

**Can information about Preston revealed by an  
artist employing a dialectic methodology of  
interaction and mapping, while working  
collaboratively with a community undergoing  
regeneration, be made useful to a wider audience  
in that city?**

**Anita J. Burrows**

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MPhil**

**University of Central Lancashire, Preston  
September 2007**

## Student Declaration

### Concurrent registration for two or more academic awards

Either  \*I declare that while registered as a candidate for the research degree, I have not been a registered candidate or enrolled student for another award of the University or other academic or professional institution

or  \*I declare that while registered for the research degree, I was with the University's specific permission, a \*registered candidate/\*enrolled student for the following award:

---

### Material submitted for another award

Either  \*I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award and is solely my own work.

or  \*I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of

---

(state award and awarding body and list the material below):

### Collaboration

Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative project, the thesis must indicate in addition clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration. Please state below

Signature of Candidate           Anita J Burrows          

Type of Award           MPhil          

Department           ART AND FASHION

## **Abstract**

Artistic practice which involves processes of engagement with a participating group have developed in response to a desire by artists to deconstruct the myth of the artist as lone genius. This art practice, termed socially engaged, has sought to reconnect art with everyday life experience and social histories; thus opening discursive opportunities for collaborating groups.

Within an analytical framework I have considered Preston, the centre of my research, in terms of people's experience on an everyday basis. Preston is a new city, a place which through its inclusion in Single Regeneration Budgets, is identified as an area undergoing renewal of the built environment.

This study aims to investigate a multidirectional dialogic approach to the practice of contextual art. I have used mapping techniques for documenting direct experience of particular areas of Preston at different times of the day. I initiated face to face interaction with communities who live, work or meet in areas of Preston experiencing regeneration. I implemented a flexible framework method of practical tasks, discussion and reflection in order to explore this negotiated methodology, where the participants contributed to the developing agenda. I have also attended local meetings, community days and events in order to gain some experience of 'being local'. This multidirectional approach involved interaction with professionals working in regeneration in Preston including community development workers, museum and art gallery officers, creative industries officers, planners, urban regeneration directors and an art and cultural diversity officer. These developing relationships have contributed to the assessment of how useful the discovered particular information is to a wider audience in Preston.

The study has indicated that a multidirectional approach to the practice of art invites an expanded audience, offering opportunities to raise the awareness of other professionals working in regeneration to this area of art practice, offering opportunities for cross disciplinary discussion and analysis.

This research therefore contributes to the wider debate on the inclusion of socially responsive art as a strategy for urban regeneration. This was highlighted by the responses of city councillors at the launch event for the CD-ROM produced as part of this practice based research project. At the launch event it was suggested that this genre of art practice was a fresh and new approach to community consultation and a strategy for community cohesion. My discoveries have led me to propose a shift in the framework used to assess engaged practice. The social context of the work makes apparent an alternative theory of form, whereby the emphasis is not so much upon what is made as upon the skills of the artist to develop a relationship of dialogue, negotiation and connectivity. This encourages an inclusive and shared authorship.

## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Abstract</b>  | <b>i</b>  |
| <b>Table of contents</b>   | <b>ii</b> |
| <b>Acknowledgements</b>  | <b>iv</b> |
| <b>Forward</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 1 Historical context</b>  | <b>4</b>  |
| 1:1 Introduction   | 4         |
| 1:2 The emergence of a socially-engaged practice from the 1960's   | 5         |
| 1:3 Summary  | 11        |
|  |           |
| <b>Chapter 2 Current debates which are informing contemporary socially-engaged art practice.</b>                                     | <b>13</b> |
| 2:1 Overview   | 13        |
| 2:2 Debate around aesthetic values, evaluation and audience  | 13        |
| 2:3 Relationship of the work and the artist to the community   | 17        |
| 2:4 Current escalating cross disciplinary interest   | 18        |
| 2:5 Sustainability and empowerment   | 19        |
| 2:6 Current debate surrounding audience and place  | 20        |
| 2:7 Summary  | 22        |
|  |           |
| <b>Chapter 3. Experiential methods and strategies for employing a dialectic methodology for research by practice.</b>                | <b>23</b> |
| 3:1 Overview   | 23        |
| 3:2 Personal history   | 24        |
| 3:3 Information about Preston  | 25        |
| 3:4 Mapping techniques   | 26        |
| 3:5 Methodologies for locating potential groups  | 28        |
| 3:6 Methodologies for participation  | 29        |
| 3:7 Layout for exhibition at   | 32        |
| 3:8 Strategies for employing a dialectic methodology   | 33        |
| 3:9 The role of documenting the participatory process  | 33        |
| 3:10 An analysis of audience engagement  | 35        |
| 3:11 Process of distribution – disseminating information and the role of the participants and artist                                 | 37        |
| 3:12 Summary   | 37        |
| <b>Figure 1 - Artist begins interaction with place.</b>  | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Figure 2 – Artist's interaction with people living and working in Preston.</b>  | <b>40</b> |
| <b>Figure 3 – Interaction with communities in areas of Preston undergoing regeneration.</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| <b>Figure 4 – Using exhibition of work as a strategy to promote interaction and a methodology for engaging audiences.</b>            | <b>42</b> |
| <b>Figure 5 – Interaction with professionals working in regeneration</b>   | <b>43</b> |
| <b>Figure 6 – CD-ROM used as a mechanism for reaching interested professionals and communities involved in art and regeneration.</b> | <b>44</b> |
|  |           |
| <b>Chapter 4. Socially-engaged artistic practice – a strategy within the development of urban regeneration programmes.</b>           | <b>45</b> |
| 4:1 Regeneration and urban communities focussing on Preston  | 45        |
| 4:2 Explanation of my process of research  | 47        |
| 4:3 Key components of process – discovery, enablement and  | 49        |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| communication.   |           |
| 4:4 Key guidelines   | 51        |
| 4:5 Sustainability of the initiated work and community ownership   | 54        |
| 4:6 The Design and Development of the CD-ROM   | 55        |
| 4:7 The role of the artist, cross disciplinary interest and the distribution of information  | 56        |
| 4:8 Conclusion   | 59        |
|  |           |
| <b>Chapter 5: Conclusions: contributions to knowledge and forms of dissemination</b>   | <b>60</b> |
| 5:1 Introduction   | 60        |
| 5:2 Contextual summary – the identification of my professional practice and the positioning of myself within this contemporary context   | 60        |
| 5:3 Contributions to knowledge and forms of dissemination  | 61        |
| 5:4 An evaluation of art processes employing dialectic methodologies of interaction and mapping in Preston   | 63        |
| 5:5 Evidence of my developed methodology implicit within the research I initiated.   | 67        |
| 5:6 Evidence for the proposal of a paradigm shift in the aesthetic modes used to evaluate this expanded notion of art practice   | 68        |
| 5:7 Evidence of the developed form for the dissemination of information about the project which I initiated; a form which is more authentically connected to a methodology of participation. | 70        |
| 5:8 Conclusion   | 71        |
| <b>Interactive CD-ROM 'The role of an artist and the regeneration of urban communities'</b>  | <b>72</b> |
| Please follow the instructions printed on the disk.  |           |
| <b>Appendices</b>  | <b>73</b> |
| I. Contextualising research – copy of report document printed and distributed to initial contacts in Preston August 2003.  |           |
| II. Transcripts of recorded interviews with participant and professionals working in regeneration.   |           |
| III. DVD documentation of launch event for CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall February 2006   |           |
| <b>Bibliography</b>  | <b>74</b> |

## **Acknowledgements**

This project was made possible by a studentship from the University of Central Lancashire.

I would like to thank all the people who have offered their help and support over the length of this research project. This has included a long list of people some but not all of whom are named in the research.

I would particularly like to offer my thanks to my supervisory team Charles Quick, Val Murray and Dave Russell.

Dedicated to the memory of Keith and Shirley Brown

## Forward

The methodology for this research focuses upon people's everyday experience of place, which gives rise to a network of contacts unique to each individual. It is upon this network that I have based my research of particular areas of the new city of Preston, a place which through its inclusion in Single Regeneration Budgets is identified as an area undergoing renewal of the built environment. As a professional artist I have negotiated and mapped areas of Preston through communication with professionals and organisations and through direct contact with the 'place' itself for the specific purposes of this research for three and a half years.

As a resident of Pennine Lancashire<sup>1</sup>, an area also undergoing regeneration, my previous professional art experience has included working with communities connected with the renewal of the built environment as well as projects further afield. The presence of urban regeneration schemes has enabled funding of art projects whose agenda has been set by the initiating organisations. Through this work I have come to recognise that:

- My professional practice enabled institutions to make contact with potential audiences - often hard to reach groups
- Reaching out to these target groups was a way institutions could access funding for initiating projects
- The agendas for the work produced in the projects was therefore imposed by the initiating institution and the funding bodies resulting in:
  - little or no sense of ownership for the participating group
  - a diluted experience, as there was no true collaboration

As a professional artist my particular approach to working with groups of people has striven for inclusivity through discussion. This has often been difficult to achieve when the requirement of a workshop has been to give the largest number of people just a taste of what an art project can be.

- Through my involvement in such experiences and others which were self-initiated I was aware that there were possibilities for collaboration and participation which were very different.
- As an artist I had unique insight into the worlds of both the participating community group and the initiating institution.
- Interaction and communication with participants and professionals developed my awareness of the situation.

The regeneration or renewal of an urban area seemed to focus on the built environment and there was no direct link to the connected community, their 'lived' experience and their knowledge of 'place'. The art produced was being used to decorate the rejuvenated site, the art being an object, an end product of a process which had not involved the community. My professional approach was to focus more on the process.

---

<sup>1</sup> Recently 'rebranded' as Pennine Lancashire by government funded housing market renewal organisation ELEVATE

- Through previously initiated projects I was aware of the cross-pollination of ideas and skills which could be incorporated into a collaborative process, and through interaction (especially the act of listening on my part) I became aware of embedded information particular to the participants' specialised local knowledge.

I began to question the role of an artist in the process of working with community groups. I had come to realise that the communities held particular knowledge of place as over the years they had built their own maps of their area: how could this particular knowledge be revealed? This approach could be used and developed to offer people opportunities to share their experience of a place and space. Would this revelation of information be of interest to other professionals working in regeneration? In Preston my professional involvement included full engagement with professionals working in regeneration as well as the arts; I initiated meetings and used the medium of an exhibition to narrate an outward reflection of the work I had initiated with two groups in Preston. I then used the exhibition and the documentation from the exhibition as a tool for discussion through meetings with other professionals the work I had initiated, gathering information about my work from the perspective of that particular professional working in regeneration in Preston.

- Through research I became aware of different perspectives in regeneration
  - Regeneration often only referred to economic regeneration - referencing the built environment and encouraging business enterprises.
  - People who inhabited the place undergoing regeneration were largely ignored.
- I became more aware of my particular approach of working with people and I investigated this as a methodology for gaining trust and building relationships within the group.
- Through reflection and analysis of my own professional practice I became more aware of my particular style which, through an unconscious approach to encouraging dialogue and inclusivity, gave rise over time to commitment and trust.

I was aware of my responsibility as a professional in developing this trust but I was also aware of how the development of this relationship was intrinsically attached to the success of the collaboration and through my research, I wanted to explore and develop a methodology for a socially-engaged practice.

This has resulted in a project which has incorporated a multi-directional approach to the investigation. I have endeavoured to include various bands of participation into the project. These have included:

- Local communities, established groups and community workers.
- Professionals working in regeneration in Preston.
- National organisations and groups involved in art, regeneration and work with communities.

I have used an inclusive methodology and a format which endeavours to convey the reality of the project whilst investigating the use of an interactive CD-ROM to disseminate information about the research. This multi-media framework allowed

me to use creatively documentation, voice recording and video footage. These components could then be choreographed into a multi-media experience which included a sense of time and place. This was achieved using a timeline linked to a map of place (Preston) with an identified activity. These activities were symbolised using colour coded buttons which referenced their particular place in Preston. The coloured buttons are gateways to layers of information associated to that particular time and place. The CD's have been mailed to over 200 organisations and institutions involved in art and regeneration.

## Chapter 1 Historical context

### 1:1 Introduction

This chapter is not a comprehensive analysis of the history of contemporary art activity. I will use this collection of information as a benchmark within which I will position my own practice. I include examples to illustrate the development and depth of this work, where socially-engaged practitioners use very different methodologies of intervention.

The historical context of socially-engaged art practice began with artists moving out of the studio and making work which sought direct engagement with an audience, often through participation. The 1960's heralded a move towards performance art, art as an event or 'happening'. Socially-engaged art signified a different approach to art practice, one where the processes of production came to hold as much importance as the end product. By citing examples in this genre of art in chronological order, I will demonstrate the development of this particular area of practice over time, demonstrating the need for a new aesthetic model for evaluation. I will place in context the listed examples, referencing the political climate of the time and various social and cultural ideologies that informed these practitioners.

Socially responsive art i.e. art that connects with environmental issues and broad social issues of inequality, emerged in the 1990's in reaction to the monumental public art found in parks, city centre plazas and squares. These objects were seen as being disconnected from the locale. Current contemporary contextual art practice within this field of democratic collaborative art processes maybe extended to the regeneration process in order to contribute to it something different or unique.

Current ideas propose thinking of space as a dynamic changing entity linked to connected relationships, where interactions between the physical urban fabric and the patterns of people's everyday lives can reveal particular information. As we participate in urban life our interactions build complex networks with a porous interface where multiple identities are constantly in flux. The geographer Doreen Massey explains this in terms of space and time,

*"If however the spatial is thought of in the context of space-time and as formed out of social interrelations at all scales, then one view of place is as a particular articulation of those relations, a particular moment in those networks of social relations and understandings."*<sup>2</sup>

Art work produced from an inclusive collaborative approach can be termed sculpture if we adhere to the notion of space as a place of social interaction. For as Jane Rendell (architect and writer) proposes,

*"The notion of the social sculpture<sup>3</sup> here is useful in reconsidering aesthetics to include form of process as well as the product of art."*<sup>4</sup>

Research suggests this complex dynamic environment is difficult to engage with using conventional methods of consultation. An artist who uses creative flexible

---

<sup>2</sup> Space, Place and Gender, Massey, Doreen, Polity Press 1994,

<sup>3</sup> Term first used by Joseph Beuys, broadly defined as bringing some aspect of the environment into a state of form or structure. Social sculpture should be accomplished cooperatively across disciplines.

<sup>4</sup> Advances in Art & Urban Futures Volume2, Recoveries and Reclamations, Editors Rugg, Judith, Hinchcliffe, Daniel, Intellect Books 2002

strategies to interact within this environment may be able to reveal different or unique information. For example in their analysis of the Window Sills art project in Exeter, Sarah Bennett and Gill Melling (artists) write,<sup>5</sup>

*“This project uses processes of participation which are increasingly common, yet interprets them for specific localities and social situations.”*

In Exeter the analysis of the work remained with the artists and other professionals were not considered, whereas I propose to use this expertise to evaluate the role of an artist working in the regeneration of an urban community by building an interdisciplinary analysis.

## **1:2 The emergence of a socially-engaged practice from the 1960's**

Joseph Beuys is recognised as a seminal force in contemporary art practice and it is with his influence in the area of socially-engaged art practice that I would like to begin. During the 1960's Joseph Beuys began looking at art as a way of shaping democratic society, art which he termed 'social sculpture'. In a piece called 'The honey pump at the workplace' Beuys used the convention of an international exhibition (Documenta 6 1977) to involve thousands of people in a conference lasting 100 days. This work has not been catalogued by historians and museums to the same extent as his other object-based work, thus illustrating the lack of dissemination of information about socially-engaged practice by established institutions. Socially-engaged practice suffers from an absence of validation by art institutions that seem to apply traditional methods of evaluation to this work.

*“In a recent discussion that posed the question of the relationship of Beuys's objects and actions to his participatory, pedagogic and social process work, it was therefore particularly disappointing to discover that a representative of an international museum of contemporary art, in charge of organising events linked to a major Beuys exhibition, did not know of Beuys's 'honey pump' or his other dialogue process works.”<sup>6</sup>*

Although the ephemeral nature of this work and its participatory context meant that it could perhaps only be fully appreciated through direct experience, this should not be an excuse to refrain from disseminating information about this work by art institutions. With the development of technology to archive more effectively time based experience, it is pertinent that there is an overt reassessment of the influence of Beuys on socially-engaged art practice. Process-based art which engages with a community now has a medium which can describe more succinctly in visual formats the form and content of the work. This reassessment of the influence of Beuys is being undertaken by Shelley Sacks of the Social Sculpture Research Unit at Oxford Brookes University.

I should like to point out that the social sculpture which Beuys initiated was very much about his own ideas; the authority of the work was very definitely held by Beuys and he used it as a pedagogic medium for disseminating his concepts. Beuys had an intense interest in the interconnectedness of humans, nature and the cosmos. In his object driven work he often placed items next to each other in order to observe their association. As Volker Harlan states in conversation with Beuys, *“his way (Beuys) of relating to substance distinguishes*

---

<sup>5</sup> Advances in Art & Urban Futures Volume 1, Locality, Regeneration & Divers[c]ivities, Editors Bennett Sarah , Butler John, Intellect Books 2000

<sup>6</sup> What is Art? Conversation with Joseph Beuys edited with essays by Volker Harlan, translated by Barton, Clairview 2004 p x

*him from all other artists*<sup>7</sup> Beuys used natural materials and initiated opportunities for open discussion in his social sculpture. He was present in this open discussion and used the occasion to put forward his ideas, the form of his installation being a repository to be used to invoke discussion with the participants. The 'Honey pump in the work place' is a particular example of socially-engaged practice which uses an agenda set by Beuys to drive the work. The artist was the author; collaboration with an audience involved participation in a discussion which was partially dictated by the art work on display. He was very much in control of the situation and directed the way in which the ideas were presented.

In contrast with this artist-centred approach, which places at the forefront the artist's ideas in an 'art world arena', I introduce the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, an artist whose work was performance-based and involved intervention in the everyday world of work. Unlike Beuys, who used the convention of a high profile international exhibition to put forward his ideas, Ukeles placed herself in the work place of ordinary people, not imposing her ideas, but operating in a subservient role, thanking the workers for the removal of the city's rubbish. At this time there seemed to be a proliferation of contemporary art work in the United States. This challenged long held traditional concepts of white, western male artists making art objects for a gallery system which existed primarily to show the work of white, western male artists. The rise of the civil rights movement and feminist issues contributed to the challenge provided by this phenomenon. Beginning in the 1970's, Ukeles worked with the New York Sanitation Department where she explored through direct interaction with the work force what it is to be a sanitation worker. The first project she initiated was shaking the hands of every garbage worker in New York and followed this with more performance based work, picking up the insults alongside the workforce from inhabitants of the city. She worked towards changing the way the city perceived garbage collectors and looked towards raising the awareness of every inhabitant of the city of their contribution to the garbage collected by the sanitation workers and the eventual place where the refuse was dumped. Ukeles had a long-standing commitment of working for over 10 years with this department in New York. Her work contrasts with that of Beuys in that Ukeles did not merely invite participation but actively sought participation through interaction in the work place. Beuys built an installation and invited participation in a discussion at an exhibition, thus he would knowingly be in dialogue with an art audience. In Ukeles chosen workplace she was an outsider and because of this perhaps she needed to gain trust and befriend the workforce by working alongside them and valuing their work. Ukeles used this work to raise awareness of the work done by the garbage workers. Environmental issues were part of her remit, but Ukeles raised the profile of real life experience in order to change discrimination and enhance social consciousness about how we dispose of our rubbish. Ukeles still, however, played the activist role in this scenario; she decided how to use the project to raise the awareness of citizens of their contribution to waste and of the service this workforce provided. The workforce were in that sense passive participants; they were not invited into the decision making process of how the artwork was to be utilised. This illustrates that, as with Beuys, the authority of the work remained with Ukeles; the idea of how the project was developed and disseminated belonged to her. Through this work Ukeles demonstrates that the everyday life that most of us experience is comprised of routine activities, not dramatic events. The American artists Helen

---

<sup>7</sup> *ibid* p 75

and Newton Harrison have been working for the last thirty years to address the co-evolution of biodiversity and cultural diversity. This has involved forming bodies of knowledge from various environmental perspectives, including environmental experts and local people, through the medium of conversation. A project in Yugoslavia involved botanists, ornithologists and a landscape architect in conversation with the artists about the environmental impacts of pollution on the River Sava. This work demonstrated how story telling contributed to a change in how the Croatian Water Department were able to see the problems of pollution in a different way.

To illustrate the progress of socially-engaged art practice in the UK, I include UK based artists John Latham and Barbara Stevani who guided the Artist Placement Group (APG) through radical developments where they explored the concept of art in the social context. In 1976 artist Stuart Brisley of APG had a salaried position with Peterlee Development Corporation in County Durham to realise a project which involved the participation of people in the development and awareness of their own community. Brisley worked on the project for eighteen months when it was handed over to Easington District Council and a local person John Porter was appointed to run what was left of the project. The APG were the forerunners to the artist in residence schemes and had a high profile abroad particularly in Germany.<sup>8</sup> Another UK based team are Leeson and Dunn who collaborated in the East End of London; this partnership which is no longer active was one of only a few in the UK whose practice could be described as socially-engaged.

Leeson had worked as an artist in Germany whilst a student on a DAAD<sup>9</sup> postgraduate scholarship at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. Her presence there was influenced by her knowledge of the work of German artists such as Joseph Beuys, Hans Haacke and Klaus Staek. However, her desire to connect with these artists on their home territory was not realised and she found no artists involved in socially-engaged practice. Her first piece of work therefore involved linking by telephone and collaborating with a student from the Slade School of Art in London, Peter Dunn. This work involved exploring art as a means of communication questioning the context of art and the role of the artist. Leeson worked with a group of students at the HdK in Berlin and used live telephone conversations and personally delivered written instructions as a means of sharing and debating ideas. This was the beginning of the Leeson and Dunn partnership which began in the late 1970's and continued until 2000. I mention this association with Germany and Leeson's intention of linking with German artists such as Beuys who had influenced her work development as an interesting historical relationship. As an art student in London, Leeson had been inspired by the work of Beuys and his German contemporaries and yet, according to Leeson, the German academy appeared to be untouched by their influence.<sup>10</sup> This area of practice was not validated by German institutions; this did not have a negative effect on Leeson who challenged the institution with the work she initiated. A particular piece involved the users of the institution. Leeson discovered that behind many locked doors were departments which were unaware of the existence of their colleagues. She invited each person she met after knocking on these locked doors to represent themselves using photography and text. These objects were exhibited at the University, thus alerting their

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.tate.org.uk/learning/artistsinfocus/apg/overview>

<sup>9</sup> The Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst

<sup>10</sup> This information was given by Leeson in her presentation at the opening of her retrospective at the NBK Gallery in Berlin in 2005

contemporaries to the activities of the inhabitants of the building. Leeson continues to raise awareness of socially-engaged practice in Germany; this was revealed to me personally when I met Loraine Leeson at her retrospective in Berlin in November 2005. She explained that as part of this thirty year retrospective she had initiated a discussion with young German artists and curators about socially-engaged practice in Germany today.

During the 1980's Leeson and Dunn lived and worked in the area known as the Docklands; they therefore knew the area well and had their own network of interested contacts. The National Lottery had not yet arrived, and funding for the arts in the 1980's dwindled. The Greater London Council with its leader Ken Livingstone helped to fund the Docklands project, but this council proved to be too popular for the Thatcher government of the day and therefore, following their failure to block GLC policies, the government passed the 1985 Local Government Act which abolished the GLC and six other metropolitan city councils. This resulted in the funding for community based initiatives in London gradually coming to an end. In the USA, in contrast, there was the National Endowment for Arts programme in place, and socially-engaged practice appeared to be flourishing with projects which I will describe below.

Leeson and Dunn initiated strategies to raise public awareness of the feelings of local inhabitants towards the regeneration of the Docklands in East London. This area was designated by the Thatcher government as an area of wasteland, when in fact it was inhabited by more than 50,000 people. They worked alongside the community to provide a means of visually expressing the thoughts and ideas of the wider working-class community with posters for billboards, performances for meetings and festivals. As the area was by the River Thames an armada of ships was organised as part of a festival to sail down the river to the city and present the Greater London Council with a petition to protest against the development of exclusive luxury flats and the 'gentrification' of the area. Although this project was participatory in nature and content, the artists were the instigators; they were the initiators, applying for funding, arranging workshops and using a great deal of energy to realise this event. According to Leeson this process of constantly applying for funding to keep the project going became unsustainable.

The 1980's were a boom time for private investment and are remembered in Britain today for 'Thatcherite' economics and upwardly mobile young people who became wealthy very quickly. As mentioned previously, funding for art projects which operated outside the mainstream art institutions dwindled. Some artists, dissatisfied with the materialism typical of the 1980's and the power associated with corporate companies who commissioned artists to make art for corporate buildings and art associated with architectural developments, began questioning the meaning of placing art objects in public spaces. In reaction to this an alternative form of public art began to appear; art which was more context specific in that the art work had a connection to the site. "*Site-specific art, as such art in public places began to be called, was commissioned and designed for a particular space, taking into account the physical and visual qualities of the site.*"<sup>11</sup> Artists began using the city as a means of revealing alternative histories, the history of the everyday or the mundane which is embedded in the buildings and the fabric of the surrounding environment through which the audience was guided. In Germany this led to projects like 'Skulptur Projekte 1987' in Münster which accommodated the role of the institutional museum in delving into the history of place. Artists were using these opportunities to challenge and comment

---

<sup>11</sup> Mapping the Terrain New Genre Public Art, Lacy, Suzanne, Bay Press 1995 p23

upon the social history of a site, placing work outside the museum. This contrasted with the received approach of an institution like a museum, where history was presented from a particular viewpoint, one which was more often than not western, white and male. Audiences were led through a city from working-class neighbourhoods to sites of historic interest. The audience participated through interaction with the city where they were directed by the artists to view their work. However, the audience did not participate in the making of the work. The sited work was temporary, consciously rejecting the permanent art monument of the past. Projects such as this raised questions about the intended audience for the work. Was it local people, the art world, tourists? How were people to engage with this work? This is epitomised in a quote by Mark Van De Walle.

*“One of the most interesting aspects of the Münster Sculpture Show in 1987 was simply walking around, trying to find the work. Since the site-specific pieces were frequently designed to blend in with their surroundings, subtly commenting on the various public spaces of this resurrected university town (like many German cities, Münster had to be largely reconstructed after World War II), one was forced into an intimate acquaintance with the city while hunting for the art.”<sup>12</sup>*

Art that raised pertinent political questions made relevant by the site and place where these issues presented themselves became areas of intervention for artists and curators. By early 1990 Mary Jane Jacob was curating 'Culture in Action' in Chicago. The project in Chicago came as direct reaction to the fact that in 1985 there had been a three day public hearing concerning the work of Richard Serra. His 120ft long 12ft tall steel structure, 'Tilted Arc', sited in Federal Plaza New York, had been removed by public request in 1989. This piece of work sited in a public place raised many questions about art in the public realm. This piece of work impinged on the public space of the plaza used by office workers at lunchtime; it meant they could no longer access the plaza in the same way and had to walk around this structure to get to their desired destination. This raised fierce opposition to the structure and Serra insisted that the work was made for this particular site and could not be moved to an alternative place. The concept was his, he was the author of the work and fierce arguments raged about the commissioning and positioning of art work in public places. The strength of the opposing public who used the space on an everyday basis resulted in its removal. In reaction to this the curator Mary Jane Jacob initiated a project in Chicago which was to involve artists collaborating directly with community groups associated with the site of their intervention.

'Culture Chicago' consisted of eight projects where the focus was on artists collaborating with connected communities. One such artist was Suzanne Lacy who initiated a project with women living in Chicago. While researching the area Lacy came across Hull House, Chicago's first and most important settlement house for immigrants founded by Jane Addams in 1889. Addams was a pioneer in reform, a suffragist, a writer, the founder of the Women's International League and the first American woman to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. Lacy used this information about Addams as a starting point from which to make a connection with present day women in Chicago and acknowledged their contribution to their community by placing inscribed commemorative rocks temporarily on the streets of Chicago. Herself resident in California and hence able to make few onsite visits, Lacy required a means of communicating with local groups to enable the project to progress. A network of

---

<sup>12</sup> ArtForum, May 1997, Van De Walle, Mark

contacts soon developed, some of whom became part of a steering committee for the project. Local women were co-opted into the project through this steering committee; I use the word co-opted as a means of describing the nature of the collaboration between the artist and the participants. The collaboration consisted of a co-operative relationship with the artist. The artist directed the events in progress and the participants co-operated; they were used for a specific purpose by the artist and the authority of the work therefore remained with the artist. Chicago is a multicultural city and Lacy required the selection of women to represent this. The steering committee devised an open public solicitation to choose which women were represented. The steering committee were asked to perform a specific task; they were indeed included in the project in this respect but the ownership remained with Lacy. This work and seven other projects were all part of the event called 'Culture in Action'. Culture in Action strove to include communities relevant to the project and Kwon in her book 'One Place After Another, Site-specific Art and Locational Identity' has critiqued the way Jacob curated this event, raising issues around exploitation of community by the artist and curator. This will be returned to below.

In September 1994 the School of Visual Arts, University College, Salford held a symposium entitled 'Littoral', New Zones for Critical Art Practice'. In an effort to gather together world authorities in this field of art practice so as to gain an understanding of the different contexts for this work from artists working in different countries. This was an important and timely conference which profiled many of the projects I have listed above by offering initiating artists, whose practice is socially-engaged, an opportunity to present their work and opportunities for the conference delegates to ask questions concerning the artists' practice. This event was an important mechanism for sharing information regarding this type of practice from artists working in very different places. Artists came to Manchester from Europe, Latin America, South America, North America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. For example, an influential group from Austria called 'Wochenklausur' explained how as a group they wanted to deal directly with problems without being missionaries. They instigated work with homeless people and described how as artists they had to become informed about homelessness. They did this by researching comprehensively for information, including meeting people working with the homeless, the homeless themselves and information specific to the place where the project was to be initiated. This led to the discovery that homeless people had difficulty finding medical assistance: being unregistered they didn't have the relevant paperwork which would enable them to find a doctor. The group focussed on this issue in their work and, through their intervention and fund raising, raised awareness of the problem. This resulted eventually in the homeless being provided with their own ambulance and doctor. High profile activity by the artists was used as a lever to persuade the city government to fund the position for a physician. This practice is activist in content and politically motivated, the artists' aim being to work directly with problems which seem to be social in nature. Art practice of this type often raises the question, 'But where is the art?' I locate the artists' creativity in their communication with homeless people and the people who work with them, where through interaction and discussion a relationship of trust is formed. The artists were then able to build on this trust and use their creative skills to raise awareness of the issues they had discovered.

Suzanne Lacy who was present at the above conference, published the seminal work in 1995 'Mapping the Terrain', an evaluation and critique of this genre of art practice. Lacy is an artist and theorist, who, as cited above, was an artist who worked for 'Culture Chicago'. This work draws together discussions

about new forms of engagement with audience and highlights the connectivity with place. She introduces New Genre Public Art with short accounts of work by over 90 artists in this field of practice where artists are exploring issues drawn from performance art, community art, installation, social history and urban planning. In an effort to release socially-engaged art practice from the catch-all designation of Public Art, which has come to signify commissioned permanent objects, the term 'New Genre Public Art' has been formulated. New Genre Public Art is so named as the media and methodologies for engagement of audience are diverse in content and form.

### **1:3 Summary**

In an effort to reconnect their work to a broader audience socially-engaged art has pursued an area of practice which makes associations with everyday life experiences and social histories. These artists have moved away from studio based practice in order to intervene and engage with everyday life. The interventions they facilitate are centred on processes of dialogue and interaction. The art work becomes this process, the creative interaction of the artist in a place or location. This approach which involves an artist intervening in a location requires, I believe, a different set of evaluation mechanisms. I will return to explanations of why this is the case in the final chapter of this thesis.

The projects I have described all display elements of participation and use various methods to achieve this. Socially-engaged processes have been used by artists as a method for disseminating their own concepts and theories. This is evident in the work of Joseph Beuys. His 'The Honey Pump in the work place' was used as a means of stimulating discussion with an audience. Although the work was accessible to anyone in the audience at Documenta 1977 (an art audience), the concept inherent in the piece of work belonged to Beuys. The authorship or the authority of the work remained with the artist. The process I initiated was centred on a dialogic methodology, using negotiation and interaction with particular locations in Preston as a means of engaging and including an associated community. This collaborative procedure can offer opportunities for shared authorship of the work. This methodological approach to making art was intended to reveal information about the lives of people living in an area of Preston undergoing regeneration. The collaboration would enable the participants to become part of the decision making process and contribute to the developing agenda as they explored creative responses to their own circumstances and environment.

This area of research has of course been influenced by the historical practices described above. In most of the examples I have given, the authority and ownership of the work remained with the artist. Leeson and Dunn are an exception as their work was in direct response to proposed changes in the participants' environment (Docklands, East London). The Docklands project was initiated as a response to a government proposal to develop an area of land which they deemed a wasteland; a proposal which excluded any consultation with the participants. I proposed to explore the possibility of the participants discovering for themselves particular information concerning their locale, which they would research and use creatively. As with Ukeles and Leeson, I actively sought participation by interaction with a location in contrast to Beuys and Lacy who invited participation and to Wochenklausur who canvassed for participation.

Art practices which utilise dialogic methodologies now have an extended range of digital technologies at their disposal, tools which are capable of revealing the complex layers of communication inherent in socially-engaged

practices. Art critics have traditionally used visual aesthetics (visually pleasing principles) to analyse and critique this area of practice. The development of digital technology now enables an audience and critics to experience, albeit second-hand, dialogical interaction, the development of relationships and engagement in the process as they can be documented more easily using digital audio, digital video and digital photography. In digital formats these elements can be used as components for building an interactive CD-ROM. The software Macromedia Director enables the artist to choreograph the documented interactive process, making manifest the processes of negotiation, relationship development and engagement, and thus revealing the dialogic and relational aesthetics present in the piece of work.

The next chapter will discuss current debates which have informed my professional practice. However, the historical foundations of this genre of socially-engaged practice have been set by the examples I have cited here.

## Chapter 2 Current debates which are informing contemporary socially-engaged art practice.

### 2:1 Overview

The nature of this genre has been complex, often activist and interwoven with ideas about the big questions such as the meaning of life, environmental concerns and political issues around ethnic and feminist identity. It is therefore difficult to grasp the connecting concepts. However, communication, relationship and inclusivity are elements which can often be identified within the art processes employed. This genre of art practice has remained outside mainstream tradition, its position in the art world often frequently contested. It is often regarded as work which has little aesthetic significance because of the participatory nature of communities who are seen to be uneducated in art and hence unskilled. There is concern from some critics about the structure of the art projects and the roles of the artist and participants individually and collectively.

In this chapter I will discuss the current debate about the target audiences for participatory art projects. Projects which rely on the artist's skills in communication in order to negotiate and include the thoughts and ideas of connected communities of people in the authorship of the project require a new evaluation mechanism.

### 2:2 Debate around aesthetic values, evaluation and audience

Socially-engaged art practice revolves around a notion of a relational aesthetic, theorised by Nicolas Bourriaud in his book of the same title (1998). Bourriaud suggests the need for a broader view of aesthetics when deconstructing contemporary art forms: the language of art history where the authority of the artist as sole producer of form is assumed, is no longer a relevant perspective for participatory art, in which a negotiation of form takes place. Bourriaud suggests, "*according to Serge Daney, all form is a face looking at us,*"<sup>13</sup> Bourriaud uses this statement as a point of reference and goes on to say, "*When the aesthetic discussion evolves, the status of the form evolves along with it, and through it.*"<sup>14</sup> In other words, form becomes a changing entity, something which develops within the process of including the *other (italics mine)*<sup>15</sup> in the activity. He goes on to cite the Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz in whose novels the characters develop their own form through their behaviour, each individual becoming more real by the way the other relates to them. This emphasis on relation to the other should also include self-referential analysis, because, by participating in a social environment, there must be a form of self which develops through interaction with others and thus enables self-referential analysis and reflection. Negotiated form has surely got to be a combination of the above, where participants (including the artist) share roles of speaking, listening and reflecting. Through these actions a form is produced which utilises relational aesthetics. The practitioner working in this environment therefore requires a different set of skills from the artist working in a studio. A practitioner of socially-engaged art should be a skilled communicator with the ability to encourage conversation and open discussion. Skills in negotiation and listening to others are also essential tools. The ability to listen is often underestimated as a passive activity whereas in fact a good listener is an active listener who is able to gain an understanding of what is being expressed and to use this information in

---

<sup>13</sup> Relational Aesthetics, Bourriaud, Nicolas, Les Presses du reel, 1998, p21

<sup>14</sup> *ibid* p 21

<sup>15</sup> where other suggests participant separate from initiating artist

formulating a response. Some artists proficient in socially-engaged practice also recommend developing skills in conflict management, and a flexible approach to the development of the work in progress is also an advantage. A practitioner who uses my methodology for engagement has to relinquish some of their authority to the participating group in order to establish combined ownership of the project.

Grant Kester (assistant professor of contemporary art practice and theory at Arizona State University) in his paper '*Dialogical Aesthetics: a critical framework for Littoral Art*'<sup>16</sup> (Kester uses the word 'Littoral' to describe engaged practice), analyses the way this practice has developed. He suggests the formulation of two strands:

1. The first he identifies as 'unidirectional activity' whose aim is to produce better citizens or consumers, and he suggests that this collaboration is largely symbolic.
2. The second Kester identifies as '*anaquality of engagement*'<sup>17</sup> or raising/refining the quality of engagement

The first strand is illustrated by the authority of the work remaining with the artist, curator or funding body. Here the participants are in danger of being exploited in that their social position could be used to further the ideologies of the artist, curator or funding body. They may not share these opinions and furthermore are not included in how the project is utilised. The work of Grennan and Sperandio in the curated project 'Culture Chicago' could be described as unidirectional activity. The work they produced was with a group of factory workers from the company Nestlé. The artists and curator had already established the content of the work and decided that the project would involve the manufacture of a chocolate bar.

*"the proposal specifically identified the outcome of the proposed collaboration – the production of a four ounce chocolate bar, including its design and packaging."*<sup>18</sup>

The artists collaborated with the head of the local union to locate a group of factory workers and this representative recognised an opportunity to promote the rights of employees within the industry. This company, failing to see any benefit for itself, declined to provide the means of production. The artists then turned to twelve workers chosen by the same union representative (Jethro Head) President of the Bakery, Confectionary and Tobacco Workers Union Local 552 and proposed a forty hour workshop. These workers together with the artists entered into discussions concerning,

*"a deconstructivist analysis of the meaning of advertising. Discussions ranged from work experiences at the plant, general attitudes toward candy, thoughts about enjoyment, ideas of luxury and purchasing, to how work could be different and how do products communicate to people who bought them."*<sup>19</sup>

This agenda belonged to the artists; the head of the union recognised an opportunity to promote the union and co-opted this agenda to serve his motives. The artists' idea was an ideal to which they aspired (the plight of the working classes) and also believed their project was conceived in the best interests of the workers. It was a philanthropic approach to an agenda which was not negotiated but produced beforehand, offered to the workers and then discussed. Socially-engaged art processes are difficult to explain, as evidenced above, and because

---

<sup>16</sup> Variant, Issue 9, Autumn/Winter 1999,

<sup>17</sup> ibid p1

<sup>18</sup> One Place After Another, site specific art and locational identity, Kwon, Miwon, The MIT Press 2002, p122

<sup>19</sup> Culture in Action, Jacob, Mary Jane, Brenson, Michael, Bay press 1995, p118

the artists used a billboard to advertise the project, the focus of attention became the chocolate bar and not the process of manufacture. This emphasises, in my opinion, how difficult it is to promote socially-engaged art projects as the process is often overshadowed by the product(s). Audiences for socially-engaged projects may focus on the product as the major part of the art project, to the detriment of the process which is the real centre of attention and the place from which the work needs to be read and understood. This can come about because the curator or artist from a project chooses to exhibit particular artefacts which do not convey a holistic view of the completed work.

Kester's second strand focuses on the negotiated discussion where there is an inclusive approach to collaboration. An example of this approach is provided by the artists' group Superchannel of whom I became aware at a conference I attended in November 2002 called 'England's Streaming'. They were working at that time with tenants of high rise blocks of flats in Liverpool.. This project initiated TV programmes for tenants; the programmes are made for tenants by tenants. In a collaborative process Superchannel discovered what kind of programmes they wanted to produce, and provided appropriate training, encouragement, resources and expertise to develop them. They have been streamed via the internet for the past three years. The tenants have been advocates for this project, helping to promote this work internationally. The inclusive nature of this engagement has evolved over time, enabling the tenants to work at their own pace, to adopt the project as their own, and for many of them it has provided, as one participant expressed '*a new reason to live*'. In contrast to the work, by Grennan and Sperandio which had a set time for its realisation, this project in Liverpool called, 'Tenantspin', has been sustainable because the collaborators in the project were eventually able to direct the work themselves.

Both strands identified by Kester are participatory and require a different evaluative framework from traditional art forms; Kester proposes one of dialogical aesthetics, Bourriaud on the other hand proposes one of relational aesthetics. The evaluation of this work requires a new paradigm in aesthetics where the level of negotiated discussion as well as the relationships of the collaborators and the role they play in the project can be analysed. The assessment of where the authority of the work is positioned is indicative of the level of engagement and ownership of the project by the participants. This would also illustrate the extent to which the artist has relinquished some of her/his authority as an 'artist'. The socially constructed position of an artist is one of privilege often substantiated by institutionalised sponsorship of their work.

In a paper entitled '*Art of Encounter engage 15 'A new modernity and the need for participation' – summer 2004*'<sup>20</sup> Declan Mc Gonagle (Professor and Director, Centre for Art, Technology and Design, School of Art and Design, Ulster, Belfast), raises questions about the marginality of the community arts sector in Ireland. He posits the idea of claimed distribution or lack of it in the area of community art as reason for its low profile in the arena of galleries and museums. Mc Gonagle goes on to say that it is through galleries and museums that art activity is validated and, because community art has focussed more on production than distribution, this area of practice has been left outside the main power bases in our society and remains undervalued. In this paper he suggests that if new forms of art practice are to emerge where emphasis is placed '*on participation not in manufacture but in negotiation of meaning and value in the art*

---

<sup>20</sup> A New Modernity and the need for participation, Mc Gonagle, Declan, Engage, issue 15 Summer 2004

processes<sup>21</sup> through active engagement, a new model for art activity will develop. This is not to exclude other forms of practice but is a way of reconnecting the aesthetic responsibilities of art with social responsibilities, and avoiding the tokenistic nature that has sometimes been a feature of art collaborations with communities. The tools with which an artist works alongside a community group are also changing, and skills in communication are placed at the forefront. I would suggest that Mc Gonagle's new forms of art are already with us, in the form of work where emphasis is placed on the participation in and negotiation of the meaning and value present in the initiated processes. This is illustrated in projects such as Tennantspin, where the participants are all too well aware of the value and meaning present in the negotiated processes. It is the misinterpretation by viewers outside this process (secondary audiences), who focus on the manufacture of end products rather than the negotiation and collaboration taking place which, I believe, causes this work to be undervalued.

### **2:3 Relationship of the work and the artist to the community**

In her book *'One place after another'* (2002) Miwon Kwon critiques instances of practice identified by Kester as 'unidirectional activity'. Kwon begins by dismantling the various uses of the word 'site specific' when referring to art projects. The term site-specific covers location as well as the physical attributes of the site, the texture of the surfaces, the lighting, the size and scale of site. Then she references the material framework of the site, the institutional networks of organisations that interrelate and sustain the world of art, and finally moving into more public arenas such as a magazine page, a marginalised community or a public debate. These sites have all been co-opted by artists who have used them to pursue an agenda that was their own, the authority of the work remaining with the artist or the commissioning institution.

New genre public art strives to include the collaborating group in the production and decision-making processes involved in the project, thereby ensuring that local expertise and knowledge is included in the art work. This open approach makes available new opportunities for new art audiences. Kwon highlights the problem of which comes first: the issue or the participant? In 'Culture in Action' the projects began with an issue. Mary Jane Jacob the curator of Culture Chicago found artists who engaged with communities to make work from a particular standpoint. For example, artists Grennan and Sperandio had a history of working with non-art audiences to make communal art often involving food. This work was described earlier in this chapter. However, I think it is important to reassert the key issues which arose from this particular project, referencing the influence of the curators. In 'Culture Chicago' Grennan and Sperandio used the product to highlight issues around production with a desire to celebrate the production worker and not the company. The authority of the work was therefore very definitely with the artists and the head of the union. The role of the connected community was prescribed from the beginning, giving rise to charges from critics of exploitation of the community group.

---

<sup>21</sup> [Engage in the visual arts](#), Declan Mc Gonagle, [www.engage.org](http://www.engage.org) 2004

Kwon places the context of the work in question and critiques the involvement of Jacob as the sole person who decided on the project through personal choice, as she states;

*“According to Sperandio, it was Jacob who made the final selection among the list of six possibilities, in effect determining the project for them as well as proactively defining the community partner and the type of social issue which would be addressed by the project (in this case, blue collar labour politics).”<sup>22</sup>*

Kwon continues to raise questions about ‘Culture in Action’ where Jacob claimed that community collaborations *‘emerged organically through the initiatives of the individual artists without specific guidelines or intervention.’*<sup>23</sup> In truth as can be substantiated by the words of Sperandio and according to Kwon *‘paperwork documenting early planning of the project when Jacob and Eva Olson (executive director of Sculpture Chicago) insisted on certain types of collaborations as an important means of establishing the exhibition’s identity.’*<sup>24</sup>

The curators chose which artists would work for ‘Culture Chicago’, thus illustrating that the role of the curator actively influences the way a project develops, so questioning the actual level of involvement and inclusiveness of the community group. Kwon goes on to say that Sperandio was reluctant to divulge any information about the other five proposals which Jacob rejected, stating that the likelihood would be that these ideas would be used in another city at another time. This stance again raised questions about the role of the community group in such work and illustrates again the ‘unidirectional activity’ of the artists.

There is a history of work commissioned by community arts organisations or self-initiated projects by artists which, compelled to secure funding often from non-art sources such as community development funds or single regeneration budgets, places a particular social issue on the proposal agenda and then co-opts a community group to explore this issue using creative techniques. This has led, I feel, to a paternalistic approach and exploitation of the community group who have been used in order to secure funding for a project. The resulting work has often been heralded as new critical public art. The nature of the research and the role of the artist has been to make visible the concerns and ideas of the artist or commissioning organisation. In contrast, however, the community group holds within it particular specialist knowledge of their location and is well aware of the issues embedded within their community. Using skills in negotiation and communication, the artist can become an enabler, making visible these concerns rather than fulfilling externally determined agendas.

Kwon also highlights the current discourse around the itinerant nomadic artist or the ‘parachuted artist’ (an artist dropped into a place to work, who visits the site when time and costs permit) with no ‘lived-in’ connection to place as opposed to an artist working and living onsite for a prolonged period of time. This is perhaps worth citing here. For example, parachuted artists could be international artists who are well-known and perhaps produce ‘art events’ and receive commissions to work in the global city. The artists visit the city, briefly because of costs, and may spend some time researching. However, because of limitations on time, they are unable to make the same commitments as a resident artist. The network of contacts and meetings which takes some months to prepare and develop is a strategy which is difficult for the ‘parachuted artists’ to

---

<sup>22</sup> One place After Another, Site specific art and locational identity, Kwon, Miwon, The MIT Press 2002, p123

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, p123

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*, p124

employ. Their strategy is not about building sustainable projects which involve developing working relationships, but rather about an attention-grabbing event which raises the profile of the city because of the international reputation of the artists involved. Although this activity can serve a useful purpose its nature is short term in that the artists are not involved in what might be developed thereafter. The parachuted artists have a transient relationship with the place and move on to the next city. The opportunity for drawing on the distinctiveness of place through socially-engaged interaction is diminished because this takes time to discover. Participatory and collaborative projects require strategies for building trust and are hence difficult for transient artists to initiate.

## 2:4 Current escalating cross disciplinary interest

In her book 'Space, Place and Gender' published in 1994 geographer Doreen Massey theorizes space, particularly from the perspective of social relations. Massey posits the idea of space-time; that space must always be thought of in the context of time. If space is made up of a network of interrelations, then this space is a dynamic entity always in flux as we interact with one another. This counteracts the view of space as a static dimension, empty, where nothing happens. In this network of relations there must be multiple layers of simultaneous lived experience that meet, divide and align themselves, and therefore space must be experienced and interpreted from various different perspectives. This concept informed the structure of my research in Preston. I initiated a project with a group of people living in areas in Preston, where we shared information particular to them. We made this information available to others, and I used the opportunity to research the evaluation of the work from the perspective of more powerful agencies (professionals working in Preston). This will be explained in more detail in chapter four, 'A methodological approach to socially-engaged artistic practice.'

Architect Jane Rendell has deconstructed the term public art suggesting that *"For art to be public raises a number of important questions about the definitions and inter-relations of the terms private and public."*<sup>25</sup> Art placed outside a gallery has been called public art, a term referring to an art object placed in a public space. Rendell goes on to say, *"Public art places 'private' art in 'public' space."*<sup>26</sup> Art objects produced by individual artists emanate from a private world. Expanding this notion still further, she goes on to say that placing work made in the personal interest of an artist and presenting this in a public space questions the role of the public audience, as there is an assumption that public space is inert and waiting for action to take place. She goes on to say that public space is social space and is constituted of everyday mundane practices such as walking and shopping. These are repetitious, contribute to the dynamic of a place and are part of popular culture. Rendell continues with ideas of threshold spaces which are articulated narratives of different spatial stories, stories told from different perspectives. These are threshold spaces as yet undefined and full of potential, areas which hold information as yet unmapped. They are the spaces where identities are constantly changing and historically difficult to engage with. Such threshold spaces are the context for my research, areas of everyday life experience with which I wanted to engage in order to

---

<sup>25</sup> Advances in Art and Urban Futures Volume 1, Locality, Regeneration and Divers[c]ities, Editors Bennett, Sarah, Butler, John, Intellect Books 2000, p19

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*, p19

discover ways of expressing aspects of the everyday lives of a particular community in a particular place.

## **2:5 Sustainability and empowerment**

As a result of my research I became aware through conversation with arts organisations such as PRESCAP (Preston Community Arts Programme) in Preston that the sustainability of participatory practice is an issue. The structure which is in place for the funding of these projects is often for short-term explorations around an issue often identified by the artist or commissioning body. As stated earlier, this can lead to the participants taking a negative view and hence to a missed opportunity for increasing the level of engagement. The Tennantspin project mentioned in section 2 of this chapter demonstrates that, by successfully empowering a community group, participatory arts projects can become sustainable. Tennantspin has helped to rebuild an aging community by reconnecting them with their neighbours and also by enabling them to make new friends through the dissemination and promotion of this work with visits to other communities in Denmark and USA to do the same. Without this empowerment one would consider whether the resulting work is something the community has a desire to achieve and own for themselves.

In May 2004 I attended a conference called "Artists and Regeneration Schemes". This conference highlighted some 'Home Zone' projects which had been initiated in the UK, The Netherlands and Germany and in particular one in Lowestoft, which was the venue for the conference. 'Home Zones', are projects of reclamation. Their aims are to reclaim the street for the residents through redesign: by moving vehicles to specific spaces, safe areas are made inviting new functions. The presented example from Lowestoft involved an artist commissioned by the local council to work with residents of two streets in Lowestoft. The apparent absence of any residents at the conference suggested to me that this project had failed to fully engage with the community. A lack of ownership and response meant there was no community dynamic to promote this work. Large amounts of funding money had been allocated to the production of a glossy booklet with CD. A London-based company had also been commissioned to undertake some evaluation, largely by gathering statistics. I wondered who the booklet and CD were designed for since it seemed obvious to me in the way the images were presented - overtly graphic with no explanations - that this printed material and CD were made for an art audience. This raised for me questions about who decides what the legacy of a project should be, and how or to whom this information is distributed. If one accepts the idea of Mc Gonagle about the lack of distribution of information for participatory art projects, one must also take into account what is distributed and the authorship of this distributed information. Although the commissioned artists had obviously tried hard to engage the residents by initiating workshops and using computer graphics to simulate how the street might look, the residents were not the commissioners of the work. The idea had been initiated by the local council. One is reminded of Kwon's statement about which comes first, the issue or the participant. The residents were used to realise an idea and an agenda set by the council. The council needed to find ways for the community to engage with the issue of reclaiming the streets, a difficult and time-consuming task with the risk that the community might declare themselves unwilling to reclaim their streets. To try to change the mindset of a community it is important to try to expand their experience, and therefore temporary projects which encouraged the community

to engage with new experiences could perhaps have been a way forward. I discovered that a flexible methodology using practical tasks helped the participants in the workshops I initiated to discover their own creative skills. Through this growth in confidence and new opportunities to engage with art, their opinions changed. In facilitating a socially-engaged art project the level of engagement exhibited by the collaborating participants is indicative of the success of the negotiated process.

## **2:6 Current debate surrounding audience and place**

In October 2004 I attended another conference 'Audience and Place', presented by Ixia (the new name for Public Art Forum). This was held at The Open University in Milton Keynes, and Doreen Massey was to be a guest speaker. Massey introduced Dr Gillian Rose who teaches geography at The Open University. Rose outlined from her perspective the development of public art in Milton Keynes and suggested that place is made by "*people doing things*' a fluid entity, open to process, a performative place which is constantly being remade." Other speakers included artists describing their personal practice and how they were using this practice to research ideas about audience. Roz Hall had used action research with young people to inform her thesis entitled 'Practising Inclusivity with New Media: young people, Digital Technology and Democratic Cultural Participation'. Hall worked with young people she met in 'The Bull Ring' in Birmingham city centre. Using new media, technologies familiar to young people with their culture of computer games, to encourage participation, Hall adopted a strategy she termed process-based negotiated evaluation. I understand this to mean that, through a dialogic process with the participants, Hall discussed the achievements of the group. This enabled the young people to develop an awareness of their own accomplishments during the project, thus building self-esteem and perhaps a desire to continue learning, this raises questions once more about the relationship of an audience to a place. The work would have engaged with a very different audience, I feel, if Hall had intervened in a school for instance. Hall uses the association of audience and place as a space for intervention. The work they accomplished was available for others to view just by the very fact that other visitors to the mall could observe the group gathering and 'doing things' together. In this way these visitors constituted the secondary audience in a public place. Socially-engaged practice employs the association embedded in the elements of the collaboration (the primary audience/participants and the place) and creates work which reveals information from the particular perspective of that association, thus making manifest a particular relational aesthetic. The meeting place had already been chosen by the young people before the project began, so that the artist met the participants on their chosen territory. It was therefore necessary for her first of all to gain the trust of the young people through open dialogue. This approach is similar to the work I initiated in Preston where I visited community places in which established groups already met together. I was a visitor to their established meeting, so in order to develop the project it was necessary for me to discover strategies for gaining the trust of the group with whom I was hoping to collaborate.

The conference 'Situations, the wrong place: rethinking context in contemporary art' was aptly held at Bristol Zoo in February 2005 in association with the University of the West of England and the Arnolfini Gallery in Bristol. Claire Doherty began by looking at the points of entry into a context and used the circumstances of an international exhibition, an event or a situation. These

locations seemed to me to be circumstances for relatively short-lived events associated with more traditional art spaces. This raised questions about the effectiveness of an artist's engagement with place. Many of the speakers were curators, and discussion seemed to focus on the traditional art contexts of museum and gallery, with the authority of the work remaining with those institutions. There was discussion about the extent to which multiculturalism has changed the notion of how we might read a place and how it relates to a museum where much of what is present represents western culture. One could question to what degree artists working with disenfranchised communities exploit these in order to point up their own political agenda, how the personal dignity of the participants is preserved and the implications that this has for the integrity of the artist. Artists involved in projects which intervene into complex dimensions with political implications and who then seek to make their work available to a broader public, must be aware of the ramifications of their work. For example, an artist working with indigenous people from a developing country is able to manipulate their participation in order to raise questions about political issues. The participants are likely to be unaware of how they are being exploited by the artist and though his/her intentions may well be to raise awareness of injustices against this indigenous group of people, the inference of exploitation cannot be ignored. The artist, I feel, has a responsibility towards the people s/he has invited to participate and who are the primary audience. A broad international audience consists of a wide-ranging set of diverse identities that hold vastly different amounts of power within society. I feel it is important not to sacrifice the dignity of the participants merely in order to engage a broader audience.

My attendance at the listed conferences has enabled me to position my own practice within this field, and provided me with a broader insight into the work of other artists, curators and academics.

## **2:7 Summary**

It is clear that a substantiated new paradigm of aesthetics would contribute to a more measured assessment when evaluating participatory process-based methods of engagement. Such evaluation could be used to give credibility to this area of practice. The identification of the authority of the project as a shared negotiated response would illustrate the level of engagement by the participating group and facilitate a means of assessing the association.

Mc Gonagle suggests that initiators of process-based work should be aware of the consequences of focussing on process and thereby overlooking the necessity of finding funding for the distribution of this work to a wider 'art' audience, because it is through distributing information to galleries and museums that this work is validated. One must also be aware of what one distributes, and how it should be included in the negotiated processes of the project. The project in Liverpool established by Superchannel is an excellent example of this, where the participants, through their involvement in the project and gathered expertise, were able to visit other venues to promote their work, and in this way were an active part of the distribution. Socially-engaged practice that utilises negotiation to this extent sacrifices some authority to the participating group. Debate around authorship and shared ownership of the work will continue, but in striving to produce socially-engaged and authentic artwork which reflects this engagement, the artist must, I believe share authorship and ownership with the collaborating group.

The evidence of interdisciplinary interest as manifested in the research of Massey and Rendell around how places are constituted suggests that socially-engaged art practice is also relevant to a wider audience. This discussion about the use of social space and its connected relationships can be extended into the realm of urban regeneration. This is where I would place myself as a practitioner.

## Chapter 3. Experiential methods and strategies for employing a dialectic methodology for research by practice.

### 3:1 Overview

I will present an explanation of the methods and strategies involved in initiating this research in Preston, beginning with information about my professional practice and how this has informed my research and some general information about Preston. My research method developed over the length of the project and included various strategies at particular times which attempted to engage particular audiences relevant to the work in progress. I use the term audience to include participants (a primary audience), inquisitive visitors to the exhibition and CD-ROM launch and professionals I interviewed (secondary audience) who were associated with the project at various points in time.

The elements have come into focus as my work has extended and included meetings with various professionals involved in socially-engaged art and regeneration. These have included face to face interviews with the internationally renowned socially engaged practitioner Lorraine Leeson; formerly a founder member of the Art of Change with Peter Dunn and now running an art organisation called cSpace in East London. I have also listened to consultants such as Charles Landry and regeneration officers from the Borough of Southwark in London, Preston City Council and organisations involved in the regeneration of East Manchester. Charles Landry founded the organisation Comedia which has facilitated arts consultancies in many cities around the world, and is regarded as an international authority on the use of culture in the revitalisation of cities. Landry explains how recognising culture as a resource was a revelation to him that began a new way of thinking about cities and assets. He cites the value of distinctiveness as a way of creating a cultural identity for a city, which, he states is important when many of our cities now look and feel the same. *"Promoting urban spaces has long been an aspect of urban development,"*<sup>27</sup> states Hall, he explains that the image of a city has a direct impact on its economic development. Landry cites regeneration as a way of using culture to kick start renewal of an urban environment. Malcolm Miles in his book 'Art Space and the City' states,

*"There are differences between 'urban development' and 'urban regeneration'....*

He goes on to explain that urban development is for the benefit of the public, whilst regeneration is about creating sustainable economies which connect socially with an associated neighbourhood. It follows then that for Miles, urban development is seen as an autonomous gesture to a receiving public, whereas urban regeneration is seen as an inclusive process of working with a connected community. Landry's idea of regeneration i.e. using culture to kick start the process is, in my opinion, a combination of both ideas of development and regeneration. In my interpretation of Landry's idea developers recognise how culture can seem an attractive selling point to potential clients and use this distinctiveness of place in evolving their ideas for urban development. It would seem there are blurred readings in the role of the developer and the public in renewal of the urban environment. I would suggest that including an associated public in democratic processes of consultation is a difficult and time consuming activity, and in areas of deprivation (where regeneration is seen to be most in need) disillusioned people are commonplace. This is where I see dialogic art

---

<sup>27</sup> Urban Geography, second edition, Hall, Tim, Routledge 1998 p121

processes as being useful strategies for collaborating with people associated with areas undergoing urban regeneration.

The work I initiated in Preston involved developing relationships through dialogic processes with people associated with the area undergoing regeneration in different ways. I built a network of contacts with resident communities, professionals working with the community and professionals responsible for regeneration strategies in Preston. In this dialogic process I also included art professionals.

It is through this experience of working with various layers of connected communities<sup>28</sup> that I have been able to discuss ideas for my research across various disciplines. This negotiation took time to evolve and required management skills to develop particular layers of contact at various points in time over the length of the research project. This cross-disciplinary interaction has opened channels of communication with city planners, architects, city councillors, cultural workers, creative industries and museum and art gallery professionals. The channels for communication have not just been for me the initiating artist but, by my placing the collaborative work in an art institution there have been opportunities for the voices of the collaborating groups to be heard.

