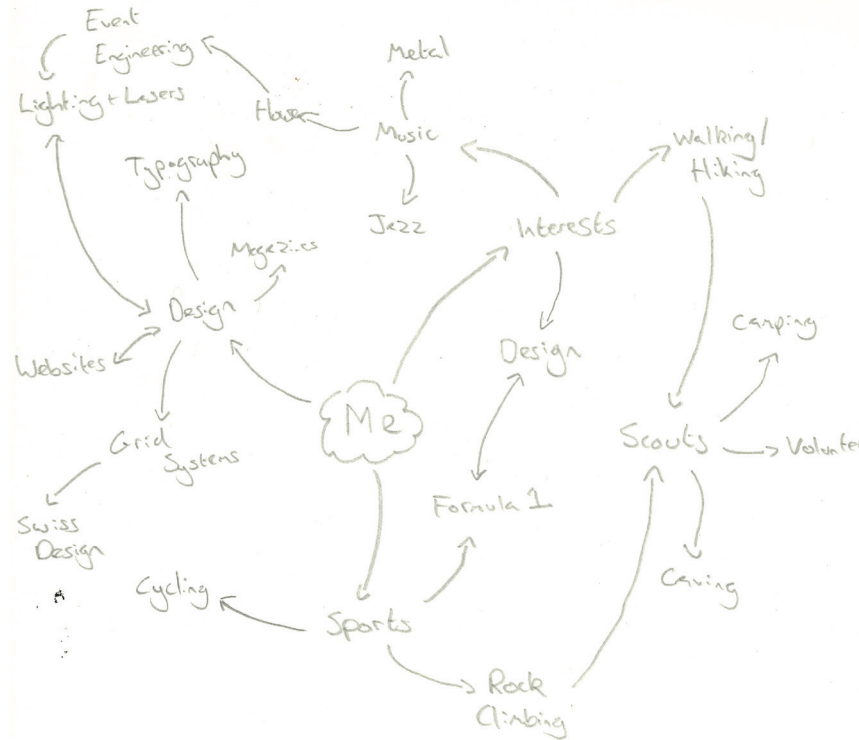# Will Baker (F427608)
ACB140 - Social Design

Research

I first created a small mindmap of which values I personally believe in, to help inform my charity choice. I did this by listing out different hobbies and interests of mine, and seeing what overlap there was with the charities.

I ended up choosing the Woodland Trust as my charity. This is mainly because I've spent my whole life outdoors, having been involved within Scouts since I was 7. By being a part of this, I already have a solid understanding about conservation issues and how this impacts people's lives.

Who are they?

The Woodland Trust is the UK's largest woodland conservation charity. Founded in 1972, their central mission is to protect, restore, and create native woodlands across the United Kingdom. They are a major landowner, managing over 1,000 sites that are freely open to the public. Their work is crucial for conserving irreplaceable ancient woodlands, fighting climate change, and providing vital habitats for wildlife.

Their Promise

The Woodland Trust's core strategy and public promise are built on three clear pillars: Protect, Restore, and Create.

- *Protect*: They campaign to save ancient woodlands from destruction by development or disease.
- *Restore*: They work to bring damaged ancient woodlands back to life, removing invasive species and allowing native flora to thrive.
- *Create*: They plant new native trees and woods, establishing the woodlands of the future to benefit people, wildlife, and the planet.


Facts & Figures

- Invested £71.9 million into various nature conservatories
- Planted almost 20 square kilometers of new woodland
- Recovered 1,040 hectares of woodlands back to health
- 11,000 ancient trees were planted throughout 2024
- Over 50 million trees planted since 1972

Social Problems

- Only 1 in 50 native woodlands have more than one veteran tree per ~200,000 m²
- Woodland-associated butterflies in the UK have declined by 47% between 1990 and 2022.
- Woodland birds have decreased by 37% over the past 50 years, and by 15% in the last 5 years.
- Dormouse populations in surveyed woodland have fallen by 70% between 2000 and 2022.
- Plant species richness in UK woodlands has reduced by 22% over the past 50 years.
- About 46% of native UK woodlands have no deadwood at all

Both images taken from the woodland trust website

Problem Ideation
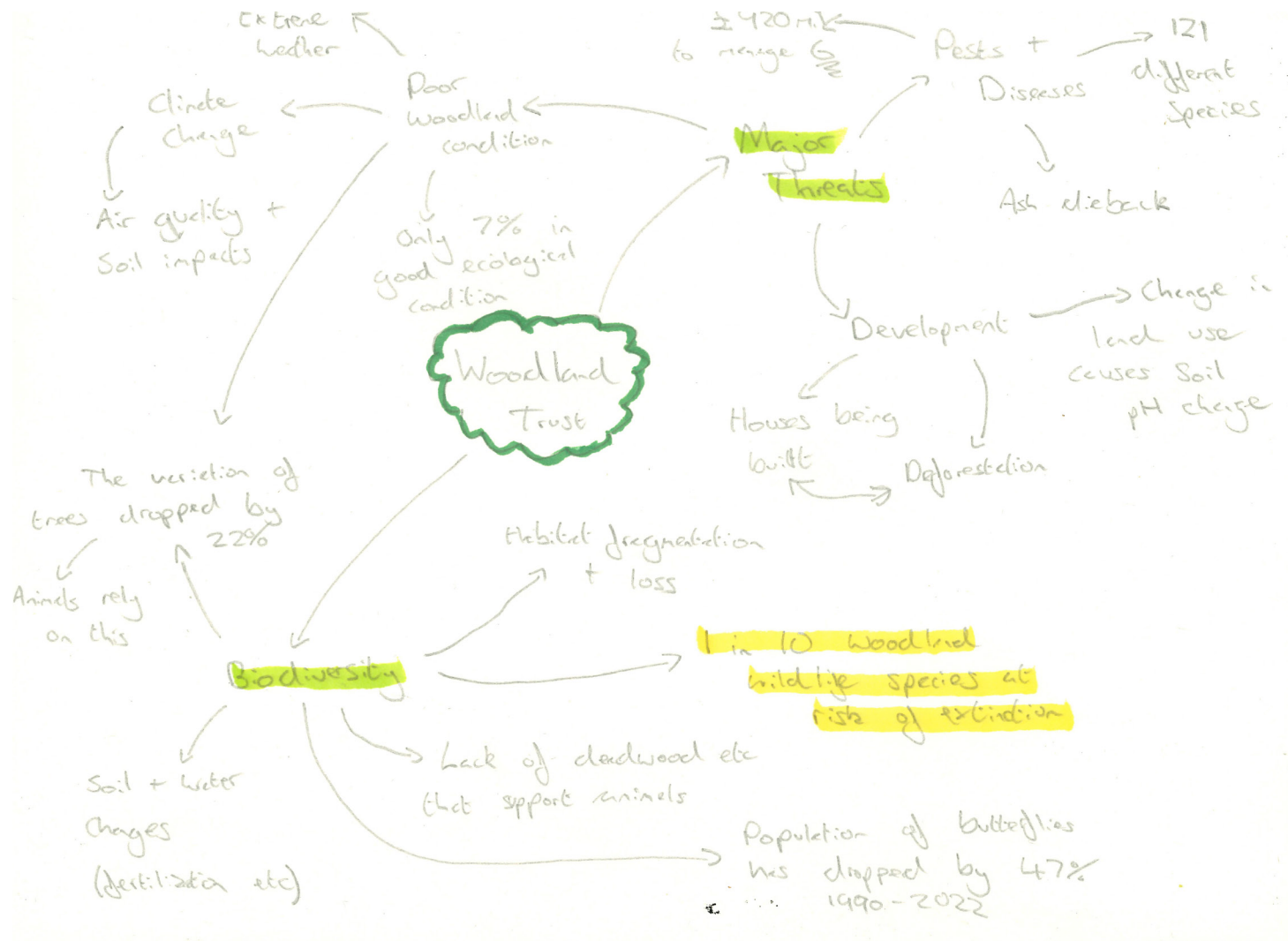
Scan from my Sketchbook

