Art Dialogues with a Place

An approach towards the empathetic learning of estates re-made

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Abstract

Lived experience is a missing knowledge within the hierarchical knowledge structures that inform housing regeneration practice. This thesis argues that without it, misinformation and misrepresentations of place narratives can manifest, leading to residents feeling stigmatised, unheard and displaced. I discuss outsider place knowledge as the dominant regeneration knowledge and examine the value of dialogical art-based methods that provide insight and understanding of the inside: lived experience.

The research aim of developing and defining spatial dialogical art practice as a method to learn lived experience is explored through an iterative and reflective practice-as-research methodology. A key pillar in my research is Re:connections, a curatorial project situated in Lee Bank, Birmingham, a former 1960s council estate that was part of large-scale housing regeneration. The project explores different dialogical approaches with residents through a series of artist-led activities and events. Methods of reflexive practice are applied to assess shifting perceptions and the development of place empathy.

In exploring the value of lived experience to housing regeneration practice, I investigate the hierarchical structures of knowledge that inform housing regeneration in England. These structures are set out in planning and design documents such as Government White Papers, Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents, masterplans and Design and Access Statements. I assess the outsider knowledge and outsider perceptions that informed the regeneration decisions of Lee Bank. Alongside this, I explore theories of place and how we experience it, with literature drawing on disciplines from human geography, philosophy, urbanism and anthropology. I investigate the unique role of art in providing opportunities to learn lived experience, and I consider critical writing on historical and contemporary socially engaged practice in assessing spatial dialogical art as a curatorial practice.

My research has led me to define spatial dialogical art practice as a framework that enables the embodied art dialogue. Facilitated by artists, the embodied art dialogues are activated through the playful and creative verbal and non-verbal, human-to-human, and human-to-non-human dialogical exchanges within a place. I have found that the embodied art dialogues create the empathetic learning space: a physical and philosophical space within

which established place narratives are disrupted, and the multifarious, layered and shifting place rhythms are learned. As such, it is a method that provides new insights and understanding into learning lived experience of housing estates. The empathetic learning space, therefore, creates an ambition to disrupt and rebalance knowledge hierarchies in regeneration practice policy possible.

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This is practice based PhD research, the practice element of which is represented by my website: www.jenny-peevers.co.uk in addition to the critical interrogation of it integrated throughout this thesis.

Preface

Was I othering? Being an outsider looking in

As a child, I remember the imposing tower blocks at the edge of the Lee Bank Estate, a council estate in inner-city Birmingham. They seemed only feet away from me, sat in the backseat of my mother's car as she drove us into the city centre of Birmingham for a shopping trip. It also seemed worlds away from my privileged, spacious home environment fourteen miles away in leafy Warwickshire. Years later, I was living in a rented house as a young single parent with my five-year-old daughter. The house was being sold so had to move out. I applied for social housing and was offered was a council flat in a tower block in the St Matthews council estate. The estate was polled as the roughest area in Leicester[1]. My perception was that the Leicester City Council's offer brought with it isolation, and a future living alongside trouble. I turned down the flat, choosing another precarious and expensive rented accommodation instead. The St. Matthews estate was well known anecdotally as the 'bad' area, yet, I had only seen it from the outside and I didn't know anyone who lived there. The flat should have represented hopefulness, a stable home and low rent, yet to me it offered hopelessness. Was I othering the estate and those who lived there? There was plentiful anecdotal and statistical knowledge that would support my perception, but was that how it felt from the inside?

Several years later I moved to Birmingham. My place of work was the Arts Council England Birmingham Office, located on an adjoining street to the Lee Bank area. The statistical and anecdotal reputation of the Lee Bank Estate was similar to St Matthew's Estate. It was one of the most notorious estates in Birmingham[2]. At the time I started working at the Arts Council office, 2004, the area was four years into a large-scale regeneration project and much of the 1960's housing had been demolished. The tower blocks I remembered as a child were empty and about to be demolished and the area was being talked of by urban designers and planners in Birmingham City Council in hopeful terms. It seemed Lee Bank was no longer Lee Bank. A housing association now owned the estate and named the five

[1] Foxes Talk: In your opinion where is the roughest area in Leicester? (2011) Available at: https://www.foxestalk.co.uk/topic/71868-roughest-area-of-leicester/page/3/ [Accessed 11 April 2019]
[2] Birmingham Mail, (2013) The Worst Slum in Europe – Ten years on. Available at: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/local-news/birmingham-park-central-ten-years-6173991 [Accessed 03 June 2020]

estates being regenerated as ‘Attwood Green’. There was a large banner on the hoarding with the name ‘Park Central’, the name of the masterplan they were developing in the Lee Bank area. There seemed to be a race to erase the Lee Bank I remembered.

My role at Arts Council England was ‘Public Art and Built Environment Officer’. In my first year, I assessed a large funding application from Optima Housing Association for a public art programme located in Lee Bank. The application was successful, and I represented the Arts Council in several meetings with the curator and commissioned artists. The project required the commissioned artists (Jorge Orta, Lucy Orta and Nayan Kulkarni) to develop a concept and plan for artworks across the five estates of Attwood Green, allowing for a possible unifying identity for Optima estates.[3] Whilst the artists concepts and interventions were meaningful, and shaped public space in a positive way for the residents, the project was focused on a top-down vision of Optima and Birmingham City Council: that of making a new place. I didn’t learn anything about the lived experience of the residents who were living through a physical transformation. I remember talking to many outsiders about the redevelopment; the new park; the new sculpture in the park, but not about the experience of living there. I witnessed the completion of new houses, new apartments, and new parks. The area began to be repopulated with new tenants and homeowners.

As I discuss in Chapter 3: About A Place, the Park Central Masterplan, part of the Attwood Green regeneration area, was a high-profile redevelopment and seen as the blueprint for regeneration practice. I was curious about what it might be like to live in a place that, in the eyes of the outside world, became a new place. Through this curiosity the notion of insider and outsider perceptions became very apparent, and this has been a thread throughout my PhD research. Even though I was physically inside the area regularly, and had knowledge about its regeneration, I felt very much an outsider, and the knowledge I had acquired couldn’t answer the question of ‘what’s it like to live there?’. My PhD research has focused my curatorial practice on exploring ways that acknowledge and value inside knowledges.

3 Kulkarni, N., Sites, site specificity, temporality and the temporary: Attwood Green Regeneration, Birmingham 2004 to 2008, in Ixia, Desirable Places: The Contribution of Artists to Creating Spaces for Public Life.

Introduction

I have been involved in art projects that are situated within and about a place for over twenty years. As a curator, facilitator, or participant, and even as an administrator of funding. Whatever situated art project I've been involved with, I've noticed that I've been drawn in. It's almost as if I've fallen a little in love with that place. The place could be an abandoned post-industrial area, a housing estate, or a beautiful park. The involvement could be an hour, or a year. I don't remember a project where, when an artist has uncovered of new meanings about a place or people within it, or created a space for others to explore, I have not wanted to listen more; notice more; to understand more. It is that change of relationship I have had with place through art, and the new meanings that its created that has led me to pursue this PhD. My PhD research, in return, has found an explanation to my changed relationship with a place: place empathy.

In the preface I illustrate my deep interest in the shifting meanings of place and how it's perceived. In this introduction I provide a brief political and ideological background context that has shaped my curatorial practice and provided opportunities for me to explore that interest through it.

Art and place: a background context

My first employed role as a Fine Art BA graduate was in a community arts centre in 1996 as an arts administrator. The national lottery had recently been established (in 1994) by the Conservative Government under Prime Minister John Major. Through it, the arts were identified as a "good cause". The arts lottery represented the most significant change in arts funding since WWII (Creigh-Tyte, S., and Gallimore, J., 2000), and through it, arts venues and art projects grew and multiplied. The 'New Labour' Government were elected in 1997 and put forward a policy vision regarding the arts and their social impact. Reports, commissioned by Labour, made the case for the transformative role of the arts in areas

including education, criminal justice, health, and social and capital regeneration[4]. This political vision shaped the strategies of government-funded agencies such as Arts Council England, which encouraged arts initiatives that served the public good. An influential publication commissioned by Arts Council England was François Matarasso's Use or Ornament (Matarasso, 1997), advocating for the instrumental use of the arts. These new pathways for the arts provided the context for my role as the Arts Development Officer for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) between 2000 and 2004. What was established as a radical practice, community arts, was becoming part of established community development and as such supported the careerism of the arts administrator. I acted as the interface and broker between the arts and several other council departments and organisations such as housing and regeneration, young people, education, and health to secure funding for arts projects from non-arts budgets. Arts and regeneration grew in significance due to the large-scale regeneration programmes nationally and locally. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council was embarking on major regeneration projects, and so, through the commissioning of several site-specific art projects in partnership with other departments, I started the beginnings of a 'between space' art and urbanism curatorial practice.

A few years later, with a different job at Arts Council England as Public Art and Built Environment Officer, I undertook an MA in urban design. A question I was asked at my interview was what my motivation to study urban design was. My naive answer was that it was to improve places for people. "*Yes*", my interviewer said, "*urban design is all about people*". Human experience, however, was absent from the MA course content, and absent in my subsequent employment as an urban designer at an architects practice. Within the design processes and decision-making structures, there was no opportunity to consider the lives of the people whose lives we would be impacting. Feeling alien inside the border of the architectural discipline, I navigated my practice back to the between space of art

[4] The Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) commissioned reports evidencing the social value of the arts. Two key reports were: Robinson, K., All Our Futures, was influential in the recognition of the value of the arts in education, and Policy Action Team 10, 1999, The Contribution of Sports and the Arts, HMSO.

practice and urban practice, where I felt better placed to influence a socially considered arts and urbanism practice. Through many arts projects I've curated, there has been deep insight experienced by the participants, artists, myself as curator and the handful of grassroots community practitioners who were involved. The scope for art initiatives within development projects, however, was often reduced during the process and always considered less significant than other political and economic factors by those in power and making decisions. The unequal 'collaborations' between curators and artists and regeneration practitioners had been a long-standing source of frustration, not least because I would engage residents and witness generous and insightful contributions, only for them to be ignored, or worse, manipulated by the decision makers. My PhD doctoral research has, years later, grown out of this frustration.

The PhD journey

My motivation for undertaking a PhD exploring the missing knowledge of lived experience was because of my role curating socially engaged art projects, and the deep insight of lived experience that the projects have provided. I was keen to initially understand the value of the knowledge and experience gained from art projects, and to also consider ways of sharing the knowledge gathered to decision makers in a meaningful way. Examples of projects I've curated with a focus on lived experience include This is Dines Green[5]. I engaged local people in Dines Green, a housing estate in Worcester, to explore different ways residents can occupy and create their own value from the indoor and outdoor spaces that existed. Many residents felt there weren't opportunities to meet socially, so we (a group of residents and myself) started the Dines Green Supper Club in the local community centre. As I write this, the supper club has continued, several years after my involvement. Another project, Bostin Chats[6], was a creative consultation project in Sandwell. It was commissioned by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Public Health, who felt that there were marginalised groups who didn't respond to traditional surveys. I worked with four artists to prompt conversations with different groups: refugees and asylum seekers; people

[5] This is Dines Green, a WERK project, 2013. Available at: http://www.werk.org.uk/projects/this-is-dines-green. [Accessed on 1 August 2021]
[6] Bostin Chats, 2015, a Creative Health CIC project, commissioned by Sandwell Public Health.

with learning disabilities; people with early onset dementia, and people who identify as having poor mental health. The artists facilitated a space for the residents to reflect and talk about what they valued about their area. The knowledge of resident's relationships with their place was deep, moving and insightful, and challenged some of the council's assumptions. I doubt the project impacted any council decisions though. My final example is Longbridge Public Art Project. I was commissioned by WERK[7]who devised and curated a comprehensive contemporary art project over five years to "*humanise the regeneration of Longbridge*" (WERK), the site of the former car factory. I started conversations with residents through supper clubs. The conversations between different resident groups focused on their personal memories and what was important to them, and what they felt their relationship was to Longbridge. Whilst the project was of value (and again, a community group that is still active emerged from the supper clubs), if the supper clubs took place with regeneration practitioners before any decisions were made about Longbridge regeneration plans, I cannot help but think the new development may have considered the existing residents more thoughtfully.

My PhD research began with a straightforward idea of applying a form of socially engaged art, a dialogue-based art practice, to increase understanding about the lived experience of a place that had undergone physical transformation through regeneration. For reasons set out in the preface, I selected Lee Bank as a location. In addition to witnessing the regeneration personally, Lee Bank is one of many examples nationally where 1960's council estates are regenerated. Lee Bank was one of the first and highest profile, as evidenced in Chapter 1: About a Place. Attwood Green, the regeneration area encompassing Lee Bank, became a blueprint of how to regenerate council estates. Attwood Green has been written about as a case study for several national bodies, including the Government as recently as 2016[8]. So, whilst I struggled to find any knowledge about inside

[7] Longbridge Public Art Project, a WERK project from 2012 – 2017. Available at: http://www.werk.org.uk/projects/longbridge-public-art-project [Accessed on 1 August 2021]

[8] Lee Bank, also referred to as Attwood Green (the name given to the regeneration of five estates including Lee Bank) or Park Central (the name of Crest Nicholson's masterplan for Lee Bank) was a case study in the Joshua Rowntree Foundation publication, Creating and Sustaining Mixed Income Communities: A Good Practice Guide (JRF, 2006); the Homes and Communities Academy considered Attwood Green a case study about Skills and Knowledge for Sustainable Communities (ESRC/HCA, 2009), the regeneration project is included as a National Housing Federation case study (NHF, n.d.). and as a Government case study for Estate Regeneration (DCLG, 2016)

lived experience, there has been no shortage of outsider perceptions and knowledge about Lee Bank.

I did not perceive my research practice to be a catalyst to change any aspect of Lee Bank or change residents relationship with it, and therefore separated my practice from that of art activism, an intention that dominates much socially engaged practice that defines itself as dialogical. I perceived the intervention to be a method of inquiry without judgement of what that might influence. This initial position was intentional. Much critique of the role of art and socially engaged practice (Bishop, 2012; Kwon, 2004) was tangled with ethics and the social intentions of the artist or curator either being well-intentioned but imposed at best, and at worse misplaced, uniformed, and open to manipulation by developers for marketing gain. My purpose, therefore, wasn't placemaking, or a critique of the physical outcome of the regeneration, but rather to understand how it is experienced and to provide a method that could be of value to regeneration practitioners.

Aims and objectives

My research questions are: How can the lived experience of a place be learned by insiders and outsiders through spatial dialogical art practice? What are the defining qualities of spatial dialogical art practice that provide ways of learning lived experience? And finally, what is the value of learning lived experience to housing regeneration practice? Through an iterative research process of reflection and adjustment, I clarified my aim: To develop a spatial dialogical art practice that seeks to learn lived experience as a housing regeneration knowledge. To achieve that aim, I worked towards my objectives:

- To define the characteristics of a spatial dialogical art practice as a method of learning lived experience
- To assess why lived experience, as a missing knowledge in housing regeneration practice, is valuable
- To examine how lived experience can be learned by insiders and outsiders through spatial dialogical art practice
- To develop a curatorial practice framework as an approach towards an ethical learning of lived experience for insiders and outsiders of a place

Thesis structure

Chapter 1: About a Place introduces a theoretical framework, drawing on the work of Doreen Massey, Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Tim Ingold, Kim Dovey and Colin MacFarlane among others. I define place as fluid, heterogeneous and layered narratives and imaginations. The chapter analyses how the phenomenon of outsideness and insideness (Relph,1976), along with complex issues of power, class and agency, translates into multi-layered perceptions of a place. I interrogate the myths and misrepresentations commonly held about residents living in social housing in the UK, of which the 'council estate' is perhaps the most stigmatised. I discuss the pervasive impact of societal perceptions of social housing in the autobiographical writing of Lynsey Hanley (2017) and Darren McGarvey (2017) alongside accounts, reports and surveys of insider and outsider perceptions of council estates either before, in the process of, or post-regeneration. I examine elements of a stigmatised perception present in discussions by developers, planners and policy makers relating to Lee Bank.

The chapter outlines the existing housing regeneration knowledge structures as fixed and hierarchical. I consider the absence of lived experience through narratives of decision-makers, including reports and evaluations about regenerated places and question why the people who experience a place at its deepest level, its inhabitants, are either not included or have not contributed to those narratives. In this chapter, I introduce Lee Bank as the location of my practice-based research. As a former 1960s council estate, I set out the outsider perceptions and narratives about it before and after regeneration, and recognise the absence of lived experience in the formation of that knowledge. In this chapter, I consider the unique qualities that art practice has that can provide opportunities to address the missing knowledge of lived experience within housing regeneration.

In Chapter 2: Curating Dialogues I define my curatorial practice as being situated within a transdisciplinary space between art, social practice, and urban practice. My curatorial role as that of a quiet carer of dialogues and a host of the dialogic art space, and I situate my practice within a theoretical framework and field of socially engaged art practice.

I set out my methodological approaches and methods that I have applied throughout my research. My research aim is to develop a spatial dialogical art practice, as a method of learning lived experience, through a curatorial framework. My research methodology in

working towards that aim reflects an iterative, cyclical process, where different methods are tried and rejected or adapted. As practice-based research, my curatorial practice has been central to the development of the framework. Drawing on Robin Nelson's Practice as Research praxis of 'know-how', 'know-what', 'know-that' (Nelson, 2013) and Hazel Smith and Roger Dean's iterative cyclic web model (Smith, H., and Dean, R., 2009) I set out the interplay between the different research modes of theory, practice, and reflection through my methods.

Chapter 3: In Dialogue follows the stages of my practice-based element of the research, my curatorial project Re:connections. Through the project I developed a curatorial framework for a spatial dialogical art practice that explores an approach to how the lived experience of a regenerated area can be learned as housing regeneration knowledge. I set out the two parts of the Re:connections project and reflect on how my curatorial practice framework has developed in response. Re:connections (part one) examine four different artists approaches, prompting dialogue with residents through their individual practices that explored lived experience in different ways. I evaluate how lived experience is learned through the different forms of art dialogue. Re:connections (part two) sets out how the evaluation of part one has shaped it and shaped the development of the theoretical framework and the curatorial framework. Part two of the project comprised a series of artist-led walks with residents, with the aim of facilitating a shared and embodied dialogical experience for the residents and artists. The walks were followed by three interactive installations called Assembling Dialogues as an approach to reflecting on the multisensory dialogues gathered during the walks. Two Assembling Dialogues events were presented within the Lee Bank area to residents who participated in the walks, and one event to regeneration practitioners as an exploration into sharing and learning lived experience through interacting with the installation. The curatorial framework is rooted in dialogical and socially engaged ideas, drawn from the concepts of writers including Grant Kester (2004), Suzanne Lacy (1995), Claire Bishop (2012), Jane Rendell (2006) and John Dewey (2005). Through the different artists approaches I define distinct forms of art dialogue and consider what form of knowledge about lived experience can be learned through the different forms.

The findings of Re:connections (part one) and (part two), underpinned by the theoretical framework, are set out in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing: Towards the Learning of Lived Experience. This chapter explores defining elements, that have emerged from the research,

that are key to understanding lived experiences of place. A key concept is that of placeness: how different states of place perception determine different qualities of being in a place, from outsider and insider perceptions. I have considered residents and regeneration professionals perceptions of Lee Bank in relation to Edward Relph's concept of insideness and outsideness (Relph, 1976). In doing so I have discovered differences to Relph's categories and have expanded Relph's forms of placeness to reflect the place perceptions that have emerged from the Re:connections project. Another quality that emerged from my research was place rhythm. I interrogate place rhythms that have emerged from Re:connections with Lefebvre's theory of Rhythmanalysis (Lefebvre, 2004) and Dewey's concept of stepping in and out of rhythm as a form of endurance (Dewey, 2005). By doing so, it was possible to observe the different layers, scale, speeds, and forms of place rhythm, and learn the complexities of the multifarious, human and non-human, lived experiences in a place. I consider the physical and philosophical space that the artists create to enable insiders and outsiders to participate in spatial art dialogues to learn lived experience.

In the concluding chapter I define that dialogical space and consider its potential to contribute to future regeneration projects. I reflect on my research findings and consider how they address my research questions, and where they fall short. I set out the curatorial framework for a spatial dialogical art practice and share my vision through an imagined manifesto for the empathetic learning of lived experience.

This research provides new contributions to knowledge through proposing methods of learning lived experience through spatial dialogical art practice. I have provided a glossary of terms that have emerged from my research, that contribute new ways of considering place knowledge in housing regeneration practice. This research will be of value to housing regeneration practitioners by providing opportunities for those practitioners to develop empathy and to learn the inside knowledge of lived experience.

I set out a curatorial practice guide to the empathetic learning of regenerated housing estates through my research website: www.jenny-peevers.co.uk. This guide is a further contribution to housing regeneration practice by introducing methods of learning lived experience as knowledge in housing regeneration practice.

Chapter 1

About a Place

This chapter sets out the different, contested knowledges about place and space and considers how lived experience of place is expressed within these knowledges. I consider how place is defined, examining the theories of Doreen Massey, Lefebvre and Soja among others, and how the epistemological position adopted by a definition of place informs how it is constructed. It is through this theoretical framework that the importance of lived experience to place meaning becomes apparent.

The practice element of my research, the spatial dialogical art project Re:connections, is about a place: Lee Bank in inner-city Birmingham, UK. This chapter introduces the making and remaking of Lee Bank. I consider the established outsider knowledges about it and question how those knowledges consider the lived experience of Lee Bank. I also consider how outsider perceptions can impact people living in a place. I cite other examples of how voices of lived experience conflict with the established, structural knowledge of places, thus establishing my argument for the value of learning lived experience of places as part of the process of housing regeneration. I examine the contribution that art practice can make in gathering and representing different place knowledges and consider how a transdisciplinary curatorial practice can establish a 'between space' that brings the two disciplines of art and urban practice, and their dialogues about space and place, together through a spatial dialogic art practice.

1.1 Critical Dialogues about space and place

Defining Place

How I define 'place' has been critical to how my thesis 'art dialogues with a place'. Concepts of space and place differ between the disciplines of philosophy, human geography, urban theory and urban practice and art practice, and these concepts reflect different epistemological positions. My definition, and therefore epistemological approach, has shaped the aims and objectives, as well as the outcome, of the research.

Human Geographer Doreen Massey considers space and place as relational (Massey, 2005) and asserted that how the concept of space or place is formulated influences the lens with which the social world, and how to effect the transformation of it, is understood. (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011: 299) Different theoretical positions present place as either fixed or fluid; and perceived from inside or outside. It became apparent that the knowledge structures of housing regeneration practice conceive place as fixed, and knowledge is perceived from an outside perspective. This contrasts with my position of place as fluid, and my approach to knowledge gathering as 'inside' place. It is possible that this epistemological divergence has determined the absence of lived experience as a knowledge within housing regeneration practice. The spatial theories of Massey formed a key thread through my research. She argues against the dominant concept of space as closed and abstract, and suggests that "Places might be understood as 'porous networks of social relations' (Massey, 1994: 121). Massey presents three propositions for an alternative approach to understanding space: She suggests that space can be understood as 'the product of interrelations'; as "*the sphere of the possibility of existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality*"; and that space is "*always under construction...never finished; never closed*." (2005: 9). She suggests that space can be imagined as a "simultaneity of stories-so-far" (2005:9), and places, then, "*collections of those stories*." (2005:140).

Massey's work challenged the dominant essentialist theory of place, from which the earlier theories of human geographers Edward Relph (1976) and Yi Fu Tuan (1977) are situated. Relph (1996) describes places as "*essentially focuses of intention, usually having a fixed location and possessing features which persist in an identifiable form*" (1976: 43). Tuan describes place as a static concept, questioning the ability to perceive a 'sense of place' if that place is constantly changing in movement. Whereas time, he suggests, is a directional or circular movement. He believes what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value (Tuan, 1977:6). Tuan considers space as "*that which allows movement*" and place as a pause, "*...each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place*." (1977: 6). Place, he suggests, is an organised world of meaning, and essentially static (1977: 179). The use of the term 'place' in housing regeneration practice is rooted in this notion of place that is static with a fixed identity an essentialist concept of 'sense of place'. Massey argues against the collective idea of the 'sense of place'. She instead believes that the 'throwntogetherness' (2005: 140)

of previously unrelated stories can provide a sense of wonder, but also a challenge of negotiation (2005:141). The idea of place as a site of negotiation becomes pertinent to a place undergoing regeneration. A position that challenges the external power forces of regeneration practice and as such, one that my practice aligns with.

Inside and Outside

The perspective from which place is perceived also determines meaning. A place perceived as an outsider, with no lived experience, is a dominant position of housing regeneration practitioners, indeed most urban practitioners. Place meaning, however, is from an inside perspective. Philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty defined a phenomenological position of place. He believed that the first point of being able to know a place is through being 'in a place'. Inside and outside of space is, to philosopher Gaston Bachelard, a key dialectic of space. His consideration of space is primarily focused on the house, and he talks about the inside and outside as a relationship between the intimate and the immense (Bachelard, 2014). Architectural critic and writer, Kim Dovey, considers the dialectic between a particular place and its other, between home and journey, formed by movement inside and outside. He claims that the inside is understood because we have been outside (Dovey, 2016). However, Dovey's position is plausible only if the one perceiving a place has lived experience of 'inside'. An outsider cannot understand the inside from entering it from outside.

Artist Lucy Lippard considers meaning of place as from the inside. She defines place as "*a portion of land/town/cityscape seen from the inside, the resonance of a specific location that is known and familiar... [Place is] a layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there."* (Lippard, 1997: 7). Lippard's definition closely aligns with Massey's concept of place as relational. By considering both place and space as lived, ethnographer Sarah Pink believes that it then follows that the phenomenon of human perception needs to be taken account of to understand either of them (Pink, 2015: 36). And therefore, by not understanding human perception of place, it is not possible to understand it.

Edward Relph made an influential contribution to understanding place perspective from inside or outside (Relph, 1976). Relph identifies several levels of intensity with which

perceptions of insideness and outsideness. Whilst recognising they are not precise, he believed that they represented more or less the ways that place was experienced. (1976: 50). While this early concept of place identity was an essentialist approach, his conceptual framework of insideness and outsideness has nonetheless been a useful thread in my theoretical framework. His theory suggests that the different intensities with which place is experienced could contribute to how place knowledge is formed, and how decisions on the re-making of it, are shaped. For example, in Relph's definition of 'existential outsideness,' he states that it: … "*involves a self-conscious and reflective uninvolvement, an alienation from people and places…"* (1976: 51). At the other end of the scale is 'existential insideness'. For Relph, this is defined by "*knowing implicitly that this place is where you belong."* (1976: 55). In Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing, I present my developments of Relph's concepts that emerged from my research project Re:connections.

Place as assemblage

The early work of philosopher Henri Lefebvre and later, Edward Soja, offer a humanist approach to understanding place and space, considering the everyday, social relations in the production of space. Their contribution brings different ways of producing space and knowledges of space together and can provide insight into insider and outsider knowledge. As such, the theories offer an approach to considering lived experience as a knowledge within housing regeneration practice. I consider their interrelated concepts as an assemblage of meanings, similar to Massey's simultaneity of stories-so-far (2005:9). I also draw on urban critic and writer Kim Dovey's concept of place as assemblage.

Lefebvre describes the representation of space as three concepts dialectically related to each other: Spatial practice, or 'perceived space', is the everyday social life that Lefebvre associates between the "daily reality (daily routine)", and the "urban reality", the networks which connect places for work, private life and leisure (Lefebvre, 1991: 38); Representations of space, or 'conceived space', are what he considers to be the space of planners, urbanists, social engineers and "*a certain type of artist with a scientific bent*" (1991: 38). Lefebvre states that the conceived space (is a "system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs" (1991: 39) and so could be understood to be more distant, produced or "represented" (1991: 39) by outsiders. Representational space or 'lived space' is the "space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate." (1991: 39).

Soja draws heavily on Henri Lefebvre's representations of space. He refers to the 'trialectics of spatiality' (Soja, 1996: 53). Soja describes 'Firstspace' as "*fixed mainly on the concrete materiality of spatial forms*" (1996: 10), the physical elements that can be represented on a map; 'Secondspace' is the mental perspective, conceived in ideas about space. It is the space of the imagination. 'Thirdspace' brings the physical and the mental together, expanding their scope. Soja describes 'Thirdspace' as the "*real-and-imagined*" places (1996: 11); "*I define Thirdspace as an-other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality–historicality–sociality*." (Soja,1996: 57).

Lefebvre's spatial triad and Soja's trialectics of space have underpinned my idea of place assemblage and opened up conceptual ideas to me about sharing place perspectives through dialectic exchange and continuous building of place knowledge. Kim Dovey's theory of 'place as assemblage' (Dovey, 2010) also brings together the experiential and the materiality of place and was influential to how I visually and metaphorically considered sharing of outside and inside knowledges.

> *…the 'street' is an assemblage of material things, flows and spatial connections that co-exist with representational narratives, urban design codes and intensities. The senses or meanings of the place are neither found within the material urban form nor are they simply added to it, rather they are integral to the assemblage. (Dovey, 2010: 17)*

For Dovey, assemblage theory offers the potential to address the separation of experience and materiality in design thinking. I bring Dovey's, Lefebvre's and Soja's theories into the realisation of 'Assembling Dialogues' as a form of representing place in Chapter 3: In Dialogue.

1.2 The remaking of estates

Estates as 'other'

The idea of an inner-city council estate has often provoked a strong set of perceptions from outsiders. For many insiders, the outside perception has made them feel stigmatised. A report called 'Overcoming the stigma of social housing' was published by the London School of Economics (LSE). It reveals that nine in ten social tenants feel that the media portrays a stereotype of tenants. It points out that the public often overestimates the number of social housing tenants who are unemployed, when the actual statistics are that 70% of social tenants are in work or retired, with only 7% unemployed, and the remaining 22% unable to work. The term 'sink estates'[9], is used to describe council owned inner-city social housing, typically built in the 1960's and early 1970's. Both Labour and Conservative governments have presented policies to regenerate council estates as the panacea to perceived social and economic failings of these estates (Jones and Evans, 2013).

Urban geographer, Tom Slater states that the category of 'sink estate' was "*...invented by journalists, amplified by free market think tanks and converted into policy doxa (common sense) by politicians in the United Kingdom*" (Slater, 2018: 877). He believes the term, which signifies social housing estates that allegedly create "*poverty, family breakdown, worklessness, welfare dependency, antisocial behaviour and personal irresponsibility*" (Slater, 2018: 877) is used to justify government social housing policies that have themselves resulted in "*considerable social suffering and intensified dislocation*" (2018: 877). Glendinning and Muthesius suggest that the physical structures of council estates were often well-liked (Glendinning and Muthesius, 1994, 323). They claim it was when a housing surplus had been created in 1968, that problem families were moved into council estates and those who could, moved out of them. Glendinning and Methesius suggest that "*with good management, the great majority of high-rise blocks are great places to live, well-liked by those who live in them*." (Hall, 2014: 271) A former tenant commented "It all seems such a terrible waste – they were perfectly good houses if the council had only bothered to look after them, rather than using them as a dumping ground. (Glendinning and Muthesius, 1994: 323)

9 Lees, L., (2016) Cameron's Sink Estate Strategy Comes at a Human Cost, The Conversation. Available at: https://theconversation.com/camerons-sink-estate-strategy-comes-at-a-human-cost-53358 [Accessed 20 July 2020]

Two different works of autobiographical literature share narratives about the lived experience of council housing estates: Darren McGarvey's 'Poverty Safari' (McGarvey, 2017) and Lynsey Hanley's 'Estates' (Hanley, 2017). Both books lay bare the impact of feeling misunderstood and unheard by outsiders. McGarvey writes about growing up in a council estate in Pollock, Glasgow. He describes how his acute anxiety and emotional stress, formed from his troubled and abusive upbringing, became the prism with which he perceived the world. McGarvey argues this was one of the most overlooked factors of the lived experience of poverty (2017: 79). He states that in post-war regeneration, planners assumed all that people needed were decent quality homes, and considered high-rise building programmes the solution to the housing problem. Later, he argues, it was realised that people also need to connect to their community and have a sense of ownership. They learned that areas of high population, where there is no connection or ownership "...*can quickly fall into physical and psychological dereliction*" (2017: 151)

> *If only there was a way of getting the people who shape the narrative, to check in with the people at the bottom of the food chain every now and then. It might interrupt the steady stream of assumptions many affluent assertions are based on and bring the conversation about society into sync with how society is really being experienced.* (2017: 150)

Hanley, in 'Estates: An Intimate History' (2017), writes of her experience growing up in a 1960s council estate in Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham. For her, living there created "the wall in the head" (2017: 148). The phrase 'council estate' is to society "*a sort of psycho-social bruise. Everyone winces when they hear it.*" (2017: ix) Hanley recalls the fictional character of Vicky Pollard from the comedy 'Little Britain'. "*a wilfully ignorant, fecund, mouthy teenager, could not have been shown to live anywhere else but on a council estate*." (2017: ix) Hanley questions some of the stereotypes of council estates and asks why the initial aim of such housing - to improve the lives of its residents - ended up, in many situations, achieving the opposite (2017). Both McGarvey and Hanley write of their emotional truths of lived experience that challenge misrepresentations and assumptions of housing and planning professionals but are also compounded by them.

There can be opposing inside and outside knowledges. An example is illustrated by the memories of residents of a south London council estate. A TV documentary, Damilola: The Boy Next Door (Channel 4, 2020) is about the friends of Damilola Taylor, a child who was murdered and left to die in the North Peckham Estate in 2000. The estate was in the process of being demolished when Taylor was killed. Taylor's friends, now adults, talk of their memories of Damilola, as well as their life on the estate. Yinka Bokinni, in remembering Damilola, retrieves a library archive of press articles about the North Peckham Estate. The headlines tell of a different reality to hers, where she felt a strong sense of friendship, community, and care. The headlines reported drug crime and violence. One resident of the area recalled his mother made the decision to move out of London to Essex, to what she hoped was a safer life. However, his reality was different: "*I didn't know what racism was until I moved to Essex … and I didn't have my community around me, I didn't have that love*" (2020). The example highlights an individual's lived experience can be in conflict with other experiences. Drugs and violence were a reality on the estate, however, they dominated the narrative and identity of the estate, with other lived experiences left ignored.

Feelings of being misheard and misrepresented have been evident where council house estates are being regenerated. In Birmingham, residents of a council estate at the south edge of Birmingham, in Druids Heath, expressed concern over the council's plans. One resident told a reporter, "*We are not slum people, this is not a slum*". (BBC, 2018) These stories tell of misperceptions, stereotypes, dominant negative identities, and a lack of understanding about the emotional impact systemic poverty has on lived experience. It also illustrates that place perception is fluid and multi-layered. It is possible for opposing narratives to be true.

The making of Lee Bank

Dovey states that "Place-making" is the goal of urban design. "…*the task of place-making is to provide a place of sensory richness, attachment and a deeper meaning based in heritage, character and a shared sense of identity*." (Dovey, 2016: 106). He believes that the concept of place slips between all places, including those considered dangerous or boring, and those places that are valued. Dovey's distinction raises the question of 'valued by who?'. Are those places that are considered boring or dangerous not valued by anyone? His position suggests outsider perception of place. Lee Bank is a useful case

study to consider insider and outsider perceptions because of the strong outsider narrative that was created before the regeneration and after.