Socially-engaged art is multidimensional in form as it is built up of layers of interaction, and is not a tangible object; its form has been produced through negotiation. It has many authors and is held in place by a network of connected contacts that hold the key to its sustainability. I will explain in more detail how I choreographed each layer of interaction as this chapter unfolds. The figures 1 – 6 (found on pages 39-44) illustrate each layer of the research process in relation to time. The figures in the diagram explain visually how a professional artist's interaction with a place builds a network of contacts. These contacts I developed contribute to the way in which information about the projects is disseminated to other organisations, who in turn feed into the project their expertise and their own network of contacts. I will provide an explanation of how the layers were constructed with references to the particular figures and the strategies used for each area of practice.

### **3:2 Personal history**

My previous experience as a professional artist working in areas of East Lancashire and the North West of England has informed the questions I have about socially-engaged art and its potential role in the regeneration of urban areas. I became aware of the limitations of short term projects often initiated in response to issues identified by commissioning agents. These projects were often well received, as evidenced by the high levels of attendance by participants eager to explore some practical activity together.

I worked with diverse ranges of people from children under the age of five to projects with people aged 90+, from people seeking asylum to lifelong residents.

Preston (once a Lancashire mill town and the jeans capital of the UK, according to Preston's Assistant Director for Regeneration)<sup>29</sup> has experienced

---

<sup>28</sup> I use the word community to include professionals working in regeneration, other professional art organisations and professional artists as well as the groups where I initiated weekly sessions.

<sup>29</sup> Historian Geoff Timmins in his book "Preston, A Pictorial History" explains that much of Preston's built environment has changed with its development from a manufacturing economy to a service economy. Yet, he goes on to say that much that was developed during the Victorian cotton textile era still remains, including former mill workers' terraces and striking public buildings situated around the old market area.

immigration from the Indian Sub-continent, Africa as well as Europe and other parts of the British Isles. As Landry suggests:

*"Throughout history outsiders and immigrants from within the same country or abroad, have been key to establishing creative cities. In an environment where their contribution is allowed to flourish, rather than feared their different skills, talents and cultural values lead to new ideas and opportunities."*<sup>30</sup>

He goes on to say,

*"Asians in Britain have helped sustain and regenerate its traditional textile industries and even revive the traditional corner shop."*

This research project is testament to the revival of the corner shop, as evidenced by the images and mapped information of corner shops on the shopping bags produced as part of the project with the group in Avenham. Landry also mentions the importance of 'insiders' who are, *"vital to harness endogenous intelligence, creativity and learning potential."*<sup>31</sup> This, Landry suggests, contributes to self reliance and he posits that striking a balance between insider and outsider knowledge is a key leadership task. This phenomenon is successful when the 'outsider' offers freshness and clarity, and the 'insider' deep knowledge; in the worst case the outsider is ignorant and the insider stale.

Human diversity was recognised in projects I undertook with asylum seekers by commissioners. The issue they were being asked to address in the project offered to them was interesting for them to explore, but by and large the commissioners were just paying lip service to the rich potential of information they held within their everyday lives. Would this information be of interest to people working in regeneration? I came across brochures which expressed the plans of the local council, listing what was going to be developed in their plans for the regeneration of an area. There was often statistical evidence that the local community had been asked to give their ideas, and I wondered how this information had been gathered. I attended meetings where community workers and community leaders gathered to explore ideas but people were wary about my remit. They wanted to know why I was there and possibly suspicious of my motives, so that trust was obviously a big issue. This was the position I found myself in; reflecting on my practice I began to make links, and questions about the role of an artist in the regeneration of urban communities began to emerge

### **3:3 Information about Preston**

Preston is profiled by its council as England's newest city, famous for the twenty year celebration of culture and heritage which is Preston Guild<sup>32</sup>. As a new city Preston is on the crest of a wave of development and therefore an apt place to begin researching the role of an artist in the regeneration of urban communities. Preston has been in receipt of money from Single Regeneration Budget tranche 3 and tranche 6 over the last decade<sup>33</sup>. I began considering the term regeneration and whether it meant the same things for all citizens. I have discovered whilst in conversation with city professionals who work in

---

<sup>30</sup> The Creative City, Landry, Charles, Earthscan 2000 p111

<sup>31</sup> *ibid* 112

<sup>32</sup> Preston Guild is a historical event which dates back to 1179 when a charter was granted for Preston to hold a Merchant Guild every twenty years.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.odpm.gov.uk>

regeneration that regeneration is experienced from different perspectives. How many perspectives are included in a vision for a city? A democratic vision of a city may be a difficult and time-consuming idea to present, but perhaps socially-engaged art practice which tenders authority to a collaborating community can contribute particular information about a place which may be useful to other professionals working in regeneration.

As a research student from the University of Central Lancashire based in Preston, I found that my connection to a local institution authenticated my presence, and was a stepping stone which aided my acceptance and validated my position when seeking meetings with professionals, organisations and communities in Preston. The University is received as an official organisation which is well established and as such carries gravitas. I have become aware of current debates about the 'parachuted artist', one who visits a city, a temporary resident working temporarily with a community, and this identity may be a hindrance to gaining the trust of a collaborating community. An illustration of this is furnished by a quotation I read recently on an internet site concerning work in Burnley East Lancashire by Kevin Carter of Co Lab Projects based in London. He stated that working with disempowered or disenfranchised young people in Burnley was difficult. Meetings were arranged but *"disaffected young people often don't show up at designated times and it can be necessary to be flexible."*<sup>34</sup> The participating youth group didn't turn up at and yet money had been spent on transporting two artists from London to Burnley for the day. Had the two artists been living locally for the project this would not have been as much of a problem. They would perhaps have been able to spend more time becoming 'local' therefore gaining acceptance and trust.

### 3:4 Mapping techniques

The mapping techniques I used to document information about the areas of research in Preston (namely Avenham and Deepdale) were a mixture of onsite experiences and interactions with the physical place of the research and the residents of that same place. These techniques included walking the streets at different times of the day as well as driving, cycling and using local transport. Through interaction with the place and the people, the researcher attempts to become local. All the information I gathered was documented using photography, video and audio recording as well as drawing and written observations. I was therefore building a topographical map of the area where the topography of place is a description of place including physical and social geography. In essence this mapping process reframes the locality as an integrated social network of contacts referenced by particular tangible or concrete meeting places which become active at different times of the day and week. Mapping techniques have been used by many artists who work site specifically, as it is necessary to collect a body of information which references a particular place from a variety of perceptions; for instance Suzanne Lacy in her project "Full Circle" in Chicago, part of Culture in Action, Mierle Laderman Ukeles in her project with sanitation workers in New York and Helen and Newton Harrison in "Breathing Space for the Sava River" a project in Yugoslavia.

I collected information about community organisations which were active in the area from printed handouts which contained information about the services

---

<sup>34</sup> [www.publicartonline.org.uk/case/burnley/description.php](http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/case/burnley/description.php)

being offered, often with contact names and telephone numbers. I found out about a community day at a local school from a local newsagent and attended this event where I met some of the community workers and we exchanged information. Such information gathered from these events and others, was also added to the mapped information. As I gained knowledge about what services were active in the area I developed a sense of the vibrancy of the place, a complex web of contacts began to be constructed. The community day also displayed information about previous projects in the area, and I was able to see if any art work had been arranged and completed. Community workers and professionals were also able to provide me with information about previous art projects and arts organisations which were active in the area. Physical interaction with place such as walking contributes to the development of an image of place which includes information about the ambience of that place. This on-site active experience is very different from the passive experience of reading or viewing images of an area.

These activities of active engagement with place are essential for creating a visual map which holds within it distinct implicit information. This information is used to construct the foundations upon which the project can develop. The map continues to gather information as the project proceeds and eventually becomes a complex web of connected information which is place and community specific. The mapping techniques described above act as a catalyst in developing informal relationships with active community services and residents associated with a particular place. This methodology of working requires from the artist a substantial commitment of time for interaction with place over a number of months. As I wrote in the previous chapter, a socially-engaged 'local' artist has the advantage of being able to build sustainable relationships over an extended period of time, in contrast to a 'parachuted artist' or nomadic artist whose relationship to place is transient. For the 'parachuted artist's spending time interacting with place as an ongoing action is difficult as they are temporary visitors to this place. Collaboration with community may help but as they are visitors their presence can not be authenticated; they are not local. This is a cultural phenomenon perhaps endemic in disenfranchised communities where acceptance of interlopers takes time, as illustrated in Ukeles's work mentioned previously.

These two different approaches to intervention with place - as a visiting or local artist - may produce contrasting projects often reflected by the aims of the commissioner or artist. Criticism of the parachuted or visiting nomadic artist approach is that once the event is over, the interest and involvement of the community dwindles. As explained by Lippard in her essay 'Looking around: where we are, where we could be',

*"The artist (who may live in situ or may have parachuted in) goes on to something else, and the community is often insufficiently involved to continue or extend the project on its own."<sup>35</sup>*

The presence of the artist is no longer visible, the dynamic energy which has been produced is not utilised and the participating community is unable to carry on without the artist. The authority of the work remains with the artist.

The methodology I am compiling here is for an artist who is able to offer prolonged engagement with a place, where s/he can access the area easily on a daily basis and is able to construct a network of contacts and relationships with a body of people who reside or work in the place of the project. A dialectic methodology which uses processes of negotiation to include the participating

---

<sup>35</sup> Mapping the Terrain, Lacy, Suzanne, Bay Press 1995, p124

group in the developing agenda facilitates the shared authorship of the project. The project includes information provided by the participating group, thus empowering and fostering ownership of the work. The network of gathered professional contacts in consequence supports the local participants, who through their engaged involvement are empowered to continue the management of future ideas for the project.

### **3:5 Methodologies for locating potential groups**

The mapping process described in the previous section having been completed the next step for the research was to make contact with some local groups. It was important to be able to explain to any service provider and community worker the aims and objectives of the project (illustrated in figure 2 on page 47). To this end I had compiled a short hand-out with images of past projects with which I had been involved and text describing the work I had completed. My first point of contact was often with a centre manager, a community worker or leader. If these meetings went well and that individual or community worker felt there were possibilities for setting up a project, I was then invited to meet potential groups. I found that it was important to find out what the group had been involved in doing in the past, as well as their hopes and ideas for the future, and using this information I looked for potential crossover points. For instance, the group in Avenham was keen to learn new skills, so I emphasized how they might accomplish this using the process I was going to instigate with them. This methodology requires excellent skills in communication because it is necessary to be able to articulate the flexibility of the approach, which enables it to incorporate the hopes and desires of the potential group. The artist needs to be able to think creatively, using the crossover points to illustrate the collaborative potential and then to explain how this might be incorporated into the initiated project.

The initial point of contact with the potential participants was important and so required some thought about how I should best structure it. I discovered that it is important to illustrate and explain the aims and objectives of the project slowly. The meeting needed to be informal and friendly so that people felt relaxed and free to ask any questions they might have. Not every first point of contact meeting was successful, in the sense that it did not lead to further work. These meetings, however, all provided information which was useful and helped me to communicate my aims and objectives for the research to lay persons. Having introduced myself and invited the group to introduce themselves by offering their names. I then tried to remember their names and use them if I got the chance. After presenting some images of past projects I had been involved in, I took time to explain what had happened and to invite questions from the group. I gave them some information about myself and the skills and resources I could offer, and explained to them that the first project would last six weeks. This helped the group to understand to what they were committing themselves to and offered some possibilities of the activities we might pursue together. The group coordinator then spoke to the potential group on their own (I had left by this point) and together they decided whether or not they would like to work with me. This gave them some authority from the outset. It is useful to try to obtain some background information and experience of the potential groups before the first meeting is planned, because this will help both the artist and the group to feel more comfortable and relaxed.

### 3:6 Methodologies for participation

The participants in socially-engaged art projects play a vital role in contributing distinct information about place. The participants may very well be unaware they possess this information; their particular lives are not often of interest for anyone outside their immediate family or friends. The relationship between the participant and the artist is best served by its being developed slowly over the length of the encountered project. This approach helps to foster trust and enables the participant to become acquainted with this new and challenging process of working. This relationship was vital to the success of the project and it was therefore important to try to establish a rapport. A collaborative role is often a new experience for the participants and they have questions about what is required of them, for example what the artist wants them to contribute. The planned sessions need to be opportunities for the artist and participant to become familiar with each other, and I discovered that a framework of practical tasks helped to encourage discussion and relaxation. I was able to use the mapped information gathered whilst researching to encourage conversation, and the participants were able to contribute to this with more detailed and distinct information. By using this mapped information I was declaring my commitment to place, and it also helped to define the area of interest for the whole group. This was important as it helped the participants gain some understanding about what was required of them and focussed their attention on their locality. My research has revealed that each participatory group requires individual attention and the development of a specific approach tailored to the needs of the group. I offer a brief description of each of the groups I was working with so that you (the reader) can understand the context within which I was situated.

Surestart offers various courses for parents of preschool children. They provide trained staff to look after the children whilst these courses are being delivered. The courses can be as diverse as information on nutrition to training in self defence. The group had been meeting for about a year in a run-down church hall in Deepdale and although the building was warm the facilities were poor. Surestart are based in various offices located in particular areas of Preston (these areas are registered on the national list of deprivation) and their courses are usually held in community buildings.

Pukar is a disability resource centre based in Oakham Court, Avenham. It offers free services for disabled people and their carers, for example support, assistance and advice as well as classes in I.T. The name Pukar comes from the Gujarati language and means 'voice'. The group had a core group of members who knew each other, some seemed to be related and there was a mix of cultures and religious backgrounds.

This specific approach is illustrated by the following examples. For instance I used the strategy of filming a walk around an area familiar to the participants at Pukar in order to try to engage the whole group. English was their second language and recognising images of places they knew helped to stimulate conversation. The Surestart group on the other hand planned a walk for us to do together with prams and small children, and as we walked they revealed specific information about their locality

These workshops culminated in an exhibition which I used to (re)present the work to a wider audience as a strategy for raising the awareness of socially engaged art projects and also for the work to be validated by an art institution. The validation of the work by an art institution is important, as I see myself as an art professional and this is where the work I perform is scrutinised and judged. I cite the case of the famous 'Dinner Party' by Judy Chicago which

was completed in 1979 and ousted from any further exhibitions in art institutions after its inaugural showing at The Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco, even though more than 100,000 people saw the work. The piece was judged offensive by the establishment and not until 2007 when the Elizabeth A Sackler Foundation for Feminist Art gifted the work to the Brooklyn Museum, New York, did the piece receive full validation by an art institution.

Whilst working with the groups, I met the Programme Manager for in Preston and we discussed possibilities for an exhibition within the museum. It was important to choose a space which would be sympathetic to the work on show. This required some connection with the work being shown and the space where it was being exhibited, which in this case was Preston. The space needed to value the objects being shown and to be accessible to a non-art audience. Our discussion led to the idea of having an exhibition in The Rotunda Café area of the Museum, a space through which people moved to visit the library and a place where people sat to drink coffee and eat snacks. This proved to be a very appropriate location for the exhibition.

The choice of venue for the exhibition of the collaborative/dialogical process is important as this is where the work is validated. By my use of an official organisation such as the work was seen to be accepted by a public institution associated with professional art, thus signifying to the participants that the professionals associated with this organisation accepted their work as of a standard worthy to be shown in this esteemed institution. If the work had been shown in their community meeting place instead, the work would not have received the same validation or been seen by the same audience.

I included the participants in decisions about what was placed on show and how this might be presented. This was important as it gave the participants the authority to make choices about their own work and communicated to them that I felt they were capable of making those decisions, and that the work we had completed together was valued. There were issues about confidentiality and we discussed how they (the participants) would be in control of what was seen.

When the group at Pukar learned that the exhibition would be in the café and that we needed to plan an opening event, a few of the participants asked if it would be possible to cook food. This was made possible, and on the opening evening the rotunda was filled with the aroma of spices. The group in Deepdale were pleased for their books to go on show as long as no one was able to look through them. However, they were happy for me to film them turning the pages they chose to show and to include this in the DVD material for the large projection. The exhibition was an opportunity for the two groups to meet for the first time.

The communicative role of the artist is important; s/he enables a bridge to be built between the institution and the participants. The strategies I had initiated enabled a high level of trust to be established with the participants and because of this we were able to plan a public exhibition of their work. The artist has an awareness of the potential audiences for this work and using this information together with the aims of the project s/he is in a good position to discuss with the art gallery/institution the best format for the accompanying text for the exhibition.

This project has been about encouraging active engagement with the place, Preston, and has explored many avenues to try to achieve this. We utilised the convention of an exhibition to include other participants in the project. For example, visitors to the exhibition were invited to participate in the project by taking a shopping bag with map and recipes, and to visit the named shops to choose vegetables. They were then encouraged to cook an Asian dish using the recipes we had provided in the bag. The exhibition was also used as an

opportunity to invite other professionals working in regeneration in Preston to meet me at the exhibition venue. This meeting promoted opportunities to discuss the work in progress and highlight the work with the groups. The information gathered in meeting these professionals working in regeneration in Preston was used to further develop my research. I organised more meetings with an extended list of contacts to gather information to use in analysing my research from the perspectives of professionals working in regeneration in Preston. It was also a method for encouraging participation in the project by offering opportunities for analysis from a different standpoint. I have used the recorded conversations and other gathered material in multi media formats to design and build a CD-ROM. The CD-ROM has been developed for interactive use and uses the software Macromedia Director to enable the user to navigate through layers of information about Preston. For example it shows documentation of the initiated work with groups from particular areas of Preston (Avenham and Deepdale), the exhibition at and responses to the work from other professionals working in Preston, the participating group members and the service providers for the groups. Interaction with the CD-ROM will offer another level of participation in the project and extend the dissemination of information about my research to a broader audience. The CD-ROM<sup>36</sup> becomes a resource I can use to inform others of my practice as research project.<sup>37</sup> I will thus disseminate information about my practice to professionals working in regeneration in other cities: artists, art organisations, academics and other professionals interested in this socially-engaged approach from other disciplines.

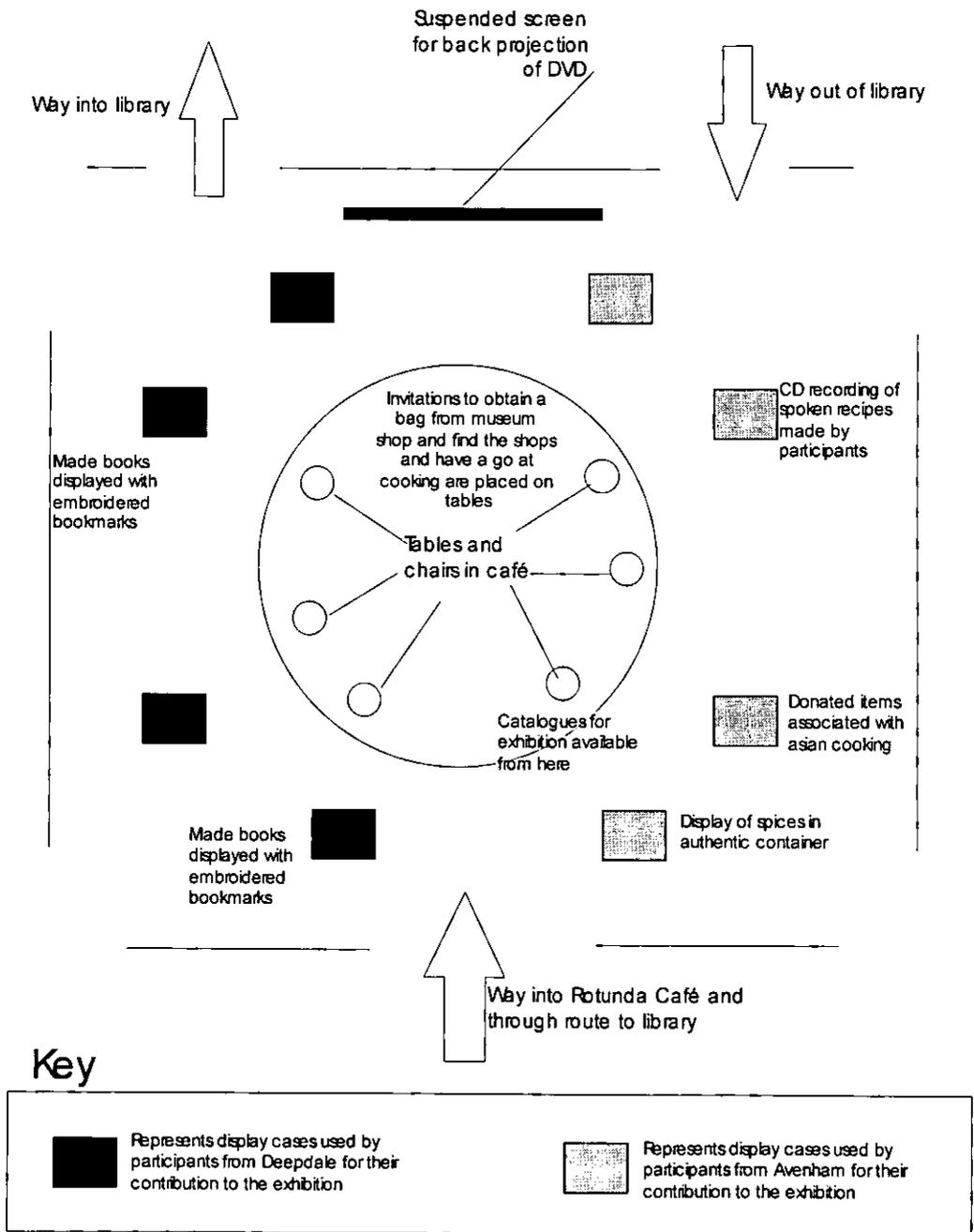
The following diagram is an illustration of the layout for the exhibition in The Rotunda Café area of The Harris Museum and Art Gallery.

---

<sup>36</sup> The design and development of the CD-ROM is explained in section 4:6

<sup>37</sup> Information about the use of the CD-ROM as a vehicle for the dissemination of information about this research is explained in section 4:7.

### 3:7 Layout for Exhibition at The Harris Museum and Art Gallery



### **3:8 Strategies for employing a dialectic methodology**

A flexible framework was tested and adopted when tasks were being planned for the proposed workshops with each group. I used the six week project to test this method and developed this further in the twelve week project. The concept involved an open structure of practical tasks which were designed and gauged towards the needs and requirements of each group. It required using the convention of a written diary in which I recorded what was done each week in the workshops. This included observations and comments I had made about how the session was received, the problems which arose during the workshop and the achieved successes. I spent time reflecting on these written responses each week. This enabled me to react accordingly when planning the forthcoming session. The planning and development of the weekly workshops was therefore flexible and open to change. This was a difficult and time-consuming process as each group required very individual attention: what was successful with one group could not be adapted for another. However, it contributed to the success of the project by encouraging dialogue, trust and inclusivity, thus fostering engagement and ownership. This flexible framework method contributed to the way the process developed in a bespoke fashion, moulding the process around the individuals who were part of the group. This led to a direct relationship with what was produced (the end product) and the producers (the members of the group). Ownership of the project by the group was therefore an automatic response. The participants were directly involved in the way the project progressed; they were not presented with a task to complete but were invited to contribute directly to the way the project proceeded. Although this approach proved to be more challenging for all concerned, I feel it proved to be successful in its aim to promote engagement and ownership. It was also very successful in building the confidence and the self-esteem of the participants.

The exhibition was utilised as an event to invite other professionals working in regeneration in Preston to view the work I had completed with both groups. It was also an opportunity to celebrate the completed work with the family and friends of the participants. The professionals were offered personal invitations to meet me at the exhibition and discuss the work over a cup of coffee in The Rotunda Café. This open dialogue enabled reciprocal learning to take place, revealing responses to the work from other professional perspectives and providing me with an opportunity to explain the processes involved in socially-engaged art practice. Thus both parties gained an awareness of each others' professional discipline by referencing participatory art and the regeneration of urban communities. I feel that choosing to meet at the exhibition was an important strategy for focussing the discussion on participatory art and regeneration and an excellent inclusive approach to developing relationships with professionals working in regeneration in Preston.

### **3:9 The role of documenting the participatory process**

As a professional artist, I brought to this research skills in photography, video, sound recording, and computer skills in desktop publishing, photographic software and video editing. Alongside this, I had practical skills in traditional art media such as paint, print, sculpture and textiles. I had used photo, video and sound recording resources to document work in progress in the past, and was aware that some participants can understandably be very wary of this technology being used during activities; from a cultural and personal perspective this is a

very sensitive area. However, socially-engaged practice is about initiating a collaborative process, and the only means of presenting to a secondary audience some idea of the work that has been initiated is to document this journey. As I have explained previously, this work is multidimensional and it is difficult to present it and to explain visually the implicit information contained within the process. The only means available is to use documentary information. I therefore introduced these documentary methods slowly, explaining why I was doing it and listening to the questions the participants presented. I knew that using images of faces would be problematic for cultural reasons and also from a personal point of view, so I gave the participants editorial power of what was used in the final presentation.

I began the documentation of the workshops with a small compact digital camera. This format was useful because the participants could instantly view what had been recorded. This proved important in gaining the trust of the participants, and gradually I invited them to use the camera themselves. They soon became confident because they realised that if they were not satisfied with the result they could retake the picture. It was also a way for them to include me in the recorded images. The camera became a successful tool for documentation; the video on the contrary was not so successful. The participants were very wary of the video camera and often would not relax when it was being used for documenting their activities. Some of them were willing to try and use the video camera, but it proved to be quite difficult as none of them had previous experience of doing this. However, the video camera was a useful tool for me to use to capture information about the areas in which I was working, and I used this information to encourage discussion, as I have previously written. As the project developed and we all came to know one another, the participants were more relaxed when I was filming for a particular purpose which we had previously discussed. For example, the women in the Surestart group were happy for me to film them turning over the pages of their handmade books to reveal the pages they had decided could be seen by an audience at the exhibition. I used a minidisk recorder to record the conversation which occurred during the workshop sessions and the ambient background noise, and this proved useful when we were cooking together. The minidisk was another piece of equipment which was small and portable and slowly became more acceptable to the groups as they became accustomed to seeing it around. The recorder was used by the group at Surestart to record a walk we made together, and the group at Pukar used it to record spoken recipes which were presented on a CD player at the exhibition.

Documentation is important for disseminating information about the process to other audiences. It is an important method for validating this work, therefore documenting the work in progress is vital. Some methodologies for this area of art practice have focussed attention on the end products of a project, but I feel this contributes to an unbalanced approach to socially-engaged practice, which may have contributed to ideas of community art being unprofessional and unskilled. As suggested by Lippard, *"The 'high' artworld perceives community art as lacking in the kind of 'quality' defined by elitist markets and tastes rather than active art audiences."*<sup>38</sup> The inclusion of the participants in the documentation process is instrumental in developing ownership of the project as well as in building the self-confidence and self-esteem of the group.

---

<sup>38</sup> The Lure of the Local, senses of place in a multicentered society, Lippard, Lucy R, The New Press, New York, 1997, p282

As well as documenting the participatory projects, I documented the meetings I had arranged with professionals working in regeneration, recording our conversation on minidisk. This was done with the approval of all concerned. These recordings were transcribed, and proved to be an important resource for the evaluation and reflective analysis of my research. I documented the opening event for the exhibition with video and still photography, and spent time filming and gathering more explicit information about Preston, particularly Deepdale and Avenham, using this information in the development of the CD-ROM. As my knowledge of place had increased and become more specific, I was now in a more experienced position to make informed choices of what was filmed and how I presented this information on the CD-ROM. The development of the CD-ROM enabled me to learn new computer skills using the software Macromedia Director and also to develop further my video and sound editing skills. These are useful tools when working with the gathered documented information and assist in producing formats which explain and describe the processes undertaken in the production of the whole project in a visual and interactive manner which extends the participatory concept of the project.

### **3:10 An analysis of audience engagement**

The project I initiated began a process of work with two groups in Preston from areas undergoing regeneration and resulted in an exhibition as part of that negotiation. An exhibition which displays information about a process is problematic because a process is ephemeral and it is therefore difficult to (re)present this to another audience. A process is defined as a series of actions or steps; to directly experience these actions or steps is different from observing them. Participating in sport is different from being a spectator, and observing a TV recording of the same sport is a different experience yet again. This experience would change if the spectator and the viewer could actively engage in the game. The project exhibition offered a secondary audience an opportunity to participate in the project, thus another layer of engagement was constructed. This is exemplified by the extending to visitors an invitation to take a shopping bag and by using the map of Preston printed on the front of the bag, find the designated shops and to buy the ingredients to make a meal described in the recipe contained within the bags. The success of this secondary engagement was evidenced by the number of shopping bags which were requested by visitors and the responses gathered from the shop keepers. The shopping bags were available through the museum shop, on demand and free of charge and were an extension of the process initiated with the group in Avenham. This extension of the participatory concept of the project to the exhibition, I hoped, would offer a secondary audience an opportunity to experience the socially-engaged strategy of the work from a different perspective, not merely as a passive spectator but also as an engaged participant.

The project was extended to include further meetings with professionals working in art and regeneration in Preston. This was a consequence of the initial meetings I organised at the exhibition venue. Reflection on the discussions at The Harris Museum in response to the work so far led me to believe that process-based art revealed different information to different audiences. The meetings initiated further discussion with other professionals working in regeneration, for example with an architect, community development worker, creative industry officer and other city council officers including the Assistant

Director of Regeneration in Preston. This provided a broader insight from their particular perspective into the completed project. These meetings revealed links between the initiated project and the work being established in Preston by the professionals I met and which may prove to be useful for my professional practice in the future. It was suggested in a few of the meetings that the area of community cohesion would be one worth investigating. These professionals recognised the contribution the project made to issues pertaining to the quality of life and the skills development of the participants. They raised the point, however, that from a local government perspective one of the main targets was for projects to lead to employment. The analysis contributed by these professionals was made from their particular area of expertise, and their reflection provided information about how art projects could be used as part of a more ambitious scheme of community development in the future.

This cross disciplinary analysis with architects, urban planners and community development workers is unusual since most evaluation processes for community art projects focus on the learning outcomes achieved. A cross disciplinary analysis contrasts to the more usual approach of receiving evaluation from an artist, commissioning body and the participants. A project which employed a dialectic methodology with an engaged diverse audience including connected professions (as listed previously) would be evaluated by cross-disciplinary experts. The information produced may well be contestable by the various evaluating partnerships, but if the analysis from each area is kept separate, a clear concise account of the outcomes of the project would be visible.

Through active experiential participation audiences may become involved in a project, and this subsequent engagement may provide them with alternative ways of experiencing process-based art. For instance by taking a shopping bag and searching for shops the secondary audience in this project became involved in the process. The audiences' awareness of the process is enhanced through active participation. Their reflections are therefore offered as an active response to their own involvement in the project. This method makes apparent the level of engagement of audiences for this work by measuring their level of participation. This information would provide museums and art galleries with ways of assessing audience responses to socially-engaged art. I propose that this active analytical methodology requires a new aesthetic model where the success of process-based art is measured by the level of engagement by audiences and their subsequent contribution to the analysis of the project. Thus strategies which encourage discussion and dialogue to promote and develop relationship become important ingredients in the facilitation and subsequent analysis of the project. These skills to promote and develop relationship are life enhancing skills and have the potential for gathering particular information pertinent to particular lives in particular places. They would be key elements in the sustainability of the project. As Lacy suggests in her book 'Mapping the Terrain',

*"Suzi Gablik calls for an art 'that is more empathetic and interactive and comes from a gentle, diffused mode of listening.....a kind of art that cannot be fully realized through monologue. It can only come into its own in dialogue, in open conversation in which one is obliged to listen and include other voices.'<sup>39</sup>*

---

<sup>39</sup> Mapping the Terrain, Lacy, Suzanne, Bay Press 1995, p36

### **3:11 Process of distribution – disseminating information and the role of the participants and artist**

The process of distributing information about the project is important in raising the profile of socially-engaged art practice as well as in increasing awareness of this area of art to other audiences. These audiences are varied and all play different roles in the validation of this work. Firstly, the friends and family of the participants help to celebrate the project, so increasing the self-esteem of the participants and bringing to the forefront of conversation aspects of their own community embedded in the project. There is the potential therefore for building on this increased awareness and interest in locality. The service providers are able to use the project to highlight their own work and also to underline how the project has impinged on their perception of art and the benefits they perhaps have experienced through their involvement in the project. This publicly endorses socially-engaged art practice as something worthwhile. Visitors to the exhibition are offered the opportunity to engage with the place outside the gallery in a new way, perhaps gathering new information for themselves. For instance, in my initiated project they could take a bag from the museum shop, discover shops in Preston outside the city centre, then choose to buy vegetables they may not necessarily usually choose and cook a dish which could also be a new experience. This is an active response to the initiated project, rather than the usual passive response to viewing the work on display. By inviting the professionals working in regeneration to the exhibition, I was able to raise their awareness of this genus of art practice, use the opportunity to discuss the work and build on this relationship by arranging other meetings. This was an important development in the research as I was utilising the contacts being gathered and including their comments on the research in the CD-ROM I was constructing. This is another convention for distributing information about a project to broader audiences further afield. The distribution of the work is an important element in establishing this area of practice as a useful contributor to regeneration schemes in Preston and beyond. Therefore the endorsement of this area of art practice by professional bodies is crucial to future inclusion of artists who initiate participatory socially-engaged art projects as contributors to regeneration programmes.

### **3:12 Summary**

In summarising these structures and methodologies I feel it is essential to draw attention to the importance of building a mechanism for dissemination to other interested parties. This is as important as initiating the participatory research, as this disseminating structure can act as a catalyst to propagate interest and validation of the work by National Arts Organisations and Professional Bodies active in urban regeneration.

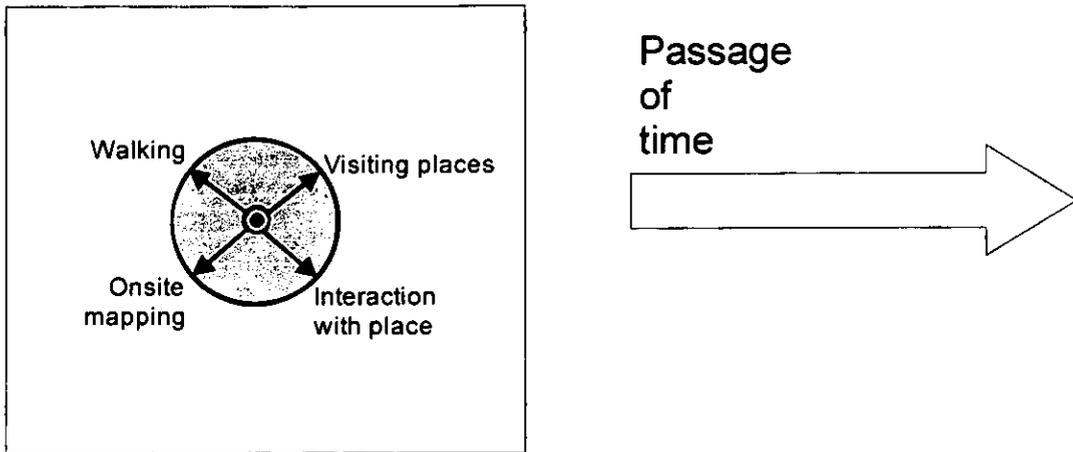
I propose a new model for interdisciplinary analysis of process-based art where professionals from the fields of architecture, urban planning, community development, creative industries, education and art development can contribute their own assessment of the work. Encouraging those same professionals to actively engage with the work through participation is important in cultivating this cross-disciplinary interest and analysis, as well as raising awareness of art processes. Cross-disciplinary exploration and research within the art

establishment has begun with conferences such as 'Cultural Spaces' facilitated by the Queen Mary and Royal Holloway Universities Geography Department in London where I delivered a paper in June 2006.<sup>40</sup> This themed conference linked together national research from a wide base of practitioners including Fine Art, Literature, Geography and many more. As cross disciplinary interest increases and the world of work perhaps changes to accommodate this by providing opportunities to share ideas and collaborate, opportunities to analyse and validate this area of socially-engaged art practice across all disciplines may well arise. By focussing on engagement through measuring active participation, assessment of the project would intensify around the methodology used to build relationships within the project and the subsequent success of the level of communication employed by the artist. The formation of active networks connected to site and place would be crucial to the sustainability of the project. The skills of the artist working in regeneration processes would therefore be focussed on communication and negotiation with potential audiences. The object of this research was to use these skills in order to reveal particular implicit information about a place. This information was embedded in the lives of the connected community who inhabited the place; it was not information about place offered from the perspective of the artist. The artist was the agent which enabled engagement with the various layers of audience, and ripples out from the central engagement of primary audience/participants into the connected networks of professionals from other disciplines and areas of work associated with this particular place.

---

<sup>40</sup> [www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/cultspaces](http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/cultspaces)

**FIGURE 1.**  
**Artist begins interaction with place**



**Key**



Artist working in Preston



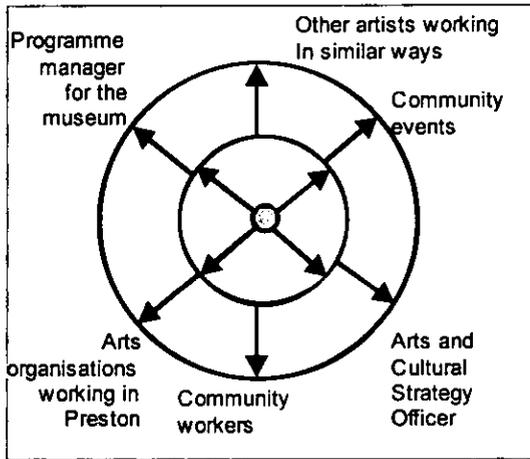
Artist begins interaction with Preston



Interaction of people -  
symbolises relational  
and dialogic aesthetic

**FIGURE 2.**

**Artist's interaction with people living and working in Preston**



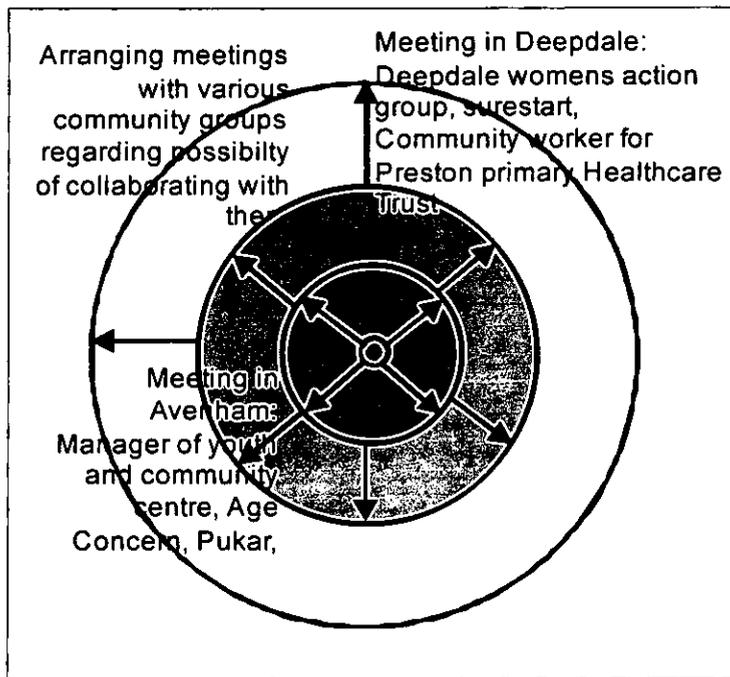
Passage  
of  
time



**Key**

- Artist working in Preston
- Artist begins interaction with Preston
- Artists interaction with people living and working in Preston
- Interaction of people - symbolises relational and dialogic aesthetic

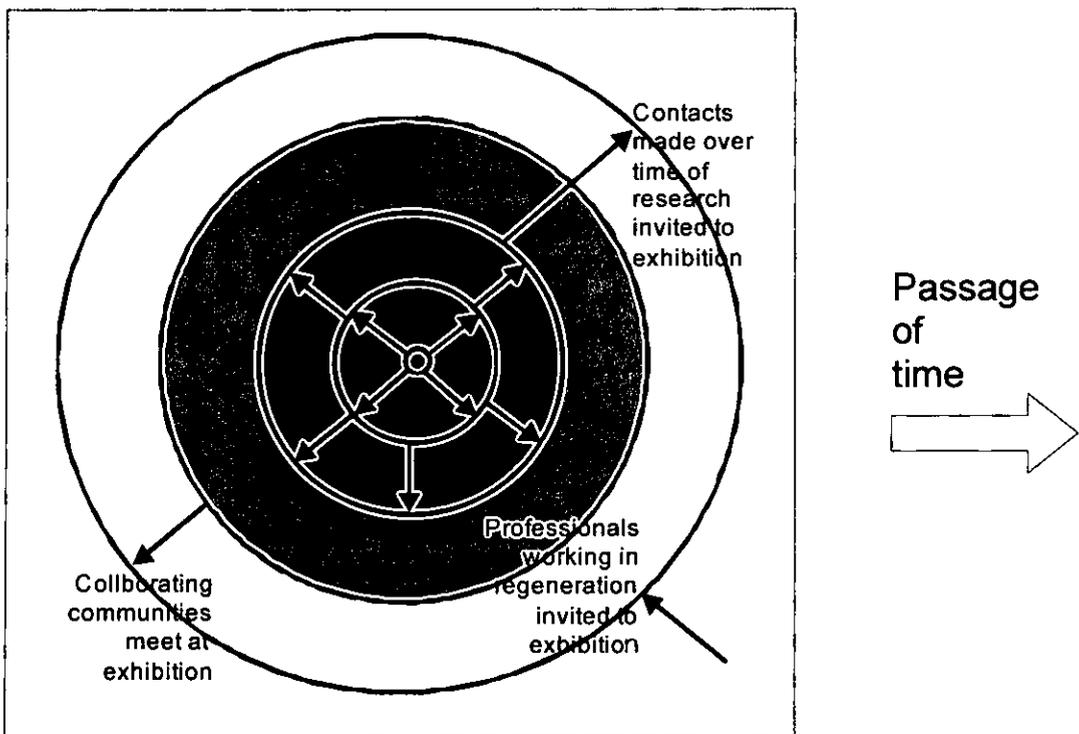
**FIGURE 3.**  
Interaction with communities in areas of Preston undergoing regeneration



**Key**

- Artist working in Preston
- Artist begins interaction with Preston
- Artists interaction with people living and working in Preston
- Artist's interaction with communities in areas of Preston undergoing regeneration
- Interaction of people - symbolises relational and dialogic aesthetic

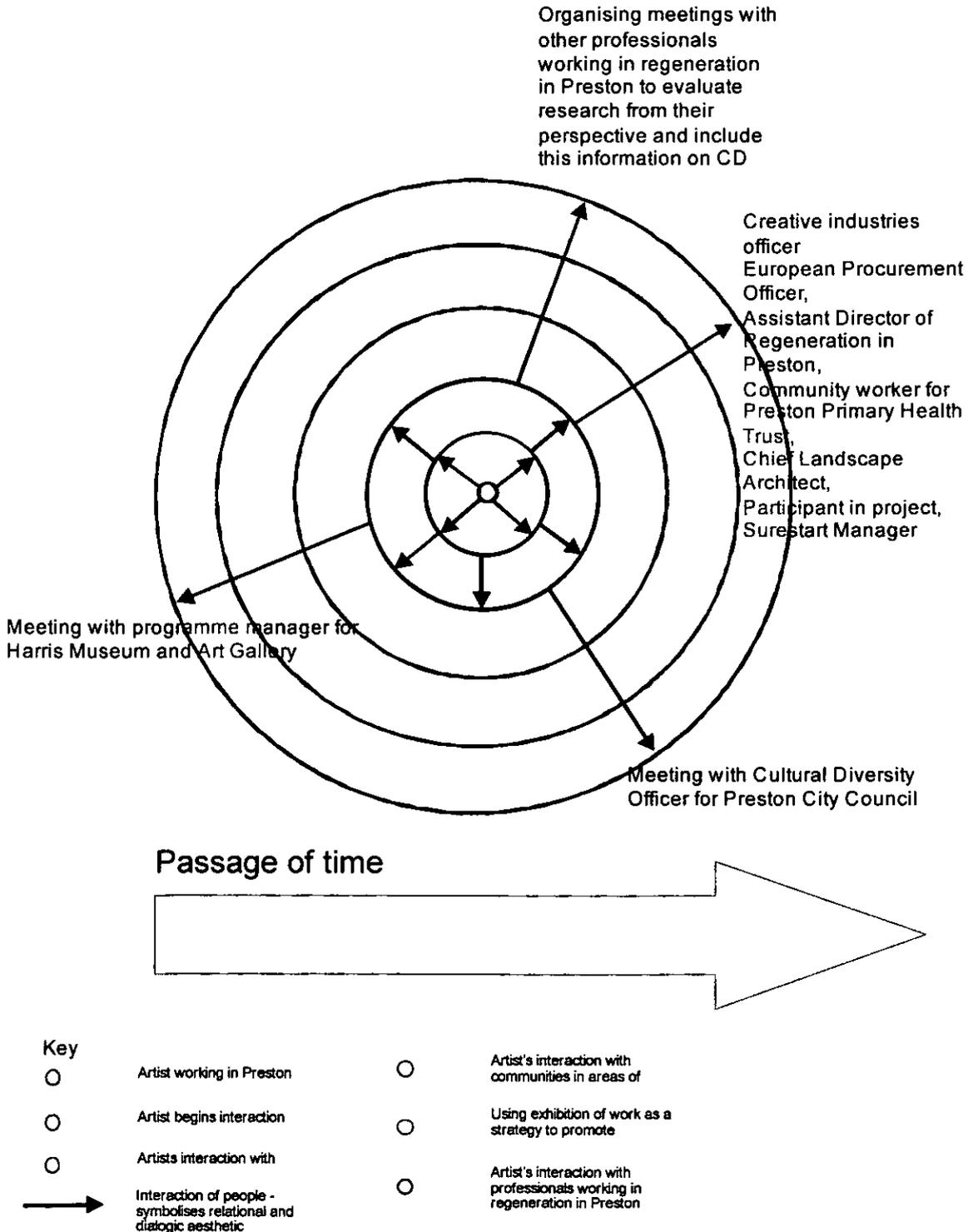
**FIGURE 4.**  
Using exhibition of work as a strategy to promote interaction and a methodology for engaging audiences



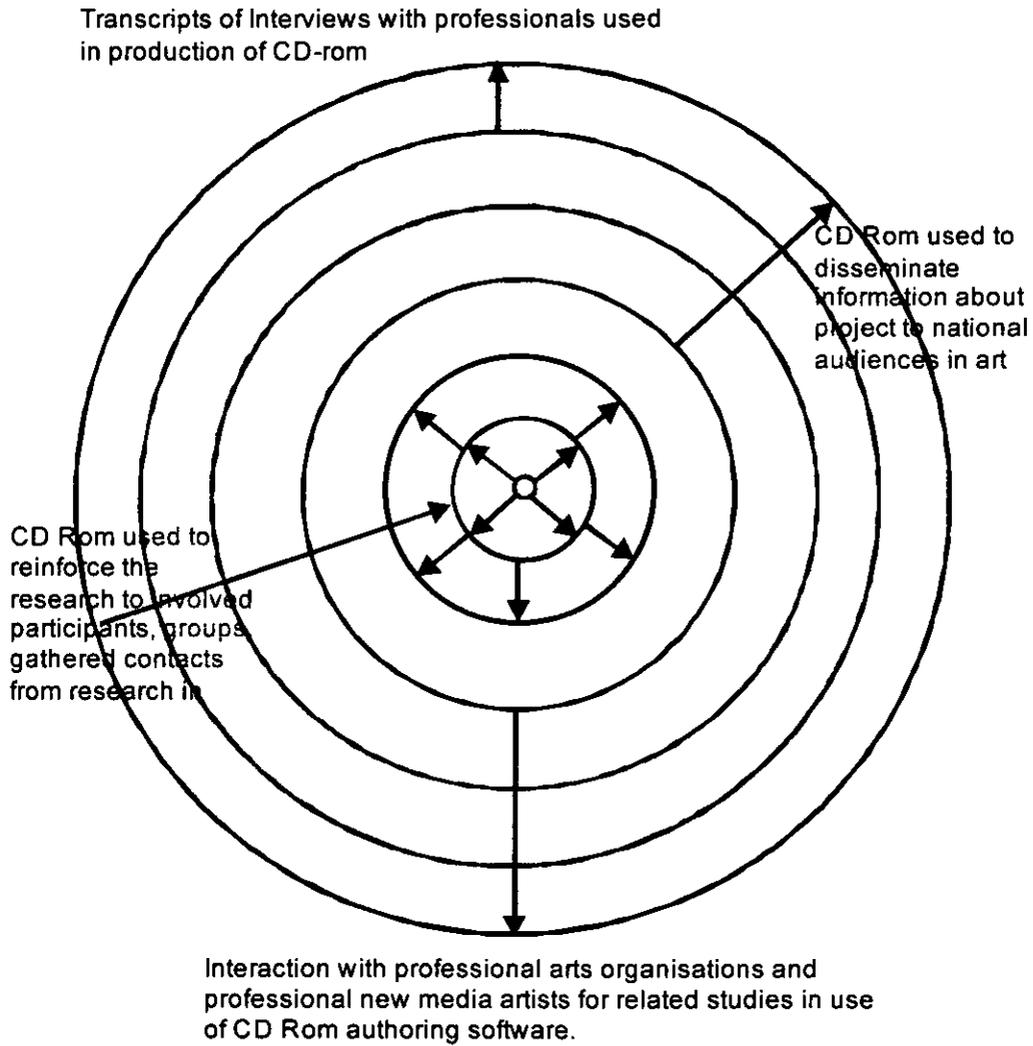
**Key**

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| ● | Artist working in Preston                                     | ⊙ | Artist's interaction with communities in areas of Preston undergoing regeneration                      |
| ● | Artist begins interaction with Preston                        | ○ | Using exhibition of work as a strategy to promote interaction and a methodology for engaging audiences |
| ● | Artists interaction with people living and working in Preston | → | Interaction of people - symbolises relational and dialogic aesthetic                                   |

**FIGURE 5**  
Interaction with professionals working in regeneration



**FIGURE 6.**  
CD Rom used as a mechanism for reaching interested professionals and communities involved in art and regeneration



**Key**

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| ○ | Artist working in Preston                                     | ○ | Using exhibition of work as a strategy to promote interaction and a methodology for engaging audiences |
| ○ | Artist begins interaction                                     | ○ | Artist's interaction with professionals working in regeneration in Preston                             |
| ○ | Artists interaction with people living and working in Preston | ○ | CD Rom used as a mechanism for reaching interested professionals and communities involved in art and   |
| ○ | Artist's interaction with communities in areas of Preston     | → | Interaction of people - symbolises relational and dialogic aesthetic                                   |

## Chapter 4: Socially-engaged artistic practice – a strategy within the development of urban regeneration programmes.

### 4:1 Regeneration and urban communities focussing on Preston

Preston describes itself as a new city and states that by 2012 it will be the third city in the North West of England. Tim Hall in his book *Urban Geography* says *“the only consistent thing about cities is that they are always changing.”*<sup>41</sup> Every city is different, having developed for different reasons, as responses to different circumstances becoming complex over time. Preston’s history is couched in the industrial revolution, in the mechanisation of the textile industry. *“All cities have an image”*<sup>42</sup> cites Hall.

The marketing of a city has become an important strategy in promoting place. Media coverage of events can have a positive and negative impact on what image of place is promoted. *“the promotion of urban places has long been an integral aspect of urban development”*<sup>43</sup> states Hall. He goes on to say in *“Marketing cities towards small, wealthy elite; the needs of less well off people have been ignored.”*<sup>44</sup>

Promotional campaigns which have stimulated the regeneration of cities have revolved around the economic and built environment of the city. However, Hall states that criticism of this type of regeneration from academics, researchers and media, and the continuing social problems and financial crises faced by local authorities will lead to future projects paying,

*“greater attention to issues such as social welfare, economic and environmental sustainability and the ethnic and cultural diversity of urban populations.”*<sup>45</sup>

There has been criticism of the more universal solutions to urban problems, and it is now understood that the key to encouraging development lies at the neighbourhood level. (Haughton and Hunter 1994) In their book ‘Sustainable Cities’ they refer to the term ‘organic planning’ to describe how successful sustainable neighbourhood regeneration is achievable by rejecting the blueprint solutions from outside and concentrating on ideas generated locally which respect local conditions.

The regeneration of Preston revolves around particular projects which reference particular areas. The Tithebarn Project is an ambitious plan to develop the centre of Preston, a £700 million regeneration scheme, focused on an area of the city with boundaries around Church Street, Ringway, Friargate and Tithebarn Street including the bus station.

The project masterplan includes transforming this area to include a department store, shopping facilities, multiplex cinema, pedestrianised streets plus leisure and cultural facilities. The city council believes that this project should act as a vehicle for transforming an unappealing part of the city into a thriving vibrant place to be.

The plans for Tithebarn change constantly. Recent discussion with Lancashire County Council and the bus companies has resulted in the plan for a new bus station being moved to a completely different site, outside the area designated as the Tithebarn Scheme. The latest news on the project which can

---

<sup>41</sup> *Urban Geography*, second edition, Hall, Tim, Routledge 1998, 2001

<sup>42</sup> *ibid* p119

<sup>43</sup> *ibid* p121

<sup>44</sup> *ibid* p141

<sup>45</sup> *ibid* p169

be accessed through the internet ([www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk)) includes the introduction of a new partner to the development scheme.

*"We are pleased that Lend Lease (the new developer) will be working with Grosvenor on this major project; as regeneration becomes larger and more complex, partnering will become a common method for delivering such schemes."*<sup>46</sup>

Preston City Council compiled an Economic Regeneration Strategy in 2005 and plans to deliver a transformative programme of investment in regionally significant projects. These have been described as having

*"been designed with the specific purpose of raising the economic performance and profile of the city and utilising its unique attributes to the full effect."*<sup>47</sup>

These significant projects include the renovation and development of Avenham and Miller Parks, *and incorporate:* a RIBA competition to design the new pavilion, plus a £160,000 project identified as 'Flare' planned to improve the lighting of key buildings and spaces across the city centre. Alongside these projects, area forums, including local people and local interest groups, are involved in the set-up of partner action groups, this initiative is intended to help the city council and its partner agencies to better address local priorities identified by each area forum.

*"The idea is that each area forum will have its own group known as a partner action group, which will be tasked to identify how issues raised at area forums can be best tackled by the council and its partners. Each action group will be made up of the relevant area forum chair, a Preston City Council Director and representatives from partner agencies including the police, Lancashire County Council and the Health Service."*<sup>48</sup>

Another strand of funding to improve health, housing, employment and education and to tackle crime in inner urban areas has been issued to Preston from the government. In 2003 Preston received £5M to boost Neighbourhood Renewal, to be spent over three years. Preston is one of twenty one areas in the North West which will see the continuation of Neighbourhood Renewal. In addition Preston is receiving £20M through Single Regeneration Budget and £4M through European Objective II Scheme as well as having access to other European money to regenerate inner urban areas of the city.

As part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme in Deepdale there is a free newsletter which disseminates information about project plans, meetings, courses and how to get involved. The publication is called 'Deepdale Outlook' and can be downloaded from the internet. In Avenham a similar scheme exists with Avencentral News, a free publication and a website.

[www.avencentral.org.uk](http://www.avencentral.org.uk). This has the same aim, to disseminate local information about projects and what is happening in the wider Avenham area. The Avencentral Regeneration partnership is funded via the Governments Single Regeneration Budget (round 6) and is overseeing the implementation of a £57M regeneration programme in Preston city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods. This has included the renovation of St Augustine's, a crumbling grade 2 listed church, now known as Saint Augustine's New Avenham Centre and which houses a multi purpose sports, family learning, education and enterprise centre. It is the focal point for the delivery of a wide range of community services. The

---

<sup>46</sup> Mark Preston, Chief Executive, Grosvenor Britain and Ireland

<sup>47</sup> [www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk)

<sup>48</sup> [www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk)

project received £1.5M from SRB6 as well as funding from European Regional Development funds, Preston City Council and Lancashire County Council.

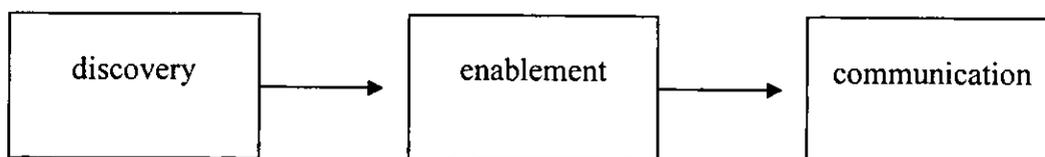
There seems to be confusion about the terms development and regeneration. The ideas for Preston put forward by the international development company Grosvenor are about forming new retail outlets, housing and office space. Should this be termed regeneration? Malcolm Miles insists "*there are differences between 'urban development' and 'urban regeneration'*"<sup>49</sup>. He describes urban development as building for the public good or job creation. Urban development is supported by the government through subsidies such as tax breaks, visual art expertise from subsidised sources and more often these days, 'signature' architecture as cities compete with each other. On the other hand regeneration, according to Miles "*means creating a sustainable sense of neighbourhood*"<sup>50</sup> He goes on to say that "*one of the roles assigned to visual art is to give the impression of the difference.*"<sup>51</sup> In other words regeneration seems to be engendering local distinctiveness without necessarily engaging in any dialogue with the local community/neighbourhood, where suggests Miles, the performing arts could be successfully employed.

I, on the contrary, would emphasise that a sustainable sense of neighbourhood is dependent on the nature of the initiated social interaction. An entertainment by street performers which does not involve any opportunity for discussion around the content of the performance is just that: entertainment. The authorship or authority of the work remains with the performing group. I would also suggest that art projects which are dialogical and relational in form and content would contribute to developing an authentic sense of neighbourhood, as the work would be owned by the neighbourhood.

The expanded field of art which can encompass a whole range of ideas and processes, from modernist objects placed in city squares to performances with sanitation workers on city streets, needs assessing from different perspectives. The complex nature of the relationships of the contributing partners in urban schemes of development and regeneration and the dialogue which exists between them requires an expanded set of principles for critiquing the success of the work. This expanded set of rules should include the aesthetic principles of relational and dialogical aesthetics. This is not to deny that there is still a place for other forms of art in the public realm, but these require assessment by a different set of aesthetic principles.

#### 4:2 Explanation of my process of research

My research has involved a process of



The above process of discovery, enablement and communication is a strategy I have adopted for each layer of initiated engagement illustrated in figures 1-6.

<sup>49</sup> Art, Space and the City, Miles, Malcom, Routledge, 1997, p112

<sup>50</sup> ibid

<sup>51</sup> ibid

These bands of interaction start from a central point that marks the beginning of the artist's engagement and research of the place, then ripple out to extend this research into a widening network of contacts that include people living and working in Preston and the communities in the areas undergoing regeneration.

A public exhibition provided a venue where the research could be seen and discussed, and which prompted dialogue and interaction with professionals involved in the regeneration. The information gathered from these meetings was instrumental in extending contacts with even more professionals working in regeneration. Finally, an interactive CD-ROM was used to disseminate information about the research to a wider audience of regional and national organisations involved in urban regeneration and art.

The contacts from figures 1-5 have a direct association with the place of research, which for me was Preston. In figure 6 the association to the research is more general in that the contacts are associated with urban regeneration and art. The arrows in figures 1-6 symbolise the dialogic and relational aesthetics cited by Kester and Bourriaud<sup>52</sup> in chapter 1 of this thesis.

The role of the artist has been diverse and extensive across various artist-initiated encounters which have developed from an instigated response to site.

I will outline some key guidelines for establishing an inclusive process where the artist has the potential to develop a deeper relationship to a site and place. This relationship includes the associated networks of contacts which, as outlined in the previous chapter, is key to the sustainability of the work in progress.

In advocating a role for the artist in the development of strategies for areas undergoing regeneration, I would like to emphasise that this role will require other professional disciplines being made more aware of the potential benefits this association could provide. This research project has provided evidence in support of this claim, but without cross-disciplinary validation on a national level, this area of practice will remain outside mainstream art tradition. I propose that a paradigm shift in evaluation on two fronts is required as this genre of art encompasses an expanded notion of art which is multi-dimensional in form and multi-directional in affect. I use the words multi-dimensional in form to describe the interactivity with the place, the inhabitants, the businesses, the services and the professionals working in the place of research. A multi-directional affect corresponds to the many ways participants can engage with the process. This shift in evaluation cuts across the professional disciplines with which it impacts, namely professionals working in regeneration as well as within the art world.

I will continue my research by using the evidence provided by this project to build on the established network of contacts and to highlight the potential benefits of socially engaged art to local government departments in Preston, so that they fully understand that this form of holistic consultation can help in both the planning and the long term success of any regeneration programme.

