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Enabling: A Critical Approach to Transformative Community-Led Design

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ABSTRACT

Enabling : A Critical approach to Transformative Community-Led Design

This thesis was completed as part of a Collaborative Doctoral Award under the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Connected Communities programme between the University of Sheffield and U.K. charity The Glass-House Community-Led Design (TGH). Situated within place-based participatory practices, community-led design, an approach advocated by TGH, has not been explored to a significant degree in academia. Similarly, the practice of enabling participatory built environment design is inherently associated with the concept of empowerment; however, little research has focused on the phenomenon of 'design-enabling' in this context.

What is needed for collective actors to take the lead in developing their design projects? These actors need to embrace design knowledge and group dynamics, but how do the community participants gain the capacity to understand the complex issues of a design project? Moreover, what does this mean for a designer, and how can designers support collective actors in unearthing and enhancing their agency and empowerment?

The research focused on interviews and discourses surrounding community-led design, alongside observations and feedback from four TGH design training workshops. The data revealed conditions, actions, and consequences of the phenomenon of 'design-enabling'. By critically examining the findings in the context of the literature on transformation, empowerment, and critical pedagogies, the need for design enablers to adopt different types of supporting roles (educator, community champion, activist, broker, and mediator) to empower diverse and different community groups within a range of design project settings emerged. By gaining a wider understanding of transformative civic pedagogies and the different levels of empowerment that come with them, enablers can create more resilient participatory approaches, enhancing and expanding a community's contributions to the design process.

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I also want to express my appreciation to the Sheffield School of Architecture, especially my supervisors, Prue Chiles and Dr Rosie Parnell, for all their assistance, reflection, and patience. For guiding me to the 'Enabling' juncture of the investigation, I want to also acknowledge Renata Tyszcuk and Tatjana Schneider's input during my upgrade process, including the suggestion that I focus the research on design enablingas an unexplored avenue within participation.

The Sheffield School of Architecture's doctoral programme gave me a rich doctoral experience by allowing me to explore academic avenues, teach, do complementary research work, and facilitate interesting discourses and debates. It made the journey from practitioner to academic a great and fruitful exploration. I want to thank my PhD cohort members, especially Christine, Elisa, Gloria, Jemima, Marjon, Priya, and Ruxandra, for all their encouragement, wisdom, contemplations, and laughs.

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and love. Matt’s daughters, Nellie and Rosalind, have also allowed me to work hard, have been my cheerleaders, and have brought much joy to my life.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for always believing in me, even when they were told in my last year at primary school that I would be lucky to finish secondary school. Thank you for your endless encouragement, praise, support, and love. This thesis is especially dedicated to the memory of my father, who encouraged me to be curious about learning and teaching. Through your perseverance in teaching me to read in our local library, I got further than people thought possible.

It is also dedicated to Vera Ponjee, whose whirlwind illness and death inspired me to rise to the occasion and finish the thesis. Her warm, compassionate smile and limitless positivity will always be missed. I also dedicate this thesis to Paul Harvey, a talented maker and designer who will be dearly missed as Cave's co-director.

Chris Hale 1944 – 2015

Vera Ponjee 1975 – 2021

Paul Harvey 1983 – 2023

Rebecca Maguire 2023

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Glossary

Agency	In the context of working practices, it is defined as capacities for action. Action or intervention producing a particular effect or result. The capacity of an actor to act in any given environment.
Co-design	An approach to design in which the input of (all) relevant actors and the interests of all stakeholders are taken into account in the design process. As with co-production it indicates an inclusive approach that maintains a dialogue between all relevant actors.
Cooperation	The action or process of working together to the same end. Cooperation implies teamwork.
Collaboration	The action of working with two or more people to create or achieve something as one.[1]
Critical pedagogies	'is that form of education that emerges from critical compassion; a transcendence of the emotional and the intellectual; the heart and mind learn to see and know in new ways. It requires liberation of the mind, courage to act and confidence to connect – autonomy, agency, and alliance—and the beginning of the transformative project lies in simply "extraordinarily experiencing the ordinary" (Shor 1987. P 93)' (Ledwith, 2001).
Empowering	'Bringing into a state of capability to act' (Ashcroft, 1987).
Enabling	Nurturing 'the human agency, values, *capabilities* and capacities necessary to manage uncertainty, act collectively, identify and enact pathways to desired, *sustainable and resilient* futures' (adaptation from Scoones et al., 2020, p. 68, additions are in italics).
Participation	The action of taking part in something or getting involved.
Transformative	Refers to existing things or conditions being changed (profoundly) rather than to entirely new things being created.
Transformative learning	'is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more

[1] A number of these definitions are adapted from 'Words Matter', p. 38–43 in *Enabling the City - Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Encounters in Research and Practice*, eds. Fokdal, J et al. Routledge 2021, developed in collaboration with Prue Chiles.

inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58)'.

Acronyms

AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CIL	community interest levy
CLD	community-led design
CLT	community land trust
CP	critical pedagogies
CPD	continuous professional development
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport, and Regions
DT	Design Training
EDP	Empowering Design Practice research project
HA	housing association
KWMC	Knowle West Media Centre
LA	local authority
NDGB	non-departmental government body (also known as Quango - Quasi Non-Government Organisation)
OU	the Open University
ST	study tour
TGH	The Glass-House Community-Led Design
QS	quantity surveyor

Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to contribute to the theory and practice regarding community participation[2] in the built environment. More specifically it hopes to generate a clearer understanding of the specific knowledge, skills, and requirements which enable communities to become involved in the design process for their own built environment. It does this by exploring the work that the national charity The Glass-House Community-Led Design has done over the past two decades, particularly focusing on the enabling processes used in their design workshops.

The research does not seek to do a historical case study of The Glass-House Community-Led Design (TGH). Instead, it uses TGH's approach as a case study[3] to contextualise design enabling within community participation practices in the built environment. The thesis takes a critical reflective approach towards discovering the conditions, actions, and consequences for the phenomenon of design enabling in the built environment.

This introductory chapter sets out the framework for this collaborative thesis, as well as addresses the significance of the study, the statement of problems, the thesis's contribution to knowledge, and its structure.

1.1 Personal introduction

This thesis has been a 12-year[4] journey of working, studying, and practicing. I applied for the Collaborative Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) award granted to the Architecture School at the University of Sheffield and was successful in 2011. For the next five years, I also continued in a smaller directorial role at our own architectural practice – The Cave Co-operative. Additionally, I was keen to be part of the research and teaching culture of the School of Architecture to make the most of my experience as a PhD student, participating as a tutor in studio projects and reviews. Furthermore, I worked as a facilitator on a large transdisciplinary Solar-Futures project at the University, taking on an early enabling role.[5]

[2] Throughout the thesis I use the term (community) engagement to cover all forms of involvement of lay people or communities in the spatial design process. There is a plethora of terms used through the planning and design literature that could be used: involvement, consultation, engagement, collaboration, co-design, etc. However, there is no single definition for any of these. I use the term (community/ transformative) participation to indicate practices where people, community or organisations have more active involvement in the engagement process.

[3] See the methodology (Section 4.2) for further details.

[4] During my journey I took two separate year-long leaves of absence due to personal circumstances and bereavement.

[5] This research has been written about by Prue Chiles (Chiles et al., 2020) in the chapter Place and Space of Power p.

As I became more involved with TGH, I was invited to participate in several of the collaborative research projects they were doing with the Open University. Through these connections I became a part-time research associate on the Empowering Design Practices research project[6] in 2015, moving to a full-time role in 2018. Since 2020, I have taken on a full-time design lectureship at the Open University and have become co-investigator on the latest collaborative research project between TGH and the Design Group at the Open University.

Having a foot in practice gave me access to an apprenticeship model in which I learnt best. In particular, my current role at Open University very much felt like learning-by-doing and has boosted my confidence in becoming a researcher. Research is sometimes a messy process of learning, unlearning, re-learning, evaluating, and reflecting. This reality and the duration of my research have enabled me to develop more fully the opportunities and to look at the findings with a deeper, more insider reflection and broader scope of acquired knowledge. Going forward, what I have taken from my research is my understanding of and enthusiasm for enabling as a practice – more specifically as a practice to support and transform informal participatory workshop settings. The findings of this research might not yet convey all that I have learnt, but I look forward to further developing these practices in the future.

1.2 Framework of and players in this collaborative thesis[7]

AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award

In June 2011, TGH,[8] along with the Bureau – design + research (BD+R) in the School of Architecture at Sheffield University, were successfully awarded an AHRC funded Collaborative Doctoral Award, with the subject of research being community-led design. This award is part of the AHRC's Connected Communities' programme.[9]

49–63 in *Enabling the City - Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Encounters in Research and Practice*. eds. Fokdal et al. Routledge 2021.

[6] Since 2020 I have been a lecturer in design at the school of design at the Open University

[7] Some of the text from Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5 have been published in a book chapter, Hale V. (2018). Good Places Through Community-Led Design. In: Zaman Q., Troiani I. (eds) *Transdisciplinary Urbanism and Culture. The Urban Book Series*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-55855-4_13. Copyright approval has been obtained, September 2021.

[8] From here on The Glass-House Community Led Design is only referred to as The Glass-House to differentiate between the actual notion of community-led design and the association with the charity's name The Glass-House Community Led Design.

[9] Connected Communities is a cross-research council research programme, led by the AHRC. Their vision is 'to mobilise the potential for increasingly inter-connected, culturally diverse, communities to enhance participation, prosperity, sustainability, health, and well-being by better connecting research, stakeholders, and communities' (Arts & Humanities Research Council, 2012).

Collaborative doctoral research is an effective way to locate knowledge within industry, 'where practice informs theory and theory informs practice' (TGH, 2012). It can help practitioners put their work into theoretical and academic frameworks, gain further understanding of their approaches, and develop and expand their knowledge. Therefore, the results can have a more direct impact on society as the dissemination of knowledge takes place not only in academia but also in the 'real' world, where it can be applied in more immediate settings. The main objective of the collaborative research was therefore to investigate the practices of TGH and to establish the value and benefits of enabling, not just for the community but also for professional stakeholders involved in the community-led design process (Hale, 2018).

The collaborative stakeholders

There are three main stakeholders within the thesis: TGH, BD+R, and me. The main collaboration has been between TGH – more specifically Sophia de Sousa, the director of TGH – and me, the doctoral student, with Prue Chiles and Rosie Parnell as my thesis supervisors at the University of Sheffield. Prue Chiles was also the director of BD+R at the time and became Chair of Trustees at TGH in 2016.

TGH is a national U.K. charity that 'supports community participation and leadership in the design of the built environment' and champions the design of great places as a 'reality for everyone' (TGH, 2012; De Sousa & Hale, 2013).[10] Through workshops, events, bespoke services, and courses, they help community groups and other built environment stakeholders gain knowledge and skills to better understand the design process. One of their key missions is to inspire and mobilise community groups to take ownership of future design changes that affect their day-to-day lives in their surrounding built environment.[11] TGH began in 1999 as a project commissioned by The Glass-House Trust in collaboration with the Architecture Foundation and the National Communities Resource Centre (NCRC; TGH, 2012). The aim of the project was to help community groups take an active role in design decisions about changes made to their local environment and explore what effect the built environment has on their quality of life. TGH registered as a charity in April 2006; since then, they have continued to work with community groups and professionals to make positive contributions to the built environment (TGH, 2012).

[10] Conference proceedings of the places conference at East London University: in 2012. Putting People in Their Place- The value of great placemaking, co-written with Sophia de Sousa.
[11] See the Glass-House website (https://www.theglasshouse.org.uk), which discusses their objectives.

At the inception of TGH project, a small group of external designers helped establish and develop initial workshops and resource materials. These designers included Urbed, Fluid, Sense of Place, and BD+R.

BD+R was a research consultancy established in 2002 at the University of Sheffield School of Architecture. Their objective was to raise the profile of architectural design within the built environment both within and outside of the University of Sheffield. They had built up a reputation for community-led design and the design of learning environments, working mainly in the Yorkshire region with local authorities, development trusts, housing associations, and community groups. Prue Chiles was at the helm of BD+R with Leo Care until her departure from Sheffield University in 2014. In 2014 BD+R evolved into Live Works.[12] Live Works continues to work in and outside of the University of Sheffield to give the larger community access to architectural teaching and design and to encourage local participation in the built environment (Live Works, 2018).

I was selected as a doctoral student coming from a practice-based background rather than an academic background, having worked as an architect for more than a decade. When I started my thesis in 2011, I was one of the founding directors of the architectural practice, The Cave Co-operative (Cave), which was established in 2008.[13] Cave is structured as a sustainable architectural co-operative, which focuses not only on environmental issues but also looks to address social and economic issues of sustainability in the development of the built environment. Cave champions projects that involve the local community, creating surroundings which clients can enjoy and which function well for users, the larger community, and the local environment.

The most important aspect of my own architectural practice is the interaction between the designer and clients, users, and the wider community. I see the design process as a process that involves working together with clients and communities, to understand people's needs and then turning these into design solutions, enabling an empowering experience for both the clients and the designer. This type of design engagement introduces new ways of looking at challenges that can create solutions that bring out previously overlooked opportunities and potential in a project. Designs of this type should help facilitate a bespoke harmony, orchestrated by the clients or users themselves, who eventually become the occupants or custodians of the project.

[12] http://live-works.org/

[13] I left my role as a director of the Cave Co-operative in August 2016.

These encounters continue to inspire and teach me – as a practitioner and now also as a researcher – how participants in the design process interact with each other and collectively affect the environment.

In addition to working in practice, in 2015 I became a part-time research associate at the Open University. This turned into a full-time research associate affiliation in January 2018. The position was based working on the AHRC funded Empowering Design Practices (EDP) research project,[14] which is one of several research collaborations between the Open University and TGH. Alongside my doctoral work, this role has given me the opportunity to develop my skills as a researcher and become a more reflective practitioner both as an academic and as a designer.

Being part of the EDP research project was an additional research apprenticeship alongside my PhD. It helped develop my confidence as a researcher, which, as a novice PhD student, was sometimes lacking. Additionally, the project opened the doors to working with 50+ places of worship and over 60+ workshops. It helped develop my experience of different enabling approaches and has become part of my reflective learning.

[14] https://www.empoweringdesign.net. Additionally, see Appendix B for a more detailed description of EDP.

1.3 The significance of the study

In the past, Cave has been part of several community engagement projects that did not always turn out as anticipated. Some of the projects did not engage stakeholders but merely offered information after the design had already been developed; alternatively, some project events were not well attended or only attended by vociferous 'not in my back yard' (NIMBY) groups, and sometimes the events only led participants in a certain direction. These experiences highlight some of the difficulties and challenges of community engagement. This was one of the motivators for doing this particular research project for my PhD – to link practice back to theory – thereby developing and strengthening my own practice.

Additionally, over the last decade, there has been a growing interest within (local) government in community engagement for design and place-making, with the passage of some legislation in the UK, such as the Localism Act (2011),[15] that supports planning procedures that actively incorporate community interests and opinions. Recent government guidance suggests:

> 'Communities can effectively shape both design policies and development through a collaborative process of meaningful participation. Early engagement and linking engagement activities to key stages of design decision-making and plan-making can empower people to inform the vision, design policies, and design of schemes.
>
> Engagement activities offer an opportunity to work collaboratively with communities to shape better places for local people. They consider how to embed empowerment, capacity building and employability opportunities for local people and organisations throughout the design process.'[16]

It does seem that the government has developed these relevant 'self-help'[17] approaches to transition from a welfare provision to giving communities and people the opportunity to engage in the construction of the built environment surrounding them (Williams and Windebank, 2001). Groups wanting to develop a project seem to

[15] The Localism Bill obtained Royal Assent on 15th November 2011. Part 5 and 6, Community Empowerment and Planning, respectively, address the increased opportunities for communities to play a part in their direct built environment through tools such as the Assets of Community Value scheme and the Neighbourhood Plan.
[16] Government guidance on Design: Process and tools, Para: Effective community engagement on design, from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, updated 1 October 2019, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 26-019-20191001)
[17] With Self-Help is meant activities and methods that have not been supported or informed by support organisations, design or community practitioners, or professionals. A perceived Do it yourself method, leaving it to the community groups to figure out by themselves how to progress.

be 'left to their own devices to delve into the world of design' and planning, which is difficult for 'professionals at the best of times' (Hale, 2018). So how can these groups be best supported to navigate the complexities of the design world and are able take a lead in the design of the built environment that influences their lives?

Funds are required to develop the skills and tools needed for the community to become a valued stakeholder at the design and development table. Budgets need to account for the additional time needed to properly engage with the broader community. However, these resources which require extra funds may represent a greater risk from a developer's perspective. Why should developers pay for and invest in such engagement when their interest lies in high short-term gains? What is the added value behind broader community participation in the built environment?

The term participation is used in different fields – from development work, education, and health care settings to civic budgeting, planning, and design, with many practitioners and professionals in fact subscribing to it use more readily. Today, community engagement and participation in the built environment are 'not only seen as desirable, but it has also become an essential part of project development and a moral right' (Robinson et al., 2005). Even so, the discourse surrounding participation is not without its detractors and critics. One of the main arguments against its use is the reduction of participation to just a technical approach without the required ideological underpinnings to effectively implement it within a field of interest (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). Even politics has subscribed to it by setting up Big Society, the Localism Act, and Neighbourhood Plans as self-help approaches to move away from welfare provision, supposedly giving people and communities the means to help themselves (Williams and Windebank, 2001). This prompts the following question: where should the support and funding for this self-help strategy come from? This has at times been perceived as solely a governmental responsibility.

At the start of the new Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010, one of the key pledges made was to cut government spending to reduce national debt. On 14th October 2010, at the start of the coalition between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, it was decided that 192 quangos[18] had to be reduced or culled from government financial support.[19] This included several place-making and housing quangos such as the Commission for Architecture and the

[18] Quangos are 'quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations'. Another term used in political discourse is non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs). They are not part of government but assist and support in government processes and are sometimes overseen at an arm's length by ministerial departments (Wiki – May 2019).
[19] https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/sep/29/guide-to-quangos

Built Environment (CABE), the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit, and several regional development agencies. Due to the dismantling of support for these civic and social support organisations, the financial provisions for quangos to support communities to effect changes in their built environment have dwindled considerably. With limited funding available, how these funds are best used to empower communities to continue their involvement in the development of their built environment has become more important.

However, communities require skills and tools to become valued stakeholders at the design table. Therefore, additional finances must be budgeted for the extra time that is required to properly engage with communities, thereby making sure that public and civic projects move forward from informing, consulting, and placating forms of design participation towards actual partnerships and even community-led developments. One of the objectives of the thesis is to examine how participation can be facilitated more effectively in a funding landscape that has become restricted and depleted.

Community involvement and its benefits

On 15 November 2011, just after I began my PhD, the U.K. government enacted the Localism Act, which distributed power and control over development and regeneration to local authorities and communities. Due to the de-centralisation of power, as stated within the act, it has become paramount for both professionals and communities to define how best to utilise and optimise the limited opportunities presented by the act.

Community engagement within the built environment is nothing new; consultations, as they are known, have been around since the 1960s. The urban white paper by the Department of Environment, Transport, and Regions (DETR) in 2000 was wide-ranging in proposing and capturing some of the potential benefits of community engagement: empowering people, strengthening communities, better public services, and making regeneration sustainable (00:/, 2011; Local Economy, 2005). Other case studies have shown how community engagement and governance can create social cohesion and economic stability in local areas.

The many opportunities that community participation can offer the design process must be highlighted; it can offer practitioners insight into local areas, it can generate new ideas, and, therefore, it can even help people identify issues that they had not considered. One of Cave's own experiences of community engagement was at Hackney City Farm, where co-founder Liz Crisp was assisting a strawbale

construction. The city farm needed an extension and chose to recruit local youth offenders to serve as young apprentices in the construction phase of the project. They would come to the farm for training and help on the strawbale construction, equipping them with skills that would result in future opportunities. It was not anticipated that vandalism at the farm would decrease dramatically as a direct result of the participation of these young people. As the youth groups that participated in the project were proud of their efforts, they warded off others that might have considered vandalising the site. This is just one example; a whole range of direct and indirect benefits attributed to community involvement has been documented (Local Economy, 2005).

Some of the benefits discussed in the DETR paper are directly quantifiable, such as better public services. Measuring whether there has been an increase in public transportation or an increase in refuse collection is easy. However, what are the assessment parameters to measure empowered people, strengthened communities, or social cohesion? How can the success of a project be ascertained if some of the benefits are indirect qualitative benefits? These are hard-to-measure criteria that funders, grant bodies, and policymakers want to observe before they can acknowledge the benefits and offer continued and increased support for community participation in the design process.

Community-led design

One way to navigate the reduced funding for community participation is to enable the community to lead the design process themselves and to work with design professionals without the continued assistance of facilitators or mediators that handhold them through the process. Nevertheless, what does it mean to enable? Enabling is linked to concepts of participation, co-design, and participation in the built environment (Alexiou and Zamenopoulos, 2019; Granath et al., 1996; Hamdi, 1991). It involves providing the resources that people can use to 'open doors and create opportunities to build' their own neighbourhoods (Hamdi, 2010). Thus, when discussing how to enable people, communities, and organisations to take part in the design process, it is about identifying mechanisms and processes that can encourage the above-mentioned stakeholders to effectively take part in the design process.

This is the approach that TGH champions; they use 'enablers' to educate community groups about design using short participatory workshops and support activities. In effect, a design enabler translates the design process to the community to increase community members' skills and confidence, thereby empowering communities to

shape their own places with the help of an architect or designer. This thesis examines the role design practitioners can play in empowering communities to be more informed and valued stakeholders in the design process.

In 2011 TGH described community-led design as:

> 'an approach that puts local people at the heart of making changes to their neighbourhoods. We use the term "community-led design" to refer to projects to create or improve buildings, spaces, homes, and neighbourhoods that are; led and project-managed by a community group or organisation or led by a local authority, developer, registered social landlord or other organisation that effectively involves local people in the decision-making process.
>
> For any community-led design project, we would expect community involvement to be an ongoing process throughout the development of the project. Community-led design projects involve local people in developing a collective vision for change, developing a design brief informed by local knowledge, making decisions throughout the evolution of the design process, signing off key stages of the design.'[20]

Using this definition of 'community-led design' suggests that the concept falls under the more progressive forms of participation, beyond a tokenistic[21] means of involvement. It is the joint use of the words 'community', 'led', and 'design' which is key. 'Community-led', instead of 'community-participated' or 'community-engaged', design emphasises the community's prominent role, centring the community and giving it more influence in how and what decisions are being made. The enabling methodology used by TGH educates the community about design and the design process so that they can be an effective stakeholder. This involves making the required architectural knowledge more accessible so that the communities can better understand what the design process is about, thereby becoming valued partners in the design process of their built environment. This thesis assumes that a better understanding of what it takes to effectively enable community participants can improve participatory approaches, which then better empower groups. This research hopes to better equip professionals, teachers, and policymakers to analyse design

[20] Cited from the writings of Sophia de Sousa in her collaborative paper 'The Value of Placemaking' and the About Us section on www.theglasshouse.org.uk at the time. However, In 2015 TGH changed its definition in response to the way language was being used in the field of placemaking and set out its on its website. They wanted to distinguish between projects led by communities and those to which they were invited to take part.

[21] Term used by Arnstein (1969) in her 'Ladder of participation'. See the literature review for a more detailed description of Arnstein's Ladder of participation (1969).

participation, including what works, as well as how and why it works. The thesis aims to examine the enabling of the communities and what this process requires so that community stakeholders can become more effective partners at the design table and remain a constructive asset throughout lengthy design processes.

1.4 The role of the enabler in community-led design

One of the initial research objectives in this project was to give context and analysis to TGH and their approaches, which could then provide case studies and resources for architects and communities alike. Nevertheless, through the literature review, it became clear that there were already quite a few scholarly resources on community engagement within the built environment that were based on case studies and resources for architects or communities. Enabling approaches, which constitute the main method which TGH uses to build capacity, are less documented.

A chance meeting in June 2012, a collective supervisory meeting with Prue Chiles, Rosie Parnell, Rebecca Maguire, and Sophia de Sousa, supported this observation.[22] Chiles had invited the architects of one of TGH's projects for a lunchtime meeting, during which we spoke about some of the projects they had enabled for TGH; they then became the architects who further designed and developed the projects. Reflecting on the conversation with the architects, de Sousa, Chiles, and I were struck by how the disparate parts of the conversation had converged on the role of the practitioner within the participation process – the enabling role so to speak – and what the implications for design and the design process were. It seemed that the architects had little to no understanding of effective community-led design, the role of the designer in participatory practice, or TGH enabling methodology.

Knowledge transfer

TGH's approaches and activities have clearly changed over time; however, one of their ongoing key activities is their Design Training. Buildings by Design, Places by Design, Homes by Design, Spaces by Design and Neighbourhoods by Design are short participatory workshops that help community groups gain knowledge and confidence in the design process. The workshops are held over two consecutive days, with resource materials, lectures, and activities to educate a delegate group from a community that is at the beginning of a design project. In addition to the participating representative group gaining skills and knowledge, the underlying principle is that they can put their newfound skills into practice by re-doing some – if not all – of the activities again with a larger group in their own locality or user group. In doing so, they can spread the knowledge throughout the community beyond the group and develop their ideas further, grounded in the needs and wants of the larger community. This expansion of skills and knowledge can improve the capacity to act

[22] Rebecca Maguire was the initial external supervisor from TGH, a role that Sophia de Sousa took over in June 2012 after Maguire's departure from TGH in July 2012.

by including a larger group of people in the locality of the project, enhancing their opportunity and ability to lead their project, and increasing a sense of ownership in the larger community. However, in a rich, participatory architectural process, what are the requirements for effective knowledge transfer so that the community can become active participants? What knowledge and skills should designers transfer to the community so that community members can better understand the design process and make active decisions on their designs?

The need for the above question to be asked is highlighted in Jenkins and Forsyth's study in 'Architecture, Participation, and Society' (2009). In their in-depth study on the role of the architect in participation and society and their recommendations for further studies, they specifically addressed the need for clarification on the mechanisms of knowledge transfer between the designer and the community.

> 'There is a need for research that examines the nature of direct participation in current architecture projects, including community-based client bodies and urban regeneration projects, to understand the level and form of participation of users and wider social groups. This research should investigate good practice beyond the range of that investigated in the case studies in the scoping project.
>
> Another necessary area of research is one that focuses on mechanisms for architecture practices to engage more actively in accessing generic information of relevance to practice, post-completion feedback on practice and the development of other forms of relevant design inputs from practice, as well as mechanisms for transfer of such knowledge (i.e., the indirect forms of wider user-oriented participation; Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009, p. 166–167).'

From guiding and signposting to empowering

As a concept empowerment was articulated in the 70s and 80s, predominantly in the fields of community psychology, action anthropology, and social work (Fetterman, 1994; Rappaport, 1987). One of the key figures in the development of the term empowerment, Rappaport described it as a process where people, communities, and organisations gain understanding and control over their affairs. Nevertheless, empowerment itself has been a debated term in both theory and practice, similar to the critique of participation, as it is seen as not 'radical enough' to effect institutional powers and it does not sufficiently consider the required 'time, space, place, and context' (Tisdall, 2013). Even though the term can be debated, it has inspired the practices of TGH. Since its inception in 1999, the empowerment of the community to

initiate, lead, or be a valued part of the design process has been essential.[23] The different TGH approaches do this by clarifying the design process and giving them tools and skills so that they can explain and motivate their ideas.

However, who should be educated to become a part of the process? It would be impossible to have all end users and everyone from the larger community trained and engaged in the process. Therefore, TGH works with a representative group; this can be a steering group within a community organisation or a gathered group of interested parties that have a design project for which they want to facilitate progress. Generally, the groups get in touch with TGH themselves. Having already formed a community of interest, these groups generally possess sufficient agency to want to move their project forward.

Since many different resources – both online and in print – are available to community groups seeking to develop project ideas and increase involvement, what makes a workshop or training more than just a signposting exercise? What does an enabling framework need to entail to make the enabling process effective, nurture empowerment, and increase agency for individuals and the stakeholder group? Similarly, how can a project that has a design enabling approach that is as inclusive and representative as possible incorporate the silent voices of minorities in the area or people unable to participate due to mobility, social, or economic barriers? In an era with less funding – and, thus, time – it must be recognised that supporting community groups efficiently and effectively has become more important.

Practitioners as enablers

Considerable factors such as preconceptions, the leading nature of the consultation, or less meaningful statutory involvement may influence the outcomes of engagement (00:/, 2011). It is essential to question by whom and for whom consultations are conducted. What role can practitioners play in community engagement to make it more effective and transformative? How do these actions influence the involvement of the community in getting the most out of short-term intervention workshops? One of TGH's objectives is to increase agency and empowerment for the participants through one or two short design support activities. How can enablers foster resilience and unlock the energy and confidence required for individuals and the representative group to continue their empowerment journey in such a short span of time? This

[23] From an interview with Barbara Watson, project manager at Trafford Hall, the headquarters of the National Communities Resource Centre and the initial location for TGH courses.

research investigates these questions and uncovers deeper insights into the phenomenon of design enabling and its influence on the role of the architect.

1.5 The research questions

The research focuses on the role of the design practitioner as an enabler by investigating the enabling methods and methodology used by TGH in community-led design, with the aim of generating a clearer understanding of the specific knowledge, skills, and requirements needed for more effective community participation in the design process through enabled design support.

The research explores the **conditions, actions, and consequences** for design enabling. The main research question is as follows: **'What is an effective design enabling approach for community-led design?'** This is explored and further partitioned into the following sub-questions:

A. What are the **conditions** for a community member or group to start taking part in a design process?
B. What **actions** does an enabler need to take to make the community member or group an active participant in the design process?
C. What are the **consequences** of having a well-enabled community-led design process for the community and the project?
D. What do these conditions, actions, and consequences mean for the **role of the design enabler** in community-led design processes?

1.6 Scope of the thesis

The initial goal of this collaborative research was to establish the value of community-led design. In the first year of determining the scope of the research, it became clear that this might not be the way forward. During deliberations in the upgrade process, it seemed advantageous to examine the initial findings differently. The Debate Series was rich, and the notion of enabling participation had not been investigated much. Therefore, the thesis moved from conducting a normative case study on TGH to a case study focusing on design enabling.

Over the last 12 years, the pace of my PhD programme has ebbed and flowed due to personal and professional reasons. One of these reasons was that, in addition to my collaboration with TGH on the PhD, I expanded my working relationship with TGH by becoming a research associate at the Open University (OU) working on the AHRC's Connected Communities-funded Empowering Design Practices project in 2015. Nevertheless, this thesis would have had a different contribution to knowledge if it had been finished earlier due to the distance and continued development of the reflective processes. Putting distance between the data and myself was beneficial, allowing me to simultaneously observe more closely the practices of TGH and how the theory impacted practice through their workshops. The pace of my studies has therefore enriched the data with practice-informed theory since I worked and practised alongside TGH for the last decade.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This introductory chapter, **Chapter 1,** establishes the framework for this thesis, as well as the significance of the study, the statement of problems, and the structure of the thesis. **Chapter 2** then introduces TGH, its inception, and some of its formative approaches over the last two decades.

Chapter 3, the literature review, situates the research within the context of different theories and explorations. It discusses aspects of community participation in the built environment, more specifically examining critical pedagogies, transformation, and empowerment. **Chapter 4** focuses on the methodology used for the research. It explores epistemology, research strategy, data collection, and data analysis methods.

Chapter 5, 'Enabling community-led design', is a dataset that is based on a Debate Series on the theme of community-led design and its meaning. The themes that emerged were not new in the community participation debate, yet, when asked to discuss community-led design, the speakers and audience converged on specific themes that they felt were part of enabling communities to lead the design development of the built environment. Consequently, this chapter shows the conditions, actions, and consequences of community-led design. Moreover, it stands to reason that emerging themes must be considered to better understand the design enabling phenomenon.

The dataset of **Chapter 6** explores what the consequences, actions, and conditions for design enabling and its enablers are through interviews with TGH enablers, observations from TGH's main educational workshop for communities, the Design Training, and fieldnotes I took during the thesis as an architect and researcher.

Finally, **Chapter 7** concludes the thesis by describing its contribution to knowledge. It summarises the findings of what an effective design enabling approach to support community-led design is.

Chapter 2 The Glass-House Community Led Design

This chapter gives an overview of The Glass-House (TGH), its inception, and its evolution over the last two decades. This chapter has come about through several interviews with Sophia de Sousa, Chief Executive of TGH since 2005; Barbara Watson, Training Manager at Trafford Hall[24] 2006–2012; Rebecca Maguire, Head of Programmes at TGH 2009–2012; and Alex Sainsbury, Founder, Chair of the Board of Trustees for TGH Trust (since 1993) and trustee of TGH (since 2006); as well as de Sousa served as editing advisor for this chapter. The information that this chapter provides was also supported by information from the TGH website (from 2012 to 2023), along with observations and conversations over the years from working alongside TGH as a postgraduate research student and research associate.

2.1 TGH's positionality

This section provides an overview of the context in which TGH emerged. This is by no means a comprehensive historic analysis,[25] as that was not within the scope of this research; however, the section surveys some of the international and national planning and urban development and policies that have influenced the inception and direction of TGH and its activities.

A pluralistic turn in planning policy

The practice of participatory practises in planning and design started at a similar time in North America and Europe, as a response to the myriad of problems that had been identifies within the urban context at both sides of the Atlantic (Maginn, 2007). Maginn (2007) noted that a 'pluralistic turn' can be identified within urban regeneration policy from the 1960s onward. One of the main starting points of this 'turn' in the UK was the *Urban Programme* in 1968 (Maginn, 2007). This new era followed the developments of the Community Design Centres (CDCs) by the American Institute of Architects in North America in the late 1960s (Awan et al., 2011; Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009; Luck, 2018). These CDCs provided pro-bono

[24] Trafford Hall was where TGH start off as a project to deliver design training.

[25] For further reading on the development of participatory practices over the decades, please see Maginn's book *An Ethnographic Approach to Urban Regeneration and Community Power* (2004); Chapter 3 gives a comprehensive overview of planning policies that influence participatory practices in urban and tenancy development over the decades. For historical and architectural context, please read Jones, Petrescu, and Till's edited book *Architecture and Participation* (2005) and Jenkins and Forsyth's book *Architecture, Participation and Society* (2009), specifically, Section 1: Chapters 2, 3, and 4, give important insights on the UK's national and international backdrop of architectural participatory practices from the 1960s onward. Awan, Schneider, and Till's book *Spatial Agency* (2011) details a number of spatial agents that have had community-initiated practices and projects over the last few decades, including TGH, highlighting the context of organisations and individuals in which TGH is situated.

design services in partnership with university architecture departments or civic organisations that offered a range of design services to non-profit organisations developing projects in their local areas (Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009; Luck, 2018). Within CDCs' partnership with universities, students had the chance to work on 'live projects' (active, real-life projects) and gain experience, whilst communities were given design support and ideas – even full-fledged plans. This type of design support continues today in the UK, with the Sheffield School of Architecture LiveWorks, the University of West England's *Hands-on-Bristol,* and others like it still offering design support to community groups every year as part of their curriculum.

In addition to the government-funded community support and regeneration efforts of the 1960s and 1970s, the development of more pluralistic approaches to urban development also gave rise to civic and community development, such as *Planning for Real* by Tony Gibson in 1977 (Gibson, 2008). *Planning for Real* is an approach for communities to learn how to develop their own built environment and that continues today and was used by TGH in the past. This surge in pluralistic approaches was followed by a more financially neoliberalist free market approach in the Reagan/Thatcher era of government during the 80s and 90s, which focused on managerialism by fostering urban entrepreneurship and privatisation (Maginn, 2007).

Agenda 21

During the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, an UN event where member states came together to collaboratively tackle sustainability issues that were too complex to tackle individually, a pluralistic approach was set into policy on a global level. Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 (A21), an action plan regarding sustainable development (one of the documents to arise from the summit), urged 'local authorities' to engage members of their constituencies in a dialogue to facilitate more holistic sustainable development. 'Local Agenda 21' (LA21) could be seen as participatory reform on an international level, as it was adopted by the International Environmental Agency for Local Governments (Turner, 1997). LA21 was unique as it was created at the 'supra-national' level, implemented at the time by more than 6,400 local authorities in 113 countries (Coenen, 2009 p. 165).

This dialogue sought a new participatory approach, through 'mobilising political, business and popular support' the idea is to move away from the traditional ways of communication between local authorities and all local stakeholders could move beyond existing or traditional community consultations (Freeman, 1996) to improve local ownership and links to important policies (Coenen, 2009; Freeman, 1996).

However, as Coenen (2009) highlighted, Agenda 21 gave little insight into how local communities could engage with their Local Agenda 21 context. One of the key challenges was that the different commitment levels of democratisation and empowerment for each local stakeholder (e.g., individuals, communities, businesses, third sector organisations) needed to be addressed in the context of each local area, requiring different methods and methodologies to assist with the formulation of future policy (Freeman, 1996). For example, in the UK, LA21 was launched at a time of increasing complexity in national and local government (Freeman, 1996), making it harder for bottom-up initiatives to have a clear picture of where they could get involved. Following a two-decade-long Conservative hold on government in the footsteps of Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21 came the 'Third Way' approach of the 1990s, endorsed by Clinton in the US and by Tony Blair's new Labour government in the UK in the 2000s. Blair's version was based on Anthony Giddens *The Third Way* (Giddens, 1998; Swyngedouw et al., 2000). Giddens promoted a new way of looking at politics with a focus on governing from the centre, seeing that division politics was outmoded.

Inception of The Glass-House

With a New Labour government at the helm, there were new funding opportunities available. Key for the inception of TGH, there were new funding streams for capacity-building projects and the rise of numerous non-governmental development bodies to support communities on varying matters and needs within the design and development of the built environment, which helped promote participatory practices.

TGH project was conceived and initiated by TGH Trust, one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts, in the mid to late-1990s at a transitional moment in social housing; it was an initiative of Alex Sainsbury. Due to the change in government, there was a shift in focus and dwindling social housing provision due to the social housing stock transfer of the 80s and 90s, with many newly formed housing associations staking out new roles looking after the local government housing stock. At the time, the objective of the TGH project was twofold: 1) empowering tenants to become a stronger group, able to design, define, and decide their lived environment and 2) showing that modern architecture could benefit housing, advocating modern building projects and good building standards such as Parker Morris standards.

TGH project developed as Alex Sainsbury developed an interest in architecture in the civic realm and questioned the experience of social housing and how TGH Trust could become involved. During this time, he met Ricky Burdett at the Architecture

Foundation. At that time the Architecture Foundation were hosting, among other things, in-house debates about architecture for architects with a general focus on modern architecture. This focus changed when Lucy Musgrove took over at the Architecture Foundation (AF), as it took on an advocacy role in the built environment and social housing, following the success of the Architecture Centre Networks that began in 1996. This led to AF setting up a tender in late 1999, funded by TGH Trust, to support housing associations, which had become responsible for social housing provision around the UK, in their efforts to engage with their tenants.

At this time the National Tenants Resources Centre, now known as the National Communities Resource Centre (NCRC), which was based at Trafford Hall (TH) near Chester, was 'enabling' tenant groups on different levels to be more empowered and assume more ownership of their places. With the newly available AF funding, TH tendered to offer architectural design support to their tenants' groups. This led to TGH project being conceived in 1999 as an action research project led by the AF in partnership with the then-National Tenants Resources Centre (TGH, 2012)[26]. In 2005, The Glass-House Trust and the TGH project team decided to set up an independent charity, that would launch as The Glass-House Community Led Design in 2006. The charity was and continues to be supported with core funding from The Glass-House Trust, with further supported through research funding, project support, commissions, and other grant earnings.

Localism Act

The eventually somewhat tarnished 'Third Way' approach[27] was disbanded over the following decade by the new Conservative government, which led to dwindling funding for spatial design support for communities. For example, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) was a charity that offered services similar to TGH (which engaged in consultancy and collaborations with CABE), in supporting community groups in the design of projects they were involved in or wanted to initiate. They had a substantial enabler bank of spatial design professionals

[26] Alex Sainsbury mentioned some key players who got the process started. Martha Weitsch conducted the first survey at TH, set up the tender, and conducted the initial research. She focused on best practices and was vital in easing access to the course. Steve Wyler worked at Locality and was active in putting housing on the pollical agenda. He was a key player in the transition of TGH Trust and as an advisor for the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust and other grant-making organisations, lending support to Cameron's conservative manifesto, Big Society. As for the workshops that were being held at TH, Alex Sainsbury joined the board at TH in 2006, when TGH itself achieved charitable status.

[27] Swyngedouw claimed the Third Way approach was doomed to failure in its attempt to reinstall a sense of 'national identity and pride within new cultures and economic order of the 21st century', due to its attempts to amalgamate national interests within a still neoliberalist lens of a privatised economy (Swyngedouw et al., 2000).

that were paid to support communities in the design process. However, after the Public Bodies Review (Warmann, 2011) and the Comprehensive Spending Review (Building.co.uk, February 2011, n.d.) in 2011, CABE was asked to merge with the Design Council, who itself had just had their non-departmental government body (NDGB – also known as quangos) status removed, along with being forced to reduce their 50 staff by 40% due to reduced funding (Bury, 2011). CABE funding went from £11.6 million to £2.75 million; by 2013 it had to be self-funded and was only able to take 20 staff (16%) over to the Design Council (Building.co.uk, February 2011, n.d.)[28].

The Bonfire of the Quangos[29] in 2010 was followed by the Localism Bill becoming law in November 2011. This policy encouraged community participation in the built environment to the extent that it included the National Planning Policy Framework,[30] with neighbourhoods having the opportunity to design their own local areas. However, this new opportunity came with little government-funded design support to tackle the wicked problem[31] that is a design process.[32]

Localism Act 2011 was an extensive white paper consisting of 10 parts, ranging from financial regulations to compulsory acquisition. The four sections that pertain to 'the Big Society' in the context of the built environment are:

- Local government: New freedoms and flexibilities for local government.
- Community empowerment: New rights and power for local communities.
- Planning: reform of the planning system to make it clearer, more democratic, and more effective.

[28] This led to a database of TGH design enablers of spatial designers who still wanted to support communities. However due to de reduced funding landscape to support community groups, not many had the chance to support communities through work at TGH. Looking at the Design Council at present (2023), there is no distinct Architectural or Built Environment development arm anymore, and it has now merged with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (REF) to focus on a more research-focused action, deliberation, and outreach.

[29] On 14th October 2010 at the start of the coalition between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, it was decided that 177 quangos were abolished from government financial support, with a further 94 under scrutiny, 4 being privatised, and 129 being merged. £50 were able to maintain their status at the time. This included several placemaking and housing quangos such as CABE, National Housing and Planning Advice Unit, and several Regional Development Agencies. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/sep/29/guide-to-quangos

[30] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

[31] Buchanan's (1992) article on Wicked problems in design thinking, describes that Rittel coined the phrase in 1960 and argues that most design problems are wicked problems. A wicked problem is a 'class of social system problems which are ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing'(p.15).

[32] Locality won a tender to support groups from 2018-2023 and they developed a dedicated website https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/about/, that supports local communities with funding and technical resources.

- Housing: reform housing policies to ensure that decisions about housing are made locally.

The whole premise is that, in line with Local Area 21, local governments have more freedom and flexibility to collaborate with local communities to find best practices and solutions. Notwithstanding the above opportunity, with reduced local budgets, it, in fact, became a prioritisation exercise about what needs, services, and provisions can be met within the constraints of the funding available. The planning system was reformed as well, transforming regeneration and development at the local level through the National Planning Policy Framework. This framework encouraged local authorities to collaborate with communities and other local stakeholders to develop a local plan. With the new freedom under the Localism Act, local authorities (LAs) did not have to follow legislation (as long as they did not break with it), making the implementation and development of changes easier and quicker.

TGH work has moved from project support to becoming a more capacity-building organisation[33] and raising awareness. It now endeavours to make people re-think and re-observe issues in their own local area or even more project-specific issues. It has introduced issues such as accessibility and inclusivity and addressed what aspects of a design can achieve on behalf of their local needs. TGH is not just a decision-making support organisation that facilitates design but an independent design capacity- and capability-building organisation that support communities in making progress on their own projects or becoming actively involved with projects that affect their day-to-day lives. The next sub-chapters illustrate the evolution of the organisation and their activities.

[33] Capacity building organisation as described by O'Hare (2010, p.36); Development of skills and structures and provision of practical support (Based on Diamond and Liddle, 2005, p.148).

2.2 TGH's evolution

As mentioned, TGH is a national U.K. charity that supports communities in taking an active role in the design of their built environment. Over the last two decades, their mission has been to champion, support, and enable community-led, participatory, and collaborative design processes. They work to empower local communities to become part of creating a collective vision for their built environment, informing design briefs with local knowledge, and influencing key decisions and policies within local development and place-making. They see design not only as a tool for 'improving place quality and equality', but more significantly as a tool to 'connect people and to help grow their confidence, skills, and a greater sense of agency' (TGH, 2012).

TGH project

TGH project was conceived and initiated by TGH Trust and launched in 1999. The mission of TGH project was to champion 'good design for all', something that Alex Sainsbury has advocated through his work at TGH Trust. They set out to help build confidence and design skills within communities, particularly in areas where social housing was undergoing large-scale change, so that residents could be informed and become active stakeholders and design champions with a 'heightened awareness of the effect the built environment has on their quality of life' (TGH, 2012). The TGH project developed design training workshops, together with bespoke services and activities, to build capacity and support community-led and participatory design processes. At the start of TGH project, whilst the AF took interactive design activities out around the country in what they called 'road shows', TH's work on the project focused on developing and delivering training activities that could be situated within their programme aimed at tenants and residents' groups.

Figure 2-1 Young Space-makers at Trafford Hall 2008, Image courtesy of TGH

Launching the charity

In April 2006 TGH evolved from the AF and the NCRC to be launched as an independent national charity. TGH had built a name and reputation for its design training, experimented with a few other complementary activities and services for communities, and been commissioned to do research for government departments such as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and quangos, such as CABE and later the Design Council. It had also begun collaborating with local authorities (LAs) and other partners, and it was clear that the project could develop further and become a specialist innovator in the field of community-led and participatory design.

The charity's aim was to further develop services that ran alongside the design training, services which had evolved over several years of learning from each workshop through feedback and evaluation forms from the attending groups and cultivate approaches to supporting community-led and participatory design processes. The communities that TGH had supported over the years had been quite vocal about the importance of working with the professionals that shape the places where they lived, worked, and played, requiring these professional stakeholders to become more responsive and collaborative as user communities.

There was a need to expand TGH activities and services to help the groups advance their projects and provide additional support for the professional stakeholders that assisted community groups in their design development. Before launching as a charity, TGH had experimented with bespoke project support and grants for community groups, and when TGH launched, it put a more formalised project support programme in place and introduced other activities such as Study Tours and Debate Series whilst continuing to work on commissioned research activities. All of this aimed to further develop the skills and capacities of community groups and stakeholders, thereby improving their understanding of the design and community engagement processes.

In their early years as a charity, they delivered their design training programme of free courses for community groups at TH, working in partnership with the NCRC. This was a long and fruitful collaboration, with 76 design training courses delivered at TH between 2001 and 2009, with over 300 groups and 1,400 individuals attending. The residential setting made the sessions very effective, helping to build bridges within community groups, between attending groups, and with the other stakeholders involved, as well as, in some cases, with the project housing officers or architects that attended the course.

However, TGH decided to change its delivery format for its design training from a three-day residential course to a two-day course in various locations around the country. Notwithstanding its success as a residential course, the three-day workshop model at TH was expensive to run and was becoming increasingly difficult to fill, having seemingly exhausted TH's regular user base. Its format and location made it sometimes difficult to recruit more widely, as it excluded people who could not travel and take three days out of their work or home schedule to join a residential workshop. Moreover, TGH had increasingly been asked to deliver the training in other locations. These reasons led TGH and TH to agree that it was no longer appropriate to continue to base the programme on a three-day residential model at TH. Therefore, in 2009 TGH started taking design training on the road to different locations around the UK and trimmed it down to a two-day course, making it more accessible for wider audiences and more financially viable for the charity. At each two-day course on location, groups from the local area were invited to attend at a local community venue, helping the training reach a wider audience. The Design Training still took participants away from their own environment and made use of the dynamic experience of working with others, whilst still maintaining the core elements

of the original design training module, such as a study visit and model-making, and allowing participants to return home in the evenings.

