

# **A comparative case study of community gardens in London-**

*Social capital, economic sustainability, cultural and social  
diversity*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Especially global cities such as London and New York are confronted daily with the challenges of social and environmental unsustainability, including lacking green spaces, social isolation and disconnectedness, cultural tensions and food insecurity (mostly low-income class people have limited access to fresh, nutritious, healthy food) (Frumkin, 2002; Uzzel, 2002). In order to tackle these ethically injustices an increasing amount of local residents join themselves together to reconnect with nature creating green open public spaces for the neighborhood. Often these gardens are said to be run for the local community by the community. More precisely, through a bottom-up approach community members transform identified derelict land, after having sort out a deal with the local council and the land owner, with the help of previously raised funds into an urban garden where volunteering neighbors grow their own vegetables, fruits, herbs as well as trees and flowers.

Studies (Baker, 2004; Corrigan, 2011) point out that community gardens constitute one possible strategy to address food insecurity by way of educating especially children through structured activities as well as providing fresh vegetables. Moreover, as Quayle (2007) of the *Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG) in the UK* claims, CGs contribute to an increase of the well-being of individuals and communities. Firstly, they positively influence the local economy through local spending and employment opportunities, for example. Secondly, the reconnection with nature would promote local activity on global environmental problems through recycling, composting and local food production. Thirdly, due to a hands-on food growing practice a healthier diet is promoted. However, community gardens in Northern America and Australia mainly aim at providing the neighborhood with fresh and healthy food, whereas London primarily focuses on providing green space and community development (Morgan, Sonnino, 2010; Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2004). In general, community gardens fulfill various functions covering multiple aspects, but the focuses are shifted, adapted to the prevailing local needs and demands. As Glover (2004) observed “community gardens are less about gardening than they are about community. They offer a ‘third place’ outside of work and home where people can gather, network, identify

together as residents of a neighborhood” (p.143). Social cohesion, neighborhood and community development are catch phrases of community gardens, most frequently situated within deprived, highly population dense and multicultural areas.

Embedded in the urban landscape of apartment towers, decaying old buildings and new developments a green oasis receiving visitors of all ages, nations, races and income classes offers a peaceful and stimulating environment to garden, relax or socialize. Such a multicultural, intergenerational and all income classes encompassing community garden is of course an ideal one. In the reality, however, CGs often face the challenge to get the whole community involved. Oftentimes, volunteers constitute a group of so-called “usual suspects”, white middle-class men and women or young trendy eco warriors frequenting the garden to “do some work for the community”. Moreover, lack of substantial funding and support of the local government frequently endanger a garden’s endurance and turn it into a fragile project.

This raises the question how CGs access resources to maintain themselves and secure their further development. In addition, it points to the need of further research into ‘social inclusiveness’, ‘social cohesion’ and ‘community development’ in the context of CGs. In particular, this paper will explore how *social capital* is generated in CGs to secure its survival as well as the social cohesiveness in the neighborhood. I focused on this aspect of ethical justice addressed by CGs because first of all it is relatively under researched. Most of the research (Baker, 2004; Corrigan, 2011; Dixon et al., 2009; Gelsi, 1999; Hopkins, 2002; Petts, 2001) explores community gardens as a strategy to address food insecurity regarding CGs as a form of urban agriculture. Additionally, there is a lack of case analyses of CGs in London, although they do exist in quantity and diversity, the abundance of research (Burtscher, 2010; Corrigan, 2011; Glover, 2003; Glover et al., 2005; Kingsley & Townsend, 2006; Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2006; etc) investigates cases in Northern America and Australia. Secondly, as indicated above getting the whole community involved is a major challenge or concern of CGs themselves. My findings suggest that community involvement, social inclusiveness and cohesion are fundamental to the survival and further development of a CG because first of all it enhances the support of the local government. Secondly, vital networks are established, extended and stabilized through trust building, for instance. Thirdly, the garden is able to generate more

revenue due to more diverse networks. In addition, a successful garden enjoys greater credibility among funders. The selected study sites represent three different approaches this paper will compare. First, the *King Henry's Walk Garden* failed in being socially inclusive, yet its endurance is secured for a long time span. Second, the *Dalston Eastern Curve Garden* seemingly succeeded in the former respect, but is economically unsustainable since it has only been established recently and therefore is still in the phase of securing its continuation. Third, the *Culpeper Community garden* apparently accomplished being ethically just in terms of addressing the lack of green spaces, social isolation and disconnectedness, cultural tensions and food insecurity. Simultaneously, over a span of 30 years the garden still is able to sustain itself. This paper, however, focuses on the DECG because few studies informed about the challenges a CG faces in the initial phase of establishment and development (Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996).

To summarize, this paper claims that CGs generate social capital in order to both secure neighborhood improvement and cohesiveness, but at the same time also use it to secure their existence and further development. Thus, this paper seeks to answer the research question how the creation of social capital within community gardens secures their survival (economic sustainability) and enhances social and cultural inclusiveness in a neighborhood (ethical justice).

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

As indicated above through transforming ruined derelict land into available green gardening spaces, committed local residents seek to restore their neighborhood and offer something that produces a value to the neighborhood (Schmelzkopf, 1995; Linn, 1999). According to Glover (2003) a CG is defined as an “organized initiative whereby sections of land are used to produce food or flowers in an urban environment for the personal use or collective benefit of their members who, by virtue of their participation, share certain resources, such as space, tools and water” (in Corrigan, 2003; Dow, 2006; Shabbir, 2010). Community gardens became widely popular in the Western hemisphere between WWI and II when the changing socio-economic and demographic situation caused

hunger especially amongst low-income classes. As a response local governments provided deprived neighborhoods derelict land for growing cheap food. However, after WW II the gardens declined in popularity both amongst citizens and government due to the industrialization of food production and distribution rendering cheap food accessible for all. The current CG movement evolved in the 1970s when local residents, due to an increased urban decay, sought green public spaces once more (Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2006). Reasons for transforming derelict urban land into recreational gardens are manifold.

Some authors focus, for instance, on CG's existence as grassroots initiatives intent to enhance the appearance of the neighborhood (Saldivar-Tanaka, 2006; Schukoske, 2000). In addition, CGs provide an opportunity for points of convergence for local residents and incite the (not only physical) improvement of the neighborhood (Linn, 1999; Schmelzkof, 1996). Moreover, as the name indicates, a CG is a collective project which involves the building as well as presupposes previously established social networks (Jamison, 1985). The latter serve the voluntary incorporation of resources and processing of those to tackle urgent concerns within the neighborhood, such as urban decline and associated criminality (Glover, 2004; Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2006; Schukoske, 2000) Other studies point out that the community in CG is more important than the actual act of gardening (Nemore, 1998; Glover, 2005). More precisely, within the context of open urban green spaces local residents are incorporated into a community (ibid). CGs, thus entail the capacity to develop communities. In particular, Shinew et al. (2004) claim, focusing upon inter racial group interaction, that garden projects maintain the capacity to promote cultural, ethnic and socio-economic diversity. Moreover, authors such as Baker (2004), Gottlieb & Fisher (1996), or Schmelzkopf (1996) explored dimensions of green space provision and empowerment of the neighborhood. Additionally, CGs seemingly contribute to the betterment of the mental and physical health of community members.

In addition to community development and neighborhood beautification, CGs are a strategy to address food insecurity. Embedded within the community food security movement, promoting schemes that proceed both in an environmentally friendly, economically as well as socially just approach, CGs are a resource for locally produced

and consumed food (Gottlieb & Fisher; Baker, 2004). Besides CGs, the CFS also encourages urban agriculture movements such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or farmer's markets. These alternative food networks are examples where the boundary between producer and consumer becomes blurred (Venn et al, 2006). In the United States of America CGs linking food production and consumption are a growing trend (Corrigan, 2003). As a consequence, gardeners are able to lower their expenditures for food (ibid). Moreover, some CGs belong to civic agriculture, a "locally based agricultural and food production system that is tightly linked to a community's social and economic development" (Lyson, 2004, in Corrigan, 2003). Local residents are able to access healthy, fresh and nutritious food grown without pesticides and produced in their direct neighborhood so that long transport distances are avoided. Thus, community gardeners produce their own healthy and sustainable food (ibid). In addition, through the execution of the gardening work, participants increase their awareness for a healthier diet and especially children become acquainted with a healthful way of life and nutrition (ibid).

Nevertheless, CGs are confronted with numerous challenges. Oftentimes, the difficulties already begin when attempting to access identified derelict land, and continue with securing the latter's maintenance. Second, ideally the local residents should gain a sense of ownership of the CG. Garden coordinators in London confirmed that an ideal CG is one owned by the local neighborhood, but that reaching this status would be a challenging undertaking. Third, organizing the garden is time and revenue consuming and involves regular support of various actors. In addition, responsible garden participants are confronted with accessing the required resources to maintain and further develop the CG (Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2004; Schmelzkopf, 1996).

My own research was heavily influenced by Baker (2004), Glover (2003, 2004), Gottlieb & Fisher (1996), Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny (2006) as well as Schmelzkopf (1996) because CGs in London primarily focus on community and neighborhood improvement, and provision of green recreational spaces where the whole neighborhood is included. However, there is a lack of concrete case studies of CGs in London analyzing their operations to simultaneously secure their viability as well as social inclusiveness. Although, there is a great tradition of CGs, existing in diversity and quantity, in London,

most of the analyzed cases are situated in Northern America and Australia. This points to the need to further investigate concrete cases in London.

Moreover, London as a global world city apparently participates in the current debate around sustainable (local and community) development (Holland, 2004) and seeks strategies for a local and sustainable food system (Morgan & Sonnino, 2010) due to London's "fundamental social, economic and environmental unsustainability (Petts, 2001 for World Health Organization). London's food system reflects many diverse urban issues such as diet-related health problems including (child) obesity and diabetes. Therefore, the public health community began to scrutinize the quality of food. In addition, the growing, processing and transportation of London's food causes severe environmental issues. In particular, the system constitutes 41% of London's ecological footprint (LDA, 2006, 17) which involves local (air pollution) as well as global (emission of green house gases) consequences. Economically speaking wide inequalities exist between high income classes spending merely 6% of their income on food, and low-income classes procuring 26% of revenues on feeding their families. Additionally, inequalities also occur in the food economy, where long working hours are paid with low wages. In order to tackle these issues of unsustainability, in 2006 Mayor Ken Livingstone initiated a holistic food strategy called "Healthy and Sustainable Food for London" designed with the primary aims to: "ensure commercial vibrancy, secure consumer engagement, lever the power of procurement, develop regional links, deliver healthy schools and lastly reduce waste" (Morgan & Sonnino, 2010, p. 213).

The food strategy is endangered, however, by a profound lack of resources (funding from the public sector alone are not sufficient) and a weak governance system, "which means that the Mayor exerts no direct control over a food system that he officially wants to reform" (ibid, p. 217). Moreover, schemes or programs launched by the new Mayor Boris Johnson (2008) to tackle climate change and food insecurity, like "Capital Growth", aiming at having created 2012 new food growing spaces by the end of 2012, are rather symbolic in nature than entailing a transformational capability (ibid, p.216). Nevertheless, attempts of more sustainable food-growing, including individual vegetable growing on rooftops and balconies or community food-growing constitute a growing trend in the United Kingdom (Petts, 2001, p. 4). Besides the 30, 000 allotments,

2.8 million private gardens, numerous school gardens with fruit and vegetable beds in the backyards, the 15 community orchards and 8 City Farms fulfilling primarily an educational and community role, more than 100 (map FCFCG) CGs spread all over the city on housing estates, near railways or on temporarily available land attract around 650 000 visitors a year, which accounts for 10% of London's population (ibid, p.7f.).

Whereas in Northern America or Cuba these garden projects are primarily designed for urban agriculture, gardeners in London "grow mainly flowers and ornamental plants, although fruit trees, herbs and tomatoes are also common" (ibid, p.7). This is due to the British community garden movement's dedication to community development particularly focused on cultural diversity and social connectedness (Holland, 2004).

According to Holland, CGs fulfill a variety of purposes: "in conjunction with vegetation growing (either as landscape or consumption), some schemes are experimental permaculture plots, others use organic methods and yet others are concerned with health, education and training issues. All appear to be based in a sense of community, with participation and involvement being particular strong features" (ibid, p. 285).

Despite lacking consensus as to the definition of the *concept of social capital* (SC) and the inability to measure it, its vagueness and ambiguity, it is nevertheless useful to understand what good dynamics occur in CGs and why they exist. Thus, the concept of SC can be used to analyze the social connections and social cohesion generated within the context of CGs. Putnam (1995) defines it as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate actions of cooperation for mutual benefit" (p.67). Through SC certain aims can be achieved that individuals would not be able to reach (ibid). More precisely, an individual enlarges its own limited resources with its social ties. In this respect, resources are understood as relationships (within a social network) generating obligations, information as well as reciprocity and trust. In other words, if an individual invests in social relationships in order to achieve a certain collective aim, it will receive a beneficial return (Lin, 2001 in Glover, 2004). As this paper reveals in the subsequent, CGs in London are social networks substantially based on trust producing value and benefits to a neighborhood especially in deprived areas as Hackney and Islington. This is also confirmed by Smith claiming that "social capital engenders socially impoverished communities" (ibid). SC occurring between different

individuals of a community is founded on social networks and connections established through trust and mutuality. Through SC members of a community benefit socially and materially.

SC can be separated into two main categories based on the constitution of the entertained relationships. First, *bonding SC* concerns networks of social ties created and supported through solid, multifunctional trust that is, however, restricted to a place. Friends or families, for instance, form such tight groups bound through reciprocity (ibid). According to Putnam, bonding SC is a network of individuals tight together due to similar social identities (ibid). Second, *bridging SC* are loosely related, so-called *weak ties* of a heterogeneous group of people. In this way, mutuality enhances relationships between individuals differing in their social identity as well as age, race, nationality, and income class. Putnam describes bridging SC as networks or links “cut[ting] across various lines of social cleavage”, id est socially (diverse,) divided groups of people (p.3).

Due to the constitution of relationships within a social network, SC can only be maintained and reproduced when members of the network interact with each other and continue investing in relationships: “to possess social an individual must be related to others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage” (Portes, 1998, p.7). To recall, individuals themselves may have limited men power and revenue (human and economic capital)in order to reach a certain (collective) aim. That is why they alternatively access resources from others through their weak and strong social ties (Lin, 2001, in Glover, 2004). Although, SC is entrenched in social relationships it is the individual accessing and applying it. However, the accessibility and availability of resources depends on the individual’s own position within a social network. In case of a hierarchical structure, the higher the location, the easier the access to profitable resources (Portes, 1998; Lin, 2001, in Glover, 2004). In addition to this, the availability of resources depends upon the individual’s capability to create direct and indirect linkages with other persons. Through *strong ties*, relationships with individuals possessing similar social resources like power, wealth, status, and lifestyle, and *weak ties*, relationships between individuals with unlike resources, an individual more easily gains access to beneficial resources (Lin, 2001, 2004 in Glover). In order to access resources an individual either reverts to her position within the network she belongs to (strong ties) or

she will approach a contact who do not hold the required resources, but instead knows another person who does. Thus, a further network connected to the original one serves as a resource (weak ties). In the subsequent these claims can be confirmatively illustrated with my own findings of the case studies. To summarize, the concept of social capital helps to understand how individuals “access ... and use ... resources embedded in social networks” (Lin, 1999, p. 30, in Glover 2004). Applied to CGs this would be the following. In order to reach an aim (maintaining and further developing a CG), responsible persons having limited resources (human and economic capital), therefore approach others through their social ties (weak and strong) to access resources. Hence, social capital can be used to secure the (economic) sustainability of a CG.

Simultaneously, SC can cause the development of communities and neighborhoods. In addition, it generates social connectedness, especially in isolated urban lives through providing green spaces (ethical justice aspect of a CG). According to Frumkin, “social commentators have ascribed to urban living a sense of social isolation and loneliness”. One out of many demands of local residents in nearby a CG are lonely or isolated persons seeking contact: “Last year, when it got warmer, we had a lot of elderly gentlemen, the oldest was 90 or something, all very lonely and isolated, and all they really wanted is to have (preferably female) to listen to ...their lifetime story” (Interview with Murray, in transcript p. 12). A possible explanation offered by some scholars (Frumkin, 2002; Uzzel et al., 2002) for this loneliness and isolation is that increased urbanization caused a declining of the contact with nature. More precisely, (declining) green spaces influence social and community interaction (ibid). In addition, humans are innately attached to nature and natural places. Therefore, CGs offer an opportunity to meet this (archetypal) urge while simultaneously promoting social interaction (Uzzel, p.27). Although, this is not yet fully comprehended, studies suggest that an approach to nature may facilitate the creation of social capital (Kingsley & Townsend 2006). Nevertheless, as Glover (2004) points out “surprisingly, the community garden literature fails to explicitly link garden projects to the production of social capital, even though the implication seems clear” (p.144). That is why I endeavor to fill this gap in CG literature by virtue of the subsequent case studies of garden projects in London.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden is located in Hackney, one of the “most deprived boroughs in the country” and highly multicultural (Petts, 2001, p.1). A couple of years ago some politically active local residents joined themselves into a campaigning group in order to demonstrate above all for a green public space, which did not exist in Dalston at this time. Parallel to that, the London Development Agency and the Design for London, organizations employed by London’s Mayor commissioned (landscape) architects in order to identify derelict land in Dalston and suggest project ideas to create green open spaces.