I then started by creating a list of different issues that threaten both woodlands, as well as biodiversity. During my research, the stat of "1 in 10 woodland species at risk of extinction" came up from the woodland trust website. This statistic was very impactful to me, mostly due to how I didn't realise many species were effected.

To help narrow down my problem even more, I asked myself the following questions:

How bad is the biodiversity in the UK?
Birds have declined by 37%, butterflies by 47% and dormice by 70%

Why is it this bad?
There's a large lack of awareness around what biodiversity is and how it impacts everyday life.

How so?
There's a big disconnect between hearing different animals in the woods, and knowing about them (if they're endangered etc).

What could I do?
There's multiple ways:
- Encourage people to go outside and listen to birds, etc.
- Make it easier to identify these animals.
- Have helpful resources linked to get involved with conservation efforts.

This helped me to realise some of the root causes of the problem, and gave me a good basis to start more refined research into my audience.

Concept Development

Initial Ideas

I then got to work developing some initial ideas. A lot of them revolved around the gamification of biodiversity. I looked at creating a Pokemon like game, as well as a sandbox virtual forest. Whilst they would have worked out well, I was worried about the consequences of children running about the woods trying to find different animals, causing more mayhem than good.

I then looked at a meditation style app where the users are encouraged to go outside and seek different sounds to relax to in forests. This idea worked a lot better for me, as I was worried with the gamification ideas, a lot of people would be going outside just to "collect" these different animals instead of wanting to experience different noises.
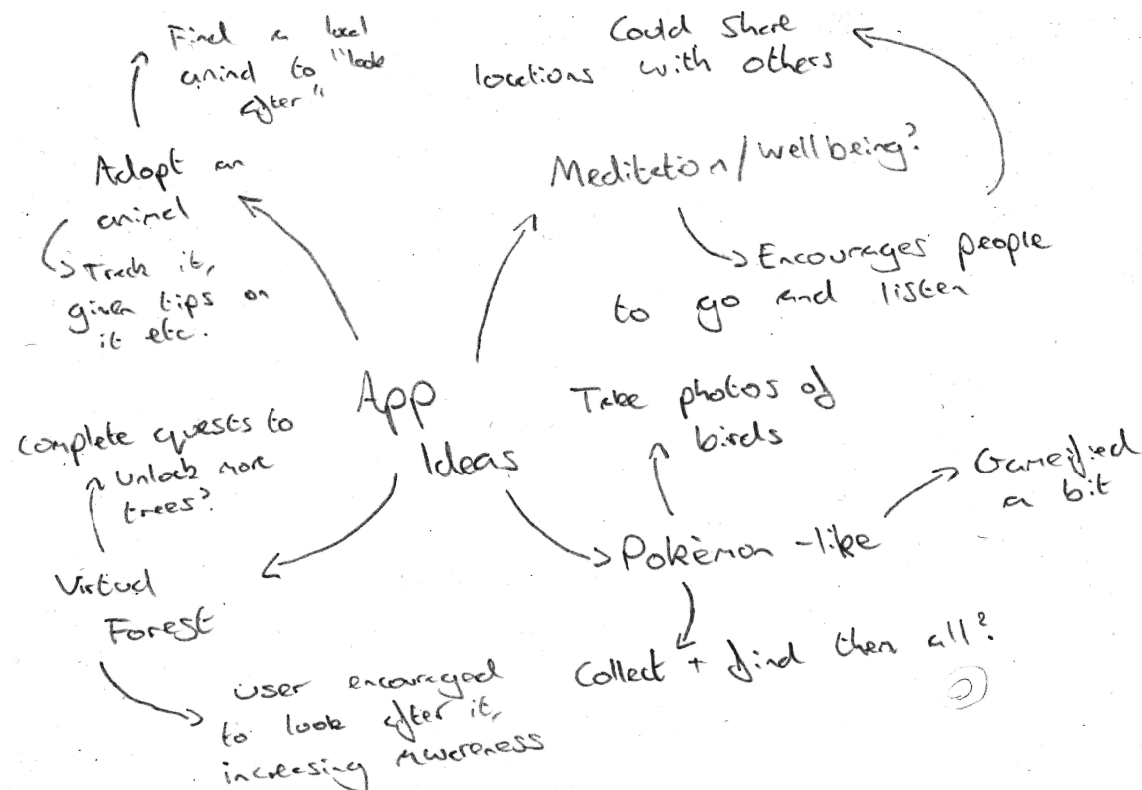
Consolidating the Meditation App Idea

I then mind mapped and consolidated my ideas for the meditation app idea, coming up with different ways I could link it to informing people about biodiversity.