My epistemological position is that place and space is relational and fluid (Massey, 2005). Lee Bank, however, has been a site of recurring movement through top-down physical transformation and new meaning. I was curious about how place is perceived in sites of repeated making and re-making. The places that are considered to have a desirable 'sense of place', however, are often perceived as highly desirable and worthy of preserving, whether due to historical or architectural merit or a sense of nostalgia. Examples of housing developments aim to create an illusion of time standing still, such as Poundbury, Dorset[10]. In contrast, for Lee Bank and other inner-city areas occupied by working class and poor people, the forward direction of time is manifest in the physical form, with no desire to preserve or even remember the past. The concept of 'sense of place' is a dominant, essentialist position in urban design practice in the UK[11]. The urban design policy document that shaped housing regeneration practice in the UK since 2000, including Lee Bank is the Urban Task Force, Towards an Urban Renaissance (DETR, 1999). It is unequivocal about the importance of sense of place. *"[Public spaces] are the foundation for public interaction and social integration and provide the sense of place essential to engender civic pride."* (DETR, 1999: 5)

The regeneration in Lee Bank that began in 2000 was the third time the area had been razed to the ground since the industrial revolution and the subsequent explosion of growth of the city of Birmingham. Historian Carl Chinn states that from 1821 to 1871 the population of the city had grown from 106,000 to 343,000 and fuelled a rapid house-building programme (Chinn, 1999). The working classes were housed in back-to-backs. Due to the poor quality construction, and inadequate sanitation, the housing prompted a public health crisis, and they became branded slums. In stages between 1963 and 1967 the Victorian back-to-backs were demolished, and The Lee Bank project was approved. A large

[10] Urban planner Léon Krier was commissioned by HRH Prince Charles to design an urban village, Poundbury in Dorset, based on new urbanism principles (Hardy, 2006). Prince Charles became known for his hostility towards post- modernist architecture and favoured traditional design. However the mock-Georgian facades of Poundbury were considered sentimental, a visual illusion of a nostalgic past (Hardy 2006) and a place that visually seems resistant to the direction of time.

[11] "the layout and landscape design of development should reinforce a sense of place", By Design, (2000) Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice, DETR: 55

council estate was constructed throughout the 1960s with a mixture of housing and high and low-rise tower blocks. Again, due to the speed with which Lee Bank was constructed, the quality of the housing was poor. The area quickly became synonymous with poor housing and social problems.

The re-making of Lee Bank

In 1998, council tenants, along with the tenants of four other council housing estates, voted to transfer housing stock from Birmingham City Council to the non-profit landlord, Optima Community Association, to enable them to manage a budget of approximately £200 million, to redevelop the area once again (Chinn,1999). This time a new name was given, Attwood Green, in an attempt to re-brand the area. However, the name didn't take hold and the area is still called Lee Bank by many of the established residents. So, for a place that has been regenerated three times in 150 years, does it matter to place perception? As I state in this chapter, developers and urban designers seek to establish a 'sense of place' in new developments. However, how do regeneration practitioners consider 'sense of place' when that 'place' is not valued by outsiders? In Chapter 3: In Dialogue, I reflect on the residents and outsiders dialogues regarding the regeneration of the area.

Regular redevelopment is described as problematic by housing policy makers at the time of the Lee Bank redevelopment. The masterplan for the area, designed by Gardner Stewart Architects was called Park Central, and followed the housing policy guidelines set out in the governments document Towards an Urban Renaissance (Urban Task Force, 1999), of sustainable urban developments. Gardner Stewart call the plan 'A Sustainable Masterplan' (Gardner Stewart Architects) (figure 1.1) as a contrast to previous rounds of regeneration of Lee Bank, which they recognised did not result in lasting developments. For sustainable developments, time and endurance is a critical measure of success in redevelopment projects from an outsider, stakeholder perspective.

Figure 1.1: Park Central Masterplan, Gardner Stewart Architects

Outsider place knowledge

Place knowledge in regeneration practice is set out as a hierarchical knowledge structure. Here, I examine the policy and planning guidelines that existed in England in 2000. This knowledge organised, produced, and assessed the output of housing redevelopments, including the redevelopment of the Lee Bank estate in Birmingham. National policy provides the framework for local policy, determined by local authorities, which considers local factors. The local policy informs the priorities and locations for redevelopment within local plans and supplementary planning guidelines. The proposals for new housing developments are considered by local authorities if they align with local plans and supplementary planning guidelines. The proposals are presented as masterplans and knowledge is gathered by urban practitioners, such as urban designers, landscape architects and architects, to inform the masterplan. Traditional ways design practitioners learn about a place are categorised as spatial, social, and environmental, and are presented as text, images, and diagrams. In the process of designing masterplans, a site analysis is carried out. Data is gathered about location, social and historical contexts, legal

matters, environmental factors, and climate components. That knowledge informs the design of the built form, following the guidance set out in policy and planning documents. Planning processes require consultation with the local community prior to submitting for planning permission.

A major policy driver at the beginning of the New Labour Government in 1997 was to improve cities, to identify the causes of urban decline and turn them into places that people want to live in. The Urban Task Force, a select group of high-level professionals and academics from the built environment sector, set out how to achieve this objective in their report: Towards an Urban Renaissance (1999). The concept of sustainable development was a central pillar of the Urban Task Force report, achieved, it states when social, economic and environmental components are balanced. A vision of sustainable development was detailed in the Government's Urban White Paper, Our Towns and Cities: The Future, which aimed to deliver on the Urban Renaissance principles. The White Paper stated that a sustainable development would:

> …*bring together economic, social and environmental measures in a coherent approach to enable people and places to achieve their economic potential; bring social justice, and equality of opportunity: and create places where people want to live and work. (DETR, 2000:8)*

The statement recognises the social element of sustainable communities (Jones and Evans, 2013), and sets an aspiration to improve the lived experience of inhabitants. However, there are no knowledge-gathering processes to consider whether this has been achieved.

Principles of sustainable development follow down to local level through local plans and 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' (SPG) down to a development framework for a specific site. The Birmingham City Council SPG document which sets out standards for sustainable residential development within Birmingham is called 'Places for Living'. The document provides clear principles to which the Urban Task Force panel and knowledge at local government level suggested would achieve sustainable developments (Places for Living, 2001: 3). The SPG is grounded in concepts of high-quality design and well-planned spaces, as set out in Towards an Urban Renaissance. As the process of the redevelopment first

started before the publication of Places for Living, the knowledge that directly shaped the development framework (SPG) for Lee bank was the Urban Task Force report. The aims of Lee Bank redevelopment (renamed Attwood Green) were set out in the Attwood Green SPG:

> *Central Area Estates, Attwood Green as these estates will be known in the future, will be a new and unique place, urban in character, mixed in use and tenure, built to high standards and designed to last well into the new millennium.* (Couch and Denneman, 2000)

Within the document there are several aims focused on 'community' and an improved lived experience for residents, including: "*A stable and balanced community - capable of sustaining a range of facilities and services*", and enhanced leisure, social, health and play facilities. At this point in the development process, a wider partnership of actors became involved. Governance structures for government funded regeneration projects at that time required housing stock and budgets to transfer to private socially rented sector (Jones, P. and Evans, J., 2006: 1497). For this redevelopment Optima Community Association was established by the local government as a private company and registered housing association, leading to greater autonomy in decision making. Optima recruited an architects practice to create a more detailed development document, and once the developers, Crest Nicolson, and property consultants, Grimley, were brought into the Optima partnership team, the Lee Bank area was rebranded 'Park Central' (Jones, P, Evans, J., 2006: 1500) and with Gardner Stewart Architects (GSA) they created the Park Central masterplan. The development process and new masterplan clearly followed Towards an Urban Renaissance principles of sustainable communities such as mixed use, mixed tenure, public private partnerships, with partnership knowledge and marketing priorities focused more sharply on the economic component of the sustainable communities concept. Stewart Dawson of Grimley's stated:

> *Values will go up from a low base…So if you can stay in for the ride as landowner, you get the benefit of increasing receipts…which you and the developer, who is part of this team, know are going to go back into here to be reinvested in…which will help drive values higher.* (Jones and Evans, 2006: 1501)

Urban Geographer Phil Jones argues that a neoliberal ethos has driven housing regeneration since Thatcherism.

> *It was after the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 the belief that the state should not be the sole driver of the redevelopment of cities. The private sector was encouraged to invest, with the state intervening to help create the market conditions to encourage the private sector to get involved.* (Jones, Evans, 2013: 14)

The Park Central masterplan followed the concept of sustainable communities, as stated above, and was divided into twelve zones of development to include housing, commercial, education and community uses, and green spaces. For each zone a Design and Access Statement (DAS) was submitted to the local authority for planning consent by the development team. The governance and design principles set out in the Towards the Urban Renaissance report were all included in the Park Central approach: there were design competitions to raise standards of architectural design; public-private partnerships; private investment and community representation in the Optima Community Association Stakeholder group. Planning processes require consultation with the local community prior to submitting for planning permission, however, as illustrated, clear policy and design principles set out in guidance documents are the dominant knowledge. Any potential changes, as a result of consultation, must be contained within those planning structures. Despite the requirement for an economic return for a developer partnership, there are many mentions in national and local guidance documents that relate to how a redevelopment considers lived experience.

So, with the Lee Bank redevelopment complete and occupied, how do those involved in decisions related to Lee Bank know if the redevelopment is achieving an improved lived experience for residents? Post completion, there was no imperative to assess the success of the development against the aims set out, and there was no recognised process to evaluate the lived experience of inhabitants. The Urban Task Force report, Towards an Urban Renaissance, does, however, include a section on improved monitoring and evaluation, with a critique of current approaches to monitoring and evaluating regeneration projects. The report advises that supporting *"…cradle to grave evaluation strategies which ensures that project evaluation commences before a project begins, continues throughout projects and for a considerable period after the project has been completed"* (Urban Task

Force, 1999). This advice wasn't followed through in policy, and there is no mention of project evaluation in the current planning structure, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document. So, whilst place knowledge is clearly set out in a hierarchical structure, there is no structural mechanism to assess whether the process and policy achieves what it sets out to achieve.

The outsider perception of Lee Bank, from regeneration practitioners, is well documented. Park Central has received many plaudits from the built environment sector. Attwood Green was included as a case study in the then UK Government Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, 2016); The developers, Crest Nicholson, were recipients of 'The Placemaking Award' for the Park Central development; and Gardner Stewart Architects have received several awards for the scheme, including the winner of National Property Awards 'Placemaking Award', a RegenWM award for 'A Vision for Transformation' and Building for Life Gold Award[12].

The Lee Bank redevelopment is also featured as a case study by the University of Strathclyde for the Homes and Communities Academy (2009) on the subject of 'Skills and Knowledge for Sustainable Communities'. In this study, the improvement in quality of life was measured by the baseline of being at the bottom 2% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England (English Indices of Deprivation, 2007) a form of measuring components of life experience such as income and employment, housing, health, crime and education, skills, and training. The knowledge does not, though, provide a sense of how living there is or was experienced. The Strathclyde case study stated, *"…the objective is to provide a sustainable community through the process of regeneration.*" (University of Strathclyde, 2009). Included in statements about impact the study claims: *"The transformation of the city centre has seen a formerly depressive environment become a vibrant and colourful hub where people want to live and work*" (2009). There is no reference of resident contribution to the case study, and so it is unclear what informs that statement, however, it follows the outsider narrative of Lee Bank being undesirable before the regeneration and desirable after. Whilst the policy and design information included in the Strathclyde case study represents valid knowledge about place, without including lived experience as a knowledge, new developments cannot be credibly assessed on whether

[12] Park Central Masterplanning,Gardner Stewart Architects, Available at: http://gsa-studios.com/portfolio/project/park-central-masterplanning [accessed 21 November, 2019]

they're successful as a sustainable development by the terms set out in the Labour Governments Urban White Paper. The Urban Task Force document states in its vision for a well-governed city that by joint working and considering people's experience and knowledge, regeneration investment can provide better outcomes (1999). Lived experience, therefore, is recognised in policy, yet not considered or practiced in a meaningful way. In Chapter 3: In Dialogue, I consider my curated event: Assembling Dialogues, which aimed to facilitate the learning of lived experience to housing regeneration professionals.

Lived experience as a place knowledge

To gain knowledge of lived experience of a place, it is first necessary to understand what lived experience is. To critically consider the phenomenon of lived experience I draw on the philosophical theories of John Dewey who states that experience is a continuum. That the process of living is reliant on the interactions between the live creature and the surrounding environmental conditions.

> *Under conditions of resistance and conflict, aspects and elements of the self and the world that are implicated in this interaction qualify experience with emotions and ideas so that conscious intent emerges.* (Dewey, 12005: 36)

Dewey differentiates experience with 'an experience' stating that often our experience is unformed. When experiences are composed in to 'an experience' however, the experience "runs its course to fulfilment". (Dewey, 2005: 36) "*Such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is 'an experience'*" (2005: 37). This, Dewey states, is how experience is often referred by philosophers. An experience having a beginning and an end. As such, he argues, it is aesthetic. Dewey suggests that most of the time we are not concerned with the flows and connections of one incident to the next in our daily lives. "*Things happen, but they are neither definitely included nor decisively excluded: we drift*" (Dewey, 2006: 41). One activity exchanges another and does not engage with it, creating an unformed rambling. These types of experiences are 'anesthetic' (2006). The interventions included in Re:connections could constitute 'an experience' as they had a beginning and end. Everyday drifting lived experiences are experiences that are layered alongside events that constitute 'an experience'.

Urban Geographer, Colin McFarlane states that knowledge is the sense made from information which is influenced by practices, ideologies, and current discourse. As such it is "*constructed, provisional and constantly developing*" (Amin and Cohendet, 2004). He suggests knowledge has traditionally been separated into two types: tacit and codified. The tacit form is pre-cognitive and rooted in "*action, procedures, routines, commitment, ideals, values and emotions*" (McFarlane, 2011: 3) and regarded as attached to place and fixed. Codified or explicit knowledge is more formal and expressed in forms such as data, specifications and manuals (2011: 3). For regeneration planning and policy, the knowledge that is gathered can be described as codified and explicit. However, learning, McFarlane states, is the processes and exchanges where knowledge is formed, challenged, and changed, and how perception emerges and transforms. He considers learning to be "*a distributed assemblage of people, materials and space that is often neither formal nor simply individual."* (McFarlane, 2011: 3). Therefore, following McFarlane's theory, the codified knowledge of policy aims, of spatial, economic, and demographic data is also layered with tacit knowledge: values of what good housing is and of what a good resident is. If this tacit knowledge is not informed by inside perceptions, then the vacuum is filled with outside perceptions. As discussed earlier in this chapter, social housing, especially 1960's inner-city council estates, are stigmatised and misrepresented, by outsiders. This tacit knowledge, if not opened to the inside knowledge of lived experience, will continue to feed myths and stigma.

This view is supported by McFarlane's concept of assemblage. He states that assemblage underlines how learning is "*sociospatially structured, hierarchised and narrativized through unequal relations of knowledge, power and resource"* (McFarlane, 2011:17). McFarlane asserts that urban policy and its routes of learning are within an exclusive knowledge community. Peter Haas (1992) described epistemic communities as experts who share "*normative and principled beliefs which provide value-based rationales for their action: common casual beliefs or professional judgements*." (Haas, 1992: 119). McFarlane states that consideration of how we learn, alongside whom we learn from, and with, is necessary, suggesting a form of 'translocal' learning, that is, place-focused "[involving an] *ongoing labour in forging and developing connections between different sources, routes and actors*" (McFarlane, 2011:2). Therefore, to achieve more equitable learning and knowledge, a widening of the methods and processes of the knowledge community to include lived experience is required.

1.3 Art and insider place knowledge

I argue that art practice has a unique role in providing opportunities to learn lived experience. In recognising that the absence of lived experience in housing regeneration policy and practice can lead to misrepresentations and ignored realities, I examine whether spatial dialogical art practice can provide a role in the learning lived experience.

It is useful to consider lived experiences to be multifarious, conflicting, experienced truths. Harold Pinter spoke of the notion of truth in drama in his Nobel Prize speech:

> *You never quite find it but the search for it is compulsive…The search is your task. More often than not you stumble upon the truth in the dark, colliding with it or just glimpsing an image or shape which seems to correspond to the truth, often without realising you have done so.* (Pinter, 2005)

Pinter goes on to assert that the 'truth' is that there is no one truth, rather, there are many, and these truths often sit uneasily side by side. They *"challenge each other, recoil from each other, reflect each other, ignore each other, tease each other, are blind to each other" (Pinter 2005)*

Pinter's statement reflects the reality of place knowledges. My own inquiry into lived narratives of place often disrupts fact-based hierarchies of knowledge. It is not that the facts gathered about places are untruths, or that there is an essence of 'truth' that is not visible, but it is the process of learning that enables deeper meanings, and a revealing of spatial truths. "*The truth of this world, then, is not to be found 'out there', established by reference to the objective facts, but is disclosed from within.*" (Ingold, 2018). Therefore, knowledge about everyday lived experience of a place is to be absorbed from the inside. Ingold comments on the unreliable nature of facts, which he argues can be propagated and manipulated to suit the interests of the powerful. He believes there can be no proper facts without observation, and this, he believes, is where those in search of the truth learn from the artist whose practice strives for 'knowing-in-being', an embodied practice. Ingold's concept of the artists role in unfolding truths about a place aligns with Massey's idea of place as fluid and unfixed. There is not a 'truth' that can be captured, owned by the finder as 'the truth'. Truths are, instead, fleeting.

Lacy states that the challenge for the artist is to reveal, but make those revelations matter*:*

> *This quest is measured as much in the truths we attempt to enflesh as in the clay we might aesthetically design. At best, artistic works not only inspire the viewer but give evidence of the artist's own struggle to achieve higher recognition of what it means to be truly human.* (Lacy,1995: 88).

Lacy illustrates her viewpoint through a blues verse:

> *Water water you ain't so blue*
> *I say, water water you ain't so blue*
> *I've done checked for myself and there's a sky in you (1995:88)*

Lacy believes the form of the blues is to transform the singer and go on to transform the rest of the community. "*It makes those singers willing to 'work the sound' into new and knowing people who go about the business of making the truth matter."* (Lacy, 1995: 93). Lacy suggests it is the 'singing' of the truth (the words) that enables

the truth to unfold. Suggesting the unfolding of truths, as Ingold believes, requires embodiment.

However, the role of the artist as a representer of truth is presumptive, exposing a sense of privilege (Kester, 2004). It raises the question, who is the artist representing their version of the truth for? and how does it impact those whose truth they claim to represent? McGarvey recalls the artist, Ellie Harrison's project called the 'Glasgow Effect'. The project aimed to investigate the impact of Harrison being restricted to one geographic location for a period of time, and to see how her work would reflect this restriction, and how it would affect elements of her life such as her social life, mental health, employability, and carbon footprint. The project name, the Glasgow Effect, was taken from a public health study which analysed why health statistics in Glasgow were worse than in other, comparative cities. (2017). The art project was a form of social experiment, and Harrison aimed to create 'local opportunities' (2017: 203) to consider the effect of investing her practice in one place. The project was launched on social media with the picture of a bag of chips, to the angry response of McGarvey and residents of many other estates in Glasgow who lived the 'Glasgow effect' and embodied the poor health statistics that she was keen to research. McGarvey describes how her project revealed a lack of understanding and awareness about what the emotional stress, day-in-day-out, does to the individual (2017).

While Harrison's project was an inquiry into the 'Glasgow effect', it was not aimed at representing other residents. However, Lacy states that the critical consideration of any particular work should be how it is perceived and embodied with others who are not artists. "*That is, art becomes one's statement of values as well as a reflection of a mode of seeing.*" (Lacy,1995: 46). Claire Bishop, however, has been critical of the tendency of socially engaged art to be too politically correct, and avoids art that troubles the audience or risks offence. She states that the criteria for "*socially engaged art are, at present, drawn from a tacit analogy between anticapitalism and the Cristian "good soul.*" (Bishop, 2006). She argues that "*discomfort and frustration*" (2006: 5) can be essential components of an artworks aesthetic impact that enables new perspectives. For spatial dialogical art practice, the role of art is to disrupt ways of behaving, which can then shift established, and imposed, place narratives and

place perception (McFarlane, 2011). It is this process that creates a dialogical space that un-fixes and reflects. (I reflect further on the role of art in disrupting establish knowledge hierarchies in Chapter 2: Curating Dialogues as a Research Practice). I, through my curatorial practice, consciously try to avoid the discomfort or frustration for participants that Bishop advocates for, although not always successfully, as I describe in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. My approach is not, as Bishop believes, "*inflexible political correctness*" (Bishop, 2006: 5), but a recognition of the outsideness of the artist, and a desire not to manipulate the lived experience of insiders for the benefit of an idea of good art. It is, after all, the dominance of outsider knowledges about a place that I am seeking to address.

I conclude that place, as relational, heterogeneous, and fluid, is only possible to know from the inside. Therefore, a process of understanding it can only be gained through inside lived experiences.

I have examined how housing regeneration is informed by outsider knowledge, and how the absence of lived experience as a knowledge has led to misrepresentations, stigmatising those whose lives are stated as being improved by it. Lived experience is mentioned as a quality valued in policy, from the influential Labour Government White Paper to local plans, and in the case of the Lee Bank regeneration, assumptions about the improved lived experience as a result of the regeneration are made. Yet, it is a missing knowledge throughout regeneration practice and policy. I argue that art practice is well placed to provide the tools to open up the dialogue with which to learn lived experience. The following Chapter 2: Curating Dialogues as a Research Practice, expands on how I define and situate spatial dialogical art practice, and sets out the methods I used to develop it as a practice to learn lived experience.

Chapter 2
Curating Dialogues as a Research Practice

In this chapter, I set out the methodological approaches and methods I have applied within my practice-based research to explore spatial dialogical art practice as a method of learning the lived experience of a place. I situate my curatorial practice within a transdisciplinary space between socially engaged art practice and urban practice, and I explore my role as a curator and the particular responsibilities of that role within this transdisciplinary space.

The curatorial practice framework has emerged from three concurrent forms of research: the realisation and reflection of dialogical arts projects called Re:connections; the development of a theoretical framework; and a process of critical reflection. It was bringing the art-based practice and theory together through critical reflection that formed my method of analysis. In working towards this, I have adopted an iterative methodology, where methods have been selected, abandoned, or adapted throughout the evolution of the doctoral research. I articulate how the iterative practice/theory/reflection relationship has shaped and reshaped my research questions, aims and objectives and methods.

2.1 Curating a 'between' space

Defining my curatorial practice

My curatorial practice occupies a space between art, social practice, and urban practice. Jane Rendell describes this space as a 'critical spatial practice': work that moves beyond the disciplines of art and architecture with an interest in areas of social, aesthetic, public and private significance (Rendell, 2006). It is from this space, and from the experience of my practice, that the initial research idea emerged. The idea, therefore, is as Nelson describes, generated from a "*know-how*" form of knowledge (Nelson, 2013). I expand further on the development of my practice in the introduction. This know-how knowledge has been formed through methodologies and methods based in socially engaged practice and urban practice, and the

concerns of my practice are relevant to both. My curatorial focus is the dialogical space between the artist, the human and the non-human elements of place. My concern is to define a dialogical art-based method of learning about lived experience. Actors within my research to achieve that learning includes residents, artists, urban practitioners, community leaders, and the multisensory elements of the place.

The reductive definition of spatial dialogical art practice is that it is a form of socially engaged art practice that prompts meaningful dialogue about a place. Grant Kester defines a project as dialogical when *"[the] conversation becomes an integral part of the work itself"* (Kester, 2004: 8). Kester describes the approach as collaborative and consultative and has a synergy with cultural activism (2004: 9). A more expanded definition of dialogue has emerged from my practice, which I articulate more fully in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. Whist my practice aligns with the broader definitions of socially engaged and dialogic practice, the synergy Kester associates with cultural activism is not an aim of my practice. Rather, spatial dialogical art practice is a method of enquiry and knowledge production to address missing knowledge in hierarchical, neo-liberal based knowledge systems of regeneration practice. From the outset, the focus of my research was to understand lived experience rather than change it.

The quiet carer of dialogues

The word curator originates from the Latin word 'cura', meaning taking care (Obrist, 2017). For my practice, I have considered myself the 'quiet carer of dialogues'. As I described earlier, my role is that of a host of the dialogical space. My role instigates and builds relationships with all the participants of the project. It was the dialogues between the artists and residents, and their dialogues with the place, that were the focus. Through this process, I listened, observed, recorded, and was alert to support the artists and participants. As such, I acted as a host and carer of the dialogical space between participants (artists, residents, and urban practitioners) and a place. The dual role was achieved by embedding care ethics into all processes of practice: in the initial concept development and process of selecting artists; in the initial conversations with participants; by observing and supporting the individual needs of participants; and ensuring their contribution was valued. As a transdisciplinary practice, I re-presented the art dialogues to regeneration practitioners to create an

insider and outsider dialogic space. It was my role, therefore, to ensure the dialogues were re-presented compassionately, were respected, presented ethically, and given time and space for further dialogue. It became apparent, as I expand in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, that through an ethics of care, more trust is established resulting in a more meaningful dialogic exchange. The aim of an ethical consideration, therefore, formed a core principle and approach.

Why artists?

I choose artists, specifically artists whose practice is socially engaged, to facilitate and activate the dialogue. This is due to their unique ability to open creative forms of dialogue in playful, collaborative ways. By doing so, they reimagine the ethnographic methods of interview and focus groups and participant observations. Allan Kaprow wrote of artists involved in the 'Happenings', stating the artists ability to reflect their reality, and in turn, allow the observer or participant to reflect. He states, "*not only will these bold creators show us as if for the first time, the world we have always had about us but ignored…"* (Kaprow, 2003: xx). Jane Rendell states that art can function by "*providing certain kinds of tools for self-reflection, critical thinking and social change*" (Rendell, 2015). Such functions are also evidenced in the AHRC Cultural Value Project (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016). The research that emerged from the Cultural Value Project found compelling evidence of how the arts impact the individual, supporting the idea that the arts help shape reflective individuals. It is the art's ability to develop reflective qualities and empathy in an individual that engages with it that proved to be a key element of cultural value (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016: 42). Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska state that individual experiences of the arts can manifest in ways that promote a deeper understanding of self and a heightened sense of empathy, often bringing with it an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultural difference. The study states that empathetic and reflective qualities may impact on areas such as civic engagement and social justice, affecting how we make sense of our place in the world (2016). Such qualities affect how individuals connect to their everyday places and are evident in the impacts of the Re:connections project, detailed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue.

These qualities have been evident in my research and have supported the artists ability to disrupt established knowledges and ways of perceiving through critical thinking and self-reflection. It is this ability to disrupt that has been of unique value. Situated art has a lineage of disrupting established hierarchies. An example is the Situationist's interventions in urban contexts that aimed to disrupt established frameworks and societal regulations (Debord,1991). In spatial dialogical art practice, it is the artists questioning of established ways of perceiving that create a dialogical space that emboldens, or prompts, those within it to reflect on their own everyday dialogues through a different lens. Through the playful unfixing of fixed imaginations of place, new dialogues become possible. The dialogical space, in this way, becomes a realisation of Edward Soja's Thirdspace, (discussed further in Chapter 1: About a Place) as the "*real-and-imagined*" space where the physical and mental perspectives come together (Soja, 1996: 57). Spatial dialogical art practice, through artists activating a dialogical space which disrupts, un-fixes and then reflects, is an "*invitation for a reinvention of the relationship between interacting actors and context*" (Phillips, 2011: 55).

The curatorial framework

Spatial dialogical arts practice is actioned through a curatorial framework. The artists who participated in my research projects do not describe their practice as dialogical but have responded to my curatorial brief to consider dialogue as the motivation, and representation of the connection between the resident, the artist, and the place. As a curator I invited the artists to articulate the idea through their own practice. It was their role to activate the dialogical space, guided by the curatorial brief. Through the iterative practice/theory process, different forms and definitions of dialogues emerged, expanded on in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. The enquiry about perception through the senses, however, was part of my initial framework and has remained as a central research objective. Ethnographer Sarah Pink (2015) states that researching sensory perception is often more profound than can be expressed as spoken or even conscious knowledge (Pink, 2015: 5).

My role in curating a spatial dialogical art practice has particular responsibilities. The considerations for curating socially engaged projects are examined by the curator Mary Jane Jacob, who defines her involvement in the creative process as "*a*

collaborator, sounding board, and ultimately a facilitator" (Lacy, 1995:41). She states that curators working with artists see themselves as contextualising and expanding the artist's reach. Jennifer Dowley, in aligning herself with the artist's visions has said "*I'd like to build bridges, linkages between what artists are thinking and doing to our daily lives...I'd like to explore situations where artists are activators, articulators, and legitimate participants in the community*" (Lacy, 1995:42), making clear that curators such as herself believe that visual art can play a significant role in wider social agendas. There are similarities in my approach to that of Jacob's and Dowley's descriptions: As a curator of socially engaged practice, I too aim to build bridges, between myself and the artists, the artists and residents; between residents and other residents; and between residents experiences and regeneration decisionmakers. To create the bridges, my approach was to create the framework for a dialogical space to explore the concept of lived experience, and to share the knowledge, or knowing, of lived experience with those who make decisions which can impact it. A transdisciplinary practice is well placed to build such bridges. I also consider myself a collaborator with artists, through continued dialogue and sharing of ideas, and facilitating opportunities for art dialogues to take place with people and the multisensory elements of place. As such, I see my role as an active host of the dialogical space. (I will expand on my role and the roles of participants in chapters 3 and 4).

Situating my practice

I associate my practice with the lineage of social practice that integrates art, social and spatial concerns. Such practices include 'new genre public art' (Lacy, 2008), and creative placemaking (Courage and McKeown, 2019) that explored and interrogated "*the language and meanings of community, partnership, identity and dynamics of power and spatial equity*" (Courage and McKeown, 2019: 202). More specifically, I associate the development of a spatial dialogical art practice more closely to what Jane Rendell describes as a 'critical spatial practice'. Rendell uses this term to define a practice that explores the intersections between art and architecture (Rendell, 2006: 1). She includes the art practices of 'site-specific art' and 'public art', and in architecture descriptions of 'urban intervention' and 'conceptual design' (2006). My practice is transdisciplinary, encompassing disciplines of socially engaged art and urban practice. As a curatorial practice I collaborate with artists who

activate and facilitate the dialogue. The knowledge produced, however, is more related to urban practice. There are similarities with practices defined as 'socially engaged arts practice'; 'creative placemaking' or 'new genre public art', but it is the intersection between the two disciplines of art and urban practice that determine my aims and methods of evaluation.

Examples of practices that align with Rendell's concept of critical spatial practice are the feminist art and architecture practice muf, and Public Works, an interdisciplinary arts and architecture initiative. Both practices have influenced my practice and ethos. muf, aim to disrupt architectural methodologies that are concerned with form and object-making. muf methods emphasise the contribution of art practice and participation within the design process. "*For muf, the architectural design process is not an activity that leads to the making of a product but is rather the site of the work itself*" (Rendell, 2006: 174).

Public Works practice explores the relationship between the governance of public space and the users. They use communication and physical structures to create dialogue with local people to uncover and make use of the resources that exist, such as local networks and skills (Rendell, 2006). Both practices use collaboration and direct action as methods for the rethinking of everyday spaces and places to encourage citizen-led agency (Kester, 2004; Courage and McKeown, 2019). The disruptive element in my practice is located in identifying the value of lived experience as a form of spatial knowledge within hierarchical structures of regeneration practice and not concerned with direct action.

I also align my research practice to that of artists and curators whose work has emerged from 'new genre public art' in its methods and ethos. Suzanne Lacy explores the role of relationships within her practice and is considered to be an early example of participatory art practice (Courage, 2019). Lacy introduced the term "*new genre public art"*, which she describes as "*visual art that uses both traditional and non-traditional media to communicate and interact with a broad and diversified audience about issues directly relevant to their lives*" (Lacy, 1995: 19). Breaking away from modernist notions of art and audience, new genre public art, through this engagement with an audience, was intent on social change or transformation,

therefore is a form of art activism (1995). It has its roots in artists work from the late 1950s to 1970s in the U.S which was aligned with different radical influences including feminism and Marxism. Empathy has been recognised as a component of new genre public art. Lacy states that "*Empathy begins with the self-reaching out to another self, an underlying dynamic of feeling that becomes the source of activism...the creative works can be a representation of an actual manifestation of relationship*" (Lacy: 1995: 36-37). Lacy argues that for artists working in this way, the relationship is transformational in terms of the work and the artists themselves (1995). As I discuss in chapters 3 and 4, empathy has emerged as a key quality to providing the opportunity to learn lived experience. The work that emanated from new genre public art, was from a diverse range of artists - including among them Judy Chicago and Adrian Piper – who challenged the notion of art, galleries, and museums. In describing the work of the artists, Suzanne Lacy drew on the writings of artist Allan Kaprow, who commented that for the artists, "*the dialogue moved from knowing more and more about what art was to wondering about what life was, the meaning of life*" (Lacy, 1995: 26). Nicolas Bourriaud continued this shift in understanding art as relational or dialogic. Bourriaud's theory of relational aesthetics has been influential to art practice operating in the in-between space of art and urbanism. He describes relational art as "*an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space*". (Bourriaud, 2004: 14). Bourriaud considers the work of art as a social interstice (2004).

The term 'urban curator' describes a curatorial practice that is defined by a radical relational practice, drawing similarities to Bourriaud's definition of relational aesthetics, although distinguishing itself from Bourriaud's omission of the connection to political and social movements since 1960s (Krasny, 2015). Curator, cultural theorist, urban researcher and writer, Elke Krasny, describes the relationality of urban curatorial practice, "*This radical relationality abounds with the aesthetic and political consciousness of solidarity and far-reaching alignment with the struggle against urban injustice and social movements striving for urban redistribution*." (Krasny, 2015: 119). Krasny purposefully doesn't define the characteristics of the urban curator, instead considers the practice relational, open, and fluid, describing it as "*conceptually open, marked by the politics of dis/continuous self-re/invention*"

(Krasny, 2015: 119). The conceptual openness of urban curatorial labour can take any form that is relevant to its radical relational practice, including art, communication, building, discourse, community organising or protest (Krasny, 2015). Krasny's description, therefore, aligns with definitions of place as relational and fluid. And whilst I don't align my practice to activism in the way Krasny does, her definition is relevant to the aims of my practice as it identifies with issues in urban practice such as the top-down master planning, taking a stance against binary positions of knowledge (2015), and considering the practice itself as "*forever incomplete*" (2015: 119).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, my concept of 'dialogical' is aligned with the concepts of Grant Kester in the sense that it is an approach to considering art and the creation of it as a dialogical space (Kester, 2004). Tom Finkelpearl uses the term 'dialogue-based art' drawing on Paulo Freire's education philosophies of dialogue as not a means to an end but a process (Finkelpearl, 2001), "*an ongoing project of intersubjective investigation*" (Finkelpearl, 2001: 283) which is based on ethical concerns (2001). These theories are set against the context of a broad range of site-specific work outside of gallery spaces. Kester's and Finkelpearl's theories are rooted in socially engaged theories and processes and align closely with my practice in their emphasis on the dialogical exchange. My definition of 'dialogical', however, is more expanded to include verbal and non-verbal, and human-to-non-human dialogue. This became clearer as the research practice process progressed as I discuss in Chapter 3: In Dialogue.