Understandably, not all the support offered over the three-day workshop could be compressed; therefore, some of the benefits of the residential training model were compromised. However, the Design Training became available to a much broader spectrum of participants, and there was a notable shift towards a more diverse demographic.

Figure 2-2 Spaces by Design Dunblane 2010, Image courtesy of TGH

TGH has now introduced its Design Training into various contexts: using it in collaborative action research within academia; offering it on-demand for community groups; building it into regeneration programmes being led by LAs, housing associations, and developers; and into design engagement programmes led by design practices. In each case, the Design Training adheres to the basic model and principles set out in the two-day design training courses and has been adapted to the specific site(s) and user groups taking part in them.

2.3 TGH structure

As a charity, TGH receives its core funding from TGH Trust and is less burdened than quangos to deliver specific support or reach certain targets linked to policy-driven funding pots. They can provide responsive, independent advice and expertise, which then benefits organisations and community groups in their participatory design processes. TGH is therefore also able to challenge the status quo and spark challenging conversations.

In addition to core funding from TGH Trust and research funding, TGH generates income through services commissioned by LAs, housing associations, and developers, as well as through other partnership projects. Profits from their commissioned work are reinvested back into the charity and go towards funding the free or heavily subsidised support they give to community groups and organisations. TGH does work towards internal targets and is responsive to the landscape around it, but there has been a strong drive to keep the charity's work as independent as practicable so it can offer its services to an as wide a range of clients (communities, community support organisations, local authorities, and professionals) as possible.

Diversifying the charity's work

The early years of the charity were mainly focused on continuing and building on the capacity building that grew out of the Design Training at TH: using design training and bespoke project support to help communities get their projects off the ground and giving them tools and skills to work collaboratively and effectively on design projects. The charity was known primarily as a support organisation for community-led projects and for community engagement in participatory design processes. However, over the last decade, TGH has developed new collaborations and partnerships with LAs, architects, regeneration professionals and developers, as well as academics and researchers to widen the impact of their capacity building for communities.

Along with these new collaborations, they have developed new workshops, continuing professional development[34] on community engagement, and a national debate and event series to spread the community-led design discourse nationwide to those who are interested in design participation and user-informed design within the built environment (TGH, 2012). An underlying principle of their work is that unlocking local knowledge in communities can create a better quality of shared spaces and

[34] Continuing professional development (CPD) is a process that tracks and manages the ongoing process of formal and informal development of a person's professional skills, knowledge, and experience.

places and that 'people have the right to have a role in shaping where they live, work and play' (Alexiou et al., 2015; TGH, 2012). One of the objectives of this work is to increase and improve collaborations between the different stakeholders, specifically by making professionals aware that communities not only need to be consulted but should also be active contributors, partners, or leaders at the design table.

TGH advocacy

In conjunction with their workshops and activities, TGH also aims to raise awareness of good design, the way in which such design can improve places, and the role that local individuals can play in improving design quality. By sharing their work and the work of those with similar ethos and approaches at their events and events convened by others and by playing an active role in national debate, they have tried to influence policy and practice (TGH, 2012). TGH is also active in several national and regional policy and advisory groups and plays an advisory role in central government departments.

Figure 2-3 Prototyping Utopia's Events 2018, image courtesy of TGH

Over the last decade, their role has moved away from mainly delivering workshops and support to communities to also include more of an advocacy and research focus in conjunction with its capacity-building function. Research has become more

important for them; provided a valuable space for experimentation, innovation, and learning; and proved vital in building an evidence base for the 'value and impact of community-led, participatory and collaborative design' (TGH, 2012).

Since 2011, TGH has worked closely with the Design Group at the OU, forming a strategic partnership in 2013. This collaboration has seen them as a community and practice-based partner with the OU and other higher education institutions on several research projects[35] such as:

- Cross pollination,
- Incubating civic leadership,
- Mapping civic leadership,
- Empowering design practices: Historic places of worship as catalysts for connecting communities,
- Prototyping utopias: Exploring collaborative economy in place,
- Starting from Values – Evaluating intangible legacies,
- Co-designing asset mapping: Comparative approaches,
- Scaling up co-design research and practice: Building community–academic capacity and extending reach,
- Valuing community-led design, and
- The role of complexity in the creative economies: Connecting ideas, people, and practices.

The research has used a collaborative participatory action research model and is generally based on TGH methods. Participation in these research projects, which TGH has increasingly played an active role in co-designing, has created an invaluable space for experimentation, reflection, and learning for participants as well as the TGH and OU research team, as well as set aside dedicated budgets to work collaboratively with communities on live projects. This has created another route for providing free support to communities and developing practical resources that can be adopted and used by others. The research projects have also created important evidence and data that shed light on the impact of community-led design and collaborative processes on people and places; these have proven vital in the charity's advocacy work.

[35] An extensive list of the collaborations and further details of the research projects are detailed in Appendix A.

2.4 TGH methodology

Since its inception, the capacity for the community to initiate, lead, and become a valued part of the design process has been central to TGH's work. This principle is the foundation of the charity's name 'Community-Led Design'. TGH's main approach is to build this capacity for community-led design by educating participants about design and the design process, sharing architectural knowledge, and making this more accessible. Through this design-based empowerment approach, groups have built confidence and skills through the support offered by TGH. This increases the community's understanding of the design process, giving them more confidence as a knowledgeable stakeholder in negotiation and decision-making for their design project. This can help the community groups become more active in the design decisions that concern their own day-to-day lives and transform them into valued partners and clients at design team meetings.

Most of the interactions with these groups tend to be small, one- or two-day workshops delivered at key moments in the project journey. Some groups may benefit from a set of workshops, activities, or both, but TGH's always emphasises building skills and confidence, increasing the community group's design knowledge, and then giving the group the tools to lead the process themselves. The intent is to build capacity within the groups to make them more self-sufficient throughout the whole design process so that they groups are empowered to act themselves, instead of someone else guiding or handholding them through the entire process. This is a more sustainable approach that transfers and embeds skills rather than building further dependency on external support mechanisms. Choosing key catalytic moments in which to provide this type of support to communities and projects also makes more efficient use of the charity budget in a funding landscape that has seen its resources reduced through austerity measures over the last decade.

Another strong element of the TGH approach is its emphasis on peer-to-peer learning. The training and workshops are set up so there is an opportunity to network and share ideas with other participants. Through feedback from participants, TGH has learnt that many find this one of the core benefits of the support. Crucially, this interaction with other groups offers participants an opportunity to see that they have shared concerns and are not the only ones going through often challenging yet common anxieties linked to a design project.

TGH's support for communities

TGH capacity-building activities have varied over the last 20 years. The list below gives an overview of some of the main free or highly subsidised services they have offered communities:

- Design Training: This is a two-day hands-on design training course. It helps groups in the early stages of their design project to explore design options, create a vision, and experience and learn about design with the support of independent design professionals, enablers, and TGH staff.
- Study Tours: These are themed (e.g., eco-buildings, heritage, community buildings) one-day case study tours that visit inspiring, sometimes community-led, completed projects. This gives attendees a chance to explore design ideas for their own projects and to learn from the experiences of the people who have been part of a design journey for the places visited.
- Design workshops: These are workshops at an introductory level, raising awareness of the role of good design in shaping the built environment and in effective community engagement in design processes. These are generally not project-specific and instead introduce key principles and themes for design engagement.
- Bespoke workshops: TGH offers a wide range of bespoke workshops. The workshops are adapted or developed to suit the needs of the specific community and project, making them as responsive, accessible, and inclusive as possible. The aim of these workshops is to empower the groups by giving them practical tools to move their project forward and increase their understanding of 'community-led design'.
- Project support: Generally, these are a combination of the above activities, with some additional introductory or technical workshops. TGH assesses a specific project and then creates a collection of activities that are delivered at the project site to give more bespoke support and reach a wider audience.

Most of the community groups that TGH engages with come to them of their own accord, sometimes having been referred by professional stakeholders. The fact that they come to TGH themselves shows that these groups already have a certain level of agency. Most of the time, they have been able to form a semblance of a steering group and have an idea of what they want to do within their architectural design challenge. This provides a strong starting point from which to develop their own design learning and empower both the group and their larger community. However,

working from experience, each group is assessed by TGH for its capacity to act to make sure the limited charity funds available are used most effectively. One of the main criteria is that the groups need to show that they have a core working group in place and that the group is resilient enough to persevere throughout the lengthy and often protracted duration of a design or build project.

Figure 2-4 Homes by Design at Trafford Hall 2008, image courtesy of TGH

The evolution of design training

At the time of its inception, TGH project commissioned a small group of external trainers to collaborate with the AF staff and the TH project development team and to co-create the initial workshops and resource material that would become the design training programme. The external collaborators included Urbed,[36] Fluid,[37] Sense of Place,[38] and BD+R, who were also the facilitators of the workshops when they went live. In 2001 the first design training courses were held at TH, and for the duration of

[36] Urbed is a Manchester architecture practice. At the time the main developers for the design training were David Rudlin and Charlie Baker (http://urbed.coop/)
[37] Fluid is a London architecture practice (https://www.fluidarchitecture.ltd/)
[38] Sense of place is a Liverpool social enterprise. Ronnie Hughes filmed and facilitated the design training workshops (https://asenseofplace.com/)

TGH project, design training became its core offering to communities with regard to design capacity building.

The courses were named with the 'by Design' label to align with the emerging work and resources from the new CABE. The first courses, Places by Design, Homes by Design, and Buildings by Design, led to a whole suite of 'by Design' training courses, which eventually included Spaces by Design, Neighbourhoods by Design, Play by Design, as well as Young Space-makers, aimed specifically at young people, and Den Building, aimed at children.

These initial three-day residential courses were based on a residential model that TH already used and aligned with their objectives to empower the people that attended their courses. Their main ethos at the time was: 'Give a man a fish, and he won't be hungry for a day; teach a man how to fish, and they can feed themselves' (Interview Barbara Watson, TH). This empowerment approach was based on transferring knowledge to a small group of people to help them become more self-sufficient and equip them with the ability to champion what they learnt in their own communities. At that time, most TH contacts were with housing authorities or housing associations, which would send a select group of their residents to a wide range of TH courses to develop their skills and knowledge. These community champions could facilitate conversations between the housing association and the other residents on various matters, as well as disseminate some of the knowledge that they gained at TH to the other residents (Interview Barbara Watson, TH).

Design training courses were designed to bring together representative groups from three to four live projects (building projects that were active or would start soon) to introduce them to the principles, language, and stages of design. The format of the training was built around using the live projects these groups were involved in, as community stakeholders or as project leaders, for exploration and experimentation with design. Offering residential courses to the community groups that attended the workshops was part of the TH approach. By removing the attendees from their habitual daily surroundings, this method created a focused set of days to concentrate on the training. It also created an environment in which groups quickly built trust within their own working groups and benefited from interaction and peer-to-peer learning with the other groups present. The role of practising design professionals was crucial to the development and delivery of the design training courses. In addition to bringing their technical expertise and experience to the design training, practitioners gave participants important exposure to and experience working with

design professionals. The courses gave participants the necessary space to build confidence in using the design language and principles explored as part of the training. They also created a safe space for participants to explore the opportunities and potential pitfalls of their own specific projects with independent design professionals.

Enablers

The organisational structure of TGH is based on a facilitation and organisational team of about three to six people who are supported by design 'enablers'. These enablers are a multi-disciplinary group of creative professionals with wide-ranging backgrounds and expertise in architecture, urban design, art, planning, heritage, engagement, and landscape architecture and share the TGH ethos. The aim of the enablers is to 'provide independent specialist advice and practical, hands-on support' to the projects the communities are working on or want to develop (TGH, 2012).

By 2013 TGH had set up an enabler network of 65+ enablers (many coming over from CABE, which had been absorbed into the Design Council – see Chapter 2.1). However, due to the changing funding landscape for community projects and for housing associations and LAs, the amount of project support and Design Training that TGH has been able to deliver over the last decade has been reduced, thereby also reducing the use of their design enablers. TGH now draws from a small group of enablers with whom they work regularly. TGH collaborates with enablers and community groups to develop and deliver the right bespoke workshop or training for each group and project. They draw on their collective experiences and skills to develop a creative way to inspire, inform, and influence the communities' built environment.

Figure 2-5 Enabler training London, 2014, Image courtesy of TGH

As the independence of the enablers and community is key, TGH Charity added a clause in enablers' contracts that they were not allowed to work with the community groups that they had encountered at a TGH workshop or activity for six months. This was to establish a level playing field between designers and communities so that the community could receive impartial advice on the issues at hand from design professionals who have no vested interests in the projects. Their role was always to provide independent support, helping to empower the group to appoint a future practitioner without feeling obliged or tied in. This was not the case during TGH project but was considered fundamental to the independent role of the charity in supporting communities. Whilst in many participatory practices, organisations and practices still use engagement as a means of generating work, TGH insists on maintaining a distinction between their design enablers and project consultants. Moreover, TGH has increasingly been able to bring some of their enablers into their action research and knowledge exchange, extending their contribution beyond the Design Training and Project Support programmes for which their role was initially conceived.

2.5 Discussion

This brief overview illustrates TGH's inception and background in providing independent advice and expertise to enable community groups through formative approaches to 'place local people at the heart of improving their surroundings' (TGH, 2012). By empowering the groups, instead of just guiding or handholding them through the entire process, TGH's intent is to make groups more self-reliant throughout the whole design process.

Chapter 3 Literature review

Enabling community-led design

This chapter consists of a review of the literature to situate enabling and community-led design within the practices of community participation in the design and development of the built environment and, more particularly, within the context of critical pedagogies, transformation, and empowerment. The literature review involved an initial scoping review of the landscape at the start of the thesis, which was followed by two re-iterations after the analysis of each fieldwork set, the 'Debate Series' and 'design training workshop'; these two subsequent re-iterations explored aspects of critical pedagogies, transformation, and empowerment in the context of participatory practices in spatial design.

3.1 Community-led design

Participating in the design of the built environment

Community-led design is still an emergent term and, as of yet, has not been clearly defined within the present co-design literature (Morton, 2021) or participation literature. Nonetheless, Alexiou and Zamenopoulos have been researching community-led design (CLD) for well over a decade in collaboration with TGH, working together on several research projects exploring CLD and its benefits. They define CLD as

> "a process through which people are engaged in and become responsible for developing their environment, including buildings, open spaces, services, and neighbourhoods. It encompasses a variety of practices by different types of communities organised together for different purposes. … There are also different ways in which communities assume leadership in design activities (Alexiou et al., 2015 p.5)."

The definition above emphasises that CLD is a complex process with multiple factors (e.g., local sociocultural and power dynamics) that influence its process and outcomes. However, with reduced funding available to support communities in taking part in participatory processes, how can spatial designers enable community groups to still take part in the long journey that is the design process? Enabling is inextricably linked to empowerment (Ashcroft, 1987; Hamdi, 2010; Scoones et al., 2020). It can be seen as the ability to support an individual or group so that they become resilient and can sustain their learning process and perpetuate their curiosity

in the design journey without continued support and, at its best, initiate and steer (Morton, 2021) the design process.

A wide variety of books from the architectural perspective on participatory practices explore the development of different participatory programmes and philosophies, principles, methods, tools, and toolkits that can assist designers and community developers as well as community participants in spatial design. Several special journals in the past have also examined different methodological practices and methods (e.g., Binder et al., 2008; Greenbaum and Loi, 2012; Luck, 2018a, 2018b; Smith et al., 2017). However, few have focused on design enabling practices that can support CLD, surveying different ways of capacity and capability building, with even less material exploring how practices work and what the methodological background of such enabling approaches is.

Some focus on participatory practices through creative means such as charrettes, games, and visual workshops (e.g., Campion, 2018; Dodig and Groat, 2019; Sanoff, 2016, 1999; Wates, 1999); others are supported by descriptive case study examples (00:/, 2011; Bell and Morse, 2013; Binder et al., 2008; Campion, 2018; Courage et al., 2020; Derr et al., 2018; Dodig and Groat, 2019; Khan et al., 2020; Manzini, 2015; Ouwehand, 2008; Sanoff, 1999; Wilson, 2018), with very few exploring more self-help methodologies for the community to adopt (e.g. Walljasper, 2007; Wates, 1999). Few books focus specifically on the role of the architect and architecture in participation (Awan et al., 2011; Ferdous and Bell, 2020; Hamdi, 2014, 2010; Hayden, 1997; Hofmann, 2019; Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009; Jones et al., 2005; Miessen, 2016, 2011, 2007; Miessen and Basar, 2006; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995), whilst more works feature cross-overs to other disciplines beyond architecture, such as community development (e.g. Blewitt, 2008; Courage et al., 2020; Hamdi, 2004; Lauria and Slotterback, 2020; Malone, 2019), urban design and place-making (Arefi, 2014; Campion, 2018; Courage et al., 2020; Derr et al., 2018; Edensor et al., 2020; Ermacora and Bullivant, 2015; Iannelli and Musarò, 2017; Miazzo and Kee, 2014; UDL, 2017; Walljasper, 2007), or service or product design (e.g., Sanders and Stappers, 2012; Simonsen and Robertson, 2013). Some works are based on the first-hand experience of practitioners who make claims about their experiences as a form of evidence-based practice (e.g., Hamdi, 1991; Hayden, 1997; Hofmann, 2019; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995), whilst others are not designers but engagement practitioners in planning or community development (e.g., Hirst and Sarkissian, 2021; Wilson, 2019).

The value of public participation[39]

Within (local) government, there has been growing interest in community participation in design and place-making. In the UK, for example, the Localism Act (2011) supports planning procedures that actively incorporate community interest and opinion. This was reiterated in the wording of government guidance on effective engagement in design:

> 'Communities can effectively shape both design policies and development through a collaborative process of meaningful participation. Early engagement and linking engagement activities to key stages of design decision-making and plan-making can empower people to inform the vision, design policies, and design of schemes.
>
> Engagement activities offer an opportunity to work collaboratively with communities to shape better places for local people. They consider how to embed empowerment, capacity building and employability opportunities for local people and organisations throughout the design process.'[40]

Furthermore, public organisations and businesses who profess to include participatory practices, such as national and local governments, housing associations, and developers, have increasingly demanded to know what the actual costs and benefits are for those who invest 'financially' in this process. In 2005 Involve,[41] a UK public participation charity, conducted an in-depth study into 'The true cost of participation'. The research showed that at that time there were no adequate economic frameworks to assess the economic value of participation (The True Cost of Public Participation, 2005). However, the study also questioned whether attempts should be made to add quantified monetary value to the value of place-making. The various qualitative outcomes of participation, such as social capital, active citizenship, and empowerment, have different meanings and therefore worth to different people. Moreover, the complexity of the engagement process makes it hard to quantify all the different resources required to have an inclusive, representative, and collaborative participation process. In what little economic-focused research

[39] The following three sections were part of the conference proceedings of the places conference at ELU: in 2012. Putting People in Their Place- The value of great placemaking. The sections used here were written by Vera Hale. The section that Sophia de Sousa wrote has been left out as it addressed matters that are not relevant to this thesis.
[40] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Guidance Design Process and Tools, Effective community engagement on design: How can local communities be effectively engaged in the design of their area? Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 26-019-20191001 (Revision date: 01 10 2019)
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design#effective-community-engagement-on-design
[41] https://www.involve.org.uk/about

there is on participation in the UK, participants are mostly overlooked, along with research on the impact of participation on the surrounding community and society (The True Cost of Public Participation, 2005).

Some case studies have shown that community involvement creates social unity and economic stability in local areas (Evans, 2002) and can lead to greater civic engagement (Grillo et al., 2010). This can, in turn, lead to plans being implemented more efficiently and effectively, as it creates a customised programme between people and places. An unwanted or ill-fitting project can create alienation, resulting in a building or development not being utilised to its full potential. By involving people from a locality, a sense of respect, ownership, and responsibility, along with a sense of belonging, can be created (Hamdi, 2010; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995). This, in turn, creates meaning, association, and attachment to a place—what Robert Putnam calls social capital (Putnam, 2001a, 2001b). Consequently, when social conditions are improved and human connectivity increases, the market value of that area evolves accordingly, as social conditions and market forces are interlinked (Coirier et al., 2010).

This social capital and human resource are also recognised by the public sector, with the increasing de-centralisation of many of its activities; the Localism Act, for example, reinforces the state's recognition that it is not all about the financial bottom line. Whatever the public sector does, they must do it sustainably on all levels, and their actions should have cumulative benefits for society. This thinking was part of the Social Value Act, a law that was implemented in January 2013. The Act, 'requires public authorities to have regard to economic, social, and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts; and for connected purposes' ("Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012," n.d.). This required all public service tenders and procurements to factor in social value and act in the interest of the community.

Nevertheless, what are the reasons for jumping on the community participation bandwagon? Planning and design professionals have accumulated years of skills, expertise, and experience to make considered and educated decisions that create beautiful and quality spaces with the end user in mind. Furthermore, the design process requires a high level of outside organisational coordination (Hamdi 2010, p98). Why then invite the community to come along on the journey?

Creating good places and community spaces

Within transient local societies, where communities come and go, space and place become even more important to create a level of place attachment for new communities to connect. Places need to remain intact whilst different associations evolve to fit new communities (Da Costa Meyer, 2009). What does that mean for the value of great design for the users of these places and spaces? Spatial design practice, 00:/, describes it as follows: "Good places are never bought off the shelf but arise in an inclusive process built on local ideas, imagination and aspiration" (00:/, 2011. p 181). Good places are therefore 'tailor made' through a collaboration of communities and professionals that enhances the identity of the people as well as that of their own locality. Spatial designers and theorists have argued that deliberate public spaces create places for sharing experiences, establishing a sense of togetherness (Pallasmaa, 2009) and developing collective identities (Dovey, 1999; Lyndon, 2009), with architecture helping to order these shared spaces (Rogers, 2000).

Architecture that is created through good engagement processes goes beyond being a great space. It offers context for reflection and association. It offers opportunities to make connections to the broader locality and to the history of an area (Lyndon, 2009). Good architecture inspires people to play with and act in it, react against it, and identify with it (Bunschoten and CHORA, 2002). Furthermore, urban structures are developed through the daily urban rituals and interactions of the people that occupy them (Sennett, 1992).

The value of place-making

To understand how project stakeholders can work together to enable and construct thoughtfully designed spaces that will benefit all people that live and work in these places, what is meant by place and place-making must first be established. Space and place are often used to define the same things in architectural terms. It is used to describe the areas and locations that surround people – from a room to a house, from a street to a city. Space has been described as the actual boundaries of the physical surroundings of where individuals live, work, and play. Place is then created by and has meaning for the people that inhabit it (Cresswell, 2004; Hamdi, 2010). It is created, transformed, renovated, and maintained by daily activities and routines (Hamdi, 2010; Hayden, 1997; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995).

This, in turn, could mean that place-making is the 'science of the everyday', as a result of everyday actions (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995). Place-making is the way

that individuals construct and connect to their surroundings in the broadest sense; it is about how they build communities and build relationships with the people in an area (Hamdi, 2010). It is at the heart of each society and should be about community. Furthermore, Schneekloth and Shibley (1995) argued that place-making is not about who is in control but about enabling a critical capacity to take part in the place-making process.

Inclusive community participation

To obtain a holistic result from community engagement, the community needs to be represented through various means, as there is a danger that not all voices will be heard. Pro-active people may not mind voicing their opinion and may enjoy getting involved, but this could come at the expense of the more passive residents. The more passive residents may not participate for several reasons. Some of them are interested but just need a nudge to join the active discourse; others are people that are just completely disengaged with their direct environment; and still others feel disillusioned and disempowered by their local government and have given up hope for change. Some of the reasons for disengagement in local participation are not just social or political disinterest but can be linked to other barriers such as language, culture, education, literacy, full-time employment, knowledge, access to information, and social and mental health issues (Cornwall, 2008). For example, Evans (2002) indicated that people from lower-income backgrounds have limited access to resources, whilst those from middle-class backgrounds tend to pursue a more individual lifestyle and are therefore not always as involved within their direct communities.

When working to create a participatory process in a community, determining who to work with in the community is not always straight-forward. Sometimes seemingly few to no people come forward to volunteer and participate. Bell and Newby (1976) described three concepts of community based on topography, local social systems, and human associations (cited in Urry, 1995). In the past, people took part in the first two principles of community: a neighbourhood, a religion, or both. Modern communities, however, are now more bound by interest and less by geographical or social constraints.

Communities have therefore become more pluralistic, networked, and heterogeneous (Hamdi, 2010, p. 54), making them more transient; this may decrease the sense of community within them. Additionally, the fact that neighbourhoods are constantly

being (re)developed at a faster pace has created new obstacles within community projects and decreased the sense of collectiveness.

Participation

The origins of the participation movement can be traced back as far as Dewey (1927), who discussed the benefits of and barriers to public participation in democratic and civic settings. The emergence of organised participation in the UK can be dated back to the 1940s, during which there was a colonial imperative for community development (Hickey and Mohan, 2004, p. 6)[42].

Over the years participation in all its forms has become more mainstream within different fields (e.g., art, design, architecture, technology, design, planning, health and community work) and has simultaneously developed into something that holds different meanings within diverse contexts for various purposes. This has caused the word to be overused and lost its meaning. It has become an 'umbrella term' or 'hurrah word' to get people engaged; it is widely suggested as a good thing (Hamdi, 1991; White and Petit, 2004, p. 2) and has come to represent 'anything that involves people' (Cornwall 2008). It is then applied uncritically and is idealised, with wrong notions of the methodology (Jones et al., 2005; Miessen, 2011) and is in danger of becoming a form of pseudo-participation (Till, 2005). "There is often little consensus across programmes about what participation is for, at what level and to what extent it should operate" (Dinham, 2007. p. 183). This lack of consensus could be attributed to the different stakeholders involved, with each coming from a different perspective and background and having their own needs and objectives (Dinham 2007, White 1996), thereby creating different forms, and meaning of participation.

The rapid spread of the term participation has additionally led to a rise in the criticism surrounding its adoption within the design and development of the built environment (Craig and Mayo, 1995). The views on it range from a fear of community architecture and non-plan approaches to mock democratic approaches (Miessen, 2007); some have gone as far as to see it as falling to the 'tyranny' of power and politics to becoming no more than rhetoric (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). Notwithstanding the above issues and challenges that participatory practices face, they must also be viewed as an important part of the decision-making process within design. Hamdi surmises that to have a 'good' fit for communities and the design of

[42] Hickley and Mohan give a thorough overview of participation in development theory and practice in a table (Hickey & Mohan, 2004: 6).

their places or buildings conventional decision-making practices need to be confronted, making the processes more resourceful and pro-active, helping to develop and nurture ownership and a sense of belonging, as well as increasing agency within the communities taking part in them (Hamdi 2010: xvi).

Ladders, typologies, and interests of participation[43]

To gain clearer insights into what participation has to offer, many typologies have been developed in the effort to clarify what participation could mean in their field of practice for their service users, communities, organisations, or a combination of these. In 'Unpacking Participation' (2008) Andrea Cornwall focuses on three main typologies of participation, Arnstein, Pretty, and White, to explore the different meanings and a diversity of practices in the field of community development. Cornwall (2008) started off by acknowledging that most typologies are intrinsically 'normative', grading the different forms of exploring participation as 'good' or 'bad'. However, she did find that typologies like these offered a good starting point for obtaining an overview of the different kinds of participation. The main types of participation discussed by Cornwall show that the majority of types focus on the meaning and processes for those initiating the participatory process. Whilst Arnstein focuses on the community perspective, Pretty examines the professional perspective, and White covers both perspectives. Additionally, all of the examples are based on what Cornwall calls 'invited participation' (Cornwall 2000; i.e., participation organised by an outside organisation and not initiated by the community).

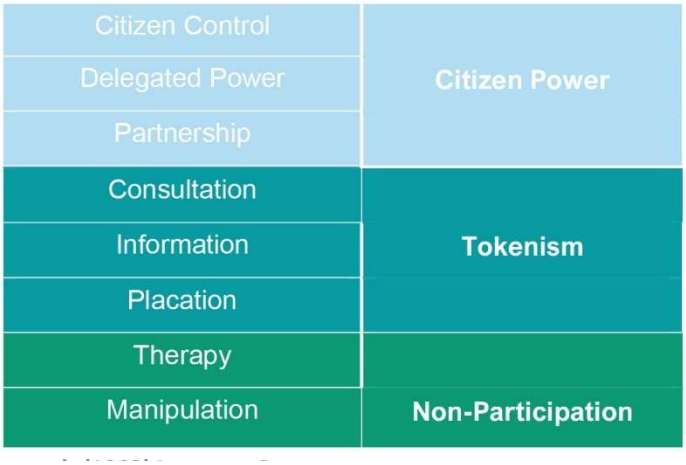


Figure 3-1 Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Participation

[43] Sophia de Sousa a blog re-interpretating Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (1969). https://theglasshouse.org.uk/capacity-building/a-tapestry-of-participation-revisiting-arnsteins-ladder/

Of the three types, Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation (Fig.3-1) is the most known and widely referenced and used. It conceives of participation from the receiving end – from the community perspective – whilst Pretty's typology examines the challenges that a professional stakeholder encounters when seeking to incorporate different levels of participation. Arnstein's ladder represents graded levels of public involvement within public decision-making processes, with 'citizen control' at the top of the ladder and 'non-participation' at the bottom. She herself acknowledged that the ladder of participation is a simplification of the gradients of community engagement (Arnstein, 1969). She mentioned that there might, in fact, be '150 rungs' on the ladder, as there are no 'clear-cut' participants but complex heterogeneous groups with diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds set within a wide variety of interests. Another issue with Arnstein's ladder was that it pitches the 'powerless community' against the 'powerful' authority to highlight barriers and gaps (Cornwall, 2008) – an 'us' versus 'them' approach, which is not always conducive to collaborative or cooperative practices such as participation. However, Arnstein's ladder is referred to in many books, texts, and papers which address participation in spatial design (Burns, 1994; Dinham, 2007; Hamdi, 2010; Jones et al., 2005). This could be due to her self-confessed oversimplification, which makes it easily understood and transferable. Moreover, the notion of the ladder felt unsatisfactory to some, and so many 'improvements' have been developed to incorporate the next level of diversification or clarification of the power dynamics (Burns, 1994; Pretty, 1995; Slay and Stephens, 2013).

Continuing with the different levels of participation mentioned by Andrea Cornwall, Jules Pretty's (1995) typology conceives of participation from an implementation perspective but is still as normative as Arnstein's ladder. Pretty's typologies are very descriptive, but, as with the ladders of participation, do not address how communities or professionals progress from manipulation or tokenistic practices to the more desirable self-mobilisation or citizen control. To Cornwall, Arnstein's model ladder shows that participation is largely about power and control, whilst Pretty's typologies are important for understanding what motivates the people that implement and shape participatory interventions (Cornwall, 2008).

Sarah White (1996) tried to articulate the power dynamics of participation through her typologies of interest, examining the various interests – or 'forms and functions', as she calls them – that are involved in different practices of participation. The forms

look at what interests are represented in the catch-all term 'participation', which she stresses from the outset is a politically loaded term with a top-down governance-initiated and bottom-up grassroots stance. Table 3-1 illustrates the context for this. White contends that participation, 'whilst it has the potential to challenge patterns of dominance, may also be the means through which existing power relations are entrenched and reproduced' (White, 1996).

White distinguished between four forms, each with a different function. *Nominal participation* is a form of display participation used by more powerful actors and gives the less powerful a chance to take part. She saw *instrumental participation* as a more financially focused form of participation that uses the expertise of the community only for limited and specific purposes. *Representative participation* gives members more space to have their voices heard, make some decisions, and implement parts of the process. For the authority or organisation, allowing for representative participation increases the likelihood that their intervention will be more accepted and therefore be sustainable. This suggests that *transformative participation* is the ideal form, where all those involved are empowered and structures and institutions are changed to reduce marginalisation and exclusion. White saw it as a dynamic framework, as several forms may be part of the whole participation process for one intervention. White's work also shows the notion of hidden agendas and objectives between the actors, highlighting the inherent politics of participation.

Out of three well-curated examples by Cornwall, White's 'Typologies of Interest' (1996) is the one that tries to cover the complexity of the participation process, as any of the forms and functions can be applied at any time within a project. White's desired outcome is *transformative participation*, which foregrounds the empowerment of the community group as its process and outcome and, in best case scenarios, also that of the other stakeholders involved. Cornwall, Arnstein, Pretty, and White all agreed that participation cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach. However, by addressing the multiplicity between the different dynamics or 'interests' that have a role to play in each unique participatory setting, White articulated a web of opportunities instead of rungs. Within spatial practices there is clear awareness that there are different levels of involvement at different stages within this design process (Hamdi, 2010; Hayden, 1997; Jones et al., 2005; Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995), yet it is noteworthy that White's 'Typologies of Interest' and her focus on

'transformative participation'[44] is not more widely used as a framework for exploring participation in spatial design practices. Whilst community development practice extensively uses White's exploration of the power dynamics in participation (Tisdall, 2013), the field of spatial practices still references Arnstein's ladder more readily than something that is more representative of the multiplicity within the levels of involvement when actively implementing participatory methodologies in planning, architecture, or urban design.

Form / Function	Top-Down *Participation perceived from the implementing organisation*	Bottom-Up *Participation perceived from the receiving community/participants*	Function *Reason for participation*
Nominal	Legitimation Show they are doing something	Inclusion Retain access to potential benefits	Display Be able to tick the box
Instrumental	Efficiency To limit funders input, draw on community contribution and make project cost-effective	Cost Of time spent on project-related labour and other activities	Means Achieve cost-effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	Sustainability Avoid creating dependency	Leverage Influence the project and management	Voice Give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	Empowerment To enable people to make their own decisions, work out what to do and act	Empowerment To be able to decide and act for themselves	Means/End A continuing dynamic, as a means and an outcome

Table 3-1 White's Typologies of Interests (1996) [45]

[44] Till (2003) mentioned transformative participation (p.27) based on Friedmann's transformative theory (1987) but without referring to White (1996) even though she had coined the term seven years earlier.

[45] This table is taken from Andrea's Cornwall article, Unpacking Participation: Models, Meanings and Practices (2008),

Sanders and Steppers's visual representation of design research and methods (Fig.3-4) has gained traction in participatory design and some spatial design practices. As design and design research are inter-connected (Cross, 2007; Dorst and Cross, 2001; Luck, 2018), it is understandable that this clear visual representation has been used to support participatory design practice. Sanders's work on convivial methods is more situated in the top right quadrant of this landscape, which they refer to as co-design;[46] its origins are rooted in the social-technical participatory design of the Scandinavian methods (Sanoff, 2006; see Section 3.2). This is also where any CLD practices within the built environment can be situated, focused on a participatory design-led mindset. In the *Conviviality toolbox* (2012), Sanders and Steppers argued for the emergence of new design disciplines that move away from the difference fields and silos of object design (industrial, interior, architecture, interaction, and visual communications design) to new disciplines that extend across the different fields focused more on 'purpose' (design for experience, services, innovation, transformation, and sustainability; Sanders and Stappers, 2012). However, in their referencing of spatial design, they do not go beyond architecture, and urban design and planning do not readily enter their discourse.

which she adopted from Sarah White (1996).

[46] To them co-design is 'the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process' (Sanders & Stappers 2008), moving back to roots of participatory design, whilst the focus of integrating user experience first-hand has been lost in some fields, where co-design refers to practices 'between professionals' (Sanders 2012).

Their approaches and methods focus on effectively increasing non-designers and designers' co-design practices, preferably at the front end of design, where they can influence the outcome the most (Harris, 2009-p4). Sanders and Stappers's work on co-design practices and methods has generated helpful methodologies and methods and increased awareness of the need for co-design in the design development process (Sanders and Stappers, 2012, 2008). However, their focus is still very much rooted in the socio-technical approach of participatory design, which involves collaboratively designing solutions such as through co-design and co-creation, focusing on methods and tools to better the experience of participants and communities in the different areas of spatial, service, innovation, and transformative design practices.

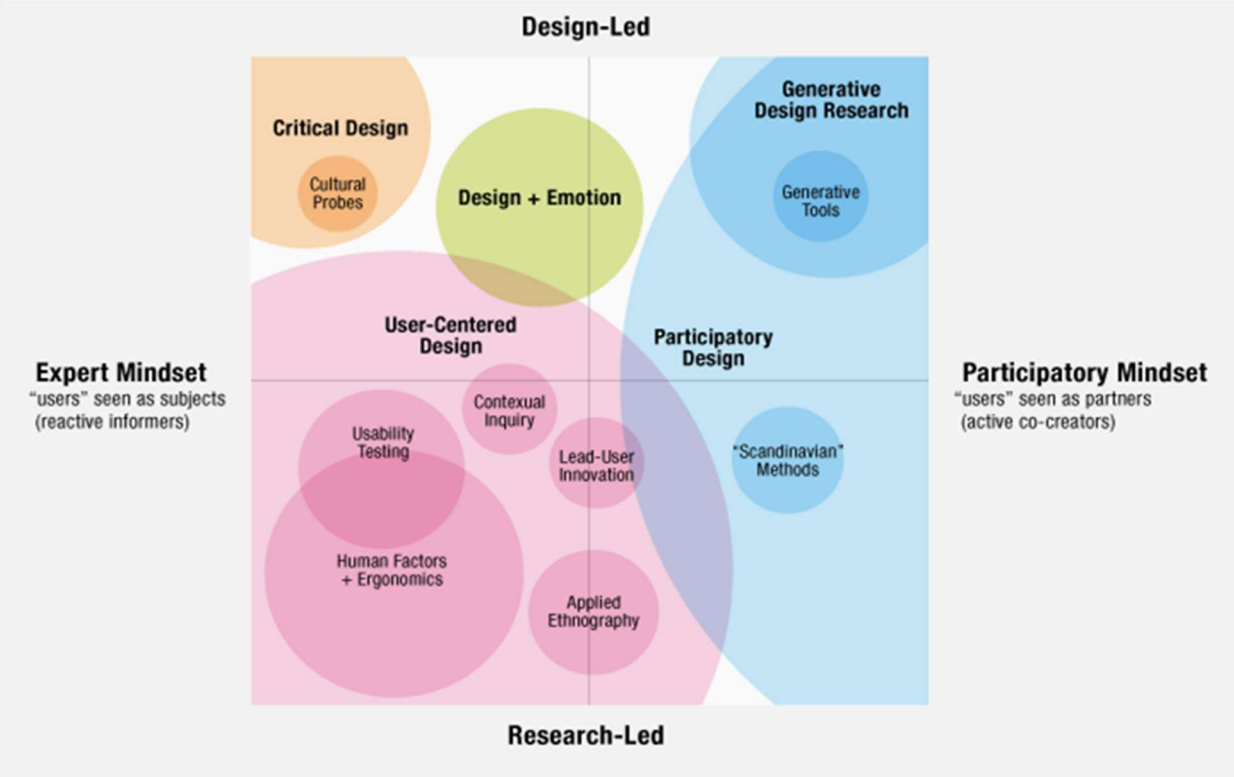


Figure 3-2 Sanders et. al. emerging landscape of design research approaches and methods (2012)

Furthermore, this focus overlooks the multiplicity and complex socio-economic and political nexus of citizen participation in activating and empowering the community to take part in decision-making processes in the first place (Harrison, 1995). The objective of citizen participation, with its roots in community development, urban development, and planning, is to give voice to the more marginalised and influence the housing projects that affect their day-to-day lives (Harrison, 1995). Spatial

design is inherent to this form of more participatory-focused practice. For the purpose of writing this thesis, I therefore reclaim the term transformative participation to refer to spatial CLD practices instead of referring to co-design or co-creation, which has become more prevalent in recent years (Alexiou and Zamenopoulos, 2019; Luck, 2018b; Sanders and Stappers, 2012). As a phrase it explains best what the experience of the participants will be. Co-design practice illude to collaboratively design process, where in fact often the invitation is only to be part of a co-design of the pre-brief stage of a design. Where the final brief might not even been review and reflected on collectively. The phrase co-creation comes closer to the actual experiences of the participants, where they assist in the creation of design and the context surrounding the design process. Nonetheless, White's 'Typology of Interest' acknowledges the levels and complexity of being involved within the participation process. It incorporates the opportunity for people to be involved at many different levels and intensities. Additionally, it highlights the key requisite of the experience is that the process and its outcomes are empowering for the individuals involved and the collective. This requirement of Empowerment is not as well defined in the co-design and creation phrases.

Reclaiming transformative participation

Hickey and Mohan (2004, p.13) believed that all participatory development practices should be transformative from the perspective of capacity, social networks, civic practice, and development (Tisdall, 2013). They saw the transformation as temporal, spatial, and representative and viewed it as key to reclaiming the viability of participation – be it community-led, co-design, or community architecture. Hart (2008, cited in Tisdall, 2013) identified three aspects of transformational participation: 1) participation that is transformative for those involved, which means extending skills, experience, relationships, and networks for all involved in the process (means); 2) transformation as a product of activities (outcome); and 3) societal transformation due to the above two. This is in line with White's perception of transformative participation.

Yet, participation, transformation, and empowerment are all vulnerable to ignorance, co-opting, and pseudo-practice (Cornwall, 2008; Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Till, 2005; Tisdall, 2013). In the 1990s, there was an increase in criticisms of participation both in theory and practice, just as it was gaining traction in different fields. The key limitations and criticisms were that it 1) had too local a focus, which blinded it to broader issues of injustice; 2) featured an insufficient understanding of power

dynamics and therefore how empowerment could occur; 3) involved limited knowledge of the structure and role of agency in social change; and 4) was used as a method instead of being implemented 'as a methodology of empowerment' (Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Tisdall, 2013). Another potential issue for transformative participation is the neo-liberal structures of progress on an economic and political level. Tisdall (2013) argued that neo-liberal structures influence civic institutions and their structures, restricting the effective implementation of transformative participation. If a top-down approach to participation is limited by neo-liberal agendas, perhaps transformative participation might be more achievable through a more active and bottom-up-enabled approach (Tisdall, 2013). Such an enabling approach to transformative participation could offer an appropriate way forward to support CLD.

To Cornwall (2008) it was important to enable people so that they could have a meaningful stake in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. This is not a linear process that hones-in on community building (Hamdi, 2010). It is an iterative process which cultivates a sense of belonging and ownership through social exchange, dialogue, respect, and association (Hamdi, 2010; Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Sennett, 1992; Tisdall, 2013), creating different levels of meaning and transformation (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). Nevertheless, with transformation and participation comes conflict (Granath et al., 1996; Till, 2005; Tisdall, 2013; Zamenopoulos and Alexiou, 2018), but conflict can also be creative (Alexiou et al., 2015). Consequently, the role of the spatial designer to navigate conflict and complexity through creativity is critical. Till (2005) therefore proposed that architects and planners embrace a transformative participatory practice, as he professed that it has an 'architectural production that benefits architects and users alike'. Confirming that the real value and benefit comes from this empowerment focused participatory process (White and Petit, 2004; White, 1996) and should be considered as an effective means for CLD.

3.2 Critical enabling for transformative community-led design

Enabling

In many texts enabling is used as a verb to describe activities within the context of empowering individuals and communities. However, little literature has explored the actualities of the enabling process itself or what it means to enable in the context of spatial design support.

In her analysis of the 'What and why of empowerment', Ashcroft (1987) acknowledged that in the Oxford English dictionary, *empower* and *enable* are defined as the same thing. She then explained that as the more commonly used word, enable has a more extensive entry as; 'to empower; to make able (to be or to do something); to strengthen; to supply with means, opportunities or the like; to regard as competent; to make possible; to make effective' (Ibid, p144). She saw empowerment as having more inherent strength and positive inclinations to act, which is why she chose to further analyse 'to empower' as a term that had also become popular in academic settings at the time. Notwithstanding her preference, she then deliberated the concept of enabling, as she saw it as a word that could add a useful distinction when articulating empowering action (e.g., strengthening, supplying, making possible and effective, regarding it as competent). She saw the word 'competent' as important in the context of empowerment, as it is described in the dictionary as 'sufficient in amount, quantity or degree; suitable, fit, proper; legally qualified or sufficient' (Ibid, p145). This, in turn, changed her original definition of empowering from 'bringing into a state of belief in one's ability/ capability to act with effect' to 'nurturing belief in capability and competence', where competence refers to 'sufficient/ appropriate/ effective action' (ibid, p145). This phrasing was also used by Chavis et al. (1993) in their work on enabling systems to support community development. They described the notion of nurturing grassroots organisations through an overall support system that enables them to support the larger community.

This enabling or nurturing of sufficient, appropriate, and effective action implies that people can only empower themselves and cannot be empowered by others; they can only be supported as they develop these qualities as individuals (Labonté and Laverack, 2008; Tisdall, 2013). It also implies that people are their own assets, and that external support guides them from the side-lines to acquire this power to act (Labonté and Laverack, 2008).

Within the built environment discourse, there has been little to no deliberation on this notion of enabling. Whilst it has been used in conjunction with participatory discussion and exploration, it has never been highlighted for its own merit. Turner and Hamdi do use the word enabler as a role for designers in the built environment; they considered it a part of the Third Way movement within community development. However, from there, it never gained further traction. With the growth of community movements in the 1960s, there was an inception of CDCs in both North America and Europe to increase community participation through design and planning services (Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009; Luck, 2018a). The focus of these types of design centres was to 'enable' the disenfranchised areas to influence their own planning (Alexiou et al., 2015; Sanoff, 2006) and to design better housing projects and improve residence conditions in such areas of deprivation.

With the introduction of the Third Way and its follow-up, the notion of *Big Society*, the idea was to devolve social welfare to the community and voluntary and grassroots organisations to reduce the cost of delivering state welfare (Popple and Redmond, 2000). There was hope that this would give community development organisations the funding boost that they needed; however, with the new political party in power, the financial support was dramatically reduced, and the organisations were encouraged to work on true volunteer support to deliver welfare support. The core values of community development – liberating the poorest of society – was at danger of becoming tokenistic when only lip service was paid to supporting the organisations that help disaffected communities (Popple and Redmond, 2000).

According to Hamdi (2010) it is necessary to establish an active civic society that has a sense of agency to start changes from within without waiting for external agents to initiate action or change. To Hamdi good enabling involves the 'ability and willingness' of the design professional to provide the means with which people can open doors and create opportunities to build their own neighbourhoods (Hamdi, 2010: 147); this involves allowing for the right circumstances for these actions to be taken and for the development to be sustainable. In making these arguments, he captured some of the issues at the heart of enabling spatial designers. According to him, this description covers the breadth of Burgess et al.'s (1997) three forms of enablement – community, political, and market enablement – for development practice. They proposed that all three are essential parts of good governance (Burgess et al. 1997, cited by Hamdi, 2010). Expanding on this, Hamdi's explanation was that community enablement explores the capacity for community actors to gain

recognition so as not to be seen as a social or economic liability. Political enablement in the setting of development work involves brokering policy, improving standards, increasing inclusion, and increasing accessibility whilst advocating for the rights of the people to partake. Market enablement refers to the ability to create opportunities for social enterprises in the public marketplace and increase the resilience of the community. These three forms of enablement are not about denying the state but about realigning their responsibilities with those of the market for better community participation (Burgess et al., 1997, Hamdi, 2010). This partially aligns with White's (1996) approach to transformative participation.

