

The University of St Mark & St John

**Beings Here: An Exploration of Outdoor
Educators Relationship with Place.**

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Dissertation submitted in part-fulfilment of the requirements for

The Master of Research in Outdoor Education

2023

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
List of Figures.....	3
List of Tables	3
Statement of Originality	4
Acknowledgements	5
Abstract	6
Chapter One - Introduction	7
Project Aims.....	7
Background and Justification	7
Summary of Content.....	9
Chapter Two - Literature Review	10
Being Relational and the More-than-human	10
Indigenous Influences	11
Place-Responsive Pedagogies	13
Post-Qualitative and New Materialist Approaches	17
Thinking-with-Theory	19
Chapter Three – Methodology	21
Researcher Position	21
Inquiry Approaches	23
Case-assemblages	25
Research Methods & Data Collection	26
Data Cases	28
Ethical Considerations	29
Generalisability	30
Procedure of Analysis	30
Chapter 4 – Data Presentation and Analysis	32
1. How are they/we making kin with each other, the woods, and other beings?	34

Assemblage A: Responsibility, care, opportunity and being welcomed.	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2. How are attunements with the place showing up – non-humans being involved, actions, words, and images?	36
Assemblage E: Chatting and silence - different ways of feeling understood and accepted by the place.	36
3. Where is ‘non-language visible’ – body movements, sounds and other sensory ways?	37
Assemblage G: Sensory- words, experiences, body-movements, sounds.....	37
Chapter Five - Discussion	41
Making Kin	41
Attunements with Place	42
‘Non-language’ Visible	43
Chapter Six – Implications for Practice and Conclusions	45
Implications for Practice.....	45
Reflections and Conclusions.....	47
Reference List	50
Appendix 1- Ethics Application	61
Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet	72
Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form.....	76
Appendix 4- Walking Interview Process & Maps	78
Old Map offered before walking interview.....	79
New Map offered before walking interview	80
Appendix 5 – Talking Circle Process	81
Appendix 6 – Images from Talking Circle Process	83
Appendix 7: Sample Interview Transcript	86
Appendix 8: Terrapsychological Inquiry Journal pages.....	100
Appendix 9: Case-assemblages.....	101

List of Figures

Figure 1: Watt's Two Framings	13
Figure 2: Assemblage A: Responsibility, care, opportunity and being welcomed.	34
Figure 3: Assemblage E: Chatting and silence - different ways of feeling understood and accepted by the place.....	36
Figure 4: Assemblage G: Sensory- words, experiences, body-movements, sounds	37

List of Tables

Table 1: Cases and Data Collection.....	28
Table 2 : Diffraction Questions	31

Statement of Originality

I confirm that I have fully acknowledged all sources of information and help received and that where such acknowledgement is not made the work is my own.

Signed J. Archard

Dated: July 26, 2023

Acknowledgements

It may not be usual to write a vast list of acknowledgements for a master's degree thesis, however this has been an immense learning journey for me, and I wish to honour those who helped make it happen. I think it is good practice to show that besides all the academics referenced in this text, there are many, many more people and other beings that have enabled this to be written.

To all those who have guided me to learn through my life, and to know that it can be hard make turns towards new ideas, I am grateful. To Marjon for being small and approachable for a woman who had failed at everything academic since leaving school, and my tutor Mark for having confidence in my ideas and writing. To the people at constellations who were in the field that made the decision with me to step into academic learning. To the fellow students who shared the journey, especially Julie and Michelle.

To the huge community of people that have supported me in the two years of study, the ones who stepped in to cover my work when I needed to read or write, or just sleep, especially Sarah, Tiff and in the background dear Jane. To those who gave up time to be part of this study and have continued to ask what is happening and what is emerging, and to Sonia who emerged to help with edits and final thoughts. To my dear family and especially my sister Susanne, who have stood with me along the way. To Gavin, my life partner and co-conspirator in all things to do with nature-people-reciprocity, for seeing when I was stressed and guiding me to be gentler. And of course, to the land of the northern edge of the Blackdown Hills, to the ancestors of those lands, to the trees and all the beings at the woods, which I love with all my being and without whom there would be no story to tell.

Abstract

This inquiry explores how a small group of woodland-based outdoor educators in the South West of England make and describe their relationship with the place where they work. It takes a post-qualitative, posthuman, new materialist approach employing a diffractive methodology and analysis, leading to a set of case-assemblages. The inquiry approach and methods are influenced by Indigenous scholars and methodologies. Materials were gathered through walking interviews and a talking-circle, which took place in the woodland. The analysis was enacted through three diffraction questions, summarised as Making Kin, Attunements with Place and 'Non-language' Visible. Discussion of the case-assemblages has enabled a series of four implications for practice to emerge, which are framed as questions: How practitioners can be supported to spend more time becoming familiar with their places, encouraging them to find ways to shift their perspective towards becoming with the place; how practitioners can hear or be present to stories of place; how practices and pedagogy can enable more-than-human agency to be included; and how we support educators to trust and the instinct to be with their senses, and to be led by the more-than-humans, as well as value their cognitive knowledge. Tentative ideas for enacting these are offered, along with new areas of inquiry including work with Indigenous scholars. The discussion also reflects on the complexity of taking a post-qualitative approach.

Chapter One: Introduction

Project Aims

This thesis presents an inquiry into the relationship between a group of outdoor educators and one place where they make their practice. The specific focus is: 'How do educators create their relationship with this place, how do they describe this and what about this relationship impacts on the way they carry out their practice?' It is situated within the growing body of research into place-responsive pedagogies (Brown & Wattchow, 2015; Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Nicol & Sangster, 2019). The research takes a postqualitative approach (Lather & St Pierre, 2013; Mcphie & Clarke, 2020), and so the research question is framed as an *inquiry*. With influences from Indigenous scholars (Chilisa, 2012; Watts, 2013), it considers reciprocity between people and land. It is an academic research-exploration, and the process of the inquiry is as important as what emerges (Murriss, 2021a) . The inquiry itself is focused on the experiences of a small group of outdoor educators who practice in a woodland in the South West of England. The methodology is adapted from Barad's (2007) diffractive methodology, uses a posthuman multi-case study, with in-place walking interviews, a group talking-circle and terrapsychological inquiry to collect data. A novel diffractive analysis produced a weaving together of case-assemblages that lead to a set of implications for practice, and the discussion reflects on the working with a postqualitative approach and the methodology.

Background and Justification

This inquiry has grown from my experience as an outdoor practitioner working in one place for more than twelve years, a woodland of 100 acres within the public forest estate of the Blackdown Hills in Somerset. My practice is a mix of outdoor education, environmental education, forest school and nature-based therapeutic approaches,

working across all age groups. I became curious about how being based in this one place was affecting my practice, the practices of others whom I worked alongside and, more challengingly for this inquiry, the place itself. I had a *felt* sense of reciprocal relationship with the woods, with ways of enacting and describing that for myself, influenced by spiritual and earth-honouring practices learned over years that entwined with my outdoor educator roles. However, I had little sense of how others experienced the place except in the most pragmatic terms, how they might describe it or what impacts their sense of place may be having on those we worked with. I also had an awareness that the place – the woods, the animals, plants, and other beings – were somehow reaching into and out to me and affecting me in ways that I could not (yet) describe and yet felt essential to bring into a language that I and others may be able to use. I could have chosen to explore my own relationship with the woods through an autoethnography or autobiography (Leather, 2020), but instead wanted to focus exploring how different practitioners were making/experiencing a relationship with the woods, and how that may be impacting their practice.

During the course of this Master of Research degree I became aware that there were many metric rich studies investigating nature connection or nature-connectedness (Mayer & Frantz, 2004; Richardson et al., 2016, 2019; Richardson & Sheffield, 2015). At the same time, I encountered the place-based pedagogies of Wattchow and Brown (2015; 2011) and Stewart's writings of place-responsive pedagogies (2004, 2020), resonating with my own experiences. These added to my questioning about what being place-responsive may mean in *one place*. Reading recent research which explored in new ways the entangled relationships that outdoor educators make with the places they practice (Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Mikaelis & Asfeldt, 2017; Nicol & Sangster, 2019), began to provoke new ways of conceptualising and thinking. These studies drew on new materialist (Fox & Alldred, 2015) and relational materialist

(Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010) approaches, which opened unexpected avenues of exploration into post-qualitative research (Gough, 2016; Murriss, 2021b). Like others (Clarke & Mcphie, 2020), once I had begun to read and explore in this post-qualitative milieu, the dominant humanist qualitative research approaches did not make sense for an inquiry where exploring relationality was at the heart. This is a field where the literature is rapidly increasing (Lather & St Pierre, 2013), where terms are often contended and can be demanding to work within/with (Murriss, 2021b) as this thesis demonstrates. Working through and thinking-with theories (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018) has created the approach for this inquiry-writing, which is explained in the literature review. My positionality as a researcher is discussed in more detail in the Methodology section.

Summary of Content

The writing is composed in a way that embodies a postqualitative and new materialist research approach, and as such needs to “transgress the traditional forms of academic writing” (Schadler, 2016, p. 510) so in places deviates from the normal structure for a Master of Research Degree thesis. This may unsettle the reader and necessitates thinking differently (Aghasaleh & St Pierre, 2014; Pleasants & Stewart, 2020). The Literature Review considers how practitioners are relational, learns from Indigenous approaches and reviews recent research into place-based and place-responsive pedagogies. It includes a discussion of how a postqualitative approach has influenced this inquiry, and following Asfeldt and Beames (2017), the Methodology includes Inquiry Approaches and includes a section on Analysis Procedure. This is a work-in-progress that embodies the spirit of be-coming described later as a key facet of post-qualitative inquiry. Inspired by my love of one place and my care for the people who work there, there are many entanglements to explore.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Being Relational and the More-than-human

The rise of the term more-than-human and the notion of being relational sit within a growing move in the social sciences, and wider research, to challenge humans being at the centre of things (Fenwick et al., 2015; St Pierre, 2011). This has flowed into the outdoor studies literature with a growing body of work (Lynch, 2018; Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Mcphie & Clarke, 2020; Riley, 2020). Eminent cultural and social geographer Whatmore (2006) called for a move towards forms of more-than-human inquiry, so that technology, place, plants, and animals, can be included in the co-making of research. She suggests this is a “return to the livingness of the world” (p 600) that helps us to shift our view from “the indifferent stuff of the world ‘out there’, articulated through notions of ‘land’, ‘nature’ or ‘environment’ to the intimate fabric of corporeality that includes and redistributes the ‘in here’ of human beings” (p 600).

A different perspective is brought by Quay (2013), exploring the importance for outdoor educators of the relationship between “self, others and nature”. He describes a difference between outdoor educators using a pragmatic, transactional thinking and what he terms an aesthetic experience - a felt, emotional sense of *be-ing* (p 142) which leads to a sense of oneness. “When thinking affectively and experiencing aesthetically, we are not concerned with this balance, whatever it may be. We are simply existing in a particular way of being” (p 154). Riley (2020) explored how relational pedagogy could challenge the nature of the learner being separate and discreet, using attuning-with land practices, and within this she describes an experience when her body felt “imbued with the very fabric of the lands materiality” as an “embodiment of relationality” (p 96). She suggests that outdoor experiential education needs to move from “learning *about/of* the world to ...learning *with* the

world” (p.97). This is echoed when Lynch (2018) describes his use of the term more-than-human, and that of other researchers such as Taylor et al. (2012), saying that it is not about a “binary of human / nature but ...open[s] to ways of understanding our intertwining of human *and* environment” (p. 66). According to Mitten (2017), relationships between people, and people and place, are central to effective outdoor education “our relationships are entwined with all beings and natural systems as a kind of ecology of relationship” (p. 2).

Graham et al (2022) remind us that the colonial project has, for Indigenous peoples, made land merely a means to an end, a commodity, obscuring the ability to see the self as an intricate part of nature. Perhaps it is even more important to know that for Aboriginal peoples there is a relational ethos between humans and land that comes from “patterns etched in the landscape by tens of thousands of years of human occupation that are available for recovery and revival in face of colonisation” (Brigg & Graham, 2021). Kimmerer (2013), scientist and Indigenous writer, talks about the importance of human story-making as essential for relationship to land:

“The story of our relationship to the earth is written more truthfully on the land than on the page. It lasts there. The land remembers what we said and what we did. Stories are among our most potent tools for restoring the land as well as our relationship to the land. We need to unearth the old stories that live in a place and begin to create new ones, for we are storymakers, not just storytellers” (p 76).

Indigenous Influences

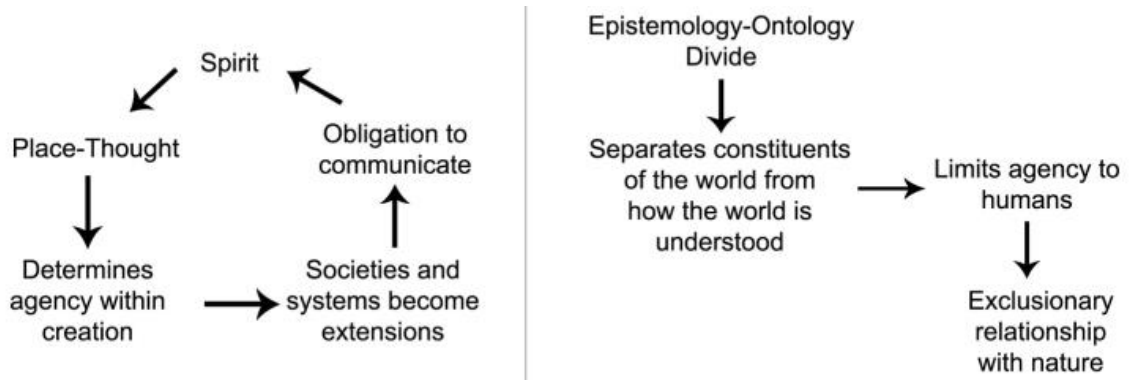
Denzin and Lincoln (2018) remind us that research has been part of the colonial project, othering people from apparently exotic cultures and setting them apart to be studied, so I honour the work that is being carried out by Indigenous researchers bringing practices into the academy, for example Shotton et al. (2018) and Chilisa (2012). Graham et al (2022) discuss the importance of bringing together non-Indigenous and Indigenous discussion as a “positive step towards reconstructing

human relationship to place and ecological communities” (para. 8). Indigenous scholars developed ideas about non-human agency long before the new materialisms or other western scholars and have something to teach if approached respectfully and acknowledged (Rosiek et al., 2020). I draw on Indigenous approaches because the notion that we/humans are entwined with the world has common ground with Indigenous worldviews that perceive the world itself as being alive (Antonio, 2019; Kimmerer, 2013; Simpson, 2014). Indigenous research academic Kovach tells us that Indigenous epistemologies include non-human sources as a place where knowledge arises, and that Indigenous theory (and lifeways) is about being in relationship, supported by values of “collectivism, experience, place and person in place or defined as respectfulness, reciprocity, and responsibility” (p. 223). She also describes how holism and making relationship have primacy in Indigenous research, different to the focus on subject/object and the dualism of western science-dominated paradigms.

The sense that land and place have agency is described frequently by Indigenous scholars and sits within their various cosmologies in differing ways (Antonio, 2019; Brown & Heaton, 2015; Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019; Tuck et al., 2014).

Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee scholar Watts (2013) writes of the story of First Woman and Sky Woman to describe how Place-Thought and (land) agency come about from one Indigenous perspective. She describes that Place-Thought is a theoretical knowing of the world through physical embodiment, based on the principle that land is alive and thinking. Her two different framings show how an Anishinaabe and/or Haudenosaunee and Euro-western perspective differ (Figure 1). On the left, a representation of Anishinaabe and /or Haudenosaunee cosmology and on the right, her frame of a Euro-Western meta-understanding.

Figure 1: Watt's Two Framings



(Watts, 2013, p. 22)

Watts says “The visual describes the animate nature of the land. To be animate goes beyond being alive or acting, it is to be full of thought, desire, contemplation and will...So, all elements of nature possess agency, and this agency is not limited to innate or causal relationships” (p. 23).

Place-Responsive Pedagogies

Research in the field of outdoor studies has grown significantly in the last twenty years, and as Quay (2020) suggests, it is now perhaps “coming of age” (p. xix). This maturity means that outdoor education research is now grappling with complex concepts such as land, human, place, space, nature, and environment - concepts that are relevant to this inquiry, some explored further through this literature review. As part of this research growth, there is a small but developing body of work about the significance of the role of the outdoor educator and the *place* where they make their practice (Brown & Wattchow, 2015; Goodenough et al., 2021; D. A. Gruenewald, 2003; Leather & Nicholls, 2016; Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Mannion & Lynch, 2016; Mikael, 2018; Nicol, 2020; Stewart, 2020)

Academic discussion of the significance of place has arisen as humans are increasingly concerned about how we live, feeling the loss of connection with both

land and nature (Baker, 2005; Lovell, 2016). One of the defining features of being alive is that we are always located somewhere and yet the importance of place has been receding as the less rich concepts of time and space have become dominant (Gruenewald, 2003a). Language obscures the connection further, with places described as simply *locations* on maps, *settings* for experiences or *sites* to be used (Casey, 1993). Natural and urban places are becoming increasingly homogenised through industrialization, with roads, railways, housing estates and shopping centres all looking and feeling the same, and outdoor places becoming simply a backdrop to an adventure or learning experience rather than having an integral, relational role (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Baker describes how environmental literacy in the USA declined rapidly in the latter half of the 20th century, linking this to the loss of undeveloped land and a collective loss of relationship with land, and describes the need for outdoor (adventure) educators to promote skills that “include a personal approach to relating to the land” (p. 270). Gruenewald (2003) called for educators to listen to the land, to what places are telling us, and others have set out to explore how to do that.

Mannion and Lynch (2016) call for a renewed focus on place in outdoor education, as they describe that an emphasis on personal development and adventure have been favoured instead of paying attention to nature, or people’s relationship with places (p 86). As a response to the sense of loss and disconnection, and lack of focus on relationships, Wattchow and Brown (2011) explored and developed concepts of place-responsiveness into a *pedagogy of place*. For them, places are not objects that can be simply packaged or described, but instead are an unfolding, emergent phenomenon, influenced by interaction, reciprocity, and interdependence with people and are “always evolving, always becoming” (p. 75). Essential to this pedagogy is the need to engage with the local, rather than have generic activities or programmes,

and for outdoor educators to be committed to knowing their place deeply. They propose these four signposts to enable outdoor educators to begin this process: “1. Being present in and with place. 2. The power of place-based stories and narratives. 3. Apprenticing ourselves to outdoor places. 4. The representation of place experiences” (p. 182). In their later writing (Brown & Wattchow, 2015), these ideas are extended further as they introduce the linked concepts of *enskilment* and *dwelling*, drawing on the work of anthropologist Ingold (2000). The process of enskilment makes learning inseparable from doing and is “embedded in the context of practical engagement in the world – that is, in *dwelling*” (Ingold p. 416). Brown and Wattchow contend that we will not get to know a place through moving quickly from one point to another, or by learning skills that are devoid of context and not engaging with the specific characteristics that are present. Instead, they suggest that to “inhabit places requires purposeful and skillful practice” (p. 437).

More recently a small number of research studies have begun to add new questions and flesh to the bones of place-responsiveness. Nicol and Sangster (2019) explored the role of the short urban solo as a way for teachers to come to know a place differently and deeply, finding unexpected results. Even though the participants experiences were in places close to where they lived and worked, places they had passed through regularly, the simple hour-long solo led to new experiences and feelings as “dwelling within them for a very short period of time they experienced them as unfamiliar” (p.1380). This finding points to place-responsiveness not happening by itself; an educational or experiential intervention like the solo is needed.

In their month-long canoe-journey research with students in the Canadian Rockies, Mikaelis and Asfeldt (2017) looked at “the entangled topics of skill, place and journey” (p. 2) through a posthuman research approach to enable the de-centering of the

human and allow different ways of seeing people's relationship to place and the more-than-human to emerge. Their findings point to three implications for practice: First, learners need the [relevant] outdoor skills to be present to the place, enabling them to stay safe, warm, dry etc., then they could then focus on natural history, social and cultural history and reading the riverscape. The second is about the significance of place-stories, both those from history and the stories that people created. The third is that outdoor educators need to really consider if learners are to become "actively engaged in landscapes rather than simply passing through" (p. 9).

