

Place Matters: Assessing the Potential of the Ecomuseum in the UK to (Re)Connect Communities to their Landscapes and Help Foster Regenerative Futures.

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Data Access Statement

The interview schedule, survey questions, survey responses, community PE postcards and roll mapping, photographs and analysis files are openly available in the NTU Data Archive repository at <https://doi.org/10.17631/rd-2024-0026-ddat>. Due to restrictions, access to anonymised interview transcripts, Personalised Ecologies (PE) journals and individual (PE) maps is limited to authorised researchers who meet criteria for access to confidential data, and this is held with the NTU Data Archive at <https://doi.org/10.17631/rd-2024-0026-ddat>. Interested researchers may apply for access through the Library's Open Research Team at <https://doi.org/10.17631/rd-2024-0026-ddat>. The data is being held under an 18-month embargo period from the date of publication to allow for the IP potential of the research outputs to be explored. The data will be available on 30/11/26.

Research output stemming from this thesis

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McMillan, V., 2022. Cailleach Song, s.l.: Landscape Research Group LEX Platform.
<https://lex.landscaperesearch.org/content/isle-of-arran-critical-field-study-creative-responses/>

McMillan, V., 2025. Land Connectedness: A Holistic Framework for Care & Action (Poster Presentation). Catania, MINOM.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK as a mechanism and process through which to promote a more holistic ecological approach to understanding place and asks how this might help combat ‘cultural severance’, (re)connecting communities with their landscapes, in a way that fosters empowerment, inclusivity, resilience and regenerative thinking in the face of climate and ecological crisis. It represents the first large-scale study of UK ecomuseum practices. It provides a new understanding of ecomuseum practices and impact and develops the idea of land connectedness as a holistic term and framework through which to understand the deep connections we have to the places we live. Together, these are presented as a framework for the stewardship of integral dynamic social-ecological systems that are place-based, community-led, polyvocal and collaborative. This research uses case study methodology focusing on the first five UK ecomuseums: Skye Ecomuseum, launched in 2008; Flodden 1513, launched in 2012; Ecoamgueddfa in 2015; and Cateran and Spodden Valley Revealed, begun in 2018. Data was collected from 397 individuals using multiple methods, semi-structured interviews, surveys and creative personal ecologies mapping.

This thesis synthesises original data with transdisciplinary ideas of current research into community-based solutions. In doing so, it addresses the paucity of study of ecomuseal practice in the UK and adds to the knowledge of what part heritage can play in meeting the climate crisis in fostering inclusive, collaborative, resilient and regenerative community futures. The development of land connectedness provides a framework for a more holistic understanding of connections to place and the implications for care and sustainable behaviours, suggesting the potential for developing pathways to land connection with a wider application than ecomuseum practice alone.

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Prologue:

1979: When I was a child, I had a best friend. I thought her ancient. Grey gnarled skin, comfortingly rough against small young hands grasping her solid limbs. Hoisted up, held safe in her arms. In the between time of school and relief of sibling arrival, I'd whisper away my fears telling stories and singing songs to her. Keeping watch on the house, the dark things within, real and imaginary. Lent against her body, in the crook of her arms, I'd listen to the stories she shared. Watching closely the lives of our neighbours, eavesdropping on conversations of people, blackbirds, the woodlouse and curled lichen. She stood alone, cut off from her kin. We were needed companions to each other. Breathing each other's breath. I thought her ancient, but age didn't matter.

2018: Damaged by years of flooding caused by the heavier rains that climate change has brought, the health clinic built next to her is to be rebuilt. Re-sited closer, she stands in the way of the new car park. But, whilst I had gone decades past, others she had befriended, who loved her, stood by her and the community fought for her right to her place.

2023: The death of both parents occasioned my return to that place after decades away. With trepidation my sister and I visited the house from our past. Inside held old shadows we did not want to wake, yet what I feared most was that my friend would no longer be there. But joy, she was! Standing alone still, outside the garden wall. She seemed smaller, not just because her crown had been cropped, but that as an adult, I realised that she wasn't as ancient as I once thought. Now about 150 years old. Midlife for a Holly, we are at a similar point in life. Holly, holy tree of Celtic and Norse traditions. Symbolic of peace, goodwill, and appropriately, coexistence and giver of protection. The current residents told us her story of survival. She had been an important fixed point of my life in that place. For others, too, she meant something. Her quotidian, unremarkable presence important. They connected to her emotionally. She gave them something and they gave her something in return. Connection, empathy, love, reciprocity, care – crossing boundaries of difference, time, culture, creed and species.

1 Introduction

1.1 Research context and themes

This thesis examines ecomuseum practices in the UK. Its central question is: **How can an ecomuseum approach help (re)connect UK communities to their landscape and help foster regenerative solutions and action to address and adapt to social and environmental challenges?**

Ecomuseums emerged from the social and environmental justice movements of the 1960s and 70s as one iteration of Nouvelle Muséologie's integral museum in service to its community as a vital juncture of society, nature and culture. They have transformed through the decades to reflect and address the changing needs and issues of communities. Recent scholarship has drawn particular attention to the ecomuseum as a vehicle to address contemporary crises, environmental and social justice and as a mechanism to deliver the 2030 Agenda¹ and SDGs. While ecomuseum practices spread around the world, they remain little known or studied in the UK.

This research explores the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK as a mechanism and process through which to promote a more holistic ecological approach to understanding place and asks how this might help combat 'cultural severance' (Rotherham, 2015), (re)connecting communities with their landscapes in a way that fosters empowerment, inclusivity, resilience and regenerative thinking in the face of social and environmental challenges. It represents the first large-scale study of UK ecomuseum practices, providing new understanding of practices and impact and presents the idea of land connectedness, as a holistic term and framework through which to understand the deep connections we have to the places we live. Together, they are presented as a framework for the stewardship of integral dynamic social ecological systems that is place-based, community-led, polyvocal and collaborative. This research uses case study methodology focusing on the first five UK ecomuseums. Data was collected from 397 individuals using multiple methods, semi-structured interviews, surveys and creative personal ecologies mapping.

¹ Agenda 2030 is a plan of action adopted by the UN in 2015 to work towards social and environmental wellbeing and prosperity. It includes 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2018)

This thesis synthesises original data with transdisciplinary ideas of current research into community-based solutions, addressing the paucity of study of ecomuseal practice in the UK and adding to the knowledge of what part heritage can play in meeting the environmental crisis in fostering adaptive, inclusive, collaborative, resilient and regenerative community futures. The development of land connectedness provides a framework for a more holistic understanding of connections to place and the implications for care and sustainable behaviours, suggesting the potential for developing pathways to land connection with a wider application than ecomuseum practice alone.

1.1.1 Research framing

In 1988 climatologist James Hansen categorically stated human-induced climate change was happening, leading to the foundation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 30 years later, in 2018, the IPCC finally stated anthropogenic climate change on a global scale was unequivocal (IPCC, 2018). In the last decade, there has been an accelerating awareness of the coactive nature of multiple environmental (including climatic and ecological) and social crises, or polycrisis, we are facing. 2019 saw a paradigm shift in public consciousness with wide declaration of environmental crisis by organisations and countries and the mass mobilisation of citizen action, such as Youth Strikes and Extinction Rebellion (Extinction Rebellion, 2019; Laville, et al., 2019). This is mirrored by increasing calls for activist practice in the museum and heritage sector for ethical, social and ecological justice, which have increasingly turned in the last decade to addressing environmental change and sustainable futures (DeSilvey, et al., 2011; Cameron & Neilson, 2015; Brown, et al., 2019).

The idea culture and heritage are key to human identity and well-being has been increasing in prominence in academic discourse and policy throughout the last two decades. This transformative power and its link to sustainable development is the basis for increasing advocacy for the arts and culture from international and national organisations. Based on Agenda 21, UNESCO's Culture for the 2030 Agenda declares 'the relevance of culture - is paramount. No development is sustainable without considering culture.' (UNESCO, 2018, p. 3). In the UK a similar activist role for museums and the arts in contemporary society is advocated for by the Museum Association and Arts Council England (Museum Association, 2017; Arts Council England, 2018; McMillan, 2019 c). Directly addressing environmental crisis mitigation, adaptation and resilience, tangible and intangible heritage is being re-envisioned as seed banks of knowledge, technology, adaptiveness and inspiration and the dynamic processes of heritage landscapes used in discourse and practice to stimulate creative conversations exploring

responses to and the framing of environmental change (Cameron, 2015; Janes, 2016; Climate Heritage Network, 2019).

Within this context, this thesis began in response to questions posed in two reports in 2019. Firstly, ICOMOS's *The Future of Our Past* (2019) called for research into what part the heritage sector can play in tackling climate change and fostering resilient communities. The report highlights the need for a broad multidisciplinary understanding of what heritage actually is and for an integrated nature-culture approach. It also notes place attachment and place identity as key indicators of success in achieving sustainability goals, including fostering bio-cultural diversity and supporting the well-being of contemporary societies and future generations.

Secondly, the *State of Nature Report 2019 UK* (Hayhow, et al., 2019) identifies anthropogenic drivers of change as the most significant pressures adversely affecting nature in the UK. It highlights the gap between people's values and actions, identifying a disconnection from nature as a causal factor. Its authors declare urgent research is needed into connecting people to nature and how this relates to sustainable behaviours.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted nations in the world, and ranks bottom in Europe, with 1/6 species at risk of extinction and over half of all flowering plants and mosses lost from many areas (Burns, et al., 2023). The UK also ranks lowest in Europe for Nature Connectedness and wellbeing (Richardson, et al., 2022). 2020 research by Natural England reflects wider findings that most people (nine out of ten) are 'concerned about damage to the natural environment' and that there has been a big increase in the proportion of people aware and concerned about biodiversity loss (Natural England, 2020). However, participation in pro-environmental behaviours has been largely static over the last decade and there is a stark gap between the proportion of people who care about nature and the proportion who take the sort of multiple actions needed to protect it (Natural England, 2020). Understanding how we might close this value/action gap is of pressing importance as part of building more resilient communities moving forward.

1.1.2 Research context and setting

In 2019, I also completed an MA in Museum and Heritage Development. My dissertation focused on the work I had done with a community group who were exploring setting up an ecomuseum through a community-first consultation process (Discovering Southwell, 2019; McMillan, 2019a; McMillan, 2019b). I spent several months with the community exploring the special sites and places that mattered to them and why. The answers chimed with a view built over decades of participatory community working in various areas, including ecological

conservation, arts, culture and heritage across all ages. The answers suggested the emotional connections people have to places reflect palimpsests of entangled natural and cultural dimensions refracted through the prism of personal experience, memories and meaning-making. The MA and the project also facilitated a deep-dive into socially-engaged heritage discourse and ecomuseum philosophy and practices, along with a wider multidisciplinary discourse centring place in addressing the interconnected problems of environmental, social and political justice.

Ecomuseums have activist roots. They were conceived in the 1970s as a means for local communities to take control of their own heritage, its interpretation and dissemination for their own benefit. They developed out of movements in the 1960's towards a deeper understanding and concern for environmental conservation and were in the vanguard of exploring the social and political role of museums and heritage that developed into *Nouvelle Muséologie*². Unlike traditional museums, ecomuseums are not bound in a building with physical collections mediated by experts, but concerned with safeguarding in-situ everyday heritage that is in and of the landscape and communities, through community participation and leadership to facilitate social, environmental and economic sustainability. The ecomuseum ideal is rooted in the importance of a holistic understanding of place and landscape and the relationship between people and their place, which, whilst predating it by over three decades, find resonance in the Faro Convention. The Council of Europe's *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* or Faro Convention (2005) encourages us to recognize 'objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses people attach to them and the values they represent.' This gives prominence to the intangible heritage aspects, the language, stories, uses and land-lore that give context, meaning, shape and depth to the physical aspects, or tangible heritage. It is these entangled relationships, or connections, on which the ecomuseum ideal is founded and the mechanism through which safeguarding is enacted. What Davis (2011) identifies as the sense of place at the heart of the ecomuseum.

Ecomuseum practice tends by their very nature to be multidisciplinary and polymodal, creating multiple pathways to engagement which allow for differing passions and interests and diverse ways of knowing and meaning-making. This increases the chances of connection and

² Nouvelle muséologie is defined in the ICOM Dictionary of Museology (Mairesse, 2023, p. 388) as the movement to reform museology and museums to reflect a change in perspective on the social role of the museum, emphasising openness and diverse audiences.

attachment for individuals to the landscape and to each other. There is no fixed structure or approach to an ecomuseum which allows each one to respond 'continually to its own particular local environment, economic, social, cultural and political needs and imperatives' (Corsane, 2006, p. 111). As such, they present a powerful and democratic conduit through which to facilitate the type of meaningful engagement paramount to creating lasting emotional connections to place increasingly linked to motivating environmental care (NT & UoD, 2020; Lorimer, 2012; Trudgill, 2001; Lira, et al., 2012; Brown, et al., 2019; National Trust, 2019; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012).

Whilst there are well over 600 established globally, ecomuseums are still relatively unknown in the UK, even within the heritage sector. At the time of starting this research there were only five established ecomuseums in the UK; Skye est. 2008, Flodden 1513 in 2012, Ecoamgueddfa 2015, Ceteran and Spodden Valley Revealed in 2018. The potential of using the ecomuseum concept in the UK remained largely untapped and unexamined. Only Skye, Flodden and Ecoamgueddfa had limited research published on their impacts (Bowden & Ciesielska, 2015; Young, et al., 2016; Brown, 2017; Brown, 2017a; Bowden, 2018; Davis, 2019a; Brown, et al., 2023; Davis, 2011). These first five UK ecomuseums form my case studies for this research, their relative positions are illustrated on the map below (Fig 1.1). Chapter 6 (Situated in Place) comparatively examines their geographic, social and political settings in detail.



Figure 1.1 Map of UK showing the locations of the case study ecomuseums

1.1.3 Significance of research

This previous knowledge and experience suggested to me the ecomuseum could provide a valuable part of the answer to the questions posed by the ICOMOS and State of Nature reports. Specifically, this research takes a case study approach to provide a comparative critical analysis of UK ecomuseum practice that addresses the gap in domestic and international ecomuseum discourse, deepening understanding of their role and impact in a specifically UK context. This study began as a comprehensive look at all established UK ecomuseums at the time of commencement, with all five being case studies. Three further ecomuseums launched during the research period. Whilst not added to the five case studies, these are referenced in general and this research still represents the largest scale study of UK ecomuseum practice to date. Additionally, this research analyses the potential of a wider understanding and adoption of the framework as an adaptive collaborative means to foster community (re)connection to and stewardship of place. In doing so, this study contributes to discourse on ecomuseums value as catalysts for adaptive change (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022), and adds to the knowledge of what part heritage can play in tackling and adapting to environmental crisis.

Answering the call for research into the mechanisms connecting people to nature and the implications for sustainable behaviours, this study builds on the concept of 'nature-connectedness' as a driver for care of nature (Martin, et al., 2020), developing the notion of land connectedness. As a broader more open term and framework through which to understand the deep connections we have to the places we live, land connectedness encompasses all aspects of the land, recognising the intertwining of nature and culture, human and nonhuman through millennia of co-evolution and co-shaping in the landscapes, flora, fauna, language, names, stories, practices and traditions that give each place its unique sense of place. Doing so offers multiple pathways to connection, implicitly framing inter-relationality. Land connectedness thus provides a holistic framework for understanding the plural and entangled connections to place and the implications for care and sustainable behaviours with a wider application than ecomuseum practice alone. Specifically, this study asks if UK ecomuseum practices can help foster land connectedness to increase efficacy as a mechanism for community stewardship of place.

1.2 Research questions

The central question of this thesis posed at the top of this chapter hinges on the notion of connection and the implications for values and actions that connection may or may not bring. To assess the ecomuseum's potential to act as a mechanism for connection and subsequent

care, it is important I also critically analyse how people emotionally connect to the places they live and any bearing on caring behaviour. Therefore, to answer the central question of this thesis four supporting research questions were posed.

1. What are the ways people emotionally connect to and understand the everyday landscapes they live in?
2. How can these connections be encouraged, maintained and strengthened?
3. What implication does this have on people's actions towards caring for the places they live and wider social/environmental action?
4. What is the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK to foster this connection and as a mechanism for community stewardship of place?

Three main aims have guided the specific work undertaken to address the central and supporting questions.

1. To critically analyse and synthesise ecomuseum and intersecting multidisciplinary discourse that centres the use of place and community participation in addressing social and environmental justice to draw out key practices, dimensions and characteristics that support adaptive and regenerative communities. The insights gathered will be used to achieve the second aim.
2. To comprehensively investigate the aims, impacts, scope and breadth of UK ecomuseum practices and critically analyse their strengths, challenges and opportunities in fostering regenerative communities.
3. To investigate the ways in which people emotionally connect to the places they live and the implications on their values and actions and to understand the ways in which the ecomuseum could support this connection.

1.3 Thesis outline

This thesis contains ten chapters. The Introduction (this chapter) and the Conclusion (Chapter 10) are kept purposefully tight to allow maximum room in the discursive chapters, allowing for the ambitious scope and scale of the data collected and analysed.

Chapters 2 – 4 situate the theory and context of this study in current discourse. Chapter 2 begins a two-part critical analysis of the evolution of ecomuseum philosophy and practice with particular regard to its use to address social and environmental justice. Chapter 3 then moves to map out overlapping threads of multidisciplinary concepts, including biocultural landscapes, social-ecology, environmental psychology, Nature Connectedness, heritage activism,

Relational Multinaturalism, convivial conservation and indigenous approaches centring human and nonhuman wellbeing. This analysis underscores the importance of place-based approaches, intrinsic values and community participation to resilience and adaptation in meeting the challenges of environmental crises. Chapter 4 returns to conclude the second section of critical analysis of ecomuseum evolution. It critically investigates literature to situate ecomuseum ethos within contemporary paradigms of sustainable development, achieving the SDGs and beyond to a more wellbeing-based regenerative thinking. It ends with the compilation of a theoretical model that synthesises analysis across Chapters 2 – 4, distilling key ecomuseum practices, principal dimensions and characteristics that support community sustainability, and social and environmental justice in adaptive and regenerative futures.

Chapter 5 presents the methodology used in this study. Firstly, it examines the blended grounded theory-ethnography approach and discusses the research ethos and the researcher positionality. Then it critically reviews the case study design and multiple qualitative data collection methods used to answer the research questions, including semi-structured interviews (including walking interviews), surveys, individual and community creative personal ecologies mapping techniques, observation and case study document/information analysis.

Chapters 6 – 9 comprise combined data analysis and discussion using the framework of the synthesised theoretical model of key practices, dimensions and characteristics at the end of Chapter 4 to answer the research questions. Each chapter works its way through different sections of the model, using its investigative questions to give an overview of the realities, challenges and potential of the ecomuseum in the UK.

Chapter 6 details the five case study ecomuseums, situating them in their physical, social and political settings, before critically examining their founding, management and governance practices. Chapter 7 examines further aspects of community inclusion, learning and collaboration within the case studies practice outside of management/governance. Chapter 8 opens the investigation wider to critically analyse individual/community connections to place, examining the benefit of a more inclusive, plural, holistic land connectedness approach.

Progressing to consider how land connectedness impacts community and environmental care and stewardship. Then, it turns to examine the practices of the case studies and understand how they foster and celebrate inter-relationality and intrinsic values-based connections.

Chapter 9 critically analyses the final sustainability dimensions from the theoretical model, before then synthesising evidence from chapters 6 – 9 to draw out the main strengths, challenges and opportunities of using the ecomuseum in the UK to help foster land connectedness and regenerative futures. Finally, Chapter 10 summarises this research and its

main findings, concluding with suggestions for further research opportunities and reflections on using an ecomuseum approach for human and environmental wellbeing and co-flourishing.

To start, Chapter 2 begins the review of the revolutionary turns in museum evolution that gave birth to the ecomuseum.

2 Revolution Part I

Ecomuseum development is recited in many papers and comprehensively in several works, not least Davis' *The Ecomuseum: a Sense of Place* (1999 & 2011). This chapter outlines the birth and early development of the ecomuseum movement, focusing on the revolutionary aspects that give the movement its relevance to this research and their potential to foster sustainable and regenerative futures. Chapter 4: Revolution; Part II, will take up the continuing ecomuseum evolution as a direct combatant in the search for sustainable futures.

2.1 Radical experiments in service to society

ECOMUSEUM (fr. Ecomusée, sp. Ecomuseo), n. Definition: An ecomuseum is a community-led museum or heritage project that supports social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability in that community.
(Dictionary of Museology, ICOM, (Mairesse, 2023))

From the start, ecomuseums were rooted in environmental and social empowerment, justice and change³. Ecomuseums have their origin in emerging social and environmental movements around the globe of the 1960s and 70s. The term 'ecomuseum' itself reflects the concepts of those movements (Davis, 1999)⁴. These ideological and political shifts gave rise to the movement of *new museology*, embodied in the International Council of Museums (ICOM)/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Declaration of Santiago de Chile Round Table 1972 (Teruggi, 1973). The Roundtable's remit 'The Role of Museums Today in Latin America', challenged traditional museology and museums. The Declaration advocated for *nouvelle muséologie's* social, political, economic and educational role in service to its community through the concept of the *integral museum*, integrated into

³ For example, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) 1969 NEPA (the National Environmental Policy Act), first formally defined *sustainable development* as: 'economic development that may have benefits for current and future generations without harming the planet's resources or biological organisms' (Sustainability for All, 2019).

⁴ The prefix 'eco' was popular at the time reflecting rising awareness of the magnitude of human impact, used for example in the term 'eco-development', a precursor to 'sustainable development' that arose out of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human-Environment (Purvis, et al., 2018) (Purvis, et al., 2018).

communities as a vital juncture of society, nature and culture. This began the ongoing transformation of global museum practice and study, shifting from object-focused Western-style museology with its colonial undertones and assumed intellectual primacy, towards transformative and inclusive participatory practices (Brulon Soares, 2021).

The Roundtable, as a response to political and social revolutions of the time, is rightly seen as an important milestone in the recognition and development of the ‘second museum revolution’⁵, New Museology and ecomuseums genesis (Davis, 2011). Yet the context for this transformation was not a vacuum. Experimental museum and heritage practices had been developing globally across the 20th Century and earlier, in response to preserving disappearing ways of life in the face of industrialisation, and later deindustrialisation, urban and modern living.

Such ideas built on foundations laid by socialist movements for equity, social justice and access to education and rights, like the Cooperative movement and the Workers Education Association in the UK, themselves born in response to industrialisation and urbanisation over the preceding century. Some new museum forms made explicit links to local identity and territory. Amongst these social history museums, Davis (2011) notes the German heimatmuseum, the Swedish hembygdsmuseet (both translate as homeland museums), open-air, folk-life, social-history, neighbourhood and industrial museums as having influenced the ecomuseum movements founding members. In the UK, open-air museums such as Beamish Museum, opened in 1958, captured this open-air and industrial museums zeitgeist.

However, whilst the museology evolution was already happening, Davis (2011) notes the rapid, radical and self-critical reassessment of the 1960s and 70s as exceptional. Responding to widespread environmental and social justice movements, museum reformation in conservation ethics and societal service can be traced in the resolutions of multiple symposiums and assemblies of bodies such as ICOM and UNESCO from 1968 onwards (for example, see Fig 2.1).

⁵ The first museum revolution is generally considered the shift from private collections or cabinets of curiosities to professional public institutions of education c. 1880 – 1920 (Davis, 2011). This was part of the Enlightenment development of the Western idea of heritage as more than inheritance of property and goods, to one of identity, culture and nationhood (Watson, et al., 2007).

- Museums must accept that society is constantly changing.
- The traditional concept of the museum which perpetuates values concerned with the preservation of man's cultural and natural heritage, not as a manifestation of all that is significant in man's development, but merely as the possession of objects, is questionable.
- Each individual museum must accept that it has a duty to evolve means of action specifically designed to serve best the particular social environment in which it operates.
- The museum-visiting public is not necessarily the total public which the museum should be serving.
- Museums have not taken advantage of the wide range of expertise and knowledge which exists in other sections of the community

Figure 2.1 Some of the resolutions of the 10th General Assembly of ICOM, Grenoble, 1971 (from Davis 2011, p 59)

Brulon Soares, et al., (2023) cite Latin American and Caribbean decolonial and labour movement ideologies, such as the 1961 work of Afro-Caribbean Frantz Fanon, outlined in Brazilian Paulo Freire's 1968 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, as directly influencing the Santiago *integral museum* ideal. Santiago participant's international and multidisciplinary character and it being the first ICOM session in Spanish, make the Roundtable a notable inclusive political event of the time (Mellado & Brulon Soares, 2022). A 'positional move' chronicler of the event, Teruggi (1973, p 131) rightly envisioned as having far-reaching consequences for opening out the museological field and discourse. He notes the testimony of the non-museologists⁶ as a 'bombshell' making apparent 'at one stroke that the existence, sorrows, longings and hopes of mankind were not getting into the museums.... we realized - the museum is grafted onto the tree of society, but is nothing unless it gets from the host trunk the vital sap that has its origin in the fields, the workshops, laboratories and schools, homes and towns' (1973, p. 129). Self-realisation of the 'profound crisis' facing mankind, including development and colonial inequalities and the fact museums did nothing to address these issues, led to the revision of what a museum could be and do, and the single 'most important achievement' of the Roundtable where...

⁶ In addition to museologists, participants included practitioners and academics in science laboratories, education, agricultural, rural and urban planning and development (Teruggi, 1973).

.... the answer hit on was the idea of the integral museum. It ripened and gained substance as the days went by until it took final shape as a new museological concept - revolutionary, even, since it gets right away from the traditional lines and limits of our museum. It was the roundtable's answer to the crisis in Latin America, but unquestionably this new notion will be applicable in other parts of the world (developed or developing), since wealthy and indigent alike are affected or threatened by today's scientific and technological innovations and revolutions.

(Teruggi, 1973, p130)

Excerpt of Resolutions for a New Museology from the Santiago Roundtable

- Museums are an institution in the service of society of which it forms an inseparable part and, of its very nature, contains the elements which enable it to help in moulding the consciousness of the communities it serves, through which it can stimulate those communities to action by projecting forward its historical activities so that they culminate in the presentation of contemporary problems; that is to say, by linking together past and present, identifying itself with indispensable structural changes and calling forth others appropriate to its particular national context.
- That museums are permanent institutions at the service of society which acquire and make available exhibits illustrative of the natural and human evolution, and above all, display them for study, educational and cultural purposes.
- That the new type of museum, by its specific features, seems the most suited to function as a regional museum or as a museum for small- and medium-sized population centres.
- Museums should widen their perspectives to include branches other than those in which they specialize with a view to creating an awareness of the anthropological, social, economic and technological development
- Museums should intensify their work of recovering the cultural heritage and using it for social purposes so as to avoid its being dispersed and removed.
- Museums should establish systems of evaluation in order to verify their effectiveness in relation to the community.

Figure 2.2 Resolutions for a New Museology from the Santiago Roundtable, UNESCO, 1972 (ICOM, 2010). (See Appendix 1 for full draft of Resolutions)

The recommendations for rural and urban communities, scientific and technological development and lifelong education are particularly pertinent to the development of and current ecomuseum focus, both generally and in the UK. Here museums were envisioned as meeting and dissemination points for new technologies, education and ways of thinking for community benefit and development, inspiring 'alternative solutions to social and ecological environment problems' (Teruggi, 1973, p. 199).

The Roundtable's vision of the multidisciplinary integral museum resonated around the globe, but its evolution was not swift nor even. Varied political landscapes affected development, and differences and divergences along language lines occurred. Beginning with the establishment of the Latin American Association of Museology at the Roundtable itself, Latin American and Caribbean countries slowly embraced the integral museum ethos, developing the experimental social museum model and the local manifestation of new museology as *social museology* (Brulon Soares, 2021). ICOM approved radical changes to its constitution to become an open professional association, in an attempt to shift its stance from self-consciously elitist and Eurocentric. It used Roundtable language to create its 1974 museum definition 'in the service of the society and its development' (ICOM Czech Republic, 2020). However, it stopped short of mentioning integral or community museums. With slight alterations over the years, like the inclusion of intangible heritage in 2007, this definition remained mostly unchanged until 2022. The impetus for a new definition arose in 2017, reflecting the increasing importance of museum's social dimensions for theorists, practitioners and communities, especially in Europe and Latin America (Brown & Mairesse, 2018). Though in the end, the Standing Committee for the Museum Definition (ICOM Define) found traditional concerns like conservation/preservation (74%) and collection (60%) higher priorities than community (51%) and service to society (44%) (Bonilla-Merchav & Brulon Soares, 2023, p. 139). This continued predominance perhaps reflects ICOM members' resistance to moving too far from traditional museum functions, as Brown & Mairesse (2018) noted. The ICOM Define project strove to be globally inclusive. Nonetheless, European and Latin American National Committees and Regional Alliances outnumbered others involved, with 40 % and 21%, respectively. Africa (14%), Asia-Pacific 14%), Arab States (9%) and North America (2%) were underrepresented in both participants and ICOM Committee composition⁷ (Bonilla-Merchav & Brulon Soares, 2023).

A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing. (Museum Definition, ICOM, 2022)

⁷ Though it is noted that the diversity of the international committees was far more diverse and served to balance out European dominance (Bonilla-Merchav & Brulon Soares, 2023).

Recognising the complexity and breadth of practices which come under the museums label, Bonilla-Merchav & Brulon Soares ⁸ (2023) observe no definitive definition is possible as museums can be whatever communities need them to be. The new definition aims to be an open and inclusive ‘general parameter – or – inspiration’ (Bonilla-Merchav & Brulon Soares, 2023, p. 138).

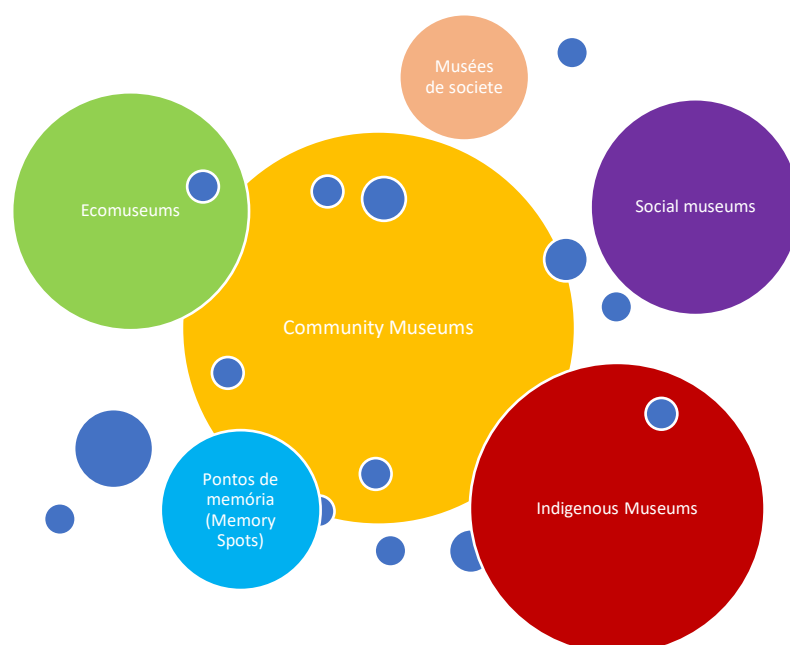


Figure 2.3 Varied types of socialmuseumological museums to emerge from New Museology movement (after Brulon Soares, B., 2024)

New museology has given rise to a number of socialmuseumological museum forms illustrated in Fig 2.3. In continental Europe, the spirit of the integral museum and new museology coalesced around the term *ecomuseum*. First put forward at an ICOM conference in 1971 by French museologist, ICOM director (1964 – 1974), Roundtable participant and New Museology movement founding member, Hugh de Varine. Reflecting a socialist turn in French museology, the term was an explicit rejection of institutional museums and a deliberate opening out to and centring of community and the environment (De Varine, 1973). As elsewhere, new socially conscious approaches to environmental and cultural protection were developing in France through the 1960s in response to political and social shifts, such as depopulation and deprivation. Georges Henri Rivière adapted the Swedish open-air model to champion a community model that gave communities agency in their own recovery (Navajas Corral, 2019).

⁸ Both co-Chairs of the Standing Committee for the Museum Definition (ICOM Define) and coordinator of the global participatory project that created the new 2022 ICOM definition.

The term ecomuseum was embraced from 1973, when the first ecomuseum, or '*fragmented museum*'⁹, Creusot-Montceau-Les-Mines, France, opened under de Varine's direction, as a necessary experiment of 'a new conception of the role and nature of museums' in community creation, management and development (De Varine, 1973, p. 242). The ecomuseum was to provide the community with a tool to 'understand and to control economic, social and cultural change' and find solutions to problems arising within their community and in its relationship with the world through a new 'ethnopolitics' (Évrard, 1980, pp. 227, 231). The ecomuseum as a typology became 'one of the flagships' of New Museology, founded on the premise it should 'emanate from the community' (Navajas Corral, 2019, p. 8).

2.2 Global ecomuseum development

Ecomuseum philosophy began to spread across the globe. As with the spread of New Museology, ecomuseum dissemination was not even, encouraged or hindered by two main factors: sociopolitical setting and language. Firstly, the idea spread to francophone countries, like French-speaking Canada, and those with strong connections with the New Museology movement – Portugal, Latin America, Spain, Italy, Sweden, and Norway. Subsequently, it expanded to other countries such as China, Japan, and Turkey. The development of the different ecomuseums responding to their individual environmental, social and political context. Those in Latin America, France, Portugal, Italy and Spain focus on addressing sociopolitical issues, having close connections with the emergence of the International Movement for New Museology (MINOM)¹⁰ (Ecoheritage, 2023). This close association has acted to disseminate and encourage dialogue, research and collaboration between Ibero-American and Francophone practitioners and academics (MINOM, 2024).

Research suggests a correlation between the sociopolitical landscape and the adoption and development, or inhibition of ecomuseums. Countries with a strong sense of collective movements, in some cases born out of shifts from dictatorship to emergent democracy (as in

⁹ Whilst de Varine had coined the term ecomuseum in 1971, when Creusot was first developed with Marcel Évrard, they used the term 'fragmented museum' although it was explicitly an ecomuseological experiment. Creusot officially adopted the term 'ecomuseum' in 1975 to symbolise the 'symbiosis of the museum and the environment' (Évrard, 1980, p. 227).

¹⁰ MINOM is affiliated to ICOM. With its ideological roots firmly based in the Santiago Roundtable, the movement was the result of the 1st International Ecomuseum/New Museology Workshop in Quebec in 1984 (MINOM, 2024). MINOM was formally inaugurated in 1985 at the 2nd International New Museology Workshop in Lisbon. Ironically, the idea for a specific group to promote new museology came out of the 1983 workshops in Quebec and the 13th ICOM Conference held in London that same year.

Portugal, Brazil, and Spain) and post-colonial development (the Sahel), proved fertile ground for ecomuseum approaches (Navajas Corral, 2019; Ecoheritage, 2023). Totalitarian regimes inhibited uptake of democratic heritage approaches such as the ecomuseum in the Eastern Bloc countries like Poland until the break-up of the Soviet Union (Ecoheritage, 2023), whilst they distort the approach as used in China with strong State influence (Selim, 2021; Massing, 2016; Yin & Nitzky, 2022). Yet Chang (2015) and Massing (2016) argue against universal value assumptions and for the need to accept the ecomuseum adaptation in centralist or hierarchical societies/states as partial cultural necessity of scale warranting different criteria. In African nations, Razzano (2022) views unstable regional governance and global dynamics, like environmental action and tourism, as compromising the mission of would-be ecomuseums through local community disenfranchisement. Japan was introduced early to ecomuseums, influenced particularly by Scandinavian examples. However, Japanese social and economic culture has given rise to mostly urban ecomuseums and a focus on touristic development rather than a community focus (Ohara, 2008; Navajas Corral, 2010). Meanwhile, in Taiwan, government embrasure and promotion of community empowerment through cultural heritage from 1994, led to a countrywide drive to establish ecomuseums, although only a small number are in community management (Liu & Lee, 2015).

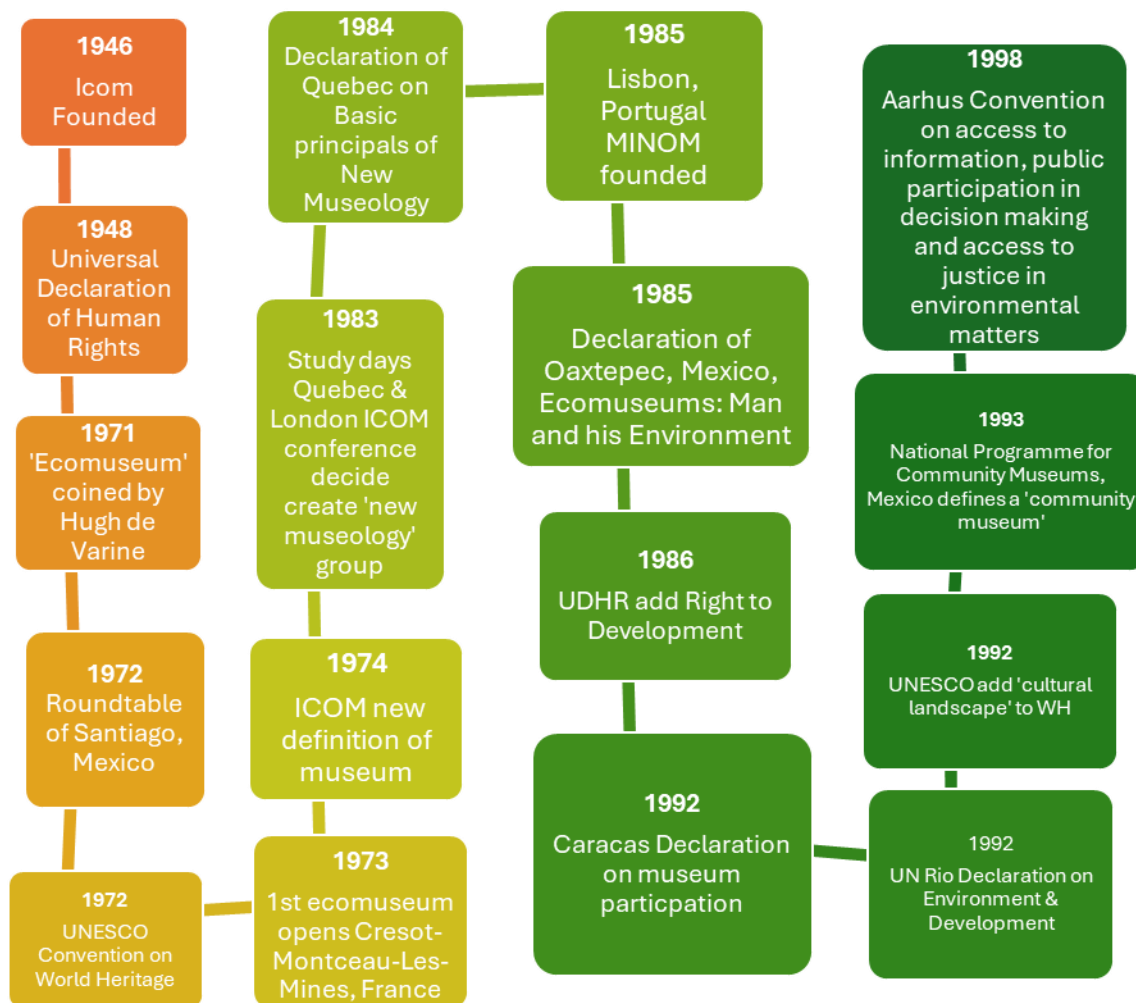


Figure 2.4 Timeline 1948 – 1998 of key developments for ecomuseums and sustainability principles

The Anglophone museum world was slower to take on board the ideas of new museology, community-led practice and the ecomuseum (Davis, 2011). A distinction between *New Museology* in British museum literature and *Nouvelle Muséologie* is made by some scholars, as a schism in approach whereby the former is understood as a critical discourse on the social and political role of the more traditional museum (objects, display, interpretation) rather than the latter's experimental social and political museum approaches actively striving to transform society (Desvallées & Mairesse, 2010; Davis, 2011; Brown, 2019).¹¹ Despite the early spread of

¹¹ It is interesting to note here that in Marstine's *New Museum Ethics* (2011), whilst laying out her argument for a new approach of museums as a pluralistic and socially engaged process and responsibility, which echoes the old New Museology and ecomuseum ethos, no mention is made of the development of either.

the ecomuseum from French to English-speaking Canada, Sutter (2022) notes the similar political and cultural landscape in anglophone Canada and the USA also inhibited initial enthusiasm or gave rise to different visions and motivations for the ecomuseum. Here, Sutter sees the deep-rooted industrialised world-view and neoliberal Capitalism, as favouring the individualist rather than the collective approach of ecomuseums (Sutter, 2022). Sutter further notes Northern America's colonial attitudes coupled with dualistic understanding of human/nature perpetuated by the wilderness fallacy and Christian roots (Sutter, 2022).

Yet Latin European countries also share similar colonial, Christian and Enlightenment roots. A distinction which directly shaped museum evolution with connections and differing evolution along geographic and language fault-lines is predicated by former Imperial colonies. Difference in direction and attitude might faintly reflect the dominant protestant ethic based on individualism, as opposed to Catholic collectivism, different attitudes to Enlightenment and subsequent sociopolitical trajectories. Certainly, politically UK culture favours individualism, personal autonomy and attainment. Whilst individualistic cultures promote innovation, individualism creates barriers to dealing with collective problems such as climate crisis (Vu, 2024). However, there are more subtleties at play when unpacking individualism in the UK that belie this national caricature. The UK devolved governments' household surveys for 2021/22/23, whilst indicating a drop in volunteering in Scotland and England, show formal and informal volunteering of adults is common (see Table 2.1). Whilst UK-wide, 75% of adults made at least one charitable action and 58% gave money in 2023 (Charities Aid Foundation, 2024).

Table 2.1 Formal and informal volunteering and charitable action in the UK - % of adults over 16 years. (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2023; Welsh Government, 2023; Scottish Government, 2023) NB no figures available for Northern Ireland. The lower figures for England could reflect the 'once a month' criteria opposed to the 'at least once in last 12 months'.

	Formal Volunteering	Informal Volunteering (eg helping out family, friends, neighbours in various ways)	Combined Formal and Informal
England At least once a month - 2021/22	16%	26%	34%
Wales At least once in last 12 months – 2022/23	30%	No fig available	No fig available
Scotland At least once in last 12 months – 2022	22%	36%	46%

These figures don't include the 100,000s of people involved in protest movements, small and large, collectively defending their rights, place and environment and in solidarity, which present an important collective aspect of UK society, linking local, national and global agendas.

Marstine (2011) meanwhile notes museum professionals' individualism in individualistic Western museums encourages a focus on objects and discourages diversity of voice. A characteristic of more traditional museums not only in the UK but across Western Europe until more recent years. Yet as said, local social history and community museums have a long history in the UK and anglophone and Germanic countries. Whilst undoubtedly also fulfilling social cohesion and wellbeing functions, the difference in their trajectory lay in the presentation of the physical remains of past histories rather than the ecomuseum's proactive future-facing remit of social transformation and inclusion of in-situ living natural and cultural heritage. A remit Worts and Dal Santo (2022) claim as exceptional to ecomuseology. A question remains as to whether these folk-life museums filled a niche met elsewhere by more radical experiments in museology.

Whilst more nuanced, a distinction between Latin and Anglophone approaches to New Museology and ecomuseums, is discernible (Desvallées & Mairesse, 2010). Brown and Mairesse (2018) stress the 'push and pull' in relations, debate and approaches in social museology between Anglophone and Latin American contexts, influencing ICOM's prioritising more traditional practices and the impacts on new museology and ecomuseums' fluctuating fortunes in Europe particularly. In devising the new ICOM Dictionary of Museums, the developers make particular note of difficulties in choosing the language of debate for the committee – French – in attempt to overcome language barriers to academic discourse and dissemination of thought, noting the particular lack of multilingual ability in anglophone writers (Brown & Mairesse, 2018). A lack this author feels strongly when unable to access the rich ecomuseum discourse from Latin language writers. Language remains a barrier or a conduit to the sharing of ideas. Where ecomuseum networks and partnerships formed these tend to be along language lines, encouraging and fostering the ecomuseum movement within those member regions/countries (Rozentino de Almeida, 2022). Brown (2019) argues small grassroots community museums, like ecomuseums, gain strength and resilience when networked regionally and internationally. The absence of such support frameworks serves to inhibit and discourage (Sutter, 2022). Despite London hosting the 1983 13th ICOM conference which first proposed its conception, the continued near absence of 'Anglo-Saxon' (including Anglophone and Germanic countries) from MINOM, is both a reflective and perpetuating of the division (Navajas Corral & Duarte Cândido, 2024). The self-consciously titled *Babel Tower: Museum People in Dialogue* (Duarte Cândido &

Pappalardo, 2022), attempts linguistic and cultural translation to find common ground as an imperative need for transdisciplinary new museology debate. Though printed in English, *Babel* brings together Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese speaking scholars, English language scholars are again conspicuous by their absence. The EULAC Museums project, purposefully strove to overcome this divide, publishing everything in English and Spanish (Brown, et al., 2019).

The research interests and relationships of academics, institutes and practitioners are also factors in how ecomuseum ideals are disseminated and fostered. Again, these are affected by language affiliations. Additionally, networking within the academy and out into the wider communities is often down to chance relationships and connections. The ecomuseum concept is still relatively unknown within the heritage sector in the UK, even less so in the wider community. For those who have heard of it and the places it has so far taken root, learning of the concept has been happenstance – at an international conference on community development, contacting a local university for advice and happening upon a rare UK academic with an interest in ecomuseums, or through a contact, knowing someone who knows someone from a community who has already set one up, through which the idea has arrived.

As illustrated in later data analysis chapters, language plays a significant part in the simplest of ways in that the word *ecomuseum* does not translate well in UK society. The term conjures visions of environmentalist organisations, like the Eden Project or Centre for Alternative Technology and/or a fixed building, confusing and limiting the broad open vision of what can actually be included. Even within the UK ecomuseum communities that this research focuses on, most research participants struggled with the term, holding little affection for it. A sentiment latterly shared by its progenitor de Varine who in 1992 expressed regret at adding another ‘useless neologism’ to ‘intellectual jargon’ (cited Davis, 2011, p 66). Yet, as I will come back to in later chapters, in the UK there is increasing understanding, use and even affection and pride in the term and being part of the movement.

It is estimated there are somewhere between 400 and more than 600 ecomuseums currently active across the world (Mairesse, 2023; Navajas Corral, 2010). The latter figure seems to be nearer to the reality. A rough tally of known ecomuseums suggests the number to c.928 (Table 2.2). Some figures include community/society museums, undifferentiated in LA and French Federation numbers reflecting their ‘convergent evolution’ (ICOM, 2023, p. 150). This

convergence is also reflected in the ICOM EULAC Museums¹² project running since 2016 to foster inter-cultural dialogue and creativity between community museums, including ecomuseums (Brown, et al., 2019; Brown, et al., 2023B). However, the ecomuseum table tally does not include all countries where they occur, nor all extant ecomuseums therein. For many countries, no reliable figures are available. This is due to several factors. Firstly, the varied interpretation and understanding of the term ecomuseum and the argument that many organisations using the appellation don't qualify as they don't hold true to ecomuseum philosophy (Navajas Corral, 2019; Pappalardo, 2020; Mairesse, 2023; Yin & Nitzky, 2022). Compare, for example, the more developing notion of what an ecomuseum is in India (NIDM; ASSSR, 2023).

Secondly, only a few countries or regions have organised ecomuseum networks, the Network of Italian Ecomuseums (EMI), Brazilian Association of Ecomuseums and Community Museums (ABREMC), Federation of Ecomuseums & Society Museums (FEMS; France & French Territories, Quebec, Switzerland, Guyana, Reunion), Community Museums of America Network¹³, and the Japan Ecomuseological Society (JECOMS). Italian ecomuseums are recognised in regional legislation, so their numbers are fairly reflective.¹⁴ Most federations and networks, like those in LA and the Caribbean, work on voluntary membership with no requirement to join, so their membership numbers don't reflect the true ecomuseum picture in those regions. In the UK there have been difficulties in fostering the fledgling UK & Ireland Ecomuseums Network¹⁵, which will come into discussion in chapter 7. The difficulty ascertaining any numbers with confidence is reflected in the fact the international ecomuseum and community museum platform DROPS does not give any figures (2024).

¹² A European Commission Horizon 2020 research project

¹³ Includes members from Bolivia, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile and Peru - incorporating the National Union of Community Museums and Ecomuseums of Mexico, Network of Community Museums of Costa Rica, Network of Community Museums of Nicaragua

¹⁴ 15 of 21 Italian regions have legislation. Though not all museums in Italy that could qualify want to join the network due to restrictive regulations (per. comm., staff of Lazzaretto Nuovo Museum, Venice, 2024).

¹⁵ An initiative I have been a part of from inception.

*Table 2.2 Table of ecomuseums globally. Ascertaining precise numbers is difficult, for reasons referred to in this section as well as the fact ecomuseums emerge and disappear, and as small community initiatives are not always recorded. Ecomuseum literature seldom attempts definitive figures but simply mostly refers to some examples. It isn't often up to date either given the dynamic emergence of ecomuseums. Countries named where ecomuseums are known to be. Numbers given are derived from literature, internet search and author's own research. This list makes no claims to be definitive and the actual number is likely to vary. * (Duarte Cândido, 2014), (Massing, 2016; Ecoheritage, 2023; Liu & Lee, 2015; Kazior, 2014; NIDM; ASSSR, 2023; IM & Lee, 2017; Dogan, 2015; Ohara, 2017; Doğan & Timothy, 2019; Pavlis, 2024), (Djordjević, 2017).*

Name of Country/Area	Number ecomuseums	Official network
Africa – Gabon; Mali; Morocco; South Africa, Namibia	5 +	
Brazil	c. 20? 12 named ecomuseums*	Brazilian Association of Ecomuseums and Community Museums (AMREMC) & Community Museums of America Network
Canada (excluding Quebec)	6	
Central America and Caribbean	8	Network of Community Museums of Costa Rica, Network of Community Museums of Nicaragua & Community Museums of America Network
China	c. 31	
Croatia	10	
Finland	1	
France and French territories (Quebec, Switzerland, Guyana, Reunion	190 ecomuseums and community (society) museums	Federation of Ecomuseums & Society Museums (FEMS)
Greece	4	
Hungary	1 +	
India	1 ?	
Italy	c. 240	Network of Italian Ecomuseums (EMI) – legal regional framework and recognition
Japan	c. 117	Japan Ecomuseological Society (JECOMS)
Mexico	14 associated ones	National Union of Community Museums and Ecomuseums of Mexico & Community Museums of America Network
Mongolia	?	
Norway	2	
Poland	c. 44	
Portugal	40	
Serbia	7+	
Slovenia	1 +	
S. Korea	46+	
Spain	c.100	
Sweden	12	
Taiwan	18	
Thailand	3 +	
Turkey	2	
USA	1	
UK	10 (+ 2 under development) * see Chapter 4, Fig. 4.1 & Chapter 9.2	
Vietnam	2 +	
Total	C. 928	

There is also tension between the differing ecomuseum governance types. Navajas Corral (2019) identifies two main types of ecomuseum management and their main characteristics

- **Institutional:** top-down driven, managed by external experts, visitor/tourism focused, static; project funded; tends to be shorter-lived project.
- **Community:** Grassroots bottom-up driven; community management and participation; focused on the needs of the community first; tourism element only when this benefits the community; dynamic and longer lasting as changes with community needs and desires. May have external funding and practical input but maintains a horizontal structure through negotiation with public powers.

These broad categories are perhaps best viewed as points on a shifting scale with many ecomuseums somewhere between the two. Neither is ecomuseum governance fixed, and individual organisations can shift from nearer one to the other typology as they respond to factors such as funding pressures and the waxing or waning of community dynamics (Navajas Corral, 2010). These points of fluidity will be illustrated in chapters 6 – 9 in the case of UK ecomuseums. For all UK ecomuseums, project funding is a basis of existence, indefinite core funding being vanishingly rare in the UK funding landscape.

2.3 Limitless diversity – process as philosophy

Rivière's ecomuseum conceptualisation sees them as a transformative tool, a mirror and a laboratory, 'it's diversity – limitless, so greatly do its elements vary from one specimen to another' (cited ICOM, 2024, p 148). Davis (ICOM, 2024) identifies the flexibility of this definition as confusing when defining what is and what isn't an ecomuseum. Whilst de Varine himself declared 'the museum is an institution. An ecomuseum is an invention. It is something that is invented by people, usually several people, to answer local questions' (2017 cited (Brown & Mairesse, 2018, p. 530)). For de Varine, possessing a traditional physical collection eliminates an ecomuseum from actually being one, as its priorities shift from people-care to collections-care (2017 cited (Brown & Mairesse, 2018)).

It has been illustrated socio-political settings shape each ecomuseum experiment. Yet the intersection of all definitions is a grass-roots community-led organisation, valorising a holistic and democratic natural-cultural heritage approach which actively pursues community participation with a 'sense of place'. Indeed, the ecomuseum's flexibility affords it great value as a dynamic mechanism to respond to local needs and changes as they arise (Corsane, 2006). De Varine and Filipe (2012) go on to argue the dangers of excessive organisation, regulatory

standardisation and professionalisation within ecomuseums stifling creativity, adaptation and autonomy.

The ecomuseum is a process; People and projects can change depending on developments in the territory.
(Fédération des écomusées et des musées de société, 2024)



Figure 2.5 'Necklace' Model for the Ecomuseum adapted after Davis (2005)

Whilst not without tensions regarding their limitations, effectiveness and application, subsequent pivot points in international discourse reinforced the transformation of community heritage practices and their role in sustainable development (Pappalardo, 2020). The *UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (1948) recognises 'everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community'. The 1987 *Brundtland Report – Our Common Future*, formalised the Sustainable Development definition as meeting 'the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment & Development, 1987, p. 41). 1992 *UN Conference on Environment and Development* (known as the *Rio Declaration*) characterised the 'cultural landscape' as expressing 'long and intimate relationship between people and their natural

environment’ (cited (Pappalardo, 2020). *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, known as the *Faro Convention* (Council of Europe, 2019), the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, ICH* (UNESCO, 2002) and the *UN 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* (United Nations, 2018) have had particular influence on the continuing evolution of centring community in both heritage practices and sustainability discourse and action (Fig 2.6). It is perhaps reflective of UK State reticence on affirming the value of a more democratic heritage, that the UK government is not a signatory of the Faro Convention and only ratified the convention on ICH on June 7th, 2024, over twenty years after it first began. Whilst undoubtedly various conventions and frameworks have influenced academic debate and heritage practices in the UK, the lack of State support serves to undermine and weaken general dissemination of ideas and practices.

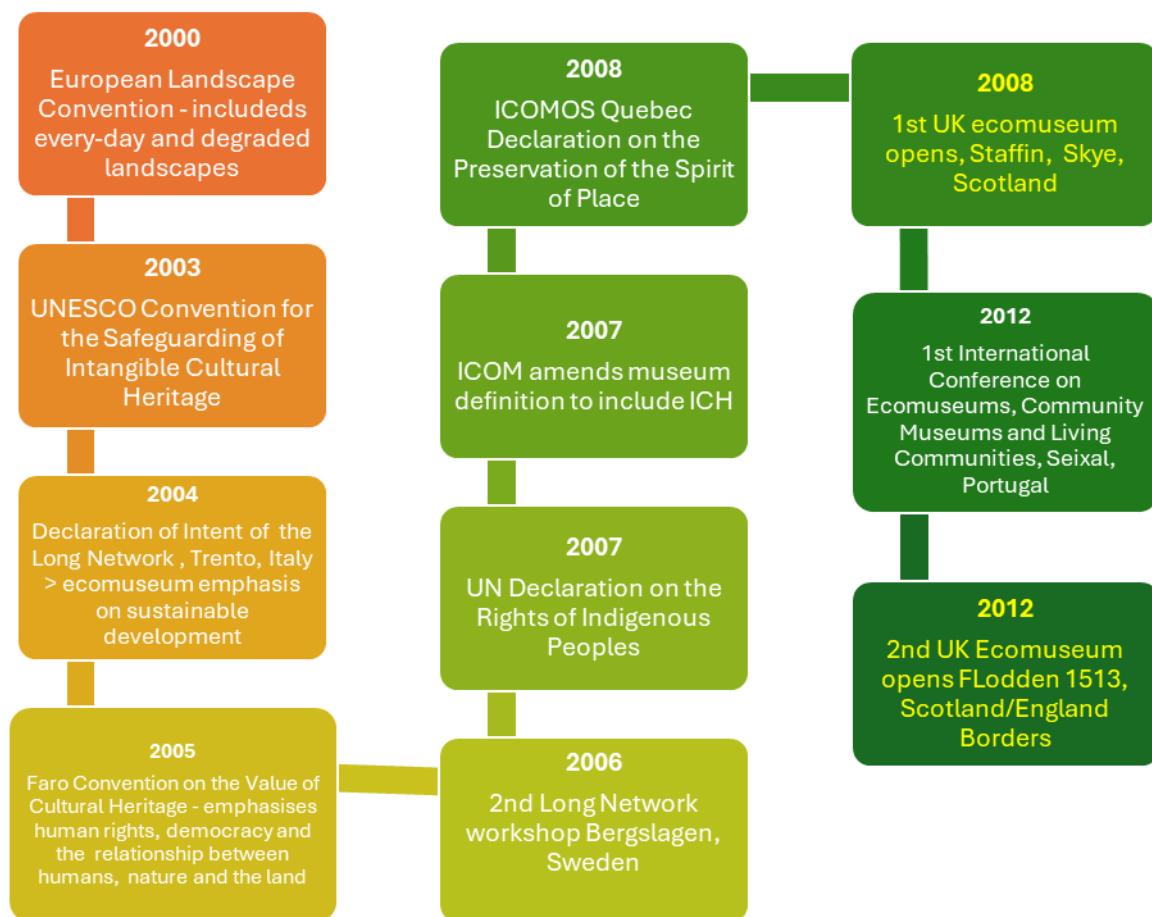


Figure 2.6 Timeline 2000-2012: Key developments for ecomuseums and sustainability principles

Ecomuseums have also transformed through the decades to reflect and address the changing needs and issues of the world they are part of. Key from its birth, there has ever been a direct link between ecomuseum evolution and sustainability discourse. Recent scholarship has drawn

particular attention to the ecomuseum as a vehicle to address contemporary crisis, climate and social justice and as a mechanism to deliver the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

Following the spirit of the multidisciplinary ethos of new museology and the ecomuseum movement, in the following chapter, I situate this discourse within a wider literature from a broad range of thought to draw out critical synergies of place, landscape, and connection used throughout this thesis to assess the realities and potentials of ecomuseums in the UK and to advance the concept of land connectedness as a holistic framework for understanding and stewardship.

3 Place Matters – entangled threads

3.1 Place and belonging

Place and belonging - the intersection of community, culture, traditions, history, landscape and nature - are at the heart of ecomuseums.

(Borrelli, et al., 2022a, p. 29)

Borrelli et al. (2022a) succinctly state the two main concepts at the heart of the ecomuseum and so too at the heart of this study, place and belonging and the connections and mechanisms that give them form. The potency of these integral concepts bestows the ecomuseum a particular position from which to attempt answers to contemporary issues of sustainable futures – ‘big questions for small museums’ (Borrelli, et al., 2022a, p. 27). Place and belonging are relational concepts. A sense of place and a sense of belonging, in essence, connote relationships, relationships with and between a particular space, human and nonhuman, living and non-living elements. These relationships, physical and cerebral, are ultimately social, co-constitutive of each other. Therefore, this notion of social relationship between us, each other and the land we share with nonhuman others lies at the heart of the ecomuseum. Through reflecting on a broad range of transdisciplinary literature, this chapter considers these relational concepts, their impact and utility in addressing the big questions of sustainable/regenerative futures. Drawing together these entangled strands lays the foundation for Chapters 6 -9 investigating the novel idea of land connectedness as a frame and lens to understand social relationships people have to places that matter to them, how this affects their actions, and the potential of the ecomuseum model to foster land connectedness, stewardship and regenerative futures.

Place is at the heart of this study. ‘Place matters’ this thesis’s title announces. But how? Place ‘matters’ as both verb and noun. Place matters as we shape the land and are shaped by the land. Place matters as it is important to identity and how we understand and interact with the world. Place matters in the particular (im)materiality of place; physically crafting together tangible and intangible aspects of the land, human and nonhuman, whereby vernacular architecture, foods, art and crafts and suchlike, become non-narrative articulations place.

‘Place is a word that seems to speak for itself’ so begins geographer Tim Cresswell’s *Place: An Introduction* (2004, p. 1) before pulling asunder this ostensibly everyday simplicity by examining the complex and multiplicitous ways, spatial and temporal scales place is used, defined and theorised within geography alone. Place is one of geography’s most central and contested concepts. Seminal works of Yi-Fu Tuan (1977; 1974) and Edward Relph (1976) signalled a focusing in geographic discourse attempting to define this elusive notion as more than just a fixed physical location but as a meaningful space, of placeness and placelessness, as a way of seeing and knowing, as lived experience and becoming. Various turns have seen place conceptualised as a material record, a symbolic expression and social construct, a practice of dwelling and dynamic processes of flows of connection and becoming, and discussed in relation to power, memory and performance, cf (Massey, 1994; Wylie, 2005; Thrift, 2008; Keith & Pile, 1993). Cresswell affirms place as fundamental, as we experience the world ‘through and in place’ and urges the whole spectrum of approaches be utilised to understand the ‘full complexity of the role of place in human life’ (2004, p. 51).

As a fundamental concept, place is (re)examined, (re)defined and utilised across a broad range of disciplines and practice from architecture to psychology, creative practices to town planning. Within these, place is increasingly viewed as central to individual and community identity, empowerment, justice, wellbeing and cohesion as well as underpinning new approaches to culture, heritage, ecology, conservation and sustainability understanding and planning (Reynolds & Lamb, 2017; PECS, 2019; Taylor & Devaney, 2014; UNESCO, 2013; National Trust, 2019; Neal, 2015). Tensions between nested scales of place, and inherent inequalities of resources, power, culpability/responsibility and effect, through local, regional, national to global spatial and temporal scales, inform the urgent relevance of place to our present situation and environmental crisis, as we contend with the ‘paradoxical realisation that we all live in one place, namely the Earth – while simultaneously living in different places on the planet’ leading to ‘a heightened existential angst linking us to the fate of our place or places’ (Edensor, et al., 2020, pp. 1,2).

Responses to this imperative have seen increased diverse multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary work more nuanced and sensitive to dynamic plural inter-relational aspects that co-constitute place and the creative/destructive potential within and between them. Strongly overlapping approaches of bio-cultural paradigm, multinaturalism, social-ecology, and environmental/ecological psychology explore interrelations of culture, heritage, nature, human and nonhuman in place to address interconnected issues of environmental, social and political justice. These resonate with notions of place and activism in heritage studies and are of

particular relevance when considering the ways ecomuseums are manifestations of place/sense of place, and how they promote relevance, resilience and sustainability.

Each approach convenes diverse, sometimes contesting, ranges of thought and applications alone, and, as with place literature, it is beyond this thesis's scope to provide an all-encompassing account of each movement therein and this work has been done by others (see for example (Whatmore, 2002; Haraway, 2016; Büscher & Fletcher, 2020; Lyle, 2020; Edensor, et al., 2020)). Below, cross-disciplinary notions are explored, calling attention to intertwining common threads that challenge urban, rural and imaginary notions of place in seeking to engender deeper connections to and care for our place/s.

3.2 Place as assemblage: 'lobsters, butterflies, meteors and men'

As a child, I spent uncountable hours exploring and observing the minutiae of the world around me. Literally burrowed beneath undergrowth, hands deep in the earth, collating tiny invertebrates, worms, pot shards, feathers, clay pipe, seeds and leaves - treasures of the earth. Wading weed-rich becks in search of sticklebacks, resurrecting the dead from their gravestones to lives conjured, or up in boughs of trees with blackbirds, taking flight over the life going on below me. As I got older, I ranged the wider area of wolds, windmills and dykes. I imagined the tiny Cretaceous sea creatures, whose crushed remains formed the local chalk and looked for fossils, Viking raiders, ghosts of seafaring forebears and a drowned grandfather on the Humber foreshore and relics of Picts on the Kincardineshire coast, tracing dual heritage along the lines of symbol stones, earthworks and in thick glacial Holderness mud. I was absorbed by and absorbed into my place, human and nonhuman, dreaming of the interwoven warps and wefts, of all that had ever gone into making that world.

This passion to seek out and understand deep connections in the landscape around me led to and was amplified by my time as an archaeology undergraduate. I fell deeper in love with the land. A visceral love of the deep brown swirl of the Humber, the vibrating resonance of standing stones, the whisper of cropmarks, the voice of the vernacular in folklore, folksong, birdsong, the winds, and the beating heart of all living and non-living things sharing, entangled, and creating places. The sort of hippy kookiness I remember one undergraduate lecturer decrying as riddling the archaeology student body in his demand for serious scientific unemotional objectivity in pursuit of academic rigour and excellence.

Perhaps he had a point in his 'type' attracted to archaeology, but not in his allocation of its negativity. Perhaps any latent philosophical leanings in archaeology students are attracted and intensified by an inherent understanding of time as the fourth dimension of any context,

landscape and place. Years later, I discovered a book by another archaeologist, Jacquetta Hawkes. Written across 1949-50, *A Land* (1951) presages phenomenology, social-constructivism, post-materialism, more-than-human and socio-ecological understanding of place by decades, in her remarkable attempt to understand the land of Britain. She invokes an entity, a land, as consciousness melding together nature, human and nonhuman, culture, art, science, emotion and love, past, present and future. Where human self-consciousness emerges as process 'with[in] the stream of time' and the inter-relatedness of all things, not above any other emergent moment but all equally significant in their difference, from the smallest microbes and the rocks, outwards to particles of the cosmos. 'The nature of this unity cannot be stated, for it remains always just beyond the threshold of intellectual comprehension. It can only be shown as a blurred reflection through hints coming from many directions but always falling short of their objective' (Hawkes, 1951, p. i).

For Hawkes, place had shape 'constant in its familiarity yet in fact continuously changing' (1951, p. 9), prefiguring Massey's (1994) timespace as a 'meeting place for the roots of life in time and space' (Hawkes, 1951, p. 38) where the particular is both global and local in its relations, networks and being. Wherein she declares "'me" is a fiction' (Hawkes, 1951, p. 40) prescient of Haraway's posthumanist contention 'we have never been human' (2007). Hawkes surmises 'we are returning to an awareness of our unity with our surroundings – [where for those who open their minds to the possibility] consciousness is melting us all down together again – earth, air, fire, water, past and future, lobsters, butterflies, meteors and men' (Hawkes, 1951, p 41).

Hawkes was writing at the cusp of what is now called *the great acceleration* (Steffen, et al., 2015). This is the point, from 1950s onwards, at which actions of (some) humans affected the global climate exponentially in what is now called, not without controversy, the Anthropocene (cf. (Brondizio, et al., 2016; Haraway, 2016; Malhi, 2017; Ruddiman, 2018) . Her words unwittingly prophetic of environmental crises, global warming 'melting' consciousness into awareness of unity as 'knowledge of material facts imposes humility upon us, willy nilly' (Hawkes, 1951, p13).

Though unarguably with roots going back to ancient philosophies from ancient Greeks, Buddhism and pre-Christian British tradition amongst others, in British academic circles at the

time, this extra-scientific and passionate *holistic*¹⁶ approach was revolutionary¹⁷. Whilst her hopeful assertion of our ‘*returning* to an awareness of our unity with our surroundings’ (Hawkes, 1951, p 41, my emphasis) was premature, in the following decades this ‘spirit of universal inter-relatedness’ (Hawkes, 1951, p.1) would be at the root of ecological thinking and wider discourse across disciplines. Turning full circle in their development of ‘new’ theoretical frameworks towards ideas that would be familiar to ancient, alternative and indigenous worldviews. Similar developments transpired in the heritage sector, particularly new museology and ethical approaches, such as ecomuseums and the establishment of groups like Common Ground (2019) established in 1983, cf (Matless, 2023; Smith, 2016). This way of approaching heritage is still evolving, increasingly promoted in recent decades as key to achieving healthy and sustainable individual and community wellbeing as illustrated in policies from the Faro convention to environmental sustainability goals of Agenda 21 (United Nations, 1992; Council of Europe, 2019; Museum Association, 2017; Historic England, 2014).

In *Place as Assemblage* Kim Dovey (2020), seeks to reconcile the central rift in place theory between ontological and phenomenological approaches exemplified by Heidegger’s (1962) irrefutable ‘being-in-the-world’ and the social-constructivist approaches as characterised by Massey’s (1994) open, progressive and fluid place. Building on the work of Deleuze & Guattari (1987) and Delanda (2006), Dovey offers *assemblage thinking* to bridge the divide in theories of place and the binaries of ‘roots or routes, open or closed – with a more Deleuzian “becoming-in-the-world” [with] a more dynamic and open sense of place as a multiplicitous assemblage’ (Dovey, 2020, p. 21).

Ingold (2015) views assemblage theory as too static, lacking movement and failing to explain the interrelationship of things. Instead, he proposes the concept of lines and knots. In Ingold’s conception, all living things are bundles of blobs (form – materiality) and lines (sociality – entanglement) which have movement and energy. This allows the whirl of entanglement where every thing spools-out lines that tangle/knot with everything else. Ingold’s invocation of knotting at the core of all interrelations, ‘between society and the cosmos’ (2015, p. 20) finds unacknowledged resonance in many worldview imaginaries of the interweaving of life, such as

¹⁶ A term Hawkes says she had not heard at the time of writing, and still disliked when writing the introduction to the second edition in 1978 (p. 2).

¹⁷ As the first women to graduate in archaeology from Cambridge, one does wonder if a female perspective helped transform received scientific doctrine in her hands in to something looser and more open.

Robin Wall Kimmerer's (2013) *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Yet Ingold's concept is restrictive, missing out non-living yet dynamic things¹⁸ and excluding nonhumans from relations and emotions.

Similarities can be drawn to scientific models, such as String Theory developed by physicists in the 1960s as a candidate for the elusive unified Theory of Everything. It envisions subatomic particles not as points (blobs) but as strings (lines), which predicates their movements and interactions. String theory is central to quantum entanglement, where particles are generated, interact, or share proximity in a way that their quantum state cannot be described separately, even if separated by a large distance. The correlation of string theory and quantum entanglement is not as peripheral to discussion of place as it first seems. Quantum entanglement is now being applied across disciplines in studies of photosynthesis and cellular organisms (Marais, et al., 2018; Ball, 2018), to timespace (Musser, 2018) and increasingly as a model for emotional responses of people and things (Adesso, 2007; Lukac & Perkowski, 2007) and new materialist principles of intra-action (Barad, 2007). For ecofeminist philosopher and science historian Carolyn Merchant (2016), quantum theory is part of the chaos and complexity needed to understand an active, autonomous nature within which humanity is inextricably positioned. Change the word particle for *thing* in the description of quantum entanglement and you have a workable definition of place, place-identity or sense of place - *Sense of/place/identity* occurs where *things* are generated, interact, or share proximity in a way that their *place*-state cannot be described separately, even if separated by a large distance.

The concept, language, and imagery of entanglement and connection are critical to all notions of place discussed in this thesis. Advancement of scientific technology and understanding demonstrate at increasingly sophisticated scales, the poetical realities of the central tenets of transdisciplinary notions of place, traditional and alternative ontologies.

Place is embodied at a cellular level. In archaeology, isotope geochemistry measures the isotopes of elements like strontium, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen using isotope-ratio-mass-spectrometers (IRMS). Isotopes are present in everything in a given environment in different measures, the soils, rocks, water, air. They're absorbed by all living things as they grow and live, through xylem and placental blood, imbibed with mother's milk, ingested with every meal. Isotopes remain in cellular and chemical structures of organic remains and mineral products, giving them a unique fingerprint of provenance, tracing complex flows and networks of population and object movements across local and global scales, from prehistoric times

¹⁸ Such as geomorphological processes.

(Moffat, 2014; De Bonisallenia, et al., 2018; Madgwick, et al., 2019). You can take the girl out of Hull, but you literally cannot take Hull out of the girl, the bowl or the axehead.

Research revealing the lively creative, nurturing and reactionary ‘wood-wide web’ lends a voice to non-animal living things in place. The complex web interconnects plant forms in place, across local to global networks via soil microbes, mycorrhizal fungi and airborne chemical communications, nurturing, healing and sustaining forest communities, in turn, affecting all life in place, from signalling bluetits to come and control leaf-munching caterpillars to reducing human stress hormones (Christopher, 2017; Popkin, 2019; Simard, 2021; Wall Kimmerer, 2013). That we should learn to listen to these other voices of place, is imperative as susceptibility of these networks to climate change and their potential to create feedback loops affecting further changes is revealed (Crowther, et al., 2016).

Knowledge of material facts is finally imposing Hawke’s humility upon us (Hawkes, 1951, p13). Synergistic social and ecological issues of climate crisis force the realisation we have indeed reached a time, an epoch, where scientific knowledge has rendered untenable notions of human exceptionalism as separate and bounded from all that surrounds us in *tentacular* place (Haraway, 2016).

3.2.1 A thing of things

Returning to Ingold, his description of assemblage evokes a classic museum collection of artefacts, each juxtaposed as ‘externally bounded blocks’ (Ingold, 2015, p. 15) not unlike my aforementioned childhood collection of ‘treasures’ gathered from my place. However, those invertebrates and worms would stubbornly wiggle away from my carefully constructed enclosures, pulling down the leaves with them to return to earth, the seeds might sprout and grow, the feathers blow away or be taken up by their avian progenitors to line nests of new generations, a pot shard would be washed or carried away by unseen forces. Nothing stayed put or behaved as expected. Of course, material objects were just part of these assemblages; the imaginative processes and stories connecting them and the emotions elicited were equally real to me. My childhood assemblage was a process, a doing, a verb, not a noun.

Likewise, Dovey’s (2020) assemblage is a lively happening, a morphogenesis in process where difference and multiplicitous relations give rise to place that is immanent. Assemblage read as a verb recalls a gathering like the *thing* or *moot* Olwig *et al.* (2016) notes at the heart of Old English and Scandinavian meanings of land and landscape, place as a *thing* of things. Place as assemblage is Massey’s (2005) ‘ongoing negotiation’. Rather than prohibiting its existence, the ‘sociability of things to associate within and between other things’ gives assemblage its creative

power (Hinchliffe, 2007, p. 40). For Tsing (2015), places are assemblages of polyphonic performances of multispecies liveability and adventures in landscape. Tsing continues ‘if we are interested in liveability, impermanence, and emergence, we should be watching the action of landscape assemblages. Assemblages coalesce, change, and dissolve: this is the story’ (Tsing, 2015, p. 158). Place as assemblage isn’t about arriving at final answers but embracing an emergent sense of wonder as tensions generate more questions.

Dovey (2020) suggests we understand these tensions, conceptual oppositions, like territorialisation/deterritorialisation, difference/identity, being/becoming, not as binaries but as twofolds. The focus on the interconnectedness and dynamism between them. As twofolds, connections between oppositions allow for dynamic creative tensions, accommodation and adaptation rather than binary narratives of exclusion, denial and oppression of the other. As twofolds, concepts intrinsic to everyday conceptions of place - difference, identity and becoming - are slippery and shifting, porous and open. Thus, we can ‘understand place as being ontological without becoming essentialist, deep-seated in everyday life without being deep-rooted in fixed origins’ (Dovey, 2020, p. 30). Difference becomes generative.

‘What if’, the girl says. ‘Instead of saying this border divides these places, we say, this border unites these places. This border holds together two really interesting different places. What if we declare border crossings places where, listen, when you crossed them, you yourself became doubly possible.’

‘Florence’ in Spring by Ali Smith (2019, p. 196)

3.3 Sense of place

Accepting place as a multiplicitous and lively assemblage leads to understanding *sense of place* as the balance of qualities of different elements of place, abiotic, biotic and cultural, perceived together. In its simplest definition, sense of place is ‘an overarching concept which subsumes other concepts describing relationships between human beings and spatial settings’ (Convery, et al., 2014, p. 5). Although more-than-human approaches argue we need to remove the *human* from *being* to reimagine the world to address climate and ecological emergencies (Haraway, 2016; Tsing, 2015).

Despite familiarity of the notion, sense of place is deeply complex and contested. For Dovey (2020), sense of place connects materiality with cognition, expression and meaning via sensation. He sees place as first experienced and analysed second. Dovey reflects whilst we can experience a sense of place in an unreflective, everyday way, the quest to define a sense of

place is ultimately impossible as materiality, experience and sensation continually co-create place anew.

Sense of place is the *more-than-sum* of interrelations between all aspects of place, of materiality, meaning and experience. Perception is polysensorial, sounds, sights, tastes, smells, touch, temperature, movement, emotion and plane powerfully combine embodying meaning-making and knowledge (Pink & Howes, 2010). Sense of place is holistic, polydimensional and experiential. Ever-shifting intensities of different qualities affect perceptions. These shifts may be quotidian, from day to night, summer swifts to winter's starlings, a weekly market, and rush hour. The interplay of different affective and emotional intensities through repeated everyday actions produces place *stickiness* (Laketa, 2017). Incremental shifts accumulate, more or less perceptively over time, the creep of gentrification and housing development, gradual changes to climate, habitat, species. Shifts over vast scales of time outside human lifespans, outside of human life altogether, like tectonic agency creating continents, raising mountains and processes that subsequently wear them down again, add to the differential qualities of place. More rapid shifts - human conflicts, the closure of local industry, the commencement of extractive mining, geomorphic events like earthquakes, biotic migration like ash dieback disease, local extinction of a species or a pandemic novel zoonotic virus, can threaten place stability and identity, altering how it is sensed. Shifts can be on a larger or smaller spatial scale, from national conflict to domestic abuse. Sense of place is a dynamic scale from dark, threatening or threatened to safe, peaceful, therapeutic and joyful.

Group and individual identity and relationship to place are also critical to how place is sensed, particularly senses of insider/outsider, belonging/not belonging. Places exist within places, a room in a house, in a street, in a neighbourhood, in a town and so on. As such, an individual's senses of place are also nested in scale, a complex interplay of each sense of one place on the other, but not reducible to any one. A home may be safe or fearful, the streets outside threatening or a sanctuary. Multiplicity of identities, not just between different people but also within a single individual, means different ways of knowing or experiencing place can be sensed simultaneously. Intersectionality recognises every individual is at the crossroads of multiple social categories, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age, dis/ability, religion etc making it impossible to neatly divide society-or place- into singular identities as the individual experiences them simultaneously and the different facets of identity shape the other identities (Valentine, 2007). Edensor *et al.* (2020) recognise these multiplicities of identity as entangled in the constituting and experience of place. Further, more-than-human and post-humanist scholars problematise the focus on anthropocentric understanding and sense of place, calling for deeper attention to

nonhuman accounts of place and placemaking (Philips & Robertson, 2020; Hinchliffe & Whatmore, 2006). The entanglement of nonhuman and human in place as *unintentional* world-making (Tsing, 2015) or worlding (Haraway, 2016) as important to understanding place and the liveability of place for all, is a theme revisited through the following sections.

Davis observes our perceptions of places affect us, modifying our behaviour (2011). The stickiness of place is embodied and shapes how different identities are perceived and expected to behave, creating a complex circular relationship in which place and identity interweave (Laketa, 2017). Thrift (2008) argues this affect can be, and is, deployed both knowingly and politically. Our behaviour can also be modified, changing our perception of place as ‘we are bodies in process, gaining ways of looking, a new set of eyes, slightly more wary nose, a different sensibility’ (Hinchliffe, 2007, p. 132). This gives sense of place a particular significance in discourse, practice, planning and policy around community empowerment, wellbeing and cohesion as well as underpinning of new heritage and conservation approaches to urban, landscape, cultural understanding and planning (Historic England, 2018; UNESCO, 2013; Taylor & Devaney, 2014; Fujiwara, et al., 2014; Graham, et al., 2009). Ecomuseums themselves were founded on the principle of advancing the empowerment of communities through active engagement with their sense of place in ‘responding continually to particular local environment, economic, social, cultural and political needs and imperatives’ (Corsane, 2006, p. 111). In *Uses of Heritage*, Smith (2006) explains the intertwining of emergent sense of place, identity and heritage.

Heritage as place, - may not only be conceived as representational of past human experiences, but also as creating an affect on current experiences and perceptions of the world. Thus, a heritage place may represent or stand in for a sense of identity and belonging for particular individuals or groups. However, it may also structure an individual's response and the experiences an individual may have at that place, while also framing and defining the social meanings these encounters engender.’ (Smith, 2006, p77)

Echoing Hawkes’ summation of the nature of place as ‘constant in its familiarity yet in fact continuously changing’ (1951, p. 9), Convey et al. explain the elusiveness of sense of place as ‘at once recognisable but never constant, it is embodied in a flux of familiarity and difference’ (Convey, et al., 2014, p. 5). Sense of place can be both profoundly individual but also something shared with and between others (Convey, et al., 2014). Consequently, sense of place is inextricably woven together with community sentiment, attachment and identity (Hummon, 1992). Ideas of personal and communal identity are bound with phenomenological

meaning-making through processes of ecological and built environments, social relations and connectedness (Hummon, 1992). Reflecting Davis' ecomuseum model (Chapter 2, Fig 2.5), the fundamental links between local communities and the land they inhabit, the interwoven 'net of relationships', form the 'essence of - people's identity' (Taylor & Lannon, 2011, p. 540).

Co-founder of Common Ground, Susan Clifford eloquently explains why a sense of place matters to individual and community identity in the 'dynamic relationships between people and geography [where] the land, embossed by story on history on natural history, carries meaning' (2011, p. 13). Recognised as 'local distinctiveness' it is a key constituent in promoting sustainable communities, seeking an holistic understanding of and approach to environment, culture and tangible and intangible heritage (Common Ground, 2018). This leads to the perception of an associative cultural landscape (Buggey & Mitchell, 2008) which highlights the entanglement of ecological and human systems and the linked heritage of the land and people (McMillan, 2019a). Cultural landscape studies have been a growing area since the 1980's (Taylor, 2008) and organisations like Common Ground and ecomuseums have advocated for the 'local and commonplace' (Clifford, 2011, p. 13) not just the civic centre and monumental¹⁹.

Gathering momentum from increased understanding of values people attach to "their everyday landscape and the concomitant value to sense of place and identity" (Taylor, 2008, p. 4) there has been shift towards a holistic paradigm. As the Faro Convention reflects, recommending individuals and local communities 'participate in the process of identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural heritage [which] include all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time' (Council of Europe, 2005).

In 'A Place for Heritage', Taylor and Devaney put forward the idea of a triple helix, a unique DNA, of identity of place and name heritage as the inextricable 'critical connector' (2014, p. 12). The importance of a distinctive sense of place is widely understood as key to our feeling connected, and to making new connections with new places, individually and collectively (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011). Sather-Wagstaff criticise heritage 'experts' for prioritising cognitive knowledge and undervaluing experiential sense-inclusive meaning-making, advocating instead for a polysensorial approach to heritage understanding that 'centres on the dynamic relationship between the senses, feeling, emotion, cognition and memory as continually in process' (Sather-wagstaff, 2016, p. 18). Low and Altman (1992) also emphasize the significance

¹⁹ Exemplified in their Parish Maps and ABC programmes (Clifford, 2011)

of temporal dimensions of place attachment and the complex emotional links of memory and connection both linear and cyclical. The narrative our everyday heritage affords gives a sense of continuity and ontological security (Low & Altman, 1992), which is shown to result in greater life satisfaction, self-esteem, happiness and overall quality of life (Historic England, 2018, pp. 9-10).

New conservation approaches built on the importance of community and individual sense of place are needed to tackle the complex multiple issues of climate change and achieve sustainable communities (Corsane, et al., 2009; Büscher & Fletcher, 2020). An increasing body of cross-disciplinary studies posits meaningful engagement as paramount to creating lasting emotional connections to place are increasingly linked to motivating environmental care (NT & UoD, 2020; Lorimer, 2012; Trudgill, 2001; National Trust, 2019; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). In this reading, heritage as culture is posited not only as the fourth pillar of sustainability (UCLG, 2010) but as fundamental to the original three dimensions of social, environmental and economic wellbeing (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015).

3.3.1 Sense of place and democratising heritage

‘There is, really, no such thing as heritage’ begins Smith in her polemic (2006, p. 11). In doing so, she does two things. First, she problematises the received assumption of innate and immutable universal values of a Western elitist hegemonic or as Smith calls it, authorised heritage discourse (AHD). Secondly, she underscores the nebulous notion of *heritage*. AHD is enacted through a narrow set of externalised performances, epistemology, and practices that have defined popular and expert notions of heritage. In turn, this obfuscates heritage as an active meaning-making process, undermining alternative and subaltern notions, including omitting and silencing women’s, indigenous, differently-abled, queer, and communities of origin identities, perspectives and experiences. AHD privileges the experience, values and materiality of the elite social classes, alienating, devaluing and neglecting alternative social and cultural experiences, values and materiality, whilst also working to constrain critique by privileging expert opinion over the non-expert (Smith, 2006).

The expert-led conservation principles of the 19th-Century Romantic movement found expression in both AHD and conservation of *natural heritage* as ‘pristine wilderness’ furthering the nature/culture and culture/class divides, the ideas of which became internationally naturalised and characterised in organisations like the National Trust and in the framing of early ICOMOS charters (Smith, 2006, p 21). Whilst notions of heritage and museology have undergone considerable transformation over the decades, Brulon Soares (2021) and Krenak (2023) point to the Eurocentric ideologies and the dangers of unequal social, colonial and class

power relations still perceptible in museal practice and policy, like the notions of UNESCO World Heritage, the limitations of any ICOM museum definition²⁰ and the notion of the ‘universal museum’²¹ – an idea reflected in the UK government’s 2024 move to exempt its National Museums from the 2022 Charities Act allowing repatriation of collection items to communities of origin.

But heritage is not static, nor only about the past, but a meaning-making process in and for the present and increasingly, in the proselyte Western academia and practice, for the future. Compare for example, the Maori conceptual framework *kuru*, ‘double spiral’, based on the immanent interrelations and co-becomings of the past, present, future, time, space, spirit and matter (Clement, 2019). Heritage is an active dynamic process in which the material, affective, emotional and non-representational are entwined, enacted and embodied in and through space/place and time. Cultural heritage cannot be divorced from natural heritage that is co-constituent with it. Heritage refers to individual and collective notions of cultural values, memories, and performances over time, including beliefs, festivals, language, songs, music, crafts, folklore, architecture, foods, natural resource usage, habitats and species, land-shaping through practices etc., traditional, contemporary and novel.

Narratives contesting AHD have been growing since the 1970’s, as exemplified in the work of Common Ground, the New Museology movement and ecomuseology. Tim Dee (2018) sees these early challengers giving voice to communities and their own values in their own places, as setting the groundwork for the mushrooming of interest in nature writing in the last decade in particular. Along with nature and environmental writing, new interpretations of ‘folk’ in music, performance and literature counter exclusionary notions of national identity with a focus on place not race, enfolding place, nature and culture in the formation of identity (Matless, 2016).

Davis reiterates Crus-Ramirez’s warning to beware any museum/ecomuseum ‘of territorial identity’ that may be brought under State influence to propagate its own ideals (Davis, 2011, p 52). An apposite warning given today’s divisive climate of culture wars and the potential state influence in cultural and museum sectors in the UK and beyond (Kendall Adams, 2022; Kendall Adams, 2024). Yet Brulon Soares (2021), discussing ongoing transformations of the museum and the equity still to be achieved, also notes the appropriation of museums by subaltern

²⁰ Brulon Soares (2021) notes critical debate around the use of the value-laden concept of ‘community’ inside international forums and organisations such as ICOM and UNESCO rarely include members of the communities or marginalised groups in discussion or the decisions that are made for them.

²¹ 2002 Declaration on the Value and Importance of Universal Museums **Invalid source specified.**

groups for community development and negotiation of identity within hegemonic narratives. Recent and ongoing debates and public protests against colonial heritage discourse and its symbols like the Rhodes Must Fall movement (Peltier, 2021), and the environmental responsibilities of museums and heritage, as reflected in fossil fuel sponsorship and divestment protests (The Guardian, 2021) and their use in climate activism (ICOM, 2022) both underline the continuation of AHD, its contestation, and the expansion to a broader remit.

The systemic inequity at the heart of culture, who makes it, who gets to experience it, and who judges its value, is deeply ingrained in UK society. The Sutton Trust (The Sutton Trust; Social Mobility Commission, 2019) shows the huge over-representation between the percentages of people privately educated (7% compared to 93% state-educated) and of the most successful in creative industries, including media & broadcasting (43%), pop artists (30%) and actors (44%). A growing disparity as Ashton & Ashton (2021) note 60% of those working in music, visual and performing arts in England are from more privileged backgrounds. They link this cultural elitism to the erosion of arts education in state schools in contrast to the increasingly valued and resourced arts education in the private sector. The Westminster Government's 'market orientation rationale' creating a paucity of arts learning and experience for most school children (Ashton & Ashton, 2021, p.485). A similar approach to higher education is seeing systematic cuts and closures to universities' arts and humanities departments, argued to similarly disadvantage those from less privileged backgrounds (Hope Bulaitis, 2023).

However, current discourse recognises that engagement with arts and culture empowers local communities, gives voice, enables innovation, challenges dualistic thinking and encourages connection. It is also becoming a rallying cry for activist practice (Fleming, 2016; Simon, 2016; Marstine, 2011; Clifford, 2011) . In "Museums as Folk," Jamel Williams (2016) envisions a future where heritage practices are integrated into marginalized and diverse communities, serving as a means of storytelling and empowering individuals to learn and engage in dialogue with their own and other cultures and communities. Janes (2015) also envisions the future of museums as one where power, privilege and knowledge are redistributed to the communities they serve, creating opportunities for responsiveness and collaboration. Opening out what heritage is and how heritage practice is done, is important not just for social cohesion and wellbeing but vital for sustainability goals. The 'imaginative work' of addressing environmental crises will be done by 'attending to what is close at hand' (Dee, 2018, p. 13). Reflecting on the thought experiment *The Museum of Open Windows*, Alexandroff (2021) envisions the museum acting as a mediator between community landscape experience and action. A vision remarkably like the ethos and practices of ecomuseums.

Founder of the ecomuseum, de Varine (2019) looks to the Faro definition of heritage as a flexible holistic concept comprising both natural and cultural, tangible and intangible facets (Fig 3.1).

Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.

Article 2; Definitions; Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (FARO convention) 2005

Figure 3.1 Article 2: Definitions FARO Convention, 2005

Davis (2011) sees heritage as an expression of both space and time, in which *place* is a *chameleon concept*. The range of heritage notions match the messiness of senses of place in the real world as multiple, diverse and imbricated. Heritage and museums of any type seeking to reflect it are subjective, affecting and effected by the changes in individual and public cultural values. Correspondingly, Marstine (2006) notes the complexities of social and museal aspirations to ‘authenticity’ and the constant flux of what is defined as such. To reflect the diverse and nuanced relationships between individuals, communities and their local environments, heritage practice and discourse must aspire to account for all that constitutes place with a more holistic approach. Multinaturalism, polyvocality, biocultural heritage and integral social-ecology attempt to bridge the nature/culture divide, highlighting the interdependency of human/nature relations in promoting more effective environmental conservation and management. The ecomuseum ideal also is predicated on a holistic approach, as the extension of Borrelli, et al.’s quote at the start of this chapter clearly states - ‘the intersection of community, culture, traditions, history, landscape and nature - are at the heart of ecomuseums - and have been since the inception of the idea some 50 years ago’ (Borrelli, et al., 2022a, p. 29).

International and national organisations have taken on board the perceived value of a holistic approach to heritage and cultural landscapes in achieving sustainability goals and wellbeing, writing this guiding principle into their conventions, like the Faro and European Landscape Conventions (ELC), (2005; Clifford, 2011; United Nations, 2018), and management strategies (Historic England, 2014; National Trust, 2015). The Faro Convention ‘encourages us to recognise that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent.’ (Council of Europe, 2019). Arts Council England’s (2019) new strategy also

identifies the need for a broader, more inclusive definition of what culture is. The 2000 European Landscape Convention (ELC) asserted itself the first international treaty exclusively dedicated to all dimensions of landscape: environmental, social, cultural and economic, of all landscapes – remarkable, everyday and degraded - where landscape is defined as ‘part of the land, as perceived by local people or visitors, which evolves through time as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings’ (Council of Europe, 2018). Reflecting Olwig et al. (2016), the ELC aims to further ‘democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to the search for solutions to major societal issues’ (Council of Europe, 2018).

While these sentiments have been ratified in principle by many countries, actual implementation of policy according to these principles has been slower to take hold (Mydland, et al., 2012). The dangers of attempts to fix a singular idea of a sense of place remain a major issue in heritage management and conservation practice, from tourism to city place-making. A fixed sense of place can limit personal and community identity as predatory tourism expectations lead to commodification, marginalisation and othering of local populations (Brown, 2017; Laudati, 2010). Failure to take heed of diverse local populations and domination by scientific experts in community consultation on place/landscape characterisation remain common (Daglish & Leslie, 2016).

Dovey (2020, p. 22) notes the ‘tacit theories of place’ permeating everyday practices of local placemaking, planning and politics where presumed shared sense of place gives rise to tensions, contestation and disenfranchisement where other sensibilities to place come into play resulting in irrelevance and failure of policy or project (Rodman, 1992; Perkin, 2010; Daglish & Leslie, 2016). Olwig et al. (2016) call for open, balanced debate, where expert opinion is just one of the voices heard, and where a more socially and environmentally complex landscape/place should be conceived as a nexus of community, justice, nature, and environmental equity.

The lag between theory, adoption of principles and practice Mydland et al. (2012) noted is finally shifting as these ideals are being reflected across a wider range of organisations signifying the paradigm shift in public opinion and political and organisational acknowledgement of irrefutable interrelated climate, ecological and social crises since 2019. The National Lottery Heritage Fund²² (HF) is the largest dedicated funding body for heritage in the UK, it is a non-departmental public body accountable to Parliament via the Department for Digital, Culture,

²² Previously the Heritage Lottery Fund

Media and Sport (DCMS). Its Strategic Funding Framework 2019–2024 (2019) privileges landscapes, nature and local communities, devolving decision-making to make it more locally specific. HF now aims for a broad holistic definition of heritage, including buildings, landscapes, tangible and intangible heritage, memories, objects, habitats and species, but claims not to define or limit its scope. Whilst its work is informed by experts, it encourages local people ‘to decide what they value from the past and wish to hand on to the future’ (The National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2019). Post-Covid changes to the framework stress even more strongly the need to focus on local social, economic and environmental impacts with the inclusion of a broader range of local people and strongly integrated environmental measures to aid a ‘green’ recovery (2021). The reality of implementation waits to be seen.

Ecomuseums are put forward as a solution by empowering community identity and safeguarding sense of place (Corsane, et al., 2009; Hawke, 2012; Bigell, 2012; Sutter & Teather, 2017; Brown, et al., 2019; Zapletal, 2012). However, Brown, et al. (2019), Howard (2002) and Davis (2011) argue the founding principles of community focus of the ecomuseum are threatened by being co-opted by institutions, academics, administrative and governmental organisations and even from those seeking to safeguard heritage like UNESCO and National Parks.

Central to this thesis’s research questions to understanding connections people have to place and the efficacy of ecomuseums to foster that connection, a holistic heritage approach reflects the complexities of real-world messiness of place as dynamic, pluralistic and relational. It contests hegemonic ideas and unsettles binaries, giving space for differing notions of place, heritage and identity to exist, be heard and shared. It allows for individuals’ differing interests and passions to be engaged in connection processes, which should facilitate greater relevance and connection. It expands imaginaries, challenges and changes ways of seeing, allowing space for new emergent contingencies, multiplying possible new ideas and adaptation to the complex issues of environmental crisis.

Rodman (1992) argued place should be understood and portrayed as a polylocale and polyvocal construction to counter the problems of speaking for and to, from and of place. It is important to ask *who* gets to define concepts of place, landscape, nature, heritage and culture and not just *what* or *how*. *Who* and *how* are crucial foci of the theoretical and practice approaches to which I now turn.

3.4 Polyvocality, multinaturalism and relational ethics: nature in place, place in nature

In *Geographies of Nature*, Hinchliffe (2007) concludes if we are to truly address the complex, entangled and plural social and ecological issues facing us, then we need to pay attention to the *where, what, how* and *who* in discourse, politics, planning and practices. Concerns that founded and drive the ecomuseum movement.

The problem of whose voice is heard and whose isn't, is a shared focus of critical ethical approaches to both conservation and heritage practices that loosely gather under the terms of multinaturalism, polyvocality and relational ethics.

Political and moral exclusionary tensions around notions and values of landscape, place, heritage and nature frame issues around ideas of who has the right to landscape/place/heritage/nature, to identify and interpret it, of who it belongs to and who belongs in it, and how they should feel, think and behave. Academic discourse, and the interface of discourse, policy and practice, reflect disparity in whose voice is heard and whose perspectives or interpretations are valued. Still most often privileged is the male, white, Western voice of the (external) specialist. Entrenched knowledge hierarchies privilege the objective language of the expert, and Western science and academia as the holders of universal truths. Thus, explicitly or as an unintended consequence, excluding, concealing and silencing the voices of women, children/young people, non-specialists, alternative worldviews, local, Indigenous, traditional, subaltern and nonhuman communities. This privileging of one voice over the many in unproblematised ways creates complex intersectional tensions within the democratisation of ecological debate, which enfolds issues of gender, race, religion, class, and decolonisation amongst others. For example, Indigenous women's understanding, knowledge of and concerns for their place are the least likely to be heard (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016).

In the UK, the continued domination of the specialist outsider, even in community consultation processes, has been highlighted by Daglish & Leslie (2016) amongst others. Deep inequalities in senses of belonging and rights are also still prevalent. Coddington (2018) highlights the negative implications of racial tension in landscape in her study of deteriorating treatment of refugees in the UK, which she links to rising negative media portrayals demonstrating the toxic tensions of the unwanted 'other' within a specific landscape idea. On her journey of reclamation along the Pennines as a brown woman, as explicitly opposed to a white man, Sethi (2021) further underlines tensions between profound need to belong in place, on a personal level and for

species survival, and deep loneliness, isolation and fear created by feelings of being *othered* in place.

Land justice and social and environmental justice are indivisible. Social inequalities and divides around access and rights to landscape, heritage and nature, both physical and imaginary, are bound up in exclusivities of ownership. 92% of the land and 97% of waterways in England are in private ownership (Hayes, 2020). 84% of it by super-rich individuals, aristocracy, oligarchs, corporations and the royal family and church, more than half of England is owned by less than 1% of the population (Shrubsole, 2019). The Covid pandemic underscored these inequalities, with unequal access to outdoor places and attitudes around who has the right to be there and how they should behave. From demonising young people and inner-city populations' unruly behaviour in parks, the countryside and beaches to reports of widespread local resistance to *outsiders*, e.g. (Murphy, 2020). Tensions resulting from the increase in number and diversity of people using green spaces in urban and rural places have resulted in the relaunch of a refreshed Countryside Code in England and Wales in April 2021 (Davies, 2021).

In the UK, non-conformist, subaltern, and alternative senses of place and nature harking back to pre-Christian pagan roots are still often considered left-field, kooky or hippy. They are not legitimised, in the media, public opinion or academia, as traditional rights/knowledge performances of fragmented, lost or re-envisioned connections to the land, as is increasingly being acknowledged elsewhere in the world as part of decolonisation practices (see for example (BBC , 2021; Reddy, 2020).

To counter negative impacts of hegemonic ideas on human and nonhuman wellbeing, more diverse voices are needed to unsettle class divides, democratise and decolonise place, nature, landscape and heritage. Part of this is a particular interest in *place in nature* and *nature in place* demonstrated across fields with more-than-human and posthumanist ontologies (Whatmore, 2002; 2006; Hinchliffe, 2007; Lorimer, 2012; Braidotti, 2018) which contest (hu)man-centric exceptionalism within space, place and nature with conceptualisations of multinatures, or multinaturalism. This work finds resonance in decolonising methodologies research seeking to amplify Indigenous and local ontologies and epistemologies in knowledge production, interpretation and conservation practice (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Todd, 2016; Wall Kimmerer, 2013).

Multinaturalism is a post-humanist relational ontology. It challenges nature-human dualism that has influenced unequal and racially unjust ideologies since the Enlightenment, shaping colonial and capitalist resource exploitation and current neoliberal and new conservation

approaches (Adams & Mulligan, 2003; Büscher & Fletcher, 2020; Braun, 2016). Contesting the privileging of Western scientific and colonial notions of *Pure Nature* and fortress conservation, multinaturalism states there is no singular universal *Pure Nature* or natural objective knowledge comprehensible through science or protected through rational management (Lorimer, 2012). Multinaturalism describes both the multiple ways any ecology might evolve and the various ways in which they can be sensed, valued and contested (Latour, 2004). Going beyond multiculturalism, it does not envision multiple cultural lenses upon a singular nature, but rather socio-natures themselves are multiple (Bingham & Hinchliffe, 2008).

Merchant (2016) argues humans are now in the midst of a paradigm shift triggered by the rise of chaos and complexity theories in science with environmental crisis as the most widespread catastrophe facing humanity. *Facts*, as we know them now, force the understanding of a world where humans are just one of a multitude of autonomous actors enfolded within a dynamic nature not controllable or predictable except in limited ways (Merchant, 2016).

Learning to live in and beyond the Anthropocene necessitates the realisation of a hybrid world of non-linear, plural socio-natures, where multinatures have ‘multiple forms of natural knowledge - not all of which are scientific or even human - informing a myriad of discordant ways of living with the world’ (Lorimer, 2015).

Lively relational ontologies of human and nonhuman actors come together in situated hybrid geographies, forming emergent assemblages of place where ‘human practices are not the only practices that matter, but neither is the world – independent of human practices, – humans are of the world, not in the world, and surely not outside of it looking in. Humans are intra-actively (re)constituted as part of the world’s becoming’ (Barad, 2007, p. 206). Tsing (2015) advises attending to the intra-active entanglements between humans and even the humblest of nonhumans in place, could help not only in surviving precarious and disturbed environments we now face, but also in creating new environments.

Recognition of multinatures does not automatically result in equi-natures. Multinatures may be subverted by market-based neo-liberal conservation ideals displacing human populations and destroying livelihoods and local socio-natures as with the marketing of Belo Monte dam, Brazil (Atkins, 2018) and the commodification of local socio-natures in Rwindi National Park, Uganda (Laudati, 2010). Opposing interests’ of different natures in place create tensions, such as between human and elephants in Sri Lanka (Lorimer, 2010) and unwanted companions like malaria-carrying-mosquitoes or viruses (Hinchliffe, 2007). Difference between multinatures can lead to narratives of exclusion, denial and repression of the other, but also to new

accommodations including imaginative responses and adaptations to climate crisis (Hinchliffe, 2007).

3.4.1 Relational ethics

Understanding relationships is the heart of this thesis's research questions. Recognising the need to evolve new, more equitable and just relationships, within and between human and nonhuman communities, has given rise to partnership or relational ethics. Ethics shared with the Indigenous concept of Buen Vivir and ecomuseal philosophy (see Chapter 4). Braidotti (2018) and Whatmore (2002) both point to synergies of feminist critical thought and the development of posthumanist relational ethics. Where a profound sense of outsider status creates an 'emphatic bond' to and concern for the rights and actualisation of other *others*, the marginalised, disenfranchised and nonhuman. Merchant (2016) describes relational ethics as an ethic in 'which humans act to fulfil both humanity's vital needs and nature's needs by restraining human hubris' (Merchant, 2016, p. 162). A synthesis between an ecological approach (based on a consideration for all living and non-living things) and a utilitarian human-centred approach (based on fulfilling basic human needs), Merchant (2016, p. 162) gives five precepts of relational ethics as

- Equity within and between human and nonhuman communities
- Moral consideration for both human and other species
- Respect for both cultural diversity and biodiversity
- Inclusions of women, minorities and nonhuman nature in ethical code of accountability
- An ecologically sound management that is consistent with the continued health of both human and nonhuman communities

Multinaturalism challenges dominant environmental management regimes, positing Western science cannot be the observer of universal 'facts', as knowledge is created by messy interactions between epistemology, ontology and affective human-nonhuman relations. Hinchliffe (2007) argues emergent contingencies of performing dynamic multinatures situated in place, present a non-foundational framework for moving towards more sustainable, regenerative futures. Radical replacements of environmental management are possible based on convivial conservation accounting for diverse human and nonhuman actants and seeking the best way to live together to enable co-flourishing (Hinchliffe & Whatmore, 2006).

This opens up the way for polyvocal plural, novel and radical understanding and environmental and heritage conservation approaches, including expert and non-expert and traditional ways of

knowing. It is also a way to re-envision place for both human and more-than-human equity through reciprocal relationships in all contexts – from cities to countryside. Truly accounting for multinatures needs context-specific solutions through re-envisioning of place and place-making which allows for entangled, even conflicting, human-nonhuman spatial and social relations, some of which do not feature humans at all (Philips & Robertson, 2020).

If we embrace the messiness of the world through these generative collaborations, recognising the impossibility of upholding a nature/society dualism, this then transforms how we conceptualise the nature/human divide. If human and nature cannot be divided in the real world, then how can they be divided in policy, research or praxis? Such separation does not reflect an innate truth in an objective ‘reality’, but rather the divide is both a product and re-productive of the nature/society dualism (Whatmore, 2002). We fail to see the whole potential if we fail to attempt to see multiple values and possibilities. In doing so, we fail ourselves, nonhuman others and nonliving elements of place and potential futures.

Donna Haraway (2016, p. 2) entreats us to ‘stay with the trouble’ and make ‘kin in lines of inventive connections’ in learning to live well with each other ‘as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings’. Embracing multinaturalist relational perspectives allows for multiple embedded values, including outside the human sphere, to inform possible ways of living in and beyond the Anthropocene – from Indigenous, traditional, local and community knowledge systems and practices including heritage (for example (Whyte, 2017), to imagining convivial cities (Hinchliffe & Whatmore, 2006) to post-wild rambunctious garden (Marris, 2011).

3.5 Kith, kin and holistic understanding for regenerative futures:

Connecting the dots

It is through close and intimate contact with a particular patch of ground that we learn to respond to the earth, to see that it really matters. We need to recognize the humble places where this alchemy occurs and treat them as well as we treat our parks and preserves—or better, with less interference.

(extract from The Thunder Tree; Lessons from an urban wildland, Pyle, 1993, p4)

In order to realise the ambition of making kin of nature, Malm (2018) stresses we have to admit the inherently unequal power relationship within and between human and other natures, and

the resultant (unequal) culpability and responsibility. As Büscher and Fletcher (2020, p. 195) observe, ‘ultimately it is humans that must accept and exercise their unique and unequal agency in deciding how to treat and represent nonhumans who cannot actually participate in democratic deliberations as equivalent subjects’.

In arguing for convivial conservation Büscher and Fletcher (2020) contend we need to move away from the idea sustainability is about saving nonhuman natures from humans and focus on saving and celebrating both human and nonhuman natures to build capacity in our own communities to steward the land.