However, some of these actions to take responsibility of their own local area and its design might be outside of the realm of the community's knowledge and may be difficult for communities to carry out on their own, especially when there are fewer resources to support communities in their efforts to become active members of the design team. According to Hamdi one of the key elements in addressing some of these complexities is for design professionals to work alongside well-embedded local organisations or support the development of an organisation (Hamdi, 2010:94). When creating such partnerships, designers need to be aware of the exclusion issues that are inherent within many community organisations, especially religious and some socially focused associations (Ibid, 2010). As Hamdi has argued, when hurried attempts to standardise the experiences of diverse groups of people in the community are made to complete a participatory exercise, certain groups or people from the community are inevitably discounted (Ibid, 2010:55).

In parallel to this citizen advocacy movement in participation, there was a more socio-technical design-focused development in the early 1970s in Scandinavia (Kensing and Greenbaum, 2012; Sanoff, 2006). It originated from the participatory design tradition which was developed in Scandinavia in the 60s and 70s when employees had an increasing say in how their workplaces were developed. The American work scientist Kornbluh coined the term 'enabler of learning', which described what he saw as a new role for the professional designer (Granath et al., 1996: p17). This enablement term came about by examining the work of Granath, Hendriksson, Steen, Ullmark, and other participatory design professionals who studied design projects with union leaders and their members and had the chance to co-design the introduction of a new contentious computer system enabled by computer professionals (Granath et al., 1996).

A level of awareness-raising and confidence-building is needed for community groups or collective actors to identify and understand the interplay of powers at play in their lives and their community and which also affect their own decisions in the matters at hand. Participatory approaches in place-based initiatives generally try to encourage discussion and debate regarding the issues at hand, with the aim of increasing knowledge and awareness of these issues and their context and, if possible, resulting in a call to action to instigate, improve, or protect what might be a need highlighted through the participatory process. This means of raising awareness and empowering individual and collective groups to take part in a local project or development is one of the key elements of critical pedagogies (Bedford, 2022). Thus, participation and participatory approaches such as participatory design, participatory research, and participatory action research can be seen as rooted in critical theory and critical pedagogies (Bedford, 2022); this includes CLD.

Thinayne et al. (2018) described critical theory as aligning with some of the key perspectives of participatory design (PD) regarding the latter's focus on users' democratic participation and empowerment. However, they acknowledged that though it is a clear political and moral claim, empowerment and democratic participatory processes are complex issues within PD (Thinyane et al., 2018).

For CLD, criticality can be achieved through increasing humanity, emancipation, and equality or equity by raising critical sociocultural, political, and economic awareness among the participants in the design process – be they collective actors or individuals. They are in-between learners, changing their perspective and their approach to their context and the larger community within it. Critical pedagogies use dialogue to build solidarity, equal footing, and mutual respect. Participants need to become reflexive, inclusive, and critical of the power dynamics and cultural capital discrepancies.

Enabling as critical pedagogy

Critical theory aims to give context to what is amiss with present-day social reality, recognise the stakeholders who can effect change, and provide a framework for its critique and practices to achieve social transformation (Johnson, 2000). Within this theoretical context sits critical pedagogies (CPs), which apply critical theory to educational approaches.

Wink (2000, cited in Brown, 2012) attributed the corollary and development of CPs to the different theoretical, social, and cultural thinking of the communist thinker Karl Marx (1818–1883); critical theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937); social

psychologist Lev Vygostsky (1896–1934); philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey (1859–1952); scholar and cultural critic Henry Giroux (1943); critical studies scholar Peter McLaren (1948); and educator Paulo Freire (1921–1997).

Moreover, the latter, Paulo Freire, as well as his seminal work, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), which was situated in the context of adult education, has had a marked influence on the development of CP[47] and is referred to often in its context (Brown, 2012; Mezirow, 2000). *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* represented a paradigm shift from conventional teaching methods at the time; Freire saw pedagogy from the perspective of social injustice, with the roles of oppressors and the oppressed by respectively the educator and the students. His stance was that the oppressed need to experience 'liberation' from oppressors so they can emerge as equals (Brown, 2012), as a praxis of reflection on their world to transform it (Ashcroft, 1987). Second, instead of the traditional transmission ('banking') model of education, which positions the teacher over the students, he proposed a 'problem-posing' model.

> "problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and simulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of men [sic] as being who are authentic when engaged inquiry and creative transformation (Freire, 1970, p.56)."

Empowerment became prominent in the work of Freire (1970). However, Freire did not use the word 'empowerment' in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Thomas, 1992). In his view the objective was for the learner to have "the power to perceive critically ... to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation" (Freire 1970, p. 71 cited by Ashcroft, 1987). For him, power is a 'creative, committed inquiry in the here and now', with a forward-looking focus and hope (Freire 1970, p. 72 cited by Ashcroft, 1987).

Such empowerment was to be achieved through dialogue, conscience, and practice. He proposed that the teacher and students co-create curriculum content through the concept of 'dialogue' (Brown, 2012), a dialectic model that supported the emancipation of the oppressed:

> "The correct method lies in dialogue. The conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership but the result of

[47] The term critical pedagogy was only coined by Giroux (1983), who credited Freire with providing a language of progressive education (Bradshaw, 2017).

their own conscientization (Freire, 1970, p.42)."

Therefore, CP is about enabling dialogue to change political, social, and economic awareness; observe its contradictions; and support communities in acting accordingly and transform their destinies (Briggs, 1998, p.10, cited by Million and Parnell, 2017). Through this process a 'conscientization', or critical consciousness, can be achieved within the learner, facilitating an inquiry and deconstruction of different actions and explaining how these influences and shape their sociocultural environment (Manca et al., 2016).

Some of the new variations of CP have evolved from constructive criticisms which have arisen over decades to highlight some of the limitations of Freire's thinking on critical pedagogies. It is not within the scope of this research to broadly explore these criticisms since it has been five decades since Freire's original publication; however, some of the issues do need to be acknowledged in the context of this thesis.

One of the main oversights in Freire's conception of CPs is its lack of acknowledgement of the complexity of several issues. This lack stems from his problematic dualism of contentious issues, pitting the oppressed against the oppressor, the empowered against the disempowered, the dominant against the subordinate in binary battles (Brown, 2012; Coben, 1998; Zembylas, 2018).[48] Another issue observed by Mayo (1999) was with Freire's notion of the oppression and its lack of acknowledgement of the complexity and the possible interchangeability of those in the oppressed and oppressor roles (Zembylas 2018). This leads to patriarchal version of the 'liberation' part of his paradigm. Freire stated that for the oppressed to succeed, leaders of the oppressors needed to step back and join the oppressed (Brown, 2012), which could give rise to a possible saviour complex (Toomey, 2011) within the positionality of the teacher or enabler. Another duality strongly perpetuated in Freire's work is that between teacher and student, where he saw the teacher as still having greater knowledge over the relatively novice knowledge of the student (Zembylas 2018). This unequal power relationship between students and teachers challenges the possible outcomes of transformation and constructing knowledge through dialogue, with the danger that it may itself become a form of a banking knowledge approach (Zembylas 2018). Conversely, Freire has an overtly positive, near romantic, and idealistic notion about the equality between

[48] Zembylas (2013, 2018) examined CPs and Freirean theory from the perspective of decolonisation and emotional knowledge. In his thesis on live projects, Brown (2012) thoroughly explored multiple pedagogies that have influenced design education.

teacher and student (Brown, 2012; Zembylas, 2018). This can lead to omission of power dynamics that will nevertheless remain and need to be acknowledge between teacher and student.

Furthermore, CP does not acknowledge the challenges of learners' emotional investments in specific social narratives and deliberations (Zembylas, 2013) as well as alternative forms of criticality (Coben, 1998; Brown 2012; Zembylas, 2018). Some of these simplified dichotomies could be attributed to the 'lack of empirical evidence' in his own work (Coben, 1998 as cited in Brown, 2012), as well as the lack of involvement of women and people of colour in his work (Mayo, 1994; Zembylas, 2018).

Notwithstanding the above critiques, the main concepts and principles of CP promote empowerment and transformation whilst unearthing the power dynamics that encumber social justice (Zembylas, 2013). Its intent is to foster learners' ability to recognise, deliberate, and challenge power dynamics in their surroundings and the local environment by raising their critical awareness and through dialectic analysis of their lived experiences so that they become more embedded, participatory, and engaged citizens, thereby undoing social injustice, and evoking transformative social action (Giroux, 2010; Manca et al., 2016; Zembylas, 2018, 2013).

Some of the varying CPs that have emerged are based on these overarching aims, practices, and assumptions, but each has had its own nuances and emphases, including liberatory pedagogy (Freire), border pedagogy (Giroux), feminist pedagogy (Weiler), engaged pedagogy (Hooks), empowering education (Shor), transformative (Merizow, Bedford), ecopedagogy (Kahn), and empathy pedagogies (Zembylas; adapted from Bedford 2022). Furthermore, these new pedagogies have evolved into different, sometimes contradictory thinking (Zembylas, 2013); with such expansive growth also comes the risk that some of Freire's intent and ideals for pedagogy have become misrepresented, and the criticisms of these misinterpretations has then been attributed to Freire's original work (Lange, 2012, cited by Zembylas, 2018).

Some of these limitations highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the complexities and assumptions that underlie CP, as well as the cultural contexts and reflectivity of the approach. What Freire wrote needs to be adapted to the present day and each situational context; however, his principles are invaluable to community work and education (Ashcroft, 1987), and Freirean theory and CP should not be dismissed due to some of their historic social and cultural limitations (Zembylas, 2013). Furthermore, in addition the aim of raising awareness, stimulating

critique, and encouraging reflection, Freire's work does add an 'emancipatory perspective' (Cranton, 2011). Ledwith (2001)describes this well in her definition of CP:

> "Critical pedagogy is that form of education that emerges from critical compassion; a transcendence of the emotional and the intellectual; the heart and mind learn to see and know in new ways. It requires liberation of the mind, courage to act and confidence to connect – autonomy, agency and alliance—and the beginning of the transformative project lies in simply 'extraordinarily experiencing the ordinary' (Shor 1987. P 93 cited by Ledwith, 2001, p. 181)."

While addressing the liberation of mind and the confidence to connect to further emancipation, she also highlights that there is a need for compassion and critical observation of everyday events.

Enabling can be seen as a CP approach in that it can 'focus on developing social capacities that empower people to take action on their own behalf – individually and or collectively' (Scoones et al., 2020. P.67), with an emphasis on capacities and processes over outcomes (Pereira et al., 2018; Scoones et al., 2020). The main attribute of this approach is that it 'recognises potential of human agents for collective action' whilst simultaneously and explicitly acknowledging lopsided power dynamics and elements of social injustice, as well as how the 'enabled' community can then go on to make more structural changes to overcome their political and social constraints.

Scoones et al.'s definition for an enabling approach is "Fostering the human agency, values and capacities necessary to manage uncertainty, act collectively, identify and enact pathways to desired futures" (Scoones et al., 2020: p. 68). For them, an enabling approach is less about theories or categorisation of a phenomenon. Enabling methods to them should focus on system 'values, agency, relations, and processes' (Scoones et al., 2020). Scoones et al. emphasised that enabling approaches can be biased in favour of a local perspective in a more global society.

Therefore, the skillset for facilitating enabling and nurturing participatory processes should include a combination of learning, deliberating, negotiation and understanding the politics or power dynamics (Forester, 2006).[49] A designer needs to learn, deliberate, negotiate, and understand the power dynamics of the CP of enabling to

[49] Forester based this on the work of e.g. Arnstein, 1969; Baum, 1997; Schon, 1983

become a critical design enabler. In doing so they become not only enablers but also learners. They then enable the community action group to become community design enablers in the larger community.

Furthermore, as each project is situated and unique with its own dynamics and sociocultural context, an enabler must embrace a new cycle of critical reflection for each project. In addition to their personal learning journey, they need to nurture the learning, deliberating, negotiating, and critical understanding of community action groups, collective actors, and the larger community to become community enablers and continue the process.

Enabling CLD

To have a CLD process, communities need support to develop the capacity and willingness to act together (Evans, 2002a). Shared longevity of residence and common cultural ties are associated with a community's ability to act collaboratively; these are the community's 'social capital' (Evans, 2002b). Changes to society and development have affected societies' 'social capital' to act as one and have changed people's sense of community responsibility (00:/ et al., 2011). This makes it harder to initiate community PD projects, as it is harder to establish or locate collective actors that can voice the opinions of the community affected by the design at hand. Design enablers thus need to find ways to harness agency within individuals and the larger community.

To White and Petit, the epitome of participation is giving people and communities the confidence and skills to be become effective collective actors. This includes raising awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding spatial design and place-making and developing relationships and processes to foster collaboration and engagement between the networks of people involved in and affected by a project (White and Petit, 2004). It is about an up-skilling of the community through a combination of participatory and design tools, giving them the capacity and a space to absorb change and structures for empowerment, and capabilities in terms of skills and knowledge as tools for empowerment (Cornwall, 2008; White, 1996)[50].

This up-skilling, in turn, helps community participants gain the agency to build bridges and guide a project through the arduous journey of policy and bureaucracy (Cornwall, 2008; Hamdi, 2010).

[50] Some use capacity to both define space to absorb change as well as skills and knowledge, whilst Sen makes a distinction between the two definitions.

> "Equipped with a critical attitude, learners can become agents of change who recognise and challenge stereotypes and transform social structures (Zembylas, 2013, cited by Manca, 2016, p.112)."

In the best-case scenario for a CLD process, the local, generally collective actors would be more involved and able to take a pro-active part in or even lead (Thinyane et al., 2018) the design process, transforming their place and the larger community. When the collective actors are sufficiently enabled and therefore empowered, they should, in fact, become 'para-architects' and 'para-professionals' to continue designing, planning, and empowering themselves and the larger community (Luansang et al., 2012:501; cited by Wungpatcharapon, 2017).

Cornwall (2008) described the role of an enabler – whether in community development or spatial design – as intrinsic to participatory practice, acknowledging that:

> "The challenge for (community development) is to be able to both enable those who take up these seats to exercise voice and influence, and help provide whatever support is needed - material, moral and political - to popular mobilisation that seeks to influence policy through advocacy rather negotiation.…Taking up that role accountably and supportively, without taking over and tutoring 'the people' to speak to power in 'acceptable' ways[51] (p. 282)."

Rappaport (1987 p.130) further alludes to a

> "change agent [who] in collaboration with those who reside in the setting, seeks to create and understand the conditions that permit change in relationships and environments that lead to development of empowerment."

These two quotes would suggest that design enablers need to enable collective actors to become critical leaders of change and nurture an open, inclusive, accessible, empowering, and transformative approach that is based on collective knowledge creation and meaning-making to enable the larger community to collectively act for social action and change (Manca et al., 2016).

Thus, a design enabler can be described as a critical change agent who helps nurture and foster the community with effective means and critical insights. It is therefore

[51] Cornwall 2008; phrasing (Barnes, 2006)

imperative for communities to have the right critical capacity and capabilities so that they can create their own opportunities and embrace change (Hamdi 2010); design enablers, in turn, must understand what capacities and capabilities are required for each different context and locality, nurture empowerment, and increase agency. This thesis aims to improve understandings of enabling different capacities and capabilities for effective CLD, as well as their conditions and consequences. However, to accomplish this, the transformational context of CLD must be understood.

Critical enabling for transformative CLD

One of the key aspects of critical theory is to establish social transformation through a framework of critiques and practices (Bedford, 2022; Thinyane et al., 2018). Which is in line with transformative participation. As Tisdall (2013, p. 185) has emphasised in referring to Hickey and Mohan, the literature on participation has argued that the main aim of participation is to make sure that existing practices are transformed, including 'the social relations, institutional practices and capacity gaps which cause social exclusion (2004, p. 13)'.

CPs and notions of transformative pedagogies that evolved from Freire's work have strongly been influenced by Merizow's work (Mezirow, 2003, 2000, 1997, 1978), who defined CP as 'learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change' (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58) with the imperative that notions of self-empowerment are developed within the adult learner (Mezirow, 2000). Taylor and Cranton (2012) saw CP as a process of 'examining, questioning, and revising the perceptions that we bring to our experience' (Lorenzetti et al., 2016, p. 205), whilst Boström et al. (2018) described CP as a learning perspective that emphasises critical learning, enabling actors to perceive, consider, and review the makeup of expectations and perceptions that 'frame their thinking, feeling, and acting' (Boström et al., 2018, p. 2).

A thread that runs through the different forms of transformative learning approaches is that they all strive for social justice and want to increase social equity; they do this by changing the learners' knowledge and belief systems (Shields, 2021, 2010). To enabling the redefining of problems in a manner that promotes collaborative problem solving, there is requirement for transformative spaces that nurture and foster dialogue, reflection, and reflexive learning (Pereira et al., 2018). Transformational practices have received renewed interest in recent years, for example, in the

sustainability discourse, specifically since the adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals[52] in 2015 (Pereira et al., 2018; Scoones et al., 2020).

Transformative learning occurs when learners change their own beliefs and value systems through reflection on and perception of new and different experiences (Mezirow 2003). This can occur inside or outside formal learning environments. Informal learning in venues such as community workshops, participatory approaches and events, or any other space where knowledge is shared and perceptions are challenged and transformed can be viewed as public pedagogy (Sandlin et al., 2009). Enabling transformative learning within a setting beyond the classroom can therefore be considered a form of transformative public pedagogy. Learners must understand and acknowledge that their background and social status influence how they perceive their world and become receptive to new knowledge (Pederson et al., 2022). They can achieve this through reflective practices (Schon, 1983; Taylor, 2000, 2007, 1997) in line with CP as an overarching theoretical framework.

As with participation and CPs, there is a danger of seeing transformative learning through rose-tinted spectacles. They can become an idealised notion with little focus on the complexity mentioned. All have some fundamental elements of complex issues, including individual and local-specific issues; therefore, none of these aspects can be fit into strict frameworks. Transformative learning does not come without its pitfalls. It can be emotionally draining to change one's view of the world (Concepción and Eflin, 2009; Yacek, 2020). This can cause a 'shut down' and 'retrenchment' to occur, perhaps due to the speed of receiving the new knowledge, with no time to process or embrace new ways of seeing (Concepción and Eflin, 2009, p. 182; Yacek, 2020). Nonetheless, design enablers and community enablers can be provided with guidelines for understanding principles, actions, and outcomes for enabled and effective transformative CLD.

Merizow's transformation approach deliberately avoids incorporating Freire's liberation agenda, as he sees it as a 'political act' at the behest of the person (Curry-Stevens, 2007). In doing so, he focuses on the development of critical thinking and self-empowerment in learners. Educators become mentors, and learning takes place through immersive activities that supported the learner in developing their own mastery (Jacobs, 2022). Thus, mentors enable personal learning and self-empowerment. As Jacobs (2022) denoted this is a form of social learning that is

[52] The Sustainable Development Goals constituted an international call for action from the UN in 2015 (https://sdgs.un.org/goals).

highlighted in Vygotsky's work on the zone of proximal development, where learning is scaffolded by a more experienced participant to further the skills and knowledge of a learner. This is akin to what a design enabler needs to do for a community group to take the lead on a project. The groups need to transform and develop a level of self-empowerment (agency) to stay the course of a design project and for when the enabler is no longer there to support them. CLD therefore needs to be transformative on two levels: as a transformative learning process for the community group or collective actors, as well as transformative on a process and impact level on a larger scale, as defined by White (1996) and Hickey and Mohan (2004).

In addition, exploring the knowledge and skills a community needs to act, practitioners' role in critically enabling transformative CLD must be considered. What role does a practitioner have in making community involvement effective and transformative? Turner (1997), Hamdi (1991), Manzini (Awan et al., 2011), and Wates (Jenkins and Forsyth, 2009) have all posited that designers should be enablers. However, this notion of designers as critical enablers and the implications of this for the designer have not been explored further. Thus, this thesis aims to contribute to this exploration.

3.3 Transformative meso-empowerment

More often than not, it is up to one person or a group of people to take up the baton to 'lead' or initiate a project in their local area or to bring the community together around the development of a civic or social project. This could be self-actualised groups or individuals that want to get something started in their community, but it is predominantly 'invited' participation (Cornwall, 2008) in which the individuals, groups, civic organisations, or a combination of these are brought together at the behest of the LAs, housing associations, or private development companies. This could happen as a product of the due diligence of the development groups to listen to local voices; however, more often it is policy-driven to comply with regulations.

Nevertheless, Cornwall (2008) has argued that present-day public engagement is often an invitation to be informed and not a collaborative place-making process that is set up by the people for the people with the enabled support of practitioners. For invitation-based participatory processes, she thinks it is vital to get the inclusion of the community and the depth of the engagement right even if it is impossible to include everyone. Trying to assemble a wider range of community members in most local or neighbourhood participatory settings is already hard, and it is even more unimaginable in a large or metropolitan urban environment. The ideal for Cornwall is as deep and as wide a process as possible. Cornwall has observed that this is costly and time-consuming, and due to the duration (logistical and information processing) of such processes, participation is very vulnerable to disengagement due to the fatigue of people involved throughout the process. Cornwall also addressed the concerns of community groups. In self-actualised, community-led projects, participants are usually a self-selected group from their own community of interest in support of their project. They can, of course, be as diverse a group as possible, but they can still become undemocratic, as some may easily feel overpowered and excluded by the enthusiasm and commitment of a small, active collective group (Cornwall 2008).

Nonetheless, these groups – whether invited or self-actualised – are often referred to as the 'representative group' or 'stakeholders'. This brings with it the problem of who is represented, what voices are listened to and who as a stake in what (Cornwall, 2008; Morton, 2021). If inclusion – or the lack thereof – is not acknowledged, participation can, in fact, increase exclusion (Cornwall 2008) by focusing on readily available or focal stakeholders and civic organisations that claim to represent the wider community. As a formal assembled group, a stakeholder or representative

group can be given or claim 'legitimacy' by themselves or through others (Cornwall, 2008). However, to what extent can such parties speak for the community and understand the needs of all the different social and cultural groups? To move away from using phrases that can be problematic I want to propose using the phrase collective actors, a word used by Dekker et al. (2010) to characterise community groups or individuals that participate and want to act in spatial development projects.

Cornwall (2008) argued that when deliberating inclusion, individuals need to be cautious of categorising people and groups as 'their lives'. They may not see that their lives are in different compartments and that they are socially isolated from other aspects of society; they may see themselves as a holistic representation of different social aspects of life (e.g., mother, co-worker, rural, poor; Cornwall, 2008). Additionally, it is important to acknowledge the socio-economic and cultural relationships between the relevant social groups and networks in any core group (Cornwall, 2008).

Williams (2004) observed that bringing community-based groups together (invited or self-actualised) to (re)build community capacities is generally a more participatory approach in affluent areas. In less well-off or deprived areas, Williams argued that informal participatory practices that go unobserved by public policy tend to be more prevalent. 'The widespread consensus is that nurturing community-based groups and rebuilding community capacity is synonymous' (Williams, 2004). As an enabler, being aware of the informal participatory practices that already exist in a place is necessary to avoid 'parachuting in' ill-fitting 'alien' approaches that do not respect the diverse needs within a society (Williams, 2004). Nevertheless, while investigating the literature the relevance of the core group of collective actors and their empowerment as a collective seemed undervalued in the theoretical and practical discourse of participation, especially in the spatial design literature.

The thesis wants to add to the discourse of supporting collective actors to take part and even lead projects. What is needed for core groups to increase their agency to take part and lead design processes? By studying TGH enabling approaches that specifically focus on empowerment, this research tries to address the empowerment discourse in participatory practices in the built environment. Furthermore, it is essential to understand which approaches are needed to harness and nurture the potential of these collective actors to be as inclusive and representative as possible.

Empowerment

Empowerment has been explored in many different fields such as women's studies (Huis et al., 2017; Kabeer, 1999; Kesby, 2005), environmental and sustainable development (e.g. Bedford, 2022; Blewitt, 2008; Coy et al., 2021; Pereira et al., 2018; Wittmayer and Schäpke, 2014), community development and social studies (e.g. Avelino et al., 2019; Coy et al., 2021; Craig and Mayo, 1995; Thinyane et al., 2018; Toomey, 2011), community psychology (e.g. Chavis et al., 1993; Chavis and Florin, 1990; Chavis and Wandersman, 1990; Florin and Wandersman, 1990; Prestby et al., 1990; Price, 1990), pedagogies (e.g. Ashcroft, 1987; Bedford, 2022), and participatory and architectural design studies (Alexiou et al., 2020; Hamdi, 1991; Hussain, 2010; Thinyane et al., 2018; Tisdall, 2013; Wungpatcharapon, 2017).

One of the key people to contribute to early empowerment discourse, Julian Rappaport, explained the following: 'Empowerment is a process, a mechanism by which people, organisations, and communities gain mastery over their affairs' (1987, p. 122). Whilst Rappaport developed this definition in a community psychology setting, Ashcroft (1987) wrote about the *Why and What* of empowerment from a language studies angle. Through the analysis of Dewey (1916), Freire (1970), and others, Ashcroft aimed to disentangle the notion of empowerment, as it was the latest 'buzz word' within education and academic settings. To Ashcroft (ibid) empowering philosophy has several important corollaries: "conceptions **of learning** as something that happens to an individual, as an internal and subjective action, as a process of inquiry and discovery; **of knowledge** as something that can only be personally acquired and not given, as truths in each of us rather than as fixed and finite truths 'out there'; **of development** as personal growth, as the transformation or change of powers already present; **of classrooms** as communities of learners helping each other to transform latent capabilities to active powers for the enhancement of all (p. 155–156)."

Cornwall argued that the classroom should be reframed as a space in line with 'spaces of participation' (Cornwall, 2008; Cornwall and Coelho, 2007) and with public pedagogies in the context of participation in spatial practices.

Huis et al. (2017) defined empowerment as a process that enables people to gain control and progress on problems that are key to their personal lives, neighbourhoods, and social context. They proposed to see empowerment as a comprehensive process that requires individual as well as collective awareness, beliefs, and behaviours rooted in the context specific social and cultural structures.

To Thinyane et al. (2018) democratic participation and community empowerment are honourable but nonetheless aspirational aims in PD practices. In line with Huis et al., they argued that empowerment is a multifaceted and complex process driven by complex interactions and interdependencies. Ertner et al. (2010) supported this by stating that empowerment is a challenging and complex activity; nevertheless, they saw it as a politically and morally appropriate aim within PD.

Power

Power is the dominant concept in community empowerment. Ashcroft (1987) noted that most literature discussing power at the time discussed power over others. She emphasised that the notion of power over was something Freire wanted to rid himself of, insisting that he saw that power over others was not unavoidable but could be a collective action that is cooperative and has shared aims. Dewey (1916) used power in his work on education in a basic sense, according to Ashcroft. He saw learning as 'organising power that ensure growth' (p51), with a focus on learning through past experiences and the power of gaining diverse and innovative forms of control. Ashcroft denoted that power had a capability and action element; the principle and the resulting action are bonded. She stated that empowering is a 'bringing into a state of capability to act' (p143).

As with participation, one of the key problems with empowerment is it is still framed in terms of viability and performance within the global market and civic accountability rather than focusing on the process (Craig and Mayo, 1995; Fung, 2009). Furthermore, as with participation, empowerment is bandied about and co-opted and feels like it has lost its context and meaning, even becoming a buzz word. Regardless, as Ashcroft emphasised, it is hard to substitute, support, enable, or motivate the construct.

However, it is important to move on from power in itself and from only focusing on power over oppression, impositions, and coercion that need to be overcome to become empowered. In recent years there has been a power shift in community development to see power as more multifaceted. As described by Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) in their literature review of empowerment within community development, Rowland's (1997) categories of power identified where people, groups, or communities 'can gain power over (resisting manipulation), power to (creating new possibilities), power with (acting in a group) and power from within (enhancing self-respect and self-acceptance)' (Zamenopoulos et al., 2021). In the context of co-design, these categories can be adapted, and empowerment can be seen as a

process where people and communities develop the power to design and transform their situation through connection with others. Developing the "Capacity to engage in design and therefore frame their own matters of concern, visions and solutions that realise these visions (Power to); Capacity to create a field of possibilities by connecting or disconnecting with other (Power with); Capacity to unlock their own knowledge and resources (Power within)."

Zamenopoulos et al. do not have a description for 'power over', as they assert that it can entail that the actor can restrict the field of possibilities and that of others. Nevertheless, Ibrahim (2007) and Samman and Santos (2009) considered 'power over' the extent to which an actor can exercise control over their personal decisions. It involves whether the actor's agency is re-scripted through local powers or social hierarchy. It is something that needs to be addressed and overcome for the actor but also requires acknowledgement in the design process, as placating community members is part of the bottom rung of Arnstein's Ladder of Participation.

Similarly, in her analysis of empowerment, Ashcroft saw power working on an inner personal level (the enabling "power to . . . ") as well as an inter-personal or social level (the cooperative "power with ..."). (p.71). Both are essential and necessary; however, Ashcroft stipulates that inner power is the prerequisite, as it precedes the ability to have inter-personal power; however, she leaves the caveat that it is a developmental process, not a value judgement that one goes before the other. Furthermore, she highlighted that both are intrinsic. If an individual only develops personal power, they may focus on their independence to the point of becoming isolated and alienating the larger society. Conversely, if inter-personal power development is one's exclusive focus, the individual's development of self-belief, security, inquiry, unique input, and creativity may be lost. In line with Zamenopoulos et al., Ashcroft does not believe power over can exist in the context of achieving power to and power with; she sees power from the inter-personal perspective and does not see gaining power over one's own decisions as an inner personal approach.

Similar to Ashcroft, Ibrahim highlighted that Alsop et al. (2006) and others have defined empowerment as having two components: expansion of agency (the ability to act on what you value – power to) and opportunity to exert that agency (influenced by institutional environments – power with).

Agency

As Sammas and Santos (2009) have articulated, agency and empowerment are both important as outcomes of development and as a means to develop other goals. They examined agency as a goal, studying what fosters and nurtures agency's role, and how it can promote empowerment (Sammas and Santos 2009). Alkire and Ibrahim (2007) drew upon Sammas and Santos (2009), Sen Rowlands (1997), Sen and Samman and Santos (2009), and developed four possible actions of agency that could lead to empowerment and communal belonging.

- "Empowerment as control (Power over) – Control over personal decisions
- Empowerment as choice (Power to) – Domain specific autonomy and household decision-making
- Empowerment as change (Power from within) – Changing aspects in one's life
- (individual level)
- Empowerment in community (Power with) – Changing aspects in one's life (communal level)"

Bring these together with the four corollaries of empowerment that Ashcroft highlighted; conceptions of learning, knowledge, development, and spaces (changed to Cornwall's distinction), to get actions of empowerment.

- Power over (developmental) – personal growth and renewed control due to transformation and agency already exhibited
- Power to (learning) – as an individual process of inquiry and discovery to develop autonomy and develop choices
- Power within – awareness of change that can only be personally acquired and given
- Power with (spatial) – actors supporting each other to transform latent capabilities into activated powers for the improvement of wider communities

In their research, Kabeer (1999) highlighted that the capability to exert individual choice was founded on three correlating factors: resources (i.e., materials, human capital, social expectations, and provisions), agency (the ability or sense of ability to define personal aims and act upon them, along with the opportunity to choose life outcomes), and achievement (i.e., outcomes). They go on to argue that these three factors of choice can be used as a measure of empowerment. However, as Huis et al. (2007) emphasised, previous research has shown that the act of choosing does not always make progressive achievements materialise. They raise the example that

women's personal choices are historically, socially, and culturally conditioned, as are the choices of members from many underrepresented and marginalised groups.

Meso-Empowerment

Ertner et al. (2010) conducted a literature review on PD, determining different categories of how empowerment is articulated in practice. These categories are specific user groups, direct democracy, user's positions, researcher's practice, and reflexive practice (Ertner et al., 2010). The first two categories involve empowerment as an outcome, and the latter three examine empowerment through the participatory process. As a spatial PD practice, CLD is focused on both empowerment as an outcome and as a process; thus, all the categories are of interest. However, for the purposes of this research, specific user groups, the user's position, and reflective practice are of greater importance.

As Pyyhtinen (2017) noted, in social development literature, phenomena are generally positioned within two vertical hierarchal levels, the micro and the macro, but the hierarchy can be broken up with a 'meso' layer that sits between the micro and macro. In their research, Huis et al. (2017) described empowerment as a process, and people normally focus on empowerment on an individual level (individual capacities and free exercise of personal choice) and a more collectivist level (involving collective behaviour that emphasises broader collective and societal growth). They therefore proposed that three different levels of empowerment can be distinguished: personal, relational (e.g., one's partner, family, or community), and societal (wider shared context). Their description of levels seems incongruous with the earlier statement about the collective or does not very effectively define community as a neighbourhood or a collective group for women working together. Similarly, Samman and Santos (2009) describe 'meso' as the community and 'macro' as the country. This overlooks the notion of the collective actors, the core groups, and the collective collaboration that is key to mobilising agency and empowerment. Schulz et al. (1995) identified three levels of empowerment: micro (individual), meso (group or organisational), and macro (community). In considering the local and global, community and larger societal changes seem to be part of the divergent macro empowerment.

In their paper, Huis et al. (2017) referred to a recent study that focused on women's empowerment within collective business ownership, working with the prevailing cultural norms of collective versus individual growth by raising women's understanding of the origins of their oppression and showing that acting as a

collective for could enhance the larger community. Their research showed that working in groups with a collective aim was the inception of individual agency and collective empowerment, which are essential to wider macro empowerment. This would suggest that working from the meso-level – empowering meso-level collective actors and other groups – can be the catalyst to supporting micro and macro empowerment.

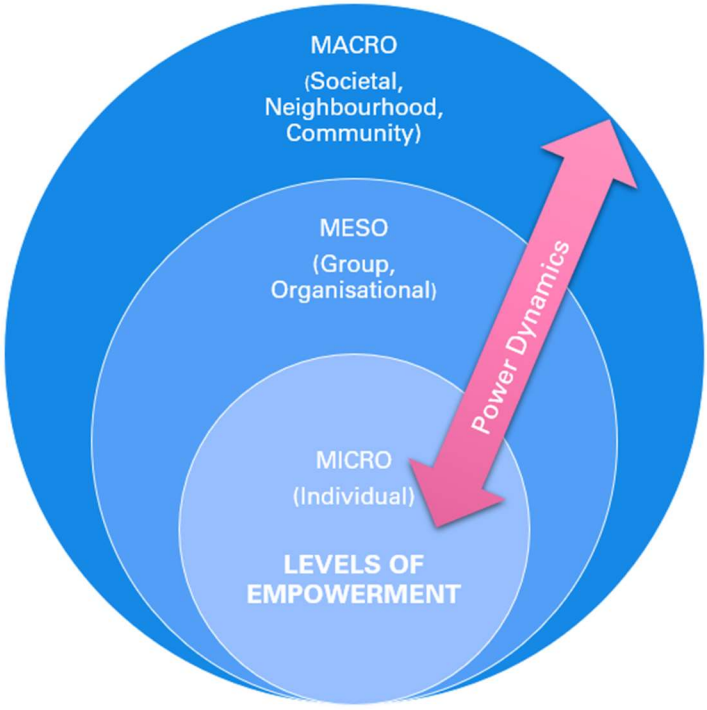


Figure 3-3 Levels of Empowerment[53]

Serpa and Ferreira (2019) support this thinking by citing the work of Fine (2012). They argued that the importance of the meso-level, which can be primary groups, secondary groups, or both, is that its social structure affects the individual's context. By focusing on the meso-level analysis, one deepens one's understanding of the diverse structure and interactions within the process and hones-in on the shared and ongoing significance of these empowering actions. Social order shapes a group, just as a group represents social order; by researching that collective action, interactions and meaning can be revealed for a wider network. Notwithstanding the constraints of a meso-level exploration, Fine explained that researching the external factors of the

[53] Levels of empowerment are an adaptation of Schutz et al (1995) and Roura (2021)

limitation and the resulting negotiations can clarify influential factors such as 'identity, social capital, collective action, group culture, networks, and civil society' (Serpa and Ferreira, 2019). Analysis of groups can provide conditions and actions to gain a clearer understanding of how an individual sits within a larger context and how they are shaped by it. Fine contended that this can be achieved by developing a shared history, collective memory, shared places, and continuous social interaction. This is what Roura (2021) described as the power dynamics between the levels, the way that each level influences and is influenced by the activities and responses of the other.

Pyyhtinen (2017) addressed the power dynamics of the levels, as vertical scales do not convey the multiple, rich, and messy nature of the levels, as well as the dynamics between the different levels and how they are actioned. Pyyhtinen see it as a crude and unrefined conceptual model that misses out on the richness and complexity of processes and find that processes cannot be confined to fixed-level structures, which can limit wider, more heterogeneous, and holistic inquiries. Nonetheless, simplified scales or levels can, at times, visualise the main concepts of phenomena, making them accessible and communicating the main structure for discussion.

Even though Fine (2012), Serpa and Ferreira (2019) Roura (2021) and Dekker et al. (2010) emphasised the importance of the empowerment of the meso-level (e.g., collective actors, community groups, community organisations, and other meso-groups) and its influence on the micro- and macro levels, even as a catalyst for their development, it is surprising that there is not more literature on meso-level empowerment approaches that could support CLD.

Transformative meso-empowerment

In the context of transformative participation, White (1996) described empowerment as follows: 'The idea of participation as empowerment is that the practical experience of being involved in considering options, making decisions, and taking collective action to fight injustice is itself transformative' (1996 pp. 8–9). To White citing Rappaport (1987) participation is about people gaining 'mastery over their affairs'. This empowerment can then lead to greater awareness of the issues that 'cause their inequality' (Labonté and Laverack, 2008; White, 1996), increase their confidence in their own capacity to effect change (Tisdall, 2013; White, 1996), and be transformational (White, 1996). This transformative empowerment process is perpetual, as it keeps 'transforming their everyday lives and their experience of it' (White, 1996). This is

similar to how Ashcroft describes the act of empowerment; she noted that empower-*ed* is a contradictory term, as empowerment never stops and, therefore, is never in the past but is always ongoing.

Community groups have a high chance of not staying the course with a development and therefore need enabling approaches and systems to sustain themselves through the process (Chavis et al., 1993). Transformative meso-empowerment involves empowering communities at the meso-level, an intermediate level between the micro and macro levels, by providing them with the necessary tools to transform their environment. This includes providing them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to take control of their environment and make it more liveable and sustainable. Moreover, empowerment can only be enabled or facilitated if people themselves achieve it (Kesby, 2005). Therefore, to effectively empower people, conditions and actions that catalyse and promote constant sharing and collective action must be present for sustainable empowerment to be achieved (Kesby, 2005; Wungpatcharapon, 2017).

3.4 Conclusion

Critical design enabling for transformative community-led design

To research design enabling CLD in the built environment in more depth, the thesis establishes a theoretical framework consisting of

1. Transformative participatory design (e.g., White, Hickey and Mohan),
2. Critical pedagogic theories (e.g., Freire, Giroux, Shor),
3. Transformative adult learning (e.g., Merizow, Schon, Taylor), and
4. Transformative meso-empowerment (e.g., White).

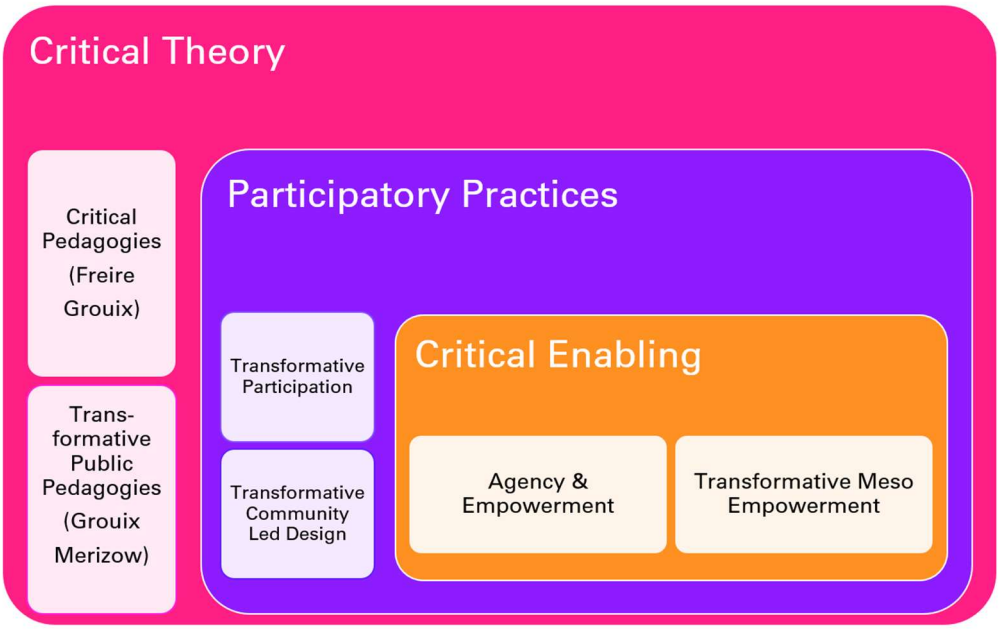


Figure 3-4 Thesis Theory Framework

Subsequently, it was observed that transformative participation encompasses the complexity of spatial design's social and political issues, which is an acknowledged fact amongst place-making practitioners. However, transformative participation, as conceptualised by White (1996) has not, as of yet, been implemented in the field of spatial design.

According to Hickey and Mohan (2004), all participation could be transformative and increase empowerment. Additionally, White's (1996) framework of transformative participation shows such participation is a complex web of top-down and bottom-up participatory processes that should contain empowerment. It highlights models that are used in framing participatory processes and methods. Consequently, design

practitioners must understand what enabling means and what skills and knowledge they need to develop to give the means to people; these people can then, in turn, step forward, design and build their own neighbourhoods, and sustain their development (Hamdi 2010). To accomplish this, a greater understanding of what enabling approaches are by looking at the transformative dynamics that can develop empowerment as a means and an outcome and determining what this then entails for the enabler is needed.

The research question asked, 'What is an effective design enabling approach for community-led design?' Given that 1) enablers have professional responsibility for collective actors to increase agency and meso-empowerment, 2) empowerment is a process and an outcome, and 3) transformative CLD is a process and an outcome, what conditions need to be in place? What actions need to be taken by an enabler for the right actions by the collective actors to happen? What are the consequences of an effective critical enabling approach, and what does it mean for a designer? Through fieldwork and data, the thesis further examines these conditions, actions, and consequences for design enabling in CLD.

Chapter 4 Methodology

This chapter describes the thesis's research methodology by examining the research approach, my positionality, the different samples from the different data collection methods, an overview of the analysis of the data, and the limitations of the study.

4.1 An ethnographic journey of a descriptive case study

Qualitative research design

The motivation for using an in-depth qualitative research methodology is that it emphasises unearthing and describing, with the objective of extracting and analysing, the meaning of a phenomenon or experience (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative methods are commonly used in architectural and design research (Maginn, 2004; Wasson, 2007) because of their inductive approach to interpreting an issue, phenomenon, or situation within a wider context. It allows the data to explain the nature (i.e., connections, relations, realities, and challenges) of an issue or interaction through observation. The explorative nature of qualitative research makes it an effective methodology to describe and understand design enabling as a transformative practice. More specifically the research frame for this thesis is the design enablingphenomenon in the context of TGH, a U.K. charity that operates in the field of design in the built environment.

Descriptive case study

The main methodology used was a case study methodology with an initial focus on exploring TGH. Martiskainen (2017) stated that a case study approach is well situated to study social entities such as social groups or communities. Furthermore, Martiskainen argues that case studies can effectively research phenomena such as design enabling 'from inside' their geographical, cultural, and social context and in their everyday applied setting (Gómez and Kuronen, 2011, p. 685). Since this thesis was made possible by a Collaborative Doctoral Award and involved working closely – and eventually with – TGH, the research was situated 'inside' the phenomenon and observed the collective actors and design enablers in action. A case study is an empirical inquiry that has an in-depth focus on phenomena such as social settings, persons, groups, activities, processes, or companies in their real-life context as defined by space and time (Yin, 2009). Stake (1995) defined case studies as 'not a methodological choice but a case to be studied' (p.236) and as 'the extensive examining of how things get done' (Stake, 2008, p. 44, cited by Parker-Jenkins, 2018). This aligns with my having observed six years of design enabling in action

working on the Empowering Design Practices (EDP) project and seeing how it is 'done'.

The value of case study research as an approach is its interdisciplinarity, its ability to encompass the complexity and richness of data, and the opportunity to triangulate (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009) using multiple methods of a descriptive, explanatory, or exploratory nature (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Parker-Jenkins, 2018; Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) asserted that case study research is notably practical 'when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (p. 18) and 'benefits from prior development of theoretical propositions' to guide research design and analysis (ibid, p.18). In this case, no propositions were made as they are not always present in a particular study (Baxter and Jack, 2015). However, the boundaries between phenomena or interventions and context were not always clear. When I started my journey, I intended to study TGH as the main phenomenon whilst examining multiple cases of projects that they had supported with their different methods. However, during my upgrade report after the first year of the thesis, it was decided that, in fact, design enabling within the context of TGH should be the phenomenon I observed.

By drawing closer to the research participants and being inside the phenomenon, subjective influences on previously developed propositions can be corrected and improved through conversations with and feedback from the studied individuals or groups (Flyvbjerg 2006). This is not always the case with biases that can influence the selection of quantitative categories and variables (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Steele, 2022), as if it is not participatory or co-produced, it may lack the reflexivity of research participant interaction. Flyvbjerg (2011, 2006) summarised five oversimplifications or 'misunderstandings' about case study research;

> "1: Theoretical knowledge (Context -independent) is more valuable than practical (context- dependent) knowledge; 2: One cannot generalize on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development; 3: The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, that is, in the first stage of a total research process; 4: The case study contains a bias toward verification, that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions; 5: It is often difficult to develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies."(Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 221)

One could come to conclude that 'it is theory, reliability, and validity that are at issue' – and therefore 'the very status of the case studies as a scientific method' (Ibid,

p.221). Additionally, he noted that even a single case has the potential to support generalisation, hypothesis testing, and theory building (Ibid, 2006). It also includes the added advantage of its ability to rigorously test observations in the context of the phenomena as they happen in the field (Steele, 2022). Flyvbjerg also implies that a dense case study can be more interesting and useful on a practice as well as theory level than high-level generalisations of theory (Steele, 2022), allowing for the 'development of a nuanced view of reality' (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 303).

Baxter and Jack (2015) combined Stake's (1995) and Yin's (2009) classifications for different case study approaches to give an overview for novice researchers. They defined explanatory, exploratory, descriptive, multi-case study, intrinsic, descriptive, and collective case studies. This PhD investigation was initially intended to use a multi-case study descriptive approach that would study different methods and community projects that had been supported by TGH but eventually became a descriptive case study that would describe the 'phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred' of design enabling within the context of TGH (Baxter and Jack, 2015, p. 548).

Ethnography

In combination with being a descriptive case study, this research also adopted an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is a form of qualitative inquiry with origins in social anthropology. It is concerned with analysing and observing a 'culture' or phenomenon and its structures, processes, groups, agents, and social relations (Maginn, 2004), strongly valuing people and their narratives (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). For example, urban design studies have gained much through ethnographic research specifically when focusing on a community and their participation in civic structures and processes (Maginn, 2004).[54]

This research focuses on describing the phenomenon of design enabling through observations, interactions, and interviews, similar to and complementary to case study research. It uses techniques that help to observe and describe the complexities and dynamics of a culture – in this case the design enabling culture within TGH workshops. It was clear that the research was to be a descriptive case study of TGH's design enabling approaches. However, I was involved in the field of practice and had positioned myself within TGH as an enabler and research observer. The DT, other

[54] In *Introduction: Anthropologies of planning—Temporality, imagination, and ethnography (Abram and Waldren* Abram *(1998)* dedicate a section to an overview of anthropological approaches within planning.

EDP activities, and workshops were a natural setting for the ethnographic part of the study, as the interaction between the design enablers and participants took place in a structured process.

