Introduction

Of course, its not at all clear how one can claim to hold creative singularity and potential social mutations together. And it has to be admitted that the contemporary Socius hardly lends itself to experimentation with this kind of aesthetic and ethico-political transversality. It nonetheless remains the case that the immense crisis sweeping the planet … open(s) the field up to a different deployment of aesthetic components...it is the very productions of science, technology and social relations which will drift towards aesthetic paradigms.

(Guattari 1992, p.132)

The motivation for developing the environmentally and socially situated art practice studied in this research is to make it fit for purpose. This entails the development of an emergent practice and a research journey that can be described as both an exploration of Felix Guattari’s (1930-1992) supposition above about aesthetics and also as taking action to address the challenges that it poses. The research studies the development of an aesthetic practice to find 'real world' solutions, similar to the way Guattari developed his psychoanalytical experimentation at La Borde Clinic. The research shares Guattari’s life-long quest to wrestle with certain basic questions that he saw standing at the heart of what it means to be human (Elliott 2012). It shares his aim of changing systems that fail to enable ‘transversality’ between individual, community and institutional subjectivity, for as he wrote, “My professional activities in the field of psychotherapy, like my political and cultural engagements, have led me increasingly to put the emphasis on subjectivity as the product of individuals, groups and institutions” (Guattari, 1992, p.1).

It is also focused on these everyday junctures between individual, community and institutional subjectivity and the agency of landscape, agency as explored by various speakers at the Landscape and Critical Agency symposium, which asked, “What agency does landscape possess, as a means of territorial organisation and creative production, to engage critically with the conditions that define the collective aspects of our environment?” (Murray et al, 2012).

Contested concepts of landscape will be studied, a central question being, as John
Wylie asks, “is landscape a scene we are looking at, or a world we are living in? Is landscape all around us or just in front of us? Do we observe or inhabit landscape?” (Wylie 2007, p.4) and Paul Selman, in writing about sustainable landscape planning, comments on this broad spectrum, adding that:

a landscape painting is often of greatest interest for the people, customs or work that it depicts, whilst landscapes noted for their distinctive culture and history will often also be recognisable by their scenery.

(Selman, 2013, pp. 1-2)

Figure 1. Wallbridge, circa 1790's, artist unknown, with kind permission of The Museum in the Park, Stroud. The painting shows cloth being stretched in Rodborough Fields.

Selman develops the case for what he calls a landscape reconnection, writing that:

Many of the desired qualities of cultural landscapes are 'emergent' – that is, they cannot simply be engineered or designed, but have to emerge spontaneously or unexpectedly. Complex, self-organising systems need to be resilient and connected if these phenomena are to stand a chance of emerging serendipitously.

(Selman, 2012, p.20)

The research studies landscape reconnection in the context of community resilience, as championed by the Transition Towns movement (Hopkins, 2008, 2011). Much of the focus about our survival is on technical solutions, and aesthetics are often ignored, indeed as will be seen, the value of aesthetics are often dismissed. I will make the case that subjectivity about landscape, along with science based objectivity, are equally relevant aspects of planning for our futures.
Equally importantly for this research is the study of the practice in the context of art, including as a manifestation of individual subjectivity within other systems and processes, both human and natural. In particular the development of a critique for collaborative art. Questions here relate to the relationship between aesthetics and ethics and artists' autonomy in collaborative ventures, ventures in which the practice is immersed in the context. Annie Lovejoy, discusses similar practices as “context-led arts practice” and points to the importance to contemporary art of making the distinction between art that is “responsive to the particularities of place rather than a model of practice that is applied to a place” (Lovejoy, 2011, p.90). In studying this sort of responsiveness to communities and their landscapes makes the case for there being a reconnection agenda in the arts that parallels Selman's *landscape reconnection* agenda (Selman, 2012). Whilst much of this has been conceptualised, there appears to be a knowledge gap in relationship to the application of practical aesthetics to sustainable community engagement with landscape planning processes.

Consequently, this thesis studies and critiques the development and application of an appropriate facilitative and collaborative aesthetic practice, that can reconnect people and landscape. It studies processes of co-creating environment and as such studies *place making* as a forward looking, participative and transitional process. The research studies the development of the emergent art practice in instigating and reflecting on a number of interventions in landscape change initiatives. The specific focus is community participation in Green Infrastructure Planning and its delivery and in Landscape Character Assessment and related activity. The interventions are studied at a number of scales and complexity. They relate to community ownership and management of a woodland, a town-wide canal restoration project and the rewriting of statutory landscape management guidance.

Overall, it studies the role of practical aesthetics in helping to grow a richer understanding of what survival might mean, not a technological solution to providing for our needs, but an aesthetic gateway to Edmund Husserl (1970) and Jürgen Habermas’s (1987) *Lifeworld*. Importantly, it aims develop an approach that is inclusive. As Graeme Sullivan writes,
the process of making art and interpreting art adds to our understanding as new ideas are presented that help us see in new ways. These creative insights have the potential to transform our understanding by expanding the various descriptive, explanatory, and immersive systems of knowledge that frame individual and community awareness. These forms of understanding are grounded in human experiences and interactions and yield outcomes that can be individually liberating and culturally enlightening.

(Sullivan, 2010, p. 97)

Figure 2. Recreation of the Racking Fields, as depicted in Wallbridge painting. Part of a protest walk led by the author with Stuart Butler and Steve Roberts, July 2013, televised for the BBC’s programme Permission Impossible: Britain’s Planners.

Resonating with art as an aspect of such reconnection, a process with the potential for incorporating aesthetic systems with the rest of life, John Fox has written:

Other cultures do not separate art from life and segregate aesthetic experience to the exclusive realms of the museum, art gallery, theatre or concert hall. Some cultures integrate art and nature with a holistic perspective and reverence which is missing in our dominant culture

(Fox, 2012).

Clive Cazeaux (2011) points to the difficulties in defining 'Aesthetic'. He writes that the word has three distinct but related meanings as follows:

(1) the ancient Greek *aisthesis*, or perception by means of the senses. (2) the modern (eighteenth- and nineteenth-century) sense of the beautiful in art and nature; and (3) the critical dimension assigned to art, experience and the senses in the continental tradition of philosophy since Kant

(Cazeaux, 2011, p. XIV).
Despite its concern with landscape, the term aesthetics in this practice is not specifically concerned with English Romantics such as William Gilpin (1724-1804) and his use of aesthetics as in the *picturesque* (1768, 1782). It shares as much ground with Arnold Berleant’s social aesthetic (Berleant, 2005), Nicholas Bourriaud’s relational aesthetic (Bourriaud, 2002), Suzi Gablik’s connective aesthetic (Gablik, 1992), Grant Kester’s dialogic aesthetic (Kester, 1999/2000) and Jacques Rancière’s linking of aesthetics and politics (Rancière, 2004). Having said this, the study does share Gilpin’s central activities of walking and drawing in the landscape. However the purpose of the practice studied in this research is concerned with walking and drawing not to represent the landscape but to perform it as an aspect of reconnection and collective place making.

The research is situated at the juncture of facilitating community landscape projects, participatory art and walking. Together these various aspects of the practice incorporate a wide range of aesthetic activities, such as walking and drawing with people, writing and photography, digital collage, project management, tree planting, fire lighting, cooking, facilitating meetings, conferences and arts interventions. The research studies the application of this through a central aspect of the emergent practice, in short-hand referred to as *art-walking*, as an example of integrating rational and aesthetic world views, as Rebecca Solnit writes: “While walking, the body and the mind can work together, so that thinking becomes almost a physical, rhythmic act – so much for the Cartesian mind/body divide” (Solnit, 2001, p. xv.). Such a position is modelled in this research, a toing and froing between theory, practice and context. As Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth write, “in practice then, affect and cognition are never fully separable – if for no other reason than that thought is itself a body, embodied” (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010, p.2). They also paraphrase Brian Massumi (2002), writing that he has emphasised that “approaches to affect would feel a great deal like a free fall if our most familiar modes of inquiry had begun with movement rather than stasis, with process always underway rather than position taken”(Gregg and Seigworth, 2010, p.2).

In writing about his idea of post discipline practice as transformative research,
Sullivan uses an overarching metaphor of the “braid”, to capture his ideas, writing:

When seen in relation to surrounding empiricist, interpretivist, and critical research traditions, different practices emerge as artistic inquiry twists and braids in response to purposes and possibilities. This dynamic process opens up several relational and transformative research practices that are found within and across, between and around the framework, as visual arts research proceeds from a stable state to a liquid form of understanding. (Sullivan, 2010, p.102)

With reference to research paradigms as set out by Norman Denzin and Yvonne Lincoln (Denzin & Lincoln, Eds., 2005, pp.183-374), the research paradigm is participatory in that, ontologically, it reflects a belief in “participatory reality-subjective-objective reality, co-created by mind and given cosmos” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.195).

Epistemologically it reflects “critical subjectivity in participatory transaction with cosmos” with an “extended epistemology of experiential, propositional, and practical knowing; co-created findings” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.195). The inquiry is set in the 'real world' in as much as the outputs will have implications on the local landscape, other people and species as well as on my own practice. As Colin Robson writes, “Much real world research focuses on problems and issues of direct relevance to people's lives, to help find ways of dealing with the problem and better understanding the issue” (Robson, 2011, p.4). The inquiry is akin to Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury's ideas of Action Research (2001), and consequently the context is not background but is an integral part of the research and the research process. The context can be looked at in a number of ways; theoretical and practical and, according to Margaret Riel, “local and professional” (CCAR, 2006-2014). There is a continual interchange between these different contexts and indeed the research journey can be traced as this toing and froing, a dynamic relationship between artist and social and environmental context and theory.

In undertaking the research, the delineation between research and emergent practice has moved in and out of focus, reminiscent of Susan Finley's, “Who is an artist? Who is a researcher? These are questions that underscore the post-modern
I think of action research as a process of deep inquiry into one’s practices in service of moving towards an envisioned future, aligned with values. Action research, can be seen as a systematic, reflective study of one’s actions, and the effects of these actions, in a workplace or organizational context. As such, it involves deep inquiry into one’s professional practice.

(CCAR, 2013)

The relationship between art practice, research and context is important in manifesting the relationship between individual and group, as Sullivan writes, “not only does the topic or subject of research undergo critical change, but the artist-researcher is also changed by the creative inquiry process” (Sullivan, 2010, p.104).

This practice lead, qualitative research studies how a multi-faceted practice can be developed in context to gather and collate the many views and values - values based on everyday experience of landscape - and integrate them with institutional and ecological systems. In discussing these everyday experiences as landscape affect, Berberich et al. write: “What sets affect apart, particularly in the ways that it engages with landscapes, is not its emphasis on the grand narratives... but its valuing the small scale, the ordinary, and the everyday” (Berberich et al, 2013, p.316). They refer to Nigel Swift’s use of “fugitive work” as “the little, the messy and the jerry-rigged as a part of politics and not just incidental to it” (Thrift, 2008, p. 197). It can be argued then that the tendency for policy makers to take a strategic overview sets up a tension with locally held and often passionate attachment to landscapes. The negative use of the word ‘nimbyism’ seems to undervalue such passion.

The methodology applied is based on “political participation in collaborative action enquiry: primacy of the practical; use of language grounded in shared experiential context” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.195). This includes non-verbal communication such as drawing, photography and video. Drawing and walking as key elements of art-walking, are studied as accessible means of participation, along with digital photography and related aspects of web based exhibiting. Angela Rogers writes of
drawing that it is “a compelling activity accessible to everyone who can hold an implement, manipulate a mouse or make a mark with their body or other instrument” (Rogers, 2008, p.3). Likewise walking suits itself to participatory interventions, especially as there are different types of walking, as described by Sue Porter in the AHRC funded *Walking Interconnections* project, “from the long walk in the countryside to the local walk to the corner shop – as well as the many different types of walkers: children, the elderly, wheelchair users, people with guide dogs, mothers pushing prams…” (University of Bristol, 2013).

The research as far as it is in the 'real world' could perhaps be argued to be the role of the social sciences, or as “research through art”; one of Sir Christopher Frayling's definitions of artistic research based on Herbert Read's distinction about art education (Frayling, 1993/94); however, as the participatory aspects of the research are a key element of the arts practice, it follows that the research is, to use another of Frayling's definitions - “research for art”. Its worth saying here that it is research for art as life.

Jill Bennett's further questioning about the relationship between an arts practice and its wider, social setting is pertinent here:

So what can art – or the study of aisthesis more generally – actually do in this field of social relations that is not already accomplished by social science? In what sense can we talk about the practical value of aesthetics without merely placing art in the service of a social agenda or promoting its 'application' to other fields? Answers to these questions may be discerned through an examination of how art and aesthetics encounter 'problems', how these practices re-imagine social relationships in the face of such problems, and how they generate new spaces and terms of operation beyond the social identities already in place. Aesthetics in this sense does not confine itself to the study of a fixed set of objects (objects of art, objects of popular culture). In fact, it might be argued that aesthetics with a real-world orientation perpetually reforms itself, looking beyond its given 'objects'. It extends the broader field of social enquiry or humanities … so as to render visible the network of relations that produces them.

(Bennett, 2012, p.5)

The rendering visible, or otherwise making apparent 'the network of relations' is important to the research, especially the particular challenge of sustaining the interventions by integrating them with wider, forward looking, community activity. In
this way it can be seen in the context of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas of “immanence” and “a people to come” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.108). This rich, forward looking collaborative approach is shared by A/r/tography, about which Barbara Bickel and colleagues reflect that such research “requires a relational practice that co-revises itself in/with community experiences” (Bickel et al, 2011, p.87). This is another toing and froing, or reflective process. Returning to the value that an arts practice can bring to such research, they quote Carol Becker's conception about the role of artist in the post-modern world:

In our collective Western consciousness, and probably our unconsciousness as well, we do not have images of artists as socially concerned citizens of the world, people who could serve as leaders and help society determine, through insights and wisdom, its desirable political course...In their role as spokespersons for multiple points of view and advocates for a healthy critique of society, certain artists should be understood as public intellectuals... these amateur intellectuals [are] forever inventing themselves and renegotiating their place on the border zones between disciplines, never stuck in any one of them. (Becker, 2002, p. 12)

(Bickell et al, 2011, p.88)

Again, this helps establish the appropriateness of a transversal and mutating arts practice as a real world research methodology; qualitative research concerned with gaining understanding rather than explaining or proving. Finley describes such research as: “... expressive research that portrays the multidimensionality of human life as compared with truth findings, proofs, and conclusivity in traditional social science.” (Finley 2005: 683). And I would add to this its portrayal of non-human life and suggest a similar comparison with traditional natural science.

Sullivan writes : “If a goal of any inquiry is to be able to act on the knowledge gained... then this quest for understanding means individual and social transformation is a worthy human enterprise, for to know means to be able to think and act and to thereby change things (Sullivan, 2010, p. 97). These ideas are shared in Riel's description of action research:

Action research provides a path of learning from and through one's practice by working through a series of reflective stages that facilitate the development of progressive problem solving (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993). Over time, action researchers develop a deep understanding of the
ways in which a variety of social and environmental forces interact to create complex patterns. Since these forces are dynamic, action research is a process of living one's theory into practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010) (CCAR, 2013).

Sullivan identifies four reflexive practices as set out in Figure 3 which offer a way of reflecting on an arts practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflexive practice</th>
<th>Facets of reflexive practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-reflexive</td>
<td>An inquiry process directed by personal interest and creative insight – open to alternative conceptions and imaginative solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meta-analytical</td>
<td>Reflection on information gathered, review of conceptual strategies used, consideration of other options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open dialogue</td>
<td>Interpretation of research findings through open dialogue, initially within the research project and eventually within the research community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning problematic situations</td>
<td>Issue driven inquiry, identifies problems and opens opportunities for change. Emancipatory, offers opportunities for participants to enact artistic, social, political, educational or cultural change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Reflexive practice according to Graeme Sullivan

Sullivan suggests that this sort of reflexive practice “has considerable appeal for visual arts researchers whose practice, in general, is investigative, multilayered, and inclusive of a diversity of theories and practices” (Sullivan, 2010, p. 110).

A practice which transforms the researcher could be seen to lack rigour and transferability. For this reason, and in keeping with the analytical framework and values expressed earlier, and importantly in response to the context, an additional framework was developed as a way of analysing the research findings. This came about through reflecting on the multi-faceted nature of the research. Consequently a weaving metaphor is established as a means of studying four facets of the interventions. Together these four facets, to use the weaving metaphor, are the warp of the weave, with the community initiatives making up the weft. However, it is important to recognise that in reality these facets are not neatly linear nor sequential, with the experience of each travelling across time and place, like a weaver’s shuttle to impact on each part of the process in making the weavings. The four facets are introduced below.
The use of this particular metaphor could lead to some confusion as one of the interventions had been called *The Weave*. For this reason, the intervention is referred to in this thesis as *The (Canal) Weave*, although in practice it continues to be known as *The Weave*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facet</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>negotiating shared futures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encountering</td>
<td>Facilitating landscape experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanging</td>
<td>revealing landscape aspirations and narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembling</td>
<td>reflecting with project partners, sustaining a community-landscape aesthetic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 4](image_url) The Warp of the Practice

**Collaborating: negotiating shared futures.**

What emerges is an aspiration for individual and collective reappropriation of the production of subjectivity... able to claim to replace the old ideologies which abusively sectorised the social, private and the civil, and which were fundamentally Incapable of establishing transversal junctions between the political, the ethical and the aesthetic.

(Guattari, 1992, pp. 133-134)

The sections entitled **Collaborating** reflect on partnership development, agreeing project briefs and roles. It is about negotiating a long-term shared future for our shared landscape. It is also about negotiating the role of the arts practice in this envisioning. In questioning the meaning of “collaboration”, Kester reminds us of its negative undertones such as those linked to Vichy France and raises related questions:

Is the identity of the many based on coercive consensus or radical plurality?
Is the one defined by narcissistic projection or an opening out to alterity?
These are some of the most pressing and political and ethical questions of our day, and they are also central to the collaborative art projects

(Kester, 2011, p.2)

Each intervention in the research has these questions at their centre, and the section on collaborating reflects on how the practice has negotiated mutually
beneficial outcomes. It is important to say at this point that while the initiatives are collaborative, they are not necessarily, or even possibly, totally inclusive. Bishop questions inclusivity, suggesting that it can be an example of “an inflexible mode of political correctness” (Bishop 2006, p.5). However, the sections reflect on how participation has been encouraged in order to increase engagement with landscape change processes.

The sections also reflect on collaboration as a creative process capable of overcoming difference. Katherine Clarke of *muf architecture/art* makes an important point about this, writing:

> Although it sounds obvious to say it, collaboration is about difference, otherwise why bother. Acknowledging difference opens up a space to recognise what you don't know, what you do know and what you didn't know you knew; this, far more than the material outcome, is the substance of collaboration.

(Clarke, 1999)

Figure 5. Jointly produced diagram by myself and Max Comfort as a part of planning the next stages of the Weave. We took it in turns to draw and comment and draw again.

As well as these learning aspects of collaboration, the section reflects on the longer term viability of the initiatives post intervention, in particular shared
responsibility for achieving their aims. Just to repeat, the future of the long-term landscape is the collaboration, as well as the shorter-term interventions.

![Figure 6. Negotiating future collaborations at the Spring Green Conference, part of The River Map project. Convivial conversations to address common ground and difference. Event co-designed and facilitated by the author.]

**Encountering: facilitating landscape experience**

Only personal connection with the landscape can allow people to know their landscape in depth, including its opportunities and threats and base their actions and activities on knowledge of the landscape in all its complex relationships. Personal engagement with a specific landscape can guarantee the sustainable development of the old landscape into new living ones, taking into account the value of the former ones

(Council of Europe, 2006, p.119).

The *Encountering* sections reflect on the practice of being outside with people, often occurring through the medium of walking and drawing. Walking is just one of a number of “affective bodily practices” (Owain Jones, 2010, slide 3) used. Others include cooking, playing, yoga, fire lighting, tree planting, hedge laying, building dams. Their agency in revealing what Kathleen Stewart refers to as “Ordinary affects”, which she says “are public feelings that begin and end in broad circulation” and are also “the stuff that seemingly intimate lives are made” (Stewart, 2007, p.3), is reflected on.
Within the wider nature-culture, mind-body junctures, *encountering* can be seen as facilitating the ongoing flow between people and environment and exploring the affect of such places on us (Gregg and Seigworth, eds., 2010). It can be seen as a way of exploring Emily Brady and Pauline Phemister's notion of 'value – space', their idea for understanding human-environment relations and values (Brady and Phemister, eds., 2012). *Encountering* is studied as a means of co-exploring these relations - “questioning the very boundaries between the non-human and the human, suggesting more a symbiotic relationship in which the identity and values of the one are informed by the identities and values of the other” (Brady and Phemister, eds., 2012, p. ix).
**Exchanging:** revealing landscape aspirations and narratives.

It is wise to dream beyond what we currently believe to be attainable. Once we have done so, the next step is to co-imagine the dream in a more shareable form. This means exchanging dreams and seeing how they can be conjoined to enhance one another


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Figure 8. A *First Friday Walk* along The River Severn at Arlingham.

Figure 9. Exchanging views and dreams about Folly Wood. Event co-designed and facilitated by the author.
Reflections on this facet of the interventions studies how the participant's values and various aspirations in relationship to each other and to landscape are revealed and negotiated. Various ways of creating this community narrative are analysed. The properties of these exchanges as a learning opportunity for participants is studied, including how any findings can be folded back into wider processes. Thought is given to the most appropriate means of disseminating the narratives, sharing the visions and moving to action.

**Assembling: reflecting with project partners, sustaining a practical community-landscape aesthetic.**

This facet of the practice was developed towards the end of the research process and applies to all the interventions. It was driven by the outcomes from the other facets and the reflections upon them. As such it incorporates some of the conclusions from the research. Again, how the findings are shared with project partners as a learning opportunity are studied, in particular relating to discussions about the intervention processes, rather than the outcomes for individual initiatives.

Figure 10. *Loom directory.* Making a display to encourage involvement in various projects
Another aspect of this facet that will be reflected upon is its role in increasing participation; to further broadcast the findings, to invite increased participation and new projects and to celebrate action.

In addition to these four facets, the following criteria for reflection have been developed, based on ideas from Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt’ s book about practice as research (Barrett and Bolt, 2007).

- enable community participation in landscape change processes at different scales
- incorporate subjective and objective views in decision making
- bridge between individual, community, institutions and environment
- open out into the broadest questions about the kind of society and culture that we espouse and wish to inhabit and promote
- announce locally different forms of sociability, environmental interactivity and collective storytelling
- support sustainable, community processes
- lead to action
- elucidate the value of creative arts practice and reveal new knowledge

Figure 11. Criteria for reflecting upon Research objectives

The final point needs to be expanded. As already referred to, the research, using Frayling’s definition (1993/94) is about ‘research for art’, research, in this case, into the development of an art practice that is based upon facilitating processes to create a practical aesthetic with the hope of sustaining relationships between individual, community and landscape in a context of institutional frameworks; core ingredients for growing resilience. These criteria therefore apply to the transformative nature of the research on the art practice in its attempts to perform sustainability. This is studied in Part Two in the context of specific interventions.

Another aspect of rigour was keeping an on-line blog\(^7\) as an aid to reflection and dissemination of information about the interventions. It gives an impression of how the process was messy, not neatly linear nor sequential as perhaps suggested by
reading the thesis. Similarly, the appendices enable the reader to make their own
direct interpretations of the practice.

This section revisits art-walking and metaphor as research methods. These are not
the only methods used but each one is core to the practice. They are the key
means through which the *encountering*, *exchanging* and *assembling* facets are
manifested.

The application and development of an art-walking practice is studied as a
practical aesthetic process, a means of reflecting on experience of landscape and
folding in other community-landscape understanding and knowledge.

In her history of walking, Rebecca Solnit comments on its amateur and inclusive
nature, picking up on its transdisciplinary nature; she writes:

> To use a walking metaphor, it trespasses through everybody else’s field -
through anatomy, anthropology, architecture, gardening, geography, political
and cultural history, literature, sexuality, religious studies – and doesn't stop
in any of them on its long route.

(Solnit, 2001, p.4)

The development of an art-walking practice, will be studied as a way of collecting,
reflecting on and disseminating this multitude of values. Developing a practical
community-landscape aesthetic.

The use of metaphor as a means of revealing and sustaining these shared values,
vision and agency will be studied. Sullivan writes that “Within the context of art
practice as research, language forms such as metaphor and analogy are used in
visual ways as agents that challenge and change things” (Sullivan, 2010, p.108).
The transformational role of metaphor in changing understandings of community-
landscape and its propensity to bring about change, both in the context of the on
the ground interventions and the practice itself will be a particular focus for the
research.

Cazeaux explores metaphor's facility to provide an ever richer understanding of
life, resonating with Finley's description of qualitative research's role to *portray the multidimensionality of human life*, and adds that:

there has been a phenomenal growth of interest in metaphor as a subject of study in recent decades. While literature and the arts, as far back as Plato, have always recognized metaphor as a source of poetic meaning, this new interest in metaphor is part of a shift in thinking which asserts that the metaphorical creation of meaning holds significance for the way we understand the construction of knowledge and the world

(Cazeaux, 2007, p.1)

The thesis is structured into two distinct but interconnected sections: Part One and Part Two.

Part One explores the context for the interventions through four chapters (1-4) which discuss the historical and theoretical background to the practice conducted as part of the thesis.

Chapter 1 establishes the environmental, personal, community and political context, making links between these aspects of life and linking local and global concerns.

Chapter 2 uses a mapping metaphor to explore an historical and theoretical context that includes landscape, aesthetics, mimesis, metaphor, disinterest, universality, ethics and artist autonomy.

Chapter 3 takes this theoretical framework, using it to explore work made/performed prior to this thesis, making the case for its relevance as context of the practical research as described in Part Two.

Chapter 4 studies the work of other artists, making the case that the recent history of art movements such as Situationists, Land Artist and Walking Artists can be understood as forerunners to the littoralist practice being studied.

Part One ends with a summary of findings, including the proposal of a new relational aesthetic that includes nature's agency.
Part Two comprises three chapters (5-7) which study the fieldwork and appropriateness of a proposed relational aesthetic by focussing upon three interventions in the context of Green Infrastructure Strategy and Landscape Character Assessment. It does this by reflecting upon four facets of the practice: collaborating, encountering, exchanging and assembling. These reflections are supplemented by reference to three long distance walks.

Chapter 5 considers research conducted as part of The (Canal) Weave, which incorporated art-walking in conjunction with an analysis of drawing through animation practice within a community engagement context. This formed part of revealing a community narrative and questions whether it is possible to influence decision making about landscape change processes as part of the restoration of the Cotswolds Canals. Fundamental to these processes was a desire to explore embodiment within a place and the potential for the development art practices to consolidate and manifest this phenomenology.

Chapter 6, River Map, further explores ideas of embodiment and phenomenology through a project based around the River Frome. In which theoretical ideas explored in Part One, were tested and extended through working together with other artists. As part of this process we exhibited photographs, videos, drawings and writings produced by the artist which included specially designed sketch books. This stimulated discussions at ten community events with the aim of exploring whether it was possible to use such methodologies to influence the re-writing of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Landscape Character Assessment.

Chapter 7, Caring for Folly Wood, interventions incorporate outcomes learned from the Canal Weave and River Map, handing over the autonomy of the project to the participant in which my role was as creative facilitator.

The thesis ends with a summary, The Assemblage, further utilising the weaving metaphor to analyse and synthesise the research findings and their impact.

The thesis concludes by consolidating the learning and looking to new questions and action.
As usual I had taken the dogs for a lunchtime walk on the common, but this time I had a particular focus on a health scare that a visit to the doctors had unexpectedly thrown at me that very morning. As the walk progressed I noticed that I was walking along what appeared to be a weather front above me. One side was clear blue, the other very dark indeed. The sun was at the interface of the two, dipping in and out of cloud, the temperature rising and falling. In due course the weather front moved away, leaving me in bright sunshine. I couldn’t help but see this as symbolic that the cancer scare I was worrying about would end positively. I felt elated enough to say to a passer-by that it was a great day. The crow cawed as it flew overhead.

Crow One, December 2014

Figure 12
If we imagine the research process as a walk for which the researcher has to develop a purpose, a route, accommodation and timescale, then this early part of the research can be seen as decision making about how to prepare - where to go, what to take, what not to take, who to travel with – folding in the context and experience and learning from earlier practice. Mark Smith writes that:

In praxis there can be no prior knowledge of the right means by which we realize the end in a particular situation. For the end itself is only specified in deliberating about the means appropriate to a particular situation (Bernstein 1983: 147). As we think about what we want to achieve, we alter the way we might achieve that. As we think about the way we might go about something, we change what we might aim at. There is a continual interplay between ends and means.

Part One necessarily begins with a broad brush, cross referencing between various contexts - environmental, personal, political and social - as well as toing and froing between theory and practice. I start by establishing the relevance of the research in a personal, a local environmental and social context, and widen this in terms of a global environmental agenda. Next the research is placed in the context of aesthetics, participatory art, democracy, ethics and art. Ideas of transversality are considered as a process for enabling and encouraging community resilience, both resistance and change.

The Transition Movement® (Hopkins, 2008) is put forward as an example of this, as Rob Hopkins, its founder, writes in what he calls “A Cheerful Disclaimer”:

We truly don’t know if transition will work. It is a social experimentation of a grand scale. What we are convinced of is this:

- If we wait for governments, it'll be too little, too late.
- If we act as individuals, it will be too little.

But if we act as communities, it might just be enough, just in time

(Hopkins, 2011: p.17)

The question of why and when such community initiatives come about is referred to. Guattari, in discusses 'the domain of social ecology' says 'there will be times of struggle in which everyone will feel impelled to decide on common objectives and to act “like little soldiers” (Guattari, 2000, p.34). Although this “like little soldiers”
analogy resonates with history of Stroud Scarlet®, replacing it with 'like a weaving community' introduces a weaving metaphor which is even more appropriate to Stroud, suggesting a community drawn to working together and with its landscape a resilient community. Recent examples include resisting road schemes, successfully resisting the demolition of much loved buildings, and, as studied in this research, the buying of Folly Wood. Such resilience is described as a type of responsiveness in another of Guattari's analogies when he relates the manner in which artists may alter their work “after the intrusion of some accidental detail, an event-incident ” (2000, p.35). There are of course many event-incidents that local communities respond to – public sector cuts, flooding, housing shortages, disasters abroad and this research only addresses a limited number of these. Some of the broader event-incidents that people in Stroud are coming together around are shown in Figure 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>– species moving from south to north, tree disease and effects of drought, wind damage from increasingly stormy weather patterns.   Species loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>– end of farm subsidies, hobby farming, diversification, extensive use of land, loss of habitat and species, loss of connectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post oil energy needs</td>
<td>– no mention of fracking but some wind turbines, decommissioning of old and possible building of new power stations &amp; power lines. Proposed Severn Barrage and destruction of internationally valuable habitat. Fuel poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban development</td>
<td>- Housing pressures without proper infrastructure or relevance to community-landscape. Housing shortages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>- Woodlands un-managed, despite fuel shortages &amp; potential carbon offset loss of diversity, loss of connectivity, tree disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal restoration</td>
<td>- increased housing, loss of amenity, green space, habitat and species, loss of connectivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of local identity/character</td>
<td>- disconnection with past culture, loss of buildings and other cultural artefacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13. Local concerns that the interventions address.

These same concerns, and the communities response to them inform and transform the practice, including the very initial stages of the artist/researchers role in instigating projects.
The question is not whether this landscape, and others like it, will change, but how the emergent practice can interact with process of change in order to sustain and enhance its value in a global and local context. Such values include the opportunity to participate in, to use Sue Clifford and Angela King's terms, the moments that shape “the evolution of our common culture as expressed in landscape” (Clifford and King in Morland 1998:15-16).
Chapter 1

Environmental, Personal, Community and Political Context

The relationships that human-nature interactions have to other components within interdependent systems at many different scales may be one critical source of resilience in disaster and related contexts. In other words, the affinity we humans have for the rest of nature, the process of remembering that attraction, and the urge to express it through creation of restorative environments, which may also restore or increase ecological function, may confer resilience across multiple scales.

(Keith G. Tidball, 2014, p. 53)

This chapter identifies personal motivation for the research and places it in an environmental, social and political context and by doing so begins to fold them into the development of the practice. A practice aimed at reconnecting people and the rest of nature.

Selman notes this disconnect between human systems and natural processes, writing, “it has often been suggested that the disruption of systems that make up physical landscape, and the erosion of bonds between people and place, might lie at the source of much environmental and social malaise” (Selman, 2012, p.5).

These environmental and social challenges that people involved in the Transition Towns Movement for example, face up to are clearly huge and complex issues that are beyond the scope of any single person, practice, organisation or discipline to resolve. Perhaps consequently, for many people it is difficult to feel motivated to take them on, maybe feeling it easier to become more and more disconnected.

How then can a littoral arts practice hope to have role to play? The first part of this question requires us looking at hope. I have come to understand that underlying my practice is a resolute hopefulness. Not a shoulder shrugging “I hope it will work”, but a hopefulness that provides the impetus for bringing about change despite the many challenges. At the 2012 Hope and Resilience Conference, at the University of Leicester, Taiwo Afuape spoke about how hope is not something that one person achieves alone but is the responsibility of a community. That ‘resilience’ and ‘hope’ are not individual characteristics and feelings but relational processes and activities and that when we listen out for the ways people respond
to their circumstances, and co-create a story of resistance, we engender hope (University of Leicester, 2012). In the context of community resilience, broadcaster Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's forward to The Transition Companion ends with:

> It is a book that is unashamedly ambitious and far-reaching in its scope and vision. But, if we are to successfully navigate what's coming towards us, and hold on to our identity, community and our shared optimism for the future, that is exactly what we need.

(Hopkins, 2011: p.12)

This provides an additional context for the research for me; not just hope for the future but hope that hopefulness itself, an aspect of humanity, will be carried into the future.

Hope is an easy target for cynicism by referring to it as 'false hope', 'jam for tomorrow', 'vain hope'. However if it is matched by a realism about the situation as we find it, it is an alternative to ignoring problems. Suzi Gablik suggests a role that artists can play by “looking seriously into the realities of the times” (Volkmann, 2007, p.272). Such realities include the evidence, albeit contested, that we have already contributed to changing the earth's climate irreversibly. WWF's Living Planet Report, reckons that biodiversity had declined globally by around 30% between 1970 and 2008 and by 60% in the tropics largely due to human manipulation of habitats, depletion of natural resources and release of carbon and other pollutants into the atmosphere. Additionally, despite the increase in efficiency of resource extraction and usage, the consumption of resources by many of the people living in such parts of the world as the Stroud Valleys, have a disproportionately large impact on threatened landscapes, communities, cultures and species elsewhere.

Indisputably, huge numbers of we humans continue to die from malnutrition in part brought about by natural processes but also the depletion of resources, the over management and over consumption of landscapes and a dislocation between peoples and between people and other natural processes. It is therefore with a large degree of humility and hope in the face of this global and local context, Guattari's “immense crisis sweeping the planet” (Guattari, 1992, p.132), that the research, which is largely undertaken amongst the relatively affluent hills and valleys of
England, is offered with the intention of making a positive contribution.

With an analysis of the situation clearly to the fore, hope can be a catalyst or source of energy for attempting to bring about change. Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone write about what they refer to as 'active hope':

It is this kind of hope that starts our journey — knowing what we hope for and what we’d like, or love, to take place. It is what we do with this hope that really makes the difference. Passive hope is about waiting for external agencies to bring about what we desire. Active Hope is about becoming active participants in bringing about what we hope for.

(Macy and Johnstone, 2012: p.3)

Importantly, Macy and Johnstone distinguish between active hope and optimism, saying that active hope is “a practice...something we do rather than have” and can be applied “even to areas where we feel hopeless. The guiding impetus is intention; we choose what we aim to bring about, act for, or express.” This is similar to the creative process where the doing is the finding out, and as Macy and Johnstone go on to say: “Rather than weighing our chances and proceeding only when we feel hopeful, we focus on our intention and let it be our guide” (Macy and Johnstone, 2012, p.3).

Art critic and educator, Grant Kester has written similarly about the position of socially engaged art practice regards its ability to bring about change, accepting that alone they cannot be expected to “bring about a sudden and absolute revolution, or a single seismic, shift in political consciousness” (Kester, 2011, p.212). Whether this is desirable or not is another question, however, Kester's suggestion that such practice can contribute to “an emerging mosaic of oppositional practices that is both local in effect and international in scope” (Kester, 2011, p.212), is very similar to the Transition Town's purpose of bringing about local change as a part of a wider, international network – sometimes referred to as The Great Turning (Hopkins 2012, Macy and Johnstone, 2012, Reason and Melanie Newman, 2013). Kester also asks what would such “political resistance look like when there are no guarantees?”(Kester, 2011, p.212 ) and it is here that the idea of active hope resonates.
Kester calls for a way of analysing whether such practices are collectively successful in bringing about “sustainable and extensive” change and suggests “a cumulative process of reciprocal testing that moves between practical experience and reflective insight”, saying:

For many ... artists ... this process begins with experiential knowledge generated through collective or collaborative practice and an increased sensitivity to the complex registers of repression and resistance, agency and instrumentalisation, which structure any given site or context. It also entails an ongoing commitment to the creation of new relationships and affiliations with other collectives, activist organisations, and NGOs in order to develop a more formal and coherent understanding of the specific insights generated through practice.

(Kester, 2011: pp. 212-13)

This wider collaborative framework is an additional criteria for the research to address - to enable more voices to be heard and to help take forward shared learning – and as such makes the learning and its dissemination an integral part of the emergent practice.

Part of the issue about which voices are heard relates to the nature of the conversations. For example, as mentioned, in the planning context, conversations are technical and so people who want to make other points may feel excluded. In his thinking on deliberative democracy, Jurgen Habermas adapts aspects of Edmund Husserl's (1859-1938) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1908-1961) writing on phenomenology and in particular the idea of 'lifeworld' (Habermas,1987).