My curatorial research practice has also drawn on the radical practice of architect and planner Nabeel Hamdi. Hamdi developed a community action planning theory that has been applied to emergency planning for international development agencies (Hamdi, 2004). Hamdi's concept of emergent development feeds local knowledge gathered through community action planning into the power structures of policymakers. The aim is to enable the small, locally-based actions to be scaled up to become new structures. Hamdi's process realises rhizomatic knowledge structures (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), where action, as a form of collaboration with people on the ground and those in positions of power, actively supports lives and livelihoods. Hamdi's approach has been useful to me to consider how spatial

dialogical art practice can not only disrupt but connect to established power structures. "*Practice disturbs…it can impose habits, routines and technologies that may lead to new and unfamiliar ways of thinking, doing and organising*…" (Hamdi, 2004: xix). Hamdi's approach to disturbing the established power structures is to connect local emergent practice to the urban and national strategic work of policy makers through scaling up the local action. My research is not at a point to achieve this; however, I draw on Hamdi's principles of practice in the conclusion chapter as I consider the future potential of Spatial Dialogical Art Practice.

2.2 Theory practice practice theory

The symbiotic roles of researcher and curator

As an art practice-based research, the relationship between theory and practice has been interdependent and critical to the progress of the inquiry. Gilles Deleuze believes that rather than understanding practice as an application of theory, or as the inspiration for theory, he states that "*practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another…No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall*." (Deleuze, 1977: 206). In my research, the theory also opened pathways for practice by provoking new ideas and rejecting others. My process between theory and practice, therefore, has been iterative and cyclical (Smith and Dean, 2009).

My dual roles within the research, that of researcher and curator, became the symbiosis of practice and theory. Namely, that the curatorial role has unravelled a theoretical concept, and the theoretical discovery in the literature review has provided insights into the practice. The intertwined roles also revealed epistemological and ethical problems with the methods in practice. These discoveries are noted in Chapter 3: In Dialogue where I discuss my research practice. The two roles required me to be the researcher and the researched (Sullivan, 2010: 67) through reflecting and analysing my role and the roles of other participants.

The iterative practice/theory research process

The imbricated roles of curator and researcher are illustrated in my iterative research process below (Figure 2.1).

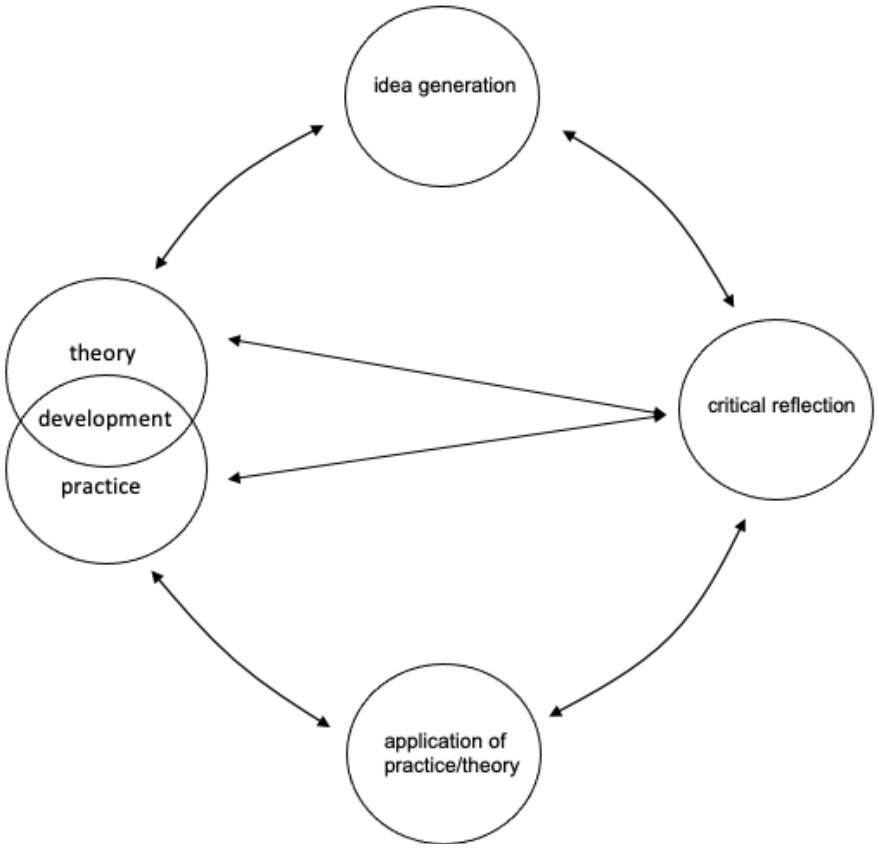

Figure 2.1: iterative research process

My research process followed different stages of 'idea generation'; 'theory development' and 'practice development'; 'critical reflection' and 'application of practice/theory'. Within the process there was movement from one stage to the next, often with several back-and-forth movements and layering between each stage, as illustrated. The broad development of the research between each stage, however, is described below.

Idea generation

The process started with the initial idea of my research question and ideas about a methodological approach. The initial research question was very broad and was underpinned by my own experience of curating projects and an aim of addressing the research problem that I'd identified through it:

What contribution does socially engaged art practice make to enable the understanding of place attachment?

Development of practice/theory

I then used the literature review to develop an initial theoretical framework to interrogate a curatorial idea, expanding fields of knowledge to include the disciplines of philosophy, human geography, and anthropology. This resulted in the further development of the research inquiry and corresponding methods and curatorial idea.

Critical reflection

There was a process of reflecting on the knowledge and ideas gained from the theory and practice development, refining my research proposal. For example, the theory identified ‘dialogue’ as a defining characteristic of the practice, creating a specific focus for the practice.

Development of practice/theory

I devised my research project; a dialogical art project called Re:connections. The project was shaped by the curatorial framework.

Application of practice/theory

I curated the live research project. Throughout the duration of the project, the practice revealed unexpected outcomes which brought new insights into the theory and methodology and therefore the curatorial framework.

Critical reflection

There was a period after the first project was complete to reflect and analyse the findings of Re:connections (part one), where I assessed the findings, and identified challenges and unexpected outcomes. The process prompted new research questions.

Development of practice/theory

Further theoretical investigation and consideration of methods were required to address the new research questions. This, again, informed and re-shaped the

curatorial framework. The revised curatorial framework was used to devise Re:connections (part two).

Application of practice/theory

I curated Re:connections (part two) using the revised curatorial framework. Similar to part one of the project; part two revealed important insights as well as unexpected outcomes and participant responses that prompted new ethical and epistemological questions, challenging aspects of the theoretical framework and methodology.

Critical reflection

A further period of analysis and reflection of the project findings took place, leading to theoretical and methodological reviews, which again, informed and re-shaped the curatorial framework.

The detail of the methods designed to address the research questions, as they shifted and developed through the iterative process, are detailed in section 2.3 of this chapter.

As PhD research, my process was necessarily goal-orientated (Nelson, 2013): the goal of submitting this thesis, and the progression reflect an iterative journey to that goal. There was an "*open and playful approach to the creative process*" (Nelson, 2012: 45). This is illustrated through my iterative research process diagram (Figure 2.1). The cyclical process will continue beyond the goal-orientated timeline: The analysis and reflection on the insights that emerged from the different stages, including the writing of the thesis chapters, will shape post-doctoral research questions and methodologies as I shape and re-shape the idea and theoretical framework. Nelson asserts that two approaches of research, 'process driven' and 'goal orientated' (2012) often interact, as they did in my research: the open and explorative approach within the spatial dialogical art projects was balanced by the research aims, objectives and timeline (2012). Smith and Dean's iterative cyclic web (figure 2.2) is another model that further illustrates the interplay between different stages. The model shows 'practice-led research', 'research-led practice' and 'academic research' as different research modes within the cycle (2009), albeit iteratively. Whilst the different emphasis of my research within each stage resonates

with the Smith and Dean model, I consider the 'practice' element as research, whereas Smith and Dean separate the definition. The model also suggests the practitioner is the creator of the artwork, however, my research involves additional complexity. As a curator, I create the framework for the artist's practice. The 'artwork', as is defined on the model as an 'output' (2009: 20), is defined in my research as the flow of the artist/participant/place dialogue. The material-based artwork, therefore, is a form of documentation of the socially engaged practice.

My research process is drawn from Robert Nelson's modes of knowledge within art practice as research: 'know-how', 'know-what' and 'know-that' (2013). This is illustrated in his model of knowledge production for Practice as Research (PaR) (figure 2.3). Know-how is the experiential knowledge of doing/making, and "*learning through doing"* (2013: 41). Nelson states it is the "*enactment of a world and a mind*" (Nelson: 43). As such, is tacit and embodied. The 'know-how', therefore is the dominant mode of knowledge in my idea generation, and application of practice/theory stages. What Nelson describes as "know-what" (2013: 44) was, in my research, the process of separating myself from that the embodied experience and reflecting on it, thus attempting the challenge of making the tacit knowledge explicit. This knowledge was generated through critical reflection. Schön recognises that a process of reflection can act to rebalance "*overlearning*" (Schön, 1983: vii), thus stepping outside the tacit understandings of know-how, provides the possibility of critical reflection and of selecting and abandoning methods. So, the 'know-what' in my research played out through reflexive practice with myself and the artists, and through reflecting on how the aims and objectives were being met or not and identifying unexpected outcomes. The 'know-what' process took place throughout the live project and post-project, through analysing documentation, material, and reflective discourse. Finally, Nelson defines a state of 'know-that'. This form, he states, is an academic knowledge allowing the presentation of 'know-how' and 'know-what' into a wider arena of knowledge, namely the academic arena. Know-that is a further form of reflection and shaping, critically evaluating, and reviewing with which knowledges take shape. Nelson's model articulates the dialogic engagement between different stages of process and modes of knowledge, providing academic rigour and depth, enabling new insights and knowledge to emerge from research findings.

Figure 2.2, Hazel Smith and Roger Dean's model of creative arts and research processes: the iterative cyclic web of practice-led research and research-led practice.

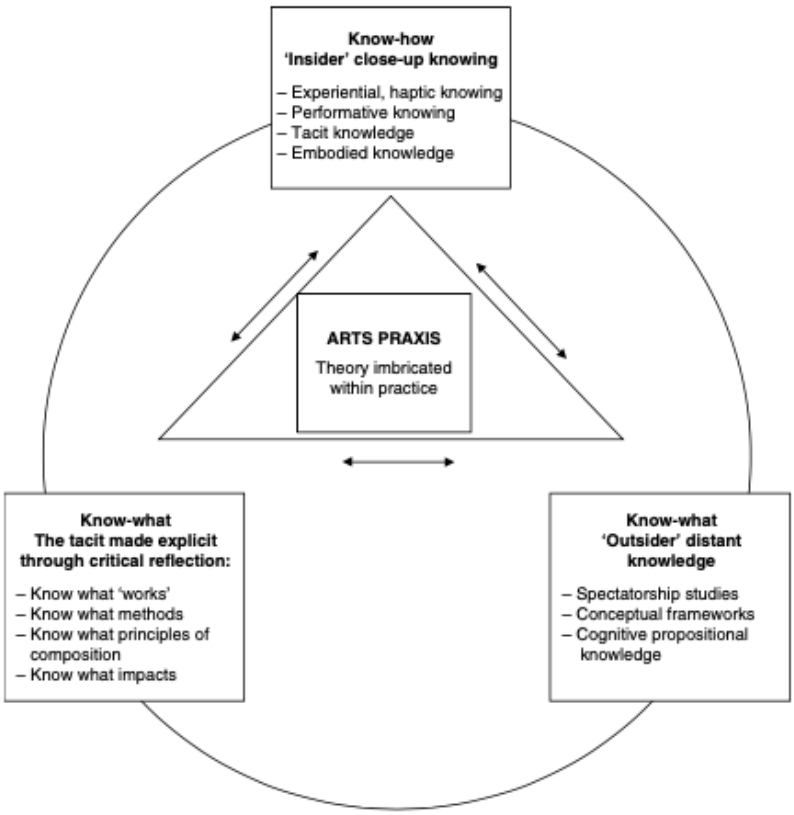

Figure 2.3 Robin Nelson's 'Modes of knowing: multi-mode epistemological model for PaR

2.3 Methodology and methods

Research questions

I have outlined an iterative practice-as-research methodology where, through the ongoing process of critical reflection, my research questions were shaped and reshaped. I adapted or abandoned the methods to address those questions. The key research questions I was asking at the initial stages of my PhD, however, have remained relevant, albeit with variations on how I name the practice and the object of research. For example, an initial question: What contribution does socially engaged art practice make to enable the understanding of place attachment*?* adapted, as I have defined the socially engaged art practice as 'spatial dialogical art practice', to reflect its focus more accurately, and 'place attachment' as the focus of learning became 'lived experience'. The questions have been adapted to:

- How can the lived experience of a place be learned by insiders and outsiders, through spatial dialogical art practice?
- What are the defining qualities of spatial dialogical art practice that provides ways of learning lived experience?
- What is the value of learning lived experience to housing regeneration practice?

Aims and objectives

Through the iterative research process my aim emerged: To develop a spatial dialogical arts practice that seeks to 'learn' lived experience

The objectives that relate to that aim are to:

- Assess how lived experience, as a missing knowledge in regeneration practice, is valuable
- Define the characteristics of a spatial dialogical art practice as a method of learning lived experience
- Examine how lived experience can be learned by insiders and outsiders through spatial dialogical art practice

- Develop a curatorial practice framework as an approach towards an ethical learning of lived experience for insiders and outsiders of a place

Methodological approach

My research aims and objectives form a qualitative enquiry. I have followed a phenomenological approach to examine ways of learning lived experience, to uncover meanings as they are lived in the everyday (Laverty, 2003). My concern was to develop a spatial dialogical art practice that explores how residents move through spaces, and how they interact and perceive them in a multisensory way (Pink, 2015). As Nöe suggests that *"[to] perceive is not merely to have sensory stimulation. It is to have sensory stimulation one understands*" (Nöe, 2004: 57). Therefore, it is the conscious reflection of that sensory stimulation that achieves the knowledge. Susan Kozel states that "*The first moment of phenomenology originates in doing, but accompanying this doing is weaving in and out of a line of thought*…" (Kozel, 2007: 67). Kozel argues the quality of thought is different from other analytical lines of thought in that it is non-homogenising. In this way, the reflective qualities of spatial dialogical art practice provided a tool to approach the understanding of the multisensory connections and stimulations with lived place.

The phenomenology of embodiment became an important component with which to explore perceptions of place. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's concept of the body as "…*the vehicle of being in the world*" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 82). Sarah Pink suggests that an embodied approach allows the researcher to "*appreciate the meaning and nature of the experiential environments*". She states it "*offers a set of theoretical tools to guide us away from attempts to change 'behaviour' and to ask how interventions might sit in relation to the existing routines, contingencies and innovations that ongoingly make and re-make the practices and places of everyday life*" (Pink et al., 2013: 22). Whilst my research aligned with this approach there was evidence that the act of reflecting and being conscious of perceptions did change participants (including artists, residents and myself as researcher/curator) perceptions and behaviours. My phenomenological approach was explored in different ways in Re:connections (part one), with artists practice opening up a space to encourage residents to reflect on their perceptions of their lived place. It was,

however, in Re:connections (part two) that the idea of embodiment became central to the dialogical exchange between the artist and residents. Here the methodology drew on the theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the interconnection between the senses. Merleau-Ponty states "*My body is not a collection of adjacent organs but a synergic system, all of the functions of which are exercised and linked together in the general action of being in the world*" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 234). The dialogical methods in Re:connections (part two), artist-led walks and an immersive, interactive installation, aimed to emplace the dialogues in a space that reflects the state of being in the world, rather than separating sensations. As Merleau-Ponty suggests, senses can only be understood in relation to other sensations.

Methods

Following my iterative and cyclical research process outlined in section 2.2, I applied a mixed-method approach, with spatial dialogical art practice forming a pillar method through my research project Re:connections, drawing on and adapting other methods, including ethnographic and urban design. The iterative stages of idea generation, development of practice/theory, critical reflection and application of practice/theory are broad stages which often involved layered iterations within each stage, as illustrated in figure 2.1. They are presented in the table below as distinct stages, however, for the purpose of clarity.

Table of research methods

The table below details the methods designed to address the research questions, as they shifted and developed through the iterative process.

<table>
<tr><th>Practice</th><th>Method</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Idea generation #1 – Re:connections</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Initially, my research question focused on the quality of place attachment of residents whose lived place has been changed through regeneration. My broad hypothesis was that a form of socially engaged art practice was a valuable method of finding out how place attachment had been impacted through regeneration.

The outline idea for my research project Re:connections was formed in late 2016, with the location of Lee Bank, Birmingham selected. Details about the creative processes and activities that took place as part of Re:connections are detailed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Development of practice/theory #1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Learning about a place -
Outsider knowledge gathering

• What was outsider knowledge or perception of Lee Bank?

• What knowledge informs decisions (locally and nationally)?

• To investigate inclusion of references about lived experience</td><td>Data gathering

• Gathered and examined historical, social, and planning data

• Case studies and reports on Attwood Green (the new name given to a regeneration area that includes Lee Bank)

• Examined National planning and policy documents

(See Appendix 5.1 sample of data gathered)</td></tr>
</table>

Practice	Method
Learning about a place - Outsider inside knowledge gathering • To reflect on my own outsider perception of the area, as part of reflexive practice	*Reflexive practice* A *w*alk, wander and ponder in Lee Bank, reflecting on my perceptions • Recorded sounds • Photographs • Initial reflections map (See Appendix 3.1 for sample of my own reflexive practice)
Learning about a place - Insider knowledge gathering • To build relationships • To develop opportunities for spatial dialogical art practice • To gather insider knowledge	*Data gathering* Face-to-face meetings with: • Optima Family Housing community engagement manager • St Luke's Church reverend and community manager • Edgbaston Community Centre manager • Edgbaston art forum manager • St Thomas Nursery manager • Sourced historical interviews with residents[13]
Investigate theory	*Expanded literature review* Key texts and concepts: • Henri Lefebvre axis of perceived, conceived and lived spaces (Lefebvre, 1991) • Edward Relph concept of insideness and outsideness (Relph, 1976)

[13] A History of Lee Bank, Optima Community Association (2010) Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSnYcWVTDPE [Accessed 12 February 2017]

Practice	Method
	• Yi Fi Tuan theories of rootedness and belonging (Tuan, 2001) • Doreen Massey theories of place as unfixed, porous network (Massey, 1994)
Artists selection criteria. Artists whose practice can embrace: • Socially engaged practice • Different approaches that prompt dialogue with residents • Existing perceptions of Lee Bank as a local 'outsider'	*Process of selecting artists* • Researched socially engaged artists • compiled short list • Initial email discussion to confirm interest in and availability for project • face-to-face meetings with selected artists • visited and observed situated project with two artists • confirmed in-principle* agreement with selected artists *Funding pending. The method of working with artists requires the sourcing for funding, adding a layer of uncertainty to the methods. I mitigated this risk by applying to three funding grants and allowing an extended timescale if unsuccessful to enable me to reapply. In the event, I was granted Arts Council funding to enable me to proceed.
Critical reflection #1	
I reflected on the inside and outside knowledge of Lee Bank gathered, and considered the differences between the knowledges. I considered these knowledges in relation to theories of space and place. Initial reflections: It became apparent from reflection of insider and outsider place knowledge that there was a disconnect between the two. The housing association, whilst based within Lee Bank, also demonstrated an outsider knowledge.	

<table>
<tr><th>Practice</th><th>Method</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">My literature review identified key texts on space and place that revealed epistemological differences (as reflected in Chapter 1: About a Place), prompting new questions to consider in Re:connections (part one).</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Development of practice/theory #2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">New research questions emerged:
Can spatial dialogical art practice provide an insight into lived experience of a place?
If so, what forms of spatial dialogical art practice (the output of which are art dialogues) are more insightful?
What is the value of spatial dialogical practice in housing regeneration contexts?
I developed the curatorial practice framework for my research project, Re:connections (part one), including its aims and objectives, roles and responsibilities and ethical framework[14].</td></tr>
<tr><td>Apply for funding
for Re:connections (part one)</td><td>Writing of funding application following discussions with residents, local partners, and artists (see Appendix 2.1).
Secured in-kind funding from project partners</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Application of practice/theory #1 for Re:connections (part one)
(following notification of funding)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Site visit with artists (April/May 2017)</td><td>Reflexive practice: through site walks and dialogue with artists about their perceptions of the area
recorded and transcribed interviews (sample of transcribed dialogue Appendix 3.2; Figure 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 site visit with artists)</td></tr>
</table>

[14] The ethical framework complied with Birmingham City University, Faculty of Arts, Design and Media Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, Version 1.0 – October 2016

Practice	Method
Artists brief development	• Negotiate and agree dialogical approach and activity with artists • Artists brief document (see Appendix 2.2)
Insider relationship building Ask for permission to proceed with project (Courage et al, 2021)	• Discussions with key community leaders to assess interest in Re:connections (part one) and ask for permission to introduce the project to resident groups • Introduce Re:connections (part one) with local groups to see if it's something they would like to collaborate in. (5 established groups agreed to participate). • Agree dates of artist sessions with venue, groups, and artists
Acquire informed consent from participants	For those interested in participating I gained informed consent as per BCU ethics policy (see Appendix 2.3)
Artists activate art dialogues with Lee Bank residents (June/July 2017) Re:connections (part one) Artists: Dan Burwood (photography) Claire Hickey and Emily Warner (visual, live art) Jess May Davies (poetry), Justin Wiggan (sound)	• 4 days for each artist's practice time on site, detailed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. *68 recorded dialogues with informed consent* (sample of transcribed dialogues, Appendix 4.1) • 4 days for each artist's research and development and reflection. Curator/researcher: • Record verbal dialogues with participants • Observed reflections of art dialogues

<table>
<tr><th>Practice</th><th>Method</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Photograph art dialogues (figures 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9)
Reflexive practice: interview with artist during their 4 days on site to note their perceptions of Lee Bank (see Appendix 3.2 for sample of transcribed dialogues with artists)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sharing/exhibition event in Moonlit Park (July 2017)
All artists shared their responses to the dialogues with participants and passers-by through presenting their art dialogues</td><td>Recorded through photography, participant observation

42 participants given informed consent

(Figures 2.10, 2.11, 2.12: Photographs of sharing/exhibition event)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Critical reflection #2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Analysis through reflecting on transcribed dialogues with participants, participant observation, and reflexive interviews with artists
Considering what insight into lived experience was achieved
What forms of art dialogues were more insightful
How artists and my own place perception was affected
Could the insight from the art dialogues be of value to regeneration professionals?
Key findings from Re:connections (part one) (expanded on in Chapter 3: In Dialogue)

Reflections on methods
Ethical implications: The emotional quality of the dialogues between artists and residents was at times ethically problematic – some residents were distressed, angry and anxious during art dialogic sessions. I considered ways of adapting the project to avoid of prompting negative experience of place for residents. I also questioned who was benefiting from this process. The residents, as opposed to curator, artists and regeneration practitioners, seemed to benefit the least.</td></tr>
</table>

Practice	Method

- Consideration of roles: The artists role was that of a representor of lived experience. Their representation as artwork was affective at sharing knowledge, however, the knowledge was an interpretation of a resident's lived experience.
- Nature of dialogue: Residents were drawing on memories rather than their embodied experience.
- Insight into lived experience was gained through Re:connections (part one) but represented through the filter of the artist, an outsider.
- Different artists approaches offered different forms of insight: resolved art dialogue, unresolved art dialogue (detailed in Chapter 3: In dialogue). Through assessment of each, the unresolved art dialogue aligned with theories of place as fluid and relational.
- There were a range of different place perceptions that were evident in through the resolved and unresolved art dialogues. Artists recalled changes in their own place perception (expanded in chapter 3: In Dialogue).
- Value to regeneration practitioners – This was a limitation of Re:connections (part one) which only focused on residents. It was decided a future project would engage with regeneration practitioners.
- Evidence of forms of insideness did not correspond to Edward Relph's theories of insideness and outsidenss (Relph, 1976).

Reshaped secondary research questions

- How can spatial dialogical art practice provide insight into lived experience to housing regeneration practitioners?
- What are the roles of curator and artist and those participating if lived experience is not represented to outsiders by the artist?
- What is the form of art dialogue that enables a more embodied, collaborative approach?

Figure 2.4
Claire Hickey and Emily Warner

Figure 2.5
Justin Wiggan

Figure 2.6
Dan Burwood

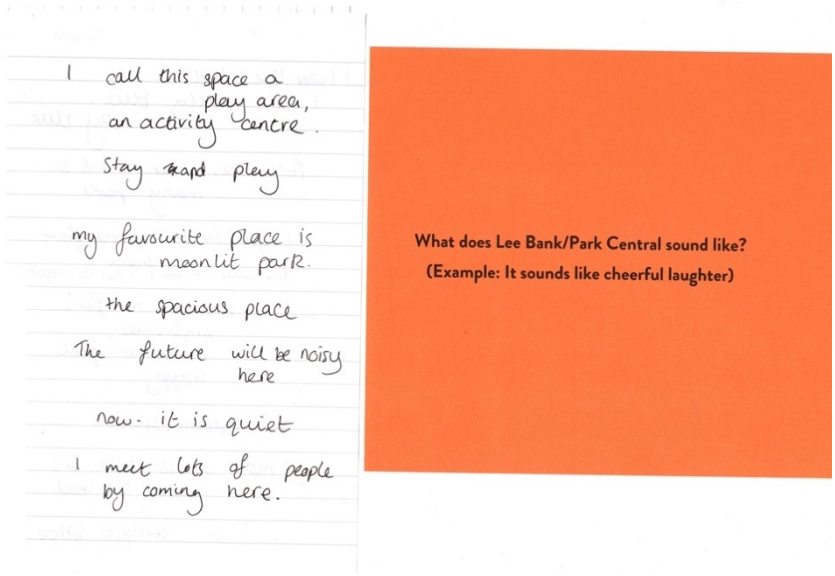

Figure 2.7
Jess May Davies

Question prompts for residents at Play and Stay group, St Thomas Nursery Centre, with written residents response

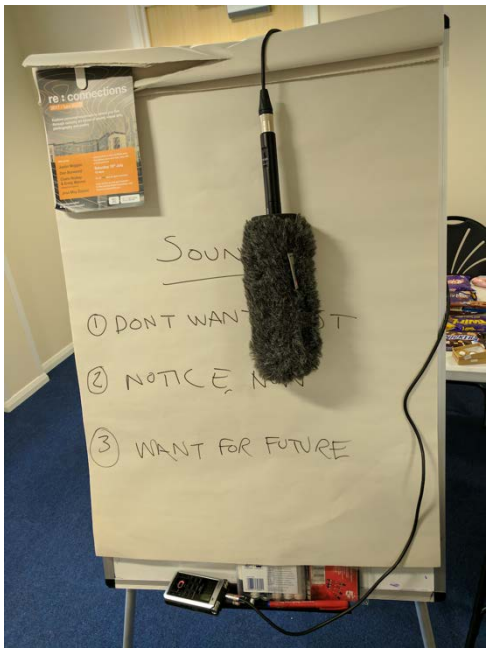

Figure 2.8
Justin Wiggan

Questions to prompt dialogue with resident groups at Edgbaston Community Centre

Figure 2.9
Claire Hickey and Emily Warner

Make/Shift/Space mobile workspace in Moonlit Park

Re:connections (part one) sharing event in Moonlit Park, Lee Bank

Figure 2.10
Justin Wiggan performative art dialogue, giving honeyed water to local residents

Figure 2.11
Jess May Davies collaborative poem on railings

Figure 2.12
Claire Hickey and Emily Warner's layered map as prompt for dialogue with local residents

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Idea generation #2 (Autumn 2017)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Re:connections (part two)
Reshaped objectives include:
engaging with residents in a participatory way, to provide opportunities for an embodied experience of place.
To involve housing regeneration practitioners to explore how insight can be gained through spatial dialogical art practice
Drawing on ‘know how’, ‘know what’ knowledge (Nelson, 2013), skeleton research project idea, Re:connections (part two) developed to answer new research questions</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Develop practice/theory #3 (Jan – April 2018)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Investigate Theory:
Development of the practice idea in tandem with literature review providing insight into new research problems and questions</td><td>Literature review expanded to include spatial theories such as Edward Soja (1996) and Kim Dovey (2010), drawing further on Doreen Massey’s (2005) concepts of space and place, alongside critical writings on socially engaged art practice, including Suzanne Lacy and Mary Jane Jacob (1995), and Jane Rendell (2006).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Curatorial Framework for Re:connections (part two):

Reshaped aims and objectives
To provide an opportunity for embodied experience for participants to enrich the verbal dialogue and knowledge of lived experience
To engage housing regeneration practitioners to analyse the value of</td><td>Artist led walks considering multisensory qualities of perceiving place

Interact with and reflect on art dialogues through immersive, multisensory installation, drawing on Sarah Pink’s concept of ‘ethnographic place’,</td></tr>
</table>

dialogical art practice as a method of learning lived experience	Reflexive practice through semi structured dialogue.
Select artists *Artists selection criteria:* • Socially engaged practice following a sensitive and ethical approach • Embodied approaches that prompt dialogue with residents • Existing perceptions of Lee Bank as a local 'outsider'	Claire Hickey and Emily Warner were selected as an extension to their involvement in Re:connections (part one). Their practice influenced the development of the curatorial framework and posed a potential approach to address the research problem. In addition, further study, through dialogue and self-reflection, of their relationship to the place would be of benefit, and the relationship between myself as curator and them was more collaborative.
Dialogue with artists	I discussed the development of the curatorial framework with Hickey and Warner, who contributed their thoughts on how they would like to work. This informed further shaping of the curatorial framework for Re:connections (part two) and the artists brief.
Secure funding	Multiple funding applications were submitted (Arts Council, Birmingham City Council and RSA), however only one was successful initially. I applied again to the arts council for the final phase of Re:connections (part two) which was successful.
Artists brief	Setting out curatorial framework and theoretical concept and roles and responsibilities (See appendix 2.2)

Application of practice/theory #2 - for Re:connections (part two) *(Following notification of funding)*	
Situated relationship building Late summer/autumn 2018	Face to face meetings with group leaders, community managers; attending community group sessions and talking about Re:connections (part two), asking if there is interest and permission to collaborate.
Organise artist-led walking sessions	Organise meeting and finishing place where the group can sit together for a welcome and introduction before the walks, and reflection time at the end of the walks. Leafleting individual houses (information about artist-led walks and how to book) Residents who showed an interest in participating in Re:connections (part two), booked to join the artist-led walks. (Size of groups between 1 – 5 residents). Residents were grouped together with people they knew if I felt they would benefit from support, or with people they didn't know where they were more confident.
Artists led walks in Lee Bank with Claire Hickey and Emily Warner. *(October 2018)* The walks were at different times of the day, lasted one hour (sometimes longer if residents wanted), and were guided by a theme set by the artists (see chapter 3: In Dialogue).	• Gain informed participant consent • 8 x artist led walks* with small groups from 1 – 5 residents. *(Total number of residents who participated: 35)* Recorded through: • Photographs • Video • Recorded dialogue (Figures 2.13, 2.14, 2.15 artist-led walks in Lee Bank)

	(For video and further photographs see website: www.jenny-peevers.co.uk) **for one event the residents group were inside and worked with clay and maps. (That group was larger with 9 participants)*
Sharing knowledge: Assembling Dialogues events Commissioned additional artists/designers Jieling Xiao, Kaye Winwood and Remi Andrews to consider taste, smell, and sound Two Assembling Dialogues events took place within the Lee Bank area, with residents who participated in the artist-led walks along with other residents. One Assembling Dialogues event (called Presenting Dialogues) took place at STEAMhouse, a venue outside the area with housing regeneration practitioners and artists. A facilitated dialogue	Brief for Multisensory art installation, drawing on Pink's concept of ethnographic place[15] (Pink, 2015: 49). (See appendix 2.2) Collaboration with artists: Development of Assembling Dialogues concept with artists, sharing and reflecting on art dialogues gathered through artist led walks, and discussing ways of presenting Assembling Dialogue events *(28 participants attended and gave informed consent)* Recorded Assembling dialogues event through: • Photographs (figure 2.16, 2.17, 2.18) • Video (For video and further photographs see website: www.jenny-peevers.co.uk) Reflexive practice:

[15] Sarah Pink describes ethnographic places not as the physical, real places that an ethnographer has been located and embedded in for fieldwork, but rather a concept of that place, one the ethnographer makes in order to communicate their research with others (Pink, 2015:48), stating that it has to be a material and sensorial presence in order to invoke the imagination of the audience.

followed time for participants to view and interact with the installation.	• Recorded and transcribed dialogue between artists, responding to questions set by me (Appendix 3.2)

Critical reflection #3

I evaluated Re:connections (part two) through reflecting on the video and sound recordings, documentation, observation and transcribed dialogues. I considered the documentation and dialogues in relation to the reshaped research questions:

- How can spatial dialogical art practice provide insight into lived experience to housing regeneration practitioners?
- What are the roles of curator and artist and those participating if lived experience is not represented to outsiders by the artist?
- What is the form of art dialogue that enables a more embodied, collaborative approach?

Some key findings from Re:connections (part two) (expanded on in Chapter 3: In Dialogue)

- Embodied learning of lived experience was evident, as expanded in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing. It is, however, learned in a form of knowledge that is not translatable through written word, or fact-based knowledge (McFarlane, 2011)
- When reflecting on each walk, individuals showed empathy towards each other's responses, and to non-human elements of place.
- The residents who talked about feeling anxious and alienated after Lee Bank had been regenerated (in Re:connections (part one)), had a different response to the artist led walks in Re:connections (part-two). Whilst they didn't talk positively about their experience of living in the area, they focused on the activity in a playful and joyful way.
- Residents who participated in the Assembling Dialogues installations in Lee Bank interacted and reflected on the art-dialogues and their experiences of the area. They wrote their thoughts on card and layered the card within the installation and

discussed their reflections with each other. Many residents behaved in a celebratory way at the event. In comparison, the housing regeneration practitioners who participated in the Assembling Dialogues event outside the area, called Presenting Dialogues, interacted with interest but did not respond in an embodied way. The facilitated discussion showed that they recognised the value in the project, and the role that artists and curators could play, but didn't show evidence that they learned about the lived experience of Lee Bank. Therefore, the Assembling Dialogues installation was not successful in learning lived experience, however, as a method of exploring how lived experience can be learned, there were useful lessons. Further reflection on my research questions is considered in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing, and in the conclusion chapter.

The research findings from my practice informed further investigation into theory which was developed through writing. The process involved constant reflection on findings from Re:Connections and further literature review, which has developed into my contribution to knowledge expanded on in chapters 4: Ways of Knowing, and the concluding chapter.