Parker-Jenkins (2018) admitted that it can be hard to rigidly distinguish between ethnography and case study as there are overlaps in techniques and concepts. She stated that case studies focus more on different elements or themes, whereas ethnography focuses on people and their activities and perceptions in their daily context (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). She sees the main distinction between the two as the time spent in the field and the level of immersion in the data. These are dependent on the nature of the research objectives and aim. Is the need to observe an event (one of experience) or a full cycle of a social aspect (i.e., a school trimester)? Parker-Jenkins argues that case studies may not generate the size of data and immersion in that data to be called ethnography; that is, they require an 'unearthing of complexities and nuances' of a phenomenon. Furthermore, she continues, building trust, respect, and credibility (Guba and Lincoln, 1985) can take months and sometimes years of high-quality face-to-face interactions and building connections within the research setting, whereas some case studies might last hours, days, or weeks. Hammersley (2006) noted that when conducting a case study and not immersing oneself in the situation, one can assume the observed situation to be typical or the norm (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). This is where time in the field is important.

An ethnographic research journey consists of several characteristics (Mills and Gay, 2019):

- it is in the field;
- the researcher needs to be in the natural setting of the event or phenomenon;
- the research provides a holistic and systematic overview of the context;
- documents are from a native perspective;
- it describes and interprets through multiple data collection methods;
- it is an indicative approach, guided by the research questions, not a hypothesis; and
- it focuses on the meaning of the words and images, not numbers (i.e., it is qualitative).

Another characteristic is that an ethnography is presented through thick description (Geertz, 2008). The ethnographic techniques available to create a rich description of the observation range from interviews, conversations, discourse, and document analysis to film and photography (Wolcott, 1999). In addition, presenting facts

through thick description, observations are interpreted, and structures are found (Blomberg and Karasti, 2012).

Nevertheless, ethnographic approaches need to be supported by a process of reflexivity, acknowledging positionality, and ensuring ethical conduct in both fieldwork and dissemination (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). The main challenge within the ethnographic process highlighted by Parker-Jenkins is maintaining 'detachment' and objectivity – specifically, when a researcher moves from being an observer to a participant. However, in some instances such as auto-ethnography they can become advocates and give voice to a phenomenon or experience (Parker-Jenkins, 2018, p. 20). Nevertheless, it is important to maintain objectivity as there is a danger of going 'native' (O'Reilly, 2011; Walsh, 2012). This is when a researcher becomes too submerged in the activities or organisation and loses their critical observational eye and distance to the research focus, both of which are essential for the analysis (Parker-Jenkins, 2018).

This research's natural setting was TGH and their participatory design enablingactivities. With myself in the field as a participant observer, as well as being a researcher and practitioner as part of the EDP and as an architect and founder working at Cave. I used observations and interviews as the main methods to collect data, with document analysis as a form of secondary data to triangulate and validate the primary data. It was not a fast process, requiring several observations, high-quality exchanges (Wolcott, 1999), and immersion in the data (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). There was ample opportunity for high-quality exchanges at a diverse range of workshops that used different methods based on TGH methodology. This helped expand the observation of enabling and allowed for some additional impact studies to consolidate the initial findings of my doctoral research within the context of the 'Debate Series', which represented a descriptive case study in implementation.

4.2 Positionality

> "Both ethnography and case study draw on a similar base of research techniques and both are informed by issues of researcher positioning" (Parker-Jenkins, 2018, p. 29).

Various aspects of the multiple, overlapping identities of the researcher can underpin meaning-making within a research project (Bourke, 2014; Moser, 2008). My background as a White, middle-class, well-educated, bi-cultural, middle-aged woman, as well as my past experiences as a student, architectural practitioner, and academic, and my personality as an organiser, pragmatist, and observer, impact how I reflect on the research process. Such reflexivity is a form of self-scrutiny by a researcher, creating a form of self-consciousness of the relationship with the other (Bourke, 2014).

I grew up in a rural village in the East of the Netherlands, part of a large, entrepreneurial Catholic family on my maternal side, in the mid-70s, 80s, and 90s. My father was British, and all our holidays were spent visiting my grandmother in the UK. My main upbringing and schooling were in the Netherlands, with a few years spent in the UK studying at different universities. I immigrated to the UK in 2009, where I co-founded the architectural practice The Cave-Cooperative. My MSc supervisor at Technical University Delft used the phrase bi-cultural to describe me when discussing my positionality for my dissertation at the time. She felt that I was more than just bilingual. My bi-cultural upbringing has given me the flexibility to feel comfortable in different settings, understanding that certain situations require a different approach or different expectations and require an openness to engage with the unexpected.

Being part of a family enterprise also influenced how I view the world and act within it. My family's milling business was an all-inclusive experience of 'getting stuck in', doing, and being part of a collective. Being part of our entrepreneurial family gave me a strong sense of social responsibility for the collective. I actively supported and belonged to it. If work needed to be done in the evening or on weekends, our parents did so, as did we when we could work. If there was an emergency, delivery, or shipment that needed sorting, one would just help out. This sense of doing and getting stuck in was also how I engage in the community workshops, working with them on the ground. This is where I feel most confident – as a design enabler and researcher doing fieldwork. Although there is a danger of getting excessively stuck, dominating, or taking over work or activities, I am aware of this tendency and have

learned to enable and showcase more, giving participants a more immersive, transformative learning experience.

During my MA studies in architecture and interior design at the North London University, renamed London Metropolitan University, I discovered an affinity for the social side of architecture. In 2001, as part of a studio taught by Maurice Mitchell, we went to Kosovo for our field trip. This was just a few years after the civil war, and we assisted a non-governmental organisation, Acted, in the small historic town of Vustrii. Through the discourse and observation of the local community, it was clear that with very little resources, they had created a new common, designing their environments with what they had available to them, recycling any type of material, and constructing their new homes the best they could. Their homes were warm and welcoming. The main aim was to start moving forward in what was a war-torn town by supporting the settling of a new community. In Kosovo it felt that the stories and narratives told throughout time about the place brought people together, creating a collective memory, of which the individual sense of self was a part. This is where I realised that as a designer, one can have a profound effect on the community by just supporting – or 'enabling' – them to build their own commons through the smallest of design narratives and interventions.

In Maurice Mitchell's studio, I met Liz Crisp, with whom I co-founded Cave seven years later. Within my work with the Cave Co-operative, we completed some community consultation projects, which did not always turn out as we had anticipated. The problem was that some of the projects were not consultations, let alone participation events, but mere information evenings set up by the clients after the design had already been developed. Other issues were not addressed due to a lack of communication or interest or were only attended by vociferous NIMBY groups, and these events tended to lead the participants in a certain direction. As a designer I wanted the voices of future users to be heard and incorporated in the design process. However, these experiences highlighted some of the challenges within the participatory design process. This was a key driver in applying for this PhD: to link practice back to theory, developing and strengthening my own praxis.

The most important aspect of my own architectural practice has been the interaction between designers and clients, users, the larger community, or a combination of these. I see the design process as working together to understand people's needs and turning these into design solutions, enabling an empowering experience for the clients as well as for the designer. This type of design collaboration introduces new

ways of understanding challenges that can create solutions and bring out previously overlooked opportunities and potential in a project. Designs of this type should help facilitate a bespoke harmony, orchestrated by the clients or users themselves, who will eventually be the occupants or custodians of the project. These encounters continue to inspire and teach me as a practitioner – and now also as a researcher – how individuals interact with each other and affect their environment collectively during the design process.

In addition to working in practice and starting my PhD in 2011, in 2015 I started working as a part-time research associate at the Open University (OU). This turned into a full-time research associate affiliation in January 2018. The position involved working on the AHRC-funded EDP[55] research project, which is one of several research collaborations between the OU Design Group and TGH. Alongside my doctoral research, this work has allowed me the opportunity to develop my skills as a researcher and become a more reflective practitioner, studying the research through the lens of social sustainability. More specifically, it has developed my interest in how short intervention community workshop come together, as well as what the pedagogic aspects and impact of doing participatory practices within community settings are.

Observer

I did not speak properly until I was four. According to my father, on my fourth birthday, I decided I would talk in full sentences, skipping the babbling phase. I now know that this was an early sign of being neurodivergent. At school initially I struggled, especially with reading and writing, but not enough to get tested for dyslexia until I was 24. However, this created a general sense of feeling lost, not fully understanding what was going on, and feeling one step behind. At the time, this was attributed to being raised bilingual. Nonetheless, this feeling of standing outside the action was due to being neurodivergent beyond the dyslexia diagnoses. Not completely catching up with what was going on made me an astute observer to help understand a world that I could not always grasp from reading or discourse. I had to develop meaning and understanding by standing outside, looking in, copying, and listening. This sense of feeling like I was on the periphery drove my passion to fight for the inclusion of others, having an understanding that it is not always easy to cross a boundary when one might feel alien.

[55] Empowering Design Practices websites- https://www.empoweringdesign.net/

The PhD turned out to take far longer than anticipated and hoped for. Multiple issues combined to make a difficult journey more protracted and painful. My dyslexia meant that I struggled with the reading and writing required, and my neurodivergence made focus and continuity of thought difficult. When I was diagnosed with severe dyslexia in my third year of university, the psychologist was genuinely surprised at how I managed to get to university without a dyslexia diagnosis and was curious about the coping strategies I must have developed that helped me circumnavigate the system. One of the main coping strategies that I believe many dyslexics and neurodiverse people use is sensemaking through observation. For example, I was an amazing notetaker, great at active listening, and could visually observe what people were doing to start making sense of and processing what was going on even if the actual conceptual or theoretical processing took a little longer to digest. This strategy of observation and note-taking was a key strength during my research until I started experiencing hemiplegic migraines in 2017, reducing some of my ability to be bilingual, observe, note-take, and deliberate. This had a knock-on effect on the writing of this thesis.

Due to the length of the thesis, the evolution of the research was not always as clearly captured. However, in addition to the multitude of notebooks, reflective conversations within the EDP team and much visual data were available. Furthermore, as the DT was part of the EDP research project, there was a need to differentiate between the findings of the EDP research and those of the PhD. To make sure the PhD had a unique contribution was crucial because at times PhD findings would cross-pollinate the EDP thinking (e.g., the use of the enabler roles in a FutureLearn course[56] '*Enabling community-based leadership in design'*).

Participant observer

Case studies and ethnographic research, along with archival research, are types of observational research that comprise a thorough descriptive analysis of an individual, group, or phenomenon and can be designed to incorporate a non-participant or the participant observation position of the researcher. Blomberg et al. (1993) described how most ethnographers position themselves between being complete observers and complete participants within their fieldwork. These positions are at either of the two ends of a spectrum, placing themselves in different positions during their research

[56] *FutureLearn course Enabling Community-based leadership in design - https://www.empoweringdesign.net/online-course.html*

journey. This can differ between different modes of fieldwork or happen during one specific approach.

From the inception of this research, I situated myself within the research as a participant observer. I collaborated with TGH as a design enabler, yet I never worked for BD+R. As soon as I became a PhD student, my external enabling position within TGH was reduced, except for enabling a single one-day DT. This happened before I became affiliated with the EDP project as a research associate. Subsequently, within the later context, I was part of the EDP research team at some of the events, workshops, and other activities. As a practising architect and as a design enabler for TGH, my observations were undisguised; it was always clear that I was there with research intentions as a PhD student or as an academic. Within the research, as a practising architect and enabler, it was not always easy to be a participant observer. As an active facilitator or design enabler, it can be difficult to take in-action field notes, and I was partially dependent on impact interviews. As a participant observer, I initially found it difficult to just do a narrative or intrinsic case study on TGH. When the research shifted from an intrinsic case study to a descriptive case study, it supported a more reflective exploration of not just TGH and their general activities but also their approaches and practices to incorporate a more personal focus on the workings of informal teaching in community workshops and the factors that enable a group to be more empowered. This interest is embedded in a search for more sustainable and resilient community participation workshops enabled by designers – and, more specifically, architects.

Moser (2008) contemplated the lack of representation of how in addition to positionality, personality and 'internal lives and capacities' (2008, p. 387) can impact a researcher's interaction with participants in the field and influence the degree to which participants might open-up and share their experiences (Steele, 2022; Wilkinson, 2016). Moser and Wilkinson (2016) both considered how they were judged by the research participants on aspects of their personalities, including their interpersonal skills, accents, responses, and means of expression. Similar to Wilkinson's experience of not looking the part of an academic, at an event organised in Ely by the Churches Conservation Trust whilst enabling a fringe workshop, someone asked if I was an academic, as they did not feel I came across as such. They felt I was more personable and easier to understand, which, they noted, was 'refreshing to see'. It is also something Prue Chiles highlighted when I assisted on the Solar Futures research projects. She found that I quickly built rapport with the

participants due to my personality and used my design skills and creativity to start and unlock conversations. This can be beneficial within ethnographic fieldwork, as highlighted by Parker-Jenkins 2018;

> "The trustworthy interviewer to whom respondents may feel comfortable in divulging personal views is not contingent on time spent in the field, for example in the sense of a traditional ethnography (Mead, Malinowski), but on the personal skills of the researcher. There are degrees of being an 'insider' (Wanat, 2008), sometimes achieving status as a 'nominal' member of the community which provides wider access to the community, particularly useful when conducting ethnography." (p.27)

However, Reich (2021) cautions that being on the 'inside', going 'native', or having 'closeness' to the phenomenon requires self-reflection to avoid reproducing variations in qualitative inquiries and in ethnographic interpretations. I believe that this was one of the most difficult elements of composing the thesis, and needing the time to distance, distil, and consolidate deliberations contributed to an extension of its duration. Moreover, Hammersley (2006) argued that researchers might compromise their objectivity by being perceived as an insider. I would describe myself as both an insider in a collective group of design enablers and participatory action researchers and as an outsider to learners in the context of the group of collective actors that attended the workshops or activities.

The DT was a participatory action research approach. At each engagement – whether at the Debate Series or at the DT – it was mentioned that I was a research and PhD student. However, as Leo Care had the lead enabling position and transferred design knowledge as he guided the day. Care would be supported by three other EDP team members, always a mix of individuals from TGH and the Open University. Katerina Alexiou, Theo Zamenopoulos, Sophia de Sousa, Louise Dredge, and I were part of the support-enabling team. We all had the same role as participant enablers; each enabler supported one of the three groups that attended the two-day DT events. As such there was no difference between my role and that of my other colleagues. The participants knew they were part of the research; therefore, our observations and notes were perceived as part of the research process. However, these were generally notes made whilst Leo Care was talking and explaining or when the groups were on a coffee break, as well as during a reflective feedback session at the end of the day. The participants were there to receive design training, learn about design, and gain

diverse skills. Their focus was on the activities of the day and talking with their groups and other peers to share experiences.

Although I felt that we did not exercise obvious power, there is a need to address the conflict between the research team and the participants – between the collective actors and practitioners that joined TGH and EDP events and activities. There is an obvious differential between an enabler and a learner, between an inviter and an invitee, and between a host and a guest. Following there are other crucial factors that can create varying power dynamics and variations between enablers and learners. Thinyane et al. (2018) surmise in their participatory design research that elements such as 'the positions and roles of the individuals within the teams and within their respective organizations, gender dynamics, cultural dynamics, as well as the relational dynamics between the individuals' (p.3) influence the groups interactions and internal dynamics. They note that these interactions regarding power dynamics have also been highlighted by Akama and Light (2012).

Additionally, Parker-Jenkins (2018) indicated that ethnographers and case study researchers must also interact with research subjects using similar power dynamics, such as by engaging, for example, with community 'gate keepers' and 'cultural minders' (Wanat, 2008). These relationships could catalyse the relationship with community groups or also block projects from ever materialising. Reich (2021) argued that researchers need to critically view how power inequities run between observer and those observed so that participants are protected, and no harm can befall them. In this research all the research received ethical approval, which was explained on the day on which I engaged with the participants; I sometimes even emailed them the consent and information sheet before they attended (especially with phone interviews). The participants signed consent forms before taking part in the procedure and were given information sheets to take home with them.

I also positioned myself as a reflective practitioner within the thesis, as were Sophia de Sousa and Prue Chiles, in addition to being my supervisors. Many of our meetings were reflections on action (Schon, 1983), deliberating practice, workshops, practices, and groups. We discussed the participants' challenges and opportunities and possible future outcomes of strategies. This meant that throughout the process I needed to maintain a self-critical and reflective position to ensure that there was a balance between being a participant observer of TGH and their enabling processes and being a practitioner with independent views.

Something Flyvbjerg mentioned is that context-dependent knowledge gained from case studies can 'allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts' (p.221), which is what my PhD journey has felt like (maybe not completely a virtuoso).

'Inquiry is a process that begins with doubt and ends with knowledge' (Dewey, 2018).

4.3 Research sample

In population sampling

Since the research was devised as a Collaborative Doctoral Award, the main research focus was TGH. To understand the impact of design enabling, it is also important to understand how the community and other stakeholders experience design enabling to obtain an in-depth understanding of the consequences, actions, and conditions of design enabling. The target population of the study is participants in the participatory process of design in the built environment (community, stakeholders, enabling organisations) and designers and architects who practice design enabling in a built environment. Consequently, the research used different non-probability, purposeful samples (Patton, 2002) to research a level of saturation and describe and analyse the design enabling phenomenon and what it means for designers.

The research hit the ground running from day one,[57] with TGH eager to help develop and kick-start the doctoral thesis. They made introductions and hosted events to facilitate the PhD. Consequently, the predominant form of non-probability (non-random) sampling used for the thesis was the convenience sample. It can be an effective sampling technique when doing ethnography or any type of investigation working on the ground. Convenience sampling does not use a sample that is representative of the entire population that it is investigating, as it may be impossible to obtain a representative sample.

With the research focused on TGH approaches, I invited interviewees and participants that became available to me through connections from TGH or fieldwork. For the Debate Series, Design Training, and other workshops, participants were invited or signed up to take part in a public event or public workshops. Additional interview participants came mostly through snowball sampling, where an interviewee would suggest contacting others who might contribute to the discussion.

PhD sample saturation

Most doctoral students who use qualitative data from interviews stop sampling when the samples are multiples of ten rather than when saturation has been achieved (Mason, 2010). Moreover, Guest et al. (2006) established that 12 interviews with a homogenous group can already achieve saturation. Bertaux (1981) noted that a researcher can discover a great deal from an initial set of interviews. Roughly by the

[57] The first week I began my thesis, I was invited to attend a Building by Design workshop in Liverpool on 5th–6th October 2011.

12th or 15th interview (depending on some of the factors named above), the researcher begins to observe patterns in the interviews. From there, additional interviews or other research methods can be used to support the researcher's initial observations in the transcripts.

Technically, there are some limitations on how many interviews a researcher – specifically, a doctoral student – can do:

- Size of the project team (Ryan and Bernard, 2006); PhDs are done by a single person, making it is harder to widen the sample.
- Heterogeneity of the sample (Guest et al., 2006); the more varied a sample is, the more interviews are necessary. For this thesis the sample was mostly homogeneous, as it included TGH staff, design enablers, like-minded speakers, and participants of the workshops and events.
- Interview structure and complexity (Guest et al. 2006, Ryan and Bernard 2006); More interviews are needed when there is variable and unstructured data. The interviews conducted for this thesis were varied. However, the Debate Series created another level of homogeneous data, which created a framework for analysing the interviews and observational data.
- The researcher's experience: Due to inexperience, PhD students can suffer from fatigue (Ryan and Bernard, 2006) and confidence (Mason 2010) issues. When they do not feel confident, they can overcompensate and may conduct too many interviews to support their thinking (Mason 2010). However, this can generate too much data to process, increase the complexity of the study, and deplete the PhD student's limited time. This was an issue with the Debate Series, which provided much data to analyse.

These limitations are not only relevant for interviews but are also valid for data sample saturation. Initially, a potential interview sample list of over 20 people was drawn up by TGH to provide an overview and backdrop of TGH itself. This was still based on the notion that the PhD would be more of a historical case study of TGH. As the research diverted from being primarily a TGH case study and became more of a descriptive exploration of their methodology of enabling, the interview list was reduced. The experience of working with communities on DT became a more important dataset for triangulation.

Research design and overview

Epistemology	Theory Perspectives	Methodology	Methods
Constructionism	Interpretivism	Descriptive case study	Debate narratives
	Social constructionism – in part for the Debate Series[58]	Ethnography	Interviews
			Enabling and observation of DT
			Practice reflections
			Archival research

Table 4-1 Research design[59]

The primary work and data collected were done through observational research as part of a descriptive case study. These are social research techniques that observe a phenomenon in its natural context. The case study method and ethnographic research are based on a descriptive analysis of a group or event and – in the case of this thesis – TGH's enabling approach. Throughout my PhD journey, I was a participant observer, as mentioned earlier. Both approaches created new data that was supported by archival research. This was mostly secondary data, documents created from phone interviews done by TGH staff and interview data from Nicola Donnery's master's dissertation. The emphasis was on rich observational data and interviews from two focus groups to explore shared knowledge and the credibility of the findings (see Table 4-1 for an overview).

[58] https://lo.unisa.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=489362#Constructionism

[59] Overview of the research theory based on Crotty and Gray (Crotty, 1998, 2003; Gray, 2004)

4.4 Framing datasets

Panel discussions 'The Community-Led Design Debate Series' [60]

The main framing set for the research were three panel discussions organised by TGH. These panel discussions were described by TGH as their 'Debate Series'. To help kick-start the PhD, TGH focused their annual Debate Series of 2011–2012 on *'Community-Led Design: What is it? Does it work? And why should communities be involved in the design of the built environment?'* The panel discussions were to be a scoping exercise for the PhD to see what themes about the value of CLD could be drawn and further investigated. The debates proved an extraordinarily rich source of narrative data to frame the discourse around enabling and empowerment in the context of participatory and CLD, in part because of the breadth of viewpoints represented. At first TGH set out to provide insight into the value of CLD through a broader geographical set of discussions. This became a dataset that helped focus the doctoral research on the activities and conditions that initiate, enable, or support CLD. The panel discourse was grounded in practice and realities and provided a rich dataset for describing the actions, conditions, and consequences of enabling CLD.

There were four panel discourses in total held in Glasgow, Bristol, Newcastle, and London (see Fig. 4-2 for overview). At each debate four speakers were invited, each from a different background: a community member or representative, a design practitioner, a local authority worker, and a developer. Practically all the speakers at the c were professionals, with even the community speakers being paid support officers or community developers for an organisation. Only the Glasgow community speaker was a community member and volunteer at the project.

Even though the outline for the panel discussions asked speakers to address the value and impact of CLD, most of the speakers prepared their presentations to focus on the implementation and effects of participatory practices. In examining the discourse, it became clear that most speakers found it difficult to articulate what CLD meant to them. This led to them discussing less the value of CLD or the impact of it and offering insights on their experiences of community participation, which was followed by a question-and-answer session from the audience. At each event, the audience was comprised of approximately 40 to 45 people, who were a mix of design professionals, community workers, and students with an interest in the built

[60] Some text section of chapter 4.4 regarding the Debate Series have been published in book chapter, Hale V. (2018) *Good Places Through Community-Led Design*. In: Zaman Q., Troiani I. (eds) Transdisciplinary Urbanism and Culture. The Urban Book Series. Copyright approval has been obtained, September 2021.

environment, architecture, urban design, community development, or a combination of these. The attendees were also of a demographic mix as well as a near-equal gender mix.

Debate	Name	Organisation	Role
Glasgow	**Anne Stuart**	the Cassiltoun Trust	Community member
	Matt Bridgestock	55North Architecture	Design professional
	Ron Smith	Glasgow City Council	Planning professional
	Jonathan Strassberg	Ethical Property Company	Developer
Bristol	**Sandra Manson**	Knowle West Media Centre	Community member
	Greg White	LOCI design	Design professional
	Cleo Newcombe-Jones	Bath and Northeast Somerset Council	Planning professional
	Oona Goldsworthy	Bristol Community Housing Federation	Developer
London	**Dave Smith**	East London Community Land Trust	Community member
	Johanna Gibbons	J & L Gibbons	Design professional
	Alistair Huggett	Southwark council	Planning professional
	David Roberts	Igloo Regeneration	Developer

Table 4-2 Debate Series speaker overview

I attended three of the four debates, as I was unable to join the Newcastle debate. Regretfully, no recording of the Newcastle debate was made. Therefore, in my analysis I was only able to use the full transcripts and personal observations from the Glasgow, Bristol, and London events. Having four experts in three different geographical areas in the UK discuss one subject created a remarkably rich dataset. In fact, each event generated four spoken essays from different perspectives, which were questioned and deliberated on by the audience and speakers on the night.

There were Twitter feeds that accompanied the debate discourse, and I copied all the connected comments; however, I decided not to add those to the data as they generally repeated the discourse from the room. The main data analysed were transcripts of recordings of the panel discussions. Analysing the dataset gave me insight into the themes concerning design enabling community participation in the built environment which then helped further explore the observational set of data.

Pilot study

In the first year of the PhD, I was still exploring the option of doing a case study analysis of several of TGH and BD+R's 'successful' projects. These were projects that they gave considerable support to and, in their eyes, were good examples of CLD. One of those on the list was Ravenscliff Community Centre.

Coincidentally, Nicola Donnery, a master's student at Sheffield University, was proposing a case study on Ravenscliff Community Centre and contacted me through an introduction from Leo Care, a colleague of Prue Chiles at the Sheffield School of Architecture. We agreed to collaborate on some of the interviews so as not to overburden the interviewees with two individual students asking for interviews. I also shared some of the research I had already undertaken on CLD, TGH, and post-occupancy evaluation and supported her in the development of a post-occupancy evaluation for her case study. This gave me the opportunity to observe and support Nicola, help develop her research, and test whether this research design of doing a case study with post-occupancy evaluation was a valuable option to continue in my second year. As the research moved from defining and valuing CLD to focusing on the phenomenon of design enabling, this research design was not continued. However, the observations of the site visits and interviews (primary and secondary) were still used to help triangulate the primary data collected from the Debate Series, design training observations, and interviews.

Interviews

Name	Company / organisation	TGH role / connection	Data source
Sophia de Sousa	TGH	Chief executive	primary
Rebecca Maguire	TGH	Project manager	primary
Prue Chiles and Leo Care	BD+R, CE+CA (Previous Prue Chiles Architects), SSoA	Design enablers	primary
Charlie Baker and David Rudlin	Urbed	Design enablers	primary
Ronnie Hughes	Sense of Place	Enabler	primary
Barbara Watson	Trafford Hall		primary
Irena Bauman	Bauman Lyons Architects, SSoA	Architect, Ravenscliff	primary

Table 4-3 Interviewees overview

In the first and second year, I interviewed[61] several of the founding members of TGH DT programme at TH. These were face-to-face, in-depth interviews. The focus was on exploring the interviewees' experiences and their perception of the methodological development of the DT and community participation. The interviews were semi-structured and generated heterogeneous data with much detail and many variables. The interviews mostly focused on DT development when TGH just started at TH in Cheshire (see Table 4-3 for the list of interviewees and their connections).

[61] Some in collaboration with Nicola Donnery

4.5 Observational fieldwork

Enabler dialogues

In 2013, in line with setting up their new enabler network and the refocusing of the thesis, TGH ventured the idea of an enabler dialogue. The dialogue sessions were imagined as enabler-led discourses and focus groups to see what the enabler wanted to discuss and explore. Melissa Lacide at TGH coordinated the events with me. The idea was to have several events throughout the country to create a different enabler focus dataset to further the PhD. At this time, TGH had just built up a design enabler network of 60+ people. Their network of enablers had just seen an increase in numbers due to wanting to develop a larger, more formal network of enablers to help them deliver support to the Neighbourhood Planning programme with Locality and other partners, with a large group of people being available due to the demise of CABE (see Chapter 2), which also used enablers to support community groups with their designs – albeit in a different setting.

The first enabler dialogue was planned for London, with only one person expressing interest, Liz Kessler.[62] The next session was in Sheffield and drew one coordinating enabler, John Mitchell, and two attending enablers, Tom Lonsdale, and Elizabeth Motley, as well as an architecture student, Claire Taylor. Enablers seemed to lack interest in these events. Moreover, the discussions tended to divert to the demise of the CABE enabler network, which happened at the same time (see Chapter 2 for further details). The problem was that at the time, due to government policy changes (see Chapter 2), there was less funding available and fewer opportunities for the new enablers to be called into action. Asking enablers to give their time for free to support these enabler dialogues when they were in fact in need of paid work was an issue. This was demonstrated by the fact that, when emailing invitations to the enablers, enablers got in touch asking about when there would be an opportunity to do some paid enabling work instead of showing interest in attending the dialogue sessions.

Due to the lack of attendance and no other enabler coming forward to help facilitate for some regions, it felt that the enabler dialogues were not the right setting for exploring notions of design enabling because of enablers' lack of interest and the political implications at the time.

[62] Liz Kessler was one of the first enablers at the Trafford Hall Design training in her previous role at the Architecture Foundation. This came to the fore within the discussion and was not as a criteria of taking part.

Group discussion

Group discussions between a researcher and a collaborator can benefit the drawing out of concepts and meaning, which can support the development of categories for analysis (Salmon, 2007). At the start of the thesis, I held a group discussion with TGH staff to explore some of the projects they thought were successful or less successful and some of the reasons why. At the time this was to establish a list of case studies for further exploration. This was abandoned when the upgrade process encouraged focusing on design enabling by exploring TGH's approaches as the focus for the contribution of knowledge.

In total, I visited three of their 'success' projects, Gamblingay Eco Hub[63] (Gamblingay community centre, Cambridgeshire), Granville New Homes[64] (London Borough of Barnet housing project; this observation was of a continuing professional development [CPD] event led by the residents), and as mentioned earlier as part of the pilot study, The Gateway in Ravenscliff[65] (Community and Children's Centre, Bradford).

Design Training (DT)

As I struggled to collect enough data to confirm my initial observations, an opportunity presented itself at the final design training for EDP[66] in 2018. As I was writing notes, it felt quite poetic that I started my PhD with a DT and found myself once again at a DT whilst struggling to write up the PhD.

By using the DT experience from EDP, I was able to update the data. The framing data was collected in 2011–2012, and by using the DT data, it made the thesis dataset more relevant. In addition, the DTs were the key foundations for TGH's enabling approach. As the first two DT sessions that I enabled and observed did not have ethics in place, due to the first being three days after I started my thesis and the other was still in my guise as design enabler for TGH. They were therefore used as scoping and observational sessions. The other four sessions did have ethics approval through the EDP project and were a particularly useful dataset to explore the themes arising from the Debate Series and to bring together the design enabling-related themes (see Table 4-4).

[63] http://www.gamlingayecohub.org.uk/
[64] http://newgranville.co.uk/
[65] https://www.thegateway.co.uk/
[66] Please see Appendix B for a description and overview of the broader Empowering Design Practices research project.

Design training and location	Attending groups	Positionality
Building by Design Liverpool (2011 – two days)	Scoping experience	Observer – Leo Care as design enabler
Building by Design Shefton (2012 – one day)	Scoping experience	Main design enabler – reflective practitioner
Building by Design Sheffield – EDP (2016 – two days)	ISRAAC Sheffield, Bow Church London, Stratford URC	Support enabler – Leo Care as main design enabler
Building by Design Manchester (2017 – two days)	Friends of St John's MNC, St Mary's Bideford, Community Church Edinburgh	Secondary data from impact interviews and team reflections
Building by Design London (2017 – two days)	St Peter's Chester, Graylingwell Chapel Chichester, Cemetery Road Baptist Church Sheffield	Support enabler – Leo Care as main design enabler
Building by Design Sheffield (2018 – two days)	St Michael's Byker, Blackley Baptist Church, Rotherham Minster, Trinity Rowden	Support enabler – Leo Care as main design enabler

Table 4-4 Design training 2011–2018

I took field notes, along with many photos, during DT. Additionally, some of the feedback sessions were recorded for research purposes. Moreover, some of the attendees were contacted for impact interviews (see Table 4-5). I was part of some of these impact interviews, which were conducted face-to-face or over the phone. Face-to-face meetings were conducted with groups that had longitudinal support, which meant that these groups received additional support such as workshops, meetings, or resources in addition to the DT itself. Transcripts of all the interviews were used to support some of the lessons that the groups highlighted.

All the interviews were structured based on the impact of the EDP project. I used references to DT to develop the exploration of design enabling.

Impact interviews	EDP support	Type of interview

St Mary's Church, Bow, London	EDP longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
ISRAAC, Vestry Hall, Sheffield	EDP longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
St Peter's Church, Chester	EDP longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
St Michael's Biker Church, Newcastle	DT plus live project	Phone interview
Cemetery Road Baptist Church Sheffield	DT plus live project	Phone interview
Blackley Baptist Church	DT only	Phone interview
Trinity Rowden	DT only	Phone interview
Edinburgh Community Church	DT only	Phone interview

Table 4-5 Design training impact interviews

Archive

Even though TGH has a wealth of archival material, it was not widely used for the research project. Nevertheless, when I started conducting research, TGH had already done some investigation into the impact of their support. They had done some follow-up phone calls, and I had access to the log of these phone calls early in the research. A spreadsheet with participants responses to the structured questions was compiled by one of TGH's employees. It gave insight into what happened after the projects left TGH's support.

Continued Professional Development (CPD)

TGH also develops CPD training events. They do this with an accredited body that can provide CPD certificates, such as the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). TGH facilitated a CPD event in Manchester for RIBA which focused on participatory practices. Maja Jorgensen of TGH facilitated this event, and I went along to observe. Another event was held at Granville New Homes Estate, one of their 'success' projects. This was a novel event, where TGH enabled the residents' organisation and the housing association to facilitate the CPD. I came along, observed, and attended the site visit. This project had received TGH DT and bespoke support in its initial stages of development.

4.6 Data analysis

For data analysis, I have drawn on the analysis phases of grounded theory, the reflexivity (Charmaz, 2006, p.10; 2008) of which made it ideal in the analysis of verbal data from the Debate Series. Grounded theory can generally be split into three data analysis phases: open coding (reading transcripts line-by-line), axial coding (arranging concepts, making them more abstract), and selective coding (converging on the main notions to create the narrative; Charmaz, 2006; Morse, 2001). Grounded theory is not without its criticisms due to the claim that it develops a 'theory' and an axial coding process (Charmaz, 2008; Thomas and James, 2006). However, Strauss and Corbin developed a scheme to structure in the axial coding phase which examines the conditions (what forms the structure of the phenomenon), actions and interactions (Participant strategy and approaches to problems, issues, or events), and consequences (outcomes of the actions; Charmaz, 2006).

This scheme has been a thread throughout the thesis, even structuring the observational data from the DT and interviews and is part of how the research questions were re-structured. The main research question is as follows: 'What is an effective design enabling approach for community-led design?'

The main research question is then explored and broken down into the following sub-questions:

A. What are the **conditions** for a community member or group to start taking part in a design process?
B. What **actions** does an enabler need to take to make a community member or group an active participant in the design process?
C. What are the **consequences** of having a well-enabled community-led design process for the community and the project?
D. What do these conditions, actions, and consequences mean for the **role of the design enabler** in community-led design processes?

The analysis used for the data included:

- Coding of the Debate Series: looking for the conditions, actions, and consequences of '*design enabling to support community-led design';*
- Thematically categorising the initial coding of the Debate Series; and
- Using the thematic framework from the Debate Series to examine other data to explore how '*critical design enabling approaches can support transformative participation'*.

Trustworthiness

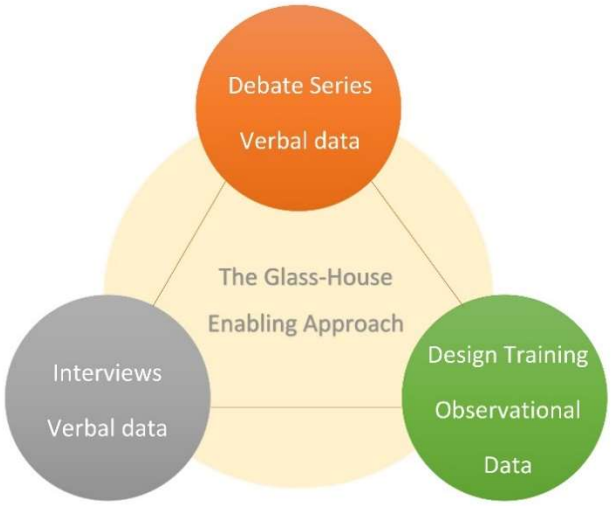


Figure 4-1 Data Triangulation

It is important to demonstrate that research is trustworthy. This can be done by examining the credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, or a combination of these throughout the research process (Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017). This thesis tries to gain trustworthiness through internal credibility and external transferability. The credibility of case study research is enhanced by its need to use several data sources (Yin, 2009) as well as the prolonged duration of the research (Guba and Lincoln, 1985 cited in Nowell et al., 2017). In the case of this descriptive ethno-case study, the credibility of the research was supported by the observation of TGH DT, the verbal discourse of the Debate Series, and interviews over a 10-year period.

Further trustworthiness was achieved by triangulating the data (see Figure 4-1). Triangulation of various sources, settings, and views within this thesis:

- Debate Series examining wider discourse and needs
- Interviews examining initial ethos and principles
- DT observing enabling methods in action

The initial research for the Debate Series contained interesting emerging themes that could explore the enabling process in design development. Therefore, by bringing the emerging themes from the verbal data (Debate Series and interviews) to the behavioural data (DT, EDP and Cave experiences), the emerging themes could be

explored further. This helped to ask questions in diverse ways to find the similarities and differences between the converging data. This could then also be triangulated by the desktop data (secondary data phone interviews) and the reflective focus group.

A descriptive case study aims to create transferable data through thick description and case-to-case transference (Nowell et al., 2017). This strengthens the data's external validity. By studying the enabling phenomenon and asking what this means for the role of design enabler, the research hopes to broader the use of the findings to a larger audience interested in pedagogy and design thinking. The research uses an abductive analysis (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012) that started by scoping the initial literature and, whilst conducting fieldwork, continually revisiting themes and theories within the literature.

Reliability is increased in a project when bias is acknowledged and, if possible, reduced or mitigated. By using converging methods and the experience of others, I hope to reduce any personal bias to the extent that, where possible, I used verbal descriptions of speakers and audience for the themes that emerged from the Debate Series. Titles in the chapters are partly drawn from participant comments to use the voice and language of the speakers and participants, as I have tried to limit the rephrasing their observations and discourse.

However, as one of the participants in the Debate Series mentioned, all the speakers and probably most of the audience could be considered 'progressive' speakers. As they attended the debates to learn more about CLD, they already believed that community participation was a positive thing and used it in their practice. Additionally, they were more likely to discuss successful projects than share experiences where things did not go according to plan. Nevertheless, some of the speakers did bring a reflective point of view, and a few audience members at each event would perhaps share a conflicting point of view or warts-and-all experiences.

In addition, the main enabler for TGH design training was Leo Care. The DT was enabled and delivered under his supervision. He is an architectural educator at the University of Sheffield and gained his experience through BD+R, working as a student for Prue Chiles; at the time Ronnie Hughes was at the helm of the design training at TH. Leo Care has grown into DT for the last two decades, influenced by the processes and structure instilled by the initial enablers that worked alongside Hughes (e.g., Urbed, Fluid, and BD+R). Nevertheless, by using a case study methodology with multiple sources and observations and triangulating the data, the research provides a detailed and descriptive dataset that illustrates the enabling

practices of TGH and represents a trustworthy and reliable exploration of the phenomenon of design enabling.

4.7 Limitations of the research design

There are various limitations to doing PhD research: experience, confidence, funding, and, of course, time. Completing a collaborative PhD can bring with it another level of limitations. A student needs to go through a learning process to develop their research skills and experience, and then there is the need to develop an understanding of what the collaborative stakeholders are looking for (Enright and Facer, 2017). This latter part is difficult to attain as research is messy, and thesis writing is an untangled version of a complex journey. Most of the time, what a researcher sets out to do is not the outcome or the process of the thesis. Thus, it is important to manage expectations.

Even though working collaboratively was an effective way to find data and gain access to enabling methodologies, the process with TGH was not as clear and focused as initially thought. TGH went through some major transitions within the PhD period, such as staff reductions, mission changes, and changes in focus (i.e., from project support to advocacy). This impacted the collection of data and, in itself, created a focus for the research. Furthermore, due to the research collaboration with the Open University on several projects, the PhD research needed to change course so as not to conflict with other research being conducted by other institutions.

4.8 Discussion

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used in this thesis. It explains the epistemology, methodological choices, data analysis, and structure of the thesis. The descriptive ethno-case study is used to explore the role of the design practitioner as an enabler through TGH's enabling approaches. By using a descriptive case study approach with mixed methods, the Debate Series uncovered some of the conditions, actions, and consequences of the phenomenon of design enabling in the built environment. These uncovered themes were used to investigate the other theoretical and practical data.

Chapter 5 Dataset – Debate Series

Enabling community-led design[67]

The debates provided such a wealth of data that it proved hard to summarise all the different narratives. The following summary hopes to do justice to the whole discourse and represent balanced outcomes, clarifying some of the conditions, actions, and consequences around enabling CLD from a varied and transdisciplinary panel and audience. The themes that emerged are not new in the broader community participation debate, yet when asked to discuss CLD, the speakers and audience converged on specific themes that they felt were part of enabling communities to lead the design development of their built environment. However, it stands to reason that the emerging themes are those that need to be considered to better understand the design enabling phenomenon, which is understood to be part of trying to empower communities to lead the design process.

5.1 What does CLD mean to you?

For several years, TGH has curated debates around the country to discuss topics related to community participation. For their 2011–2012 Debate Series, and with the allocation of the Collaborative Doctoral Award in mind, TGH chose the theme: 'Community-led design? What is it, and does it work?' As the term 'community-led design' can have diverse meanings for different people, the debates explored what it meant in practice.

TGH asked panellists from different backgrounds to shares their experiences and views on 'community-led design' within their fields of expertise. At every debate there were four types of speakers[68] who would invariably talk in the following order: a community member or representative, a design professional, a local authority worker, and a developer. They were asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation to discuss the merits and barriers they encountered within community participation. These presentations were then followed by a discussion with the audience. In total there were four debates in the 2011 and 2012 series. They were held in Glasgow,

[67] Some of the text from Chapters 5.1 and 5.2 regarding the Debate Series have been published in book chapter, Hale V. (2018) *Good Places Through Community-Led Design*. In: Zaman Q., Troiani I. (eds) Transdisciplinary Urbanism and Culture. The Urban Book Series. Copyright approval has been obtained, September 2021.

[68] As mentioned by a participant in the Bristol debate, all the professional speakers could be regarded as being from a progressive standpoint.

Bristol, Newcastle, and London. I was able to attend three of the debates; therefore, in my analysis, I only use data from the Glasgow, Bristol, and London events. Altogether the three debates were composed of 12 short real-world 'praxis' presentations by the speakers on their experience of CLD. Then through the question-and-answer session, their views were deliberated with an audience made up of a community of interest (e.g., architects, planners, community organisers, and community members). All TGH debates were chaired by Sophia de Sousa, the chief executive of TGH. She moderated the discussions that followed the presentations, aiming to explore the broader issues. With each speaker coming from a different professional or community background and with every debate located in a different part of the United Kingdom, the Debate Series seemed like a collection of participatory praxis statements, each with a unique point of view and reviewed by a group of the presenters' peers.

Each debate had its own predominant theme. In the Glasgow debate, there were some honest reflections on the obstacles to inclusive participation in design; funding, time, and process were the most prominent. The overarching focus in Bristol was on the process and impact of participation. In London the debate explored notions of increased involvement, moving beyond consultation fatigue to positive engagement. Collectively, these conversations showed how far-reaching community involvement can be within the development of the built environment, with most of the speakers agreeing that participation was essential to creating good designs as well as describing many examples of what 'good design' is in practice.

Glasgow debate

In October 2011, over 35 guests gathered at The Lighthouse venue in Glasgow to discuss what CLD meant to them. Four speakers presented their own personal views and experiences of community engagement in the built environment. The Cassiltoun Estate is a historic part of Glasgow that has been neglected and run down since the 1970s, with the main Cassiltoun House pulled down in the 1960s. Anne Stuart had been the chair of the Cassiltoun Trust for over nine years. Stuart explained that the stables were the only old building left from the original estate, and the community was determined to save that part of their history, taking control of the regeneration of their own area. They set up as a group to restore the building to its former glory and maintain the estate's legacy. They also decided to add additional facilities so that they could give the community '*something more than just a history lesson'*, as Stuart articulated. She spoke about how the larger community got involved from day one.

They started by disseminating surveys to establish a brief based on the community's requirements. According to Stuart, the regeneration turned something that had a bad reputation into a 'brilliant' place, creating new local jobs with the help of training facilities set up in the building. Stuart also described how the actual development of the project was done by a preservation trust, which was subsequently taken over by the community-run Cassiltoun Trust.

Matt Bridgestock is co-owner of the architecture and urban design office 55NorthArchitecture and a trustee of Skirmishes. In the past, he had also worked as TGH enabler. Bridgestock also gave insights into some of his experiences with community-engaged design. He first shared what was important to them in their architectural practice:

'Obviously making architecture look good and beautiful overrides all of this, but to be able to get something that is of place; [something] that responds to either the people in the community who use it and the community around it and that respects the planet and sustainability agenda is obviously what we chose. What we try to do is get all of those things to come together as one...'

Through case studies from his own architectural practice, he showed the complexity of participation that the community encounters. According to him, honesty is very important throughout the process. He explains that the worst thing one can do as a designer is to say that something will be delivered when one cannot guarantee that it will. At the end, Bridgestock summarised three major challenges to working on these projects: funding, lack of interest, and lack of knowledge of the design process.

Ron Smith, a planner on the Glasgow City Council, sincerely shared his account of his encounters with community involvement in the planning process from the LA side. When Smith asked his superiors what the official line was on CLD, he found that the council did not really have one. Their city plan mentions the process of public consultation, which is statutory and must be done. However, as he stated, there are all sorts of ways of looking at it, but for him, the main question is: 'What is meant by community?' In his work he found that half the time when they are designing and talking about redevelopment, 'the community is not even there'. He explained that planners determine the length of consultation and what to develop, but they do not always take it very seriously as they work from an agenda that usually does not focus on the public interest. Difficulties that he encountered through his time working at the planning department were political agendas, ownership, funding, getting users involved, and sentiment. From his own personal experience of being in a residents'

group, he found that using steering groups was an effective way of maintaining communications between professionals and communities.

Jonathan Strassberg of the Ethical Property Company in Edinburgh gave an honest perspective from the developer's side. He had not heard of the term CLD until recently. Being from New Jersey, his notion of neighbourhoods had to do with those delivered by developers 'as if ordering pizza', generating a monotonous urban sprawl from the developer's catalogue.

'I had spent 16 years living in our suburban sprawl, and I remember driving along beautiful farmland areas and seeing a great big boulder which would say something to the effect of 'Carlton Homes bringing you another fine community'. That's not just something that is delivered to you. It's not something you work for. It's not something that you create. It's not something that people put their lives towards. It's something that's delivered, something like a pizza, and that was sort of unfortunate for me.'

He then mentioned that a top-down approach does not establish urban diversity, which, to him, is key to a great city. He indicated that financiers want predictability and reduced risk, which he identified as the most significant difficulty with CLD. He concluded that aiming for economic and social maturity is important, focusing on creating a high quality of life as opposed to satisfying the financial needs of the few. He finished with a quote by Jane Jacobs: *'What happens on the sidewalk is just as important as what happens inside a building'.*

In the question-and-answer (Q&A) session at the end of the presentations, the audience mentioned that it was impossible to define CLD, as participation can influence design on many levels. However, many agreed that starting with a good brief was the area in which the community could have the most impact; this could be considered community-initiated design. Another observation that the audience had was that community members might not be experts, but they do hold opinions on their own surroundings. It was argued further that communities should be appreciated as equal stakeholders, and councils and planners need to step in and enable that equal partnership. From that point, communities could start to move further into the participatory process, create great spaces, and take ownership of the built environment.

Bristol debate

November 2011 was the second TGH debate in Bristol at the Architecture Centre Bristol.