My research has revealed that there is cross-disciplinary interest (from architects, planners, community development workers, people working in health professions as well as artists and art professionals) in this particular methodology for art. However in order for professionals to fully appreciate the role the artist plays, I propose that the method of its evaluation needs to change so that greater attention is paid to the input the artist can have in making apparent the views and aspirations of people who are often under heard at this level. Art forms

---

<sup>52</sup> Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework for Littoral Art, Kester, Grant, Variant Issue 9, [www.variant.org.uk](http://www.variant.org.uk)  
Relational Aesthetics, Bourriaud, Nicolas, Les presses du reel, 2002 (English translation)

which are multidimensional in form and include processes of interaction in their methodology require the use of aesthetics based on dialogue and relationships as cited by Kester and Bourriaud.

In this chapter I will include a section on the role of the artist, cross-disciplinary interest and the distribution of information. This section will highlight some possible outcomes and include information from the launch event at Preston Town Hall for the interactive CD-ROM, as well as defining the approach to the design and production of the CD.

### **4:3 Key components of process - discovery, enablement and communication**

The process (as demonstrated in the diagram at the beginning of 4:2) of work uses the components of discovery, empowerment and communication in each layer of interaction. These components involve the artist, people living and working in Preston, the community participants and others. They are not restricted to any particular area of involvement, and there is no hierarchy. For example in figure 1 through the physical discovery of place, I (the artist) was able to communicate with people living and working in areas undergoing urban regeneration. The encounters I made with community development workers provided opportunities for them to discover information about my professional practice which meant that these community workers could suggest groups who might be interested in working with me.

The process always begins with discovery. In order to discover potential communities, I initiated strategies which used direct experience with the place of research, and this enabled me to discover its particularities. These particularities provided information which was used to map the area. This map was my personal construction and provided me with information particular to place which I could use to discover potential communities with whom I could work. As Lippard suggests this information is not easily found unless one becomes local. *"Local places remain stubbornly hidden from the systems of control and ownership."*<sup>53</sup> The discovery of this particular mapped information enabled me (the artist) to discover potential communities. I then arranged meetings in order to share my aims and objectives with potential participants.

These three key components – discovery, enablement and communication (as illustrated above) are vital to my particular approach to producing art work which invites participation and is hence an interactive engagement of participants who have an association to the place of research. They are not limited to particular areas of my practice and are used in the interactive process at all stages and by all engaged in the artist-initiated activity and are hence instrumental in providing a common ground for the mutual revelation /excavation of information about locality.

The methodology as outlined in chapter 3 produces work which is multidimensional in form and is made up of a complex web of networked contacts. In essence these three key components are used creatively to produce an interaction which utilises practical activities to facilitate empowerment and ownership in a shared negotiated agenda, and to produce artwork which is rooted in the lived experience of the residents associated with the place of research. The context of the work is the whole situation, the physical and social geography of place. This could be termed the topography of place, the

---

<sup>53</sup> The Lure of the Local, Lippard, Lucy, The New Press New York 1997, p77

relationship of the social with the physical. The context of the work is important; it is what makes the work particular and therefore can not be directly transferred to another situation as the context or the backdrop for the work would be different.

The work of American artists Helen and Newton Harrison is similar. They have produced projects over the last thirty years which respond to the ecological conditions of particular regions and have been invited to work in different environments around the world. I also facilitated a project which interacts with the conditions of a particular place.

The Harrisons use a process of interaction and dialogue which Kester refers to as 'active listening' with groups of people associated with the place of research, for example environmental activists, scientists and policy makers. This methodology, which the Harrisons describe as 'conversational drift', is very similar to the way I began my research. Newton Harrison explains,

*I don't think about our art as a product at all. As a guiding thought 'product' is counter productive.....(G)enerally we make installations which stand for the place and as a meeting ground for discourse.<sup>54</sup>*

The research project I initiated did not make an installation but did produce an exhibition of artefacts and documentation of the processes of production. This was the meeting ground used to promote discussion with regeneration officers, an architect, a planner, community development workers, the creative industries and an arts and cultural development officer. I then used the convention of a CD-ROM to present the research holistically, taking account of the context and particularity of place. The dialogical processes of interaction were included in the information presented on the CD-ROM. A CD-ROM, unlike an installation is easily reproduced and made available to others.

The work the Harrisons initiated was about gathering a particular and diverse body of information and using this to creatively (re)present this information to an associated audience who had been given the power to decide the outcome. The Harrisons are the authors of the (re)presented information presented to the government officials, whereas in my research the participating group were included in the authorship of the (re)presented work at the exhibition. The methodology of shared authorship which I adopted was a strategy to encourage ownership of the project by the participating group. Ownership of the project was not something the Harrisons were seeking. They were interested in the possibility of changing the mindset of the government officials by presenting a broader and inclusive agenda of the environmental problem they were investigating. My aim was to reveal particular local information from a particular local perspective, which may otherwise be difficult to discover using conventional methods of consultation such as questionnaires.

The notion of the artist becoming local is important because as suggested by Cllr Afrin at the CD launch *"you (the artist) were obviously able to see with fresh eyes."* The use of the word see is interesting because to see can mean to discover; by becoming local the artist has the potential to reveal or discover information together with the community. It is only through direct experience of place over a length of time that one is able to appreciate what it might be to "be local". As Lippard goes on to say in her book 'The Lure of the Local',

*"a truly space specific public art is still in its infancy. For all art that is about place, very little is of place – made by artists within their own places or with*

---

<sup>54</sup> Conversation Pieces, Community and Communication in Modern Art, Kester, Grant H, University of California Press 2004 p64

*the people who live in the scrutinized place, connecting with history and environment.*<sup>55</sup>

On the other hand the Harrisons raise questions about the larger ecological systems,

*“by knitting together connections based on the collective expertise of naturalists, scientists and activists. Further, they ask larger questions, and envision more comprehensive solutions, than individual specialists: literally ‘reframing’ the meaning of a given site.”*<sup>56</sup>

My research seeks to reframe the situation from a local perspective, to be inclusive in presenting particular information from people who have a direct association to the place of research and asking the other professionals seeking to develop that same place such information is useful to them.

Towns such as Preston which were once thriving industrial areas contain a number of disenfranchised communities, and Lippard reinforces this point by stating *“One way society disempowers people is to give them no credit for their thoughts and accomplishments.”*<sup>57</sup> The inclusiveness of my methodology seeks to empower people by including their thoughts and ideas in the developing agenda of the research. This strategy for encouraging participation in a creative process uses methods which secure empowerment, so enabling a democratic sharing of information about place which fosters ownership and contributes to promoting an active audience. This technique encourages and values the participants’ thoughts and accomplishments, and is a strategy which contributes to the regeneration of communities by encouraging active engagement with their community and locale.

#### **4:4 Key Guidelines**

As already stated, the mapping techniques I employed reframed the locality as an integrated social network of contacts, so providing me with up to date information that was acquired through direct engagement with place. I was not a passive observer looking at plans in an office and only engaging with people by phone or e-mail, but was building an image of the place for myself. I was not relying on the image provided by city marketers, as suggested by Hall,

*“Since the mid-1980’s a large and apparently growing industry has developed around the deliberate manipulation and promotion of place images, which has become an integral part of urban regeneration.”*<sup>58</sup>

This active onsite approach helped me become “local” and therefore provided me with an authentic identity when engaging with the community. I was able to demonstrate that I had acquired some knowledge of their locale, and this encouraged the sharing of information which they could provide from a very particular perspective.

The work that I initiated in Preston is grounded in grass roots experience, in face to face contact with people living and working in the places I have been researching. I was very aware, because of my previous art experience of working with agendas provided by commissioning agents that I wanted to initiate a project where the agenda was produced organically from the process of engagement. This open-ended approach proved difficult to explain to officials

---

<sup>55</sup> *ibid* p 263

<sup>56</sup> *ibid* p 65

<sup>57</sup> *ibid* p291/2

<sup>58</sup> *Urban Geography*, second edition, Hall, Tim, Routledge, 1998, 2001

working in regeneration, who are more familiar with concrete aims and objectives often allied to their own ideas and schemes, art for them is more commonly used to sell ideas to an audience perceived as being hostile to change. *"Public art became a tool to help these residents cope with change."*(FTA, 1996b:20)<sup>59</sup>

An inclusive negotiated agenda would be owned by the group, which, as stated previously, would encourage empowerment. This has not historically been the case,

*"Projects of urban regeneration in the UK, Europe and North America have been characterised by a lack of public debate, consultation, inquiry or detailed prior impact assessment."*<sup>60</sup>

This negotiated agenda took time to develop; I used strategies which built trust, and constant reflection each week on the developing process, enabled empowerment. There was a commitment on my part to enable engagement. This is a key initiative for building sustainable projects and a strategy which has relevance for urban regeneration if communities are to be consulted. An interactive discursive approach requires a reflexive methodology, and as Kester argues,

*"This reflexive orientation to dialogue is a key component of the aesthetic model I (Kester) am developing in this book, constituting a discursive corollary to the formal self reflexivity that plays such a central role to the Greenbergian critical tradition,"*<sup>61</sup>

A reflexive inclination towards conversation is a key component of dialogical art practice. My methodology of keeping a diary to record and reflect on the ongoing dialogical process enabled me to be flexible and respond on a weekly basis to my deliberations. Kester's call for a dialogic aesthetic model for critical analysis of art practice of this nature is a response to the critique of such work by contemporary critics.

*"When contemporary critics confront dialogical projects, they often apply a formal, pleasure based methodology that can not value, or even recognise the communicative interactions that these artists (practitioners of dialogical art processes) find so important."*<sup>62</sup>

Typically, dialogue has been provoked by an art object. Dialogue has not usually been an integral part of the artwork itself. The Greenbergian critical tradition refers to the modernist critic Clement Greenberg whose modernist ideals of aesthetic purity, the heroic, the genius, the visionary, has disconnected art from the everyday. Greenbergian concepts are connected with the artist as lone genius, often regarded as white, western and male and disconnected from the social or any ideas about relationship, dialogue or art as a process.

The research has demonstrated the success of this strategy for engagement by the way the Preston participants embraced the project. The participants became committed to the project, and therefore gained ownership of it. This is evidenced by their regular attendance at the workshops and by their presence at the exhibition and the CD launch event two years later. At the launch event one participant felt empowered enough to speak from the floor of the meeting about the benefits she felt she had experienced by participating in the project. She explained that by exploring the CD at the event, she had become aware of the amount of work I had done, and could see the places I had been to

---

<sup>59</sup> *Art, Space and the City*, Miles, Malcom, Routledge, 1997, p146

<sup>60</sup> *Urban Geography second edition*, Hall, Tim, Routledge 1998, 2001

<sup>61</sup> *Conversation Pieces, Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Kester, Grant H, California 2004 p69

<sup>62</sup> *ibid* p10

by viewing the video footage on the CD. This she felt was important as the project looked at the reality of how people live in Preston in 2002-2006, and the CD would be able to archive this experience. These comments are documented on DVD in the appendix to this thesis.

This methodology, which promotes interaction and dialogue, has been discussed by other professionals working in regeneration as a useful consultative tool which could be adopted as a strategy for the regeneration of urban communities. This was revealed by Councillor Veronica Afrin who holds the portfolio for Preston City Council's Regeneration, Community and Leisure Services Department at the launch of my CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall. Councillor Afrin said that she hoped the CD would be circulated widely throughout the City Council Departments as well as within community organisations in Preston, as the CD illustrated another form of consultation which could be used in the council's consultation strategy. The CD contains a recorded meeting with Derek Whyte, the Assistant Director of Regeneration for Preston City Council, which highlights his thoughts on how this work would be useful for developing community cohesion, and become a government strategy for regeneration.

It is suggested by Tim Hall, an Urban Geographer that *"the key to developing sustainable urban forms lies in encouraging development at the neighbourhood level."*<sup>63</sup> Through the inclusion of the neighbourhood in planning for their locality, grass roots expertise and knowledge are utilised, so respecting local conditions and valuing local social processes. Hall goes on to say,

*"Small scale, neighbourhood level planning seems to offer greater and realistic potential for achieving sustainability than that dealing with more abstract and universal approaches."*<sup>64</sup>

If the regeneration of communities is going to be sustainable, and sustainability is important if communities are going to continue to develop and contribute to wider society, then art work which enables empowerment of, and communication with an immediate audience as well as other interested parties must be a useful strategy for the regeneration of urban communities. As Hall mentions participation *"should be a 'right of citizenship'."*<sup>65</sup>

I will now return to the diagrams (labelled figures 1-6). Each concentric ring illustrates how the project created situations for networking with residents and professionals involved in regeneration. Figure 3 identifies interaction with community centre managers and community development workers. These are professionals involved in working directly with communities. The establishment of these networks was crucial in providing me with background information about the place of research. These professionals had long-standing links with the communities they were involved with, and were sources of information concerning planned activities and past projects. Figure 4 shows how the exhibition was used as a place to invite professionals working for the city council in regeneration, so drawing them into the project and using their expertise in a discursive approach to assessing the instigated process of work. These meetings provided opportunities for networking with a broad range of disciplines (multidisciplinary) involved in the regeneration of urban places. They were occasions for raising the profile of the work we were involved in and for people to recognise potential benefits of this area of practice in the future. These events were important in raising the awareness of all concerned to the different

---

<sup>63</sup> Urban Geography second edition, Hall, Tim, Routledge 1998, 2001 p182

<sup>64</sup> ibid p183

<sup>65</sup> ibid p182

perspectives of various professional disciplines and their approach to regeneration.

This research provided opportunities for residents of local neighbourhoods to contribute particular local knowledge; Hall correspondingly suggests that for future urban regeneration we will see, *“projects more attuned to the characteristics of their localities or which will utilise local pools of skills.”* The importance of including and taking account of locality is seen to be a key guideline for future regeneration schemes. Schemes which concentrated on regenerating and developing property in the hope of kick-starting economic growth have been criticised by academics, researchers and the media. The drawbacks of this model of urban regeneration was highlighted by the bankruptcy of the developers behind the London dockland scheme, and Hall suggests that,

*“future developments might include issues such as social welfare, economic and environmental sustainability and the ethnic and cultural diversity of urban populations.”*<sup>66</sup>

#### **4:5 Sustainability of the initiated work and community ownership.**

The methodology I used was successful in enabling the engagement of all the participants in each community group based in the areas undergoing regeneration. This is an important target as it enables the participants to gain ownership of the project, and is essential for the sustainability of the work.

The participants in the Tennantspin project initiated by the artist group Superchannel from Denmark gained ownership of the project quickly as they were actively involved in the management of the project from the beginning. The participants made the decisions about the programme content to be streamed over the internet. In contrast the New York sanitation workers appropriated the role of observers of performances by the artist Laderman Ukeles. The participant workers were not actively engaged in the project and therefore ownership of the work remained with Laderman-Ukeles. The project she initiated could be described as a residency project. She was the resident artist for the New York sanitation department, a large institution run by the city council. In contrast Superchannel were visitors to high rise flats in Liverpool, although the flats were owned by Liverpool Housing Association Trust (Liverpool HAT) they were the homes of the participants in the project. Homes are personal/private spaces unlike the streets of New York which are public spaces. Perhaps it is easier for participants to become actively engaged in a project which is initiated in their own personal space as opposed to the public nature of a city street.

Another example of a residency which included participants working collaboratively with a resident artist is Dawn Dedaux's work with African American men in an art-in-the-prisons program in New Orleans, North America. As with the Laderman-Ukeles residency, this work was also with a large institution. Dedaux used the situation to gather information through dialogue about the lives of the prisoners.

In his book 'Conversation Pieces' Kester raises some of the ethical dilemmas artists who work across class, cultural and racial boundaries come up against, namely compromising one's trust, perhaps inadvertently, by documenting and storing information about the personal lives of vulnerable people, in this case convicted criminals. Dedaux secured access to the inmates of the prison through her professional status as an artist and social worker,

---

<sup>66</sup> ibid p169

having had experience of work in both spheres. She came to know two prisoners who were infamous for the crimes they had committed and she documented conversations held with them and developed a rapport. Dedaux used these conversations in workshops with imprisoned young black boys who knew, revered and respected these men and so managed to engage their attention. In his analysis of this project, Kester highlights the benefit Dedaux herself received from working closely with these men. Having been mugged herself she became aware of her own fear of young black men whom she had begun to objectify. This project acted as a therapeutic resource, helping her to regain her confidence which had taken a huge blow as a consequence of the mugging. However, the documentation she had gathered from the conversations with the two infamous prisoners was seized by the police some years later when one of these two men had murdered a police witness, seized by the police. It was used to build a case against him.

The information Dedaux collected was used in an installation of video booths which showed film narratives of convicted black people expressing their contrition and grief. The installation was built around the experiences of young black men in New Orleans and it was then exhibited in other cities, namely Rochester, Baltimore and Los Angeles.

*"In Rochester they bussed in students from poor and working class black communities. They also arranged visits from youth and probation and suspended city school students and established a 'debriefing' room staffed by social workers, psychologists, and school counsellors. When the show travelled to Los Angeles it was installed in the Los Angeles Photography Center in MacArthur Park, a largely working class, immigrant community."<sup>67</sup>*

The context of the residency changed. The installation was seen by other institutions from other areas and co-opted by them as a way of putting forward their views and ideals to an audience of their choosing. Kester criticises this move to other cities, as the installation was not inviting open debate about the work Dedaux had completed but focused on the contrition of the prisoners, thus aligning it with the existing institutional authorities of the social services and justice system. The project had been sponsored in New Orleans by the Institute for Mental Hygiene and the Orleans Parish Prison. I question what opportunities were being offered for the expression of other concepts and ideas from outside institutional organisations.

In the course of my research in Preston I also gathered and documented information about people from particular localities in the city. Although this was not used in a compromising way, it could be said that by revealing information which by its very nature can be personal, the artist compromises the participant when this information is displayed to a viewing public. The participants were always aware of what I was documenting and I included them in choosing what was displayed at the exhibition and so that they had editorial power regarding what was seen. This was not the case for the participants in Dedaux's installation since she edited the video and was sole author of how the installation was presented to a viewing public.

---

<sup>67</sup> Conversation Pieces Community and Communication in Modern Art, Kester, Grant H, University of California Press 2004 p145

## 4:6: The Design and Development of the CD-ROM

My decision to build an interactive structure which would contain relevant information about the process of research was grounded in the awareness that my professional practice adopts a layered process of investigation, and that my methodology uses inclusive participation.

Evidence of this approach is demonstrated by the series of diagrams (figures 1-6 on pages 39-44), where each circle of interaction represents this layered approach. I was aware that a CD-ROM has the ability to contain within it a layered structure of information. I built a three-dimensional model in the first instance, to explore the design and construction of the stand alone, interactive compact disc.

My programme of related studies included tuition in using the software Macromedia Director. This extended my knowledge of the programme and I learned how sound, still and moving images can be choreographed into an interactive stage, where the user is offered a range of choices to explore. The project developed over a period of three years, and I felt it was important that the front page or first layer in the design process should reflect the association with time and place, as support for this genre of art practice requires long-term commitment from a commissioning body. I have used a timeline which references activities which occurred at particular points along this line. The design decisions I made were linked to building a coherent narrative of the whole process of research. The colours I chose to use were linked to the palate of colours in the image of the map of Preston which was built using pieces of map available to academics from the internet source of Digimaps. The map therefore is important in visually expressing the place of research using an imaging device with which most are familiar – a map of Preston. The points of activity on the timeline are linked to buttons which are found on the map. From this position I was able to design interactive buttons which act as 'gateways' to information. The buttons are positioned on the map where the activity they represent actually happened. They are devices for accessing layers of information associated with particular events at particular times. The ability of this software to construct a multi-dimensional form into which I could pin particular multimedia information and reference this to time and place, has provided me with a new vehicle to creatively represent a holistic experience of the whole process of work. The documentation is annotated with my voice, another design decision I made which was influenced by my face-to-face contact with the network of participants in the project. By using the sound of my voice on the CD I was able to reflect my particular identity and approach. The interactive quality of each button is important as it enables the user to discover their own pathway through the research; this is an important aspect, as this approach allowed me to extend my methodology of participation to the CD-ROM and hence another potential audience.

The software Macromedia Director enables interaction by the user with the resources presented on a compact disc, thus promoting another layer of participation: figure 6 illustrates this mechanism. The participatory nature of the project is illustrated in this case by an interactive CD-ROM. This becomes the methodology for disseminating information about the whole of the project, not only about the participation with the communities and the exhibition, but also about the methods used to discover the place of research and the processes used to interact with professionals working in different disciplines in the same place. It has been used as a format for the dissemination of information about this area of art practice.

#### **4:7: The role of the artist, cross disciplinary interest and the distribution of information**

It has been suggested by Declan Mc Gonagle<sup>68</sup> that this area of practice has denied itself the recognition it deserves because it has failed to distribute information about itself to arts organisations and galleries. It is therefore at this point pertinent to consider what is distributed and which organisations are targeted for distribution purposes.

This research project has involved a multi-directional approach which included developing working relationships with professionals involved in regeneration as well as with art professionals. The methodology I have initiated has been instrumental in providing opportunities for cross-disciplinary discussion about the work in progress. The research itself has therefore identified which organisations are targeted for the distribution of the information gathered. The project has developed direct associations with these connected organisations; which therefore have an invested interest in the project. This genre of art practice is carried out alongside other professional disciplines represented in urban areas which are undergoing regeneration. The level of success is dependent upon including them in the network of contacts gathered through the research, as this network will contribute to the sustainability of the project, a fact I found was recognised by the other professionals I encountered who were involved with the regeneration schemes. Therefore a methodology for socially-engaged art practice must include other professional organisations in the distribution of material about the work and also regard them as potential audiences for the work.

This approach to art practice therefore encourages and invites an expanded audience for the work and maybe this has contributed to its status as art especially from high art institutions including museums and galleries. The methodology I have developed includes art professionals in the multi-directional process and I contacted art professionals working in Preston when I began this research project. They validated my research by enabling the public exhibition to be held in . The work was particular to Preston, and therefore the local gallery was an apt place to site the exhibition. The work exhibited in this form would not be suitable for display in other museums and galleries outside of Preston. The exhibition at the Harris was part of the whole process of interaction and as such it is included in the CD-ROM. However, it is only a part of the whole project. The exhibition was sited in an unusual part of the museum, the Rotunda Café, and this proved to be a successful place. This place was chosen after discussion with the museum's programmes manager.

My position as an MPhil research student from the University of Central Lancashire, based in Preston, contributed to the relationship I had with the The Harris Museum and Art Gallery, it having a long-standing link with the art department at the university. The site of the exhibition was important because it conveyed to a visiting public that the work had been endorsed by the art professionals from the museum. The launch event for the CD-ROM was held at the Town Hall in Preston in order to facilitate a diverse audience, from professionals involved in regeneration, art, community workers and local people.

The multi-directional approach to this work has provided opportunities for raising the awareness of a range of professionals involved in regeneration and

art to the many facets and perspectives inherent in the work. This was highlighted by responses given at the launch event for the CD-ROM by a city councillor, a public art development officer, a participant and the programmes manager of the museum. They identified potential uses for the work, namely community consultation, development of new temporary public art with a direct association to place, documentation and promotion of real life experience and questions about how best to use a CD-ROM to disseminate information about the research.

If this area of art practice is validated by professional regeneration organisations, one has to ask why some art galleries and organisations find it difficult to do so. To answer this, I must return to my previous proposition of the need for a paradigm shift in the evaluation of this practice using new aesthetics, where relational and dialogic aesthetics are taken into account when assessing the success of a project. Does this mean then that this work cannot be considered art because it uses an expanded notion of aesthetics which incorporates the evaluation of a process which produces a shared negotiation of form? This would mean that art must be a dictatorship, where an artist can only be defined by self possessed autonomy which does not incorporate democratic processes of inclusivity, a notion I have discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis. This argument will continue.

I propose that in this post-modern era of art, the notion of a pluralistic art form, which is produced from a negotiated discussion of developing relationships, is not only necessary as a strategy for improving quality of life, but will also be instrumental in reconnecting art with everyday life experience, and therefore has the potential to be a valuable strategy for regeneration.

My role as the artist has been to utilise creative methods of representing this work which illustrate the inclusive methodology and the multi-dimensional form of the work.

The methodology involved in the distribution of material is an important strategy and requires the artist to plan how s/he will utilise the contacts gathered from the initiated project to provided opportunities for networking with professionals working in regeneration. These contacts are channels to be used for the dissemination of information about the project. Professionals working in regeneration have thus been enabled to recognise how this methodology can be used in the process of regeneration.<sup>69</sup>

It is difficult to discover methods of distribution which offer a secondary or tertiary audience an experience of the process without direct involvement. However in an effort to encourage active participation rather than a passive voyeuristic approach, I have researched methods which use strategies for participation, for example, new media which have the ability to invite interaction. This format i.e. the CD-ROM is able to extend the methodology for participation to wider audiences, and therefore promotes a more authentic involvement in a socially-engaged project. I have therefore explored using new media as a methodology for distributing information about socially-engaged art processes. The presentation of video, still photography, sound recording, sketching, text etc. are all easily assimilated into digital formats, thus offering an interactive user ways of understanding a place from various perspectives. My intention is that distribution of this CD will validate this work as a process for revealing particular information embedded in communities which might otherwise be difficult to discover. The spoken responses from professionals working in regeneration,

---

<sup>69</sup> Please see cllr Afrin responses at the CD launch section 2 of this chapter and Derek Whyte's response recorded on the CD.

included on the CD, as well as documentation from the launch event, are evidence for the utilisation of this particular information by other professional disciplines.

The project has been identified by the Assistant Director of Regeneration for Preston City Council as a tool for developing community cohesion. At the launch event Councillor Afrin identified the project as a strategy for community consultation. The officer for developing public art in Preston recognised that the CD-ROM could be used as a tool for discussion in raising the awareness of other council departments to this area of art practice. A participant from the project felt empowered to share her experience which had developed since engaging interactively with the CD-ROM. She recognised the amount of face to face contact in the project and felt that this was an important strategy for identifying and valuing everyday life experience.

The working relationships I have developed with various strands of the community in realising this research are manifested in the design and construction of the CD. The CD allows exploration of the project from various angles by inviting interaction from particular points of interest, as demonstrated at the launch event. It invites the user to interact with the information from their particular perspective. For example, a city officer may begin by accessing information with relevance to their own profession, for instance interviews with city council officers. A resident of Avenham may begin by exploring information particular to that vicinity of Preston. Thus the design of the CD is place-specific and allows the interactive user to focus on their particular areas of interest. There is an option for returning to the starting place each time, and opportunities to discover new aspects of place. The CD uses voice recording rather than text to explain the work processes; this approach mirrors the face-to-face nature of the reality of the encounters I initiated which were often discussions. This technique of representing the work was positively endorsed by comments made by a participant at the launch of the CD-ROM, as previously stated.

The CD has been mailed to various regional and national organisations and professionals involved in urban regeneration, communities and art, as well as art academics with an interest in socially-engaged practice.

#### **4:8 Conclusion**

This research project has presented opportunities for cross-disciplinary discussions on the role of the artist in regeneration, which have revealed that according to other professionals working in regeneration, this methodology for initiating art has the potential to be adopted and included as a strategy for community consultation and cohesion. The launch event for the CD held at Preston Town Hall was instrumental in providing a situation for this to be suggested and endorsed by city councillors working in regeneration in Preston. It was hoped that this would result in further meetings to raise the awareness of other city departments in Preston to this approach.

These meetings will provide opportunities for Preston City Council to endorse and adopt this methodology as a valid process in the regeneration of urban communities. This defines a role for the artist in urban regeneration programmes and affirms this methodology as a significant genre of art practice.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions: contributions to knowledge and forms of dissemination.**

### **5:1 Introduction**

In conclusion I will begin by summarising the completed project in order to demonstrate how I have engaged with the research question. In identifying my own professional practice as socially-engaged art, I will position myself within this contemporary genre. The heuristic approach to this research has enabled empirical learning to take place on many levels, and was necessarily open-ended in order to facilitate authentic collaboration from all participants.

This open concept, which adopted a flexible framework method to facilitate the sharing of an inclusive agenda for the research, has been a methodology which has enabled me to become more aware of the specific roles I played as an artist within the project.

Through my research, which has crossed other disciplines, I have become more aware of the importance of disseminating information about this area of practice. Mc Gonagle's idea for a claimed distribution of information or lack of it as being the reason for the low profile of community art in the arena of galleries and museums raises questions for me about what is distributed, and how it is distributed. I will address these issues in this concluding chapter, and in so doing will reveal how the development of digital technology is contributing new methods and resources for the documentation and dissemination of information.

### **5:2 Contextual summary - the identification of my professional practice and the positioning of myself within this contemporary context.**

My practice has adopted different forms of expression, which is illustrated in the very different outcomes achieved when working with the two groups in Preston. I have represented these different outcomes in the form of an exhibition in a local art gallery and museum using a back projected DVD on a large screen, artefacts produced from the workshops, voice recordings of the participants and encouragement of another layer of participation through the invitation to explore specified local shops using a map and shopping bag. I used this exhibition as a way to engage with local professionals working in regeneration and with art professionals by offering a personal invitation to meet me at the exhibition and discuss the work. I thus extended my research to include further investigation through discussion with these professionals and others in order to achieve a more holistic approach to the evaluation of this research.

In this twenty first century I identify my professional practice as being socially-engaged and I have researched ideas of a shared authorship. Although this approach of sharing authorship is adopted by other artists such as the group Superchannel, discussed in chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis, socially-engaged art practice can not be described as 'mainstream', and this particular strand of shared authorship is uncommon.

The historical context of this thesis began with information from the 1960's about Joseph Beuys and his expanded notion of art, which included working with speech, thought and will, or what he termed social sculpture. The intervening decades have seen work by artists, curators and commissioning bodies who have explored ways of communicating more directly with an audience, but in order to research or make visible their own ideas and issues. As with Beuys, the authority and authorship of the work remained with those artists, curators and commissioning bodies. Superchannel, who do share authorship use their skills

in digital media to enable collaborators to make TV style programmes; their area of practice always resides in the field of digital media and even though every new piece of art can be described as unique, their mode of presentation (in contrast to mine) remains the same.

My research has involved the initiation of layers of interaction with various communities connected to the place of research, which for me was Preston. This necessary interaction signposts my professional art practice as socially-engaged. I recognise that the methodologies adopted by socially-engaged artists are varied and diverse. The methodology I have developed has been instrumental in promoting a participatory art project with an inclusive open agenda centred on a particular place. This agenda has included collaborating with a primary audience to make art work which was driven by negotiated responses to their locale. This methodology of working was made available for another audience in the form of a public exhibition, described above, where professionals working in regeneration were invited to comment on the project. This has subsequently resulted in the production of a piece of work with a 'multi-layered format' – the CD-ROM. This multi-layering has made manifest the collaborative role of the work and has extended the interactive form of the whole project.

### **5:3 Contributions to knowledge of collaborative art processes which employ dialectic methodologies of interaction and mapping in order to reveal particular information about Preston and the dissemination of this information to other audiences in that city.**

In response to my research question my analysis of art processes employing dialectic methodologies of interaction began by mapping exercises. This research has been about the initiation of a practical project with various layers of participation. The following points provide a succinct summary of the contributions to knowledge made by this research which are explained in more depth in the rest of this chapter.

#### **1. Development of an original bespoke methodology which encourages dialogue and participation, not just with a primary audience but with subsequent audiences who have a desire to engage with the project.**

Key components:

- A methodology which is flexible and accommodates the individual circumstances and personalities present in the participating group.
- Strategies which encourage participation on different levels in order to facilitate social engagement. These strategies were developed as engagement was established.
- The concept of an open agenda which is linked to a particular place in order to encourage participation and contribution by using interaction and mapping with an audience connected to this location undergoing regeneration - in this case Preston. Thus a place specific project imbued with particular information provided by the connected participants who have direct experience of the place undergoing regeneration was developed.

- A new approach which uses interaction and mapping to achieve engagement and ownership of a project. This has led to the development of a new methodology for disseminating information across other professional disciplines connected to urban regeneration, including art professionals.
- A public exhibition of the work in progress. The place and format of the exhibition was directly connected to the place and methodological approach of the project (the exhibition invited visitors to participate in the project).

## **2. A new theory of form with evidence to substantiate my claim.**

Key components:

- Democratic negotiation is the driving force in producing a form of work which includes a network of communication and participation.
- A paradigm shift in aesthetics in order to evaluate the work, whereby aesthetic issues around negotiation, relationship and communication are included in the evaluation.

## **3. A form of disseminating information about this genre of art practice which is more authentically connected to the methodology of participation.**

The forms used for the dissemination of information about this genre of art practice are an interesting issue, since according to Mc Gonagle this genre of art practice has lacked the validation it deserves because it has failed to find suitable ways of providing information which holistically encompasses the whole process of work. The development of the CD-ROM has been used as a method for distributing information about this field of practice.

Key components

- The design and production of a stand-alone interactive CD-ROM. This has been used as a form for disseminating information about this genre of art practice which is more authentically connected to the methodology of participation. This new media format has the ability to utilise a multi-layered narrative using documentation in various compositions of sound, moving and still image.
- A public launch of the CD-ROM. This was held at Preston Town Hall, a venue chosen in relation to the intended audience, which comprised city councillors, professionals working in regeneration in Preston and the communities directly involved in the project as well as art professionals from art organisations, museums and galleries.

#### **5:4: An evaluation of art processes employing dialectic methodologies of interaction and mapping in Preston.**

In response to my research question my evaluation of the art processes employing dialectic methodologies began by undertaking mapping exercises, so building a body of information particular to place which I could use to facilitate a project. The mapping activities, which included the artist interacting with organisations, residents and the physical place itself (the place of regeneration), went on to include other participatory mapping methods with a connected audience, the connection to the place of regeneration being through either habitation or work. This project involved the artist working together with a resident community in order to discover embedded information about particular lives in a particular place. This was presented to other audiences, where I discovered that the initiated project was analysed from various professional disciplines (connected to urban regeneration) which assessed the work from different perspectives. This approach to artistic practice has been termed socially-engaged; identification of this genre is important in providing information about where the emphasis of the work is positioned.

Through my research I have become aware that the success of a socially-engaged art project may be evaluated by:

1. How and why the place of research was chosen and the subsequent association of this place with the aims of the project.

I chose Preston as the place of research because it is a new city experiencing regeneration. As a student attending the University of Central Lancashire whose campus is situated in the city, I had a connection to that place and could easily access areas on a daily basis. This meant I could arrange meetings with established groups and city officers with the knowledge that these relationships would have the potential to develop over time. Based in Preston, I was able to explore potential areas of research on foot and at different times of the day and on different days of the week; in essence I had the opportunity to experience 'being local' and utilise the existing links between the University and the City Council.

All the above points contributed to the aim of the project which was to find out if an artist employing dialectic methodologies of interaction and mapping could reveal particular information pertinent to the site of research, including in the negotiated agenda a collaboration with people associated with the location of the project.

2. The strategies used by the artist to enable engagement with the place of research, and the subsequent success of these strategies in providing relevant information.

I used a bespoke flexible methodology which was developed over the length of the project. It was successful in engaging participants as it was able to respond because of its flexibility to the requirements of each particular group. The development of the research was recorded using a weekly diary which enabled reflection. This strategy, although time consuming and often challenging, enabled me to discover ways of engaging the group, and through this engagement the participants became motivated to contribute particular

information about their everyday lives. The project with Pukar was probably more successful in motivating the whole group to contribute particular information. The Surestart group had a different dynamic as they were parents of small children who were present at each session, although cared for by Surestart staff. The work produced by this group was far more personal, and I think this was a reflection of the lives of the members revolving quite intensely round the care and nurture of pre-school children. The Pukar group worked together in negotiating and discussing how the project developed around their own particular shopping habits. The group was made up of middle-aged women; one man joined the group until he gained employment.

3. The management of this information by the artist in order to discover methods for engaging with the residents of communities associated with the place of research.

I utilised onsite mapping techniques to gather information about the location of the research and I walked the streets to enable me to gain knowledge of the layout and street names of the area, thereby discovering where local shops as well as community centres, schools, health centres and faith centres were situated. This information was used to find out where local groups met, and through discovery and attendance at a community day I was introduced to local service providers. I then used these points of contact to arrange meetings and deliver presentations about my professional practice and research proposal. These strategies were very successful in revealing a number of potential groups.

4. The methods and strategies used by the artist to discover potential groups.

Once I had arranged to meet with a centre manager or group committee to present to them information about my professional practice and research proposal, I looked for ways of discovering information about that particular group. For instance, I picked up leaflets offering information about these groups from local libraries, and spoke to professional people working in the arts in Preston and to local artists and art organisations. This gave me some insight into the history of the group, their previous art experience and the sorts of courses they delivered. I was then able to use this knowledge to inform the development of the presentation I gave about myself and the sort of work I could offer. This was important in discovering common ground. For example, the Pukar centre regularly ran practical art and craft activities and so I used this information to promote my research. The meetings were always delivered in an informal and friendly manner. These strategies proved to be successful in securing my involvement with Pukar and Surestart.

5. The methods and strategies used by the artist to promote engagement with these groups.

These methods and strategies proved to successfully engage the participants from both Pukar and Surestart, as members of each group attended regularly. They enabled members of both groups to contribute particular information. The Pukar group used information about the group's shopping habits in Preston and this information was presented in the form of shopping bags displaying information on a map with images of the shops. These were used to extend to

those visiting the exhibition an invitation to participate. The Surestart group contributed personal information about their families' everyday lives, including what they held to be precious, and the achievements and interests of their children. This was presented in the form of an altered book and a personal journal.

6. The success of said methods in enabling engagement of the group – evidenced by:
  - a. Regular attendance
  - b. Contributed information
  - c. Demonstration of shared authorship
  - d. Attendance at exhibition opening
  - e. Willingness to own the project

The shared authorship of the Pukar project was manifested by the inclusion of the whole group's ideas, the whole group's involvement in the production of the bags, the whole group's inclusion in the effort to obtain sponsorship of the bags from the shops and the shared cooking activities, including the cooking which took place at the exhibition opening event. For Surestart this was not as obvious, as the books they produced were of a personal nature. However, the whole group was involved in the idea and the decision to make books and we performed the practical tasks together as a group.

Both groups were well represented at the exhibition opening, with all of the Surestart participants attending with their children; most of the Pukar participants were present, including those who were involved in cooking for the visitors. This is evidence of their ownership of the project. I recognise that such ownership is difficult to differentiate from enthusiasm for the project. However, the Pukar participants demonstrated that they were willing to associate themselves with the project by volunteering to cook at the opening, and by their involvement in trying to obtain sponsorship from the shops. This association could be an indication of their willingness to own the project. I was asked by the Surestart group members at the exhibition when I would be able to return their books. This, as well as their attendance at the exhibition opening was evidence that this group was also willing to be associated with the project. Both groups were keen to carry on working with me and expressed this as a desire they were pursuing themselves.

7. The effectiveness of the form and dissemination of material to other art galleries, museums and institutions.

In order to evaluate whether this particular information presented at the exhibition was useful to other professionals in Preston it was necessary to extend the research to include interviews with professionals working in regeneration in Preston. The transcripts from these recorded interviews can be found in an appendix to this thesis. These interviews include my attempts to raise their awareness of this area of art practice and to understand how it might be incorporated into strategies for regeneration. In my interview with Derek Whyte<sup>70</sup> (Assistant Director for Regeneration for Preston City Council), he expressed an understanding of my approach and its usefulness in promoting community cohesion, and that this is an area the council would be keen to explore creatively. This was also addressed by Councillor Veronica Afrin who holds the portfolio for Preston City Council's Regeneration, Community and Leisure

---

<sup>70</sup> See page 7 of the transcript

Services Department. At the launch event for my CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall, she also expressed her hope that the CD would be circulated widely throughout the City Council Departments as well as within community organisations in Preston, as it illustrated another form of consultation which the council could utilise in their own consultation strategy. This knowledge is evidence that the particular information revealed by the participating groups is of interest to other professionals working in Preston.

The CD was mailed to national organisations involved in art and regeneration. The feedback I have received so far includes e-mails of interest, networking opportunities and requests for a CD.

The following organisations e-mailed expressions of interest:

Tessa Fitzjohn

Arts manager of Looking Ahead Housing and Care, Bristol

Peter Sinclair

North London Arts and Creative Sector Development  
Urban Futures

Kim Graham

Arts Infrastructure Manager, Liverpool Culture Company

Alessio D'Angelo

Information Services Officer, Creative Exchange, Development House, 56-64  
Leonard Street, London EC2A 4LT

Kathleen Houghton, Communications Director,  
Elevate, East Lancashire

This information offers evidence of interest nationally from institutions involved with urban communities.

The above points all refer to the way the artist is building a relationship with the location and the participants in the project. An analysis of the results of the research is not about assessing the products of the workshops and the skills displayed by the participants. This is a project which uses dialectic processes, and therefore to concentrate on end products would be to misrepresent the work's importance which lies in the engagement of the artist with the location of the project and with its participants. The aesthetic of the work lies in how the artist related to the location and the community, and through discursive negotiation enabled an engaged collaboration to take place.

The work produced from this collaboration was made available to a secondary audience in the form of a public exhibition which continued to invite participation. The secondary participants validated the research by advocating ways for this approach to the practice of art being used as a tool for community cohesion. The participation of secondary audiences from other professional fields was instrumental in raising awareness of this methodological approach, and provided opportunities for validation and evaluation from other perspectives.

## **5:5 Evidence of my developed methodology implicit within the research I initiated.**

I have become more aware of the skills required for the realisation of a socially-engaged art project as my research has progressed. Through this research I was able to examine my own ideas for methods and strategies which encouraged communication, trust and ownership of the project and developed a flexible methodology which used practical tasks to promote informal communication and a sharing of information particular to place. I have recognised my individual approach to working with a group of people as instrumental in gaining the trust of my collaborators, and this has contributed to the successful realisation of a piece of artwork. This contribution to the project focuses on my skills in communication with other people. Such skills are not normally associated with the development of a piece of art. This evaluation has led me to propose that a new aesthetic framework is required for a full analysis of socially-engaged art projects.

An important ingredient in my research has been an open approach to the project where the agenda for the work is based on a particular place, and the items within that agenda are explored through interacting in that place with a connected audience or community. This connected audience or community contributed to the developing agenda with their particular knowledge of the place. Evidence for the success of this concept is found in the level of engagement of the participants and the contribution of local knowledge provided by the map on the shopping bag and the personal information contained within the hand-made books. Most of the participants attended the opening event and contributed to the evening by cooking for the visitors.

The group based in Deepdale produced very different work from the group based in Avenham; this illustrates the level of contribution from the collaborating group as well as the level of inclusivity made available by myself. I was the initiator of the project; thus holding the authority and, by discovering ways of engaging with the participants, I was able to share the ownership of the project with them.

Since the concept of an open agenda is unusual, I have used various methods for raising the awareness of this approach, for example:

- a) An initial report sent to organisations and contacts gathered from the initial mapping process.
- b) A public exhibition
- c) Meetings with professionals working in regeneration at the venue for the exhibition.
- d) These meetings were used as opportunities to build relationships with professionals working in regeneration, which were necessary to developing possibilities for the future as well as to raising awareness, and were therefore continued and extended to include more professionals from regeneration.
- e) A public launch of the CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall. I was able to invite all the gathered contacts I had collected over the length of the research. This event enabled me to introduce and explain the format of the CD-ROM in the context of the research.

I have created opportunities for other professionals working in regeneration in Preston to engage with my research and myself as the artist who facilitated the project. This has led to my approach being recognised by professionals working in regeneration as a methodology which could be adopted in their work for developing the cohesiveness of communities. This contribution to cross-disciplinary knowledge was made possible by my direct association with other professionals working in regeneration in Preston. The responses generated by these meetings have been included in the working process of building an ephemeral structure of a network of communication. The discussions have also been included in the production of the interactive CD-ROM which documents this ephemeral process.

### **5:6: Evidence for the proposal of a paradigm shift in the aesthetic modes used to evaluate this expanded notion of art practice**

Implicit within this evidence is the notion that a new aesthetic framework is required to analyse fully socially-engaged art practice. I therefore propose a paradigm shift in the aesthetic modes used to evaluate this expanded notion of art practice. I use the word 'aesthetic' to denote a set of artistic principles or a theory of form, and this is where I return to the theory supplied by Bourriaud<sup>71</sup>. First I will analyse the negotiated essence of the project I initiated. Embedded in the negotiated fabric of the research are found the threads of connected dialogue which represent a connected aesthetic within which the sustainability of the project is held. These threads of dialogue are illustrated clearly in figure 5<sup>72</sup> in this thesis. The dialogue is further evidence of the level of engagement of a connected community; my research reveals a more holistic approach to the research that engaged and included cross-disciplinary analysis of the work by other professionals with a working knowledge of the particular place of the research. This supports the critical framework supplied by Kester<sup>73</sup> of dialogical aesthetics, where dialogue is necessary to encourage engagement.

An interactive piece of art which relies on the social engagement of participants is therefore dependent upon a theory of art which supports the social context of the work. Bourriaud suggests

*“Relational art (an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space) points to a radical upheaval of the aesthetic, cultural and political goals introduced by modern art.”<sup>74</sup>*

He continues with

*“Relational aesthetics does not represent a theory of art; this would imply the statement of an origin and a destination, but a theory of form.”<sup>75</sup>*

---

<sup>71</sup> Referenced in chapter 2 of this thesis

<sup>72</sup> Found on page 44 of this thesis

<sup>73</sup> Referenced in chapter 2 of this thesis

<sup>74</sup> Relational Aesthetics, Bourriaud, Nicolas, Les presses du réel, 1998, p13

<sup>75</sup> *ibid* p21

It follows then that art work employing dialectic methodologies of interaction and strategies for mapping the social context of the work expresses this alternative theory of form which manifests a relational aesthetic.

Another theory of form developed by Declan Mc Gonagle concerns a concept of working in four dimensions<sup>76</sup> where the fourth dimension is a porous interface of negotiation which can accommodate all or some of the other three dimensions. The first dimension is the idea of self working in a studio, (the modernist tradition); the second adds the idea of communicating with a viewer; the third describes the artist working outside the gallery. In this theory put forward by Mc Gonagle, the authorship of the work remains with the artist and the participants are invited into a negotiation of the meaning and value in the art process by contributing their thoughts, so adding value to what is already there. I understand this to mean that the participants are essentially playing the role of art critic by offering their contribution to a discussion of an artwork presented by the artist – a strategy used by Beuys in his concept of social sculpture.

I propose that Mc Gonagle's four-dimensional theory operating in tandem with Bourriaud's relational aesthetics provides the foundations for a paradigm shift in the aesthetic framework or theory of form required to analyse socially-engaged art practice. The theory of form which best describes my practice must include the notion of shared authorship. This element is not included in the theory provided by Kester, Bourriaud and Mc Gonagle, where the artist retains the creative authority. The autonomy of participatory practice cannot remain solely with the artist if the theoretical horizon for the work resides in the social context of including human interactions.

For this negotiated form to be authentic, it must be an inclusive, democratic negotiation where authorship is shared. If the artist is to be an authentic negotiator, s/he must be able to accommodate the cultural values of the other in the negotiated process of producing form. This alternative theory of form must therefore include a porous interface of negotiation, relational aesthetics and inclusive participation. Such inclusive participation requires dialogue (verbal or nonverbal)<sup>77</sup> in order to actualise this negotiated form which constantly changes as the process develops. In order for the process of production to be inclusive, the social context of the work must exhibit some connecting aesthetics. The project I initiated included the overriding connection with Preston. I was able to use this to include various layers of participation in the whole project:-

- The groups I worked with.
- The exhibition participants.
- The professionals working in regeneration

Each of the above was able to respond to the initiated process because they held in common a connection with Preston.

This alternative theory of form supports a call for a paradigm shift in the aesthetic framework used to evaluate socially-engaged art practice. To summarise, evaluation of socially-engaged art projects must consider aesthetics of negotiation, relation, dialogue and connection when assessing and analysing this genre of art practice.

---

<sup>76</sup> VAGA Annual General Meeting, Manchester City Art Gallery 11<sup>th</sup> March 2005

<sup>77</sup> I recognise that there are other modes of communication that could be used, they would need to be able to be democratically understood.

## **5:7 Evidence of the developed form for the dissemination of information about the project which I initiated; a form which is more authentically connected to a methodology of participation.**

In recognising that socially-engaged practice manifests an alternative form, it is much easier to comprehend the difficulties encountered when researching what form the dissemination of information about this work to validating institutions should take. Some practitioners are sceptical about the relevance of this activity. However, considering that much of this area of practice produces ephemeral works and lacks validation there is concern for practitioners interested in this field of always having to 'reinvent the wheel'. If this area of art practice is to exist alongside more traditional forms of art and receive corresponding acknowledgement by writers and critics of the history of art, the form of dissemination that it takes is crucial. This area of art practice includes not only visual works but aural work and work which is tactile. This further compounds the difficulty in finding a form which can express the aesthetic qualities inherent in this genre of art practice. The qualities I have listed above, which I claim to be necessary components to be included in an alternative evaluative aesthetic framework, are also essentially ephemeral and difficult to make manifest to a critical audience. How does one demonstrate a relational or connective aesthetic for example? I investigated how new media might be used to address the problem of making manifest ephemeral relational and connective aesthetics. A stand-alone CD-ROM is able to provide a layered structural framework on which I could choreograph the documented evidence of audio, still and moving image. This is able to provide information about the whole process of work to an audience who has not directly participated in the project. This interactive capability enables the audience to experience an element of participation by devising or exploring their own path through the research.

I have researched using the software Macromedia Director to create a stand alone CD-ROM and have discovered that this medium is capable of revealing the ephemeral qualities inherent in socially-engaged art work, and is therefore a useful resource for distributing information about this work to a wider audience. This programme uses simple programming language to enable the user to incorporate sound, video (including animation) and still images to choreograph (using the computer screen as a stage) an interactive narrative of the processes involved in a socially-engaged project. This format has enabled the inclusion of other voices of participation which is an important element in revealing the authentic dialogic aesthetic within the work. The connective aesthetics are made apparent using video and still images which reference Preston generally, and in particular those areas of Preston which are associated with the groups with whom I collaborated. I have been able to include documentation of the exhibition which manifests the negotiated aesthetics present in the process of making art works for public display. I have chosen to use my voice on the CD to annotate the process and to reveal my approach to initiating discussions and conversations with the participants in the workshops and meetings. Whilst this methodology reinforces the negotiated and dialogic aesthetics, it also reveals the way I have developed a relational aesthetic within the research.

## **5:8 Conclusion**

My research has revealed that the possibilities arising from a dialectic methodology of interaction with a collaborating group requires an open-ended and flexible strategy. This includes a shared approach to the authorship of a project in order that particular local information is revealed. A methodology which relies on such strategies encourages social engagement.

Socially-engaged art has the potential for becoming a significant strategy which could be used as a bridge to reconnect communities in the regeneration of urban life. This would require the validation of this area of art practice, (as I am identifying this as a genre of art practice, this must come from art galleries and museums as well as organisations involved in regeneration). This would thus receive the funding required to initiate sustainable projects which allow authentic collaboration with urban communities rather than a tokenistic gesture.

This is the beginning of an area of research where artists will investigate alternative forms of participatory art, where the artist becomes the itinerant negotiator, navigating and exploring alternative processes of collaboration.

## Appendices

- I. Contextualising research report document printed and distributed to initial contacts in Preston August 2003.
- II. Transcripts of recorded interviews with participant and professionals working in regeneration.
- III. DVD documentation of launch event for CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall February 2006

## **Bibliography**

A Place in the World, Massey, Doreen, Oxford University Press 1995

A Short Guide to Interviewing, Berry, Judith, NW Regional Health Promotion Resource Unit 1984

Advances in Art & Urban Futures Volume 1, Locality, Regeneration & Divers[cl]ivities, Editors Bennett Sarah, Butler John, Intellect Books 2000

Advances in Art & Urban Futures Volume2, Recoveries and Reclamations, Editors Rugg, Judith, Hinchcliffe, Daniel, Intellect Books 2002

Advances in Art and Urban Futures Volume 3, Cultures and Settlements, Editors An Urban Renaissance? The role of the arts in urban regeneration: a survey of local authorities in Greater London, Evans, Graeme, University of North London Press 1993

Art for Change, Leeson, Loraine, Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst Berlin 2005

Art Space and the City, public art and urban futures, Miles, Malcom, Routledge 1997

Arts without Frontiers, Seminar 24, Arts and the Environment, A conference on the effects on the arts of the European single market, held in association with The Sunday Times and The British Council, Glasgow March 1990

But is it Art?, Felshin, Nina, Bay Press1995

City A Z, ed Pile, Steve, Thrift, Nigel, Routledge 2000

Commentaries on the New Media Arts: Fluxus & Conceptual Art, Artists' Books, Correspondence art, Audio and Video art, Robert C Morgan, Umbrella/Banana Production 1992

Conversation Pieces, community and communication in modern art, Kester, Grant, University of California Press Ltd. 2004

Conversations at the Castle , Jacob,Mary,Berenson, Michael, MIT Press 1996

Culture in Action, Jacob,Mary,Berenson, Michael, Bay Press, 1995

Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975-2001 (October Books), Rosler, Martha, The MIT Press 2004

Dialogues in Public Art, Finkelpearl, 2001 MIT

Doing Your Research project, a guide to first time researchers in education and social science, Bell, Judith, Open University Press 1987

England in Particular, Clifford, Sue and King, Angela, Hodder and Staughton 2006

- Envisioning Information, Tufte, Edward Rolfe, Graphics Press 1990
- From place to PLACE maps and Parish Maps, Editors, Clifford, Sue and King, Angela, Common Ground 1996
- If You Lived Here: The City in Art, Theory and Social Activism (Discussions in Contemporary Culture), Rosler, Martha, New Press 1999
- Image-based Research: A Source Book for Qualitative Researchers, Prosser, John, Falmer Press 1998
- Images of Information, Wagner, Jon, Sage Publications 1979
- Improving Urban Areas, Good practice in Urban Regeneration, Prepared for the Dept of the Environment by Jurue, a division of ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd., London: Her majesty's Stationery Office
- Interactivity by Design, creating and communicating with new media, Kristof, Ray, and Satran, Amy, Adobe Press Mountain View, Ca 1995
- Joseph Beuys, Diverging Critiques, Editor, Thistlewood, David, Critical Forum Coordinator, Macphee, Anne, Liverpool University Press 1995
- Key Thinkers on Space and Place, Hubbard, Phil (Editor), Kitchin, Rob, (Editor), Valentine, Gill (Editor), Sage Publications Ltd (18 April 2004)
- Littoral, New Zones for Critical Art Practice, Editor Lerner, Celia, Symposium Organised by Projects Environment at School of Visual Arts, University College Salford 1994
- Mapping the Terrain, New Genre Public Art, Lacy, Suzanne, Bay Press 1995  
Miles, Malcom, Kirkham, Nicola, Intellect Books 2003
- New Media in Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art, Rush, Michael, Thames and Hudson 1999
- Non-places, an introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity, Auge, Marc, Verso 1995
- Objects, Performance, Video, Sound, Abramovic, Marina, Museum of Modern Art Oxford, 1995
- One Place After Another: site specific art and locational identity, Kwon, Miwon, MIT Press 2002
- Out of the Bubble, Approaches to Contextual Practice within Fine Art Education, Papers presented at the 'Out of the Bubble' symposium held at Central St. Martins College of Art and Design, Editors, Carson, John, Silver Susannah, The London Institute/Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design and London Arts 2002
- Postmodern Cartographies, Jarvis, Brian, Pluto Press 1994
- Postmodern Geographies, Soja, Edward W., Verso 1989

- Preston, A Pictorial History, Timmins, Geoffrey, Phillimore & Co Ltd, 1992
- Relational Aesthetics, Bourriaud, Nicolas, Les presses du réel 2002 (for English translation)
- Shaping Neighbourhoods: Health, Sustainability, Vitality , Barton, Hugh, Grant, Marcus, Guise, Richard, Spon Press; Spi edition (Jul 2002)
- Sharing the City Community participation in Urban Management, Abbott, John, Earthscan 1996
- Space, Place and Gender, Massey, Doreen, Polity Press 1994,
- Space, Site, Intervention, Situating Installation Art, Suderberg, Erika, University of Minnesota Press 2000
- Stretching Exercises for Qualitative Researchers, Janesick, Valerie J, Sage Publications 1998
- Subversive Imagination : artists, society, and social responsibility. Becker, Carol (Editor), Routledge, 1994
- Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process, Rudestam, Kjell Erik, and Newton, Rae, Sage Publications, 2001
- Sustainable Communities: The Potential for Eco-neighbourhoods, Barton, Hugh, Earthscan Publications Ltd (1 Jan 2000)
- The Creative City, a tool kit for urban innovators, Landry, Charles, Earthscan 2000
- The Dialectics of Seeing, Walter Benjamin and the Arcades project, Buck-Morss, Susan, 1999 MIT.
- The Flâneur, ed Tester, Keith, Routledge 1994
- The Lure of the Local, senses of place in a multicentered society, Lippard, Lucy R, The New Press 1997
- The Power of Maps, Wood, Denis, Routledge 1993
- The Production of Space, Lefebvre, Blackwell 1991 (Eng translation) Anthropos 1974
- The Rise of the Creative Class, Florida, Richard, Basic Books 2002
- The Unknown City – Contesting Architecture and Social Space, edited by Borden, Iain, Kerr, Joe, Rendell, Jane, Pivaro, Alicia, MIT Press 2001
- The Urban Condition, space Community and Self in the contemporary Metropolis, ed GUST, 010 Publishers Rotterdam 1999

Twilight Memories, Marking time in a culture of Amnesia, Huyssen, Andrea, Routledge 1995

Urban Geography, Hall, Tim, Routledge 1998

Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials, Rose, Gillian, Sage Publications Ltd (March 20, 2001)

Weaving the Web, Berners-Lee, Tim, Collins 2000

What is Art?, Beuys, Joseph, Editor, Harlen, Volker, Clairview 2004 (for English translation)

World City, Massey, Doreen, Polity Press (Jul 2007)

Writings on Cities, Lefebvre, Henri, Blackwell 1996

#### **Journals:**

Article title: Terms of Engagement: Radical Communalism in Bay Area Art.

Author: Brookman, Donna.

Journal Reference: Sculpture (Washington, D.C.), v. 21 no6 (July/Aug. 2002) p. 46-51

Article title: The mid-life crisis and artist led initiatives

Author: Stanley Michael

Journal Reference: Artists Newsletter, June 2000 p 10 -13

Article title: Trials and triumphs: arts-based community development.

Author: Cleveland, William.

Journal Reference: Public Art Review, v. 13 no1 (Fall/Winter 2001) p. 17-23

Article title: Art Education and Urban Aesthetics.

Author(s): Sousa Vianna, Rachel de.

Journal Reference: Leonardo, v. 35 no3 (2002) p. 255-61

Article title: East Londoners

Author: Leeson Loraine

Journal Reference: Public art Journal Vol 1 No. 4 p60-62

Article title: Public Art?

Author: Greenan Althea

Journal Reference Make Sept - Nov 1999 no.85 p 11-15

Article title: Maps of Remembered Belonging

Author: Waite Lorna J.

Journal Reference: Matters issue 14 Spring 2002 P16-18

Article title: Whose Art? Where? The Value of visual arts in culture

Author: Dr. Anne Douglas Chris Freemantle

Journal Reference: Matters issue 14 Spring 2002 P19-20

Article title: Collaboration: definitions and dialogues

Author: Rawlinson Ian, Crowe Nick

Journal Reference: Artists Newsletter May 1998 p10-13

Article title: Beyond site: towards a definition of place-specificity

Author: Vaz-Pinheiro Gabriela

Journal Reference: Point Autumn/Winter 2001 p40-50

Conference Report  
New Voices in the City, Art and the Urban Environment  
Manchester Town Hall 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> March 1999  
Programme Organised by Projects Environment in Association with Manchester City Art Galleries

Article title: Power to the people.  
Augmented title: Superchannel  
Author(s): Gibbs, Michael.  
Journal Reference: Art Monthly, no243 (Feb. 2001) p. 20-1

Article title: Some notes from London, 2001: cultural crossings in a renewed center.  
Author(s): Cohn, Terri..  
Journal Reference: Art Papers, v. 26 no1 (Jan./Feb. 2002) p. 10-11

Article title: New landscapes: community art, video process and fantasies of disability.  
Author(s): Koppers, Petra.  
Journal Reference: Afterimage, v. 29 no3 (Nov./Dec. 2001) p. 24-5

Article title: Picking up stones: design research and urban settlement.  
Author(s): Miles, Malcom.  
Journal Reference: Design Issues, v. 17 no2 (Spring 2001) p. 32-52

Article title: "A study of audience relationships with interactive computer-based visual artworks."  
Author: Graham, Beryl (1999).  
Journal reference: Leonardo, 32 (4). 326-328.--> a brief summary of PhD research.