After having discussed with the architects, various cultural organizations and Hackney Council for about two years, it was agreed upon the following: the identified land owned by Sainsbury’s shopping centre was licensed to Hackney Council on a six month rolling program, a steering group with a so-called responsible body should govern the garden, and a grant of 35, 000 Pounds by the LDA should be used to transform the derelict land into a garden for the local community. The steering group is constituted of six local businesses and organizations existing for about 10 to 30 years in Dalston. The CG has been established from a top down approach since it is funded by an organization which is quite high in the local government, as well as the architectural involvement before and during the process of setting up the garden. In this respect the CG is quite unusual. A classic CG, such as the KHWG and the Culpeper would be established through a bottom-up approach of local residents.

I conducted a network analysis (who and what are the relevant actors and factors contributing to the garden’s survival) in order to find out how the community garden access resources, especially in terms of *social capital*. Moreover, I seek to find out which patterns of relationships contribute to an ethical just, and economic sustainable CG, and which kinds of relationships ought to be shifted in order to create a more ethical just, and economic sustainable CG.

For this purpose I carried out semi-structured interviews with representatives of the respective gardens. In my case study this are Nicola Freshwater, chair of friends of KHWG, and Marie Murray, coordinator of the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden (DECG).

After having visited both CGs and interviewed their representatives, I chose to continue my case analysis only with Marie Murray because the CG only came into existence one year ago, and is thus in the middle of establishing itself and securing its endurance. Therefore, I am able to speak to persons who are still directly involved in this process. Moreover, I performed participatory observation at the sites. To be more precise, I helped constructing a pizza oven at the DECG, walked through the gardens, talked to visitors, sat down and watched the goings-on for several times at both gardens, and attended a barbecue music dance event at the DECG. In addition, I was a guest at a scarcely attended “Art Club” (four middle aged white women including 2 members of staff) at the KHWG. Firstly, this helped me to get an overview of how the gardens work. Moreover, my observations allowed me an insight into the kind of contact various people make with each other, the staff as well as the gardens.

In order to deepen this understanding I also visited other gardens. For example, the *St. Mary’s Secret Garden* existing for about 30 years (visited once on 27-04, talked to member of staff Catherine Birkett and Noushine Nozari) is primarily focused on people with (psychological) disabilities. Also, I frequented the *Hackney City Farm* (visited once on 27-04), as well as the *Culpeper Community Garden* (visited once on 28-04, talked to Martha, 07966525036).

Nevertheless, at the KHWG the interviewee sometimes appeared to be slightly unsecure about the correctness of her own answers, which were also superficial at some points, whereas at the DECG first of all, the site was very noisy, and our interview was interrupted several times. For instance through an aggressive six year old, stone throwing boy, so that the interviewee had to leave our interview for quite a long time to settle the uproar. The second time I visited, our interview was interrupted many times by a quite obtrusive autistic girl. All in all the interviewee talked very fast, with slight dialect, and gave highly information-dense answers. Moreover, she had only limited time available, whereas I personally would have liked to talk to her on several days. In general, access to possible interview partners was limited in so far as the only first contact that I was able to establish with the CG was through the general information email address. Hence, I had to rely on the person answering and offering her as the representative of the garden.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 Social Capital as a source

This paper considers the studied CGs as both a *consequence* and a *source of social capital*<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence, social capital is the result of a social network of community gardeners and others involved dedicated to the maintenance and development of the garden. As a source of social capital, it created and enhanced social ties as well as enabled social connections among local residents, which occasionally even induced socializing beyond the context of the CG.

#### 4.1.1. *Green open spaces, community development, social connectedness and cohesion*

To begin with, the empirical research led to the conclusion that in London community gardeners regard the garden as a site for social and cultural interaction as well as a place to relax instead of an agricultural production site: “I have to say the garden wasn’t build for food growing but it was built to be a green space to come to relax” (Murray, DECG, Interview 1, p.3). All gardens provide, however, a physical space for people to grow vegetables, although gardeners would not be able to feed themselves and their families with the relatively small harvest due to the lack of sufficient space: “this garden is not an allotment so we maintain a balance of flowers and vegetables because this garden ... is a place that people come to ...especially for the environment, for the green space, the peace, ... and that tranquility within a city” (Martha, Culpeper, p.4). Thus, a CG rather aims at providing a focus for the local community in a green environment: “Growing stuff obviously is important but with a little plot like that you not going to feed yourself all year round, so it’s more about getting people outside” (Freshwater, KHWG, p.4). Growing food yet happens for several reasons. First, it fulfills an educative role “teaching children where food comes from” (ibid). In addition, socializing through “sharing, growing and eating food, sharing conversation” is an alternative way of dealing with topics as food miles and local food production “because we’re not lecturing people” as

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<sup>1</sup> Terms borrowed from Glover, 2004, p.156

well as a moment of binding people to the garden as it will be evident in the subsequent: “it’s just more by coming together and getting involved people then are doing the things” (Murray, Interview 1, p. 3). Moreover, due to the exclusiveness of prices for fresh vegetables, CGs simply offer a physical access, yet small, for people with limited financial opportunities (Martha, Culpeper, p. 4).

In the discourse with persons engaged in CGs in London a frequently recurring topic is lacking *green space*, especially in densely populated Boroughs such as Islington and Hackney. Green spaces as parks, however, are neither community-led nor designed, developed, and defend by local residents. In contrast to parks, CGs reflect the “needs of the surrounding neighborhood” (Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2006, p.14). Most of the time these demands are of emotional nature; residents seek a safe and welcoming green environment for social contact: “A lot of people can feel isolated in a big city. If you came in here and you sat here and you were eating a sandwich and somebody else comes and chats to you. But in a public park they wouldn’t” (Freshwater, p.8). Moreover, CGs in deprived neighborhoods offer an alternative to traditional city parks usually situated in wealthier areas and out of reach for low income residents. Apparently, CGs are accessible urban open spaces for neighbors who might not financially be capable of frequenting public parks. More precisely, a family of four living in Dalston had to pay 20 to 30 Pounds for transportation. For visitors who might otherwise fear crime in city parks, for example, these participatory urban open spaces generate a comfortable, welcoming and safe feeling for visitors. Unlike anonymous, institutionalized city parks, CGs are personal (“it’s different from a park, it’s very domestic, almost like a living room”)<sup>2</sup>, encouraging participation, and are sensitive to cultural and social diversity and hence, also attractive for immigrants or low-income classes. That is why the DECG, for instance, is designed, by an architect, with a definite, subtle, but simple aesthetic, so that the visual identity of the garden is as neutral as possible. Second, there is the wooden pavilion serving as a transition zone to the garden breaking any fear or suspicion (see photograph beneath).

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<sup>2</sup> Murray, DECG, Interview 1, p.6



The KHWG, for instance, looks like a perfect British garden, whereas the DECG presents itself more in an open, neutral and simple design. To recall, gardening is culturally embedded in Britain. In addition, a duty manager welcomes every visitor either by offering a tea and starting a chat or by immediately involving her into the happenings: “the older gentleman, he just asked what’s this about, he has never been here before, we start a little chat, and now he’ll come back” (ibid).

This welcoming is supportive in binding people and constitutes an effective incentive to create social connections among visitors and gardeners. According to Martha (Culpeper), an ideal CG “strikes a balance between engaging with a very wide range of people and cooperating with quite high needs while maintaining a beautiful garden” (p.4). Various demands of different people are among others high-maintenance children, autistic, aggressive, unattended etc., isolated city dwellers, or disintegrated immigrants. At the same time, however, coordinators equally need to protect the potential of the place for young parents seeking a peaceful, green place to have a picnic or business men consuming a lunch at a quiet corner, e.g. Thus, a CG features the opportunity to bring people together that would otherwise never be able to meet. In addition, garden projects enable residents that before have felt isolated from their community, to connect to it. This

urge to connect with other neighbors and develop a sense of community is recognized and incorporated as a prime focus of CGs. According to all coordinators I encountered, residents involved in the garden can profit from the social connections and relationships built within the context of CGs in so far as they become acquainted with the neighbors living close by or even at the same apartment block: “I can just go in the shops and I’ll see people and stop and have a chat and before this just did not happen at all. I think for the people a feeling of community is a huge aspect” (Freshwater, p.8).

In other words, the gardens animate residents to connect with each other by the simple provision of a collective initiative and a stimulating environment, in where neighbors can socialize while simultaneously reaching further goals, such as the beautification of the area around the garden. Moreover, the socializing leads to a sense of trust among neighbors. To be more precise, it diminishes possible fear or suspicion of unknown neighbors, and incites reciprocal support. While for instance gathering and collectively attempting to warm up a traditional clay oven to bake pizza, watering plants, weeding or especially at common lunch every Saturday fundamental moments of building social relationships as well as binding people to the garden occur. The social capital that is generated in the CGs through bonding ties at some points even extends beyond the context of the garden for different purposes: “When people come here they meet other people and then they may make an arrangement to meet somewhere else, like the lady here her little boy is home schooled, and then there is another lady who came with her little boy who is also home schooled, so now they have set up an arrangement to meet together every Friday afternoon” (Murray, DECG, Interview I, p.6). Moreover, the networking facilitated by the CGs also constitutes a resource that residents can draw upon when being confronted with other neighborhood issues outside the garden. As a consequence, neighbors experience a feeling of security and trust creating a sense of community. More precisely, bridging social ties between individuals that otherwise would never meet facilitate neighborhood coexistence: “There is a young lady living in the same state than the [two aggressive unattended Turkish boys in the age of 6 and 12] and she said that since she has been here, her life has become much easier because those boys she had previously been a bit nervous of, now say hello to her, they know her” (Murray, DECG, Interview II, p.18). Although, on the one hand bridging social ties

potentially lead to so-called *social cohesion*, this social inclusiveness causes, however, controversial and challenging decision-making within the garden, as will be evident in the subsequent.

*Social cohesion* in the case of the DECG means that people who usually have no point of contact, even are suspicious or afraid of each other are provided a physical space as well as structure and guidance through a third party (duty manager, garden coordinator) to become acquainted with each other. *Social or community cohesion* is a concept that time and again occurs during all four interviews, perceived as a potential benefit both by CGs themselves as well as by the local governments. As Murray claims, CGs entail an opportunity to “mix people. We got lot of this new development, people who live in there coming here, and then a lot of the kids, and people that live across the estate who have been here a long time, a lot of older people, who had lived in Hackney all their lives, come here. I don’t think there is anywhere else in Dalston where those people would meet” (Interview I, p. 6). Social cohesion is tightly knit to social and cultural diversity and inclusion that CGs ideally seek to be aware of and attempt to support or achieve.



#### *4.1.2. Social and cultural diversity and inclusion*

To recall, through community development local residents are empowered and stimulated to become active in their neighborhood. In addition, CGs ideally preserve a variety of cultural features of an area, as Shiness et al. (2004) observed their potential for interracial interaction. Not all garden projects, however, are capable of fulfilling these roles.

Whereas the DECG and the Culpeper entertain a more heterogeneous bridging environment, the KHWG shows a lack of ethnic and social diversity. In other words, the garden site in Islington is merely frequented by “predominantly middle class white people” (Freshwater, p. 8). Moreover, this green open space is also incapable of “getting the whole community involved. You do find that it’s a certain type of person. So we are constantly making big efforts ...and we are trying hard to get them to sign up” (p.5). Cultural events, for instance, attract various kinds of people creating an intergenerational, multicultural all income classes encompassing mix of neighbors. Thus, in order to reach a broader spectrum of people CGs once in a while offer the opportunity for neighbors to organize different recreational activities and cultural events themselves, such as African tango night, a theater, capoeira dancing, a choir singing, summer readings, barbecues; in short: “On the big events it tends to be more mixed” (p.9). As a result, neighbors, who otherwise might feel excluded from the majority of the community, such as homeless people or (ethnic) minorities, immediately recognize that the CG is not prevailingly welcoming white middle class people.

Striving for social inclusiveness involves, nevertheless, serious, at times conflicting decision making and demands a certain robustness of garden coordinators. Especially in one of the most deprived areas of Britain illusions about social inclusiveness are absent. More precisely, including vulnerable young people, for instance, causing not only trouble for themselves but also for others, can bring irritated, complaining parents into the arena seeking to protect their own children. By way of “trying to encourage a sense of responsibility to each other”, and “explaining the situation of the kids to the adults” garden coordinators attempt to tackle these dilemmas (Murray, Interview II, p.18). Although, no blueprint exists guaranteeing success when replicated elsewhere, “there are [maybe] things that can be extracted that work as a model” (ibid). Firstly, democratic governance and collective decision-making carefully taking into

consideration various opinions and demands of different neighbors may contribute to a socially and culturally inclusive CG for the simple reason that people feel part of the whole, instead of excluded. Secondly, due to the fact that DECG and Culpeper have been “started by slightly more diverse people” than in the case of KHWG, minorities more easily will be able to find somebody in the garden to identify with. Thirdly, and most importantly, entertaining a well established social network with local businesses and (cultural) partner organizations generates trust and awareness of the CG among neighbors. Hence, making various connections to different communities produces links to people “who maybe would otherwise not have found the place” (Martha, Culpeper, p. 2). Moreover, as to generating trust, through the campaigning within Dalston many neighbors know the people involved in the garden because they fought against demolitions of old buildings under which many small local businesses had to suffer. Affected people again entertain networks resulting in many good, far reaching relationships around the DECG. The steering group organizations, all long and well established within Hackney, in each case again boast their own good networks. In addition, although the KHWG features only few links with other organizations, they are nevertheless aware of the strength of weak ties: “One of our committee members knew somebody at a local Turkish nursery school so she was able to suggest why we do [the CG]... and they came down here at a barbecue one evening, the parents and the children, and just had a lovely evening...and they are coming back again in summer” (Freshwater, p. 5).

When a CG manages to achieve a situation of community cohesion, and many diverse people are frequenting the garden, the endurance of a CG becomes more probable and certain. Firstly, community cohesion is what the council desires and is quite vocal about. Secondly, if a CG finds strong support within a Borough, the council fears bad press and loss of votes. That is why already established gardens such as the Culpeper and the St. Mary’s Secret garden both existent for about 30 years do not have to fear to be taken away, although their land might be high-priced nowadays as well.

## 4.2. Social Capital as a consequence

Sustaining a CG fundamentally depends on its capability to access resources. Apparently, raising sufficient revenues is a prerequisite to an organization's endurance. Furthermore, the mobilization of social resources such as connections, knowledge, time, and skills, in other words the involvement and participation of local residents, is of central importance to the survival of a CG.

### *4.2.1. Economically sustainable: generating sufficient revenue*

Usually CGs are either council, grants or charity funded provided that the garden is an entity with a constitution like a proper organization, a charity or charitable company, which is advantageous for fund raising: "it is very important for the sustainability of the Culpeper that it is a charity and independent because we would not be able to fundraise in the same way if we would not be a charity and independent" (Martha, p.3). More precisely, funds from trusts are specifically open for registered charities due to their legal structure. Additionally, fund givers do not have to fear losing their financial support to individuals. In the case of the DECG, which is officially a temporary project with a steering committee of six different businesses and organizations, funds are raised alternatively by way of cultivating relationships and generating connections with possible fund donors. In particular, creating trust and awareness among sponsors is fundamental because the DECG was very well funded in its set up, but not in its running costs. As a consequence, the garden appears professional and fully funded, so that people act bewildered and are hesitant when it comes to providing funds and man power.

Nevertheless, the DECG fulfills certain criteria to receive grants for activities offered to young vulnerable local residents "getting themselves and other into trouble", for instance. Simultaneously, these activities are set up in such a way that they will benefit the garden as well. For example, boys in the age group of six to 12 tend to like to work with wood, so that they will construct wooden furniture under ward of experts. Further criteria for receiving grants are innovativeness. To be more precise, the DECG would rather need money for ordinary matters such as paying experts for the workshops, activities and especially the so-called duty managers, whereas grant givers most

frequently are more willing to spend money on innovative projects within the garden. Thus, a CG runs the danger of creating events designed to meet the sponsors' criteria instead of realizing those activities that comply with the needs of the neighborhood. Moreover, small entrepreneurial activities such as hiring out the place, selling plants and food, for instance, to restaurants is a common way of CGs to acquire revenue. While hiring out the place, however, the garden has to carefully balance between the core purpose of providing green open space for as long as possible and generating income. All in all, when approaching possible donators the fund raiser draws on a previously established network, as well as on weak social ties, id est, on acquaintances who again know another individual of relevance because: "You know somebody and then it's easier to access those [resources]" (Murray, Interview 2, p. 8).

#### *4.2.2. Participation, binding and involving local residents*

Besides financial support, sustaining a CG depends largely on relational resources of a social network within the garden constituted of recruited members and volunteers contributing mainly with physical labor, as well as a network reaching outside of the CG to which partner organizations and businesses belong assisting with materials, tools and prevaingly (expert) advice. Firstly, CG coordinators access resources, like man power, ideas, management skills, fundraising specialists, expert knowledge in terms of gardeners, material and tools through strong social ties. More precisely, members apparently search for resources within their own garden network. For instance, due to the garden's ambition to be socially inclusive, dilemmas such as the aggressive Turkish boys have to be solved. Therefore, garden coordinators draw upon the social network within their garden in order to seek support in terms of conciliation: "When we had terrible problems with the boys who burnt the windmills of the kids workshops and some of the little signs for the exhibition City Visions, to come back to the network, what I have noticed, there is quite a lot of adults now who are interested in taking responsibility for these kids in their different ways. We have got one Turkish speaker for the Turkish boys, and then there is another young lady who comes a lot and wants to do cooking with these boys...so it's a good network" (Murray, Interview II, p. 10f.). Without their supportive

contribution, achieving the collective goals of the CG (provision of safe green open space, community development, social cohesion) would have been far more difficult.