I came up with a variety of potential screens the user could navigate through, as well as various different social aspects, as these encourage others to share the app with their friends, further boosting engagement.
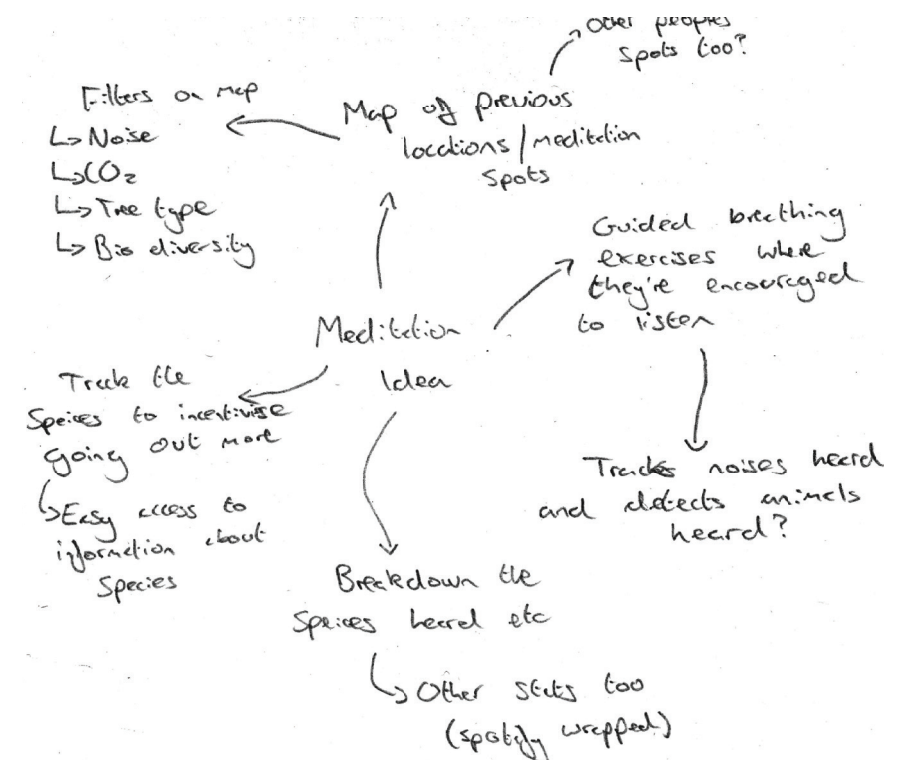
User Personas & Stakeholder Maps

Persona Profile   Woodland Trust

Jennifer, A

bio
- 26 years old
- 3 young children
- Lievs near Cambridge
- Married to Zac A
- Looks after her kids full time

about
Jen is a 26-yea-old mother of three living on he outskirts of Cambridge. Between caring for her children and balancing part-time work for her small marketing agency, she rarely finds quiet moments for herself. But loves being outdoors with her family and often takes short walks in nearby woodlands to unwind. She's becoming increasingly aware of how much calmer she feels in nature and wants to build healthier routines that support both her own wellbeing and her children's appreciation for the environment.

frustrations
Struggles to find time or mental space for self-care and mindfulness. Finds most wellness apps too commercial or detached from real experiences. Wants to feel more connected to the environment but doesn't know where to start.

interests
Birdwatching · Walking · Photography · Baking · Calm · Nature · Yoga · Exploration · Reading

expectations
Hopes the app will help her slow down and reconnect with herself through nature. Wants a calm, simple interface that feels soothing, not demanding or confusing. Expects to learn more about local wildlife and understand the value of woodlands. Would like to share specific locations with her friends also looking to relax. Wants to feel part of a wider community of people who care for both their own wellbeing and the planet's health.

Persona Profile   Woodland Trust

Chloe, M

bio
- 29 years old
- Primary School Teacher
- Lives near Norwich
- Lives with her Partner Brad
- Has a rescue dog

about
Chloe spends her days surrounded by children and noise, which she loves but also finds exhausting. She often feels mentally drained by the end of the school day and looks for small ways to unwind without feeling guilty about "doing nothing." She enjoys taking her dog for walks along nature trails near her home and has recently started exploring mindfulness podcasts. Chloe isn't an expert on environmental issues but feels a quiet appreciation for the outdoors and wants to protect it for future generations.

frustrations
Feels constantly busy and overstimulated from work and social media. Finds wellness apps either too time-consuming or overly focused on metrics. Often feels disconnected from nature despite living close to it. Wants to take care of her mental health but doesn't know where to start

interests
Picnicking · Hiking · Travelling · Music · Dogs · Nature · Design · Podcasts · Painting

expectations
Wants a calm, welcoming app that doesn't feel like another task. Expects to learn about local wildlife in simple, meaningful ways. Likes the idea of hearing real sounds from other users' woodland recordings. Would enjoy reflecting or journaling quietly after a walk — not sharing publicly, just for herself.
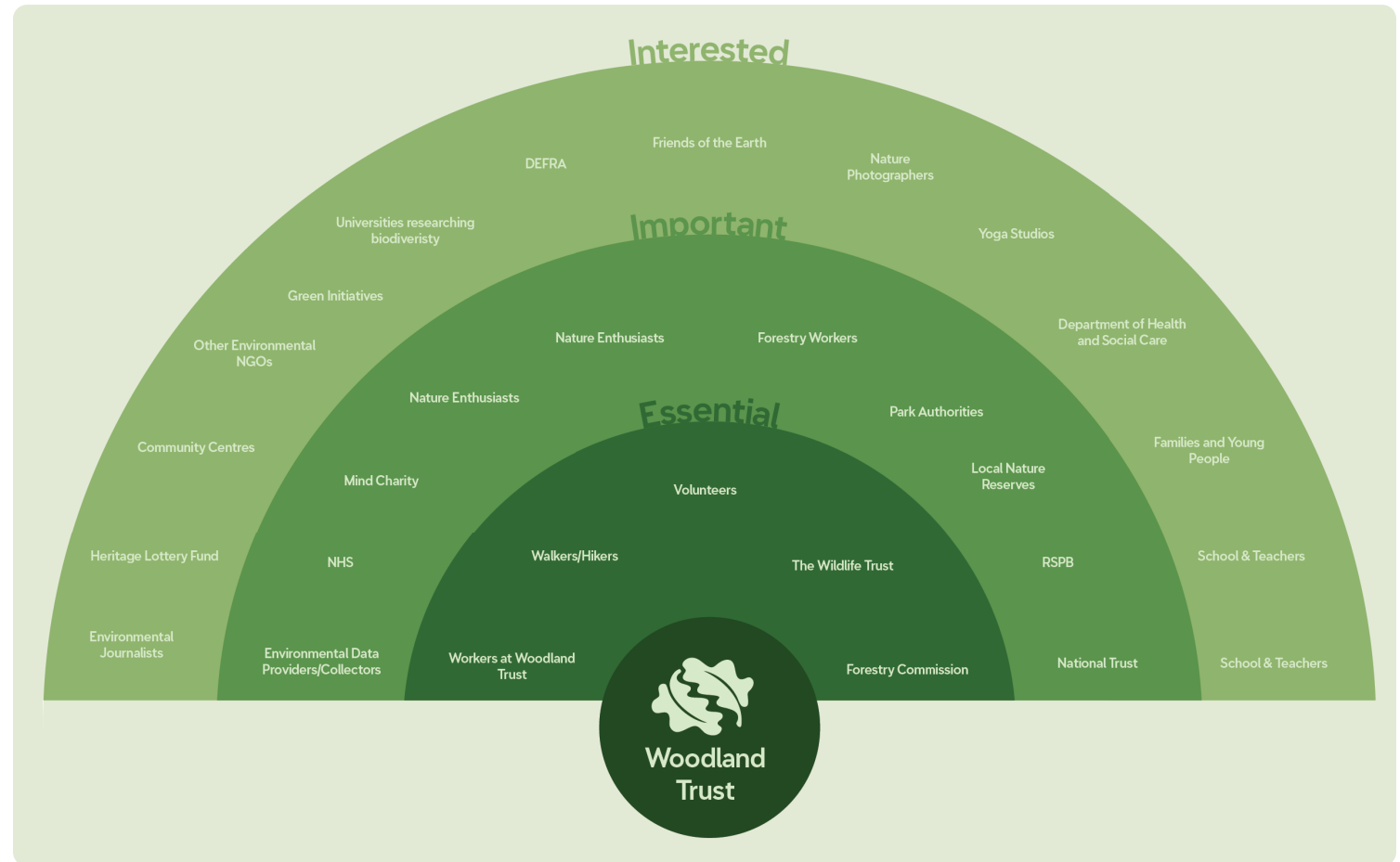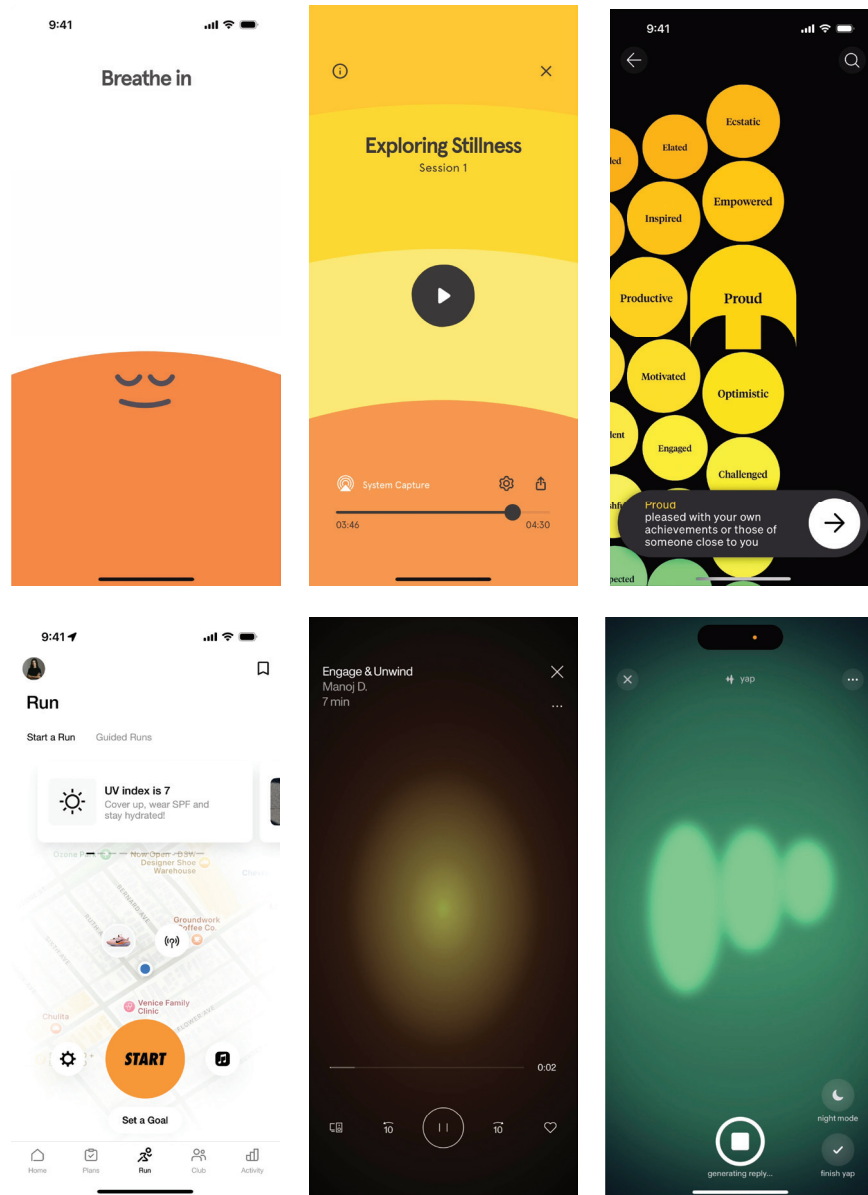

Personas
I then created some personas based off of statistics on what common demographics to suffer from mental health issues. Whilst a large majority of people within the UK will suffer from one at some point in their life, women are 3 times as likely, and so I focused my app towards them. In terms of age, I again looked at the statistics, and decided to focus on younger women, between the ages of 18-30.