Sandra Manson is the Youth Media Coordinator for the Knowle West Media Centre (KWMC), a project that received TGH support at the start of the project. A new youth centre was developed, as the old building was not fit for purpose. From the start, they decided to involve five of their young people throughout the design and building process. KWMC supplied the framework for these young people to be active members in the design team meetings. Manson explained that in Knowle West, people were quite disillusioned with the idea of any community participation. The difficulty was that the community had been over-consulted in the past, with allocated funding for community improvements subsequently redirected to other civic activities outside the locality. By instead supporting local businesses and working closely with partnership agencies, many people were part of the development of the Media Centre, and consequently, the whole experience had far-reaching effects. '*It is the process you go through, not just the end results that matters',* Manson said. She explained that the experience of being a valued part of the Media Centre design gave many of the participants a new level of confidence and even resulted in a new future for some of the young people involved.

Figure 5-1 The Debate Series, Bristol (2012)

Greg White, Principal of LOCI Design, gave his point of view from the design practitioner's side. He had also been a TGH enabler in the past. White talked about some of his experiences with community participatory projects. White showed that it is essential to develop partnerships at the start of the design process, as the designer's role was to translate all the emotions and history of the community into a project. He loved working on a microscale with children. At the end of a project at St.

Paul's, the children involved held a presentation in which they explained that, above all, the process had changed their lives. By involving youth groups in the creation of another project, vandalism was reduced considerably. However, he mentioned with honesty that he had also worked on projects that were disasters. He felt that for these projects the local people were not involved from the beginning of the process.

Chloe Newcombe-Jones, a town planner at Bath and Northeast Somerset Council, explained that her role had changed over the last five years and had become more about collaborations, especially with the new Localism Bill. One of the points the Council had been focusing on was making technical information more accessible for the community, giving them more insight and therefore control over the processes that they are involved in. Newcombe-Jones perceived that LAs have increasingly worked with local groups to give communities guidance through a series of events rather than a one-stop consultation. One of their responses to localism in planning is getting communities involved in the participation process itself. Parishes are very autonomous and are pro-development when it comes to addressing the needs of their locality. Therefore, according to Newcombe-Jones, councils can take on an enabling role and engage in a more collaborative process to achieve the common good.

Oona Goldsworthy, Chief Executive of the Bristol Community Housing Federation, addressed the issues of CLD most clearly. She asked: *"What is the point of Community-led design?"* To her it needs to make a difference, result in the creation of a better design, challenge standard ideas, and increase local pride. People need to be engaged pro-actively in the design, not just during indoor table workshops. Goldsworthy stated, '*To create pride of place, we can't work according to a linear process but need to involve different elements of the community at different stages. But most of all: HAVE FUN! Creativity is key'.* To avoid any 'white elephants', as Goldsworthy put it, the function and maintenance of a project need to be thought through. These are just as important as a good design.

In the Q&A session, there was much discussion regarding aspiration versus viability. Aspiration is the challenge of community involvement – the process of keeping lay people involved even through the tedious times, as building processes can be long. One of the difficulties discussed was how to get everyone from different sectors and backgrounds involved, even people who might not have initially wanted to be involved. The consensus was that solutions needed to be found within the community itself. For future developments, there is a need to work in a collaborative way so as not to depend on local councils to initiate.

There was a perceived view that it was therefore essential to make things accessible in a variety of ways for communities to partake in the process and include as many people as possible. Due to several issues, one of which is over-consultation, communities may have lost trust in their LAs and may not believe that they can make a difference in a project. Progress is achieved by making small steps real and using these achievements as role models to inspire others.

London debate

The last debate examined in this thesis was held in London at the Design Council in March 2012. Sophia de Sousa began the meeting by stating that design in neighbourhood planning should not be forgotten, as good design can change people's quality of life.

Figure 5-2 Debate Series London (2012)

David Smith of London Citizens and East London Community Land Trust was the community voice for the evening. According to Smith, CLD is about avoiding placation and is all about creation, ownership, and management, as places are not static and evolve all the time. Smith described how community land trusts stem from the US, where, in the 1970s, land was given to communities with the aim of creating permanent affordable housing in the city. He described how this ownership brought people together and gave the community a powerful base from which to work and engage with LAs. However, he indicated that community land trusts are now threatened due to the demand for property and land in cosmopolitan cities such as London.

Giving the designers' perspective was Johanna Gibbons, a landscape architect and founder of the firm J & L Gibbons. Focusing on two themes, people and 'grey to green', she showed how her firm practised deliberative design. In the Dalston Green Spaces project, this required community conversations and the mapping of

community spaces. She found mapping a good tool to test and illustrate how an idea can be embedded in a design brief. One amazing fact Gibbons mentioned was that the underused 'estate landscaping [green land around high rises, etc.] in Southwark alone is equivalent to one Hyde Park'. She concluded that there is enough green space for everyone; it just needs to be made accessible.

Alistair Huggett from Southwark Council's planning department reminded the audience that one of the key issues he faces is consultation fatigue. To combat over-consultation, he advocated empowering people through the creation of community councils, which could have their own budgets and make their own decisions. One example of this is the proposed library closures in Southwark. Due to a campaign by local people, the closures were averted and are now managed by community volunteers. Huggett also described some useful strategies employed by Southwark Council to engage with the community: using a non-council website to disseminate their information to a larger audience, bringing consultation to the people, and engaging people during the construction period of buildings. However, even with the best of intentions, Huggett had to admit that one cannot please everyone.

David Roberts of Igloo Regeneration gave the developer's view on community involvement. David explained that Igloo's aim is to create mixed-use, sustainable urban neighbourhoods in partnership with LAs and communities. He explained they were not looking for short-term gains; their aim was to have a long-term vision based on co-design and good spaces. For city sites, this is a difficult approach, as most developers target a high return on investment with a quick turnaround. For Roberts, this makes CLD unviable on public-owned land, especially in London. He also suggested rephrasing the concept to 'community-owned design' to reflect his understanding that no one can work in isolation but rather that people need to work together and collaborate.

The Q&A session focused on the new planning policies. With the then-new Localism Act in place, there was a discussion about the need for resources such as funding and time to build trust and be able to build connections between professional stakeholders and communities. It was argued that 'this is required to have true inclusive and representative design'. There was also a conversation about the need for different levels of engagement at each stage of the design process to secure the optimal involvement from the people. This then needs the support of 'additional investments' as 'participation is time-consuming'; public funding for community engagement was seen as limited in the Q&A. However, Huggett admitted that as

they get responses and finance from developers through Section 106, he feels that they are more flexible as a council.

One of the questions from the audience was: "*How does the community work on the design?*" In Johanna Gibbons's case, they start working with the community from the outset, as the community takes part in developing the design brief. This establishes trust with the clients, which is key to moving the project forward. For Gibbons, deliberative planning is a very organic process of constant 'doing'. In her practice, this is implemented by actively listening and not assuming that one already knows what the community wants.

Phenomenon of enabling

Even though the Debate Series was about the theme of CLD, most of the themes addressed in it were not new to the broader realm of community engagement and participation. Due to the complex nature of design, participatory democracy, and community development, many factors contribute to the process of community participation in the design of their built environment. However, two queries stood out throughout the three debates: 'How should stakeholders get local people more involved?' and 'What type of tools and skills need to exist for communities to be equal partners at the design table?' These questions can be reframed as: What are the conditions required for people to get involved? What are the actions required for their involvement?

For the community to lead, they need to have a sense of agency to start changes from within without waiting for external agents to initiate action or change (Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007). As mentioned in the literature review, according to Hamdi (2010) 'good' enabling is providing resources so that people can have prospects to develop and design their own neighbourhoods, with the right circumstances for such developments to occur and be sustained. Therefore, what can the Debate Series show us about what some of the conditions, actions, and consequences are for enabling a community to start leading their design project?

First, what is meant by CLD so that what the designer would be enabling can be better understood. As one of the participants in Bristol asked: 'What is community-led design? If you don't have a definition for it, how will you know if you need to apply it?'

5.2 Community-led design is complicated

Each debate had its own overarching theme. At the Glasgow debate, there were some candid reflections on the obstacles to inclusive participation in design; funding, time, and process were cited as the most prominent. The focus in Bristol was on the process and impact of participation. In London the debate explored notions of increased involvement and moving beyond consultation fatigue to positive engagement. What became clear during these debates was that it was difficult to pin down what CLD means. As Sophia de Sousa observed at the Bristol debate: *'I think all our speakers ... very cleverly avoided any definition of community-led design'.*

None of the speakers formulated a definition for CLD, and therefore the overarching question of the Debate Series was never actually answered. This could have been due to the setting of the events, where the speakers only had a limited amount of time to deliberate on their positions and experiences on the matter. Although it is also indicative of the difficulty of defining community participation and in particular the term 'community-led design', as the three words are, themselves, contentious.

The first query regarding community-led design (CLD) came from the audience at the Glasgow debate Q&A, asking if CLD was part of a spectrum with community-led design at the end of that spectrum: '*I mean, community-led design is a good phrase, because it's sort of the end of the spectrum towards which to strive. I think because all the other examples or most of the other examples the people have given are somewhere on the spectrum moving in that direction. But community-led design for me means that the experience of end users is valued more than professional training'.* The idea of a spectrum is in line with the now well-articulated ladder of participation by Arnstein (1969) or any other normative participatory typology.

David Smith considered CLD 'genuine creation with people'. To him, it meant asking a group what they like about a particular area and what they want to bring into a new location, not just placating the group by only asking the group for their opinion on a design. To him, it is, most of all, about 'ownership afterwards': *'I think it means realising the value that community groups bring to a design process, putting a quantifiable value on that and giving it to them'.*

Smith followed on with an interesting point: '*If it is about creating ownership afterwards, is it a definition that we need to be looking for, or do we need a description of an approach that is beneficial in widening the implementation of community-led design?* '[69]

[69] A definition is an exact meaning of something, whereas a description is more detailed and can change from person to person and may not be exact or correct like a definition. (marrian-webster 23/10/2017)

An 'observation' made by an attendee at the London debates series was as follows:

'If the purpose of this is community-led design, and in my opinion, when you [swap over] the words to "design of communities", it's too elitist. You're talking to them about something that they think is too distant from them. Community-led transformation requires a better understanding of how communities take it upon themselves. Design is basically transformation and problem solving'.

Does this then mean that CLD is about describing a transformative approach similar to Sarah White's description of transformative participation (1996),[70] where the end user experience is valued and is brought in to benefit the design process and the design itself? Is CLD about combining a bottom-up activist approach and a top-down social-economic approach with empowerment of the community as the main action and consequence? Such an approach is very much what was discussed throughout the Debate Series. Vocal and engaged community groups showed that they can be part of a project, and progressive professional speakers and audience members showcased how they might enable CLD.

The following sections of this chapter are divided into the three main focuses of this thesis: the consequences, conditions, and actions of enabling CLD. The next section, the consequence data from the Debate Series, clearly shows that transformation is a key outcome of CLD.

[70] See literature review section 3.2

5.3 Enabled communities (conditions)

Not all projects warrant community involvement, there is a time and a place for community involvement, as there can be underlying reasons why it is not sustainable for a community to be integrated in a particular process. Several of the speakers and audience members indicated that time, longevity of groups involved in the process, finances, and knowing which group to support are key to developing a sustainable approach.

Project selection

In the Debate Series, participants were aware that a full transformative participation process is not always possible; sometimes, applying levels of participation to attain a level of representation is sufficient. All of the speakers with a developer background acknowledged that not all projects are ready for a transformative participation approach. To Oona Goldsworthy it is important to be selective about which projects have a 'purpose for it [participation]'. She worked on projects that were 'not controversial', were compliant the planning brief, and were well designed without community involvement. Goldsworthy noted, *'But there are others where you know you've got to get it right because the impact of the development on that community if it's wrong will be serious',* meaning that if a development is designed wrong, the community might reject the development, generating additional problems.

Ron Smith concurred that some projects are appropriate for non-participatory development. However, he did mention there was always some applied level of participation even if it only consisted of information giving. At the London debate, Alistair Huggett gave another planner's perspective. Planners consult on many planning-related issues such as supplementary planning documents, area action plans, traffic-management orders, etc. The response that they received from some communities was: 'Just get on and do stuff'. When communities feel over-consulted, they may no longer want to engage. Smith concurred with this finding based on the feedback that his planning department gathered, as people stated they wanted them to 'just get started'.

Community 'as a resource'

In all the Debate Series, Big Society, the Localism Act, and neighbourhood planning were topics of discussion. These were government policies set up as 'self-help' approaches to encourage communities to take ownership of the development of their own neighbourhood plan. It was seen as a process that was all about 'doing-it-

ourselves, having a say, and getting ourselves organised'. However, in Bristol, debate participants addressed the issue of the 'capacity within the community and councils to effectively take part' in these processes, freeing up precious council time. The Debate Series showed that there was a reluctance to embrace Big Society principles due to funding cuts at council level, meaning that the budget was insufficient for supporting the communities developing neighbourhood plans. Nevertheless, the Big Society messaging from government and LAs was sometimes difficult for communities to hear, as some had 'been doing this for a decade' and 'it's not a new thing'.

De Sousa supported this argument at the Bristol debate with some research which TGH did with CABE in 2000. It focused on the challenges community groups faced when regenerating spaces and leading projects themselves. One of the top issues was that the groups felt that the '*local authority officers don't recognise [them] as a resource'.* It can be challenging for a professional community support officer to tap into this availability. This is something David Smith is constantly amazed at:

'We're a hugely unfunded organisation, I think. What we're stretching to do and it's something I need to learn to do myself, is you go in there and think, 'oh God I've got to do it all myself' and actually there's a huge wealth of talent out there that if you're willing to delegate these things for people it's not work for them. They want to do it and they want to put in the time. We have architects, engineers, and a huge number of contributions from people.'

It is therefore important that the community recognise that they are experts and a resource to be reckoned with. For example, David Roberts used locals as experts and recognised that they had a better understanding of the social heritage of a place. Many of the designers addressed the use of the community as experts, using community members in areas where there is a form of 'knowledge connection' or possible mediation by community members. This meant using them as consultants to help inform the larger community about a project; during the Debate Series, all of the community speakers spoke about this, as did the planners in the audience.

One of the audience members at the London debate spoke of this as follows: '*to ensure that communities are empowered to actually make those decisions to allow them to influence the built environment, and I think that's easier said than done….I know from my own background as a Trustee of Planning Aid that it's very easy to say "well communities can get involved" but actually you need to enable them to do so effectively, and it's not an easy process as many of you, professional urban architects and planners, it's a complicated process so we need to enable communities to do that'.*

Matt Bridgestock mentioned: '*it's not just time for the professionals; there is volunteer time involved as well. There is a huge amount of that required'.* According to Bridgestock lack of interest in transformative participation predominantly comes down to the voluntary time and input required to do a project. As a project grows, 'there is an exponential amount of time involved'. This is echoed in an example that de Sousa shared during the Bristol debate: to set up a community engagement event in Cornwall, 10,000 volunteer hours were needed. De Sousa observed that the resources were certainly available but needed to be brought together with the right support mechanisms.

Empowerment

Consequently, how can a community be enabled to get started? Different levels of empowerment need to be cultivated to establish the right conditions for the road ahead.

Activating citizens

People feel that they 'need permission to speak', 'feel they are not heard in a meeting', or 'don't feel that comfortable speaking in meetings'. This is something both Manson and Stuart addressed in their talks about the process their community projects went through. In Glasgow Stuart noticed that *'communities believe that they need permission to become active and to be involved in the process'.* They feel they need to be invited to the table. Nevertheless, she did note that due to social media and changing political landscapes, people have begun to challenge that notion.

In Bristol this confidence issue – of not being able to speak up – was also addressed. Three participants, along with Greg White, the designer, observed that some people do not feel that they can make a difference or are heard. This was echoed by community members, designers, and LA speakers at other events.

In Southwark a community council was created in response to this issue. '*So, a lot of the consultation is actually undertaken at a more local level, and quite a few of those issues are debated at a local level. One of the ways to empower the community councils was actually to delegate, to devolve some of the powers, i.e., they can make decisions and also some of the budgets, so when there's money involved, communities feel that they have a little more say and they determine where things go'.* This way, local people could bid for tenders to undertake projects, and the community council decides which projects to carry out. He does highlight the downside, as sometimes there are '80 people in a room, and a lot of people don't feel that they can speak out in that kind of way.'

Another participant responded,

'we need to use systems to build that confidence in people so that it feels as though they can make a difference and it's critical. [If] you wait for a project and you are not educating all the time about the fact that you can make a difference then the project's going to fail. You need people who are educated and confident that they can make a difference. … And education is producing citizens who are interested in what's going on around them. That is critical. The community shouldn't 'feel or act like a spectator … they need anything that is going to help them.'

Leadership

An important part of the transformative participation process is giving communities a sense of leadership and independence over the design process. During the debates how relevant this is for further progress became evident. David Smith illustrated this when addressing leadership:

'It's very tempting when you're going to do consultation or community-led design … to go to the head of institutions for their leadership. So, if you're working next to a school, you'll go and talk to the head teacher about it. What I've found as an organiser is invariably generally leadership within an institution doesn't rest with people who are the de facto head of the organisation. It might be someone who is an inspirational PE teacher in a boys' school. [Who] we've got to look for first and foremost I think, are people who've got a genuine following. And that's how you've got to tap into people who've got a genuine interest rather than … people who come to every planning session regardless of what it's on because it's a semi-retired career for them sometimes.'

Sometimes such leadership arises from a confrontation, from not wanting something to happen in an area. If people only get involved when there is a problem, it can appear to be nimbyism. However, Sophia addressed this by observing that 'sometimes this actually creates an opportunity', an opportunity to do something with that problem [that] can inspire the community towards achieving something that they truly do want. '*I think [it] is how we collectively create a sense of opportunity, not just the challenges for people, that is important.'*

As a participant put it in the Bristol debate, '*I think it needs some sort of impetus from the community level … getting together and saying right, we want some housing here, we want to park there... …Being the sort of seed of the process as opposed to someone coming in with a lump of money and saying right, we'll have that for community involvement, that for building, and that for maintenance. [It] needs to be sort of an organic process'*. Confirming this, another audience member described this process as '*the agency of the people wanting and understanding what they can ask for is really important.'*

Core group

Throughout the 'Debate Series', it became clear that the main interactions within the community took place via a dedicated group in the community. All the community

members, designers, and LA speakers worked with core groups. Many of the participants also referred to their own steering groups when giving examples, and some planners mentioned that they were working with steering groups. Many examples within the discourse showed that the main point of departure for a project was to have a core group to support the process along the way.

Bridgestock gave several examples of projects that use core groups – predominantly steering groups – to help the project along and found them of great importance in making a project run successfully. He described how these groups needed to persevere. With projects taking a long time, 'it's very important that these groups have this tenacity', Bridgestock remarked. For some steering groups or support groups, there was not enough support to help the group realise their project; therefore, having a core group becomes very important. He attributed Cassiltoun's success to the notion that there was a group of people who agreed that something should happen.

'I think coming through all of this is when you're making big projects, you need a core group, and I think maybe this is why Cassiltoun has been very strong. There's been a core group involved over nine years and more, so you get that same or similar view all the way through.'

He stressed the importance of this; when a core group is a consistent group of people, there is no need to reiterate the status of the project and the decisions that have been made to get to the next stage.

Longevity

According to Chloe Newcombe-Jones, whether a project succeeds or fails often depends on time. Projects can take years to develop before they even get off the ground. The 'controversial' additional time caused by integrating community members into the design team must also be considered. Newcombe-Jones emphasised the importance of taking time into consideration – the additional time of the architects, planners, and other team members involved in the duration of the project – when integrating a community in the design process. Newcombe-Jones acknowledged that the community is a precious resource but observes that finding the right contractor alone can take up to a year. To her this also raises the question of how to simultaneously keep groups inspired whilst managing a development. She admitted that she is sometimes overwhelmed by the demands from the office and different communities. For her, it is about knowing 'how to not be inundated and how to sort, and how to take things forward for a group'.

One of the Bristol participants phrased it as follows: '*Continuity and determination and never giving up is the big issue - lack of franchise actually means it's really something daunting because if we're just given the tools to do what you're suggesting' tick the box', we'll just fall into the trap the LAs fall into'.*

Community partnerships

From the Debate Series, specifically from the professional speakers, it became apparent that all of them had teamed up with some other group or organisation at some point. Some projects collaborated with LAs or private businesses just to get off the ground. To combat the specific challenges faced in projects and to create specific opportunities, it can be beneficial to forge specific partnerships to build relationships with the larger community and get the projects up and running. As a by-product, this can even help with funding opportunities. It was evident that even community speakers worked collaboratively with other organisations. As Sandra Manson confirmed, a project cannot be completed in isolation: *'...it is about working in partnership with as many organisations as possible and working with as many people as possible through that'.*

David Smith shared insights into how Igloo started building community partnerships. '*What we do is we try and embed ourselves within civic society institutions so churches, schools, mosques, trade unions, anywhere really where people come together for a greater sense of purpose than just making profit. Because what we found over the years, through doing community organising, is where you find the bedrock of society, where you find stability in transient places like Tower Hamlets, where 30% of the population move in and out of the borough every year, where you find the real consistency is in these civic institutions so that's who we try and work through.'*

'I try and bring together these different organisations so we can facilitate a conversation in the local area about things and start by asking the question what is it that makes you angry about the area in which you live and what is it that you're particularly pleased with? And we've found invariably that if you can create these relationships between these different institutions locally then you immediately have a real genuine power base from which to talk about common things rather than everybody saying 'well what does a community mean nowadays? What is a community?'

De Sousa at Bristol emphasised the importance of building community partnerships as well: '*The groups that we are working with recognised more and more that collaborative approach with the local authority, with developers, or moving into the area with local businesses, with everyone. I think this key point is that we're not going to fight you; what can we do together?'*

Inclusiveness

Participants in the Debate Series noted that consultations can be a confrontational process and that it can be hard to navigate the levels of inclusiveness and involvement when one undertakes a large project. To Oona Goldsworthy, chief

executive of the Bristol Community Housing Federation, enabled communities collaborate as equals: '*It is not "other", it is us. It's not just us professionals handing over community design, but a collective process. And each individual should be enabled to participate'.*

As one participant explained, being involved has value and a cost: *'And that is not just being actively involved; even just coming to events is precious time for the community. Even just coming to engagement events can be difficult for some. For some people, they just don't have the time in the day or evening to come to events, and so it does mean that we might need to make sure everything is as accessible and inclusive as possible. We must also make it fun for people to come out and give their opinion'.*

David Roberts gave an example in which the developers 'focused on the target community too early on in the process'. He observed that when the development was finished, another part of the community was not impressed by the facility. He focused on a user group of a park, teenagers, as they seemed to just be hanging around and causing mischief. They were asked what they wanted from the park, and their proposed idea was then designed by a skate park designer. When revealed, other users and surrounding residents felt that they were not consulted and became resentful of the skate facility and its users. This indicated that placated participation could cause more problems. If the people were at least informed of how a development was going to happen, they might have made peace with it earlier, and, at best, a more representative community opinion could have been elicited to understand what the park needed to be and have.

Some of the developments that the LA and developer speakers work with have no residing community. Even though many of the people that initially became involved with his project are no longer part of the campaign because they are busy or have moved, David Smith argued the following: *'you've got to build in the opportunity for new people to come to the project and take it on and to leave it and feel a certain degree of ownership over it'.* Another example of transient communities was shared by an audience member in London who runs an allotment project. She described her group, which has evolved since 2009, as driven by a few committed members. Over the years membership has grown to about 25 people, with support from local councillors. However, she observed that the people involved in the group change every year. They come with lofty ideas in March, get involved, start to talk to community members in a new way, and become very excited. Nevertheless, the turnover of people is quite significant, and in the beginning, she was quite upset because of this:

'They might move away from the area; they might just decide it's too much for them. I'm trying to grow this group and people keep moving on, and it's not working out how I thought it would, but what I'm trying to do

is harness that activity at the beginning of the year. It usually starts in March, and it kind of tails off in November, and just try to get as much out of it as possible and get people talking to each other. Just make the most of the whole community of people where you've got them there because they might not be there in a year's time, you know, so many things can change.'

Oona Goldsworthy remarked that sometimes when many new people are moved into a project, there is 'no community spirit yet, because people don't know each other'. Thus, in a project they really invested in, they worked closely with new residents to build a sense of community by hosting activities: '*We set something up, sometimes we help them set something up, and sometimes they even set something up themselves'.* For example, when older residents were annoyed with young people in the park and the park was more run down, a group of young people was recruited. These young people were called 'the Young Rangers' and given nice jackets with 'the Young Rangers' written on the back. They took ownership of the park, looked after it, and made sure that it was well maintained. The young people assisting with the regeneration of the park made an impact and stopped the loitering.

Funding

If the thesis focused on the participation-related theme that was on the forefront of speakers and audiences' minds, the title should have been 'How to fund community-led design', as funding was the main topic of discussion. The developers who spoke, Jonathan Strassberg and David Roberts, were quite upfront about the matter. Due to the perceived risk that community involvement brings to a project and the value of land as it stands, most developments do not allow for CLD.

Below is a summary of the funding-related sub-themes.[71]

Funding objective

There are different short- and long-term objectives for the different stakeholders in a development. Housing associations and LAs have care-related duties (maintenance, budgeting, and the residents) after the development of a project, whilst a developer sometimes only has a short-term funding objective, wanting to finish the site and move on to the next development. Consequently, community participation and transformative processes tend to be more beneficial for civic developers than private developers.

[71] Each sub-theme is supported by on one or two examples out of many points raised during the debates. However, as funding was not the focus of the research, only the most pertinent examples were included.

Funding risk

Jonathan Strassberg in Glasgow addressed funding from the 'risk' perspective of the developer. Developers do not want any risk in their project and therefore work to reduce risk and complications; and they 'feel the project is better for it'. Strassberg stated, 'Simply by adding the community into the development you are adding an unknown risk'.

External funding

This is one of the main funding opportunities mentioned in regard to getting a community project off the ground. This is due to the perceived risk that certain banks and developers see in a community project, as well as diminished funding through civic or public means. If there are no traditional funding streams available, it becomes imperative for the groups to develop community partnerships to forge new alliances. An alliance itself can be perceived as lower risk and draw new funding from traditional funding streams, or a new partnership might be able to support the project with private funding.

Community funding

To Ron Smith community funding also comes into play. With civic projects generally requiring external funding from charitable or social enterprises, the community becomes part of the funding exercise. Communities can become a draw for public and third sector funding. This is done because LAs or developers have to prove that they have engaged the community. The community can, of course, also raise their own funds which can be used to match-fund[72] a project.

Funding community support

Paid community workers, as seen in some community groups that are perhaps financially financed, can be of great benefit in leading community initiatives, as was illustrated in the Debate Series. The only problem is that 'volunteers tend to drop off the scene or are not as willing to put as much in' if others are paid. Ron Smith acknowledged that 'local volunteers are very important to the level of involvement that we are discussing in community-led design. … sometimes local volunteers, who perhaps have a professional background, may be able to lead and manage projects very well. Areas where the

[72] Match-funding is a principle used by some charities or grant organisations requiring applicants to match the funding they are requesting. Thus, if an individuals wants £200,000, they need to prove to donors that they have raised £100,000 through fundraising or other donations. The funder or donor then agrees to match the amount of funding pledges raised for a project.

locals are not so professionally qualified or educated in such processes sometimes have a lot of difficulty getting started and taking it seriously'.

Funding resources

There is a constant need to fund community engagement and participation in a project, specifically with time and resources. These resources are needed before, during, and even after the project is finished. Anne Stuart explained that The Stables project needed 23 different funding packages to stay alive and to develop itself; moreover, 10 housing associations are involved in the management and maintenance of the whole project area. This illustrates how important funding is for the development itself and to sustain a project or area.

Political funding constraints

Sometimes the hands of planners and project support officers are tied by budget constraints from an LA or housing association. Even though they might want to help a group, they might not have the means to do so due to policy development at a local, regional, or national level.

Discussion

The conditions for enabling CLD were mostly discussed in the form of barriers to and challenges for transformative community participation. Funding appeared to be a key condition that needed to be met; there is a certain level of risk perceived when introducing the community into a development and the additional time it requires to work with the community. Nonetheless, the need for funding can open new avenues that otherwise might not have been taken. It can be a motivator to create partnerships and obtain funding through other means, or the partnerships can help develop a better business case for a project. Enablers may not have much influence with regard to funding side but can nevertheless point out elements of funding and their importance.

Table 5-1 provides an overview of all the conditions relevant to enabling CLD, transformative participation, or both. In addition to funding, this section shows that communities need to recognise themselves and professional stakeholders as resources to be reckoned with. Through citizen activation, leadership, core group assembly, and longevity support, a community can be enabled to feel more empowered to take part more effectively in the design and development process. To increase its viability, a community group can partner with local organisations and businesses, supporting the group with longevity and funding through sustainability challenges and promoting greater inclusivity within the community project. It was

clear from the Debate Series that the community projects had to address most of these conditions in some form or another within their projects. These conditions exposed that much groundwork is needed to make a project as transformative as possible.

How can the right combination of conditions for a project be supported and enabled? The next section explores the actions necessary to enable CLD.

Table 5-1 Conditions of design enabling for community-led design

Conditions - Enabled communities

• Project selection
• Community as a resource
• Empowerment
  ○ Activating citizens
  ○ Leadership
  ○ Core group
  ○ Longevity
  ○ Community partnership
  ○ Inclusiveness
• Funding
  ○ Funding objective
  ○ Funding risk
  ○ External funding
  ○ Community funding
  ○ Funding community support
  ○ Funding resources
  ○ Political funding constraints

5.4 Enabling approaches (actions)

Not many enabling methods were shared in the Debate Series. The approaches that were addressed were more approaches of how to initiate, position, and guide the enabling process for transformative participation. The main themes that came to the fore were related to the initiation of the participation process, the clarity of which can help enablers and communities understand what they each wanted to gain from the process; such clarifications can make the participation process as transformational as possible for all.

The themes were all discussed in an inter-connected fashion. One speaker would talk about honesty and time, whilst another would talk about honesty and transparency. The headings chosen to combine speaker- and audience-named themes into larger categories, which, in fact, are in line with the main values of CPs: dialogue, respect, and equality.

Initiating participation

Structured and managed plan

The speakers mostly shared their success stories, which were coherently presented. Whilst the speakers did address challenges and share examples of engagement that were unsuccessful, it was mostly up to audiences to highlight some of the more unsuccessful elements of participation.

One unsuccessful form of participations involves poor management, which can also be referred to as poorly structured engagement. It is important that professionals go into events understanding what they want to achieve from the participation; such information gathering can also be beneficial and transformative for the community. Such clarity of purpose can help a professional to obtain the knowledge needed for the development of a design and a community to not to become disillusioned with the participation process; this prevents them from feeling 'unheard' and disempowered. A professional audience member gave a good example of poorly structure engagement at the Glasgow debate. They conducted a design consultation that was poorly structured. After advertising it for three weeks and offering residents leaflets, at the event itself, the only way in which residents could participate was placing three little cards in different categories that were predetermined by an LA. The LA thought they knew what the issues were, so, at the end of the day, the communities' main concern seemed to be about pets soiling the footpath. This just 'reinforced the notion that communities have nothing to offer the design process', as

when it is a badly designed event, community members have no other ways of expressing their needs. An audience member proposed the following solution:

'one of the crucial roles of professionals in this process is to be able to create a framework where any experience they [community] can explore their ideas and put them forward in a way that can actually be useful… let's get somewhere that's imaginative but it's also drawing on their experience and knowledge as people who live in that community.'

Another audience member later in the evening shared another challenge – that of asking communities the wrong questions: '*the moment you ask a community what it wants, you're asking the wrong question, and you should be asking what the community needs. … as the professional in that place, you should be there and brave enough to provide the group with critical analysis to any responses'.* To this participant, professionals needed to be somewhat confrontational toward the community. By asking the right questions, by being truthful about what influence they can have in the design, and by showing critical analysis, people can learn about the decision-making process from the design side. This can help them better identify what they need.

Another related example that he shared was as follows: '*Where I work … people want a Tesco and a swimming pool. Now, I could spend the next five years trying to get them a Tesco and a swimming pool. I will try and do, but those desires are identifiers of need, you know, they're not the answer. [It] is not necessarily a swimming pool or a Tesco. They identify them as a need for accessibility to produce, goods, sporting facilities, recreational facilities'.*

In Glasgow Ron Smith, the planner speaker, mentioned that architects can serve as brokers for engagement. His experience was that it was often left to the planning authority to 'decide what level of consultation is involved, from actually acting on what people would like to see nearly right down to telling people what's been proposed and perhaps giving them the opportunity to formally object'. However, he felt that the architect could play an important role in initiating participation within the community. Architects serving as a broker between the council and the community can establish the level of participation a project requires.

The brief

Designers and planners all spoke about how to get the community involved as soon as possible. Johanna Gibbons, the design speaker at the London debate, gave a detailed description of the opportunities presented in brief development with the community:

'It started right from the very embryo of the project so, you know, they didn't start on the design, they started on defining the brief out of which the design emerged. I mean luckily, I don't have a problem that we often are given terrible briefs, because actually it gives us more freedom to explore opportunities with our stakeholders. So, I view design, you know, it's not community-led design as such as a kind of collaboration, a kind of getting to know each other. Sort of building trust, exchanging vocabulary in order that those people who are around the table actually can discuss issues with you.'

She added,

'it evolves out of the people, out of the stakeholders and out of the site as well … there may be quite a lot of heritage that comes out from local knowledge as well so it's pooling all of that together, so it's a very organic process.'

Sophia de Sousa summarised it as an '*iterative and collaborative process in which the leadership might not mean being in charge of but informing'.*

Obtaining needed information from the community at the briefing stage to influence the design and allow it to 'evolve' out of the collaboration is one of the elements of making participation transformational. Showing people that they have an influence on that design instead of being set to choose from prepared options.

Negotiated situations

Within every design and development projects there are complex issues that needs to be resolved. As Matt Bridgestock explained, few developments are like Cassiltoun, where there was a 'group of people that agreed there should be something happening'. Moreover, to him, other speakers and audience members may see it the opposite way; 'it is groups of people who agree something should not be happening', and it may become the designer's task to come to a 'negotiated situation' between the council and the community, similar to the broker role that Ron Smith articulated but focused on resolving tensions. According to Matt Bridgestock, holding negotiated discussions is a different skill from how an architect might deal with the design of a building and is generally not something an architect learns. He saw it as

'a modern way of getting people to think about what the town space might be over time. Coming to a negotiated solution is establishing different ideas for the town, including community facilities and what they might be and who might use them.'

In his first example, Bridgestock showed a project in which the opportunities that arose when the council made the very unpopular decision of removing the swimming pool without any consultation had to be examined. This resulted in a very hostile

series of events, as it represented the demolition of something that had clear community value. To even begin to negotiate, Bridgestock needed to move the discussion 'beyond the unpopular decision and loss felt by the community'. Furthermore, he had to establish what the people wanted as a replacement and, at the same time, make sure the LA could deliver these expectations.

According to several of the other examples Bridgestock, White, Newcombe-Jones, and Goldsworthy gave, they favoured doing community engagement 'on site' in the locality of a project to allow for more effective negotiations. When groups must leave the area and have to go to a town hall or civic meeting place, they may feel out of their depth, might not go, or may feel a level of anxiety or hostility before attending the event. To mitigate this power imbalance, the discussion must be brought to them. Having the engagement take place in the area where the development is to be makes it easier to attend and involves a more inclusive and broader audience of stakeholders, as they are required to take less time out of their days to go and have a chat.

Dialogue and respect

The main action coming to the fore in the Debate Series was dialogue through respect. To maintain the hope and interest of the community through the long journey of a development, feedback and dialogue are essential, as highlighted in the presentations of Johanna Gibbons, Matt Bridgestock, Oona Goldsworthy, and Sandra Manson.

Appreciation

In summarising the Bristol speakers' presentation, Sophia de Sousa highlighted that each of the speakers had shown examples of 'respect and appreciation for what everyone brings to the table'. To her, an important part of an enabler's role is to make sure to create an environment that makes 'everybody to feel comfortable', but she also acknowledged that as 'one of the biggest challenges'.

Chloe Newcombe-Jones mentioned it is not only the professional who needs to appreciate the community; her role is also to mediate and facilitate respect and appreciation among communities 'who don't necessarily talk to each other round the table'. Finding the right groups that will be affected or need to be involved and bringing these different voices to the table even if they do not see eye to eye is important to her. To her not having the right discussion is half the problem of participation. Many times, 'you are not in the right place with all the right people to

realise the common issues and frustrations', she remarked. Newcombe-Jones highlighted a way to increasing the sense of appreciation for the groups they worked with. They hired a local sustainability group to develop guidance documents, which gave 'the community a chance to showcase their knowledge and which [could] empower them to share their knowledge locally'. Additionally, this also freed up time for the LA.

Greg White described it as follows: *"that there are a lot of people here who find going to a meeting completely alien, completely scary and therefore don't get involved and it is how to get those people involved in the process."* Consequently, making them feel appreciated and valued is an important first step in elucidating the invitation to contribute.

Transparency and honesty

Transparency and honesty are mentioned numerous times, specifically by the community and design speakers but also by other professionals in the rooms on the evenings in question. One of the main conclusions was that transparency and honesty come from trust. Trust is established by not 'constantly being disappointed' as what they 'can expect or ask for' may not be made clear to a community.

Sandra Manson used this premise to establish a better relationship between youth groups and the larger community. As the community was consulted throughout the whole journey and the core group of teenagers also felt heard, the development sustained a better relationship with the wider community as they all understood what was going on.

Furthermore, to Oona Goldsworthy, being clear and transparent about what is on offer is essential, as '[it] *makes things accessible in a variety of ways for communities to partake in the process and includes as many people as possible. Due to several issues, one of which is over-consultation, communities have lost trust in their local authorities and believe that they can make a difference in a project. Making small steps real and using these as catalysts to inspire others to see their larger vision'.*

Several of the planners and designers use pop-up shops to bring people together. Having a meeting space in their neighbourhood and creating a 'fairly transparent' process can set the scene for 'quite lively meetings'. Spaces that feel open and where people feel respected allow people to be honest and build trust amongst themselves and in professional stakeholders.

Alistair Huggett held a variety of workshops for different age groups – for the kids

and the councillors.

'We had a walkabout with the community council and (found) that you're actually quite a lot of people talking about similar things. It only boiled down to a few areas of conflict. …

Transparency probably is one of the important things if you can't do something you don't think your clients or the people that commissioned you, the council, the development trust or whatever it is, can't deliver. The worst thing that you can do is say to people that it can be delivered. The best thing you can do is say to people 'this can't be done.'

This showed Huggett that there is 'less conflict than you expect'; instead, there are far more 'areas of connection', and people come to understand that not everything can be done. They just need to be trusted with that information. This was reiterated in examples from Matt Bridgestock, Anne Stuart, Sandra Manson, and Oona Goldsworthy. Professionals need to let go and trust that a community comprehends some social, cultural, economic and design matters. Furthermore, as Johanna Gibbons highlighted, *'We can't often tell what the outcome's going to be at the beginning, so it means that we need a really trustworthy client who is going to bear with us as we explore stuff'.* Developers also need to come along on the journey of transparency and trust building.

Language

During the debates and as highlighted by twitter feeds, it was clear that the language used to engage with the community is important for the people to understand what was going on and that they could respond. It is easy to use language that excludes people from a meeting or event.

To Sandra Manson, it was important that professionals keep language accessible to keep everybody engaged. This can help practitioners and community members respect and understand each other. She provided an overview of how the teenagers in her steering group effectively handled the issue of language:

'I had 12-, 13- and 14-year-olds sitting in the world's most boring meeting. I was falling asleep. They must have been, .. having a terrible time. It was boring, it wasn't that interesting, but they gained so much from the actual process of going to those meetings. They did have their input. I think as long as you're honest with people, and you say to them you might find this boring, some of the issues, you know, you might not understand. Make sure as well in those meetings that the professionals don't use acronyms all the way through, because it discounts everyone else apart from anyone working in that field in that meeting. We had a red card system. If someone got too many red cards, they had to do a penalty the young people drew up. But if someone kept saying … any acronym, someone would hold up a red card then they had to explain what that acronym was. Also, if they used rather large, complicated words that were unnecessary in a

sentence. Because we all thought, the young people all thought, they only used them to make themselves feel that little bit more important, and there was no need for it.'

It made the meetings more fun, the young people becoming more attentive and engaged, as they were listening out for somebody to use an acronym, who then had to run around with a fruit bowl on their head.

Manson concluded: '*If you're expecting young people and communities to get involved in designing and have a real say in it and it not just be lip service for the funders, then you have to accommodate them, and you cannot use those acronyms because they don't understand it, and why should they?'*

This thought about accessibility through appropriate language use was echoed in several different discussions across the three evenings. From a professional point of view, Matt Bridgestock emphasised that there is a trust issue when people do not understand the terms, measures, and jargon that are being used. It creates a barrier between the community and professionals.

Listening

To give good feedback, to understand the actual needs of the community, and to build trust, 'quite a lot of listening' is required according to Johanna Gibbons. The Debate Series showcased many ways to listen and make people feel included and welcome in the process – from pop-up shops to surveys, focus groups, meetings, theatres, bus rides, and study tours. Design professionals can provide different ways to inspire people to talk about what they know about their area, as well as what they think about a development and generally what they want to share with the group, community, professionals, or a combination of these. By listening and trying to understand what is on people's mind, Anne Stuart said, one can 'be on the same page' and collectively begin at the same starting point.

Design

Aspirations versus viability

In the three Q&A sessions, much discussion centred around aspiration versus viability. The two main challenges regarding aspiration were related to how to bring different and often disparate aspirations together and how to keep the aspiration high throughout an often quite 'alien' and 'boring' process. The development of built environment projects happens through different stages – from brief development to design on to tender and construction – and all take quite a long time, often longer than community members anticipate.

Oona Goldsworthy characterised the problem as follows:

'One of the difficulties is to get everybody involved from different sectors and backgrounds and even people that might not want to initially be involved. Solutions need to be found among the community itself. For future developments, we need to work in a collaborative way and not depend on local councils to initiate.

It is therefore essential to make things accessible in a variety of ways for communities to partake in the process and include as many people as possible. Due to several issues, one being over-consultation, communities have lost trust in their local authorities and belief that they can make a difference in a project. Making small steps real and using these as role models to inspire others.'

She explained that they get a quantity surveyor (QS) on board from the start to discuss and raise aspirations. Quantity surveyors help build aspiration by showing community groups what is on offer and what a transformation can do for them, so they feel informed and part of the process. Enabling the groups by educating them about the possibilities is helping them step forward into the empowerment process. The QS is also there to discuss the financial implications of any idea put forward, making sure that any idea or concept is viable from the start.

Chloe Newcombe-Jones has also adopted this process, finding that having a QS around the table beneficial because she had discounted design options, thinking they were too expensive. However, having a QS at the table with the designers led to creative discussions that enabled them to re-think concepts; a QS could tell them that they 'could do [something] and save on money in another area'. Talking about cost early, according to Newcombe-Jones, does not always have to be a negative experience and can raise aspirations by saying what can be done instead of focusing on what cannot be done. Issues of viability were also highlighted by an audience member at the Bristol debate: *'if there's too much aspiration and not enough viability, then it isn't going to work basically'.* Therefore, being upfront and honest about what the community can influence and what is achievable is essential to developing and maintaining aspirations throughout a project.

To Greg White as a designer, design aspiration needs to keep evolving throughout a project. He described facilitating other people's ideas and introducing one's own knowledge as the technical stakeholder as a delicate balance. He felt it is important to develop aspirations to draw the best out of the site and the community. Sandra Manson confirmed that aspirations naturally change throughout a project. Some of the young people started out wanting 'a moat and a slide for the media centre'. However, by being honest with people, they grew over the course of the project and

felt like they were part of the design as they understood the decision-making process.

Design knowledge

Ron Smith and Matt Bridgestock addressed the issue of a lack of design knowledge. Smith explained that sometimes 'people can't understand why you insist on timber frames and not plastic ones', and if people cannot 'articulate' aspects of the design as they lack design knowledge, it 'fall[s] back in the lap of architecture'. Bridgestock highlighted the importance of understanding what something is 'going to look like' – to show and visualise the different spaces and areas with the reasoning displayed. He used different techniques, models, and sketches to help people visualise the decision-making process.

Ron Smith believed that education was needed to understand the most appropriate words and the use of design and projects. He admitted that another issue is 'sharp memories', as 'people forget what they've said or agreed to before', which can cause problems. Thus, core groups need to maintain consistency, as mentioned in the conditions (see Chapter 4.4). To address this issue, Oona Goldsworthy 'brings everybody together at the design table, so everybody is in the loop', and it is not some 'mystical processes behind closed doors'.

Matt Bridgestock believes 'that a little bit of knowledge about the process might help maintain that enthusiasm and bring more people along with it'. He has had many people approach him saying, 'I want to do this' really enthusiastically and finds it fantastic to see that enthusiasm, but then he has to say, 'Well, okay, that's fine, but it might take three years to get to that, you know, to the stage of being in there' even if the groups hope it will come to pass in six months. Thus, having insight into the design process minimises disappointment in the community groups.

Johanna Gibbons believed 'that design is a really excellent vehicle' for participation. Her designers can enable communities to 'express ideas and aspirations', helping to develop the process and integrate the community's ideas with 'time and a bit of money as well'.

Discussion

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the actions that enable CLD or transformative participation are related to initiation and particular handling approaches to addressing and supporting the communities. It is noteworthy that without the Debate Series explicitly addressing CPs within the three discourses, the

themes that arise from it are within its realm. Dialogue and respect, along with raising critical awareness (one of the conditions), are part of the values and objectives of critical pedagogies and were mentioned as the main thematic actions within the debate setting.

CPs are based on dialogue, equality, and mutual respect between learner and educator. To enable the community to lead, it is necessary to actualise their decisions and choices in the design of their built environment. However, in addition to dialogue, respect, and raising critical awareness, addressing the architects, who can come enablers who initiate and broker participation and mediate between the different stakeholders, is essential. Table 5-2 summarises these 'critical' enabling approaches to actualising communities taking charge over the design of their built environment.

Table 5-2 Actions of design enabling for community-led design

Actions – Critical enabling approaches

• Initiating participation
  ○ Structured and Managed plan
  ○ Brief
• Negotiating situation
• Dialogue and respect
  ○ Appreciation
  ○ Transparency and honesty
  ○ Language
  ○ Listening
• Design
  ○ Aspiration versus viability
  ○ Design knowledge

5.5 Transformative participation (consequences)

The speakers and audience members from the Debate Series never defined CLD; however, they did focus to a large extent on the transformational aspects that make it a key approach to increasing resilience in a community in that it increased pride, confidence, and ownership; created jobs; and tackled poverty.

'Transformative process'

What became evident in the Debate Series is that CLD is not only about the final outcomes of transformative participation. During the three evening gatherings, it was clarified by different speakers and audience participants that it was about the process. As Sandra Manson mentioned succinctly: *'community-led design is fantastic because it leads on to all those other things, it's not just the outcome of that, it's the process you go through'.* Sophia de Souza later summarised, *'We talk about community-led design as a way to transform places but actually it transforms people's lives as well. …The journey that people go on is transformative'.*

An audience member confirmed that CLD was not about the finished project. According to them, the whole process behind producing a successful community space is important, so people should get involved from the brief development stage.

At the Bristol event, Manson very clearly articulated how proud she was of the involvement of her group of young people, the process they went through, and the sense of control that the group gained. Furthermore, she addressed the importance of people having a sense of power to transform their surroundings. As one audience member mentioned:

'I think it's very important that the community still has a sense of power and incentive purpose in determining what happened in council policy. Everybody knows about all the cuts. You say one of those cuts was to reduce the libraries. But through local campaigning the libraries remained open, and decision was to find savings elsewhere. So, with more information communities can take action and own the process.'