Lynch and Mannion (2021) propose that de-centering the human is essential to enact place-based education. Their empirical study with teachers who regularly work outdoors inquired into how the more-than-human elements found in the outdoors became part of planning and performing their outdoor education. Their key finding is about attunement, a socio-material practice which they described as "a response-making process at work *with* the material, more-than-human and affective features of a place" (p5). For example, a research vignette described a participant moving through the forest, experiencing the different sensations of being in the tree-shade, or out in the open, which can be seen as *attunements* that influenced their smuggling related education activity (p. 14). They conclude that the educators need to develop "their attunements to the more-than-human as a core concern" (p. 23). Stewart (2020) brings together a series of 'assemblages' that describe what he says is an attempt to create outdoor and environmental education pedagogies that are based in the "natural-cultural history of the places in which they occur" (p. 1). Each is a response, a telling of story of the place, local history, peoples, flora/fauna or concepts that he is investigating/travelling with, and what is most striking is the place in this volume given to the non-human – the cod of the Murray River, dead river red gum, speckled warbler.

Post-Qualitative and New Materialist Approaches

McPhie and Clarke (2020) describe post-qualitative research as a “recent and controversial addition to academic methodological practice” (p.186). The approaches can be challenging, as they take researchers away from “representational ...knowledge re-production” (p.187), encouraging knowledge to be produced differently. Quoting St Pierre (2011), they describe how this leads each researcher to create a “*re-mix, mashup, assemblage, a becoming* of inquiry that is not a priori, inevitable, repeatable.” (p. 620). There are concerns about whether post-qualitative research can *really* be considered research, as evidenced by the critique of Greene (2013) who questioned what is being lost in how we see the social world.

Attention has to be paid to philosophical underpinnings *as method* and to the *process* of the inquiry itself (Murriss, 2021a). Researching in this way “reconfigures even ontology itself as not being about what ‘*is*’ but about ‘*becoming*’ [emphasis added]” (p. 2). This concept of things always becoming rather than being is a central (and unsettling) part of post-qualitative inquiry, is challenging to work with and write about. Attempting to describe a world that is always in flux, on the move and not made up of *any* fixed states does not fit easily into usual forms of academic language (Aghasaleh & St Pierre, 2014). For an outdoor practitioner, working in ever-changing weather, seasons, cycles and even people’s moods and behaviours, things being in flux makes complete sense. How can I know and also inquire into something that is always changing and shifting, never still? This is far from the positivist /Cartesian approach to knowing and understanding a world that allows us to have object/subject, to stand apart from and look at (Pleasants & Stewart, 2020).

Emerging in the late 1990s, the *new materialisms* are about materiality, the substance and matter of physical things/beings/world/concepts, in a world where language and culture have come to dominate (Barad, 2003). They include a complex

array of research/inquiry approaches, under a variety of names, including posthuman studies, material feminism, actor network theory and the ontological turn (Koro-Ljungburg et al., 2018). Clarke and Mcphie (2020) describe how the new materialisms, whilst defying one single definition, are trying to create ‘better philosophies of matter’ (p 1235) and consider that matter is alive and has agency or is *agential*. The emerging philosophies are influenced by a wide range of theorists, such as Ingold (2000, 2011) on materiality, Haraway (2016) on posthuman relationships and making kin with the non-human, Barad (2003, 2007) on the entanglement of matter and quantum physics as method and Braidotti (2019) on critical thinking in posthuman theories.

How to conceptualise and work with data from a post-qualitative standpoint is an interesting task which opens up new perspectives. There is an imperative to see data as not simply being passive, inert, or lifeless (Koro-Ljungburg et al., 2018; Murriss, 2021a) which is in alignment with Indigenous researchers (Chilisa, 2012). The critical stance taken by post qualitative theorists such as St Pierre & Jackson (2014) is that data analysis needs to be about *more* than coding - “analysis can treat words (e.g., participant’s words in interview transcripts) as brute data waiting to be coded, labelled with other brute words (and even counted)” (p. 715). They argue that coding in this way reinforces and comes from a Cartesian standpoint; one that expects data to exist somewhere out there, and that it (the data) can be found and can answer the question that has been posed – a deductive approach. To move away from this linear, representing approach and towards seeing “a world that is simply there” (Colebrook, C 2016 in Murriss (ed) p.11), I explore Barad’s approach (2007) and adopt a diffractive methodology for this inquiry, explained further in Inquiry Approaches.

Taking a critical view, Rosiek et al. (2020) challenge researchers who are considering the new materialisms to actively engage with Indigenous literature. The topic of non-human agency, the agential realism of Barad (2007) and others, is they say, common to both, and yet the ‘ontological turn’ discussions that dominate the literature are tending to ignore this. There is a danger of reinforcing the erasure of Indigenous cultures or thought, that avoiding a focus on Indigenous studies can be another example of “white privilege or white fragility” (Rosiek et al., 2020, p. 334). The earlier sections attempt to address that challenge.

In line with other outdoor educators who are inquiring into how place-responsiveness can influence the development and practice of outdoor pedagogies (Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Mcphie & Clarke, 2015; Mikaelis & Asfeldt, 2017), this inquiry draws on French philosopher Gilles Deleuze and his co-enquirer Felix Guattari and their philosophical concepts of *assemblage* and *becoming* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). They challenge with different and fluid uses of language and thought, to move beyond objects and subjects, and instead to consider multiplicities of reality that make up the assemblages that we experience. An assemblage is a coherent structure or arrangement of elements, or as Mannion (2020) describes it:

“A DeleuzoGuattarian assemblage must be a collection of material, human and non-human parts with expressive capacities to affect and be affected by each other, and by other assemblages (Deleuze and Guattari 1977). The parts of an assemblage and the assemblages themselves are produced through their relations or their connectivity. These arrays of entities are decomposable and are not seamless – this means they can be put together and taken apart” (p2).

Thinking-with-Theory

In an attempt to embrace, see and experience the relational nature of what emerges in this inquiry I adopted the approach of thinking-with, developed from the work described as thinking-with-theory by Jackson and Mazzei (2013) which is also part of

the methodological-analytical approach. They exhort researchers to “use theory to think with their data (or data to think with their theory)” (p. vi), which I take to mean that the researcher reads/listens to (explores) theory, and data at the same time, and what emerges from that creates a new assemblage and possibilities of new ways of seeing, thinking, and being/becoming. Stewart (2020 p. 86) describes how “thinking within/through assemblage enables the production of new realities through the development of numerous, often unexpected connections.” My approach of thinking-with has been emergent as this inquiry has progressed.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Researcher Position

Describing positionality as a researcher is about naming influences and practices, and includes philosophical underpinnings, ontology, epistemology and methodology. Together these can be described as a research paradigm, or “the fundamental set of assumptions – explicit or otherwise - regarding the nature of the world and the relationship between the world, ourselves, and other subjects, objects, processes, events and happenings” (Gibson & Leather, 2020, p. 270). As Holmes (2020) states, positionality can be difficult for new researchers to locate and describe, and reflexivity can help to bring values into view. He suggests position statements should typically include the researcher’s lenses, potential influences, chosen or pre-determined position about participants and the research-project context (p. 4). These are explored below.

As a person who sees themselves as deeply embedded in the natural world, experiencing natural ecosystems as a guide (as in ecopsychology (Roszak et al., 1995)), my research stance sought to explicitly embrace the complexity and relationality of life (Boulton et al., 2015). I *had* to choose not to follow interpretivist approaches that use quasi-statistical forms of analysis like coding and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) which objectify data and represent phenomena (St Pierre & Jackson, 2014). As I read, I recognised that I perceive entanglement between the ‘things’ that I wanted to research and could relate to the concept of the indeterminacy of matter - the notion of things not *being* but *be-coming*- (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004) and often found current uses of the (English) language a barrier to being present to life. Thus, the exploration of postqualitative, new materialist and posthuman approaches (Haraway, 2016; Ingold, 2000; Murriss, 2021b) gradually

became the territory I wanted to engage with. Murriss (2021a) describes this as where “epistemology, ontology and methodology are seen as inextricably interwoven” (p. 2), which felt both exciting and daunting at the same time. As a researcher who sought to inquire into relationality between/with human and more-than-human, reflexivity meant that a demanding shift in philosophical worldview was taking place *during* the course of this research and writing, which is considered further in the Discussion.

These post-qualitative approaches are juxtaposed by the earlier referencing of Indigenous literature, and I note that part of my cosmology sees the land as alive, as having agency, as being my relation. As a white, cisgender, English woman in England it is questionable if I can reasonably adopt Indigenous research *approaches* without reinforcing the colonial-settler divide. However, part of the method will allow for story and new folklore to emerge as Chilisa (2019) suggests that *all* researchers should consider the use of story, artefacts, folklore “to resist academic imperialism” (p.14).

My background includes having worked with interviews and numerical data and using interpretive methods like coding and thematic analysis (Braun, 2013). This move into a new post-qualitative onto-epistemology meant changing my ways of thinking, trying to understand and critique new philosophical and methodological viewpoints, to consider and design appropriate methods, all as I learnt about what it takes to be a ‘good’ practitioner-researcher – and creating a coherent and useful inquiry (Quay, 2020). This has led into a methodology that I hope has allowed me to *not* represent data or findings, but rather to create or discover a “becoming of inquiry” (St Pierre, 2011, p. 620) and allow these be-comings to emerge through this writing.

Finally, the relational aspect of the inquiry meant that I was researching in a place that I know and am known, with people with whom I already have working and friend relationships, all of which vary. This is interesting as a methodological consideration,

which is considered in the Sampling section, and needs attention from an ethical perspective, which is explored in the Ethics section.

Inquiry Approaches

It felt essential to attempt to move beyond the human as central to the research and find ways to hear or be present with the more-than-human, which includes human-made as well as existing without or beyond human (Abram, 1997; Whatmore, 2006). Bozalek (2021) asserts that a relational ontology “starts from the premise that entities do not pre-exist their relationships but rather come into being through relationships” (p. 137), or what Barad (2007) calls intra-action, “the mutual constitution of entangled agencies” (p.37) or the co-construction of beings that come about through performance or enactment. Relationality would be seen as a co-emergence in the moment of the research, and the methodology needed allow for the concepts, words, beings, sounds, animals, trees (etc) to appear, *without* being objectified.

To do this, I explored and developed a diffractive methodology, based on work by Fenwick et al (2016). In classical physics, diffraction is a physical phenomenon what comes about when multiple waves meet and (apparently) bend around an obstacle, or through an opening, or when they overlap (Geerts & Tuin, 2016). How has this principle become relevant to social sciences and outdoor education research, and how can it be used to enable findings to emerge? Diffraction as a method was first described by feminist scholar Haraway (2016) as a metaphor, Barad (2007) took it beyond metaphor through her interpretation of quantum physics. She used the methodology to create agential realism, by reading texts “through” one another (Murriss & Bozalek, 2019).

Influenced by the earlier work of Haraway (1992), the choice of diffractive methodology aims to move this inquiry beyond simply *reflecting* what is present,

which in her terms only “reproduces what is already there. In diffraction, something new is produced: A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather, *maps where the effects of difference appear* (Haraway 1992, p. 300, emphasis added).” Explaining this another way, Sauzet describes the difference between reflection, a common term used in describing qualitative analysis:

“As opposed to reflection, which is a common metaphor for analysis that invites images of mirroring, diffraction is the process of ongoing differences. As thinking-tool for analysis, diffraction *attunes us to the differences generated by our knowledge-making practices and the effects these practices have on the world*”. (Sauzet, 2015, emphasis added).

Barad describes the difference between a hierarchical methodology that puts different texts, theories, and strands of thought *against* one another, and diffractively engaging with texts, concepts and other materials means that they are dialogically read “through one another” to stimulate creative, and unexpected outcomes (Barad 2007., p. 30). In outdoor education research, Lynch (2018) describes how diffractive analysis took him, the researcher, into a different mindset, creating useful results in the process:

“This diffractive analysis is not traditional qualitative analysis where researchers might attempt *to find the truth ‘behind’* the photograph, or to imagine (and interpret) the event as a child might have experienced it.” (p71, authors italics)

As explored earlier, the researcher taking a postqualitative approach does not find specific guidance (Lather & St Pierre, 2013) as this is a praxis and is about process as much as findings.

With the aim of working with processes and methods that already have credibility in outdoor education research, I chose to work with Mannion’s four practices (2020) , which he describes as “general orientations for Assemblage Pedagogy and Assemblage Research” as a *suggestion* of how to proceed. In summary, these four

are: “Analyse and collect from the middle, evoke significance, engage with the more-than-human and attend reflexively to our own capacities” (p. 28). These gave a framework to the diffractive methodology, to *think-with* for the whole process of this research inquiry – the reflexive journaling, the gathering of empirical materials, reading/listening as well during the writing, and the analysis. To operationalise Mannion’s practices, I kept in mind four questions whilst carrying out/enacting the method and doing the analysis: 1) How did I move from linear thinking to being immersed in the process of the middle? (What Deleuze and Guattari call the milieu). 2) How did I disclose/discover local and wider significances? 3) What did the other beings, species, and more-than-human say? 4) How and where was I implicated in this inquiry? These are considered in the discussion.

Case-assemblages

Whilst having a diffractive methodology to work with overall, a process of working with the emergent properties/connection and assembling findings was still needed. The work of Andersson et al (2020, 2021) re-conceptualised case study for new materialist work by bringing in the Deleuzian principle of *immanence*; this creates a focus on looking at flows between bodies, human and non-human, in a present moment. Their design for *case-assemblage* is composed by exploring the data of case studies and creating the ground for new case-relationships to emerge:

“Instead of the traditional approaches where researchers as sense-making human agents make use of already established case study methodology in order to design a case study, new materialist case studies need to emerge from the event under study, and thus from the affective flow within a case-assemblage” (Andersson et al., 2020, p. 5).

Rather than being held to a preset boundary of case as defined by the researcher, these “minor cases” can allow for new connections, flows, affects to be seen and new knowledge to emerge, however they do suggest that the “ontology of immanence

makes case study research complex and unpredictable” (p 8). Each case-
assemblage is a cutting together of different parts of the data materials. This way of
working was experimental and is reported on in the discussion.

Research Methods & Data Collection

The inquiry used multiple methods to enable assemblages to emerge. The influence
of Lynch (2018) extends to adapting his *posthuman multicase* study approach to the
gathering of materials. He drew from Stake (2006), who suggests that case study
allows for complexity to be seen whilst attending to the whole and can explore
relationships between and within cases. Drawing on Andersson et al (2020), who
investigated case study approaches in new materialist research, I looked for case-
assemblages, where entities - such as concepts, ideas, experiences, pictures,
sounds - coming together from/within the data are composing something new or
different whilst the data were coming together.

There were three stages for the gathering of materials, all of which took place within
the woods. For the first element, mobile interviews were chosen as a method to
enable participants to talk about their own experience, to tell their story, whilst they
were within that experience in and with the woods, and the other non-human beings.
Mullins (2020) says that mobile methods are useful for positioning outdoor
researchers as “active within the production of experiences and knowledge” rather
than unconnected. I also referred to the method explored by Lynch (2020) collecting
data at (and with) the place of the outdoor educator’s practice. Following the work of
Hill et al (2020), and to engage with a postqualitative approach in practice, interviews
were designed to “take into account the agency of place and more-than-human
world” (p. 58). This meant attending to what else was happening during the
interviews – for example birds screeching and acorns falling - not just the words of

the person. These interviews took place with each of the seven participants in the woods at different times over a month; starting at the main camp area, the person decided on where they wanted to walk, and each lasted 30-45 minutes. Interviews were recorded on a handheld voice-recorder carried by the researcher or the interviewee, depending on which felt easiest. To decentre the human further, people were given three maps of the woods at the start of the interview, and they were offered a phone to take photos at points along the walk *if they chose*. Interview process and maps are attached as Appendix 4, and sample raw interview transcript at appendix 7.

The second stage took the form of a two-hour group *talking circle* with a participatory visual activity embedded within it. This took place in the woodland two months after the mobile interviews. Described by Chilisa (2012; 2014) as being common to Indigenous methods, the talking circle is designed to allow equal opportunity to be heard, with people able to talk without being interrupted (Chilisa, 2012, p. 213). This aspect of the inquiry was to enable participants to hear each other's' experience of relationship-making with the woods and add to or make new case-assemblages. During the talking circle participants were given question-prompts for each 'round' of the circle. The visual participatory activity using drawn images/words also had a prompt question and was inspired by the work of Risbeth and Birch (2022). The talking circle process is detailed in Appendix 5 and images created are in Appendix 6.

The third stage, following principles of Terrapsychological Inquiry, as suggested by Chalquist (2020), aimed to engage with the woods and inquire with them through different means. Following his methods, I camped overnight in the woods after the human interviews had completed, re-read history, looked at old maps and made a 'ceremonial opening' with the woods for the inquiry to begin. I kept a longhand journal

of notes and as Chalquist exhorts to “let the phenomena speak” and spent that evening, night and morning noticing feelings, dreams, and other ‘interruptions’ (p. 78-79). Terrapsychological inquiry (longhand) journal notes in Appendix 8.

Data Cases

The selection of cases was defined by the research inquiry question; thus, they were people who worked at the woodland, with the woodland itself as a further case. All those who worked there at the time were approached and seven agreed to participate. The humans were invited to choose their own pseudonyms. Seven participated in the walking interviews and six in the group talking circle. The eighth case is the woodland, and the data comes through the Terrapsychological Inquiry process *and* how it emerges in the interviews and talking circle; it is referred to as place, woods, and woodland.

Table 1: Cases and Data Collection

Case Pseudonyms	Walking interview	Group Talking Circle	Terrapsychological Inquiry
Fin (F)	yes	yes	no
BOG	yes	yes	no
WB	yes	no	no
Elizabeth (E)	yes	yes	no
Bud	yes	yes	no
Lia (L)	yes	yes	no
Blue (B)	yes	yes	no
Place, woodland, woods	yes	yes	yes

Ethical Considerations

The varying terrain of outdoor research, both literal and methodological, mean that ethical considerations are broad, so this inquiry used the four principles suggested by Ashworth et al. (2015): purpose and gain, risk of harm, anonymity and confidentiality, and informed consent. It also adhered to the Plymouth Marjon University Ethical Guidelines (2021), evidenced by ethics forms at Appendix 1 and 3. To clearly state the purpose of the research, all participants were given an information sheet (see Appendix 2), that sat alongside the ethics form. The existing relationship that the researcher had with participants was noted, and that participating in the research, or not, should not lead to any gain or prejudice how the researcher may interact with them in their work role. In practice this role can be hard for a researcher to maintain (Ashworth et al., 2015) and in this case I was aware that participants may gain by being involved, as they explored their own thinking and practice. BERA guidelines advise being respectful of anyone affected by the research (BERA, 2018). Risk of harm in this inquiry could have included the outdoors element, however all the participants were used to the terrain, weather and other 'usual risks' of the working woodland environment – staying within the limits of my experience (IOL, 2017). As those involved in this study are all involved in one place of work, providing anonymity was a challenge. Besides the signing of consent forms, participants were reminded as the study went along, to share only those aspects they would want included (BERA, 2018). Although participants were anonymised using names that they had chosen they may still be identifiable. The other complex issue of maintaining professional friendships and knowing that we will encounter each other repeatedly, whilst discussed in the literature as an issue (Palmer, 2016) is a dynamic situation not covered in the ethics forms. This kind of ethical decision making is a continual process (Humberstone & Riddick, 2020).

Generalisability

Stake (2006) suggests that multi-case studies are usually more about local specifics than wider generalisability, and that the power of them is in their ability to do the job of illuminating particular complex, social issues. However, Yin (2014) cites examples of broad findings from case studies that can lead to useful broad generalisations, particularly when linked to the theory base of the research design. He says these “analytic generalisations” aim to “generalise to ...other concrete situations and not just contribute to theory building (p. 41). This inquiry aims to be exploratory and will take Yin’s stance to explore the findings and suggest where they can be applied.