Habermas's perspective on this aspect of democratic debate is that our lifeworlds – family life, cultural conventions, personal desire, feelings and dreams – are “colonised” by systemic mechanisms that introduce us to a second type of world – a world of specialisation, clocking in, policies, corporate speak and media. Habermas contends that this steers us towards “a block of quasi-natural reality”, saying that “within these media steered subsystems society congeals into a second nature” (Habermas,1987: 154). In other words he sees the separation of aesthetics from other aspects of life as a part of a specialisation that he suggests is a result of modernism's specialisation of science, art and morals. However, Habermas considers modernism to be an unfinished project. The question of whether and how post-post-modernity can include a continuation of the modernist
project is seen as being important outcome of this research; an example of sustaining vision and ideas across generations.

In my work, I use the analogy of communities as organisations - not necessarily well organised, but people living close to each other, sometimes meshing into groups, sometimes with common interests which might be unclear and unstated and with unresolved differences. Similar to Habermas's *lifeworld*, Debra Meyerson and Maureen Scully (1995) in writing about organisational change, introduced the concept of the *Tempered Radical* (TR). They write that “‘Tempered Radicals’ are individuals who identify with and are committed to their organisations, and also committed to a cause, community, or ideology that is fundamentally different from, and possibly at odds with the dominant culture” (Meyerson and Scully, 1995, p.586). They suggest that despite commitment to the organisation, the TR will possibly have to reconcile these differences by leaving the organisation. In my work I choose to work with and support others who carry similar commitments as myself regard the dominant culture, Guattari's “integrated world capitalism” (Guattari, 1989) - not to leave – for where else is there to go – but to question, disrupt and change its outlook regards taking on board social equality and environmental agendas.

Although the context for the research is landscape change in Gloucestershire's Stroud Valleys, it has a wider context, relevance and application. For example, as one of the world’s most densely populated countries, and with high fertility, long life expectancy and net population increases from immigration above emigration, England's population is set to increase$^{13}$ and the landscape will consequently change. These various pressures are controlled by the statutory sector as a part of the democratic process, particularly through the designation of protected landscapes and more generally, the Town and Country Planning System. However, its biological, physical and cultural future is increasingly shaped by pressures beyond the reach of individuals, communities and local planning systems, as the provision of cheap food or cheap green field sites for development are set within an increasingly global market place. A current, local example is the awarding at appeal by the Minister of State of a contract to build a waste incinerator on the edge of Stroud, despite much local opposition, including from the district council$^{14}$. 

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Another central issue is that planning processes find it difficult to take on board subjective criteria, whereas scientific and other quantifiable data is taken into account. This point was well made at the 2014 national CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) AGM, where their President, Sir Andrew Motion, quoted the Stroud District Council's Chief Planning Officer, referring to a planning application in the valley made famous by Laurie Lee (1914-1997): “the planning system tries to breed the emotion out of you. Heritage and culture is about the soul. If we fail the Slad Valley it's almost open season” (Motion, 2014). The inquiry addresses how to bridge this sensory/rational dichotomy. How to bridge between everyday and subjective ways of valuing place and strategic, institutional understandings of the same places. The fact that our systems struggle with incorporating this subjectivity can be seen to be a great irony; for example, many of the qualitative judgements about landscapes in the planning system tend to be delivered by experts, who are themselves often influenced by centuries old work of landscape painters, garden designers, poets and writers. Artists who were responding to now defunct social orders and limited world views.

The Council of Europe recognises the importance that landscape plays in shaping our lives and through it's *European Landscape Convention (ELC)*, seeks to make the decision making process more democratic, they state:

> Landscape must become a mainstream political concern, since it plays an important role in the well-being of Europeans who are no longer willing to tolerate the alterations of their surroundings by technical and economic developments in which they have had no say. Landscape is the concern of all and lends itself to democratic treatment

(Europe, 2000, II, x23).

In commenting on the challenges facing the implementation of the the *ELC*, Michel Prieur, expert to the Council of Europe, further emphasises and prioritises the need for community participation:

> The fact that landscape involves a sensitive relationship to an area, without any ownership link between the beholder and the beheld, changes landscape into a genuine 'common resource'... Public participation in decision making is one of the fundamental principles of the European Landscape Convention...recognising the public as the principle actors in
decision-making processes affecting their living environment and quality of life and it is clearly the area in which most progress must be made...

(Council of Europe, 2006: p.14)

Natural England, who are charged with delivering the ELC in England, are also aware of the knowledge gap in delivering community participation and of the issues relating to what they refer to as their “EcoServices Systems”\(^\text{16}\) approach. This is an example of an attempt to combine scientific and cultural values, and whilst they have a range of tools for quantifying the scientific ones, the “cultural services” are more challenging, as expressed in this recent personal correspondence from the Principal Adviser Innovation in their Conservation Strategy and Innovation Team:

> The National Ecosystem Assessment team are aware of this challenge and there has been joint project work with natural and social scientists to try and gather data from people directly. But the methodology involved responses to images of locations around the study area, images generated by the researchers rather than by people themselves. In contrast, your research is generating first hand responses and doing so through arts practice.

(Stearn, 2014)

Policy making and delivery is a role of national and local government. In terms of a policy framework regards landscape change, broadly, it is the District Council's Local Plan\(^\text{17}\) and The Cotswold Conservation Board's Management Plan\(^\text{18}\), along with the Gloucestershire County Council and various Town and Parish Councils plans, that provide a framework. This can be seen as channelling institutional subjectivity. These policies seek to balance social and environmental considerations, market forces, technological possibilities, national and European legislation and local priorities. The District Council have produced a Landscape Character Assessment (Stroud District Council, 2000) as Supplementary Planning Guidance\(^\text{19}\) and the Cotswolds Conservation Board have produced Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change (Cotswold AONB Partnership, 2003) and a Landscape Character Assessment (Cotswold AONB Partnership, 2004) for those parts of Stroud District that fall within the AONB. It is into this interface between the state and active citizenship that the emergent practice has intervened
Isis Brook addresses active citizenship and promotes *make, do and mend* as a strategy for learning “to demand more of ourselves rather than of the world” in order to “redeem non-places, create healthy relationships and a sustainable wider environment” (Brook, 2012, p.114). She refers to Stroud, along with Totnes, in the context of populations that were quick to adopt the Transition agenda, saying that “neither had really made that initial transition into placelessness”. Her suggestion is that this would help to “Underline the placelessness thesis that would expect soulless towns to lack the human movers and shakers who would have the necessary aspiration to begin the process” (Brook, 2012, p.117). While agreeing with the ideas around *make, do and mend* as a way of combating placelessness, my experience with initiating and participating in Stroud based projects is that the instigators are often what are referred to locally as incomers (myself included).

This idea of two communities was certainly raised at the 2011 so called, diagnostic visit by the Academy of Urbanism cited in Chapter 5. The distinction was softened however by the participation of some 'born and bred' residents and by input from a new generation of Stroud born and bred people, daughters and sons of 'incomers'. This was reinforced by a conversation at one of our exhibitions with a person who had recently moved back to the town, and revealed her memories of the town from childhood as ‘a miserable place to grow-up’ and that her ‘mother wouldn’t have been able to believe the fuss people now made about Stroud – it really had been an awful and hard place to live’ (anon, 2013). I suggest that it is the symbiotic connection that Stroud retains with its landscape and cultural history that is key to placelessness.

There are many people in the Stroud Valleys actively engaged with transition type projects which will in various ways re-create or sustain a sense of place. Such people and organisations hoping to modify main stream consumption, behaviours and relationship with local culture, landscape and the wider world include Project Stroud, SITSelect, Stroud Common Wealth, *Stroud Community Agriculture*, Stroud Civic Society, StroudCo Food Hub, Stroud Community Land Trust, *Stroud Nature*, *Stroud Valleys Project*, *Stroud Valleys Art Space*, *Stroudwater Textiles Trust*, *Transition Stroud*, *Stroud Woodland Cooperative* and *Walking the Land*. For me and for other participants in the interventions, this is the continuation of a process of taking direct action and facilitating community initiatives which can be
traced back to the 1992 *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* in Rio De Janeiro, where 179 countries signed up to an agenda for change. An outcome from this, ‘*The Rio Earth Summit*’, was the acknowledgement that the role of local communities is vital to finding sustainable solutions. This became known as *Local Agenda 21*, which began to popularise the term 'sustainable development', for which *Vision 21*, Gloucestershire’s *Local Agenda 21*, used the following working definition based on the Brundtland Report, “Our Common Future” (United Nations,1987):

> development that enhances the quality of life for all (especially the most disadvantaged), without damaging the environment, or the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.  
>  
> (Vision21, 1996, p.1)

Within this there is a call for hearing more voices, a process that manifests greater direct participation rather than solely representation. The research studies the development of an art practice that manifests participation rather than representation so as to increase the number of voices heard.

However, in considering my practice in terms of combating placelessness, and despite nostalgia providing a fruitful starting point for artists, it is useful to heed Dorren Masey’s (2005) warning against yearning for romanticised pasts, imagined harmonious communities or even that communities do feel a sense of place. The Stroud example could be understood as a succession of *incomers* engaging with the landscape over the centuries and sustaining threads of the area’s rich cultural and natural heritage – for example weaving, the arts and crafts, non-conformism, innovative engineering, radical and green politics – all of which over-ride simultaneously present aspects of placelessness, of which there are also many corners - old, new, planned and threatened.

It is easy, and not uncommon, to imagine the seventeenth century weaving community in the Stroud Valleys as having lived a rural idyll, in harmony with nature, harnessing water power, harvesting wool from sheep grazing on the species rich, limestone grasslands that now, along with the industrial heritage, we value and protect by legislation. Unsurprisingly there are accounts of hardship
and injustice from the time and the emergent practice isn't a call for a return to this romanticised rural idyll and its inequality, as referred to in the writing of Stuart Butler in response to participating in April 2013's First Friday Walk:

The End of the 19th Century

They called it ‘The Golden Age of Farming’:
The end of the Corn Laws, 1846,
Until Depression, 1873,
When foreign competition, the prairies,
Refrigeration and also steam ships,
Saw farm jobs drop by a third in our county,
With hardly a farm job left for a woman;
A 10 hour day with extra at harvest,
Shepherds and cowmen working the whole day,
Damp, cramped cottage for a home, no rights,
Children working long hours as well;
Some farm workers were content, I don’t deny,
But our children lacked an education,
And we had no vote – it was degrading,
We were backward and poverty stricken,
That’s why Joseph Arch’s union spread here,
The National Agricultural Labourers’ Union!
Imagine! A nine and a half hour day!
Thanks to William Yeats, the Stroud mechanic,
And Joseph Banks, the Slad Road chemist,
We had a lot of hot summer meetings
In Stroud and the Valley villages,
In 1872, I think it was,
With Mr Banks calling for an end to truck,
Calling for shorter hours and higher wages:
‘In sterling money, not fat bacon …or a couple of swedes,’
Is what I remember him eloquently saying
At the meeting in Stroud we all went to.
We went to another big meeting too,
All about emigration and empire,
Thomas Connolly, a London stonemason,
Talked about the wonders of Canada:
‘ Which could accept up to 100,000 people
Every year without causing a glut on the labour market.’
He said you could get three meals a day and good wages -
That’s why I am so lonely; all my boys have gone,
And my daughter is about to emigrate, too.
The joy has gone from my life,
An occasional letter ends up wet with tears,
And I don’t see how I can escape the workhouse,
Mr Hardy might write his novels about these things,
And the painters might paint their pictures,
But there is no romance in the story of my life.
If not to return to a romanticised past, then what is the purpose of the practice? It is to help create equitable, participatory, informed decision making processes that reveal and lead to taking action towards creating environmentally and socially just futures.

Whilst the study is not primarily focused on theories of democracy, it is nevertheless relevant to place a socially engaged practice within such theory; theory based on a participative practice. Indeed, the prevalent state of western democracy cannot be ignored as it is also context for the practice. As Carole Pateman has said in her presidential address before the American Political Science Association in Seattle:

> We are surrounded by democracy-talk. Yet in Western countries popular confidence in old-established institutions is fading, voters are disaffected, trust in government is declining and a very wide gap has opened up between citizens and governments and political elites more generally.

(Pateman, 2011, p.15)

This appears to be evidenced at the time of writing by the journalistic commentary accompanying the last hundred days of the campaign to the 2015 UK General Election, such as the particular argument around increasing the number of voices heard on a series of TV debates by including a greater number of ‘minority’ parties. The value of this approach, the collusion of the media in making the event even more of a spectacle is another question, a question which the traditionally centralist labour party for example seems to share when, according to The Guardian the Labour leader said “We will win this election, not by buying up thousands of poster sites, but by having millions of conversations. I am going to be leading those conversations in village halls, community centres, workplaces right across the country…” (Wintour, 2015). In considering there to be shortcomings in this primarily representative form of governance, the intention of the emergent practice is to facilitate action at a mundane level. That’s not to say that there aren’t risks with a more participatory style of governance. Pateman identifies a distinction between the forms of participatory democracy initiated in the sixties and the burgeoning, deliberative democracy of later decades, which she sees as just one aspect of participation and warns against seeing it as its only manifestation. For
example, she suggests that its evolution into deliberative democracy supports rather than questions the status quo in as much as it 'does not disturb existing institutions' (Pateman, 2011, p.15). The potential for applying art's ability to 'disturb' will be examined as part of a strategic approach to democratising landscape change processes.

An important aspect of this democratisation for me is Guattari's concept of transversality (Guattari, 1989). Transversality was an important concept for Guattari and one which developed as his ideas developed. As they become applied to situations outside of their original psychoanalytical setting, it is important, as Gary Genosko writes, not to forget that “the concept of transversality had for Guattari practical tasks to perform...” (Guattari, 1989, p.47), and warns that the "postmodern appropriations without practical consequences... would not be in the spirit of Guattari's thought" (Guattari, 1989, p.47). This resonates with the spirit of this practice led research, in particular with Genesko's comment that: “the idea was to use it imaginatively in order to change, perhaps not the entire world, but institutions as we know them” (Guattari, 1989, p.47).

This kind of practice, dealing with complexity and research in the real world, is referred to by part of the scientific community as trans-disciplinary. Unlike inter-disciplinary it looks to operate between disciplines, across disciplines, and beyond each individual discipline. It aims to understand the 'real world' by developing an overarching unity of knowledge. Quantum physicist Basarab Nicolescu writes:

> The transdisciplinary ethic rejects any attitude that refuses dialogue and discussion, regardless of whether the origin of this attitude is ideological, scientific, religious, economic, political or philosophical. Shared knowledge should lead to a shared understanding based on an absolute respect for the collective and individual Otherness united by our common life on one and the same Earth.

(Nicolescu, 2002, pp.147-152)

In the forward to The Transdisciplinary Handbook, Jill Jäger, researcher at the Sustainable Europe Research Institute\textsuperscript{37}, suggests that “the uniqueness of the approach lies in the partnership between members of different disciplines and stakeholders” (Hadorn et al, Eds., 2008, p.vii). Jäger is discussing partnership, an
important question for the research projects studied here, pointing to the need for a partnership between myself and other participants. A partnership which will itself run the risk of developing its own exclusive language, ways of working and fixed objectives. When philosopher Jacques Rancière was asked if his work was 'inter-disciplinary' or 'a-disciplinary' he answered:

Neither. It is 'indisciplinary'. It is not only a matter of going besides the disciplines but of breaking them. My problem has always been to escape the division between disciplines, because what interests me is the question of the distribution of territories, which is always a way of deciding who is qualified to speak about what.

(Rancière, 2008, pp. 2 – 3)

Here he appears to share ground with Guattari's political motivation for transversality, the facilitation of political process rather than achieving a set of pre-conceived outcomes or ideals. The relevance to the research is that the emergent practice should not create a new discipline, rather to use aesthetic practice to develop processes that make the barriers between disciplines and stakeholders pervious and thereby open the way for greater participation and learning. This can be seen as complementing and refining the status quo's various methods of decision making, enriching those traditional consultation approaches which currently privilege expert views above local knowledge and privilege a rational overview above experiential engagement.

This chapter has set out an environmental, personal, community and political context for the research, threads that dynamically intertwine to co-create landscapes and landscape affect. In studying relationships between individual creativity, community activism, institutional legislation and nature's agency, tensions can be recognised, such as between the imperative felt by many environmental activists to act now and the slower, consultative processes such as governments' strategic, long-term planning. Conversely, it is sometimes environmentalists taking the long view, for example, planning to allow flooding to accommodate climate change's effects on a range of other species versus urgent calls to resolve the flooding along the River Severn. The intention then is for the research to address both strategic infrastructure and locally focused action. Consequently the research will study the emergent practice's ability to support community action through enabling deliberation across the community, including between activists and those exercising
the power invested in representative democracy, in order to support co-ordinated direct action. Deliberation and delivery rather than merely enabling 'democracy-talk' or taking uncoordinated direct action – a model of participatory democracy which enhances representative democracy in decision making about landscape change.

The theoretical discourse set out in this chapter will be seen to be tested through practice in *The (Canal) Weave* in which divergent perspectives such as community aspirations were interfaced with local authority planning through creative processes such as art-walking, drawing practice and animation.

Chapter 2 considers the philosophical and historical context reconsidering, for example, aesthetics within a relational context with the aim being to construct a theoretical framework to situate the practice discussed in Part Two.
Chapter 2

Eastings and Northing, Hummocks and Tall Grasses: mapping a useable theoretical context.

The body-mind connection is so pervasively intimate that it seems misleading to speak of body and mind as two different, independent entities. The term body-mind would more aptly express their essential union, which still leaves room for pragmatically distinguishing between mental and physical aspects of behaviour and also for the project of increasing their experiential unity.

Richard Shusterman, 2006, p.2

In setting out context for the research, Chapter 1 located it in terms of environmental, personal, community and political considerations. This chapter develops the historical and theoretical context for the research by looking further at questions of landscape, aesthetics, mimesis, disinterest, universality, nature, ethics and artist autonomy. This is in effect developing a critical framework for the practice.

This chapter begins by using a mapping metaphor which refers to the use of Eastings and Northing as a way of locating the research. Such referencing depends upon using coordinates which were invented by rationalist René Descartes (1596 – 1650), and although many people collect them, maps can be interpreted as detached overviews of landscape, often representing expert readings of places, using visual means to inadequately describe embodied experience. Nevertheless, when on a walk, throwing the ball for our dogs and keeping an eye on where it lands, I automatically locate the spot by lining it up between nearby features such as hummocks or tall grasses. The analogy suggests that while maps provide a helpful locating grid, walking the land equally is a way of collecting information for map making.

Eastings and Northing

The term landscape is problematic. At the start of the book, Landscape, John Wylie, in describing one of a number of paintings by Paul Cézanne (1839 – 1906)
of Mont Saint-Victoire, points to a tension which he claims has “recurrently
haunted cultural geography”, a tension “between proximity and distance, body and
mind, sensuous immersion and detached observation.” (Wylie, 2007, p.1) This
mention of detached vision reflects Paul Selman’s ideas of ’disconnection’
(Selman, 2012) and raises a central questions which I suggest is the relationship
between the visual senses and rational thought. In writing about oral senses and
relationships with nature, Paul Thelin Nelson, in making the case for the
significance of “sound in the imaginal experience” (Nelson, 2008, p.54), claims that
“in more modern times and industrialised cultures, rational thought emphasises the
visual sense in the development of theory and experimental verification of its
understanding of reality”, and goes on to write that “The experience of the
imaginal whole requires the the embodied participation of all senses” (Nelson,
2008, p.54).

However, it is difficult to separate landscape from aesthetics and in turn to
separate aesthetics from a visual appreciation of landscape. For example, the
common usage of Gilpin’s word, picturesque and the dictionary definition of the
verb, to landscape is to “improve the aesthetic appearance of (a piece of land) by
changing its contours, planting trees and shrubs etc.”. By placing the words
'aesthetic' and 'appearance' together, the definition ignores the many other values
of introducing trees and shrubs onto a piece of land, all of which have an aesthetic
resonance – the sound of bird song as a result of improvements to habitat, the
appreciation of the tree’s shade and shelter and so on. It limits aesthetic
appreciation to being concerned with 'appearance' rather than referring to
aesthetics as connection through experiences based on all the senses as
expressed above by Nelson and by Berleant’s ideas of an Engaged Aesthetic
(Berleant, n.d.).

Selman writes that many languages “lack a term that adequately translates
landscape” (Selman, 2012, p.2) and suggests that the “visual qualities of
landscape – delightful or dramatic scenery, generally combined with 'picture
postcard' villages – have, in practice, dominated spacial planning and
environmental management policy” (Selman, 2012, p.2). An example of this are Sir
Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) landscape paintings, sometimes referred to
as *Fancy Paintings*. Even though their depiction of the rural poor have raised many questions (Barrell, 1980; Jones, 2002; Sloman, 2011), and despite the huge changes in societal and environmental context, these paintings and their representation of the rural idyll remain for many people, potent symbols of an aspirational English countryside. It could be argued that such art proves its value in connecting us with landscape but I would argue that this is a superficial connection – consider instead Selman’s reference to other ways of reading landscape - such as holding “stories, nutrient cycles, carbon fluxes, customary laws, economic activity and manifold other mysteries”. He argues that the limited perception and understanding of landscape based on the visual is a part of the disconnect between people and environment. This is challenging for a visual arts practice concerned with landscape.

Perhaps the problem is the nature of the art rather than art per se? The disconnect could be seen to occur between the viewer (the subject), and the art object, in part created by the framing of work, especially in a gallery, giving the art object its own being, identity, presence, meaning, significance and history. There is a long history of conceptual and land art that challenges this approach to subject/object and a feminist perspective which counters what is referred to as the male gaze, with a turn towards privileging embodied experience. In the arts there are examples of embodied work in relationship to landscape and place, and of particular relevance to this study is the performance of walking as art.

However, by approaching this problem from an aesthetic point of view, we can recognise that its not just the privileging of the visual that creates the divide, but the separation of aesthetics and reason. For Alexander Baumgarten (1714-62) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), aesthetics was the study of beauty and art in nature. They opened an ongoing debate based on the ancient Greek meaning of *aisthesis*, as knowledge obtained through the senses as separate and secondary to *eidos* – knowledge gained through thought and reason. Kant challenged the then prevalent Cartesian theories by proposing that empirical and rational approaches are complementary to each other (Kant, 1790). Similarly, Baruch Spinoza (1632 – 1677) in his writing about ethics (1677) had questioned the Cartesian mind/body dualism, claiming that all ethical judgements are relative;
relative to experience of lived situations.

Four centuries later, the debate is taken up by Brian Massumi who writes, “the dichotomy recurs as an opposition between 'fact-based' or 'common sense' approaches and 'experimental', 'idealistic', or 'utopian' approaches, with a clear implication of the superiority of the former.” (Massumi, 2011, p.11-12). The core value in this research isn't to replace 'reason' with 'aesthetics' in some kind of hierarchy of understanding about being in the world, instead to bring all our faculties to bear on decision making. As Massumi explains “activist philosophy refuses to recognise these divisions as fundamental, or to accept the hierarchy they propagate” (Massumi, 2011, p.12). Suzi Gablik (b.1934) has a similar approach, with reference to Thomas Moore's *The Reenchantment of Everyday Life* (1996), she addresses the perceived need of “putting soul back into the picture” saying, “Reenchantment... signifies striking a balance between subjectivity and objectivity, masculine and feminine, discursive and intuitive modes of knowing” (Gablik, 2002, p.14).

So far, arguments about aesthetics and their role in reconnecting us with nature suggests the need for a reconnection between mind and body which would be reflected in a more engaged aesthetic experience than just visual, although Gablik adds another perspective writing, “vision is not defined by the disembodied eye, as we have been trained to believe. Vision is a social practice that is rooted in the whole of being” (Gablik,1998, paragraph 6). The thesis also argues for that fuller aesthetic engagement should be complemented by a rational understanding of landscape.

Privileging a visual understanding of landscape meets with other criticisms, such as concerns raised by Karl Marx (1818-1883), which is problematic for an arts practice aiming for social inclusion. Wylie (Wylie, 2007, p.p. 63-70) refers to this when he quotes these words by John Berger: “Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents take place” (Berger, 1972, p.41). This is not only a criticism of a visual reading of landscape, but also implies that landscape is a bourgeois construct in which artists collude. Denis Cosgrove's
humanist marxist approach to cultural geography (1983, 1998), posits the central idea that “landscape constitutes a discourse through which identifiable social groups historically have framed themselves, and their relations with both the land and other human groups” (Cosgrove, 1998: p. xix), and it follows that artists played a part in this framing. Related to this is a critique of the visual regarding its potential to be manipulated by a neoliberal political order, or Guattari’s “Integrated World Capitalism” (Guattari, 1989), for example, in providing his understanding about the growth in socially engaged art over the last twenty years, Nato Thompson writes that neoliberalism results “in maximising the role of the private sector in determining priorities...” (Thompson, 2012, p.29). In relating this to art, Thompson explains that Guy Debord originated the term 'spectacle' “to refer to the process by which culture, expressions of a society’s self-understanding, is produced within the capitalist machine” and adds that this is “Typified by the image of an audience at a cinema passively watching television and film, the spectacle can be seen as shorthand for a world condition wherein images are made for the purpose of sales” (Thompson, 2012, p. 29). A situation which implies that as consumers we not only collude with this but are also spectators of it. It is confusing whether real life is what we experience or what we watch. This is problematic for socially engaged artists who wish not to add to this spectacle, who wish instead to resist it and the dominant forces driving it. Thompson writes “It is upon this stage of vast spectacle that we must attempt to create meaningful relationships and actions” (Thompson, 2012, p.31). Thompson calls this the “strategic turn”, saying that its “where we find works that are explicitly local, long-term, and community-based” (Thompson, 2012, p.31). Works which apply aesthetics to make connections between individuals, community and environment. In describing post industrial changes in the relationship between the individual and society, Clive Cazeaux makes the case for the role of aesthetics, writing that aesthetic experience has been redefined; that rather than “being a mere adjunct to every day perception, it is shown to be vital to an understanding of the relationship between human being and the world” (Cazeaux, 2011, p. X111). Jacques Rancière likewise promotes the role of aesthetics and art by putting them at the interface between people, making them essentially a political concern, writing that “artistic radicality and political radicality” is an “alliance” that has “been undone” - “an alliance whose proper name is today’s incriminated term of
It could be argued that the term aesthetics was *incriminated* by Plato (between 429 and 423 BC - 348/347 BC) and his ideas on art and philosophy as written about in *The Republic* (around 380 BC). Plato's schema of art as mimesis, art as imitation of reality, produces a tension between art and life, a position which, it is argued here, placed aesthetics and reason at odds with each other; and placed reason above aesthetic appreciation. This ignored the value of aesthetics as a way of exploring a different kind of knowledge, of gaining a wider understanding of the world.

Rather than seeing art as imitation, Jill Bennet instead sees it as “practical aesthetics” (Bennett, 2012: p.3), a means of revealing how we respond to life as we experience it through our senses. This provides an alternative role for art to that of mimesis. Bennett develops this possibility, writing that practical aesthetics is “the study of aesthetic perception at work in a social field” (Bennett, 2012: p.3). She thereby suggests that aesthetics is not about art for arts sake or “the philosophy of art” but that it has wider applications as “an endeavour in which art and exhibitions participate as they engage with and reflect on aesthetics-at-large. Art, in this sense, offers an exemplary instance of practical aesthetics” (Bennett, 2012: p.3). This theoretical context not only relates to what I read as an underlying issue of art and aesthetics, but also resonates with real world research.

Miguel de Beistegui suggests that art and aesthetics, rather than being consigned the role of bridging between the *sensible* and *supersensible*, instead, by using metaphor, “twist free of mimesis and open onto a different sense of experience” (de Beistegui, 2012, p.7). He calls this *space and time* the *hypersensible*, and with reference to Marcel Proust (1871-1922), suggests that we understand metaphor “as the operation that reveals or opens up that space and time, hidden or folded in the space and time of ordinary perception and cognition” (de Beistegui, 2012, p.6). The research studies how an arts practice can use metaphor to transform everyday landscape experience.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson approach metaphor from a neuroscience
perspective, and suggest that it is central to our understanding of the world. They write:

By the early 1990s, a whole new level of metaphor analysis was discovered that we will call deep analysis. What we and other researchers found was that our most fundamental ideas—not just time, but events, causation, morality, the self, and so on—were almost entirely structured by elaborate systems of conceptual metaphor.

(Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, 249)

Although Lakoff and Johnson accept that these ideas are contested, they suggest that we “don't have a choice as to whether to think metaphorically. Because metaphorical maps are part of our brains, we will think and speak metaphorically whether we want to or not” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, 257).

In examining the influence of Kant on contemporary aesthetics, Cazeaux writes about the interest in the role and popularity of metaphor being a return to “the Kantian question of how one secures objectivity given that the task of organizing the world has been assigned to (subjective) consciousness” (Cazeaux, 2004, pp. 3-4). This question of being objective about subjectivity, is central to this research, and studies ways of applying it to bridging between world views. Cazeaux suggests that metaphor raises this as a possibility “since it produces meaning which is new yet insightful... an original, freshly minted trope”. (Cazeaux, 2004, p.4). Metaphors' facility to be objective about subjectivity is clearly useful for qualitative research which is itself subjective. Research psychologist, Barbara Tversky describes some of the benefits of visual communication in this regard and in particular how they are at the heart of creating community identity:

they are cultural artifacts created in a community... fine-tuned by their users. They can provide a permanent, public record that can be pointed at or referred to. They externalize and clarify common ground. They can be understood, revised, and manipulated by a community. They relieve limited capacity short-term memory, they facilitate information processing, they expand long-term memory, they organize thought, they promote inference and discovery. Because they are visual and spatial, they allow human agility in visual-spatial processing and inference to be applied to visual-spatial information and to metaphorically spatially abstract information.

(Tversky, 2010, p.502)
Although I would like to add other sensory perception beyond just the visual, Tversky’s reference to the facility of metaphor to convey abstract information is important in its potential for increasing participation in meaning making. She writes:

> These ways of communicating meanings may not provide definitions with the rigor of words, but rather provide suggestions for meanings and constraints on them, giving them greater flexibility than words. That flexibility means that many of the meanings thus conveyed need context and experience to fully grasp.

( Tversky, 2010, p.502)

A central question here that Tversky raises is how we can, accepting that we all bring our own context and experience with us, exchange and grow these understandings in a post modern, living collage, co-created place.

In his Critique of Judgement (1790) Kant raised the idea of 'disinterest' which remains a focus for debate. It is claimed, including by Hannah Ginsborg, that "Kant's account of aesthetics...is ostensibly part of a broader discussion of the faculty or power of judgement" (Ginsborg 2014, I. The Faculty of Judgement, first paragraph) and Berleant writes that “the philosophical origins of disinterestedness lie, not in aesthetic experience or in the arts, but in eighteenth-century speculation on moral philosophy and the need to ensure impartial judgment by excluding any consideration of private interest” (Berleant, 2013, p.vii). The issue here for the research is whether the emergent practice can eliminate private interest, indeed whether it can ever be left out when we are making judgements. Nevertheless, suggestions that we need a reflective space or process in order to understand our motivations are important aspects of the emergent practice. Jurgen Habermas (1987) for example has written that valuable aesthetic experience exists all around us, in the 'lifeworld', a term he uses developed from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1908-1961) writing on phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Habermas proposes that our very processes for living - our thinking, planning, institutional systems etc. - compete for our attention and push our aesthetic appreciation into the background. In this sense the research studies the emergent practice's process as a kind of disinterested moment, not an anaesthetic moment, but as an
antidote to our very processes for living, a means of facilitating aesthetic engagement, allowing space for human responses to life such as passion, spirituality and empathy. How though is this stepping back also engagement? In writing about process philosophy Massumi refers to Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) and the “principle of unrest” or “becoming” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 28), saying:

The principle of unrest eddies into some-thing we would be forgiven for suspecting is not unlike aesthetic appreciation: an enjoyment of creativity... How is this “at no remove”? How is this immediate? Doesn’t it imply self-reflection? Doesn’t self-reflection imply luxury of the contemplative distance on the world?

(Massumi, 2011, p.2).

Massumi arrives at what he calls a duplicity which he sees as “an artefact of the immediacy. It is simply that each occasion of experience comes into itself amid activities that are not its own, already going on” (Massumi, 2011, p.2). The linking of self-reflection and artefacts of immediacy could be a way of interpreting disinterest as a moment of reflection that is folded back into ongoing experience and understanding. It could also be a description of a certain type of drawing practice, a performative practice that enables judgements to be made about and in the moment. A moment of encounter which is both subjective and objective.

Rancière referred to aesthetics as an incriminated term, and this has certainly been the case in the field of environmental aesthetics. Here the mind/body dualism can be seen to occur between people taking what are referred to as either a cognivist or noncognivist approach. Berleant and Allen Carlson have been notable protagonists in this debate. Carlson summarises the cognitive position as stressing “various kinds of emotional and feeling-related states and responses” and the noncognitive position as contending that “appreciation must be guided by the nature of objects of appreciation and thus that knowledge about their origins, types and properties is necessary for serious, appropriate aesthetic appreciation” (Carlson, 1998/2011, introduction). This has tended to block the use of aesthetics in environmental debate, policy and action and there has been a problem with landscape aesthetics in particular. Here the relevance of aesthetics has been dismissed as: trivial (Callicott, 1994), anthropocentric (Godlovitch, 1994), subjective (Thompson, 1995), scenery-obsessed (Saito, 1998), and/or morally
vacuous (Andrews, 1998). This was reflected in a recent planning decision about an application to build on Rodborough Fields, where the ecology of the site gave the local authority grounds for refusal, whereas the signatures of three thousand residents held no sway. How to integrate these individual and community values in our institutional systems is a challenge for the emergent practice. Certainly Thompson’s 1995 criticism above, that aesthetics are subjective, can be seen as part of the challenge at the very heart of this research. Here though it is not seen as a criticism, more how to enable a positive reconnection.

From their initially, contradictory positions, Berleant and Carlson have more recently found common ground as outlined by Carlson:

> recent work in environmental aesthetics, especially in the aesthetics of human environments and everyday life, demonstrates that although different in emphasis, they are not in direct conflict. When conjoined, they advocate bringing together feeling and knowing, which is the core of serious aesthetic experience.

(Carlson, 1998/2011, introduction)

Carlson's terminology may still suggest that 'feeling' is not a way of 'knowing', a distinction that seems unhelpful in advancing ideas of multiple understandings of the world. Nevertheless, this softening of the interface between different ways of knowing is important in order to understand the different ways in which people connect to landscape and engage with decision making about it.

The research is concerned with how an arts practice can accommodate these different ways of connecting with landscape and democratising decision making. Selman writes that “decisions about landscape should be democratized as far as possible” (Selman, 2012, p.63) and, being mindful of the risk of furthering disconnection, suggests how this might be done through “landscape quality objectives, supported by community participation and social learning opportunities” (Selman, 2012, pp. 91-117). He sees this as building resilience in what he refers to as “regenerative social-ecological systems” (Selman, 2012, pp. 42-67). This community building would gain support from some sociologists who claim that such processes are core to resilience. This is referred to by Nicole Lurie, a former professor of health policy who has been President Obama’s assistant secretary for
preparedness and response since 2009, quoted by Eric Klinenberg saying “There's a lot of social-science research showing how much better people do in disasters, how much longer they live, when they have good social networks and connections...” (Klinenberg, 2013). Social networks and connections are clearly issues in art and aesthetics, as referred to by Thompson's ideas of *the strategic turn* (2012). Other examples are Gablic's *Connective Aesthetic* (Gablic, 1996) and *Social Aesthetics*, as described by Elizabeth Burns Coleman, Christopher Hartney and Zoe Alderton as promising “to become the site of a rich crossroads in disciplinary research ... It is a rediscovery of aesthetics in the everyday, and in this there is an immediate political dimension...” (Alderton, Coleman & Hartney, 2013, p.4). Likewise, Berleant wrote that “extending the boundaries of the aesthetic to include environment carried me further to the social environment” (Berleant, 2012, p.viii). This in turn has focussed environmental aesthetics on the aesthetic of the everyday. This idea of *Aesthetics of the Everyday*, a development from John Dewy's (1934) *Pragmatist Aesthetics*, has influenced thinking on landscape affect and as such is particularly relevant to social practice involved with landscape. In addressing landscape affects it is also addressing the aesthetic experience of everyday life, as Ben Highmore writes, the “materialistic turn towards the immaterial, towards affect, towards thingliness, the senses and so on are necessarily determined by the social world that produced them” (in Berberich et al, 2013, p.p. 323-336). However, Selman warns that resilience, be it ecological or social is not necessarily desirable, for example the resilience of systems that are inherently unjust would be undesirable in a liberal democracy. He therefore suggests that “we need a socially endorsed touchstone to judge whether a system is showing the right kind of resilience” (Selman, 2012, p.63) and argues that as the concept of sustainability - although contested (Hopkins, 2008) - has “been widely debated and endorsed by society and government”, it would therefore provide a broad consensus for testing resilience, “including principles of social justice” (Selman, 2012, p.63). This aspect of democratising systems raises questions about universality.

Historically, universality has been associated with modernism's quest for utopia yet it is problematic for a participatory and pluralistic practice. Merleau-Ponty's ideas of phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), which, along with feminist ideas of
embodiment and emotional geographies, bring into question normative approaches to understanding the world. As Pamela Richardson suggests: “We live our lives as embodied creatures; feeling, sensing, and thinking through the body. Our relationship to space, place and landscape is inescapably shaped by the kind of bodies we have” (Embodied Resources, n.d.). This seems to call for an interpretation of 'universal' that is synonymous with 'common' or 'inclusive'. Rather than being a reductive, pre-fixed benchmark or standard of beauty, these qualities appear to be more about expanding understanding by recognising diversity. This suggests that we don't yet know universal beauty, universal truth or universal good, rather that life is a process of discovering and rediscovering this and that beauty is in the common experiencing.

The interface between modernism and post modernism can be seen as permeable, as argued by Habermas (1987), modernity is an unfinished project and this thesis seeks a constructive development of modernism rather than, for example, being anti modernist. Barbara Bickel and colleagues describe how, in their collaborative community engaged arts practice in the City of Richgate, British Columbia, they cross “cultural, ethnic, geographic, institutional, public, private, and disciplinary boundaries, reflecting the ever-changing character of postmodern reality” (Bickel et al 2011, p.87). In doing this, they “find resonance in and challenge from Becker's (2002) conception of the post-postmodern integral artist's role as global citizen” (Bickel et al, 2011, p88). A specific role for art is how to reveal the boundaries to be crossed and develop locally specific processes for sharing understanding, a multilayered approach to making judgements, suggesting ideas of micro utopia or micro politics as described by John Wood (Wood, 2007).