Convivial conservation aims to address the fact mainstream conservation, based on Western practices and the separation of nature from humans, is failing, as evidenced in the State of Nature reports for the UK and Europe amongst others (Hayhow, et al., 2019; EEA, 2020). The reign of global capitalist growth which views the earth, its nonhuman and human inhabitants as a resource to be exploited, is increasingly recognised as the tyrant driving environmental and social crises and injustice (Huijbens, 2021). Büscher and Fletcher highlight that modern conservation and capitalism have ‘intrinsically co-produced each other, and hence the nature-culture dichotomy is foundational to both’ (2020, p. 72). Convivial conservation refutes Neoprotectionist’s *fortress conservation* of complete separation of human and nonhuman, like Earth Sparing, which suggests 50% of the earth’s land surface should be set aside for untouched nature (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020).

Bateman and Balmford (2023) argue such earth-sparing approaches fail to deliver sustainability for both human and nonhuman populations and actually accelerate biodiversity loss. Firstly, in their failure to realistically account for human needs such as sufficient food, and then failing to factor in the ‘offshore’ damage to other ecosystems by increased imports, and therefore farming elsewhere, to make up the shortfall. They argue for a more pragmatic approach of ‘land sharing’ instead with increased yields from smaller lower impact farmed areas and larger habitat blocks (Bateman & Balmford, 2023).

Convivial conservation also contests New Conservation’s economic development models based on capitalisation/commodification of nature & ecosystems services etc. As these models rely on a nature/culture dualism, perpetuating separation from humans with nature as other, and framing the conservation debate in extrinsic terms of saving nature from us, or in transactional and commodified terms of the monetary value of nature to us, such as ‘natural capital’ (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020).

Both neoprotectionist and New Conservation approaches add to affecting a new colonialism in mainstream conservation, where dominant rich nations/cultures pull the strings of more-or-less remote others, through environmental extractivism, enforced holding back development or traditional uses of land. Doing so continues the racist and colonial enterprise on which Western conservation was first founded (Kashwan, et al., 2021; Ramutsindela, 2020). Instead, it is recognised environmental justice cannot be solved without addressing social and economic inequalities, which traditional, neoprotectionist and new conservation fail to address, if not perpetuate. Convivial Conservation advocates we move from protection to connection with a Whole Earth vision (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020). In propositions redolent of ecomuseum ethos, to achieve this, intrinsic values embedded in diverse social/cultural and ecological contexts should be promoted through community-focused place-based approaches (see Table 3.1)

Table 3.1 Five idealistic long-term propositions towards convivial conservation (after Büscher 2020 – ‘In case it was not already clear, we need a conservation revolution!’ presentation at Oxford Conservation Society)

1	From protected to promoted areas: not setting nature apart or turning it into capital or ‘services’ but (re) integrating uses of nature into social, cultural, agrarian and ecological contexts (re-embedding)
2	From saving to celebrating human and nonhuman natures: re-learning (needs of) ‘human’ natures in relation the needs of nonhuman natures
3	From (speedy) touristic voyeurism to slower, longer-term engaged visitation
4	From spectacle ‘outside’ to the everyday ‘inside’
5	From privatised expert technocracy to common democratic engagement

Similarly, the bio-cultural paradigm is a theoretical lens which recognises the interplay of humanity and nature to provoke a critical and productive dialogue between biological and social/cultural theories and methods. In this study, the application of bio-cultural diversity, heritage and landscape are of particular interest. Biocultural diversity is recognised as dynamic and place-based, arising from the links and feedback loops between human cultural diversity and biological diversity (Mercon, et al., 2019). The interactions between people and nature at any given time and place result in a biocultural heritage and landscapes.

Bio-cultural understanding challenges the idea of a pristine untouched Nature, instead recognising natures in which humanity is a major component in the co-evolution of the landscape. In the UK this is particularly notable with no landscape unaffected by human action with many cherished British landscapes, open moorlands, flower-rich meadows and open woodlands, plagioclimatic systems created and maintained by human activity (Philips, 1998).

Failure to recognise the essential biocultural nature of landscapes leads to cultural severance from landscapes, which environmental geographer Ian Rotherham calls the ‘most serious threat

for nature conservation of the 21st century.’ (Rotherham, 2015, p. 3405). The answer suggested is for bio-cultural understanding to be centred in conservation approaches, ‘as a link between people, history and biodiversity’ to rebuild connectivity with nature and the land (Rotherham, 2015, p. 3425).

The notion of kin clearly runs through many concepts so far discussed like shared DNA. It is interesting when considering developing connection to consider the related term *kith*. Deriving from Old English, *kith* was both a noun meaning knowledge, familiar/known country, place or home, and a verb meaning to get to know (OED, 2024). It was also synonymous with the mind, emotion and love (OED, 2024). Only latterly did it come to denote one’s acquaintances (OED, 2024). Wall Kimmerer asserts ‘restoring the land without restoring relationship is an empty exercise. It is relationship that will endure and relationship that will sustain the restored land’ (2013, p. 336). Perhaps enacting *kithing*, as knowledge of our places through embodied and emotional personal connection, could nourish such relationships to grow. So how, then, do we nurture such connection?

3.5.1 Nature connectedness

It should be remembered that the need to restore the relationship between humans, nonhumans and the land, is a peculiarly Western modern (Capitalist) problem. The level of cultural severance imposed upon our societies is relatively new and is not even nor universal, even if its effects are global. As noted earlier, notions of human exceptionalism, humans as separate and above other natures, are inconceivable to many cosmovisions of peoples where culture, heritage, human and nonhuman natures are equal elements of a whole. Indigenous environmental thinkers, like Krenak (cited in Dias, 2022) and artist activists have much to offer current debates through notions of interspecies relationally, offering alternative ways of thinking to Capitalist extractivism and human-nature relations.

However, in the Global North, *nature connectedness* (NC) is increasingly prominent in both policy and research. Mayer & Frantz (2004) describe NC as a psychological measure of individuals’ emotional relationship with the natural world, impacting their ecological behaviours and wellbeing. NC goes beyond contact with nature, ‘incorporating nature into one’s own self-definition’ resulting in ‘a subjective sense of oneness with nature’ (MacKay & Schmitt, 2019, p. 1). Sense of self is, therefore, central. The focus on NC is an outcome of the perceived disconnection of contemporary societies from nature. The divorce of our daily sustenance and needs from direct interaction with the land for the vast majority of us through urbanisation and

modern lifestyles have created what Pyle (1993, p. 136) calls an ‘extinction of experience’. The steep decline of nature contact through work, needs or leisure leads to Louv’s (2005) plea to save our children from ‘nature deficit disorder’.

Feelings of belonging and connection, to other humans, nature and environment, are innate human needs that positively correlate with mental wellbeing levels (McEwan, et al., 2019; Martin, et al., 2020; Pritchard, et al., 2020). NC engages self-transcendent mechanisms (Lumber, et al., 2023), allowing us to *think beyond ourselves* to the bigger picture, including concern for others. A decline in NC reduces both human and nature wellbeing through lowering conservation concern (Martin, et al., 2020).

The level of NC one feels is not fixed, it shifts with age and experience and importantly can be changed (Mayer, et al., 2019). Richardson, et al.’s (2019) study shows the fluctuations of NC across lifespans, reflecting how children’s NC levels are strong indicators of later adult levels of NC and actions. Further research linking NC, biodiversity health and human wellbeing ranks the UK lowest for NC and wellbeing out of 14 European countries and 11th for biodiversity (Richardson, et al., 2022).

Research suggests there is a strong positive correlation between NC and personal wellbeing and also pro-environmental behaviours (PEBs) - actions to limit or reduce ones impact on the environment, e.g. recycling, not flying, buying local produce, and pro-nature conservation behaviours (ProCoBs), also called pro-nature behaviours (PNBs), intentional actions to actively support nature recovery (Martin, et al., 2020; Richardson, et al., 2020). Mackay & Schmitt’s (2019, p 8) meta-analysis also found ‘a large robust correlation’ between nature connectedness and PEBs. Importantly, superficial short-term interventions did not increase NC nor PEBs. More successful in doing so, were examples of sustained and reflective nature interactions.

Because of the correlation of NC, wellbeing and PEBs, reconnecting people and nature is recognised by organisations and governments as an urgent priority as highlighted in the State of Nature report that co-triggered this thesis (Schultz, 2000; Colding, et al., 2020; Hayhow, et al., 2019). Tools have been created to evaluate NC, but our understanding of NC formation and how to increase it is incomplete (Restall, 2015; Lumber, et al., 2017). Therefore, there is a need for studies to explore the pathways to increase NC, particularly those that incorporate everyday nature experiences (Hayhow, et al., 2019; Soga & Gaston, 2016).

Based on Kellert’s 9 types of relationship to nature, researchers led by Ryan Lumber and Miles Richardson have developed five pathways to improve connection based on promoting Intrinsic Values – senses, emotion, beauty, meaning, and compassion through everyday experiences and

engagement (Lumber, et al., 2017) (Fig 3.2). These intrinsic value relations have been shown to encourage *thinking beyond ourselves* and be a much stronger predictor of environmental behaviours and also positive human-to-human connection and between humans and other natures, than unhelpful extrinsic relations of domination, utilitarianism and (isolated) scientific knowledge²³ (Lumber, et al., 2017; Common Cause Foundation, 2021). Many Indigenous worldviews have upheld the importance of intrinsic values for millennia. Wall Kimmerer (2013) observes the scientific prism often expresses stories of land and environmental crisis in a language that excludes emotion and, therefore, people. A false objectivity Trudgill (2001) also cites as a threat to activating public engagement and stewardship. Wall Kimmerer declares the critical consequences of this exclusion for a compassionate true ‘democracy of all species – for what good is knowing without caring?’ (2013, p. 345). Love, respect and reciprocity are vital (Wall Kimmerer, 2013).



Figure 3.2 The five pathways to Nature Connectedness (after (Lumber, et al., 2017)

Wall Kimmerer (2013) continues one step towards building more equitable and respectful relations with our nonhuman community members is through naming. Naming is a human compulsion in building relationships with other humans and the world around us. Creation myths around the world, including the Abrahamic religions, begin with calling the world into

²³ This should not be conflated with the many ways of knowing that are implicit in relationships between individuals, human and nonhuman and places.

being through naming as an act of creative knowing. The ultimate act of human hubris perhaps? But Indigenous worldviews would see it as a reciprocal enactment, reflective of and activating recognition, respect, responsibility, reciprocity and care (Wall Kimmerer, 2013). Imagine entering into a caring relationship with a person and never even asking their name, or as Wall Kimmerer (2013) asks, referring to a member of your family only as 'it'. We would question the level of care, of respect, would we not? Naming becomes a part of the 'grammar of animacy' which fosters kinship in a 'democracy of species – not a tyranny of one' (Wall Kimmerer pp. 56 & 58).

Through naming we acknowledge existence. This is affective in several ways. Firstly, in becoming familiar with something, a particular type of bird or tree for example, we notice it more. Psychologists call this Baader-Meinhof phenomenon (Kershner & Henderson, 2023). This also serves to counter 'shifting baseline syndrome' where peoples' experience of the natural world is depleted, reducing ability to recognise losses like species as they aren't aware of them in the first place. Secondly, it is harder to ignore the plight of one we know personally by name, even when we can ignore, or feel helpless or overwhelmed by, the plight of the nameless, faceless multitudes. During the Covid pandemic people got to know their neighbours more and took actions to care for each other. If we could extend this personal knowing – kinship - to our wider community of human and nonhumans, then it should increase care. Cox & Gaston's (2015) study on garden bird feeding found a strong correlation between how many species a person could name and higher levels of NC. Whilst a further study built on this work to suggest the 'ethic of familiarity' arising from a knowing-caring feedback loop within everyday domestic human and avian interactions (McMillan, 2022). Lastly, language is a holder of knowledge (Wall Kimmerer, 2013; Macfarlane & Morris, 2017), with names revealing characteristics, histories, myth and meaning of living and non-living things and places. In turn, language, through names and other ways like storytelling, is co-creative of culture and place identity. They directly enact, frame and reframe connection between human and nonhuman, living and non-living elements of place and landscape. An important dimension of ecomuseums generally and this thesis' case studies which will be returned to in Chapters 6 to 8.

Nature Connectedness research shows simply factoring provision for more green space and time in nature has and will continue to fail and increase the decline of nature. How time is spent is what's important and Richardson (2020) has suggested a Green Care Code for Nature, advocating us to stop, look, listen and feel through which the pathways can be harnessed to promote the emotional connection needed.

A systematic review of 50 studies by Prichard et al. (2020) concluded eudaimonic values and wellbeing, feelings of happiness based on meaning and purpose, had a greater correlation to NC than hedonistic values of enjoyment and pleasure. This suggests that of the five pathways ‘meaning’ in particular is important to forming connection and so to human and nonhuman wellbeing through activating compassion. Where the pathways have been implemented by organisations like the National Trust (2023) in reframing their ‘50 things’, engagement intervention tends to focus on the senses, beauty, emotion and compassion. Creating meaning is perhaps the most difficult of the pathways to foster as utterly personal in construction, multifaceted and working on many levels. The composition of any framing necessarily excludes and has limits. This is where the NC framework bumps against its limits.

Attempting to enhance the five pathways outcomes, Lumber et al. (2023) looked at the efficacy of using shared character strengths of nature. 24 character strengths were identified, such as curiosity and fairness, collated under five themes; seasonal change, weather, awe and wonder in nature, nature as honest or dishonest, and the inability to find similarity in nature (Lumber, et al., 2023). Encouraging participants to recognise personal character strengths in natures around them invokes the ‘similarity principle’ with a ‘bidirectional approach’, increasing compassion and empathy, and so NC (Lumber, et al., 2023, p. 2). This utilises the inversion of NC tenant of a sense of ‘nature-in-self’ to a sense of ‘self-in-nature’ (Lumber, et al., 2023, p. 11).

Sense of self, of self-identity, is the crux of NC. Yet, as we have seen in the discussion above, a sense of self is a multifaceted and shifting concept, tightly bound to multiscalar time and place, the where, who and when we find ourselves at any given time, to memories, experience and associations. This thesis’s research data suggests broadening the notion of *nature* in NC to a notion encompassing human, nonhuman, living and nonliving entanglements, creates a broader frame to understand and encourage people’s meaningful emotional connections to their everyday settings. Chapter 8 develops the idea of Land Connectedness as one broader framework for connection, care and stewardship.

3.5.2 Land - a social relationship

Like Hawkes’ (1951) passionate and inclusive portrait of *A Land*, opening out the idea of connectedness from NC to land connectedness centres the range of connections people have to their land/s, where land is understood as a dynamic co-creative whole. My own experiences and decades of multidisciplinary working with community groups of all ages indicate to me the value of a more holistic *land* approach. This is strengthened by my MA work, particularly consulting a community about what matters to them in the place they live for a nascent

ecomuseum group (McMillan, 2019a). The answers revealing the personal, emotional and intertwining relationships land enfolds (McMillan, 2019a).

Land is a social relationship between human and nonhuman, living and non-living elements in place. This social relationship provides all that humans rely on for existence: food, shelter, and community. It is fundamental, it is existential. It also provides the (non)essentials of modern living, from oil to rare earth metals that power our world and seemingly excise and obfuscate that same relationship. It is a relationship of uneven power dynamics that threatens the safety of everything within. The main contention arising from the commodification of land in a world dominated by capitalist ideology. The scramble for ownership of land, control and extraction of the resources it holds has driven human expansion and imperialism for millennia²⁴, culminating in the violence of Colonialism and at the root of environmental, social and land injustice and inequity today (Monbiot, et al., 2019; Winchester, 2021; Gouldhawke, 2020; Kwaymullina, 2005).

Etymologically Old English and Germanic, the word land²⁵ originally meant a defined piece of ground, or a home territory, defined not by ownership but by the politics, practices, customs, culture and identity of those who inhabited it (Olwig, 1996). Human cultures, nature and the land are co-shaping and co-creative of each other. Land then, is a construct predicated on that 'nexus' (Olwig, 1996, p. 633), firmly placing the idea of a social relationship at the root of Western definition. An idea more recent commodification has obscured.

The UN Human Rights Office of the High Commission (OHCHR) draws attention to the inter-relationship between humans, land and the dangers of commodification in stating 'land is not a mere commodity but an essential element for the realisation of many human rights.' (OHCHR, 2024). The OHCHR (2024) note land as a 'cross-cutting issue' linked to livelihood, economic rights, identity, social and cultural rights, with current food insecurity, rapid urbanisation, conflict and climate crisis bringing land rights sharply into focus. The way people, communities and importantly those in power, understand the meaning of *land* is fundamental to how those same people, communities and those in power go about caring for, using and restoring that land. Wall Kimmerer posits, 'if land is just real estate, then restoration looks very different than if land is a source of subsistence economy and spiritual home. Restoring land for production of

²⁴ Since the first farmers of the Neolithic.

²⁵ Noted in written sources from the 8th century AD (Olwig, 1996)

natural resources is not the same as renewal of land as cultural identity. We have to think about what land means' (2013, p. 335).

For many peoples around the world, the notion of land as a dynamic social relationship is self-evident (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016; Gouldhawke, 2020; Kwaymullina, 2005).

Aboriginal scholar Kwaymullina explains how 'country', the Aboriginal equivalent term to land, similarly echoes its original meaning as 'Country is family, culture, identity. Country is self' (Kwaymullina, 2005). She goes on to explain the complex relationship of all things that create country/land is sustained by 'Law', ways of living with and responsibility of all things as equal parts of country/land (Kwaymullina, 2005).

Yet the spiritual perception of the interconnectedness of human, nonhuman, living and non-living as true relations many cosmovisions view as co-creating land, is seen as something Western Christianised societies have lost (Sutter & Teather, 2017), and that approaches, like Multinaturalism, strive to reconnect (Tsing, 2015; Haraway, 2016). Hawkes' (1951) proto-Multinaturalist vision of *A Land*, was preceded to publication by one of the leading Western environmentalists, Aldo Leopold's (1948) posthumous work, *A Sand County Almanac*, in which he advocated for a *land ethic*. Leopold's *land ethic* ecologised the notion of community in conservation to include as interrelated and equal actors, human, nonhuman, living and non-living (Lutz Warren & McKibben, 2016). Denouncing commodification as the cause of land abuse and the failure of conservation, Leopold's *land ethic* is rooted in the strength of a more-than-human social relationship understood by many Indigenous peoples as living with/living as - 'when we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect' (Leopold, 1948, p. xiii). Accepting *land* as *community* demands an ethic of interrelated caring relationships (The Aldo Leopold Foundation, 2023).

3.5.3 Land – the UK in particular

Glimpsed in the origins of the word *land*, and richly woven through pre-Christian lore of land, place and folk surviving in language, names, stories, sites, traditions and knowledge, a deeper understanding is reflected of the social relationship that formed the lands, peoples and communities which now make up the UK. Increasing modernisation, industrial farming, employment types, access to supermarkets, utilities - piped water, electricity and free medical care served to diminish our perceived dependency on the land around us. The sacred and essential demoted to superstition, quaint custom and hobby. Albeit impoverished/somewhat removed, these connections entwined with personal and communal history, experiences and memories, can be found in the intangible and tangible cultural heritage of these Isles. 'The land

is our great creation. Underpinned by nature, it is a physical thing and an invisible web' Clifford & King (2006, p. ix) reflect on the deep connections and intertwined people/place relationships and belonging that together constitute *land*. This belonging is outside of legal ownership and comes through knowledge and meaning of the particular and everyday (Clifford & King, 2006). Nan Shepherd, localist, writer and hill walker, explained her understanding of *land*, the mountains she loved, as the relationship between physical matter, psyche and spirit,

'it is, as with all creation, matter impregnated with mind: but the resultant issue is a living spirit, a glow in the consciousness. - So, simply to look on anything – with love that penetrates to its essence, is to widen the domain of being in the vastness of non-being' (Shepherd, 2014, p. 102).

The spirit of land becoming apparent through an ongoing process of knowing leading to meaning and love - 'knowing another is endless. And I have discovered that - experience of them enlarges rock, flower and bird. The thing to be known grows with the knowing' (Shepherd, 2014, p. 108).

These understandings of land and belonging are not so far removed from Indigenous ontologies, and with the belonging comes responsibility and motivation to care (Leopold, 1948; Clifford & King, 2006; Baldwin, et al., 2017; Wall Kimmerer, 2013; Raines, 2021). The accumulation of experience renders landscapes 'lifescapes' (Burchardt, 2023). Redolent in memories, personal and shared, land becomes a mnemonic of transformation and change (Oosthuizen, 2019).

These understandings of land and belonging echo the notion of kith and kithing discussed above – love and care of land through the act of knowing.

This sense of belonging and community are impacted by land rights and justice at the heart of many problems facing the UK nations, including inequity and exclusion from housing, access to land for recreation, wellbeing and meeting needs such as growing food and ecological/biodiversity crises (Monbiot, et al., 2019; Right To Roam, 2020). Section 3.4 discussed how social inequalities and divides, like race, class and gender, are bound up in the exclusivities of land ownership and access (Shrubsole, 2019; Hayes, 2020; Sethi, 2021). The UK is the 9th most economically unequal out of 38 OECD countries (Equality Trust, 2023). Two-thirds of UK land is owned by 0.36% of the population (Shrubsole, 2019) with just 8% of land in England publicly accessible (Prior, 2024). In Wales, 20% is open-access land, meaning the right to roam (Natural Resources Wales, 2023). The Land Reform Act (2003) in Scotland means, theoretically, most land is accessible for responsible public access (Outdoor Access Scotland, 2020). The many groups working across the UK to increase equity in land access, both physically and in imaginaries, bear testimony to the desire and need for this fundamental

relationship (Banton-Heath, 2020; Right To Roam, 2020; Open Space Society, 2022; Land In Our Names, 2023; Common Ground, 2019).

Land access and ownership and the interconnected inequalities relayed by Monbiot et al (2019) and the OHCHR (2024) above, effect the case study communities and form in part the motivations behind the ecomuseum establishments (see Chapter 6). Monbiot et al (2019) and other land rights campaigners argue discussion of and recentring our relationship with *land* is fundamental to transformative change across political, social and environmental arenas in the UK to engender equity, agency and belonging. Holistic/social-ecological understanding and sensitivity to attachments and motivations are shown to increase social resilience and stewardship (Baldwin, et al., 2017). Therefore, understanding the way people of the communities in the case-study areas conceive *land*, explored in Chapter 8, is fundamental to understanding the efficacy and potential of ecomuseum practices.

3.5.4 Place as a frame for understanding environment and action

Pyle's (1993) alchemy in the intimate knowing of a 'particular patch of ground' quoted at the beginning of this section, reverberates with the notion that a *sense of place* matters that runs throughout ecomuseum philosophy and the transdisciplinary discourse so far presented.

Underwriting all the concepts and approaches is the intersecting discourse of the emergent field of Ecological or Conservation Psychology. Research supports using place as an appropriate frame and scale to understand environmental crisis and adaptation including visualisation, meaning-making and resilience (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). The alchemy of Pyle's intimate sense of place corresponding to Canrill & Sencah's (2001) 'sense of self-in-place'. The effects of global environmental crises ultimately will be, and already are, experienced in and through place. This does not have to mean a purely parochial view but can serve 'as a point of departure for understanding global networks in which the soil, people, plants, industries and transport systems that make up a place are imbricated' (Walton, 2017, p. 54).

Whilst few argue the need to act on environment crisis through action and planning for change, environmental adaptation in practice can become a prickly issue when it appears as an external 'expert', top-down governmental imposition (Herrick, 2018; Cantrill & Senach, 2001). Such a top-down approach risks the efficacy of climate change policy, planning and action as tension and dissonance between community and external stakeholders limit buy-in and success when culturally imbued sense of nature/place and meaning are ignored. Cantrill & Senach (2001)

argue being sensitive to sense of place in gaining a social consensus is fundamental to resolving conflicts and successful adaptation.

Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012) delve deeper into the need to incorporate place-identity, as an important part of self-identity, into understanding environmental adaptation. Drawing out the 'intra-psychic phenomena' of thoughts, feelings and beliefs that impact cognitive behaviour, health, wellbeing and our willingness to take action to care, that should be integrated into research and practices for successful 'locally appropriate strategies' (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012, pp. 259-262).

In a report on identity and how place-based environmental change will affect the UK population, Twigger-Ross (2013) underlines the distributional impacts of environmental crises and argues adaptation must be contextualised to be meaningful and successfully addressed. Community resilience to environmental change lies in fortifying social networks and support structures to deal with increased vulnerability to risk, which is not only physical but psychological too. Twigger-Ross argues a place-based oblique approach of strengthening community identities rather than focusing on solving environmental issues will be more successful.

The specificity of a particular place as a unique assemblage of tangible and intangible elements, including memories and meaning-making, is reflected in many approaches and policies like the Faro Convention, and pioneering research published by the National Trust, *Places That Make Us* (2017) and *Why Places Matter to People* (2019). These support the importance of emotional connection to specific places to wellbeing, but also as an indication of people's willingness to take action to care for them, highlighting the need to develop new ways to promote and increase connectedness to the local and everyday to encourage broader individual and collective action. Creating home 'fields of care' can be a starting point to begin to address the overlapping issues of environmental crisis (Till & O'Sullivan, 2020).

Social-ecology is the study of the relationship between ecological and social issues, people and their environments. It sees dysfunctional hierarchies of power at the root of environmental problems like climate change, biodiversity loss, resource scarcity, and resource degradation (Baldwin, et al., 2017). Redolent with Relational Ethics and Buen Vivir, life and the environment should instead be looked on as a complex system in which all lifeforms, human and nonhuman, are interrelated and of equal importance to a healthy and sustainable environment. Social-ecological systems (SES) are nested, multilevel systems that provide essential necessities of society like food, energy, water, aesthetic and cultural needs (Charles, et al., 2020). Changes to SES are linked to human and nonhuman wellbeing. The approach posits problems in ecology

will only be completely resolved when underlying social issues are addressed and resolved (Baldwin, et al. 2017).

Social-ecology research suggests integrated place-based and community-involved approaches are most likely to achieve needed transformations (Baldwin, et al., 2017; Bhowmik, et al., 2020; Charles, et al., 2020; Schultz, et al., 2007). High levels of ‘affective, functional and cognitive attachment’, connectedness between human, nonhuman communities and place, expressed in terms of love, responsibility and reciprocity, result in more adaptive and resilient social-ecological systems (Baldwin et al., 2017, p 38). Schultz, et al. (2007, p.150), note the ‘human-in-nature perspective’ is the root of ‘intergrated social-ecological’ approaches. The co-production of contextualised knowledge and understanding between both external and local knowledge holders as equal experts is key, rather than privileging reductionist Western empirical methods (Charles et al., 2020). This more humanist approach allows for common ground to be found between different yet equally valued voices, presenting space for resolving conflicts and co-creating solutions (Baldwin, et al., 2017; Schultz, et al., 2007).

The need for equitable collaborative partnerships with communities to optimise resilience and justice seems clear. True sustainability must be understood as both social and environmental wellbeing. Community empowerment and agency is vital to effecting real change and emphasised²⁶ as the ‘sweet spot’ for fostering rapid climate and sustainable actions where global and local understanding, impact and action converge (Bhowmik, et al., 2020).

Owen’s (2021) climate adaptation meta-analysis indicates collaborative decision-making, sharing resources, knowledge, skills, networking, valuing human and environmental wellbeing, plurality, and social and environmental justice practices, including land justice, are the most effective attributes for adaptation, resilience and stewardship (see Fig 3.3). However, she notes plurality and social/environmental justice are the least implemented in practice. Approaches like social-ecology aim to bring social and environmental justice together. Schultz et al’s (2007) work directly links social-ecological approach to an ecomuseum, Kristianstads Vattenrike, Sweden, as the site of implementation and practice. The resonance of ecomuseum philosophy with social and environmental justice is explored in the following chapter.

²⁶ Along with urban scale action (Bhowmik, et al., 2020)

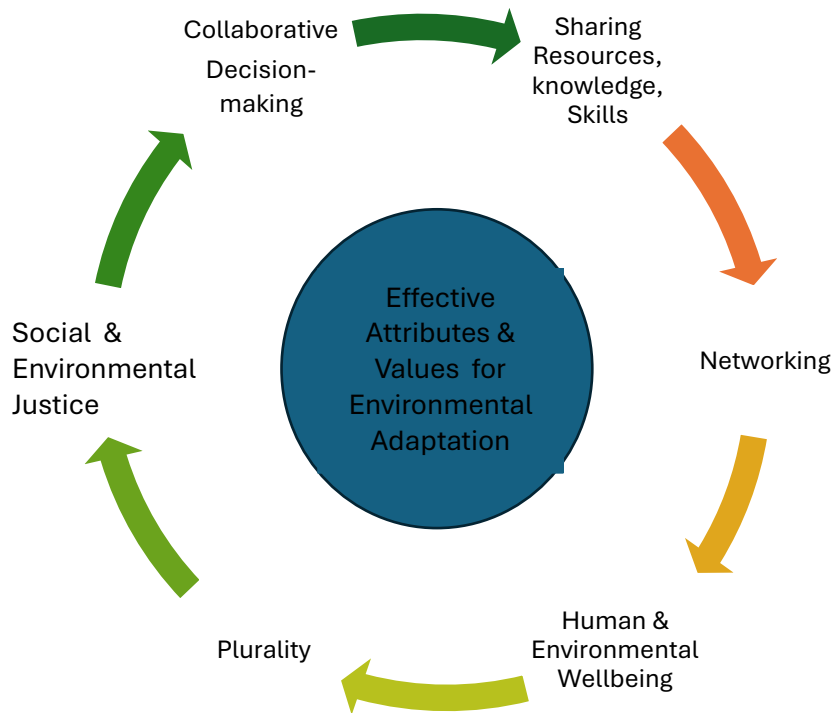


Figure 3.3 Co-active effective attributes and values for successful climate adaptation (after Owen, 2020).

3.6 Summary

Building the foundation for answering this thesis's research questions 'what connects people to the place they live?', and 'what impact does that have on their actions to care for that place?', this chapter brought together a broad range of transdisciplinary discourse illustrating the value of place and connection to human and planetary wellbeing. There remains a need to bridge discourse and practice further, that Mercon, et al. (2019) and Bridgewater & Rotherham (2019) among others, note as key to the success of the relational ontologies of multinaturalism, bio-cultural paradigm and socio-ecological systems. In doing so, we return full circle back to the main strengths of a place-specific community-led approach in implementing just sustainable practices to effect transformative change. Cantrill & Senecah (2001) suggest museums and educators could act as an effective bridge linking communities and adaptation. Schultz's et al go further, citing the ecomuseum as that bridge. It is argued community museums present such a community action process (Brown, et al., 2023B) and that ecomuseums are the best-known model of such in the Global North (Brulon Soares, et al., 2023). The following chapter explicitly explores the positioning of ecomuseums as catalysts for transformative change.

4 Revolution Part II

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 drew out ecomuseum genesis, born from the movement for a new social museology and an integral museum in service to its society. Chapter 3 situated the ecomuseum ideal in a wider transdisciplinary literature, weaving nodes of connection considered in assessing the realities and potentials of ecomuseums in the UK, and to advance land connectedness as a holistic framework for understanding and stewardship throughout Chapters 6 -9.

In this chapter, particular focus is given to current discourse on the ecomuseum as a tool to achieve the revolutionary fundamental change of just sustainable futures. Firstly, with regard to achieving the UN Agenda 2030 and SDGs and the connection to human and environmental rights. Secondly, the idea of SD is critically examined in contrast to the notion of regenerative thinking as a progressive alternative. Thirdly, specific ecomuseum principles and characteristics, along with the UN SDGs are synthesised to create a starting framework with which to analyse the UK case studies in the following chapters.

4.2 In small places, close to home

*“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places,
close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on
any map of the world.”*

*(Eleanor Roosevelt, extract ‘The Great Question’, 1958 cited (United
Nations, 2024))*

Whilst the evolution of the social museum has been varied, the integral museum ideal remains an invitation as much needed today to reinvigorate museal praxis towards addressing issues of contemporary life. Continuing transformation and experimentation of what the social museum might be and do ‘point to alternative possibilities for imagining the future of societies in relation to heritage in general and museums in particular’. (Mellado & Brulon Soares, 2022, p30).

The well-used refrain of ‘no climate justice without human rights’ is cognisant of the direct link between human rights and environmental sustainability (see for example (UN Climate Change,

2023). Heritage, as natural-cultural inheritance from the past and to the future, sits at the intersection of both. As such, it illustrates the argument made in many declarations on landscape, heritage and environment, that ‘the path to sustainability cannot be exogenously provoked, but local communities are called upon to find their own way’ (Pappalardo, 2020, p. 9270). These complex intersections between heritage, sustainability and social justice press home the need to incorporate human and environmental rights in ways that challenge disciplinary and professional boundaries (Siebrandt, et al., 2017).

The ecomuseum, born from earlier social and environmental justice movements, adaptive, place-based, community-led and with a holistic approach to landscape and heritage, is considered by many to offer just such ‘small places, close to home’ from which to address the big questions facing contemporary society of social and environmental justice and action (McGhie, 2022). *Sustainable development* features in spirit in all ecomuseum definitions and charters since inception and explicitly in words from at least the 2004 European Network of Ecomuseums (Long Networks).

From the early years of this millennium, ecomuseum scholarship has been increasingly focused on sustainable development potential, referred to by Sutter et al. (2019) as Ecomuseologies 3rd Wave²⁷. This reasoning builds on the capacity for fostering identity, connection, knowledge and decolonising practices (eg Worts, 2006, Riva, 2017) and led to the 1st International conference of Ecomuseums in 2012 (Lira, et al., 2012) and the development of the International ecomuseum platform DROPS in 2017 (2024) (Fig.4.1). The same increasing imperative that has led the drive to situate place as a concept at the heart of the global sustainability debate is reflected also in the centralising focus of ecomuseum and community museum discourse in the last six years, with two major transnational research projects, Ecoheritage (2023), begun in 2018 and the EULAC Museums Project 2016 - 2020 (2024), and four major edited collections; *On Community and Sustainable Museums* (Brown, et al., 2019), *Ecomuseums and Climate Change* (Borrelli, et al., 2022 b), *Babel Tower: Museum People in Dialogue* (Duarte Cândido & Pappalardo, 2022) and *Communities and Museums in the 21st Century; Shared Histories and Climate Action* (Brown, et al., 2023 (a)). Two of this thesis’ case study ecomuseums have been involved. Skye Ecomuseum

²⁷ Sutter (2019) describes the 1st ecomuseums as aimed at heritage preservation and cultural representation. The 2nd wave, coming towards the end of the 20th Century, brings in new practices and concepts, focusing on investigating ideas. The 3rd wave begins in the early years of the new Millennium and is differentiated by a shift to tackling economic, sociocultural and environmental challenges not only on a local but a global stage.

with the EULAC project and Cateran Ecomuseum with the Ecomuseums and Climate Change conference and subsequent edited collection (see Chapter 7).

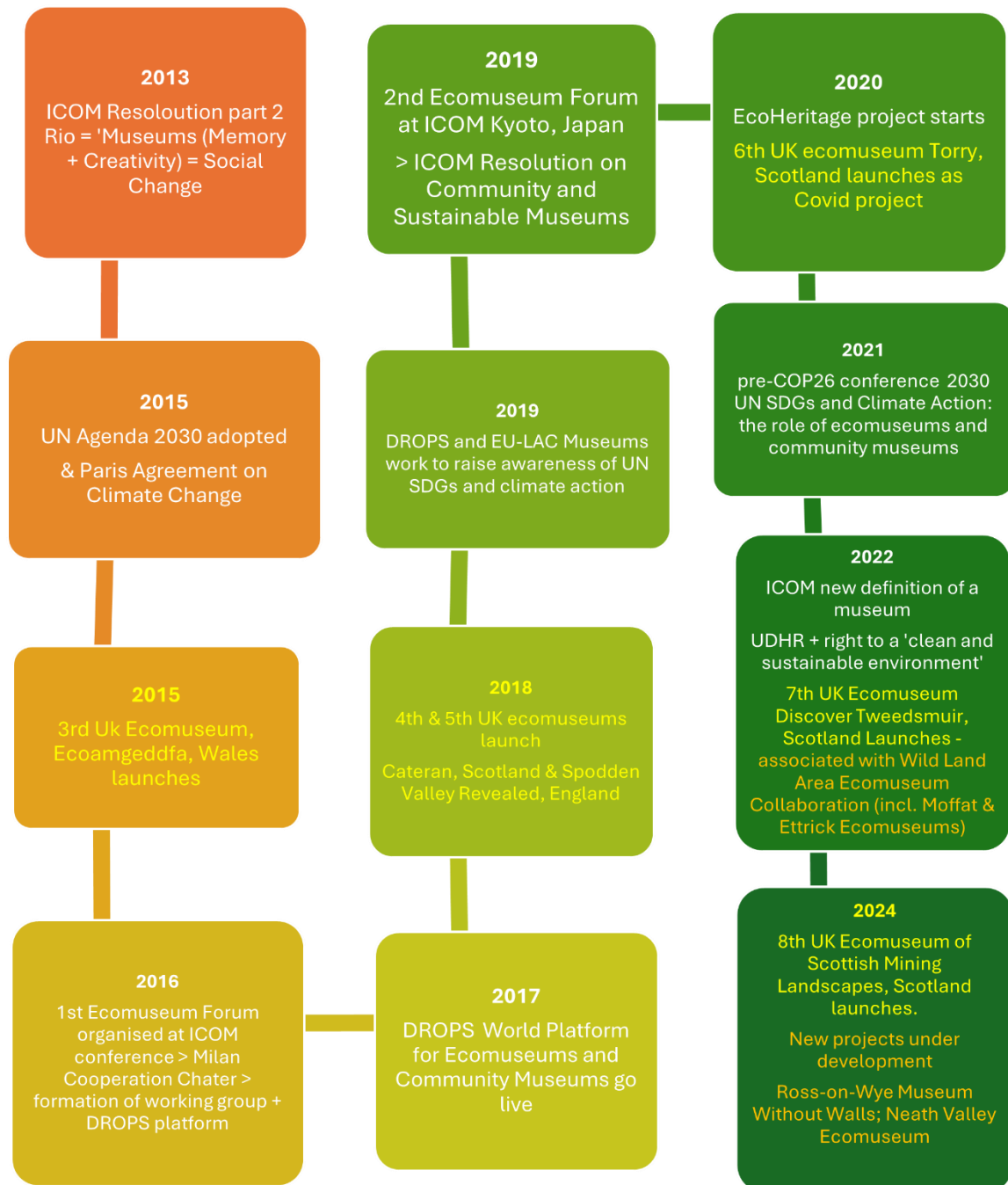


Figure 4.1 Timeline 2013 - 2024: Key developments for ecomuseums and sustainability principles. NB The UK has seen several new ecomuseums emerge during the research period of this thesis. Those highlighted in light yellow are fully launched. Those in darker yellow are launched but still developing (Wild Land Area (Southern Upland Partnership, 2022) and Ross (createRoss, 2024)), or still at the project stage (Neath Valley (Nooma Studio, 2022)).

Peter Davis sees the sustainability potential lying in the ecomuseums ability to re-connect 'the broken link between culture and nature' (2019, p. 69) underlying environmental and social issues and to address the synergistic threats of unemployment, industrial decline, depopulation, loss of cultural identity and sense of place through a holistic and interdisciplinary approach combining specialist and lay knowledge. However, this potential is not fully realised yet (Davis, 2019). A thread running through this latter discourse and research is the power of networking, on multiple levels from local to global scales. Collectively this confers on ecomuseums a particular political significance, strength and resilience when considered not in isolation but as a connected movement reclaiming tangible and intangible commons beyond ownership and across geographic borders (Bigell, 2012; Brown, 2019). Creating in turn, a 'new sense of solidarity through engagement in the intersection of social and natural environment' (Bigell, 2012, p. 28), reinvigorating 'a framework of insurgency' in museological theory and practice (Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido, 2022, p. 10).

McGhie (2022) explores the strong alignment between Corsane's 21 ecomuseum principles and the UN's SDGs. He draws attention to the Agenda 2030 vision, incorporating its attendant SDGs, as a rights-based agenda – as it brings together a wide range of pre-existing multilateral agreements and declarations on human rights and environmental agreements²⁸. Salient to ecomuseum principles, the UDHR enshrines in international law the rights to education, to participate in cultural life and public affairs, to information and self-expression (McGhie, 2022). The 1986 amendment, the Right to Development, gives individuals but also groups and communities the right of self-determination, to define themselves as they so choose and have full sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources and equal opportunity to benefit (McGhie, 2022). Whilst 2022 saw the nonbinding addition of the right to live in 'a clean, healthy and sustainable environment' in recognition of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity and nature loss, and pollution as increasingly affecting human rights across the globe (United Nations, 2022).

McGhie (2022) highlights individual and community access, participation, inclusion and education are fundamental to many agreements. Principles often failed by top-down state actors, but intrinsic in ecomuseum principles. Whilst it is acknowledged not all ecomuseums fulfil all these principles (Pappalardo, 2020; Navajas Corral, 2019), when consciously enacted

²⁸ For example, the Rio Declaration 1992, Aarhus Convention 1998, the Paris Agreement 2015 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and subsequent amendments eg 1986 & 2022 (McGhie, 2022).

they can provide a broad yet localised socio-ecological framework for integrating a ‘just heritage’ with achieving the UN SDGs (Pappalardo, 2020, p 2970). McGhie (2022) asks what better ‘small place, close to home’ to fulfil SDGs and support Agenda 2030’s overarching vision and rights-based environmental action than an ecomuseum?

The Ecoheritage Project, running 2020 – 2023, was set up to explore the strategic function potential of SDGs in the realities of ecomuseums in Italy, Portugal, Spain and Poland, and how best to support ecomuseums to integrate SDGs across their activities. Results suggest there is insufficient data to assess the impact of ecomuseum declarations, charters, forums and conferences of latter years that situate them as ‘catalytic agents of transformative change needed to imagine and realise a sustainable future’ (Pigozzi, et al., 2022, p. 93). However, whilst most participant ecomuseums did not have an explicit focus on the UN SDGs or climate action, the results show many involved their community in imagining, identifying, defining and planning for a sustainable world with environmental, social and economic sustainability having key foundational roles within the organisations (Pigozzi, et al., 2022). The study concludes ecomuseums have high potential ‘by their very nature, to promote integral sustainability (social, environmental and economic)’ but suggests they need more support to do so (Pigozzi, et al., 2022, p. 107). The Ecoheritage project seeks to realise this potential through a collaborative approach, raising SDG awareness, offer training, share knowledge and practices, and encourage global networking (Ecoheritage, 2023).

4.3 From sustainable development to regenerative thinking

Whilst the terms *sustainability* and *sustainable development* have been part of the global mainstream for over 30 years as a solution to the world's problems, the validity of their use is being increasingly problematised (Chassagne, 2020; Purvis, et al., 2018). Appropriated by capitalist agendas and with colonial connotations, SD rhetoric has failed so far to have meaningful impact on an increasing climate crisis (Purvis, et al., 2018). Recent reports on climate and human rights (in)action make for sobering reading (UN, 2022; UN Environment Programme, 2022; UN, 2023; Ahmed, 2024). With the world in such crises, from depleted soils, polluted air and water, devastated flora and fauna to human suffering, mostly resulting from human exploitation and misuse, the idea we sustain things as they currently are is unpalatable to many. Moving beyond sustainable development towards replenishing the land, and nonhuman and human relations to create a more flourishing world with reciprocal and regenerative thinking offers a better path (Girardet, 2013; Büscher & Fletcher, 2020; Wall Kimmerer, 2013).

Purvis et al. (2018) give a concise review of the problematic conjoining of sustainability with development, where development has become synonymous with economic growth within the UN. A conflation arising due to the recognition that some countries and communities need development on some level to address inequity and attempts to achieve ‘intergovernmental consensus’ through appeasement of more powerful governments (Purvis, et al., 2018, p. 692). SD institutionalisation reflects embedded capitalist ideologies, rendering the term an oxymoron that obscures and restricts the context-specific approach needed under a cloak of one-size-fits-all (Purvis, et al., 2018).

Likewise, moving away from the colonial and capitalist notion of *development* towards Krenak’s suggestion of *involving* (cited Brulon Soares, 2024) opens alternative readings of the social museum through indigenous concepts such as Buen Vivir (Mellado & Brulon Soares, 2022; Chassagne, 2020). Buen Vivir, or ‘sumak kawsay’ in Quechua, translated loosely as ‘Good living’, is a complex political and academic concept based on Latin American indigenous Cosmovision worldviews on the human/nonhuman natures complete inter-relationality and the idea that one cannot flourish without the other – no environmental justice without social justice (Chassagne, 2020). It takes a bottom-up endogenous and holistic approach to achieving the health and wellbeing of both humans and the environment they live in through a value-based wellbeing economy. As such it has been put forward as a practical, more regenerative and plural alternative to sustainable development (Chassagne, 2020).

McGhie (2022) notes the ecomuseum similarly emphasises social capital borne from involving/inclusion rather than economic growth, fostering strong, resilient communities in which communities benefit foremost rather than tourists (cf. Brown, 2017). Where the ‘harmonious balance of considerations of people, planet and prosperity over time’ of the SDGs are well reflected (McGhie, 2022, p. 51). As noted in the previous chapter, scholars such as Büscher & Fletcher (2020) problematise the use of commodified values such as ‘capital’ in evaluating the worth of nature, heritage and culture. Current examples of such economic models used in heritage and nature conservation can be found in the UK governments The Green Book (HM Treasury, 2023) and DCMS Valuing Culture and Heritage Capital: A framework towards informing decision making (2021), Arts Council England’s Guidance Note: How to quantify the public benefit of your Museum using Economic Value Estimates (Lawton, et al., 2021) and in UNESCO Culture 2030 indicators (2023). Each deploying a cost benefits analysis approach where valuation/cost/benefits indicators are still based on economic rate of return. The Common Cause Foundation campaigns for the promotion of intrinsic values through framing, language and action, such as love, familiarity and universalism. Research, including

into Nature Connectedness noted in Chapter 3, shows this is more affective and effective in fostering positive outcomes socially and environmentally than extrinsic values such as power and wealth, which are shown to erode compassion, care and stewardship (Common Cause Foundation, 2021).

By virtue of their long-standing place/community foci, creatively engaged with life's entangled messiness, Worts & Dal Santo (2022) see ecomuseums as singularly placed to act as 'cultural catalysts'. Catalysts that can help forge the adaptive foundational cultural change needed to meet environmental crises' critical challenges. Adaptive foundational cultural change, like Buen Vivir and convivial conservation, offers an alternative to continuous financial growth, such as GDP, as a measure of a country's health, refocusing instead on human and environmental wellbeing (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022). In order to act as such a cultural catalyst, ecomuseums can lead the way for other cultural organisations by focusing on relationship building with and between local communities, individuals and groups, rather than tourism development (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022).

The conscious uncoupling of sustainable development from the fallacy of continuous growth is imperative. Continuous growth, by definition cannot be sustainable (Soper, 2020; Helm, 2019; Raworth, 2018). A truism argued since the 17th and 18th centuries and vigorously so from the early 1970s (Purvis, et al., 2018). Yet not many institutions or governments dare voice this truth out loud, New Zealand been a rare exception signalling a shift to wellbeing rather than GDP to measure a country's health (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022). Regenerative thinking is about reciprocal relationships between human and other natures and reviving communities at a local level. Girardet (2013) invokes the decentralised and human-scale ideas of Schumacher's concepts in *Small is Beautiful*²⁹ and that people matter. Borrelli et al. (2022a) add to this paradigm another slogan originating from the same movements as ecomuseums, 'Think Global, Act Local'. Both sayings sum up ecomuseum ethos and strength as a regenerative process. All regenerative thinking models, like Buen Vivir and convivial conservation stress a grassroots approach as paramount. This shift in thinking from SD to regenerative thinking is already happening at ground level in ecomuseum communities. It could be argued it has been happening at ground level in small communities and ecomuseums for decades, since inception, as their raison d'etre is most often to revitalise struggling communities. Simply semantics perhaps? Yet the semiotic

²⁹ In a pleasing symmetry of going back to roots, published 1973, in the same period and atmosphere that gave birth to new museology and the ecomuseum

signposting is now quite different. As a neologism, *regenerative* was frequently preferred to SD by those in UK ecomuseum communities discussed in the following chapters. As a paradigm shift, it is important to pursue in order to realise better futures.

Critical review of the issues with the terms SD and *development* in particular leads to an unease with using the term *sustainable development* in defining an ecomuseum³⁰. It is interesting ICOM's latest 2023 definition quoted at the start of Chapter 2, promotes *sustainability* without reference to development (ICOM, 2023, p. 147).

As a means for museums to fulfil their promise of becoming catalysts of adaptive cultural change, Worts and Dal Santo's 'Inside/Outside' model enfolds all aspects of the world as one entangled whole – 'an entire living culture' (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022, p. 78). This expands beyond the walls of what most museums would consider their remit, making the museum responsible for co-accounting for everything within a particular community, from the wellbeing of the natural environment to housing, jobs, education, equity and relationship building. This is another way of interpreting the moniker of ecomuseums 'museums without walls' and reflecting Janes' (2016) 'museums without borders'. This dissolving of the lines between the ecomuseum and its co-constituent community is reflected particularly in the ecomuseum case studies, Skye and Ecoamgueddfa. The differing degrees and ways this occurs and the impacts it has are discussed in Chapters 6 - 9.

Regenerative thinking isn't in opposition to sustainability and the SDGs but can be seen as the next step as a plural solution for fundamental change. In evaluating Buen Vivir as such an approach, Chassagne (2020, p 38) uses Dryzak's division of environmental discourse – 'status quo' – business as usual, 'reform', including SD, and lastly moving to revolutionary systemic change of 'transformation'. A consensus by numerous scholars across many disciplines and not least in ecomuseum discourse as shown in the current chapter and the two preceding it, suggests that to achieve such revolutionary transformation, communities must be at the heart of context-specific change. Yet it is acknowledged communities can't do this alone but need support, financial and practical, alongside knowledge sharing with outside or governmental organisations, the caveat being that the needs and solutions are led by the community in collaborative and equal partnership (Chassagne, 2020; Pappalardo, 2020; Worts & Dal Santos,

³⁰ For example, the 2004 Declaration of Intent of the Long Network definition 'An ecomuseum is a dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for sustainable development. An ecomuseum is based on a community agreement' cited (Corsane, et al., 2008).

2022; Ecoheritage, 2023). How this delicate balance is achieved or not in the case of UK ecomuseums will be further discussed in Chapters 6–9.

4.4 A starting framework for analysis of the regenerative potential of ecomuseums

To end this chapter, I present a starting framework (Table 4.1) that brings together the intersecting key principles of ecomuseum philosophy and characteristics that research presented so far suggests lays the path towards more resilient, sustainable and regenerative futures. In particular, the resulting table begins with practices from the new 2023 ICOM ecomuseum definition, then synthesises ideas from Corsane’s (2006) 21 principles, Davis’s five key ecomuseum characteristics (2001), Fresque-Baxter & Armitage’ (2012) framework for understanding place identity and climate change adaptation, Lumber et al.’s (2017) pathways to nature connectedness (see Fig 3.2), Pappalardo’s (2020) recurring ecomuseum characteristics for ecological and social just heritage, Brüscher & Flechter’s (2020) idealistic long-term goals for a Conservation Revolution (see Table 3.1), Owen’s (2021) effective attributes for climate adaptation (see Fig 3.3), Common Cause Foundation’s (2021) *Unlocking the potential of human values*, and McGhie’s (2022) synthesis of his seven characteristics of museums for sustainability and the UN SDGs; and correlate to Brown et al.’s (2023 (b)) key components of a community-based museum (see Appendix 2 for some of the above).

Each of these practices, principles and characteristics should be understood as coactive, building on and working with each other. This starting framework generates questions with which to begin interrogating the practices and potential of the five case study ecomuseums in the following chapters. It is purposefully called a starting framework to highlight the iterative process of primary empirical data analysis presented in Chapters 6 – 9. Drawn from literature exploring connections to place and nature, the key characteristics and their dimensions also intersect with the research questions ‘What connects people to the place they live?’ and ‘What impact does this have on their actions to care for that place?’ – in particular the questions around holistic approaches, inter-relationality of humans and nature, fostering connections between people, nature and land, and human and environmental wellbeing. Chapters 6 – 9 consider the practices, dimensions and characteristics of the UK ecomuseums to investigate the ecomuseum’s potential to foster sustainable and regenerative communities. In addition, Chapter 8 focuses on these research questions in drawing together the concept of land connectedness to better understand the connections people have to their places so as to understand how ecomuseum practices can help foster those connections. Using the emergent

themes of land connectedness as a focus framework could aid ecomuseums in bridging the cultural severance and the values-action gap that are the starting points of this research. First, Chapter 5 turns to discussion of the methodology employed in this research.

Table 4.1 Table of key ecomuseum practices, principle dimensions and characteristics for sustainability and regenerative futures.

Practices	Principle Dimensions	Characteristics	Questions for investigating characteristics
Place-based	Physical Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale • Recognisable/meaningful delineation of space • Fragmented/dispersed sites 	Does the ecomuseum have the characteristics of a meaningful space? Is it recognisable/meaningful to the community? Were the community involved in its identification?
	Place Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place attachment • Rootedness • Belonging • Social connections • Local distinctiveness • Continuity • Commitment to place • Security 	How does the ecomuseum foster/valorise place attachment and the related characteristics?
Community Led	Community Including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endogenic • Community benefits • Active agency • Self-efficacy • Increased capacity • Plurality 	Did the ecomuseum derive from the community? How does the ecomuseum benefit the local community? Is this a priority? Is there community participation in a democratic manner? How? Is there community management? Do they strive to be inclusive and plural rather than reductive? Is there an emphasis on process rather than end product?
Supporting	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic • Transdisciplinary • Intergenerational • Knowledge • Skills 	Does the ecomuseum promote understanding of the inter-relationality of humans and nature? Are active embodied learning processes fostered over passive education? Is local knowledge at multiple levels valorised? Are they sites and catalysts of transdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange and skills sharing?
	Collaboration/Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion • Local networks • Wider networks • Support local producers & artisans 	How does the ecomuseum seek to collaborate within its local community and with wider networks? Does it act as a bridge between different sectors and demographics in the community?
	Intrinsic values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning • Respect • Reciprocity • Care 	Does the ecomuseum promote directly or indirectly intrinsic values? How? Does it create opportunities for experience and foster connections between people, nature and the land? Does it celebrate human and non-human natures?
Sustainability	Holistic approach Regenerative thinking Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context specific • Adaptive & responsive • Holistic nature/culture approach • Small scale • Non-extractive • Collaborative solutions • Community 1st • Increasing capacity 	Does the ecomuseum contribute to the health and wellbeing of both humans and their environment? How? Is it adaptive, embrace change and continuous community consultation? Does it provide opportunity for community solutions and action? Does it increase the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to meet the community's needs for regenerative futures and climate action?

5 Research Methodology:

This chapter presents the methodological approaches and design used to collect and analyse data to answer the research questions discussed in Chapter 1.

5.1 Approach

This study examines the interwoven people-land connectivity and how this affects the care and concern for and resilience of the local environment and community. Further, it assesses how UK ecomuseum practices could help in the formation, maintenance and strengthening of this connectivity and the opportunities ecomuseums provide for people to care for their local environments.

To answer the research questions based on subjective experience, meaning-making and relational interactions of individuals with case-study sites, a naturalistic, inductive and flexible approach incorporating elements of grounded theory (GTM) and ethnography methods was thought apposite. Integral reflexivity and iterative processes allows for research into more complex person/landscape relationships and reflect the subjectivity and multiplicity of individual experience and interrelation with their landscape, leading to an interpretative understanding of the studied world (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). The methodology was designed with ethical considerations of care-full engagements, reciprocity and responsibility (Owen, 2020; Gaudry, 2011; Iwe, et al., 2022; Danquah & Billingham, 2020).

5.1.1 Blended grounded theory ethnography

Both ethnography and grounded theory are concerned with understanding individual experience and perception. Bamkin & Goulding note both approaches share a constructivist philosophy, whereby reality and truth relate to an individual's perceptions of their world, thoughts and behaviours, which, used together, can form 'a potent methodology' (2016, p. 216).

Ethnographic study is based on developing a broad full description of a single group or society through naturalistic observation by the researcher immersed within that setting over a lengthy period. The result been 'thick' description of a whole setting from a social or cultural point of view, where data collection is often unfocused 'everywhere and nowhere, gathering everything and nothing' (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 161). Grounded theory uses similar naturalistic qualitative research methodologies, applying an iterative set of systematic procedures and simultaneous data collection and analysis process from which inductive theories emerge about a particular social phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Both ethnography and grounded theory seek a closer understanding of people's perceptions, experiences and actions. For Pettigrew, the similarities in both approaches make them highly compatible, whilst the differences compensate so combined they 'produce a level of detail and interpretation that is unavailable from other methodologies' (2000, p. 9). Together they provide a flexible strategy for collecting and analysing deep, rich data whilst ensuring fieldwork is focused and astute analysis is produced (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). For this investigation, ethnographic elements allowed a deeper exploration and insight into the lived experience, the 'thick' description produced lending itself to grounded theory's analysis modes of memo and coding. Grounded theory's iterative processes of comparison across settings and data collection, and analysis focused research and facilitated the generation of theories.

Important for this study was the methodology used was not bogged down in any rigid framework or methodological dogma but was allowed to evolve and change as research progressed. An open-minded and flexible approach is more critical to deeper understanding of the studied phenomena than mechanistic methods alone (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). Therefore a fluid approach with some grounded-theory-ethnographic elements was taken, with multiple sites allowing theories to develop and be tested better by a single PhD researcher within the given timeframe. This fluid approach also allowed for the creation of methodologies grounded in the same intrinsic values the study explores, reciprocity, empathy, respect and relationships.

5.1.2 Research ethos

These intrinsic values are a thread running through much research and methodological philosophy and praxis during the last three decades. For example, the heritage approaches of new museology (Janes, 2015; Marstine, 2011; Simon, 2016), research activism and non-extractive research arising from decolonial praxis (Gaudry, 2011; Silva, et al., 2022; Iwe, et al., 2022) and advocated in wider contexts (Danquah & Billingham, 2020; Owen, 2020).

For myself, this ethos grew organically over 30 years working in and with community groups and projects, mostly grassroots groups and charities, and mostly in a voluntary capacity from participant and voluntary worker, including over 18 years in various leadership roles, committee member, group/project leader and organiser in (amongst others) ecology, conservation, women's support, education, art and heritage organisations and projects. Well before any personal knowledge of or access to academic research; insight and understanding of marginalised groups, frustrations in the face of lack of funds, outside support and understanding, along with the power of collaborative working, laid a foundation of empathic reciprocity through respectful relationships as a baseline for life in general and as a working

approach. Led by the collective needs and interests of the groups I have been part of, I have always lent towards co-production and a community-first approach (Fox, et al., 2016; Simon, 2016) long before I had that terminology. The reason for taking on active roles within these groups stemming from a belief in reciprocity, that you should give something back where you can, if you get or use something. This was also reflected in how I negotiated projects, sometimes with more or less success, encouraging each group member to have a voice and to help develop ideas and direction.

In research, self-reflection and acknowledging positionality in our research choices, approach, design and lens on the data is important – including impacts on collecting data, participants and analysis (Holmes, 2020). During my MA studies, I naturally gravitated towards similar ethical praxis, community first (Simon, 2016) or human-centred design (Fox, et al., 2016) and the work of community-led organisations such as Common Ground (Common Ground, 2019) and ultimately to ecomuseums and the taking of a reciprocal approach to my MA dissertation research and placement, co-designing a community first approach to a nascent ecomuseum (McMillan, 2019a) and hence this study. So, it was important for me to foreground a reciprocal and relational position from the start.

When undertaking community research, indigenous scholar Gaudry (2011) defines non-extractive or *resurgent* research as being responsible first and foremost to the communities we study, rather than for the benefit of the academy, or the researcher's own personal academic end-goals, such as a published paper or a PhD. The latter more traditional approach removes or *extracts* localised knowledge from communities without much thought to involving or benefitting the studied community in a one-way flow of knowledge (Danquah & Billingham, 2020; Owen, 2020). Non-extractive research should be based in and demonstrate reciprocity, respect and responsibility (Gaudry, 2011). Building mindful relationships between the researcher and the studied community is key to achieving this 'relational responsibility' (Gaudry, 2011, p. 124). Researchers who are not studying their own community or already embedded within their studied community 'must take special care to build these relationships and be willing to invest ourselves in these relationships, to adopt a responsible position within the community' (p. 125). Our research should be intended to be read by and shared with community members and ultimately be of use and relevance to the community (Iwe, et al., 2022).

However, such a reciprocal approach would be difficult or dubious to enact if the studied community was one negatively positioned or in opposition to societal or legal sanctions, or personal beliefs, such as the KKK or a terrorist organisation.

My research does not fulfil all principles of non-extractive research as research questions were not designed with the studied communities, nor did I use or train community participants to gather data themselves (Gaudry, 2011; Danquah & Billingham, 2020; Iwe, et al., 2022). Although in three instances, community members or groups did ask to continue the data collection process for me, having participated themselves during one of the pop-up events. This included a community group using roll mapping with their local primary school (Cateran Ecomuseum area), a community museum and a library both using the postcards and post-boxes in their buildings (SVR area) (see section 5.3.5). In practice though, I have attempted to work by the principle of care-full engagement, reciprocity, respect, responsibility, relevance and in adding to the community (Clifford, 2003), in knowledge, time and practical ways as best I could in the ways described below. I began from a stance of 'what can I do for you?' and 'how can this research help you?'

Community in this study is the case-study ecomuseum organisations and the wider communities they are situated within, including partner organisations and other community groups and individuals. Through its focus and questioning, this research also recognises the position of value and knowledge nonhuman communities hold as integral to the wider community of which humans are part (Kouritzin & Nakagawa, 2018).

Researcher insider-outsider positionality and the benefits and ethics of that, remain a key point of debate in ethnography and social sciences (Holmes, 2020). Mercer argues rather than a dichotomy, we should view 'insiderness in a more pluralistic way (accepting human beings cannot be classified according to a single ascribed status)' and so 'consider the two terms as poles of a continuum that is more or less fluid' (Mercer, 2007, p. 7). The dichotomous view is rendered useless if we understand insider-outsider positionality changes through and across the research process and multiple positions can be held simultaneously by both researcher and participant, affecting each interaction and the knowledge co-created (Holmes, 2020).

Positionality is always context specific, constantly evolving and dynamic, changing from one situation or participant to the next. For example, how we are perceived externally depends on who is perceiving us, how we respond, what is offered, shown or hidden, consciously or unconsciously, by both researcher and participant and how these change over time as we get to know each other.

Similarly to Owen (2020), I deliberately chose to research within my own country. As a white British woman researching in British, predominantly white communities, I share a similar

enough background and experiences, cultural norms, idioms and the like, to ease acceptance and understanding on both sides, researcher and participants. These characteristics and years of experience in similar fields to the which the ecomuseums practice, helped establish trust and credibility with community members. My being female with experience in leading children's groups facilitated organisation and participation in family and children's groups' pop-up activities (section 5.3.5), for example.

Yet, whilst sharing a larger cultural grouping, I am not directly of the communities I am researching. As a community outsider, I still prepared to invest time and care as Gaudry (2011) advised in building response-able relations with the communities. Kouritzin and Nakagawa (2018) advocate to embrace non-extractive positions, researchers should be as open as possible about themselves, their beliefs and assumptions, their relationships and their intent for their research, usage and consequences. This was particularly important concerning relations with the ecomuseums themselves to allay any anxieties about my coming to scrutinise their practices.

My position as outsider, separate to the ecomuseum organisations themselves, did privilege me with some community members, partner organisations and even steering group or committee members as they felt they could be completely honest about their feelings and experiences of engagement with the ecomuseums. Conversely, to some participants at pop-events my position was sometimes construed as being a member of the ecomuseum themselves. This was particularly so at the events at which I was directly connected with the ecomuseums, for example the bioblitz and Alyth museum events. Data gathered at these events did not directly concern perceptions of the ecomuseums (see section 5.3.5), but with personal connections to their local landscape, so the impact of that assumption was not negative.

5.1.3 Indigenous language

Gaudry (2011) also draws attention to the issue of the lack of indigenous languages used throughout the research cycle and how the hegemony of the English language can distort and diminish worldviews and understanding. Whilst sharing a similar larger cultural background and English as both indigenous and official language, other indigenous languages in two of my case study areas, Welsh in Ecoamgueddfa and Scots Gaelic in Skye presented an ethical matter to be addressed. This was particularly pertinent as part of the remit of both these ecomuseums is the promotion of their native tongue.

In Wales, Welsh is protected by law³¹, and public bodies have to provide both English and Welsh versions of all they do. As Ecomagueddfa is affiliated with the local council, all their work is bilingual. Ecomagueddfa's Llyn Peninsula location is one of the strongholds of the Welsh language and it is spoken widely in the area, with all primary schools Welsh medium. To work with Ecomagueddfa and out of respect for the community, I produced promotional material, PSI sheets and community Personal Ecologies information and questions in Welsh and English. I initially worked with a native Welsh-speaking family friend who lives in the area, then collaborated with an ecomuseum employee and a partner organisation employee, both native speakers. Participants could choose to answer in either language, and the ecomuseum employee I worked with on events and translations translated the answers back into English for me. Part of this quid pro quo was we shared information from the data collected (see below). Interviews and online survey questions were in English only. This did not negate the issue of lost-in-translation meaning or words/phrases not being directly translatable, with particular phrases coming up in interviews several times such as *hiraeth*. However, participants usually used the Welsh phrase to better express what they meant, including non-native speakers, and participants gave their own explanations of what it meant.

Whilst an official language,³² Scots Gaelic is not legislated for in law like Welsh, and there is no obligation to provide bilingual resources. However, the Skye Ecomuseum area of Staffin in the North of Skye, has the highest Gaelic-speaking population in Scotland, with 61% stating they can speak some Gaelic³³. As one interviewee (B08) states the area is 'one of the last real Gaelic heartlands where it is spoken as a community language - certainly in Skye terms that's pretty unique now.' However, several participants remarked Gaelic was not used as an everyday conversational language unlike Welsh. Due to Covid's greater impact on community engagement here and the lack of time for anyone to help, it was not deemed possible to provide a translation of promotional material. I did not conduct any pop-up events in this area, and interviews and online surveys were conducted in English. However, as with Welsh, Gaelic words and phrases were repeatedly used and recorded with participants' own translations.

³¹ Welsh Language Act 1993 (gov.wales, 2020) and Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (gov.wales, 2020b).

³² Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (gov.uk, 2005).

³³ 2001 census data (UK Population Data, 2022).

To give room for both languages and the richer nuance of meaning and knowledge both lend to the understanding the deep emotional ties of participants to their place and communities, in the discussion chapters of this thesis, both languages will be used where given by participants, alongside their own translations.

5.1.4 Reciprocity with the ecomuseums

In the first scoping discussions with each ecomuseum, I asked them if there was anything they wanted to find out or particular questions they would like answers for so my research would be useful to them as well as me. I did not get much response beyond a generic 'no, but we'd like to see the final research results', but the offer was made. Later in the data collection process, I co-designed, with an Ecoamgueddfa employee, feedback questions for a bioblitz event we could both use (part of my pop-up activities, see section 3.3.5) as they hadn't previously gathered any event feedback.

I also helped with and/or put on events and provided family craft activities alongside my creative community personalised ecologies data collection activities (see section 5.3.5) for three of the case study ecomuseums, the aforementioned Bioblitz event in the Ecoamgueddfa area; a family activity at Alyth Museum for Cateran Ecomuseum and two specific community engagement events with SVR. During these, I variously helped with the planning, promotion and organisation of day, set-up and take-down, added activities, and created resources for them, such as gathering feedback (Ecoamgueddfa) and a 'how to make a journey stick' sheet (SVR, Appendix 3.1).

Throughout my study, I have maintained a continuous dialogue with the ecomuseums about findings as the study has gone on, strictly adhering to anonymisation data protocols, using only general emerging themes from aggregated data. This has worked both ways. Firstly, it has helped me to understand certain things being discussed or mentioned by participants, and secondly, the ecomuseums have, if they wish, been able to take on board what their wider communities are saying and act upon it rather sooner than if waiting for final publication of my thesis. Which, in some cases, will be after the current funding – and therefore, potentially the life span – of the particular ecomuseum, and therefore of no benefit to that community. Once collated from the bioblitz, I shared the 'born-anonymous' feedback with Ecoamgueddfa³⁴. I have also had talks with Leonie Shultz, employed by LIVE/Ecoamgueddfa to gather visitor activity

³⁴ This was clearly stated as feedback for both the ecomuseum and my study on the day to participants

feedback in Wales and shared some anonymous raw data from Ecoamgueddfa community pop-up PE's (see section 5.2.4).

I also worked with CATERAN Ecomuseum on a 12-month placement project to help create a community engagement programme, the School of the Moon. Using community-first principles, this was co-designed and produced with community members, thus following the principles of this study and non-extractive research. I also instigated and helped to coordinate an ecomuseum youth group exchange between CATERAN Ecomuseum and SVR. Unfortunately, the exchange didn't happen at that time, due to circumstances outside of the control of ecomuseums or myself.

One outcome of my engagement practices is raised and/or increased awareness of the ecomuseums and their activities amongst their wider communities. I know my research engagements have acted as connective networking between individuals, groups and ecomuseum organisations in several cases.

I co-organised the 1st UK and Ireland Ecomuseum Webinar in July 2021, the first time all the UK ecomuseums had come together or even knew of the other's existence in some cases. This also included international practitioners and a roundtable discussion chaired by renowned ecomuseologist Peter Davis. A second UK & Ireland webinar was delivered in September 2023, which introduced two new UK ecomuseums to the group.

I also co-instigated the UK and Ireland Ecomuseums Network as a forum for knowledge and resource exchange and sharing. Though this has been slow to begin with, membership numbers increase and we have organised a first evening online talk given by a member of the UK's newest ecomuseum in July 2024.

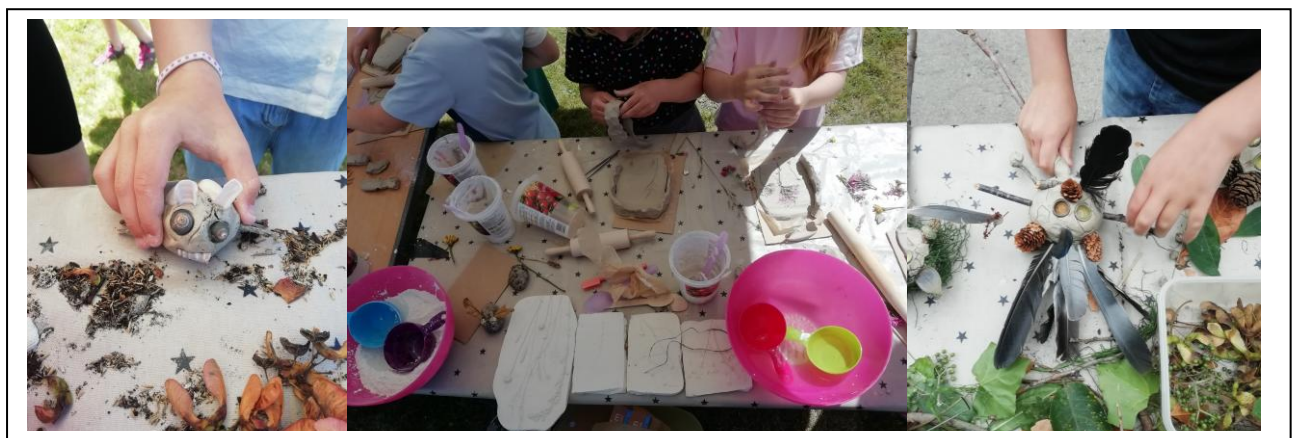


Figure 5.1 A selection of the free family make & take crafts provided: wildflower seed bomb creatures, flower casting and Boggart making

5.1.5 Reciprocity with community groups and partner organisations

During the second tranche of my fieldwork (see section 5. 2), I engaged with various community groups and partner organisations, Llyn Maritime Museum (Ecoamgueddfa partner), beaver and cub groups, youth groups (Cateran and SVR area) and the Healey Dell tea rooms (SVR area), to provide activities for the public and group members otherwise not available. Another activity for a community festival with another community group in the Cateran area was cancelled on the day due to extreme weather. I prepared and delivered events/activities and provided all resources used at no cost to the organisations, groups or participants.

5.1.6 Reciprocity with the general community

Throughout all of my fieldwork and data collection activities, it was important I went to where people are, into community venues, spaces and events, and didn't expect people to come to me. Interviews were held where and when at the convenience and choice of interviewees. Community events were put on to coincide with other larger community events, e.g. the Bioblitz and museum festival day, at popular community spaces, or at regular community group sessions such as youth groups. There was no financial cost to participants of the community events.

Participants at the pop-up events (see section 5.2.4) expressed enjoyment and pleasure from participating in the free craft activities provided, both verbally during the event and in written form including the Bioblitz feedback. Thanks from participants was frequently expressed for providing something to do, particularly for families with children during the summer holidays or for keeping the children busy whilst the family ate and drank at the tearooms for example. The data collection process itself was also liked by many. People expressed having fun and also the positive emotions generated through participation (see section 5.3.5). One journal participant (C24) enjoyed the process enormously. In particular, it made her realise how important the place she lives is to her wellbeing and is continuing to write about her connection to the place she lives and what it means to her for herself now, inspired by her participation.

One interviewee described an ecomuseum as 'time served in place' (B13). To understand the individual ecomuseums and their communities, I too needed to spend time in place, building relationships and giving of myself too, not swooping in, taking and leaving. This afforded me the connections that facilitated engagement activities and was crucial to building relationships with individual interviewees. This is discussed more in section 5.2.2. Whilst I didn't take up their time if busy, I didn't rush people either. Time was offered if wanted, time to chat (not interview), discuss, ask questions, have an extra coffee, share a meal, to socialise. Relationships were

built, with participants across all data collection modes, barring the online survey, some fleeting, for the duration of a single brief interaction, others lasting longer and leading to further interactions connected with the study and/or beyond it. All participants deserving of my respect and thankfulness regardless. I got involved in whatever was happening and always asked/offered if there was anything I could do for them. I remained, and remain, open to give something of myself, as they gave of themselves. As per ethical review, all participants were given the information my research would be openly accessible to everyone when completed and how to access it.

Questions around impartiality arise when a researcher declares such close and open involvement with the community they are researching, along with issues of unprotected research data and ideas when openly sharing thoughts and processes. Yet Silva et al. (2022) highlight the importance of non-extractive research methods in radicalising hierarchies of knowledge through challenging hegemonic authorised knowledge. Dominated by imperialist and Christian elite systems of education and value that dislocate, devalue and subordinate local knowledge and world views in favour of the false principle of an objective scientific universal truth. Instead, they advocate acknowledging the researcher as an activist researcher in any given social context, moving on from false objectivity and neutrality. This presupposes community participants, subjects, are 'not merely objects of research to be extracted, captured, measured, and quantified' (Silva, et al., 2022, p. 2) but co-constituents in a pluriversality, in which the needs and aims of researcher, the academy and the community are equally valued and can all be fulfilled. A two-way sharing of knowledge openly and throughout the research cycle is key to this relationality (Iwe, et al., 2022).

No research is ever truly impartial as Haraway's *Situated Knowledge* exposed (1988). This remains a key notion working through the four intersecting planes of research and engagement, epistemological, ontological, ethical and political (Rogowska-Stangret, 2018). We all make choices based on more or less acknowledged personal experience, interests and aims. This does not mean our research is not rigorous and valid. I must take a critical friend approach (Mat Noor & Shafee, 2020) for my research to be useful to the case study communities and others considering using ecomuseum or similar models in their own places, or I fail them. Pursuing objectivity can obscure the deep emotional intensities of quotidian affective and non-representational geographies. Reciprocity, empathy and relational responsibility provide a basis for a more honest, deeper understanding which can act to challenge and reshape the limitations of what counts as legitimate research. This is particularly imperative in addressing

community sustainability experience and action (Trudgill, 2001; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012).

Pertinent to my approach is the knowledge experience has given me, that whilst I might share experiences, such as with community-led groups, each person has their own motivations, goals, gains and costs from doing so, and I would never presume they are the same as my own.

As someone who aligns with ethical museology and non-extractive research paradigms, I am committed to representing the complexity of polyversality - the plural ways of valuing and multidimensional experiences of participants, not just a single 'truth', my own or collective. This study is grounded in the subjectivity of participants' experiences and feelings; about ecomuseum praxis and their connections to the places they live. I have strived to allow them, their words, their worldviews, to speak for themselves and not be objectified through my research lens. How I endeavoured to do this is explored in the sections below.

5.2 The research process

5.2.1 Case study areas

This study utilised a multiple case-study design to fulfil one of its aims highlighted in Chapter 1, to be the first study to examine and compare the practices of UK ecomuseums comprehensively. Therefore, the case studies are the five established UK ecomuseums (at research commencement) and the communities living within their geographical areas. These are Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, Skye Ecomuseum, Ecoamgueddfa (now part of LIVE), Ceteran Ecomuseum and Spodden Valley Revealed. Using different case study areas as theoretical sampling groups also enables constant comparison between data, strengthening emergent theories (Urquhart, 2013).

I had pre-existing limited contact with three of the ecomuseums, Skye, Flodden 1513 and Ceteran, from a previous MA study (McMillan, 2019a). This meant I already had a first contact whom to approach when starting this research, and they had some understanding of my experience with ecomuseums.

In the early stages of planning this research, online scoping interviews were conducted with each ecomuseum to gain general insight into their practice and activities. These interviews were before the data collection stage and were not to develop any categories or theoretical framework but to gain a realistic understanding of what type and scale of data collection methods would be feasible to build this into the research design. Each ecomuseum was also asked if they had particular information or questions they would like answered by my study (see

section 5.1.2). This also gave all the ecomuseums a chance to understand my starting position, intent, aims and potential outcomes.

Table 5.1 The case study sites and number of visits and activities carried out in each

Ecomuseum	Location	Active or not	Previous contact	No. field visits	Data Collection Activities carried out
Skye	Isle of Skye, Scotland	yes	Yes. Project manager	2	Interviews Surveys Observation
Flodden 1513	NE Northumberland/SE Scottish Border, England/Scotland	no	Yes, Founder/Director	1	Interviews Walking interviews Survey Observation
Ecoamgueddfa	Llyn Peninsula, NW Wales	yes	No	2	Interviews Walking Interviews Survey PE sketch mapping PE journalling PE postcards & roll mapping Observation
Cateran	NE Perth & Kinross/W Angus, Scotland	yes	Yes, Founder/Director	2	Interviews Walking interviews Survey PE postcards & roll mapping Observation
Spodden Valley Revealed	Whitworth, Lancashire, England	yes	No	2	Interviews Walking interviews Survey PE postcards & roll mapping Observation

5.2.2 Data collection methods

This study employed multiple data collection techniques and sources. Field trips to the case study areas allowed exploration and observation of the ecomuseum sites and practices, participation in both ecomuseum and community activities around those sites, in-depth

interviews, walking interviews and novel pop-up community Personal Ecologies (PE) mapping exercises (see Table 5.1). These were combined with online surveys, individual participatory PE journalling and mapping and analysis of other materials such as ecomuseum reports, blogs, event listings and websites.

5.2.3 Fieldwork

Most primary data was collected in two tranches of fieldwork (Table 5.2). The first ran from September 4th to December 3rd 2021. This tranche consisted of a visit to each of the five case study areas. One important aspect of these first visits was they allowed me to build relationships with people, getting to know people and them to know me and what I was trying to do. This facilitated further contacts and arrangements for community events during the second tranche for mutual benefit.

Table 5.2 Timetable of fieldwork visits

Field Trip	Flodden	Skye	Ecomgueddfa	Cateran	Spodden Valley Revealed
Tranche 1 Dates	04/09/21 – 11/09/21	28/09/21 – 09/10/21	23/10/21 – 03/11/21	13/11/21 – 23/11/21	26/11/21 – 03/12/21
Tranche 2		03/05/22 – 12/05/22	01/07/22 – 09/07/22	28/05/22 – 11/06/22	28/08/22 – 04/09/22

The second tranche ran from May 3rd to September 4th 2022. This tranche consisted of four visits to Skye, Cateran, Ecoamgueddfa and SVR, as these are the case studies actively ongoing and engaged with their community. This tranche allowed initial relationships within the community to be built on and expanded, significantly widening the number and range of community participants through facilitating pop-up events (section 5.3.5).

Due to Covid issues, geographic location or finding a suitable time, some interviews were conducted online around the two main fieldwork tranches. The online survey remained live throughout the data collection period and individual P.E. mapping and journalling were done in participants' own time and sent to me either via the post or digitally via email.

5.2.4 Participants

The use of theoretical sampling, targeting specific groups (UK ecomuseums and their users) and sub-groups (wider community in UK ecomuseums areas) for data collection, was used to generate substantive theories about ecomuseum praxis and land connectedness.

Interviewees and other participants were recruited through the ecomuseums as 'gatekeepers' and by the subsequent use of stratified snowballing techniques (Wheeler, 2017). Contacts at each case study ecomuseum, the project manager where they have one, or a founder-director, gave me a list of initial contacts of people who were or had been involved with their organisation. These initial contacts ranged from members of steering groups, volunteer directors/committee members and paid staff to local partner organisations and community groups and individuals. These first contacts recommended and introduced other contacts and so on.

A research website (McMillan, 2021) and posters advertising for participants (Appendix 3.2) were shared via local social media, partner organisations and community notice boards. A Welsh language version was supplied for the Ecoamgueddfa area. Whilst on site, I talked to local people and, where possible, joined in ecomuseum activities. Altogether this supported relationship building and raised awareness of my study, allowing me to recruit more participants and make further contacts independently of the ecomuseum.

Initial contacts in each area resulted in both repeat and new interviewees during my return visits. Community contacts also introduced me to community groups, including schools, they work with, and I was invited to join ecomuseum and other community group activities during my return visits. This was particularly useful in expanding the range and ages of participants by facilitating community pop-up events for the personal ecologies mapping (section 5.3.5). These were organised to coincide with ecomuseum events, partner organisation events, or arranged directly with community groups, schools and sites within the ecomuseum areas.

I conducted 46 in-person or online interviews, including 12 walking interviews, with 42 interviewees. I had 40 survey respondents and one repeat survey respondent. Within the PE mapping activities, I had two jourallers and one sketch mapper. In addition, the community PE mapping events resulted in 124 postcard participants and 190 community roll mapping participants.

Of the total 397 participants, one participant, C24, took part in four types of data collection, interview, repeat survey, PE mapping and jouralling, and three did repeat interviews. It was

understood some interviewees also completed the online survey, though certainly not the majority. As the online surveys are anonymous, they are not traceable. (See Appendix 3.3 for tables of participant demographics: number of participants per ecomuseum area, by data type, age and gender.)

5.2.5 Pandemic effects on study

I started my study during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Changing restrictions and lockdowns across the three countries in which my case studies are situated, meant my original ideas for data gathering and certain aspects of the study had to be adapted and adjusted for the pandemic impacts both to ecomuseum practices and their communities.

All the case study ecomuseums had stopped all planned activities in the initial lockdown, followed by a move to a much-reduced virtual programme in some cases, CATERAN and Ecoamgueddfa, and a slow re-emergence of activities as different communities reopened at different speeds. Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, as a legacy project, was least affected as it was not running an active activity programme. Skye Ecomuseum only began community engagement activities again in 2022, though it continued to work on developing digital resources in 2021. Spodden Valley Revealed halted all activity, slowly re-emerging in late 2021 to re-establish communications with partner community groups and only engaging in its first community activity in the summer of 2022.

Communities in and of themselves were affected by the varying restrictions too. The pandemic also affected the willingness to participate in face-to-face participatory data collection events, particularly in the small community of Skye Ecomuseum, which remained in self-induced lockdown conditions after lifting official restrictions.

Both the halted or reduced practices of the ecomuseums and community openness had two main effects on my study. Firstly, in the case of the relatively newer ecomuseums, Ecoamgueddfa, CATERAN and SVR, all of which only started in earnest in 2018, had not cemented their identity in their communities, so participation and awareness were low. Secondly, it was harder to make connections with community members due to restrictions, or they were more reluctant to get involved in the study, either because they felt they didn't know the ecomuseum or they were not yet participating in external activities, particularly during the field trips of 2021. This was most keenly felt with the Skye communities, where it wasn't possible to arrange for any community pop-up events as in other areas.

Changes and adjustments to data collection methods are discussed in section 5.3.

5.3 Data collection

5.3.1 Interviews

In-depth interviews gave deep insight into participants' lifeworlds to represent the nuances of 'real people behind the data' (Dunn, 2016, p. 186). I conducted 46 interview sessions with 42 interviewees, with three repeat interviews³⁵ and one taking place over two sessions due to time constraints. Thirty-two were during or shortly after the first tranche of fieldwork visits, and 14 during or around the second tranche.

Most interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes. 12 interviews were walking interviews. These generally lasted significantly longer, lasting between two and a half hours and six hours, though one was just over an hour.

Table 5.3 Break down of interview participants

Ecomuseum Or expert	Direct Involvement: Employee/Funded position	Direct involvement: Voluntary eg. director, founder, community steering committee	Partner organisation	Non direct involvement: community member or group	Non- affiliated expert	Total interviewees
Flodden	2	1	1	3		7
Skye	1	4		2		7
Ecoamgueddfa	5		3	3		11
Cateran		4		5		9
Spodden Valley Revealed	1	2		4		7
Peter Davis					1	1
Total	9	11	4	17	1	42

Interviewees recruitment is discussed in section 5.2.4 above. Table 5.3 shows the breakdown of interview participants per ecomuseum. Twenty-four out of 42 interviewees, 57 %, were affiliated in some way with the ecomuseums themselves. Nine (21%) are paid employees (both full or part-time), 11 (26%) volunteer directors or committee members, including five founder-members. Four interviewees were from partner organisations. Seventeen interviewees (40%) were not directly affiliated but were members of the local community and community groups. Peter Davis, one of the UK's leading ecomuseologists, was also interviewed as he has given support to some of the ecomuseums during their founding (Flodden) and or examined them

³⁵ First interviews taking place in first tranche of fieldwork and the repeat in the second tranche.

since (Flodden and Skye) or acted as expert panel advisor (Ecoamgueddfa/LIVE). Numbers of interviews per ecomuseum were even across each site with 7 and 9 interviews. Ecoamgueddfa had the highest with 11.

The interviewees' given gender was almost equal, with 22 female and 20 male interviewees (Table 5.5). Interviewees had to be over 16 years of age. Most interviewees, 32/42, 76 %, were aged 45 years or above, with almost half over 65 years (Table 5.6). Only one participant was aged 16 – 24 yrs. This reflects the general audience make-up of heritage and cultural activities (Neal, 2015; Arts Council England, 2019). The lack of diversity Neal (2015) notes was also reflected in all interviewees being white, 39 out of 42 identifying as 'white British/Scots/Welsh/English', and three as 'white other' (Irish and North American). This also reflects a lack of diversity in the general populations of the ecomuseum areas, which generally are over 98% white, Whitworth (SVR) being the most diverse with 97.9 % white in the 2021 census data (city population, 2022).

Table 5.4 Breakdown of interviewee participants by given gender

	Female	Male	Other
Participants by given gender	22	20	0

Table 5.5 Breakdown of interviewees by age group

Age range (in Yrs)	Under 16	16 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+	Total
Interviewees/Age group	0	1	9	12	20	42

Before the actual interview, there was communication in the form of emails, telephone calls and, in some cases, online or in-person meetings, sometimes several times. This allowed a comfortable relationship to be established beforehand, facilitating a more relaxed and open dialogue. Interviewees were offered and sent an indicative interview question sheet (Appendix 3.4) if they wanted before the interview.

Interviews were semi-structured with a question schedule as a starting point (Appendix 3.5). These open-ended questions explored the participants' experience and perception of their local ecomuseum and the affective, functional and cognitive logics underpinning their connection to place and their behaviours. This gave structure to begin with, and a guide to ensure most points were covered. Active, empathetic and sensitive close-listening to interviewees, with eye contact

and following up on interesting leads, facilitated a more relaxed and natural conversational interview, rather than sticking rigidly to a schedule. Most topics were covered through this approach without the schedule, allowing for themes to emerge and be explored with the interviewee and others in a continuously evolving reflexive and iterative process (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). This open-prompt interview process also avoided the potential bias of restricting responses to the researcher's own preconceived categories (Seyfi, et al., 2019). In-person interviews were recorded on a small discrete digital recorder (Olympus DM770 Voice Recorder), to minimise disruption to conversational flow. Online interviews were recorded using Microsoft Teams record function. Using an emic approach, interviews were later transcribed verbatim by myself, to allow the 'true voice' of participants to be heard (Holmes, 2020, p. 5). This also facilitated continuous analysis of emergent themes and their exploration in subsequent interviews and data collection. Transcripts were anonymised.

Interviews were conducted at a place of the interviewee's choosing to make them as comfortable as possible. The choice of a walking or static interview was given to all participants. Static interviews were conducted in their homes, cafes or outdoor spaces – covid restrictions playing a part in some choices. Two interviewees chose specific outdoor sites significant to them and 11 interviewees chose to be interviewed whilst walking a route of their devising of a place or places of significance to them. (Some of these interviews also included segments whilst driving to, from and between walking sections.) With these latter two categories, the site/s and the experiential nature of and interactions with them were significant features of the interview, adding significant depth to understanding the participant's connection to their place. Two walking interviews were with two participants simultaneously (total four participants). Each duo consisted of two members of community groups who chose to be interviewed together and devised the walking route together. These two interviews constituted the two longest times spent with participants. One lasted six hours and the other consisted of a whole day tour of ecomuseum sites, a static interview, and attendance at an annual community event. One interviewee participated in two separate walking interviews, one in each fieldwork tranche, and each exploring a different but adjacent area of their significant area.

All interviews resulted in in-depth description of participants' multiple experiences, perceptions of and entanglements, human and non-human, in their personal connections to place. This included individuals' cognition of sustainability and ecomuseums in general and in particular to their areas one. The chosen significant place/s interviews and the walking ones in particular added multiple layers of embodied and performed connections to place and human-nature

ontologies as we walked, felt, and explored (Tilley, 2012). Walking alongside each other allowed for trivial talk to life and death matters with less pressure through sideways listening (McFadden, 2017). Conversation could meander and spur off unexpectedly, prompted by an engagement with the environment around us. For example, conversation with C19 jumped from discussion of death threats over a liable case to a fungi we found, talk of the death of her mother and partner interspersed with excitement over the discovery of a prehistoric cairn. These spontaneous engagements with place belie what captured participants' imaginations and interests. Photographs, audio recordings, notes and 'findings'³⁶ from these walks added to the 'thick' description garnered from these interviews (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001).

Participants were self-selecting and so generally comfortable with talking to me. Emphasis on relationship building and response-ability before, during and after the interviews helped it be a participant-led flexible approach and allowed participants the time and space to have their voice heard. Verbal feedback suggested participants enjoyed the experience, giving them the time and space to focus on what they care about in a new way and a sense of pride to share their place, their story and their activities with someone.

One issue to bear in mind was participants giving me responses they think I wanted to hear. Again, relationship building was key to lessen this. Time was spent getting to know people and them me and what my study was about, in building interviewee's confidence that there were no particular answers wanted or expected and that their own opinions were what mattered and they were the experts as far as my questions went. Another weakness was participants were self-selecting. This allows for inherent bias in the answers given. Participants were generally either connected in some way to the ecomuseum and/or potentially more highly motivated by their environment than the general populous. The first issue was mitigated by my position external to the ecomuseum organisations, allowing participants to be open in their responses (see section 5.1.2), reinforced by the knowledge all responses would be anonymised. However, purposive or theoretical sampling for targeted research questions is a key strategy in GTM (Charmaz, 2014; Urquhart, 2013). There is little point asking somebody who hasn't heard of the ecomuseum about what they think of its activities. Testing emergent themes across multiple case studies allows confidence in the findings (Pettigrew, 2000). My study was not solely on ecomuseum praxis but on personal connection to place and how that impacts behaviour. The

³⁶ Found items such as a pebble, fungi, a feather, shard of pot etc.

multi-method design helped mitigate both the first and second issues regarding this aspect by offering several ways for a broader pool of respondents to engage. Diversifying theoretical sampling groups beyond those connected to the ecomuseums, also further tests emergent theories (Urquhart, 2013).

5.3.2 Surveys

The second method employed was an anonymous online survey. There were 40 general survey participants and one repeat survey participant. Participant recruitment is discussed in section 5.2.4. The survey remained live throughout the whole data-gathering period, but there was a discernible clustering of participants around the field visits to each site, suggesting community engagement during those visits directly resulted in the responses.

The 28 questions (Appendix 3.6) combined both closed quantitative questions and open-ended qualitative questions. As with interviews, these questions explored participants' experience and perception of their local ecomuseum and the affective, functional and cognitive logics underpinning their connection to place and their behaviours. Questions were adapted from environmental and social-ecological psychology frameworks to draw out notions of place and nature relatedness and perceptions of community sustainability and climate change adaptation (Baldwin, et al., 2017; Capstick, et al., 2019; Barbett, et al., 2020; Melville, et al., 2020; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). Affective/functional/cognitive-behavioural questions focused on four primary areas

1. **Place Relatedness (PR) and self** - self-esteem, emotional attachment, belongingness, meeting of needs; social connections, security, rootedness
2. **PR and perception** - Self-efficacy, environmental skills, continuity; meeting of needs, distinctiveness, empowerment, commitment to place, shared values, collective action
3. **PR and experience** – landscape values, motivations, opportunities, barriers
4. **Pro-Environmental Behaviours (PEBs) (incorporating Pro-Nature Conservation Behaviours (Pro-CoBs)**– Personal actions and perceptions; catalysing beliefs

I adapted the INS (Inclusion of Nature in Self) scale (Schultz, 2002; Miller, 2005) to assess the dualisms of participants' perception of the relationship between heritage, nature and self in three pairings – heritage/self, nature/self, heritage/nature (Fig 5.2).

Look at the diagrams below, please select one pair of circles from each row that you think best shows the relationship between the two named concepts. For instance, choosing the first image in which 'me' and 'heritage' are separate indicates that these two concepts are completely detached, choosing a middle image would suggest that there is some overlap, and choosing the final image would suggest 'me' and 'heritage' are completely inseparable.

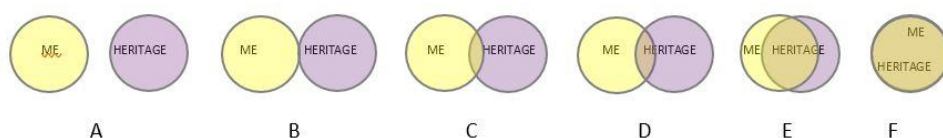


Figure 5.2 Example of adapted INS scale used – Heritage-in-Self

Two further open-ended questions assessed the impact of Covid-19 on participants' values and actions.

1. Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected how you value your local landscape? And how?
2. Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your views on what actions to take in relation to climate change? And how?

Basic demographic information was collected, including age group, gender, ethnic group and the first part of post-code to determine geographic spread of participants.

The repeat survey used the same questions as the general one, but participants completed a linked repeat after a period to see if attitudes and behaviours had changed. Uptake for the repeat survey was disappointingly low, with just one respondent. As such, the data is of limited use in itself, but the particular respondent also participated in three other types of data collection and so this is included as part of the rich data gathered from them.

The digital survey's main strengths were it allowed extensive data from a relatively large number of participants to be gathered and analysed quickly without the time and financial costs of interviews. Independent online access made it easily accessible and convenient for a wider range of the community. Anonymity encouraged honesty in answers.

Whilst qualitative data was produced, there was no opportunity to follow up responses and explore themes more deeply. As questions are fixed at the start there is no flexibility as part of an iterative process. However, careful design and a broad range of questions meant the data gathered through the survey adds valuable weight to test emergent themes from the other data collection methods against.

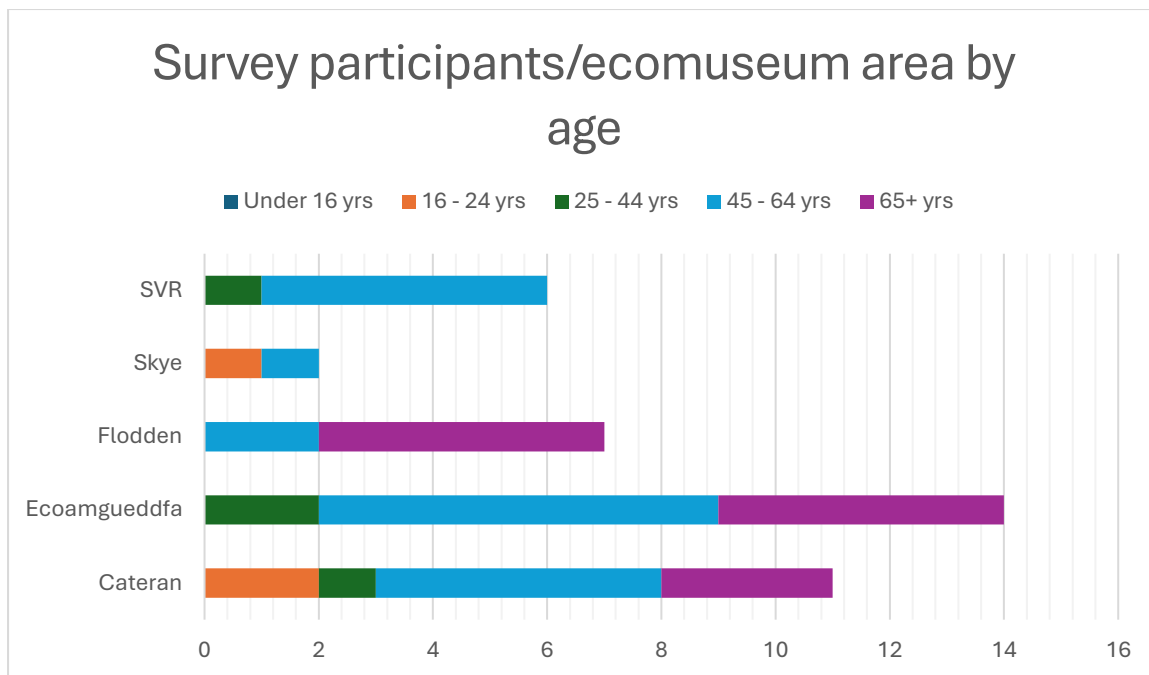


Figure 5.3 Survey Participants per case study ecomuseum area by age group

5.3.3 Personalised ecologies mapping

The third data collection method used novel forms of Personalised Ecologies (PE) mapping. Gaston et al. (2018, p. 917) define personalised ecologies 'as the investigation of the direct interactions between individual people and nature and their ecological dimensions.' Such interactions are affective and phenomenological, perceived through multiple senses. For Gaston et al. (2018), nature is delimited to only living organisms but not including 'non-self-sustaining populations', such as farm animals and domesticated plants.

Yet this study centres on concepts of a more expansive nature, encompassing living and non-living elements such as geological, water and weather systems, and a holistic socio-ecological concept of the place, environment or habitats human communities are part of, as discussed in (Chapter 1 & 2). The etymology of *ecomuseum* itself combines the root of ecology - *okios* (Greek)– meaning home/habitat and *mouseion* (Greek), *mūsēum* (Latin) meaning 'seat of the Muses' and 'study', together suggesting contemplation and study of our habitat/place.

Therefore, the PE definition is expanded here to explore a broader understanding of *more-than* ecology – a holistic ecological understanding of landscape and nature, allowing for an individual's interactions with all landscape aspects and elements, human and non-human, living and non-living, tangible and intangible.

Maps give a schematised imaginary of a landscape, real or imagined. The choice of what is represented, how it is represented and what is omitted, make maps expressions of power

(Cochrane, et al., 2014). Most people think of maps as two-dimensional visual representations, such as OS maps. Critical analysis recognises the power play of the Western/Cartesain/Eulidean lens that these impose (Murrieta-Flores, et al., 2022). Alternatively, maps can be multidimensional, use moving images, objects, words or sound and represent non-spatial connections through non-linear stories and composition as demonstrated in Australian Aboriginal songlines and deep mapping techniques (Norris & Yidumduma Harney, 2014; Bodenhamer, et al., 2022).

Whilst not free from power dynamics and bias, community-based and participatory mapping offers opportunities to 'challenge, assert and transform power and control' (Cochrane, et al., 2014). Using participatory PE mapping methods empowers participants to give their own perspective of their environments, giving insights on form, frequency and duration of interactions, as well as affective, cognitive and functional values and experiences of different elements of their landscape (Moore, 1980; Powell, 2012; Swords, et al., 2019).

5.3.4 Sketch mapping & journalling

Initially, I planned to use two types of creative methods with an open flexible brief to capture participant PEs (for PIS see Appendix 3.7). Firstly, individual Sketch Mapping – where participants draw a quick annotated doodle map of their local landscape depicting what they love about it and why. Secondly, Creative Journalling, where participants were sent an A5 journal to keep a note of their experiences, interactions with and activities in their local landscape, including any ecomuseum activities. Whether a single entry or several over a period of time. Participants were encouraged to be as creative as they liked, using drawing, photographs, found objects, and writing.

Such creative visual methods allow participants agency to illustrate their own lifeworlds, offering glimpses of multisensory and emotive experience (Rose, 2016; Crang, 2010).

Journalling allows participants time and space to reflect, capturing the deep subjectivity of personal experience and connection to nature and place, combining both feeling-thinking and writing-living (Salazar, 2020; Silva, et al., 2022).

Recruiting participants for these activities proved difficult, with only one sketch mapper and two journallers. The impact of Covid restrictions on ecomuseum activities in the 18 months running up to and continuing during the first phase of fieldwork resulted in a lack of recent community engagement and awareness of the ecomuseum organisations and the opportunity for me to meet community members playing a part. The two participants (one doing sketch mapping and journalling) were both local community members, recruited after meeting them whilst

participating in a series of activities delivered by one of my case study ecomuseums. These were the first in-person events it had done since the start of the pandemic, and it was one of only two of the ecomuseums to do any in-person events by the end of 2021, and the only ones I could attend.

5.3.5 Postcards & roll mapping

To widen participation and garner PE insights from a broader range of community participants, I created new novel PE mapping activities for the second tranche of fieldwork, PE postcards and community roll mapping. Going under the title of 'A few of my favourite things in [location of place]' (see Appendix 3.8), these were designed to be anonymous, quick and accessible to any age to engage casual participants as pop-up activities in community spaces, groups and events (see Table 5.6). Whilst these don't give the depth of information the sketch mapping and particularly the journalling do, or the survey or interviews, they gave a snapshot into what people value in their everyday landscape across a broader range of the communities than would typically have participated in the other forms of data collection. Both proved popular with participants as activities in and of themselves.

Of 13³⁷ pop-up sessions, I delivered 10 myself and three were supported by community members (coloured blue on table 5.6; see section 3.1.3). Three events were in association with ecomuseum activities; the rest I organised independently with partner organisations; community groups and sites I had made contacts with during the first tranche of fieldwork. At seven events, I provided additional free make-and-take crafts for people, with no obligation to participate in the data collection. At some pop-ups, both the postcards and roll mapping were used; at others only one or the other. With children's groups, I focused on the roll mapping; whilst the postcards lent themselves well to being left in place such as at a local shop, library or museum over a period of time as well as at whole community events.

³⁷ An additional pop-up was planned at a community festival, but the festival was cancelled on the day due to adverse weather.

Table 5.6 Pop-up PE Community Sessions

Ecomuseum area & Date	P.E. Post cards participants	PE roll mapping participants	Make-take activity	Location/event/ group	Type participants
Cateran					
01/06/22		13		Alyth Youth group	8 – 14 yrs + 3 adult helpers
04/06/22		8	Earth sprites/seed bombs	Alyth Museum (ecomuseum hub)	3 – 7 yrs + 3 adult carers
10/06/22		15	Earth sprites/seed bombs	Kirkmichael Beaver Group	6 – 8 yrs
01/06/22 – 10/07/22	4			Kirkmichael Shop	intergenerational
29/06/22		45		Kirkmichael School	5 – 11 years
Ecoamgueddfa					
29/05/22	24	25 approx.	Wildflower seed bomb creatures	Llanbedrog Bioblitz (ecomuseum event)	intergenerational
02/06/22	16	30+ approx..	Wild flower Casting + Wildflower seed bomb creatures	Medieval Family Festival; Nefyn Maritime Museum	intergenerational
Spodden Valley Revealed					
29/08/22	30	35 approx.	Boggart making	Healey Dell heritage centre	intergenerational
01/09/22	9	14 approx	Wild flower Casting + Wildflower seed bomb creatures	Facit Incline (Ecomuseum activity)	intergenerational
02/09/22		5	Boggart making + wild flower seed bomb creatures	Vibe Youth Group	11-13 yrs
04/09/22	14			Whitworth Rushcart Annual Community Event (attended with ecomuseum)	intergenerational
03/09/22 – 04/09/22	22			Whitworth Museum	adults
01/10/22 – 10/10/22	5			Whitworth Library	intergenerational
Total Participants	124	190+			

5.3.6 PE postcards

I designed three different postcards, see Fig 5.4, each with a prompt to explore participants' landscape values, adapted from Nature Connectedness frameworks (Richardson & Sheffield, 2017; McEwan, et al., 2019). The reverse of all postcards asked for the age of participants and awareness of their ecomuseum prior to that day.

<p>My Favourite Local Place is</p> <p>..... and Why?</p>	<p>What place in your surrounding area makes you happy and why?</p>														
<p>What good thing in your surroundings have you noticed today?</p>	<p>My age is... (Please tick)</p> <table><tr><td>under 16 yrs</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>16 -24 yrs</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>25-44 yrs</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>45-64 yrs</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>65+ yrs</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table> <p>Were you aware of the Cateran Ecomuseum before today? (please tick)</p> <table><tr><td>Yes</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table> <p>Please note your responses on this postcard will be collated and used as part of a research study by Victoria McMillan. Please read project information displayed on the postbox before participating or email victoria.mcmillan2018@my.ntu.ac.uk for more information</p>	under 16 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 -24 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-44 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	45-64 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	65+ yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
under 16 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>														
16 -24 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>														
25-44 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>														
45-64 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>														
65+ yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>														
No	<input type="checkbox"/>														

Figure 5.4 PE Postcards questions and reverse

Participants were asked to 'draw, doodle or note the things that you love on a post card' and post it into a post-box I had made, which displayed the project and consent statement, including prompts.

124 people filled in postcards. Ages of participants (when given) were spread across all age groups from under 16 years, two years been the youngest stated, to the 65+ group. 21% under 16's, 18.3% 25-44, 10.5% 45-64, 33% 65+, with 17% not stated. The notable exception being a complete absence of any 16-24-year-olds. The absence of this age group in participants reflects the relative lack of this group participating at the types of family and community events where the pop-up activities took place. This mirrors the drop off in engagement of this age group

across arts and cultural activities and also in Nature Connectedness in the UK (Tait, et al., 2019; Richardson, et al., 2019).

5.3.7 PE community roll mapping

The PE community roll mapping activity consisted of laying out a huge roll of paper 1.06m wide by as many metres as could fit along the tables, floor or ground I was using at the various locations, and could be rolled out more if needed, with a mass of colouring pens and pencils and prompts to 'draw, doodle and sketch the things that you love' in the local area.

Approximately³⁸ 190 participants worked individually and/or as groups to produce 179 drawing clusters. Clusters could be a single drawing or written piece by a single individual or else collaborative and collective drawings which may include several drawings. All together participants produced over 37 metres of drawings and notations.