Procedure of Analysis

The concept of data is problematic when working with a new materialist relational ontology (Murriss, 2021b), because it sets the researcher apart from the researched, and asserts representation and power-producing binaries. I have chosen to continue using the term data even though my approach aims to de-centre researcher/human, to make reading a little easier. I decided to use diffractive analysis, and following Barad (2007, p. 73) and Fenwick et al. (2015; 2016) I constructed a “diffraction apparatus”, a set of questions (Table 1). These questions evolved with the analysis, informed by thinking-with theorists and researchers (Haraway, 2016; Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Springgay & Truman, 2018; Stewart, 2020) during the first stages of analysis. I used these to go back and forth across the materials, noticing what to cut into or with, and what to emphasise. The materials, the data, included everything to have come from the interviews, talking circle, and terrapsychological inquiry - recordings, transcripts, maps, photos, drawings/words, journals – and to read, and listen to transcripts and look at the pictures, drawings, and my reading notes, and from that moving back and forth, and allow case-assemblages to emerge. The

emboldened words were used in the analysis to help enable focused attention to each of the areas and are used in the discussion.

Table 2 : Diffraction Questions

Question 1	How are they/we making kin with each other, the woods, and the more-than-human?
Question 2	How are attunements with the place showing up – non-humans being involved, actions, words, and images?
Question 3	Where is ' non-language visible ' – body movements, sounds and other sensory ways?

The process of this analysis had these components which took place over eight months: Digital journal and longhand journal as I researched and read /listened to interviews; six months after the interviews, I listened again and made notes; viewed photos and made notes; transcribed interviews and made notes; started making case-assemblages from individual and group interviews; read transcripts again, looking at the maps and photos, listening to some parts again, I made notes on *each* transcript; I read these notes through, and my journal, next to each other, attending to what emerged.

In practice my diffractive approach evolved, as Mannion describes “working from the middle” (2020) as I explored *how* to be diffractive and the best ways to find/see/create assemblages, my thinking-with theory took me deeper into quantum theory and actor network theory (Barad, 2007) , socio-materiality (Fenwick & Doyle, 2016) and complexity theory (Boulton et al., 2015). The final case-assemblages were created and selected as the thesis was written, allowing for all the thinking-with to influence what is offered.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents and discusses the data – the case-assemblages. Stewart (2020) describes how “thinking within/through assemblage enables the production of new realities through the development of numerous, often unexpected connections” (p86). Similar to Mikaelis and Asfeldt (2017) who used the three guiding topics (Skill, Place and Journey) from their research design in order to create their analysis, the three diffraction questions described earlier (Table 1) enable composition of the case-assemblages. As Mikaelis and Asfeldt (2017) describe, I see these headings themselves “as entangled, and as such having no clear boundaries” (p5) which means they too are be-coming, and the challenge to the researcher and reader is to try and experience them in a non-linear way – which is hard in this form of writing and reading (Aghasaleh & St Pierre, 2014). In this space only three are presented, with all eight case-assemblages in Appendix 9.

These assemblages of becomings may feel unsystematic and different/difficult to read, because they aim to unsettle and change the way the reader thinks and spends time with their own ideas about outdoor practitioner-woods-place-relationship-language. The framed, more visual format of these case-assemblages is informed by and adapted from what Miles and Huberman (2015) call “within-case displays”, a way of showing what has been collected as more visual than reams of narrative which allows for a more coherent account than placing the data separately within appendices. The frames contain fragments of the data-materials with initials next to each to identify the practitioner or source. Working diffractively, each one is followed by a gathering together of what the case-assemblage is showing. Barad (2018) describes this as a way of exploring patterns of difference rather than similarities “reading insights through rather than against each other to make evident the always-already entanglement of specific ideas in their materiality” (p. 64). On a final note

about how I decided to include data or not, MacLure (2013) explains what she calls “the data beginning to ‘glow’” (p 661); how in a relational rather than interpretive stance, the agency of the data seems to lead the process, or at least be distributed. So, some parts of the case-assemblages are where it seems they wanted to be, that came from a sense of how something fitted in, or drew my attention, what Taylor also calls “arts of noticing” (2021, p. 32).

1. How are they/we making kin with each other, the woods, and other beings?

Figure 2: *Assemblage A: Responsibility, care, opportunity and being welcomed.*

F: I suppose what is a reasonable analogy to think in terms of relationships that you have as a parent with a child and that so occasionally you stop and think, So, he or she a lovely young person. But a lot of the time you're thinking, have you done it? Have you done the insurance in your car, and have you sorted out your maintenance grant for next year and your hair needs cutting? And it's been sort of with me as I've gone through some very difficult times in my life. So I always tend to when I when I'm here, it always partly reminds me of the different phases of life that I've gone through.... And I think the fact that I'm walking on lias clays here, that I'm on calcareous ground and I'm thinking how that contrasts with other land in the [place name] and that the acid lands on the wet... So, I always I always feel very conscious of what sort of land I'm walking on working on and how that makes me feel.

F: You can't get away from the fact that when you look at the place... you see yourself, you know, because we've written our names across the face of this place. And in the grand scheme of things, it's, it's probably has very little significance. But, you know, this place is a reflection of us now. And I suppose that's part of why where the core of my fascination comes from. Because what I'm interested in is the nature of the relationship between people and the rest of the natural world. So, this is like a living experiment in that because this is evolving through that interaction and it's hopefully a respectful interaction.

L: So, I feel like I've been given lots of opportunities. Come in here because you encouraged me to do the forest school training, which is really nice, and that has opened doors for me, um, partly working here and other places and I really enjoyed doing that. So that's good. So, it feels like quite a place of opportunity and it's quite different all the time because different volunteers and different people who work and it's not always the same people. But that's not about the place, it's about the people.

WB: I've done a lot of work with trying to connect people and myself to places and to the land and to the part that's outside themselves rather than their sort of mind. And for probably the last ten or 20 years, I've been doing it with adults. And I was forest school trained a long time ago. And there's something about being in these woods and especially doing the work with children and families that feels like I'm getting the opportunity to take that work and explore how that work can be received by children and people that don't normally have the same sort of access to the countryside that we do.

J: That sounds something like because you have a relationship with this place that you can do that?

WB: Yeah. It's much, much easier to do it here than it would be to do it in a place I didn't already know because I know that that the place is welcoming. There are places I've been to that aren't welcoming and it's positively hostile because they've had bad experiences, possibly with humans.

J: I needed a night alone in the woods, with nothing else pressing. How can I have a relationship if I don't just come and spend time here – needs space. (TI journal)



WB's photo of offering tied to tree branch.

Fin spoke of working with and being with the woods over many years, how this has been both encumbrance and responsibility - like parenting a child - and that this is an expression of care as well as of love. His relationship with the woods is complex because it has taken place over years of his life, there is a sense of him and the woods being enmeshed, and how the geology influences his feelings. In another location, toward the end of the interview, he spoke about his own interest in this relationship and how for him it has become this 'living experiment'. I cut this conversation together with that of Lia, to see what difference emerged. She talked about familiarity with the woods, and how noticing the relationships with other people influenced her feelings about the place. WB talked of how her perception of a welcoming nature of the woods had enabled really important work. She took a picture of an offering someone had made tied to the branch of an oak tree in the main camp.

In my terrapsychological inquiry journal I had noted that I felt had to stay in the woods to re-make my own relationship, with nothing else 'pressing'.

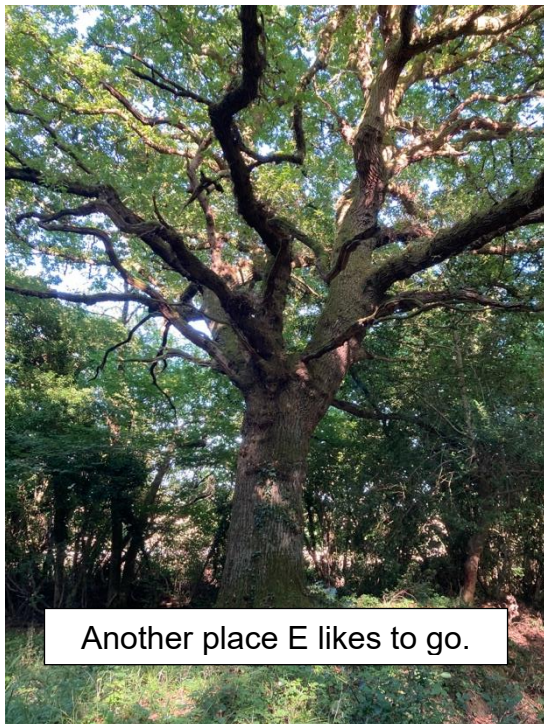
2. How are attunements with the place showing up – non-humans being involved, actions, words, and images?

Figure 3: *Assemblage E: Chatting and silence - different ways of feeling understood and accepted by the place.*

J: And what's the sense of the relationship then that you have with this place? It allows you to do that, or how would you describe it?

E: It's very difficult to explain. I think just actually offers understanding. A nature connection and allowing others and teaching others how to do that. It's quite a strong pull to certain places. And it's a place that's far enough away from camp, but you can still be back there in about 5 minutes.

E: ... this is another place I like to sit sometimes when we go off for 5 minutes. If no one else is sat there, then that's where I'll go. And just have a little chat with her and live in wonder at how much she's seen in her life and who she's met and who else has sat at the bottom of that tree. I think she may be one of the oldest trees in the woods. ...but place accepts you as well. It doesn't care really who you are as long as you are, who you are. And it might not make sense to anyone. I'm quite good at that. I have my own little language. So, it works for me, I mean, I'm going to understand it.



Another place E likes to go.

J: Is there anymore that you can say about how this relationship that you have with the place shapes the way that you work?

E: Yeah, by the woods accepting you as you are, you expect that you are inclusive to the people that come here. Because the woods accept you, so why should it not accept everybody else that comes here. In actual fact, by doing that, it's taught us to remove other barriers that stop people from coming here. [wasp arrives] This is not a wasp! Yeah, it accepts. It accepts you for who you are. So therefore, it teaches you to accept people for who they are, other people for who they are.

E: ...But there's also a lot of peace here. It's a very quiet place. And you can sometimes hear the trees chatting away to each other in the sense of the treetops in the wind, just moving. So, it kind of feels a bit like speaking to each other, certainly connecting with each

other.

F: ... I don't have a conscious sense of the spirit of the place that I can articulate to you, but I do have.... um. I think for me that the spirit of the place is silent. It's almost.

What am I trying to say, it's almost, it's there in the silence rather than in the speaking. And. There have been times when I've been here, when I've been in a really bad state of mind, and I have shouted at the place. I've just shouted, not at any particular tree or feature, I've just shouted at the place because I'm shouting out the personality that I feel the place has. And although I never hear any voice back, there's something in the nature of the silence. There's something in the nature of what it doesn't say that I find calming and it's something like a child having a crying fit and wanting its parent to make it all okay and the parent doesn't make it all okay by telling them anything, but simply by putting their hand around their shoulders. And the place does put his hand around my shoulders. Sometimes. And there's not many places in the [area name] that do that. So that's probably about the closest I get to spiritual connection with the soul of the place, perhaps.

L: The trees are there just because they are, not because someone's decided to put them there. They've just ended up there. So maybe it's just okay to be. I thought about, maybe. So, I work in a school and maybe we'll look after some of the children with autism or developmental delay or something. I'm making the decision on whether it's okay to just let them be who they are or if we need to try and make them do something different. So maybe I should just leave them as they are, more with the kids as well.

This assemblage emerged from similar questions about participants relationship with the place, the first two from walking interviews and the third from the group talking circle. Elizabeth described her relationship in terms of feeling accepted and a pull to certain places. She described that she chatted with the tree, that the woods accept her, so that teaches her to be accepting of others. It is not clear how she links these two things. For Fin it was the silence that brought connection and describes the woods with 'his hand around my shoulders'. For Lia, knowing that no-one decided to put the trees there leads to questioning of how she is with children, and how this feeling of the trees 'just being as they are' challenged her to be more accepting of the children.

3. Where is 'non-language visible' – body movements, sounds and other sensory ways?

Figure 4: *Assemblage G: Sensory- words, experiences, body-movements, sounds*

J: That's the whole point of holding and hold and speak into it.

BOG: The recording doesn't show what we're looking at and how we're looking at things and how we're feeling the ground underneath our feet and the bugs in the air and our skin and things. What's here? Bits of grass or something, is it I see. I think there's a bit of grass has been growing. In a patch sun light. It's just something to look at, isn't it?

J : oh that's a dog poo just in our stepping place, just there,

B: can we put a flag in or move it away?

J: That's quite fresh.

S: So I was going to show you where I saw the glow-worm, so I absolutely love glow-worms , um , I thought they absolutely capture my imagination, the thought there was a creature that could glow of its own accord without being plugged in, and that creation, so I saw a glow-worm here one evening, so ever since then when I come here I leave, like you can see the flower I left today, so I leave a little something. I really like this little corner. and because it's sort of on the edge, on the margin, it's like on the edge of the carpark, so it might not get a lot of attention ha.

J: so how does that influence you, that relationship with this space, this place, this bit?

B: umm, I think... I think because a lot of the work that gets done here is a bit like too, it's for people who are on the margins maybe a little bit, um, and pushed the edge maybe in different ways, and maybe some of the people that come and work here are a bit like as well, drawn to this kind of work. Um so... yeah so there are no places that aren't sacred even the edge of the carpark.



J: So, is there any more about how it how it makes you feel? How it, what it leads you to think about or feel about when you're not here or the impact it has on you when you're working with people?

L: It's all very of a positive and it's easier to be calm when you're outdoors, I think, and in the woods because it's quite like calming sounds and you can't really hear the roads and stuff or even when there's loads people. If I doesn't get that noisy because you're outdoors, so it's more calming and being in the woods, I suppose it's a bit like maybe being in snow. How the sound feels different, isn't it? Because

there's a lot of trees about. Whereas if it's an open field, it still feels, like can feel a bit like a playground. A bit shreeky.

Bud: Its definitely being outdoors in general in this place is always like this. The textures and the shapes and all of the discovery, all of it. And you find a new area where animals have been there, they know it's there. But it's new to us and always that even though you know what's going to go on seasonally in the main part, you don't know where exactly when. There's another little fluffy thing in there.

J: Owls Not so interested in that one, not owls, no it's too small

Bud: What are they for?

J: Thank you. I don't know. But I just like them.

Bud: Yes. I think feeling and touching and smelling and I think, you know, from forest bathing, you know, and other research we know what that does to our brains and why that's of benefit. I'm definitely a feeler, and a toucher and a sniffer. Although I do disguise that, I'm not sure that's obvious, but I can see that the children enjoy it. I can see why and what they want to do. But I think I disguise it because I know what fits societally. And that's what's so great about the woods. You don't have to really worry about that.

J: So, the question is about *how* you go about making your relationship with this place so the words we talked about in terms of relationships

L: ...So it's quite nice that everyone sees it in a different way. It's quite a flexible place because different people get different things from like, Hey. Yeah. It's a hard question to answer. I get the familiar feeling, familiarity of the place, how I feel. I know the place well enough for my legs just to wander when I go for a walk. And I never really know where I'm going to end up until I get there.

This sensory, somatic related composition is put together from four parts of interviews. In interview with BOG, I reminded him how to hold the voice recorder. He said how the recording would not show how people are feeling the place around them, sensing what was happening, and then talked of bugs on skin and the sunlight on piece of grass. In the walk with B, as we stepped toward a place for her that was really important and evoked the marginal nature of work with people, a very fresh dog poo was right in front of us. There was a link with the conversation about marginal place and the work with marginalized people, and the glow-worm that for her acts as the 'flag' to remind her. With L, she noted how sound is different in the woods, and that helps her and possibly others to be calmed. Walking with Bud as she talked of

discovering new things, who then found a small fluffy feather and offered it to me knowing I'd been collecting them, and then that seemed to allow her to explain more about being able to be herself and show her sensory aspects in the place – being a feeler, toucher, and sniffer. L spoke about her legs knowing the place, a sense of somatic knowing, to be able to wander and how the sound in the woods felt different.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The discussion is guided by the inquiry question ‘How do educators create their relationship with this place, how do they describe this, and what about this relationship impacts on the way they carry out their practice?’ The three diffraction simplified questions from Table 2 – making kin, attunements with place, and non-language visible - are used as titles, and the four questions from Mannion (2020) - described in the Inquiry Approaches section - are exposed as the discussion unfolds.

Making Kin

The ways that each educator talks about making and experiencing their relationships with the woods is a complex meshwork of intra-actions (Barad, 2007) ; each one is different, related to how long they have known the woods, the experiences they have had, as well as the worldview they bring. Fin has a sense of obligation and responsibility linked to his caring for the place, knows the geology and ecology as part of his understanding and describes his work as evolving through interaction. WB’s description of the woods as welcoming and being able to now try out work in the woods with children that she has done in other places with adults, also sounds again like evolution through interaction. For Lia, the familiarity of walking the same paths with small children creates the literal ground for them to experience the changes that take place in the woods, and before doing these now-familiar walks, she did not think you could do the same thing each week. This resonates with Ingold (2000) talking about wayfinding, different to map-using or map-making, and relies on people building a familiarity with the place or land, and as Ingold suggests “life is not contained within things, nor is it transported about. It is rather laid down along paths of movement, of action and perception” (p242). There is a sense that time, practices

and familiarity are helping relationship be made, through walking and other kinds of intra-action – the acting together of people and woods.

It is interesting to consider how the woods may be reaching into these accounts, the trees having agency that influences the actions of the those around them, as discussed by Goodenough et al. (2021). B talks about one of the trees being an Elder, comforting, and benign, and sees all the comings and goings of the people. Fin talks about having agency as he collects lime seedlings, but what if the lime seedlings are the ones with agency, needing to be transported and given more chance to grow. There is a “long and perilous route from a seed to a tree” (Rackham, 2006, p. 7), so could this be a different example of the woods enacting their needs through humans? In B’s account of telling the story of creating the compost loo with a group of children, she sees how they are becoming part of the story of the woods too, and that they can take this story away with them, and there becomes an enmeshing of their story, her story, and the woods story. This making of story together is different to Stewart’s (2020) focus on local history and culture and resonates with Mikaelis and Asfeldt’s (2017) finding about the significance of place-stories to enable educators to become actively engaged in landscapes (p. 9). It is enabling new stories to emerge from the place-relationship (Chilisa, 2012). Assemblage D brings together a sense of the woods not belonging to the human and again having agency, as Fin said, “*the place belongs to all of us and none of us*” and Lia said that it is not changed “*to meet our needs*”, whilst Bud’s picture expressed a beautiful, multiplicity of place-words.

Attunements with Place

For Lynch and Mannion (2021), attunement is about responding to and with the material and more-than-human aspects of a place. The reciprocal response-making

process they described between humans and more-than-human (p. 20) is evident here. What emerges in this inquiry is that educators respond to a perception that the place, or parts of it, are a being in their own right. Elizabeth talked about a feeling of acceptance by the woods, at the same time as she talked about a bodily feeling of being pulled to certain places where that arises, and she responds to the acceptance of herself by the woods by being accepting of and inclusive with other humans. Fin talked about a connection coming from silence that he felt, when the woods had their '*hands around his shoulders*', and in Assemblage C he talked about the woods enabling him to have agency, which could be linked. This response making extended to actions outside of the woods for Lia. Assemblage F shows the educators responses of meaning-making from encounters and intra-actions during the interviews themselves; for example, WB and I noticing frogs on the path and her talking about their symbolism of metamorphosis, that became part of the narrative she was relaying.