Re:connections (part two) embodied art dialogues through artist led walks with artists Claire Hickey and Emily Warner

Figure 2.13
Claire Hickey's walk, with participants drawing their reflections of the walk

Figure 2.14
Emily Warner's walk focused on ties and bonds, using rope to connect

Figure 2.15
Claire Hickey's method of using clay as a companion on the walk

Re:connections (part two) Assembling Dialogue events with artists Claire Hickey and Emily Warner, Kaye Winwood, Jieling Xiao and Remi Andrews

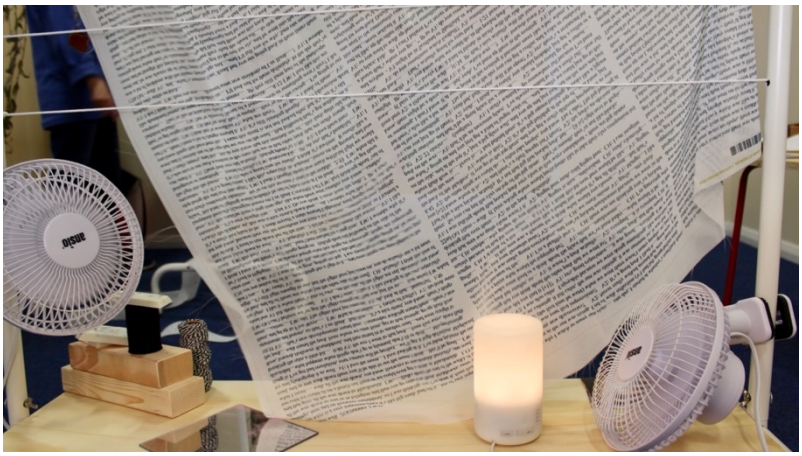

Figure 2.16
Transcribed recorded dialogues printed on fabric, blowing with fan and Lee Bank smells (created by Jieling Xiao in response to residents dialogues)

Figure 2.17
Biscuits made by artist Kaye Winwood to look like the clay pieces made by residents during the walks. They taste of strong coffee in response to residents dialogue about coffee

Figure 2.18
Assembling Dialogues installation presented at STEAMhouse, a venue outside Lee Bank, with housing regeneration practitioners

2.4 Reflections on spatial dialogical art practice in practice

The curatorial and research focus for Re:connections (part one) was to explore how certain art forms and approaches generated dialogue, contributing to the aim of defining spatial dialogical art practice. I set certain parameters for the artists: To generate dialogue either through participatory activity or as a response to their work in some way. The definition of dialogue in this first project was primarily verbal, prompted by multisensory considerations explored through the art practice. The artists were required to produce or facilitate art-based outputs, and these outputs would be shared in a public setting as a prompt for further dialogues with residents and regular visitors of the area. Re:connections (part one) informed the framework for Re:connections (part two), which focused on artist-led walks to encourage embodied dialogues. The approach to the sharing of outcomes of the art dialogues also shifted. In Re-connections (part two) the art dialogues were presented as a multisensory installation where the art dialogue objects were layered with spatial plans, historical maps, reports and case studies about the area, bringing art and urban practice forms of knowledge together. The aim of the installation was to reflect the heterogeneous and shifting meanings and experiences of place.

Key to my role was the initiation and brokerage of dialogues both on-site and off-site: a realisation of the 'bridging' role of the curator. A socially engaged project, especially one with a limited timeframe, is enhanced when there is support from individuals in the local area. Often these people are community leaders of some kind, people who know the area and can provide knowledge about on-the-ground community networks and intelligence. Community hubs provided opportunities for me to introduce the project to residents who visited those hubs and invite them to take part. The hubs were also required for the artists to base themselves during their engagement days on-site.

Insider partnerships: Re:connections (part one)

Having selected the location of Lee Bank, I researched networks to establish knowledge about those key individuals, and social meeting spaces in the area. My starting point was Family Optima Housing Association (Known as 'Family Optima), formally Optima Community Housing Association who oversaw the redevelopment of

the area from the 1960s Lee Bank council estate and remained the largest landlord of the social housing in the area. Following a meeting with the Community Engagement Manager at Family Optima, I approached several community groups she informed me about. Many of the leads I was given drew me further into the more intricate social networks of the area. My initial communication was with individual representatives of venue-based community hubs. These relationships were critical to building trust in my project and their subsequent willingness to engage and open opportunities for the artists to have space and time with residents who were members of groups based there. As part of my ethical framework, it was necessary for the resident participants to give informed consent to participate. Therefore, once potential groups were identified, I introduced the Re:connections project to the residents groups and asked if they were interested and would like to participate and explained the purpose of the project and how their contribution would be used. Informed consent was given through signing a consent form[16] (see appendix 2.3) and through me ensuring each participant understood the content of the form.

Insider partnerships: Re:connections (part two)

The insider partnerships in part two were more easily formed due to the relationships already that had started to form in part one. The community hubs played a similar role in part two, and were a vital support, both as a physical space to meet and as a place where residents feel comfortable and supported within their own networks. A significant difference in part two, however, was that I aimed to engage outsiders: housing regeneration practitioners, in the dialogues. Re:connections (part two) was more collaborative between the artists, residents, and myself, with my role acting as a 'bridge' between these relationships and collaborations. A new bridge in this project was between the outsiders (urban regeneration practitioners), artists and myself. I didn't feel it was appropriate to invite urban regeneration practitioners to join in the artist-led walks at this stage, as I felt it would damage trust.

[16] Consent forms complied with Birmingham City University, Faculty of Arts, Design and Media Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, Version 1.0 – October 2016

Artist/curator relationship: Re:connections (part one)

The relationship between the artists and the curator in Re:connections (part one) was focused on the artists brief, with ongoing discussion to enable the curator to support the artists deliver it. During the initial conversation with the artist, I was clear about the number of days, fees and requirements set out above. Following the site visit, the artists considered how they wanted to approach the project. Based on my initial brokering of relationships within the local area, I was able to provide the artists with suggestions and opportunities for how they could apply their practice to generate dialogue with residents. The artists proposed ideas of what activities would happen where and we developed a feasible plan together. I then set their brief based on our conversation, and my role was to support the artists and broker partnerships to realise the artists plans. We discussed the ethical considerations of the project which the artists were required to consider in the delivery of their practice.

For Re:connections (part one), each artist agreed on their own approach. The ideas for engagement were developed by the artists in a way that aligned with their individual practices and discussed and negotiated with me to ensure they aligned with my aims and objectives. During those sessions, the artist was required to frame activity in a way that facilitated verbal conversations with approximately ten residents each session. (I considered several levels of participation, however, as noted below.) Due to the quality and personal nature of the dialogue, I purposefully kept a low engagement target. My objectives included a reasonable diversity of residents. I aimed to achieve a gender and generational balance and include people from different ethnic backgrounds. I was also keen to engage people who lived in area for different amounts of time, from newly arrived to established residents who lived there some years prior to the regeneration starting in 2000. However, the aim of the research was to explore the methodology and not to be representative of the area. Following the four engagement sessions, the artists were required to come together as part of a public sharing event, to present the artworks representing the dialogues with residents, and continue conversations at a public event in Lee Bank. I shared the aims and objectives of the event with the artists, who then developed their own way of sharing their individual outcomes (the artists material outcomes (the art dialogues) are included in Chapter 3: In Dialogue).

Artist/curator relationship: Re:connections (part two)

Hickey and Warner were selected for Re:connections (part two) (as mentioned in 'Artists selection' above). As they had been commissioned for part one, a site visit wasn't required. The curatorial practice framework had shifted and was now specific about the activity (artist-led walks and multisensory installation), and who would be involved, therefore there was less negotiation. However, the relationship between myself as curator/researcher and Hickey and Warner, despite the specific activities, developed as collaborators. We reflected on the activity and its impact on themselves and residents regularly. For example, it was through discussion with Hickey and Warner that we agreed that dialogue was more than verbal. We also worked closely together on the concept, physical structures, and content for the Assembling Dialogues events.

Ways of participating in the dialogues

Vito Acconci states that participation is where people are led into interacting in a certain way (Hewitt et al, 2018). For Re:connections (part one), the residents response to the artists practice took different forms, with each considered as a valid response. These were: *Informal bystanders, where a* resident has not elected to participate and is not aware of the context or rationale of the artists activity but has shown some level of curiosity. This could be a short conversation or a one-word response. This was a common form of participation for Hickey and Warner's activity in Re:connections (part one), as there were no expectations of residents and passers-by. People often approached the artists out of curiosity. This form of response was also apparent in Davies work also and was evidenced when a resident read the poetry banners one by one, commenting on each one without engaging in one-to-one verbal dialogue. The *Informal participant* has engaged in casual conversation regarding the artists activity and once the project has been explained by the artist or researcher, has agreed to contribute their thoughts and perceptions to the study (giving informed consent). A *formal participant* has elected to participate at an agreed time in an informed way, having been given information about the project and their role in it, and given formal consent to their thoughts and perceptions contributing to the study. Participants in Re:connections (part two) were all formal participants, as they were introduced to the project by myself, they gave informed consent and booked on to a specific walk. The formal participants seemed to be

more committed to participating over a longer time duration. There was an opportunity to establish a relationship and trust. However, the informal participants offered spontaneous insight and engaged a more diverse selection of people, many weren't part of established groups.

Reflexive dialogues

Reflexive methods have been an integral approach to Re:connections (part one) and (part two). Reflexivity is a method drawn from ethnographic practice where the researcher "*seeks to understand other people's ways of being in the world and simultaneously aware that her or his involvement is part of the process.*" (Pink, 2015: 143). It is a process that aims to avoid, as much as possible, the artist unwittingly putting themselves in the position of "*ideological patronage*" (Foster, 1995). Hal Foster states the danger is of the artist who plays with the representation of the situated other, where the artist "*wanders from collaborative investigation to "ethnographic self-fashioning," in which…the other is fashioned in artistic guise*" (Foster, 1995).

My inquiry was to explore lived experience as a knowledge within the setting of Lee Bank and the everyday situation of the residents who live there. The artists and I used reflexive practice as a method to, as much as possible, to be aware of our own knowledge and relationship to the site. Gillian Rose (2007) explains that "*reflexivity is an attempt to resist the universalising claims of academic knowledge and to insist that academic knowledge, like all other knowledges, is situated and partial*" (Rose, G, 2007: 136). As detailed above, the methods for reflexive practice involved semi-structured dialogue with the artists. These took place before the artists engagement with residents started, during the artist first site visit; during mid-project, and at the end of the project. The dialogue questioned the artists perceptions of the Lee Bank area, and what might be informing that. I asked the artists to consider how their perceptions had changed over the course of the project. Whether they had assumed 'truths' that turned out to be different to their expectations. For my own self-reflexivity, I also considered my perceptions before the development of the project through a site visit, wandering and pondering within the Lee Bank area and recording my thoughts. I then recorded my reflections mid-project, and at the end of the project. The reflexive practice proved to be a useful method of creating an

awareness of our outsideness and the inherent risk of making assumptions based on outside knowledge. It was also useful for us to reflect on how our perceptions had changed as a result of the project.

Ethical dialogues

There were a number of ethical implications that emerged from the Re:connections project. Firstly, the personal implications the research may have on the residents participating in, and artists commissioned in, the Re:connections research project. Also, the professional implications for the individuals involved in the interviews and group interviews I have had with decision-makers in the housing and regeneration sector. In addition, there are wider societal consequences of the research. Svend Brinkmann describes the considerations as micro and macro ethics. Micro ethics is about the "*concrete research situation*" (2012: 59) with matters such as gaining informed consent and the confidentiality of data. Macro ethics is concerned with the impact of that data once it is published.

At times there have been tensions between the micro and macro ethics of my research. Re:connections (part one) involved verbal dialogues with residents about their perceptions of their lived place. The correct ethical processes took place, and participants gave informed consent to be involved. They were made aware they could withdraw their involvement at any time. During conversations with artists, a group of residents talked about how alienated and unsafe they felt living in the area. Some appeared stressed and anxious, so the artist tried to refocus the dialogue on more positive perceptions. One resident withdrew from the conversation (I followed this up with the community centre manager who spent time talking to this participant.) Through the critical reflection process, I adjusted Re:connections (part two) in response.

During Re:connections (part two) I wanted to ensure a more positive experience for the resident participants, so designed the activities to be more embodied, with a focus on the present rather than past perceptions. Many participants volunteered stories about their past, which was valued, however, the artists didn't prompt such stories. Some of the same residents that took part in part one also participated in

part two. Of those residents, the ones who appeared stressed and anxious in part one, seemed at ease and comfortable in part two, displaying laughter and playfulness. The micro ethics was concerned with not causing harm to participants. Methods and approaches to spatial dialogical art practice seek to mitigate, as much as possible, any ethical implications, such as the perceived power balance between participants and artists within the dialogues, and the artists and curator's role in ensuring residents contribution is not manipulated in any way. The reflexive practice, detailed above, is a method of heightening awareness of such risks.

To conclude, the development of spatial dialogical art practice as a method of learning lived experience has been an iterative, reflective, and reflexive process. It has necessarily been complex, and at times chaotic and messy (Smith and Dean, 2010). It was often from the chaos and mess that new knowledge emerged and methods shifted. Chapter 3: In Dialogue examines Re:connections (part one) and Re:connections (part two) and considers the artistic approaches and outcomes in relation to how the projects addressed the research aims and objectives. Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing explores the findings and examines ways that lived experience can be learned through spatial dialogical art practice.

The objective to bring housing regeneration practitioners to embody and learn lived experience remains unresolved. The Assembling Dialogues installation was an event that explored the concept of creating a space that invited the audience to "*imagine themselves into the places of others*" (Pink, 2009: 49). It didn't, however, provide the embodied experience with which lived experience could be learned. I consider the potential of housing regeneration practitioners joining residents and artists on the artist led walks in the conclusion chapter, alongside the ethical considerations that shift in approach brings.

Chapter 3
In Dialogue

A key pillar in my research methods was my practice element, a spatial dialogical art project called Re:connections, situated in the Lee Bank area, inner-city Birmingham, UK. The Lee Bank Estate was a former 1960s council housing estate that was part of a large-scale regeneration project that started in 2000[17]. In this chapter, I examine the process and outcomes of Re:connections, and how the project addressed the research questions that I established. I illustrate how, through the iterative and reflective research process (detailed in Chapter 2), new research questions emerged and shaped new approaches.

The key questions explored through Re:connections were:

> How can the lived experience of a place be learned by insiders and outsiders, through spatial dialogical art practice?
>
> What are the defining qualities of spatial dialogical art practice that provide ways of learning lived experience?
>
> What is the value of learning lived experience to housing regeneration practice?

The theoretical framework for my research has been informed by spatial and philosophical concepts of space, place, and everyday experience, as set out in Chapter 1: About a Place. A key conceptual thread within these concepts has been that of insideness and outsideness (Relph, 1976). Alongside this concept, the curatorial practice framework has drawn from theories of place drawn from Henri Lefebvre (1991), Doreen Massey (2005) and Edward Soja (1996) among others, which I expand upon in Chapter 1: About a Place. I explore these theories in practice through Re:connections, and through the artists different dialogical approaches, define different forms of art dialogue and consider these forms as methods of

[17] The regeneration of the Lee Bank area is discussed in Chapter 1: About a Place.

learning lived experience. I assess how participants and the artists were impacted by the art dialogues, and how those impacts reflect on the theories of place. This analysis shaped my curatorial framework for spatial dialogical art practice. In this chapter, I also examine some of the ethical challenges that emerged from the research project, and the questions they pose for a curatorial practice framework for spatial dialogical art practice.

3.1 Dialogues in Lee Bank: Re:connections

Re:connections was a series of artist-led activities and events. The aim was to explore how spatial dialogical art practice can be applied to understand more about people's everyday experience of where they live. The area of study was an inner-city residential area, previously one of five council housing estates that formed the Birmingham City Council Central Area Estates, before undergoing regeneration in the year 2000. Before regeneration, the area was called the Lee Bank Estate and was synonymous with poor-quality housing and social deprivation. The area covers approximately thirty-eight hectares and is bordered by two eight-lane roads. The £550 million regeneration project (ESRC/HCA, 2009) has been recognized as a flagship project and has won several awards, including the Deputy Prime Minister's Award for Sustainable Communities in 2006. It involved the demolition of four tower blocks, the refurbishment of seven towers, the building of new private and social housing, and the design and development of two parks. Over the last eighteen years I have witnessed the physical changes as an outsider, and knew how perceptions of the estate from the outside had altered; I was curious to know how area, post-regeneration, was perceived in the day-to-day experiences of the people who lived there. I examine the outsider knowledges about Lee Bank in Chapter 1: About a Place. In this chapter I examine the inside knowledge learned through Re:connections.

The project provides evidence of the potential of spatial dialogical art practice to housing regeneration practice. The project illustrates an approach to learning about a place that reflects the complexity and nuances of people's experience with their everyday place.

Re:connections was delivered in two parts: Re:connections (part one) included four micro-projects with artists applying different dialogic approaches with residents of the Lee Bank area, to prompt dialogue that explored lived experience. Re:connections (part one) commissioned five artists from different art forms: photography, poetry, sound and live art-making. There was a period of reflection and analysis of the curatorial framework alongside each artist's contribution. This analysis informed and reshaped the curatorial framework for Re:connections (part two). The second iteration of Re:connections comprised a series of artist-led walks facilitating embodied dialogues, followed by a multisensory and interactive installation of the dialogues gathered and documented during the walks. The installation was presented to residents in the Lee Bank area and housing regeneration professionals to explore and reflect on the lived experience of the participants of Lee Bank.

Re:connections (part one)

Re:connections (part one) took place in the summer of 2017. The project explored different art forms and approaches to art dialogue, and through those approaches, my aim was to examine the insight into the emotional attachments to Lee Bank. In addition to my own role as curator, Re:connections (part one) involved five artists: a sound artist (Justin Wiggan), a poet (Jess May Davies), visual artists/live art makers (Claire Hickey and Emily Warner) and a photographer (Dan Burwood). They engaged with residents in parks, on street corners and in community hubs, exploring the sensory and emotional perceptions of Lee Bank. The artists prompted conversations through their practice and created work as a response.
Re:connections (part one) culminated in a mini-festival event in the local park, where the artists shared artworks and a picnic with residents and continued the conversations. In this chapter, I outline the approaches and processes of each artist and reflect on how the curatorial approach, alongside the artists individual creative approaches, provided a method for outsiders and insiders to learn lived experience.

Re:connections (part one) objectives:

To explore different approaches to spatial dialogical art practice prompted through art forms of sound, live artmaking (visual arts), poetry and photography.

To assess spatial dialogical art practice as a methodology to understand more about emotional attachment to lived places.

To contribute to art and place-making discourse by considering spatial dialogical art practice as a method of place analysis.

My artists brief for Re:connections (part one) was purposefully open to exploring the impacts of different dialogical approaches. My requirements from the artists were to engage residents of Lee Bank through existing networks and groups and engaging passers-by, (supported by my role as curator); explore the residents emotional connections to Lee Bank through their arts practice, and present work created at a final sharing event in the local park (see appendix 2.2). I embedded reflexive practice in the project through semi-structured dialogue with each of the artists before, during and after their Re:connections project.

Re:connections (part one): The artists approaches

Justin Wiggan (sound)

Justin Wiggan's process started with an open and personal dialogue with Lee Bank by walking around the area. Through these dialogues he created a concept developed from his response to those dialogues. Wiggan spent time in a disused community room in Clydesdale Tower, one of the remaining 1960s tower blocks in Lee Bank and used the room as a workspace where he developed a concept formed by the multi-layered elements he observed. The physical structure of the tower block reminded him of a beehive, and people entering and leaving it were like bees,

> *…the idea of the voice and the beehive and the value of every single person contributing to that activity.*[18] *(Wiggan, 2017)*

[18] Wiggan, J., (2017) interviewed by Jenny Peevers as part of PhD research at Birmingham City University, 5 June 2017

Wigan also observed a nearby billboard poster quote by Hippocrates, "*Declare the past, Diagnose the present, Foretell the future"* and a display of photographs of the area before, during and after construction, in the foyer of the housing association office and community centre. These observations contributed to his concept of nostalgia as an illness. Further research identified that nostalgia comes from Greek meaning open wound and made the connections between the use of honey as a healing medicine used to treat open wounds, and Hippocrates quote. Following Wiggan's research and development, he devised a process of prompting verbal dialogue with a small group of residents from Edgbaston Community Centre. Many of the residents had lived in the area before the regeneration. He posed three questions, based on Hippocrates quote, to the group and recorded the dialogue. He asked the participants to consider what sounds have gone or are not welcome, what are the sounds that exist now, and what are the sounds desired for the future. The following dialogue between him and the participants was recorded by Wiggan. He then composed the sound piece layering the recorded dialogues he had with residents so that they represented the sonic quality of a beehive. Wigan shared the sound piece as part of a performative artwork in the public park to encourage further dialogues with a wider group of residents as part of the collective sharing event. The composed sound piece played out of an empty beehive (figure 3.1). There was honey water in individual cups which Wiggan handed out to residents, wearing a beekeeper suit. For Wiggan, the honey water represented the treatment of nostalgia and healing, symbolising hope. The artwork, therefore, was a reciprocal act and represented a form of healing.

The dialogue between Wiggan and the group of residents was troubled. Some members of the group found it hard to consider present sounds other than those that are negative, and some of the residents expressed anger and resentment towards other residents. One resident chose to leave the group as she found the process of expressing her thoughts and experiences too upsetting[19]. The group talked about how they felt at that present time, and many of them felt alienated and unsafe. One

[19] When the member of the group who was upset left the group, I approached the centre manager, who had an established relationship with her. The manager spent time with her until she was feeling calm. I later approached her and apologised for the project causing her distress. She remained in the building and appeared settled.

resident had lived in one of the tower blocks that was demolished. She talked about the time they were moved out of the tower: *"…that's when they started building all these houses and destroyed all the land.*"[20] The group talked about what they missed, and they discussed social problems they were aware of:

> *You don't hear the little birds now, you used to always hear the little birds cheeping. The squirrels running up the trees…don't hear none of that now. They got rid of it when they done all that over there.* (Resident 1)

> *There's ambulances and police cars and fire engines, that's all you can hear* (Resident 2)

> *'cos every day of the week...if you don't hear it, there's something wrong.* (Resident 3)

During the collective sharing event the response to Wiggan's performative sound piece from residents who passed by was engaged and positive. The residents (who had recently moved to the area) said they enjoyed the hopeful sentiment. The residents from the group at Edgbaston Community Centre did not attend the event.

Reflections on Wiggan's approach

An initial art dialogue between Wiggan and the physical elements of the place shaped the dialogue between himself and the residents. His artwork represented his personal response to those dialogues and prompted further dialogue with the residents. Wiggan's approach and process provided deep and raw insight into the lived experience of some of the residents. Through his art dialogues, both he and I learned more about the emotional attachment of the residents and their perceptions of the area, which was the curatorial aim of Re:connections. The participants seemed to illustrate a sense of grief over what was lost, and resistance or inability to participate in the changes presented by the regeneration. Their response aligned to what Relph termed 'existential outsideness' which he defines as *"an alienation from*

[20] Dialogues with residents at Edgbaston Community Centre and Justin Wiggan, June 2017, recorded and transcribed (See appendix 4.1).

people and places…" (Relph, 1976: 51). The emotional upset in discussing their perceptions of the area was evident, and this was troubling to me and Wiggan, and ethically problematic. Interestingly, the dialogue that the artwork facilitated at the collective sharing event with younger and more recent residents prompted a different and more positive response.

It was apparent in Wiggan's project that the forms of placeness that were evident in the residents dialogues added complexity to the categories of insideness and outsideness defined by Relph (1976). For example, the residents that he collaborated with in dialogue were established residents. They were insiders. Yet, some of them illustrated the "*rejection of an individual by a place*" (Relph, 1976: 51), and feelings of alienation that Relph defines as 'existential outsideness' (1976).

Jessica May Davies (poetry)

Davies followed a more traditional 'workshop' structure where she set a creative task for the participants to do to reflect on their perceptions of the area. Participants were from two different established groups of residents: a group of older residents who met at the local community centre, and young parents at a stay and play session at St Thomas Children's Centre. As a visual tool to prompt words she used historic photographs of the area and presented residents with a set of questions[21] to spark dialogue including: "*If Lee Bank/Park Central was a person, what would they be like?"* and, "*What would you tell people about this area?*" Davis presented each participant with the questions and invited them to write their responses. Participants responded differently, with some more comfortable with a verbal conversation with Davies, and others happy to write. Davies edited the responses and produced or co-produced ten poems. Some poems were structured around words and quotes, and others were written entirely by the residents. Davies presented the poems as banners fixed to park railings as part of the collective sharing event in Moonlit Park

[21] Jess May Davies questions: Where is your favourite place? What does Lee Bank/Park Central sound like? If Lee Bank/Park Central was a person, what would they be like? What would you tell people about this area? How do you get to know someone? And What do you think Lee Bank/Park Central will sound like in the future?

(figure 3.2). She also presented the poems as a set of postcards that were given to participants.

For Davies, each poem represented a dialogue of the participant(s) perceptions. Although Davies was ultimately responsible for the content of the poems presented, she was not consciously contributing her personal dialogues with the area. Each poem reaches a conclusion, whether that is about a community space that makes one resident happy, or where 'home' is. Some of the poems are structured as a dialogue and arrive at a reflection as an unanswered form of resolution such as the poem 'Too Many Words' which states:

> *…the park is the most peaceful place*
> *but then again it's very noisy.*
>
> *Maybe it's not more peaceful?*
> *Perhaps it just has a better view?*

The poem reflects a shifting place perception of the female resident who spoke these words during a conversation with Davies. The dialogue's starting line is a positive place perception, immediately contradicted, finishing with doubts over what her place perception was. That shifting of place perception was a common occurrence in many of the verbal conversations residents had with the artists. Of the other poems (there were 15) some were observations of how a resident felt in a particular place, such as the park, or community centre, another resident shared memories of growing up in the area before the area had been regenerated in the 1960s. The content of the poems was varied, and so were their perceptions of Lee Bank., reflecting their lived experience. The observed responses to the poem banners from residents was positive. When Davies was installing the banners on the park railings, one woman, when told what they were, told Davies she would go and read each one. She did, and said '*how lovely!*[22]. For Davies, her role was to capture and edit the dialogues, amplify them as coherent poems and suspend her own perceptions.

[22] Davies, J.M., (2017) interviewed by Jenny Peevers as part of PhD research, Birmingham City University, 13 September, 2017.

Reflections on Davies' approach

The shifting perception illustrated by the residents 'Too Many Words' poem aligns with Massey's concept of place as relational and meanings fluid (Massey, 2005). Davies dialogic process did provide some valuable insight into lived experience, however, poetry was an artform that residents didn't feel confident enough to engage with fully, and so had a verbal dialogue with Davies. This positioned Davies in the role of reworking the words to create poems. Whilst Davies' was concerned with separating her own perceptions of the area from the dialogues with residents and aimed to be the channel for the residents perceptions and lived experience, there was limited time with each participant and so Davies took on the role of editing the residents words. Whilst poems can powerfully capture deep emotions and perceptions, the art form seemed to be intimidating for some of the residents, especially those for whom English was their second language. Davies also felt she had to distract participants away from their children at the 'Stay and Play' activity at St Thomas Nursery[23]. Therefore, dedicated poetry or word-based participatory workshops, over a longer time frame, may have encouraged more residents to write poems in their entirety, in which they could express their experiences and perceptions. Certainly, residents perceptions of Lee Bank were evident through the poems. However, I wasn't sure whether the poem expressed their real and imagined perceptions, or whether the process of playing with words to flow with other words was more of a focus than a process of exploration about their perceptions of Lee Bank.

Dan Burwood (photography)

Burwood spent time with residents at a Church Centre during a 'drop-in breakfast club'. Most of the members of the church were established residents, who lived in Lee Bank before the regeneration began. During the first session, the dialogue between the artist and each resident was open. There was also a process of trust-building for the residents. Many of the dialogues were about personal stories of Lee Bank, reflecting various place perceptions from troubled and less friendly than before the regeneration, to more positive perceptions. Burwood suggested a

[23] Davies, J.M., (2017) interviewed by Jenny Peevers as part of PhD research, Birmingham City University, 13 September, 2017.

participatory photo walk with the residents, where those who participated would take their own photographs of the area during the walks. Some residents expressed an interest; however, they didn't turn up at the time and place arranged.

Burwood re-planned the activity, and asked group members to bring their own photographs of the area (or of their previous home if they were more recent residents) to the following drop-in session. Four group members participated, and the photographs provided a loose frame for more focused, in-depth, and one-to-one verbal dialogues about their perceptions of the area. One resident shared photographs of her childhood home in Cornwall and agreed to walk around the Lee Bank area with Burwood. Her conversation related her perceptions of spaces in Lee Bank with perceptions of spaces she remembered in her childhood environment. Burwood and the resident sat in the local park called Sunset Park. She said: "*I sit here and it just makes me go 'ahh'…When things are built up there's a sense of anxiety."* She compared informal seating in Sunset Park (large steps in an amphitheatre style) to her childhood coastal environment, *"…that's what I love about the beach, you know when you sit on a big beach you can find your own little space that's comfortable for you.*" She talked about when she and her family lived in a nearby flat that backed onto another flat, *"I looked outside the windows…it just made me feel like I was caged in.*" (Lee Bank residents, 2017). Burwood scanned the residents photographs and then returned them. He compiled layered montages with the scans and produced large-scale prints, presented as part of the collective sharing event in Moonlit Park (Figure 3.3).

Reflections on Burwood's approach

The personal photographs that group members shared with Burwood provided a powerful tool for dialogues about memories of the Lee Bank area. The dialogues, however, didn't provide as much insight into the current lived experience. The exception was the walk with the resident. The dialogue during the walk and discussing the personal childhood photographs provided an opportunity to consider childhood memories of place perception and how that shaped her present perception and experience. The walking activity also provided a reflective space for a dialogue about the design elements of the place, such as access for

those who a less mobile, which considered the experience of others and was empathetic. Burwood commented on the process: "*One of the things you get in a dialogical discourse is a sense of this being within a frame, outside of which life is continuing, but you're only getting this vignette."*[24] (Burwood, 2017). Therefore, Burwood's approach, through photography, was able to create a focus on a specific dialogue. Through Burwood's layering of those dialogues, a complexity is established that aligns with Massey's concept of space as "*simultaneity of stories-so-far*" (2005:9) and Dovey's concept of place as assemblage (Dovey, 2010). It was also evident Burwood's walk with the resident enabled the dialogue to be embodied. Burwood represented the lived experience of residents through the photo compositions, and so, ideas about lived experience that might be learned from them are represented by Burwood rather than the residents.

Claire Hickey and Emily Warner (live artmaking)

Hickey and Warner used a physical mobile structure they called 'Make/Shift/Space' (figure 3.4) to create a pop-up workshop environment as a base to engage people in conversation; to make work as a form of embodied response to place and to display provocations, photographs, and materials. They placed the Make/Shift/Space structure in outdoor public spaces and engaged local people and passers-by in an informal way. They also placed Make/Shift/Space inside a nursery space within Lee Bank and engaged parents at a 'Stay and Play' session. Their process was fluid. During each session in Lee Bank, they gathered more material which they layered with earlier work. There was a final editing stage to select work to print and display.

Their final sharing event at Moonlit Park represented a continuation of the dialogues rather than a presentation of a finished work or works. Residents were involved throughout all stages of their project in a way they felt comfortable with. There were brief conversations, longer conversations about the place and the artworks, and some local children with their parents stayed long enough to play with materials themselves, providing an opportunity for longer dialogues about

[24] Burwood, D., (2017) interviewed by Jenny Peevers as part of PhD research, Birmingham City University, 5 September, 2017

their lived experience. Hickey and Warner documented their own exploration and sensory responses to the area. Among other materials, for example, Hickey used clay to engage the body in the physical spaces by pressing and shaping it; they used historical maps to forensically trace layouts of the past with the present layout, spotting many commonalities; with card, plastic tape, rolls of photo paper, Warner drew her responses and layered in snippets of conversation she had with passers-by curious enough to come over and speak to them. They both recorded incidental happenings with photography and video on their phones[25], layered and assembled with other materials.

The curated assemblage of materials spoke of Hickey and Warner's response to the fluidity of space. Their work brought attention to the small scale (such as flower petals, grass seed, jagged bits of glass and a piece of paper blowing in the wind), and the larger structural elements of building materials and layout. All observations were treated with equal importance and were non-hierarchical. They describe their working process as a 'live feed', constantly adding to and layering their responses to the verbal and non-verbal, human and non-human, multisensory elements of the place. For example, they had a conversation with an older woman who mentioned that she walked through the park each day to smell the flowers. This prompted Hickey to press found flowers into clay (figure 3.5) and add to the layered collages of drawing and found objects (figure 3.6).

As part of the reflexive practice, they considered how their perception of the space shifted and in a state of flux, similar to their work. And, like their work, their perceptions remained unresolved. This resonated with a conversation they had with a resident who had lived in Lee Bank before the regeneration began. They recalled his perceptions swinging from wanting to leave; "*it's not how it used to be*", to a comment about how lovely the park seemed to him that day. Hickey and Warner's model is a form of 'conversational drift' (Kester, 2004), which reflects Massey's theory of space as an open process and system (Massey, 2005). Their layered assemblages are symbolic of the flux and flow of places. It was through

[25] No photographs of participants faces were included. Participant anonymity agreed in informed consent

their reflection of it they became conscious of meaning. For example, they considered the layering, pressing, and painting of objects to represent a "*glossing over of things*"[26], representing their perception of the regeneration process, although weren't conscious of that symbolism at the moment of making the work. The artists represented their embodied responses to the verbal and non-verbal dialogues of the place through their work, supporting the concept of 'placeness' or state of place perception as relational and multi-layered (Placeness is expanded on in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing).

Reflections on Hickey and Warner's approach

Hickey and Warner's embodied response to place was evident in their process and the material outcomes of their work. Their responses to the lived experiences shared through verbal dialogues with residents were layered with their own multisensory experiences, and with data such as historical maps. Through reflection of their process, the dialogues, and their material outputs, they became conscious of their perceptions and those of the residents they met. It was also evident that there was no hierarchy to the encounters, or the meanings that emerged from them.

Hickey and Warner's process and material outcomes aligned closely with Massey's and Dovey's theories of place as fluid and heterogeneous. Through verbal conversations, there were some insightful observations and dialogues which were interrogated through their work developing an embodied knowledge of Lee Bank through their art dialogues. The residents, however, were not involved in that bodily experience, so for them there were no new ways of being conscious of and reflecting on their own place experience.

[26] Hickey, C., and Warner, E., (2017) interviewed by Jenny Peevers as part of PhD research, Birmingham City University, 30 September, 2017

Reflections on Re:connections (part one)

The gathered materials and dialogues from Re:connections (part one), including artworks, interviews and observations, reveal a complexity of perceptions which, seen collectively, are unresolved and in flux. Owing to the small sample size of participants (forty-two), it is only possible to view the research as a body of individual responses, rather than as a generalizable insight into place identity. Therefore, the practice provides an insight into lived experiences rather than a rigorous place analysis.

It was apparent that the layered narratives of lived experience that were learned were mostly filtered through the artists representation. Whereas the artists responses, especially those of Hickey and Warner, were embodied in the place. They had the opportunity to reflect to become conscious of their perceptions and experiences. The residents, however, while they were generous in talking about their emotional and sensory perceptions, did not explore their perceptions through bodily connection, and did not make physical artworks themselves as part of the event. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan suggests that creating an awareness of sensory perceptions through physical involvement may form a deeper association with lived spaces (Tuan, 1977); sensory ethnographer Sarah Pink describes sensory experience as a particular form of knowing, one that cannot necessarily be expressed in words (Pink, 2015). Therefore, the role of the artists should be to encourage conversations through bodily connection as well as through talking.

Through the project it was learned that some of the established residents who engaged in dialogue with the artists felt alienated and dislocated by the changes the regeneration brought about. Some expressed anger, a sense of loss, or a fear and a perception of lack of safety post-regeneration. Drawing on Edward Relph's concept of "insideness" and "outsideness", some of the older, established residents' emotional attachments to place aligned with "*existential outsideness*" (Relph, 1976: 51) (I reflect further on the concept of placeness in my research findings in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing). The residents could no longer take for granted their relationship to and experience of their home. Existing literature about the Lee Bank regeneration project, including case studies and awards, does not include a consideration of residents' emotional experience and perceptions of place.

It is notable that the perceptions of some of the older, more established residents conflict with the awards and case study literature regarding the success of the regeneration detailed in Chapter 1: About a Place. This inconsistency suggests there is misrepresentation in the established knowledge about Lee Bank regeneration, and so there is value in considering lived experience as a place knowledge. However, whilst the negative emotions and place perceptions from some of the residents were valuable lived experiences to learn, it was not ethical to subject residents to emotional distress as part of the process of learning. In addition, the value of the artists in Re:connections (part one) was in their critical responses and representation and interpretation of that knowledge. This also posed ethical questions about the role of the artists, as outsiders, interpreting the lived experiences of those who are, too often, the subject of misinformation and misinterpretation. (Kester 2004).