This resonates with objectives inherent in the Transition Movement referred to as localism. Hopkins points out that there are detractors to Transition, who argue “that a focus on localisation negates the potential of design and human brilliance to create low-carbon, high-tech new cities...that by promoting localisation, Transition wants society to return to the Middle Ages.” (Hopkins, 2011, page 290). While this call to encourage human brilliance and creativity are most certainly a part of what the emergent practice aims to facilitate, this criticism appears to ignore the relational aspects, the community building and social equality motivation of those
involved in Transition. It is the very process and wider environmental implications of creating these cities and their imagined supporting technology which is under question. As Alderton et al write, “we need to look at what drives our conceptions of the good and the beautiful not as mind to object, but as human to human and human to space” (Alderton, Coleman & Hartney, 2013, p.11).

Questions then for the thesis are how to use aesthetics to explore this 'common'. A common which is also diverse, also becoming; Guattari’s question of *how to hold together individual and group subjectivity*. He gives a helpful perspective to this when he writes about archaic societies' tribal celebrations and rituals. He suggests that in these societies, prior to western art having detached itself from a holistic group life, “individuals found themselves enveloped by a number of transversal collective identities, or if one prefers, found themselves situated at the intersection of numerous vectors of partial subjectification” (Guattari, 1992, p.98). In other words, subjectivity is relational and dynamic and the role of aesthetics is key to forming these relationships, as Cazeaux suggests, in recent, post modern times, the “aesthetic, formerly exiled from mainstream attention, assumes centre-stage as a sensibility... to which we can now turn for new moral, political and cognitive possibilities” (Cazeaux, 2011, p. X111).

The research asks about the role of aesthetics in co-creating landscape in ways that refer back to sustainability as “a socially endorsed touchstone” (Selman, 2012, p.63) and in such a way that more people can participate in making informed decisions about the future, decisions that take into account our collective agency, including social and natural systems. Rancière can be seen as addressing part of this question by claiming that there was a strand of aesthetic art, as opposed to representational art, starting at the time that Kant developed his ideas and coincidental with unrest in Europe such as the French Revolution which “intervene in the distribution of the sensible” (Rancière, 2004, p.25). In this way, he sees the main political value of art, not as taking a particular political stance or taking-up a political cause, but as a foil to established politics and power holders, questioning who has a voice.

Question for political art studied here relate to the relationship between ethics and
Bishop aligns herself with Rancière's ideas and the political role art has via its distribution of the sensible. One of her main concerns however is the collapsing of the ethical into the aesthetic; arguing that it is the very separateness of art that gives it its transformative qualities (Bishop, 2012a, 2012b). This commentary seems to be at odds with ideas of integrating aesthetics and reason, unless we see such integration as a constantly self-rupturing relationship. Bishop’s concern is that social practices leave the artist “devising new models of social and political organisation” (Bishop, 2012b, p.284). She suggests this is because there is a political vacuum; no political cause to which such practice can be aligned. This is based on her presumption that “at a certain point art has to hand over to other institutions if social change is to be achieved: it is not enough to keep producing activist art” (Bishop, 2012b, p.283). This raises a number of questions about the nature of the collaboration. In particular, this seems to suggest that the artists and participants projects have no shared, longer-term plan when they start out? This appears to be at odds with Thompson's discussion about the strategic turn (Thompson, 2012, p.31).

Kester too writes about a vacuum in organised political resistance and it's relationship to the aesthetic. He traces this back to the view held, in particular by French philosophers and activists, that the May 1968 Paris student uprisings were unsuccessful. This he claims led to what he calls “a third way” (Kester, 2011, pp. 43-65) and he proposes that it resulted in the “textualisation” of resistance, the creation of a separate space for resistance. A space uncontaminated by the realities of everyday life such as the commodification of revolution (the business of tee shirts brandishing images of Che Guevara (1928-1967) for example), and separate from involvement with the failed and tainted political organisations of protest. He sees this as a marginalised space which claimed aesthetics as its own and where perhaps disillusioned activists had chosen to exile themselves from the application of ethics – and from practical aesthetics. Of course it is equally possible to argue that this space was the last bastion of resistance, a space in which and from which the phoenix would rise. As Kester described it, “to develop covert, subversive 'interventions' in the cultural sphere, which will reproduce the contagion logic of street action at the level reader, viewer or student” (Kester, 2011, p. 46). The question remains the same, how to re-integrate a practical,
ethical relational aesthetic, an art practice, with mainstream culture.

Shusterman writes about the necessary transformation of such applied art practices, writing:

The emancipatory enlargement of the aesthetic involves similarly reconceiving art in more liberal terms, freeing it from its exalted cloister, where it is isolated from life and contrasted to more popular forms of cultural expression.

(Shusterman, 2000, p.xv)

Referring back to the discussion about spectacle, and the written at a time when reality TV for example has helped create celebrities as icons of popular culture, celebrities who are celebrated for being celebrated, and at a time when even elected and mandated political leaders from all sides struggle to express complex ideas without reverting to sound bites, it is important to be reminded of Bishop's concerns about participatory art treading "a very thin line between cultural democratisation and incessant banality" (2012a). The question then is, as with any profession, how can the artist deliver work which s/he sees as of value, work which has integrity?

This question is brought to a head in discussing the autonomy of the artist in the field of a collaborative and environmental practice. In writing about the enlargement of aesthetics, Shusterman suggests that "Art, life and popular culture all suffer from these entrenched divisions and from the consequently narrow identification of art as elite fine art" (Shusterman, 2000: p.xv) and a question arising is whether this cloistered existence is chosen by artists or is more akin to an impasse between disciplines and approaches, a compartmentalisation across the board; a sort of institutionalised prejudice between disciplines. A labelling of art and artist's role from within and without.

Guattari made the case above for art having been integral with everyday life in archaic society. Writing with Deleuze, he extends this role of art-making and sees it as a means of communicating to future communities, putting it "in view, one hopes, of that still missing people" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.76). In this way the art work can be understood as being both inside and outside of everyday life:
living it yet reflecting on it, adding value to it, transforming it so as to “extract new harmonies, new plastic or melodic landscapes, and new rhythmic characters that raise them to the height of the earth's song and the cry of humanity” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.76).

Rancière responds to this particular piece of writing, discussing the intertwining of art into everyday life and comments upon the relationship between artist and community.

What the artist does is to weave together a new sensory fabric by wresting percepts and affects from the perceptions and affections that make up the fabric of ordinary experience. Weaving this new fabric means creating a form of common expression or a form of expression of the community – namely, ‘the earth’s song and cry of humanity.

(Rancière, 2011, p. 56)

In choosing practical aesthetics primarily to engage with the everyday in this way, it may be that the autonomy that collaborative artists choose does not conform with the labels and expectations that place them in a particular discipline, choosing instead to live between disciplines, between identities – to find their own identities by weaving an assemblage of the earth's song and cry of humanity.

Poet Reginald Shepherd (1963-2008) explored autonomy from, but not necessarily in agreement with, a Marxist structural analysis. This viewpoint suggests that the artist is “the ideal of the un-alienated worker” (Shepherd, 2007), compared to the worker alienated from production. Shepherd however points to the following paradox. While, the ideology of genius “expresses this idea of the artist’s free and autonomous production”, the same ideology says that “the artist loses himself in his possession by his own genius, which is both intrinsic to him and alien to him.” (Shepherd, 2007). This brings into question whether such a schema, with ideas of expressing genius as a sort of divine right does actually allow for autonomy.

Shepherd concludes that “the artist expresses his true self only through the occlusion of himself as a social being” (Shepherd, 2007). Rancière, in writing about aesthetic separation and aesthetic community, states that “all forms of art can rework the frame or our perceptions and the dynamism of our affects”
(Rancière, 2011, p. 82), and, of particular relevance to this research, suggests that this can “open up new passages towards new forms of political subjectification” (Rancière, 2011, p. 82). He concludes that “none of them can avoid the aesthetic cut that separates outcomes from intentions” (Rancière, 2011, p. 82), which suggests to me that rather than art and life being kept separate, my practice needs to develop as a facilitative process that absorbs this contradiction. Furthermore, a collaborative process that holds together commonality and difference as it facilitates change.

Despite the differences between Bishop and Kester, many of the ideas that Bishop suggests in her conclusions to developing a critical framework for participative art, such as “Arts inventive forms of negation”, “art as an experimental activity overlapping with the world” and “the progressive transformation of existing institutions through the transversal encroachment of ideas” (Bishop, 2012b, p.284), do not seem that far removed from Kester saying that the “creation of new knowledge regarding political and social transformation, and the specific role that art can play in facilitating this transformation, requires a process of both learning and un-learning via practice” (Kester, 2011, p.226). However, Bishop writes here about “using people as a medium” and this raises questions about collaboration. I have an embodied response to the way that “using” is applied here, it is a feeling of discomfort, a question of ethics.

A feeling of discomfort is also engendered when the non-human elements of landscape are used. This raises similar questions to those discussed earlier about the problem of judging what is self-interest and what is for the common good. Only this time it is less clear how we can hear the voices of other species, habitats and historic landscapes for example. In some cases we fall back on the judgements of experts. This of course presumes that their judgements are disinterested, for example are not motivated by career or constraints of a particular discipline or budget. Another strategy involves empathy. This is closely related to Wilson’s notion of biophilia (1984) and Tuan’s (1980) notion of topophilia. It is hard to claim that there is no self-interest even with these “innate personal and psychological responses to natural forms posited by the biophilia hypothesis...with a related ... set of positive emotions suggested by Tuan's ... notion of topophilia (literally 'love of place')” (Stedman and Ingalls, 2014, p.130). It is perhaps more pertinent to the
questions of sustainability and resilience to recognise that there is a relationship and to consider the nature of the relationship, to reflect on each situation as individuals and collectively. Wylie raises a question that is central to this problem when he writes about a separation of human and non-human as “the tension between eye and land” suggesting we “split landscapes in two... 'material' and 'mental' aspects, objective and subjective, science and art, nature and culture.” (Wylie, 2007: p.8). He writes, “the issue of where to draw the line between the two becomes fraught with political, moral and ethical dilemmas” not least of which is the question of whether humans are a part of or apart from nature. Emily Brady and Pauline Phemister's value-space, a space in which they explore, through contributors essays, “the possibility of transfers of values...not only from humans to their environments, but also in the opposite direction, from environments to humans.” (Brady and Phemister, Eds., 2012, p.ix). They suggest that this has the potential to enable us to rethink the relationship between the self and environment, saying:

Working with the notion of a more situated self, the essays seek to uncover a certain fluidity in the hitherto set boundaries between self and nature and a degree of agency in the material world. It is through these ways of rethinking human-environment relations that we see this value-space as having transformative significance.

(Brady and Phemister, Eds., 2012, p.ix)

John Wylie talks in similar terms, addressing the question of how landscape is at once internal and external, affected and affecting, saying:

Landscape is not just a way of seeing, a projection of cultural meaning nor, of course, simply something seen, a mute, external field...Landscape might best be described in terms of the entwined materialities and sensibilities with which we act and sense.

(Wylie, 2007: p.245)

The research studies the emergent practice as a way of exploring these ideas of value-space and of revealing entwined materialities and sensibilities.

This chapter has explored theories relating to landscape, aesthetics, ethics and art. It has considered these in terms of the relationship between individuals and
group, particularly that of the artist. It has identified some of the challenges of embedding these values in institutional frameworks. It has considered theories appertaining to mimesis, metaphor and dualism. It has considered relationships between human and non-human. These various lines of enquiry, or to return to the mapping metaphor, the Eastings and Northings, provide a context for studying how to use, develop and apply an art practice capable of incorporating engagement with, and an ongoing understanding of landscape, into other community resilience initiatives. The following Reference Points, to use the mapping metaphor, or hummocks and tall grasses to use the out-walking-the-land metaphor, outline this as a framework for the emergent practice, setting out a relationship between theory and practice.

**Hummocks and Tall Grasses.**

*with reference to* practical aesthetics, ethics and politics, the emergent practice seeks to bridge between individual, community and public life by exploring the role of practical aesthetics in participatory democracy and collective decision making at a local level, in particular its contribution to envisioning resilient landscapes that will answer the needs of future generations.

*with reference to* the mind/body dualism, the practice, in working with people with varying approaches to landscape, seeks to develop in such a way as to encompass these differences, and accepts that rational and embodied, cognitive and non-cognitive ways of knowing are complementary and non hierarchical.

*with reference to* the shortfalls of a purely visual landscape aesthetic, but with reference to the potential of art to create long-lived attachment to landscape, the emergent practice seeks to reconnect people with landscape through direct experience of landscape

*with reference to* mimesis, the emergent practice seeks instead to explore the role of aesthetics in building a multi-layered understanding of the world and to explore the appropriateness of metaphor as a means of being objective about subjectivity in the context of landscape change.
with reference to the idea of 'disinterest', the emergent practice seeks to explore the idea as the reflective space and time that allows for reconnection with 'the lifeworld' through aesthetic appreciation, including of the non-human, and one which allows aesthetic and rational, individual and collective responses to landscape to co-exist.

with reference to ideas of universal beauty, the emergent practice seeks to explore ways of reaching judgements based on revealing a multitude of values regards landscape as a part of building an inclusive and common sense of place with sustainability as a common benchmark.

with reference to human/non-human relations, the emergent practice seeks to adopt an ethical approach when considering the transfer of values between human and non-human.

with reference to the question of artists' autonomy, the emergent practice seeks to collaborate within communities about issues of common concern and to use this as context for making work.

Chapter 2 has referred to underlying questions in order to help locate the practice in a kind of theoretical framework, or to use the mapping metaphor: grid reference. The coalescence of the reference points makes a type of map of the emergent practice in development, a sort of blue print for the liminal aesthetic practice. This theoretical research manifested in Chapters 5-7 through various practice based experiments such as the creation of the DIY drawing machine (Chapter 5) and other art walking and concepts were further consolidated in the Assemblage installation, Stroud Museum in the Park, discussed in the Summary.

In order to establish the practice as genesis for the research and also to establish a benchmark so as to be able to demonstrate how, over the period of the research, the practice has changed, Chapter 3 takes the theory and back casts to earlier practice conducted before the thesis creating a personal and practice based context.
Chapter 3

Reference Points: developing a critical framework

Proceeding along a path, every inhabitant lays a trail. Where inhabitants meet, trails are entwined, as the life of each becomes bound up with the other.

(Ingold, 2011, p.148)

For we are made of lines. We are not only referring to lines of writing. Lines of writing conjugate with other lines, life lines...

(Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p.215)

The ideas expressed above of trails and lines entwining and conjugating describes the relationship between drawing practice, walking and the writing of these lines. As such it performs these interventions as junctures with other people’s and other species' life lines and with other times. This chapter back casts to previous practice, a part of the context for the research, overlaying it with the reference points addressed in Chapter 2. An analogy is that the previous practice was like walking in the landscape without the map and in this chapter the map is used to see where I went, took wrong turns or missed significant places. Although this map was conceived after the execution of work described below, its compilation has been influenced by earlier, similar, if less concerted 'map-making'. This section then is like finding scraps of these earlier maps, yet to be pieced together.

My work has been undertaken in collaboration with a range of people and disciplines including community and performance artists, video makers, town and country planners, landscape architects, ecologists, farmers, countryside managers and educationalists as well as across the public, private and voluntary sectors and across national and local government; with other members of the local community, businesses and residents, neighbours and friends. The development of the transversal practice can be traced back through working in woodland management, urban fringe and countryside management, community forestry, urban wildlife gardening, organisational change, sustainability facilitation and socially engaged art. These practices have had in common their concern with the relationship
between the individual, the community, the state and environment. Activity they have in common are community participation, developing environmental and cultural appreciation of landscape, collectively envisioning future landscapes and taking practical action on the ground.

This has included developing processes aimed at transforming experience of and relationship with everyday landscape. A 'nowness' of now was how Dennis Potter (1935-1994) so poignantly expressed this in the 1994 interview with Melvin Bragg about his writing, the Forest of Dean, his past, and dying of cancer; talking not about the “Blue Remembered Hills”, but about the garden plum tree seen through his window, he said:

> the blossom is out in full now, there in the west early... it's white, and looking at it, instead of saying "Oh that's nice blossom" ... I see it is the whitest, frothiest, blossomiest blossom that there ever could be ... the nowness of everything is absolutely wondrous, and if people could see that, you know...There's no way of telling you; you have to experience it, but the glory of it, if you like, the comfort of it, the reassurance ... The fact is, if you see the present tense, boy do you see it! And boy can you celebrate it.

(Potter, 1994)

I was interested to increase my understanding of such reflective moments that appear to transform feelings about everyday experiences. Interestingly, Steven Shaviro writes: “A good synonym for Kantian disinterest might well be passion. The scandal of passion is that it is utterly gratuitous: it has no grounding, and no proper occasion” (Shaviro, 2009, p.6). My interest was in whether such passion as Potter's blossomiest blossom can be expressed through the planning system or incorporated in other ways into decision making about future landscapes.

Since 1997, I had been based in Gloucestershire working with colleagues to facilitate community participation in projects aimed at increasing sustainable ways of living. Having increasingly used arts activities in this work, with Kel Portman and Tom Keating I established the art collective, Walking the Land in 2004. Initially we walked and exhibited our work, using these exhibitions to invite others to walk and respond to landscape with us, exploring the relationship with the world around us. Merleau-Ponty (1962) questioned the nature of this relationship, as paraphrased
by Tim Ingold as “what kind of involvement of the perceiver in the lifeworld is necessary for there to be things in the environment to perceive, and beings to perceive them” (Ingold 2000, p. 263 and 2011. p.12). Ingold addresses the question of how we are in the world by summarising his reading of Merleau-Ponty's own conclusion, writing: “since the living body is primordially and irrevocably stitched into the fabric of the world, our perception of the world is no more, and no less, than the world's perception of itself – in and through us” (2011, p.12). Angelica Nuzzo expresses this by coining the term ‘transcendental embodiment’ writing: “the body is no longer a mere object of experience but the necessary a priori condition thereof … the human body … becomes the compass for our “orientation” in the world” (Nuzzo, 2008, p.7). Such ideas were implicit to work that we undertook, however, we were particular interested in the role of walking in engaging people with landscape.

Tim Ingold adopts “the term wayfaring to describe the embodied experience of this perambulatory movement” suggesting that “it is as wayfarers that human beings inhabit the earth” (Ingold, 2011, p.148), contending that “lives are led not inside places, but through, around, to and from them, from and to places elsewhere” (Ingold, 2011, p.148). Walking the Land's First Friday Walks resonates with this. They also rely on their very simplicity and accessibility to bring about what Yi-Fu Tuan describes as “the aesthetic hints of another reality” (Tuan, 2012, p.155). For us, it is the experiential engagement aspect of walking that is of interest; the direct experience and reflection in place. Although Tuan's text is rooted in Christianity and Buddhism, he expands on this idea of the aesthetic as transformative of the everyday:

> our senses are equipped to give us the “lilies of the field” and other marvels of nature and art, only we seldom use them to the full, preferring to go through life as though perpetually affected with a head cold. When the cold lifts, our surroundings have the fresh look of new creation.

(Tuan, 2012, p.155)

And no doubt, after this metaphoric head cold has cleared, the world would not just have the look of new creation, but also sound, taste, feel and smell new and fresh. Initially we were content that any work produced was similar to showing
workings out in the margins of a maths exam paper, instead emphasising the actual walking experience. We did however show work on our website, dedicating gallery space to people. Overall, we found that participants were reticent in showing such work, being more used to showing 'finished' work. We were keen to exhibit work around the town as a way of engaging a wider community and developed some specific projects, an example being called *Wish You Were Here*, asking participants to use post cards as if sending brief holiday messages about how they valued the landscape we walked through. We hoped that this format would make the work less precious and encourage people to let us have and exhibit the work.

![Figure 14. Wish You Were Here walk from Woodchester to Selsley Common. Drawing by Chris Smith](image)

![Figure 15. Wish You Were Here walk from Woodchester to Selsley Common. Drawing by Valerie Coffin-Price](image)

As a part of opening the work to a wider audience, we showed the work in a local
pub and led walks from their as a part of Stroud's Walking Festival.

Ingold suggests an interdependence between human and non-human, writing that “human existence is not fundamentally place-bound... but place binding” (Ingold, 2011, p.148), a very different relationship from that of the flaneur, the detached observer. Deidre Heddon understands this as relational, and as co-ordinator of the Only Human? 2014 Festival in Glasgow was quoted as saying: “To be human is to be always more-than-human – and in a context of climate crisis and environmental degradation, it is important that we recognise and understand these inter-relationships, the things that connect us” (Stewart-Robertson, 2014). This relates to two further developments in our work – asking participants to respond to the non-human, and also to use our work in the context of place making.

Walking the Land’s exhibition, Arboreality, at Westonbirt Arboretum, is an example of developing relationships with the non-human which in this context was endangered trees, raising awareness about the arboretum’s work in safeguarding endangered trees and reinforcing our relationship with this threatened resource. We did this through a variety of practice based interventions such as, for example, wrapping a tree in coloured silks influenced by Eastern philosophy to draw participants into a closer physical relationship with the trees.

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Such work didn't particularly lead to practical application of these new understandings as a part of our place making agenda. Simultaneously I was involved in facilitating such projects and initiatives as *The Market and Coastal Towns Initiative*\(^{50}\) and *Stratford Town Design Statement*\(^{61}\) which didn't directly develop participants relationship with the non-human because they tended to be based on negotiations between people in meeting rooms, lacking the immediacy of walking in landscape. Reflecting on these earlier projects I can understand the difference as a manifestation of the duality between body and mind — outside, embodied in landscape, inside, using our rationality to discuss the landscape’s future with our back turned on it.

An example of our involvement with place making was the *Remembering Rodborough Project*,\(^{52}\) where we arranged public walks accompanied by local historians and played back stories recorded from interviews with older residents, used old photographs and maps to add depth to everyday and current experience of the landscape. These walks combined a sense of being in the moment with an appreciation of the past and folded into the experience a range of values that people held dear. A question therefore was raised about the idea of disinterest in terms of the walkers not having an interest in reaching a physical destination, rather to be engaged in the journeying, including the collaborative activity. From the artist's point of view, it also questions ideas of artistic autonomy and collaboration.
Suzanne Lacy (b.1945) has said about collaboration in the *Oakland* projects in which she was involved between 1991 and 2011, that the “‘We’ was a complicated coming-together”. In further describing it she gives the picture of an evolving, unplanned, creative process; an activity of bringing people together. In this case a collection of:

- artists,
- politicians,
- teachers,
- police people,
- health professionals,
- and college students and youth.

When I say ‘we’, I mean collectively a kind of a difficult-to-identify, but very known-to-each other group of people. It is a very complicated ‘we’, but it is always a ‘we.’ never an ‘I’.

(Kester and Lacy, 2007, p.3)

Some of my previous practice shared a similar interface between participants. An
example of this was a series of installations that *Walking the Land* curated at Capel Mill during SITE04, Stroud's annual visual arts festival, in 2004. Capel Mill is the site of the former dying works where, along with other members of a local community group, it was hoped to establish a landscape visitor centre under the railway viaduct crossing the River Frome, adjacent to the line of the to be restored canal. *Walking the Land* with collaborating artists and writers Sean Borrowdale, Louisa Fairbrother and Oogoo Maia made a number of on-site interventions to transform what was a popular walk into and out of town. My own piece was a cloth dying machine, made from two discarded bicycles and powered by the River Frome. Each participant was given a foot square 'canvas' attached to one of the bicycle wheels that acted as a turntable, onto which they were invited to drip red and green paint from simple, DIY spray guns made from recycled garden sprays. The sprayed cloth was hung amongst the trees, converting the space into a temporary, outside gallery. Green and red are particularly resonant with Stroud's 17th century textile industry as is hydro power.

![Figure 19. Installation at Capel Mill, 2004.](image)

A recurring theme my practice was addressing was the relationship between technology and our consequent separation from other natural processes. A relevant context at the time however was that the site, a much cherished natural and cultural heritage site, was under threat from the canal restoration and our intervention coincided with local authority led public consultations being
undertaken about the route. Portman's piece invited passers by to write words on hanging red cloth as a way of expressing how the site is valued. After dark, photographs of work produced was projected onto the viaduct. This was a collaboration between the invited artists, the community group and members of the passing public who engaged.

Tuan approaches collaboration in a straightforward way, referring to it as being "simply engaged in a common task" and, of particular relevance to my practice, suggests that “Working together in the field, planting or harvesting, produces a sense of oneness that, at the same time, is also a oneness with nature” (Tuan, 2012, p.26). While the idea of oneness with others or with nature is appealing, it is also problematic for my practice in that it perhaps denies difference and also suggests an ideal, forever, state of being rather than a dynamic and hopeful process. Indeed, creating situations in which the “common task” can be identified and acted upon, has been a core part of my practice. Later on, this chapter sets out a wider discussion about the role of the planning system in managing these always competing interests. Interests between individuals, between individuals and the collective process at different scales and inclusive of the non-human.

Identifying and moving towards a common task can be seen as an example of using what Berleant refers to as a social aesthetic; the aesthetics of the situation (Berleant, 2005). An example of this which is of particular relevance to one of the research projects was my facilitation of a partially successful Landscape Partnership\textsuperscript{8} initiative, “Stroud Living Landscape”, with a focus on landscape heritage management and on taking action to improve green space, linking town and countryside for ecological, heritage, educational, economic and access benefits. The initial part of this unpaid community-landscape development work was to establish a partnership made up of local groups and organisations and in 2004 we successfully attracted Heritage Lottery Funds (£50k) to develop and co-ordinate our joint plans, but were not successful in attracting further funds for implementation. In discussions with a number of partners, the disappointment was expressed in terms of the frustration of spending time fundraising rather than spending that time on delivery. In this way, the situation can be seen as an example of the risk highlighted by Pateman about 'democracy talk' (Pateman,
2011, p.15), whereby the national funder’s agenda could be interpreted as controlling, even dissipated local community energy and direction, encouraging discussion over action. Nevertheless, “Living Landscape” partners continue to collaborate to deliver some of the wider benefits that they had envisaged. The project could be seen to have created a long-term “relational situation”, which Berleant describes as “the abandonment of separateness for full integration...integration equally of the personal and the social, a goal as much social as it is aesthetic” (Berleant, 2005, p.31).

The Capel Mill project was another example of a similar partnership building, including architects, a micro brewer, a furniture makers’ co-operative, illustrators, canal enthusiasts, a green builder, wildlife experts and social enterprise facilitators. The four directors – an architect, illustrator, green builder and myself, aimed to create a landscape inspiration centre on the site. We used practical aesthetics to generate a joint venture, bringing, as suggested by Kester, “a sense of the possibility of a kind of community that is not externally imposed, but is felt at the individual level. It makes reference to the possibility of a larger sense of being together” (Kester and Lacy, 2007, p.6). We led walks, put on exhibitions, held a small festival and worked with an architect practice to produce feasibility studies.

![Figure 20. Capel Mill Festival. Local MP, David Drew, and Town Mayor, Kevin Cranston, help recreate Capel Mill in the town Centre.](image)

At much the same time as the festival, the county council who were making the land available to the group changed political colour and the land became
unavailable to us. Nevertheless, we had raised the profile of the situation and through the event and many others, we had actively engaged people with the site, its past and present and potential for the future. We had also celebrated the river itself and had raised the possibility of hydro power, a cultural as well as environmental issue in the Stroud Valleys. However, despite the event having engaged hundreds of people, and gained political support, it hadn't engaged directly with the decision making process, which, as is often the case, happened inside, at meetings. So while the encounter process was successful in engaging people in the moment and place, it may have had little effect on shaping the future, although it may have achieved a micro-utopian moment and even a fleeting vision of a future. However, about ten years later, the site has been changed. The canal passes through in a more or less sympathetic way and the river corridor has become the first Community Asset Site in the District, in opposition to development pressure brought about in part by the increased land values that canal-side property can demand. There is no community run landscape inspiration centre but there is a canal-side park with a piece of public art. The area has won a CPRE award but falls far short of the original shared vision.

This raises questions about collaboration and artist autonomy. Another example of this are Walking the Land's First Friday Walks. On these we sometimes co-perform a slow walk. The whole group walk in line concentrating on each movement and the surroundings; a silent, meditational walk of fifty paces or so, taking maybe five to six minutes. As a facilitator of these slow walks there is always an outsider, observational aspect to the practice, always a consideration of what has just happened and a thought to what comes next as well as a deepened experience of place and being in a group. It is this 'as well as' aspect of the practice that makes it possible to be in the moment with people as well as at the same time reflecting on what they have just said as well as at the same time be prepared for the next planned or unplanned encounter; facilitating a walk or a discussion in a seminar are both parts of the practice which demands being responsive to people in the moment. The creation of these co-performed situations has been central to the practice, a practice that is neither inside or outside of community; it combines both in order to enable a deep collaboration, a shared endeavour which Kester is helpful in expanding:
Certain orders of experience enable us to perceive the world outside of a self interested, acquisitive, possessive model of knowing. They allow us to access the underlying operations of human cognition. When we cease looking at the world as a thing to be possessed and to be turned to our needs, we reflectively become aware of the fact that that way of knowing the world is something that we must all share.

(Kester and Lacy, 2007, p.6)

With hind sight, I can see that at this point my practice was spanning arts interventions and landscape projects. While they each had at their centre a questioning of my own relationship with landscape, community and involvement with institutional decision making processes, the two remained separate. Tim Collins has researched a similar role of art in the public realm and its environmental context, including through practical landscape restoration projects. This has included looking at the work of Newton and Mayer Harrison amongst others, who work “to initiate collaborative dialogues to uncover ideas and solutions which support biodiversity and community development” (Harrison Studio, n.d.). Collins finds that the “ongoing tension between individual freedom and social interaction is best addressed through a moral commitment to creativity in relationship to the emancipation of people, places and things” (Collins, 2005, p.vi). I share this view and was interested in how this could be addressed through a drawing and walking practice.

Wanting to develop a practice that is both political and aesthetic, its useful to reflect further on Rancière's discussions which place arts practice and wider community in direct relationship. He suggests the purpose of art as being to “make that which did not possess grounds to be seen, make a discourse heard where once there had been nothing but noise” (Rancière, 1995, p. 53). Rancière's quote reconnects art and politics and it is the nature of the link that is of interest. Bishop, who says that she has been influenced by Rancière, believes that good art demands that this link be disruptive, that it “transmits its meanings in the form of a rupture, rather than simply giving us an awareness” (Bishop, 2006a, p. 24). This remains based on the idea of an artist acting upon an audience, whether it be to disrupt or make aware. It can’t be denied that this is a form of relationship, an antagonistic one according to Kester. Whether it is a relationship that is different
from the above described reuse of bicycles in the river is questionable. It certainly has a lot in common with Kester's idea of *shared labour or collective labour* (Kester, 2010). A matter of making or performing work for which the genesis, if not the work itself, is collaboration. A collaborative relationship with others and with natural processes.

Bourriaud, who has used the term *relational aesthetics* (2002) to critique the work of some post modern artists as having "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space" (Bourriaud, 2002: p.113). He contends that relational aesthetics are political, referring to micro utopia. He is criticised by Bishop (2006a, p.180), for curating such works within a setting provided by the art institution, rather than in the setting of grass root actions, and similarly by Kester on grounds of them "retaining an essentially textual status in which social exchange is choreographed as an a priori event for the consumption of an audience "summoned" by the artist" (Kester, 2011: p.32-33).

My own practice and *Walking the Land's* was relational but within living situations. Creating a relational aesthetic that was cross disciplinary and cross sectorial, a practice that has opened doors on areas of knowledge and concern, such as natural history, renewable energy or archaeology. It is important for my practice to recognise that art is one of many disciplines, and like others carries its own power. Kester has written, “The 'artist' occupies a socially constructed position of privileged subjectivity, reinforced by both institutional sponsorship and deeply imbedded cultural connotations” (Kester, 1999/2000, p7). For this reason, I find it necessary to further explore the practice, not as being outside of the community looking in, but as a working and reflecting part of it. This includes being conscious of the history that artists and other aesthetic practitioners have had in shaping the landscape. My collaborative practice was leading me to explore how ideas of a common goods could fit with post modern thought, chiming with Berleant's proposal that:

>aesthetic community does in fact exist in more limited forms, imperfectly and impermanently … in small, intentional groups and communities. It may be that a modest scope is the precondition for an aesthetic social order, a necessary corrective to the overpowering magnitude of mass culture.

(Berleant 2005, p.36)
This seems to be the case with Stroud and in this context, my work can be seen to resonate with John Wood's suggestions for achieving micro-utopias when he writes that there is “a huge creative challenge that will require new methods and approaches. We are not used to a ‘joined-up’ society in which common sense is used to design the way things work” (Wood, 2007, p.12). Wood emphasises this need to dream and envisage the future that we want, and suggests that by perceiving the unthinkable as thinkable, we begin to address some of the barriers that prevent us from dreaming of and thereby achieving our desired futures. He goes on to say that the next step is to “co-imagine the dream in a more shareable form” and that this would mean “exchanging dreams and seeing how they can be conjoined to enhance one another” (Wood, 2007, p.13). This conjoining of dreams was very much a part of much of my art walking process and other facilitation work whereby people would be taken on a guided visualisation of their desired future and then asked to draw it. In such work, the next step was for the group to pin-up and compare drawings and from these drawings and conversations to begin to cluster ideas and common ground. It is also important here to emphasise that such participative processes are about and reinforce the point that Wood makes about promoting ‘micro-utopias’ rather than a monolithic 'Utopia', as sought by Sir Thomas More’s (1478-1535) 1515 novel.

On reflection, walking in company can be understood as collective, rich and sensuous experiences of landscape, informed by layers of understanding collected over time. Walking and drawing enables participants to make judgements using both cognitive and non-cognitive appreciation; to focus through the senses on what is happening and to fold in prior experience, knowledge and thoughts with embodied perception through a reflective process. This leaves the question of how to incorporate this into decision making processes.

This chapter has reflected upon my earlier practice and thereby demonstrated the evolutionary relationship between theory and practice. In doing this it has also given context in terms of the nature of the practice, the local situation and the community and statutory decision making processes. The next chapter develops a broader practice context by referring to the work of others in related fields.
Chapter 4

Art into Life: deepening the critical framework

Relational aesthetics rejects art’s claim to self-sufficiency as much as it dreams of transforming life, but even so it reaffirms an essential idea of art as a way of occupying a place where relations between bodies, images, spaces and times are redistributed.

(Rancière, 2009, p.22)

As art enters life, the question that will motivate people far more than What is art? is the much more metaphysically relevant and pressing What is life?

(Thompson, 2012, p.33).

Chapters 2 and 3 have drawn out and mapped reference points for developing the emergent practice, and used them to reflect upon my own previous practice in the local landscape, community and institutional context.

This chapter widens the context and deepens the critical framework by studying other practices at the juncture of art and life, and which are in various ways environmentally and socially engaged. It further question the relationship between collaboration and artistic autonomy, examines the relationship between aesthetics and ethics, including within a collaborative framework between people and between people and nature, and studies relevant aspects of metaphor and finally places these in the context of walking. Consequently the chapter studies practice that appear to share threads which are central to developing a practice with a positive role in creating a resilient future.

The thesis here studies the ancestry of the emergent relational practice, a category of practice that Nato Thompson writes has seen a “veritable explosion of work in the arts” (Thompson, 2012, p.19). In such collaborative and participatory practice there has been a turn away from the purely visual and the subject/object dichotomy; a desire to make art life rather than represent life. Bishop is concerned that consequently there is a raft of artistic endeavour which has produced no art for future generations, other than photos of the process. Kester turns this into a
question about an evaluative framework for Littoral art, saying that if it “is no longer centred on the physical object then what is the new locus of judgement?” and answers, “I would contend that it can be found in the condition and character of dialogical exchange itself” (Kester, 1999/2000, p.5). Thompson suggests that this “call for art into life at this particular moment in history implies both an urgency to matter as well as a privileging of the lived experience” (Thompson, 2013, p. 21).

This isn’t a new challenge and artists such as William Morris (1834-1896) and John Ruskin (1819-1900) also believed that art should be integral to all aspects of life. The arts and crafts movement was in part motivated by what it saw as the threat of industrialisation and there is a thread of art that continues to resist the threats brought about by separating aesthetics from other ways of being in the world. Practices that with reference to Kester’s ‘cyclical paradigm shift within the field of art’, “involves an increasing permeability between 'art' and other zones of symbolic production (urbanism, environmental activism, social work etc.)” (Kester, 2011, p.7).

Thompson suggests, the last twenty years of socially engaged art has been “essentially shaking up foundations of art discourse, and sharing techniques and intentions with fields far beyond the arts” (Thompson, 2012. p.19). An example is the influence of woodland practices on David Nash’s (b.1947) work, as can be read in his description of making Ash Dome (1977): “I cut out a series of V-shapes, bent them over, and then wrapped them so the cambium layer could heal over” (Nash, 2010). Nash also comments on being in the real world, saying:

I think Andy Goldsworthy and I, and Richard Long, and most of the British artists’ collectives associated with Land Art would have been landscape painters a hundred years ago. But we don’t want to make portraits of the landscape. A landscape picture is a portrait. We don’t want that. We want to be in the land.

(Nash in Grande, 2004, p.13)

This being in the land can be seen as a performative practice, although for Nash, as with many land artists, the production of the art object is an essential aspect of the practice. Nevertheless, the genre has changed the nature of experiencing art and changed art galleries, such as the introduction of sculpture parks. Nash’s Ash Dome exists outside of the gallery, being in the land, enabling experience of work
co-sculpted by Nash and the elements. It is not just about the placing but also about how the work is received - it appears to be part of a move towards a non-framing, a direct experiential link with the landscape for both artist and audience. Although still an object, such work can be interpreted as a gateway to landscape experience, a reminder of how such experience can be part of life.

An example of taking non-gallery engagement further appears on the website of *Situations* in Bristol:

> Working beyond the boundaries of a gallery or museum context offers a rich and often challenging set of conditions. We begin from a more dynamic understanding of place than a physical site, inviting artists to contribute to the lived experience of a place. This consideration of situation (a set of conditions, locations, people, moments in time and circumstance) rather than location means that every newly commissioned project starts with a process of becoming locally embedded.