'Non-language' Visible

The postqualitative desire to decentre the human means attempting to de-centre language (Taylor, 2021), a challenge with interviews. The composition elements in Assemblage G are varied, and again the practitioners are attuning with the place but this goes further as they talk about their bodies being involved and intra-action with the place happens. BOG was attracted by the sunlight on the grass, just wanted to look at it, wanted our attention to be on our felt sense of the place, evoking the job of the practitioner as moving away from talking and towards sensing or being. With Bud, the interruption of the feather led to her being able to describe her own sensorial nature, and she noticed that the children she works with enjoy that, rather than feeling she has to hide it. In Assemblage H, I noted that practitioners were seeing through the eyes of others, and at the same time the physical intra-actions with the

place and non-human drew me (as researcher) in, and draws their learners' in. This aligns with Heaton and Brown (2015) who say that felt and embodied knowledge creates wisdom for the experiential educator that goes beyond cognitive knowing.

Chapter Six: Implications for Practice and Conclusions

Knowledge-making in postqualitative, posthuman approaches have to take account of how to decentre the human and bring matter, and the more-than-human to the fore, allowing for messiness (Taylor, 2021). Key to this is creating “conditions for curiosity to flourish” (p. 31). This final section pulls together implications that arise from the discussion with ‘how’ questions to stimulate curiosity and an interwoven web of reflections about the inquiry approaches and process.

Implications for Practice

The enmeshed nature of the inquiry and the findings, and the postqualitative approach itself, make it challenging to unpick and state findings that can be fixed in a time and place, so these four implications for my own and wider practice are thus framed as questions.

1) Echoing the finding of Lynch and Mannion (2021), the assemblages show that relationality develops through educators becoming familiar and spending time with and in a place, both alone and with their learners. They asserted that “place-responsive pedagogical attunement in educational practice is a skilled and material process linked to human and more-than-human relations developed over time – time spent in places” (p 23). B suggested all practitioners should spend more time being, especially alone, with that land. This has stimulated me to consider how practitioners can be supported to spend more time becoming familiar with their places, encouraging them to find ways to shift their perspective towards be-coming with the place that can inform development of what could be called a place-conscious pedagogy.

2) The practitioners were creating their relationships through their own ways of making sense, creating stories of the place that appear to come from an interweaving

of their bodies, experiences, and the more-than-human. This was not about them learning the story of a place from someone else in order to be place-responsive (Leather & Nicholls, 2016) but instead was about creating new stories, or even plugging into the place and stories emerging. The practice of the walking-interviews, the inquiry itself, brought this to light, echoing Springgay et al.'s (2018) WalkingLab. This leads to a question of how practitioners can hear or be present to stories of place. The walking interview method provides a clue; walking with learners and being with all that is emerging and present – place, human and more-than-human – thus making, telling, and finding stories whilst walking is not just a research method, it is a potential pedagogical tool. It could be helpful to regularly lead walks and encourage sharing of stories amongst practitioners through sharing our own stories about our place through everyday dialogue, and on specific occasions which are created for the purpose, groups of practitioners sharing together.

3) There were many places where the more-than-human interrupted, or pointed towards something, which became part of a story, as with Fin and the lime seedlings. If trees are agentic with humans (Goodenough & Waite, 2020), then we need to consider that more-than-human actors are too. This sense of agency poses a question for how practices and pedagogy can enable more-than-human agency to be included, to become-with the practices or make space for and take it into account in design. This resonates with Watt's (2013) description of the Indigenous Anishinaabe and/or Haudenosaunee understanding of animacy of the land, described in Watt's two framings in Figure 1, from the Indigenous Approaches section. The findings here suggest that as outdoor educators become familiar with a place, experience the agency in point 2, that a different onto-epistemology (or cosmology) is emerging, that requires further inquiry. This could be through an exploration of the educators' ideas and language about their place and the non-human in occasional group sharing, as

well as through daily exchanges. Respectful study of Indigenous pedagogies and working-with Indigenous scholars could strengthen this aspect of inquiry.

4) The stories of being with the immediacy of what was present and sensory experiences during the walk-interviews revealed a way of attuning with the place and more-than-human, beyond talking about it/them, and this was hard to bring to the fore. For example, Lia kept noticing things, and losing track of the interview questions, then worrying as the interview questions were 'more important'. Whilst the questions were the focus of the conversation in our walk, their presence experienced *through* an interruption of our dialogue informed the work we were doing as much as our thoughts did. This has led me to consider how we support educators to trust and communicate in a variety of ways that instinct to be with their senses, and to be led by the more-than-humans, as well as value their cognitive knowledge.

Reflections and Conclusions

This research inquiry has led to findings that have implications for my own practice as both researcher and educator, which could influence others, adding to our practices, the how-to elements of pedagogies of place. The four implications for practice above provide questions to be enacted through further research and experimentation.

Discussion with Indigenous researchers and scholars about how to frame an emergent ontology or cosmology that respects traditional knowledge and story as suggested in point 3), is often experienced by the dominant culture as anti-colonial (Yunkaporta, 2019). It would be important to raise awareness of the potential impact and restrictions of the colonial culture in an effort to increase our respect of and inclusion of all researchers and scholars.

The methodology was complex, and the approach generated a large number of materials which could have supported further analysis and discussion beyond the

scope and timeframe of a master's degree. The diffractive methodology and analysis process were mind, body and time-consuming; Taylor says it is not at all easy, in fact "it is strenuous to enact knowledge-making in this way" (2021, p. 32) . I continually re-read papers that use diffraction and assemblages (Lynch & Mannion, 2021; Mannion et al., 2013; Merewether, 2019; Renold & Iverson, 2014). At the outset, as discussed in researcher positionality, I felt that postqualitative approaches were the best way to consider the question of practitioners' relationship with place. However, it has been a challenging position to take, and this thesis reflects the limits as far as my own thinking as progressed at this time. A more in-depth study of the philosophical base (Braidotti, 2019; Deleuze & Guattari, 2004; Haraway, 2016; Ingold, 2000, 2011) and support with how to apply postqualitative, posthuman approaches for outdoor studies researchers would be recommended for others taking this route. I suspect that my approach has been only partly postqualitative and may appear more as a mixed methods study *within* a postqualitative ontology. Some parts of the method developed as the process itself was emergent, leading to more materials than planned. The walking-interviews became more like conversations than formal interviews, as people found the relational questions hard, and perhaps also reflecting that interviews are a two-way, hierarchical enactment, rather than a relational, reciprocal exchange. This emerging of conversation allowed for people to talk about their own direct experiences and the walking-interviews to flow well, however it made the data complex to process. Perhaps this reflects the postqualitative position that analysis that separates data from the researched (Murriss, 2021a) , and that people and place are entangled and interwoven. The talking-circle created really interesting materials which have appeared only a little in this writeup and warrant more time than was possible in this process. The terrapsychological inquiry process (Chalquist, 2020) is not very present in the material, and although it provided some initial

impetus for design, the methods did not seem to fit well when used as a component in a larger approach. The undefined nature of postqualitative inquiry led to a re-mixing and mashing-up of methods, as St Pierre (2011) suggests, which was creative, enjoyable to carry out and challenging to pull together into a coherent whole; I would recommend others to enact fewer methods at this level of study.

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Appendix 1- Ethics Application



Plymouth Marjon University is a trading name of University of St Mark & St John

Research Ethics Application

Research Project Information

Ethics Application Code (provided by Research Ethics Panel upon submission):

Please refer to the Guidance documents for Research Ethics Applications when completing this form. Note: Researchers are not to engage in data collection or recruitment until they have received a favourable ethical opinion from the Panel.

1. Title of Research Project

Our Relationship with Young Wood: An Exploratory Study of Outdoor Practitioners' Connections to one Place

2. Researcher Information

Name	Jenny Archard
Institutional email	20207798@marjon.ac.uk
Role	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD Researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Staff
Undergraduate and Masters: Please provide name of supervisor	Dr Mark Leather
PhD Researchers and Staff: Are co-researchers involved? If YES , please provide the names and institutional contact details.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Undergraduate and Masters Researchers, please submit this Application Form and Supporting Documents to your supervisor and/or module team as directed.

PhD Researchers and Staff, please submit this Application Form and Supporting Documents to ethicspanel@marjon.ac.uk for review.

3. Rationale

Summarise your proposed research using, wherever possible, language understandable for a non-specialist reader.

Outdoor education has been through many changes as it matures, and place-based or place-responsive education has become an important topic in the last twenty years. It is becoming accepted that how outdoor educators themselves *respond* to the places that they work from and with -the seas, lakes, mountains, rivers, hills, valleys, woodlands, parks, grounds, or gardens - will influence their approach to pedagogy (how they educate). Whilst there is a growing body of work that illustrates the unfolding and entangled relationships with the places that educators make visits to, there has been little inquiry into place-responsiveness for outdoor practitioners who spend their working time with one place. This inquiry seeks to add to that work. It proposes an exploratory study with a small group (4-6) of outdoor practitioners who all have a connection with one natural place, Young Wood in the Blackdown Hills of Somerset. The purpose is to explore, uncover, gather, and reveal the stories of the experiences *between* one place and one set of practitioners.

The methods are a multi-case study with walking 1:1 interviews and a photovoice focus group process; the natural place itself will be included as one case.

4. Initial Review Checklist

1. Will your research involve research participants identified from, or because of their past or present use of, the NHS and/or Social Care Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
2. Does the research project involve intrusive procedures with adults who lack capacity to consent for themselves or health-related research involving prisoners?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

3. Will this project be reviewed by a research ethics panel external to Marjon?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
4. Does your research involve non-human animal participants, or non-human animal biology?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
5. Is your research an evaluation of existing service or initiative?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

If you answered **YES** to **ANY** question please contact ethicspanel@marjon.ac.uk, before proceeding.

If you answered **NO** to **ALL** questions please complete the [Potential Issue Checklist](#).

Potential Issues Checklist

1. Does the research involve human participants and/or their personal data?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Does the research involve your own students as participants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
3. Does the research involve participants who are unable to give informed consent, considered to be vulnerable, or lack capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
4. Will the research require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups/individuals to be recruited? (e.g. for access to students at school, or to members of a particular organisation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
5. Will the research involve access to records of personal or confidential information concerning identifiable individuals, either living or recently deceased?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
6. Will the research involve the use of administrative data or secure data? (e.g. student records held by a school or college, medical records)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
7. Will the deception of participants (including covert observation in non-public places) be necessary at any time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
8. Will the research involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, political behaviour, ethnicity and, potentially, elite interviews, <i>including PREVENT</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
9. Will the research involve members of the public in a research capacity, helping to shape methodology and/or to collect data? (e.g. participatory research)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
10. Will the research involve visual or vocal methods where participants or other individuals may be identifiable in the audio	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

or visual data used or generated? (this does not refer to audio recordings for the purpose of transcription)	
11. Will the research involve any drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins and other supplements) being administered to the participants, or will the study involve invasive, intrusive procedures of any kind?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
12. Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants (deceased or alive)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
13. Is the research likely to involve or result in participants experiencing pain or more than mild discomfort?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
14. Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences? (both research participants and their living relatives should be considered)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
15. Will the research involve prolonged or repetitive testing of participants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
16. Will data collection involve e-mail, social media, and/or instant messaging services in data collection?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
17. Will financial inducements (other than reimbursement of expenses) be offered to participants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
18. Will the study involve external organisations to recruit participants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
19. Will the research place the safety of the researcher(s) at risk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
20. Will any data collection be undertaken outside of the UK?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
21. Will the research or its dissemination involve data sharing of confidential information, or the re-use of previously collected data?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
22. Is the research funded?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

If you answered **NO** to **ALL** questions, please complete the [Declaration](#).

If you answered **YES** to **ANY** question, please complete [Research Project Further Information](#).

Research Project Further Information

1 Project Start and End dates

a. Start date for data collection	May 2022
-----------------------------------	----------

b. Estimated completion date for data collection	July 2023
c. Estimated completion date for study	Dec 2023

2 Research Methods

<p>a. Describe where data will be collected.</p> <p>At Young Wood, a woodland base in the Blackdown Hills, and/or through virtual media such as teams, zoom or telephone.</p>
<p>b. Describe how data will be collected.</p> <p>1:1 interview, photo elicitation, focus group discussion(s).</p>
<p>c. Describe how data will be analysed.</p> <p>Diffraction analysis</p>

ALL questionnaires, interview guides, standard operating procedures and/or other instruments to be used in data collection MUST be attached as appendices.

3 Research Participants

<p>a. Describe the participants to be recruited.</p> <p>People who work at Young Wood.</p>
<p>b. Will it be possible to identify participants, directly or indirectly, from the data collected?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If YES, please explain how confidentiality will be maintained.</p> <p>Information gathered will be anonymised as far as possible. The place name will also be anonymised. It is hard to maintain complete confidentiality. This is addressed through a continuing consent process, so that participants can withdraw their consent to be involved in the research until data analysis begins.</p>

c. Does the proposed research involve extraction or collection of personally identifiable information about the participant from existing databases or records?

Yes No

If YES, please explain how consent from the individuals or authorisation from the data custodian will be obtained.

d. Does the proposed research involve participants who have a pre-existing relationship with any of the researchers?

Yes No

If YES, please explain the relationship and how power differentials (actual or perceived) will be managed.

All are freelancers who work with and for the researcher, and one is the life partner of the researcher. There are both real and perceived power differentials, and participants need to be assured that as far as possible what is provided in the research will not materially affect any personal relationships, work relationships or work prospects. They need to be free to leave the research (up to the point of data analysis), or to not engage with it. They need to be free to withdraw comments made. Given the small number of participants it will be hard to anonymise, so they need to be happy that they are able to be identified when any reports are published.

There may be consequences of what they discuss, and confidentiality needs to be ensured should they talk about third parties, and if this cannot be anonymised successfully it shall be withdrawn from the analysis and reporting.

As I am in a relationship of perceived and actual power, this may influence how they talk and what they share. The pre-interview and engagement notes will be clear that they should not say something if they don't feel comfortable. There will be a fully informed consent process; at each stage of inquiry consent will be re-sought. There will be a time limit for them to withdraw their consent, by the analysis phase.

e. Will the proposed research result in products (physical or intellectual) that are commercialisable?

Yes No

If YES, please explain how ownership will be negotiated and communicated to participants.

The research may provide material that is useful for the researcher in carrying out her future work, or in writing articles, blogs, and the like. This will be communicated as part of the information sheet, and continuing consent process through the research.

4 Consent Process

a. Describe the process that will be used to obtain informed consent and explain how consent will be recorded.

Consent forms will be given to potential participants before the study so they can decide if they wish to engage; forms will be collected before the first interview and held securely. Participants will be reminded of consent before each stage of the process (1st interview, photo elicitation/focus group, 2nd interview).

b. Please describe procedures for participants withdrawing from the study.

See attached sheet.

ALL documents (e.g. consent documents, participant information sheets, email scripts) to be used in the consent process MUST be attached as appendices.

5 Data Management

a. Will participants' personal data be collected?

Yes No

If **NO**, please proceed to [Risk Evaluation](#)

If **YES**, please confirm:

b. Personal or identifiable data will be kept on password protected or encrypted files.

Yes No

c. Access to data will be restricted to the research team.

Yes No

d. Coded data and identifying codes will be stored separately.

Yes No

e. Data will not be transferred to or via a third party.

Yes No

f. Personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purposes it was collected for.

Yes No

g. All data will undergo secure disposal.

Yes No

h. Data storage timelines:

Until Jan 2024

i. If you have answered **NO** to any of the above, please explain data management process:

6. Risk Evaluation

a. Please indicate the risk level for the project by checking the intersecting box:

		Research Risk		
		Low	Medium	High
Participant Vulnerability	Low	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Medium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	High	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the risk level for your project is **GREEN**, please explain:

b. the research risk level you have identified: low

Being outdoors in woodland carries risks of injury, disease and weather related.

Sharing personal experiences and ideas in groups can expose peoples vulnerabilities

c. the participant vulnerability you have identified:

All those involved are used to working outdoors in all weathers and with the same elevel of physical risks as they may encounter.

During group sessions people will be encouraged to only share what they feel comfortable with and to maintain confidentiality.

If the risk level for your project is **GREEN**, please proceed to [Declaration](#).

If the risk level for your project is **YELLOW**, please complete [Full Review Information](#).

If the risk level for your project is **ORANGE**, please conduct a scholarly review and complete [Full Review Information](#).

Full Review Information

1. Risk Management

a. Please list potential research risks.

b. Please explain how you will manage and/or minimise research risks.

If the risk level for your project is ORANGE in the risk matrix, please attach a copy of the outcome of your scholarly review.

2. Experience of Investigators with this type of research.

a. Please provide a brief description of previous experience with this type of research, including data collection techniques, by the research team. If there is no previous experience, please describe how the researchers will be prepared.

b. For projects that will involve community members (eg. peer researchers) in the collection and/or analysis of data, please describe their status within the research team (e.g. are they considered employees, volunteers or participants) and what kind of training they will receive.

3. Possible Benefits

Describe any potential direct benefits to participants from their involvement in the project as a result of this research. If there are potential direct benefits to the community, the scientific/scholarly community or society as a result of this research, please also describe these here.

--

4. Compensation

Will participants receive compensation for participation?

Financial? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
In-kind? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Other? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If YES, please provide details and justification for the amount or the value of the compensation offered and how will compensation be affected if participants chose to withdraw? It could be construed that by being in the woods for group discussion with others and the researcher creates benefits to those involved. This will only provide benefit for the times that they are participating, so if they choose to withdraw then there is no compensation to be gained.

Declaration

My signature below confirms that I am aware of, understand, and will comply with all relevant laws governing my research. I agree to ensure my co-investigators, collaborators and all involved in the running of this research will comply with these laws. I understand that for research involving extraction or collection of personally identifiable information, national and/or international laws may apply and that any apparent mishandling of personally identifiable information must be reported to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office.

I agree that research will only commence after a favourable opinion has been received from the Research Ethics Panel; that neither the University, Panel or individual members of the Panel accept any legal obligation (to use to any third party) in relation to the processing of this application or to any advice offered in respect of it or not for the subsequent supervision of the research. If there is any significant deviation from the project as originally approved I must submit an amendment to the Research Ethics Panel for approval prior to implementing any change.

Signature of Researcher

Date 13th June 2022



Additional for all student applications:

As the supervisor of this student project my signature below confirms that I have reviewed and approve the research project and the ethics protocol submission. I confirm that I will provide the student with the necessary supervision throughout the project, to ensure that all procedures performed as part of this project comply with all relevant laws governing the research.

Signature of Supervisor Mark Leather **Date** 16th June 2022

As the counter-signer of the project I confirm that I am not directly involved in the project, and have reviewed and approve the academic merit of the research project and the ethics protocol submission.

Counter-signed Georgios Katsogridakis **Date** 16th June 2022

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

Title of Research Project:

An Exploratory Study of Outdoor Practitioners' Connections to one Place

Name of Researchers: Jenny Archard

What is the purpose of the study?

The research will explore a small group of outdoor practitioners' experiences of their relationships with one natural place, Young Wood. The researcher is interested in how practitioners create relationship with natural places, how they describe them, the actions they take and the ways they describe and define their relationship with the place. Beyond this, the researcher is interested to see if anything about this sense of relationship impacts on the way the outdoor practitioners carry out their practice. The research will involve 4-6 people, all of whom work or volunteer as outdoor practitioners at Young Wood, the base for Neroche Woodlanders.

The research method includes two 1:1 discussions with the researcher, a focus group discussion, and activity taking photos of things that are significant for you about your relationship with Young Wood.

Why have I been invited?

Because you are an outdoor practitioner at Young Wood.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in the study is entirely voluntary. It will not impact on your current work or prospects with Neroche Woodlanders. There is a consent form for this study, and you will be asked to sign it as part of this process.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you participate, you will be asked to come and discuss your ideas, thoughts, and feelings about your sense of relationship with Young Wood. There will be:

- A first one to one walking or sitting discussion with me, the researcher, at a mutually convenient time

- A group discussion, date to be confirmed
- A practical making or photographing activity
- A second one to one walking or sitting discussion with me, the researcher, at a mutually convenient time
- These are planned to take place over the summer and early autumn 2022.

I will be recording and taking notes of discussions, collecting images of the walk and images and records of anything you photograph. Verbatim quotes may be used in writeups. Data will be kept securely on the University secure drive for the life of this research, until Sept 2023.