Article title: The Community is Watching and Replying: Art in Public Places and Spaces  
Author: Bray Anne  
Journal Reference: Leonardo Vol35 2002 p 15-21

Article Title: Fictional Community  
Author: Haake Hans  
Journal Reference: Parachute V103 2001 July/Sept p 136-140

**Appendix for Thesis submitted in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of MPhil  
September 2007**

**Anita J. Burrows  
University of Central Lancashire**

## **Appendices**

- I. Contextualising research report document printed and distributed to initial contacts in Preston August 2003.
- II. Transcripts of recorded interviews with participants and professionals working in regeneration.
- III. DVD documentation of launch event for CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall February 2006

The above documents have been submitted as an appendix for the degree of MPhil. This practice involved processes of work that evolved and developed over a long period of time and I include them as evidence of this process.

### **Contextualising research report document printed and distributed to initial contacts in Preston August 2003**

This document provided information about my initial research and was used to inform a developing network of contacts made during this initial research process.

### **Transcripts of recorded interviews with participants and professionals working in regeneration**

In order to discover information from particular people involved in regeneration in Preston I planned and recorded interviews with:

A participant

A community development worker

The Creative Industries Officer for Preston City Council

The European Procurement Officer for Preston City Council

The Chief Landscape Architect for Preston City Council

The Assistant Director of Regeneration for Preston City Council

The Programmes Manager of The Harris Museum and Art Gallery

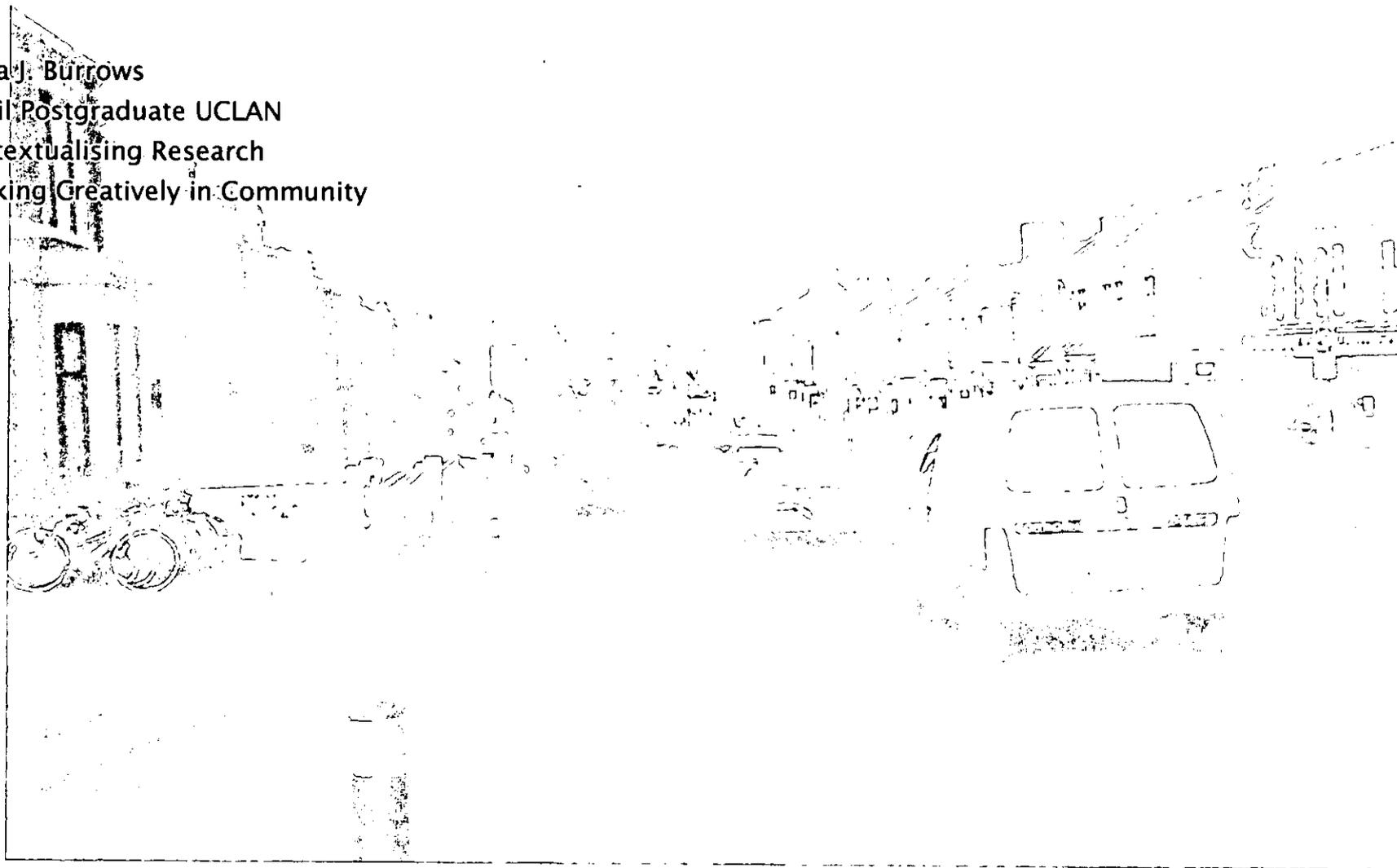
The Arts and Cultural Diversity Officer for Preston City Council

The Manager of Sure Start Preston East

The Assistant Manager of Pukar

These interviews were then transcribed. These transcripts are presented as an appendix as evidence of these meetings and are referred to in the text of the thesis.

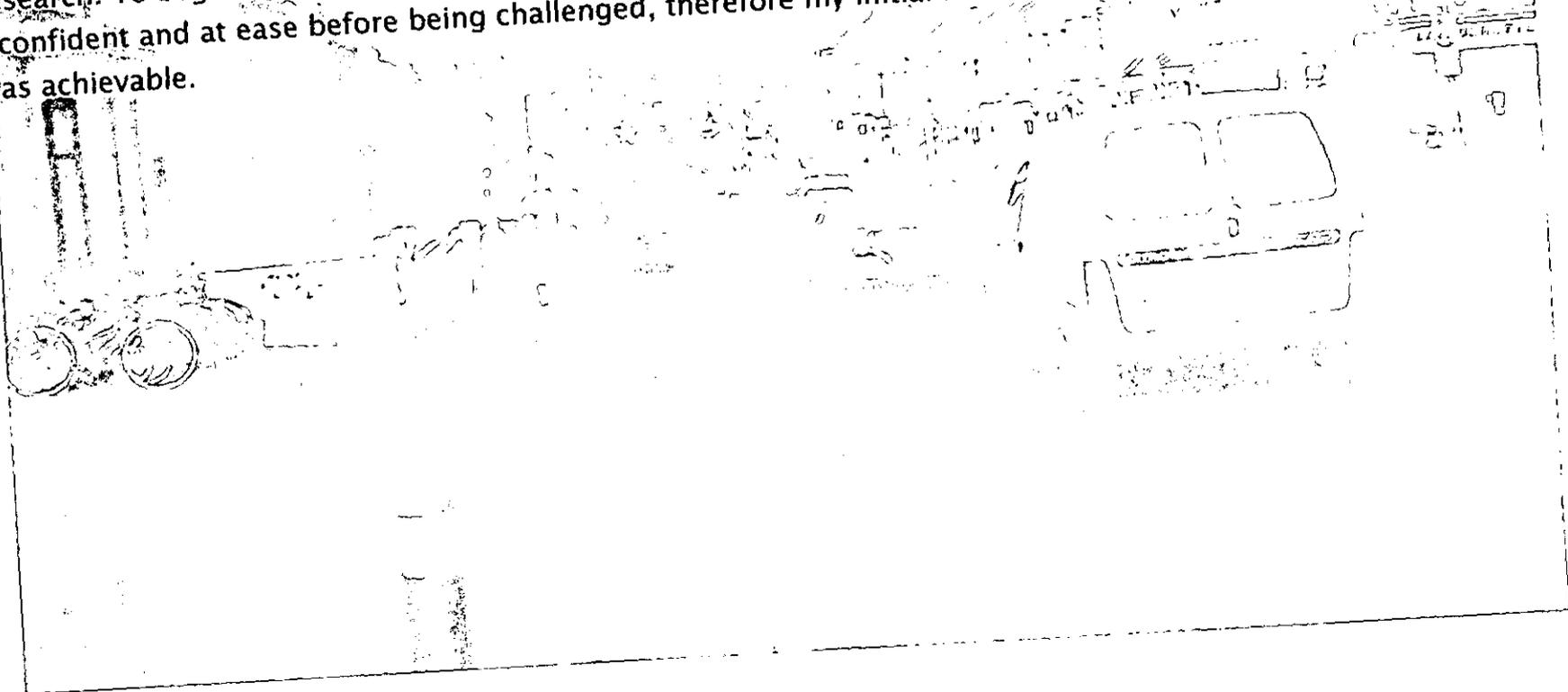
Anita J. Burrows  
MPhil Postgraduate UCLAN  
Contextualising Research  
Working Creatively in Community



Beginning this research my main aims in implementing these case studies are:

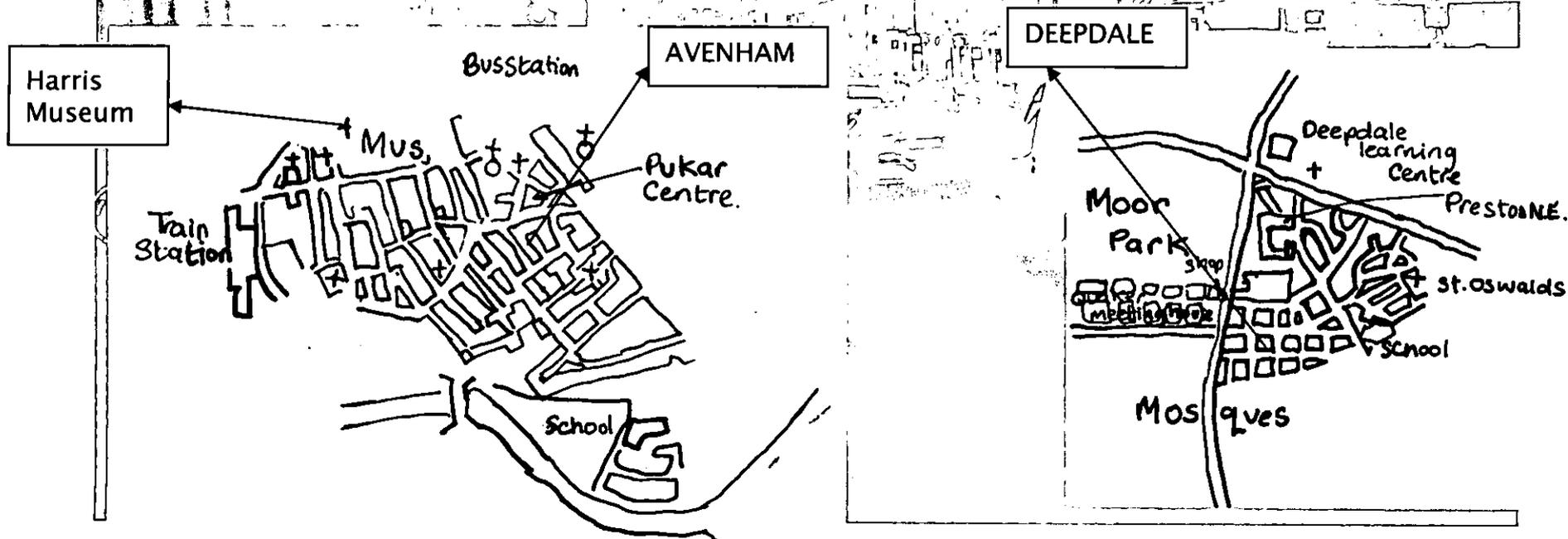
- To develop trust and a working relationship with the participants.
- To invite the participants to have an active role in the project.
- To begin an exchange of information and experience.

These aims will provide a solid foundation on which to build, to extend and challenge the participants in developing this research. To begin here without this preliminary work would only serve to alienate the participants who need to feel more confident and at ease before being challenged, therefore my initial research needed to try to reach a point where this was achievable.



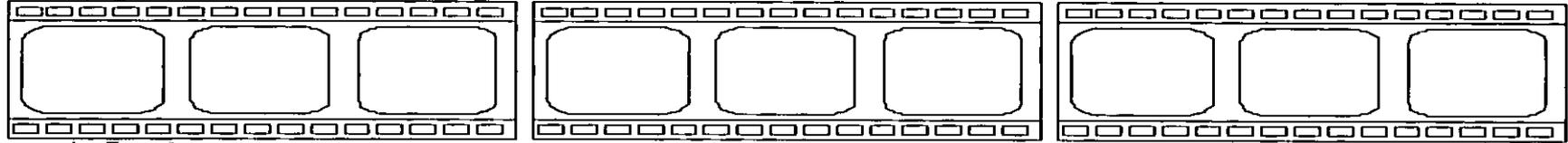
## Choosing a community in Preston

- Gathering information about different areas of Preston from networking with people whose work is based in Preston. Professional people engaged in the arts with an emphasis on community.
- From these meetings not only was I building a map of information about community groups in Preston I was gaining valuable contact names and an interest in my research to pick up on later, possibly in evaluation, but also disseminating the story and making connections with a potential secondary audience.
- Using this information and making a decision to find communities from different cultural backgrounds, within easy reach of the city centre, I chose to work in Avenham and Deepdale

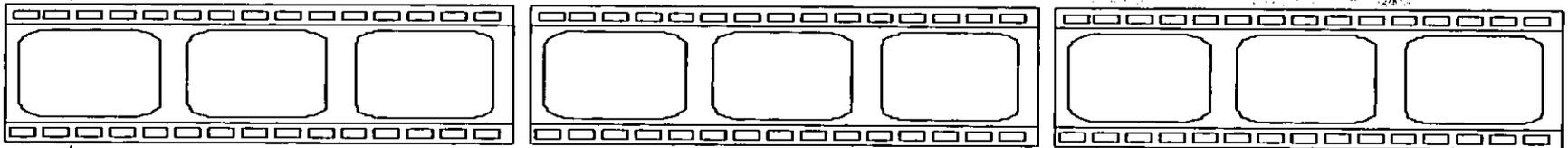


## Onsite research

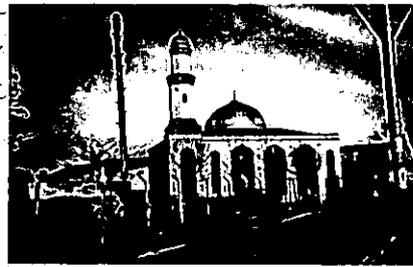
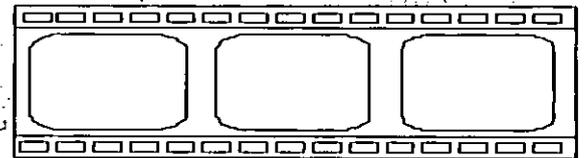
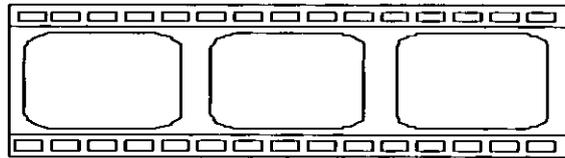
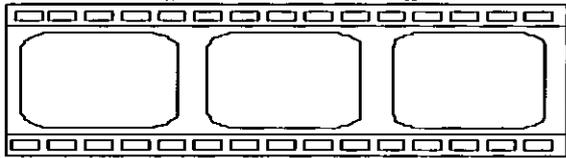
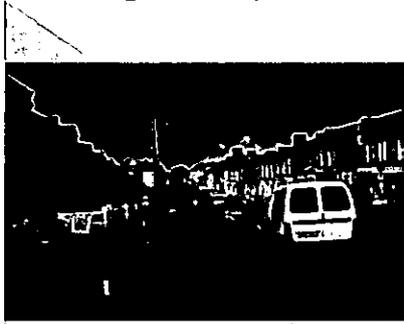
- I walked around both areas on different days and at different times.
- Locating centres I already had links to and new ones.
- Looking for known places helped in beginning conversations with other pedestrians I passed, which often meant gaining more information about the area at grass roots level.
- Local newsagents are always a good source of local information; I bought local newspapers and enquired about community groups which met in the area.
- This local newsagent in Deepdale gave me a flyer about a community day in the local school on a Saturday, where she said I would find representatives of community groups.
- Of course I went along. I was welcomed and picked up all sorts of information. I had printed a folded A4 sheet about myself with pictures of past projects, a picture of myself, contact details and a short resume of what I was hoping to do.
  - Spoke to representatives from Sure Start, Deepdale Women's Action Group (invited to their open day), NHS representative, Sahara, Pukar and Arts in the Park.
  - Attended open day and met representatives from: The Harris Museum and Art Gallery, University, Sure Start.
- I documented my onsite research with photographs and video and text.



Walking in Avenham



# Walking in Deepdale



From this initial research :

- I met with Deepdale Women's Action Group Committee a few times and we shared some of our aims and objectives. They are a busy group with all sorts of activities planned for Wednesday lunch time when they meet until 3pm.
- I met with Kim Graham (Arts and Cultural Strategy Officer) and gained many contacts for groups and community professionals.
- I met James Green (Head Curator) at the Harris Art Gallery and Museum and arranged a time and space for an exhibition of the work produced in community. James was very interested in the research I was undertaking and asked to be kept in touch with it's progress.
- I met Christine Campbell from Prestom Sure Start East, Christine had a group in mind for me to work with and I arranged to meet them at St. Oswalds Church in Deepdale.

I learned from working with Deepdale Women's Action group that they needed to sell the project to their group to gain interest, the women were particularly interested in gaining skills and the mapping information I was talking about would probably not help sell the project because it would be difficult to understand. They suggested I demonstrate a skill so that the women get an idea of what would be involved in working together with me. Although this group didn't get in touch with me I used this information in beginning my workshops with the Sure-Start group.

I made the decision to introduce technology slowly and began with non threatening practical tasks where we could chat and get to know one another and the group could gain confidence in their creative skills.

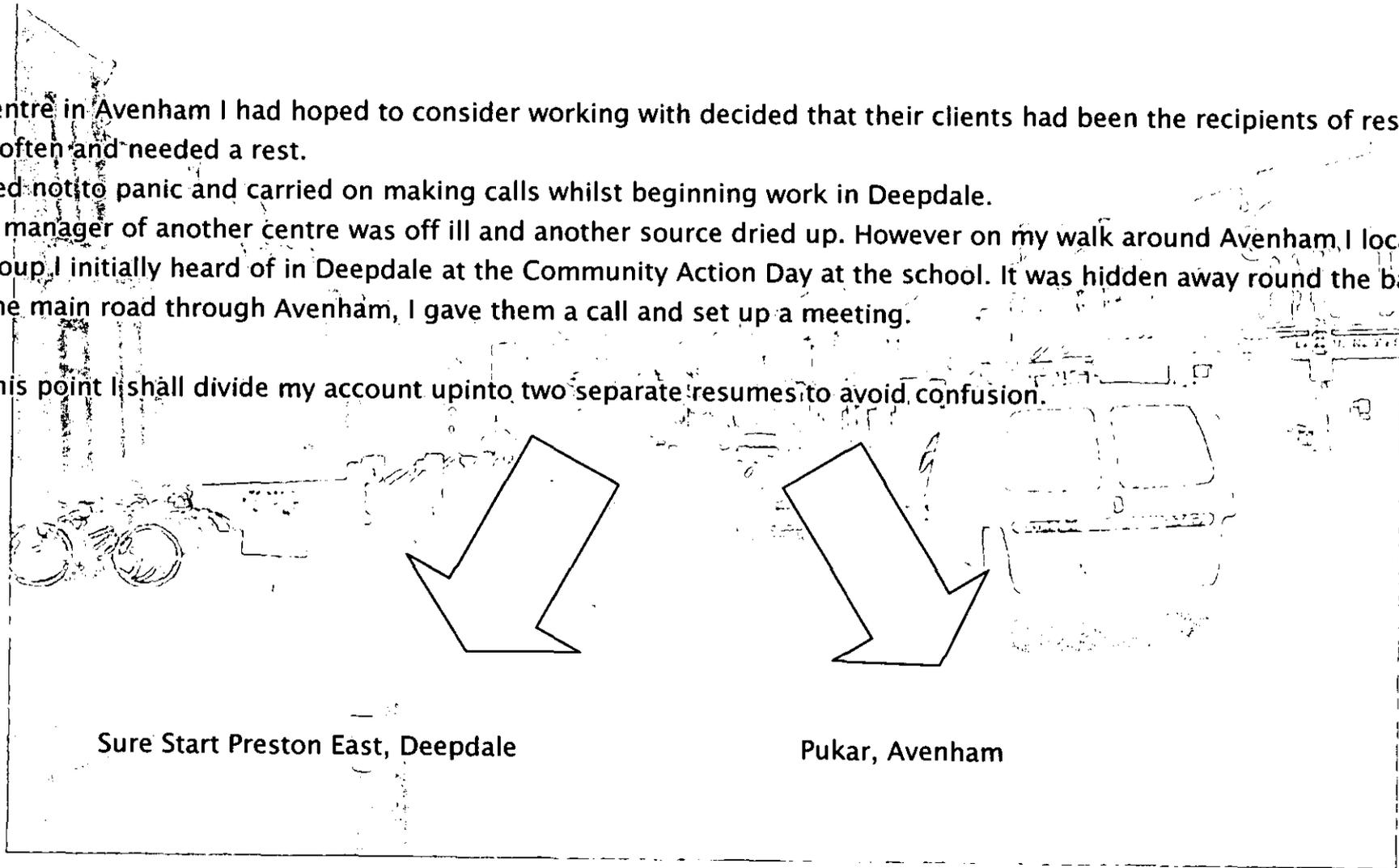
On reflection this worked very well.

A centre in Avenham I had hoped to consider working with decided that their clients had been the recipients of research too often and needed a rest.

I tried not to panic and carried on making calls whilst beginning work in Deepdale.

The manager of another centre was off ill and another source dried up. However on my walk around Avenham, I located a group I initially heard of in Deepdale at the Community Action Day at the school. It was hidden away round the back of the main road through Avenham, I gave them a call and set up a meeting.

At this point I shall divide my account up into two separate resumes to avoid confusion.



## Sure Start Preston East, Deepdale, St. Oswalds Church

The group consists of four women all have small children under school age - there is a creche provided for the children by Sure Start.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> April I met the group for the first time. This meeting was, for all concerned, a chance to get to know a bit more about each other and to find out whether we wanted to work together.

I had taken along lots of images, documentation (including video) information and examples of past projects. We sat in a circle and I was able to talk through my images and offer some background information on the projects I had worked on.

I suggested that I could work with them for the next six weeks in their Tuesday afternoon session and begin some practical sessions perhaps making paper. I explained that I was interested in hearing about their experiences of living in Preston, in their own neighbourhood, their day to day experiences of living in Deepdale with small children.

They seemed interested and I suggested that we could begin on the 8<sup>th</sup> May (after Easter ) and run 6 sessions including a visit somewhere.



Christine Campbell (Sure Start) agreed to offer me the six sessions – so I arranged the dates beginning 8/5 to run for six weeks.

I began to develop thoughts and ideas of how I would begin working with the group.

- Now that I had met them
- Had knowledge of the place they met
- Knew the time scale within which I was working

I could begin putting some shape to the sessions.

I had spoken with Christine and she gave me some background about the group:

- They had been together for about a year
- They hadn't done much creative work
- They met together at a different venue for another meeting – but happened to be exactly the same group.

I was aware that the session needed to be relaxed with no pressure but a place where people were allowed to experiment without feeling they were being tested – a non threatening environment.

Practical tasks which introduced using everyday objects and materials that were familiar to them.

I had made three box frames of different sizes and decided to offer different materials to arrange and place in the box frames, these items could be changed easily, but each phase could be documented by the participant using a digital camera.

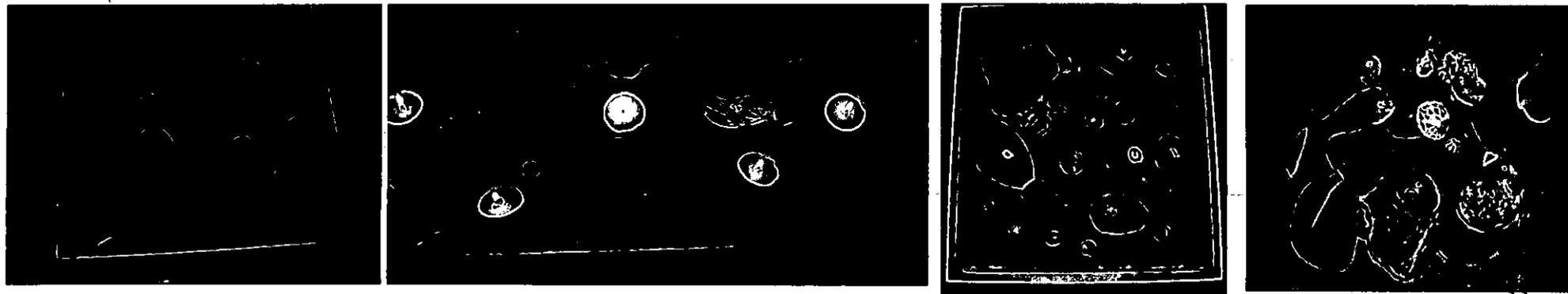
A digital camera is ideal as:

- It easy to use –point and shoot
- It is small and the viewing display is large, therefore it is easy to see what you are going to take a picture of.
- The photographer can see the results on the camera instantly, so decisions can be made about whether they are happy with the image, or whether another one needs to be taken, the notion of ‘doing it wrong’ is diminished, pressure of using a piece of complicated kit is reduced, however confidence in using new hi tech equipment is gained.

I had the opportunity to ‘pilot’ this idea at a weekend conference in Cardiff where I was offering a ‘drop in workshop’ to people unaccustomed to having this type of experience offered.

I decided this was a good enabling exercise which offered opportunities to begin conversation whilst using lots of visual skills without necessarily realising this.

Images taken by the creators of the work



*Notes from my diary:*

*Used three box frames*

*All had a go - bit reticent to begin with*

*All used digital camera*

*We talked about collecting everyday objects*

*They seemed to relax and enjoy having a go*

*Openly chatted especially B and J as the presence of shells prompted their thinking about a planned holiday together in September, this was news to Christine when we talked about how the session had gone later on.*

*I was apprehensive that they might get bored but 2 hours went very quickly - we were all surprised.*

*They all worked in different ways and B was very reluctant to take hers apart when the session had ended.*

The activity gave us a chance to expand on the idea of everyday objects and how they tell a visual story. I asked them if over the next week if they could collect objects that symbolise their everyday, place them in a carrier bag and bring them along to the next session.

Alongside the sessions I was arranging a visit for the group. My first choice was the University Contemporary Art Centre, this wasn't possible, so a visit to the Harris Art Gallery and Museum. I rang Paula Simpson (community liaison officer) from the Harris and she said she would be happy to meet the group. I was unable to attend the visit, I gave Paula some background information about the group and some information about the work we had been doing together in the workshops.

The children would be able to stay at the creche and Christine arranged a taxi for the women to get to the Harris.

Beforehand I visited an Open Day at the Harris and picked up leaflets for the group, introduced myself to Paula who gave me some goody bags for the children. I looked for items exhibited which might feed into the project i.e. everyday objects.

- exhibition of perfume bottles,
- everyday items from the past with particular relevance to Preston,
- piece of work by the artist Kurt Schwitters - a collage of everyday items

When I introduced the idea of the visit to the Harris to the group I received quite a lot of negative feedback, however I explained that the staff at the Harris were interested in hearing about how people felt about visiting the museum and suggested they mentioned to Paula their past experiences of visiting with small children. I phoned Paula to put her in the picture.

The group still wanted to visit and the opportunity of some time to themselves was a good incentive. I mentioned the items I had seen and gave out the leaflets and goody bags. I asked them if they would record their visit to the Harris with photographs and R. said she would take a camera.



The following week B arrived with a carrier bag of everyday objects she had collected over the week, I was really pleased, it opened up the opportunity to discuss the visual language of such a collection.

B's collection of everyday objects

B chatted about her week, reluctant to extend the exercise by using a camera to document her journey to the supermarket with R aged 22mths.

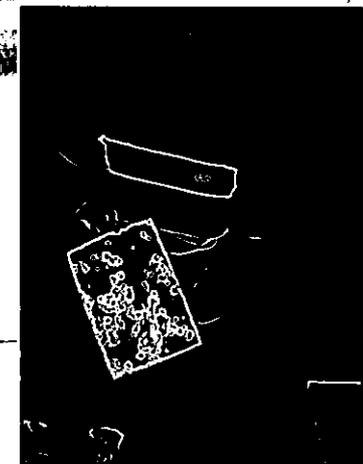
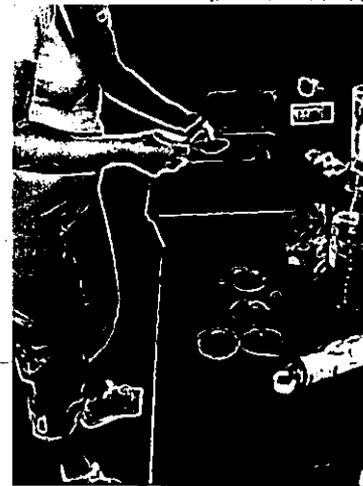
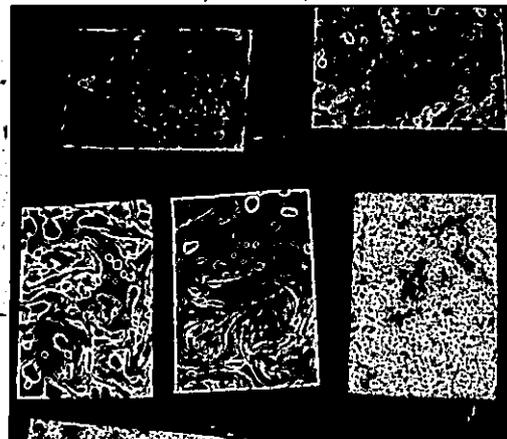
R. said she would have a go at collecting some items, she worked until 11pm every evening and we talked about how she might include this.

Just B and R at this session

B had also brought in some old envelopes and paper to recycle and make paper with.

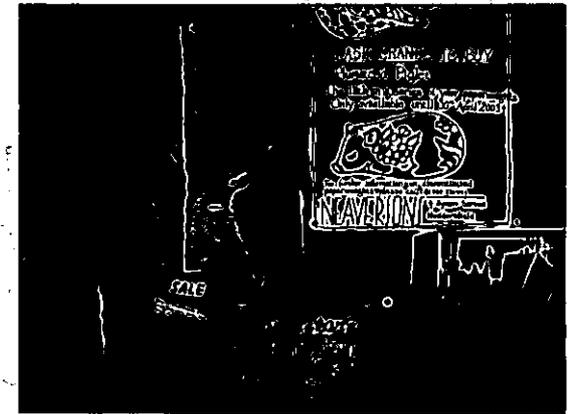
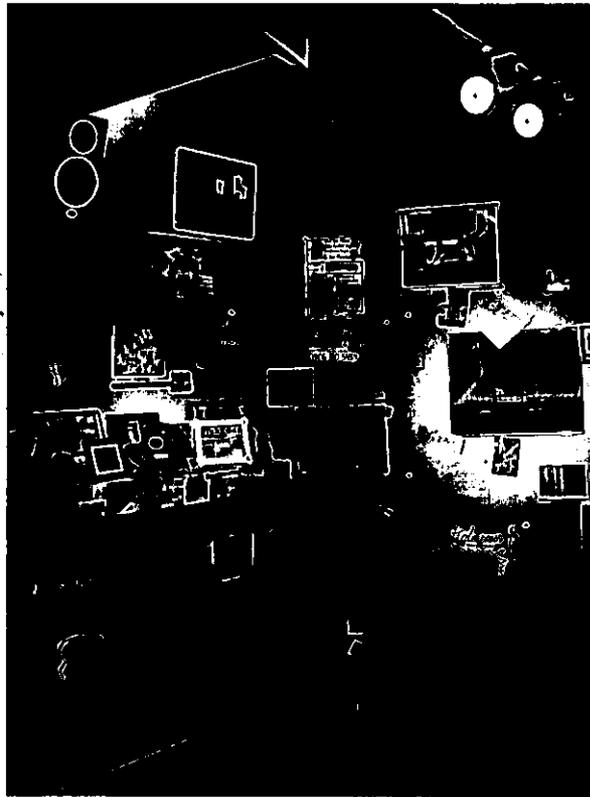
R said she would collect some paper too.

The rest of the session was spent marbling by floating oil paint mixed with white spirit in a tray of water and picking up the resulting pattern on paper.



At the beginning of every session we recapped about what we had done the week before, this particular week J and B told me about their visit to the Harris which seemed to go much better than they expected. However, they were surprised to learn that the taxi driver didn't know where the Harris was and they needed to offer to direct him.

I had visited an exhibition at the Castlefield Gallery, Manchester the week before and taken some photographs of the exhibition which used everyday objects and text arranged in a very informal manner to convey anecdotal information about life in Huddersfield. We had a look at the images and chatted about how they were arranged.



We then used the old envelopes and paper to make a pulp to couch some handmade paper.

We experimented adding different things to the pulp:

- leaves from outside around the building
- petals also from outside
- paint
- tea leaves - we always begin a session with a drink of tea or coffee

Christine came towards the end of the session and J and B encouraged her to have a go at making a sheet of paper.

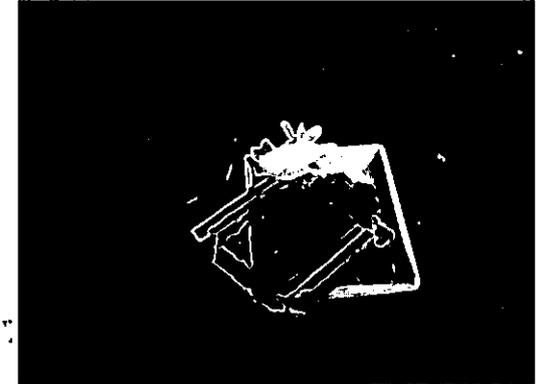
They explained the process to her and showed her what to do.

The sessions so far had been planned to offer opportunities to get to know one another and help the participants feel more comfortable in working creatively together, to exchange information about each other and pick up some new skills and reintroduce forgotten skills.

At the end of the session we talked about going out for a walk together. As I didn't know the area they could plan the walk and share with me some of their thoughts and experiences of this area of Preston where they live.

- There was some negativity
- I was told of the dangers and the areas where they felt vulnerable walking on their own with small children during the day.

We talked about documenting this walk with sound recording, video and still shots. I gave them a quick demonstration of the equipment.



## 5<sup>th</sup> June Session 5.

We began the session by unwrapping the handmade paper we had left to dry last week. All were pleased with the result and those who had missed the session showed interest.

Disappointment was expressed that next week would be the last session, I explained that the sessions had been a getting to know you experience and that I was hoping to return in the autumn to do a longer 10 week slot. We talked about what we had done and decided that next week we would bring together all that we had gathered and decide what or how we might use the material.

I suggested that over the next week they might like to think about the possibilities.

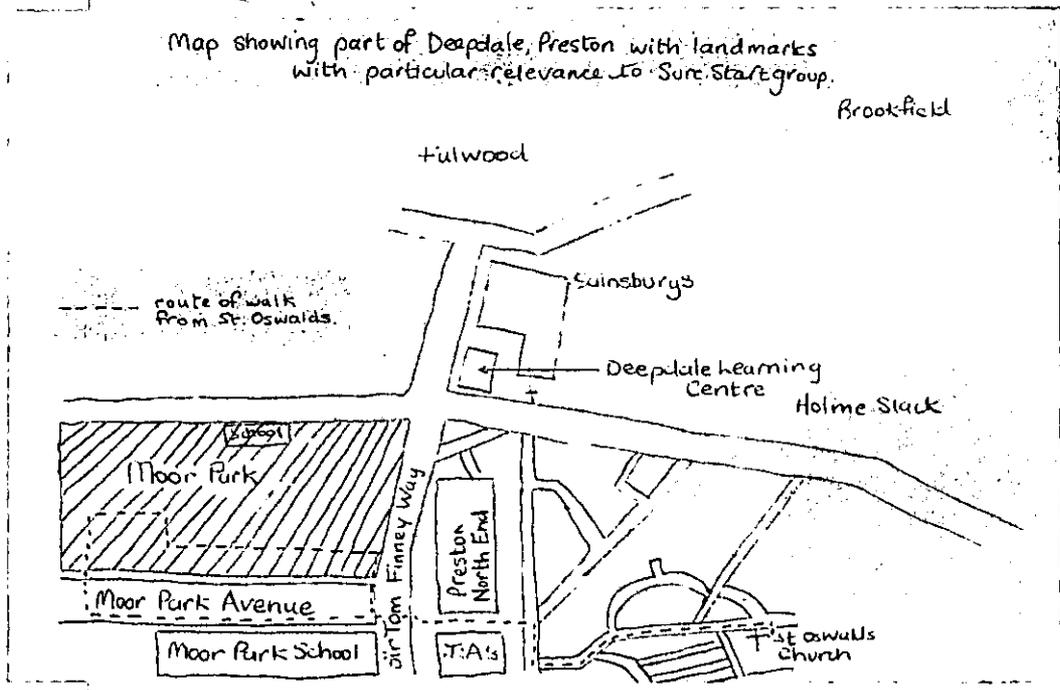
I recapped on how to use the:

- Minidisk
- Digital still camera
- Digital video camera

They were a bit reluctant to have a go but B took video, J still camera and R minidisk.

**B. led us on a walk around Moor Park**

We set off, walking past Preston North End football stadium towards Moor Park



As we approached the park and turned down the avenue a police car came screaming past and then the police helicopter appeared - something that happens all the time they told me and a few other incidents were recalled and shared.

We returned to St. Oswald's the way we came and J pointed out where she lived and I found a short cut through to the main road that I didn't know about.

Offered a reminder about next week.

12<sup>th</sup> June Session 6

B J and S

With the video, sound recording and still images collected on the walk the previous week I made a short DVD and we had a look at it at the start of the session.

Spread out all the made and gathered items with ideas about books, they shared the fact that they met together at another venue to make story sacks for their children.

A children's story book is chosen and the items which feed the story or can be associated with the story in some way are collected and placed together with the book in a draw string bag.

I thought this was an interesting idea and suggested we could use the same concept to make a story sack about them as a group.

We went with this idea and we then discussed how we were going to do this, the group I felt were lacking in confidence in suggesting ideas or taking lead roles. I suggested that they take the role of commissioner and describe to me how they would like the finished book to look, considering the raw materials (collected items) we had gathered.

Sure Start representative -Christine- arrived and thought the idea was great and asked if I would do another two sessions at a different venue to complete the idea.

The book told the story so far so the pages were put together more or less to mirror that, each member took a page and described what they would like included.

We then chatted about B's gathered items which symbolised a week for her, we had another look at the collection and I asked what we would include in the sack to say something about the group.

- A tea bag
- A biscuit
- A disposable nappy
- A drink for the children
- A toy

Were some of the suggestions.

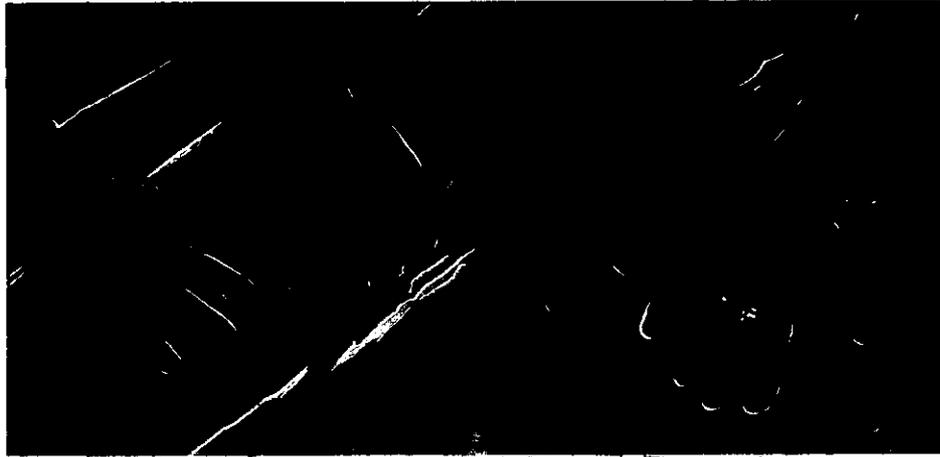
7<sup>th</sup> July Deepdale Learning Centre

B J R and S

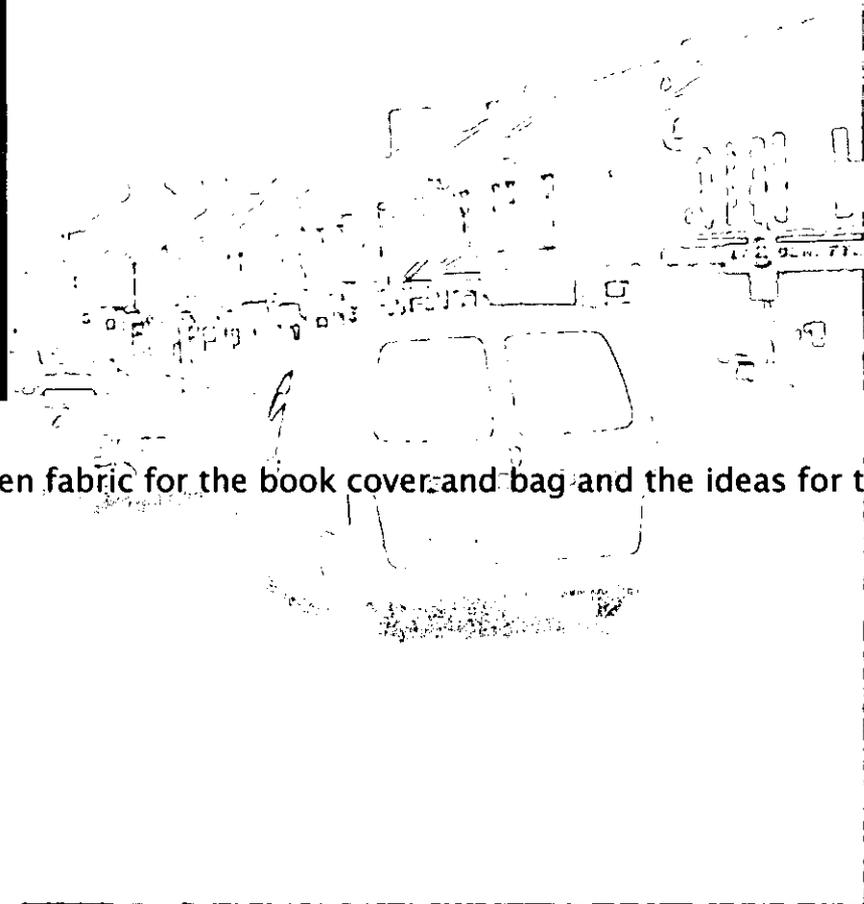
This was a difficult session as lots of distractions around, however we had a look at how best to display the hand made paper in a book and J had a go at sandwiching it between two pieces of frost fleece, this seemed to work well and seemed to keep the texture of the paper, laminating the paper would give it a 'plastic' feel.

We then thought about an image to go on the bag, using a laptop computer and photoshop software we experimented with different images and layering them.

Using digital camera I took a photo of their hands - they liked this idea as it was personal yet not instantly recognisable.

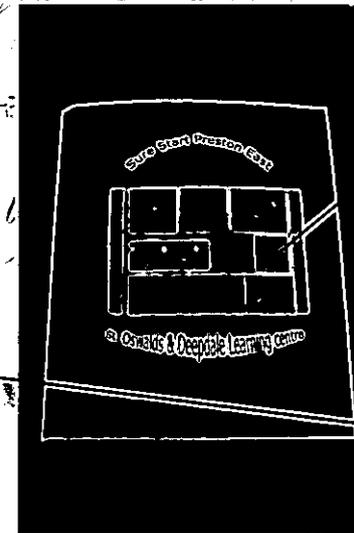
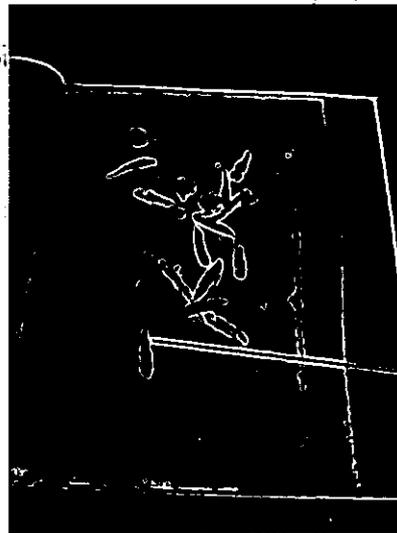
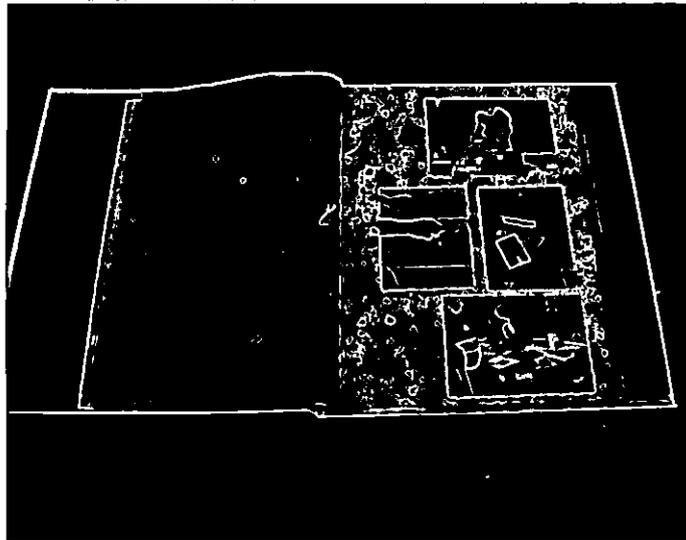


I left with an outline list of the pages for the book, the chosen fabric for the book cover and bag and the ideas for the images to be placed on the book cover and bag.



## Making the book and bag

After some experimentation in the best way to enclose and bind loose leaved A4 sheets to stand up to being continually turned, I decided to strengthen each A4 sheet with a strip of cloth sewn down the length of the page.



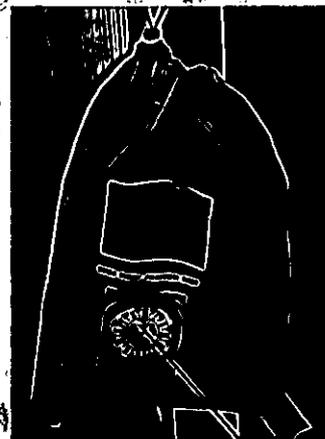
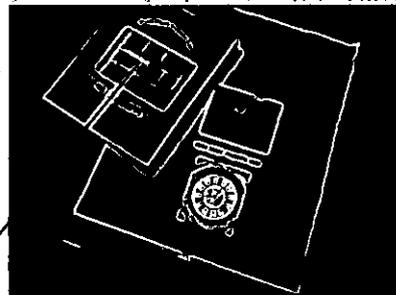
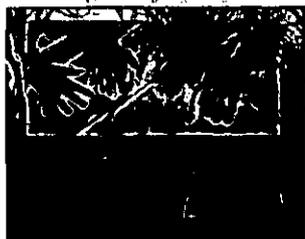
I used an iron on transfer on the front cover of the book

Frost fleece to enclose h/made paper

## Making the bag

Again I used an iron on transfer on the front and back of the bag, incorporating the layered images assembled at the previous session.

Map showing area in relationship to whole of Preston and image of Moor Park



The box frame images which started the sessions

A clock at almost 1 o'clock to signify the time the group meets and it is a rare opportunity for the group to have some time for themselves

**Avenham, Preston**

I met with Poppy Tanna the Centre Manager of Pukar, we chatted about what I might do, I took along some examples of my work. I was introduced to Sara and had a tour round the centre, which is well equipped with IT hardware including a teaching area with digital projector and screen.

The centre runs all sorts of courses in helping people with special needs whatever they may be.

I was made to feel extremely welcome.

I filled out a volunteer form with contact details and referees.

They were happy for me to come in on Tuesday afternoon from 1pm till 3pm for 6 weeks.

We planned some dates which unfortunately couldn't run concurrently.

*Notes from diary*

*The group will consist of 10-12 people.*

*Invited to art w/shop get together where I could meet some of the people who would be interested in working with me.*

*Notes on above session*

*Group had very different aims from mine- they needed to put together an object to be displayed on the flag market for a community awareness day*

*All practical session no exchange of conversation from w/shop leaders with participants.*

The first session began with a group of 6 with some others dropping in for short periods.  
I learnt that Pukar means voice in Gujarati, most of the group speak Gujarati.

I had previously been in touch with the centre to see if they could provide me with some paper to recycle, stressed no news print, as this is too acidic.

The session began by tearing the paper into small pieces, this was a good exercise to begin with as it enabled people to chat and get to know one another.



We shared information about

- Where we live
- The centre, how long it has been running

We talked about the things we might bring in from home to place in the pulp:

- Petals
- Blossom
- Onion-skins
- Fabrics to emboss
- Leaves
- S said he had some tulips that were just finishing blooming and he would bring them in

We left pulp to soak until next week- couched a small amount which we left to dry.

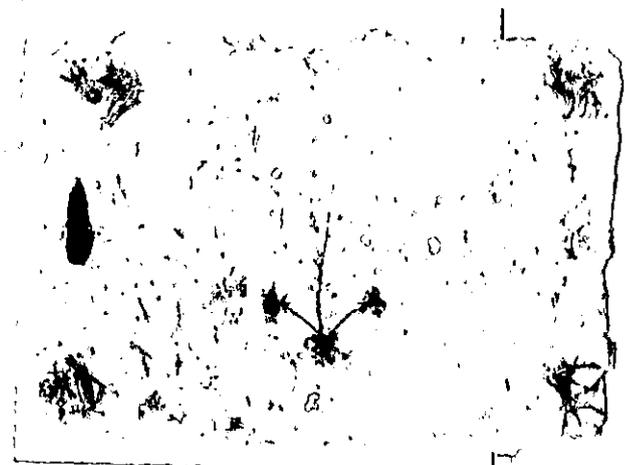
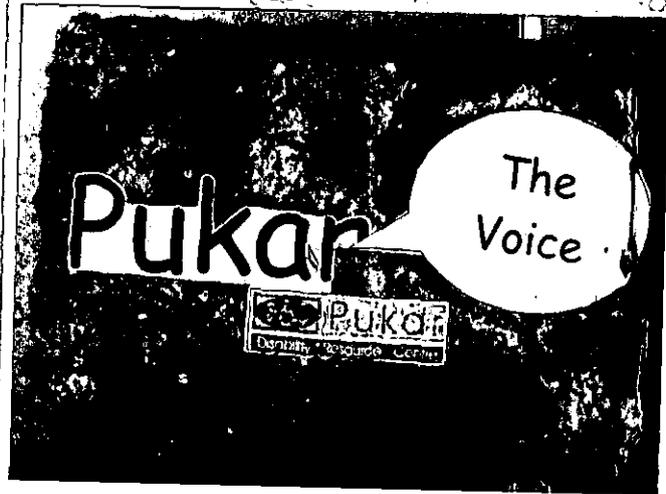
Finished session with reminders about what to bring for next week

The following week we unwrapped the paper made the week before which fuelled the enthusiasm to begin this weeks session.

As they became confident in the process ideas began flowing, I left the equipment as they were eager to continue the following week on their own.



We unwrapped all the paper they made.



We chatted about what we might do with the paper.

Using the onsite IT equipment and networking with Helen the computer instructor, we decided it would be good to scan the paper, all of the participants said they enjoyed computer work but none of them had used a scanner before.

*Notes from diary*

*Amazed at the clarity of the image when scanned*

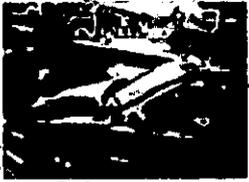
Demonstrated the software photoshop and how to collage and layer images

I introduced some examples of traditional postcards and suggested we could publish our own postcards that said something about the group and Preston - which would be more interesting and vibrant; as they would be postcards designed by the people who live there.

I left them with disposable cameras to take pictures of walks or journeys they make regularly maybe into Preston or to the Pukar centre or nearer to their home in Preston.

Saskia returned with pictures

saskia's journey to Pukar



Saskia documented with a series of photographs her journey to Pukar from Chorley.

Which begins with a car journey with her father to Chorley bus station.

A bus to Preston bus station.

A walk through the subway

To catch a taxi to the Pukar centre

As you can see with the images and the paper, together we designed three postcards that say something about the group.

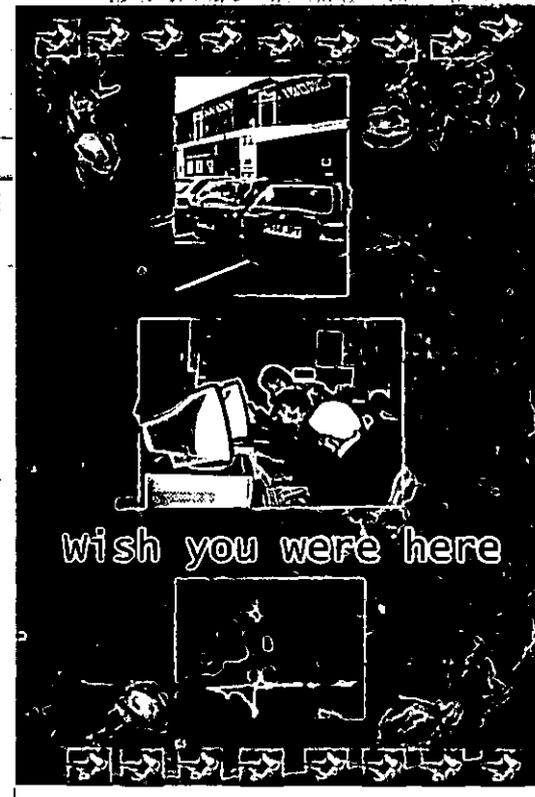
The finished designs were sent off to a publishing house.  
3 designs of 250 postcards with a professional glossy finish!

They were used to promote Pukar and the group as part of a 'Celebration of Disability Day' at the Guild Hall, Preston.

3/5 Oakham Court  
Preston  
PR1 3XP  
tel. 01772 822700  
website: [www.pukar.org.uk](http://www.pukar.org.uk)  
e-mail: [pukar@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:pukar@ukonline.co.uk)

Welcome to Pukar  
A place where you can:  
meet people  
learn about other cultures  
do a computer course  
have a go at arts & Crafts

postcard design by Pukar Tuesday afternoon workshop group



3/5 Oakham Court  
Preston  
PR1 3XP  
tel.01772 822700  
website:www.pukar.org.uk  
e-mail:pukar@ukonline.co.uk

Welcome to Pukar  
A place where you can:  
share ideas  
recycle old envelopes &  
make paper  
find new friends  
learn about cultural  
celebrations

postcard design by Pukar Tuesday afternoon workshop group



pukar  
preston

postcard design by Pukar Tuesday afternoon workshop group

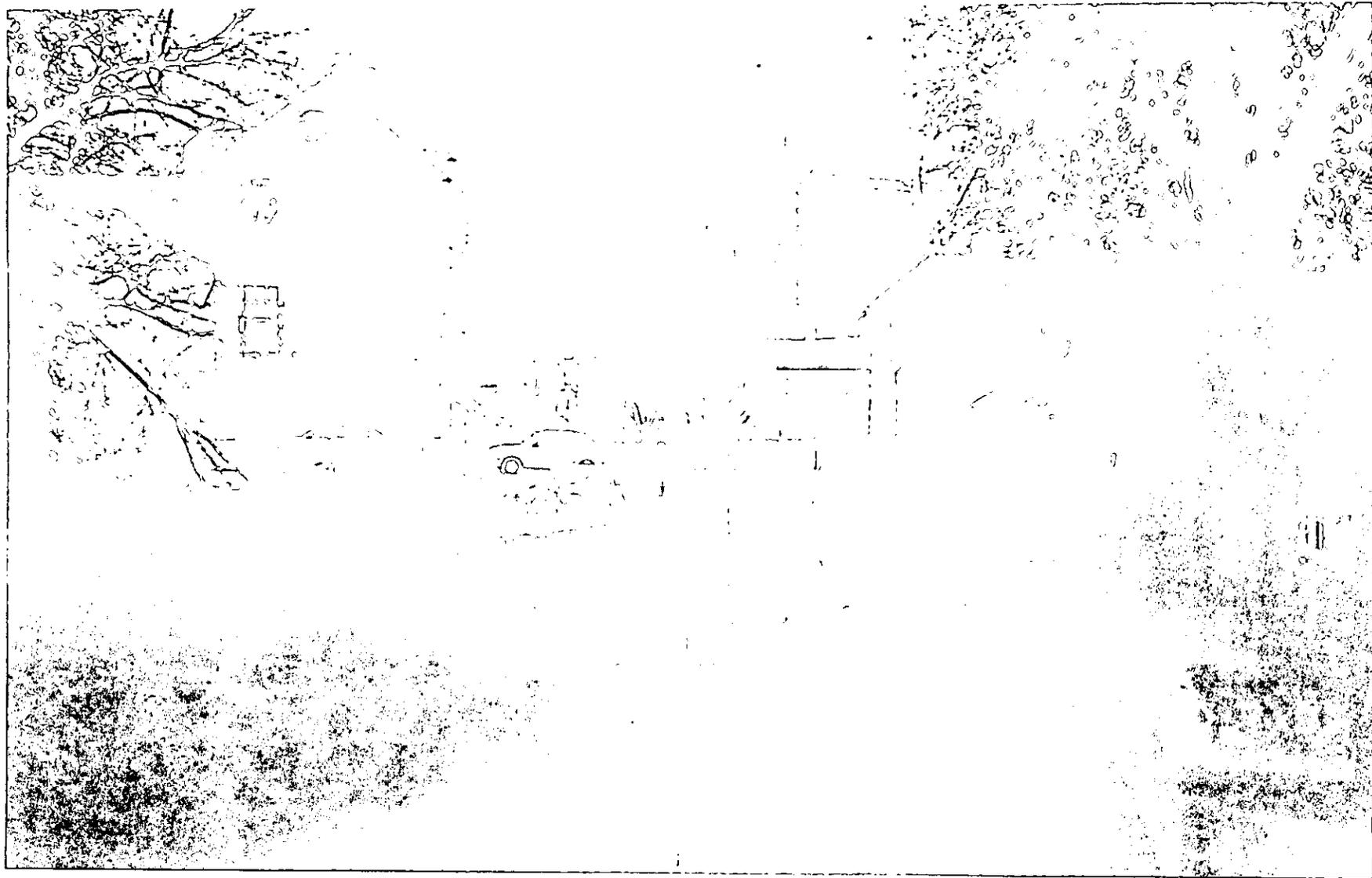


3/5 Oakham Court  
Preston  
PR1 3XP  
tel.01772 822700  
website:www.pukar.org.uk  
e-mail:pukar@ukonline.co.uk

Welcome to Pukar  
A place where Saskia  
tells me you'll find  
a friendly  
family atmosphere

Postcard reverse side with  
contact details with  
responses from participants

Using a scanned image of  
their handmade paper  
which was then  
manipulated using  
software photoshop



"Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary field that uses a multimethod approach to research. Its perspective is naturalistic and interpretive with regard to the understanding of human experience. It stresses the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and, what this writer calls the Mentor-Other - a positional view of those people who have been marginalized by the greater society and labelled as "other," but who are, in fact, experts who guide the researcher through the area of study - and the situational constraints that shape inquiry." (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994)

Reflection on my research so far has led me to thinking about and placing in context the discoveries that have come to light. I have come to see the importance of:

- A flexible approach - allowing the project to move and change as it develops
- The need and importance of a collaborative way of working even though this might seem almost impossible to achieve at the beginning. As the participant's ideas and suggestions are taken seriously their confidence begins to grow and very slowly their engagement and ownership of the project develops. This can not be rushed.
- The development of trust between artist and participant is very important.

The two groups with whom I have worked have had no experience of working in this collaborative way, so many of the tasks which I have initiated have been ways to slowly explore, in an inclusive way, opportunities to extend their experience and awareness.

I have now completed two case studies of six weeks duration of 2hrs per week. In September I will continue working with the same groups for a period of ten weeks in the hope of extending this research.

## **Derek Whyte – Assistant Director for Regeneration, employed by Preston City Council**

Derek Whyte has been involved with Preston City Council for at least the last ten years. He has a background in local government on the community development side and has moved across through general policy work into what he now describes as work with more of an economic focus. The interview, which took place in his office, was informative and Derek gave me the following names as contacts to pursue in regard to my professional practice.

- two community workers, Yvonne Hines, and Jennifer McCarthy, based at Open House, Grimshaw Street
- Peter Barge, community cohesion
- Kate Thorpe, neighbourhood renewal

There are only two core funded staff in Preston's economic development department, whereas in Blackburn there are 25 staff in the economic development section, of which 8 concentrate on business start-up and enterprise. Derek describes Preston's setup as small and although they are dealing with issues pertaining to a city they are doing it with funding on the level of a district council. Therefore, he explains "there's a much greater emphasis on seeing outputs, hard outputs in the built environment, but it's really in terms of economic growth, jobs etc. because we need to justify things much more rigorously to our members and also in terms of the European money that funds creative industries."