While I didn't collect demographic data, anecdotal evidence from participants themselves and the youth groups' age group lets me know participants' ages ranged from 2 to 87 years old. In the case of the youngest respondents, they participated with siblings and or parents as collaborative placemakers or translators (see below and Fig 5.5 & 5.6). Interestingly, this also included at least 3 participants in the 16-24 category, who joined in during a break from



Figure 5.5 Parent translating very young participant's response postcard

working at the site where I was based one day. This equates to 8.5% of participants that day. Perhaps suggesting if this group are present, they will participate, they just need the opportunity. Observation of participants at the community events also evidenced a slightly more ethnically diverse population too, particularly at the Healey Dell event, SVR, reflecting its close proximity with diverse populations of Rochdale.

³⁸ Approximate as often I was facilitating the craft making at the same time, and large numbers of people would be drawing on the roll map and crafting so it was difficult to keep an exact number.

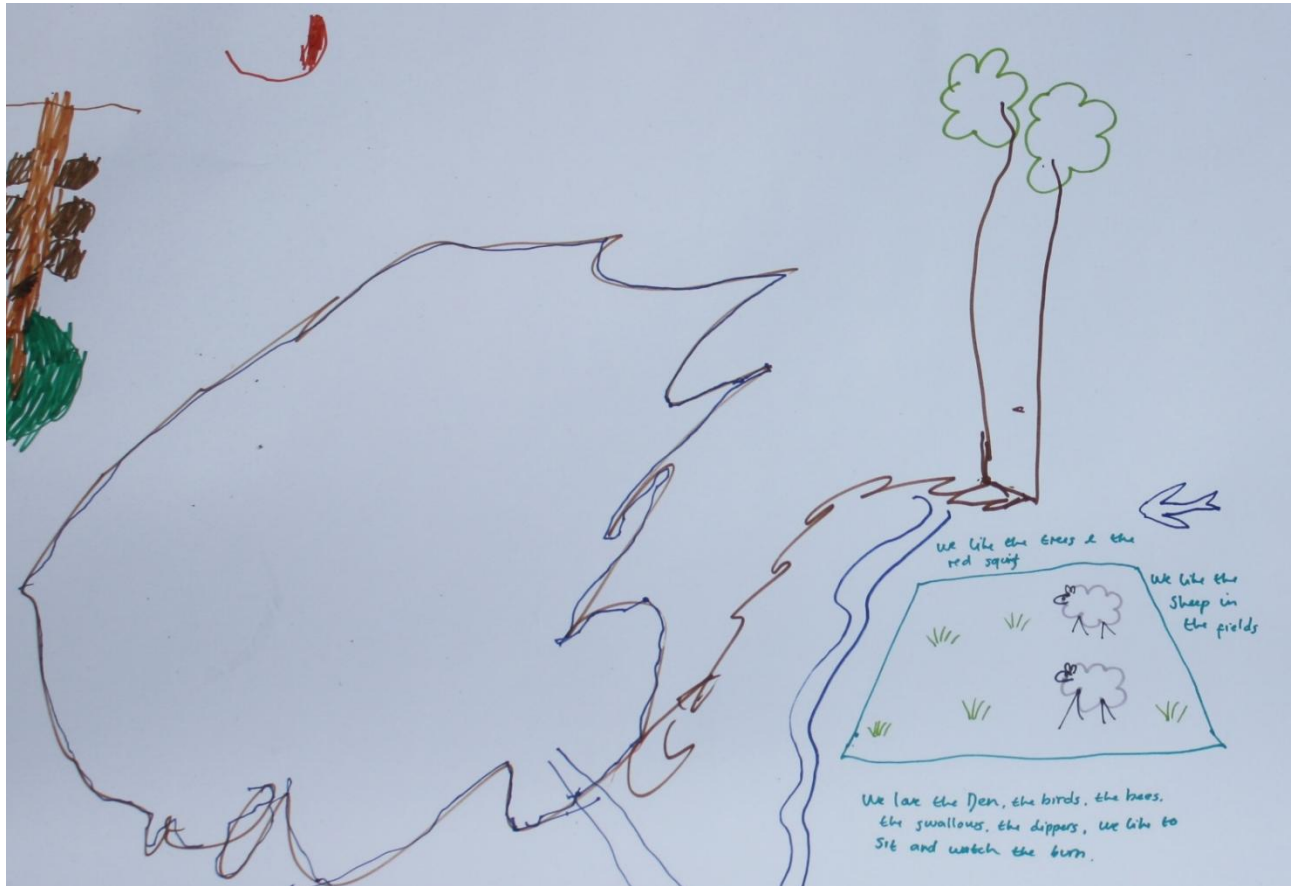


Figure 5.6 Collaborative place-making of parent and 3-year-old child on roll mapping

The large scale of the paper seemed enticing to all age groups, with many adults exclaiming how it reminded them of joining in with big drawings when they were young. So much so that one participant asked to do the activity with her local primary school for me. Whole family groups of multiple generations joined in with this activity as well as individuals and groups of just children or adults. The task was designed to be completed in 2 to 3 minutes, but most participants spent much longer, averaging 10 – 15 minutes, with some returning to continue drawing and some spending up to 1 ½ hours carefully rendering their drawings. It was clear people of all ages enjoyed this task as a fun activity in and of itself.



Figure 5.7 PE community roll mapping event

Participatory mapping can be particularly valuable with children (Fig 5.7), even the very young, and young people, giving them the power to represent their lifeworlds on their own terms, through a medium accessible to them as equal evaluators (Puolamäki, 2017). An opportunity often not afforded to them, yet one they seemed to relish. The children's obvious pride in showing and explaining their drawings to accompanying adults, friends, siblings and myself was a frequent occurrence.

The drawings and notations give insight into landscape values, including non-representational and effective logics at play. The process of creating the drawings conferred the activity a post-representational aspect (Swords, et al., 2019). The performative process of individual and collaborative production of narrative telling during creation and drawing, viewing, interpreting and responding to others being done or already drawn, meant the activity itself and the rolls became palimpsests of insight into embodied experiential worlds, real and imaginary, individual, shared and collective (see Fig 5.8).



Figure 5.8 Palimpsest landscape of collective drawings

Whilst apparent across all pop-ups and all ages, the collaborative placemaking was particularly apparent when working with young people's groups such as youth groups and the school (see Fig 5.9). Back-and-forth negotiations building real and fantasy places and figures, revealing and reinforcing a collective sense of identity and connection through stories, ideas, motifs, interests and hobbies.



Figure 5.9 Collective fantasy narrative alongside representations of real places & nature values

Both novel pop-up activities proved popular with community members. They were an effective way to gather insights from a broader cross-section of communities and in far greater numbers than would participate in more in-depth activities such as journalling and interview or would be

practicable for a single researcher in the time frame I had. Whilst not as deep, the insights provided a wider understanding of cross-community landscape values and knowledge, what matters to people, what captures their interests, what makes them feel connected. Both pop-up activities worked best for data collection purposes when I was present. Building rapport with people encouraged people to be more engaged and garnered more insights into the drawing and comments through the accompanying narratives as they chatted about what they were drawing or writing. These narratives allowed further layers of understanding than just the comments or pictures alone, allowing for greater depth and confidence in accuracy of analysis.

5.3.8 Observation

Personal observation of the ecomuseum sites, their wider contexts and communities, were an important part of this study. Whilst this study's main focus is the communities' own perceptions and experiences, observation adds to 'thick' description (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001) and leads to greater understanding and appreciation of what people shared. As mentioned earlier, one of my participants defined an ecomuseum as 'time served in place'. To get under the skin of the ecomuseums, their wider landscapes and their communities, you really need to experience them physically, to serve time getting to know them.

During fieldwork, I visited ecomuseum sites and explored the wider area where they are situated and participated in community activities. Through inhabiting the same physical spaces, I gained a deeper insight, into the multiple dimensions of those spaces, experienced through all the senses, the wild weather, the smell of the sea, the squelch of the bog, the bite of ice and excitement of being snowed in, the sentience of the storied landscape. In short, sensing place. This helped to give context to the ecomuseums themselves through a better understanding of aspects such as isolation, built landscape, facilities or lack thereof, travel issues, and prevailing weather. It also allowed me to understand better the places people were telling me about. In some cases, I would visit the sites people had spoken of afterwards; other times, the fact I had already explored certain places facilitated conversation through mutual understanding and shared knowledge.

Physically experiencing the land was done various ways. On my own I visited ecomuseum sites, including partner organisations in the case of Ecoamgueddfa, using the information provided by the ecomuseums for visitors, including online information, maps, leaflets and suggested walk itineraries. This allowed me to reflect on how the sites and activities are presented, what focus do the ecomuseums have, who was engaging, how different parties engaged with them, and

how I myself engaged in them (see Fig 5.10). At the sites and the area in general, I would talk to people if the opportunity arose.



Figure 5.10 Visitors looking for dinosaur footprints, An Corran, Staffin, Skye

I also visited other places within the ecomuseum area, some suggested by people I spoke to, which gave greater context to the areas. This included places communities had chosen to keep quiet and not promote through the ecomuseums.

I also explored places socially too, as part of walking interviews, with people I met during my visits, as a participant in an ecomuseum or community events, the Llyn Peninsula with my husband and dog, and once with my brother who lives near to CATERAN Ecomuseum. Visiting as part of a social group differed from being on my own. Whilst less self-reflective, it broadens insight through the companions you share the experience with.

In addition to previously mentioned events, I participated in other ecomuseum events. As part of the Ecoamgueddfa Archaeology Festival (Oct '21), I joined two guided group walks and one talk (originally a third walk but stormy weather meant it was transmuted to a talk in local museum about the walk – which I later did in part). I also walked, with my brother, to view the Great Awakening giant outdoor art installation, CATERAN Ecomuseum (November '21).

I was also invited to join two meetings with local community group members, and the local museum and the SVR project manager late November '21, as she initiated first contact with community members since the pandemic.

I was invited by people I met to two community events. The Flodden 1513 Club annual memorial event held on the anniversary of the Battle of Flodden (09/09/21), comprising of a piped march and oratory in Coldstream, then a procession and orations at the Flodden memorial itself. Plus a wildflower meadow guided walk by Plant Life Wales at Plas yn Rhiw, one of Ecoamgueddfa's partner sites.

I made notes whilst at sites and afterwards, reflecting on how the sites were presented through signage and information boards, if at all, how it felt to be there, accessibility, how other people were using the sites, who was using the sites and issues arising from visitors and others local communities were feeling. I also took photographs, sound recordings, and videos.

5.3.9 Document analysis

The ecomuseums produced miscellaneous literature, including documents, reports, events programmes, and social media blogs and posts. These show the ecomuseum activities range and extent, who they aim at, and who participates. Inherent bias and agendas in such documents represent a public-facing statement of self-identity and remit, how ecomuseums present themselves to the outside world and would like to be seen.

The material in this category is not consistent across the case study sites. Production of such material has been variable between the different sites, the pandemic again having some effect on this. SVR have produced little material beyond an initial webpage and a book, whilst the others have produced varied types of documents from websites, blogs, booklets, information and activity leaflets to reports. What documentation has been shared with or collected by me is also inconsistent. Documents have been used to clarify case study practices and contexts rather than the in-depth analysis discussed below, used with other data types.

5.4 Data analysis

For data analysis, I used constant comparison and an inductivist approach with open coding (Campbell, et al., 2013; Cope, 2016).

Charmaz (2014) notes GTM is an iterative, comparative and interactive approach requiring constant interaction with your data. Drawing on GTM, coding was an iterative process using full open coding across all data types. Analysis began when gathering the initial data, with memo-making on possible initial coding and themes to explore in subsequent data collection.

NVivo 12 Pro software was used to manually code across all types of data. I used ‘sensitising concepts’ as starting points in initial coding (Charmaz, 2014, p. 117). Size, unitisation and chunking of data for coding were done intuitively dependent on the data type. For roll mapping, picture by picture, and also overlapping clusters; for postcards – line by line. For individual PE maps – line by line/or block for text, and pictures; for journals, some line by line, others ‘units of meaning’ which could be a paragraph or section (Campbell, et al., 2013) or by individual photographs/pictures/objects. Interviews were coded using line-by-line or meaning units, as were the survey’s open questions. Survey results were imported into NVivo for analysis alongside the other data for direct collation, comparison and exploration. Memos and notes were added to the data to further question and aid patterning.

Initial open codes were grouped into 37 thematic categories, or ‘parent’ nodes, for example, ‘Ecomuseum effect on individual’ and ‘Connection to land/ecomuseum area’. Thematic categories were subdivided into ‘child’ and ‘grandchild’ nodes. Some data chunks were coded into more than one node as a sentence or discussion could have relevance to multiple areas. Together these totalled 1833 nodes (see Appendix 3.9 for coding sample).

A separate case, along with demographic information, was created for each participant across all data types. Cases were collated under data type, like ‘postcards’ or ‘interview’. Collective analysis across diverse qualitative and quantitative data using the same coding framework matrix allowed for better, more robust understanding of the complex cognitive processes at play. This also allowed for greater confidence in interpreting recurrent patterns in the data, giving rise to emergent themes and theory building.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has outlined the ethical and methodological approach to investigate the realities, challenges and potential of ecomuseum practices and impacts in the UK, alongside people's emotional connections to the places they live and implications for care and action. To do so, a multiple-case study approach was utilised, employing multiple qualitative and quantitative methods of semi-structured interviews (including walking interviews), surveys, individual and community creative personal ecologies mapping techniques, observation and document analysis. Corroboration between multiple sites and varied complementary data collection mitigates limitations, giving confidence in emergent themes and theories drawn. The results of this investigation are discussed in following Chapters 6 – 9.

These empirical chapters are written to be read and understood as is. But in keeping with the themes of ethical and social justice that inform this study and to honour participants' generosity and the beauty, wisdom and depth of their words, I have also included extended appendices of referenced quotes for each chapter. Affording the participants their own words, also allows, for those interested, further insight and practical ideas that might be useful to other ecomuseums and communities.³⁹ Chapter 6 begins with an exploration of the case study ecomuseums, situating them in their physical, social and political settings, before critically examining their founding, management and governance practices.

³⁹ These references are hyperlinked, however, for ease of reading if desired, I suggest having a second copy open at the corresponding appendices to read alongside.

6 Situated in Place – The case study ecomuseum settings, foundation, governance and management

Chapters 2 – 4 examined ecomuseum evolution alongside multidisciplinary notions exploring connections between people, sense of place and regenerative futures. From this broad field, a table of intersecting key ecomuseum practices, dimensions and characteristics (Chapter 4, Table 4.1) was drawn together that research indicates in more resilient, sustainable and regenerative futures. This broad discussion highlighted the importance of community participation at all levels of processes, decision making and activities. Chapter 5 set out the methodology of this research, aiming for broad inclusion when investigating connections between the ecomuseum communities and their place. Moving forward, this chapter and Chapters 7, 8 and 9, use this rich empirical data to examine activities, practices and perceptions of the case study ecomuseums with a specific focus on testing them against the set of key practices, dimensions and characteristics laid out in Table 4.1.

Two main points need to be borne in mind. Firstly, the set of key practices, dimensions and characteristics in Table 4.1 are drawn together by me, synthesising key ideas from current multidiscipline research and analysis, as detailed in Chapter 4. The case studies themselves make no claims to be following the criteria I have drawn up. Though each organisation follows some or all in their own way. Chapters 6 – 9, as this thesis does, maintain a focus on exploring the practices, potential and challenges of using the ecomuseum model in the UK to foster regenerative communities through such social action practices. It does not seek to judge the legitimacy of any of case study organisations in using the name *ecomuseum* – this is not the focus of this research. Further, whilst practices and perceptions of individual case studies are discussed as necessary to understand the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches, the aim is to understand the overall potential of the ecomuseum as a model for regenerative community building rather than scoring individual organisations.

Secondly, this chapter, 7, 8 and 9 use the framework of Table 4.1 as section and subsection divisions. Key characteristics and questions for investigating them from the table are used to interrogate the practices and potential of the case study ecomuseums. Whilst for ease of analysis and clarity these subdivisions are used, it needs reiterating each of these practices, dimensions and characteristics should be understood as imbricated - coactive, building on and working with each other. As such, many practices and characteristics discussed are affective

and effected through several spheres of influence. For example, a community benefit such as employment of locals or using funding to pay partner organisations to deliver specific aspects of work also influences networking, learning, capacity building and sustainability.

This chapter examines the positionality of each ecomuseum situated in a specific place, its settings, foundation, governance and management.

It's run by the community for the benefit of that community. And there's no blueprints for any of them. However, what they do have in common is that they celebrate the identity of a certain area and the way that they define that is up to them. Without the community, it wouldn't work, basically, so it's all an inclusive mashup of everything in the community to make it work.

(Definition of an ecomuseum by interviewee C22)

C22's definition of an ecomuseum above reflects the ethical ideal in service to its community (Brulon Soares, et al., 2023; Mairesse, 2023). It depicts an endogenous, responsive, adaptive and inclusive experiment, by, for and celebrating the community within a specific area reflecting Corsane (2006) and Davis (2011). This chapter considers these premises. First section 6.1 explores the situation of each ecomuseum, their physical and socio-political settings and founding. Section 6.2 interrogates the realities of the case studies in relation to the ideal articulated by C22 in terms of choice of area, place identity, and how the notion of 'community-led' fits with their governance and management.

6.1 The case study settings

Canvaese et al. (2018) view ecomuseums as mediators of landscapes from geology upwards to their communities. Each ecomuseum's development, identity and function are situated in a specific place, reflecting and responding to unique dynamic and relational multiplicities, or *assemblage* (Dovey, 2020): material, intangible, spatial and temporal. Below, each of the five UK ecomuseum case studies for this thesis is introduced, illustrating their unique geographical and politico-socio-economic setting and establishment.

Table 6.1 Comparison of launch date, size, population, management type and paid employee numbers. Size and population figures approximate (Ref (Staffin Ecomuseum Ceumannan, 2019; Gwynedd Council, 2016; NCC, 2019; Scottish Government, 2019; City Population, 2023; Communities Housing Trust, 2022). Population density is people/metre². V = voluntary management. FT = full-time. PT = part-time; L = paid employee lives locally, E = paid employee lives external to the community.

Ecomuseum	Date Est.	Area KM ²	Population	Management	Paid employees
Skye	2008	73.5	568 Density = 7.7 p/m ²	Community Trust Committee (V)	1 project manager (FT; L) *as of Autumn 2024 none in post
Flodden 1513	2012	2,500	55,000 Density = 22 p/m ²	Community stakeholder steering committee & directors (V)	(duration of active project only – 2013 - 2016) 1 project manager (FT, L) + 4 PT posts (E & L)
Ecoamgueddfa Llŷn	2015	621	27, 500 Density = 44.3 p/m ²	Ecoamgueddfa project management team	Has varied throughout different funding phases; but 4 staff part-funded ⁴⁰ , 1 of these was FT for duration of LIVE ⁴¹ (L)
Cateran	2018	1,000	20,516 Density = 20.5 p/m ²	Community director group (V)	None until mid-2023 then 3 PT – Project manager, communications and social media coordinator; community engagement and volunteer coordinator (L) NB currently only CSMC in post ⁴²
Spodden Valley Revealed	2018	18	6,720 Density = 373.3 p/m ²	Initial community steering group (V); but external management organisation (MPA)	1 project manager (PT; E)

⁴⁰ Ecoamgueddfa has part-funded several local positions, such as 50% of the education officer in partnership with the National Trust, who pay the other 50% to create a full-time roll.

⁴¹ LIVE as a larger project also part-funded posts on the Irish side of the partnership but this research focused on the Llŷn project

⁴² At time of writing, only the Communications and Social Media Coordinator is still in post as Cateran have suffered from various staffing issues.

6.1.1 Skye Ecomuseum

6.1.1.1 Location

Skye Ecomuseum (previously Staffin Ecomuseum, renamed in 2020) is situated on the north-east coast of the Trotternish Peninsula, Isle of Skye, north-west Scotland (Fig 6.2). It centres on the Staffin community, spread around Staffin Bay and the Trotternish Ridge in 23 crofting townships. An area of approximately 73.5 km², with a population of c.568 people (Skye Ecomuseum, 2020 ; Communities Housing Trust, 2022).



Figure 6.1 The rock escarpment of the Cuith-Raing (Quiraing) meaning ‘round fold’ in Old Norse. Part of the Trotternish Ridge at Staffin. Famous features include the Needle (centre left), the Prison (centre right) and the Table, a grassy plateau just visible as a green triangle directly below the Prison. Tradition holds islanders would hide their cattle here from Norse raiders.

The Trotternish Ridge, which gives Skye its tagline, *Druim nan Linnntean* – Ridge of Ages, is formed by Tertiary igneous sills, basalt lava flows over-laying fossil-rich Jurassic sedimentary deposits (sandstones and shales), pushed up against volcanic plateaux. Millennia of erosion, resistance and glacial action, gave rise to massive landslides along the great escarpment of the Ridge (Fig 6.1), creating the iconic landforms of blocks and pinnacles the area is famous for, such as the Old Man of Storr, ravines, lochs and dramatic coastline (Stephenson & Merritt, 2006). The landscape prescribes the distinctive flora and fauna and the whole ridge is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation for its geology, mountain botany

and birds; its summit a National Scenic Area (Skye Ecomuseum, 2020). The Scottish Development Department identifies the whole coastline as a Preferred Conservation Zone, and a broad coastal strip an SSSI for geology (ibid). Ancient human action has stripped the once wooded hills, and the area is largely open moor and grassland (Stephenson & Merritt, 2006).

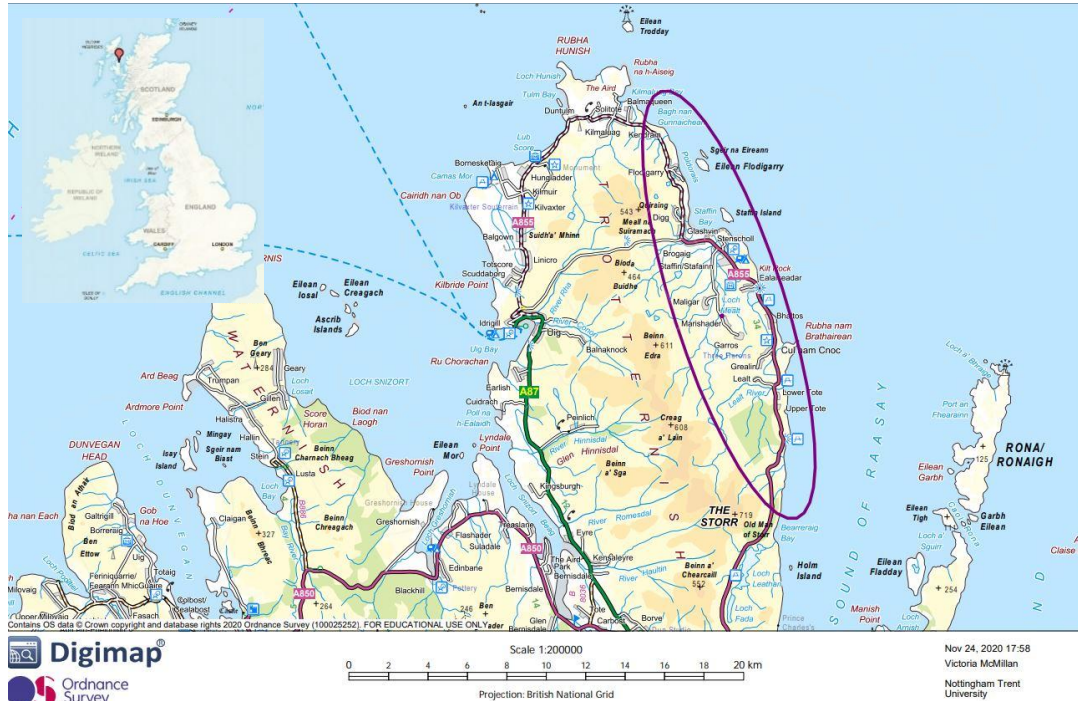


Figure 6.2 Skye Ecomuseum (approximate area circled)

6.1.1.2 Socio-economic setting

Crofting still forms the economic basis in the area, with cattle and sheep kept and small cultivated fields growing animal fodder and potatoes (Stephenson & Merritt, 2006) (see fig 6.3). Small enterprises such as weaving and tourism-based hospitality add to the local economy. Fishing and increasingly aquaculture (salmon farming) also feature.



Figure 6.3 Croft land and houses at Stenscholl, Staffin showing small linear croft divisions. Stenscholl is one of the larger and most densely housed townships in Staffin.

The Staffin community is classed as economically fragile (Highland Council, 2012). Few and mostly seasonal employment opportunities and an ageing population present economic and wellbeing issues, whilst its remote location mean Staffin falls into the 10% most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile for access to services (Public Health NHS Highland, 2019; Scottish Government, 2020).

In Scotland, legal frameworks protect and promote cultural heritage, impacting funding and support organisations can access directly from the State or indirectly through collaboration with education and third sectors. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 was passed by the Scottish Parliament recognising the Gaelic language equal in status to English as an official language of the country. It requires each council area produce a Gaelic Language plan every five years. The Act also established Bòrd na Gàidhlig, a statutory, non-departmental public body, to promote the use and understanding of Gaelic language and culture throughout Scotland. The Highland Council's plan implements and supports a series of interventions to promote and develop Gaelic culture through education including Gaelic Medium Education, bi-lingual signage and through media, arts, heritage and tourism (Highland Council, 2018). 50% of the Staffin population speak Gaelic fluently (Brown, 2017). The Scottish Government's schools' Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) framework embeds culture, identity, sense of place and sustainability within the schools' curriculum (Education Scotland, 2020). The Scottish Government's health and wellbeing agenda emphasises the role of landscape, community empowerment⁴³ and connection in tackling inequalities, good health and wellbeing (Scottish Government, 2018).

6.1.1.3 Ecomuseum conception, structure and aim

Opened in 2008, Skye was the first UK ecomuseum to be established. It was developed by Staffin Community Trust (SCT), a community-led development group first created in 1994, the first on the Isle of Skye, to try and reverse population and economic decline and 'stimulate social and cultural activities and improve services, with the Gaelic language an integral part of that' (Skye Ecomuseum, 2020). Trust Board member B09 explains this was the community consciously empowering themselves to address their needs not met elsewhere ([Appendix 4; 6.1.1.3.1](#)). The ecomuseum contributes to this providing a co-produced, self-sustaining

⁴³ Through the Community Empowerment Act, for example (Scottish Government, 2018)



Figure 6.4 Skye Ecomuseum signage at its southern threshold 'stairseach a deas'. 'An Storr', the Old Man of Storr, one of Skye's most visited landmarks, is clearly visible on the skyline to the right.

organisation through which the community can interpret, preserve and manage its own cultural history and use it for sustainable development.

Since its inception, Skye has shifted its focus from creating a dispersal effect in local tourism⁴⁴ towards a community-centred one, when its success in driving up visitor numbers at certain sites was damaging⁴⁵. An extensive community review and consultation resulted in the 2020 rebrand, capital works to mitigate environmental damage⁴⁶, all new site interpretation, approach and website (Ross, 2016).

In line with Canvaese et al. (2018), Skye facilitates exploration, research and engagement with all aspects of their cultural landscape from the internationally important geology, ecology, 175-million-year-old dinosaur footprints, and how this has all shaped development

through 8,500 years of human settlement, culture and language, to the present-day community. It also promotes community direct action with their environment through activities like footpath creation, beach-cleans and tree-planting.

⁴⁴ Aimed to get visitors to explore beyond the 'bucket list' sites such as the Old Man of Storr and spend more time and therefore money in the area (Angus Murry, programme Manager, pers com.)

⁴⁵ Annual visitor numbers increased with the establishment of the ecomuseum from 15,000 to 90,000 (Brown, 2017).

⁴⁶ Such as high standard, heavy use footpaths and viewing platforms to protect the surrounding areas by creating a defined route for visitors (Ross, 2016).

6.1.1.4 *Funding*

In 2004 SCT was awarded £200,000 to develop phase one of the ecomuseum project from the EU North Highland Leader fund, the Scottish Executive, HLF, Scottish Natural Heritage, Skye & Lochalsh Enterprise, and the Highland Council, which funded the appointment of two development staff and the initial trails connecting 13 sites, on-site interpretation, a website and an engagement programme (Davis, 2011). A further £522,000 HLF grant, and £38,000 from SSE, in 2016 was awarded for Phase Two and included paying for a three-year full-time programme manager (Skye Ecomuseum, 2020).

6.1.2 Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum

6.1.2.1 *Location*

Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum (hereafter Flodden) links together 41 sites across 32 places. The majority of sites, 23 places, focus on the Flodden battle site and surrounding area (see Fig 6.6). However, unlike the four other UK ecomuseums, it also has some more widely spread sites across the UK from Edinburgh to Portsmouth. This research focuses on the area of primary sites, situated across the eastern Scottish/English Borderlands, the only UK ecomuseum to span two countries. It encompasses part of the Southern Uplands, the Cheviot Hills and crosses the Scottish Border counties of Berwick, Roxburgh, Selkirk, and English Northumberland. The sites are mostly along the Tweed and Till river valleys, from Berwick-on-Tweed in the east to Traquair in the west, Bolton to the south and Ellemford in the north. Flodden covers approximately 2,500 km², with a population of c.55,000 (Scottish Government, 2019; NCC, 2019).

Geologically, Devonian and Carboniferous rocks, sandstones, siltstones, mudstones and limestone, underlay the area, with the igneous volcanic massif of the Cheviot Hills in the west of the study area and other zones of igneous intrusion to the north-east (Scottish Natural Heritage, 1997; Simpson, 2020). The surrounding countryside is upland moors and grassland. The towns of Melrose, Selkirk, Kelso, Harwick, and Berwick-on-Tweed are main areas of population.



Figure 6.5 Flodden battlefield left the centre area with the Flodden memorial visible on the hill ridge in the centre. Typical agricultural landscape of large arable fields.

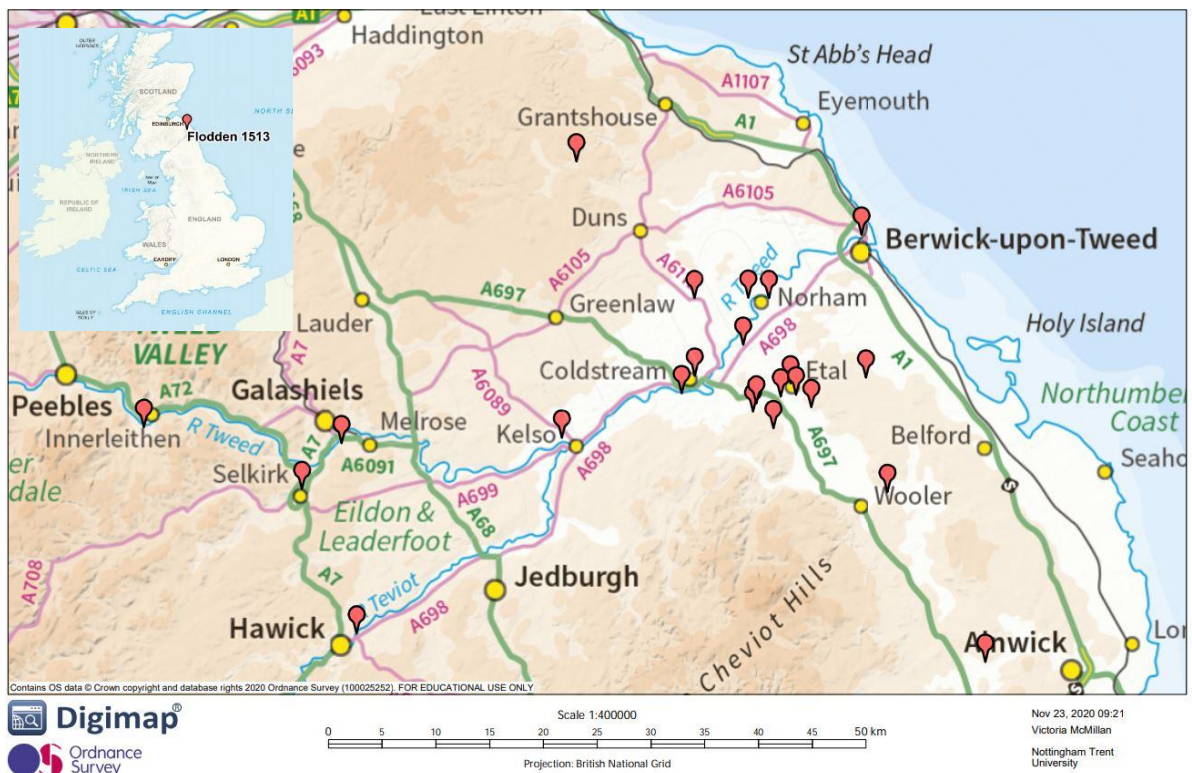


Figure 6.6: Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum area map of main sites (red markers)

6.1.2.2 Socio-economic setting

Wool and weaving have historically formed primary industries. Today they remain mainly rural with agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors the largest employer, 23.6% in SB and 17.2% in Northumberland, along with other low-status and low-paid sectors such as construction and

hospitality leading to lower than average wages for both areas (SBC, 2018; Community Foundation, 2017).



Figure 6.7 Hawick town centre showing the rural-urban connections. The Horse memorial on the right commemorates the capture of the English flag by the town's young men in 1514. A hugely symbolic act after Scotland's defeat at Flodden the previous year.

In the Northumberland zone, deprivation has generally increased using the IMD rankings, since 2015 from the 30–40 % to 30–20 % most deprived IMD decile (NCC, 2019). Access to services and fuel poverty are particular issues (Community Foundation, 2017). North of the border, the situation is generally better, with only Hawick (Fig 6.7) and small

pockets of Selkirk falling into the 20% most deprived SIMD ranking (Scottish Borders Council, 2017). An ageing population, c. 25% currently and growing, on both sides of the border presents issues with health, wellbeing, care provision, exclusion and isolation (SBC, 2018; NCC, 2020)

6.1.2.3 Ecomuseum conception, structure and aim

Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum (Flodden) is unique amongst UK ecomuseums in being the only one established to commemorate a particular event, the Battle of Flodden between Scotland and England in 1513 AD⁴⁷. Because of this, Flodden's network of sites, intangible heritage and activities are focused on this particular event and its legacies, rather than more general cultural landscape focus of other UK ecomuseums and with less of a tourism/economic regeneration strand⁴⁸. Flodden was established as part of the Flodden 500 project, which sought to be a

⁴⁷ 9th September 1513, between Scottish troops led by King James IV of Scotland and the English Army under the Earl of Surrey. Over 10,000 men lost their lives, including much of the Scottish nobility and James IV, the last time any reigning monarch of the British Isles died in battle. The defeat of the Scots army at Flodden was influential in the formation of the Union 100 years later (Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, 2019).

⁴⁸ For example, no economic targets were set for the project, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that local businesses did benefit during the commemoration period (Hunter, 2017).

'catalyst to inform, involve and support the wider community in commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Battle' (Hunter, 2017, p. 7).

Through creating a strong sense of connection between sites and communities, a sense of place and collective identity, the project aimed to bring together communities on both sides of the border in a 'process of commemoration, peace and reconciliation', whilst building capacity and skills within the local and regional population through key activities (Hunter



Figure 6.8 Section of Flodden Peace Centre's Timeline of action for peace and reconciliation at Crookham Church, part of Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum.

2017). The steering group wanted to address historic and contemporary tensions between the two nations; that the quincentenary took place in the run-up to the Scottish Independence Referendum lent particular resonance (Joicey, 2021) (see Fig 6.8).

The project idea came from a small group of community members in 2008 with a desire to commemorate the quincentenary and debate Flodden's cultural importance to the area. A placement student, from University of Newcastle, studying under Davis and Corsane, suggested the ecomuseum model to achieve the aims. In part, it hoped to gain battle-site legal protection from future development. Through community consultation, a large group of stakeholders came together, and with a newly formed voluntary steering committee and directors. A not-for-profit company, Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, was formed in 2011. Over the initial four years, a network of 27 local sites⁴⁹ and over 300 stakeholders, ranging from large organisations to individuals, joined the project which collectively held just under 300 events and created a suite of resources from information leaflets, interpretation boards, learning resources, a book and its website. Archaeological digs, fieldwalking, documentary research along with music and cultural events

⁴⁹ 41 nationally in total. The out of area sites include the Flodden Wall, Edinburgh and the Mary Rose, Plymouth.

such as the Common Ridings⁵⁰ brought together the area's tangible and intangible cultural history (Hunter, 2017). The ecomuseum, as a passive digital and physical interpretation point for the landscape, is the project's main legacy. Continued enthusiasm for many of the networked events and groups formed, the raised profile and participation with intangible heritage continue beyond its funded period, (see Section 6.3 and Chapter 7.1.2).

6.1.2.4 *Funding*

Initial EU Leader seed corn funding employed a project manager to develop the ecomuseum idea. Two stages of HLF funding in March 2012 and January 2013, totalling £887,300, funded the development and main phase of Flodden 500 Project 2013 - 2016. (Its unique cross-border settings meant it was the first cross-border HLF project.) This funded a full-time project manager, part-time Education Officer, Development Officer, Archaeology Officer and an IT and Marketing Officer (Hunter 2017). The ecomuseum is now entirely volunteer-run⁵¹ and has no funding.

6.1.3 Ecoamgueddfa Llŷn

6.1.3.1 *Location*

Ecoamgueddfa Llŷn (hereafter Ecoamgueddfa) is situated on the Llŷn Peninsula, North-West Wales. Stretching from the Snowdonian Mountains in the east, out into the Irish Sea and to Bardsey Island, it forms the westernmost arm of the county of Gwynedd (see Fig 6.10). A coastal peninsula, it has a long coastline, 153km. The population mostly live in the chain of towns and villages along the coastline, Pwllheli and Porthmadog the largest. It encompasses richly diverse natural landscapes in a relatively small area, a large percentage of which has some form of designation, the Snowdonia National Park, Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Pen Llŷn and Sarnau Special Area of Conservation. The peninsula area is approximately 621 km² with a population of c. 27,500 (Gwynedd Council, 2016).

A geological fault line runs through the peninsular with ancient pre-Cambrian rocks to the west and much younger protruding volcanic and sandstone Ordovician rocks to the east. Glacial activity moulded the landscape and created boulder-clay deposits. The coastline has diverse natural features, including high cliffs, caves, stacks and islands, rocky headlands and sandy

⁵⁰ A centuries-old traditional horse-riding of the boundaries of the Scottish border towns which take place in June and August, and feature the ride-outs, music, song, parades, sports and revelling.

⁵¹ With staff time given from some of the organisations involved, such as the Ford Etal Estate.

bays. Inland, small, rounded mountains, pasture, heath, coniferous forests, marshy land and small stone-walled enclosed fields predominate (Gwynedd Council , 2016 b) (See Fig 6.9). Climate change, coastal erosion and changes to traditional agricultural practices are noted as critical issues for the area.



Figure 6.9 View of Pen Llŷn from Tre Ceri Iron Age hillfort showing Llŷn's low mountains, typical small-field farming and woodland. Stone wall in foreground part of hillfort outer wall.

The area's remote location and island-like setting are considered one reason why it's the last remaining majority Welsh-speaking area, with 71% of the population speaking Welsh (Gwynedd Council , 2016 b). Welsh is the primary language used in schools⁵² and for many in the wider community. The language and associated intangible cultural heritage (ICH) are considered the main cultural asset of the area (Young, et al., 2016).

⁵² Primary schools on the Llŷn Peninsula are Welsh Medium schools, secondary provision tends to be in mixed English and Welsh.



Figure 6.10: Position and boundary of Ecoamgueddfa Llŷn

6.1.3.2 Socio-Economic Setting

Historically, in addition to fishing, shipbuilding and agriculture, rock and mineral extraction of copper, zinc, lead and manganese, formed an important part of the local industry (Gwynedd Council, 2016 b). Now the tourism and hospitality sectors are the largest employers, followed by agriculture, forestry & fishing sectors (Gwynedd Council, 2016). This economy is mostly seasonal and considered low value and low paying, with too few jobs to meet current needs. Llŷn ranks in the 30% most deprived areas in Wales using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) for remuneration (Gwynedd Council, 2016). An ageing population, people having to commute outside the area for employment and rising depopulation through 'brain drain' as young people and families move away from the area to pursue education, careers and higher value and better-paid employment are priority challenges for local government. 39% of the local population, higher than the Gwynedd, Welsh or UK average, live below the poverty line and household incomes are not sufficient to meet local housing costs, recognised as a sign of widespread poverty (Gwynedd Council, 2016) a problem compounded by flourishing second-home market pricing out local people (Young, et al., 2016) (see Fig 6.11).



Figure 6.11 Prominently displayed campaign banners against second homes were frequently spotted during field research at tourist hotspots on Pen Llyn making the local communities' feelings clear.

In 2015 the Welsh Government passed the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales 2015) Act* defined as "the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the wellbeing goals" of meeting current needs while ensuring those of future generations (Commissioner for Wales, 2020). This Act and ways of working through collaboration and participation, and goals set out therein enshrine in law the local context through which Ecoamgueddfa aspirations are reflected (Young, et al., 2016). The Welsh language is protected by legislation in the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011* and related standards.

Welsh language national curriculum provision (see footnote 51) and an EU-funded programme focusing on cross-border innovation and adaptation of the Irish Sea and coastal communities to climate change, the Ireland Wales 2014-2020 European Territorial Co-operation (ETC) programme (see below), both impact the project's support and capacity.

6.1.3.3 *Ecomuseum Conception, Structure and Aim*

Ecoamgueddfa is Wales's only ecomuseum so far⁵³, and was developed as a legacy project by the Llŷn Landscape Partnership (LLP)⁵⁴. The partnership's Project Manager knew of the ecomuseum concept and introduced it to the group who saw the potential for the Llŷn Peninsula (Young, et al., 2016). In 2013, staff from Bangor University's Sustainability Lab became involved in developing the project collaboratively with seven core partner sites identified through the LLP work. Ecoamgueddfa aims to develop year-round sustainable tourism by equipping and encouraging local organisations, businesses and individuals to collaborate in adapting and developing opportunities on their own terms that celebrate their natural and cultural assets. Thereby increasing employment opportunities, economic benefits and reasons to live/stay in the area (Young, et al., 2016).

Seven original core partner sites' form a necklace' around the coast, with six of them directly sited on the Wales Coastal Path circumnavigating the peninsula (Young, et al., 2016, p. 468). The sites are: Nant Gwrtheyrn, a centre for Welsh Language and Culture; Llŷn Maritime Museum, maritime history and local hub for performances and research; Felin Uchaf, a holistic education centre and community enterprise with a focus on practical skills training from permaculture to eco-building and heritage skills, including boat building, and green business mentoring; Porth y Swnt, National Trust (NT) interpretation/information centre for the wider landscape and exhibition space, art, poetry and activity centre; Plas yn Rhiw, NT 16th century manor house; Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw, Wales oldest arts venue and gallery and restored woodland trails; Plas Heli, a community hub and exhibition centre and home to the Welsh National Sailing Academy and sports event host (Ecoamgueddfa, 2019). An eighth site, Plas Carmel, has recently (2023/4) been added to the partnership. It is a community hub/heritage-centre, shop and café.

⁵³ There is currently at least one other that is under feasibility development with HLF funding, the Neath Valley Ecomuseum (Nooma Studio, 2022).

⁵⁴ Which was HLF funded from 2010 -2013. Landscape Partnerships is the only current HLF programme to focus specifically on the countryside. The partnerships, which deliver the work, typically comprise a mix of statutory agencies, local authorities, NGOs and community organisations. The lead partner enters into the formal agreement with HLF. They address conservation of both the built and the natural heritage, and a typical scheme is delivered through several discrete projects. Project aims encompass heritage conservation and restoration; community participation in local heritage; access and learning; and local heritage skills training (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2011). The difference between these schemes and ecomuseums is that LPS are 'top-down' organisations and ecomuseums tend to be 'bottom-up'.

It was originally decided Ecoamgueddfa would be a fully digital platform, the hashtag in its original name⁵⁵ denoted this approach. Young et al. (2016) give two reasons for this, firstly, lower costs (responding to present and future low funding availability) as no physical interpretation boards/leaflets to fund and update; and secondly, to maximise global exposure. Ecoamgueddfa officially launched in 2015. Its bilingual digital platforms act as 'a portal to capture, curate and promote' the area's diverse cultural/natural assets through digital archives and a promotional hub for activities of the seven core sites and community (Young, et al., 2016).

At the time of data collection, Ecoamgueddfa was working on developing a partnership with a nascent ecomuseum project in County Kerry Ireland, part of the ETC programme. The funded project ended Autumn 2023. LIVE (Llŷn IVeragh Ecomuseums) aimed to promote tourism using the ecomuseum model and cooperative marketing of natural and cultural assets to increase tourism outside of traditional peak tourist seasons, enhancing consequential socio-economic benefits to the coastal communities (Ireland Wales Programme, 2020). The collaborative LIVE website states the project seeks to actively work towards the national wellbeing goals and the UN SDG's using their five ways of working, based on the four pillars of sustainability (see Table 6.2) (LIVE, 2023).

Table 6.2 LIVE's five ways of working (LIVE, 2023).

5 Ways of Working	
Long Term	The aim is to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of two marginal areas in Wales and Ireland using the ecomuseum concept.
Prevention	In so doing we will reduce outward migration by increasing year-round employment opportunities to retain young people and attract those who have moved away. We will reduce congestion on narrow roads by promoting sustainable transport and reverse cultural decline by promoting language and heritage as valuable assets.
Collaboration	This is a collaboration between two countries, two Universities, two local authorities, the National Trust and an Irish Community Group, 13 communities, more than seven heritage sites, businesses, individuals and the global ecomuseum network.
Integration	LIVE integrates well into the local development plans of the partner local authorities and contributes towards national well-being goals and UN SDGs.
Involvement	LIVE is a co-developed initiative between academic institutions, community representatives and heritage sites on both sides of the Irish Sea. We promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work.
4 pillars of Sustainability	

⁵⁵ Originally it was called #Ecoamgueddfa Llŷn.

Economy	We will be working together to find sustainable ways of extending the visitor season beyond the traditional ‘peak’ weeks, with targeted seasonal offers aimed at the ‘slow’ tourist. This includes promoting local produce, local craftsmanship and local cultural activities benefiting locals and visitors alike.
Environment	The landscape is a major asset in both locations. We will be telling the story of our good land management practices. We will also be promoting sustainable transport options to reduce car use and provide location specific information on the ecology to enhance local and visitor understanding of the importance of protecting our environment.
Social	Our slow tourism approach aims to engage visitors offering routine-weary people a refreshing contrast to their everyday life – a chance to engage with the landscape, with communities, with culture - to ‘connect’ - in contrast to extractive tourism, where people parachute in and out to ‘anyplace, anywhere’ without much regard for a sense of place. We want to foster community cohesion and provide a welcoming environment
Cultural	The Welsh and Irish languages are strong in both areas. Providing work, using language and heritage as USPs to attract discerning visitors will have a positive impact increasing awareness that human diversity and biodiversity are equally important.

Since launching, there’s been perceptible changes, such as increasing community-focused activities, which are explored in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Reminiscent of Corsane’s (2006) model, Ecoamgueddfa’s website states ‘Ecoamgueddfa is a moving feast; things change daily. The key to progress is agility, flexibility and the ability to adapt and change as required together with total commitment to the concept of co-working, co-developing and co-promoting’ (Ecoamgueddfa, 2019).

6.1.3.4 Funding

Initial idea developed as part of the LLP funding programme. In 2014 funding was received from UK Technology Strategy Board’s Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) scheme, via the university, to pay for a full-time development officer for 11 months to carry out proof of concept work. The LIVE project has combined funding of €3,584,735 from EU’s European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Bangor University, Gwynedd Council, University College Cork, South Kerry Development Partner, Kerry County Council and the NT.

6.1.4 CATERAN Ecomuseum

6.1.4.1 Location

The CATERAN Ecomuseum (hereafter CATERAN) is situated in rural Tayside, Central-East Scotland, spanning the two counties of Perth & Kinross and Angus (see Fig 6.12). It takes its name and

geographical boundaries from the Cateran Trail, a 103-kilometre circular long-distance walking route.

It is situated along the geological feature, the Highland Boundary Fault, which demarcates the highlands from the lowlands. The Fault is situated towards the southern part of Cateran's area, along the line of Blairgowrie - Kirriemuir, the two main towns in the area. Devonian and Carboniferous sedimentary rocks, predominantly Old Red Sandstone, lie to the south and west of the fault line, and younger Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian metamorphic schists, slates and phillites, to the north and west. A 1.2 km wide band, the Highland Border Complex, runs along the length of the Fault where the two meet, consisting of weakly metamorphosed sedimentary sandstones, limestones, mudstones and conglomerates (McKirdy & Crofts, 2010). The Boundary Fault demarcates an abrupt difference in "topography, weather, vegetation, wildlife and land-use" that has influenced the area's history and culture over time (McKirdy & Crofts, 2010, p. 16).



Figure 6.12: Position and Boundary of Cateran Ecomuseum shown by the purple line.

The land rises from less than 50m above sea level south of the Fault, with low-lying crop agriculture typical, to over 1000m in the mountainous northern part of Cateran, typified by mixed agriculture along the glens and open moorlands and coniferous agroforestry on mountains like Ben Gulabin (Fig 6.13). The northern part of Cateran lies in the Cairngorms National Park. Cateran covers an area of approximately 1000 KM² with a population of c.20,516.

The population is concentrated mostly in the towns of Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus and Aylth (Scottish Government, 2019).

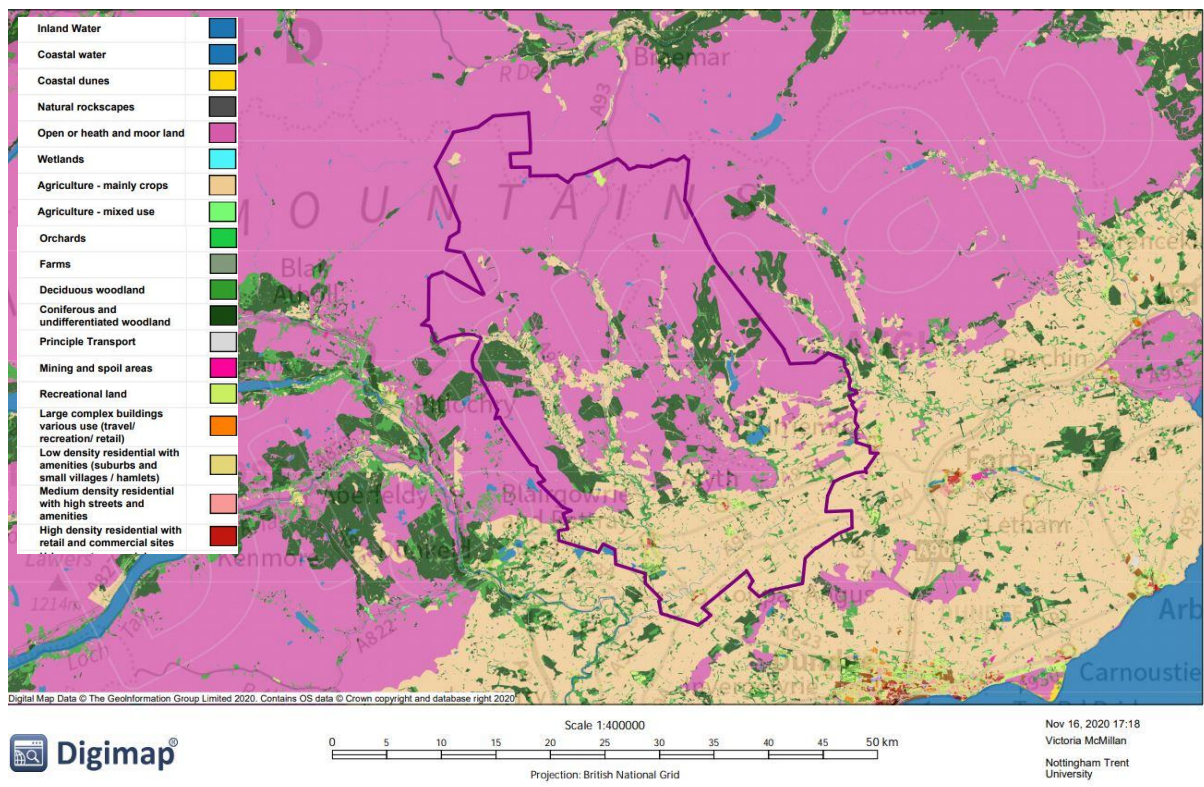


Figure 6.13 Land use in Cateran Ecomuseum Area

6.1.4.2 Socio-Economic Setting

Historically, agriculture and textile production formed the economic basis. The economy is still agricultural, with soft fruit growing a significant part of local industry (7%). Agroforestry, energy production (predominantly wind farms), and construction are also important employment sectors along with tourism (see Fig 6.14 & 6.15). All these areas tend towards seasonal employment and short-term contracts, meaning a proportion of the population does not have a regular income (Perth and Kinross Council, 2017; Angus Community Planning Partnership, 2017).

Eastern Perthshire, which includes approximately Cateran's left half from Blairgowrie-Rattay in the west, north to the Spittal of Glenshee and east to Shanzie, contains some of the most deprived communities in Scotland, with Rattay being in the bottom 10% in the country using the SIMD. Child poverty affects 21.52% in the Blairgowrie-Rattay area. Between 10 – 20% of households earn less than the average income in East Perthshire. Access indicators on SIMD place the area in the 10% most deprived in the country, creating barriers for young people, the elderly and those on a lower income. Priority areas identified by the council include tackling social isolation, employability and deprivation, young people and environmental issues (Perth and Kinross Council, 2017).



Figure 6.14 View over the fertile valley of Strathmore towards the Sidlaws. Strathmore is the major arable zone for potatoes and soft fruits



Figure 6.15 Cattle, sheep farming, agroforestry and wind turbines common on upland areas. C19th Keathbank Mill, one of Blairgowrie's original 14 flax & jute spinning mill buildings along the River Ericht.

The River Isla roughly forms the border between Perth & Kinross to the left and Angus as Cateran's right section. This area of Angus, part of Angus Glens and Kirriemuir, has seen a steadily rising index over 100 for the SIMD indicator for depopulation over the last 13 years, and a steep increase in negative health outcomes, well above the Angus baseline and Scotland's

average. Using SIMD ranking for access to services, the Angus part of the ecomuseum falls even lower than the Perth and Kinross part, ranking in the most deprived 5% in Scotland, forming the six most deprived Data Zones (DZ) in Angus for this indicator. Locality Plan priority areas target community cohesion, access to services (including digital), activities particularly for young people, the elderly and those on lower incomes to increase wellbeing, and sustainable development of underused natural and historical assets as a means for economic regeneration (Angus Council, 2017).

As with Skye, Perth & Kinross and Angus Councils implement similar Gaelic Language plans (Angus Council, 2019; Perth & Kinross Council, 2018) and are subject to the CfE.

6.1.4.3 Ecomuseum Conception, Structure and Aim

Cateran developed out of Cateran's Common Wealth (CCW), a project by a group of cultural and creative practitioners, voluntary and community organisations, business people and civic leaders that came together in 2014 to promote and enable the local community to celebrate and develop local culture and heritage (Cateran's Common Wealth, 2019). CCW launched in 2017. In the same year, one of its founders attended a conference in Italy about slow tourism, learning about ecomuseums. The resonance between CCW's aims and ecomuseum practice was clear and the group decided to develop Cateran Ecomuseum (Cooper, 2019).

Constituted as a social enterprise, the pilot phase launched in 2018 with the vision to enable holistic, democratic and sustainable involvement with culture, history and heritage. Its mission statement is

"to engage in activities to develop public understanding and engagement with the arts, culture, history, natural and cultural heritage - through the establishment, development and maintenance of the Cateran Ecomuseum [and] to support individuals and organisations involved in the establishment, development and maintenance of the Cateran Ecomuseum."

(Cateran Ecomuseum, 2020 a)

In their pilot phase, they worked with communities to create ten walking, 14 cycling and two driving itineraries. These collectively interpret and curate c.140 points of interest covering over 500 million years of geology and ecology intertwined with over 6000 years of human history into a series of trails and information for each itinerary. Cateran's engagement and content interrelate geology and landscape and their impact on society development, explaining how people moved through the landscapes and why/how the landscape enabled specific ways of life to exist. Cateran seeks to provide a unique mechanism for meaningful community engagement

in preserving and learning from their heritage, fostering identity and sense of place. It hopes to facilitate a form of 'regenerative tourism' that authentically represents the stories and people through the area's cultural, historic and natural resources to build resilient and sustainable communities (Cateran Ecomuseum, 2020 b).

Cateran is now in its second phase, the commencement of which had been delayed from 2020 to 2021 by the Covid-19 crisis. They embarked on ambitious plans to establish Cateran as Scotland's first Museum of Rapid Transition (Cateran Ecomuseum, 2020 b). It aims to take an integrated nature-culture approach to show how the past, as repositories of knowledge of adaptive change, can help guide our future. Cateran worked with local specialists, archaeologists, geologist, naturalists, historians, storytellers, farmers, community groups, craftspeople, musicians, artists and writers to share knowledge with the community aiming to develop skills and mitigation strategies as a participatory force to bring people together in imaginative and innovative action to mitigate and adapt to the growing risks from environment crises (Cateran Ecomuseum, 2020 b) (see Fig. 6.16).



Figure 6.16 Cateran's Turning Points timeline of climate change displayed in Alyth town centre November 2021. Part of Cateran's Museum of Rapid Transition activities to coincide with Cop26 Glasgow. Its opening was delayed due to the Alyth Burn (foreground) flooding the town centre, an increasingly common occurrence.

6.1.4.4 Funding

Phase One received £63,450 from Rural Perth & Kinross and Angus LEADER Programmes 2014-2020 and SSE (SSE , 2018- 2019; Angus Leader, 2018; Perth & Kinross Leader, 2018). HLF funding for Phase Two was awarded in 2023. Additional funding comes from various local,

regional and national charitable Trusts and Community Funds, including Paths for All and Cairngorms National Park Authority.

At the time of data collection Cateran had no paid employees, and a volunteer workforce undertook all work. Phase Two funding allowed it to employ 3 part-time staff: a project manager, a marketing & communications coordinator and a community engagement & volunteer coordinator.

6.1.5 Spodden Valley Revealed

6.1.5.1 *Location*

Spodden Valley Revealed (SVR) is situated in Lancashire, Northwest England. It focuses on the civil parish and township of Whitworth and Whitworth Valley, in the borough of Rossendale, bordering Greater Manchester to the south-east and West Yorkshire to the north-east (see Fig 6.17). Taking the ecomuseum ethos of 'no borders', its area of activities and interests cross over into the neighbouring counties. Whitworth Valley covers an area of c. 18km². The population is c.6,720 (2021 Census).

Set in the Pennine foothills, the area encompasses the town, which includes the communities of Healey, Whitworth, Facit and Shawforth, and adjacent countryside through which the River Spodden flows north to south. The landscape comprises the partially wooded slim river valley, in which Whitworth is sited and the flanking uplands, which are a mix of rough pasture and moorland (see Fig 6.18). Located in the south of the town is Rossendale's only designated nature reserve, Healey Dell. Several surrounding reservoirs attest to the high precipitation for which Lancashire is renowned, and numerous springs well up through the dominant sandstone, mudstones and peat.

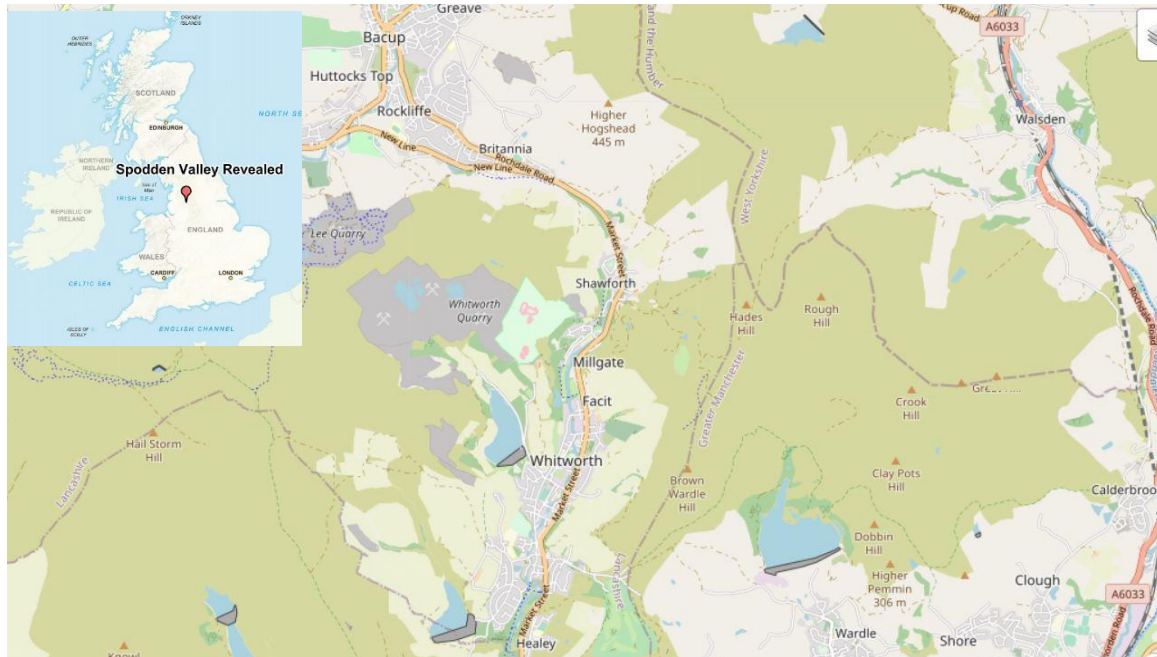


Figure 6.17: Spodden Valley Revealed area (Source: OpenStreetMap)

6.1.5.2 Socio-Economic Setting

The area's economy was traditionally sheep farming, yarn and textile manufacture, quarrying and mining. Since the early twentieth century, steady decline of industry, increasing unemployment and economic downturn have meant, in common with many parts of Lancashire, Whitworth is an area of deprivation. It has become relatively more deprived on the IMD average rank measure since 2015 and is amongst the most deprived 20% in England for employment (Lancashire County Council, 2019).



Figure 6.18 Whitworth town hidden in a narrow valley viewed from Brown Wardle looking towards Rooley Moor. St Bartholomew's Church tower (centre) stands at the head of Whitworth Square – the old town ran east- west across the valley (note the houses running up the hill towards Rooley Moor), following routes of employment, to packhorse trails, mills and quarry sites. Open moor is mostly common land with ponies and sheep grazing, utility companies now own large portions of the land for reservoirs and wind farms (one just visible on horizon of Rooley Moor to left).

6.1.5.3 Ecomuseum Conception, Structure and Aim

SVR was launched in 2018 by the charitable arts organisation Mid Pennine Arts (MPA) who have been active in the wider area since 1966, supporting the local artists and culture to 'bring the arts, people and places together' (MPA, 2020).

SVR sprang from an initial 2016 proposal from Whitworth's Town Clerk for a project exploring the area's heritage in collaboration with other interested groups. A staff member at MPA was studying ecomuseums at the time, and the initial idea developed into the current shape of an ecomuseum. A volunteer steering group was formed of community members, individuals and representatives of local groups, organisations and the town council. These included volunteer-run Whitworth Museum, a representative for the local primary schools, the Town Clerk, some town councillors, a local archaeology group and local artists, with MPA managing the project. Work was carried out with a broader group of stakeholders, including local specialists, to implement community consultation activities to survey potential sites and stories of interest.

Eleven sites were chosen, creating 'a trail of discovery' through the landscape designed to highlight its unique heritage and stories from deep time, through 10,000 years of human occupation to the present (MPA, 2020). These include Mesolithic hunter-gather sites, Medieval merchants, a 17th-century dynasty of doctors, relics of the cotton famine, lost hamlets and C19th runner 'Treacle' Sanderson (MPA, 2020). Working with Lancashire County Council, the sites were intended to link to the new extended walking/cycle route, the Valley of Stone Greenway linking Rochdale to Rawtenstall to improve access and sustainable transport. New interpretation of sites and landscape viewpoints, artist commissions including on-site works and creative initiatives such as books and digital projects, a broad programme of community activities and events, and the development of educational resources and activities for schools were included in the project plan.



Figure 6.19 Layers of industrial past, agriculture and civic town life around Whitworth Valley (from left) Healey Dell & Viaduct over the River Spodden with remains of mill workings; sheep on Cowm Moor next to traditional Lancashire vaccary walling, Dules Mouth stone processing mill remains in foreground and quarry spoil heaps along hilltop; Whitworth Rushcart procession along Market Street 04/09/22

SVR's aims are to promote the area's stories and history, reinvigorate community cohesion, identity and pride, stimulate novel local economic development that benefits the community as much as visitors and provide skills training for volunteers and young people. This echoes Sutter et al.'s (2016) claim that ecomuseums are uniquely positioned to foster creative change, adaptation, and economic and community sustainability through reinvigorating pride of place and care for the local environment.

6.1.5.4 Funding

Due to high levels of deprivation mentioned above, Pennine Lancashire is a priority development area for the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) who awarded the project £246,500 (Heritage Fund, 2017). A further £199,386 funding was secured from Lancashire County Council, Whitworth Town Council, Lancashire Environmental Fund, and charities Newground Together and the Ernest Cook Trust altogether totalling £445,886. This funds a part-time programme manager. Further S106 funding was included from developers via Rossendale Council (see section 6.2.2). The initial funding period was late 2018 to December 2020 - but due to the pandemic, delays with the Greenway infrastructure, staff changes and ill-health, an extension until Autumn 2024 had been granted (Hunt, 2024). MPA also received a grant of £28,000 from Arts Council England's Emergency Response Fund to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of which will be used to support SVR (Lancashire Telegraph, 2020).

6.1.6 Discussion of case study settings

Introducing the case study sites, we reveal certain similarities and contrasts affecting their capacities and approaches. Considerable differences in scale of size and population, in funding and number of paid staff between each ecomuseum curtail or expand capacity (see Table 6.1). Skye and Ecoamgueddffa are coastal, both having a Celtic language focus. Ecoamgueddffa and CATERAN both use pre-existing long-distance footpaths to define their area or link sites. CATERAN and Spodden particularly use the arts to connect communities to their cultural landscapes.

All sites bear similarities; four encompass largely rural areas, albeit with urban communities in all but Skye; SVR is urban/rural fringe; mixed upland and lowland settings; a rural/deindustrialised economy – low status, pay and opportunities. The relative isolation of the physical setting of Skye, CATERAN, Flodden and Ecoamgueddffa gives rise to similar socio-economic issues, depopulation, ageing population, isolation and access to services, in each location. A classic declining post-industrial mill town, SVR's area similarly shares socioeconomic issues. In all but Flodden, these issues are primary drivers for the establishment of the ecomuseums. Whilst Flodden was not focused on economic development, increasing community cohesion, wellbeing and skills were their main objectives. Different national political settings impact potential funding, support and collaboration with other organisations the ecomuseums can access in Wales and Scotland. However, this perhaps worked against the Flodden project, where a perceived reluctance to engage in a cross-border project from

VisitScotland was seen as reflecting the political landscape in the run-up to the referendum (Hunter, 2017).

Although having similar agendas, each ecomuseum developed and functions differently, especially in relation to the community they purport to represent and differing potential risk of commodification or predation of the community and/or its cultural landscape and resultant disenfranchisement. It could be argued Ecoamgueddfa reflects Navajas Coral's (2019) top-down institutional ecomuseum, focusing on tourism with limited community engagement or input. It would be worth scrutinising if the comparatively vast sums of funding awarded to it somehow reflect any funding organisation institutional policy bias towards more 'authorised' organisations, but this is beyond the remit of this thesis. Certainly, though, academic institution relationships offer increased funding opportunities, as discussed in Chapter 7.2.2. In Staffin, tensions between mass tourism, environmental sustainability and community wellbeing and participation are highlighted by Brown (2017) and were the catalyst for its deep self-analysis and changing approach.

All the ecomuseums fit into Stutter's 'third wave' ecomuseums (2019, p. 80), in addressing issues of sustainable development in the Anthropocene. But Cateran's development of its Museum of Rapid Transition, takes this to another level by attempting fundamental change in communities through the lens of climate crisis and synchronous need for environmental and social justice. Cateran's use of holistic cultural landscapes as repositories of knowledge, the arts and participatory praxis to re-envision the past and the future echo DeSlivey et al.'s (2011) *anticipatory history*.

6.2 Place-based

6.2.1 Physical space

The previous section set out each case studies physical setting and scale. Here, discussion considers the meaningfulness of the physical space each ecomuseum comprises in terms of the impact of scale, recognisability, and identity on the communities involved.

The localised, small-scale focus of the ecomuseum underpins for many scholars, their ability and power in centring place and belonging at the heart of social action (McGhie, 2022; Pappalardo, 2020; Worts & Dal Santo, 2022; Borrelli, et al., 2022a).

Two of the case studies have a tighter geographical focus, Skye and SVR. Peter Davis singles out Skye as an exemplar of the small meaningful ecomuseum.

I think the most successful ecomuseums are the ones that are very specific. And really do focus on a smaller area. So I always use Staffin [now Skye], as a good example. Because it's got so much to offer, really, in terms of nature and history and everything else. (PD)

Run by the local Community Trust, Skye's physical area is dictated by the community council area. This instantly gives it recognisability and relevance to the community it serves but is also a barrier to extending outside the area to avoid treading 'on someone else's toes' (B09).

SVR has the smallest area, just 18 km², delineated by the physical geography of the Spodden Valley and the hillsides – common land – on either side. For E36, the natural boundaries of the 'vale' and its histories seemingly create a recognisable and natural 'niche' for the community member steering group who decided the boundary ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.1](#)).

This natural 'niche' seemed more fitting to the steering committee than adhering to modern and oftentimes shifting unitary boundaries. Pride in SVR's ability to transcend borders of administration and ownership came up in several interviews. However, complexities of town, local and regional council boundaries and the ancient manorial system of ownership of common land, which crisscross SVR's space, create opportunities and difficulties in negotiating funding and networking for particular activities such as walking and cycling routes ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.2](#)).

The three other case studies cover much larger disparate areas. Larger scales can create problems with a lack of cohesion and meaning as Peter Davis explains referencing the vast Kalina Ecomuseum in Canada ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.3](#)).

Flodden covers the largest area, crossing not only council borders but national borders, the first HLF project to do so (see section 6.1.2.4). However, it had a unifying theme of the Battle of Flodden to connect those places. As shall be discussed in Chapter 7, community groups decided themselves if and how to be involved during the active phase of the project. The ecomuseum sites were decided upon with input from local community through interviews, stakeholder meetings and community debate. The number of sites grew from the initial 12 to 28 during the second phase, finally totalling 41 in 32 locations – 23 local locations and 8 more distant. The final number included fragmented offshoots across the UK which Davis (2019a) notes as unconventional and a distortion of the usual geographical local foci to adopt a more complex split-site model. A complication Davis finds confusing ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.4](#)). However,

most of these were put forward by local community experts as A04 explains ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.5](#)), demonstrating Flodden's dedication to being community-led and valuing local knowledge.

Ecoamgueddfa evolved directly out of an existing Landscape Partnership, so the geographical space of the Llyn Peninsula was predicated, as was the network of partner organisations. Project staff and partner organisation staff are all local residents, but wider community consultation was not involved. The LIVE collaboration with the Irish Iveragh Peninsula was decided by academic input seizing a funding opportunity. Yet the Llyn Peninsula geography does give it coherence as an identity readily meaningful to inhabitants.

Cateran's founders initially decided on the ecomuseum's boundary to coincide with the Cateran Trail, a 103-km circular trail. One of the founding directors had developed the Trail. Yet, whilst this seemed logical from a visitor economy point of view, the area itself is large, encompassing numerous town councils and sections of different counties. Without any geological/natural or organisational or thematic identifying boundary, Cateran is perhaps the case study that suffers most from the lack of cohesion and meaning for the local communities Davis notes as an issue for larger ecomuseums. Lack of meaningful identity in this 'disparate area' has impacted the Cateran's development as noted by D34 ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.6](#)). D28 further notes cultural and geographical barriers between Cateran's different areas, as well as diverging community opinions on touristic development ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.7](#)).

Compounding the lack of general interaction between towns and communities within the ecomuseum area, is the fact Cateran's activities are perceived to focus on one particular town, Alyth, where a number of the founding directors are based and where a seasonal physical hub was opened in the local town museum in May 2022⁵⁶. This evidences lack of awareness of Cateran outside of the town, particularly in perceptions it is 'centred around Alyth' (D34) ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.8](#)), suggesting higher risk of irrelevance threatening ecomuseal fragility (De Varine & Filipe, 2012).

Cateran's director group have made efforts to address the issues in their make-up, with a member 'notionally' from each settlement to 'represent' and 'network' in those communities (D28). However, difficulties of a volunteer director group with time constraints mean project

⁵⁶ As of autumn 2024, Perth & Kinross council who own the Alyth museum had closed it down, leaving Cateran newly without a physical hub at time of writing.

management is mostly done by one director based in Alyth, who has been the driving force of the whole project. Forming satellite ecomuseums in each area was suggested as a possible solution to the lack of cohesion and meaning by one participant, D33, from a remote community ([Appendix 4; 6.2.1.9](#)).

6.2.2 Place identity

Chapter 3 illustrated place identity as a key dimension of self-identity, sense of place and Carrill & Sencah's (2001) 'sense of self-in-place'. Place identity is important to human wellbeing but also to nonhuman and wider environment wellbeing as it is intimately linked to our attachment and care of place (National Trust, 2017; National Trust, 2019; Owen, 2021).

Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012) identify 13 subdimensions of place identity, (Table 6.3 and Appendix 4.1 for a full table including operational definitions).

*Table 6.3 Fresque-Baxter & Armitage's 13 subdimensions of place identity. * Emotional connection to place is often considered one of the defining aspects of person-place relationships. Fresque-Baxter & Armitage therefore adopt this as the overarching construct of place identity. All other constructs influence the degree of emotional attachment to a place an individual will have.*

Emotional Attachment *	Commitment to place
Self-Esteem [including Pride]	Security
Sense of Belonging	Local distinctiveness/uniqueness
Rootedness	Continuity
Familiarity	Self-efficacy
Social Connections	Environmental Skills
Aesthetic/experiential value	

These dimensions concur with the key ecomuseum practices and characteristics as incorporated into Table 4.1, Chapter 4. Given the co-active nature of the characteristics, most subdimensions, particularly those in the second half of the table, are examined in the following sections of this chapter and Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Here, the generalised question considered is 'Does the ecomuseum foster/valorise place attachment and the related characteristics?'

40 interviewees out of 42⁵⁷ were asked about the effect their participation had had on their personal connection to and understanding of their local community and the places they lived.

⁵⁷ Two interviewees had not been involved with their local ecomuseum up to that point. So, the conversation was focused on their connection to and understanding of place but not the impact ecomuseum engagement had had.

Out of all the effects of the ecomuseum on individuals' lives, these two characteristics of strengthened connection to community and place were most frequently reported, with 183 and 166 positive references, respectively. Out of the 40 survey respondents, 32 had engaged in some way with their local ecomuseum; these respondents were also asked about the impact on connection, bringing the total to 72 participants asked – see Figs 6.20 & 6.21 below. In addition, there was one repeat survey respondent, C24, who first answered the survey in early November 2021 having just encountered their ecomuseum for the first time, and repeated the survey in late July 2022 after nearly eight months low-key engagement and knowledge of the ecomuseum.

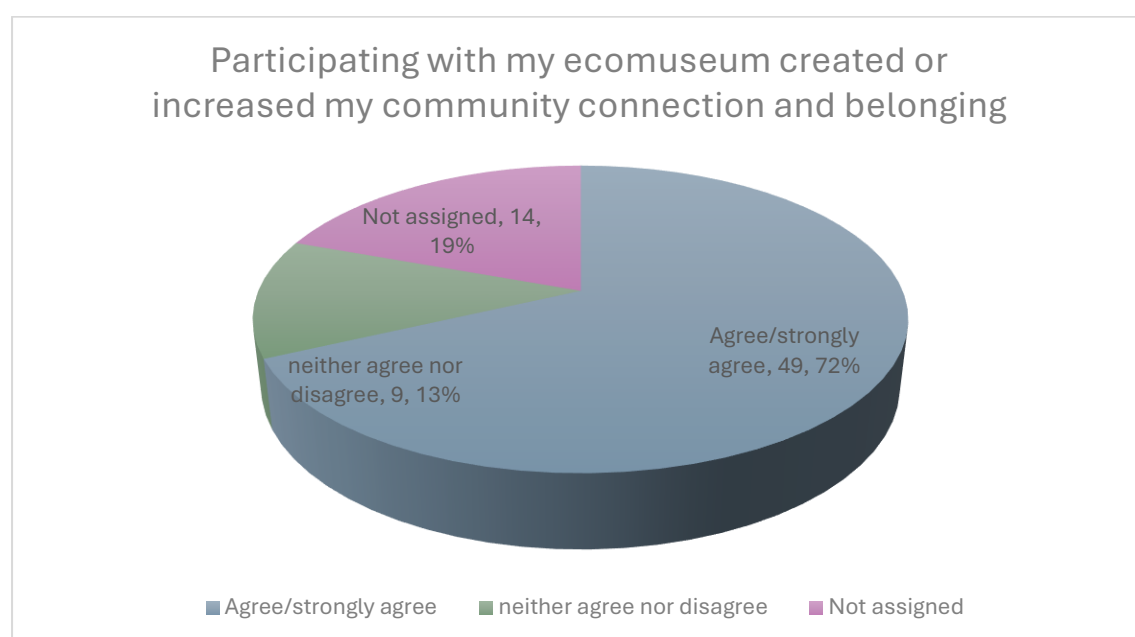


Figure 6.20 % of interview and survey participants whose participation with their ecomuseum had created or increased their connection to their community

Interviews show this increase in personal connection to community comes in varied forms. The strongest impacts were widened or strengthened connections, a better understanding of their community, valuing people's skills and knowledge and community-in-self identity (belonging). Other impacts were creating connections, greater understanding of community sensitivities and changing perceptions. Meeting new people was a common benefit mentioned. This included 'like-minded people' (S246), but also conversely meeting people outside the usual social or work circles, expressed by A07 recalling how a window cleaner she bumped into, had remembered her from her time working with Flodden. 'I got to know lots of people that I wouldn't have gotten to know otherwise. - I still get people - come up to me who wouldn't have otherwise' (A07).

Increased circles of connection were a recurrent theme, with C22, a young man working with Ecoamgueddfa, finding himself presenting at Women's Institute meetings, giving him insight into demographics outwith his usual cohort ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.1](#)). 33 interviewees, 80%, mentioned increased community social cohesion as an outcome of ecomuseum practices, including creating opportunities for different sections of community to come together, and local groups and organisations to work together. These aspects of connection and social cohesion, within and between communities, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.2.3 Collaboration and Networking.

The data supports the idea that ecomuseums also foster connection to place. 79% of interview and survey respondents expressed it had created or strengthened their personal connection to the place they lived (Fig 6.21). Again, the routes to connection varied but centred around experiencing and learning about their place, increasing interest and connection. Recalling Bender's (2018) assertion, this intimate knowing-belonging feedback loop created the pathway for D28's increasing connection during the course of her work for Cateran ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.2](#)).

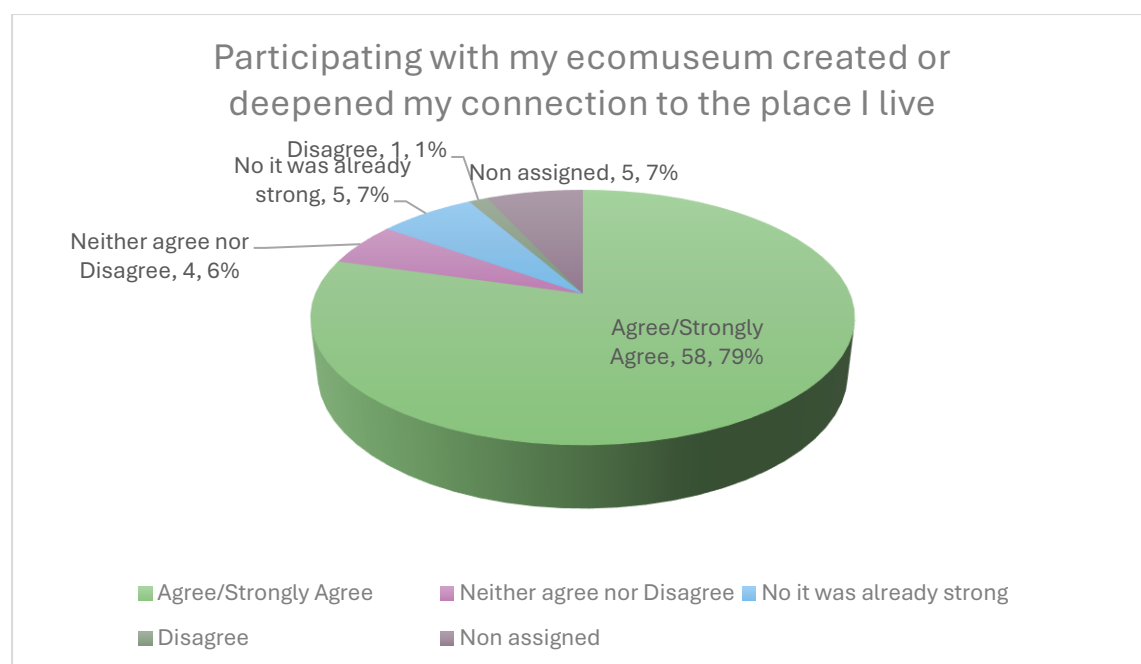


Figure 6.21 % of interview and survey participants whose participation with their ecomuseum had created or increased their connection to the place they lived

Five interviewees expressed their ecomuseum experience hadn't altered their personal connection as it was strong already. A05 put this down to having lived their whole life in the area ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.3](#)). This could be seen as indicative of Harvey's (1996, cited Hawkes, 2010)

conviction that rooted individuals have less need for heritage. However, with 30.4% of respondents⁵⁸ being lifelong residents and a further 28% living in their areas more than 20 years, the figures suggest this is not the case generally (see Fig 6.21 and Chapter 8.7 for more on connection to land).

A relative newcomer to the area, D31 noted whilst they already felt they belonged, their engagement with the ecomuseum had enhanced their perceptions, opening their 'eyes to a different way of being in the landscape. An 'entirely positive' experience (D31).

Repeat survey respondent C24 reported increased connection to place through participating with their ecomuseum from the first survey to the second. Conversely, their answer to the question 'Participating with the ecomuseum makes me feel part of the community' decreased from 'agree' to a more neutral 'neither agree nor disagree'. For them, their participation impacted their perspective of place most, increasing their awareness of nature and heritage, making them think more deeply about their place, giving them a reason to get out and enjoy their environment and more opportunities to be actively involved in caring for it.

The general survey results also reflect ecomuseum participation had a positive impact on people's awareness and consideration of place as well as opportunities to enjoy and actively care for their places (see Fig 6.22).

⁵⁸ Combined survey and interview respondents.

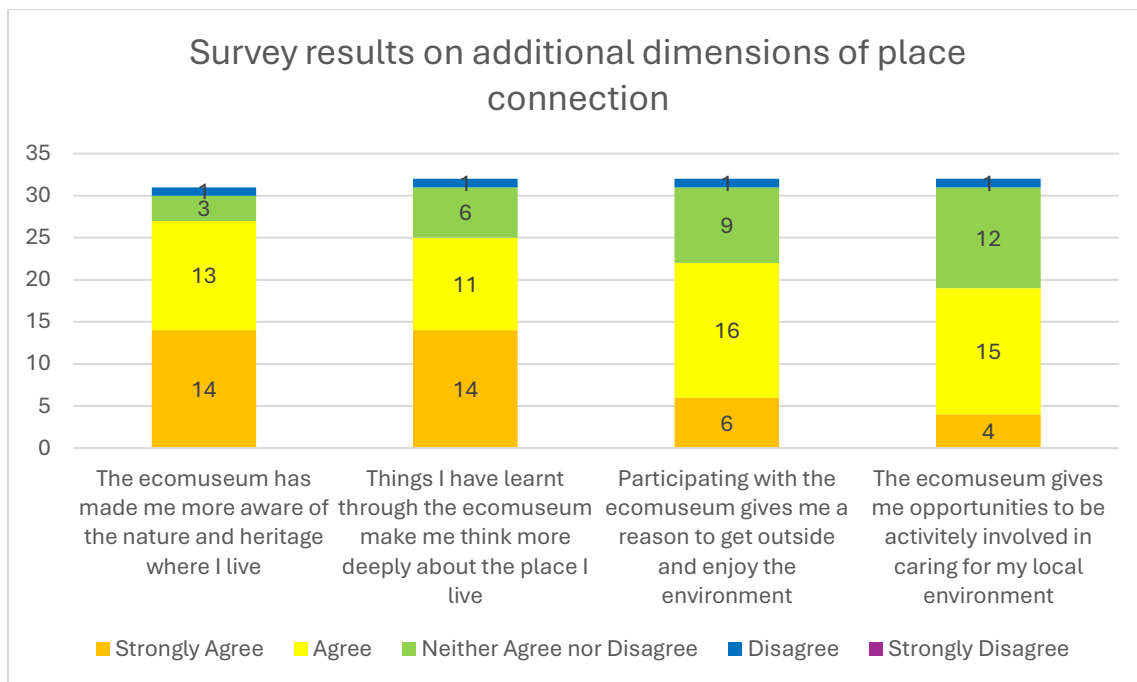


Figure 6.22 Survey results of additional dimensions of connecting to place

The combination of people in place, gaining experience and knowledge in many forms, were important factors in fostering connection to place and community. The social dimension functions as a route to gain and share knowledge and forge relationships as D26 expresses ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.4](#)).

Interestingly, when looked at overall, the impact on individuals' connection to their communities was slightly lower than the impact on connection to the place they lived in both the survey and the interview data. 72% of respondents reported ecomuseum involvement increased their feeling of connection to community, compared to 78% reporting an increase in connection to place. This result is reflected evenly in both respondents who are directly involved with their ecomuseum in some way, paid staff volunteer steering committee or partner organisations, group or business and those who volunteer in some way or are simply community participants.

Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012) included self-esteem as a subdimension of place identity. Self-esteem is reflected in Corsane's 21 principles (2006) as a sense of pride. A sense of pride as an outcome of ecomuseum participation was roughly split into increased individual pride in their community and perceived increase in community pride. These are particularly noticeable in those working with their ecomuseums, either as project staff and/or steering committee members. 22 interviewees (54% of the total) indicated increased personal feelings of pride in

their community and self-esteem. 70% were project staff and/or steering group, 25% of responses were from individuals not directly involved, such as community member participants, and 5% were partner organisations.

18 interviewees (44%) perceived increased community pride and aspirations. Whilst lower in proportion, these respondents also reflect a higher proportion of project staff and/or steering group committees, 61%, compared to 33% of community members not directly involved. This, perhaps, is not surprising. Working closely with the projects creates pride in individual and organisational achievements (Massing, 2019), and provides an insider view of the whole project, activities, engagement numbers and impacts, compared to those outside who may only have a partial view/understanding of the ecomuseum work. A point discussed further in Chapters 7 - 8.

Interviewees indicated a sense of pride in several ways. They expressed a sense of pride in their achievements individually and collectively, feeling 'honoured' (A03) and 'proud' (D26) to be part of the projects ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.5](#)). Increased pride was further indicated in personal feelings about place as expressed by E36 – 'I think its instilled my passion a bit more ... I take massive pride in where we are.'

Pride, not only in what they've personally achieved but in what their communities have achieved and are capable of, was expressed by interviewees. A heightened sense of community pride was also perceived. A02 noted this in Flodden, where communities decided for themselves how they participated in the ecomuseum project, heightening the sense of achievement, 'I think that everyone did feel they were a part of it that, making their own contribution'.

As Section 6.1 discussed, a common reason for the case studies establishment is to tackle social issues. A desire to foster love of and pride in place in their communities was expressed by several interviewees. B09 sees Skye and the Community Trust running it, as a direct attempt to show what community can achieve together ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.6](#)). B09 references economic development, jobs and community pride as 'basic things' communities need, reflecting self-efficacy, security and self-esteem subdimensions of place identity (Table 6.3). Here the ecomuseum is social action, embodying Navajas Corral's ecomuseum ideal, empowering community 'development, self-confidence, self-management, self-sufficiency' (2019, p. 23).

Echoing Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012), B13 warns engagement must go beyond the superficial, building experience on experience, to provide continuity and create deep emotional connection and commitment to place ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.7](#)).

A07 saw it as an important part of the Flodden project to attempt to change perceptions of a maligned area of Berwick, increasing community pride through understanding of their heritage ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.8](#)). E36 echoed this sentiment discussing an SVR collaboration planting blubs in community spaces instilling pride in a community often felt looked-down-upon because ‘it had a bad reputation - You know, it just made a massive difference, I think because it does give people a sense of pride of you know, just that little bit of an area. It really does’ (E36).

Eight further participants considered the ecomuseums’ potential to boost sense of pride to combat negative tourism impacts. This reflects McGhie’s (2022) view that ecomuseums foster low-impact/high-benefit tourism models. Mirroring Worts & Dal Santo’s (2022) *Inside-Outside* museal vision that intrinsic values foster positive foundational change in behaviour, B12 and C18 envision this pride and obvious ‘care’ ‘spreading’ through the community to visitors, resulting in greater visitor valuing and ‘respect’ of place ([Appendix 4; 6.2.2.9](#)). This is a manifestation of knowing-caring feedback loop discussed in Chapter 8.

6.3 Community-led – endogenous foundations, governance and management

Pappalardo (2020), amongst many others, foregrounds the endogenous path for ecomuseum success activating just heritage, combining environmental and social wellbeing. Yet, Brown (2024) acknowledges attempts to universally define ‘community museum’ and ‘community’, a Sisyphean task due to complexities and contentions around the terms and usage, noting at least 94 definitions of ‘community’. Further, as Chapter 3 discussed, the notions at the heart of what makes a community and an ecomuseum, *belonging and place*, are subjective and shifting, with place not always connoting a physical space but also an intangible psychological and/or emotional space. Communities are plural. Not only communities within communities, each a smaller subdivision of larger ones, but they also expand, stretch out and entwine across space and time, entangled into identity, itself plural and complex, self-defined and externally imposed. Following the ideals of the integral museum in service to their communities, for Brown et al. (2023 (a)) community-led museums are created from community need, traditional knowledge and managed by local governance. Further addressing what makes a community-led museum Brown et al. (2023 (b)) answer all the practices and characteristics included in Table 4.1 yet fall short of answering what or who identifies the community. As a dimension of identity, community can likewise be self-identified and/or imposed externally.

So, how should we consider and measure whether an ecomuseum is community-led or not? Certainly, community identity in the case study areas is complex, and their involvement in the ecomuseums is complex and again contested in some instances. Each case study ecomuseum, by defining its own physical area, has self-defined its community in terms of its physical geography, the *local/e* community. Yet people involved in the ecomuseums recognise there are plural ‘communities within communities’ (D26) and the difficulties that complexity creates in appealing to everyone ([Appendix 4; 6.3.0.1](#)).

Scale particularly, intersects with community identity, ecomuseum identity within the community and community engagement. Skye ecomuseum area has a population of c.568 people (Communities Housing Trust, 2022). The 12 members of the Community Trust managing the ecomuseum represent 2% of the population. Bring in volunteers and numbers of community engaging in various ways, and it is easy to understand why Davis asserts Skye an exemplar of a small and meaningful ecomuseum. As Table 6.1 notes, the other ecomuseums have much larger populations, SVR being the next smallest with c.6,720. This impacts severely on ability to engage all sections of their communities and perhaps their success as an ecomuseum – a point returned to later in this chapter and Chapters 7-9. Total inclusion of everyone in these larger areas is unrealistic, not only on a practical level, but clearly not everyone has the time nor the inclination to be engaged. Even in a small local community such as Skye, whilst ecomuseum awareness maybe comparatively high, not everyone chooses to get involved (see section 6.3.2).

Taking local community as a starting point, this section explores how community were/is involved in the ecomuseums creation, decision-making and management. As with all dimensions and characteristics picked out in this chapter and the following ones, the questions considered here are imbricated with others exploring further aspects in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

‘Community including’ is a dimension of the core ethic of ecomuseum ethos, to be community-led. Community-led practice differs from community-based practices. The latter usually refers to an externally derived, top-down project, whereas community-led refers to grass-roots projects where communities maintain power, make key decisions together and there is a high level of collective ownership and responsibility. Table 4.1 suggests several questions to interrogate how/if ecomuseum practices promote the characteristics of being community-led: endogenic, community benefits, active agency, increased capacity and plurality. This section, considers two of these - did the ecomuseum derive from the community? and is there community governance and management?

6.3.1 Did the ecomuseum derive from the community?

The founding of the case study ecomuseums and how much they involved community or otherwise is discussed in section 6.1 above. Chapters 2 and 4 highlighted a fundamental characteristic function of ecomuseums to address local needs through a shared vision (Corsane, 2006; Pappalardo, 2020; Rozentino de Almeida, 2022). Reflecting this, with each case study, community members, often just a few, perceived a need such as cultural threat and/or social-economic deprivation and formed a steering group to tackle these. The notion of the ecomuseum came into the group usually via an individual with previous knowledge or from an external source, such as academic or external organisation, when external advice was sought. In the case of SVR, this external organisation, Mid-Pennines Arts (MPA) was tasked by the community steering group to lead the project. The problems of external management and continuity are hinted at by E37 ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.1](#)) and further discussed in section 6.3.2 and Chapter 7.

Each founding group performed some level of community consultation to further include wider community, apart from Ecoamgueddfa. Ecoamgueddfa emerged fully formed directly out of a Landscape Partnership with a direct translation of all the main partner organisations. However, as discussed below, the steering group and partner organisation identify as community members; they are all local residents. Yet the understanding and involvement of the wider community is complex.

Difficulties of grappling with who/what defines endogenous came immediately to the fore with Cateran, a large and disparate area, where D34 had to argue the founding group were ‘community’ to potential funding bodies ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.2](#)). D34 grapples with the complexities of believing as locals, the project founders/steering group are the local community, whilst aware by forming a ‘group’ they are at once set apart from the rest. This presents a common challenge for the case studies and their self-perception, but also for how their communities perceive them. The initial idea of creating an ecomuseum must come from somewhere or someone, even if in answer to wider community issues. Peter Davis sees this as important to seeding the idea and driving the project forward ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.3](#)). The passion of a single individual was cited as a key driving force in Ecoamgueddfa and Cateran by their steering group members, as C17 expresses – ‘He is the Landscape Partnership. Yes, it's his vision, actually; he probably won't tell you that. But he is.’ However, a singular driver can cause issues, as section 6.3.2 expands.

Likewise, it is usually a smaller group of local community members who have the inclination and resources, including time and skills, to drive the project forward. D31 notes the potential for exclusion in this approach, acknowledging locally voiced feelings of exclusion, which they consider necessary 'in order to move it forward quickly' ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.4](#)). However, this puts the onus on outcomes not the process, which runs contrary to ecomuseum philosophy and the key ecomuseum characteristics outlined in Table 4.1. Research shows whilst slower, community consensus is vital to project success and impacts in heritage practices (eg (Perkin, 2010) and in fostering sustainable/regenerative approaches (Cantrill & Senach, 2001). Excluding community input risks the project assuming a top-down approach, contradicting Pappalardo's (2020) 'just heritage' and disenfranchising the wider community (De Varine & Filipe, 2012). The fact people are expressing feelings of exclusion suggests they were interested in becoming an important active part of the project. In excluding them, the success of the project might be reduced. This is explored further in section 6.3.2.

With Flodden, two landowners of the battle sites initiated that seed. But from the start opened it out to wider community with an open stakeholder group, moving beyond traditional, legal ideas of ownership to a more open inclusive way of thinking – 'I remember [A01] saying, [at the] very beginning, he said, "Well, you know, we can start this and it's not, it's not mine, it's not ours, - , it belongs to the community"' (A06). Far from holding back the project, giving the community ownership opened a vast rich seam of diverse community enthusiasm and engagement. A01 recalled how the 'extraordinary' community response to that opening out 'completely blew us away' ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.5](#)). Bowden & Ciesielska's assessment of Flodden's governance records a funding grant officer reporting it as 'almost the most extreme case of a grant application genuinely coming from the community.' (2015, p. 26).

Staffin Community Trust came up with the ecomuseum idea but began with community consultation, in part responding to funding requirements dictating community involvement. As Perkin (2010) observed, this process takes 'a lot of time, a lot of energy' (B09). However, as with Flodden, B09 notes opening out the project also resulted in more diverse ideas than 'you might produce yourself' and crucially increased community support.

For SVR, the steering committee was made up of community representatives from the town council, local groups and organisations providing inside knowledge and expertise to increase community relevance and service. E36 expresses this mindful process centring community wellbeing and regeneration ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.6](#)). Again, time and effort put into this process is highlighted, the committee conscious of its need to successful funding application (E36).

Ecoamgueddfa derived directly from the pre-existing Landscape Partnership as a means to keep the project going once the LP funding term had concluded. As such it could be argued Ecoamgueddfa is an example of Navajas Corral's (2019) top-down institutional ecomuseum. Yet the project management team, all community members, firmly believe it is community-led. The ecomuseum definition at the start of this chapter is by C22, a member of their team. Ecoamgueddfa acts as an umbrella, bringing together the individual partner organisations which in turn link into their locale networks and communities, a 'bottom-up approach – from community – then fed up through the funnel to the [ecomuseum]' (C23, [Appendix 4; 6.3.1.7](#)). Discussion of the purported community inclusion and benefits of the project are further examined in Section 6.3.2 and Chapter 7.

Interestingly, when the LIVE project came about – again a means of extending the partnership through a new funding opportunity, the Irish side of it was starting from scratch without the preexisting partnership, which led them to the more usual route of community consultation (C25). However, the project leads were all external academics or staff brought in, a feature of the institutional ecomuseum (Navajas Corral, 2019), which meant they were starting from zero knowledge of community needs. C25 acknowledges barriers this created on the Irish side, to building relationships and trust in the community and the extra effort needed to overcome initial anger and suspicion ([Appendix 4; 6.3.1.8](#)). A problem compounded by previous extractive research projects in the area that left locals feeling 'like guinea pigs and getting nothing back' and by pandemic restrictions on meeting people (C25, [Appendix 4; 6.3.1.9](#)).

6.3.2 Is there community governance and management?

Bearing in mind Brown's (2024) tensions around what constitutes 'community' which D34 struggled with (see section 6.3.1), each case study has ostensibly a smaller group of community management or steering group. Yet this bears deeper scrutiny as to the input these steering groups have, particularly when an even smaller project management team holds control as was/is the case with Flodden, SVR and Ecomgueddfa. The steering groups are formed mostly of the same people who first conceived of the projects, Davis's drivers (see Appendix 4; 6.3.1.3). The effort and time put in by founding members creating a desire to see the projects continue and thrive (see Chapter 8, Intrinsic Values). In some cases, for example Skye, active recruitment is carried out, inviting new members, as was the case for B10. Others, like Ecoamgueddfa, are more closed. Organisations, particularly community non-profit and charitable organisations, commonly require (by law) a committee with a minimum number of posts to be quorate, and particular skills are sometimes sought. Having served on various

community committees over the years, I understand getting new members willing to give their time is not always easy. However, invitation could suggest conscious choosing of potential members and, therefore, open to (un)conscious bias on who is invited which could inhibit democratic participation (Hustinx, et al., 2022). In *What future for ecomuseums?* De Varine & Filipe (2012) note the risks of restrictive participation and irrelevance to organisation resilience and longevity. Between data collection and writing up this research, Skye announced three new board members in March 2024, whilst Cateran has lost one founding director to retirement. The particular governance and management makeup and hierarchy of each case study are examined below.

6.3.2.1 Skye

Skye is run by Staffin Community Trust board. At the time of data collection, this board consisted of eight community members and two paid staff; a development officer and the ecomuseum programme manager⁵⁹. An articulation of the *Inside/Outside* model (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022) where the ecomuseum is inextricably enmeshed within its community, each member interviewed expressed the entanglement of the ecomuseum and the wider Trust ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.1](#)). Division of the different activities and aspects therefore indivisible in discussion as articulated by B13, ‘Okay, sometimes I’m talking about the Trust rather than the Ecomuseum, but it’s all..., it’s all interlinked anyway.’ Taking this into account, the Trust and the ecomuseum are referred to interchangeably here as they were by interviewees.

Begun in 2008, the longest-running UK ecomuseum⁶⁰, over the years individuals on the board have changed, with trustees coming, going and coming back again over the years. B09, currently the only original founding member still active explains, ‘I’ve been on the trust more or less the entire time. I’ve taken the odd short break. Yep since 1994⁶¹ I’ve been involved really’. Whilst a small community ‘the Trust has managed over the years to maintain a fairly healthy number of trustees’ (B09). This affords them a stabilising continuity other local boards, such as the community council lack ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.2](#)).

⁵⁹ SCT itself has 112 members in total (businesses and residents), roughly 20% of the local population.

⁶⁰ The relative long time that the Trust and subsequent ecomuseum have been going perhaps explains, understandably, why Skye is the only case study to have had a significant change to its steering group. The others are all either shorter-term projects (Flodden) or relatively newer projects.

⁶¹ This date refers to the founding of the Community Trust.

Whilst stability is desirable, B09 acknowledged the need for new, diverse members on a board ‘largely male - all a certain age’⁶² and the challenges in recruiting, where time pressures volunteering entails and the ‘practicalities’ of fitting those into the daily lives of younger individuals ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.3](#)). However, this was couched with disappointment in a perceived lack of interest contrasted with his own at a younger age ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.4](#)). Echoing a lament common to many formal and informal voluntary organisations/activities, and a factor to remember when judging the legitimacy of those who step up to community management, B09 stated (most) people are ‘happy to use what the Trust provides. But they’re not really prepared to put their own time into it.’

B10 also acknowledged the ‘different priorities in life’ for recruitment ‘struggles’. Yet, as the only non-native/Gaelic speaker on the board at the time, he also perceived strong personalities potentially dissuading possible recruits, along with a lack of confidence. The latter a problem to incomers to the community in the face of a ‘99%’ local board ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.5](#)). One of the drivers for Skye’s founding was safeguarding the Gaelic language. Whilst deeply supportive, B10 wondered if this could potentially deter recruits, as he himself felt excluded on occasion when Trust/ecomuseum business emails and some social media posts were in Gaelic only. An exclusion felt keenly ‘because I’m really interested and passionate about the history of this place and the culture. But the reality is, I don’t speak Gaelic, you know’ (B10, [Appendix 4; 6.3.2.6](#)). Given one remit of the Trust/ecomuseum is to reverse population decline, (explored in Chapter 7.1), potential unintentional exclusion of incomers is a point to consider. One that highlights tensions between inclusion and representation with safeguarding heritage, faced by all the case study dynamic communities returned to in Chapter 7.1.

Over the years, the Trust/ecomuseum has ‘drawn on the skills that are within the community’ (B09). The specialist knowledge, skills, and interests of the board members directly influence who takes on what projects. Skye’s evolution directly links to the passion of some current and past board members for cultural and natural heritage ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.7](#)). Tapping into diverse skills of members affords the Trust greater strength and so resilience. Allowing them to keep going as B09 mentioned earlier, and having varied knowledge to share, but also more mundane skills such as with funding applications which plug any ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.8](#)). B10

⁶² There was only one woman at the time, and all being older with the exception of the paid staff. The Trust actively sought new, more diverse recruits eg (Shirley Muir Associates, 2021). Their 2024 recruits include one woman and two younger men.

argues this pooling of knowledge and ideas is good reason to push for more diversity, including women and incomers, on the board because different ‘people bring things, don't they?’

B08 was keen to defend the boards ‘really good understanding of what they need to be doing and keep improving’, acknowledging tensions of trying to improve community life and potential conflict with other community members who don’t want change. The affordable housing project an example, increasing the population of Staffin and its viability ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.9](#), discussed further Chapter 7. 1.4). Recalling the challenges of any single group to please everyone all the time within any heterogenous community discussed above (section 6.2), B10 notes how those few willing to attempt to act for the community inevitably expose themselves to most criticism. Whereas ‘the people who don’t do anything tend to give it out’ (B10).

Other non-board volunteers also help with management on a smaller scale, linked to specific projects volunteers have an interest and/or stake in seeing come to fruition. B08 cited the harbour development project⁶³ subgroup, made up of mostly local slipway users with a direct interest in the project ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.10](#)).

The last point to consider regarding management is paid staff (see Table 6.1). The sixth point of Corsane’s 21 ecomuseum principles states ecomuseums should ‘Depend on substantial active voluntary efforts by local stakeholders’ (2006). Whilst volunteer action takes many forms and levels of involvement in the case studies (see Chapter 7.1), the pressures of volunteering in the management groups were a considerable undertaking for many spoken to. The responsibilities and time pressures are a big ask even to those retired, as B09 references, for example, the conflict with family for ‘spending so much time on something I get nothing for’ ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.1.3](#)) and are echoed by other volunteer management elsewhere below. As mentioned previously this limits who is willing to sign up for such roles. If the ecomuseums are to fulfil their remit to be community-led and have active engagement, this can be nigh impossible for a volunteer management group. ‘And so that’s where you need jobs. You need development officers or what have you, to deliver all these things.’ B13 advises. Acknowledging this, the day-to-day management, administration, planning and delivery of engagement activities of Skye is done by the development and programme managers. Both live in the community, which is vitally important to the strong, close relationships between Skye and the wider community resulting in relevance and resilience.

⁶³ The harbour development project is discussed further in Chapters 7 & 9

6.3.2.2 SVR

At the opposite end of the community management spectrum from Skye is SVR. As mentioned, the kernel for SVR began in the community, who brought in an external organisation, MPA, to help shape and deliver it. Originally, a steering group was formed to consciously bring together representatives from all areas and key groups and individuals in the parish, including community groups and town and county councils. This created a core group of seven community members with specialist local knowledge, skills and networks, along with various other interested individuals and groups coming and going ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.2.1](#)). MPA, a well-established arts organisation in the county, where contracted to give ‘a bit of impetus’ to the project (E37). This took the pressure of day-to-day management and delivery discussed above, off the volunteer steering group, who had other work/commitments. MPA holds the funding account for the project and an external⁶⁴ project manager was employed by MPA on a part-time basis to lead.

Whilst the steering group was involved in idea generation and decision-making at some levels, there have been problems rooted in the management group being external to the community and a lack of communication and clarity between them and the steering group. E37 views the conflict between being ‘community-led’ and ‘trying to facilitate it from outside’ as ‘inevitable’. This has led to confusion about project aims and feelings of extractivism, disenfranchisement and disillusion within the steering group ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.2.2](#)). These issues have been compounded by a prolonged project hiatus, first due to Covid, then by staffing changes and illness. This fractured the continuity that afforded Skye its strength and resilience. Consensus was this complete break wouldn’t have happened if the project manager lived locally, even in Covid. Skye, Ecoamgueddfa and Cateran had kept going throughout the pandemic in some form, providing an important resource and connection for community members. The much hoped-for SVR restart began faltering in winter 2021 but, hindered by aforementioned staff issues, has so far failed to begin properly and without any regrouping of the community steering group.