Secondly, CG staff acquire resources mainly in terms of (expert) knowledge and advice to further develop the garden while approaching people outside the immediate garden network. Additionally, they undertake efforts to build connections with relevant individuals expanding the existing social garden network. The DECG started to create a connection with “Capital Growth”, an organization developing food growing spaces in London, from whom they received a small grant for their fruit trees. In addition, Murray is working for the “Hackney Environment Network” (HEN) seeking help and support from “Capital Growth” in order to establish their own food network in Hackney with the physical base in the DECG. By distributing leaflets, organizing, for instance, a fair about food growing in the DECG, or several events for food growers, planners and biodiversity action plan a network of tree experts, food experts, food selling experts etc will be established. Through Murray’s own professional background as a garden designer and organizer of the campaigning group “Open Dalston” she is already acquainted with the relevant people, such as architects or gardeners. This previous personal network is extended through the networks of the other steering group organizations as well as through the new established networking organization HEN. In addition, there is the Hackney Council for volunteer services (HCVS) giving small grants to community organizations, which also enhances the network of the DECG. Thus, an informal advice networks of experts is created through socializing at courses, events and other activities in the local community: “There is a group called the tree musketeers, they do a lot of stuff in Hackney around street trees and park trees, nearly all volunteering. The main guy Russo, when we started I asked him to come along and have a look at our trees, and give advices for the best ways to look after the trees in very warm and dry periods” (Murray, Interview II, p.10). Moreover, “they have a biodiversity advisor at Hackney council and she is putting together a biodiversity action plan for Hackney ... and we want to put a little green roof on the back shed of the coming greenhouse, so I met a guy through that biodiversity thing who is a specialist in green roofs. So it’s networking really” (ibid).

Thirdly, CG leaders access resources by virtue of weak ties. In case of reaching the limits of the own social network, coordinators draw on an acquaintance's social relationships to obtain the required resources: "The other things is to go through people who know people, so some of the people I know, know people" (Murray, Interview II, p.3). In sum, the relational resources are elementary for sustaining a CG. Producing social capital, thus is fundamental to the continuance of a garden project.

Having identified the importance of building relationships, that is to say sustaining the garden is mainly due to the "involvement of local people ... tak[ing] a very active role in the running of the garden"<sup>3</sup>, coordinators emphasize the pivotal moments of socializing and hence binding people to the garden. Moments of binding visitors to the garden already begins when entering the site for the first time, being welcomed through a proactive approach by employees: "When they say come on in, and do you want to know anything, do you want to ask something, some people, especially last year, were instantly a little bit suspicious and if you chat to people they become less suspicious" (ibid, p.7). In addition, building relationships with the visitors and volunteers occurs mainly at the regular Saturday lunch when sharing food and conversations, as well as during the gardening. Besides, welcoming people, it is of essential importance to ensure "that people feel valued" (ibid, p. 9), to "make sure how much we appreciate their work ... and that everyone knows that they have something to offer" (Martha, p.2). Moreover, "setting the thing up that people get to know other people and feel comfortable" is fundamental because visitors then get themselves in for building relationships, whereby the foundation for producing social capital is laid at the same time (Murray, Interview II, p. 9). Thus, sociability accomplishes a substantial task in developing relationships that are required for accessing resources. In other words, sociability is one of the main factors inciting participation, consequently motivating to maintain the socially appealing environment of a CG. Garden leaders are well acquainted with the powerful appeal of sociability laying the foundation for social capital production: "One of the things we do is when people come in we ask would you like a cup of tea, as when somebody visits your house, and that's how we get to know a lot of people, and we buy a lot of tea and coffee by ourselves, and that's a nice way of people

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<sup>3</sup> Martha, Culpeper, p.1

coming in and sitting down, feeling relaxed and welcome” (ibid, p. 7). The salience of sociability, hence, reveals the significant role of leisure in the generation of social capital used to access required resources for maintaining and developing a CG. In short, moments of leisure should prevail moments of work. Ideally, work ought not to be perceived as such for the simple reason that volunteers are more likely to provide the required resources when they do not feel obliged to: “It’s just more by coming together and getting involved people then are doing things, because it’s really about enjoyment to be honest” (Murray, Interview I, p, 4).

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The findings of this study investigating CGs’ striving for economic sustainability as well as their potential for cultural and social inclusion suggest that the generation and conservation of social networks are supportive in achieving those endeavors. For various reasons social capital serves as the pivotal element of a CG. To recall, social capital can be understood as relational resources, including time, knowledge, skills etc., assisting an individual with own limited resources to achieve a collective aim. Thus, an extended network within and outside the garden largely contributes to a garden’s survival. However, no blueprint exists guaranteeing success (in terms of a garden’s endurance) when replicated elsewhere. This is due to the fact that many differing components determine whether a site will endure or not. Nevertheless, this analysis identified some major abstractable factors. Firstly, by way of socializing and making connections with local businesses and other cultural organizations trust and awareness of a CG is established, which contributes, among various other factors, to a diversely and much frequented site. As a consequence, the local government is more likely to support a garden project, instead of licensing the space to new development investors, because it may fear loss of votes. Secondly, a council is inclined to endorse a site when it appears to create social cohesion and contributes to community development especially within a deprived neighborhood. Hence, social capital is a source for creating and enhancing social ties that enable connection among neighbors who may be suspicious or afraid of

each other. Occasionally socializing even extends beyond the context of the CG. Hence, a CG acts as a bridging environment between people that otherwise would never meet. Therefore, a qualitative well functioning social network within the garden is of vital importance as well. Apparently, sustaining a CG largely depends on the amount of local residents taking an active role. The recruitment of participants will most likely occur when their work is valued and not perceived as obligatory by the volunteers. Hence, leisure episodes are decisive factors garden coordinators have to take into consideration when leading and organizing the site. In addition, times of leisure, such as recreational activities or a common lunch, serve as crucial moments of binding people to the garden with the aim to encourage regular participation. Besides networking within the garden, leaders create various connections with different experts and relevant organizations outside the immediate garden network in order to seek advice necessary to maintain the site.

Simultaneously, social capital, as a consequence of a social network of weak ties with possible fund donors is used to sustain the garden economically. Accessing financial resources largely depends on the trust that is created through the connections between sponsors and a CG. This research, however, establishes that none of the investigated case studies is capable of being financially independent, thus fully economically sustainable, although many efforts were undertaken to reach such a situation. In addition, small entrepreneurial activities such as hiring out the space or selling food and coffee would undermine social and cultural inclusiveness. Moreover, fundraising appears as a frustrating, time and energy consuming endeavor, and thereby may distract from the actual mission. Also, the often economically fragile condition of CGs leads to the creation of activities designed to meet the donors criteria. Therefore, I question the demanded necessity of CG initiatives to become economically sustainable. Public parks, for instance, are not economically sustainable neither. In addition to provision of green open space, CGs, however, seemingly address many more aspects of social and environmental (un-) sustainability within (global) cities. First, in contrast to parks, they entail the potential to address food insecurity in so far as they educate especially children about fresh and healthy nutrition as well as providing small plots for growing few vegetables, herbs and fruits. Additionally, CGs raise the awareness of

environmental issues. By virtue of pleasurable activities they stimulate local residents to a healthier and more environmental friendly life style. Second, due to their location mostly in deprived areas, they beautify those neighborhoods and are accessible for families with limited financial capacities, whereas public parks are usually situated in wealthier areas. Third, CGs may potentially contribute to community development as this paper established and tackle isolation frequently occurring in big cities. Lastly, CGs are more sensitive to cultural and social diversity than public parks. As this research identified, some CGs perform integration on a small scale.

That is why I challenge researchers to investigate more in the potential of CGs in comparison to public parks. As a consequence, I encourage researchers to advise policy makers to fund CGs like public parks because of their potential to tackle various issues of environmental and social unsustainability within contemporary cities.

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## **APPENDICES**

**A. Interview 1 with Marie Murray**

**B. Interview 2 with Marie Murray**

**C. Interview 3 with Nicola Freshwater**

**D. Interview 4 with Martha**

## APPENDIX A

### Interview 1 with Marie Murray, at DECG, 14-04-2011, 3pm, 55 min

M: So, what I always say to people in terms of to be in this cg, to me the kind of classic model for the cg is what you just said, people who see a piece of land and join themselves together and some kind of organization, a body, they approach the landowner, they get some sort of deal for the land and then they work in that way and they usually have a kind of a constitution and its the people who use the garden, whereas ours is quite different from that. I am trying to think of a way to explain it very briefly. we've got some people working, probably you have seen them up there, because ...basically this piece of land was identified. I'm quite of an organizer of a campaigning group called open Dalston and so...

A: Its financed by the major right?

M: No, ours is not. Ours is an organization of local residents and businesses. we have been campaigning in ..for about six years against quite a lot of the demolitions of old buildings and some of the new developments and for more space and for more open public space and this is in Dalston where there is no green public space. So this is the only green public space. so we've been campaigning for about six years so certainly we had thought about this...we knew about this piece of land and we had often thought it would be very suitable as some kind of open space but we didn't have the means to approach anybody really to get the land. also because that was our main concern at the time. there were so many things we were campaigning for. so at the same time our local council, hackney council, were developing a sort of a planning framework for this area. In the year 2009 they did a kind of an open public consultation on which our organization was also very involved in. We did a kind of a parallel consultation or about a month getting people involved. the main thing that ..consultation was that people want to green open space that was sort of top of the . but also the council had identified this in a draft plan as a route from that part of basically from the new train station, Dalston junction, through here to the shopping centre .... and then through there, I don't know if you've walked around the area, but basically the railway line, the old railway line once ..through the car park of that space. to the other end. I live the other side of that shopping centre and that's the railway line. so one of the things in this area, certainly the council identified it the shopping centre and the railway line cut Dalston in half . so, its quite hard to move around the area. really, if I'm trying to come here, I'll like to come straight through here actually , but I don't want to have to run through, I don't want to have to be going against cars and delivery ..and so on. so the plan is that this will be, the council identified it as a green route. But they were really a bit vague about how that might look. but they showed us their illustrations and we ... our consultation, when everybody said we love the idea of the green route for walkers and for cyclists, but the pictures we saw were not green, they were like a pedestrian pre sinked and everything on both sides was about ten, 12, 15 stories high. so that was kind of canyon. so a bit like what's going to come over through there, in between those two developments was going to be a public square a cross the road. but it would be mostly paved. they have trees and its quite nice. I should say the landscape architect who is designing the detail for that, who is involved here. That's goes back to my point this is not being like other cg. at the same time the council

identifying this, this program championed by the London development agency and design for London, making space in Dalston, and started to look at how underused spaces in Dalston, and how they could be relatively cheaply brought into shared/charged use for temporary, not for permanently, temporarily. so this was on paper. what I should say is that the LDA paid for a landscape architect and an architect to do some consultation work or some identification work of those spaces. and at the end of those two years, they came forward with a plan on paper for about 70 projects. And only about 7 or 8 of them have either been completed or something has happened. Unfortunately, for this project and that bigger project the LDA has now been cut, its finished because of the new economic climate in Britain and London. The LDA has been done away with and although Design for London still exists, and still very much champions its project, there is no money.

So, basically at the end of that process...I mean open Dalston and lots of other organizations, cultural organizations ...we were involved for two years, talking to the architects and the landscape architect about the different projects, and what we would like to see more valued in the area and what we would like to see enhanced so always this was quite an eco park. Broadly speaking this eco park was the idea because this was as you know it was the old railway line but it was derelict in about the 1960s, but in recent years it had actually become, because it was just been neglected, quite a natural wild life here. But actually unfortunately a couple of years ago, one of the nearby landowners came and dumped a whole lot of stuff illegally, dumped a whole lot of stuff and destroyed what had actually just naturally been in the area. You know these butterfly bushes, I don't know how much you know butterfly bushes. This here came out of the wall. That grows. And we got loads of it through the hole garden. It's a weed. It's quite a symbol of dereliction often. It grows out of roofs and railway lines but it's fantastic for wildlife. So that had been all through here. And there were all kinds of birds and it really was a natural wildlife here, but that was destroyed by the person who dumped. So which meant when this finally got of the ground was quite a lot of money that had to be spent but that's another story.

So, the whole thing about the community involvement. From about the Christmas time of 2009 it was agreed that money could be spent from that LDA on this...and that the arrangement on January, the arrangement of hire would be governed as they call it or managed, started to be discussed and because this part is actually owned by the shopping centre, and the part where the pavilion sits is owned by Hackney Council. And so the arrangement we've got is: the shopping centre license the land to Hackney Council on six month rolling program which is not very long six month. Any time after each six month they could say that's it. If anything ever happened or went wrong, we would be in trouble. Then the council kind of granted, if that's the right word, to a steering group for the garden, and the steering group for the garden is made up of my organization, which is "Open Dalston", the Arcola theatre, the BootStrap Company who are the company kind of over Ashwin street who have some nice planting outside and who have the wrong roof part, an organization called hackney co operative developments, an organization called hackney council for sector, which is not the council, but they deal with a lot of small community organizations and the V21 whose studios are in this white building. It's six organizations and we got together then basically the January of last year.

A: And the other organizations already existed there?

M: All of them. probably the youngest is v21 they have been there for about 9 years, Arcola 10 years, BootStrap 30 years, Hackney cooperative developments 30 years, so all organizations have been in Dalston for a long time. the thing about this part of Dalston or this part of Hackney is always historically very full of activists, so very much people... You know the mural outside? Did you see the mural on the wall? That was turned on in the 1980s, its very famous in Hackney its called the peace carnival mural. and I do think its very symbolical. Well, Hackney is activist. and I think it's brilliant that we are right next to this mural.

so, we started up. we had the steering group and then a small grant from LDA.

A: How much?

M: Last year it was 35,000 Pounds. This was after everything had been built. they paid to have the work here done. because this was not, again this goes back to the kind of model of cg so quite often people would dig themselves, but you have seen the pictures on the internet. because this was a massive rubbish tip, and originally this the idea had been that the garden would be inside the railway cutting so that you would see that it was railway so but it was so much rubbish that it was impossible. so that had kind of an impact on how we gardened. it has all been packed and small amount of soil on top and then of these raised beds sort of got especially ...so we only grow food inside of these beds. we cant grow food directly, but I have to say the garden wasn't build for food growing but it was built to be a green space to come to relax. the beds are very empty because we just started to do our work with the seeds, but I'm sure you have seen the pictures in our big book. starting July to September last year, all of these beds were just full of food and it looked amazing and we had a harvest festival in October. so we had our own produce it was very great.

A: You don't want to go further with that?

M: I think we would, but we are kind of constrained by what we can do with the land. and I think, well, we will built more of these boxes, but i think everything here is always a balance of all the demands that go out from all different people with all different needs with the one relatively small space. the way we garden is, we run a gardening group every Saturday. we will start next Saturday and then it will be every Saturday all through the summer until next winter again. and then there are the people who all look after the plants in the garden, grow the food, and we would like to grow more food this year, and we certainly going to grow more food for the clay oven. we going to grow tomatoes, basil and we do a lot of small things and you probably saw little boxes up with the herbs in. one of the things we also try to do is actually gardening that people can do at home themselves.

A: More educating the people than feeding.

M: No, we're not going to go feeding the neighborhood with this garden. so, but is kind of very much about people. ...its very much about...when we do the garden group on a Saturday, then we will sit down and have lunch together and its about enjoy and food. There is a lot of healthy eating thing, but not ...what's the word...we're not making a big deal out of it. cause its, actually the thing that's perhaps more a bigger deal is the idea of sharing food and eating food and growing food, sharing conversation. its kind of bit more of that rather than necessarily stuff about food miles and local food production, but all of these things happen as well. so we garden chemical free and we try to ...and we had our own compost. so everything is done in a kind of a sustainable way. but we're kind of

trying not to be too heavy handed about any of it. we're not lecturing people. its just more by coming together and getting involved people then are doing the things. because its really about enjoyment to be honest. and its about...you have probably gathered ....

A: Its probably also a lot about the children. or is this only in this moment now because of the school holidays?

M: Yes, we are very busy with the children at the moment because of the holidays. but we do...its kind of ..its quite...I don't like this expression, but people talk about intergenerational...we get all ages here.

A: But that is so nice.

M: Yes, it is very nice, and it is very important ...like with the pizza oven. I think its very important for children and adults to work together ...so when we garden on a Saturday children can come as well and garden with the adults. we try not to have it too divided apart from like this week when we put on this special activities for the children, but again we encourage all ages to get involved and we encourage the children a lot to do the real things with this ...building things, like the clay oven. or like the chairs and tables and the wooden boxes. I mean they really love doing the wood work. so, we try to do a lot of that. but obviously when ever we embark on that kind of stuff with all these tools and stuff. especially for the boys of that kind of age group of Ally and his brother, that slightly older boys that are here today, we would love to have the money to have people coming and help with really structured activities, building real stuff for the garden. so far there are not really interested for the garden...its a bit frustrating, because we could really do with more help in the garden.

A: Adults around here in this neighborhood, they are interested in gardening?