Expenses and payments

There are no expenses offered for this research. The researcher will offer tea/coffee/snacks to participants during the discussions.

What will I have to do?

You will need to come to the woods, to talk with me and in a discussion group, and to get involved in making something of your own choosing.

What are the advantages of taking part?

Being part of some academic research and exploring your own thoughts about being connected to one place.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Because it is a small group involved in this research, and you are associated by others with Young Wood, it is highly likely that you will be able to be identified as a participant when the research is written up or further articles are published. If this could cause a problem for you, then it may be better to not take part.

You may feel uncomfortable talking about your own experiences, and feel that there are “correct answers”. What you say and do during your participation in the research is completely up to you.

As I am in a position of authority, you may feel uncomfortable if you wish to say no to being involved, wish to not say something, or wish to withdraw from the research. It is important that you decide what is right for you, so please consider what is best for you before you agree to participate.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

- Whilst researchers will always protect the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants and their data, there are risks to anonymity with limited numbers of individuals taking part.
 - Drafts of the report/thesis will be sent to participants before any publication so that you can check any quotes and if you feel happy with them being included.
 - It is possible that some of the data collected will be looked at by authorised persons from the University of St Mark & St John to check that the study is being carried out correctly. All will have a duty of confidentiality to the research participant and will do their best to meet this duty.
- All data will be stored on the secure network drive at the University of St Mark & St John. Audio files of the semi-structured interviews will be uploaded to the secure network and the original files will be deleted.
- During analysis, data will be linked to separate file accessible to the researchers which enables individual research subjects to be identified.
- Following the production of the final thesis, all datasets will be disposed of securely
- Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data
- Data will be kept until the research thesis has been written, by the end of December 2023. Some data *may* be kept for further research purposes. If this is the case, you will be contacted to ensure that your consent is given for this data to be kept and used by this researcher in future study.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

- You should let the researcher know as soon as possible.

- You can withdraw up to the point that the data is being fully analysed, which will be October 1st 2023. (Once data has been anonymised it is not possible to easily withdraw it from the study.)
- If you withdraw your data will be destroyed.

What if there is a problem?

- If you have any concerns about the study, you should talk first to the researcher. Their details are at the end of this information sheet.
- If you have further concerns, you can talk with the ethics research panel at the University: contact the University Research Ethics Panel at ethicspanel@marjon.ac.uk

What will happen to the results of the research study?

- The main output will be the researcher's Thesis. If you wish to have a copy, then that can be provided.
- Other articles will be written and may be published online and in other publications.
- Learning from the research may inform the work of Neroche Woodlanders and made into courses.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet. If you decide to participate you will be given a copy of the information sheet to keep and your consent will be sought.

Researcher Contact Details:

University of St Mark and St John

20207798@marjon.ac.uk

07541 080397

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Project: An Exploratory Study of Outdoor Practitioners'

Connections to one Place

Name of Researchers: **Jenny Archard**

- I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information sheet dated [TBC] for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up to Oct 1st 2022 (the point where the data are analysed or anonymised) without providing a reason.
- I understand that data collected during the study may be looked at by individuals from the University of St Mark & St John for regulatory purposes. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data.
- I agree to my interview being audio / video recorded. The recording will be transcribed and analysed for the purpose of the research and will be destroyed after being used for reporting.
- I consent to the data and materials I provide through group discussions, photography or practical activities being used for the purpose the of research inquiry and reporting
 - I understand that the data and materials I provide will be destroyed after the data is analysed unless it is to be kept for future research. In which case I will be asked to re-consent.
- I consent to verbatim quotes being used in publications and conference presentations, I will not be named although I understand that there is a risk I could be identified.
- I understand that participation will include group discussions
- I understand that the results of the study may be published and / or presented at meetings or conferences and may be provided to research funders. I give my permission for my anonymised data to be disseminated in this way.

- I consent to the data being stored until the end of the write-up period , end of December 2023
- I agree to the data I contribute being retained for any future research approved by a Research Ethics Committee
- I understand that data will be stored on paper, in the physical form it is created, print or electronic media. It will be stored securely and only the researcher and their supervisor will have access to it.
- I understand that I will not benefit from the commercialisation, if any, of data or derivatives as a result of this study
- I agree to take part in the above study

Research Participant Information

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Person Taking Consent

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please note: If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to make a complaint, you can contact the University Research Ethics Panel at ethicspanel@marjon.ac.uk

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher's file.

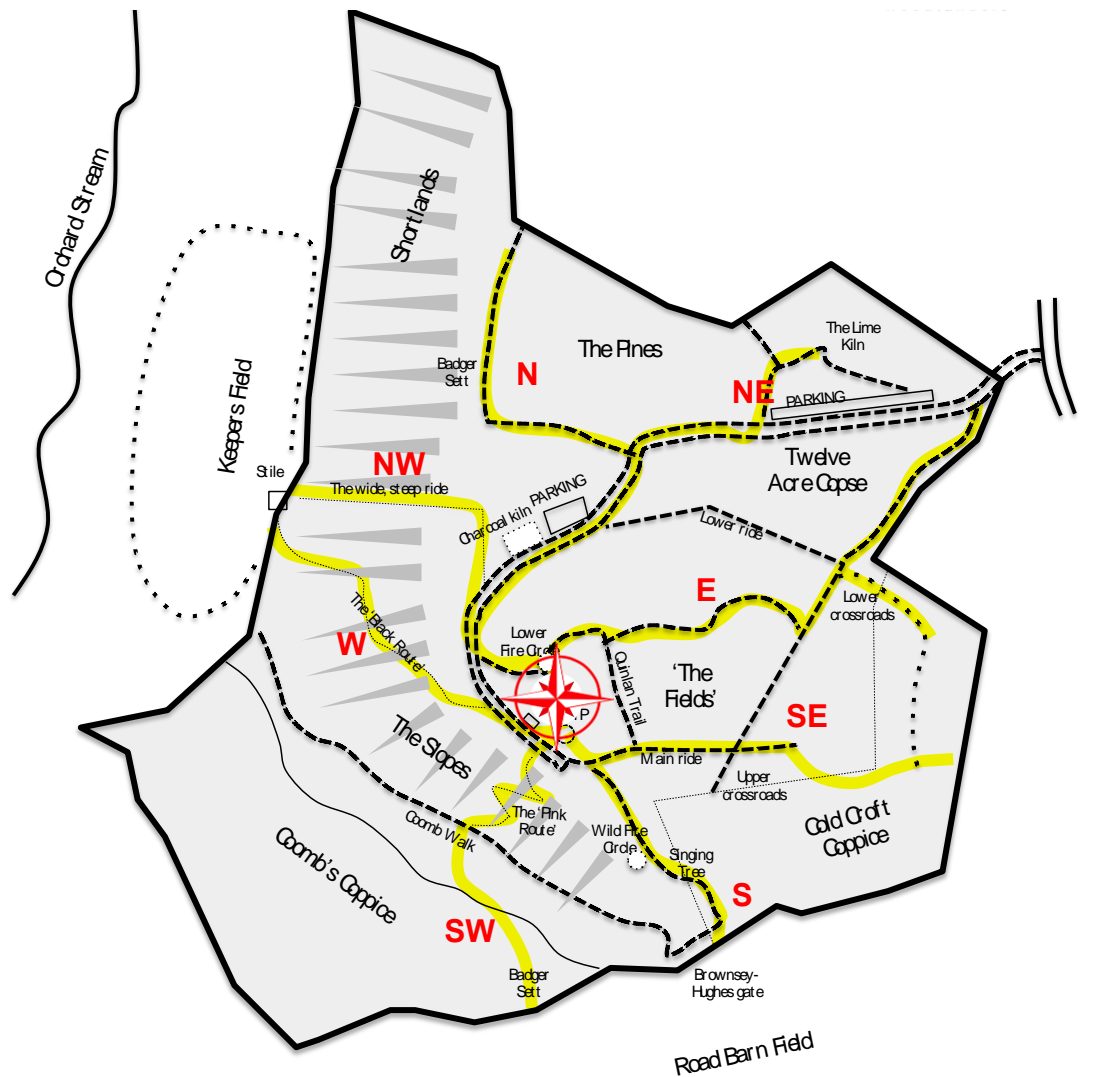
Appendix 4- Walking Interview Process & Maps

Notes for me: So what are the questions, the prompts, the intentions that I am holding as we meet together? Remember to be looking for questions, for archetypes, for myths, for stories. From my proposal it is: The problems/questions that are emerging include how the practitioners relate to the place; how it sounds, feels, is to them; how it has or makes meaning and how their relationality is shaped.

Introduction: So here we are in the woods. This research is all about understanding practitioners' relationship with this place, the soul of it if you like, and how those manifest— reveal, express- for you. Then into, how this relationship influences you here and elsewhere, as a practitioner. We will walk and talk, and if you like you can show me things or places that evoke the sense of relationship, the how of it. I'll invite you to use my phone to take photos. You can then bring these to the group discussion later in August/Sept. I have some maps here that you can look at before we start.

What is the or your relationship with this place, these woods? How might you try and describe it? Or where would we find it?
How is the relationship (shape, feeling, form, place). Different to others, similar. Feelings evoke (bring to mind/body).
Where is it? Is it a place or being or way of being?
How does this relationship with the woods, this place, this land, how does it work for you?
How does the land shape, season, other beings influence your relationship?
How is your relationality shaped?
What meaning does it bring to you?
How does it influence you? What influence does it have on you with those who come here?

Old Map offered before walking interview.



N - Down past charcoal kiln, and on to badger sett

NE - Down past charcoal kiln, and on down to lime kiln

E - Quinlan trail, then new path through The Fields, and on down to big oak at bottom crossroads, and out into Cold Croft

SE - Main ride past top crossroads, into Cold Croft by climbing tree

S - Down to wild fire circle, past singing tree and out to Road Barn Field

SW - 'Pink route' down the steep slope, and out into Coomb's Coppice

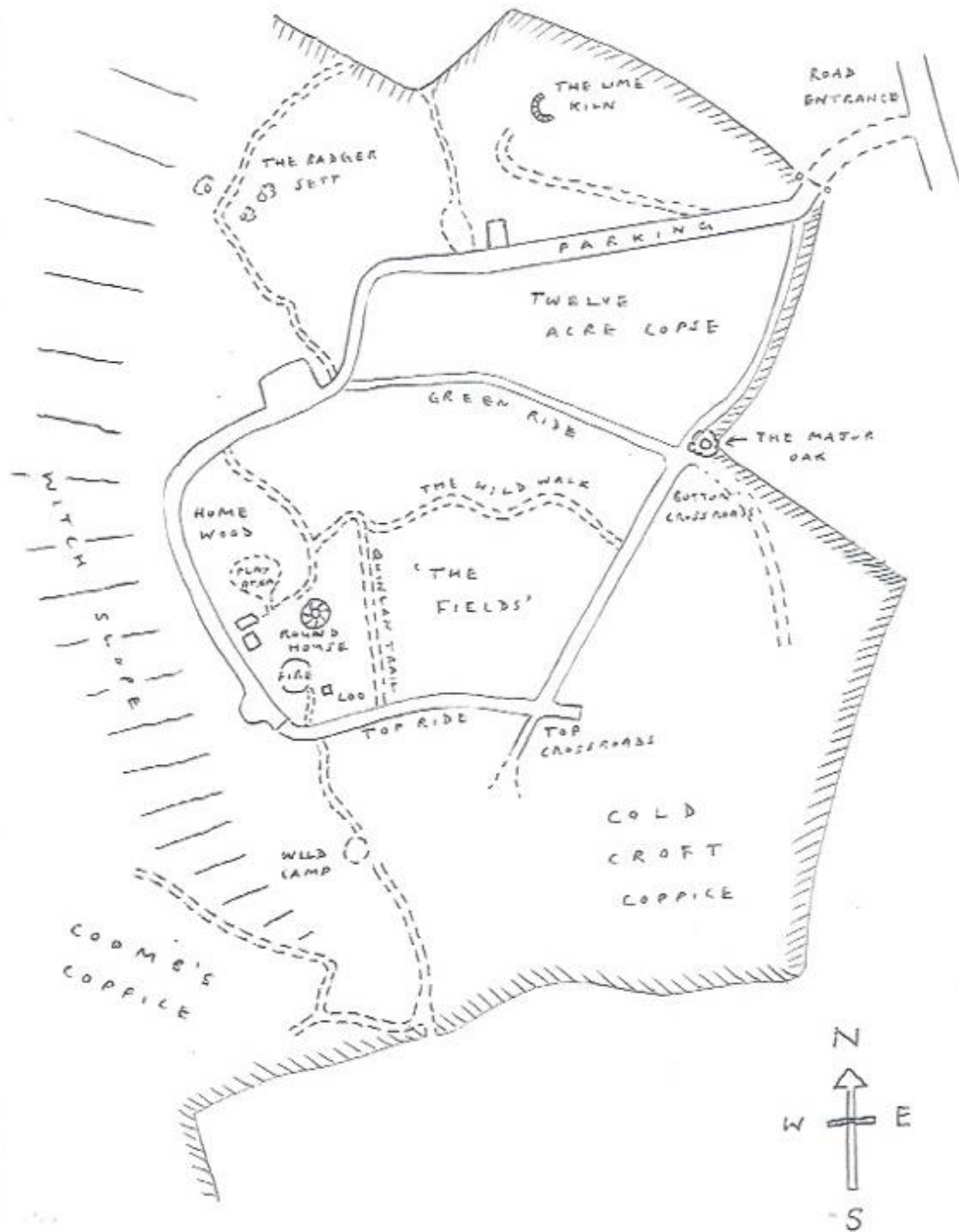
W - Down slope via diagonal route, out to Keepers Field

----- Paths - good to moderate surfaces

..... Paths - steep / difficult surfaces

200 m

New Map offered before walking interview .



Appendix 5 – Talking Circle Process

The process lasted 2 hours and took place in the woodland.

1) Participants were invited to walk away from camp deeper into the woods for 10-15 mins, to have time to re/connect with the place, take a walk or sit, or whatever they wanted to do in order to prepare for the group conversation and make a connection with the place in their own way. As a prompt before they went, I read this quote from Kimmerer (2013) *The Democracy of Species*:

To be native to a place, we must learn to speak its language. I come here to listen, to nestle into the curve of the roots and a soft hollow of pine needles to lean my bones against the column of white pine, to turn off the voice in my head until I can hear the voices outside it. The ssshh of the wind in needles, water trickling over, rock nuthatch tapping, chipmunks digging, peach not falling, mosquito in my ear and something more. Something that is not me for which we have no language. The wordless being of others in which we are never alone. After the drumbeat of my mother's heart, this was my first language (p. 1).

2) On their return, each person to draw or write something about that experience, using paper, coloured pencils or pens provided for them. These images/sets of words are in Appendix 6.

3) Talking circle with these question-prompts listed:

- Words do you associate with the term relationship.

- With the help of these words we have collected, how do you describe your making of relationship with this place?

4) Invited to go away from the camp again, go to a place and listen to what that place has to say to you right now, or imagine what it would say, and see this as an experiment if you are not used to doing this.

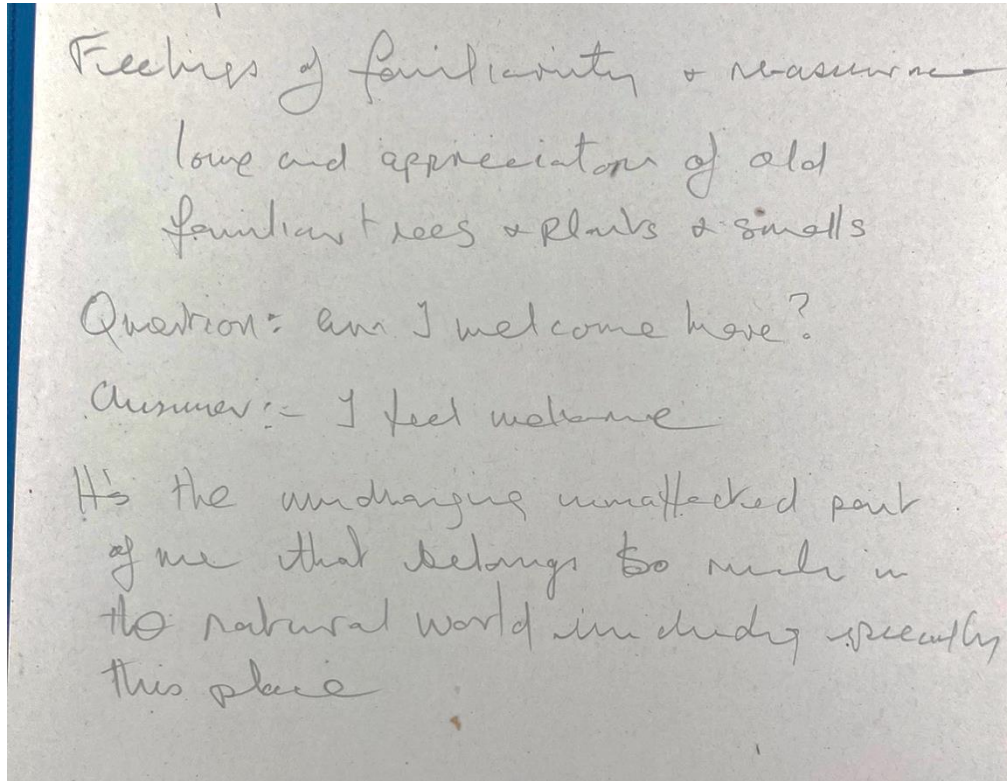
5) Talking circle with these question-prompts listed:

- What was it like doing that? What was your experience?

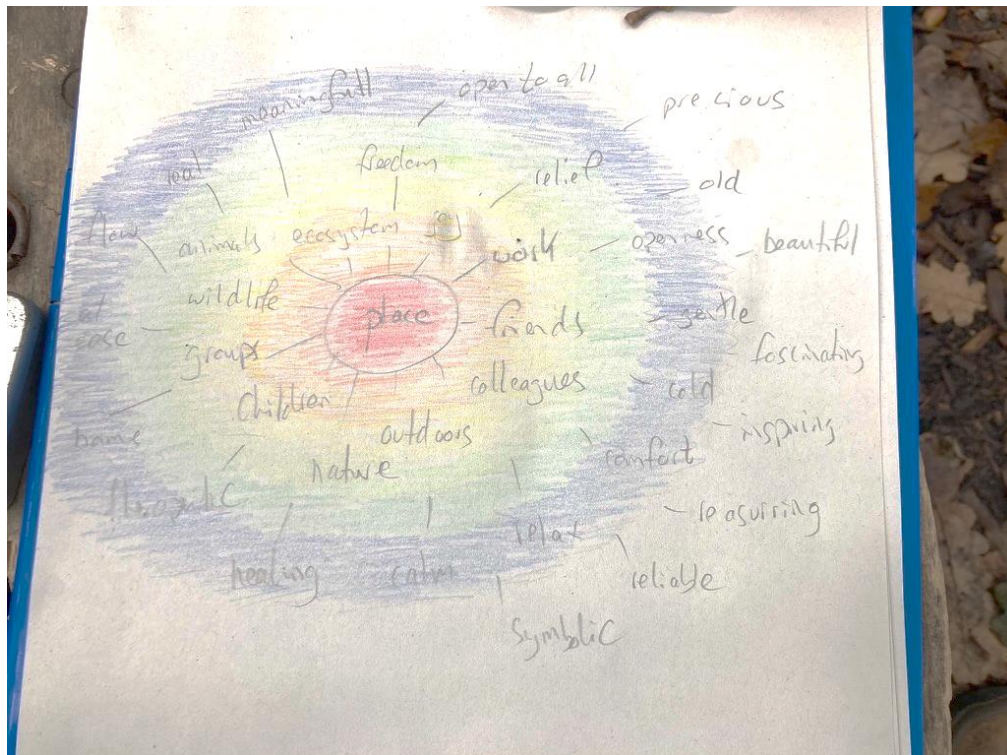
- How does your relationship with this place impact on your work with the people who come here?