Whilst E39 acknowledged ‘a lot of good’ had come out of the project, such as learning resources produced for the museum to use with school groups, overall, the group and community are left

⁶⁴ The project manager, employed by the external MPA lived about 2 hours drive away in a different county.

‘disappointed’ and ‘abandoned’. E37, a leading steering group member, expressed the general uncertainty within the steering group as to what the whole project is about, ‘I’m still not..., not clear (laughs) on what Spodden Valley are attempting, or is attempting to achieve.’ SVR is referenced in the third person, not as something which he is part of. This reflects the steering group views the project as external to themselves and the community now. E37 expresses disenfranchisement from something he was passionate about, in the hands of people who view it as just another job ‘No, I don’t think they [know]. I think it’s just a project’. The implication being if management were part of the community they would care more. Similar issues of continuity and dedication of external experts brought in, here and at other case studies, are discussed in Chapter 7. The danger is SVR becomes not community-led but a community-based project.

During the fragile attempt to restart, the project manager at the time acknowledged community had to be recentred at the project’s heart if it were to succeed. ‘I think making sure that it’s happening, coming from local people rather than Mid Pennine Arts, kind of coming in and heading and leading on those things.’ (E35). The passion and drive to actualise the ecomuseum within the original steering group members is still there. This enthusiasm to get going again, reform the steering group with the new town clerk, and bring in more community is conveyed by E36, who was ‘definitely up for that’, and others she spoke to who said ‘Yay! Lets get it regrouped!’ ([Appendix 4, 6.3.2.2.3](#)). Unfortunately, due to MPA staff issues this hasn’t happened yet at time of writing. Whilst staff issues happen and can’t be eliminated, the effects of them are devastating if all power, plans, information, records and funding are held by those external staff and an external organisation, rendering the community impotent – ‘You know, even if you have that key group, they’re always going to be available ... because at the moment there’s like no representation of any of it [SVR/MPA] anywhere, you know, because there’s isn’t anybody about.’ (E36). Ecomuseum resilience is found in a community-led approach (Navajas Corral, 2019). Where power, processes and access to the resources are shared within the community, decision and plans made together; shocks such as changes or losses in staff are better withstood.

6.3.2.3 Flodden

During Flodden’s active phase, paid staff were a key priority for the steering group founding members to avoid the workload pressures referred to by B13 above, of coordinating and delivering such a large multistranded project. A01 thus viewed himself and fellow director ‘facilitators’ only ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.3.1](#)). Acting as facilitators also reflected the commitment of

the steering committee to community ownership. Flodden's openness, supporting community ownership and planning of varied groups and individuals to generate their own ideas and support delivering them was mentioned above (section 6.3.1) and is further discussed in Chapter 7). The voluntary steering committee contracted a project co-ordinator, an archaeology manager and engaged a charitable trust⁶⁵ to provide financial administration and coordinate an education officer to look after day-to-day management and delivery of the project.

In contrast to SVR, the staff employed were also mostly local people. This meant staff member A07 saw no conflict with the notion of ecomuseum community management and themselves, 'We were paid staff as well, but I felt that because most of us were local, that made a bit of a difference. And I think everybody's attitude towards working with community groups made a difference.' They worked collaboratively with steering and stakeholder groups, community groups such as TILVAS and organisations such as Berwick Archives Office in planning, decision-making, supporting and delivery of engagement. Maintaining a balanced equitable cross-sector partnership with a common purpose (Bowden & Ciesielska, 2015). This sidestepped the potential of it becoming a top-down project, as 'It could have gone quite badly wrong and not been quite the ecomuseum ethos' (A07). Yet, she mirrors Navajas Corral (2019) institutional ecomuseum trajectory, concluding the potential for longevity was reduced as the idea was initially suggested by two community members, others then getting on board, and 'it became a kind of lottery project that had a sort of end to it' (A07). An unfair assessment perhaps. The project was always conceived as a finite active project around the quincentenary celebrations. The ecomuseum designed from inception to sit as a legacy quietly in the landscape after its funded active phase with minimum input required timewise or financially beyond an annual coffee and chat ⁶⁶ ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.3.2](#)). The passivity of the remnant ecomuseum begs the question of what constitutes an ecomuseum? Is it a static end-product, requiring little intervention or a participatory process? A question explored in Chapter 7.1.2. Further, as Davis mentioned, all ecomuseums have initiators and drivers. Bowden & Ceisielska conclude of Flodden's governance and management, the 'very open stakeholder group that was the ultimate

⁶⁵ Woodhorn Charitable Trust

⁶⁶ Peter Davis, who had been an advisor to the project, had once mentioned to A01 that what you want to achieve in an ecomuseum, ultimately, was that it looks after itself, requiring little ongoing effort beyond a 'coffee and a chat' once in a while. This perhaps oversimplifies potential external 'visitor/tourist facing' signage in the landscape or online, but does not encompass the proactive community engagement that many ecomuseum scholars advocate for such as (Pappalardo, 2020).

arbitrer, while having a capability-based, representative and constantly evolving steering group to do the business' facilitating a 'distributive leadership' (Bowden & Ciesielska, 2015, p. 29). This suggests the horizontal structure of Navajs Coral's (2019) community ecomuseum.

Whilst there is no active ecomuseum engagement any longer, groups begun during the active phase, TILVAS, YAC, the archive volunteer group, and the Peace Garden group have continued independently since (see Chapter 7.1). This suggests community interest for extending the project might have existed. However, these groups have extended their remit beyond the battle, hinting that perhaps one limiting dimension of the active project was its restricted theme. Corsane (2016), amongst others, states to remain relevant, ecomuseums must change and respond to the needs of the community. In the case of Flodden 1513, to expand its theme would have fundamentally changed it into another ecomuseum. Interestingly one interviewee, A06, had just that idea, which is discussed in Chapter 9.2.

6.3.2.4 *Ecoamgueddfa*

Ecoamgueddfa also has paid staff who manage and deliver the project. However, this differs from the three examples given above as the paid staff essentially act as the directing group. This comes back to the ecomuseum deriving from the Landscape Partnership, with help from Bangor University Sustainability Lab. The management group is essentially formed from members of the university, county council and National Trust, full or part-time funded by the project. As such they reflect Davis's (2011) professional organisation. They are also local residents.

Ecoamgueddfa's remit includes providing local employment in roles that wouldn't otherwise exist (see Chapter 7.1). Ostensibly, they work with the network of seven partner sites to steer direction and make decisions, as C17 explains 'Definitely. I mean, they [the partner sites] are the ecomuseum. Definitely, whatever they want, they do.' Each partner acts representative for their communities and partner staff are also local residents. As such the management is made of local people, but it is closed and not open to general community input. Input is 'funnelled' through the partners as C23 stated above (6.2.1).

However, the relationship with partner organisations is perceived as less equal than portrayed, with some feeling more 'informed' of what Ecoamgueddfa is doing rather than involved in any planning or decision-making. C15 voices feeling marginalised, their organisations input ignored, and left out of decision making and planning, with activities happening at their site delivered *fait accompli*, 'this is what we are doing ta-da!' ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.1](#)).

Communication between Ecoamgueddfa management and the partners seems to be lacking. At another larger partner site, senior staff didn't know what was happening in the ecomuseum. Whereas lower-level staff and volunteers don't often realise that their site is part of the ecomuseum at all suggesting information is not filtering down. C16 commented that there hadn't been any partner group meetings for a while. This was partly due to Covid – though Ecoamgueddfa had remained active throughout with online sessions elsewhere. At the time of interview, communication was at a low point with none of the pre-Covid partner group meetings happening, 'I'm not sure if what their plans are at the moment. I haven't been to a meeting or anything, I'm not sure if they've had the meeting recently.' (C16).

The National Trust has a close association with Ecoamgueddfa, sharing employment costs of an education/engagement officer between them. Yet senior staff here expressed the low ebb in communications, and the need to repair the relationships, 'I think it's kind of petered off really - that contact time between the organisations, and I think that really, we need to get that back up and running, - and pick up that strong relationship again. (C18)

C15 recognized Ecoamgueddfa's excellent work creating walks and guides, but noted a lack of cohesion between partners leading to 'missed potential'. C15 felt better communication, joined-up thinking and action could strengthen partnerships and information sharing with their communities and visitors ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.2](#)). Despite the disappointment, C15 was keen to work better together, 'we've got to make time to make this work.' Albeit doubts remained, 'but I won't have any influence. [] But it's something that people need to think about isn't it? How to work together.' (C15). Whilst acknowledging Ecoamgueddfa staff were locals too, C15 felt their primary allegiance was to Bangor University rather than the community ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.3](#)). C15's suggestion of a potential way forward being the ecomuseum leadership and staff being based with a partner organisation again underlines the lack of communication and understanding. The project leader is based not in the university but in a village community-hub office, let to Gwynedd Council, whilst another staff member, as mentioned, is based with Llyn National Trust. But the expressed need for 'more co-operation' (C15) is fair, 'It would be nice if we could - say that one of the [partner organisation] employees, - and a committee member could go to regular meetings, then expect to feed in ...' (C15).

That partner groups aren't as involved in management as C23 suggests (section 6.3.1) is corroborated by C16's tentative speculation that 'I'm sure you know, things will, will develop and you know when. when plans are put into action really - We'll learn more about, and become more, you know, more involved.' Speaking about partner organisations influencing

Ecoamgueddfa direction and plans, C18 suggested that wasn't happening and the need to get back to 'meeting more regularly' ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.4](#)). Although, C18 also expressed that the smaller organisations weren't so used to partnership or community working as the NT. ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.5](#)). Ecoamgueddfa education officer C22 further suggests the 'level of involvement from [partner] sites seems quite varied from very involved to not really involved at all', with some partners choosing not to be as involved as they could be ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.4.6](#)). This maybe so with one or two partners, but clearly the partners represented by C15 and C16, plus comments by C22, suggest that at the time of interview, there was a desire amongst partners for more involvement. The 'informing' and 'consulting' recounted reflect 'Tokenism' on Arnstein's (1969) renowned *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (Appendix 4.2) rather than the collaboration suggested prima facie.

6.3.2.5 Cateran

At the time of interviewing, Cateran had no paid staff (see Table 6.1). As previously noted, Cateran management consists of a nominal director for each settlement area, though in practice, day-to-day management falls mostly to a single director, D28. Reliance on a singular driver presents several issues; uneven distribution of labour and stress discussed below; danger of losing information and/or momentum if that individual leaves similar to the external management issues that have affected SVR (see below); and the threat that rather than been community-led or even steering group-led it becomes in essence a one-person plan. Each of these issues is touched on in fellow director D27's concerns ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.5.1](#)), illustrating the lack of knowledge of direction/plans that the rest of the director group have and the 'critical risk' to Cateran's existence.

Reflecting B09 above, and counterpoint to the assumption of volunteer ecomuseums (eg Corsane, 2006), D28 spoke of the sweat-equity of the funding system and idealism heavily reliant on volunteer labour, the resultant pressure on voluntary management and difficulties recruiting new volunteers into management and partnership-building ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.5.2](#)). D28 has drawn a small income for project managing some of Cateran's larger art events, but 'so much less than the hours that she puts in' (D31). Most funding goes into commissioning local artists⁶⁷ and running costs (D31). Cateran does have some volunteers outside the management

⁶⁷ Cateran have worked with artists to deliver giant land-art (Hamish Henderson portrait and The Awakening) and has a poet-in-residence and a storyteller-in-residence and commissions various other artists and craftspeople to deliver events/activities.

group (see also Chapter 7.1). But this is mostly on an ad-hoc basis rather than long-term commitment that managing requires because ‘most people are incredibly busy. And they don't have acres of time to do stuff.’ (D28, [Appendix 4; 6.3.2.5.3](#))

One ad-hoc volunteer, D31, acknowledged awareness of the ‘bias of volunteerism’ that can hinder board diversity, as Skye also found, with the same smaller number of people willing to take on such roles across multiple community groups ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.5.4](#)). Robust evidence suggests volunteers typically have a certain level of economic, social and cultural resources (Hustinx, et al., 2022). UK volunteers in formal settings are more likely to be older, from higher socio-economic groups, female and educated (Donahue, et al., 2020). Number and diversity of available candidates affects ‘what actually gets done’ as well as what is on ‘the list of what could be done’ (D31). Yet D31’s previous claim (section 6.3.1) of the necessity of an exclusive driving group to begin with, seemingly undermines their claim bias ‘has not been allowed to reign supreme’ (D31). Hustinx, et al. (2022) highlight inherent inequalities in unquestioningly accepting volunteering bias, whilst Donahue et al. (2020) note the need to address power, privilege and prejudice in the voluntary sector. Ecomuseal and social museal ethos dictates a horizontal hierarchy and that practitioners make efforts to include those most marginalised (eg Pappalardo, 2020). Yet, tensions between aiming for greater diversity, the time and resources management groups have and the number of potential volunteers, particularly in smaller settlements where ‘most people have only got so much capacity for volunteering’ (D33), remain an issue. Keen to be able to address the problems, D34 is interested in finding what others ‘are doing and how they overcome some of that.’ ([Appendix 4; 6.3.2.5.5](#)).

6.4 Discussion

Davis argues ‘ecomuseums require better strategic planning, both to guide the long-term development of the organizations and to allow delegation of power from the founder group to a wider community’ (Davis, 2011, p. 94). In varying degrees, each case study still has work to do in this regard. Reflecting Sutter et al.’s (2016) petition for repeated self-analysis, Skye acknowledges and takes steps towards the continuous work needed to better reflect and respond to its wider community. Flodden walked the tightrope between paid staff and community management, mostly achieving rare equity of stakeholders, ‘within the Flodden community large public authorities or small community groups have been equally important as each other’ (Joicey, 2018). Ecoamgueddfa, SVR and Catheran display most need for Davis’s strategic planning to climb the ladder of participation and realise *citizen power* (Arnstein, 1969).

Passion and dedication to their communities and the ideal of democratic ecomuseal ethos cannot be denied, yet without opening out more, there is a danger of being *for* their communities rather than *by* the communities. Massing (2019) notes the tensions for founding members between ecomuseum development and letting go of the reins to broader community. Restrictive power-sharing risks irrelevance and longevity of ecomuseums (De Varine & Filipe, 2012). External management (as with SVR), what constitutes 'community' in community management, pressures of volunteering, problems of diversity within volunteer steering groups and the need for better communication and collaboration, are issues needing constant attention.

Bowden & Ciesielska (2015) suggest ecomuseums can act as cross-sector partnerships that are both emergent (as endogenous adaptive responses) and deliberate (with an agreed strategy such as a funding plan), as Flodden exemplifies. Distributive power in collaborative leadership roles enables the sharing of capabilities and strengths, with skill and knowledge exchanges increasing capacity within diverse governance and management groups (Bowden & Ciesielska, 2015). This speaks to knowledge exchange as a key characteristic of ecomuseum potential for regenerative futures (Table 4.1) and will be returned to in Chapter 7.2.

6.5 Summary

This chapter introduced the case studies physical and social-economic settings. This provides distinctive context for the founding of each ecomuseum as they emerge in response to their community's needs and aspirations.

Sections 6.2 and 6.3 explored characteristics deriving from Table 4.1. Section 6.2 considered the meaningfulness of the physical space the ecomuseums comprise in terms of impact of scale, recognisability and identity for their communities. Whilst Section 6.3 interrogated endogenous provenance, governance and management of the case studies. Different scales of place and population impact the meaningfulness of defined ecomuseum areas, presenting challenges in community recognition, cohesion, engagement and impacts of the projects. A relatively small size and population lends itself to the ecomuseum ideal. Whereas a larger scale and disparate communities present greater challenges. Ecomuseums are evidenced to increase place and community identity and connection for those who engage with them, as staff, volunteers or participants. Social action fostering self-efficacy, achievements, collaboration, and contribution to the projects supports individual and community pride.

Each ecomuseum claims endogeneity, with residents making up founding steering groups. Yet the picture was seen to be complex, with varying degrees of broader inclusion in their foundations. Likewise, governance and management also reflected varying degrees of community participation, with each ecomuseum found to still need Davis's (2011) strategic work in achieving equity and inclusion. Here again, small population size helps Skye perform better, along with repeated self-analysis and remedial action. Issues with external management, communication, collaboration and attracting or seeking wider volunteer participation in governance and management hinder progress, capacity and impact of the ecomuseums.

The following chapter will explore further dimensions of community inclusion, learning and collaboration, in the case study ecomuseum practices, building the picture of how these fit with the key practices, dimensions and characteristics set out in Table 4.1.

7 Supporting community; wider community inclusion, learning and collaboration

Chapter 6 introduced the physical and socio-economic settings informing each case study ecomuseum founding and approaches. Referencing key ecomuseum practices, dimensions and characteristics from Table 4.1, place identity and attachment, ecomuseum inception, governance and management were explored. This highlighted complexities and tensions around notions of endogeneity, of being of the community, but not being all the community, especially in larger and more disparate populations. Ecomuseum participation was evidenced to increase place and community connection. However, external management, weaknesses in communication, collaboration and attracting or seeking broader community participation in governance and management were shown to hinder progress, capacity and impact.

This chapter explores further characteristics of community inclusion in activities, learning and collaboration beyond the day-to-day operational management in the case study ecomuseum practices to analyse how these fit with the key practices, dimensions and characteristics set out in Table 4.1.

7.1 Community-led and community inclusion in everyday activities

7.1.1 How does the ecomuseum benefit the local community?

Chapter 6 began with an ecomuseum definition by C22. Recalling Corsane's (2006) 21st Principle and the integral museum in service to its community (Brulon Soares, et al., 2023), C22 stated that ecomuseums are 'run by the community *for the benefit of that community*' (my emphasis). Ecomuseums at heart should be emergent processes responding to their community's needs (Navajas Corral, 2019). But how do the case study ecomuseums benefit their communities and is this, as Navajas Corral suggests it should be, a priority for them?

The benefits of good ecomuseum practice are broad and various, they include a sense of pride and identity, discussed in Chapter 6.2, alongside regeneration; wellbeing; social inclusion/action; active participation and learning, access to and safeguarding of holistic cultural/natural heritage; economic benefits, including jobs and supporting local producers and craftspeople. Most key characteristics across all dimensions of Table 4.1 benefit the community, and, as previously stated, the key practices, dimensions and characteristics are

imbricated. Therefore, many beneficial aspects are discussed throughout this chapter and Chapters 6, 8 and 9. This subsection considers the intention of community benefit in case study practices.

Chapter 4 discussed the focus on sustainable development of ecomuseum scholarship and practice, scrutinising tensions between economic development, particularly touristic development, and community and environmental wellbeing (McGhie, 2022). Each case study, at some level aims to address threats of unemployment, economic decline and lack of services noted in Chapter 6.1. Tourism development was an important founding aim in Skye, Ecomgueddfa and Cateran. In *Paradigm or Predator?*, Brown (2017) asked if Skye's community benefited from the ecomuseum. She concluded whilst threatened by predatory touristic development, Skye had trodden a delicate paradigmatic path towards community agency through a second phase of analysis and change (Brown, 2017). B08 acknowledged tensions in balancing economic development and community focus from Skye's first consultation stage onwards with questions around 'Is it for the people who live around here? Or is it for visitors?' Concluding, 'We tried to focus in on the folk who live here as our primary way we were trying to construct what we were doing' (B08).

Ecomgueddfa was established to develop year-round sustainable tourism through a collaborative network of local partner organisations, thereby increasing employment, economic benefits and reasons to remain/live locally (Young, et al., 2016). C21 evidenced success explaining Ecomgueddfa's influence in routing the coastal path past the partner sites, increasing footfall to 30,000/year and their income ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.1](#)). As the LIVE project, their stated aims reference Wales's National Wellbeing Goals, the UN's SDGs and using the four pillars of sustainability that underline the primary importance of visitor economy development (see Table 6.2 (LIVE, 2023)). Focus on economic development raises questions about broader community benefits and risks to community wellbeing through predatory touristic development (Howard, 2002; Brown, 2017). Yet, as indicated in Chapter 6, Ecomgueddfa views its partner sites as part of the community. Something C21 puts down to the ecomuseum's influence shifting mindsets, seeing those attractions becoming community hubs too, 'I think that's a big, big shift. - they used to say they were serving community. Now there's a shift to understanding what that means.' Additionally, increasing accessibility and facilities, like on-site cafes, for the community previously lacking or deemed not for them ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.2](#)). An important ecomuseum function in 'giving back to the communities as well' (C21).

Whilst deeming Ecomagueddfa successful in raising the area's profile and attracting funding for partner organisations, C17 is uncertain if, outwith those with stakes in the visitor economy, the 'ordinary person' benefits or 'care[s] that he or she is on the map?'. On balance, C18 concludes 'out of both groups, community versus tourists', regarding opportunities, activities and resources being created 'probably the community that are getting the most benefit on that side of things.' Through virtue of shifting mindsets, C18 explained Ecoamgueddfa encouraged locals to go out, explore and discover more, whereas tourists arrived primed to explore. Survey results back this notion. 28 out of 32 (87.5%) respondents who'd participated in some way with their local ecomuseum felt ecomuseums were for locals as well as visitors. Reasons cited include encouraging them to get out and explore, opportunities to learn about and actively care for their place, resulting in increased connection (see Chapter 8). However, it's noteworthy Ecoamgueddfa's planned survey gathering community perspectives on tourism/ visitor economy, and community interest in the cultural and natural offer (leisure activities/ events/ walks/ etc), alongside visitors' perspectives to inform its sustainable visitor plan, was scaled back to only visitor perspectives. This was used to create a visitor vision in collaboration with the Ecoamgueddfa partner organisations (Schulz, 2022).

Displaying ecomuseal community-first approach, putting community wellbeing ahead of economic development (Navajas Corral, 2019), Flodden consciously took steps to avoid harm with unanimous community consensus not to develop a visitor centre at the battle site. Along with threatening the small local community at the site, A01 explained touristic development threatened the 'pretty fragile' local economy. Rather than 'thinning the slices of cake that people are going to get' (A01), Flodden looked to more modest dispersed economic benefits across the area, a 'coffee here – somewhere else a campsite' (A01).

Both Irish and Ecoamgueddfa sides of the LIVE project exhibited similar sensitivity, making efforts not to take away livelihoods from local businesses – 'every time we did an activity, we checked to see is there anybody locally doing it already. Because the one thing we didn't want to do was displace people' (C25).

In line with Corsane's (2006) ecomuseum adaptability and responsiveness, case studies evidenced changes in strategy as they developed to better reflect communities' needs. As mentioned, Skye shifted their focus from increasing tourism to mitigating its negative environmental and community impacts during their 2016-2020 redevelopment. These included capital works like

path and access routes, community management takeover of certain sites and taking a deliberately low-key approach when promoting other sites to lessen visitors⁶⁸.

SVR management was also considering changing its approach after the pandemic hiatus from a 'capital [works] – regenerative programme towards 'prioritising – galvanising the community' to 'build and strengthen the community behind it rather than physical regeneration.' (E35).

Ecoamgueddfa changed the way it promoted activities, such as free paddleboarding and kayaking taster sessions. Initially they'd hoped local people would take part, gaining confidence and increasing social inclusion in the area. Yet when holidaymakers took all the places, C21 explains Ecoamgueddfa were proactive in prompting locals by using a booking system instead ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.3](#)). The resultant increased local youngsters taking up watersports, raising confidence, awareness of safety and pollution issues, environmental respect and employment potential, evidence Ecoamgueddfa's ability to 'influence little things' with 'a big knock on for the community' (C21).

Similar proactive social inclusion was demonstrated across other case studies. Reflecting the benefit of a fragmented site approach (e.g. Corsane, 2016), E36 described efforts to share the benefits of ecomuseum activities by linking with other groups and sites rather than focusing on one place ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.4](#)). A07 considered for people 'involved with [Flodden] at the time, it probably had quite a big impact on them.' For some, this impact continued beyond the project itself with 'lots of local heritage groups that kind of came out of that, because [the lead] was so enthusiastic' (A07). The result is increased capacity in the community 'we never had - 10 years ago' (A01).

Increasing capacity by providing resources, learning experiences, activities and increasing access to knowledge, skills and places otherwise unavailable is an important beneficial function of the case studies. For busy teachers like B11, such resources and opportunities are 'brilliant, excellent'. Done well, like Skye's 'Footsteps in the Community' project, it increases teachers' knowledge and 'the amount of time that saves for teachers - is astonishing' (B11). Learning for all ages benefits not only those directly involved, but the results can be shared and enjoyed widely, as A07 conveyed, referencing archival work volunteers had taken part with Flodden. 'It's not just about them finding this information [and] passing on to some academics

⁶⁸ Such as the sacred Loch Shianta to lessen impact on local users and the environment (project manager, pers. comm.), specifically noted in Brown's (2017) paper.

or whatever, it is actually, you know, enjoyed by lots of different people.’ (A07). C25 stressed the importance of knowledge created being open source so community members can benefit in multiple ways ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.5](#)). Whilst more muted in appraising SVR’s benefits so far, E37 noted learning resources had been created and left with E37’s organisation to share with the community as an albeit ‘quite small’ but ‘positive legacy – which is good.’

Access to physical space, through encouraging exploration as C18 noted, creating routes, paths and access was viewed as beneficial to community wellbeing. Inclusive decision-making increased community relevance of ecomuseum work as B08 conveys referencing the path network Skye has developed ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.6](#)). Not all community members agree; instead, viewing the path and access works ‘for visitors’, not locals, even though the Trust board are adamant it is both ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.7](#)).

Simply creating opportunities to experience, explore and participate can be beneficial, something B08 states ‘the ecomuseum model encourages’. Although B08 recognises the difficulty in measuring precisely ‘what each person takes from each of these experiences [as] it’s not like something that can be tangibly ticked off a list.’ But ‘by exploring their own local community this way – then they take away something good from it’ (B08).

Community benefit was demonstrated to be a priority in Flodden, Skye and SVR. With Ecoamgueddfa, wider community benefits initially came indirectly through touristic development increasing facilities. However, understanding those facilities wouldn’t exist without external visitor revenue, recalling Brown’s ecomuseum constraints ‘under the shadow of the predator of mass tourism’ (2017, p. 27), and continual adaptation throughout development has increased Ecoamgueddfa’s community-first benefits. C21 makes a valid point to remember when assessing rural ecomuseum development, noting double standards of urban leisure industry (considered for locals too) and rural (considered for tourists rather than local or nearby visitors) ([Appendix 5; 7.1.1.8](#)).

7.1.2 Is there community participation in a democratic manner? How?

Chapter 6.3 explored community participation in foundation, governance, and management. This section focuses on wider participation in ecomuseum practices and activities.

Brown’s (2017) analysis of community engagement with Skye’s sites suggested it was lower than expected; quotidian life a barrier to rarefied cultural enchantment. However, direct comparison of community with visitor engagement with sites isn’t useful. This reduces the ecomuseum to a static end-product, recalling questions about what constitutes an ecomuseum discussed

regarding Flodden's legacy ecomuseum in Chapter 6.3. The value of daily landscapes is plural and diverse (see Chapter 8), and interaction with it for local people is going to be different to visitors but no less valuable. 37 survey respondents (92.5%), for example, stated living in a beautiful and historic landscape was valuable to them even when they don't go out into it. Reflecting the notion of ecomuseums as dynamic processes (Corsane, 2006; Pappalardo, 2020; F.E.M.S., 2024), Skye's community engagement goes far beyond visiting its 12 promoted sites, with diverse, broad and repeated activities and actions across the landscape and community in the spirit of Worts & Dal Santo's (2022) Inside/Outside model. This has increased since the 2016 reassessment and 2020 relaunch. New signage and the website bring together plural perspectives of daily life along with the spectacular. But community participation has been Skye's ethos from the start. B08 describes whole community input with 'really high levels of community involvement' where 'you could argue every school child in the primary school was involved in decision making' albeit fluctuating across time and projects ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.1](#)). Community involvement at all levels is vital to ecomuseum practice for B08. Skye strove for this during redevelopment, which, recalling Perkin (2010), 'takes a bit longer' but was 'worth it in terms of buy-in of people' and ensured high levels community participation (B08). Community member B12 explains the community's involvement with redesigning boards and information, what 'stories' should be included and 'where they should be situated'. Skye's continued striving for democratic participation is evidenced by their continuous consultation on direction (see Chapter 9), including their 2034 10-year planning consultation (Staffin Community Trust, 2024) and open invitation to all community members to join SCT.

Chapter 6 described Flodden's open and successful approach to democratic community participation in events and activities that occurred during the project's active phase. A01 describes the equity of voice all stakeholders had in planning processes as 'extraordinary', bringing organisations and groups together who wouldn't normally interact ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.2](#)). This democratic approach permeated all processes and activities through to the post-project publication (Flodden 1513, 2016; 2019) where it 'was important that [everyone involved] got a chance' to contribute to the publication, reflecting 'the diversity of what happened and what interested people'⁶⁹ (A02). Being open to following these interests led to unexpected results that rippled through the project, like a battle-horse theme that spread through research

⁶⁹ This included community volunteers and the voices of children, alongside and equal to experts and organisers.

and activities involving community archivists, archaeologists and school children. This open, inclusive approach inspired ways of working elsewhere in the area ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.3](#)). A04 and A05, members of a local history group, participated in the open community process, sharing information and suggesting sites for inclusion. Yet they doubt the community at large was engaged due to general community apathy rather than openness on Flodden's ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.4](#)). Although Flodden's final report suggests this is an overly austere view, noting over 300 events from music concerts, flower festivals to excavations, 2000 community learning participants, 3030 participant days, over 10,000 school children participants on-site and in-school, 282,000 hours recorded volunteer time, 8303 travelling exhibition visitors (Hunter, 2017).

Chapter 6 discussed the collaborative network of partner sites in Ecoamgueddfa, the 'vision' being each 'play a really strong part in their hyper-local communities' (C18). A vision yet to be fully realised. Yet Ecoamgueddfa strives for fairness in the community in a 'quiet way' through dispersed activities and paying the hosts, and supporting community groups with advice and funding access (C21, [Appendix 5; 7.1.2.5](#)). However, community members, like some partner organisations (see Chapter 6.3), express lack of knowledge and uncertainty about Ecoamgueddfa's direction and whether community have any sway 'at the end of the day' (C24). Questions remain on the efficacy of a deliberate 'quite way' approach. C21 explained this as a conscious 'exit strategy', allowing for fluctuations/cessation in funding and activities by highlighting partner organisations' consistent identities rather than Ecomagueddfa, focusing instead on embedding collaboration within the network ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.6](#)).

Yet, whilst understanding the rationale, having gone through various phases of activity and incarnations due to funding, if the community don't know an ecomuseum exists, how can they participate democratically? Recalling Brown's (2017) contention regarding Skye, 21 interviewees, across all case studies, expressed a lack of ecomuseum identity and understanding in the wider community hindered ecomuseum impact. This included loss of recognition for the work/activities they were actually doing. Six survey respondents also noted the ecomuseums 'need - more promotion' (S082), 'to be apparent in our communities, not just a concept and name!' (S956). Postcard responses further reflect this, with only 24%⁷⁰ having prior

⁷⁰ This probably is inflated as 8 positive responses came from a community event at an Ecoamgueddfa partner organisation, an unusually high number 50% of respondents that day. Having taken advice from both Ecoamgueddfa staff and the partner organisation the high number of people ticking 'Yes' for

knowledge of their local ecomuseum. However, 23/32 survey respondents (71.8%) who had participated in some way with their ecomuseum, felt they had or could have an influence in what it does. This suggests increasing ecomuseum identity in their communities could increase democratic participation and should therefore, be a priority. It's notable that during the second round of data collection, Ecoamgueddfa had begun using a LIVE branding⁷¹. C21 explained this was not a change in tactic but reflected opportunities presented by LIVE funding to produce promotional material. Interestingly, this came towards the latter stages of the LIVE project, funding dictating the use of the LIVE brand, though Ecoamgueddfa is named on the material too; 'to survive the Ecoamgueddfa has to be flexible and agile and adapt to the ebb and flow of funding opportunities.' (C21).

The ebb and flow of those opportunities are recognisable in CATERAN and SVR's stop-start community engagement; the aforementioned hiatus in SVR activities, and a limited CATERAN programme. Both were hampered by weak inter-community communications at the time of data collection which frustrated and distorted their identity, openness and impact in their communities (see Chapter 6).

Two young pop-up event participants, one from SVR and one from CATERAN, neatly summed up communities' desire to have a voice. Responding to the question 'what place in your surrounding area makes you happy and why?', PS33 indicated the roll mapping data collection activity 'because I can write what I think about the area around me.' Yet giving voice, via consultation is only part of the equation. To move from Arnstein's 'tokenism' (Chapter 6.3) to empowerment, it is contingent for those voices to be heard, acted upon and invited to collaborate. Wisdom echoed by another young participant, RC75, unambiguously stating 'I like being heard' (Fig 7.1).

previous ecomuseum awareness is most likely a misunderstanding, with people thinking it referred to the partner museum where the event was taking place, not a reflection previous awareness of Ecoamgueddfa/LIVE. Dismissing this number reduces the average to 19%.

⁷¹ On equipment, gazebo's banners, leaflets etc.

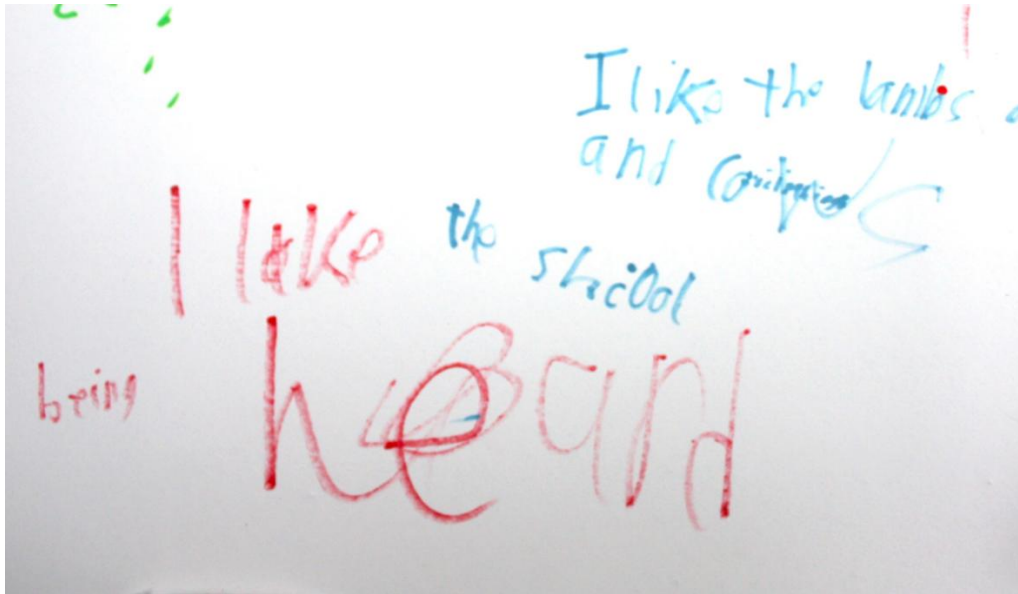


Figure 7.1 Detail from community roll mapping showing RC75's response

A statement all case study ecomuseums should heed. Yet the limits on ambition imposed by funding, or lack thereof, on what ecomuseums can achieve and act on was also cited by Cateran. Funding was a 'very fundamental problem' effecting what and when activities could be staged as D34 explained, 'when we had money – we managed to get a lot of things done' such as the 'active travel project'. Having garnered 'the enormous amount of information' about people's concerns around active travel ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.7](#)), Cateran found themselves stymied, 'because, as of now, we have no money. All we can do is share that information' (D28). Since interview, Cateran secured funding for stage two of their ambitious plans to become a museum of rapid transition, including a community engagement plan and paid staff to deliver it. However, that activity plan was drawn up without community consultation on direction and activity ideas and, also hampered by staffing issues, it has struggled to capture community support for some activity strands⁷². Here again, Cateran's evaluator of the 2nd stage (McNaughton, 2024) notes the way UK project funding cycles emphasise delivery and don't allow sufficient time/resources for the groundwork needed. Even stalwart Skye is ultimately limited by the landscape of project funding in the UK, limiting continuity of wider participation to lots of smaller-scale individual projects ([Appendix 5; 7.1.2.8](#)).

⁷² Particularly guided cycle rides and young people's engagement despite it being given emphasis in the programme plan (McNaughton, 2024).

7.1.3 Do they strive to be inclusive and plural?

Recalling arguments in Chapter 6.2, 6.3 and 7.1.2 above, when discussing the range of community activities and benefits, B11 reflects ecomuseum efforts to be inclusive are only one side of the equation, ‘I think it kind of works both ways, you need to meet in the middle....the community need to be willing to participate in or engage with it’. C21 agreed, ‘I suppose that individuals living in the area need to work out how they fit into this jigsaw as well, and if the activities appeal to them.’

Whilst not appealing to everyone’s interests, barriers to engagement were also recognised as limiting diversity at all levels, lack of time, motivation, mobility issues and caring responsibilities ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.1](#); see also Chapter 6. 3). Addressing stereotypes and fear of otherness by including youth voice and marginalised communities, such as Travellers, was emphasised as important ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.2](#)). Interviewees cited socio-economic barriers to attending events and activities, such as travel costs and availability, especially in remote rural locations, and psychological barriers of who belongs and ‘feel[ing] like they’re not going to fit in’ (C24, [Appendix 5; 7.1.3.3](#)). Recognition of such barriers reflect research on inequalities in volunteering cited in Chapter 6 (Donahue, et al., 2020; Hustinx, et al., 2022), but also general cultural participation research showing socio-economic inequalities across age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, class and access in the UK (Katz-Gerro & Sullivan, 2023; Mak, et al., 2020) and across Europe (López, et al., 2022). Ideas of taking the ecomuseum activities ‘to the people’ where they live (C24) reflect the earliest ecomuseum roots in social-museological activism in the home landscape (Teruggi, 1973).

Again, issues with size and community identity come into play here, along with issues of ecomuseum capacity to deliver (Chapter 6 and above 7.1.2). For example, poor communications and lack of ecomuseum identity amongst partner organisations and wider community hindered the inclusive potential of collaboration in C15’s view, ‘It would be a win-win situation – to get more people involved.’ ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.4](#)). D33 also noted a lack of ecomuseum identity in Cateran’s landscape and the missed opportunity to involve the community in itinerary production, which could have bolstered community cohesion and buy-in and utilised their knowledge with currently ‘lots missing – lots not there.’ ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.5](#)).

D34 expressed the community-orientated aims and practices with Cateran’s programme of workshops. Though acknowledged uncertainty as to whether they appealed only to the ‘committed’ demographics of usual cultural participants, recognising ‘for most people at the

moment, it would be hard to imagine – that they would think [Cateran] – was doing much for them.’ (D34).

Flodden took a conventional approach to community engagement, sending out notices and letting individuals and groups approach them rather than seeking out specific groups to work with, except for schools. A07 explained it was not the ‘remit’ at the time ‘to target specific audiences’ such as learning disability groups, nor did they have the time. Yet, despite this, they had the most inclusive range of community groups actively involved in planning their own events. Echoing the grant assessor (Chapter 6.3), Flodden was perceived by outsiders a model of ‘the most genuine community-based, bottom-up partnership – ever seen’ (S181). Such accolades piqued survey respondent S181’s interest, prompting them to apply for a position with Flodden when the opportunity arose ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.6](#)). Although not everyone felt included, with some events perceived as more exclusive, like the 500th anniversary commemoration service. Living in the tiny settlement at the battle site, local participant A06, who had been pivotal in promoting the battle site prior to and throughout Flodden’s active phase, expressed disappointment at not being invited to this exclusive event for ‘the great and the good’.

Related to inclusiveness is plurality in the stories ecomuseums tell, reflecting communities’ diversity. Conversely, reductive stories promote a simplified narrative of homogeneity.

Pappalardo (2020) cautions community is a diverse, complex and fragile concept where inclusion, particularly of the most vulnerable and marginalised, is a key justice principle in ecomuseum practice. Case studies made some effort to highlight stories missing, excluded or contested, such as women’s histories in Flodden ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.7](#)) and Ecoamgueddfa (Young, 2024). Sensitive land rights issues are visible in Skye’s documenting the Clearances and the new Crofter’s Memorial⁷³, *Sùil nam Brà*, ‘The Eye of the Quernstone’, commemorating the Crofter’s Uprising ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.8](#)). B10 intimates the historic land justice commemorated resonating with empowering the contemporary community with SCT’s community asset transfer of the memorial site, Kilt Rock ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.9](#)).

Across the case studies other histories received less, if any attention, like women’s, children’s and marginalised communities’ experiences, such as Travellers in Skye⁷⁴. Few interviewees

⁷³ Planned for completion and opening in 2025.

⁷⁴ As discussed by Skye’s project manager during 2021 UK & Ireland Ecomuseum Network Conference.

mentioned more diverse ethnic groups as missing in the narrative of community, despite in-field observation evidencing their existence. Cateran's website, for example, displays a photograph of a historic Traveller community, but they've done little to include their story and not collaborated with the contemporary Traveller community ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.10](#))⁷⁵. The inclusivity slogan of 'nothing about us without us' (Charlton, 1998), warns of the potential for tokenism, appropriation and entrenching power inequalities when stakeholder communities are not involved. Nor have Cateran included the large Eastern European population, their contemporary equivalents in the local berry agriculture. It wasn't initially considered part of their remit as 'contemporary history', though D28 added project funding also restricted capacity of what they have been able to achieve so far.

Pressures of volunteer labour time also limit capacity of ambition/achievement. Relationship and trust building takes time and effort to move outside of the usual participants. During my 12-month part-time placement leading Cateran's pilot co-produced community programme, we had virtually no budget⁷⁶, but my hours and the volunteers allowed a slower process of relationship building, consulting, listening to and acting with community members to deliver a small programme based on their interests. This programme and the positive responses and engagement with it reflected community interest in bringing to light hidden histories. It reframed traditional narratives of women's power and oppression through local stories of witch trials, maligned quasi-historical figures, Vanora (Genivere) and Gruoch ingen Boite (Lady MacBeth) and uncovered local Suffragist actions as well as highlighting women's traditional herbal knowledge. Other project strands included connecting and working with a wider base of youth groups, schools, community groups and organisations than previously worked with through intergenerational and cross-community projects.

Contemporary community diversity can result in tensions where case studies aim to safeguard a singular cultural heritage, including language, conflicting with diverse inclusion. Language was shown to be a barrier in Skye's management participation (Chapter 6.3). With Ecoamgueddfa, there are similar tensions in an area attempting to maintain the last stronghold

⁷⁵ When working on the Cateran community co-produced School of the Moon community programme project, (as a Doctoral placement) I was in contact with the local Traveller community and they were keen to explore working together if the opportunity came up. At the time of SotM, the contact was not able to join in sufficiently due to illness and they proposed to postpone until a later opportunity.

⁷⁶ Entire Cateran costs £225. My placement was funded by my PhD funder M4C, a AHRC-funded partnership.

of the Welsh language ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.11](#)). The Welsh language, whilst funded to promote⁷⁷, was also a barrier to increasing youth participation for partner organisations C15 explained, due to the dominance of English-speaking incoming families ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.12](#)). With threatened languages, inclusion, equity and safeguarding can seem at odds and finding a path between them difficult. B10 suggests a dual language approach would promote not only the language but inclusion, understanding and engagement with language, culture and ecomuseum practices ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.13](#)). Yet as C17 expressed ([Appendix 5; 7.1.3.11](#)), there is a financial cost to having everything in translation. A consideration for organisations where funding is tight, yet one that should be planned-in from the beginning. However, dual-language signs and notices do not address complexities around balancing the right to use threatened indigenous, first languages of some community members in meetings with inclusion of English⁷⁸-only speakers. A wicked problem not easily answered and outside the scope of this current thesis.

To achieve inclusion generally, space should be made for more than one narrative, with room for tension and doubt.

7.1.4 Is there an emphasis on process rather than end product? Does the ecomuseum foster active agency and empowerment of the community? Does the ecomuseum influence across community issues?

Not only is inclusion a social justice issue for Pappalardo but also ‘a practical way to increase the effectiveness of the ecomuseum as a community-based process’ (2020, p. 12). The notion of the ecomuseum as a process is fundamental to its positioning as an adaptive catalyst for fundamental social change (eg (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022)). All case study ecomuseums evidence process-focus and goals, rather than just an outcome-focus, to varying degrees. Emphasising continuous participatory engagement, dialogue and planning (section 7.1 – 3 above, and 6.2 & 6.3 previous chapter), learning processes (section 7.2) and promoting networking and collaboration (section 7.3), reflect Dal Santo & Worts’ ‘logic’ of ‘active citizenship’ (2022b, p. 327). One principal way this process-focus manifests is in subtle perception shifts towards systems thinking and working practices. For example, interviewees

⁷⁷ As noted in Chapter 6.1.3, the Welsh language is protected under Welsh law, Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and related standards.

⁷⁸ As equal official language in all the areas, whilst being the dominant threat.

reported their experience working/engaging with their ecomuseum caused fundamental shifts in perceptions of ways of working and how things can be done. This was particularly noticeable amongst those working most closely as staff and partners at Flodden and Ecoamgueddfa. A02 mirrored the sentiments of several participants who reflected how interdisciplinary collaboration and valuing different perspectives and opinions across a community can lead to stronger more relevant work; 'We have to work together and share, - you can do something which is far better together - you build up a much better picture and come up with something which is far more meaningful for people' (A02).

Ecomuseums' ability to bring 'people together' (C16) and 'link up with other organisations (C18) changed people's working practices by presenting a new alternative as C25 concludes, 'It's that idea that there's better ways of working, it doesn't necessarily mean you have to work longer or harder, you just work smarter.' Experiencing alternative collaborative ways of working has been life-changing and revelatory for A02, presenting 'long-term thinking – look[ing] at the wider picture, the enthusiasm of [the team] and their commitment to working with -local people – and involving them'. Long-term thinking is important as it incorporates long-term and future effects, impacting regenerative actions as custodians of the land (see chapters 8.8 and 9.1), alongside consistent and deeper participation. Meaningful connections which foster care and stewardship are wrought not by superficial contact but through consistent and deep exposure (eg (National Trust, 2019; Richardson, et al., 2020). Consistency was noted by several participants as fundamental to efficacy (eg B13) and momentum (E36). This linked to funding constraints as D28 noted (section 7.1.2) reflecting Pappalardo's (2020) acknowledgement of the necessity of economic resources to maintain continuity of processes. B13 insists 'that's where you need jobs. You need development officers or what have you, to deliver all these things.' Like A02, A03's experience working on Flodden changed both her working and personal perceptions of collaborative working and how she thinks about the land around her. Like C25 and A02, A03 has taken this forward beyond the ecomuseum – 'it very definitely has influenced how I go about things now'.

Similarly, A01 discerns the legacy of being process-focused, promoting collaborative inclusion, in the community groups which grew from Flodden, like TILVAS, and in collective community memory of what they achieved together. S343, a community volunteer, strengthens this claim by describing the ways in which their involvement changed their life too, leading to ever-widening involvement and opportunities through TILVAS ([Appendix 5; 7.1.4.1](#)). Changing perceptions, offering space to create alternative and new ways of collaborative community

working reflect Dal Santo & Worts' (2022b) findings at Parabiago Ecomuseum, Italy, where they concluded co-creative and participatory processes were paramount to transformational ecomuseum practice.

The importance of inclusion and collaboration to a process-focus, brings with it the associated tensions discussed in section 7.1.2/3. Whilst acknowledging these difficulties, it was noticeable Cateran had the least emphasis on process rather than outcome in its projects. As discussed previously, Cateran has had the least community collaboration in programming activities. That activities have been less favourably received and engaged with is perhaps reflective of this. For example, low engagement with both phases of the River Detectives paleo-ecological survey (discussed more in section 7.2). Whilst laudable in its ambition, it wasn't steered by community interest, presenting the type of isolated scientific knowledge research has shown to be unhelpful in creating meaningful connections (Lumber, et al., 2017; Common Cause Foundation, 2021). Further, whilst limited local youth engagement was sought on several occasions⁷⁹, full agency in collaboration was not always perceived by those involved. A local youth leader expressed concerns when approached to join the SotM co-production. His group's engagement with an earlier Cateran film project had left the young people disappointed when their weeks of work were invisible in the final film. Their perception was their work wasn't considered of the professional level wanted, leaving them feeling disengaged and devalued (see section 7.2.2). The sentiment expressed suggestive of Facer & Enright's (2016) conflict of logics of quality and democracy. A cardinal rule for any community collaboration should be each contribution is valued in and of itself.

Community inclusion and participation are inextricably linked to the process-focus that is key to effective ecomuseum practice. Through effective practices, ecomuseums facilitate community and individual agency and empowerment for 'the general interest – common good [] and wellbeing' (Dal Santo & Worts, 2022b, p. 328). Bowden and Cielielska (2015) conclude ecomuseums collaborative working processes engender new skills and capabilities across all

⁷⁹ Most engagement was with the same small youth groups in the town of Alyth, a focus of much of Cateran's activities, rather than across the ecomuseum area. In part this is due to some of the volunteers also volunteering with Alyth youth groups. Examples include a small group of young people invited to attend the opening, (though not involved in the creation) of Turning Points, a 50 ft long timeline exhibition in Alyth documenting 20,000 years of climate change as part of Cateran's events around COP 26. Children from a local primary school, Kirkmichael, the only young people external to Alyth directly worked with at the point of interview, were invited to attend the launch of The Great Awakening event, also linked to COP 26.

community actors in negotiating cross-sector relationships. This is echoed by respondents viewing ecomuseums as communities taking agency into their own hands, ‘saying that we can look after our own heritage in our own space, and we have to start trusting each other to do that’ (A03). This was thought a ‘stronger’ alternative to ‘grand institutions’ who ‘don’t have all the answers – [or] the capacity’ (A03). 18 (43%) and 21 (50%) of interviewees respectively, across all case studies, believed ecomuseum processes fostered community agency and empowerment through connection and collaboration. However, it was acknowledged in some, Ecoamgueddfa and particularly Cateran and SVR, that this was a still-evolving process yet to achieve its potential. Low community awareness of the ecomuseums again hinders their ability to empower agency. C18 expresses doubt ‘[if someone] had an idea for a project or something - that [the community] would think of coming to Ecoamgueddfa.’ This contrasts with C17 and C21’s earlier assertion communities can and have approached Ecoamgueddfa for support (section 7.1.2). The examples given⁸⁰ suggest knowledge of Ecoamgueddfa, e.g. through knowing someone directly involved, forms an unintentional barrier to accessing its resources more widely.

Yet empowering community in the face of State or institutional indifference/inaction was expressed by interviewees as a key driver in each case study. Growing directly out of an initial heritage community event, in Skye, recent commissioning of works on the local harbour is the fruition of a 100-year community battle for improvements ([Appendix 5; 7.1.4.2](#)). Flodden’s founders felt as communities located at Scotland and England’s margins, amid 2008’s financial crash and the Scottish Referendum, hoping for local government or large organisations to commemorate the anniversary ‘would be whistling in the wind’, necessitating them ‘to just get on with it – and create a vehicle’ themselves (A01). From inception, this ‘vehicle’ aimed to facilitate collaboration between individuals and groups to generate and deliver their own ideas ‘all those different ways of people coming forward. Saying we want to play our part in all of this’ (A01). Importantly, it provided a ‘catalyst’ for communities to ask themselves ‘what do we need?’, ‘galvanis[ing]’ community action with improvements to village halls, church carparks and access paths (A01).

Many ecomuseums utilise awareness raising, knowledge exchange and learning, to increase capacity and so empower community agency. By delivering a digital skills learning programme,

⁸⁰ For example, the support creating a village trail, maps and QR codes was in the village one of the Ecoamgueddfa staff live.

Ecoamgueddfa's 'overall aim – [was] to empower and give local communities the skills to – promote the area for themselves' rather than depending on external and costly PR companies (C23).

Empowering agency and capacity building are intertwined in the case studies' non-traditional museal practices that blur boundaries between the ecomuseum and its co-constituent community, reflecting Worts & Dal Santo's (2022) Inside/Outside model. Widening experimentation to activate change. Chapter sections 4.3, 6.2 and 6.3 highlighted how Ecoamgueddfa and, particularly, Skye exemplify the practice of an entangled whole, influencing across community issues of human and environmental wellbeing, housing, jobs, education, equity, and partnership working. Skye's aforementioned harbour works an example, as is the ecomuseum/Trust's involvement in building six affordable homes, business units and a doctors/nurses surgery. Each project calibrated to support a viable local population and services, including the school, that would 'never have been provided' otherwise (B09, [Appendix 5; 7.1.4.3](#)). Care-ful contracting of local trades, skills, employees, and using local materials where possible, add to creating and sustaining employment in the area and community entrepreneurship opportunities.

Less direct than Skye's infrastructure building, Ecoamgueddfa's managing team, particularly C21, express a fluid and encompassing approach to what comes within the ecomuseum remit. The difficulty of describing his role reflective of the blurred boundaries of 'really complex' practices across the peninsula ([Appendix 5; 7.1.4.4](#)). These complex practices include a focus on securing employment for local people, retaining local skills and talent, directly as ecomuseum employees or through supporting partner sites to flourish and work better together. Additionally, funding is sought for environmental projects. Like the pioneering payment-for-outcomes project along the coastal path, encouraging traditional farming practices and increasing biodiversity, woven together with Ecoamgueddfa awareness raising and promotion of natural and cultural heritage ([Appendix 5; 7.1.4.5](#)). Additionally, Ecoamgueddfa's promotion of slow/regenerative tourism across the shoulder season⁸¹ benefits local communities through increased viable year-round services and employment, increasing mortgage eligibility and strengthening communities vulnerable to loss of services such as shops and schools. ([Appendix 5; 7.1.4.6](#)).

⁸¹ Spring and autumn months outside of the main summer season

This enfolding of ‘an entire living culture’ (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022, p. 78) within ecomuseum purview⁸² reflects systems-thinking in the way Skye and Ecoamgueddfa connect to, interact and collaborate within a networked whole to achieve greater impact across communities. Thinking and acting within a bigger picture and a longer timeframe reinforces collective impact in addressing wicked problems, increasing opportunities and leverage points (Stroh, 2015). Doing so gives communities greater leverage in negotiations with ‘different scales of power’ in complex relationships with cross-sector and state actors that can render ecomuseums and their communities ‘subservient participants’ (Brulon Soares, 2021, p. 449). Whilst all case studies state aims to address social, environmental and economic issues (see Chapter 6), SVR and Cateran are still evolving and not yet directly acting across community issues such as infrastructure. Though Cateran, positioning itself as a museum of rapid transition, has ambitions to influence broader cultural change, it hasn’t yet sought to network in a way that would facilitate greater impact. Flodden, whilst unique in both its singular historical focus and short-term active period, evidences cross-sector/community equity (see chapter 6.3; Joicey, 2018) and catalysing community change and development as discussed above.

As Brulon Soares (2021) notes, negotiations with local and state actors affect ecomuseums’ abilities to act across community issues and differing political conditions across the UK’s nations afford different conditions. As mentioned in Chapter 6.1, Ecoamgueddfa benefits from Wales Future Well-Being Act. Presented as an exemplary roadmap in the UK’s People Plan for Nature (peoplesplanfornature, 2023), the Act sets favourable governmental backing for a cross-cutting ecomuseum ethos as conveyed by several interviewees. Skye has made use of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which promotes Community Asset Transfer, supporting community rights to manage land and buildings. Such asset transfers come with financial and labour costs/responsibilities, which could inhibit some community groups from considering such tasks. Funding, as shown (e.g. section 7.1.2), is a limiting factor across case study practices.

Acting across community issues underscores the inter-relationality of social, economic and environmental dimensions. Each imbricated and co-creative/effective of the others, just as, and related to the fact, the key ecomuseum practices, dimensions and characteristics examined in Chapters 6 – 9 intertwine. This inter-relationality directly impacts sustainability and regenerative

⁸² Or perhaps better viewed the other way round – the enfolding of the ecomuseum within an entire living culture, the essence of an integral and integrated museum.

processes, as further discussed in Chapter 9. The notion of systems-thinking as a network is also touched on in section 7.3 below.

7.1.5 Issues and barriers

This chapter section has considered community inclusion within the case study ecomuseum processes, which are shown to affect relevance, sustainability and social justice. Barriers to full and democratic inclusion include a lack of ecomuseum identity and/or understanding of the concept and aim in their communities (7.1.2 & 7.1.3) and even within the steering groups and partner sites (Chapter 6.2) ([Appendix 5; 7.1.5.1](#)). More than half the interviewees expressed difficulty understanding and explaining the term and concept and attested to general community ignorance of their local ecomuseum as D27 expressed, ‘I suspect if you asked 1000 people here, probably 950 will never have heard of the ecomuseum. Which is not the fault of the ecomuseum. It's not been around for long’. In part, this is down to ecomuseums’ uncommon use in the UK and a need to increase concept understanding so the term ‘will catch on eventually’ (D30). A03 speculated ‘the word works. We just need to change how people think of it’, increasing awareness and perceptions of what ecomuseums can be, whilst acknowledging ‘we’ve got a long way to go with that.’

Not striving for full inclusion risks irrelevance and an unjust heritage approach (De Varine & Filipe, 2012; Pappalardo, 2020; Perkin, 2010; Brown, 2017). Interviewees expressed feelings of alienation and disenfranchisement in the face of perceived predatory practices including external top-down management and extracting knowledge for touristic development over broader community benefit (Chapter 6.3 and 7.1. 1). E39 expressed similar fatigue and cynicism that C25 encountered (Chapter 6.3), ‘But, (sighs) you got the impression it’s “here we go again” - You know, somebody else is coming in and doing something.’ Such feelings were exasperated by a lack of clear communication and continuity when projects lapsed and ideas and promises were not fulfilled. ‘I thought it was all take and no give. They wanted to find out what we knew about the area, and we wanted to know what they knew about the area that we didn't know’ (E38), leading to disappointment and feeling left ‘high and dry’ (E39). The issues of ‘stop-start’ (D34) activity (for example due to funding or staffing issues) loses community momentum and goodwill, with worries community effort would be wasted, ‘it'd be such a shame for it to sort of like go flat when there is so much to be done, you know.’ (E36).

C24 captures community members' fears about ecomuseum focus on touristic development in communities already blighted by tourism straining infrastructure, housing and hollowing out

communities ([Appendix 5; 7.1.5.2](#)). Tensions over who benefits from ecomuseum development were touched upon in Chapter 6.2 and 7.1.1 and acknowledged in all case studies. This included perceived unfairness of funding allocation, ‘little bits of jealousy’ (D28), and the environmental and social damage from tourism development.

Mitigation measures undertaken by the case studies centre around inclusion, ‘to encourage locals... and then they would feel that there's something in it for them’ (C24). Such as including plural contemporary and historic voices, bringing into the ecomuseum fold those excluded or contested, in the stories they tell but also in decision making and sensitivity to plural perspectives, capital works to repair or avoid environmental damage and empowering community agency to manage their own place. In general, the consensus of those with concerns was community benefits should be the priority, ‘preserving the story’ for the community rather than ‘promoting it’ externally, as E37 says. Corsane’s (2006) constant re-analysis and adaptation help as shown in the case of Skye (Brown, 2017). But it is difficult to please everybody all the time. Even Skye still has ‘isolated bits of negativity’ (B09), like the crofter who opposed encouraging people onto his land and cut down an interpretation/direction board.

Tensions related to funding are repeatedly flagged in Chapter 6 and above as a limiting factor on the case studies ambitions and achievements. This tension mingles with the effort of being community-led; the difficulties of volunteer labour and continuity of engagement have also been highlighted. Together these add, as Worts (2006) acknowledges, to the stresses of achieving broad community inclusion and perception. This research’s evidence suggests raising community awareness of the ecomuseums and their activities would improve community perception of their existence and the benefits they do and could bring. But as concluded in Chapter 6, more effort needs to be made to fully embrace inclusive and open community-leadership. For A03, the space opened in doing so can be fundamental.

Its encouraging people to eventually to want to take on the responsibility, if you had said that at the beginning people would have run a mile, but you slowly experience being part of the community and then little light bulbs go off then people might “oh actually, I will do this thing” and they maybe start taking on responsibility without actually realising that’s what they are doing and to me that’s what stewardship is about, actually people just gradually go “hey I want to care for this thing and be part of it”. (A03)

7.2 Learning

Chapter 3.3 drew attention to epistemic inequalities of entrenched place, heritage, land and ecological knowledge hierarchies that marginalise understanding, meaning-making and ways of knowing of certain groups as inferior, whilst others are held as superior (e.g. (Sather-wagstaff, 2016; Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016; Haraway, 1988; Go, 2017; Smith, 2006). Whilst pluralistic valuing and sharing of knowledge is shown to lead to more effective adaptation and resilient social and environmental outcomes (Bhowmik, et al., 2020; Owen, 2021). Chapters 2 and 4 indicated how the integral museum and ecomuseums have been held up as nodes of power redistribution through levelling knowledge hierarchies including specialist and lay knowledge (e.g. (Teruggi, 1973; Davis, 2019). Worts highlights ecomuseum potential to escape the expert trap so often afflicting cultural institutions like traditional museums, by promoting pluralistic ways of knowing and values, and elevating cultural participation beyond mere leisure-time pursuit to foundational to ‘human consciousness and responsible action’ for both human and environmental wellbeing (Worts, 2006, p.127). Whilst Zapletal (2012) highlights the ecomuseum's position to promote contemporary use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in community-based-solutions to environmental and social issues. Reference to the centrality of learning and knowledge exchange to the case study ecomuseums has been made throughout Chapter 6 and above, section 7.1.4. This section considers the ways in which the case study sites embrace knowledge exchange in a democratic and just manner, so moving towards a rights-focused community-based regenerative path (Pappalardo, 2020; McGhie, 2022; Navajas Corral & Fernández, 2022).

7.2.1 Is local knowledge at multiple levels valorised?

You know, there are individuals in the community who have a deep knowledge of the past and the present. .. there are ones who have encyclopaedic knowledge. - it's very important to try and use it when you can and record it. (B09).

B09 emphasises the importance of safeguarding, promoting and valuing local cultural knowledge, including histories, memories and TEK, argued as fundamental for ecomuseums to support regenerative futures (Zapletal, 2012; Navajas Corral & Fernández, 2022). With the case study organisations, valuing local knowledge is central to their approach. There are dangers of predatory use of local knowledge for touristic development when there is little benefit to the community of origin, as discussed in section 7.1. However, when the aim is to preserve, pass-on, be interrogated and used by the local community for their benefit in strengthening social

cohesion, participation, integration and human and environmental wellbeing, the value is immense. For Navajas Corral & Fernández (2022), to achieve this, encouraging the community's own understanding, respect and value of their knowledge is central to opening space for more democratic knowledge sharing. A dimension of inclusion and plurality, local knowledge comes at all levels, including elders and those less heard, such as children's perspectives. Local knowledge also includes that of local people acknowledged through skill, specialism and/or education/training/profession as experts in their fields. This includes local specialists like educators, artists, storytellers, historians, geologists, poets, herbalists and palaeontologists described by each case study, that blend traditional and contemporary knowledge. Retaining and utilising such local expertise in steering groups, management, and direct and indirect employment was evidenced across case studies in Chapter 6.

Skye again leads the group with its well-developed and numerous ways in which local knowledge is valorised and integrated into its everyday practices. Including knowledge and perspective gathering in planning, site interpretation and decision-making to numerous activities that valorise, share and record community knowledge including language, placenames, histories, stories, ecological knowledge and sustainable traditional practices ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.1](#)). Skye's practices reflect Navajas Corral & Fernández's (2022) ecomuseum ideal endogenous path to sustainability, acknowledging that 'this community is intrinsically linked to its environment and the methodology of everything they do anyway is actually with the environment in mind - there is a lot of understanding about the environment built into this community' (B08).

As noted, Ecoamgueddfa has worked with farmers to reinstate traditional farming methods and so reducing farming costs, pollution and habitat degradation and boosting biodiversity. In the peri-urban setting of SVR, such TEK may seem more removed from daily life, but was sought in discussions with residents, including the Traveller community, in its primary phase ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.2](#)). During SVR restart talks, members of the Commoners Association had been approached for collaboration. E36 expressed being 'absolutely in awe' at the knowledge they hold collectively 'of their land and – old laws. – and layers of the land – all the history in the farming of this area'. E40 echoed esteem for incorporating Commoners' knowledge to address both ecological and antisocial issues in a community participatory moor restoration programme. Yet both these instances of knowledge holding in SVR are undermined by the lack of communication and clarity that seemingly dogs SVR practices due to external management, as discussed in Chapter 6. E36 expressed not knowing where those recorded interviews are

now; their use unfulfilled, whilst the promise of further collaboration is yet to begin (see section 7.2.2).

Flodden evidenced equal valuing of local knowledge across all spheres, from actively seeking out local knowledge within the steering committee to realising community ideas (see chapters 6 and 7.1). Outside specialists were only brought where no local ones could be found⁸³. An ethos of explicit epistemic equity was explicitly and implicitly referenced by interviewees and practices, seeking local specialists and encouraging and valuing plural opinions and all participation as equally central to its success ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.3](#)) and credited with changing peoples' long-term working practices post project as noted section 7.1.4. This reflects Stevens et al.'s (2010) view that equitable working relationships between mainstream heritage specialists and community knowledge holders as experts lead to benefits on both sides. More comprehensive knowledge is gained as knowledge and skills pass in both directions. Mainstream specialists learn and fill knowledge gaps from community specialists, who are better placed to interpret and collate their community's knowledge, and communities gain skills through training and access to professional/formal advice and resources. This should include matters such as copyright and raising revenue from their 'collections'. Most importantly, in 'handing on' power, it acknowledges and empowers the community as capable custodians of its own heritage (Stevens, et al., 2010).

The concept of the 'knowledge gatherer' was used by the LIVE partnership. Within Ecoamgueddfa, 'gatherers' were mostly commissioned local specialists delivering specific activities or outcomes, such as artists and filmmakers (see also section 7.3 below), and local residents enrolled as 'coastodians' (see Chapter 9.1.3). However, on the LIVE Irish side, they were mostly external experts brought into the project to facilitate 'community and individual research' (C25). Echoing Navajas Corral & Fernández (2022) finding that communities often don't value their own knowledge, C25 explained how facilitators had to overcome local self-depreciation where 'they don't talk about it because they feel "oh, if I don't have a degree in ecology, I can't talk about plants", you know.' Sharing knowledge with an external 'expert' can be more intimidating than sharing it with the local community, reflecting an internalisation of privileging formal professional knowledge Stevens et al. (2010) noted as a barrier to equal partnerships. Viewing local knowledge as 'indigenous knowledge', C25 expressed the LIVE

⁸³ For example, the lead archaeologist for TILVAS was from the University of Newcastle, but there was a local archaeology lead for YAC and schools workshops etc.

team's awareness of the hazards of manifesting dominant power hierarchies and attempts to mitigate potential extractive practices from an ethical perspective ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.4](#)).

Valuing local knowledge doesn't automatically result in equity if it's not perceived as beneficial by locals, or worse, has a negative impact, as when used to promote predatory tourism.

Reflecting Desportes (2024) pitfalls of participatory research and knowledge co-production, the potential for locals to feel exploited was hinted at by E38 and E39 in section 7.1.5. Further, whilst the ecomuseums themselves may strive to valorise and include local knowledge, collaborating external specialists don't always meet the same standard where power inequalities privileging formal knowledge can impact. The clash of external 'expert' versus local knowledge was evidenced by several interviewees describing instances of local knowledge being dismissed or the 'expert's' dubious analysis and/or insight into a local site or story. E37 recalls external archaeologists were judged inferior to community expertise, expressing the incomparable knowledge accumulated over decades of familiarity to outsider superficial insight ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.5](#)). Similar incidences were remembered with amusement by B09 ([Appendix 5; 7.2.1.6](#)). In neither case were the external specialists corrected, 'out of politeness' (B09).

Whether politeness indicated a reluctance to call out an 'expert' or a level of cynicism and resignation to yet another outsider thinking they know better was uncertain, but either reflects the tensions around the notion and value of 'expertise' and AHD. These occurrences underline the importance of valuing community knowledge through horizontal methodologies, not to supplant external expertise but to combine, gaining a fuller picture, greater understanding, and better outcomes. Marrying multiple levels of knowledge and experience is foundational to ecomuseum philosophy (Ecoheritage, 2023), a point returned to in the following section.

C25 highlighted 'another side' of valuing local knowledge: sensitivity, respect, listening and acting on what is said, such as not promoting particular sites the community want to keep quiet. This reflects similar sensitivity to knowledge shared evidenced by B09 (Chapter 6.2) and A01 (Chapter 8.8).

The intergenerationality of knowledge exchange is important. B12 spoke of the importance of sharing knowledge between the older and younger generations. 'Definitely, because the older generation do have a lot of knowledge about the local area. And if it's not passed down, then it'll likely be lost. It'd be really disappointing if it was lost.' B08 thought intergenerational opportunities 'put more importance' on the knowledge that community elders held. The importance of intergenerational participation is discussed further below.

7.2.2 Are they sites and catalysts of transdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange and skills sharing?

Ecomuseums' ability to promote diverse understanding and knowledge can encourage foundational change (Worts, 2006). To affect a pluralist knowledge base, the sharing of perspectives, research, knowledge and skills is vital.

At the simplest level, each case study researches, collates and shares transdisciplinary knowledge through traditional media, interpretation boards, printed materials, websites, social media and so on. This includes bringing together, often for the first time, community knowledge, as well as research and the generation and sharing of new knowledge. Table 7.1 illustrates the different dissemination platforms each case study uses.

Table 7.1 Case study ecomuseum basic information sharing platforms. Key: ✓ = has to varying extent; ✗ = does not have. Social Media – Facebook (FB), Instagram (I), X (X, Twitter), YouTube (Y), Blog (B); Contact Address – Postal address (P), Telephone (T), Email (E), Online contact form (OF).

	Interpretation boards, signage, QR codes	Printed information materials, leaflets, maps etc	Official Website	Digital itineraries, maps, learning resources etc	Social Media X, Facebook Instagram	Links to local organisations, providers, crafts people etc.	Contact Information Given
Skye	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ I, Y	✓ (range local businesses, accommodation, makers, museum, services)	✓ (P, T, E)
Flodden	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ FB, X now defunct	✓ (linked ecomuseum sites)	✓ (OF)
Ecoamgueddfa	✗	✓ (limited, 2022 onwards)	✓	✓	✓ FB, X, I, Y, B	✓ (partner sites only)	✗
Cateran	✗	✓ (limited dispersal)	✓	✓	✓ FB, X, I, B	✓ (accommodation food, cycle hire)	✓ (OF)
SVR	✗	✓ very limited, nothing post 2019	✗ small section on MPA site	✗	✗ limited blogs on MPA website nothing after 2020, except Skyline walk date flag '23 & '24	✗	✗ but MPA P, E given

These include both active and passive learning. For example, active includes participatory workshops, training and community research projects. Passive includes reading materials. The ecomuseums noted as having most work to do in terms of community identity, communications and inclusion, also make least use of traditional platforms in terms of physical presence visible in the locality, such as signage and printed materials. The lack of explicit contact information is another factor, creating a barrier to dialogical interaction. SVR has limited presence across platforms, noticeably adjunct to MPA's online presence. This reflects the project's current stagnation and external management risks, as one of many projects, lacking the drive and dedication of internal community management. E35 confirmed a website is planned, but as an end-product. This ordering and lack of visibility inhibits both awareness and participation in the ecomuseum process but also means when continuity issues strike, such as currently facing SVR, the ecomuseum all but ceases to exist, and work done lost to the community.

However, SVR had supported production of a book. Created by SVR-commissioned artist, Chatton Baker, Lorelines (2019) combines field research notes, art, poetry and writings inspired by the area's archaeology and folklore. It also records SVR community engagement projects, including school music and play productions inspired by the same themes. The sharing of knowledge gathered through books and/or papers publication is evidenced in several of the case studies. Flodden (2019) published an account of its activities, noted in Section 7.1.2. Ecoamgueddfa published a paper chronicling its founding (Young, et al., 2016) and the recent book centring women's voices of place (Young, 2024). Cateran also published a paper, sharing its practices and ambition to foster rapid transition for climate adaptation (Cooper, 2022). The paper was presented at the 2021 Ecomuseums and Climate Change conference and published in the proceedings (Borrelli, et al., 2022 b). Sharing knowledge and practices through conferences or public presentations, like the UK and Ireland Ecomuseum Network discussed section 7.2.3, is another way the ecomuseums enact knowledge exchange.

Whilst four out of the five case studies have an official website and social media, too much reliance on those alone to reach diverse members of their communities can be misplaced. Research shows museum websites and social media are largely consumed (80%) by the usual museum audience (white, middle class), who already like museums and/or those already know the museum (Parry, 2023; Brooke, 2021). Including access information, interpretation and especially, learning resources on digital platforms increases the potential for wider access and use, within and outwith the community. However, efforts must be made to open the

ecomuseum to wider communities by raising awareness of its existence and opportunities offered, or that potential is wasted if not known nor used.

12 interviewees (28%) mentioned the value of digital platforms for networking, co-promotion, community and visitor access. Eight expressed positive results, such as C21 noting better search engine visibility for the locale and visitor offer. Search engine optimisation techniques (SEO's) can boost findability, where key terms and links promote targeted online traffic. Discussions with participants suggest targeted traffic is more visitor-focused than community-focused. One survey respondent, S072, noted accessing site and event information via Ecoamgueddfa's social media and website. But echoing Parry (2023) and Brookes (2021) contention, they were associated with a partner organisation, so already knew about it. As expected from a media manager, C23 reflects museum digital best practice ideals (Arrigoni & Galani, 2019; Parry, 2023) in highlighting dialogic potential, 'it has to be social, to be a two-way conversation. [It's] a great platform in order to portray the real kind of feel of the area, for audiences locally and worldwide as well.' How much the case study platforms move beyond information dissemination to true dialogue, resulting in dynamic, collaborative interpretation and civic listening of the type Arrigoni & Galani (2019) envision is less evidenced and warrants further investigation.

Cassidy et al. (2023) highlight the ability of digital technologies in heritage work to create active networks that increase global knowledge, social cohesion and understanding. A similar understanding of use to Ecoamgueddfa's, founded first as a wholly digital platform to co-promote the partner organisation and prioritising digital skills training within its partnership (see 7.1.4). Digital proficiency of staff is a limiting factor in small or community heritage organisations with limited resources (Cassidy, 2023). However, digital inequalities⁸⁴ affect community members too, giving rise to inclusion issues and power imbalances, particularly affecting lower socio-economic groups and the elderly (Neal, 2015). Moreover, the often vaunted environmentally friendly aspects of digital use over hard copy, as by Ecoamgueddfa (Young, et al., 2016), are now being questioned as the true environmental costs of digitalisation are reassessed (Santarius, et al., 2023; Truong, 2022; UN Environment Programme, 2024; Stokel-Walker, 2024).

⁸⁴ Inequalities to access, both physically and in familiarity of use, create a barrier to participation, particularly amongst the elderly and low socioeconomic groups (Neal, 2015).

D30, D33, C17 and Peter Davis, 33% of participants mentioning digital platforms, had doubts about their efficacy as practised, with too much reliance on using them alone to reach people ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.1](#)), resulting in keeping ‘people in the dark’ (D33). Even ecomuseum interested and connected, social media generation D30, confesses ‘it doesn’t cross my mind’ to look at their ecomuseum’s digital platforms.

Beyond basic sharing of information, the ecomuseums evidence numerous ways in which they facilitate research, knowledge and skills sharing. Table 7.2 illustrates the breadth of themes that the case studies have included in participatory activities (see Appendix 5.1 for more detailed list).

*Table 7.2 Participatory activities case study ecomuseums have provided or facilitated at some point. Table illustrates the range of themes and disciplines. It does not indicate scale, frequency, quality or level of engagement. Colour Key: dark purple = provided, light purple = planned; * indicates a small number of SVR’s resources are available through the MPA website. Mid-blue = Provided during School of the Moon (SotM) pilot programme activity co-produced as part of my placement; light-blue = SotM planned youth exchange between Cateran and SVR area youth groups. Planning at advanced stage, but SVR area youth group ceased provision, so project halted. ** As of Autumn 2024, Perth & Kinross Council closed Alyth Museum which hosted Cateran’s Ecomuseum displays, so at time of writing it no longer has a physical hub.*

	Skye	Flodden	Ecoamgueddfa	Cateran	SVR
Exhibitions					
Guided Walks/Events/Workshops					
Archaeology					
Astronomy					
Geology					
Ecology, Nature, Plant Lore, foraging and language					
Art/Craft/Skills, Cultural Traditions					
Cultural Festivals and Traditions, inclu. food					
Storytelling					
Oral History					
Talks, online and in person					
Music and dance					
Photography/Film					
Poetry					
Theatrical performance					

Physical museum/gallery incorporated in sites list**					
School and Youth Work					
Schools Workshops					
School longer-term projects					
School Learning Resources					
Youth Exchange					
Youth Groups Direct or collaboration					
Active travel					
Cycle Routes + guided rides					
Walking routes					
Sports Sessions					
Public transport routes					
Training					
Language (placenames, language & environment etc)					
Digital Skills					
Research Skills					
Traditional skills (eg dry stone walling)					
Archaeological skills					
Citizen Science Collab					
Ecology					
Other					
Linking community to other communities worldwide					
Driving Routes					
Direct action (habitat & path creation, litter pick					
Publications including books					
Resources online, including films, learning materials					*

The case study ecomuseums fulfil Wort's (2016) concept as facilitators of multiple ways of knowing and learning, raising awareness of and connection to the inter-related bio-cultural landscape (a theme focused on in Chapter 8). Transdisciplinarity is central to achieving a holistic understanding of the intra/inter-relations of cultural and natural heritage. In combining disciplines, like creative arts, folklore, language, ecological knowledge and conservation in single projects, the case studies remove barriers between academic disciplines, specialist and lay knowledge as Davis (2019) calls for. This provides multiple pathways to engagement as A03 recognises, 'it means that people can access the story in different ways, not everyone wants to read a history book, but somebody else might learn the story through a song or the art.' Knowledge and skills are shared through both formal and informal modes. Informal channels include simple day-to-day social transactions between those involved in the ecomuseum, including participants in previous learning activities, who share what they've learnt with other community members and visitors. D26 voiced this, 'I speak to everybody that comes - I pass on information. And I know - they pass that information on too.' Similarly, C23 stated an implicit aim of Ecoamgueddfa workshops was to start a chain reaction of knowledge flow, 'for [the community] to be able to use for their own, - if you had somebody visiting. Because then you could tell them "oh did you know this"...'. However, both respondents highlighted the use in developing visitor offers.

Formal knowledge exchange and sharing was evidenced in the provision of talks, guided walks, events, workshops, and longer-term training courses and participatory projects. The most effective opportunities for knowledge sharing are engagement with local schools and young people, community workshops/projects encouraging intergenerational and cross-community sharing and research, and inter-community-specialist/academic exchange. Each of these can overlap. Commock & Newell (2023) highlight citizen science projects as a useful example of connecting local museums, communities, wider scientific research and Agenda 2030.

Working with schools and young people, was evidenced in each case study. Brown & Brown (2023) argue museum and heritage organisations should invest in their young people as the holders of transformative potentiality and our future. To achieve this, the strength of community museums and ecomuseums to promote knowledge exchange between young people and the intergenerational community is highlighted. School engagement varies across case studies. From Skye's close long-term collaboration with its single small primary school to workshop/session provision and project-based engagement across much larger areas and number of schools in Ecoamgueddfa, Flodden, and SVR, to limited engagement with Cateran.

All case studies, except Cateran, have created school resources, physical and digital, for independent use by teachers and pupils. SVR created education resources for the community museum.

Doing so increases capacity, providing knowledge, resources and opportunities for educators and young people, filling gaps in provision and teachers' knowledge and easing time pressures ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.2](#)). E36 described how learning programs stimulate awareness and excitement of local holistic heritage and sense of place. B08 agreed it fostered a 'stronger sense of identity' ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.3](#)). Combining cultural and natural heritage learning inside and outside of the classroom, the ecomuseums offer local history and archaeology site visits (Skye, Flodden, SVR, Cateran), language (Skye, Ecoamgueddfa), ecological knowledge/projects like meadow and tree planting, boardwalk/path creation/maintenance (Skye, SVR, Ecoamgueddfa), and skills such as dry-stone walling (Ecoamgueddfa, Skye and SVR).

The Martesana Ecomuseum, Milan, Italy, lists six schools among its member organisations involved in planning and delivering engagement and learning (Bricchetti, 2022). Of the case studies, only SVR had a working local teacher in their steering group. Having such close connection allowed insider insight into what was needed and wanted by teaching staff. Describing the planning of educational packs E36 explained 'it was collaborative, I did most of the lesson plan, MPA created like the actual prop part of it.' Additionally, the children were involved in the creation of materials through a process of trialling and feeding back their perspectives. Whilst not a member of Skye's management group, local teacher B11 noted their close relationship with the ecomuseum afforded similar collaborative opportunities such as trialling the Gaelic language environment resource pack *An Cladach*, 'On the shore'. Ecoamgueddfa's education officer and trained teacher C22, nurtures similar close relations with local schools, involving them in the co-creation of the Big 5 maps (Fig 7.2).

community and school involvement opportunities in archaeology and palaeontology projects. Flodden likewise incorporated young people with professional and wider community archaeology activities. For the School of the Moon (SotM) programme, Cateran facilitated a renowned professional poet and a local poet to work with two schools on separate projects focusing on sense of place and the environment. Ecoamgueddfa and SVR both commissioned professional artists to work with young people to deliver key projects⁸⁵. Young interviewee B12 explains the community activities created ‘quite a buzz – encourag[ing] the passing of information between people.’, prompting all ‘generations and different people in their community to share stories’.

School engagement in all areas during the first data collection tranche had been impacted by Covid restrictions. However, most youth engagement was normally with primary schools, which it was generally agreed was easier to facilitate. Although D28 and D30 viewed all school and youth engagement difficult due to restrictions on teachers' time and inflexible curriculums. Cateran's limited engagement reflected these notions, particularly D28's negative view of the effort-to-results ratio of doing so ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.5](#)). The latter should be considered alongside the youth leaders' comments on young people not feeling valued in section 7.1.4. Tensions arise from mismatched perceptions, motivations and expectations. As elsewhere where Cateran have struggled with engagement issues, the solution could lie in having more endogenous programming, understanding the importance of allowing for and valuing all contributions, varying time commitments and standards across all ages⁸⁶. Young people are underrepresented in cultural organisations with prejudice on both sides creating barriers (Icarus, 2015; Spinks, 2007). To move beyond youth participation being Watson & Waterston's (2010) tick-box exercise, the right opportunities and realistic expectations should be offered (Vinspired, 2018).

Secondary school and older youth were generally considered by interviewees harder to engage, due to pressures of curriculums, exams and competing interests on teenagers' time and fledgling freedoms. However, C22, who'd led successful projects with secondary-age participants working with local craftspeople and specialists, advises a different approach is

⁸⁵ The aforementioned SVR music, puppetry and animation projects (section 7.2.2) and Ecoamgueddfa's Big 5 maps (section 7.1.2 and above)

⁸⁶ This applies to all volunteers if to reach wider demographics beyond the usual older, often retired, age groups who have the time to commit.

needed, taking the time and effort to build relationships and accepting youth engagement will be less consistent ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.6](#)). Longer-term interactions allowing for relationship building was evidenced as beneficial across age groups, including younger children. ‘You could build up quite a relationship’ A07 said, encouraging deeper interactions and meaningful ‘conversations about Why are these places important? How do we look after them?’ To become meaningful, fostering identity and belonging, experiences need to be built on B13 advises,

It's no use having the best day you ever had when you were 10, you need to keep having these experiences. - And that's where the hard graft comes in. It needs to be continued, needs to keep going, it needs to be continuous. (B13)

Interim data on Cateran’s 2nd stage project activities (McNaughton, 2024) again reflect the vital need for time and resources to be factored into plans for relationship building and continuity, particularly with youth work, but more widely applicable. A lack of community inclusion at the planning stage, funding cycle pressures and staffing issues seriously blighted engagement and continuity with Cateran’s youth engagement strands.

Alongside opportunities for knowledge exchange with UHI, a rare opportunity was offered to Skye to collaborate with the EU-LAC Bi-regional Youth Exchange programme⁸⁷, which is the subject of Brown & Brown’s (2023) paper. SCT’s board members and Skye’s programme manager collaborated in organising the exchange in conjunction with Brown & Brown from the University of St. Andrews. Six young people from Skye took part, engaging in a programme of research, learning and travelling to Costa Rica, along with young people from Portugal. Wider community were involved on the return visit to Staffin, hosting and participating in cultural events and explorations for the group. Interviewee B12, was a youth participant and representative with a delegation presenting the project at an academic conference in the Caribbean. B12 exemplified the project's stated aims, to foster empathy, nurture critical thinking and a mindset of empowerment to create change, explaining how it had deepened his understanding and connection to his own place and his way of thinking about others (see

⁸⁷ A three-country community-ecomuseum exchange programme collaboratively arranged and led on the Scottish side by University of St Andrew’s staff along with an advisory board made up of prominent community and ecomuseum experts, including Hugues de Varine, Peter Davis and Teresa Morales. Luís Raposo amongst others. The exchange involved young people, aged 15 – 18. and their communities from community and ecomuseums in Portugal, Costa Rica and Skye, Scotland. 90 young people from Coast Rica (11 selected for return travel visits), and 6 each from Portugal and Skye. The Bi-Regional Youth Exchange project was funded by the Horizon 2020 project. (Brown & Brown, 2023).

Chapter 8.8.3) and his subsequent involvement with the Community Trust. The benefits of taking part in such an exchange are great, touching on themes of community identity, cohesion and achieving Agenda 2030 vision (Brown & Brown, 2023, McGhie 2022), but are rarely afforded small communities alone on such a scale without academic interest, backing and funding access.

Figure 7.3 gives 10 principles for community-university partnerships drawn from Bristol University's 10-year AHRC-funded research project Connected Communities (Facer, 2020).

10 principles for community-university partnerships

- A commitment to strengthening the partnering organisation
- A commitment to mutual benefit
- A commitment to transparency and accountability
- A commitment to fair practice in payments
- A commitment to fair payments for participants
- A commitment to fair knowledge exchange
- A commitment to sustainability and legacy
- A commitment to equality and diversity
- A commitment to sectoral as well as organisational development
- A commitment to reciprocal learning

Figure 7.3 Ten principles for community-university partnerships. After Facer, 2020.

These principles aim to foster mutually beneficial, high-quality research that explicitly strives to avoid enhancing inequalities. Academic engagement with all ages in communities allows communities to benefit from specialist knowledge, advice, person-hours in the form of student placements, skills and technologies, such as specialist archaeological technology and skills as at Flodden and Skye. A sense of pride was evident in participants that their place, community and efforts put into the ecomuseum garnered interest, and recognition from outsiders, including myself ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.7](#)). A05 views this a reciprocal relationship, outside interest stimulating more interest and learning in themselves and so on. For academics, along with gaining insights and knowledge from the local communities, collaboration provides important scope for research (a requirement for formal Knowledge Exchange Partnerships and Transfers), including action research, sector experience via placement opportunities, public engagement/outreach and research sharing. Academic collaboration overlaps with other outside professional/organisation interest and networking. Peter Davis and B08 agreed these bring vital recognition to ecomuseum communities, increasing kudos, funding opportunities with academic partners but also other organisations and influence.

The other case studies evidenced academic/professional knowledge exchange to varying degrees. Ecoamgueddfa's metamorphosis to an ecomuseum developed through the partnership between the landscape partnership group, led by the local authority and neighbouring Bangor University Sustainability Lab through a Knowledge Transfer Programme (Young, et al., 2016). Ecoamgueddfa's LIVE phase likewise was a partnership led by Cork and Bangor Universities formed through academic institutional networks and ecomuseum partner connections ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.8](#)). Both gave access to multimillion-pound funding pots generally unobtainable for small community groups. Some Ecoamgueddfa staff are employed through the university as account holders. Alongside local specialists and artists already mentioned, Ecoamgueddfa's academic and professional partnerships included archaeologists, tourism impact researchers and sector specialists on their advisory board, including Peter Davis⁸⁸. Ecoamgueddfa's 2022 bio-blitz event brought together partner organisations, local branches of specialist interest groups including Plantlife Wales, the British Arachnological Society, Wildlife Trust for Wales, local artists and even national wildlife TV-celebrities. The community's appreciation of the range of participatory opportunities was shown in positive feedback given by roll mapping participants.

At Flodden, academics, including Peter Davis, provided advice, student placements and the lead archaeologist. Local and external specialists collaborated with community groups to generate new knowledge and research. Specialist training in skills such as archival research and archaeological techniques increased community capacity. As discussed above, SVR, itself managed by an external specialist arts organisation MPA, brought in specialists, local and outside, to deliver archaeology workshops and surveys, creative interpretation and resources based on local folklore and histories.

Cateran has strived for full use of academic and specialist knowledge and skills, liaising with three Scottish universities, Aberdeen, UHI and Dundee, including placement students, interpretation development and a Knowledge Exchange and Innovation funded archaeological survey. A close relationship has been built with Dundee University, partnering Cateran's Rapid Transition work, including the climate change timeline and its long-running paleo-ecological river surveys. The paleo-ecological surveys represent a good example of how ecomuseums can activate citizen science, proliferating knowledge exchange and generation on both sides of the

⁸⁸ On the Irish side of the LIVE phase, the University of Cork provision included geologists, ecologist, marketing and PR specialists.

academic/scientist-community partnership. This echoes Schultz et al.'s (2007) exploration of the ecomuseum, Kristianstads Vatterike, Sweden, as a site of social-ecological knowledge exchange. Whilst 'important for -credibility, - fundraising – [and] talking – to the wider world' D34, a Cateran director and co-organiser of the survey, was less 'sure how much it's important to the locals.' Certainly, both the initial survey phase and its second extended project phase have struggled to gain and retain the expected number of community participants. The possible reasons of non-endogenous design and isolated scientific knowledge were discussed in section 7.1.4. That said, whilst low numbers were involved, about 18 participants mostly over the age of 65, volunteers were enthusiastic and enjoyed the opportunity of sustained engagement and the skills and knowledge acquired in an equitable and open atmosphere (McNaughton, 2024a). My own 12-month-P/T Cateran placement explicitly aimed to address the issues and promote the mutual benefits of a co-produced programme (McMillan, 2023). Other specialists Cateran's worked with include local and regional cycling specialists, playwrights, botanists, conservation organisations, Scots/Gaelic language and placename specialists, storytellers and poets.

The ten principles for community-university partnerships in Fig 7.2 are aimed at the university side of the relationship to build better, more equitable relationships with community organisations. Yet they are applicable in any partnership working with communities, including ecomuseums. In general, the relationships between the academic/professional and the ecomuseum/community are evidenced to deliver transdisciplinary, mutually beneficial and reciprocal knowledge and skills exchange. However, tensions around financial fairness, who benefits financially from funding, university/consultants/specialists or community?, Ecomuseum or community?, are evident with interviewees expressing occasions of disgruntlement as to who gets the money via jobs created, commissions etc. ([Appendix 5; 7.2.2.9](#)). Perceived financial benefit inequities loom larger where communities don't perceive any other direct benefits for themselves (section 7.1). A community-first approach, prioritising inclusion and equity, clear communication, collaborative setting of goals and a commitment to transparency and accountability alleviate some risks and pitfalls (Facer & Enright, 2016; Desportes, 2024). With Ecoamgueddfa and SVR, where the financial account holders are, respectively, an academic institution and an external organisation rather than a community group itself, the risks of Navajas Corral's (2019) detached institutionalisation is greater. Alongside financial fairness, questions arise of who benefits most from these collaborations in terms of outcomes and impacts such as career development, the academic institute/external organisation or community members.

One aspect of all knowledge and skills exchange is an implicit coming together and exchange between generations. This is explicit in schools and youth engagement but also an important dimension of general community engagement, family and whole community events, where skills and cultural knowledge are shared within the communities. Each ecomuseum case study evidenced examples of opportunities for such intergenerational exchanges as noted. SVR had included an oral history strand in one of its early projects (noted 7.2.1). Skye, exemplified valuing elder knowledge, capturing memories, stories, cultural and ecological knowledge by creating opportunities to record, share and pass on that knowledge within their community. Passing on knowledge, stories and memories is important to fostering identity and connection to place, which is explored in Chapter 8.

7.2.3 Collaboration & Networking: How does the ecomuseum seek to collaborate within its local community and with wider networks? Does it act as a bridge between different sectors and demographics in the community?

Navajas Corral & Fernández (2022) and Schultz et al. (2007) emphasise the ecomuseum's role as a bridging organisation between groups, individuals and internal and external organisations to facilitate knowledge exchange and successful adaptation like social-ecological management strategies. Networking and collaboration have been evidenced through knowledge exchange activities discussed above. This section explores the impacts of collaboration and networking, asking, How do the ecomuseums seek to collaborate within their local communities and with wider networks? Do they act as a bridge between different sectors and demographics in the community?

Local Networks & Partnerships

For many ecomuseologists, the ecomuseum itself is, in essence, a network of individuals, groups and organisations, local, regional and even national and international. The conscious inclusion of representatives of different geographic communities, interest groups/organisations, community groups, teachers, businesses, and tourism groups in steering and management groups was discussed in Chapter 6. Ecoamgueddfa clearly demonstrates the notion of the ecomuseum as a network, an umbrella, in its partnership structure. Although perceptions of unequal inclusion and voice within those partnerships creates issues as discussed in Chapter 6. Other local networks and partnerships are evidenced in seeking out collaboration with local schools, youth, community and local specialist groups as mentioned above and include working together to deliver events. Case study steering/management members displayed a

variety of local and regional affiliations through their (other) jobs and involvements, which afforded connections, collaborations and the type of blurring of lines in ecomuseum work enabling inside/outside impacts such as described section 7.1.1. For example, E36 and D30's work as community connectors allows them insights into community needs and the contacts to help make action happen. D28 uses knowledge and experience gained from Cateran, such as the paleo-ecological project, to 'rehearse ideas that can then be scaled up' through the Bio-region Tayside initiative they are involved with when development allows.

Work with community trusts, and local councils is prominent. Most directly, Skye is managed by the local CT as well as working closely with their community council. SVR, Flodden and Ecoamgueddfa steering groups all involved local councils to some degree. Cateran has partnered with community support and development groups in a limited capacity. Again, insights into community needs and the potential connections, staff and access to funding needed to act and create change are afforded through such collaborations. Addressing power inequalities across steering groups, from individuals and small community groups to town and regional councils, is key to an equitable working relationship, as Flodden A01 noted (7.1.2). E36 noted the frustrations felt when community roots are overshadowed by regional councils coming late to the table and appropriating 'massively - over-riding ownership of it' in press reports, making no mention of the community residents or town council who instigated it.

Rather than competing, C21 notes sharing resources and collaboratively delivering projects are important benefits of networking, increasing capacity, opportunities and reach above what any individual group might achieve alone. B09 describes such a collaboration between SCT, the Skye and Lochalsh Housing Association and the Community Housing Trust, working together to deliver the housing initiative. Alongside co-promotion, Ecoamgueddfa has encouraged sharing staff expertise and skills between partner organisations, which saves money. Ecoamgueddfa's management themselves share the education officer's pay and time 50-50 with the National Trust, (see Chapter 6). Innovatively, they also advocate the sharing of volunteers between its partner organisations. This, C21 explained, had resulted in richer, more diverse experiences for volunteers and more skills and knowledge for the partner organisations ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.1](#)). D32, a local environmental campaign group member, explained they hosted some of Cateran's INHERITage workshops as there was a 'crossover in terms of a lot of what we're trying to promote.' The benefit of 'partnering up with other groups that have other goals' can 'bring their people and our people on board to address both issues at once' as a 'productive way of doing things' (D32). Similarly, survey respondent S299, an environmental organisation representative,

saw the merit of partnering with Ecoamgueddfa – ‘I was looking for community hubs for this work with Plantlife, and the Ecoamgueddfa sites seemed ideal.’ Sharing resources, knowledge and support to achieve the goals of all groups involved in Flodden was noted in 7.1.1. Local community member A06, who had long headed a tiny charitable organisation promoting the Flodden battle site, campaigned for new interpretation boards and an accessible path to Flodden’s memorial as part of the project.

Other ways the case study groups seek to collaborate and network with their local communities include collating information on local groups, organisations and businesses for wider community use. SVR evidenced this in mapping community groups in their area. An eye-opening activity for the steering group as E36 explained,

we realised how many millions of different little groups in Whitworth [that] we didn't know - And it's like, why do I not know that? So, - of all the things that are available, we tried to include them in things – put them on the map. (E36)

A community directory of groups and events was planned, but Covid and aforementioned SVR staffing issues have stalled development. Similar ambitions to be a hub for community events, groups and businesses were expressed by Ecoamgueddfa, part of the co-promotion of Pen Llyn. As noted in section 7.2.2, both Skye and CATERAN have links to some local providers and businesses on their websites. Skye’s small geographic size and population allow it to comprehensively include all businesses. CATERAN is more selective, promoting those aligning with its stated active travel goals, etc. Ecomuseum scale affects the feasibility of promoting businesses and makers. C21 noted Ecoamgueddfa don’t have such an online directory of businesses/providers as it would be untenable to do so fairly.

Alongside such inventories, local businesses were supported through direct commissioning to provide services or office/work/event spaces. Ecoamgueddfa rents office space from a local business hub. Skye commissions local builders and suppliers when carrying out capital works such as path and house building. CATERAN worked with a local cycle hire company to provide bikes for guided family cycle rides. Flodden supported many community business initiatives during its active phase, from digital trail makers to rock concerts. C21 spoke of indirect business support through encouraging wider collaborative networks within communities, linking into the co-marketing of the partner organisations ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.2](#)).

Each case study evidenced a commitment to supporting local artists, creatives, producers, and artisans. This includes examples already alluded to in the sections above such as

commissioning artists and writers to produce work and publications as part of the ecomuseums' programming. For example, CATERAN's *The Awakening*, involving visual land artists, a storyteller and a poet (Fig 7.4) and SVR's Skyline Walk trail and artist-made educational resources.



Figure 7.4 CATERAN's The Awakening created by artists McGuinness & Gray (2022) a 9,000 sqm land art installation made from hessian and geo-tex. A Giant's hand emerges from the Glenshee hillside where legend claims pan-Gaelic giant hero Finn Mac Cumhaill sleeps, awaiting the call to return in humanity's time of greatest need.

Artists and creatives were also commissioned to work collaboratively with community groups and schools, discussed in 7.2.2, such as Ecoamgueddfa's Big 5 maps and promotional films. Artisans, from tartan to marmalade makers were supported by the Flodden project. Skye's website links directly to yarn producers, quilters, glass artists, and provisioners of local and artisanal produce.

Nurture and use of wider networks, regional, national and even international, are evidenced by the case study sites. Some of these, like academic collaborations, were discussed above. As with local networks, connecting to wider networks, like National Parks Authorities and Sustrans, can increase capacity, knowledge, skills, opportunities and funding. For small organisations with limited funding and capacity, D34 sees this a good way for CATERAN to 'have an influence' beyond its size and 'act as a catalyst' as 'things work better in partnership.' ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.3](#)). However, community members and representatives of potential key partners in the area, felt lack of wider engagement resulted in lost opportunities to increase awareness and networking ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.4](#)).

Skye has managed to attain an extraordinary level of influence for a small community group as B08 concedes, 'it would be considered fairly unusual that a community organisation is going out there and winning other contracts in other community heritage [projects].' As part of a wider group bidding collectively for funding for projects across the Isle of Skye, B08 continues, 'it wouldn't traditionally be part of my job, but that has led us to continue to secure funding for other projects that improve the environment around us.'

Flodden's wider group of 42 sites includes eight 'distant' sites across Scotland and England, in what Davis (2019a) calls a 'distorted necklace model' with a fragmented-site policy. Skye's part in the youth exchange project and Ecoamgueddfa's LIVE collaboration take networks across national borders. Further international networks were evidenced with ecomuseums seeking connections via local stories, events and diaspora communities. A theme continued in Chapter 8. B13 spoke of Skye's further cultural exchanges with Ireland, 'a Celtic triangle thing.' Sharing a common Celtic linguistic focus. At the time of interview, Ecoamgueddfa were also exploring getting involved, 'we've spoken about this Celtic triangle ecomuseums' (C21). However, Brexit is causing issues with future cross-UK/EU funding making this harder to achieve.

Chapter 4 highlighted the importance of networking with other ecomuseums for greater political significance, strength and resilience (Bigell, 2012; Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido, 2022; Ecoheritage, 2023). Informal networking between the UK ecomuseums, such as sharing information and practices was noted. Skye, as the longest-established UK ecomuseum, had hosted visits and fielded questions from most of the other ecomuseums during their foundation stages. During the process of this research, an informal UK & Ireland Ecomuseum Network (UKIEN) Facebook group has been established, which has convened two online conferences, in 2021 and 2023, bringing together all existing⁸⁹ UK ecomuseums along with international practitioners and scholars to share projects and workshop issues and ideas. The aim is to build supportive relations within the UK & Ireland and beyond. A third, stand-alone online event was held to introduce the UK's newest ecomuseum, the Ecomuseum of Scottish Mining Landscapes, in June 2024. The UKIEN has attracted attention from international communities considering the ecomuseum concept for their communities, leading to Ecoamgueddfa, SVR and Flodden hosting visits and discussions. The Ecoheritage project discussed in Chapter 4.3,

⁸⁹ At the time of the first 2021 conference this was just the five case studies, along with their Irish partners. During the second 2023 conference, two new ecomuseum, Torry Ecomuseum and Tweedsmuir joined in.

requested to join, linking UKIEN to their Ecoheritage Network promoting global ecomuseum collaboration. Ecomuseum networking can offer opportunities to share work and knowledge through presentations and publications as section 7.2.1 noted.

Whilst all case studies utilise local and wider networks and connections, Cateran's interaction is perhaps the most superficial, involving occasional/temporary collaboration with a few local groups. My Cateran SotM placement work revealed benefits in post-project partnership working amongst community groups who'd formed the programme's co-production group. It is felt Cateran could benefit from more continuous and formal networking with local groups and organisations by opening out the steering group to include them. As D28 pointed out (Chapter 6.3.2), this all takes time and effort to achieve, something that for a small voluntary-managed group (at time of interview) was difficult. However, evidence suggests whilst in the short term this takes effort and time, in the longer term it offers greater capacity, resilience and relevance (Watson & Waterton, 2010; Perkin, 2010; De Varine & Filipe, 2012). Engendering community engagement and buy-in results in greater overall efficiency than any number of fantastic, resourced ideas and plans if no one is interested or takes part. As previously noted, continuous self-analysis and inclusion of new groups should be a goal of all ecomuseums.

Does it act as a bridge between different sectors and demographics in the community?

All dimensions of ecomuseum practice discussed in this chapter and Chapter 6, are facets of the social role ecomuseums play in a community. Encouraging social cohesion and understanding through democratic inclusion and participatory community-building practices is a core ethos of ecomuseal philosophy (Corsane, et al., 2008; Dunkley, 2012; Pappalardo, 2020). Chapters 2 -4 illustrated how ecomuseums are, at heart, about the relationship between people, belonging and place (Borrelli, et al., 2022a). Chapter 8 focuses on the dynamics of fostering strong social relationships within and between human and nonhuman communities and their land. This section explores how the case studies offer opportunities that promote social cohesion/inclusion amongst different demographics and groups in the community.

E35 expresses this ideal, stressing the importance of 'connecting different people in the community to work together, to share their heritage and resources.' Working with multiple community stakeholders, the case studies provide opportunities to bring different groups and demographics together. Intergenerational opportunities included Skye facilitating community elders sharing knowledge in local schools, and SVR encouraging children talking to older neighbours about history and getting teens planting blubs alongside older community

members. E36 explained with more dynamic populations, many young people nowadays did not have older relations nearby, and increasing segregation of ages in communities and biased media reporting resulted in children being ‘scared of older people’, and ‘people terrified the teenagers in general.’ Through providing collaborative opportunities, barriers and stereotypes are broken down as each side sees the other for the individuals they are, increasing mutual respect and value. This was important to the community groups co-producing Cateran’s SotM programme. Intergenerationality was built into activities, like whole community involvement in a primary school poetry project. Elders were invited to work with children, countering similar paucity of nearby family and social isolation whilst promoting knowledge and skills sharing. Increasing opportunities for active participation of older generations in the community were evidenced across case studies. Flodden’s plan, guided by their HLF advisor, built in the promotion of mental and physical wellbeing in ageing ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.5](#)). A07’s work with older people and the wider community on archival research created connections with people she ‘wouldn’t have gotten to know otherwise.’ Acknowledging as a society ‘we’re not particularly good at that intergenerational mixing’, A07 appreciated the opportunity as a good way to do so. Skye brings generations together in many ways such as whole community events and activities from archaeology to fishing competitions. Getting intergenerational groups to work on projects like filmmaking provides similar opportunities, as B13 expressed, ‘In this [film] project, we’ve got a 15-year-old, we’ve got a 30-year-old, and [B14] and I who are in our 60s, you know. That’s been a lovely project.’

Meeting and working with people you wouldn’t normally through ecomuseum engagement was seen as a positive outcome by interviewees. Survey respondents also reported ecomuseum participation increased community connection (28/32, 87.5%) and belonging (23/32, 71.9%). Family bike rides (Cateran), sea festivals (Ecoamgueddfa) and themed events and projects like storytelling and photograph sharing (Skye) provide opportunities for meaningful connections to be built within and between all generations and groups across communities. The range of themes and opportunities allows a something-for-everyone approach. B13 notes such activities create opportunities that can ‘join two communities together’. E35 considers such opportunities important to ‘give an *in* to a place and to a community’ for people new to an area. However, success in bringing diverse sections of the community together depends on striving for inclusion, particularly that of marginalised or less represented groups. As discussed previously, efforts need to be made to build relationships based on trust to bring people in. There are costs involved, time, money, labour and emotional/psychological, in striving to be

inclusive. But this strengthens relevance and so resilience (Perkin, 2010; De Varine & Filipe, 2012). But if ecomuseums are to achieve their full potential as catalysts for social and environmental justice, they must become integrating and just heritage processes (Pappalardo, 2020; Brulon Soares, et al., 2023; Duarte Cândido & Pappalardo, 2022).

Flodden evidenced a particular type of building bridges, reconciliation, ‘that was a big theme. That was a big thing’ (A01) across the project. Events bridged communities on both sides of the historic battle, still felt acutely in some communities, and resonated with contemporaneous contentions of the Scottish Referendum. Peace gardens were created commemorating victims of all wars across the ages, Catholic and Anglican faiths came together in a requiem mass, and hundreds of people from across the world came and stood together in solidarity on the anniversary.

Ecomuseum collaborative work also built bridges between different groups in the communities, where there was previously little, or even on occasion, hostility or suspicion, such as between rural and urban communities and farmers and non-farmers. The latter feeling ‘increasingly alienated from society’ and ‘on the back foot’ A01 explained due to tensions around pesticide use, nitrate pollution and CO₂. A01 sees potential in making explicit connections between local farming activity and everyday food people buy and eat, signposting the potato crop to chips, rapeseed to the oil to cook them, oat fields to flapjacks, rather than the museumification, ‘kind of quirky and museumy and it’s what Granny used to do’ (A01) of bannock baking activities as put on by Cateran in their InHeritage sessions. D29 sees a way forward through increasing engagement and collaboration between landowners/farmers and local communities connecting production, consumption, waste disposal, biodiversity/climate risk and adaptation. This could include collaborative community management in forestry, composting and habitat creation. A01 and D29’s approaches chime well with redressing Rotherham’s (2015) cultural severance, although I believe combining Cateran’s linking to past usage with the contemporary use/need has a place in establishing a fuller context. Indeed, Cateran’s 2nd stage project included a strand, Farming Fit for the Future; Adapting Agriculture for a Changing World, an exhibition combining past and present farming practices, including interviews with contemporary farming families in the area.