M: Many of them come on a Saturday when we run our regular thing and this year, because we started quite late in this year. last year in the gardening year we didn't get that how we did gardening. this year we want people to be gardening every day but it takes a little bit of time to get it properly organized because its first of all, unlike in KHWG, people haven't got their own space to garden, so its shared.

A: But also in their garden there is only few space, so they cannot really feed themselves. It's more about being in a green space as well.

M: That's right. but with us because, for instance, because we do a lot of planting for wildlife and also the weeds, like that butterfly bush, that people would weed out, we keep them. so, therefore, we cant people just pop in of the street to garden because you have to know what we do here in terms of the way we garden. so, there is weeds over there which we leave because they are good for the wildlife, while we would for other things we have planted grow up. so its kind of . there is a management plan, a garden management plan underpinned on the door. it is designed you know it is managed, structured, that's what I mean. but we want to get more. we have to look for ways of big books or things so that people could come in and see what was last done and see what needs to be done. but all of that takes time. so the way, in terms of the way our 35,000 Pounds that we had last year, the way we spend that money was we paid to have a duty manager here for everyday.

A: A duty manager?

M: We call it a duty manager. its like a member of staff here everyday on a shift work. and that was for the some days a week. so the hours we were open. and out of 35,000 Pounds that took probably 20,000 because we are open very long hours. in summer we

are open until nine at night. and we went on that route because we didn't think, because we had to start MBO (management from objectives) from day one with long open hours, that was the agreement we had with hackney council. it was part of the deal and now that we have no money for year ahead, people are saying maybe that can be done by volunteers. I argued I think it cant because its very long hours and there is not that many people around who want to come and spend 8, 9, 10 hours. we see though. we might . we don't know how thins going to be this year. and then the other stuff we pay for, is we pay for this holiday activities so we paid for the materials, but also for he people who run the workshops. we have done some in hire ourselves but its quite important as well to have really high quality stuff, for the environmental education, the arts and the crafts, and with the stuff like cooking, and the clay oven. so, its not a huge amount but we pay like Nicola who is the artist who did the gardens yesterday, and these dance today. its unusual to have the same person here three days. she's very good we wanted her to do this three days. so while other people making this sculpture, people children can get involved and do it together in their own way. she did a fantastic workshop in February called nester. she does a lot of stuff with natural materials. we like to do a lot of stuff around wildlife. environmental education, you know. She's doing that and then we will have somebody next week doing the poetry putting together poetry. Children writing on the garden. we making scarecrows, windmills and recycle materials. so we pay for all of those. but now we have no budget for that. so we have to see what I am doing at the moment is trying to get. well I'm trying to get this funds for the garden.

A: How do you do that?

M: Well, you know the obvious way ...one of the things we look at is things liek grants and grant making trust but they take a long time.

A: To whom do you go?

M: well, in this country, I don't know how it is in Holland, but in this country there is on every level from small, with small I mean 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 up to 10,000, 20,000, 50, 000, 100,000, big ones, people like the big lottery, small ones are, I mean there is a whole range of...the co operative, as mefurban, there is so many. but increasingly, they have specific criteria. and quite often one of the things they ask for is innovation. Now, I'm a big fan of innovation, but sometimes what you want is very, for instance, they would not pay for us to pay to have a duty manager here open in this place, because this is not innovative. but its very crucial, we cant function without that. so, quite often you end up. I find you have to put in the same amount of work even for a tiny amount of money as for big amount of money. and then quite often you don't get it. because you are not innovative enough. so what you end up doing, a lot of people end up doing this, is create activities to get the funds rather than doing the activities you want to do. so, what i am about to start to do, is getting private donations from individuals and co operations. we got a lot of change in Dalston at the moment, so we got a lot of new bars, clubs, restaurants, coming in we didn't have before. so, i am going to approach them the next couple of weeks. basically, and i hope this is not going to be published on youtube, its just for you to understand, the way I am trying to break time, we need a minimum of 35, 000, but trying to make that its not a huge amount, but when you haven't got it, it is, so, I'm going to try and get a 1,000 Pounds from 35 individuals. or else, 500 from 70. just trying to make it achievable. because we need to do it quickly.

A: What does quickly mean?

M: By quickly, you know, as I said, the money we have managed to get, we held a little bit back, so when we started this year, and we don't have any funding we held a little bit back from last year funding so that we knew pay the duty manager next two month cause the financial year starts in April to may. so then by June no more money just our busiest time, just when we were really warrant to go. I mean that's what's so frustrating about because everything we do last year was kind of trial you know of first time. it was first time. everything was very successful but the ideal had been then that we would spend the winter building on that stuff, but having more of them. This funding thing is so frustrating. its really frustrating and I actually had little sleep about it last night, because I do think this space is ... I think all past expectations in terms of what it ...I don't know with your study if you have kind of thought about or come across, there is something quite leveling about gardens. Leveling is not the right word. because when people come in, just come in, you don't have to pay, you don't have to do anything if you don't want to, you just sit and relax and because of the way there is always something going on, you often get into conversation with people. so its quite good way to mix people. we got lot of this new development, people who live in there coming here, and then a lot of the kids, and people that live across the estate who have been here a long time, a lot of older people, who lived in hackney all their lives come here. I don't think, there is anywhere else in Dalston where those two people would meet. I just think they wouldn't. There is no reason for them to meet. and in that respect I just think its fantastic. that why when we kind of call it the Dalston eastern curve garden as we wanted it to be attached to the history of that space.

A: And its different from a park...

M: Yes, very different. Also because its very domestic, its like a living room.

A: Yes, its more like a domestic, private garden, and a public park is very anonymous, and this here is much more inclusive.

M: Exactly, and this is how we wanted to be. we said on our website that we are a meeting place for plants and people. so its for people to meet plants. and for people to meet other people. and you know we do sometimes when we have, lets say, lunch on the Saturday morning when we are doing the garden, or anytime, like that guy you saw me talking to, came in, the older gentleman, he just asked what's this about, he never been here before, he has lived in hackney all his life, we start having a little chat, and now he'll come back. he really liked it. What's very nice when people come and then they meet other people here, and then they make an arrangement to meet somewhere else, or back here and I really like. like there is some, the lady here her little boy is home schooled, and then there is another lady who came with her little boy who is also home schooled, so now they have set up an arrangement to come here every Friday afternoon and meet together and do their own little thing here. Its just nice little offshoots anyway.

A: To come back to the fundraising thing, because you are kind of struggling to survive, right?

M: Yeah...that's the bottom line...that the bottom line...

A: But then there is this thing that you can have your own income to cover all your expenditures. But you said yesterday that you are not allowed because this space is owned by the shopping mall to have a cafe or...

M: No No no, that's not we are not allowed its more the way we are set up is ... and this is again...I need to be careful... how you use this. Of the six organizations, that got

together as the steering group last year, five of us wanted to set it up as like a charitable company. That's how we wanted to set it up, and the council wouldn't let us. we wanted to set it up like that because we wanted to ...because this is the most efficient way to raise funds because as a charitable company you can have enterprise like a cafe, but you can also, the way we had charity in this country....

A: As a charity you are allowed to have shops in order to survive

M: Charitable company. I mean everybody can set up, you know there is charities, but charities can run shops and cafes and things as well, but a charitable company its a slightly new thing here. It's like a non profit company, like social enterprise. and the reason we wanted to do that was if we wanted to the enterprise, but also the charity part of it would mean make it easier for us to maximize any income we generated, because for instance, with charity, if someone gives a donation then you can do what's called a gifted which adds money on top of the government so its just a more efficient way of raising the money. but also we wanted to be kind of a little bit independent and we weren't allowed to. so as i said five of the six organizations within our steering group was happy to go along with what the council wanted which was for them to be what they called the responsible body within our six and so all of our money, well the money we had last year, the grant has to sit with them rather than sit with ...basically what the council didn't want for this was place to be an entity. They wanted it to be a project rather than an entity, rather than an organization, or a body. My own feeling about that is that's about control. its about kind of ...this is very hard to remove it from the politics we have. and this is my personal opinion, this is not me speaking in behalf of the garden this is me speaking as me. we have a local council who are very control freaks. they really like to have you where they want you to be in a way, and they want all this to happen but they wanted it on their terms. and because there is lots of activism in hackney they are very wary of certain organizations getting together and doing things because then they have less control. and so we are in a very vulnerable position ...

A: its a little bit complicated because now you said they are very wary of all these organizations to be together, but before you said you are not allowed to be an entity, but rather together with all the other five organizations of the steering group.

M: Well, we are a steering group for a project. we are not Dalston eastern curve garden company. If you think of this like that. charitable company. so, the council referred to this as a project, whereas we involved in a steering group referred to it as a garden because a project makes it sound like something quite small, quite unimportant...

A: And temporary...

M: very temporary. we never came here thinking we would be here forever, but we thought we would be here for quite a long time.

A: Like?

M: I thought a minimum of 5 years, but because this earlier plan building a route through, we thought, that things work so slowly that that wouldn't even had been for literally 20 years. and i thought we all will have a great time , and everybody would be here enjoying themselves and it'll be so fantastic, but I now that what the council don't want. it'll be so fantastic that there wouldn't dream of taking it away. because that would be such bad publicity for them.

A: That's the rare thing because in Islington things work in a totally different way. there the council wants the people to use the vacant space and they are allowed to stay there for

50 years. and they are in the same city, and they are so close. and what is also observed in these few days they are kind of the same neighborhoods.

M: Yes, yeah. That's right.

A: So why are things so different?

M: Well, because of our council I think. we have politically we have a very particular kind of local government. they are , well I would say they are control freaks, but also the other difference between us and KHWG, where we are is some of the most expensive land in this part of London, but you cant...

... is very important, because KHWH is on an old railway land, isn't it. its kind of got limited value that land, whereas ours is prime really estate. This part of Dalston, I mean I live in Dalston for over 20 years, so, now that we have got our new railway and all of this, there is just such pressure from developers on every scrap of land here, every scrap of land and quite a lot of the land is still owned by hackney council so they own this building, but they lease it to the v21 studios owners, relatively small rent, the bootstraps building they own that, they own the land that the pavilions .., they own the building that has the mural on the site of it, they own the space behind the garden, where there were some Victorian houses but they were demolished last year. this is private, this big one here, but it is actually a quite threat to the garden because this is now the biggest remaining potential development site in this part of Dalston. and if you look at the size of it and they have got outline a permission to do, I think its 15 story high, private flats, can you imagine in here, that comes a building inside that becomes really very difficult so we are kind of in this very peculiar location with expensive land and its a real, everything is very changing. this coupled with a lack of funding it all feels very fragile and the other thing we thought that would be a long term , and then out of the blow at the end of last year hackney council said that they wanted to bring forward the plan to have a route through to the shopping centre and they wanted to come from in front of the garden along here and through here . so take all this away and if they did that there is the thing about the disability discrimination so none of this would be legal within the DDA acts so this path would come away. we doubled in width and become more like the material ...like bonded something...stuff like this ...if its a major road. and they would make it a major road walking road, but a major road, through to the shopping centers. so now the steering group has argued that nobody around here wants that. this is what they want. you can get to the shopping centre, this is very limited value . for the greater good compared to this. so we put through kind of recommendation to them as a response. we are waiting to hear back from them at the moment. that coupled with the end of the funding has made us so vulnerable, and its also like a perfect storm, because of in terms of approaching grants and funds or grants , if they think you are really temporary, they less interested in investing some money in you. and i noticed in the kind of proposal that I wrote. they all call us temporary , they called us an temporary installation. that we were sort of an artwork or something a temporary installation which meant it sound so unimportant, and if I was a funder I would definitely think twice about investing any kind of money in that. so, we are very vulnerable. and yet, when people come in they just love it. and i think the other thing that this is I suspect that the council really got quite worried when they saw how successful we were last year.

A: What do you mean by successful?

M: That people are really enjoying it. that people come. many people. I mean we didn't do any publicity last year because we were to busy seeing what was going to work. we will start the publicity now and when people come, especially with the weathers warmer and I think they were a bit slightly surprised about it, and I think they got nervous. and i think that why they brought up this plan and why they quickly started to call it an installation. so, that's where we are. in that respect so I don't know, we just have to see what we going to do.

A: so, you will first see whether you can stay here, before thinking about having a cafe or something like it to be able to survive economically?

M: I should say with the cafe, last year, we didn't want to start straight away for it to have a cafe here because we started at a time, when there was loads of new cafes and pubs, and restaurants opening and they are very huge kind of escalated sort of incoming, I cant think of the word, quite well off white young people, trendy, you know. It wasn't a trend before, I have lived here before and it really wasn't absolutely not and it become uebertrendy in about the last three, four years. now its just the height of trendyness and all these coffee shops, and its all so expensive. and its all fine. However, we didn't ...its still... a very deprived area and there are still a lot of people her e who cannot afford to go in any of those trendy cafes. the reasons we didn't want to set it up the cafe the day we opened was because we wanted people to come in and everybody to be completely the same. we not going to have some people over there enjoying an expensive coffee and some people over there who cannot. but we are now looking at ways being able to do some things on a very simple level. we are not really set up to do that much. but again the way we are set up , our actual structure makes it just a little bit more complicated. we were a social enterprise we would be hundred percent straight forward. but because we are straight set up , things like that are a little bit more difficult. we are all looking for all kind of things this year. there is quite a lot of feeling in this area at the moment of what i would call the haves and the have nots because of that influx. this is all happened very suddenly and very dramatically and very visibly and that is not always an ideal way for a neighborhood to coexist. so that was felt very quite strongly that the cafe was not the way we go we also want people to understand that this was a garden so this year it might be a garden where you could have a cup of tea . but unfortunately though we have to do everything very officially so if we do the cafe we might get into the thing where we have to offer toilets and all this and the you start to think that its too complicated , adn we have to pay for all of the new things so its kind of we having these conversations very much though at the moment, trying to decide what's the best way to proceed. so the things with licenses, we need not sell alcohol here, and its not that if we want to run clubs or raves here but occasionally there are things we would like to do here, and there are people who would pay to do certain things here, but we don't have a license so we cant do it.

A: That's what the chair of the KHWG said, she was advised to ask some fee for certain workshops, because people would tend to more likely attend if they have to pay because they value it more., than when the workshop was for free.

M: That's interesting. What do you think of that? I think some people say that, but I'm not quite sure. and I think in areas where... we have our activities for children for free and they are fairly well attended. and it obviously is weather dependent. I don't think that we will ask people to pay but we going to have to try to get some funds to pay for these activities. so in the next school holidays we will do some workshops around food and

cooking. so I'm going to go and try to get private donations for that from shops, cafes, restaurants in the area because its not ...we pay all together in the holiday. we spend about in a normal week for the activities 700 Pounds, paying for workshop leaders, materials, bit of publicity. It's not a huge amount.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Interview 2 with Marie Murray, at DECG, 29-04-2011, 1pm, 2:48 hours**

M: We can talk about this a little after or before, but about some things I need to be a little discrete about, depending on when you are going to be writing up your stuff, and where its going to appear.

A: Alright. I was wondering how do you formulate your arguments? Based on what do you ask for the funds. Do you argue for instance, about the benefits of the garden?

M: I can't remember how much I said about this before, because we are very late in fundraising for a very immediate need. if we had been more sure that we going to have...we were supposed 60,000 for this year. So, we slightly rested on our lorrows. because we don't...you know I think I told you...Just now I am working I am paid to do one day a week officially as coordinator for volunteers, marketing, publicity, website, gardening, fundraising, education program, everything... and before that I wasn't even paid for that. so, everything is volunteer and we had hoped to really build on what we did last year safer the knowledge that we had so we are very late starting to do fundraising, which I am getting feelings of panic. So, I'm going for a two prong approach. and in terms of formulating the arguments the grants it is easier to formulate the arguments but they are longer term, so even if I applied today its unlikely, even if we are successful, for the numbers of grants I focused on, we'd be happy to have money, July or august, and the thing with those grants they tend to be for programs rather we need the core funding for is to pay for to have someone here every day. the garden to be open for longest hours possible every day. and that's not something any grant giver will give us money for. so that's why with the two prong approach for that I am looking for donations so that's individual small donations. you know every penny counts. and also approaching local businesses. In terms of the argument formulating, I have to say its not going to be particularly subtle or sophisticated. it's a bit like the way I used to be a cooperate fundraiser for a museum, so it's a bit like the way I would approach a cooperate fundraiser, but minus the sponsorship benefits because we have very limited benefits that we can offer here in the traditional cooperate sponsorship way. its not going to be mass marketing in terms of publicity, it's very much going for to show responsibility, and in particular I am prioritizing clubs, new organizations, that have been this recent influx into Dalston and its now become partly central and uebertrendy, certainly with a number of those clubs they been quite, relatively vocal about saying in the press and so on how much they like the community in Dalston . so they are one of my ...and its pretty much ...just put something back in, which is not so all, and its not guaranteed success at all. we haven't got enough time to...you know what's not ideal about it that kind of individual fundraising cultivation of relationships with either companies or wealthy individuals.