Forms of art dialogues

I have defined two forms of art dialogue that emerged from Re:connections (part one):

The *resolved art dialogues:* This is the form of dialogue where the artist assimilates the dialogic material gathered and represents it in the form of an artwork or artworks. The artwork provides a point of reference or conclusion to the dialogue. A resolved art dialogue can present a symbolic statement and so, can be developed as a form of art activism, aligning with Kester's definition of dialogic aesthetics (Kester, 2004) and more closely aligned to Helguera's definition of socially engaged art (2011). The artwork(s), in re-presenting the stories and perceptions of participants can be effective in prompting reflective and meaningful dialogue in response.

Analysis of the findings from Re:connections (part one) have shown that the information flow within the resolved dialogues was heavily balanced on the artists view. The resolved dialogue can be shared with an audience of outsiders effectively and does not require an embodied engagement of place to consider the artists representation of lived experience. The risks inherent in the resolved dialogue, however, are in the representation of lived experience knowledge as coherent, when, as the complexity of the dialogues over the time of the project suggested, it is

complex, in flux and layered. Wiggan's performative artwork represented a resolved dialogue in that it was a coherent representation of the artists response to the dialogic material gathered. Davies collection of poems represented resolved dialogues in some ways. The poems were a tangible representation of lived experience. In and of themselves they also evidenced the residents perceptions were valued.

The unresolved art dialogue: Unresolved art dialogues continue and shift, and do not reach a conclusion or clear understanding. They are reflective of our human relationship with space as "*always in process, as never a closed system…"* (Massey, 2005: 11). The art dialogues are represented by the artists and can be a form of embodied learning of place for the artists. Artists Helen and Newton Harrison describe their working method as "*conversational drift*", freeing them from what they term 'dialectical' thinking and the requirement to "*find a resolution between two forces of opposition*" (Kester, 2004: 65). Claire Hickey and Emily Warner's process embraced the 'conversational drift' and was a clear example of unresolved art dialogues. Unresolved art dialogues are layered and fluid, so, therefore, do not rest on a coherent representation of lived experience. It is the unresolved art dialogue that aligns with the concept of place as relational.

Figure 3.1
Justin Wiggan in beekeeper suit with soundpiece playing from beehive.

Figure 3.2
Jess May Davies collaborative poems on railings

Figure 3.3
Dan Burwood's layered photograph, using a scan of the residents childhood photograph of her local beach, layered with her sitting in Moonlit Park, Lee Bank

Figure 3.4
Hickey and Warner's clay pressing of a flower, in response to a dialogue with a resident who walked in the park every day to smell the flowers

Figure 3.5
Hickey and Warner's map layered with drawings and objects made in response to the dialogues with residents

Re:connections (part two)

Re:connections (part 2), happened from October 2018 to March 2019. The methods shifted, as described in the 'know-how', 'know-what, 'know-that' process (Nelson, 2012), as a result in the analysis of Re:connections (part one) and the associated theoretical review. Through reflecting on the methods and dialogues gathered by the artists in Re:connections, (part one) it was decided that Re:connections (part two) would develop the concept of the unresolved art dialogue further. The artists would collaborate with residents in an embodied approach.

The curatorial practice framework shifted to reflect an aim for the artists to facilitate participants embodied exploration of Lee Bank. It reflected the expanded concept of dialogue, as evident in Hickey and Warner's approach. The framework aimed for the spatial dialogical art practice to enable residents to creatively explore their perceptions of where they lived. I specified the method of artist-led walks and immersive events to achieve the aims and to share the art dialogues as a form of knowledge about lived experience. Hickey and Warner were selected as artists for Re:connections (part two) because their approach in Re:connections (part one) aligned closely with my theoretical framework, and re-shaped my curatorial framework. Their approach was layered, anti-hierarchical and fluid. Their layering and shifting of materials, using found objects and being embodied in the space, closely aligned to my definition of place (expanded on in Chapter 1: About a Place).

Re:connections (part two) was also re-shaped to include an additional objective to engage regeneration practitioners (outsiders) to explore how lived experience could be learned. I considered an immersive installation, drawing on Sarah Pink's concept of an 'ethnographic place' (Pink, 2015) as a method of achieving this. Through process of critical reflection, the Re:connections (part one) objective of considering 'emotional attachment' assigned a value to lived experience. I also moved away from the objective of place analysis which suggested a defining statement about the place which would align with an essentialist position.

Walking activity

Walking was chosen as an activity for Re:connections (part two) to provide the opportunity for participants bodily and sensory engagement with the Lee Bank area, drawing on walking art practice as a socially engaged art. There were eight walks that were facilitated by either Hickey or Warner and focused around themes they developed to encourage residents to reflect on their perceptions. The themes included a walk called 'Edges, cracks and crevice', guided by boundaries, and encouraged residents to think of how the borders inform perceptions of space. Another, called 'Out-of-place and over-looked', was "*a walk that looks for what has been misplaced, discarded, or forgotten over time. What happens when things don't go as planned, don't fit or drift?…*" (Warner, 2018). 'Layers, Growth, Care and Loss', was a walk that uses clay "*as a companion*" (Hickey, 2018), and 'Ties, Bonds and Connecting Points' was a walk that thinks about ties and connections to a place. (Warner, 2018). The walks explored the Lee Bank area emotionally and physically, using mindfulness techniques to focus on feelings in the present and to connect to the layered landscape in a multisensory way. Groups were purposefully small to ensure equal consideration was given to the dialogues. The approach was playfully disruptive, providing a space to explore elements of residents everyday place that are often walked by and not noticed. The group reflected on the walk and how it impacted them at the end of each session.

Reflections on the walking activity

Ernesto Pujol (2018) defines artists walking practice as "*a socially engage public performance practice through considered human gesture, such as conscious walking*" (2018: 3) *"…ultimately seeking a socially transformative, cultural experience*". My research was not seeking to be directly socially transformative, rather, it was an inquiry into everyday place knowledge. However, it became apparent that Hickey and Warner's walks disrupted ways to behave in a place, and so, were transformative in a certain way. I expand on the forms of knowledge of lived experience that were achieved from Hickey and Warner's walks in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing. However, a notable change occurred with the same established residents who had participated in Wiggan's and Davies dialogues (who I had mentioned expressed anger and anxiety towards the regeneration and the impact it had on their lived experience) when they participated in Hickey and Warner's walks.

During the walks, the emotional quality of their dialogue was very different. The residents were playful and joyful, and their memories (prompted by their own discussion rather than by the artists), were more positive. They all said they enjoyed the walk and saw the area in a different way.

Reflecting on their approach, Warner discussed her interest in "*being in fluid and non-fixed states...which lends itself to working with particular types of materials or props, such as water, being a fluid thing..*" She was also interested in exploring ideas of being connected or disconnected:

> *[allowing] us to explore ideas of compromise, negotiation, struggle…an alternative way of physically engaging with space, so tapping into this idea of performing, or mis-performing, in familiar space as a way of breaking open perspective or changing what we're paying attention to. (Warner, 2019)*

Warner's reflection illustrates an alignment with my theoretical framework and epistemological position and the idea of disrupting ways of performing in place as a conscious approach. Both Hickey and Warner's ideas and approaches influenced my theoretical research, and my curatorial framework created new opportunities for their ideas. It was also evident that the walks enabled an empathetic sharing of lived experience.

> *...we were making space for conversation and sharing of knowledge, and experience, which I am eternally grateful to people for sharing that because I just think that's one of the most fulfilling and enriching ways of engaging with people is them sharing aspects of their life and experience and in turn, opening up insights and perspectives from outside of yourself and in the project*. *(Warner,2019)*

It was the empathetic responses that opened up the opportunities for learning lived experience: "*Empathy is a deeper ability to engage with a variety of feelings and to inhabit, sometimes even bodily, the other's perspective*" (Lanzoni, 2018:6). Lanzoni states that empathy includes spatial qualities, "*the ability to dwell in an-other's place and to see from this vantage point*." (Lanzoni, 2018: 6) My definition of empathy

embraces this description, however, I also refer to Ingold's idea of social relations including all organic life (Ingold, 2018), therefore place empathy includes non-human elements of place in empathic learning. It was evident that Hickey and Warner, through sharing an embodied experience with the residents within a place, developed a form of place empathy.

Form of art dialogue

The form of dialogue that emerged from Re:connections (part two) was the embodied art dialogue. Embodied art dialogues represent a non-hierarchical method of learning through being-in-place. The artists, in facilitating the embodied art dialogues, created a philosophical space where those who participate explore their own embodied responses to the multisensory dialogues and learn the embodied responses of others within the space. The embodied art dialogues enable those participating to move through the site in a fluid way and reflect how the place is in constant flux (Massey, 2006). Yi-Fu Tuan suggests "*An object or place achieves concrete reality when our experience of it is total, that is through all the senses as well as with the active and reflective mind"* (Tuan, 1977: 18). Sensory dialogues represent a deeper form of connection. This definition also returns to Kester's notion that all artwork promotes dialogue. "*It creates a different kind of knowing…"* (Tuan,1977:18).

The resolved and unresolved art dialogues produced situated knowledges for the artists and therefore enabled the multisensory embodiment of that place. The embodied art dialogue, however, enables all participants in the dialogue to explore together, to share each other's insights and perspectives. As such, it illustrates Lanzoni's description of empathy: "*the ability to dwell in an-other's place and to see from this vantage point*." (Lanzoni, 2018: 6) The embodied art dialogue, therefore, creates a physical and philosophical space to enable embodied, empathetic learning.

Re:connections (part two) embodied art dialogues through artist led walks with artists Claire Hickey and Emily Warner

Figure 3.6
Emily Warner's 'ties, bonds and connecting points' walk, with residents making a sculpture with found objects.

Figure 3.7
Claire Hickey's walk, 'Layers, Growth, Care and Loss', using clay as a companion to the walks

Figure 3.8
Claire Hickey's walk, 'Layers, Growth, Care and Loss', with residents considering the sensory landscape

Figure 3.9
Emily Warner's walk, 'Water Sources and Elemental Flows'. Assemblage with found objects and water.

Figure 3.10
Emily Warner's walk, 'Water Sources and Elemental Flows', using paint and water on dried leaves.

Figure 3.11
Emily Warner's walk using props to reflect and consider place in different ways.

3.2 Assembling dialogues: sharing dialogues as a knowledge

Assembling Dialogues

Following the series of walks, artists Hickey and Warner, in collaboration with myself, curated an interactive and immersive installation called Assembling Dialogues following my curatorial framework. Additional artists were involved in Assembling Dialogues to create an immersive and multisensory installation: Remi Andrews collaborated with Will Taylor on a sound piece using sounds gathered; Kaye Winwood created food experiences that responded to the walking dialogues, and Jieling Xiao created ways that participants could interact with the smells that were observed on the walks.

The concept underpinning Assembling Dialogues (both inside and outside Lee Bank) was drawn from ethnographer Sarah Pink's idea of an ethnographic place (Pink, 2015): A sensory and material experience where audiences and participants can imagine themselves in the place, while also extracting theoretical and practical meaning (Pink, 2015). The installation layered and assembled images, tactile objects, tastes, smells, and the sounds of conversations between artists and residents layered over environment sound recorded in the area such as cars and children playing.

The curatorial framework for Assembling Dialogues is underpinned by the theories of Doreen Massey (2005) and Kim Dovey (2010). Massey considers space as simultaneous 'stories-so-far'. A place, she suggests, is a collection of those stories. Places also gather experiences and histories, languages and thoughts. Massey proposes a re-thinking of space from something that can be flattened and mapped out to a multiplicity of meanings (Massey 2005). Kim Dovey (2010), an architectural and urban design critic, explores the theory of place as a dynamic assemblage "*Place is a dynamic ensemble of people and environment that is at once material and experiential, spatial and social*." (2010). Dovey states that the concept of place-as-assemblage enables us to understand place as an everyday experience. Assembling Dialogues concept included layering of multisensory material, encouraging the fluidity of moving elements, adding and taking away. Pink states that the sensory ethnographer's aim is to know other people's places in a way that is

similar to the way those places are known by those people. She suggests this provides an understanding of how people experience and perceive their everyday places. (Pink 2015)

As part of the curatorial framework, I included traditional forms of knowledge used by regeneration practitioners in the layering of the installation, alongside materials gathered from and in response to the embodied artist-led walks. For example, historical maps, design drawings, policy documents and laser-cut figure grounds. The idea was to bring together and share different forms of knowledge, translating a form of 'Thirdspace' (Soja, 1996). Soja stated:

> *Everything comes together in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, conscious and unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life, and unending history"* (Soja,1996:56-7)

Assembling Dialogues aimed to conceptualise the emplacement of the participants of the artist led walks through multisensory material, interweaved with dominant place knowledge such as spatial, economic, and social data, typically learned by built environment professionals. The purpose was to create an environment where people can "*imagine themselves into the places of others*" (Pink, 2015: 49). Pink describes ethnographic places not as the physical, real places that an ethnographer has been located and embedded in for fieldwork, but rather a concept of that place, one the ethnographer makes to communicate their research with others. She suggests that whatever medium is used, it is the representation and interweaving of "*experience, theory, reflection, discourse, memory and imagination*" (Pink, 2015:48) stating that it has to be a material and sensorial presence in order to invoke the imagination of the audience. Different stories were layered and assembled: visual, haptic, factual, and imagined, emotional and non-emotional, to reflect our learning of place as non-linear and assembled (McFarlane, 2011:3). The title of the installation, Assembling Dialogues, draws from Kim Dovey's theory of Place-as-assemblage. Dovey describes place as a "*dynamic ensemble of people and environment that is at once material and experiential, spatial and social*." (Dovey, 2010: 7). The idea of

assemblage is also echoed in McFarlane's theory of learning assemblages (McFarlane, 2011) as ways of learning place.

The installation explored the concept of representing place knowledge. Materials gathered from and in response to Hickey and Warner's walks were presented in a fluid, layered, and entangled, multisensory installation where participants could continue to contribute by shifting materials and assembling new dialogues and stories. Two Assembling Dialogues events took place within the Lee Bank area in two key community hubs: Edgbaston Community Centre and St Thomas Nursery Centre. All the residents who took part in the walks were invited to the events to interact with and contribute to the installation. The installation was also presented to an invited audience of planners, housing professionals, artists and others who are involved in placemaking practice but have no embodied knowledge of the Lee Bank area. The location for this audience was a city centre space, STEAMhouse, approximately one mile from the Lee Bank area.

Reflections on Assembling Dialogue events

The two situated Assembling Dialogues events in Lee Bank provided a valuable collective sharing of the participants collective contributions. The events were well attended with participants inviting members of their family and friends. Some participants who came to the St Thomas Nursery event wanted to bring coffees and teas and snacks from their country of origin (including Eritrea, Turkey, Iran and China), sharing their cultural heritage. Their contribution added rich layers of multisensory dialogue to the event and created a celebratory feel. All who attended interacted, shifted layered materials, contributed their thoughts, and chatted with each other about the installation and their thoughts about the area. The events provided an opportunity to interact with and reflect further on the place rhythms represented in the gathered multisensory materials. The events also created an embodied dialogical space for those attending them, and a further opportunity to reflect on their own place experiences and perceptions. They also strengthened the understanding of the perceptions and experiences of each other, thereby developing an empathy with the place.

The STEAMhouse Assembling Dialogues event provided a useful exploration into whether lived experience can be learned through a curated space to an audience of outsiders. The invited outsider audience of planners and housing practitioners at the STEAMhouse event were also invited to participate, add their dialogue, and move and re-assemble materials. The aim was to explore whether the audience, through interacting with the multisensory qualities of the installation connected to the work in a way that achieved place knowing.

During the first part of the event, the participants were invited to interact with the installation. They did interact, but more tentatively than the participants (mostly residents) at the events in Lee Bank. There was a facilitated discussion as part of the STEAMhouse Assembling Dialogues event. Participants were asked whether they gained a sense of the Lee Bank area through the installation. The responses were mixed. One person said he felt a sense of the engagement rather than a sense of the place. Another said it communicated to him "*a sense of finding their way*". He explained:

> *… the thing that I picked up from this is the individual living in the place, discovering their own neighbourhood. A place has been created but people don't know all of it. Or they haven't felt comfortable in exploring all of it, and there are things still to be discovered about it, and then when they share that experience it gets so much richer because they're then realising that everyone has a different sense. So, to me, that is all about discovery.*[27] (Participant 1)

This participant gained a perception of residents new multifarious connections within the Lee Bank area. Through the installation, he'd sensed a 'richness' of their coming together. His perception was similar to that of me and the artists involved, and his reflections illustrated empathetic perceptions about residents lived experience of the place. There was an overall agreement from the group that new ways of learning about place were needed. One comment from a planner suggested there needed to be a "*reframing of [planning] consultation to take into account non-tangible*

[27] Jenny Peevers Recorded discussion at Assembling Dialogues event, STEAMhouse Birmingham, April 2019

experiences of place",[28] however, there was also a question of the validity of a form of knowledge that can't be presented on A4 paper as text. Another participant stated:

> *People are so used to having a piece of paper. It's the validity issue we were coming across. How valid are people's experiences and how do you record them? We can't even put pictures on a 500-page report let alone acknowledge senses.*[29]

However, she recognised the value of a 'ripple effect' when one or two stakeholders become open to change, they can then convince several other people, and so on. She suggested for housing associations, the residents voice is powerful. Speaking about a resident-focused project she was involved with she told us "*people's voices had never been heard, and that's had a massive ripple effect*." This suggests communication of new forms of embodied knowledge is possible but needs to be a considered and gradual process. Her comment led me to consider the openness to new perceptions needed and the role of empathy in the process of imagining other people's lived experience. A question was raised as to whether there would be a difference in housing regeneration decisions if the decision-makers lived in the place being regenerated. Others in the discussion group felt there would be. In that situation, their own embodied knowledge of lived experience would be layered with the structural place knowledge used in regeneration practice. It is probably that there would be more vested interest and therefore value given to lived experience of the place.

Many comments from the group revealed an expectation that myself and the artists were problem solvers. Our role, however, was not to identify a problem, but rather to provide an empathetic environment with which to understand the lived experience of Lee Bank. Hickey recalled:

> *[the group members asked] what do you do with this now? where do you go with this now…?" That's not necessarily what we're trying to do, we're not*

[28] Ibid

[29] Jenny Peevers Recorded discussion at Assembling Dialogues event, STEAMhouse Birmingham, April 2019.

> *trying to solve any of these problems, we're just acknowledging that there are these different things that are there, and we're just trying to show a different way of looking at a place, that does bring all these things and it is messy.*[30] *(Hickey, 2019)*

The comments raise the issues mentioned in Chapter 1: About a Place, where the artist is perceived as the problem solver, thus moving the focus away from those in positions of power having to deal with the structural problems that exist. The hierarchised knowledge and learning processes of urban policy and planning can lead to "*unequal relations of knowledge, power and resource*." (McFarlane, 2011: 17). Therefore, addressing the missing knowledge of lived experience disrupts the hierarchy. Ultimately, this may question the distribution of power and resource.

[30] Hickey, C., in conversation with co-artist Emily Warner as part of their reflexive practice, May 2019

Re:connections (part two) – Assembling Dialogues events in Lee Bank. Interactive, multisensory installation with artists Claire Hickey, Emily Warner, Kaye Winwood, Jieling Xiao and Remi Andrews

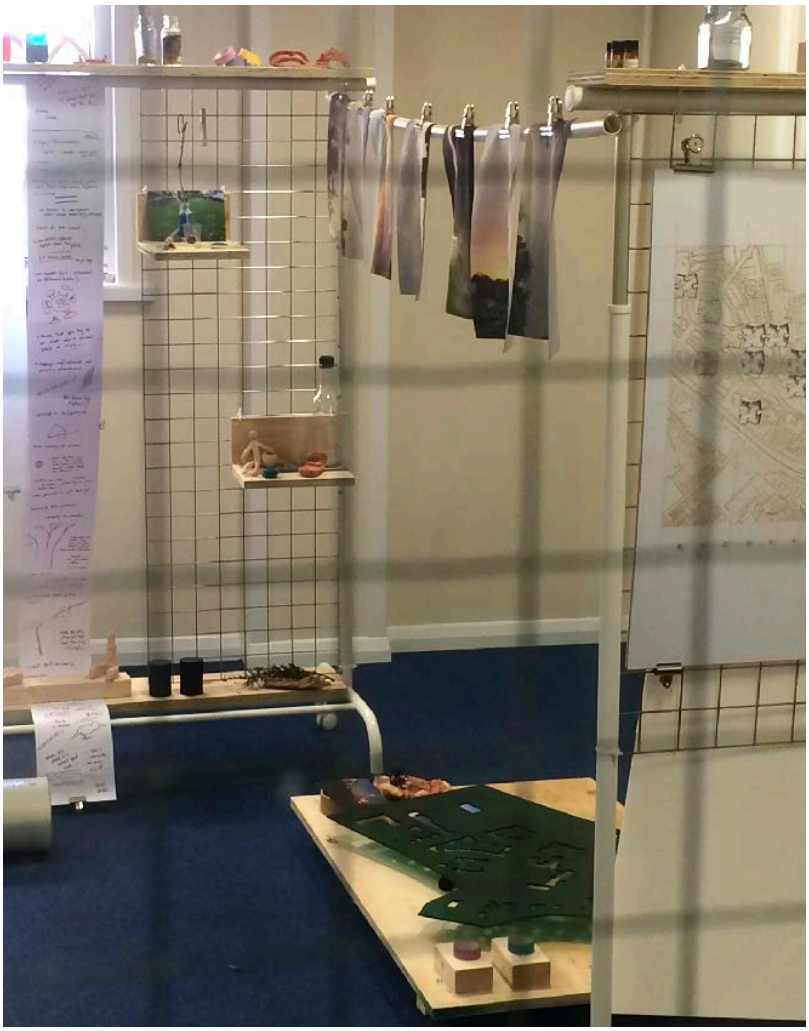

Figure 3.12

Figure 3.13
Residents brought teas, coffees, and snacks, which contributed to the sensory dialogues

Re:connections (part two) – Assembling Dialogues events in Lee Bank and STEAMhouse. Interactive, multisensory installation with artists Claire Hickey, Emily Warner, Kaye Winwood, Jieling Xiao and Remi Andrews

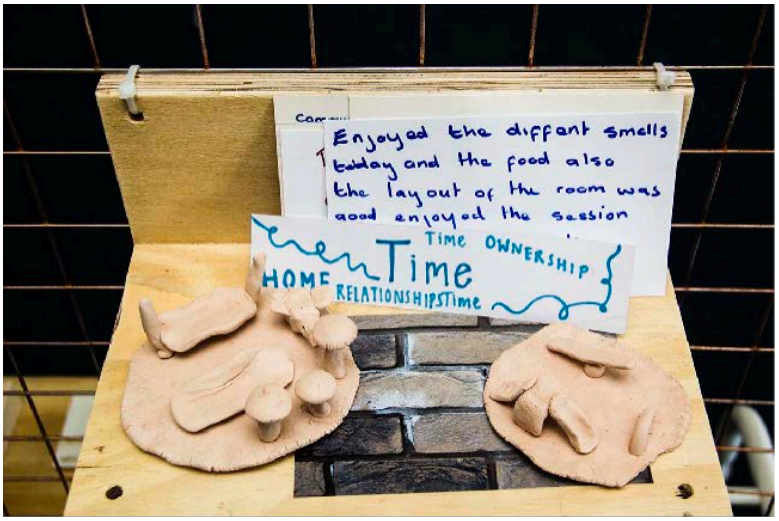

Figure 3.14
Residents interact with and contribute to the assembled art dialogues

Figure 3.15
Assembling Dialogues at STEAMhouse with housing regeneration practitioners

In conclusion, different forms of art dialogue emerged from the Re:connections project that shaped the type of knowledge and learning of lived experience, each raising their own ethical questions. The resolved art dialogue was effective in sharing coherent representations of the shared dialogues with residents. The risks inherent in the resolved dialogue, however, are in the representation of lived experience knowledge as coherent, when, as the complexity of the dialogues over the time of the project suggested, it is complex, in flux and layered. The unresolved art dialogues aligned more closely to my theoretical framework of space and place as fluid and open to new meanings, however, they too were the artists representations. It is the embodied dialogue that provides the opportunity for all participants in the art dialogue to shift place perception through embodied learning. The embodied art dialogue, a development from the unresolved art dialogue, enables the embodied learning of lived experience by all participants. Through the sharing of each other's perceptions, it is open to place empathy. My definition of place empathy draws on the earliest meaning, of empathy, a translation of the German term Einfühlung: "*in-feeling*" (Lanzoni, 2018: 2). Place empathy, therefore, as a form of inside knowing. The embodied art dialogue creates an empathetic, non-hierarchical space, not only for the participants of the dialogue but for the different types of meanings and representations that are gathered. It has the potential to bring urban practitioners into the space, to shift their place perception and disrupt the existing knowledge hierarchies of housing regeneration practice. In that way, it is a form of stealth activism.

The Assembling Dialogues multisensory installations revealed a process of learning about the sharing of lived experience as knowledge. The two events situated within Lee Bank with participants of the walks and other residents and workers provided a reflective space and an opportunity to share, learn and embody each other's lived experiences, and to shift place perception. It created a Thirdspace (Soja, 1996), bringing together the real and imagined spaces. The Assembling Dialogues space was an empathetic space that was unfixed and non-hierarchical. It allowed participants to continue to create and shift meaning. The STEAMhouse Assembling Dialogues event aimed to explore the dialogic space for outsider housing regeneration practitioners to learn lived experience. The participants (regeneration practitioners and artists who had not been involved in the project) interacted with the

dialogues and recognized the value of lived experience as a housing regeneration knowledge, however, the installation did not enable the "*knowing-in-being*" (Ingold, 2018) embodied learning that was apparent in the artist-led walks and the situated Assembling Dialogue events in Lee Bank. In that sense, it is only possible to consider the possibility of housing regeneration practitioners learning lived experience. I suggest this can be possible by not separating activities between insiders and outsiders, but by bringing outsiders (housing regeneration practitioners) into the embodied art dialogues through the artist-led walks and the situated Assembling Dialogues event. The value of learning lived experience of places being regenerated, however, was clearly recognised by the planners and housing professionals who attended.

In considering the form and definition of art dialogue that is created through spatial dialogic art practice, it has emerged through the research process that the embodied art dialogue provides clear opportunities to learn lived experience. Generated through a creative process of being embodied in a place, guided, prompted and facilitated by artists. Embodied art dialogues are verbal and non-verbal, human-to-human, and human-to-non-human dialogical exchanges. Embodied art dialogues encourage what artists Helen and Newton Harrison describe as "*conversational drift*" (Kester, 2004: 65). They are non-hierarchical and concerned with the layered, heterogeneous, shifting, multisensory meanings of a place.

In the following chapter, Chapter 4: Way of Knowing, I present the ways that lived experience can be learned through the embodied art dialogue, drawing on theories of place perception, place rhythm and empathy.

Chapter 4
Ways of Knowing: Towards the Learning of Lived Experience

It is through the findings of Re:connections that I present, in this chapter, the insight into how lived experience is learned. The findings, critically interrogated, allow us insight into my research question: How can the lived experience of a place be learned by insiders and outsiders, through spatial dialogical art practice?

Three concurrent concepts have emerged from my research that present ways of learning lived experience through spatial dialogical art practice. The concept of insider and outsider placeness, the state in which place is perceived, has been a thread running through my research process. Drawing on Edward Relph's definitions of outsideness and insideness (Relph, 2015), I consider the forms of placeness that were evident in my research practice and consider how those relate to Relph's theories. The second concept is that of place rhythm. The multifarious, linear, and cyclical life structures within a place that, through participating in spatial dialogical art practice, it is possible to become conscious of. I have drawn on the theories of Lefevbre (2013), Dewey (2005), and McFarlane (2011) to interrogate my findings on place rhythm. The third concept is made possible through shifting one's placeness and becoming conscious of one's own place rhythms and those of others, and conversely, it is possible to shift placeness and become conscious of place rhythm through it. Place rhythm and placeness create the third concept, place empathy. I define place empathy and explain how empathy is a quality that brings a particular kind of bond between participants of the embodied art dialogue (Lee and Ingold, 2006). It is through these three qualities that it is possible to embody and reflect on the lived experience of others.

4.1. Learning placeness

Placeness is the quality of perceiving a place. The term was introduced by human geographer Edward Relph (2015) to mean the quality of 'being' in a place. It encompasses every form of perception, from settled, safe and belonging, to troubled or distant and dispassionate. Placeness, then, is the state with which a place is experienced, and place knowledge shaped.

Insideness and Outsideness

The responses from participants of Re:connections affirm the importance of placeness and where it's positioned in relation to the concept of insideness, of "*knowing-in-being*" (Ingold, 2018). Relph developed forms of insideness and outsideness[31] (1976) which have remained a key contribution to theories of phenomenology of place, particularly the different ways and depths that people perceive place. Within his theories there are clear delineations of being 'inside' or 'outside' place (Relph, 1976) which provides a clear position of residents as inside, and decision-makers as outside. Perceptions of placeness that have emerged from my research project draw on his theories but reflect different complexities of perception. Whilst it is possible to have one dominant place perception, placeness is fluid and highly responsive to new dialogues and ways of being within place. Therefore, one's placeness can be shifted and definitions of inside and outside are not so fixed. This suggests that decision-makers could, through a process of learning lived experience, shift their perception from being dispassionate to a more empathetic state.

There are key epistemological differences between Relph's research position and my own (explained further in Chapter 1: About a Place), and not all of Relph's classifications have been relevant to my research, however, the following forms have provided a useful tool to examine, expand or dispute the classifications as a framework to understand the different ways built environment professionals might know a place: Objective outsideness: Relph describes this as: "*The deliberate adoption of a dispassionate attitude towards places in order to consider them selectively…as spaces where objects and activities are located, involves a deep separation of person and place*" (Relph, 1976: 51). The policy and practice of placemaking is one of objective outsideness through the hierarchical nature of policy development and practice. If residents are involved in the process, it is generally on the terms set out in policy and design guidance formulated by the local authority. For example, resident representation on a regeneration steering group, or community consultation, where a set of decisions are presented for residents to either like or

[31] Existential outsideness; objective outsideness; incidental outsideness; vicarious outsidness; behavioural insideness; empathetic insideness; existential insideness. Relph, E., (1976) Place and Placelessness, Sage: 49-55

dislike. My research has shown that objective outsideness is not a "*deliberate adoption of a dispassionate attitude*", but rather an inevitable one given the structures and processes in place. It is a position that precludes the lived experience of a place. Vicarious insideness is described by Relph as: *"[experiencing places] in a second hand or vicarious way, [and for the] experience to be one of a deeply felt involvement*" (Relph, 1976: 52). Examples include artists responses to place presented through art forms such as poetry or visual art. Vicarious insideness, could be invoked through reflection and the imagination. In considering Re:connections, this form of perception aligns to how the artists describe their perceptions of Lee Bank, and the residents dialogues of lived experience. Relph describes *behavioural insideness* as a form of knowing that "*consists of being in a place and seeing it as a set of objects, views and activities arranged in certain ways and having certain observable qualities.*" (Relph, 1976: 53) Behavioural insideness would consider place components such as boundaries indicating you are 'here' rather than 'there', and other physical structures understood by designers and planners such as built form, public or private spaces or density. However, the sensory and embodied experience of a place, the form of knowledge that informs how everyday life is perceived, is not included in this type of place knowledge. Empathetic insideness adds depth of perception to that of behavioural insideness. Relph suggests "*empathetic insideness demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to know and respect its symbols*." (Relph, 1976: 54). It is this form of insideness that aligns with what I aimed to achieve for myself and the artists through Re:connections. It is a state that requires a considered and embodied curatorial and artistic process, for as Relph states, empathetic insideness requires a purposeful effort to gain the phenomenologically informed insights that are rooted in people's lived experience of a place (1976). There were times when I and the artists aligned to Relph's description of empathetic insideness when engaged in the art dialogues, most notably during the artist-led walks in Re:connections (part two). It is a form of insideness that requires empathetic attention to lived experience. Relph states that *existential insideness,* however, requires a durational lived experience. It is a deep form of insideness where "*place is experienced without deliberate and self-conscious reflection yet it is full with significances*." (Relph, 1976: 55). This, Relph states is the most common form experienced by people who live in an area. Relph believes that existential insideness is part of knowing implicitly that you belong, creating "*a strong*

and profound bond" between person and place (Relph, 1976: 55). As I have expanded in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, the residents forms of perception were complex and in flux. Some residents felt alienated, and that they didn't belong. Other conversations did align with Relph's existential insideness definition and then shifted to the opposite, a form of 'existential outsideness' (1976), later. I outlined in Chapter 1: About a Place, McGarvey (McGarvey, 2017) may have embodied a place perception of 'existential insideness', as his perception was without conscious reflection, but full of significances. However, his account of his acute anxiety and emotional stress supported the definition of 'existential outsideness'. This suggests placeness is fluid, complex and layered, with placeness being a state that moves in and out of different states.

There were other forms of placeness that emerged from Re:connections that expanded Relph's descriptions. These definitions present an important framework with which to understand positions of placeness that are open to learning lived experience. 'Empathetic outsideness' is a form of place perception that, similar to 'empathetic insideness' (1976), demands a conscious effort to be empathetic to states of perception formed from everyday lived experience. However, the perception of place is from the position of outsideness and is without the embodied knowledge of lived experience. Comments from the urban practitioners that attended the STEAMhouse Assembling Dialogues event for Re:connections (part two) aligned with my definition of empathetic outsideness. There was a deep concern and recognition from the housing and regeneration practitioners, that residents experience of place was not being considered or valued by the regeneration knowledge structures. It would suggest that there was a recognition that this was a missing knowledge and represented an openness on their part to learning lived experience. 'Pro-placeness', I define as a perception that is supportive and 'acts for' a place. This form of placeness supports the hierarchical structure of place knowledge. I identified pro-placeness with audience members of Assembling Dialogues. This state is open to empathy and proponents of it have the potential to support the 'ripple' effect. Indeed, the acceptance of my invitation to participate in Assembling Dialogues supports the definition of their perceptive position of pro-placeness by their openness to learning. For decision-makers with pro-placeness, however, whilst supportive of wanting the best outcome for a place, their knowledge

is formed from the existing hierarchical structures that risks the 'othering' of lived experience of that place.

An example of pro-placeness in housing regeneration decision-making is illustrated by a Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) project in Druids Heath, Birmingham. BHMT Development Manager, Steve Dallaway, was involved in projects that aimed to transform previous council-owned estates that have suffered neglect, similar to Lee Bank. Dallaway states that the redevelopment of Lee Bank is seen by housing professionals within the city council as a successful model and is a default model for new housing redevelopment.[32] BMHT are currently in the early stages of the redevelopment of council housing in Druids Heath, an area in the south of the city, where that model, following Towards an Urban Renaissance principles, is being applied. Dallaway and his colleagues found that many residents objected to the plans. *"…what they've kicked back on is, 'we don't like your model"*, (Dallaway, 2020[33]). In a recent BBC interview about the redevelopment, one Druids Heath resident recognised that outside perceptions of the area, and of themselves as residents, were very different to their own. She stated, "*It's not a slum, and everybody living here, we're not like slum people*." (BBC, 2020). The BMHT colleagues of Dallaway involved in the project were working towards what was believed to be the best outcome for the residents, however, their pro-placeness supported a dominant hierarchical structure. For the Druids Heath residents, the decision-makers absence of knowledge about, and empathy for, their lived experience, resulted in a lack of trust and a recognition of misperceptions (also expanded on in Chapter 1: About a Place). If the housing practitioners had engaged in an embodied process of an empathetic insideness through the sensory, multifarious stories and place rhythms in the way myself, Hickey and Warner learned through spatial dialogical art practice, a more empathetic perception may have built trust rather than diminished it.