Shifting perspectives and promoting understanding, empathy and respect was evidenced in SVR exploratory work and plans with Commoners, local community groups, landowners and environmental organisations to highlight and address issues of misuse and climate impacts on the local moorland and the knock-on effects to areas of habitation. Similarly, enacting LIVE’s

(2023) stated environmental sustainability goal, Ecoamgueddfa created education packages and films to increase understanding of agriculture/ land management, nature conservation and the links to leisure pursuits like walking, 'because people don't associate land management with that offer. So you're kind of showing them it's part of it' (C21).

Another important bridge ecomuseums can build is better understanding between tourists and local communities. For Ecoamgueddfa this is a stated aim of their ecomuseum. One way they do this, C23 explained, is to counter fanciful stories and names visitors and second-home owners erroneously prescribe to historic buildings and sites by promoting the real history and Welsh names ([Appendix 5; 7.2.3.6](#)). Increasing visitor empathy and respect for the local communities is returned to in the following chapter.

7.3 Summary

This chapter explored case study practices in the domains of community inclusion, learning and collaboration. Democratic participation, knowledge exchange and fostering collaboration are viewed as key characteristics needed for an ecomuseum to fulfil Burlon Soares et al.'s (2023) transformation of the social museum's contemporary role as an integral and integrating process.

Chiming with social-museology discourse on ecomuseums, section 7.1 illustrated the case-study organisations view themselves as community-led organisations, whose intentions are to benefit their community (e.g. McGhie, 2022). The evidenced aims and practices demonstrate efforts to address issues of social deprivation, such as unemployment, economic decline and a lack of services, through direct and indirect actions and increased capacity. Actions demonstrated include increasing viable employment, increasing social and participatory cultural opportunities and increasing community cohesion and pride. In addition to actively benefiting their communities, consideration was evidenced by case study ecomuseums to not detract/damage existing businesses and organisations. Listening to communities and considering their wishes and worries was also important in their practices. This linked to proactive social inclusion. The case study ecomuseums were shown to aspire to democratic participation and inclusion (section 7.1.2 & 3). However, success in doing so varied across them. Section 7.1.4 explored the importance of a process approach to ecomuseum practice and the ways the case studies empower active agency in their communities. This was shown to be an aim in each case. Awareness raising, knowledge exchange, capital works including path-building and environmental stewardship, and giving the community a greater voice in

negotiating with local, regional and national organisations are some of the ways the case studies achieved this. Although evidence suggests implementation is more variable. Echoing world-including models (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022), Skye and Ecoamgueddfa influenced outside the usual parameters of heritage organisations, influencing farming and conservation practices, and building affordable housing and medical centres.

Section 7.2 explored the characteristics of knowledge and skills exchange, collaboration and networking that can offer ecomuseums strength, resilience and political significance (Bigell, 2012; Brown, 2019). It demonstrated local knowledge at all levels was valued, with the case studies giving particular attention to its promotion. It was also evidenced the case studies acted as sites of knowledge creation and exchange at multiple levels and involving multiple stakeholders. This included schools, local specialists, generally community, academic and external specialists/organisations. This provided valuable pluralistic and diverse opportunities for community members. Overlapping the exchange of knowledge, collaborative and bridging practices created and strengthened networks within and without the communities, locally, regionally and internationally. Such collaboration benefits both the community and ecomuseum, fostering greater social cohesion, understanding, strength and resilience through resource sharing, greater engagement, support and relevance.

Whilst the ecomuseums evidence practices affective within each domain, the success and efficacy of them achieving their full potential were limited by several factors acting across all domains. Firstly, as in Chapter 6, it is acknowledged that the small scale and population of Skye lend it an advantage in achieving whole community reach. The other case studies with larger populations and/or larger geographical areas and numerous detached communities have to work harder to achieve the same reach.

Duly noted, similar issues as raised in Chapter 6, were demonstrated to be in play, namely weakness in communication, collaboration and inclusion. These manifest as barriers to achieving a truly integrated and integrating ecomuseum (Brulon Soares, et al., 2023).

Frustrations were noted at lack of attempts to meaningfully engage wider community members in processes and activities, leading to disenfranchisement and missed opportunities. Even some steering/director/partner group members admitted not really knowing what plans and activities were afoot. Again, external management and top-down approaches of *informing* rather than *involving* increased the likelihood. Greater efforts to include and reflect broader diversity of community, particularly those often left outside of traditional heritage/cultural engagement, like migrant communities and lower socio-economic groups, would increase the

case studies relevance by reflecting the realities of pluralistic contemporary communities. Seeking to include the most vulnerable in society is considered key to just heritage practice of the ecomuseum as a social museological process (Pappalardo, 2020; Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido, 2022). Proactive action is needed, going into their communities and areas, taking time to build relationships and trust and taking a community-first collaborative approach to planning any subsequent activities (Moore, 2014; Simon, 2016; Navajas Corral, 2019). Doing so would foster collaboration with the ecomuseum to address their needs and interests and increase resultant benefits across a wider demographic. Alongside this, clear communication and continuity are needed to avoid loss of confidence and support through perceptions of unfair or poorly delivered engagement. Such a loss of confidence leaves ecomuseums needing to 'repair the damage - before [they] can get back on an even plane' (E37).

One major issue both affecting and reflective of the need for increasing diverse participation, is the lack of cohesive ecomuseum identity in the wider community. This was particularly noticeable with Ecoamgueddfa, CATERAN and SVR. It should be noted this bias may reflect the fact that most wider community data was collected in these three case studies. However, this does not detract from the fact that lack of identity is demonstrated to severely impact community engagement, perception and relevance of their local ecomuseums.

Overlapping ecomuseum identity, improved networking and collaboration would benefit all case studies. Again, better communication and efforts are needed to gain consensus on aims/direction within existing partnerships. Increasing formal and consistent networking with local community groups and organisations would be beneficial, especially for CATERAN. SVR has plans to do so, but its current status has stalled all development. Whilst acknowledging the extra effort and costs involved, increased collaboration and networking can only strengthen any of the case studies in the longer term. Equal voices and mutual benefits are fundamental to equitable working partnerships with all stakeholders, creating pluralistic spaces which encourage us to sit with the uncomfortableness and tensions of differences within our heterogeneous and plural communities.

Financial and staffing restraints, especially with volunteer staff, were demonstrated to limit capacity, impacting delivery, continuity and enacting ideals. Considering these restraints, the case studies do demonstrate success as sites of participatory community inclusion, knowledge exchange and collaboration. However, more work needs to be done to achieve their full potential as integrating and just heritage processes.

The key ecomuseum characteristics and practices explored in this chapter are all rooted in social relationships, building connections and bringing together individuals, groups and organisations within and without their communities. The following chapter delves deeper into the theme of connection and social relationships, expanding to include the nonhuman and the wider environment. Facilitating a positive relationship between people and place is considered fundamental to ecomuseum potential to affect transformational change (Borrelli, et al., 2022 b). Chapter 8 explores how such relationships are formed and strengthened, and what ecomuseum practices encourage such relationships.

8. Land Connectedness; a framework for understanding connection and care

8.1 Introduction

Restoring the land without restoring relationship is an empty exercise. It is relationship that will endure and relationship that will sustain the restored land (Wall Kimmerer, 2013, p. 363)

The notion of relationship, of connection, flows through the previous chapters. Concepts and ideas from a broad range of fields aiming towards a more sustainable, regenerative and equitable future pivot on the relationship between humans, nonhumans and the land. Chapters 2-4 drew out the intertwining threads from place studies, heritage activism, multinaturalism, convivial conservation, bio-cultural/social-ecological approaches and nature connectedness that centre these relationships. Ecomuseum philosophy and practices have been shown to be founded on the same principles of relationships between peoples and their environment.

These ideas address a key conservation threat, namely the separation, or ‘*cultural severance*’ (Rotherham, 2015), of human and other natures (Hayhow, et al., 2019; Colding, et al., 2020). With the UK as one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world (Hayhow, et al., 2019), these offer possible paths to reconnection. Yet whilst pathways such as nature connectedness (Lumber, et al., 2017) and convivial conservation (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020; Marris, 2011) point the right way, they fail to (re)connect and (re)combine all dimensions of the emotional entanglements between people and place. Thus, failing to bridge the gap between theory and practice, values and action, and achieve effective outcomes.

Nature is our heritage too. The rich tapestry of species and topography, the views we see daily, the vanishingly rare songs of nightingales and turtle doves, the everyday hubbub of house sparrows⁹⁰, the smell of lime trees in urban streets in summer and the smooth shine of conkers in a child’s palm in autumn⁹¹ and the taste of blackberry jam. This holistic heritage

⁹⁰ UK house sparrows are also in rapid decline.

⁹¹ UK Horse chestnut trees are under threat from invasive moths.

encompasses the interactions of geology, soils, microbes, water and weather cycles and intimate knowledge of the web between species, land and peoples, and the dawning understanding of the damage disregarding that web has wrought. Research into concepts like ecological psychology, social-ecological approaches, Buen Vivir, community museums and ecomuseums suggest a more holistic culture/nature approach centring intrinsic values and mutual benefits of an interdependent whole is a more effective mechanism for connection and behaviour adaptation (Chassagne, 2020; Brown, et al., 2023 (a); Baldwin, et al., 2017; Bigell, 2012; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012; Borrelli, et al., 2022 b). Figure 4.1 gathered these intersecting transdisciplinary ideas indicated to foster care, solidarity and stewardship to produce resilient, adaptive and regenerative communities.

Alongside place, landscape and heritage, Chapter 3.5 explored the notion of land as a social relationship between living and non-living, human and nonhuman. Human relationships with land were framed globally in terms of human rights (OHCHR, 2024), Indigenous approaches to co-flourishing (e.g. (Kermoal & Altamirano-Jiménez, 2016), activism and environmentalism from Leopold (1948) to Harraway (2016). In the UK, our relationship with land, is increasingly linked to social and environmental justice (Monbiot, et al., 2019; Shrubsole, 2019) and activating deep connection through close attention and local distinctiveness (Clifford & King, 2006; Burchardt, 2023).

Yet what is the nature of the deep emotional connections people have to the places in which we live? Is it as binary in terms of the culture-nature divide, as some in the academy would have us believe? Or is it more nuanced and entangled; its subtleties hidden under a language of difference imposed by segregated subject boxes through which Western education is taught?

Using primary data, this chapter examines the connections people in the case study ecomuseums' communities have to the places they live and the impacts this connection has on their stewardship of the land. Building on ideas from Chapters 2-4, the concept of land connectedness is developed to better understand human/nature/culture/place relations.

I define land connectedness (LC) as an explicitly holistic heritage understanding of land(scape), (re)combining cultural and natural heritage specifically embedded in place. Thus, recognising the intertwining of nature-culture, human-nonhuman through millennia of co-evolution in landscapes, flora, fauna, language, names, stories, industry, practices and traditions that give each locality its unique 'sense of place'. By dissolving dualisms and embracing a holistic

heritage approach, land connectedness aims to fully integrate living and non-living elements, to embed human and non-human natures in an ever-emergent living landscape.

Land connectedness centres diverse tangible, intangible and plural connections people have to their lands, where land is understood as a dynamic, layered and co-creative whole. In doing so, it supports multiple pathways to connection such as B08 describes,

‘you can see there is many layers of history to that place from dinosaur footprints, to a salmon bothy, to a large fortification on the headland – to a religious meeting house - and again not only that, there is beautiful rockpools and wonderful wildlife - what each person takes from each of these experiences it's not like something that can be tangibly ticked off a list. (B08)

92.7 % of combined interview and survey respondents expressed a strong connection to the landscapes in which they lived. Expressions of belonging, knowing and meaning and the impacts for community care of land are evidenced in the data explored in this section. These expressions of everyday connection and meaning indicate all affective, functional and cognitive dimensions of people-place attachment (Baldwin, et al., 2017; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). Knowing, meaning, memories and connection enacted and re-enacted suffuse objects and sites; tucked into stories shared, rising in common recipes, walked along with the dog and on the commute to work, haunting the kids' favourite play-spot, sketched in playground games, ascended whilst climbing trees and sung into melodies.

Emergent themes reflect intrinsic values. The familial and kinship, concern for others, universalism and connection, both individual and communal, through time and across species, the living and non-living, occur commonly. These are important mechanisms through which people feel, as one participant, put it ‘hefted to the land’ (D27). The same feelings seem important not only to those who have a long history in a certain landscape but also for newcomers as a process of connecting and belonging reflecting Bender (2018).

Social dimensions of the intrinsic values reflected in the data, are particularly important when considering how we move towards ‘thinking beyond ourselves’ to an ethic of care and stewardship. Our civic identity includes both environmental and social values and appealing to one leads to spillover concern about the other even when not explicitly referenced (Common Cause Foundation, 2021).

These emergent themes strongly suggest lay ontologies of innate understanding of polydimensional and layered landscapes, of worlds within worlds within worlds. A process of emergent overlapping worldmaking reflecting many ideas of Multinaturalism and relational

ethics discourse is discussed in Chapter 3 and hints at the value a more holistic heritage land connectedness approach could lend to sustainable futures.

Sections 8.2 – 8.6 consider types of connection individually: kith and kinship, intra/interdependence, spatio-temporal dimensions, storied landscapes and future thinking. However, the ontological themes picked out are not discrete from each other, with much overlapping evident in the sentiments expressed, reflecting the imbricated logics at play. Indeed, interplay between the themes creates what I envision as a feedback loop of co-creative knowing-belonging-caring illustrated in Fig. 8.1. Section 8.7 considers the potential of using land connectedness as a frame to understand and foster connection. Section 8.8 explores current practices within the case study ecomuseums that promote LC dimensions, specifically inter-relationality, community and intrinsic values.

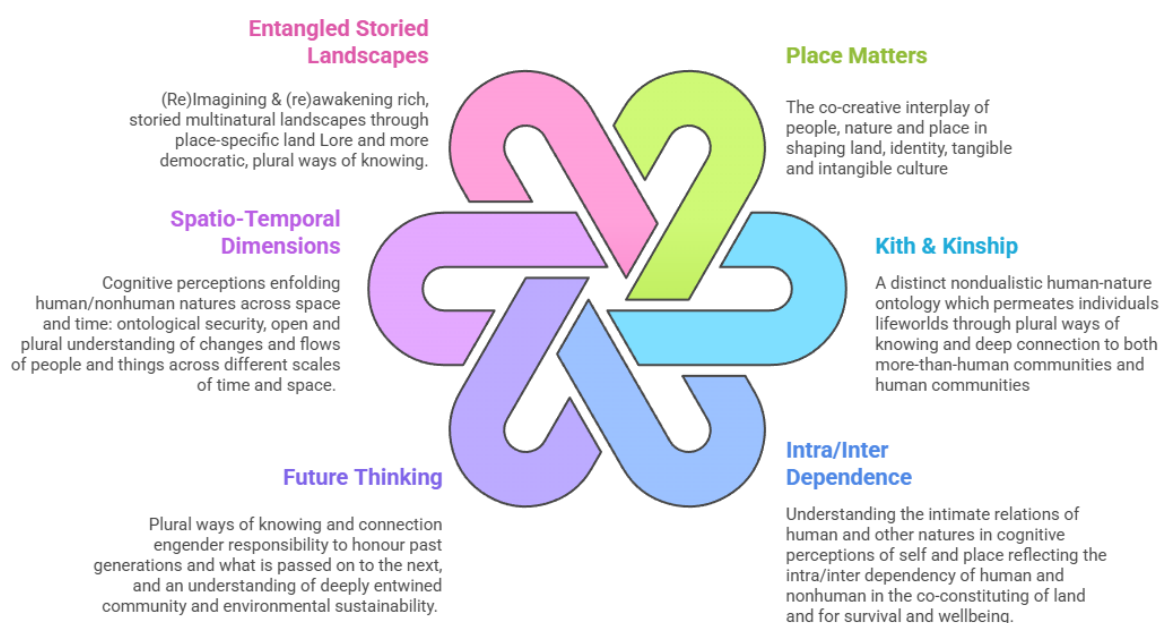


Figure 8.1 Emergent themes of Land Connectedness as a knowing-belonging-caring framework

8.2 Kith and kin – knowing and the familial

8.2.1 More-than-human community

Inherent in the idea of belonging to the land is the notion of kinship and the familial covering intra and inter-actions of human and nonhuman communities. Localised strong affective ties to community/culture/people/place were conspicuous across all participants and data types.

McMillan (2022) found the ethic familiarity encompassed a nondualistic human-nature

perception informing participants’ lifeworlds and identities. Similar responses from my participants such as ‘we are nature’ (D29), ‘I feel part of the landscape’ (S464) and ‘I belong here - I feel so connected to this earth and this place’ (C20), link place/nature/self with identity.

Survey responses to an inclusion of nature-in-Self scale similarly evinced a lack of dualism with 92.5% of respondents conceiving of some level of overlap between nature and self (Fig 8.2). 57.5% identified with the two strongest levels of nature-in-self.

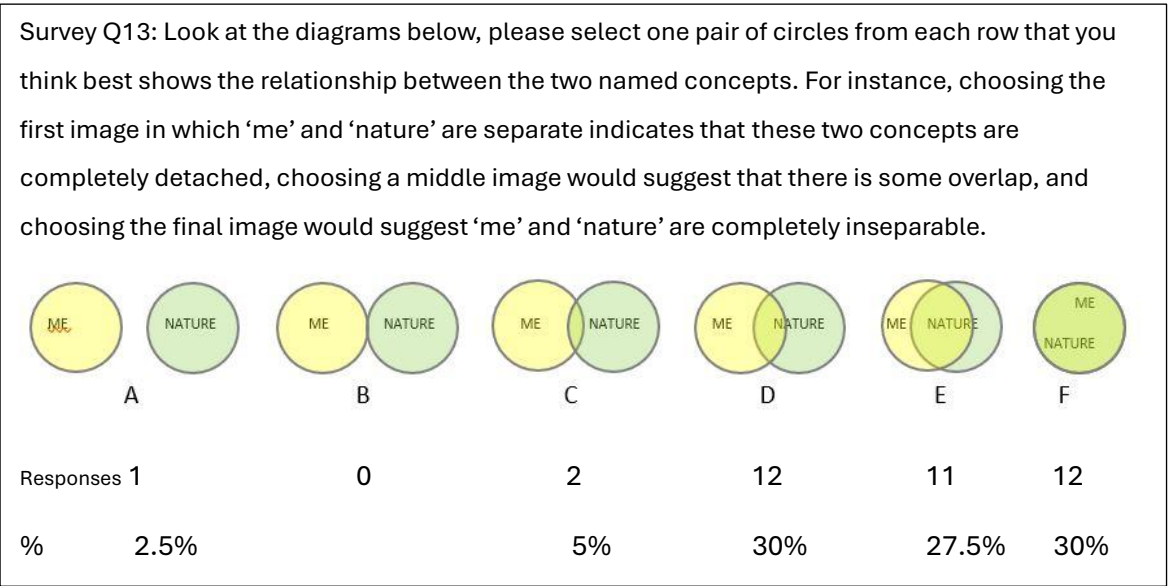


Figure 8.2 Inclusion of nature-in-self scale (after Schultz, 2002) survey responses. 38 people out of 40 total respondents answered this question.

Adapted inclusion-in-self scales for heritage-in-self and heritage-nature connection illustrated similarly strong self-identity (see Fig 8.3). 87.5% with some overlap between heritage and self, and 90% conceiving heritage and nature as overlapping.



Figure 8.3 Survey responses for inclusion of heritage-in-self and nature-heritage connection scale (adapted after Schultz, 2002)

72% of interviewees also expressed a sense of combined heritage-nature- in-self. Participants everyday interactions with their particular land indicate that human-nature relationships are more complex than the Cartesian dichotomy often portrayed as prominent in Western society (Braun, 2016; Merchant, 2016). The strongly perceived nature-heritage entwinement is particularly salient to forwarding the concept of land connectedness. Combined interview and survey data show 81.9% of participants consider the heritage of the place they live an important part of their identity. 73.5% further consider heritage and nature as inseparable parts of the place they lived. D32 explains, ‘Because our ancestors were so close with nature and so heavily involved with it, I think a lot of our heritage and culture does come directly from nature.’

Affective connections were created and strengthened through cognitive processes of knowing and getting to know, including local and family history (95% of survey respondents), traditional knowledge such as folklore, cultural practices, language (92.5%) and nature/land knowings (85%).

These multinatural and combined holistic sensibilities are exemplified by participant C24, who took part in the four primary data collection methods, interview, repeat survey, personal ecologies journaling and mapping. The quote, photograph (Fig 8.4), map (Fig 8.5) and weaving (Fig 8.6) reflect the interconnections between all aspects of land and cosmos. The stars, owl,

bats, human, 'just being, all of us' (C24) recalling Hawkes' collective consciousness of 'lobsters, butterflies, meteors and men' (1951, p. 41).

*The streaming Milky
Way runs, across
Fadryn, Boduan,
above us.*

*To lie in the field &
gaze up at a myriad
stars - in the dark
silent – perhaps an
owl, the rustle of a
vole, the flit of bats
from the barn, just
being, all of us.*

(C24, journal entry)



Figure 8.4 Photograph of starlings above and quote to left both by C24



Figure 8.6 Detail of weaving made and photographed by C24 out with wool spun from her sheep and 'findings' of bone, pebble, shell, plant, gathered around her home and on local walks. The result literally weaving together dimensions of her land.

The deep connections created were evidenced in expressions of intrinsic values, such as love, joy, beauty, universalism, kinship, empathy, gratitude, wonder and reciprocity. 76 people out of a total of 83, 91.5%, of interview, survey, journal and mapping participants, expressed intrinsic values. Compared to only six who expressed extrinsic values in their personal connection to their land, including enthusiasm for personal challenge in mountaineering and cycling, economic and utility value in field sports and forestry (Table 8.1). However, of these six, most expressed more intrinsic values despite also having extrinsic values. Even in the same point of conversation combining both intrinsic and extrinsic were apparent. For example, D26 found his

love of the land when having moved to a new area emanating from knowledge absorbed incidentally through his initial passion for challenging cross-country running ([Appendix 6: 8.2.1.1](#)).

Table 8.1 Expressions of intrinsic and extrinsic values from interview participants

Example quotes expressing intrinsic values	Example quotes expressing extrinsic values
It's because there's love involved. There's love involved and nurture and stewardship and individuals and history and story and belonging (B13)	So, I have been a big user of the outdoors and done a lot of outdoor sports, at a kind of competitive level (B08)
I love this place (D26) that was quite high and quite a long walk. [] because [we] were up and over Llewellyn. I think it was about 17 miles – but it was a long walk. We were out for at least 11 hours (C19)
And I did just feel really connected to the place. There's a lot of history to the place. A lot of heritage involved. – And its just a really calming place and I've always gone there – you know, as soon as I was able to walk basically, we were on that beach every week – And, yeah, its juicy a really special place. So I'll go and sit on the rocks and look at the sunset, look at the birds and just look at the sea – because I could look at it for hours and just feel. (C23)	So, the landscape as far as I was concerned then, was very key for the golf course. Because it brought in a lot of money. It had shooting, fishing and all that sort of thing. And it was very key for that. It kept people employed. It brought people to the area (D33)
Its that thing about again, you're toughing something that is bigger than you. I think that's a nice thing as a human being as well, to fond something that's not about you and yours but something bigger (D29)	Its 54 miles and you're supposed to do it in 24 hours. Some people, well the record at the moment is just over 10 hours. My record is 23 and a half hours (D34)

All postcard and roll mapping participants, 124 and 190⁹² respectively, a total 314, expressed joy/happiness, goodness and love/special connection as the pop-up data collection explicitly explored intrinsic connections. Prompts encouraged participants to share 'a few of [their] favourite things' and to 'draw, doodle, sketch or note the things you love' for both activities. The three postcards prompted 'My favourite local place is... and why?', 'What good thing in your surroundings have you noticed today?', 'What place in your surrounding area makes you happy and why?'.

⁹² The 190 participants created 179 drawings or drawing clusters in total – see Chapter 5 Methodology



Figure 8.7 A young community roll mapping participant (RS48) shares their love of things natural and cultural in the SVR area.



Figure 8.8 Young participant (RC84) expresses a love of combined human and natural elements in their love of houses drawn alongside the tree, thunder, a hill and a spider web.

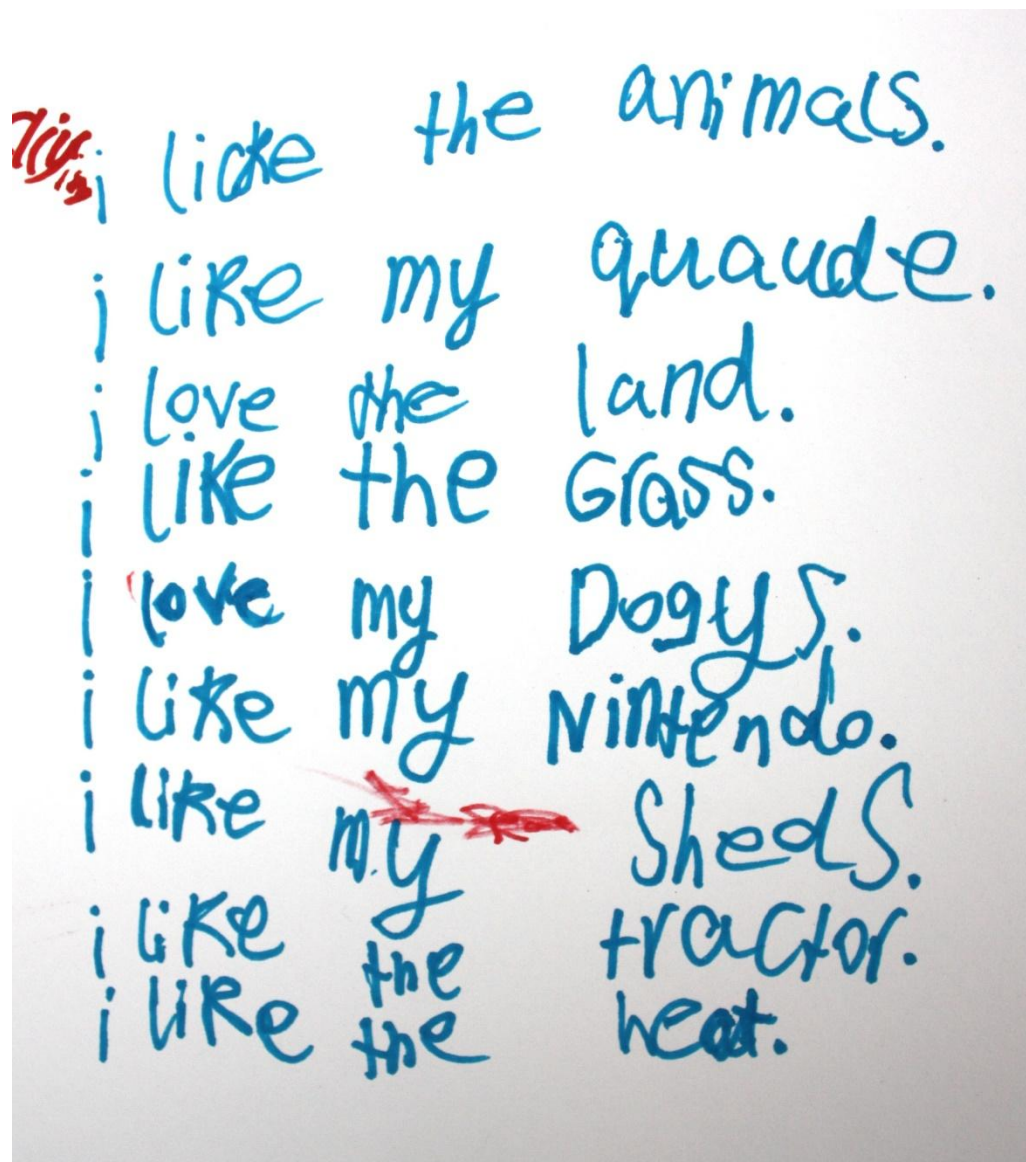


Figure 8.10 Another child (RC78) shares the things they love in their place. A combination of natural and human is evident. Interestingly they declare they 'love the land'.

Even for young participants, as shown in the examples from the community roll mapping in Figs 8.6-8.10, the combination of human and nature is important to their sense of place and attachment to it. In Fig 6.10 for example, RC78 denotes a greater 'love' in comparison to 'like' for two things: their dogs and the *land*. All ages evidence an enfolding of nature/human entwinement with the notion of home. Many younger roll-mapping



Figure 8.9 RC66 draws a direct line between home and the nature that makes it.

participants' drawings depicted 'home' and the combined nature/human elements that made it special, as RC66 stated, 'I like my home because of the birds and nature.'

Figure 8.11 shows the eight most referenced intrinsic values. Intrinsic values, such as love, are important, but often dismissed by scientific objectiveness as too emotional. Yet, as previously noted, research has shown emotional values to have a greater impact on wellbeing, adaptiveness, resilience and actions to care (Common Cause Foundation, 2021; Trudgill, 2001; Lumber, et al., 2017; Pritchard, et al., 2020). They are interactive and co-constitutive of each other, each leading to and amplifying the other. Wall Kimmerer argues values like love have agency and power to 'change everything – if you stand together and profess a thing before your community, it holds you accountable' (2013, p 248 - 249). That empathy, compassion and thinking beyond ourselves, gratitude, reciprocity and responsibility have the highest number of references reflects the potential of these as outcomes of other intrinsic values such as love and happiness (Pritchard, et al., 2020).

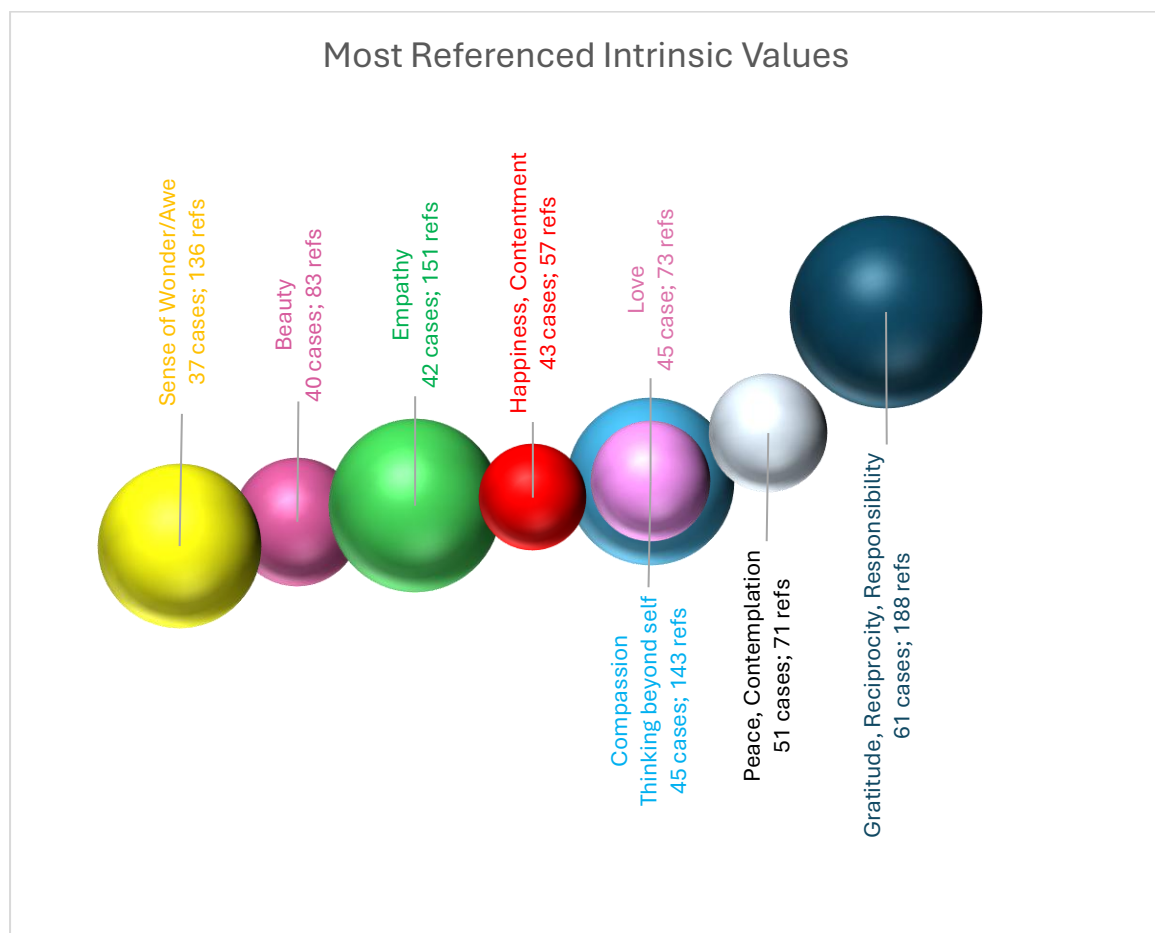


Figure 8.11 Relative size and position of most referenced intrinsic values. Bubbles in order of number of individuals (cases) citing value and size is relative to number of references made.

8.2.2 Human community

Indicated in affective, cognitive and functional dimensions of attachment, human-to-human social dimensions are important to social resilience (Baldwin, et al., 2017). The importance of community connection was expressed across all data types. All interviewees revealed strong human-to-human social connections in their expressions of land attachment. 22 survey responses (55%) noted human social connection. Both PE journals feature it multiple times. Human social connection was explicitly expressed in both pop-up data collection activities by 82 (43.2%) roll mapping and 45 (36.3%) postcard participants, respectively.

The types of human social connection participants expressed as important to them and their sense of place included family associations and opportunities for time together, friends and wider community connections including intergenerationality, feelings of friendliness and safety. Spaces, facilities and opportunities enabling social connection, such as school, youth groups, parks, sports and recreation, are important in creating connection and feelings of belonging ([Appendix 6; 8.2.2.1](#)). Together, these facilitated a much-valued sense of community, expressed in a single word by postcard respondent PS73 answering the question *What good thing in your surroundings have you noticed today?*, 'Camaraderie' (PS73).

The social dimensions, family, friends and the wider community and the places where those social interactions take place, were particularly important to younger participants. The circularity in the creation and maintenance of a sense of community was demonstrated in collaborative placemaking, particularly noticeable in young people's roll mapping contributions (Fig 8.12 – 8.14).



Figure 8.12 Human social dimensions of land connectedness for participant RC50 including reference to friendliness and nicety. The writing above the heart says 'everyone knows each other'. Environmental aspects such as 'the small amount of cars' are also cited as important.



Figure 8.13 For RC74 (detail from community roll on left) community, home and school are important parts of what they love about where they live. The postcard by PL24 (right) shows their favourite place populated by people identified by them as family.



Figure 8.14 RC51 is the work of two boys working collaboratively to draw a map of their place. It includes the main important elements of their lifeworlds; their houses, the local shop, school and a sign to the play park, all connected by the routes they take to travel between them.

8.2.3 Transmutation of matter

The final aspect of kinship and familiarity interviewees referenced was a particular type of self-in-nature identity. This moved from cognitive to the bodily through the transmutation of the human body after death to become one with the matter of the land.

D26 desires his final resting place, where 'I'm going to lie after I depart from this earth' (D26), to be his favourite place, a peaceful spot shared with osprey, deer, fox, and the occasional golden eagle, which is on the walking trail he founded – 'This is my favourite place - my ashes are getting spread here' (D26).

Similarly, referencing the natural burial ground she will be buried in, C19 expresses the positive resilience that knowing self-as-nature and love of a particular land can bring - 'I have absolutely no fear of death and I'm very comfortable with the unknown. I love that wood, and I get to become literally part of it. And that's wonderful! (C19).

8.2.4 Kithing

Themes of kinship and the familial strengthen the notion of *kithing*, as *knowing*, as a process for the making of kin. The human/nonhuman/nature social dimensions of land connectedness come into other themes considered in this chapter too, such as temporal/spatial dimensions

and stories. Their importance to creating, strengthening and maintaining emotional connection to land is vital to people who have lived a long time in place such as A05, 'It comes back to the point that we know our area. We grew up here, we love it. It's in our blood.' But also to those new in place, creating connection and belonging. Like PE41, ([Appendix 6; 8.2.4.1](#)), who learns to love all her place encompasses, including the characteristic weather of living up a hill on the Welsh coast known locally as the 'fog capital of the world' (Young, 2024).

The act of kithing, as a process of reconnection, was expressed by several participants who had returned 'home' after a time living away to study or to work, as a way of strengthening re/connection. D32, expresses kithing in getting to know her place again through exploration of the local woods with her father as a 'grounding experience of me getting back to where I'm from'. Recalling Wall Kimmerer's (2013) grammar of animacy, D32 and her father enter a process of naming specific trees ([Appendix 6; 8.2.4.2](#)).

D32's return to her native place had been enforced by the pandemic. In common with many people, 72% of interview, survey and journal participants in this study noted the strange paradoxical space that lockdowns opened up, allowed people to emotionally re/connect and explore their local area. Such close noticing and getting to know led to changing or deepening perspectives ([Appendix 6; 8.2.4.3](#)).

8.3 Inter/Intra dependence

The intimate relations between human and other natures in cognitive perceptions of self and place are evident in expressions of inter- and intra-dependence of human and nonhuman in the co-constituting of land and for human survival, wellbeing and resilience (see Table 8.2).

Table 8.2 Expressions of inter- and intra-dependence of human and nonhuman in the co-constituting of land and for human survival, wellbeing and resilience.

It's all it's all interlinked. I think there's no one without the other. Really, I think we're all interdependent on each other. (D32)
So it has to be this combination of people and place and it's the totality of that, rather than any one bit of it that makes it what it is. (A03)
It was basically about connecting people and land and how that loss of connection was really bad for people. Yeah. And community, because what is land and community? It is everything! (D29)
When I got home - I did what I always do when I get out of the car, I paused to feel the air, to see the view, to acknowledge my happiness at coming home, & that home is here, looking at Nefyn Bay, hugging the side of Yr Eifl. A healing place to live. (PE41)
It is our roots and without roots our heritage will not survive. Our Welsh language is part of this landscape. (S858)
I'm very aware of my relationship with nature, my dependence on it for my health, particularly, well, both my physical and my mental health. I feel very close, I <u>have to be close</u> to the ground, I can't, I become unhappy if I don't get my feet into wild places and hands in the earth. I always need that. (C19)

Despite the challenging of a dichotomy between nature and society in these quotes, the respondents seem to partially embrace the notion of nature as resource for human use and wellbeing (Castree, 2005). Though utility here could be framed as reciprocity, acknowledging the need of something for our survival and wellbeing engendering a reciprocal care and nurturing of that something. Just as my friends and family are important to my health and wellbeing, but I hope that it is a reciprocal relationship where I nurture them too. The concepts of multinaturalism and more-than-human ontologies are echoed in participants' cognitive perceptions, expressing ideas of humans and human cultures deeply enfolded in the land and

all the multinatures therein. Expressions such as ‘we evolved in this natural world, this is what we're fitted to, where our place is’ (C19) and ‘it's all interlinked - there's no one without the other’ (D32) recall immanent philosophies of emergent and diverse more-than-human political ecology and ways of living together (Bingham & Hinchliffe, 2008; Braun, 2016).

Nevertheless, there remains a tension of elements of dualism in this lay multinaturalism. Our language and common usage of the terms ‘human’ and ‘nature’ perpetuates a separatism coupled with modern life and technology as wrestled with by C22 ([Appendix 6; 8.3.1](#)).

Rotherham’s ‘cultural severance’ (2015) presents a visceral challenge through cognitive, functional and affective dissonance of place that D29 ponders while considering land connectedness in contemporary society ([Appendix 6; 8.3.2](#)). This mirrors the ‘pain’ of separation at a more or less (un)conscious level Baldwin et al. (2017) note resulting from loss of connection to land. This connection is vital to both human and nonhuman health and wellbeing, as D29 continues ‘...it's about connection and belonging. And that can only happen in a place, on some land. And oftentimes, you know, the people who suffer have got no connections, and no belonging’. C19 and S095 further emphasise the intersection between land, wellbeing, knowing, belonging and identity highlighted in the previous section is prevalent ([Appendix 6; 8.3.3](#)).

Participant responses highlight the intricate and contradictory spatial concepts of nature/human relations (Castree, 2005; Hinchliffe, 2007). Yet the combining of culture/nature evident in ontologies of inter and intra dependence suggests this disconnection to nature might be bridged by encouraging a more holistic land connectedness with the rejection of a ‘pure nature’ as separate to humans. D27 stated, ‘This area here, [people] look at, think it's wonderful, it's natural. There's no single thing natural whatsoever’, rebuffing the ‘wilderness fallacy’, which suggests that nature and humans are inherently spatially exclusive and therefore inhibiting any possibility of convivial coexistence (Cronon, 1995). Alongside the imprint of millennia of farming, the industrial past evident in the quarries, mills and factories common to Ecoamgueddfa, Skye, Catteran and SVR’s landscapes, emphasises the interdependence of people and place for many participants. As section 8.1.2 discussed, the combination of human and natural heritage is shown to be an important factor in people’s connection to place. Postcard responses citing what people love about their favourite place ([Appendix 6; 8.3.4](#)) illustrate the importance of combined nature and human dimensions of community, history, industrial and urban development.

By embracing the entwined multinaures of landscape, a deeper connection can be forged. In turn, sparking curiosity to know more, as expressed by another participant who said 'I'm an incomer to this area, but I have fallen in love with the landscape. I want to understand how it has developed, what has gone into making it as it is, and how people have shaped it' (S698). Whilst academic terms like multinaturalism and relational ethics are not used, respondents' relationships with the land show the potential for a lay multinaturalism, in which human-nonhuman interdependence is 'common sense!' (D29). Generating an understanding of how the land, as one participant put it, "has been shaped by the actions of people in the distant and near past and is evolving to reflect the needs of today' (S978).

Melding cognitive and functional dimensions, participants emphasised land knowledge's role in shaping past and present human actions, such as the relationship between geology, soils and crops. A06's reference to 'silly little details....' ([Appendix 6; 8.3.5](#)) suggests tensions between perceived lack of value put on such knowledge and its practical implications.

Many participants also perceive the intra- and inter-dependence of humans/nature in the human impacts on climate and biodiversity crises. D34 illustrates the cognitive tensions grappling with notions of our unequal and disruptive/destructive yet 'symbiotic relationship' with nature⁹³ ([Appendix 6; 8.3.6](#)).

Participants recognised the effects of the wider co-shaping of nature/culture, land/human. Viewing the watershot stones⁹⁴ typical of the town's buildings, E37 reflected on the land scarred by human hands and the hard lives lived between the unforgiving Lancashire weather, hard stone and moor that shaped the fabric of the towns and the stoic Lancashire spirit. E37 wonders, 'Again that [asks] the question, does the landscape shape the community, or does the community shape the landscape? Probably both.'

8.4 Spatio-temporal dimensions

Participants' cognitive perceptions of landscapes repeatedly reflect the importance of intertwining spatial and temporal aspects of human connection to the land and the multiple

⁹³ Storm Arwen happened while doing fieldwork in November 2021, and its impact was felt and referred to across case study areas.

⁹⁴ Watershot coursing is a distinctive vernacular architectural style where the outer face of stone blocks are slightly angled so the upper edge projects beyond the lower edge to aid rainwater drainage.

scales at which these occur and are perceived. Again, this reflects the enfolding of human and other natures across space and time.

Usage of history and heritage as terms in expressing connection to place and self-identity infer a sense of time. All interviewees mention a sense of (pre)history as an important part of their sense of place. Of 31 interviewees who spoke of their favourite place or thing where they lived, 27 (87%) cited cultural heritage or combined human/natural heritage elements. When asked to describe in their own words what is important to them about their local landscape, 26/40 survey respondents mention history and/or a sense of time. 89 (71.2%) postcard respondents reference cultural heritage/human dimensions, as do 84 (46.9 %) roll mapping participants. With 74 (59.2%) postcard respondents referencing a sense of history/time. With the roll mapping images, human/cultural dimensions of a particular place are explicitly referenced in drawings. In particular, the built environment of houses/homes, local streets and facilities such as shops, schools, parks and built local landmarks. A deliberate depiction or understanding on the part of the respondent of a sense of history/time is harder to assess except where explicitly noted. Such as the young boy (RC18) who drew a historical artefact he had found in a local stream or written by RS22: 'History: Railway; Industry; Munitions; Mills; Stone Polishing'. Time was inferred in natural heritage references in both types of community mapping data, in seasonal specificity, 'seeing the changing seasons' (RS52), and seasonal festivals like Halloween, or time of day/night.

Participants' spatio-temporal expressions include sensing time in the materiality of the places they live, ancestor reverence, a sense of the continuum of time, past-present-future connections, time served in place/space and multiple scales of connections.

Sense of time is not linear. Time spools out multiple threads, looping, circling, folding back on itself, snagging at particular points and events. Time haunts the dark smell of peat, the roughness of lichens on a hillfort's stones (C19), calcified in ancient volcanic rock and the footprints of dinosaurs (B14), written on the land in the 'rig-a-rendal' (B08) and the old 'pack-horse routes' (E37), and read in the weather of the changing seasons (D29). Layered and stratified, past, present and future fold onto the other and back again in walking with loved ones ghosts in special places (C23), in holding a fragment of armour unearthed for the first time in 500 hundred years (A01) and replanting long lost native trees for future generations (B09). Time accumulates and accretes. For those who can read the land, time tells the story of interactions and co-shaping over millennia. B08 described the resulting 'imprint' ([Appendix 6; 8.4.1](#)).

Participant responses convey feelings of ontological security derived from perceiving oneself as a small part in a long continuum from the past and into the future. One participant articulates this saying ‘The connection to previous generations over thousands of years. It is a healing place, where I can get the world and its worries into perspective, where I root myself’ (S698). 30 interviewees and 11 survey respondents explicitly referenced similar perceptions of the continuum of time in their relationship with their particular land. These include awareness of deep geological time, other species outliving humans and past generations of humans. The latter was not linked to direct genealogical claims but important on a species level.

C16 expresses both this human link and the longevity of other species, an ancient Yew ([Appendix 6; 8.4.2](#)). The Yew reflects the special place trees hold in the human psyche, featuring prominently in the things and places participants cared about. This prominence and the connection to stability and continuity through standing in place for centuries, is reflective of Clifford’s (2003) assertion of arboreal ontological security. Discussing her favourite place, D31 expresses this ontological security and the perspective she gains ‘about what I get upset about’, by walking in her local wood amongst long-lived trees ([Appendix 6; 8.4.3](#)).

The sense of perspective and resulting wellbeing expressed by D31, can also derive from perception of human dimensions. Also discussing their favourite place/thing about their land, C20 and D29 centre a sense of wellbeing and perspective derived from knowing yourself as part of a long continuum. C20 referenced Mynydd Rhiw, a mountain in western Llyn, rich with sites of human habitation from the Neolithic onwards, presenting ontological security through both deep geological time and millennia of human survivance. D29 also finds comfort from ancient human traces in a local standing stone, placing her firmly into ‘something bigger’ ([Appendix 6; 8.4.4](#)).

Referencing current global conflicts and historic to contemporary battles of national identity, C20 also went to explain how a later-in-life understanding of (pre)history of place has given perspective on the futility of constructed nationalism. Thinking through time from a point before modern national borders and languages existed and the perception of commonality this confers ‘grounds you really’ and ‘makes you realise how small and how unimportant we are.’ (C20).

B13 beautifully depicts the intimate relationship between land and people across time. Whilst she views her connection as a crofter as more direct, it reflects similar themes perceived by others more removed. Experiences and memories intimately connect her to the land and the

generations of people who have lived on the land before her. This 'heritage' provides strength from being part of the continuum, the circularity of having a 'rounded life' ([Appendix 6; 8.4.5](#)).

The Spatio-temporal imaginaries further reveal the recognition of the flows of people and things in and out of place across time and space. Fossilized ancient seashores in the local sandstone, historic movements of objects, people, plants and animals and contemporary need for community and environmental sustainability reflect Doreen Massey's global sense of place as both routes and roots (1994; 2005). Lähteenmäki et al. (2019) view ecomuseums sites of shared global public memory and transnational human rights, cultural and environmental sustainability, in which local engagement becomes a 'microcosmic part' of global concerns (p90). Similarly, participants' interest in trying to understand the inter-relations between their place and community and others is expressed in various ways. Including making a point of taking in hitchhikers and visitors, 'the pilgrims who come' (B13), understanding the connections between cotton and linen trades to slavery and local social justice, the flows of goods, ideas and peoples between maritime communities and the global diaspora created by past and current migrations. ([Appendix 6; 8.4.6](#)). Human and nonhuman migration has always happened, it enriches and shapes land. Promoting understanding of this as an integral natural process at different scales, from the migration of tectonic plates in deep time to burgeoning climate migrants, could increase empathy, reminding us of our interconnectedness.

Local scale is important to embodied connection too, providing direct physical connection in place. Whether with school children who experience local histories as a gateway to larger global narratives, 'because it were local and they could experience it, it massively, massively set in on them you know' (E36). Or pride in a community's industrial heritage, empathy for the hardships endured and an understanding of how that has shaped the landscape expressed by S448; 'industrial heritage returned to nature - the history and sacrifice of others who created the landscape'.

The importance of local knowledge and understanding of the environment and its changes across the seasons and years is another aspect important to participants. 'Doing time somewhere' (B13) watching the unfolding seasons, knowing where certain flowers bloom, where to pick the best blackberries and fungi from, and witnessing changes to habitats, plant and animal populations over the years ([Appendix 6; 8.4.7](#)). Understanding the balance of natures in place was conveyed by E36, 'It depends where your landscape is and where you live, because obviously like here we have things what grow and blow differently to what they have just up [the road]' (E36).

Further spatio-temporal dimensions are observable in empathy expressed for both humans and nonhumans by 65% of interviewees and journal participants and a further 27.5% of survey respondents. Such as sadness at the death of thousands of trees by Storm Arwen, 'So it's quite, it's quite sad and some [are] sort of reluctant to go walking because they don't really want to see all the sad trees that have fallen down' (D32). Contemplation of past human struggles to survive on the land in all case study areas elicits empathy where 'it brings home to them how people survived' (E39). Empathy is linked to understanding the continuum of time and wellbeing gained through a perspective of commonality and universality of the human condition, 'the same struggles, the same heartbreak' no matter 'what century' (D29). Perspective fostering appreciation of what one has now in comparison, 'what am I getting worked up about? I'm so lucky! (C24) ([Appendix 6; 8.4.8](#)).

Empathic understanding of past events can lead to better understanding of current crises. Through ancestral/national histories, D29 expresses empathy and understanding of current migrant crisis causes, 'Its all about land', and its impacts 'eroding of community' ([Appendix 6; 8.4.9](#)).

Perceptions of time in place connect the past with the future, creating a sense of responsibility to honour past generations and as caretakers for future ones. 'How transient this life is' (C24) gives the perspective we are but 'passing through' (S301), which promotes stewardship. In the ecomuseums' farming communities, heartfelt responsibility to 'keeping the land going' (B08) to pass on to future generations 'the way it's been passed on to them' (C21) is fundamental to the deep connection to 'their land as part of their heritage' (C21). Future thinking comes with a sense of 'how huge the risks of losing what there is' (C24), echoed by B08's alignment of local stewardship with global climate action ([Appendix 6; 8.4.10](#)). These ideas are explored further in section 8.6 Future Thinking.

Like all this chapter's themes, spatiotemporal dimensions are inextricably entwined with the others. I end this section linking to the next with two of many possible examples underlining the entanglement of time in storied landscapes. For D29 understanding the long story of her land is intimately linked to the quest to understand human connection to it and her own part in the story ([Appendix 6; 8.4.11](#)). Time is written on the land in the tangible and intangible domains, which, when read, tell the story of the land – 'the scars from peat cutting, sheep tracks or derelict croft houses, which visually tells the stories of the past' (S139).

8.5 Storied landscapes

Wall Kimmerer (2013, p. 341) says ‘stories are amongst our most potent tools for restoring the land as well as our relationship to the land,’ through unearthing old stories in place and creating new ones. Stories are not just fairytales, though they have truth and power of their own. Stories can tell us the tale of the last net salmon fisher on the Tweed (A04), the women working together to make community gardens (C32, C29 & E36), the stories of traveller and migrant agricultural workers in the berry fields of Scotland (C28) or the story of how trees talk to each other and the wider community of life through a mycorrhizal fungal and biochemical wood-wide-web. ‘You can really engage people with stories. I think you can. I think stories are key in life’ (D33).

History, myths, legends, herb-lore, animal-lore and folklore intertwine in specific landscapes through language, place-names and stories. The richness of associations, facts, traditions and beliefs illuminate the history, uses and natures of the land, both mundane and sacred, over millennia. From ancient, sacred waters of lakes, wells and rivers, animals and plants imbued with meaning, to the resonance of landscape features and sites venerated or created by our ancestors from prehistoric times to vernacular architecture and creative arts on which the local thumbprint is clear in the materiality and language, names and inspiration. The recognition and importance of the storied land are clear across all types of participant data. ‘The power of stories’ (C29) ‘define’ and ‘connect’ us to place (C23, C16), providing explanation and traditional knowledge (C16, B08) ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.1](#)).

This reawakening or reimagining of storied multinatural landscapes in Western academia undoubtedly owes, too often unacknowledged, debt, as Indigenous feminist scholar Zoe Todd (2016, p. 6) notes, to ‘Indigenous thinkers for millennia of engagement with sentient environments’ and ‘cosmologies that enmesh people in complex’ interrelationships and with climate ‘as important points of organization and action’. Whilst the prompt was sorely needed to open the conversation to voices other than ‘objective’ expert opinion, we don’t need to appropriate the details as it is all there - latent in the land, waiting to be rediscovered as ‘instruments of consciousness – engaged in reawakening the memory of the world’ (Hawkes, 1951, p. 26). We just need to unlearn the boxes, becoming open to traditional knowledge (C25, C16) and alternative ways of knowing (A07) ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.2](#)).

In each area, language and placenames are holders of knowledge in urban and rural settings. A town’s street name, Tootie Street, delights D31 and D28, with the story it tells of past land use and cattle herds being called to market. B13 illustrates the entangled human/nature stories

behind placenames that are ‘full of humanity’ (B13). Livelihoods bound to the sea’s bounty and dangers expressed in ‘*Am Beannachan*’, The Blessing, marking fishermen’s safe return ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.3](#)). For B10, placenames have provided an avenue into understanding the local landscape and culture of his adopted home, illustrating how they are useful to creating connections for people new to an area.

Survey results underline the importance of traditional knowledge and it’s power to connect people. 36/40 (90%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed the traditional knowledge, folklore, language, events, arts and crafts are an important part of the place they lived (Fig 8.16). 37/40 (92%) thought art and cultural events help connect people to local nature and history (Fig 8.17).

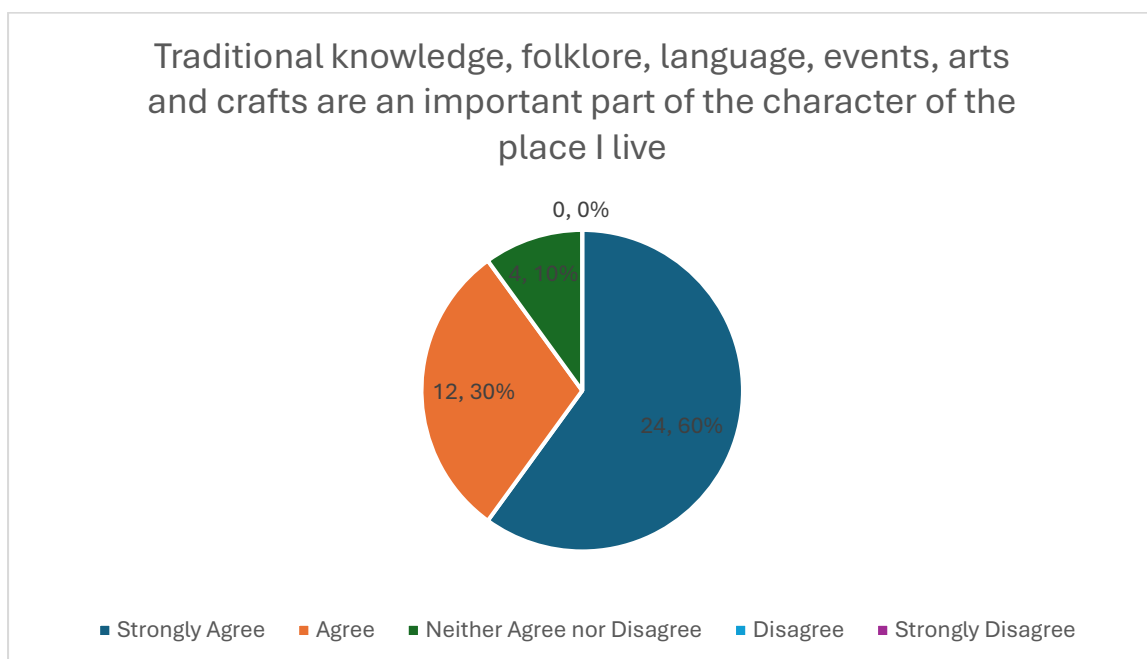


Figure 8.16 Survey responses on the importance of traditional knowledge

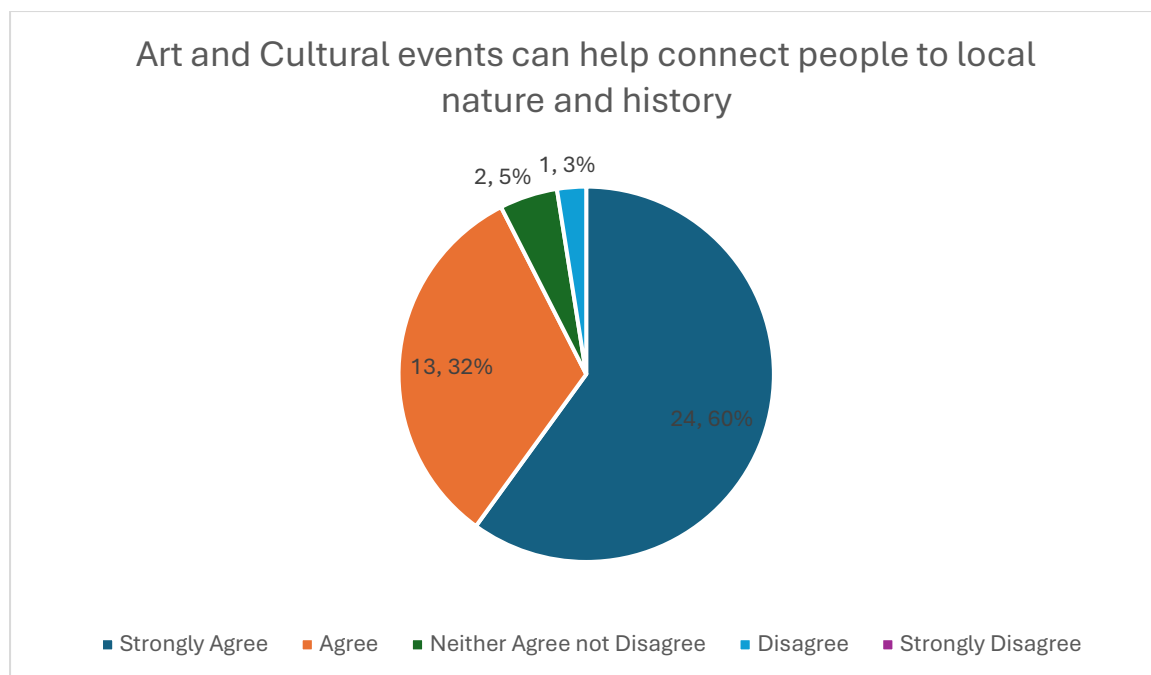


Figure 8.17 Survey results indicating potential of art and cultural events to connect people to local nature and history

Chapter 3.4 discussed the need in the UK to give space and legitimacy to and encourage diverse understandings and connections to land. B10 pondered others' negative perceptions of alternative spirituality and his resultant reluctance to talk about it, whilst holding as true a deep conviction our connection to landscape is spiritual and fundamental – ‘the landscape is so powerful that we....., that there must be a connection to it’ (B10, [Appendix 8.5.0.4](#))



Trudgill (2001) argues feelings foster the democratised will to conserve. Stories of the land can connect, unlocking emotions and other ways of knowing, whether they are perceived as merely interesting stories, useful traditional knowledge, or a more spiritual experience. Perceiving ‘reality in the so-called fables we hear’ (C24) confers significance to mythic tales of transformation, shapeshifting (C24), magical, sacred, and useful animals and plants (C22, C18) and dinosaur/dragons (B14) ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.5](#))

Figure 8.18 Dinosaur footprint in the rocks at low tide An Corran, Skye

When shared with each other, stories connect us not only to nonhuman natures but to human others too, challenging preconceptions and fostering greater shared understanding and empathy. As one participant stated, ‘that is what we can do for each other – it’s sharing the stories isn’t it’ (A03). For C16, stories passed from generation-to-generation fold time, leaping across centuries in just two or three moves ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.6](#)).

Empathy for those mistreated and ostracised in the past came across in gendered histories of women, for instance, persecuted as witches (B16, E36). D29 expressed feelings of anger at the inherent prejudiced message some traditional tales convey, ‘that bad things will befall you’ (D29) if you don’t conform to society’s rules and advocated for reflective retelling ([Appendix 6; 8.5.0.7](#)).

As a mother of a young daughter, D29 is ‘very aware of what people say to girls and women’ and the need to change the narrative, ‘Just stop, just stop! Who are we listening to?’ (D29). Applicable beyond gendered prohibition, D29 appeals for new stories to break away from constraints formed by imperial pasts and capitalist structures ‘and it, yeah, in land, maybe it’s - time to write new stories. Because it’s very imperialist. It’s about boundaries and ownership’ (D29).

8.5.1 Myths, legends and the Fae

Story as a mechanism of connection was prevalent across all data types and all ages. Thirty-nine out of 40 (97.5%) survey respondents agreed (37.5%) or strongly agreed (60%) they enjoy knowing the stories and folklore about nature and places in their local landscape. 6.1 % of roll mapping participants and 30.4% of postcard respondents referenced land stories, such as folklore and history, in their favourite things about their place. Given interview question themes and interviewees’ high level of engagement with heritage, unsurprisingly all interviewees shared numerous stories connected to their place. Of 26 interviewees who shared their favourite stories about a place or thing in their area, 21 included folkloric dimensions and 11 historic story elements. With Flodden, the ecomuseum’s focus on the Battle of Flodden meant these centred on associated sites and legends. Such as the mythic qualities of Flether of Selkirk, the lone surviving fighting man, not so much based in fact but deeply embedded in the community identity (A01, A07).

Myths and legends explain the origins of landscape features, both natural and humanmade. Like the giants of Glen Isla and connections to Finn mac Cumhaill⁹⁵ and Arthurian legend in the Cateran area. Or specific trees or fields linked to the tragedies of Meinir and Rhys and women executed as witches in the Ecoamgueddffa area. Stories of local fae abound in each case study area, with each having its own local variations. Echoes of pre-Christian genius loci, fae are not the sparkly Disney variety, but complex beings requiring caution and placating. Faeries requiring the service of the local blacksmith or stealing babies in Ecoamgueddffa and fae lovers in the SVR, Cateran, Wales, Skye areas. The fae inhabit ancestral sites such as barrows and carved stones (SVR, Cateran, Wales), sacred wells and lakes where they can be appealed to for good health (SVR, Cateran, Wales, Skye). Likewise, dangerous and liminal places, a warning to keep people away and safe, such as the Faerie Chapel in SVR sited in a deep gorge (Healey Dell) where water tumbles and swirls. E40 was happy to live alongside ancient appeal for fae protection with a carved apotropaic symbol of fern-seed marking their house's fae connection. The Fae appeal for all ages illustrated by the postcard and roll mapping contributions in Fig 8.19.


'The Fairy Chapel – because I believe in fairies'	 A hand-drawn illustration on a white background. At the top left is a yellow sun with rays. To its right is a green tree with a brown trunk. Below the tree, the words 'Fairy Dell' are written in a stylized, hand-drawn font. Below the text, there are several small, colorful figures (blue, pink, green, blue) standing on a red line that represents a path or a river. To the left of the figures, there is a black, curved shape that looks like a cave entrance or a waterfall. The entire drawing is done in a simple, childlike style with various colors.
PS10; aged 65+	RS11; age under 10 years

Figure 8.19 Quotes referring to the Faerie Chapel, SVR area

Far from being wholly set in the past, participants from the Skye community demonstrate the influence of the fae on contemporary society and behaviour. B10 told of the reluctance of the community to offend the fae led to the failure of a local bridge project in the 1960s ([Appendix 6: 8.5.1.1](#)). In another example, the Fae were invoked in the community's successful 2019 fight against an unwanted fish farm development when an objection was lodged by a group called

⁹⁵ The pan Celtic stories of Finn mac Cumhaill and Cuchulain, crop up across areas (Cateran, Skye) as do the pan-British lore of Arthurian legend (Cateran, Ecoamgueddffa). Similarities between stories of Giants, type of Fae etc across all areas also hint at the common cultural backgrounds shared between the areas.

Friends of the Eilean Fhlodaigearraidh Faeries (Flodigarry Island Faeries) (Bradley, 2019; Bradley, 2020). Stating it would harm all species of fae, including the Ashrai fairies (similar to a mermaid), roanes, gnomes and broobries, who lived there. The campaigners also warned of the dangers to human life from the Ashrai and the Blue Men of Minch if the plans went ahead. B12 was particularly taken with this collaboration of his local fae and human communities tendering it as his favourite local story ([Appendix 6; 8.5.1.2](#)).

8.5.2 Enfolding the world – the importance of stories in place

Clifford argues knowing and reflection forges attachment to ‘the land, embossed by story, on history, on natural history, carries meaning. It is through meaning that attachment, watchfulness and rapport are forged’ (2011, p. 13). The underlying co-constitutive nature of this chapter’s themes and the power of stories to affect understanding, reflection and suggest alternative more watchful, care-ful paths is expressed by D29. Echoing notions of past/future time and stewardship discussed in section 8.4, D29 invokes nature ‘speaking’ through environmental change over differing scales of time, sounding an alarm. ‘Knowing stories about ancestors’ (D29) offers an alternative course ([Appendix 6; 8.5.2.1](#)).

The importance of knowing the stories of your land is echoed B11 who contends ‘it’s important to learn first and foremost, about your actual own natural history, You know, your own stories, your own people, before you then move on.’ Connection through place to wider understanding of other natures and other places simulates Walton’s ‘point of departure’ (2017, p. 54). For A03 getting the human story in first presents a gateway to other wider stories ([Appendix 6; 8.5.2.2](#)).

B13 calls a lack of care of your land’s stories ‘a sin’, reflecting Shepherd’s (2014) contention that knowing is a never-ending process, in her warning it is a lifelong undertaking, albeit rewarding and vital for wellbeing ([Appendix 6; 8.5.2.3](#)). Barbara Bender reflects this ideal beautifully when she stating that love of place comes through the detail, “in trying to understand the stories and histories that go to make a living landscape, comes too – a sense of belonging” (2018, p. 24). B13 echoed this sentiment when discussing the distance technology creates and the need for people to get outside and get to know their land, the people in it and the stories it has to tell, ‘The more that you can fall in love with a place, the more that you feel you belong’ ([Appendix 6; 8.5.2.4](#)). Language, here the ‘*Gealach abachaidh an eòrna*’, ‘The moon that ripens the corn’, again invokes traditional knowledge linking to love and connection (B13).

Yet Wall Kimmerer reminds us ‘we are storymakers, not just storytellers’ (2013, p. 341). The need for new ways of telling old stories and creating new ones for the world we want to see,

reflecting the multiple ‘who’s in who we are now, the places we are from, the places we want to live in, to tackle climate crisis and forge resilience was a theme repeated across the in-depth data participants. Resonating with Gümüşay and Reinecke’s (2021) ‘acts of imagination’, D29 links story to future thinking. Arguing humans’ storytelling capacity presents opportunities to shift both negative narratives to more ‘restorative’ ones and the trajectory of environmental crises, declaring ‘it’s time for some new ones’ ([Appendix 6; 8.5.2.5](#)).

8.6 Future thinking

New stories for alternative futures are one dimension of future thinking. Other themes already explored feature aspects of future thinking too. Not least, temporal aspects of place with the notion of a continuum present a powerful motivation for thinking and caring about what we pass on to future generations ([Appendix 6; 8.6.1](#)). D29 expresses the baldest of motivations for change voiced by many, children. ‘I suppose I had been, like many people here, thinking, looking, watching the world change in my lifetime. Then.... I had a daughter - And I thought, well, what is the world she's going to live in?’.

Continuity interwoven with perceptions of intra/interdependence also lead to future thinking as described by S956, ‘the wild personality, the roughness and the resilience of our area inspire me to continue to strive for our language, identity and communities’.

Related to this, participants expressed understanding biocultural significance to their communities, with traditional land management practices considered vital to community and environmental resilience and regeneration. The importance of traditional peat bog management, crofting and commoner practices in Skye and SVR areas and field margin meadow zones noted to flood and water management (Ecoamgueddfa area), habitat and biodiversity increase, carbon sequestration, food, economic and environmental stability in all areas were cited.

Responses suggest a knowing-caring feedback loop as a pathway to land connectedness. Revealing the interwoven nature of land dimensions where knowings, learnt, observed and sought, result in caring feelings and action, leading to seeking more knowledge. As previously noted, community knowledge of their environment engenders a responsibility to honour past generations and what they pass on to the next generation. 97.5% of survey respondents agreed (15%) or strongly agreed (82.5%) it is important to preserve and pass on local heritage, culture, traditions and knowledge to future generations. Whilst 92.5% agree (12.5%) or strongly agree (80%) it is important to them to know the landscape and wildlife where they live will be there for

future generations. Though participants recognised this does not mean holding things static or stuck in the past, as C21 explains, ‘it's not, you're not going back to how it was, but you're, you're using that knowledge to manage that in a certain way.’ C17 echoes the sentiment of dynamic evolution for the future ([Appendix 6; 8.6.2](#)).

Grappling with the failed governmental conservation approaches he has worked within, D27 returns us to the barriers dualistic culture/nature teaching create, ‘We’re educated in boxes. We define nature by what we consider to be important species, or important habitats. And they have this line drawn around them – here be nature, and everywhere else there isn’t nature.’ D27 petitions for change ‘its patently out of date, and it patently has to evolve’ to ‘future-proof’ conservation.

In all study areas, the human communities are under threat from social and economic deprivation, lack of affordable housing and jobs, which further undermines infrastructure and resources available. A02 explains how future thinking motivates more regenerative communities, ‘keeping them together and wanting them to have a vision of what they want to do and what they want their community to be in the future, so it doesn’t die.’ Echoing concepts highlighted in Chapters 3 and 4, including convivial conservation (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020) and just heritage (Siebrandt, et al., 2017; Mellado & Brulon Soares, 2022), participants' notions of community resilience and sustainability are deeply entwined with environmental sustainability ([Appendix 6; 8.6.3](#)).

8.7 Land Connectedness potential – embedded landscapes of care

The results from this research point to the strong connection and entanglement between people, nature and cultural heritage in landscapes and of the potential of this strong connection to motivate and empower agency in caring for it.

Figures quoted in section 8.2.1 show high levels of combined nature-heritage perception and of nature-heritage-in-self among survey, interview and journal respondents. Data from the community mapping postcards similarly evidences the importance of combined nature-culture and human-nonhuman dimensions of land to people's emotional connections to it (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3 Community mapping postcards results sorted by natural/nonhuman dimensions and cultural/human dimensions

Postcard Question	Natural Heritage only	Cultural Heritage only	Combined natural/cultural/social	Social Aspects only
What good thing in your surroundings have you noticed today?	14	2	6	3
What place in your surrounding area makes you happy and why?	12	2	27	6
My favourite local place is...and why?	10	2	35	5
Sub Total/124 cards	36	6	68	14
%	29	4.8	54.8	11.2
Total % of natural /nonhuman only to combined all human aspects	29	71		

Overall, 71% of respondents cited human aspects, alone or in combination with natural dimensions, as important to what mattered to them and why, compared with 29% citing natural/nonhuman dimensions only. The combination of nature-culture-social within land is shown to be the most valued in relation to happiness and favourite place. Interestingly, noticing good things leans more towards natural aspects, with 14 out of 25 respondents. Although combining all human dimensions gives a more even ratio of 14 to 11.

Values most frequently expressed in the postcards as reasons for why places are important to the respondents include a sense of space and freedom, wellbeing, calm, relaxing, tranquillity, beauty, views and space to think and ponder alongside a strong sense of community as supporting, caring and of being heard; of family, home, memories and safety and a sense of history. Other important aspects frequently mentioned in association with respondents'

emotionally charged connections, are access and facilities and walking (alone, with family, friends and dogs).

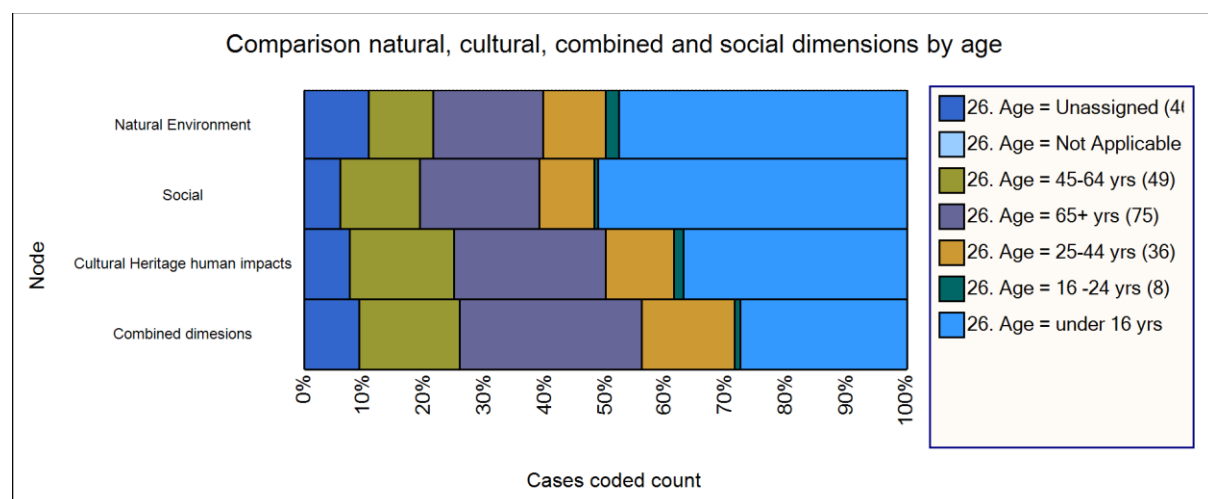
Community roll mapping results are more evenly distributed between natural dimensions only and those combined, though with slightly more combined (Table 8.4).

Table 8.4 Roll Mapping results, total 179 drawings or clusters, sorted by natural heritage only; combined natural/cultural/social dimensions; isolated figures (self, portraits, friends and family); fantasy figures (imaginary or from tv/games etc) and other (abstract shapes with no explanation).

Natural/non human only	Combined natural/cultural/social	Figures only; self-portraits, friends, family	Fantasy Figures only	Other
80	84	6	3	6
44.7%	46.9%	3.3%	1.7%	3.3%

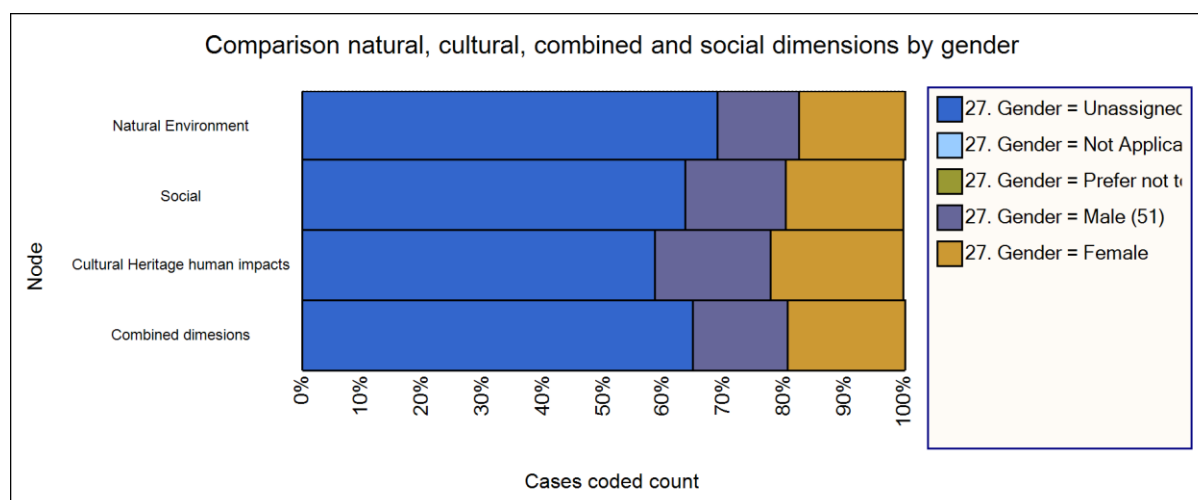
This could be due to the higher number of younger participants in the roll mapping, with 173 (91%) under 16 years. The data shows younger participants are more likely to reference nature alongside social dimensions, including family, friends and community (see Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 Comparison of natural, cultural, combined and social dimensions referenced by different age groups across all data types. Graph shows % of each age group for all participants (cases) referencing each dimension rather than a comparison of number of references for each dimension. NB It is more useful to compare the different dimensions within specific age groups, (e.g. you can clearly see social dimensions received the greatest number of references from under 16's compared to cultural, whereas in the 65+ age group more references were made to combined and cultural dimensions and the least to natural), as the overall total % of each group for any one dimension is affected by the total number of participants of that age, e.g. there are significantly more under 16's than any other age group (see Appendix 3.3)



While there are noticeable differences between age groups, when the same data is sorted by gender (where assigned), there is little difference (see Table 8.6).

Table 8.6 Comparison of natural, cultural, combined and social dimension references by gender. There are slightly more female participants, 65 to 51 male, with two preferring not to state gender. Most community mapping activities are gender-unassigned (see Appendix 3.3).



The same values of love, beauty, peacefulness, family, friends, community, safety, facilities and access expressed in the postcard data are also evidenced in the roll mapping.

The emotional connections discussed in this chapter correlate with higher intrinsic values. Joy, inspiration, love, beauty, wellbeing and belonging entwine, leading to reciprocity and feelings of responsibility embedded in landscapes of care. Again, the knowing-caring feedback loop, cited by so many scholars from Leopold (1948), Shepherd (2014) to Wall Kimmerer (2013) and Clifford & King (2006) is central to motivating A02, 'I think you have a greater awareness which I think is important, because you are going to care for it a lot more if you're aware of it'. B13 agrees, using the term 'nurture', a word steeped in notions of kith, kin and the familial, an act of love ([Appendix 6; 8.7.0.1](#)).

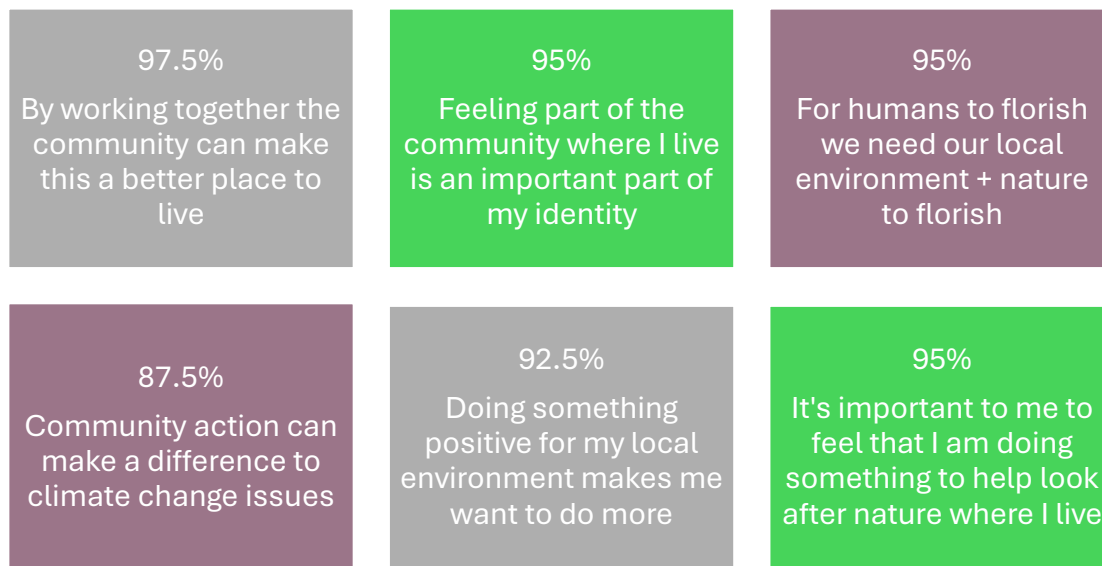
Chapter 3 and section 8.1.1 note such intrinsic values lead to *thinking beyond ourselves* to an ethic of care and stewardship, with spillover from either environmental or social value dimensions leading to concern and action in other (Common Cause Foundation, 2021). Action and feelings of agency begets more agency and actions. Data from the survey correlates with this. 92.5% of respondents stated doing something positive for the environment makes them want to take more action. 32 (80%) interviewees expressed *thinking beyond themselves*, taking multiple pro-community actions, outside of any ecomuseum actions. 'Pockets of passion' (E41) for making life better for both human and nonhuman community members in their place, from the mermaids of Flodigarry, habitat and access creation, planting flowers and trees to improve their towns, picking up litter, to regular and multiple volunteering actions with varied groups,

committees, community and town councils. Survey results also evidence strong feelings of reciprocity and responsibility attached to places we live.

Strong community-in-self identity is evidenced by 95% of survey participants. Yet only 26.3% of respondents identify as lifelong residents with 42.1 % having lived in the area more than 20 years, 18.4% between 10 - 20 years and 13.2% less than 10 years. This suggests community-in-self identity, belonging, is equally fostered through the particularity of land connections, reflecting the importance of sense of place to connection for new and long-term residents (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011). A similar breakdown is evidenced in interviewees too, with only 35.7% identifying as born-and-bred locals. The majority paradoxically identify as 'incomers', even when having lived in a place for nearly five decades, with some having ancestral roots in the area and/or having moved from within the same country. Two interviewees worked in the area only, emphatic outsiders living just a five-minute drive away. Reflecting Hawke's (2010) findings, 12 interviewees highlighted their incomer status driving their interest in finding out about the place they live, to understand, engage and belong to the community. Natives who had left for education or work and now returned, noted increased awareness and appreciation for their area upon returning.

Importantly, Table 8.7 illustrates community-in-self identity correlates with a belief in community action and agency to initiate change for the better. Making the place they live better, for both humans and nonhumans to flourish and to address climate crises.

Table 8.7 % of survey participants who agree or strongly agree with the statements



Reinforcing claims of ecological psychology and social-ecological place-specific approaches (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012; Twigger-Ross, 2013; Till & O’Sullivan, 2020; Baldwin, et al., 2017), participants strongly expressed the importance of communities’ particular connection to a particular land through knowing to future human and nonhuman wellbeing ([Appendix 6: 8.7.0.2](#)).

A02 gave an example of how a holistic understanding of deep time inherent in a particular landscape had been responsible for protecting an area adjacent to her favourite site, a 4000-year-old stone circle (Fig 8.18), from inappropriate development. The stone circle presents an articulation of our ancient ancestors’ everyday entwinement of culture/nature as a whole landscape that ‘you cannot change’. ([Appendix 6: 8.7.0.3](#)).

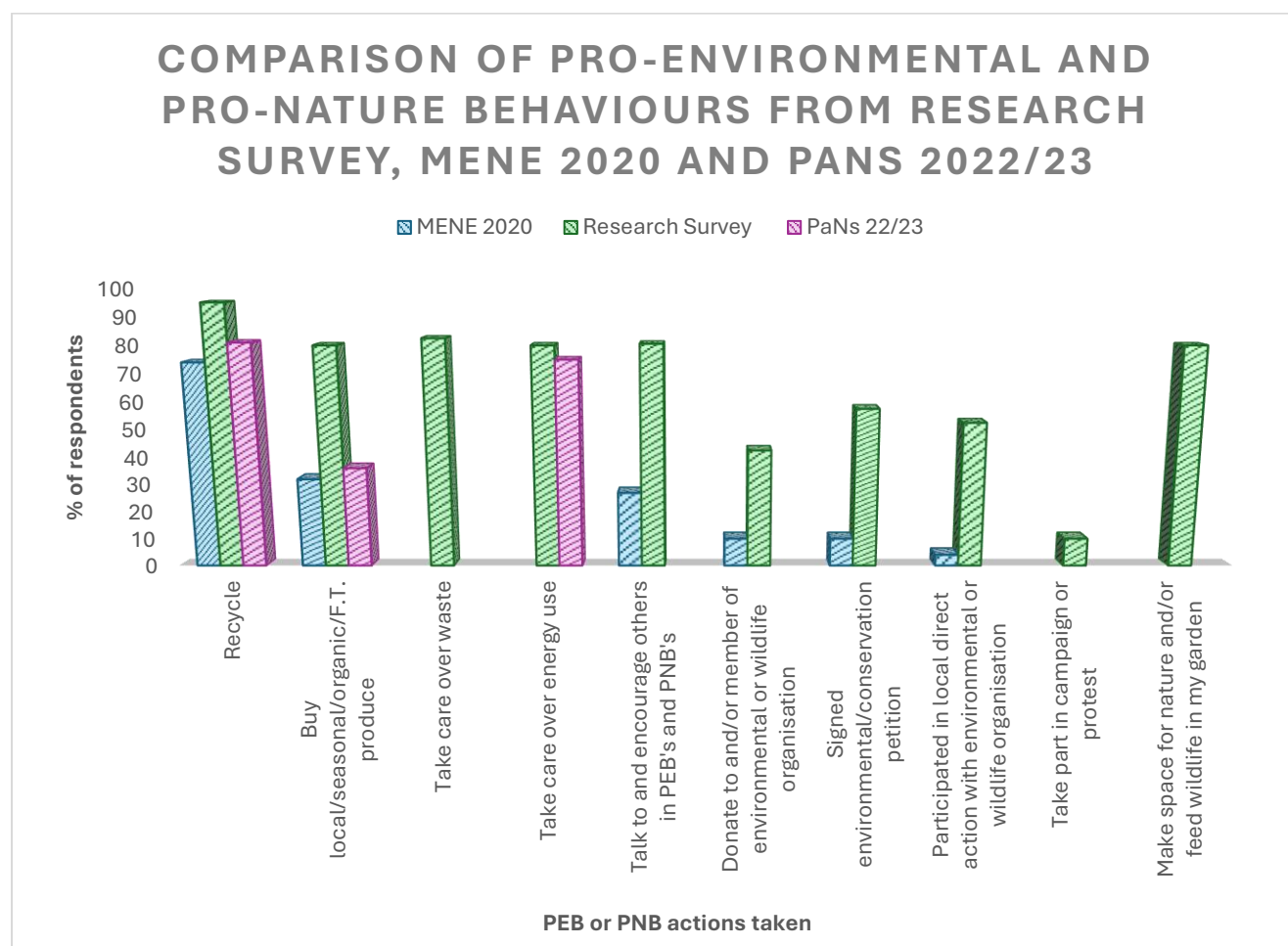


Figure 8.20 Duddo Five Stones, Northumbria, traces of ancient entanglement of human communities and the land that resonates with contemporary populations that ‘you cannot change’ (A02).

Local resilience and regeneration are understood as intimately linked to community engagement and agency. E40 sees the way forward as ‘more localised, and it needs to be more communal stuff.’ A sentiment echoed by D29, the import lying in community understanding and framing of global issues at a local scale of ‘what’s this look like on the ground? – What’s all this - mean to me?’ ([Appendix 6; 8.7.0.4](#)). B13 summed up the importance of contemporary community in a Gaelic proverb about the connection/belonging of people in place equalling strength and resilience; *Thèid dùthchas an aghaidh nan creag* - ‘this people in their place that can withstand the rocks’.

C24’s journal entries express sentiments of belonging to ‘our land, our place’, and the reciprocal stewardship, ‘for now our responsibility & joy’, acknowledging our temporary role as custodians, ‘transient travellers’ in a land that will long outlast us. Interview, survey and journal data suggest these deep connections do result in more sustainable behaviours of the type the State of Nature 2019 (Hayhow, et al., 2019) notes are needed to tackle biological and climate crises. Table 8.8 compares the survey results relating to pro-environmental and pro-nature behaviours with those from the MENE (Natural England, 2020) and PaNS (Natural England, 2023) results.

Table 8.8 Comparison* of PEBs and PNBs of the survey respondents for this research and Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) 2020 and the People and Nature Surveys for England (PaNS) 2022/23** results. * Where a direct comparison is possible, these are given, if no comparative category then no value in table; this research's survey had more detailed actions than either MENE or PaNS. **An average value was taken from the month range from January 2022 – April 2023. Source material for MENE (Natural England, 2020) and PaNS (Natural England, 2023).



The results show a higher level of PEBs and PNBs across all actions for survey respondents than average. Interviewees and journal participants evidenced similar levels. These add together with 80% of interviewee's taking regular and multiple actions for both local human and environmental wellbeing, and high levels of belief in community action and resilience discussed above. These results suggest a correlation between high land connectedness with higher levels of PEBs and PNBs, reflective of findings of MENE (Natural England, 2020) and Mackay & Smitt (2019) who report a correlation between higher NC and PEBs and PNBs. This supports the conceptualisation of LC as pathway to environmental action.

In-depth data participants may be considered highly motivated by their landscapes and communities. This is evidenced by the involvement of many (though not all⁹⁶) with their ecomuseums, as founders, volunteers and general participants, alongside more general engagement with their land, individually and with organisations, and in volunteering to take part in my research. Yet rather than detracting from the results, this underlies their potential, with the results suggesting a strong positive correlation between high land connectedness and greater care/stewardship. Data from a broader cross-section of communities gathered in the postcard and roll mapping also supports the notion of using a broader metric of land connectedness rather than nature connectedness alone, to understand people's emotional connections and in thinking about creating pathways to encourage and foster those connections.

The important distinction between LC and NC is the potential of capturing and bolstering both everyday social, cultural and environmental dimensions in the first instance, amplifying buy-in, connection and spillover over of values and action, promoting intra and inter-relationality/dependence and so increasing drivers to care more and act (Common Cause Foundation, 2021).

8.7.1 Barriers to achieving Land Connectedness potential

Despite the perceived potential of connection to land and community, participants were not blind to the barriers and issues in achieving it. A lack of empowerment was cited as a barrier to overcoming apathy and inaction, 'a lot of people would like to care more about their landscape, but they don't feel they have any power to do so' (C24). Related to this, people's relationship to the land, with conflicting senses of belonging and ownership can also be divisive. Participants noted conflicts between landowners, farmers, and recreational users and differing opinions on how best to steward the land in urban spaces as well as rural. E35 acknowledges tensions between different users of the land, yet she remains positive about the power of common ground to bring people together ([Appendix 6; 8.7.2.1](#)).

D29 discussed the combative language climate crisis and actions are often couched in as being unhelpful and divisive to community cohesion and so community action. Rather than terms of

⁹⁶ 7/40 (17.5%) survey respondents had not participated with their ecomuseums at all. Neither had one of the interviewees who had never heard of their ecomuseum before the interview, and 4 more had extremely limited participation, having only recently stumbled across them through attending an event.

‘dominance’, ‘war’, ‘winning’ and ‘losing’ she advocates for ‘nature terms’ of ‘growing’, ‘seeding’ and ‘flourishing’ (D29).

The dangers of a false sense of control stemming from extrinsic thinking of humans as somehow outside of nature were also cited. During data collection, several areas I visited experienced severe storms, flooding and drought. High awareness of the local effects of climate crisis⁹⁷ and the damaging effects of human behaviour⁹⁸, was evidenced across interview, journal and survey participants. 85% of survey respondents recognised direct effects in the places they lived. Only one interviewee (B09) explicitly stated, whilst he believed the science, he saw no local impacts in temperatures or biodiversity, except a longer growing season in grass. Though other interviewees in his area did. However, he had spent years planting trees to regenerate depleted habitats caused by historic land uses.

Whilst not directly asked about climate crisis, a level of awareness was expressed by several roll mapping and postcard participants, both young and old, with references to much needed rain after summer drought (PS69, PS71) and RC47 notating their drawing of trees with ‘big footprint to small footprint’. After Storm Arwen, D29, reflected on the threat of complacency ‘You know, we feel in control and in charge - and then a big storm hits, or a flood hits, and we think 'Blimey, we didn't see that coming. We, we were not prepared’.

Everyday pressures of busy work, family and home commitments were by far the largest barrier to survey respondents spending more time in their local landscape, with 75% reporting it. Poor physical health was the next (8%), with fear or worries about safety (5.4 %) and poor mental wellbeing (2.7%) also reported. Yet S698 touched on a sentiment voiced by 92.5% of survey respondents for whom living in a beautiful and historic landscape was valuable to them even when they don’t go out in it, stating they engage with their landscape ‘constantly, even if only through a window.’ This suggests the deep, meaningful and emotional connections expressed by people have lasting impacts beyond in-the-moment experience.

The Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005) maintains attached meanings and values are what is important about objects and places. The emergent conceptual ontological lenses of

⁹⁷ Including species decline (eg A04, A05, C22) and changing and extreme weather patterns (eg A02, C25, D28, A06, B11)

⁹⁸ 28 (70%) of interviewees cited environmental change or biodiversity change due to human practices including the fungal disease affecting Sika agroforestry (D26), overgrazing of sheep and deer (eg B09, E38, D27), Industrial farming methods (eg C21, C17, D29); the decline of traditional land management practices (eg E40, B08, A01, A04 D28, D29, D33, E37, C18) and the Covid 19 virus (D31).

kinship and inter and intra-dependence across time and space uncover a lay multinaturalism kindled through land connectedness in which human natures are enfolded with nonhuman natures in place. This is characterized by a distinct lack of dualism, instead being embodied and enacted through intricate biopolitical and spatial affective networks. Local scale and specificity of a particular land are important in affecting feelings of connection, agency and empowerment to enact positive change. Meaning leads to values leading to action to care. Success in achieving both human and nonhuman resilience and sustainability, evidenced by participants both in their perceptions and actions, suggests engaging people by appealing at a human level is central as 'it all hangs together with people at the end' (C15). At this juncture of planetary stress, Worts (2006) highlights the knowing-caring link, suggesting the ecomuseal approach for increasing human consciousness and so responsible action. It is to this potential I turn now.

8.8 Ecomuseum impact on land connectedness

Chapter 4 noted ecomuseums, as place-based community-led organisations have been considered a potential bridge between nature and culture (Davis, 2019). Most key ecomuseum practices, principles and characteristics for sustainability and regenerative futures brought together in Fig. 4.1 are reflected in the imbricated dimensions of land connectedness and its impacts. This being so, one cannot readily draw out ecomuseum dimensions or practices applicable alone to land connectedness. Central to LC, notions of community, knowing and the affective dimensions that foster those also run deep through the ecomuseum practices explored in chapters 6, 7 and 9. As such, there is a concurrence between LC and all dimensions of ecomuseum practice interrogated in this thesis. As part of the continuing interrogation, this section explores the practices of the case study ecomuseums that promote holistic understanding and intrinsic values using exploratory questions from Fig 4.1.

8.8.1 Do the ecomuseums promote understanding of the inter-relationality of humans and nature?

An understanding of the intra/inter-dependence of all things in a place, the social community of land, is foundational to moving towards regenerative and co-flourishing futures (Chassagne, 2020), and core to the integral museum and ecomuseum potential (Mellado & Brulon Soares, 2022; McGhie, 2022) as Chapter 4 discussed. All the case study ecomuseums brought together stories and sites that encompassed human and nonhuman dimensions and the intra/inter-relations between them. Referencing Davis's (2011) influential necklace model, SVR aims 'to

create a kind of route of pearls of history, of stories in the landscape' (E35), incorporating geology and land use from prehistory to near history by engaging the community in activities, knowledge gatherings and artistic interpretation.

Some of the most successful events the ecomuseums have run promote the inter-relationality of people, nature and place.

Languages, dialects and vernacular names, are deeply entangled with places, people and identity. Recent studies have highlighted the extent of this association (Blaxter, 2021)⁹⁹ and their value to inform climate adaptations (Costello, 2020; Jones & Kilby, 2020; Jones, et al., 2017)¹⁰⁰. Ecoamgueddfa and Skye promoted inter-relationality of culture/nature and language through educational activities specifically embedding culture, including Gaelic and Welsh language, in the landscape. Pre-Covid, Ecoamgueddfa ran a popular talk series *Cynefin r Cymuned*, 'Your Place, Your Community', promoting a holistic understanding of the relationship between people and their place across time ([Appendix 6; 8.8.1.1](#)). Which they plan to rerun in community spaces around the area.

For many years Skye has hosted a similar course, *Arainneachd, Canan is Dualchas*, 'Gaelic in the Environment'. Several interviewees had attended and/or helped co-run it with an outside expert. The first experience of the ecomuseum and area for the current project manager, then living outside Skye, was attending the course years before applying for his current job. For B13, a multiple attendee, the course epitomises the entanglement of culture and land; 'I've done his course every year and I still enjoy going to it. And it's looking at the environment with Gaelic eyes. The Gaelic view of the Gaelic environment, it's wonderful, you know' (B13).

Cateran organised a well-received wild-food forage walk. 'People are completely staggered about how many different kinds of edible shrubs and trees there were up there, they just didn't know' (D28). During community consultations for Cateran's School of the Moon (SotM) programme, one of the most requested activities related to learning native plantlore and uses, including food and medicinal uses, alongside related plant folklore (McMillan, 2023).

⁹⁹ This ongoing study highlights the special link and affection held for vernacular language forms between human-nature-place through collecting common names for woodlouse, over 300 so far and counting.

¹⁰⁰ These studies suggest placenames can mitigate extinction of experience/shifting baseline syndrome, contest perceived 'traditional' landscape notions, offering alternative perspectives and prospects for our land through an understanding of past environments, what species were in place and an understanding of how past communities mitigated climate risks.

Storied connections between folklore, culture and nature illustrate the entanglement of people and place. Storied connections are utilised by the case study organisations. Ecoamgueddfa held a collaborative guided walk with the Snowdonia Dark Sky Society. C22 explained it blended astronomy, history, local and global cultural astral stories and spiritual beliefs with the impacts of light pollution on spiritual connections and cultural calendars. Fungi forays, again linking cultural lore and uses, had also proved popular. Concurring with Trudgill (2001) and Wall Kimmerer (2013), C22 felt cultural stories provided important routes to connection than science alone, 'people would feel more strongly connected to it if there was a story relating to people or history in some way' (C22).

Each case study ecomuseum addresses the preservation of language, patronyms and placenames, as holders of environmental and cultural knowledge. B09 described a toponymy project Skye instigated to safeguard this reservoir of knowledge at risk of disappearing through lack of use. Section 8.5 observed that placename knowledge can aid understanding of land and culture. Whilst this has been utilised in the Celtic language case studies, it remains an under-exploited resource, particularly in English-speaking areas. Placenames hold potential as embodiments of intertwined language, culture, history and environment. Revealing the depth of relationships between people and the land, placenames can fight the extinction of experience through increased understanding of historical flora and fauna. For example, wolf placenames in the Catteran area highlighting wolves' native status. Research has shown placename studies highlighting past ecologies can change perceptions of our lands and what they have been and could be again. For example, placename studies have proven the extent of Irish woodland challenging the Natura 2000 expectations and proven useful to contemporary flood adaptation and action in the English Midlands (Jones, et al., 2017; Costello, 2020; Jones & Kilby, 2020). Such work would complement case study plans of regenerating habitat restoration, replanting native trees, and rewetting heathland/moor (e.g. Skye, Ecoamgueddfa and SVR). Alongside aiding conservation efforts, toponymic studies reveal the dynamic and heterogeneous human histories of places. Millennia of migration/immigration and global connections revealed in the mixture of English, Gaelic, Welsh, Scots, Pictish, Celtic, Latin, Norman French and Norse nomenclature can reframe notions of who belongs in a place and contemporary migrant communities.

Flodden highlighted the inter-relationality of the land and events of 1513. Topography, weather, and vegetation impact historical and contemporary identity, borders, events and activities. For A02, seeing the battle site firsthand proved to be 'a big eye-opener' to understanding that inter-

relationality, and making 'sense' of events ([Appendix 6; 8.8.1.2](#)). A06 displays understanding of this inter-relationality, explaining how the underlying geology affects both past and present lives at the battle site he lives next to. The 'boggy ground' (A06) adding to the downfall of the Scots and the difficulties of the modern farmer ([Appendix 6; 8.8.1.3](#)).

8.8.2 Do the ecomuseums promote directly or indirectly intrinsic values?

How?

The case studies promote intrinsic values such as meaning, respect, empathy, and reciprocity in several ways. First and foremost in their founding, borne out of local need, addressing deprivation of services, depopulation and threats to local culture and environments (see Chapter 7). By visibly presenting a community-led project to visitors and residents alike, they can promote respect. 'I think people like that', B10 said. Whilst C17 explained how Ecoamgueddfa intentionally promotes the idea of their land as 'being a home first, a destination second' where 'you're very welcome, but treat it with respect.'

That this works was evidenced by B10, who had 'laughed' initially when it was suggested a donation box be placed at a waterfall viewing platform erected by Skye Ecomuseum (Fig 8. 21) yet was proved wrong with annual donations of c. £12,000. An occurrence and amount he still finds hard to believe but has opened his mind more to the positive nature of people.

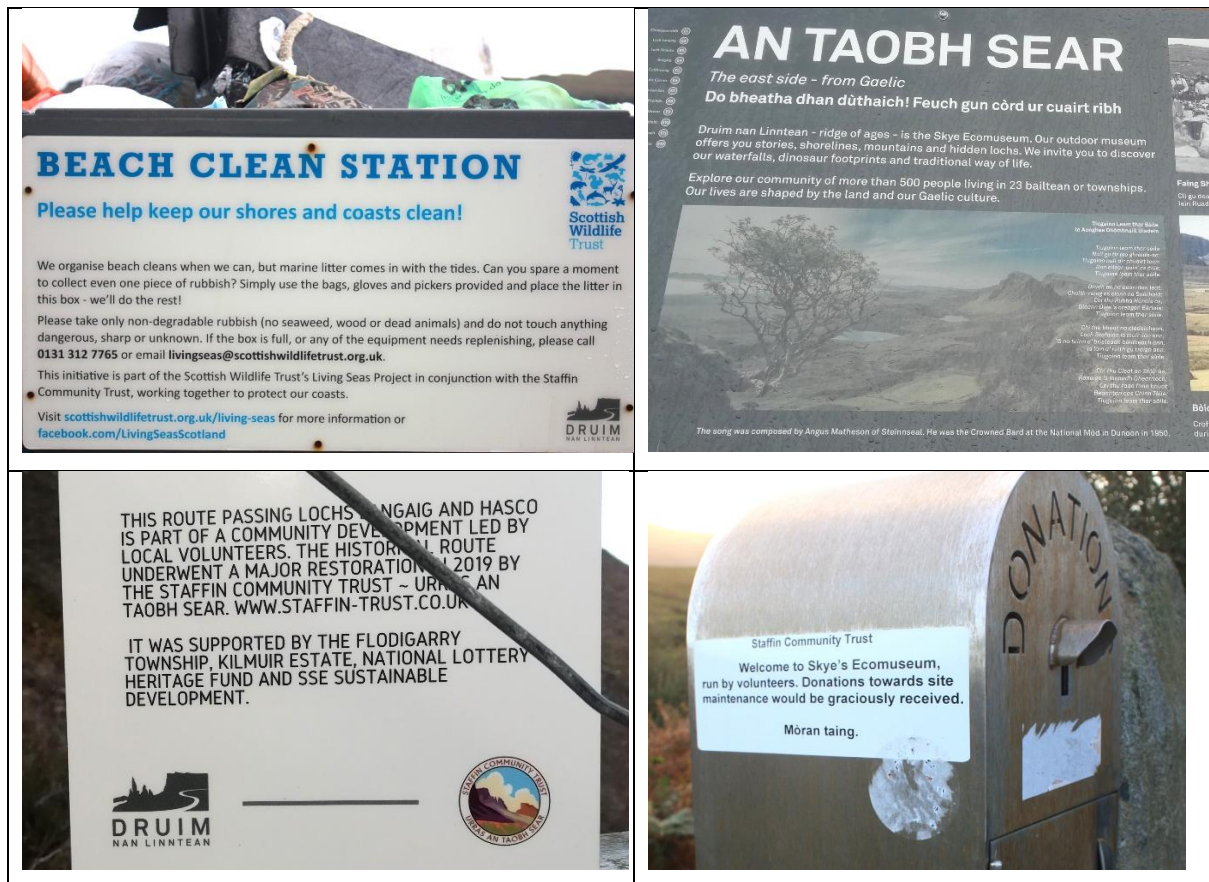


Figure 8.21 Signage and interpretation boards in Skye Ecomuseum highlight community ownership and initiative and encourage respect and reciprocity. From top left, encouraging beach cleaning; promoting the notion of community and inter-relationship of ‘our lives shaped by the land and our Gaelic culture’; signage highlighting the voluntary nature of hard work gone into path building; encouraging contributions by highlighting the voluntary nature of the ecomuseum community.

Respect and empathy are promoted by all case studies through sharing knowledge, skills and values from past and current generations, including traditional land use and care, such as crofting in Skye (B08, B09, B13) and commoning in SVR (E35, E36, E40), which also demonstrate reciprocity in notions of passing the land on to future generations (see Chapter 7.2). This mirrors Navajas Corral & Fernández (2022) contention that ecomuseum potential lies partially in the crucial link between valorising ancestral knowledge and sustainability, with contemporary rural communities as the ‘heirs to rural memory’ (p.296).

Intrinsic values and participation

Staff and volunteers

Reflecting Massing's (2019) findings of the positive¹⁰¹ wellbeing outcomes for those closely associated with ecomuseum development, for participants working directly with the case study ecomuseums, either as paid staff or volunteers, collaborating as a community group to achieve goals creates feelings of cohesion, pride and belonging. For E36, a lifelong resident, being part of the ecomuseum community steering group deepened her love and pride of place 'massively'. For B10, the opportunity to get to know a place and embed into the community as a new arrival was a strong motivation for getting involved with their ecomuseums, even if outside their comfort zone.

In addition to Massing's wellbeing outcomes, respondents express a heightened sense of reciprocal value and care between colleagues. B08 expresses high esteem for his voluntary coworkers and the skills they bring, and for feeling cared for as an individual ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.1](#)). Witnessing others' efforts put into the ecomuseums stimulates reciprocity and care for each other. C17 conveyed this 'investment', driving them to go 'over and above' their job description to ensure ecomuseum and employment continuation for paid staff, reciprocating their dedication to the project ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.2](#)).