Derek goes on to mention the link my work might have with community cohesion and gives me some background information as to what is currently happening in Preston. He explained his hopes of Preston becoming a city known for its particular distinctiveness and Derek cites Brighton and Bristol as cities that have profiled a successful image of particular distinctiveness.

The meeting ended with an explanation of the various ethnic cultures to be found in Preston, and Derek's thoughts that Preston has avoided some of the 'social ills' other northern mill towns have experienced. He felt it necessary to focus on the positive benefits of diversity, and indeed to acquire a basic knowledge of what another's culture, faith, traditions, are all about.

INTERVIEW WITH DEREK WHYTE

D – Derek Whyte A – Anita Burrows

D Oh yes, it was just that I scribbled some comments against the questions.

A *Right.*

D [muttering]

A *If I just sort of lead us in to sort of, or take us back really in a way, to the projects, the pilot studies that I did, because it's quite some time ago, and I suppose evaluating it, what's come out of it perhaps is the sort of flexibility that I introduced to the workshops was something quite different and something new, my approach of working, but it seemed to work quite well in offering the group ownership and offering them some confidence in how it might proceed and trying to sort of get them to engage in what we were doing really. So I don't know whether that came through on the CD or not. I don't know. It's difficult for me to look at it from a sort of separate angle. I mean both projects ended up being very different because of that because they both took a particular route for that particular group really and the one in Deepdale with it being involved with Sure Start was, I think because it was rare child free time for that particular group, they became quite focused on making these [3.02] that they did begin using a computer, which many of them hadn't used before, which became exciting because in a sense they were using personal things, using a scanner and putting sort of images of their own children into stories that they knew, and sort of being able to put their own child next to Postman Pat was fantastic. It really sort of sparked an interest for them in computers.*

?

A *Yeah, he did yeah, okay, thank you. So, but you know that's sort of taking it back down to the grass roots again of actually onsite working and sort of steps a little bit away from that, and I know we had conversations last time and you gave me some contacts to follow up and I haven't really done that, I haven't really been able to pick up the next step of work at that level, I've had to sort of take a look back at it, so maybe that's something we can talk about and develop. I mean I don't know whether you've any questions to ask about CD-ROM, well it's not CD-ROM, just the video CD, I mean it was made to go in the Rotunda, it doesn't have any sound because I didn't want to sort of impinge on the café area and it was seen sort of large scale, there were still images...*

D I particularly liked the images off the activities in the Rotunda; I mean that was the sort of presentation at the end of it really.

A *Right, yes.*

D Because it seemed both appropriate and paradoxical. Appropriate in that you know the Harris, this institution which is designed to sort of propagate you know, knowledge and appreciation of the arts and culture and their influence on our lives to a wider population, specifically not just the educated middle class, you know, and yet when you look at it, it's actually a building out of time because by the stage it was built it's, everybody else was into the gothic revival, and it's precisely that kind of quasi-British museum feel that carries almost quite oppressive overtones and things, and it's nice to see that being subverted, or by, you know, types of artistic presentation and things that are emphasising community participation and also wider spread of ethnic groups. I know that my colleagues from the [05.43] say well we actually do quite a lot of that, and I recognise that that's true, but just a reaction to the images, there did seem to me to be a contrast of those two sort of sets of meanings if you like. So that was one of the things that I felt was particularly powerful out of

that.

**A** *Yes. I think it's really important to get the Rotunda, I didn't want the community gallery, because I feel that's something, very sideline sort of space.*

**D** Yeah, it is.

**A** *And they were, I mean it was good for the women to be in that Rotunda area, it gave them confidence, and it's not an easy space to enter anyway is it?*

**D** No.

**A** *I think quite a few of their friends were a bit reluctant, they needed encouragement to go in and look at it, but yeah the fact that there was [cooking] in there as well was great, it was a good opening for that, it brought the two groups together and some wonderful aromas drifting in that area. Yes. So yes, I mean I guess it tells a story and maybe for a secondary audience, the actual projects that were, and the process of making whatever went into the Harris is perhaps a little bit, not that interesting really in a sense. I mean it sort of said why the things were there in a way that we'd worked together and we'd produced this, but it's probably the people who were involved in the project who were more interested in seeing that process because they can relate to it far more than other people in a sense. But it does introduce the process of making art, rather than just the end product and sort of gives a bit more background information I think, rather than just plopping something there and how did it come to be sort of thing. Yeah, I mean I know we talked last time, and you said you used artists in regeneration and you have done in projects in the past. I've had different conversations with different people. I had a meeting with Helen Worsley last week, and I mean I met Helen last year in her other role as cultural diversity officer, and I got involved in international women's week because the exhibition was on at the same time and she was saying there isn't a lot of sort of she'd like to sort of, I think she's still finding her feet in her new role really, but she was talking about there being a separateness in lots of departments, that there isn't a lot of crossover and I spoke about an idea that I'd had of how this might sort of move on in the future, with my link with the University really. I sort of call these projects pilot studies, and I know they were only a sort of very quite small really, but it would be interesting perhaps to do more of them in a wider spread of areas across Preston, and I thought it might be quite interesting if there was a possibility of making the link, perhaps with the University offering electives for some of the third, second, third year students to work with me using sort of my flexible methodology, which has proved to be quite successful, but not sort of inhibiting their creative potential in whatever they might bring to the project, that there may be a way of linking that together, perhaps with regeneration and cultural diversity, you know, and sort of suggesting that idea as a way perhaps of, we might move in the future, I don't know, but just to raise that really.*

**D** I think it's something we would be interested in. The contact we've got mainly with the second and third year students at present tends to be around looking to encourage people into kind of entrepreneurial jobs creation after they leave college, because obviously issues of graduate retention are quite important to us in terms of what are the characteristics of the future city of Preston, not the current city, but how do we change and develop what we've got at present and having that kind of creative mix, you know, we feel will help move on the development of the city in quite a lot of ways. We've got some links at present, which my colleague, Mike Brogan, has been leading on, where we've had a series of, we've jointly run with the University, a series of lectures and so forth and we've got architects or urban designers and stuff...

**A** *With the [Speaking of Art]*

**D** Exactly.

- A **Yes, yes.**
- D And I know that Mike's keen to roll out more practical applications of some of that work.
- A **Right, right.**
- D But he's taking the lead on that, so it might be there are things there that would probably be fruitful to follow up I think.
- A **Yes.**
- D My mind's still full of Christmas things, I can't remember the name of the Spanish artist...
- A **Yes, Alfredo [11.07]**
- D That's right, yeah. I think there are plans to work with him to do some design related concepts across the city, but I'm not quite sure how far we've got on that, but that's the kind of partnership or partnering that we're interested in working up a bit more with the University. It's easier for us, or it's easier for the University, if things are tied in, can be justified in course related terms because we've been trying to press the University to do more as a sort of major player in the city if you like pro bono, and they're saying that, quite understandably, they've got some difficulties in pushing out activities at the margin because they're required to justify expenditure is going for the development of students' interests, mission of learning and all that kind of stuff, so I think if activities are linked in with course work, that works much better I think.
- A **Yes. The fine art department, they're only just developing a research, I mean I'm probably the first, no I'm not the first, there was a woman who did...**
- D During the first wave sort of thing.
- A **Yeah, yes, yes. They've, I got a studentship to do this research, so it's in their interest sort of I suppose to see where it goes and see what develops, and I guess there's an angle of what you've been saying that's been involved in funding my position to see what might come of it all. My supervisor is Charles Quick who I think has been asked to work alongside Alfredo, in whatever they decide to do in Preston. So, are you saying sort of that I might be better going and speaking to Mike rather than sort of looking towards a partnership with...**
- D Well it depends what sort of projects we might be thinking about. I suspect Mike would probably be the better contact, you know, according to my assumptions. Within the regeneration division we've really been picking up some of the other things through the work of Jenny Rutter and Keith. So, for example, the staff [13.39] that Charles Hadcock has done where we've placed sculptures around various parts of the central Preston, that's really arisen out of Jenny's work. So I mean there might be an overlap there. In terms of, but that if you like has been I think more opportunity focused than part of a sort of grand plan. The stuff that we're trying to plan more consciously about what's the role of the arts in regeneration is really linked into the work that Mike's taking a lead on. So from that, you know, please don't get the impression that I'm saying no we're not interested in any of these things, I'm just saying I think it may be more productive to pursue some of these issues through with Mike. Having said that, if there's issues that come out of our discussion or whatever that we think oh yeah that would be useful to follow up on, then I'd be quite keen to do so.
- A **Yes. It's the focus on the people really, that I'm interested in, it's sort of bringing you know people who live in Preston, giving them an opportunity and an experience of working with an artist, more than an artist having an idea and maybe using the people to make that idea happen. It's more of a collaboration that's grass roots up, so that the ideas come out of that collaborative process.**
- D There's two. I was going to say, there's perhaps more, but there's two possibilities there

that strike me. One is I've got two community involvement workers, whom you may or may not have worked with, Yvonne Hines, and Jennifer McCarthy, yeah, and some of the stuff they're doing is about bringing people together at a grass roots level, maybe around something as simple as doing a walk round of the area in which they live and identifying action points, clear up, boarding up or what have you, or it might be a little bit more complex projects in terms of doing kind of action seminars with people about aspirations for an area and bringing in the main providers and discussing with them how they're meeting peoples' expectations. So I would have thought that there could well be scope for some fruitful collaboration there. The other area is the, you talked about working with Sure Start in Deepdale. We're also responsible for Sure Start Central, which is based in St John's Centre, as it cuts through the bus station, so there could be something around that that Alan Walsh would be quite interested in working something up. Or the other thing now that I think about it is some of the work that Peter Barge has been taking a lead on called community cohesion because there was a particular emphasis on constantly, following the civil disturbances, riots, calling it what you will, a couple of years ago, the Home Office identified Preston as an at risk area because of the demographic similarities with some of the other northern mill towns where these disturbances are taking place. We are therefore tapping into some additional Home Office monies for activities designed to promote community cohesion and some of those have involved working with Prescap, but again it's about, I suppose there's two layers, one is working with individual sections of the community, which in large part, but not exclusively, means different ethnic groups, but also say the gay and lesbian community or the disabled community, and helping them kind of being self reflective, but then secondly, bringing people together in a way that is a bit more than the sort of valid, but slightly limited bringing everybody together and having a nice cup of tea and we're all sisters and brothers under the skin. And some of that I think is quite interesting. The stuff that I'm particularly concerned about is getting at probably a better verb or expression than that, but getting the sort of young white male population to address issues because it does seem that, whereas their parents' generation actually undertook more shared activities with people of a different ethnic background, there does seem to be a tendency now for ethnic groups, certainly in secondary school, but it's a question about whether it starts in primary school, or kind separating out, so you don't get out of class people in groups that have sort of mixed ethnicity, and that does seem to be linked then into some of the antisocial behaviour activities and so forth that are going on. Of course you can address some of those through ASBOs and stuff, antisocial behaviour orders, and that's probably quite a useful tool, but it's only one kind of tool, it's not addressing the kind of core issues. So there's stuff there around community cohesion that we would be interested in looking at more creative or alternative roots into some of these things, and it's interesting that actually in looking at some of these things, the police are now much more open minded and creative than some organisations like local authorities that you might expect to be more interested in these things. So, for example, they're doing a project, not directly related to community cohesion, it's related to home security and reassuring elderly residents at present, but a couple of the inner city wards here and they're doing that using sort of theatre groups and things, so you get the people in an area out into the community centre and you do sort of drama with them, you get a bit of participation from them and so forth. I was a bit leery when I heard about it at first because I thought if I was kind of elderly and a bit concerned and answered the door, I wouldn't want somebody in a clown face staring at me, but it's interesting, that was a proposition that they came to us to fund, they came to us with the proposition and said we'd like you to give us some funding to help us do this. By all accounts, it seems to have been, you know, actually very effective. Sorry, that's a sort of side reflection on some of these things.

**A** *Yeah, sure.*

**D** Yeah, anyway. So there's maybe those three areas, the stuff that Jennifer and Yvonne are doing, Sure Start Central and community cohesion work. So those might be things that,

perhaps particularly around the community cohesion.

**A** *Yeah. So the contact names that you've just given there are they people that I could perhaps get in touch with and take this forward a little bit further.*

D Yeah. I mean Jennifer and Yvonne, their immediate manager is Kate Thorpe. I don't know if you've met Kate at all?

**A** *No, I don't think so, no.*

D Kate's responsible for our neighbourhood renewal agenda. So she manages the community involvement work, she manages the community observatory, she manages the neighbourhood renewal fund...

**A** *Ah, yes, I think I may have met her then if she's involved...*

D Dark hair, fairly long...

**A** *Yeah.*

D By all means approach Yvonne and Jennifer directly, I mean that won't be a problem. They're based at Open House at Grimshaw Street, just over the road. The same office as the observatory, just underneath where the SRB offices are.

**A** *Yeah. I've met them through Preston Women's Network, and they're all involved in that.*

D That's right. And Sure Start Central is Helen Walsh, I can give you phone numbers and so forth, but she's contactable at the office in St John's Centre.

**A** *Yes, I know where that is.*

D Community cohesion stuff is Peter Barge, who is my deputy, but I've seconded, or he's been seconded down to provide, for three months, to provide interim management at the SRB team, so he's on the first floor of Open House just down the road.

**A** *Okay. Thanks for that.*

D Those people...

**A** *Yes. Good. Yeah, I'll see what comes of that. I mean I've sort of set up meetings with Jenny Rutter and Keith Launchbury I've spoken to them. I've spoken to Jendy Bullman, I know she's sort of retired now from her role as community development office, and various other people to get different perspectives, which is what I was sort of, this research was really about was sort of a bit more joined up thinking really about a project like this, rather than an artist coming in and doing it, but just to try and get some different perspectives really on how useful it might be. And it's been interesting to speak to Jenny and Keith. I mean Jenny's very pro this sort of work, but in a sense, I think maybe feels her hands are tied because she's in economic regeneration, and I don't know, I get the idea there's a sort of economic regeneration seems to concentrate on the built environment and not the people, and that seems a little strange to me, but whether that's because of the way they've worked...*

D Well, it's a sort of slightly grand title because really we've only got, there's Keith, Andy White, and then there's Jenny, so there's only two core funded staff. Blackburn just down the road, they've got 25 staff on economic development section, of which 8 concentrate on business start-up and enterprise. So by comparison, we're much smaller, and it's partly because, although we're sort of grappling with some of the issues of a city, we're only doing it with a district council's resources, and that causes us some problems. Therefore, there's a much greater emphasis on seeing outputs, hard outputs in terms of, not so much, yeah I suppose in the built environment, but it's really in terms of economic growth, jobs etc. because we need to justify things much more rigorously to our members and also in terms of the European money that funds what Jenny's doing. We need to be able to demonstrate

that we're hitting the outputs and so forth, so that means that other things that are, could also be of a priority, like the kind of work you're talking about, get under-emphasised because we need to concentrate much harder on the core outputs. If you've got 25 staff, you've got much more flexibility even, if push comes to shove, to lose a couple of those members of staff in budget cuts. If you're starting from a basic two core staff, it's really much more of a problem. And we do have a number of, well at least three community development posts, but basically I've robbed those as people have left to shore up other bits of activity where for example we need to find match for ERDF monies and so forth. So we're a bit more underrepresented in some of these areas than ideally I'd like.

A **Right.**

D That's an acknowledgement and, well it's really robbing Peter to pay Paul really.

A ***Yeah, sure, yes. Just as an outsider it sort of strikes me as, I know you've got, it's an exiting place to be in a sense that Preston's got you know some really good ideas of what it wants to work towards and with the Tithebarn project and the ideas that are being talked about for Church Street as well, and I mean I come at it from a sort of, the angle that I've been working with and the people that sort of inhabit the areas, there's an opportunity there to sort of, an opportunity for them really to move on and have more experiences. I know it won't be everybody and not everybody will be interested, but it seems a real opportunity and an opportunity wasted if that isn't sort of incorporated into whatever's...***

D I think the thing... I think we are clear actually, perhaps surprisingly clear as a council, and this includes our members, that if Preston is going to grow as a city, it's going to grow in an organic way, that's probably the wrong adjective, it's not going to grow in a linear way. I think the days when urban designers, or whatever, went along the line of saying if you build it, people will come, that doesn't work now. With transport links, it doesn't work with the built environment because people need to populate structures and the mix of the way in which the structures are populated is very important, and there's a lot of research over the past couple of years coming from kind of fairly hard nosed economics points of view that underlines that fact. So, for example, Michael Parkinson from Liverpool University did a big study last year for ODPM and the European Commission about the competitiveness of European cities, and the factors that promote growth and economic competitiveness, and some of them are obvious, links to higher education institutions, access to airports, good transport infrastructure, high concentrations of I.T. infrastructure, broadband, wireless connectivity, but there was a lot more about quality of life, diversity, creativity, culture and the arts, access to leisure activities, diversity, both of population in terms of ethnicity, but also in terms of the types of spreads of activities that go on. So if we were looking for a model for Preston, we wouldn't be looking at somewhere like Milton Keynes, we'd be more looking at some of the aspects of York or Brighton or Bristol, where there's actually quite a diversity of, I mean there are the, the mainstream retailers and so forth, but there's also an emphasis on A creativity, but B kind of local brand, owner occupier, shops providing small specialist, but high quality activities. There's issues for us here about links to the rural hinterland, farmer's markets etc. So, we're clear that there needs to be a mix which can't be fully planned out, but what you can do is try and ensure that when you get a big plan development like Tithebarn comes along, that you put considerable effort into marrying in with that an approach which looks at, on the one hand, complimentary development of other parts of the city centre area in physical times, but secondly that tries to link in with the local people, both in terms of those who are providing businesses at present, and who are perhaps concerned that they might be being squeezed out when we don't want them to be squeezed out, we want them to be retained, to continue to provide diversity, but secondly also linking in with the population in the local area. Now primarily the focus that we have taken on that at present is about access to the labour market because we see that that's the primary way of getting people who are currently disenfranchised, disadvantaged, disengaged, linked back into wider civic society and people getting over this feeling of being

cut off, of not having a stake in society and interestingly government policy, there's always been a strong strand on that, even under the previous administration, because at root, and it's back to economics again, the civil service has always taken the view, and politicians of both the main parties have always acceded to this, is that the whole of civil order rests on the ability of people to ascent to being governed, and those outbreaks of civil disorder, whether you're talking about Irish terrorism, or the Brixton riots, or whatever, have all been associated with people feeling disenfranchised, that they don't have a stake in society, therefore it doesn't matter that they turn on society and you know that kind of activity in larger economic terms is very destabilising. I'm beginning to get into a quasi-academic rant now, but it's just to say that, I hope that maybe marginally interesting anyway. But the point is that in open policy terms, or in social policy terms, it's important I think to not just talk in terms which are about philanthropy, it's important to talk in terms which links outcomes from the activities that you're generating or participating in with some wider economic and social benefits.

**A Yes, yes, yes.**

D You know.

**A Yes, sure.**

D For example, we're saying to local businesses, we want you to recruit people from the immediate area who are unemployed, and they're saying why should I, why should it matter to me if someone comes from Blackburn or whatever. Now in larger terms you're saying, oh well, you're reducing your national transport costs and pollution and so forth and all that, that doesn't necessarily sell, certainly to a local retailer, you might have some weight with a larger firm, with chains all over the place, but what you can say to someone is if you recruit someone locally we can ensure that they are trained to your specification. They are likely to be very motivated about coming to work because you're giving them access to training and you're getting therefore a better commitment, a better quality of work. You're getting someone who is going to be able to walk to work, which assists with flexibility and child care arrangements, access into work, so there are some tangible bottom line benefits that we can point to you. I sort of say this, it's kind of been a fairly lengthy lesson for me to learn really because I started my working life in local government on the community development side, so I've actually started from that, moved across through general policy work into what's now more economic focused, albeit if you look at the way in which the audit commission splits down what regeneration is about, economic regeneration is probably only one quadrant of our.

**A Right.**

D I could probably dig out a little jigsaw diagram of that. But anyway, sorry I'm straying off onto wider areas.

**A No, it's interesting to hear because it does cover such a broad area does this, and it's good to sort of get your expertise on that, because it's certainly not mine. You know, I've learned just through experience in what I've done, but I haven't got the breadth of experience as people who have been working you know for many many years in this sort of work. I mean you picked up on about the Harris and the images that are contained in that, and so the feel you get when you go in. I know Jenny has an idea for an arts centre doesn't she on the Church Street area, and I have talked to her about it and the sort of quality, you know, it would be great for Preston to have this sort of contemporary space for high art, but then it does sometimes, it is sometimes to build that bridge out to local people who don't necessarily, which art's such a broad thing now, it's often very difficult for people to understand what's, what is it's use and all the rest of it. You know, I sort of said, you know, it would be an opportunity for people who live near here to use that space and perhaps gain more of an understanding or use it for whatever, the work, some work that's similar to this**

*where they put their own work in there, so they feel as though they have more of a part and a role to play in that. Don't know whether that's her idea, I don't know. It seemed a difficult thing. I think there's probably got to be perhaps a combination of both, but I know through doing this, you know, it was good to have conversations with people about but is it art, and what is art about because the Turner Prize is put on the telly isn't it, and there are big debates about what they, I mean it's interesting, I mean that's what art's about, if it doesn't create some conversation and people to invite people to give their own opinion, but then you've got to have confidence to be able to do that as well. You know, maybe something like this did give people more of an idea, and perhaps they would have gained more confidence in being able to say I think this or I think that and that would be good. You know, I know I've sort of brought it sort of back, but I don't have that breadth of experience that you have, I sort of, I've got a little narrow road sort of, the art world in a way, but I know there are links back out, and it's sort of trying to move something forward along that really. Yeah.*

D I think that trying to maintain an overview of how all these bits fit together is probably quite important from the point of view of big picture stuff and also trying to address some of the issues that you referred to earlier about the tendency of large institutions to work in silos. But what that does mean is you can't focus on two sort of different things at once. You need to then adjust your focus to look down at the much more specific localised initiative or themes in a way, and I think you're talking about, my approach has always been the agenda in Preston is sufficiently broad for there to be scope for basically everybody to get involved. By and large, I'm comfortable that we're collectively pretty much working along the same lines, and I think that it doesn't do to be over-prescriptive about saying, well is an initiative such as you're talking about, can we clearly show how it works into such and such a work stream and da, da, da, da, because I think that's overly anal retentive, and I think actually militates against some of the kind of creativity and happenstance that actually is what generates urban and community growth. Preston is a, as a city has seen very significant economic restructuring over the past 10 years. In the 90s it was the jeans capital of the UK.

**A** *Yes, I remember you telling me that last time I was here.*

D Well it's completely diversified away from that, and over the past three years we've shown growth in employment of 16%, which is a phenomenally high growth rate. Now, by and large, none of that has been generated in any planned way by the activities of the public sector, whether it's the local authority, county council, Business Link, whoever. We can all say there are things that we have done that may have assisted with particular aspects or particular trends, but really that's all happened despite, almost, the activity and the role of the public sector. So, while it doesn't let us off the hook in terms of doing a bit of hard analytical thinking about what kind of area do you want, and what are the things that you can put in play to help generate that, you also need to recognise that it's, in a way it's almost the [41.44] of unplanned activities that provide some of that fruitful creativity about what the urban form is, or the community form and so forth. As a model, I think that works better in economic terms. In community terms, the downside of it is that you only treat citizens as units in the labour market and their democratic or philosophical role as the building blocks of the, not just of the state, but of the local and the wider community, get downplayed and not addressed. Now I have to be honest and say that our primary focus in economic terms is in helping people reconnect with the labour market. And we justify that in individual or community focus terms by say, as I've done previously, that it's, that's, that kind of engagement is what reconnects people with wider society, helps them improve their feelings of self-worth, that they've got some stake in society, it also helps them financially to stabilise and support their family units, etc., etc. However, I recognise that that's not a sufficiency, having been brought up like Gordon Brown, as a Presbyterian, you know, one of the things my dad always used to go on about was man's not fed by bread alone, so you can't just live in terms of a purely economic model. So, and the government's policies, even

where they're not directly economically focused, are focused on changing peoples' material circumstances, which is entirely appropriate, but it does mean that I think that we underplay and under-resource the kind of creativity development with people, and helping people define what are their own aspirations and objectives, or maybe even beginning to think that it's legitimate to have some of those and it's in that context that you know, from my perspective anyways, seize a lot of benefits from the sort of approach that you've been developing and working through.

**A** *Yeah, sure. I mean there are links, you know, with gaining new skills that might help in future employment, but yes...*

**D** You don't want to get too dragged down into kind of classic English utilitarianism you know.

**A** *Yeah sure, yes, yes. And you know I've visited Berlin a few times and Germany has, they're very good I think at this sort of thing, maybe, but they're very used, they're quite happy to talk about it, you know about art, and they'll talk till the cows come home, where there's a reticence here, I don't want to make a fool of myself, I think. Perhaps it is, I don't know, lack of having the opportunity to have a go or maybe it's just lacking in confidence that the opportunities are there, but we don't have the confidence perhaps to pick them up, I don't know.*

**D** Well there's cultural differences aren't there...

**A** *Yes, there are.*

**D** I think there's this, we talked about, or I talked about utilitarianism, there's also this kind of classic English scepticism isn't there about...

**A** *Yes, yes, yes, yes, and maybe particularly around old mill towns where they're very, they're very entrenched in their work and the use of whatever was made that had a purpose, and not just a decorative thing, or a thing to ponder, but had a use.*

**D** There again, if you look back at how Preston was a hundred years ago, some of the physical fabric is still there, the population has changed very significantly and back to the community cohesion sort of issues in a way, in large part, the kind of cultural richness that comes from the Indian sub-continent tradition, in particular, doesn't seem to be as sort of disseminated out and informed the sort of wider body politic, and some of this discussion, for example around the controversy in Birmingham at present about the play about [46.29] precisely seems to revolve around this, that people in the community are complaining that there's a lot of talent that isn't invested in, and the things that the arts establishment as they see it picks up on are those things that are kind of counter-intuitive or critical of the tradition from which they've come. Now, that may or may not be true, but it's clearly that there's a strong feeling about that and I think Preston's in an interesting position in terms of it's sort of relation to ethnicity because I think it's avoided some of the kind of social ills that other northern mill towns have had, but I think there's not the same kind of awareness of the positive benefits of diversity, or indeed basic knowledge of what another's culture, faith, traditions, are all about. To the same extent that you get in somewhere like Birmingham or London, and it's not about size, because if anything size should militate against the larger unit rather than the smaller one. So I think, you know, back to this thing about, there's good things in Preston, but actually what we don't want to do is fall into the trap of being complacent about it, I think a bit of humility about where we are is often quite well advised you know.

**A** *Yeah, that's really interesting to hear from quite a broad area. We've mentioned that first bit about a partnership and the last thing is as part of my thesis, with it being a more of a practice based research, I'm hoping to put my project onto a CDROM so that people will be able to access it at different levels, perhaps with a map of Preston and the areas that I've worked in, with links down through to different layers to say, you know, I worked in Sure Start and then maybe some examples, but then, you*

***know, with links even further really, but the front page will be the overall process so if people look at it they'll be able to perhaps delve through one bit one time and then come back to it and have another look at another bit, and would that be something you'd be interested in receiving or?***

D Absolutely and we're just about to embark on a pilot, study's probably the wrong word, pilot piece of work with the audit commission on area mapping, or [49.17] mapping, which is primarily going to be statistical based, but it's going to look at trying to collect national data sets, but also local data sets held by a number of the key public sector stakeholders in Preston and collate those, break them down to ward level, and make them available on a GIS system to the public. There's some sensitivity about this amongst some of our colleagues because I think they perceive this as potentially fuelling requests for more locally divergent funding patterns, which is likely got, or has the potential to be politically controversial, but we're going to go and do it anyway and see what happens. I mean there might be, there might be some way there of linking in that with that as well. But irrespective of that, I think that is, the type of activity that you're talking about we would certainly be interested in.

A ***Yeah, I know my approach has been very particular, it's been very particular about particular areas, particular people, but in a sense, that was nice to have that opportunity because that, you know, in the real world, that often isn't an easy thing to access for funding reasons, but I think it's interesting to turn it on it's head in a sense and go to the people and say yes, but what does your area mean for you, what is it about your life that's, well that they were gob smacked really why would you be interested in anything we do, sort of thing, and yes it was a good, it was a good place to start, and an interesting journey that happened, and Sure Start and [51.27] have both expressed an interest in working in the future, it's just how all that might happen and be managed. Yeah, well thanks for that, that's been really interesting and it was good to get the broader perspective on it all. Okay.***

**Hassimati Parmar – participant from the Pukar group in Avenham, resident in Preston.**

I came to know Hassi quite well and she was happy for me to visit her home where this interview took place. Hassi has lived in Preston for many years; she comes from Kenya originally and migrated to Lancashire in the early 1960's with her parents and brother.

Hassi offers some of her thoughts about participating in the research and how her ideas of what art can be changed through her involvement in the project. She took a lead role in chatting to the owners of the local shops when we went out as a group, explaining to the shop owners what we were doing in an effort to obtain some sponsorship.

In this interview Hassi offers some of her own reflections about the opening of the exhibition at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery. She came to the launch of the CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall two years after originally working with me. She explains in this interview how she recognised a broader picture in the research project and how she felt it was important that this work archived information about the everyday lives of Prestonians in 2004.

Hassi offers some information about her thoughts on Preston as a new city and the need to include consultation with ordinary people. She emphasises the point about disseminating information to people and avoiding rumours developing. She believes that the city needs to value the people of Preston and inform them clearly about the plans they have and offer opportunities for residents to give their opinions.

Hassi offers a particular view of Preston bus station as being the only one she has come across that enables disabled people to be independent, as one can alight from a bus coming from outside the region and access the local buses without having to walk very far. One wonders whether Preston city councillors are aware of this.

Hassi gained in confidence from participating in the research. This was evidenced by her voicing her opinion on the project to all those gathered at the Town Hall for the CD launch. This audience comprised city officers, academics from the University, art professionals from Preston and beyond, community workers, architects, planners and other participants.

INTERVIEW WITH HASSIMATI PARMAR

H – Hassimati Parmar A – Anita Burrows

A *...I mean you'll remember this from before, but we might as well just stick to it, because it helps to keep it focused.*

H Yeah.

A *You'll feel as though you're seeing it all again.*

H Yeah, mind you I'm terrible, you know, I could say things today and if somebody say it's something different, I don't know why I do it, because my son [0.18] said, he said you're never, I don't know why you're not consistent, and I said well it just depends what I feel like on the day.

A *Yeah, course it does, we're all like that, aren't we. So, I mean again, it's just looking back at what we did together really and sort of thinking about the way I came and worked with you and sort of my approach to that. So I mean that second question, if you cast your mind back, right to the beginning of the project, when I came to work at Pukar for six weeks and we began by chatting and tearing up old envelopes, and there was Seresh and Saskia and Nina, and is it Hershi...*

H Hersha, yeah.

A *And Newman and Zebonitia, I just wondered if you know you can just remember what your thoughts were right back at the beginning and how you felt about sort of me coming and beginning to chat to you and beginning this work and how you felt about it.*

H Because it was something to do with art, we were thinking does art only consist of painting or drawing something, so I think we were all thinking we weren't going to be any good at doing this art work, but, and then when you said about tearing pieces of paper and that will become art, I think visually we couldn't see what that was, because I think people had this vision of looking at art as a painting, a big painting or whatever, and it's like we're never going to achieve, doing any kind of painting, but it was a real different kind of thing, just to sit there and tear paper to make maché paper, it was more involved, and I think that was a good thing to start on art with for us.

A *Yeah. And it helped people chat didn't it?*

H Yeah, and they talked about oh, like if they've done it with their children or grandchildren or, whilst [2.32] done before, but I've never actually had my hands to doing it, so that was quite good, because maybe they can take it back and do it with their grandchildren or great grandchildren, yeah, that was very interesting.

A *And people were keen once they got the idea weren't they to sort of bring in things from home like flowers or...*

H Flowers and yeah, that was good, or what, and the good thing was that they tallied that with what they had things in their, in their own hands and in their own heads by, but was in their culture to be able to do it, because when we did make the maché, and people started putting paint, or putting the leaves in there, they set it up like and they can remember like me I thought about when we were doing it, oh I might as well do a pattern, like in [Dwhali] we do [Rangoli] patterns, so thinking of like doing pattern like that. So it brought the culture what we were used to...

A *You could use it...*

H We could use it to say, we've modernised it, but didn't really realise that we were doing it

because we brought our thoughts into what we were able to do because I remember I think somebody, I think [Hersha] did a [Rangoli] pattern, she said that would be like, I could do a [Rangoli] pattern, you know, symmetrical and each corner and then some... yeah, yeah, I think that was a good bit, you know, as an artist you didn't think, as a student that you could that is art when it finished, so that was good.

**A Yes. Sort of an open structure...**

H Open structure, yeah, yeah, I think so, yeah.

**A And sort of this open ended approach where we sort of talked about what it might be, but it could be anything, but we were interested in what Preston or what interested you as a group.**

H Yeah.

**A Is that a way you'd worked before, or was that something new for you?**

H I think it was new for us and I think it's something because we lived in Preston and we did things, like everyday things, but to actually put it into maybe an art form was like a new thing, thinking oh I can put what my thoughts into that, it wasn't like saying well you're drawing this picture of a flower and you just follow it, a flower is a flower to everybody, but that unique in the sense that it was, something what you could put in, or what you had already the skills in your hands, but you didn't know how to connect it into an art form kind of thing, so that was very interesting for me anyway, yes.

**A Do you think the others felt the same?**

H Yeah, I did yeah, yeah. Because when we did that maché, then when we did, doing pictures and making it with lentils and pulses, the patterns, I mean that was quite good because we're used to the pulses to eat with, but then actually to use them in an art form that was good, and I do think that I would keep that skill to take it, to give to my grandchildren, you know, if they were doing something, or if they've brought something from, a picture home from school, you relate that to, oh I remember doing that, I'll show you how I did it. So it's sort of putting something, yeah, and I think it's giving confidence to think well you can use a few bits of pulses what you've got left behind to use for a picture and that was good, yeah.

**A So did you think that helped people feel relaxed, having that sort of approach?**

H Yeah.

**A And sort of gave them confidence to keep coming every week...**

H Coming, yeah, and I think not to say like it was set in stones was the most important thing, that you didn't set it in stones where somebody felt like saying oh no I can't go this week because I never managed to draw that, or I never managed to do that because they knew that we could change it, or like if they couldn't manage that say well why don't you do something else and I'll do that and then when they see what you've actually done, and they've realised that, oh I wasn't going to do it, but oh isn't that easy to do, and then they want to have a practice and do it, and that's quite good because that means they've sort of opened their vision to think well I can do this, I was thinking more I can't do that, but I can do it now, you know, I think watching one another was a good thing.

**A Yes, it was quite a mixture, there were some of the women that aren't quite as open and as good at English as you are and it sort of gave them a bit more confidence to ...**

H That's it, because it was like a mix of things sometimes, speaking, because sometimes they explained it, what they have maybe even because they were older than me, what they have done, maybe in the past when they were children and that was children not here in England, but in Pakistan, or India or Africa or wherever, maybe they've remembered

something from it and they think oh yeah, I remember that, so that was a good thing, yeah.

**A** *Then we made the postcards didn't we which I suppose in a sense we didn't know we were going to do that, but that was quite a, it was a successful thing to do to have something printed in a professional format.*

H Really professional to say that that was our work what's gone into that picture, and I think Saskia was really pleased about that, she was like oh look, and we did that you know, so it was really good that we even reflect afterwards, and I think at Pukar they had somewhere and you know, we done that, yeah.

**A** *And the postcards were there for them to use to advertise the centre.*

H [9.44] I sometimes keep things for like [9.48] box and I'll put it in there, and I think oh right I done that, and it's good.

**A** *So we got down to this, well Pukar and the group were very welcoming, it was a good place for me to come.*

H And it was nice because even some of the I think there was a class, computer classes going and the teacher, Helen, she said oh look at this, you know, and it was nice to know oh this is nice what you're doing, and it's like doing it as an art form, and then when she seen it even develop from just what we started with and then when we finished and it was drying out or being put at Pukar, it was good that...

**A** *So we used the technology as well didn't we to scan the paper...*

H Yeah, that's right, and then she got, you know, she was quite oh, she said I wouldn't mind sitting with you lot and doing this, so it was good that, and I think it made the group feel worthy that thinking that gosh we are doing something exciting, something really different, yeah, that was good, yeah.

**A** *What are your thoughts about the second project where we cooked and went out shopping that perhaps took a little bit to get off the ground...*

H It did, yeah.

**A** *I suppose it started when I'd taken that video of walking around Frenchwood and Avenham and I went in the shops and then conversations started about cooking sort of Asian vegetables didn't it?*

H Yeah, and I think it was good that it started with the vegetables where it wasn't offensive to anybody who was a vegetarian, because a lot of Asians are pure vegetarians and they're not meat eaters, but meat eaters do eat vegetables anyway, so it didn't, it maybe enticed them to think about more of a vegetarian dishes than just meat dishes, so that was good. I thought it was brilliant. I know it took a bit of doing, but it was good that it started off from us thinking of where we shop for the things, for the ingredients and like because we all came from different areas, so everybody has their own little shop where they thought of where to go for their ingredients, and then when we decided we'd ask the shopkeepers for a bit of help and put them on the map, I think it was quite good that they were put on the map because it brought that, oh there's somebody who's thinking of Asian shops being here, you know. I mean sometimes shops are there a lifetime, but you walk past them, you go in them, but it was just that little bit more for them as well.

**A** *Yeah, and they tend to be small businesses don't they?*

H Yeah, long hours and small businesses, so that was quite good, and I think that as we went round and explained to them what we were doing and then showed them the end product as well, and I think that was quite good because I think the bags were an absolutely brilliant idea because they thought oh it's like having their name on a piece where they'll think oh well somebody will use it and it will still be usable and it was great that we thought of the environment in the sense to think oh well it's not on a plastic bag where it will be chucked

away or torn up and just put in the bin, they could reuse it in a recycle way.

**A** *I can't remember whether it was you or one of the other women that mentioned that shopping in Kenya or India used cotton bags.*

H Yeah, we used to do it like that, yeah.

**A** *Used there...*

H Yeah, it's true, yeah.

**A** *So it's nice to sort of again bring that sort of cross over of culture isn't it?*

H Yeah, that's it, to say well, you know, even though it was all those years ago in Africa or in India or wherever we used it, we brought it like almost a full circle to say oh well we can still use it here and that. That was a very good idea.

**A** *And a lot of shopping seems to focus perhaps more on the city centre and a lot of these small businesses around the edge where people live more, and it was good to sort of you know, encourage them...*

H To get them involved, yeah, to say well you know we use your shops and we, you know, maybe appreciate them for being there and just take it for granted, but it's taking one step to say well we do notice that you are here. It's good that, I really enjoyed that.

**A** *Do you think it made a difference us going as a group of women, and a mixed group so that you know it was pretty obvious to the shops we went in that some of the group used those shops on a regular basis...*

H Yeah, because they've seen your face.

**A** *Do you think that made a big difference?*

H It did and it made a difference in the sense of them thinking oh right, you know, and it was women doing something, and I think that was good for the women because I mean every day women think oh well it's only cooking and cleaning and running the home and the family is the only important thing, but you're actually taking time out and doing it as an art form project and you're actually going out to the shops you go to where they've seen you go in and maybe those people who are using the shops have, the shopkeeper may have a different look to that person to say oh, they're doing, you know, education wise, looking at you to think oh she does do something besides just being a housewife, or a mother or, you know, or just looking after the family, there is something else she's involved in, and maybe the women got that, you know, without knowing that they've got that, the shops we went to and enquired and asked, I think they do remember you because if you just use those shops they will know you, yeah.

**A** *I've been back in and people do remember the bags and have seen them since and that...*

H Yeah, yeah.

**A** *[16.52]*

H Yeah, I think that was a real good thing to do, yeah I enjoyed that because I gave it to Paula and that and she's got it and she actually took it to another, she works at another centre [17.12] and she says oh they were looking at it and oh that might be a start off for somebody else doing that kind of a project in a different way to think wow, you know, let's put that community on a map as well. Yeah, yeah, so I think it's brought more things into it without us knowing until we may see it again and you think oh got this idea and where you got it from, but to say that we were the starter of it or something, you know, and I think that would make the women and the men feel good that. I remember being involved in that. It's a good idea.

- A** *And then sort of thinking about the exhibition as well. I know the sort of, that was the instigator of trying to get people to have a go at doing some Asian cooking and getting a bag and having a go, and all the bags went...*
- H Yes, they did, yeah.
- A** *Just thinking about the opening and...*
- H Oh...
- A** *Having it in the Harris...*
- H I think that was a great idea because when you had it at Harris, it was very central for people to get to and it was taken on more, rather than just a community centre, it was taken away from that to say it's for the arts and it's in the Harris, that was really important and I think even the staff there were sort of looking over to see what's that going on, and even people using the library just walking around and thinking oh what's that going on, and I think when we actually made the dishes, they were so very simple, but I think the aroma of the cooking brought another, I think that's an art form of its own, sensations I think, you know, to smell it, to think oh it's, sometimes people have a smell of thinking oh curry being nasty, but just that mellow spice smell, just oh that's not too bad, I can tolerate that, so that was really nice.
- A** *Yeah, different really from a restaurant in that sense, because often you don't get the smell coming up from the food that's cooking...*
- H Food itself cooking and just seeing them, I mean when we think about it wasn't big stoves or anything, we just had a little camper kind of stoves, but we managed, and we did a prepared a bit earlier, but they were all prepared, everybody could see, even we prepared it slightly by cutting the veggies or bringing them, or pre-boiling them and bringing them, but the spice bit and the actual the cooking vegetable bits went in just then and there in front of their eyes and the smell, it sort of brought it... yeah, I was really amazed by a few comments even people made that they didn't think that you could make it so simply and so easily because I think one of the ladies she said have you thought of setting up a restaurant and I think all we did is like potatoes, curried potatoes, it's such a, I think we put potatoes on the menu is because everybody more or less eats potatoes and it's not an expense, and it's not a thing where you have to go to an Indian shop to buy, they're everywhere where you can just have a difference between a mashed potatoes and chips, or a boiled potato, it was sort of bringing another dimension from those. That was good.
- A** *I had a lot of positive feedback from that opening, I think it was very successful, you know for people...*
- H Actually just different and actually to smell it, see it and eat it, taste it, as a taster, I think that was really good, yeah.
- A** *And to have it in the Rotunda Café was good wasn't it?*
- H Yeah, good, yeah, because it sort of belongs to a food area.
- A** *Yes, yes.*
- H ... in the Harris and it's sort of broad thinking. I think it was a real good idea, yeah. It was, yeah. I enjoyed [21.49]. It was very simply, but glad we made it simple and not over-complicated where it would have been hard work to finish it or whatever. It was lovely.
- A** *And of course, I mean, whilst I was working with you, I was working with the other group as well...*
- H With the other group as well and they sort of came around and had a look and sort of when we went to have a look at their work put out as well, so that was quite good, you know, yeah. And it was good that a lot of them brought children with them as well, so it involved

children and I think that was mixing, you know, it was an interest of all, you know, and it was good those children maybe will remember that taste, the smell and to say that it's not just got to be an Indian restaurant, it was you know, and maybe it might improve their value of eating curries to think oh no I've had a better taste, because you do remember the smells and tastes a lot longer than you'd remember the food, you know eating it at a restaurant is an entirely different kind of a feel about it. It was very interesting, yes. Because we tried, like we said, simple potatoes, through aubergine and I think we did some chillies, and the chapattis, they are hard to make and that, but it was nice that, oh that's our fresh bread, like you would have bread, so that was a good thing to show that, at least you know, it's only a different kind of bread, in a different format and that, and a different taste.

**A** *And that was popular with the children.*

H It was, yeah, if they couldn't manage the spices, they could have managed the chapattis, like they could manage the bread, and it was different from them thinking oh I don't, we don't have to eat bread all the time, we can try something else. It was very interesting.

**A** *Of course, I mean just sort of trying to link up with the other project, you know, their project was completely different, a complete contrast to what we'd done together, theirs was sort of more personal, I mean, it's easy for me to sort of tell you because I was part of both groups, and I was the only one that was part of both groups really, and their group was very different feel because the children went to a crèche and I think the mothers valued that child free time and really got focused on doing things about their personal lives.*

H I think it's bringing actually, it's like same as we felt is being valued to do something where we could get help to look after, somebody's looking after, have a crèche to look after the children, and they're bringing all their skills what they've had, life skills, what you have and you don't realise that they are life skills because they're everyday things, you don't realise it. I mean there are some people who think they're not working just because they're, and I think the great thing, and I do get told that because I sometimes put myself that way is to say, oh I'm only a mother, but that is, it's really a life skill, you don't realise you know when you bring up your children and they grow up and they do things for themselves, that it's you that's put all that input in them to be that person, you know and in a matter of fact, me my personal thoughts are that I do put my input in what I was given from my parents, but then I hope that it's giving some skills to my children, but then they've taken it on to do it a level up, you know, more than less, or bad or whatever, you know, I think that, yeah, because we often, like those women who did that, you know, probably didn't realise they had all these skills and it all sort of comes back and you think oh right I can go on a course and do a bit of this, or I can go and learn and do history, or anything, you know, and realise it, I've got this because I think the life skills are sometimes very important than just getting an OBE or whatever.

**A** *Yes, absolutely.*

H That was really good, yeah.

**A** *So the question third up from the bottom, so are you more likely to think of art now in a different way?*

H Oh definitely, yes.

**A** *Can you recognise a change?*

H Change, yeah.

**A** *In yourself.*

H Ooh yeah.

**A** *When you look at things.*

H Things yeah.

**A So do you go to the Harris now and...**

H Look around, yeah, or get involved in lots of things if they've got anything going and you think oh right oh let me go and see and maybe I might be able to do that. And put my bit of difference in that work and I feel that's quite good, and then I think when you've taken that on and you've done it there, or in this different art form, I think it'll give the group, that other group the acknowledgement, oh look she's from different culture, different community, but she came and did that, and I think it's recognising she's same as me, she's no different, she may dress different and have another language, but underneath all that she's brought something that's she's got skills as well like everybody else. Just being a bit more human really, that's more important.

**A It is, yeah. So sort of thinking about community groups and what they offer to communities, you know, sort of thing back to Pukar and what they offer, do you think this sort of creative approach can be used in other ways apart from art, but maybe in learning other things, do you think it's important to have that sort of elastic flexible approach?**

H Yeah, I do think that, and I think that brings out, when you've done that, I think it brings down the barriers without you knowing that, they're saying, you know if it's two mothers of two different cultures, but when they've done something in a creative way, they've realised, oh she's, she has same feeling as I do about her family as I have of my family and realised that oh she's nearly same as me, even though she is different, but you know, the ethos of living is there, same for her as is same for me, and I think it brought down barriers where people don't judge you just by your looks, they understand you in a sense. Yeah, I'm up for that because... it's I do a lot for mental health and I think I've realised that I can, I sort of value, see them in a different way, where before I used to think oh they're just freaky and I don't look at it that way, I think oh well they're just a bit different than us, you know. It's their way of coping with life, and you have, you know, you have to accept that's their way and that everybody has good days and bad days, but I think mixing with the community, with this project was a real good feel factor about it. Important and I think because there was such multi-cultural now that we need to sort of get on with each other in the spaces we live in, rather than just be on conflict and that makes, it makes you more ill than happy.

**A Yeah, yeah, excellent. Just at the end, I suppose that's going back to the plans that Preston has, and we talked a little bit right at the beginning with the change at the Harris and I don't know whether you've heard about the Tithebarn project and things like that...**

H I am looking forward to it, but then I'm, I have things that they need to look at it and think about it and not just spend the money and then think it's wrong. That really does worry me. I think you need to, they need to bring it out and do something and evaluate the project, or before it's really written in stones, you know. I think there's a lot of misconception by it not being brought out to the public. I am quite concerned that it's not brought out to the people, it's just offered to them, well this is the only thing and why is it that they're not listening to the people that if they, if they put it out on a plan and got more people involved by saying come and listen to it and come and have a look at the plan, it needs more to be done because whatever this project when it's done, it will, it needs to be good for the people, the Prestonian people, you know. It's alright thinking it's become a city and it's to move the city on, yes, but you need the people to be with you, not against you, or to feel well this isn't Preston now, I have to move away, and if that person has given so much living in Preston, that they're thinking of moving, well I don't think it's doing, you know, money isn't everything, I think it's important that they do keep... I have got the feel from a lot of people that it's not, they haven't sort of really said well this is it, it's no good just putting one meeting at Town Hall and saying oh well we've done our bit, we'll let you know, but I think it needs to be more on community wide and often, you know, when little bits saying oh well

this project is going on there here, come and have a look, and I think my community do it two or three times because people are thinking oh they'll always do what they think they want doing, but I think if they got the people on the side to say oh you know we're doing this, and give us your points of view, I think is to evaluate and value peoples' thoughts, it's important, yes.

**A** *Do you think the approach that we took, if it was used in some way for people to give a voice about what's happening there, you know, or be involved in doing some, temporary creative work, that's part of this new idea...*

**H** Yeah, new idea for a new city, but I wish Preston would take that on, you know, whether it's from town hall or people who run the town hall is, if you really value the people of Preston and Prestonian people who have lived here a long time. I know that it doesn't suit everybody, but if you put it out enough, they know. I mean right now, I mean even now I get quite concerned about this where you hear from people and really you haven't heard from somebody to say well come to this meeting, we're having it here, why don't you come and listen from the actual planners who are doing these changes, there's the bus station, I mean I've heard so much rumours and there's no rumours, but what gets you all het up and worked up about and not like the councillors and things like that, then if you really just more community based, telling people, you know, rather than them listening, second hand news from one mouth to the other and it always changes, what's really planned, and I mean right now, I think Preston's got such a lot of one way, I mean you cannot change the roads what you've already got, so you've got to harness the buildings or the way you're doing things to move around and not get stagnated. I mean what's the point in doing something and the old roads are still there, but it's blocking people to move that traffic, so I know it only could be doing 30 miles an hour, it doesn't matter, but it's moving at 30 miles an hour, what's the point in building something or doing something, or blocking off where people can't get to it, and everybody's grid-locked, you know, that is, and I think it's so important to think about this now...

**A** *Well you have an interesting point there really because you can't walk as far as you might like and things like that are important to you...*

**H** Yeah, and I'm just about, I know the bus station is bad or good, but to me it's good that I can get off one and I think, to be honest, I only know this bus station who has buses coming from other towns, so you can come from other towns into that bus station, from that bus station you can cross over to catch the local buses for somebody to meet that other person who's come from a distance, to be able to show them the local buses, to be able to get home, and isn't that helping to use less cars for themselves.

**A** *Be independent.*

**H** Independent, which is really important to me that I'm still independent that I can get to places myself, that I can get home and get to other end of Preston, but still get on buses to get back home, and I have used, I had to get somebody to drive me from A to B, which is another car on the road, at least I've used the buses.

**A** *Yeah, you think Preston's the only one you know...*

**H** Yeah, it is because I do remember I lived in the Midlands and they had the buses come in from a different, the outer buses go somewhere different, and from there to go to their local buses was really awkward because I had to carry the luggage or drag it along to try and catch the local buses and this was really a great thing that you could do from, come in at one station, just cross over to the other, get into the local one, get home, and at that time, it was great because I didn't have to think about somebody picking me up and taking me anywhere, and it gave me my independence to think oh I can do this for myself, and that was important.

**A** *That's really interesting. Makes you wonder whether the council is aware of that. They must be, or whether they're aware of its importance...*

H I wish I could get onto their, I've seen the, I mean that's another thing, the bus drivers, they absolutely need training or something, just for everybody. I've seen them drive up and they've come to the bus stop, and they're about four feet away from the pavement, I'm disabled, I always have to get onto the road to get onto the bus, and it was in such a mess, they've become a city and they've put up these lovely blue domed bus shelter, I've seen one down here where I am, and I was absolutely disgusted at the way the [water came in].

**A** *I think we've more or less covered it haven't we now?*

H Have you heard that people, they call them observatory, have you heard of that, Avenham Quest [40.24], it's on Grimshaw Street. I went to one of these Avenham quests they usually have a little, they had a day here at GHS for the community and I thought oh well I'll go and have a listen to what they have to say. So I went down there and this lady was there, and I was just speaking to her and telling her. She says to me you have quite strong views don't you, I said yeah, [40.49] and I think they look at things and they evaluate, this Avenham Quest money probably it is. And I said, yeah, I says I've got bus drivers don't get, you know, I says more people would use buses properly and feel easier if they pull up properly and they come, not three or four all at once, but it says you know, and I says some of the old people, that's another, I get on and he's driving off, soon as he gives you a ticket, I mean where is he going to get to, the end of the row where there's traffic lights anyway, so why doesn't he just be thinking well it's an old person or she's carrying, a mother with a pushchair, or a mother with loads of bags, just give her that little bit of, you know count from one to ten, and just give her chance to get to the seat or something, I mean, you know there are some people who will just walk on and you can pull away and drive, but just be courteous really to the others who need it. I think that was really lacking in some, it makes me go flying sometimes and I think phewww, and then you think why should I use buses and maybe that's why the town is clogged up because people are just feeling a bit, thinking oh I can't be bothering with the bus driver.

**A** *Just thinking about that, and just thinking about Saskia and that story that she did. I mean that told that didn't it? She could get from Chorley, I dropped her off at Chorley because is she a wheelchair user...*

H No.

**A** *No, but she was on crutches...*

H On crutches yeah, and I think her co-ordination and that is slightly long-taking.

**A** *But she could manage to get from Chorley bus station to Pukar didn't she?*

H Yeah, that's brilliant. It's great that you know, the parents put her on and she manages, I think when she gets off at Chorley, I think somebody from Pukar picks her up, you know, and she needed that, but you know.

**A** *She got a taxi didn't she?*

H Or a taxi yeah.

**A** *Down to Pukar?*

H I think it depends, sometimes someone's there to pick her up, or sometimes she got a taxi, yeah.

**A** *I wonder if, do you think people would pick that up by looking at that postcard that that's what it says? Eventually maybe.*

H Eventually yeah.

**A** *It's not instant is it?*

**H** *Instant, no, no. It's a change, or at least it's noticing disabled people, yeah...*

## **Helen Worsley – The Arts and Cultural Diversity officer for Preston City Council**

Helen's office is in the Guild Hall Building in Preston alongside Leisure Services. When I began my research this post was held by Kim Graham, Helen had not been in post long when this interview took place. I began by explaining my open-ended approach to the work done with the participants from Sure Start and Pukar and that it was a difficult concept to sell: commissioners like to have some idea of an end product and do not necessarily view art as a process. Helen picked up on the point that an open-ended approach would contribute to the collaborating group's ownership of the project from the outset.

I offered Helen some background information about how the research began. Newly appointed, she had no knowledge of how the project had begun. Helen had been involved in the carnival in Preston and in the course of the interview she reflects on some of the comparisons which can be made. She mentions the fact that a lot of commissioning bodies do not value the expertise required to engage a particular community group in activities. The issue of the sustainability of engaged projects is mentioned and how at this time this is difficult. On funding grounds it is hard to find funding for a project to be or become sustainable, but Helen recognises the importance of sustaining projects.

Helen offers some insight into some of the problems in Preston from her point of view. She points out that culture and the arts are situated within the Leisure Services Department along with the Harris Museum and are therefore outside the remit of regeneration. This means that public art work which is being carried out as part of a regeneration scheme is not necessarily aligned with the community development workers, which Helen sees as a missed opportunity. She goes on to say that there is a lack of communication across the departments of the city council and hopes that she may be able to change this.

The meeting ended with discussion about the CD-ROM and the usefulness of it as a resource. Helen explained that it would be good to have it as an example to use to illustrate engaged projects in meetings, and clearly shows how an art process develops and engages people.

***Interview with Helen Worsley - The Arts and Cultural Diversity officer for Preston City Council***

H – Helen Worsley A – Anita Burrows

H This week I have 25 meetings, it's just crazy. It's too much for any human to cope with, so I am hoping that will be productive, and in the New Year I need to look how I plan time in. It's been a case of everyone has the last 3 or 4 weeks have been mental and I don't want everyone to wait and in a way I'd rather meet people and have time to think for a few days.

A **I suppose it helps you get ...**

H That's ok as long as I don't overload my agenda.

A **This is as just to help me as.**

*Getting a glass of water*

H Yes, I still have your bag, I still use it. On a weekly basis. I still carry my lunch in and out. It's really useful, I find it useful for all sort of things. When I go shopping at weekends. It reminded me of that film of how it came to be.

We will go through these and refresh myself.

A **Just reading through this again where I've started. Yes, that tells a story of what I did with the groups, and then the next phase is meeting people in Preston to get their take on it, so I don't know if you would want to ask me questions about the project or if you just read it. It's interesting to talk about that. One of the things that was quite for people to understand what I was setting out at the beginning there was no pre-conceived idea of what was going to happen at the end. And it could have been anything, and that was difficult to sell. It is a bit of an unknown, but having had a try at it, it was successful in the sense they stayed with it and became quite enthusiastic and owned it themselves, which was important.**

H Maybe it didn't have that pre-determined end it helped them have ownership of it.

A **Have you come across that yourself, or is it you perhaps you think about using in the future.**

H I think that approach is not common and the more common approach is you get a brief and then that gets presented to the funding body, or who ever is doing the funding, and yes, that fits in with our ..... and then you go away and do it, and the artist is under quite a lot of pressure to ensure that actually the project deliveries what it says it will deliver. Actually may be with the group, the group may wish to change it so you will be flexible, and so I think

there has to be an element of flexibility when you are working on a project, and I think that the participants benefit more at the end of it and it is also quite a good learning experience for the artist. This may be needs to be discussed at the beginning ..... And it can be proven that it works so it doesn't have to be a set project but you still end up with an excellent project. You still end up with the participant sticking with it and getting a lot out of it, and I think that is proven, but I think it is quite novel, in my experience, the only time that has happened in the past .... There hasn't been enough time and we want to work with this particular group we have some money, here's the artist, go and work with the artist. And it's lets see how it works, and it works. An artist this year worked with the Chinese community on a float for the carnival, and again 2 weeks, and nobody benefited and it was just a case of what do the community want to do. They have their own ideas, and it works really well. It really inspired them, and they want to go and win the carnival now this year. This is the first artistic project they have ever been involved in so it might like a lot of the women you worked with but may be the most they've been involved in, so I think from the participants' point of view, it's most exciting to give them more of an involvement.

**A I was lucky, I was funded by the University to do this research so I wasn't sort of tied to any funding policy, and I wonder if that's an issue it tends to be done that way round. There is an issue here, let's get an artist in and explore ..... rather than go to the community and see for them.**

H I think that's often the way it's done but I think that literally that's because there aren't enough out reach workers working with communities. Certainly working with the voluntary section, there a lot of outreach workers based at disability organisations or Preston Muslim ..... but there aren't art workers they're advice workers who focus pretty much on advice, and individual organisations may say oh we have some money; we'll do an arts project. In that case, it may be something the women have talked about, said in the past, we'd love to do this sort of project, with our embroidery, and so it happens. I think in my experience just in local authority it is mostly, I don't quite honestly know, where it comes from. Certainly the money comes into place and there might be through process of consultation a culture strategy elements come through, it might be higher aims like community cohesion ..... For me will get rid of community tension, or race hate or homophobic crime they are their main aims, and any community projects which help to bring communities together that could actually work towards that main aim are that the council would love to fund to kind of instigate, and at that stage, they will obviously so that is our long term aim, here are some artists and let's get them in. But again it wouldn't be 100% scripted on what happened, but it wouldn't come up ..... either.

In that sense

H It wouldn't be ..... Like a group of young African Caribbean never worked with disabilities. It's not like they think that but it may be an interesting one to explore and break down barriers.

**A Part of this began with Preston mapping because I don't know if you know Charles Quick and Val Murray they were doing some work which they were hoping to get funding for about mapping, Preston getting city**

status so I was coming with an angle of wanting to know particular information about those kind of people. But I particularly wanted it to come from grass roots up other than the other way round..

H There haven't been any other similar projects .....

A I don't think so, Jendy Bulman has worked in Deepdale doing different projects and I know there is, in fact, the community worker who works in Avenham Jennifer Carthy.

She's worked in Avenham quite a while. I've not met her so I don't know what she's doing in Avenham, I've met her through the women's network. There are things like that going on. It's different ways ..... developing in the community. It does tie in but it has a different take or focus on it.

H Yes, it is a fairly novel approach. How did you know you wanted to explore the area of Deepdale, in particular? Do you live there? Not living there, I mean how did you feel as an artist?

A Coming to work in Preston.

H That you were going to be able to get in touch with the right people, well people there in general.