[32] Dallaway, S., interviewed by Jenny Peevers, at 1 Lancaster House, Birmingham City Council,12 March 2020
[33] ibid

Unfixed placeness

As mentioned above, my research has shown that placeness is fluid, can shift and be contradictory. This can also be illustrated by a group of residents who participated in both Re:connections (part one) and Re:connections (part two), mentioned in Chapter 3: In Dialogue). They were part of an established community group, and most of them were regular attendees of a local church group which met on a Friday for a regular breakfast club and on Sunday for a church service. They were also regular attendees of an over-50s group. During their participation in Re:connections (part two), myself, Hickey and Warner observed deep friendships, a concern for each other's wellbeing and an ease of being in each other's space, expressed through unselfconscious laughter and joy. They embodied the placeness of existential insideness (1976). Many from that group were also participants in Wiggan and Davies initial workshop in Re:connections (part one), where their state of placeness seemed very different. In analysing their dialogue, their placeness, similar to that of McGarvey's, was more closely aligned to perceptions of Relph's definition of existential outsideness, as they expressed feelings of alienation and lack of safety. Yet, their place knowledge and place meaning was established and multi-layered. It was apparent that those residents placeness was that of anxiety and a sense of alienation, even though their place knowledge was embodied and rooted in social networks. They also produced mis-placeness: troubled and unsettled perceptions of place. Drawing on Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstructionism, placeness and place meaning is a social construction that can change according to a number of variable contexts. Relph's theory of place identity implies a fixed model where an individual would experience one state of perception until material changes occur to shift them to experience. Derrida's theory allows for multi-layered place perception (Derrida, 1976).

The curator's role, through spatial dialogical art practice, can serve to shift participants position of placeness through art dialogues that explore and reflect on lived experience. The artists role can also shift their own and others position of placeness. As facilitators of the art dialogues, they hold the art dialogic space. They encourage the self-reflection of forms of existential insideness that residents were not conscious of, to consider significances. The role establishes a form of empathetic insideness through a process of place embodiment through phenomenologically

informed insights. Through participating in the art dialogic space, the residents are giving permission for the curator and artist to shift perceptions to that of empathetic insider.

4.2 Learning place rhythms

> *Everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm.* (Lefebvre, 2013:25)

Whilst placeness considers the way an experience is perceived; place rhythms are the structures of life that are experienced. The embodied art dialogic approach applied in Re:connections (part two) illustrates a methodology of experiencing the layered, complex, heterogeneous place rhythms. Without always being conscious of them, rhythms can structure our perceptions of place. Henri Lefebvre, states:

> *We come to know - implicitly and explicitly – these rhythms through social norms, practice, experience, memory, and haptic recollections that allow us to apprehend and negotiate the movement of diverse rhythms, and which allow us … to live it in all its diversity.* (Lefebvre, 2004:36)

For Lefebvre, these different rhythms, their speeds, cycles, repetitions and differences, sensory and spatial qualities, and their existence and absence, provide him with an insight into the urban order, such as state order, and divisions of labour and daily routines. Lefebvre considers rhythm and the everyday as a Marxist concept, a contrast between the capitalist system and the daily lives of individuals (Lefebvre, 2015: 9). For Lefevbvre, it is a form of lived experience and as such, is a lens with which to consider lived experience as a knowledge, and disrupt existing knowledge hierarchies. Lefebvre traces the root of the word ‘everyday’ to the Anglo French word ‘quotidian’: happening every day. (Elden, 2015). It is the mundane, but also the repetitive. The everyday, then, is itself a rhythm. To gain insight into the rhythms of a place is to understand more about the assembled layers of heterogeneous everyday perceptions within that place. In this chapter, I will explore the concept of place rhythms and assess how, through

art dialogic methodology, place rhythms can be learned, and therefore embody lived experience as a knowledge.

To consider the significance of place rhythms to my own lived experience, I will share some observations of my place rhythms. I lived in my previous home for nine years and over that time locked my subconscious into the rhythms of life there. There were regular daily repetitive rhythms: The dull thud of my neighbour's front door opening and closing at 8 am when she went to work, and at 5 pm when she returned; The sound of the doctor's surgery gate dragging on the tarmacked carpark at 6 am as the caretaker opened the building; the noise of chattering adults and children from 8:50 as they arrive for the school day. Rhythms were cyclical, linear, human and non-human. A favourite tree in my local park that was the first to turn bright orange in the autumn and the first to lose its leaves. It was when the rhythm changed and fell out of rhythm, I noticed them the most. For example, I noticed an elderly neighbour's front garden hedge hadn't been trimmed. I didn't know her, but I had noticed previously that her hedge was regularly trimmed. I learned from another neighbour that she had fallen, her health had deteriorated and so had moved into a care home. A few months later the house was up for sale. The concept of rhythm, then, includes not just repetition, but difference (Elden, 2013, Adkins, 2015). I had a sensitised, sub-conscious knowledge of place rhythms that surrounded me and structured my knowledge of my everyday place, and how I should behave in it. Rhythms, therefore, were my inside knowledge of lived experience. I have mentioned a few rhythms, but there were many hundreds that I was aware of. Knowing these rhythms of the everyday differentiated my experience from where I lived to where I live now, where I have the place perception of an outsider, having recently moved to my present house in an area where I have no previous inside knowledge. Colin McFarlane states "*Learning through dwelling is a relational process produced…through the multiple rhythms, temporalities and spatiality's that shape everyday urbanism*." (McFarlane, 2011: 53)

John Dewey describes life's rhythms and the individual's relationship with them as central to our experience with our surroundings. He states that we are in harmony with our surroundings when we are in rhythm, but life's demands inevitably throw us out of rhythm, causing a feeling of temporary alienation. It is the process of

adjustment and recovery to regain equilibrium with surrounding rhythms that creates growth in life:

> *Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers in unison with it – either through effort or by some happy change.* (Dewey, 2005)

It is through the process of recovery, Dewey states, that life is enriched. Dewey states that equilibrium is created from the tension between the ongoing process of being in rhythm and stepping out of it, adapting, and regaining rhythm. This, he claims, is the form of life and provides endurance. If, however, the individual is unable to adapt, Dewey's prognosis is stark: "*If the gap between organism and environment is too wide, the creature dies*." (Dewey, 1935: 13) Conversely, if there is no temporary alienation created by falling out of rhythm, providing the conditions to adjust and grow, then life just subsists. Dewey's theory is instrumental in understanding the flux and flows of lived experience and the individual's experience with their place.

Applying this theory to housing regeneration prompts questions regarding the level of adaptation and adjustment that is required to regain equilibrium. Were the changes to the physical environment in Lee Bank too extreme to enable adjustment and growth? Certainly, some elements of dialogue with older residents who lived through the regeneration process suggests a hostility, as stated in Chapter 3: In Dialogue where an example was given of one residents comment about the beginning of the regeneration process: "*that's when they started building all these houses and destroyed all the land.*"[34] (Lee Bank resident, 2017). Some residents openly stated they wished that nothing had changed. Despite the hostility, however, the residents who participated in the Re:connections (part two) artist-led walks showed some level of growth and adaptation, and regaining rhythm. This was illustrated through their verbal dialogue before and during the walks. Examples include their changing daily rhythms such as walking to Five Ways to their local supermarket or catching the bus

[34] Recorded conversations with Edgbaston residents group with artist Justin Wiggan

to a retail park. They continued to meet regularly at the community centre and at the church, both different buildings before the regeneration of Lee Bank began. The older group of established residents responses to the Lee Bank environment during the artist-led walk were also insightful. Through a conscious and playful connection to the rhythms of Lee Bank they were noticeably joyful and positive about the experience, as illustrated in Chapter 3: In Dialogue.

Lee Bank rhythms

Place rhythm is experienced as a form of embodied place perception. It also aligns with Relph's concept of 'existential insideness': a place experience "*without deliberate and self-consciousness reflection yet it is full of significances*" (Relph, 1976: 55). It is a state emersed with everyday spatiotemporal rhythms of a place and therefore most likely to be experienced by individuals who live there or spend significant periods of time there.

Knowledge of individuals Lee Bank place rhythms was illustrated in all the artists practice, however, the un-resolved and embodied art dialogues produced a more significant insight into a network of cyclical and linear rhythms as perceived by the residents and the artists. The resolved art dialogues weren't a method that explored the unconscious knowing of residents, although, the dialogues did reveal some rhythmic memories of Lee Bank:

Resolved art dialogue rhythms:

We will explore the significance and the insight of rhythm through the resolved art dialogues of Wiggan and Davies. Both art forms, sound and poetry, embrace rhythm in some form.

Jess engaged in conversation with residents, mostly one-to-one.

The poem called 'Where do you call home?' has rhythm in its arrangement, but also illustrates a residents personal understanding of place rhythms:

> *Where do you call home?*
> *A stretch of land that you could call your own,*

The place where you traded time
For a right to stand there.

But then how do you measure time?
How do you weigh it?

You could follow the sun across the sky,
Watch it set and exchange it for a moon –
Before counting how long it takes for the sun
To come back to you.

You could weigh
The mass of the moments that occur,
In-between the sun setting
And the moon coming back around
To keep the street lamps on.

You could follow the lights
Until you arrive there,
The place that you call home.

(one of a collection of poems created through Jess May Davies art dialogues, 2017)

Wiggan observed place rhythms of residents entering and leaving the building which informed his concept of bees and the beehive. The older residents he engaged in dialogue talked of their memories of cyclical nature rhythms that they don't hear now, compared to present rhythms related to crime or serious incidents:

you don't hear the little birds now, you used to always hear the little birds cheeping. The squirrels running up the trees….don't hear none of that now. They got rid of it when they done all that over there.

There's ambulances and police cars and fire engines.

It is the unresolved art dialogues, however, especially those of Hickey and Warner, that seemed more open to engaging with place rhythms. Their process also opened up opportunities for people to talk about the incidentals in their everyday lives that they might not consider significant. For example, the older resident who walked the perimeter of the park every day to smell the flowers. Their working process was also rhythmic and embodied.

The embodied art dialogues that emerged from Re:connections (part two) however, were more effective in providing deep knowledge of residents unconscious or subconscious knowledge of place rhythms. The main part of the dialogue between the artists and residents was structured through the artist-led walking activity. The walking activity, itself rhythmic, revealed layers of cyclical and linear rhythms through observation and conversation. It also enabled the artists and researcher to literally step into the walking and breathing rhythms of others. The dialogues during the walks revealed rhythms such as the sky, the sun rise, sunset, cloud formations and social rhythms: through food, regular group meetings and social gatherings, Sunday church services, and a new vicar. One resident talked about the importance of cosmic rhythms.

> *…that's what I mean....walk all the way down, you know Fiveways to MacDonalds basically. One road, the main road. And as you walk down there, you'll be able to see the moon I think...this'll be good.*

One community manager, who didn't live in the area but had worked in different capacities for over forty years, talked of the rhythm of her breakfast, which was different on a Sunday:

> *...normally I have porridge and banana, but on a Sunday I usually have cornflakes and something coz I actually have a much longer period between when I start out on a Sunday than I do in the week, coz I have about an hour before I come out in the morning. So, I usually have my breakfast here [In the community centre]. On a Sunday I'm at home until about half seven so I've got about two hours to do things*

Residents talked about routes. One resident talked about how the blocking of the underpass changes the rhythm.

> *... but for people who were travelling from those places over there, to come up over here to church, coz there's some people who live down there who come to St Lukes, it's a really awkward run now.*

It was noticeable that the participants who were asylum seekers didn't seem to engage with place rhythms. They talked of not knowing where they would be the following day. Their attention seemed to be focused on phone calls, waiting for phone calls, and bureaucratic processes.

One of the themes of Hickey's walk during Re:connections (part two) was called 'Out of Place and Overlooked'. One of the artists walks examined things that were: 'misplaced, discarded or forgotten over time' (Warner, 2017). The walk also asked participants to consider things that don't go to plan, or 'don't fit'. The walk encouraged the participants to 'mis-perform'. During this walk, the group lay down in the park and spent several minutes in quiet contemplation. By doing so the participants were stepping outside their everyday behaviour, and therefore their everyday rhythm. Lefebvre discusses the knowledge of rhythms is only known in relation to other rhythms, or difference. (Lefebvre, 2004:16). In consciously stepping outside one's everyday rhythm to 'misperform', is an effective method of being conscious of place rhythms.

A conversation on a different walk between Hickey and a more recent resident who observed disturbance of rhythm:

> *Resident: I walked along the Bristol Road to meet today...they've taken the church down on the corner, big old building....and I was just thinking...there's something lost there. You know, that was a beautiful old building, and actually, at one time it was a real heart of the community, probably going back*

20 or 30 years it was a really important part of the community, that's gone now, we've lost that...

Hickey: What will be in its place we've yet to know...

Resident: It will be a square box of apartments...for students...that'll make the most money.

Hickey: that adapting, and moving a heart around is quite an interesting thing...and re-forming that in different places...

Warner: ...and thinking of a sense of ripples of change that happen as a result of a big change. That maybe you don't recognise in the first instance...both good and bad....

Resident: you need some things to stay the same. If everything changed at once people feel lost basically...

The 'ripples of change' when they are 'bad' are a phenomenon of disturbance. Lefebvre describes this type of rhythm as 'Arrhythmia', a pathology state. "..*when they are discordant, there is suffering…"* (Lefevbre, 2004).

The Assembling Dialogues event, part of Re:connections (part two), provided a platform for the residents to share rhythms through their daily rituals of tea and coffee drinking. The participants (artists and residents) drank tea and coffee together. The multisensorial rhythms: coffee cup raising and lowering, voices rising and a regular tempo, created a sharing of rhythms (Pink, 2015).

Disrupted rhythms

John Dewey states that order with a place is created from harmonious interactions. He claims that living creatures need this harmony for it *"secure[s] the stability essential to living*". (Dewey, 2005: 14) Dewey states that in basic ways we are similar to other animals and require the same basic needs in order to live. He believes life

goes on in an environment "*not merely in it but because of it, and through interactions with it.*" (2005: 12). We are, as beings, intrinsically connected to our environment. Dewey states that falling out of step with rhythm is a regular, everyday occurrence, bringing the necessary, conscious awareness of our needs, requiring adjustments to continue to re-establish a level of harmony (2005: 12). "*Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it*" (2005:12). It is the rhythmic flow of a place, always shifting, never returning to a prior state, always requiring readjustment. The readjustment enriches the connection and harmony. This, according to Dewey is the aesthetic of experience. "*Life grows when a temporary falling out is a transition to a more extensive balance"* (2005:13). Balance and harmony with one's environment is achieved through rhythm and through tension. Changes interlock and sustain one another and this creates endurance.

This process of falling out of rhythm, connection and harmony is helped by the embodied art dialogue, in particular the artist-led walks. The walks, because they were a new experience for participants, performed the 'falling out of step', and shifting. The theory suggests that the process brings a conscious awareness and enriches the connection, thereby providing learning and reflection. But what of the disruption caused by regeneration? The aims of which are to provide place harmony by removing old buildings and building new ones. The responses of hostility, a sense of alienation and fear from the established residents, who remained living in the area while the regeneration was taking place, suggest that the process didn't bring conscious awareness, and didn't return to harmony. Harmony, Dewey argues, is only achieved when it is negotiated within the environment. To impose order and harmony is an illusion (2005:16). According to Dewey's theory the act of regeneration, imposed as it is, is problematic in attempting to override the life rhythms of a place.

As described in Chapter 1: About a Place, the experience of many residents involved in regeneration projects is often disharmony and a feeling of being unseen. Does the process, then, prevent participating fully in place rhythm? Dewey suggests that dislocation occurs between the present and the past and future living. "*The past hangs upon them as a burden; it invades the present with a sense of regret, of*

opportunities not used, and of consequences we wish undone" (2005: 17). This statement chimes with many verbal statements of the older, established residents. It also chimes with observations of their patterns of living in a space. Their social networks slowly decreasing, talk of fear and alienation.

This dislocation is something that Wiggan captured conceptually in his artwork. Lefebvre too, writes about significant moments that are out of step with rhythm. He defines different notions of rhythm as polyrhythmia, eurhythmia and arrhythmia. (Lefebvre,2013: 25) Polyrhythmia, he describes as the first listening, and eurythmia as a normal state of everydayness when different rhythms unite with one another. When they unite in a state of health there is harmony. A state of conflicting rhythms, promoting suffering, is a state of arrhythmia (as mentioned earlier). Arrhythmia, then, is the conflicted state, similar to Dewey's concept of disharmony.

Learning rhythm through art

The findings of the Re:connections project suggest there is a role for art to play in re-establishing harmony and rhythm, as observed in the embodied dialogues. By focusing on the daily place rhythms around one's environment, it reconnects, even if temporarily, with them. The residents who expressed troubled, disharmonious feelings found joy in connecting to elements of the environment that would otherwise be considered insignificant: a crack in the earth, droplets of water on a discarded bit of plastic, and contributing new colour to dried autumn leaves. "*Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reenforces the present and in which the future is quickening of what is now*." (2005:17)

For Dewey, this is the source of the aesthetic experience (2005:18) and is achieved by engaging all the senses. Dewey compares the animal in their environment, fully present, with all their senses engaged. "*What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operates as directions in the present*" (2005: 18). Art is an active interpreter of the self and the world of objects and events.

> *Instead of signifying surrender to caprice and disorder, it affords our sole demonstration of a stability that is not stagnation but is rhythmic and developing. (2005: 19)*

Whilst the aim of the project was not to change place perception for the residents, there did appear to be positive connections established as a response to the embodied art dialogues. This response is supported by Dewey's theory of art as a connector of the self to the world around. Reflections of Re:connections (part two) have identified that the urban practitioners would have benefitted from participating in the embodied art dialogues, as discussed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. It is possible, from Dewey and Lefebvre's theories, that they, as myself and the artists, would have observed, learned and stepped into the rhythms of lived experience, and developed an empathetic knowledge. Ethnographer Sarah Pink, in discussing walking as an ethnographic practice states: *"...sharing their step, style and rhythm - creates an affinity, empathy or sense of belonging with them…"* (Pink, 2015: 111). The art dialogues, especially the embodied art dialogues, have provided insight into the everyday rhythms of residents, and the impact of the regeneration process on those rhythms.

The curator and artist as rhythmanalyst

Lefebvre sets out the role of rhythmanalyst. A role he believes has some similarity with a psychoanalyst (Lefebvre, 2013: 29)). Rhythmanalyst's listen to the environment around them, to all sounds and to the silences. They learn to listen to their own rhythms in order to assess the external rhythms: "*His body serves him as a metronome.*" (Lefebvre, 2013: 29). Lefebvre states that the rhythmanalyst should listen to the inside [their bodily] rhythms and outside rhythms as a whole.

> *The Rhythmanalyst will not be obliged to jump from the inside to the outside of observed bodies: he should come to listen to them as a whole and unify them by taking his own rhythms as a reference: by integrating the outside with the inside and vice versa* (Lefebvre, 2013: 30)

The curator and artist, then, fulfil the role of rhythmanalyst. Through considering their own position, their values, and their own place rhythms through reflexive practice, they can be awake to the rhythms of others (human and non-human) and, layered within a place.

Learning through walking art dialogues

The significance of learning through walking is recognised by different disciplines. Urban geographer McFarlane states that walking is a dominant way of learning the city (McFarlane, 2011). Interdisciplinary urban designer Filipa Wunderlich (2008) argued that walking is an unconscious activity through which we confirm and shift our relationships to place. (McFarlane: 2011: 50). Walking is also in itself, a place rhythm.

> *Walking is a key form of learning through dwelling, a practice through which we become immersed in temporal continuums of social everyday life activities fused with spatial and natural rhythmic events.* (Wunderlich, 2008: 26)

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz stated that "*sharing or creating a walking rhythm with other people can lead to a very particular closeness and bond between the people involved"* (Geertz, 1976). Geertz believed that the social connection provided by walking is an embodied experience. Ethnographer Katrín Lund considers how walking connects the body to its surroundings:

> *[walking] not only connects the body to the ground but also includes different postures, speeds and rhythms…[that] shape the tactile interactions between the moving body and the ground, and play a fundamental part in how the surroundings are sensually experienced.* (Lund, 2006: 28)

Learning Rhythms

In considering how walking art practice contributes to the academic knowledge related to waking practice as a method of learning, I ask what is different about an artist-led walk from any other. Artist Ernesto Pujol states;

> *This process is about artists as humble, entrusted students of place, as grounded scholars who walk the landscape as a library, giving their personal reading preferences, allowing them to be led to unknown readings, ultimately pointing creatively to the many contradictory texts a place contains* (Pujol, 2018, 56).

The unresolved dialogues echo this reading. However, the embodied dialogues offer a more empathetic space. There is a role for art to play in re-establishing a present, as observed in the embodied dialogues. By focusing on the daily place rhythms around one's environment, it reconnects, even if temporarily, with them. The residents who expressed troubled, disharmonious feelings found joy in connecting to elements of the environment that would otherwise be considered insignificant: a crack in the earth, droplets of water on a discarded bit of plastic…"*Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reenforces the present and in which the future is quickening of what is now*" (2005: 17). For Dewey, this is the source of the aesthetic experience (2005:18) and is achieved by engaging all the senses. Dewey compares the animal in their environment, fully present, with all their senses engaged. "What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operates as directions in the present" (2005:18). Art is active in the interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events. "*Instead of signifying surrender to caprice and disorder, it affords our sole demonstration of a stability that is not stagnation but is rhythmic and developing*."

> *Experience is the fulfilment of an organism in its struggles and achievements in a world of things, it is art in germ.* (2005:19)

Drawing from Lefebvre's rhythmanalyst concept, the mix of layered rhythms is initially perceived as non-rhythmic and chaotic. Lefebvre states that to understand

rhythms one needs to have been "*grasped by it; one must let oneself go, give oneself over, abandon oneself to its duration*" (Lefebvre, 2013: 37). It is therefore necessary to experience rhythms both from inside of them and outside of them. For Lefebvre, his viewing platform of a balcony overlooking a junction in Paris achieved that aim. (2013: 37). Reflecting on the different roles of the curator, artist and other outsiders such as urban practitioners, the embodied art dialogues provide the inside perception, and sharing and reflecting on the dialogues is a way of stepping outside. The sharing of rhythms, the stepping outside in order to analyse, proved to be more problematic in the example of the STEAMhouse Assembling Dialogues event for urban practitioners (discussed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue). It should be recognised that whatever form that attempts to capture them are themselves only representations, or signifiers, of that rhythm. *"No camera, no image or series of images can show these rhythms. It requires equally attentive eyes and ears, a head and a memory and a heart."* (2013: 45). It was noticeable, however, that the Assembling Dialogues event for residents, which was situated in Lee Bank, seemed to provide an opportunity for affinity and reflection, as a way of stepping outside. This further confirmed that learning lived experience as a knowledge needs to be an embodied learning.

There are rhythms that relate to acts of production or destruction (Lefebvre, 2005: 65) These, Lefebvre describes as rhythms of capitalism. As such, rhythms of regeneration that destroys buildings and produces new ones are rhythms of capitalism, or as the planning documents indicate, destroys old places and produces new ones. It could be argued that rhythms of capitalism are a form of arrhythmia. A final form of rhythm Lefebvre offers is "isorhythmia" (Lefebvre,2013: 77) which he defines as the equality of rhythms, and describes as a higher order such as the rhythms of an orchestra under the direction of the conductor. It was noticeable that in Hickey and Warner's walks, there was no perceived hierarchy to the multiple, layered polyrhythms or eurhythmia that was explored as part of the walks. The rhythm of a leaf blowing in the wind, or the life cycle of a beetle, was considered without judgement against the cosmic rhythms of the sun and moon. The rhythms of capital development often prompted verbal comment from the residents, about social justice and the feeling that new buildings are more

important than them. This hierarchy was perceived by residents. An example was a comment by a resident who participated in one of Hickey's walks:

> *The problem with an area like this is money…it's driven by capitalism and its money – as much money as you can get per sq ft. they haven't actually thought about the life of the local community. (Lee Bank resident, 2018)*

When considering the artist-led walks through the lens of place rhythm, it becomes apparent that the human-to-human, and human-to-non-human dialogues created through the embodied art dialogues, are all interactions with place rhythm. It is through the creative process of noticing, reflecting, and reimagining that we become conscious of them. I have included a link to the video of the artist-led walks in Re:connections (part two), led by Claire Hickey and Emily Warner. The video, created by Emily Warner, illustrates the place rhythms of Lee Bank.

link to video of artist led walk _ Place rhythms

Empathetic rhythms

Artist Ernesto Pujol states that '*Walking, as an immersive process, can evoke empathy. This empathy results from experiencing and thus understanding the conditions endured by others, whether human or non-human*." (Pujol, 2018: 77) Sarah Pink writes that the activity of walking with others, "*sharing their step, style and rhythm*" (Pink, 2015:111) creates an empathy which she states is an acknowledged idea in the field of ethnography. (2015:111). Jo Lee and Tim Ingold suggest that "*sharing or creating a walking rhythm with others can lead to a very particular closeness and bond between the people involved*" (Lee and Ingold, 2006: 69). Importantly it can allow the artists to "*step into the rhythms of participants and participate in the in the placemaking practices of those people whose worlds they are learning about*." (Pink, 2015:112). It is through this process of learning that empathy for the place and the residents within it, is established.

4.3 The empathetic learning space

In considering ways of learning about lived experience as a regeneration knowledge it is necessary to rethink ways of learning. I propose, therefore, spatial dialogical art practice is a method with which to create embodied art dialogues, through which to shift placeness and learn place rhythms. It is this process, within a situated space, that creates an empathetic learning space (figure 4.1). I have drawn on Colin McFarlane's concept of learning assemblages (McFarlane, 2011) in seeking to explore how an artist-led approach can contribute to new, embodied forms of learning. The concept of the empathetic learning space has emerged from the walking-based embodied art dialogues, and through the idea of the ethnographic place (Pink, 2015) and from my analysis of Assembling Dialogues. McFarlane states that assemblage underlines how learning is "*sociospatially structured, hierarchised and narrativized through unequal relations of knowledge, power and resource"*. (McFarlane, 2011:17). He states of urban policy that its routes of learning are within an exclusive knowledge community. Peter Haas described epistemic communities as experts who share "*normative and principled beliefs which provide value-based rationales for their action: common casual beliefs or professional judgements*." (Haas, 1992) McFarlane states that a consideration of how we learn, alongside whom we learn from and with is necessary, suggesting a form of 'translocal' learning, that is, place-focused *"[involving an] ongoing labour in forging and developing connections between different sources, routes and actors*" (McFarlane, 2011:2). Therefore, to achieve more equitable learning and knowledge, a widening of the methods and processes of the knowledge community is required. McFarlane believes learning is always in a process of translation, and therefore "*the spaces and actors through which knowledge moves are not simply a supplement to learning but are constitutive of it."* (McFarlane, 2011: 16).

Although learning can be achieved through policy, facts, and imposed structures – the forms generally presented through built environment practice - learning can involve "*shifts in ways of seeing, where 'ways of seeing' is defined not simply as optical visuality, but as haptic immersion"* (McFarlane, 2011: 16). His theory suggests that by changing who is involved, and the type of learning that creates the learning assemblage, new knowledge and therefore new perceptions can emerge. This suggests the idea that the 'exclusive knowledge community' can be disrupted to

amplify those who have the least power in the current regeneration knowledge hierarchy: local residents. Participating in the embodied art dialogue and providing an empathetic learning space to shift place perception and learn place rhythms, is a method of disrupting the 'exclusive knowledge community' (McFarlane, 2011).

As described in Chapter 1: About a Place, traditional forms of knowledge used for built environment professionals to learn about a place are spatial, social, and environmental data presented as text, images and diagrams illustrating spatial information as well as economic and demographic data. Not only is the form of presentation not conducive to invoking the imagination, but the knowledge it is conveying isn't either. As an entanglement of lived experience, Assembling Dialogues intentionally pulls together different types of knowledge within the ethnographic place as a way of understanding the interrelationships within a place. Types of knowledge include theory, experiential knowledge, and dialogues, and are arranged in a way that invites the audience to understand new perspectives and "*imagine themselves into places of others, while simultaneously invoking theoretical and practical points of meaning and learning*" (Pink, 2015: 49).

There is recognition of the role art can play through inquiry into everyday life, disrupting and creating new perceptions (Sullivan, 2010: 3). An AHRC study into the value of the arts (Crossick, G et al, 2016) found compelling evidence that the arts help to shape reflective individuals and can enhance a sense of empathy, helping individuals to appreciate difference in the experiences and perceptions of others (2016: 57).The report states that among the experiences associated with the arts, an ability to reflect on differently on one's own life, and enhance an empathetic understanding of the diversity of others, giving a wider sense of human experience (AHRC, 2016). It is these qualities, of reflective individuals and enhanced empathy, that can transform perceptions of space, widening and diversifying sources of knowledge to encompass the heterogeneous and entangled forms of lived experience. So, the arts are well placed in creating new ways of learning about place, applying the frameworks of learning assemblages (McFarlane, 2011) and ethnographic places (Pink, 2015).

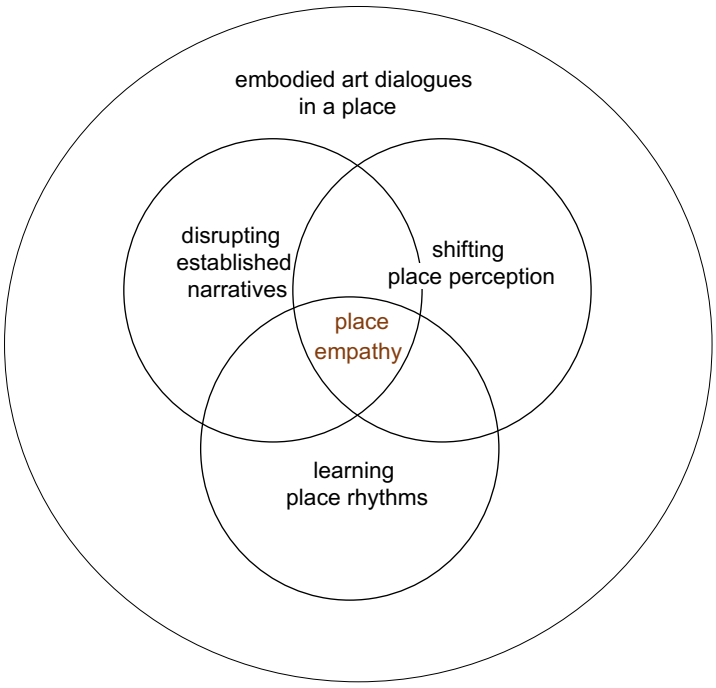

Figure 4.1: Diagram of the empathetic learning space

To conclude, through the findings of my research it has emerged that the concurrent concepts of shifting placeness, becoming conscious of place rhythms, and developing empathy are qualities necessary to enable the learning of inside lived experiences. It is through participating in the embodied art dialogue, facilitated by artists, that creates an empathetic learning space, enabling the shifting of placeness and the learning of place rhythms. The empathetic learning place is established through spatial dialogical art practice, facilitated by artists approaches to performing the embodied art dialogue with others.

In my introduction chapter, I mentioned a process of 'falling in love' with a place when involved with an artist's situated, socially engaged project. I explain how I notice a change in my place perception and understanding of a place when learned through an artist's uncovering of place meaning from the inside and through their ability to create a space for others to perceive place in a different way. Through my research, it is now evident that it is empathy that has been developed – a concept of empathetic placeness.

Conclusions

In this conclusion, I reflect on the themes from my research findings, and consider how they have addressed my primary research question: How can the lived experience of a place be learned by insiders and outsiders through spatial dialogical art practice? I look at the value and contribution my research makes to the academic field of knowledge and to future housing regeneration practice. In Chapter 1: About a Place, I include a statement from Darren McGarvey which aligns with the core aim of my research:

> *"if only there was a way of getting the people who shape the narrative, to check in with the people at the bottom of the food chain every now and then. It might interrupt the steady stream of assumptions many affluent assertions are based on and bring the conversation into sync with how society is really being experienced"* (McGarvey, 2017: 150)

My doctoral research attempts to address Darren McGarvey's comment in the area of housing regeneration. I argue that it is through the process of developing spatial dialogical art practice as a method, that lived experience can be learned as a housing regeneration knowledge. This chapter sets out my concluding argument by presenting a curatorial practice framework that defines the practice and considers what it achieves, and how it achieves it. I share my future vision through an imagined manifesto: 'Towards the empathetic learning of estates re-made'.

Learning lived experience

Embodied art dialogues and place empathy

It became apparent through my doctoral research that two forms of place knowledge were unconnected and needed to be connected. One form often uncovered by artists from a socially engaged practice: The deep insight into people's lived experiences that unfold heterogeneous and fleeting truths about a place. The other form generated by housing regeneration practitioners: the dominant, outsider knowledge

that shapes housing regeneration from national policy to local practice. One form shifting, rhizomatic, heterogeneous, always incomplete; the other form fixed and hierarchical and the established form of knowledge that imposes physical and social changes on people's everyday lives through redevelopment. My motivation was driven by frustration that the potential for the inside knowledges learned, facilitated through artists practice, was unlikely to disrupt the outsider knowledge hierarchies of housing regeneration without the two forms engaging in dialogue. There is established recognition that engaging in the arts can develop reflective thinking and empathy (Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2017). Both these qualities have been evident in my previous projects and in many other socially engaged art projects as I have described in the introduction chapter and Chapter 1: About a Place. And it is these qualities, as explored in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, that are necessary to shift people's perception of a place to be open to learning lived experience. The challenge, that became apparent through my research, was to expand the dialogic reach to include regeneration practitioners and to see if lived experience can be learned by outsiders through spatial dialogic art practice.

A key part of my research was to define spatial dialogical art practice as a critical spatial practice (Rendell, 2006). I positioned the 'art dialogue' as a form of art-based research inquiry. Dialogue is a recognised phenomenon in art. As I examine in Chapter 2: Curating Dialogues, many theorists state the process of making and perceiving any art as dialogic (Dewey 2005, Bakhtin, 2002). However, my curatorial practice sits alongside socially engaged art practices that levitates dialogue as a defining quality and output of the work. A key initial influence was Kester's concept of dialogical aesthetics (Kester, 2004) who he defined the practice as:

> *[a] creative orchestration of collaborative encounters and conversations…these exchanges can catalyse surprisingly powerful transformations in the consciousness of their participant.* (Kester, 2005)

Re:connections (part one) and Re:connections (part two) formed a key pillar in my research. Through the projects, and through the iterative process of critical reflection and development of practice and theory, I developed my curatorial practice framework for spatial dialogical art practice. Within this framework I have expanded

the definition of dialogue to encompass verbal and non-verbal, human-to-human and human-to-non-human.

The art dialogue is defined as a way of interacting with the world. The other differential from most other socially engaged practice that defines themselves as dialogical art is that I don't consider it as a form of social activism. As the research progressed and forms of dialogue were examined, I acknowledged that there is the potential of activism by stealth through disrupting dominant knowledge hierarchies. In defining the art dialogue as a mechanism to learn lived experience it emerged that the embodied art dialogue, as defined in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, was closely aligned to the concept of place as fluid and heterogeneous (Massey, 2005). The embodied art dialogue followed a more multifarious, anti-hierarchical process. Through artist-led walks described in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, participants moved through space and place in a fluid way, and could reflect on their own and others layered, heterogeneous, shifting place rhythms.