Community members

For general community members, participation in ecomuseum activities can lead to increased community involvement, connection and care. For S139 learning through the ecomuseum heightened appreciation of 'the amazing place' they live, allowing them to 'gain a connection, understanding and respect for the different aspects of mine and other communities'.

Flodden placed its communities' needs first, respecting their feelings against large-scale visitor development. Activities were done with sensitivity, care and respect for landscape, people's connection, reverence of ancestors and the fact that, as with Ecoamegeddfa and Skye, the area is first a home, not a touristic exhibit A02 explained ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.3](#)). A01 discussed how Flodden's development had 'taught' them the importance of respect and sensitivity, when unexpected emotions arose contesting battlefield excavation of 'hallowed ground' in search of mass graves ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.4](#)). The Flodden anniversary commemorations highlighted the

¹⁰¹ Less positive feelings reported by Massing were also expressed, associated with frustrations in project development and structure such as those evidenced in SVR (see previous Chapters and Chapter 9).

‘mind-blowing’ (A02) power of contextualised stories to bring people together in empathy and reconciliation, to stand in place ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.5](#)).

Again, this power of stories told by ecomuseums to foster empathic understanding is illustrated within SVR. E37 and E38 (two men) expressed increased empathy for women’s differing perspectives of land and the potential for exclusion due to gendered fear. Voicing the overlap between contemporary women’s experience who ‘don’t feel safe coming up here on their own’ (E38) and empathy for a 19th-century woman, Ailse O’Fussers, a Limer’s Gal¹⁰², known for wearing men’s clothing and ostracised by the local community ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.6](#)).

Ailse’s tragic story elicited empathy and alternative understandings of ‘outsider’ness (E36) and by E39 reflecting on the rare show of empathy by Ailse’s contemporaries on the death of her child – a tragedy familiar to many in those days ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.7](#)).

D31 thinks ecomuseums have potential as a ‘family album’ to foster community cohesion and kinship between humans and place ([Appendix 6; 8.8.2.8](#)). The capacity of ecomuseums to build empathy between humans/nonhumans, living and non/living is a sentiment echoed by S534, ‘It is an important tool in building imagination and empathy for our natural surroundings.’

Understanding the story of their land over time, the lives lived and events that happened engendered ‘a lot more respect for it’ for long-term resident and Flodden partner organisation member A02.

‘[It] is quite mind-blowing really, for somewhere where you think this is a little place in the middle of nowhere that people don’t really think of having an importance, whereas it was really really important in the past’ (A02)

For B12, his engagement as a young person with his local ecomuseum not only increased his empathy for his place but extended beyond to change the way he thought about other places. Importantly, this increased respect was allied with new mindfulness of behaviour at home and elsewhere ([Appendix 6; 7.8.2.9](#)).

¹⁰² Limer’s Gal is a term given to the female packhorse leaders working the ancient Limers Gate, a route over Brown Wardle moor flanking Whitworth town.

8.8.3 Do the ecomuseums create opportunities for experience and foster connections between people, nature and the land?

Each case study ecomuseum provides opportunities for directly experiencing and fostering connections between people, nature and the land. Redolent in notions of kith and kin (section 8.2) pathways to knowing underlie the potential of fostering connection. Opportunity to engage and access place and knowledge are central. Overlapping with the information and stories mentioned in sections 8.8.1 and 8.8.2 above, E37 and E38 suggest a principal strength of the ecomuseum is that it is ‘out there’ in the land where people might be. This they view in contrast to the more traditional local heritage museum at which they both work¹⁰³ ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.1](#)).

D28’s involvement with their ecomuseum as a founding member had emphatically cultivated a ‘more intimate’ and deeper connection to place, through continual active learning and getting out into the ‘nooks and crannies’ ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.2](#)). This correlation between knowing, understanding and increased connection to people and place is echoed by other interviewees, including C18, who has participated as both an employee and a community member, ‘more exposure’ resulting in ‘more interest’ (C18).

For D31, a locally active community member, the ecomuseum has presented pathways to connection to both place and the community, ‘in two ways, one, a much greater appreciation of what I’m actually seeing. And secondly, a greater sense of belonging.’ Understanding and appreciation of place co-creative with a sense of belonging mirroring Borrelli et al.’s (2022a) central tenets of ecomuseums.

B12 echoes the value of their local ecomuseum in facilitating connection through knowing as an incoming family ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.3](#)). This participant went on to be part of the EU-LAC Bi-regional Youth Exchange project referenced in chapter 7.2.2. B12 is now actively involved with the Community Trust, a manifestation of the potential of ecomuseum engagement to foster connection and empower action Brown & Brown (2023) hoped to engender.

Direct experience through participatory community activities is paramount to creating connections. In addition to those activities mentioned in the previous sub-sections, specific events and educational outreach work with local schools are evidenced to be effective.

¹⁰³ A completely volunteer-run organisation within the SVR area.

Working with schools, particularly working closely with local schools and youth groups on projects, getting youngsters out into the land and community and providing educational resources, is effective in making conscious connections between people and place. For example, archaeology (Skye, Flodden, Ecoamgueddfa, SVR), history (Skye, Flodden, SVR), natural history sessions (Skye, Ecoamgueddfa) and combined (Cateran, Skye, Ecoamgueddfa) projects and hands-on experiences, along with connecting with other schools and young people from other areas (Ecoamgueddfa, Skye)¹⁰⁴. Skye produced a Gaelic language pack, *An Cladach*, 'About the Shore', co-developed with the local primary school¹⁰⁵. B11, a teacher at the school, explained the breath of connections included, from land forms, flora and fauna, to culture, language and cooking. The local context spotlighted, yet also set within wider contexts, both culturally, spatially and temporally. Plus, the multiple scales of entwinement of nature and the land, such as the interaction with celestial bodies in the lunar cycles-tide relationship ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.4](#)).

C17 explained the importance of 'promoting and pushing people out into the landscape and telling them the story' and creating opportunities to get children outside, away from screens, and engaging with their land, that both Ecoamgueddfa's educational outreach and family packs provide ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.5](#)). Though C17 admitted to being unsure whether they are changing anyone's mind or just catering to those already interested anyway. A lack of participant feedback was cited for the uncertainty. However, C17 did report being 'touched' and 'surprised' overhearing an exchange of a family engaging with an ecomuseum site and resources. The family's enthusiasm for finding out more particularly linked the wildlife to the Welsh language ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.6](#)). Linking local culture and place to language was considered particularly effective in expanding perceptions of the world contextualised through place ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.7](#)).

Intergenerational community activities also provided routes to connection within communities and to their place, increasing and strengthening the social ties evidenced as important to resilience in section 8.2.2. Archaeology groups started for the Flodden project, TillVas, and a Young Archaeology Club (YAC), have both continued after the project's end, expanding their remits. Likewise, Flodden's archival volunteers continue to work with the county archives and

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 7.2 for more on specific educational working.

¹⁰⁵ This is to have a wider distribution to all the Highlands and Islands schools (see Chapter?/section ?? Catalyst and Knowledge Exchange)

project staff expressed a shift to cooperative working in their post-project lives (See Chapter 7.2.3). Skye's *Arainneachd*, *Canan is Dualchas* and Ecoamgueddfa's *Cynefin r Cymuned* culture-nature courses also provide such opportunities (see section 8.8.1). As do the varied and many events the ecomuseums have created. Skye's endeavours have brought together generations and townships through events sharing memories, photographs, music and stories. An event centred on community members special items of clothing, presented the opportunity for connection and empathy between the younger and older generations. The multiple media of arts, drama and music created a celebration of 'so human' connection (B13, [Appendix 6: 8.8.3.8](#)).

Ecoamgueddfa's *Blas o Môr*, 'Taste of the Sea' festival¹⁰⁶ likewise brought the community together with a deliberately small-scale and conscious linking of past and contemporary culture within the place. Again, incorporating working with schools connected the event to the wider community ([Appendix 6: 8.8.3.9](#)).

Ecoamgueddfa also exemplified the value of access to knowledge and physical place to local people with their archaeology festival (Fig 8.22). Through the festival in 2021¹⁰⁷, land/sites not usually accessible to the public was a particular draw combined with expert knowledge¹⁰⁸. C24 appreciated the unusual access, acknowledging the landowner's allowance of it, which altogether created a 'special' event. Access to Castell Odo, a late Bronze Age – Iron Age hillfort, and to specialist knowledge made 'interpreting what I see made easy' (C24), helping them to imagine the lives of earlier inhabitants. The same guided walk provided first access to a site close to home, often glimpsed and wondered about, for C20, ([Appendix 6: 8.8.3.10](#)), a draw that was their first ecomuseum contact.

The festival also created valuable knowing-caring/kithing connections for a newcomer, S698, seeking to understand their new place. Through direct experience of new 'ideas about people and place', including contemporary issues faced by locals, arising from conversations had

¹⁰⁶ This event began under the Landscape Partnership Ecoamgueddfa grew out of. One of the first large community events the new ecomuseum put on was the *Blas o Môr* festival.

¹⁰⁷ October/November 2021 This was the inaugural archaeology festival and the first in-person events after the pandemic restrictions. I attended several events in person, including guided walks, talks and exhibitions at which I spoke to organisers, guides and community participants, some of whom subsequently agreed to be interviewed and/or complete PE journal/maps. The festival was repeated over an extended period September – November 2022.

¹⁰⁸ Archaeologist and local guide Rhys Mor.

during activities. This led S698 to further contemplation and a conviction to ‘keep the spirit of place alive’ ([Appendix 6; 8.8.3.11](#)).



Figure 8.22 A guided walk to Tre Ceri Hillfort, atop Yr Eifl hill in centre of image, during the Ecoamgueddfa Archaeology Festival 2021

The ecomuseums provide opportunities otherwise not readily available for community members giving them the push C17 mentions to engage in activities that might easily be set aside in busy lives. The Bioblitz event organised by Ecoamgueddfa in June 2022¹⁰⁹ (see Fig 8.23), included a dawn chorus walk¹¹⁰ which provided the space to ‘just stand and listen’ when often ‘we don’t give ourselves time to do that - the opportunity to go somewhere with somebody who does know, is invaluable’ (C24).

¹⁰⁹ The event on 02/07/22, Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw (Gallery), brought together a number of organisations and specialists, such as Plantlife Wales, Welsh Wildlife Trust, RSPB, specialist wildlife groups, storytellers, Ilo Williams, artists and the Ecoamgueddfa partner sites staff to provide intergenerational activities including marine safaris, guided walks, flora and fauna identification, nature folklore and crafts. I helped set up this event on the day, and provided two make-and-take family craft activities (see Chapter 5). I also took part in several events during the day, talked to specialist participant group members and gathered audience feedback as part of my data collection, which was shared with Ecoamgueddfa.

¹¹⁰ I attended this event.



Figure 8.23 An intergenerational guided walk with Ilo Williams from BBC's Spring Watch looking at woodland and heathland plants and animals during Ecoamgueddfa's Bioblitz Event 2022

Community feedback¹¹¹ from the Bioblitz suggest events such as these were well-liked and wanted¹¹² (Fig 8.24).

Lovely event with great information. Would love more local events. Great for all ages too! Spiders and lichens + butterflies + lots walk (BIO3)

A wonderful walk in the forest – enriched with local stories and passionate knowledge. A walk not to be missed if ever offered again!!! At one with nature! (BIO4)

Realize how much the landscape varies and its rich content (BIO6)

Figure 8.24 Quotes from the bioblitz community feedback

BIO3 notes intergenerationality; reflecting an important dimension of LC given in section 8.2.2, the social dimension. Bringing people together and a sense of community, was an important aspect of the day too for participants as a ‘fantastic community event’ (BIO16) with ‘people having a good time with lots of smiling!’ (PL18).

8.8.4 Do the ecomuseums celebrate human and non-human natures?

Place, with all its entangled dimensions that dictate human lives, has long provided cultural inspiration in story, poetry, song, music, performance and visual arts as highlighted in the preceding sections of this chapter. The bardic tradition in Wales provided the seed for

¹¹¹ Gathered by me. See footnote 109

¹¹² Ecoamgueddfa are indeed repeating the event in July 2024.



Figure 8.25 View through the window of a ruined homestead, *Tobhta Ruaraidh Dhòmhnaill a Chùrin* abandoned in the C18th at Rubha nam Bràithrean, Brother's Point, Skye.

celebrating the entangled lives of human/nonhuman. A poem by Cynan¹¹³, about a local Pwllheli fisherman and a mermaid, served as the basis for an Ecoamgueddfa community event, which like the *Blas o Môr* festivals, highlighted contemporary livelihoods reliant on the environment as C18 explained ([Appendix 6; 8.8.4.1](#)).

Skye is 'very, very keen' (B13) to celebrate the vast range of natural and cultural heritage from deep time onwards, their lives shaped by the land and their culture ([Appendix 6; 8.8.4.2](#)). In doing so, Skye

highlights the shifting fortunes of its communities through time, such as the abandoned homestead in Fig 8.25.



Figure 8.26 Participatory environmental artwork by Richard Shilling, commissioned by SVR to encourage the community to engage with their environment during the Facit Incline activity day, September 2022.

¹¹³ Cynan was the Bardic name used by Pwllheli born Sir Albert Evan Jones (1895 – 1970).



Figure 8.27 Whitworth Rush Cart and traditional clog dancers, September 2022. SVR was instrumental in supporting this ancient tradition's reinvigoration and provided participatory family crafts and information during the 2022 event.

The motivation for one survey respondent to get involved with SVR, is the potential to celebrate all the area holds. 'I love where I live, and I believe that we have something very special in

Whitworth' (S482). Figures 8.26 and 8.27 depict two holistic community celebrations that SVR was involved with in 2022, at which they provided activities and information¹¹⁴.

Cateran also brings together stories of both human and nonhuman natures, weaving together nature-culture in their itineraries and activities to tell the story of its people, places and landscapes 'from deep time to our time' (Cateran Ecomuseum, 2019). Recalling Oosthuizen's (2019) mnemonic landscapes, Cateran aim to show 'how the story of our past can help guide the story of our future' (Cooper, 2022, p. 268). D28 hopes promoting 'layer[s] of meaning' will activate the knowing-caring feedback loop, 'if you know a place and you get to love a place, if you love it, then you take care of it.'



Figure 8.28 Dressing 'Auld Maggie' an ancient beech tree in Meigle as part of the SotM community Beltane Festival daytime activities.

The communities' interest and desire to celebrate entwined culture-nature is demonstrated by the SotM pilot community engagement programme. The consultation results and the subsequent activities chosen by communities to develop had a strong holistic heritage theme, featuring traditional knowledge, folklore, ancient beliefs and the seasonal calendar of traditional festivals linking to multiple natures in place (see Fig 8.28). Drawing out hidden histories, such as the persecution of local women during the C17th witch trials and the story of local suffragist activity, was another popular dimension. The project brought together specialists and artist with community groups, individuals, schools, and youth groups to achieve goals set by themselves. Chosen, developed and delivered by communities in their own place assured

¹¹⁴ I also attended these two events with SVR to provide family crafts and activities and gather research data from community members via PE roll mapping and postcards.

local buy-in. Full capacity participation by community members demonstrated the interest and potential of this approach.

Whist Flodden had a very specific historical theme, its events did celebrate human and nonhuman natures. Firstly, in the historical period under review, ‘they found a document that listed all the horses, that were divided up after the battle. So we turned that into little activity that we did with schools and events’ (A07). Secondly, in contemporary communities, bringing together people to celebrate human endeavour and culture, like the Ridings¹¹⁵, but also in reconciliation with the creation of peace gardens. Flodden’s activities also highlighted how the land shapes human life, culture and events. Both historically, such as topography influencing the battle’s outcome (Kille, 2019), and contemporarily, in careful consideration of present-day community livelihoods and habitat regeneration, like stopping ploughing the battlefield memorial area, improving access and seeding it with wildflowers (Fig. 8.29).



Figure 8.29 Late summer wildflower meadow at the Flodden Memorial, Branxton

8.9 Summary

This study aimed to respond to questions posed by ICOMOS’s ‘The Future of Our Pasts’ report (2019), what part can heritage play in tackling climate change?, and the State of Nature 2019 report (Hayhow, et al., 2019), how can we reconnect people to nature and so increase sustainable behaviours? Towards this end, evidence gathered via multiple methods from 397 participants across the case-study areas, was analysed. This chapter explored participants’ deep emotional connections to place and the impact they have on motivation and actions to care for both the human and nonhuman communities with which they live.

Chapter 2 – 4 highlight the overlap between current thinking across multiple disciplinary concepts such as biocultural landscapes, social-ecology, environmental psychology, Nature

¹¹⁵ Conversely attention has also been drawn to the potential for exclusion and marginalisation of the outsider, of race and gender, in spatially focused collective cultural events such as the Border Ridings (Smith, 1993).

Connectedness, just heritage, and indigenous approaches that centre human and nonhuman wellbeing (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012; Wall Kimmerer, 2013; Taylor & Delaney, 2014; Richardson, et al., 2020; Chassagne, 2020; Pappalardo, 2020). This analysis underscored the importance of place-based contextualisation, intrinsic values and community participation to resilience.

This chapter proposed the frame of land connectedness as a means to understand and promote people's deep emotional connections to land, and its impacts on regenerative actions. Using primary data, this chapter considered emergent themes of kith and kinship, intra/interdependence, spatio-temporal dimensions, storied landscapes, and future thinking. These dimensions are evidenced to be founded and strengthened through a knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop, intrinsic values, and notions of community.

Results indicate a strong connection and entanglement between people, nature and cultural heritage in landscapes and of the potential of this strong connection to empower agency in caring for it. This supports the conceptualisation a broader concept of Land Connectedness as the basis and route to counter Rotherham's (2015) cultural severance, building connection and so fostering stewardship.

My in-depth data participant sample population is small and, given the nature of my study group, also highly motivated by their environments. However, results from the community mapping data give a broader picture of community sentiments and likewise suggest LC has the potential as a broader framework for understanding and fostering connection and stewardship. The ecomuseums here have more rural or semi-rural settings, where it might be argued, people's connection to the nature around them is more present. Yet, using stories of the land in urban settings could have greater potential for inclusive heritage practices where the human side of the inter-relational equation may resonate readily. This could include stories of towns and cities told from topographical foundations, the fabric they are made from, the vernacular architecture, the names of streets, the calendar of events, and the generations of humans and nonhumans who have populated them through millennia to present-day, and what we envision for the future. Nature/culture, human/nonhuman, living/non-living, none are isolated entities; all are equally entangled whether in a city centre or a hilltop in Wales.

LC suggests pathways which are universal but not reductive. They are broad and expansive, open and plural, and they are dynamic and particular to place and individuals. They are not a view from everywhere and nowhere, but everywhere from somewhere very specific. Love, family,

community, joy – these notions are universally understood. Yet the detail will be different in each instance, in each place and culture, for each individual, as discussed in Chapter 3, distinctive yet recognisable, plural in place. This contextualised dynamic pluralism resonates with the ecomuseum ethos reviewed in Chapter 2 (e.g. Corsane, 2006; de Varine and Filipe 2012).

Desire for connection and belonging is also universal. However, it needs to be attended to in ways that nourish and nurture human and nonhuman wellbeing through intrinsic values, opposing extraction or exploitation. An understanding of inter-relationality undermines the dangerous myth of human exceptionalism and bridges divisions that haunt contemporary communities.

Echoing the contention of the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005), this research shows places and things carry weight in the heart because of associations and memories. These don't have to be personal memories but can be prosthetic, shared and borrowed from others across time and space (Landsberg, 2018; Bender, 2018). Everyday distinctiveness offers a pathway to knowing-belonging-caring (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011) shown to be important to human and nonhuman wellbeing. This is important in rural or urban settings.

Relations, associations and meanings are as complex, overlapping and plural as are individuals and cultures. Burchardt (2023) argues we are landscape, that landscapes are the accumulation of experience, renaming them lifescapes. Paying close attention to and respecting individual lifescapes is an act of care. Parallels between lifescapes and ecomuseum practice as therapeutic landscapes are by made Davis (2012). Notions of the imbricated logics at play in the intra- and inter-connected relationships land presents, reflect the 'ideal of social life that promotes integrated relations between self and other, self and nature, in an environment that is non-repressive and caring' (Hein, 2007, p. 33). Intrinsic value for human social dimensions spillover into care for environmental dimensions and vice versa (Common Cause Foundation, 2012).

LC can broaden views, empathy, commonality and respect, but also accepts a level of unknowability, tension and difference between humans and nonhumans as okay. Mystery and wonder are good. Kinship isn't being the same (as each other). It is empathy, respect and caring for, recognising the ties that bind us, human and nonhuman, living and non-living to each other. Getting to know a place in particular, the multiple natures, including diverse human natures,

enfolds and transforms strangers amongst the masses into individuals, neighbours into friends. Making family of the land, of communities, through knowing-belonging-caring, through kithing.

This suggests LC's potential to help to mend the rift/pain of disconnection expressed by D29 (Section 8.3). By encompassing important social dimensions, it could foster new connections and relationships based on empathy, respect, understanding and reciprocity. This could be important for bridging divisions between different groups and individuals within communities, such as shown in Henna Asikainen's (2022; 2023) work with migrant, displaced and local communities in Northumberland.

The findings in this chapter reflect findings from previous studies on attachment to place (National Trust, 2017; National Trust, 2019) and research I conducted for *Discovering Southwell* (McMillan, 2019a; Massing & McMillan, 2019) that place, sites, things, and history are viewed through the lens of personal meaning. People's desire to increase connection and knowledge of place and lore has also been demonstrated.

The evidence presented suggests connection and relationship are key to motivating love, respect, reciprocity and stewardship, leading to resilient and adaptive regenerative communities. Conceptualisation of land as a substantive and holistic social relationship, a community, opens the doors to wider connections than attempts to promote nature connection alone can do. LC centres meaning, speaking to Borrelli et al.'s (2022a, p. 29) 'place and belonging' and Bigell's 'new sense of solidarity through engagement in the intersection of social and natural environment.' (2012, p 28).

Culture has been called the interface between humans and nature; I view culture as the manifestations of natures in human selves. We are animals. We are nature. Not all manifestations reflect a positive relationship, especially when dominance is coupled with utility. But by promoting positive manifestations such as empathy and reciprocity, we disrupt the hegemony of knowledge and meaning-making, validating and proliferating alternative understandings, sparking the imagination and wonder of co-dependence of the ecologies of place.

Developing a LC framework allows for a better understanding of lay human-nature ontologies and how the underpinning affective logics can be used to create pathways, ideas for engagement, that reinforce positive intrinsic values. This promotes emergent solutions for land resilience based on collaboration, empathy, reciprocity and respect within and between all human and nonhuman communities.

The dimensions of LC are reflected in the key ecomuseum characteristics, dimensions and practices for regenerative futures (Table 4.1). Section 8.8 demonstrates the synergies and potential of ecomuseums in the UK to foster pathways to LC through promoting intra and inter-relationality, intrinsic values, and opportunities for connection, experiencing, knowing and celebrating human and nonhuman natures. The social aspects of ecomuseum ethos, collaboration, teamwork, networking and bringing people and groups together, reflect one of the most potent LC dimensions. The explicit notion of collaboration has been inherent to human survival for most of human existence and still is in many cultures. Western cultures need to (re)alise and embrace that truth. The holistic remit of the UK ecomuseums offers strong potential as important experimentations of ecomuseal practice to foster resilient, adaptive and regenerative communities. Chapter 9 continues the investigation of the case studies' practices and potential to promote such resilient and adaptative communities.

9. Pebbles into a pond: Ecomuseum practices and regenerative community futures.

Chapter 4 highlighted the current focus of ecomuseum discourse around sustainability and their privileged position to act as catalysts for revolutionary cultural transformation (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022). This positions ecomuseums as small places of insurgent museal processes for localised implementation of SDG's and socio-ecological justice (McGhie, 2022; Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido, 2022). Chapter 4 concluded with a framework of key practices, principle dimensions and characteristics for sustainability and regenerative futures drawn from transdisciplinary research (Table 4.1). All dimensions of this table are coactive, each resting on the other to achieve its full potential. The preceding three chapters, 6, 7 and 8, interrogated the overlapping dimensions of the case study ecomuseums as place-based, community-led and supporting entities. Exploration of these dimensions has highlighted the importance of connection and relationships, within and between human and nonhuman communities and to the places they live. Community connection is fundamental to successful ecomuseum practices of participation, inclusion, networking and collaboration, affecting community support and impacts. Consciously fostering intra and inter-relational connections between communities and place, based on intrinsic values, or land connectedness, was shown in Chapter 8 to offer a route to motivating love, respect, reciprocity, care and stewardship.

This chapter continues the exploration of the case study practices, their realities and potential to act as small places of insurgent social and environmental action and change, and the barriers to be overcome. Firstly, section 9.1 explores the final key ecomuseum practice aspects from Table 4.1, sustainability. Some key characteristics of this domain have been discussed at length in the previous three chapters, such as taking a holistic natural-cultural approach (Chapter 8.8). Building on those discussions, case study practices will be examined for their impact on sustainability/regeneration for continuity and longevity of the ecomuseums themselves and potential community impacts, in terms of social, environmental and economic sustainability and regenerative thinking.

Section 9.2 then brings together discussion of case study ecomuseum practices and land connectedness from Chapters 6 - 9. Drawing out their main strengths, challenges and opportunities in navigating a path towards regenerative goals and social-ecological justice (Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido, 2022).

9.1 Holistic and dynamic approach and regenerative thinking.

9.1.1 Is the ecomuseum context-specific, responsive, adaptative and embracing change?

Worts views the ecomuseum as having transformational potential to increase ‘human consciousness and responsible action to share limited planetary resources’ (2006, p. 127).

Worts sees this potential lying in meaningful participation through place-based practices. The localisation of global goals and SDG’s frequently occurs in lists of key ecomuseum features for potential (e.g. McGhie, 2022), in heritage sustainability and social justice discourse (Siebrandt, et al., 2017; Alexandroff, 2021) and in ecological/environmental psychology (Cantrill & Senach, 2001; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). Accordingly, being context-specific and small-scale features in Table 4.1 within the field of sustainability and affects ecomuseum sustainability in two ways. Firstly, their capacity to facilitate community action, adaptation and resilience. Secondly, the sustainability of the ecomuseum organisations themselves by facilitating or hindering their relevance to their communities and longevity.

Each case study, by its nature as an ecomuseum, is consciously context-specific, seeking to respond to their community's needs and promote the holistic heritage of their place. Chapter 6.2 illustrated the importance of being place-based and place identity to the effectiveness of the case study ecomuseums. Mirroring Davis’s (interview quote, Chapter 6.2) contention of a small scale being the most effective, Skye exemplifies the benefits of this. Larger scale case studies struggled more with coherent meaningful identity and inclusive participation. Where these lacked, or were perceived to lack, as with Cateran and Ecoamgueddfa, there is increased risk to longevity, through lack of community buy-in and relevance. Similarly, whilst having the smallest area and a manageable population size with a readily recognisable identity, SVR has suffered with external management and continuity issues, shown in both Chapters 6 and 7, to erode community support and risk longevity. Conversely, whilst having both a large area and diverse and large populations, Flodden scored highly on community buy-in due to its efforts in participatory inclusion at all levels. This suggests lack in some key dimensions may be compensated for by extra effort in others and vice versa. Case study practices were evidenced to increase place identity and connection for participants at all levels, which is linked to higher levels of pro-community, pro-nature and pro-environmental behaviours (PCBs, PNBs, PEBs) (chapters 6.2.2 and 8 particularly; (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012; Common Cause

Foundation, 2021)). However, the efficacy of this was again circumscribed by weak ecomuseum identity within their communities, narrow participatory inclusion and continuity issues.

Chapter 3.6.2 drew attention to the importance of context-specific approaches to climate adaptation that centre place-identity, community involvement and social justice (Bhowmik, et al., 2020; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012; Till & O’Sullivan, 2020; Owen, 2021). In interview, Davis considers the power of ecomuseums to embody the ‘think global, act local’ paradigm, ‘action is always going to come at a local level. – if you can get lots of little things happening – at the local level, raise people’s consciousness, over time that has to have an impact.’ Davis concluded in conviction that ‘there is a place for community action, and it’s small steps, - I really do believe that.’

A03 views ecomuseums’ strength lying in the specificity and flexibility of the concept, ‘there is no recipe. The ingredients will vary from place to place to be relevant and responsive.’ This notion mirrors Corsane’s (2006) dynamic ecomuseum mechanisms that bestow its potential. Ecomuseum continuous self-reflection, community consultation and self-analysis are necessary to be able to achieve A03’s relevance and responsiveness (Sutter, et al., 2016). As discussed in previous chapters (see 6.3 and 7.1) the case studies reflect varying levels of achievement in this area. Skye and Flodden display high levels of responsiveness and adaptation stemming from democratic participation in community consultation.

Ecoamgueddfa and SVR evidenced a lower level but still discernible. Cateran showed little evidence of responsiveness and adaptation to community needs, which links to their lower levels of participatory inclusion at planning stages. However, post-data collection evidence from their interim Stage 2 report for the River Detectives strand shows improvement in adapting in-process projects with openness to input from participants as to how (McNaughton, 2024a). Evolution and longevity are entangled for C21, stating ‘if done well, it will continue for a long time, - you’ll pass the baton on, - it could change – But if you are investing in that community, [you] will have to evolve over time.’ Passing on the baton and inevitability of change if to survive is redolent of Howard (2002) and De Varine & Filipe’s (2012) warnings to evolve and change to meet the changing needs of communities.

As a movement, B08 perceives the change discussed in Chapter 4 in ecomuseum discourse towards a sustainability remit in general ecomuseum practices that have shifted ‘to think more about conservation and the environment – than initial models about buying into their own history.’ This was something B08 envisions being reflected in all Skye’s future projects. Skye’s embrasure of a broadened world-enfolding approach (see chapters 6 & 7) lends itself well to

this vision. Alongside previously discussed housing and harbour developments, community asset transfers and potential partnerships promoting active travel, B08 spoke of the possibility of looking at renewable energy, whilst acknowledging the need to adapt and change to survive.

9.1.2 Does the ecomuseum contribute to the wellbeing of both local human communities and their environment?

The previous three chapters each highlighted various ways in which the case studies contribute to the health and wellbeing of their communities (6.2, 7.1 & 2, 8.8.2). Alongside increasing wellbeing indicators such as a sense of pride and agency (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012), specific interventions aimed at increasing human wellbeing include Skye and Flodden's targeted programme aimed to increase the mental and physical health of older community members (see Chapter 7.2.3). For example, Skye now offers a dementia support group at the new health centre it co-delivered and has offered 'modest' but 'very successful' health walks 'targeted at elderly people who don't get the opportunity to do much walking' (B09).

Interviewees from each case study cited health benefits indirectly from increased access and encouragement with walking routes and, in some cases, cycling routes. Cateran has a particular focus on active travel (Chapter 7.1.2 & 7.2.2). Their guided family bike ride was a success. However, they have had less engagement with other active travel initiatives so far. D26 spoke with pride of the extensive work done with a collaborating off-road cycling expert on creating numerous well-informed self-led cycle routes ([Appendix 7; 9.1.2.1](#)). Follow-up communication (late 2024) with Cateran's Evaluator for the 2nd stage Museum of Rapid Transition project and the final Paths for All Evaluation Report, evidence guided cycle rides continued to garner limited interest (Cateran Ecomuseum, 2023; McNaughton, 2024a). The use of self-guided routes is harder to gauge, relying on the premise of 'providing people read about it' (D26). Cateran, in common with the other ecomuseums, has no hard data on community usage. Guided walks offered in all case study areas, however, present a successful way to get people out and engaging 'which works extremely well' (B09).

The social aspect of guided walks is perhaps one key driver of their success, suggested by E38 observation that people 'all come back with something completely different' whether that is a 'recipe for scones' or 'new knowledge about the area they just walked.' The fact that they go, talk to people, get some 'fresh air and exercise' is what matters (E38). Social aspects of interaction and engagement have huge wellbeing benefits (Baldwin, et al., 2017), and the importance of social relationships for community members of all ages was highlighted in Chapter 8. Proactive

social inclusion and cross-community and intergenerational engagement were evidenced across all case studies, from school engagements to whole community events to networking and collaborations (Chapter 7). In *Ecomuseums today – Tools for sustainability?* Rivard (2017), an early advocate of the ecomuseum movement, reiterates the ‘true democratic job’ for ecomuseums is to ‘build social ideas and practical tools’ that foster human and environmental wellbeing (Rivard, 2017, p. 28). This links the social to agency, which also has wellbeing benefits (Owen, 2021; Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012). E36 recounted how an SVR project to get people cultivating small patches of ground near where they live and work, contributes to people’s wellbeing by providing agency through direct action and stewardship of place. This resulted in increased pride, self-esteem, social interaction and collaboration, and an improved greener environment and its proven associations with increased human health and environmental resilience (The Wildlife Trusts, 2018; Martin, et al., 2020). This generates a virtuous circle of care of PCBs, PNBs and PEBs, a landscape of care that perpetuates further human and environmental care (Jacobs & Wiens, 2023; Milligan & Wiles, 2010).

Rivard’s (2017) quote above also speaks of the conjoining of human and environmental wellbeing as central to the ecomuseum’s true job. The case studies evidence contributing to the wellbeing of their local environments in two main ways, indirectly through increasing awareness and direction actions.

Increasing awareness of their local environments and the threats faced and acting as knowledge and skills exchanges (see section 9.1.4) increases connection, capacity and the likelihood of PEBs and PNBs. Alongside human benefits, E36 believes that ecomuseum activities like SVR’s community street cultivation project have contributed to a perceptible shift in community awareness and active care of their wider local environment. Previous apathy overcome, ‘whereas more people now are more vocal and [pro]active’ in noticing and dealing with issues such as fallen trees in local woodland, ‘they’re a bit more ownery of the area.’ (E36). 17 interviewees stated their engagement with their ecomuseum had increased their own environmental awareness. For many, like C15, their involvement had expanded their interests, knowledge and/or work to encompass the interrelated holistic landscape, ‘Yes, it’s made me more aware. I could quite happily just be heritage-focused and people-focused. It’s making me look at the environment.’ Others, like B10, expressed how their engagement had increased their awareness of tourism’s damaging effects, resulting in feelings of anger, ‘very, very cross’, and a ‘passionate’ desire to change things, ‘I suppose the reality is, you’re seeing the damaging effects of it, which makes you perhaps even more passionate about it.’

Similarly, nine interviewees considered the opportunities ecomuseums afforded to the wider community affected changed/deepened understanding and perceptions. As with B10, these were based on the knowing-caring feedback loop, 'raising awareness - gain people's interest - to make them more protective' (C22). Results are particularly noticeable when working with young people in school and youth groups, as noted in Flodden, Ecoamgueddfa, Skye. These opportunities not only include activities directly aimed at environmental awareness, such as Skye and Ecoamgueddfa's ecology resources and activities, but also include tangential activities. Such as learning to surf (Ecoamgueddfa) and conversations around what survives as archaeological artefacts (Flodden), both leading to consideration of contemporary waste, pollution and recycling issues. Another 12 interviewees spoke of the high potential of ecomuseums to raise community awareness. Although participants in each group noted it was hard to determine if the changes would have happened anyway due to the increased presence of environmental issues in the media and public consciousness. 'That's come from an enormous range of sources. I think the world has been moving in the same direction, so I don't I'm not sure how much one could say we've had an impact on that' (D34). For C21 though, this concurrence confers the ecomuseum concept with relevance and a great opportunity to be seized as 'everything - ties into the ecomuseum concept very nicely.' As highlighted in Chapter 2.2, Anglophone understanding and use of the term 'ecomuseum' has lagged behind the rest of the world. But C21's comment suggests that in the age of environmental crises, Anglophone (mis)understanding of the word is finally coming full circle with the convergence of popular understanding of the prefix 'eco' and use of the term to symbolise the 'symbiosis of the museum and the environment' as at the first ecomuseum, Creusot (Évrard, 1980, p. 227).

For interviewees who explicitly stated the ecomuseum had little/no effect on their awareness/knowledge of environmental issues, the primary reason given was that they already worked in that specialist area. Of the remaining three, two had limited ecomuseum engagement restricted to pre/history activities, although this had not stopped others considering the interrelated aspects of culture-nature and contemporary crisis. The last is interesting as an ecomuseum director, B09, claimed, contrary to other interviewees and evidence, that their ecomuseum had 'never actually engaged with these kinds of wider issues, not directly anyway.' Additionally, they voiced the only expression of climate crisis not directly affecting the UK, 'I think - climate change is something that affects hot countries. I don't know. Climate change - there's no evidence of it here.' Perhaps this reflects a different understanding of what the question about wider environmental issues encompasses, as B09 readily acknowledged

climate change was real, knew about their ecomuseum's activities and was proactively restoring habitat themselves on their own land (see Chapter 8.7.1).

Habitat restoration brings us to the second way ecomuseums contribute to environmental wellbeing, direct action. Direct actions include restorative actions, like litter picks and habitat regeneration, and mitigating actions such as path creation and promotion of public transport.

Direct opportunities for community involvement, offered by the case studies included tree and meadow planting and heathland restoration (Skye, Ecoamgueddfa, Flodden, SVR), restoring and building stone walls¹¹⁶ (Ecoamgueddfa, SVR), and litter picks/beach cleans (Skye, Ecoamgueddfa). 19 of 33 (57.5%) survey respondents, spread across all case studies, who had engaged with their local ecomuseums agreed that their ecomuseum offers opportunities to become actively involved in caring for their local environment. Ten (30.3%) were ambivalent and one, from Ecoamgueddfa, disagreed.

Whilst Cateran has not so far engaged in any direct restorative actions, it is very active in mitigating actions such as promoting active travel, for example through its 2nd stage Paths for All strand discussed above. Each of the other case studies has engaged with or is developing active travel to some degree, such as campaigning for bus routes and (co)creating and/or promoting walking and cycling routes. Entwined with this are the case studies efforts to mitigate the negative effects of tourism. B10's passion noted above in reaction to tourism's damaging effects on both community and environment is a key driver of case study direct action and even establishment. Ecoamgueddfa and Skye both state sustainable and regenerative tourism development in their aims. Whilst this might be seen to be at odds with a community-first ideal, for those involved it is a response to predatory and extractive tourism already threatening their communities and environments. The ecomuseum, in this light, is an embodiment of the community (or part of a community) trying to take control and change the narrative of the local visitor economy. Chassagne & Everingham (2019) note the importance of bottom-up community-led tourism practices that put community and environmental wellbeing first in combating extractivism. Likewise, both McGhie (2022) and Worts & Dal Santo (2022) argue that ecomuseums can function to empower communities to take control and lead the way towards a more regenerative path that centres their wellbeing and that of their environment. C21 articulated the struggles to get people to understand that there are differences in tourism

¹¹⁶ Traditional stone walls provide valuable habitat for flora and fauna.

approaches. Whilst ‘people understand there's a difference between intensive dairy farming and organic, sustainable farming - tourism is one thing.’ (C21). He expressed the need to change both local and visitor mindsets to see the ecomuseum as an organic model that benefits local people, ‘not tourism at all costs’ ([Appendix 7; 9.1.2.2](#)). The shift to ‘being regenerative’ is ‘how you distinguish between an ecomuseum and mass tourism’ (C21). The imperative to push the conversation onward from sustainability, focused on reducing negative tourism impacts, towards regenerative tourism is one shared by Cateran director Clare Cooper who says ‘ a regenerative approach aims to replenish and restore what we have lost by helping to build communities that thrive, while allowing the planet to thrive, too’ (Holt, 2022).

On a practical front, works such as path and access works, benefit not only local communities but help mitigate visitor environmental impact alongside efforts to disperse visitors away from highly impacted sites. Whilst Skye has undertaken such works, B12 believes more effort is needed to further mitigate the impacts of encouraging more visitors to an area with few facilities. ‘We need to invest in parking, paths, and restrooms or services – better, more frequent public transport’ (B12) to combat tourist behaviours like vehicles churning up grass verges and emptying chemical toilet waste along roadsides, that damage both the environment and community life ([Appendix 7; 9.1.2.3](#)). Elsewhere, in less tourist hot-spot SVR area, E37 and E38 expressed concerns over ecomuseum visitor development and the potentially damaging impacts on already fragile local communities and environments, such as seen in high tourism areas like the Lake District. Similar community concerns were raised in Flodden, listened to and plans accordingly adapted (see Chapter 7.1.1).

As noted above, direct action is intertwined with awareness, through the knowing-caring feedback loop stimulating actions. C22 spoke of the benefits of wider conversations around environmental actions and the problems and causes of climate crisis that occasions like beach cleans or heathland restoration provoke, such as when leading school sessions. Reflecting the ripple effect of taking part in action fostering more similar actions as reported by 92.5 % of survey respondents in Chapter 8.7, C22 noted the reverse socialisation of environmental knowledge and action beyond the ecomuseum activity with children requesting litter pickers for Christmas. 27 (64%) interviewees expressed that their ecomuseum engagement had changed their and/or wider communities' behaviour as a result, increasing PEBs such as recycling, conscious use of transport and shopping choices, and PNBs such as digging ponds, planting wildflowers and trees on their own land. Ecomuseum influence on the wider community was evidenced in encouraging litter picks and beach cleans (Skye and Ecoamgueddfa), supporting

community habitat cultivation, including gardening (SVR, Skye, Ecoamgueddfa, Flodden) and promoting more environmentally conscious farming methods (Ecoamgueddfa, Cateran).

9.1.3 Does it provide opportunity for community solutions and action?

Does it increase the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to meet the community's needs for regenerative futures and climate action?

As Chapter 4 reflected, the issues and solutions impacting social and environmental justice are intimately entwined. This entwining is recognised by many declarations, conventions and approaches, such as the Faro Convention and Buen Vivir, which highlight the importance of democratic and equitable community-led approaches (Council of Europe, 2019; Chassagne & Everingham, 2019). Ecomuseums, as small places, close to home, are proposed as endogenous pathways to solutions and catalysts of change (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022; McGhie, 2022; Pappalardo, 2020). This section examines the opportunities for community solutions and action the case studies provide.

As Chapter 6 established, each case study views itself as community action towards solutions for social and environmental issues. Their founding community members proactively addressing specific needs that they identify in their communities. With Ecoamgueddfa, Skye and Cateran their primary remit sought to do this through 'slow', 'sustainable' and 'regenerative' tourism development. Their aim, as described above, is to challenge extractive tourism through the community taking charge of tourism for their own benefit. Although, as Chapters 6 and 7 have shown this is not without its problems. Whilst Flodden and SVR both have a visitor development dimension, their primary focus is community development.

Chapters 6 and 7 also explored the many ways in which all case studies have sought to benefit and give agency to their communities in addressing social issues, such as housing, depopulation, social inclusion/cohesion and lack of services. Skye and Ecoamgueddfa particularly echo a world-including model, directly tackling/influencing issues such as housing, employment, transport and farming practices (Worts & Dal Santo, 2022). Reflecting ecomuseum adaptability to changing local needs and concerns, B08 spoke of how Skye's remit had broadened over the years to cover 'things that weren't really considered at the start of the project when it was more from the [traditional] heritage perspective.' An example of this is the

current harbour works discussed in Chapter 7.1.4. Springing from Skye restarting a historic fishing competition, it illustrates how ecomuseum events can become ‘part of how the community sees its future’ and enacts on that vision (B08, [Appendix 7; 9.1.2.4](#)). This enlarging of remit to cover ‘larger scale environmental issues’ is considered ‘all the more positive for [it]’ (B08). Witnessing community involvement and commitment to action in their own area, has attracted greater funding opportunities and support from ‘the powers that be, the landowners, the local authority, the government quangos’ buying into the ecomuseum concept (B08). Implicit in this acknowledgement is the sense of time served, building community relationships and networks and experience. The need for time to build those relationships and experience and adapt accordingly was acknowledged as limiting ambition and impacts so far, by several interviewees from newer case studies, particularly SVR and Cateran. Factors that should also be appreciated when reviewing their progress so far. The opportunity for community agency to address its needs through the ecomuseum is illustrated in Flodden facilitating numerous activities of different interest groups and particularly in galvanising communities to seize the opportunity to realise needed improvements, such as the church car park (Chapter 7.1.4).

Taking part in activities, like direct action discussed above, is another way ecomuseums provide opportunities for community solutions and actions to environmental issues. Connected to this is creating or facilitating stewardship opportunities, including species monitoring, citizen science projects, and guardian schemes for local areas. Ecoamgueddfa encourage active stewardship with the ‘coastodians’ scheme¹¹⁷, encouraging local resident volunteers to ‘adopt a beach or section of coastline and look after it’ (C22). Living locally, volunteers watch over their patch, keeping an eye out for potential problems with footpaths, oil spills, securing boundaries and gates, collecting litter and notifying the ecomuseum or local organisations of problems if needed. This scheme seems successful, ‘they’re really good, because they have taken up the position as a volunteer because they care about it and they want to help and to do something.’ (C22).

Similarly, Cateran is connected in encouraging the Alyth Rivers Keepers¹¹⁸, volunteer monitors working with other groups/agencies towards community-led flood management strategies and adaptations. Their aim is to increase ecosystem resilience and recovery and lessen the human impacts of increased flood risks due to climate change that have affected the area in recent

¹¹⁷ Run by partner organisation the National Trust on Llyn

¹¹⁸ Cateran’s founder/director is also the founder and lead of the River Keepers.

years. This initiative links to Cateran's Vital Signs and River Detectives strands to encourage greater community engagement with and stewardship of the ecomuseums river systems via sustained volunteer engagement with citizen science projects. Vital Signs included a bio-blitz and paleoecological survey. The second stage River Detectives had four interweaving strands¹¹⁹, giving volunteers diverse opportunities to develop understanding and add to knowledge of local social-ecological heritage, from scientific field methods such as core-sampling and GIS mapping to archival research skills.

Elsewhere, other examples of case studies encouraging stewardship include Skye's volunteers becoming key contacts for cetacean monitoring for the Hebridean Whale Trail as one of the ecomuseum sites, Kilt Rock, is a main spotting location. B08 explained the opportunity had been seized by one volunteer 'who just ran with it' gaining a 'sense of ownership' in their reporting. Flodden's legacy of community stewardship and agency includes the TILVAS group and community garden groups as discussed Chapter 7.1.4, emerging from the project's social and cultural inclusion aims.

Community engagement in activities such as direct actions and monitoring range from sustained/repeat involvement in projects over time, a high-school programme of habitat creation in Ecoamgueddfa for example, to one-off events such as path-building days in Skye. This variation allows for different levels of involvement that are crucial to inclusion and overcoming barriers to engagement, as discussed in Chapter 7.1.2, and a vital part of environmental justice that includes parity of participation alongside redistributing, recognition and rights (Chapter 4). Big whole community/family events such as Ecoamgueddfa's Bioblitz or Cateran's recent pop-up Iron Age Village event might provide a more superficial involvement but present a successful way to reach a greater number and broader range of community than are generally involved in longer-term sustained engagement. Cateran's recent pop-up Iron Age Village two-day event in July 2024, attracted approximately 600 people. Attendee feedback suggests ages spread evenly across all age groups, and 80% from within 30 miles of the location¹²⁰ (McNaughton, 2024b). In comparison, only 16-18 people in total sustained

¹¹⁹ Flood and Flow (uncovering the flood history of the River Isla flood plain); Peat and Productivity (investigating the historic use of peat from Coupar Angus to Meikle to Forfar); Flax and Flood (the impact of water-powered mills on the River Ericht and connected river systems); Marl Mania (uncovering the forgotten local history of marl as a fertiliser on agricultural land from Meikle to Glamis and beyond).

¹²⁰ Issues securing a site elsewhere and with staffing led to changes to original plan. It was eventually held in Alyth, 'more familiar territory for the Ecomuseum' (McNaughton, 2024b). Chapter 7 noted how

participation in the River Detectives projects, most aged 65+, with two under 40 (both studying for an Environmental Science degree) (McNaughton, 2024a). Additionally, 86% of family event feedback respondents and 63% River Detective participant feedback respondents said it was their first time attending an ecomuseum activity (McNaughton 2024a/b). This suggests that both activities were good at increasing Cateran's reach, but the whole community event was better, particularly when factoring age ranges. Whilst attendance might be considered more superficial for leisure, more than half the pop-up event respondents indicated the event had influenced their attitude to taking climate action (McNaughton, 2024b) suggesting such hands-on and practical events can be important gateways to transformational change. However, whilst popular and effective, McNaughton (2024b) notes the 'tremendous amount of work and resources involved' in putting on large community events like this and Ecoamgueddfa's Bioblitz event (see Chapter 8.8.3), making cost/benefit a consideration in repeating.

That ecomuseum engagement can influence behaviour illustrates that integral to community solutions and action is the safeguarding, sharing and increasing of knowledge, understanding and skills and building relationships and networking examined in Chapter 7.2. Common to Skye, Ecoamgueddfa and Flodden was the perception the ecomuseums demonstrated different ways of working together that increased community resilience and capacity. B08, for example, stated ecomuseum behaviour encouraged community engagement with different levels of sustainability models, such as sourcing local materials and skilled labour for its capital works. Thus, fostering a mindset of positive in-sourcing and community self-reliance. Up-skilling and keeping skilled expertise in the local area and fostering a mindset of mutual support and sharing of resources are central to Ecoamgueddfa's aims. Whilst Flodden had influenced a culture of collaborative working beyond the project.

Long-term future thinking and understanding the connectivity of all aspects of community life is a strength of the ecomuseums being firmly rooted in their communities. Local impetus driving desire to create change, such as employment and opportunities 'where I am from, helping people develop and giving my children the opportunity to possibly work here' (C21). To achieve this for Skye, B08 said, 'You've got to look each other in the eye and see what solutions to sustain things like housing and work opportunities and build those up in a fairly measured way.'

Cateran is perceived as just being 'an Alyth thing', so it is a shame that its attempts to move beyond that familiar territory did not succeed this time.

Such ambitious plans as Skye manages may seem far outside the remit of the other case studies. However, manifesting Dal Santo & Wort's (2022b) active citizenship (see Chapter 7) through influencing practice and perceptions was evidenced by all, such as raising awareness of and influencing land management and farming practices, collaborative working and the core notion of community taking control themselves and making a difference. C25 echoes this sentiment saying, 'I'd love to think that we've left the concept behind, you know. And that we've also changed people's idea – to fight back. You know, I want to leave a little revolution behind.' Through showing alternative ways of knowing and being, ecomuseums can show 'that things have been different the past and can be different in the future. We don't have to live in this way necessarily. It doesn't have to be like this' (A07). A03 considers the greatest legacy of ecomuseum activity is an empowering mindset,

The legacy of the project - will have to come down to stewardship. - people being willing to take some responsibility for their little patch and that idea of starting local, the person, the individual, the wider people....it will be the beginning of that process. (A03)

9.2 Throw a pebble into the pond and let people do things

In *Babel Tower. Museum People in Dialogue*, Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido (2022) ponder the question of bringing into reality new community-led practices at the intersection of planning, governance and museology that value, blend and stimulate plural heritage understanding and contemporary socio-ecological justice and urge future thinking and care. Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido conclude social-museological practices, such as ecomuseums, are still the evolutionary frontier of the realisation of such insurgent innovation for a more regenerative and social-ecologically just future. As reflected in Chapters 2 and 4, the ecomuseum has, from its roots, been considered an experiment, a laboratory and an invention (Rivière, cited ICOM, 2024; de Varine 2017a cited Brown & Mairesse, 2018). Around the world, scholars and practitioners readily refer to ecomuseums as experimentations (e.g. Navajas Corral, 2019; Pappalardo, 2020). Such a framing emphasises the process and the new, as well as connoting trial and error whilst striving for new ways of human and nonhuman living well together. The notion of the ecomuseum as experiment is discernible in the case studies. Explicitly, in their aims to change the way community can work together to influence and impact their lives and their environments, as discussed above and in Chapters 6 -8. Implicitly, in the self-reflection and adaptation evidenced in attempts to become more community-led/focused, and

acknowledgement that to do so takes time to build the relationships and trust such new ways of living together are founded on.

As ecomuseum scholars and practitioners in the UK, we should embrace the notion of experimentation, of processes always in flux and never finished. As how can they be if ecomuseums are to live up to the ideal of constant action, reaction and adaptation? Chapter 7 highlighted the process rather than the outcome should be paramount. However, this comes with the caveat those processes should be care-ful, conscious of not leading to harm of individuals, communities or the environment. For the ecomuseum, those processes should include community-led continual dialogue, self-reanalysis and adaptation. Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido (2022, p. 9) suggest observing and reflecting on these insurgent experiments affords opportunities to 'advance theoretical debate' of regenerative and just social action. But they also offer opportunities to learn together and from each other, sharing practical ideas and experiences to build together a fuller picture of what might work best to achieve the goals of regenerative value-based community action. Being more forgiving and open to failure as experiments and experimenters creates the space needed for new ways of being, understanding and co-flourishing to emerge. Speaking with praise of the open-minded community-led approach that Flodden took, one community member interviewee captured the spirit of experiment, stating, 'I don't see the ecomuseum as being an entity' but instead likened 'the right way to do it' as 'get[ting] someone to chuck the pebble into the pond and let people do things' (A06). The ecomuseum as a pebble, sending out ripples into the community, stirring things up, setting things in motion and seeing what happens, the experiment personified.

This section then, brings together threads from section 9.1 above and Chapters 6 – 8 to reflect on the main strengths, challenges and opportunities for using the ecomuseum and land connectedness as a mechanism and framework in the UK for regenerative community futures to connect people to each other, to place and foster stewardship of the land. In reflecting and learning from the case study experiments, it is hoped that theoretical discourse with real practical implications is advanced.

9.2.1 Strengths: Lighting little light bulbs

Chapters 6 - 9, evidence numerous ways in which the case studies have sought to and effected sustainable and regenerative change in their communities, from increasing engagement, understanding, knowledge and pride in local natural and cultural heritage, to addressing housing, employment and environmental threats. Collectively, the case studies are shown to

address each pillar of sustainability, social, cultural, environmental, economic (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015; UCLG, 2010).

Their strengths reflect contemporary ecomuseal discourse as discussed in Chapters 2 – 4, founded in being place-based and community-led. Their strengths come to the fore particularly when being truly community-led, striving for real democratic inclusion, adapting and responding to meet their communities' needs and interests. At best, they have been shown to change mindsets, challenge community outlooks and aspirations, increase place and community identity and pride, empower alternative ways of doing things and working together and offer real practical actions that benefit human and environmental wellbeing. A03 puts the ability down to encouraging new ways of thinking by allowing agency and responsibility to slowly permeate wider community. Through experiencing 'being part of the community – little light bulbs go off - "oh I will do this thing"', fostering a gentle dawning of stewardship where 'people just gradually go "hey I want to care for this thing and be part of it"' (A03). Empowering this sense of ownership and responsibility through opportunities to experience and ways of knowing was evidenced in each case study ecomuseum, such as E36's perception of raised community ownership and care in SVR (see section 9.1.2). Chapter 8 showed the sense of ownership that drives care is one of reciprocal ownership, of belonging to the land and community and being responsible for it. Increased land connectedness, based on emotional connections and intrinsic values, creates the knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop that engenders thinking-beyond-ourselves to an ethic of care and stewardship. Evidence in Chapter 8 suggests the potential of using an expanded framework of land connectedness as a holistic and plural understanding of the deep emotional ties that bind the dynamic and intertwining social relationships between peoples and lands. The concurrence between key drivers of LC and the key ecomuseum practices, dimensions and characteristics for fostering regenerative futures strongly commend ecomuseums using LC as a focus framework. Using it to develop pathways to create, strengthen and maintain LC as an effective means to counter cultural severance and drive care and wellbeing of people and place.

For Peter Davis, the strength of ecomuseums being community-based is key to facilitating the knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop, 'having that engagement with place, - where you are and where you live and your attachments to it. And all those senses of belonging and the importance of little things'. Rather than external bodies, such as UNESCO, imposing their ideas of 'this is what's important', ecomuseums give the 'opportunity for local people to say, "well, actually, this is what's important to us, this is what matters here"' (PD interview). Interviewees

were equally convinced of the need to shift to more egalitarian ways of heritage management from more traditional modes of AHD and museum practice. D31 reflects Pappalardo & Duarte Cândido's (2022) call for a return to the museum as a forum in viewing the ecomuseum as a return to the open learning founding ideals of the V&A ([Appendix 7; 9.2.1.1](#)). Although not entirely free from issues of funding and its restrictions, discussed below, ecomuseums present a more democratic mechanism 'because we all own this land, and none of us own this land' (D31).

Following on, A03 cites the struggles that traditional museums face in housing, caring for and giving access to their collections. Commonly only 5 to 10 % of publicly funded museum collections are ever on display, while conservation worries, time, money, and staff shortages all add to the difficulties of museums allowing the public to actually access what is by rights theirs to see (Murphy, 2016; Bradley, 2015). Museum activists like Janes (2015) and Simon (2016) advocate for ethical and open stewardship of museum collections, their use as seed banks of knowledge, technology, adaptiveness and inspiration and the redistribution of power, privilege and knowledge into the communities they serve in order to fully realise the social function of museums. A03 echoes and amplifies this asking 'what's wrong with stuff staying in the hands of the people who own it? They can find other ways of sharing and cherishing it.' Flodden had convinced A03 the ecomuseum is a good way to do that. Like Janes' (2015) call for redistribution of power, privilege and knowledge, A03 challenges the authority of 'the grand institutions' who 'don't have all the answers [or] capacity'. For A03, ecomuseums provide a more resilient way to care for heritage,

the ecomuseum concept is about saying that we can look after our own heritage in our own space, and we have to start trusting each other to do that. – If the concept of the ecomuseum got stronger and more understood, then that trust to start delegating some of the responsibility for sharing our joint heritage will get stronger. (A03)

The popular ecomuseum moniker 'museum without walls', was invoked by many interviewees to underline the notion of empowering people to 'get people out into the environment [and] to interpret the environment for themselves' (B09). In doing so, revitalising community spirit, enjoyment and joy, sense of place and agency was evidenced in the ecomuseum organisations' aims, practices and impacts, such as Skye changing the way 'the community sees its future' (B08) discussed above. As observed in Chapter 4, pushing beyond the museum walls also invokes the expanded world including ecomuseum remit, as manifested in Skye's housing, services and harbour developments and Ecoamgueddfa's land management trials. But

expansive remit was evident across all ecomuseum aims, if not yet fully realised in practice. Breaking through the walls is a psychological state too. Opening imaginary space by raising awareness of what is around us, the dynamic layering through time and the intra/interdependence therein, changing attitudes to one of collaboration and agency and stimulating community action, being the pebble in the pond. Chapter 7.1 illustrated how ecomuseums had influenced participants to work more collaboratively and interdisciplinary, even beyond the projects.

In Chapter 8, participants also told of how their experiences with ecomuseums as staff, volunteers and general participants altered their personal views of the places they lived, broadening and deepening their interest and connection in ways both small and big ([Appendix 7; 9.2.1.2](#)). ‘The thing to be known grows with the knowing’ as Shepherd (2014, p. 108) said. Fostering the knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop, in turn, fosters active agency in caring for human and environmental wellbeing, increasing pro-community, pro-nature and pro-environmental behaviours. This was also evidenced by participants in the ripple effect and legacy of ecomuseum practices. Similar to Navajas Corral’s (2019) contention that community-led ecomuseum practices lead to longevity and resilience, A07 underlined the importance of the grassroots nature of initiatives in the Flodden project which have seen them continue beyond its active phase. Speaking of the Selkirk Peace Garden, A07 commented ‘- that's going strong, because it was started with the community. So they're still looking after that and raising funds for that.’ A06 is inspired by the ecomuseum ethos and spoke of his desire to revitalise and expand Flodden's scope to include other sites along the River Tweed, building on Flodden’s subtext of reconciliation, using the idea of borders and bridges as physical and metaphorical symbols of division and union. Ecomuseum effectiveness in bridging divides between different groups and individuals could be enhanced by using the LC framework to broaden views, empathy, commonality and respect (Chapter 8.9).

For B12, their engagement with their ecomuseums had stimulated not only their interest in the landscape, heritage and culture around them but also their drive to be actively involved, ‘that kind of motivated me to get more involved in this sort of stuff. It wasn't for the project. I'm not sure I would have got involved in this sort of thing.’ Although he acknowledges his opportunities, as part of the youth exchange (see chapter 7.2.2) are rare, arguing that ecomuseums ‘need to do more stuff that involves young people’ (B12). This acknowledgement of what else ecomuseums could be doing to strengthen their effectiveness in fostering community connectedness,

stewardship and regenerative futures brings us to the question of where the case studies current challenges lie.

9.2.2 Challenges

As reflected in the previous chapters, common and co-active challenges afflict the case study ecomuseum practices, summarised in Fig 9.1, inclusion, community perceptions, communication, ecomuseum identity, funding and staffing capacity. These serve to both restrict their ambitions and limit their effectiveness in enacting community solutions and actions.



Figure 9.1 Common and co-active challenges to ecomuseum capacity and effectiveness

As Chapters 6 and 7 highlighted, identity and perception are linked to clarity of communication and inclusion. Increasing parity of inclusion at all stages from planning to delivery, is fundamental to achieving both community relevance and just heritage, social and

environmental practices (McGhie, 2022; Pappalardo, 2020). Ecoamgueddfa and Cateran have most work to do in this area, although they are working towards doing so, as evidenced in their widening community programmes. However, community inclusion at the planning stage and in management/governance would better drive successful programming and increase relevance. This, in turn, affects the continuity and longevity of the ecomuseums themselves (De Varine & Filipe, 2012).

Continuity issues at SVR threaten its existence. Problems of external management, lack of communication and failure to devolve management to the extremely willing community steering group have seen it stall. First during Covid, where other ecomuseums carried on with reduced but inventive online and outdoor activities and resource building. Secondly, in the face of staffing issues post its lengthy Covid hiatus. This has affected the implementation of new plans for community collaboration with Commoners, landowners and environmental groups in heathland management and restoration. But also resulted in lost momentum and goodwill through literally letting the grass grow over projects started pre-COVID, as with the nascent community orchard and garden. E36 explained this was hoped to act as a focal point bringing together various community groups, including young people, breaking down barriers between different demographics, engendering a sense of ownership, providing fresh local produce and increasing biodiversity and habitats. But ‘we haven’t been able to get back out, and so much of it’s overgrown again’ (E36).

Navajas Corral’s (2019) ‘community’ ecomuseums, as opposed to ‘institutional’ ones, are inherently more adaptive and resilient to the vagaries of social and economic upheavals as they are founded in, directed and managed by and for the community. Another aspect of this resilience, which would certainly have helped with SVR’s recent troubles, is sharing responsibility, power and knowledge between a larger group of members. Firstly, this would relieve the pressures from a single set of shoulders noted by D27 in Chapter 6.3.2 as an existential threat ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.1](#)). Secondly, when issues strike paid or voluntary staff, such as illness, changes in commitments, employment elsewhere and even death, then there should be enough others who can step into the breach and operations continue.

Communication, continuity and inclusion issues don’t only affect ecomuseums self-sustainability if deemed not relevant or reliable through undermining community backing and trust. At worst, it can damage community sustainability itself through increasing feelings of disenfranchisement and disillusionment. Resulting in greater reluctance to engage in future community projects, thus threatening social cohesion and actions.

Linked to a lack of communication and inclusion, low community perception of the ecomuseum's identity and understanding of all they encompass in their practice, act as barriers to community buy-in and relevance, even if misplaced. When asked if they felt Ecoamgueddfa contributed to community sustainability in any way, community member C24 stated 'I don't think people feel it is. And I don't think I necessarily do either.' C24 afterwards expressed surprise on hearing about Ecoamgueddfa's involvement with school outreach work such as ecological awareness and habitat restoration.

Across dimensions explored in Chapters 6, 7, and 9.1 above, tensions were highlighted around community perceptions of the case study ecomuseums as primarily a tourism driver and resource or as an organisation with a community-first focus. The same tensions affect case studies' efficacy in fostering community solutions and actions. These tensions are entwined with ecomuseum identity, communication and inclusion, each having the potential to alleviate/overcome or exasperate problems. Where communities perceive the ecomuseum's main aim is to increase tourism in places where communities already feel the negative effects of tourism and/or where it is perceived that only a small percentage of the community with a direct stake in tourism will benefit, local support for the ecomuseum is low. These feelings were particularly strong in Ecoamgueddfa's local communities as C24 continued, stating that to increase community buy-in the ecomuseum needs

to encourage locals... And then they would feel that there's something in it for them. You know, a lot of what's happened historically here, and I think that's why there's so much bad feeling, aggression, against second homeowners and all the rest of it, is that locals feel like they've been excluded. (C24)

Across all case studies, if community members can clearly see the benefits the ecomuseum can bring, support and interest increase. This doesn't have to be direct individual benefits but is mostly evidenced as support to their wider community and area, such as benefiting children and young people through working with schools.

The most pressing concerns expressed by interviewees for community sustainability/regeneration were having viable, mixed-aged communities, with viable schools and things for young people and families to do; housing for local people (addressing the issues of 2nd home/holiday lets hollowing out community and services), good public transport and services (shops, medical etc), local employment opportunities, food security, local produce produced in a manner that was accessible/affordable and didn't damage the soil, habitat and

biodiversity. As Borelli et al. (2022a) and McGhie (2022) say, these are big issues for small community organisations to tackle, but they are things that each ecomuseum has aimed to do in some capacity.

Table 9.1 shows all suggestions given to the survey question ‘Is there anything that you would like your local ecomuseum to offer now or in the future that it currently doesn’t and why?’

Table 9.1 Survey suggestions in response to the question ‘Is there anything that you would like your local ecomuseum to offer now or in the future that it currently doesn’t and why?’

Promotion and awareness of ecomuseum
Promote it more. It is rarely mentioned now and part of it is likely to be dismantled (Flodden)
To be apparent in our communities, not just a concept and name! (Ecoamgueddfa)
It’s very good, probably needs more promotion of what’s on offer (Cateran)
More information (Cateran)
Having only just discovered it I would like to be kept informed on the initiatives it offers. (Cateran)
Improve publicity and information about fine detail and how community can be involved with ecomuseum. How do we protect and promote it? (SVR)
World Including Engagement & Action
Early days. But it would be good to see the sites developing into real local hubs for joining up the people, planet, economy, heritage in a meaningful way. (Ecoamgueddfa)
It should purchase outright and manage heritage sights (of whatever description) within its bounds. (Ecoamgueddfa)
Take a full and active part in the forthcoming climate assembly (Ecoamgueddfa)
More green transport to the area (Cateran)
Community Learning & Groups
The opportunity for guided tours of the ecomuseums [sites] so that people have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their importance and the opportunity to learn more than what can be shown on the information board or website. (Skye)
Just carry on with the work, especially educating the younger generation to the local environment, its riches and its needs. (Ecoamgueddfa)
Establish, or help to establish, a group which meets regularly to explore the heritage and the nature of the area, with expert guidance. There is so much to find out! I want to know about the coastal erosion, the fossils we find on the beach, how the landscape has changed, how the villages developed, the links to Ireland and the textile industries, etc.!! (Ecoamgueddfa)
Build on its success and support further community heritage groups with their activities (Ecoamgueddfa)
More walks, talks, more involvement of community in real action (Ecoamgueddfa)
More classes (Cateran)
More activities in the area More information signs Heritage/nature walks (SVR)
Provide trails, information and links to websites (SVR)
It needs finalising the project is half-finished (SVR)
Awareness to younger generations (SVR)

Suggestions fit into three rough groups representing themes that have recurred throughout discussions of the case study practices: increased promotion and awareness of the ecomuseum (20%), world including engagements and actions (13%) and further community

learning and group opportunities (33%). Out of 30 overall responses, a further three expressed uncertainty as to what their ecomuseum was currently doing, again suggesting the need to increase promotion and awareness through better communication. All suggestions infer community involvement and non-touristic development, indicating the community's preference for a community-first approach. Five others answered 'no', whilst two others shared the sentiment that their ecomuseums were 'doing as much as possible as present' (S419).

This latter comment, regarding doing as much as possible, brings us back to the costs of community work in terms of effort, time and funding and how this limits capacity (Chapters 6.3, 7.2, 7.3 and 9.1.3). To fulfil B12's recommendation (section 9.2.1) to increase youth engagement brings with it significant labour costs involving 'a horrible percentage of your time' B13 explains, doing risk assessments and first aid training etc. and a 'heartbreaking' amount of 'red tape to circumnavigate.' Overwhelming red tape, including risk assessments, was something that E36 had seen inhibiting both the ecomuseum's and other community groups' engagement with children and young people in her area. Both from the offering community group perspective, 'its all too much', and the group/teachers/schools side too, 'just too much of a headache' with paperwork and staffing (E36).

Whilst chapter 7.2 expanded the theme of the efforts the case studies are making in working with children and the benefits gained, B13 and E36's comments remind us of the person-hours involved. Something not lightly undertaken by volunteers, hence B13's earlier comment (Chapter 7.1.4) about needing funded paid staff to deliver this level of engagement. The ecomuseums who had done most community engagement had the most paid staff, Flodden (1 FT, 4 PT), Ecoamgueddfa (1 FT, 3 others 50%/part-funded FT), Skye (1 FT)¹²¹ (see Table 6.1). SVR only had one external PT staff member (currently none specifically assigned), and Cateran had no paid staff at the time of interview but has since employed 3 PT staff to deliver its 2nd stage programme, although it lost 2 of those partway through. In Chapter 6.3, D28 spoke of the pressures of 'sweat-equity' of the UK funding system and the idealism of ecomuseum reliance on voluntary labour (e.g. Corsane, 2006). In a contemporary society overwhelmed by economic pressures of the cost-of-living crisis, uncertain jobs and futures, the difficulties of increasing a diverse volunteer bank are great. The fact that these issues disproportionately affect lower-income households, families with children, young people and societies most vulnerable and

¹²¹ Skye has recently lost its programme manager (Autumn 2024) and currently has no one in post.

marginalised, the same groups least likely to be engaged by the ecomuseums and yet those that they could impact most, compounds the difficulties (Youth Select Committee 2024, 2024; Action for Children, 2023; Brown, et al., 2023; Kings College London, 2023; Pappalardo, 2020). Even getting to and from the site of volunteering has a time and financial cost that can be off-putting or prohibitive, as C15 and E40 pointed out. The frustration and anger at assumptions that this is an easy ask was clear in D28's response,

And so this sort of arrogance that funders and others have said, "Oh, you've got to get everybody engaged"... maybe they just can't, they just surviving, Sometimes I wonder whether - not that it doesn't matter - but I think it matters [more] maybe that stuff's there for them to enjoy as they want. But I don't know if it matters, that you're not getting people like that, on boards and committees and stuff because they don't have the time. They just haven't the capacity (D28)

Common points in discussions about volunteering with interviewees included the same small pool of volunteers generally willing and available (see Chapters 6.3, 7.1, 7.2) and the volunteer fatigue that accompanies that. Volunteer fatigue led to limiting who was willing to get involved and impacted volunteer retainment. Interviewees spoke of the pressures they themselves felt or had felt in various volunteering roles (not just with the ecomuseum), and the detriment to mental and physical health that it can have (see also Appendix 7; 9.2.2.1). Virtually all interviewees were involved in various local groups, clubs and charities in some capacity, in addition to whatever ecomuseum work they might do. The extremis of this pressure was detailed by A07.

I was on five layers of local government till I had a complete breakdown. - it was a lot – and chair of this, chair that, chair the other, and then I, one evening, completely cracked up. - so that had to go. So, - I gave up virtually everything. (A07)

Over-reliance on the voluntary sector was noted by C25, 'we're only held together by volunteers - our sea rescue, mountain rescue, - St. John's ambulances, - the football clubs. - And there's only so much they can do. And there's only so much you can ask of people.' The enforced break of the Covid pandemic had allowed people to 'realise[] how much they were doing and how little we're getting back for it' (C25). The result was communities were 'having a really hard time trying to get some of these groups up and running again' (C25).

The solutions offered by interviewees focused on offering a greater range of smaller opportunities, time-limited or a particular focus only, rather than the open-ended and poorly defined requirements of ecomuseum management/governance and volunteering roles more

commonly looking to be fulfilled ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.2](#)). Evidence suggests that creating more diverse opportunities to volunteer, like micro, remote, one-off or non-commitment volunteering, encourages greater and more diverse engagement (Ellis, 2012; Holmes, 2014; Jones, 2017; Hustinx, 2010).

As Chapter 7.2.3 illustrated, strategic networking with other groups and organisations is a way to mutually benefit all parties, sharing resources, knowledge and skills, increasing opportunities, reach and impact. However, several interviewees pointed to the barriers that local politics, in-fighting, silo and territorial mentality present to achieving it ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.3](#)). Partnerships also ‘come with a lot of work’ (B13), from initial building relationships to maintaining them. C25 observed an existential weakness in the lack of collaborative networking for funding and co-promotion on the LIVE partnership’s Irish side, whilst the Ecoamgueddfa side has mastered that vital skill. Again, this difference came down to having funded paid staff within the community dedicated to coordinating that, underlining the entanglement of capacity and funding to maintain operational functions. Although Ecoamgueddfa’s relationships are not without tensions around inclusion.

Funding is an issue that challenges all aspects of ecomuseum practice, as it impacts on capacity to enact and improve inclusion, community perceptions, communication, ecomuseum identity, meet operational demands and deliver activities. As acknowledged in Chapter 4.5, whilst an endogenous approach is vital to achieving long-lasting transformative and regenerative place-based solutions, communities cannot do it alone but need practical and, importantly, financial support (Chassagne, 2020; Pappalardo, 2020; Worts & Dal Santo, 2022; EcoHeritage, 2023b). Giving the example of the threat to Iveragh’s Dark-Sky status due to its single ageing volunteer wanting to retire, C25 echoes this view, stating, ‘We’re kind of pushing towards the council to get them to realise they can’t keep expecting the community to do this for free.’ ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.4](#)). Discussing the risks of disenfranchisement and disillusionment that short-term ‘projects’ parachuted into communities bring (see Chapter 7.1.5), E37 underlined the connection between funding, longevity and lasting legacy,

The ecomuseum is fine as a concept. But what is its long-term future? Where does it get its long-term funding? And I’m always banging on about the legacy of a lot of these projects. There’s got to be a positive legacy. And there isn’t always. (E37 2nd Interview)

Whilst the need for funding is acknowledged, the practicalities of obtaining it present a complex landscape of public, charitable and private funding to navigate. This adds to the administrative

burden/barriers of red tape in delivering activities with a significant burden of time, effort, financial cost and anxiety around searching, applying and evidencing grants. This is felt disproportionately by small and medium-sized organisations, particularly those community-led, with limited staffing, non-specialist and/or voluntary staff (Mills, et al., 2023; Puffet, 2022). Reflecting the findings of the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) (Mills, et al., 2023), this burden reduces the amount of time and resources that the case studies have to put into delivering their activities, thereby constraining their impact. E35 combines the time needed to build network relationships required to support the application with doing the funding application itself, suggesting it's 12 – 18 months of work. Whilst A07 noted serious impacts of the funding process on delivery time, curtailing their ambitions of education programming ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.5](#)).

An increasingly high bar for evidencing social impacts must be cleared to access the shrinking pot of current UK funding from both public bodies, like the Arts Council or National Lottery Heritage Fund, and private funding, such as the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and local charities/trusts and businesses (Arts Council England, 2020; Puffet, 2022). An increased focus on communities and activating social and civic change and benefits such as inclusion, wellbeing, civic cohesion, pride and better environments mirrors ecomuseum ethos . Yet Puffet (2022) notes the increased expectation of the shift to using a *theory of change* approach, planning in ways to measure impacts, is unfamiliar to the cultural sector. The textbox below contains just a small section from ACE's Strategy 2020-2030, echoing the theory of change.

We want to invest in organisations that are bold, and are determined to improve the quality of their work. We will expect applicants to set out their ambitions when they apply to us for investment, and to talk about how they plan to make their work better. We will expect them to gather the views of the public and their peers on the quality of what they do, and use that feedback in discussion with their staff and boards to shape future decisions about their work. We expect them to be aware of the best work in their field – wherever it happens in the world – and to tell us how they will apply that knowledge to their own development. (ACE Let's Create Strategy 2020 – 2030, Investment Principles)

Whilst this all sounds reasonable and again mirrors what ecomuseum generally aim to do, it is easy to see how overwhelming this might be for a small informal community group to grasp and fully implement. Consider the highlighted line for example. Imagine the time and difficulty of a volunteer attempting to fulfil just this one aspect. Many organisations outside of academic

institutions are excluded from easy access to research and literature as presented in journals and conferences (and this is one thing ecomuseum-academic partnerships could help address). The complexity of specialist knowledge, skills and language/jargon needed to successfully apply creates a significant barrier. Larger organisations employ professionals just to look for and apply for funding and others to monitor and analyse impact. Further issues around short-term ‘project’ funding, increased workload and continuity issues, add to the barriers community-led projects face and threaten wider community becoming and staying involved (Mills, et al., 2023). All these problems and their impacts are noted by the case studies, from continuity of funding staff members in Ecoamgueddfa to delivering activities in Cateran. Even the novelty of the ecomuseum concept and what they try to achieve can be a barrier, as C34 explained, ‘...things like Visit Scotland and other grant-giving bodies, they just can't get their head around it. We don't tick any of the right boxes.’

Navajas Corral (2019) differentiates between institutional museums as dependent on public grants and community ecomuseums that try to be self-financing, underlining the tensions between finance and power. Economic dependency on public grants is here seen as indicative of ecomuseums being set up and/or managed by an institution or municipally compared to the autonomy of non-financed ecomuseums. ‘Virtuous’ ecomuseums tending to self-management and financial diversity and independence. Examples given include La Ponte-Ecomuséu, Spain, Ecomuseo Lis Aganis and Ecomuseo Casilino, Italy ((Navajas Corral, 2024; Pigozzi, 2024) from the Ecoheritage project). However, the reality is often more complex. Certainly, the Ecoheritage project Transnational and National reports suggest most European ecomuseums rely on public and private funding for most of their funds (Ecoheritage 2023b, c, d, e, f). Of the ‘virtuous’ examples themselves, Lis Aganis, in common with the majority in Italy, is provided with a guaranteed Regional governmental income as their primary source alongside other municipal, public and private funding. Casilino gets 75% of its funding from public and private grants and 25% from donations. La Ponte in Spain also receives Regional and State subsidies as well as tendering for Regional, National and International research project funding, with a small amount from visitor charges for tours etc (EcoHeritage, 2023g). Navajas Corral (2024) differentiates this public funding as not linked with administration. Whilst not easy to ascertain, the situation in Latin America appears to be similar with ecomuseums and *museos comunitarios* (community museums) being supported, financially and practically by larger institutions such as national museums, universities, and governments eg Rey Curré, Costa Rica (Brown, 2017) and Ilha Grande, Brazil (Rozentino de Almeida, 2022).

In the UK, the ecomuseums do not fit into Nevajas Corral's distinction of funded/Institutional and unfunded/community. Except for Ecoamgueddfa, which is managed by Bangor University and Gwynedd Council in partnership with local organisations, the other case studies are not tied to institutional administration. The case of Ecoamgueddfa is more nuanced than being a top-down initiative, as the instigators and staff are all local community members, as are its partner organisations. Although there are tensions around needing more horizontal and inclusive management and planning (eg. see Chapter 6). Of the newer UK ecomuseums, only the Ecomuseum of Scottish Mining Landscapes (ESML) constitutes an institutional partnership between the National Mining Museum Scotland and the University of Sterling (The Mining Landscapes Project, 2024). Torry Ecomuseum, Discover Tweedsmuir (as the most developed member of an umbrella ecomuseum group, Wild Land Area Ecomuseum), and Ross-on-Wye's Museum-without-Walls, are very much endogenous experiments (Old Torry Community Centre, 2022; Tweedsmuir Community Company, 2022; createRoss, 2024). In common with the Ecoheritage findings, all UK ecomuseums rely on a mixture of public and private grants as primary finance (see Chapter 6). Although alternative sources of income, like Skye's tendering for contracts and gathering donations (discussed in Chapters 7.2.3 and 8.8) and Tweedsmuir's Wee Crook Café and events, provide some diversity. Whilst grant funding does come with aforementioned constraints in costs, efforts and boxes to tick, it is not linked to direct administrative oversight.

That said, the constraints of short-term project funding, the dominant form of grant funding in the UK, present stresses as mentioned above to consistency and longevity, ultimately undermining community confidence in the lasting power and legacy as E37 expressed above, which in turn affects community buy-in ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.6](#)). C21 colourfully expresses the strain and lurching impulses of having to chase from one project grant to the next ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.7](#)). Having an overarching long-term vision helps steer a course through for C21, something which Ecoamgueddfa seem to have managed in their transformations through LP and various incarnations of the ecomuseum to maintain the same partnership network and retain staff ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.8](#)). However, IVAR (2023) advocate for moving away from the constraints of project funding to unrestricted funding to enable more flexible, agile and effective practices, build organisational confidence and resilience and reduce risks.

An additional strain on funding continuity several interviewees mentioned was the link to local politics, and the difficulties ensuing from shifting political fortunes, as E35 elucidated with the

difficulties securing promised S106¹²² funding ([Appendix 7; 9.2.2.9](#)). In interview, Peter Davis observed similar tensions in ecomuseums elsewhere, such as Italy, where changes in local politics have equated to a loss of support, and where in practice, ‘political influence often equates to money and resources and all the rest of it.’

The question remains, could and/or should ecomuseums be economically self-sufficient? After all, the drive of sustainable tourism in ecomuseum development was built on the idea of bringing economic self-sufficiency to communities. Yet this reality is rarely borne out. Lisa Pigozzi’s PhD research on ecomuseum sustainable tourism development (forthcoming), was hopeful this could be a route to economic independence but found the picture far more complicated (Pigozzi, 2024). Also a researcher on the Ecoheritage project, Pigozzi found whilst some income is gained from tourist tours, sales of goods etc, reliance for primary finance was on grants and project awards as discussed above (Pigozzi, 2024). With the case studies, the benefits of sustainable/slow/regenerative tourism tend to be dispersed in the community, to service and goods providers and their employees and through lessening the impacts of extractive/high-intensity tourism, rather than bringing money directly to the ecomuseum organisation.

Chapter 4 interrogated the potential conflicts between a sustainable development model focused on tourism and achieving social and environmental justice through the social museum. Fundamental problems in focusing on economic activities include the dissonance that can arise between that and the community and environmental benefits supposedly at the heart of ecomuseum practice. If all efforts focus on making money, then you are almost certainly increasing barriers to broad community engagement with paywalls and greater disenfranchisement a focus on touristic development has been shown by this study to cause. Similarly, as noted above in relation to the challenges of increasing diversity in volunteering and in Chapter 7 regarding ecomuseum inclusion in general, such barriers would likely disproportionately exclude those groups already least represented in cultural activities generally (Arts Council England, 2020) and in the case studies activities specifically, including lower-income households, young people and societies most vulnerable and marginalised. Additionally, the commodification of culture and landscape also fosters disenfranchisement

¹²² Section 106 funding (S106) is money that developers, such as housing developers in the case of SVR, are obliged to give towards community and social infrastructure and projects under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Planning Advisory Service, 2024).

between people and land, eroding compassion, care and stewardship, the opposite of the interconnectivity we need to (re)build as a society and where ecomuseum potential lies (see Chapters 3, 4 & 8; (Büscher & Fletcher, 2020; Common Cause Foundation, 2021; Worts & Dal Santo, 2022).

The high bar of social services expected in return for funding mirrors ecomuseum principles of being in service to society. The argument can be made in a political and social landscape of shrinking and stretched resources, the outsourcing of services that foster human and environmental wellbeing to smaller community-based organisations is a way forward in which the cultural/heritage sector has a part to play (Dodd & Jones, 2014; Mughal, et al., 2022). Certainly, this seems to be the root of public funding body strategies that centre health and wellbeing (Big Lottery Fund, 2018; Arts Council England, 2018; Creative Scotland, 2024; Historic England, 2018). This expectation of providing public/civic services perhaps warrants more ease with being funded to do so. The reality in the UK and across Europe, at least as shown in the Ecoheritage research, is that most ecomuseums function as third-sector organisations, as either charitable trusts or non-profit social enterprises/associations. The case study ecomuseums were founded to address social, cultural, economic and environmental issues facing their communities, providing activities, solutions and actions to address the deficits. As social-action processes the 3rd sector seems the right place for ecomuseums to be.

9.2.3 Opportunities: Soft power to transformational change

The Optimism Project¹²³ (Mackenzie, et al., 2018) set out to discover avenues of hope and positivity in the UK in the face of divisive and troubled times. It concludes that building connections and local communities, increasing our access to public space and celebrating and sharing our culture, heritage and stories are the key mechanisms to bring people together in a common purpose. Since its publication, collaborative and collective thinking and action are arguably needed even more now, post-COVID, with increasing political/societal division, war and environmental crisis and their impacts on human populations. The case study ecomuseums are shown through this research to be attempting community building by just these routes. There are challenges to be addressed in increasing inclusion at all levels, better communication, more positive community perceptions through centring community needs and benefits, raising awareness of the ecomuseums and what they do and the compounding issues

¹²³ Co-produced by cross party think-tank DEMOS and strategic insight agency Opinium.

of staffing, capacity and funding. Knowing what the challenges are allows focus on the opportunities through ecomuseum practice for the case studies to address them.

The identified avenues of hope and positivity rest on connection. This mirrors the notion of connection, of social relationship between peoples and the land, running through this thesis and its themes, summed up in land connectedness (LC) and the key ecomuseum practices explored. Chapter 8 illustrated the importance of interwoven human-to-human and human-to-nature/place bonds in creating, strengthening and maintaining deep emotional connections. LC was shown to be important and effective in countering cultural severance, fostering relationships based on empathy, respect, understanding and reciprocity and generating a knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop. The same mechanisms work for both those with a long history in a place and those new to an area. Ecomuseums are well placed to readily act as a vehicle to foster greater LC and be a conduit for the social-ecological actions LC engenders. Focusing on opportunities that build connectedness offers the ecomuseums greater opportunities to increase impact and foster transformational change via the soft power A03 spoke of as a gradual empowering of agency, care and stewardship (section 9.2.1). The case studies' holistic heritage remits and practices position them well to bridge community divides and cultural severance, a sentiment shared by A07, 'bringing everyone together - you should be able to do that through a heritage project and through the landscape.'

The opportunities aren't radical departures from current practices but centre inclusion and a community-first approach, creating more opportunities to experience the interconnectivity of culture-nature, place-community, sharing knowledge and skills, and fostering collaborative working. Appendix 7.1 gathers interviewees' responses regarding their personal hopes and wishes for their ecomuseums. As expected, they show great insight into what needs to be done to address some of the challenges discussed above and reflect similar concerns to the survey respondents. B09 states, 'It is what we've been doing, but it's the kind of thing that I think could be further developed.' Whilst C22 astutely adds, 'You have to do more of it and get more people involved.' Hopes include raising community awareness of the holistic heritage and value of their areas and increased inclusion and social cohesion via opportunities for community members to get involved and take part in activities and social and environmental actions. This focus on interconnectedness and interconnecting of human and nonhuman communities in place is a wise path to follow. Chapter 8 illustrated building and strengthening awareness of our rich and storied land is an effective route to land connectedness leading to increased social/civic and environmental care and action. In addition, interviewees also reflect on increasing economic

sustainability, of the ecomuseum itself with greater employment and financial diversity ideas, alongside community economic viability through regenerative tourism.

Chapter 7. 2 highlighted interview and survey respondents' view that working with children and young people is important. It was also picked out as a particular area where more work should be done (Appendix 7.1). B13 gives wise counsel,

As far as the children are concerned, you want to fill them up as much as you possibly can. With all of this, what would you call it? Heritage. It's not knowledgeit is knowledge. In a way, it is information, but information's a very cold clinical word. Its heritage. You have to grasp the moment because the next thing [is] they'll be moving into another phase, - they've left all that behind. – [But] they often ... they'll come back to it. (B13)

Research supports B13's contention, finding whilst young people's values shift with age and experience, younger children's values, such as place attachment and nature connectedness, are strong indicators of their later adult values and actions (Richardson, et al., 2019). Research shows whilst there tends to be a dip in reported values and connectedness during the teen years, referred to as the 'teenage dip', adult reported levels match the higher levels of values registered by children under 10 years of age (Piccininni, et al., 2018; Richardson, et al., 2019). A similar teenage dip in values and engagement is reflected in heritage engagement in the UK (Curious Minds, 2019; DCMS, 2024). B13's particular usage of the word heritage as something with deeper meaning in opposition to 'cold, clinical' information/knowledge also echoes research findings that emotions and intrinsic values matter more in creating transformative connections (Lumber, et al., 2017; Wall Kimmerer, 2013; Common Cause Foundation, 2021). The strength and purpose of the ecomuseum for B13 lies in their ability to make meaningful connections, particularly for young people, 'a sense of belonging, and feeling really good about that – "This is where I'm from and I feel good about myself"'. Having a sense of self, of 'bearings' is vital to wellbeing, 'it sustains you in life' no matter where it might take you' (B13, [Appendix 7: 9.2.3.1](#)).

In his study collaborating with children on place values, Moore (1980) called for childhood place values to be centred in 'a more earth-bound culture, driven by a "politics of experience" as a motivating force' (p 135) to foster positive environmental and social values and action. Recent UK reports further underline the importance of young people's inclusion with heritage to social justice (Institute for Community Research & Development; Arts Connect, 2023). The benefits include personal development, identity and belonging, social inclusion and cohesion and

tackling regional inequalities. Certainly B12's experience and calls for further youth interventions (section 9.2.1) back this up. E36's passion for working with young people and giving them a voice was highlighted throughout Chapter 7. She thinks ecomuseums could facilitate/provide opportunities to help counter the negativity teenagers feel directed at them through creating ways into the community. Including activities like community actions, working with local organisations and getting out into their local environments, camping, foraging and cooking to increase skills, knowledge and connection. Having proactively asked and listened to teens' needs, fears and desires, E36 is confident 'they want to help' and they 'like a project' to work on (Appendix 7.1). B13 suggests similar activities, like 'Scouts', stressing as others did, that continuity and longevity of interaction is what is important, 'it's the regular things that matter – that leave the legacy.'

Increasing opportunities for the wider community to experience, deepen knowledge and get involved with their place was also prominently noted by respondents. Analysis in Chapter 8 suggests this increases land connectedness, intrinsic values, reciprocity and care, increasing pro-community, pro-nature and pro-environmental actions. Impressed with Ecoamgueddfa's Bioblitz activities, C24 thinks ecomuseums have the potential to promote greater community sustainability by focusing on increasing community understanding and direct care of their environment, including kelp bed restoration and community allotments and addressing urban decay in town centres by increasing knowledge and pride of its history. That ecomuseums can create a sense of pride and place has been shown (e.g. Chapter 7 and Section 9.2.1 above). Yet, it takes time and effort to build relationships and trust with the wider community not engaged with the ecomuseums already. It also requires the ecomuseums themselves to move out of their comfort zones and be prepared to spend time and effort in areas not instantly comfortable and prove their worth to the communities there, to ask, listen and respond to their needs and wants. It also requires ecomuseums to be prepared for those efforts to fail. Perhaps just at first, or perhaps totally and to learn from that how to change, adapt and improve what they offer. B13's counsel for continuity of presence above applies equally to wider community engagement and relationship building.

Part of going into communities and spending time, talking, listening and building relationships, is gaining a greater understanding of the barriers that prevent certain individuals or groups from engaging. Alongside considering, with those concerned, ways to overcome those barriers. Chapter 8 noted E37 and E38's insight and empathy of gendered differential landscape perspectives and exclusion. B10 addressed the same issues, seeing an opportunity to help by

sharing about a female neighbour who'd started a women's outdoor activity group realising that many women didn't have the confidence to go out alone. Which has since been inundated with women wanting to join. Discussing with B10 my own feelings of vulnerability walking the countryside alone during my fieldwork, particularly where I didn't know the footpaths and they weren't clearly marked, highlighted further issues ecomuseums could address. The need for clear, easy-to-follow route information and the need to educate people, locals and visitors, on safe and appropriate behaviour when out in the environment. Issues applicable to several of the case studies. For example, D33's frustration with the Cateran maps, E37's wondering about the local lack of knowledge about how to get up onto the hills, D28's recalling local school children not being suitably dressed for adverse weather conditions during an activity and needing wrapping in survival blankets. B10 also spoke of people not understanding the potential dangers of the environment and D31 suggested the ecomuseum should educate people about access rights. Guided walks proved popular events in all areas, and demand for increasing such activities for all ages is clear from the suggestions given by participants. Whether aimed at specific demographics/abilities, themes or more general, they can increase people's confidence to get out into their environments and get to know them.

Building relationships and inclusion is key to increasing positive community perceptions of the ecomuseum. Relatively small things like clearer communication and visibility in the community can help with this as D33 expresses, 'something that said we're part of the ecomuseum. Even a little like ecomuseum sign. - I feel it would give more prominence to the ecomuseum, but also more prominence to the community'. The ecomuseum as a forum, as mutual consensus, only works if inclusion is prioritised at all levels. Yet as observed above, the challenges of achieving this rely on funding and capacity as well as will.

However, as C17 points out, something the ecomuseums are doing is changing mindsets and ways of working, as Section 9.1.3 discussed. Shifting mindsets to collaborative 'everyday' working together 'really ought to be the way we do things' as 'the ultimate goal' (C17). C17 refers specifically to co-working, co-sharing and co-marketing in a partnership network. But shifting mindsets by fostering more collaborative communities impacts across society, from intergenerational sharing of stories, skills and knowledge to community groups sharing resources and spaces with each other, with no direct funding required. This is part of Worts & Dal Santo's (2022) adaptive foundational change, a revitalising of community spirit. Community spirit can exist without funding. Undoubtedly it does, evident as it is the founding actions of community members coming together to form the ecomuseums and the many other

community groups and individuals giving their time and skills for free. Yet the scale of societal shifts needed to address environmental and social issues of today needs a level of input that, as C25 says, is unfair to expect people to do for free or reasonable to achieve without support (Chassagne, 2020; Pappalardo, 2020; Worts & Dal Santo, 2022). C17 concludes, agreeing that ‘some funding is essential’.

Community-building and relationships again hold the key to increasing ecomuseum capacity, resilience and funding. Chapter 7 showed how opportunities, resources, knowledge and skills can be gained through partnerships with local and outside expertise and organisations such as universities. Expanding networks and partnerships to include more local and wider groups/organisations, such as live-and-local touring arts schemes like Village Ventures and Music in Quiet Places, can only increase diverse opportunities for communities to experience. Networking with other groups and organisations is noted by interviewees as the most promising route to achieving collaborative goals (D34), including funding applications (C25). The campaign to make funding more open and adaptable gains ground with more private charitable foundations signing up to the idea of unrestricted funding (IVAR, 2023). Yet the difficulties of negotiating the UK’s funding landscape remain complex. There could be strength gathered not only in ecomuseums partnering with local organisations, groups or universities to apply for funding, but in coming together as an ecomuseum network to apply for funding collectively. The efficacy of doing so is evidenced elsewhere, such as with the Brazilian Association of Ecomuseum and Community Museums (Rozentino de Almeida, 2022). This could support training staff and volunteers, including around funding applications and other skills within the communities. The EcoHeritage project identified a list of training needs in its participant ecomuseums and created four open-source correlated modules covering museological skills, participatory methodologies and processes, understanding and planning for sustainability and monitoring impacts (EcoHeritage, 2023b). The as yet very informal and minimally active UK & Ireland Ecomuseum Network has joined the EcoHeritage Network, although not actively engaged with it thus far. International collaboration is another way UK ecomuseums could raise awareness and gain useful contacts, insights and experience.

B13 harbours hopes for diversifying and increasing income streams with tourist merchandise. In an area like Skye, this could do well, but it seems unlikely it would become a primary source. In SVR, E38 and colleagues at the local museum have similarly thought about merchandise based on some of the resources created by SVR-commissioned artists, but opacity around copyright has stalled the notion for now. In this case, the idea was to raise money for the museum itself

rather than SVR. As noted in the section above, most case study ecomuseum economic effects are dispersed to community providers of goods and services. However, similar concepts could provide supplementary income streams for the case studies and other ecomuseums without detracting from their core community-building work.

Building on ideas mooted by several interviewees and taking inspiration from European counterparts, such as La Ponte discussed above (9.2.2), there is an opportunity to develop the regenerative tourism side with paid-for walking tours, etc., for visitors whilst maintaining a primary focus on free community engagement. Cateran is developing regenerative tourism plans that include the growing trend of ‘voluntourism’ experiences, where visitors can ‘give back to their host community’ by joining in environmental restoration opportunities (Cooper, 2022). The potential ethical and practical pitfalls of voluntourism, if not community-led and done with the utmost care and consideration, are well-recorded (Global Brigades, 2023). Whilst domestic voluntourism may be less problematic, it still requires awareness of potential reinforcement of societal inequalities, disenfranchisement and divisions that volunteering, in general, can bring (Hustinx, et al., 2022). As this thesis has illustrated, the need for ecomuseums to position themselves clearly as community-first is paramount.

People are interested in what affects them directly, what they can see, hear and feel. Working at a very local level offers the best way to evidence direct community benefits and activate engagement. Size is one barrier to ecomuseums capacity to include whole communities. Where there are problems around ecomuseum ‘community’ identity in the larger case studies, such as Cateran, considering having smaller local hubs or satellite ecomuseums could provide a solution as voiced by D33,

I think that if each area engaged in it, [as sub-ecomuseums], they would be able to do a bit more, they will feel a bit more personal, or a bit more local and community rather than it just feels a bit.... I don't know. (D33)

Size matters to coherent identity and capacity to empower community agency to address local concerns, as reflected in Skye’s successes. Smaller satellite ecomuseums or hubs could help, each working through local community collaboration of individuals, groups and organisations. Coming together under an overarching umbrella ecomuseum network affords greater collective power, voice and resources. Ecoamgueddfa demonstrates this and has local hubs in place in their constituent partner sites. However, there is work to be done to integrate their communities, and even the partner sites themselves, fully into all levels of planning,

management and governance. One option would be for each site to act as a hub for an ecomuseum community forum/steering group. As an open community forum, making efforts to go out in the communities to listen to people from all areas and sectors of their local communities, they could then lead on ecomuseum activities in their area and work together with the other sites' forums to all feed into Ecoamgueddfa's plans, aims and overall strategy. This is probably easier for some of the partner organisations to achieve. The Llyn Maritime Museum, was founded by, run by and is sited within its local community. Whereas physical accessibility, e.g. Nant Gwrtheyrn and Felin Uchaf, or perceived commercial/visitor focus, e.g. Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw, needs more effort to overcome.

The potential of the ecomuseum in the UK is underlined by the newer ecomuseums that have opened since I began this study. Discover Tweedsmuir and Torry Ecomuseum, are both deeply embedded within their small defined communities, arising as integral parts of Community Trusts. Despite origins as a finite pandemic project, David Fryer, Trustee of city-based Torry Ecomuseum in Aberdeenshire, declares it has 'revitalised sense of place amongst local people' encouraging reciprocal care of environment and pride, as evidenced in the donation of tree saplings and planning for a subsequent native tree-planting scheme (Holt, 2022). Torry also established an international community cultural exchange with the Japanese Yubari community via the Shimizusawa Project (Old Torry Community Centre, 2022). Discover Tweedsmuir is an integrated part of the Tweedsmuir Community Company, a charitable organisation formed in 2007 in response to the closing of the historic listed Crook Inn that had been a centre for employment, social and cultural life for over 400 years (Tweedsmuir Community Company, 2022). They since have become a community focus for action including a rich events calendar, community garden and practical environmental actions. Its members take great pride in being part of the global movement of ecomuseums, reflecting the power of a collective sense of solidarity that Bigell (2012) and Pappalardo & Durte Cândido (2022) perceive (Mason & Leckie, 2023). This sense of solidarity manifests further in Tweedsmuir's membership of an umbrella ecomuseum initiative, Wild Land Area Ecomuseum, part of the Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area project run by Southern Uplands Partnership (Southern Upland Partnership, 2022). This rural development partnership of local community trusts and groups has, alongside Tweedsmuir, evolving webpages for Moffat Ecomuseum (Moffat Ecomuseum, 2022) and Ettrick Ecomuseum (Ettrick Ecomuseum, 2022). Whilst Tweedsmuir is the most developed and active member of the partnership, this network presents impetus, opportunities, support and resources that reflect the potential of collaborative strength discussed in this section and noted by others (eg

(Brown, 2019). It will be interesting to watch its progress. Catherine Mills of The Ecomuseum of Scottish Mining Landscapes meanwhile, views their ecomuseum for local and nearby communities to explore and understand their socio-ecological heritage and stories rather than attracting tourists (Mills, 2024).

9.3 Summary

This chapter continued the exploration of the case studies' current practices and their challenges and potential in acting as small places of social and environmental transformation. Section 9.1 explored the case study practices in relation to the remaining unexplored key ecomuseum characteristics and dimensions from Table 4.1. Is the ecomuseum context-specific, responsive, adaptive and embraces change? Does the ecomuseum contribute to the wellbeing of both its human and nonhuman communities and their environment? Does it provide opportunities for community solutions and actions? Does it increase the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to meet community's needs for regenerative futures and climate action? Evidence illustrates the case studies do attempt each of these actions to greater or lesser degrees, their efforts and effectiveness bolstered or hindered by recurring challenges.

Section 9.2 brought together discussion of case study ecomuseum practices and land connectedness. It highlighted the case studies' main strengths as being community-led and place-based alongside changing mindsets by challenging community outlooks and aspirations, increasing place and community identity and promoting alternative, collaborative working plus capacity-building and acting as a vehicle for social and environmental action. However, common challenges to the success of achieving these goals were observed in each area of ecomuseum practice. These are identified as the need for increased inclusion at all levels, better communication, more positive community perceptions through centring community needs and benefits, raising awareness of the ecomuseums and what they do alongside the compounding issues of staffing, capacity and funding. Identifying the challenges allows focus on opportunities to address them. The synergies between land connectedness and ecomuseum philosophy suggest the potential of ecomuseums using land connectedness as a focus framework to foster intra and inter-relationality, intrinsic values and connections. This increases the likelihood of encouraging a knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop. The case study ecomuseums' aims and practices suggest they would be well placed to channel the drive to care generated by increased connection by acting as a conduit for community agency, action

and stewardship. To paraphrase B09 and C22 quoted in the section above, it's what they've been doing, they just need to do more of it.

Chapter 10 will next close this study by summarising its key findings and answers to the research question.

10 Conclusion: Revolution Part III?

This final chapter concludes this research. Section 10.1 gives an overview of this PhD study, its aims, research questions, main findings and contribution to discourse. Section 10.2 considers opportunities for further research. Section 10.3 concluding thoughts on the potential for the ecomuseum in the UK.

10.1 *Hiraeth*: Summary of research objectives, approach and findings

Hiraeth (Welsh) – A soul-deep longing for belonging and home

This study began, as all research does, with questions. It began in response to two questions posed in 2019 reports on the increasing impacts of synergistic climate and biodiversity crisis. ICOMOS's 'The Future of Our Pasts' (2019) called for research into what part the heritage sector can play in tackling climate crisis and fostering resilient communities. Whilst the State of Nature 2019 (Hayhow, et al., 2019) urged research to address disconnection from nature and the gap between people's values and actions. This thesis aimed to critically examine the view that a holistic place-based understanding of social/cultural-ecological systems and a community-led approach are more likely to lead to long-term sustainable care and wellbeing of both human and nonhuman communities. Ecomuseums, as social-action processes, were considered an apposite vehicle to achieve this. Ecomuseums are relatively unknown and underutilised in the UK, and their impacts are little studied. This thesis's central question therefore asked **How can an ecomuseum approach help (re)connect UK communities to their landscape and help foster regenerative solutions and action to address and adapt to social and environmental challenges?**

This study then, aimed to provide the first large-scale study of ecomuseum practices in the UK. The five extant ecomuseums at research commencement are my case studies. This research set out to explore the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK to (re)connect communities to their landscape and help foster regenerative futures. To do so required a combined exploration of what connects us to the places we live and current ecomuseum practices in the UK. Data was gathered using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including semi-structured interviews (including walking interviews), surveys, individual and community creative personal ecologies mapping techniques from a total of 397 participants. Observation, including during a 12-month practice placement with one of the case studies, and document analysis supplemented this.

To answer the central question, four main research questions were posed,

1. What are the ways that people emotionally connect to and understand the everyday landscapes they live in?
2. How can these connections be encouraged, maintained and strengthened?
3. What implication does this have on people's actions towards caring for the places they live and wider social/environmental action?
4. What is the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK to foster this connection and as a mechanism for community stewardship of place?

To answer these questions, synthesis of multidisciplinary discourse in chapters 2 – 4, provided a detailed framework of key practices, principal dimensions and characteristics (Table 4.1) to interrogate the realities, challenges and potential of UK ecomuseum practices. Corroboration across case studies and data types allow for confidence of emergent themes and analysis of characteristics and common challenges.

Chapters 6 – 9 used investigative questions from the framework to answer the research questions. Chapter 6 explored the importance of being place-based and community-led in ecomuseum foundations, governance and management. Chapter 7 evidenced the importance of wider community inclusion, learning and collaboration in ecomuseum activities beyond day-to-day management. Chapter 8 opened out to examine case study communities' connections to place and how this impacts care and stewardship. It proposed the notion of land connectedness as a more inclusive way to encompass the range of connections encountered. Alongside, the case study practices were critically analysed to understand how they foster and celebrate inter-relationship and intrinsic values-based connections. Chapter 9 focussed on further sustainability dimensions and synthesises evidence from across chapters 6 – 9 to draw out the main strengths, challenges and opportunities of using the ecomuseum in the UK to help foster land connectedness and regenerative futures. The findings are summarised in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 Summary of findings against the key practices, principal dimensions and characteristics

Practices	Principal Dimensions	Characteristics	Summary of Findings
Place-based	Physical Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale • Recognisable/meaningful delineation of space • Fragmented/dispersed sites 	<p>Current UK ecomuseums mostly succeed in presenting a defined meaningful space. However, size of area and population were found to impact success. A small geographic size and/or population, such as with Skye, makes it easier to achieve a meaningful identity. Increased challenges were found where the ecomuseum areas are larger and with more dispersed and distinct separate communities such as in Cateran.</p> <p>Another important factor in succeeding in presenting a meaningful space is the level of inclusion of the local community in defining that space. Higher community inclusion equates to</p>

			<p>greater meaning to that community. Again, size of area/population plays a significant part in the ease of doing this. But also, conscious efforts at broad inclusion at foundation level are important.</p> <p>The potential to increase success in this dimension would be for new ecomuseums to have a small focus area/population. Where larger areas are already in use or considered, then smaller hub-ecomuseums could help, working together as a larger networked group.</p>
	Place Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place attachment • Rootedness • Belonging • Social connections • Local distinctiveness • Continuity • Commitment to place • Security 	<p>All the UK ecomuseums perform strongly in this dimension with ecomuseum engagement evidenced to increase individual and collective sense of community and place connection and understanding. An increased sense of pride and community cohesion was also evidenced along with other associated characteristics of place attachment.</p> <p>Challenges came in increasing the impact of this dimension in the broader community. Again, size and inclusion levels present obstacles to be tackled.</p>
Community Led	Community Including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endogenic • Community benefits • Active agency • Self-efficacy • Increased capacity • Plurality 	<p>There is clear evidence of achievement and potential in this dimension. However, tensions around issues of what or who constitutes the community in community-led and the level of broad community inclusion in both management/governance and general engagement in activities feature strongly in this dimension.</p> <p>The common challenges of size, inclusion levels, funding and capacity impact here, along with weak communication which impacted perceptions of ecomuseum aims and activities. This distorted perceptions and reception of potential community benefits.</p> <p>Greater success in this dimension is key to unlocking ecomuseum potential. Wider community consensus should lead ecomuseum aims. Evidence suggests prioritising an overt community-first approach, which centres community wellbeing over touristic development, is essential for greater community buy-in and engagement. Clearer communication and broader inclusion at all levels of planning and delivery could combat negative community perceptions through increasing plurality, relevance and understanding of practices.</p>
Supporting	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic • Transdisciplinary • Intergenerational • Knowledge • Skills 	<p>This is another dimension in which the case studies performed strongly. They evidence the potential of the ecomuseum as a mechanism to effect more pluralistic and inter-relational understanding of people and place. They all acted as nodes of transdisciplinary learning, knowledge and skills exchange, bringing together specialist and lay knowledge and the ability to bridge demographic divides within and beyond the community.</p>
	Collaboration & Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion • Local networks • Wider networks • Support local producers & artisans 	<p>This dimension should be a foundational key strength of ecomuseum practice. Evidence suggests that whilst this is happening at varying degrees there is room for improvement. Again, challenges of size and levels of inclusion impact this dimension.</p>

			Particular attention should be given to increasing inclusion of different sectors and demographics in the community at all levels. Increasing local and wider networks and improving communication and the level of inclusion with those existing ones will lead to greater relevance, resources, impact and resilience.
	Intrinsic values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning • Respect • Reciprocity • Care 	<p>Cutting across all other dimensions, ecomuseum practices are evidenced as an effective means to foster maintain and strengthen intrinsic values through their practices.</p> <p>This concurrence with land connectedness dimensions indicates the efficacy of the ecomuseum as a vehicle for strengthening land connectedness and so increasing the knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop.</p>
Sustainability	Holistic approach Regenerative thinking Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context specific • Adaptive & responsive • Holistic nature/culture approach • Small scale • Non-extractive • Collaborative solutions • Community 1st • Increasing capacity 	<p>The ecomuseum is shown to provide an effective mechanism for promoting a holistic understanding of the intra/interdependence of people-place, culture-nature and increasing land connectedness through opportunities for learning and experience.</p> <p>The case studies activities, including learning and direct action, present the opportunity to channel the knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop into actions by empowering opportunities and agency for communities to enact social and environmental solutions and actions. Moving beyond sustainability to regenerative thinking, this has the potential to increase community adaptation and resilience to social and environmental stress and crisis.</p> <p>The challenges to full success in this dimension are size, funding and capacity, inclusion at levels and communication. Potential would be increased through a greater community-first approach, broader inclusion at all levels from the planning stage onward and increased networking/collaboration. This would increase community relevance, buy-in, resources and resilience.</p>

In answer to RQ1, I found compelling evidence that people's deep connections to place were founded in a holistic heritage of intertwined culture/nature, human/nonhuman social relationships at different scales and across time. Strong themes emerged of kith and kinship, intra/interdependence, spatio-temporal dimensions, storied landscapes and future thinking.

In answer to RQ2, these emergent themes were evidenced to be founded and strengthened through a knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop, intrinsic values, and notions of community. The evidence presented suggests that connection and relationship are key to motivating love, respect, reciprocity and stewardship. Evidenced also was the distress disconnection from the land caused and the strong desire to increase connection, knowing and belonging.

Answering RQ3, the result of this knowing-belonging-caring feedback loop is active care. Higher connection levels correlate with higher everyday pro-community, pro-nature and pro-environmental actions and so more resilient and adaptive communities.

Together these support the conceptualisation of the broader concept of land connectedness as the basis and route to counter cultural severance, build connection and foster stewardship and co-flourishing of both human and nonhuman communities in place.

In answer to RQ4, critical analysis of the case study ecomuseum practices show a correspondence between their aims and practices and the key dimensions and characteristics of land connectedness. Overall, ecomuseums in the UK present an excellent mechanism not only to promote land connectedness but also to channel emotions into action by empowering opportunities and agency for communities to enact social and environmental solutions and actions. Their greatest strengths in acting as community catalysts for adaptive and regenerative change come when they take a community-led and community-first approach in a small, meaningful area, with a focus on inclusion, collaboration (local, regional, national, international) and plurality at all levels. Challenges to success include below optimal inclusion, poor communication, negative community perceptions (most often when viewed as tourism developments), and low awareness of the ecomuseums and what they do, compounded by issues of capacity and funding.

My work contributes to the discourse on ecomuseology, social museology, heritage activism and general museum and heritage studies as the first in-depth study of UK ecomuseum practices, deepening understanding of their use, role and impact in a specifically UK context. Further, it explores the potential of ecomuseums in the UK as an adaptive, collaborative mechanism for community stewardship of entangled dynamic social-ecological systems that are place-based, community-focused, participatory, democratic and poly-vocal. This adds to the discussion not only of what part heritage can play in tackling climate change but also links to wider discussions of the entanglement of social and environmental justice (ICOMOS, 2019; Pappalardo, 2020; Borrelli, et al., 2022 b; Duarte Cândido & Pappalardo, 2022; Brown, et al., 2023 (a)).

My research also contributes to multidisciplinary literature in fields of culture, heritage, psychology, ecology, conservation, landscape architecture and sustainability understanding and planning, that centre place and landscape as fundamental to community identity, empowerment, justice, wellbeing and cohesion (Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019; Edensor, et

al., 2020; National Trust, 2019; Reynolds & Lamb, 2017). In answer to Hayhow et al.'s (2019) call for research into increasing connection to nature, advancing land connectedness argues for a broader understanding of diverse meaningful lay human-nature ontologies than nature connectedness alone. This shines a light on more effective pathways to engagement that reinforce intrinsic values that promote action and solutions for land resilience based on collaboration, empathy, reciprocity and respect within and between all human and nonhuman communities.

Most of all, it is hoped this research will be of interest and benefit to ecomuseum practitioners themselves, in the UK and further afield, as well as communities considering using the concept. The findings give examples of practices, activities and engagement ideas, as well as discussing common pitfalls, to help focus planning and resources on the most effective areas and activities for what they want to achieve. Funding bodies might also find it useful to understand better the ecomuseum concept and what it can achieve, helping them to make better, more appropriate decisions about funding.

10.2 Opportunities for further research

This research started during the pandemic of 2020. Successive waves of restrictions and societal shifts affected not only my research approach but also the ecomuseum practices and, importantly, their varying low engagement levels with their communities preceding and during my data collection periods, particularly the first set of field visits. For me, this necessitated a change in my approach to data collection and participant recruitment, leading to the creation of pop-up community mapping events. This method did not provide the deep, rich data of the individual personal ecologies mapping and journaling, but it did increase the number and range of participants significantly to allow a picture from a broader cross-section of the communities than I would have gathered otherwise. For the case studies, it meant that community perceptions were perhaps lower than they might have been. However, the difference in case studies approach to activity and interactions during the pandemic, as well as before and afterwards, allows for confidence that the strengths and challenges observed are consistent and not just a Covid aberration.

However, as relatively new organisations, it would be beneficial to revisit and reevaluate the case studies community engagement and perceptions to gauge continual changes and adaptations in approach and practices, such as noted in Ecoamgueddfa and Cateran, and their efficacy. The interest in the development of the case studies also includes their continued

existence, such as with SVR, to further build the picture of what can mitigate or exasperate the challenges. Further, as relatively new concepts to the UK, ecomuseum numbers are seeing a relative current boom in numbers, with three new ones started since I began this research and work-in-progress on several potential others. It would be important to include these newer examples to any further study to explore further the role of the ecomuseum in promoting regenerative community stewardship.

It would also be beneficial to expand research on the potential of networking within and between ecomuseums. This study discussed how networking locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, offers benefits such as sharing and access to resources, knowledge and support. Projects such as EcoHeritage (2023) also reflect this. It would be an interesting KTP project to work with UK ecomuseum to consolidate the UK & Ireland Ecomuseum Network to create a strong support network, further explore the needs of ecomuseums and work together to meet those needs. International collaboration could be an important part of this.

Further research on the use of land connectedness and developing pathways to land connectedness in practices across different situations and fields offers exciting opportunities to corroborate findings and open out discourse and practices for more democratic and plural voices and ways of knowing at the heart of strategy and policy.

10.3 *Thèid dùthchas an aghaidh nan creag* : The future/potential of land connectedness and the ecomuseum in the UK

Thèid dùthchas an aghaidh nan creag (Scottish Gaelic) - ‘this people in their place that can withstand the rocks’; connection and belonging equals resilience

This research began with a question mark. Can one also conclude with a question mark? Writing this conclusion at a time of terrifying political shifts and unrest and increasingly dire warnings about environmental tipping points it is easy to become overwhelmed and paralysed by despair and fear. Like the Optimism Project (Mackenzie, et al., 2018), I have to choose hope as an avenue of resistance to Edensor et al.’s (2020) existential angst linking us to the fate of our place or places. Our Earth is amazing. Our shared and entangled human and non-human lives and stories are worth celebrating, loving and caring about. I loved a holly tree once. I felt it reciprocated, providing safety and care to me. Clearly, I was not alone. Years later, a community rose together, to speak for her, to save her from threat. Hope counters despair’s inaction with action (Hayhoe, 2021). Whilst not the answer to everything, it is not nothing. Small acts of local

resistance and resilience add together, and together they can affect social and political change, and so environmental change. Social and environmental justice are entwined. People enact change if they perceive that change as beneficial to them; those benefits are not all based on extrinsic values of commodities. This study shows the potential of the ecomuseum in UK as a social-action process to create, strengthen, maintain and enact a land connectedness ethic based on intrinsic values, love, empathy, respect, reciprocity and stewardship.

Ecomuseums are shown here to raise awareness and engagement with the worlds we share and shift mindsets. The ecomuseum provides an effective vehicle to enact the knowing-belong-caring feedback loop as a catalyst for community social-ecological stewardship and resilience. Building strength and resilience through connection and belonging – in the words of the proverb recounted by one of my participants, *Thèid dùthchas an aghaidh nan creag* - ‘this people in their place that can withstand the rocks’. Ecomuseums demonstrate community leadership in tackling entwined social and environmental inequalities. Ecomuseums arose out of a revolution of museum thinking and practice (Chapter 2: Revolution part 1) and continued to adapt and evolve to meet new imperatives (Chapter 4: Revolution part 2). There is no single ecomuseum pattern or way of doing things as each iteration responds to the unique situation of its founding communities. Likewise, ecomuseums can’t/aren’t the (only) answer to all/every societal ills. But as insurgent and accumulative revolutions of solidarity in and between small places, they can play a part in answering big questions (Duarte Cândido & Pappalardo, 2022; McGhie, 2022; Dunkley, 2012). The question mark in this chapter’s title is an open door to continued experimentation, to action, to change, to hope. That question mark is the pebble waiting to be thrown into the pond. I am excited to see where it can take us.

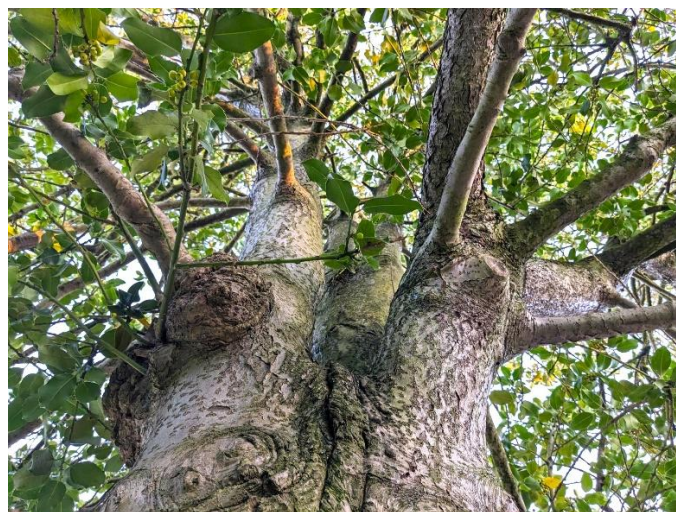


Figure 10.1 My old friend Holly

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Roundtable Santiago, Chile, Basic Principals and Resolutions

Sociomuseology IV, Cadernos de Sociomuseologia, Vol 38-2010 13 (ICOM, 2010)

Round Table Santiago do Chile ICOM, 1972

1 Basic principles of integral museum

Members of the Round Table on the Role of Museums in Today's Latin America, analyzing the leaders' accounts on the problems of the rural environment, of the urban environment, of scientific and technological development and of lifelong education, became aware of the importance of these problems for the future of Latin American society. They agreed that solution of such problems depended on an understanding by the community of the technical, social, economic and political aspects involved. Creation of awareness of the present situation and of possible alternative solutions was considered to be an essential step in achieving the integration envisaged. It was in this respect that the members of the round table believed that museums could and should play a decisive role in the education of the community.

Santiago, 30 May 1972

2 Resolutions adopted by the round table of Santiago (Chile)

Considering

That the social, economic and cultural changes occurring in the world, and particularly in many under developed areas, constitute a challenge to museology. That mankind is living through a profound crisis; that technology has produced an enormous advance of civilization which is not matched by cultural development; that this has led to an imbalance between the countries which have achieved great material development and others which remain on the periphery of development and are still enslaved as a result of their history; that most of the problems revealed by contemporary society have their roots in situations of injustice and cannot be solved until those injustices are rectified. That the problems involved in the progress of societies in the contemporary world call for an over-all view and integrated treatment of their various aspects; that the solution is not confined to a single science or discipline any more than the decision concerning the best solutions and the way of implementing them belongs to a

single social group, but rather requires the full, conscious and committed participation of all sections of society. That the museum is an institution in the service of society of which it forms an inseparable part and, of its very nature, contains the elements which enable it to help in moulding the consciousness of the communities it serves, through which it can stimulate those communities to action by projecting forward its historical activities so that they culminate in the presentation of contemporary problems; that is to say, by linking together past and present, identifying itself with indispensable structural changes and calling forth others appropriate to its particular national context. That this approach does not deny the value of existing museums, nor does it imply abandoning the principles of specialized museums; it is put forward as the most rational and logical course of development for museums, so that they may best serve society's needs; that in some cases, the proposed change may be introduced gradually or on an experimental basis; in others, it may provide the basic orientation. That the transformation in museological activities calls for a gradual change in the outlook of curators and administrators and in the institutional structures for which they are responsible; that, in addition, the integrated museum requires the permanent or temporary assistance of experts from various disciplines, including the social sciences. That the new type of museum, by its specific features, seems the most suited to function as a regional museum or as a museum for small- and medium-sized population centres. That on the basis of the above considerations, and bearing in mind that the museum is an institution in the service of society which acquires, preserves, and makes available exhibits illustrative of the natural and human evolution, and, above all, displays them for educational, cultural and study purposes, the round table convened by UNESCO in Santiago (Chile), from 20 to 31 May 1972 on the role of museums in today's Latin America.

RESOLVES

In general

- I. That museums should widen their perspectives to include branches other than those in which they specialize with a view to creating an awareness of the anthropological, social, economic and technological development of the countries of Latin America, by calling on the services of advisers on the general orientation of museums.
- II. That museums should intensify their work of recovering the cultural heritage and using it for social purposes so as to avoid its being dispersed and removed from Latin America.

- III. That museums should make their collections available in the most convenient possible manner to qualified research workers and, so far as possible, to public, religious and private institutions.
- IV. That traditional museographic techniques should be brought up to date in order to improve the visitors' comprehension of the exhibits; that museums should preserve the character and atmosphere of permanent institutions, without resorting to the use of costly and sophisticated techniques and materials which might encourage a tendency to extravagance unsuited to Latin American conditions.
- V. That museums should establish systems of evaluation in order to verify their effectiveness in relation to the community.
- VI. That having regard to the findings of the survey on current needs and the shortage of museum staffs to be conducted under the auspices of UNESCO, the existing training centres for museum staffs in Latin America should be strengthened and expanded by the countries themselves; that the system of training centres should be amplified with regional integration as an ultimate objective; that facilities should be provided at the national and regional levels for the re-training of existing personnel and provision should be made for training courses abroad.

Concerning rural areas

That museums should be used to help create wider awareness of the problems of rural areas, by the following means:

- (a) Exhibitions of technologies which might be applied to community improvement;
- (b) Cultural exhibitions setting forth alternative solutions to social and ecological environment problems with a view to increasing the public's awareness and strengthening national ties:
 - (i) Exhibitions relating to rural areas in urban museums;
 - (ii) Mobile exhibitions;
 - (iii) The establishment of site museums.

Concerning urban areas

That museums should be used to help create wider awareness of the problems of urban areas, by the following means:

- (a) City museums should lay special emphasis on urban development and its problems, both in their exhibitions and in the research facilities provided;
- (b) Museums should organize special exhibitions illustrating the problems of contemporary urban development;
- (c) With the assistance of the large museums, exhibitions should be held or museums established in suburbs or rural areas with a view to acquainting the local populations with the possibilities and disadvantages of life in large cities;
- (d) The offer of the National Anthropological Museum in Mexico City to try out the museological techniques of the integral museum by holding a temporary exhibition of interest to Latin America should be accepted.

Concerning scientific and technical development

That museums should be used to help create wider awareness of the need for further scientific and technological development, by the following means:

- (a) Museums should stimulate technological development based on actual conditions in the community;
- (b) Museums should be included in the agendas of meetings of ministries of education and other bodies specifically responsible for scientific and technological development as one of the means for disseminating the progress made in those fields;
- (c) Museums should promote the dissemination of aspects of science and technology by decentralizing themselves through the organization of mobile exhibitions.

Concerning lifelong education

That museums should intensify their function as the best possible agent of lifelong education for the community in general by making use of all the communication media, by the following means:

- (a) An educational service should be included in museums which do not possess one, and provided with adequate equipment and resources to perform its teaching role inside and outside the museum;
- (b) Services to be offered by museums on a regular basis should be included in the national educational policy;

- (c) Audio-visual programmes on important subjects should be diffused for the use of schools, including those in rural areas;
- (d) Duplicate materials should be used for educational purposes, through a system of decentralization;
- (e) Schools should be encouraged to make collections and hold exhibitions of items from their cultural heritage;
- (f) Training programmes should be established for teachers at different educational levels (primary, secondary and university). These recommendations reaffirm those made at various seminars and round tables on museums organized by UNESCO.

2. For the creation of a Latin American Association of Museology

Considering

That museums are permanent institutions in the service of society which acquire and make available exhibits illustrative of the natural and human evolution, and, above all, display them for study, educational and cultural purposes; That, particularly in the Latin American region, they should meet the needs of the broad masses of the population, which is striving to attain a better and more prosperous life through a knowledge of its natural and cultural heritage, past and present, which, in more highly developed countries, are performed by other bodies; That, with few exceptions, Latin American museums and museologists encounter difficulties of communication owing to the great geographical distances which separate them from each other and from the rest of the world; That the significance and potentialities of museums for the community are not yet fully recognized by the authorities nor by all sections of the public; That at the eighth General Conference of ICOM in Munich and at the ninth General Conference in Grenoble, the Latin American museologists present referred to the need to set up a regional organization. The Round Table on the Role of Museums in Today's Latin America convened by UNESCO in Santiago, Chile, from 20 to 31 May 1972,

Resolves:

- I. To set up the Latin American Association of Museology (ALAM), open to all museums, museologists, museographers and research workers and educationists employed by museums, for the following purposes and by the following means: Providing the regional community with the best museums, based on the total experience of all the Latin American countries; Creating a means of communication between Latin American museums and museologists; Promoting co-operation

among the museums of the region through the exchange and loan of collections, and exchange of information and specialized staff; Creating an official body to express the desires and experiences of museums and the profession in relation to its own members, the community, the public authorities and other related bodies affiliating the Latin American Association of Museology to the International Council of Museums and adopting a parallel organizational structure, its members being at the same time members of ICOM; Dividing for operational purposes the Latin American Association of Museology into four sections corresponding, provisionally, to the following four areas: Central America, Panama, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Haiti and the French West Indies; Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia; Brazil; Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.

- II. That the undersigned, participants in the round table of Santiago, Chile, constitute themselves as an Organizing Committee of the Latin American Association of Museology and appoint a working group of five members, four representing one each of the four above-mentioned areas and the fifth acting as general co-ordinator; that this group will be responsible, within a period of six months at the most, for:
Preparing the association's statutes and regulations; Agreeing with ICOM on forms of joint action; Giving extensive publicity to the new organization, and calling elections for constituting the various organs of ALAM; Fixing the provisional headquarters of this association at the National Anthropological Museum in Mexico City; Composing the above-mentioned working group of the following persons representing their respective areas: Area I, Mr Luis Diego Gómez (Costa Rica); Area 2, Dr Alicia Dussan de Reichel (Colombia); Area 3, Mrs Lygia Martins-Costa (Brazil); Area 4, Dr Grete Mostny Glaser (Chile); co-ordinator, Professor Mario Vázquez (Mexico). Santiago (Chile), 31 May 1972.

3. Recommendations presented to UNESCO by the round table of Santiago (Chile) The round table convened by UNESCO in Santiago (Chile), from 20 to 31 May 1972 on the Role of Museums in Today's Latin America presents to UNESCO the following recommendations:

1-One of the most important achievements of the round table has been to identify and define a new approach to the activities of museums: the integral museum, designed to give the community an over-all view of its natural and cultural environment; the round table suggests that UNESCO use the publicity methods at its disposal to promote this new trend.

2- UNESCO would continue and extend its assistance in the training of museum technicians-both at intermediate and at university level-as it does at the Paul Coremans Regional Centre.

3- UNESCO would promote the establishment of a regional centre for the preparation and preservation of natural specimens, for which the existing Regional Centre of Museology at Santiago might serve as a nucleus. Apart from its teaching function (training of technicians), its professional museographical function (preparation and preservation of natural specimens) and the production of teaching materials, the regional centre would play an important role in the protection of natural resources.

4- UNESCO would grant research and training facilities for museum technicians at intermediate educational level.

5- UNESCO would recommend that education ministries and bodies responsible for scientific, technological and cultural development should consider museums as one means of disseminating the progress made in those fields.

6-In view of: the magnitude of the town-planning problems in the region and the need to inform people about them at various levels, UNESCO would arrange for the publication of a work on the history, development and problems of Latin American cities; such a work would be published in two versions: scientific and popular. In addition, to reach wider sectors of the population, UNESCO would produce a film on the subject, designed to appeal to all types of audience

Appendix 2 Chapter 4 referenced sources for Table 4.1

2.1 Corsane's 21 Key Principles of the Ecomuseum Ideal from 'Outreach' to 'inreach': *how ecomuseum principles encourage community participation in museum processes*, (2006)

1. An ecomuseum is initiated and steered by local communities.
2. It should allow for public participation in all the decision-making processes and activities in a democratic manner.
3. It should stimulate joint ownership and management, with input from local communities, academic advisors, local businesses, local authorities and government structures.
4. In an ecomuseum, an emphasis is usually placed on the processes of heritage management, rather than on heritage products for consumption.
5. An ecomuseum is likely to encourage collaboration with local craftspeople, artists, writers, actors and musicians.
6. It often depends on substantial active voluntary efforts by local stakeholders.
7. It focuses on local identity and a sense of place.
8. It often encompasses a 'geographical' space, which can be determined by different shared characteristics.
9. It covers both spatial and temporal aspects. In relation to the temporal, it looks at continuity and change over time, rather than simply trying to freeze things in time. Therefore, its approach is diachronic rather than synchronic.
10. The ecomuseum often takes the form of a 'fragmented museum', consisting of a network with a hub and antennae of different buildings and sites.
11. It promotes preservation, conservation and safeguarding of heritage resources in situ.
12. In the ecomuseum ideal, equal attention is often given to immovable and movable tangible material culture, and to intangible heritage resources.
13. The ecomuseum stimulates sustainable development and use of resources.
14. It allows for change and development for a better future.

15. It encourages an ongoing programme of documentation of past and present life and people's interactions with all environmental factors (including physical, economic, social, cultural and political).
16. It promotes research at a number of levels - from the research and understanding of local 'specialists' to research by academics.
17. It promotes multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches to research.
18. The ecomuseum ideal encourages a holistic approach to the interpretation of culture/nature relationships.
19. It often attempts to illustrate connections between: technology/ individual, nature/culture, and past/present.
20. The ecomuseum can provide for an intersection between heritage and responsible tourism.
21. It can bring benefits to local communities, for example a sense of pride, regeneration and/or economic income.

2.2: Davis's five attributes of Ecomuseums from Ecomuseums; A Sense of Place, 2011

1. The adoption of a space that is not necessarily defined by conventional boundaries.
2. The adoption of a 'fragmented site' policy that is linked to in situ conservation and interpretation.
3. Conventional views of site ownership are abandoned; conservation and interpretation of sites is carried out via liaison, cooperation and the development of partnerships.
4. The empowerment of local communities; the involvement of local people in ecomuseum activities and in the creation of their cultural identity.
5. The potential for interdisciplinarity and for holistic interpretation is usually seized.

2.3: Fresque-Baxter & Armitage's (2012) framework for understanding place identity and climate change adaptation. (Also see Appendix 4.1 Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012) 13 subdimensions of place identity)

Key Purpose	Central Tenets	Key Place Identity Subdimensions	Strengths	Weaknesses
Cognitive-behavioral	To make explicit how individual place identity shapes the decisions people make about adaptation options and actions when addressing impacts from current or potential future climate change impacts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-efficacy 2. Self-esteem 3. Continuity 4. Environmental mastery 5. Distinctiveness 6. Meeting of needs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to identify how people perceive climate change, and make choices about adaptation based on a cognitive process; it is one that acknowledges the role of place identity in decision making 2. How people understand environmental change, and how they select adaptation strategies are important for designing 'locally appropriate ways to cope' (Ref 67, p. 31) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It can be difficult to disentangle adaptation intentions with specific actions, given the multitude of factors which shape actual adaptations 2. Methodological approaches would be largely quantitative and as such less suited to exploring nuances associated with place identity and experiences of change

	Key Purpose	Central Tenets	Key Place Identity Subdimensions	Strengths	Weaknesses
Health and well-being	To make explicit how attachment to places is important for health and well-being of individuals, and how this influences coping with environmental changes and fostering greater adaptive capacity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Relationships to particular places influence how people understand and navigate those places, and will influence actions and emotions; environmental degradation will impact emotional and mental health2. Identity is an important aspect of well-being and a loss of self-identity can lower individual and community abilities to withstand and cope with change3. When places change mental well-being may be impacted resulting in feelings of displacement, alienation, and grief, decreasing overall well-being4. Loss of activity and severance of social ties can lead to decreased sense of belonging, security, and self-esteem	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Environmental mastery2. Self-esteem3. Meeting of needs4. Emotional attachment5. Sense of belongingness6. Continuity7. Social connections8. Esthetic values	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Addresses psychological impacts from climate change that are often underemphasized2. Integrating understandings of health not only can aid in adaptation plan designs that address the importance of health but also to create plans which foster and promote maintenance of health and well-being, through protection of certain places	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The experience of psychological health is subjective, and as such statistical or empirical measures may have difficulty in elucidating the nuanced connections between these concepts

	Key Purpose	Central Tenets	Key Place Identity Subdimensions	Strengths	Weaknesses
Collective action	To make explicit how people come together in collective settings to engage in action as related to environmental change, and what extent place identity may shape this	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Shared values and identity can play an important role in creating space(s) in which people can collectively organize and engage in actions2. Development of a collective place-referent identity and identification of related place-based values can be an impetus for action when identity is threatened3. Shared social connections created by interacting with others in place(s) can foster increased social capital and can aid in creating diverse social networks that people can rely on during times of stress and crisis4. Shared values and identity can contribute to the development of trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Commitment to place2. Social connections3. Self-efficacy4. Place preferences5. Continuity6. Rootedness7. Security	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When person-place connections are incorporated into any planning process the process and its outcomes become much more community-centric and appropriate for the place in question2. Can help in creating spaces to bring people together, as well as creating opportunities to bridge diverse values, perspectives, and goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Can be challenging to ensure all perspectives, connections, and concerns from all community subgroups are incorporated; may result in hidden voices

2.4: Pappalardo's summary of recurring characteristics of well experimented ecomuseums; from Community-Based Processes for Revitalizing Heritage: Questioning Justice in the Experimental Practice of Ecomuseums (Pappalardo, 2020, pp. 6-7)

Characteristics	Questions for investigating the characteristics
Residents' identification/benefits	Does the ecomuseum encompass a "geographical" territory that is determined by shared characteristics,

	identified by residents? Does the local community manage the ecomuseum? Does the ecomuseum bring benefits to local communities – e.g., a sense of pride, regeneration or economic income?
Community participation	Does the ecomuseum allow for public participation in a democratic manner? How? Is there an emphasis on process rather than on product?
Local organisation operations	Does the ecomuseum encourage collaboration with local craftspeople, artists, writers, actors and musicians? Is there joint ownership and management between local people and “experts”? Is it a fragmented “museum” with a hub and “antennae” of buildings and sites?

Opportunities for ecomuseums

1. The practice of ecomuseums is a way of focusing on the underlying relations between humans and nature.
2. Ecomuseums are context-based, space-related practices. The way space is organised and managed matters, and it reflects social relations.
3. Ecomuseums may be education and transformative processes that start from the collective reconstruction of memory – including tensions, conflicts, contradictions and questions of power – and may evolve in emancipatory paths for liberating the most oppressed individuals in society.

Then, intersections between ecomuseums and the concept of just heritage can be found if ecology, relations, space, institutional agency and emancipation matter in their practice.

2.5 Owen’s effective attributes for climate adaptation, from What makes climate change adaptation effective? A systematic review of the literature (Owen, 2021, p. 11)

Common attributes of activities that were effective across multiple indicators include;

1. collaborative decision-making
2. sharing physical, financial, and informational resources and techniques that simultaneously enhance human wellbeing, institutional relations, and environmental security.

These activities tended to be synergistic and to build upon each other; no single activity was effective in isolation. Effectiveness can be measured in addressing both the root causes and subsequent impacts of climate risk, vulnerability, and exposure.

**2.6 McGhie's synthesis seven key activities of museums with UN SDGs from
Connecting the 21 Principles of Ecomuseums, the Sustainable Development
and Climate Action (McGhie, 2022, p. 52)**

1. Protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage, both within museums and more generally. This can be monitored and evaluated through SDG 11.4 (acknowledging that this also incorporates the considerations of SDGs 14 and 15 for life below water and on land respectively).
2. Support Education for Sustainable Development, which supports SDG 4.7 (Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship) as well as SDGs 12.8 (information for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature) and 13.3 (education, awareness and capacity development for climate mitigation, adaptation and action).
3. Promote cultural participation for all, which can be monitored through SDG 10.2 (universal economic, social and political inclusion) and 1.4 (ensure access to services), as well as 5.1 (eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls) and 11.7 (provide safe, inclusive and welcoming green and public spaces).
4. Support sustainable/responsible tourism, which has its own SDG target (8.9).
5. Support research for sustainable development, for example by supporting research activity and by sharing research findings. This can be monitored as SDG 9.1 (provide sustainable infrastructure) and 9.5 (promote scientific research).
6. Direct everyday activities and operations towards sustainable development, for example through management, recruitment, use of resources, management of waste and management approaches and decisions. This can be considered within SDG 8.8 (support labour rights and provide decent work), 12.6 (adopt sustainable practices and sustainability reporting) and 12.7 (sustainable procurement.), 16.6 (effective, accountable and transparent institutions), and 16.B (support laws and policies for sustainable development).
7. Direct partnerships and collaborations towards sustainable development. This activity can be monitored in reference to 16.7 (participatory decision making), 17.16 for international partnerships and 17.17 for more local and cross-sector partnerships, and 11.B for integrated policies for Disaster Risk Reduction and social inclusion in the community.

2.7 UN Agenda 2030's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2020)



Appendix 3.1 How to Make a Journey Stick Activity provided for SVR family activity day

Share your photos of your journey stick adventures using the hashtag - #greenwaytrails and tag @teammpa for Twitter and Facebook @midpenninearts for Instagram

How to Make a Journey Stick

First Nations Peoples from Australia and the Americas have used Journey Sticks to tell the story of their travels - like a memory map.

You will need

- A strong sturdy stick
- Lengths of natural twine or wool



- 1 Go for a walk and take your stick and twine
- 2 Collect findings along your way to represent & remind you of what you see, hear, smell touch & feel
- 3 Use your twine to attach them to your stick starting from the top as you find them
- 4 When you get home you can use your stick to remember your journey and share the story with others

Have fun, stay safe and respect other living things!

- Only collect fallen objects that are not living
- be careful of prickly and stinging things
- Don't eat anything you find
- Remember to wash your hands before eating or drinking




Spodden Valley Revealed
mpa
Whitworth Town Council

Lancashire County Council

Heritage Fund

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

Nottingham City Council

Nottingham City Council

Appendix 3.2 Participant advertising posters (English and Welsh)



Research study Flyer (English version) was also created in Welsh

HELO BOBL HYFRYD!

A YDYCH YN BYW NEU YN GWEITHIO YN YR ARDAL?

Allwch chi helpu Astudiaeth Ymchwil
PhD sy'n archwilio'r ffyrdd y mae
ecoamgueddfeydd yn y DU yn cymhorthi
cymunedau cysylltu â, deall a gofalu am y
lleoedd a'r tirweddau y maent yn byw
ynddynt a'r goblygiadau ehangach ar
gyfer dyfodol cynaliadwy ac i wneud
gwahaniaeth i'r hinsawdd? ?

CWBLHEWCH AROLWG DIENW AR-LEIN

'Sganiwch y Côd QR neu ewch i
www.landconnectedecomuseums.com i gael mwy o
wybodaeth, linc yr arolwg a ffyrdd eraill o helpu i
'Cymryd rhan yn yr astudiaeth hon' (dilynwch 'Get
involved in this study')



NOTTINGHAM
TRENT UNIVERSITY

Midlands4Cities
Local Area Partnership

UK
RI

Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

Research Online Survey recruitment poster (Welsh version) Was also created in English

Appendix 3.3: Participant Demographics: Number of participants per ecomuseum area, by number/data type, age and gender

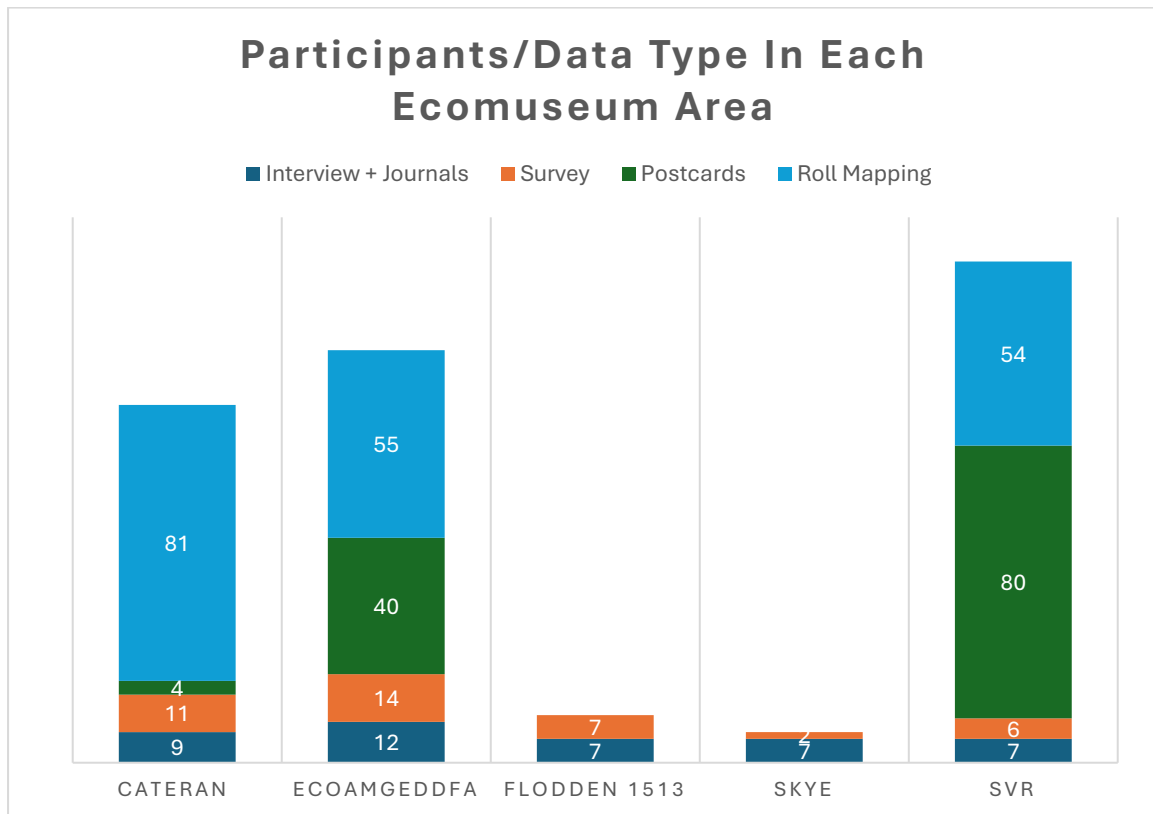


Table 0.1 Number of participants of all data collection methods per ecomuseum area. NB only interviews and online surveys were carried out in Flodden 1513 and Skye ecomuseum areas hence the smaller numbers. Peter Davis was not assigned an interview area.

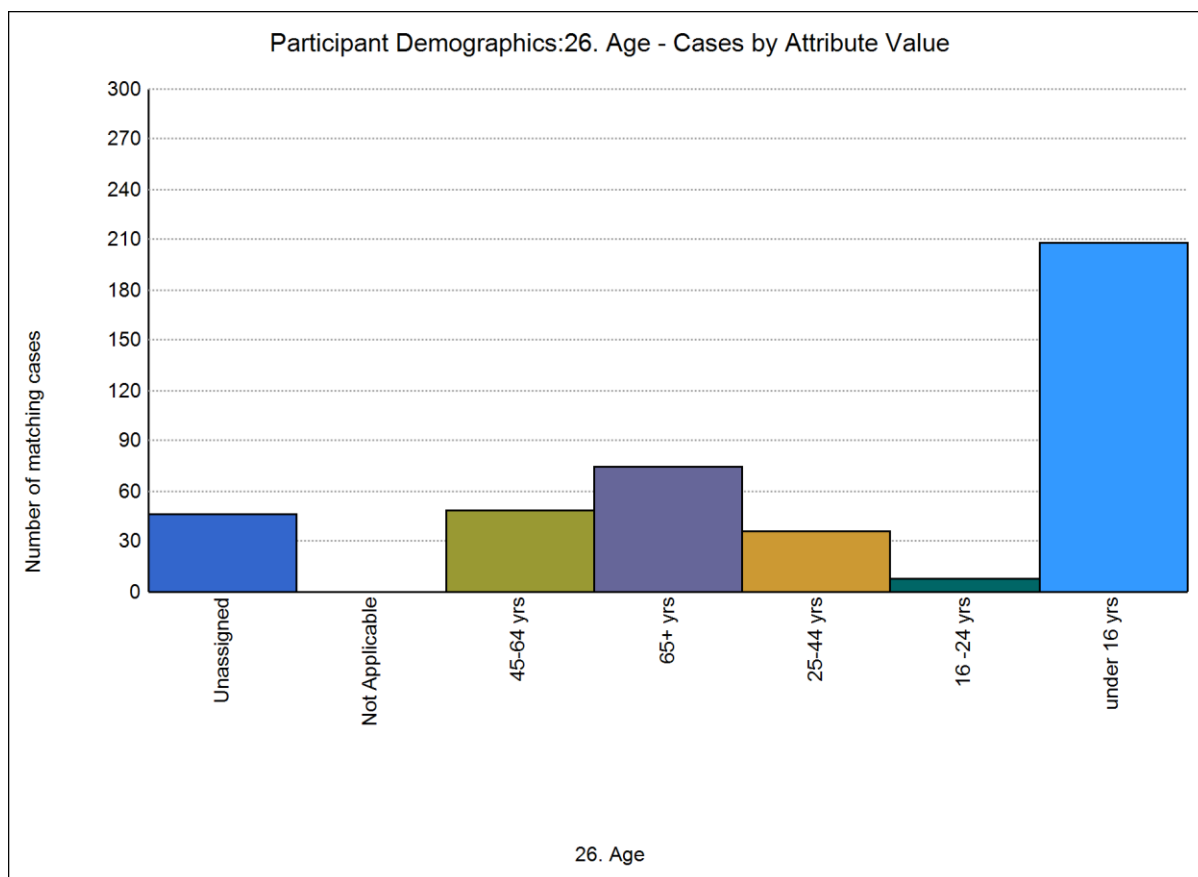


Table 0.2 Participants of all data types divided by age

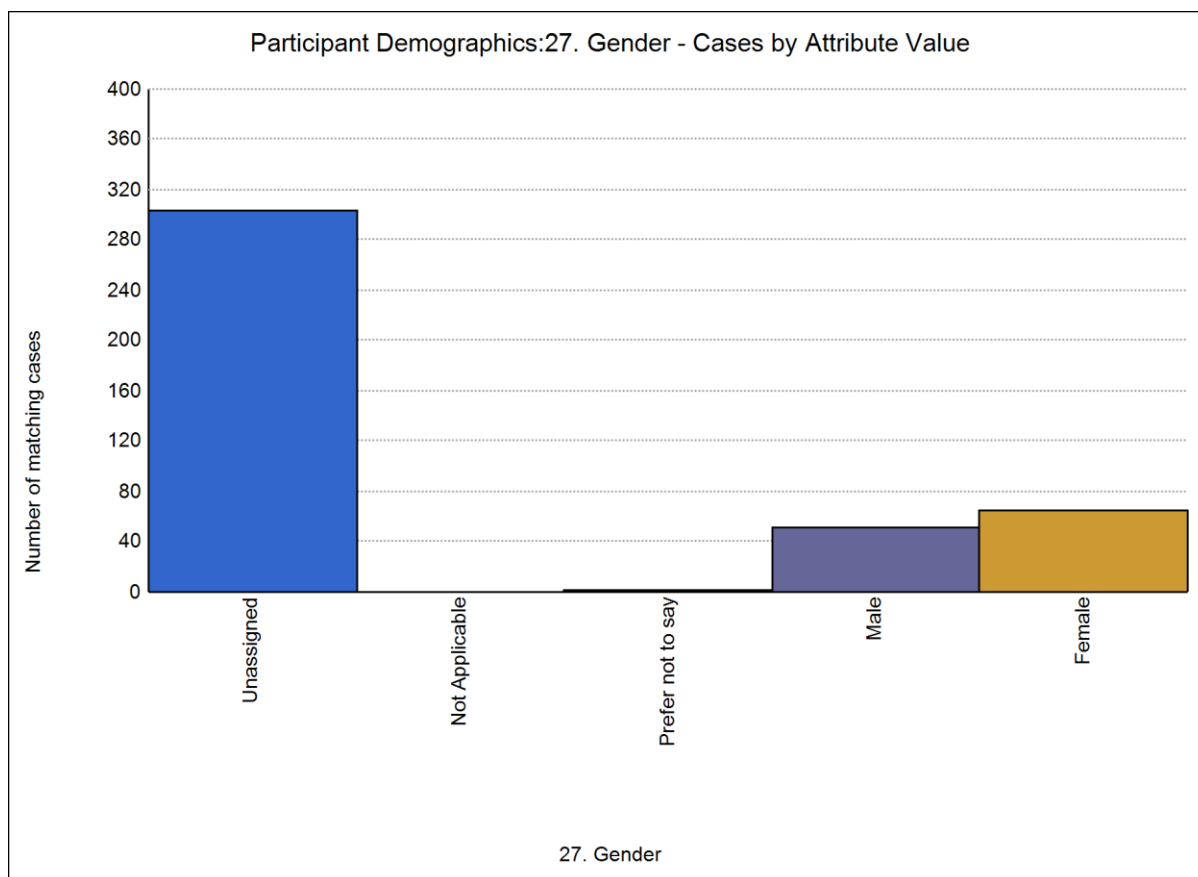


Table 0.3 Participants of all data types divided by gender where given.

Appendix 3.4: Indicative interview questions/topics sent to participants

Hello, thank you for having agreed to be interviewed. In preparation for the interview, I thought you might find it useful to have an idea of the sort of topics that I will be asking you about. Some people prefer to be able to think about their thoughts and feelings about the topic beforehand.

My study is particularly focused on exploring the many varied practices of ecomuseums in the UK and if these help communities and individuals, with many and varied interests and passions, connect to, understand and care for the places and landscapes in which they live and the wider implications for climate action and sustainable futures, including social, economic and environmental sustainability.

This study, in a way, is testing the idea that people care for what they cherish and cherish what they particularly know, and how ecomuseums can help foster this deep emotional connection needed to elicit care.

The interview will not be strictly structured, and the question samples below are just to give an idea of the general area of interest, but discussion will not be limited to them. Each conversation, I hope will be led by each individual interviewee and develop freely around the theme of connection, to landscape, places and each other.

Question/topic samples:

- 1) Your personal involvement in the ecomuseum, how you where/are involved, what you did/do etc
- 2) Your experiences of the landscape/environment prior to engaging with the ecomuseum
- 3) How has your experiences with the ecomuseum facilitated or changed the way you understand and feel towards the local landscape?
- 4) Your personal motivations for engagement with the ecomuseum (initial and continuing)
- 5) Reflections on personal and community benefits of engagement with the ecomuseum. For example, skills, resources, empowerment, sharing of knowledge, sense of community, relevance to community.
- 6) Do you feel that the ecomuseum development adds to community sustainability and if so, how?
- 7) Is there any group/community that you feel is/was not represented by the ecomuseum activities so far, and why do you think this is?
- 8) Do you feel that the ecomuseum development has any negative impacts on the community and if so, how?
- 9) Do you think that engagement with the ecomuseum could relate to conservation or climate mitigation for you personally and for the wider community?

- 10) Do you think your engagement with the ecomuseum has altered your broader understanding of and spurred engagement with wider environmental issues and if so in what ways – eg general awareness and understanding, everyday actions etc
- 11) Thinking specifically about community sustainability and caring for the local landscape, What do you think is most important to address?
- 12) Do you think the ecomuseum does provide or has done, an important way for the community to care for the environment for the future?

Appendix 3.5 Indicative Interview Schedule

INDICATIVE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE for: Place Matters: Assessing the potential of the ecomuseum in the UK to (re)connect communities to their landscape and help foster sustainable futures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research and for returning your consent form. • In line with that consent, if you wish to withdraw from this interview at any point you are welcome to do so. • Can you confirm that you are happy for this interview to be recorded (audio or Teams record)? • I'd just like to remind you that the audio/Teams recording of this interview will be transcribed and anonymised and recording destroyed so that you will not be identifiable from the resulting data. • The interview will take approx. 60 – 90 minutes. (walking interviews longer) • Do you have any other questions before we go ahead?
Engagement with the ecomuseum:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask about their ecomuseum involvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which one - When first aware of - When first became involved/engaged - Type of involvement/engagement - Level of involvement/engagement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ask about experience of landscape/environment involvement prior to engagement with ecomuseum (could simply be out and enjoying it, walking, reading about history, for work, or more involved engagement eg with local group or organisation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where/what organisation (if any) - What/how - how long
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ask about how they understand the concepts of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ecomuseum - Heritage - Nature - The relationship between heritage and nature (how closely related or not at all?) - How closely do feel you are connected to heritage/nature? - Sustainability

- Community Sustainability
More detailed information on type of engagement they have taken part in through the ecomuseum:
4. Type of activities engaged with - Eg archaeology, biodiversity, conservation, creative, combined 5. What have they really enjoyed/found interesting/gotten the most out of?
Thinking about their engagement with the ecomuseum:
6. How the engagement has changed or broadened their understanding of your local landscape - More holistic, increased awareness of history, geology, nature, particular aspects? - Give Scope for different/ even contesting interpretation or understanding 7. How they feel the ecomuseum relates or could relate to conservation, including of heritage and traditions and environment, or climate action/mitigation for them personally and for wider community? -direct action (eg habitat maintenance/creation, mitigating environmental damage from visitors/use/climate change/safeguarding landscape and/or community, sustainable development) - indirectly (eg changing attitudes, framing of landscape, spillover Pro Environmental Behaviours) 8. Ask about how their experiences have - Confirmed previously held perspective/understanding of local landscape - Contested previously held perspective/understanding of local landscape - Altered their perspective/understanding of local landscape 9. How has this engagement has changed, or not, their feelings - towards the place they live (sense of place/rootedness/place identity/emotional connection to/feelings of responsibility/desire to care for) - towards their community (sense of identity/cohesion/feelings of responsibility/desire to care for) 10. Ask about the kinds of resources/capacity used or accessed that ecomuseum has facilitated that otherwise might not be available to them.
Reflection on motivations and empowerment
11. Ask about initial reasons for getting involved with the ecomuseum and continuing involvement (what do they get out of it? Feeling connectedness- nature-community, usefulness)

12. Why do they continue to be involved?
13. Do they feel they have benefited as an individual in any way through their engagement with the ecomuseum? (increased sense of place, identity, ownership/stewardship, valuing of the landscape etc)
14. Do they feel the community benefits in any way from the ecomuseum?
15. Do they feel that they have a say/will be heard about local issues/concerns/ideas within and through the ecomuseum organisation as an individual and a community?

If so can give examples?
16. Do they feel that the ecomuseum allows different voices (range across whole community) to be heard, through interpretation, activities etc,

If so can they give examples
17. Is there any group/community that they feel is not represented by the ecomuseum activities so far, and why do they think this is?
18. Do they feel that the ecomuseum development adds to community sustainability, this can be social, economic and environmental, and if so how?
19. How could this be strengthened?
20. Do they feel that the ecomuseum development has any negative impacts on the community and if so how?
21. How could this be mitigated?

Pro-environmental behavioural (PEB) spillover

22. Do they think their engagement with the ecomuseum has altered their broader understanding and spurred engagement with wider environmental issues and if so in what ways
 - General awareness and understanding
 - Everyday Direct action – PEB in personal everyday life (eg recycling, less waste, avoid littering, thinking about food miles/production, using less energy in house, purchase environmentally friendly products etc)
 - Direction action in local area (external to ecomuseum) other organisation
 - External/wider Direct action – campaigning/protesting, signing petitions, donating money/joining to other organisations
 - Indirect action – talk to friends and family about issues and PEB's, more interested in wider environmental issues (in news etc)

Future thoughts
<p>23. What plans for the near future do you have to engage with the ecomuseum?</p> <p>24. What would you like to see available to do?</p> <p>25. Thinking specifically about community sustainability and caring for the local landscape,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do they think is most important to address? - What activities/ideas do they think should be prioritised? <p>26. Do they think the ecomuseum provides an important way for the community to care for the environment for the future?</p> <p>27. What do you see as the ecomuseums key role moving forward in promoting sustainable and regenerative communities?</p>
<p>28. Could you tell me about your favourite thing, place in your local landscape.</p> <p>29. Favourite story/folktale/legend about your local landscape or nature?</p>
Closing the interview
<p>Thank you for responding to all my questions.</p> <p>Is there anything else you feel you would like to add?</p> <p>Would you like to receive a copy of the transcript of this conversation once it has been typed up?</p> <p>Thanks again for your time.</p>

Appendix 3.6 Survey Questions

- Q1 I have read and understood the information provided (If under 16 yrs, please get a parent/guardian to read this information and tick this box before completing survey)
Yes; No
- Q2 Which Ecomuseum do you live or work in the vicinity of or have been involved with?
Cateran Ecomuseum; ~Ecoamgueddfa; Flodden 1513; Skye Ecomuseum; Spodden Valley Revealed
- Q3 Do you live or work in the vicinity of the ecomuseum?
Live; Work; Both
- Q4 Have you ever participated in any way at all with your local ecomuseum?
- Q5 What way/s are you involved? (Tick all that apply)
Community participant in activity or project; Organiser; Volunteer; Networked group/organisation/business; Visitor (e.g. have used information created when exploring the landscape); Other
- Q5_a If you selected Other, please specify:
- Q6 What types of activities have you participated in? (please list all – open response)
- Q7 Describe in your own words your motivations for engaging with the ecomuseum and any benefits from doing so
- Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your involvement with the ecomuseum? (Liskert 5 point Scale; Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree or Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree)
- Q8_1 Participating with the ecomuseum makes me feel more connected to the place I live
- Q8_2 I feel as though I have had or could have an influence in what the ecomuseum does
- Q8_3 Participating with the ecomuseum makes me feel part of the community
- Q8_4 The ecomuseum gives the community a voice
- Q8_5 The ecomuseum has made me more aware of the nature and heritage of the landscape where I live
- Q8_6 The ecomuseum is just for tourists not the local community
- Q8_7 The ecomuseum gives me opportunities to become actively involved in caring for my local environment.
Participating with the ecomuseum gives me a reason to get outside and enjoy the environment
- Q8_8
- Q8_9 Things I have learnt through the ecomuseum have made me think more deeply about the place I live
- Q9 How long have you lived/worked in this area?
- Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your personal connection to the place and landscape where you live/work? (Liskert 5 point Scale; Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree or Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree)
- Q10_1 I do not feel connected at all to the landscape where I live
- Q10_2 Feeling part of the community where I live is an important part of my identity
It is important to me to know that the landscape and wildlife where I live will be here for future generations to enjoy
- Q10_3
- Q10_4 The heritage of the place I live is an important part of my identity
It is important to me to feel like I am doing something to help look after nature where I live
- Q10_5
- Q10_6 Knowing about the history of the place I live is important as it helps me feel more connected to it

- Q10_7 I am aware of environmental issues
- Q11 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you think about the environment? (Liskert 5 point Scale; Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree or Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree)
- Q11_1 For humans to flourish we need our local environment and nature to flourish too
- Q11_2 It is important to preserve and pass on our local heritage/culture, traditions and knowledge, to future generations
- Q11_3 By working together, the community can make this a better place to live
- Q11_4 I have noticed certain species of animals and/or plants locally that have declined or disappeared over time
- Q11_5 I am aware of how more extreme weather events, such as storms, flooding, extreme heat and drought are affecting the people and place where I live
- Q11_6 Traditional knowledge and folklore, language, events, arts and crafts are an important part of the character of the place I live
- Q11_7 Art and cultural events can help connect people to local nature and history
- Q11_8 My actions can affect the nature in my local environment
- Q11_9 Heritage and nature are inseparable parts of the place I live
- Q12 Thinking about your personal experience of the place and landscape where you live and/or work, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Liskert 5 point Scale; Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree or Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree)
- Q12_1 I do not enjoy being actively involved in community conservation or heritage
- Q12_2 I take notice of wildlife wherever I am
- Q12_3 My local landscape inspires me
- Q12_4 I enjoy knowing the stories and folklore about the nature and places in the landscape around me
- Q12_5 Living in a beautiful and historic landscape is valuable to me even when I don't go out into it
- Q12_6 I enjoy being outside in the landscape
- Q12_7 I get more out of being in nature if I can identify some of the plants, animals and landforms that I see
- Q12_8 Doing something positive to care for my local environment makes me want to do other similar things
- Q12_9 Connecting to nature improves my wellbeing
- Q13 Look at the diagrams below, please select one pair of circles from each row that you think best shows the relationship between the two named concepts. For instance, choosing the first image in which 'me' and 'nature' are separate indicates that these two concepts are completely detached, choosing a middle image would suggest that there is some overlap, and choosing the final image would suggest 'me' and 'nature' are completely inseparable.
- Q14 Look at the diagrams below, please select one pair of circles from each row that you think best shows the relationship between the two named concepts. For instance, choosing the first image in which 'me' and 'heritage' are separate indicates that these two concepts are completely detached, choosing a middle image would suggest that there is some overlap, and choosing the final image would suggest 'me' and 'heritage' are completely inseparable.
- Q15 Look at the diagrams below, please select one pair of circles from each row that you think best shows the relationship between the two named concepts. For instance, choosing the first image in which 'nature' and 'heritage' are separate indicates that these two concepts are completely detached, choosing a middle image would suggest that there is some

- overlap, and choosing the final image would suggest 'nature' and 'heritage' are completely inseparable.
- Q16 Describe in your own words what is important to you about your local landscape? Why?
- Q17 How often do you spend your free time outside in your local landscape on average?
Every day; At least once a week; At least once a month; At least once every two months;
Less than 6X a year; Never
How important is access to local green space to you?
- Q18 Very Important; Important; Not that important; Not important at all
- Q19 What prevents you spending more or any of your free time in your local landscape? (tick all that apply)
Too busy at work/home/or family commitments; Poor physical health; Poor mental health or wellbeing; Not interested; Access barriers for disabilities; Fear or worry about safety; No one to share it with; No particular reason; Other
- Q19_a If you selected Other, please specify:
- Q20 Thinking about climate change, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Liskert 5-point Scale; Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree or Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree)
- Q20_1 Climate crisis does not directly affect the place I live right now
- Q20_2 Community action cannot make a difference to climate change issues
- Q20_3 Human-caused climate change is not real
- Q20_4 Nothing I do will change problems in other places on the planet
- Q20_5 Thinking about climate change makes me anxious
- Q20_6 Climate change does not affect me
- Q20_7 Nothing I do can stop or slow down climate change
- Q21 Do you ever discuss climate change or ecological concerns with friends or family?
Yes; No
- Q21_a If so, who do you talk to? (tick all that apply)
Parents; Grandparents; Children; Siblings; Other Family; Friends of a similar age; Other
- Q21_a_i If you selected Other, please specify:
- Q21_a_ii Do you discuss what actions you and/or they can take?
Yes
No
- Q21_a_ii_a Have such discussions changed either their or your way of thinking about climate crisis and taking action?
- Q22 Outside of any ecomuseum activities, what pro-environmental actions do you do or take part in? (tick all that apply)
Recycle; Buy local, seasonal, organic or fair-trade produce; Take care over waste; Buy environmentally friendly products; Take care over energy use, in the home and transport; Avoid littering; Make space for and/or feed wildlife in my garden; Donate or subscribe to an environmental or wildlife organisation; Participated in local direct action with environmental or wildlife organisation, such as litter picks, path repair, habitat creation etc.; Sign petitions -including online; Take part in campaign or protest
- Q23 Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected how you value your local landscape? And how?
- Q24 Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your views on what actions to take in relation to climate change? And how?
- Q25 Is there anything that you would like your local ecomuseum to do or offer in the future that it currently doesn't? Why?
- Q26 What is your age range?
Under 16 yrs; 16 – 24 yrs; 25 – 44yrs; 45-64 yrs; 65+

- Q27 Which gender do you identify as?
Female; Male; Non-binary; Prefer not to say
- Q28 Which of these ethnic groups do you identify as the most?
Prefer not to say; Black or Black British/Welsh/Scottish/English; Asian or Asian British/Welsh/Scottish/English; Arab or Arab British/Welsh/Scottish/English; White other; Mixed; Other
- Q29 Please give the first three/four letters of postcode - (This is just to give an idea of the geographical spread of respondents. Your identity or address will not be traceable to you in any way.)

Appendix 3.7 Participant Information for PE Journaling and Mapping

Activity 1: Personalised Landscape mapping.

Draw a map of your local landscape (or part of it), including any particular points of interest to yourself. Represent this with basic sketches. Don't worry about being messy and the drawing quality doesn't matter! And don't worry about scale or accuracy either, it's all about showing what's interesting and important to you. Make sure to add lots of notes and annotations to the drawing explaining what you have drawn. Annotations could include things you like and dislike; connected memories and emotions invoked by particular sites; particular stories linked to landscape features; places you consider important to yourself, the community and for nature; inspiring heritage, nature and views etc but please feel free to interpret it any way you wish and include whatever things matter to you, there is no right or wrong way to create your map.

I have included a sample just to reassure you that the drawing quality does not need to be perfect (If activity done remotely - After you have completed your map please take a photo of it and email it to me at victoria.mcmillan2018@my.ntu.ac.uk

SAMPLE MAP

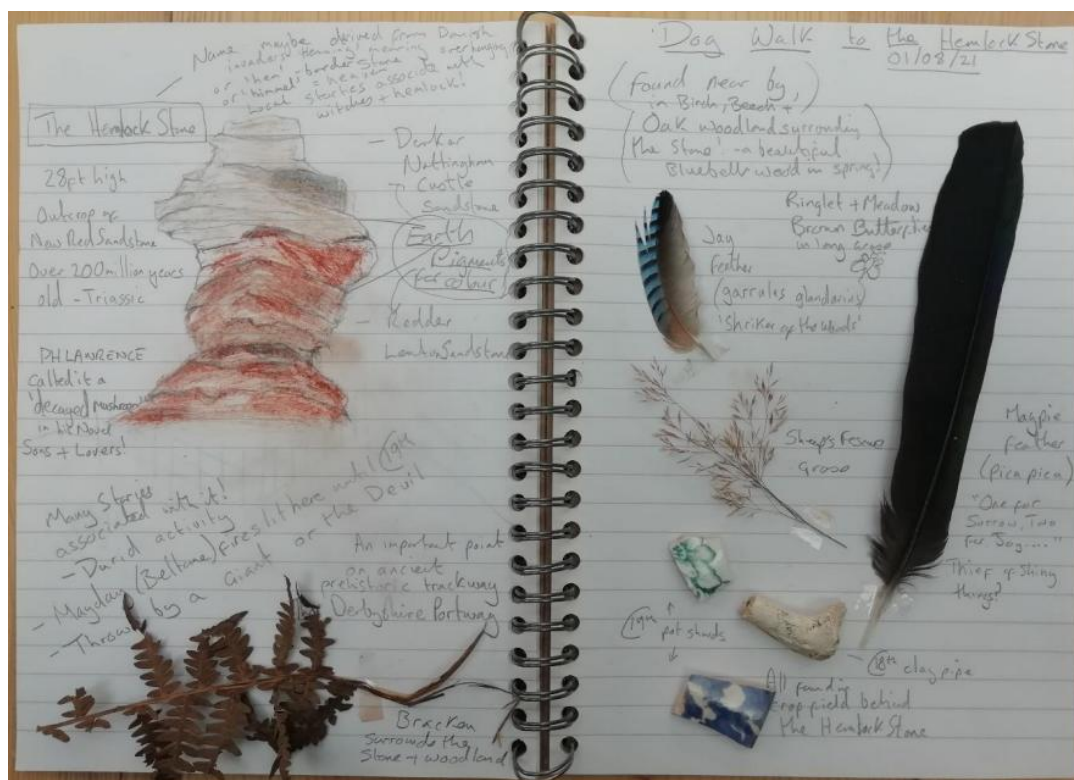


Activity 2: Journaling Activity brief:

Keep a journal of your experiences, interactions with and activities in your local landscape and any ecomuseum activities that you do. This can include anything you want it to, such as notes on where you have been, what you did and saw there, what discoveries you made, small found objects and how you feel. It can be like a traditional diary entry just writing, or if you wish you can also include drawings or photos of places and activities that you mention, even actual small found objects (please label these describing what is depicted and why you selected that image/item) or be creative and put in anything you like! There is no right or wrong way to do this and you can write as much or as little or as often or infrequently as you like. Even a single entry is great, or you can keep this journal over a period of days, even weeks I am just interested in how you interact with the place/landscape where you live, what interests you, and why.

After you have completed your journal please take a photo of the pages you have produced and email them to me at victoria.mcmillan2018@my.ntu.ac.uk or use the stamped addressed envelope provided to post the actual journal back to me (to request and envelope please email me on above address).

Example of journal page just to give idea, but you can do it however you want to, and include anything you like, prose, poetry, art, photographs, sketches, small found items.... the list is endless, but please take care not to harm or damage anything.



Appendix 3.8 Pop-up activity information & statements

Statement displayed during Community Participatory Mapping Pop-up Activities

A Few of My Favourite Things in [name location of pop-up activity] Community Map.

What are your favourite places and things in your area? What places make you feel happy and Why?

Do you have a favourite tree, or place to walk? A favourite story or special site you love to visit?

(for community roll-mapping activity) Draw, doodle and sketch the things that you love on the map to help a research study discover the things people love in the [name of location of activity] area! Please read the information below.

(For postcard mapping activity) Draw, doodle or note the things that you love on the map to help a research study discover the things people love in the [name of location of activity] area! Please read the information below.

PROJECT AND CONSENT INFORMATION displayed at pop-up activities.

Hi. This activity today is part of a study that aims to explore the ways in which ecomuseums in the UK help communities connect to, understand and care for the places and landscapes in which they live, and the wider implications for sustainable futures.

The study is being conducted by Victoria McMillan (Nottingham Trent University). The project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded Midlands4Cities Doctoral Training Partnership (M4C).

Your participation in this activity is completely anonymous. No information you share can be traced to you and it will not be possible to identify you from the responses you give.

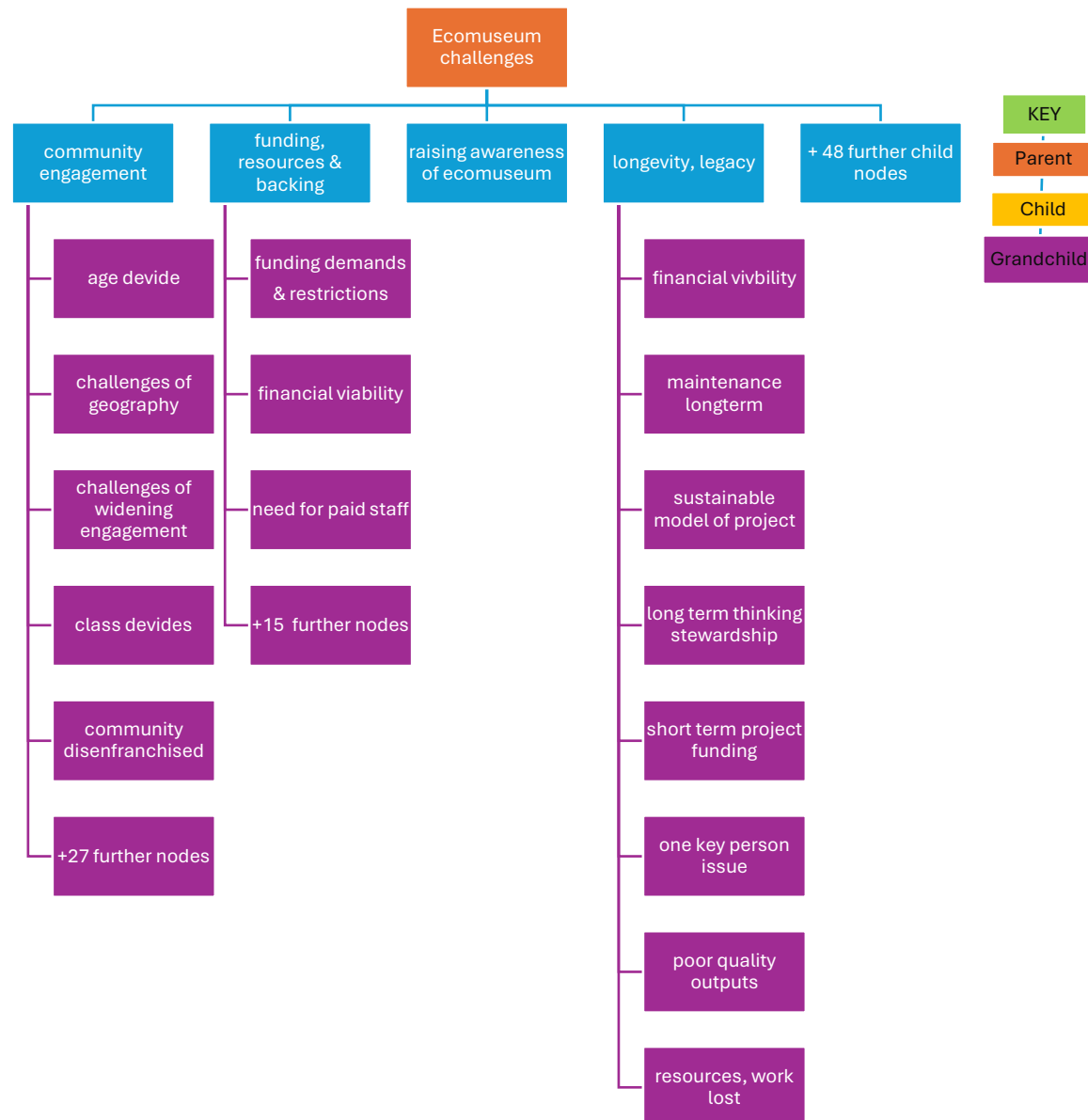
The drawings and contributions made here today will be analysed as part of my study and I will write them up in my research publications; these and the data will be publicly available for you to read if you are interested in my findings. This will also allow anyone else (including researchers, businesses, governments, charities, and the general public) to reuse.

Please ask me any questions here today or my contact details are victoria.mcmillan2018@my.ntu.ac.uk for any later queries.

***Your participation in this activity indicates you have read this consent information and agreed to participate in this anonymous activity.**

Appendix 3.9: Sample of Thematic coding categories and subcategories

Sample of parent, child and grandchild coding frame



Sample from coding book – colour key as above

Ecomuseum effect on individual
academic collaboration specialists
accessibility
achievement sense of
aspects not interested in or understand
balance of relationship
change life direction
changed perspective, connection or understanding of landscape
no
not really
yes
changed view of working
clash with partner interests perceived
community connection
changed view of people/individuals
community identity of self
created connection
likeminded people
sensitive to insider/outsider issues
understanding community better
valuing people's skills & knowledge
widened strengthened connections
community input imperative
connection to outsider
connection to wider area
global community
continuing community involvement
doing something innovative
doubt in the truth of stories
enhanced or created community-led ethos
environmental spillover
exclusion left out
feeling of privilege honour
feeling part of something
frustrations or disagreements
aspects projects that didn't work well
barrier to inclusion
different approaches
felt all take no give Predator
funding sharing
holistic understanding of place and culture
imbalance of time and effort

increase knowledge
increase respect
increased broadened skills experience
increased feeling responsibility
increased understanding of ecomuseum use and potential
inspire reconciliation today
inspired by ecomuseum approach for working
inspired collaborative working
intellectual stimulation
Interest amplified by others
invested personally in project's success
lack of support or acknowledgement
learning and experience
local knowledge importance
motivation and focus of interest or project
navigating relationships with leadership
no discernible benefit
offering ideas
opinion on success of project
other community activity anyway
pleasure enjoyment
pride
pursuing interests
self-identity strengthened
snowball of idea or interest
social or family time
solitary engagement
stress
team working
unsure of need for ecomuseum
work benefit and/or employment

Appendix 4: Chapter 6 Situated in Place quotes table

Chapter Section	Reference Number	Quote/s
6.1	The case study settings	
	6.1.1.3.1	I was one of the founding individuals of the Trust. I was on the Community Council at the time and the kind of ambitions we had for the community weren't going to be fulfilled through the Community Council. So we decided to set up a Community Trust.
6.2	Place-based	
6.2.1	Physical space	
	6.2.1.1	If you look at aerially, it's a lovely shape. It's like a very nice shape. And I think because we're encompassed by that that Hills around because we're like encompassed within that area with the history of like the Vale as such around it, it makes it, even more, a bit more special and niche, you know, it really does. (E36)
	6.2.1.2	Because the routes that we've been looking at, come into some quite complicated areas when it comes to local authority boundaries. So, like Healy Dell is like a jigsaw of local authority boundaries and private ownership. So it's that the Ecomuseum doesn't need to recognise those local authority boundaries. I mean, obviously, you do have to recognise and understand it in terms of ... it depends on where your funding is coming from. So for example, the recent work that we were doing with [a community art event] that's funded by Lancaster County Council. So they want to support activity on the Greenway that is in Lancashire. So crossing over into that border with Rochdale wouldn't work for those particular activities (E36)
	6.2.1.3	I think somewhere like Kalina is problematical, because it's just too vast. I don't think an ecomuseum covering several 1000 square miles works. You know, I don't see how it can. I mean, you've got it, you can drive around Alberta and visit all these various places. But you're where's the cohesion really? I don't think there's any real cohesion there (PD)
	6.2.1.4	One of the things that I don't understand about Flodden, - is the involvement of places like the Mary Rose or a stained-glass window somewhere in Lancashire. You know, because it seems to me to be taking it away from the place that actually

		<p>matters. I can see the links, I mean, they are historical links, and that is fine, but I don't know (PD)</p>
	6.2.1.5	<p>[our colleague] did come to us and ask us, where else could we connect to? And that's where we probably would have been brought up the Flodden bell up at Swinton and probably Flodden Wall in Edingburgh and also this - a Flodden [memorial] window in a church down -it's, it's Lancaster. - Because some of the some of the English army came from there. (A04)</p>
	6.2.1.6	<p>Ours, I think as I said before, is this sort of slightly disparate area, which, which is held together by things like the Cateran Trail. Which everybody knows about and understands about, but it's been going on for a long time. So it's just, it's, it's easy to see why, so far, it's been difficult. (D34)</p>
	6.2.1.7	<p>There are very different cultures in different parts of the [eco]museum. So down here, in - the southern end, were all very keen to develop the kind of visitor offer. Whereas some[where] like Glen Isla doesn't want visitors. Somewhere like Kirk Michael is actually, whilst it's just as the crow flies, it's not that far away, it's actually quite tricky to get to, you know. It's, it's not..., it's pretty windy roads. In a way, it's kind of closer to Pitlochry than it is to here. So there's a sort of different vibe up there. (D28)</p>
	6.2.1.8	<p>I think that's the problem - I think it's, I would agree with anybody who's told you that it's centred around Alyth. And if you don't go to the Alyth museum, you don't really know what it's about. It's just not something that, that people talk about. (D33)</p> <p>I don't know. I'm basing this on I don't know how well the ecomuseum is known about in like Blairegowrie and whatnot. Because I have friends in Blairegowrie and when I've mentioned the ecomuseum, [they're] like what's that? Whereas here in Alyth, it's just being kind of the hub. Everyone seems to know about it even if they don't know exactly what it's doing. They at least know the name. You know, the ecomuseum is supposed to be sort of the Angus region, Perth and Kinross and if they want it to be that way, then they need they need to have a presence in these places, not just an Alyth. I think that's probably what it is in my head. And partnership working is fine. But again, then it just looks like 'oh the Alyth people are here together', rather than like the ecomuseum people are here again. (D30)</p>
	6.2.1.9	<p>I think that if each area engaged in it, you know, - They would be able to do a bit more, they will feel a bit more personal, or a</p>

		bit more local and community rather than it just feels a bit.... I don't know.... (D33)
6.2.2		Place identity
	6.2.2.1	I suppose it's given me a chance to meet people that might not really engage with otherwise, - ... Yes, so meeting with and working alongside the group that I might not have in the past. So I'm must have done presentations with all the WI groups on the Peninsula. Which was, yes, I suppose it was in an insight into something that might not have come across otherwise. (C22)
	6.2.2.2	Totally. Yep. I mean, I, I mean, there's loads more I need to learn, but I mean I am beginning to know, all sorts of nooks and crannies. And, yeah, I mean, both in a physical sense, by travelling the geography in more intimate and kind of deep ways - deep in that I'm travelling more and more of it. And then in terms of, you know, what there is; learning more and more about, you know, the local, natural heritage on our hill; learning, you know, different shrubs and wild plants, and especially food plants, and all that kind of stuff, through to where all the archaeology, archaeological sites are the whole breadth of stuff. Absolutely. (D28)
	6.2.2.3	Well, if you grew up in an area and it's in your blood and your heart or whatever it is, That's it. It would take a lot to impress you after all the years have been involved in the area. I mean, in 2013 I was 70 years old, so [I've] been around for a bit. (A05)
	6.2.2.4	I've met some really really nice people, made friends with some, with some of these people learn[t] a lot more about the area, about what there is in the area. So and then I've passed that knowledge on to people who come. - I've learnt....I think it's fair to say I've learned a lot more being with - the ecomuseum than I knew before. (D26)
	6.2.2.5	I think the team, - as far as the [] Ecomuseum is concerned, we are buoyed up. We're not going to let this go - And it makes me proud to be part of that team at the age of 73. I'm still young at heart and I still you know... I've still got loads of ideas about what we could do, and what we should and what we should be doing. And I think the good thing is that everybody within the Ecomuseum Trust, they're always looking for new ideas to do things. (D26) I did feel well honoured to be part of that (A03)
	6.2.2.6	So I think the community trust, was an attempt to try and offshoot that you know, to, to try and bring some focus on the

		community and do what we can with the community. And if we could, you know so we could offer some economic development, some job creation, some pride in the community. These kind of basic things. Yeah. (B09)
	6.2.2.7	So that's great. But you need to build on that. It's no use having the best day you ever had when you were 10, you need to keep having these experiences. And that's where the hard graft comes in. You know, because if people have really meaningful, memorable, creative experiences that deepen their sense of who they are, and enhance the belonging to a place, and you know, you hope that they want to live here or return here, when they grow up, etc, after they've educated themselves or wherever. It needs to be continued, needs to keep going, it needs to be continuous (B13)
	6.2.2.8	I felt that was really important, because Berwick got quite rundown, and people used to go 'Oh Berwick, you know, is like, miserable place'. But the history of Berwick is just phenomenal- you know, that sort of sense of, there's more to this this place, it hasn't always been like this. People haven't always spoken about this place in this way. - I think that's starting to happen a wee bit now. But you know, and it's just, yeah, showing that there's things have been different the past and can be different in the future. We don't have to live in this way necessarily. It doesn't have to be like this. I think that's really important. And I think heritage can do that. to certain extent. (A07)
	6.2.2.9	<p>If there was more of these services it would be more sustainable, because people would have a bit more respect, because it would show that we, as a community cared about these sites. (B12)</p> <p>And, you know, if you know, a bit more about it, or interested in it, but also, I suppose, it's that, I guess it's that, that hope that, you know, that some of the local communities can almost be like, a bit of ambassadors for the area in a way. So if they know a lot about certain things about hill forts or fungi, or birds or whatever it is, that they would be able to kind of spread that knowledge within the community, but also with visitors as well, and that the visitors to the area will kind of feel that in some way, or be able to experience that in some way.(C18)</p>
6.3 Community-led – endogenous foundations and management		
6.3.0		
	6.3.0.1	Looking at this area, and I keep looking at that map and that's fine. You have got communities within communities. Where we are now, Glen Isla, that's a community in its own right. Black

		<p>Lunans, that's another community. Spittle. Enochdu, Kirk Michael, Bridge of Cally, Ballento, they are all communities, with with probably two or three things in mind, and that is keeping what they've got. They don't want to see change [...]. We need to do a little bit more to preserve our area. Then you come down to Alyth and it's probably safe to say there's probably maybe two, three communities within the village of Alyth. And then you've got Blairegowrie and Rattray and its the largest town in Perth and Kinross now, [...]. Communities in Blairegowrie..... Rattray is its own community, Blairegowrie is its own community. But within Blairgowrie, and within Rattray you've probably got three or four other communities. (D26)</p> <p>Well, yeah, that's yeah, that's a whole other, I mean, communities. I mean, even within Norham village, there'll be so many different communities. Yeah. Yeah, I think that that is difficult. (A07)</p>
6.3.1		Did the ecomuseum derive from the community?
6.3.1.1	<i>6.3.1.1</i>	<p>I mean, the whole concept we started about 12 years ago, and was basically to give a bit of impetus to the development of the cycle track through Whitworth [the Green Way]. And that, that I think, was the root of the contract that originally Whitworth Council gave to Mid Penines. But I suspect there are no people still at Mid Penine who remember that. But that's where it started. (E37)</p>
	<i>6.3.1.2</i>	<p>You know, [D28] and I went to meeting with VisitScotland and they to the very top to try and see if we could get people to understand what we were doing. And one of the people at the meeting said, Well, you know, I'm not sure that it is community-led, or something like that. And they said and "who is the community?" And I looked at him, I said, "Well, I think you'll find we are. We live, we live here." But I don't know whether people mean, the bulk of people who aren't affiliated to any kind of group or whether they actually normally mean, the Community Council or any other group. It is quite tricky. (D34)</p>
	<i>6.3.1.3</i>	<p>...it just takes someone to drive it. Because you need someone. With all these ecomuseums and community museums, you've got to have someone who's going to, you know if you like, people need to drive it. Things don't work...., well, it's like any organisation, isn't it? I mean, you've got to have someone who's going to take a lead and push things forward and say, Look, there's huge potential here. How about, you know, this is what we can do. If you all think it's a good idea. (PD)</p>

	6.3.1.4	<p>I think that the way that things work, when you're setting something up, is that in order to move it forward, quickly, it takes a small number of people all facing in the same direction and getting things done. And one of the, just in general terms, one of the organisational behaviour, things that is common to every new venture, is that comes a moment when people feel like they're not included. that's just, that's just the way it works. And that's when you start your second layer of communication to make people feel included. But you can't get a lot done quickly on limited resource if everything's done by committee. So personally, I think [D28] has threaded that needle very well. (D31)</p>
	6.3.1.5	<p>Really, what was extraordinary is to find the number of people - To find the number of people coming forward, who said, 'we'd like to do something, we'd like to play our part. We'd like to, you know, in our community, we'd like to do this. We'd like to do that. What about this? What about?' And they all felt, I think, that this was a real moment in history that was happening on their watch. And they wanted to do something about. It was fantastic to see, these people coming out of nowhere. church groups, Women's Institute, History Society, rock concert. It blew us away, completely blew us away. Some of them have come and gone. Some of them are still around. (A01)</p>
	6.3.1.6	<p>Whitworth is made up of four areas, it's like Shawforth, Facit, Whitworth and Healey you know, it covers all the areas, you have a bit of Britannia thrown in as well. So, it were a lot of talk around what, what we think people might be interested in, what sort of things need sprucing up and we were trying to link everything to the five gateways of as wellbeing, so taking notice of the world around you, keep learning, be active you know, that's around the mental [health] side of things. So that's how they came up with the ideas to rejuvenate the cycle paths, clear the footpaths, make some footpath, you know like mapping.</p> <p>.... it were like the biggest bid I've ever seen in my life, [...]. So the idea was you see, that collectively because everyone had different.. because at the time I was at the school as well, so we had an educational investment, interest into it, that we'd all input our own bits and try and carry them projects forward as such and implement or help more on them. So when it originally got in it, would have had input from quite a lot people on it as well. So we knew it would work, because sometimes when they send bids off they're dead unrealistic because they've not consulted people or don't know the area and things like that (E36)</p>

	6.3.1.7	<p>It's a bottom-up approach basically, so we've got the communities feeding into the seven sites, and then seven sites then are giving us the information that's then put into this cauldron, or portal and then it's gone 'phefffft' and it's then spread out.</p> <p>I think it has to come from... If it doesn't come from the community and if the community don't want it, there's no point.</p> <p>Mainly again, it's just through that having the partners acting as a hub. So they will be working closely with their local communities or schools blah blah blah, so their voice is being heard via that and we don't normally have people coming to us, individuals coming to us directly, it's always via a site. So yeah, and again this is going - it's referring to that bottom-up approach of content coming from the community and then fed up through the funnel to the [ecomuseum] (C23)</p>
	6.3.1.8	<p>One of the things was, well, who were we? How did we get these jobs? You know, like, really, really suspicious, you know? And then, of course, it was, well, why, why was I given the job when I don't even live here? Why wasn't somebody else. - Are we going to be another one of these projects that comes and goes, you know, we're just, we're getting paid. They're not. (C25)</p>
	6.3.1.9	<p>I think we arrived at a time where the locals were finally getting fed up with feeling like guinea pigs and getting nothing back. And so for - now, I have never worked for a college before, I'd never worked for UCC, I've never worked for any academic body. But I feel like I felt my first six months apologising to everybody, on behalf of academia for ever having done anything wrong. And I think it's really important. [..]</p> <p>I think we were so the opposite, that that's why we almost didn't work for a while, because we were going in going, what do you want us to do? We're not even going to start thinking about it until you tell us what you want. And of course, they didn't tell us. So like, we were like six months going.. 'what will we research?' You know, well, like, 'what is it they actually want to know?'. And it took them a while to get used to us. You know, and of course, because it was pandemic, we couldn't have any meetings. So it was just an awful lot of phone calls. Yeah. Phone calls, and then accidentally meeting outside a coffee shop and going for a walk on the beach with a coffee. Like, we weren't allowed to do it any other way, You know, so it was very slow going (C25)</p>
6.3.2		Is there community governance and management?

6.3.2.1		Skye
	6.3.2.1.1	<p>there are really obvious connections between our projects as a community trust and the ecomuseum as an idea and how it works in practice so yeah they are kind of one and the same. (B08)</p> <p>You know, the formality of it at a meeting is that they are separate, separate areas that you deal with. But in reality, there is a fair degree of overlap. - there's a very clear link there. (B09)</p>
	6.3.2.1.2	<p>you know, because their members have changed fairly regularly, [they] don't have that kind of continuity going on, going forward, that the Trust does offer.(B09)</p>
	6.3.2.1.3	<p>But we definitely need to sort of get new... new members. – It is [having] time to to do it. You see, I'm retired. So, you know, I can spare quite a bit of time. And I do spend a lot of time on things despite the fact that I volunteer. But I do get criticised by my wife for spending so much time on something I get nothing for. You now (laughs). –</p> <p>one of the things I find difficult is erm.... is the board really should have a broader base of members. At the moment, it's largely male. We're all a certain age. We need more women. We need younger, younger members. And they're difficult to get. The practicalities of meeting in the evening, when a mother might be putting her children to bed. It makes life difficult, you know, to get people interested. (B09)</p>
	6.3.2.1.4	<p>You have to twist people's arms sometimes. I was in my 30s, when we started. And I don't really see very many around in that age group, who would be even remotely interested. They're happy to use what the trust provides. But they're not really prepared to put their own time in to it. (B09)</p>
	6.3.2.1.5	<p>They struggled to get directors. Which is interesting in itself.</p> <p>And I think there are even having been on the board some years, I've stood back and wondered why we struggled to get directors, and we struggled to recruit people. And I think I'm starting to see the reasons for that. And they're very much about personalities that are on it [the Trust]. Because there's lots of people in the village that would have the time to be able to commit to it. But I think as you often get with these sorts of things, a lot of its personality driven.</p> <p>Everyone's got different priorities in life. And some people just might not have the experience or the confidence to want to go on board. But I do think sometimes people would maybe look at the board and see that it's made up of 99% people that have</p>

		lived there all their lives and probably think, I'm not sure that's for me then. (B10)
	6.3.2.1.6	I don't speak Gaelic. I would dearly like to speak Gaelic. But I have to tried to learn and I do struggle with it. I mean i've got a couple of words, but I struggle with it. I have really mixed views about it. Because because I like it. I understand the importance of it in the culture, and the heritage of the place. I just think sometimes. This might sound a bit strange. I think they're slightly insensitive with it. I'll get emails which are [only] in Gaelic about the trust. And the ecomuseum stuff, particularly. They put a lot of posts [only] in Gaelic on Facebook about the ecomuseum. Which I'm not being difficult about, but I'd like to know what...., I'd like to read them, and I can't and I just think it's difficult, isn't it? (sighs) It's like a British person living in France and moaning that all the signs are in French. You know, I'm very conscious of that. But I think given the dynamic of the population here, they've got to be a bit more sensitive to that. Because I'm really interested and passionate about the history of this place and the culture. But the reality is, I don't speak Gaelic, you know. (B10)
	6.3.2.1.7	Well, all the ... the activities are generally directly linked to members of the Board (B09) But in the main, the individuals on the Board have interests that they simply... if there are any activities going on, their interests focus on that activity and they lead the activity. But as was mentioned, [B14], and archaeology is, is a perfect example of that. And [B13] is another one who... I don't know if you have met [B13]... she has a deep interest in heritage here and that has influenced a lot of the work we've done. (B09) One of our directors, [B14], he's sort of the person who discovered the most fossils and dinosaur remains of anyone in Scotland anyway, so he's quite unique in his knowledge base. (B08)
	6.3.2.1.8	We've been fortunate on the trust to have a lot of people that are very knowledgeable about some things that I have no knowledge about, you know, so I've told you what my background is. So I mean, I have no knowledge of, you know, tapping into third sector finances and that kind of, all that kind of stuff which I find incredibly tedious. But there are people that were lucky enough to have on the trust have got that knowledge. (B10)
	6.3.2.1.9	Its one of the, it's the nature of the beast and the people doing a lot, the board of the trust have a really good understanding of what they need to be doing and keep improving , and

		<p>sometimes they get criticised for you know for what's going on, but then your like – there is criticism of six really nice affordable homes going into the local area owned by the [Trust], or whatever but six families are going to be living for probably the rest of their time. So you can be open to criticism from other parts of the community. But those who do the most [as in doers] are the ones who take most of the criticism aren't they,. The people who don't do anything tend to give it out. (B08)</p>
	6.3.2.1.10	<p>There are a few..... well, the harbour development has a subgroup of non-Board individuals, which is quite a large group. And they're typically users of the existing slipway. So they have a direct interest in seeing the project, you know, come to fruition. And so they're represent a significant, you know, group in the community - slip-way users, they're almost entirely local people, which is, you know, is a good thing. So they're seen as you know, typical users, you know. And they're are a sizable group that don't have any direct connection with the board. (B09)</p>
6.3.2.2		SVR
	6.3.2.2.1	<p>There were seven of us, more or less all was on it from the beginning. So there was [E37] from the museum, [P.M.] who's part of the museum as well. There was [M.B.] and [he] is massively involved with Whitworth swimming club and oversees all that. But [he] is a prolific Rambler of Whitworth and a photographer, - he set up the 'Make Whitworth a Great Place', I think he helped set that up. So he is forever putting in his little rambles in and you know, encouraging people to go on walks and find these little hidden treasures and stuff. So [he] was in, there was [M], the town clerk from the town council. So there was there was somebody... we always have two people from Lancaster County Highway and things because we're doing things with bridleways because we're doing things with cycle paths and all that, they were never the same people, but they were always people from up there and then a couple of local town councillors would come in and out as and when. And there was [D.C.] sometimes, the Leisure and Tourism Committee chairperson. Because obviously the leisure and tourism do things like the Rush Cart, they do things like St. George's [] parade and you know things so everybody who was involved in it are all people who are part of the community. (E36)</p>
	6.3.2.2.2	<p>It's very, Spodden Valley, it's very confusing sometimes that they've not sort of been more defining what the, the role, the you know, the roles are. I mean, they came here and they did erm, asked for the accommodation and had a couple of meetings. And [E38] came to the meetings. And, and then they</p>

		<p>seem to just go and [E38] said, he just thought he was very disappointed. Very disappointed. There was no follow-up. You were just left a bit high and dry. You know, and erm So it was a shame really, they'd got, people were left disappointed and high and dry and thinking, 'well what was that about?' you know? (E39)</p>
	6.3.2.2.3	<p>So, yeah, so, what I think we need to do is organise a meeting physically for us all to be able to get together again. And I think what I need to do is invite everyone who was originally on the steering group. I think the issue that I've got, is that then there's going to be a new town clerk, and that role is quite integral to Spodden Valley and how it develops, you know, in the community. So what I'm going to do is suggest [to the old clerk] that I organise that for when their new town clerk is in place. We can offer it like as a sort of introduction if [the old clerk] can come along as well, I think that'd be great. So, kind of have this almost handover with the new town clerk. I think what would be good is to extend it, that group out now and to include people like Rooley Moor Forum and the Healy Dell tearooms. And potentially somebody [] from the Commoners Association, because I think, you know, they're interested. So, yeah, that is what I think we need to do. So as soon as that town clerks in place, we can get that up and running again.</p> <p>[The community connector] she sent a message on Instagram, she put on the Spodden Valley be great to get this Spodden Valley Revealed steering group back up and running. And then she tagged in []. And I replied, and I put 'Definitely up for that' And she put 'Yay [E35], let's get it regrouped.' So somebody like [her] actually will be brilliant and really key in throwing some enthusiasm at it, I think (E36)</p>
6.3.2.3		Flodden
	6.3.2.3.1	<p>And we didn't really want to be anything, [my neighbour] and I did not want to be anything other than sort of facilitators. We didn't want to do much ourselves. We've got busy lives. So we appointed a project admin officer, which was paid for, by Heritage (HLF) and the PA. We thought, [my neighbour] and I felt we had to have a PA to us, rather than just through the project officer, initially. And we were, you know, it worked very well. You know, we did not want to have anything really much to do with it ourselves, other than to just be the facilitators. (A01)</p>
	6.3.2.3.2	<p>we have wound it down and we have annual meetings, [fellow director] and I. We go through the accounts, we get a few donations still every year, we pay the accountant to do the accounts, we pay something for the website and that's about it. So we have a cup of coffee or chat. And that's that's what</p>

		you go back to Peter, Peter Davis. You know the cup of coffee and the chat thing. He was right there. Yes. Such a brilliant statement. And that's that's what you go back to Peter, Peter Davis, you know the cup of coffee and the chat thing. (A01)
6.3.2.4		Ecoamgueddfa
	6.3.2.4.1	when first meeting, when they all, everyone got together, and we all said what we were doing. It was just giving a report, it wasn't acted on at all. There was no linked up thinking to it, and even if they just had every quarter, say, a meeting where people do begin to share. Just 'this is what we're doing' ta da. And they say, 'Oh, this is what the ecomuseum is doing' ta da. Well, that could be sort of 'We could do this together. We could do this together' and they have a programme of work to get it done. Because like these walks and packs - they've been mentioned, but we don't know what's happening. It's like this, this [archaeology] festival this week was talked about, but there's no further development in it. (C15)
	6.3.2.4.2	<p>Well signposting. I think they are doing excellent work in the walks that they're creating at the moment, nature walks and... And they are, they, it needs to get, be filtered down to us though, as well. I know that [BP] has been taking some fantastic photos that they've got these walks they're going to create, but it needs to get back to us first to tell the public as well, and thats the link - that they can't just do it all and put it all up online, it needs to be spoken and so forth. (C15)</p> <p>There is missed potential. Quite often people have come here and 'where can we go for a walk now?' I can tell them but, if we could say well look this is what ecoamgueddfa is doing. So its work in progress there, definitely. (C15)</p> <p>Well the potential is there! And they are all lovely people. Maybe they're all busy people, but we've got to make time to make this work. (C15)</p>
	6.3.2.4.3	There's one thing that really distances us I think, is that it's university lead, which is in Bangor. I think if one of the partners had the leadership and the staff here, it might pull us together a bit more. I know [C23] lives locally, and [C21] as well, but they're Bangor first aren't they? Thats the impression I been given here. I don't know if other members feel the same way. Just an idea. But I would like to see it work. I would like to see more co-operation. (C15)
	6.3.2.4.4	Yeah, I think, again, I think it comes back to, I think we need to be going back and kind of meeting more regularly, because I think that's what, that's what that's, having more contact time

		between the sites, that's where conversations like that come, like with Ecoamgueddfa, (C18)
	6.3.2.4.5	I think everyone knows locally, on Llyn, we kind of, within the partnership, and within the different organisations, we all kind of know, like, and we're quite maybe [the] Trust more so than others. We're, we're kind of used to being quite outward facing like thinking like, we want to work with the community or with the school or with a partner or something, whereas other smaller organisations, maybe they look, they don't automatically, necessarily look outward so much. (C18)
	6.3.2.4.6	<p>I suppose with the other sites, it's been, it's quite, the level of involvement from site seems quite varied from very involved to not really involved at all. There's the Felin Uchaf site, which we haven't, I have not worked with this, this last year and a half since I've been back after furlough.</p> <p>in terms of like attending any of the meetings, and it's been, that's, that's the point of the ecomuseum I suppose, you can be as involved or not involved as you choose. So yeah, for me, it's it's varied really, depending on property on the people. I wouldn't say....., it's not the same across the board, where accessing the resources or working alongside them is equal. Throughout it, there's quite a bit of it's very different from very strong to not strong at all. (C22)</p>
6.3.2.5		Cateran
	6.3.2.5.1	We haven't..., we haven't had a chance to sit down as directors and discuss the future direction. [D28]'s been so busy, and sometimes, if you're so busy, you're caught up in the minutiae doing stuff. And I'm sure she has got a clear idea of where we're going. But we need to..., we need to sit down and talk about it. Because that... that is a, I see as a critical risk of us, of the whole thing falling apart quite honestly. But that's the status. (D27)
	6.3.2.5.2	I mean everyone talks about collaboration and partnership. And it is very important. But nobody understands how much human resource that requires to do well. You know, there's, there are far too many assumptions about..... Yeah. (wry laughing) I've been published on collaboration in the past and I, and nothing much has moved on. Really, people still think you just talk about it and it'll happen, when it doesn't. As I said to you yesterday, that assumption that most institutions continue to have, is that communities will do everything for nothing. And that they have boundless time to contribute to their paid projects, which they've got loads of money for, sitting on salaries with, you know, paid holidays and paid pensions.

		<p>And you know, they have, they don't even bother to ask the question.</p> <p>- In Alyth [alone] there are something like, somewhere between 40 and 50 different community groups, ranging in different sizes, and absolutely, completely different focuses. If you are being strategic about that, then you would be going off and talking to each of them and finding out how they might want to go engage. But again, that's a kind of massive resource issue. So all we can do is is put ourselves about, and see what comes out of that. (C28)</p>
	6.3.2.5.3	<p>I think, though, I would describe that more is if I call them up and said, Do you fancy getting involved in this? They're more likely to say yes. Rather than, you know, them stepping forward. I mean, you know, I'm sure it's the same in your community. But most people are incredibly busy. And they don't have acres of time to, to do stuff. (D28)</p>
	6.3.2.5.4	<p>Because most of us who are volunteering are already involved in three or four projects. And so that the bias of volunteerism will present itself, to some degree in what actually gets done. But we are content that it has not been allowed to reign supreme in the list of what could be done. We, and the recruitment process for leading on these projects will take a year. for some of them and some of them won't get done. because there just aren't going to be enough people who really do it. (D31)</p>
	6.3.2.5.5	<p>there's only about 200 people in the whole Glenn, and, you know, 99% of them don't do anything, and most people have only got so much capacity for volunteering. So, it'd be really interesting to see how you've, what you find other people are doing and how they overcome some of that. (D34)</p>

Appendix 4.1: Fresque-Baxter & Armitage (2012) 13

subdimensions of place identity

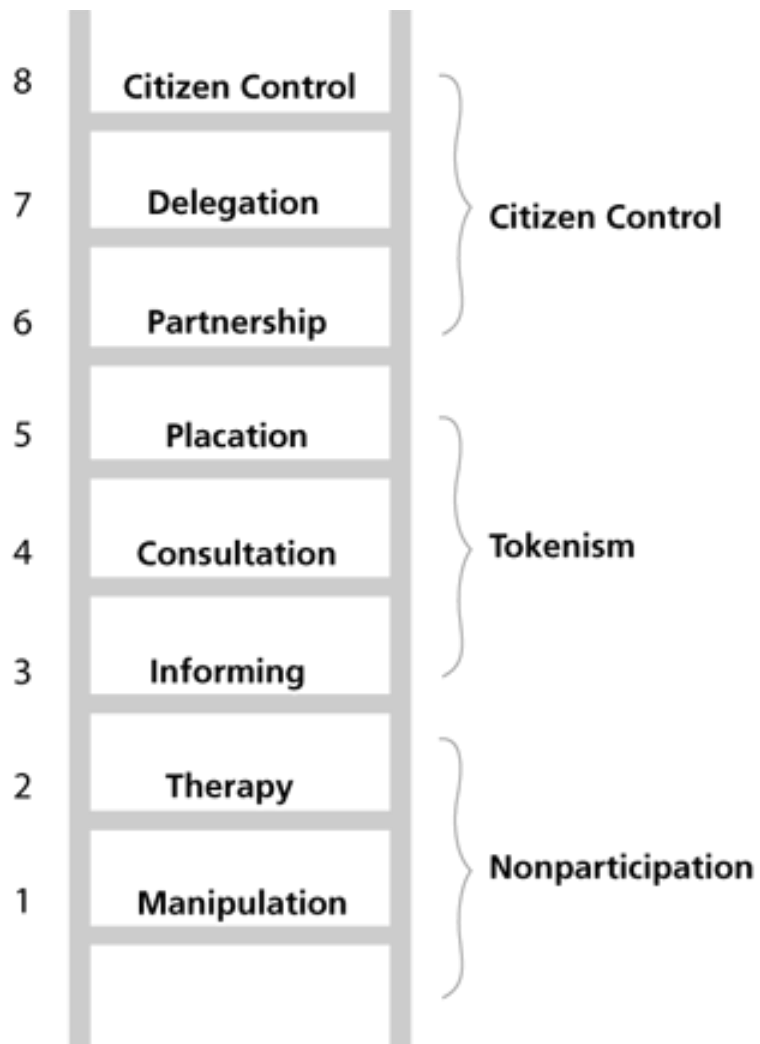
Subdimension	Operational Definition
Emotional Attachment (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be both positive or negative • Attachment to specific places or features of place • Relationship to a place leads to emotional bonding with that place • Place as a repository for emotions • The degree of attachment will vary from person to person • Related to satisfaction, can result in fostering creativity, providing security and serenity
Environmental skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to use a specific place to meet the needs and desires of the individual that is congruent with how they define that place as important to their self-understanding • In part defines the level of attachment to a place and to which the place defines part of one's understanding of themselves • Consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Competence: is the ability to use and behave within an environment based on one's understanding of that environment (how to navigate physical features or interact with other people in a place) ◦ Understanding: represents awareness of the environment, ability to read environmental cues in the landscape and interpret these, the ability to recognize change and what this means to the individual and understanding of how to change individual or group behaviour as necessary to the environment in question ◦ Control: represents actual skills or ability to change the behaviour of oneself or others, or to change the actual setting
Self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection of a person's opinion of their own self-worth • Being associated with a certain place can give a person feelings of self-worth and belonging • Certain environments support self-esteem
Self-efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual's perception of their own ability to undertake certain tasks and meet particular goals • An environment that meets the needs of an individual using it can contribute to positive feelings of self-efficacy • Understanding of environment is important for daily activity • When an environment is unmanageable, self-efficacy is threatened
Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The desire to preserve continuity of the self-concept' • Places remain continuous and provide same attributes and meet certain needs, giving continuity to identity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be subdivided into place-referent continuity and place-congruent continuity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Place-referent continuity: places act as references and maintenance of a link to that place provides a sense of continuity to their identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exists at both individual and group levels - Importance of maintaining control over changes to continuity ◦ Place-congruent continuity: attachment and maintenance of 'characteristics' of places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of types of features - These can be transferred from place to place and carried with a person
Distinctiveness/uniqueness	<p>Exists in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place itself is distinct from other places and is valued for this purpose • Being from a specific place creates a distinct identity that individuals use in distinguishing self from others, there is a sense of uniqueness in being from that place and a desire to maintain this
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel safe and secure in a place, whether physically, emotionally or psychologically • Feelings of being able to be oneself and feeling able to carry out everyday activities free from (relative) harm and risk (of varying types) • Having freedom to express oneself • Relationships to place are an important source of security
Sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel that they belong to and/or in a place • A sense of 'insideness', can exist in varying degrees • Can also reflect power relationships, through defining/determining who belongs in a place and who does not
Rootedness (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An unself-conscious state of being at home in a place • Reflects a deep attachment to place • Results from living in one place for long-term periods • Feeling at home, secure, comfortable in one particular place • Concept of 'existential insideness', of belonging to and identifying completely with a place • A mood or feeling • People may feel homesickness or grief when away or relocated from a home place
Familiarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Result of daily experiences in-place • Knowing and being known in a place • Familiarity can be part of existential insideness, and can shape environmental understanding (ties to the concept of environmental skills above)
Social connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places are settings where social activities take place, particular social roles are also carried out in-place(s) • Membership to a social group may be defined by use of/residence in a particular place, may also serve to define who does not belong in-place

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to others in-place can help strengthen relationship/attachment to that place • Can foster sense of community • Social identity can be communicated through place(s) • We experience the social meanings of places held by others, these function to shape reality • There is no physical environment that is not also a social environment
Commitment to place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tied to future perceptions, expectations, and goals • Wanting to stay in a particular place • Important for identity stability • Strong place attachment is often linked to being willing to take action to protect place, low satisfaction with place conditions also influence this type of behaviour, and is often coupled with strong place attachment
Aesthetic/experiential value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects individual preferences • Valuing qualities of a place • People value places for certain aesthetic components (e.g., beauty, nature, architectural structure) and experiences (e.g., quiet, social activities, pain/pleasure, freedom of expression)

Table of effective dimensions of place identity taken from (Fresque-Baxter & Armitage, 2012) (1) Emotional connection to place is often considered to be one of the defining aspects of person-place relationships. Fresque-Baxter & Armitage therefore adopt this as the overarching construct of place identity. All of the other constructs influence the degree of emotional attachment to a place an individual will have. (2) As place attachment and rootedness are intimately linked, Fresque-Baxter & Armitage include rootedness as a place identity construct, given the view adopted of their paper that attachment is a key part of place identity development.