(Situations, n.d.)

*Becoming locally embedded* is a part of what distinguishes these practices from other site specific work. They are embedded in both community and landscape.

This desire to be in 'the real' has a tradition that includes Beuys' (1921-1986) ‘Social Sculpture’, which continues to inspire as is evident through the *Social Sculpture Research Unit at Oxford Brookes University*. They describe their territory and practice as ‘wide and varied because social sculpture has to do with exploring new values, new forms of thinking and new ways of being in the world.’ (Social Sculpture Research Unit, n.d.) This asks the question of what the desire to be in the real world means? For Beuys it clearly meant bringing about change in the way we would live our lives in the future; an aim apparent through his interwoven political activity and art. In describing their approach, the SSRU could be seen as setting out a triple legacy of Beuys' work; one being a collaboration between a “great many people from different practices, disciplines and cultures”, another being “working towards a humane and sustainable way of inhabiting the world”, and thirdly, a “new determination to transform the conditions and take our lives into our own hands.” (Social Sculpture Research Unit, n.d.). It seems then that this desire to be in the real world is not straight forward, not a value free
assocation on any terms, more a hopeful, future focused collaboration.

Beuys was interested in the potential of creativity to facilitate solutions for the future. He was also concerned that creativity should be given a broader and more integral role than being the dominion of the artist. This is similar to ideas of Situationist International approach of which Guy Debord wrote that a constructed situation is “designed to be lived by its constructors” (Debord, 1957, p.110). The idea was that the “role played by a passive or merely bit-part playing 'public' must constantly diminish, while that played by those who can not be called actors, but rather, in a new sense of the term, 'livers', must steadily increase” (Debord, 1957, p.110). However, over fifty years later Debord's description now seems to describe an imposition from outside rather than a collaboration. Nevertheless, Beuys and Situationists International shared a common intention to make art a part of life, and by so doing, not simply to be a part of the real, but to change reality; for Debord it was through Constructed Situations and in Beuys' case, Actions. Kester has argued that the growth in such practice requires the “development of a new critical framework and a new aesthetic paradigm”, partly because “there are aspects of Littoralist Practice that simply can't be grasped as relevant (or in some cases identified at all) by conventional art critical methodologies” (Kester, 1999/2000, p.2). Bishop (2006) refers to these as 'relational practices' and in looking for a critical analysis suggests a common purpose:

socially engaged art, community-based art, experimental communities, dialogic art, littoral art, participatory, interventionist, research-based or collaborative art...Although the objective and outputs of these various artists and groups vary enormously, all are linked by a belief in the empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas.

(Bishop, 2006a, p.179)

Bishop has pointed out that the emergence of criteria for analysing such work has been limited by “the standoff between... aesthetes who reject this work as marginal, misguided, and lacking artistic interest of any kind ...and...the activists who reject aesthetic questions as synonymous with cultural hierarchy and the market” (Bishop, 2006a, p.180). She sees difficulties in critiquing such work, saying: “The social turn in contemporary art has prompted an ethical turn in art criticism. This is manifest in a heightened attention to how a given collaboration is
undertaken. In other words, artists are increasingly judged by their working process” (Bishop, 2006a, p.180). In her criticism of Turkish artist collective Oda Projesi, she writes, “there is little to distinguish their projects from other socially engaged practices that revolve around the predictable formulas of workshops, discussions, meals, film screenings, and walks” (Bishop, 2006a, p.180).

However, in response to what he sees as a void left “as dominions of economics, religion and art break down” (Fox, 2012), John Fox (b.1938) formerly of Welfare State International, includes “cooking, gardening, building houses, telling stories, making music, seasonal festivals” (Fox, 2012) in his practice. Claiming to be a “pathological optimist”, he advocates bridging the void with “a vernacular celebratory art that is integrated into our lives, which offers a creative outlet for the majority, where process comes before product and where participation is all” (Fox, 2012). Jeremy Deller (b.1966) has said that “the public world is my studio” (Rugoff et al, 2012, p.82) and, like Bishop this raises questions about how such work differs from other activities such as running marathons in fancy dress to raise money for a good cause - and even whether this matters. Stuart Hall writes of Deller that:

Traditional artistic categories do not quite capture him. He is, amongst other things, a sort of ethnographer, an assembler of things, a 'stager' of events, people and artefacts, a re-maker of already constituted materials, an animator of living environments

(Rugoff et al, 2012, p.82)

If we can understand 'living environments' as a process, we can understand animation of them as being process-driven and durational. In a landscape context, these durational aspects resonate with Robert Newell's drawings and ideas of the morphological sublime (Newell, 2012a, pp. 56-59), which talk of landscape change over time. In writing about Beuys' posthumously completed large scale ecological action, 7000 Oaks (1982-1986), Collins and Reiko Goto Collins ask whether we can “consider the tree-stone body as the final form or is the generative growth and the potential for natural reproduction an important factor in the aesthetic sensibility of the work?” (Collins and Goto Collins, 2012, p.127). Taking this longer view, the work is understood as being about revealing processes, creating an understanding
of the relationship between human and non human processes. Sue Clifford and Angela King describe the ethos for their *New Milestones* project in similar ways, writing:

> Thousands of years of hard work in the land and cultural understanding of it are echoed in the landscape we have built. Every piece of land is unique... the investment it represents and receives; its ownership and the rights over it; the social relationships it encourages; the politics it sustains – all are apparent in the landscape...Like old documents, paintings, literature, buildings and dialect, the land holds many keys to an understanding of our past, our present and particularly the evolution of our common culture. (Clifford and King, 1988, pp.15-16)

This is similar to how Doreen Massey has referred to place in *The Future of Landscape and the Moving Image* project, as “a simultaneity... a cut through ongoing histories. Not a surface but a simultaneity of stories-so-far” (Massey, 2008). Rancière (2009: p.55) refers to Deleuze and Guattari’s particularly relevant thoughts about and art’s effectiveness over time. By using *monument* as a metaphor for art work, they suggest:

> A monument does not commemorate or celebrate something that happened but confides in the ear of the future the persistent sensations that embody the event... a monument that is always in the process of becoming, like those tumuli to which each new traveller adds a stone. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.76)

Rather as the tumuli withstands the weather, so too can the intention be seen as a type of resistance, the safeguarding and carrying of a values into the future. In this way *Littoral art* can be read as a resistance to modernism's transformation into neoliberalism.

Bishop is concerned by the ethical turn in art criticism. Kester however contends that, “the aesthetic has an implicitly ethical dimension. It has precisely to do with how the individual and the social relate to each other; the one and the many; the group and the singular individual” (Kester and Lacey, 2007, p.16). In this way, collaborative arts practice can be seen as experimental practical aesthetics,
whereby art is the process for studying the relationship between individuals and other collaborators\textsuperscript{57}. In conversation with Kester about the *Oakland Projects*, Lacy describes an aspect of this, saying “We were challenged by working with young people. Were we exploiting youth?...There were a complicated series of personal relationships” and she rightly, in my view, questions “Who has a right to speak for whom” (Kester and Lacey, 2007, pp.2-3). In the conversation Kester adds further clarification, saying “The aesthetic really begins as a way to talk about a social exchange, a way of being together, that is rooted in the individual, rather than collapsed into external forms of religious or earthly authority” (Kester and Lacy, 2007, p.6). The reflection on my own praxis is that the ethical dimension is one in the same as an aesthetic sensitivity to other participants involved in the work.

However, this collapsing of ethics and aesthetics leads to other questions. Bishop argues that an appropriate critique for littoral art would judge works by the extent to which they address the “contradictory pull between autonomy and social intervention” (Bishop, 2006a, p.185). However, her mistrust of a critique based on artist's *working process* seems to be an attempt to seek out the autonomy of the artist in the work, rather than to critique a community endeavour. While Bishop is supportive of political art in principle, and calls for criteria against which to analyse such work, there appears to be a reluctance to recognise a coming together of the rational and sensual, ethical and aesthetic, instead seeing this as a drift to political correctness and the banal. Indeed she quotes Charlotte Higgins' reference to Anthony Gormley's (b.1950) *One and Other* (2010) fourth plinth collaboration in Trafalgar Square as “twitter art” and suggests that Higgins “wasn't far off” (Bishop, 2012a). My interpretation of *One and Another* is that it was a successful piece of collaborative art by nature of its democratic intent, its placing of individual, everyday concerns amongst some of the country's iconic, cultural landmarks and perhaps ironically, only just outside the *National Gallery*. Gormley has himself established a critique for such work, when he asks if it is:

“possible to re-think art and take it from this finished-object status and make it into a verb, a participatory, open space, a place of transformation and exchange of ideas and reflection on our state and status? Can we use art as a way of investigating this perilous time?”

(Gormley, 2010, p.15)
A similar approach is Gablik’s *connective aesthetic*, with its shift away from “the myth of the hard-edged, autonomous individualist” (Gablik, 1992, p.2), whereby she argues that artists see themselves as “free agents pursuing their own ends” (Gablik, 1992, p.2). She refers to the work of Christo (b.1935), and by implication the work of Jeanne Claude (1935 – 2009), and says that even for an artist like Christo, “whose public projects...require the participation and cooperation of thousands of people. The feeling of being emotionally independent and inwardly free still dominates the psyche” (Gablik, 1992, p.2). She emphasises this point quoting Christo’s own comments on the work:

> The work is irrational and perhaps irresponsible. Nobody needs it. The work is a huge individualistic gesture that is entirely decided by me... One of the greatest contributions of modern art is the notion of individualism...

(Christo, 1990, p.135)

Such statements are certainly in line with neoliberal ethos of individualism, even the exclusion of any mention of Jeanne Claude. As Gablik writes, “individualism and freedom were the great modernist buzzwords, but they are hardly the most creative response to the planet's immediate needs” (Gablik, 1992, p.4).

Markuz Wernli Saitô is an artist who instead approaches his work collaboratively. Describing his *Momentarium* project he says:

> I seek the collaboration with the public. This means that people can enter my work, make use of it, and complete it — ideally from the beginning to the end. I try to direct (rather than to restrict) this engagement by creating a situation that becomes the form of the work... I believe that the art experience isn't located in the finished product but in the creation of an opportunity for personal exchange.

(Saitô, 2009)

Bishop (2012a) is concerned with such collaborations, in particular their relationship with politics. In referring to the opening of *Tate Modern’s* staging of Tino Sehgal's (b.1976 ) performance artwork, *These Associations* (2012) she raises the possibility that such work has been hi-jacked by political ideology and suggests that, in the current political context, citing *big society*, “participatory art
acquires a different resonance, more akin to the sacrifices of unpaid labour” (Bishop, 2012a). She suggests that, counter to this, the nature of Sehgal's relationship with his collaborators is one of a business arrangement and claims that, “Seghal isn't particularly interested in empowering people; those who work for him are paid performers who serve his ends” (Bishop, 2012a). My reading of the work would be that while Sehgal pays the performers in his piece, the underlying aim is to enable the visiting public to experience being a part of a group, a transformation not only of the Turbine Hall but of human relationships. Adrian Searle’s experience of These Associations seems to suggest that this is the case, “There are no objects: we are the subject. It is about communality and intimacy, the self as social being, the group and the individual, belonging and separation. We’re in the middle of things. It is marvellous” (Searle, 2012). Sehgal's intent regards These Associations can be read as resonating with Saito's 'opportunity for personal exchange'. Sehgal says, “It is about what it means to belong to a group, which is also quite a personal question for me” (Higgins, 2012).

The question of what it means to belong to a group and how, as individuals, we experience this, is a central concern of politics and of relational aesthetics, both brought together in Rancièr's ideas of (re)distribution of the sensible (Rancière, 2004). He refers to this as “a form of common expression” or “a certain sensory fabric” that binds us all together (Rancière, 2008, p.4) and refers to relational aesthetics. However Kester questions the ethics of some of this work with its inherent textual status, saying: “this approach places the artist in a position of adjudicatory oversight, unveiling and revealing the contingency of systems of meaning” (Kester, 2011, pp.32-33). Returning to These Associations, the choreography of the situation has the performers as intermediaries, a sort of group of sub-authors by proxy, and as such the situation can be seen to be authored, albeit in a hands off way. Additionally, the location of the work in Tate Modern clearly sets the work in separation from everyday life (no matter how successful Tate Modern has been in increasing people’s interaction with art) and so the work does retain a specific cultural context, rather than an aesthetic of the everyday. Its difficult to know whether Sehgal's reference to the art world is meant to carry meaning. San Francisco artist/curator Kim Cook refers to Shelley Stacks' writing about the role of the Social Sculpture Unit at Oxford Brookes, saying that she
“highlights the dual nature of social sculpture as both transforming society and challenging dated conceptions of art” (Cook, 2012). For the emergent practice, this is seen not as an inward criticism of art institutions, rather sharing ground with Cook's sentiment about transforming society by placing “social and moral responsibility on the artist, who can also be considered a change agent” (Cook, 2012).

Regard an art practice’s role in democratic process, and in particular practices that attempt to integrate art and life, Habermas points to what he sees as the irony of the avant garde saying:

But all those attempts to level art and life, fiction and praxis, appearance and reality to one plane; attempts to remove the distinction between the artefact and object of use... the attempts to declare everything to be art and everyone to be an artist ... have served to bring back to life, and to illuminate all the more glaringly, exactly those structures of art they were meant to dissolve.

(Habermas, 1987, p.302)

Habermas contends that “all these undertakings have proved themselves to be sort of nonsense experiments” (Habermas, 1987, p.302). This research instead reads such undertakings exactly as successful attempts to continually wanting/need to re-vitalise the activity of art to suit the social context rather than reading them as attempts to get rid of art. The ideas and work may in due course be adopted by the established art world, but by then the avant garde has moved on – beyond the conservative and inward looking elements of the art world, revitalising it as an expression of cultural significance.

Another ethical discussion is about the role of art to create shared, actionable knowledge. This is addressed through such management theory as psychologist Bruce Tuckman's (1965) ideas about "forming, storming, norming, and performing" where storming can be read as synonymous with Simon O'Sullivan idea that aesthetics 'might in fact be a name... for the rupturing quality of art: its power to break our habitual ways of being and acting in the world' (O'Sullivan, 2010, p.197). He goes on to write: “what is at stake with aesthetics is what Deleuze would call a genuine 'encounter'” (O'Sullivan, 2010, p.197). The ethical
point being that person to person, the artist is purposely making people uncomfortable. Grant Kester compares and contrasts ideas of rupture with ideas of a different kind of encounter, *reciprocal creative labour* (Kester, 2011), whereby rather than art rupturing the everyday, the creation of conviviality instead challenges our everyday habits. As Iain Biggs writes:

> people I meet are managing to continue to make ‘convivial places’ that serve to grow or support forms of community and mutual support – ‘places’ that exist solely through the coming together in good faith of people engaged in creative action. This form of ‘making’ seems to me one basis for what we might call another kind of politics and some of the most valuable creative work we can do.

(Biggs, 2013)

Biggs refers in the article to Alice Tatton-Brown, Hannah Sullivan and Martha King, commenting on the “particular outward-looking, enthusiastically engaged and intellectually curious quality of the ‘convivial place’ these three have managed to create at the Parlour Show Rooms” (Biggs, 2013). Although after eighteen months, it has now closed, *The Parlour Showrooms* worked with 44 organisations, 16 festivals and 555 individuals to present 93 exhibitions, 120 events, 52 performances and a 6 month arts council funded programme of live performance. It is hard to measure the impact of such work, but no more so than measuring the impact of a more rupturing intervention.

This problem of rupture and conviviality can be seen in terms of transversality. Where problems to be solved within complex systems are beyond the control of participants, a transversal approach is seen as a means of bridging these systems. However by its very nature it challenges or disrupts existing power structures and hierarchies. Bradley Kaye writes of Guattari and his psychiatric work at *La Borde Clinic*:

> Guattari evokes transversality as a common, perhaps revolutionary, quality among subject groups. It embodies a certain way in which the discourse produced by such groups creates an open flow of thoughts and expressions resulting in a creative self-discovery that can be therapeutic as well as revolutionary

(Kaye, 2011a).
This suggests to me that a transversal practice is both rupturing and convivial, both challenging established power bases and enabling reciprocal creative labour. The chosen strategy for the emergent practice is to facilitate encounters which both raise and face the issues of concern and which lead to collaborative activity to address them. In addition to the social context, the research addresses the environmental context, suggesting that it too has agency and can therefore be seen as a collaborator, raising other ethical considerations.

Artist Samantha Clark discusses what she sees as the tangential debates about aesthetics in contemporary art and in environmental aesthetics, arguing that “these disciplines, having evolved separately in response to the limitations of traditional aesthetics, may now usefully inform each other” (Clark, 2010, p.351). One of the points she makes is that “Gablik's 'connective aesthetics', like Berleant's 'aesthetics of engagement', folds aesthetic experience into the social as a kind of environmental aesthetics” (Clark, 2010, p.351).

In interview with Russ Volkmann, Gablik expresses the conflicting nature of this, saying:

I feel timorous that I sounded so bleak. You wouldn’t know it, but I’m a great lover of life and believer in life. It’s very painful to watch it all going under and being systematically destroyed. I find myself like an alien member of the human race—how can people act like this? How did this happen?

(Volkmann, 2007, p.274)

Gablik's distress about environmental degradation expressed in the interview was overlaid with distress about the Iraq war and her fears about what the West had unleashed. War and environmental destruction are in many ways the antithesis to building partnership and collaboration, an approach Gablik shares with her friend Riane Eisler. When asked in the same interview about Eisler's book, The Real Wealth of Nations (Eisler 2007), Gablik said that Eisler had been very influential in her own “early writing about art, to construct a notion of art that’s built around relationship, participation, collaborative communities, and interaction with others”
The conflict for Gablik appears to be created at the interface between the human race in its systems and destructive behaviours, from which she is now feeling alienated, and the rest of life, the lifeworld, which she loves. This is a sensitivity to a lifeworld which includes the more-than-human. My reflection about Gablik's “Art that is grounded in the realisation of our interconnectedness and intersubjectivity” (Gablik, 1992, p.4), is that it refers to a wider interspecies connectedness and also for me, a connectedness across time.

In this context, the emergent practice is driven by an environmental aesthetic appreciation, folded in with ethical appreciation of these human/more-than-human relationships. Emily Brady quotes Cheryl Foster and suggests that the story “illustrates how aesthetic pleasure conflicts with a moral attitude towards environment” (Brady, 2003, p.246).

If I am witnessing a spectacularly-coloured sunset from my kitchen window and am taking great pleasure from its beauty, how shall I respond when a friend drops in and informs me that the reason for all that colour is the proliferation of sulphur dioxide in the air? … the result of a factory operating up river… with grave consequences for the creatures in the marsh downstream.

(Foster, 1992, p. 212)

Foster refers to this hypothetical conflict between an aesthetic appreciation and an ethical valuing of environment as **aesthetic disillusionment**. However I would argue that there is not necessarily a conflict; the people at the kitchen window may feel conflicted and if so, as a result, may respond to overcome this feeling in any number of ways. For example by taking action to change the situation in support of the endangered marsh species by boycotting the goods from the factory, picketing deliveries etc. In other words environmental aesthetics and ethics are totally compatible, if at times, or maybe constantly, uncomfortable.

Traditionally, these responses were seen in terms of subject and object, a separation between self and the world, instead of a dynamic relationship in which, according to Wylie “rather than relations and connections being forged in an already-given space, relations are being viewed as **creative of spaces**” (Wylie, 2007, p.200). This implies that aesthetics as a way of connecting us with each
other and with each other in space, are central to creating place or landscape and it suggests to me that the more-than-human elements of landscape also have agency and as such gives an ethical dimension to these relationships. Wylie acknowledges that this “relational view of a world-always-in-the-making- owes much of its derivation to the actor-network theory” and he goes on to reference Bruno Latour’s *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993) and Donna Harraway’s *Simians, Cyborgs and Women* (1991), citing their concerns to “disturb and unsettle the academic (and also commonplace) habit of dividing the world up into 'cultural' (or social) and 'natural' domains” (Wylie, 2007, p.200). These further ideas of there being no division between cultural/natural or human/non human provides important context for the research. In particular the idea of 'hybridity' - complex amalgams of human/animal/machine (Harraway, 1991) – which suggests a relational aesthetic that includes a sensitivity towards non-human species and artefacts with which I need to deal in the context of facilitating a relational landscape aesthetic as a part of the co-creation of place.

Beuys’ work often included animals and plants, which for him were a link to a spiritual and self-healing world. In his well known *I Like America and America Likes Me* (1974), he performed a week long dialogue with a coyote, an important symbol of indigenous North Americans’ spirituality, in which the coyote ripped-up and urinated on copies of the *Wall Street Journal* which were placed on the floor of the gallery. They appeared to be commenting on America’s loss of engagement with its cultural past, a past and way of being co-created by animals and humans, making a comparison with its financial focused culture. Its difficult to know what relationship had been developed between Beuys and the coyote, however, while the work in the gallery appeared to be co-created, in practice the coyote probably had no choice about being there. In this sense, rather like the early work of the Situationists, the coyote was not so much a participant in the work as an 'extra' - but then again, maybe Beuys had no choice about how to be with the coyote.

There is little doubt that he would have been sensitive to this ethical question and perhaps in this regard, his work *A Party for Animals* (1969), in which he included his name on the list of invitees along with other species, was more successful and could be seen as performing a 'complex amalgam', part animal part human. Other
artists/activists such as Goto Collins, has approached the idea of kinship with other species, particularly trees, through ideas of empathy. In writing about shared experience between people, place and trees in public places, she concluded amongst other things that “It takes integration of empathy, cognitive mental activities and rational imagination to understand the complex relationship. Creativity, the core of art, takes an important role in this integration of mental activities” (Goto Collins, 2012, p.117). In writing with Tim Collins about “the move by artists towards nature as a context and subject for work that addresses ethical ideas and aesthetic opportunities in relationship to a changing environment” (Collins and Goto Collins, 2012, p.122), she uses empathy as an analytical framework. In describing empathy they say, “Empathy is not based on self interest. It is reaching beyond self without losing or forgetting oneself” (Collins and Goto Collins, 2012, p.123). This resonates with ideas of disinterest and the whole question of together apart, and suggests empathy as a reflective space. A space created by aesthetic practice in which to reflect on “inter-relationship, interface and empathic exchange with plants and trees” (Collins and Goto Collins, 2012, p.132).

In terms of making policy about landscape scale management, there is an interesting parallel here with the rewilding agenda and initiatives. George Monbiot, sees “rewilding as an enhanced opportunity for people to engage with and delight in the natural” (Monbiot, 2013, p.11), letting it and us go ‘feral’. In response to this, the Wildlife Trusts say “this is also about the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. People need to understand that they are part of, not separate to, nature” (Wildlife Trusts, n.d.). For me, as with Sehgal questioning being a part of a group in These Associations, questioning being a part of this extended group of species and natural processes, is a personal thing.

The idea of empathy as an element of an arts practice that deals with wider environmental concerns and an enabler for producing cross species dialogues is developed by Professor Freya Mathews. In her opening address of the ‘Nature in the Dark’ video project (Mathews, 2012), she said of the challenge to humans surviving on earth that the “missing piece in the puzzle is empathy”. Whether, as she goes on to suggest, “only artists, writers, poets, animateurs and other adepts of the imagination can supply this link” (Mathews, 2012, p.6), is questionable.
However, it does raise the question of how artists contribute in this context; to help counter what Gablik sees as the situation whereby as a “flawed species” we have “managed, unwittingly, through our many technological advances and our unwavering belief in them as desirable, to write ourselves out of the picture” (Volkmann, 2007, 270). Gablik bemoans that despite decades of raising environmental issues nothing has changed and says that “Pipe dreams and soap bubbles aren’t working at this point” (Gablik in interview with Volkmann, 2007, p.273). However she doesn't say, and it would be hard to measure, what difference she and others have made, how much worse the situation might have been without their resistance. In the absence of such information, the earlier mentioned concept of active hope (Macy and Johnstone, 2012: p.3) comes into play, hope in the face of adversity, an impetus for taking action. Hope can be understood as a type of resistance.

Carrying hope, rather than loosing it, I would argue is an important element of Gablik practice her description of it role of “looking seriously into the realities of the times”, saying that doing this “is a 'gift' to the community” (Volkmann, 2007, p.272). Its interesting to compare this way of using the word 'gift' with how it is used in discussion about the autonomy of artists – gifted, genius, divine right. Instead Gablik talks about her work in terms of integration, saying, “I'm a collage artist with a special gift for synthesis. It means that I can take bits and pieces from everywhere and see how they connect, perhaps in ways that someone else might miss” (Volkmann, 2007, p. 271). This is a part of her belief in the value of sharing the big picture, a hope to be able to create "a multi- dimensional, non-compartmentalized view of reality". The emergent practice aims to integrate people's hopes for community and landscape, assemblages or collages of future hopes can be revealed and acted upon. In a way the “gift” is to step hopefully into the unknown future in community with people and other-than-human.

This gifting of hope for the future is akin to ideas of utopia or micro utopia, imagining and working towards a future in which people's hopes are held. Ruth Levitas refers to this as an “imaginary reconstitution of society” and claims that these “fleeting utopias” are an “escape and compensation, rather than having transformative or even critical power” (Levitas, 2007, p.54). The emergent practice
returns instead to their potential as put forward by Paul Selman as a *sustainability touchstone*; elements of an ongoing, learning process rather than a blue print for community resilience.

As has been said, littoral art practice questions the traditional view of the artist as autonomous, often outside of the community, and instead manifests a type of collaborative venture, including with the more-than-human, in which the artist manifests the human condition of *being apart together*. What does this mean to day to day praxis? Simon Read writes about his involvement with a coastal protection scheme for Sutton Saltmarsh, Suffolk, explaining how his role has evolved:

The original premise for my place in the project was quickly sublimated into the function of project manager, developing and bringing it to completion. My identity as an artist in projects like this is ambiguous. In any such partnership, the question of authorship is not really appropriate; neither should the status of the structure be an issue. It might be attractive to think of it as sculpture by default, but this is a conceit. My underlying intention happens offstage and belongs to another.

(Read, n.d)

Likewise with my practice, or more accurately, with the projects in which I participate, the question of artist autonomy instead becomes a question of combing individual sensitivity and expression with collective sensitivities and expression, and like Read, I often become project manager. However, these projects usually include me making drawings, and although their relationship with the projects are varied, they are always about me being present with people and myself engaged with the landscape. This counters criticisms that social practice can be “self-effacing” (Bishop, 2006a, p.180), as it is always informed by my own direct experience of the landscape itself; its sites and sounds, smells, tastes and textures; its hidden geology, different coloured soils, tempting paths, enchanting hedgerows, vibrant and mysterious ponds, only half glimpsed animal species and the remnants and imagined stories of earlier and future lives and situations. And an awareness of the many threats to it.

Further considering artistic autonomy and artists working in landscape, Nash's work, such as *Wooden Boulder* (1976), can be seen as a collaboration with natural processes external to himself and beyond his control, as he says of working with
wood: “There’s a profound wisdom there, stretching over millennia…I take my cue from what the material suggests to me…I am a researcher into the science and anthropology of trees and the wood they produce” (Nash, 2010).

Furthermore, Nash’s comment that he is “a maker of objects that are motivated by an idea, an attitude of a healthy relationship with our outer skin, the environment” (Nash, 2010), resonates with ideas of a dynamic relationship between human and more-than-human and consequently there are ethical issues relating to nature’s agency. Nash says of his work that the, “and is absolutely fundamental and has to be in the front. I can’t stand sculpture that uses the land as a background. I find it offensive.” (Grande, 2001).

Deleuze and Guattari write that “The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p.157). This is interesting in the context of some of the questions already raised in this thesis about the nature of art. The idea of creating a new type of reality which, at least temporarily, can reveal various sensitivities and realities so as to make their collective existence apparent is a transformative process. Michel de Beistegui writes:

the metaphor that weaves isn't the product of fancy...Rather, its the figure of the real in its self-transposition or transfiguration. Metaphor believes in transubstantiation, in the conversion of matter into spirit, which it carries out, but only as an implicit dimension of itself, inscribed within it from the start.

(de Beistegui, 2013, p.3)

Beuys’ previously mentioned 7000 Oaks operates in this way, being in a number of worlds and times at once, a means of creating a reflective space that enables dialogue, potentially revealing and creating new collective ideas and activity.

The use of metaphor in philosophy has been contested by analytical philosophers such as Black (1979) and Davidson (1984), however metaphor is defended by
David D. Clarke and Brigitte Nerlich’s claims that metaphor was generated by aesthetics to describe the world beyond pure reason. They write that the “German philosophy of metaphor, which proposed a close link between the body and the mind as the basis for metaphor, debunked the view that metaphor is just a decorative rhetorical device” and argued that “metaphors are not only nice, but necessary for the structure and growth of human thought and language” (Clarke and Nerlich 2001, p. 39). The idea here of metaphor as a way of linking body and mind reflects one of the key arguments in this thesis and thereby validates its use in the research.

Patrick Keiller’s use of metaphor in the Tate Britain commissioned exhibition, *The Robinson Institute* (27th March - 14th October, 2012) centred on revisiting his fictional, unseen scholar Robinson; taking the viewer on what can be seen as a metaphorical journey through southern England’s changing landscape, using places, names, historic events and landmarks to point to the growth of the UK economy, in particular its oil dependency, military alliance with the USA and the effects of this on landscape. A part of the richness of the metaphor was created by the inclusion of artefacts from the Tate Britain collection, and images of what for me, was a familiar and cherished childhood landscape. This familiarity and sense of place and sense of self was transformed into a sense of betrayal by what appeared as my own collusion with neoliberalism which abused the very fabric of an ancient England. Similar to Beuys's use of metaphor, Keiller's works on many levels, it is both a metaphor for a number of ideas, and at the same time, a manifestation of the idea; Keiller explains that the work is based on the fictional Robinson Institute's mission statement “to promote political and economic change by developing the transformative potential of images of landscape” (Tate Shots, 2012), which the exhibition itself achieves. He goes on to describe how “protagonist Robinson turns up at this disused cement quarry and he realises that he must ... suggest that they should establish some sort of experimental centre in this quarry which is perhaps where the Robinson Institute is based” (Tate Shots, 2012). The exhibition itself becomes such an experimental centre, its very construction using quite low tech metal construction, reminiscent of a science lab, its every questioning of our previously held pictures of landscape, developing the transformative potential of images of landscape.
However, some see metaphor as a way of suppressing critical thinking, for example, Charles Gaines agrees with Liam Gillick's comment about the allied invasion of Iraq that: “the Bush administration’s metaphor of ‘desert storm’ was an instrument to form an identifying figure that would locate the war as an act of patriotism” (Gaines, 2009, p. 48). Gaines widens the argument, saying:

this “suppression of thought” is a faculty in forms of art whose *raison d’être* is based on aesthetics... Further, that there is a historical evolution of ideas that reveals... how metaphor helped advance the Western idea of universal knowledge, the idea that there are totalizing concepts that preclude dissent or difference.

(Gaines, 2009, p. 48)

This is put forward to caution us of the possible abuse of metaphor rather than an abandonment of its use in art practice and Gaines does acknowledge its value, writing “This is not to say metaphors do not produce ideas or that metaphor is not a type of thinking, for the metaphor is often responsible for the introduction of new ideas” (Gaines, 2009, p. 49).

Nevertheless, he goes on to critique the use of metaphor and the related idea of metonymy in the work of a number of contemporary artists – Francis Alÿs, Sam Durant and Olafur Eliasson - and in so doing he points to what he reads as the:

Conflicting poles that occupy the centre of art discourse today, namely, whether art is essentially a critical practice that adds to our knowledge of the world or that art is an aesthetic practice that continues to establish its autonomy in yet newer ways in the midst of highly charged political and social ideas.

(Gaines, 2009, p.56).

This polarisation seems unnecessary and this research suggests that with collaborative practice, metaphor can add to our knowledge of the world and establish a collective autonomy or self determination. The research will study this argument further by using metaphor as a part of a participatory, connecting and action based processes, revealing the unseen, unheard, unknown, unnoticed or unfelt, combining the real and the imaginary, the embodied and rational.
Another example of a participatory, connecting and action based process that is central to this research is walking with people; walking as a critical practice that adds to our knowledge of the world. Of course, for many artists, walking is primarily an aesthetic practice and of itself is not collaborative or socially engaged. Indeed, as an arts practice, walking has now developed in many directions to the extent that there is an active on-line Walking Artists Network posting calls for papers for conferences and exhibitions as apparent from this January 2014 call for submissions for “The Walking Encyclopedia Exhibition” which was asking for submissions “reflecting on different artistic, cultural and academic approaches to the act of walking”. One of the network members, Blake Morris, emailed that: “There has recently been a huge amount of doctoral work being done on walking. I am in the process of compiling a list for the Walking Artists Network of theses and dissertations with walking as the subject” (Morris, 2013).

At the time of writing, in conversation across this network, Deirdre Heddon initiated an email discussion about the “homogeneous frame of reference, serving to marginalise or make invisible the diversity of walkers and the diversity of walking”, this in reference to an article in The New Yorker (2014). Her point being that walking came across as the preserve of males and that “This frame is historically and culturally informed (stemming largely from Romanticism) - and it does enshrine and perpetuate an attitude - about what walking is, who has the right to walk where, etc.” (Heddon, 2014). Certainly the emergent practice aims instead to reflect Rebecca Solnit’s understanding of a walking practice when she writes:

To use a walking metaphor, (walking) trespasses through everybody else’s field - through anatomy, anthropology, architecture, gardening, geography, political and cultural history, literature, sexuality, religious studies – and doesn’t stop in any of them on its long route.

(Solnit, 2001, p4)

Hamish Fulton’s facilitation of mass walks such as the slowalk for the AV Festival in Newcastle breaks away from Heddon’s ironic description of the stereotypical walker - “the solo male figure striding across an empty landscape - managing to both walk and think! And yes, those are mountains in the background” (Heddon, 2014). Here he led a group-walk in a disused car park at Spillers Wharf near the Tyne. Reading the blog of a participant and poet, Linda
France, provides an insight into the nature of the walk as an aesthetic experience. It was both very mundane – simply being still, walking very slowly – and quite sublime... I was born in Newcastle and have a Geordie’s sentimental attachment to the city and its river. Being at that particular spot, I felt deeply connected with my roots. (France, 2012)

Mark Robinson, another blogging participant and trustee of the festival gives another insight into the walk experience. In describing the walk, as “trying to keep my legs moving, shifting the movement up one leg and down the other, making sure I lifted my toes and heels, but only moved them a very little, tightening my stomach whilst keeping one foot off the floor, being very conscious of my body” (Robinson, 2012), he emphasises a type of being in landscape, a corporeal knowing. He also reflects Berleant’s engaged aesthetic when he describes the experience as also “a visual one – playing games with the tarmac to determine where to move my feet next, piece by piece, trying not to go too fast – and an aural one, listening to the wind and the Quayside buses, the squalls of birds” (Robinson, 2012). He also refers to the relational aspects of the work saying “Talking to the two strangers we exchanged experiences and felt curiously alive, it seemed. Our joint participation in an odd, but shaped activity, created a connection” (Robinson, 2012). Robinson's blog says 'if we are going to talk about mass participation performance art – which is what I decided this was - maybe it will help to talk from inside the experience.' (Robinson, 2012). For me, the interesting point here is not the interpretation of what kind of art the walk is or the labelling of the experience, but the nature of aesthetic experience itself, art seen from the inside. Although, I note that Robinson saw the event as shaped by the artist.

Walking as an aesthetic practice to facilitate direct experience of space or place as opposed to making or performing work for an audience is described by Carl Lavery as aiming to “overwhelm us in the present, to provide us with actual experience, to make the world float in the here and now” (Lavery, 2009, in Mock [Ed.], p.45). He suggests that such pedestrian performance displays an “avant-garde heritage: its ultimate purpose is to replace vicarious experience (reading someone else's
account of space) with actual experience” (Lavery, 2009, p.45).

Walking then can be seen as an embodied art practice, a practice which is about place, about being in the moment and co-produced by the artist and participants. It can also be understood in the context of sustainability; in his *Mourning Walk* piece, Lavery refers to it as a “mode of resistance against the acceleration of the world, a desire on the part of performance makers, to rehumanise space” (Lavery, 2009, p.46).

Lavery refers to walking’s “bodily beat of three miles per hour” as a particular aspect of walking that enables experience of environment at a “properly human pace”, resulting in walking being “conducive to a production of place, a perfect technique for merging landscape, memory and imagination in dynamic dialogue” (Lavery, 2009, p.49), and he goes on to say:

> the contemporary walker is seeking ways to re-enchant existence and to find meaning in the world. In an age of impending ecological catastrophe, the enchanted sensibility of the walker is both ethical and political. It points forward to an alternative way of being in, and caring for, the world. 

(Lavery, 2009, p.49).

This research studies walking as a way of knowing the land and other species with which we share it. Pamela Banting in writing about the 2003, five month research journey of biologist Karsten Heuer and filmmaker Leanne Allison quotes Tim Ingold's ideas of walking as “a highly intelligent activity”. Ingold suggests that this intelligence is both embodied also situational, writing: “This intelligence, however, is not located exclusively in the head but is distributed throughout the entire field of relations comprised by the presence of the human being in the inhabited world” (Ingold, 2004, p.332). Banting claims that her article about Heuer and Allison's journey, whereby they follow on foot the Porcupine Caribou herd during their annual migration, is about them in the “processes of being and becoming animal” (Banting, 2007, p.409).

Walking as a practice that pulls together aesthetic and rational ways of knowing is especially appropriate for the scope of this research. Banting's description of the
sort of understanding or knowledge thus developed is inspirational. She writes:

Knowledge is native, aboriginal. Knowledge walks the land on four legs and two. Knowledge ambles and pads, lopes and prances, skis and hikes, crawls and swims. Knowledge flocks across the sky in feathered guises. Knowledge moves you, carries you away, enraptures you, and alters your being in the world just as walking, moving, joining the herd, and stepping in tune with being are forms of knowledge. Knowledge is nomadic, migratory, and wild. Knowledge travels through and flows across landforms and beings in motion – individuals, herds, species, life-forms. Locomotion is a form of knowledge, and knowledge is that which is in local motion. Knowledge is alive, afoot and animal. Animality is a bundle of particular knowledges (Banting, 2007, p.429).