A I hadn't chosen Deepdale, or a particular area to begin with, so I began having meetings with Kim and different people who were already working in Preston, artists already working in the area, Chris Davis for instance, and looking for a group that were experiencing regeneration so that sort of narrowed it down a bit. I spoke to Di Cumin at Prescap and groups that did not / had not worked with an artist. So I could have gone and worked with Chris, he would have been quite happy to work with him, but he has done loads of work up there and I wanted to sort of work with people who hadn't experienced that sort of thing before. So that's how I came to work with people in Deepdale and Avenham. These areas were in receipt of single regeneration budget tranche 3 and 6 and I walked round and that's how I began, looking at communities that were in that area, then ringing them up and seeing if I could come and talk to them. And the first thread that ballooned, I went into the newsagent on Deepdale Road and there just happened to be a community event that week end, the newsagent gave me a leaflet and I went along, and that began the ball rolling. Sure Start picked it up. I met Deepdale Women's Action Group who were very busy and they were great, they were wonderful. They are committed, and I met them a couple of times and they found it difficult. How are we going to sell this to our women? I gave them examples, took videos of things I had done in the past, and they really liked it. But they were really busy, and not to have anything concrete to say do this, like an end product, we will paint glass bottles this week, put them off a little bit and they had other options that they could go with, which was fine. So I ended up working with Sure Start in the end. I wasn't particularly focused with working with women but in the end it was just the way it happened, they were groups available I suppose.

H And what were you saying to them? We were looking to do some new activities?

A I sort of said I was interested in where they lived, and that sort of thing. Which was hard for them to understand, again it was about building trust, and I could not give them an idea of an end product, I didn't want to frighten them. They needed to know what they were committing themselves to and responded by asking, "Ooh what are you going to ask us to do?" But I began by introducing practical activities that we did together which just sparked conversation.

H Was that just the baking of the cake?

A And a fruit salad. Food is a great medium for that. They had seen cameras and most of the women are cagey about that. I took that on board and I was very open. If you don't want it, just say. That was OK. Trust developed, and as you saw them opening the books, they were quite happy for you see their hands. And they could control which pages they showed which was fine. And it worked really well, and they were quite personal those books and quite different from the shopping bags. They are women with small children and I think that it became a special time for them. Women with children lead busy lives, and everything was hectic.

H ... to collect their favourite photos. Something they will have to keep for their rest of their lives now.

A So that was what is important to them, the family and was reflected in the books they did and that space, the afternoons they spent together were quite surprising how quiet they were as they got straight to their books. They had not used computers, and I had my lap top and scanner. They were amazed that they could put a picture of their little boy next to Postman Pat van which was quite fantastic.

H That's really creative, great. A whole new form of creativity for them.

A They then had the confidence to think of new ideas themselves, and one participant used her initiative and used a digital camera to go and take a picture of her own front door and put that in her book. This participant had no experience of technology at all, to see her confidence develop and how she enjoyed the freedom of being able to express herself was wonderful.

H It breaks the barriers that people have. That has answered my question really. It was kind of, I think it's similar to any artist going, as recently being commissioned. We are looking at some public art and you think an artist gets a commission to develop a public art piece, and it's going to be right in the centre of a housing estate, or whatever, and then he/she wants to go talk about that housing, where you live. Really, it is a difficult thing to do as an artist, and I think people really underestimate the time, and effort and

approach that is needed to work with, not necessarily, hostile people, but often wary or disinterested communities. And often, you end up with the same people, poor ones, or who love to have say in what's on in the local communities, but it takes a special skill to actually say, no, let's go to people who haven't worked with an artist before and had a say in what happens in their community. That awareness is all part of the approach. Just having that awareness, because I think if you don't have that awareness and that background because it's easy just to go in and say, "right you will do". And I am not sure that is always the best approach. It does require the artist having that skill to be able to respect those people and understand. I think that's quite an underestimated ability, you know, that a lot of people will underestimate when commissioning a project, or expecting a project to be done by a certain date. Just appreciating the value of that at the end of the project. ....

**A I think it's difficult, and they don't necessarily think of it as public art, but it is. But and one of the questions I was asked is "you don't feature in that video at all?" Where are you, we don't see anything of you." Well, that's not what it's about, it's not about me. Often, art is sometimes about the person, the approach.**

H To me those people may see the difference between pure art and social art and does there have to be a distinction. I mean I don't know.

**A I don't know. It's such a broad thing to talk about art. That did come up. How is it art? That sort of thing.**

H I know you have mentioned that here. And you obviously keep coming across that question and you know you have to justify it.

**A It is so broad**

H It is the arts, you know, and it does mean different things to different people.  
...

**A People don't always see ordinary every day life as having some creativity in it. Artists like Joseph Beuys were part of recognising that, they don't have the opportunity to make those links.**

**I think doing something like this and talking together it makes some participants more aware that in our every day life we have opportunities for creativity.**

H It is quite liberating.

**A Do we think about what we do every day, we just do it.**

H We don't have time to stop and reflect. I was just going to say, that really covers it. What I thought a professional artist could bring to cultural development. Just really the involvement with communities, the sort of work explored in this project, and also I think it's important to look at the

professional artist, and their development and the culture development they can bring. As long as we are focusing on that artist, professional development. What we need to do more is ... the artist.

**A And their sort of experience working in the culture .... How do you think that could happen?**

H I don't know. We have been looking at the carnival, that's just one example, and at the moment we are looking at that, rapid development at the moment. Bigger and increased massively in that ..... Similar carnivals around the country and similar artists working on designer costumes and this may be useful in linking up and sharing similar experiences with artists working in different parts of the country and learning

from that, and giving people a chance to go out of their area and give ... I think the Arts Council are giving really strong messages about that kind of capitalising on their money and bringing a bit of money into Preston, and to aid professional artists. We obviously have the creative industries at the moment and they are doing some work with more of the business side of it, but I think there are some one off grants available for some professional development of artists. And I think it's just capturing to catch the information ..... Kim did not that ... but there is only so much one particular person can do. You don't have a dedicated arts officer, what you do normally is kind of fulfil that role, but I just think we will get a lot more benefit for everybody. I know there is the Preston Arts Forum as well, which is meant to be for artists networking. There might be common training issues, or issues that come out of that that can be identified, and dealt with. And developed. I don't know. I don't know how effective that was, because I was not part of it.

**A Did you go to the odd meeting?**

H Yes, I think it was kind of an opportunity to do that but in the end it sort of was ... listening to peoples' complaints.

**A They did have a gathering where they showed work, in a church.**

H Was that an art bazaar. No

**A No, it was the art forum**

H I don't know then. It was the Preston Arts Association they do a festival, and a photography exhibition in the Minster. It might have been that. I haven't had all that long to think about these questions so I only read this through this morning. And I thought I could do with a couple of days to go away and think about it.

**A If you come with anything, you can email me. I am just thinking ahead and what might develop from this. My link with the University. I have a meeting with Derek White and I met him just after the exhibition he was coming at it from his angle, regeneration. And he said we know artists working creatively are good for regenerating but we struggle to come up**

with new ideas and we would love artists to come and say we would do this. That was just thinking how I may be able to use that and maybe a way of linking the University and elective where artists on BA course were given some no. of months to work with a methodology, which would still keep their creativity to blossom for themselves, but also they could work with some links with regeneration of drawing that together so it would help communities in Preston and the graduates to get experience of working with people.

H That would be a good idea.

A I thought, I don't know how that would come about but maybe you have to start somewhere and I know Charles and James are working together on a temporary art project. There will be some scope within that.

H Like I say, ... what has happened with this

A This is a pilot study more than anything else. Because, it is experimental learning. You sort of see what ..... Realise that perhaps, pockets of it, more broader areas would be more beneficial than just having... But that's how I had to do it. Just learning from what I've done. And seeing it has been a useful thing for people to do.

I think, for Sure Start, women coming back into the workplace perhaps just the initial taste of using a computer might just. There is links, and how it might just all fit in and group together. We may be get chance to have further talks about that.

H I think there does need to be a more sustained approach. Rather than just a one off, and then we can look. I think Derek is right, he recognises the contribution art makes to the community, to get colleagues to recognise it. If he is looking for new projects then I'm sure that would not be a problem.

A **Plans for Preston in the future?**

H You have put there plans for regeneration of neighbourhood. It's again, is it regenerating the communities, or is it buildings, or economic regeneration. It's about all of them really. It's a bit difficult for me, because the way the city council is set up, I'm actually separate to regeneration, so that within our department of regeneration and leisure, I am actually leisure section, and arts and culture are still in leisure, so that it is still seen as a leisure activity along with sports, so we have sports, parks, and culture and the Harris Museum, and I am actually linked to the Harris Museum. But that pushes me further away from the regeneration section which sits over further in another area .... It is impossible to actually know what people are doing over there, we don't go over there, we don't get newsletter, no formal communication about what's going on. Obviously the trade and industry after Kim had worked on it for a long time was handed over to a new project which received loads of money from ????

Massive budget which most local authorities don't have the benefit of. Was able to initiative new work is certainly plans for the future. But that is more for a business starter and economic regeneration, although it's regeneration for

individuals...

I see what our role is and seeing ... it's great these artists are able to receive money and working opportunities, opportunities to show work, premises to sell, and that's great. I mean not being an economic expert myself it is how much of that money then gets recycled back down to people who are really living in those areas and really need that money and who are living well below the poverty line. Very difficult lives, hard lives and it's great to see the economic regeneration that can be kick started by creative industries and more graduates retained and I'm sure ... diagrams about how it works, and does filter down and I don't necessary believe that. We need to see over a period of time what of market changes there are to regeneration of the deprived wards in Preston. It's recognised there are 8 deprived wards in the city of Preston, and obviously there is depravation and poverty all over in rural areas. But if we are talking about the main areas of regeneration in the city council, then the regeneration dept. does not seem to be kick starting any major initiatives to really deal with that, the people at the lower chain of the economic chain.

**A It is odd that there is this separateness .... I realise there is an economic side of it, but people who live in it will walk through that area, and they are not necessarily benefiting from it. And they are not really having a say in it, but it's their community, to feel as they're sidelined in a sense, and it's a shame because it's a missed opportunity because they're their audience.**

H This is what I say about the ..... It was set down South Church St. and it did, there were 2 projects at the Foxton Centre, which is only one community centre. There is a great missed opportunity with the some of the Asian shops down there as they have been living and working down there and there might have been some opportunity to explore their heritage, but I keep making these suggestions, but they fall on deaf ears. I think there are other artists who have other ideas and they are not focused on that, more focused on their work. That's what the problem is. We have got people working in the creative industry in the regeneration sector, but not fully linked up with the community development section workers, or fully connected with the cultural development. By that I mean cultural strategy, events, that we are dealing with here.

So, I think the future plans for me is about better co-ordination, better working together of anything creative that's happening in regeneration, in the community, or neighbourhood department, or anything happening in my section, and by sports. There is some development adhesion, just talking about art and culture in regeneration, then I think definitely, the future plans need a definite working together, so that there is a consistency of approach to the public, that people understand what the council is trying to do, so that if people walking down South Church St. are going ooh and they find out the council has done it, well why didn't the council tell us. It's all that sort of stuff, and to me regeneration is not all about that physical stuff, but giving people a better life, and those people weren't involved .....you are probably adding to the poor quality of their life because you are not adding and they feel more disenfranchised and they feel more. I think the will is there, but I don't think there has been any really together co-ordination of regeneration.

It's crazy and it's one department, and it's like working for different organisations. And I might as well be working for Boots, and they working for Body Shop, and there's really no sort of working in the same area, but not at all, and we've all got different aims and objectives and they don't seem necessarily to correlate together.

So I think we need to do that, and it's great that you are talking to Derek about new, more sustained projects, better partnerships, buzz word is partnerships. Basically if you go to any government authority, any funder, if you can show there is good key partnership working, and then you are already half way there. Again, working with the art students, it's all about graduate retention. If as undergraduates they're working ..... And there might be something at the end. There are work possibilities at the end of it, and we want them to stay in Preston, more creative people, and by engaging them ..... that might happen. Better the links between the community and the University because there is huge barrier.

At the moment I am trying to work on an art house cinema in Foster building, do we really think communities are going to go to Foster building and watch a film. Are they are going to say that's nice, but do we really want that. I just feel that any productive partnerships between different groups, and as for the groups you have talked about there is, we have got a cohesion plan which does link in with regeneration and I mean that has identified lots of different communities that need working with, so that mapping, or identification of communities would be there through the project I have been working on and other reviews ... cohesion ... So it's a mixture of both, about regenerating communities and I totally agree that at the moment that the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

**A Thinking of an artist who can provide a service, not just a business. It's odd that it is quite narrowly focused, about a product, but the product may not be a material thing.**

H It does seem a bit limited really. As I say that project is due to finish in March 2006 but they're looking at continuing the funding, so maybe it's time to talk to Derek about that, and you would like to see a community support service, that supports all creative industries, and not just the business ones. Their definition of business.

**A Does Derek Whyte have something to do with creative industries as well?**

H He's the head of the dept. of regeneration, so he's like the top boss. He has overall control really.

I agree I have some reservations about, in a way it's great to see South Church St. it can be regenerated, and looked better, and that's great it's not just about feeding those artists, it's about people who live there, that's because regeneration don't have a history of working with communities. Maybe they need to work a bit closer with the community development team. It's not about getting loads of new outreach workers, they can go off and feed in. I work with Jennifer , the people out there.

- A** What they come back to me with it's a largely industrial buildings, and there aren't any dwellings there, but that doesn't mean they can't use that area.
- H** They are constantly using that area.
- A** That's what I said to them, and that was their angle on it. There are no dwellings really in that area. They have plans for an art centre, which is brilliant. And it would be good to have that, and they don't necessarily see the people who live near that being their audience, but they should be, there should be an angle where.
- H** That's it, it's not just about regenerating the community, and individuals .. that's where it falls down. The community, ... it's not just one homogenous groups, it's individuals and that needs to be invested in. But I'm sure there are some good learning .. so that we could pass on to them.
- A** I'm glad to hear you have plans. I'm only just learning, but ..
- H** I think the biggest problem has been the lack of working together totally and I think there should be an arts and culture group with somebody from regeneration, somebody from community, somebody from the Harris, and we need to know what's happening. Right, what are we doing? You are doing it the wrong way, you need to be doing ... To be honest with each other, as colleagues challenging each other, and saying have you thought about this angle, and have you thought about including this group. This is not what's happening at the moment. And that's where misunderstandings are happening at the moment.
- A** It could be quite exciting.
- H** I think we need to. People think oh no, not another meeting, not another group. But I think it's missing at the moment. We need to have that, and I hope it will be administered and facilitated by one of our senior managers so that, it's not just a lot of officers sat around doing all this great stuff, and then not being able to get the money for it, or the support. Hopefully, our assistant director, Phil Walsh, will sit in on that, and I'm going to suggest it to him. We call it like the art and culture team, and we see ourselves separate to the other teams, and not as a team of people working for the same organisation. It just doesn't seem like that. And there are also bits of ... and it's not on purpose, but there all set against each other. It's kind of weird really.
- But it's the way, we are not, there's no mechanism for us to work well together, apart from each other. There's lots of ways we work separately as we are forced to do that and there is that element of what new things have you done, and it's kind of not really how we work. We are here for to provide a service. That's the plans.
- A** The last bit, as part of my thesis, I'm hoping to produce a CD Rom which I see being a narrative of the process which I see being more user

**friendly and reactive than a big wedge of paper, so I see it being a layered thing on CD Rom so people can access it and take it to whatever depths they want it to find out the information which will be held within it. Is this something you would be interested in? Receiving it and using it?**

H Yes, I think it would. I think it's the sort of thing I would want to show my senior manager and counsellors. Counsellors hate receiving wads of paper. Senior managers look at us all, but I'm just like that in paper. But to have something more inter-active something I can actually see. The other thing about arts projects is that you can't make people visit it, to describe it is a nightmare, you spend 6 months ..... and you go to senior managers and .... They miss it, and they miss what was brilliant about it. And they'll never understand it. The thing is with our budget we don't always have, that is where regeneration have been so lucky but they've been given money. They can then produce really nice flyers and demonstration material, we don't have that and all the money goes on the project  
.... To work with. You can't use 50% , this is the battle we have. But having a CD-ROM for many different things, the artist works, and actual projects. It can be used an actual project for example to discuss future art projects. That will be really useful for that reason. I'm sure there'll be other reasons as well. It's something I'm seeing and useful kind of set my own thoughts, kind of different projects, maybe they're discussing things with me. How things can be approached and how things can be presented. And the way you'll be presenting is different than normal. In all those respects I think it will be useful.

**A But the council and you will all have the facilities to look at this in your offices.**

H We will do, yes, it's all networked so we all have the software there to look at it.

**A You just pop it in.**

H Yes, we all have that.  
So I think this point you meeting up with other professionals ..... evaluating work, yes, we've been talking about how we measure and how we evaluate some of the work that goes on, and try to look at really sophisticated valuation materials, tools so we can recapture the work and ... talking to regeneration about some of the benefits that this work has and involving people. And I think some artists that I work with will be kind of talking to me how we can do that and we have ideas of ways they can involve it in their evaluation but I think a lot of that is being missed and maybe the case has been made that art .... On health skills education, but we are in the days where we want to see some hard evidence, essentially, and I know that .... Groups want to get on with it and be .... It's very difficult to get a snapshot, very subjective opinion. But there are some interesting examples of fairly long term longitudinal research that has been done and it will be interesting to see if there was the project happening say in partnership University regeneration and yourself then looking at getting face line evidence and marking what

progress has been made by individuals, communities, any shifts that are happening, and evaluate the approaches or methods they use.

**A Again it's networking using bring the professionals together.**

H I'm a great reader, and I do try and keep up with what's going on. I have my own interest area in research and the economic impact studies, in the last 2 years I have done social and impact studies on ..... carnival. OK I'll ask a disc for you. We commissioned .... To do one and Leeds University to do the other. We asked Media to do one but they weren't interested. Phil Wood, and 2 or 3 partners and another guy at De Montford called Francois Matarasso who has been involved with a lot of research work.

**A With Jubilee Arts. He's written a report**

H That was excellent and I learnt quite a lot from them so we'll save one for you and then you can have a read. Very interesting, but just a snapshot, very expensive research. But all this talk of research will involve some bid together, but I haven't started to explore who puts bids together. All bits here and there. I know that Lancashire County Council are interested their economic development dept. are interested in doing some more research and the impacts on various activities and ... on the region so .

**A Research for funding. AHRB – research board – something to think about for the future.**

**Thanks Helen, that's really useful.**

H I would like to have had a bit more time to think about, but if there is anything else I will let you know. Only 1 look at the video, so will have another look. Have to shoot off.

**Jendy Bulman – Community Development worker in Deepdale, Preston employed by Preston Primary Care.**

Jendy has lived and worked in Deepdale, Preston for over 20 years. She was appointed Community Development Worker with Preston Primary Care Trust in 1999. Jendy explained to me that she had taught English to ESOL students for 18 years. She speaks fluent Gujarati, and because she enjoyed working with communities from Deepdale, she decided she would like to work as a community development worker in Deepdale.

In the transcript of the interview I had with her she explains that she began her work by making a Deepdale Directory and uses the comparison of mapping. Mapping is the term I used to describe how I began my research in Deepdale. Jendy's mapping included indexed lists of activities for various sections of the community (young, old and ethnic minority people). This was a device constructed to offer information both to new and established residents of Deepdale. My mapping techniques included walking the area, visiting local meeting places such as shops and community centres, attending community meetings, organising visits to established community groups and then documenting this information with drawings, photography, video and sound recording. This information was used to help me (the researcher) discover and map information about Deepdale which I could use to meet and talk to resident communities.

Jendy goes on to explain that she compiled a needs analysis for Deepdale by talking to residents and discovering their ideas and needs, and alongside this she gathered and published information about what was on in Deepdale. In order to avoid duplication of work Jendy arranged to visit the community development department at the Town Hall in Preston to discover what their role in Preston and was amazed to find that they were a completely desk-based department, which although it allotted money to established community groups, did no community development work themselves.

## Interview with Jendy Bullman

J – Jendy Bulman    A – Anita Burrows

- J    I've got this thing about that I did with a group in Sahara, I haven't even put the date on. I haven't even got my name on it.
- A    *Have you not?*
- J    It's about Fishwick.
- A    *Oh right.*
- J    And it's got photos of the food shops and we did it as part of an English...
- A    *Oh right, I'll have to have a look at that. Is Fishwick further down London Road?*
- J    No, it's down Newhall Lane.
- A    *Okay.*
- J    Do you know where Sahara is?
- A    *I don't, no.*
- J    Oh right.
- A    *I've never been there.*
- J    Do you know Jeffrey Street Clinic?
- A    *No.*
- J    If you come in from the M6, the normal way, past the Tickled Trout, you come in along, straight to town along Newhall Lane, and before you get to town, that area is Fishwick, St Mathews.
- A    *Oh is it?*
- J    Yeah. Before you get to Homebase or anything.
- A    *Yes, I know where you mean now.*
- J    and Fishwick's mainly to the left, while St Mathew's is to the right.
- A    *But Sure Start's office for Fishwick is on London Road coming up on the left isn't it? Is it?*
- J    It's on Newhall Lane actually.
- A    *Is it, oh right, well that must be another one then, I thought it was there.*
- J    It is on the left, but it is Newhall Lane.
- A    *It's Newhall Lane is it? Well I don't come in on Newhall Lane.*
- J    I have got a spare one of this which is a different one that you can have that. That's not about mapping, well it is, it's life mapping.
- A    *Right. Oh yeah, that would be interesting.*
- J    Women did all the words for it you know.
- A    *Right. Didn't you work as WEA?*
- J    Yeah, Workers Education Association, they do night school and I think they're having a reorganisation, but they were very good because you could write any course and they

would pay for it if you had a class. So I did quite a lot of very interesting courses and I've got allsorts of booklets from them there. It was much better, I stopped teaching for Preston College because we had to do all this foundation accreditation in maths and English which was very very boring and very difficult to teach because everyone had to do so many little objectives in speaking this and reading and writing and they were [2.23] every week, it was awful, so I did this for fun and got more English I think.

**A** *Yeah, yeah. Yes, it's a similar thing really in a way.*

J Yeah, it is, it just had a different background.

**A** *Yeah.*

J Yes, I did print yours out. I can't read off the screen, I have to... Anita are you doing a Phd.

**A** *I am yeah.*

J That's what it is it?

**A** *I transferred, it was MPhil, and I'm only the second person in this faculty, not in our faculty, but in our art and fashion department, they're only just beginning to build a research [3.16] and they offered the studentship for an MPhil two years ago, and they just had one other person doing a PhD, then in fashion, so it was a great opportunity, so I jumped at the chance. Well there were a few, I had to go and have an interview and got chosen to do it.*

J I didn't know it was a joint department. I know Dave Knight in the fashion department.

**A** *Right. We don't see much of them. We've a shared head of department, Brenda Brindle, but we, unless it's something to do with the administration of it all, you don't really need all that often. And we did, when I did my degree, the sculpture department was in Victoria where all the fashion is, but they've move out now, we're all in sort of a little building across the road, [4.03] Road, where painting used to be in there, just painting, but all the fine art is in there now. So we don't see, unless you need to go over for some reason.*

J Right, well you'd better take charge.

**A** *Trying to make some focus to it, because as I say we probably do share lots in common and it's fabulous finding how your experience could feed into my evaluation in a way. But it's been really interesting reading that bit about how it all came to be and I did jot some bits and pieces down, but I thought, if I sort of start with my, I've begun doing that because I'm trying to put together a CDROM that I'm hoping to send out to different organisations and maybe academics and artists as well that will give an overall view of the research I've done, with links to other organisations probably and I'm still in the process of developing it all, but part of what, my research question is 'research in the role of an artist within regeneration of urban communities' so it was, there's not, often you were sort of mentioning about short-term projects, and often that's where artists come in to do short-term projects, and I thought it would be interesting to find out what an artist would bring in a shared sort of project. Are other organisations aware how all this pulls together.*

J Actually art probably works well as a short-term thing because you've got a product at the end and people have got skills.

**A** *Yes, yes.*

J And, in a way, the agenda isn't quite the same as their normal agenda, I mean their background agenda, but it would enhance it.

**A** *Yes. From research, I've found out yeah art is used and often it is a short-term project because it's limited by funding, so they come up, the powers that be decide an area they may want to research or may want to do some work in, knowing there is*

**a pot of money in that, and so the artist is brought in to do some work, and there is a definite end product and I wanted to turn that on its head in a way, and say well look, surely the people you're working with in some ways they know the areas that interest them, you know, how, you know, what information is there embedded in that community that may be useful to try and draw out for other professional people working in that group.**

J That's the idea, that people like PCT just cannot get their heads around.

**A Can they not? No.**

J I think it's because it's one step removed from a government target. Though government targets must be informed by coming into need and so on. When they reach the organisation who's paying, it shortens their sight and I think they then [7.30] because they've got to have results, and so they go out in a directive way on the whole to get those results, their targets and ticks.

**A Right, that's their remit.**

J But kind of I know, and lots of other trusts and people do know that the way to do it is through working with the community and in fact their, their aims and ideas do mesh in, but people don't quite make the connection. It isn't made enough for the community to realise, I don't think, that they're sharing objectives.

**A Right, yes, to make that connection so that they feel as though they have some ownership in their community as well.**

J And that things might be actually happening to improve things too.

**A Yes, and that their views are taken on board.**

J Yeah, but of course it's much slower. I mean if you've a special community...

**A Yes it is...**

J [8.26] they're just there, they're hard to get hold of, and workers, directors, and organisations like to go out there and get quick results, don't they?

**A Yes, they do because they want it.**

J You'll know that, I mean I saw you said you made your [cake] the first time, and that's just a getting to know you thing isn't it? And quite often you can't even get people in organisations, though that's getting a lot better with what I've said about Jennifer McCarthy and regeneration, she knows how to do it, and she's able to turn it round somehow and get the results she needs as well.

**A Right, that's interesting. In the beginning, this is just a thing that I've been putting together, that's sort of a short, it's a narrative really of the work I've done, but being a sort of visual person, I find it easier to do diagrams. I can roll it out. It is long. Just to remind me a little bit...**

J That's good, that shows what you've done, that's brilliant.

**A I mean I started, I mean I don't live in Preston, so in a case it was me finding out where I wanted to work in a sense, so I began walking the areas really and talking to various people. I met allsorts of people, and really I came to find out about you through going to the newsagents in Deepdale, who were very helpful, she was lovely and she said oh she said you want to come along at the weekend, here's a leaflet, there's a community day at the school, and that triggered quite a lot.**

J Which newsagent was that? The one on St George's Road?

**A No, the one on Deepdale Road, across from the school.**

J Yeah.

**A She was lovely. Yeah, we got talking quite a bit. So this sort of comes into this sort of area here with the community and the local school and there were lots of things that came off there, you see Sahara's mentioned and alongside that I was looking in other areas, and I was walking around [Avenham] and I went to Age Concern and [10.36] just through talking to people at [Prescap] probably, but that developed more slowly, this kicked off really quite quickly with this community day at the school and coming to meet Deepdale Women's Action Group, and then Christine Campbell, and they went alongside each other really, and eventually it developed into me going and working with Sure Start, but alongside that I'd, I went to the Foxton's Centre and they felt they were over-researched. Age Concern, there was somebody off with illness and it was difficult and there was this thing going along at [Pukar], again which was the one that took off. So there were lots of little shoots, but two came off, and I particularly was looking in Deepdale and [Avenham] because I wanted areas that hadn't done a lot of work with artists and areas that were SRB6, under regeneration, so that all worked out quite well, and I mean I get...**

J Deepdale was SRB3.

**A Was it?**

J Yeah, which finished and that's one of their problems now. It finished in 2003.

**A Right. Yeah, so that'd kick in a lot earlier then if it was SRB3.**

J Yeah, it did. And it was disappointing in quite a lot of ways. Just on the evaluation of it, and they didn't get nearly as many millions as they'd hoped. Not nearly as much money, so everything was shorter, smaller, and they had management problems early on and the whole organisation had to be rebuilt.

**A Right. Right.**

J You do take a lot [12.16] out of it, one way or another, but there were quite a lot of problems with the exit strategy, which was to go to an organisation called Input, which had a great guy working for it [Latif Badat], but eventually they got rid of him, for reasons which I don't understand, and there wasn't anybody else. It still keeps trying to rebuild itself because it did get money to be an exit organisation and it's linked to County Palatine, which is a housing association. Anyway that's just, but SRB6 is still foraging forward.

**A Yes, so that's mainly Avenham is it where the SRB6?**

J It's Avenham, and Avon central it's called. Avenham central and it's got a bit of Broadgate as well. Yeah, it's very interesting doing it like that.

**A Yes. What I'm trying to sort of work towards doing something, putting something visual, and how best to sort of do it. A lot of it's been sort of carrying different threads forward and it's a layered piece of work really in some ways because right at the beginning I had to sort of, you know, I spoke to Kim...**

J What was the beginning, what date was it that you started?

**A October 2002.**

J Right, yeah.

**A I met Kim and Kim was very helpful and she knows Preston very well, sad that she's gone really.**

J But the person who's taken over in some respects, Helen Worsley, do you know Helen?

**A I do, yes.**

J Because she's great. She's very proactive and she kept the Women's Day going, which

would have otherwise died.

**A** *Yes, she did. She did a lot of work for that because I got involved with that last year. Yeah. Getting lost here. So I was talking with James at the Harris to try and get, know that I wanted to a space for an exhibition, didn't know quite what it was going to be, and that was always quite difficult really talking to people not knowing what the outcome would be. That was hard to sort of explain to people what it might be. I think...*

J Very good that you had the Rotunda and not the community gallery. Million times better.

**A** *Yes, yes, I stuck out for that. He'd forgotten [14.44] when I went back to him that we'd met, and I was panicking, anyway as things went, the Rotunda was, I think, the best place for it really, better than being further upstairs because it's more accessible.*

J Yes.

**A** *I mean it's come about, I don't know whether you picked up with the things that were actually made through the groups that we did, that there was information about those communities through the things that were produced really.*

J Yes I did, yeah. On the [Books] Project, it looked more like information sort of about the individuals' lives, rather than about community thing, but the other one, I loved the way they all went out shopping and they did the mapping with you.

**A** *Yes, yes.*

J Was that easy? Because I've found people aren't familiar with maps at all, with actual maps on the ground.

**A** *Well, how we did it, how we did it, part of the methodology that I've developed through this, which was hard work in a sense and I don't know whether, I think it's my particular way of working in a sense was going, was constant reflection each week on how to engage these people and it wasn't, it wasn't an easy process in some ways and I had to be very flexible in which I'd...*

J [16.20] different groups.

**A** *Yes, which way I sort of went, and I was trying to spark some conversation with the group in [Pukar]. There were two sort of sides, there was one very chatty side, and another very quiet reserved side and I thought how am I going to draw them in, and it began by me walking their area and taking my video camera, and when they saw their area they came alive and started telling me about things. Oh, that's my house, why didn't you call in, sort of thing, you know, and it became a different group and so it grew from that really. So the following week I took, I enlarged some street maps of Preston and they talked about the shops that they went to in their area and the places they went to in the city centre, and we just marked them with a little flag, but everybody sort of joined in and...*

J I mean that is really mind-blowing. When we went to Indian, I went to the [17.19] and I took a road map with me, an atlas, a [Gujarat] atlas with me, and we went on a great trip all around the temples [17.28] but virtually nobody I met had ever seen a map before, and they were very interested.

**A** *Right.*

J But yeah, it's just a different way of portraying things. So the taxi driver didn't have a map, just knew where to drive.

**A** *Because he'd lived there so long he knew where things were.*

J [17.47]

- A** *So they must have a mental map of some sort.*
- J Oh yeah.
- A** *[17.52]*
- J It doesn't look the same, it's like the Aborigines, they can do anything with a rock, can't they?
- A** *It's been interesting that you won't have seen it, but there's been a programme on BBC2 called Map Man who's gone through different times of history looking at different maps and some of them were very linear. There was one and it was a walk from York to Lancaster and it was just constant, just one linear line, no information about what was on either side, and he followed it and it's been quite an interesting thing, and I think, you know, this came out of...*
- J I suppose it is [18.28] for the person doing the journey isn't it.
- A** *Yes, it is, yes it is. Yeah.*
- J It's just a convention that some people aren't so used to.
- A** *Yes, and you know, I don't know perhaps it was difficult for some of the women, the language I used was perhaps a little bit difficult for them to understand, but I was trying to sort of find out about their lives and try and make that connection you know, and they were talking about [18.55] patterns, but there was a mix of Muslim and Hindu and a Catholic woman from Malta, and it developed, it developed slowly...*
- J Were they all women?
- A** *Yes. They weren't in the beginning. The first, I did a six weeks project for both groups which was very getting to know you, practical tasks to help people feel comfortable and relaxed and support conversation really and there were some men in that, but [Pukar] they move in and out very quickly some of them, don't they? Especially the men if they've time out of work and then they find work and then it changes, so it changed. Yeah.*
- J Yeah, because mapping is broader, mapping's a new term isn't it in the last five years possibly and it doesn't necessarily always mean there's a map.
- A** *No.*
- J When I started my job in 1999 I had to do, I did a Deepdale directory of which [20.03] and that was a mapping thing. It just showed everything that was going on. There was no map in the book at all. It had addresses and phone numbers, and it had, it mapped it in the way of what's there for old people, young people, ethnic minority people.
- A** *So different sections of the community, there was information there.*
- J Have you not seen that?
- A** *No, I haven't. No.*
- J I've had a complete change round since [rooting through things].
- A** *This is how you came to work in Deepdale in the beginning...*
- J No, it was part of my job remit was to produce a Deepdale director, so I did it because I'm very good at following instructions, and I could choose how to do it, and because it's so difficult to sort things out, they're alphabetically in the book, but they're in the index with categories.
- A** *Oh right.*
- J And at the back there's also a thing on rooms for hire, because that was another thing

people didn't know, where you could rent a room. I'm surprised you never came across that. It's been re-done into 2002 and there were hundreds of them about.

**A** *Right.*

J So that's useful [21.22] sort of thing that you're doing.

**A** *Mm, yes.*

J And I think the Council ought to produce them in every area. Again, this is one of the ideas that's just gone by the board. Avenham's got it.

**A** *Have they?*

J Did you see [their] directory?

**A** *No.*

J [21.32] did that.

**A** *No, I haven't seen that either.*

J Oh.

**A** *No, it would have been because I sort of do it myself.*

J Do it yourself.

**A** *Yeah. You know looking at, well walking the area really and finding out where people [21.44].*

J Mmm, well that's what I did to start with, I [spent] the first three months talking to people and doing a needs analysis, what they thought they, an ideas analysis in a way, and doing this sort of same parallel.

**A** *Mmm. For somebody coming into the area this would be absolutely wonderful wouldn't it?*

J Yeah, it would, of course it's out of date now because it was 2000, but Janet [22.06] at the University in Ethnicity and Health updated it exactly, exactly updated my book to 2002, but that too is out of date too, it might not be here. I've packed away loads of stuff from work. I did bring quite a lot home, but I've put it in the attic.

**A** *I can understand that.*

J But that's a different [22.27] mapping exercise [22.29]

**A** *Yeah, yes, yes, it's great, yeah, just shows you the wealth of what's going on in different...*

J And that goes hand in hand with what's on in Deepdale I used to do with all the groups meeting and that's what communities need and workers, but who can, and it needs to be done centrally as well, not on a project thing a person's going to stop, but it isn't because it's time consuming, I don't know why really.

**A** *No.*

J But I didn't put this in my thing, but when I started I went to meet the community development department at the town hall to find out what they did, so I wasn't duplicating, and they were completely desk based, so what they did they had a pot of money that they gave to community organisations like Sahara and the CBS, and people to do, well women's centre probably, they didn't actually do any community development themselves, they were completely desk based, and I was thinking, when I was reading, I think that's the same, but it's not the same because they've now got these regeneration people in odd spots of the community and I'm not sure how they're funded, it must be, I think it's probably European funding, but again it's just being pointed at specific areas, and as far as I know there's only

Jennifer McCarthy in Deepdale, and Yvonne Hines in Fishwick, I don't think there's anyone in Ingol, which is desperate and has different sort of regeneration going on, or Larches where there's somebody from [23.58], but there isn't an overall plan.

**A** *No. I haven't come across those people.*

J You haven't come across Jennifer?

**A** *No, I haven't, no. I had a meeting, and I'm hoping to pick it up again with Derek Whyte at the regeneration office in Preston.*

J No, I haven't come across him.

**A** *Regeneration officer he's called, assistant director? Yeah, I mean it was an interesting meeting, and it's been, you know, a sort of how am I going to make these meetings useful to me and what information do I want to find out and I thought it would be good to come and talk to you because I know you well and sort of use your, coming and talking to you as a way of learning perhaps the best approach to try and do it, because it's not easy.*

J No. No. And [24.54] I haven't got a particularly clear mind.

**A** *Was it you, I mean, was it useful, I'm seeing Jenny Rutter, I don't know whether you know Jenny Rutter, Creative Industries, and Keith [Launchbury], Community Safety Officer I think his title is.*

J Oh right, I do know him as Keith, I've met him.

**A** *And he asked because he did come to the exhibition and for some reason we missed each other, but he asked if he could see the projection again to remind him.*

J It was very useful seeing it and I hadn't sat and looked through the whole thing while it was on. It was there in the background. Would you like it back?

**A** *Only unless you want it.*

J I can probably just copy it onto my machine.

**A** *Yeah, you could. Thinking about the CDROM, do you think, have you any idea, do you think it will be useful for people in organisations to see something like that?*

J I think it would be very useful, yeah, in allsorts of organisations. With things like this on it showing how your particular [26.04] was achieved

**A** *Yes. I'm hoping to bring in the other perspectives at the end as well.*

J It would have been, the thing that's missing on it, which will be in your written thing is words from the people, the participants...

**A** *I'm hoping to include that, I am hoping to include that...*

J Because there must have been such a lot.

**A** *Yeah.*

J Yeah, they're [26.47] community voices.

**A** *Yeah. I mean that was a problem right at the beginning, they were a little shy, but the digital camera was great. They were more shy of me using the video camera, but I did introduce it a little bit, but because they could use a digital camera themselves...*

J Well a lot of peoples' religion to be on a screen as well...

**A** *Yes.*

J But [27.07] very well [27.10].

**A** *Yes.*

- J But if you had your machine on you would have got lots and lots of quotes that you could use.
- A **Yes, the Deepdale project, because, like you say, they were very different and the Deepdale project, because it was child free time it became precious to them, and they really got stuck into it, and when they were stuck into what they were doing, because you were saying it was very much about them, personal thing, there wasn't that much conversation, and I think they enjoyed the fact that they could just leave everything and just concentrate on, I think that was a sort of good place for them...**
- J [27.49] a huge part of the arts side of it.
- A **Right.**
- J Is that people can kind of go back into themselves in a way and it makes them stronger.
- A **Sort of meditation almost.**
- J Almost yeah. Or it's just stepping back from all the things that are in your mind all the time.
- A **Yeah.**
- J And not stepping into nothingness.
- A **No, having something to explore.**
- J Yeah. But how you get that across to funders and so on...
- A **Yes.**
- J I think a CDROM would be very useful for funders, but I don't know how you produce them, you know, how you do the indexing and things. On this I can see you've got everything there, and it's got the pictures separately.
- A **Well I could show you a little bit actually. I've only just begun doing it, but I'll, it's a programme called [28.46]...**
- J Called what?
- A **Director, and it doesn't, it produces something entirely different from that...**
- J [28.52] some good embedding and stuff...
- A **Yes, and it's interactive...**
- J ... summaries and then you can...
- A **Yes.**
- J Mm, what does it work with? I mean do you have...
- A **It works with anything...**
- J Does it have to be Quark Express or some professional thing?
- A **It's an independent, it's an independent programme that people use to author CD-ROMs, so that when you put it on a CD-ROM and pass it to somebody they can put it in their player and it will just boot straight from that, they don't need anything else to run it.**
- J But I mean when you're writing it?
- A **When you're writing it, yeah, it's Macromedia Director, and you use it in that software, and then it's called creating a projector that runs independently, and it will run on P.C. or MAC, it's cross platform.**
- J That's good.

- A** *Yeah. Is that Quicktime you're looking at it through.*
- J No, it's actually Reel One Player.
- A** *Oh yes.*
- J I've got several viewers on mine and it automatically goes to Reel One, but something happens on set up that sometimes make a jump in things and I have to keep... oh that's just the Windows booting. I love all those pictures.
- A** *Yes, somebody took some for me at the opening.*
- J Yeah. I missed that, I can't remember why.
- A** *I'll show you the bits, I'm only sort of doing a test, this is part of my related studies really, learning how to use this programme.*
- J Presumably the reason for doing one, making one and sending it to people is so they can take advantage of your research to inform their work?
- A** *Mmm. And it's building a sort of, trying to build an advocacy for this sort of work.*
- J Do you have much to do with Prescap? Or have you had?
- A** *I've met with Di. I haven't, you see there again, I have talked to them quite a lot, I mean I know they do a lot of good work in Preston, but they're issue based, and they know they're issue based, and they've never really questioned it because it's how they came to be and it's how they get that funding and...*
- J And in fact there are other problems that when people want to use them, they're terribly expensive if you haven't got, you know, funding and there's this great gap between the artists, those artists, who are artists doing things, and the ability of the community to use them for what they really want an arts project, you know, they want a Katherine Beckett centre, they wanted to decorate the toilet, the toilet block has been taken down out there. It used to be there, but it was closed, and they wanted to do a decoration project, but it was just, the money was impossible, and there wasn't the particular help for funding advice.
- A** *Right, that's a shame isn't it?*
- J So I think that the whole, with art, the whole funding things is fundamental.
- A** *Yes. Yes. And the funding side of it is not necessarily arts based either because there are lots of other pots aren't there....*
- J Oh yes.
- A** *[32.18]*
- J There are the issue based ones.
- A** *Yes.*
- J If you can pull the right, turn the right switches on.
- A** *Mmm. CD-ROM there we go.*
- J Did you buy this Director programme?
- A** *I got it through the University. So this is my little, I've called it test because I'm just sort of... Yes, so that would come up like that and you would just click on it. So this is just the beginning, I've not done a lot of animating... This is the beginning map I did that was more circular rather than linear, but it was a way of just introducing and playing with how to interact with the thing, so...*
- J Yeah.
- A** *You get a little map, and if you want to find out more you just click on the map and it*

**takes you, I've got a couple of aerial shots that you'll have seen. Then this was a sort of learning thing that you could bring in video and the viewer [background noise] can interact with it and stop it and...**

J Oh yes. That looks superb.

**A To give people an idea of what it's like in Deepdale.**

J The other thing about producing a CDROM is presumably it's extremely copy?

**A Yes.**

J You could make one and then you can have as many as you like, you haven't got to think of a print run or anything

**A No. No. It's a big, it's like being a choreographer really, you have a stage and you bring in players which can be sound, music, moving images, whatever you want.**

J That's another whole [34.11] learning...

**A Yes. It is. That's my creative input really in a sense that I quite enjoy being able to learn how to do it really.**

J I'm thinking how well you've put, yeah, [34.30]

**A Right, yes.**

J I have this thing I really want to do one day and it was sparked off by [Tahira], you know [Tahira] Patel from Deepdale Women's [34.42] secretary.

**A Yes I do, yes.**

J She was saying that her dad used to walk to Chorley, an apple a day, she said they had an apple, they walked to Chorley following the mill chimneys looking for work when they first came here, and that's history isn't it?

**A Yeah, it is.**

J And it would be very very good to have [35.03] presented.

**A Yes it would. There are lots of stories like that at... I got the women at [Pukar], a lot of them came from Kenya in the early 60s and they'd some interesting stories to tell...**

J Some of them are in here, not the [Pukar] women, but people from [Africa], I was born at Mombassa in Kenya, yeah.

**A It was a little disappointing I thought that the exhibition that they put on in the Harris last year about Avenham, there were some conversations that they'd taped with people, but it wasn't that engaging I didn't think...**

J There was sound in yours wasn't there, I'd forgotten that. Wasn't there some sound that you could listen to in the Rotunda?

**A Yes, there was, yes, there was.**

J That's not on here is it?

**A No, I didn't put that on, no. It's the women speaking their recipes, that was what was on. Yes.**

J Right, carry on down your agenda.

**A Yeah. So I was talking about the embedded information and I'm just wondering whether that's something an artist brings to a project like that, to be able to open up the visual information perhaps a little bit more. It would be interesting to know whether people who work in regeneration actually see that that information is there**

**embedded in these objects that are made and that they can actually see that that information may very well be useful information for various organisations which might be difficult to find out in the normal sort of tick box questionnaire that they do.**

- J That's right. When you're doing the cooking with the ladies, were they talking about things like [36.54] is good for people with diabetes apparently, and often people tell me about ingredients in like a folk medicine way.
- A **Yes. They talked about spices, yes, and they talked about different ingredients that they gave to their children if they were getting a cold or if they had exams coming up and they were important they would feed them this that and the other. Yes, lots of information like that. All spoken really, yeah. I mean I don't, part of it was that they don't realise what experts they are, you know, it's something that they just take for granted and it was good, I don't think they understood really how much people appreciated it and the opening, their cooking, perhaps they did, perhaps they got to do it in a place like that...**
- J Yes, I think people might, I think people do know how much the cooking's appreciated because there's quite a lot of very small businesses doing it now aren't there?
- A **Right, yes.**
- J When I did this we did it, well it doesn't say this, but we did it thinking if a new lady came to Fishwick and didn't know anything about it, how she could find out. Later I did things bilingually as well, but how would they find out and we've got loads of refugees coming to Preston and the services that the Council provides are sort of limited and college as well and start English classes, but people don't keep going because it's too slow, it's not relevant and they've got to do all the things at home, but the sort of work you're doing might be something that would actually help with new people, refugees settlement or...
- A **As well as learning English at the same time and having an opportunity to say who they are as well and where they've come from, because that's important when they've left somewhere isn't it?**
- J Yes, it is, yeah.
- A **I did do some work with some refugees in Kendal on, we did some [Batik], and we used an art project as a starting point, and again yeah it was, you know it was, there was some really sad stories you know, they'd left everything behind, the families, hoping they would come here eventually, but they obviously wanted to talk about it and they didn't often get a chance to be able to do that.**
- J I had three Bosnian ladies in my English class at Deepdale, and we were doing a magazine there with recipes and things in and actually we didn't, yes they did bring the things in and they made Bosnian cake and things and brought them in for people to try, and that was such a good creative thing to do because these were refugees with nothing, but they were giving something, actually giving something physical to the group that could be enjoyed.
- A **Yes, that's good. Yeah.**
- J These people giving recipes or expertise, you know, I can see, if we go back quickly to your Deepdale group, it will have drawn together meeting every week, but that's more a sort of traditional idea of art, you know when I say is it art, producing something creative from your soul and with the help of whatever, but it's not so easy to link it with regeneration.
- A **No, although I thought about that as well and I thought, what was important to them was their family and do the powers being not realise how important their family is to them because they all concentrated on their family, they didn't need to do but they did because when you're in that position, and again it took me back, my two boys are grown up now, but it took me back to being in that position and when you've passed it you forget how intense it is and everything's focused around these young children,**

**and they did talk about safety and not feeling safe walking around, even during the day.**

J That's a family thing too isn't it?

A Yes.

J Aware of that as well. When I did my initial needs analysis that no one used a park because they were afraid there and they didn't get exercise and I started those women's walks that you came on and that, I've not put it as one of my things though because I've too many, too many achievements, but that, women walk without me, women who have never met me walk because [41.43] started it and groups go and they'll go at different times and even if it doesn't happen, but Sure Start's taken it on.

A **Have they, oh good.**

J That's Christine Nuttall who's worked with Sure Start and she works with Old people and with Sure Start, so she does work with grandparents

A **I come, you know worked with Maria Neil [42.04] because she's sort of taken that on hasn't she [42.08]. Yeah, oh I'm glad that's going, I mean I really enjoyed meeting them and it was lovely to be included when, as an outsider and it was really nice to just, something different happens I think where you're having a conversation where you're walking, people are more relaxed and it was [42.29]**

J And when they're so accepting, well most of them are, if you can manage to communicate all it's really good. Once we had a reporter from Radio Lancashire [42.39] well she wasn't there when you came?

A Yes, she was.

J Oh right, and we didn't have many women did we?

A **No, you didn't no that day, in fact I think I was the one that got grabbed. I don't know whether anything went out on the air.**

J Yes, I think it did, it did, yes. But they accepted her as well [42.53]

A Yes.

J [42.55]

A **We digress, but I mean this business...**

J [43.01]

A **Yes, well it will be interesting just to, I mean it's just interesting, there's so much, like you say so much to talk about and so many crossovers it's knowing how to make best use of it all. But this sort of new people coming into an area, I think that's probably helped me think about it because I've lived in the same area all my life, but somebody came to live in our area from outside who came with a family on their own, they came from Germany, they'd lived in Germany for 12 years and found it extremely difficult to settle and found ways to make contact with what was going on in the community, quite a closed community and it sort of made me think, made me stop and think.**

J The Bosnians have not meshed in at all. They have no friends all. Well they've got me, us, the family, and I don't know why it hasn't worked.

A No.

J Partly hasn't worked because they're a different sort of Muslim to the, they're Western.

A **Right.**

- J Westernised so they don't necessarily...
- A Yes.
- J And they're more European, but I don't understand why they haven't made friends with people in the playground, or one of the, well yeah, it hasn't worked. I think there were perhaps too few of them and too difficult a community to get into. But yeah when [44.29] it's really difficult.
- A **Yeah, and it makes you sort of sit back and reflect on these things. I stuck this in after reading what you'd written in response to my agenda yesterday, and talking about, but is it art, because it is something we talk about who do this sort of work, it's often referred to as new [genre] public art and you know there's big debates about the work public art and what it means to different people and it carries baggage with it, but there's been a lot of work done in America in new [genre] public art and this is a book that was done in the 80s really, oh no 1992 and I thought that you might like this one because it was a particular piece of work with a group of women that an artist called [Susan Lacy] did, and they found this woman and they, overnight, [45.34] it was highlighting what women had done in Chicago that hadn't really been recognised, you know how you see these huge public bronzes. Well what they did was bring these just huge boulders like that, brought them in overnight, plonked them in various places that had been researched, you know why they would put them there, somebody, the person who had a plaque on it had some association with that place, and what it did, it was a temporary public art piece, what it did for the community to have those rough rocks placed in an urban place.**
- J One of the things we did with Deepdale Women's Action Group, not this year, but last year for International Women's Day, did you come to their open day, and they had big A3 pictures of women who've made a difference, local and national and the world, international.
- A **Yes, wasn't that, yeah, they talked about with [46.38] Valerie Wise I think organised it. Because there was...**
- J This was one that the Deepdale Women's Action Group had done, they got their own, in fact we did it with two students from the University came as a placement to do it, but they did also bring them to the more public, the joint thing [46.55] meeting house, 20 pictures [46.59]
- A **Wasn't there one they did about black women as well that they did?**
- J Yes, there was, yes, that was different. These women were allsorts of colours including Princess Diana and Mother Theresa and Sister [Sharifa Kabhir] from A&E here.
- A **So they'd chosen that themselves, who they decided they wanted to include?**
- J Yes, chose who they wanted. And the students went off and got the pictures and mounted them all, and the University paid, so that's good. I'm just going to write this down actually.
- A **Yeah, they're not easy to get those books. University library have a couple. We were only talking about that the other day...**
- J Is this your copy?
- A **It is yeah. I found it in the University library...**
- J [47.47] whatever she's called, an honorary fellow at the University...
- A **Oh right.**
- J [47.52]
- A **Yeah. Yes. Another one that's not got as many pictures in is Mapping the Terrain by Susan Lacy, which talks about allsorts of different art projects that have connected**

**with communities, and a lot of them, that was one of the things that I've found out in research, ones that have been really quite, have made a big impact have taken maybe ten years...**

J Yeah, well that's the big thing isn't it about the whole thing and it's very interesting how the effects go on for years, even after all the [48.33] the perpetrators have gone, their jobs have finished and there's no one to sort of notice, but it still goes on. Doesn't matter I suppose, no one to notice, it's just a waste that it's not...

A **Yes. Yes. Yes, I mean this woman who I'm talking about was working with the sanitation department in New York and trying to break down the thing about people not wanting, thinking that people who collect rubbish were dirty themselves and how people dispose of rubbish and trying to raise the profile of environmental issues and all that sort of thing, which it was an interesting project. Yes, so as I say, but it was just a sort of, talk again about that but is it art because it is something, especially with this sort of work that gets brought up all the time...**

J The other thing is that people might think that only artists can do art and anybody can do...

A **Yes.**

J Yeah, I hadn't thought of that, and it's just come to me.

A **Yeah, it is so, and it's often lack of confidence or what's happened in the past at school or bad experiences like that that really knocks people confidence doesn't it?**

J Do you know [Martha]?

A **No.**

J Right, well she's, you ought to meet her, she's a great person. She's not working much at the moment because her job finished at PCT, but she will tell you that she was anorexic for ten years and very ill with it and everything sort of stopped, but learning to do stained glass cured her completely and turned her into an artist, or discovered her art, you know.

A **Yes, yes.**

J She lives in Blackburn.

A **Oh does she?**

J Mmm, [50.23] area.

A **There's a guy on the MA will probably know her then because he's a ceramicist and lives in Blackburn, I'll have to mention it. And the other thing that struck me, a lot of what this came from was because Preston's now become a city and the huge amount of money that's there hovering to be spent...**

J Is it really.

A **On the Tithebarn project and [50.52]**

J [50.53] set backs.

A **I don't know, yes I think it probably will, they're saying 2007 aren't they before anything happens?**

J [51.03]

A **Right, have you. You think there's a feeling of that throughout Preston about it all in different communities?**

J I think there may well be. I mean the Duke of Westminster part, is it all Duke, I've forgotten whether it was the Duke of Westminster's project, because I'm sure there were problems about who, if we didn't agree to certain things happening they'd pull out. I don't know

actually.

**A** *Well, the only things that I've done, I've been to some meetings and what I've grabbed off the web really, and there's been a lot of sort of community feasibility studies, trying to find out what they needed and I don't know how they've really gone about that, it doesn't say a great deal about how they did it. And all the work that they're planning to do mainly in the Church Street area.*

J Sorry about all the banging.

**A** *It's okay.*

J Yes.

**A** *So, you know, that was sort of an element that I'm sort of working alongside because it will come into the conversation I know on Friday with Jenny and Keith because they're involved in all that and the plans that are afoot to sort of, I guess, gentrify in a way the Church Street area and just how important it is to them about the community who already live there because they are the people who will have these things on their doorstep, who are their immediate users in a sense, they aren't people that have [52.45], you know, are they going to be able to, are there going to be places for them that they want to visit, are they going to be sidelined and pushed to the side? What steps have they got to include them and all the rest of it? And you know, projects like this... maybe you know could break down some of those barriers or try and find ways of including them in some way in different areas. I don't know. I mean there's a lot of, I think there's a lot of, the big thing is about pulling down the bus station isn't there and what they're going to do...*

J Oh yeah, they have got a new plan for that now [53.32] people don't like change. They need to understand, [53.36] we don't have to go until [53.39], but I've got to get my friend up the road who said she'll come down if they haven't finished and they won't have finished, you see.

**A** *Yes, that's okay. Just give me a chance to gather my thoughts. Yes, another thing that I jotted down last night was one of the things when we were talking in the Deepdale Group about having an exhibition at the Harris, they don't particularly, they don't really go into the centre all that much, to Preston city centre with young children because it's not an easy thing to do. Is that something that you were aware of?*

J No, I'm not really aware of it. I know there's a Sure Start office now, right in St John's Centre, I don't know if that will make a difference. Well you see loads of people shopping actually with children.

**A** *Yeah, you do, but it's not something that they did.*

J They may not have much spare money. They may simply be...

**A** *Bus fares.*

J Yes.

**A** *And the Harris wasn't a place they would particularly choose to go. That was difficult. There is so much isn't there, that's... it's difficult to know. You mentioned you know, I mean I guess it's not that important from our project about the refurbishment of community buildings and things like that. I mean I know there are quite a few, but some of them yeah do need refurbishing don't they?*

J Catherine Beckett [59.06] probably didn't know before it was done up. You do know Catherine Beckett...

**A** *I do know it yes.*

- J And it's in beautiful pastel colours.
- A **Yes.**
- J And that was done with an architect [Ishmail [59.19]] who lives opposite Kwik Save, he's very very local, and he's an architectural technician, I think he may not be a full and paid up architect, he has a practice.
- A **Right, so how did you get him to do it, was it just because he lived there?**
- J I think it was personal contacts and [59.38] Patel, do you know him?
- A **No.**
- J He was chairman of the County Council last year, and he lives in a huge posh house in [59.46] actually with three floors, oh it's amazing his house, and Ishmail did his design and [59.53] Patel's on the committee at Catherine Beckett, so I think that was how it happened. But it wasn't really, I'm sure it wasn't, well yeah, the community, the group, GCDA, Greater Deepdale Community Association, yeah, they were being consulted at all stages, but he will have submitted, I think the way he will have worked is he will have submitted plans and the decoration was a big thing of it, because they couldn't at that stage change it very much. And the price, it had to be fairly cheap. So the way he did it, he did it with different pastel colour panels, because it's used for children's groups and allsorts and they had pin boards that were keyed in with it that could do it.
- A **So was it all his idea?**
- J I think it was all his idea. So, I don't know, I think it was his idea. Sometimes with a community consultation, that's the other thing they take too long don't they? It takes a very long time, there are some groundwork people doing a consultation about the Deepdale, the bit of grass behind Catherine Beckett, the bit of ground and some works on that that might well include art works. It may happen, but it hasn't happened yet, and sometimes funders have got shorter, it's got to be spent by the end of the financial year.
- A **Yes, that's true.**
- J Yeah, but community buildings, refurbishment and being built, there just aren't enough still, and they are being knocked down. There was one opposite the Catholic church on Meadow Street. It was the [1.01.27] Club. That's been knocked down and County Palatine's building houses on it. So that is a huge social centre and a hall which has gone, and the corner of St Jude's Road by the [1.01.39] meeting house, sorry on the corner of St George's and St Paul's, there was St Jude's church, that's gone and been replaced by housing, and that was a place used a lot by community groups.
- A **Sad isn't it?**
- J But that's a way if community can be involved in designing things and what they actually look like, and art.
- A **Yeah. Yes. Well there's a big thing about you know church use and [1.02.10] community using church buildings more, and them changing the use and the design of church buildings to make that easier for the same reason, things are changing and they aren't getting the people in the churches, so they need to look for ways of [1.02.28]**
- J [1.02.28] in St George's Road, and they've realised it's an opportunity for outreach as well and they've started [1.02.39] and stuff in there. And they've come across problems because they're actually making so much out of rent, they weren't a business, they were like a charity and it was meant to be a contributions and it's changing that they've got to change their organisation because a lot of their income now comes from rental.
- A **Yes. Right. Yeah, so there's, a city council will look at community buildings, do you**

**know, where they've...**

J Well they used to own a lot of them you see, and no I don't know. I don't know. They owned Catherine Beckett, but, and they still do own it, but it's been the lease is sort of transferred to the community association.

**A And they're responsible for...**

J They're completely responsible for it.

**A [1.03.25] city council...**

J Oh yes. It's [1.03.30] they have to do. I'm not sure if they've done it in other areas, but they've got premises up in Grange and different places, they do have youth centres in odd places about.

**A Right.**

J But, no, I don't know, you could ask them that.

**A Yes, that would be interesting to find out. [1.03.46] what plans they may have to build new ones and all this housing that they're building, people need centres don't they? I mean people are isolated in [1.03.57].**

J You know there isn't a housing office in Deepdale. When I started there was quite a lot of housing, property, council housing, which isn't very much now because it's been hived off, and they were talking in 1999 about using one of the houses on [Harwood] Road, a bungalow, to be a housing office. Because most areas have housing offices, but they hadn't. So people still have to go into the town hall.

**A A problem.**

J Yeah. It does seem difficult to get things done, and it means community workers, I often feel resentful and think why don't they get on with it [1.04.38] about all sorts of things, which is a same, rather than feeling creative about it. Working with community makes me feel positive and creative, working with statutory bodies pulls you back.

**A Yes. Yes. Yeah, it's hard to know how that will change, if it will change.**

J Have you got a research budget, I mean how do you pay for your video cameras and things?

**A [1.05.04] I do have a consumables budget.**

J That's it yeah. I saw when you were carrying your stuff in, you can provide things.

**A The laptop's the University's.**

J Is it?

**A Yeah. Again, it's all sort of a fairly new area and I've noticed a difference even over the three years that I've been there, how they've got a graduate school for research going now and there is a place where they'll pull all the researchers together because sometimes you're very much on your own, most of the time you're very much on your own, and there is a possibility you know to give papers now where they ask you to do them and it was finding [place] yourself to do it where there is...**

J I've got a Cambridge background you know, and in Cambridge and other places [1.06.06] they have sort of [1.06.10] common rooms or [1.06.11] actual place with blackboards all over the wall, and while you're having a coffee and chatting, you're also sketching ideas out and it's such a superb creative way of rubbing things off. I don't think there's anything like that in Preston.