Appendix 6 – Images from Talking Circle Process

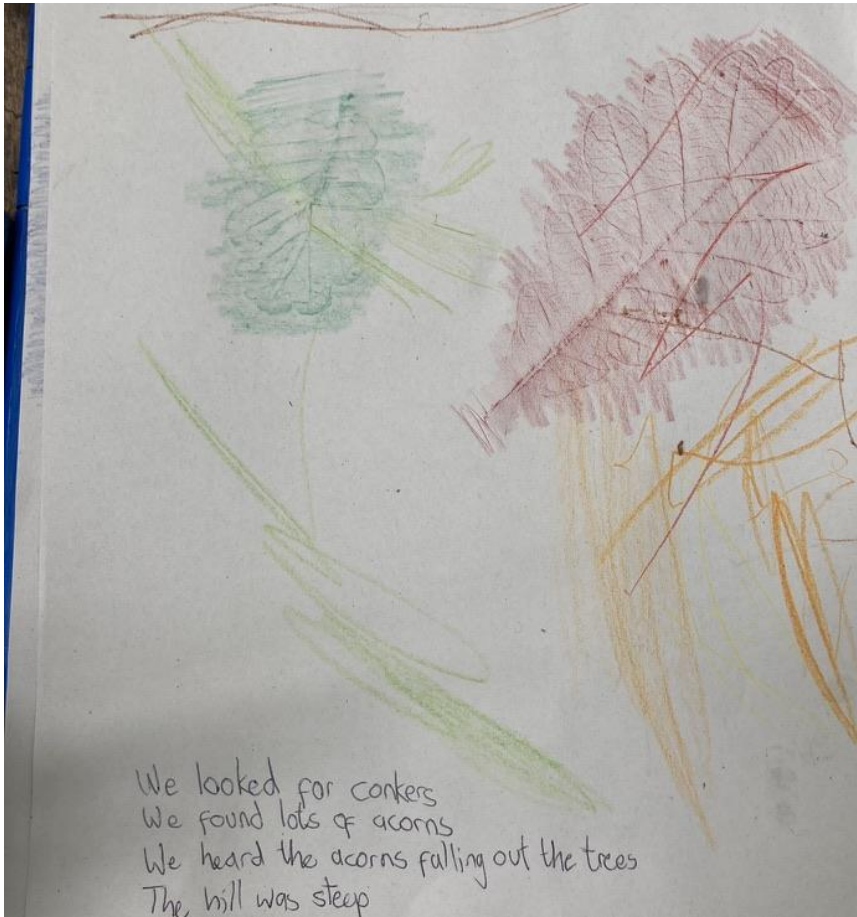
These 6 images were created by participants after part 2) of the Talking Circle. Each has a name label.



BOG



Budgie



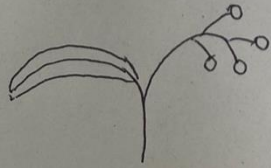
Lia



Blue

I went looking for lime seeds.
Because it's a 'gathering' thing
that is in my mind at the
moment. I find it quite hard
to just 'be' in these woods, I
always want to 'do' - gather,
plan, cut, sort out etc. That's
part of what makes this place
special for me - I have agency
here.

Fin



- Walk, mind Fungi, mindfulness -
- Meeting old friends - shaking hands (leaves) - saying hi
- Seeing changes - trees
leaves
seasons
- Lichens - mosses -
- Freedom - to follow your legs -

Elizabeth

Appendix 7: Sample Interview Transcript

Sample Transcript: Blue

J is interviewer B/Blue is participant

J: So I've got a kind of a little script so it says 'here we are in the woods, this research is all about understanding practitioners' relationship with the place, the soul of the place if you like, and how those manifest for you and then how the relationship you have with this place then manifests, influences you as a practitioner. so my suggestion is that we walk and talk, so that if you like you can show me thing for places that evoke that sense of relationship for you. and then I have my phone with me, so you can take pictures of things if you want to as we walk. So it's not like ' a walk!' you know, is there somewhere you want to go.. somewhere that says something about the relationship here or about significant things that have happened and then those photos or those things you want to say, so then Im going to try and get everyone together as a group, probably early sept, and I now that not everyone will be able to make a session, so then you can hear others experiences. because this is like understanding that we're constantly making it, we're constantly becoming with the place, so it's not just like I do an interview with you, its constantly moving and changing, so when you all come together then you can hear other people's moving and changing and what their relation ship is like that's like and how that is.

B: ok, alright, yeah

J: I'm kinda intertesed in the how of it, more than the what, so its like how does it work, how does it look, how does it feel, how is it and they are not the usual kinds of questions really I think so, how does this smell, how does it influence, how does it work.

B: and can this relate as well to all of the work I do here?

J: yes, it's across the whole piece, do you want to say something about all the work as a reminder?

B: so I do, I have come here as a person being nurtured by the woods, and I have come here as someone who is working here, and as um an assistant guide for vision fast and the weekends when we have the teenagers come once a month, and then for the short breaks a few times a year, and the Saturdays, with the, I can't remember what that is, is that the Woodlanders?

J: wild explorers

B: yes wild explorers, that's it, I always get them all mixed up, so wild explorers as well, um, and the HAF days that I've done so various different hats at different times, so yeah

J: thank you, so it's interesting that you bring that up, so we can sit here and you can talk about the places if you don't want to go for a walk

B: no I'm happy to go for a walk,

J: yeah

B: Yeah Ok, absolutely, I thought maybe we could go down that way past where the kids we have set up our, and then we can go to glow worm corner and then we can go up to where I camped on the vision fast, come back that way, that's quite a nice walk.

J: yeah ok, lets do that then, so ill take this and ill take my bit of paper so I've got the phone if you want to take a photo and you can bring anything you want to bring with you

B: ill just bring my water just in case

J: So lead the way and I'll hold this under your nose

B: Ok

J: and you can just tell me about where we're going and about what it is and about how it influences you or how it is really

B: I'm just noticing already as soon as everyone left and suddenly its you and i here how it, we've gone into another space, it feels really different already, like I was looking at the roundhouse and the light on the roundhouse and suddenly feeling like we've got into that slightly liminal time where that we've spent here together where we run, like we've done wild hearth or when we've done vision fast it has a complexly different air to it to when all the families are here or when all the kids are here and as soon as everyone left it felt like it all shifted and dropped and its really interesting

J: hmm

B: hmm

B: cheeky bramble...so we're going down this path and we're going to come, might not quite go past it, but the first time I ever slept here, I remember the first time I ever slept out here in the woods this down here in my hammock and then....[crunch crunch] we're gonna head towards the loo that we made for the Riseup children which is really fun um, fun day like making a Wendy house. Ha ha,.al this kind of like memories of fabric and string. Making something work. [crunch crunch] [long walking and no speaking] 06:54 07:24

B: so here's our compost loo for the Riseup teenagers Saturday teenagers, and I didn't think they were going to, thought they would turn their nose up at it, so we showed it to them, but they were amazing, they really accepted it didn't they, like ok ,

yeah so that's what we're going to do , that's great, could be anything,

c07:54 [photo?] could be anything! [humour]

J: so how is this part of your relationship ?

J: um.. this is just reminding me of doing what needs to be done, making it work, and um, play, so, when I helped make this, I went into that play zone part of me, creative play, which is part of what we're bringing out in the young people when they are here as well. so when I experience what its like, what I'm hoping to bring out in them, if I'm embodying that, or I'm experiencing that, or I've remembered what its like then I like to think, I hope then I hope my I'm more authentic when I'm with them, so I'm not literally one type removed from it, I'm part of it.08:59

J: And *how* is your relationship with the place in that story?

B: Because it becomes a story. So there is some story telling to be done, and sharing, and so this place becomes story that I tell to them about how we made this. and then for them it, its umm like a pointer a pin in a map, so all those little pins ji up, so each time they come we go to different parts of the woods which is what we've been doing with them, so they will become another little pin, part, so almost like a journey stick, you know that they weave. They have 09:47 the story of the woods that they can take away with them.

J: Do you want to take a photo of it? 09:53 I mean you dont have to.

B: Yeah why not, lets take a photo.

J: Uh so . There you go. Shall I leave you to hold that. Then Take photos.

B: Is it just swipe?

J: Yeah just press the button and then swipe. [crunch]

B: SO we're going to go down this way and... whenever I come up and whenever I arrive here, For work or whatever I'm doing here I always um I always sort fo hover at the gate and if I've got music on or a podcast or anything , I turn it off and I have a real kind of awareness, a stepping over the threshold into this place. and I can always feel like the sense of a welcome as well. and for me that's part of not taking it for granted that um you know of what we're asking of this place. And that it shows some reciprocity and that there's a relationship and not just oh I'm driving to work and trying to get there as quickly as I can and I'm pounding up the track and I'm slamming the door ... sort of a difference ... being greeted, greeting and being greeted like a friend, and old friend, and we're working together rather than I'm just exploring this space

J : oh that's a dog poo just in our stepping place, just there,

B: can we put a flag in or move it away?

[crunch] J: That's quite fresh.

B: So I was going to show you where I saw the glowworm 12:16

so I absolutely love glowworms , um , I thought they absolutely capture my imagination, the thought there was a creature that could glow of its own accord without being plugged in, and that creation, so I saw a glowworm here one evening, so ever since then when I come here I leave, like you can see the flower I left today, sol leave a little something.

J: Umm

B: To honour uh, and say hello, um. 12:58 Shall I take a photo of glowworm corner?

J-Hmm

{crunching, crunching}

Blue: I really like this little corner. and because its sort of on the edge, on the margin, its like on the edge of the carpark, so it might not get a lot of attention ha.

j: so how does that influence you, that relationship with this space, this place, this bit?

Blue:umm, I think... I think because a lot of the work that gets done here is a bit like too, its for people who are on the margins maybe a little bit , um, and pushed the edge maybe in different ways, and maybe some of the people that come and work here are a bit like as well, drawn to this kind fo work . um so... yeah so there are no places that aren't sacred even the edge of the carpark

j hmm. [quiet]14:21 thank you. [walking sounds] and where are we going now?14:56

Blue; so we're going to go sort of past the area that we always take the young people or families actually , generally part of the session actually, is to go for a walk into the woods and explore and play and beyond that a little bit an oak tree where I slept um in my bivi under and tarp and it was the first time that I'd ever really slept out so that's all kind of happened in my later years. so I hadn't really had that kind of experience and sleeping out on my own um and that space is just a really gentle space, and it was really gentle to me when I did that, and I had a really lovely night, nothing untoward happened apart form some curious slugs, um, so I like to go there sometimes if there is something we are doing and I get time um. so part of that uh. I've never had a relationship with a work place before.

hmm

Um maybe I'm starting to get that with my studio, but having a that kind of relationship with the place I work where I notice and I feel noticed and there's , well

like I said before there's that reciprocity so there's a place I might go to offer my thanks and ask that the ... and to ground myself actually. so like when I go to the tree in the morning its often to ground myself so that I'm really present and I dont think many people get the chance to do that in their work. so ... no we don't go to the water cooler in the morning and say 'may I present' you know. So there being a culture of that here, promotes that in people, and for me I find it does really help. me to just push away anything else , and say for these next six hours I'm fully present to the needs of the people and what's going on and to be able to use my senses and um so I suppose having a workplace that can actually be grounded in can be grounded upon, feel grounded in, and have a relationship with is quite novel.

hmm right

And I think it shows as well, because when people come and there's and they see a person that is really like comfortable in there place, in this place, that , id like to think that helps them to feel comfortable and say

J; uhu

Blue: Its not like its hey look at me I'm really comfortable and safe in this place so you should feel like that too, its just that its there. and especially when you've got the groups of young children coming in and lots of different sensory needs and background stories, might not have been here before. kids can just sniff it out I think.

J: so what...what is that you think they are sniffing out?19:19

Blue: They're sniffing out authenticity As I said before, there sniffing our here's a person who's happy to be here.

uhu

Blue: so that means it must be a nice safe place for me to be too

J: so what or how does your relationship with the place enable that to happen?19:46

Blue:through that through the moment , the times, the feeling grounded by the place, by having certain places that I go to, that nourish me, that I can share with others, I can share that *this is my favourite tree*. sometimes I come and sit here and tell the tree how I'm feeling, so yeah, so I think through the way. so its a subtle but they can see that I have a relationship in the way that teacher/miss doesn't have with the school building or her classroom, and in fact I think when I was little maybe that the Steiner thing was sort of interesting because they do have a relationships with their space, the teachers,

J: and so that pedagogy has influenced you?

Blue: yes definitely

J: That steiner pedagogy

Blue; yes I think so, like now that I'm saying that, not that it happened on purpose, or consciously, but subconsciously, yeah , yeah . and for me and my story is that I didn't get taken to places like this as a child, and as a city kid, and so maybe as well that comes across to others too, subtly as well, like I dont expect chudilren to be connected to nature. I know whats its like to not be, and so I dont take for granted the relationship that I have with this place. In my morning prayers this place is mentioned. every morning. you know. So its like there is a bond even when I'm not here. So I've just been talking and realising that you're following me.

J: yes I am!

Blue; Ha ha ha. We're going through here.

J :Maybe your feet know where you are going

S: Not quite the way I would normally go (crunch crunch] 22:25 but ... [muffled spech.. crunching] oh yes this is my little spot. my oak tree that I come to. and that I slept under, well in that space over there. um.. and I wasnt scared. which is unusual for me, not to scared in teh dark.

Blue: so your relationship with this tree. how it works for you? or maybe how it is? or maybe how is it for the tree, what you know.?

S: Yeah I suppose I feel like that the tree just sees all the comings and goings of us all, and see me in different hats, and see me come alone to speak my story from the vision fast. I've been here with a hoard of children. Umm, so its almost like an elder, probably quite impassively, nonchalantly noting the deferent days and different ways ins hitch humans pass by, but defiantly feels very benign and comforting and nurturing. 24:37

[long quiet]

And that's something I've never had, a solo experience in nature, and then taken a bunch kids to that spot where I know something else about the space because I've been here before, doing something completely different and then I'm here doing head counts and just.. but, I think there must be something subtle in that that just makes me more present, tan then keeps everyone to calm down... and we've done just sitting around the truck and just dropping a little bit, and um

J: so its helped you to have the confidence to do that, that you feel this space welcomes you in a way that you might go can I do that there, but you feel at home here, would that be..?

Blue: Yeah, yes Id say that's exactly it, id say that its given me the confidence to trust and have a go and trust that its going to work out.

J; And is it the tree that's given you the confidence?

Blue; Yeah the trees given me the confidence, definitely

J: because it was kind to you?

Blue: yeah, yeah.

J: where you said what you...

Blue: yeah because the tree.. I already have a relationship with the tree and so its almost like I have an ally in the situation! And that's what it feels like, when I go to the tree and camp before everyone arrives and then its this you know, and I want to help me be grounded and present and thank you you know for.. that's it.. the woods are allies! ha.. and part of the team in a sense

J: yeah, yeah

Blue: so.. 27:04

I think those are the sort of good . Oh I didn't take a picture of the tree. [quiet/noise]

J: thank you. So there isn't somewhere else to go? that's it?

Blue: I think yeah.. there could be, I think not. I think those are the best ones.

J: so whiter way you want to go, heading back now or whatever is that you..

Blue: Yeah, head back

J: and I was just going to ask you, and I dont know if this question with work, and how you , how your relationality is shaped?

Blue; aww what does that mean? in English?

J; UMMM .. trapped, oh we are stuck in the hazel tree! stuck with the question!

Blue: ducking under the tree, the music tree

J: Its quite hard to ask questions about relationship.. you know like if I was asking about your relationship with your partner. Like what shapes that? how does it work? How does that relationship work when its trying to get a sense of what the facets are. What it feels like? Looks like? You've talked about going and talking to the tree? I'm wondering if there is anything else to say?

Blue; umm in terms of kind of outdoor education and brining people into the outdoors, connecting people with nature, umm ...

J; Cos you do that in other places, right?

S; I've done that in other places. I only do it here now. But I've done it in other places but I've never had a relationship with the places like I do here

J: so whats different?

Blue: I've done nature connection practices here, and that's what makes it different here. I already took time out here, and had those experiences where I was able to be quiet and I the space and observe and have a dialogue and take my thoughts and my feelings and my fears and take myself to the woods and be vulnerable . and I think that's what I've been saying all along, that because I've had that experience of being nurtured myself by these woods umm then when I come on a very typical forest school day um, that's there, its shining out, and I think if people if I was training people or creating something from fresh Id get them doing that work first so that they build a relationship with the space before they bring other people and try to get them build a relationship with the space you wouldn't do that in any other way so. everywhere there are so many places that have a story, or where I slept or where I've seen deer jump out or knowing it at different times of the year . uh. all of those have filled, create really strong connection and its not like a I'm riffing to any new kid who

comes about my experience is not that , I dont need to do that, its just there in the quality I like to think of me being with them. I like to think its just there and they feel more confident or comfortable because they are around people who have that relationship with the space. 32:25

[crunch]

J: so I've got a little bit of an off-piste question because I've been reading about, ah actually there's a writer whose bene talking about place responsive §work vs places consciousness work, so seeing a place as having a consciousness in its own right and I'm leading you a little but by dropping those phrases in but um and I wonder what you make of the, in terms of your relations ship with here. is it about responding to the place or seeing the place as conscious , and connecting with that somehow.

Blue: well I think that's part of why I got into that habit as well, you know , I choose to do it, its not like, you do it because that's what we all do, um, like glowworm corner, and having my own response to the consciousness of this place because I'm in dialogue with it. and we have a relation ship, when I arrive I wave and shout hello, to everyone. and I do that every time I arrive so its like an old friend, its my family I've come to see, so I very much have that sense that this place has a consciousness. And that I've been lucky enough to be allow into that into the space

J; hmm

: 34:36

J: Ok.. So what else is there? Is there anything else to say? I'm aware of your time and energy. Um. [sounds back at the camp table] I guess the only last piece would be about how it influences what you do in other places, and how you are in other places, so how the relationship here kind of shapes your practice?

Blue: yes so I guess that I consciously build relationships with different places , and different kinds of relationships, so there might be other places like on Dartmoor that I might return to again and again. um. because I have a relationship with at place. Cos some people who want to do lots, will go to different places, 'oh I don't want to go back there again', I've been, but for me it's about repeating, going back, going back, and building that relationship and feeling ... sense, seeing, if I get that that sense of welcome, and that I'm known , and 'ah it's you, I know that one'

j: hmm

s: which is what I feel about this place now, that when I come in in the van and I roll the windows down and say hello, there is a 'hello!' back and "it's you!" it's that one!" You know, So .. and then I really notice that like when I just keep that repetition in lost ways, like when I go out in my garden and I say I stand for thriving life in my garden, in the woods, and I name certain places and then all places, and then I see more thriving life, it sort of shows itself

j: hmm, hm

Blue: Are we are, here's some thriving life for you, I mean, like you see there is . So, I think for me going back and building relationship, but in terms of work, actual work, I wouldn't want to work in a place where I don't have that relationship

J: that's changed for you? 37:02

Blue: Yeah that's changed so if someone said would you come and do some forest school stuff at this fire circle here at this place I would really try and get out of it if I could, if I wouldn't do it. If someone said I want to offer you a job where you'll be working in this place every week, if I felt like the people I was working for were like me, and they had a relationship with that place and they were sort of open to me building a relationship , then maybe, but I would never go back to that just here's a

fire pit and here's some scrub and here's a wood, and do your thing, cos that's not, for, I don't think that's what its about.

j: hmm, Ok Thank you.