It is this quality of experiencing and gaining understanding of being in the world that part of the research aims to study through walking.

This chapter has looked at examples of art practices which are positioned at the juncture between art and life and include a diversity of artists from Beuys to the contemporary work of Deller and Sehgal, all of whom integrate aesthetic experience with the everyday. Through studying other approaches to collaborative and participatory practice it has been possible to learn how to position this research and how to define and locate the practice to emulate Selman's reconnection agenda and create a symbiotic reconnection of aesthetics and everyday life.
Summary to Part One

Part One has provided context for the research, context that is folded back into the practice. It has addressed the challenge of reconnecting art and life as an aspect of sustainability. It has begun to map out the development of the emergent practice as an amalgam of practical community landscape management projects, land art and walking practice, pivoting around a relational, dialogic, engaged or collective aesthetic. It has uncovered values that inform the practice, such as a commitment to collaboration and participation in the context of sustainability and practical landscape change. It has explored some of the boundaries between artists, community, public institutions and non-human agency.

In studying the context, the chapters have identified and explored a research gap. It has found that whilst much practice and theory regards relational and environmental aesthetics have been conceptualised and resonate with the aims of the emergent practice, overall it finds that there is not a practical aesthetic that adequately expresses the complex amalgam between individuals, community, institutions and nature.

Figure 21 pulls out a number of reflections or threads which resonate with the emergent practice’s aim of integrating with and supporting community-landscape resilience initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the practice</th>
<th>The practice needs to be multi-faceted, for example including project management and leadership, facilitation and building collaboration within community and with everyday and nature.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It requires being in the real world and able to comment on it, together and apart, able to reveal and combine a variety of world views and narratives. It needs to be transversal and non-compartmentalised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It needs to carry (active) hope in the face of adversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical/aesthetic</td>
<td>Working with people and landscape requires collapsing ethics and aesthetics. This requires an engaged, relational, connective, dialogic and practical aesthetic. Consequently artistic autonomy becomes the freedom to choose to join in with a project and to be a part of a group and a part of nature – and just how to do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>considerations of the</td>
<td>The practice needs to be sensitive to the past, present and future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Role of practice
To reveal landscape as an expression of common culture, animating the process and supporting the co-creation of place in order to bring about sustainable change and resist non-sustainable change. To facilitate encounters and reveal actionable knowledge.

Nature of practice

It variously needs to negotiate, reveal, assemble, bridge, stage, re-make, make do and mend, transform, collage, synthesise.

Transversal, disturbing, rupturing and convivial and expressing situation. To be empathetic and encourage a disinterested-interest, being in the moment.

Its methodology and form are drawing and walking, being outside with people, avoiding choreography and also assembling metaphor as manifestation of an amalgam of scientific and sensory ways of knowing, rather than to represent or symbolise.

Figure 21. Threads: summary of reflections on Part One.

Part One concludes by proposing a hypothesis for further exploration in Part Two – a practical community-landscape aesthetic as an approach to facilitating engagement with landscape change processes as posited below.

A Practical Community-Landscape Aesthetic.

Revealing and acting upon our incremental experiences and understandings of, including agency in, the spaces where lives have been, are being and will be shared between people, with other generations and with non-human entities and activity, such as plant and animal communities, geology and weather, in a multiplicity of ways; as individuals, friends and family, community groups, producers and organisations that are both public and commercial in nature.
As I near the end of todays walk I find I'm pondering on the crow, which, over the last few days, seems to be watching me and getting closer and closer. I remember how my much loved mother had taken a dislike to crows, suspecting, I think, that they were harbingers of death, or maybe she just disliked the way they took fledgling hedgerow birds from her garden. Society does seem to demonise certain species – rats, magpies, snakes, wolves. I have a very different feeling for crows and love watching them playing in the wind; imagining that its me flying, diving, falling, soaring, cawing.

There it is at the top of a telegraph pole, a magnificent crow, shining black in the sun. I greet it as I walk under its perch. Seconds later I see its shadow pass over my own and the dogs'. I wonder what it was saying as it cawed? All I know is that for whatever reason or non-reason, I felt that even if the cancer scare did turn out to be for real, it was still a wonderful day right now.

Crow 2, December 2014.
Part One set the context for the study. It located the practice in theory by studying what were referred to as reference points. It used these to reflect on my own earlier practices and other artists' practice. From this it identified threads to be woven into the emergent practice and found a need to develop a new practical aesthetic that recognised not only the social context but also the landscape and institutional context for the work. It arrived at a methodology for researching the proposal for practical community-landscape aesthetic.

Part Two studies the development of this practical aesthetic through interventions in a number of community initiatives relating to Stroud between 2010 and 2014. These interventions relate to initiatives which are examples of community led responses to the concerns shown in Figure 13 in the preamble to Part One. In all cases, the overall purpose of the interventions was to work in community in place, to explore and apply an appropriate aesthetic to help develop community and landscape resilience. Specifically to make apparent and narrate individual and community aspirations and relationships as expressed and manifested in landscape and to connect these with institutional, cultural and natural processes. This in order to increase understanding through dialogue and thereby enable collaborative action.

The different interventions raised different issues for the emergent practice in terms of scale, the nature of community and landscape, type of changes envisioned and the interface with institutional frameworks as shown below in Figure 23 below.

Returning to the original wording of the research proposal, there were a number of distinct objectives relating to community action: involvement in Green Infrastructure planning and delivery, and Landscape Character Assessment.

Chapter 5 studies The (Canal) Weave which is involved with Green Infrastructure, while Chapter 6 studies the River Map intervention, and is involved with Landscape Character Assessment. However, they overlap both in terms of policy and geography, and the River Map project can be seen as an extension of the (Canal) Weave, dealing with a wider geographical area and constituency.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>intervention</strong></th>
<th><strong>Purpose/change</strong></th>
<th><strong>network</strong></th>
<th><strong>place</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The (Canal) Weave</td>
<td>To integrate the canal restoration project with other green infrastructure initiatives, plans and aspirations</td>
<td>Civil society groups active in Stroud, relevant NGO's, Stroud District Council, Cotswolds Conservation Board</td>
<td>Stroud Valleys, particularly the River Frome and canal corridor as they pass by Stroud town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folly Wood</td>
<td>To develop and implement a woodland plan and organisation to deliver it</td>
<td>Initially Stroud-wide community, then Stroud Woodland Cooperative.</td>
<td>Three and a half acre larch plantation into ancient semi-natural beech woodland in the Slad Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Map</td>
<td>To integrate individual and community values and activity related to the River Frome landscape in the context of the Cotswold conservation Board's Landscape Character Assessment</td>
<td>Walking the Land artists, Stroud Festival of Nature Consortium, Cotswolds Conservation Board, Civil society groups active in Stroud</td>
<td>Stroud Valleys, particularly the River Frome valley and Nailsworth stream as they meet and flow towards the River Severn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transition Walks**

- **Between A and Bee**
  - To develop understanding between walking artists and scientists/bee campaigners
  - Walking the Land artists, Bee Foundation, Bath Visual Arts Festival
  - The Cotswold long distance footpath along the Cotswold escarpment, between Stroud and Bath

- **in-between places**
  - To develop conversations between transition towns about ‘transition landscapes’
  - V21 FLN group. Transition movement in the Co-op mid counties region
  - The landscape between the Gloucestershire stretches of the River Severn and the Derbyshire Trent, especially around the “Cotswold Way” and “Heart of England Way”.

- **transhumance walk**
  - To pilot art-walking as a way of narrating landscape values
  - WtL artists. International community of story tellers and sustainable landscape interest group
  - Aurland, Norway

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Figure 23. Overview of the interventions and situations

Chapter 7 studies *Caring for Folly Wood*, which can be read as an example of grass roots green infrastructure delivery.
The three long distance walks that were undertaken over the period, *Between A and Bee*\(^{62}\), *In-between Places*\(^{63}\) and *Transhumance Walk*\(^{64}\), are also discussed.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarises the findings by evaluating an installation made and performed to reflect with partners and the wider community on the various interventions.
Chapter 5

THE (CANAL) WEAVE

Background

The research purpose was to explore and develop a practice that would involve and be involved with the community in the landscape changes being stimulated by the restoration of the Cotswold Canals.

Phase 1a of the restoration was underway as a result of a successful Heritage Lottery Bid and was now lead by Stroud District Council. There was an undercurrent of concern about the project being a missed opportunity to, for example, put Stroud Town Centre on the map or regenerate the Cheapside area of town. Equally concerns were being expressed about perceived threats to some of the town’s green infrastructure and public realm, so, for example a group, Stroud Against Gyratory, had sprung into being to combat proposed new road layouts that had been brought about by bridging the canal.

Figure 24. Line of Cotswold Canals Restoration. Crown Copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey.
More generally, there was an often expressed concern amongst local people, especially given the changes to planning legislation\textsuperscript{69} being brought about by the coalition government. This was seen by many as a green light to developers, suggesting that the canal's most lasting legacy might be a corridor of private, waterside housing where currently there were inexpensive industrial units, remnants of past settlements and farms, playing fields and woods. During previous art-walking around the area, a number of people I met commented that they didn't want it all tidied up too much. I wondered if this was short hand for not wanting to loose a sense of locally evolved, and evolving, place to an imposed aesthetic.

Figure 25. “We don't want it tidied up too much” Digital photographs from First Friday Walks.

In recognition of such concerns, Stroud's Local Strategic Partnership\textsuperscript{70} (LSP) decided to research the community's ideas and aspirations for the restoration. In 2010, given my previous experience with the Stroud Living Landscape Project (see chapter 2), I was invited to undertake the research by a director of Stroud Common Wealth, Max Comfort, and to study these concerns as a part of my PhD. In accepting this invitation I made it clear that I would focus on green infrastructure, open space, and town and countryside interface. I was completing a paid project for Natural England encouraging the development of Green Infrastructure Strategies across the south west and was able to put the project forward as a community led example.

Early on, in discussing the web like qualities of the physical landscape, the watershed and escarpment, cut through by river valleys and streams, bird migration routes, animal tracks, textures and colours of various habitats, overlaid
with transport networks, various histories, meanings and values and with daily experiences, we came up with the name 'The Weave' which for me also expressed what I was being asked to do.

**Collaborating**

While Shannon Jackson recognises the value of social practice that “displays the importance of anti-institutionality in political art”, she is also interested in “art forms that help us imagine sustainable social institutions” (Jackson, 2011, p.14). Writing from a performance perspective, which she sees as being cross-disciplinary, time-based, group art, she is mindful of the need for “a degree of systematic co-ordination, a brand of stage management that must think deliberatively but also speculatively about what it means to sustain human collaboration spatially and temporally” (Jackson, 2011, p.14). Using Jackson’s description of performance as an analogy is helpful in clarifying the nature of the collaboration. In the case of the (Canal) Weave, the group were members of a community of interest who brought their own lines and stories, and the stage was the canal at the interface between Stroud and the surrounding countryside. The project management was the equivalent of stage management in the immediate term and over the longer term, we had to be more speculative about the nature of the ongoing collaboration, indeed, the intention was to widen the collaboration by bridging between the community and public sectors and between human and more-than-human agency.

The verbally negotiated terms of reference for the collaboration between myself and Stroud Common Wealth were to:

- use a process that incorporates the aesthetic in exploring the social/cultural/political/environmental aspects of the project by walking and drawing with people
- create a relational or dialogical aesthetic by co-developing a community narrative and interface with decision making processes
- develop a process which over time would enable community involvement in the decision making process about landscape change and enable community driven action in the context of Green
Infrastructure planning.

At much the same time the newly elected MP, Neil Carmichael, set up a Canal Forum to share information about the canal restoration project's relationship with Stroud town centre. As a number of local groups attended this forum it seemed like an appropriate point of engagement. In making this step, I was able to widen the Forum's remit to include consideration of the town's landscape setting and in particular the potential of the canal to link town and country. Conversely, it broadened the make-up of those involve with the (Canal) Weave. In face of the environmental challenges facing us, the project may seem inconsequential, however, as Fox says, in negotiating his relationship as an artist with his community, “let us start in a small and a domestic way. Make life and art work together. I work for my neighbours to the best of my ability” (Fox, 2012). In this way, collaboration is not simply an aim in itself, but is the process by which values are shared and understood at a meaningful level, developing the ground for future action orientated collaboration.

In terms of developing a collaboration between the community and public sectors, the practice needed to address questions about how the various parts of the planning system and local authority governance might be able to accommodate the delivery of a national project, district-wide strategies such as Green Infrastructure Planning, all with local people's aspirations and concerns. Consequently I wrote to Karen Toole (1963-2011), the then head of Community Services at Stroud District Council and Mark Connelly, the Land Manager at the Cotswolds Conservation Board in order to develop this interface. The communication with both of these bodies was positive about weaving a participatory approach into their work.

**Encountering**

Between November 2010 and May 2011, I walked various lengths of the Cotswold Canals restoration. Seven of these 24 walks were with Walking the Land participants on First Friday Walks, the other 17 with people from local groups and organisations with a strong interest in the canal restoration and vision for its impact
on the landscape and interface with the town. On these walks, I recorded conversations, and along with participants took photographs and made drawings; these to be used to reveal the community narrative. This section explores some of these encounters by reflecting on the drawings produced.

The initial drawings (Figure 26) came about as a result of walking and talking with local activist, Ben Spencer on 24th November 2010 about the afore mentioned proposed traffic layout resulting in loss of pedestrian flow in and out of the town centre. An outline alternative scheme had been produced on behalf of Stroud Against Gyratory (SAG) and, as a development of the previous practice of combining drawings and photographs, a series of images were produced, overlaying SAGs scheme with photographs and drawings of the place undergoing change. The resultant 'digital collages' were inappropriate to their purpose in a number of other ways – the primary one being that they were images which said little about the multi-sensory experience of being in the place and how people felt about the place and the perceived threats to it – about its value to them. Secondly, despite trying to respond to the changes taking place, the images were static and didn't incorporate the dynamism of the situation.

The dynamism of relationships between both landscape and community in transition is similar to Stewart's description of “ordinary affects” as being:

a tangle of potential connections. Literally moving things – things that are in motion and that are defined by their capacity to affect and to be affected – they have to be mapped through different, coexisting forms of composition, habituation, and event.

(Stewart, 2007, p.4)
After this reflection, I began to shift my practice towards developing the (Canal) Weave narrative in ways which would include reference to walking through spaces which are in transition so that the dynamic aspect of community and landscape would be “mapped”. I decided to experiment with animation and made a number to explore how the moving image might reflect walking through landscapes, themselves in transition.

After a number of experimental stop frame animations made by drawing photographs taken on the walks and then scanning these drawings at various stages of completion into the computer and producing simple slide shows, I soon became aware of their limitations, limitations which can be seen from the sequence of stills made from the December 2010 First Friday Walk. One issue with these is that they were made in the studio from photographs. Although there are many examples of artists successfully using cameras as a part of their process, this particular method was too many steps removed from being in the moment and in place with people. The drawings were laboured and held little of the feeling of the encounter, being more a record of it. Additionally, the way that the images appeared on the screen – for this is how the animations would be viewed, and I return to this later – was actually very static and seemed to be more about taking root in a landscape rather than moving through it.

I attempted to increase the sense of movement and shared experience in an animation of a walk with community activist Martin Large and woodsman Adrian Leaman from Capel Mill and, along the disused railway line at Dudbridge. Martin regularly comes on the First Friday Walks and was keen to draw as we walked. This meant that I too had time to make drawings that I could later ‘turn’ into animations, and also record conversations, made on the walk to use as a sound track.
now when we look at this landscape, hedgerows have been left to grow as straggly lines of trees. I think its a shadow of its former self and has really been let go whereas with woodland management and enterprise and education this could be a huge resource.

Martin Large.

Figure 28. Dudbridge Cycle Track: collaged stills and transcribed conversation from animation made from walk on 16th December, 2010

I felt that the addition of colour and sound slightly enlivened the animations. Nevertheless they remained too static despite including drawings from different stages of the walk. The practice of drawing together and recording conversation simultaneously was a positive aspect of this encounter.

It would be a shame not to manage these sites and make them into diverse and beautiful woodland, and if we do, that will create a lot of materials that are really valuable for crafts.

Adrian Leaman.

Figure 29. Dudbridge Urban Woodland: collaged stills and transcribed conversation from animation made from walk on 16th December, 2010

The drawings remained too illustrative and the attempts to represent Adrian's
thinking about woodland produce was crass. This was perhaps in part due to being preoccupied by the technology of making animations and also being too concerned with their illustrative end use.

On January's *First Friday Walk*, I had made drawings of falling leaves and recorded participant Tara Downs' story of a falling leaf as a sound track for it. Although the resultant animation was more successful in showing an "ordinary affect" and movement by the addition of video footage on which the leaf was superimposed, it remained representational and lifeless.

![Figure 30. Falling leaves: stills from animation made from First Friday Walk, 7th January 2011](image)

Simultaneously, and in part brought about by the (canal) Weave, I was also organising a Woodland Enterprise day with Martin, Adrian and staff at Ruskin Mill College to be held in February 2011. This was symptomatic of a number time management issues as a result of pressure to respond to the dynamic situations and fragmented relationships within an active community.

![Figure 31. Facilitating woodland enterprise day at Ruskin Mill College](image)

The problem of the time it was taking to make animations also became apparent
as the outstanding work to be made from walks began to mount up. For example, on 11th January I walked with Stroud's then mayor, Andy Read, long before the animation of the falling leaf was finally published on Vimeo on 9th February and it was not until 28th February that I made preliminary drawings from this walk with Andy Read along lengths of “The WAS Way”\(^73\). I didn't complete this particular animation as I had lost the ability to reflect on the walks and on the work produced from them in time for the next walk.

This was disappointing as good material was coming from the walks. For example, as well as making a link between the two powerful concepts of home and landscape when he described one reason behind creating the “WAS Way” as enabling people to access “the hill or valley you can see from your window...within a five minute walk”, Andy was also clear that for him “Landscape is not just visual and physical, its emotional”, saying: “there is a sense of place felt through walking in the countryside; for me a rhythm – you walk and you walk and that becomes your essence.” I heard this comment in two ways, as a facilitator of the walk collecting useful information about how people are affected by being in landscape and as a walking artist, spending time manipulating images and sound in the studio rather than experiencing the “rhythm” of walking!

Nevertheless, I continued experimenting with making animations including drawings, overlaid photographs and video, such as on a walk with fellow director of Stroud Nature, natural historian and illustrator Steve Roberts on February 8th.
Capel Mill is a place where you can leave the urban area and within seconds you're in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – traditional hay meadows of Rodborough Fields – a summer blanket of flowers and views to the commons and along the valleys.

Steve Roberts

Figure 33. Drawings overlaid on video of walk along the River Frome, 8th February 2010

The shortfalls of the work had become clearer by the time of a second walk with Ben Spencer, this time joined by Rachael Lyons another member of SAG, on 15th February when she said:

Living just over there the relationship the house has with the landscape and local history is quite a strong story and the road system just seems to cut right through former relationships with the land, with the railway, with the canal – the road system seems to be taking over the landscape and people are being forgotten rather than being reconnected with the canal and its historical context with the town. From my perspective as a housewife living locally...it just feels frustrating...

Rachel Lyons.

Figure 34. Ben Spencer and Rachel Lyons point out their plans for a gateway to Stroud.
This comment reinforced a number of the aspects of why I had chosen to walk with people in their place as a means of compiling the community-landscape narrative and why the resulting work was ‘failing’. It helped me decide to focus on collecting everyday affects of landscape, rather than try to incorporate ideas of master plans, new landscape and woodland initiatives or solutions of any sort, trusting that the overall collective process would address such matters in due course. This decision seems to have some resonance with discussions at *Homework II*, a 2014 conference in Ontario on “utopic dreaming within artist-run culture as manifested through collaboration, friendship and long-term social engagement” from where Amber Berson reported that:

> It seemed that in cases where artists were looking to design solutions and become activists they often failed and that it would be easier to start with a desire for community engagement and problem solving. It seems that artist-run culture has in some way failed to achieve the utopic project it set out to accomplish... Perhaps the problem, then, as Lambert and others spoke to, is no longer knowing where our collective utopia resides. In using art to help people define their own ideas of utopia, we can collectively engage in the social work required to effect real change. We must first envision “real” utopias to arrive at them.

*(Berson, 2014)*

Stewart’s explanation of her hopes for her own book on ordinary affects were helpful in clarifying why the illustrative, or representative approach I had been taking was problematic. She writes that in her book she is trying to:

> slow the quick jump to representational thinking and evaluate critique long enough to find ways of approaching the complex and uncertain objects that fascinate because they literally hit us or exert a pull on us. My effort here is not to finally “know” them – to collect them into a good enough story of what's going on – but to fashion some form of address that is adequate to their form; to find something to say about ordinary affects by performing some of the intensity and texture that makes them habitable and animate.

*(Stewart, 2007, p.4)*

Paying attention to *some of the intensity and texture* was a liberating suggestion and seemed to mean:

> being less illustrative and representational
showing movement and change
including a sense of cultural and ecological value of place
referring to sensations of landscape experience beyond the visual
creating a stronger sense of being with people in place without them being
the object or separate other
collecting stories about people's relationship with place such as their
emotional attachment to it, and the affects it has
making work more spontaneously and in place

A specific aspect of this resonated with many discussion on First Friday Walks
about how we generally stop to draw rather than make drawings of the actual
activity of walking. I was interested in finding a way of doing this, perhaps a natural
development of the literally hundreds of indexical drawings I have made of train
journeys; Railway Lines. These question who is making the drawing, me, the train,
the driver, the railway line? A type of collaborative encounter, a type of amalgam.

As a development of this, I made a DIY drawing machine\textsuperscript{74} for making animations.
I used the prototype drawing machine in performing Between A and Bee, a three
day walk in 2010 with the Bee Foundation along the Cotswold Way to Bath. On
arrival we exhibited work and made a presentation as a part of the Bath Visual
Arts Festival, an assemblage of a three day long walking-conversation between
artists and scientists – and the more-than-human. My own work for this were scroll
like drawings made on the DIY drawing machine, an attempt to draw the movement of passing through the bee pollinated landscape – a movement not dissimilar to the bees own lines of flight.

Figure 36. Between A and Bee. June 2010, example of drawing made on DIY drawing machine, combining both drawing types.

Figure 37. The DIY Drawing Machine.

Figure 38. Drawing and walking on Rodborough Common with Ellie Harrison, as a part of filming for an episode of BBC's Countryfile programme. 16th February 2012. Photo Kel Portman.
Some of the drawing machine work produced were of lines made while in motion, loosing much of their reference to what was being drawn, more about moving, while others were more of a linked series of stopping points, drawings of significant for me moments/places on the walk – the bee stopping to pollinate.

![Figure 39. Details from two types of drawing using the drawing machine: The left hand image was made while I was walking, with the rollers being turned. The righthand one more conventionally drawn, stopping to look and stopping the rollers to draw. June, 2010.]

In the doing, I became aware of the serendipitously produced shadows on the images. In the 2012 Harvard Norton Lectures, Drawing Lesson One: *In Praise of Shadows* (Kentridge, 2012), William Kentridge refers to the use of illusion in his work and, in countering Plato's ranking of illusion and delusion at the bottom his hierarchy of intelligence, instead shows the place that illusion has “in the making of knowledge itself”. The distinction between illusion and vision is slight. A future as envisioned does not yet exist and consequently a means of revealing it is also illusory be it architects' drawings, artists' impressions or something closer to my intended animation - less confining and more open to interpretation and collaboratively authored. I wanted to create an illusion which represented a shared future place, not a prediction but the possibility of possibilities.

Kentridge argued his case for illusion and knowledge-making by referring to the use of shadows in his own work, in Plato's writing and by using them as a metaphor for art making. He says:

> it is in the very limitations and leanness of shadows that we learn, in the gaps, in the leaps we have to make to complete an image and in this we perform both the generative act of constructing the image... being fooled...and knowing we are being fooled, by being made aware of our part
in the construction of the image, our part in the construction of the illusion, but most importantly our part in the construction of ourselves.

(Kentridge, 2012).

This created a link for me back to my earlier walking and drawing practice of experimenting with shadow and line drawing.

Figure 40. Example of Line and shadow image from MA project, 2004.

It was also useful to consider Kentridge’s argument that illusion or delusion can be used to develop understanding, using a medium in a way which we know isn’t ‘real’ and which, as a result, emphasises the need for us to independently make sense of what we are seeing or experiencing. This resonates with Beuys’ ideas of self determination. I decided to use simple stop frame animation in this way, not to attempt to pin down a future situation but to make enough hints towards other people’s sense of place to necessitate the participation from the viewer to make sense of it themselves and therefore become engaged in this co-creation.

Kentridge’s use of the medium to make political comment by encouraging us to consider what is behind the illusion was influential, not just in the abstract, but in the actual drawn quality of the work. In sketch books and other drawings, I can often see the unresolved questions that are being asked, possibilities hinted at.
Kentridge’s simple black and white drawing, using light and shade to create illusion of people in space invites us to participate in the sense making. I decided that the animations would be further enhanced by the illusory nature of stop frame animation.

By adding a mounted camera to the DIY drawing machine, I was able to regularly take a photograph of the ‘drawing-walk’ as it progressed. I could combine the idea of images gradually appearing with a more immediate, and illusory, sense of moving through place and equally importantly, could produce the images for the intended animation in place rather than slavishly working from photographs back in the studio. The drawings became more about moving through and being immersed in landscape, a transition between places, rather than of people in a landscape. (See Appendix 1 for additional drawings).

![Figure 41. Stills from Garden Drawing, 22nd March, 2011.](image)

Kentridge’s ideas of illusion and knowledge making were a useful way of critiquing the experimental animations and by adding a sound recorder to the machine I was also able to further put into practice the idea of the encounters as an example of an engaged aesthetic. The addition of the sound track was also about letting voices be heard, including those of the landscape itself; as Bruno Latour and Peeter Weibel express:

> Ecology... is about the recognition of the immense complexity involved for the entity – human or nonhuman – to have a voice, to take a stand, to be counted, to be represented, to be connected with others.


While the nature of the encounters remained relatively standardised – walking, recording conversation, taking photographs, some slow walking, some drawing
sounds – the purpose of the encounters had become more clearly about exploring the experiences that Robert Morris called “presentness” (Morris, 1978). The drawing process was to stop and make a drawing every few paces and take a photograph from the machine mounted camera of the drawing. In this way the images were a collage of drawings. So although they weren't 'made on the move', they did express transition between places, a sense of overlaid 'presentnesses'.

The taking of the photograph became an important aspect of creating the collages and involved me in finding a place to take the photograph where an interesting shadow could be cast across the scroll, or waiting for the sun to come out or go in. For me, this located them in time as well as space. As said, serendipity is at play in this process, and as artist and academic, Mel Woods (Woods, n.d.) acknowledges that, art movements such as Fluxus, Dada and Situationists have all made use of serendipity in the creative process and goes on to ask “Can we design devices or vehicles that facilitate serendipity?” (Woods, n.d.) In a sense the drawing machine can be seen as facilitating serendipity in the way it 'captured' falling light on the scrolls. Woods quotes artist Eilidh Mckay response to such moments “as a collaboration between you and your life” (Woods, n.d.) and it is this aspect of making the drawing, rather like the Railway Lines, that performs an encounter with the world, an unplanned and yet sought collaboration. In paraphrasing Louis
Pasteur (1822-1895), who recognised the value of serendipity in his scientific work, Woods describes this in terms of adopting a mind set that is “conscious yet unconscious, controllable and chaotic.” This chimes with the idea of aesthetics as a reflective space.

Figure 43. River Frome near Lodgemore. Stills from animation made on First Friday Walk, 6th May, 2011.

Exchanging

This section reflects on the development of the emergent practice in revealing the (Canal) Weave narrative. It refers to a symposium and animation. It also reflects on some of the issues arising from these exchanges.

14th May, 2011, Weave Symposium, Exchange, Brick Row, Stroud.

While the encounters described above had been performed in the landscape, the symposium was indoors. It was an opportunity to bring together a range of participants to discuss each others stories and aspirations and to plan future partnership projects. The idea here was to collect a community vision or narrative about the canal and River Frome Corridor. This could be compared to Beuys’s Actions but, unlike these, the drawings and documentation on show were about the participants’ own narrative and aspirations for the future of their place. Much time had been previously invested in developing the relationships between participants and the project, many of the people being known to each other. Unlike some of Beuys’s actions, people weren’t invited off the street to engage but rather...
had been invited beforehand, often as a known representative of a group or interest.

Figure 44. Revealing and Exchanging, Weave Symposium, 2011: as well as exhibiting the drawing from the drawing machine, photographs of participants and quotes from them on the walks were shown while the author recorded bullet points from presentations.

The lack of inclusivity of this process was recognised, although local authority representatives were present and the event opened by the local MP. Previously, local authorities in Stroud have criticised community activity as being by and for ‘the same old self interest group’ and there is undoubtedly a tension between representative and participatory democracy which the project recognised and took account of by inviting the wider community to participate in the following ways:

By putting on a town centre exhibition and public meeting
By putting the narrative from the walks and symposium on the Town Council’s website
By inviting other groups to voice their responses to the canal restoration at specifically designed interventions
by engaging with the Neighbourhood Planning Process.
In short, this is not a call for one or other of the systems of governance to dominate, rather an example of what Paul Selman calls sustainability learning which incorporates social and institutional learning (2011, pp.123-124), calling for processes by which local knowledge and aspirations are informed by and in turn inform public policy. The seminar was designed as such a process (See Appendix 2 for programme, invitee list and presentations). As well as presentations of local knowledge by the walking participants, strategic and expert input helped frame the discussions about future collaborative projects. These expert views referred to different approaches to landscape change; heritage led development, ecological and landscape strategy, public health and architecture, retail and trading.

The successful design of such exchanges are important in taking forward collaborative projects, as Selman says, “If it is conducted successfully, ‘sustainability learning’ is likely to generate outcomes that are more widely endorsed and therefore more likely to achieve implementation and compliance, as well as be more scientifically grounded” (2011, pp.123-124). This concern for community projects to be grounded in science is the other side of the coin to the concern for scientific projects to be grounded in community endorsement. The concern to find ways of integrating cognitive and non-cognitive understanding resonates with both Guattari’s suggestion that “it is the very production of science, technology and social relations which will drift towards aesthetic paradigms” (Guattari,1992, p.132), and with Beuys’s 1973 argument about reinvigorating the power of culture (over what he considered as the predominant Marxist ideology of the day, the revolutionary potential of economics, class struggle theory). He
suggested that: “it’s time to show that art means the power of creativity, and it’s
time to define art in a larger way, to include science and religion too…”
(Beuys, 1993, p.31). Accepting that these different world views need to be
somehow combined in our decision making processes was a key reason for being
inclusive in the process. This also resonates with landscape design theory and
practice, as Brenda Colvin wrote:

Landscape design is the youngest art, since the refinement of our natural
joy of landscape comes late in history. The understanding and perception
of the visual goes deeper than what the eye sees, and owes so much to
scientific knowledge that the study of landscape design must now bridge the
chasm between art and science.

(Colvin, 1970: p. xxii)

However, many other tensions exist that cloud decision making processes which
can lead to exclusion and consequentially unsustainable solutions. The LSP
(whose chair was also chair of the chamber of trade) pushed for a tighter town
centre focus. Led by a desire to be more inclusive, a Town Centre exhibition was
held in partnership with the Chamber of Trade and Commerce along with a
discussion event between traders, town councillors and civic groups. A Weave
Advisory Group\textsuperscript{76} was established as a way of overcoming these and other
differences. The group had two important outputs. Firstly they invited The
Academy of Urbanism to visit Stroud as a part of their Place Partnering initiative
and sought collaboration with the Town Council and other Parish Councils to
develop a Neighbourhood Plan\textsuperscript{77}. Both initiatives were aimed at bridging between
the various sectors and town and country.

Figure 46. Briefing the AoU on the community networks and the place.
Assembling

These initiatives overlapped with the time when I was making the (Canal) Weave Animation (Appendix 3) that would combine the canal walks with the symposium. The intention was to reach people who had not been involved, to provide a community vision for the canal and river corridor and invite people on future walks. Figure 47 comments on the animation against these criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>criteria</th>
<th>strength</th>
<th>weakness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reveals future possibilities; envisioning community-landscape for the river and canal corridor, the relationship between town and country.</td>
<td>The relationship between town and country is strongly expressed, as is the idea of a community and landscape aesthetic</td>
<td>The animation is too busy in places, a combination of sound, images, video, recorded voices and written words weakens the envisioning quality</td>
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<td>expresses a variety of values and meanings; telling of a variety of community aspirations, a collective envisioning referencing history</td>
<td>A good variety of values and meanings are given. Reference to the past may be stronger than visions for the future</td>
<td>It would have been more successfully achieved by spoken word, rather than transcription of conversations</td>
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<td>reflects being outside and in place; reflecting the dynamic co-creation between culture and nature</td>
<td>In places the editing of story and image achieves this. The weaving sound track reflects the agency of weaving culture.</td>
<td>Much of the first half of the animation is inside</td>
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<tr>
<td>reflects the actual collaborative walking process and ideas of transition; temporal, spatial and evolutionary</td>
<td>The drawings are more successful of this, including the sound track, than the video images</td>
<td>No clear move from how things are to how things could become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourages and invites further participation and action - a part of an ongoing, open process, disseminated accordingly and used to invite future participation.</td>
<td>Showed how people could participate. The process had encouraged participants to collaborate</td>
<td>No process in place for evaluating role in consequent participation</td>
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Figure 47. Strengths and weaknesses of the animation

The animation can also be compared to a piece I assembled in a collaborative exhibition, “The Museum Box Project”, through *Space, Place and Practice*¹, at Corsham Court in June, 2010. This assemblage didn't really connect with partners.
in Stroud, although the exhibition was later shown at The Museum in the Park, in Stroud, as part of SITE13. However, it was helpful in working through how else to show work made without, in my mind, colluding with a culture of spectacle and designing work to be watched on screen.

Figure 48. Making and showing the DIY Drawing Machine drawings as a part of the “Museum Box” Project, Corsham Court, 2012. This was made in the context of museums and suppression/interpretation of local knowledge of place.

On reflection, animation was limited in a number of ways:

- it would lead to more watching a screen and collude with the culture of the spectacle
- it was a very time consuming element of the practice and reduced time to be spent in other ways
in itself, it did not have direct and positive effect on the landscape – i.e. it represented the landscape, but was not made from it
it was not a metaphor and despite the use of shadows and stop frame animation, did not create an illusion that required sense making, because, like earlier drawings, it was too focused on making sense, too figurative.
Its production and use hadn’t been agreed in the original collaboration negotiations – at the time I hadn’t known what the output would be beyond the walks and symposium. Consequently, despite being on the Town Council website, it had little impact on follow up events, such as the academy of urbanism visit.

The museum box piece above can be criticised in a similar way. In particular it is not made from landscape.

Nevertheless, the overall intervention was a part of an ongoing process to include community aspirations for landscape in future decision making. There is no clear Green Infrastructure Strategy but many of the people involved, including myself in a limited way, are now involved a Neighbourhood Plan for Stroud, emphasising green infrastructure. As mentioned the canal route and design around Capel Mill in particular has taken on board local aspirations, including the new park. With hind sight, I recognise that this is the nature of the democratic process and the shifts in perception of the area and resultant work should be viewed as success in influencing, rather than as a failure to deliver an original vision.

The (Canal) Weave linked the up-and-running canal restoration with a richer community place making narrative. It included more voices in the existing framework of the local authority led process. It attained a measure of success with this and also developed the nature of the partnership between individuals, community and local authorities into the future. Regard building relationships with the more-than-human, they were particularly strengthened by the embodied practice of art-walking with people. While the links between town and countryside were made apparent there was a pull towards privileging the town. The next chapter looks at working with the public sector more directly and balancing town and countryside needs.
Chapter 6

RIVER MAP

Background

There is much work using mapping to explore people's experience of place, their aspirations and needs, such as community social mapping and deep mapping. *River Map* is an example in a specific context of linking local people’s aspirations and landscape values into public policy and to generate action. The purpose of the intervention was to engage local people with the Cotswold Conservation Board's review of their Landscape Character Assessment, specifically the Settled Valleys Landscape, a Cotswold landscape type unique to the Frome and Nailsworth Valleys (Cotswold Conservation Board, 2004, pp.68-71).

![Landscape Character Types around Stroud](image)

Figure 49. The area coloured pink around Stroud and Nailsworth is the Settled Valleys Landscape Character type.
On their website, *Natural England*, refer to Landscape Character Assessment in the context of delivering the European Landscape Convention:

The UK is recognised as already putting many of the principles of the ELC into practice. For example, the National Character Area map of England has been in use for nearly 10 years. Another example is the well-established practice of using Landscape Character Assessment to inform local policymaking.

(Natural England, n.d.)

However, having been directly involved in this work, I understand some of the challenges of putting it into practice and understand that Natural England often rely on the persuasive skills of their staff to encourage planning departments to take such policy onboard. It is an additional challenge to encourage grass roots engagement in the process.

**Collaboration**

Stroud Community Land Trust provided funding through the Festival of Nature and the Cotswold Conservation Board awarded Walking the Land a grant through their Sustainable Development Fund. (See Appendix 4 for a copy of the project report)

This was a multi-layered collaboration involving artists, conservationists, farmers, land managers, project managers, event organisers, strategists and the wider community. The density of it is hinted at in Figure 52 below. This could be seen as a weaving pattern or instruction for the emergent practice to weave together.

Below each asterisk another weaving pattern could be revealed, other levels of relationship; for example *Stroud Nature* includes forty or so local groups, which Steve Roberts and I were hoping to weave into the Stroud Nature Consortium. A particular collaboration was the participation of thirty three different artists, writers and photographers on the ten art-walks held between April 2013 and January 2014. This was a development of Walking the Land's First Friday Walks.

Whether all of this represents collaboration or co-operation is questioned by Rochelle and Teasley making this distinction. In his exploration of collaborative practice across art and architecture, David Patten quotes them as saying “Cooperative work is accomplished by the division of labour among participants,
as an activity where each person is responsible for a portion of the problem solving” (Patten, 2007). They compare this to collaboration which they see as a “coordinated, synchronous activity that is the result of a continued attempt to construct and maintain a shared conception of a problem” (Patten, 2007).

