**Developer Diary**

***9th February 2018***

*17:00*

Started development with having a look through scripts that are inside ARKit unity plugin. No testing or changing code was done as of yet, just looking to through the scripts to get familiar with them and how they operate.

The goal for today was to start research and comparing more games which were implemented in AR, that use environment around player to work – how is UX designed in those games. VR games are to be considered too.

20:55

AR game titles have been looked at, where features and gameplay can be relevant to my project idea. Found out that at the moment there are not many titles that have relevant game mechanic, design that my project is focused on (world spawning around the player). Games looked at have minimalistic UI, have to figure out a clever way to minimalize UI in the game.

Would be helpful to look at some VR games, to find out how they indicate information around the player.

***10th February 2018***

*15:15*

Had some issues uploading files to GitHub, where progress from today was deleted and had to start from beginning. I have done what was recommended to me, creating a prototype which tests tracking of world even when the spawning location is not in camera view.

This was implemented using detecting horizontal plane, as it will work with any user input, however I thought of implementing some kind of board game into this game and having horizontal plane to have as a starting point sounds like a good idea.

Game involves having a cube in the spawn location which is initiated by the player, and then based on that location spawning two spheres, which have different locations. Player can easily view them and look at them without looking at the spawning location and it tracks very well. No issues.

There was a bit of learning required to get used to the code and how it would operate. After I got familiar with the code and how it operates, I didn’t run into any other issues.

*19:30*

There was an error with Developer Diary file, it was corrupted, had to re-download file that was backed up on GitHub.

Islands, which look like planets with very distinguishable colours for the time being, is implemented. First thoughts are that the planets are too close together, are a bit too big (size of 0.5 on all axes on Unity). For the initial implementation it is fine, will have to test it out and get feedback on the situation. Need to gather also feedback on the spawn location, if the plane is required or not – will depend on feedback and how player wants to play the game.

Created player character – a cylinder for initial implementation – where the top positions of each sphere are the locations that the player will be able to travel between. Not able to travel yet, but does spawn at the correct position.

There was a small challenge of getting the top of each sphere to be recognised as a spawn location, but it was overcome. The locations are stored in an array which can be easily accessed. At the moment, everything is being implemented in one document, which will change soon. It is done this way at the moment for testing purposes.

***11th February 2018***

*17:15*

Today focus on development was to get movement (tap on island to appear on that planet). This was challenging. Initially I tried to implement it using HitResult that is in ARKit plugin, however it didn’t work as after searching on the documentations, it appears that it only detects plains, and real-world objects and interactions, not what I was looking for.

My second approach was to use raycasts, which worked at the end, but there were problems to overcome along the way. Initial problem was getting 2D input to be transformed into the ray – it was quickly overcome by just double-checking code. One problem was detecting which planet it hit. As dependant on the planet hit, character will appear on that planet. Once I detected which planet was hit, the player appeared inside the planets – which isn’t visible – instead of the spawning locations.

It did work when I hard-coded the location as it had the same offset throughout every island, but I wanted it to work with the location points that I initialised every planet with. After further testing and changing things, I realised that it was the code that I saved the location points at that was a problem and the way that I accessed them. Now they do get written and read properly. There is an issue that the very planet (last in array) that is in the origin doesn’t get read properly, so have to investigate it.

*20:50*

The tap movement system works, for as long as the island/planet is not at the origin, it has offset of at least 2-axis from the spawn location. One solution that may overcome this issue is adding 0.1f to one axis (as it doesn’t work if position has the same 2-axis as the spawn location). Minor issue that can be worked around, and one case where it won’t work.

As the implementation is concerned at the moment, it is slow, as whenever I make any changes, I have to wait first for build to finish in unity, before building it on iPhone using Xcode which is a slow process, so testing is not as quick as I would have liked which affects the speed at which it is implemented.

The goal for today was achieved, where tapping does work to move the character. It has a bug that can be worked around as it is very minor condition which it works under.

***17th February 2018***

*14:15*

Started implementing Sprint Two today. Started with implementing testing buttons to have a prototype position where they might be. Full UI implementation will be done at later date. Today I started implementing Virus and first thing which I wanted to implement is virus showing up in game. This was done without many problems using Coroutines**.** When it was implemented there were some issues, but they were issues setting up (assigning materials again since I renamed the variable), which were easily fixed. Once they were fixed, the game plays like expected and I set it up to initially wait 90 seconds before virus shows up but it can be easily changed.