Manson went on to say that the young people in Knowle West, through the confidence built by being part of the design process, have gone on to different things: *'The process has changed their lives; it has put them on a different path'.*

As de Sousa described in the Bristol debate,

'the communities might not effectively design… [however they] are effectively transforming a space and its relationship with other things. You've got a local authority interested in your use of that space and how it might relate to them, and I think we mustn't forget the galvanising power of projects on the ground that can actually transform a community and start regeneration'.

Making things tangible is important when motivating the community to join the process, according to Sandra.

'Trying to involve people in the community if you've got something tangible to work with, it doesn't half motivate, and it does then lead on to other things afterwards.'

To Oona Goldsworthy making things tangible is a prerequisite for CLD:

'So, what's the point of community-led design? It has to be more than just something nice that we feel good about. It has to make a difference out there in the real world, and there has to be something tangible that comes out of it. It's about …. producing a better design, a better building, or a better neighbourhood that works better because of that input.'

'Sense of Pride'

Along with transformation pride was another topic of discussion, specifically in Glasgow and Bristol. It was also mentioned during the London debate, but Anne Stuart and Sandra Manson summarised their projects with pride, leading speakers and audience members alike to respond. The three community speakers all stated that the collaborative work with designers and developers had given them a sense of pride in a place by taking people and places on a transformative journey. To them, it created a wider-scale sense of pride in the individual as well as in the community.

As Manson illustrated,

'This is what I feel comes out of making a young person proud or making a community proud of what they've done… It's about building up their confidence levels, it's about giving them a platform, it's about hard work, it's really difficult. You do get people standing in your way; you do get obstacles thrown at you; you do get people saying, 'you're trying to destroy our community; you're trying to', you know, 'put something, we don't want, these new-fangled things, in our community; we're quite happy with the leaking building with the bars on the windows, you know, but it it's about having those conversations with those people; it's about making them understand. And the people who decided they didn't want it to go ahead, [now] come up and do a free computer drop-in on a Wednesday, or they come to the free over-50s film club that we run.'

Manson concluded proudly:

'What's happened [is] the community are still proud of the building. It's been open since 2007 and there's not been one bit of graffiti or one bit of damage to that building, so you can see that it is actually community-owned and run.'

For Anne Stuart pride takes the stigma away from a place so it is not only an area of deprivation.

As a designer, Greg White found that the pride gained from being respected during the development of a project helped the whole community looking after the project, making it all more resilient. During different design processes, he consulted groups of young people since they might understand vandalism sensitivity better. The groups advised on which materials and plants to use to reduce vandalism. Moreover, being part of the decision-making process means that they obtained insight on the project and its cost implications; this knowledge was then disseminated to a large audience. Of course, some projects failed and were run down within five years. Nevertheless, according to White to make the 'magic go on', it is important to enable the community 'right from the start'.

It is important to consider not only the community's increase in pride but also that of the other stakeholders, such as the designers, LA officers, and developers themselves, making them feel invested in the project and outcome. For Oona Goldsworthy it was all about 'creating that local sense of pride' that would make her sit in draughty church halls every time: *'There's nothing more satisfying than actually being able to point around the city and think "I was involved in that, I did that" or "I helped with doing that".'*

Even David Smith was clearly proud of all the work he has done to develop the community land trust he supported in London. He felt that the participation process was something 'to champion and push forward':

'We have a lovely phrase in the East End that goes like this; 'you don't shit on your own doorstep'. I think it's very true. I think when people have a real sense of ownership and pride over the area in which they live, that leads to better places. Well, it's true in the design and after, and very finally, I think it means management as well. I think it means building into the design ways in which local community members can manage the place afterwards.'

'Ownership'

Ownership came to the fore in all the debates I attended. It was especially emphasised by the community, designer, and local authority speakers. As David Smith mentioned above, ownership and pride seem to go hand in hand, with increased ownership equating to increased levels of pride, a form of empowerment from within.

At the Bristol debate, Sofia asked the following question, *'Is some of it about clarity of that ownership and roles?'* She went on to describe her direct experience:

'I was just visiting a project the other day, in a community where, there was the town council, the district council and a county council and a real lack of clarity over really who has control and decision-making

power over what. And what is their relationship with developers, what is their relationship with communities, what is their relationship with place, you know, what can we as people as members of our community stand for, that's not yours that's ours. Is there something which is just about helping us understand the layers of ownership?'

Much of the discussion on ownership seems to fall into two categories: either the levels or structures of ownership or the feeling or concept of ownership. In the Debate Series, structures of ownership seemed to be about the external acknowledgement of ownership. Ownership through responsibilities that are given or taken to empower a group is more the social-economic top-down or activist bottom-up form of transformative participation, as Sarah White describes, with the main actors being the community group or organisations, councils, or other LAs. The concept of ownership was more about its intrinsic sense and empowered the individual, group, or community by nurturing or instilling pride and confidence. The concept of ownership seemed to have developed due to engagement with the decision-making, design, and development processes.

Structure of ownership

Chloe Newcombe-Jones, Ron Smith, Alistair Huggett, and other planner attendees spoke of several asset transfer projects. These were buildings or other assets where the LA relinquished control and handed spaces over to local trusts or groups to manage themselves. Smith shared two examples of groups being given or taking ownership. One project was on participatory budgeting, and the LA involved the community in some of the financial matters and how money was spent in their area. The other example was about the LA relinquishing control, which was key so that groups could take ownership. The local community took on the green area in the town, created and tended their own community gardens, and transformed the area. The LA was keen on 'allowing local people to change their own environment'. For Smith, 'this is still design, it's still transforming a community', as it drew people together through a community activity.

An audience member in Glasgow examined ownership by stating whose voices she thought should not be marginalised in community activities and how 'social and small fires that are lit create successful communities and spaces'. Despite her inability to know the economic course of the coming years and decades, she saw it as important that what happens would not be *'owned by the loudest voices'.* She gave the example of working with a housing association through small communities and trying to *'get them to a place where they're taking ownership and making change happen themselves because social landlords*

in communities are the biggest community businesses now and a lot carry a lot of voice'. Furthermore, to the participant, residents need to own their voice and actions: '*In Glasgow where there's people who are fully disenfranchised, so how do we engage them in that process and making decisions that are important, making successful communities and places, it's not all about buildings …it's not just about residents and the community is bigger than that*'.

Concept of ownership

One clear example of the concept of ownership about developing a sense of community ownership through ceremonies was described at the Bristol debate. White observed that ceremonies can be used as creative ways of letting communities initiate certain parts of a project. He described how, in the tree ceremony, the trees represented people who had died, who had taken their own lives, or who were pushed from a nearby motorway flyover. These trees represented something positive that could come and restructure the park, and the community even produced a radio programme about it. It created a sense of pride and a collective memory where people took pride in place and ownership when looking after these trees.

De Sousa summing up this description of White's experience observed that it *'highlighted a different role that a designer plays in the community-led design process. It's about translating those ideas and stories and sometimes transforming the emotions into a more positive one. I mean the story of the tree planting to commemorate lives, we've seen it elsewhere as well that a design element can be a real touching and unobtrusive way to celebrate the sadness as well as the things that have gone really well, and I think with designers now there's often a real challenge.'*

She also emphasised that it *'[gave] a sense of ownership and community back through a process'.*

Another example was when Oona Goldsworthy suggested 'that when we stop talking and take charge of development projects, we create a sense of ownership'. Her organisation does this through a multi-agency approach, empowering the community by teaching them and giving them skills, which, in turn, can create opportunities for the future of the neighbourhood.

Empowered and resilient communities

In the Glasgow and Bristol debates, there were several comments regarding the fact that projects continued beyond the built environment intervention, leading to continued community activation. Cassiltoun and Knowle West both clearly showed how the empowerment of the community did not stop after the project was finished. It continued beyond the final building, creating confidence, new job prospects, and a new sense of pride in the area. Additionally, sometimes it is not about the

transformation of the community during or after the process. Sometimes the process is about transforming an area for a new community to rise-up or take ownership. A strong example of a 'holistic' approach to tackling poverty, social inclusion, and promoting life-long learning took place at Cassiltoun. Stuart explained that during the development phase of the stables, the Glasgow Building Preservation Trust took temporary ownership. They applied for the funding and managed the physical development, and when the building was finished, they gave it back to the Cassiltoun Trust, now a subsidiary of Cassiltoun Housing Association. However, Stuart described how the Cassiltoun community stayed involved from day one.

'We had open days, we had surveys done to find out what was needed in the community and we've actually put [it] now into the stables itself. And it's taken the stigma away of Cassiltoun being one of the areas of multiple deprivations.'

The surveys showed a need for a local nursery, but unlike the ones run by Glasgow District Council, they used European funding, which encourages the employment of local individuals. The offices relocated into the stables and used local staff, with the local housing management team basing themselves there as well. Additional jobs related to the site were created for local individuals as well (e.g., community artists, community gardeners, woodland rangers, and housing trainees). The surrounding area of the building became very popular, with the garden being used to educate children about food growing and edibility. The stables also included training facilities for the local residents and at the same time brought training opportunities into the area; this allowed for 'life-long learning' opportunities within the community, especially providing greater flexibility for learners of all ages.

Moreover, the community engagement continued after the development. The community took part in open-door days, with 3,000 people coming to visit over a weekend. Due to the historical connections, people who had moved away from the area would pop back to see the stables' development when visiting friends. Therefore, staff from Cassiltoun Housing Association had to become well versed in the history of the Cassiltoun Stables and the Cassiltoun House.

As Stuart proudly admitted, Cassiltoun is a very central locale.

'So, we actually took that building away from Glasgow City Council. But as I say, we were to tackle the poverty, social inclusion and life-long learning which was lacking in Cassiltoun and we would not duplicate facilities. What we were offering was entirely different, and it didn't cost a penny for the Glasgow District Council.…so what we've done [is] the local community have taken on roles and as someone who's been involved in district council projects when the district council owned the building, community ownership by

the community is a far better idea.'

This example shows that the local community's involvement can address local problems and even tackle poverty by providing training and job opportunities.

Moreover, most of the projects that Anne Stuart, Ron Smith, Sandra Manson, Greg White, Chloe Newcombe-Jones, and Oona Goldsworthy described created jobs in some form as part of the outcome or through the process. Even audience members shared experiences of job creation due to taking part in such transformative processes. Job creation was achieved through working with local volunteers and organisations, creating job opportunities because of the development, and different career opportunities that arose post-participation due to increased confidence in taking part in the design process. It was seen that having the chance to work alongside the organisations helped develop skills and confidence, making it feel transformative for the groups taking part. Furthermore, Stuart integrated job creation into the development project after having done an intensive survey in the community, from which better understood the community's needs. Another social-economic example was shared by an audience member at the London debate. As part of the Shard development, the construction company Mase developed a local job scheme. They created a mini-Shard in the adventure playground, a pyramid climbing structure, and invited kids from two nearby schools to come along. They simultaneously had a job fair close by and attracted some of the parents of the children to come along, with three of the parents obtaining jobs on the development as a result.

'Time and a place' for transformative participation

During the Q&A in Bristol, Sandra Manson acknowledged that there is a time and place for approaches that lead to higher levels of community input and that then all leads to great projects with a sense of pride. All the community and design speakers acknowledged that having transformative participation is 'hard work and not a quick fix'. From the debate it became clear that a transformative participation process takes time and, therefore, money. This is also due to the lack of funding for people in important roles such as community support officers and planners who assist community groups each step of the way in the design process. Thus, for transformative participation to take place, communities need to take the lead in their own transformation processes. In this case how can communities be enabled to take charge and, as TGH puts it, *'become a good client at the design table'*?

The debates addressed the fact that the people themselves are a substantial resource and need to be shown as a viable resource by activating and utilising them in a creative way. The experience at the KWMC reveals how a CLD building transformed the lives of local young people in the area. Sandra Manson acknowledged that involving the community might increase the construction budget, yet the benefits (pride of place, ownership, improved community resilience and confidence, job creation) are 'worth it' as they spread throughout the whole community. She was also clear that community participatory projects are 'hard work so there needs to be a purpose', for not every project is suitable. Knowing that CLD is socially and economically viable for certain projects avoids disillusionment further down the line. According to Manson, it was 'worth every penny, even double':

'Community-led design is fantastic because it leads onto all those other things, it's not just the outcome of that, it's the process you go through.'

Another example was given by Matt Bridgestock. A self-build project he had worked on had spent 10 years trying to get funding. Eventually, a housing association stepped in and set up a different funding scheme with a different proposal from what the group had put forward. To Bridgestock, it was 'purely down to the group's tenacity that the new building exists'. The different approaches to obtaining funding taught Bridgestock that perhaps there is a unique time for some of the cases. The self-build option was not the right way to get the project off the ground at that time because the support group was not large enough and did not have enough people with the right skills for the self-build. However, in the outsourced set-up, the main group was still able to be involved all the way through and therefore knew the building that they ended up commissioning. They knew both the building and the designers; since this is rarely the case in architecture, Bridgestock found this both admirable and interesting from a reflective standpoint.

David Smith stated, '*You cannot have architects in isolation, and you cannot have communities in isolation, and it's not always going to be a very smooth process but like so much of this…. It's a dialectical process, and it's messy, and there's nothing wrong with that'.* In finding a definition for CLD, David Roberts 'injected a real dose of realism', as he proposed that CLD is not viable because of governments' financial priorities. He described what Igloo does as follows:

'an investment approach founded on evidence that good design adds value in the longer term, …we call this 'out performance', but if you are a local authority officer …or maybe you work for one of the government agencies, …who are charged with selling off public sector land. If you're charged with that and you're targeted on raising as much cash as possible in a shorter period as possible then your horizons are completely

different, and the benefits of community-led design are of no interest to you because your job is to sell quickly for the highest amount of cash.'

Alistair Huggett voiced another downside of CLD, which is that one simply cannot please everyone as there are competing ideas of what the outcome should be. For example, *'in London, you also get people that complain after something that's been developed because they didn't want the youngsters to hang out in the skate park that they developed. They didn't [agree] they wanted a pristine park with no activity but also didn't want the young people to hang around, they can't basically make everybody happy'.*

Therefore, according to David Smith, CLD is not viable on publicly owned land, especially not in London, due to the high value of the locations: *'It doesn't really suit the long-term approach unfortunately'.*

Discussion

The previous section exposes some of the consequences of enabling transformative participation in the built environment and shows that such participation can lead to a range of different outcomes. The speakers and audience focused on facilitating transformation, increasing a sense of pride and ownership, and creating opportunities for job creation during and post-development. However, the age-old debate about participation for all persists, as participants acknowledged that not all projects warrant or are viable for PD and development. Nevertheless, when done effectively, such transformation can not only impact those who take part but also cascade through the larger community.

Table 5-3 Consequences of design enabling for community-led design

Consequence – Transformative participation

• Transformative process
• Sense of pride
• Ownership
  ○ Structure of ownership
  ○ Concept of ownership
• Empowered and resilient communities
• 'Time and place' for transformative participation

Table 5-3 gives an overview of the main results of design enabling for CLD, as highlighted by the speakers and audience members in the Debate Series. The main consequence is transformative participation, with additional outcomes of personal and local pride, ownership through given or taken responsibility, increased confidence and empowerment, and more resilient communities with perceived better

prospects. However, transformative participation is not always applicable to each design or development setting. As Manson indicated, this approach tends to be more time-consuming and therefore costly. Nevertheless, when a sense of ownership to a project, building, or site needs to be transferred to a community, a transformative participation approach is key to establishing that ownership and increasing empowerment and resilience. Sometimes, this requires the opening up of individuals, groups, or a community to take part in a project. The next section examines which conditions of transformative participation result in the best possible outcome from the enabling process.

5.6 Critical design enabling for transformative participation (phenomenon)

The panel discussions never gave a definition of what CLD stood for. Nonetheless, the data shows that what participants valued and described was transformative participation, which enables communities and individuals to take part in the design process at different times and opportunities to make their voices heard. If this is done effectively and communicated clearly and honestly, people start feeling heard, giving them a sense of ownership over part of the decision-making process. Most of the themes that come from the data are not new discourses withing participatory practices. Nevertheless, looking at them with a critical pedagogies' lens, has helped illuminate design enabling practices.

Table 5-4 Phenomenon of design enabling for community-led design

Enabling - critical approaches for transformative community-led design		
Conditions *Enabled communities*	***Actions*** *Critical enabling approaches*	***Consequence*** *Transformative Participation*
Project selection **Community as a resource** **Empowerment/ agency** Activating citizens Leadership Core group Longevity/ Resilience Community Partnership Inclusiveness **Funding** Funding objective Funding risk External funding Community funding Funding community Support Funding resources Political funding Constraints	**Initiating participation** Structured/ managed plan Brief **Negotiating Situation** **Dialogue & Respect** Appreciation Transparency & honesty Language Listening **Design** Aspiration versus viability Design Knowledge	**Transformative process** **Sense of Pride** **Ownership** Structure of ownership Concept of ownership **Empowered & Resilient communities** **'Time and Place' for transformative participation.**

Table 5-4 shows the conditions, actions, and consequences of design enabling CLD as addressed within this Debate Series. It shows that the phenomenon of design enabling starts with nurturing and enabling communities to be more active citizens and empowering them to become more resilient in areas of leadership, teamwork, creating community partnerships, and understanding the funding challenges and opportunities that underlie any development or design project. It is part of the

enablers' challenge to cultivate a framework for these things to unfold. The finds show that spatial designers do so by critically enabling the people, communities, and other organisations through the initiation of community participation as early as the brief development stage and creating a well-structured and managed plan for participation. Creating an honest and transparent dialogue amongst all the stakeholders and having respect for each other's positions can benefit the transformative process.

Participation can take place on different levels and intensities of transformation. As Ron Smith argued, even taking ownership of the green spaces in a small village can be transformative for its residents. Transformative participation is less concerned with the actual community taking the 'lead' on a project. It focuses on the transformative process that any of the stakeholders involved go through on the empowerment of the people and communities taking part through their own action, and on the support and nurture of their empowerment by professional stakeholders. This then leads to an increased sense of pride and ownership in projects and the local place, benefiting the people and locality through job creation, the establishment of resilient projects, reduced vandalism, and reduced maintenance costs.

For the enabler, this means;

- clarifying and educating communities about design and the design process,
- using creativity as a tool to participate and deliberate with communities to develop their voices and needs,
- sometimes mediating and negotiating conflict between the different stakeholders,
- empowering a core group and nurture them so they have the longevity to stay engaged for the duration of the usually long development process,
- empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves as a resource,
- empowering the community to become active citizens by raising their critical awareness of the design process and the power relationships within it,
- brokering the participation process between the community and the professional stakeholders, and
- brokering and signposting connections for funding opportunities.

Roles of the enabler

What does this list of consideration mean for the architect or spatial designer? During the analyse, different roles for the architect and spatial designer started to emerge. By looking at the findings through a CP lens (see subchapter 3.2) as well as actions of empowerment (Combining the four actions of agency by Alkire and Ibrahim (2007) and the corollaries of empowerment of Ashcroft, see subchapter 3.3) critical roles of

design enabling started to emerge; educator, activist, mediator, broker, and community champion (See table 5-5).

Table 5-5 Critical Enabling

Summary of the condition, actions, and consequences of enabling	***Action of empowerment***	***Critical Enabling*** *(CP context)*[73]
Participants require clarification and education in design and the design process to communities, using creativity as a tool to participate and deliberate with communities, to develop their brief and develop their voice and leadership skills.	Power to/ learning - as an individual process of inquiry and discovery to develop autonomy and develop choices. Power within/ knowledgeable – awareness of change and possible transformation that can only be personally acquired and given.	***Educator*** *Conscientization* *Praxis*
Empowering the community to become active citizens, by raising their critical awareness of the design process and power relationships within it.	Power over/ developmental - personal growth and renewed control due to transformation and agency already exhibited Power within/ knowledgeable – awareness of change and possible transformation that can only be personally acquired and given.	***Activist*** *Emancipation* *Transformation*
mediating and negotiating conflict between the different stakeholders, e.g. within group, wider community, planners, developers, design team, to foster community partnerships.	Power with/ spatial - actors supporting each other to transform latent capabilities to activate powers for the improvement and transformations of wider communities.	***Mediator*** *Dialogue & listening*
Supporting the participation process between the community and the professional stakeholders, as well as brokering and signposting connections for funding opportunities.	Power with/ spatial - actors supporting each other to transform latent capabilities to activate powers for the improvement and transformations of wider communities.	***Broker*** *Network building* *Peer sharing*
empowering a core group to have the longevity and leadership skills to stay the duration of the usually long development process, as well as empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves as a resource and for inclusivity.	Power with/ spatial - actors supporting each other to transform latent capabilities to activate powers for the improvement and transformations of wider communities.	***Community Champion*** *Cohesion & Inclusion* *Resilience & Sustainability*

Upon further research[74], these roles align with the empowerment roles outline by Labonté and Laverack (2008) in the field of health promotion, educator/ watchdog,

[73] CP context are aspects of critical pedagogies that can be situated within this role.

[74] I only discovered these empowerment roles developed by Labonté and Laverack by chance in 2021, a week before my initial submission of my thesis. Whereas the enabler's roles came out of the analysis of the panel discussion much earlier withing the analysis of the thesis. The notion of the role of the enabler came after reading Toomey's article and not completely recognising her descriptions, however after analysis and re-analysing the data, there are similarities that

resource broker, community developer, partnership development, advocate/ catalyst (p.29-30). However, these roles seem to have no empirical background to them. The empowerment roles by Labonté and Laverack are mentioned a priory, with no further deliberation where they come from. However, they do go on to deliberate them very briefly in the specific context of health promotion.

Toomey (2011) work on defining roles that serve to empower communities within community development practice did serve as an interest to explore what roles there could be for a design enabler. Toomey's role definitions are very much set in the context of community development (CD), more specifically focused on CD overseas. She identifies four as she perceives them 'traditional roles', (rescuer, provider, modernizer, liberator) and offers four 'alternative' roles, (catalyst, facilitator, ally, advocate). She looks at these roles from an empowerment lens as she states, "if we can except that the ultimate aim of community development is to empower, then all roles undertaken … must be subject to the lens of empowerment, as well as its opposite – that of disempowerment (p.183)." She analysis these with a strong dichotomy of traditional versus alternative. The former having too many challenges, whereas the new alternatives have more potential and opportunities according to her. The later are also in line with the empowerment and CP discourse, and therefor there are connections to be made to the roles that have come out of the empirical data here. She continues that most of the roles professional stakeholders take up in the participation process, are defined by the institutions or organisations they work for, not by the community they support. With many of the labelling of these roles influenced by the 'buzzwords' of the time in academia or practice. What this research did was by analysing the 'Debate Series' within the third person of those that took part in an ethnographic manner was to draw out themes of enabling and its practices from participants experience and observation.

Toomey warned that people that are being supported in participatory practices are left with the consequences of a practitioner's successes and or fall out. It is therefore imperative that practitioners understand the consequences of the roles they need to play in development projects. Moreover, there needs to be a comprehension of the impact of the development on the community once they have moved on. She notes that role of the development officers is complex and can't be confined to one role, it is a mix of positionalities, defined by what their remit it, the budget, the community

have been drawn from the transcripts.

context and what sometimes feels 'right' and all of these will have conflicting parameters, which all need to be navigated.

This would be similar for a design enabler. It could be that for certain projects they only need to be an educator or a mediator, or that they can share the responsibilities between different enabling designers or practitioners, each with their own expertise. However, it needs to be in such a way the community to be an effective part of the design process. To have transformative participation and community-led design, the design enabler does need to understand the different critical design enabling roles to support transformative participation in the built environment.

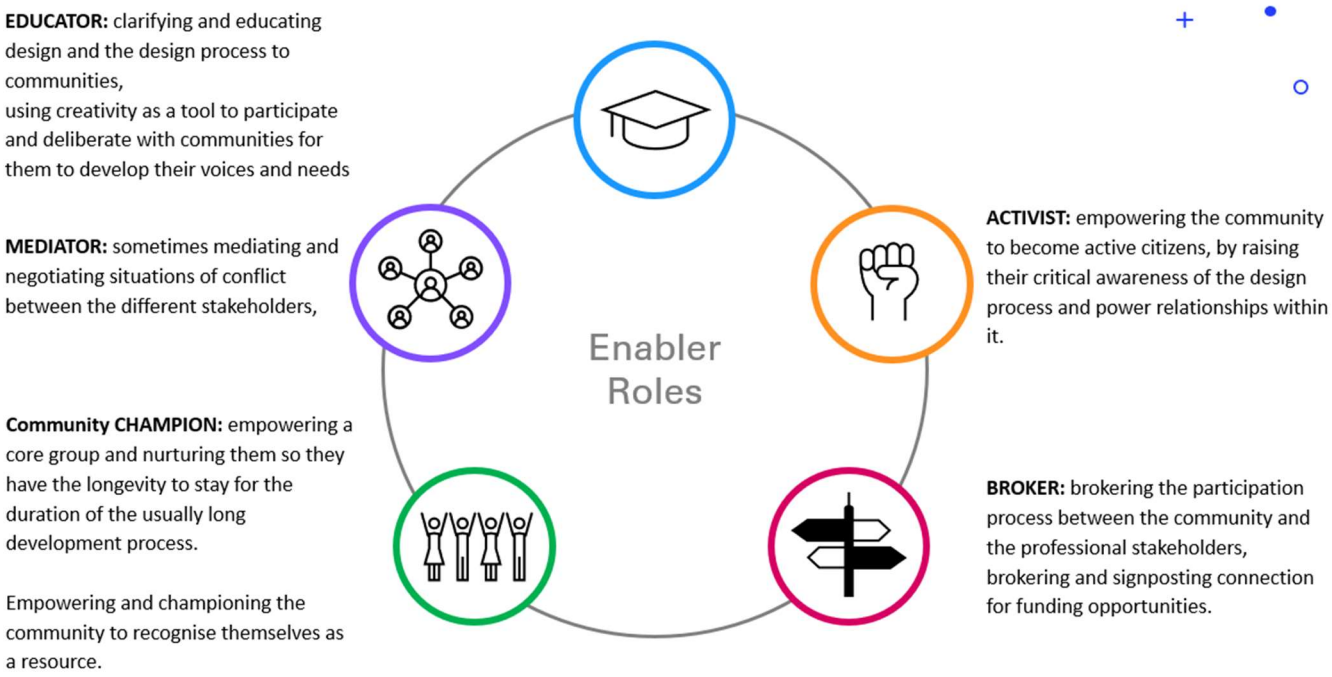


Figure 5-3 - Roles of design enabling

Educator

A key role is that of educator, to clarify and educate about design and the design process, as well as using creativity as a tool to participate and deliberate with communities to develop their voices and needs. This is a key approach that The Glass-House employ in their design enabling offer, especially in the 'by Design' training. The design knowledge received and experienced by the various means on the two-day design training course raises participants confidence, so they feel able to able to ask questions and voice their opinion on design matters, not only within the group or with their wider community, but more importantly with practitioners and professionals.

As a critical enabler, it is not only about design knowledge transfer and demystifying the design process for those that want to take part or lead a spatial design project in their place. It is also about nurturing the individual's critical inquiry, their conscientization, for the actors to gain the power to develop autonomy and develop choices. Therefore, as the educator the enablers also needs to clarify critical transformative enabling practices. This is most relevant when enabling a meso-group of collective actors to be able to enable their wider community. They need to understand the power dynamic and transformation processes, "to make them[selves] more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58). This is a personal transformation, for the actors to be 'empowered to', that can be acquired through reflexivity. A design enabler can facilitate this reflexivity through creative practices, such a journaling, mapping, or narration.

Knowledge about design and the design process needs to be transferred and this requires pedagogic skills, specifically around informal adult learning and public pedagogies, as well as an awareness of tools for visual and creative learning. A creative workshop can be inspiring, but with the right transformative pedagogic knowledge a creative workshop can be impactful and raise critical awareness and achieve transformation in the learner. Having awareness of the opportunities and barriers to learning specifically in public informal settings the educator can nurture the community leaners into a receptive state, re-engaging their conviviality, curiosity, and creativity. Raising their agency to develop autonomy and develop choices, to empower themselves to take part in the design process.

Activist

A key role as activist is to empower and emancipate the collective actors and the wider community to become active citizens, by raising their critical awareness of the

design process and power relationships within it. The core group need to become empowered enough to understand the dynamic power-plays that are part of the design process. This requirement is so they can have an impact on the decisions that impact their involvement, choices, and use of the design. and see where they can most effectively influence the design brief and design process.

Alongside educating about critical practices, the activist can nurture personal growth and renewed control due to transformation and agency already exhibited within the actors. These latent capabilities and capacities for growth and agency within the collective actors need to be reactivated. Schön's (1983) states that we know more than we can tell, and that this 'tacit knowledge' (Polanyi and Sen, 2009) and latent knowledge can be made explicit through practice and practical activities. Well curated critical design activities can kick-start discussion and deliberation regarding their needs and requirements, raising awareness of change that is required within, and the cultural and social change that is need for improvement of the wider community.

Labonte & Laverack (2008) argue that community empowerment goes beyond participatory practices, they argue for community ownership and action for political and social change. They see it as a process of re-negotiating power, whereby somebody needs relinquish power, for the other to gain more control. Additionally Scoones et al (2020) argue that it is essential for enabling to have a political activist citizen participation at its core. The critical activist needs to raise awareness of power dynamics as well as nurture individual agency and leadership capabilities, where ideally the collective actors themselves become community enablers and change agents.

Mediator

The next three enabling roles are mainly about nurturing the ability for actors to support each other to transform latent capabilities to activate powers for the improvement of wider communities. Whereas the previous two are mainly concerned about the agency and empowerment of the individual, in support of wider empowerment activities performed by the individuals, the mediator, broker and community champions are focused on the development, strengthening, support, and maintenance of meso-empowerment.

One of the key tasks of the mediator is to create a safe space for dialogue and listen. A space where the collective actors and wider participants can come together and support each other to transform latent capabilities to foster meso-empowerment within the collective for the improvement of wider communities. Meditation can be

scaffolded with collective storytelling, a creative tool that can support personal reflections of political, social and cultural experiences (Sandercock, 2000), and explore what the collective opportunities and barriers are. Through stories, people can creative narrative maps of the spaces and places that are important to them (Barton, 2001) and re-establish a new collective memory that could foster collective actions (Hale, 2018).

The mediator also has to negotiate conflict and reconcile differences between the different professional and community actors. The enabler does this by listening to what the parties have to say and what outcomes the parties would like to see, not using their own opinion or knowledge to change the outcome (the latter being consulting). It is a role that revolves around negotiation, building bridges and resolution by drawing people in and creating a shared sense of purpose and developing mutual respect by listening and dialogue. Furthermore, designers and architects have the visualisation skills to illuminate and navigate the different perspectives and voices of the actors (Eneberg, 2012) and moderate between them.

Broker

The design enabler also undertakes the role of a broker, someone that nurtures networks, fostering peer to peer support between and inside community groups and organisations, as well as being activity aware and part of local and national networks that can support the transformation and improvement of the wider community and assist in the implementation of design projects. This role is required due to perceived imbalances in power relations between the different parties involved, as well as when community struggle to ask for the support and they need to take the project forward, however not having confidence, skills, or connections to develop their required connections. As Scoone et al. (2020) observed, network understanding of the enabler can address the more complex power dynamics and link new actors with people in more established positions and establish sustainable pathways for project to evolve. To do this the broker needs to foster agency and citizenship to increase local action and emancipatory change (Scoones et al., 2020). The design enabler is in fact a catalyst for brokering these networks as they have the capacity to grow their connections and professional insights for the benefit of the groups and support the growth of their meso-empowerment.

The enabler as broker can negotiate with organisations or specialists to get materials, funding, or expertise where this is lacking in the design process or the capabilities of collective actors. This is not one of the main roles of a design enabler and might be a

role that can be delegated within the enabling process to other specialised organisations. Being able to signpost for funding or other opportunities with other support organisations can help enable actors to further their project. One of the main requests in the TGH feedback forms, when asked how TGH could further support their journey, was help with funding.

Community Champion

Before the design enabler can progress to working with the community and their representative group, there needs to be a sense of local community understanding and cohesion, within the wider working group but more specifically in the core working group of collective actors. The first step the community champion needs to take is to bring together and nurture a strong core group to take the design project forward. They also need to raise awareness and share practices on inclusiveness, making sure the group continues to build their community.

Within the setting of the design process this is all about meso-group empowerment, developing the resilience and longevity of the group to move forward as a collective to last the duration of the long design journey.

Enabling the design enabler

> "The main trouble with design schools seems to be that they teach too much design and not enough about the social, economic and political environment in which design take place. (Papanek and Fuller, 1972, p. 291)"

For the designer to become the educator, activist, mediator, broker, and community champion they themselves need to be enabled on transformative participation, requiring themselves to go through their own transformative journey from designer to critical design enabler. They need to understand the power dynamics within the public pedagogic context that they are working in and the different roles they can find themselves in as design enabler. The skill set for enabling and participatory practices as designer requires a combination of learning, deliberating, negotiation and understanding the politics (Forrester 2006) of culture, community, and design practises. Enabling as description by Scoones et al, (2020) is to "Foster 'the human agency, values, and capacities necessary to manage uncertainty, act collectively, identify and enact pathways to desired futures (p.68)." To do so requires understanding of the principles of agency, values, and capabilities in an effort foster them within people and groups. Moreover, Ashcroft argued as the importance of making competent*, as enabling in making* is 'sufficient/ appropriate/ effective action' (Ashcroft 1987,

p.145), which leads her to describe empowerment as "nurturing belief in capability and competence" (ibid, p. 145). Therefore, enabling can be phrased as "nurturing 'the human agency, values, capabilities and capacities necessary to manage uncertainty, act collectively, identify and enact pathways to desired, sustainable and resilient, futures (p.68)". I added the aspects of sustainability and resilience as important as empowerment is always ongoing (Ashcroft, 1987)

Subsequently, the designer needs to acquire the critical pedagogical aspects for effective transformative participation, that of conscientization, praxis, emancipation, dialogue and listening, developing networks, peer learning and inclusion. This is essential knowledge for the critical designer to be able to position and situate themselves within each bespoke context and enable effectively for transformative empowerment at micro, macro, and meso-level. This requires a broadminded approach of reflective learning and good communication skills of the designer (Hamdi, 2010). Moreover, as design is an interactive dynamic process (Lawson, 2006; Sara, 2002) where architects can use not only their creativity, but also need to use their personal skills to negotiate conflict into constructive opportunities (Wungpatcharapon, 2017). Design happens within a framework, starting from a loose design challenge to a well-developed, well-founded brief, which is evaluated, accessed, and adapted though further design and development stages. The design process, including the architectural process, is in a fact a process with multiple stakeholders involved.

They also need to be able to cope with the unexpected, with an awareness of the complexity of placemaking such as the background of the participants and the community, relationships, socio-economic and political issues as well existing practices, services and project that are already embedded (Sletto, 2010). It is therefore essential that transformative participation should be developed in response to and situated in its defined setting, to the extent that the spatial designer positions and situates themselves within the spatial and social context of the community and user (Poiner and Drake, 2021; Till, 2005). There is a political dimension with being situated closely with the people of the community (Luck, 2018). This requires the enabler to have critical awareness of their own positionality through reflexive practice (Sletto, 2010), to understand what preconception and views they bring to the process and how these preconception and views can affect the power dynamics of the enabling process.

Till (2005) therefore posits that transformative participation is vital to determining transparency in power, knowledge and decision making between the enablers, practitioners, professionals, clients and users (Poiner and Drake, 2021; Till, 2005). By acknowledging the imbalances of power and knowledge in design, the objective becomes to prioritise the raising of agency and empowerment through effective and feasible participation (Poiner and Drake, 2021). By inserting community participation as a vital part of the design decision-making process, transformative participation disrupts expectations of design outcomes, which are a natural 'modus operandi' for designers (Till, 2005). The design professional's reputation and status are built on a pursuit of excellence and to be seen as the expert. This stance can alienate people and make them feel inadequate (Hamdi 2010). Moreover, there is a duality in the role of the design enabler. On the one hand the role of the design professional is vital to the participatory design process, as they have expert knowledge of the power dynamics between professional stakeholders, policy and legislation, design, development and construction (Hale, 2018; Sandercock, 1998) through years of experience and education. Whereas, on the other side of the coin, as a design enabler it is all about relinquishing control (Rendell, 2006) and power, for the community be enabled and empowered to co-produce and lead the design process.

'Co' in CO- design, production stands for cooperation. "Cooperation is about partnership, sometimes formal sometimes informal. It's about coming to consensus about a common goal, recognising that no one partners alone can achieve. It's about participation and shared responsibility, consolidating and deciding obligations." (Hamdi 2010, p.143) It's about creating horizontal relationships, mutuality, and legitimacy (Ibid, p.143) However Sennet highlights that this description is collaboration (Sennett, 2012). He notes that cooperation is not about consensus, it's about dissensus however which has a shared goal. Furthermore, Pereira et al. (2018) argue that transformative practitioners need to first be activators and then facilitators of transformative spaces for learning. However, that would still have the designer as initiator or activator. Similarly, Hamdi (2010) sees architects, planners urbanist and other professionals concerned involved in placemaking practice as placemakers. However, if enabling is supporting, nurturing, and fostering but not actioning oneself, then it is in fact the community that are making their places, and who are therefore placemakers. Is it not better to view the design enablers as change agents, central in establishing a variety approaches of enabling, participation, and dialogue for the purpose of transformative change by catalysing transformative learning (Fazey et al., 2018;

Pereira et al., 2018; Wittmayer and Schäpke, 2014). Awan et al. (2011) use the phrase spatial agents, when you are facilitating knowledge to create, inspire or support others in the development of their space and place. They define the spatial agent as,

> *"one who effects change through the empowerment of others, allowing them to engage in their spatial environments in ways previously unknown or unavailable to them, opening up new freedoms and potentials as a result of reconfigured social space".* (p.32)

Combining the latter two views for clarity, design enablers can therefore be seen as spatial change agents, support the community through transformative participatory practices to becoming placemakers, even place agents that take on the baton of the design enabler to enable the wider community for transformation and improvement for all.

This chapter examines the conditions, actions, and consequences of design-enabling, where transformative participation is less concerned with the actual community taking the lead on a project. The next chapter, however, explores some of the design enabling processes TGH has used over the last two decades – more specifically their 'by Design' design training workshops – to explore meso-empowerment through design enabling practices.

Chapter 6 The Glass-House enabling practices

6.1 The Glass-House enabling practices

This chapter explores the conditions, actions, and consequences for TGH design enabling approaches, specifically from their core enabling offer – Design Training (DT). Over a three-year period, data was collected from four DT[75] courses, which were part of the EDP research projects. The data collected was from observation, fieldnotes, interviews with staff and participants (past and present), and feedback forms. To understand the phenomenon of design-enabling, it is essential to explore the conditions (what forms it), action and interaction (what are strategies and approaches), and consequences (outcomes).

The research shows that short intervention workshops, such as the DT, can build some of the capacities and capabilities that the individual, group, and community need to initiate, realise, and sustain their involvement in the design of their built environment. Within this research, it is impractical to do a fully detailed narrative of the whole two-day course. This chapter is therefore an outline of the emerging themes that emerged in the set-up (conditions) of DT, the activities, and strategies (DT days one and two) as well as the consequences. This means that some of the activities are not comprehensively described in the text below. This is not to trivialise those activities but rather because their benefits may already be covered in another mentioned exercise.

6.2 Design Training[76]

The DT has been given the overarching label '… by Design' with specific names such as Buildings by Design, Spaces by Design, Neighbourhoods by Design, Play by Design, and Young Space-makers. Initially, the programme was a three-day residential training at TH, but over the last 15 years, it has become a two-day training and even a one-day course which takes place in a community or locality.

The Buildings by Design training brings together several community groups that are planning or going to undertake the (re)development of a particular building (e.g., a community centre, place of worship, or village hall). The main objective of the two-day course, as with any 'by Design' course, is to give groups knowledge and skills so

[75] I was a participant observer for three of the four design trainings but was part of the feedback and impact studies for all of the courses.
[76] See Chapter 2.3 for a detailed overview of the DT evolution.

they can become more confident and self-sufficient in navigating the design and design process of their project. The aim being to introduce their particular design challenges and demystify some design aspects.

For this set of Building by Design training courses, the focus was places of worship (PoW), in line with the research focus of the Empowering Design Practices (EDP)[77] project. The four training sessions were attended by three to four different cohorts. Each cohort had three to five attendees in three different locations (see Table 6-1 for an overview of the four DT). The people in the groups were a self-selected group, generally in charge of the maintenance and upkeep of the heritage listed PoW or vestry hall. All the attendees came from different backgrounds; whilst some were professional caretakers such a vicar or project manager, most of the attendees were volunteers.

[77] See appendix B for further details on the project.

EDP BUILDING BY DESIGN	ATTENDING GROUPS	EDP TEAM	STUDY TOUR
Sheffield – (2016) The Sheffield School of Architecture, Arts Tower	ISRAAC Sheffield, Bow Church - London, Stratford URC	Leo Care Sophia de Sousa Katerina Alexiou Carolyn Butterworth Vera Hale	Sheffield Buddhist Centre - 45min Saint Mary's Church - 45 min Sum Studios - x min
Manchester (2017) Manchester Uni Humanities, Bridgeford Street Building	Friends of St John's Manchester, St Mary's - Bideford, Community Church - Edinburgh	Leo Care Sophia de Sousa Theo Zamenopolous Louise Dredge Stephen Smith	Bridge Mill 5 - 1 hr HOME Community Café - 1 hr
London (2017) University College London (UCL) – Duke's Road	St Peter's Church - Chester Graylingwell Chapel - Chichester, Cemetery Road Baptist Church - Sheffield	Leo Care Sophia de Sousa Theo Zamenopolous Louise Dredge Stephen Smith Vera Hale	East London St Paul's Old Ford - 40 min St Paul's Common - 30 min Bromley by Bow Centre – 45 min
Sheffield (2018) The Sheffield School of Architecture, Arts Tower	St Michael's Byker - Newcastle Blackley Baptist Church, Rotherham Minster, Trinity Rowden	Leo Care Sophia de Sousa Myra Stuart Tom Morton Vera Hale	Sheffield Buddhist Centre - 45 min Victoria Centre - 45 min St Mary's - 45 min

Table 6-1 EDP Building by Design Training overview

6.3 Establishing the conditions for DT

First, the conditions under which the DT conducts its two-day design intervention must be considered. What shapes the two days so that the attendees get the most benefit from the training? The DT has been running for over 20 years, during which time it has become what could be described as a well-oiled machine, with some well-supported structures in place to make the two days run as smoothly as possible. The two days are action-packed, running from 9.30 in the morning until 17.00 or 17.30 in the afternoon. Much ground is covered in the course (see Tables 6.2, 6.3), so it has to be exceptionally well-organised. The research showed some key conditions for the DT (agency as groups, neutral space, pedagogic insight, and enablers), making sure that the two days are as transformative and empowering as possible. Chapter 5 indicates how important the transformative process and empowering outcomes of design enabling are for CLD.

Neutral setting

The location of the workshop is important because as a full residential course, DT has always had the aim of taking the attendees away from their project setting since the earlier TH period. Even though it has become a two-day training course and participants have to take time off as it takes place during the week, most attendees have mentioned that having the time to be fully submerged in a project benefits the development of ideas. Creating such allocated time away from some of the social, cultural, political, and even personal dynamics has been important, allowing participants to reflect on their own projects.

By being in a full two-day training together as a group and immersing themselves in the activities, stronger relationships can develop within the group; additionally, a stronger peer-to-peer learning setting between the individuals within the group and among the different groups can be fostered. Furthermore, the full immersive experience represents a more reciprocal learning environment between the enablers and attendees in the short time available. This is something that was highlighted in the feedback forms (Appendix D). One group mentioned that by taking those two days away from their daily activities, they had time to reflect on where they were in the project. It gave them time as a team to deliberate and assess the issues at hand from a different perspective.

Another benefit lies in creating a safe and neutral space for more difficult conversations, especially those that are harder to have when only their own cohorts are present. One vicar brought along a parishioner who was resisting ideas of

reordering (restructuring the layout of a PoW), with the hope that the two-day training course would open their eyes to different opportunities. By having enablers and other attendees share and provide feedback on the activities around their own PoW, the vicar was empowered to engage with the subject in new forms of dialogue that were beyond their cohort and situated within a broader collective experience. These DT sessions were held in large rooms in academic buildings in the planning or architecture department with an area for lecture-style teaching and an area for studio teaching. The days were very creative, and the attendees needed space to spread out, especially on day two.

Enablers

Generally, the main enabler was Leo Care, who works for the University of Sheffield and LiveWorks but has also been involved with the DT for more than 15 years. A key person from TGH, Sophia de Sousa during the EDP process, was also involved. Care and de Sousa co-facilitated the two-day activities. Furthermore, there are also enough enablers so that each group can have an experienced design enabler throughout the two days who will support them with the creative activities, mostly at the tables in a studio-style teaching setting. This is in part so that people and groups are encouraged and actively engaged. It is important to keep momentum throughout the duration of the course. As the material is unfamiliar, there can be moments when participants are overwhelmed and may not know what to do. By having an enabler at the table, any hesitation or query can be resolved so that they do not get stuck on the activities or exceed the time allotted for the activities in their busy set schedule. Generally, de Sousa took a floating role, whilst Care and two or three other enablers were allocated to a cohort. This became especially important later on when the groups modelled.

Thus, the DT is quite resource-heavy, with five or six enablers over the two days. However, attendees value this one-to-one-cohort support immensely. In the feedback given at the end of the DT regarding how they rated the days, one of the most frequently repeated comments have to do with how good the trainers are.

> 'I think the encouragement and generosity of those of you that were involved in that, in just rolling up your sleeves and encouraging and getting us motivated, when we were feeling a little bit disillusioned, pointing us and refocusing us, that was really good, so that's been one of the big things for us' (Chester).

They mention that they felt the enablers kept it light and interesting and that the teaching was inspired. They also mention that they were made to feel at ease and encouraged by Care and the team, who were friendly, accommodating, and enthusiastic.

Enabler roles

Chapter 4 shows that the enabler's role can be subdivided into five more focused roles: 1) the educator who transfers knowledge about design and the design process; 2) the activist who empowers to initiate action; 3) the community champion who supports community understanding, development, and cohesion; 4) the mediator who devises processes and tools to identify and nurture shared values and co-create ideas; and 5) the broker who facilitates broader connections for the community groups to gain access to additional resources, such as funding and networks. Within the setting of the DT, the enabler's main role is that of the educator, transferring knowledge about design and design thinking to the attendees to support their development and increase their sense of empowerment.

Agency as group

> 'The fact that people manage to get themselves organised… and be able to come and engage in something like [this] was always impressive' (Leo Care, LiveWorks).

From the start nearly all the cohorts that attend already have a sense of agency. They have already formed the core group that wants to improve their PoW. The DT attendees are generally a subgroup, a cohort, of the self-formed core working group in the PoW and are active members and available to attend on the day. As the DT takes place over two working days, not everyone is able to attend. The self-selected group comes with varying levels of agency; some want to take ownership of the process ahead, some already have a sense of where that process is going, and some are slightly unsure about what to do but know something needs to be done to look after the building.

> 'They need to come with a shared willingness' (Barbara Watson).

Just because they are a self-selected group does not necessarily mean that they are cohesive. Projects run a different course over the two days depending on the individual and group dynamics in the cohort. Groups that are not as cohesive might not get as much out of the workshop, as all of the activities are collaborative explorations of the design of their own project. For the vicar who brought the more reluctant parishioner along, the second day's activities were challenging for the two

of them, as the first day had not yet inspired them. However, it could be seen at the end of the two days that the vicar seemed more hopeful that they would be able to continue the dialogue.