Blue; thank you

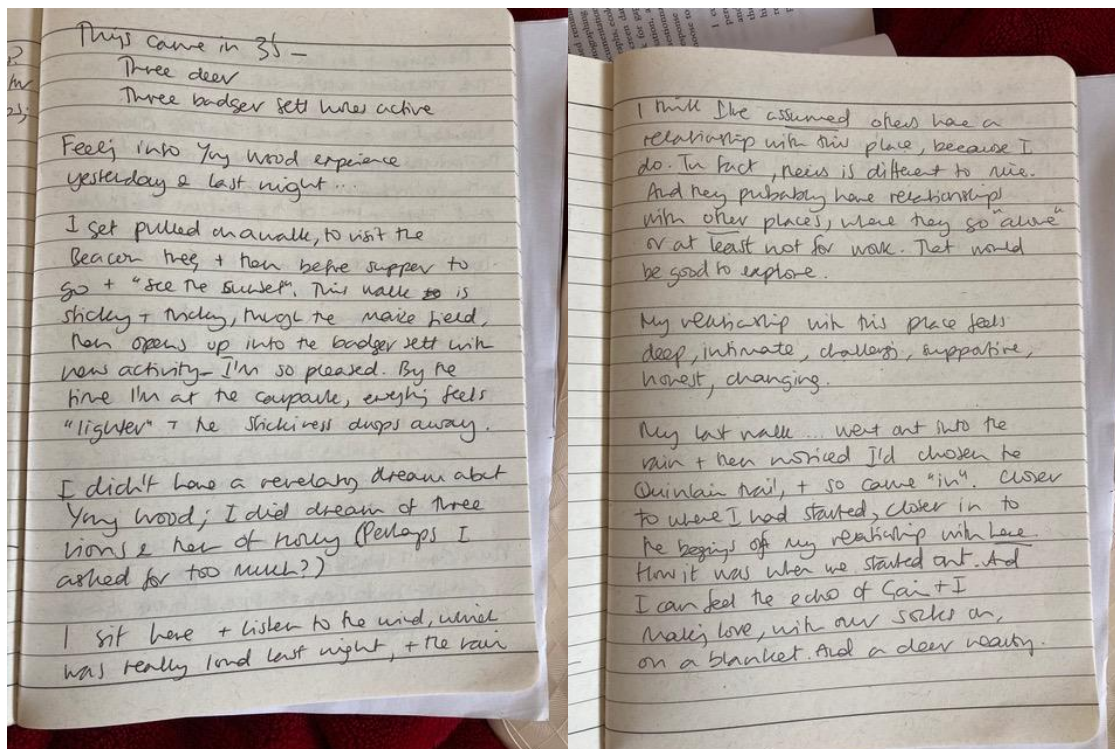
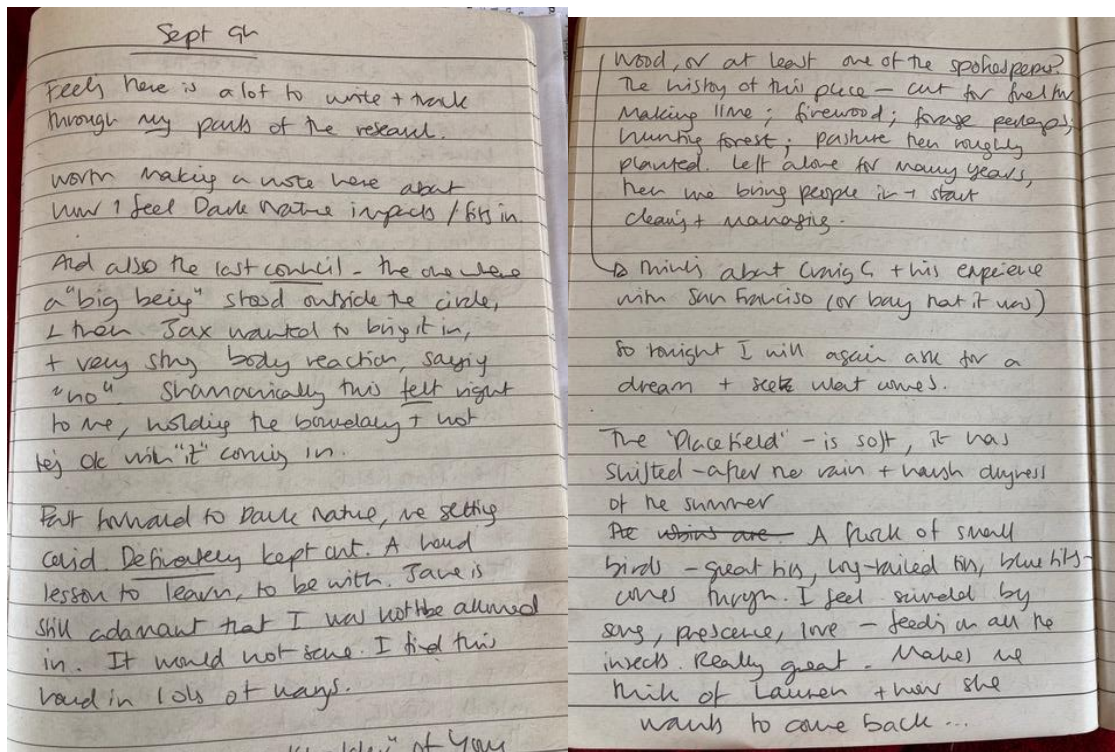
J; thank you. I think that's everything. so that's a good piece of your time so 37:58

I'm really grateful for that.

Blue: well my pleasure! Good, excellent

J: I'll turn this beast off.

Appendix 8: Terrapsychological Inquiry Journal pages



Appendix 9: All Case-assemblages

1. How are they/we making kin with each other, the woods, and other beings?

Assemblage A: Responsibility, care, opportunity and being welcomed.

Fin spoke of working with and being with the woods over many years, how this has been both encumbrance and responsibility - like parenting a child - and that this is an expression of care as well as of love. His relationship with the woods is complex because it has taken place over years of his life, there is a sense of him and the woods being enmeshed, and how the geology influences his feelings. In another location, toward the end of the interview, he spoke about his own interest in this relationship and how for him it has become this 'living experiment'. (*is there something to say in here about power relationships, or place pedagogies or becoming indigenous?*). I cut this conversation together with that of Lia, to see what difference emerged. She talked about familiarity with the woods, and how noticing the relationships with other people influenced her feelings about the place. WB talked of how her perception of a welcoming nature of the woods had enabled really important work. She took a picture of an offering someone had made tied to the branch of an oak tree in the main camp. In my terrapsychological inquiry journal I had noted that I felt had to stay in the woods to re-make my own relationship, with nothing else 'pressing'.

F: I suppose what is a reasonable analogy to think in terms of relationships that you have as a parent with a child and that so occasionally you stop and think, So, he or she a lovely young person. But a lot of the time you're thinking, have you done it? Have you done the insurance in your car, and have you sorted out your maintenance grant for next year and your hair needs cutting? And it's been sort of with me as I've gone through some very difficult times in my life. So I always tend to when I when I'm here, it always partly reminds me of the different phases of life that I've gone through.... And I think the fact that I'm walking on lias clays here, that I'm on calcareous ground and I'm thinking how that contrasts with other land in the [place name] and that the acid lands on the wet... So I always I always feel very conscious of what sort of land I'm walking on working on and how that makes me feel.

F: You can't get away from the fact that when you look at the place... you see yourself, you know, because we've written our names across the face of this place. And in the grand scheme of things, it's, it's probably has very little significance. But, you know, this place is a reflection of us now. And I suppose that's part of why where the core of my fascination comes from. Because what I'm interested in is the nature of the relationship between people and the rest of the natural world. So, this is like a living experiment in that because this is evolving through that interaction and it's hopefully a respectful interaction.

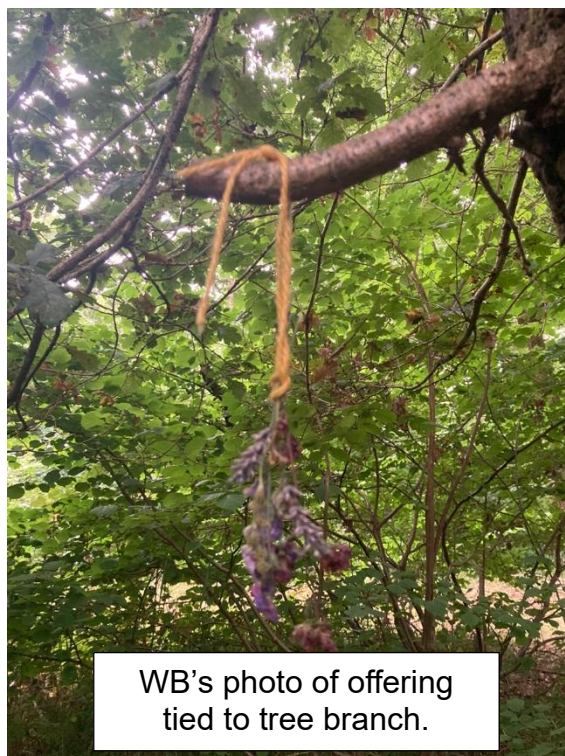
L: So, I feel like I've been given lots of opportunities. Come in here because you encouraged me to do the forest school training, which is really nice, and that has opened doors for me, um, partly working here and other places and I really enjoyed doing that. So that's good. So, it feels like quite a place of opportunity and it's quite different all the time because different volunteers and different people who work and it's not always the same people. But that's not about the place, it's about the people.

WB: I've done a lot of work with trying to connect people and myself to places and to the land and to the part that's outside themselves rather than their sort of mind. And for probably the last ten or 20 years, I've been doing it with adults. And I was forest school trained a long time ago. And there's something about being in these woods and especially doing the work with children and families that feels like I'm getting the opportunity to take that work and explore how that work can be received by children and people that don't normally have the same sort of access to the countryside that we do.

J: That sounds something like because you have a relationship with this place that you can do that?

WB: Yeah. It's much, much easier to do it here than it would be to do it in a place I didn't already know because I, I know that that the place is welcoming. There are places I've been to that aren't welcoming and it's positively hostile because they've had bad experiences, possibly with humans.

J: I needed a night alone in the woods, with nothing else pressing. How can I have a relationship if I don't just come and spend time here – needs space. (TI journal)



WB's photo of offering tied to tree branch.

Assemblage B: A really gentle space, safe and being familiar.

This assemblage is composed of words from B and L interviews which presented different kinds of familiarity or safety, emerging in distinctive ways. B took us to a place where they had slept out and talked about the gentleness of this experience, and how the making of relationship like this had helped them to be with others in a happy and comfortable way. A tree she described as being an Elder gave her a sense of being safe. L talked about repetitions of walking in the same places with the very small children and parents, partly because they cannot walk every far, and that created a familiarity. This is linked in this composition with being safe, and yet evokes something different; not a being looking over the children but something coming up through the activity of walking in the same places again and again, with different seasons and feelings, and that familiarity helps with noticing changes. Lia's map shows how her walk took us back along the way we had walked out, enacting the making of familiarity, which was not mentioned in our conversation.

J: Where are we going now?

B: so we're going to go sort of past the area that we always take the young people or families actually, generally part of the session actually, is to go for a walk into the woods and explore and play and beyond that a little bit, an oak tree where I slept um in my bivi under a tarp and it was the first time that I'd ever really slept out so that's all kind of happened in my later years. So I hadn't really had that kind of experience and sleeping out on my own um and that space is just a really gentle space, and it was really gentle to me when I did that, and I had a really lovely night, nothing untoward happened apart from some curious slugs, um, so I like to go there sometimes if there is something we are doing and I get time um. so part of that uh. I've never had a relationship with a workplace before.

And I think it shows as well, because when people come and there's and they see a person that is really like comfortable in their place, in this place, that, I'd like to think that helps them to feel comfortable oh yes this is my little spot. My oak tree that I come to. and that I slept under, well in that space over there and I wasn't scared. which is unusual for me, not to be scared in the woods.

J: So your relationship with this tree. how does it work for you? or maybe how it is? or maybe how is it for the tree, what do you know.?

B: I suppose I feel like that the tree just sees all the comings and goings of us all, and see me in different hats, and see me come alone to speak my story from the vision fast. I've been here with a hoard of children. Umm, so it's almost like an Elder, probably quite impassively, nonchalantly noting the different days and different ways

in which humans pass by, but definitely feels very benign and comforting and nurturing.

J: So, thinking a bit about how you've made a working relationship with this place. You know, the bits that are favourite places or I don't know how, how you, how you describe it or is it just places that you're familiar with.

L: So, it's nice to be familiar with it. It's nice to be a place that I'm getting to know. So, I like walking this trail [because we did it so many times. We do it every week for a while and then it was just quite nice to have it changed.

And so if you remember carrying various children along it and coming across things.

And. You know, the familiarity is quite nice, I guess, too, and doing the same thing each week. I sort of before I started come in here, maybe I saw, oh, you can't do the same thing each week, but you can because things

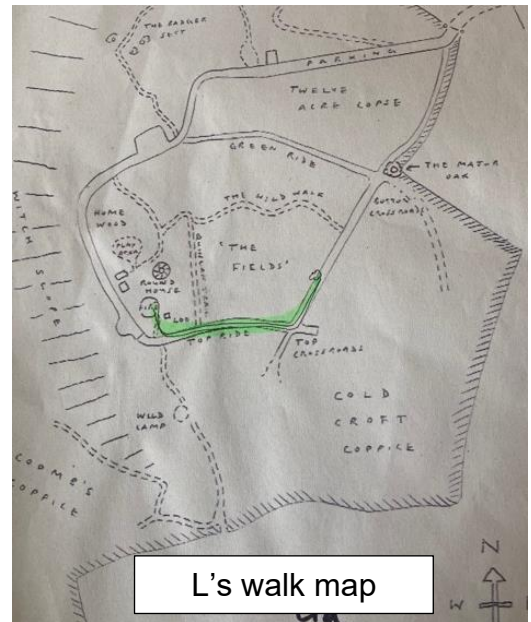
change. Like, I mean, like, I thought. So maybe it's boring to do the same thing each week. It's the same, but then it's never quite the same. And actually, people do quite like repetition when there's a gap in between and the changes to spot within the work. Uh huh.

J: So, you're looking for those changes when you're working with people?

L: Yeah, actively.

J: Actively looking for what's changed.

L: Yeah, and we find that the kids do too. The kids sort of know that maybe they're not looking for it. They just see it. Let's suppose I looking for it because you can. Do you see the changes more when it's familiar? Whereas when it's new, it's all just new. Mm hmm. So, you need to keep coming back to see changes, because otherwise you just. You don't really think about how, how it changes. Just, It's just a new place.



Assemblage C: Making things, making stories, having agency.

B walked us to the composting loo structure she and I had created together for a group of young teenagers. She told the story of creating, materials, having fun and the story-making with the young people, who she described as becoming a 'pin' in this story. She describes her notion that the making activity in this location helped them to become part of the story, and how she hoped that will help them become part of a bigger connected up map, like a taking journey stick through the woods. (I also noticed that I was in the story with her and them, as I was involved in the making). She took a photo of this place-object, the compost loo. Talking with F, he noticed the dead limb on a maple tree that needed attention, and picked up his dog's poo, enacting the sense of having to clear up, be responsible, being echoed through what he notices and what needs attending to. F described being hands-on, how the place lets him do that. In his 'picture' from the group session, he wrote about gathering lime seeds and the agency he gets from that action.

B: We're gonna head towards the loo that we made for the [group name] children which is really fun, fun day like making a Wendy house. Ha ha.. this kind of like



B's picture of the compost loo

memories of fabric and string. Making something work. I didn't think they were going to, thought they would turn their nose up at it, so we showed it to them, but they were amazing, they really accepted it didn't they, like ok, yeah so that's what we're going to do, that's great, could be anything!

J: so how is this part of your relationship?

B: this is just reminding me of doing what needs to be done, making it work, and um, play, so, when I helped make this, I went into that play zone part of me, creative play, which is part of what we're bringing out in the young people when they are here as well. so, when I experience what it's like, what I'm hoping to bring out in them, if I'm embodying that, or I'm experiencing that, or I've remembered what it's

like then I like to think, I hope then I hope my I'm more authentic when I'm with them, so I'm not literally one step removed from it, I'm part of it.

J: And how is your relationship with the place in that story?

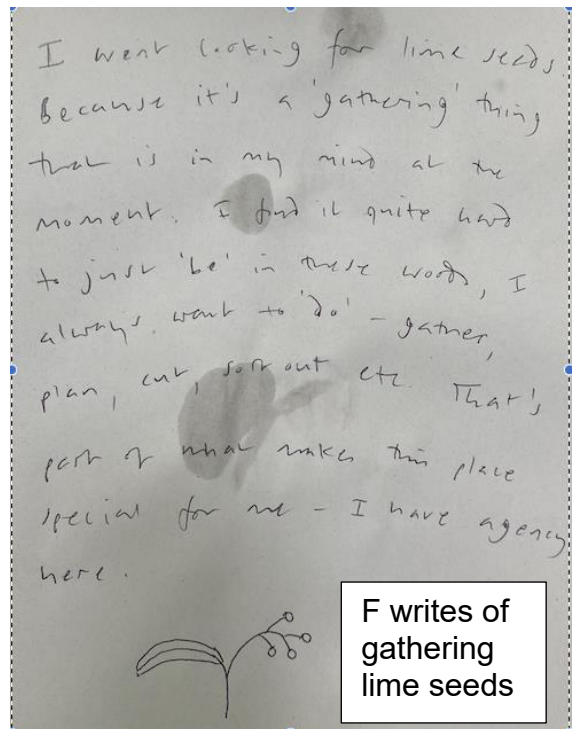
B: Because it becomes a story. So, there is some storytelling to be done, and sharing, and so this place becomes story that I tell to them about how we made this. And then for them it, its umm like a pointer, a pin in a map, so all those little pins join up, so each time they come we go to different parts of the woods which is what we've been doing with them, so they will become another little pin, part, so almost like a journey stick, you know that they weave. They have the story of the woods that they can take away with them.

J: What's it like your relationship with this place?

F: a hugely important part of having a close relationship with a piece of land is to have some instrumental role, for this to be, physically involved with it. And the thing that I've always wanted to try and enable for people is a physical involvement, practical involvement, with the place.

J: You mentioned reciprocity about people doing things. Do you get a sense of what you get back? From your relationship with this place?

F: Difficult to sort of separate out what you personally get. I suppose I get something from the fact that the place has allowed us to be here and to sort of work through and explore some of these big questions. So, what I get back is the sense that this place has given me a chance to explore those things rather than them be theoretical. So, it's, it's a yeah, it's. [pause] And again, it comes down to this hands-on thing. Everything I've done before to explore my love for the natural world I have to do as a third party. Here I've actually been able to be hands on.



Assemblage D: A different kind of belonging?

This assemblage emerged in the last readings and listening, as I noticed different ways of hearing a sense of belonging to land, and who land belongs to, came forward. The image created by Bud seems to evoke a sense of many layers, meanings and ways of understanding and belonging with place at the centre. L responded about the land not belonging to anyone and that people are not changing the place to meet their needs. This is different to the perspective of F in the group circle, who gets a sense of agency from looking after, and saw that place belongs to

no-one and everyone and how important that is for everyone to be able to make a relationship.

J: I'm wondering what the what the differences about it being here in these woods because that's what I'm interested in learning more about. And I know it's a difficult judgement, but yeah, I just if you have anything to say on that?

L: They don't belong to anybody particularly. Maybe that's quite a nice thing that they are just. I mean, I know you're managing it, and maybe it's owned by the Forestry Commission, but that seems like quite a faceless thing. Mm hmm. And so it feels a bit like. I don't know if you go into someone's garden or something and accidentally break something and it feels like it's not personal.