**A No.**

- J A literal meeting place for people on a similar level often, to, cross-fertilisation, a chance to meet at regular times and people just used to go, they'd got at 11 o'clock, they might stay for an hour because actually they were working you know, things were going on.
- A ***Well it's when you begin chatting to people who are maybe thinking, or work or you know have ideas on similar lines, it's where things begin to spark and ideas take off isn't it, rather than being on your own.***
- J Yes.
- A ***It will be interesting just to sit back and reflect on all the things we've talked about, because we've touch on allsorts of things.***
- J Well you can come any time [1.07.12] quite so chaotic here forever.
- A ***It's given me more insight into sort of your work, you've done as a community [1.07.22]***
- J It is strange that it's, you know that in fact I've been a short-term person and I haven't been replaced, and goodness knows what will happen, but I decided that I just, there are lots of things I felt I should have done better, I never worked closely enough with councillors, and I ought, because they work with community as well. They have their own agendas, but I felt that that was a bit lack that I didn't have like a regular monthly meeting with the councillors in the area I worked, and also didn't work with me either, but I could have initiated it and I didn't.
- A ***No.***
- J And I'd got to a situation with the groups I was working with where I thought they ought to become more independent. So I stayed on with the women's action group and actually I had done a lot of the things that I had set out to do, I had got things moving. What I'd done the Deepdale directory, Sure Start had that, Christine had it, it helped a lot of, [1.08.19] had it, it helped a lot of people get going with other projects and there is a lot going, more going, and I've just had enough really.
- A ***When you came to it in 1999 did you know Deepdale quite well then?***
- J I knew bits of it yes, because, yes I did really because I'd taught English there for about 18 years. Yeah I did know it, and that's why I went after the job actually because I loved the people there.
- A ***Yes. That comes through. As soon as I meet you...***
- J And because I can speak [Gujarati] and so magic, it's just magic being able to communicate isn't it, with anybody. So yes I did and I knew that there were things that needed doing, and all those years ago when I started, I actually applied for a grant, Inner Urban Aid it was called in those days, maybe 20 years ago now, and there was money about and I wanted, they wanted a women's centre, but there were in Deepdale, still want it, but the people there had not got enough experience in the wider world and their, they were drawn back by their community always like, not pulled back, but if you had visitors you had to look after visitors, somehow there wasn't the, people weren't able to take on the responsibility for a community building, so it reduced and [1.09.40] had a little group there called Deepdale [1.09.43] and they applied for allsorts of teaching materials and computers with Asian languages on when it was very very difficult, didn't work, they worked, but they were a nightmare, and books and allsorts of things, £11,000 worth of stuff I got for it, but we didn't get a women's centre and it was very much me led because they couldn't take, wouldn't take the responsibility. Well 20 years later, or 15 years later, some of them are actually the daughters of those women, like [Kalsum], [Kalsum]'s mum was one I tried to get involved, well she was on the committee. And actually [1.10.21] but they have got their group and they have got a lot of self-direction and [1.10.28] but they do most of it and that's great, so yes, the answer is I did know Deepdale and I did run things for it. And some of them have happened.

**A** *I hadn't realised that your job was quite a short-term thing; I thought you'd been sort of in place for quite a long time.*

J No, it was a three year job, projects job, and then it was extended for two years, but on a very ad hoc basis. It was extended the week before our financial year ran out in both cases, and then it had to become permanent actually by then. It did become permanent, but not to the extent, there was never a budget after the first three years when all the money had been put in, it was joint funded from health and social services in 1999 for two years. For me, somebody in Avenham and somebody in Brookfield. After that they just didn't have a pay budget, and [1.11.24] at the end they found my salary, they paid me a [1.11.29] which is very very important to be able to rent rooms and professionals, do anything, travel, and I had about £3,000 a year for that, and I left recommendations they should have one in every deprived ward at least, with a non-paid budget, a half time worker. It would cost about £90,000 a year, but you'd get such a tremendous result from it, and they are considering it, but I'm not...

**A** *Not very hopeful...*

J No, I think something will happen, but not as big as that.

**A** *What was the kick to place you that the job came up, what was the remit for that to happen?*

J Well, Carol [1.12.12] who you might not have [1.12.14] she now heads up men's health in the PCT. She had been a community development worker in Avenham for a couple of years with Cath Sittens, who's her manager, and they had had this wonderful vision of community development and the CVS, or the CHC, community health council had done a report about health, about something in Deepdale [1.12.36] and it was obvious that it needed an input. Now I don't know why they'd chosen Deepdale in [1.12.41], but partly on the back of that Carol and her assistants drew up a project description for community developer workers in Deepdale and [1.12.51] and got the finance for it for the complete three years and then put out the adverts and so I saw it and went after it. And it was to do very much what Carol had done in Avenham, which was produce a director and you know set up groups, support groups, Deepdale had nothing, it didn't have any community groups, well it had Deepdale community forum, which didn't really meet. No tenants groups because there was a lot of owner occupying. Yeah.

**A** *That's interesting...*

J I could send to you my initial needs analysis charts, I could e-mail it to you just out of interest was people wanted.

**A** *Yes, that might be interesting to see. I mean it's interesting that it's two women who were fired up by knowing that this sort of work was working in those areas...*

J Yes, it worked in Avenham and they wanted to spread it.

**A** *Yes, but come from a central...*

J No, it didn't, and they axed Cath Sittens within 3 months. She was in a layer of middle management and [1.13.53] it was just appalling. She's in Burnley or somewhere now.

**A** *Is she?*

J Yeah. Brilliant person, real live, she had a health visitor background, I think a very wide view of how things could be, but she's only an [1.14.11] and after those first three months I had very peculiar, no management, odd management, always had to explain what the job was to the new manager.

**A** *Right.*

J Never, you know, it was difficult and it's very tiring, but you work on your own and that must

be similar to you. You have good supervision?

- A** **Yes. Yes, yes. I have two supervisors, well three supervisors, I've one who sort of deals with the admin [1.14.38] the other one's dealt with more of the nitty gritty arts [1.14.41] art stuff, and one that's got more, that's a social historian who's had more experience of doing research, so he [1.14.52] on that sort of, but I don't see them all that often, but they all came to [1.14.57] they have been very supportive. It's good. It makes a huge difference.**
- J** You feel that you're in a team. People understand...

## **Kath Brogan Chief Landscape Architect employed by Preston City Council**

Kath Brogan begins by mentioning the neighbourhood renewal team who have been active in Deepdale. She mentions Ian Mills as being the head of the team and that community centres are managed by the County Council and not the city council.

Kath recalls a public art project in a park which involved the community contributing to the design work behind the production of some metal gates. Reflecting on this project she mentions how pleased the community participants were when the gates were installed and they could see how their designs had been incorporated in their manufacture.

Kath then comments on some of the elements she found interesting and valuable in my research, for example the informality of the contact with people and celebrating their distinctiveness, something which she thinks does not usually happen. The big question according to Kath is how to incorporate what people actually relate to, which is expressed in projects such as this, into the work she does as a landscape architect.

Kath mentions the idea of having legacy artefacts which keep the project alive for other people to consider, so she thought the idea of having a shopping bag made from cotton to be excellent.

We discuss the idea of time frames and that engaging communities can be a long process. Kath explains that for her this is a problem, as she often requires work which can be completed quickly and to a very exact deadline. I explain that I did project-manage this work with deadlines when particular parts of the project needed to be completed. Kath mentions financial constraints in government departments when budgets have to be spent by particular dates.

She recognises the empowering nature of the project for the participants and then remembers her own involvement with the Parish Maps project initiated by the Art Group Common Ground.

Kath explains how she understands that her role as a landscape architect is to provide a service for the community. As she explains, "you should be providing things that people are wanting, but not everybody does have that approach in local government."

She ends the interview by saying, "The thing I saw of particular value was drawing out the cultural distinctiveness. We try, wherever we can to sort of celebrate the distinctiveness of place in a sense, you know, a sense of the place, but you can sometimes get that by different routes, I think what you were doing was very good at making contact and drawing the ideas out."

INTERVIEW WITH KATH BROGAN

K – Kath Brogan A – Anita Burrows

- A** *I've seen Derek White and Keith Launchbury and Jenny Nutter, James Green, one of the participants, manager of Sure Start, so there's been about 7 or 8 really, oh and Jendy Bulman who was a community development worker. She was appointed by, it's not the National Health Service, is it...*
- K** Primary.
- A** *Primary Care, and she worked in Deepdale for a number of years. I think she's just recently retired, but she's sort of, as I worked in Deepdale it was just interesting to get her perspective on what...*
- K** Did you not have any involvement with [0.41] renewal team, I mean they were, they have been active in Deepdale and are now active in...
- A** *No, I don't think I have. Who heads up the team?*
- K** Ian Mills is the head of the team, he's on the same director as a [0.57] services, but Jan Langfield's the one, she's actually, I don't know exactly what it is, but I could find out, but she's at a site based office, but that's, it's Frenchwood that she's based at. [1.09]
- A** *Yes, I haven't come across them, are they community based, or is it ...*
- K** It's private sector housing they deal with and [1.23] rural areas, which is sort of the focus of their attention, so they have [1.30] I think it's mainly [SRB money] that they use and they're an improvement, environmental improvement and housing grants, that sort of thing.
- A** *Who deals with community centres, is there a sort of body in Preston who sort of looks after, or are they private?*
- K** Well, there are county community centres, Lancashire County Council. And then they have community facilities. I think the label community centre is more [county in nature].
- A** *Just a thought that came into my head as you were chatting.*
- K** There are centres like on [2.13] Estate, there's, well probably centre's gone over to housing association but there is a community house there, which is sort of equivalent I guess of sort of a drop-in place and I think all of our housing officers have a similar sort of function, so...
- A** *Oh right. So [Callum] Estate, is that where Chris Davis works, Brookfield, is that up that way?*
- K** Brookfield separate.
- A** *Is it? Are they near together?*
- K** [Callum's] as you come up from the Tickled Trout onto [2.42] Lane, it's on the left hand side, and Brookfield you go off to the right and further...
- A** *I haven't been to [Callum], and [2.50] Brookfield, maybe heard people talk about [Callum], not just [2.54] actual vicinity. Oh that's interesting, yes. I mean, I sort of met various people to begin with as I was starting my research, which would be like 2 ½ years ago really, met people working in Preston and people that run PRESCAP and various people who worked in the arts, and just trying to, I mean although I know Preston reasonably well, I don't live here, so it's getting to know the area from, in a different way, but I walked quite a lot really around the centre, and looked really for places where people meet, because my work's always been about sort of making, engaging with people and seeing what develops from that encounter really, so that's*

**how it began really, and I chose Avenham and Deepdale in the end because they were areas that were receiving SRB money and it just so happened that there were community centres there and groups and just meeting them and ...**

K Yes, I mean there are lots of different meeting places aren't there, I mean Brookfield have the [4.10], the house that he occupied was a real drop in community centre wasn't it?

A **Yes. I don't know whether I mentioned it or not, I spoke to Chris as well and he would have been happy for me to go and work alongside him really, but I wanted to sort of try and find groups that hadn't had that experience of working creatively with an artist, although it would have been interesting, I decided to sort of, and to come nearer the city because this sort of scholarship grew out of Charles Quick and Val Murray put in an application to do some research around mapping in Preston and this sort of studentship came in alongside that. Unfortunately they weren't successful in their bid to get the AHRB funding to do that, but that left me to sort of carry on with the research, which I mean Charles is still involved in lots of things that are going on in Preston...**

K There is a great deal going on. It's very encouraging on lots of different levels. I think there's a lot of ... properly connecting up, but hopefully [5.19] that will change.

A **Yes. Yes.**

K [5.21] there will be more information in circulation for people maybe [5.25]

A **Right, right, good. Yeah, it is, it's a, yeah, I mean I met Neil at the public art conference down in Milton Keynes and he was asking about my research and I was saying what's happening in Preston and saying what a, there are things afoot and things moving and developing.**

K There are, yes, it's, we've been involved in quite a lot of artwork projects, our own project, we sort of encourage the [5.49] [public] art, as a means of involving the community in the process.

A **Yes.**

K And they've been quite successful [5.56] at the other extreme there are sort of, you know, trying to find some location, well we've identified locations [6.04]

A **Right, right, right.**

K So there's a whole spectrum really [6.10] opportunities.

A **Yeah. Yes, I mean, I don't know whether you've any questions you want to ask about the DVD, my work, I don't know, is sort of very people orientated, it doesn't have anything, it sometimes difficult for people to get a hold of it because there's nothing tangible in a sense that holds it all together, it's very much a social interaction.**

K Yes, but it's, what I liked about it was sort of the informality of it, it was making contact with people isn't it, and it's finding out what is special and important to them, and you know, a celebration of distinctiveness is a very important thing, and it especially seemed important that it's, we've got a very rich sort of cultural make-up in Preston and it isn't always celebrated, it's sort of celebrated within communities, but it's not openly celebrated sufficiently, and to me it was drawing out of people what they are proud of, or what's special about their culture and that was a very good means of doing it, but I think the big question I had was sort of what next as far as the process for people like myself. You know, you find out through that process what it is that people really relate to, but how can that be expressed in the sort of work that I'm doing.

A **Yes, in a sense I've done two very small pilot studies and it's been interesting just to work with a new methodology really I suppose of engaging with people that was very open ended and very flexible and was quite hard in that sense, because I was**

**constantly reflecting on each week that we'd done and working with two groups that were entirely different at the same time and reflecting and thinking well how do I sort of move this along, or encourage them to just get involved a little bit more. They were both very very different and that's been sort of part of it really, looking towards developing a methodology that may help other artists use, but without sort of taking away their creativeness in whatever approach they might have. So part of my thesis I hope will be about putting down in text a methodology for this approach really that...**

K I thought that the [bag] idea of people mapping all the different places that you can go and [8.44] I thought that was a lovely idea because it's something that's there as a permanent thing afterwards isn't it?

A **Yeah, I mean, it was strange sort of trying to sell it right from the beginning because people aren't used to coming and saying well we don't know exactly what's going to happen in this next 12 weeks, but whatever we do together will be about you and you living in Preston, and it was very sort of odd for them to approach it in that way. I think it was good to do those, I did sort of two little taster courses beforehand and it gave them confidence I think just to experience it and a lot of it was about gaining trust and I sort of initiated various sort of, not extremely challenging, practical tasks that we could share together and build conversation and that's sort of how it grew. And the [bag] idea, it was quite difficult, they were a mixed group and trying to get them all involved wasn't easy and we looked at maps of Preston and we talked about where they visited and they were quite open about where they came to and went to certain places on certain days depending on what was there or what they were doing at that particular time. None of them could drive which was also quite interesting and in the end, the information that I gleaned from that about the places they go, I walked myself, and I can't remember, filmed the shops that they were telling me about and then the week after we sat and watched it on the television and they suddenly came alive because they could associate what they were seeing and it was of interest to them because it was about them and their lives you know, and so that idea of sort of mapping and showing people where they went grew from that sort of little...**

K Have you been watching those [10.54]

A **Yes, yes, yes.**

K Because it's the same, not the same sort of approach, but there's a similarity there isn't there, it's things that are special to those people and then they're seeing them afterwards and suddenly they become [11.05]

A **Yes, yeah, yes, yes, it sort of builds their self-esteem and confidence I think and speaking to one of them last week about the culmination of the exhibition and the fact that it was in the Harris and it was in the Rotunda and they were saying how, it was just on for two weeks, but how, what a great sort of compliment it was to them as Asian women that they were, that they felt special, they you know...**

K That's right, yes. I think that's the beauty of public artwork that it does make people special and I've had a similar experience up at the first one I was involved in really was at Grange Park at Ribblesdale, I don't know whether or not you've been up there?

A **No.**

K And we had Chrysalis Arts involved there, and it was part of, going to be restoring, it was a Heritage Lottery funded project and we were wanting people to get involved in the project and looking at the future, but also, you know, celebrating the history of the place and they held workshops there and produced the, they actually the gates on the entrance to the park and [12.17] and it was such a rewarding experience to be involved in because we started off with young kids of school age, the full range, anybody obviously who wanted to get involved and they all started off, ooh I can't draw, I can't do this, my [12.35] aren't important, and we

took them right through the project and we took them to see it being manufactured and then a big event of celebration where these gates were opened, and they were so happy to have been involved in it and the kids were so pleased with their artwork, it's a very rewarding experience all round because you've come up with something that's very special to them and it's not just the ownership and you know [13.03] and all the rest of it, it's something that's real to those people, and special, and it's the same sort of thing that you're getting [13.10]

**A** *Yes, yeah, yeah. Yes. I worked with Chrysalis Arts and did a way marker on the canal with them, a half way marker, I think it's Rishton and Oswaldtwistle, somewhere around there, and that was, yeah, a similar approach the way that we were, you know, attracting schools where we gathered images that we use to make the...*

**K** The name is familiar yes. Right. I must have seen it on...

**A** *Right. Yeah. So, yeah, they use that [13.41] approach quite a lot don't they and that's the sort of thing they do really, a lot of this sort of metalwork. Yeah, that's interesting.*

**K** What age were the Asian ladies that you worked with?

**A** *They'd be probably, it's hard to say isn't it really? 50s perhaps.*

**K** Not young.

**A** *They didn't have young families, in contrast to Sure Start really who all had young families and, yeah it was, it was quite amazing really to sort of see the contrast because the parents of these young children think it was so special to have this two hours that was child-free time and there wasn't much chat amongst, they came up with the idea of making books because we'd done some paper making in the first six weeks and they'd actually commissioned a book because we didn't have time for them to make a book using the paper that they'd made from tearing up envelopes and adding things from their garden and bits and pieces that they'd brought in, and I made a book and they sort of said what they wanted to include in it and how they wanted it painting...*

**K** I was going to ask you that, I wasn't sure, because from the images I couldn't see, I couldn't tell whether they were photographs or print outs or what it was.

**A** *Right. Yes, they'd been doing another project about making book bags for children that had a story book in and then there would be sort of toys associated with that story in the bag, so as they were telling the story to their children they could look at the toys or whatever, it would just be sort of something that they could include. So I sort of used that idea in a sense and we made a book about the group and they put articles that were sort of symbolised them as young mothers really in the bag, and ...*

**K** So very special to them.

**A** *Yes, yes. I mean on the evaluation they were really disappointed that they couldn't make a book themselves, so that idea came from them and we just went with that right from the beginning and I had sort of realised that we'd probably need to leave one aside for each to dry or whatever, at some point they'd be best to have two going on at the same time and once they got the idea that they were going with it was silence in the room apart from whatever they were doing, they were really focused on it, they were really pleased to see them in the glass cases...*

**K** So where are they now, what's happened?

**A** *They've all got them; they asked me when do we get them back? They were quite adamant, so they had become precious items that they wanted to keep. So I had them for a while and I took them back last summer and sort of kept contact [16.40] it was good keeping in touch as well. You know, I'll just, I've had to let that go really in*

***a sense which has been a shame in some ways because it would have been nice to sort of carry something on, but maybe at the end...***

K Well it's a starting point and I know that if they've all had a good experience of it, then there's nothing to stop them starting off something themselves is there?

A ***Sure Start have mentioned that they're trying to bring in IT and other projects that they do, which is quite good. I feel as though I've helped sort of bring that along really because there's so many, I mean part of Sure Start's remit I think is sort of helping people gain skills to move on and do different work or whatever in the future and a lot of the, maybe one had used a computer before, but the others had never really touched a computer before, and it was good to see them you know suddenly come up with ideas and start thinking about what they could do and how they could use them. So yeah it was a very intense couple of hours really fitting everything in, but yeah, they seemed to enjoy it. Both groups were quite small and I suppose the activities were sort of tailor-made for them, I was working with, so it worked okay you know...***

K Well yes you've got to be organised haven't they?

A Yes.

K [18.21]

A ***Well, this was as much to keep me focused as anything else, but I mean it's just interesting to have the opportunity you know, with your experience of commissioning public art in the landscape, I suppose it is more isn't it? And just to get your reflection on another sort of public art. I mean it does come under the umbrella of public art and I talked a little bit about public art with James yesterday saying what a broad term it's become now, and it sometimes very difficult for people to get any inkling of what is public art, you know...***

K Well [19.05] in the landscapes the fabric of everything that we do is potential public art opportunity and I've seen examples elsewhere where it's been very successfully done, at no real extra cost, instead of pulling things off the peg as a standard, getting artwork [19.28] makes them unique, special to that place and just [19.34], but then there's the other extreme is thing like lighting schemes and statues and landmark pieces that are, they're probably public art aren't they, and they all have a role to play in stimulating peoples' images of their lives.

A ***Yes, I suppose, I mean artists can be sort of, act as bridges can't they between designers and planners and the community and help sort of the community feel as though they've had some say or some inclusion into [20.08].***

K It's a very time consuming process, properly engaging people, that's something that we struggle with because we have such limited time to be meeting our deadlines and delivering that we quite often are not able to dedicate sufficient time to doing that. So I think it's teamwork really is the important thing that you know artists and designers and others in the environmental field working together.

A Yes.

K As long as everybody respects one another's, their abilities and areas of expertise, I think it can work very well.

A ***Yeah. Because what was quite interesting for me is sort of these women sort of producing these bags became quite empowered really and it was their idea that we went round the shops and tried to get some sponsorship for them, which I thought was a good thing for them to do. And we went round as a group and it was fun, you know, going round as a group and it was great for me because I can't speak Gujarati or Urdu, and you know, I mean a lot of, it didn't really matter in some ways, but I***

**guess the shopkeepers felt well perhaps these women do use my shops anyway, you know, I have been in to use ...**

K [21.22]

**A We laughed about that yes the other week because she'd been in on her own had one of the women, to one of the shops and she said, he looked at me and thought oh what's she going to come and ask for this time. But yes it was a, it was a very sort of empowering thing to do. I think they weren't used to doing things as a group of women, they weren't used to going shopping as a group of women or going in shops together as a group, they were used to doing it on their own and I think they really enjoyed it. I don't know whether it's continued, but they really enjoyed going as a group and it was a good social thing to do. I mean I don't know whether you've any comments or questions to ask about the approach that I have, this sort of open ended sort of approach and would it be something that would interest you, or is it sort of something that may interest you now that you've had a chance to look at something that's been done and you can see the sort of narrative of it.**

K It is a good approach to go in, it's like going in with a clean canvas isn't it, instead of going in with sort of preconceived ideas about what's appropriate. I think the only concern I have about the approach is the timescale, is that the problem that there is with all public art is that you know as local authorities we have financial years and we have budgets that we've got to spend within a certain period, it is so constraining and it sort of limits imagination got to get things done, and that's the only thing that would concern me is perhaps the length of time it takes, but it depends very much on how it's programmed in.

**A Yeah, I mean I knew that I had 12 weeks to manage it and I had to manage it to fit into those 12 weeks, so it was a case of, yeah, even though there was perhaps only that once a week face to face contact each week for that 12 weeks, there was a lot of work went on sort of outside, trying to get a place to make the bags and [23.29] and I did all the sort of legwork if you will regarding all that and the preparation and the gathering of things. It, yeah, it, it was quite an interesting process for me to work through and I reflected on why I felt so tired about it. I realised that well yes because I'm constantly reflecting on it, it never left me and I was constantly thinking about it, reflecting on it and deciding from one week to the next how it was going to go, which is probably quite a difficult way of working in some ways, but I think very rewarding in that, you know, they were able, I was able to sort of draw out from them what was interesting to them, rather than me coming in with an idea and...**

K So at the end of the process did you feel as though you'd sort of completed what you'd set out to do, or was it just sort of a start of potentially a bigger...

**A No, I thought I'd completed it, I mean I felt they were, you know, there was, we could have developed even more and even more, we could have gone onto, once we got the idea of it, after doing that I could have gone onto something more ambitious probably, that was the development that could have taken place, but we didn't, we had to sort of say no, this is done, and I'd sort of spoken to Kim and James had the idea of making an exhibition out of what we'd done together, so there was all that to organise as well, and as you say, people have deadlines and I got this two week slot at the beginning of March, so it had to be finished and the DVD projection had to have all been edited and sorted for them, so there were sort of cut off times and things had to be finished by that particular date.**

K It just occurred to me actually, it hadn't before, but have you come across the Parish Maps? It's a similar sort of approach...

**A Yes it is.**

K Years ago I represented the council on the Lancashire Rural Action group and there were

[25.40]

**A** *That's right, yeah.*

**K** And there were quite a few projects got going [similar] to that in Lancashire, and they were another thing that this is our space, this is our, and that was sort of mapped in lots of different ways, and I've got some examples in here [25.58] the ones that came out of the process.

**A** *Yes. I looked at the books that have come out through the work they did right at the beginning, sort of trying to sort of contextualise my work within what was going on and around really and, I mean there have been pockets of it, but it's not something that I think is widely distributed and there was Loraine Leeson and Peter Dunn who worked in the docklands area of London and they lived there, so they knew the communities very well and it was the, I think it was when the PLC was up and running and it was quite a political approach that they had for sort of empowering the people to give their say about what was happening in the Docklands at the time and I think they sort of did an armada of the Thames, they did billboards and things like that. But empowering people to sort of be able to express their opinion in a public place really.*

**K** [1.46] they're all very valuable approaches aren't they?

**A** *Yes. Well in sort of modern life, people don't always get an opportunity to do that, do they? Maybe sort of more reserved people, or even people from a different cultural background perhaps haven't as much confidence about you know voicing or...*

**K** But I think as what you were saying before about the group approach, as a group you have more confidence to have a go at things as an individual [2.20] seen a few of these sort of Planning for [Real] exercises as well, I don't know if you've come across that?

**A** *No.*

**K** It's a mapping sort of approach, but it's just allowing people to, they give them a big sheet with the area that's being focused on and the idea is to get, generate ideas about sort of [2.43] the future of the spaces, it can be done by different sort of blocks and things that the people create, or just writing on a big sheet or whatever. But they did it at [Callum] one of the projects on [2.56] and it was, that was actually done on the ground, it was sort of [3.02] to just sort of suggest what could happen [3.04]

**A** *Yeah, it's a way of including as many people as you can and them feeling as though they're...*

**K** Yes, it very much depends on the people coming forward...

**A** *Yes it does doesn't it...*

**K** [3.15] take part in that. Consultation has to be meaningful doesn't it?

**A** *Yes, and that's another thing isn't it? Trying to get people out of their homes as well. It's not an easy thing.*

**K** You're sort of going into their community.

**A** *I went to them, yes, I think that was very helpful. We've sort of talked about that since and they were saying there would have been no way they would have come out to a centre to say well there's something happening at this arts centre or whatever or, they may feel different now they've had an experience of it and they may feel as though they could do that, but in the beginning I think if they were asked to go to a place they weren't sure of, that would have been quite a big step for them to do...*

**K** It is for anybody.

- A ***It is, yes it is. And it was a big step for people to come into the Harris, it's quite an imposing building.***
- K That's right.
- A ***Yeah, but it has its...***
- K That's where all those [arty] people come from [4.24]
- A ***Yeah, that's right, and it worked very well. Yes, so there are similarities, I mean I've put here are, are there any similarities and differences in the way each of us works and I guess there are differences, but there are similarities.***
- K I think there are similarities, yes, but it's something that I've always, it's close to my heart that the community are well provided for, public servants, that you should be providing things that people are wanting, but not everybody does have that approach in local government and yeah there is a similarity because I believe that.
- A ***Yeah. I mean just to ask you, it's interesting for me sort of thinking of the work I've done, and it's, although, maybe there are teams of artists that have worked in this way, but it seems to me quite a lot of women working this way and I don't know whether it's because women are more aware of community or more interested in community, I'm not quite sure, I don't know whether you've come across anything like that?***
- K Not recently, but I think you're right, I think there are a lot more people who work in that way.
- A ***Yeah.***
- K I wouldn't say, it's not exclusive, but I mean...
- A ***No, I don't think it is...***
- K [5.44]
- A ***Yes, that's right...***
- K ... there's other artists around who [5.49] have you met [Fern]?
- A ***I think I have yes. I think he was at, I think he was, or people have mentioned his name to me. I don't know whether he was at, I went to a community day at Deepdale school and there were representatives there from arts in the park and I think he ...***
- K [6.10] he's done a lot over the [6.15] and that's his way of engaging with people.
- A ***Yes, that's quite a, it's a way that's been used isn't it, it's a good way of including peoples' ideas.***
- K So there are [6.28]
- A ***Yeah, yeah, sure. Yes, I'm sure there are. It...***
- K [6.34]
- A ***Yes, that's right, yeah. I worked with Kate more than Rick, I think he must have been doing something else at the time and Kate was sort of in, but they, I mean, there was another artist from Leeds called Van, I can't remember his last name, but he was working on it as well, so yeah, his approach, although he was, I think I was brought in again for my sort of people skills and he'd done more of the design of the actual structure of the metalwork, where I'd sort of, you know, gathered the images from the children and we each sort of did panels using the images that we'd gathered. But he'd sort of done all the planning for the, I don't know what his expertise was, you know, the underground sort of foundations that needed to be [7.37], he'd done all that.***

- K Well that's right and there's a lot of work goes into...
- A **Yes.**
- K ... some of these structures and you've got to have the right sort of expertise for them to be acceptable, both sort of structurally sound, but also there's lots of health and safety [7.52].
- A **Yes, that's right, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a side of public art isn't it, that's, you know, when you're not working out there in the public arena, there's a lot of red tape that needs to be...**
- K There is, I mean one of the ones that we keep coming across which never ceases to amaze me, is that quite often the public artwork that we'd done is seen as play equipment, and it's not designed as play equipment, might be a surround to a play area, but it isn't play equipment, but people seem to expect that it should be, the health and safety issues that have gone into play areas, should also have gone in, there's things like finger traps and the like, which obviously nobody would be wanting to create something that's going to injure anybody, [but there's a lot of people that, well the council think probably especially]...
- A **Used to remember that coming in to the work we did at [8.42] because their open metalwork is very much, could be for foot traps because, looking at them they are very inviting to climb aren't they? There are spaces in them...**
- K [8.55] having to put some perforated metal sheet behind so that you could see through it, from a distance you could still get the same effect, but it spoiled it to an extent because from, well the one [9.09] inside you're basically seeing the silver of the metal, rather than the [9.14] see through it from both sides.
- A **Mmm. Yes, yes.**
- K How did we get onto that?
- A **Yes, it's surprising how things crop up in conversation isn't it? Yeah. I mean, or whether it's worth just mentioning in my approach, I've come across a question, but is it art? Lots of people have asked me that because we made food together and you know, and well is that art, and that's been a big question and again arts is such a broad thing, I think there are artists that I think, and I think that I'm one of them, there is art in the way we sort of live everyday...**
- K Everything you do, about the way you dress...
- A **And the rituals or whatever you know of just every day ordinariness that we accept because we do it everyday that perhaps isn't interesting to anybody else, but if there are differences it is quite interesting to hear what other people do. And that was one of the, you know, one of the things that cropped up with the other women, is this art? And we talked about it, and it sparked conversation and that was good, you know, it was good that they felt they had the confidence to ask that question because I think, I don't know, perhaps with some of the more avant garde stuff that's around, people don't want to make fools of themselves do they and say well is it art and what's it mean and what's it all about...**
- K Well to be honest some of the images that you had of the food being prepared and the food cooking, those are pieces of artwork in themselves, as images aren't they? But it was also a means I guess of getting people involved and expressing what was special to them and they moved onto a different type of art [11.01] in the process.
- A **Yes, yes, that's right. So that opened up a new can of beans for them really and we've sort of talked at the end of it, and their own view of art's shifted through being involved in it. That when I came at the beginning and said, maybe it was a mistake to say I'm coming to work, I'm an artist and I'm coming to work with you because as soon as I said I'm an artist it was like, well what, are you a painter, or, you know and**

*that sort of thing, but it was good that they were able to feel comfortable enough to talk about it and at the beginning they might have, somebody said, they might have said well art is painting and sculpture and drawing and, but now she's sort of been involved in this, she's, well no cooking is art and...*

K Cooking is an art in itself isn't it?

A **Yes, it is.**

K The way it's presented, it may be sort of routine to the Asian women to be presenting their food in a certain but it can be very different to the way we cook our food and I think it is very interesting, the way you sort of combined the two [12.07]

A **That's right, yeah. Like the colours and the smells and...**

K Yes, [12.12] I was waiting for the smells to come out of the screen.

A **Yeah, it was interesting to just sort of open that up between us. I was talking yesterday with James about, you know, we touched on it today about what's happening in Preston and it's quite an exciting time. I've sort of spoken to Helen Worsley and Derek White and wondering where all this might lead, and I don't know whether there will be, I'm hoping there will be openings in Preston for work like this to sort of do more of it, but I've had initial ideas wondering whether there may be possibilities of the University doing a sort of elective in public art for the BA students and whether sort of my methodology could be used as sort of like a mentoring programme to them perhaps come into Preston and work with communities and have the opportunity to you know, for those that are interested, of working with people, but with an artist who has a bit more experience in...**

K [13.15] sculpture department, there was a project in Deepdale, and I think it was a young student, Katherine Marshall, the reason I remember that was my maiden name, so [13.30]

A **Marshall...**

K If it wasn't that it was very similar to that. She did this project, it was a letterbox thing that ended up at the, I think head of sculpture, completed the work because she didn't finish it off.

A **I do remember, yes...**

K That was in the centre at Castleton Road.

A **Yeah, I do remember. Was it a [13.51]**

K Yes.

A **I do remember it. She lived [13.54]**

K Yes I think she did do. Yes.

A **Yeah, so it was...**

K [13.56]

A **She graduated I think the year before me.**

K So there are certainly already some [14.07]

A **Yes there is, yes. Yeah. I know, you know, I know Val Murray's run electives where, well there's been opportunities to work in Blackpool and all over the place really, I think she's always looking for new venues and new ways and you know a thing about perhaps thinking about graduate retention and you know if sort of artists got the opportunity to work with people then it might just establish something for when they finished University.**

- K Well there is a lot of support isn't there, you've met Creative Industries [14.43] a lot more emphasis is now on retention.
- A **Yes, there is. So whether there will be opportunities, that's what I'm sort of looking for, something that could maybe be developed in a more sustainable way really. Yes, I've spoken to Jenny Rutter, their sort of take on regeneration, because they're economic, tends to be more buildings orientated, and although she sees the value of working with people, that's not a big emphasis I don't think for her in how she sees her work going, so although they're wanting to develop Church Street, they didn't seem all that interested in sort of engaging the people who lived around Church Street.,**
- K There's been a project, again it's planning, but it's a design effort that's been [15.41] on it in Friargate, which is, there's quite a lot of press coverage, it's creating metal trees [15.50] various constraints, we couldn't include trees, and that's been attempting, I don't know how successful it's been, but it's certainly been attempting to engage the local shopkeepers in the overall process. So I mean things are changing and happening, in a lot of different ways, and [16.10] in the process of, well we've drafted an urban landscape regeneration strategy and that's largely looking at sort of the landscape fabric and the different categories of urban spaces that we have, I see public art as a [principle] part of that process.
- A **And all the maps downstairs are they about that, are they something to do with that, or are they sort of, there might be some Preston that are in the foyer downstairs, there are sort of areas that are coloured for different land use...**
- K Well that's local planning [16.41]. That actually is currently being reviewed and they're bringing in what's called a local development framework, which is an opportunity to be revisiting a lot of issues and [16.54]
- A **Right, right.**
- K And there is actually, there is a section on public art already in the local plan and it doesn't [17.03] down to the sort of detail [17.06]
- A **No, no, no.**
- K ... [17.08] principle of the thing and the approach.
- A **The guy who's been working in Friargate, was it his idea to sort of, the way he approached it to sort of make trees and...**
- K I think it came out of the fact that we just weren't able to accommodate them, it's largely to do with CCTV and needing to keep things open in [17.31] the street. And I think they always intended to have some public artwork of some description, but because we couldn't get real trees, the idea came up of having metal trees and we had a competition and have had a number of artists...
- A **So they're going to be permanent?**
- K Yes, the trees, yes, they've got, I don't know which designer's, I don't know exactly [17.53] I know they've had a lot of public consultation, but I don't know whether they've actually selected the one that's going [to do it], and Neil's now taking on other projects that [18.04]
- A **Yeah, right, good. The last thing was the CD-ROM that I've sort of, it's quite difficult really to give people a holistic view of this sort of work really, all the networks that have built up around it, so as part of my thesis with it being a practice based research, I'm producing a CD-ROM that will be an interactive CD-ROM, that will sort of tell the story of the work in pictures and sound and video and hopefully be a more user friendly thing than, you know, a written thesis, but they will sort of live alongside each other, so the people may want to read the thesis and look at the images and interact with the CD-ROM at the same time, so it was just, you know,**

**would something like that be of interest to you?**

K Yes I'd be interested to have a look [19.03]

**A Yeah, yeah, yeah, and it will be, a sort of layered approach so that people can perhaps come at it and pick out bits that interest them in the beginning and then see whichever journey, wherever they want to go and visit and find out bits...**

K Certainly I'll circulate that your CD within the team for information [19.24], as an approach I'm sure they'll be interested to receive that.

**A Yes. You mean the one I gave you?**

K Yes. Or unless you're wanting that back are you?

**A No, no, I'm not, I mean it's just a taster, but if it's useful for people to have a look at...**

K [19.35] it's not [19.39] approach, but it's a similar approach, the sort, attitude I think that we've had on projects.

**A Right, good, okay.**

K But as drawing up, the thing I saw of particular value was sort of drawing out the cultural distinctiveness, we try, wherever we can to sort of celebrate the distinctiveness of place in a sense, you know sense of the place, but you can sometimes get that by different routes, I think what you were doing was very good at making contact and drawing the ideas out.

**A Yes. The Deepdale group was mixed cultures, the group, because it's, well the Pukar group was as well, there was a majority of Asian people, but there was a woman who'd come to Preston after living in Malta for many years, and so it was, just it was an interesting mix really. Yeah. Okay, well thanks for that, it's been useful and interesting.**

K It's been interesting. So when are you hoping to...

**A I'm hoping to submit my thesis by September. I've still quite a lot of work to do...**

**Keith Launchbury, European Procurement Officer employed by Preston City Council**

Keith is involved in the economic development of Preston, a position he has held for many years. He has a particular interest in the South Church Street district of Preston which is part of the Tithebarn Masterplan Regeneration scheme for Preston.

**Jenny Rutter, Creative Industries Officer employed by Preston City Council**

Jenny came to Preston recently from Manchester to work for the city council. She is very enthusiastic about her role and works with Keith in pursuing projects which stimulate the economic regeneration of Preston.

The interview I had set up was with both Keith and Jenny and took place in an office at the University. The meeting was lengthy and difficult to manage as discussion went off at tangents and I found it difficult to pull it back on track. I was looking for answers concerning the role of the community or residents involved in areas undergoing regeneration. This stimulated some interesting discussion about South Church Street in Preston. (The Pukar Centre is very close to South Church Street) and the area is viewed largely by Keith and Jenny as an industrial one with few dwellings. The Tithebarn Masterplan involves the demolition of much of the property and gentrification of the area involving a large shopping mall, offices and pedestrianised routes into town.

Jenny mentions the difficulty of public consultation and the hindering or scrapping of large 'flag ship' projects because of the lack of public support, citing Liverpool and the ambitious riverside scheme planned for 2008 and the 'City of Culture Award'.

INTERVIEW WITH KEITH LAUNCHBURY JENNY RUTTER AND ANITA BURROWS

K – Keith Launchbury J – Jenny Rutter A – Anita Burrows

- A I mean that's interesting in the way that that progress, talking about going to the communities and getting information from grass roots, which is what I sort of mentioned...
- K This is a sort of GCE 'O' Level question, here's the proposition, explore and discuss that sort of thing, that's what I was thinking of.
- J So we've got the agenda.
- K So the disk puzzled me really.
- A The disk puzzled you, did it? Right. In what sense? What puzzled you, what was...
- K Well the conclusion we came to this morning was that there would have been a community artist in the room, but not visible through your photography, so it was a workshop basically in both instances, but you're not focusing on the [1.20] workshop, you don't see that.
- A No. That was part of it really, the focus wasn't on [me] at all; the focus was on the activity and the process of working together. I mean in the exhibition there was a booklet that sort of described a little bit more in the text about what I'd done with them, and there were articles in display cabinets around the side of the Rotunda area, but this in a sense was a sort of [1.49] in picture format of the work that I'd done in both groups and [1.53] both groups were very different sorts of groups, at the same time it flicks from one to the other because that's what happened in the real sort of journey of things. I was working one day in one group and another day in the other group, so in a sense that's probably makes it a bit more difficult until we get the gist, I think there are dates on there, but it needs [2.18]
- K When I started work with [2.25] I had to find [summer holidays] and these were two, that's [Paul and Des], that's Paul O'Hara and Des Butler, and Des Butler is [Head Room up at the County Arms], and this photograph was taken in [MRK]. But Paul O'Hara was studying, he got a first class honours degree here in Media Studies and then he was studying [2.53] University to be a teacher and while we were doing this [5 15] stuff, which comes into hot water at times... [3.00 to 9.00 missed out]... conversion work is ongoing, but it's an encouraging picture.
- A Yes, I spoke at length with Jendy Bullman who's been working [9.09] since [9.10] and she's done some very creative projects in Deepdale with different groups.
- J There's a lot of really good work going on I think in Preston at the moment, really starting to use arts and creativity as a tool that's a really positive thing, and a lot of different groups are getting involved in different ways and it's not done in a kind of tokenistic fashion I don't think, it seems to have been carried out quite sensitively, interesting and carefully thought out projects, not just a lot of oh let's do a graffiti project with some kids on a subway, that happens a lot in a lot of places and it's not that those things are bad things, it's bad if it's not thought through and done in the right way, and not looked at carefully enough in terms of community involvement in projects, I think. So I've certainly been very impressed with some of the projects I've seen going on.
- A Yes. The thing that sort of came out, which I mentioned is they were often short-term and this sort of work that I sort of set up with these two community groups, it's slow because I guess it's about changing thought patterns...
- K Artists [want] to be mobile though. I mean the funding might not be short-term, the funding [10.27] applying for might be [among] the lottery and funding [stream].
- A Not all artists [10.38]. Some artists, you know, artists that have worked in this sort of way in America that have done projects and they've taken them 15 years and they're still working on the same project with the same people.

- K [10.50] going on for two years I think, [in] the school. This went a long way, nearly 18 months, I think. We started with the [brother] stuff, then there was working with [a] school, where I happened to know the arts officer there, because she was a member of the Preston Photographic Society and I was President of that at the time.
- A Yes, it's often difficult for [11.14] to understand and, often...
- K It's a wake up call.
- A It is.
- K [11.19] everybody in Preston [11.22]
- A It's often very controversial in raising people's, well why should we give money to somebody to do that, and it creates...
- K It's antagonistic [11.32]
- J I think that's important though, I think you have to use art in that way as well, as well as doing the groundwork where you're working with communities; you can't allow art to purely become a community development tool. It can't be allowed to sit, you know, community, I think community arts and how you engage with communities is extremely important and it's sensitive and it's difficult and it's a very important area of practice and work, but arts practice has to exist outside of that doesn't it, otherwise it just can't...
- A That's what is perhaps so difficult for lots of people its because its so broad, its become broader and broader all the time.
- J Exactly, and more people accept more I think these days as well. To a certain extent, you know. I think if you think now how many people go into a shop and buy an abstract painting, that they wouldn't, they start to accept that as art that, thanks to Ikea and places like that, they do that. I think people start to accept things about art that they didn't accept, but installation is now, installation in these more difficult kinds of subjects and where things aren't quite so aesthetically pleasing and easy to engage with. That's what people are now [12.43], whereas 40 years ago they reacted against abstract art, you know and it's just about pushing things forward isn't it, and community arts has to go with that, and I think sort of your work and the work of a lot of other people that have been doing some of these projects is trying to do that, its trying to use contemporary art and contemporary themes and contemporary issues, which is what I find so exciting about the way that you do and other people that it's pandering to perhaps their lack of knowledge about art, it's not saying we're going to, we're not going to do some finger painting with you today, there's a lot of [13.20] trying to engage with themes and produce pieces that are actually quite challenging and interesting in their own right, and just because they come from a community perspective, doesn't mean that they can't be good art as well.
- A And have information that says...
- J Exactly.
- A ... those communities, I mean that's part of it, you know, [was] the information that's perhaps, I mean I don't know, but maybe it's not that easy to see on a DVD like that there is information about community embedded within what we did. [13.52] information [13.53] other organisations that may be looking to find out information about communities that's difficult to get in the normal sort of tick boxes, where they go, what they feel about their community, what the issues are about [14.08] lives.
- K One thing about projects and [14.09] [history town] I think that probably says what it intends to do, intends to be. This article here is about public art in large regeneration projects. It mentions the Bullring in Birmingham [14.28] 2 ½ million pounds of that development was set aside for public funds associated with the scheme.
- A [14.36] involved in that.

K That's [public]...

A [14.44] public aren't they?

K Is that [14.44]?

J Is it [14.47]

K [14.48] [central government].

J Yeah.

K Lottery funding...

J Oh, no, that's West Brom, the public, that was on telly last night, did you see it?

A No I didn't.

J I was going to say because [14.58] that night, did you see it? It was on the culture show last night.

A [15.02]

J Yeah, really good programme actually.

A Yeah, it's on twice isn't it as well?

J It is? That's good. I only watched half of it because then I was watching the Art Show thing on Channel 5 as well.

K [15.11]

J Well that's on Channel five, yeah, so I watched that one, but I watched the first half of the Culture Show, and they were talking this is a new great big arts, not centre really, it's not an arts centre in the sense that it's not about just show, it's not about showing work from other people, it's about the community, it's a community arts centre, and it's a forty million pound development.

K It's a community trust isn't it?

J Yeah, it's a community trust that was set up by this woman and she was on the programme, and she just, to be honest Keith, it made me go oh my God...

K It's taken her 20 years...

J 20 years to get there, yeah. 20 years, and she's ...

A Can you remember her name?

J Oh I can't now.

K I've got some articles of her.

J Yeah.

K Because I mentioned it when we were researching art centres at one time.

J Yeah.

K For the [16.00] master plan.

J I mean they've used, it is going to be an immensely iconic building.

K [16.07]

J Yeah.

K Again this is trying to sort of almost shock people really where you take a 50 acre area of Preston and you do a master plan, which includes, there's several shocking elements to this, one is that the University established a post-graduate centre for design on the other

side of town [16.39] campus, so that is here, and here we've got the arts centre, and here's a four star conferencing hotel, which is a post-graduate village.

A Right.

J I think we talked about this a bit last night.

A Yeah, touched on it didn't we?

J I tried to describe it without visually having anything to show you.

K This public art here. So that's over 60 million pounds. Now, as soon as our chief planner saw that, he said what a great place to put Preston's new bus station, so...

J I think we touched on that as well.

K We're displaced to the East and obviously we can't now even hope to do this. But we're not giving up.

J Not in the same way, I mean...

K Again, as the guerrilla tactics come in, so you, you try to do it in a smaller way. And so Jenny's creative team designed some [17.32] pad. Really what we can do, but [17.39] really was the idea, some 30 million pounds more.

A You know Charles [Quick's] lectures series speaking of art ; did you manage to get to them?

J Not on Wednesday because I have [17.52] on Wednesday so I couldn't go to that.

A That was interesting because they were talking about the [17.55] [developments] and you know there's a lot of discussion now about an actual [turn] of public art because it brings baggage with it that people seemed, it's object based, it's this or it's that, and it sort of, you've got to get rid of all that sort of baggage to begin talking about what it can be and the guy that it came from, what's it called, the organisation that's working with [18.23] partnerships, is it Art, P Arts, is it Public Arts, P Arts, something like that.

J Oh, I don't know.

A He was talking, they're doing a lot of things on development on their disused coalfields up and down and he was giving examples of you know big developments like this sort of thing and the way that artists have been used in allsorts of different areas, but we didn't really get chance to ask him any questions because one of the questions I would have like to have known was whether he, they were [18.58] development but are they still be used to sort of, he did touch on it in various instances...

K This is symbolic, this piece of public art and originally it's from a conversation I had with an acquaintance of mine, Mike [Territt], who with his ex-teacher partner, Sue, they run a company called [Camper] and [19.19] Princess Youth Business Trust and I advised them on their business start-up, this was about 4 years ago. So, I was chatting to Mike [Territt], and I eventually, I don't know how he managed this, but I said, I gave him a challenge I think about dreaming a scenario into South Church Street and that's before even emerging sort of South Street study was even contemplated, and I said well you imagine something in South Church Street, what would you like, what would draw you into South Church Street. So he [e-mailed me to home] half a page, I think I gave it [20.02] half a page of how he imagined a square to be with a beautiful fountain, trees and music playing and people lying around and so I sent that, and we did have the [20.17] work, contractor to a consultancy and I sent them Mike's half page and I said incorporate this dream, so that became the square, his other bits thought, they came from an architect who was professional at generating this kind of 3 dimensional vision.

A It's about the other people that live in that area [20.39].

J There are actually not very many people, I mean this particular area, there's no houses there is there? There's some up here behind that, but this is all industrial, so it doesn't

actually particularly, it doesn't displace anybody in terms of housing really I think.

A No, but people will pass through.

J People will pass through it, so you've got, I mean I think you've got up here is all the tower blocks in Avenham, so they would pass through this on their way into town, so it would actually significantly improve the environment for them I think.

K The idea is to bring the community in. So what we, in master planning the important thing for us to do was to talk to all 180 property owners, people who actually owned a physical piece of South Church Street, what do you see the future of your building being? We know that one of our, a head of our own design team, Allan [Wellington], had done his own fantasy drawing, he loves drawing, of South Church Street area a few years ago when [Tithebarn] was first discussed and he drew 1000 houses into this area, 1000 homes, well we know you can't have 1000 homes because there's a planning moratorium at the moment on new housing concerns. But if, I think you can get around the moratorium if you have an adaptive views or [ideas] to housing. So I'm not sure whether a post-graduate village which was part of the scheme would actually become the subject of a moratorium.

J [22.28] work [space] is a way around it, I'm presuming, that there's a business community as well as a home, which would be nice, and well it's something to think about anyway as a potential to engage more artists in the area.

K There are two major things, there's going to be a new partnership called Creative Lancashire, which is [ERDF] funded, but there's a longer established organisation [22.57] Network, which was designed as a sort of a bi-monthly meeting of [23.06] arts officers and that's going to have two themes running in the future, one is rural [creativity] in more areas and the other one is inner city living with work space. Because these are two subjects which are outside of the scope of Creative Lancashire because that's the idea of [subject] of two and that's pertaining to the deprived wards throughout the Western half of Lancashire. So if Lancashire Creative [23.40] report into the structure of Creative Lancashire it can take issues which are outside the geographic funding scoping of the very urban deprived ward focus [28.58] funding this operation for North and West part of our action plan. This very definitely is located within the deprived part of Preston; all the way down [24.18] which is also [24.21] obviously adjust to the south [24.28]. I asked the council could I re-mark it as [24.33] and they said no [24.34] go and find your [24.41] somewhere else Keith.

A Right.

K So this is what we're doing.

A Right.

J When we spoke last time you were quite concerned about the community involvement [24.55] concerned with how communities were being engaged with the development of it.

K So we had two open events [25.02]. We were a little bit constrained because we had now, there was no formalisation of this, it wasn't part of the local development framework, [25.13] framework, so it was a non-statutory process this master planning. Sometimes they can be within a statutory framework.

A Right.

K And there were also the ongoing negotiations and discussions with [25.29], so we had to be a bit, a little bit sensitive to the environment we were professionally working in. So the best thing seemed to be to have two [25.44] consultations in [25.46] where the plans and ideas that were generating from the grass roots shall we say, the [25.53] buildings and the consultants who were obviously [walking] from [25.57] gathering and spreading ideas and trying to build consensus because before you generate three dimensional drawings, people have to kind of own the idea at least a little bit in their minds, so that it's not a total shock when they see the drawings.

- A And did you get many people coming to the [26.19]?
- K Well everyone was asked to register in and to place their comments in the visitor's book for the exhibition. Now, I don't actually have that on record myself, [26.31] will have it.
- J There were a lot of people that came through, but they were they majority of business owners because the footprint that that sits on is more industrial than actual residential, so it...
- A [26.43]
- J No, she, I mean she's concentrated very much on the Tithebarn side of things and not on this side, but she's now continuing or she's doing this now.
- A Is she?
- J That's why Keith has just given me this to give to her because she wants the plans, even though they're not ratified plans and they aren't going to be like this because things have moved on since then and new decisions have been made, she wants these kinds of plans to...
- K [27.09] though is chair of, chair of ... [27.17], I don't think she's chair of [27.16], she's chair of the [27.20] Association, just immediately south and she was the project officer for the study that we did, so she had to wear two hats really and keep her community hat fairly bridled because she had to deal with me through [SRB], but to a certain extent you can compromise [27.47] Tracey wanted the residents to be consulted, so we'll happily do that, we can also do presentations through [27.58] Civic Trust [28.00] Civic Trust [28.02] invitation.
- A So a lot of the residents that live round there are not used to going onto public buildings, they're not an easy group to reach. In fact part of what I did with them about taking them out, when they go to [Pukar], they're not used to [going] [28.18] and that was quite a new thing for them because they're not used to [moving around].
- J Yeah.
- A Certainly not as a group.
- J I think it was really interesting, I was watching this thing last night on the public, they had lots of people on the streets of West Brom and [28.34] shots to camera, what do you think of the public, well they're a waste of bloody money, 40 million quid, they should be spending that cleaning our streets and they should be spending that doing this, and all of these things, and their conservative council are perched in the council chamber saying [28.51], you know and all of this kind of stuff, so it was quite funny really, so I think to a certain extent when you're dealing with consultation and you're dealing with big ideas and big projects, you can't always take everybody's opinions into consideration, because if you did you'd never do anything would you? And you've got to think big sometimes for regeneration I think, and this is my opinion, not having done economic development as long as Keith, but my feeling is big exciting projects attract other money and they attract more people to knowing about what's going on and why they should come in and spend time and if you allow too many people to kind of colour and dilute a vision for a place because you're trying to please everybody you actually end up with not very good regeneration because you're not taking risks and you're not trying to push things, and the impact of something, a development like this on this area will be immense, and it might be quite shocking and quite difficult for some people to take why so much money is being spent when their housing isn't in a very good state and they're, you know, the environment they live in isn't in a great state, but the impact of this will be that there will be ripple effects and they will benefit in the long run because more money will come in and more activity will then be able to be focused on them and they will be able to develop and have more say at the end of the day because there'll be more power behind them because it's more directly in effect. Do you know what I

mean?

- A I do. But maybe there could be sort of steps taken so that they're aware of that. You know and don't feel [30.34] and pushed out right from the beginning, but there are steps taken, you know.
- K The community here, they lie outside of the 50 acres because there's a few [30.46] but generally an industrial area. So immediately south of that we've got a [30.54] building where we, as an authority I think we sold, probably for a pound, 1200 houses to a housing association who formed a community group, so obviously Collinwood have done immense amount of demolition, re-build, revamp, they've reduced the overall number of dwellings to just under 1000 something like that. So you've got an improved area. So St Augustine's is actually inside that Collinwood area as well, so that was their flagship major development, maybe 5 or 6 million pounds worth of development. There was a major bid into the regeneration stream this side of the A6, but of course if they [31.46] Tithebarn, they walk through this area, so they have a stake because they're permeating through.
- A If you do have an arts centre or whatever and it's built near your immediate audience aren't they for whatever is built in there.
- J There's certainly the potential if they choose to want to come in and use the facilities.
- A Yes there are.
- J You're absolutely right, I just, I mean when you look at something like that thing that was on the telly, you can see that if you ask people, a lot of the time they won't want it, until it's there, and then once it's there they don't want to let it go, but if you actually took into account what they said when you first asked them you wouldn't do it, and that's a shame I think and it's like in Liverpool, you know, Liverpool have stopped that big [32.33] project for along the riverside, the great big architectural building because of public opinion, everybody was like you can spend that much money, oh it's terrible, what a horrible building, whereas...
- A A lot of it is building a dialogue with them and getting them, getting people...
- J There was a massive public consultation with that and they did what they could, I think, but so many, I think you get this kind of consensus of opinion of people saying you can't spend that much money on a building and you can't, you know it's, we don't like it. Well, no, you might not like it now, but you're building heritage of the future here, you know, we're trying to make places that are going to be places that people want to spend a lot of time in for a long time and you've got to be risk taking and actually sort of say no you know nobody liked St Paul's Cathedral when they were building St Paul's Cathedral, but that didn't stop them building St Paul's Cathedral, and would we be a better place without St Paul's Cathedral, I don't know, we might have got another very basic church in its place, but...
- K The biggest regeneration vehicle in town is the University. It has [33.40] regeneration more than the south, most of it in the south in [Yeovil] city [33.46] thinking regeneration, if we can bring the biggest regeneration player in the area into this part of Preston, then it can contribute towards driving the engine for large regeneration and what I thought the University, what would appeal to Alan Roth was Alan you've [34.11] career since 1984 and what ambition might be left, maybe to take UCLAN into the European [34.20] of universities in the faculty of design, but you need to do that through R&D and post-graduate development and you probably can't do that on campus because you're not going to have space because [34.34].
- A But you're talking about regeneration again from a buildings perspective and the University...
- J Well business [34.41]
- A Yeah, but people involved in that regeneration as well. Do people get considered within

regeneration as people?

- K Set out in little compartments for who the people are, who are the people, here we're talking about the investors, [35.04] institution, the University is composed of people isn't it, so you've got...
- A Yeah, sure, yeah, and they are regenerating in that sense aren't they, that the people are coming in and doing things and going out and doing other things and...
- K So what we're doing, we're building, I was interested with the new name that Northbridge Housing Association adopted, Places for People and People for Places, no Places for People I think it is, it's that way round. Because even before I started this I went on a [35.33] housing, because they had some membership in the area and I said [35.39] investment plans and we're going to go back to Places for People to see if we can draw them in, so you're trying to build an environment which people will want to live in.
- J And work in.
- A Yes. I'm just thinking of, that's all well and good but if the mindset of the people remains the same, then things...
- K There's nobody there you see.
- A No
- K In terms of what you call people, they're not there, they don't exist.
- A But they'll still be passing through.
- J Yeah. There does need to be, you're right, there does need to be work done with those people in order to allow them to feel associated with the regeneration, so they don't feel that it's being done for other people and for them to understand the spin out benefits of this kind of development because it's not generally targeting them, it is a kind of, it's a benefit. You can walk through it, but you're not likely to end up living in it frankly because probably the cost of the thing is going to be too high.
- K We say they're still passing through, they're passing through in very limited ways because they can only go north south and this master plan was to generate an east west corridor and also the popular dubbing of Church Street is Psycho Alley. There was an article in the, it made the front page, it was a about a fortnight ago in the Lancashire Evening Post and [37.08] which plotted the pubs and nightspots of Preston and low and behold there were all these red dots, greatest cluster of red dots was Church Street and it was a place where people wouldn't want to go unless you're part of that pubbing, nightclubbing fraternity. So, we're talking about a place which is in danger of becoming further exclusive.
- A [At night]
- J [37.36]
- A Yeah, at night, they probably go....
- K Excluding, exclusive and excluding.
- A Probably walk through during the day.
- J They would, but not, I think, I think the people who have to will, but the people who don't have to will go a different way, and that's not good for the people who have to, I don't think.
- A No, sure.
- J You know, just doing this work with these students [37.58] because where we're planning on putting our shop is on this road, on Church Street, and we did focus groups with [38.06] and allsorts of people and they were all saying oh it's dangerous down there, you don't want to be down there, I wouldn't walk down there. Yeah, maybe in the night time, but also I wouldn't park my car in that area, I wouldn't, so you know what I mean, there's a perceived

level of danger down there, now whether that's true or not, I'm not sure that it is because I think it's probably one of the most looked at areas in terms of the police...

- K It's the first reaction to the location of the shop, that's a lousy place there's no [footfall].
- J Yeah, exactly. Whereas actually they did some footfall studies and I just got, they were very limited, but you know you're talking like within a half an hour period 100 odd people walking past, you know, that's not insignificant really is it? I mean it's not massive, and who those people are, they didn't stop and ask them, this was just a tick box.
- K They didn't sort of bag them up into women with children...
- J Well they did in terms of a market research for shops, they did you know women, men and age groups and whether they looked like they were going to work, or whether they looked like they were in a social kind of [39.12]. So they did do that, but it was a pretty even spread over all. Mostly social use, so not many people, but then again I think they're assuming that people who go to work wear a suit, you know, I think that's perhaps their little, them being students and naïve a little bit, I don't know, it's just interesting because they were all saying everyone [39.31] you know, and I would like to see the crime statistics myself for along there and actually see whether it's actually any worse than Friargate or any worse than anywhere else late at night particularly because I'm not sure that it is.
- A [39.45] down there isn't there?
- J Yeah.
- A That's an odd place isn't I suppose for [39.51]
- J Cheap so people go down there, but I think you're absolutely right, I think in terms of a regeneration in Preston, people do need to be engaged with the process, but maybe not consulted in a way to actually inform decision making when it comes to some of the bigger projects and they should be engaged so that they have an opinion and their opinion is recognised and that they have a debate and an opportunity for debate and to be heard, but I just think if you do try and please everybody you end up with not very good projects, and I think long-term, it's about...
- A I guess it's about, I don't know, educating them in a sense or letting them know what's happening and feel as though they're a part of it in some way. They're maybe; they know what's going on or...
- K It's important to say something about the process for this as well, in terms of getting funding, because the community has a veto over how funding is spent on from this side [of the A6], so I actually put an application in and it gets appraised and it also gets appraised by community representatives, and they have the absolute veto, so the first time around I needed £42,000 I think, something like that, because it's a £50,000 piece of work and the offered me 16 and I said I can't do it for 16. So they said well go in a tender and see what price you can get. So the lowest price I could get was, I think it was 42, 40 or 42. So I went back and said well I've managed to save 5,000 provided though, you've still go to go through the appraisal of those tenders. So he said well okay, we submit with the tenders and we'll make another offer, and they made me an offer of 32. I think I only had 10 from the council, so I had to find another 8 because having scored the tenders, I found out who was best fitted for the job and their quote was 48. So we had to [42.12] Creative Industries project, our own project for the balance of about...
- J 6,000.
- K At least £6000, I think £6,050 and [42.24]. So in the process there where the community really were not overly enthusiastic initially and actually tried to [42.34] by making an offer which was...
- A Seems difficult, yeah.