Stakeholder Map
I also created a stakeholder map to help figure out other parties which could be interested in my app. Whilst my target audience is Women aged 18-30, it can still be used by anyone with mental health issues, or just people interested in nature, trying to figure out what birds they're hearing.

Visual Inspiration

Existing Apps

I first had a look at existing wellbeing apps, such as Headspace. This gave me a good idea about what people expect from these apps.

It was here I discovered the Calm Technology principles, where technology should be in the peripheral of the user. This is paramount for my app, which is all about relaxing and listening to the woodlands. These apps all do this via a minimalist interface which is heavy on using icons instead of text.

They also heavily consider the placement of different buttons to ensure the user doesn't become uncomfortable stretching to press a button on the opposite side of the screen, taking them out of their relaxed state.

Images taken from the Headspace, How We Feel, Nike Run Club, Open and Pillow Talk IOS apps
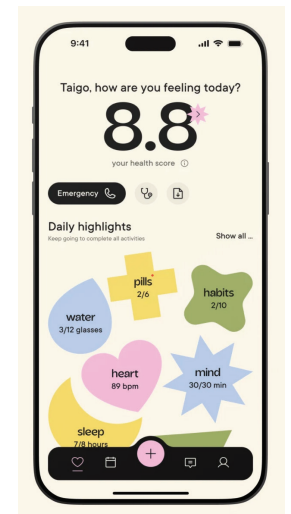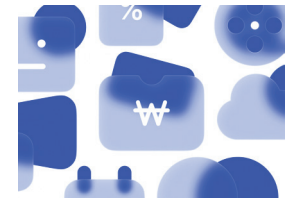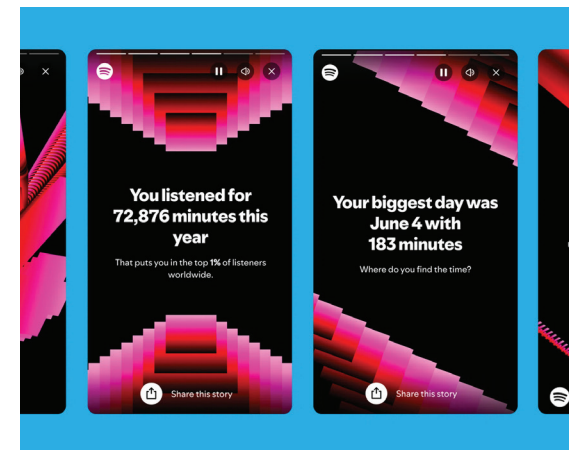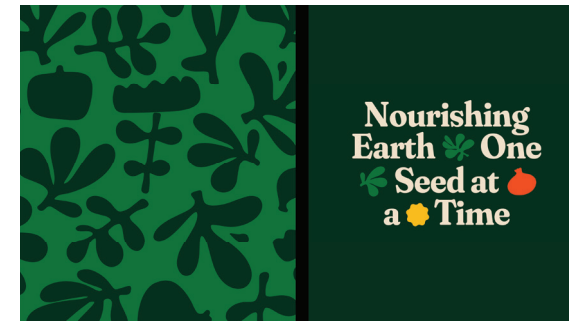
Moodboard

I wanted a minimalist style to keep it non distracting, with elements of glass morphism. I was also reminded of Spotify Wrapped, and whilst I don't think the visual style fits, the way they humanise the data, making statistics interesting, is something I want to look at.

Sketches & Development

Initial Sketches

I started by creating some rough layouts for my app. I focused on the main screens at first, leaving out transitions/confirmation screens.
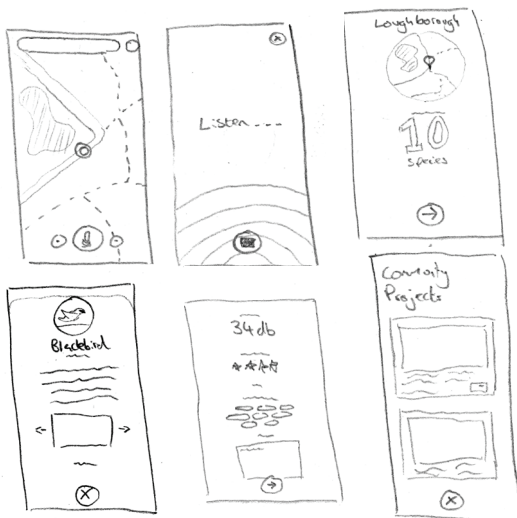
I created the main home/map screen, the very minimal relaxation/recording screen as well as a couple different finishing/confirmation screen ideas. I also added a community project page and species profile pages.

Components

I then also created a collection of components for me to use throughout the project. All interactable elements (buttons, checkboxes, stars, etc) have the same selected state throughout the app of being Grass with a soft glow around them. This is to eliminate any confusion about if something is selected or not.

Some elements (such as the filter dropdown) also have a blurry translucent background to indicate they're an overlay.

App Guidelines

I then worked on some guidelines I could follow between the different pages to help keep my app looking professional and consistent. This mainly involved border radius, font sizes, colour palettes, but also included things such as blur gradients on scrollable elements to indicate that you can scroll on them.

Type

Headings
AT Name Sans in SemiBold at 40pt
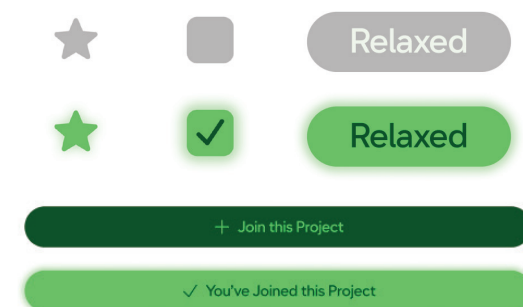
Subheadings
AT Name Sans in SemiBold at 16pt

Titles
AT Name Sans in SemiBold at 16pt

Bodycopy
AT Name Sans in Medium at 12pt

Latin Names
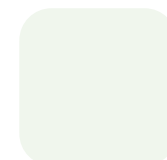AT Name Sans in Medium Italic at 12pt

Colours

Forest

Hex: *#09522A*
CMYK: *9%, 0%, 49%, 68%*
RGB: *9, 82, 42*

Grass

Hex: *#53DD6C*
CMYK: *62%, 0%, 51%, 13%*
RGB: *83, 221, 108*

Birch

Hex: *#EEF4EB*
CMYK: *2%, 0%, 4%, 4%*
RGB: *238, 244, 235*

Stone

Hex: *#808080*
CMYK: *0%, 0%, 0%, 50%*
RGB: *128, 128, 128*

The colours were picked from a variety images I took on a walk through my local woods, and are named in accordance to where they were taken from.

Forest is used for Headings and Titles (apart from when it's being used as a background colour). Grass is used primarily in buttons and selectables in their active state. Birch is used as a background colour throughout the app and Stone as Subheadings and Bodycopy.

★ ▢ Relaxed
★ ✓ Relaxed

＋ Join this Project
✓ You've Joined this Project

Filters
Air Quality
Biodiversity
Noise Pollution
Light Pollution
Forest Type

Beacon Hill
30m session from 16/05/25 at 12:30
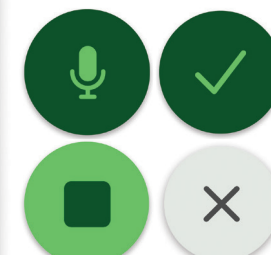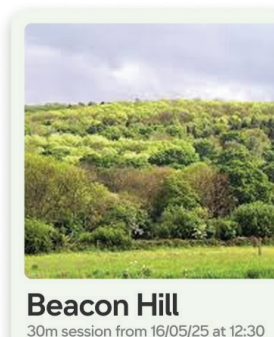
Development

Home/Map Screen

I started by getting a photo of the local forest from Maps, and then editing it to fit better with my app's colour scheme, as well as adding the location indicator.

I also added the location chips as well as my home navbar. I wasn't happy with how the overall design felt with all the visual elements though. It felt like too many elements were fighting for your attention. 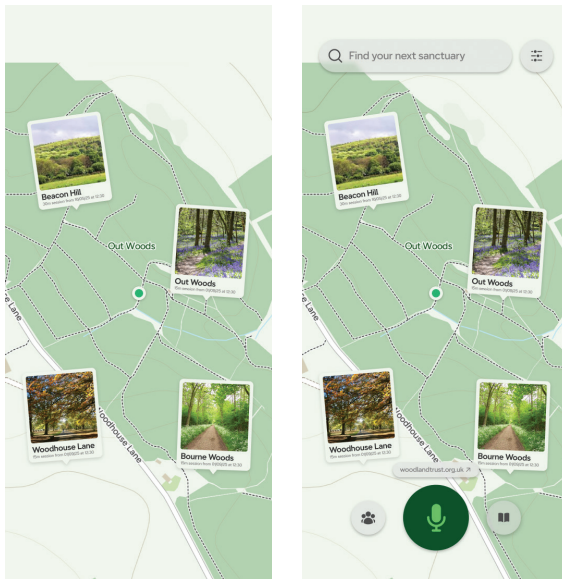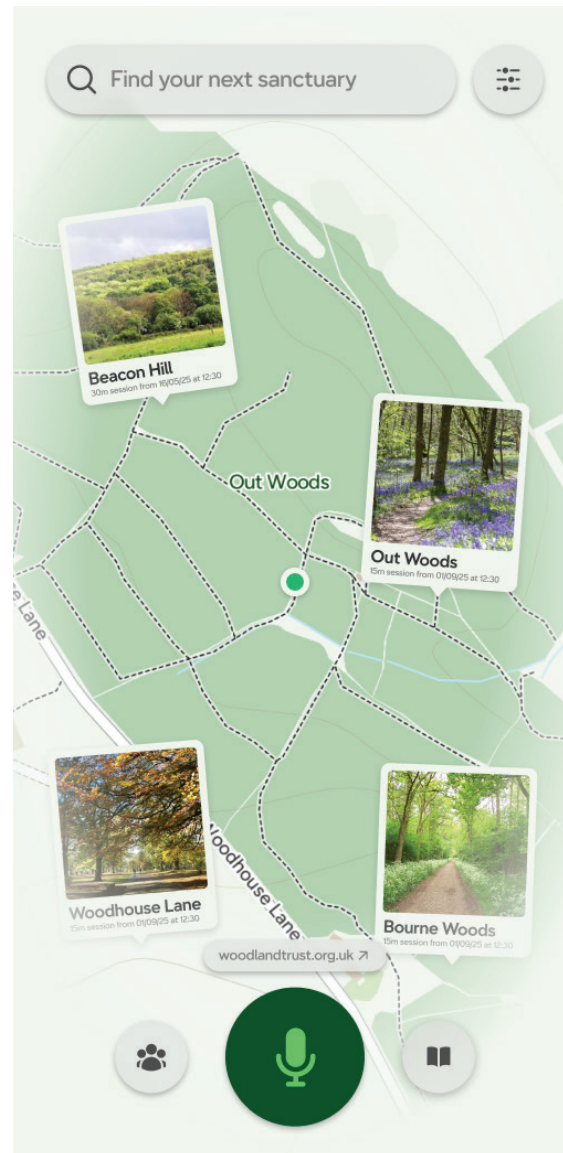To help with this, I added a radial gradient to mask off a circle around the map. This worked well to not only remove some of the elements, but also to draw the eye towards the center of the screen.

Previous versions of the home layout

Final Version

Meditation Screen

At first I started by designing the pages in Illustrator and then converting them to Figma, but as I grew more comfortable with Auto Layout, I would design straight in Figma.

For the primary meditation page I experimented with various different ways of representing "breathing". I ended up using the bottom right as it fit well with the rest of my designs. I also moved the close button to the other side to minimise stretching for buttons.

To up the level of realism within my app I included some short videos to appear as though the elements are animated. I made a small looping animation for the circles, as well as the scrolling species list. I created both of these in after effects.
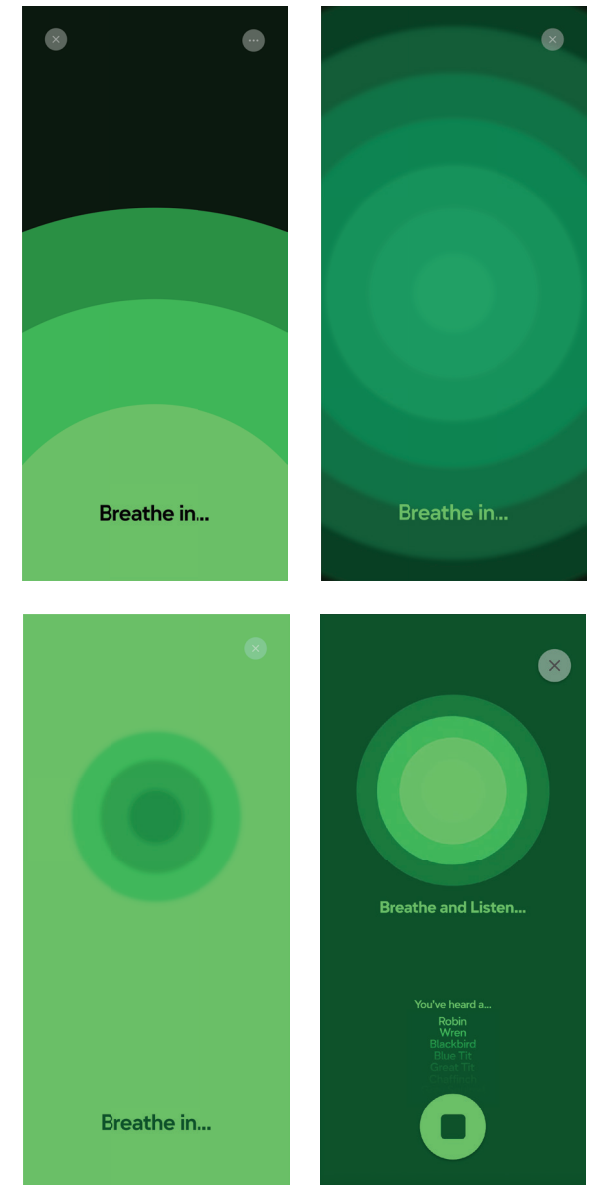
Previous versions of the meditation layout as well as the Final

Development

Volunteering Screen

To help further promote the Volunteering aspects, I added an easy to access communities section. This showcases different events going on near you that you can join.

I created a simple tile component that I could reuse, as well as an easy call to action, encouraging users to join.

Community Projects

Near Loughborough, UK

Wildlife in Whittle Woods
📍 Sherwood   🕐 16/12/25   👤 250

Join local nature lovers and Woodland Trust volunteers in exploring woodlands. This project invites you to record any wildlife you enco woodland birds and small mammals to fungi, mosses, and insects.

+ Join this Project

✕

Wildlife in Whittle Woods

📍 Sherwood   🕐 16/12/25   👤 250

Join local nature lovers and Woodland Trust volunteers in exploring biodiversity of Whittle Woods, one of Lancashire's most treasured woodlands. This project invites you to record any wildlife you enco woodland birds and small mammals to fungi, mosses, and insects.

+ Join this Project

Result Screen

The statistics page was designed to give users a calm overview of their woodland sessions. Early layouts were simplified to avoid some clutter, instead focusing on clear highlights like species heard, time spent, and sound levels.
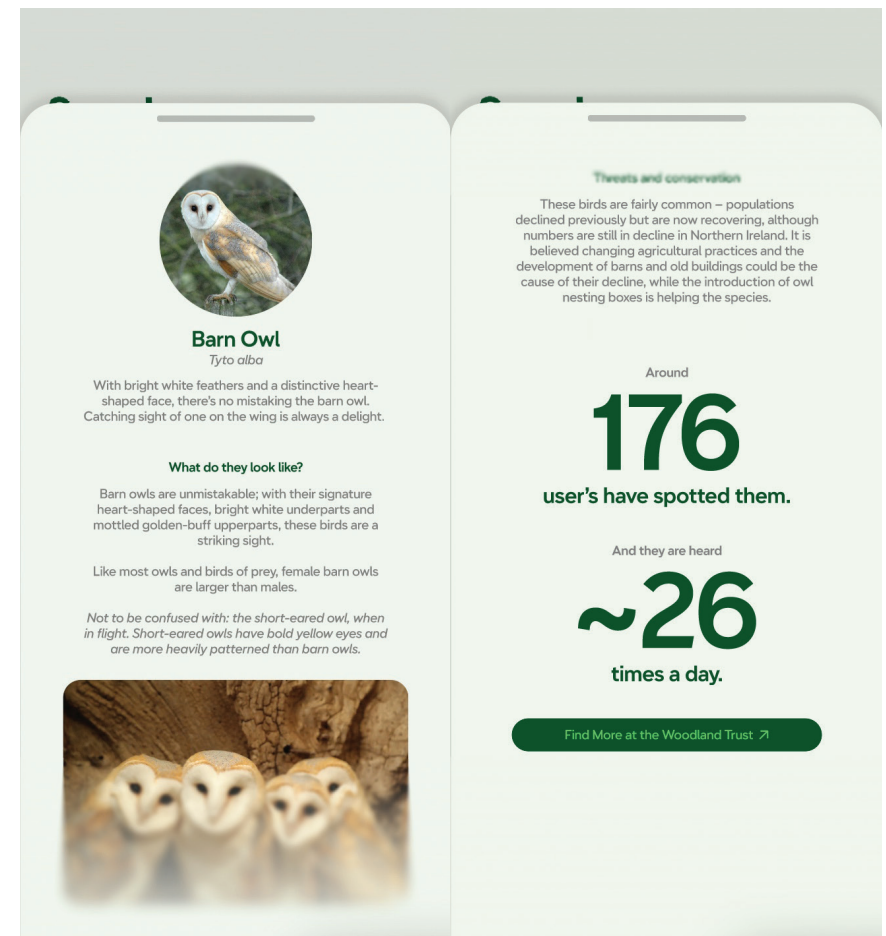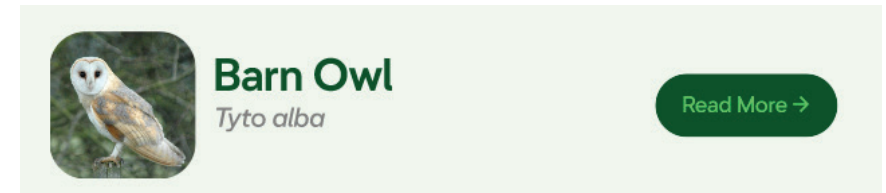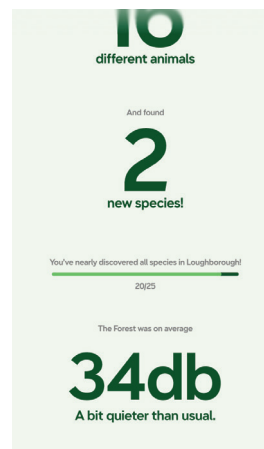
This creates a similar shareability to Spotfiy Wrapped, where users will want to flex their statistics on their friends, boosing engagement.
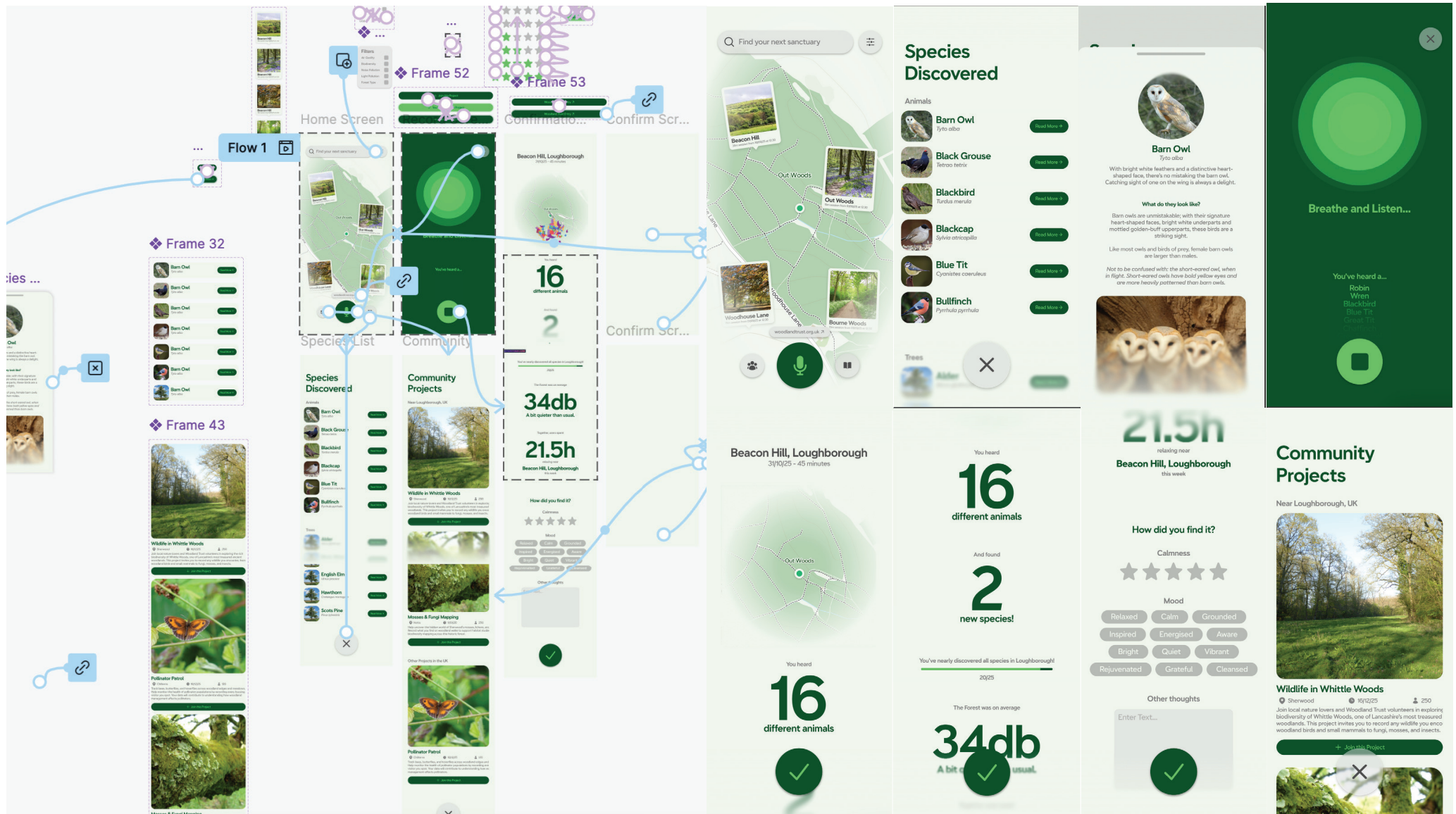
Library Screen

To further build on this, I also added a library screen where the user can see different plant and animal species in their local area.

The user can click into the animal which opens up a draw containing **different facts and information.**

It also contains some localised stats, such as how many users have seen the animal, and how often they're seen a day, as well as a link to find out more information through the woodland trust.

16
different animals

And found
2
new species!

You've nearly discovered all species in Loughborough!
20/25

The Forest was on average
34db
A bit quieter than usual.

Barn Owl
Tyto alba

Read More →

Barn Owl
Tyto alba

With bright white feathers and a distinctive heart-shaped face, there's no mistaking the barn owl. Catching sight of one on the wing is always a delight.

What do they look like?

Barn owls are unmistakable; with their signature heart-shaped faces, bright white underparts and mottled golden-buff upperparts, these birds are a striking sight.

Like most owls and birds of prey, female barn owls are larger than males.

Not to be confused with: the short-eared owl, when in flight. Short-eared owls have bold yellow eyes and are more heavily patterned than barn owls.

Threats and conservation

These birds are fairly common – populations declined previously but are now recovering, although numbers are still in decline in Northern Ireland. It is believed changing agricultural practices and the development of barns and old buildings could be the cause of their decline, while the introduction of owl nesting boxes is helping the species.

Around
176
user's have spotted them.

And they are heard
~26
times a day.

Find More at the Woodland Trust ↗

Final Pages

Attatched here is a screenshot of my final figma file, showcasing the prototyping of the interactive elements.

I've also included screenshots of all the different screens in my app.

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