Well-programmed schedule

In the feedback given at the end of the DT regarding how they rated the two days, the most mentioned comment was about the 'good trainers', but the second was that it was well-structured. The cohorts felt that the workshop was well prepared and thoughtful, granting them the opportunity to feel more confident in the enabling discussion on space and language. This underscores how vital it is that the days be well-structured to keep momentum and intensity in what are mostly unfamiliar exercises, tasks, and approaches for the different groups. This is achieved by a structured mix of different activities to break the day into more manageable and varied sections.

Pedagogic and community group insight

> 'The training is a form of advocacy-…trying to enable people in a way of seeing and building' (David Rudlin).

The training session can be seen as a form of adult education, as all attendees are adults, and it is in a training context and, as such, a formal teaching setting (Gravell, 2017 p37), with formal and informal activities. DT is, in part, about a direct transfer of knowledge from the architect as a design enabler to the community, but it also involves knowledge exchange through the active learning aspect of sessions. This supports the peer-to-peer learning achieved by exchanging experiences and stories and by observing what everyone is doing both inside and outside their cohort.

It is not a requirement that each enabler have a full pedagogic background, but an understanding of some of the pedagogical issues that concern adult education is not without merit. For example, the ability to identify barriers to learning, particularly in adults, has direct relevance for the enablers assuming the educator role in the DT. Being able to identify where elements that are hindering activities from progressing effectively are related to an individual and where they are related to the general dynamics of the group is a pedagogic skill that is invaluable in this role.

> 'They had to manage the feel of it. They had to be aware if a group was having internal issues or if somebody wasn't getting involved properly… Doesn't mean because you are professional that you can teach' (Barbara Watson).

From an educational standpoint, DT occupies a central position between formal and informal learning. On one hand, it is formal training that has a very specific structure and has been developed with set outcomes in relation to that structure. On the other hand, it is informal learning, as the groups voluntarily come with an informal approach to the workshop, and many of the non-specific outcomes are the result of informal interactions between participants and groups. In a way, this is represented in the difference between community development, groupwork, and critical pedagogies. The formal educational part of the workshop sits within the realm of critical pedagogies, with its outcomes related to an increase in the awareness of the groups of the opportunities, influence, and power available to them by increasing their skills and knowledge. The overall objective is to increase their sense of ownership of their project and its process in design, as well as increase their personal and group agency. The informal group development, however, is an important part of the workshop – perhaps as important as the formal, as it prepares the way for future engagement with the project by a more cohesive group with greater potential agency as a result. This falls more into the community champion role of the enabler.

6.4 DT Day 1

Buildings by Design – Day 1	
9:30	**Welcome, introductions and outlining the course** Introducing trainers and facilitators Introducing groups and their project locations Outline of the two days
10:00	**Design basics** Community buildings presentation with informal discussion Acting sustainably presentation Buildings by Design principles – Form, function, feelings presentation
10:40	**The story so far…** Set up work areas and discuss your building project and opportunities using pictures and plans Prepare summary for short presentation to the other groups.
11:00	*Break*
11:15	**The story so far…** Presenting building projects to everyone
11.45	**Inspiring buildings** Case study examples of community buildings analysed through three Fs
12:15	**Refurb and renovation** Working with old and existing buildings: challenges and opportunities
12:30	*Lunch*
13:00	**Field trip / study visit** Visit to three buildings and analysis by groups
16:40	**Review of field trip / study visit** Analysing the places and lessons learnt
17:20	**Introduction to Day 2**
17:30	**Finish** - Evening meal reminder

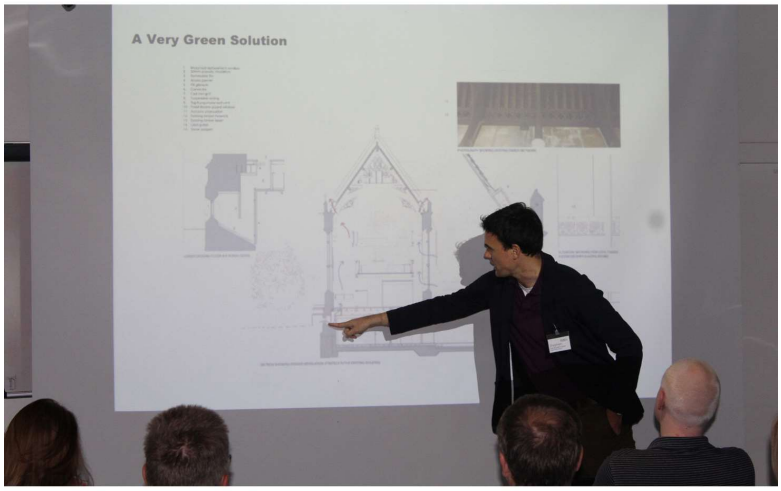


Figure 6-1 DT Knowledge exchange session - images courtesy of EDP

Welcome (30min)

- Introducing trainers and facilitators
- Introducing groups and their project locations
- Outline of the two days

There is a bright and early start at 9:30 on Day 1. Once everyone is present and sits down, the day starts with a welcome and an introduction of all the people that are attending, starting off with the enablers and Leo Care as the lead facilitator. Then the groups are given the opportunity to introduce themselves. Each group briefly introduces themselves, where they are from, and which design project they represent – in the case of this set of DT, PoW or vestry hall. Then there is a general introduction to the schedule for the two days and how the time will be used.

Day 1 focuses on:

- Design basics: community buildings
- Your projects: the story so far
- Inspiring buildings
- Field trip and review

Although an active learning educational approach would generally favour mixing up the groups (Gravells, 2017), each group stays with their own cohort throughout the duration of the training. This is because the DT is trying to help them to develop a deeper understanding of their building and their own ability as a more cohesive group to enable transformation in that context. Whilst there are aims that relate to the transfer of knowledge, the DT utilises an enabling approach centred around the outcome of them feeling more empowered, thereby increasing their agency to act. It is a training to garner experience and insight and explore new and unfamiliar opportunities.

It has to be acknowledged within the structure that, as there are only two days available, the scope is limited. The objective is to share knowledge with the groups by focusing on their building specifically and them as a group within that context. Thus, in this short amount of time, one of the objectives is for them to fortify their own core group and feel more empowered as a collective.

> 'I think it brought us together as a team of three as well because we got so passionate about it and so excited, and it gave us the time to really think about it. Because there's a lot to things in just a day, and we would have loved another day, I think. Definitely would have liked one more day' (quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with members of Graylingwell Chapel, Chichester, 2018).

Design basics (40 min)

- Community buildings presentation with informal discussion
- Acting sustainably: presentation
- Buildings by Design principles - Form, function, feelings presentation

This was the first set of a cluster of design knowledge transfer, focusing on why good design is important, sustainability of design and providing an introduction of the 'Building by Design' design principles - form, function, and feelings (3Fs). These are the core principles that TGH uses to explore design with non-designers. Design is not just about form and function; it is also about how one feels about a building. However, how does that become apparent? The questions the groups are asked to reflect on were: What inspires people? What surprises you about the building? What delights people about the building? If there are any elements that you feel are not to your liking, what are they? These questions are asked to encouraged attendees to look beyond the preconceived sense of what the building should be. In effect, once they realise there is such a way of feeling about a building, they might even discover they have strong opinions about what they feel about it. This is an essential part of the first day. In the feedback forms, the 3Fs are one of the main aspects of the DT that they think they will take home and share, along with the modelling.

Figure 6-2 'Story so far' presentations - images courtesy of EDP

The story so far… (1hr 5min incl. 15 min break)

- Set up work areas and discuss your building project and opportunities using pictures and plans.
- Prepare a summary for a short presentation to the other groups.
- Presenting building projects to everyone.

This is, in a sense, a fully structured icebreaker. They have just over an hour (including an on-the-go coffee break) to assemble photographs, maps, drawings, documents, and anything else that they have been asked to bring along about their building to prepare for a presentation that introduces themselves and their building. This represents a moment of nurturing pride – a show – and talking about who they are, what their building challenges are, and what they are hoping to achieve today and in the long run. As they assemble the material, they are given a set of prompting questions to structure their presentation (i.e., a who, what, why, how, when, where, and what structure). As all the active learning elements are collaborative exercises, they give people a chance to properly ask questions and deliberate amongst themselves about the building.

During the exercise, enablers join each group at the tables, assisting in their reflective process. They question what they are placing where on the display, why, and what they are trying to convey. These queries add another level of scrutiny to their material, prompting them to actively engage with it. Then when they share their 'Story so far…', the attendees get a first sense of shared experiences amongst the groups; other attendees see how much they might or might not have in common with the presenters.

It can be observed that most of the activities on both days are, in fact, about learning, re-learning, and reflecting. In this particular instance, they learnt about representing their building. By assembling the materials, they have brought along, they have to deliberate amongst themselves and re-learn about their building to formulate a representative version on the visual display. Some of their reflections are within the group, but the groups also reflect externally with the larger group present within the room. Consequently, they constantly learn how to present themselves outwardly as well as define themselves within themselves. The exercises also give them tools to understand how to present themselves and their ideas.

This format of presenting their work after an activity continued throughout the two days. There are indicators that illustrate aspects of a group's identity, tone, and character that were visible in the presentations and how they have gone about

constructing them. For some, the format is quite informal; some people make it quite formal, some come with very little, and some come with an abundance of material. One of the outcomes is that they learn to present and define themselves and their project on their own terms. This exercise is a focus on peer learning among the attendees and within the group themselves as well as learning through the presentations of others.

Inspiring buildings (45min)

- Case study examples of community buildings analysed through three Fs
- Working with old and existing buildings: challenges and opportunities
- Focus on refurbishments

After the introduction of their building, they take part in another session of knowledge transfer. The groups are introduced to some inspiring buildings and analyse these through the principles that were introduced earlier (i.e., the three Fs). They examine examples of community buildings, as part of their joining the DT was a desire to re-order their own PoW, and most consider this a way to create a more outward-looking community function within the building space. It might be something that was already running from their PoW, café, food bank, or theatre, but they were looking to explore possible design options to facilitate these functions.

This session prepares participants for the field trip in the afternoon. Through this session, they see how Leo Care implements the three Fs whilst clicking through a set of architectural building images. This is aimed at helping them when they saw the actual case studies in the afternoon. It helps them maintain a focused critical perspective when they walk around the case studies, employing an active observational and reflective approach rather than just sauntering around. The morning session ends with lunch, which allowed for some informal mixing of the groups. After lunch the whole group gathers to go on the coach to visit the case studies.

Figure 6-3 Study tour social learning spaces - images courtesy of EDP

Field trip and study visit (3.5hr)

- Visit to three buildings and analysis by groups

Each DT has the component of a half-day study tour, a field trip that takes the groups to two or three case studies to give them the opportunity to observe and explore a building with their newfound knowledge on how to look at the building through the 3Fs.

To visit these nearby locations, a small coach is organised.

Coach trip

The coach trip proves not to just be a means by which to get to the various locations. Being in close confinement whilst travelling together to a destination that participants share together creates an informality. The coach's journey is a catalyst for breaking the formal teaching setting into a much more informal one. Although these are adult participants, the journey can be described in terms of the attendees regressing back to being on a school trip, and there is even a light-hearted jostle for who gets to sit at the back. An increase in conviviality can be perceived, and the tone becomes jollier. By removing them from a 'classroom-based' environment and inserting them into what is essentially a non-hierarchical environment, the participants become more relaxed. Out in the field, certain boundaries and guards are lowered between groups, individuals, and enablers. Throughout the morning they have been working intensely and somewhat formally within their own cohort. Even though in the afternoon they still stay within the vicinity of their cohort, they start to talk and share stories within the larger group setting.

Furthermore, as they are more relaxed, they become more open to seeing the buildings and are more open to receiving and applying some of the morning's knowledge. With their social inhibitions lowered, they are more able to wander around the three buildings with new curiosity and consciousness. It is possible to observe this, especially after they have visited the first site and are enroute to the second building. At this point people really start sharing their newfound knowledge of the morning. Returning to the bus, the groups come together and start sharing their experiences with one another: 'What did you think of this? I wasn't too keen on that.' Did you see that detail?' It is a cacophony of enthusiasm due to their newfound design knowledge. In fact, without realising it, they are initiating their own reflective process by immediately sharing their thoughts. This reflective process between the attendees enables them to become even more relaxed in those exchanges.

The whole on-site experience fortifies and empowers the group as a whole and the core group even more so. From here on in, people become more familiar with each other, and the rest of the DT has an increased convivial and interactive atmosphere. Of course, not everyone feels that confident right away. Some people remain coy and reserved and are not comfortable letting themselves go in an unfamiliar group. The enablers try to monitor if anyone can be identified as isolated and make sure they have a more personal one-on-one conversation with that person. However, most of the time, when someone in the group is maybe less engaged, the group itself rallies around to make sure they are okay.

Case studies

Generally, three buildings are explored. The enabling team chooses buildings that are relevant to their design challenge and the theme of the Buildings by Design training. For these EDP training sessions, the theme was reordered (refurbished) PoWs.[78]

When they go on the field trip, each group is given their own camera. By giving them each their own camera to take photos with, it helps them physically to look at the building through a different lens. The aim of this part of the activity is to empower them to see the building from a very different perspective than they normally would. They are asked to take their own photos to showcase their observations of the buildings using the form, function, and feelings method. In fact, they are asked to question design through form, function, and feeling. They are informed that the images they take will form the basis of the review later in the day after their trip. This stimulates most, if not all, to capture at least some images, as they know that they will be part of the review. The cohorts are encouraged to share the camera; however, the observation is that it is generally held by one or sometimes two persons. This could be seen as due to power dynamics in the group, but it mostly appears to be due to creativity and confidence levels, with some mentioning, 'I am no use with a camera', and being dismissive of their own abilities.

[78] *In the first Sheffield field trip, there were two more relevant buildings and one that was a refurbished school turned into a shared-offices social enterprise, Sum Studios. The study tour review and the feedback forms indicated that this might have been too much of a wild card for the attendees and was replaced by another PoW for the second Sheffield training.*

Figure 6-4 Study tour reflective situated moments - images courtesy of EDP

The buildings that they visit are mostly contemporary designs. Whilst they do not have to be 'high-end designs', the idea is to open participants' eyes to new possibilities in design terms and show more 'aspirational' contemporary designs to help them think through design options that they might not have thought of and get them to think outside the box of standard reordering solutions.

At each site the visit is guided by the owner, manager, caretaker (e.g., vicar, curate, project manager), or someone from that building who was part of the redesign and who can share their design journey, warts and all. They elaborate on how they got there and take the groups on a walkabout of the building and, if present, any outside areas. This is another form of peer-to-peer learning. It is not an educator or design professional telling them how a project was initiated, developed, and designed. This is someone who they can relate to as somebody that was in the same position, albeit further down the line. It is always further down the line; it is never really the end of the line because each is an ongoing project, as highlighted by the events manager at St Paul's Old Ford in London. She explained one of the financial consequences of redesigning a PoW: having a more community-oriented, even commercially-oriented, purpose. When individuals recreate their church to become more than just a PoW, it becomes a business. For this vicar, the project never stops. Although she was hired as a vicar, she felt she was becoming an event organiser to make sure there was enough revenue to keep the building going, as maintenance costs are high for PoWs. For the participants, it is very educational to talk to their peers; they are more receptive to it. When it is time for questions, however, most groups become very shy until they get back on the coach. This may show that they still lack the confidence to ask questions to someone they might deem more successful, or conversely, they may not want to stand out in the group. Very few ask questions when prompted in a more formal group setting; they are happier to ask questions during a more informal walkabout.

The walkabout is an invitation for the group to explore. As mentioned initially they are guided around, but most of the time they are also given a chance to walk around on their own. During the guided walkabout, Leo Care generally takes on a co-host role and highlights design solutions that might otherwise be overlooked. The walkabout is a chance for them to see and experience the building and some of its design aspects. Enablers walk along and through the group to engage participants in conversation or help deliberate on a design aspect. Nevertheless, most of the time, the groups explore and deliberate in the space with members of their cohort.

During the visits, the groups clearly gain confidence, and they are more open to seeing the building in more detail. They start spotting the design details: the pews that are on casters, modern sliding doors in an arched doorway, or the very hard contemporary pod in the middle of the nave. The idea of what is possible is opened and expanded by reflecting on another example or just by asking questions. It is that very act of asking them to question things that is the motivator – a way of opening their eyes to the design that is all around them.

Some of the projects are award-winning, which can, in turn, inspire groups to consider that this is also something that they can achieve. Some of these groups have different levels of funding; during the walkabout they might see a wall full of sponsors and grant bodies on display. This helps them consider how they can realise their aspirations. By seeing examples from another building similar or equivalent to theirs, they are empowered to consider that they might be able to do the same, whilst simultaneously instructing them that these things take time and that they need to receive the funding as well as design their building. They experience this process on site in three separate buildings, which is an intensive and sometimes overwhelming experience. The whole field trip is an informal space where they can connect, reflect, and learn from each other through real-life examples. It represents a peer-to-peer sharing and learning opportunity.

Review of field trip and study visit (40min)

- Analysing the places and lessons learnt

The last dialogue of the day focuses on discussing photographs taken during the field trip by the different cohorts, after which there is a short introduction for Day 2. Upon arriving back at the space where the training is held, there is a quick tea and coffee break, whilst Leo and other enablers collect the cameras and initially sift through the images. This is to remove any unclear images or any repetition within the cohort's sequence. It is not to curate the cohort's slide show. The review is done in a lecture-style setting again, but now the group is more open and more enthusiastic about debating their photos on design.

It is interesting to see the three different slideshows from each camera, as an array of images can be seen. Some have only taken a few sparing images along the way, a quick few at the last building as they forgot to take any before, and some have noted every detail they could feast their eyes on. Nonetheless, there is a nice collection to go through, and it stands to reason that the slideshows will repeat images, as they

have all gone on the same field trip at the same time. Repeated images between groups are an effective way to identify elements or details for corporate discussion.

Figure 6-5 Study tour design specific learning - images courtesy of EDP

From the slideshow, whether case study, or part of it, was not relatable can be observed; fewer photographs are taken if something does not feel relevant to the group. The use of the camera is an interesting artefact for the examination of the individual dynamics within a group. The slideshow can make disparities in a group apparent – whether one person holds the camera throughout the duration of the field trip or if it is shared around is evident based on the variety, or lack thereof, of images taken and their deliberation by the cohort. This illuminates confidence, ownership, or power dynamics within the group.

The cohorts do not formally present their slideshows, but a guided dialogue, listening, and learning of what people have to say about how they viewed some of the design aspects – from small details, such as casters on pews, to an artfully designed security screen in front of windows, or how the light came into a room, or the colours used throughout a building. Leo Care facilitates the dialogue, asking attendees why they took a particular image or how they felt, indicating the possible design reasoning or solution visible in a particular image. What is interesting is that the images can really focus on the day-to-day issues that a particular cohort is facing, honing their camera lens on a storage solution or on signage for bike storage. It seems they take images that are inspiring and different but have to be relatable to the day-to-day issues that they face in their own building.

The dialogue is nearly non-hierarchal, although Leo is still at the front, guiding the debate. Everybody has returned from the field trip with a different energy, and there is still a convivial atmosphere; hence, in a formal lecture setting, things feel more informal than in the morning lecture-style session. The attendees seem to feel freer to talk and share their opinions. By doing so, they learn to articulate what they see and how they feel about design. This shows them that they themselves are already knowledgeable, however having the means to structure the way they look and articulate this tacit knowledge through the 3Fs can help them (re)gain confidence and feel empowered from within.

When looking at the feedback forms and 'how useful' they found the 10 activities they experience over the two days, the study tour is the winner if only the top rating is taken into consideration. It goes to a close fourth place if the two top ratings in the feedback forms are combined. It is also rated the highest in the query section about 'the things you most enjoyed' about DT.

> 'In particular, the site visits were very influential. They opened all our eyes to what, in some situations, was about to close. I forget the name of the one that had a pod inside [St

> Paul's Old Ford], that had the disabled gym upstairs. The story was that the church was on its very last legs, and then suddenly, somehow, the vicar or whoever it was understood what the community needed and managed to achieve what was achieved. Was phenomenal, really, and I suppose that raised our horizons.' (Quote taken from transcript of impact interview with member of Cemetery Road Baptist Church, November 2019).
>
> "It has highlighted the significance of empowering adults, examined in relation to transformative theory. It appears that these students and practitioners have developed a sense of empowerment and an empowered mindset by the visit to the extent that they both felt and thought differently … and that this empowerment process enabled them to operate as change agents …." (Rose et al., 2011).
>
> "The field visit enabled the students to experience, to some extent, a 'cultural immersion' in an alternative context that generated new ways of thinking" (Rose et al., 2011).

It thus seems that the field trip increases their confidence and gives them more experience in seeing and identifying design; by supporting them in expressing their thoughts and feelings about a building, they gain confidence in being able to voice their opinions.

Evening meal

After the study tour, there is an evening meal, in which attendees are taken from the semi-formal setting of the field trip review back into a very informal setting. During the dinner, there is even more opportunity to break ranks. During the field trip, most people might sit next to one or two of their cohort members, but during most of the dinner, the attendees mix it up. This can lead to interesting configurations of information sharing and knowledge transfer.

Participants use the opportunity to interact with the group as a whole, including the enablers. They might have overheard someone say something interesting throughout the day and may want to continue that conversation. A prime example of this was during the London DT. All of the participants came from afar and stayed in hotels. This made this dinner especially functional, as no one had the chance to quickly go home, which does happen if people are local. Mike and Claire ended up having a conversation after Mike gleaned that Claire had experience and had been successful in grant funding applications for PoW. This conversation led to Mike gathering funding to hire Claire to support them through their grant application, which helped their PoW obtain £100,000 to do some needed roof repairs. This has remained an ongoing

connection, where Claire has a mentoring and guiding role to support and empower Mike and his PoW through their funding applications.

6.5 DT Day 2

Buildings by Design – Day 2	
9:30	**Language, drawings, and models** Showing the type of materials that may be used in the building, the design process
10:00	**Understanding your building** Memory mapping
10:45	*Break*
11:00	**A vision for your building** Collage / drawings / photo-montage
12.00	**Building creation process** Developing a participatory approach Involving professionals
12.15	**Dream and reality** Modelling the vision for your building
13:00	*Lunch*
13:45	**Dream and reality continued**
15:30	*Break*
15:45	**Dream and reality continued** Presentations
16:45	**Course review** Summary of the two days and obtaining feedback
17:00	**Finish**

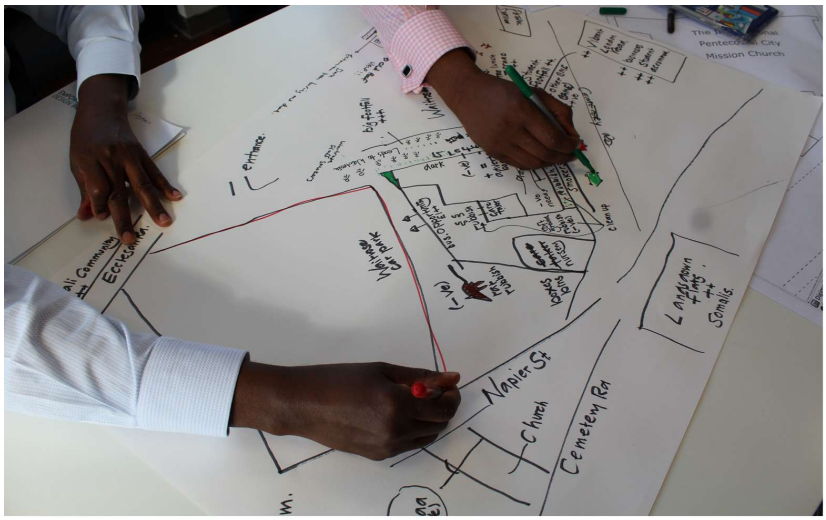
The second day of the training starts back in a far more formal setting of training and education. They are given insights into design language and understanding design. As a whole, this day is about transferring design knowledge and skills to help obtain insight into one's own design visions and ideas. The previous day was more about tacit design knowledge for how a building can be perceived and how this can be reflected and evaluated. It gave the attendees permission to articulate how they saw and felt a building.

Language, drawings, and models (30 min)

- Showing the type of materials that may be used in the building, design process

The second day starts off in a more formal, lecture-style setting again, and the first presentation is about design and the design process. The groups are introduced to some of the jargon they may encounter. They are taught how to read models and drawings and what these could be used for – from concept exploration to final technical design drawings.

This exercise was a warm-up for the activities that would follow. Day 2, in fact, is all about them getting involved and making, with three hands-on activities that involve maps, collage, and model-making.



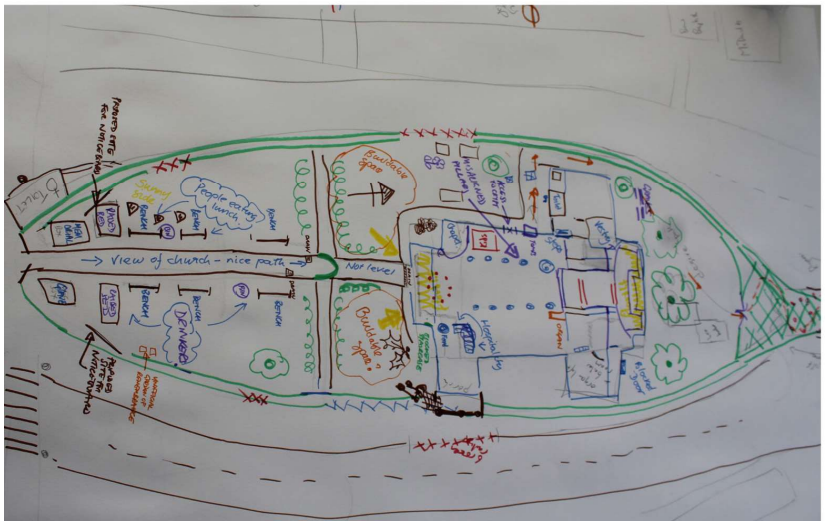


Figure 6-6 Memory mapping in action and end result - images courtesy of EDP

Understanding your building (1hr including break)

- Memory mapping

Memory mapping and visioning are two elements that go together and build on each other. Participants are asked to create a map without a plan and from memory; this serves as a guide to their own thoughts about how they are building. It draws together their shared personal experiences of what they love and hate. It also brings out what they want to see improved about the building. At the same time, this exercise enables sideways talking and listening to one another. It mediates personal opinions to create a shared representation of the building. A sort of therapeutic listening becomes apparent between them because they all feel the urge to create this map. This evokes more empathy within the listener. With the memory mapping exercise, the values of their place become apparent. It brings to the fore what is important to them. This is then used to reflect and create their vision.

Figure 6-7 Collages for vision creation - images courtesy of EDP

A vision for your building (1 hr)

- Collage / drawings / photo-montage

For the visioning, participants are asked to produce collage using available materials to represent their vision for the building. The groups do the mapping for an hour and a half. Then they continue to develop the vision that comes out of the mapping. The group then makes a presentation where they present the vision and the map together.

This is all about learning and re-learning as they learn how to look at the buildings through a map and simultaneously how to create their own map. At the same time, the group relearns their own building by looking at it through other people's eyes from the feedback they receive from other participants and groups at their table. This gives them the opportunity to become reacquainted with their building. In that sense, they are re-learning. In the end, their building is not the same as what they started off with. In their mind's eye, they have already gained a different perspective. When they make their presentation, their perception is evaluated and reflected on. This is very much what is done in CP. From here on, they can start with the modelling. Just before lunch on Day 2, they start with that last part. They proceed from the presentation of their vision and map exercise to the model-making exercise.

Figure 6-8 Enablers assisting at the worktables - images courtesy of EDP

Dream and reality (3.5 hr and 1 hr presentation)

> 'The model-making, and I have to say that when you announced we were doing model-making I was a bit sceptical, but actually that helped us get to know our building really a lot better and looking at the scales and proportions, and just confirming ridiculous things like gosh this is a square building, and this building has no space outside it whatsoever, the property boundary is the walls' (quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with members of the St Peter's Church in Chester on December 18, 2019)

The next step in their vision-making process is to model their vision of their building. This is where having enough hands-on experience is vital. They are asked to develop a model in under four hours. It would be difficult to teach them how to make a model in a day, and that is also not the main aim. The aim is for them to have an artefact that they can share and discuss back at their PoW. It does not need to be an amazing, stunning piece. They are simply asked to make a working model with which they can play, interact, and test some of their ideas. This model is a good artefact for them to explain what they have learnt in the two-day course to the group back home so that they can continue the dialogue.

The whole exercise is focused on learning-by-doing and continuing their vision in 3D, the third step in the vision-making and testing approach. Like the mapping and collaging, the model-making re-activates their creativity, and people really get stuck, even appropriating the floor, like architecture students in a rush to finish a model. Another important aspect of the model-making is empowering conversation and action. The activity lends itself to side-by-side talking and listening; they have to negotiate their ideas within the group, talk them through, develop them, and test them out.

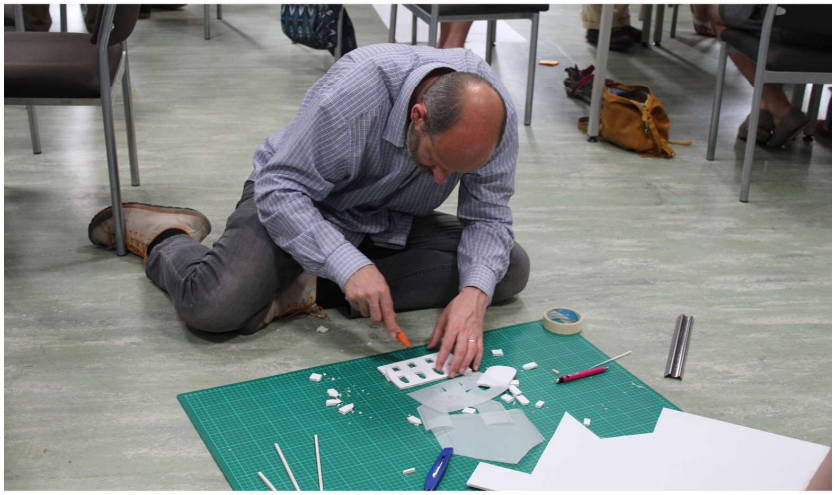


Figure 6-9 Model making in action – image courtesy of EDP

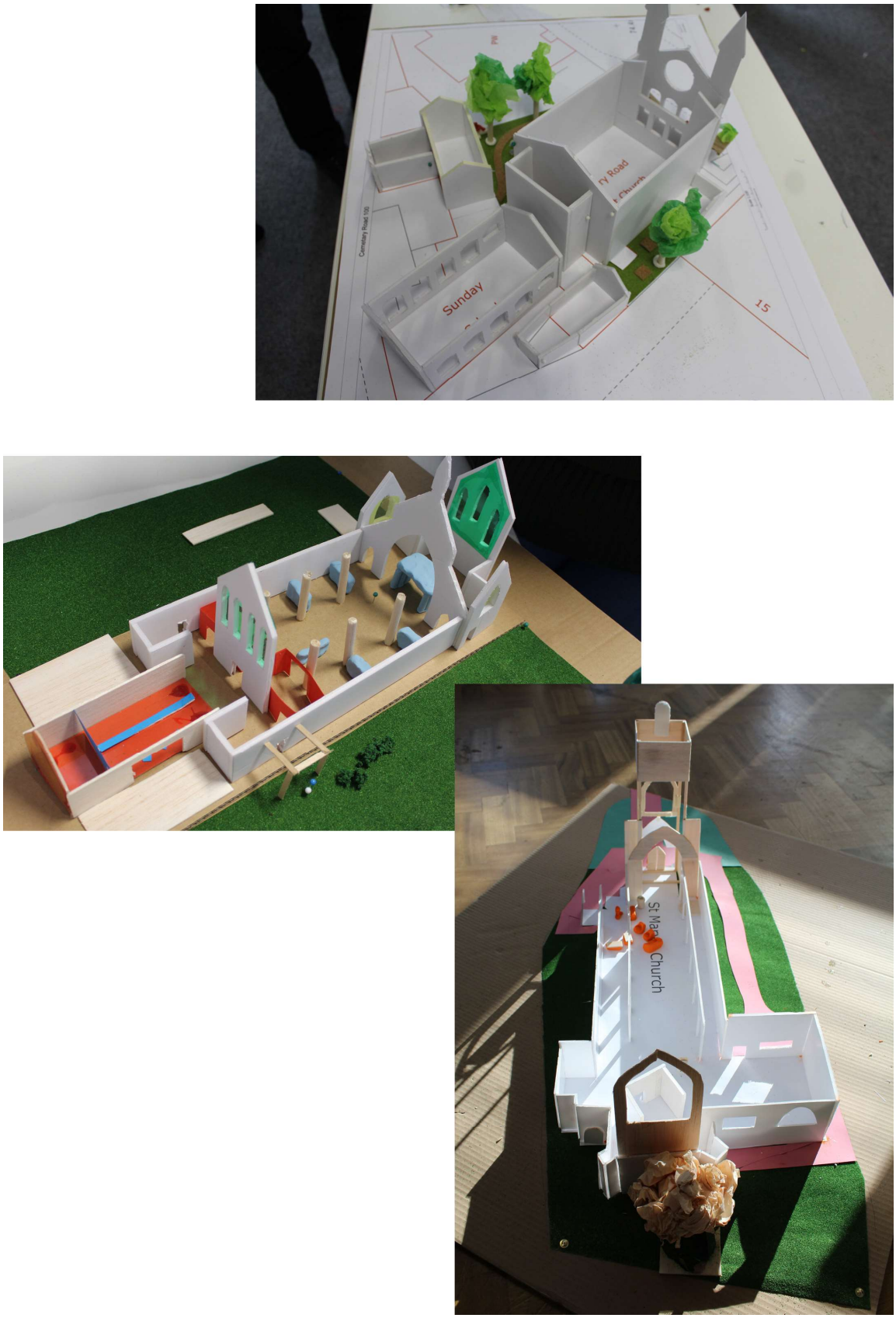


Figure 6-10 Model examples - image courtesy of EDP

6.6 'Course review'

> "It appears that "one of the most powerful tools for fostering transformative learning" is providing students with learning experiences that are 'direct, personally engaging and stimulate reflection upon experience" (Rose et al., 2011; Taylor, 2007, p. 182).

At the end of the two days, there is a course review of the DT. Overall, this is for the benefit of TGH and for the enablers to get feedback on how the attendees have experienced the different elements of the training. However, as Rose et al. (2011) mention in the quote above, the act of reflecting upon experiences – whether individually or collectively – can foster the articulation and embedding of the transformational learning from the day. In most instances, this section was facilitated not by Care but by de Sousa, Alexiou, or Zamenopoulos.

In Appendix D, a collated overview of the feedback forms that participants were asked to fill out after the physical reviews can be found. I used these results to provide a quick summary of their feedback below, as it better 'quantifies' their reflection and, for the most part, correlates with their verbal reflections on the course review. Some of these results were shared in the activities themselves. It must be noted that there is always a degree of satisfaction with the provider in feedback forms. Very few people want to give negative reflections, especially if they have been given free support or are continuing, in some cases, to receive free support from an organisation. Therefore, the results do need to be treated with some caution; however, the feedback forms were an effective tool to reflect upon which activities were preferred or were more challenging. It also gave some insight into how they perceived the two days and their activities.

Another aspect of feedback to consider is that the participants were still on a high. As Ronnie Hughes, one of the first enablers, mentioned in his interview, 'the course has a shelf-life of about six weeks'. This is the period in which participants can harness their empowerment and agency and set a flywheel in motion within their project to keep the spirit of the DT going within their cohort and their larger group or community. Therefore, the feedback forms were followed up in 2019 with impact interviews to determine what benefit the DT and any other support had had on the evolution of their project.

In the first question of the feedback forms, participants were asked to answer five questions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Most of the participants had answered these questions with the top two choices of strongly agree and agree,

so there was not much variance. This is one of the questions where an attendee may not have wanted to cause offence.

However, if measuring from the highest ranking, the statement that participants most agreed on (35 out of 44) was that they had a 'greater awareness of how design can enhance the quality and function of our building'. This was followed closely by a better understanding of basic design principles and design processes (32 out of 44) and that they 'felt more confident with professionals' (30 out of 44). This was followed by the ability to better communicate their ideas and vision (27 out of 44). Interestingly, the item that was agreed with least was the sense that they gained enough 'skills and confidence' to be able 'to lead a design process and engage [their] community in it' (19 out of 44). The latter is an important part of developing the capabilities for CLD. Thus, based on their answers to the feedback form, participants feel they have gained the capacity to deal with professionals, the design, and its process and functionality more confidently. However, they are less confident about their capabilities to better communicate their vision and be able to lead the design of the. Thus, they increased their capacities a little more than their capabilities according to these questions.

Question 2 asked which exercise the participants thought was the most useful. Looking only at the highest rating, it was the field trip, then vision work, followed by model-making. The active learning aspects of the DT were very much appreciated. This could be seen as being contributed to by the conviviality of the three exercises. The atmosphere during these three activities was the most relaxed and jovial.

When asked what they are most likely to share with others upon their return home, the answer was the three Fs and model-making: 'A new understanding of form, function, and feeling coupled with the benefit of the model which gives a bird's eye view of the situation' (anonymous quote from the Sheffield DT 2018).

What was interesting in the replies to the question, 'What help would you require to build the confidence to look after your building?' was a request for continued support. They wanted the availability of advice and someone to talk to at the different stages, as well as support to continue the conversation amongst themselves and with their larger (church) community. These aspects very much reflect the type of support described in the enabler roles of the broker and the mediator. These participants wanted a broker to help them find support at the different stages of the development of their project and a mediator to help continue the (broader) conversation.

Question 5 asked them to reflect on what they enjoyed most. The clear winner, eight places ahead of model-making, was site visits, with a score of 17 votes. In third place was peer learning, with an emphasis on meeting members from other PoWs to hear about their buildings:

> 'Knowing we are not alone with issues Helpful camaraderie in the group and the interactive sessions. Learning with fun and enjoyment' (an anonymous quote from the Sheffield DT 2018).

Even though modelling was perceived as one of the most useful and enjoyable things in the previous questions, it was seemingly also the most challenging, leading by 10 votes with 18 detractors. This could be due to the short amount of time to learn about modelling skills and to create a model, as not enough available time was the second highest critique. Furthermore, in the question asking about how to improve the course, more time was the leading answer with 10 mentions.

> 'The intensity of the first day… Although I enjoyed it all, it was a lot to take in and a very long day. I'd like to see this course lengthened to three days. More time to digest and build models.' (quote from London DT 2017).

In the question asking how the DT is run, the enablers (and especially Leo) were mentioned, with words such as 'friendly', 'accommodating', and 'enthusiastic' used to describe them. Additionally, how well the DT was structured was the runner-up.

> 'I think it was the expertise in the room—to have that kind of knowledge from yourself and the architects, Yes. It was just the knowledge in the room, and the take-aways for us were just that there's some amazing kind of enthusiasm out there. …I think some of the learning points were amazing, because we'd done a lot of consultation, we'd done nearly one a year, but it made us really re-think some of the ideas and how we were going to.' (quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with members of Graylingwell Chapel, Chichester, 2018).

Summary

The immediate feedback and the inferred outcomes show that in the short term, the participants increased both their capacity and capabilities in design; they felt more confident in their capacities to deal with professionals and the design process and were able to communicate their ideas more than they were confident in their capabilities to lead the design of the project. The underlying factors behind this lack of confidence in leading design are not clear from the research and may be an

interesting area for further research. Nonetheless, there are extrapolations to be made.

It could be inferred that whilst they enjoyed and found the capability-raising exercises most useful (e.g., developing their own visions, making a model to better understand their project, testing possible design ideas themselves, developing their design brief and initial design concept, presenting and sharing their activities and ideas to the groups), they have not gained enough agency to take these newly developed skills and knowledge outside of the larger group and take ownership of them.

The site visits and all the other activities throughout the day, as well as how these were delivered in an inclusive and convivial way all together, had given most of them an increased sense of confidence to take part in the design process, but they were still not confident enough to take ownership as they depart.

Impact interviews

Below are some quotes, examples, and deliberations for what some of the long-term outcomes were for the cohorts after the DT. These impact interviews were all held at the end of 2019. First, it needs to be acknowledged that each of the situations that the PoWs were in when they attended the DT was unique. Some had just acquired their building and were just coming to grips with the journey ahead, whereas others had already engaged an architect, started initial discussions, or already had full-scale drawings. Thus, the outcomes varied widely in relation to the circumstances of each PoW.

Community Church Edinburgh, Blackley Baptist Church, and Chichester all attended their DT at different events; however, that was the only support they received within the EDP project, so it was interesting to see how they had progressed and how that reflected on the project.

Community Church Edinburgh had not made much progress due to the personal circumstances of one of the team members. However, they did recall that attending advanced their conversation on what to do next within their larger community. This did lead to some initial steps taken to make themselves more identifiable, including creating some new signage near the road.

> 'I think coming out of the training, we realised there were different things that we wanted to do, so that was all out, so we got that all out on the table. And probably what that spurs on is a wider discussion in the church community around what our vision and values are'

(quote taken from transcript of impact interview with a member of Community Church, Edinburg,. 2017).

The vicar at Blackley had just taken up the post and inherited a grade A-listed PoW in need of much maintenance and with a dwindling congregation. Already in an active building group, he and two of the steering group members attended the DT. The vicar stated:

'I think it gave us more confidence as we went into the feasibility study. So for instance, I think one of the things that was said to us by EDP was that you need to be clear with your architect about your feasibility study. If there are things that you want from it, you need to say that up front and make it clear. So, I think we felt more confident about the feasibility study and asked for what we wanted from it, rather than being a little bit more passive in front of the expert, as it were' (Quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with the vicar of Blackley Baptist Church, 2018).

When they asked if they had used the model to develop their ideas, the vicar responded, 'Other than show it to the rest of our group when we got back, we haven't as yet'.

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, Graylingwell Chapel is a decommissioned PoW, and the team responsible for its redevelopment is in the further stages of design:

'I think it brought us together as a team of three because we got so passionate about it and so excited. It gave us time to really think about it. Because there's a lot to things in just a day, and we would have loved another day, I think. Definitely would have liked one more day.' (Quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with Development Trust Director of Graylingwell Chapel, Chichester 2018).

There was one example of where a change did not happen. It was clear during the DT that there was discord within the group, with different people having their own focus; during the training they did not come together as a team, which, for some, was a key benefit. No one in the group was really embracing the idea that the church needed reordering, preferring the buildings to just be restored, not renovated. They were disengaged to the extent that they were not interested in taking the model back home or even having a reflective conversation about the whole DT experience between them, let alone with others. This was a shame, as all of the participants

moved on, and none of those who took over from the building maintenance group knew about what happened or what they had learnt.

> 'But certainly, continuing the dialogue, you have supported us in the process by doing the workshop for other Baptist churches and other Baptist churches joined the course in Sheffield [DT]' (Quotes taken from transcript of impact interview with members of Cemetery Road Baptist Church 2016).

Here on the opposite end of the spectrum was Cemetery Road Baptist Church. They were so enthused by the DT that they got other Baptist churches to join the DT course two years later and facilitated an additional separate EDP workshop with yet another set of Baptist churches. They had become change agents (Rose et al., 2011). With most of the impact interviews, it was evident that the attendees had undergone different levels of transformation, even if it was as small as creating new signage to identifying themselves with the locality. Moreover, some continued the dialogue and facilitated change and transformation within the community, becoming change agents.

> "It has highlighted the significance of empowering adults, examined in relation to transformative theory. It appears that these students and practitioners have developed a sense of empowerment and an empowered mindset by the visit to the extent that they both felt and thought differently … and that this empowerment process enabled them to operate as change agents" (Rose et al., 2011).

6.7 Transformative learning

As mentioned at the end of the impact interview the attendees had become change agents (Rose et al, 2011). It was clear they had undergone different levels of transformation, even if as small as creating new signage to identify themselves to the locality. Moreover, some continued the dialogue and facilitated change and transformation within the community to effect wider transformation and change at different levels, becoming change agents.

DT is a transformative learning process, and the research shows that is consists of five elements of learning; knowledge transfer, skills learning, case study learning, criticality (activism and critical thinking combined) and social learning (Fig 6 – 1). These modes of transformative learning collectively help develop, grow, and support the transformative meso-empowerment of the attendees, the collective actors in the own local area.

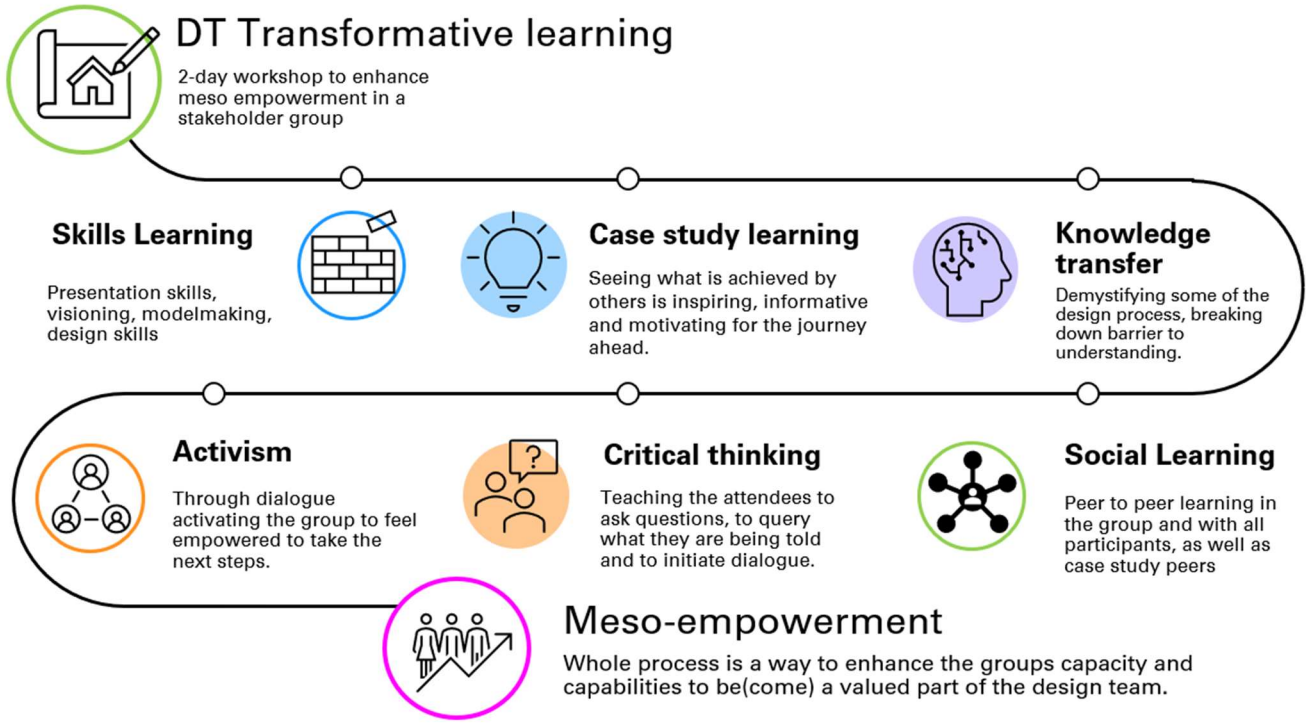


Figure 6-11 DT Transformative learning

Taylor (2000) connotes six characteristics to foster transformative learning, which are: 'fostering group ownership and individual agency', 'providing intense shared experiential activities', 'developing an awareness of personal and social contextual influences', 'promoting value laden course content', 'recognizing the interrelationship of critical reflection and affective learning', and 'the need for time' (p.10). Even though TGH had not set out the DT to be specifically transformative learning from a pedagogic lens, the approach aligns mostly with the above characteristics.

Group ownership

One of the key elements that Taylor research supports is that of creating cohesive groups, which is in line with Huis et al. (2017) recent study that working in groups with a collective aim is the inception of individually agency and collective empowerment. Through the process of diverse group activities, the collective actors, that don't always arrive as a cohesive team, work closely together during the two days. This can benefit new dynamics, as mentioned in the below comment by one of the attendees.