- J Yeah.
- A Who were the community then when you say, who are they, how are they represented?
- K I think you need to go to [42.50] to look at the reconstruction of the board, how it's made up.
- A Right.
- K There's an issue with Inner Preston Partnership, which was then succeeded by the Avon Central Partnership. The community have got the greater [voting], there's £20m of government money. I don't know whether they've got a greater weighting through physical numbers, represented numbers, or [43.27] through just the arbitrational process. I think it's probably the latter. So you'd only need maybe two of them, or even one of them involved and if they've got an absolute veto, then that's it, they just wield it. Even if it's the rest of the professional prizes, Business Link, [43.50] this is wonderful, tremendous output, [43.53] economy, local area, if the community's representative says I disagree, it's not happening, it's not happening.
- A Right.
- J Which means they've got an awful lot of power over us really.
- K So you get a new breed of community politician who's unelected and...
- J How do they consult...
- A Yes.
- K And that's where we really need to think about [44.19] community representation because this has been introduced really in the last ten years, where you have individuals there who you have to say well, they're not elected, but they're nominated...
- J They've been nominated...
- K How do you ensure yourself that you are, you have a mandate...
- J To veto something...
- K [44.44] and then have you the training to use your mandate well... Anyway that's the system...
- J And it depends on communities as well, you know, because like we talk about there are different communities that have different agendas and not all work can be focused around residential communities [45.04] and communities who live here, it can be about people who want to work together, like groups of artists and groups of...
- K So it's [45.11]
- J Other like minded people in different ways and it's making sure they're all given the opportunity to express and have projects that are focused around them, you know.
- K So the Preston Strategic Partnership and all the [45.22] working groups underneath it, we've got so many seats for community representatives, but Preston is a small place, it's a small town. So throughout my 20 years here, I see the same people in cycle for every initiative, onto every board and Alan Roth is a prime example. He is always represented within [45.49], so the Alan Roth opinion is always prevalent. Whether that's good or bad...
- J Yeah, you don't know whether that's good or bad do you?
- K That's one of the things that I think disadvantages a small place is the, finds it difficult to engage because of the inner power play, it finds it difficult to engage as many people as Leeds or Manchester or Birmingham. So it limits its vision, it limits its capacity to change because it becomes more conservative with a small [46.27]. So here what we're doing is it's a bit extreme really is saying well recognising that we live in a small place with a small number of people having the ability to express opinion or given the chance to express

opinion, we'll do something which is a little bit over the top is at the very extremes of what we think is plausible, so this is the extreme of plausibility I think, this idea for new [47.01] development and it comes from a very small [47.09] elements, somebody called Mike [Territt], somebody called Keith Launchbury who thinks the University should be a European centre for education and design, Jenny wants an art centre...

- J I want an art centre because I think we're desperately lacking kind of cultural facilities that are engaging [47.30] for everybody you know. Even though it won't have a community arts focus, particularly, there will be space for community arts activities. In any arts centre there should be, but there be space to show internationally significant work and touring theatre and things and I think it's disgusting...
- K So we chip in those ideas into the pot and [47.52] sort of thing, that's it. But it has to be not a sort of a frothy, flowing substance, it has to be hard, and this is where you get down to the, talking about buildings ...
- J How much is it going to cost.
- K Because when you come to sell it, buildings are easy to cost, they're easier to, if you talk in terms of buildings and I just use them really as conveyors of what we're trying to do it's when you come to this, the statute of limitation, you need to submit planning applications where you need to submit that in terms of buildings and ideas or people's feelings, it's got to be physical things.
- A But then there are allsorts of possibilities around that, you know those buildings are there, they're going to be there, but there's historical associations with that area aren't there, as well, and I guess that's again, back to the community and if that was, I don't know, you'd have to see whether that would be important for people of Preston whether they would be interested in seeing that, but that's again a way of incorporating them.
- K So the Avenham Central [49.16] has invited presentations [49.19] 27<sup>th</sup> January, so again the community come, the board having a community veto, the board then sits in judgement [49.30]
- A With the community representative [49.33] already in place.
- K Yes. But we know because of the bus station sitting on our footprint, although it's not publicly declared yet, it's likely that our master plan remains, I suppose, more vision than deliverable reality, so we have to look at what can we do without losing the ideas, can we do something that Preston thinks it can afford, or allow...
- A That will change, like you say, be a risk in a way of changing something that will highlight an area in some way.
- J Yeah, or give people the opportunity to see this in a smaller way and see the potential for something bigger, which it isn't like the [50.19] I'd rather somebody gave me the money and I could go away and build the arts centre, but that's not going to happen, so it's about building capacity and making people kind of engage with the themes and understand how it could work on a smaller level, but it just takes longer...
- K Preston's created a Vision Board for the purposes [50.40] Regional Development Agency. I decided yesterday afternoon, talking to Brian Dean...
- A Oh right.
- K To create my own vision board for Church Street.
- J With really visionary people on it.
- K Yes. So my Brian Dean's my first recruit
- A Can I be on it?

- K Of course.
- J And maybe we could get some community representation in on that as well, you know, to ensure that we are working in those areas...
- K [51.12] he's now [51.15] she's actually seen the study through, professionally through [51.19] officer, he's a project chasing officer [51.24].
- A Do you have plans to include artists in whatever is ...
- J In terms of the building and the design, yeah...
- A The ideas around what happen [51.37]
- J Well I did, my shop project for example, we got this opportunity to look into potentially starting a shop that would sell the work of local artists and designers because they might be a [51.50] for people who have creative products and so we looked at that and what we've got is the potential for a 3,900 sq ft retail space on Church Street, underneath those new flats on the corner of Pole Street, and the developer's quite interested in having us in because he hasn't got many people who are particular keen on that area at the moment, because of all those problems we talked about and the idea being that we would take it on for three years and that one side of it would be a retail space, it would be about selling peoples' work, and offering a commercial opportunity for people to develop work and sell it in their local, you know, where it was developed, but the other side to be more of an arts, a mini arts centre environment, because it's so big you can fit it in. Like a mini performance space and gallery space, an opportunity, what I did was pull together just through the people I've been working with really, artists and different people from the creative industries who could offer something to that, we work in different ways, so [52.51] artists, musicians and allsorts of different people and pull them together and I've been kind of liaising with them really about the overall kind of what are we going to do here and how is it going to work, to make sure they are engaged with and they are sort of offering their, and you know, we changed the name, somebody had come up with a name, they said they didn't like it, so we changed the name, you know, and we are trying to follow that, but again, there's only so many people you can consult with without it becoming a big argument and you never get anything done because there's too many people [53.27] and that kind of happened at these focus groups that we did with the students, I felt a bit sorry for them because I only found about this today, because I was there, but I didn't want to go into any of the focus groups because I knew it would turn, instead of talking about selling art and buying art, everyone would want to ask me questions about how it was all going to happen, so I stayed out of it, but they turned on the students, and were kind of like, well why haven't we been consulted with this before and different people have different reasons for wanting to be consulted at all times, but there's an awful big group out there and you can't consult everybody and you've got to kind of, I think, sort of take a little bit of responsibility for yourself sometimes in making sure you're proactive about engaging with things that are happening, say I want to be consulted, and if you're constantly you know, I'll disseminate information out as often as I can through my website, through e-mail newsletters, try and let people know what's going on and you know, but at some point it's got to stop coming from me and start coming from somebody else, to ring me up and say I would like to get involved in this and then I'll get them involved, you know, as much as I can, I'll do what I can, but I think sometimes people sort of sit back and wait for me to go to them and I think sometimes in communities you get a lot of that as well and like Keith was saying you get the same people represented on all the boards and it's symptomatic of those that will actually get up and say yeah, I will go to that meeting, and you know, and I think you probably find that a lot...
- A Yeah, you do in deprived areas it is difficult because a lot of people are low on confidence and things like that, but things do change, but yeah...
- J But there's only so much you can do to help them past that point and you can't force them past that point, and if you get one person that's willing to go is it better to have that person,

even if maybe they don't represent the views of the majority of the community they're supposed to be representing, I don't know, it's a difficult one, because without having an open [referendum] on every subject, every time...

A Well, yeah, it's too unwieldy isn't it in some ways...

J Yeah, you need the right channels in place really don't you for that?

A Yeah.

J And communication.

A Yes, that's right and for people to feel as though they can take that step because sometimes if they've never done anything like that before, it's a big step to take.

J Yeah. We need more open forums for people to discuss.

A Yes.

J But you know, it's things like at this focus group apparently, people were saying oh well don't let the council choose what art's going to go in, in this quite negative way and yet it's us at the council who are starting it and making it happen and sometimes there are negative opinions that people have that really aren't based on anything in reality in the situation and if they actually took the time to ask questions more, they might learn a bit more and they might form a more realistic opinion as opposed to you know this kind of political viewpoint, that perhaps aren't based on the current situation and are historical problems that they've faced, you know, which is always easy, we all do it don't we?

A Yeah, sure.

J [56.36]

A It's complex and...

J We haven't really gone through ...

A No we haven't.

J But we've covered the areas, some of the areas, I think and...

K Yeah, just I've just highlighted a couple of questions, just thinking [56.48] all of the professional artists in the general community, opening up the subject of the project to the community group. That's the, I haven't really got the subject, now is that the subject that's introduced by the artist or?

A No. No, that's the difficult thing really that a lot of because the work I've done, as you've seen, and maybe that's part of what you haven't got from looking at the DVD, I'm not about, I'm coming to work with you and we're going to make this together, that's not my approach at all.

K The community have commissioned the artist...

A No.

K To build their capacity or increase their sense of direction...

A No, not really. I went to introduce myself to the group right at the beginning and they could have said, no, we don't really feel that we can work [with you] and some of them did, you know, some of them felt they were too busy to step aside and do something else.

K What value were you adding?

A What was adding to them by going in and saying that I can work with you?

K What were you going to add, what was your selling proposition?

A Yes, well it was a difficult thing to sell because what I was selling was a process really of

them taking a risk, perhaps, of doing something new that might reveal things about whatever we discussed together as a group that would develop as the process went along, but would be initially about their community and how they lived, and what they did in their everyday lives.

K What would be new that would be exciting to you?

A To me? Well part of what it was for me was finding out about them, it's not about me putting...

K You're coming in with the motivation, so to one extent you've got to control that motivation because you don't want it to dominate this process.

A I don't understand where you're coming from, what you're saying...

K I'm just trying to [59.01] you're trying to draw out from them, or help them to draw out from themselves something of interest.

A Well something that's particular about them, the people and the community in which they inhabit.

K And example might be, or was?

A An example was their shopping routes in town.

K Right, so if you've got 18 people who might have 18 different routes...

A You might have, yeah.

J So it's very, it's very agenda-less isn't it, to start off with, it's just about getting them to sort of say well okay then, I'm interested in this, I'll come along and see what happens, and then through the process of engagement see where that goes, and it could lead anywhere.

A It could, yes.

J It could have led to any project...

A It could have led to almost...

J So you have no idea when you start what you're going to get and where it's going to go and so you're not trying to define or lead it in any way, it's them leading it, and you're merely facilitating that...

K There was an interesting representation of [1.00.16] it's an exhibition in the café at the moment where they all had a GPS handset and as they went along, the GPS recorded their co-ordinates and so then when they got back, they could plug the GPS into a computer and generate a map, which could draw something like a [1.00.37] their route could be anything it, it could be an intangible picture, or it could be something that actually was, oh you're a [1.00.46] sort of thing. That's the shape of the route that you took around town, that's the ...

J But even that had an agenda at the start in that you knew that you were going to take a GPS system and you were going to walk around town, but when you came back that would produce an image of something, or some description, whereas, I suppose Anita's approach is more fluid than that even in that there is absolutely agenda when starting [1.01.15]

K [1.01.13] GPS pictures to get a collective ...

A Yes. The only thing there was going to be was going to be information about the people.

J Yeah, at the end of it, that's the only thing, you don't know how physically you're going to represent that, if at all, you know whether it's going to be some kind of video, or if indeed they want you to visit and represent it, because they might enjoy the sessions, but not want anyone to share that information...

A Yes, that was something that was discussed, yeah.

- J So, you know, the process itself is the art work...
- A Is the artwork, yes.
- J Not the actually physical manifestations at the end it's the process of going through, of working with the community and it's how the benefits are how then they then start to think about...
- A Yeah, allsorts of different things and how they thing, yeah, and art's one of them.
- J Yeah, but it might not cross their mind that they're even doing something artistic...
- A Yeah, that was discussed prior to that as well, [there was the question] what is art? And that was interesting to talk about and it was interesting to see [1.02.24]
- K The process of doing that is extremely difficult [MISSED OUT TRACK MARK 11] ... which is why I'm struggling a bit [1.10.09]
- A Right. You felt you had to [1.10.11] it in the same way as [1.10.13]
- K Yeah, I was looking for a musical accompaniment or some theory or spoken word or something like that.
- A But of course when it was in the café, that would have been, that would have disturbed the place as it was [1.10.25] too much, so I couldn't do that with [1.10.29]. I mean that's not the artwork, really...
- J Yeah, exactly was I'm saying...
- A It's really the presentation of it.
- J It is a process isn't it?
- A Yeah.
- J It's how you present that as well isn't it because it kind of takes [1.10.43] to try and articulate it too much, in a presentation format to almost, you don't want to bang home what it's all about in a sense because it kind of removes a little bit I think from the actual...
- A Yes, it does. And the primary audience and the people...
- J Who did it...
- A Who did it, they were there at the opening so people did get more of a flavour of that. Yeah, but I mean they, you know, they were interested in bringing their friends to see it. It was good for them to see it where it was, that was an empowering thing for them to...
- J But traditionalists won't understand it ...
- A As art.
- J No.
- A No.
- J But the ironic thing being that the participants who don't have the same kind of understanding of art that traditionalists may have will see it more as art than traditional art because they participate and their friends will see it more as art and the people that they [1.11.41] will engage with it in a positive way because it's been part of their community experience, whereas somebody who is perhaps ...
- A Used to seeing [1.11.52]
- J Knowledgeable of art in inverted commas, in a traditional sense.
- K So where are you with your PhD now time wise and what is your hypothesis that you're testing?

- A My hypothesis is looking at the role of professional artists in regeneration of urban communities.
- J Vital.
- A Yeah. And so, you know, I've looked at, I mean I've come in from you know, what's termed as the [1.12.22] public art, I mean people, that's what I say, the language is a barrier in some sense because...
- J It is a lot of the time isn't it, I mean it's fine with me, I've studied new genre public art, you know, I've read the book, you know, but that's very few people ...
- K It's a good example for [1.12.41]...
- J Public art to a lot of people is sculpture and its sculpture in a public place on a large scale, or it's maybe at a push somebody making some railings for a school, where they've got children welded into them or something.
- K They have an [1.13.00] methodology.
- A Yeah, I've got a methodology.
- K [You've got to measure things haven't you?]
- A Yes, I mean, yeah part of it is a new, it's an practice based PhD, it's a new way of doing it, it's, you know, but I've still got to formulate methodologies and what have I come to [1.13.23].
- J Have you got a leaflet about the [Generise] project?
- A No.
- J Ooh, I'll get you a leaflet, because that's going on in South Church Street that was one of the [1.13.31] we used to start getting artists engaged in the area.
- K [1.13.35] people to discover what the area means, historically, our heritage and also [1.13.42] to love it.
- J You should potentially contact Andy actually because it's quite interesting; he did two of these projects working in [community] projects.
- A Andy [Poole]?
- J Yeah.
- A Right.
- J So it's, we've literally got work [1.13.58] and I'm ashamed to say I haven't been round a single one yet. We have to go through [1.14.01]
- K I was saying to Lynn that's going to be embarrassing if Andy asks us in a fortnight's time ...
- J I know and we haven't actually been around and seen it. But its pieces sited all over the Church Street area...
- A I've heard about it, the students have been [telling] me about it.
- J Yeah, and the idea being that you know we're using kind of art as a, and it wasn't primarily sort of a community project, but the fact that at least two of the [1.14.23] should be working with community groups that are from that area, so I think they've been down at the Foxton Centre working with some of the groups out of there.
- K I'm working at the Foxton Centre [1.14.35] I think it was 1998. No, it was a lot earlier than that, it was 1995. Barry Wise, who used to be leader of the council at the time [1.14.48] local hearing, so I put my hand up as an employee volunteer to put into pictures into still pictures what it was like to live around the Foxton community centre, so I produced 6 monochrome prints, which they then used to speak for them, so they went into this local

hearing at the Guild Hall with other people as well, there was Julie [Britten] I think her name was at the time, she lived in [1.15.20] and she was the sort of centre co-ordinator. So they weren't going to say anything at the Guild Hall about what it was like to live and be a part of the Foxton community, youth and community centre. My photographs were going to do that job, so it was quite a responsibility. [1.15.42] Another project that I did was, I haven't done this for a long time, but I was in 1998, I was with [1.15.53] there was going to be a national, there was a national conference being held in October 1998 in the town hall about the plight of homeless people, so I put my hand up again, said I'll go and [1.16.05] and I'll do a picture story about what it's like to be homeless, I'll do an exhibition, and I went a bit further than I did with the Foxton one this time. Everyone I photographed I said will you come to see the exhibition on the day of the conference and be, agree to be interviewed by local media as part of the conference, and if you come I'll give you my photograph [1.16.33].

A And did you get?

K We only got one. The day before I was going to get 7, but then 6 bottled out on the day. Because I was working for the National Churches Coalition, they said we could have [1.16.51] and we could have knocked on the door and get out of bed, but they chickened out and that's not their fault, it's just a little bit intimidating for them. So we have the local media and radio and newspaper interviewing one person and he did a real game performance, he did tell his story in the Town Hall.

J I think there's some really interesting [1.17.19] it's quite challenging [1.17.22] and quite different for Preston definitely. I think, I mean a lot of people come up to me and said God I've seen some of them [Generalise] pictures, don't think it's a good idea to start that, that, you know, that kind of different for Preston, you need to ease people into it. I don't know if that's the case, I mean I think some of the work is quite challenging and it will be very [1.17.43] I don't know whether that's bad thing or a good thing, you know, it's interesting, but I think the community projects, I'm not sure exactly what's been done with who and how it's all worked out, but I know one of the projects they worked at it for along time with [1.17.59] people as a video project and then another one was some graffiti artists went in and did some work with some people, but I think that was more, more kind of like we're going to go and do this really, whereas the video project was perhaps a little bit more layered by the participants.

K It needs to be documented really for posterity at least, and that's what we did with this, and ...

J I think Andy's been documented it all the way through, we just haven't seen the results of that yet because he's putting a report together for us at the end of it all.

K So we'll probably be interviewed on what we think of it in the end [1.18.35] documentation process.

J [1.18.38] I just think it's been a really interesting process really and it's, you know, it was one way that we felt that we could engage with artists to try and look at the area as a creative space, and as a way of developing as a creative space and kind of create something creative out of it, whilst it was as it was and not having to change the buildings or change...

K What happened from this was a physical project eventually we [1.19.09]

A Yes, yes, right.

J Are there any sorts of more areas that you want to cover that we haven't covered because we've probably gone off on a tangent.

A Well it's been interesting to hear in more detail, where's my agenda gone? You know, we did speak last time, touched on various bits, so I've had more depth into your plans and what have you. And it's interesting to get some feedback on the DVD and I do realise that

is probably part of the difficulty with this sort of work is people understanding what it's about.

J But almost you have to not worry too much.

A Well maybe yes, maybe. Or there are possibilities of people [being] able to come and talk to you and find out a bit more about it.

K If you make yourself invisible in a workshop [1.20.14] you were there.

A Yes. But why would I want to make myself [invisible]?

K We'll just leave that question hanging in the air for a few seconds. Why would you?

A Well I've no intention of making myself [visible]. That's not what it was about.

J It's not about you is it?

A No.

J That's the whole thing about new genre public art isn't it? It's not about the artist because even with public art it's still about the artist's ego in a certain [sense] isn't it, and new genre public art's all about understanding the art, the community art is only truly successful when it's about and from and within the community and the engagement is at a level that isn't about an artist coming in and going I'm going to teach you how to do this...

A Yeah, that's right, introduce a different power relationship. If I'd have been [1.21.09] pictures.

J And the processes don't have to be artistic...

K [1.21.13] you were there.

A I was then, yeah, and my hands appear occasionally, as do all the other participants' hands.

J Mm, but the facilitation is a sort of an invisible facilitation in terms of the documentation isn't it?

A Yes, that will come out [1.21.32], but I didn't feel that was [1.21.39]

J One of my [1.21.54] if you can call it a type but is a kind of some projects that you see today that have been out of this kind of community interaction, they've got very little to do with art in a traditional sense, they don't have like, one project that I, it was a fabulous project, was to do with planting trees, you know, that was community led and artists working in a similar way, going in and sort of saying well let's just talk about things and out of those kind of discussions came the fact that people didn't feel like they were doing it in a community environment anymore, you know, all the trees were gone, you know, so they decided as their project, they would form groups and plan trees down the middle of roads and you know, to green their own communities and from that grew a sense of community spirit that had been lacking in their community previously because they didn't talk to their neighbours anymore, and they felt nervous of their nervous, they didn't feel safe in their own communities, all of these things came out, and then through the act of planting trees, where they all got together on the weekends, and took it in turns to plan trees, and they planted on other peoples' roads and they planted in front of other peoples' houses, and they did it for each other, this community spirit grew out of it and so the art is really the process that then became community spirit, and the product is only a tree, so it's not an artwork, but it's an artist that's facilitated that, in a very kind of invisible way, without telling people what they needed, but helping them understand.

A And the product's ephemeral really isn't it? The product is there, but it's ephemeral, and it's not a tangible objects, I meant the creativity that's been facilitated there is possibly all the time, I guess, because the trees are growing all the time.

J And it is the artist using their creativity to think of ways that could make this happen without telling people, by doing this, this will happen, you know, and it's a very kind of, it's a very

intellectual process on the part of the artist I think, and the... and I think it's hard for artists to be invisible in the process, and it's hard for them to keep their egos out of it in a sense, and so it's quite a selfless kind of process in a way as well.

- A Yes, I don't think it would have happened if I hadn't have been there in that sense, you know, I was the trigger that sort of encouraged them to speak, or encouraged them to say more about what they were, what they began talking about.
- K When I photographed the homeless people there were several strategies [MISSED OUT TRACK MARK 13] ... their criteria...
- J Matched your criteria.
- K Matched my criteria and in that case...
- A That's the case for anything like that isn't it? I mean you come across that in the [1.28.53] we did, you've got...
- J But that can happen with community art as well can't it, the community can want quite a traditional approach to working with the community and that's fine, but there are too many people that automatically adopt that approach of, you know, going in with an overt agenda about what they're going to do and what the problems for those communities are and how they're going to solve it using which particular art form, without any kind of real understanding of the community or engaging with them prior to that to that to understand what's required and it can be too kind of dictated by you know, oh well we've got a bit of a problem with drugs in this area, so we're going to set up a theatre group to work with the young people about drugs, and you know, with no real kind of investigation into whether the young people want to talk about that, or by allowing them to talk about other things like ...
- K Enter the opinionated artist.
- J Yeah.
- K But then there are all kinds of artists, so this particular work that you're interested in, you don't want an opinionated artist, you want an un-opinionated one.
- A No, I have opinions; it's just that I'm not enforcing that.
- K [1.30.10] you're leaving them outside the door [1.30.13]
- J Not necessarily, you just...
- A No, I'm just being more open-minded to the people that I'm meeting, it's not about a power relationship with me coming in and putting my stamp on whatever I do with them...
- K [1.30.31] walking with a skill set...
- A I'm walking with a ?
- K You're walking in with a skill set?
- A Yeah, I go in with skills, yeah.
- K That's why you're adding to their...
- A Yes, yes.
- K I agree. Then you're showing how you exercise the skills that you have in your toolbox that they [long] to exercise.
- A Yeah, yes. Or incorporate some new skills that they have as well.
- J But obviously there's a real subtlety to that, that there isn't in other types of community art really. You know, it's not overt is it that you're going to go in and teach them anything.
- A No, and that was difficult to get across. They didn't really understand it, but they do, once they'd experienced, I did two projects, I did a six week initial project and I did a further 12

week, we've extended it, once we'd done the six weeks, then they understood it and they could understand what I was [trying to do].

K Are you coming to the final year then, everything's coming to a conclusion?

A Yes. Yes, so I'm trying to meet different people who are working in regeneration...

K What's your biggest discovery in the last three years?

A Biggest discovery in the last three years...

K About yourself?

A About myself?

K [1.32.00]

J You're not shy about asking difficult questions.

A About myself... off the top of my head I can't... I've discovered how long it takes to ... begin to work with groups and get to know them and develop things. It's not something that happens quickly, it's something that takes a lot of time. But about myself... I don't know, but I can work on my own.

K So the [1.32.55] so I've got to deal with, well I'm a quirky person, I think about quirky subjects and I've got to sort of try and separate these things out. Not to impose, if you think you're quirky yourself you see, you can see everything as quirky, but is it?

A Or does it matter?

K Let's have a decision [1.33.22] before the [shutter] is released, so I developed a threshold a sort of [new] threshold of thinking, so it happens automatically now, something [1.33.33] so many quirky points before the shutter is released.

A Right.

K It happens without me thinking about it, so it reaches a threshold, ping. It's almost sort of [1.33.45], you know, it really is quirky, take it [1.33.48]. I might stand looking at something for an hour and the threshold isn't reached, so you move on.

A Right and you can recognise that now.

K Yes. It's an accommodation I made within myself about dealing with my own quiriness and dealing with, I think it was an external quirkality. That's not a word even.

J Quirkality that's a new word.

K So I've invented a theme which I can't find a satisfactory definition for in the dictionary, so I have to do it through photography. So what's missing in the dictionary definition, quirkiness, is coming through my photography.

A Right.

J They are quite difficult photographs to read though until you start to point out the quirkiness in them, so...

K Yeah you don't get that in a public exhibition; you'll [1.34.47] 2001.

J Yeah, exactly, and you don't get your interpretation and I think they are difficult photographs to read, I don't think people, for example, with the caravans and the flags, especially when you then when onto say well they used to have really big flags and they'd [1.35.01] size of the flags, and you know nothing of that because it's the back story and the time that you've spent in a place, understanding that...

K They're difficult ...

J ... the quirkiness of that community, and you've chosen to express that through the physical

things that you're seeing, as opposed to any kind of documentation of their opinion or...

K The difficulty [1.35.20] mirrors the difficulty of the [1.35.24], so it's just a, as I say it's a self-portrait isn't it with art, it's, that's why I asked about you really, your course. Through your art you learn more about yourself.

A Yes, I do.

K So I learn more about my own complexity, but I've just become more complex.

A Well, [1.35.45] as you grow older, you do become more complex as we gather stuff.

K So, the first time [1.35.54] and I just leave it there, don't worry about it [1.35.58] that's an easy way of finding it, shutting it away [1.36.05] end of story. So, have we run out of disk yet?

A No, it's still going.

J It's just [1.36.17] screensavers...

A This one [1.36.21]. No, well that's been useful, I don't know where it's going to take me, but it's been useful.

J Well I think both Keith and I think that artists are very important and their role within regeneration is important, but we work in economic regeneration so it's slightly different you know that community regeneration, in the sense that we have to compartmentalise things a little bit and [1.36.51]...

K We're dealing with hard outputs.

A Yes.

J You know we're dealing with jobs created and increasing turnover, those kinds of things which, you know, are difficult to kind of...

K Public institutions are investing money in us, so they must be remunerated in return.

A Yes. I did talk about that with Jendy a little bit, but I'm sure there are [1.37.13] because through the work that I have done, boxes will have been ticked in various things, so it's just a different way at coming at the same, similar problem really I suppose.

K Have you spoken to Helen [Worsley] or...

A Yes, I have, yes. I got involved with International Women's Day last year because the exhibition coincided with that, and she's got a new appointment now hasn't she? I haven't spoken since she's been in that...

K Cultural development manager.

A Is that her title?

K Horrendous title.

A But it's covering arts and culture...

J Yeah. Scarily enough.

A Yeah.

K And the cultural strategy is her only reference.

A Yeah.

J It's quite difficult with art, I mean think she has some problems with the job description herself, but it will be difficult because obviously she's from quite a cultural diversity background and so will want to concentrate on that work and won't want to let any of that work slip, which she's undertaken and done such brilliant work with over the last few years, but, so I just worry that the arts side of it might lose a little bit because arts development is

- such an enormous area, and since Kim hasn't been here, there's been such a great big gaping hole and I can't...
- K It's a substitute for a decent wage.
- J Yeah.
- K You come up with these job titles and I think that's a bit overdone, that one, that's a bit of a problem.
- J It is difficult and I think she will face some real problems with it, and it's actually being moved out of Alex Walker's line management and into [1.38.42] Walsh's direct line management now, so. So even actually taking out the [1.38.47], the only way that's necessarily a bad thing, but it means that she hasn't got, because Helen doesn't really have a background in the arts, you know, she doesn't and she'll freely admit that, so it does worry me that the actual arts development side might slip and that the focus might become more on the community development without the knowledge of the arts and how, like we were saying earlier, you can't make it all about the community, arts has to be more than just community arts, you know, it has to have, you know, we have to be proud of our artists who are out there and doing it for the personal love of doing it, you know, and for being different and trying to develop themselves as artists and it's slightly worrying in that it might have too much emphasis on the community side of arts and not enough on the other side, and obviously I can only do so much because my emphasis is on economic development and I have to make them see themselves as businesses and think about how they develop themselves as business which is ...
- A It's different from fine art...
- J Yeah, and I've got a love of art, so at least I can talk to people about it and try and encourage them, but I don't have any finances to support them on that basis, so I can't [1.39.59] projects really...
- K Once you have people thinking about themselves in business, but can they [1.40.02] become units of investment, then try and encourage them to invest in the property that's sorry for itself because nobody's loved it for ten years, try and regenerate that.
- J We're quite lucky that we were able to support [Generise] and get [Generise] going and that was quite important I think because it has produced some really interesting contemporary work, so really that's our bit of arts development for Preston and [1.40.27] feel able to do...
- K The 1<sup>st</sup> of November was my own personal launch for South Church Street, [1.40.36] South Church Street were assembly of the [1.40.42] three projects Keith [1.40.46] and I said well I just want to get some activity going [1.40.50] in Church Street, create my own vision [board], although [1.40.55] think tank. And it all started on 1<sup>st</sup> November with the launch of [Generise]. So it's, Andy's work is more significant to me. So that was D day.
- J I think as a council we've got more to do with how we link these things up and how we have a coherent approach them in what you're saying, artists are important and we recognise the importance of artists, it's we have limitations on how much we can actually engage with, but...
- A Plus there's the links with arts and health [1.41.32]
- J Of course there is, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I mean Kim used to teach on arts and health and stuff up here and help develop courses and things and definitely there, and a real potential for economic development there as well because people can run really useful businesses on that basis. Consultancy is [1.41.50] and having a practice as an art, somebody working in arts and health...
- K So through artists [1.42.01] the next ten years before I retire, there will be a permanent change to that area for the better.

- J I tell you what is good news and I only heard this recently, but you might know already, but Charles is now working with Alfredo [Jaar], so they have secured Alfredo [Jaar] now for the Tithebarn [1.42.17] artist working in collaboration with Charles, so Charles is the person on the ground here doing it, I'm presuming, and Alfredo's more remote, but will engage in the process of developing arts and developing projects and working with the developers to make sure that artists are engaged with what one would hope is that it's [1.42.34] a little bit and that we can all benefit from that, and you know that we can use somebody like Alfredo who has that kind of mind and he works in quite an unusual way...
- A Yes he does.
- J Some of the projects more overtly than others.
- A Yeah. [1.42.53] where he [burnt] the museum and they rebuilt in [1.42.54] it's very much about...
- J Yeah and the homeless project in Canada, that one particularly, all of those things, really interesting projects and let's hope he can really do something here that's exciting and makes Preston understand a little bit more, and it is really risk taking that and it's, if I'd have known that the other day when that consultant came to ask me about the economic strategy for Preston, somebody came and asked me about, you know, wanted to know what my opinions were about what was good about Preston and what good projects had happened and I said oh I'm sorry I can't think of any, you know, and sort of was... you know the instigation of the council and having been asked by them what I felt the biggest barrier to regeneration was, and answered the council, and he said well can't write that down, and I said well you should really, but yeah, I mean I think if I'd have known that about Alfredo, then I would have said the best thing they've done is done this because whilst we don't know the results of it yet, it's a really forward thinking move that, I think.
- A It was a very successful day that day I think when he came [1.44.06]
- J You're not impressed with Alfredo are you Keith?
- K Well I've never met him...
- J No, you didn't come to the day did you? But you weren't impressed with his thing that you saw were you?
- K Well what did I see of his?
- J I think you downloaded some information...
- K Off the net, yeah, well I was judging on sort of his photographic abilities...
- A Right. [1.44.30]
- J There were pictures of his work probably, but not necessarily him taking, because a lot of his work, one of his projects he told us about was one where he handed out cameras to people wasn't it?
- K I think at this point [1.44.44] I couldn't find anything out on the web.
- A His website's wonderful I thought, really creative sort of...
- J I don't think you actually went to his website ...
- K I couldn't find it through Google...
- J [1.44.53] on a different website.
- K I was a bit frustrated, who is this guy and I can't find him.
- J Well if you've got his website details will you send it through.
- A It's alfredo.jaar.net.

K e-mail it.

A I will.

J It would be really good to have a look at that. I just think that's one of the best things they've done so far and that makes me more excited about living and working in Preston because I think that's the kind of risk-taking innovative approach to how we're going to do this, that's the equivalent of getting that architect who's done the public to do the public in my opinion and it won't cost forty million quid, but the impact will probably be as spectacular.

A And maybe it might highlight the council have [1.45.49] think about this gap with arts ...

J Yeah, well I've already said to Charles what I'd like to do is talk about taking some of the artists that are on my scheme and actually getting them to do some work with Alfredo and with Charles through this process, kind of mentoring type arrangement, so that they can learn these processes, so in future we might be able to have more home-grown artists doing the projects that have the same kind of impact, you know, and it's not that they can't do it already, it's just that perhaps the council might be more [1.46.18] look at that once they've worked with, you know, [1.46.22] you've kind of got to do that in order to make, get your own way. I'd love to do it, introduce something similar like an arts centre and cultural facilities [1.46.34] because that is [1.46.38].

## **Maria Neale – Projects Manager for Sure Start Preston East.**

Christine Campbell formally held this post and she was my contact for Sure Start from the beginning of the project. Christine visited the group occasionally and was a good point of contact for me regarding feedback. In a letter she sent to me regarding her reflection on the work I did with Sure Start, she mentioned that she felt that it was an ambitious project for the Sure Start group but felt they engaged with it wholeheartedly and she could see how the participants had gained in confidence and skills over the length of the project. Christine was always encouraging and took a keen interest in the research; she attended the launch of the CD-ROM at Preston Town Hall.

Maria was always difficult to get in touch with but she did agree to meet with me and the interview took place in her office at the Watermark Centre in Preston.

Maria begins the interview with some background information about Sure Start and how it came to be. She mentions partnership working with health visitors and midwives with courses in parenting skills and that the most important work any one will do is bringing up a child. Maria has a background in health care she recognises the importance of quality of life issues and so trips out are always incorporated into courses run by Sure Start.

According to Maria the project met all Sure Start objectives: building self confidence, group work, people feeling good about themselves and developing new skills.

The meeting ended with a discussion about the usefulness of CD-ROMs.

## MEETING WITH MARIA NEALE

M – Maria Neale A – Anita Burrows

M It is a government initiative and it came about as well as how professional it is working in isolation ??? area and it about the Victoria Climbié affair and the strong recommendations were that people came together to provide services. Sure Start is targeting the 20 most deprived areas in Preston. Home Start comes into that category. The model is how we deliver services to all children. It is about giving (and the name says it all) - a sure start in life and it goes beyond all, and that includes antenatal care as well.

For example, our team consists of a strong helper, a speech therapist, a midwife, a health visitor, family support worker, and the other part of that is education, people with those skills in education, creativity and play area. And the other factor element is regeneration involving the communities, and the difference in Sure Start is we have really tried to involve parents on the management. It is not about professions (we do to you), it is coming from the grass roots, programme up. That parents tell us, no, we don't want that. So, there is also what we call "children centres" and you will hear a lot about this in the news and election speeches where we are providing children centres. That is early education integrated into day care. So in the future the government is working with the population and a lot of research has been done where parents who work, and are likely to pass their skills on. There has been a history of gross unemployment in these areas, and then we will be able to provide child care for people to go to work but we will sign post them, with the help of Job Centre Plus.

Realistically, jobs are not there at this time, so it is capacity building. We are starting early with adult education, we are starting early with ante natal, with help and social regeneration, so there is money available to put aside for that. And also a change in services may work, where perhaps a midwife or health visitor may work in isolation in the health trust, they now have to see a bigger picture with the child – what services we could provide - the outcomes for that child, education, early assessment of what their needs are, and we become a one stop shop where the parents said I would like to do some training, then we can sign post them into adult education, and support where the needs are. The parents may show mental health problems, depression, I am not saying we have the in house skills, but we can give them the best advice we possibly can.

There is social isolation; people have never done this sort of thing, come out to a group, how do we get them to come out? It is hard, and long term work. You can't just put a sticky plaster over it, we are not going to see the evaluations and outcomes for this sort of work for a generation, perhaps until these children grow up and have their own children.

We do put a fair bit from the budget on one side for evaluation, and there is a website and you could look on this for some examples of what we are trying to achieve. There has been a blank canvas, but there has been some really good example of work, sharing of good practice. It has been really enlightening for us to see a couple of parents employed even up to NVQIII level, and they are running their own child care courses (not courses) but able to run their own parent groups and that kind of thing. The art work is the icing on the cake. That all started by our predecessor, and that has been very popular.

**A** Again, I suppose in a sense there are cross-overs in the way in which I am approaching it. Art can be a tool for education, new skills and all sorts of things, and often artists work in isolation, and maybe it is a different approach, coming in and being able to work with other people. How do you see that?

**M** I don't know how you do it formally, but there is a lot done informally. We were very lucky to get into this building, I happen to drive past and there was sign "for rent" but it is a very creative place and Charles, the owner, did a sculpture in the park. It is a lovely sculpture. We took a group of children down to do some "rubbings" and there is a public company we have used. And "Prescap" are doing some work and we have asked a senior child care practitioner - part of her course is using art in play, and children using their imagination. Mums have never had the opportunity to sit and play with their children and understand the importance of play. My role is pulling it altogether as programme manager. It is an exciting role, but it is demanding. You never know from one day to another what you will do. You need a good multi skilled team to be able to do this work, and being able to tap into "different ingredients", and understand you can't work in isolation. We have to have a broad view of what is happening out there in terms of communication, community groups, and not offending anyone out there, and making sure we are not duplicating what other people have done. We have to work on what they have achieved. Aspirations for work with the Sure Start, I think we have covered that.

**A** Where do you see the future going?

**M** Employment, let families enjoy their children, I think. Being realistic, there are a lot of problems; good parenting skills just don't come out of the water! If you have a lot of problems going on in your life - death, domestic violence, the work "Sure Start" tells us what it's all about.

**A** They know where they can go for some kind of help, if they need it. You are there for them if they need it. Thanks for that. I worked in a playgroup and one of my friends in playgroup has gone on to work with Sure Start in Burnley and Pendle.

**M** Gosh. The work of playgroups - people underestimate the importance of them.

**A** It now has a higher profile; playgroup is not what it used to be. Moved on

**M** There is a play stage curriculum to follow. Everything we do we try to incorporate in this. Sociable child, framework, and these are the standards you would hope to achieve, and work towards at getting that. It is so important raising a child and it is getting to a standard where everyone is aware of that - child care, and child minders. Very important work, looking after a child is the most important job anyone will be asked to do. It is acknowledging that. There is so much going on at a playgroup which shapes that child's life, before they even get into school.

- A** I just thought I would mention the playgroup to help spark some thoughts and reflections. ....  
 I was looking for some groups to work with as I got a scholarship .....map in Preston (new city), money available. Came in on that, people working with projects.  
 Knew I wanted to work with community projects, made contacts with people.  
 Deepdale - regeneration. Spoke to Chris Davies. .... Went to community events, exhibition, Age Concern, Foxton Centre.  
 Group - Muslim women in Community. Wanted the ideas to come from the groups, and they found that difficult to get hold of. Part of it is finding what you want and I will help you. Showed photos. Grand hall, and not an easy space to enter. Important achievement. Beautiful work — beautiful building. Harris Museum prestigious building in Preston. Part of your group had a visit, I suggested went to Harris Museum. Takes some effort to walk into a museum - think they are for academics, but children thought it was wonderful. This was beginning ..... 6 weeks in both centres. Gaining trust!
- M** I come from a background in health. I go into meetings and they question you. It's challenging but it is good. Building confidence so they will ask questions.
- A** Good to do that 6 weeks and getting views from both sides. I put that in the mobile library, through Deepdale, which goes through the exhibition. "Pukar" group made 3 postcards. I have put this together. Had a brew before they started. Making it clear from the start that what they did, is of interest to other people. Walk to supermarket has something to say to society. How you get there. They did not think that was important.  
 Why do you want to know, and what are you going to do with this information. Got to happen slowly. Having small groups help. Personal thing. (Taken snippets, no sound).  
 Taking gear/DVD - my son helped. Big hall.  
 Took time to get the group talking. Little glimpse of DVD that we went shopping, quite interesting. Your group always go out. This group never goes out - like going on a school trip.
- M** We have a lot of visits out. We have kick started them, getting funding. Always a good idea having a trip out.
- A** At Pukar, some of them have disabilities, so it is not always easy. Wonderful group.  
 General chat about cooking. They don't value it, or realise what experts they are!

**Asked to bring things in during the week. Life is so different when you have young children. Used power tools. Ruth was the first one to have a go. Their idea to make a book.**

**They commissioned me to make a book, they wanted to make a book themselves. I suggested two books, they thought it would be difficult, but they made them really special. They valued them. Fascinated by them, never thought of scanning photos.**

M We've now put IT into our groups where we can. Lot of people initially cagey about it, but Mums, now have a go, are OK.

A **Future of IT very important. Talking about exhibition, and how to exhibit, to show value of work done. They did not want their faces on. You chose the pages you want to show so you have control of what people see.**

**Books bought from Oxfam. (Anita and Maria looking about books and commenting).**

M things displayed beautifully. Everything has to have a launch. The mayor would be interested in what you have done. Very interested in art work in groups. She has hung work in mayor chamber.

A **Got involved with International Women's Day. Interesting meeting people and how they cope with the big space.**

Other questions from Anita:

#### MARIA'S ANSWERS

1. Met all our objectives, building self confidence, group work, people feeling good about themselves. Another project about to come off with Prescap. We have seen the benefit of the art work.
2. Q. How do you see the idea coming from them, rather than me?  
Answer Good idea. Asking them questions - what do you fancy doing?
3. Q. Have you received any feedback?  
Answer: I have spoken to them and they had enjoyed it.
4. Q Would you consider this type of work?  
Answer: Yes we would.
5. CD-ROM: Maria, we have CD-ROM, sort of work we are doing in Sure Start.  
- see in action. It would be useful for us to have.  
Anita wants to see perspective and feedback from different audiences.

## **Sara – Assistant Manager of the Pukar Centre, Avenham**

Sara was always at the centre when the project activities were taking place being based in an office at the entrance to the centre. Pukar is an organisation set up to help the disabled and their carers. They offer advice and help with all sorts of issues, such as job applications, language difficulties, etc.

In this interview she explains how she experienced the group's engagement with the project and how excited they became when trips out to visit shops were arranged.

Sara explains that she knows the background of some of the participants and recognises how depressed they can be. She describes how she felt about seeing them enjoy a project, explaining that for her the most important thing was that it was a project and not just a skills course. Sara mentions the cooking sessions and how she felt that it was this activity that really inspired the group. As she puts it: "I think you really gelled when you started cooking, and that, and exchanging recipes and when you made the yoghurt and you were talking about milk and all the rest of it. I think that was like, when you kind of really got to know them." She goes on to say, "Because you were really interested in like how they did all the Asian cooking and that, and they we're loving it, we're actually telling the teacher something."

The meeting ended with Sara explaining how the group were able to bond, something which in normal sessions run by the centre doesn't happen.

INTERVIEW WITH SARA FROM PUKAR

S – Sara A – Anita Burrows

S Something that looks really good, it's the real thing.

A **Yes. I'm pleased about that.**

S Yeah.

A **So different in some ways.**

S Yeah, because normally what we have is we'll have a training session where it will be booked for 4 or maybe 10 weeks, and then people will come to the centre and then just stay in the centre.

A **Right.**

S If they're doing arts, then it will only be arts, if they're doing cookery, then it will only be cookery, but the way you did it they had a mixture of everything and they got a chance to go out of the centre as well, which they really really enjoyed.

A **Yes, they did, didn't they?**

S I think that was the best bit of it. They really did because doing things in the centre they're kind of used to it, but going out they don't do it that often. So they really enjoyed that aspect of it.

A **I felt it came alive, once I'd been out filming in Frenchwood and I showed the video, they suddenly, their eyes started to light up more because I was in their area and they recognised it, and it started to ...**

S They were a bit hesitant to start off with, but once they got into it they really enjoyed it, and we've not done it like that before at all, so I think it went really really well. I mean I would like to do it again. If you come across another project, then I'd like to get involved in more things and probably get a few more people involved. Because it was a small group.

A **Yes it was, and then with Eid kicking in it sort of...**

S That's it...

A **And Diwali as well, and then Christmas...**

S Yeah, and Christmas and all of that. But the ladies who regularly come, a few of them had a few problems, like health problems and they stopped attending, otherwise it was quite, well at least 6 people, but one person, well it was a guy who used to come to the cookery class, he got a job so he couldn't come, and then a few more ladies had family problems, so they stopped attending.

A **It didn't matter really that it was a small group. In some ways it helped them because they got to know one another a bit better I think.**

S Yeah. It did work really well.

A **Yeah. So you usually sort of pick a topic, an area to...**

S No, I normally speak to everybody. Because our courses run for a couple of months, ten weeks, say on the 6 to 8 weeks, I'll speak to everybody and say look, what kind of thing are you interested in? So you know how you came in and you mentioned oh this is the kind of thing we're doing, I'll kind of take notes, mention it to people, see if I'm going to get some interest and if I can get a small group to sort of like join in, I might just say right okay we'll start this, and then because the way it works at the centre, you don't always get a whole

group of people coming and saying I'm definitely interested, it works through word of mouth, so that everything, you always start off with a small group, and then once they hear about it, they go oh well I'll join in, or they'll pop in and have a look and see what everybody's doing, and then they'll want to join in. So I speak to them, if I think oh this is something that would work, then I ...

**A** *Did you find that hard in the beginning when I sort of came and I didn't really give you, I gave you some ideas, but it was quite...*

**S** Yeah, it was because I couldn't give them any information because they kept saying oh you're doing something, it's an art project, and they say well what are we going to be doing, and well arty things I suppose, and I knew I wasn't really giving them information, but I suppose it was a good surprise for them isn't it? And it was something different because you made the postcards and they've not done that before. That was really really good, and I really liked those, and maybe they enjoyed doing that. And then we came up with the idea of the [3.42]

**A** *But then that's the sort of my approach I guess in a sense that I come and I'm trying to bring something from them, rather than me bring something to them...*

**S** Yeah, you were quite adaptable. If you thought that this would work with them, I think you did it that way.

**A** *I did yes.*

**S** I think that you [3.55] everybody else, say maybe it's [fabricating] or whatever it's [fabricating] and that's it, you get a piece of material and you paint the fabric and you don't adapt that at all. That worked really well I think.

**A** *Yeah. And I suppose it takes time for people to get an idea that that's actually what's going to happen because they're not necessarily used to that.*

**S** No, because they're not used to having somebody adapt to them.

**A** *Yeah.*

**S** That was really good.

**A** *Yes. I've had some positive feedback from the group about it all, that they'd like to do something else, and I think they did enjoy going out. I think particularly maybe women, who may be carers of people, or disabled themselves, perhaps don't get to go out very often as a group of women, and I mean perhaps they do go shopping on their own, but it's very different to go shopping with a group isn't it, it's much more fun?*

**S** Yes.

**A** *And I think they did enjoy that.*

**S** Because it's not been done before, it worked really well I think and they really enjoyed it. And I didn't realise how much they would until after like it all and I spoke to them and they were all excited, it's like going on a school trip or something and they were like oh yeah, well we need to be meeting and [5.14] okay brilliant.

**A** *Yeah, because ideas got growing and growing, didn't they, really from that, they wanted to go and have a trip down to Leicester and all sorts of things, yeah.*

**S** We're having our annual trip going to Leicester anyway.

**A** *Yes, I believe so.*

**S** So they go to that.

**A** *Yeah. I've spoken to Hassi and Paula about maybe doing something in the future, and maybe we'd have to talk about it. I mean I've been lucky really in a sense that the*

**University funded what I've done so far, but there may be ways, you know, of partnership funding something. I don't know how you would; we'd have to chat about that for the future. So do you look towards using the arts as a tool for helping people, it's something that's proven to you as an organisation that works...**

S It's something that we do anyway. Because we work with a lot of people who have like mental health problems and things like that, or learning disabilities, we know that when they're doing arty things it keeps them occupied and it does help them, and if they enjoy it and they get into it, then it creates a hobby for them, and gives them some sort of focus. That's why if you look at our timetable, we always try and have a mixture of arts and crafts. Something every day, something for everybody. Because we've got the IT centre, but it's not for everybody. Not everybody wants to learn how to use the computers.

**A No, that's right. No, that tends to be, you're not talking to people the same if you're tapping in things to a computer are you?**

S No, and it doesn't really bring out a creative side. Whereas when they did your project, they had like the technology aspect of it, but then it was more creative as well. But I definitely think that art does help.

**A Yeah.**

S And it's something that we do want to carry on doing.

**A Yeah. I'm meeting the city councillors that are in charge of regeneration and I'm trying to build an advocacy for this sort of work because I think it is quite new, I know PRESCAP do a lot of community work, but often it's issue based, it's not sort of so they're taking something to the group, rather than bringing something out of the group I know, and I guess maybe funding has a lot to do with that because to try and get funding you've got to...**

S Yeah it does, and with funding it's always like short-term as well, so if you want to carry something on, then it's always like well half way through the project, you have to start looking for funding elsewhere, just to make sure that it's going to carry on.

**A Yes, I've spoken to other people it is hard to keep things sustained. Do you think having something like this at the end of the project has helped, having it in a place like this?**

S Yeah. It gives them a sense of achievement, and they can go round and tell people oh well, if you're in town, just pop into the museum and have a look at what we've done and that kind of thing. So definitely. And then they can come in themselves and have a look and they can feel proud, and I think that's really really good. Rather than just having in the centre, I think it's a really good idea. Definitely.

**A Yes. That was always my idea right from the beginning and I particularly stuck out because I did want it in the museum rather than in the community gallery, have you used the community gallery for Pukar?**

S We haven't, but somebody that comes to the centre has been involved in a project, and their artwork is displayed there.

**A In the community gallery?**

S Yeah.

**A You haven't had anything actually in...**

S No, not yet. So it's different.

**A Yeah. Good. It's interesting to get all your feedback on that.**

S Maybe, I mean I don't know if you want to know, but I think that if you do it again, then maybe you could stick a few more posters up advertising what you're doing and that kind of

thing at the centre, just to get more people involved, because the way we did at the moment, it's like you told me a bit about the project and then I mentioned it to a few people and that's how we did it, but because it's done so well, and people have enjoyed it so much, maybe like next time we could put more posters up at the centre.

**A** *And maybe you've got a better idea now of what, by being involved, you've got more of an idea where, we were all perhaps just learning about each other in the beginning, going a little bit tentatively because you don't know just what's going to happen.*

S That's it.

**A** *Yeah, no that would be fine.*

S So maybe talk about the past projects, and maybe how looking to do something new, something different.

**A** *Yeah. Well when I came I brought things I'd done in the past, but then again if people have never been involved, it's difficult for them to understand, and probably now those people in Pukar have had a go, they'll help to sort of introduce others...*

S Spread the word, definitely, yeah they would. They usually do anyway.

**A** *Yeah. Good.*

S Do you want this report back?

**A** *No, no, you can keep it.*

S Oh can I keep it?

**A** *Yeah, I had a few done.*

S Because I read it and then every time you came I felt really bad because then I'd say right I'll speak to Anita before she goes and then you'd go and I never did.

**A** *Don't worry. It was to keep people in touch really with what I'd been doing altogether and for me as a report really before I moved onto this sort of, well I felt I was sort of a bit more challenging in the next 12 weeks, we had longer and it was a bit of more of a challenge for them perhaps than the first 6 weeks, because it wasn't long really, it passed very quickly didn't it, 6 weeks is, but then it was a taster and it just gave people an idea of how I worked and what I did, so that was good that they were happy to work again, that was a good sign for me that they were happy for me to come in again.*

S So are you thinking of doing something else?

**A** *Yeah, I mean I'm, yeah, that's right, I'm always looking for work. I mean this is, this is sort of a part of trying to build an advocacy really I suppose I'd say for this sort of work, hence the meetings with all these different people, to try and say you know, this is what the arts can do in community for people, is it worth funding and making something of, what can we do with it, you know, how can we make it sustainable, is there ways that we can gather funding, because I know, you know, I've spoken to Di at PRESCAP and their funding often doesn't come from arts sources, it comes from community sources.*

S Could you not get funding from like NHS and places like that?

**A** *Maybe, I don't know, I mean again I'm meeting, because the other group were Sure Start, who are connected with the NHS, and Jendy Bulman who works for the NHS doesn't she? I may get an idea of, I mean all that, I don't really know anything about, it'll be...*

S Yeah there might be like pots of money that you can tap into, but it won't be like a long-term thing.

- A **No, that's a problem isn't it?**
- S It never is though; I don't think you can ever...
- A **Because they're having to justify themselves all the time...**
- S Yeah. And because they're on a budget themselves, it's not something the government's going to give like regularly all the time.
- A **No. Unless, I guess they funded an arts centre, but then I wouldn't, I don't necessarily see that that would be a great thing to have just a centre, it's nice to see this kind of work going on in centres that are already set up around Preston.**
- S A lot of places do like outreach, so it's best to go to the community than they come to you because they don't always do, and there are, I mean the people that you worked with at the Pukar centre, would not have gone out to an arts centre, no matter how much I sold it to them, they wouldn't buy it, they would be like no, I can't be bothered, I'm not interested, but because you came to them, it was different, and then they were willing to go out and all the rest of it.
- A **It's building that trust isn't it? Which is what I was looking towards doing right from the start, hence the practical activities that were quite simple but began conversations really as much as anything.**
- S You see, I think you really gelled when you started cooking and that and exchanging recipes and when you made the yoghurt and you were talking about milk and all the rest of it. I think that was like, when you kind of really got to know them.
- A **Yes. And allsorts of things started coming in then didn't they?**
- S Because you were really interested in like how they did all the Asian cooking and that, and they were loving it, we're actually telling the teacher something.
- A **Yeah.**
- S That was really good.
- A **Yes. Well that sparked really from going in that, in the Asian shop down in Frenchwood and looking at all the vegetables, which I hadn't a clue how to cook, and they were like oh that's such and such, and yeah, and then to go out and buy them and do it, it was good, yeah.**
- S I really like that. It's a good touch.
- A **Walking into the, yeah. Well you would be able to associate with that yourself, you do that every day.**
- S Yeah, that's it. But is that the kind of thing that you were looking for?
- A **Mmm. Yeah, I mean it's quite a different approach I think in some ways and I'm perhaps only just becoming aware of it myself that a lot of arts education projects, that's what they are, they sort of have an issue that they're using for people to learn from, it's not necessarily, it doesn't, you know, it's good, but this is a different approach in that it's, it gives the big concern is [stronger] ownership of it I think...**
- S Yeah, that's it.
- A **... and having somebody who's used to placing that sort of work, or who has more experience of placing that sort of work in a public place, I mean that's where my expertise has come in really, being able to do that, but it's been great to be able to do it as part of a bigger group, you know.**
- S And it was more of a project than them just doing a class.
- A **Yes.**

S That was the best thing about it.

A **Yes.**

S I think, one of the best things about it, it was an actual project, so they started with like, from nothing to something and then had a big launch and that type of thing as well.

A **Yes.**

S That was really good because we don't normally do that, it's just a class, and they'd be oh right it's over, what next, it's like that.

A **Yes.**

S That was really good.

A ***Well it was a way of celebrating them really because they had that ownership so it was a nice opportunity to do that, yeah. I've never worked with two groups and I've never put an exhibition together that was worked from two very different groups with two very different projects, and that was quite difficult and it took me ages to come up with a title, but both groups met at one and that's why I called it [16.53]'See You at One.'***

S That's really clever, I'd never have thought of that.

A ***Because...***

S But when I saw it on there and I thought what does that mean, and then I saw it on there [see you at 1], you know right at the start, and I thought oh right, it's because they meet at one o'clock. I just remember you walking in at one o'clock with your bags.

A ***Yeah. And trying to balance those projects as well, because Pukar's was very much active, exciting, doing things, where [17.31]Sure Start group was more reflective and quiet really. Not wanting to have one focused more than the other really, which was quite hard. I was really pleased when I got this, you know, I could put the exhibition in the Rotunda Café because I think with the food, then the library with the books at the back, it's a great place to put it really. Again, a lot of these shops, [18.14] I think some of these I took in a shop, but some of the other ones that were, when we were cooking...***

S It's good that, have you made any of the recipes yourself after that?

A ***Yes, I made some chapattis at Christmas.***

S Did you, brilliant.

A ***Yeah, I did. I've done something with the green vegetables guar. We must get together again then later down the line perhaps and you have a chat with Poppy and see what develops really.***

S Definitely. I would like to e-mail like over the summer, maybe like over the holidays when we get more children coming in as well, maybe we could get them involved in something.

A ***Right, yeah.***

S I don't know if you can.

A ***I'd have to see how I go because I've got this, next year I'm sort of trying to pull this PhD together, and then after that I'm hoping I'll have more time, but like you say you need a good three months don't you to build something that's lasting and valuable really because it takes time to develop, when you're only meeting for a couple of hours a week, it takes a while to sort of develop something...***

S Yeah, but maybe we could do something with the same group again then...

**A** *Yeah, or introduce one or two new ones, yeah.*

**S** Just to see how it goes, but they have really enjoyed it and thank you. You've given them like an insight into sort of like themselves as well, you know, maybe there was a time when they thought I'll never be able to do that, I'm not going to be able to go away and do this and do that, all the rest of it, but they've done and they've achieved something and that in itself is just fantastic so thank you.

**A** *That's okay. No it's been an exchange really.*

**S** And I hope that it's helped you as well.

**A** *Yes, it has, very much so.*

**S** And you've gained something towards your PhD.

**A** *Yeah. I've gained friends there, it's been nice for that, it's been lovely.*

**S** And it's so good to see them smile because you've only just met them and you don't really know their background and what their life's really like and that type of thing and for them to come in and get excited over that, and it's really good to see them like that because it's a bit of an escape from their lives at home.

**A** *Is that quite different, quite unusual for them to react like that then?*

**S** Yeah, because they get into a routine and they come in and they do the class and they have a chat and have a laugh and all the rest of it, but for them to come in and get all excited about going away and then exchanging recipes and talking about it over the phone as well, it kind of, they got to bond as well more than they normally do, because yeah they do chat when they're in the centre and that, but it kind of gave them something else to kind of focus on really. I was really pleased for them. You really did help them.

**A** *Yeah, thank you. I mean they helped me too, as I say, I feel as though I've gained some friends there, I've been invited round to their homes and things which is lovely isn't it...*

**S** Yeah, it's fantastic, definitely.

**A** *So yeah, let's hope it's the start of something...*

**S** Let's hope so.