Appendix 4.2: Arnstein's Ladder of Participation 1969



After (Arnstein, 1969)

Appendix 5: Chapter 7 Supporting community; wider community inclusion, learning and collaboration quotes

Section No.	Reference No	Quote
7.1. Community Including		
How does the ecomuseum benefit the local community?		
	7.1.1.1	<p>You know, somebody like the art gallery in Llanbedrog, because I had an office there for a very long time. So when they were looking at the coast path around Llyn, we put a lot of pressure for that path to come past the gallery. So then overnight, they had 30,000 people on foot going past every year extra, who were looking for different kinds of facilities. But they didn't have cars, so they weren't taking up space on the carpark. They weren't going to stay very long. And, you know, they [the gallery] were saying, 'Well, how are we going to sell something [to] these people, you know, what are they going to buy off us?' And I said, Well, you know, nobody walks out of here with a picture under their arm, you just, if they want to buy your picture, you just make sure that it's delivered to their house when they're home. Or if they just want a pencil or a rubber they can still buy that in the shop. But most of them are just want to, they just want a toilet and they will they want a coffee and a cup of tea or a cake. So you know that 30,000 times £5, which they'll spend, it's a lot of money. So, and that's what's happened really, you know. It's just changed how they think about people and opening up new markets. (C21)</p>
	7.1.1.2	<p>I think at least the ecomuseum sites are, although they used to say they were, you know, serving community and blah, blah, blah. I think now there's a shift to understanding what that means. So somewhere like the art gallery, they stopped, they used to charge a fee to go in and they stopped. And they're making more money because they don't. And that's they're not getting public funding. But the amount of people going through that place is phenomenal. Because you can just walk in there, use it as, in whatever capacity you want to. And I think that's, that gives the person that power then, because they use it as they want to use it. (C21)</p> <p>But a lots of families, lots of [local] girls, okay, and men, with young children who aren't working, they'll go there during the week, meet their friends, but before they'd just think that's a tourist attraction. I'm not going there.</p> <p>So local people see these as facilities that they've they can utilise for their leisure needs as well. I think that's what, you know, that's</p>

		what the ecomuseum should be doing. It's, it's, it's giving back to the communities as well, you know (C21)
	7.1.1.3	<p>And what was, when we started, what was happening was all these people who were on holiday, we're just running down and taking up the slots. And we were just saying to everybody (the local community), look, there's just, these people can do this anyway, because there's a surf school at Hell's Mouth, if you want to do it, you have to put your name down and then take advantage of this. So what we did following year, we said, well, using social media, we were just putting it out, you know, two weeks before, if you want to do a taster session on surfing, sign up today. And then turn up on the day, and then you'll have the slots. And it was quite weird because all those people who were on holiday, came back the year after. And they were there going 'We want to do that'. And you're going well, yes, you can. These people are here every day through the summer and it's 20 quid, and they go</p> <p>But you know, but a lot of what's happened after that we've got a surf club. There's about 80 children who come to the surf club on a Tuesday night at Hell's Mouth. So if you Google it, you'll see it. So then they taught them how to surf from a young age, but they also do lifesaving courses and first aid. So then they a lot of them get jobs as lifeguards and so on in the area. So, and they have an understanding of the coastal environments that they wouldn't have otherwise. So you just, you can just influence little things, and it has a big knock on for the community. Because historically, surfing, you know, it'd be a lot of people who they wanted to live a certain style of life. They moved down here, and they did have jobs, but they would be in the water a lot of the time. But now you see lots of local kids who are into surfing because they've, they've got the bug, you know? And it's really cheap. A board and the wetsuit and that's about it. And then, obviously, you have that wider understanding of water quality, rubbish on the beaches, you know, it just changes people's perspective of where they live and respecting that environment. (C21)</p>
	7.1.1.4	<p>everything that we did, like, most of what we did, could massively benefit the museum, you know, like we could have formed in everything to do with the museum and centrally focus on that. And [E37] were very adamant of like, well actually we can link it here and here and here, and we don't have to do that here, we can do it there instead (E36)</p>
	7.1.1.5	<p>Like, and that's why that's why we're everything we do, we try and make sure that we either we document it in some way, either through a report or a blog or a video. So that all the things that we're researching, become open source, and then the locals can use it for whatever they want to use it for. It could be just a case of out of personal interest, or it could be like an accommodation provider, like a b&b who loves walking and just wants to know,</p>

		more information to be able to tell the people staying with them or you know, if they're walking leaders or something like that (C25)
	7.1.1.6	like having a really nice path network has been decided by the community topics, the routes and all that, there has been a huge level of engagement with it, so they go out and use it and they get a lot of health benefits from it. (B08)
	7.1.1.7	I think it does. I think a lot of local people don't. One of the things I would say is that I've I've heard a lot of criticism of the Trust. Because a lot of local people think all the work is for visitors. And you say, Well, where does it say on the footpath this is only for visitors? You know, it's as much for the lady who's lived here all her life, walking the dog as it is for a guy who's coming from Belgium tomorrow. So I don't know what's driving that, what's the root of that? But um, yeah, that's an interesting.... People seem to think a lot of stuff being done, not for their benefit, but the benefit of people who are visiting here. And of course, it isn't, really, it isn't. (B10)
	7.1.1.8	People who live in big cities and go to the art galleries, museums, eat out etc are not tourists but are part of the visitor/leisure economy of that city. All of the activities that the individual sites put on through the year are open to all, and are attended by local people and visitors. The ecomuseum hubs offer leisure, cultural, heritage and health related activities that would not have been there 10 years ago. (C21 follow up questions)
7.1.2		Is there community participation in a democratic manner? How?
	7.1.2.1	In terms of this though as a project we've had different phases with had really high levels of community involvement, you could argue every school child in the primary school was involved in the decision making to with the initial curation of what the ecomuseum would do and there were about 18 adults involved with that community level of curation as well but that is, sorry that is and also on top of that 8 members of our board also maybe half a dozen members of the community council, so there has been a lot of engagement on a volunteer level with the project but I would say that beyond our board of 8, there hasn't been that continuation of of they've been involved from the start to the finish, they have different phases of been really highly involved but this is partly to do with the fact that the funding was to do with creating lots of smaller scale individual projects, and some of them have been quite self-sustaining and other have been quite short term and a little community events here and there. (B08)
	7.1.2.2	I think the extraordinary thing about the Flodden venture was it embraced representatives of English heritage of Historic Scotland,

		big, big players, and tiny little players like the parish council at Branxton or the parish council of Bolton further south. Who would never find themselves sitting around a table with representatives of [these big organisations] and English Heritage and people had to listen. (A01)
	7.1.2.3	You know it's the little things like the horses, where did they all come from, or where that initial involvement took you to find out more and I think that's the really valuable bit of it and we've used that concept and how we developed that and continued in the [P] landscape partnership project. They also produced a book but their inspiration was that [Flodden] book to do it, to do it as contributions from different people and from different viewpoints. (A02)
	7.1.2.4	<p>(A04) - I would say the community doesn't fit in with it at all. - The general people at large. I think it will appeal to 5% of the population. As [A05] would say that's my opinion. I don't know.</p> <p>(A05) - I wouldn't characterise it in percentage terms of what it does. It wouldn't matter what you do. There's a museum in Coldstream, in the Market Square. Where the [Coldstream] Guards headquarters was, a nice lovely little museum. I'd lay odds that 3/4's of the town have never been near it. So it doesn't really matter.</p> <p>(A05) - It's as good a museum [the ecomuseum] in many ways as a walled building with artefacts in it. So it's only of interest to those people who are interested. I'm not sure that because it's an ecomuseum, that it creates any more interest than a building with stuff in it. It's just a fact of life. People switch off as soon as you save the word history, You know, you're not going to get everybody, as you know yourself, a lot of people are not the slightest bit interested in history.</p>
	7.1.2.5	<p>it has to happen in a kind of a quiet way because of, but you know, the whole point of the Archaeology Festival, so we, we would pay those locations to host events as well. So yeah.</p> <p>We've helped the community group in [a village], what they've done is the QR codes around the village. I don't know if you spoke to (C17), so they've got QR codes around the village. They just wanted to do this guided walk. So they just, they were asking us for some advice and support and we said, yeah, we'll help you with that. And they got funding through the lottery.</p> <p>But we're able to, to signpost people to where they can get funding as well. So you have local funding through the AONB funds, the Sustainable Development Fund, which they have, I don't know, 60, 70,000 pounds a year, which they hand out to local groups. So,</p>

		<p>yeah, we kind of know all those people like that as well. So you can very quickly find what's needed and point them in the direction and then they'll have money. I think that's really valuable, because people spend a lot of time chasing, especially if you're not experienced in that kinda line work. (C21)</p>
	7.1.2.6	<p>And then whatever happens after LIVE, it doesn't matter if there's nobody around, you can still share that information on Facebook or whatever. So as separate organisations, but also as a as one as well.</p> <p>I don't think the appetite is within the wider network of locations to have anything more formal.</p> <p>But I think you have to have a very clear exit strategy for projects as well. And as, as it stands at the moment, the exit strategy is those seven sites are there. And they can continue to push themselves, as individuals or to work collectively without much investments of time or money, if they want to.</p> <p>Because I've, you know, I've seen other areas just develop really complex projects, and then it just, the project officer moves on and then it just goes [folds], and 'oh, that was really good'. And then five years later, they say oh, let's try and do the same as what we were doing before. Well, that's not, that's not being sustainability, or regenerative. People get a bit disenchanted as well, don't they then. They think, well, it doesn't last, so what's the point of us putting in the effort? I mean, for local people as well.</p> <p>Yes, So thats...., the ecomuseum is just part of a suite of projects that we have on the peninsula, which are inter-tied to each other, which gives you that continuation. And that's the most important thing (C21)</p>
	7.1.2.7	<p>Again, in a in a small way, we're trying to do that. So part of the 'Travel for all our tomorrow's' project, which was around active travel for leisure, where these new cycling itineraries came [in], we did a lot of evaluation with all sorts of different kinds of people from young people to old people and visitors and local people, asking them how difficult or easy it was for them to cycle around. And we've gotten the most enormous amount of information from people about what they were concerned about, mostly around safety. And actually mostly around for young people needing to have more lessons to cycle well. That's one immediate example of that. (D28)</p>
	7.1.2.8	<p>... there has been a lot of engagement on a volunteer level with the project but I would say that beyond our board of 8, there hasn't been that continuation of they've been involved from the start to the finish. They have different phases of been really highly involved. But this is partly to do with the fact that the funding was</p>

		to do with creating lots of smaller-scale individual projects, and some of them have been quite self-sustaining and other have been quite short term and a little community events here and there (B08)
7.13		Do they strive to be inclusive and plural?
	7.1.3.1	So I think it's usually the same kind of like few people that like to get involved in this sort of community engagement. So it might not be attracting all of the like, difference. different community members, or residents. It might just be a select few that have the time or motivation to go and influence the this sort of project. So other people might not have like the mobility or the time or okay, even family responsibilities, so like, a child or anything to go to these sort of meetings. So their advices might not be heard. (B12)
	7.1.3.2	<p>I mean, you've probably noticed that Whitworth is like 99% White British, you know and stuff. And we were really concerned at one point that weren't bringing in any other culture or heritage's into Whitworth, you know, and because Whitworth has got very deep seated like Christian roots, you know, it's all Church of England, very Christian there isn't even really much like Catholic things what are recognised you know, or what go on (E36)</p> <p>... because I'm massively into youth voice and making sure they have a say in what goes on. Because you can't just say we're going to put this here and they're going to love it. - Because I always find that people just presume things about young people as well, they just presume this is what they'd like, presume that would be good, you know. So yeah, that would would be really cool, get a like a little [youth] council, a little forum going on. (E36)</p> <p>It's a shame really, because, you know, because [the Travellers'] have some of the most interesting people you can ever meet. And again, it's I think sometimes you really need to break down them stereotypical barriers that there is, and that fear again, you know, that people have. (E36)</p>
	7.1.3.3	<p>Yes. And I think that's that's also important, because at the moment, the way I sort of view ecomuseum, it sounds sort of quite posh. Quite exclusive. And it's getting away from that. I'd really like to get away from that, if it was humanly possible. - take it down to the park or some other kids playground or whatever. Just stick a sign up the week before. You know, "cancelled if pouring with rain". But you know, it's gonna happen if, if not, and do something there. Take the stuff to the people. Erm and that could include, I don't know taking a wasps nest. A few leaves of different trees. Match the tree to the leaf. Erm, that sort of thing. I like the way it has been at centres for now. But I do think it needs to come out of the centres.</p> <p>I used to work with scouts or girls brigade. So I know how kids think and how, how you do get different people who turn up depending</p>

		<p>on where you work. You know, I worked in quite a smart area. And I worked in a pretty rough area. And it's quite hard to get a mix of, because obviously, in a smart area, you've still got pretty, you know, areas of deprivation and what have you. And they'll turn up and "I don't know, I don't think I can do this", you know, or the mums turn up, pushing a pushchair, and everyone else has come in their 4X4 or whatever, and then they feel like they're not going to fit. Whereas if you take it to them..... why not? You know?</p> <p>And it's very hard now I think it might be quite hard for the ecomuseum here to pull away from the centres. But I'd like to see it. I mean, I liked the fact that there were walks out. I mean, Felin Uchaf is in the middle of nowhere. So it's quite difficult to get people to turn up if they, you know, [are using] by public transport. You know, if we're going to be 'eco' perhaps we you know, trying to disincentivize people to use cars is good, but then how you do that on somewhere like Llyn?</p> <p>It's interesting because what we were talking about, you know, because I said about it sounding posh and expensive. But what about poorer less environmentally aware Children and Families and that sort of thing? (C24)</p>
	7.1.3.4	<p>I don't think, and that's your second level, isn't it? When you get outside the volunteers who are engaged here, you're going out to the general public, I don't know how much response you'd get there, and using the Ecoamgueddfa, as a joined-up organisation with these concerns about sustainability, heritage and nature, you'd surely be able to get more people involved. It would be a win win situation won't it? to get more people involved in the ecoamgueddfa, and also [with] us and lobby the council to get [more support]. It needs to start somewhere, where does it start? And if we've got seven of us all singing the same song maybe it should come from there. (C15)</p>
	7.1.3.5	<p>Well, it's interesting, because when you look at these (the walk leaflets again), you realise that each, each one of these four places actually does have interesting things as part of the ecomuseum, which clearly this is. And I do think that what we don't have anywhere on any of these things that if you look at ours, for instance, there's no sign in if you had a little bit of signage on these. It doesn't need to be much and it does, and it can be you know, if people don't want lots of signs I get that. But something that was said they were part the ecomuseum even. Even a little like ecomuseum sign. You know I sort of feel it would give more prominence to the ecomuseum, but also more prominence to the community. It has, the community, it remembers its past. –</p> <p>Well, I have absolutely no idea who chose them. But I know that I would have chosen..... We've all stolen stuff off each other, if that</p>

		<p>makes sense. That's what we all do as groups. And, you know, [D28]'s got, she's got some very brilliant pictures, I think. So [D28]'s clearly found..... and there are some lovely things here. Absolutely what you'd want to do. But you know, what it says about Queen Victoria, blah, blah, blah, we've also got a little plaque that you could go and see. And there's lots, it just there's, there's lots of missing and there's lots not there. But most of all, I hate the maps.(D33)</p>
	7.1.3.6	<p>I first heard about the Flodden Ecomuseum when hosting a meeting of various North East heritage organisations to begin to think about what we might do together to mark the centenary of the First World War, sometime in 2011/2012. One person present said: "we should learn from Flodden, their approach is the most genuine community-based, bottom-up partnership I have ever seen". ...or something like that. In about November 2012, I received an invitation to submit a tender to be the project manager of Flodden 500. After being interviewed, I began work in January 2013. (S181)</p>
	7.1.3.7	<p>I was always kind of looking for any stories of local families or what were the women doing? So any kind of hint at that. But that was quite difficult and the ordinary people, so we had the Alnwick Muster Roll the list of soldiers. And I use that a lot with schools, because a lot of it would be names of just, you know, ordinary people, which you wouldn't see normally. Not that it gives much more information than about them, but it told us where they lived and what they brought to the battle and things like that. So yeah, try to make it more about the ordinary people rather than just the kings and the nobleman. (A07)</p> <p>certainly in the education workshops, it was brought up every time you know, you would talk about, you know, you know, who's not been mentioned, you know, yeah. Who's missing from this story? Yeah, we'd talk about that, and why they were missing. But then you got Katherine of Arragon who was quite gutsy, fighty woman. So we sort of brought her in a bit. (A07)</p>
	7.1.3.8	<p>... things such as landscapes that have been cleared, that are a really powerful but also really quite I don't know, a topic that you still need to be quite careful about.</p> <p>You might be interpreting a landscape with a piece of interpretation but you're also saying that the landscape in front of there use to home to hundreds of people but now one farmer keeps his cattle there and that's in its sense is a little bit delicate, that potentially the farmer or the landowner you know that you're saying that in a sense this shouldn't be like this – so there are things you have to be careful with in language and messaging or so yeah so I think we do that quite well, we are careful about it, I think that's part of taking your time over these kind of projects and not just arriving all singing and dancing and that this is exactly what we should be saying</p>

		<p>about your community - people have to be involved and that in discussion. (B08)</p> <p>It's to celebrate the kind of the crofter's fight in getting the crofting laws brought about in the 1880s. And the crofters struggle. I mean, you probably know a fair bit about that. But you know, lots of people fought very hard. People went to prison over it, you know, the clearances and all that, and there are actually there's still families live locally, whose relatives were directly involved in that. You know, there is a lady at Valtos, her, would have been her grandfather, maybe even a great grandfather, he was, was, if you read like the history books, he's mentioned in it, you know, he was kind of fighting with the army and the police here and went to prison and everything for this change in the law. So he's seen as a local hero. Probably lots of people have never heard of him. So, you know, it's just again, goes back to heritage and culture, it's a strong kind of ... crofting is a strong thing up here. And I think a lot of people, that have lived here all their lives, they do understand..... I do and I've not lived all my life..... Just how hard won those things were, you know. The kind of crofting Act was just revolutionary for people really. It gave them that kind of security of tenure and somewhere to live, and grow their crops and, you know, people literally fought and died for that. You know, people come up there and look at Crofting and think it's a quaint little way of life but the history of it is incredible. (B10)</p>
	7.1.3.9	<p>So the crofting Memorial is about bringing people's kind of understanding that history. It's just thought that having a formal kind of Crofters Memorial would be good. Yeah, that's right. But as I say, I think that what that's pushing us more and more to do is, we need to get a grip of the whole of the Kilt Rock site, because otherwise I think it will be a bit wasted. If you look at the site at the moment, whilst it gets a huge number of visitors, it's a completely neglected site and you're going to put this really significant cultural monument there in a in a rubbish site, you know? (B10)</p>
	7.1.3.10	<p>I mean, that, you know, the travelling community around here is, has got an enormously important history in the history of the Travelling community in Scotland. Erm, we haven't done as much as we probably could do with that. I mean, the principle archive at the moment is the photographic archive of the land collection, which, again, maybe has about 15 to 20, very, very moving photographs of them. And of course, they used to come to do all sorts of things, but berry picking was very much part of the cycle of their of the year. And that's why a lot of them came here, came through here. (D28)</p>
	7.1.3.11	<p>It is stronger, but think how near we are to England. That was a danger now. Thats the real danger. Scotland's a bit further away, if you're up on the isles and the language, quite insula there. But</p>

		<p>here, we're just beaten, just been beaten down at the moment and its (sucks in breath). And Llyn is one of the last strongholds, that gives an added impetus to the ecomuseum. (C15)</p> <p>People come right and they join in - 'oh how can I?'... , this is a great example, so they blow-in, and they want to get involved, so the join committees and stuff. And then you have to have a translator, or the whole thing turns to English, and there's no self-awareness at all. And they sit there and say, "Oh, why don't we do it in English? because its costing money to translate". You're thinking "No its not, it's costing money to translate, because, you're here. We're all understanding, we can all understand what's going on." So it's like a misunderstanding of how to blend in, how to be responsible, how to be a responsible citizen, with sensitivity towards what's going on, and whats around you so.... (C17)</p> <p>I don't know if it's possible really. Because lots of people have very sensitive skins. It should be policy. Introducing some sort of sensitivity to other people should be, you should be brought up anyway to be mindful of diversity and, and of people's heritage, or whatever you want to call it, you know, of the way things are. I mean, so I don't know, I don't know how to, apart from having a tantrum and telling people to go home, it's not, which isn't an option, and you wouldn't want it anyway. (C17)</p>
	7.1.2.12	<p>We need more youngsters? Definitely. I'm sure you're hearing this all over. Because we're just we just did, three weeks ago, I think we did a guided talk with Rhys Moi around the history and archaeology of Nefyn. I tried to do it twice before, and couldn't get the youngsters involved, because we were doing it through the medium of the Welsh language, the grants to do it and the target was children 10 to 13 year olds. It was so difficult. (C15)</p> <p>But even there, if we get so many people moving in, and their children are non-Welsh speaking, the teachers going to go (holds hands out and shrugs). Once the balance, 70% in local communities isn't it, if it goes below 70% people loose their confidence and people speak English, don't speaking Welsh first. It takes someone very strong to keep on with Welsh, when you think ahhh they're not going to understand me. In schools, it's much lower because children will speak with children. Because if we get a couple of strong-spirited English speakers in the classroom, a whole school can churn into English and the poor teachers are trying their best then to get them to keep to Welsh. It's sad. Is it is, I've got friends who teach [locally] and they're really struggling at the moment. Okay, the children learn Welsh, they learn Welsh, but they go home to English-speaking homes. So English is still their language. It's still their understanding because, you know, the school curriculum doesn't give them the love of the Welsh that home would give them. (C15)</p>

	7.1.3.13	<p>An interesting point - about the signs, and something I've teased them about, is a lot of the marker points are in Gaelic only, which I think People would argue with me and say, Well, no, you're missing the point, we are promoting heritage. But I think, you know, I mean, I live here and I drive around, and I see marker posts, and I think well, I'd like to know what that's really called, other than something I can't pronounce. (B10)</p> <p>And I do think and it's a delicate area to broach, but I do think some of that is around some of the Gaelic stuff. People see it very much entwined in Gaelic and if you don't speak Gaelic and you don't come from that background then it's perhaps not for you. I'm talking about people who live locally. And I think without losing the whole value and importance of Gaelic, I think there's got to be somewhere in there where we say, this needs to be diluted a little bit, because you're actually stopping people from engaging a bit. I mean, you know, as I say, there's me, I mean I'm involved in it and I see it and I'll just scroll past it because it's all in Gaelic and I'm involved in it. So somebody who lives down the road who perhaps would be involved and isn't, what are they going to do if they don't speak Gaelic? (B10)</p>
7.1.4		Is there an emphasis on process rather than end product? Does the ecomuseum foster active agency and empowerment of the community? Does the ecomuseum influence across community issues?
	7.1.4.1	<p>Main motivation was opportunity to take part in archaeology project Flodden 1513. This led to formation of a group called TillVAS. I.e. Till Valley Archaeological Society in 2011 and I have been on its committee since about 2013, Membership Secretary since 2015. I have undertaken research on local people of the area as part of our TillVAS Village Atlas of Branxton and Crookham to which I contributed two chapters and other information. (S343)</p>
	7.1.4.2	<p>One really strong example is that there use to be an annual sea fishing competition in this area and it had gone a bit flat in the previous decade or so and we resurrected it with the support of funding for the model of the ecomuseum and with volunteer involvement and trying to connect up the heritage of the place and Gaelic language and we ran the event and it was very successful indeed. -</p> <p>from that event those volunteers that got involved then became the heart of the very steering group that are now part of this huge capital works redevelopment of our harbour, so its like you start of with a heritage activity and it can actually become part of how the community sees its future, and that connectivity is really important.</p> <p>The community have been fighting for improvements to that harbour since the Napier Commission, the Napier Commission was you know 100 years ago when the crofters gained their rights</p>

		<p>and it was minuted back then that all the community in Staffin and they have individual interviews and they're saying that we should be doing something the harbour and stuff, and its sort of 100 years and they're still pushing for it, and it's the same surnames meeting the commission is the still involved now so its like their descendants and so yeah I can see this is really important in terms of community empowerment, this will happen, we have 2/3 of the money in place and the works will start soon so yeah I think that could be very interesting to get involved in and the ecomuseum will be involved on a level as well that as well as we want their to be that connectivity between the history of the place and its future. (B08)</p>
	7.1.4.3	<p>It goes back to what I said right at the start that we live in the periphery of Skye. The housing would never have been provided by Highland Council, or any of the other groups like, like the Housing Association. They would simply argue that there's no demand. Where as, if you do a community consultation, you discover that there is demand. Which we, which we did do. So you, you use that as evidence that actually there is demand, we want your support. And the housing development was done through the Housing Association and the Community's Housing Trust and SCT. So there are three organisations delivering, delivering the package. And we all have a... Well, in the housing, we have an equal share of a 3rd each. The business units are SCT. And Doctor's surgery is SCT as well. (B09)</p> <p>So we devised our own allocation policy and we had a huge amount of interest in this, and 36 families applied most with a local connection, so we had to be very careful in devising a fair allocation policy because it is largely based on sustaining our very good school, that we still have whereas other communities have lost theirs many times over, all over the place in this part of the world, all over the island (B08)</p>
	7.1.4.4	<p>What's my role? I suppose just first we've just facilitated the setting up of it, and I just, I'm just trying to enable that to develop organically, really. So working with the partner organisations. I work for Gwynedd Council. Well Gwynedd Council pay me, but I kind of find all the funding to fund myself really, I've done that for 20 years. So I've never had a proper job.</p> <p>I'm supposed to, I'm local lead on LIVE at the moment. But I, because I work in the, we've got a project management, environmental team, and I'm part of that team. So I work with A[], who's the main [environment?] officer. And we've got two other project officers that work for us directly as well. So all environmental work, I kind of find funding for that. And then we either run them ourselves, or we bring staff into that, but with at the moment, I'm working full time on the ecomuseum project through LIVE. So, yeah, so it's really complex. (C21)</p>

	7.1.4.5	<p>we've got one project, which is £700,000, looking specifically at managing the whole of the coast holistically, as one connectivity corridor. So we developed a coastal connectivity strategy, and then we're implementing that over time. So three farms who signed up to trial this payment for outcomes model, we've seen 20% biodiversity gain in those farms in less than three years. So they're talking about, you know, the new payment system in England, it's the same in England, the new payment system. You know, it's just not then based on how much land farmers have. So, if you can see that gain across the board, then in theory, you can see a 20% increase in biodiversity anywhere in Wales, in three or four years. That's massive. So it's, and we are showing it's possible by enabling farmers to take decisions on their land, it's their decision, it's not ours, we just advise.</p> <p>We have people working with us who can give them advice, and their rewarded for doing that. And we also give them business advice. So then they can see, even, you know, a lot of them are in, in this kind of deathly cycle of high inputs, spending a hell of a lot of money, and having minimum profits at the end of the year. So they've tweaked their business models, where now they're spending less money, the risk is less, they get environmental payments, and their profits has gone up (C21)</p>
	7.1.4.6	<p>So I feel that the ecomuseum concept shows that it is possible to do that. And I think if you look at somewhere like so, Porth Y Swnt in Aberdaron, it's not like a normal tourist attraction because they don't, they've got a shop there that sells something different to everybody else in the village. They don't have a cafe because the village has cafes, so. And that place is open, I know they've changed the hours a bit with, after the hassles with internal problems in NT and with COVID and so on. But they were open 51 weeks of the year. So if you went into, the pub is open, every day of the year, the one facing the beach, the shop is open, the bakery is open with reduced hours in winter. So that village is serviced 12 months of the year for anybody that wants to come there. And you get a lot of people that visit because of that attraction [Porth Y Swnt] being open. So it just feeds into that visitor economy all year round.</p> <p>And the second thing is just having mortgageable jobs in tourism, because a lot of the businesses here and what they do they offer, they pay a salary and then staff work longer hours in summer, less in winter, but they still get that salary. So what that means to them is they can walk, walk into a bank and say, I want to buy a house. I'm in full-time employment; that's my wage, and my patterns, blah, blah, blah. And there you go, give me the money. (C21)</p>
7.1.5		Issues and barriers
	7.1.5.1	<p>I'm still not, not clear (laughs) on what Spodden Valley are attempting, or is attempting to achieve. - this is what I mean about</p>

		<p>been possibly... not misled but not explained [?] . I think if you were to ask quite a few people involved with Spodden Valley Revealed, it's probably the only [E38] and me who are aware of the expression ecomuseum. I don't think it's ever been mentioned to others. So we haven't even got as far as what does that mean. We're still looking at the expression and thinking of what that might involve. I mean, you seem to be implying that we've already got one [an ecomuseum]. And that may be true (laughs). (E37 – steering group member)</p> <p>And I think that that has been the struggle I'd say, in terms of erm..... erm, things like, things like thinking back on when we were like trying to push like, okay with everyone use the hashtag Ecoamgueddfa, but then I think there was a lack of understanding outside of the group or even like in the group slightly, as to what that meant. And like, if we're asking people to do that, like, what does that, what's it stands for? What does it mean? (C18 – partner organisation member)</p> <p>[Speaking about community awareness] I suppose.. I suppose the problem is, at the moment is I'm not sure if they perceive the ecomuseum at all! Like I think they get the benefit in what we are doing. But I'm not sure whether they, how I suppose it'd be interesting, like how different it would be.. - . But I think yeah, I think we need to be communicating the whole of it more, hopefully going forward. (C18)</p> <p>we came in going ecomuseum, ecomuseum, regenerative tourism, blah blah blah... and everyone's like, what the fuck are you talking about? It was too much. We were too enthusiastic. And we were coming in with terms that are so new that even we didn't fully understand them. You know what I mean? Because they're very new concepts, and they're evolving all the time (C25 – Irish LIVE project staff)</p>
	7.1.5.2	<p>... because, one it's a bit of a conflict, I think from people who live here, and the concept of enlarging tourism and expanding it. Who's gonna gain? The risk is it's just the people who are already making money. And who see it as a money-making exercise. And at the end of the day, that's the bottom line, isn't it? But if you focus all your energies on tourism, I mean, we've got so many camping sites, - and what have you in the area we really don't need any more. -</p> <p>I very much feel that caring for the community we have here is paramount. And to invite more pressure for more tourists out of season is not how I see it ought to move. (C24)</p>
7.2.		Supporting – Learning
7.2.1		Is local knowledge at multiple levels valorised?

	7.2.1.1	<p>This community is intrinsically linked to its environment and the methodology of everything they do anyway is actually with the environment in mind, and it can be quite easy to criticise from outside when you see a 'falaisg', you know a hill fire burn which is often a deliberate hill burn as a negative but then you also see that the different vegetation that exists on these hill sides it would only be dominated by bracken, rushes and heather whereas now what we have is grasslands of many different species across our hillsides. Is that because of hill fires? Erm I think it probably is, but I'm not a scientist. I think that there is a lot of understanding about the environment built into this community (B08)</p> <p>You know, there are ones who have encyclopaedic knowledge, basically, you know, of family's stories. And it's all in their head, and you know, and it's important to try and record it, if you can. And we've definitely used these individuals a lot in the past to get information and we've used the skills of others to our production of interpretive materials. Somebody might be an excellent Gaelic scholar. They might have certain skills. There's a local poet, for example, who we've used for his skills. A lot of the, a lot of these individuals tend to be elderly. And, you know, when they're not here, you know, it would be sad if that kind of knowledge went with them. So it's very important to try and use it when you can, and record it.(B09)</p> <p>We partnered with - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, which is in the south Skye - and held afternoons with storytellers here. And the people from the Gaelic college came up, the academics and some of the students, and we had a community day, community afternoons where we had soup and sandwiches, and we had all the stories. And that kind of thing is wonderful. And particularly when I tell you that two of these men are no longer living, you know, we were just working on one of their obituaries yesterday, actually. So, you know, things like that are really, really worth doing, the stories thing.(B13)</p>
	7.2.1.2	<p>So but she were massively helpful with certain bits of it. So she were really, really good, like she knows loads around like highways, byways, and footpaths and she were really really helpful when it comes to, because she lives upon the hill, - they've lived there for donkey's years you know in a mobile home. So she's really knowledgeable on like rights of way up there, when you have to ask lords of the manor if you have can have permission put up fences. Though she's really, really good on the old laws.</p> <p>...she's really, really knowledgeable. But she and she's got tales for everything, literally everything. Because as part of this [SPV], they - did something called the Glasseye, I think. And [they] came and met people locally and spoke to them about old folklore and that, did a series of interviews with a local people all around like old</p>

		things ..And it was sort of like they were like one of them things on a shelf in a museum of such, so somebody's story is something that is embedded into the museum, the ecomuseum. (E36)
	7.2.1.3	<p>As I said earlier, we had an awful lot of information in our heads long before 2013. It part and parcel the local - if you are interested in local history, Flodden is one of the places. We've had that interest for decades. It wasn't like a new thing for us. (A05 – local history group member)</p> <p>And so, and again, she puts in crazy hours, and so dedicated to [the volunteers], you know, and has like, a coffee morning for them every year at Christmas time to thank them. And, you know, it's just, yeah, I think things like that. (A07)</p> <p>the more you work with local people and in the landscape, the more you realise there's more to it than that isn't just about hard facts and science was certainly that's not.. doesn't have to take priority over, you know, all the other elements to the story. (A07)</p>
	7.2.1.4	It's really frowned on in maybe some other situations where academics come in and study and suck the locals dry for knowledge and then go away. And we've, you know, ethically, we're trying to stop doing that with some other cultures, but we're still allowing it here, because we don't consider ourselves indigenous. You know, it's kind of strange. And that was something we talked about a lot, at the start was that the locals have a wealth of indigenous knowledge. And at no point do we want to be seen as coming in. As the academics who know it all, and we're going to tell them what they should be doing. It was very much, here's what we know. You know, here's what we can offer you. And take it. (C25)
	7.2.1.5	I've got to be careful how I say this. We had quite a lot of emphasis placed on archaeology, particularly the Mesolithic and the Neolithic period. As it happens, there's quite a lot of local expertise in those fields, who were rubbishing the work of the SVR archaeologists. Now I'd qualify that. And what I would say was well, yes, you've been walking these hills for about 20 years. They've walked them for about two weekends. But therein lies the problem. Because I'm making that as an excuse. But the fact is, they haven't come up with the goods. And it's the goods that you want. And that is the problem (E37 2nd interview)
	7.2.1.6	I remember the Trust commissioned an archaeologist to identify interesting sites in our district. And he put a lot of work into it and produced a very interesting document. But I noticed there was one site identified quite close to here, just over the fence, basically. And I knew it, I knew as well. It was a square ruin, and I remember going to visit an old boy who lived he actually lived in the South of Scotland, but he was here on holiday at the time, he's from here.. was from here. And I mentioned this to him, you know, it was this

		<p>little square ruin that the archaeologists had identified. And he just laughed and said, I built that he said (laughing). Okay, he built it for use as shelter for hogs, young sheep. So you know, very little... of zero archaeological interest, really. But the archaeologist assumed it was a lot, a lot older. - There's plenty examples of that, you know, where so-called experts appear on the scene and give you an interpretation... and a local person will know that that's a load of nonsense, but you don't say anything out of politeness (laughs). (B09)</p> <p>My brother had another archaeologist's story, maybe the same one, who took a... led a group on a path, one of their earlier paths we did years ago, and he led the group and was doing some interpretation. And he reached this building. And he, he said to the group, [my brother] was part of the group listening, and he said, 'this ruin obviously belonged to somebody who was relatively well off. There are a few clues... there are fragments of slate lying about..'. was one clue. 'There is a walled garden' was the other clue. There was a third which I can't remember.. but [my brother] was thinking to himself, the walled garden is actually just the enclosure that people had for stockyard, it was a stockyard, that's all it was, nothing more, nothing less. The fragments of slate came from a house up the hill. Slate had blown off during a severe storm and pieces (laughing) had landed down, down below. So again, [my brother] didn't say anything to correct him. (B09)</p>
7.2.2		Are they sites and catalysts of transdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange and skills sharing?
	7.2.2.1	<p>Because not everyone's online. And even people like, I'm like, I'm online on social media and whatnot, but very rarely, will I type in or take a look at what the ecomuseum are doing. Not because I'm not interested, it doesn't cross my mind. (D30)</p> <p>Because a lot of it relies on the website. And there's loads of people who don't go and look at a website. You're talking about the middle area, middle aged groups. And they go there for information and they go there. My children go there just to find out something, they look for a phone number or they look for, you know, they tend not to read lots of blurb on a website. And the Cateran Ecomuseum relies on you reading that website. Which you don't. Or not everyone does it. I think it keeps it's keeping some of the people in the dark, is really I suppose what I would say (D33)</p> <p>And the idea is well, that it was going to be, you know, entirely focused on if you like, in the digital realm, rather than being really talking to people, and people engagement, and people involvement, and people having a say, people have been the place it was all 'Right. This is what we're gonna do. We're gonna make it all digital, digital, put everything online,' and and that'll be it. That's our, that's our ecomuseum created. But yeah, so it's a bit of an odd one. (PD)</p>

		<p>And actually, I mean, if you look at the website and stuff, it's, I mean, it's pretty okay. But in reality, it could be a lot better. Well there is stuff with the [partners], but again, that's slowed down to a snail's pace. But [C23], for example, is working hard with them, to try and get them to promote their, each of these activities. I think that's quite pivotal. But also, and it will get there, and again, it's it's a slow burn thing. It's kind of being a hub for their community, to promote stuff that's going on. And it is the hard burn, because it's a slow burn. Some people get it more than others. (C17)</p>
	7.2.2.2	<p>I think it's really helpful to schools you know. The stuff that [C22] was doing, I think is pretty important (C17)</p> <p>we do a lot of work with local schools, just giving them resources so that schools can use those resources with children. Because a lot of teachers are, they're not from that village or that area, or they have no interest in the environment. Or they have no understanding of ecosystems or, you know, they just know how to teach a curriculum. (C21)</p> <p>To the school itself [the ecomuseum] provides a lot of learning experiences, I would say more than anything, to the school itself. It provides learning experiences, learning opportunities more than anything. (B11)</p>
	7.2.2.3	<p>...one of the topics was 'Love where you live'. So it linked in lovely with that [idea] about learning the heritage of your area. Looking at local history. - the kids are going home googling things. One of them realised that a next door neighbour, his next door neighbour was Treacle Sandersons great granddaughter, you know, so they invited themselves for a Sunday dinner with them and talked to her about her granddad all day, you know, then they brought it back in [to the school] and then they did 'show and tell'. So just like it escalated, you know? - I've been working with [that age group] for six seven years, and they don't retain things, they don't remember things you know, and right after this project they massively had absorbed so much of it and I do think it's because they were recognisable and it was local so it peaked their interest that little bit more. (E36)</p> <p>that stronger sense of identity - sense of place is quite interesting. How best that can then, help young people harness that ?..., you know that you hear of levels...., like you hear that [when] we've taken some of the school kids to different locations and then they've gone with their parents at different times that maybe they wouldn't have done otherwise. (B08)</p>

	7.2.2.4	<p>We worked really closely with the local primary school. And every time we did it - The kids created like a little, they performed like a sea shanty, or they did something. So all the kids came down, so that brought their parents down. (C18)</p> <p>A couple of examples, one primary school in Aberdaron, I've been into school talking about pollution and litter, and they've adopted that as one of the themes for the term, and we went out to the beach, and we're doing litter picks and talking about why it's important not sort to litter and to recycle. And then some of the children had gone home and had got litter pickers as Christmas presents. So they'd asked for litter picks for Christmas so they could go out with their parents and do litter picks themselves. That was nice to know that they were involving the parents at home. But yeah, it does happen. - It's nice when you go into school and find out that they came to an event and learned something and they've remembered it. - and they can say that they'd been out somewhere with their parents and they've been talking about it, so yeah, it does. I think it's probably the best way to get the message home into households [is] through engaging the children a lot of the time, if you can do something interesting and that they enjoy. (C22)</p> <p>I do think it's really important that we managed to connect with the children as well, because often that's one of the best ways of disseminating information. (D34)</p> <p>Its dispersed as well so like there is 600 people [in the area population], but I would think that the number of participants in anything related to the ecomuseum is proportionately is ridiculously high so you know, its all the school and all the parents almost and there would be lots of other activities that tick the boxes of other generations too. (B08)</p> <p>But, you know, if it's their kids or their grandkids, that are being shown by visiting experts about dinosaurs and stuff, they think that's great. You know, and that's really good of the Trust. (B10)</p>
	7.2.2.5	<p>They simply have no room in the curriculum centred world to have any flexibility really. And I, you know, I don't blame them, they have to do it like that. But the amount of effort it takes to raise money that then isn't really.... doesn't fulfil its potential. It's, you know, I, I would be very careful about how I approached any further work with either schools or young people. I don't know what the answer is. But I certainly have learned lessons about how much effort it took to raise money and how little result we got. (D28)</p>
	7.2.2.6	<p>It's less consistent than primary age children, 99% of the primary age children seem to just be enthusiastic straightaway, really, without even knowing what they're doing. Even before you introduce what the activity is going to be they're much, I find them</p>

		<p>much easier to engage. The secondary age, it takes more time. - But being able to work with them on quite a consistent basis, it sort of builds up that relationship with them a little bit. I know you're only seeing them for a few hours at a time once a week for eight weeks, 10 weeks, whatever it is. But, yeah, they tend to, initially they can be a bit standoffish and 'oh, What's this? I don't want to be doing that'. But then if you're given time, a lot of them tend to engage more. But yeah, definitely it's, it takes a little bit of time and a bit bit of work. And some of them just might not want to, or if they keep, trying to give them the opportunities.</p>
	7.2.2.7	<p>And it got a lot of recognition. Look at what we've got with the Awakening. Some really, professional professors coming up, because they want to play a part in it. Because they can see they can see the advantage in it. (D26)</p> <p>I did a walk and talk for an academic conference on Flodden during 2013. And so it was all Dr. this and Professor that, all the rest of it, - a professor of mediaeval history -came up and shook my hand and said that is precisely what we're trying to do.(A07)</p> <p>I think the Ecomuseum has, has brought, it certainly brought [academic interest], well you're doing a PhD on it. And I've done quite quite a few interviews with people who are doing masters and PhDs on the on the topic of the ecomuseum. (A06)</p> <p>I have learnt more, and continue to engage with academic studies that come into the area, obviously we have a lot, you are here, but a really good relationship with the Highland and Islands University archaeology institute (B08)</p>
	7.2.2.8	<p>Cork University we're looking for a partner in Wales because of InterReg (European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)) and they've been in contact with Aberystwyth because of other projects. And we got wind of it through the National Trust because the one of the lads working for the Trust was sitting on the board of one of the other InterReg projects and he He said, Ah you need to talk to us because we part of this partnership up here. So that's how that came about. (C21)</p>
	7.2.2.9	<p>There were one or two or one or two things that were people are a bit iffy about, they hadn't got funding to do this, and they weren't interested in doing that. But again, everyone heard there was a lot of money. £800,000 pounds. And, 'oh, right. They'll be plenty to go around'. Well, a lot of it, in effect went, from what I can gather and perhaps talking., to a lot of in effect went back in, or at least through the county council. The archaeology I understand was expensive (A06)</p> <p>I think right at the start when there's the big thing about- [the] project because it gets a lot of funding is always a bit of like, oh, well, who's getting that money? You know, there's always a wee bit</p>

		<p>of that, and I think it was a wee bit of that at the start. - I remember speaking to one local printers, and, [he said] 'I was hoping I'd get some work out for them, but I didn't.' You know, the work has to go to somebody, it went to somebody locally. But you know, - I don't think it was that high level. (A07)</p> <p>One of the things was, well, who were we? How did we get these jobs? You know, like, really, really suspicious, you know? And then, of course, it was, well, why, why was I given the job when I don't even live here? Why wasn't somebody else. (C25)</p> <p>light touch tourism doesn't necessarily do it very much for the local general economy, unless you're having people stay here. If they stay here. But then often, people just get their Tesco delivery to the caravan even. You know, they don't eat out much or whatever, so it's not even much of a boost. And it is a bit you know, it's who... you know, if there's any money to be made, are people just looking at [the ecomuseum] as a money-making exercise or is it more... you know... low key? (C24)</p> <p>Well, Interestingly, the only piece that I've seen is that Dig Adventurers who took care of the archaeology parts of it, did the final report. Sorry, did the draft report. I've not seen the final report. So whether it's been completed, I don't know. [E35] sent me a copy of that. And I made quite a lot of fairly negative points on it. Not to have a... not to have a go at them, but I felt that, you know, a lot of money had gone into this report. And so it should have been pretty comprehensive. (E37)</p>
7.2.3		Collaboration & Networking: How does the ecomuseum seek to collaborate within its local community and with wider networks? Does it act as a bridge between different sectors and demographics in the community?
	<i>7.2.3.1</i>	<p>They were all fighting for volunteers. You know, there's only so many people who volunteer on the Peninsula. - So we just had to chat to them and said, 'instead of you all trying to get volunteers, why don't you give your volunteers different opportunities with different organisations?' And then what happened then was that you'd see the volunteers who used to just be in one place, they'd pop up in other places, because they had skill sets. They had something different to offer, if they were into gardening or whatever. And it was really interesting, because they were getting better experiences. They were, they were part of a bigger network of people. And the organisations were getting the benefits of specific skill sets as well. (C21)</p>
	<i>7.2.3.2</i>	<p>The businesses around those hubs understand that concept as well. - with [partner organisation] the museum in Nefyn, we have an end of year, start of Year/ End of Year events where they invite all the businesses within the two or three mile radius. And they all</p>

		come together and they say, Well, what are you going to be doing over the summer, this year? What are your plans? Should we be promoting something that you're doing? So you've got the Cwrw Llŷn, the brewery, which is community owned the Nefyn. The pub is community owned, Yr Heliwr. So those people employ the digital staff now as well. So you know, we're always engaging with those people. So then they're sending on our stuff, and we'd share their stuff. So very quickly, that network develops of co-marketing. It's kind of an informal thing. (C21)
	7.2.3.3	So [D28] was thinking about doing footpaths and I sit on the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland and I said, You do not want to be involved in footpath maintenance, leave it to people who are skilled at getting money for doing that kind of thing. But, But we could act as the catalyst. - I feel like there's a there's most definitely a place in the space of the Ecomuseum to have an influence. But it might as well use the existing bodies as well. We don't want to be trying to do everything, because then we can't. So, knowing what other local bodies are out and about doing, and what they're doing means you know... working together, which, you know, most things work better in partnership. (D34)
	7.2.3.4	I really think that some of the stuff she's been doing is fantastic! But it it needs to engage more and be alerting everybody. One of the council members said to me, "is there going to be something up in Glenshee about a big hand?" and I went, I said "yes", I said "well actually I don't even know when it is, what it is". Whereas had they known and had VisitScotland known, - [they] emailed me to say "do you think we will be allowed to come?" and I thought, God you should be invited! This is big for Scotland. Tell Scotland this is what we do! Because to me it was such a fabulous Because I really want to say about it is that [D28] is fantastic; has the most big enthusiasm for stuff, but has a bit of a habit in my in my experience of knowing her, and she's so full of life and full of keenness and whatever, is she slightly can move on a bit too quickly before she's really done what she's going to do. - And she's really really brilliant. But we need to engage more people in it. (D33)
	7.2.3.5	[The HLF advisor] said we have to engage the older folk. Heritage Lottery is all about engaging the older folk, stopping the downhill slide towards dementia and obesity and staying at home and not having anything to do. Get them upskilled.
	7.2.3.6	I think that's one of the things we want to tackle with the ecomuseum is - over the last couple years we've had people changing place names and Anglifying place names as well, so - there's old, there's a few fishermen's huts in Porth Ysgaden, And I watched a YouTube video a couple years ago. Where you've got a person and he goes there and he said, look at this beautiful fairy hut, and you're like that's not a fairy hut, you know. And so what

		<p>we're trying to do now, Well we can again flip that on its head and say this is, this is an old fisherman's hut. It used to be owned by so and so from down the road and you just tell that story, don't you. So people get a better understanding of it (C23)</p>
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Appendix 5.1 Detailed activity tables per ecomuseum

SKYE	Participatory Activities	Capital Works
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website with maps, site information, links to local accommodation and producers, films etc <p>Publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets?/Shore pack Volunteer path days Tree planting Beach cleans Archaeology days (when universities there) (with schools and community – e.g. Under the turf of time) Palaeontology days (with university researchers) see quote below Specialist talks – birdwatching, archaeology General Dinosaur activities – dinosaur museum (one of founders) School engagement – including Forest schools? EU-LAC Youth exchange – to Costa Rica, (with Spanish kids too) including return visit to Skye – cèilidh and site visits Partnership with Derry – cultural visit to Skye – music/Shinty/Dance etc and landscape Gaelic environment language courses (annual) Schools resources – eg Gaelic shore pack School engagement in building the Crofters memorial – stonewall building skills/ history etc School project - Sceumannan mar Coimhearsmachd. 'footsteps in our community' Guided walks for community and schools (including along paths created and for the elderly) Photography exhibition on local residents Storytelling evening Community project on clothes that matter – shared stories and created a play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage at sites, community interpretations and way markers (includes artwork and poetry/words (e.g. Loch Shianta) Built path network – local materials, labour, volunteers (volunteer path days) > access Affordable housing (6) Health centre Harbour development (includes improving the access road, enlarging harbour and creating business modules etc) fish farm access but other economic and heritage development > hope increase population BUT housing staff is an issue Tree planting (road verges, church yard, and around new housing development– away from sheep so limited) Leth-Alt water fall viewing platform and access and parking (NB voluntary donations box gives c. £12,000/year to community trust) Sùil nam Brà (Eye of the Quern Stone)– Memorial to the Crofters of Staffin Extended car park at Kilt Rock because of the memorial (community transfer? That spoken about in interviews – see capital works quotes. There was a need to sort out the neglected site and make better access for the benefit of environment and community by mitigating the damage/issues of heavy tourism) <p>PLANNED PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POTENTIAL cycle track? Walking and cycle routes in commercial forest partnership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community photo festival – what is a photo’ -sharing family photos • Film making about locals, lifestyle (sheep shearing), history (all in Gaelic) • Placename study of topographical features in landscape (safeguarding for future) • Community Day on Stories - Collaboration with Gaelic Language College • Reinstated Sea Fishing Festival • Commemoration event with US families of WWII airmen who crashed in area • Dementia support group (website) • Community History event (with Community Land Scotland on how to archive and record oral history 	
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FLODDEN	Other activities	Capital Works
<p>NB for Flodden many of the capital works and activities happened because of the ecomuseum commemoration project, though not all directly funded by, but supported, and helped</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website with site information, project information and reports from across the community etc <p>Publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project book Leaflets of sites Various others – music etc, books from community Supporting community ideas/projects in funding bids Eg Peace Garden x 2; flower festival, Flodden beer, marmalade (by artisan producers) ; music festival; Albums; books (give number of activities supported by project) Exhibitions Poetry written Music composed eg Paul Travis, Sally Beamish, Scottish Chamber Orchestra Edinburgh Festival acts Flodden pudding created Flodden tartan Archive research skills and palaeography Community Archaeology group TILVAS and YAC – including arranging certificate of recognition of learning/skills with CBA School archaeology excavation events School events programme collaborations with archives, archaeologists and project manager Metal detectorists Cycle route (not kept maintained now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flodden site car park (took over control from council) Accessible path to battle site monument Taking part of farm field out of tenancy to ecomuseum control for access and wildflower planting (battle site) Gave over control of part of a field to local church/community use as car park (battle site) New sites/access for trails, car parks, viewpoints – not all maintained after main project term (see quote below)

ECOAMGUEDDFA	Other Activities	Capital Works
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website (and linked to Iveragh/LIVE too) with links and info on partner sites, events diary etc • Series of online talks during Covid and after for accessibility • Digital resources for schools etc • Programme of digital skills, marketing etc for staff/volunteers at partner sites so they could do it in house and reduce their running costs • Campaigning through working with councils etc for access routes, paths and transport links • Eg encourage coastal bus route (only partial so far) • Guided Fungi foray – linking folklore • Astronomy walk (Dark Skies event) – linking folklore and the stars etc • Connecting nature and habitats, enriching (mini meadows etc, Big Five) increase knowledge, awareness and enrich nature/habitats • Collaboration with Magnificent Meadows > mini-meadow creation with schools and at partner sites (some combined like Nefyn) • Clawd wall (stone wall) building community workshops (local skilled waller) • High school activities – Clawd walling, habitat restoration, tree planting • School project on geological timeline to future of Llyn • School site activities – marine environment; heathlands; Maritime History – • School litter picks/beach clean (impacted outside school to family) • School tree planting • School boardwalk building – access to beaches • School resources • Teacher resources/knowledge increase • Family resource packs • Coastodian scheme (partner NT?) – local people voluntary stewards of their local area, alert any issues, litter pick etc, talk to visitors • Community knowledge gatherers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting path routes (to coastal route to sites) • Eg the Sailor's Path N-S route on peninsula – working with council etc to way mark routes • Worked with partner sites to increase facilities at sites – eg requirement of partner site > café, car park, toilets etc

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film commission from local naturalist – link of land management and biodiversity • Support local community activities – funding applications or more directly- village trail/QR codes; wild goat count/ promote organisations and share social media posts (eg Plas Carmel) • Pay local sites directly for use of area for events • Pay local sites for staff costs • BIG 5 Maps – local artist and schools • Local walking route maps – local artists and schools/community • Archaeology Festivals (x2 or 3 now?) • Sea Food Festival 'Blas o Môr', – included community/school involvement in planning and day – eg operetta written and perform based on Largo poem • Ecomuseum Festival (early on – kind of like archaeology) • Bio-Blitz – included activities like guided walks (including Yollo Williams), Dawn chorus walk, specialist organisation (Plantlife and moth survey, marine life watch), Wildlife Trust storytellers and art/craft activities (including me) • Fund directly local projects (eg exhibition) or help access funding) • Free taster days – paddleboarding, surfing and kayaking • Book of Llyn history of Women <p>Planned at time of data gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual school exchange with Irish language schools and Welsh – eg shared Curlew Day • Knowledge exchange with Irish side of LIVE project – community ambassadors • Rerun the 'cynefin r cymuned' community and place talk series 	
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CATERAN	Other Activities	Capital Works
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website – itineraries, information about sites films blog ect <p>Publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk leaflets Cateran 100 objects <p>Climate/Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel cycle routes/itineraries (including promotional films) & promote Dirt Dash Walking routes InHeritage session, Bannock (thinking food miles/waste/local produce), Plaid, Corracle etc > sustainability Home is where the hearth is – traditional heating and cooking methods 'Travel for all our tomorrow's' project Bio-blitz activity on River Ericht Paleo-ecological study of the River Ericht Tree treasure hunt day and 'name your favourite tree' activity Climate Change Timeline – in Alyth Square – part of COP 26 events River Keepers monitoring group <p>General (some with eco basis)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided cycle rides (including family one) Guided Walks SotMoon Sessions: IWD sessions (Herbal workshop; guided women's history walks, Reframing Scottish Witch trails talk SotMoon Community Beltane Festival SotMoon community path site exploration and activity day Guided Gaelic placename walk Wild Foraging walks Limited work with schools and youth group – eg storytelling session at one school SotM did school sessions: poet-tree boxes and Beltane events, and Kirk Micheal poetry and sense of place trail + youth groups and high school. Worked with Cateran Mackar Tree seed planting with youth groups (SotM) <p>ART</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamish Henderson commission The Awakening commission (coincided COP 26) – art work, story, poem ; And associated Great Imagining workshops – storytelling, poetry and art, events with school children and community groups – and representatives and community connectors (but are they always the easy options – the obvious participants – not aiming to reach further) 	NONE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID activity online - #Cateran100's 100 Days of Poems, Songs, Music, Stories, Films & Photographs community project 	
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SVR	Other Activities	Capital Works
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No working website (is planned) basic information about project (now changed name?) but all old pre Covid events Community tree planting Community blub planting (in partnership with local Whitworth in Bloom) Walk leaflets (Funded) EC(coproduced with community member BUT issues on design as not best accessible but disagreement on changing them – see active travel CODE walk routes) SKYLINE route guided walk – and audio Lorelines Book – artist commission Artist-run hub The Bug worked on various projects making puppets etc for performances such as Lady of the Well and folklore Billy Greenteeth Lady of the Well project – schools Archaeology strand – (contracted by Dig Ventures) community survey, Drone Survey, school Explorer activities; excavation on Brown Wardle Valley of Stones project Glass Eye project Primary school collaboration with museum – on Whitworth Stories Creation of school resources explorer bags/props based on Whitworth Stories Creation of resources for the museum to use with schools based on the Whitworth Stoires Commission of artist 3D sculptures with music boxes and animation (by artist Fabric Lenny) (with children) – now displayed in museum Community calender produced from community photos and pictures (at least 2) <p>Post Covid restart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family art/craft session – me and environmental artists at Facit Incline and the Rushcart – raise awareness and mini consultation on mapping path route/sites 	<p>Capital works programme to start with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Greenway – cycle walking route (collaboration) Artist commissions for greenway? Stiles Path Building/clearing Stonewall building/stabilising

Appendix 6: Chapter 8 Land Connectedness quotes

Chapter Section	Reference Number	Quote/s
8.2		Kith and Kin – Knowing and the familial
8.2.1		More-than-human community
	<i>8.2.1.1</i>	When we moved up here - I wanted to explore it more. And in those days, early days, I explored it on foot by running, running in the Munroes, running in the hills, alongside rivers, on paths. Going that wee bit further, seeing what was around the next corner. And then getting back home and getting a map out and looking where did I run? Could I go further? Could I go a slightly different way. So I've learned a lot about what's underfoot. And also probably the best, the best way to see what's up in the sky. Where's the best place to see golden eagles, ospreys. Where's the best place to capture a great sight of a large head of deer. (D26)
8.2.1		Human community
	<i>8.2.2.1</i>	<p>Healey Dell. Perfect day out for all ages, long family dog walks, teaching children about the great outdoors (PS5)</p> <p>Flowers + the variety of trees in Healey Dell. Also crafts for children + Healey Dell café is so good. Good to meet lots of other people. (PS26)</p> <p>Birtle Dene – I have lived in Bury all my life and my parents used to take me and my sisters on walks & picnics up Birtle Dene as children. My grandad used to take me there picking Winberries and this summer I took my grandson doing the same (PS40)</p> <p>Local football ground – because I love to play football (PS16)</p> <p>Everything from the beautiful woodland to the river and all its life, to the community and strong sense of supporting others. (PC3)</p>
8.2.4		Kithing
	<i>8.2.4.1</i>	We live in the cloud – we are the people of the cloud! You learn to love it, otherwise it would be a misery. But to touch clouds, walk through them, breathe them in – to me it is always a thrill. - From being lost I found my home. I felt wrapped in the spirit of the place. (journal entry PE41)
	<i>8.2.4.2</i>	And we would wander around. And you know, we would recognise routes by specific trees. So we would give them all different names. So there was like, you know, the Giant Tree because it was

		like the biggest tree in the woods. That would be one of our markers and then the Alien Tree because it had like a weird little face coming out of it. And you know, just identifying our routes by these different trees, which was really cool. (D32)
	8.2.4.3	I spent quite a lot of time taking photos and stuff as well of, of that, of the sky and the trees and enjoying the squirrels and the nature and things. Just really, you know, as I say, [I've] fallen, sort of fallen in love with the town that I'm from. Because when you live someplace, you don't really take advantage of what, the amazing things you have on your doorstep, because you think it's always there. You know, I live there. I'll see it next week, next month, next year, next decade whenever, but coming back home and sort of the situation with a pandemic made me actually sort of, forced me to see it in a new light and actually enjoy it. (D32)
8.3 Intra/Inter Dependence		
	8.3.1	I suppose we dip in and out of nature a little bit with the way that people live these days. Because we can be part of nature, when you are part, in nature, you are certainly part of it, but then we're able to dip out of it by living in a house, and disconnecting from it with technology. (C22)
	8.3.2	And yeah, it does still exist, but we don't understand it in the same way. We've replaced it with shopping, and buying stuff in. Rather than using our hands and our knowledge - But I suppose it is that thing, what tied you to the land? Once you have cut adrift from that, you are in some ways free to do very different things, in very different ways. But you also lose an enormous amount of Yeah, it's like being a refugee in the landscape. Rather than a kind of native, I guess. And I think, for a lot of people that is pain. They maybe don't understand it in those terms. But it is something that doesn't, doesn't quite feel right. A dislocation. Yeah. In some way. (D29)
	8.3.3	<p>...there's record levels of mental ill health, and, and I think a lot of it would be solved by just stepping back and scaling down and just being in a place with people. It's, it's about connection and belonging. And that can only happen in a place on some land. And oftentimes, you know, the people who suffer have got no connections, and no belonging. And you know, the..... yeah, nobody if..... you know, part of that is being accepted and connected. And then you feel like you belong, because they know..... You have to know somebody to accept them. And, and all of this can only happen in a place. So yeah, you need that sense of place. (D29)</p> <p>I think in Wales, this whole thing it's very much linked to the concept of 'hiraeth' and when people move away from here, their origins, the sense of loss - it's a very strong and important concept</p>

		<p>in Wales. This desire to be where you belong, like sheep hefted to part of the landscape. So I was hefted to the hills. (C19)</p> <p>Having lived here for 20 years before leaving I had not understood the importance of how a sense of place and belonging was essential to wellbeing. We as humans need to feel connected but that extends beyond personal relationship and shared cultural values to include the environment in which we exist. (S095)</p>
	8.3.4	<p>A mixture of history, nature, industry and beauty rolled into one. (PS7)</p> <p>We are so lucky in our small valley we have everything, history, nature, good people (PS9)</p> <p>.... like you're standing on the top of the world! You can see Blackburn, Darwen, Ribble Valley, Pendle Hill, the terraced streets, history of the cotton industry (PS41)</p>
	8.3.5	<p>On this side, the crops grow better on this side, on the Carboniferous, where it's better drained. And it's silly little, well, it's hardly little details, but it's, it's things such as that, that make all the difference. (A06)</p>
	8.3.6	<p>I think we are kind of part of it in a way. Or you know, it's it's like a symbiosis thing. A symbiotic relationship. Except for we're relying on nature. They're not relying on us. Yeah, I guess like, I just think that we're really affecting it and impacting it with a lot of what we do. And a lot of what we do is causing change in the climate, which is, in turn having effect on local nature. Like the Storm Arwin, you could say that's climate change, you know. And like I say, look at all the trees that have been felled. And I think we very much are shaping and forming and changing the nature that surrounds us significantly. So therefore, we are, you know, part of it, I would say, and it wouldn't be the way it is without. So... Yeah, we've definitely shaped the landscape, (D34)</p>
8.4 Spatio-Temporal Dimensions		
	8.4.1	<p>So its all the connectivity of all those generations after generations of knowledge of the environment that makes things what they are and what they look like. If you are looking out on the hill you are not seeing a land that's not been used, you are seeing land that's been used by people and shaped accordingly for a thousand years at least. So the people's imprint, the human impact is on every single bit of the environment around here. Even though you might get a visitor, the regular visitor would see it as not the case, it is entirely a human, an environment entirely impacted by humans here. (B08)</p>

	8.4.2	You know a Yew tree in a churchyard, and you think perhaps this tree's 1000 years old. And how many people have actually walked past this, you know, - that's survived all through these generations, how many generations of people have actually stood by this tree or noticed this tree. (C16)
	8.4.3	..it calls back that moment of, you know, we're just here for a really short period of time. So, choosing like... you look at the trees that have been here for a couple of hundred years, and you feel like I should make better choices about what I get upset about. (D31)
	8.4.4	<p>..the first thing is the view – from the Mynydd Rhiw. And that, that's it. I wouldn't want to live away from Mynydd Rhiw for that reason, I think. And knowing that it's.. it's always, you know I'm like a little fleck of dust in the history of everybody that's been living here in the past. Not important really. (C20)</p> <p>...it's a standing stone. I don't really know anything about it. I don't know what it's lined up with or anything. But it's been here a lot longer than me. And I always like to think in that way. I think that's really useful. Because then you.. you see your place better, if it is just in the continuum. Just, yes, you're here for now. And then you're not. - And touching. I will touch it. I suppose. It's that thing about again, you're touching something that is bigger than you. I think that's a nice thing as a human being as well, to find something that's not about you and yours, but something bigger. (D29)</p>
	8.4.5	<p>So, because we're crofters ourselves, sometimes a memory can stay in your mind for years, about the morning you went out, and just the way the sun was rising, and maybe I remember one morning was a lamb born, and it's sack, you know, it's it's sack, it's amniotic sac was blowing like that with the wind (indicates waving/moving with hands), and it was making a wee noise, and the lamb was inside, and just the sunrise. It was just a moment I've never forgotten. And I think the people here, who work the land, that's what their lives are about. That was their lives, all these moments, you know.</p> <p>So I think that for heritage, for people who work the land, and for people who are here from generation to generation, they have a round life, you know what I mean? It's not a square life, it's a round life. And, you know, Chekov said that he finished his story when he felt at the end, that he was returning to the beginning. And I think that people have that sense here, especially the older ones, the people who work the land. I think they have that sense, that they understand what their hands are doing and their lives make sense. You know what I mean? I think that they can find more sense in their lives. (B13)</p>

	8.4.6	<p>There are pebbles containing fossil coral, & in the cliff, fossilised sandstone layers, with ancient ripples where the water once made patterns & somehow they were preserved. (C24)</p> <p>My Grandfather used to be in Merchant Navy, so I you know, I remember growing up my grandfather used to live in the house next door to me here and so we can see the Irish Sea, so we'd be both of us would be there with binoculars looking at all the ships going past and....(C23)</p> <p>This barrel can tell you that story. Because it talks to you it tells you its own story in its own words. It even speaks in the first person. I am one of the 1000s of barrels that was filled with flour and sent by the Free States of America, in the ship the 'George Griswold' to the starving people. of Lancashire whose misery was caused by the aggressive civil war of the slave owners (E40)</p> <p>I have [being in touch with the descendants] - and they came across here. And they came from all over the world because they'd spread out afterwards. And we gave them a special Burn's supper. (A05)</p>
	8.4.7	<p>It is important to know what is around us and the change of the seasons and landscapes. It is also important to understand things that have once been on the landscapes and are no longer there from nature and man-made. (S482)</p> <p>You don't actually, you don't need to be six generations here, but it's about doing time somewhere. And it's about doing time somewhere with all your senses, you know, with your ears open and your eyes open and your conversations with people. It's about smelling it and walking it and feeling it and all those things. (B13)</p>
	8.4.8	<p>What you've kind of realise is that they have the same struggles. The same heartbreak, the same, you know, experiences together. And that is, it doesn't matter what century you're in. You think, Oh, yeah. Many, many things we share. And that's a good thing. (D29)</p> <p>And sometimes when the broadband goes off, I get all worked up about it and I think, get a grip. the people who lived here in this [house], these four walls here with two or three children. The water you got, you had to walk up the road, up the hill there to get water. They didn't have electricity till the late 60s. What am I getting worked up about? I'm so lucky! (C24)</p>
	8.4.9	<p>And you think over hundreds of years, all of this is eroding community - taking people off the land. And, you know, and looking at migrant crisis, everything, and that is about land! It is about millions of people who cannot stay where they are, where they may have been, for a long time. - ... you know, if you look</p>

		back at the history of any family, we all were migrants. You know, Canada, Australia, wherever. Because the law of Scottish rural families was there was too many people and no land. (D29)
	8.4.10	<p>It inspires me and makes me feel free. I'm aware I'm passing through but "all my possessions but for a moment in time" (S301)</p> <p>Yeah, there is also that responsibility that they've looked after, generation after generation, for a huge amount of time and they intend to pass it on to their next generation. A croft is not run for profit, it is run for the sense of keeping the land going you know, that is what it is, it is keeping the land going, erm so that's yeah its very different to a big scale climate debate but it is definitely something real. (B08)</p> <p>I imagine ancient man/woman in huts where stone circles remain on the tops [of hills], realise how transient this life is, how minor we are against the landscape. And how huge the risks of losing what there is. (C24)</p> <p>you know, they're very proud of their heritage, and they don't want to have a negative effect on what, they see their land as part of their heritage and something they're gonna pass on, the way it's been passed on to them. (C21)</p>
	8.4.11	<p>Yes, as just a small part in the landscape - there's loads of, of Pictish stones - But it is they're, they're done by people. And the thing that you can't get away from it. As much as I love nature. And I am part of it. I am human. And therefore, I'm part of that story. Those, yeah, Why did they do.... and I want to understand, I'm like, Why did they do that? What was it about this place? (D29)</p>
8.5 Storied Landscapes		
	8.5.0.1	<p>In places - there's are always so many stories and folktales and things connected with landscape features or animals and such. There is. (C16)</p> <p>That's the power of stories. I mean, we've always sat around fires telling stories. And you have to listen to what stories are chiming and what ones are you interested in. And yeah, what ones are you telling about yourself and about this place (D29)</p> <p>I think that the stories help define a place, don't they? And make you feel a lot more connected to them. (C23)</p> <p>The plants we see around us, St Johns wort – 'Lus Chaluim Chille', and apparently it [has] mild healing properties - but 'Lus Chaluim Chille' means the 'Armpit of Saint Columba' the man who brought Christianity to the Western Scotland and there is a massive story as to why that is. And Meadow Sweet is 'Lus Chuchulain', 'The Waistband of Cuchlain' the famous Irish warrior and there is a</p>

		whole story attached as to why he needed this meadowsweet, these calming qualities of because he had a massive temper. (B08)
	8.5.0.2	<p>It's funny, because we don't talk about, like, our knowledge, living here as locals, as indigenous knowledge, but it is. It very much is. (C25)</p> <p>... the more you work with local people and in the landscape, the more you realise there's more to it than that isn't just about hard facts and science was certainly that's not - doesn't have to take priority over, you know, all the other elements to the story. - the older I get, the more I think it has to be in the landscape. Otherwise, you're taking away so much meaning. (A07)</p> <p>we tend to think that the old people knew the different signs, you know, such as the sky perhaps, the cloud formation, that they could predict the weather, you know, and perhaps that if they see a certain bird or an animal at certain time of year, that would be a sign of good weather, bad weather. So, it's all part of heritage, it's very important, isn't it? (C16)</p>
	8.5.0.3	When the fishermen came home - after working a day's work, they would come round a place called ' <i>Am Beannachan</i> ', 'The Blessing'. And that meant that was them home. So it was called ' <i>Am Beannachan</i> '. And when you hear that, it's just full of humanity a wee story like that., a wee snippet, about a place name. (B13)
	8.5.0.4	I mean, you know, yeah, without getting too deep into it. People talk to me about religion, and I say I'm not religious; I was christened Church of Scotland, and I have no interest or belief in it. I'm much more, kind of lean towards sort of pagan thoughts and beliefs and that kind of stuff. And people, even in this day and age look at you and say "that's a bit wacky isn't it?" You say, "Well, perhaps that's why I don't talk about it very much, then." But yeah...yeah. - That's what it is for me. I mean, when I say pagan stuff, don't get me wrong. I'm not a believer in that, you know, Gods of things. But I just think that the landscape is so powerful that we....., that there must be a connection to it. (B10)
	8.5.0.5	<p>The peoples of the Mabinogion become real to me. Blodywydd – the woman of flowers, become an owl – The hoot of the tawny owl at night, which I hear often at home, reminds me there is a reality in the so-called fables we hear. (C24)</p> <p>It's meant to be really bad luck or something, you shouldn't [bring] any harm - or have a negative impact on coughs. It's something that should be sacred almost because of that. (C22)</p>

		<p>One of my favourite stories about the local area concerns a local lady who recalls being made aware of the [] dinosaur footprints during the late 1930s. She related how her mother used to encourage children to stand in the prints as the salt water was good for their feet. If some of the children were reluctant, she would try and persuade them with the words 'Stand in the dragon footprints'. (B14)</p> <p>And there's big interest - people are really interested in that type of stuff aren't they? Like the stories and the medicinal purposes of plants and things like that. (C18)</p>
	8.5.0.6	<p>Say, for example, 20 years ago, somebody was 80 years old, perhaps told me a story. That story may have been told, he may have been told that story by somebody was 80 years or 60 years older than him. So, you know, 1800 isn't so far away, when you consider that. You know, when I was a teenager, people born say around 1900 were alive, and you know, perhaps told me a story. But when they were 15 years old in 1915 say, perhaps somebody born in 1850 or even before then, 1840, were alive so that's you know, it's not so far away isn't it, when you consider that really (C16)</p>
	8.5.0.7	<p>I feel like it's a story that needs to be retold. And I think we have now because there's a, by Forfar lock where they must have drowned them all. They put a little sign up saying 'Not witches just women'. (D29)</p>
8.5.1		Myths, legends and the Fae
	8.5.1.1	<p>And apparently, some years ago, I mean, we're not talking lifetimes ago, we're talking in the sort of 60s or something the council came and built this bridge for the local people to get down to the shoreline. I think people never would use this bridge. This bridge cost a lot of money to build, this footbridge. And they would never use it. And they wouldn't use it because there was a superstition that fairies were pulling people under the water and drowning them. - I think the footnote to the story was in the end they took it away. Because they wouldn't use it. Something about they saw shadows in the water and it was fairies. (B10)</p>
	8.5.1.2	<p>I think my favourite one has to be the mermaids in Flodigarry, and how the folk tale of the mermaids in Flodigarry actually stopped the fish farm from being put along there. So there's the mermaids in Flodigarry they only come up in..... I think it's a full moon. - So they were planning and putting a fish farm all along in Flodigarry. And there was a big uproar in the community and signs along the side of the road saying 'Save the mermaids'. So that managed to put off the fish farm being put in Flodigarry, so there's not a fish farm there. So it's really cool. (B12)</p>

8.5.2		Enfolding the world – the importance of stories in place
	8.5.2.1	<p>I feel like nobody listens to...., and nature has been speaking for years to me. In things like the seasons are weird and migrate..... And I know change is also part of that. That is a natural thing, right? So landscapes change, coastlines change, yes, totally I get it. And we don't really see it because of our timescales. Timescales is really important. And we don't, it's very hard for us to step out of the human lifespan. And, but I think that's where knowing stories about ancestors and stuff is, is good, because you sort of see how they had to..... They didn't have the choice to import everything from everywhere else. (D29)</p>
	8.5.2.2	<p>People tend to relate to people, so if you get people's story in first and if that leads to this other important story, whatever that might be, fair enough. But people are more likely to respond to the human initially. (A03)</p>
	8.5.2.3	<p>Not to know its stories, and, and its its natural heritage, its cultural heritage - it's an absolute sin, not to know your own place. But it's important to recognise that you'll be learning about that all of your days, you know, you're never, you're never going to reach a point where "that's me, I understand it all now". And that's what makes it good. - There's always more to discover. And, and I think, as human beings, for our mental state, and our spiritual wellbeing and all the rest of it, on all the levels, I think it's really, really important to be able to make connections. (B13)</p>
	8.5.2.4	<p>It's just not the same as getting out there. And smelling everything. And, you know, [it was] the Harvest Moon last week, this huge orange moon, and [my friend], our dear friend who just died, he was one of these storytellers, he would always tell you that that was '<i>Gealach abachaidh an eòrna</i>', 'The moon that ripens the corn'. You know, and these lovely things, which, which really make you feel like you belong to a place. The more that... the more that you can fall in love with a place, the more that you feel you belong. (B13)</p>
	8.5.2.5	<p>You can make the story up, you know, you don't have to have the story that somebody gives you. And that is the beauty of us humans I suppose. Yeah. And maybe the whole the climate and the ecology stories are too..... Somehow we don't..... Yeah, we're not getting them quite right, they're too depressing. So people don't want to be part of that story. – What are the stories of land now? - They're not really, they're not restorative, there are no positives. They are not encouraging. - I think it's time for some new ones. (D29)</p>
8.6		Future Thinking

	8.6.1	<p>Protecting what we have – understanding of the significance of these sites – passing on knowledge and farms – to next generations (S246)</p> <p>In acknowledging the importance of landscape, nature, heritage and culture to wellbeing we not only enrich ourselves but we can share that joy with those who come here. We are the custodians of the now and we need to safeguard these for future generations. (S095)</p>
	8.6.2	<p>We have a connection with the landscape, and it's linked to the past, but it's also evolving to meet the needs of people of the future as well. And we need, you know, not to be too sentimental about certain things in the NIMBY sort of way. That's quite important. Yeah. It's got to work, hasn't it, - going forwards as well (C17)</p>
	8.6.3	<p>I'd say that the two aspects [of sustainability] are - living in a manner that's not going to reduce the resources in the area for future generations, whilst also making sure you've got networks and the contacts and the people in place to deal with situations as they arise. Because even without climate change, things are going to change. You've always got to cope with something. I think that's where the community - comes in. (D32)</p>
8.7 Land Connectedness Potential – Embedded Landscapes of Care		
	8.7.0.1	<p>So yes, I do think that if people love a place, you know, it's called nurture, isn't it? It's all about nurture. That's, that's what it's all about. It's, it's about nurture. That is really what we're, it's really what we're talking about. (B13)</p>
	8.7.0.2	<p>It's that responsibility, I think, keeping it local, to have people and land, and the habits of whatever goes on in that. It's really important. Yes! Really important to connect people with land. I mean, - Native communities, indigenous communities are doing more to look after forests than [us].... , and that is because they are so connected with their land. They know about it, they understand it, they know how to use it. We've lost so much of that. (D29)</p>
	8.7.0.3	<p>At one time they did want to build a wind farm here, very close to the stones really because it would have been over there and the person, when they did the public enquiry, they went up to the stones and the saw right away, understood that you cannot change that landscape, you cannot change that vision because if people have looked at that for thousands of years you cannot change it. (A02)</p>
	8.7.0.4	<p>... communities have to show the way. There is a role for communities to say 'what's this look like on the ground?', 'What's</p>

		all this biodiversity emergency mean, to me?', 'What is this going to do for my life?', 'How can I start looking at how my landscape absorbs carbon or supports biodiversity or wellbeing and people?' (D29)
8.7.2		Barriers to achieving Land Connectedness potential
	8.7.2.1	I think it definitely is.. because it's how people either encounter each other or come together is dependent on the landscape. And the environment. I think how people use that landscape and environment is what can either bring people together or not. It can be quite divisive as well you know, like we've had it all in the moors between you know, people, horse riders, and people cycling so you can end up with fractions as well. But I think the landscape can be something that people come together behind as well. (E35)
8.8		Ecomuseum Impact on Land Connectedness
	8.8.1.1they look back at the history of the peninsula from basically, the Ice age. They'd start off with a geology lecture. Then you'd have maybe something with the relationship between the community and the sea, and it would touch on language and poetry. And Sunday schools and.... What else was there? Oh all the.....we have a few estates on the Peninsula. So there'd be old kind of manor houses and their estates. But like, so the intention was to give the audience a synopsis of the history of the area from the beginning, basically. (C23)
	8.8.1.2	That was actually quite a big eye-opener because going somewhere like that explains a lot more about how, you know, you understand about how the battle happened, but also why you had the result you had. But you can't really understand that until you go and actually stand there and that puts you quite in awe of the landscape, you've got a hill and then another hill and they go down the bottom and it makes sense that you wouldn't get otherwise. (A02)
	8.8.1.3	Branxton Hill is a fault line. On that side, it's hard Andesitic rock, on this side, it's carboniferous and there are two spring lines coming down the hill - But further down, there are glacial clay deposits. I hadn't realised this, but the tractor driver, the chap who used to plough the fields, said in certain places you had to be very careful, because the plough would suddenly dig into clay and dam near tip the tractor over backwards, which is usually fatal thing. So you know, we did a bit of wandering around and he pointed some of these things out, and there's another spring line further down. Ground conditions get worse coming down the hill, boggy ground in the bottom. - But on this side, the crops grow better on this side on the Carboniferous where it's better drained. And it's silly little, well, it's hardly little details but it's, it's things such as that, that make all the difference. (A06)

8.8.2		
	8.8.2.1	working for a community organisation with a lot of highly skilled people who give up their precious time to contribute to your project and they seem to care a lot about you as an individual, (B08)
	8.8.2.2	Because it took so long to get the funding. I wasn't going to walk away. I was heavily invested in it. I mean, you know, it was over and above, it was beyond my job description. I didn't have to do it. Because of my links. Because I wanted [C23] to have continuity. You know, she'd invested, like, she's full time on it now, which is brilliant. So yeah. So that's sort of loyalty to individuals and the community, I suppose. And personal interest as well. (C17)
	8.8.2.3	Well its protecting it isn't it because they shouldn't do anything on that site and also leave Braxton the way it is, because it's still a small community. Because if you try and develop anything, you'll just distract from it which you don't want to do because it's, historically it's important. But you know there's probably a spiritual importance as well, if they're Scottish or English or had someone who fought there, you have to kind of preserve that as a site that's somewhere where people can go and reflect on what happened. (A02)
	8.8.2.4	It really taught me, that taught me the importance of communication and telling people what you're going to do and how you're going to do it and why you're doing this, this understanding of people's sensitivities. (A01)
	8.8.2.5	when you think the people that came, when they had that day for the 500th anniversary, why they were there, because that was quite amazing really, why they were there and why they had come from and why they were determined to be there. That was just a bit mind-blowing really (A02)
	8.8.2.6	E38 - I can imagine a woman working on her own in a masculine environment would be vulnerable ... it'd be a good idea to disguise yourself E37 - That's right. Yeah. So I mean, you know, there is a sense of logic to all of it.
	8.8.2.7	The story is when she had the baby and it died, a lot of the Whitworth women, because she walked with a coffin up to St Bartholomew's Church, but a lot of the women were there, and they sort of put flowers there. (E39)
	8.8.2.8	We're born alone, and we die alone. But in the middle, we're all walking along together, and arts and culture, give us a family photograph album of what we're able to achieve, and the best of

		what we can be. And, and I always thought, well, that's worth being involved in, in addition to being fun, it's worth being involved in. And I think an ecomuseum can be the family photograph of the outdoors for all of us. (D31)
	8.8.2.9	I think it's made me have a lot more respect and for where I live, and it's kind of highlighted the importance of our past, and how it shaped like the way the community is today. Yeah. And yeah, not to... like I kind of.... yeah, it's just a lot more respect to the different aspects of where I live..... and other like locations, if I go on holiday anywhere, I have a lot more respect for their traditions and their landscape. So, I'll stick to the paths and like use the restrooms and make sure I'm polite to folk. (B12)
8.8.3		Do the ecomuseums create opportunities for experience and foster connections between people, nature and the land?
	8.8.3.1	E37 And I think I think therein lies the value of the ecomuseum. E38 Yeah. Exactly E37 - Because would they come into the museum to explore that? The answer is probably no. Would they like to know what they're walking past? The answer is probably yes. I think, I thinkthat's the crux of it really, isn't it?
	8.8.3.2	Totally. Yep. I mean, I, I mean, there's loads more I need to learn, but I mean, I am beginning to know, all sorts of nooks and crannies. And, yeah, I mean, both in a physical sense, by travelling the geography in more intimate and kind of deep ways - deep in that I'm travelling more and more of it. And then in terms of, you know, what is there; learning more and more about, you know, the local, natural heritage on our hill; learning, you know, different shrubs and wild plants, and especially food plants, and all that kind of stuff, through to where all the archaeology, archaeological sites are the whole breadth of stuff. Absolutely. (D28)
	8.8.3.3	It was probably just after we moved to Skye in 2012. Because we started doing all the touristy things. So we started reading the boards that were located at the different ecomuseum [sites] and learning a bit more about the place that we've moved to. So it was quite, quite interesting. And it made us feel slightly more connected to where we'd moved to. (B12)
	8.8.3.4	And again, it was a resource that not only looked at nature, and outdoor learning, the environment, so that's quite big just now. But it looked at something that was specific to the area. On top of the area itself, like the whole Skye really, and the whole Highland culture. And its shores, and wildlife, birds, fish, it gave ... What else was there? There was land formations, but also activities on how, you know, seaweed might have been used, or how it can be used still, how you can use different shellfish to cook, what to do

		with it. And different activities, how to assess the tide based on the moon, and just different things like that, that were so important to our ancestors in years gone by. So again, it's making that not only the connection with the area and the community and the land itself, but to the culture and heritage as well. So it's combining those two things, and it's something that is really specific. (B11)
	8.8.3.5	I think it's really helpful to schools you know. The stuff that [C22] was doing, I think is pretty important. Because a lot of, I mean, even children in Pen Llyn, I think some don't go, you know, they everybody's stuck with their heads in their phones aren't they. And so it's getting out to learning about the sort of outdoor classroom, that kind of stuff -feeds in to it all. And the packs they do for families, Discovery packs, stuff like that I think is really important. (C17)
	8.8.3.6	They were absolutely made up with looking for the nature stuff and what they were really interested in was to learn the Welsh words for dragonfly. "What's dragonfly in Welsh?" "Gwas y neidr." "How do you say that?" "How would you spell it?" "How do you....? (C17)
	8.8.3.7	They went away [with] maybe not a bigger awareness of the nature stuff but of the link between there's another name for this thing, is not just the dragonfly. It's got another name, dragonfly, in Welsh it's gwas y neidr, the servant of the snake. (C17)
	8.8.3.8	We joined these two communities together. And we got young people to act in the play. And we used all the memories with the older people. The community loved it, they just loved that. They loved that project. There was music in it. You know, there was drama involved. There was flirting going on. It was fantastic, honestly, it was so human. So human. (B13)
	8.8.3.9	<p>because that's what was really good about - it was a very small scale, because, you know, we've got these big seafood festivals happening, but we just wanted to do something very small scale on the beach at Porthdinllaen, to link the fact that there are still fishermen there, [and] the history of the fishing trade at Porthdinllaen.</p> <p>So we wanted to hold a day, so that it wasn't just like a kind of tourist destination to go and have a pint, so that people could kind of link into some of the history and heritage of the place. And that worked really well. And it was really well supported. We worked really closely with the local primary school. And every time we did it, I think we've done, we did about eight years of it. The kids created like a little, they performed like a sea shanty, or they did something. So all the kids came down. So that brought their</p>

		<p>parents down. And yeah, it was really well supported by the locals, and we kind of did it, it was usually the third week of June. So it was outside of like the summer holidays, or, you know, it wasn't on a holiday period. But yeah, it went down really well. And it was just nice. Being able to kind of link people to the place in a bit of a different way than the usual, people arriving and just wanting to know where the pub is basically. (C18)</p>
	8.8.3.10	<p>because Castell Odo was the draw, because there isn't a public footpath up there. So I've often looked at it, and I thought I wouldn't mind having a look up there. I could knock on a door and say, can I go up, but I've never done it. Anyway. So 'Oh, somebody is organised something. I'll go and see'. And that's, that's really ... you know[how I got to know about the ecomuseum] (C20)</p>
	8.8.3.11	<p>The talk about Rhiw raised so many exciting ideas about the people and the place. Like many lovely areas of the UK, Pen Llyn has some threats, and some needs, things like affordable housing when locals are competing against second homers and buy to lets. The proportion of incomers is high, and the opportunities for local people are small so demographically it is changing. Keeping the spirit of the place alive is important. I went out walking Yr Eifl with the dogs this morning, thinking about what I learnt at the talk yesterday and how it might apply here. I will be attending the talk re Tre'r Ceiri next weekend and will learn even more about my immediate surroundings. (S698)</p>
8.8.4		<p>Do the ecomuseums celebrate human and non-human natures?</p>
	8.8.4.1	<p>If you go to Porth Y Swnt, you'll see on the way in, there's a poem in the in the floor. So that's written by Cynan. But one of his poems was Ballad Largo. So Largo was a fisherman in Pwllheli. Yeah. So he was, you know, a mythical fisherman in Phwelli, that went out and caught a mermaid. So we basically used that poem and created a bit of a little festival about that, and then created little opereta and put it on in the local brewery in Nefyn. And because they've got, they've brewed a larger called Largo, and things like that. –</p> <p>- we just wanted to kind of bring back some of - you know, there's still an active fishing fleet, that you know they fish here, the history of it with the boat building there. (C18)</p>
	8.8.4.2	<p>Because in this area, we have all the ages of archaeology represented, you know, we've got Jurassic. Then we've got the Ice Age. We've got the Mesolithic. We've got the Neolithic. We've got the Bronze Age, the Iron Age. We've got the Picts and the early Christian, Mediaeval up to the Vikings, the Clans, the Clearances, the Jacobites, and industrial archaeology in the diatomite industry. We've got every area so we're very, very keen to do work. (B13)</p>

Appendix 7: Chapter 9 Pebbles in a pond; Regenerative community futures referenced quotes table

Chapter Section	Reference Number	Quote/s
9.1		Holistic and dynamic approach and regenerative thinking ??
9.1.2	9.1.2.1	I mean what he's done in this area over the last year and a half as far as cycle routes - whether it is on the road or off-road, what have you - he's created something else now whereby people who like doing a little bit of adventure cycling can go. With descriptions, what to see, how long it will take, what your climb is, all that. Which is all really, really good knowledge and providing people read about it, then they're not going to go off route or they're not going to say 'Och we'll manage that and then find themselves in the dark. All the information is there, and we've got a fantastic website which has got everything that you could want on. (D26)
	9.1.2.2	<p>And it's not tourism at all costs. Otherwise, you're just stripping everything else, including the money in the end. It's got to be organic, it's got to feed, it's got to keep people here. It's got to sustain people, and they have to be able to make a decision as a person and as a family, that they can still live in the area, and benefit from tourism, if they want to do that. Not see it as something that's taking everything away from them. And it's the same conversation everywhere. But I think the problem with tourism, it's just seen as one thing. And growth in tourism is always seen as good. Where, you know, we don't just build loads and loads of factories everywhere, because that will create work. There's a there's a knock-on effect. -</p> <p>We have to move on to being regenerative. And that's been used in agriculture at the moment, as a term that people understand. So we need to do the same with tourism. And then that's how you distinguish between something like an ecomuseum and mass tourism. You know. (C21)</p>
	9.1.2.3	I think, if we're going to keep, like, sharing and making our Eco museum [sites] like an attraction for people to come and visit or wanting to share our heritage with other people that aren't in the community, then we need to invest in parking, paths, and like restrooms or like services. So they they're not like impacting on the nature that surrounds the ecomuseum. So like the parking.... the people park on the verge or, and then dig up the ground. And it just makes it really wet and not nice. So if you had to better public transport, like more frequent public transport, it might encourage people to stop hiring cars to explore the island, or and if the paths

		<p>were well kept, then it would stop people from walking at the sides of the path and expanding the path, taking up more. Public toilets, and that would stop people from using nature. And also, I think another thing that would increase sustainability would be services for camper vans. Quite often, you find that camper vans are letting their chemical waste out at the side of the road, or as they drive along or in like, ditches, just..... If there was more of these services it would be more sustainable, because people would have a bit more respect, because it would show that we, as a community cared about these sites. (B12)</p>
	9.1.2.4	<p>The annual sea fishing competition in this area and it had gone a bit flat in the previous decade or so and we resurrected it with the support of funding for the model of the ecomuseum and with volunteer involvement and trying to connect up the heritage of the place and Gaelic language and we ran the event and it was very successful indeed.</p> <p>But from that event those volunteers that got involved then became the heart of the very steering group that are now part of this huge capital works redevelopment of our harbour, so its like you start of with a heritage activity and it can actually become part of how the community sees its future, and that connectivity is really important, so that's a really strong example where events away from the desk are really important (B08)</p>
9.2		Pebbles into a pond
	9.2.1.1	<p>You know, 100 years ago, museums were seen as large public institutions, the V & A was, you know. It was a classroom for anybody who wanted to go in. And a lot of museums have, because they rely on wealthy donations, have become much more like a collector's club than a public institution. And ecomuseums are completely the other way. We've already been given the gift of the landscape. And although they require money to run and and fundraising is part of it, you're not in thrall to wealthy collectors in the same way, because we all own this land, and none of us own this land (D31)</p>
	9.2.1.2	<p>'They got us very interested in [finding out more] – you know' (E37)</p> <p>since working on LIVE I'm more connected with because the guys are doing research into, You know the different flowers, the coastal flowers, it's now even better because I get more out of my walks because I know oh that's an Irish moss, on the seashore. Or that's the oystercatcher and that's you know, I'm enjoying my walks bit more because I know a bit more about the wildlife that I'm seeing at different times of the year. Whereas before it would have been more of a cultural aspect or historical aspect of the things that I'd enjoy out for walks (C23)</p>

		<p>I'm more interested, - it's broadened my understanding of lots of aspects of Llyn really (C18)</p> <p>[It] has allowed me to gain a connection, understanding and respect to the different aspects of mine and others communities (S139)</p>
9.2.2		Challenges
	9.2.2.1	<p>[D28] needs to delegate more. She, she's good at everything, in fact she's amazing. But she's gonna burn herself out. And she's already showing signs of, signs of fatigue. And I think what's the effort she's been putting in over the last, particularly last six months, it's gonna take its toll. Unless she future proofs the management of the ecomuseum, the whole thing can fall apart very, very easily. I've seen it with Geoparks. You give something, three years funding. You know, the project officer spends a year learning his or her craft. It's been a year of doing stuff. They spent a year trying to get funding to keep the project going. Whilst the committee sits back, and lets the project officer do the work. The project officer goes and there's no-one left to do the work. (D27)</p>
	9.2.2.2	<p>I often feel that when you're asked to be a trustee or director or whatever. And you say Yes, A) you don't know what you're getting into and B) you don't know how long for. And I think that if sometimes we could have projects where people could just get involved in that one thing that they know about, are confident about and could do, do good, but they're not signing their life away. That could be a really, that could be a really useful way of going about things.</p> <p>So you know, if we want to go and I don't know they clear all the Giants tombstones or if you want to go and discover something, it's a very specific thing. And if people want to do it, then they then they can join in (D34)</p>
	9.2.2.3	<p>I think the difficulty with it is that the Hall its own committee. So if the trust tried to do anything, you're almost treading on their toes. I think you probably need better kind of joint working or joint understanding really. - I mean, you know, I often want to go to the hall committee and say, can you tell me what you're doing with this hall? (B10)</p> <p>My biggest problem I have with the community, - is they don't talk to each other. So where we could as one group, be fundraising to get the whole properly sorted or the..... We don't! We have one person looking at this, one person looking at that (D33)</p> <p>It's just, it's epic. It's epic proportions of not working together, there's a long history of not working together. But the problem is, is that they're all run by separate committees. And they don't talk to each other. They don't tell each other anything. (C25)</p>

		<p>And the people who look after the interests of Blairegowrie, generally speaking are only interested in Blairegowrie. It's very much the, what you get in, in most communities that people relate to the community they live in (D27)</p> <p>the other thing I learned, which was an important lesson for me, is that there may be 40 to 50 different voluntary groups, which is fantastic, but the people who are involved, they're interested in that particular subject. They're not, just because they're being a volunteer in that community group, that doesn't mean that they're interested in everybody else's voluntary group. (D28)</p> <p>I think that is hard work about ecomuseums because they are meant to be community-led projects. Which is great. But it does come with the kind of issues of you know, people, you get the plus side and the negative side, you get the wonderful enthusiasm and knowledge of somebody like [J], but then you get the kind of "Well, but I'm not prepared to prepare to compromise or allow any changes" (laughing). - So it's finding that middle ground - Which it's just gonna be a constant negotiation, I think. (E35)</p>
	9.2.2.4	<p>What we're really, if we're trying to get anything out of this project, it's, it's now we're kind of pushing towards the council to get them to realise they can't keep expecting community to do this for free. Like they like you go on to any tourism brochures, website, or anything that talks about this peninsula, they talk about the Dark Sky reserve. It's, it's massive. But there's no one looking after it. You know, it's almost down to one man now at this point, who's answering all the emails and organising all the events, and he's retired and he can he's like, 'I'm, I'm, I love it. I love astronomy, but I'm getting tired. And there's no one to pass it on to'. So you know, it's that catch-22 they can't afford to pay somebody to run these things. But it won't run properly unless there's somebody, even part-time to run these things. You know? (C25)</p>
	9.2.2.5	<p>just the length of time it takes to you know, develop all those partnerships and relationships, but also, just to apply for funding and get all the funding in place, you know. You're probably looking at 12 to 18 months. for that. (E35)</p> <p>we've done more, but it's always the way; it's lottery funding, and it takes so long to get through that whole process. So by the time we actually got the funding, it was just six months to the anniversary, were as if we'd had a year or two before, I think there'd been a lot more, you know, schools would have been a lot more willing to engage, because he's working towards that thing. But then afterwards a bit like, "oh, yeah, we did that, did that last year for the anniversary". (A07)</p>

	9.2.2.6	Because it's all voluntary, because it's all grant funded, you know, the projects have a finite life, and then they just stop. So you get lots of criticism from people who have no idea that's why stuff just stopped and they just perceive that we can't be bothered anymore or something. But you know, there is a limit to what people can do without funding. And so sometimes, you know, we're super active, we've got funding, and then there's no more money to run another event or another whatever. So it's a bit stop-start and I don't think that that helps with the overall PR of the initiative (D34)
	9.2.2.7	You know, in the grants world, you're a bit like a drug user, aren't you? You just go from one hit to the next. And you can get caught up very easily in that game of just chasing money all the time, without having control over your own destiny. And I think that's the the balance that you need to find is you need to have a long-term vision. And then you have to find funding that allows that vision to develop. (C21)
	9.2.2.8	And then with, we thought, that's a good idea. Can we move it on? And so we had the, the, I finished the HLF project (the Landscape Partnership), and then we thought we'll apply for something like InterReg money, and get that in place quite quickly. And then she'd [be] back, that'll be, this will evolve through that. Little did we know how long that was going to take. But we, [C23] got a job with the Sustainability Lab in Bangor with [C17] and we kind of agreed that she'd still keep the ecomuseum website ticking over. Because at the end of the day, those sites are there. It's just promoting them. And we, I, well, we started working on this bid with Cork [for LIVE]. And that took forever. (C21)
	9.2.2.9	I've noticed in the last three, maybe four years, is that local authorities, across county and borough, have been really affected budget-wise. And what has happened, has key contacts at those councils, key officers, have just disappeared. And you are kind of starting again. So we spent quite a long time trying to unwrap - there was an original agreement for our project to have some funding through Section 106 funding. - So we had an agreement with Rossendale for some Section 106 funding for the project. Oh, it took like, over a year to sort out and untangle because of people moving and changing in the project. And then you, it gets quite difficult because of elections. And you might find that there's been really great political support for a project. But then that all changes again (E35)
9.2.3		Opportunities: Soft power to transformational change
	9.2.3.1	But I just think that it's actually there's something lovely about feeling connected in this world that we live in. And so for me, this ecomuseum it's all about connections, a sense of belonging, and feeling really good about that, you know. 'This is where I'm from, and, and I feel good about myself, because', you know. And I'm not talking about myself here, I'm talking about young people in

		<p>particular. 'This is where I'm from. This is where I'm from, I'm really clear on who I am. And I'm clear on where, where I'm from'. Now, maybe I'm gonna go on and live in China and stay there for the rest of my days. But at least when I arrived, I had a sense of bearings, where I came from, and, you know, the ground was still on my boots, the earth, you know, that kind of thing? I think it sustains you. I do I think it sustains you in life. You know? (B13)</p>
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Appendix 7.1: Table of Interviewee hopes for the ecomuseum

Economic sustainability/viability
What would you like to see it achieve? I would like to think that a) we're able to sustain our jobs, or maybe get other jobs, - employ more people (B13)
I'm hoping that it'll bring in some more Leisure and tourism mainly because Covid has been so bad for so many businesses, you know massively, and they've absolutely struggled to death to get themselves back on. (E36)
I think that the ecomuseum can help, you know, to show people that there are opportunities within the field of marketing and so on, So it's just identifying what's opportunities there are for people to work and live here as well. Which ties into the ecomuseum concept. (C21)
At a simple level, I'm hoping that you know, going back to that kind of carrying capacity, and like, you know, self-catering places, I'm hoping that, if through the ecomuseum, that we can kind of raise awareness of that it doesn't have [a summer destination], you know, there's great walking to be done in the winter months (C18)
[Guided tours and walks] that's not happening down here at the moment. There's some people dabbling in it. But I think if stuff was packaged a bit better, and people took advantage of the ecomuseum offer, and, you know, worked with those sites, they could make a nice living out of a slower tourism or a regenerative tourism offer. (C21)
If we could spread the season and make the, you know, November and February and stuff a bit busier, maybe there'd be more opportunities for full-time work in industry, like not just seasonal work. And that's probably a benefit for like young people finding work and working in that industry if there are full-time jobs. And if we're successful in being able to kind of, I don't think you're necessarily going to bring the numbers down, but if we're successful and promoting the offseason visits, then maybe that will help..... (C18)
It's that idea that there's better ways of working, it doesn't necessarily mean you have to work longer or harder, you just work smarter. And I think if we leave that behind, if nothing else, if we actually manage to get that concept going, I think it's a huge battle (C25)
Economic Diversity
I would like to think that we had merchandise that we could sell, you know, postcards, bilingual postcards that tell you something on the front, and T-shirts, whatever, you know. I would like us to have a bit of that going on (B13)
Awareness
Raising awareness. Raising awareness of what's, of what is out there. What can be done. (D26)
The key role would be just to be there to promote and hammer the messages out there and I think, it's as important as that really. And raise awareness and create opportunities, as many opportunities as possible within the community and yeah, maybe be the portal that people look at when they wanna learn about regenerative tourism and communities. (C23)
I have this real desire to do this, like, green map of Kirri. And like mark all the, like, here's the community fridge. And here's where you can lock your bike up. And here's all the cycle routes. And here's all the walking routes. And here's like, where you can get your shoes fixed. And here's where you can get your computer fixed. And like, you know, mark all the like sort of places for like repair and recycle and active sustainable travel and all that stuff. And I think the ecomuseum could do some sort of like, really, really cool interactive map of like, all the

spots and all the different towns and places around here that have some sort of cultural or cultural or historic value or reference (D32)
Something that said we're part of the ecomuseum even. Even a little like ecomuseum sign. You know I sort of feel it would give more prominence to the ecomuseum, but also more prominence to the community. It has, the community, it remembers its past. (D33)
I'd like to see it be able to be described as a success, but I'm not quite sure what that looks like. And I don't feel like we're there yet. But I think I would really like to, to be involved with it, to get it to the stage where people know what it is, are interested and as is a success. I think when everybody's talking when when people come and stay with their friends and relations. And it's something that's talked about, and people go and explore or look at something in a normal way, and everyone can talk about it and everyone understands what it is, that's when it will be a success. (D34)
I hope it contributes to this debate about the museum-ification, anti-museum-ification. I just don't want ecomuseums to be seen as being sort of special things, out of the ordinary. They should be as part of the ordinary. (A01)
I think it's a link with our heritage and our environment is ...It is what we've been doing, but it's the kind of thing that I think could be further developed. You know, understanding that the environment has been shaped by our past. Because I'm aware that we are forgetting our past. (B09)
I would like to connect it, to connect to their humanity, you know. I wanted to show the hard-working hands and faces. And I want to communicate the songs that they have composed and poetry. I would like it to tell me maybe a little bit about how they do things, - how they relate one to another.. As well as informing me of the topography of the place - . I would like - to go to a place and know what happened right there. (B13)
You have to do more of it and get more people involved with a wider variety of topics that'll gain people's interest and that they want to be involved in. I suppose it's just doing more. - Engaging people in what there is here and why it is special. Hopefully, the more people who are aware of it and enjoy it and want to learn more about it, the more they're going to be protective of it and want to make sure that it's not lost.(C22)
We sort of like want it to kickstart and like, get it really going again. (E36)
I think it would be massively beneficial, especially looking at we've got around us, you know, if you've [had] things like the Duke of Edinburgh, it's all your outdoors it's learning its your environment around, it's your landscape where you live, you know, because you do camping, you do cooking outside and all stuff. And even foraging you know, around here we've got all sorts we've got wild garlic and berries, everything like that. And I think I think I think be really good for mental health and wellbeing as well as just getting [young people] active and getting them out rather than being in, you know. (E36)
I mean, Bangor has been doing a lot of work restoring the kelp beds. You know, a couple of glass bottom boats trying to look at the Kelp beds.. (as an idea for activity). A bit over the top, I know, but you know, thinking outside the box sometimes... [and] more of the sort of education on heritage sites But I think I think there's potential for that. I mean, I think there's potential say - but Pwllheli, I mean, it looks terrible. I don't know if you've walked around the town, but it's gone like, well dumpy. But it's got a lot of history. Because it, you know, was one of the origins of Plaid Cymru. There's a lot of local history there. And if you're, like us, relatively new to living here, you might not realise all of this. And even if you're, you've been here forever, you might not know all the nuances of everything. And I think there's potential to develop those sorts of things as well as the natural history of the area, which is really precious. (C24)
Activities

I would like a History Society for real developed.] I would like to see us do more of that kind of work, I definitely would. (B13)
I would like us to meet regularly for stories. I would like us to be meeting regularly to speak Gaelic and to share stories. (B13)
Maybe [school] assemblies, or class excursions to these different ecomuseum [sites], as maybe history lessons, or geography lessons even (B12)
Do more guided walks (B13)
I'd like to do more on the biking side of things. Biking in the in the local community. I'd quite like to do some of that (D34)
When I was a young person going to Ireland or wherever, for exchange trips, I got an awful lot out of them. I did. So, I would like us to do more of that. (B13)
I think we should be doing Scouts and things like that, you know. We should be doing things like that. How do you put a tent up? You know, how do you light a fire? I would like us to do that more regularly. It's the regular things that matter, with a few highlight days here and there for young people. But it's the regular hard graft things, that the things that leave the legacy you know. (B13)
Keep being creative in what we're doing. I would like us to make more films. (B13)
They linked to the [SVR] with the Skyline Walk. - That would be brilliant if they carried that on. Let's keep doing that. Because there's so many people that take part in the skyline – it's really, really good, and you learn so much going round (E36)
One of the things that we're hoping that would set back up is, walks [for] the [school] kids (E36)
We've been talking to them, [young people at the youth group], one of the things they're saying is that they'd like to work on all the weeks, you know, like a project, so that when they come, they know what they're coming for. They know what they need to do the week after and it keeps them busy in the week leading up to it as well. So you know, potentially things like that. That's what I hope. That's my dream. - to get a team of them there interviewing people at the Rush Cart [or] I think young people might be the people [to work with digitising the museum archives] (E36)
So it's quite an important thing. To be able to go out and do activities outdoors, rather than just being in the school following the curriculum. - But yeah, it's something I hope to do more of next year, if it's, if it's possible, hopefully things will be. (C22)
Extending the Ecomuseum - Networking
I think it [the ecomuseum] does need to move on. And I think we need to make a better, have a slightly different heading with a strap line run on the ecomuseum principles, that sort of thing. - He said, if somebody wants, he did say if you know, somebody wants to take it on and run with it later on, fine. So that's what I want to do at the moment. I want to take it on and run with it, and extend, in effect extend it (A06)
I think what would be interesting - it'd be really nice to connect more with Healy Dell as well and I think some of those connections that we started to make with [the tearooms] with [Rooley Moor Forum] And again, that'd be another really great thing to be able to do is to make some of those connections into Rochdale. Which we haven't done. - And I think working with Healy Dell, we can do that. But also a chaps been in touch as well about the Limer's Gate, and the pack horse trails and that he's got Rochdale counsellors on board with that, so yeah (E35)
I think Mid Penines [Arts] can be a kind of a bit of a facilitator for getting some of that going and up and running and throw some of its expertise around things like fundraising, etc. And bringing some of those and negotiating, bringing some of those groups and partnerships together. (E35 Interview part 2)

I'm like, can our website provide something for the museum as a, like a kind of portal for the museum in Whitworth. You know, to have all the information that they've got on their kind of lecture programme, etc. But it could also be a portal into their collection as well. You know, that they're doing all this amazing work recording (E35 Interview part 2)

Social Action

I'd like to see it. I'd like to see the sites really taking ownership of the idea, and creating hubs, proper hubs for Co-promoting their own places. (C17)

I definitely think there is a need for us to try and engage with the community quite a lot more than we do. (B10)

I'm thinking of all the people who volunteered across the pandemic to erm you know support the more vulnerable people in this community and maybe we can harness what they are doing and maybe get them to continue to contribute in the future (B08)

More partnerships (B13)

I believe intergenerational engagement on projects is key for community sustainability. This will hopefully ensure continued interest in the ecomuseum thereby protecting the local landscape and engaging the community at large. (B14)

Maybe different groups could adopt a little area to care for yeah, definitely. That's another really good idea you know, like a defined area that they maintain and look after it. So one of the ideas then was to get a team together to make sure that all street names were visible. Because a lot of them were broken or there were letters missing off them (E36 (2nd Interview))

I spoke to the younger people here, like between 13 and 15 sort of thing. They've been like, well, that'd be cool, but you can guarantee if anything gets broke they'll blame us. If it gets set fire too they'll blame us even though it's not us, you know. So I think a lot of it's just finding them stuff to do and giving them alibis of actually 'we're here' rather than there, I think, you know, but a lot of them are quite helpful, they want to help you know. They're happy to bits, they're happy to do gardening. My idea would be getting them involved in community bits, you know, like the tidy up an area, or planting an area or stuff like that. Or even just that, like, you know, like a forage and cook type of session somewhere, just trying to get them to some things that they normally don't, [to] come out of their comfort zone. But if you keep them active, it keeps the brains going, doesn't it? (E36)

you could have like community allotments and things like that (C24) I mean, if you had stuff like that, and you were growing things that grow well, locally, which would encourage people to think that, you know, it's more special here because that only grows here or that you know, we've got a microclimate here which grows that (C24)

Environmental Action

I was going to arrange to do some survey work in one of the most important areas of woodland in central Scotland. [before the pandemic] So it's. So I feel that's something I would like to continue involvement with. (D27)

I'm hoping that some of the work that we're doing in the ecomuseum can rehearse, for example, particularly the paleo-ecological study type thing, can rehearse ideas that can then be scaled up through the bio-region. (D28)

Sustainability, I think, if we're going to keep sharing and making our ecomuseum [sites] an attraction for people to come and visit, or wanting to share our heritage with other people that aren't in the community, then we need to invest in parking, paths, and restrooms or services. (B12)