Normally that's long term, but that's what is difficult about it, and it makes me feel quite uncomfortable actually and that what I mean with not subtle and sophisticated, normally you would try and work long term with people and build a relationship, but we haven't got the time to do that. so there is the businesses, and individuals they are both slightly hybrid. we are not aiming for massive bank of America, the type of cooperative sponsor, but its much more local at the moment. that's not to say that I would not go for bank of America, if we had connections in, so that would be another thing, but then the other thing is to look at individual donations both literally then, which we now finally got, and then we also start people making aware of what our funding situation is and make sure that everybody who comes in knows what our situation is, the other thing we are looking at, but I am not completely convinced is this with the a lot of gardens and places, people have friends scheme or supporter scheme, where people pay 20 or 30 Pounds a year, this slight issue that we have here is again its a bit like with the cooperate sponsors we haven't got massive of benefits we could offer, I mean I used to work for a botanic garden we had a very successful friend scheme there, but that was because of the garden was closed more often than it was open, and therefore the benefit was to coming when the garden was closed but as you know we have very long opening hours and also because we have limited time, we don't have paid staff. our resources are very limited, we have to be careful at any kind of scheme we would set up. if you end up spending so much time servicing that scheme, it really completely defeats the whole purpose of having it. I think because it all has to be done so quickly and in a very slightly unsophisticated way, it's a case of doing all the different fundraising thing you do, but just in a more escalated way. in terms of the grants I think we have a slightly better chance, for some of the programs that we do, particularly with grants, its very much criteria based.

A: what are the criteria? (except innovativeness)

M: exactly. also things like for instance, I am looking at a couple the moment, and one is very much meeting a local need, so and you have seen one of the local needs we have here is we have an age group of boys, who live nearby who like this garden who want to come here and be involved but unless they are very structured in what they are involved in, because we give a structure for that, well we have the choice to not have them here at all, but since we want to be inclusive, and they are very much young people who live in this area, and they love this garden, what I am doing at the moment putting together a proposal for a summer activities for that age group, and specifically for boys, I know it sounds sexist but kind of wood work cliché as that sounds, but they love making things with wood, and maybe some cooking with the people, but a very structured and also very high receive, difficult to young people, so I'm putting together a program for that and applying for grants, and I would hope that we would have a pretty good chance, of getting some grants for that. and the timing is we are a little bit late but we are just about okay for that summer and because this is meeting a need, and because those kids they have nothing to do, and again another criteria that you often come across is vulnerable young people, and they are vulnerable because when they ...they getting themselves into trouble, and they cause other people trouble. but what we also like to do is activities that benefit the garden, for instance, making more furniture, which they really like anyway, so more tables, and chairs, and the bird boxes, and the scarecrows, so that's one. So we are applying for grants for a greenhouse, and that's capital money, and that's very much

about extending the garden into the winter again, all of those programs of activities in theory anyway, are... We fit the criteria that a lot of those grants ask for, and even the innovation as well, because some of the stuff we are planning to do is quite innovative actually. So that should be okay. But unless we are open with our duty manager and the rest, its not going to work. So we have to do both. And the other thing to look at is revenue generation; certainly we are investigating things around growing to sell both as plants and as food. So that might be for restaurants. and also maybe doing small scale hiring of this place in the evening, so we for instance, looked at a way round our long opening time versus trying to generate some income, we are about to start to do is on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday we close at six, so its not unreasonable, 11am to 6pm, so at these days we could then have people hiring the space, and the other days we close at 9pm. so it's a balance and its kind of you know what I said to you, you have to be very careful when you start thinking about starting to hire the space, that you don't actually completely undermine what the core purpose is, which is to have a green space open for as long as possible. That seems to be an okay balance.

A: You said that you are trying to approach cafes, especially clubs, and how do you do that actually, I mean do you call them or write an Email, or do you know the people personally?

M: its an individual approach, its not easy, and I have to be honest with you, in terms of my own feelings about it. Usually what people do is networking, and I know who the people are so I am just going to be lifting the phone and say can I come and talk to you. Dalston is small enough. The other thing is to go through people who know people, so some of the people I know, know people. the problem is it's a small enough place and there are other people looking for money as well in the areas, so its feels like a small ...you know that's quite tricky, but I keep you posted on how I get on. I have waves of feelings supremely confident, and then I think why would anybody give money, but then as soon as the money comes in and the way I am looking at it I am asking for a minimum of 1,000 from each company that I speak to and they say no way but we could give you 300 when you and its just a case of it all adds up. And there is this thing as well we do not need it all immediately, we only need some money immediately, but obviously I am projecting forward for the whole year, but I can continue, in terms of building relationships, that can happen later on as well. We need to get now immediately just about 10, 000 Its this thing as well success attracts success. Although, its not a sponsorship deal we would be crediting people who are supporting us, and once people see other people who are supporting you they start thinking Oh that's worth supporting.

A: As to the resources and the money. How do you actually recruit your members, the volunteers?

M: Well, we have been really given that up now. We have our Saturday gardening and we advertise that on our website, and we have our mailing list. And we started now to additional publicity in local magazines and newspapers. Anybody who comes in at any time and asks about volunteering its very informal. Its not heavily structured, and relatively speaking this garden is low maintenance, it does still need constant maintenance, its fairly low key gardening apart from the people who are involved in the food grow, but in terms of looking after the plants its mainly weeding and watering, we also starting the hackney host, which is a scheme, that's training a 100 people in hackney to be host during the Olympics, its been people who have been unemployed for a while,

its kind of getting them involved this year in volunteering in organizations so far we have got about 5 hackney hosts working with us, and 5 more are about to start, and then we have also just been approached by Barclays bank, who want to start by the end of May an average of 10 people 2 days a week for 5 weeks, and I have reservations about that approach, they were really keen to do it...

A: They approached you, right? Did you know them before? Or did you know people that knew people in there?

M: No, but they are located just on the other side of the road, and they are one of the major banks in here, and they are one of the companies I would have approached, but because they part of a national chain, it's a bit like Sainsbury's here, its hard to sometimes speak to the local branch, you end in a big system, a structure that is often very bureaucratic. And often delivers very little money, but we would have tried it, but they bitten it to us, and approached us and we are very keen and happy to work with the local branch, because we want this garden to be owned by local residents and local businesses, and that's a good way to own it, becoming a volunteer in it, but they (Barclays bank) widened it out to the whole of east London. And I have big reservations for it because I think the garden is a fragile little ecosystem of people and plants. And you need to be very careful with the balance, and if we end up having too many cooperate volunteers, who are also each time they come on a Wednesday and a Thursday, lets say, they wanted to come for a two month, but on a Wednesday we would have 10 volunteers, and on a Thursday again 10 different volunteers, the following week 10 different again, and this actually becomes quite intensive on our time because each time you are introducing ten new people and you spend a lot of your time explaining to them, how to do things and then they never come back, but in terms of ownership its very important for the people to develop a relationship with the garden, and the best way to do that is to develop a relationship with the plants, and if you come every week to weed this hatchrow for instance, and you know every plant, and tree in this garden, it's the best way to develop a relationship with this garden.

A: How do you try to get people coming more often?

M: with the volunteers its not going to work, but with the others, when we had our Saturday gardening last year, we had a core of people, who were still there at the end of the year, and quite a few of them have come back already this year, whereas in the winter nobody came, its very hard to get people coming in the winter, and we would like to do more with our volunteers, and have a bit more structure. (what do you mean with structure? Other gardens: how important is structure? And how do you achieve this?) What we would love to do is having more training sessions, sometimes with external trainers.

A: Do you bind these people to you as well? Do you create a certain feeling of responsibility?

M: Yes, this is the key thing. It's a little bit complicated to explain this. A lot of people come here to sit and relax, its almost like a park, but its not a park, that means we have to have it looking good, our aim is to have it looking good, especially in the height of summer, with the food beds this year we are concentrating on things as tasting good as well, look good above the ground, so we are deliberately not planting things that are in the ground for a long time, with not interesting leaves, because it has to look very pretty as well. And that's where we differ from other CGs as well, there is a bit more direction

in it, and much of this direction is from me, because I run the gardening, and that's a little bit unusual, and that slightly undermines the ownership, we are not collectively deciding what we going to put in the garden, but we do have conversations about it, but ultimately I decide with the people who garden here, but if some people came in and said they want to grow potatoes and I had to say, no this year we are not growing them in the ground, but we probably going to put them bins or sacks because they took up a lot of room last year, so there is a certain decision making process slightly different, and equally its not allotments, so there is not individual ownership, so its communal ownership with the beds, with a bit of direction, so its slightly (scrutinize: is this effective leadership?)

[...]

M: And I am really worried if we are running out of our money that this professional, creative, high standard would be very undermined and that's quite fragile too. Personally, I am not a fan neither of this hand drawn posters, especially because we are in an area, where ... and we have worked very hard not to be like this hippie kind of garden that only attracts a certain type of people, but I don't know how to explain that. I don't know how we have done that, but I know that we have, and that's exactly how we set out to do it. And Brain who is graphic designer, and me, I am a garden designer, are both very embedded in this garden.

A: That's a thing I also want to talk about. How is the landscape architect or designer contributing to this garden?

M: What Joe Gibbons designed for us is beautiful. Her design is, forgetting about the pavilion, what she has done with this piece of land, is so subtle and so sophisticated, and everything is very well made and designed, and she had a definite aesthetic, its about very simple, about these trees that are a substitute for these pioneer trees, traditional trees to grow on derelict land, she is making a statement with these trees, but also they look beautiful, it's a very light touch actually, she left everything what's there at the bottom but then supplemented, there is very few species, so you have got the two types of trees, just repeated and repeated, she has planted more butterfly bush and gold willow and she did an eco boost, so we brought the wildlife as far as possible, and then these beds rising up in the middle of it, and the paths. And if we ever wanted to do something that is relatively big, I would go to Joe and ask her, because I feel we should be very respectful to her design.

[...]

A: When I compare your garden to that of the KHWG, for instance, I see a beautiful, nice, perfect garden, but only, at least the times I went there, the same few people (middle class white middle aged women), and here what I see is many diverse and mixed people and a lot is going on, and I think of course, it has to do with the fact that you are located right in the middle of a big street, but it appears to me that it also has to do with the design of your garden that is creates an openness.

M: Yes, that's right, but I also think it has to do with the fact, that we have a paid duty manager here that welcomes people coming in here. And I know some people find it weird, or something it could be quite easily done away with, and now that our money is gone, many people think we could just be open and have a few volunteers here, and we

have a very proactive approach to people coming in, and that's one thing, and then we have also got people who are very passionate about this place.

A: The others are also very passionate about their gardens, and they told me they put on their effort to attract various kinds of people, and include other groups of the local residents, such as the Turkish group, but it doesn't work.

M: (difficulties to answer) I think its very complicated. (try to find out how Culpeper does it, for instance, and then compare to the efforts KHWG is making). Although, you say our Boroughs are similar (KHWG: Islington, DECG: Dalston), we are different because Dalston has quite a history of activism, for instance, the reason why Brian and I are involved in this garden is because we have also been involved in the Open Dalston Campaign, which is against a lot of demolitions, and redevelopments in the area, so a lot of people trust us, we have a lot of networks in the area, and people know that we spent a lot of time and fought quite passionately and protect buildings and businesses, so the party here tonight, Newton that is sitting up there, for instance, he run the Black Music Club across the road that we fought to stop, the club already closed, but at least the building, he is in his 70 now, but he still does his clubs, and he has a network, and the fact that OpenDalston is involved in this I think a lot of people see this as a very good thing. There are other organizations involved in the steering group that have a very good network of...networking reputation so that sort of underpins it, and then some of the things we did last year, maybe they were not the most obvious things, so for instance, we did African tango here, so we had dance here, it was mixture of a lot of west Indian people and a lot of southern American, that's the people who run the African tango, and immediately people could see that it wasn't white (Nicola: when bbq people tend to come more frequently, compare as well to Culpeper, how do they achieve the feeling among local residents that the garden is not exclusive) It's very multicultural. Maybe Brian can help us?

Aischa is pointing to how diverse the garden is here, and it's not the usual suspects in a way that are frequenting the garden.

B: I think its because we are aware of that it is a possibility. I mean we are welcoming everybody and not excluding anybody while we are aware...

A: The others are doing the same, but they just do not succeed in it. It's even on their agenda to include as many different people as possible. They are making all their efforts, but it's just not working.

B: Alright, I think its difficult, but you have to ..I mean especially since day one we are really trying to encourage...just by I don't know.

A: Maybe it has to do with design as well?

M: there is this structure, this wooden pavilion which has a kind of domestic feel to it, so it feels quite safe so even if say culturally you are not ...well I think we do understand cultural differences because all of us have lived in this area for quite a long time, 20 years, but also through all the campaigning that we have done, we know a lot of people and we know the mix, we don't live in a kind of middle class white enclave. But its also Dalston a bit

B: Its different from Islington, its just one thing part of our campaign that is open, one of the worries we had of the new developments was that it would end up like Islington divisions which is very obvious and which is something Dalston does not really have, its so culturally mobile, because when we first came it was predominantly western India I

would have said, and then it moved into Turkish, and African and we have seen the changes and we are not really ... I think a lot of people come here and sort of think they can have a look and take a snapshot without understanding the kind of complexity the mix that goes on in Dalston which is definitely more complex in Islington and a lot more fluid as well. It changes so much because it is a relatively poor area, we tend to get the migrants in, but then I think its because we are aware of it. Maybe that one of the benefits we can bring. Just having this awareness.

M: But I also think with the mix of volunteers, like with the gardening on the Saturday we are very mixed and I know there are other projects in the area that I can see all the volunteers are young European white, and they are kind of eco warriors. and if somebody comes in here they see other mixed people here, and they will always find somebody that is like him...

A: the people that were involved in the beginning of the garden, were that people that have been already involved in something similar? Or friends, family, people that you knew?

M: You know we have this strange background of this project which is very top down (usually bottom up approach), funded by the LDA which is kind of high in the local government, a lot of architectural involvement, the whole thing developed from the making space in Dalston project, which had 2 years of stakeholder meetings with people like us and .... Then Nicolas the architect who build the pavilion, he specializes in temporary structures, he tries to engage with the community, in which he is building the project, this is certainly his ethos, all of these things somehow have come together and the strong design ethos and creativity, and the steering group and the campaigning background in Dalston have somehow come together to make it what it is. And that's why this whole fundraising thing is so frustrating, because all of us have created such a good thing here, but its still very flagging, it needs to be nurtured and the finance I see as pretty disastrous. Until next year we could have managed to very attractive for funds, but we need them this year to be able to continue with the good stuff we are doing here ... It's a whole lot of things, and I would find it quite hard to write the instruction manual, because there are people asking how do you manage and fund the garden, I want to set up the same thing somewhere else, and I could tell them about everything but I don't think that would guarantee that you are going to be able...there is no blue print, there are things to be extracted maybe that could work as model. I find it very difficult to say what it is (being socially inclusive), I know its working, but I find it very difficult to say what it is, and I want it to work better as well,

[...]

A: How do you try to convince your members, as well as the local residents to get involved in this CG?

M: that's kind of through the gardening. And its also through...you know we make a lot of cups of tea for people and this comes back to being sort of domestic, and I know its not our house, you have to be very careful wit this, because there are a lot of people that associate Brian and me with this garden., but its mot our garden its everybodys garden so we have to be very careful when I say come and join us in our garden. So you need to

find a balance. But one of the things we do is when people come we ask would you like a cup of tea, as when somebody visits your house, and that's how we get to know a lot of people, and we buy a lot of the tea and coffee by ourselves, and that's a nice way of people coming in and sitting down, feeling relaxed and welcome. But I think it's this duty manager thing as well, when they say come on in, and do you want to know anything, do you want to ask anything, some people, especially last year, were instantly a little bit suspicious and if you chat to people they become less suspicious, so people would not need to think oh that's one of these middle class white people thing, and I live in Dalston for more than 20 years and that helps as well, because people like the fact that we are not new, and I have lived here more than I have lived in Ireland.

A: Now that you have described your role, what is the role of the community?

M: I am funny about the word community because I don't like it that community. I tend to talk about Dalston residents or people who live in Dalston. Sometimes it's shorter to talk about community when I am writing things because you are slightly obliged to shortcut to this, for instance, if you are writing for funding or publicity, when we talk about community focused events, what does it mean? It sounds as well a bit hippie and it's as well become a little abused last ... it's a little bit hippie, a little bit patronizing, and a little bit institutionalizing, and I tend to think of things being done for and to the community, rather than by the community. Personally I am a bit of a fan of by the people for the people approach thing because I am one of the people, part of the community. But in Dalston you got so many different cultures and races and classes, it's so diverse. That makes me very comfortable personally. And I am not disillusioned about that, because there are definitely downsides to that as well. Dalston is such a deprived area, and that's why we were so determined not to set up a café last year, because we wanted everybody to come in and feel welcome because last year there was this search for new trendy people coming into Dalston, and new trendy cafes and restaurants and expensive places.

A: How do you access all your resources; the material, the water, the tools, the ideas...

M: well, in terms of the plants last year, there is a bit of that you know somebody and then it's easier to access those, but I think there could be more of that. Last year it was an obviously paid for project, there was an assumption that everything was covered, so that's the downside of funding as well. It was very well funded in its set up, but not very well funded in its running costs. But the downside if you want to establish community ownership is that people will think that's all paid for already. The other thing is you can never forget with this place it's not permanent. That's why I have a sense of urgency. I find it hard to relax, which is sad on one level, because it feels it could be taken away any minute. Although, I said to people we need to make the most of it now while we are here, when it is taken away then we at least had enjoyed it, but I don't really think that. I am slightly pretending (Leader: motivate and prevent people from becoming disillusioned). Obviously I would be devastated. There is a good chance that it will be taken away. There is another element that is kind of hard to explain. And I have to be very discrete to you. I know the council they do not have the amount of respect that they should have for what we are doing here. And a catch phrase always engrained the local government is community cohesion, and that's what is happening here.

(Speculation about Cg as valuable as a public park plus its unique benefits=> questioning the necessity of CGs to be economically sustainable)

A: You said this land is very valuable. Then I went to the St. Mary's Secret Garden, which is already existing for more than 30 years. And I ask about the land as well, in KHWG its definitely not valuable, and in the case of the Secret Garden it is actually.

M: By whom is this land owned?

A: hackney council as well. But maybe its because they have this arrangement with the nearby hospital paying the garden to have the disabled people in the garden working and being taken care of.

M: it could be that. It could be, I mean there have been around for 30 years, and at the tiem they were established the land would not have had very much value, and although it is valuable now it is still not as valuable as the land here in Dalston, because this here is under enormous development pressure. And although the land may not be taken away, the other massive threat is the land surrounding us because anything that happens to the neighboring sites really is so impactful. This is the biggest remaining development site in Dalston and it has outlined framework permission to do ten story high massive mixed developments. This house over there which is at the moment squatted is marketed for being sale. Before it was for sale, one of the organizations of the steering group should have gone in that building and that would have been ideal but they wanted it to develop it with a glass back thing looking at the garden, we would have worked together perfectly, so now for economic reasons they have to sell the building obviously what happens there has a major impact. The whole thing is in a state of flux.

A: You said you have the Saturday lunch where you share food and talk. Is it also an opportunity when you build relationships with your members, and then bind them to the garden and to you. Do you have more of these moments?

M: Its mainly through the gardening and people coming in. its also through giving time to people as well, and welcoming them. Ensuring that people feel valued, but we also get a lot of people with problems, a lot of lonely people come here, adults with various ranges of depression, and we are very patient with people. Setting the thing up that people get to know other people and feel comfortable. I think the pavilion has a lot to do with it, the actual set up has a lot to do with it. And the architect designed this to be comfortable and culturally when you were talking about white middle class people feel comfortable in gardens, and gardening is culturally embedded in Britain, whereas here this helps as a transition zone. It just breaks that. It's a domestic thing.

A: Do you have with relationships with other organizations, and businesses to seek advice, materials, tools etc?

M: We started with it. Like capital growth. We got a small grant from them for our fruit trees. They are an organization developing food growing spaces in London. That's the main one. Also, I have been involved in the hackney environment network, so we are about to set up the food growing network for hackney as part of that working together with capital growth, but I am setting it up here. So this place becomes a physical hub for it. Its more an online thing, but here people can come and pick up some leaflets, for instance, we will do a little fair about food growing, through that there is ... I and we know a lot of people who... we know tree experts, food experts, food selling experts...

A: How do you know all these people?

M: I am a garden designer, so I know a lot of people, gardeners, people associated with garden, trees, and plants and parks, and then because of our campaigning, and because I am a garden designer my very special own interest has always been open spaces, then we know a lot of designers and architects, and then through our steering group we a lot of people.

Last year I worked for Hackney environment network so I did a whole lot of networking events for food growers, for planning, biodiversity, lots of people. Hackney has a real history of being very active in the above mentioned respects, and very into networking as well there is lots and lots of networking, and then we got the HCVS (Hackney Council for volunteers services or sector) giving small grants to community organizations, that's more networking.

A: Can you give an example of this networking?

M: When I was in the HEN I set up a series of meetings, I did it in farm: shop, which is a new project across the roads. I invited all the people that are growing food in hackney. Over the years you go to courses, you meet people so then when I was setting up the thing, I remembered all the people, and then just wrote would be great if you could be there, and it was just the start of something and look what's actually going on it got a bit stalled. For instance, then there is a group called the tree musketeers they do a lot of stuff in hackney around street trees and park trees, nearly all volunteering. The main guy Russo, I don't remember where I met him, when we started I asked him to come along and have a look at our trees, and give advices for the best ways to look after the trees in very warm and dry periods. That's an example of an informal advice network of people who are experts. So, for instance, they have a biodiversity advisor at Hackney council and she is putting together a biodiversity action plan for Hackney and I am involved there because of the fact that I am involved here, the fact that I am involved in Open Dalston, and the fact that I am a garden designer, so I'm involved there for biodiversity, green spaces, and housing because I do a lot with front gardens, so you meet a whole lot of people there. So we want to put a little green roof on the back shed of the coming greenhouse, so I met a guy through that biodiversity thing who is a specialist in green roofs. So its networking really.

[...]

M: We do not work that much together as we would in the ideal world with other organizations such as farm: shop, or the KHWG because it's one a question of time.

A: Is the understanding of cultural and social features of the area necessary to encourage participation?

M: well I think it does. And this comes back to what I said about the duty manager, and the people involved here myself included I think a number of us do understand all that rich mix that it works. I think we are successful in that sense because we are sensitive to that and respectful to it without any illusions. You have to be fairly robust and on one level sometimes quite tough.

A: Now we have talked about the network outside the garden. Do you have a good network within the garden as well?

M: I think our steering group could be better, but we have a good network within the garden, but its small. Its quality not quantity. It just evolved over, and we will continue to evolve and lot of them come to garden on a Saturday and now they do not necessarily come to garden but do other stuff, and I was very conscious of it last week. The first day with our pizza oven, when we had terrible problems with the boys who burnt the windmills of the kids workshops and some of the little signs for the exhibition City Visions. To come back to the network, we have loads and loads of people and there will be more, but what I have noticed there is quite a lot of adults now who are interested in taking responsibility for these kids in their different ways. We have got one is a Turkish speaker for the Turkish boys, and then there is another young lady who comes a lot and wants to do cooking with these boys so slowly but surely other adults taking responsibility as well. So it's a good network, but its not loads. And they are not what I would call the usual suspects. And they are people who Dalston and live in here, and people who are themselves from different backgrounds and who have no illusions about Dalston, so they coming to get something but also to give, so they are not eco warriors.

A: Do you have a good network with the local residents, the neighborhood?

M: I think so. For instance, there is this new development across the road with new people, this is new Dalston, and because they have kids but no gardens they all come in here and that's quite interesting. And I had a call last week from the marketers of this development and they asked me to give some information about the garden for the new residents. So they (the city) will recognize the benefits of this garden.

To come back to this social cohesion thing, what I think is great there is very few places where you get this new people in contact with all the others.

A: Do you think that the people who live here around and work here are all pulling together to get it work?

M: perhaps not as much as they should be, this is partly because a lot of people have a lot of pressures on them. Because the people involved here have done such a good job that others think its all covered , its sort of a vicious circle. The need isn't obvious, because it looks so professional. Like with the funding, people cant believe we have no funding that's something we have to work on. And, Brian and I for instance, we gave up a lot for this garden, and I think you need some people, although, I don't want to say its been only us, but you need some people who really go for it. When the project started, like in the consultation phase with the architects they talked about this project as being community led, but I think if people like us haven't been involved, really going for it and pushing it. When we opened the first month, I was here seven days a week, till 10pm every night.

A: do you think this motivates other people to follow your example and encourages more participation?

M: A little. But they could also get a little bit lazy because they think everything is covered. I am not quite sure about that and it's a big challenge because I do recognize this. And it's a bad thing if you don't leave room for other people to do the things that need to be done. But because we have such high demands on this space and expectation, the bar is quite high.

A: Such as?

M: We had to prove that this an be run outside of the park system to hackney council to the shopping centre, to LDA who funded the project. There was not much room for failure. It had to be seen good from day one. And that's why I pushed for not having

publicity to take it easy in the beginning, get it look good, get people involved, get some events on...slowly by slowly...

A: Do you think the success of the garden also depends on the assistance of others?

M: It needs a core of people who are very committed and who give up a lot to go beyond certainly anything that somebody is paid for, we work very hard, so when we are not here, we are doing the website.

[...] 01:41:48:

The council undermines our sustainability because they do not allow us to be an organization, because then we would be more powerful. And that's what I would like first, to be an organization. I would like us to be set up as a company even, and to be able to employ more of these people helping us. We have a lot of people who are themselves vulnerable financially, I would like to pay some of these people. I do about ten jobs, I would like to pay other people to do some of these jobs. I like us to be like a proper organization.

A: Why do you prefer to pay these people rather than having volunteers overtaking certain tasks of you?

M: Because there is a lot of work involved and I think it's a bit too much. It's a bit like the duty manager. Its too much to ask people to work from 11am to 9pm for nothing. I think that's exploitative. Personally I think volunteering systems sometimes exploit people. (striving for an ethical just initiative!) to come back to the class issues, the people who can really afford being volunteers are middle class people in general. And that's another issue why you sometimes get certain type of people volunteering. Not everybody can afford to be flexible and spend time working here for nothing.

[...]

M: The things against our further existence, except the money issue, is two things, to be popular and to look nice. And in order to look nice for a garden it takes three years. We need time to grow up. We need things to nurture, you need three years for to look nice and everybody loves it.

A: Decision making.

M: The steering group constituted of the six organizations works as a committee for the garden. And we do have meetings. We used to meet once a month and we are about to meet less because the last meetings were poorly attended. That's because all organizations involved are equally suffering at the moment with the current economic climate of cuts and uncertainty. So everybody was preoccupied in the last couple of months. And then what we also have, within our system of paid duty managers we meet once a week. There is a whole lot of duty managers, its like a shift. There is about five or six, but we will have more this summer. To talk through what's have been up the week, the groups that been in, issues, inquiries, that's where our day to day decision making happens. As the garden coordinator role that I have I deal with all the E-Mail inquiries and all the events and workshops. I will ask people what they think, if there is something a bit strange. For instance, we met yesterday and we talked about the problems we had with the boys during the holidays and we tried to come up with a solutions. Because there is a different person each day its partly also about making sure that everybody knows what is going on.

A: there is various needs from different people. Except the council, the shopping mall and the steering group, who are these people and what are their different demands?

M: mostly the visitors who come to the garden. We got high maintenance children. For example, last year, when it gets warmer, we had a lot of elderly gentlemen, the oldest was about 90 or something, all very lonely and isolated, and all they really wanted is to have preferably female to listen to them. The duty manager were kind of worn out they just wanted to come and sit with us and have us listen to their life story, and that is a very valuable thing that we are doing but there are times when you do about a hundred other things and its quite a challenge, that's what I mean with demands. Its mainly emotional demands. Its that thing of living in a city and they come in and you give them a great welcome and they relax into it, and then you talk about your problems.

A: When you plan an event, do you observe what do people want and need and how could local residents profit from it, or do people rather approach you and ask for something, suggesting their own ideas, or will you go to the neighbors in order to find out in what they are interested in?

M: in terms of our decision making we said anybody can come here and suggest their ideas as long as it is not commercial, we don't let people run their private event. But you can come and do an event like the African tango.

A: So this was suggested by the neighbors?

M: Yes, I now already started to get emails and people come in as well and they then suggest that they would like to put on a day or evening of something. but we cant give people money to do it. The main thing is it must not be exclusive. So the garden must be open during the event.

A: How do you know what people want in the catchment area? How do you know that people rather feel attracted by a garden that is designed and planned like yours rather than a totally different one?

M: I see what you mean. What was needed was a green relaxing space so that's the main thing that we have to offer here. All the activities are in addition to that. And if people came in and said you should have more tulips I say it's a very small space, there is a limited amount of what we can actually do here. Given that we don't have any money and its run by volunteers it has to be relatively low maintenance but we are making a virtue out of it by making it a wildlife friendly space and therefore we have a certain type of planting rather than cultivated. Therefore, not everything is open to collective decision making. Because of the need we are meeting, well the core need is the green space, and all the other needs such as the vulnerable children, isolated adults, etc that's a bloody good job and I have limited patience with collective decision making about things that in the end of the day are not really important. That's my own hard line thing. Keep the garden kind of simple, don't get into contrived decision making about things that are not important. But make sure to take on board what people really think.

A: As to individual suggestions I completely agree, but when a certain idea is more frequently uttered by many different people then I would say it is something to take into consideration, right?

M: An example of that is actually we had quite a lot of parents who want us to ban those boys from the garden. We have really grappled with it. It's a quite huge challenge, a serious decision making controversy. And I don't know yet where we are going to go

with it. Within the steering group there is a lot of ...its definitely the most difficult part of trying to be socially inclusive when it can cause danger to other visitors. That's what I mean with serious, important decision making.

A: that is an example where people approach you directly but do you also approach local residents who may not be active in here?

M: No, we don't and that is something in the ideal world you would do, that's the classic thing. But there is also the thing with the limited resources that we have got. Neither do we have enough time really. We can just cover about in here. How we try to outreach is through activities, through organizations. For instance, I am talking to age concern, who work with older people, I am talking to hackney carers, who work with people responsible caring for other people, that's all out there. We are encouraging to come in here, we are also talking to schools. The problem is that can be quite often ghettoized, it goes back to the community thing,. They can sometimes deal with people in ghettoized way, but we cant really control that because that's the way things are set up, if I want to talk about elderly people I could go and talk to them straight forward. So there is good and bad in it. So its one way of outreaching. The other thing is though things like schools. Children are throughout the whole community, so getting them in here other than that its limited I guess. We do not have any leaflets, we do all advertising through the events. But we only do tiny little print runs, because we cant afford more, but it would be definitely great to have more announcements. We have a mailing list now but this is only for people who do email, and who have access to email. I have just written a piece for free magazine that goes into every household in the East it postcode, that's coming out next week, we do a lot more with the local paper, that's the first time actually that I have invited the local newspaper to come because a lot of people do read it.

A: You try to achieve a balance between all the different demands from various kinds of people. That's really challenging I guess?

M: It is. That's the thing about shared spaces as well, isn't it? Today is an unusual day, and we don't do that very often. I found that music a little bit loud. We had this debate how late we would let them come today. I thought it should be a little bit later, but then its not every day that we do this.

[...] 02:09:24

Introducing the architects. Explains which architects had been involved in 2 years consultation phase. Describes the process, in which public spaces were identifies in Dalston, and the fact that it is a place with a lot of creative industries and businesses.

A: Could you elaborate on the different kinds of recreational activities and events that you are offering to reach a broader spectrum of people?

M: We don't have enough money to have...the only events that we pay to have is children's holidays activities. We have done that three times now. Everything else is other people, we encourage other people to come forward and say I would like to do this and that for free. We are very happy for them to take donations for themselves, so this sort of amplifies music like today we only do that for or five times a year, because the general thing is that the garden is relax. Most people come to the garden for to be quiet, or not to have amplified music. So this is unusual, and the African tango would be the other thing. This year we have a theater, we have done capoeira dancing we are going to

have a carnival arts organization called hackney jambolay, they did a special day last year and they want to come back, and do another special day this year, we got the hackney carers and they want to come to like a fund day for their carers, we have got a choir coming, there is some singing. All are from hackney rather than specifically from Dalston, so hackney is our catchment area for events. Dalston is the focus for people to have a green space to come to and sit, and relax. But when we do an activity is rather Hackney, or beyond. Most of the activities are on Saturdays and Sundays, but we don't have that much at night. Again that might change this year, it just depends what comes forward. We want to do make more people aware in the next months that they can come and do an event here and a wider range of events. For example, we are getting a new library across the road, to get them over and to do some summer reading over here. So this is a resource for people, music, drama. But I have to say equally we need the balance up and we have always very adamant about this that people ask for in Dalston. My organization Open Dalston we were really involved two years ago what was called the master plan for Dalston, which is a pro active planning framework from the local government and the number one thing was for relaxing green space, it wasn't so much for a space for music or drama, because we do have another space for this, which is very hard landscaped and that does outdoor music, and events. And we are not looking for duplicating what somebody else is already doing. We need to equally protect the potential of this place to be a relaxing place.

A: but once in a while its nice to have these kinds of events, because it attracts people that would usually not come to the garden. That's what I also found out with Nicola from the KHWG, people tend to come on events such as a barbecue, talk to you and then another day they will come back again and again.

M: Absolutely. This year the pizza oven, for instance, gives us a lot of mileage, potential to different kinds of things., but we haven't worked it out yet how this is going to panel, because it's a little bit...its not an oven where you have to press the button, but you have to light it on two hours in advance and it has to be managed, but we are hoping that this will be something that people can use quite flexibly as well and there will be different kinds of events.

A: Its also a gathering point.

M: Exactly, absolutely. I think its going to be great.

A: its also a point where people can meet more easily and talk to each other when they are actively doing things together instead of just sitting on a bench and relax.

M: Absolutely, and that's what we definitely find last year with the Saturday gardening. The thing that made it a real success was the fact that we would sit down every Saturday and have a big lunch together like a family on Sunday. That's what really kept the whole thing together When the season went on we eat the stuff that we had grown ourselves, that was really wonderful.

A: Can describe who leads and who manages? Or is this overlapping in your garden?

M: this is going to be very controversial now. When we had this conversation last year how the garden would be governed, and the council would not allow us to set up as an entity, so they said one of the steering group organizations had to be what they called the responsible body, and they wanted it to be the Arcola theater.

A: For what reason did they chose the Arcola theater?

M: this is going to be a bit politically, because particularly our organization have a history of campaigning against the council, but the others all had their moments of campaigning against the council, whereas the theater were the only ones who did not have. So they are an organization who the council like. So the grant, the money had to go to them, and that's totally fine, nobody has a problem with that, it just sits with them. So for instance, me working and getting paid for being the garden coordinator, I am officially employed by the Arcola theater, which in my book is not great but that's how it has to be. So they are also responsible for things like, you have to have insurance, public liability, it is a public space so there has to be a number of insurances that are held by someone. There is a tension there, because it is quite complicated to explain. The tension is...they manage, operationally manage the space, and so for instance with the duty managers, there is like a router who is working on a Monday, who is working on a Tuesday etc. they have to do that, they have to pay people, so that kind of operational management they do. The tension is, they would like to think that they lead as well, but they don't. and the tension won't go away and if anything probably gets worse, because there are also issues around land in this area and some of the organizations within the steering group are interested in some of the land. That's another reason why I personally think the way our model is been set up by the council is not a good one because if there was a garden organization, then the garden would 100% look out for the garden's interests with no other vested interest in land or anything around. For instance, the plan to put this route through here to the shopping centre, some of the other people in our steering group are affected by that because their land, their buildings back onto this land as well, and I think it's quite difficult that they were asked to comment on the plan, we should be able to comment on that just about the garden and that's not the case. So there are issues about that. Politically we have quite a complicated little thing going on.

To go back to the management and leadership, I don't think it's the theater that are leading, but they are managing the space, and to be fair they do that quite well, which means for instance that they write a lot of reports.

A: Maybe it's easier for you to answer how would the garden ideally be managed?

M: I do have my own complex about this because I always wanted it to be set up as a charity or whatever, so it was independent, but I am sure that it would have had its own issues as well. Possibly, I would not be involved as I am then. Looking at my own personal interest and involvement, maybe it would have been set up like that I could not have been involved as much as I am now.

I find it hard to explain what it is. But if think if it was set up like an organization we would be perfectly being capable of what the Arcola is doing in terms of setting up contracts, paying people, checking out the right insurance...it's complicated to explain, there is a lot of politics involved both organizational politics and also local government politics in Hackney.

A: Would you consider it as more effective if there was a person that is independent from all organizations, who is operating as leader as well as manager?

M: It has to be someone fighting for the garden in a very way which is about leading as well, but it's fighting for the garden and having no vested interest that have nothing to do with the garden. That's a major flaw in our set up that we have steering group that is full of organizations who have other interests, that sometimes are conflicts of interests. It's a shockingly bad way to set up the system. I know there are people in our steering group,

who are, when the council would announce tomorrow that the garden was to close they wouldn't be bothered and that feels awful to me and that causes a lot of anger. But that's the systems that has been imposed on us. There is nothing I can do about that. You just have to work what you have got, but it means that there are from time to time waves of extreme tension where I feel quite unsupported as well. You would normally think that you are in a steering group for a project here everybody speaks with one voice, and you would think you are all on the same side. And it does not always feel like that. It feels a little bit unsupported sometimes. Not everybody in the steering group shares the same commitment to the garden and passion and conviction that this is a very important thing. Its quite exhausting to feel unsupported and lonely in the steering group.

A: Why don't you have an unofficial committee operating within the garden constituted of volunteers that can support you and overtake certain tasks? This would be the normal model of leading and managing a CG.

M: that could be another thing that we could do. That would be another possibility, and I have been thinking about that. It has its pros and cons.

A: the cons would be?

M: it can go back to what we have said about the usual suspects. My experience is that most committees are made of the same experience. Most people don't consider themselves as being that is the person that is in the committee whereas a lot of people do. But that is something we could do.

A: What would be the pros?

M: it widens the democracy. It widens the decision-making, which again has pros and cons. It widens the, it shares the load and responsibility.

A: Would you consider yourself as an unofficial leader?

M: Maybe, yes I think so, but I don't like admitting that because it feels a bit funny, but also there are some people that don't like that, and that endangers me. It makes em quite vulnerable.

A: Do you think the management of the Arcola theater gives the garden a certain direction?

M: Do they or would they?

A: Do they.

M: No, because I stop them. I had been very forcefully stopping them because they have a very specific ...and I wrote the government document that the garden has to have its own culture, it could not have the culture of any organization

A: what do you mean by culture?

M: The culture of an organization is the ethos, the brand. Its not really interests it's more like a brand. The sociology, the psychology of the organization, the way people are, behave, the norms, how they presents themselves. The culture of the Arcola theater is ...That's off the record now....

A: Although you said you don't like the term of intergenerational, why do you still consider its as important that the garden works like that?

M: I cant even find an answer to that. I just believe in this concept so strongly. Personally I come from a background where families live quite closely you wouldn't use this expression, it would just be there. Older people and young people. I often find it disturbing, London can be quite an anonymous city, that the young and the old never

meet,. Personally I feel quite strongly about the benefits that these two meet each other. Its about respect as well. Also to try to do away with the fear of young people by older people. It just makes sense, its healthier.

A: How do you try to achieve this?

M: When we do our gardening on Saturday we say its for all ages, we make that very clear, we encourage parents to bring their children. And we encourage very much older people not to feel to old to come to the garden through directly talking to them. It comes back to the thing with making people welcome. Its saying it. But its also there were some adults last year when they came to the garden and they were a bit against these boys. That was again one of these decision making things where I try to talk to the adults who said I feel a little anxious about them, and I explain the situation of the kids to the adults. Trying to encourage a sense of common responsibility to each other in a way. Adults should feel responsible for children who aren't necessarily their own. Especially kids who haven't got parents looking out for them for whatever reasons. There is a young lady living in the same state than the boys and she said that since she has been here, her life has become so much easier because those boys she had previously been a bit nervous of, now they say hello to her, they know her, just little things. It was guy Fox who said do not fires next to your house we have told not to do fireworks next to their houses, it's a very healthy way to live.

I think we could do even more. Since our interview I think we have so much more to do. We tipped our tie in the water with a lot of stuff and its working. But we have a long way to go as well. The clay oven will be quite good for that as well.

... the people that work here, like Brian and me we are hugely ambitious, and we have huge aspirations for this place and we are making a very high standard and I think some other people haven't got that ambition and I think lot of the success is because of the ambition. The last 6, 7 years of campaigning in Dalston, what enriched me the most as a resident in Dalston was for instance my local council and their lack of real ambition, not this developments. That's not ambition.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Interview 1 with Nicola Freshwater, at KHWG, 13-04-2011, 11am, 47 min**

A: What is your role in the garden?

N: I am the chair of the committee, which is basically 12 of us.

A: What is your profession next to the garden?

N: I am a freelance editor. I work on law books. But we got a whole mix of people. We've got somebody who used to be an agent for celebrities. And she's given up her job and is now running a social enterprise called the garden class room which does all the educational stuff with local schools here. We've somebody else who is a retired mistress. An engineer. A costume maker. People doing completely different things. But just all local people who interested ...

A: Do you all live close to this garden?

N: Yeah.

A: How much time do you actually invest in the garden?

N: I never know what to say to this because it is sort of ..its a good few hours a week.

Lets say...I don't know... eight or ten hours a week.

A: And what are your activities in the garden? Your responsibilities? As a chairman...

N: Well, me particularly we have monthly committee meetings. So I have to prepare the agenda for the meetings, chair those, I'm also the main contact for the garden if anybody emails the info address on the web dress comes to me so I deal with all those inquiries kind of make sure that you know that everything is running smoothly and if people need help things they get it. We had a problem just recently with the gate code number and the kids from the playground next door found out and were coming in, and they shouldn't be. so my husband and I were whole day in front last week... getting phone calls when we were half way of the mountains...The kids are in the garden...So you know dealing with things like that. They take quite much of the time. I also run the website. I am particularly interested in planting here so I like to do the weeding and the flour beds, help with sowing and things in the greenhouse, planning the plants sells ...that kind of thing. And then we have all sorts of events so we try to delegate the different people, taking responsibilities, managing different event . we are opening for national gardens scheme on 6 of July which is a kind of national fundraiser thing. For charity so we had a meeting last night with somebody to plan the food we re going to have.

A: So you are also responsible for the fundraising?

N: Not me personally. Another of the committee members is especially concentrated on fundraising and planning our events.

A: When and how did you hear for the first time about this garden? Or were you one of the founders?

N: I was one of the founders. The council initially sort of came to one of the community organizations and said this piece of land what would people like us to do with it. So there was a consultation period that was before I was involved and then I heard about it. And I thought it sounds really interesting so I went along one meeting and that was just about time when the committee was formed to actually manage it.

A: How long does the garden already exist?

N: It opened end of 2007. So this is really our fourth year.

A: Its quite a young garden.

N: Yeah, very young.

A: Can you tell me little bit how did everything begin, like what was the procedure and what kind of incentives, motives did you have to start this garden? What were the actions that you took?

N: Well, I think the incentive was really just the fact that it was such a lovely idea to have a community garden here. And the fact that the land was being made available to us to do something with. So, the first thing the council had drawn up some plans for the garden but we didn't feel that they were quite right so the first thing we did was to get some of them and to revise them, improve them. And then two kind of main things initially were fundraising. And actually going through the whole process putting contracts out to tenders. To find people who do the work because we had a lot of landscape work done here. The council ..i don't know 10, 15 years ago this was actually a public park but its quite a secluded side ...it had only one means of access. And they had a lot of problem

with vandalism and antisocial behavior so they closed it. It wasn't safe. And then for three years it was used to temporary accommodation by local schools they just put porter cabins in here and the money that they paid the school paid to the council in rent which was just 13000 pounds the council gave to us to kind of start this off. Which was really useful because if you are trying to raise money if you got nothing people don't like to give you something ..they really feel confident about you money. So that was really useful. We raised 200,000 pounds...

A: How did you do that?

N: A lot of it came form Islington council. But from different sort of pots of money within the council.

A: Can you specify these pots?

N: The councilors divide it into different areas .there is an east area, so there is an east area committee and they have a budget so we had I think 26.000 pounds from that . there is a thing called the Islington community chest which gives out funds for things that benefit community so we had money from them for doing workshops, things that would people get into the garden. And involved. The department of the council that manages green spaces and leisure with very supportive so they gave us grants when they had funds available.

A: You told that the council contacted you, but how did it really work?

N: There is a group, I'm not sure if its still around the local council ward is called Mildmay there was an organization called the Mildmay community partnership and so the council contacted them as a means of you know getting in contact with the local people to ask what people ideas they wanted. And generally the response was that they like some space to grow their own vegetables.

A: The Mildmay committee?

N: I'm not absolutely sure how consultation process worked because I wasn't involved at that stage.

A: And how did you come into that process? Were you in this committee as well? Or are they friends?

N: I...once they had gone a little way through the consultation process they had an open day her e to show people the plans that they had got so far and get peoples feedback and stuff like that and I was sent an invitation to it I think my name just must have been on a council mailing list for something . I think its because I'm a member of the islington gardeners which is a sort of gardening group and had contact with the council through that so I guess that s how

A: How does the garden actually work? Are the plots rented, for instance?

N: Yes, basically from the beginning onwards. The first two years from early 2005 until 2007 the planning and fundraising process and all the contractors were sorted out then from kind of may to September 2007 the garden was constructed so September 2007 what we had was basically an empty garden so we had this raised bed here but it was just full of soil nothing else and it was difficult to divide it up into plots so we had an open day and we printed leave lets and distributed them to every single house in the neighborhood and lots of people came and people put their names down then for plots.

A: Do you have any particular rules in this garden?

N: I have copy of them I can give it to you.

A: You told me you have a lot of events and activities and probably also workshops. Can you elaborate a little on that?

N: I find you a program actually.

so this kind of three different areas in a way we do workshops which are open to anybody to come to. we try to keep prices as low as possible.

A: So you have prices?

N: We do have prices. What we...the first three years we've had funding to pay to run the workshop but the fund givers said to us its better to make it charged because people appreciate it more. they actually value what they get more than if you say its free. we have got funding there is slightly less funding for this year and next year but what we are trying to do is in future we like not to have to be dependent on finding funds. so we are going to see if we can do it and break even . so we have put prices up a little bit, but not very much so its still a lot cheaper than you paid to do a lot of the courses than somewhere else.

A: Do you have any other entrepreneurial activities or income?

N: We hire out the building, so sometimes people would hire it to have a children's birthday party something like that.

A: for how much?

N: I cant remember. I know its 50 Pounds to hire for a whole evening.

A: How many times did you actually rent it approximately? How much income do you have? Can you cover all your expenditures?

N: At the moment we reckon we can just about cover our basic running costs through subscriptions people pay to be member s, hiring out the building holding fundraising events, so we have four seasonal events so we had a wild life theme event about you know three weeks ago. we have a summer fest at beginning of June. and you know we will sell all cakes and plants and we have coconut shine. all sorts of things. so they are quite good for raising money , but not huge amounts . it doesn't raise enough to cover the costs to putting on all the workshops.

A: What are costs?

N: WE...

A: Maybe you have a list? Do you have an administrator?

N: I mean I always have all the information, but I just don't always have it in my mind. So the costs of putting on the workshops ...

A: Of the whole garden actually...

N: We reckon about 6,000 a year. basic running cost. we have got 5,000 Pounds funds this year to run the workshops which is just about enough

A: All the plots are rented to individual neighbors, right? So do you so sometimes have supplements vegetables that you donate to churches?

N: No, because peoples plots are very tiny. if someone got that space there they actually not going to have enough spare

A: what are the aims and goals of the garden?

N: Its...well...it's really to provide a sort of focus for the community to bring people together. I mean growing stuff is important but obviously with a little plot like that you not going to make enough to you know feed yourself all year round. Or anything like that. so its more about getting people outside, especially with children teaching them

where food comes from , making them comfortable with being outside and getting their hands dirty and learn about nature. providing a nice place to come to. I mean a lot of people run here they come here to relax.

A: its amazing. its so relaxing to be here. You cannot imagine. I come from a little town in the Netherlands and its so overwhelming to be here in this noisy London. And i am really relayed right now.

N: its amazing. I mean you can still hear the police serene, but actually its such a small distance to Balls Pond road, which is not a very nice area particularly, and you come here and you do feel...i mean we got birds everywhere and its green and peaceful. its lovely so even if people don't have a plot here they can become a key holder member so we give them the gate code and they can just come in whenever they like just sit and read a book...

A: So its not only about a healthier nutrition but also about having a feeling of community and going out having green space

N: Yes, definitely!

A: Where would you locate your focus? What's the most important ?

N: well, its difficult to say because it does fulfill so many different roles but education is very important to us.

A: especially for children?

N: Yeah, so in addition at the workshops that we put on which are not all for adults, some of them are for children, children with their parents together. we through the garden class room which is the social enterprise run by our fundraise chair we get lots of school groups coming in during term time and they do all sorts of activities that are actually linked to the curriculum they are studying in the classroom. They might be learning about science or math, something like that but they are doing it outside in the garden in the environment.

A: Do you have that a lot in London?

N: Its becoming more important, I think. I think you know people are realizing that just being outside is good for children because there was a government manifesto. I think it was the last government but it was called learning outside the classroom, and that was really trying to encourage this kind of thing but there aren't many places where teachers can take the children outside. and I think we have kind of started a trend for it in islington. so I am more of a community gardens in Islington are kind of following and doing these kind s of things

A: how many gardens are there actually in Islington?

N: In Islington itself there is Culpeper, Sunnyside and olden garden. so there is another three.,

A: are there some gardens in planning?

N: Not that i know of in Islington because there is very limited space here. but its a really popular thing in Britain at the moment so i had an email just the other day from somebody who is just about to start setting one up in south London so he said can we come talk about it. There is just a little way that way in hackney different council but they have got oh quite a few actually. some really nice ones. and they have hackney city farm and we have got Freightliners farm in Islington as well.

A: Yeah, I saw it as well on the internet. its very nice. So, what are the challenges and difficulties, and how would you describe the shortcomings of the garden?

N: One of the problems that we found is actually getting the whole community involved. you do find that its a certain type of person . so we are sort of constantly making big efforts to ..for example there is a big Turkish community here and you know we are kind of trying quite hard to get them to actually sign up.

A: how do you try that?

N: Well, for example last summer there is a local Turkish nursery school and they came down here at a barbecue one evening so they just came down, the parents and the children and just had a really lovely evening. so its just a case of doing things that will get people to come into the garden.

A: So you send invitations to them?

N: Yeah, one of our committee members knew somebody at the school so she was able to suggest you know to why do we kind of do it and they loved it and they going to come back again in summer . whether people are enjoying the garden ...you know you cannot force people so you just have to try and get them here at first place and show them what's available and hope that they will like it.

A: Are there other problems except reaching all community members?

N: Its a lot of work to run for volunteers especially we are lucky at the moment we have got a full committee of 12 people but sometimes it can be difficult finding enough people who are prepared to give up their time.

A: did you have these problems in the beginning of the garden?

N: A little bit. we had a few people who joined the committee straight off and then quite quickly realized they had not enough time for this but we managed to get a sort of fairly committed bunch of people who stuck with seeing it all through to opening and then some of those said well I've done my bit now and I'm going to step down and so for a couple of years we had fewer than 12 people we are back up to 12 now which is good.

A: How do you see that for the future? For the next 50 years, which is quite a long time...

N: I know I think we just have to keep plugging away at it we have monthly Saturday morning work session so we just encourage people to come along and help looking after the flowerbeds and that kind of things. sort of hope that by doing that regularly people will learn how to look after the garden themselves and actually kind of take on more responsibility for the garden rather than leading them through the committee

A: and how important in that respect do you consider leadership?

N: Puh... Well...I think you have to lead by examples really you cant with getting the members to help or with getting you know committee members to do stuff everybody is a volunteer so you cant ell people what to do you just got to try and infuse people and get them to care about the garden.

A: What is actually the role of a leader? Would you consider you in this role?

N: yeah I guess so. to an extent

A: But also other committee members?

N: I mean I do think that my role is more having an overview of what everybody is doing rather than being in charge we will work together very much.

A: there is a difference between a manager who is in charge of everything organizes, and leadership who is more showing the values of the garden, and motivating

N: But not ordering. Exactly.

A: So there are more people who share this position. There is no real hierarchy here?

N: Not really. I don't think so personally Perhaps they might say differently but no. i

mean you know we discuss matters if necessary we cote on something but generally we luckily we mostly tend to agree to what we think its best

N: Okay.

A: So you have the committee of the 12, and then volunteers helping out in the garden?

N: yeah, exactly and then the plot holders. i mean anybody is welcome to help but generally its the people who are already members.

A: How many are that?

N: Well, there is 76 plots but if you think quite a lot of them are rented to couples so that's more people and then we have about at the moment its 26 key holder members as well. so its over 100

A: Are there any other partners or organizations, other initiatives, community gardens that are somehow indirectly linked to the KHWG? Do you work together? Do you entertain any relationships with them?

N: we do a bit we kind of set up links with other islington cg just so that we keep in touch and get together from time to time just talk about problems and then we are member of the FCFCG and they have come here to hold an event and they have an annual show in autumn in Annfield for the London farms and gardens so we have been to that and straw about

A: Do they help you or support you in a way?

N: They support us with advice.

A: such as?

N: well... we had a problem with business rates. the tax. they were actually not able to help us. but they did you know ask around and tried to get some sort of information for us, so you know things like that. Legal things, practical things.

N: what are legal things?

A: We did not particularly have anything but i just think of that is the kind of thing where they could give us advice if we needed it.

A: But so far none legal problems?

N: Well, we had the problem with the business rates. and its quite complicated. the innonnrevenue who value the site and the council then have to ask us to pay tax in accordance with that valuation and we basically in accordance with the valuation the council were asking us for i can remember something like 12.000 Pounds a year. so its crazy. we had big battle with the council was supportive of us and they said we don't think you have to pay this but we cant do anything about it because the revenue said this is the valuation of the site so that went on for a long time and we were going to take it to a peel and then about a week before the peel was going to be heard the revenue said oh actually I just thought about the way we can reduce the valuation because you are using the site for food growing, aren't you so they reduced it so much that it kind of eliminated the problem. but that was a big issue for a while.

A: What do you think who contributes to the survival of the garden? Except you...

N: everybody really. who is involved I mean ..

A: I mean except the people who are involved directly that come to work here. There must be some aspects, for instance the islington council that is supportive of the garden, or the FCFCG that help giving advice. So, there are more factors.

N: Yes, there are. I don't know...pfew...Obviously the more people who are supportive of us the better. but i kind of think that we reached a position now where we could pretty

much carry on because we are expecting that the council wont be able to give us so much money in future just because they have all cuts so they don't have very much money . we kind of planning to manage without outside help as much as possible.

A: Does the garden have any policies?

N: List.

A: How is the relationship to the government, the local council?

N: The relationship is quite well, they are quite supportive.

A: Are there any laws that are supportive of having or establishing a cg? Or are they rather restrictive?

N: well, I don't really know to be honest. in my experience it depends a lot on the local council and whether they are supportive or not. and islington have been. but i think there are probably better than a lot of councils.

A: Does it have to do with the neighborhood as well? Maybe they consider it as necessary to have this kind of spaces because there is not much green space in this area.

N: Yes, I think there is certainly a need for it. but also in this area you got a real mix of populations. so we've been very lucky that we had good mix of people who have all sorts of different skills that they can bring to the project. whereas you might find in an area that is perhaps more deprived overall. perhaps it wouldn't be quite so easy for them to find people who got all the experience of fundraising, and all these kind of things. (contact fundraiser for background, social ties, where got experience from etc)

A: Why do you consider it necessary to have this particular garden in London?

N: because there is very little green space in this particular corner of islington. so many people just don't get the opportunity.

A: I mean you could just then go to a park, but this is different. This is a community garden. You grow vegetables. so there must be something lese behind that garden.

N: Its different that you.. I mean people like to grow things, people get a great sense of satisfaction out of growing things...

A: You could also grow tulips...

N: Some people grow tulips as well. People grow what they want.

A: There is a great discussion going on in London, as well in other cities about the failures of the conventional food system.

N: Yes, I don't know. Its certainly a fashionable thing growing you own food.

A: it is.

N: I don't know whether people feel they ought to grow vegetables rather than flowers because vegetables have a practical use and flowers don't. some people grow a mixture. I don't know.

A: Okay. What would you estimate the role, or the impact of this garden on the local community?

N: I don't know, maybe I am not the right person to ask. maybe somebody out of the garden. Well, for me as somebody who lives in this area its made a huge difference to my life, not just because of the time that I spend working on it but because I know so many people. And i can just go in the shops and I'll see people and stop and have a chat and before this just did not happen at all. so i think for the people a feeling of community is a huge aspect.

A: And why do you consider that as important or as valuable?

N: Well, you know its nice, isn't it? to know people and to have a good relationship with

people. I mean a lot of people can feel isolated in a big city. having somewhere that they can come and. I mean If you came in here and you sat here and you were eating a sandwich and somebody else comes and chat to you. But if you are in a public park they wouldn't.

A: You said before that the people who are coming here visiting the garden are a certain type of people? Can you characterize these?

N: Not all of them. but predominantly middle class white people.

A: Would you rather love to have people here that are from low income classes as well?

N: Yeah. I mean we . I wouldn't ever wanted to a thing that people felt they couldn't come here because of whatever., their income or race or anything. it is open to anybody and I want people to feel that. and to understand.

A: Why do you feel is that just these white middle class people come to visit the garden?

N: I really don't know. I think its just here, but something that we see throughout British society and its a difficult problem. so we are just going to try address it on a small scale by just getting as many people in here. whether its with the schools that the children come and then they say to their parent s its really nice here.

A: It happened already?

N: It did. yes.

A: And they like it, and come more often? What is their reaction?

N: It is early days to say but certainly we have seen kids coming along at the weekends with their parents and showing them the plots and the greenhouse. things like that.

A: Could you characterize the neighborhood around this CG?

N: Well, its very mixed. we've got some quite big councils estates. but then.... I mean nice houses, some of them are still single houses but lot of them are flats. its quite lot of young professional people who work in the city or whatever.

A: with quite a good income probably?

N: Potentially. But there are some people who have very low incomes.

A: is it mixed as well as to ethnicities?

N: Its fairly mixed. there is big Turkish community. and has been for, since the second WW. It is mixed, this community green prime school just up the road. something like 97..no..incredibly high percentage of children have English as a second language. and most of them get free school meals, which means that their parents income is pretty low.

A: Are there problems with criminals around here?

N: Yeah. Well, if you go that way a little to Dalston which is quite rough. there are gangs, shootings and stabbings and things like that but most of the time luckily you are unaware of those things.

A: Would you personally consider the garden as successful?

N: Yes.

A: Why?

N: Because I think we very much achieved what we set up out to do. And that we've created the space that's beautiful, that people using all plots we have allocated. we have a waiting list. the garden is busy, school groups coming in we have got people coming to workshops we get several hundred people coming to our events. yeah. that's successful.

A: But rather only a certain group of people?

N: Yes, its actually funny that on the big events it tends to be more mixed.

A: Do you have any vision for the future, for the garden?

N: To keep going as we have so far. just to get it busy here really. get more people coming in.

A: Do you have space for that?

N: Not in terms of renting out plots but I mean for example. Okay its school holidays now but it would be nice to have something going on here now. there could be some children holiday workshop. so just keeping it busy everyday really.

A: But why isn't that the case now?

N: Money.

A: Is money always a problem that is present?

N: Oh yeah, definitely. I think we've reached a level where we can cope with, and we can fund what we are doing but to go and do more would need more funding. and you said that you think that you can become more independent from these financial supports.

N: We hope so. we going to try.

A: Is there somebody who is responsible for fundraising?

N: Mania, vice chair who was responsible for our early fundraising. and the rosei who is not a committee member, she has taken over fundraising. felicity is our treasurer.

A: Okay, that's it. Thank you very much.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Interview 1 with Martha, Culpeper, telephone interview, 28 min**

A: How could you secure the endurance of the garden in the beginning?

M: That's a big question it's a lot due to the involvement of local people. And the fact that as it is a community project it has real ... of the people who are involved in and two of our committee members have been in the committee for 20 years. The plot holders take a very active role in the running of the garden which have a lot of benefits and impacts on the endurance in lots of ways. Because by the plots holders and local people ...much of the gardening and the running of the garden and its keeps the costs low. ..tively this is a very low cost project, because they for example, we have an event the members of the garden and the volunteers here started (what's about the event?), so our costs are very low.

A: How could you persuade the Islington council to support you?

M: In the Borough Islington there was very little green space which obviously impacts on how ..and it's very densely populated, so there is a need for more green spaces. And also when the garden was created it was needed (agreed) on the basis that there needs to be public access to this space. So in the sense they were getting another green space. I wasn't involved at this time, so if you need more specifics you have to talk to one of the older committee members.

A: How do you sustain the garden?

M: again a big part of it is down to the input of the local community and volunteers. And the bulk of the work that is carried out here is done by volunteers, and local people who either have a plot or come and help in the garden. That takes care of an surprising amount of things that somebody ...one of the major (?) committee members takes care of the composting . Everything from practical tasks to ...you know even buying tee, things like that is done by local people.

A: also by expert knowledge?

M: Yes, there is expert knowledge in terms of the gardeners here, and then the management committee has specialist skills. So one of the workshop cfb she has good knowledge of .. and another one is a garden (writer) so she has .... So, there is specialist volunteers. Another one is handling some surveying .. so this specialist skills within our management committee and our volunteers which contribute to the running of the garden. And then basically it's two ... members of staff . And we have fundraised, we are primarily grants funded, charity funded.

A: How do you raise the funds?

M: From a variety of charitable trusts, we are not council funded anymore, they cut the funds of the garden about ten years ago. Most ...funding. It's not public service funding. It's charitable trust that is ...givers and some more community based (?)

A: Do you have connections to the fund givers?

M: Not really, because I am quite new, I started in October, and with most funders you do not deal that frequently. With trust funding it is less likely to ...long going funding.

A: Are there any organizations you with together?

M: A lot of our partners are on our website. There is a wide range of partners that we work with. Starting with ... Islington Mind ... then there is the exportation (?) program ...people long term health conditions and we work with the Claremont .. which is primarily older people , we work with the ..lo trust who is and the ... which is (adults?) with learning difficulties ...heel ..which is ...refugees ..cha UK which is children and local schools.

A: Can you specify the collaboration?

M: ..heel have a gardening group here every Friday which provides an amazing meeting point for a very dispersed community of people, they have a barbecue and a fire and they have two plots within the garden. It's a lovely session. We support some garden activities and they meet other people and they cook together. A different person cooks very week it varies with singing songs, this sorts of things.

A: Do you also seek advice, material and tools from these organizations?

M: They wouldn't provide us with tools or anything but if I needed advice on something related to their work, then yes.

A: How do you manage that the garden is so much and diversely frequented?

M: It's a little bit managing (the plots?) and it can be a little bit reactionary. It can be sometimes, when you do not respond to E-Mails ... it can be difficult to stay on top of the ... management because when you are at the garden, then you are very much available and there is lots to do and projects...and it can be difficult to find time to funding, ...more desk bound activities.

A: Comparing your garden to the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, and the King Henry's Walk Garden, I see that the former two are frequented very much and by diverse people, whereas the KHWG is rather devoid of these mixed people and trying to get the whole community involved. How do you do that?

M: Interesting that you noticed that. I think it's down to a lot of factors. The long established nature of Culpeper had more time to make different links with different communities. Our partnership work with organizations gives us links to people who maybe would otherwise not have found the garden. It's a public space so it's open to public, which is very very different dynamics than KHWG which is a closed space. With

Culpeper anyone can come here at pretty much any time. That makes it quite different of how open the place is seen by the ... who come here. I think also the fact that it was started by slightly more diverse people ...

A: How do you get the volunteers involved and how do you lead them ,and motivate them to participate on a regular basis?

M: We advertise with posters and (hang them up?) in the garden. We do not advertise very much though. In terms of empowering (?) people ... so they can have an ownership of the garden when they work here so I make sure that the tasks they are doing are varied ... there is more dealing with the compost and tidy up tasks have to be done on a more regular basis than I would like. With our management committee we bring a lunch for them as well as make sure of how much we appreciate their work. But the ones who really benefit from it and who volunteer ... sustain fashion come to see the effect of their work because gardens are tangible like that. You can see that you are now doing quite well. And people can get a lot of satisfaction from that. The question is also managing quite different needs most of the time, and find tasks that suit different people. When they first come and want to volunteer they are very comfortable in groups. They are not comfortable or confident (as part of) the team. So maybe you will find that person on the street ... can take charge of and another person maybe has difficult situations and the thing is to think quickly what everybody can contribute to the garden. You have this massive different things happening and different tasks ...try and match the person to the tasks... and make sure that everyone knows that they have something to offer, that's a fundamental ethos.

A: Did I understand it correctly that the leadership and management are separated in your garden? You have a management committee who will take care of the administration.

M: No, a little. Our management committee is voluntary so they take on ... but the majority of the reports funds, these things are done by staff. The treasurer... you have special skills, so for example the inputting and the ...manages the finance by staff here , but our treasurer will compile the financial reports for the committee the sent all the data on our income expenditure and prepare those reports . In some specific areas they take on ... functions, but it tends to ... relating to the committee and the functioning of the governance of the garden.

A: Is the governance of the garden democratic and collective decision-making?

M: Yeah, ... and governed by a constitution . we have an annual general meeting quite ...in its legal structure . At the annual general meeting the committee is elected and the committee then elects the chair. It's a simple, but democratic structure.

A: Do you also include the opinions of other volunteers, that are not part of the management committee or member of staff, the gardeners and the neighbors?

M: We try to. In the past we had courtly (?) meetings for members ...at the moment it works at a very informal level, member talk to the workers and we deal with it on a committee level. There is a ... within the committee, that a certain percentage of the committee has to ...holder sof the garden. It is kept quite tight in the sense that the committee are quite involved in the garden. A percentage is present in the garden so it should be possible for members to speak to one of them or to speak to the workers, and they do frequently ...

A: What kind of entity constitutes the Culpeper garden?

M: It's an association, a CG which is a charity. This is an independent organization but

also it is a charity and our funding situation would be very different if that would not be the case. It is very important for the sustainability of the Culpeper that it is a charity, and that it is independent because we would not be able to fundraise in the same way if we would not be a charity and independent.

A: Why is this the case?

M: a lot of trust funding in the UK is not open to...its specifically for charities. if you are not a registered charity there is whole lot of trust funding ...because of your legal structure, and again most funders require ...its very difficult to get funding if you are not a properly constituted organization. The reasons for that are very straight forward. If somebody is giving money they need to know to whom they are giving money. And if you are a bunch of individuals within a steering committee it's actually giving money to the individuals, which is very high risk

A: How do you become an organization?

M: You can form a basic ...with a constitution ...its very simple to set up the constitution and make sure you have the required amount of people for the management committee. The local council for voluntary service generally they help you set one up.

A: How important is the vegetable and herb growing for you? Do you want to raise awareness of the necessity of healthy nutrition and educate?

M: Yes, there is all of this around on the agenda about healthy eating, especially some of the groups I work with do not have good access to fresh and healthy food. This area is a funny one, on one side there are quite some rich houses with big gardens, and on the other sides there are flats with kids that have never seen a lettuce. There is very much healthy eating agenda, there is very much good access to healthy eating and space for growing...local farmers ...Prices for fresh vegetable can be exclusive for some people. So there is that agenda both with the volunteers and the groups that we do but also in terms of our plots holders so they have physical access to growing space. We are not very vocal about our work it for several reasons. The garden is a garden, it's not an allotment and so we do maintain a balance of flowers and vegetables because this garden, I wouldn't say primarily, but it's a space and it's a place that people come to so the environment is very important and that's a lot what people really relate to here, and many people whether they are casual or regular visitors come here for that environment so that green space, for the peace, for the flowers, for that tranquility within a city. The vegetable growing is kind of managed within that. And also because of the amount of visitors we have here ... of vegetables here. So if people grow things like pumpkins there is a possibility that this will be stolen by visitors. I don't think it's a secure enough site for somebody to grow for profit, but because it's for public you couldn't grow a quantity of things, people would stop (?) the harvest.

A: Except provision of green space and food growing are there more aims of the garden?

M: There is a lot about well-being. That's a very big part of what we do in terms of community cohesion. Just the kind of community aspects of work that we do here. While it's one of the most important ... of the garden, and that's about providing a safe space for people to meet, which the garden does a lot in terms of the "key hub". And it's a very simple concept but actually, but it's the simple provision of space and a welcoming environment in which everybody is appreciated is a huge part of what we do and that underpins a lot of what we do with groups about integration, and the social aspects.

A: What does a successful CG mean for you?

M: For me personally this means people taking ownership of the garden, it means the community taking ownership of the garden and that the community is reflective of the community it is in.

A: How do you reach that the community owns the garden?

M: One of the reasons why I am attracted to work here is that the Culpeper manages it at a quite high extent, obviously there is room for improvement. I think the community involvement is really high, community ownership is very high and it does engage with a diverse range of people and it strikes this sometimes very balance between engaging with a very wide range of people and cooperating with quite high needs while maintaining a beautiful garden. It is difficult to answer how this works, but its probably the interaction of people.