The dialogic space, facilitated by artists, enabled the embodied, empathetic learning of lived experience. It became apparent that the 'dialogue' became an effective mechanism of bringing others in and was the imperative element of the curatorial framework: Dialogue as a way of collaborating with others; as a collaborative process between myself and the artists; as a reflexive tool; and finally, dialogue as a way of bringing outsiders in, in this case, housing regeneration practitioners. I set out the development of the art dialogue through my research in Chapter 3: In Dialogue, which identifies and defines the embodied art dialogue as the form which opens up the opportunities to learn the lived experience of others. The primary mechanism of the embodied art dialogue is to develop place empathy. Suzanne Lacy states that artistic works "…*give evidence of the artist's own struggle to achieve higher recognition of what it means to be truly human*." (Lacy,1995:88). For a spatial dialogical art practice, the artistic process and outcomes of the embodied art dialogue provide an opportunity to learn about what it is to be human within a particular place and develop what I define as place empathy.

The value of lived experience as a place knowledge

The hierarchical structure of knowledge that informs housing regeneration processes is set out in planning and design documents such as government white papers, local development plans, supplementary planning guidance, masterplans and design and access statements. Stated aims often include experiential aspirations to 'improve the quality of life' and to create 'places where people want to live'. Yet, without the knowledge of inside, lived experience, it is not possible to know if the aims have been achieved. Further, I argue in Chapter 1: About a Place, that examples of the missing knowledge of lived experience within regenerated places have resulted in misrepresentations and misinterpretations of place narratives.

The shifting, heterogeneous knowledge of place that is uncovered through the embodied art dialogue aligns closely with the humanist concept of place defined by Massey (2005) and Dovey (2013). To consider the value of lived experience as a place knowledge in housing regeneration, it is useful to examine the impact of its absence. Two autobiographical accounts of lived experience of council housing estates, included in Chapter 1: About a Place, are those of Darren McGarvey (2017) and Lynsey Hanley (2017). Both personal stories powerfully illustrate how an absence of the knowledge of lived experience can lead to misrepresentation and compound feelings of being stigmatised. McGarvey's and Hanley's realities are echoed by many residents whose lived places are the subject of outsider attention, including areas being regenerated (as I discuss in Chapter 1: About a Place). Despite the widespread outsider assumption that 1960s council estates were undesirable, commonly described as 'sink estates' (Guardian, 2016), there is, of course, no simple narrative about lived experience within them. McGarvey believed the physical and psychological dereliction of his estate in Pollock, Glasgow, was exacerbated by lack of connection and ownership. Whilst high crime and physical dereliction were realities of the Peckham Estate in South London, Bokinni and other residents talk of strong community connections and love.

The simple narrative of council estates as bad has been repeated enough, however, through government statements and national press, to become established knowledge. Such binary perceptions continue to stigmatise those living in social

housing, including those in areas that have been regenerated. The 'Overcoming the stigma of social housing' report (LSE, 2018) supports social housing residents claims of stigmatisation and myth-making. The 'negative opinion of others' was the highest response from social housing tenants to the question of 'what is bad about being a social housing tenant?'. The two forms of inside and outside knowledge continue to remain separate, with the outside dominating the inside. When considering the insider narratives alongside the social tenant surveys, it is clear that lived experience is a vital knowledge for regeneration professionals. To achieve the aims of *"…[bringing] together economic, social and environmental measures in a coherent approach to… bring social justice, and equality of opportunity: and create places where people want to live and work*." (DETR, 2000:8) that governments claim they want to achieve.

New insights into learning lived experience

There have been clear findings in my research practice that I have set out in detail in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing Place. They illustrate the research aim of positioning dialogical art practice as a valid and effective method of learning lived experience. I have defined spatial dialogical art practice as a practice that facilitates the embodied art dialogue*,* which opens up opportunities to learn lived experience through shifting placeness*,* being conscious of place rhythms and through developing place empathy*.* It is a process of these qualities coming together in the empathetic learning space, created through spatial dialogical art practice, that is my contribution to knowledge.

I describe the embodied art dialogue as a fluid, layered, heterogeneous, and shifting dialogic space, held and facilitated by the artists, and hosted by the researcher/curator. The embodied art dialogue enables the empathetic learning of lived experience through being-in-space and experiencing its multisensory qualities fully. It became apparent that the embodied art dialogue became an effective mechanism of bringing others in, providing the opportunity to step into the rhythm of, and be conscious not only one's individual embodied experience of place but also of others within the embodied art dialogical space, thereby develop place empathy.

I define Placeness as a quality of perceiving place, and draw on Relph's theory of place identity which categorises forms of perceiving place from positions of insideness and outsideness (Relph, 2015). New forms of placeness emerged from my research practice (as illustrated in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing) that reflect the fluidity and heterogeneous character of place perception. It emerged that through the learning of the lived experience of others in the embodied art dialogic space, placeness could shift to become a more open to empathetic perception. The research identified that the embodied art dialogue is a method through which to learn the layered, multifarious place rhythms. Being conscious of them is a way of learning one's own and others lived experience. It is through stepping inside the rhythms of others that provides the opportunity for empathetic learning of lived experience. Place rhythms are a form of inside knowledge uncovered through the embodied art dialogue.

There was evidence that those who participated in the embodied art dialogues, learned place rhythms and developed a form of place empathy. Both the artist-led walks and the Lee Bank/residents Assembling Dialogues events, described in Chapter 3: In dialogue, led to a particular closeness and bond (Pink, 2015) that provided the opportunity to be conscious of one's own lived experience and the lived experience of others. This was achieved through sharing the step of others, reflecting on observations, stories and learning about human and non-human place rhythms. I introduced the concept of the dialogical space created by participating in the embodied art dialogue as the empathetic learning space, discussed in Chapter 4: Ways of Knowing.

One of my research objectives was to define the characteristics of spatial dialogical art practice that has the potential to address the missing knowledge of lived experience within housing regeneration knowledge, both in policy and practice. I explored this objective through the concept of an 'ethnographic place' (Pink, 2015), a multisensory, interactive installation that presented assembled 'art dialogues' gathered by residents and artists during the walks, as part of the second Re:connections project to housing regeneration practitioners. The interactive installation, called Assembling Dialogues, didn't prove to be effective, as detailed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue. There was no evidence that interacting with the installation,

without participating in the artist-led walks with residents in Lee Bank, re-created the embodied experiences of those walks. It was apparent, however, (as discussed in Chapter 3: In Dialogue) that through the reflexive practice, myself and the artists involved in Re:connections did develop a form of place empathy that shifted place perception. I propose, therefore, that expanding the empathetic learning space to include housing regeneration practitioners would provide the opportunity for those practitioners to participate in the embodied art dialogue and learn lived experience. (The proposition comes with it ethical dilemmas, as I consider below).

The empathetic learning space aligns with Soja's Thirdspace (Soja, 1996), as described in Chapter 1: About a Place. The form of outside knowledge that informs much of policy and practice aligns with what Soja describes as 'Firstspace' perspective: "*fixed mainly on the concrete materiality of spatial forms*" (1996:10), 'Secondspace' is the mental perspective, conceived in ideas about space. It is the space of the imagination, 'Thirdspace', that brings the physical and the mental together, expanding their scope. Soja describes 'Thirdspace' as the "*real-and-imagined*" places (1996: 11); "*I define Thirdspace as an-other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality–historicality–sociality*." (Soja,1996: 57).

Lefebvre's spatial triad, and Soja's trialectics of space has underpinned my idea of place assemblage and opened up conceptual ideas about sharing place perspectives through dialectic exchange and continuous building of place knowledge. Kim Dovey's theory of 'place as assemblage' (Dovey, 2010) also brings together the experiential and the materiality of place and was influential in how I visually and metaphorically considered sharing of outside and inside knowledges.

> *the 'street' is an assemblage of material things, flows and spatial connections that co-exist with representational narratives, urban design codes and intensities. (Dovey, 2010: 17)*

As a learning assemblage (McFarlane, 2011) the empathetic learning space has the opportunity to assemble outside and inside knowledge. As I discussed in Chapter 1: About A Place, between the years 2000 to 2020, the changes for the individuals living in the local area of my research project, Lee Bank, were beyond what individuals living in stable communities would have to endure. Relationships with human and non-human elements were fragmented during the process: Many families moved out of the area therefore friendships and networks were fragmented. The existing green spaces were re-landscaped. Many residents remembered the cherry trees in blossom with a sense of joy. Many mentioned the large paddling pool where families spent time in the summer. 50% of new private tenants and homeowners moved to the area to the new private housing built. Several established residents mentioned that they wished the area hadn't been regenerated, however, the Lee Bank area is now described as a desirable place to live (Jones, A, 2014).[35]

Hanley discusses the deficit of and requirement for care and support in regenerated housing (Hanley, 2017). I suggest that the empathetic learning of lived experience as a knowledge to inform housing regeneration is one element where care can be embedded. Centralising empathy in regeneration practice is to radically change the approach. Such an ambition can seem impossible and therefore a pointless aim to embed within the established neoliberal structures. However, I apply Hamdi's code of conduct statement of "*Work Backwards, Move Forwards, Start Where You Can*" and "*Never Say Can't*" (Hamdi, 2004: 132) as a principle of practice. One element of care in regeneration practice is to consider the impact on those whose lives have been changed by it: the residents. Participating in the embodied art dialogic approach, which promotes an empathetic knowledge of lived experience, gained within the empathetic learning space, is valuable as a starting point, particularly as a method for knowledge gathering for design and development as well as for assessment and evaluation. It was apparent, in the example of the regeneration of the Lee Bank area, that there was no effective process with which the local council

[35] "Ten years later it is a desirable place to live in the city, home to more than 1,000 people, including professionals and families." Jones, A., (2014) Birmingham City Centre's Park Central Named Best Regeneration Project, Birmingham Live, Available at: https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/homes-and-property/birmingham-city-centres-park-central-8134955 [accessed 20 August 2019]

or housing association can learn about the lived experience of the large-scale housing regeneration project that transformed the area. If knowledge of lived experience is not relevant in housing regeneration, then who are we regenerating for?

Spatial dialogical art practice and the empathetic learning space align with and contribute to number of radical spatial practices. I have mentioned a few practices in Chapter 2: Curating Dialogues. Another example includes The First World Congress of the Missing Things (Holub, 2014) which subverts the hierarchical idea of 'congress' and created a "*spatial rhizomatic structure enabling non-hierarchical communication*" (Holub et al, 2015: 156). Barbara Holub describes these practices as critical spatial urbanism that is focused on the "*undoing and rethinking of urban practices" and the structures of production within which they operate*" (Holub et al, 2015: 32).

The imagined future of the empathetic learning space

New dialogues

In considering how an empathetic learning space can contribute to housing regeneration practice, I examine the challenges that exist: Support for community activity, as assumed in Supplementary Planning Guidance (Birmingham City Council, 1999) and Design and Access Statements approved for Lee Bank (Gardner Stewart Architects, 2009) does not exist in the same way. There have been cuts to local authority budgets (Hastings, A., et al, 2014), that would have affected some of the residents in social housing that we collaborated with. Since writing this thesis, I learned that the former manager for Edgbaston Community Centre has retired. She has been a continuous support for many of the residents, going above and beyond her role. Many talked about her critical role in guiding them when they were children (who are now over 40 years old). St Thomas Nursery Centre services have been reduced and nursery staff were campaigning to retain their jobs at the time of the Re:connections project. These were two venues and services that provided an opportunity for specific groups to meet and develop friendships and support networks. Optima Community Association merged into a larger housing association.

Their remit changed from the five estates, including Lee Bank, to social housing covering three local authority areas. The expansion resulted in radically reduced capacity for community engagement work.

It is not possible to write about lived experience within a regenerated housing estate without considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has dramatically affected daily life, social relationships, and our perceptions of our environment. There has been an increase in sales of houses that have access to a garden and green spaces and large numbers have moved out of inner-city areas (Centre for Economic Performance, 2021). The pandemic has also revealed inequalities in income and health, with loneliness and poor mental health impacted negatively (Marmot, 2020). The austerity measures that have impacted the social housing residents in Lee Bank, in addition to the pandemic, have shattered the myths of certainty that are reinforced by the dominant forms of housing regeneration place knowledge. Any assumptions that housing regeneration practitioners made about how the regeneration would impact the lived experience of residents before 2010 would not be relevant now. Learning lived experience as a knowledge within housing regeneration practice in a time of growing inequality has become ever more imperative.

Ethics of the empathetic learning space

Reflecting on ethical considerations, in particular how some residents responded with anger and anxiety when in conversation with an artist, I adapted the curatorial framework to consider the way that the artists engaged in dialogue about residents relationships with Lee Bank. The embodied art dialogues prompted residents to consider their present dialogues with place. Residents did at times contribute memories or future imaginations; however, this was volunteered by them and not a required contribution. Care for participants of the Empathetic Learning Space is considered before, during and after the embodied art dialogic process.

In proposing the expansion of the dialogic space to include housing regeneration practitioners, an ethical code is required. For the dialogic art spaces to work there needed to be an openness and trust within it. It was observed that of the participants

who chose to take part, some felt happier walking with people they knew and trusted, and others were happier with people they didn't know. Some of the residents had a distrust of authority. I and the artists at times felt we needed to reassure the residents that we weren't working for the council or the housing association. The consideration of trust is an ethical issue when including regeneration practitioners. In addition to the concern that regeneration practitioners represent the authority that causes mistrust and anxiety in residents, there is an inherent risk they will use the opportunity as a public relations exercise to win trust, only to then ignore the residents contributions or make decisions against their interests.

This ethical issue is not resolved and requires piloting as a small case study with a clear ethical code of conduct for regeneration practitioners. The problem illustrates my role as curator to consider participants, especially residents, with the utmost care to build trust. I refer to my description of the curator as the 'quiet carer of dialogues'. It is for the curator to consider the motives of anyone who may wish to participate by assessing their place perception to decide whether there is an openness to be reflexive and reflect on their prior perception, and genuine care and respect for others, including residents, participating in the dialogical space. The curator, in this between space, must remain independent of the established structures the practice seeks to disrupt. By not being assimilated into dominant hierarchies it can remain significant (Kwon 2004: 1). This is a particular challenge, going forward, for spatial dialogical art practice, if, as desired, it becomes a mainstream method of learning about lived experience.

An imagined manifesto

As an empathetic and ethical approach to realising the empathetic learning space, I consider an imagined manifesto towards the empathetic learning of estates re-made. The imagined manifesto declares the importance of lived experience as a place knowledge within housing regeneration practice and sets out an imagined future development of my research: bringing housing regeneration practitioners into the empathetic learning space through a dialogic curatorial framework.

My imagined manifesto makes manifest an approach to place knowledge that considers those whose everyday experience is changed by the regeneration process. In developing the manifesto I draw on Nabeel Hamdi's code of conduct "*Playing Games – Serious Games*" (Hamdi, 2004), aimed at planners and development works in areas of development across the world. It is a form of participatory action planning. The Manifesto for an empathetic learning of place aligns with his code of conduct and comes before the action of physical changes to a place. My manifesto focuses on achieving a state of open and empathetic place perception that is conducive to following Playing Games – Serious Games. It is aimed at housing regeneration practitioners and policymakers with an aim of disrupting knowledge hierarchies. This is a bold aim, and housing regeneration, in the absence of socialist housing policies, operates within a hierarchical neo-capitalist approach (Jones and Evans, 2013). However, in the words of Hamdi's code of conduct: "*Never Say Can't*" (2013: 132) "*Challenge Consensus*" (2013: 137) and most importantly, "*Work Backwards, Move Forwards, Start Where You Can* (2013: 130).

The concept of the manifesto fell out of favour with many art critics, curators, and artists. Curator Hans Ulrich Obrist stated that the form of manifesto is of the twentieth century, is loud and the opposite of listening. He states that manifestos proclaim when the twenty-first century should be more about listening, and questions relevance of the manifesto (BBC, 2017). Art critic Jennifer Higgie, argues that "*In terms of art, pretty much no one has manifesto's anymore. They don't have much currency.*" (BBC, 2017). Despite these claims, the concept of the manifesto appears to be gaining momentum yet again. In January 2021 The White Pube, presented "*Ideas for a new art world*", as six large billboards and posters, each one with a proposal of how museums and galleries can socially, ethically and economically improve life for artists and art workers (The White Pube, 2021). In 2016 the Arts and Place Consortium produced a "*Manifesto for the Arts in Place"*. In architecture and placemaking the Place Alliance produced their "*Healthy Places Manifesto*". Art historian Alex Danchev states that artists manifestos are optimistic. "*To make a manifesto is to imagine or hallucinate the promised land, wherever that might be*". He states that, with notable exceptions, the artist manifestos are forward movements (BBC, 2017).

An imagined manifesto for the empathetic learning of estates re-made

The embodied art dialogues enable the empathetic learning space, and the learning of lived experience through place empathy. There are three factors necessary for the empathetic learning space to create place empathy.

The empathetic learning space will disrupt established narratives
Artists will disrupt established ways of perceiving to create an empathetic dialogical space, prompting those within it to reflect on their own everyday dialogues through a different lens. Through the playful disrupting of fixed imaginations of place, new dialogues become possible. The dialogical space, in this way, becomes a realisation of Edward Soja's Thirdspace (Soja, 1996), as "*real-and-imagined*" space where the physical and mental perspectives come together. Spatial dialogical art practice, achieves what Andrea Phillips suggests artists contribute, which is an "*invitation for a reinvention of the relationship between interacting actors and context*" (Phillips, 2011). Participating in the empathetic learning space will disrupt established place narratives by considering lived experience as an approach to learning about a place. Participants will collaborate with human and non-human elements through an embodied dialogical exchange with artists, residents and housing regeneration practitioners.

The empathetic learning space will shift place perception
Placeness, a term introduced by Relph to mean the quality of 'being' in a place (Relph, 2015), is fluid and highly responsive to new dialogues and ways of being within place. By participating in the empathetic learning space one's placeness can be shifted and definitions of inside and outside are not so fixed. By reflecting on one's own and others placeness participants will develop an empathetic form of placeness and a form of place empathy.

The empathetic learning space will enable the conscious learning of place rhythms
Without always being conscious of them, rhythms can structure our perceptions of place. Henri Lefebvre states that by negotiating the movement of diverse rhythms we are able to dwell in the urban present (Lefebvre, 2013). Participants in the

empathetic learning space will learn place rhythms: the non-hierarchical cyclical and linear, micro and macro forms of life within a place. Place rhythms will be learned by stepping into, embodying and reflecting on place rhythms.

Figure 5.1: Diagram of an *imagined manifesto for the empathetic learning of estates re-made*

Participating in the empathetic learning space: roles

curator	develops the conceptual and practical framework for the empathetic learning space
	creates a new context for the artists practice reflects on their own placeness
	builds bridges: with artists, partners and participants seeks permission from insiders of a place to activate the empathetic learning space
	supports and cares for the artists, participants and their contributions hosts the empathetic learning space
	seeks permission to share the material documentation of the embodied art dialogues
	decides how the embodied art dialogues are recorded
	collaborates with the artists to present the made and collected documentations of the embodied art dialogues as an interactive, immersive installation
	cares for the material documentation of the embodied art dialogues
	oversees administration and logistics
	explores and contextualise the dialogues

artists	activate the embodied art dialogues
	reflect on their own placeness
	hold the empathetic learning space through the facilitation of the embodied art dialogues
	guide and are guided. collaborate with participants disrupt fixed narratives of a place
	playfully explore heterogeneous place rhythms with participants
	reflect with participants on their perceptions and place rhythms care for the participants and their contribution
	collaborate with the curator to present the made, collected documentations of the embodied art dialogues as an interactive, immersive installation
	foster a relaxed and safe environment
participants	collaborate within the empathetic learning space
	guide and are guided. collaborate with other participants reflect on their own placeness
	share and reflect on their own and others embodied art dialogues

Participating in the empathetic learning space: code of conduct

The empathetic learning space is non-hierarchical. To participate in it is to value all contributions and consider all embodied art dialogues of equal value. The purpose of the empathetic learning space is to learn lived experience of a place as a knowledge. To participate there must be trust in the motives for understanding a place from one's own perspective and the perspective of others. Participating in the empathetic learning space should not be used to enhance a person's or company's status or standing. Knowledge gained about an individuals lived experience should not be used without their informed consent and should be anonymised.

The roles and code of conduct for participating in the empathetic learning space are taken from: A curatorial practice framework for spatial dialogical art practice, "curating the empathetic learning of estates re-made, a guide" (Peevers, 2021). The guide is available at www.jenny-peevers.co.uk

Glossary of terms

Embodied art dialogue

Embodied art dialogues are generated through a creative process of being embodied in a place - guided, prompted and facilitated by artists. They are activated through artist-led wandering and exploring with participants through a form shaped by the artists practice*. the embodied art dialogues are verbal and non-verbal, human-to-human and human-to-non-human dialogical exchanges. They are non-hierarchical and concerned with the layered, heterogeneous, shifting, multisensory meanings of a place.

*it is the artist who will define their methods of activating the embodied art dialogue. they may choose to use creative materials or playful performative actions to engage and heighten different senses of the body. their methods are their intellectual property.

Empathetic outsideness

Empathetic outsideness is a form of place perception that, similar to Relph's definition of empathetic insideness, demands a conscious effort to be empathetic to states of perception formed from everyday lived experience of a place. However, the perception of place is from the position of outsideness and is without the embodied knowledge of lived experience.

Empathetic learning space

the empathetic learning space is the philosophical space that contains the embodied art dialogues created within it. the knowledge of lived experience is learned by building empathy through reflecting on one's own and others embodied art dialogues. the empathetic learning space is created first through the process of participating in the embodied art dialogues. There is further reflecting and sharing through a physical, interactive and immersive installation of assembled dialogues - the gathered material, sound and visual documentation of the embodied art

dialogues. "*The fact that you are empathising means that you are presented in experience with the experience of another*." (Maibom, 2017)

Lived experience

The lived experience of a place is the day-to-day individual and collective experiences - from the micro to macro, forgettable and unforgettable. Lived experience is fundamental to our experience of being human.

Place Empathy

Place Empathy is a form of 'inside-knowing' of a place (Lanzoni, 2018). Susan Lanzoni states that empathy includes spatial qualities, "*the ability to dwell in an-other's place and to see from this vantage point*." (Lanzoni, 2018: 6) My definition of empathy embraces this description, however, and I refer to Ingold's idea of social relations including all organic life (Ingold, 2018), therefore place empathy includes non-human elements of place in empathic learning. "*The fact that you are empathizing means that you are presented in experience with the experience of another*." (Maibom: 5)

Placeness

Placeness is a quality of perceiving a place (Relph, 1976). It can include perceptions of being settled, safe and belonging, or being troubled or dispassionate. Placeness can be fluid, complex and layered and can shift in response to new ways of being within place.

Place rhythms

Place rhythms are the layered, complex, heterogeneous rhythms that are the life within a place (Lefebvre, 2013). Without always being conscious of them, rhythms can structure our perceptions of place (Dewey, 2005). To uncover and reveal them is to begin the process of learning lived experience. walking and wandering with others in the empathetic learning space, and stepping into their rhythms can lead to a closeness and empathy (Pink, 2009).

Pro-placeness

I define pro-placeness as a perception that is supportive and 'acts for' a place. This form of placeness supports the dominant hierarchical structure of place knowledge, although it is open to empathetic responses. Proponents of it have the potential to influence others to build a more positive narrative of a place.

Spatial dialogical art practice

Spatial dialogical art practice is a form of socially engaged practice, focusing on human interaction and collaboration, that is situated and immersed within a place. Drawing on Grant Kester's concept of dialogical aesthetics, it is concerned with the reciprocal nature of dialogic exchange as the primary focus of the artistic work (Kester, 2005). Spatial dialogical art practice considers an expanded definition of dialogue, as described in the 'embodied art dialogue' definition above. The practice is concerned with the curation of embodied art dialogues to create an empathetic learning space. a process of reflection is involved with all who participate in the practice - curator, artists and participants - to consider what has been learned about one's own and others lived experience and place perception.

List of figures

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Appendices

1 – Curatorial practice guide spatial dialogical art practice

1.1 Website

www.jenny-peevers.co.uk

2 – Curatorial development of Re:connections

2.1 funding applications

Excerpt from Re:connections (part one) funding application to Arts Council England Project Grants (successful)

Applicant: Jenny Peevers 58729265
Project: Re:connections GFTA-00049042

Basic details

Project information

Please give a concise description of the activity you are asking us to support.

No more than 600 characters. Please read the Basic details section of the How to apply guidance for information on how to complete this section.

Re:connections is a creative place-making project and will engage residents in Lee Bank, in partnership with Optima Community Association. 5 highly innovative and nationally regarded artists (from photography, poetry, visual arts/performance and sound) will explore residents' emotional connections to the area.

Art work will be produced by i) participatory sessions and ii) artists creating work responding to conversations.

- Artists will engage residents in Lee Bank for a total of 16 days in apartment foyers, church and community centres, street pavements and parks
- Artwork shared in a final art/social event
- Reflections shared through a project blog, a-n, RSA and National Housing Federation

Amount requested

Here we want you to tell us the amount you will be requesting from us, including any access costs.

If you are deaf or disabled or experience learning difficulties there may be extra costs relating to your own access needs that you will need to pay to help you deliver your project and manage your grant online. For example, payment for a sign language interpreter to help you manage your activity.
We want to know your personal access costs so we can deduct them from the total project costs when we decide how long it will take use to make a decision. This is particularly important if you are requesting close to £15,000 from us. For example, if you are applying for £15,350 but £650 of this relates to your personal access costs, we would still view this as the same as an application for under £15,000 and would make a decision on your application within six weeks. You should use the guidance notes for applications for £15,000 and under to complete your application form.

To find out more about personal access costs please read the information sheet 'Access needs and Grants for the Arts'.

Please tell us the total amount you are requesting from us, including any personal access costs (£): £14,900

Excerpt from Re:connections (part two) funding application to Birmingham City Council – Culture on our Doorstep (successful)

☐ explore, celebrate and share the cultural heritage of the neighbourhood you are working in

Please describe your project (max 500 words)

- What will happen
- How will the project address the commissioning criteria you have selected
- How the project will build on the local arts infrastructure
- How the project targets adult residents living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation

Re:connections (part II) will enable residents to creatively express their perceptions about

where they live through deep and meaningful engagement in arts activity. This will be done in 3 ways:

1 – Dialogues*: arts activity with myself, Claire Hickey and Emily Warner, engaging residents with their environment in Lee Bank. Activities will include walking, exploring perceptions, documenting and expressing with visual arts techniques such as clay pressings, drawings, cyanotypes and collage. The initial Re:connections project revealed that by focusing on areas important to everyday life residents engage in a meaningful way. *The activity is dialogue based as the arts activity prompts meaningful discussions between residents and artists.

2 - Mapping Dialogues: 4 artist led meals with residents, artists and urbanists exploring and contributing to art works created. The experience will be immersive and interactive with participants mapping dialogues (artworks). The events will prompt discussion the impact of environment on emotions.

3 - Presenting Dialogues:
i) Movable and interactive presentation of artworks in flux to be displayed at Edgbaston Community Centre and in Attwood Green Medical Centre
ii) Presentation/workshop with wider group of artists and urbanists to debate artists practice in place contexts at Birmingham Impact Hub. Invited audience will include Crest Nicholson, developers of Lee Bank, Family Optima and architects practices such as Glenn Howell Architects.
iii) a fold-out map will be created by Jenny, Emily and Claire as an art work and a memento for each participant. It will tell the story of the project and represent the art works created by participants

The activity will provide the opportunity for residents to improve their wellbeing through supporting New Economic Foundation (nef) evidence based Five Ways to Wellbeing measures:

- Connect: connecting with neighbours through the activities as well as considering their connections with their everyday environment
- Be Active: through the walking activity
- Take Notice: we are inviting residents to ponder and notice the sensory details of

Excerpt from Re:connections (part two) Assembling Dialogues events application to Arts Council England Project Grants (successful)

Basic details

Please give us a short summary of your project.

We'd like to know what your project is, what will happen and who it is aimed at.
You can use up to 600 characters to answer this

Dialogues Assembled is a creative and playful exploration into the sensory experience of Lee Bank through dialogical arts practice, and the interrogation of that exploration through critical debate into artists practice and the value of arts in place making

This will be achieved through:
Mapping Dialogues: 2 immersive/participatory events with 50 residents of Lee Bank and artists/urbanists interested in art and place to create a sensory map and art product
Presenting Dialogues: STEAMhouse event providing debate and creative participation for 30 artists and urbanists interested in art and place

Amount requested

Tell us the total amount you are applying to us for, including any personal access costs* (£):	£12,600
How much of this request is for your / your collaborators' personal access costs?* (£):	£0

***If there are extra costs relating to your own access needs, or those of the people you are working with, to help you deliver your project and manage your grant online, include them in this figure. For example, payment for a sign language interpreter to help you manage your project.**

If your personal access costs take your request over £15,000 we will still treat your application as an application for £15,000 and under, and make a decision within six weeks.

To find out more about personal access costs, please read the information sheet Access support.

2.2 artists brief

Excerpt of artist brief for Re:connections (part one)

Project Outline:
Re:connections is a creative place-making project and will engage residents in Lee Bank, Birmingham. Commissioned artists will explore residents' emotional connections to the area.

Art work can be produced by i) participatory sessions with residents creating work facilitated by artists or ii) commissioned artists creating work responding to residents conversations.

An event will take place on 15th July in Lee Bank (venue tbc) from 12 – 3pm to present art works and continue conversations.

Role of [redacted]:

- 4 days engagement of residents of Lee Bank through existing networks and groups and engaging passers-by
- Explore residents emotional connections to Lee Bank through [redacted]
- Present work created at a final event on 15th July
- Provide at least two short updates with an image to upload onto the re:connections blog and social media
- Support Jenny Peevers in capturing evidence of outcomes and outputs

Role of Jenny Peevers:

- To liaise with artists and project partners
- Project management and budget responsibility
- To co-ordinate the sharing event in collaboration with artists and partners
- Marketing for sharing event
- Project evaluation

Artists brief for Re:connections (part two) Assembling Dialogues

Re:connections Brief January 2019

Background information

Re:connections is an ongoing exploration into how dialogical arts practice, arts interventions that prompt conversations, can help provide insight into people's experience of living where they do. The project focuses on the Lee Bank area in Birmingham, an area that has undergone transformative regeneration.

The first Re:connections project took place in summer 2017 and involved five artists from different art forms (Emily Warner and Claire Hickey; Dan Burwood; Justin Wiggan and Jess May Davies) to test out different approaches. The artists prompted conversations through their arts practice, producing a body of work that was shared with residents. The majority of the art works were created by the artists in response to the dialogues with residents. The residents, whilst generous in talking about their emotional and sensory perceptions, didn't have the opportunity to physically engage their senses in their environment as part of the engagement. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (Tuan, 1997) suggests that creating an awareness of sensory perceptions may form a deeper association with lived spaces and sensory ethnographer Sarah Pink (Pink, 2015) describes the sensory experience as a form of knowing that can't necessarily be expressed by words. Therefore, it was decided that the following project, Re:connections (part II) would benefit from encouraging residents to engage their senses in everyday spaces.

Re:connections (part II) comprises:

Dialogues – artist led walks with residents exploring sensory connections, gathering materials and spoken responses. (Dialogues took place in October 2018)

Assembling Dialogues - two events taking place within the Lee Bank area in March 2019. we will invite previous participants, residents, artists and urbanists to experience and contribute to an experiential map created from material generated during Dialogues. Additional sensory elements of smell, taste and texture will be included, as a response to the conversations that took place during the Dialogues phase.

Reflexive arts practice – artists reflections on their role within the project, personal perceptions and the consideration of the impact those perceptions may have on conversations and activities.

Presenting Dialogues –

- an event at STEAMhouse in April 2019 for wider artists and urbanists to interrogate dialogical arts practice within place based contexts and the value of the project to wider place-making discourse. An installation of Assembling Dialogues will form part of the event.
- a mobile mini-presentation to share the work and findings to a wider local audience
- an art product as a memento of the project and a gift to participants

Curatorial framework for Assembling Dialogues

- to be accessible and enjoyable for local people
- to enable the audience/participants to contribute their thoughts about the area
- to create an ethnographic place* to include sensory/experiential materials generated from walks, spatial analysis data and text from articles relating to Lee Bank
- to respond, through arts practice, to human geography and urban design theories about how place is experienced

*An ethnographic place is a sensory and material experience where audiences and participants can imagine themselves in the place of study, while also extracting theoretical and practical meaning (Pink, 2009)

Theoretical underpinning

Doreen Massey, human geographer, proposed space as simultaneous 'stories-so-far'. A place, she suggests, is a collection of those stories. Places also gather experiences and histories, languages and thoughts. Massey proposes a re-thinking of space from something that can be flattened and mapped out to a multiplicity of meanings. (Massey 2005)

Kim Dovey, architectural and urban design critic, explores theory of place as dynamic assemblage "Place is a dynamic ensemble of people and environment that is at once material and experiential, spatial and social." (Dovey 2010) Dovey states that the concept of place-as-assemblage enables us to understand place as an everyday experience.

Ethnographer Sarah Pink states that the sensory ethnographers aim is 'to know places in other peoples worlds' in a way that is similar to the way those places

are known by those people. She suggests this provides an understanding of how people experience and perceive their everyday places. (Pink 2009)

Materials for Assembling Dialogues

- work gathered from Dialogue events include photographs, clay pieces, found objects, short video pieces, transcribed conversations, conversations during walks as audio files.

- urban design spatial analysis including figure ground maps (past and present) vehicular and pedestrian movement networks, building density, topographical maps

- literature review on Lee Bank including government case study, media articles

- artists reflections which could be in the form of audio recordings, video, text or drawing.

2.3 consent form

Re:connections

Information and consent form

LAYERS: GROWTH, CARE & LOSS
Creative workshop led by Claire Hickey on 11th January 2019
St Thomas Nursery, parents group

Re:connections is a creative place-making project organised by Jenny Peevers in partnership with Creative Health. It has been taking place in the Lee Bank/Park Central residential area in Birmingham. This workshop aims to learn more about residents sensory perceptions through walking and talking, guided by the artist's playful prompts. Conversations and artworks produced during this workshop will contribute to two events in March where we will create a sensory map of Lee Bank.

The findings of this project will form part of Jenny Peevers PhD thesis, parts of which may be published. The PhD explores how arts activity can be applied to understand more about peoples connections to where they live.

- ☐ I am confirming that I understand the project and my participation in it.
- ☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any point in the project
- ☐ I agree to any artworks I have created being used to contribute to the further stages of the Re:connections project.
- ☐ I consent to being filmed, photographed or recorded. Any documentation will be anonymous

For PhD Thesis:

- ☐ I understand that my participation is anonymous and that I will be given a pseudonym in the interview transcript
- ☐ I understand that I will have the opportunity to edit the interview quotes once the recording has been transcribed

☐ I am interested in taking part in future Re:connections events

Name _____

Email_____

Phone number_____

Address_____

_____

_____Post Code_____

Name:	Date:	signature:

Data protection:
The information on this form will be held and stored securely in a digital format. It will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. It will only be used for the completion of the Re:connections project and for research and statistical anaylsis purposes by Jenny Peevers/Creative Health CIC. Your contact details will never be used for any other purpose, except when you have specifically agreed to take part in further research or be added to a mailing list.

2.4 Marketing of Re:connections

Flyer for Re:connections (part one) sharing event

Flyer for Re:connections (part two) artist led walks

re:connections

w a l k & t a l k

17th – 24th October

w a l k & t a l k is a series of guided walks around the Lee Bank/Park Central area that will stimulate awareness and perceptions of the area, both past and present.

Artists Claire Hickey and Emily Warner will provide creative materials such as clays, fabrics and inks to accompany the walks, and will use playful techniques to help connect us with familiar and forgotten places.

Artist Jenny Peevers will lead walks that re-trace people's everyday routes. Groups will be encouraged to ponder, consider different senses and capture with photography.

The walks will aim to illustrate our sensory responses to Lee Bank, and will ask us to consider the impact this has on how we feel.

Groups of 2 or 3 people per walk
Allow up to 2 hours for the walk and time to sit down and chat
Please wear comfortable shoes and weather appropriate clothing
Activities are free and all materials will be provided.

Contact Jenny to book your walk
Jenny@creativehealthcic.co.uk
07825 229244
www.re-connections.uk

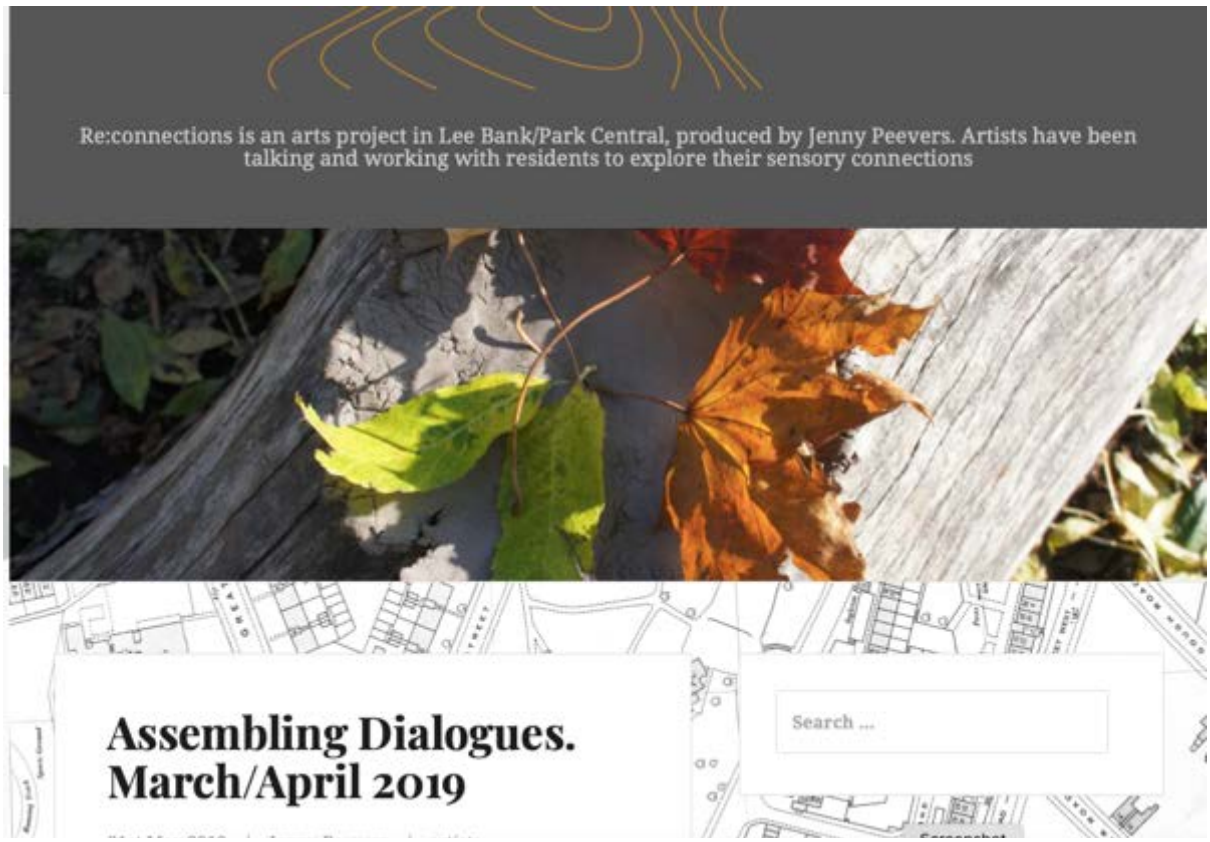
Supported by

Birmingham City Council

Creative Health
arts and health community interest company

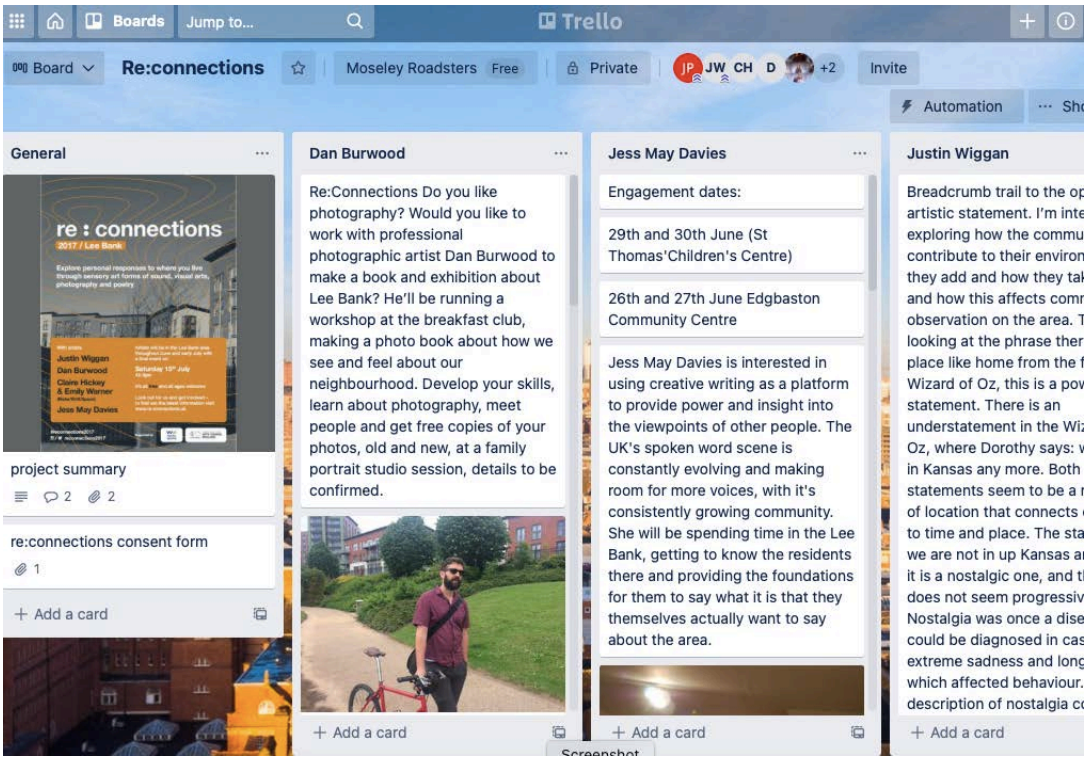
Poster for Re:connections (part two) Assembling Dialogues

Website for Re:connections (part one and part two)

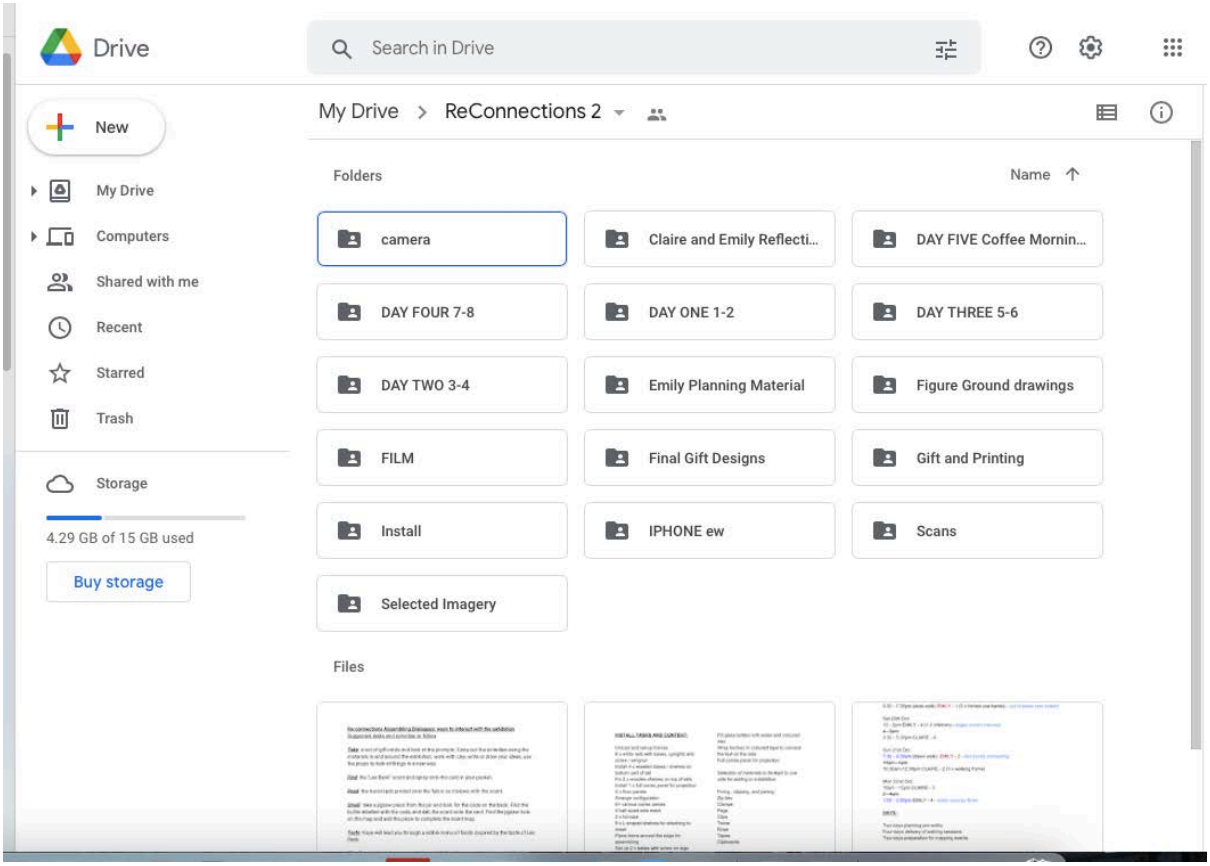


2.5: curatorial planning of Re:connections

Online project communication for Re:connections (part one)



Online communication for Re:connections (part two)

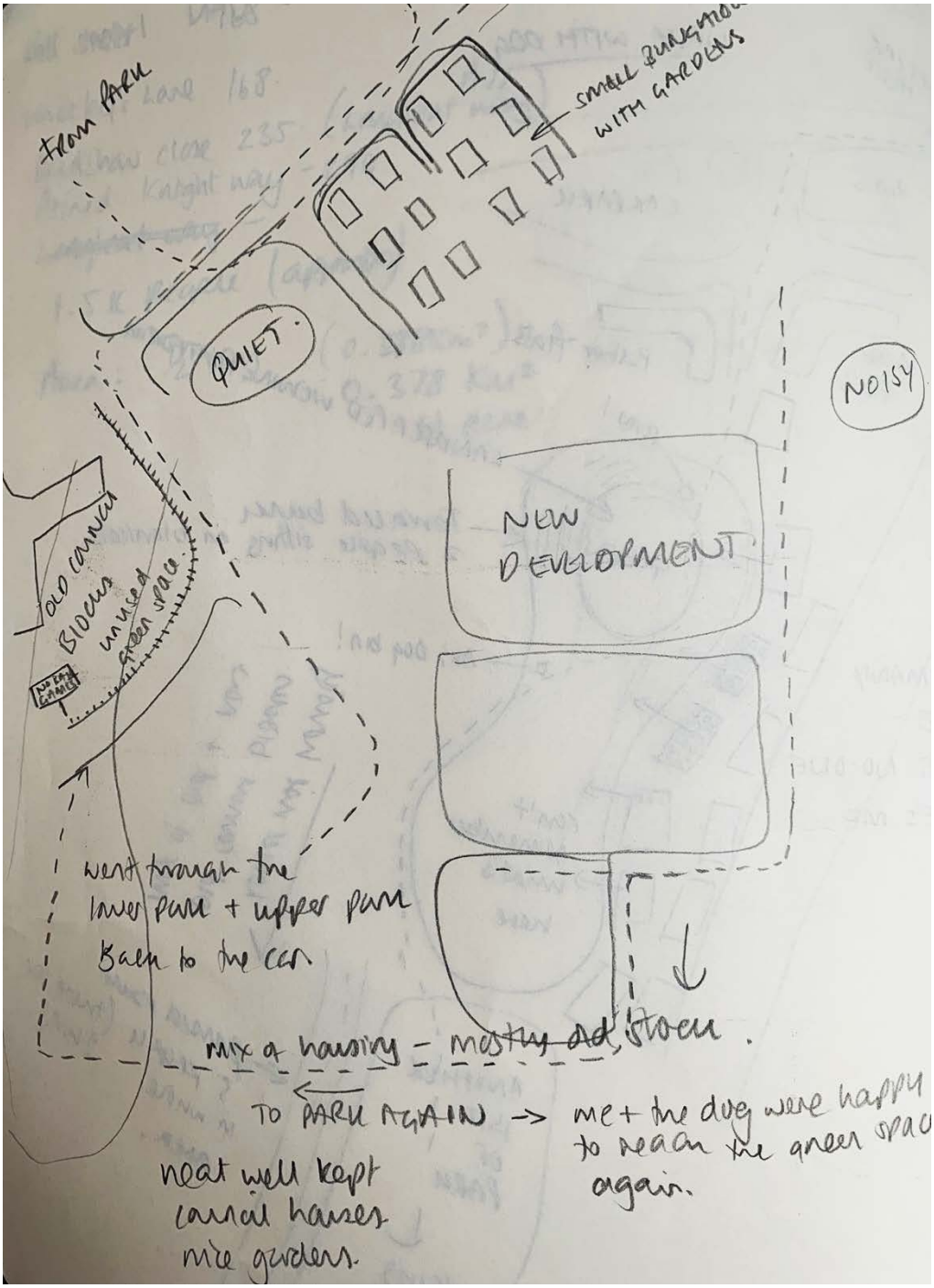


Sample of Re:connections (part one) project management timeline

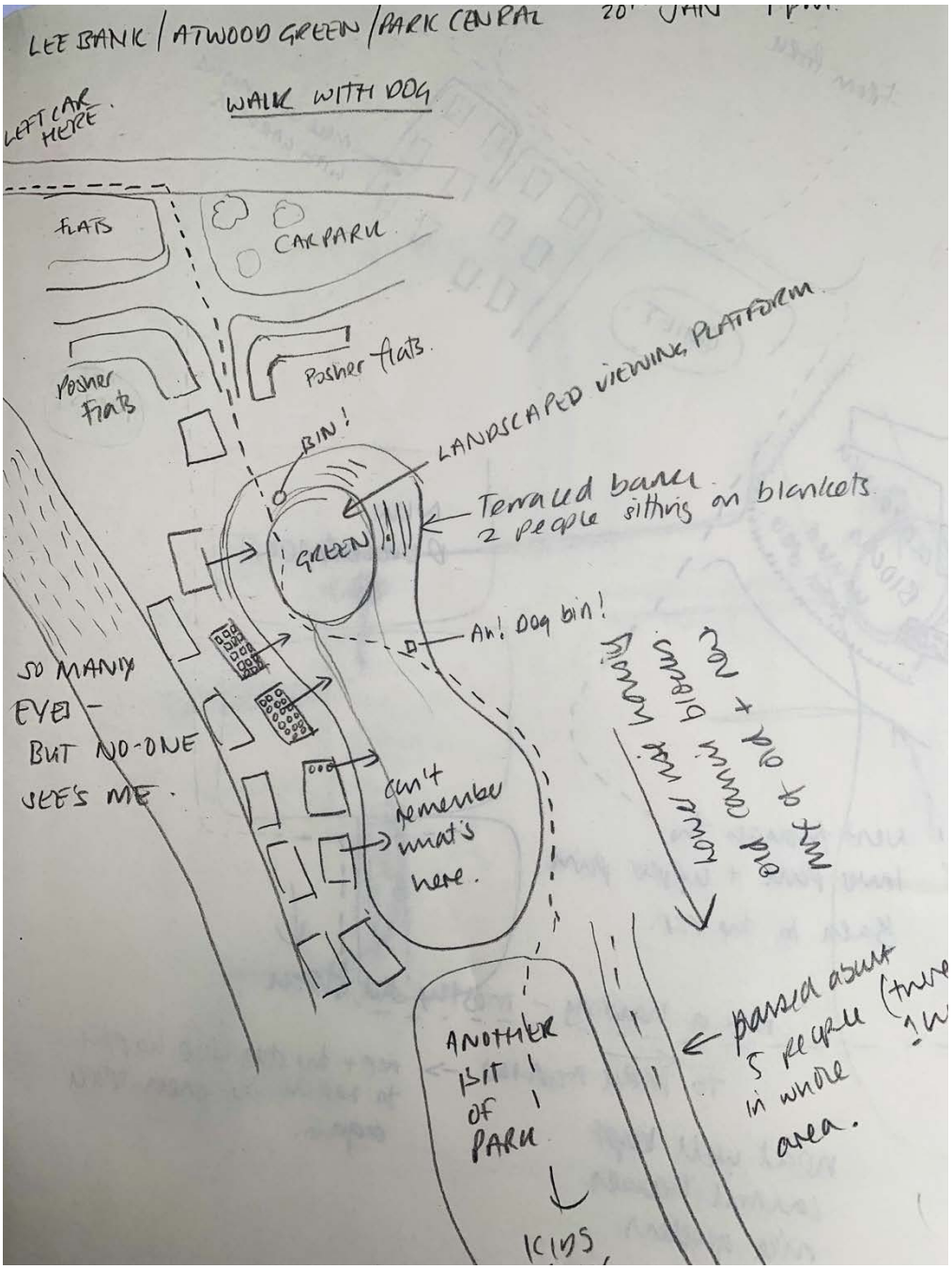
Date	1st Oct 18	8th Oct	15th Oct	22th Oct	29th Oct	5th Nov	12th Nov	19th Nov
Dialogues								
Flyers/invites out								
Sign up participants								
Prep sessions								
Interviews before								
Interviews after								
Gather data on area								
Big map printed								
Delivery of dialogues								
Analysis/eval								
Phase 2								
Date	26th Nov	10th Dec	31st Dec	14th Jan 19	4th Feb	11th Feb	18th Feb	25th Feb
Assembling Dialogues								
Confirmation of venue								
Confirmation of funding								
Commission artists								
Content development								
Invite participants								
Confirm participants								
Delivery of Map/dialog								
Analysis/eval								
Marketing (MD)								
partnerships								
Social media								
website								
Printed marketing								

3 – Reflexive practice

3.1 sample of my own reflexive practice – drawings and notes during initial site visit



Drawings and notes of initial site visit



Excerpt from self-reflexive practice:

24 July 2017

Reflecting on my initial site visit in April 2017, before the project began, Lee Bank feels like a different place. I have known it for so long, and been familiar with many of

its physical characteristics, but now I've heard stories from people about their lives here, the importance of the physical is reduced. Looking at the notes and drawings I made, I was trying to make sense of the area partly on what I would want to experience, such as good quality green spaces, less traffic, friendly neighbours, some semblance of communal life. It was apparent that what I find appealing was the new buildings, the new park landscaping. The buildings and landscape that has remained is hidden from the award winning park. The green spaces around the tower blocks are unchanged and unused. There are no trees, there is no birdsong.

What was noticeable from the artists dialogues with residents was that the established residents, who were here before the regeneration, are either living in the same tower blocks or houses, or have been moved to the neighbouring estate. They are not part of the award winning masterplan. Their lives move around it. Their networks are reduced – many of their friends and neighbours moved to different areas – but the networks that remain are strong. It is here that a sense of community exists. That, I have come to appreciate, is a huge quality in the area. There is anger and mistrust within this network though. The feelings and observations I had during my initial site visit – that the shine of the regeneration is not felt by them - are borne out by the comments of some of the residents during the artists dialogues.

From the residents we spoke to, parents of young families seemed the most positive about the area. They met other parents regularly at St Thomas's Nursery. The Stay and Play session that Emily and Claire and Jess joined, is at risk of closing due to funding cuts for Sure Start. If it does close, the parents will lose this seemingly vital meeting space.

I noted on the drawing the different names of Lee Bank. It seems it was such a poor decision to rename the area and has caused resentment and confusion. The people that seem the most sure about the name of the place they live is the established residents. Most of them still call the area Lee Bank and were angry that it was changed. Some newer residents call the area Park Central and told us taxi drivers don't know where that is.

3.2 sample of artists reflexive practice

Prompts for reflexive dialogues with artists:

Can you reflect on the impact your life experience, values and knowledge has had on the engagement with residents? How do you think they might have shaped the approach and outcomes?

Do you feel that the life experience and knowledge of the residents/participants impacted on you? Has new knowledge emerged?

How did the ongoing engagement shape your thoughts?

Can you reflect on how you perceived the power relations between yourselves and the residents?

Claire Hickey and Emily Warner reflexive dialogue for Re:connections (part two)

Emily – *it's interesting to think about something being about process and also what it looks like at the end. Disconnecting our expectations and assumptions about what something is at the end point, but knowing that it's had care and attention and integrity in the process of it being formed or moulded. I guess that connects in an interesting way to questions around placemaking and 'building of'…and maintaining communities as well, which were themes that came out in all of the chats actually. And I find that with a lot of social practice or 'workshop' work…people seem to come primed with reflections and observations on where they are and almost this sort of intuitive need to suggest improvements or to suggest change or want to propose ways of taking care of trouble in an area or problems in an area that always seems to come up, and even in the more impromptu passing way, when we've done things in the street and people have come up to us, even in early Make/Shift/Space, and "what are you trying to achieve?" people have this sense of agenda or a mission don't they…?*

Claire *– that there's an end point…where things are done and dusted and perfect,*

Emily *– there's …'Good luck with it!", "Good luck with what you're doing!" it's an interesting*
mindset that people seem to come with.. I'm interested in trouble as well and deviancy, and the difficulties in dealing with that (29.23), I am interested in problems, maybe I've been involved in other people's work that's been about "how do we take care of the mess that we make…" "how can we take care of the fact that we cannot resolve everything", "how do you take care of the fact that people are affected by trouble…"

Claire *– it's a difficult thing looking at a particular place, because, as we found and as we knew, it's multi-layered and people come from very different backgrounds and they bring their own agendas and they bring their own 'troubles' with them, and yet it's this feeling that you bring all this mess and then what do you do with it…the where do you go with it? It's interesting because when we talked at the last Re:connections Presenting Dialogues " what do you do with this now, where do you go with this now…?" That's not necessarily what we're trying to do, we're not trying to solve any of these problems, we're just acknowledging that there are these different things that are there, and we're just trying to show a different way of looking at a place, that does bring all these things and it is messy, but that's what we should be exploring and showcasing, and I really hope that how the exhibition was displayed that people got that sense from it, that we're not just trying to show all the 'nice-ities' which is – I think with that particular area is what some residents have got a problem with is that it's won all these awards and stuff but that's not important to them, that's not the thing they want to be focusing on and it should be looking at all this other stuff and that's what we're trying to get across – there's so much going on, that you have to take all of that on board with it.*

Emily *– and I think what I was thinking about 'trouble' and 'chaos' (32.04) actually by taking a walk, being in motion you encounter and move on through all of those things don't you, you move through danger, you move through darkness, you move through pollution, you move through dead bugs on a tree…you keep moving through it…and*

you have this opportunity to talk about things – just thinking about the clay workshop that you did at St Thomas, the younger couple that I sat beside for some time that were clearly going through some difficult personal adjustments, there was a piece of clay that started off being a fist, which was to do with trouble and violence and pain, and anger, but with time and process that imprint of the fist then became this enveloping form which then almost took on this kind of caring object which then the person made these little figures to go inside…it's not that we …there was a space there for difficulty, and trouble and it wasn't that there was an answer to that, It's just that it was explored, and was communicated and then it was turned into something else, and how the process of walking….there was this like two way informing of approach and outcome and process…

4 - Re:connections dialogues with Lee Bank residents

4.1 Re:connections (part one) sample of transcribed verbal dialogues

Excerpt from Justin Wiggan's dialogues with residents at Edgbaston Community Centre

R1- It should stay as Lee Bank. I mean they do call it Attwood Green but it's not Attwood Green it's Lee Bank

R2 - they done that with the Doctors round the corner. They put Attwood Green on there which I never agreed with. It's not Attwood Green, it's Lee Bank

R3 It's still on my letters Lee Bank. I still give my address out as Lee Bank, I live in Lee Bank not Attwood Green. No it won't

R4 Attwood Green is up Bath Row isn't it, up where the Doctor's is.

R3 Yeah but it shouldn't have been called Attwood Green, 'cause nobody calls it Attwood Green…it's Bath Row and that's what it should've been called. It used to be Bath Row

R4 Yeah…'cause I used to live in Haddon Tower. That's when they built the new homes. When we were moved out of there that's when they put all the new, they started building all these new houses and destroyed all the land…

R2 They destroyed the area…

R3 All the trees had gone, everything's gone

R4 [redacted]….You in Chiswick?"

R5 No..Hogart…I waiting to move out of Hogart…

R3 - you don't hear the little birds now, you used to always hear the little birds cheeping. The squirrels running up the trees….don't hear none of that now. They got rid of it when they done all that over there.

R2 - There's ambulances and police cars and fire engines.

R1 - That's all you can hear

R2 cos every day of the week….if you don't hear it, there's something wrong.

Dan Burwood's dialogue with resident at St Luke's Church
R1 - We're here, this is the park that I really like that is kind of an open. You know I was talking about the walk through's...and now there's steps and plants and stuff. There's like bedding and stuff so people with wheel chairs can go up and people who can walk can go up the steps…I really like that design. But it was this..because everything's not on top of each other, what made me think that in a more open space you think things are bigger because of the space. What made me think of home (in Cornwall) was the nature of when you look outside you see space. So our back garden, we have a back garden because it's another room isn't it. So having a park….that kind of makes you think you're in a bigger space than you are.

2:45 Dan talked about space and relationship to security

R1 - for me, we lived at Five Ways in a flat that backed onto each other. So for me, when I looked outside the windows it just made me feel like I was caged in. And for my husband when he was growing up, there were parks around, not like this particularly, but there were parks….they could go out and be allowed to play, but also their mum could see them, because they were in maisonettes. They talk about this funny time where the milkman used to deliver and (can't hear words but the mother had a row with the milkman and the children were embarrassed)

Dan: if there's an arena for conversations, even if they're not the best ones, then you get a degree of familiarity don't you.

R1 - What I like about Birmingham compared to where we were living in Cornwall …it wasn't in the town Redruth it was outside of Redruth. So I knew my neighbours to the back and to the front and to each side but we didn't really talk like I talk with my neighbours….but actually what I loved about Cornwall was my family and the beach.

4.2 Re:connections (part two) transcribed dialogues

Emily Warners early walk as part of Re:connections (part two)

EW asking what everyone had for Breakfast - what are people's food routine for an early riser…

v1 Well on a Sunday morning I always do it differently, so normally I have porridge and banana but on a Sunday I usually have cornflakes and something coz I actually have a much longer period between when I start out on a Sunday that I do in the week coz I have about an hour before I come out in the morning, so I usually have my breakfast here. On a Sunday I'm at home until about half seven so I've got about two hours to do things

V1: I just like getting up early and getting on with the day…

EW: I had cornflakes this morning because I didn't think I'd have time for porridge
CH: I had toast and marmalade.

V1: I come down on the bus…I come down to five ways on the bus then I walk down St James Road around that way….I get up really early, I get up around four o'clock…because I like that early morning, coz when I was a little girl- I'm the eldest of six children – so I used to get up to help my mum, and we used to have all the old ash fires you know…grates…so I used to get up and do all of that stuff..

Emily Warner's evening walk, part of Re:connections (part two)

V1 – five ways is a very important place it's like big roads lead off it…lots of very important buildings, near and on fiveways roundabout, so I was thinking, coz I've done it, from five ways walk all the way down so you're in Islington and then you go onto Lee Bank Middleway, same street…..and that goes all the way down to Macdonalds

EW:…..(talks about the end of the walk)..if it's not too cold we could sit on a bench out there or we could even get a drink at Macdonalds

V1 that's what I mean…. walk all the way down, you know fiveways to macdonalds basically, one road, main road, and as you walk down there you'll be able to see the moon I think…this'll be good…

EW: we'll try and photograph it as well

V1: I love the moon…I love looking at it. I've taken pictures the only thing is I've got bad resolution, your camera will be perfect…we'll get it high definition

EW: talks about theme: day to night, strange limbo at dusk…a bit of an 'out of place' time, so the theme for this walk it 'out of place and overlooked' and I wanted to have a theme so that could give us clues or directions to go on the walk and give us some

prompts for how we want to move, what we want to record and maybe what we want to collect….

Misplaced, discarded…what happens when things don't go as planned, don't fit or drift…..
Mis-performing, breaking the rules a little bit…

V1: the way I went to that park…from five ways, down Bath Row, towards Holloway Roundabout, and then turned in to another road…and went straight to the park.

…walk round the park from where we came from, get to that turning, go up Bath Row,

V1: …that's new developments round there. I remember walking round there…there's new apartments and houses, so that's Lee Bank. Bath Row…it's a nice street, you know, there's things there, and get up to Five Ways….

EW: What do you notice….?
(noise of traffic)

V1: the birds seem more…..calmer…

EW: oh! The lights have just come on!

V1: oh, look at that…beautiful!
EW: Oh I can't believe we've got the lights coming on! That was just for us…
(car noise)

EW asked about how V1 felt about the road

V1: I don't mind…I like it, I like looking at the cars, especially the lights. I like it when there's lots of cars…on this side, all the lights are red, obviously, you know, the back, and all of those are white [on the other side of the road].

CH: Actually, I think this time of night…it's still light enough to see, but the lights have just come on, you do actually see a lot more don't you…

EW: yeah!

V1: sure

CH: coz you notice all of it…everything has a light to it….and some things are spot-lighted at the same time…

V1: I was in the gym, getting my bag. I was speaking to a guy there….nice guy, he's lived in Highgate…I think all his life, and that place is also bad for …things going on, he says. I think I knew to a point. I'm always hoping when they things are improving, things are improving in Birmingham, but there's still things going on.

(talking about old billboard on the side of the road)
EW: this feels very

V1: old…hasn't been touched for a long time.

EW: I wonder why it's not been taken down as well…

V1: hopefully it will

V1: I like this stretch. I used to run down her all the time…I did the London marathon in 2010, so I trained a lot you know, because they say for marathons you train a lot, so I was …running up here, jogging, it's a really nice place to be. I made myself a route around Edgbaston, used google earth, so I know exactly the distance, so this was a nice stretch down here….oh, I wonder what this is…

5 - Scholarly articles

5.1 publication

Peevers, J., (2018) Re:connections: A Festival of Conversations, Architecture and Culture, 6:3, 526-529, Routledge, Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/20507828.2018.1535213

5.2 conference presentations

Sense of Place: arts, enterprise and placemaking, an interdisciplinary conference, University of Bedfordshire, 3-5th November 2017

both now and through history.

talk: re:connections

Re:connections is a creative place-making project exploring residents emotional responses to where they live through sensory arts practice. Jenny Peevers devised and produced the project, and involved artists who engaged residents through conversations prompted by their practice. The arts practice is dialogical as it is a way of facilitating conversations which encourages people to articulate in a sensitive way.

AHRA International Conference: Architecture, Festival and the City, November 2017, Birmingham School of Architecture and Design, BCU

A Festival of Conversations: Dialogical Arts Practice as a Method of Generating Conversations About A Place

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A Festival Of Conversations: A Dialogical Arts Practice as a Method of Generating Conversations About a Place

Jenny Peevers, Birmingham City University, Birmingham, West Midlands

Dialogical aesthetics is a term used by art historian and critic, Grant Kester,(2004) to describe a form of arts practice defined by the artist's ability to listen and catalyse

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EURAU Alicante 2018, Retroactive Research
Presentation: Dialogical arts practice in place-making. Re:connections: a case study of Lee Bank, Birmingham

Title:	Dialogical arts practice in place-making. Re:connections: a case study of Lee Bank, Birmingham
Authors:	Peevers, Jenny
Keywords:	Dialogical aesthetics | Phenomenology | Place-making | Housing | Emotional attachments
Issue Date:	Sep-2018
Publisher:	Universidad de Alicante. Escuela Politécnica Superior
Citation:	Peevers, Jenny. "Dialogical arts practice in place-making. Re:connections: a case study of Lee Bank, Birmingham". En: Sánchez Merina, Javier (Ed.). EURAU18 Alicante: Retroactive Research: Congress Proceedings. Alicante: Escuela Politécnica Superior Alicante University, 2018. ISBN 978-84-1302-003-7, pp. 519-523
Abstract:	Dialogical aesthetics is a term used by art historian and critic Grant Kester (2004) to describe a form of arts practice defined by the artist's ability to listen and catalyse understanding. My research explores how this arts practice can be applied to the understanding of people's emotional connections to their lived place, addressing the need to consider complex nuances of people's place attachment within existing built environment assessment processes. This paper focuses on Re:connections, a creative place-making project that took place in summer 2017 where artists, through a dialogical approach, engaged residents in Lee Bank, Birmingham, an area that has been undergoing regeneration since 2000 and previously regarded as an area of poor quality housing and social deprivation. Re:connections provides an insight into the impact physical change has had on residents place attachment, and new knowledge regarding the value of dialogical arts practice as a tool for design professionals.

EURAU 2020: Multiple Identities. Reflections on the European City, 8-11 September 2021, Birmingham and Staffordshire

Presentation: Towards an Empathetic Learning of Estates Re-Made: A Manifesto

University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"
DADI

Tricarico, Rossella
Umeå University

Universidad Politecnica de Madrid

Parallel session 6
16:00 | 10th September 2021 |Staffordshire University (Stoke-on-Trent)

Panel A
Place, Practice and Making the City
Chair: Alberto Lage

Towards an Empathetic Learning of Estates Re-made: A Manifesto
Jenny Peevers
Birmingham City University

Worlding the European city. An opportunity for architecture to take its place back as art of placemaking.
Dr Francesco Casalbordino
Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

The Psychogeographies of the six towns.
Mark Brown, Lisa Mansell, Martin Brown, Maria Sanchez
Staffordshire University

Panel B
Place, Practice and Making the City
Chair: Aleksandar Dundjerovic

Mapping the sensitive body: wanderings through Madrid and Santiago
Durán Cavieres, Rolando José; Ruiz Sánchez, Javier; Martínez Sánchez, María José
Universidad Politecnica de Madrid
Staffordshire University

Living The Contemporary City
Dr Laura Parrivecchio
Università degli Studi di Palermo

Architectural Design in the Mediterranean Landscapes
Prof Adriana Sarro
Università degli Studi di Palermo

Panel C
Place, Practice and Making the City
Chair: Laura Rhodes

Urban "mixticity" configuration. Program synergies at Sagrada Familia neighbourhood in Barcelona
Crosas Armengol, Carles; Gomez-Escoda, Eulalia
UPC-Barcelona

Towns As Ecosystems. Towards A "Great Place" In The Internal Sicily
Dr Luciana Macaluso
University of Palermo
Department of Architecture

The Breeders, surrogacy center
Ángela Emma Molina Calzada
University of Alcala

5.3 Exhibition

Re: connections (part one) Exhibition as part of AHRA, Architecture, Festival and the City Conference Exhibition at Parkside, BCU