![Figure 50. Participating artists negotiating scope of collaboration](image)

This view is contested by Paul Brna who suggests “that even within the closest collaboration possible (under their definition of collaboration) the participants will do some of the subtasks on their own (in their heads, on scraps of paper etc)” (Brna, 1998). Of the participating walking artists, six of us met regularly to develop the project – this included bringing to the table the scraps of paper and half formed ideas, which in our collaborative process then took form. Simultaneously I was co-operating with other organisations, in effect developing the Stroud Nature Consortium with Steve Roberts.

![Figure 51: Stroud Nature Consortium seminar as a part of the Festival of Nature](image)
The question of collaboration and co-operation seems to me to be central to a participative art practice. In the River Map project, which included distributing grant based on achieving targets, this became a very practical concern and for example, the artists regularly meeting received more funding than those who simply cooperated by making work for the various exhibitions. It could be argued that this recognised the value of collaboration above co-operation.

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<th></th>
<th>Walking the Land</th>
<th>Cotswold Conservation Board</th>
<th>Stroud Nature</th>
<th>Local food hub</th>
<th>Stroud Community Land Trust</th>
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<td>Seminar and exhibition</td>
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<td>New project development</td>
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Figure 52. *Weaving the River Map Collaboration*. The asterisks indicates involvement in the various stages of projects.

Rather than theorising collaboration more generally, I here draw attention to the observation made apparent by Figure 52 above, regards *Walking the Land* being involved in every activity. Chicago based artist and educator Frances Whitehead similarly “traverses disciplines to engage with engineers, scientists, landscape architects, urban designers, and city officials in order to hybridize art, design, science, and civic engagement, for the public good” (Whitehead, 2013). As a part of the *Embedded Artist Project* (Whitehead 2006), she poses the question “What do artists know?” and has answered it by publishing a list of artist skills which includes:

- synthesising diverse facts, goals and references – making connections
- production of new knowledge
- creative, in-process problem solving
- compose and perform
- pro-active, not re-active
Whitehead's project aim is for artists, and therefore these skills, to be incorporated into local governance systems. The River Map collaboration with The Cotswold Conservation Board is an example of this.

The nature of cross sector partnership is of particular interest, what Paul Selman refers to as the ‘process of social and institutional learning’. In conversation with Jo Burgon, the chair of the Cotswold Conservation Board's Grant Committee, on their annual review visit to successful projects on the 29th July, 2014, he recognised that “it is the robustness of the process that enables the subjective and qualitative findings to be taken seriously.” This is reflected in Selman's claim that “Democratising landscape options...depends on a range of continuous processes that solicit public opinions and incorporate these into policy and planning options in order to align them with social preferences” (Selman 2012, pp.123-124).

Encountering
First Friday River Walks

Perhaps we need to be thinking about the performativities of nature as embodied in the agencies of things like rivers.” (Jones et al., 2012, p.96)

In the River Map intervention, the performativity of the River Frome was seen as an agency for settling the Stroud Valleys. Writers, video makers, poets, printmakers and photographers were invited to join Walking the Land’s First Friday River Walks82. These participants responded initially to the river landscape, most doing so in shared recycled paper sketch books which artist Lucy Guenot had made for the project. Some instead used still and video cameras and others wrote. However the sharing and passing around of sketch books was an important aspect of the project in that it provided a commonality and a focus for participants which
encouraged in-the-moment responses to be made, and importantly submitted. As referred to, over the years we have tried with limited success to encourage such 'in-the-moment responses' by using post card format in the *Wish You Were Here* project for example. Many of the books were collected after each session and handed round the following month, so they themselves were collaborations.

The encounters with the river were of prime importance, as apparent in the images above of artists Bart Sabel and Fiona Cam-Meadley. However, a part of the encounters for the wider community were with work of the artists and therefore we need work to exhibit and the sketch books were central to these events. These exhibitions and community discussion events, could be seen as a second hand encounters and to address this, they also incorporated walks along the River.

My own drawings further developed the (Canal) Weave experimentation, but rather than using the drawing machine, they were made in the sketch books. Another difference was that at this stage, they were about the landscape as I encountered it rather than in response to other people's aspirations. Nevertheless, these earlier
conversations influenced my drawing. I was interested in showing landscape as an amalgamation of these specific interests and also how the future is always an open question, a direction or destination not yet known, a future amalgamation. Consequently one batch of my drawings were made around the edges of the page. As I walked, I stopped and looked up and down, right and left, and drew on the top or bottom, the right or left of the page, importantly leaving the centre open. I kept the sketch book upright so that the images always related to a human being walking through a landscape. Similar to the Weave animation, I was interested in how the landscape is in constant transition, how my marks were of the moment and location. The images below show a selection of a series of marks made as the February 2013 First Friday River Walk appeared on the sketch book pages. (See Appendix 5 for more examples of sketch book images).

Over the previous summer I had walked to Derby with colleagues to give a paper on our walking collaboration, In-Between Places, at the Affective Landscapes Conference at Derby University (see Introduction). The drawing machine had proved impractical and since its appearance on The BBC's Countryfile
programme had developed a not altogether helpful notoriety, although, more seriously, its was impractical to use it over such a long walk, camping and meeting up with Transition Groups along the way. I wanted to simplify my approach and accordingly I used sketch books to record the journey from Stroud to Derby, again photographing the drawings as they appeared on the page to provide images for making an animation (See Appendix 6 for additional drawings). As an extension of the idea of being in the moment and place, the performativity of the drawing act, this time I had taken the photographs with sketch books appearing in the bottom left hand corner of the image, immersed in of the landscape and group activity. I was still seeing this as an alternative way of making stop motion animation and also recorded conversations with people and sounds of landscape. I did show a very brief animation at the conference but without the sound. I decided not to complete the animation as I was concerned about the producing work for viewing on screen.

Figure 57. Images from In-between places walk.

There were similarities with the River Walk drawings but in the latter, I had moved away from having the sketch book as a part of a photograph of the wider activity and also, rather than intending to make animations, instead wanted to make still collages from the digital images taken of the drawings as they evolved – 'digital collages'. I was interested in showing time passing, not so much as a sequence of moments on an animation, but as a collection of moments captured and held still on paper. This way of making work about time and place seemed to raise the questions about duration more than an animation. I was interested in the possibility of a still moment that also included the past and potential of the future. This way of always being in-between appears to be a challenge for sustainability and is an example, to quote Guattari, of the artist's “capacity to invent mutant coordinates to extremes” engendering “unprecedented, unforeseen and
unthinkable qualities of being” (Guattari, 1992, p.106). The making of these images, always blurred, were pursued to develop the idea of both movement through space and time and of change.

Figure 58. Series of overlaid photographs of emergent drawings.

Although it was interesting to working with the recycled paper sketch books, their colours and patterns to respond to, I found both this and the format constraining and consequently made my own unfolding drawing books, also distributing them to other walkers. The unfolding format reflected the scrolls produced on the drawing machine and the way that maps unfold. Also the way that walks are linear, the landscape unfolding with each step. (See Appendix 7)

This change of format accelerated the rate at which I produced drawings. I walked alone as well as on the first Fridays, making drawings with a focus on the different aspects of landscape, landscape as a collage of moments passing and situations changing. I also continued to experiment with how to make the digital collages. A still moment in place that also includes the past and future.

Figure 59: Modified Drawing book, summer 2013
As well as walking and drawing, the encountering also created written verse, video and photography. It also involved collaborations with scientists and social historians. For my own art-walking practice this involved me in making banners and video work.
Exchanging

Work made during the *encounters* was showing and discussed at community venues in conjunction with advertised discussion events and additional walks for attendees. The premiss was for the work to initiate discussion. These discussions were facilitated in different ways, from 'guided walks' through the exhibitions with the artists, to group discussions recorded on post-it notes and questionnaires. Whatever the method, the objective was to collect information about how people valued their locality.

![Discussion event at Stroud Brewery exhibition, part of Stroud Visual Arts Festival, SITE13](image)

**Figure 63.** Discussion event at Stroud Brewery exhibition, part of Stroud Visual Arts Festival, SITE13

![Discussion event at The Exchange. Workshop exploring how the River Map has potential to supplement Natural England's Ecosystem Services approach](image)

**Figure 64.** Discussion event at The Exchange. Workshop exploring how the River Map has potential to supplement Natural England's Ecosystem Services approach

Common ground can be found between the showing of the work produced, with ideas of performance as practiced by Dee Heddon for example. In writing about her autobiographical performance, *One Square Foot*, and her use of performer
Tim Miller’s analogy of performance as a window onto the life of the performer, she says, “I like to think that the square foot is just such a window: not only onto my own life and experiences, but onto a whole host of other bodies and places” (Heddon, 2009, p.173). By exhibiting the artists’ responses to these other bodies and places, the participants at the discussion events were invited through Miller’s window into the life of the artists and also to become aware of the agency of the river. We wanted to make it seen and heard, similar to Heddon’s reflection on the relationship between self and place, when she writes “the site itself becomes a co-author and co-subject” (Heddon, 2009, p.173). The encountering aspect of the practice can be understood as facilitating site and participant(s) to co-create a reflective space, co-performed moments of mutual engagement.

As has been said, the idea of the warp of the practice is not a neat, linear process. It is a support for the weaving. Throughout there is a toing and froing across the strands. The discussion events were in some ways both an exchange, as described above, and also an encounter, particularly when they included additional walks. Additionally, the discussions were to some extent influenced by the work shown and in this way were a type of encounter. For a number of the artists, the discussion events also became an encounter with community aspirations and these influenced the making of additional work shown later in the project.

At this point it's useful to reflect on the ethical considerations, particular regards authorship and audience. The project was not about enlisting people to participate in an arts project, it was about using an arts process to enable people to engage with the statutory sector’s planning for our common future. Rather than understanding the participation, and inclusion of people’s aspirations in artists’ work, it can be understood as outreach from the partnership referred to earlier and as such, an attempt to involve more people in the project, to be inclusive. Consequently thought was given to location of the events in order to reflect particular places and, as far as possible, the type of audience that would be attracted, hence the choice of the local micro brewery with its own bar, an education centre for young people with learning difficulties, a social enterprise centre, a marquee in the park as part of the Festival of Nature and at the Museum in the Park.
Doreen Massey explores this interface between encounters and what she refers to as “terms of engagement”. Her emphasis on the spatial and temporal nature of encounters helps explain the relationship between encounters and exchanges as a dynamic process, an interconnectedness of us all, describing it as “The space of many trajectories, the simultaneity of stories so far” (Massey, 2003, p.117). Hence the emergent practice, as a the manifestation of connecting with others in time and space was also “the product of those connections” and the folding in of information gathered at the discussion events an example of how they “are constantly disconnected by new arrivals, constantly waiting to be determined” (Massey, 2003, p.117). If we are as Gormley suggested, to “use art as a way of investigating this perilous time” (2010), then the encounter/ exchange interface is an important space of collaborative reflection and the artists’ work can be seen to reveal these moments of communal interest and disinterest regards landscape. In this regard, the emergent practice has resonance with Massey’s ideas that “This space is always therefore, in a sense, unfinished (except that ‘finishing’ is not on the agenda). If you were really to take a slice through time it would be – in this sense – full of holes, of discontinuities, of tentative half-formed first encounters; space being made” (Massey, 2003, p.117). This can be understood as another example of needing to recognise and work with an ongoing community process.

Massey also writes that “There are always loose ends. If you were to make a map that really had the characteristics of this space, it would be entirely possible to fall through it” (Massey, 2003, p 117). The map metaphor and the idea of loose ends are helpful. A specific piece of work we made addressed some of our own loose ends. It was actually a map. The issue was that putting up exhibitions was time consuming and the discussion feedback loop also a drawn out process. We wanted a more direct approach. The River Map invited people to draw on and put stickers on the map to express how they responded to landscape in a number of ways. The map was based on the AONB Landscape Character Types, an expert lead approach to valuing landscape. A second key was added by WtL, inviting people to add their favourite places and routes by using coloured pens and adhesive dots. People were guided through the process and conversations struck-up. Versions of the map visited different venues where people added their own local knowledge directly onto the map, thereby tying up some of the loose ends and filling some of the holes of our collective understanding.
The River Map exchange raised a number of comments from collaborators and participants. A small selection of these are shown below.
Provides me (the Cotswold Conservation Board) with very visible and accessible information about how people value and use the landscape
good to have permission to draw on the map, feels like someone is taking notice
easy to use
now what happens when I cross that style, oh yes, turn right and walk towards the big view
They mustn't build the incinerator over there, it would be seen from all along here (pointing to map)
I love walking along this bit; the sunken lanes, overhanging branches and tree roots
I never knew you could cycle that way. It all links up.
this is where my child took their first steps – how do I mark that on?

Figure 67. A selection of River Map generated comments

Assembling

As with the distinction between encountering and exchanging, the boundary between exchanging and assembling is pervious. Perhaps more accurately, as the action research assembles actionable knowledge, the resultant dialogue and shared learning can lead to further exchange and assembling. This cyclic process leads to action and further learning and consequently the refinement of the research process. This was the case with assembling the learning from River Map, which culminated with an exhibition at The Museum in the Park and associated seminar. A number of the involved artists had produced work which incorporated other participants values and aspirations from previous discussion events. Tara Downs and Bart Sabel modified a museum cabinet to create a Miniature Museum of Memories, adding sound to collect aural histories as well as all manner of artefacts added by the general public.

Figure 68. Tara Downs and Bart Sabel's Miniature Museum of Memories
The Long River Map, started as a collaborative piece between the author and Kel Portman and morphed into a collaboration with people taking part in the discussion events, as shown below. In this way, the assembling both altered the pieces of work produced and also the nature of the practice. It's interesting that both the examples shown here were collaborations between artists before becoming collaborations with the wider community.

![Figure 69. Detail from Long River Map as shown at Stroud Brewery in May, 2013](image1)

![Figure 70. Same detail from Long River Map as shown at The Museum in the Park in November, 2012.](image2)
It was also recognised in discussion with Natural England staff, that we were not only providing rich information for *Landscape Character Assessment*, but also for Natural England's *Eco Services* Approach. These were interpretations of the art process, about which Sullivan writes:

> It can also be argued that the process of making art and interpreting art adds to our understanding as new ideas are presented that help us see in new ways. These creative insights have the potential to transform our understanding by expanding the various descriptive, explanatory, and immersive systems of knowledge that frame individual and community awareness. These forms of understanding are grounded in human experiences and interactions and yield outcomes that can be individually liberating and culturally enlightening.

(Graeme Sullivan, 2010, p. 97)

For me the process did feel liberating in the way that I could incorporate my own aspirations with other peoples, and it was apparent from the positive reception of the work, that it was also culturally enlightening. It was also interesting that at the museum seminar the artists felt quite overawed by the responses to the exhibition which were two fold. From the funders it was very positive, from the participants many of the comments in an open space session tended to leave us feeling slightly bruised as it brought out people's frustration with public sector consultation, rather than seeing the project as a step forward. It did however reinforce what we were trying to do in terms of being more inclusive.

Action research aims to ‘to produce actionable learning’ (Reason and Bradbury, 2001) and an example of this was the establishment of the aforementioned wildlife grazing project. The exhibition also celebrated and invited activity. A practical outcome of the process, stimulated by the River Map, was the establishment of a new *wildlife grazing project*. Although it is still at an early stage this is already forming a new focus for the collaboration, one in which many new partners are involved. In addition, Natural England are co-planning with the Cotswold Conservation Board and Walking the Land, a study exchange to the Stroud Valleys based on the *River Map project* and subsequent *Wildlife Grazing* project. This is in recognition of how River Map have delivered the specific aspect of Natural England's *Ecosystems Services Approach* which relates to *cultural services* provided by the landscape as referred to in the earlier quoted email.
correspondence (Stearn, 2014). It is an example of the cyclic nature of the research methodology.

Figure 71. Detail from Loom as shown at the Museum in the Park to enable participation in projects

Figure 72. Inaugural meeting of Wildlife Grazing Project at Stroud Brewery.

Compared to the (Canal) Weave, The River Map intervention's aims were more straightforward and consequently more achievable. Key outcomes were that:

the collaboration with other artists developed an additional network of people interested in applying cultural practices to local resilience
the Stroud Nature consortium was developed
the partnerships between and across sectors was developed
the River's agency in co-creating place was highlighted
My practice widened and my drawing continued to develop in context.

The next chapter studies the development of the practice in the context of caring for a small community woodland.
Chapter 7

CARING FOR FOLLY WOOD

Background

Folly Wood appeared serendipitously as the research was being formulated; another example of responding to what Guattari described as an *event-incident* and an opportunity to develop the weaving nature of my relational practice. It was a new initiative relating to a single land ownership, albeit a multiple ownership and this is where the relationship work was focused, having little interface with the public sector for example.

![Map of Folly Wood and Stroud]

Figure 73. Folly Wood, Location.

Collaborating

A local activist, Ben Spencer, approached Martin Large, a director of Stroud Common Wealth, regards buying a 3.5 acre woodland on the edge of Stroud. Four days later myself, Ben and Martin successfully bid for the land at auction. We had
received enough expressions of interest from local people in buying £500 pound shares to be able to offer around £20,000 to £25,000. The three of us became the initial directors of the Stroud Woodland Cooperative and distributed 64 shares which paid for the purchase of the wood and left a small working budget. I offered to co-facilitate the process of the next phase of considering what we would do with the woodland and how we, the 64 shareholders, friends and families, would organise ourselves to do it. This would become the Caring for Folly Wood plan. (See Appendix 8 for the plan and initial year's action plan)

Inclusivity has been mentioned earlier and Hal Foster's question about the democratic credibility of works encompassed in Bourriard's relational aesthetics (2002) applies to Folly Wood. He says that the politics sometimes “ascribed to such art” depends on what is “a shaky analogy between an open work and an inclusive society, as if a desultory form might evoke a democratic community, or non hierarchical installation predict an egalitarian world” (Foster, 2006, p.193). The Folly Wood intervention could be understood exactly as being about developing an aesthetic to explore an egalitarian world regard the membership's relationship in and with the woodland. However it does raise questions about the interface between the group and the wider Stroud community. In this context, the woodland co-operative could not claim to be inclusive as it was formed by people who were able to buy shares in the wood, although, in recognition of this inequality, one of the group's principles is to engage with the wider community. Financial considerations aside, it would of course be unrealistic that everyone in Stroud could or would have wanted to join the co-operative. In effect, the project was offered as an opportunity for interested, local people to play an active role in managing or co-creating a part of the local landscape. Taking a broader view, returning to ideas of micro-utopia and transition, Folly Wood is one of a number of land-based projects lead by and open to people in Stroud and the co-op plans to support similar projects elsewhere.

At our first gathering as owners of the woods (4th September 2010) we agreed an initial organisational structure based on topic groups, membership gatherings and core group meetings. Much of this is well rehearsed practice, and for example has has been included in Hopkins “The Transition Companion” (2011).
Our structure, which included an ecology group and an arts and crafts group, reflected an ethos to include rational and sensory ways of understanding the wood and our relationship with it. Early on the group decided that the plan preparation would take a year in which time we would get to know each other, our various needs and the wood and its needs, and to achieve this through a non-hierarchical, inclusive and transparent as possible internal process. Regional *Good from Woods* research\textsuperscript{89} illustrated this in its Folly Wood case study, with this quote from a member:

> it was refreshing to come to something like this where you get 50 or 60 odd people who are there just doing it without creating unnecessary administration or hierarchies or silos or any of the stuff that you seem to get in other organisations, so for me it’s been quite a hopeful experience.

*(Good from Woods, 2014, Section 11, Indicator B, p.2)*

Part of the perceived success of the process was agreeing a set of principles\textsuperscript{90} which were strong enough to guide us into an as yet unchartered future.
**Encountering**

During the year making the Folly Wood plan, members of the group gathered in the wood at the equinoxes and solstices to celebrate seasonal changes. At such times, as well as eating, drinking, dancing, singing and hearing readings from quasi-pagan scripts, people were invited to draw, write and talk about how it felt to be in the woods, what they especially valued about it. The routine of fire lighting and sitting around the fire became iconic. These encounters had been 'designed' to help us understand our responses to the wood and to each other; our collective aspirations, our hopes for the wood. They were shared experiences and conversations, folding in multiple understandings and perspectives. Similar to the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded *Ways of Knowing* project, we too “wanted to experiment with what it means to know things through collaborative and participatory research” (Ways of Knowing Project Team, 2013) and using a range of arts methods we too “experimented with methods which focus on embodied and emergent knowing” (Ways of Knowing Project Team, 2013).

![Figure 75. Gathering for the Winter Solstice, 2010.](image)

These gatherings were collaboratively designed. A member who was at the time chair of “Forest Schools Camps”⁹¹, Andy Freedman, along with partner Ruth Illingworth and Mike and Purdita Dawson, were particularly interested in using the quasi native-american metaphor of *for the good of the tribe* and also quasi-pagan rituals. These metaphors, which manifested in songs, fire rituals and readings,
also enabled us to get to know ourselves in the context of communities that are now absent, as explored by Iain Biggs through *Border Ballads* referring to the songs he has studied as a “latent sonic communal place” (Biggs, 2009, p.8). Biggs hopes that accessing these places “may contribute to the gradual embodying of a ‘quasi-pagan’ mentality”, which he believes “is necessary to our future well-being”. (Biggs, 2009, p.8) He goes on to make the case that:

The lived evocation of another, quasi-pagan, animistic way of thinking constituted by these songs … offers an embodied potential point of resistance – activated through the shared community of singing and listening – to a social and cultural reductivism inseparable from the ‘monotheistic individualism’ pre-supposed by the forces that drive neo-liberal western market democracies. (Biggs, 2009, p.12)

A part of this resistance was to encourage a more caring attitude by ‘designing’ the encounters to develop a shared commitment to the project by cross referencing the aesthetic experiences of being in the wood together with a growing understanding of our needs and the wood’s ecology, history, enchantment and possibilities. An amalgamation.

Figure 76. Member Martin Large reciting woodland poetry at the vernal Equinox, 2010.
Encountering each other in the wood, undertaking activities such as research into its history, flora and fauna, tree planting, taking part in such quasi-pagan rituals as tree dressing, all performed a weaving of a relational aesthetic between people and between people and woodland – a practical community-woodland aesthetic. Being in and caring for the wood became synonymous with being a part of and caring for the group. This was was often expressed in the Good from Woods research into the well being benefits of Folly Wood as evidenced by this extract where a research participant was speaking about community ownership as:

a shared purpose to create a small community of its own...It’s the sense of purpose that’s really kind of tangible and concrete, and there’s a common sense of value and a reason why we’re doing this - it's kind of enriching lives ... it's got a sort of longevity which is based on the fact that it’s very simple, so the wood is owned by all these people and one of the main purposes is actually to come up and maintain the wood.

(Good from Woods, 2014, Section 11, Indicator A, p.3)

Figure 77. Dressing the Holly with our wishes for our common future.
Winter Solstice, 2010

A large part of the process at the gatherings was to combine individual and group subjectivity and accordingly Walking the Land facilitated a number of activities aimed at creating a relational aesthetic. Two of these which have been promoted by Common Ground are Tree Dressing and the ABC of Place. These provide a basis for encountering the everyday differently. As Common Ground say, “Creating
an ABC liberates us from classifying things as rare or beautiful to demonstrate what we care about in the everyday” (Common Ground, n.d.). They also refer to the way it can transform the experience, “it reshuffles things and juxtaposes them in ways that surprise and make you think. This can change what we see, disperse our complacency, make things we take for granted seem new to us and encourage us to action” (Common Ground, n.d.).

A particular encounter was a 100 mile woodland pilgrimage, 29th May to 4th June, 2011, which, members of the arts and crafts group, Kel Portman, Tom Keating and myself walked together. On this walk we rubbed a tree approximately every mile and posted the resultant bark rubbings back to the group.

The initial idea had been to engage with other woodland groups in response to the government's threats to sell off the nation's woodland estate. In the time it took to organise the pilgrimage, the threat subsided and member's impetus fell away, leaving a disconnect between the walkers and the rest of the group. Nevertheless, the rubbings were exhibited at a woodland gathering and other members were invited to make and add their own tree rubbings around the wood.
The *Encountering* Folly Wood facet of the practice manifested the group's aim to have an ongoing open process rather than a top down, hierarchical management system. Resonant of Beuys' actions, an objective was to encourage self-determination. For Beuys this was key to his expanded concept of art in which he saw human liberty as the basic concern (Beuys 2004). We were able to research in practice how individual and group freedom or subjectivity could be negotiated, also with reference to concepts of the woodland's freedom or agency. Accordingly, the way that I facilitated the encounters, how they fitted into the gatherings, how the feedback was taken and processed was collaborative throughout.

In a cross disciplinary research project about co-creative and participatory practices, Professors Paul Harris and Dr. Chris Fremantle with Anne Douglas have
questioned whether participation is of itself democratic. (Fremantle, 2013). In summarising their findings, and referring to Kester (2012), Fremantle says “Kester makes a compelling case that context can be generative and transform the underlying logic of formal processes” and that the processes of such artists as Suzanne Lacy have lead to “an aesthetic of participatory and co-created practices, not merely to the art work that might result...an aesthetic of interaction” (Fremantle 2013,15-16 minutes). Their findings, particularly that Freemantle’s idea of “the aesthetic of participation” (Fremantle 2013 14 minutes) is a way of increasing participation, is supported by this quote from the Good from Woods research: “You feel responsible for it and I feel more of a commitment to it, and then I think that it’s less up to other people to look after it, like it’s up to all of us” (Good from Woods, 2014, Indicator C, p6).

In terms of my own encounters with the woodland, as opposed to the group, I performed/made some work about “sudden oak death” a disease that at the time was affecting larch. This didn’t especially engage with the development of the management plan, other than stressing the need to gradually replace the larch trees, which were now old trees anyway, and to plant a mix of species to replace them, thereby increasing diversity and the robustness of the woodland.

Figure 80. The Author Performing Sudden Oak Death. March, 2011. Photo Kel Portman.
Woodland member and ecologist, Seb Bucton, and I collaborated on a piece of work, *One Metre Transects*, to record the ecology of the changing woodland floor which again, didn't particularly add to the preparation of the plan, but does have the potential to monitor the effects of our work over the coming years.

![Figure 81. Black Bryony. Part of One Metre Transects collaboration](image)

**Exchanging**

More than in the other two interventions, the interaction between encounters and exchange was very fluid. Collecting and compiling the richness of information in the woods from the encounters were often immediately followed by exchanging views and ideas. For example, as a part of the *ABC of Place* as referred above, people's words were displayed and samples read out. There are two reasons why there was this overlap. Firstly, large numbers of the membership regularly met in the woods as a group, so that distinctions between the woodland and the woodland group were blurred. Consequently, encounters were equally with the wood and the group. Secondly, as has been seen, unlike the other interventions, the collaboration was clearly framed by the agreed principles and people had literally bought into the project on equal terms. In this way the various aspirations of all members were clearly the business of the whole group, and it was this relationship between other members and the wood that people wanted to encounter and at the same time, exchange their own aspirations.
This fluidity in turn was part of an ongoing process of reviewing the research practice. A reflection here on my practice is that the situation with the other two interventions, required the practice to play a role in 'holding' information and arranging events at which it could be revealed to others. With Folly Wood, the alternative situation required the information to flow between members almost immediately. This fluidity brought its own challenges and required constantly reviewing the research process. For example at one gathering, as we worked through ideas to do with how people wanted to use the space, as a group we began to discuss how to communicate this. On the spur of the moment I offered to make copies of a simple base plan for people to add to at our next meeting. Other people offered to collect pieces of cloth to demarcate activities, and that became the basis of the design for that next stage of the research.

![Figure 82. Making the canvas, scroll like base maps. Echoing the DIY drawing machine drawings.](image)

However, not all members participated in gatherings which raises questions about inclusivity and democracy. Citing the “Power Law Distribution” model as a way of comparing “the numbers of people who could contribute in relation to the numbers of people who do contribute” Fremantle et al suggest that “A few people make a significant contribution and a lot more people make a much more limited contribution”. (Fremantle, 2013, 10-12 minutes). Rather than see this as a failure of the process, the process should be seen as responsive to post-post-modernism ideas of heterogeneity.
Assembling

As mentioned, we needed to address spatial, temporal and organisational issues and developed a mapping process to consolidate our discussions and discoveries. Previous gatherings had reached a level of agreement on the range of activities and facilities we wanted to develop in the woods. We gathered and divided into four groups, provided with a canvas base map and pieces of cloth. Each group responded to a number of questions about where previously agreed, activities should be sited. This was done through walking around the wood in conversation and then sticking the fabrics onto the base maps.

![Figure 83. Displaying the various spatially mapped activities. Spring equinox, 2011.](image)

Each group then presented their ideas to the whole gathering. After the event I produced and circulated amalgamations of the four maps, which in due course became the basis of making decisions about the spatial layout of our activities in the woods.
After the event, as a part of compiling the final folly wood plans, I assembled the findings from the mapping event by overlaying the four images. This approach echoed the drawings I was making in the other two interventions.
A particular issue to reflect upon has been the status of the woodland itself in the research. Unlike the two other interventions, I had initially wondered whether the woodland itself, as a co-created artefact, could be claimed to be the product of the art activity. Biggs has a similar question and in response to Kester's (2004) privileging of a performative, process based approach above a productive practice, citing Andrea Thoma and Joyce Lyon, asks “Why, for example, should ‘object makers’ such as Andrea Thoma and Joyce Lyon not provide both content and context, since they in fact arrive at their ‘objects’ precisely through a ‘performative, process-based approach’” (Biggs, 2012)? Appropriately enough, for my thinking about a woodland project, he suggests that “This tension is a ‘stick with two ends’; ends that nonetheless have to be ‘thought together’” (Biggs, 2012). For me the thinking together means understanding my process as practical aesthetics and any process co-ordinated or performed or product made are aspects of the practice. In other words, there is no separation between the two, just different stages or elements of a relational practice.
The co-created maps referred to above are similar to the work produced in the River Map project; amalgams of people's interactions to each other and place. As I write, I am considering whether metaphor has been used. In some ways the whole project has been rich with metaphor, tree planting as hope, woodland pilgrimage as resistance, firelighting as enabling community, maps as co-created place.

There seems to be scope for further work to do on this. Guattari would suggest this would be as and when an event/incident occurs. I would contend that living with nature requires a more constant attention to our shared lifeworld.

The next chapter summarises the findings of this and the previous two interventions.
Summary of Findings

ASSEMBLAGE: WEAVING A COMMUNITY-LANDSCAPE

The summary of findings is in two sections:

A) **Racking Fields** – a pictorial representation of the impact of the practice

B) **The Assemblage** – an exhibition which wove together the various threads of the research

The research aimed to study and develop a practice capable of making a difference in the real world of Green Infrastructure and Landscape Character Assessment. The findings suggest that it has done this to varying degrees and this chapter summarises these findings, firstly with regard to the impacts in the context of the interventions and secondly regard the impact on the practice. This is a slightly uncomfortable distinction to be making because, as suggested in Reason and William Torbert's idea of the action turn (Reason and Torbert, 2001), and born out in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the collaborative action research approach is a process that produces actionable learning. Learning for the participants and researchers which is then folded back into subsequent research activity, often reconfiguring the methods and even the questions. Nevertheless it is helpful to be able to pause the process, to assemble the findings and reflect on these two symbiotic aspects of the research. The findings in terms of wider research questions will be addressed in the conclusion.

With regard to the impacts and influences on the interventions, figures 88 to 97 are a series of works made in response to the adaption of Barrett and Bolt's criteria for practice based research (figure 11, page 17). Their form and colour is also in response to the tradition of drying and stretching cloth in Rodborough Fields, known locally as the Racking Fields. And responding to the community's protest against development and the walk across the fields – see pages 2 and 4. Figures 88 to 94 can be seen as evidencing the impact of the practice on the interventions, while Figures 95-97 are about the research's capacity to elucidate the value of creative arts practice in revealing new knowledge.
HOW WAS COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LANDSCAPE CHANGE PROCESSES ENABLED AT DIFFERENT SCALES?

THROUGH THE RIVER MAP AT A RIVER VALLEY SCALE, THROUGH THE (CANAL) WEAVE AT A TOWN AND SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE SCALE, THROUGH CARING FOR FOLLY WOOD AT A SMALL WOOD SCALE.

Figure 88. Racking Fields 1.
HOW WERE SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE VIEWS INCORPORATED IN DECISION MAKING?

THE (CANAL) WEAVE: WALKS AND SYMPOSIUM LEADING TO ONGOING DIALOGUES, PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES.

RIVER MAP: WALKS, DISCUSSIONS AND ART WORKS FED INTO THE AONB PLAN AND INTO PROJECTS.

CARING FOR FOLLY WOOD: THROUGH WORKING GROUPS IN THE WOODS, DRAWING, WRITING, SINGING, MAKING.

Figure 89. Racking Fields 2.
DID THE INTERVENTIONS BRIDGE BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY, INSTITUTIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT?

THE (CANAL) WEAVE: YES, BUT THE EMBRYONIC PARTNERSHIPS CREATED NEED FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

RIVER MAP: YES: PARTICULARLY BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS, LANDSCAPE AGENCY AND THE STATUTORY SECTOR.

CARING FOR FOLLY WOOD: YES, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND THE GROUP AND THE WOODLAND.

Figure 90. Racking Fields 3.
HOW DID THE INTERVENTIONS OPEN OUT INTO THE BROADEST QUESTIONS ABOUT THE KIND OF SOCIETY AND CULTURE THAT WE ESPouse AND WISH TO INHABIT AND PROMOTE?

THROUGH ALL INTERVENTIONS; BY HEARING OPINIONS AND ASPIRATIONS AND REVEALING COMMUNITY-LANDSCAPE NARRATIVES AS A FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMED, COLLABORATIVE ACTION. BY MODELLING PARTICIPATION IN SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY JUST PROCESSES, THAT RESPECT PAST AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, HABITATS AND SPECIES.

Figure 91. Racking Fields 4
HOW WERE LOCALLY DIFFERENT FORMS OF SOCIABILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTIVITY AND COLLECTIVE STORYTELLING ANNOUNCED?

THE (CANAL) WEAVE: WALKING, TALKING, EXHIBITIONS, PUBLIC EVENTS AND DISSEMINATING THE ANIMATION.

RIVER MAP: EXHIBITIONS AND DISCUSSIONS AT VARIOUS VENUES, WALKS, FESTIVAL, SEMINARS.

CARING FOR FOLLY WOOD: THIS HAS BEEN MORE ABOUT MANIFESTING DIFFERENT FORMS, HOWEVER THEY HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED ON VIDEO, THROUGH THE GOOD FROM WOODS RESEARCH, AT CONFERENCES AND LOCAL EVENTS.

Figure 92. Racking Fields 5.
HOW HAVE THE INTERVENTIONS SUPPORTED, OR BEEN SUPPORTED BY SUSTAINABLE, COMMUNITY PROCESSES?

THE (CANAL) WEAVE: OUTCOMES INCLUDED THE ACADEMY OF URBANISM EVENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, SETTING-UP OF THE WEAVE ADVISORY GROUP, INVOLVEMENT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROCESS.

RIVER MAP: INCLUDED IN THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES, INTERACTION WITH NATURAL ENGLAND'S TRAINING EVENT.

FOLLY WOOD: INTERNAL PROCESSES; AGM, CORE GROUP MEETINGS, MEMBERSHIP GATHERINGS, FRIENDSHIPS, DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITIES ETC.
HAVE THE INTERVENTIONS LED TO ACTION?

THE (CANAL) WEAVE: ACTION INCLUDES, THE NEW PARK AT CAPEL MILL, INTERPRETATION OF THE CANAL CORRIDOR, PUBLIC ART COMMISSION, FURTHER RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROCESS.

RIVER MAP: WILDLIFE GRAZING PROJECT, FESTIVAL OF NATURE, WALKING THE LAND PROJECTS.

FOLLY WOOD: TREE PLANTING, CONSTRUCTION OF WILD PLAY AREA, SEATING, COMPOST TOILET, WOOD FUEL GROUP, ETC.

Figure 94. Racking Fields 7.
HOW HAS THE RESEARCH ELUCIDATED THE VALUE OF CREATIVE ARTS PRACTICE

THE (CANAL) WEAVE, BY REVEALING:

- THE MULTI-VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE RIVER AND CANAL CORRIDOR AND ITS INTERFACE WITH THE TOWN IS VALUED
- HOW A PRACTICAL COMMUNITY-LANDSCAPE AESTHETIC CAN BE FACILITATED AND APPLIED TO THIS SCALE OF LANDSCAPE CHANGE PROCESS USING ART-WALKING AND METAPHOR
- HOW THE COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE HAS ITSELF BEEN TRANSFORMED

Figure 95. Racking Fields 8.
HOW HAS THE RESEARCH ELUCIDATED THE VALUE OF CREATIVE ARTS PRACTICE

RIVER MAP, BY REVEALING:

• THE MANY VALUES FOR THE 'SETTLED VALLEY' LANDSCAPE
• HOW TO INCORPORATE THESE WITHIN THE STATUTORY PLANNING SYSTEM
• HOW TO INITIATE ACTION
• HOW A NUMBER OF ARTISTS CAN COLLABORATE ON SUCH WORK
• HOW THE ART PRACTICE IS ITSELF TRANSFORMED.

Figure 96. Racking Fields 9.
HOW HAS THE RESEARCH ELUCIDATED THE VALUE OF CREATIVE ARTS PRACTICE

FOLLY WOOD, BY REVEALING:

THE VALUE OF DEVELOPING AN ARTS PRACTICE TO WORK WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE TO PREPARE A PLAN AND TAKE ACTION TO CARE FOR A JOINTLY OWNED WOODLAND. ALSO HOW THE ART PRACTICE WAS ITSELF TRANSFORMED.

Figure 97. Racking Fields 10.
What the figures above don't show is how the interventions impacted on the practice. The next section summarises this in three ways:

firstly, as a response to the theory discussed in chapter 2, particularly the grid references.

secondly, with reference to the four facets of the practice, the warp of the weave.

Thirdly, by making reference to Assemblage: Weaving a Community Landscape, an installation, including a book and associated events, at The Museum in the Park, Stroud, 5th - 20th April, 2014.

The grid references identified a number of theoretical questions which have been considered in practice. The outcome is that they have become a critical framework for my practice, a type of practical manifesto.