> 'I think for Nev and myself particularly the residential in London 18 months ago was really impactful, and it was in a number of ways really. We were a new team, we'd been established for just a few months that a couple more of us had come on, and that was a brilliant team building for us. Jonathan's observation was that we'd gone away as a committee and come back as a team.' -Quote taken from transcript of impact interview with members of St Peter's Church, Chester -2018).

Experiential activities

The DT is an intense two-day workshop. Through ten different steps the attendees are provided with a plethora of intense hands-on learning experience that has plenty of shared experiential activities. From the sharing their story so far to ending up making the model, the attendees get a short intense tasters of design learning. Design is all about experiential learning, about making, doing, reflecting and iteration. For Taylor the learning occurs when the activities trigger disorientation and dilemmas. This is when critical reflection and transformational learning occurs within the group, and they will have to navigate conflict and dissensus through dialogue and listening. Through the activities over the two days, the attendees are learning not only design skills, but also reading drawings, observing building, developing a vision, collaging, and model making. These are all latent and new skills that provoke joy and frustration in equal measure. Moreover, making shared decisions on the outcome of

the skills sessions, how the model will look, what images to use, what message to convey, are where the groups experience critical reflection and transformation. This process of navigating different opinions, social-cultural values and experiences nurtures the collective as well as the individual process of inquiry and discovery, which should foster a (renewed) development of autonomy and choices. It is by being challenged on their beliefs and values as individuals that even the smallest incremental transformations follow (Thinyane et al., 2018). The contribution made by each individual and the role they take within the group influence the growth of the group, affecting the group's cohesion, rapport, performance and effectiveness (Thinyane et al., 2018). It is therefore important to support these group processes, so the resulting actions aid, not hamper, growth of meso-empowerment. The attendees also learn other valuable skills to support their development of critical inquiry and personal agency, such as presentation skills, groups deliberation, and affective learning. These help the attendees to develop their voice and ability to articulate their needs.

Value-laden course content

DT activities all promote the importance of discussion and questioning, as well as difference of opinion. There are several reflective sessions where the attendees can voice their learning, observations and discuss challenges or opportunities they discovered over the course of the exercise. Spatial design of place is in its own right value-laden and experience driven and therefor the design training is a natural frame-work for transformative learning.

Critical reflection and affective learning

Reflexivity has been seen as a key part of participatory and participatory design processes (Sletto, 2010; Steen, 2013; Thinyane et al., 2018). Thinyane et al. (2018) posit that reflexive design practices have been recognised to enable and foster critical inquiry, user empowerment and self-development, as well as assist in the effectiveness of groups. Widmer et al. (2009) described group or collective reflexivity as teams ability to "overtly reflect upon and communicate about group objectives, strategies, and processes and adapt them to current or anticipated circumstances" (p.2). This dependent on the teams 'team characteristics, trust and psychological safety, shared vision, diversity, and leadership style' (Thinyane et al., 2018; Widmer et al., 2009).

Additionally, Taylor draws attention to a study by Neuman (Neuman, 1996) that highlights "[that]it is the learners' emotions and feelings that not only provide the impetus for them to reflect critically, but often provide the gist on which to reflect deeply". (p.16)

Through Neuman's work he goes on to show that a critical reflective capacity requires the capability to recognise and process emotions as part of the learning experience. Critical thinking requires enabling as it does not come about spontaneously (Thinyane et al., 2018; Widmer et al., 2009). It is therefor beneficial to develop methods that are 'creative, respectful, flexible and productive' (Schon, 1983; Sletto, 2010, p. 405) DT embodies affective learning very creatively within the 3F's exercise. This where the attendees are invited to explore a building or a place through the lens of form, function, and feelings. People naturally learn from and through their emotions through their day-to-day activities, however the critical reflectivity is not always present. Within this exercise people are again brought back to their feelings and emotional responses and actively encouraged to deliberating and reflect on them.

Criticality is crucial. DT could develop maybe better mechanisms that explore the development of critical reflexivity more clearly, explaining the process so they can continue this development. As highlighted in role of the activist enabler, there is a requirement to instil critical thinking in the collective actors, so they can continue the design journey autonomously. The core group need to become empowered enough to understand the dynamic power-plays that are part of the design process and see where they can most effectively influence the design brief and design process. This is required so they can have an impact on the decisions that impact their involvement, choices, and use of the design. This is highlighted in the knowledge transfer session; however, it does not encouraging critical inquiry to support awareness of power dynamics that influence the design process and its inequalities. The DT feedback forms indicate that they do not feel empowered enough to lead the design project, because although they felt transformed, they did to feel that they could take leadership of the design of their project.

This would be a great avenue to explore further to understand where critical learning can be added within the DT. At present adding another layer of information to the DT seems impossible, because people feel exhausted by the conclusion of day two. An option might be to replace the model making experience with pre-made models of the participants building being used. The model making is very insightful for them; however the research did not explore if this was due to the making and discourse during making or if a finished model could facilitate enough discourse to remove the making element which is a time-consuming activity. Such a change would leave time for an activity devised to increase their agency and advocacy in design and as a meso-group, to then feel they can take a lead in the design of their project. For

transformational learning and participation to occur effectively, there is a need to nurture the capability and capacity for critical reflexivity to navigate the messy design process to develop, integrating different forms of affective knowledge (Zembylas, 2013), and continued changes.

*A*wareness contextual influences

Contextual influences are the surrounding in which the learning takes place, the individual and professional background of the attendees, and the social and familial backdrop of the individuals which affect the transformative learning (Taylor, 2000). It is important for the design enabler to have awareness of the complexity of 'multiple histories, social relations, and grounded and ungrounded practices' that are involved in placemaking and 'to be able to deal with the unexpected' (Sletto, 2010. p.411). Group dynamics are a combination of the multiple socio-cultural backgrounds and therefore to make a cohesive group members need to work together through experiential activities to get to know themselves and the other, as well as position themselves within the context of the group and the other collective actors. Reflective activities are not only improving design practices and the effectiveness of a group, they also foster criticality within the meso-level of how for example negotiation, cooperation, creativity, empowerment and participation affect a specific situation (Thinyane et al., 2018), As well as that it can be in support of more resilient strategies through partnership and network building (Dekker et al., 2010). This also requires the enabler to have a critical understanding their own positionality, specifically in the setting of where they are working, as well as acknowledgement of critical reflexivity practises which is a key part of the aspects of the enabler pedagogy (Sletto, 2010).

Fung, (2009) argues that "civic participation offers a kind of social education in which citizens learn to trust and work with one another that better enables them to act collectively for common ends." Thus, the taking part in participation is capacity building as well as being one of the objectives. It harnesses meso- and macro empowerment as means and outcome. Social learning, as described by Fung, offers transformation of the core group and wider community and is empowering of them. However, the social learning 'can take place but might not happen' (Million and Parnell 2017).

The need for time

This characteristic by Taylor is set within the context of transformative learning in educational settings. However, it similarly applies to transformative participation. DT is only a short intervention on the long journey a group of collective actors are on

within the design process. Transformational learning is ongoing and part of the everyday.

Enabling the community enabler

The meso-empowerment approach of DT is based on using transformative learning to foster wider transformative participatory practises in their local area. The five learning elements are knowledge transfer, skills learning, case study learning, criticality (activism and critical thinking combined) and social learning. Table 6–2 gives an overview of the empowerment actions that support the different learning elements. The empowerment actions are a combination of Ashcroft (1987) elements of empowerment and Ibrahim's and Alkire's (2007) 'actions of agency' (see chapter 3.4). When compiling the table and looking for some of the empowerment description of the different enabler roles I was struck by the description developed for the community champion role, 'Empowering a core group to have the longevity and leadership skills to stay the duration of the long design development process, as well as empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves as a resource and for inclusivity.' This seemed the essence of what meso-empowerment is all about. To find time and space for collective actors to come together to form as a cohesive group that can go on to a lead in the design of projects that the community can live, work and play in. To do so they also require difference capacities and capabilities to support their critical inquiry journey along the way.

As stated at the end of chapter 5, design enablers can be seen as spatial change agents, that support the community through transformative participatory practices to becoming placemakers, even place agents that take on the baton of the design enabler to enable the wider community for transformation and improvement for all. For the collective actors to become critical place enablers it is key for the collective actor, and similarly the design enabler, to acquire the awareness of the critical pedagogical aspects for effective transformative participation, that of conscientization, praxis, emancipation, dialogue and listening, developing networks, peer learning and inclusion. Therefore, it is essential for the place agents to have awareness and understanding of a variety of approaches for enabling and transformative participation, to support transformative change through transformative learning (Fazey et al., 2018; Pereira et al., 2018; Wittmayer and Schäpke, 2014).

This chapter shows that a short two-day intervention DT can build and enable some of the capacities and capabilities that the individual and the cohort need to be able to initiate and grow their involvement in the design of their built environment. By supporting the transformational development of micro- and meso- empowerment through a variety of enabling approaches and modes of learning, the attendees and the cohort and collective actors are enabled to act with more agency and empowerment and take ownership of some of the different and complex parts of the design process.

Table 6-2 DT Transformative enabling characteristics

Learning Characteristics[79]	***Empowerment actions***
DT Approach *Cohesion & Inclusion* *Resilience & Sustainability*	***Transformative meso - empowerment***[80] **Empowering a core group to have the longevity and leadership skills to stay the duration of the long design development process, as well as empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves as a resource and for inclusivity.**
Knowledge transfer Emancipation *Conscientization* Power over/ developmental Power to/ learning	Nurture an individual process of critical inquiry and discovery for actors to have the power to develop autonomy and develop choices, by giving clarification and education in design and the design process as well as in critical transformative enabling practices, and fostering agency by demystifying the design process, breaking down barriers to understanding through course specific content.
Skills development Praxis Emancipation Power over/ developmental Power to/ learning	Nurture an individual process of critical inquiry and discovery for actors to have the power to develop autonomy and develop choices, By enabling individual agency and ownership through intense experiential activities to develop skills and praxis, and enabling creativity as a tool to for participation and deliberation, for collective actors to develop their voices and needs.
Case-study learning Dialogue & listening Situatedness Power over/ developmental	Developing awareness of social contextualisation and the situatedness of design and transformative participatory practices, by enabling exploration of what is achieved by others to inspire, inform, and motivate for the journey ahead, as well as nurture an individual process of critical inquiry.

[79] This table brings together the roles of enabling from Chapter 5 and Taylor (2000) essential characteristics of transformative learning.

[80] This is the same description of the Community champion roles as the collective actors through their meso-empowerment become community champions, place agents that perpetuate the empowerment journey.

Criticality (activism & critical thinking) Conscientization Reflexivity Power within/ knowledgeable	Foster the awareness of critical change within the collective actors, this is a personal transformation that can be acquired through reflexivity, dialogue and listening. As well as by raising their critical awareness of the design process and power relationships within it, to feel agency to query and initiate dialogue. Empowering the community to become active citizens, by nurturing their individual agency and leadership capabilities, thereby fostering the collective actors' ability to become community enablers and change agents.
Social Learning Peer Sharing Networking Solidarity Power with/ spatial	Peer to peer learning in the group and with all participants, as well as case study peers Brokering the participation process between the community and the professional stakeholders and practitioner, by nurturing meso-empowerment within collective actors.

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Discussion

This thesis concludes by summarising the findings of the research, highlighting some of the discovered conditions and actions that need to be in place to achieve transformative community-led design through enabling. This conclusion also discusses further investigations and next steps to be undertaken from this research, whilst also considering the limitations of the research.

7.1 Overview of the study

When community groups start a design project, or are invited to partake in a live project, they often come to the table with no experience of design or development. They will lack skills, resources, and networks to engage with the challenges and issues at hand. When they take part in long running consultations and meetings, often they do so in their spare time and are unpaid, as compared to the paid professionals (e.g. architects, community support officers) who have years of experience in developing projects, have built up confidence in running meetings and have a grasp of the technical languages and processes. Moreover, these professionals will be supported by well-presented plans, timelines, and objectives.

There is a clear power imbalance between the community that takes part in a project and the professionals that are already embedded within the project. Sharing one's views takes confidence and opportunity. The community require capabilities and capacity to support them in finding and raising their voices within their community and in a design project. By developing the community's capacity and capabilities they can start re-addressing the power dynamics that shape their own built environment.

However, the designer or architect are mostly only capable of supporting a group for a short period and are unable to support the community group throughout the duration of the project. Enabling for the design professional is about giving the means to people, for them to then step forward and create their own opportunities to design and build their own neighbourhoods and to sustain its development (Hamdi, 2010). The professionals should be there to empower the group in such a way that they feel confident to learn and grow within the project setting of the design development process.

By placing the findings in the context of literature on transformative participation (White, 1996), the analysis and results show that there is a need for the design enabler to adopt different types of supporting roles to be able to engage and

empower the diverse and different community groups within a range of design project settings. The findings also suggest the need for the design enabler to have a better understanding of some of the critical pedagogic mechanisms of informal adult learning within participatory design workshops. By having a wider understanding of the different levels of meaning-making within transformative enabling approaches and the different levels of empowerment to support community-led design, the enabler can assist the community group to develop shared principles, create a more resilient approach and widen the community contribution to the design process.

This transformative empowerment process should be perpetual, as it keeps 'transforming their everyday lives and their experience of it' (White, 1996, p.9). This description by White, resounds with the metaphor I use when describing enabling. I see transformative participation as a flywheel that needs to be activated and energised (needs to be effectively enabled), conversely once in motion and in balance it can keep going perpetually with much less energy input. It requires understanding how to bring it in motion, what are the axis of the cogwheels, what is the energy requirement to get it in motion and what keeps it in balance and continues to flow, and once in motion how is it sustained and maintained (the understanding of the enabling phenomenon)? Which bring us back to the main research questions for this thesis. 'What is an effective design enabling approach for community-led design?'

7.2 Contribution to knowledge – critical design enabling

The aim of the thesis was to contribute to the practice and theory around community participation in the built environment, by exploring the main question 'What is an effective design enabling approach for community-led design?' More specifically it hoped to generate a clearer contribution to knowledge of the specific knowledge, skills and other requirements needed for more effective community participation in the design process through enabled design support. It raised awareness of the catalytic role of design enabling, and that design enablers play, in aiding transformative participation and empowering individuals and communities, by strengthening and building sustainable critical design capacity and capabilities to foster meso-empowerment.

Overview of the Enabling as a critical approach to transformative CLD.

'What are effective design enabling approaches for community-led design?'

The research asked four questions exploring the main research questions:

A. What are the **conditions** for a community member or group to start taking part in a design process?
B. What **actions** does an enabler need to take to make the community member or group an active participant in the design process?
C. What are the **consequences** of having a well-enabled community-led design process for the community and the project?
D. What do these conditions, actions, and consequences mean for the **role of the design enabler** in community-led design processes?

The key exploration was to create greater understanding of what enabling approaches are by looking at the transformative dynamics that can nurture empowerment, as a means and an outcome, and determining what this entails for the role of the designer.

The literature review helped define enabling as "nurturing 'the human agency, values, capabilities and capacities necessary to manage uncertainty, act collectively, identify and enact pathways to desired, sustainable and resilient, futures."(adaptation from Scoones et al., 2020, p. 68, additions are in italics supported by Ashcroft, 1987). It also highlighted the need for critical pedagogical understanding to support effective transformative participation, through the aspects of conscientization, praxis, emancipation, dialogue and listening, developing networks, peer learning and inclusion.

Table 7-1 Phenomenon of design enabling for community-led design

Enabling - critical approaches for transformative community-led design		
Conditions *Enabled communities*	***Actions*** *Critical enabling approaches*	***Consequence*** *Transformative Participation*
Project selection **Community as a resource** **Empowerment/ agency** Activating citizens Leadership Core group Longevity/ Resilience Community Partnership Inclusiveness **Funding** Funding objective Funding risk External funding Community funding Funding community Support Funding resources Political funding Constraints	**Initiating participation** Structured/ managed plan Brief **Negotiating Situation** **Dialogue & Respect** Appreciation Transparency & honesty Language Listening **Design** Aspiration versus viability Design Knowledge	**Transformative process** **Sense of Pride** **Ownership** Structure of ownership Concept of ownership **Empowered & Resilient communities** **'Time and Place' for transformative participation.**

Chapter 5 showed that for the communities to take part within transformative participation and community-led design, they need a cohesive core group of collective actors to support the wider community throughout the duration of the project. The collective actors and the community need to start valuing themselves as a resource and feel more confident in taking part in the design and development that effects their day-to-day lives. The chapter gave an overview of the prominent conditions, actions, and consequences of design enabling (Table 7-1). Further analysis of the enabling phenomenon illuminated the different roles the designer needs to inhabit for effective critical design enabling, educator, activist, mediator, broker, and community champion (Table 7-2, expanded version exploring empowerment action within the roles). The table highlights the different critical aspects within each role to nurture agency and empowerment. Both these findings contribute to the research around participatory practices in the built environment, more specially developing initial discourse regrading critical design enabling practices for transformative participations and community-led design.

Table 7-2 Roles of enabling (expanded)

Critical Enabler *(CP context)*	***Enabling for agency & meso-empowerment***
Educator *Conscientization* *Praxis* *Dialogue & listening*	Nurture an individual process of critical inquiry and discovery for actors to have the power to develop autonomy and develop choices, by giving clarification and education in design and the design process as well as in critical transformative enabling practices. Enabling creativity as a tool to participate and deliberate with communities, for them to develop their voices and needs. Foster the awareness of critical change within the collective actors, highlight that this is a personal transformation that can be acquired through reflexivity.
Activist *Emancipation* *Praxis*	Nurture personal growth and renewed control due to transformation and agency already exhibited and a latent knowledge within the actors. Empowering the community to become active citizens, by nurturing their individual agency and leadership capabilities, thereby fostering the collective actors ability to become community enablers and change agents. Emancipation of collective actors by raising their critical awareness of the design process and power relationships within it.
Mediator *Dialogue & listening*	Enable collective actors to support each other to transform latent capabilities to activate powers for the improvement of wider communities, to foster meso-empowerment within the collective. Mediate and negotiate conflict between the different stakeholders, through dialogue and respect, to foster appreciation for all points of view, Using creative skills to navigate varying perspectives, and to balance power dynamics between the different parties involved.
Broker *Network building* *Peer sharing*	Supporting collective actors to activate powers for the improvement of wider communities, by fostering community partnerships. Brokering the participation process between the community and the professional stakeholders, by nurturing meso-empowerment within collective actors. Signposting and brokering connection for funding opportunities.
Community Champion *Cohesion & Inclusion* *Resilience & Sustainability*	Empowering a core group and nurturing them so they have the longevity to stay for the duration of the usually long development process. Empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves and the wider community as a resource.

Chapter 6 highlighted some of the meso-conditions and actions to empower collective actors to become a cohesive and cooperative group and be able to effectively participate within the design process. The main condition for them to take part in the design process is to have agency as a group. This requires a level of micro- and meso-empowerment, which can be part of the enabling approach, but is beneficial if its already part of the conditions when setting out on the journey. As well as developing meso-empowerment, this chapter showed that collective actors also need to develop their criticality and reflexivity to make the process as transformative for all. This chapter finished with an overview of the transformative enabling characteristics of DT (Table 6 – 2). Highlighting the empowerment actions for transformative meso-empowerment to nurture a core group to have the longevity and leadership skills to stay the duration of the long design development process, as well as empowering and championing the community to recognise themselves as a resource and for inclusivity.

The enabling phenomenon overview, the roles of enabling and the empowerment action for transformative meso-empowerment combine several angles of looking at critical design enabling in the built environment through the case study context of TGH. The findings explore how enabling can support transformative participation that can lead to CLD.

7.3 A critical enabling approach to transformative CLD

In a funding landscape where there is less and less available funding for institutionally supported, normative and invited community participation that allows people to influence their own built environment, the activity of enabling the community to take part and even initiating (uninvited) participation themselves, will need to become more common place. When the community is enabled, they can then act themselves, and even enable the wider community to support their own efforts.

However, as the Debate Series showed. Participation is most justified when the outcome of the participation requires the taking of ownership by the end users, to maintain the project through attendance, use, or management. Thus, when you do have user participation, you must make sure as designer you maximise the reciprocity of the experience for all stake holders involved, giving all stakeholders and the project the benefit of transformative participation. There is a complex dialogue between enabler and enabled community that should recognise the social impact of architectural knowledge transfer. By giving community groups and individuals the right architectural design knowledge, and the boost to confidence this knowledge creates, there is an activating agency and increasing empowerment which is further developing of their capabilities. Transformative participation can have a wider social community impact, an economic impact, and a wider impact in the whole community can be achieved.

The Glass-House has the experience and standing to help develop the future of architectural design practice to be more embracing of this participatory approach. It is positive to have initiatives such as the localism act and the NPPF, nevertheless if architects and designers do not fully understand the foundation of transformative participations and critical enabling practices, it will be difficult to foster genuine participation of the community in the design of their built environment. If architects, a key institutional enabler, are not proficient or willing enough to guide the core groups or community and empower them sufficiently, it will be challenging for communities to develop their sense of agency and aspiration and influence the design process.

A focus on the meso-empowerment layer appears to be the best way of helping and strengthening a community group to work as a catalyst, to utilise and distribute the knowledge transfer between the enabler, other professional stakeholders, the project, and the wider community. This steppingstone in the process needs to be harnessed at the start of any project. It became very clear in the Empowering Design

Project that if you have a coherent/ cohesive steering group to work with, the activities then build capacities within the steering group, the wider community and as a result overall the project will be more guided, focussed and will have more effect. These factors will result in the group and process being more sustainable over the longer term, surely a desired requirement of any community build project.

7.4 Limitations

As case-study research, this thesis explored the phenomenon of design enabling in the context of the work of TGH. Their specific enabling experience is invaluable, using enabling as their main modus operandi spanning decades of work and research. However, for further development of knowledge around design enabling within the built environment it would be important to establish critical enabling approaches that will be, or are already, used by other organisations in other affiliated fields as well as in the design of the built environment. This would help in further validating the findings within this investigation and could expand the implication of critical enabling approaches within the different levels of empowerment that make for transformative participation.

The process of researching and writing a PhD has been an incredible and complex process. Due to the central role of The Glass House in the research often the progression of the research has required examination and management of the ground rules of that interaction. As the findings obtained regarding the PhD have to remain unique, this has created a requirement to manage the dialogue and transfer of information with this collaborative partner. It has also required a constant assessment of the areas of exploration as guided by the PhD, rather than by The Glass House and their expectations of the direction of the study.

During the process of this research The Glass-house went through economic difficult times. With major re-organisations and changes of program and focus. This naturally influenced the focus of the PhD research, as the emphasis or agenda of the collaborative organisation altered or adjusted.

Due to divergent desires of the research partners, it was not easy to find a focus of research at the start, so things were more 'malleable' along the way than they would be if that was not the case. But the actual PhD process was like a PAR in itself, the research granting me access into the offices of TGH and the possibility to see some of the elements they worked on, talk to players in the field that support the work, or are co-competitors.

7.5 Further Investigations

One of the main outcomes of the thesis is the identification of five enabling roles that have emerged from the research, these have already been incorporated into the development of an online course for the Empowering Design Practices research project and is on Future Learn since the end of 2021.

Focused solely on the enabling activities within the Glass-House and them setting their specific enabling methodology and experience has been invaluable. However, for further development of knowledge around design enabling within the built environment it would be important to establish if and how critical enabling approaches are used by other organisations and in other affiliated fields. This would help further in validating the findings within this investigation and could expand the implication of critical enabling approaches within the different levels of empowerment that make for transformative participation.

Other investigation routes to take would be to look further at enabled training workshops as a design tool in participatory projects, developing on from the research done in chapter 6 and investigating enabling and transformative practices more widely.

Another area to expand on would be to examine the role of the enablers further. This thesis has started the journey of this exploration, further research needs to be done into the methodology and available methods. It also encourages others to explore critical enabling for transformative participatory practices.

Next steps

Publish papers on the three sections of analysis:

- Critical enabling for transformative participation (Chapter 3)
- Design Enabling - Role of the Designer in Enabling (Chapter 5)
- Critical enabling practices (Chapter 6)

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Appendix A

Externally funded collaborations between the Open University and the Glass-House Community Led Design

Jan 2022 – April 2023	**Cross-pollination: Growing cross-sector design collaboration in placemaking**
Sept 2020 – July 2021	**Incubating Civic Leadership**
Oct 2018 – present	**Fostering creative citizens in China through co-design and public makerspace**
Oct 2014 – Oct 2021	**Empowering Design Practices: historic places of worship as catalysts for connecting communities**
Feb 2016 – June 2016	**Prototyping Utopias: exploring collaborative economy in place**
Jun 2015 – Sep 2015	**Rules of Thumb: An Investigation into the Potential of Contextual transportation in Social Design**
Feb 2014 – Sep 2015	**Starting from Values - Evaluating Intangible Legacies**
Feb 2014 – Apr 2015	**Co-designing Asset Mapping: Comparative Approaches**
May 2014 – Dec 2014	**Unearth Hidden Assets and Scaling up co-design** **Connected Communities Festival 2014**
Feb 2013 – Jun 2014	**Scaling up co-design research and practice: building community-academic capacity and extending reach**
Feb 2013 – Jun 2014	**Unearth Hidden Assets through Community Co-design and Co-production**
Feb 2013 – Feb 2012	**Bridging the Gap between Academic Theory and Community Relevance: Fresh Insights from American Pragmatism**
Mar 2012 – Dec 2014	**Media, community and the creative citizen**
Mar 2012 – May 2013	**Valuing Community-Led Design**
2011 – 2012	**The role of complexity in the creative economies: connecting ideas, people and practices**

Appendix B

Empowering Design Practices

Empowering Design Practices (EDP) was a cross-disciplinary research project funded by the AHRC connected communities programme that ran from October 2015 till October 2021.

The research project worked with 50+ places of worship in different settings, on an individual basis, through group workshops and targeted events. As well as working with communities that were custodians of the places of worship, they also worked with the professional stakeholders that support these communities. My role on the EDP project was as a Research Associate. Initially I worked part-time at 0.6ft and then from January 2018 took on a full-time position.

The research that was set up was a collaboration between academics in design, art history and educational technology at the Open University. This was combined with the experience of their community research partner, The Glass-House. Other stakeholders were asked to join as partners alongside The Glass-House to support the research with their expertise in historic preservation of faith buildings and heritage management. These partners included Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Religious Building Alliance, and Live Works. There were also several consultants attached to support different sections of the research.

By working with many participatory practices, it made the research project a great space to reflect on how participatory best practices contribute to capacities and capabilities of community groups.

Below is an extract from the Final Impact Report describing the activities that the EDP project covered.

About the EDP project[81]

Empowering Design Practices (EDP) is a £1.5m research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under the Connected Communities and Design Highlight Notice. The project started in October 2014 and will end in October 2019[82]. EDP aims to explore how community-led design can help empower those who

[81] Extract from the Final Impact Report Aug- 2018

[82] The research project had a two-year non-cost extension due to project delays and Covid lockdown, with a true final end date on October 2021.

look after historic places of worship to create more open, vibrant, and sustainable places that respect and enhance their heritage. It is led by the Open University (OU) in partnership with Historic England, Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Religious Buildings Alliance, The Glass-House Community Led Design and Live Works, with additional support from consultant, Becky Payne, and architect, Stephen Smith (Wright & Wright).

The core team leading on the co-design and delivery of the project activity is the strategic partnership of The Design Group at the Open University and The Glass-House Community Led Design, who have collaborated on multiple AHRC-funded projects dedicated to design, people and places over the past seven years.

To date, the EDP project has engaged with over 50 communities looking after historic places of worship across England, providing direct support, training and specialist workshops to more than 300 people - helping them develop their awareness, skills and confidence to lead design projects in their places. The project activities have engaged more than 900 people in design-related public engagement events.

The EDP project has worked together with these communities in a variety of different ways. This includes providing bespoke materials, workshops, and support to projects either in a targeted way or as part of a longer-term interaction with individual places (longitudinal support), as well as themed workshops involving multiple communities who come from a specific geographic area, faith group, or share a common issue/interest. The project also offers other types of support such as training programmes, engagement with student work ('Live Projects') or study tours.

All these activities aim to help people engage with design (e.g. through workshops helping to identify needs and assets, develop a vision, negotiate conflicts and brainstorm ideas), and to engage with their wider communities (e.g. open community days) to support an inclusive, community-led design process.

Here are some highlights of activities that outline the reach of EDP projects:

- **Longitudinal support:** 12 bespoke workshops with **4 communities** (London, Sheffield, Chester and Stourbridge) that the project has supported longitudinally, i.e. providing longer-term support in a responsive way to community groups looking after a historic place of worship. These activities engaged **84 people**

- **Targeted support:** 5 bespoke workshops or events to support specific needs of **5 communities** in England, e.g. helping a local group explore the value and process for developing a community engagement strategy, or to understand how to write a 'statement of need' for a Heritage Lottery Funding bid. This type of activity engaged over **120 people**

- **Themed support:** 7 themed workshops that involved **29 different places of worship** across England and covering different faith groups and denominations across Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim communities. This type of activity engaged **84 people**

- **Outreach:** 2 outreach workshops at externally organised events by the National Churches Trust and The Prince's Regeneration Trust, reaching over **150 community members or leaders.** The project also delivered a number of dissemination activities and presentations in a variety of outlets for diverse audiences, such AHRC's annual conference in Bristol, the Churches Conservation Trust conference, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance's Big Update, Heritage Research Network conference and others

- **Design training:** 4 (two-day) design training courses, delivered in London, Sheffield and Manchester with **13 different communities** looking after historic places of worship. This activity engaged **46 people** in training

- **Live projects:** The project has supported interactions with MArch and MSc students who provided advice about future design plans and undertook activities such as community audits and public engagement events. This activity has benefitted 5 **different places of worship**

- **Workshops with completed projects ('past projects'):** 8 workshops with **8 different places of worship** reaching approximately **60 people**

- **Engagement with professionals:** The project conducted a focus group with architects and heritage and development support officers looking at challenges, opportunities and sharing of best practice (12 people)

- **Engagement with the general public:** Separate funding was obtained from AHRC for public engagement activities which included a community open day in Bow, East London, with over **140 participants** and a public exhibition at the Somerset House Utopia Fair with an estimated **10,000 visitors**. The project, designed and delivered by EDP partners, the Open University and The Glass-House, produced a film to showcase its activities. More information about the Prototyping Utopias project can be found at http://prototyping-utopias.uk.

The project also delivered an interactive workshop and art installation at Tate Exchange in London entitled 'Places for connection'. The workshop was part of the 'Who are We?' project, run by Counterpoint Arts and the Open University, in association with Stance Podcast and the University of York. **50 people** from the public organically created an art installation by sharing their stories, drawings, and artefacts. Also, in collaboration with the Baroness Warsi Foundation the project has delivered a public debate on 'Shared Spaces' at the University of Liverpool and launched a survey to collect the public's views on the future of places of worship in the UK and their role in society.

- **Sharing learning with policymakers and funders:** Learning and insights from the project activities have already been shared with the Heritage Lottery Fund's Places of Worship Practice Group, the Heritage Lottery Fund's Places of Worship Roundtable, the Places of Worship Forum led by Historic England and the Baroness Warsi Foundation.

The project focused on producing a range of resources for a variety of audiences (communities, professionals, policymakers) including an open online course on community-led design. Emphasis is also placed on academic papers.

The geographical reach of the EDP project has focused on England.

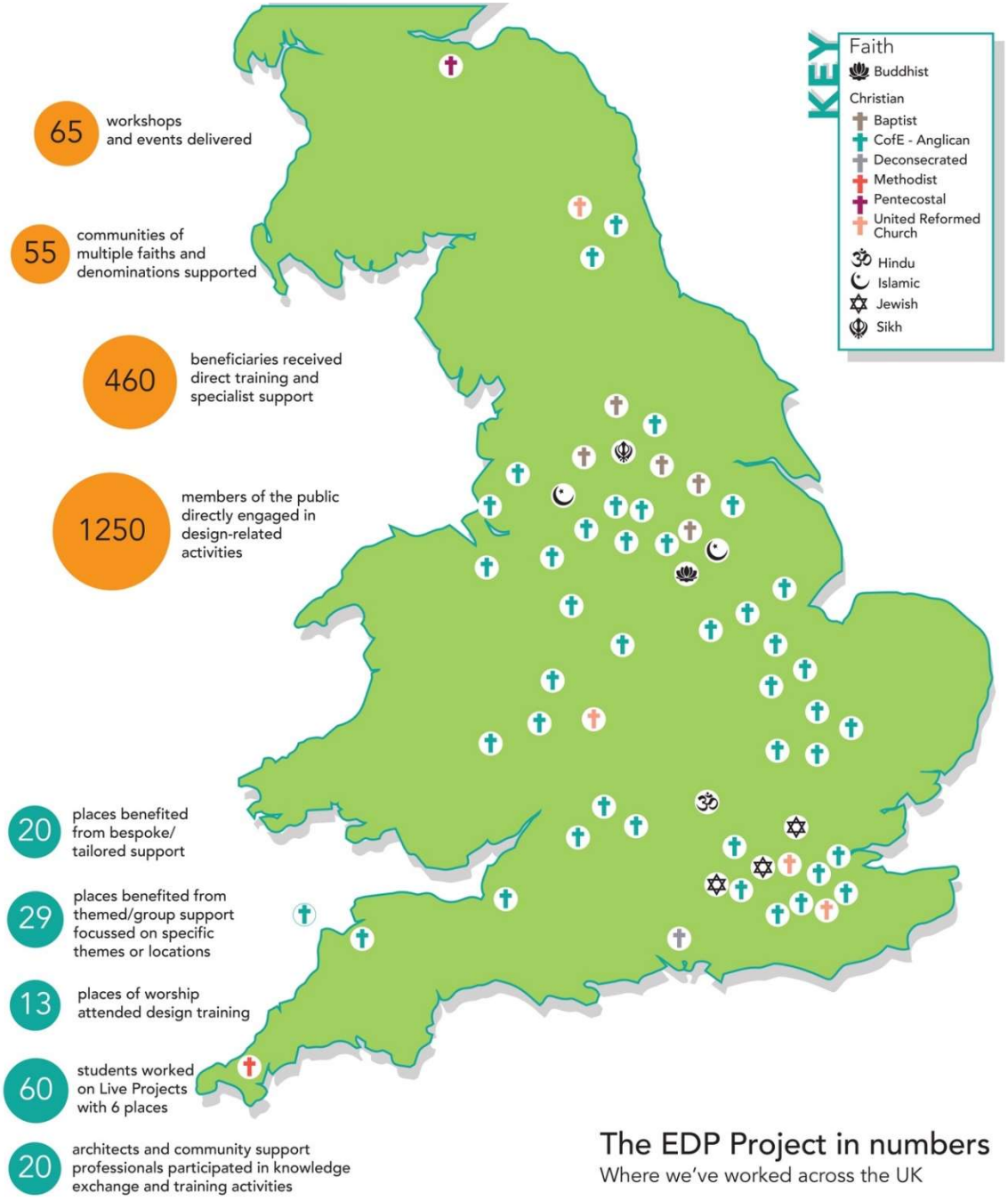

Figure B-0-1 - EDP in Numbers

Appendix C

Fieldwork

Debate Series 2011-2012

Debate	Name	Organisation	Role
Glasgow	**Anne Stuart**	the Cassiltoun Trust	Community Member
	Matt Bridgestock	55North Architecture	Design Professional
	Ron Smith	Glasgow City Council	Planning Professional
	Jonathan Strassberg	Ethical Property Company	Developer
Bristol	**Sandra Manson**	Knowle West Media Centre	Community Member
	Greg White	LOCI design	Design Professional
	Cleo Newcombe-Jones	Bath and North East Somerset Council	Planning Professional
	Oona Goldsworthy	Bristol Community Housing Federation	Developer
London	**Dave Smith**	East London Community Land Trust	Community Member
	Johanna Gibbons	J & L Gibbons	Design Professional
	Alistair Huggett	Southwark council	Planning Professional
	David Roberts	Igloo Regeneration	Developer

Interviews 2011-2012

Interviewee's Name	Company/ Organisation	GH Role/ Connection	Data source
Sophia de Sousa	The Glass-House	Chief Exec	Primary, 3 interviews, 1 lecture at SSoa
Rebecca Maguire	The Glass-House	Project Manager	Primary, 2 interviews
Prue Chiles & Leo Care	BD+R, CE+CA[83], SSoA	Design Enablers	Primary, 1 interview
Charlie Baker & David Rudlin	Urbed	Design Enablers	Primary, 1 interview
Ronnie Hughes	Sense of Place	Enabler	Primary, interview with ND
Barbara Watson	Trafford Hall		Primary, 1 interview
Irena Bauman	Bauman Lyons Architects, SSoA	Architect Ravenscliff	Primary, 1 interview with ND

[83] *CE+CA previously known as Prue Chiles Architect, https://cecastudio.co.uk/*

Design Training (2011-2018)

Design Training & Location	Attending groups	Positionality
Building By Design Liverpool (2011- 2day)	Scoping experience	Observer – Leo Care as Design Enabler
Building By Design Shefton (2012- 1day)	Scoping experience	Main Design Enabler
Building By Design Sheffield – EDP (2016 -2day)	ISRAAC Sheffield, Bow Church London, Stratford URC	Support enabler - Leo Care as Main design enabler
Building By Design Manchester (2017 - 2day)	Friends of St John's MNC, St Mary's Bideford, Community Church Edinburgh	Secondary data in impact interviews
Building By Design London (2017 -2day)	St Peter's Chester, Graylingwell Chapel Chichester, Cemetery Road Baptist Church Sheffield	Support enabler - Leo Care as Main design enabler
Building By Design Sheffield (2018 -2day)	St Michael's Byker, Blackley Baptist Church, Rotherham Minster, Trinity Rowden	Support enabler - Leo Care as Main design enabler

Impact interviews	EDP Support	Type of interview
St Mary's Church, Bow, London	EDP Longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
ISRAAC, Vestry Hall, Sheffield	EDP Longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
St Peter's Church, Chester	EDP Longitudinal	Face-to-face interview
St Michael's Biker Church, Newcastle	Design Training Plus Live Project	Phone interview
Cemetery Road Baptist Church Sheffield	Design Training Plus Live Project	Phone interview
Blackley Baptist Church	Design Training only	Phone interview

Trinity Rowden	Design Training only	Phone interview
Edinburgh Community Church	Design Training only	Phone interview

Additional Fieldwork

Enabler Dialogues (2013)

London Melissa Lacide, Liz Kessler

Sheffield Melissa Lacide, John Mitchell, Tom Lonsdale, Elizabeth Motley & Claire Taylor.

Focus groups (2012-2021)

2012 the Glass House Team; Sophia de Sousa, Rebecca Maguire, Maja Jorgensen, Hannah Gibbs, Louise Dredge

2021

CPD training attended and observed

RIBA Facilitated by Maja

TGH Facilitated by Granville New Homes project team

Archival research (2011-2012)

Scoping phone interviews (2012)

LSE Liz Richardson did research in the performance and management of TGH. Contacted and received fieldnotes.

CABE (Design Council) Nicola Mathers

Research Events & Outputs

CES Conference & Summer School 2012 Cities are us - Invited delegate

AHRA conference 2012	Transitional Cities & Urban Conditions Presenter & Chapter published 2018 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-55855-4_13
UEL Conference 2012 conference paper	The Production of Place - Co-writer
UN habitat III – Conference 2013	Future of Place - Invited delegate

Appendix D

Building by Design collated feedback

1. **Thinking about what you've done on this course, do you agree with the following statements?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have a better understanding of basic design principles and the design process.	**32**	**12**			
I have a greater awareness of how design can enhance the quality and functionality of our building	**35**	**9**			
I have gained skills and confidence to help lead a design process and engage my community in it.	19	25			
I feel better able to communicate our ideas and vision for our building.	27	15	2		
I feel more confident about working with design professionals.	**30**	**12**	**2**		

2. **Please let us know how useful you found each of the following activities: (1 is for most useful and 5 is for least useful)**

Activity	**Rate**				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Design basics presentation and discussion	22	14	5		1
Groups presenting and sharing information about their projects so far	20	19	4	1	
Inspiring buildings presentation	11	17	5	1	1
Refurb and renovation presentation	20	18	3	1	1
Visiting buildings & and follow-up discussion	**30**	**7**	**1**	**2**	
Language, drawings and models presentation	17	19	5	2	
Understanding your building / memory mapping[84]	13	9	2	2	
Visioning workshop	27	12	5	2	
Building creation process presentation	**23**	**10**	**4**	**2**	
Dream and reality modelling activity & presentations	**26**	**14**	**2**	**1**	**1**

3. **What aspects of the learning from this course do you feel you can take back and share with your community?**

Activity	**Sheffield 1**	**Manchester**	**London**	**Sheffield 2**	**Total**
3F's	3	4	1	4	**12**
Study Tour	4		3		**4**
Memory mapping		2		1	**3**
Vision	1	6		1	**8**
Modelmaking	6	1	2	3	**12**
Design Process	1			2	**3**
Interact with	1		1		**2**

[84] *This question was not asked at Sheffield 1.*

other groups					
	13/13	11/11	11/11	9/9	**44**

Sheffield 1:

- *"Memory mapping, we enjoyed and can take back to our church. Model making highlighted problems we hadn't thought of."*

Manchester:

- *"Activities to engage collaboratively with others."*
- *"How vision must impact design and function. Can't just do something to update building – far deeper than that."*
- *"Share the process we went through to come to conclusions we've come to. Emphasise the values which we feel we can't compromise on – light, colour, belonging and space for peace/reflection."*

London:

- *"Understanding that we need to be open – look outwards, seeing what the community needs, opening our space."*

Sheffield 2:

- *"A new understanding of form, function & feeling coupled with the benefit of the model which gives a bird's eye view of the situation."*
- *"I feel that making the model will prove invaluable in future discussions at the church/ - The field trips were very useful-seeing how spaces are being used and what is possible."*
- *"Learnt good exercises I can take back to the congregation – I feel I have a better understanding of the design process."*
- *"To interact with other groups and know that everybody is faced with different problems. Goods plans and models to consider."*
- *"Really made me start to think creatively about the building."*

4. **What would help you and your group continue to build confidence in looking after and potentially making physical changes to your building?**

BUILDING BY DESIGN DESIGN TRAINING & LOCATION	SCORE
Availability of advice & Someone to talk to at different states – independent advice on working with architects – understanding what stage we are at	6
Continuing the conversation	5
Working with the wider church community to discuss our vision and how the building can be part of it.	5
Ongoing support (with EDP)	5
Finance becoming available	4
Using our new skills to enable & encourage others to be part of our journey	3
Exploring more / the bigger picture and whole vision for the building	2
More group discussion. More ideal on financial impact	1
Being able to physically model ideas	1
Continuing Networking	1
Skills in Funding	1
A better relationship with our Church Architects	1

5. The thing you enjoyed most about this training was…

BUILDING BY DESIGN ENJOYED ABOUT THE TRAINING	SCORE
Visits & Reflections	17
Modelling	9
Peer Learning – meeting members from other churches to hear of their buildings	7
Bounding ideas with professionals	5
Teamwork	3
Interactivity (Discussions)	3
Project Focus – Time to examine our building	2
Mind mapping – Visioning	2
Facilitated active sessions	1
Variety; trainer & professional	1
Well organised / professional	1
Reflection	1
Gaining understanding	1
Lectures	1
Presentations	1

Quotes / feedback Sheffield 2:

- *"Enabling us to work together as a team on the building and the reality of it."*
- *"Knowing we are not alone with issues. Helpful camaraderie in the group and the interactive sessions. Learning with fun and enjoyment."*
- *"The opportunity to think creatively as a team about how to develop our building."*
- *"Pooling ideas and experience of it."*
- *"Conversations with the presentation team, and with other groups re plans and aspirations."*
- *"Shared experience - We are not alone -everyone has similar problems and it was good to share our concerns in such a lively atmosphere.*
- *"I loved making the model – it helped to see the building in a very different way. The fields trips were also helpful seeing what we would like but also*

what we wouldn't – practical experience of space was so much better than photos "

6. The thing you found most challenging about this training was…

BUILDING BY DESIGN THING MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT TRAINING	COUNT
Modelling	18
Long full day / tiring / extra day	8
Concentration	2
Presenting	2
Design Language	1
Reflection Time	1
Arts & Crafts	1
Memory Mapping	1
Vision	1
3 F's	1

Quotes Manchester:
"One thing running into another meant less time to reflect as an individual and group."
"Working through the feeling that there was something not quite right – and feeling more peaceful having worked it out!"

Quotes London:
"The intensity of the first day. Although I enjoyed it all – it was a lot to take on board and a very long day. I'd like to see this course lengthened over 3 days. More time to digest and build models."

Quotes - Sheffield 2:
"The challenging part was starting to play with the space -what we do now with our church has to be right. So, we need to put a lot of thought into what we do for future generations and the wider community."

"Reconciling the idea of change 'for the sake of it'. Against what the needs of the building deserve ie. Style of building internally v. change for the sake of it 'perceive value of new usage'."

"Holding in mind the historical/ traditional strengths of our building whilst seeing to create new space and more flexible space."

7. How do you feel working alongside other groups affected your experience on the course?

Quotes Sheffield 1: Learning, enhancing, helpful.
"It was an enhancing experience"
"great to see similarities and challenges and the enthusiasm for their project"

Quotes Manchester: All positive and encouraging
"Useful to see how your project is unique and allows you to clarify your purposes and needs are against what others are doing."

Quotes London: All positive and useful / inspiring/ different perspectives.

Quotes Sheffield2: All positive and encouraging.
"To connect with other groups – bounce off their ideas and spaces. It broadened our experience and helped to vision other 'sacred' spaces and how they are used and wish to be developed."

8. How would you rate how this training was run overall?

OVERALL RATING OF THE TRAINING	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
	37	7	-	-

BUILDING BY DESIGN How was training run overall?	COUNT	COMMENTS
Good trainers	6	• *Kept it light and interesting* • *Inspiring teaching* • *Felt really easy and encouraged by Leo & Team* • *Friendly* • *Accommodating* • *Enthusiastic*
Well Structured	5	• *Prepared & thoughtful* • *Opportunity to feel more confident in enabling* • *Discussion about changing building space and what language is useful*
Good mix of different learning styles	2	• *Seminar / presentation* • *Practical work* • *Us presenting* • *Field trips/looking at buildings*
Knowledgeable people	2	• *Excellent support*
Overall comments	• *Much of the info was imparted in an entertaining & informative way* • *Really helpful overview of design process, with practical opportunities to explore our building especially through visits and modelling.*	

9. Please tell us how you think we could improve the course?

BUILDING BY DESIGN HOW CAN WE IMPROVE?	COUNT	COMMENTS
More time	10	Maybe too much expected in time available (3 days)
More breaks	2	More advice on design for individual groups
More reflective space	7	
Shorten Field visits	1	
Continue the conversation	1	
More matching example building	3	
Space outside day 2	1	

Quotes Sheffield 1:

"Material-handouts should have been given out from the start."

"Giving specific questions in areas to look when visiting other buildings."

"Maybe more info on technical issues maybe – would be very individual."

Quotes Manchester:

"I think a little too much content at times. Some parts could have been more interactive. For example, the explanation about the materials for model making could have been done by different facilitators at each group, based on what understanding the group already had."

"Perhaps asking individuals from within each team to introduce themselves briefly, who they are, what they do and connection to the team."

"Some of the group facilitation could perhaps have been a bit sharper and clearer eg. Clear questions asked of group."

"Perhaps if you know the issues of the churches before the event – you could give more examples of places which mirror how the issue was solved in that church."

Quotes London:

"This is hard!"

"Inserting pro-active consideration of future users with disabilities in function (side?) would be good to complete the already good pointers later."

10. Any other comments

"Very pleased to have the opportunity to attend, take part."

"Enthusiastic input from all the course leaders to encourage and inspire: inspirational."

"Really helpful catalyst to restart our imagining how to develop the building."