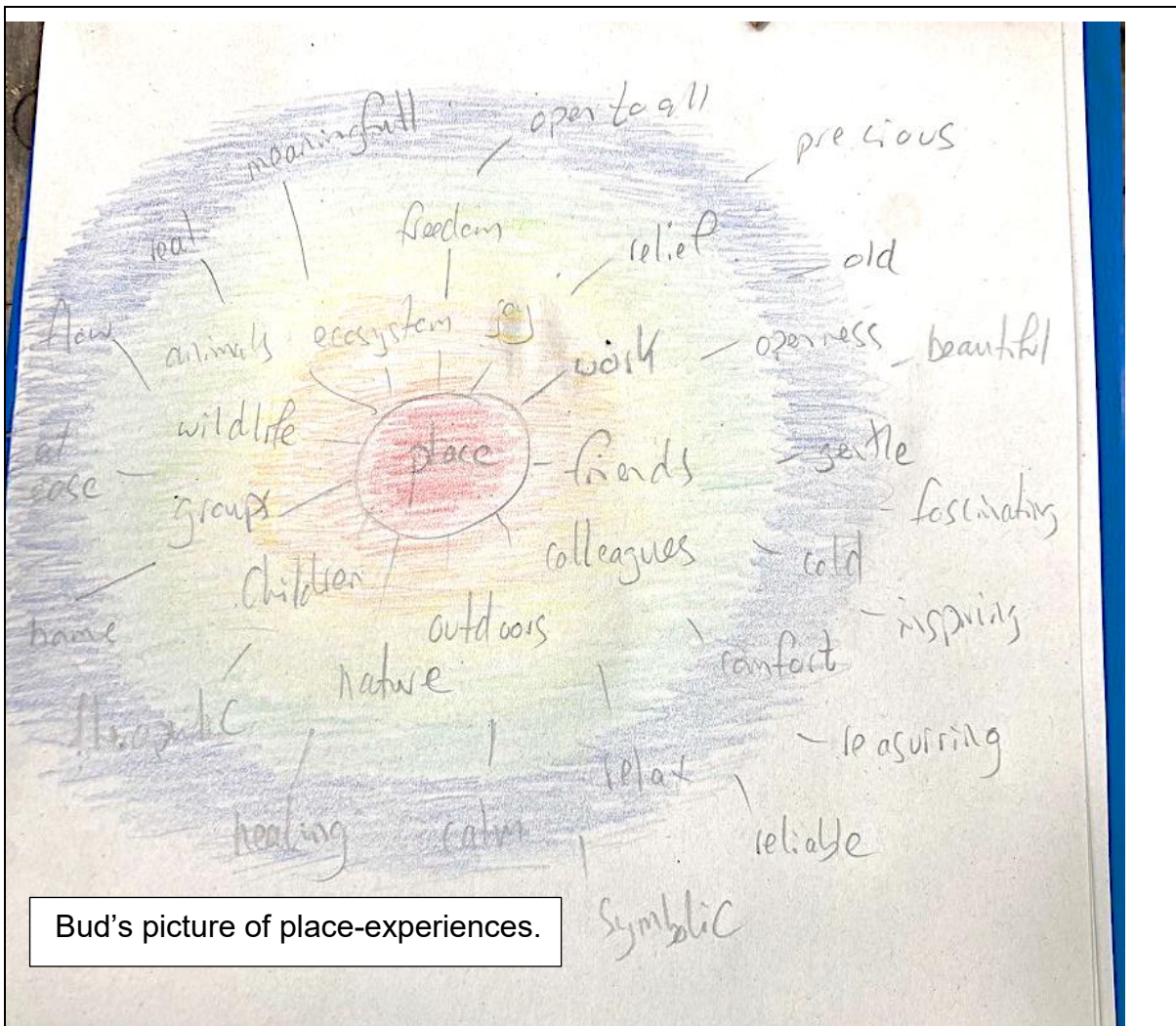
J: U hu. So, like, it's a bit more... free?

L: Yeah. Yeah.

Jenny: Because it doesn't belong. It doesn't really belong to anybody effectively.

L: Yeah. I suppose. Arguably no land does, but you know. You know what I mean? Mostly it just feels that way. I guess it's just being in woodlands in general because it's been that way for a long time.... [we are] Working with it rather than trying to change it to meet our needs.

J: So, the question again is about how your relationship with this place impacts on your work with people who come here.



Bud's picture of place-experiences.

F: So, if, for example, these woods belong to me or belonged to [team member] or belong to one of us, then we would automatically impose a certain sort of human sense of hierarchy on how we would relate to the place. Because it would be, you know, however much the owner said, Oh, you're all welcome. You know, there'd be a little bit of sense of, oh, thank you for letting me be here, because we all have that slight feudal sense about land that although this place does belong to an authority, an organisation, it is formally seen as being a public forest, a public resource. So, it's always been very important to me that we're all here on a level none of us has a has a has a sort of authority that comes from traditional senses of ownership. And I always feel that when I'm working with people here, that although some people sometimes, you know, seem to think I know more about place than other people, which isn't true. And I'm always sort of comforted by the fact that the place belongs to all of us and none of us. And I think part of it, sense of freedom comes a little bit from that. I don't feel beholden to anyone when I'm here. And I think that mattered.

2. How are attunements with the place showing up – non-humans being involved, actions, words, and images?

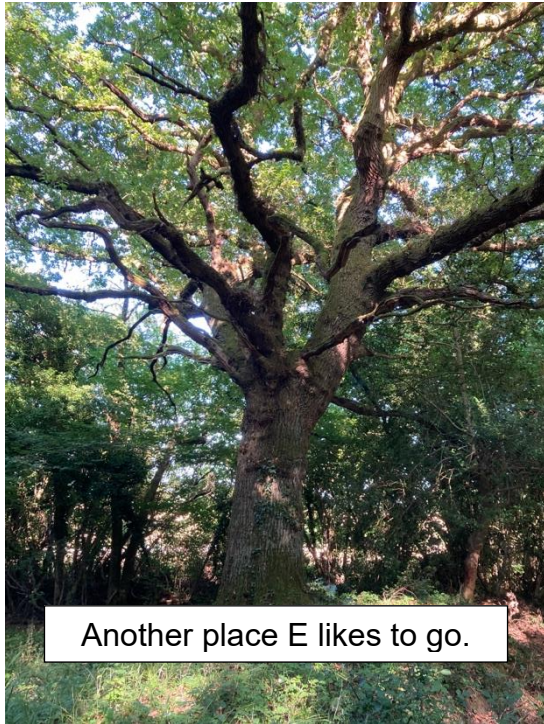
Assemblage E: Chatting and silence - different ways of feeling understood and accepted by the place.

This assemblage emerged from similar questions about participants relationship with the place, the first two from walking interviews and the third from the group talking circle. E described her relationship in terms of feeling accepted and a pull to certain places. She described that she chatted with the tree, that the woods accept her, so that teaches her to be accepting of others. It is not clear how she links these two things. For F it was the silence that brought connection and describes the woods with 'his hand around my shoulders'. For L, knowing that no-one decided to put the trees there leads to questioning of how she is with children, and how this feeling of the trees 'just being as they are' challenged her to be more accepting of the children.

J: And what's the sense of the relationship then that you have with this place? It allows you to do that, or how would you describe it?

E: It's very difficult to explain. I think just actually offers understanding. A nature connection and allowing others and teaching others how to do that. It's quite a strong pull to certain places. And it's a place that's far enough away from camp, but you can still be back there in about 5 minutes.

E: ... this is another place I like to sit sometimes when we go off for 5 minutes. If no one else is sat there, then that's where I'll go. And just have a little chat with her and live in wonder at how much she's seen in her life and who she's met and who else has sat at the bottom of that tree. I think she may be one of the oldest trees in the woods. ...but place accepts you as well. It doesn't care really who you are as long as you are, who you are. And it might not make sense to anyone. I'm quite good at that. I have my own little language. So, it works for me, I mean, I'm going to understand it.



Another place E likes to go.

J: Is there anymore that you can say about how this relationship that you have with the place shapes the way that you work?

E: Yeah, by the woods accepting you as you are, you expect that you are inclusive to the people that come here. Because the woods accept you, so why should it not accept everybody else that comes here. In actual fact, by doing that, it's taught us to remove other barriers that stop people from coming here. [wasp arrives] This is not a wasp! Yeah, it accepts. It accepts you for who you are. So therefore, it teaches you to accept people for who they are, other people for who they are.

E: ...But there's also a lot of peace here. It's a very quiet place. And you can sometimes hear the trees chatting away to each other in the sense of the treetops in the wind, just moving. So, it kind of feels a bit like speaking to each other, certainly connecting with each

other.

F: ... I don't have a conscious sense of the spirit of the place that I can articulate to you, but I do have.... um. I think for me that the spirit of the place is silent. It's almost. What am I trying to say, it's almost, it's there in the silence rather than in the speaking. And. There have been times when I've been here, when I've been in a really bad state of mind, and I have shouted at the place. I've just shouted, not at any particular tree or feature, I've just shouted at the place because I'm shouting out the personality that I feel the place has. And although I never hear any voice back, there's something in the nature of the silence. There's something in the nature of what it doesn't say that I find calming and it's something like a child having a crying fit and wanting its parent to make it all okay and the parent doesn't make it all okay by telling them anything, but simply by putting their hand around their shoulders. And the place does put his hand around my shoulders. Sometimes. And there's not many places in the [area name] that do that. So that's probably about the closest I get to spiritual connection with the soul of the place, perhaps.

L: The trees are there just because they are, not because someone's decided to put them there. They've just ended up there. So maybe it's just okay to be. I thought about, maybe. So, I work in a school and maybe we'll look after some of the children with autism or developmental delay or something. I'm making the decision on whether it's okay to just let them be who they are or if we need to try and make them do something different. So maybe I should just leave them as they are, more with the kids as well.

Assemblage F: Listening to and for the other-than-human and making meaning.

Place speaking through a non-human encounter or actions, during the interview of circle session rather than as part of their story. I walked with WB as it rained, and she told the story of a challenging winter night staying alone in the woods before the winter solstice session with children the following day. Police were searching on foot and helicopter for a missing person, and as she told this story this story many frogs appeared. She made meaning from this more-than-human encounter, about the metamorphosis they symbolised for her, and how her challenging night became a magical day. With Bud, she noticed a fallen, uprooted tree and drew significance from that, analogies that can be used for her and for others. With B, as walked and I asked a difficult question, we both got stuck trying to clamber through an old hazel tree. This prompted me to ask the question differently, and her rich answer is about having been able to be vulnerable and she told her own story of making a story, about deer jumping out, that leads her into talking about how important it is for herself and others to build a relationship with the place before bringing others there. E spoke in the last part of the talking circle about how she listened, and her legs walked her to the polytunnel, which really needed watering, and she said that maybe she should listen more often.

WB: ... winter in the cabin and had quite an initiation into the whole greater [place name] area when an old lady had gone missing from 3:00 in the afternoon and I arrived about to spend the night here, because I don't go anywhere by wheel on the solstice. So, the only reason I could work was because it was on the condition I could stay here for the two nights that I didn't really get by wheel. And when I arrived, a load of police cars and ambulances just stuck at the [nearby place name] turning. And I suddenly got quite freaked out and turned around to see what it was all about. And they told me about this old lady being lost. And I was going to spend the night here on my own. And I opened the gate and shut the gates and the cabin, lit the fire. And then I got completely freaked out because the helicopter started going over with search lights. oh there's a little frog! Lots of little frogs. I can see at least four. Make sure we don't tread on little frogs... And it really brought up a lot of fear for me, even though I knew it wasn't anything to worry about. So, the cabin -oh another little frog. We're just remarking on little frogs running across the

track, which are metamorphosis. About metamorphosis, aren't they? Changing from one thing to another.

J: So, the little frogs have arrived. Just when you're talking about your night in the cabin and how challenging it was.

WB: I really understand now. So, I sat in the cabin with all the lights off, looking at the window because I knew there were people searching the woods. And then luckily for some reason, [staff] had heard about it and texted me. Said she'd been found. So, I was able to relax. And then the next day was really magical.

Bud: I mean look at that, it's just amazing we don't really get to see this, do you. The trees that are down. You can see in the root plate and talk about what's underneath it and talk about difficulty of it bobbing back up in the wind and trapping someone underneath, there is so much conversation is. So, there's so many analogies in nature for like life, with trees specifically about being leant on, being about taking the strain, and growing stronger. And if you don't, then you grow up not being able to cope with adversities Then As soon as the wind blows you fall over and you know, growing up in a crooked way and having imperfections and actually that being OK.

As I ask B a question, which is tricky we get physically stuck, so I have to re-ask the question, and then lead into her saying that her relationship developed through practice, means she can create the same for others

J: ...and I was just going to ask you, and I don't know if this question with work, and how you, how your relationality is shaped?

B: aww what does that mean? in English?

J: UMMM ... trapped, oh we are stuck in the hazel tree! stuck with the question!

B: ducking under the tree, the music tree

After re-asking the question and her exploration is:

B: ... but I've never had a relationship with the places like I do here

J: so, what's different?

B: I've done nature connection practices here, and that's what makes it different here. I already took time out here and had those experiences where I was able to be quiet and I the space and observe and have a dialogue and take my thoughts and my feelings and my fears and take myself to the woods and be vulnerable. and I think that's what I've been saying all along, that because I've had that experience of being nurtured myself by these woods umm then when I come on a very typical forest school day um, that's there, its shining out, and I think if people if I was training people or creating something from fresh I'd get them doing that work first so that they build a relationship with the space before they bring other people and try to get them build a relationship with the space you wouldn't do that in any other way so. everywhere there are so many places that have a story, or where I slept or where I've seen deer jump out or knowing it at different times of the year. uh. all of those have filled, create really strong connection and it's not like a I'm riffing to any new kid who comes about my experience is not that, I don't need to do that, it's just there in the quality I like to think of me being with them. I like to

think it's just there and they feel more confident or comfortable because they are around people who have that relationship with the space.

In my journal (April 16th, p2), after the group discussion, I say "The presence of the acorns as people are speaking – sometimes seeming to collude with what is being said or emphasise a point."

J: I sit here and listen to the wind, which was really loud last night, and the rain and the dripping of water into the butt outside the cabin. The water is overflowing... Feels like the water was telling me all night to look at how it flows, here. (TI journal)

J: So, take your imagination with you or your however it is that you listen and see what the place has to say to you right now.... what it was like just doing that and anything that you want to say about that experience, you know?

E: When I was asked a question, I kind of thought, that's quite a hard one. And I got onto the track, and I did listen, and my legs walked me down to the polytunnel and when I was on the track I had actually not the trees saying hello, it was tomatoes going, somebody please help me. So, I ended up in the polytunnel picking tomatoes and so was not the plants and it was really pretty ugly. So maybe I should listen more often. It was what I came away with and I actually just go with it. So, I have a pocket full of tomatoes. If anybody wants. Some of the bounty that comes from it. And I'm now like yeah, wow, wow!

3. Where is 'non-language visible' – body movements, sounds and other sensory ways?

Assemblage G: Sensory- words, experiences, body-movements, sounds

This sensory, somatic related composition put together four parts of interviews. In interview with BOG, I reminded him how to hold the voice recorder. He said how the recording would not show how people are feeling the place around them, sensing what was happening, and then talked of bugs on skin and the sunlight on piece of grass. In the walk with B, as we stepped toward a place for her that was really important and evoked the marginal nature of work with people, a very fresh dog poo was right in front of us. There was a link with the conversation about marginal place and the work with marginalized people, and the glow-worm that for her acts as the 'flag' to remind her. With L, she noted how sound is different in the woods, and that helps her and possibly others to be calmed. *[for the discussion – I could have ignored*

this comment if I was just focusing on what people said about the woods]. Walking with Bud as she talked of discovering new things, who then found a small fluffy feather and offered it to me knowing I'd been collecting them, and then that seemed to allow her to explain more about being able to be herself and show her sensory aspects in the place – being a feeler, toucher, and sniffer. L spoke about her legs knowing the place, a sense of somatic knowing, to be able to wander and how the sound in the woods felt different.

J: That's the whole point of holding and hold and speak into it.

BOG: The recording doesn't show what we're looking at and how we're looking at things and how we're feeling the ground underneath our feet and the bugs in the air and our skin and things. What's here? Bits of grass or something, is it I see. I think there's a bit of grass has been growing. In a patch sun light. It's just something to look at, isn't it?

J : oh that's a dog poo just in our stepping place, just there,

B: can we put a flag in or move it away?

J: That's quite fresh.

S: So I was going to show you where I saw the glow-worm, so I absolutely love glow-worms , um , I thought they absolutely capture my imagination, the thought there was a creature that could glow of its own accord without being plugged in, and that creation, so I saw a glow-worm here one evening, so ever since then when I come here I leave, like you can see the flower I left today, so I leave a little something. I really like this little corner. and because it's sort of on the edge, on the margin, it's like on the edge of the carpark, so it might not get a lot of attention ha.

J: so how does that influence you, that relationship with this space, this place, this bit?

B: umm, I think... I think because a lot of the work that gets done here is a bit like too, it's for people who are on the margins maybe a little bit, um, and pushed the edge maybe in different ways, and maybe some of the people that come and work here are a bit like as well, drawn to this kind of work. Um so... yeah so there



Glow worm corner

are no places that aren't sacred even the edge of the carpark.

J: So, is there any more about how it how it makes you feel? How it, what it leads you to think about or feel about when you're not here or the impact it has on you when you're working with people?

L: It's all very of a positive and it's easier to be calm when you're outdoors, I think, and in the woods because it's quite like calming sounds and you can't really hear the roads and stuff or even when there's loads people. If I doesn't get that noisy because you're outdoors, so it's more calming and being in the woods, I suppose it's a bit like maybe being in snow. How the sound feels different, isn't it? Because there's a lot of trees about. Whereas if it's an open field, it still feels, like can feel a bit like a playground. A bit shreeky.

Bud: Its definitely being outdoors in general in this place is always like this. The textures and the shapes and all of the discovery, all of it. And you find a new area where animals have been there, they know it's there. But it's new to us and always that even though you know what's going to go on seasonally in the main part, you don't know where exactly when. There's another little fluffy thing in there.

J: Owls Not so interested in that one, not owls, no it's too small

Bud: What are they for?

J: Thank you. I don't know. But I just like them.

Bud: Yes. I think feeling and touching and smelling and I think, you know, from forest bathing, you know, and other research we know what that does to our brains and why that's of benefit. I'm definitely a feeler, and a toucher and a sniffer. Although I do disguise that, I'm not sure that's obvious, but I can see that the children enjoy it. I can see why and what they want to do. But I think I disguise it because I know what fits societally. And that's what's so great about the woods. You don't have to really worry about that.

J: So, the question is about *how* you go about making your relationship with this place so the words we talked about in terms of relationships

L: ...So it's quite nice that everyone sees it in a different way. It's quite a flexible place because different people get different things from like, Hey. Yeah. It's a hard question to answer. I get the familiar feeling, familiarity of the place, how I feel. I know the place well enough for my legs just to wander when I go for a walk. And I never really know where I'm going to end up until I get there.

Assemblage H: Seeing the woods through the eyes of others.

In the walk with L, we came to the corrugated metal that lies on the track. She talked about the difference of working in the woods to living on a farm, and how being in the woods didn't feel like work as it is outside. She automatically lifted the metal sheet as

we got to it on the ride (woodland track), to see what was there, disrupting the conversation perhaps as a child would, and talked about seeing the woods through the kids' eyes. As BOG attended to things and noticed them, I did too, and my gaze was drawn by theirs, and their stories, and they explained how they watched people (learners) to see what they would be interested in and draw them in with a question.

L: Okay. I think it doesn't feel like work because it's outdoors. Cause I've always, always when I was younger, I like the. Uh, oh slow worms. Uh huh. Well, um, two things. They must get interrupted so often.

Jenny: Do you want to take a picture?

L: That's an ant's nest under there.

L: Uh, uh, just the variety that you find within the woodland is really nice and seeing through the kids' eyes as well, and then being able to find so many things to do. Um. And things like the blackberries and the wild strawberries and things, you know, seeing them enjoying that, that's really quite nice. And the fact that it's all just here already and you just work round it rather than having to do stuff to it.

BOG: I'm watching a lot of times and see what they're doing and what they're getting from things...

J: So, there is so their response. So, people's response to the place is informing you?

BOG: Yeah. Definitely.

J: So, the place speaks to you through other people's actions?

BOG: I could say, not solely, no. But it is an important part of when I'm coming for a walk here to see what other people are looking at. I suppose because I can't see very well anyway. I use other people's eyes quite a lot. A lot of the time. Yeah. "Oh, what's that?" And get them to describe what it is.

Research Journal entry: It feels like the analysis needs to be able to see the immediacy of what people are saying - not what lies behind it, but what is actually present. So, like with Lia, where she keeps noticing things and forgetting the question. Elizabeth "follows her feet".