Collaborates in the context of community resilience
manifests and encourages active hope
Transforms the everyday, reconnects communities and Other than human
allows for/encourages objectivity about the subjective
integrates a multitude of world views and judgements
accommodates collaboration and artistic autonomy
reveals community narratives as understanding of real world situations
is sensitive to context, including past, future and Other than human.
accommodates both productive and performative activity
encourages further participation
manifests and simultaneously allows for collaborative reflection
uses materials that will impact upon the landscape into the future

Figure 98. A Critical Framework for the application of practical community-landscape aesthetics.

In adopting the mapping analogy, its shortfall in terms of being top down and disconnected was mentioned. As the practice emerged, and the theory and practice merged more and more with the context, it adopted a different analogy, a
weaving metaphor. Figure 89 below reflects on the findings with reference to the key learning gleaned from the four facets studied, the warp of the practice.

**Collaborating:** the importance of having shared aims and roles between participants, including the artist. The importance of an inclusive feedback/reflective process around agreed milestones to enable the collaboration to be renegotiated (or not) to reflect learning. Recognising the limitations of deliberation in participatory democracy, keeping it real in terms of instigating action.

**Encountering:** the centrality of the adaption of an art-walking practice to facilitate embodied knowing amongst participants, in particular contact with Other than human in the landscape. It appears to be an inclusive way of enabling participation. A way of transforming everyday landscape affect. Allowing the boundaries between this and other facets to be porous.

**Exchanging:** the necessity of facilitating situations to enable the sharing of aspirations, including nature's agency, for given community-landscapes so as to open opportunities for further shared understanding and collaborative action between people and with nature.

**Assembling:** the use of metaphor to enable artistic autonomy within a collaborative framework. A purpose/brief for making and performing ephemeral work. A means of envisioning/imagining a collective landscape future in such a way as to begin to manifest that future, for example, through choice of materials.

Figure 99. Reflections on the multi-faceted praxis; the warp of the weaving and the learning.

The weaving metaphor was also used to assembling the findings, to make a weaving metaphor that could exist as an artefact with which people could interact, albeit temporarily. This was a shift in the practice and quite intuitively I began cutting different species of trees and weaving them as simple hangings in my studio. This activity in the landscape can be seen as woodland and landscape management, coppicing areas of woodland, thinning trees or removing them from areas designated as grassland. I finally choose to use ash (Fraxinus excelsior) in response to ash die back, its everydayness - as apparent from its frequency on the *Woodland Pilgrimage* - its bark and bud colours and suitability for weaving. There was also a link between the hangings and traditional harvesting of ash for
tool handles and the like. Another cultural link was the use of red and green cloth, colours which are used locally in representing the weaving tradition.

The installation referred to the community-landscape aesthetic in practice, rather than overtly to the practical action that it helped to initiate and shape. However I was present to guide people around the Assemblage in order to explain the real world outcomes and invite further participation in the projects as well as adding drawings, words and additional ash branches. As with *The DIY Drawing Machine* and *Mother Nature's Drawing Machine*, the *Assemblage* could be seen as both performatitive and productive, but in a more collaborative and serendipitous way. This continued involvement was a considered part of the whole, an ongoing process of inviting participation, rather than treating people as spectators.
Figure 100. Layout. The installation was designed similarly to an open space, with walking routes through and around it. Copies of the book about the research were placed in the sitting area in the centre.

Taking *Assemblage: Weaving a Community-Landscape* as a reflective pause, the following images from the installation demonstrate changes in practice brought about by the key learning throughout the inquiry.
Figure 101. Assemblage 1, Autonomy and Collaboration. The installation included briefing Clive Chinnick a theatrical services company, to design and make a hanging light to project the hangings against the wall, while leaving the floor and ceiling unlit. This aspect of the work was an autonomous decision made in context of the various collaborations.

Figure 102. Assemblage 2, April First Friday Walk. With reference to embodied knowing, the installation was an experiential space, a walk through the ash hangings, with sitting area and larch bench. The hangings were double sided, resonant of embodied submersion in landscape.
Figure 103. Assemblage 3, Spectacle and Illusion 1. Developing the earlier transitional drawings of moving through landscape and rather than showing animations on a screen, leaving more to the imagination through still projection and illusion.

Figure 104. Assemblage 4, Spectacle and Illusion 2. The installation was added to by and with visitors as a manifestation of co-creating place, increasing participation and folding new learning into the research. Their comments on cloth tied the structure together.
Figure 105. Assemblage 5, *Transforming the Everyday*. Reconnecting community and Other than human. In adding the drawings and maps to the ash hangings, I was very aware of the visual impact on the wall, reminiscent of our impact on the planet.

Figure 106. Assemblage 6, *Objective about Subjectivity 1*. The weaving Metaphor revealing and enabling conversations about the *Lifeworld*, revealing serendipitous moments.
Figure 107. Assemblage 7, Objective about Subjectivity 2. Revealing community narratives as understanding of real world situation, aspirations and meaning.

Figure 108. Assemblage 8, Integrating World Views and Judgements. Inclusion of work made from the (Canal) Weave seminar for example, revealed a transversal, collective and common vision of the future we perceived as good, beautiful, just and sustainable.
Figure 109. Assemblage 9, Metaphor as Manifestation. Materials collected by ash coppicing is sensitive to past rural cultures and biodiversity as well as manifesting immanence. A Community-Landscape yet to come.

Figure 110. Assemblage 10, Performing collaboration. Finding new ways of hearing more voices. Manifesting individual, community, institutional and ecological subjectivity.
The Assembling facet of the practice also aimed to aid reflecting with project partners, sustaining a practical community-landscape aesthetic. In this way, the landscape moot on April 5th, a part of the installation, was of equal importance to the ash weavings. Amongst the activities was a walk around the installation led by colleague Alison Parfitt who engaged participants in taking turns to read from the installation, voicing many concerns and aspirations. Performing the metaphor.

**ASSEMBLAGE:**

*weaving a community-landscape*

**Programme:**

- **2.00** arrivals-view & add to installation
- **2.30** welcome & introductions
- **2.45** presentation & questions
- **3.15** workshop discussion
- **4.00** choice
  - “open space”-discussion groups with agenda from the floor
  - view & respond to exhibition
- **5.00** Close

*Museum in the Park, Stroud*

www.museuminthepark.org.uk

Figure 111. Landscape Moot Programme.

The Assemblage was an ephemeral collage, a metaphor made of real world outputs, outputs of the process, such as drawings, poems, photographs, maps of walks, and of woven ash and larch benches made from Folly Wood thinnings. My own drawings made on the walks studied in Part Two were woven into the installation as were other people's drawings and writings that had been made
during the interventions. The book that accompanied the installation and a video of a conversational walk through the installation with video maker Andy Freedman from Appendices 9 and 10 respectively.

The conclusion will discuss the research in terms of its contribution to knowledge and potential for its further development.
Conclusion.

The intention of this research was to explore and address the extent to which a hopeful, collaborative creative practice could be developed with the aim of helping to engage people with landscape change processes within the context of community resilience.

The thesis was structured into two distinct but interconnected sections: Part One and Part Two.

Part One explored the contextual terms of reference for the research and discussed the problematical nature of multifaceted, cross disciplinary approaches in real world situations, as well as ideas, historical constructs and philosophical notions relating to experience of place, space and the relational nature of all these considerations. It used a mapping metaphor as a self reflexive tool to navigate the territory of participatory practice within a community and landscape context and to locate the practice within a critical framework. It resulted in the proposition that a practical community-landscape aesthetic provided a useful meta-understanding of the context in which this type of intervention takes place. A list of criteria were also developed as an additional way of interpreting the kind of findings that a creative arts inquiry would be expected to reveal. Next a weaving metaphor was adopted to supplement the research methodology, an action learning and autoethnographic approach which constantly folded learning back into the process and developed actionable knowledge. The weaving metaphor established four interrelated facets as a framework for reflecting on the practice; collaborating, encountering, exchanging and assembling. These facets of the practice were teased out in order to provide a robust and stable means of studying the practice in development in addition to the various impacts on the three projects.

Part Two tested the ideas and approaches set out in Part One by reflecting on these four facets as they became an important aspect of understanding the interventions as the interface between the creative process, community endeavour and landscape agency. It applied and developed these mainly through three case studies: The (Canal) Weave, River Map and Caring for Folly Wood. The emergent praxis, as the dynamic interface between theory, context and aesthetic practice was developed with a range of impacts and indicators of success (see Racking
Fields 1-10) and development of the critical framework (see page 172). The learning from this reflection effected both the practice and the outputs from the various community projects. It reflected on the cyclic nature of the relationship between theory, practice and context, considering the questions that arose at different stages of the interventions, in effect feeding the learning back into the research process. In the case of *The (Canal) Weave*, the findings point to the challenges of applying the practice within a complex and cross sectorial situation, where not all partners are clear about the nature of the collaboration. Certain aspects of the intervention were speculative, for example working in parallel with the preparation of the Local Plan and a Green Infrastructure Strategy, neither of which have yet materialised. However, it was found that art-walking was useful for revealing a community-landscape aesthetic, sharing visions for a desirable future.

It found that the making of the animated drawings initially created using *The DIY Drawing Machine* was instrumental in developing a collective understanding of the initiative and retaining my involvement and co-facilitation. It also found that simple stop frame animations, made while walking, revealed and narrated a community-landscape aesthetic. A particular learning point here related to developing a making process, the stop frame animation, which was capable of synchronising with the dynamics and time demands inherent in complex partnerships. Learning from *The (Canal) Weave*, *The River Map* intervention bridged between community aspirations and an established, albeit expert led, institutional process. In this case, the collaborating facet of the project, although still complex in the range and number of collaborators, allowed for more time to be spent on the encountering and exchanging facets of the practice. Additionally, and to widen the approach and increase resources, the intervention benefited from the collaboration with other artists. It was found that the three stage approach taken - making work in response to the river landscape, discussing the work with the wider community and incorporating the outcomes of the discussions into additional work- created and in so doing, revealed a community-landscape aesthetic. It was also found that this led directly to action, namely the *Wildlife Grazing Project*. This action, can be understood as a fourth stage of incorporating the community findings with the landscape's agency. The intervention continued to challenge and develop my own drawing and digital collaging practice and also to give shape to installations by beginning to develop the weaving metaphor as a space for collective reflection.
In the case of *Caring For Folly Wood*, it was found that using simple art activities, such as those pioneered by *Common Ground*, integrated cognitive and non-cognitive understanding about being a part of the group and the woodland. The use of simple rituals, based on quasi-pagan songs for example, helped to transform an everyday place and create a community-landscape aesthetic. This involved facilitating the dispersion of creative input amongst the group and adopting a more performative practice.

In the ‘Summary of Findings’, I have assembled the various threads of this inquiry and its findings by using the locally resonant weaving metaphor. This metaphor of *weaving a community-landscape* was extended into a diagrammatic interpretation of the inquiry (*Assemblage: Weaving A Community-Landscape*) and provided both the core of the methodology and the practice. It also became a metaphor for the emergent praxis, a dynamic interface between theory, context and aesthetic practice. It provided a loom like framework, enabling others to reflect on the cyclic nature of this relationship and consider and incorporate their own questions, ideas and action.

The research has demonstrated its facility for addressing underlying problems and questions relating to an aesthetic practice with an agenda to reconnect people and environment, art and life as well as stimulate deliberative democracy and action. A number of these questions were anticipated at the outset, others arose as the research progressed. As part of this research tensions have been recognised between the construct of individual artistic endeavour and community aspirations. Through the practice based case studies it has been demonstrated that it is possible to reconcile aesthetics and ethics, individual autonomy and community endeavour. The research has resulted in developing a practice which could:

- develop a relational aesthetic that accommodates the juncture between individual, community and institutional subjectivity and the agency of landscape
- bridge the dualism between rational and embodied ways of understanding the world, through activities such as art-walking
- reveal understandings about the relationships between communities and landscape, values and aspirations.
transform the practice in response to the 'real world'
disrupt and question the status quo
build new relationships and action focused partnerships
reveal community narratives and values
incorporate metaphor to enable objectivity about subjectivity
address the privileging of the object, representation and visual perception
and help develop experiential and embodied experience, and balance
performativity and making of cultural artefacts
reconcile aesthetics and ethics
address artistic autonomy in collaborative endeavours
reconfigure *disinterest* as a collective process for sharing aspirations
use community resilience/sustainability as a touchstone for arriving at
common judgements and revealing collective visions
transform everyday landscape so as to increase sensitivity to the
uniqueness of the moment, the past and the future

For my own practice it has resolved a number of issues pertinent to a
collaborative, relational and multi-faceted aesthetic practice, and has framed for
me a particularly important aspect of this, namely how to combine an aesthetic
and ethical practice.

The research undertaken has already had some impact in re-engaging people and
landscape, producing and influencing a number of local landscape change
processes as described throughout the thesis. The learning has been shared with
local partners/co-researchers and disseminated through conferences, workshops,
exhibitions, events and seminars (Pages 210-211). This has lead to and influenced
action on the ground, influenced policy, and helped establish ongoing participatory
processes and partnerships. Notably a refocussing for the many artists,
photographers and writers who participate in First Friday Walks, the strengthening
of the Folly Wood community and the development of the Stroud Nature
Consortium. Additional to this is the bridging between community aspirations for
landscape change and The Cotswold Conservation Board’s policy and the
manifestation of this in collaborative action.

The methodologies and findings explored and developed in this research have already found
practical implementations. Natural England are arranging a study exchange visit with regard to their Ecosystems Services approach which could lead to impacts elsewhere. In reviewing the River Map project The Cotswold Conservation Board have suggested applying a similar approach to The World Heritage Site of Bath and have committed to sharing the learning across the family of protected landscapes; the 35 AONB’s and 10 National Parks.

The research findings allow me to claim that an emergent art practice can be used to research into aesthetic practice in the real world in ways that other approaches would struggle to represent. Art's very nature of being at once a part of and apart from contributes to knowledge that helps understand the human and more than human relational aspects of being alive.

The findings point to the importance of being responsive to the human and more-than-human context and for the context to be embedded in the practice. I conclude that it is the resultant relationships that develop a collective understanding and leads to action. Rather than seeing this as loss of artistic autonomy, it can be perceived as specifically located and purposeful. In the cases studied, the specific intent has been to develop a relational aesthetic practice that reconnects community and landscape through making landscape change processes, and also the practice, more participatory.

So far this research has been conducted with me as a part of the context. The next phase would be to test this in an alternative context with others who share a similar aim and world view. This will be possible as part of research for the Narrating Landscape: Sustainable Tourism Conference in Norway and with Vision 21 colleagues, for which I am involved in writing a bid for future research based on the “in-between places” walk for Transition Towns. The research findings indicate that these projects require intermediaries to understand the context and sustain the initiatives long term. Future research will investigate the difference between working in a local community-landscape, where the researcher is embedded, and with a dispersed community where the researcher just shares some common concerns.

This writing is a type of pause, albeit a useful one, from performing the practice. Meanwhile local projects and processes continue outside in the real world of the Stroud Valleys. As demonstrated, the impact is ongoing, both in terms of the positive transformation of my practice, and also the demands that the research have stimulated in terms of real world relationships and expectations for continuing to support the various projects. This is a rich vein to be tapped and also a long-term commitment.
Bibliography


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Ways of Knowing Team. (2013). Emailed invitation to CCRESEARCHERS@jiscmail.ac.uk. re Ways of Knowing Workshop and Final Event - 15th January 2014, 20th November 2013.


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Events attended

**2010**

14th September  
National Drawing Conference, University of Brighton.

10th November  
Sense, Seminar, Bristol University. Contributor.

20th November  
Vision 21, writing weekend. *Being with sustainability*. Laugharne. 20th November

**2011**

3rd May  
Field Trip, Llanddeusant, Brecon Beacons National Park

1st and 2nd July  
*Memory and Being in the Moment*, seminar, UWE. Contributor

12th October  
WIRAD PhD Symposium, Cardiff. Contributor.

14th November  
*Gainsborough's Landscapes: Themes and Variations*. Exhibition and study day. The Holbourne Museum, Bath.

18th November  
Drawing Symposium, Swansea Metropolitan University. Contributor.

28th November  

**2012**

13th January  
*Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman*, Grayson Perry, British Museum.

15th March  
*To the River*. Sophie Rickett, exhibition, Arnolfini, Bristol.

16th July  

21st August  
*The Robinson Institute*, Patrick Keiller, Tate Britain.

5th-7th September  
*Practice Makes Perfect*. PhD Symposium, Swansea Metropolitan University. Organiser.

**2013**

30th May  
AHRC *Connected Communities* Seminar. Birmingham.

30th May  
A Universal Archive: William Kentridge as Printmaker. Mac, Birmingham.

12th August  

Author's exhibitions, publications, presentations, long walks, seminars and workshops

**2010**

19th May,  
South West Region Landscapes Partnership Annual Meeting, Somerset College of Art and Technology. Design and facilitation

30th May-2nd June  
*Between A and Bee* Walk from Stroud to Bath

3rd June  
*Between A and Bee* – presentation, Bath Arts Festival

13th June-13th July  
Walking the Land Exhibition, *Between two Shores*, The Old Passage, Arlingham. Contributor

27th July  
Green Infrastructure South West Steering group meeting, Exeter.

26th August- 5th September  
Tidal Severn, The George, Newnham, Exhibition. Contributor

1st -25th September  

**2011**

2011  
The Walk, the gatherings and the presentation, *Moving Between the Lines*. Bristol: Wild Conversations Press for PlaCE, pp. 61-64.

12th February  
*Weave*, artists workshop, Stroud. Organiser.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Event Description</th>
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<td>12th May</td>
<td>Weave Seminar, Stroud. Design and Facilitation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29th May - 4th June</td>
<td><strong>Woodland Pilgrimage.</strong> Gloucestershire.</td>
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<td>4th - 8th July</td>
<td><strong>External Perceptions of Stroud</strong>, exhibition, organiser.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22nd October</td>
<td><strong>Landscape Scale Planning.</strong> Exchange visit from Norway. Contributor.</td>
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<td>5th November</td>
<td>Vision 21, Writing Weekend.</td>
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<td>12th-19th May</td>
<td><strong>In-between Places</strong> walk. Stroud to Derby.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th - 26th May</td>
<td>Accessing New Landscapes, conference paper with Sue Porter at <strong>Affective Landscapes Conference</strong>, University of Derby.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th - 10th June</td>
<td><strong>In-between Places</strong> walk</td>
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<td>23rd - June</td>
<td>Museum Box exhibition, Corsham Court. Contributor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th June</td>
<td>Presentation at WIRAD GRADE PhD symposium and work in exhibition.</td>
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<td>24th to 29th July</td>
<td>Fiord Walking, Study exchange looking at transhumance and slow tourism.</td>
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<td>19th November</td>
<td>Vision 21 writing weekend</td>
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<td>4th - 6th May</td>
<td>River Exhibition and discussion event. Stroud Brewery</td>
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<td>6th - 30th May</td>
<td>Museum Box Exhibition, Museum in the Park, Stroud.</td>
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<td>1st July</td>
<td>River Exhibition and discussion event. The Exchange, Stroud.</td>
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<td>19th July</td>
<td>Public Protest walk, Rodborough Fields, Stroud.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19th August</td>
<td>River Map workshop, Stroud. Organiser/facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th September</td>
<td>River Map, Stroud Festival of Nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th September</td>
<td>River Map exhibition and discussion day, Ruskin Mill College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st - 12th November</td>
<td>New River Map exhibition and Symposium, Museum in the Park, Stroud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 16th - 17th</td>
<td>Vision 21 writing weekend, Laugharne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th - 22nd April</td>
<td>Assemblage: Weaving a Community-Landscape, exhibition, Museum in the Park, Stroud.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th April</td>
<td>Assemblage: Weaving a Community-Landscape, Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th-25th September</td>
<td><em>Art of Walking</em> exhibition, Museum in the Park.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th - 30th November</td>
<td>Vision 21 writing weekend, Laugharne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Berberich, Campbell and Hudson(Eds.) **In-Between Paces: Envisioning and Accessing New Landscapes. In <strong>Affective Landscapes in Literature, Art and Everyday Life: Memory, Place and the Senses</strong>, pp.223-238. (Written with Sue Porter).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 2a

The  W E A V E  Symposium:

9.00 AM until 12.30 and 1.15 to 3.00PM, Friday 13th May 2011, The Exchange, Brick Row, Stroud, GL5 1DF

The purpose of the symposium is to share information about the canal corridor and in particular flag-up projects and aspirations relating to it so as to develop a strong community vision for how the restoration can act as a catalyst for rural and urban enterprise, landscape, town and heritage conservation, learning and outdoor recreation.

The symposium is an opportunity to input ideas, liaise with other groups and organisations and find out more about the national and local context for helping influence the kind of future that the canal could help deliver for Stroud and its rural hinterland. The morning session will be followed by a project development workshop

Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 00</td>
<td>Arrivals and Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 30</td>
<td>Welcome and background: the opportunity                                                    Neil Carmichael, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 40</td>
<td>Introduction to the day: realising the opportunities                                         Max Comfort, Stroud Common Wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 50</td>
<td>External Perceptions of Stroud                                                             Elena Marco, University West of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 05</td>
<td>The Traders’ Views                                                                         Carole Garfield, Chamber of Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 10</td>
<td>Mapping Projects; weaving the opportunities                                                Participatory exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 30</td>
<td>Coffee and look at the drawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 45</td>
<td>The Cotswold Western Corridor – Landscape Connections                                      Mark Connelly, Cotswold Conservation Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 55</td>
<td>Natural England – supporting the Landscape Community, Localism and Green Infrastructure     Val Kirby, Natural England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 15</td>
<td>Developing a Community Vision and Narrative                                                Richard Keating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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12 30  Project Delivery based on Social Identity  Edward Nash, Nash Partnership

1 45  Lunch

2 00  Project Clusters  Participatory exercise

2 40  Feedback and next steps:  Participatory exercise
      policy and strategic framework
      project milestones
      collaboration
      fund-raising
      sharing information
      future up-date event

3 15  Thanks and Close  Max Comfort

Followed by tea and biscuits
**APPENDIX 2b**

**Weave Symposium Attendance List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neil Carmichael</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Comfort</td>
<td>Stroud Common Wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Connelly</td>
<td>Cotswold Conservation Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carole Garfield</td>
<td>Stroud Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Keating</td>
<td>Walking the Land, Swansea Metropolitan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Keating</td>
<td>Walking the Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val Kirby</td>
<td>Natural England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Marco</td>
<td>University of the West of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Nash</td>
<td>Nash Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Young</td>
<td>Constituency Aide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoff Beckerleg</td>
<td>Project Stroud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Burgin</td>
<td>Cotswold Canals Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Comparelli</td>
<td>University of the West of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Capener</td>
<td>Stroud Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Rebecca Charley</td>
<td>Whiteshill and Ruscombe Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Kevin Cranston</td>
<td>Stroud Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Davey</td>
<td>Westley Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Roy Derbyshire</td>
<td>Rodborough Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Ford</td>
<td>Project Stroud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lois Francis</td>
<td>Canal Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Freedman</td>
<td>Forest School Camps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Steve Hurrell</td>
<td>Stroud Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Jones</td>
<td>Transition Stroud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Lyons</td>
<td>Stroud Against the Gyratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Mackintosh</td>
<td>Stroud Water Textiles Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare Mahdiyone</td>
<td>Stroud Valleys Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Morgan</td>
<td>Federation of Small Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neville Nelder</td>
<td>Cotswold Canals Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Brian Oosthuysen</td>
<td>Gloucestershire County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Pilkington</td>
<td>University of the West of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kel Portman</td>
<td>Walking the Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Roberts</td>
<td>Stroud Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Spencer</td>
<td>Folly Wood Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin Studholme</td>
<td>Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Thomas</td>
<td>Canal Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr. Jo Elliot</td>
<td>Cainscross Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Large</td>
<td>Stroud Common Wealth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adrian Leaman</td>
<td>Wholewoods Environmental Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Meadley</td>
<td>Transition Stroud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tony Robinson</td>
<td>Cotswold Canals Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Rutter</td>
<td>Countryside Consultant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Wilson</td>
<td>Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
River Map: Final Report

Sustainable Development Fund – Walking the Land’s River Frome Landscape.

1 Background

Walking the Land (WtL) and associated artists have been walking the Stroud Valleys and River Severn on the first Friday of the month for the past four years, collecting images, sounds and conversations about the landscape. As a part of post graduate research at Swansea Metropolitan University of Wales Trinity St. David, Richard Keating has been working with people in the Stroud Valleys to study how an arts practice can be developed to help engage people with landscape change. In conversation with Mark Connelly from the Cotswold Conservation Board, this developed into a project to help inform the review of the Cotswold Landscape Character Assessment of the Settled Valleys Landscape – the landscape character type of much of the Stroud Valleys. A number of months into the project, WtL successfully applied to the Conservation Board’s Sustainable Development Fund.

Other collaborators in this project are Stroud Nature, who run an annual Festival of Nature and Stroud Community Land Trust with additional input from Stroud Museum, Stroud Brewery, Rodborough Fields Preservation Group, Ruskin Mill and The Exchange and The Community Land Advisory Service (CLAS).

Earlier in the research (May 2011) Mark had given a presentation at the WEAVE Symposium in Stroud and the possibility of a Wildlife Grazing project met some interest. This possibility was woven into the seminars and network events with particular attention being paid to including representatives from Stroud’s active local food network.

2 Project aim and objectives

The overall aim has been to develop deeper and broader community engagement with the AONB Management Plan, in particular the review of the Cotswolds Landscape Character Guidelines in collaboration with the Cotswolds Conservation Board, specifically the “Settled Valleys” Landscape type, by:

- supporting artists in producing work which will formed the centre point of walks, workshops, discussions and debate about landscape change in different locations/communities
- arranging discussions/events/shows to engage communities and integrate Landscape
Character Assessment with local landscape activity, including at the Stroud Common
Wealth AGM, at conferences, two networking events, Stroud Visual Arts Festival and
Stroud Festival of Nature.

holding a final exhibition at the Museum in the Park.

“River Map” also had an additional but overlapping research purpose in the context of the Swansea
sponsored project, which was to study the development of art practice in enabling community
engagement with landscape change processes. These findings will be written up in more detail as
a part of the doctoral thesis.

3 Summary of project delivery

All targets were met and an additional seminar was held as well as an additional exhibition and
walk.

Also other people have become involved and are planning to engage a number of schools in the
future.

Notably the Wildlife Grazing project has been initiated, a number of local grazing projects have
been started as a result, and a steering group has met and planned early steps of larger scale
implementation including training and communications. Art walking and further exhibitions are
included in the programme.

10 walks with artists
5th April, 3rd May, 7th June, 5th July, 2nd August, 8th September, 4th October, 1st November,
6th December, 3rd January,

10x liaison/art making workshops
16th April, 29th April, 31st May, 9th July, 14th August, 3rd September, 15th October, 25th October,
5th November, 6th November

10x community discussion events and walks
4th May, 11th May, 12th May, 18th May, 4th July, 9th July, 19th August, 8th September, 11th
September, 9th November

work made for exhibitions that accompanied discussion events
included sketch books, large scale River maps, photographs and drawings, poetry and
video

Spring Green Conference, 15th April
Festival of Nature and network event, 6th and 7th September,
November River Map Seminar and Final exhibition discussions, 6th to 11th November
Wildlife Grazing Project 9th October, 20th January

4 Activities in more detail

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4.1 Walks with artists

These ten ‘First Friday Walks’ have attracted local artists, photographers and writers for a total of 600 hours of walking along the Frome and Nailsworth Stream. Sketch book work has been produced, video taken, sounds recorded, poetry written and photographs taken and a deeper understanding of the landscape gained, in particular how it affects us.

Most of the length of the Frome has been walked above and below Stroud as well as along the urban parts of the river. Walks have also been taken along the Nailsworth stream.

Participating walkers/artists:
Rachel Beard, Stewart Butler, Fiona Cam-Meadley, Jilly Cobbe, Valerie Coffin-Price, Ian Cridland, Sue Cridland, Tara Downs, Eileen Dunlop, Lucy Guenot, Sylvain Guenot, Ahrabella Heabe-Lewis, Karin Jarman, Phil Johnson, Richard Keating, David Moss, Alan Mossman, Claire Nicole, Carlos Ordonez, Kel Portman, Martin Large, Dot Newton, Wendy Rendall, Deborah Roberts, Philip Rush, Bart Sabel, Chris Smith, Jacqui Stearn, Nik Taylor, Bob Loe, Roberta Loe, Alison Vickery, Cynthia Whelan,

4.2 Liaison/art making workshops

Workshops have been run at which work was developed from the sketch books and from other preliminary work collected on the walks. The purpose was to make work suitable for inclusion in the exhibitions that complement the community discussion events and, later on. To make work for the two larger exhibitions – Ruskin Mill and The Museum in the Park. Notably a Miniature Museum Of Memories (MMM) has been made as well as River Maps and a loom.

Planning meetings and other negotiations took place to integrate the project with the Spring Green Conference, with the Stroud Consortium Network event, the Festival of Nature, Ruskin Mill’s programme, Stroud Common Wealth’s AGM and the Museum’s exhibition programme. Towards the
end of the project, a public meeting was held at Stroud Brewery to invite people to engage with a wildlife grazing project, again within the context of the settled valleys landscape type and subsequently, a steering group attended to take the project forward, including the use of art walking as a way of revealing an ongoing narrative of the grazing project; its successes, challenges and personal stories.

4.3 Stroud Spring Green Conference

40 or so organisations attended this day long conference at the Museum in the Park with Mark Connelly making a key note presentation on Stroud's landscape and ecological setting. This helped to see local green space action in a Landscape Character Assessment framework, with other presentations placing it in other local planning frames. There were also two workshops on arts and landscape, with others on planning, working with volunteers, community engagement and collaboration. Participants agreed to meet again in the late summer to consider and develop a pan-organisation overview and collaborative project ideas, including a Conservation Grazing Project as it turned out.

4.4 Community Discussion Events and Walks

4.4.1 To coincide with the Stroud Visual Arts Festival in May (SITE13), two events were held at Stroud Brewery with walks along the Frome and up into the surrounding wooded hillside. The second discussion event was well attended (a dozen people) and some useful comments collected (Appendix 1).
4.4.2 Also coinciding with the Visual Arts Festival, Tara Downs and Bart Sabel held two collecting days for their Miniature Museum of Memories in Stroud's Museum in the Park; their project has been developed as a way of collecting information about how people value the river landscape.

The Miniature Museum of Memories

4.4.3 The exhibition was put up at The Exchange, Stroud’s Social Enterprise Centre, for about five weeks where the project was discussed at the The Community Farm Land Trust’s AGM and Stroud Common Wealth’s AGM which was attended by a group of about a dozen very active and influential citizens. It was also visited by other people using this community resource.

While still at The Exchange the exhibition was added to by the Miniature Museum and an evening discussion event was held for local artists and writers and community planners, including a very useful workshop session on National Character Areas being run with input from a member of staff from Natural England.
4.4.4 During July, as a part of the campaign to save Rodborough Fields (from development), a walk was held through the mills and along the canal and River, with actors and poets reading from historical documents about the valleys and particularly the heritage of the Stroud Scarlet. Scarlet banners were specifically made for the event and carried as a part of a short talk about the Settled Valleys project. The banners were used to recreate one of the most loved local paintings of the racking fields (anon) from Wall Bridge. About 75 people attended and the walk was filmed by BBC 2 as a part of their ‘Planners’ series. Participants were interviewed about how they valued the fields and a short video made of the event.

Recreating the Racking Fields

This discussion event was unusual in that it was initiated by external circumstances and involved a different sort of walk and work. It was however successful in engaging people and a useful opportunity to practice the well used adage in community work of “starting where people are”, in other words, starting with their concerns. In this context the sometimes perceived ‘dryness’ of countryside policy was instead seen as relevant and essential.

An additional walk was led by local naturalists and experts that invited people to help record the wildlife of the area. A particular relevance of this was to illustrate the value of certain urban habitats for wildlife in the settled valleys.
4.4.5  The fuller exhibition, including the Miniature Museum was shown at Ruskin Mill, also with new work which had been influenced by the discussion events that had been held up until that point. While at Ruskin Mill, a further discussion event, collection day and walk were undertaken plus an impromptu viewing and discussion about landscape with a group of new staff. A meeting with an art teacher and her students also led to work being made by them which was then shown as a part of the final exhibition in the museum.

4.5  Stroud Nature Consortium Seminar and Festival of Nature

Following on from the Spring Green Conference, a framework for collaboration and ideas for collaborative projects were developed at the seminar; conservation grazing, woodland and water
management and a landscape/ecological/access vision for Stroud were discussed.

For the Festival of Nature a 'People's River Map' had been made and was added to by local people marking their favourite routes and places. A couple of hundred people participated. This began to show very graphically how people use the countryside and proved to be a very accessible way of making comments about landscape and led to many impromptu discussion about what is important and what is perceived as negative in the landscape. From a landscape experience aspect, it was fascinating to watch people converting their memories of walking in the landscape into making marks on the map – very clearly reliving experience of place.

![Adding to the River Map at the Festival of Nature](image)

4.6 Final Exhibition and Seminar

New work was created for this exhibition at the Museum in the Park and upwards of 300 people visited it in the short time it was on. As well as discussions with these visitors, including additional collecting for the

![River Map as catalyst for conversation during Museum exhibition](image)
Miniature Museum and additional adding to the River Map, a well attended seminar was held which outlined the project, discussed the art work and gave an opportunity for people to discuss both in small workshops. The main findings from this was that the project had been a good way to engage people with the AONB and that more was needed, particularly a greater involvement of young people, older people and people with disabilities.

Perhaps the single most striking theme was that the project had begun to re-people the landscape.

From an arts perspective, those involved found the process developmental and created a lot of new and different work. Many who visited the show commented positively on the unusual and collaborative approach taken while some at the seminar pondered on the mix of environmental action and art.

5 Findings

5.1 Overall
More than thirty people have been directly involved in delivering the project through walks and helping arrange events and making work.

A number of approaches were taken and trialled from a socially engaged arts practice point of view – the very personal approach of one to one (re)collections in the Miniature Museum of Memories, the direct encounters with and conversations about landscape on walks, group discussions which highlight a range of values and create a relational aesthetic, intervention in other live projects and concerns and integration in a variety of ways with the community's various landscape, art and nature initiatives and organisations.

Over a thousand people have taken part in discussion events and additional walks and a further hundred or so people have taken part in seminars or conferences.
The project has both broadened and deepened an understanding of the Management Plan and the Settled Valleys in particular.

Overall the process has proved to be a useful way of engaging people with Landscape Character Assessment and capturing the social values inherent in landscape. It has provided qualitative data about how people value the settled valleys landscape and has also demonstrated that a primarily aesthetic approach can initiate action.

5.2 Exploring Landscape Values

5.2.1 Written comments.
The ways that the “Settled Valleys Landscape” is valued was expressed through a number of media. Appendix 1 is a list of comments made at some of the discussion events taken from post it notes or proformas. While they give a flavour of how people value place, the post it notes don't include the conversations that lie behind the words that were written, while the proformas, although more considered, were more than many people were willing to complete.

5.2.2 Images, verse and video
Many of the ways that people value landscape are expressed in the images, verse and video that were produced on the walks and some are attached on disc as Appendix 2. Their use in stimulating further response to landscape was a central method for the project. This aspect of the process was referred to at the final exhibition as “Encounters” and put people in direct touch with the landscape and also with other people's values for it. In other words, the project increased the opportunity for experiencing the landscape and for sharing understanding of its many values.

5.2.3 New Work
As the project progressed, the artists incorporated the comments that people had been making into their work making, creating what was referred to “Assemblages”. Such works were varied and included:

- combining image and words
- composite images that expressed some of the nature of a landscape in transition
a video of a collaboration between artists and the local community art with sound track of how people value the place

Examples are attached as Appendix 3 on disc.

5.2.4 Maps and Miniature Museum
Although in many ways these were “assemblages”, they are worth separate mention for a number of reasons. Firstly that both are examples of the work being made in the moment with the participants and as such a very direct dialogue between artist and participant, one in which any concern of the artist's interpretation being removed, instead the artist playing an even more facilitative role. Secondly, the Miniature Museum and the Map especially, produced very readily located information for use by the Conservation Board. Images are attached as Appendix 3 on disc.

5.3 Community Infrastructure
The report has given a flavour of numbers involved however, it is worth pulling out from this some underlying issues which relate to the project area and its community which would have an effect on the replicability of the project elsewhere.

5.3.1 Walking the Land have been leading First Friday Walks for many years and as such were able to develop these into First Friday River Walks, having the infrastructure and profile to attract people along and a willingness to contribute this aspect of the project as match funding.

5.3.2 Walking the Land are networked with a number of other Stroud based activities which facilitated the community facing aspects of the project, notably the Stroud Visual Arts Festival (SITE13), the Festival of Nature and Stroud Nature Consortium.

5.3.4 The lead officer from the Cotswold Conservation Board attended a number of events and positively contributed to the discussions as well as the design and review of the project as it progressed, including seizing opportunities as they arose.

5.3.5 The points set out above are not conditions for success but give an idea of the sort of community infrastructure to link with in order to facilitate such projects.


6 Future Work generated by the project

The closing section of the final exhibition was referred to as “Action” and as has been said, a number of continuing strands have been initiated by the project. A couple of people have planned
discussion events for later in the year, one at Archway school, another at Maidenhill School. Other useful ideas came from the project which could be initiated given the resource, particularly ideas around engaging older people and collecting their landscape stories.

The project will be incorporated into the PhD Thesis being written about Landscape Aesthetics and as such will hopefully gain further exposure.

The Wildlife grazing project is up and running and a firewood co-op has also been set-up. Sitings of rare moths and butterflies have been recorded and a related, a new art project is in development. As this report was being written the Cotswold Conservation Board heard that they had been successful with an HLF bid and are able to direct some of that towards the wildlife grazing project.