At the moment, the whole project is being implemented on one single script. When everything is working and being implemented – thinking at the end of Sprint Three – then I will split it up into separate scripts to be neat and easier to manage the code.

***18th February 2018***

*13:55*

Today I am focusing on visualisation of virus and the spread of the virus. I increased the spawning planet size to 10 – for better testing – and made the planets smaller (to 0.2f), will get feedback in testing to see if it is better to have the planets bigger or smaller.

I managed to implement spreading to the nearby planets without any troubles. I used mathematical Pythagoras equation to find the closest planet for which it will be infected. Once infected, at the moment it just changes colours and the planet tag changes from “*Planet*” to “*Infected*”, this information is used to find out if the planet is to be infected or if it’s already infected.

By testing it out, the spread of planets at the moment doesn’t look great and some planets are too close to each other, so once everything is implemented together, the plan of where each planet will be located – with the agreed size – will be implemented.

When was looking through the code, I found little bug that I fixed, where initially when I was calculating distance, I was only taking account x, y axis and y axis was taken into the equation twice, fixed it by changing one y axis to z axis.

*15:40*

For testing purposes, I reduced the time which takes for infection to start from 90.0f seconds to 20.0f, and also the time which it takes to spread is quicker than it will be implemented in the final product – 5.0f is set to at the moment.

The alert system is implemented – in portrait mode, have to get feedback which orientation the game should be implemented – when the infection begins. It starts 5.0f seconds before the actual infection appears on the planets with outline and text appearing on the screen. It looks ugly. But for testing purposes and gaining feedback, I think it will work. It will be changed later to look more pleasing.



***19th February 2018***

*19:25*

Today was focused on creating a connection between the planets. It had a lot of problems along the way, in a form of first not displaying the prefab of cylinder at all. I tried to implement each connection inside an array, but for current implementation it wasn’t implemented. Goal was to have a connection going from one planet to another, however at the moment all connections go from one – the beginning planet.

The prefab was initially along the y-axis, however later during testing it didn’t display in correct direction, so the mesh was rotated 90 degrees in x-axis. This displayed the mesh in correct direction in testing, but not long enough which has to be adjusted in the code.

It was implemented using localScale, with prefab of cylinder being created of scale 0.02f in all axes. Using transform, I calculated the distance between the two points (the two planets), and calculated the midpoint from which the prefab was displayed. Tried to calculate how to stretch it along the correct path, initially trying to work in y-axis, but after many tries and testing, it wasn’t working properly, followed by x-axis with the similar result. After testing out z-axis at the end, it worked, however the value has to be multiplied by 50.0f otherwise it is not the correct size. I am not sure to that value – with the distance being calculated before – but it has to be implemented and works at the moment.

All points go off one planet at the moment, which has to be changed to the links coming off correct planets.

***20th February 2018***

*12:15*

Fixed situation where the link points only go off one planet. Now the links go off the closest planets – just as it should be implemented in the first place. Also, saved the connections – links – in an array for easy access at later time if needed, compared to just creating them when needed and not being able to access them again.

The information of start and end planet (which planets are connected to each-other) is stored in dictionary, key being the start planet and list of ints is created as the values for all the connections coming off that planet. The link is stored in an array, where at the moment I can’t think of a solution to link the array and the dictionary together. In the meantime, whenever I need to access the link, I will look at start and end planet and based on the location of the planets and the link position I will figure out which link it is relating to.

Fixed a small bug, where the player starting position wasn’t saved until the first move was made – the initial position of player wasn’t saved. It is solved now and planet location is saved initially when game is loaded.

*13:20*

Dictionary was removed due to not working as intended. It was breaking the game, so for now dictionary is deleted, but the initial array for the links is still in place. By the use of planet locations, I will identify which link players are relating to.

After getting some feedback on the pause menu location – the feedback was to keep it on the bottom right (in portrait mode) for easy access and doesn’t get in a way. Also, at the moment the character is able to go around every planet – what I want to implement is the limitation that player will only be able to travel around closest planets – not able to travel to any planet that they want.

*16:35*

Implemented Pause menu where it has “Main Menu”, “Restart”, “Back” buttons, where main menu is yet to be implemented. It stops the time when the pause is in place. Also, have added command that never dims or puts the phone to sleep when the application is open.

Also added GameOver screen, which occurs once the player is on the infected planet. Surprisingly there were troubles to make it work, not sure what the problems were, but they seem to be simple like not referencing or calling the function properly and had to change locations when the GameOver function is called. I had it to scan every frame to see if the planet that the player is on infected or not and based on that affect the result, but it didn’t always show the correct results, when the infection spread towards the planet that character was on already, the GameOver screen wasn’t triggered. Therefore, I added if statement in the spread function which checks that if the player position is the same as the spread position then GameOver screen is triggered.

Also, made Game Manager game object which holds the scripts which control the UI and states of the game.

Everything implemented is very basic with simplistic graphics and functionality, the idea being to improve it once everything is implemented and working as intended.



***26th February 2018***

*16:00*

Did testing of 8 people testing the orientation of the game, the result being landscape orientation. The orientation of the game was changed to landscape. I used 3D TextMesh available in Unity to display text on menus which will be displayed next to the planet. The planet has 4 locations (front, left, right, back) where the menu can be displayed in. At the moment, the menu only shows up on the left side of the planet every time. The menu has one big intractable button – that is not active at the moment but will have point of action once programmed that will do an action. Actions available are move, pickup ingredients, place mix solution on the planets to cure the infection.

No issues at implementation at the moment, however it takes a while to think of how to implement it logically. Instantiating the prefab for menu to be displayed at the right location. Looking to have the right rotation to be in the direction of the camera. Meshes and colours are basic for the time being to minimalize time spend on implementation and easier to make changes based on the feedback.

*17:40*

In progress on implementing which menu shows up on the menu. There are complications in the form of menu disappearing without displaying anything. Not sure the reason for that. Created separate variables to track the input. Have different functions to be called at times to track inputs and when the action button is pressed.

*20:20*

Issues occurred when trying to implement pressing the button, where the game would not load (the game world that is), unless the game is restarted through the pause button. Another issue was that the menu was not showing, or it wasn’t counting the press correctly, either blinking or just not appearing, or appearing without being active. Also, another issue being the presses were not registered correctly, as moving the finger around would initiate the different functions. Currently, the game is implemented with touch.phrase == TouchPhrase.Began to track the press, and it does work as intended when it comes to presses, however it does not turn off the menu once the planet is pressed again. It only works initially when the planet is pressed.

***3rd March 2018***

*15:20*

Had an issue when it comes to turn turning off the planet menu as it did not work when was clicking planet again. Due to this, I decided to implement a red exit button which turns off the menu, and once it was implemented it worked as intended without any problems. Using raycasts to detect when the exit button was hit as it is in the tag on its own called “Exit”.

Thinking of 3 win conditions (done by doing different combinations of ingredients gathered). Bomb that explodes and heals the planets / Healthy link spread / Health solution place on planet.

***4th March 2018***

*14:35*

Implemented all states: Move, Solution, Collect, Collected buttons, however it does not show in correct manner, there are bugs as the points/how many ingredients there is available on the planet is not deducted. Have to fix those bugs and have working version before continuing implementation.

*15:55*

Implemented the text showing the number of ingredients available on the planet. Once it is collected, the menu disappears. Now everything is showing as it should, once the ingredients hit number 10, the player will be able to place the solution on the planet, and at the moment it send the player automatically into the winning screen. This will be changed to match the winning conditions, where player plays the game according to the mix combination.

There were a little trouble with displaying the ingredients on the menu plate. First I tried to search for the object by .GetComponent<TextMesh>().text, however it did not display any results, therefore I changed my strategy to first .Find(“Text”) (that’s how the object is called in the prefab), followed by .GetComponent<TextMesh>().text. That seems to work. Then I was working on displaying text, where first I used string.Format(args), however it did not show any results, it ended with not showing anything. Then I tried just entering “string” + arg way, however it did not work either. Reasoning for nnot working is unknown to me, however, when I tried to create a separate string variable and use string.Concat(args) it worked perfectly.

Once this was implemented, when the player clicked the collect button, the whole game would freeze, which was unknown error. However, I think it was as in collect function, I called recursive function for MenuAction which displayed correct text and menu options available for the planet. I passed the argument of player planet position, which I assume cause some sort of recursive call just freezing the game. I fixed it by not calling the MenuAction function, and once the ingredients were collected I changed so the menu just disappears.

That is the reason for menu disappearing once the ingredients were collected, not intended solution as I wanted the text to just change, however it does work as it is. The player just has to click on planet again to view possible options. It is fine as for testing the functionality, this solution may be changed at later date.

*16:40*

Implemented a split choice when the player has enough ingredients for solution, and if there are more ingredients available on the planet. Changed the ingredients required to place the solution to 5, previously being 10, for easier testing. Whole game will need to be balanced while everything is implemented and working. Now player can choose what to do. Next thing to implement is the inventory system, which initially will be implemented with the pause screen.

***5th March 2018***

*12:45*

Implemented the basics for inventory system, where it splits the screen with the pause menu, only showing the basics of the inventory for now. It shows how many ingredients the player collected, with an option in inventory to create new solutions to win the game. The menu is moved to the side, which I think takes better advantage of the whole screen, while at the same time it has less interact-able buttons in the game screen, showing more of the screen for the gameplay.

The numbers get updated as the player pickups the ingredients, it is reflected in the numbers on the pause/inventory screen.

Plan to implement next is the solution choice in the planet menu, and the creation of solutions when the ingredient number is of certain number and the solutions having different effect on the game.

***8th March 2018***

*11:40*

Was implementing the two solutions for the game, including the UI in the menu, the code to count the different solutions, namely “Health Link” and “Big Bomb”. The coding was implemented and there were no issues, however when I was implementing the UI, for some reason the UI did not want to appear, the solution button stopped working. It happened after I have changed the tag name for the solution button. This problem was fixed once I reloaded the project in Unity. Now everything is working as intended.

***9th March 2018***

*21:00*

Created the prefabs and everything ready to have implemented for two different winning solutions for the game. The link solution was copied and applied in similar way that the spread of the infection was implemented, with different green texture. The big bomb is yet to be implemented but will have a semi-transparent texture on a bigger sphere and the planets touched by the sphere will be ‘healthy’.

The linking is not working properly, as when the link goes over the infected planet, it does not stop the infection, i.e. it’s not working properly and it gets stuck. No other progress is made. Don’t know why that happens, more testing will be done later to figure out the cause of that.

***10th March 2018***

*10:55*

Today goal is to finish implementing the two solutions for the game. Fixing some bugs with linking system, namely where the infection could spawn on the healthy planet. Now I have added additional check to see if the planet that is being infected is healthy or not with the tag check, as the planets have tags to see if they are healthy/normal/infected. Having those extra checks fixes this issue. Another change that was implemented is that there is a wait now when the link is put down so the first link doesn’t occur immediately. Additionally, I added a constrain that the health link can only occur 3 times so the game won’t end when the link is put down and it makes player to keep playing.

*12:00*

Implemented the bomb mechanic, where it has a radius and anything within this radius becomes healthy. I have implemented it by taking a collider of a bomb prefab and checking the bounds.interection(planet collider.bounds). If it is within those bounds then it is within the bomb range. Once it was implemented, it works as intended. Increased the blast radius, originally from 0.5, then 1.0, and now to 2.0 for it to be more impactful. Then reduced it back to 1.5, as 2.0 was too big and was the size of almost whole game world.

One thing I will have to change, or add, is the tag for bomb explosion, as it can be infected by the virus again. Also, looking to implement the instruction screen at the beginning when the game is launched and also the ingredients recovery, so after certain time the planets have extra ingredients.

Will implement the winning condition (when infection reaches = 0), and also a possibility of collecting ingredients once the infection started.

*15:20*

Implemented the different tag for planet, which represents healthy planet, but it can still be infected. Implemented the ingredients recovery – at the moment every 10 seconds the planets ingredients is increased by 1. Also, the menu system is now displayed the closest position to the player, has to be refreshed, the planet has to be clicked again. It will rotate to the camera too. I had to change the prefab to be face in the opposite direction to be visible in the game world correctly. But it does work as intended so far.

Next thing to implement will be to have instructions at the beginning of the game, and also increase the time in game when everything happens before doing public testing.