7 Appendices

7.1 Comments from events

7.1.2 Common Wealth AGM
features-
Springs, wells and the way springs are landscaped with stonework
network of footpaths and rights of way
woodlands and the connections between them
animals, bird habitats where you might see e.g. dippers at Capel Mill
places where special flowers grow e.g. orchids – Minchinhampton, Rodborough, Selsley Commons
Open spaces – commons, small patches of special land including orchards and allotments
Stroud Museum and Stratford Park and 'The Secret Garden' as the genius loci of the valleys
variability and contrast – industry in countryside theme
very different habitats
fantastic views and enclosed valleys
river and canal
varied flora reflecting different habitats
amazing mills
scary walks
amazing footpath network
unique commons

wide vistas from the high ground
varied terrain – open, woodland
footpaths

woodland accessibility
bluebells and wild garlic
birdsong

rolling hills and valleys, but more than rolling, I'd say plunging valleys with hidden gems
space to breathe and relax

what I value in the From Valley:
the wealth of wildlife flora (especially) and fauna
the varied aspects – woodland, commons, river banks, nature reserves (Siccaridge especially)
the walks along the tow path and in woodlands,
also the evidence of historical industrial activity and the way nature has taken over.
Hedgerows, wild strawberries, raspberries, lilies of the valley, bluebells
elemental life

the dry stone walls
the industrial canal environment
the wild flowers
the buzzards
the beautiful walks
the variety of mini landscapes

stress less
wooded area and copses
co-housing, housing for life in sympathy with landscape
acquiring common ownership of woodland/green spaces
Stroud Community Agriculture

pubs and cricket

space/green
sky
wildlife
'wilderness'
play
exploration
walkways
view
swifts
freedom to wander

exploring new places

230
closeness of countryside to town (Rodborough Fields)
forage in farmers market for wild food
Stroud Valleys Project

stone walls!

Ice cream on the common
walking – woods, common
biodiversity – bluebells, butterflies, orchids, trees, badgers, doormice, birds
sense of place – nature, people and change

antidote to the city (- example of how to live >mongolia > Stroud (lab)> experiment in living)
a place to raise a family
livelihood and landscape

7.1.2 Exchange Discussion Event
amazing recreational walking and nature
easy to find peace, quiet and fresh air
green lungs
allotments
public space
mills
intrinsically different
vibrancy of mixture of industry, small businesses and homes - concerns over large blocks of new housing
land use and economics – connect rural enterprise with landscape change
biological value
the people and what they produce

separation of Stroud and Rodborough
front garden
(lack of caring for environment here – cycle track litter, vandalism, scruffy, down at heel)
diversity of the landscape from the aspect of the hills and valleys and the old industrial mills
contrast – wild, part tamed, tamed, derelict, dereliction reclaimed by nature – all in a glorious juxtaposition
up and down – hills and valleys
connection between people and the landscape
discovering
...changing perspectives and views of valleys...surprises... from the shapes of geography to peoples ways
hidden valleys
secret places to be found
place for discovery
view points
open space – therapeutic value, psychological health
feel embraced by the scale of landscape. Love the steep wooded valleys when exiting the Sapperton tunnel on the train to Stroud – feels like entering paradise, wonderful to follow the river into town.
Beautiful wildlife
Arcadia (21st Century)
Venn Diagrams – how do we circumscribe the local? What about redcoats and slavery?
The topography of five steep valleys with woods and fast flowing stream together with Cotswold Scarp looking westward
small spaces – surprise hollows – valleys with water courses, the fields, woods and settlements
social history within the landscape – rescuing ordinary people from the enormous condescension of parents

I like the lanes that look like green tunnels
joined-up green space corridors
ability to travel within the landscape without transport i.e. walking
walking along the scarp, surprised by a western vista of patchwork fields, Severn and Wales
Not a chocolate box environment
stories, threads – historical and contemporary -
not always staying on the safe, well trodden paths
human scale
connections
desire lines
access to paths for recreational walking in a safe way
old wiggling footpaths tracing older footsteps and streams
value the web of footpaths, weaving through the valleys and along canal and water courses

commons
take ownership, make individual – idiosyncratic
space, open space
not just preservation, chocolate box
community ownership – orchards, woods, tourism, energy
lushness (so much green)
variety
beauty
open skies
awareness raising/threat
economic possibilities
sense of history
feeling enclosed
connection with nature
our little bit of arcadia – beautiful, light
and the history that is so visible everywhere
ancient history – dreamland of spirits
rarity of species and features
large trees left over from old estates
woods – Randwick
beech woods and blue bells and wild garlic
light – its play on everything
Dippers at Capel Mill
Orchids and skylarks on commons
the spirit of people here loving the place
local identity
community green ethos mill buildings
ocean floor – Eolithic stone
the evocative names of places – the Vatch, Spillmans, Uplands, Rodborough etc.
light captured in wild grass

7.1.3
Proformas from the Brewery Discussion events
(attached)

7.2 Accompanying CD

7.2.1 Encounters – examples of work produced on the walks.
i. sketch books
ii. poems
iii. photographs

7.2.2 Assemblages – examples of work incorporating feedback from discussion events
i. long map
ii. River Map
iii. Slide show containing:
    transitional drawing
    words and images
    weaving

233
7.2.3 Moving image and presentation
i. Miniature Museum of Memories (video)
ii Rodborough Fields (video)
iii. Presentation at Museum (power point)

iv “River Frome” dvd (video on separate disc)
LOOKING AFTER FOLLY WOOD

1 Introduction

Between July 2010 and June 2011, the members of Stroud Woodland Co-operative organised themselves into a number of topic groups in order to research how to look after Folly Wood. The research was gathered at topic group events and fed into regular core group meetings, open to all. The core group developed ideas and plans from these findings and fed these back to seasonal gatherings of the wider membership.

At these meetings further research was undertaken as to people's:
  aspirations for buying the wood
  ways of valuing the wood
  choice of activities in the wood
  location of activities in the wood

(see appendices for more detail).

Figure 1. Maps produced at the Spring Equinox gathering
2 Principles: Early in the process a set of principles were agreed as follows:

“Our overall principle is that the wood can be enjoyed for generations to come. Everything should start slowly and be low impact with full respect for the place, the environment and each other, that we seek to find a way of working together with respect when putting the spirit of this principle into practice. Examples of this principle in practice are:

**Tree management:** Folly Wood is not a completely natural woodland, and as such at times it will be necessary and desirable to remove individual trees and replant others: it's part of looking after the wood. Parts of the wood will be used for activities and other parts restored, and both will require woodland management.

The overall aim is to restore and manage the woodland, its trees, flora and fauna to be similar in nature to the ancient semi natural woodlands in this part of the Cotswolds, not withstanding that it will have a range of relatively intense uses by the group.

In practice this will mean gradually replacing the majority of the larches with a range of suitable species. Unless unhealthy and dangerous, existing mature species such as ash, beech, oak, sycamore, holly, yew and pines will be kept and self seeded and young saplings of these other species will be kept. A wider variety of species will be considered such as filed maple, small leaved lime and hedgerow species.

The value of the woodland in the wider landscape, both as a visual feature and for its biodiversity value should be recognised as a part of the management operations. In particular, felling of larches should be a gradual process over at least a ten year period unless overtaken by the presence of Sudden Oak Death.

**Permanent structures.** Generally, and for the time being, we will not develop permanent structures (such as buildings, car parking, hard surfaced paths) - they require considerable investment of time, energy and materials and significant funds to construct and maintain. Permanent structures in Folly Wood are also more likely to attract interest from people who may not have the best interests of the wood at heart.

**Vehicles in the wood:** Visitors to Folly Wood should consider local residents and the environment when bringing their vehicles. Wherever possible visitors to the wood with cars should park on the main bit of Folly Lane. No motorised vehicles (i.e. motorbikes) should be driven within the wood: to do so would compromise the ecology of the wood as well as prevent others from enjoying the wood.

**Nature reserve:** All the wildlife of the wood is of value to us, and we may keep one or more areas largely as 'wild' areas with minimal intervention and disturbance. We also recognise that Folly Wood is a resource to be enjoyed by the Stroud Woodland Coop community and not a strict 'nature reserve'.

**Materials** - any structures in the wood (paths, fencing etc.) will use natural and local materials (ideally from Folly Wood itself) wherever possible.

**Access** - all Folly Wood members are welcome to the wood. We will develop a calendar to ensure that we can enjoy the wood in a variety of ways. In accepting that there won't be hard paths, we will need to strive to enable people with a range of abilities to gain access. We also need to devise appropriate access for members and the wider community, baring in mind our legal responsibilities.

**Fires:** Fallen dead wood is a finite resource in the wood and also important for woodland ecology. We should use wood for fires as economically as possible, monitoring our wood use over time.”
Towards a layout

Following analysis of the maps produced at the Spring Equinox, the map and related principles below were produced and discussed at the Summer Solstice gathering.

Figure 2. The map shows seven zones or patches into which specific uses and activities are placed.

A number of guiding principles have been allocated to each of the seven zones based on the current knowledge of the site's flora and fauna; there may be specific management operations needed to conserve/promote particular species.

Gradual restoration of the woodland has been estimated to take place over a ten-year period, 2012 to 2022. Each year, removal of ten percent of the agreed number of larch from each zone should happen, other than from zone 3 where 20% of the larch to be felled could be removed between 2017 and 2022. Each year new tree and woodland edge planting to take place and changes in ground flora to be monitored.

Installation of other infrastructure to happen in parallel, taking account of issues such as visibility from roads and footpaths, re-use of felled timber etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone/patch</th>
<th>Existing features</th>
<th>Woodland management principles and operations</th>
<th>Activities and structures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Large number of pines with mix of broadleaved species. Relatively open. Quarries against lane. Remains of building at top corner. Easy, level access</td>
<td>Remove all but a few larch. Introduce limited number of new species such as Rowan and oak to create an open woodland. Create and/or leave clearings for ground flora.</td>
<td>Formalise access. Provide sign board. Create shelter in ruined building. Locate appropriate place for simple seating. Bird and bat boxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Predominantly larch plantation with mature ash and other species especially along the boundary with field. Good views to east and north east,</td>
<td>Gradually reduce larch to 5%, starting with least healthy. Leave some lying for invertebrates. Encourage natural succession and also replace with appropriate native species. Create open woodland, leaving clearings to encourage ground flora. Include small areas of hazel coppice.</td>
<td>Paths through. Occasional seating to take advantage of views to the east. Bird and bat boxes. Some coppicing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Predominantly larch with some beech, ash and other native species. Sloping to road. Potentially good views through trees to east.</td>
<td>Very Gradually remove 95% of larch, leave some lying, encourage natural regeneration and provide robust woodland mix including dense under story to screen active zone 4 from road and provide enclosure and shelter. Include areas of hazel coppice.</td>
<td>Some coppicing. Some play structures. Create views through from zone 4. Compost toilet facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Predominantly larch with specimen beech and some ash and holly. Quarries an important feature, Views out to south, east and west.</td>
<td>Remove all larch, starting with the least healthy.</td>
<td>Provide majority of activity space, including fire site, shelter in quarry with removable cover and banked seating. Play structures in northern quarry. Wood store.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Quarries and badger sett. Quarry next to road has good mix of tree species.</td>
<td>Gradually remove 95% of larch. Leave some lying for habitat. Encourage natural succession and plant appropriate tree species and shrubs to create dense woodland.</td>
<td>Discourage activities and structures. Redirect path. Provide sign unless provided in zone 7. Fence to discourage tipping and allow only very limited parking/delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Predominantly larch with open feel and views to south (Stroud), south west and west.</td>
<td>Keep as open woodland, Gradually replace larch with deciduous species. Create clearing for flowers.</td>
<td>Simple meditation clearing. Simple bench. New access and signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Woodland edge with mature trees and flower rich areas in places. Access points.</td>
<td>Plant hedge using native, non-invasive species, leaving wild-flower verge adjacent to the lane. Consider running hedge behind either or both of the two long quarries at the northern end of the site to maximise habitat.</td>
<td>Access to woods, with signage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Much of the boundary has the remnants of a stone wall. A decision needs to be taken whether to repair and replace this, whether to repair lengths, whether to remove or leave much as it is. Where possible the felled trees to be used for structures, including any path edging, steps and chipped for surfaces as appropriate.

*Figure 3. Principles by zone/patch*
3 Further research and resources

Further research is needed before finally deciding on precise management regimes, in particular a fuller flora and fauna survey and more work on aesthetic appreciation of the wood, including its appearance in the landscape.

More detailed decisions about tree felling and planting as well as design decisions for some elements, particularly in patch/zone 4. The general approach is that these decisions will be delegated to those group members undertaking the works, co-ordinated via the core group initially with input from those of the group who offer to become specialists – see Figure 5.

At the summer solstice gathering it was felt that people would like to take responsibility for a patch (zone) or an element within it. These have been added to Figure 4 below. The next step is for groups of people to choose a patch and to use this template to produce a costed work programme including people hours, training, tools, equipment and materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>patch</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>activities</th>
<th>materials</th>
<th>equipment</th>
<th>additional resource</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Path layout, prepare for tree felling and replanting. Seating, coppicing in due course. Bird and bat boxes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jo, Andy</td>
<td>Compost loo path layout prepare for tree felling and tree and shrub planting improve views out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Martin, Barbara, Ruth</td>
<td>Path layout prepare for tree felling tree and woodland edge planting improve views out. Seating.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4. Annual template for looking after your patch*
As well as taking responsibility for looking after a patch, it was agreed that people would need to be responsible for specific activities. This would include becoming specialists and offering advice and support to groups looking after their patch. These specialisms will generally sit under the remit of the existing Infrastructure and Woodland Management group and supplement the work of the other topic groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>specialism</th>
<th>people</th>
<th>notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree felling, including training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree planting, including training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppicing and green wood skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird and bat box construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and signs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play features and other structures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letting contracts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber storage, seasoning and firewood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5. Specialist advice and support*
## APPENDIX 8b

### ACTION PLAN: April 2012 - March 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Estimate/ in kind payment/income</th>
<th>Lead person/group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin larch trees and unsafe trees in area 4 in accordance with the Folly Wood Plan.</td>
<td>In kind days: I day contractor £200.00 chain saw use: £150.00 self financing</td>
<td>Ben Spencer, (Richard Lewes, Richard Keating.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plank wood if there is a demand for products</td>
<td>In kind days; chain saw: £50.00</td>
<td>Martin Large, Ruth Illingworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete rural benches and tables in quiet area, including ‘thrones’/’totems’.</td>
<td>In kind days: chain saw: £50.00</td>
<td>Andy Freedman, Greg Pilley, Nadine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete compost toilet</td>
<td>In kind days: 5</td>
<td>Andy Freedman, Greg Pilley, Nadine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design, make &amp; erect two number sign boards (timber available)</td>
<td>In kind days: 4</td>
<td>Seb Buckton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue tree planting (trees etc. in stock, including some pot grown at Hawkwood)</td>
<td>In kind days:30</td>
<td>Richard K., Gabriel Kaye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearing and managing new clearing and placing benches</td>
<td>In kind days: 4</td>
<td>Jackie Rowanly, Seb Buckton, Nadine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark, clear and set-out new paths</td>
<td>No action required</td>
<td>Mark Harrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create more play possibilities</td>
<td>No further plans, will respond to children’s ideas</td>
<td>Ali Coles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert larch and other felled timber into firewood, stack and organise disposal. Fuel. Arrange chain saw course for members</td>
<td>In kind days: 30 Self-financing Self-financing or fund-raise</td>
<td>Richard Lewes, Ben Spencer, Mark Harrison, Richard Keating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrange woodlands open day</td>
<td>£350 from earmarked from rural task force money</td>
<td>Richard K., Martin Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3x group celebrations, informal bbqs and AGM Printing, postage</td>
<td>In kind days: 5 £10</td>
<td>Alice Goodenough, Andy Freedman, Gabriel Kaye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin. Costs: insurance, update website, mail outs etc.</td>
<td>In kind days: £650</td>
<td>Ben Spencer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set-up and administer membership scheme</td>
<td>In kind days:3 Income: £400</td>
<td>Helen Keating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals: expenditure income balance</td>
<td>£1,400 £400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals: income balance</td>
<td>(£1,000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Place making came into practice as a tool for designing urban areas in the 60's. It addressed these environments from the point of view of people living in them, rather than traffic movements or commercial activity, typically looking at public spaces and green space.

Green Infrastructure, according to the Town and Country Planning Association's website (http://www.tcpa.org.uk/data/files/TCPA_TWTT_GI-Biodiversity-Guide.pdf) provides opportunities to protect and enhance the natural environment and is fundamental to strategic planning to safeguard the natural environment for future generations. GI adds tangible value to communities in economic, social and environmental terms. It creates places that are more resilient to climate change, that have distinct local character, and in which people want to live, work, and visit; places that promote well-being, productivity, educational benefits and crime reduction; and places where communities can actively engage with their local environment.

Landscape Character Assessment is defined as "The tool that is used to help us to understand, and articulate, the character of the landscape. It helps us identify the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpoints what makes it different from neighbouring areas." (Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland, The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002) http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/assessment/

Racking Fields are the actual fields where, as a part of the Stroud Valleys' 17th and 18th century textile industry, newly dyed cloth was stretched to dry, was put on tenter hooks.

The walk was shown as a part of Episode 6 on 5th March, 2014

A/r/tography, according to the A/r/tography Trail website (http://theartographictrail.com), is a form of practice-based/art based research steeped in the arts and education. Alongside other arts-based, arts-informed and aesthetically defined methodologies, a/r/tography is one of many emerging forms of inquiry that refer to the arts as a way of re-searching the world to enhance understanding. A/r/tography does not seek to answer questions or offer linear procedures that end in finely extracted answers. Rather, it provides a form of living inquiry. These questions are generated by the evolution of the experiences surrounding and resulting from the relational realities and processes of one’s active engagement in an ongoing search for deeper understanding. As a relational process, a/r/tography dwells within tensioned in/between spaces, seeking out and acknowledging discomfort as a vibrant place of becoming and learning.

The blog can be visited at http://richardkeating.co.uk.

The Transition Movement is a response to a post oil economy. Its role is to inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities as they self-organise around the Transition model, creating initiatives that rebuild resilience and reduce CO2 emissions.

Stroud Scarlet is the popular terminology for the scarlet cloth woven and dyed in the Stroud Valleys for use as British army uniforms.

Taiwo Afuapeis spoke at the conference in her role as the Principal Clinical Psychologist and Systemic Psychotherapist working at the Tavistock and Portman NHA Foundation Trust


Office of National Statistics 2010 www.ons.gov.uk/.../population.../population.../the-uk-population--how...?

Javelin Park Incinerator went to appeal after being turned down by the County Council and in January 2014, the Secretary of State for Communities ruled in favour of the development.

The European Landscape Convention, or Florence Convention, promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The convention was adopted on 20 October 2000 in Florence (Italy) and came into force on 1 March 2004 (Council of Europe Treaty Series no.176). Signed by the UK Government in February 2006, the ELC, is
devoted exclusively to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe. It became binding in England from March 2007 and applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside; the coast and inland areas; and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection. The Convention prioritises community participation and was reaffirmed as being part of the Department of Food and Rural Affairs delivery framework in England through the Natural Environment White Paper in June 2011. Of relevance to this research is Preamble, Article 5. Paragraphs a, b and d are of particular relevance:

a. to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people’s surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;
b. to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6;
c. to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mentioned in paragraph b above;
d. to integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape. http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm

16 Natural England's ecosystem approach seeks to identify the range of ways the natural environment provides benefits to society and to engage the beneficiaries in reaching decisions about the objectives and priorities for their environment. Evidence collecting is focused on identifying and mapping ecosystem services, understanding how they provide benefits and how they can be valued and considered in decisions about projects for, or affecting, the environment.

17 Stroud District Local Plan. At the time of writing, the District Council has a draft Local Plan. Stage 1 of the examination hearings of the Plan took place on 1-3 April 2014. Following publication of the Inspector's Initial Conclusions on Stage 1 of the examination in June 2014, the Council agreed to suspend the examination in order to enable further work to be undertaken. On 9 December 2014, an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council was held; this considered the work undertaken during the period of suspension, agreed to adopt an overall housing provision figure of 11,200 dwellings (2006-2031). The resumed Stage 1 hearings will now commence at 10.00am on Tuesday 12th May 2015.

18 The Cotswolds Conservation Board is the organisation that exists to conserve and enhance the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

19 Supplementary planning guidance supports, clarifies and/or illustrates by example planning policy statements and plans. This can take the form of design guides such as the ‘Creating Places’ guide for residential development or guides prepared for Conservation Areas. It also includes a set of Development Control Advice Notes that explain the criteria and technical standards to be considered when dealing with specific categories or particular aspects of development. Where relevant to a particular development proposal supplementary guidance will be taken into account as a material consideration in making decisions. (Source: http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy-supplementary_guidance.htm)

20 Academy of Urbanism’s Diagnostic visits helps those involved in building and sustaining successful places – from streets to city quarters – understand the factors that underpin or undermine their success. The service provides a critical friend’s assessment of local aspirations, responsibilities and actions. It focuses the expertise and experience from a pool of over 500 Academicians.

21 Project Stroud is a steering group arising from Stroud's involvement in the Market and Coastal Town's Initiative (see chapter 3)

22 SITSelect – runs Stroud International Textiles Festival.

23 Stroud Common Wealth exists to own and develop property for community benefit and to enable social enterprise development.

24 Stroud Community Agriculture Ltd (SCA) is a community-led enterprise, which is developing a local farming business to produce fresh organic/biodynamic produce for its members. Members pay an annual membership and a further payment in order to receive produce including vegetables, pork and beef, and diversifying into other produce. The farm is certified organic and is influenced by biodynamic methods. (Source: http://www.stroudcommunityagriculture.org)
25 Stroudco Food Hub is a not-for-profit grocer bringing together an ever-expanding and exclusive range of locally produced artisan food, drinks and much more. Orders can be collected at any time during the week from 2 points in Stroud or delivered to your door. (Source: http://www.stroudco.org.uk)

26 Stroud Community Land Trust is a registered charity set up in 2001 to protect and enhance green spaces for people and wildlife.

27 Stroud Nature: Stroud Nature runs The Festival of Nature which has grown since its inception in 2008 and attracted upwards of 4,000 visitors each year to its daylong event in Stratford Park. During 2013 there were, in addition to the 40 stalls concerned with the natural environment, marquees for local food, walking, arts and eco homes.

28 Stroud Valleys Project aims to protect and enhance the local environment by working with local communities to embrace sustainable development and biodiversity, and so to make Stroud and its surrounding area a better, healthier place in which to live for both present and future generations.

29 Stroud Valleys Artspace's (SVA) mission is to raise the profile of artists and their role in the community by supporting the production and presentation of their work, thereby increasing opportunities for access to and active participation in the arts for a diverse range of people.

30 Stroudwater Textile Trust tells the story of the Gloucestershire woollen industry. It restores and demonstrates historical textile machinery at two sites, Dunkirk Mill Centre and Gigg Mill, Nailsworth.

31 Transition Stroud is part of the Transition Towns movement, which started early in the 21st century. The movement aims to help communities become more resilient in the face of the twin challenges of Peak Oil and Climate Change, with a focus on the Stroud Valleys area. It is a non-profit company, with no affiliations to any government or political organisation.

32 Stroud Woodland Co-operative, owners of Folly Wood, aim to carry on business for the benefit of the community, including: to realise the environmental, biological, landscape, economic, social, cultural, educational and recreational value of woodland ecosystems in and around Stroud as a resource for a sustainable community; and to acquire, hold, steward, create, and manage woodland, land and property sustainably in trust for biodiversity, social enterprise, access and community benefit for present and future generations.

33 The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from June 2-14, 1992. It was held twenty years after the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) took place in Stockholm, Sweden. Government officials from 178 countries and between 20,000 and 30,000 individuals from governments, non-governmental organizations, and the media participated in this event to discuss solutions for global problems such as poverty, war, and the growing gap between industrialized and developing countries. The central focus was the question of how to relieve the global environmental system through the introduction to the paradigm of sustainable development. This concept emphasizes that economic and social progress depend critically on the preservation of the natural resource base with effective measures to prevent environmental degradation. (Source: The Encyclopedia of the Earth, available at: http://www.eoearth.org/view/article/156773/)

34 Local Agenda 21: At the Rio earth Summit in 1992, the United Nations agreed that the best starting point for the achievement of sustainable development is at the local level. In fact, two thirds of the 2500 action items of Agenda 21 relate to local councils. Each local authority has had to draw up its own Local Agenda 21 (LA21) strategy following discussion with its citizens about what they think is important for the area. The principle of sustainable development must form a central part of the strategy. LA21 regards sustainable development as a community issue, involving all sections of society. (Source: Sustainable Environment. Available at: http://www.sustainable-environment.org.uk/Action/Local_Agenda_21.php)

35 Sections of the Stroud Valleys were designated as an Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA), in 1987. Many of the surrounding woodlands and limestone grasslands are designated under the European Directive as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and are nationally designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Cotswold Commons and Beech Woods are a National Nature Reserve.

36 Stuart Butler's piece was researched using 'Agricultural Trade Unionism in Gloucestershire 1872-1950' Moreby Nigel Scotland, 1991, published by the Centre for the Study of Religion, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education, creating a first hand voice within a prose-poem historical
narrative. Other work by Stuart can be accessed at [http://radicalstroud.blogspot.co.uk](http://radicalstroud.blogspot.co.uk)

37 Sustainable Europe Research Institute (SERI) is a Pan European think tank exploring sustainable development options for European societies. It was set up in September 1999. (Source: [http://seri.at/en/about/#sthash.lVgZyL1a.dpuf](http://seri.at/en/about/#sthash.lVgZyL1a.dpuf))

38 Eastings and Northings are geographic Cartesian coordinates adopted by map makers, including the Ordnance Survey to locate a point. Easting refers to the eastward-measured distance, while northing refers to the northward-measured distance. Easting and northing coordinates are commonly measured in metres from a horizontal datum. However, imperial units are also used.


40 For a fuller appraisal of these approaches and the various protagonists see Brady, 2003

41 Rodborough Fields: These are the racking fields referred to in the Introduction. An application to build 100 houses on them, on the southern edge of Stroud, was refused in April 2013 based on the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's evidence. On the BBC TV's planning programme, the planning officer, explained how this was of material consideration whereas the signatures on the petition were not.

42 From the 1970's, Urban Fringe and Countryside Management was a practice championed by the then Countryside Commission, aimed at managing landscapes on the edge of cities and access to them. These were often in partnership with local authorities and particularly addressed the issues at the interface of urban and rural.

43 In England, twelve Community Forests were established in the 1990's, along with the National Forest, by the then Countryside Agency and Forestry Commission in partnership with local authorities as a way of integrating urban and rural into Town and Country Planning and other public policy. These approaches have been integrated in Green Infrastructure Strategy and Social Forestry.

44 During the 1970's and 80's the work of environmentalists such as Dr. Chris Baines caught people's imagination and throughout the country people consciously gardened for wildlife, including working with local authorities, Wildlife Trusts and the then British Trust For Conservation Volunteers, to manage public open space for wildlife.

45 The interview was recorded on March 15 1994. It was broadcast by Channel 4 on April 5, 1994 in the *Without Walls* interview with Melvyn Bragg.

46 *Blue Remembered Hills* is a British television play by Dennis Potter, originally broadcast on 30 January 1979 as part of the BBC's Play for Today series. They refer to Potter's childhood memories in the Forest of Dean.

47 Colleagues include Julia Bennett, Alison Parfitt, Sue Porter, Diana Ray and Jaqui Taylor. We first worked together as the Facilitators Learning Network to facilitate Vision 21 and its various projects.

48 First Friday Walks: Since 2005, Walking the Land artists have been offering and leading free walks on the first Friday of each month around Gloucestershire and neighbouring counties. On the walks we produce our own work and encourage people to respond to the walks. Work performed/produced includes: drawing, photography, video and writing.

49 “Only Human?” Festival in Glasgow was held in November 2014 to explore how the arts and humanities offer innovative ways for us to think about and explore the relationships and dependencies between human and non-human, to consider what it is to ‘be human’ in a world with others.

50 Market and Coastal Towns Initiative: Early in 2000 the Government encouraged the formation of public agency partnerships in order to develop regeneration initiatives that could tackle issues faced by market and coastal towns and the surrounding rural communities. This initiative aimed to help communities to plan their future, build their skills and implement their plans. It also aimed to help co-ordinate activity of local and regional agencies to provide a 'gateway' to funding programmes that would make things happen. My involvement in this was through a facilitators co-operative called Sustainable Futures where I worked closely with Alison Parfitt and Neil Spencer in Lydney and Minehead.
Stratford Town Design Statement: This was a pilot Town Design Statement in which I was involved with Alison Parfitt through Sustainable Futures. It is a published document that gives a detailed guide to the character of a town. It sets out the specific nature of the buildings and landscape which make the town distinctive, with recommendations on how to encourage new development that enhances and compliments what already exists. A Town Design Statement is similar in concept to a Village Design Statement but the scale and complexity of towns means that a carefully co-ordinated approach is required in its production. The Stratford Town Design Statement was adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 30th September 2002.

Remembering Rodoborough. A 2008/09 Heritage Lottery funded project to celebrate the history of Rodborough Parish.

Capel Mill is the former dying mill on the River Frome on the edge of Stroud with remnant cultural artefacts, such as mill pond. The footpath across the River links town and country and the river at that point is a local nature reserve. The Great Western Railway viaduct passes over the river at the same point and it is adjacent to the Stroud Water Canal. It's a valued and informal open space used by all age groups in many ways. A local group had well advanced plans for its restoration as a social enterprise centre.

The language around nature and natural processes is blurred by the question of whether humans are a part of or apart from nature. This is explored throughout the thesis.

The Landscape Partnerships Programme is administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund for schemes led by partnerships of local, regional and national interests which aim to conserve areas of distinctive landscape character throughout the UK. The Stroud Living Landscapes Partnership had successfully bid into stage one of the initiative but had been unsuccessful with their stage 2 bid. However a number of partnership projects had ensued.

The SSRU encourages and explores transdisciplinary creativity and vision towards the shaping of a humane and ecologically viable society. It engages with Beuys thinking and work, as well as those before and after him – making available some of the insights, inquiries and explorations in this multidimensional field. [http://kenpa4i.com/ssru/](http://kenpa4i.com/ssru/)

The Future of Landscape and the Moving Image is a research project that since March 2007 has explored received ideas about mobility, belonging and displacement, and their relationship with landscape and images of landscape, in a context of economic and environmental crisis. It is a collaboration between the artist Patrick Keiller, Doreen Massey, Emeritus Professor of Geography at the Open University and Patrick Wright, formerly Professor of Modern Cultural Studies at Nottingham Trent University, now Professor of Literature and Visual & Material Culture at King's College London, and has been accompanied by Matthew Flintham's related PhD project: Parallel Landscapes: A spatial and critical study of militarised sites in the United Kingdom.

The analysis of the tradition of portrait painting and photography in terms of aesthetics and aesthetics is beyond the scope of this study.

Psychologist Bruce Tuckman first came up with the memorable phrase "forming, storming, norming, and performing" in his 1965 article, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups." He used it to describe the path that most teams follow on their way to high performance. Later, he added a fifth stage, "adjourning" (which is sometimes known as "mourning").

The thinkers referred to are Giambattista Vico, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Jean Paul, Gustav Gerber, Alfred Biese and Friedrich Nietzsche.

The Walking artists on line network is available at: [http://www.walkingartistsnetwork.org](http://www.walkingartistsnetwork.org)

See the AV Festival Website for more information. [http://www.avfestival.co.uk/programme/2012/events-and-exhibitions/hamish-fulton](http://www.avfestival.co.uk/programme/2012/events-and-exhibitions/hamish-fulton)

Between A and Bee: 2010 walk along the Cotswold Way between Stroud and Bath with Jessie Jowers and Carlo Montesanti from the Bee Guardian Foundation, and artists Tara Downs, Tom Keating and Kel Portman.

In-between Places was a walk between Stroud and Derby designed with colleagues, Julia Bennet, Alison Parfitt, Sue Porter, Diana Ray and Jaqui Taylor who, along with Lindsey Colbourne, Gordon Jackson,
Helen and Tom Keating, Martin Large and Kel Portman, joined me to walk parts of the route and to meet transition practitioners along the way.

Transhumance Walk: A four day walk in Aurland, Norway with Jorun Barane and Morten Clemetsen, Helen Keating, Martin Large and Kel Portman, focusing through walking, drawing and story telling on the practice of transhumance and the future of summer farms and associated landscape and culture.

The initial impetus for the canal restoration had come from a group of local canal enthusiasts who established the Stroud Water Canal Society in 1972.

During the process of delivering the canal restoration, the lead organisation, British Waterways, was abolished and the District Council took on its responsibilities.

As with many town centres, Stroud continues to compete with on-line shopping and out of town stores. It currently has 21 cafes and numerous charity shops and a number of empty shops. It has a weekly, Saturday farmers market which has greatly increased footfall over recent years and important festivals throughout the summer.

Cheapside lies to the south of the town and railway line, roughly a triangular site, with boundaries formed by the railway, canal and town centre access road. In recent years it has been the focus of a number of community led schemes, notably the buy out and redevelopment of “Hill Paul”, a landmark building due for demolition, and a waterfront development scheme led by Project Stroud.

The Localism Act was introduced in 2010. So far the community has mounted campaigns against two planning applications by developers.

The Stroud District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) was formed in 2002 and is made up of members from about 30 different organisations. There are public, private, voluntary and community groups represented who have a diverse wealth of local knowledge and expertise. The LSP's purpose is to improve the quality of life for local people by encouraging effective partnership and sharing information between those people who can directly and indirectly bring about change.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board is the organisation that exists to conserve and enhance the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Established in 2004, the board is the only organisation to look after the AONB as a whole and is a statutory body created as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000. The act allowed for the creation of boards to oversee large AONBs that overstep county boundaries and cannot easily be hosted by one local authority.

Ruskin Mill College students range from 16 - 25 and are either residential or day students with complex behaviour and learning difficulties. These can include autistic spectrum disorders, epilepsy, dyspraxia, Asperger's, speech, communication difficulties and mental health issues.

The WAS Way – named after the idea behind the project of a circular Walk Around Stroud - was established by Andy Read and Debbie Hewitt by signing and promoting existing footpaths that together create a continuous trail – further information can be found on Stroud Town Council's and the website and the Long Distance Walkers Association Websites.

DIY Drawing Machine, made from DIY components – paint trays and rollers, a take on landscape painting as well as hi-tech machines.

The episode was broadcast on 4th March, 2012.

Weave Advisory Group: membership included representatives from Stroud Chamber of Trade, Stroud Common Wealth, Stroud Town Council, Stroud Valleys Project and Walking the Land.

Neighbourhood Plans, were introduced as a new tier of planning which sits below local planning. If they choose to, your community can now prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which would sit alongside the local plan as part of the development plan for your area.

Space, Place and Practice: Established by artists Suze Adams and Michele Whiting, Space Place Practice is a research station through which visual artists and multi-disciplinary researchers meet to engage with issues of space, place and site. Its dimensions are produced through interaction and critical discourse which act as points of departure for individual practice and collaborative projects. Together we
challenge and explore the interstices between embodied practice and theoretical enquiry, and there is no hierarchical distinction between making, thinking, writing, and doing. Our expanded practice is expressed in image, word and action. Our primary concern is practice-led research that examines the contested and problematic concept of 'place' and our attention is firmly focused on critical analysis within visual and textual (re)presentation of the experiential landscape.

79 The early stages of my research project overlapped with a paid contract with Natural England to develop the use of Landscape Character Assessments across the South West of England, as a part of delivering the ELC.

80 The Stroud Nature Consortium is a loose associations of local organisations co-ordinated by Stroud Nature, including: Gloucestershire Bee Association, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, the Museum in the Park, Stratford Park Management Committee, Stroud District Council, Stroud Town Council, Walking the Land.

81 Stroud food hub refers to a number of local food projects in and around Stroud, such as previously cited Stroud Community Agriculture and StroudCo.

82 First Friday River Walks: for the duration of the River Map project, First Friday Walks focused on the River Frome and its tributaries. Participating artists were given a briefing and a core group of us met regularly to discuss progress and to liaise with Marl Connelly of the Cotswold Conservation Board. Members of this core group were Tara Downs, Lucy Guenot, Kel Portman, Valerie Coffin-Price (Ffin) and myself.

83 Figure xx. Affective Landscapes in Literature, Art and Everyday Life Memory, Place and the Senses

84 Open Space is a group discussion technique whereby there is no preset agenda and items for discussion come from the floor.

85 Wildlife grazing is an approach to landscape and habitat management which combines supporting locally produced meat with future proofing biodiversity in the face of such threats as climate change.

86 Folly Wood is a three and a half acre larch plantation over-planted into ancient semi-natural woodland. It is just beyond the urban edge of Stroud on the east facing slopes of the Slad Valley and in the Cotswold AONB. The larch was planted about 90 years ago and is pretty well unmanaged, with many trees covered in ivy and some dead or dying.

87 There are constraints regards felling which is controlled by the Forestry Commission. There is also landscape planning policy relating to the AONB, which aims to conserve, enhance and increase native woodlands. Any change of use from woodland would require planning permission.

88 Stroud Woodland Co-operative was established as Community Benefit Society.

89 Good from Woods was a lottery funded research let and co-ordinated by the Silvanus Trust between 2010 and 2014, in partnership with Plymouth University, the Woodland Trust, Neroche Scheme and Forest Research. A team of four members of the Stroud Woods Co-op researched a case study focusing on the benefits of membership of a woodland co-op. See http://www.goodfromwoods.co.uk/case-studies-2/

90 The principles are set out in the Caring for Folly Wood Plan, Appendix 8

91 Forest School Camps is a voluntary, national educational charity. Forest Schools, which ran in the 1930s, drew its philosophy from progressive educators, from the Woodcraft movements and the Native Americans, from Quakers and others. Special importance was attached to the experience of boys and girls, children and adults, learning to work and play together close to nature.

92 Ash Die Back, Chalara dieback of ash (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus), is a disease of ash trees caused by a fungus called Hymenoscyphus fraxineus. (The fungus was previously called Chalara fraxinea, hence the name of the disease. Chalara causes leaf loss, crown dieback and bark lesions in affected trees. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal, either directly, or indirectly by weakening the tree to the point where it succumbs more readily to attacks by other pests or pathogens, especially Armillaria fungi, or honey fungus. The first signs of Chalara in Britain were found in a nursery in Buckinghamshire in February 2012. Improved monitoring techniques continue to uncover new finds. As we continue to monitor the situation around the country we expect to continue to find more new cases. (Source: Forestry Commission, 2015. Available at: http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara)