# Homeless Heritage: collaborative social archaeology as therapeutic practice

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# Abstract

To be defined by a lack of something – home*less* – creates problematic identity challenges and fundamentally ruptures a person's sense of ontological security. Archaeology as a contemporary material and creative practice involves working back and forth between material culture (landscapes, places and things) and intangible heritage (memories, stories and experiences). Through this work, narratives emerge which inform identities, challenge dominant stereotypes and aid a sense of belonging which enhances resilience and self-esteem among those involved. This thesis presents fieldwork conducted in the U.K. between 2008-2013 in which contemporary homeless people were engaged as colleagues (rather than participants) and facilitated to interpret the heritage of homelessness in ways and words meaningful to them. Working collaboratively with archaeology students, homeless colleagues mapped and documented landscapes and undertook two archaeological excavations of homeless sites. Two co-curated interactive public exhibitions were produced.

This thesis considers how the archaeological process – counter-mapping, field-walking and talking, working as a team, identifying sites and artefacts of significance and constructing narratives – can be shown to have significant therapeutic effects. Memory and identity work are considered in relation to psychological observations concerning the qualitative benefits of hope and its role in motivating people. Recent neuroscience work is also drawn upon. Findings suggest that neural plasticity can be affected by the *social environment* in health damaging *or health promoting* ways (McEwan 2012). Significant positive outcomes from the Homeless Heritage project include increased 'social connectedness', independent living and employment among those involved and suggest that collaborative archaeological work can provide *positive social environments* and function as low level support. It is suggested that associated health benefits offer a potentially rich avenue for further collaborative research between archaeologists interested in how the discipline might function in socially useful ways and neuroscientists keen to explore non-pharmaceutical approaches to treatment of trauma and social sustainability.

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## List of Accompanying Material

**Appendix 3** – an 8 minute film on the excavation of 'Turbo Island', Bristol, made for the BBC television series *Inside Out South West*. The film was first broadcast on BBC One television (south west) on the 23$^{rd}$ February 2010.
Available in perpetuity online at:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bristol/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_8530000/8530447.stm

**Appendix 7** – DVD of a 40 minute documentary film on the process of engaging homeless people, undertaking counter mapping and excavation of 'The Pavilion', York. Film made by independent production company Digifish, www.digifish.tv

The film is available online at:
http://arcifact.webs.com/apps/videos/

*NB: appendix 7 DVD is clearly labelled and securely fastened in a plastic wallet bound at the end of the thesis in accordance with university guidelines.*

## Dedication & Acknowledgments

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## Author's Declaration

I declare that this work is original and has not previously been presented for any other award at any other institute. All sources are acknowledged as references. Aspects of this thesis have been published in the following articles and book chapters:

Kiddey, R. & Schofield, J. (2009) Rough Guide, '*The Big Issue*', 23-29 November, Issue 874, pp. 14-15

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Kiddey, R. & Schofield, J. (2011) 'Embrace the Margins: adventures in archaeology and homelessness', *Public Archaeology*, 10(1), pp. 4-22

Kiddey, R. (2014) 'Punks & Drunks: counter mapping homelessness in Bristol and York'. In J. Schofield (ed). *Who Needs Experts? Counter Mapping Cultural Heritage*, Farnham, Surrey, Ashgate Publishing Limited, pp. 165-179

# Chapter One: Introduction & Overview

'It doesn't happen all at once,' said the Skin Horse. 'You become. It takes a long time…'

(*The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams)

## 1.0 Introduction

Archaeology initially developed as a discipline concerned with unravelling stories from the deep past. From the late nineteenth century onwards historic periods came to be investigated using archaeological methods (for example, 'lost' medieval villages were excavated) but there remained insistence that archaeological work involved digging in the ground for 'old' things. There was a gradual move from circa 1960s towards approaching the contemporary past archaeologically which evolved through increased critique of methodology and incorporation of theory from disciplines focused broadly on human behaviour (for example, anthropology, cultural theory, sociology and psychology). A key transformation which occurred within the discipline was the move from archaeology as a quest for *knowledge* about the human past to archaeology as a methodological approach for *enquiry into material culture* 'regardless of time and space' (Rathje 1979:2). Contemporary archaeology offers an 'archaeology of us' (Gould & Schiffer 1981) not as a function of ethno-archaeology but as enquiry into the present through the study of material culture. The subject of this thesis is the heritage of contemporary homelessness in two British cities, Bristol and York. In this chapter I set out aims and objectives and provide a brief introduction to each component of the thesis.

## 1.1 Aims & Objectives

If archaeology can shine light on human activities, behaviour and attitudes from the deep and historic past then the same theory and methodologies may be useful in understanding the contemporary or very recent past and potentially reveal fresh

insight into aspects of contemporary society. The initial intention of this project was to see whether homeless people would be interested in undertaking a collaborative archaeological investigation of contemporary homelessness and to see whether such a study might have anything useful to add to existing literature on contemporary homelessness. A further objective was to extend the suggestion that archaeology may function as 'socio-political action in the present' (Tilley 1989) by testing whether the disciplinary potential for archaeology to 'bear witness' (Thomas 2004) may contribute to 'archaeology as activism' (Stottman 2010) and enable advocacy to become an explicit reason for undertaking archaeological work.

Homeless people were approached in Bristol and the suggestion that archaeology might have something useful to say was met with enthusiasm. After a pilot phase of fieldwork in June 2009 the decision was taken to make contemporary homeless heritage the subject of a full time PhD. Initial enthusiasm led to observations that homeless people, usually categorised a 'hard to reach' group, wanted to be involved and readily turned up for fieldwork, actively and animatedly contributed to conversations concerning how findings were presented and published. This inspired a further hypothesis that archaeology might function therapeutically when undertaken collaboratively with people who have experienced trauma and marginalisation through facilitating reconstruction of identity, aiding the development of useful and transferable life skills. It was also proposed that increased representation in the heritage context may lead to better understanding of particular 'social problems' and potentially enable the development of better designed social policy.

## 1.2 Homelessness in theoretical & historical context

In Chapter Two I set the thesis in theoretical and epistemological context. I track how concerns common to post-structuralism, feminism and critical Marxism which centralise debates over perspective, interpretation and the role of power and ideology in the construction of social being came to be incorporated into archaeological theory and prove useful in examining homelessness due to the complex duality of its nature.

Interpretive archaeologies contend that the past is open to a plurality of meanings precisely due to its socio-historic construction and because humans engage with the material world in multiple ways, reflective of different attitudes and access to resources. I argue that our job as archaeologists is not to defend single truth interpretation of data by silencing all contrasting narratives rather it is to convey conflicting perspectives and remain open to critique. I argue that there is more to learn about social being in the present by questioning *what* we seek to conserve and *why* we preserve certain narratives over others and by revealing those we choose to ignore or attempt to hide. A focus on materiality and object biography – stuff and its stories – is what makes fieldwork undertaken for this thesis explicitly archaeological.

Chapter Three begins with a necessarily reduced overview of the historical and political development of the concept of homelessness, from late medieval vagrancy statutes to current British housing policy. Later in Chapter Three, I examine the legislative context for suggesting that homeless peoples' perspectives may be considered 'heritage'. I explore definitions of heritage relevant to this thesis (for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 27.1a states that access to heritage is a human right and the Faro Convention 2005 states clearly that 'interaction between people and places through time'[1] constitutes heritage). At times, contemporary homeless heritage jars with traditional conceptions of heritage as something 'polite' or 'pleasant'. However, homelessness results from 'action or interaction of natural and/or human factors'[2] and therefore landscapes of homelessness exist with as much validity as, for example, landscapes of 'Jane Austen's Bath'[3].

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[1] http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/199.htm

[2] http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm

[3] http://channels.visitbath.co.uk/janeausten

## 1.3 Ethics & Methodology

Chapter Four begins by detailing ethical concerns relevant to working archaeologically with homeless people who are, by definition, vulnerable as they have nowhere safe to which to retreat. Drawing predominantly on ethical considerations from the fields of anthropology, archaeology and social policy, I examine why ethics are important, what is meant by an 'ethic of care' and explore how this may be applied in a heritage context. I set out challenges faced when proposing to undertake collaborative archaeological fieldwork with homeless people and reveal how each challenge was met in order to meet the highest standards of health and safety and ensure that no one involved came to any harm as a result of the project.

The second part of Chapter Four details methodological approaches to making initial contact with homeless people in Bristol and York and sets out how and why approaches differed in each city and conveys how different approaches impacted data. As previously mentioned, a central concern for this thesis was that all stages of fieldwork should be undertaken in a truly collaborative manner. For this reason, I explain the importance of referring to homeless people with whom I worked regularly as 'colleagues' rather than 'participants'. The term 'colleague' more accurately represents the relationship (for example, equal responsibility for different aspects of the project). The use of ethnographic approaches are also explored (for example, participant observation methods were employed, cognitive and memory mapping work was undertaken and at each stage of the project decisions regarding the direction of the project were taken collectively). In the final sections of Chapter Four I detail how the decision was reached to archaeologically excavate two sites of contemporary homelessness - 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York) – where each excavation team comprised homeless people and students from the University of Bristol and the University of York.

## 1.4 Data

Chapters Five, Six and Seven may be considered a trio of inter-related chapters in which data are presented. It is intended that the reader moves from the macro to the micro scale where Chapter Five concerns 'landscapes', Chapter Six hones in on 'places' within the landscapes and Chapter Seven hones in further still on artefacts and the role of objects in homeless culture. Themes in contemporary homelessness started to emerge from early stages of ethnographic work but became more strongly identifiable during excavation and post-excavation work when it became apparent that a thematic structure was the most appropriate for presentation of findings. Some moving back and forth between the data chapters is necessary which is why it is suggested that Chapters Five, Six and Seven are conceived of as a package. While it is necessary that some aspects of landscape, places and things are revisited across the data chapters it is intended that the chapters are not repetitive rather that multi-functionality and adaptation emerge as strong themes in contemporary British homeless culture.

It will also be observed that the data include descriptions and quotes from homeless colleagues which are slightly longer than those usually included in sociological work and which name individuals rather than refer to 'respondents'. There are important ethical and theoretical reasons for diverging from conventional practice in this way. Firstly, in order to ensure that the project remained an authentic interpretation of contemporary homeless heritage it was essential to preserve, as far as possible, the voices of individual homeless people and felt that the best way to achieve this was to relay interpretations of landscape, places and things verbatim. This approach also enables the contributions of specific people to the broader field of contemporary archaeology to be properly recognised. Secondly, a major problem with the way that homelessness is currently defined and rationalised in legal, moral and political discourse concerns the homogenisation of homeless people through the use of the inadequate and dehumanising term '*the* homeless'. In identifying individual homeless people it is intended that individual human agency is better acknowledged.

## 1.5 Key findings

Chapter Eight begins by drawing on data to reveal what an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness can contribute to our current understanding of the concept of homelessness and also its phenomenological and individual physical manifestations. Practical suggestions are made for engaging homeless people in ways that, arguably, may be more successful in retaining attendance at events intended to encourage those who want support to gain the skills and confidence necessary to live happy and independent lives away from the street. Drawing on research from neuroscience that suggests stress and associated health damaging brain responses (for example, substance abuse, violent or aggressive behaviour) may be countered through low level support in a safe and nurturing environment, it is suggested that the archaeological process and involvement in heritage work can function therapeutically and may be useful in providing such social environments. Through the archaeological process, individual human agency is materialised and methodologies promote a positive framework for thinking about the world in ways that highlight the inter-related nature of social being, encourage compassion and promote self-efficacy. It is suggested that the archaeological process may facilitate engagement with homeless people on a holistic level where those involved are actively involved in the design and implementation of meaningful activities which promote self-esteem, confidence and the development of 'self-realisation' (Lacan 1977). It will be argued that methodologies developed for this project are transferable to similar heritage based projects (for example, food is identified as an opportunity) and work with other marginalised groups of people (for example, elderly people, single parents, long-term unemployed people).

The latter part of Chapter Eight unveils how attitudes implicit in pre-welfare state legislation (for example, late medieval vagrancy statutes, the Poor Laws and the Victorian incarnation of the concept of deserving and undeserving poor) remain strong forces within current housing and homelessness policies. Such historic legacies are shown to continue to affect how homelessness is approached and are

revealed to have physical impact on the type of accommodation made available to people who find themselves statutorily homeless in Britain. Persistently negative stereotyping of homeless people is revealed to be located in discourse and socio-political constructions of homeless people as pathologically to blame for their situation.

## 1.6 Conclusion

It is concluded in Chapter Nine that further to the suggestion that archaeology can function as socio-political action, forensic and cognitive capabilities reveal the discipline is suited to making advocacy an explicit reason for undertaking archaeological work. In representing perspectives that are commonly silenced (for example, through maps, recorded memories of people and events, photographs and films and associated tangible materials) archaeology is uniquely placed to materialise 'hidden' lifestyles. Perhaps more exciting is the potential for archaeological activism to provide material evidence of inconsistencies in the distribution of social welfare, expose injustice and highlight gaps and limitations of social policy. It is suggested that archaeology may be conceived of as an accessible democratising tool – a method of recording evidence which harnesses experience in the recent or contemporary past in order to improve representation and rights in the present and future. In this way, archaeology becomes not only the study of 'evidence *for* social activities in the past' (Barrett 1988) but an active methodology for recording evidence *of* social conditions in the present with the explicit intention of improving conditions in the future. I will now move on to present the theoretical and epistemological context for an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness.

# Chapter Two: Research Context

## 2.0 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide the ontological and epistemological context for an archaeological approach to the heritage of contemporary homelessness in two British cities, Bristol and York. Taking a broadly interpretive and phenomenological perspective, theories explored were initially developed within anthropology and sociology, psychology and cultural geography. Themes central to post-structuralism and critical Marxism are unpacked (for example, the role of interpretation, power and ideology). Patterns of social relations and 'spatialised' conceptions of time are visited. I argue, after Shanks & Tilley (1987), that archaeology is a 'contemporary material practice', explore the concept of 'archaeology as activism' (Shanks & Tilley 1987 & 1992, Tilley 1989, Buchli & Lucas 2001, Byrne & Nugent 2001, Harrison & Schofield 2010, Stottman et al 2010, Zimmerman 2010) and suggest that data presented in this thesis provide compelling evidence for archaeological work as therapeutic practice. An interdisciplinary review of the concepts of home and homelessness is provided.

## 2.1 Archaeology, a contemporary practice

Archaeology is the study of the human past through material remains (see for example, Childe 1929, Clark 1939 & 1952, White 1943, Hawkes 1954, Binford 1962, Flannery 1965, Clarke 1973, Hodder 1982 and Barrett 1988). The historiography of the archaeological discipline has been well explored elsewhere (Hodder 1995b, Trigger 1996, Johnson 1999, Hodder 2001) but from the early twentieth century anthropological research methods and theory increasingly impacted upon archaeological work. For example, it was conceived that observations made of living cultures could aid interpretations of past behavioural patterns (Malinowski 1922, Radcliff-Brown 1922, Boas 1940). This 'new' anthropology was distinguished from ethnology as 'social anthropology' and derived much theoretically from the writings of French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), a 'founding father' of sociology, along with Karl Marx and Max Weber (Giddens

1971). Observation of living cultures was increasingly advocated within archaeology on the basis that people are motivated by customs, social structures and perspectives and that ideas impact the physical environment, have material effect (Clark 1939, Childe 1949). Increased incorporation of sociological and psychoanalytical theory into archaeological practice reflects a wider recognition that material remains are produced by multi-sensorial individual humans operating within historically situated sets of relations (Lacan 1977, Jung 1967, Durkheim 1984, Spriggs 1984).

This thesis draws widely from post 1970s social theory (Foucault 1972, Bourdieu 1977, Giddens 1986 & 1995). Interpretive and phenomenological archaeologies remain contentious (for example, Binford 1977, Wylie 1985, Hodder 1986, Leone et al 1987, Shanks & Tilley 1987, Pinsky & Wylie 1989, Shanks & Tilley 1992, Preucel & Hodder 1996, Fleming 1999, Wylie 2002, Fleming 2008, Barrett & Ko 2009, Leone 2010). It will be argued that the relationship between humans and their environment is dialectical (Lefebvre 1991) and materialised through interventions made by people motivated by what they *perceive* as much as by what can be shown empirically to exist. Thus social and psychoanalytical theory and recent developments in neuroscience add useful strings to the archaeological bow. I turn now to a fuller exploration of interpretive archaeologies.

**Interpretive archaeologies**

Originally intended to probe material remains from the deep past, archaeological methods have more recently been applied to contemporary culture (for example, Rathje 1981, Tarlow & West 1999, Graves-Brown 2000, Buchli & Lucas 2001, Harrison & Schofield 2010). To an extent, the 'every day' is a constant theme in interpretive archaeologies. Interest concerns exploration of meaning, symbolism and language (Leone 1981, De Certeau 1988, Hodder 1990, Bapty & Yates 1990, Shanks & Tilley 1987 & 1992). Ideology, social conflict, power and the individual often feature and the epistemological roots of western science are challenged (Bourdieu 1977, Foucault 1979, Poovey 1998, Sahlins 2008). Reflective of postmodern approaches more widely interpretive archaeologies commonly draw on post-structuralism, feminism, critical Marxism and structuration theory to facilitate the

development of archaeology as a philosophy of science (Clarke 1973, Gosden 1994, Wylie 2002, Lucas 2005). Psychoanalytical approaches enhance our ability to cognitively map areas according to mood and memory (Renfrew & Zubrow 1994). Such approaches contend that archaeological data is always *active* within the present, routinely reinterpreted according to new paradigm perspectives which themselves impact upon interpretation (Martin 1972).

**Interpretation and perspective**

Interpretive archaeologies propose that there is no single 'true' past because, like the present, the past is a tapestry of multiple perspectives (Ingold 2011) and recognise that perspective and the effect of language on meaning must be situated within historical practice (Lacan 1977). *All* archaeological work takes place in the present therefore *all* archaeological work involves some level of interpretation (Shanks & Tilley 1992, Shanks & Hodder 1997). Archaeologist, Christopher Tilley observes:

*'The archaeological record is not so much a historical but anthropological fact. Meaning is multiple not because of an error on the part of the archaeologist but because the past is open, something which by the virtue of its very social and historical constitution contains different meanings'* (Tilley 1990:136)

Scientific methods characteristic of New Archaeology in the mid twentieth century (Binford 1965, Flannery 1965, Leone 1972) were widely criticised from the latter part of the 1980s, in part because they failed to take account of issues such as the social and ideological construction of gender and the political and contemporary role of archaeological data (Bapty & Yates 1990). Although some felt the pendulum swung too far (Dyson 1993). Early critics adopted structuralism, a form of linguistics theory initially developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and adapted by French anthropologist, Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) (Leach 1970, Trigger 2006). Ian Hodder, a processualist who became an early interpretive archaeologist, used structuralist principles to suggest the basis of human society is to be found in the duality that is perceived between 'culture/nature, domestic/wild' (Gosden 1994:157).

Tilley later critiqued structuralism suggesting it to be inconsistent where 'symbols' and 'structures' were impossible to define, 'Tombs kept turning into houses, houses into women and women into pots…' (Tilley 1990:135)

Post-structuralism seeks to advance concern with meaning and interpretation but remains an incoherent body of knowledge. Jacques Derrida aside, Michel Foucault is perhaps the best known post-structuralist. Moving away from an anthropological view of history, Foucault's aim was:

*'…most decidedly not to use the categories of cultural totalities (whether world-views, ideal types, the particular spirit of an age) in order to impose on history…the forms of structural analysis. The series described* [in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*], *the limits fixed, the comparisons and correlations made are based not on the old philosophies of history, but are intended to question teleologies and totalizations…'* (Foucault 1972:15-16)

Foucault questioned the epistemology of history and in 'excavating' his own culture identified 'spaces for creativity and resistance'. This notion holds great promise for scholars engaged in archaeology as 'socio-political action' (Tilley 1989:104) which is a concept I expand upon later. Foucault's work amounted to a series of 'genealogies' of history, reflecting his development of Nietzschean philosophy (Callinicos 1989). The epistemological roots of the practice of archaeology are, arguably, rational, empirical and Eurocentric. In its earliest incarnations archaeology was a leisure pursuit of predominantly wealthy white men (Bender 1993, Rose 1993, Chadwick 2004). Foucault challenged the foundation of history in conducting an 'archaeological' study of the ways in which knowledge is created through links between specific events and the creation of law (a discourse). He showed history to be a complex array of often contradictory series of discourses. Foucault revealed how discourse exerts power – power over and power to – its influence can place certain aspects of humanity into areas where they are conceived of as 'dangerous' or 'immoral'. For example, madness is delineated as an aspect of humanity that is

cordoned off, separated. Through powerful socio-medical discourse, madness becomes 'Other', something that requires control through force. The incarceration and punishment of people judged to be 'mad' through 'disease' (a biological condition) or 'illness' (the social construction of the condition) by those whose *social position* grants them *power over* others comes down to social constructivism (Conrad & Barker 2010: S67).

For Foucault, discourse was the 'place' from where power emanates and to him, the most powerful institutions and disciplinary schools of thought are the church, the state and science. The effect of such discourse driven power in the world is physical, it has material consequences and the human body is often the 'place' where such power materialises through mutilation of those found 'outside the law', for example, through the guillotine (Foucault 1991). Foucauldian theory is integral to this archaeological view of contemporary homelessness because it exposes the duality of the condition of homelessness, a social status defined and rationalised by legal and 'moral' discourse (Neale 1997) and also an embodied, phenomenological individual experience.

Interpretive archaeologies do not throw out scientific method rather it is explicitly acknowledged that archaeological remains do not excavate themselves any more than cakes bake themselves. For material culture to become archaeological data *intervention* by people is required and takes place within historically constituted social and political relations. Positivist, empirical scientific theory and method are useful in aiding interpretation of data but the intervention is an *act of interpretation*. We can radiocarbon date material in controlled conditions in the present and show the fabric to be, for example, prehistoric. But we are unable to radiocarbon date the prehistoric past as a social, ideological and political construction. Archaeological data do not form a 'record' of events rather provide us with '*evidence for* particular social practices' (Barrett 1988:6, emphasis in original). This is why interpretive archaeologies explicitly foreground the role of interpreters and consider their social position in the world an active component in the way the past operates in the present (Heidegger 1972, Bourdieu 1977, Giddens 1995). We might say that '…*our*

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understanding comes from *our* practice' (Gosden 1994: 113, emphases in original). Stories, history is no exception, involves foregrounding some things and masking others. This is what makes archaeology inherently political. Interpretive archaeologies are reflective, archaeology that is *conscious of itself* as an active network bearing influence on the operative meaning of the past in the present. I now look more closely at perspective.

There is a false dichotomy in western discourse that dictates that culture (human/mind/ideal) is separate from nature (non-human/body/real) and yet the 'real' (in western philosophy) is deemed more 'concrete' than the ideal (Sahlins 2008). This dialectic is crucial to this thesis because contemporary homelessness exists as both a concept (ideologically constructed) and simultaneously as an embodied, individual experience (tangible, physical). The epistemological roots that have dominated western thought have made science 'unquestionable' to the extent that aspects of knowledge have become fundamentally 'taken for granted' or assumed to be 'true' (Poovey 1998). Deconstructing such 'taken for granted' aspects is the focus of much postmodern theory and philosophy and contemporary archaeologies 'of us' seek to materialise where we act differently from how we say or think we act (Rathje 1981, Tarlow & West 1999, Harrison & Schofield 2010). We cannot stand outside the world and look into it objectively. Heidegger called this *Dasein* or Being There (Heidegger 1972). Post-enlightenment epistemologies hold that science can reveal single-truth evidence and where data are quantitative we might agree that claims are largely substantiated; for example, it is difficult to defy the law of gravity. However, positivist theory contends that two contradictory beliefs cannot be true and this is more problematic where data are qualitative. Habermas is instructive when he suggests that to accept rational method (the tools of scientific enquiry) as unquestionable is to render theory of knowledge defunct (Habermas 1972). Following Habermas, I find Hegel's concept of the dialectical useful in thinking about perception and perspective. I will explain.

In Hegel's (1770-1831) understanding everything is defined by what it is not and everything is in constant motion trying to remain what it is by overcoming the opposite, everything exists as movement *and* as contradiction or it is nothing. A table

is a table in relation to the fact it is not part of the chair or the floor. As soon as the table stops being the table and starts being a chair or the floor, the table is defined. Hegelian philosophy contends that because the mind can reflect on the state of being, unlike a table, and it does this by defining what it is not, the mind is the *most* dynamic of all things and therefore the prime mover or force for change in the world, so it can begin to transform the experience of 'reality'. Chris Gosden phrases this well:

*'Thought is an active element in reality and by changing the nature of itself it changes the systems of relations constituting itself which together make up the physical universe'* (Gosden 1994:64)

In seeing the dynamism of the mind (Hegel calls it 'spirit') as the primary force that creates change, it is understandable that his philosophy was rejected as unscientific by structural Marxists such as Althusser (1971). However, I embrace this part of Hegel's concept because it gives weight to the *significance of perception* in shaping how day to day life is experienced and *created* by people. In this respect, I follow in the tradition of anthropological political economists such as Eric Wolf (1982) and Robert Paynter (1999). Hegelian philosophy is useful in thinking about homelessness for the reasons given above and several others. Firstly, homelessness is predominantly conceived of as 'other' or 'alien', that is, defined *negatively* – home*less*. Secondly, approaching the *contemporary* past as an archaeologist, sites can be witnessed constantly changing shape, as data will shortly reveal. We can see contemporary homeless sites '…not being but becoming' (Gosden 1994:64). Thirdly, the transient nature of contemporary homelessness means that homeless people exist in near constant motion – there is no 'home' to which to return. I will now explore the role of hermeneutics which pursued Hegelian philosophy.

Hermeneutics, the science of interpretation, developed largely from critiques of positivism. It can be unsettling because it decentres but leads us back to ourselves (Ricœur 1984). I argue that so long as method is made explicit hermeneutic

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approaches need not slip into relativism. Hermeneutic thought removes universal truth and liberates the possibility of seeing things – the past, wars, door-knobs – from multiple perspectives. It does not deny the reality of the door knob but recognises that the door-knob is always subject to the subjectivity of the observer; that the observer is active within their own *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977) which impacts the way they interpret the door-knob (the war or the past). In accepting that we are always *already in the world*, not able to *decide* to be objective, we are relieved of the true/false dilemma and instead asked '…how to decide our *reaction* to different views' (Lucas 1997: 41, my emphasis). We can never recover essential 'meaning' from archaeological data only hope to understand from more perspectives, be better at thinking around things (Giddens 1995). Shanks & Tilley describe the position of the archaeologist as the 'fourfold hermeneutic' by which they mean that the archaeologist works within four points of interpretation: working within the archaeological discipline, conducting contemporary archaeology within contemporary society, trying to understand the 'alien' culture and attempting to transcend the past and present (Shanks & Tilley 1992:108). Shanks & Tilley (1992) suggest that what is necessary is *more theory* so that we further question why we construct the past in certain ways and avoid romanticising or reducing the past to sanitised, logical narrative. Gavin Lucas observes that to be inclusive of 'alternative' interpretations of the past does not mean we have to agree with them. 'Our problem is whether that view is represented, since we [archaeologists] hold the power of vocality' (Lucas 1997:41). This resonates in important ways with the suggestion that archaeology can function as activism because representation in the past is a form of recognition and can aid the development of rights in the present. We do not slip into relativism because, as Tilley reassures us, 'The past resists our constructions; its empirical materiality has to be respected' (Tilley 1990:136). Motivations, in the Hegelian sense, behind materiality may always be viewed from multiple perspectives (for example, one man's 'discovery' was another woman's colonial invasion). I turn now to phenomenology and its application in archaeology.

## 2.2 Phenomenological approaches to archaeology

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was the founder of phenomenology (Zahavi 2003). The Husserlian concept was further developed by existentialist philosophers, one of whom was Husserl's student Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). According to Schacht, Husserlian phenomenology is:

*'...concerned with the qualitative differences among the various objects of possible experience; and it starts not with definitions and axioms, but rather with 'the flow of experience', in its 'whole wealth of concreteness'* (Schacht 1972:298).

Schacht describes Husserlian phenomenology as 'a kind of inductive generalisation on the basis of past and present experience' (Schacht 1972:302, emphasis in original). Schacht asks us to think about how we divide things typologically using language. He asks us to perform a mental exercise using the example of experience of tools. We have many 'tool experiences' but what is it that makes us categorise a tool as a tool and not something else? To base our judgment on a single 'tool experience' would be to risk 'some accidental feature as essential', Schacht proceeds, in a manner familiar to processual archaeological methodology. 'By taking into consideration a wide range of tool experiences, one has a better chance of seeing what is and what is not an essential feature of what might be called Platonistically, 'toolhood' (Schacht 1972:302-3). Husserl, Schacht contends, goes on to state that 'imaginative variation' is essential in understanding the essence of what it is that makes the tool a tool. If we imagine things which lack the features that we have concluded, through inductive generalisation, to be tools and then look at features that could not be removed without the thing ceasing to be a tool, then we are left with the essence – what it is that makes a tool a tool. This is the 'performance of phenomenological reduction' according to Husserl (Schacht 1972:304). In other words:

*'...the real world exists, but in respect of essence is relative to transcendental subjectivity, and in such a way that it can have its meaning as existing reality only as*

*the intentional meaning-product of transcendental subjectivity'* (Husserl, from Ideas, cited in Schacht 1972:297).

The Husserlian philosopher must then work out what sort of essential structures the ego has presupposed and, Schacht observes, when all phenomena of consciousness have been thus analysed, the process of Husserlian phenomenology is complete (Schacht 1972:303-4).

Heidegger's phenomenology departs from Husserl's in its rejection of Husserl's transcendental ego. In *Being and Time* Heidegger asks not 'what is it to be human' but 'what is it to *be'* – 'Being-in-the-world' (*Dasein*). For Husserl, all being is relative to consciousness and rooted in some structural sense in the transcendental ego which is, for Husserl, the ultimate and sole 'reality'. Therefore, in rejecting Husserl's transcendental ego and idealism, Heidegger takes us only to the point that human beings are 'Being-in-the-world', which might seem obvious but is also hard to deny (Schacht 1972:304). Where Husserl advocates inductive generalisation and imaginative variation, Heidegger proposes interpretation, a hermeneutic approach, the process by which the basic structures of the thing being described are exposed.

Heidegger's phenomenology is fundamentally a form of methodology and it '…concerns exclusively with matters pertaining to concrete existence' (Schacht 1972:308) which perhaps renders it the more 'realist' and potentially most valuable to archaeological practice. However, it could be argued that archaeologists are engaged in eidetic analysis which is distinctly Husserlian. According to Husserl, the phenomenological reduction necessarily involves eidetic analysis – a process of reflective enquiry into 'concealed' meaning that is beyond what can be ascertained through description of the thing itself (Schacht 1972). It is suggested that the researcher needs to ask, 'what makes this experience uniquely different from other related experiences? Whereas the researcher following phenomenology as developed by Heidegger (and later, Merleau-Ponty) is required to be involved in hermeneutic analysis or interpretation but this is from what is directly observable 'in

the world' (Schacht 1972). It is an inadequate reduction but it is useful to think of Husserlian phenomenology as epistemological and Heideggerian phenomenology as ontological.

In simple terms, Husserl is concerned with how we know what we know about the world. Whereas Heidegger is more concerned with how things and people are 'Being-in-the-world', hence Heidegger always comes back to *Dasein* or Being There. Husserl's last book (1936) *The Crisis of the European Sciences* began to turn from transcendental ego and consciousness towards a focus on everyday life as it appears in the world. Heidegger and particularly Merleau-Ponty took Husserlian phenomenology and shifted the focus further towards the world as we experience it. Husserlian phenomenology is empirical in many ways but it argues for a more embodied, holistic approach to the world and this is the aspect that Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty furthered in radical ways. To my mind, archaeologists engaged in phenomenological approaches engage in primarily Heideggerian phenomenology – observing how things appear in the world and reflecting upon them before interpreting what they mean. However, I suggest that archaeologists perform eidetic analysis more often than perhaps some like to admit or notice! All inference about past lifestyles involves interpretation of 'things' before us and moving beyond description to explain what the thing 'meant', its functional or environmental meaning and at times, its ideological, cosmological or symbolic role. Having made explicit the difference between Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology I will move on to explore recent phenomenological approaches to archaeology.


Cited frequently as among the first texts to deal with phenomenological approaches to archaeology was Chris Tilley's book (1994) *A Phenomenology of Landscape: places, paths and monuments* (Bender 1998, Brück 2005, Edmonds 2006, Johnson 2012). Many criticisms levelled against such approaches are overcome by working collaboratively in the present *with people from the culture* under observation, an opportunity unavailable to archaeologists studying the remote past. Before I explain how phenomenological approaches to contemporary homeless landscapes can be shown to be useful, I will unpack criticisms.

Perhaps the most severe theoretical criticism made of Tilley (1994) is that he conflates the phenomenological approaches proposed by Husserl and Heidegger (Barrett & Ko 2009:279) which I have argued above are significantly different. It is my suggestion that where Tilley departs from Husserl and agrees with Heidegger is in Husserl's insistence that there can ever be a 'reconstruction of knowledge on absolutely certain foundations' (Schacht 1972:305). Tilley's arguments for why there can be no single 'truth' about the past are well-rehearsed (see, for examples, Shanks & Tilley 1987, 1989, 1992 and Tilley 1989, 1994). A further criticism of Tilley's 'solitary strolls and musings' is that they are antiquarian in character (Chadwick 2004:22). Taking a rather cynical view, Johnson criticised the phenomenological approach to British landscape archaeology arguing that most major prehistoric sites are within two hours' drive of the university departments that produced significant contributions to phenomenological approaches to archaeology (Johnson 2012:271).

An element of Tilley's work (1994) suggests that an archaeologist walking through a landscape in the present comes close to experiencing the landscape in a fashion similar to prehistoric communities. The claim that bodily experience can be understood to be universal has been criticised by a number of scholars (Brück 1998, Hamilakis, Pluciennik & Tarlow 2002). I share concern that to claim *universal* bodily experience of a landscape is deeply problematic (for example, a heavily pregnant woman experiences a steep climb up a stony track differently from a physically fit young boy, blind people will not prioritise the visual aspect of a landscape etc.). Fleming has been strident in his criticism of Tilley's phenomenology (Fleming 1999), specifically attacking Tilley's connections between prehistoric monuments and topographical features (for example, Tilley 1994:83). Fleming argues that such connections take no account of the fact that the monument might have survived due to local ecology or the chance unsuitability of the surrounding land for later agriculture (Fleming 1999:120). Fleming also asks how close a monument must be a topographical feature for a connection to be established (Fleming 1999:120). Despite such critique phenomenological approaches to archaeology can be useful in revealing the 'dynamic and historical conditions of

material existence' (Barrett & Ko 2009:290). As Brück, at times herself critical of phenomenological approaches to archaeology, has observed:

*'...phenomenology has made a significant contribution to archaeological theory...The argument that the world around us is experienced not as abstract two-dimensional space but from the perspective of an embedded and sensual human body provides a useful critique of Cartesian modes of representation that have dominated the discipline'* (Brück 2005:64).

Challenging visual dominance, this thesis draws from phenomenological approaches because 'human beings live *in* not *on* the world' (Ingold 2011:47, emphases in original) and experience of this three-dimensional world is embodied and multi-sensorial. This necessitates an investigation of what has been termed the 'spatial turn' in critical social theory (Massey 2005).

**Embodied archaeologies: space and time**

In his book *Postmodern Geographies* (1989) Edward Soja critiques the 'space-blinkered historicism' of critical thought that was current throughout much of the twentieth century. Soja's book considers 'the interplay of history *and* geography, the 'vertical' and 'horizontal' dimensions of being in the world freed from the imposition of inherent categorical privilege' (Soja 1989:11). History 'becomes' not in a vacuum but in space where space does not indicate endless nothingness but socially constructed, often contested, locations (Lefebvre 1991). If the task of the archaeologist is to investigate past life ways through analyses of material remains, be they landscapes, 'places, paths and monuments' (Tilley 1994) or 'things' (Appadurai 1986) then archaeologists are well placed to ensure that knowledge about the past is constructed with equal attention paid to 'historical and geographical contextualisation' (Soja 1989:11). Put simply, *where* things happen is as fundamental to their constitution as *when* things happen.

In locating power (Foucault) and ideology (Marx and Althusser) in networks of social relations, it is implied that time is significant. Time has obvious implications

for archaeologists but the connection between power, social relations *and* time is a relatively new and comparatively under-theorised area of research (Leone 1978, Gosden 1994, Lucas 2005). Time, space and power aside, the problem of chronology has remained a central archaeological concern since the inception of the discipline and in undertaking archaeology in the 'present past', memories aid understanding. Equally, historical 'documents' such as photographs, prescriptions, letters, emails and text messages help locate social relations in time and space and thus add to chronological understanding. Determining *how* sites change over time and relating how changes on the local level relate to the wider landscape is more problematic and Braudel's concept of levels of time is instructive (Braudel 1980).

Little and Shackel conceptualise Braudel's three levels of time, which happen simultaneously, as 'long-term history', 'social time' and 'individual time' (Little & Shackel 1989). Braudel's concept can lead to a 'top down' model of history (with long-term, often Eurocentric, gendered, class-based history prioritised). Equally problematic would be interpretation of sites according to only social or individual time as this would likely produce dislocated histories, synchronic, problematic for their specificity. However, as Lucas (2006) points out, different stories can usefully be told according to different timescales because 'historical archaeology invites new approaches to time…that map the temporalities of specific traditions, communities or things' (Lucas 2006:39) - we can locate these within larger or smaller scales to highlight different perspectives. This 3-dimensional approach has been particularly well applied to landscapes where the approach illuminates multi-functionality, multiple perspectives (for example, 'Shakespeare's country' might also be viewed as 'car manufacturing heritage country').

Implicit within the objective of this thesis was the consideration that homeless landscapes might involve narratives that counter or contradict authorised descriptions of the built environments of Bristol and York. Fieldwork conducted for this thesis necessarily involved more than *looking* at landscapes, places and things. It involved walking *through* each city, crouching to enter 'non-existent' places, the collection of memories and myths told with new lexicon from within a curious

*habitus*. Data gathered using visual means are informative but form a fraction of what exists. A short critique of visual ideology in archaeology is necessary.

**Visual ideology**

As Gillian Rose has observed 'seeing and knowing are often conflated' (Rose 1993:86). For Lazzari (2003) and Thomas (2008), there exists a problematic visual ideology within archaeology and it is suggested we look to the period during which the archaeological discipline first emerged for illumination. Rationalist philosophy in sixteenth/seventeenth century England can be seen to have gained ground during a climate of fierce political, philosophical and religious instability, where social change, science and superstition combined to form foundations for the 'western gaze' discourse which conflates what we *see* with what we *know* (Toulmin 1992). In uncertain times, compounded by huge changes to the physical landscape and social conditions (for example, enclosure and industrialisation) claims by Descartes, Newton, Hobbes, Locke and others that empirical observation could lead to 'truth' and 'certainty' were understandably appealing. Thomas has argued that Newtonian conception of a world in which universal laws could be applied to all phenomena and where all objects were conceived to be static played a vital role in severing knowledge, that is, *scientific* knowledge from religion, politics and ethics (Thomas 2004:23) – and that such knowledge conflates what can be *seen* with what can be objectively *known*.

*'Archaeology inherits this emphasis on methodological rigor, distanced objectivity, and clarity of vision and exposition, but at the cost of creating a past that is difficult to understand as inhabited or embodied. It is widely recognised that this is unsatisfactory...'* (Thomas 2008:7)

Brück (2005) suggests the use of phenomenology arguing that such approaches have helped to deconstruct dualistic thinking which she also argues is a '…product of post-Enlightenment thinking' (Brück 2005:65). Challenging Cartesian modes of representation is central also to Ingold's (2011) work. To use Julian Thomas's

phrase, it might sound 'mystical' to suggest that archaeologists must go beyond vision in recording and interpreting sites but '…the point is that what we 'see' is as much a question of our qualitative attitude to our surroundings as the mere acquisition of information' (Thomas 2008:9). Thomas argues not for the rejection of empirical approaches to archaeology but for the recognition that to rely too dominantly on visual technologies (for example, GIS, aerial photography) is to assume a level of knowledge superior to communities who created them and that, as archaeologists, we must seek to 'recapture the human scale' (Thomas 2008:1). As Brück observes, 'place is always experienced as three-dimensional and sensuous, a point that is all too often lost in traditional archaeological accounts of landscape' (Brück 2005:47). In recent years, archaeologists have sought to address this issue and for many, a phenomenological approach has proven helpful, despite also, at times, omitting the significance of senses other than the visual (Hamilakis 2002).

In this section of the chapter I have argued that archaeological data and the perspective of the interpreter are active elements constructed from within historically situated sets of relations, which themselves impact how the past functions in the present. I now move on to unpack theories useful in conceiving of history as the product of socially constructed action (McGuire 2006).

## 2.3 Critical Marxism, *habitus* and the individual

In *Political Economy* Karl Marx (1818-1883) developed a holistic approach to understanding society through theorising capitalism and social (class) structure. Marx followed Hegel in recognising that human culture/nature is a dialectical relationship - humans take from nature and nature provides what humans need to survive (Gosden 1994). Marx then identified 'classes' of people (*relations of production*) whose social position – lifestyle, condition - was affected by their access to resources, technology, raw materials (*forces of production)*. In the theory, capitalism is the 'mode of production', a system whereby workers are forced to sell their labour to the people who 'own' the resources and the people who own the resources pay the workers *less* than the value the workers add to the resources. The effect, Marx observed, is that those who own the resources have surplus and become

increasingly wealthy through a process of exploitation. If workers refuse to work, they starve because they have no other access to resources (or under the wage system, money). The owners of the resources are in a position of power over the workers. The cycle of exploitation continues.


Marx's diachronic approach to society encourages us to take a holistic view of history. For example, history of economics must be considered in parallel with environmental, political and cultural factors and vice versa. Diachronic history can be conceived of as a (spatialised) matrix. For Marx, 'western' history in the post-feudal period is the struggle of people trying to overcome social inequalities that arise from the capitalist system and change can only come through social conflict, or revolution. Influenced by structural Marxists and critical theorists (for example, Althusser 1971, Habermas 1984 & 1985) critical Marxist archaeologies have been forthcoming since the early 1980s (Leone 1981b, Meltzer 1981, McGuire 1988, 1993 & 2006, Johnson 1996, Leone & Potter 1999). Rather than aligning directly with every aspect of original Marxist theory critical Marxist archaeologists use Marx's class analysis as a theoretical framework from which to reveal other examples of exploitation, for example, inequalities in terms of race, gender and sexuality (Conkey & Spector 1984, Spriggs 1984, Gero 1985, Leone & Potter 1999). Structural Marxists such as Althusser (1971), sought to replace the Hegelian concept of the dialectic within Marx's original theory, with structuralism in order to make it more scientific (McGuire 2006:130). French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) developed his theory of *habitus* based upon social strategies which were largely lineage based (Bourdieu 1977). Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* can best be understood as a general theory of practice, a way of explaining how people act in relation to specific social relations and structures. Bourdieu's theory does not suggest that social action is the result of 'oppressive' state structures or specifically shaped by individual creativity, rather he explores more broadly what he sees to be the dialectical nature of individuals and the social contexts in which they operate, their networks – *habitus*. Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* is useful to this archaeological study of homeless heritage for the fact it facilitates a way of showing '…how some sectors of the population are *systematically* excluded from the centres of social

power' (Gosden 1994:115, my emphasis). Bourdieu's theory recognises that what constitutes 'decent' behaviour is constructed according to class based *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977) – or what might more loosely be translated as 'manners' (Shanks 2012:68). Finally, Bourdieu's theory is useful in thinking about the role of the observer and their place, their perspective from the network. Such an approach might derive insight from the application of Giddens's structuration theory and it is to this that I now turn.

Giddens's theory of structuration offers a way to explore the 'messiness' of the archaeological record and is useful in locating individual agency in the past. This is important since, 'Accurate knowledge does not…exist independently of the social consciousness of the individual' (McGuire 2006:124). Following Marx, structuration theory contends that action, social structure and context are dialectical (Giddens 1995). There is a constant renegotiation of power inherent within this relationship. This theory is of particular relevance to this thesis because homelessness is in some cases, I argue, a form of resistance to institutionalisation and resistance occurs at an *individual* level. Group solidarity can be detected at a material level at times but single people perform acts of resistance routinely which serve to uphold, negotiate and transform the structures imposed upon them, a subject I unpack in more detail later in the thesis.

**Power & ideology**

Foucault, like Nietzsche before him, offered insight into the relationship between knowledge formation and power (Foucault 1972 & 1991). Both men define power as deriving from *social* relationships. People always exist in historical context and, as McGuire argues, social relations '…do not exist in the abstract. Therefore, while history is the product of human action, such action is always socially constructed' (McGuire 2006:133). Foucault's work traced the way that medieval powers gave way to the modern world where regulation and laws were used to control people. This, Foucault says, was undertaken through a period of 'rationalism' (Gosden 1994). Foucault charts the development of punishment in France from the 'spectacle of the scaffold' through to 'non-physical' punishments such as lengthy prison

sentences, although he makes the point that incarcerating people still restrains the body (Foucault 1991:30) and in this way, it is strange to conceive of modern day prisons as 'non-physical' punishment. Applying Foucauldian logic to this thesis, homeless people are socially constructed into positions which make them unable to resist 'power' exerted over their bodies (for example, homeless people are routinely denied access to bathroom facilities, physically dispersed from parts of the city). Homeless people are regularly robbed of autonomy and the historic phrase, 'beggars can't be choosers' can be seen to hold value (see Chapter Six).

As implied, 'power' for Foucault and later for Shanks & Tilley, is not something which is possessed, it is granted through position in social relations (Foucault 1991, Shanks & Tilley 1987:72). Although this is not to deny the material 'reality' of power: *'Power relates to and works in terms of material (technologies, raw materials, control over coercive and non-coercive media) and non-material resources (knowledge, information, position within the overall field of social relations, competences and skills) which individuals, groups and collectives draw upon routinely in their day to day conduct'* (Shanks & Tilley 1987:73)

Foucault famously rejected the concept of ideology because he considered it to be based on something that was supposed to be 'truth' and as Foucault's work centred on the origins of knowledge he questioned the epistemological upon which the concept of ideology works. Instead, Foucault argued that *all* discourse was interpretation so that the interpreter faces a never ending task because what they interpret is already an interpretation of interpretation and so on (Waterman 1990:83). While I consider Foucauldian theory to be useful, this is where I humbly depart because I consider ideology to be powerful in relation to homelessness. Foucault was forced to recognise that he suffered the same problems of epistemology, that is, from where do you start if not 'the beginning'? His admission had the effect of '…rendering him [Foucault] and his work as one further symptom of the pattern of development he had set out to dissemble and reconstitute' (Bapty & Yates 1990:13). Ideology may not be immediately materialist but it has physical agency and is therefore important to archaeology because '…the function and evolution of social

systems may owe a great deal to 'ideas' which do not find material form in the archaeological record' (Meltzer 1981:115).

Ideology itself is not illusory or 'false consciousness' rather its effect is such that subjugation is made to seem the *natural* way of things and therefore unquestionable. This is the essence of what makes ideology so powerful. For example, the notion that cooking, cleaning and childcare are 'women's work' forms part of patriarchal ideology. Female oppression was masked as the 'natural' way of things. The 'Dominant Ideology Thesis', prevalent in 1980s critical Marxist archaeology (Leone 1981, Meltzer 1981) has since largely been rejected (McGuire 1988) and debated elsewhere (Waterman 1990). However, critical Marxists continue to find ideology useful in analysing struggle and oppression of infinite varieties (Leone & Potter 1999, Spriggs 1984, Shanks & McGuire 2004). Shanks & Tilley (1987) follow Louis Althusser (1971) when they define ideology as, '…an imaginary relationship between people and their conditions of existence' (Shanks & Tilley 1987:75). Althusser identifies Ideological State Apparatuses (by which he means institutions such as schools, religious and cultural networks) as bodies that serve to maintain and reproduce relations of production (Althusser 1971). Here, Habermas's theory of 'communicative action' is instructive (Habermas 1984, Leone 1995). Habermas argues that:

*'…the theory of communicative action intends to bring into the open the rational potential intrinsic in **every day** communicative practices…unlike the classical assumptions of historical materialism, it brings to the fore the **relative structural autonomy and internal history of cultural systems** of interpretation"* (Calhoun 1992:442 my emphases).

The *every-day as a place of communicative action* and the notion that power resides in systems of interpretation are central to this thesis. Key proposals within Habermas's theory are that greater democratisation and greater access to public discourse could lead to social action in a form accessible to everyone. In moving

away from centralising economics towards language and communication, Habermas adapts the Marxist view to pave the way for many more people to access and join the wider debate on how we, human beings, might proceed and in a small way, this thesis attempts to apply this in practice. In directing and controlling fieldwork, presenting findings in their own words and retaining ongoing access to materials generated throughout the project, homeless colleagues join the heritage debate, as data presented later reveal. If it is accepted that archaeological data are always open to multiple interpretations then archaeology is uniquely placed to act as a form of *material witness in the present.* I turn now to archaeology as activism.


## 2.4 Archaeology as activism

As I have shown, archaeology is a process of *interpretation* and *reconstruction* and it takes place in the present. To assert this is not revolutionary (Rathje 1974, Leone 1981, Hodder 1995, Shanks & Tilley 1992, Shanks & Hodder 1997, Tarlow & West 1999, Graves-Brown 2000, Byrne & Nugent 2004, Smith 2006, Harrison & Schofield 2010, Stottman et al 2010). In situating the practice of archaeology in the present the business of archaeology is located firmly in the political sphere which demands clarity concerning how the past functions in the social construction of the present. In exposing methodologies for critique, remaining critical and open to regular re-evaluation, archaeologists can potentially affect the future in positive ways which may be considered a form of activism. We use the past daily to shape the way we consciously and subconsciously continue with our lives. We routinely remember and narrate stories – the deep or historic past, family past, individual past - that give structure to our identities and personalities. The past insistently reappears in the present in myriad ways and it can be conceived of as a resource, a tool for shaping the future. In this way, as archaeologists, we can positively 'change the world' (Stottman et al 2010).


It has been suggested that the practice of archaeology '…will involve a view of material culture-patterning as a *resource* employed in social strategies' (Shanks & Tilley 1992:245, emphasis in original).  For others, archaeology is seen as;

'…a *mode of cultural <u>production</u> embedded in the material, social, political and ideological relationships between different communities'* (McGuire 2006:135, my emphasis)

If we accept these definitions, there is no reason to think that the archaeological 'resource' cannot assist in bringing about desirable social change (for example, a more dignified and individually focussed approach to tackling the realities of contemporary homelessness). Underlying scientific methodologies and rigour need not be compromised rather what I suggest is reconceptualising how we recruit people into all aspects of the archaeological process, from perspectives on to presentation of the past. Everyone has heritage and is entitled to actively engage in interpretation of the past. In return, multiple and often contradictory perspectives can shed light on difference, aid a more nuanced appreciation of diversity in the present and help inspire more peaceful and tolerant societies.

A host of valuable historical archaeological projects have focused on sites which were historically the location of oppression and connected to people more commonly written out of history and overlooked by archaeology (for example, McGuire & Paynter 1991, Spector 1993, Schofield & Anderton 2000, Schofield 2002, Byrne 2003, McAtackney 2005, Reynolds & Schofield 2010). Archaeology, in line with postmodern interest more generally, has responded well to calls to probe underrepresented groups and explore quotidian aspects of past cultures. I suggest that one possible next step on this genealogical trajectory could be to develop ways to make activism – action, praxis and social change – the explicit *aim* of some archaeological endeavour rather than a co-incidental by-product. Continuing to develop collaborative methodologies for working archaeologically with diverse groups and considering how materials generated through collaborative work with a particular community – photos, maps, recorded memories – will remain accessible to the source community, is a good place to start (Stevens et al 2010).

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The past has traditionally been made familiar to the general public through national, regional and family based customs, mainstream education (for example, history lessons) and authorised constructions such as those found at museums and depicted in popular culture (for example, TV and radio programmes, films, novels and websites). Stories concerning the past currently narrated via these myriad platforms are not necessarily 'wrong' but there has, until very recently, been a tendency for the past to be reduced to neat chronologies in which very wealthy Europeans have been over-represented at the expense of all other ways to be in the world. In such constructions, typical of the conserved and admired British country house, important events and issues that we now find uncomfortable (for example, slavery) are too often glossed over or sanitised (Dresser & Hann 2013). For example, a 2007 exhibition produced by the now defunct British Empire & Commonwealth Museum (Bristol) entitled 'Breaking the Chains: the fight to end slavery' was criticised for over emphasising the role played by white European politicians in the abolition movement. It was suggested that the exhibition omitted to theorise how enslaved African and Caribbean people actively resisted and contributed to the abolition of the trade in creative and intelligent ways[4]. The exhibition broke no moulds in minimising Britain's role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade whilst commemorating the nation's partial role in abolition rather it confirmed a longstanding historical narrative[5]. This is extremely problematic because the way in which the past is reconstructed in the present has active political agency and affects the future. I suggest a more collaborative approach to the history of the abolition of the slave trade involving people from the African and Caribbean diaspora would have revealed important new perspectives on one of the darkest aspects of modern British history. Collaboration with marginalised communities on heritage considered significant by those communities, reconstructed in their words and in ways relevant to them can forcefully challenge neo-colonial and paternalistic re-telling of stories that otherwise continue to actively disempower and patronise. Such work may be

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[4] http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/exhibitions/museums/step.html

[5] http://sydney.edu.au/arts/publications/philament/issue15_pdfs/JOHNSTON_The%20Ideal.pdf

considered 'socio-political action in the present' (Tilley 1989:104) and can serve as activism.

Recent projects which have intended to highlight injustice in the past and evolved to concern issues of advocacy include, for example, promoting a decolonised approach to cultural heritage management where archaeological data actively support resistance histories and materialise groups who experienced oppression (for example, Byrne & Nugent 2004, McDavid 2010, Gadsby & Barnes 2010). Such examples have utilised collaborative methodologies where descendants of marginalised groups have been empowered to take ownership and inform the construction of their heritage, using ethnographic and counter mapping techniques, recording memories and traditions, telling stories about places and landscapes that counter the dominant thesis. Such methodologies do not call for the abandonment of established archaeological theory and method, but rather for better questions to be asked. Rather than *telling* audiences what they should find significant about a particular landscape, it must be *asked* what people relate to and why. In this way, we start to develop truly dynamic interpretations of the past that enhance rights in the present through representation. As Gavin Lucas has suggested, archaeologists might intentionally offer 3-dimensional interpretations of data (Lucas 2006) and if this were to become the norm archaeological work might commonly be conceived of as a form of activism where data function as witness to alternative viewpoints, testament to injustice and human diversity. Identifying alternative perspectives on place facilitates a sense of belonging which itself informs and aids construction of identity.

There is a wealth of literature examining the link between heritage and identity (Lowenthal 1985, Silk 1999, Graham et al 2000, Gram-Hanssen & Bech-Danielsen 2004, Tilley 2006). Links between community, place and identity are also well known in psychology, sociology and anthropology (Jung 1967, Snow & Anderson 1987, Lyng 1990 & 2005, Stea 1995, Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996). Homeless colleagues directly involved in archaeological work for this project reconstructed self and group identities in powerful ways through identifying places of significance to them within each city and working with material culture and memories of people and events to construct and share perspectives on the city from a much misunderstood

and often feared but 'familiar' perspective, as data will show. Crucial to this experience was the creation of a supportive and nurturing environment in which those involved were enabled to come to their own realisations, about themselves, their local environment and the relationship between these. Realising for oneself (making connections rather than absorbing 'information') is a far more powerful way to learn about or accept aspects of ones' personality than can be achieved through lecture or punishment (Lacan 1977) and in this way, involvement in the archaeological process can be therapeutic. Similarly, those working alongside homeless colleagues (including audience members at talks and conferences and visitors to the public exhibitions) learned about homeless culture and met homeless colleagues *as individual people*, rather than statistics or 'risk factors'. In linking our points of view archaeologically (for example, through landscapes, routes, places and memories) everyone involved was enabled to find an affinity with people who may, at first glance, appear very different. This represents a valuable component of archaeological work which Shanks & Tilley phrase this way, 'We find our affinity with the past through our difference to it, through practice which links past and present' (Shanks & Tilley 1992:20).

## 2.5 Conceptualising 'home' and 'homelessness'

In order to study the heritage of contemporary homelessness it is necessary to define what is meant by 'homeless' in this context. Semantically, home*less* implies 'a lack of home'. The search for an unequivocal definition of what is meant by 'home' is not new and continues to trouble scholars from a variety of disciplines (for examples, see, Miller 1987, Saunders & Williams 1988, Saunders 1989, Somerville 1989 & 1992, Brink 1995, Rapoport 1995, Fox 2002, Gram-Hannsen & Bech-Danielsen 2004, van der Horst 2004). Definitions of 'home' include that it is a 'socio-spatial system' (Saunders & Williams 1988, Rapoport 1995), an ideological construct created from emotional experiences of where individual people happen to live (Gurney 1990); 'home' as 'locale' (Saunders & Williams 1988, after Giddens 1981 & 1984) and also a place of Heideggerian 'ontological security' (Saunders 1989).

Socio-psychological explorations of the concept of 'home' suggest that '…home is of key importance in the making of personal identity', 'home' as a tangible expression of 'self' in the Jungian sense (Dickens 1989: 232). Anthropologist, Susan Kent says of 'home':

*'…home…is an individual meaning, often concerned with family, that is expressed in culturally recognisable ways'* (Kent 1995: 163)

It is possible that everyone in world understands the concept 'home', although what 'home' looks like - how it is constructed, where it exists, who it involves, how it is intangibly and tangibly constructed – will be different for everyone because 'home' does not refer to an agreed upon physical object, it is an abstract term (Brink 1995), a subjective concept, influenced by the 'western illusion' (Sahlins 2008). As Pallasmaa states, 'home is an intra-psychic and multi-dimensional experience, which is difficult to describe objectively' (Pallasmaa 1995: 134).

The etymological origins of the English word 'home' originate from Germanic languages (for example, *heim* is the word for home in German, *hjem* in Swedish, *hem* in Norwegian). The German word *heim* itself derived from the Indo-European notion *kei*, meaning 'something precious' (Reinders & van der Land 2008:4). In Britain we can see derivations of the word 'home' in place names, for example, Birming*ham* (denoting a collection of dwellings), Old German *heima* (meaning home, world) and Viking nifel*heim* (one of the nine Norse worlds, this being a dark world inhabited by giants). The Irish word *coim* means beloved or loved, and is also associated with early 'western' meanings of 'home' (Brink 1995). The word 'home' or some derivation thereof can be seen to have existed for thousands of years and spread widely across the globe, its meaning and pronunciation expanding from and within different groups of people over time, geographic space and cultural borders resulting in great ambiguity.

Aspects of what home denotes might be shared by people from similar cultural backgrounds (Kent 1995) but no two people will conceive of home in exactly the same way, even if they share a physical dwelling or, to use Rapoport's useful phrase, the same 'system of settings' (Rapoport 1995: 44). Saunders suggests that in Britain home *ownership* significantly affects how people conceive of home (Saunders 1989). While van der Horst shows that people from the Netherlands are quite 'at home' speaking of a rented apartment (van der Horst 2004), a reminder that in thinking about home it is important to maintain a strong sense of cross-cultural context (Kent 1995, van der Horst 2004). Conceptions of home also vary within cultural and historical contexts. For example, an aspect of home for many British people is a building of some kind. However, boats, vehicles and caravans and sheds also frequently function as homes, despite some British people considering this odd. Historical context has equal connotations, for example, popular conceptions of home in 1950s Britain were likely more rigidly gender defined than they might be today (Bowlby, Gregory & McKie 1997, Noble 2009).

In Europe and North America we might now readily associate home with a building but settlement of this kind is not the only way to live and so cannot be the only way to experience home. It has been shown that people from transient and non-text based populations exhibit socio-psychic characteristics of 'homesickness' when absent from home which reveals the experience of 'loss of home' is felt worldwide even if the words 'home' or 'homesickness' are perhaps not attributed in all languages or useful to all cultures (Benjamin 1995: 296). This also suggests that some of the ambiguity in the term 'home' stems from humanity's nomadic roots, that humans experienced and 'knew' the concept 'home' in the deep 'pre-text', pre-architectural and pre-historic past. Old Celtic languages demonstrate another theme that is often found within discussion of 'home' and that is the notion of 'love', as demonstrated by the Irish word *coim*, meaning 'dear' or 'beloved' (Brink 1995). Brink relates this aspect of the etymological roots of the word home to the Old English word 'haeman' (to have sexual intercourse, to marry) itself of Greek origin and meaning 'bring to the bed' (Brink 1995: 20). Arguably, 'home' is among the deepest and most primal human concerns we may assert.

Despite disparity among scholars about the exact definition of the concept of 'home' opinions converge on the notion that home implies *more than just functional shelter* and suggest that 'love', the sense that 'one is loved' or that 'home is where the heart is', is more central to the concept than has been thoroughly investigated previously (Dickens 1989, Somerville 1989, Neale 1997). Van der Horst (2004) has shown that many immigrants living in reception centres in Holland struggle to feel 'at home' despite having access to all *material* components considered necessary for 'minimal housing' as defined by Dutch (comparable with British) housing policy. Horst's case studies reveal that residents often continue to refer to 'home' as their country of origin, suggesting that home can exist independent of whether or not we live there and that it can relate to huge geographical areas, smaller landscapes and functional single objects such as individual houses (flats, castles, boats, bushes and so on) simultaneously. 'Home', it would seem, is a flexible fantasy, an amorphous and phenomenological construction of 'social relations' and 'systems of settings', a place in the mind and heart as much as shelter for the body.

It is intriguing, considering the degree to which home*less* is legally defined, that no such legal definition exists for 'home' (Fox 2002). For Rapoport (1995), the term home is almost useless to the researcher due to its vagueness. He contends there is no x that 'makes a house a home', he writes, '…x refers to a set of relationships between people and important systems of settings of which the house may be the primary setting or anchoring point' (Rapaport 1995: 45). Pallasmaa agrees that home is 'not merely an object' but further emphasises the phenomenological aspects of the concept, describing it as '…a diffuse and complex condition, which integrates memories and images, desires and fears, the past and present…a set of rituals, personal rhythms and routines of everyday life' (Pallasmaa 1995: 133). Scholars differ in their definitions but it is commonly agreed that 'home' describes shelter *plus* certain other characteristics which include: security/privacy, stability, material conditions and variable cultural/religious standards; home includes autonomous space, comfort, self-expression and is a space in which personal physical, emotional and social well-being is enhanced, a place to which we regularly return (Saunders &

Williams1988, Somerville 1992, Wikstrom 1995, Neale 1997, van der Horst 2004, Gram-Hannsen & Bech-Danielsen 2004).

**'Home' as a negative concept**

In much of the literature reviewed above there exists a level of agreement that home can best be expressed in terms of binary opposites, not so much defined by what home *is* than what it provides *protection from* (Dickens 1989, Somerville 1989 & 1992, Benjamin et al 1995, Neale 1997). Pallasmaa (1995) makes the observation '…home is particularly strongly felt when you look out from its enclosed privacy…' (Pallasmaa 1995: 142) 'Home', argue Bowlby et al, can be a '…haven from the pressures of paid employment and public life' (Bowlby et al 1997: 343) but as they proceed to reveal 'home' is not an unremittingly positive concept. Consider, for example, children housed in institutional children's 'homes' or people housed in care 'homes', 'home as place' rather than 'home as residence', as is the case for many homeless people (May 2000). In this section of the chapter I examine 'home' as a negative concept.

Feminists have long drawn attention to the problems of home as a place of work and subjugation for women (Delphy & Leonard 1984, Weedon 1987 & 1992, Morgan 1985, Somerville 1989, Bowlby et al 1997). Gender bias can readily be found in seemingly positive depictions of home, particularly where nostalgia and tradition associate idealised notions of femaleness with home (for example, home as a place of uncompromising comfort, support, reliability, warmth, services traditionally expected to be provided by women). Department stores in the twenty-first century continue to reveal 'home' as a place that involves a heterosexual couple with a few kids where spaces and roles are divided according to gendered stereotypes - she's beaming at a pot bubbling on the stove, he's mowing the lawn – at the most, 'new Dad' has a child on his shoulders. Popular images of home remain, 'patriarchy at its most seductive' (Weedon 1987: 15).

Home, as a private realm, is a feature associated with affluence and modernity which resonates with an arguably increased 'privatisation of experience', more generally (Graves-Brown 2011). The private 'home', away from the public sphere can have a

dark side. For some women, home is the place they are *most* 'at risk', effectively 'homeless at home' (Wardhaugh 1999). For such women, home exists as a place of unpaid work - cleaning, cooking and providing comfort and services for others. Often, such 'homeless at home' women are subservient to male members of the household. In some contexts, the notion that women are inferior and should be subservient to men is culturally supported or underpinned by class-based ideologies. In other cases, threats - perceived and real (for example, to a woman's safety, access to her children or money) have physical agency on her life and can be used to manipulate and control the 'homeless at home' woman (Wardhaugh 1999). A recent sociological study conducted by the Institute of Public Policy Research showed that, within heterosexual married couples, eight out of ten married women still undertake the majority of the housework[6]. The notion that one can be 'homeless at home' is particularly pertinent in relation to unofficial contemporary homeless places presented later in this thesis where homeless colleagues report they feel more 'at home' in spaces they create (for example, under bridges, in bushes) than at hostels or in temporary accommodation where intangible elements of the concept of home such as autonomy, privacy, safety, comfort and a sense of self-worth are perceived to be or are minimal. A feminist perspective on home is therefore useful to this thesis for the way in which it can help us understand how a person might continue to be homeless despite having access to shelter (for example, homeless hostels and bed and breakfast accommodation). A critical Marxist perspective further illuminates these concerns.

The work of Karl Marx constitutes a theory of historical materialism which remains, in the words of Anthony Giddens:

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[6] see http://www.ippr.org/press-releases/111/8831/eight-out-of-ten-married-women-do-more-housework-than-their-husbands

*'...the necessary core of any attempt to come to terms with the massive transformations that have swept through the world since the eighteenth century'* (Giddens 1981: 1)

In applying broadly Marxist theories to the concept of home it is possible to reveal how it is subject to power relations which make home a place where class conflicts are created, sustained and reproduced. As Shanks and Tilley note, the post-Marx debate has predominantly sought to reveal/disprove '…to exactly what extent the economy 'determines' and/or 'dominates' the social' (Shanks & Tilley 1987: 166). Unequal access to resources played a significant role in creating social inequality in Britain and contributes to how it is sustained. It is necessary to acknowledge that people in Britain have not always lived in settlements, home has not always been signified a static place (Baudrillard 1981).

Idealised notions of towns inhabited by wholesome generations living in patriarchal formation for generation after generation, such as that portrayed by late nineteenth century writer, Richard Jefferies in *Hodge and His Masters*, are plainly romanticised and incorrect (Jefferies 1979). It has been written elsewhere that the 'tide of migrants' in the early modern English period produced *movement* of people that was 'literally the necessary condition of the abiding, settled, 'structure'' of towns and cities (Rollinson 1999: 10). Alongside the economic reasons that those in socially constructed positions of dominance had for reducing transience among the working classes (Chambliss 1964) was a gradual moral imposition that 'inside' (settled) lifestyles were 'good' and 'decent' and that 'outside' (transient) lifestyles (for example, forest communities) were, according to one barrister in 1648, 'dens and nurseries of licentious people, where there are many close alehouses that are receivers of rogues and thieves' (Cooke 1648, quoted in Beier 1985:38). During the same period Thomas Hobbes derided 'men in the state of nature' for not constructing 'commodious buildings', characterising such lifestyles as 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short' (Hobbes, quoted in Sahlins 2008: 11). Transient lifestyles were lambasted as 'wicked' and increasingly criminalised through legal and moral discourse and those caught living 'vagrant' lifestyles (including increasing numbers of people whose varied professional trades required transient lifestyles) soon risked torture or death (Pound 1971, Slack 1974, Beier 1985, Rollinson 1999).

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Central to the development and success of capitalism were ideologically loaded constructions of home as 'settlement'. In reference to hunter/gatherer communities, Sahlins (1974) suggests that, contrary to axiom, it is actually *modern* economic systems that 'invent' scarcity of resources because capitalism requires that production continues to expand or the model fails. As Sahlins notes, '…Free from market obsessions of scarcity, hunters' economic propensities may be more consistently predicated on abundance than our own' (Sahlins 1974: 2). Reduced to its most basic understanding capitalism may be understood as inequality, the unfair distribution of wealth. Implicit within the capitalist system is the notion of greed and a central feature of greed is that it can never fully be satiated. This is the system that gathered force throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Britain as common lands were enclosed and common rights gradually eroded to become the right to be detained in a Bridewell or exported across the ocean for the 'social crime' of being found vagrant. The practice of forcibly exporting poor people to less desirable places continues to the present day, as data presented later reveal.

As Steinbock states:

*'The home is not something we "possess", but a phenomenological structure of co-existence…A 'home' cannot be 'given' because it is generated developmentally, concordantly and inter-subjectively, and experienced as such from the <u>perspective of the participants, as belonging to a home'</u>* (Steinbock 1994: 218-19 – emphasis in original)

Psycho-analyst Carl Jung suggested 'home' is essential to developing and sustaining personal identity (Jung 1967, Cooper 1974, Dickens 1989). Stea (1995) points out that many environmental psychologists, and I would add some archaeologists, are:

*'…so firmly rooted in the mythology of personal choice that we often fail to recognize that the choice of home base is limited for most people: the failure to*

*exercise the 'choice' to maintain house-home identity is taken as evidence of the*
*equally mythological 'culture of poverty'* (Stea 1995: 183).

If 'home is a staging of personal memory' (Pallasmaa 1995: 135) essential to developing and sustaining a sense of personal identity, eviction or having to leave home as a refugee, economic migrant or to escape abuse effectively means a person 'loses twice', becoming 'homeless' in the sense they have to leave their physical home and 'homeless' again in the sense that some of the '…concretisation of personal images of protection and intimacy which help one recognise and remember who one is…' (Pallasmaa 1995: 135) are removed. To illustrate this, it is useful to consider the well-documented trauma experienced by slum-dwellers removed to 'better' housing and also that of Aboriginal and indigenous populations, forcibly moved from their ancestral lands (Byrne 2003). An example from closer to home comes from contemporary Islington where a recent cap on housing benefit is forcing claimants, many of whom are elderly and have lived in Islington all their lives, to move elsewhere, their privately rented homes having become suddenly too expensive for them to rent[7].Yet nothing has physically changed to make these houses so – the catalyst is political and economic. When this happens, Stea (1995) observes:

 *'…house and home are…separated: the house becomes more of a dormitory for*
*people (temporary, they imagine), separated from their true homes. They see*
*themselves as exiles rather than settlers…establishing a dichotomy between house*
*and home'* (Stea 1995: 183).

The result of this shift, from essentially transient lifestyles to forcibly settled, is that we are forced to concede that home has been increasingly commoditised and as a commodity, our 'choice' over where we live is dependent upon our access to

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[7] http://www.islingtontribune.com/letters/2012/jul/forum-trauma-facing-tenants-forced-move-out

resources (money). Those who have responded to this 'choice' by living transient lifestyles (for example, tramps and travellers) have been unremittingly criminalised, a topic expanded upon in the next chapter. Home, in the western context, is expected to involve stasis, a building or place that can be fenced around, however small or ill equipped it is to function as home – and taxed. 'Rootedness', as a key feature of home, articulates a peculiarly modern and predominantly 'western' fear – fear of losing our place, fear of becoming homeless (Wikstrom 1995). To be homeless is to cross over permanently into alien territory, to be outcast. For Sahlins, our fear of homelessness extends back institutionally to the earliest origins of the 'western illusion of human nature' (Sahlins 2008) and is sustained by scientism and capitalist ideology. Semantically, home*less* implies lack of home but as home has been shown to be an intra-psychic and subjective concept what exactly is meant by 'homeless'?

**Homelessness: the semantic contrary of 'home'?**

It has been suggested that '…in a sense, without homelessness, we would not be concerned by what 'home' means' (Dovey 1985: 48). Disagreement over what constitutes 'home' is explained by its subjectivity and individual construction. However, despite its subjectivity the concept of home can be seen to combine common characteristics which include, '…privacy, space, control, personal warmth, comfort, stability, safety, security, choice, self-expression and physical and emotional well-being' (Neale 1997: 54). Home is an emotive concept and homelessness, a politically charged subject (for example, Saunders 1989, Somerville 1992, Neale 1997, Pleace & Quligars 2003, Horst 2004). Somerville clarifies:

 *'...homelessness is ideologically constructed as the absence of home and therefore derivative from the ideological construction of home'* (Somerville 1992: 530).

The physical reality of homelessness is keenly felt by those people who find themselves 'roofless' but 'homelessness' can be experienced by those who find themselves 'rootless' but with shelter (for example, people housed in institutional accommodation (Somerville 1992). As Somerville points out, homelessness is not

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the converse of the *ideal* of home because some elements of the ideal concept can remain with homeless (roofless) people (for example, a person may be lacking shelter, privacy, comfort and even safety but they may retain some aspect of emotional well-being, autonomy or caring social relationships). In some cases, reciprocal love and a sense of 'belongingness' (Maslow 1987) might not elude homeless (roofless) people completely rather they are sometimes engendered through relationships between homeless people and people they meet randomly or through support services, pets and other animals (see Chapter Six). Due to their dialectical and binary nature, 'homelessness' is a concept as hard to define and subjective as 'home'.

Despite the subjectivity and inherent inconsistencies with the concept of homelessness, 'homeless' is a statutorily defined social status and a person must be verified homeless according to legal criteria before they may be considered eligible for housing assistance. In this way, the *legal and political* definition of homelessness has the effect of both defining and rationalising homelessness (Neale 1997). Or as Steinbock puts it;

*'Those who become 'homeless' are those swept into the vortex of political practices, socioeconomic assumptions, values and expectations bearing on the phenomenon of 'home' as we understand it today, and negatively put on 'homelessness'* (Steinbock 1995: 205).

The legal and political definition of homelessness and much surrounding discourse developed from classically patriarchal and capitalist institutions (for example, the church, state and property law). The legacy is that current housing and homeless policy remains haunted by associated ideologies and related assumptions, a topic expanded upon in the next chapter.

## 2.6 Discussion

In this chapter I have explored ways in which archaeology has incorporated social and psychoanalytical theory to inform interpretations of the past. I have examined the political consequences of conceiving of archaeological work as a contemporary

material practice where the active role of the interpreter and effect of perspective are centralised. I have argued that archaeology is a political practice due to the construction of narratives about the past and their active role in the present. I have argued that activism and a desire to inform social change may be considered primary motivations for undertaking archaeological work. I have reviewed the concepts of 'home' and 'homeless' and exposed inherent problems.

In the next chapter I chart the historical development of the social status of homelessness from notions of vagrancy through the arrival of early modern legislation concerning 'unsettled' poor people. I show how poverty and criminality have been increasingly conflated resulting in punitive treatment of 'non-conformist' lifestyles. I move on to the conception of the Welfare State and creation of state dependency and argue that the concept of deserving and undeserving poor survives in the current construction of people in receipt of state aid (among whom we may count most homeless people) as 'scroungers'.

# Chapter Three: Homeless Policy in Historical Context

## 3.0 Introduction

The last chapter situated the thesis within its theoretical and philosophical context. The purpose of this chapter is to review the historical development of relevant legal and moral discourses in relation to homelessness. My aim is to show how 'the poor' (among whom we may count homeless people) were divorced from means to subsist independently during the move from feudalism to capitalism. I reveal the way in which 'common rights to subsistence' have been gradually eroded and replaced by punitive forms of 'care' (for example, incarceration in bridewells, workhouses and prisons). I suggest that the recent criminalization of squatting[8] represents further replacement of common rights to subsistence with the 'right' to be dependent.

The arrival of the Welfare State was intended to sweep away the Poor Laws but investigation of post-war homelessness legislation reveals that current housing policies retain (and in some cases reinstate) much of the philosophy and mentality behind nineteenth century provisions for poor people. To view contemporary homeless heritage in political context it is useful to review a necessarily condensed history of the development of post-war housing (homeless) legislation. The reader is provided with recent policy frameworks in table formation (appendix 1). The chronology of statutes and policies referred to throughout this chapter extends between the late thirteenth century and the present day and is introduced at this early stage to enable the author to refer back to aspects of historic legislation throughout the thesis and reveal how these materialise archaeologically in Bristol and York in the twenty-first century.

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[8]   http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/section/144/enacted

## 3.1 Homelessness in British historical perspective: from vagrancy to homelessness

From the earliest written sources there is evidence of wanderers, travellers, transient workers, pedlars, vagrants and people choosing to exist at the margins or cast out from 'mainstream' society (Ribton-Turner 1887). An early characterisation of homelessness comes from the Bible in the guise of St Francis whose homelessness was considered an admirable trait and pious lifestyle. Later conceptions of the 'wanderer' termed vagrancy a 'threat to public order', vagrants were painted 'dangerous rogues' or 'idle beggars', a threat to 'moral and decent' society. Statutes and amendments to vagrancy and settlement laws can be shown to have increasingly expanded the types of people considered vagrant to include anyone whose trade did not directly support the growth of private commerce. Eligibility for poor relief came to be legally dependent on 'settlement', a very modern way for human beings to live and one consistent with predominantly western philosophies.

Poor Law in this context can be considered to incorporate:

*'...that body of law which governed the relief of poverty. Poor law became a matter for statutory regulation after the Reformation, culminating in the Act of 1601...'*
(Charlesworth 1999a: 150)

Vagrancy law and Poor Law were two separate branches of law which became increasingly entwined in England from circa twelfth century to the present day (Charlesworth 1999 a & b). The Poor Law was founded on the common law principle that each parish had a duty to take care of their poor although this was not made a statutory obligation until the Poor Relief Act 1662. But first, details brought to my attention in a paper by historian David Rollison (1999) reveal how recently transience was the 'normal' way of life in England.

In Cirencester in 1209 the Sheriff of Gloucester wrote to complain that Richard, Abbot of Cirencester was breaking the rules of the town and in so doing, oppressing people. 'Nineteen lawful elders' were asked to explain the customs of the town. Those called upon were market people of a variety of trades and among them were

'sojourners'. The undefined collective was referred to as 'the fellowship of the town' and together explained it was customary in Cirencester that:

*'...if a stranger coming hither slept in Cyrencester on midsomer night, and afterwards stayed there till the king or his fee-farmer had his corn reaped…then, whosoever he might be, whether freeman or bondman, male or female, he (sic) must needs do three bederipes to the king, or to his fee-farmer, for the fellowship that is of the town, which the said man had used and had enjoyed up till that day'* (from Badderley 1924, quoted in Rollison 1999:8-9)

As Rollison goes on to remark:

*'Anyone who could be accepted by this **informal 'fellowship'** could attain membership of it, and such membership overrode feudal obligations. This was politically naive in the early twelfth century, but even then the view of the commonalty was more 'realistic' in a deeper sense, in that it embodied something fundamental about the **fundamental dependence of such places on immigrants'*** (Rollison 1999: 9, my emphases)


My point in borrowing so heavily from Rollison is that his paper starkly reveals the extent to which transience *enabled* settlements to exist. The axiom of feudal life involves peasants tilling the same land as did their forebears and not travelling far from manorial land and one can only ask why history has traditionally been interpreted this way? The process by which the 'traditional' English way of life came later to be synonymous with settlement – picturesque stone cottages set within patchwork fields, marbled by cobbled streets and dotted with cosy inns that appear to have existed since time immemorial – is romanticised (Thomas 1991). As a construction of national identity it was also convenient in helping to control resistance against enclosure and strengthening property law. Close inspection reveals a process by which common law rights to subsistence (for example, the right to graze a little stock on common land or squat wasteland) were gradually reduced to 'the right to be offered the workhouse' (Charlesworth 1999: 83). What follows is a brief examination of the laws of vagrancy and explanation of how these became conflated

with the laws of settlement. I then move on to explore how the process of industrialisation rendered the poor laws 'unworkable' in the eyes of landowners.

It is generally agreed that the 1349 Vagrancy statute was the first piece of legislation specifically intended to deal with vagrancy. The Black Death (and other disease epidemics), various wars and Crusades combined to cause great social change in medieval England, the plague alone being thought to have wiped out almost fifty per cent of the population. Feudalism was under threat. Those serfs who survived childhood and impending starvation suffered worsening conditions and the lure of a better life forced people to take to the road, for example, as weavers in the rapidly expanding cloth-making industry of fourteenth century England (Chambliss 1964). Flight from manorial territories meant cheap labour was in short supply and feudal masters saw their workforce dwindle motivating those in dominant social positions to push for legislation which had the effect of protecting their hegemony. The 1349 Act made it illegal for anyone, including church institutions, to give alms to any 'able-bodied beggar' thereby condemning the landless 'wandering poor' to Hobson's choice. The 1351 amendment strengthened the 1349 Act in favour of feudal masters by specifically forbidding anyone to move around in search of better working conditions:

*'And none shall go out of the town where he dwelled in winter, to serve the summer, if he may serve in the same town'* (from 1351 Vagrancy Act, quoted in Chambliss 1964: 68)

By 1360, the Act was strengthened further still by the introduction of the threat of fifteen days imprisonment for anyone caught in the act of vagrancy without being able to justify themselves to authorities. As Chambliss states:

*'There can be little question but that these statutes were designed for one express purpose: to force labourers (whether personally free or unfree) to accept employment at a low wage in order to ensure the landowner an adequate supply of labour at a price he could afford'* (Chambliss 1964: 69)

The curtailment of transience is a recurrent theme within homelessness legislation and a subject further unpacked later in the thesis (see Chapter Eight). The content of

the vagrancy laws did not change a great deal until the early sixteenth century when England underwent something of a commercial and industrial boom. The 1530 Vagrancy statute represents the first clear characterisation of vagrants as criminals the focus having shifted from a concern over itinerant labour to a concern over people who could:

 *'...give no reckoning how he lawfully gets his living...and all other idle persons going about, some of them using divers and subtle crafty and unlawful games and plays...'* (1530 Vagrancy Act, quoted in Beier 1985)

Five years later, the 1535 Act goes further still in condemning vagrants as criminals, specifically using the word 'felon' and allowing the physical mutilation of potential offenders:

*'...if any ruffians...after having once been apprehended...wander, loiter or idle use themselves and play the vagabonds...shall not only be whipped again but shall have the gristle of his right ear clean cut off. And if he shall again offend, he shall be committed to gaol...and being there convicted...suffer pains and execution of death as a felon, an enemy of the commonwealth'* (1535 Act, quoted in Chambliss 1964)

Chambliss (1964) and Humphreys (1999) attribute the strengthening of the vagrancy statutes of the sixteenth century to the increased importance of commerce in England at the time. Enclosure was underway by the early part of the sixteenth century and led to the development of road systems, travelled with increased frequency by vagrants, merchants and highwaymen alike. Having lain dormant for most of the fifteenth century, vagrancy laws were revived in order to incapacitate those suspected of robberies but also to apprehend those displaced or travelling communities whom it was felt threatened the 'established order' (for example, squatters, gypsies, wizards, players, pedlars and musicians). Many of those punished for vagrancy were simply attempting to better their chances by travelling in search of work 'in spite of the persistently deprecatory connotations *created legislatively* by the use of 'vagrant' to encompass every poor itinerant' (Humphreys 1999:33, my emphasis).

By 1571, anyone found '…not applying themselves to some honest labour…or running away from their work, shall be taken for a vagabond…' (1571 Act amendment) and in such cases could be branded with a hot iron on their chest or forehead. The types of people considered suitable for prosecution for vagrancy grew to include:

*'...proctors, procurators, idle persons going about using subtil, crafty and unlawful games or plays; some of them feigning to have knowledge of…absurd sciences…all fencers, bearwards, common players…and minstrels…all jugglers, pedlars, tinkers, petty chapmen…all counterfeiters of licenses, passports and users of the same'* (1571 Act amendment)

Essentially, the term 'vagrant' came to include anyone who tried to resist the new economic system by remaining freelance. Beier puts it this way:

*'...vagrancy is perhaps the classic crime of status, the social crime par excellence. Offenders were arrested not because of their actions but because of their position in society'* (Beier 1985: xxii)

As Chambliss notes, itinerant labourers for whom the vagrancy laws were originally intended, 'harvest folks that travel for harvest work, corn or hay', are specifically *excluded* from the list of people who may be apprehended as vagrants by 1571 (Chambliss 1964: 73). Good argument can be made that this was because *mobility* of labour was necessary to ensure the success of commercial interests (for example, early manufacturing and ship building). In terms of political and legal ideology, vagrancy and criminality were firmly entwined by the end of the sixteenth century (Chambliss 1964, Beier 1985, Charlesworth 1999a & b, Humphreys 1999).

Such an historical analysis broadly concurs with Chambliss's argument, now infamous within criminological discourse, that vagrancy laws were informed by class tension and largely motivated to enhance the commercial interests of the dominant class (landowners). This reading of the vagrancy laws has been criticised for being 'suggestive rather than conclusive' (Adler 1989) but precisely due to the negation of poor and landless people it is notoriously difficult to write their history (or archaeology) with quantitative accuracy (see Tawney 1967, Humphreys 1999,

Wolf 1982). I argue that it remains most pertinent that those penalised under the early vagrancy acts were landless or destitute people who were subsequently criminalised for being poor. Their 'crime' was imposed social position made illegal under capitalism, the ideology of which constructed the 'vagrant' through a legal discourse that increasingly strengthened property law as opposed to individual common rights.

The language used to describe vagrants became increasingly linked with and openly symbolic of criminality as the sixteenth century progressed. Pejorative terms were employed until there was no semantic difference between a poor (homeless) person and an 'idle rogue'. Critical of this reading of the evidence Adler himself acknowledges that the number of arrests for vagrancy that took place in early nineteenth century America reveal that laws were intended to 'control and repel or expel' those wandering poor (Adler 1989:214). Adler goes on to reveal that charged cases of vagrancy rose steeply at times when jobs were scarce (Adler 1989:214). Data reveal that 'vagrancy' was to a large extent a *product* of capitalism and the introduction of the 'free-market', particularly visible in pre-welfare state periods in Britain as it continues to be in countries with arguably inadequate social provision for those who fall on hard times (for example, America).

Throughout the early part of the sixteenth century concern grew over what might happen to the 'moral character' or physical health of society at large if numbers of, what were characterised as depraved and diseased, 'wandering poor' were left to roam the country. Such concerns undoubtedly influenced ways in which vagrancy laws were enacted. It is useful to note that by the end of the sixteenth century the same individuals in positions of authority were charged with dealing with vagrancy and poor relief. That is, magistrates and clergy, local landowners, must surely have had difficulty distinguishing objectively the difference between 'an idle rogue' and an 'honest pauper'. Facing a court appearance for the charge of vagrancy, an 'honest pauper' was completely at the mercy of the whims and mood of the local magistrate (Charlesworth 1999b). Equally, it is likely that an 'incorrigible rogue' or two escaped the stocks (or worse) due to his or her ability to act the honest pauper.

In essence, vagrancy laws were not the direct result of exclusively economic concerns which a purely Marxist interpretation might reveal. However, the problems of vagrancy increased in England throughout the sixteenth century, exacerbated by a combination of factors including peacetime unemployment, flight from plague, mass migration to England after famine in Ireland and a series of very poor harvests, combined with falling wages and very high inflation, the net effect was to push the poorest into situations where they were extremely vulnerable to charges of vagrancy with increased regularity (Webb & Webb 1963, Pound 1971). As the 'socio-spatial' effects of enclosure began to take place across England, vagrancy became more common among people who had previously subsisted but under the new system held no legal title to land. Additionally, reasons for transient lifestyles cited by contemporary homeless people were as much to blame in the past: the death of a parent or spouse, unintended pregnancies, escape from domestic abuse, loss of employment or a combination of such personal tragedies can be seen to have contributed to the likely reasons a person became 'vagrant' (Slack 1974, Beier 1985). It should also be noted that a small proportion of people chose a transient lifestyle despite the problems and prejudices this entailed, then as now.

Like all 'revolutions', the shift from feudalism to capitalism involved huge upheaval and took place over what Braudel would call 'long-term' time (1980) and what Giddens might refer to as 'institutional' time. Things did not happen with immediate effect and were not perceptibly witnessed within one human life time (Giddens 1995: 28). As Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* suggests, those with 'weaker' personal and social networks (the majority, in sixteenth century England) suffered most (Bourdieu 1977). I wish now to return to the dawn of the seventeenth century and the creation of the 1601 Elizabethan Poor Law Act which for the first time explicitly localised responsibility for 'the poor'[9].

It has been argued elsewhere (Blaug 1963, Solar 1995) that poor relief as it was organised in England between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries contributed to

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[9] 'settlement' as in 'birth in a place' was a right from much earlier but not explicitly linked to rights to, for example, shelter, food, relief from poverty etc.

the economic development of the country, strengthening a Marxist and Foucauldian argument that homelessness is historically constructed, controlled through increasingly powerful discourse. The relative political and social stability in England throughout this time has in part been explained by the system of local taxation paying for poor relief, creating a context in which the development of economic prosperity (for some) was possible (Beier 1985). A feature which distinguished English poor relief from other comparable European countries (for example, France and Holland) was the way in which funds were levied (Solar 1995). A tax on income from property – buildings and land – was used to pay poor relief which meant that any 'occupier of land' was liable for a proportion of the cost of relieving the poor of the parish. This acted as an incentive to those with assets to take an active interest in reducing the number of people who were in need of poor relief. Effectively, the parish was linked through an interdependent network regardless of social position (for example, the landowner needed labour to extract wealth from the land but the labourer relied on poor relief in times of hardship). Thus, if a landowner could employ people (for example, as labourers, agricultural workers or in service) it made economic sense for them to draw from people within the same parish boundary. Solar (1995:13) suggests that in such situations landowners were incentivised to, '…undertake labour intensive activities, particularly in the winter months when agricultural work was scarce. If workers could be more fully employed in the slack season, their incomes would be higher and the parish's poor relief burden lower'. Equally, apprenticeships were encouraged to ensure that local skills were retained and future jobs secured[10]. An alternative reading is that labourers earned what little landowners chose to pay and that the children of labourers were expected to follow suit.

The 1601 Elizabethan Poor Law Act made it compulsory for 'occupiers of land' to take care of the poor within their parish. Linking parish and poor relief 'was done consciously', writes Sara Birtles (1999:164), 'as it served to 'fix' poverty, dispersing

the dangerous bands of vagabonds'. Initially, church wardens were made the unofficial overseers of the poor and later, local rate payers were encouraged to relieve poor families through giving them what they needed. This could be food, shelter, work, apprenticeship or money. Those poor people who were infirm were granted relief without the need to work and those able-bodied who refused to work could be jailed, although this was hampered in the early seventeenth century by the lack of institutions such as prisons and asylums (Foucault 1989, Norval 1998). Bridewells and Houses of Correction for 'idle rogues and vagabonds' were established and, outside the church, represent the first institutions to link the causes of crime with unemployment. The 1601 Act was also expressly used to 'control' the vagrancy problem. By specifically requiring local parishes to deal with the poor of their parish, it was effectively no longer possible to have a transient lifestyle and also claim legal entitlement to poor relief. It was assumed that one had to be from *somewhere* – and that 'somewhere' had to be a static 'place'. As Charlesworth notes:

'*...statutes revealed the premise that labourers and servants were not free to move at will and that settlement, in fact if not in law, reflected contemporary social belief in a stationary labouring class'* (Charlesworth 1999a: 81)

The 1601 Act linked identity with a particular church, the records of which functioned as an early form of surveillance and were consulted to assess whether a person was entitled to claim poor relief. Such checks on 'establishment' identity mark a point at which the administering of poor relief became reliant on bureaucracy. The verification of personal identity was considered subjectively by those in authority who were often the same landowners whose tax paid the parish poor relief. Notions of respectability, essential to receipt of poor relief were couched in terms of marital status and mode of employment, where such notions were constructed under ideological pressures consistent with the newly formed Church of England, itself propped up by patriarchy.

The 1662 Poor Relief Act established statutorily that paupers resident in the parish, the 'settled' poor, had a right to claim poor relief from that parish. Settlement, in legal terms, was determined as the place of birth until a person transferred their place of residence (for example, if they were married and moved to their spouse's village

or town). For the purpose of this thesis it is essential to recognise that the settlement entitlement inherent in the 1662 Act 'remained the fundamental legal basis for the relief of poverty in England and Wales until the National Assistance Act of 1948' (Charlesworth 1999a: 150). As Charlesworth puts is: 'They came for aid not as beggars but claiming their *legal* rights' (Charlesworth 1999b: 152, my emphasis). Solar observes the fact that landowners were statutorily obliged to give relief to the poor meant that *certain types* of poor people were more desirable than others:

'*In practice parishes did use settlement as a device for screening migrants. Those turned away were mainly old people, widows, and families with many children, just the sorts of migrants likely to need relief without contributing much to the labour supply*' (Solar 1995: 14).

Contemporary examples of such 'screening' and the use of current housing policy in achieving 'sustainable' communities of people entitled to housing benefit are unpacked in detail later in the thesis (see Chapter Eight). In essence, 'settlement was not simply a set of rules', as Charlesworth observes, it '…consisted of the fundamental state of belonging to a particular place - belonging so thoroughly that all the other residents of that place owed a financial duty to a settled person who had fallen into poverty' (Charlesworth 1999a: 79). That there existed an assurance, across the classes, that poor relief would be delivered is evident through the fact that there was relatively little social unrest, as might be expected to have occurred if landowners neglected their duty to pay the income tax that funded poor relief (Solar 1995). However, as Snell (1991) notes, the process of 'passing back' vagrants to the parish from which they had come was pointless, having the effect of '…a motiveless game of draughts, the human pieces staying on the same local board' (Snell 1991:383). With the exception of exporting vagrants to infant British colonies, press-ganging and forced military service, state intervention in terms of vagrancy charges took a painfully slow creep towards the idea that relieving people from desperate situations rather than punishing them or taking advantage of their vulnerabilities, might bear more positive results (Beier 1985, Snell 1991, Humphreys 1999). However, it would be foolish to read too much philanthropy into seventeenth century English poor law. It is possible to view the certainty with which poor relief was felt

to be guaranteed, even in times of population growth and high food prices, as having significantly contributed to the loss of common land:

'*Poor relief helped to counter the land hunger so characteristic of preindustrial populations and to tilt the balance in the direction of wage labour. One implication of this argument is that the existence of poor relief should have facilitated enclosure. Many cottagers and smallholders lost access to land because they could not afford to enclose a small parcel or because their formal or informal common rights were extinguished...*' (Solar 1995: 9)

Through a process referred to derogatorily as 'Industrial Speenhamland', the low wages of labourers were subsidised by poor relief funds, the exact amount dependent on the price of bread and the size of a labourer's family (Taylor 1991). The gradual process of industrialisation drove down the relative economic importance of agriculture and reduced the need for labour in the countryside. As the eighteenth century progressed, many able-bodied people were drawn to fast expanding cities in the hope of finding work. Factory work, manufacturing, ship building, domestic service and services that supported the former (for example, chandler and laundry services) represented better opportunities than were available in rural locations. Contrary to the 'dependent woman' narrative, young women were as likely as men to travel far from their 'settled parish' for work, often leaving young or sick children with relatives where child-minding, food and shelter was more likely guaranteed (Hurl-Eamon 2008).


By the turn of the nineteenth century Britain was industrial and cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool swelled in size as migrants came from the English countryside in search of work but also from Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and further afield (Taylor 1991). Increased urbanisation brought new problems – overcrowding and lack of accommodation – the start of what we might now recognise as 'homelessness' (Watson & Austerberry 1986:26). In migrating to places where industrial jobs were available, the labouring classes had to leave their parish settlements and this meant risking destitution because although legally bound to give relief to settled poor under the 1662 Act of Settlement, obligations to 'un-

settled' poor were far from clear and not defined in any practical sense until the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. Thus, as hundreds of poor people took to the road in search of work it is inevitable that many of them were forced to beg along the way. The 1824 Vagrancy Act, still in use today, reclassified 'mendicants' as 'common criminals' and compounded the shame and stigma of poverty (Charlesworth 1999 a & b). As labourers moved in search of work landowners saw the proportion of fit and healthy poor in their agricultural parishes fall but were obliged to maintain and 'relieve' those that remained – the infirm, the elderly, the children of those economic migrants. I suggest that it was economics rather than philanthropy that drove government, a veritable cabinet of male landowners, to overhaul the Poor Law and produce the extremely harsh Poor Law Amendment Act 1834.

There is little disagreement among scholars of the period that the intention of the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 was to charge union officials with setting up a system of workhouses where conditions were 'less eligible' than anything a person working for a wage might afford and ensure that membership was intentionally intolerable to reduce the number of those who might accept (or survive) it (Dunkley 1981, Charlesworth 1999). The 1834 Act included the stipulation that no relief was to be given to any able-bodied person (Hutchinson-Crocker 1987) and instead that any able-bodied person applying for relief should be removed to the workhouse. This was the lowest place to which a person could sink and escape was made extremely difficult owing to the strict regime within which made it virtually impossible to seek alternative work (Watson & Austerberry 1986: 32). The market dictated that poor relief ceased to be a right (Charlesworth 1999a). Instead, the 'private right' to poor relief was obscured and now considered a 'public' gift (Thompson 1971). Perhaps the most obvious change that occurred once the 1834 Amendment was adopted was that the parochial system of relief from poverty as a legal right, funded from resources garnered through membership of a 'settlement' was replaced by larger Poor Law Unions, themselves centrally monitored from London (Dunkley 1981). The effect was that a fundamental and quite ancient *right to relief* from poverty was removed and '…replaced…with a bureaucratic administrative process increasingly in the hands of *paid* poor law union officials' (Charlesworth 1999a: 83, my

emphasis). Poor Law Unions were geographical territories or, in effect, early local government units (Driver 1994). By the 1840s records show the term 'vagrant' being used to describe migrant and casual poor with some consistency (Charlesworth 1999b). I suggest that contempt and social division felt between paid union officials and those in receipt of poor relief, relationships characterised in novels by Charles Dickens, George Elliot and Thomas Hardy, served to exacerbate feelings of 'moral failure' in those who fell on hard times. The legal right to relief from poverty was replaced with the 'right to be condemned' for being poor, a social status produced by capitalism.

The mid-nineteenth century British obsession with 'moral decency' and powerful patriarchal family ideology did not aid those who found themselves at the mercy of available (affordable) accommodation. The often severely inadequate and overcrowded accommodation only served to compound allegations of 'depravity' and 'wickedness' among poor people. Women bore the brunt of punitive legislation; for example, the conference proceedings of the London Government Board 1872-3 reveal that 'outdoor relief' was forbidden to able-bodied widows and also not granted to women 'alleging' to have been left by their husbands unless they could prove they had been deserted (LGB 1872-3, cited in Watson & Austerberry 1986). The notion that the burden of proof lies with the person in need actively continues to the present day, for example, under the 2002 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act the homeless person is required to prove they did not become 'intentionally homeless' before they may be considered eligible for assistance. The last three decades of the nineteenth century saw a rise in the number of individuals and organisations that sought to reform how 'the poor' and problems of poverty, including overcrowding and homelessness were attended to and I shall now give a necessarily reduced overview of those relevant to contemporary homelessness.

In 1890, General William Booth published *Darkest England and the Way Out*, a book that investigated the problems of destitution in England. Many of his ideas and observations formed the basis of policies implemented by the Salvation Army, still an important player in homelessness provision today. There was a renewed

paternalistic interest in poverty and its causes and foundations and endowment funds set up to address and research the issue continue to be important (for example, the Rowntree Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation) and the suffragette movement impacted homelessness, recognising and seeking to repeal much of the blatantly anti-female legislation surrounding poverty. For example, in 1909 three hundred homeless and destitute women signed a petition demanding that London County Council (LCC) open a hostel specifically for women and proposing they should be its first residents (Higgs & Hayward 1910). The action resulted in the formation of the National Association of Women's Lodging Houses and one of its former directors was a remarkable woman called Mary Higgs whose book, *Where shall she live? The Homelessness of the Woman Worker* was published in 1910. Higgs wrote extensively on the subject of homelessness among women who were employed. A canny social reformer as well as an advocate for women, Higgs highlighted practical obstacles that prevented a poor person from attaining good employment such as hygiene and the ability to be 'clean and tidy'. She wrote that men could get labouring jobs where a clean shirt was not necessary or expected but no woman without access to laundering facilities or the knowledge thereof could expect to be hired into service.

The onset of the First World War put housing on the political back burner while the horrors of 1914-18 effectively reduced the number of people who required housing. However, as domestic service dwindled between the wars, many poorer people who had been 'live in' staff in large and middle income households were left with nowhere to live. The government recognised there was a housing shortage but the Housing Acts of 1919, 1923 and 1924 did little to alleviate the problem. The Local Government Act of 1929 served to transfer the responsibilities of the Board of Guardians or 'overseers', those in charge of the casual wards and workhouses, to newly established 'Local Authorities' (Hoath 1983: 1-2). Housing options for those who could not afford to buy a house were slim – people stayed at the family home or risked lodging houses which varied considerably in quality and availability. George Orwell's description of life in the casual wards of London was made infamous in his book (1933) *Down and Out in Paris and London*.

I do not claim that the brief overview provided above is in any way exhaustive but I hope that it serves to demonstrate the vacillations in statutory responses to poverty and vagrancy. I wish to reiterate how poor people were controlled in space, movement dictated by policy. This is important in the context of this archaeological thesis because '…recognising that the organisation (and imagination) of space is deeply implicated in the maintenance of existing power structures makes it possible to consider alternatives' (Rollison 1999: 7).

In the 1940s, homelessness was considered a structural problem, caused by the lack of housing immediately post war. Homelessness was not considered an on-going social problem. Beveridge's vision was that the 1948 National Assistance Act would provide for a living standard below which no British person would be forced to exist and shelter was considered essential. Resonant of current problems posed by an upper limit on housing benefit (see Chapter Eight), in the 1940s, Seebohm Rowntree suggested that all national assistance schemes should include 'a nominal subsistence benefit plus the claimant's *actual* rent' (Lowe 2005:144, my emphasis) which would account for the fact that a significant portion of the average working class budget would be spent on rent, a volatile and regionally specific expense. The 1948 Act aimed to repeal the Poor Laws but in reality little changed for homeless families and single people. It is reasonable to acknowledge that the post war government and local councils had few options but to continue to house people wherever possible. In practice, the majority of people made homeless through poverty or bomb damage, remained 'housed' in the workhouse into the 1950s (Noble 2009).

Between 1948 and the present day, many attempts have been made to overhaul the punitive approaches to 'vagrancy' or more recently 'homelessness'. It is however possible to identify 'the spirit of the poor laws' as it continues in contemporary homeless legislation (Somerville 1994:163), a subject to which I return in detail in Chapter Eight. Appendix 1 forms a table that shows the main policies and publications concerning homelessness from 1948 to the present day. The aim of

providing this information in tablature form is to facilitate swift access to its content throughout the remainder of this thesis. I move on now to examine what archaeology might contribute to our understanding of contemporary homelessness.

## 3.2 Homelessness as Welfare State policy: conceptual problems and how archaeology can help

In this section of the chapter I wish to explore how an archaeological approach might complement the varied literature that exists on homelessness in the UK (for example, Watson & Austerberry 1986, Somerville 1992, 1994 & 2013, Bevan & Rhodes 1996, Neale 1997, Anderson & Christian 2003, Clapham 2003, Fitzpatrick & Jones 2005, McNaughton 2008, Pawson 2008, Quilgars et al 2008, Crowson 2012). It has been argued that one of the reasons homelessness remains ill-defined is that recent researchers have tended to focus on specific groups of homeless people (for example, single people or ex-forces personnel) which are themselves abstract constructions (Anderson 1993). Somerville has argued that homelessness suffered from functioning as a political football in wider debates around de-politicisation, centralisation and privatisation (Somerville 1994). A philosophical explanation of homelessness is that it represents the archetypal 'Other' and is therefore an impossible concept to truly grasp due to its inter-subjectivity (Steinbock 1994). More recently, the 'structural versus individual' argument has been critiqued from a critical realist perspective (Fitzpatrick 2005).

I propose that an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness might usefully add to current literature due to the disciplinary expertise in dealing with *materiality and spatiality*. Archaeology involves the identification and study of material culture (routes and journeys, adaptation of the built and natural environment and 'things') and incorporation of geographical theory greatly aids our abilities to map *where* these things materialise, as well as when (Soja 1989). To map how homeless people use the city is to document social margins and 'gap' sites as active places (Augé 1995 & 1998). Homelessness is not, as it is often portrayed through campaign literature and imagined by scholars of policy, something that occurs in

doorways and squats alone. I contend that an archaeological approach adds a material and spatial dimension and offers fresh insight into what homelessness looks like practically and identifies places from which homeless people might be engaged as *individuals*. The archaeological process (for example, mapping, excavating, finds cleaning and presentation of narratives) is accessible to 'non-experts' meaning that homeless people can easily be recruited *as the archaeologists*. This enables the people who 'live out' homelessness (as an everyday *material reality*) to be directly involved in the process of recovering and interpreting material remains, a process by which the diverse experiences and unique knowledge of homeless people may be brought into the light. Finally, archaeology is good at identifying gaps, limitations and patterns and to approach homelessness archaeologically is to forensically test the efficacy of social policies concerning housing and homelessness. Additionally, broader socio-historic events, political decisions and cultural changes may be viewed through the homeless prism by studying the material culture of contemporary homelessness (for example, de-industrialisation and the associated steep rise in unemployment throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, impact of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Bill 1994 and increased availability of illegal drugs). Thus, perspectives that counter establishment histories are offered. Such an undertaking necessitates examination of the relationship between archaeology and heritage and it is to this that I now turn.

## 3.3 Archaeology and heritage: related contexts

The way in which archaeology and heritage relate to one another has been a subject of debate since the publication of Charles McGimsey's seminal text *Public Archaeology* (McGimsey 1972, Rathje 1981, Appadurai 1984, Cleere 1984, Hodder 1986, Pinksy & Wylie 1989, Tilley 1989, Hodder et al 1995, Jones 1997, Ascherson 2000, Graves-Brown 2000, Carman 2002, Derry & Malloy 2003, Smith 2004, 2006, Smith & Akagawa 2009, Smith & Waterton 2009). As suggested in the previous chapter, the arrival of interpretive archaeologies circa1980s represented a significant departure from the positivist approach whereby '…archaeological knowledge is of

the past which means that it aspires to objectivity in the sense of being neutral and…timeless…' Hodder et al 1995: 3, emphasis in original). Buchli and Lucas observe that:

*'…by focusing attention on the nature of archaeological methods and data…the whole issue of how recent the subject matter of archaeology should be, becomes irrelevant'* (Buchli & Lucas 2001:3)

Some archaeologists have argued we should '…treat [archaeological evidence] not as a record *of* past events but as *evidence for* particular social practices' (Barrett 1988:6, emphasis in original). This shift in thinking has emphasised the way in which the past is socio-politically and ideologically constructed in the present, part of which includes the process by which community groups and so-called 'non-experts' are engaged and involved in interpreting the past. Archaeologists must be accepting of 'difference' – different world views, customs, perspectives and experience - or the relevance of working collaboratively is lost (Smith & Waterton 2009). In short, if archaeology can tell us about cultures from the deep past it can tell us about modern cultures and show us how and where 'difference' occurs (for example, in highlighting varied attitudes to the built environment, landscapes and commodities). As William Rathje defined it, archaeology is '…a focus on the interaction between material culture and human behaviour' (Rathje 1981: 52). Research undertaken for this thesis is underpinned by such theoretical developments within the discipline and takes into account phenomena such as technological change and globalisation (Harrison & Schofield 2010). The absorption of post-colonial discourse and critical Marxist theory by archaeologists across a shrinking planet, linked in ever more immediate ways can be regarded to have increased the viewpoint that the conditions in which we practice archaeology are not only significant but they *actively impact* the way the past is constructed and understood (Wylie 2006). For example, one of the founding principles of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) was that archaeology, an inherently political endeavour due to the way in which it mobilises the past as an active component of the present, cannot stand aside

from the political climate. Archaeology had to integrate values of equality and social justice into its *every day* practice (Hamilakis & Duke 2007:19).

The Executive Committee of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) spent the first part of the 1990s developing an ethics code that recognised the archaeologist's role as 'guardian' of the past. The responsibility this entailed moved the SAA to revise its ethics code and, in 1996, publish a code with 'the principle of stewardship of the past in both practice and promotion…' at its core (Zimmerman 2003:8 ()[11]. There is '…some level of recognition of [archaeology's] publics in virtually every principle.' (Zimmerman 2003:8). Academic and professional strides towards a de-colonised approach to the material past in countries such as America and Australia were mirrored, to an extent, in Britain. For example, attempts were made to be inclusive of working class and immigrant perspectives on the past. Examples include The National Trust's 'Whose Story?' project[12] which sought to tell the story of migration to Britain from the perspective of those migrating, although problems of imbalance persist where 'interpreters' of subaltern heritage narratives remain overwhelmingly white, middle-class people (Littler 2005, Harrison 2010a) and many groups and communities remain under-represented in heritage interpretations (for example, people with mental and physical disabilities, people lacking formal education, homosexual people, elderly people, single parents). Archaeologists have the 'power of vocality' (Lucas 1997:41) and therefore the onus is on us to develop methodologies that might be used to enhance diversity in the heritage sector. Indeed, to do so is arguably our moral duty.

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[11] see also Lynott and Wylie 1995 and visit
http://www.saa.org/AbouttheSociety/PrinciplesofArchaeologicalEthics/tabid/203/Default.aspx

[12]

http://www.midlands.specialistnetwork.org.uk/asset_arena/textual/Joyce%20Wallace%20Whose%20Story%20project%20-Midlands%20Federation%20Presentation.pdf

Access to heritage is a Human Right. Article 27: 1a of the Declaration of Human Rights states:

*'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits'*

The European Landscape Convention also recognises:

*'..."Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'*

And Article 5c of the above named Convention promises:

*'...to establish procedures for the participation of the general public in the definition and implementation of...landscape policies...'*

The Faro Convention also specifically recognises that 'cultural heritage' is independent of ownership, a 'group of resources' with which:

*'...people identify...as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time...'*

A central aim of this thesis seeks to 'establish procedures' by which homeless people are enabled to participate in the 'definition and implementation' of cultural heritage and develop 'practice(s)' whereby this end can be achieved. In facilitating homeless people to document contemporary homelessness archaeologically it is hoped that Smith's (2006) aim to challenge what she terms the Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) is furthered. Working collaboratively with homeless people, prioritising their words, names for places, memories and perspectives, it is intended that

archaeological 'productions' (Shanks & Tilley 1987) are more 'authentic' (Jones 2010) and representative of diverse and individual experiences of contemporary homelessness in Bristol and York.

In this chapter I have examined the historical development of the concept of homelessness from the late medieval period to the present day. I have provided, in table form (appendix 1) an account of post-war policies relating to homelessness. I have explored how an archaeological approach to contemporary homeless might add usefully to current literature. I also examined the relationship between archaeology and heritage. In the next chapter, I address key ethical questions that arise from proposing to work with homeless people as colleagues whilst preserving archaeological and academic integrity. I then explain methodological approaches developed throughout fieldwork in Bristol and York and emphasise how the highest health, safety and ethical standards were upheld throughout fieldwork in accordance with the university guidelines.

# Chapter Four: Ethics & Methodology

## 4.0 Introduction

In the last chapter I examined the historical and political development of the concept of homelessness in Britain. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the value and importance of acting with integrity in approaching contemporary homelessness archaeologically. I begin with an exploration of ethics in social work. I move on to consider issues that relate to working with vulnerable people and unpack concerns relating to working with people who may have consumed large volumes of alcohol or drugs. I explain how this project developed organically through a period of what I have termed 'informal familiarisation' with homeless people and move on to explain methodologies developed for this thesis. The last part of this chapter focuses on challenges which emerged during fieldwork. Some solutions were reached and are discussed.

## 4.1 Ethics

*'Ethics are concerned with the critical appraisal of human conduct and character…ethics is also about positive and attractive springs of action: values, goals and ideals, aspiration and personal and social fulfilment.'* (Scarre & Scarre 2006:2)

The practical application of ethics in conducting academic research is necessary not only because it affords the work 'integrity' (Caplan 2003:4) but also because it is 'dishonest' to behave in any other way (Crisp & Slote 1997:2). The University of York ethical codes and guidelines for best practice served a vital purpose in ensuring the integrity of research conducted for this thesis and were useful in terms of ensuring the physical, mental and emotional health and safety of everyone involved in the project. Ethical and methodological approaches to fieldwork were scrutinised by the Department of Archaeology staff and approved. The homeless people with

whom I worked have always been (and remain) *colleagues*, individuals who *choose* to engage in the heritage process (Smith 2006). The landscape, routes and journeys, sites, places and material culture of contemporary homelessness are the subject of study *not* homeless people. Homeless people work as colleagues whose *expert knowledge* of homelessness is centralised through being involved in the collaborative archaeological process (Habermas 1984 & 1987).

## 4.1a Working with vulnerable people

Working with vulnerable people involves negotiating a 'messy' range of complex personal situations and difficult circumstances (McNaughton 2008). Homeless people are far more likely to have suffered serious betrayals of trust and/or – physical, sexual, mental and/or emotional abuse – than the rest of the population (Johnsen, Cloke & May 2005, Quilgars et al 2008, McNaughton 2008, Kiddey & Schofield 2011). Lack of safe accommodation further exacerbates the vulnerability of homeless people (Hopper 2003, McNaughton 2008, Kiddey & Schofield 2011). It was imperative to ensure that everyone involved in the project was protected from (further) injury, harm or distress. It was also necessary to protect myself from being harmed in any way.

Initially, I sought funding from the Quartet foundation (Bristol) to pay for a full day of professional skills training in 'Working with Vulnerable People' which I advertised to the wider community in Stokes Croft (Bristol). Eleven local people and I attended the course including a policewoman and two archaeology students from the University of Bristol. The course provided participants with sound working knowledge of the types of difficulties homeless people might experience (for example, addiction and mental health problems) and detailed the kinds of abuses commonly experienced by homeless people. Course participants were given practical advice on how to communicate safely with people whose trust may have been brutally betrayed. Throughout the day, course participants were reminded how vital it is to treat (vulnerable) people with dignity and compassion, to maintain confidentiality and act with discretion and the need for expectations to be properly

managed was constantly reiterated (for example, we were reminded not to promise anything we could not realistically deliver). The course inspired debate among participants surrounding the ethical nature of approaches to working with vulnerable people and a closer inspection of social work ethics informs the next section of this chapter.

## 4.1b Applying 'an ethic of care' in the heritage context

Appendix 1 shows how the 1997 New Labour government was heavily influenced by the work of sociologist Anthony Giddens (1986, 1995). Giddens's concept of 'social exclusion' can be regarded as having helped kick-start 'intense change' to homelessness legislation (McNaughton 2008), most obviously through a large injection of funds and the enactment of the Homelessness Act 2002 which expanded the list of those who could be considered eligible for housing assistance. Discussions were prompted around 'emotional responsiveness' and what has become known in social policy terms as an 'ethic of care', promoted within nursing and social work (Banks 2001:46).

It has been argued that '…the literature on social work and ethics has focussed on…principles about how the social worker ought to treat the individual service user' (Banks 2001: 24) where a central Kantian derived principle in particular, 'respect for persons', is primary (Kant 1964, Plant 1970, Crisp & Slote 1997, Banks 2001). Throughout field-work, I maintained respect for homeless people as individual human beings, respect for their perspectives and respect for them as 'knowledgeable agents' (Barrett 1988). I did not behave respectfully towards homeless colleagues out of a sense of 'duty' (Kant 1964, Banks 2001). Nor did I behave respectfully towards them because it was the '…most likely way to produce …the greatest balance of good over evil (the principle of utility)' (Banks 2001: 31); or through any sense of 'moral self' (van Meijl 2000). I try to behave respectfully towards all human beings because I think respect enhances healthy relationships and, to me, it is part of being a 'good' person. As Scarre and Scarre note:

*'The ethics of any profession cannot be conceived in isolation from ethics in general…we should be good persons before we are good archaeologists, philosophers, politicians or bus drivers'* (Scarre & Scarre 2006:4).


Modern social work ethics can be seen to derive from 'virtue ethics', themselves critically reappraised by multiple disciplines after the publication of G.E.M. Anscombe's 1958 paper, *Modern Moral Philosophy*, which '…provided a counterpoint to the utilitarian and deontological theories then in vogue' (Colwell-Chanthaphonh & Ferguson 2006: 118). Deriving from an Aristotelian background, virtue ethics tended to focus on virtues such as courage, justice and honesty, attributes conventionally associated with men (Okin 1994, cited in Banks 2001). More recently, scholars have argued that virtues such as 'caring', 'nurturing' and 'the ability to listen carefully' (traditionally feminine virtues) should inform the practice of 'good' social work (Okin 1994: 228, cited in Banks 2001) '…a key element of what has been termed 'an ethic of care' (Banks 2001:46). Applying such an 'ethic of care' is important in undertaking ethnographic research, such as that described here, where a high level of emotional sophistication (and 'on the spot' responsiveness) was integral to managing colleagues' expectation in a way that sustained trust but did not give anyone cause to expect more from the project than it could give (for example, there were small things that I could offer colleagues such as the loan of books we had spoken about).


Kantian principles of consistency and promise-keeping are often cited as integral to 'good' social work and 'ethical' care (Biestek 1961, Gilligan 1982, Nodding 1984, Baier 1995, Banks 2001). It was vitally important that I did not let-down homeless colleagues at any point throughout fieldwork. This courtesy was not consistently reciprocated at the start of the project but improved dramatically throughout the course of fieldwork (see also Chapter Eight). I could not risk breaking promises or a situation arising whereby it could be *perceived* that I had broken a promise (for example, if I was unsure whether I could commit to working with someone, I did not mention the possibility). There were situations where a more Utilitarian ethical approach was necessary (for example, at Christmas). It was both impractical and

impossible to give Christmas presents to *all* the homeless people with whom I worked so I decided it would be least harmful to give no presents at all (Shaw 1999). In working with homeless people on the documentation of their cultural heritage I have sought always to respect individual worth and remain non-judgmental. It is not for the archaeologist to assign guilt or evaluate behaviours (Biestek 1961, Banks 2001). Within the limitations imposed by legalities and funding, I sought at all times to facilitate 'participant self-determination', that is, I asked homeless colleagues to direct the project and make decisions over how best to proceed.

The socially constructed perspective from which I was viewed by colleagues meant that the project and I were treated differently by colleagues from Bristol and York. In Bristol, a city that was my home for many years, I was perceived by colleagues as 'a squatter' and *also* an archaeologist. In Bristol homeless people identified with the fact that I was regularly in and out of abandoned buildings and vaguely 'anti-establishment' because I was keen to record 'alternative' perspectives. This has been confirmed to me anecdotally. Some elements of the squat fraternity were critical when I chose to move to York to continue with a PhD, seeing formal education as 'becoming part of them'. Moving to York meant that I was 300 miles away from friends and family and I felt it was important to maintain my own personal safety by remaining professionally involved with homeless people rather than associated with what was then the legal practice of squatting disused buildings. The result was that York homeless colleagues viewed me as 'staff'. I have anecdotal evidence that I was shown 'cleansed' and 'acceptable' homeless sites in York and protected from the less salubrious places.

If, as the Declaration of Human Rights states, *everyone* is to be facilitated to, '…participate in the cultural life of the community… ' then an 'ethic of care' such as that outlined above is particularly relevant for archaeologists because 'everyone' includes people who are traditionally 'hard to reach'. Rather than accept that some people are 'too difficult' to engage in archaeological work I suggest that the onus is on the discipline to develop methodologies for working with traditionally marginalised groups in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to them. Possibly,

the paucity of research on how we might work with people with complex needs is explained by the fact the work is extremely difficult! I contend that rather than acting out of a sense of duty or learning how to implement a 'solid' Code of Ethics (Tarlow & West 1999, Banks 2001, Tarlow 2001, Hamilakis & Duke 2007) ethical dilemmas were negotiated as they presented themselves and that I acted with humility and consistency.

## 4.1c Archaeological ethics

*'The ethical task of archaeology is to bear witness to the other human being in his or her difference…concentrate less on the autonomy of universal individuals but rather on the connectedness that arises from difference. Archaeology may have arisen from modernity but it has the unique capability to bring us into contact with lived worlds that are utterly alien from our own…'* (Thomas 2004:32)

The literature on ethics and how we wrestle with them in archaeology is abundant (for example, Foucault 1972, Said 1979, Clifford & Marcus 1986, Lynott & Wylie et al 1995, Pels 1999, Tarlow & West 1999, Buchli & Lucas 2001, Tarlow 2001, Carman 2002, Caplan 2003, Zimmerman 2003, Zimmerman et al 2003, Byrne & Nugent 2004, Meskell & Pels 2006, Hicks & Beaudry 2006, Scaare & Scaare 2006, Hamilakis & Duke 2007, Fairclough et al 2008, Harrison & Schofield 2010, Kiddey & Schofield 2011). Post-modern critique of anthropological and archaeological ethics has sought to distance the interrelated disciplines from colonial hegemony by insisting 'the past' always has a plurality of narratives. Many scholars demand attention should be focused on the *process* by which we engage 'studied cultures' and facilitate them to construct their own heritage narratives (Smith 2006, Smith & Waterton 2009, Harrison & Schofield 2010). A perennial question has remained - for whom do we do archaeology and what right do we, archaeologists, have to make claims about knowledge of the past or decisions about how the past is reconstructed (Strang 2003, Zimmerman 2003, Zimmerman et al 2003)?

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## 4.1d Informed consent

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that participants in projects do not come to physical or psychological harm as a result of academic activities (Denscombe 2010). During fieldwork for this project I ensured that homeless colleagues were fully aware that information we recorded might be reproduced (for example, in field notes, as a paper in a journal or photograph in a magazine). Concern over how publication of research material might affect participants is not a new concern, as Barnes noted in 1967:

*'...anthropologists need to be aware that there is a significant difference between public knowledge circulating orally in a community and stories appearing in print'* (Barnes 1967, cited in Caplan 2003:6)

Therefore it was essential that I obtained informed consent from everyone who chose to work with me. This was at times problematic. For example, the presence of paper consent forms actively discouraged homeless people from working with me in Bristol and York. I chose instead to explain verbally that I was an archaeologist interested in the heritage of homelessness which I intended to attempt to document through photographs, maps, memories, journeys and through film and audio and that these materials would likely be published and exhibited variously. A comment from a homeless man who wished to remain anonymous illustrates a commonly encountered problem:

*'...I don't mind helping out... [the project] seems quite interesting... I don't want my face printed in a magazine that's saying I'm a tramp or a street drinker... to my kids, I'm their absent dad and I wouldn't want them to see me like this....It would kill them to see me like this!'*

When informed about the intended use of data colleagues typically reacted in one of three ways: 1) the person said they were not comfortable with arrangements and

chose to avoid the project 2) the person said they were happy to take part but did not want their real name used or photograph taken or 3) the person agreed to take part and was comfortable being identified in publications. In all cases, I fully respected the decision of the individual. I also reiterated that participation in the project would be undertaken as voluntary action (Denscombe 2010) and that all colleagues were entitled to leave the project at any time with no repercussions. Those colleagues who stayed with the project to its conclusion were happy to be photographed and actively wanted to be named in publications and presentations, the project having become a source of pride and associated with a sense of personal achievement, the full impact of which will be unpacked later in the thesis (see Chapter Eight)[13].

## 4.1e Working with people under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Many homeless people with whom I worked had consumed alcohol or drugs (pharmaceutical or illegal). All interactions I had with homeless people were voluntary, that is, no-one was coerced, contracted or forced to work with me. Part of working *with* homeless people on their heritage necessarily involved the development of methodologies contingent upon working with people who might have consumed a large volume of drugs or alcohol, these being a significant feature of contemporary homeless landscapes in Britain. To exclude those who had consumed drugs or alcohol from the project would be to exclude the very people with whom I set out to work (see also Chapter Nine). Ethnographic research undertaken for this thesis involved walking, talking, drawing and speaking into a microphone, none of which are made hazardous if a person has consumed alcohol or drugs. I found that those who had consumed crack cocaine were not interested in speaking with an archaeologist or discussing heritage whereas people who had consumed alcohol and/or heroin were more likely to wish to engage.

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[13] In one case, Andrew Dafnis, the project was cited as the direct reason Andrew started to use his real name again having been known only as Smiler for almost 30 years.

A further consideration is the effect that drugs and alcohol have on perception of place. As a primary aim of this thesis was to document landscapes *as perceived by homeless people* the inclusion of perspectives according to those who had consumed drugs and alcohol and the material function of substances in bringing about perceived changes to environment was crucial (see also Chapter Five). It was essential that methodologies were developed for working with people 'as they were' rather than expecting homeless colleagues to conform to more traditional work patterns or modify their behaviour in order to 'fit in' with normative archaeological practice.

## 4.1f Privacy

Throughout fieldwork homeless people took me to places to which they felt emotional attachment (Byrne & Nugent 2004) which demanded that I fully respect peoples' privacy. Several times, we came to a place described by colleagues as a social place and found people asleep. In these cases, we did not disturb the sleeping people or take photographs that might identify them.

Here, sociologist John Barnes is instructive:

*'Social research entails the possibility of destroying the privacy and autonomy of the individual, of producing more ammunition to those already in power, of laying the groundwork for an invincibly oppressive state'* (Barnes 1963: 22)

Addiction and shop lifting feature in many homeless landscapes and assemblages. However, it was important that research did not add to the overburden negative 'cultural image' of homelessness in an unbalanced manner (Rosenthal 2000, Hopper 2003). Some sites recorded showed materiality suggestive of illegal behaviour (for example, security tags, empty wallets and drug paraphernalia). All effort was made to accurately and authentically represent what homeless colleagues shared with me

without impinging on individual peoples' privacy or unfairly attributing certain action or behaviour to *all* homeless people.

## 4.1g Representing 'Other'

Central to methodologies employed was the aim of enabling homeless people to publish materials and produce presentations that represented homeless heritage in their own words, if they wished to do so. Through the publication of popular articles in which colleagues' words are reported verbatim (Kiddey & Schofield 2009, 2011), through co-presentation at conferences[14] co-curated exhibitions and in making a documentary film this end has been achieved in a small way. However, I am aware that I remain a key 'proprietor' (Strang 2003) of the data we gathered which poses ethical questions perhaps more commonly experienced by scholars working with indigenous and Aboriginal groups (Byrne 2003, Strang 2003, Zimmerman 2003, Byrne & Nugent 2004). Effort was made to counter this position by explicitly asking homeless colleagues how they thought we should construct narratives but I could not ask every homeless person their view and there remained diversity within the homeless 'community' (Said 1979, Anderson 1983, Hamilakis & Duke 2007, Smith & Waterton 2009). In the end '…it [was] never about codes or canons but about better or worse choices…' (Silverman 2003: 118).

## 4.2 Informal Familiarisation

I lived and worked in Bristol between 2003 and 2011 and have been familiar with Stokes Croft (central Bristol) from the mid 1990's. Until 2007/8 much of Stokes Croft lay disused, its empty warehouses infamous for 'raves', a destination for people looking for adventures on 'ecstasy', a popular recreational drug (Reynolds 1998). Between 2006 and 2009, I spent most of my time in Stokes Croft volunteering and working on community projects and helping to squat empty

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[14] Co-presented 'Punks & Drunks: counter-mapping homelessness', Theoretical Archaeology Group Dec 2010 Bristol

buildings for community use. The area is widely associated with homelessness and has been for many years. Within a square mile, there are several homeless hostels and emergency shelters and services for people with addiction problems, free and cheap food venues and *The Big Issue* office are sited there. Probation services are located nearby in St Paul's. Horfield prison is directly connected with Bristol Magistrates Court via a bus route along Stokes Croft. The road forms part of the original route north from the city of Bristol. Passing through and working in Stokes Croft, I came to meet homeless people – Punk Paul, Disco Dave, Jane, Andrew, Rich, Ratty, Little Tom, Gary, Lorraine, Michael, Tia, Pops, Whistler and Tony Tap, to name just a few. My research subject found me, rather than the other way around. Initially, homeless people spotted me smoking a roll up cigarette and asked if I had any spare. I always had 'spare' tobacco, and this is how research for this thesis began. In many respects, these chance meetings led to the creation of an important store of what anthropologist Simon Ottenberg refers to as 'headnotes' – observations that are not written down but remain inside your head, framing and inspiring what comes next (Ottenberg 1990).

Informal but regular engagement with homeless people for several months preceding the point at which any formal research took place was integral to data I was able to gather in Bristol. After weeks of giving (homeless) people tobacco and frequently helping them interpret letters from housing and probation services, I began to notice patterns in homeless peoples' behaviour and found homeless perspectives increasingly interesting. I began to ask homeless people informally about the obstacles they felt held them back from being housed and living independent lives. At this point, some people were suspicious, asking whether I was 'outreach' or 'undercover [police]'. I explained that I had trained as an archaeologist and was 'just interested' because I thought perhaps archaeology could tell us about homelessness in new ways. Some people asked no further questions. Others began to ask what I meant by 'homeless landscapes' and question how I could 'do archaeology' without digging in the ground. These informal conversations led to the creation of a team of colleagues from Bristol with whom I worked regularly.

During this phase I considered countering homeless perspectives of the city with maps of the city as prescribed and dictated through policy implementation (for example, Designated Public Place Orders (DPPO) or Alcohol Exclusion Zones and Dispersal Zones – see appendix 4). In researching whether to proceed with this idea I spent an evening with 'Streetwise', a partnership between Bristol City Council and the local police, the aim of which is 'tackle street based anti-social behaviour'[15]. I joined 'Streetwise' for their walk around Bristol on the evening of the 12th March 2011 to observe interactions between the 'Streetwise' team and homeless people. On balance however I decided to work directly with homeless people in attempt to reach more authentic views on homeless culture. Some observations made during the shift I shadowed 'Streetwise' are returned to later (see Chapter Eight).

## 4.2a Methodological Approaches in Bristol

In the months before I moved to York I was keen to begin gathering data because time with the Bristol homeless community was limited. I designed a short questionnaire which I carried with me wherever I went in the hope I could gather data on numbers of people who considered themselves homeless and typologies of homelessness[16]. I quickly abandoned the questionnaires because they actively discouraged people from engaging with me. One man, Tyrone, had recently left prison and been allocated a room at Jamaica Street hostel (at the time run by English Church Housing Group). Tyrone had been keen to be involved in the pilot phase of field work but when I approached him with a questionnaire he found it very off-

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[15]

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council_and_democracy/Our%20City%2025%20January%202012.pdf

[16] In retrospect, I agree that this method of data gathering is almost completely useless with respect to homeless communities, as Hopper notes; 'The trick…was not to confuse categories of problems with typologies of persons. It was practices not personalities than needed to be understood.' (Hopper 2003: 84).

putting. I am not alone in having found this typical of how most homeless people respond to requests to complete questionnaires. Nels Anderson, sociologist and 'pioneer of the method that became known as participant observation[17]' studied 'hobos' in Chicago in the 1920's. Anderson recalls:

*'At first the writer tried to gather his data by revealing his identity and purpose and asking the [homeless] individual to fill out the case card, upon which were about twenty five questions of a general nature. He was not long learning that such a method was not practical, as the reactions of the men were generally negative'* (Anderson, cited in Rauty 1998: 81)

More recently, the 'rogue sociologist', Sudhir Venkatesh, encountered the same reaction during research into housing projects in 1980s Chicago (Venkatesh 2009). Acknowledging that paper questionnaires were likely to dissuade people from working with me I took to using a microphone and digital sound recorder. Asking whether they minded being recorded before any recording took place I engaged homeless people verbally.

A pilot phase of fieldwork took place 8th -12th June 2009 in collaboration with Dr John Schofield (JS was working for English Heritage at the time). Our aim was to meet a different homeless person each day and map their routine in as much detail as they were prepared to share. Homeless contacts already made were central to this week. Others were involved intermittently. Some people remained peripheral characters, keen to speak with us as archaeologists and talk about places they knew but not willing or able to take the time to engage in the process more fully.

During this period I observed street life to be chaotic and highly transient so it was impractical to schedule formal meetings. I suggested we took a less formal approach

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[17] See page 5 of Raffaele Rauty's introduction to 1998 reprint of Anderson's 1926 work *'The Hobo'*

by spreading the word by word of mouth that 'the archaeologists' would be around for a week and keen to work with homeless people who wished to work with us. I loosely arranged - with Punk Paul and Little Tom - to meet at Turbo Island (a small tract of private land where homeless people frequently gather) each morning of the week commencing 8th June 2009. The approach taken was that we would see what happened and be flexible.

I had also observed that most homeless people I had met in previous months suffered addiction to alcohol and/or heroin or other drugs. I felt that if we gave everyone an hour or so to sort themselves out – buy a beer or 'have a hit' – we would be most successful in finding people willing to work with us. I asked JS to meet me at a local café and we walked together towards Turbo Island. The route JS and I took between the café and Turbo Island led us passed the Post Office (from where most homeless people local to Stokes Croft collect their giro), *The Big Issue* office and Abdul's convenience shop which sells strong cheap alcohol. My feeling was that we would likely meet homeless contacts going about their business as we walked and that we could ask whoever we met whether they would like to spend the day with us, there and then. This mirrors the spontaneity and chaotic nature of homeless *habitus*, I had observed, and felt the best way to approach people for whom formality can be extremely off-putting (Bourdieu 1977).

## 4.2b Ethnography (Bristol)

*'Participant observation as a method – and ethnography as a genre – may be said to have cut its teeth domestically in the effort to capture the dynamics of rootlessness and mobility apparent in post-Progressive Era America'* (Hopper 2003: 57)

Anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists routinely practice participant observation in ethnographic research. Research conducted for this project included asking homeless people if *they* would like to make notes, draw or annotate maps the

objective being to record as much of homeless peoples' perspectives as directly as possible. I found homeless people consistently resistant to this idea for reasons I will explain. Information I sought to record included daily routines, journeys, places, items picked up and discarded and language and names for places, rituals and things.

As Denscombe notes:

*'Routine and normal aspects of <u>everyday life</u> are regarded as worthy of consideration as research data…the ethnographer is generally concerned to find out <u>how the members of the group/culture being studied understand things</u>, the meanings <u>they</u> attach to happenings, the way <u>they</u> perceive their reality.'* (Denscombe 2010: 80, emphases in original)

Attempting to minimise inevitable partiality in conducting ethnographic research (Hopper 1990, 2003) I took a variety of equipment on these ethnographic journeys in the hope that where one method of recording was unsuccessful another would prove successful. For the first few journeys I carried audio recording equipment, maps of central Bristol, pens and paper and a digital camera. It quickly became evident that the map I was using was not sufficient as the journeys we followed incorporated areas far away from the centre of the city (appendix 2, see also Chapter Five). Having found homeless people reluctant to draw or write I relied more heavily on the digital camera and whenever we stopped walking, I asked whether we might record our conversation (Fig 1).

Figure 1 - RK audio recording with PP (photo: John Schofield)

Between September 2010 and May 2011 I arranged to work more closely with Andrew, Punk Paul, Jane, Whistler, Danny and Deano on several occasions. It is not possible to be entirely scientific about how many meetings took place but I aimed to work with people until *they* felt we had exhausted the places, sites, journeys and intangible heritage significant to them (Figs 2 & 3). I showed each person the photographs we had taken previously, asked them to describe the picture and typed what they told me verbatim. During these conversations, I explained in greater depth what I meant by 'attachment' to specific areas in the city and we were then able to include intangible heritage such as memories of homeless people who had died and legendary squat parties (Byrne & Nugent 2004).

**Figure 2- RK working on memory map with AD (photo: John Schofield)**
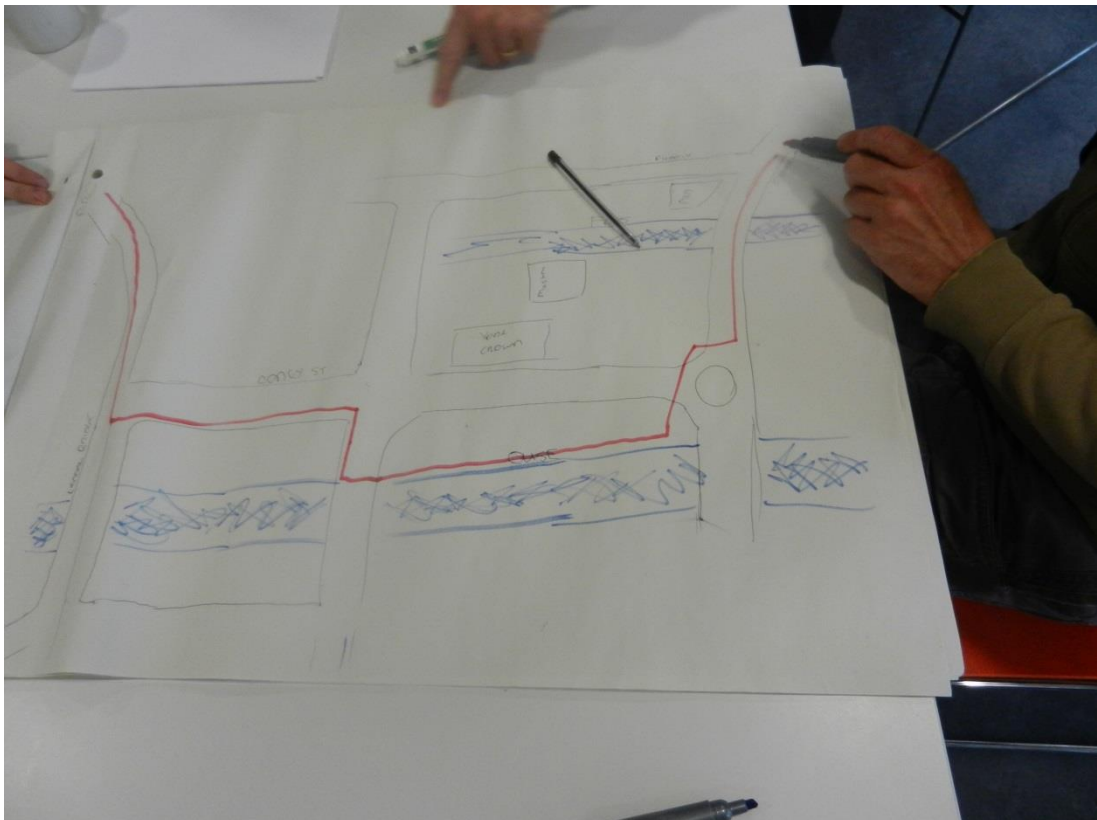


**Figure 3 - close up of memory map illustrating 'attachment' (photo: author's own)**

## 4.2c Methodological Approach to Excavation at Turbo Island (Bristol)

One afternoon, at the end of a mapping day, a conversation broke out on Turbo Island between homeless people concerning past uses of the site. Suggestions included that it had been 'a kind of Speaker's Corner', 'a place where pirates were hanged' and that beneath the turf lay the largest 'crack den' in Bristol. I suggested we might excavate the site together – homeless people and archaeologists working in collaboration - to see what archaeology could tell us. This suggestion was met with great enthusiasm. Two local policewomen, familiar to colleagues, were invited to join us for one day of the excavation.

The practice of working collaboratively with local communities and engaging the wider population in interpretation of the past was discussed earlier but I reiterate here the value of accepting plurality of meaning in the democratic production of the past in the present. Academic acceptance of this approach was galvanised in the arrival of a peer reviewed journal *Public Archaeology* which published its first edition in 2000 and increasing numbers of publicly funded projects to diversify heritage in Britain[18]. The excavation of Turbo Island brought together homeless people, local police, students and members of the local community, a diverse group of people for whom there exist a variety of significant perspectives on this tract of land in their neighbourhood (Fig 4).

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[18] See for example - http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/embracing-difference/

**Figure 4 - collaboratively excavating Turbo Island, Bristol (photo: Ali Rowe)**

It was important that 'the dig' was approached safely but informally so as to remain appealing and accessible to everyone (Fig 5). I was careful to maintain the procedural level of archaeological integrity and professionalism expected at any other site which was achieved in part through recruiting several postgraduate archaeology students from the University of Bristol to help manage volunteers. This allowed anyone from the local community who wanted to be involved to be included in the excavation with supervision from people trained in archaeological theory and practice. The excavation took place 7th -9th December 2009. A student archaeologist made posters advertising the excavation which were displayed on local noticeboards and in places previously identified as 'homeless places' (see Chapter Six). In retrospect, few homeless people who later joined the project had noticed or read the posters, rather heard about the project through word of mouth, implications of which are further unpacked in Chapter Eight.

Homeless colleagues chose where to site three trenches on Turbo Island. The BBC made a short film about the excavation[19] (see Fig 6 & Appendix 3). In December 2010, the homeless heritage team was granted £3,500 funding from UnLtd (a since dissolved body that supported social entrepreneurial projects). We used some of this money to create an archaeological exhibition that tracked the story of the project to date, from counter-mapping, through the identification and excavation of Turbo Island to the finds cleaning process. Taking on a squatted shop we had space in which to display and interpret finds from the excavation, show photographs and create audio booths in which visitors could listen to recordings of homeless people speaking about homeless places whilst looking at corresponding photographs and we were able to show our films. We agreed that taking on a squatted space and creating *our own* exhibition space was necessary for several reasons: 1) homeless colleagues were not comfortable with suggestions that we paid to show our work in places they perceived would have been unwelcoming to homeless peers 2) our exhibition materials were 'adult' in nature (for example, including pictures of drug paraphernalia, stories relating to prostitution and violence), rendering many community spaces inappropriate 3) Andrew and Danny felt it would make an important political point about loss of public space if we held the exhibition in a squat. We occupied 37 Stokes Croft between the 18th and 21st December 2010 and created *A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects*, an interactive public archaeological exhibition about contemporary homelessness in Bristol (see also Chapter Seven).

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[19] http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bristol/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_8530000/8530447.stm

**Figure 6 - BBC film crew, Turbo Island (photo: Ali Rowe)**

## 4.2d Methodological Approaches in York

Arriving in York to undertake a PhD I knew very few people and did not know the city and therefore decided to use the opportunity to develop a contrasting approach to working archaeologically with homeless people. I contacted an official homeless

agency in York called Arc Light[20]. I approached Arc Light by email (February 2011). I explained that I was a postgraduate archaeology student looking at contemporary homelessness and keen to develop a project *with* residents. I was invited to meet the managing director, Jeremy Jones (JJ). JJ asked me to develop an action plan with a timescale and budget. My action plan explained that I would donate my time for free and having contacted a film maker who had previously worked with residents from Arc Light, Paul Banks (PB), I included a rough budget for the project. JJ kindly found funds to add to the project and put me in touch with a member of support staff from Arc Light, Peter McEvoy (PM). Together with PM I sought to engage Arc Light residents in beginning the York based second phase of the project.

## 4.2e Peer to peer handover

Using funding granted by the University of York's Research Development Fund I was able to arrange for three members of the Bristol homeless heritage team to come to York to handover the project, explain what it might entail and drum up enthusiasm among Arc Light residents. Andrew, Jane and Deano arrived in York 11th July 2011 and I was able to accommodate them at an affordable hotel in the city centre. We visited the York Castle museum together with Jacko, a resident from Arc Light and support worker, PM (Fig 7). In the afternoon the Bristol homeless heritage team presented an introduction to 'homeless heritage' at Arc Light. Colleagues each gave a short talk about their preconceptions, hopes, fears and reaction to involvement in the project and we showed the BBC film. In the Arc Light audience were residents, staff and a local Police Community Support Worker (PCSO). After the presentation Deano played guitar and we ran a question and answer session to address any immediate concerns. In response, Arc Light residents were keen to show us films they had previously made with PB. These included several spoof adverts, 'Arc Light news' and a music video that accompanied a rap song written and performed by an ex-resident, featuring several residents in the room. The rap video provoked a strong

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[20] http://www.york-arclight.co.uk/

emotional reaction from one Arc Light resident and we were told that two of the six people in the video had since died. One man commented that the film was 'all that was left' of his friend because he was not informed of funeral arrangements. Homelessness and bereavement is an under-studied topic to which I return in more detail later (see Chapters Five and Eight). The handover session was successful because Arc Light residents identified and felt affinity with Bristol homeless colleagues. Nine residents from Arc Light signed up to take part in the York based project.



Figure 7 - peer to peer handover: trip to Castle Museum, York (photo: author's own)

## 4.2f 'Walk and Talk': counter-mapping York

Six of the nine people who signed up to take part in the York homeless heritage project came to an informal meeting where we scheduled days during which we would 'walk and talk' around York with maps. Everyone agreed to PB filming these sessions. Between 3rd and 6th August and on 22nd September 2011, I joined six Arc Light residents on walks around the city with film maker PB (Fig 8).

**Figure 8 - filming in Museum Gardens, York (photo: author's own)**

I carried pens, paper and maps but no-one was keen to write or draw echoing earlier experience and that of other sociologists working with vulnerably housed and homeless people (Anderson 1926, Venkatesh 2009). With PB filming each day (except 22nd September) I used my camera less than I did throughout fieldwork in Bristol but focussed on recording details on the map including 'short cuts' through bushes and the use of 'snickelways' (a York word for small alleys). Routes taken by homeless people through the city of York bear marked similarity cartographically to those of Biripi people in nineteenth century Australia (Byrne 2003). Journeys are made around the edge of main arteries and alongside private boundaries and reveal how homeless people move through 'in-betweeness' (Byrne & Nugent 2004). Indeed, it is possible to argue that homeless colleagues exist literally at the margins of mainstream society as routes and sites of significance cluster around the edges of York city wall (Fig 9).
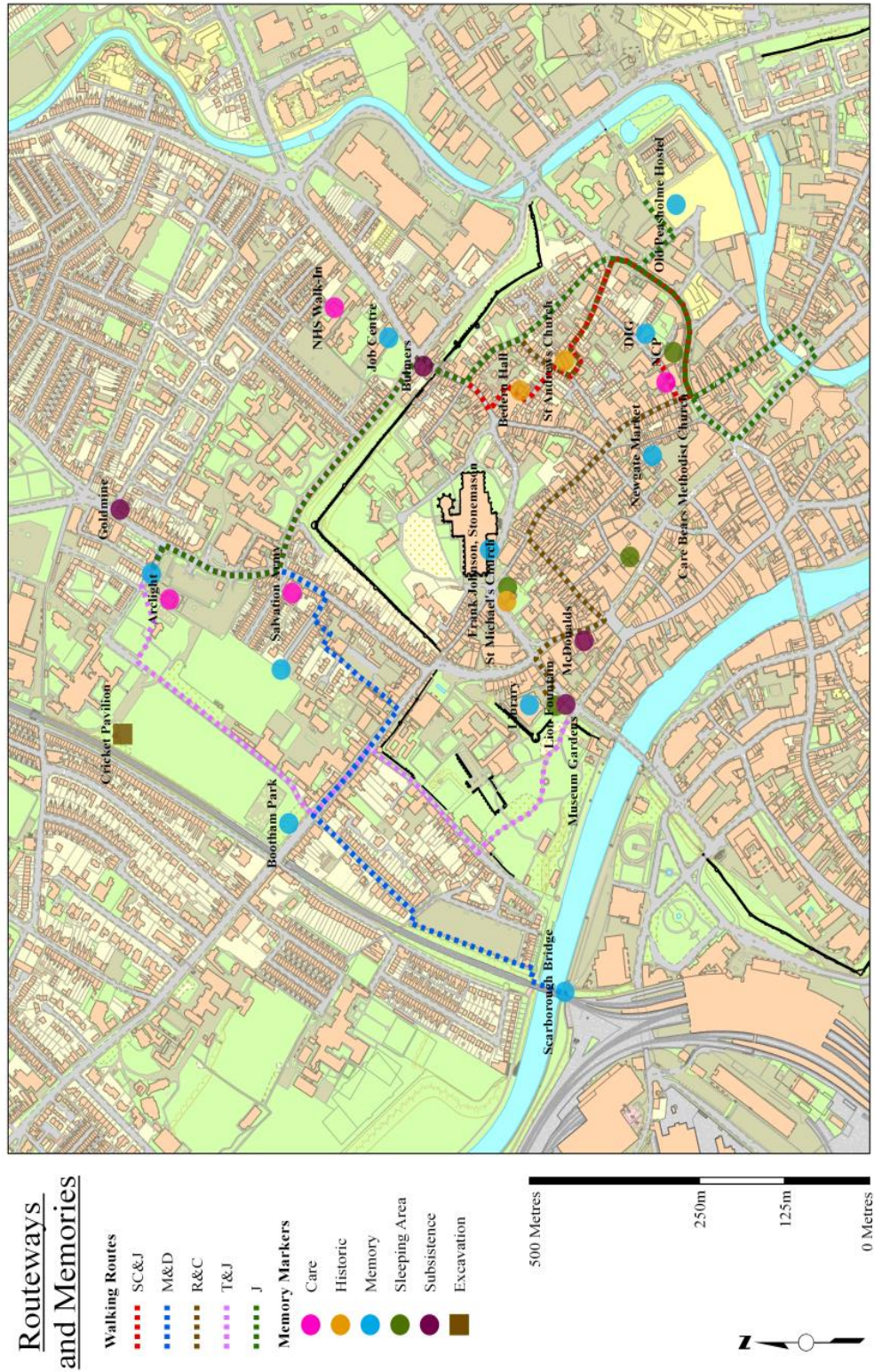
**Figure 9 - homeless routes cluster around old city wall, York (map: Tom Fitton)**

Alongside walking around York together with homeless colleagues to identify areas, places and things of significance to them, I was offered workspace at the Arc Light centre in which to develop map work. Facilities included a study room, pens and paper and an electronic whiteboard and computer. We were able to draw maps of the city from memory and therefore cognitively map York (Fig 10) and also locate homeless places using Google maps.



**Figure 10 - MD making a memory map (photo: author's own)**

Memory mapping was illuminating because it allowed us to pictorially represent diversity in perspectives of homeless York. For example, asked to draw a map of homeless York according to memory, Ray found that he drew a map of Bishopthorpe (a village just south of the city). Ray was surprised and on reflection attributed this to the fact 'it's where I was first homeless. I mean, I think of it as York now but in actual fact, it was here, where I've drawn. I had a problem with the drink and ended up sleeping in this little hut (a shed on the Bustardthorpe allotments) and then I slept behind the Tesco car park…until I got some help' (Fig 11).

**Figure 11 - Ray's map of Bishopthorpe, York (photo: author's own)**

Similarly, Dan's map was revealing for the fact he found that he navigates the city via memories of concerts and gigs. Dan was surprised at the fragmented nature of this map (Figs 12 & 13) and commented:
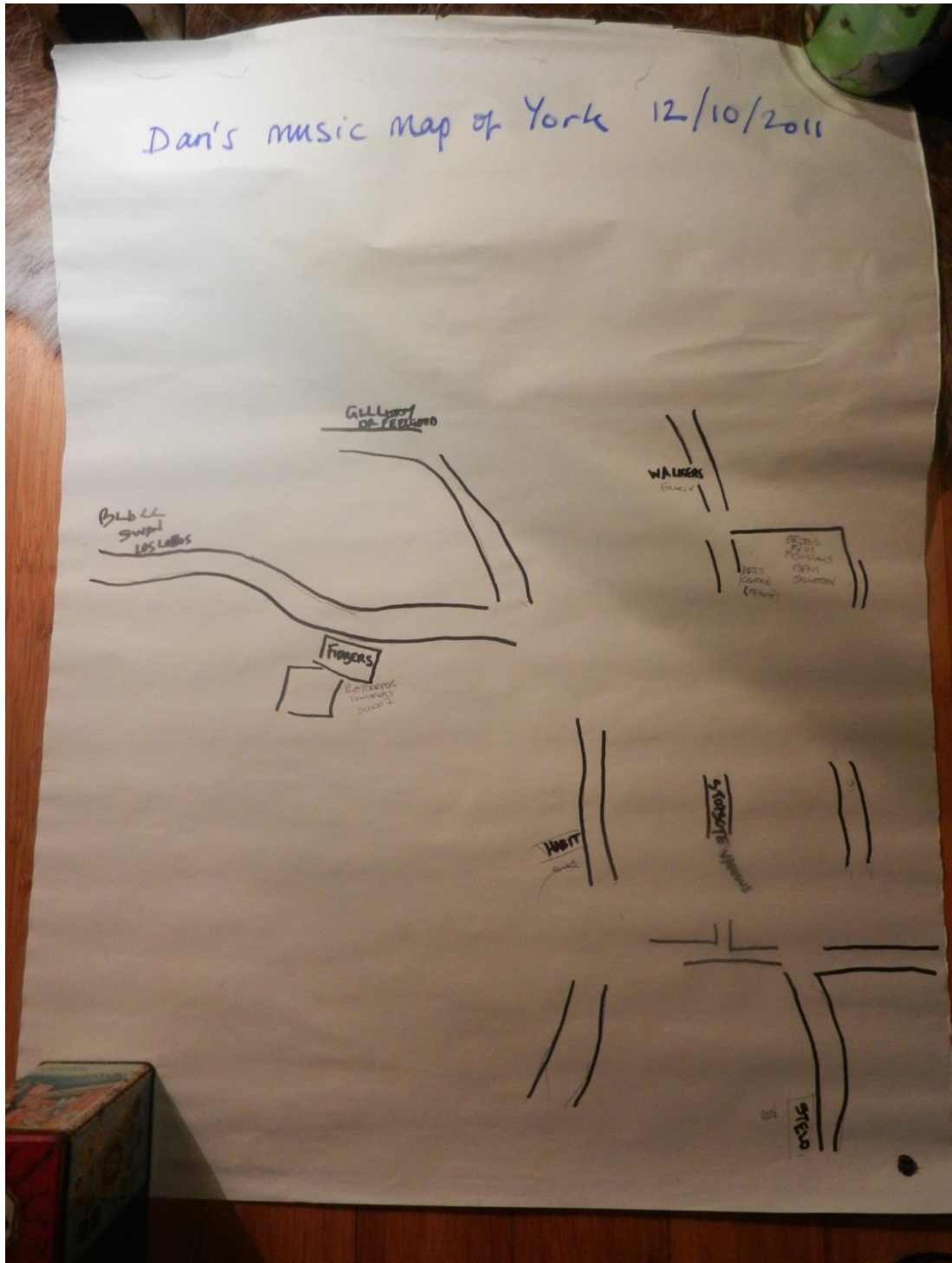
**Figure 12 - Dan's memory map of 'music map' of York (photo: author's own)**

*'It's so strange that I can't remember the street names that join these places up. I've known these streets for over thirty years and if I was out there, I'd know exactly where I was, but when I think of the streets now I can only think of them as gigs and the names of clubs that have long since closed down.'*

Memories of York

Dan's Music Maps

0 100 200 300 400 m

N
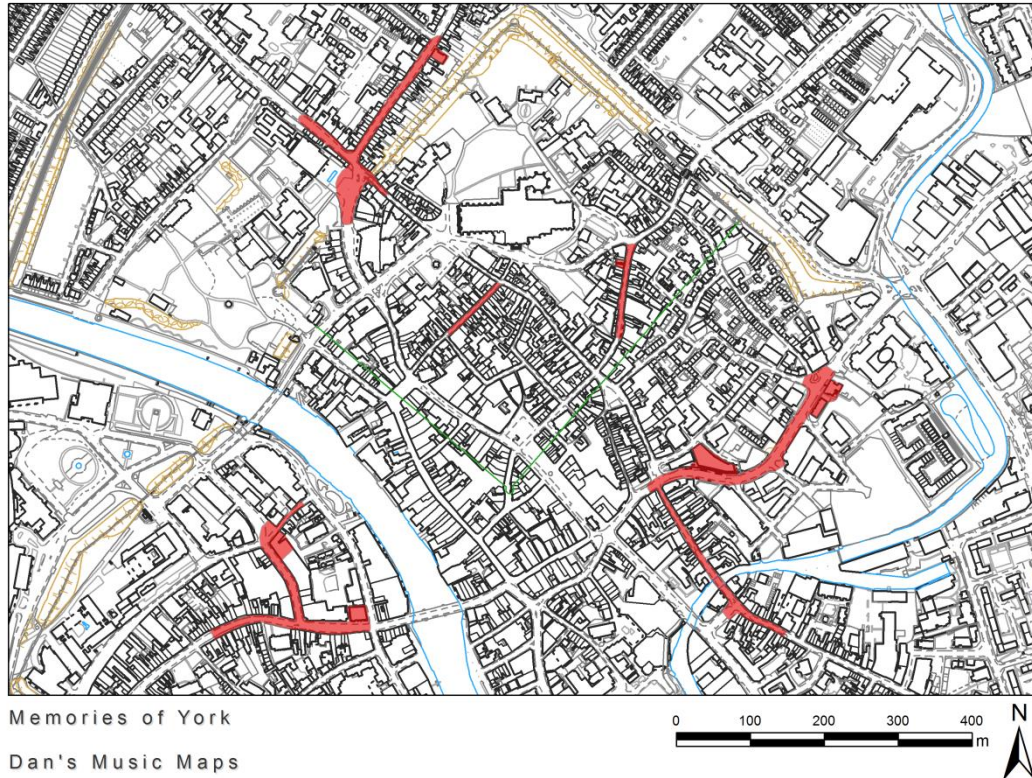
**Figure 13 - Dan's music map overlaid York street map (map: Tom Fitton)**

After creating memory maps of York we collaboratively tried to plot places (for example, specific salient features, bushes and sheds) using Google maps (Fig 14) but were intrigued to find that the majority of places significant to homeless colleagues were impossible to 'see' on Google maps due to their 'insignificance' and lack of address. Often we could move the street view camera to a road or feature *close* to the place significant to colleagues but the map would then blur and reveal the place to be unrecorded. This challenges aggressive surveillance discourse and reveals the degree to which digital map functions continue to suffer from ideological bias common to mapping throughout the ages (for example, maps as capitalism). It also reveals the degree to which homeless places are genuinely 'hidden', conceived as 'non-places' where 'nothing' happens.

**Figure 14 - using Google maps to locate homeless sites remotely (photo: author's own)**

The effect of different methodological approaches taken in Bristol and York became clearer after mapping days. For example, in York, I was accompanied by PB (and his film camera) and another archaeologist interested in homelessness (Hannah Baxter). The homeless people with whom I was able to work were aware they were guiding three 'non-homeless' people around York. As Denscombe notes:

*'[ethnography] has an open and explicit awareness of the researcher's <u>self</u> in the choice of topic, process of research and construction of the findings… It acknowledges the inherent reflexivity of social knowledge.'* (Denscombe 2010: 90 – emphasis in original).

I have no empirical evidence to prove the Arc Light residents would have behaved differently had I approached them using the same methodology applied in Bristol. However, I was aware that, having made contact with York colleagues via official

channels I was associated with 'authority'. There are implications here for refining methodologies that allow the researcher to distinguish more 'intricate and subtle' differences between these 'realities' (Denscombe 2010: 90).

## 4.2g Methodological approach to excavation 'The Pavilion' (York)

Applying the same excavation method as in Bristol I worked with homeless colleagues in York to identify a place at which colleagues' route maps converged. Six York colleagues (Dan, Jacko, Mark, Ray, Scott and Rich) identified a spot behind a cricket pavilion in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital as a place they had used intermittently. Dan remembered sleeping rough there in the 1980s. Jacko remembered socialising there from 1995 onwards and Mark had memories of spending time behind the pavilion, drinking and socialising from the early 2000s. Ray identified the place as 'somewhere you can usually find someone for banter and a drink'. Scott identified it as being 'more of a place to be, before Arc Light opened [1999]'. Rich identified it as a social place. We decided this was the spot we would like to excavate and set to work gaining necessary permission.

Bootham Park Hospital is a mental health hospital serving in and out patients. The cricket pavilion was in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital and was removed by hospital staff shortly after our excavation. The grounds in which the pavilion stood were also used by Bootham School as sports facilities. JJ knew the manager at Bootham Park Hospital (professionally) and introduced me. We secured permission from the NHS hospital quickly on the condition that people were supervised at all times. JJ's wife is secretary to the Head Master at Bootham School and knew privately that the Head Master disliked the idea of 'a bunch of homeless junkies playing at archaeology' (anecdotal evidence from JJ). It took a little more time but we secured permission from the Head Master on the condition that homeless colleagues were separated from school children by a perimeter fence that he insisted was erected around the work area (Fig 15). The date of the excavation was set and we began to promote it through word of mouth and regular announcements at Arc Light residents' meetings and by email at the University of York. Several students

and staff from across academic strata – undergraduates through to a postdoctoral researcher – signed up to volunteer. We held meetings to prepare for 'The Pavilion' excavation at Arc Light in an effort to make the project more appealing and familiar to Arc Light residents. Everyone was welcome to attend all meetings. As with preparation for the excavation of Turbo Island, everyone was given appropriate health and safety training. It was important that everyone received the same training so as not to distinguish members of the team as 'homeless' or 'students'.

**Figure 15 - poster on perimeter fence erected around excavation site, York (photo: author's own)**

Experience at Turbo Island suggested that the best way to involve homeless people in the excavation process was to begin and remain open to people joining in. In contrast to many student excavations, enthusiasm developed as the excavation proceeded so that we extended the dig by three days (Fig 16). Student volunteers worked side by side with homeless colleagues with no distinction made between

circumstances (Fig 17). Consistent with experience in Bristol, colleagues became familiar with archaeological processes and technical language quickly and were keen to demonstrate new skills which I will later argue had profound therapeutic benefits for those involved (Fig 18).



**Figure 16 - enthusiasm for taking part in the excavation increased as the week progressed, Pavilion, York (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 17 - no distinction was made between student and homeless colleagues as people worked together on site (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 18 - MD & DC bagging finds, Pavilion, York (photo: author's own)**

## 4.3 Challenges

Throughout fieldwork challenges arose some of which were anticipated (for example, how to manage expectations properly). Some of the challenges faced were

more surprising (for example, the degree to which low self-esteem inhibited homeless colleagues from trying new things such as drawing maps). Some regional difference was detectable in terms of challenges faced. For example, people with whom I worked in Bristol were more likely to be rendered incapacitated through excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs but this is perhaps reflective of my methodological approach, that is, I was working with people who were not enrolled in any process of rehabilitation. In York, colleagues with whom I worked were less likely to be intoxicated but more likely to associate the project with authority, resulting in poor attendance to begin with. In this section of the chapter I further explore challenges and explain how each challenge was met.

## 4.3a Communication

Homeless colleagues, including residents at Arc Light, generally had problems maintaining mobile phone communication. Where colleagues were currently rough sleeping the reasons for this are fairly straightforward (for example, colleagues had no mobile phone, no credit or nowhere to charge the battery). Further problems included the fact that mobile phones are frequently stolen or sold within homeless culture which means that phone numbers change repeatedly. Another problem, experienced twice, was calling someone who had expressed interest in taking part in the project and being told angrily by a different person, 'they're not interested anymore' (or more colourful words to that effect). Negative pressure from *within* the homeless and insecurely housed population *not* to take part in projects perceived to be 'straight' was evidenced in Bristol and York. In most cases telephone communication was less than satisfactory with the exception of a few individuals.

The best method of communication was to physically go to places where people might be and speak with them or leave a message with other homeless people and rely on word of mouth, a time consuming process. The advantage of working with Arc Light was that colleagues were more easily contacted via staff at the centre. Another advantage was that I could rely on support staff to remind colleagues about meeting times. One problem I had not anticipated was that when colleagues moved

on (for example, to 'second step' or social housing) the communication channel was broken or lost due to the Data Protection Act which prevents confidential details being shared without the permission of both parties.

## 4.3b Trust

Homeless people with whom I worked found the concept of trust extremely hard. I suggest that the common 'cultural image' (Hopper 2003) of homeless people serves to exacerbate the difficulties homeless people regularly experience.

*'The alleged offense of the homeless poor…is their failure to belong…and the host of uncertainties about an individual's untrustworthiness this gives rise to…'* (Hopper 2003: 62 – emphasis in original).

As the previous chapter sought to show contemporary suspicion of homeless people has a long politically and ideologically constructed legacy in Britain. The 'outsider', once literally one from outside the parish, has been increasingly linked with shady criminality, immorality and disease. I suggest the circumstances in which homeless individuals often find themselves (for example, with nowhere to go, inadequate access to bathroom facilities and little emotional security) lead many people to experience the feeling of being judged or feeling that passers-by are suspicious, even if they simply hurry past without acknowledgment. Experiencing this regularly severely damages self-esteem and leads homeless people to become accustomed to the notion that they *are* untrustworthy and extend this preconception to others. My experience has been that, to a large extent, mistrust of others is a default position among homeless people. As Baier notes:

*'…inequalities foster distrust because feelings such as goodwill and a readiness to become vulnerable seem almost ridiculous in such contexts'* (Baier 2006, cited in Scarre & Scarre 2006:128).

Added to this is the fact that many people who become homeless have *already experienced* deep betrayal of trust, abuse being a commonly cited catalyst for homelessness (Quilgars et al 2008, Whitbeck 2009).

In Bristol and York it was palpable how many people were suspicious of my motivation for wanting to work with them. For example, when I first began asking people to show me homeless places people were keen to establish that I was definitely not 'a pig' or 'undercover' [police or drug squad]. Many homeless people needed a lot of reassurance that I was not trying to 'set them up', that I was an archaeologist interested in homelessness. The fact that I had spent two years prior to embarking on a doctorate developing relationships with homeless people in Bristol was invaluable because word spread quickly, 'she's an archaeologist and she's alright'. Trust also worked by association. Because I was alright, then so was JS whom I introduced. I also introduced two other archaeologists, both of whom were accepted on the same basis. Similarly, because I spent time in Bristol developing an understanding of contemporary homeless culture, linguistic terms and 'tricks of the trade' (for example, begging tactics) I was availed of a lexicon unfamiliar to most non-homeless people and this made integrating with York homeless people easier than it might otherwise have been. It is important to acknowledge that homeless people have credible reasons for being wary of people they do not know or strange sounding propositions. The chances of being physically attacked are much higher within the homeless population than for the rest of society (Johnsen, Cloke & May 2005, Whitbeck 2009). The proliferation of drugs and drink, lack of proper sleep and stressfulness of homelessness combined further exacerbate the potential for arguments, misunderstandings and fights to develop (Hopper 1991, 2003; Johnsen, Cloke & May 2005, Killgoree et al 2008, Whitbeck 2009, Kiddey & Schofield 2009, 2010, 2011). Instances of being 'set up', robbed, tricked or defrauded are experienced by homeless people more regularly than in society at large where there is greater financial and emotional resilience (Bourdieu 1977, McNaughton 2008).

## 4.3c Crime

Being homeless is itself illegal under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. Throughout fieldwork I was aware that *some* homeless people commit crime (for example, robberies and illegal drug taking). In Bristol far more than in York, homeless people spoke about drugs – their quality, availability and who was 'doing' what[21]. Fenced and stolen goods were spoken of frequently (for example, bicycles, mobile phones and iPods). Privy to conversations about illegal activities such as drug taking and stolen goods, I had to ensure I did not 'collude', 'grass' or 'hustle' (Venkatesh 2009). I became aware that the illegal exchange or sale of prescription pharmaceuticals is wide-spread in both cities, in some cases, functioning as peer to peer self-medication (for example, opium substitute pills might be offered to reduce the need for heroin). I took the view that I could legitimately observe and record each situation without judgment as this represented 'gift exchange' and shone a light on aspects of reciprocity (Mauss 1990).

## 4.3d Literacy

Undiagnosed dyslexia, exclusion from education at an early age, bad memories of school and digital exclusion were profound among homeless colleagues with whom I worked. Of all colleagues, only three were happy to write, Little Tom (Bristol) and Scott and Dan (York). The strong reluctance to write using a pen and high level of computer illiteracy made it necessary to rethink the way we recorded data. I created a blog because some homeless colleagues showed interest in learning to use the computer but this has since proven unsuccessful. One comment was illuminating:

*'I hated school. I was always told I was thick at school, or lazy. I tried going to one of those computer classes at the hostel [Jamaica Street hostel, Bristol] but it was like*

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[21] This might be explained by different methodological approaches. That is, I am associated with Arc Light, formality and authority in York and therefore it is unlikely that homeless people in York would be as open with me about overtly illegal practices such as the purchase and consumption of narcotics.

*school. It was boring…It put me right off. I didn't go again but I would like to learn how to use a computer because my kids use it and you have to bid for flats[22] on it now too* [register preference for council housing]*'* (Gary, Bristol)


## 4.3e Fear & Worry

Being homeless means a person is further isolated from any safe place than non-homeless people and a significant proportion of every day is taken up either being asked to 'move on' by police or landowners or attempting to be 'invisible', constantly reinforcing a sense of not belonging. Correspondingly, homeless people with whom I worked often imposed separation from the 'mainstream' themselves, frequently using derogatory language about themselves (for example, 'I'm just a tramp'). Fear and worry were found to be significant obstacles to be negotiated at almost every stage of attempting to engage homeless people. Colleagues who chose to become involved in the project needed a lot of encouragement to believe that they had anything to offer and routinely expressed concern that they might 'get it wrong'. It was not uncommon for something to happen external to the project that knocked a person's confidence to such a degree that they wanted to terminate their involvement. For example, Jane was hospitalised for a week after being physically attacked in April 2011. I heard about the violence via another member of the Bristol homeless heritage team and telephoned the hospital immediately. Jane was understandably extremely depressed and angrily told me that she wanted nothing more to do with the 'stupid project'.


At the time, I calmly respected Jane's decision and wished her well. That afternoon, I wrote Jane a card, including my telephone number and stating that her contribution to the project had been extremely valuable, that she would be missed and that if she changed her mind she would be welcomed back. Jane telephoned me from hospital within a couple of days. She was desperately upset and told me that she had been

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[22] http://www.homechoicebristol.co.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/30.aspx

attacked for having taken part in the archaeological project; her attacker was a man of whom she was generally frightened. This example clearly illustrates the pressure from *within* the homeless community under which homeless people labour *not* to 'conform'. Psychiatric and sociological literature suggest that addiction, particularly heroin addiction, can 'numb' or have a 'pausing effect' on a person's emotional development leading them to operate with under-developed emotional intelligence (Whitbeck 2009). Furthermore, recent work suggests that sleep deprivation (common to all homeless people) can also reduce *perceived* emotional intelligence and constructive thinking skills (Killgore et al 2008).

## 4.3f Money

Money – lack of it, sourcing it - plays a significant role in the lives of homeless people, particularly those with addiction problems. Perhaps more significantly, all homeless people with whom I worked were recipients of state benefits, most commonly Job Seeker's Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (currently undergoing restructuring as part of the proposed 'Universal Credit'). In all cases, 'Giro Day' (the day the person received their benefit money) was seen as a special day and in the majority of cases colleagues spent their entire allowance (paid fortnightly) in one day. For example, Jane commonly came to find me on Giro Day to show me what she had bought, what she called 'little presents' for herself and others (for example, a scented candle, a CD Walkman, a new mobile phone, a collar for her dog). In common with many homeless people I encountered, Jane felt no need to budget for the fortnight. Being quite used to having no money for long periods desensitises homeless people from the concerns it might cause 'the rest of us' - the disadvantage of this lackadaisical attitude to money can be seen to have a more detrimental effect on a person's life once they begin recovery from homelessness. For example, among the recently ex-homeless people with whom I worked budgeting skills were cited most commonly as difficult to grasp.

Giro Day is also significant for those people who use drugs (for example, Jane would allow herself to use heroin on Giro Day and go without heroin for the rest of the

fortnight). She calls herself a 'Giro junkie'. This was a common theme. As one man put it:

*'When you're used to having absolutely no money most of the time, it burns a hole when you get it. You're like a kid with pocket money. You want to get rid of it as soon as you can. You spend your life telling the world that you can live without money (because you have no choice) as a kind of survival strategy…and then when you have it, you act like most people! You consume. You splash out. There's no difference between you spanking hard earned wages on a posh meal and me spanking my giro on smack [heroin], the way I see it.'*

How I reimbursed homeless people for their time was a subject I thought about in depth. I decided I would offer people food, non-alcoholic drinks and pay travel expenses. I was clear that I would not pay any money for joining the project and in fact no one enquired about being paid. It was important that people engaged with the project because they were interested in it not because it led to 'rewards'.

## 4.3g Paperwork, bureaucracy and language

I have already identified that literacy skills were generally poor among the people with whom I worked. Many homeless people in Bristol asked me to interpret letters sent to them by probation, court and other public services. The excessively formal or industry specific language used by these institutions obfuscates unnecessarily. The effect is generally that threats of prosecution and potential consequences are often misunderstood.

The overly burdensome bureaucratisation of the Welfare State was central to debates about how it should operate in the early 1950s (Lowe 2005). It is also being cited currently by the government as a reason to 'trim' all benefits into one monthly package. Homeless people with whom I worked repeatedly described struggling to keep up with paperwork and frustrations encountered in trying to sort out support,

made worse by the fact a lot of the 'paperwork' is now online but few homeless people are computer literate or have access to computers. The 'system' is a vast and complex network of often competing and contradictory discourses and 'power' resides with those who are able to cut off resources and impose fines (Foucault 1979). Andrew (Bristol colleague) told me that he finds reading and writing difficult and this has always made paperwork feel daunting. In Andrew's words, *'…to be honest, I can't deal with it [paperwork]…Them little tick boxes might as well be massive great brick walls'*.

To date, the material culture of contemporary homelessness has received scant attention from archaeologists (Harrison 2009, Kiddey & Schofield 2009, 2010, 2011, Zimmerman, Singleton & Welch 2010). The subject of homelessness having more traditionally been investigated by scholars from within sociology (Anderson 1926, Rosenthal 2000, Amster 2008), anthropology (Mathieu 1993, Hopper 2003), social and cultural geography (Mitchell 2003, Johnsen, Cloke & May 2005, Radley, Hodgetts & Cullen 2006,  Sheehan 2010), psychology (Whitbeck 2009), city planning and associated areas of social and housing policy (Wolch & Rowe 1992, Somerville 1992, 1994, 1999 & 2013, Quilgars, Johnsen & Pleace 2008, Bridgman 2008, Ravenhill 2008). It is my belief that an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness may be socially useful and contribute to existing literature on homelessness through adding a spatial and material aspect to our understanding. In approaching contemporary homelessness archaeologically archival material was consulted (for example, books, newspapers, online and journal articles and conference papers). Oral testimonies about the recent history of sites identified by homeless people were gathered and recorded through photographs, film and audio. I read widely around homelessness literature and the subject of representation of communities traditionally ignored or dismissed by the heritage sector (for example, Martin et al 1947, Handsman 1980, Anderson 1983, Bapty & Yates 1990, Hopper 1990, Lucas 1997, Byrne 2003, Byrne & Nugent 2004, Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009, Conrad & Barker 2010).

In this chapter I have addressed ethical concerns arising from working with homeless people in a heritage context and explained how the project came into being. I have clarified how I approached the project and explained where and why methodological approaches taken in Bristol and York differed. Challenges posed were examined and solutions to particular challenges presented. It is hoped that the reader is assured by this and earlier chapters that a strong case has been made for the plausibility of contemporary homeless heritage and value in undertaking such work. With this important backdrop in place I move on to present data gathered.

# Chapter Five: Landscapes

## 5.0 Introduction

In this and the following two chapters I present data gathered throughout fieldwork. It is useful to consider this and the following two chapters as a package where some overlapping and referring back and forth is necessary. Data are presented thematically. I begin in this chapter with data related to landscapes, hone in on 'places' identified within the landscapes in Chapter Six and zoom in further still, in Chapter Seven, to focus on artefacts. In so doing my aim is to present the experience of homelessness as shown to me by homeless colleagues, a transient and dynamic palimpsest of characterised landscape, ephemeral locations and 'things' that relate to homeless lifestyles. Themes emerged throughout fieldwork but were more clearly determinable after excavation of two contemporary homeless sites – Turbo Island, Bristol (2009/2010) and The Pavilion, Bootham Park Hospital, York (2011/2012).

In Chapter Two I briefly explored the origins of the concept of landscape within western discourse and developed a critique of the primacy of visual ideology within archaeology. I suggested that people and places work back and forth, across time and personal experience to create and recreate perceptions of place which are constructed as heritage. As people change so too do their perceptions (an assertion evidenced by some recent neuro-endocrinological findings further unpacked in Chapter Seven). I have argued throughout the thesis so far that heritage can be understood as a dialectical *active process* rather than a static bounded entity. I have argued that 'landscape', like 'home', is a subjective concept perceived through *relationships* between the tangible and intangible world, affected by cultural, social, political and personal contexts as well as an active force which shapes such contexts. This theoretical construction of landscape aligns with its definition in the European Landscape Convention, which came into force in the UK in March 2007[23]. Landscapes are deeply personal, imbued with subtle nuances which make them open

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[23] http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=176&CM=8&DF=&CL=ENG

to as many variable interpretations as there are, have been (and will be), people to experience them.

Data reveal that homeless perceptions of the landscapes of Bristol and York sometimes adhere to traditional interpretation (for example, accepting historic events as 'known' fact). At times, homeless perceptions convey a far more multi-sensory and phenomenological understanding of landscape akin to those more common to indigenous world views. Thus, data offer ways to challenge visually dominant interpretations of each city. It will later be argued that data presented have implications for future work with others whose lifestyles or personal circumstances (for example, physical/mental/emotional states) make them currently considered 'difficult' or 'inappropriate' for inclusion within heritage work. Such groups might include, for example, sex workers, trafficked people, severely disabled people, ex-offenders or those recovering from politically or economically induced trauma such as asylum seekers and refugees. Such 'non-conformity' is equally active in the production and reproduction of the city and contributions often remain overlooked by archaeologists or considered in isolation from wider heritage interpretations of the city. Inclusion of such perspectives, it will be argued, might aid better understanding of the specific experience and suggest avenues for further research into the therapeutic potential of archaeology. It will also be argued that archaeology is uniquely placed to approach 'difficult' aspects of contemporary culture as heritage; that archaeology can be inclusive of 'non-experts' where disciplines more traditionally associated with the study of society (for example, sociology and social policy) remain less accessible, often sustaining social and intellectual divisions which can make engagement with professionals unappealing to those who feel judged.

This chapter begins with data relating to how policy impacts homeless landscapes and a review of conceptions of time in relation to homelessness. I then present data thematically as it was prioritised by colleagues during field walking and counter mapping. Seasonality, environment and ephemeral/psychological landscape features are presented.

## 5.1 National policies, local implementation

Policies tangibly shape the way colleagues experience and use parts of the city even where no physical manifestation of policy stipulations exists in the landscape. As discussed in Chapter Three national homelessness legislation is implemented differently within local contexts due to circumstances beyond the control of local councils. For example, Bristol is a large, ex-industrial city with a high volume of homeless people and/or people suffering addiction problems. York, by contrast, is a much smaller city with a smaller homeless population and much smaller stock of housing deemed 'suitable for statutorily homeless people'. Therefore, people who present homeless in York are likely to be offered temporary accommodation outside the city in places where rent is cheaper (see also Chapter Eight). By contrast, Bristol based homeless people are more likely to be offered temporary accommodation within the city. The effect is that Bristol based vulnerably housed people often remain 'visibly homeless' on the streets whereas York based homeless people are physically removed from the city, resulting in the *appearance* that York produces fewer homeless people. In fact, York has proportionately as many homeless people as anywhere else but they are relocated when they become 'visibly' homeless. Equally, the decision by York council to treat activities associated with homelessness (for example, begging) with aggressive 'zero tolerance' or 'straight to court' approaches is possible due to the fact the council is financially better positioned to implement such strategies than is Bristol city council. There exists some circularity to this situation – the fewer people you allow to stay in an area with complicated problems (for example, addiction, mental health issues, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), the less it costs to police the area. The less it costs to police an area, the more aggressively a council can afford to police problems as they occur. The result of local variation in the implementation of national laws and legislation is that there arguably remain 'better' and 'worse' places to be homeless in the country, as we have seen was the case historically (see Chapter Three).

Police have the power to arrest anyone they find begging under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. None of this is lost to homeless colleagues with whom I worked. As Jacko put it, 'in York, you get caught begging and you're straight to

court and if they [magistrates] think you're a problem, they'll jail you. Puts some people off begging but they [police] have to catch you doing it.' Magistrates are also entitled to fine beggars up to one thousand pounds (£1000). Of course, most people who are caught begging are unable to afford such a sum and in some cases fines are paid over a long series of regular small payments. The disadvantage to this is that this money is likely paid using state awarded benefits, a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul. Other colleagues actively looked forward to being sent to prison, 'I love prison,' Little Tom told me, 'three meals a day, a bed, a TV, proper education and help getting off drugs. You don't get that outside prison.'

Another area of local policy implementation that warrants consideration for its near total *absence* of significance to homeless colleagues' perception of the landscape is 'Alcohol Exclusion Zones' or 'No Drinking Zones'. Under Section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 local councils have the power to designate a restriction on drinking alcohol to certain areas of cities which have experienced alcohol related anti-social behaviour. Such designations are officially called Designated Public Place Orders or DPPOs. However, most councillors, police and local people know them as 'No Drinking Zones' or 'Alcohol Exclusion Zones'. Where an area is a DPPO it is not an offence to consume alcohol but the police have the power to 'control the consumption of alcohol' in that area through requesting a person refrains from drinking alcohol or confiscating their drink. Of those colleagues with whom I worked, several were addicted to alcohol and therefore very likely to have alcohol either in their hand, up their sleeve or in a bag. Both Bristol and York colleagues were aware that such zones existed and in some cases, modified their behaviour in response to them. However, modifications primarily included finding ways to disguise alcohol rather than not drinking alcohol. Jane explained, 'That's why I pour sherry into a pop bottle and keep the big bottle [of sherry] up my jacket sleeve. I'm trying to play the game, that's how I see it.' York has recently proposed to make the entire city (within the outer ring road) a 'No Drinking Zone' where officers would have the power to arrest or fine a person up to £500 for refusing to allow police officers to confiscate alcohol. Information on alcohol exclusion zones is not available on the local police website or Bristol City Council's website but after a

Freedom of Information request, Bristol City Council confirmed the areas designated DPPOs (appendix 4). Bristol City Council also confirmed:

*'...the City Council advertises each DPPO by street signage (laminated metal) at all main public rights of way and highway entry into the designated areas. Additional signage is erected within each area where there is likely to be increased risk of infringement - for example open spaces and transport terminals. These signs tend to be stickers, applied to street furniture and lighting columns'*[24]

During fieldwork conducted for this thesis it was observed that street signage at main rights of way were positioned so high that the message could not be read from pedestrian height and that stickers were often vandalised or removed. Themes common to historic policies recurring in contemporary implementation and strategies for managing homelessness and associated 'anti-social behaviour' are more fully unpacked later in the thesis (see Chapter Eight).

## 5.2 Time in relation to homeless landscapes

To a degree it can be argued that the archaeological discipline is less about time in the conventional sense than space. Data gathered for this thesis supports this notion through revealing perceptions of landscapes that are created and recreated through memories of events and people, historic and personal. Chronological time is understood by homeless colleagues to be theoretically linear as shown by the frequency with which colleagues refer to events happening 'back then' or 'in those days' but historic events actively shape the present. Places come into being through social activities which literally 'take place' at geographically specific locations *through* space. The act of remembering is integral to the creation of homeless places where tangible markers of homeless activities and attachment to place are often

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[24] Direct quote from email communication between myself and Bristol City Council (14th August 2013)

fleeting and ephemeral. The act of remembering (a social activity, part of the oral culture) is what gives places their unique character (for example, 'this is where Josh died').

Time is not routinely experienced as 'clock-time' by homeless colleagues rather specific days are made relevant due to events associated with that day (for example, Monday is Giro Day, Tuesday morning is when the Trinity Tabernacle offer free cooked breakfasts, Wednesday is the day the Homeless Health Service is available etc.). The 'time rhythm' as experienced by colleagues often observes days of the week more prominently than specific dates (for example, 'it is Thursday' often means more than 'it is Thursday 24$^{th}$ August'). Similarly, conversations with colleagues reveal that specific dates, even years, are hard to recall with precision. For example, Jacko talked of the fire at the York Minster in '1984 or somewhere around then' and Gary, speaking about when he used his 'skipper' (place to sleep) beneath the railway arches in Bristol recalled that he used the place 'since January or something'. The season is recalled more clearly than the date. Exceptions include days when a particular appointment must not be missed (for example, a meeting with a housing worker or doctor) and significant dates which have specific meaning for individual people (for example, the birthday of a child or anniversary of the death of a friend). Overtiredness or excessive consumption of drugs or alcohol can dramatically change perception of time as the following conversation between two homeless colleagues revealed:

**Liam:** time doesn't mean nothing to us really.

**Paul:** to everyday people in normal life it does, Liam. Every moment counts.

**Liam:** yeah.  It's like we'll disappear for a couple of years, yeah? When you're doing class A drugs all the time, it's like years, months, weeks…it's like, that won't really mean anything to us but to, like normal, Joe Public, that amount of time will be life changing to them.

**Rachael:** Time means nothing?

**Liam:** Nah. Well, to some people it do but me personally, there would be times when I hadn't slept for like ten days and then it's like, day, night, months. No difference. It was mad really because like I hadn't seen my mum for six years and then, like, we got in touch again and she was married and it was like…woah! Shocked me because like when you're living this sort of life years fly by and you don't think nothing of it. Whereas like, a normal person's life is different like. I don't know...it's difficult to explain. You know what I'm saying Paul?

**Paul:** I know what it's like. Yeah, I understand perfectly.

When asked whether time was a consideration, Jane (Bristol) answered as follows:

*'When I was on the street [homeless], I didn't think about time, like, the time on the clock, at all. I thought about Mondays because that's when I got paid* [received benefit money] *and I thought about different people that I knew had died or moved on but I wouldn't think of them things like a date, more like if it was winter or summer… If you're homeless, it might not be in a nice way, but you're not bothered by time. The day matters sometimes, like if you're going to get money but otherwise all the days meld into each other.'* (Jane Hallam, November 2010, pers comms)

Time is more perceptible to Dan (York) whose concept of clock time was reinforced through the *sound* of time marked by the built environment:

*'I usually think about fifteen minutes ahead…I might think ahead for another fifteen minutes, just until the clock bongs the next quarter of an hour* [York Minster chimes]. *It impacts the things you do more than I can really explain because, when*

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*you're homeless, you often don't even contemplate tomorrow, let alone next week, just a very short time ahead'* (Dan, pers comms, 2011).

I turn now to data relating to seasonality, environment and ephemeral and psychological features which combine to shape landscapes of homelessness in Bristol and York.

## 5.3 Seasonality: weather, seasonal change & anniversaries

In this section of the chapter I present data relating to weather, seasonality and anniversaries which data show affect homeless peoples' perception and experience of landscape. I begin by presenting data relating to weather and temperature. I move on to seasonality and ways in which homeless landscapes are experienced differently according to the change of seasons and climate. Finally, I present data relating to cultural and personal anniversaries which affect homeless perceptions of landscape in material and tangible ways. I include anniversaries in this part of the thesis because data show that time is not routinely experienced by colleagues as 'clock' time. Rather the time rhythm experienced by colleagues might be interpreted as a longer wave, where weeks are punctuated by the day individuals receive payment of benefit money but where notions of 'time moving on' are more seasonally based and include cultural periods such as Christmas. Specific times of personal vulnerability (for example, colleagues' children's birthdays and anniversaries of the death of friends) are identified as important landscape features. I further unpack the concept of time and its relationship to data later in the chapter.

## 5.3a Weather

Perhaps unsurprisingly, homeless colleagues in both cities are acutely aware of the weather. In so far as homeless people are able choose where to spend time, the

weather shapes their choices very much. 'If it's raining, we sit on the steps [Westmorland House] because it's sheltered', Michael told me (Bristol). The weather impacts where homeless people go, their movement and at times, the routes they take, 'If it's been really cold of a night, I'll walk about through't snickets [alleys in York] to keep dry and spend the morning in the library. They're nice, people that work in there are nice. You have to keep a book open so they don't ask you to leave. Choose a book and sit in a comfy chair. You drift off [to sleep] because it's warm in there,' Steve told me. I had asked him to take me to a place he considered a 'good' place in the city.

According to colleagues, cold weather is more manageable than wet. During a visit to a site Jane refers to as her 'Hot Skipper' (Fig 19) a conversation arose that confirmed this. The site was behind a restaurant in Bristol and Jane explained that the presence of a hot air vent made the site appealing (see also Chapter Six, section 6.1c). During fieldwork in York Jacko was reminded of a man he had known who had died whilst sleeping rough beneath the city wall one snowy night several years earlier. Jacko recounted the story as we passed through the city wall from Lendal Bridge to Station Road. Jacko explained that the man's death had led to a local policy response, 'the outreach team won't have anyone out [sleeping rough] overnight if it's snowing. They're afraid someone'll die and that wouldn't look good. So, when there's snow about, they come round all the places they think [homeless] people might be and tell everyone they find to come inside. That said I've woken up to snow covering my sleeping bag plenty of times. It's bloody horrible.'

Figure 19 - JH standing in front of the 'Hot Skipper', Bristol (photo: author's own)

## 5.3b Seasonal change

Alongside clear changes to outside temperature that occur throughout the year more subtle seasonal change affects how colleagues behave and perceive the city. For example, at Gary's sleeping place under the railway arches in Bristol, he explained why he had built up one side of a small fire pit he had made from stones and brick, '…broken bricks here, look, build yourself a fire look to keep yourself warm…but… because you can be over-looked. I mean, it's over grown now but over the winter this is all clear and you could be seen from the houses', he pointed to the backs of houses that were obscured by trees in leaf when I visited the site with him in June 2009. Clearly, if we had been at the site during winter when the trees were bare we would have been overlooked and a fire might be seen by occupants of the houses. Gary had lived at the site throughout the previous winter but he avoided his fire being spotted, as he explained, '– so this side [of the fire pit] built high so that you don't see the embers or the flames and also it reflects the heat towards where I am.' Gary gestured how the small wall he had built acted to screen the flames from view

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of the houses whilst simultaneously directing the heat to where he lay in his sleeping bag (Fig 20).

Using leaf cover in a similar way, as a form of camouflage, Little Tom explained why a site known colloquially by many Bristol homeless colleagues as 'the dungeon' was 'a good place to hang out in late spring and summer…because the leaves hide you. No-one knows you're here unless they come up close or you're making loads of noise.' Tree cover was again a feature that made a site close to Bristol Temple Meads train station explicitly attractive to Andrew as a place to sleep rough. We visited Andrew's skipper by the river in 2009, three years after he had lived there. Andrew explained, 'I used to come along here and climb over the purple fence at the bottom and then get up underneath where them water willows are  and I had loads of pallets with foam on the top and I was sorted. All that was wasteland when I lived here,' Andrew told me, pointing to the new station car park, 'all that was vegetation and trees which was good because it meant no-one would think I was here. I was safe.'

In York, Scott showed me a 'place in a bush'. He did not claim it as his own rather Scott knew it was used sporadically by a number of homeless people, 'it's just a place we know about. It's not like it's my place, just…a place that you know you can get some shelter if you find yourself out of a night'. In conversations that developed throughout fieldwork we came to refer to the bush as the 'Monkgate Bush'. The Monkgate Bush is a clump of evergreen bushes. Scott showed me how from all angles – from Lord Mayor's Walk, from Monkgate and from High Newbiggin Street – Monkgate Bush looked like an ordinary bush. The 'entrance' and hollow inside could not be seen from any authorised approach. Scott showed me around the back of the bush to the 'entrance' (Fig 21). The bush grows on the site of the former St Maurice church and 'entrance' was possible only from the side of the bush that backs onto a wall, that is, the entrance was imperceptible to the majority of people likely to pass by. 'These are evergreen so the leaves give you cover all year round,' Scott explained. The waterproof feature of evergreen leaves was a recurring feature in homeless landscapes, as Jacko testified. Jacko, 'used to live in some bushes next to the Minster. They were right thick and pretty waterproof once you got inside them. But the council chopped them down not so long ago to stop…well, stop people like me living in them I suppose'. A tension exists here between bushes and trees providing 'safety' and 'shelter' in homeless conceptions of the landscape and bushes and trees presenting a problem in terms of 'anti-social' behaviour from the local authorities' perspective.

## 5.3c Anniversaries

Data reveal that cultural festivals and anniversaries shape the rhythm of homeless landscapes in each city in tangible ways. Christmas was cited by all colleagues with whom I worked as the worst time of year to be homeless. Further questioning on this revealed a cruel paradox. Christmas is arguably the time of year when the *idea* of homelessness most heavily features in the public imagination. A quick Google search reveals thousands of local and national newspaper articles about homelessness dated in the run up to Christmas. Conversations with staff at Arc Light homeless centre confirmed they receive a surge in requests for residents to do interviews with local radio and television companies as Christmas approaches. That 'interest' in homelessness is seasonal is not lost to homeless colleagues. In York, Scott introduced Jacko to me as, 'York's celebrity homeless man! He's been baptised by the Arch Bishop and gets wheeled out every Christmas to do the 'poor homeless bloke' interview'. The paradox is that when Christmas actually arrives, the streets of each city are deserted. Shops are closed. Buses do not run. The 'natural' rhythm of

the city is interrupted. Devoid of crowds and bustle, empty streets amplify the loneliness and sense of aloneness felt by colleagues. Punk Paul put it this way, 'I find Christmas really hard. Everyone goes home to be with their loved ones and you're left in the city and it's…it's…like, 'where is everyone?' All the Christians close everything for about ten days – you can't get a cup of tea. I used to think it weren't very Christian of them to do that, you know? But I suppose they have families. It just…makes me think of my sisters and brother.' Speaking in 2010, having then been housed for a year, Andrew agreed that Christmas was extremely painful throughout the years he was street homeless, 'I can't hack it at all. I'd think about my daughters. I have four daughters but I've not seen any of them for years. I can cope if I ignore Christmas all together…But I find it….it's when I see little kids with their dads, out shopping or getting all excited. I can't watch telly because it's all mush about Christmas and kids. It does my head in!' Jane agreed, 'I think of my kids all year but especially on their birthdays and at Christmas. I speak to them on the phone but I haven't had Christmas with them…and all the lights all twinkling in town. You walk past houses with their trees and decorations up and that. Yeah, Christmas is hard, especially if you've got kids.'

Jane explained how the Christmas period always sees a dramatic rise in sales of *The Big Issue* (a magazine sold by homeless people). The week before Christmas 2010, Bristol colleagues and I held a public exhibition on our archaeological excavation of 'Turbo Island', a site in Bristol synonymous with contemporary homelessness. Once the exhibition was up and ready for visitors, Jane (a regular vendor of *The Big Issue*) went out to sell her copies. She explained, 'the week before Christmas I can make £40 a day easy selling *'Issues*. People are all full of good will. It can be dangerous too though mind. A lot of *'Issue* sellers die around Christmas, well, the bit between Christmas and New Year to be precise because they're not used to having so much money and when they get it, they go overboard on whatever, you know, heroin or crack or drink and they do too much of it. Their body can't cope and they overdose. Sad, but it's because they're not used to having so much money and it's Christmas'.

Another distinct seasonal period that colleagues in Bristol and York identified as a significant landscape feature was the long summer break common to university calendars. On fieldwork in Bristol with Liam and Joe one afternoon, we passed Sainsbury's supermarket on Park Street and Joe pointed out a begging spot beside the cash point. 'I'd come up here and beg in the early summer because the students go to Sainsbury's. Don't come up here when they've gone home because it's not so good [for begging]'. In York, Noel expressed sadness that, '…the streets are empty at night when all the little 'uns go for the summer. I miss them. They [students] give me cigs and buy me drink.' Correspondingly, of those undergraduate students who visited our York exhibition, *Arcifacts: unearthing York's homeless heritage* many asked if I knew Noel. Noel (described by several students as a 'friendly, older homeless man') features in student landscapes of York as the students feature in Noel's perception of place.

Other anniversaries cited by homeless colleagues as featuring strongly in their experience of the city included their own birthdays and the birthdays of family members, particularly children. These personal flashpoints were often triggers for rapid descent into increased drug/alcohol use. At times throughout fieldwork in each city, memories of particular peoples' birthdays were evoked through the chance sighting of children and families going about their everyday existence. Comments such as, 'that's about how old my little girl was last time I saw her,' were frequently made. Several colleagues whom were addicted to heroin and/or alcohol as well as homeless reported that happy memories of life before they became homeless are in many ways the hardest to escape because they are a reason *not* to continue down an otherwise daily path to oblivion. 'You get reminded of stuff and it makes you think you should maybe try again, you know, to get off the drink and that,' Jane said. These memories affected colleagues in *individual* and visceral ways, where the experience of 'seeing' but not 'being seen' – present and simultaneously absent in the Husserlian sense – operated as a catalyst for material change (for example, drinking a vast quantity of sherry or scoring another bag of heroin). The role played by memory in archaeological work and its 'adaptive value' in responding to stress

and stressful situations is a topic further unpacked in Chapter Eight  (McEwan 2012:17180).

## 5.4 Day/night

Data reveal that colleagues use different parts of each city at different times of day and night. In some respects the rhythm of the city is inverted where the parts of the city used during the day by non-homeless people (for example, supermarket car parks and shopping streets) are the parts of the city colleagues are most likely to visit during the evening (for example, checking bins/skips for food/materials they can make use of, begging). Central themes that emerge from homeless perceptions of the character of certain parts of the city during the day and night are: safety/danger, opportunities to make money/obtain resources, myths/legends.

## 5.4a Safety/danger

In each case, the city centres of Bristol and York are considered likely to be more dangerous for homeless people during the night than during the day. All colleagues explicitly stated that it is dangerous to sleep rough and that they would specifically avoid sleeping in the city centre although they might spend some time in the city centre in the evening due to the opportunities to make money (see below). Everyone with whom I worked recounted instances where they or people they knew had been physically attacked or in some cases, murdered while sleeping rough. Data on such attacks is hard to come by. Communication with St Mungo's homeless charity, local police and CHAIN (Broadway)[25] has revealed that attacks on homeless people are often under-reported for the following reasons: 1) it is hard to define either 'homeless' or 'attack' in such a way that statistics can be meaningfully collated and 2) many homeless people do not report attacks for fear of reprisals (for example, if a homeless person gives evidence on another person they have nowhere safe to go

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[25] http://www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN/CHAINResearch.html - Broadway are a homeless charity based in London. CHAIN is their research arm and often under take one-off research projects.

while the case goes to court or if the person they accused is not then arrested, charged and convicted). The second of these points was confirmed by all colleagues. Throughout the duration of fieldwork (2008-2013) several colleagues were involved in violent attacks which went unreported for fear of further violence. Jane was hospitalised for two weeks and Punk Paul for one week, each by men they knew. Pops was murdered in his hostel bedroom but witnesses would not testify for fear of reprisal. Little Tom went to prison charged with manslaughter. Certainly, from this small sample, data confirm that attacks on and violence between homeless people are not uncommon but severely under-reported. All of the attacks mentioned above happened at night.

During fieldwork in Bristol, Andrew and I passed through the southernmost subway tunnel in the Bear Pit (St James Barton underpass). Andrew gestured to a spot on the ground, 'this is where Josh died. Overdose and hypothermia' Andrew then pointed to the tunnel on the opposite side of the Bear Pit, 'can't remember his name but this Polish geezer was set fire to in his sleeping bag over there. He died too.' I asked Andrew if he thought about these deaths as he passed through the subway, 'Yeah! You think about the people who've died every time you pass a place. I mean, it's not like it's uncommon for heroin addicts to die. It's a hazard of the lifestyle. But sometimes, the way people die is horrible – in agony or it's really messy and you see the fall out in people who found them.' That these unremarkable and unmarked places evoked such memories became more significant when it became clear that for homeless colleagues in Bristol, these sites have become way-markers, navigational points in the landscape.

## 5.4b Opportunities to obtain resources

The night-time economy was identified in both cities by some colleagues as representing an opportunity to make money through begging, asking people for money or in some cases, stealing. In Bristol, Joe and Liam explained that more could be made from begging on Park Street (a street lined with popular bars and restaurants) than anywhere else and that Friday and Saturday nights were the best

nights to beg. They each confirmed that during university term time weekday nights were also 'good', when several nightclubs ran nights aimed at the student population. Joe showed me where he begged on Park Street (where Park Street and Whiteladies Road meet) close to an HSBC cash machine. He explained, 'I sit here with a blanket round me and a paper cup or something and people give me drops [drop money]'.

In contrast, daytime was perceived to be the better time to beg for money in York. During fieldwork conducted for this thesis Jacko was not actively begging regularly but he showed me two places he regularly begs when he needs to. The first place was between Betty's tea room and the Halifax bank on Parliament Street, 'I sit here because I'm right on the boundary of Halifax and Betty's. Not on either one of their doorsteps so they can't say I'm on private property' (Fig 22). Jacko's second begging spot was close to York railway station. As we walked from the begging place on Parliament Street to the second place on Station Road I asked Jacko why he felt it was better to beg in the daytime in York. 'York's a tourist trap! You have loads of people coming and going and they're the ones that give you money usually. There's more tourists in the day.'

**Figure 22 - Jacko at his begging spot between Betty's tea shop and the Halifax bank, York (photo: author's own)**

### 5.4c Tourism & transience

Close to Jacko's Station Road begging spot, another homeless man called Mark sells *The Big Issue*. I met Mark through having stopped occasionally to buy a magazine. He asked me what I did for a living and I told him I was an archaeologist. 'Ah well,' he said, 'you can tell me something. Is there really a Roman burial ground under York station?' Whenever I passed Mark selling magazines he called me over and talked more about the possibility of a Roman burial ground beneath the station. During our conversations, Mark told me that York's position as a tourist attraction was the reason he travelled from Wakefield to York to sell his magazines. He said, 'The people are happier here because a lot of them are on holiday, tourists. The streets in York have more people doing things, like that purple man who stays ever so still on a bike…I try to tell jokes and say nice things to make people smile and it works most of the time. More people buy mag's [*Big Issue* magazines] here than they do in Wakefield.'

Throughout 2010-2013 I monitored a steady rise in the number of people begging on the short stretch of pavement from York railway station (Station Road) to the point at which the road passes under the city wall. A number of times I stopped to speak with people begging all of whom were newly homeless in York and/or reported traveling to York on account of tourism making it easier to beg. Even when no beggars are present, hollows in the privet hedge indicate precisely where people sit along this short stretch of pavement, just beyond the city walls and there are often pieces of cardboard and a paper cup or two (Fig 5.5). Another homeless man joined me for a few days of fieldwork but wished to remain anonymous. I will call him Sam. Sam described how he saw his 'role' as a beggar as 'something that suits the tourist market'. When I asked what he meant, Sam said, 'you have all these trails around York with people dressed up – ghost hunters, Viking walks and the people in the market wear historic costumes sometimes. Beggar is just another character, a sort of feature, if you like. I'm not from York. I come in from Leeds to beg. You'll not make money begging in Leeds but on a sunny day, you can make quite a bit begging in York.' Tourism therefore helps to shape homeless as well as non-homeless perceptions of the city of York. On the other hand, it is the tourists themselves, rather than tourist attractions, that attract those homeless people who beg. For some homeless people, the act of begging is considered a performance that complements the historic surroundings.

**Figure 23 - Gap in hedge where people shelter whilst begging & store cardboard (photo: author's own)**

## 5.5 Surveillance

As data concerning tree cover and the seasons show whether or not a person can be seen is important to homeless colleagues and an active force that shapes how and during which season people use different parts of the city. The reasons for this are complex and range from maintaining personal safety to wishing to avoid being seen in a particular area. In both cities, colleagues routinely opted to take routes that involved shortcuts and in York, 'snickets' that marble the oldest parts of the city. The reasons colleagues gave for using backstreets were numerous but shared one common aspect and this was to do with visibility. For some people, moving through the city using backstreets allowed them to avoid bullies, police, people to whom they owed money or any other unwarranted attention or unnecessary trouble. For others, in York particularly, the fact that snickets are typically covered over offered some element of shelter from the weather. Explaining why he and a friend, Mark, chose to take a particularly low-key route around the outer parts of York Dan told me:

*'We specifically avoid walking into the centre of York because we're perceived to be 'problem' drinkers. I find this laughable to be honest because we might be alcoholic but neither of us throw-up or do anything anti-social. I think the problem is our brand of cider – the cheapest! We're not like most of the people you see staggering around town at the weekend, especially during the races.'* (Dan, pers comm, April 2011)

The route itself acts as a form of cover or disguise where remaining hidden from view is perceived to equate with remaining undetected. Concern over how colleagues might be perceived by non-homeless people actively shapes homeless people's routes and decisions about which areas to visit in the city and which to avoid. This dialectical process involving perceived or 'real' judgement plays an active role in constructing and shaping homeless landscapes to the extent that routes which are known to be less heavily populated are sought out and preferred by colleagues in both cities. I now unpack these themes more fully.

## 5.5a CCTV

The presence of surveillance or CCTV cameras has direct agency over the routes homeless people with whom I worked take through each city. Colleagues were very much aware of the location of closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV), the type of camera installed and the range of its view. In some cases CCTV cameras were explicitly avoided by colleagues (for example, if they had committed an offence such as shop-lifting). In other cases, the camera was perceived by colleagues to offer a level of protection (for example, against being attacked while they slept).

Fieldwork with Little Tom revealed the extent to which some colleagues explicitly avoided the gaze of CCTV. Little Tom was well-known in Bristol as a homeless person and a heroin addict. Tom's addiction meant that he regularly had cause to 'dodge' the cameras, to avoid being seen going to 'score' drugs, to avoid being seen taking drugs and, at times, to avoid being seen making the money necessary to buy the drugs. Tom explained that there are two types of CCTV camera – static and swivel cameras. Tom said static cameras record what passes in front of them, 'dead

easy to avoid once you know where they are.' The 'swivel' cameras are watched at a central monitoring office at Bridewell and can be swivelled remotely, 'they're the ones you have to watch because they're getting better technology and they can follow you through town, picking you up on the next one and the next one so it's much harder to avoid them,' Tom told me. While I was undertaking fieldwork for this thesis colleagues and I were routinely followed by swivel style cameras through Broadmead and Cabot Circus (shopping centres in central Bristol).

An example of homeless people using CCTV as a form of protection from harm also comes from Bristol. While conducting fieldwork in the Bear Pit one afternoon we met Karl and Simone. The couple had constructed a shelter (in which to sleep) from protest placard, blankets and foliage. The shelter was camouflaged but directly in view of the static CCTV camera in the centre of the Bear Pit. Karl and Simone told me they slept in view of the camera because it afforded them extra security - at least there was a *perception* that it made them safer. Karl was on bail from prison at the time and said, 'because I have a bit of a record and because of who my cousin is, if shit goes on, the police quite often think it was me. So, if they come to give me grief, I can tell them to check the tape and they'll see that I've just been sat here all the time'.

A further example of how colleagues reported using CCTV again comes from Bristol. Walking through Broadmead shopping centre with Andrew one afternoon after a long day of fieldwork, he pointed to a CCTV camera outside the Levis shop. 'I pretty much owe my life to that camera!' He explained that shortly before his fortieth birthday he had decided that he had to recover from homelessness and stop using drugs. He went to a drug rehabilitation service and was told that there was a long waiting list for a place at a residential detoxification unit. 'So I came straight back down here, grabbed a load of jeans off the rail, turned my face directly towards the camera and walked slowly away from the shop. Security guards jumped on me. Police came and they arrested me for shop-lifting, went to court and I went to prison. I knew I'd get treatment quicker that way.' That Andrew knew that his quickest route to help with his drug habit was via the criminal justice system is an example of

homeless *habitus* and the way that petty crimes are sometimes the result of someone attempting to 'do the right thing'.


## 5.5b Security guards & gatekeepers

Fieldwork with Whistler in Bristol revealed the way in which security guards can function as a deterrent to homeless people but that the efficacy of this strategy depends upon individual personalities and relationships involved. Whistler often slept rough in the Bond Street National Car Park (NCP) but whether or not he stayed at the car park was dependent on which security guard was on duty. As Whistler explained it, 'There's one fella who's really kind like. He even brought me a sleeping bag and pair of thick socks when it was snowing. He gives me food sometimes, like. He says he'll lose his job like, if his bosses knew but I'm always out first light and not back until it gets dark and I never leave a mess or bring anyone back.' As he recounted this, Whistler gestured around where we were standing on the return of a stairwell at the top of the Bond Street NCP (Fig 24). He had slept at the site the night before and his claim to leave nothing behind was warranted. There were no visible blankets or cans or other artefacts commonly found at homeless sleeping places. Whistler continued, 'The woman security guard is a bitch. She just tells me the rules are the rules and she'll wake me up if I'm sleeping and confiscate things. She saw where I stashed my kit [sleeping bag and blankets] like, in the day. If I see it's her on duty, I don't sleep here. I can't because she'll call the pigs, like'. Whistler then showed me out onto the flat roof of the car park (through a fire exit) and opened up a yellow grit bin which contained bin liners in which were his sleeping bag, duvet and a change of clothes (Fig 25). He explained he stored his belongings in the grit bin whenever he left the site.
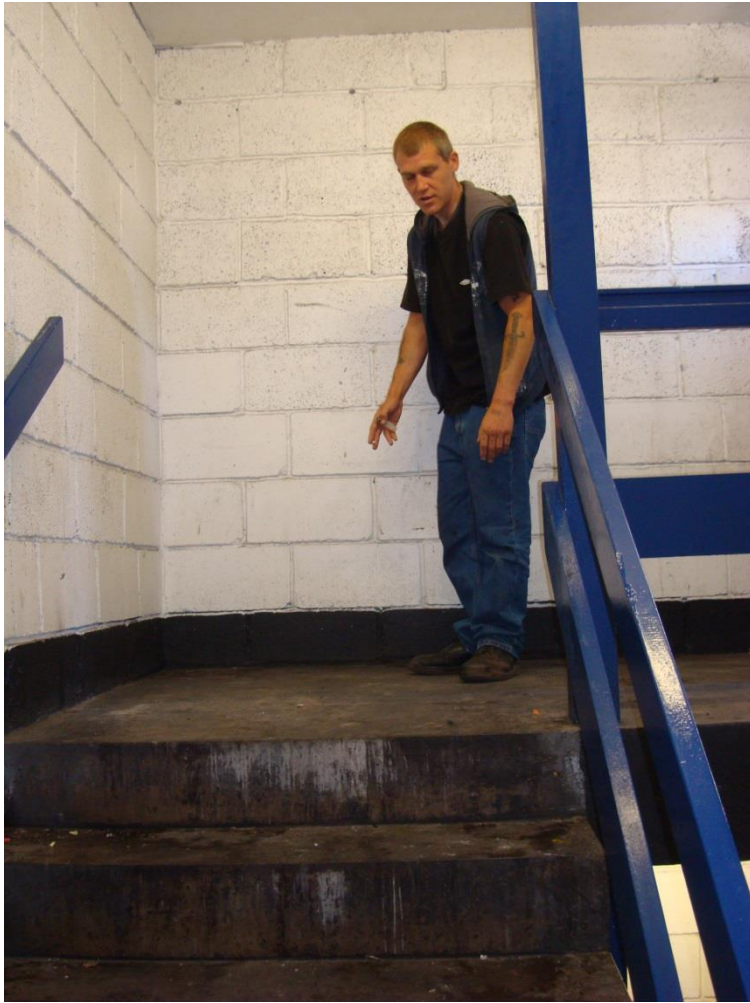
**Figure 24 - Whistler gesturing to his skipper at NCP Bear Pit, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 25 - Whistler demonstrating how he stores clothes and bedding in a grit bin (photo: author's own)**

Whistler described a similar subtle negotiation of secure space when he used the Marlborough Street bus station loos (just off the Bear Pit subway). 'I have a wash at the bus station,' Whistler and I were standing in the Bear Pit and he pointed towards the bus station, close-by. 'I have this deal with an African fella who guards the toilets. He looks the other way and I jump the barrier and don't pay the 20p to use the toilet. He was homeless when he first came [to the UK], you see. He understands what you have to do to get by.' Whistler agreed to join me for another day of fieldwork the next day so we agreed to meet at the bus station which afforded me the opportunity to observe, from a distance, how he negotiated his way into the bus station loos. We might view Steve's informal arrangement with librarians at the York public library (mentioned above) as a similar example of subtle negotiation of 'secured' space and the way in which gatekeepers are sometimes complicit (through compassion) in making places accessible and borders permeable to homeless people.

## 5.5c Accessible/Inaccessible

During fieldwork in York, Steve explained how it is easier to 'appear' not to be homeless during the day. 'If it's sunny I like to sit in Museum Gardens because there's benches there and it's a nice place. You don't get so much looked at if you're in a park as if you're walking about with your duvet.' This exemplifies creative lengths to which homeless colleagues go to disguise the fact they are homeless. The same sentiment was expressed by Alan who enjoys fishing from the river footpath on the south side of the Ouse (York). Alan told me, 'when you're sat by the river with your fishing rod, you don't look homeless.' During the same phase of fieldwork I was shown Museum Gardens by colleagues who repeatedly expressed the view that it appealed to them as a place to spend time being peaceful surroundings with attractive plants, small animals and birds. The landscape character of Museum Gardens functions to disguise homelessness as relaxing in a park. However, the Gardens are locked at night and data reveal those colleagues who identified them as a 'sleeping place' did so in the past tense. 'We used to sleep down here', Jacko showed me where he and several others lay in the ruins by Lendal Bridge, 'but you can't get in at night now. It's just a place to hang out in the daytime these days.'

Another primary feature within homeless landscapes in Bristol and York was the perception that places appropriated by homeless colleagues were 'being sealed off' by 'authorities' (Jane, Bristol). Data reveal an increasing trend for places known to have been appropriated by homeless people in each city to be rendered inaccessible through the use of metal grilles or fences or blocked off using wire mesh or metal bars[26] (see Figs 5.8 - 5.11).

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[26] See also Fig 5.1 – Jane's 'Hot Skipper' has been grilled off since she used it last as a place to shelter.

**Figure 26 - metal grille over Trenchard Street NCP skipper, Bristol (photo: author's own)**



**Figure 27 - metal grille over entrance to 'The Dungeon', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 28 - JJ & metal grille over entrance to St. Saviourgate NCP sleeping place (photo: author's own)**



**Figure 29 - metal grille over entrance to sleeping place behind Greggs, York (photo: author's own)**

Bins which were previously kept unlocked by commercial businesses are also increasingly locked into fenced store areas making the contents of the bin and the

space occupied by the bins inaccessible to homeless people (Fig 30). In contrast, where bin stores and back alleys remained accessible roofs were often removed to make the spaces less attractive to homeless people through reducing the sheltered element of these spaces. An example comes from the back of the Ramada hotel in Bristol (Fig 31).



**Figure 30 - fenced off bin store, York (photo: author's own)**



**Figure 31 - roof removed from Ramada hotel bin store, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

## 5.5d Invisibility vs. visibility

Other examples of the way in which invisibility and visibility exist as important themes in contemporary homelessness are drawn from various ways in which colleagues reveal the built and natural environment to be useful to them in surveillance (for example, seeing what or whom is around). During fieldwork in Bristol I noticed that whenever he spent time at Turbo Island Punk Paul sat in one particular place, on the edge of the wall that surrounds the small tract of land, facing Stokes Croft. I asked Paul whether there was a reason he liked the spot. He showed me that from his seated position he could make use of the reflective window glass of the solicitor's office opposite, 'you can see if anyone's coming up from behind' (Fig 32). Similarly, field walking in York with Scott and later, Ray, we travelled from Monkgate to the Hull Road on tiny pedestrian streets and snickets. When I questioned why this was, Scott said, 'you get to know the short-cuts… This way, you avoid being seen and that's a good thing!' Ray's reason for using a similar route was different, 'you're covered over most the way. Keeps you dry. Also, you can avoid all the people who want to borrow money from you.'



Figure 32 - using reflective glass of solicitor's office window for surveillance, Bristol (photo: author's own)

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## 5.5e Authorised 'hiding' of homelessness

Another aspect relating to this theme concerns the way in which homelessness and associated 'undesirable' social issues such as addiction and chronic mental illness remain hidden from mainstream view. Through a complex combination of planning restrictions, property value and disdain for lifestyles deemed 'anti-social', services for homeless people are often situated in underdeveloped parts of the city and in premises where homeless people remain separated from the general public. It will be argued later in the thesis that there are significant political advantages to 'disappearing' social problems from the view of the average voter. To ground this assertion in archaeological data, figure 33 shows Jacko standing at the entrance to a homeless service affectionately nicknamed Care Bears (Carecent, York). York's homeless people travel down a bin alley and are quickly obscured from view. Similarly, an example from Bath was brought to my attention by Bristol based colleague, Andrew. Figure 34 shows a similar back alley in which are located the rubbish stores and recycling bins of local residents and businesses. Alongside the rubbish is the entrance to the Bath office for *The Big Issue.* Vendors of the magazine are invited to stand among the bins to drink a coffee before heading out to work selling a national magazine. I suggest that the juxtaposition of homeless people and rubbish bags does little to raise a persons' self-esteem and more to reinforce the pernicious myth that to be homeless is to be little more than human rubbish.

**Figure 33 - JJ in the alley leading to 'Care Bears', York (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 34 - alley leading to The Big Issue office, Bath (photo: author's own)**

## 5.6 Environment

Data reveal that despite the lack of choice about official accommodation homeless colleagues in both cities consider the environment in which they spend time to be important. Factors such as the weather and temperature, things beyond the control of all human beings, impact upon the way homeless colleagues move about the city and influence the places they are likely to spend time. However, where shelter from inclement weather is taken remains a choice to some degree, even for people who are homeless. In this section of the chapter I present data relating to environment. I begin by presenting data that relate to the natural environment and the function these play in shaping homeless landscapes in Bristol and York. Following on I present data relating to the historic or cultural environment and its appeal to colleagues. Finally, I present data relating to conceptions of environment which are ethereal and ephemeral. Data show that colleagues in both cities conceive of landscape in relation to stories, historic and anecdotal, legends and myths in ways that are perhaps more common to indigenous world views.

## 5.6a Nature/wildlife

 Andrew was attracted to a sleeping place he used over the winter 2006 specifically because it was by the river and surrounded by willow trees, brambles and undergrowth. 'I liked being here because it's peaceful. In hostels you've got chaos all the time! People banging on doors, asking for citric and needles and lighters and shouting... I liked it here because I could fish and relax under the trees.' Mark and Dan (York) explained that one of the reasons they always stopped at the south side of Bootham Park Hospital grounds to drink cider was that the environment appealed to them. 'It's lovely here', Mark said. 'We're not supposed to be here so we have to be a bit careful but there's trees and grass and it's just a nice place to sit'. Dan concurred, adding that, 'facing south, you're warm if the sun's out.'

Sunrise was most commonly cited by homeless colleagues in each city as being a 'good' thing about being homeless. Sitting on a bench, facing south, in King's Square (Bristol) with Punk Paul one afternoon, he told me, 'I bet I've seen more beautiful sunrises than you've ever seen in your whole life. While most people are tucked up in bed oblivious to the world, I'm just waking up in the city and sometimes it's bright pink or orange and it's just me there to enjoy it…and if there's a beautiful sunrise, it's magic.' This sentiment was echoed by Andrew at his river side sleeping place (see also Chapter Six). Seeking peace and quiet in natural surroundings made what Bristol colleagues called 'The Herb Garden' (ruins of St Peter's church, Castle Park, Bristol) an attractive place to spend the day time (Fig 35). In this sense, the natural environment shapes colleagues' experience of the landscape in arguably stronger ways than it does non-homeless people. To be homeless is to live closer to the elements on a daily basis.

**Figure 35 - TT, DD, PP & RK in 'The Herb Garden', Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

At some parts of the city interactions with wildlife were recalled vividly by colleagues and data reveal that such interactions can enhance a sense of well-being and compassion within colleagues. For example, during fieldwork in Bristol I asked Jane whether there were any parts of the city where she felt nature strongly influenced her reasons for spending time there. She immediately thought of her 'Hot Skipper', a sleeping place behind a restaurant off Park Street (see also Fig 5.1). Jane had used the 'Hot Skipper' often during several periods of homelessness 2003-2006. As we approached the site Jane fondly recalled that for a portion of the time she had used the 'Hot Skipper' regularly, a pigeon had shared the space with her. 'She made her nest in the corner. Up there,' Jane pointed to a ledge where the nest had been. 'If I got a sandwich in the day, I would save her little bits and pieces, seeds and that, and feed her. She was like my little pet. People will think that's disgusting…but I liked her.' The sense of aloneness Jane experienced through the years she used the 'Hot Skipper' was eased by this person/pigeon relationship. 'It was nice to have someone else there. I used to talk to her. She cheered me up and made me keep telling myself 'it's a beautiful world really'.'

Rats also feature strongly in homeless experiences of each city. 'You keep your food in bags and tie it up high, try to keep the rats out.' Michael showed me where he tied a carrier bag in a tree above where he slept. It contained crisps and some Rice Krispie snack bars. 'When I was down here last,' Andrew said, speaking about a skipper 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol), 'they had them boards up over the struts to try to keep the rats off.' In York, Ray explained, 'the slightest noise and you think it's the rats and then you can't sleep for hours. You hear them near you but your imagination takes over and…it's horrible, that feeling.' Jacko was candid, 'if you sleep in a bin cupboard, you get rats over you. You get used to it.' Homeless colleagues spoke far more frequently about *hearing* and *sensing* rats than actually seeing them revealing the degree to which senses other than the visual can powerfully impact how we conceive of and experience landscape.

Central to Jane's homeless experience is her relationship with Patch, her dog. Patch gives Jane a sense of security when she sleeps rough. Patch's needs come before Jane's needs, to Jane, and require that Jane spends more time seeking out areas of green space in the city than do some other homeless colleagues. Secondly, Patch gives Jane a sense that she is needed, that she matters in the world. Their relationship is central to Jane's sense of self-esteem and self-worth and increases not only her ability to show compassion but also to receive it. Compassion, for oneself and for others is vital to recovery, developing and sustaining healthy relationships and adopting a healthy lifestyle. The complex ways in which the ability to *show* compassion is often removed from homeless people due to the way homeless services are currently organised and potential therapeutic benefits of thinking more strategically about the role compassion can play in aiding recovery from the trauma of homelessness is more fully unpacked in Chapter Eight.

## 5.6b Historic/Cultural Environment

Of equal importance to colleagues from both cities was the historic and cultural environment. Although several colleagues with whom I worked were not formally educated beyond the age of fifteen most colleagues expressed interest in history and

cultural sites and enjoyment of places which they identified as 'historic' or 'cultural'. For example, in York, Mark explained why he chose to sit under Scarborough Bridge, again, the *sound and movement* of the place featured explicitly. 'It's a beautiful old bridge,' Mark began 'but I really like it for the fact it's the Scarborough London line. I was born in Scarborough and I moved to London for the music…that's also where I was first homeless…I like the fact this bridge goes between two places that are important to me. I'm in between them here…you know… There's so much potential here. I like that…I like the sound of the trains rumbling overhead and that the river is constantly changing. It makes me feel that I could go somewhere. Sometimes there's loads of boats, sometimes not, sometimes geese or swans go by and the river is always changing. I like the potential of it all. You can people watch and it's just a great spot to sit and drink cider' (Fig 36).



**Figure 36 - MD's place beneath Scarborough Bridge, York (photo: author's own)**

Standing at the site of 'The Dungeon' (ruins of St. Mary le Port church, Bristol) one afternoon, Jane commented that she prefers to sleep rough in historic or natural surroundings. Jane explained, '…I like being in nature and I like me woods and old buildings. Like, these sort of places appeal to me. I'm much more attracted to

sleeping in places like this than doorways….we have often wondered, when we've been sleeping down here, whether this [underground part of the ruins] was a dungeon, because it was supposed to be an abbey, or whether it was just a large larder'. Equally, when I visited 'The Dungeon' with Ratty she cited the historic nature an appealing factor. 'It's not that you feel old buildings are safer or better insulated or anything like that. It's really about taste. I like historic buildings. They tend to have more character and more about them and they're usually set in nicer surroundings with more trees…all the wildlife…If you're going to…break a squat or live in a derelict building, better to live in one you think is attractive.'

Throughout fieldwork, colleagues frequently stopped at particular parts of each city to talk about historic events with which they felt affinity. The English Civil War and enclosure featured prominently among data gathered with Bristol based colleagues. In York, Romans, Vikings and several specific ghost stories were evoked at particular places in the city and relayed by colleagues.

During our first day of fieldwork together Andrew pointed to Kingsdown and explained that the site of Prior's Hill Fort was probably in what is now Freemantle Square. The fact that parliamentary forces captured the fort in 1645 after terrible fighting was not lost to Andrew, 'Oliver Cromwell was a hard bastard. The Irish hate him! He battled the King for Bristol. They travelled all over the country on horses and foot, Cromwell's men. There's Civil War sites right up to Hebden Bridge. I've read a few books on the Civil War. There's tons in the library. I read this thing about a woman called Mrs Baker whose husband was killed during that battle for the fort and she sat down where he died and refused to move. She stayed there until she starved to death.' Little Tom was similarly keen to show me where 'parliamentarians, that's Cromwell's side, went on a show down with the King. Basically, Cromwell was up for having a republic, like America. But the King believed he had a God-given right to be the ruler. So that's what caused the Civil War.'

For several homeless colleagues, the gradual process of enclosure was understood as straightforward theft from the many, by the few. For Andrew, '…the church stole the land from ordinary people and that's why, when I was using [drugs], I'd never mug a person or go robbing from peoples' houses but I never had a problem stealing from churches. They stole our land. I was just stealing a bit back from them'. As a team, Andrew, Jane, Deano and I gave a talk on our homeless heritage work to the Archaeology and Anthropology Department at the University of Cambridge in November 2011. During that trip, we stopped at a drove road that Jane knew and warmed a stew on a fire wok that we had brought with us. Under the stars of a cold November night Jane became unusually animated, dancing from foot to foot by the light of the fire. A conversation broke out about the difference between drove roads, marked as such on the road map we had with us, and what Jane referred to as 'country lanes'. Jane asked us to imagine if the considerably aged oak tree beside us could talk and what it might say about how the countryside has changed. She began to speak about enclosure as something she felt was *personal and relevant to her life*, relating enclosure to the Poll Tax Riots of the 1990s. Jane explained, 'I know things were different back in the past but I could never understand how the rich people got the land in the first place…Why didn't they fight back, like we did at the Poll Tax?...When I lived in a van with me kids, I'd get cautioned for parking up. Roads like this are ancient, probably as old as when there were proper Druids, they weren't meant to be private. I was taking up just a tiny bit of space when I lived in a van. Yeah, I'd light a fire so that I could cook tea for my kids but I wasn't going to burn down the whole countryside. I love nature! That's why I lived like that until the police nicked my van.' Andrew responded, 'they did fight back! That's what the Levellers were about. The people that filled in dykes, not the band! And there was the Tolpuddle martyrs from Dorset. They went to prison for refusing to work because their pay was so shit. They got let off because everyone threatened to riot if they didn't let them out [of prison]'. The drove road environment, the firelight, eating outside evoked memories of life as New Age Travellers for both Jane and Andrew as was strongly illustrated by a host of anecdotes and stories that were told throughout the evening, stories that see-sawed back and forth between recorded historic events and present day narratives told in relation to the deeper past. Colleagues' identities are shaped and reshaped by dialectical relationships between

the present and a multiplicity of pasts – the very recent and contemporary, the deeply personal, the historical and deeper pre-historical past. These pasts exist as a web of reference points in the present and the present affects how each past is constructed.

## 5.6c Games/Recreation

Homeless colleagues in both cities cited boredom as a major feature of homelessness. Many colleagues – Dan, Ray, Pablo, Andrew, Jane, Ratty (female) and Little Tom in particular – spent a lot of time reading in order to combat feeling bored. Little Tom said, 'reading is a passion of mine. I get lost in a good book and for a little while…I wish I could stay in books'. Other ways to pass the time included colleagues making up games and using the built environment in creative ways.

**Car Fishing**

Little Tom told me he liked to play what he called 'Car Fishing'. The game involves sticking a matchstick in the traffic lights button in such a way that the lights become confused and change from green to amber to red, very quickly. Tom's preferred place to play 'Car Fishing' was at the lights on Stokes Croft opposite Turbo Island. At the red light, Tom would race to the window of the stopped car and urge the driver to show how fast it could go from stop to go. 'Sometimes they play. Sometimes they just stare ahead. Lads in souped up cars like the challenge', Tom said.

**Squash the Can**

Punk Paul also regularly played a game he invented which he called, 'Squash the Can'. 'You finish your beer right? And you stand the can up in the middle of the road and then you bet on what make and model car squashes it'. Punk Paul said he most often played 'Squash the Can' with people sitting on Turbo Island. 'The person who gets it right gets their next can paid for. Sometimes it takes ages for a can to get squashed. Sometimes it just takes ages to guess what make and model car squashes it. It's mad that you can watch a can for ages and so many different ways for it to go…Passes the time.'

**Embodied art**

Punk Paul told me, 'sometimes I do variations on my one man protest. Basically, it involves me acting like a piece of art. Once I sat on that bin [next to Turbo Island] for a whole day with my legs crossed. I expect a lot of people thought I was mad but I was symbolising myself as human rubbish…a waste of space, a loser, something that should go in a bin'. Paul told me that another thing he liked to do to pass the time was sit on the traffic island in the middle of Stokes Croft. 'I can't do it now because the pigs [police] said I was a hazard to motorists! I used to travel from Turbo Island to my own private island. I liked it just for the peace and quiet and imagining my own private place in this world of mayhem'.

**Marbles**

Colleagues in Bristol and York told me they sometimes played marbles to pass the time. In each case, marbles were considered accessible to homeless people for the fact they are portable. Marbles were found on both excavations and are further discussed in Chapter Seven.

Such made up and recreational games are an attempt to overcome boredom which is cited by most colleagues as a significant feature of homelessness. A tension exists between having little concept of clock-time, perhaps due to having few reasons to keep it, and having an overwhelming sense of having to find ways to pass time that feels endless. That homeless landscapes can in part be characterised by an uncertain but regular circularity is perhaps one of the most frightening aspects of this state of being in the world and sheds light on why, as Dan said, 'you don't even contemplate tomorrow.' For many homeless people the notion of 'the future' as endless repeats of the present is frankly, terrifying. Later in the thesis I return to the therapeutic potential archaeology has for developing positive conceptions of the future which can aid development of transferable life skills in people who have experienced long-term marginalisation and few opportunities to gain a sense of personal achievement.

## 5.6d Ethereal/Ephemeral Environment

At certain parts of each city a strong sense of personal heritage was evoked for some colleagues. During fieldwork with Jacko (York) I asked if there was a reason that he specifically chose to sleep in bushes next to York Minster (before the bushes were chopped back). He replied, 'because it's the nearest place I've got to a relative.' I listened to Jacko recount his extremely complicated early childhood involving foster care, adoption and living with several families before the age of fourteen. 'One memory I will always have in York is of my Granddad who used to work as a stone mason for York Minster. Now, after the fire happened in 1984 or somewhere near that he helped restore the Minster which is one thing I am pretty proud of. I ain't got many memories of my granddad but one thing I'll always have to remember him by is that above the south transept is his name – Frank Jackson.' Jacko showed me where his grandfather's name is inscribed on a wooden plaque above the south transept (Fig 37), 'I was baptised by Archbishop John Sentamu at an Easter blessing the other year, dunked me right under, I've got a photo of it. And I go to church at St Micks [St. Michael le Belfry church, next to the Minster]. Them bushes were just where I slept, nearby my granddad and my church,' Jacko explained. It became clearer that what Jacko described was a sense of belonging somewhere and his choice of place to sleep rough was integrally linked with his personal identity. Jacko's name is itself an attempt to reclaim what he understands to be his 'real' identity. He reclaimed the 'Jack' from his grandfather's 'Jackson' having spent the first part of his life being called by a completely different name to the one he was given at birth.
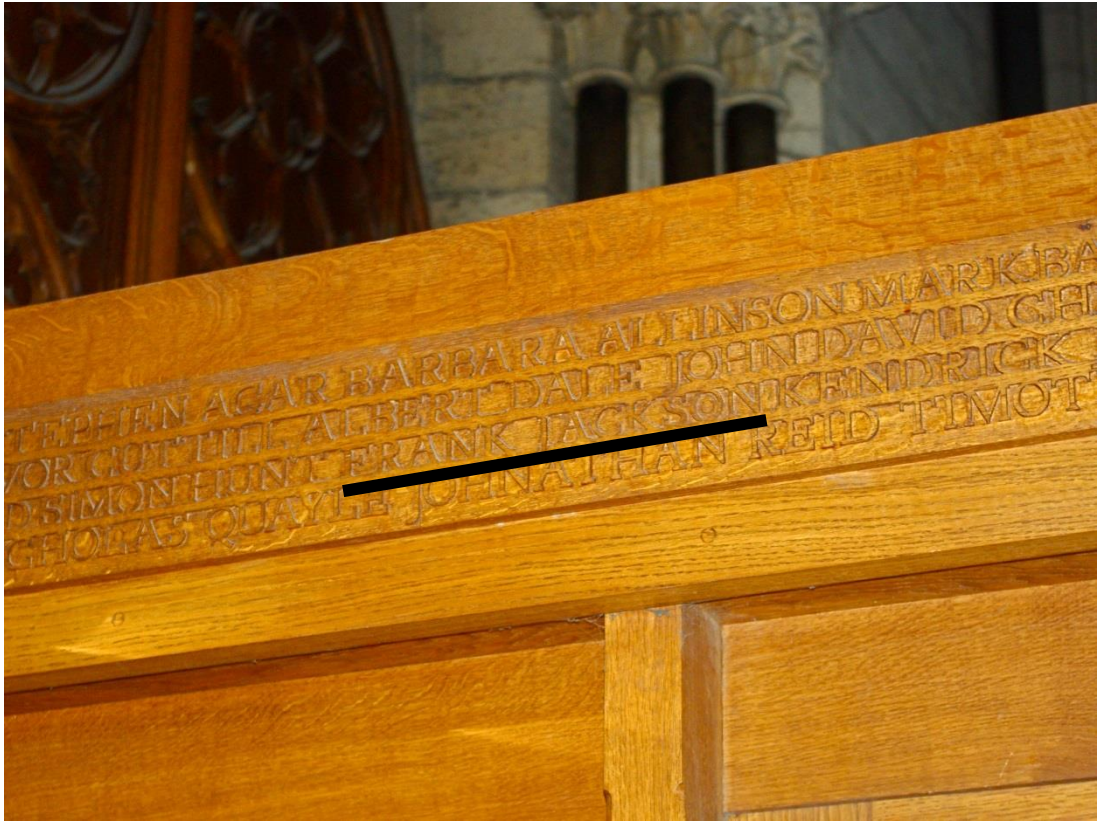
**Figure 37 - 'Frank Jackson' inscription, south transept, York Minster (photo: author's own)**

In Bristol, Little Tom repeatedly spoke of 'our' streets and 'my 'hood' (neighbourhood), of the streets we field walked together as being 'in my blood'. He felt direct and deep personal association with St. Paul's (an inner suburb of Bristol). Little Tom took me through St Paul's to show me 'the frontline' and the streets (but not individual houses) where he said cannabis is grown and from where other drugs such as crack cocaine and heroin are dealt. As we walked together Tom explained, 'Bristol has a long history of not conforming to establishment ways. Think of the pirates linked with this city – there's Blackbeard, who might have been Jamaican actually and John Cabot who went to America before Columbus.' At certain points during our walk, Tom switched seamlessly to talking animatedly about the St Paul's riots of 1980 when police raided the 'Black and White' café. 'I was running down here, right!' He ran ahead and mimed throwing something, 'and it was chaos mate! Bottles and cans and bricks! We were pelting the pigs!' Tom spoke of 'we' and acted out throwing bricks and hiding behind bins. Little Tom is two months older than me. We were two years old in 1980 but Tom vividly and physically recreated this locally legendary riot. It features strongly in his sense of self-identity. It is true that he might

have been present during the riot because Tom's mother was also homeless and known around St. Paul's during the time of the riots. Tom's street name, 'Little Tom', stems from the fact he was known on the streets as a very young boy. It is unlikely that Tom threw bottles at the police aged two but the legends and stories associated with the infamous 1980 riot are hugely significant to him. Stories about police cars, sirens, blockades and people rioting in the streets he has known and slept rough on all his life fundamentally shape how he conceives of the landscape, his place in it and his identity.

Several colleagues reported feeling a sense of commonality with criminals 'from the past'. As one man put it to me, 'there's always been ne'er do-wells in life! We're the ones of our times. Bad apples!' Often, colleagues identified most with romanticised stereotypes or folk myth characters. Dick Turpin and Robin Hood were frequently commended as common heroes. Andrew told me, 'it was easier to get away with it…before the police had cameras and phones and ways of tracking you…You could get away with stuff and then go to another part of the country and reinvent yourself. These days, that would be impossible.' Punk Paul took me to a spot in Castle Park from where he identified small doors which can be seen at the edge of the water on the opposite bank of the river. Punk Paul told me that this was where smugglers kept their wares, 'close to the city. So they could sell it easily'.

In Bristol, at the site of Priors Hill Fort, Andrew recounted a dream he had during the first night he slept at his flat on Dove Street, close to the site of Prior's Hill Fort (see above). Andrew explained, 'I dreamt about Mrs Baker the first night I stayed in my flat. It was really vivid. It wasn't scary, just weird... I suppose there's loads of dead bodies under here [Andrew stamped his foot against the pavement]. Not just from the Civil War but the whole place was bombed out in the Second World War.' The potential presence of graves was also significant to Punk Paul's perception of the landscape. Standing at the 'Camp of Thieves' (Castle Park) Paul suggested the negative and dark, unpleasant feeling which we all agreed was present, 'might be because we're so close to Newgate Prison. God knows, this could have been a graveyard part of Newgate' (see section 5.7 below).

Ghost walks and historic trails are plentiful in York and fieldwork revealed homeless people are no less likely to engage with York's traditional heritage than anyone else. Several colleagues recounted ghost stories as we passed the area around York Minster. Ray said, 'there's supposed to be a Roman army that marches through these gates' (at the Treasurer's House), an interpretation of a popular ghost story that surrounds the site. Jacko recounted another popular ghost story relating to a woman whose dead brother visited her while she was on a guided tour of the Minster in the 1920s. 'He whispered in her ear and she knew her brother was dead…He was in the navy and he was killed but they hadn't got the letter yet.'

## 5.7 Death

Stories of death, ghosts and imagined deaths feature strongly in homeless landscapes in both cities. In York, colleagues mentioned people they knew who had died but death was not evoked as frequently by places encountered during fieldwork for this thesis[27]. Examples that follow exemplify the quotidian nature of death as a homeless landscape feature. This is in stark contrast, I argue, with the way most (non-homeless) people experience their local area on a daily basis. Perhaps due to the dangers posed by homeless lifestyles (for example, heightened risk of physical attack, inhospitable surroundings, poor diet and often excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs), death is a routine, more immediate feature of homeless than non-homeless landscapes.

During fieldwork in Bristol Andrew and Punk Paul referred often to the 'Dead Building', a large six storey derelict office building officially called Westmorland House and last occupied by the Football Pools Company in 1986. 'People have been going in there to use [heroin and crack cocaine] for years. Lots of people never come

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[27] With the very sad exception of Ray, our friend and colleague who died two days into our excavation of the homeless site in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital (October 2011)

out alive. That's why we call it the Dead Building,' Andrew said. Conversations with other homeless people in the area confirmed the term 'Dead Building' a colloquial name specific to the local homeless community. At the front of the 'Dead Building' are some steps which are referred to by colleagues simply as 'the steps'.

Another building firmly associated with death in the minds of homeless colleagues is 'The Black House', a derelict shop on Little Bishop Street almost directly opposite the Julian Trust night shelter. The function and specific characteristics of 'The Black House' are more fully unpacked in the next chapter (Fig 38). Punk Paul, Andrew, Jane, Tony Tap and Little Tom associated 'The Black House' with death readily and when it arose in conversations it was connected to stories of people, in their minds, 'beyond help' (through severe addiction or mental health problems). 'People go in there to die,' Jane said as we passed the Black House one morning. The imperturbability with which Jane identified the building as a place 'to die' was striking.



Figure 38 - 'The Black House', death in the landscape, Bristol (photo: author's own)

Tibor Tarr was a vendor of *The Big Issue*. He died during winter 2008 and his friends and colleagues at *The Big Issue* office, Stokes Croft created a small tribute to him – a piece of A4 paper with a few words about Tibor and his photograph was attached to a lamppost close to his pitch in Broadmead (Fig 39). The same afternoon, the memorial had been removed and contact with Bristol City Council revealed that it is council policy to remove such items after a short period. Nearby, flowers and cards attached to a railing in memory of a teenager who had been run over remained in place. The removal of Tibor Tarr's memorial is an example of how homeless attachment to or emotional involvement with place is somehow less 'real', less authentic, treated differently from that of non-homeless people. It also exemplifies the way in which homeless people are given less time (and space) to grieve lost friends. When a homeless person dies they often do so in circumstances that mean the police and coroner are involved. The body is removed and taken away from those who consider the body to be that of a 'buddy' or 'close friend'. Due to next of kin rules, often, those left behind are not made aware of funeral arrangements or the location of burial or scattering. In some cases, the dead person is cremated at a pauper's funeral with no-one in attendance (see below). In other cases the dead person's family is tracked down and the body reclaimed by a family who have no desire to involve themselves with homeless people. In either case, those homeless people left behind who feel attachment to the dead person and have no opportunity to express sentiment, pay respects, memorialise or mark the passing of their friend.

**Figure 39 - Tibor Tarr's memorial, Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

Homeless people who often report feeling 'invisible' in life are made *more* invisible through death than non-homeless people. Homeless death is removal without remembrance, intangibility without acceptance. Coming to terms with death can be traumatic for everyone but in the case of homeless people, the funeral is often state organised, that is, a pauper's funeral. This necessarily means the body is cremated and the ashes often go unclaimed. This removal without meaningful memorialisation can seem industrial. Several deaths occurred during the period in which I conducted fieldwork and each case triggered a domino like series of relapse into addiction and mental or emotional breakdown within the homeless community with whom I was working. In two cases, I arranged to take those who wanted to go to the crematorium in my car and encouraged colleagues to walk with me after the funeral in local woods where we talked about and remembered the deceased person. Funerary ritual

of this kind was new to the majority of people present that day. In Chapter Eight I unpack ways in which data gathered for this thesis might aid the development of therapeutic approaches to dealing with death within homeless communities with the aim being the reduction of trauma and therefore reducing the likelihood of relapse and breakdown.

## 5.8 Faith

Colleagues in both cities cited 'faith', either their own faith or that imposed through the church specifically as a landscape feature. Faith and food places were strongly linked. Although colleagues' opinions on faith were varied distinct faith in 'higher power' of some kind remained a recurrent theme in Bristol and York. I present data in this section relating to 'faith' of all descriptions as encountered.

**The Wild Goose café run by Crisis Centre Ministries (Bristol)**

The Wild Goose café was situated on City Road, St. Paul's when I conducted fieldwork (Fig 40). It has since relocated to Stapleton Road. The café regularly offers food to homeless people (see also Chapter Six). Café customers are not expected to engage with the Christian ethos of Crisis Ministries if they choose not to although anyone who wishes to attend one of the member churches is encouraged to do so. In some cases, Wild Goose café customers become Christian as a result of engaging with the volunteers and services encountered through the café. Whistler, put it this way, 'I have a lot to say now in what God has done for me and where he has taken me…I've struggled in areas but with his grace and love he has changed me…It's been truly amazing getting to believe in God.' It is noteworthy that the majority of Bristol colleagues spoke of the individual volunteers kindly, often recognising they gave their time freely, although colleagues often refer to Christians generally derogatorily, for example, ' the God squad'. With the exception of Andrew for whom 'nature is the only real God', all Bristol colleagues recognise some form of supernatural 'higher being' but in many cases, this was not Christian.

**Figure 40 - 'The Wild Goose' cafe, City Road, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

It is of note that despite fairly regular rejection of doctrinal religion many colleagues repeatedly expressed a sense of faith in some kind of spiritual power and ghosts were often spoken of. Several colleagues adhere to personal superstitions or carry what might be interpreted as talismans (for example, Punk Paul carries a particular penny, Whistler carries a photograph of his mother and both men consider these artefacts to be 'lucky'). Equally, despite Punk Paul's protestation that he dislikes Christians, 'respect for people sleeping' in the graveyard of Temple Church led him to significantly modify his behaviour (see below). Asked whether she had faith in God or considered herself to be a religious person, Jane said, 'I'm more spiritual… I don't believe God is a bloke with a white beard in the sky but I definitely think there's something bigger than all this. I've prayed…I'm more into thinking about it like they did back when Stonehenge… was being made. I lived in a Druid cave in Derbyshire for a few years near the Nine Ladies stone circle.' Recent research by sleep scientists has shown that sleep deprivation can lead to reduced emotional intelligence and

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reduced capacity to think constructively and 'an elevation in esoteric thought processes' (Killgore et al 2008:523). Homeless people are more likely to suffer lack of sleep than the non-homeless population (for example, through inadequate shelter, fear of physical danger and at times, excessive consumption of drugs and alcohol) suggesting that esoteric conceptions of environment may be considered strong features of homeless landscapes.

Data reveal there exist zones or areas of each city which homeless colleagues perceive to be 'good' for particular activities (for example, begging or socialising) at a particular time of day/night, season or time of year. Similarly, there are areas to be avoided (for example, main thoroughfares) and those perceived to be pleasant (for example, on the banks of the River Ouse or Museum Gardens). Landscapes of homelessness are typically palimpsest constructions that cut back and forth across time (for example, recalling the Romans, the English Civil War and enclosure, World War II) and space (for example, acutely and necessarily aware of developments in the city and resultant loss of homeless places). Personal experience informs constructions of the recent past (for example, Jane's recollection of the Poll Tax Riots and, as memories, the contemporary past informs identity (for example, Little Tom's physically mimed recollection of the 1980 St Paul's Riot, Jacko's memories of his grandfather and association with place). Responses to memories or experiences that catalyse 'bad' memories (for example, anniversaries and flashpoints) can be health-damaging (for example, over-consumption of alcohol or drugs). Recent work suggests that there is previously under-acknowledged plasticity to the adult brain even within adults who experienced trauma as children and suffered associated developmental problems (McEwan 2012). McEwan insists that given supportive and productive social environments in which to learn new (health-promoting) brain responses to stress, the adult brain can adapt. I return to the exciting proposal that the archaeological process can function therapeutically through its potential to offer a supportive and productive social environment later in the thesis (see Chapter Eight). For the moment, I wish to draw the attention of the reader to the way in which human needs and social activities also shape the character of homeless landscapes.

## 5.9 Landscape character

Data presented earlier reveal that contemporary homeless landscapes resist documentation using traditional mapping techniques. Reasons for this include that to be homeless is to be theoretically 'placeless' and the transient and impermanent nature of homelessness renders maps of bounded entities a difficult and erroneous task. In this way, homelessness may be seen to share landscape features with indigenous world views which tend to question the possibility of land 'ownership' central to the capitalist ideology. The definition of landscape according to the European Landscape Convention is helpful because it allows for the consideration of areas of each city which can be characterised by their uses and perceived functions according to *different* perspectives and include intangible as well as tangible aspects. What follows is a presentation of data according to human needs and social activities. I present themes in order of priority as relayed to me by colleagues with whom I worked.

## 5.9a Sleeping

Homeless people, as data reveal, are able to disguise the fact they are homeless during the day (for example, spending time in the library, by the river or in the park). Some colleagues chose to sleep in public areas (for example, York railway station and Bristol bus station) because it afforded them a sense of security (for example, public areas tend to be monitored by CCTV or security guards). In all but one case (Noel in York) colleagues reported that sleeping in stations is now almost impossible because these 'public' spaces are now private and those working for (private) train/bus companies move homeless people on. The majority of colleagues in both cities therefore opted to stake out places they could 'skip' (sleep rough) or 'doss' which were away from public view and where they felt they had an element of privacy. As sleeping places tend to be changeable colleagues tended not to feel the need to spend time or work close to sleeping places because these places do not function as 'home' as defined earlier in Chapter Two. That is, a fundamental aspect of 'home' being the act of returning regularly. This was significantly absent from

sleeping places I encountered with colleagues from both cities. Colleagues tended to have several places they used regularly but few people had one place to which they would return every night with the exception of Andrew's place by the river. Sleeping places tend to be located on the outskirts of the city centre, outside the city walls of York and away from the city centre of Bristol.

## 5.9b Eating

Colleagues repeatedly told me that obtaining food for free is relatively easy in Bristol making it a more attractive place to be homeless. Many colleagues became homeless in other towns and cities (for example, Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Shipley, Birmingham, London, Southampton, Swindon, Chippenham and Plymouth). Free food was obtained during every day of fieldwork with colleagues. In Bristol, the three main ways that food was obtained for free were: 1) non-homeless people giving food to homeless people usually when colleagues were begging 2) through a process of food donation usually as part of services run by church groups and 3) through 'skipping' (looking for food in bins). In York, where most people were also residents of Arc Light homeless centre colleagues returned to Arc Light for lunch and supper where these meals are given to residents as part of their residential package. In some instances, colleagues 'skipped' for food in bins or went to 'Care Bears' (Carecent, St Saviourgate) where breakfast is served daily. It is of note that Bristol based colleagues often reported not eating for days at a time despite free food being widely available. The reasons given for this were that addiction to drugs and alcohol greatly suppresses the appetite as do pharmaceutical drugs prescribed for conditions such as anxiety and depression. In each case, knowing where food could be obtained for free and on which days shaped the routes colleagues took through the city on given days.

## 5.9d 'Using' (drugs/alcohol)

Everyone with whom I conducted fieldwork had experienced addiction or was currently addicted to alcohol or drugs. Several colleagues had been diagnosed with some form of mental health problem, where depression, bi-polar disorder and schizophrenia were most common. All colleagues were taking regular prescription

medication of which benzodiazepine or diazepam (anti-anxiety or sleep inducing), tramadol (pain reliever or treatment of liver problems), clozapine, risperidone and phenothiazines (anti-psychotics) and methadone (synthetic opioid) were most common. Of those colleagues who used heroin, the drug cycle penetrated every aspect of their perception of landscape - the need to find money and buy drugs over-riding all other commitments and interests. As Andrew put it, 'the whole routine becomes addictive. It's a continual battle to get money. And it don't matter how much you've got because you'll always want more.' Those colleagues addicted to alcohol identified with areas of each city where their particular brand of drink was available for the lowest price and data reveal that availability of favourite brands determined routes through the city. 'We used to be able to buy white cider en route to our place by the river but they stopped selling it', Dan said, explaining why he now routinely detoured to a shop that continues to sell white cider.

For most colleagues in receipt of prescription drugs the location of the pharmacy responsible for supplying medications and associated health services featured strongly as the place to which colleagues returned with *most* regularity. For Andrew, this can act as a landscape obstacle for people attempting to recover from homelessness and addiction, as he explained:

*'I'm prescribed such strong medication for my condition* [trigeminal neuralgia, a complex neurological pain problem] *that I have to go to the pharmacy to collect medication every day. They won't give me, like, a week's worth, in case I overdose. But the problem is that I have to go through town and see all the wrong 'uns that I'm trying not to be involved with anymore… for some people…it's the reason they end up back at Square One because they get dragged back into it all.'*

Similarly, the Post Office closest to these pharmacies was the most likely place from where people with whom I worked would draw their benefit money.

Perception of the landscape according to homeless colleagues is impacted by drugs and alcohol in two distinct ways. The first is the physiological effect of the substance

in question, the second is the legal position of the substance, its availability and the potential for the person in question to be criminalised if found in possession. Working with colleagues who were under the influence of alcohol, drugs or strong prescription medication revealed that individuals' experience of each city changed according to which substances were ingested and impacted reactions to places and surroundings. For example, whilst field walking 'the frontline' (St Paul's, Bristol) Little Tom talked about 'crack walks' which he described as 'when you've got the money for crack, your walk speeds up because you're so impatient to score. You'd run if you could but it would look too obvious so you try to walk. But you can't walk normally. I've seen it. I've done it!'

Throughout fieldwork, colleagues' reactions to places changed depending on their place in their individual cycles of medication and/or addiction. A related phenomenon mentioned by several colleagues was the experience of having their actions or words (under the influence of drugs or alcohol) described to them by others at a later date but having no recollection of their own. As Punk Paul put it, 'I can't remember half my life. I hear about it later from people who saw me.' Describing how he had been introduced to heroin when he first became homeless in Bristol, aged seventeen, Whistler said that his first impression of the drug had been that it was 'a nice warm fluffy place to go where nothing matters.' For Whistler, taking heroin was about *perceiving a change* in his physical surroundings. Drugs and alcohol play a significant role in the creation of 'places' in homeless landscapes in Bristol and York and their availability or scarcity dictates the routes colleagues take and the way in which they perceive the world around them. An associated factor is that in the case of illegal substances, there can be an added threat of physical danger created through the abundance or scarcity of a particular drug. For example, if heroin is difficult to obtain then opioid substitute prescription drugs (for example, Subutex or methadone) become worth more money on the street. There is a thriving trade in prescription medicine on the streets of Bristol and York most of the time but when illegal drugs are unavailable (for example, because a shipment has been intercepted) the trade in certain prescription drugs is more volatile and operates along ungoverned

capitalist rules, the nature of the black market being unregulated inflation and commonplace fraud.

## 5.9e Socialising/keeping appointments

As data show there exist differences between Bristol and York regarding homelessness and associated anti-social behaviours (for example, street drinking, drunkenness, fighting and drug-use). What is termed 'socialising' for non-homeless people is often termed 'loitering' where homeless people are concerned. Broadly, data reveal it is unusual to find groups of homeless people socialising on the street or other public areas in York. Whereas in Bristol particular areas in the city are locally synonymous with homelessness and street drinking and at times, populated by groups of perhaps ten or twelve people who are homeless. It is of note that areas designated DPPOs by Bristol City Council and Avon & Somerset Police (appendix 4) include seven areas of the city in which the highest concentration of temporary accommodation (deemed 'suitable for statutorily homeless people') is situated: Stokes Croft, St Judes, Redcatch Park Knowle, Queens Rd Withywood, St Augustines Park Whitchurch, Filwood and Bedminster.

Fieldwork showed that homeless people in York are likely to socialise in pairs or small groups and likely *remain walking* around the city together or 'stay on the hoof for warmth and safety', as Steve put it. Data reveal that the difference between the two cities is in part due to planning decisions. For example, the decision by Bristol City Council to grant planning permission to a range of services used often by homeless people (for example, The Hub housing service, Bristol Specialist Drug & Alcohol Service, *The Big Issue* office, probation services, Bristol Drug Project, the Compass Centre (£1.6m homeless centre), Jamaica Street homeless hostel and a significant proportion of short-term temporary B&B accommodation) in Stokes Croft and the immediate local area has the effect of drawing the city's homeless people (and often friends, family and associates) into that particular area. The area is now also a DPPO (colloquially referred to as a No Drinking Zone) which means that people found drinking alcohol in the area (for example, people who are addicted to

alcohol and homeless, on their way to appointments at any of the services intended to help them) can be charged under the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 further exemplifying the ease with which homeless people can find themselves criminalised. In York, however, where the police and council operate a 'zero tolerance' policy, those found drinking alcohol, deemed to be loitering or known for begging are far more likely to be charged and sent to court, hence remaining 'on the hoof for safety'.

## 5.9f Working

In contrast to the image of the lazy homeless person data reveal that 'work' is a landscape feature for homeless colleagues in Bristol and York. Work can entail legal and illegal work practices (see Chapter Six). Several people with whom I worked were official vendors of *The Big Issue* and two colleagues regularly busked in Bristol. Those colleagues who sold *The Big Issue* had pitches at which they could be found regularly. For these colleagues, there existed an element of territorialism over the pitch, their identity palpably bound in interactions with regular passers-by and others whom, if not customers, were pleasant enough and whose friendliness added to colleagues' perception of particular areas of the city being friendly or 'good' (for example, Rich at his Bear Pit pitch) (Fig 5.23).

**Figure 41 - Rich at 'The Big Issue' vending pitch on the south side of the Bear Pit, Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

In contrast, none of my York based colleagues were *Big Issue* vendors although two were previously vendors.  Several homeless colleagues 'tat' or recycle waste materials through exchanging things they find in skips or bins for cash at the scrapyard. Andrew is a prolific 'tatter', often making £60 or £70 from things other people have thrown away. Colleagues in both cities always stopped to look in skips and bins and regularly found things from which they could make money or swap for items they needed (for example, copper wire, shoes, scrap metal and food). Skips are of course impermanent features but in both cities homeless colleagues would take routes that passed skips they knew about or places where they knew bins often contained useful items. Students were again present in the landscape according to Andrew and Joe in Bristol. During fieldwork with Andrew towards the end of August 2010, we met up at Turbo Island and he told me that he was going to show

me a hoard of treasure! We walked from Stokes Croft to a new block of student accommodation by the hospital and went straight around to the bin store. There we found wheelie bins full of black bin bags which contained all manner of domestic appliances, computer equipment, kitchen equipment and clothes. Andrew took things that were useful to him (shoes, coats, jeans and some electrical cables) and organised several other people to help share kitchen equipment, computer equipment and soft furnishings around local squats.

## 5.10 Discussion of Landscape Data

There is a contained pattern of chaos to homeless landscapes in Bristol and York. Landscapes are not viewed from a particular point empirically rather they are experienced as a mess of repetitive but never guaranteed actions which involve zigzagging back and forth between 'places' in the network which are characterised by social activities (for example, sleeping, eating, scoring and walking which happen in liminal, temporary 'places', themselves subject to regular change). The rate of changes to the known landscape as experienced by individual homeless people is considerable (for example, as one squat is closed, another opened, as one 'skipper' is rendered inaccessible, another must be found). Similarly, the landscape of contemporary homelessness can be said to be truly Heideggerian in the sense of 'Being-In-The-World' (*Dasein*) and having no place from which to retire from public view (Steinbock 1994).

Sound and movement play significant roles in the character of homeless landscapes (for example, the sound of trains going over railway arches and bridges, the sound of rats or water or the York Minster bells). Amid the uncertainty, movement and sound, there is a palpable sense that to be homeless is to be trapped in constant motion with little concept of 'the future'. In some respects, one might liken the experience of contemporary homelessness to a clump of Christmas tree lights where many services and places of *temporary* refuge exist as potentially twinkling points but the sum of the parts is a tangle of unimaginable *individual* complexity where each person's experience of the web is unique.

Using Lefebvre's (1991) definition of place as defined by activity in space data presented in the next chapter relate to places defined by homeless activities and are also presented thematically. Data from two archaeological excavations of homeless places conducted collaboratively with homeless colleagues and students from the Universities of Bristol and York are also presented. Reference to some artefacts is necessary in characterising homeless places but detailed analysis of artefacts is left to Chapter Seven: Artefacts.

# Chapter Six: Places

## 6.0 Introduction

In the last chapter I presented data concerning homeless landscapes of Bristol and York. This chapter will hone in on *places* within landscapes identified by homeless colleagues. Necessarily some referring back to elements encountered through the previous chapter will occur but the intention is to look more closely at the form and function of places. Following Lefebvre's (1991) assertion that places become through social activities undertaken in space, data are grouped according to human activities such as sleeping, eating, working and socialising. The order in which each theme appears reflects the priority in which colleagues ranked each type of place. For example, sleeping places were prioritised over all other places and were unanimously the first type of place colleagues considered when thinking about homeless places. Drug use at particular places is mentioned in this chapter but unpacked more fully in the next, the focus of which is artefacts. The last part of this chapter forms a discussion of comparable and contrasting features of homeless places in Bristol and York. Places are grouped according to theme. Places are multi-functional but sleeping places and food places show some clear characteristics and features in common and are presented in table form (appendix 5, T2 and T3).

## 6.1 Sleeping places

In this section of the chapter I focus on places identified by colleagues as 'sleeping places'. Sleeping places were commonly referred to as 'skippers' by Bristol based colleagues whereas the term was not used by York based homeless colleagues. It was made clear in both cities that I would never be shown sleeping places which were in current use by colleagues for reasons of colleagues' personal safety. To facilitate discussion of types of sleeping places and comparable features data are presented according to the environment in which shelter was found (for example, car parks emerge a common theme among sleeping places in both cities). Data reveal that some sleeping places are specific to individual people and 'secret' areas in each city are often multi-functional (for example, operating as sleeping places and

simultaneously, places where drugs are used). Where data reveal multi-functionality each function will be presented separately.

## 6.1a Car parks

**"The car park near the hospital" (Trenchard Street National Car Park, Bristol)**

Jane described sleeping in the Bear Pit with several other homeless people but told me she did so out of desperation after they were '…evicted from a wicked place we had round the back of the car park near the hospital' (Trenchard Street NCP). The car park is a multi-storey concrete construction familiar to many British towns and cities. The car park facility is entered via a ramp from street level. As we walked towards the car park from the Bear Pit Jane recounted the site from memory. 'That place [Trenchard Street NCP] was wicked because we had, like, a shanty town really. It was really good shelter made of boards and hoardings and bits of fence...Loads of us used to sleep there', Jane told me. As we approached the car park, I observed that Jane did not look toward the entrance ramp, as I did, in anticipation of the place we were visiting. Jane went straight to a gap just to the left of the entrance ramp. A metal grille prevented us from exploring the skipper further (see also Fig 26 for detail). 'See this fence? Well, when we were here about five years ago, it weren't here then. So you could crawl under here and there'd be maybe fifteen or twenty people living here. If it was really raining, you were dry under here and if you go all the way to the other side…it's all grown over now so you can't see it maybe, but there's like a wilderness the other side, a patch where there was trees and bushes and that…It was a little patch of nature with birds singing and that. That's where we had the…shanty town and made…little houses with boards and that.' Jane and I entered the car park and walked up to the top floor from where we could see down to the area described. A large volume of cardboard remained visible (Fig 42). Andrew remembered the Trenchard Street site from the same time (circa 2004/5) but said that he chose not to sleep there, 'too many people for me to ever want to sleep here…I like somewhere a bit more private to sleep.'

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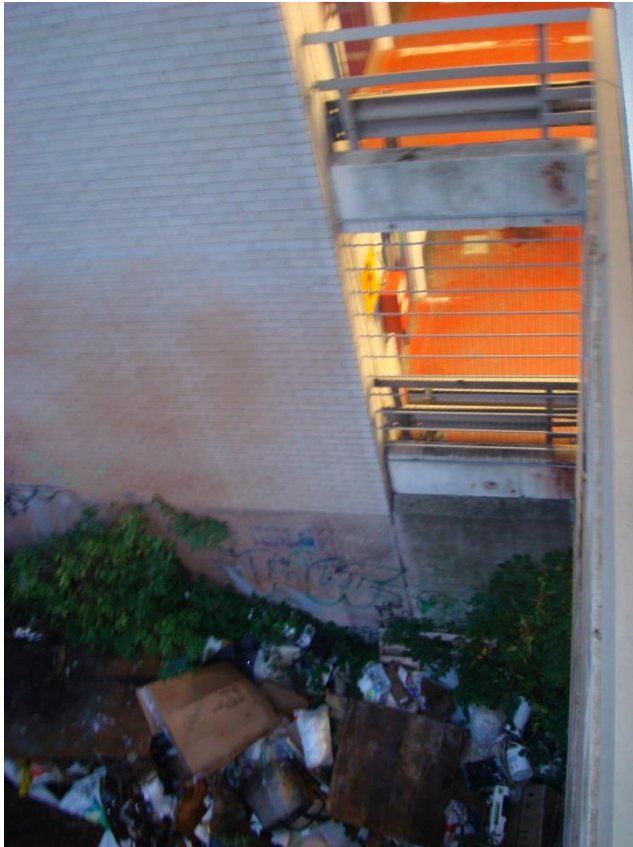
**Figure 42 - Trenchard Street NCP skipper, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**"The Bear Pit Car Park" (Bond Street National Car Park, Bristol)**

Whistler was happy to show me the place he had slept the day after he was housed in a hostel. Whistler referred to the Bond Street NCP as 'The Bear Pit car park'. Again, it is a multi-storey car park made from concrete accessed at street level via a ramp. As we approached the site I noted that Whistler spoke of the place in the past tense until we were actually sitting in the spot in which he had slept for four months previously. He said he would always go straight to the top level of the car park, 'seems safer up here somehow.' Whistler showed me the spot at the very top of the staircase where there was a wide step and a fire door out to a flat roof. There was a small burnt patch on the concrete. 'That's where I make myself a little fire…Just burn McDonald's wrappers and things like that' (Fig 43). I asked Whistler to tell me what made the site a 'good' place to sleep rough. He began, '…it's near the Bear Pit. That's good for the morning because you can…meet fellas there in the day [other homeless people]. And I can have a wash at the bus station' (see also Chapter Five). He explained that the spot where he lay on the return of the stairs was 'out of the

way' and 'it's sheltered by the roof and there's a grit bin out there where I can stash a few things so I don't have to carry them around in the day,' (see also Fig 25).

**"Cardboard Village" (Lower Castle Street or Broadmead NCP, Bristol)**

The Lower Castle Street or Broadmead car park featured more significantly during fieldwork with colleagues who were homeless in Bristol from the mid'1990s. Once again, the Broadmead car park is a concrete multi-storey. Andrew and Jane first mentioned the site and we made a visit to it one afternoon in early 2010. Andrew and Jane said that 'Cardboard Village' had been on the first floor of the NCP just off the suspended bridge. Andrew explained, 'this was a wicked place when it was all cardboard houses. There were loads of people here, all totally off their nut! People made an effort to make inside the village…comfy so there were cushions and blankets. You'd sit inside a cardboard house and it was a bit like being on site [living on a traveller's site]. It was just after the Criminal Justice Bill [1994] so there was loads of travellers that had their vehicles nicked by the police'. Jane had stayed at 'Cardboard Village' for a few months in the mid-1990s. 'It was like a big family. I loved it. Loads of people had got evicted from sites all over the country – we didn't have mobile phones then – but a lot of us knew each other from living on the road and the Beanfield [Battle of the Beanfield, Wiltshire, 1985]'.

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**"St Saviourgate multi-storey" (Stonebow NCP, Stonebow House, York)**

The Stonebow National Car Park is again a concrete multi-storey car park. I visited the site with Jacko in June 2011. 'I used to sleep here,' Jacko pointed to an area underneath the return of a staircase on the lowest floor of the car park but one floor up from street level (see Fig 28). 'I'd sleep here but they grilled it off, so I'd sleep just next to it [next to the metal grille]. Cars park just a bit further out.' Jacko called the car park 'Saviourgate multi-storey' and said, 'it was convenient here because Care Bears [Carecent] is just over't road so I could go there in the morning for a cup of tea and some breakfast.' Jacko explained that when he had first started using the site in the late 1990s, it had been monitored by a security guard. The security guard knew that Jacko slept rough in the car park. 'He didn't bother me. I'm not a drinker so I didn't cause any fuss. Just came up here when I was ready to sleep and I was gone in the morning. Tried not to make a mess or leave any of me stuff around'. I asked Jacko if he felt safe sleeping under the stairs in the car park, 'safer than I would be out there in a doorway. It had a security guard when I was using it.'

## 6.1b Public or communal area sleeping places

Data reveal that places where ownership might be described as 'public' or 'communal' are attractive sleeping places. In some cases places presented in this section might not be publicly owned but the *perception* is that they are and that they are more accessible than obviously private places.

**"The Dungeon" (St Mary le Port, Castle Park, Bristol)**

All colleagues with whom I worked in Bristol identified what they called 'the dungeon' or 'the castle' or 'the old church' as a place they had slept regularly but not consistently since becoming homeless. The site is known by Bristol City Council as the ruins of St Mary le Port church. The ruins are situated at the western end of Castle Park and overshadowed by two twentieth century financial buildings, also derelict. The juxtaposition of derelict financial buildings and the ruins means that 'the dungeon' site is not overlooked by office workers or shoppers, pedestrians or motorists using the surrounding High Street and Wine Street. I was first introduced

to the site in June 2009 by Little Tom and later, Jane. It is Jane's interpretation of the site to which I now turn.

In November 2010, we approached the site from the north and it was immediately clear how visible 'the dungeon' is in winter when the trees are bare. The majority of the ruins are now beneath ground and form stone chambers, although remains of architectural features such as arches and walls have the effect of dividing the ruins into areas or 'rooms' (Fig 44). That homeless people use these spaces in different ways was determinable archaeologically. Jane explained she slept at 'the dungeon' regularly with a couple of other homeless people from around 2003 until the chamber was fenced off by the council. Jane estimated the metal grille had been secured over the chamber rendering the space inaccessible in 2006/7. Directing me to look through the locked metal grille down into a chamber, Jane pointed out two double mattresses with duvets. 'That was my bed, on the right and, on the left, that was my mate's bed. You wouldn't think it would be warm down there because it's made of stone but I promise you that place has saved lives. It is warm down there. We used to make it nice, you know, put tea lights and that in the nooks and crannies. When they fenced it off, they put peoples' lives at risk because it's yet another place people can't go to get shelter. They fenced it off with my stuff in too.'

**"The BRI" (Space in front of the Bristol Royal Infirmary)**

Tom said he often 'skipped' (slept rough) in front of the BRI. The space he showed me was a spot in the flower beds just in front of the hospital in central Bristol. Entrance to the site was clearly marked via an informal footpath worn through the chippings on the flowerbed. The site was approximately six foot square and elevated with a view across the main road. The 'back' of the site was protected by the wall of the hospital and the 'front' of the site was obscured from general view by trees and bushes. Unless you knew to look up towards it, people sitting at the site would be well hidden from view. The site was delineated by a metal fence and there was a bundle of cardboard which showed signs of wear and dips consistent with having been slept on (for example, similar to wrinkles in a bed) (Fig 45). 'You're quite sheltered by the overhang of the car park,' Tom explained, 'and also by the trees that keep a lot of weather off you. See here, we drag a load of cardboard – as much as you can find – to keep the cold from coming up and this fence – well, it makes you

feel a bit more secure. If anyone tries to attack you, at least you're going to wake up when they climb over so you can be ready'.



**Figure 45 - Tom's skipper at the Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI), Bristol (photo: author's own)**


**"The Bear Pit" or St James Barton Roundabout, Bristol**

All Bristol based colleagues identified 'the Bear Pit' as a place they had slept rough at some point. Centrally located and linking a series of concrete subways 'the Bear Pit' is the colloquial term for the St James Barton roundabout and the area of green space and sunken flowerbeds beneath the end of the M32, in the centre of Bristol. Punk Paul described the Bear Pit as '…your first port of call if you're homeless in Bristol. It's a kind of hub'. Throughout fieldwork conducted for this thesis homeless people were encountered in the Bear Pit, sleeping or socialising (see also section 6.5

below). During a phase of pilot fieldwork undertaken in June 2009, a couple (Karl and Simone) were sitting on the grass to the northern end of the Bear Pit. The couple had built a shelter in which they had slept the previous night and were intending to sleep until asked to move on. Their shelter was a construction of blankets and pieces of protest placard which was loosely strewn with foliage to camouflage its existence (Fig 46). The shelter was situated directly in front of the CCTV camera in the centre of the Bear Pit (see Chapter Five) and on one of the elevated hexagonal sections of grass. Karl explained he had 'tatted' (found in skips or bins) the materials necessary to construct the shelter and that it was designed in such a way that it could easily be dismantled and stuffed into a rucksack quickly. Portability is an important feature of homelessness and a topic to which I return in more detail later in the thesis.



**Figure 46 - Karl & Simone's shelter in the Bear Pit, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

Returning to the site three days later the shelter had gone. Parts of placards that had formed the timber frame of the structure were still in the ground suggesting the shelter had been removed in a hurry. I spoke with a homeless man called Ricky who was sitting nearby with two other people sleeping beside him. Around Ricky's feet, near his sleeping friends, marks on the ground delineated where the single-seat with arms upon which he now sat had once been benches which, as Dixon has observed is, '…a design intended to stop people sleeping on them…Rather than making the

place safer, which the non-cynic must believe was the council's intention, the benches starkly deny homeless peoples' right to be.' (Dixon 2009).

I asked Ricky if he knew what had happened to Karl and Simone's shelter and he explained, 'yeah the police come and take it down…they said now it's summer…people are walking around with their heads up and they don't want to see you [homeless people]. They said it's not allowed.' I asked Ricky whether he and the two sleeping people he was with had slept at the Bear Pit the night before. He said they had and that the police had woken him, '…they asked if we was ok…They said it was ok to stay here so long as one of us was awake. Then it's classed as chilling out not sleeping.' Ricky explained he was 'on guard' and that when one of his friends woke up he would go to sleep again.

## 6.1c Bin stores

Bin stores and areas where bins are kept also featured strongly as places in homeless landscapes. There is a surprising degree of variation in style of bin stores! In some cases bins are stored in locked purpose built containers. In other cases, historic fabric is adapted for contemporary use as an area in which bins can be stored. Several examples follow.

**Jane's Hot Skipper (Berkeley Square, Bristol)**

Jane took me to see what she called her 'Hot Skipper' (see also Chapter Five). To access the skipper we had to descend three steps at the back of a pizza restaurant which brought us to a private (but unsecured) area where bins and recycling crates were kept. To our left was the back entrance to a restaurant kitchen and to our right were three recessed arches, currently used as the bin store. 'When I used this place (2003/6)' Jane began, 'I wouldn't show no-one. In them days, the staff who worked here would sometimes leave me out a bowl of spaghetti or a bit of pizza. It was kind actually. Sometimes there would even be a whole cigarette for me. But if there wasn't, I used to pick up the ones they'd only half smoked because they didn't have time to finish it. This was a good place.'

Standing in front of three dimly lit arches crammed with bins and catering crates I asked Jane to tell me exactly where she slept. She pointed to the last arch grilled off with familiar metal fencing (see also Fig 19). 'I slept in this one because the hot air vent blows right into the archway and it keeps you warm....With that vent blowing hot air and Patch [Jane's dog] curled up with me, I was warm' (Fig 47). Jane demonstrated how she would take off her two coats, wet trousers and position them over the hot vent, resting her trainers over the top. 'In winter, I wear my PJs under my clothes. Extra layer of warmth,' she explained. 'The best thing about this place is that I could put dry clothes on the next day.'



Figure 47 - hot vent at JH's 'Hot Skipper', Bristol (photo: author's own)

**"Ramada Hotel Bin Store", (Redcliffe Way, Bristol)**

There were some homeless people with whom I mapped for a day or two who then decided they did not wish to continue with the project. Jonathan was one such man. Jonathan was happy to show me where he slept rough regularly at the back of the Bristol Ramada hotel. 'See how they took the roof off? It was deliberate alright!

They came and told me they'd do it if I didn't stop sleeping here. It was a good place to sleep because there's hot vents opposite so when the roof was on and them vents was chucking out hot air, it was a good place. Get food from the bins sometimes and it was pretty warm and dry. It's not now…I don't stop here anymore so it worked…them taking the roof off.' Figure 31 shows where the roof above the bin area was removed to reduce the sheltered aspect of the space, a specific anti-homeless intervention.

**"Bin cupboard behind Greggs" (St. Sampson's Square, York)**

Jacko and Jamie (York) each separately showed me a covered bin area in which they had slept at different times. Like Jane's 'Hot Skipper' the area was attractive to Jacko because it offered shelter and being situated at the back of Greggs' bakery food was often available from the bins. I first visited the site with Jacko in June 2011 and he was surprised to find it had been grilled off (see also Fig 29). 'This [fencing] is new because I stayed here not long ago,' he said. Jacko explained the site was 'good' because it was out of the way of the general public but central so that he was close to places from which he regularly begged (see also Chapter Five). The site offered some shelter, cigarette ends and spare cardboard from commercial bins which could be used to insulate the ground from cold.

Jamie identified the same location as 'a popular spot to crash for the night'. We visited together in October 2011. The site remained grilled off. Jamie said he knew of several places that offered similar shelter but that this was a particularly good site because, 'there's cameras around so you know that if anyone tried anything, you'd have that security that it might get picked up' (see Chapter Five).

## 6.1d 'Secret' sleeping areas

Data reveal that some sleeping places were formed at parts of the city that might be considered 'non-designed places'. I term these 'secret' because it is unlikely that

non-homeless people would encounter such places and they often involve complicated access routes.

**"Under the bridge" (beneath Temple Way, Bristol)**

Fieldwork with Andrew led me to 'Under the Bridge' (beneath Temple Way, Bristol). Entrance to the site was gained by climbing over an iron railing the top rung of which was missing, presumably removed by people using the site to improve access (Fig 48).



Figure 48 - entrance to 'Under the Bridge' with rung missing, Bristol (photo: author's own)

We climbed through to a space between the bottom of the bridge (Temple Way) and the riverbank. In front of us were two 'beds', one double and one single, positioned towards the 'front' of the space under the bridge, beside the water's edge and fashioned from a combination of cardboard boxes, pallets and blankets (Fig 49).

**Figure 49 - cardboard bed 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

At the back of the space was a huge volume of suitcases, clothes, duvets, shoes, newspaper, cans, bottles, plastic bags, cigarette packets, food wrappers and drug paraphernalia. We noticed many empty bottles of Lambrini (inexpensive white wine) and cans of Tennant's (strong lager) with price stickers that read Malik's (an independent off-licence in St Paul's). On the 'wall' (or bridge architecture) messages were written including one piece of graffiti, written in blood which read, 'Home Sweet Ho…' (Fig 50)

**Figure 50 - graffiti written in blood 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

Of direct relevance to the character and creation of places is the positioning of artefacts in context. In this case, we felt strongly that the site was 'active' although not actually occupied at the time of our visit. Reasons for this included that the beds had been freshly slept in (the bedding was dry and no leaves or detritus had blown over it) and undisturbed cigarette ash was observed. Two pieces of cloth were hanging from a bridge strut overhead (Fig 51). These items were grouped typologically, suggesting they were placed there by someone intending to return for them. Andrew identified these as tourniquets necessary to people injecting heroin. The fact that these were purposefully tied up and clearly visible suggests that they remained someone's belongings, stored rather than discarded.

**Figure 51 - tourniquets hanging up 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

There exists some debate over the classification of objects by archaeologists, for example, when is an object lost/found and how does the status of the object affect archaeological theory and practice (Orange 2012)? The theoretical implications of this topic and its relation to the material culture of homelessness is further unpacked in the next chapter.

Andrew explained that the site, 'Under the Bridge', was multi-functional. 'Basically, people use this space as somewhere to sleep. You're dry, you're out the way of the police and in a way, you're safe because to get in, you've got to climb over that precarious bit so people aren't going to come down here unless they know about it…people coming down here are homeless heroin users. It's a place to sleep and use [use drugs].'

## 6.1e Bushes

Bushes and clumps of trees emerge from data as places where shelter is sought by colleagues in Bristol and York.

**"Monkgate Bush", (York)**

I first encountered what we came to refer to as 'Monkgate Bush' while out on fieldwork with Scott (see Fig 21). The bush is situated on the site of the former St Maurice church graveyard just outside the city walls on the corner of Monkgate bar and Lord Mayor's Walk. The Monkgate Bush is surrounded by a small number of tombstones and headstones now defunct and significantly moved from their original positions and a clump of bushes to the right of the Job Centre on Monkgate. Scott explained that the 'best' thing about the bush was the fact that the bush was big enough to climb into and spend time without being seen by anyone passing nearby. Further to this, the proximity of the York Job Centre (11-17 Monkgate) made the bush an attractive place to spend the night if a person had an appointment at the nearby Job Centre the following morning or shelter from inclement weather while waiting for the Job Centre to open. 'I've not slept here regularly,' Scott told me, 'but people do'. Ray showed me the same place a few days later and explained, 'I slept here once or twice when I was first homeless in York. It's a good spot because you're quite sheltered from the weather but you can see out.' Ray explained that the bush was known to him as a place to shelter whilst waiting for appointments at the Job Centre but that 'plenty of people just use it as a place to do drugs. You quite often find used needles…It's not a secret place. It's somewhere a lot of people know about.' Walking the wider context of the Monkgate Bush site, there was evidence that the tombs were used as discard places and perhaps for storage in some cases and there was a high concentration of material culture relating to sex (for example, condoms and condom wrappers) possibly indicating the place had been used for prostitution. There was also a concentration of soiled male and female clothes and a latrine area (Fig 52).

**Jacko's Bushes by the Minster, (York)**

Fieldwork with Jacko revealed that he had regularly slept in bushes close to the York Minster for several years previously. At the time I visited the site the bushes had been chopped back by the local council specifically to stop people from sleeping in them. Jacko explained that the bushes had been evergreen and offered some protection from bad weather. This also enhanced privacy and Jacko said he *felt* safer sleeping in these bushes than he did sleeping in, for example, bin stores. Alongside personal reasons for choosing to sleep in the bushes by the Minster (see Chapter Five) the physical properties of the bushes were significant as Jacko explained. 'When the bushes was here, I used to crawl in and sleep up against this wall, right?' He imitated where he had slept curled up against the wall. The wall to which he referred is part of a branch of Jackson, Stops & Staff estate agent. 'It's got me name on it, the wall!' Jacko commented that 'Jackson' (his grandfather's surname) was also in the name of the estate agent. The comment was made by Jacko in good humour but as he shared more about why he felt attached to this particular part of York the material presence of Jacko's surname in the environment came to hold deeper meaning. The estate agent wall acted as a form of security for Jacko. In one

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direction, at least, he knew his 'back was covered'. Another safety feature, Jacko explained, was the proximity of the bushes to the York Minster building and associated curtilage. Jacko said, 'you feel safer here in front of this great building [the Minster].'

## 6.1f Individual sleeping places

Some places I was shown were remarkable for the fact they 'belonged' to an individual colleague. Colleagues identified such sleeping places as 'safer' or 'better' because the place was felt to offer more of the essential (often intangible) characteristics of home (for example, privacy, autonomy, safety, shelter and they were places to which colleagues returned regularly).

**Jane's place beneath the Dental Hospital (Bristol)**

Bristol Dental Hospital is situated opposite the Bristol Royal Infirmary on Lower Maudlin Street. It is a short walk from Stokes Croft, the Bear Pit and Marlborough Street bus station. Jane explained that she had a 'good skipper for a woman on her own' and we walked there together during fieldwork in November 2010. Jane and I passed over a small railing to the side of the hospital entrance (Fig 53) and crawled down a narrow passage between the hospital building and the street. Jane pointed out pipes on the wall, '…them pipes must be water pipes…because they're hot.' Jane and I crawled along the narrow passage on our hands and knees and reached a wider space about a metre square with enough headroom to sit up. 'I sleep here,' Jane said, 'You're covered so you're out of the rain and when I'm tucked down here, with Patch no-one knows I'm here and it's quite warm.' Jane explained that the skipper offered her privacy and the chance to catch up on rest. 'Sometimes…you get tired of always being on the hoof and you just want to get your head down…This is where I come…I still stay here sometimes even now I've got a flat. Probably sounds weird…but if I'm in town and I've got an appointment the next day, I stay here…because it saves me two bus fares.'

**Figure 53 - Jane's place beneath Bristol Dental Hospital, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**Andrew's skipper by the river, (Bristol)**

During fieldwork in 2009 Andrew showed me where he lived between 2006 and 2008. He did not have a specific name for the place but to distinguish it from others, we referred to it as his 'skipper by the river' (see also Chapter Five). We passed a horde of wooden pallets which Andrew said he had gathered as firewood. He was surprised to see it still there. Beneath the branches of a mature weeping willow tree was a pallet with a railing around it. 'That was my bed! My actual bed I mean,' (Fig 54). A wooden pallet is much like another wooden pallet but this was Andrew's wooden pallet upon which he had slept for two years. To Andrew, the pallet was as significant as if I visited the room I had as an undergraduate, unchanged after sixteen years.

**Figure 54 - Andrew's skipper by the river, Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

With his permission, I recorded Andrew speaking at the site:

*'I dragged some foam out of a skip and had a sleeping bag and with a small fire going next to me, it was a great place. This* [referring to an iron railing and steps down to the river] *used to be the old ferry landing, I think. This was an ideal place. I didn't have a name for it because it was like, out…out….sort of… nowhere! That was the best bit! I didn't tell no-one* [about the skipper]*, so it didn't have a name. I'm so pleased that they left this beautiful tree here. I had a fire here so I could dry my clothes and boots. Plus, it takes the chill off the night air. You could sit here and catch fish. None that you could eat but it was something to do, and passed the time. You'd get tiddlers! Bream, the odd eel.'*


**Gary's place beneath the Arches (Bristol)**

Gary pointed to a bill board off Gloucester Road and said 'that's where my pad is, behind there.' We climbed up and over a 4ft wall, crossed a fence and dropped down onto the railway track. We walked along the loose stones of the railway track for about a quarter of a mile. We then had to climb over another fence and jump down a wall, about 6ft. We picked our way through bushes and trees and came out

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underneath the arches, beneath the railway. Gesturing to the railway arch above Gary explained that shelter from the rain and wind is the first thing he considered. Secondly, the fact that the spot was fairly inaccessible meant that few people were likely to find the place accidentally and this meant that he was likely to have privacy and remain relatively safe. Despite being obscured by tree cover when I visited the site in June 2009, Gary explained that the site was overlooked by nearby houses but that a few carefully positioned bricks meant that he could obscure flames from view, even in winter and make himself a small fire to keep warm (see also Chapter Five). I asked Gary if he lived at the place alone:

*'Yeah, sure, it's much better that way. Keep a low profile, don't let too many people know what you're up to. Like I say, keep a fire going, big enough to keep you warm, small enough to not cause attention to yourself...yeah dead comfortable, really comfortable. Like I say, when I was stopping in homeless shelters, I'd stop in a shelter for a night and be kept up all night by the shenanigans that go on...people coming in drunk, arguing over a cigarette that they thought they'd left on their bed and has been stolen and the like. Then I'd come out here and sleep here, get proper sleep here.'*

A siren peeled and briefly interrupted our conversation. 'Yeah, you get immune to these things [noises such as sirens]. Train going over the top of you! You tend to wake up to the noises that matter rather than the general background.'

## 6.2 Food

Data reveal that obtaining free food is relatively easy in Bristol but less so in York. However, food for free is often made available at irregular times due to volunteer schedules (volunteers usually being from local church groups). It will be argued later in the thesis that food –shared meals, education surrounding food - represents an opportunity for engaging people who are homeless in meaningful and potentially therapeutic ways which are currently under-explored (see Chapter Eight). In this

section of the chapter I present data that relates to places within homeless landscapes of Bristol and York which colleagues associate with food, meals or eating.

## 6.2a Food given directly to homeless people

**"Outside Sainsbury's, by the cash machine" (Park Street, Bristol)**

'When you're begging, you want money but some people feel bad giving money because they think it'll go on drink or drugs so they give you food instead', Ratty told me. 'You get to know good pitches [places to beg] where there is a good flow of people, office workers usually just chuck a few pence at you, if they acknowledge you at all, but shoppers and students quite often ask if you want a cuppa or a sandwich. So if you're hungry, it's a good idea to go up around the Triangle [Clifton triangle] because you can make £20 quite quickly and also, it's near Sainsbury's so it's easy for people to buy you a sandwich'. I asked Ratty to show me where exactly she had been given food and she identified a 'pitch' just to the right of a cash machine outside Sainsbury's supermarket at the top of Park Street. Liam and Joe identified exactly the same spot as being a good place to obtain food. The same 'pitch' or begging site was associated, for them, with shoppers and other passers-by giving food to them or offering to buy them food from the Sainsbury's.

**"By the station" (Station Road, York)**

Jacko identified a pitch at which he regularly begged close to York railway station where he was often given food rather than money by passers-by. 'Loads of people pass by so there's a good chance you'll get a hot drink, sandwich, some coins…I only beg when I'm back on the drugs'.

## 6.2b Food from skips or bins

**'Somerfield skips' (Co-Operative supermarket bins, North Road, Bristol & commercial bins on Cromwell Road, Bristol)**

When asked whether there was anything 'good' about being homeless in Bristol, Ricky said, 'yeah, the food! There's loads of food here, free food in bins I mean.' Similarly, Gary commented on the ease with which food could be obtained for free in Bristol, 'I didn't cook here [Gary's sleeping place beneath the arches]. I used to get food out of the Somerfield [now Co-operative supermarket) skips [off North Road]. It's easier to pick free food up – soup kitchens, free food. If you can't eat for nothing in Bristol then you must be really blind. Got a skip literally in the next street [Cromwell Road] so you can grab stuff from out of there. All your basics, bread usually.'

**'Budgen's skip' (bins behind Budgen's Micklegate, York)**

Mark showed me where he regularly 'skipped' for food in the bins behind Budgen's convenience store. The shop is situated on the corner of Micklegate and Bridge Street in York but Mark accessed the bins via North Street. 'You have a quick look around for cameras and then try the bin. I come here when I'm, not starving, but hungry. There's usually sandwiches and bread and things they can't sell when it's just gone over its sell by date.'

## 6.2c Faith based food places

**"The Goose" (The Wild Goose café, Bristol)**

The Wild Goose café is staffed by Christian volunteers who are members of a group of Bristol churches (see Chapter Five). Andrew, Ricky, Jane, Little Tom, Liam, Joe, Punk Paul, Whistler, Michael, Tia, Tony Tap, Little Dave and Ratty (male and female) individually took me to the Wild Goose café, City Road[28] and explained that

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[28] The Wild Goose café is owned and managed by Crisis Centre Ministries. The Wild Goose café relocated to Stapleton Road in November 2010.

it offered free food to anyone who was hungry, whether or not they had money. Alongside providing food the Crisis Centre Ministries, which manages the Wild Goose café, engage customers in other support services such as mental and physical health services, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services and pastoral care services. The Crisis Centre Ministries describe the café as a 'street level self-referral centre'. At the time I conducted fieldwork (2008-2010) it was estimated that the Wild Goose café provided 300 meals a day (Fig 55). Most colleagues ate lunch and an evening meal at the café. The café work in partnership with a food sharing community initiative called 'Fareshare'[29] the aim of which is to work with services for vulnerable people and the food industry to provide meals and reduce industry waste. Strict rules regarding the types of food Fareshare will distribute among service partners means that only sealed and in date food is considered acceptable. The fact that the Wild Goose café relies heavily on food provided through the Fareshare scheme means that the café menu can be surprising in terms of combination and types of ingredients. For example, the first day I visited the Wild Goose café with Andrew, we were offered coleslaw, smoked haddock and garlic bread. Another time I visited with Punk Paul tinned spaghetti and cauliflower was available.

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[29] http://www.faresharesouthwest.org.uk

**Figure 55 - Andrew with a plate of food outside 'The Wild Goose' cafe, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

When I visited with Tony Tap, Joe and two other men (who remained anonymous) each emerged from the café with a packet of Parma ham, a packaged slice of brie, a tub of black olives and Rice Krispie snack bars. On my way home after fieldwork, I passed the café which had closed for the day. City Road was strewn with black olives and plastic food wrapping. This is something that concerned Andrew. Speaking with regard to the many elderly and mentally ill, not necessarily homeless, people who also use the Wild Goose café, he said:

*'It's wrong that people who are old, paid taxes and that, it's wrong they have to get their food here. Some of them old men were…in the war. Half the time, there's people off their head on drugs or pissed up, banging on the window shouting abuse at the staff or banging up heroin by the bin…they chuck anything they don't like on the road, really ungrateful. And it is good of the Christians! They don't have to care… Them old folk…deserve to be able to afford to feed themselves… on their pension. They shouldn't have to come to places like this.'*

For Andrew, there is a clear distinction between types of poverty. The concept of deserving and undeserving poor and the way it features in contemporary homeless culture is further unpacked later in the thesis.

The Wild Goose café is open between two and four hours every day except Sunday. It featured on every field walk with homeless colleagues. Other faith based food services that Bristol colleagues identified as food places included: 'the nuns' (Sisters of the Church, St Paul's) who give food parcels away most Sundays, 'the Methodists' (Bristol Methodist Centre, Old Market) open between two and five hours every day except Saturday, 'the Tabernacle' (King's Kitchen) offer a free full breakfast on Tuesday mornings and 'Pip'n'Jay' (Bristol Soup Run Trust) offer soup and sandwiches, blankets and toiletries every night. Each of these services is open at quite specific times (see appendix 6). The places that follow featured less prominently in fieldwork than the Wild Goose although colleagues reported that they are used regularly.

**"The Nuns" (Community of the Sisters of the Church, 82 Ashley Road, Bristol)**

I first visited 'the nuns' with Andrew. He wanted to show me 'the way some people have no respect at all. The nuns give out food parcels, bags of tinned foods, rice and pasta, that sort of thing. They're really nice. Proper nuns! But some people go in there and they're like, haggling, squabbling like kids over 'he's got cheese!' or 'I hate peas. Got anything else?' They don't realise that beggars can't be choosers and the nuns just put up with it'. The Sisters of the Church operate from a house (82 Ashley Road) and the building is sometimes made available for supervised meetings between children in care and their parents, many of whom are familiar to the Sisters from their work with homeless and otherwise vulnerable people whom they seek to serve. 'I hardly go there for food but when I was living down by the river I sometimes used to go to the nuns for the peace and quiet. They don't mind if you just sit in the garden. I liked it for that mainly', Andrew told me.

**"The Methodists" (Bristol Methodist Centre, 31-33 Midland Road, Bristol)**

The Methodist Centre was mentioned as a good place to get hot food by Punk Paul, Andrew and Little Tom. I visited the Methodist Centre three times during fieldwork and each time I was with Punk Paul. The Methodist Centre is situated on Midland Road in the Old Market area of Bristol. It occupies a Victorian shop building and flat upstairs. The ground floor is a charity shop that sells second hand clothes, books and other articles donated to raise money for the centre. On the first floor there is a common room and café where homeless people are invited to eat, socialise and they are able to shower and use laundry facilities. The Methodist Centre and its facilities are open for at least one hour every day except Saturday. Paul explained that the Methodist Centre is one of only two places where homeless men can shower and do laundry in Bristol.

**"Pip'n'Jay" (St. Philip & St. Jacob church, Tower Hill, Bristol)**

Pip'n'Jay is the local name for the St. Philip & St. Jacob church, Tower Hill (Fig 56). The Pip'n'Jay church and Bristol Cyrenians joined forces to create the Bristol Soup Run Trust in 1986. The Bristol Soup Run Trust now operates a nightly soup run where soup, sandwiches, blankets and toiletries are given to homeless people. The Pip'n'Jay church is the first of two locations (9.15pm), the second is at Redcliffe wharf, after 9.40pm. I visited the soup run at Pip'n'Jay church car park location with Andrew and later, Redcliffe wharf with Andrew and Whistler. The Soup Run is staffed by volunteers from the churches.

Figure 56 - Pip'n'Jay church, Bristol (photo: author's own)

**"The Tabernacle" (King's Kitchen, Easton, Bristol)**

I was taken to 'the Tabernacle' one very cold Tuesday morning in January 2010. I had arranged to meet Andrew and Punk Paul on 'Turbo Island' at 6am because they had previously told me 'you have to get there early. You get a full fry up, for free'. We arrived at the Tabernacle at 6.30am and there were approximately thirty people eating breakfast. Inside the Tabernacle building a full English breakfast was on offer with tea or coffee. Several men were also sifting through a pile of donated clothes.

**"Care Bears" (Carecent, Central Methodist Church, York)**

Steve took me to what he and other York based homeless colleagues fondly refer to as 'Care Bears' (Carecent, Methodist Church, St. Saviourgate). 'It's a really good place. You can get breakfast, as much toast as you like, coffee, tea, beans. And you can get clothes from here as well – t-shirts, trainers. It's a really good place,' Steve

told me (Fig 57). 'Care Bears' operates from the Methodist church on St. Saviourgate and is open every morning, except Sunday, from 8.30am to 10.45am. The aim is to offer food, clothing and pastoral support in a clean and friendly environment to homeless and unemployed people. Entrance to Carecent is gained via an alley down the side of the church. The church appears closed from the front of the building to anyone passing by. Jacko was a resident of Arc Light when we visited and in his words, 'this place is a life saver when you're sleeping rough. There's nowhere else you can get free hot food in York, not every day.'



Figure 57 - JJ & SC on the steps of the Methodist church at 'Care Bears' (CareCent), York (photo: author's own)

## 6.3 Work places

Most colleagues relied wholly on benefit money but some undertook work too. Work comprised legal occupations (for example, selling *The Big Issue*, busking or selling scrap metal) and also illegal occupations (for example, prostitution, street level drug dealing and pick-pocketing). As explicitly outlined in Chapter Four I was often aware that crime had been committed but at no point witnessed colleagues committing crime. I reasoned that being present while criminal activities were discussed did not compromise my position as an academic researcher because it

forms part of the culture under observation. I now move on to present data gathered on work places identified by homeless colleagues in Bristol and York. As with earlier sections, I subdivide data into groups that facilitate comparison.

## 6.3a Legal Work Places

**"Issue Pitches" (Places from where *The Big Issue* is sold)**

Of all the homeless people with whom I worked for this thesis only three people, all from Bristol, were official vendors of *The Big Issue*, a national magazine sold by homeless people. Jane, Whistler and Rich were badged vendors of *The Big Issue* at the time we conducted field work. Jane sold *Issues* on an ad hoc basis from her pitch in Broadmead. 'I hate the job. It's really hard because the mag' ain't that good and you have to stand in the cold…most people just pass by. It's a hard job but sometimes you got no choice. Need the money,' Jane told me. Whistler and Rich were more positive about their work and the fact that vendors of *The Big Issue* have a legitimate job was important to them. 'I'd much rather do this than beg…No way I'm begging…I've always worked... I'd rather steal than beg, if I had to,' Whistler told me. During fieldwork, Whistler quite often worked Jane's pitch in Broadmead, with Jane's permission, because he felt his own allocated pitch (on St Augustine's Parade) was less profitable. Rich's pitch was at the western end of St James Barton Roundabout (The Bear Pit). Rich enjoyed the job. 'I wear crazy hats and have a distinctive beard so…people know me. I usually make a little money and that's that. You can have quite a laugh actually. The main thing is to be smiling…' Rich said (see also Fig 41).

**Busking**

Ratty (female) showed me a place on St Stephen Street (Bristol) where she routinely busked playing the penny whistle between the late 1990s and 2010. 'I had four or five tunes that I could play reasonably well so I would sit here and play them, over and over again. This man from the bank [Co-operative Bank, 16 St Stephen Street]

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used to come out and hand me £20 and say, 'take this and go away'. It was brilliant! Well, I thought it was brilliant at the time. I had a raging crack cocaine addiction so it wasn't actually that brilliant because £20 sustained me just long enough to do it again…and again…and again'.

Deano and Jane also busked fairly regularly for money in Bristol. Deano played a pink guitar and Jane sang and played tambourine. 'I just busk where I feel like,' Deano said. Deano regularly travelled as a homeless person between Bristol, Bournemouth and Darlington citing Bristol as 'where my friends are', Bournemouth as where his children live and Darlington as where the rest of his family live. 'I busk to get around. If I don't busk, I don't have any money. It's simple,' Deano told me. As a busker, Deano was attracted to Bristol because there are fewer strictly imposed rules concerning where a person may busk and a population proportionately more likely to donate to buskers compared to the other towns and cities in which he spends time.[30] When busking in Bristol, Deano's favourite spots were 'on the waterfront' (Narrow Quay) or 'by the horny bridge' (Pero's Bridge also known locally as The Horned Bridge). These two spots are officially designated public performance locations although Deano did not know this. He just found the sites good for busking 'because you don't get bother'.

Punk Paul often undertook what he described as, 'sort of half busk, half beg sort of thing'. With his permission, I recorded our conversation about this performance based engagement with passers-by:

**Rachael:** what kinds of things do you do or say if you're half busking, half begging?

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[30]

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/leisure_and_culture/Do%20I%20need%20to%20apply%20for%20any%20other%20licences_0.pdf

**Paul:** people say, 'alreeeet?' [all right?] and I say 'half left, pretty well balanced, thanks for asking' . Nobody seems to stop to see what I've actually said...or if they do get it, they laugh. Then it's like, 'thank you for smiling, you beautiful person! Carry on smiling and we might change the world!' What else?  My favourite! 'Could you share a few shekels with us homeless please because we're trying to get a pirate ship together to sail off the end of Earth!' Some people love that one! … If the timing's right and I just let my imagination go then I come up with all sorts of things. I think of original things. My survival instinct tells me that I must be original. Originality, I have that!

**Rachael:** to stand out from the rest of the crowd? To be different from people who say 'do you have any spare change?'?

**Paul**: not only that but I understand how mundane some people's existences are and to be pleasantly surprised by someone who looks as brutal as me, you know...it makes me smile if they smile. I love making people smile. If I can busk, sing or make someone smile, it makes my day.

By contrast none of my York based homeless colleagues busked. Busking in York is heavily controlled through a Busking Permit Scheme which requires anyone wishing to busk in the city to apply to the council and to perform in front of a select panel who may or may not grant a permit after evaluating whether or not the person is considered 'appropriate' to busk in York. Applications to busk in York are 'considered according to skills, competence levels, general entertainment and presentation (performance and *general appearance*)[31] (my emphasis) and has recently been the subject of some controversy[32]. The York Busking Permit costs £40,

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[31]

http://www.york.gov.uk/info/200427/street_trading_and_busking/237/street_trading_and_busking/3

[32] http://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2013-03-10/york-busker-campaigns-for-local-authorities-to-support-street-performers/

is reliant on proof of residential address, the provision of two photographs, a formal performance interview and subjective assessment of 'general appearance'. As a result, busking in York is arguably made intentionally difficult for people who are homeless.

### "Tatting" (recycling found/discarded materials)

Several homeless colleagues 'tat' or recycle waste materials through exchanging things they find in skips or bins for cash at the scrapyard or swapping things with other people. 'Tatting' is a process difficult to map due to its ephemerality and opportunistic nature. People with whom I worked were accustomed to walking the city in search of skips, commercial bins and developments where building materials were likely to be discarded. I joined Andrew for a day of walking through the city and we discussed what he meant by 'tatting'. 'I can't pass a skip without looking in it. I don't know why people throw away things that are worth money! ...a few quid or a fiver or sometimes…When the price of copper went up, I was making a mint from old electrical wires, mobile phone chargers.' Keen to try to document this, I asked Andrew if there were any specific places that he associated with 'tatting'.

### "Bushes off Midland Road", (Bristol)

Andrew showed me some bushes off Midland Road (Bristol) where he knew people regularly 'stripped wire'. Stripping wire means to remove copper wire from discarded electrical cable. The copper wire is then sold to the scrap merchant. At the time of fieldwork it was legal for scrap merchants to pay cash to anyone who brought material to the scrapyard but legislation changed recently so that people must provide proof of address before they can be paid for scrap and scrap merchants are under legal obligation to use cheques, not cash[33]. This has impacted those who used to rely on scrap metal to subsidise other work practices and/or benefit payments, many of whom are homeless or members of travelling communities. The

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[33] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118018/scrap-metal-guidance.pdf

'stripping wire' site is directly opposite the scrapyard and material culture around the edge of the site showed where people had been sitting as they worked. Paths were worn through the bushes to a clearing where plant growth had been flattened by people sitting in a semi-circle. Lot of plastic coating from electrical cables and mobile phone chargers lay around, along with cigarette packaging and cans. 'Tatting' in this respect can function as either a legal or illegal practice, as Andrew explained, '…when I was using [heroin] I had to make lots of money. I wanted to make money without hurting no-one and… to me, stealing from big companies ain't really stealing.' Andrew explained that as he recovered from addiction 'I started to see things a bit different. I was sick of the police hassling me so I had to stop all that. I still tat. I'll still strip wire for the copper but I only do it from stuff I find in bins and skips. I don't go into buildings to tat no more.'

## 6.3b Illegal work practices

Throughout fieldwork I encountered places where illegal activities (for example, prostitution) had taken place. As explained in Chapter Four I always made it explicitly clear to colleagues that I was an academic archaeologist, I intended to publish findings on the archaeology of contemporary homelessness and that if anyone wished to remain anonymous, they need only say this and I would respect their wishes fully. I have taken the decision to make anonymous any information that might lead to a person's comments implicating them in criminal behaviour. It is prudent to acknowledge that I was not shown places associated with illegal work practices by York based colleagues. I believe this is due to being perceived by colleagues in York as being in a position of 'authority' having approached homeless people through an official agency. I now turn to data relating to illegal work practices identified by homeless colleagues in Bristol.

**Prostitution places**

Several colleagues, male and female, had experience of working in prostitution. The male colleague who had worked occasionally as a male prostitute told me he was 'picked up here [at a pitch commonly used by beggars, beside the cash machine

outside HSBC, Park Street] by this posh weirdo, not a regular thing…maybe two or three times. Sometimes, when you're begging you get propositioned by men. I only did it when I was really desperate. It's easier to get £50 for letting someone…I'll spare you the details. It was just…easier than trying to beg it up [raise £50 begging]. And contrary to what Her Majesty's police might say, I don't like stealing. I don't like being a rent boy either. I don't like much of my life, to be honest.' Female colleagues were more likely to work regularly as prostitutes and two women identified the north side of Brunswick Square as the location from which they most frequently worked. One female colleague explained, 'stand here yeah? Cars come round and…you don't really want to…you know. Better if you can clip them, yeah?' She explained that 'clipping' is a term used to describe tricking a kerb crawler into handing over money before any sexual activity has taken place and then running away. 'It's dangerous yeah, because you got to get in his car or he thinks you ain't going to do it. Soon as you get the money, you open the door [of the car] and run. Mostly, I got a couple of lads waiting near where I am, yeah? If he come after you [the kerb crawler]…you know…' My colleague explained that the 'lads waiting' would take the money from her and buy drugs. 'We sort each other out, yeah? They get some money doing things, I get money. We get by like that, yeah?'

Just off Brunswick Square lies the former graveyard of St. Paul's church. Several homeless colleagues identified the graveyard as 'a place where prostitutes take men for sex'. One female colleague explained that the site was popular with female prostitutes because 'it's near One25. They give the ladies condoms if they're sex workers. And there's a needle exchange at BDP [Bristol Drugs Project]'. The One25 is a charity dedicated to helping women trapped in street sex work and Bristol Drugs Project, located at 11 Brunswick Square, aim to reduce drug and alcohol related harm through education and harm reduction strategies (for example, offering addicts a needle exchange where used needles can be exchanged for hygienic injection packs).

I visited the graveyard behind St. Paul's church with colleagues and identified an area to the east side where a large concentration of material was related to sex and drug use (see also Chapter Seven). Punk Paul explained '…there's all sorts you find

here, man. I'm not joking. Girls' changes of clothes you find behind trees and hidden in tombs. There were a massive pile of needles and Durex collected and left on this gravestone yesterday. When I came back today, I knew they would have cleaned it up because they have the Sex and Drug litter police [council clean up team]… they collect all the discarded needles and Durex. They've even cleaned behind that tree...Stuff was being hidden there.' Scattered around the area we found remains of women's underwear, used condoms, make-up, a comb and a disposable razor of the same brand offered by the Bristol Soup Run Trust (see above). There was also a high concentration of drugs paraphernalia (Fig 58). Since undertaking fieldwork for this thesis the graveyard behind St. Paul's church has received investment. It has been officially renamed 'St. Paul's Park' and a ten year (2009-2019) management plan has been published by Bristol City Council[34].



**Figure 58 - drugs paraphernalia found at St. Paul's graveyard, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

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[34]

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/leisure_and_culture/parks_and_open_spaces/information_on_parks_and_open_spaces/St%20Paul's%20Park%20Management%20Plan.pdf

**Shop-lifting and pick-pocketing**

**"Camp of Thieves" or bushes to the eastern end of Castle Park, Bristol**

The 'Camp of Thieves' was the name given by Andrew and Punk Paul to a thicket to the eastern end of Castle Park. It was so named, according to Andrew, because, 'you're up to your knees in handbags and security tags...Stuff pinched off people shopping in Broadmead. These are the worst sort, these types of people. Proper low life scumbags.' Entrance to the 'Camp of Thieves' was granted by an informal path through trees to the right of the pedestrian entrance to the park from Lower Castle Street. Once inside the thicket, paths were very well worn and there was a high concentration of material culture (for example, handbags, security tags, cans and bottles, drugs paraphernalia, shoes, clothes, hand tools, sleeping bags and tent poles). Paths led down to the wall (the park perimeter) where we found distinct 'bedroom' areas suggested by duvets, tents, clothing and other artefacts, about which I will say more in Chapter Seven. Paths wound off from these 'bedroom' areas deeper into the bushes and other areas where specific activities had taken place were perceptible (for example, drugs had been used, prostitution had likely taken place, there was a latrine area) (see Fig 59).

**Figure 59 - paths winding through the 'Camp of Thieves', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

On the day I recorded the site with Andrew and Paul, I was at some points literally ankle deep in stolen artefacts, for example, security tags, handbags, purses, wallets, lap top bags and articles one might expect to find in these (store cards, combs, make-up, hand written notes and utility bills) (Fig 60). The presence of two jackets hanging up in a tree suggested to Andrew that that the people using the site intended to use the jackets again. Andrew explained that shop-lifters seek to change their appearance as soon as possible after a robbery to avoid being detected by CCTV and a quick 'change' can be achieved through swapping a jacket. Punk Paul said he knew two people who had been sleeping at the site recently, 'two Welsh lads . . . mucky

bastards. There are some people who are just lost. They live in bushes and they don't comb their hair or have a wash or nothing.' To all of us, the site felt sinister and different to that of 'The Dungeon', a short walk across Castle Park. We agreed the site felt active, deeply unpleasant and negative (see also Chapter Five). We left the site via a different exit/entrance, through a gap in the bushes that led onto Broadmead. On the pavement slab just 'outside' was graffiti that read, 'PEACE, LOVE & UNITY'.



Figure 60 - handbag at the 'Camp of Thieves', Bristol (photo: author's own)

## 6.4 'Using' places & using substances to 'change' places

Throughout fieldwork in Bristol and York I was aware that many colleagues used illegal drugs and a colloquialism for 'using drugs' is the abbreviation, 'using'. I asked colleagues whether there were places we might identify as 'using places'. I was told repeatedly that people use drugs when they obtain them and therefore that many places associated with homeless culture will show evidence of drug use but that does not necessarily equate to the place being specifically associated with 'using'. It is notable that several colleagues with whom I worked spoke of substances (for example, strong alcohol or drugs) as 'shortcuts' to changing the *place* in which

they found themselves, emotionally and in their mind, physically. The language with which people speak about using drugs is spatial, geographic, locational (for example, 'heroin is a *nice warm fluffy place* where nothing matters', 'I use drugs to *get out* of my head', 'he's *off on another planet*!'). The perception was that colleagues were unable to change the actual place in which they found themselves (for example, on the street, living in and out of temporary accommodation)  but that they were able to control the way in which they experienced these places, to a degree, through consumption of drugs and alcohol.

Places where material culture directly related to using heroin and/or crack cocaine was present include: 'The Black House', the graveyard behind St. Paul's church, 'Under the Bridge', at the 'Camp of Thieves', 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and the 'Bin Cupboard behind Greggs', the 'Monkgate Bush', the 'The Pavilion' (Bootham Park Hospital grounds, York) and Museum Gardens, also in York. I present data relating to the rituals of drug consumption in the next chapter.

## 6.5 Social Places

In this section of the chapter I present data relating to 'social places' in Bristol and York. Data reveal that although colleagues felt attachment to different parts of the city for personal reasons there were some places that *all* colleagues from that city identified as homeless places. Two such places were 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York), sites to which I turn in more detail later in this chapter. These were also the sites of two collaborative archaeological excavations. First, I present data relating to other social places encountered throughout fieldwork.

### "The steps" (Westmorland House, Stokes Croft, Bristol)

I first encountered 'The Steps' with Punk Paul. 'The Steps' is the name given to the steps of Westmorland House, a derelict twentieth century building last officially occupied in 1986 by the Football Pools Company. 'The Steps' are situated on Stokes Croft and within a short walk are many ' homeless amenities' as Paul put it: off-

licences, specialist drug and alcohol services, several hostels, the local *Big Issue* office, probation services and 'The Nuns'. 'The Steps' were once the front entrance to the building and have been synonymous with homelessness and street drinking since the late 1980s in the minds in the minds of homeless people with whom I worked. 'The Steps' are covered over and offer shelter from rain and wind (Fig 61). Punk Paul introduced me to Pablo for whom 'the steps are somewhere I like to come to read. I bring a few cans [of beer] and the paper and a book or two and this is where I kill my time.'



Figure 61 - Pablo & PP sitting on the steps of Westmorland House, Bristol (photo: author's own)

**"The Bear Pit" or St. James Barton Roundabout**

Mentioned earlier as a sleeping place the Bear Pit (St. James Barton roundabout) was also characterised as a social place by most Bristol based colleagues and is 'somewhere you can hang out with relatively little bother,' as Tom put it. During the period in which fieldwork was carried out a loud speaker was fitted in the Bear Pit. This changed the character of the place according to Punk Paul, as he explained. 'I was sitting minding me own business with a beer…Suddenly, I hear this voice, like God, and it says, 'you are in a No Drinking zone. Dispose of your alcohol or you will be liable for arrest.' I didn't know what it was at first and then I realised they must be looking at me from somewhere. It spooked me out.' Jane also commented

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on the way the loud speaker affected the character of the Bear Pit, 'it's pretty weird. Sometimes the voice actually says what you're wearing! Like, 'you, in the green jacket…' (Fig 62)



Figure 62 - CCTV and loud speaker in the Bear Pit, Bristol (photo: John Schofield)

Whistler's conception of the Bear Pit as a social place was related to its role as a first port of call for people newly homeless in Bristol. 'See, if you come to Bristol by bus [Marlborough Street Bus Station] you come through the Bear Pit first off and that's when you meet people…it's a place you know you'll always find the fellas [other homeless people]'. I asked Whistler to show me where people socialise in the Bear Pit. The grassed areas to the northern end were most commonly associated with socialising in summer, possibly due to the presence of several deciduous trees, the leaves of which function to provide relative privacy. Whistler said that in winter people were more likely to gather on the southern side of the Bear Pit where, 'it's not as nice but you're behind the camera so the voice can't tell you to move on'.

**"Jamaica Street park" (King Square, Bristol)**

King Square is known by homeless colleagues in Bristol as 'Jamaica Street Park' which suggests people conceive of King Square in relation to the Jamaica Street hostel which flanks the Square on the eastern side. 'Jamaica Street Park' is a

formally laid out square of grass, trees and shrubs and is a popular place for homeless people, street drinkers and other unemployed people to spend time during the day. During fieldwork I often encountered people there. Jane said, 'there's not that much green space in this bit of Bristol so I like to come here with Patch [Jane's dog].' Little Tom was often found reading a book on the bench at the northern end of the square.

### "The Dungeon" or St Mary le Port ruins (Castle Park, Bristol)

Several places encountered were multi-functional. For example, Jane knew 'The Dungeon' predominantly as a sleeping place (see above) but Little Tom's experience of the St Mary le Port church ruins was as a social place in summer but an exposed place in winter (Fig 63). As indicated earlier architectural remains had the effect of dividing the ruins into several distinct areas. Data reveal that the central area was used a 'social space' where material culture strongly suggested that people spent time engaged in social activities (for example, drinking strong lager and wine and smoking tobacco and heroin). The spatial pattern of materials suggested that several people had been sitting in a group or circle. In a nearby but separate area we found personal effects (for example, make-up, toiletries and a razor). We also found condom wrappers. Jane explained that it is important to recognise that the presence of condoms and condom wrappers does not always indicate prostitution. To the west of this area and down a slope formed between the ruins and the edge of the derelict twentieth century building was a latrine area, well hidden from view with a lot of foliage and undergrowth in which privacy, of a fashion, could be sought. Assemblages are more fully unpacked in the next chapter.

**Figure 63 - exposed winter view from 'The Dungeon' towards the river, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**"The Herb Garden" (St Peter's Church, Castle Park, Bristol)**

Throughout fieldwork I spent time mapping places identified as homeless places with Punk Paul, Tony Tap and Disco Dave. It became clear that when the weather was fine the men liked to spend time in what they call 'The Herb Garden' (see also Fig 35). 'The Herb Garden' is in the grounds of the now derelict St Peter's Church (Castle Park, Bristol) and a short distance from the 'The Dungeon' (the ruins of St. Mary le Port church) and the 'Camp of Thieves' (see above). St Peter's church was bombed during World War II and the space around what is left of the building has been landscaped with flowerbeds containing a range of low maintenance, hardy and scented plants. 'It's a nice place to bring a few cans and sit in the sunshine,' Tony Tap told me, indicating the bench he particularly prefers. Disco Dave agreed, 'so long as you're not making too much noise, you don't get asked to move on and it's luxury to sit among all these aromatic plants'. Punk Paul began to name the plants to which Dave referred, 'there's lavender, rosemary, poppies, more lavender. It beats sitting on 'Turbo Island' for an afternoon especially if you've got your mates with

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you and some beer.' I asked whether the site was attractive due solely to the plants or whether there were other reasons. 'It's peaceful, that's the main thing. You can come here and chill out and get away from all the chaos of the Croft [Stokes Croft]. Avoid people,' Tony Tap told me.


**"The Bombed Out Church" (Temple Church (derelict), Bristol)**

Another derelict church (Temple Church, Redcliffe, Bristol) is known by Bristol based homeless colleagues as 'the bombed out church' (Fig 64). The remains of Temple church and some of its former graveyard are maintained as green space. Similar to the Monkgate Bush (York) headstones are visible. I visited the site several times throughout fieldwork with different colleagues who commented that the site is usually very quiet in part due to its location in an area (at the time) characterised by largely disused industrial and commercial buildings. One afternoon, during fieldwork, Punk Paul and I sat down in the former graveyard for a short rest. Finishing his beer, Paul squashed his beer can and put it in his pocket. Previously, I had witnessed Paul leave his beer can in unconventional places (for example, hooked onto the branch of a tree or atop a bin rather than inside it at 'Turbo Island'). I asked Paul what made him put his beer can in his pocket this time, 'there are people resting here [in the former graveyard]. You have to respect that.' This indicates the level to which the *perceived* character of places influences behaviour and attitudes of people, informing a sense of personal and local identity.

**Museum Gardens, (York)**

Museum Gardens is a ten acre botanical garden that surrounds the Yorkshire Museum (Fig 65). The gardens were formally planted in the nineteenth century but the site includes archaeological remains of a Roman fortress and the remains of St. Mary's Abbey. Museum Gardens is open to the general public during the daytime and many people pass through the botanical gardens on their way to other places. In some respects, this aspect is actively what Steve finds attractive about the place because his social status (homelessness) is made *less visible* through the transience that characterises so many peoples' use of Museum Gardens (see also Chapter Five). Other colleagues identified Museum Gardens as 'one of few places in York where, as a homeless person, you can sit with your mates without being asked to move on', as Scott put it. Colleagues in York identified with different aspects of Museum Gardens according to the time of day and activities for which they used them. For example, Steve enjoyed the peace and quiet offered by sitting on a bench whereas for Tony, 'the space under the arches by the sarcophagus – it's spooky but it's a good place to sit out the rain with a mate. You're not supposed to drink here but people do and if you're not causing trouble, you don't get any bother from the guards.'

**"Turbo Island" (Stokes Croft, Bristol)**

'Turbo Island' is a small triangle of land on Stokes Croft, Bristol (Fig 66). It is situated to the north east of the city centre and, in planning terms Turbo Island is a SLOAP (site left over after planning) (Graves-Brown 2014). Located within local Conservation Area 19, Turbo Island also falls within a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) also known as an alcohol exclusion zone (see appendix 4). In the minds of police and local people, Turbo Island has been synonymous with homelessness and street drinking for around forty years. All homeless colleagues identified Turbo Island as a social place and spoke of it as a 'hub' for communication among homeless people (for example, messages left with someone sitting on Turbo Island were most likely to be passed to the relevant person quickly). Homeless colleagues told me there are several reasons why Turbo Island is attractive as a place to socialise. Turbo Island is 'close to amenities' (for example, it is yards from *The Big Issue* office on Stokes Croft and Bristol Specialist Drug and Alcohol Service is a few feet away). Ironically, considering the site falls within a DPPO,

there is a high concentration of shops that sell very strong and cheap alcohol within half a mile of Turbo Island. 'Abdul's' off licence is directly opposite and 'The Best' supermarket is situated 250 yards away. Homeless people and other street drinkers use both shops frequently. The Jamaica Street homeless hostel (now run by St. Mungo's) is less than half a mile from Turbo Island. Colleagues reported that a secondary reason Turbo Island is regularly used by homeless people as a social space is that, like 'The Steps' (mentioned above), it is privately owned land so the police have no power to move people on unless they can be proven to be breaking the law or behaving in a way that is considered to be anti-social (for example, drinking alcohol in an alcohol exclusion zone).



**Figure 66 - Turbo Island, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**"The Pavilion" (Cricket Pavilion in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital, York)**

'The Pavilion' was mentioned by all colleagues with whom I worked in York as a social place (Fig 67). '[The Pavilion is] south facing,' Dan showed me where people regularly sat, 'so it's a good place to sit if you have to be outside all day because you can stay warm for the longest amount of time possible.' 'The Pavilion' is situated in the grounds of NHS owned Bootham Park Hospital. Originally opened in 1777 as York Lunatic Asylum the hospital continues to serve people with mental health problems. The cricket pavilion is far younger than the main hospital building, dating from circa 1940s and was, at the time fieldwork was conducted, located in the north-

west corner of the hospital grounds, beneath a large tree[35]. 'The Pavilion' looked out across the lawn in front of the hospital which was also regularly used by Bootham School as a cricket pitch. To the back of 'The Pavilion' lies the railway line. The building was a timber clad wooden building with a concrete foundation and tiled roof.



**Figure 67 - 'The Cricket Pavilion', Bootham Park Hospital grounds, York (photo: author's own)**

During counter mapping Dan told me that he had often spent days behind 'The Pavilion' drinking cider with other homeless people, chatting and reading the paper. Dan had not slept at the site himself but remembered other people doing so, 'they slept along the wall [that followed the railway track] because it's more sheltered there.' Richard told me that he had spent lots of time 'drinking, smoking, just hanging about', behind the 'The Pavilion'. Jacko and Tony had both slept at the site before they became residents of Arc Light homeless centre and continued to use the site as a social place on and off. Several homeless people with whom I spoke during

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[35] The Pavilion was demolished shortly after we excavated the site in October 2011

counter mapping remembered the pavilion as a place where people slept throughout the 1980s and early 1990s and Dan recalled that people 'used to stash belongings in bags in the trees and bushes. Things were relatively safe in the bushes behind 'The Pavilion' back then'.

## 6.6 Discussion

In this chapter I have focused on *places* of contemporary homelessness in Bristol and York and presented data in the order in which sites were prioritised by homeless colleagues from each city. Places, I have argued, emerge in space through social activities which characterise function and impact meaning. Some comparable factors were observed and I will now draw out themes common to these homeless places.

Data reveal that the *perception* of invisibility (hidden/safety) is of higher priority than a roof or shelter (for example, Andrew's skipper by the river had no roof, although he was sheltered by mature willow trees which obscured his use of the site from public view and made him *feel* safe). Many places encountered involved complicated access routes which were felt to camouflage the existence of the place. For example, entrance to Gary's skipper beneath the arches was gained by scaling a wall, travelling along a railway track and moving through undergrowth and Jane's skipper beneath the dental hospital involved crawling along a narrow submerged passage to a 'non-place' (Auge 1995). Data reveal that where invisibility is not available homeless people commonly make use of the built environment in order to preserve the *perception* of safety (for example, the 'Bin Cupboard behind Greggs' (York) was in view of a CCTV camera and Jacko's sleeping place at 'St. Saviourgate Car Park' was monitored by a security guard during the time Jacko slept there).

Data reveal that homeless places are commonly elevated and offer a wide view. For example, at the 'Monkgate Bush' (York) entrance to the bush was gained from the back and the view out to all other approaches was clear. The same can be observed for Little Tom's 'skipper by the BRI' where the sleeping place was elevated and protected from the back by the hospital building. Furthermore, in each case of

sleeping places in car parks, homeless people chose to sleep on the first floor or higher floors, the reason cited being that these places 'felt' safer. Every sleeping place had either a wall or relatively impassable natural feature (for example, a river) on at least one side. In some cases (for example, the 'Bin cupboard behind Greggs' (York) and 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol) the space utilised had a cave like feel to it where the occupant was likely to make use of the 'front' of the 'cave'.

Other comparable factors include the likelihood for homeless places to be situated either close to perceived amenities (for example, services for homeless people or availability of drugs/alcohol) or in locations perceived to be 'away' from the bustle of the city (for example, one of the reasons Andrew liked his skipper by the river was because it was 'out…sort of nowhere'). Homeless places exist commonly in 'SLOAPS' (Graves-Brown, in press) at parts of the city perceived by colleagues to be unused, derelict or abandoned (for example, 'The Black House', 'The Herb Garden' and 'The Bombed Out Church' [Bristol]). Equally, many places identified to me by colleagues from both cities are connected to, run by or take place in buildings associated with the Christian church. With the exception of Jacko, Whistler and Rich the majority of colleagues did not consider themselves Christian but spoke in esoteric terms or enjoyed places connected to faith for the 'peace' or kindness they perceived were on offer at such places (for example, 'The Herb Garden', 'The Nuns', the 'Wild Goose café', 'The Methodists' and 'Care Bears'). Often, colleagues socialised in places perceived to be public space  (for example, Museum Gardens, beside the River Ouse or 'The Pavilion' (York)) and enjoyed the function they provided in terms of disguising their status as homeless (for example, Alan fishing on the banks of the Ouse and Steve sitting on a bench at Museum Gardens).

It can be argued that individual homeless places (for example, Jane's 'Hot Skipper', Gary's skipper beneath the arches and Andrew's skipper by the river) offer *some* essential intangible 'home' elements. For example, at each of these places the person felt they had *autonomy* over the space, they decided when to leave *and return*, they decided when to sleep and when to light a fire, they decided how their bed was constructed and they *controlled* what they did at the place. It can be argued that

Andrew chose where to stack his firewood in the same way a person might choose where to put their sofa or hang a picture. Each of these places was felt to offer a degree of *physical warmth*, *sense of safety*, *sense of privacy* and some shelter. In Jane's case, *compassion* existed in the form of the *relationship* she perceived she had with a pigeon that shared the space with her. Each person involved felt 'homeliness' was more available to them at these places - under a willow tree, under railway arches, under a dental hospital - than was available to them at hostels or emergency shelters which were all characterised as dangerous, noisy, chaotic and unpleasant.

Data reveal that 'non-places' such as railway and bus stations, public underpasses and designed utilitarian parts of the city are rendered increasingly inaccessible to homeless people through anti-homelessness tactics. For example, the replacement of benches with single-person seats with arms so that homeless people cannot sleep on them (Dixon 2009). More surreptitious moves to exclude homeless people include the proliferation of pay-to-enter turnstiles at 'public' washroom facilities and use of ubiquitous metal fencing intended to block off sheltered spaces (for example, the 'Bin Store behind Greggs'(York) and the space beneath Trenchard Street car park (Bristol)). Such measures indicate how homeless people are specifically targeted for exclusion from the city (Mitchell 2003). In the next chapter I focus on artefacts identified at places and provide discussion of two archaeological excavations undertaken collaboratively by homeless people and students at sites identified by colleagues as contemporary homeless places, 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York).

# Chapter Seven: Artefacts

## 7.0 Introduction

This chapter forms the last of the trio in which data are presented. I hone in further on artefacts and assemblages found at places identified previously by exploring types of artefacts, their proliferation and patterning and unpacking how artefacts are given meaning. In the second part of the chapter I focus on the process of finds cleaning and data processing in relation to excavations at 'Turbo Island' (Bristol, 2009-10) and 'The Pavilion' (York 2011-12). Data reveal that the *process* of undertaking archaeological work (for example, digging, being outside and active, cleaning and processing finds, identifying and interpreting material with other people) can have significant physical, mental and emotional health benefits. Two related interactive public archaeological exhibitions – 'A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects' and 'Arcifacts: unearthing York's homeless heritage' – are described and their impact explored. Collaborative presentation of findings through co-authored articles and a series of popular and academic talks are described and their contribution to the wider understanding of homelessness is unpacked.

## 7.1 Themes in contemporary homeless artefacts

Throughout the thesis I have argued that homelessness is a subjective concept experienced differently by individuals. I have suggested that a significant benefit of looking at homelessness archaeologically is the potential to move from the general (ideologically constructed stereotypical conceptions of homelessness) to the particular (routes, places, memories) where a sense of the *multiple and individual* ways in which homelessness is experienced may be enhanced. Social policy professor, Peter Somerville has recently argued that current approaches to homelessness too often 'ignore, distort or diminish the humanity of homeless people' (Somerville 2013:1). In focusing on specific material remains archaeology facilitates a view of contemporary homelessness which acknowledges creativity and diversity among homeless people. However, as with other cultures, contemporary homelessness can be seen to involve some common characteristics and these, it is

argued, are best represented thematically where themes are common but individual creative differences protrude in surprising ways.

Themes emerged slowly throughout fieldwork from initial mapping exercises to the production of two interactive exhibitions. Immediate and practical concerns for homeless people (for example, sleeping and eating) were distinguishable from early stages of field work through the presence of bedding and portable food items recorded at sites identified as homeless places by colleagues. Lifestyle activities (for example, smoking, drinking and drug taking) emerged more strongly as the presence of certain mundane items came to be recognised as 'signs' of homelessness. For example, the presence of newspaper and cardboard came to signify a 'skipper', shelter or begging spot, gaps in hedges became 'entrances' and the presence of detached ring pulls and blue plastic bottle lids suggested that homeless people had been drinking alcohol at the location. Supporting arguments for collaborative heritage work more generally, conversations with homeless colleagues were essential for the full meaning of particular items to become clear. For example, the presence of a ripped beer can appeared to non-homeless members of the team to signify that someone had perhaps ripped the can through boredom or anger. Conversations with homeless colleagues revealed that it is quite common for an empty beer can to be ripped apart so that the concave bottom of the can functions as a 'spoon' in which heroin and water can be heated and from which, drawn up into a syringe. This practice is well known by homeless colleagues with whom I worked and has theoretical implications for archaeological interpretation more broadly. For example, items recognised as having a particular or 'known' use might in fact be multi-functional or representative of a broader range of social activities than those most obvious to the archaeologist. Similarly, constraints on access to resources can be detected through the creative re-use of items with 'known' functions (for example, wooden pallets used as bedframes or a grit bin used as a storage place). In presenting material culture relating to homelessness thematically, nuance and multi-functionality are more easily preserved (for example, places feature as places to sleep and *also* places to socialise). I now turn to present data relating to artefacts thematically.

## 7.1a Sleeping artefacts

Although most sleeping places were encountered some time after they fell from use, material culture related to sleeping typically remained. Cardboard and/or newspaper and wooden pallets were discovered at all sleeping places. At several sites sleeping bags, tents, duvets and blankets also remained.

**Cardboard & Newspaper**

Newspaper and cardboard are used to insulate the ground and typically wrapped around a person to 'trap the air and make you feel a good deal warmer', Jane told me. Such materials are widely available for free throughout each city. Cardboard was often found at sleeping sites laid out in the shape of a bed. For example, 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol), a pizza box bed was found (Fig 68) beside a 'double bed' constructed from commercial cardboard and blankets. At 'The BRI' sleeping place cardboard showed indentations consistent with people lying down (see also Fig 45). Cardboard was found at the 'Bin cupboard behind Gregg's' (York) which Jacko identified as his own sleeping place until it was rendered inaccessible (see also Fig 29).

**Figure 68 - Pizza box 'bed' at 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

Cardboard was commonly found at begging places, for example, 'By the Station' (York) and at several places along Station Road where gaps in the hedge indicate how people begging take shelter (see also Fig 23). Colleagues told me that sitting on cardboard rather than the pavement dramatically reduces the cold and makes sitting in one position for a long time more comfortable. As fieldwork progressed, it became clear that strategically placed cardboard is a primary material indication of homelessness.

**Sleeping bags, duvets & blankets**

Sleeping equipment was found at every site we visited except 'Cardboard Village' (Bristol) and 'St. Saviourgate Multi-storey' (York). Typical equipment included duvets, blankets, sleeping bags or fragments of tent canvas (Fig 69). These articles were found in varying states of decay giving indication of how much time had elapsed since the site had been used regularly. The proliferation of sleeping equipment was suggestive of how many people had used the site. For example, 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol), we recorded numerous decaying blankets and duvets towards the back of the site but there were two distinct 'beds' towards the front, indicating that three people – a couple and a single person - had slept at the site in the very recent past. At several sites we recorded bedding that was the *personal property* of colleagues. In two cases, colleagues' bedding had been locked away from them through a process of fencing off the site in question (for example, Jane's bedding was visible at The Dungeon [Bristol] (see Fig 70) and Jacko's cardboard bed was visible at the 'Bin Cupboard behind Gregg's' [York]). Bedding was sometimes found stored out of sight indicating that homeless people intended to return to use it again (Fig 71). At the 'Camp of Thieves' [Bristol] there was a high concentration of sleeping bags and tent paraphernalia which seemed to indicate the site was used frequently by different people.

**Figure 69 - decaying sleeping bag at 'Camp of Thieves', Bristol (photo: author's own)**



**Figure 70 - JH's mattress and duvet grilled off at 'The Dungeon', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

## 7.1b Clothes & personal effects

Clothes and personal items such as hairbrushes, razors and make-up were found at many sites recorded. Buttons and items of jewellery were excavated at Turbo Island (Bristol) and The Pavilion (York) and were recorded at 'The Dungeon'. At 'The Dungeon', a central area above ground level was particularly rich in artefacts relating to personal hygiene and presentation (for example, toothbrushes and toothpaste, razors, make-up and a deodorant canister).

The presence of clothing took on more meaning when routes were explained by colleagues and it could be discerned that some items were discarded or 'lost' while others were stored in particular places, as one might use a chest of drawers. For example, while recording Jane's skipper at 'The Dungeon', Jane, Andrew and I recorded a separate sleeping area that appeared to have been used recently. The second sleeping area was to the eastern end of the ruins and flanked on one side by a

metal railing. A jumper was hanging over the railing and this indicated to Andrew that someone intended to come back for it, 'otherwise, why would they have hung it up?' In this case, the railing functioned as both a semblance of a wall or point at which the sleeping place was demarcated from the wider landscape and also, a place to store clothing (Fig 72). As discussed earlier, places are created through social activity and personalised through the presence of 'things'. Hotel rooms look much alike until we open our suitcase, put our wash bag by the basin and throw our clothes over the chair, for example. The jumper slung over the railing at the second sleeping area at 'The Dungeon' is an example of personalisation of space and a form of ownership. Similarly, two jackets recorded hanging in a tree at the 'Camp of Thieves' (see Chapter Six) were *positioned purposefully* in such a way they may be returned to, the act of returning forming an important aspect of the concept of 'home'.



Figure 72 - jumper hanging over railing & newspaper 'bed' at 'The Dungeon', Bristol (photo author's own)

Data reveal a high concentration of shoes in assemblages at homeless sites. 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol), we discovered a pair of small white plimsolls and nearby a pair of white silk mule slippers. Unlike a duvet or a beer can these small and overtly feminine artefacts required that gender be considered more fully in relation to material culture at homeless sites. The contrast between delicate white silk slippers

and the exceptionally dirty and bleak context in which they were found increased the sense of isolation and out-of-place-ness we attributed to the users of this place (Fig 73). Gender was again an insistent trope in a small turquoise ring found at 'Turbo Island' and a gold hooped earring was recorded at 'The Dungeon' (both in Bristol). These artefacts felt personal and represented *individual women*. Shoes, rings and earrings are familiar to archaeological assemblages frequently acquisitioned by museums, prized on account of their rarity or unique construction. Often, the 'pricelessness' of such objects is inferred through meaning imbued in them by the people, places and events – the *heritage* - with which they are associated. Such artefacts are often encountered out of context, behind glass, positioned purposefully by a third party working within a particular ideological framework. There were no such barriers or boundaries between the silk slippers and me 'Under the Bridge'. The context in which these small and perfectly white shoes existed combined to form a perplexing and sinister narrative. They lay in a familiar pattern, just kicked off (female) feet, a short distance from a rat infested pile of debris that had accumulated over more than a decade of homeless occupation of the site (according to homeless colleagues). The slippers in context were arresting because the composition challenges the popularly imagined homeless person as male, feckless, alcoholic or deviant, instead asserting *femininity* and *individual agency*.

**Figure 73 - white silk slippers 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

Sunglass lenses were found at both excavation sites (Fig 74) and at the 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol). Colleagues attributed the presence of evidence of sunglasses to people wishing to hide their eyes from public view (for example, if they had taken heroin, their pupils would be noticeably small ['pin holes'] and if they had taken amphetamines they might be particularly wide or 'glassy' looking. Very drunk people often struggle to keep their eyes open). Some colleagues felt that by hiding their eyes they could make themselves *less visible* and confirmed they felt less vulnerable behind a pair of sunglasses, a surprising connection between homelessness and celebrity culture perhaps - sunglasses as protection or disguise. With no place to which homeless people can retreat the body is a consistently public interface. In this sense, perhaps sunglasses function in much the same way as blinds or curtains might at the window of a house. One man who wished to remain anonymous (York) confirmed that poor personal hygiene can function similarly as protection because it sends an overt signal not to come too close.

**Figure 74 - sunglass lenses found at Turbo Island (L) and The Pavilion (R), Bristol and York (photo: author's own)**

### Latrine Areas

At 'The Dungeon', the 'Bear Pit', 'Turbo Island' and the 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol) and 'Monkgate Bush' (York) latrine areas were identified a short distance from the main social and sleeping areas. At 'The Dungeon' the latrine area was down to the right of the main social area and along the line of an adjoining building where bushes offered some privacy. The 'Bear Pit' latrine area was formed along the city centre (southern) wall ironically just above public loos which remained locked. The Turbo Island latrine area was located just behind the resident electricity substation and was predominantly used by men during the day due to the fact there is not room enough for a person to squat down behind the substation and therefore anatomically difficult for a woman to use. At 'Monkgate Bush' (York), the latrine

area was against the wall of the building adjoining the grassed area and again, offered some privacy owing to evergreen leaf cover. All latrine areas were extremely unpleasant and inadequate, the impacts of which are returned to in Chapter Eight.

## 7.1c Drinking artefacts

Drink related artefacts were most common across all sites encountered during fieldwork. Drink cartons, cans and bottles included non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages. Among the most prevalent non-alcoholic drinks were Coca Cola cans (or cheaper alternatives) and 200ml Coca Cola bottles, assorted fizzy pop drinks and polystyrene take away cups. In both cities there was a high concentration of cans of enriched milk drinks (for example, Nurishment). These drinks, it was explained by colleagues, are easily digested by people with serious drug and alcohol dependencies because they are gentle on the stomach but they provide energy to people whose appetites are often suppressed (see also Chapter Eight). Most significantly, no water bottles were recorded at any homeless site.

Material culture relating to the consumption of alcohol was found at all sites. At several sites, artefacts were minimal (for example, blue bottle tops from White Ace or White Lightening cider bottles or ring pulls). Artefacts included cans and bottles, bottle tops and bottle glass and a high concentration of ring pulls. Most commonly found on sites in Bristol and York were plastic bottles and blue plastic bottle tops from White Ace (strong white cider), cans of Tennant's super strength, Special Brew and Kestrel (strong lagers) and bottles of Lambrini (inexpensive white wine), broken Lambrini bottle glass and metal bottle tops (Fig 75). Assemblages in Bristol also commonly included glass and bottle tops from Abbey Royal sherry (inexpensive fortified wine) whereas no sherry bottle material culture was found in York. In both Bristol and York, data reveal that ring pulls of the type not intended to be detached from the can were found (detached) in high concentration across all types of homeless sites (Fig 76). Consultation with colleagues revealed the ring pulls are detached by homeless drinkers for a number of reasons: 1) removing the ring pull allows the drinker to see the bottom of the can and therefore detect whether or not their drink has been spiked 2) removing the ring pull makes the area from which

drink can be ingested larger and makes the experience more like drinking from a glass 3) homeless drinkers are often bored or anxious or both and fiddling with the ring pull can result quite quickly in the ring pull becoming detached from the can. It can be said that the presence of a large volume of non-detachable ring pulls is a clear marker that the site has been appropriated by homeless drinkers as this practice is uncommon among the rest of the population.
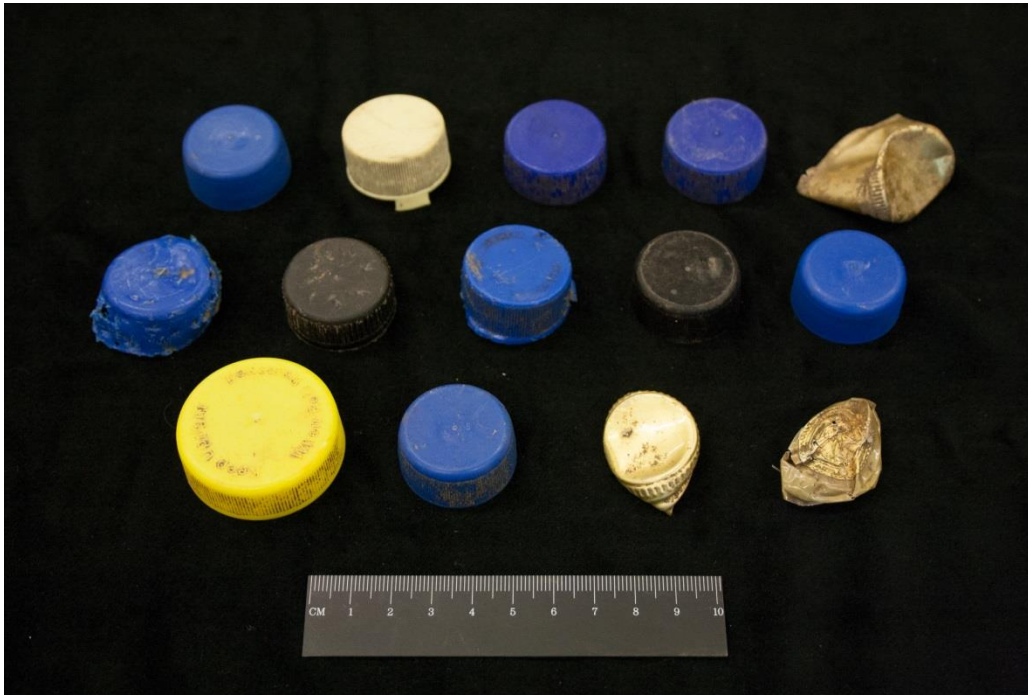


**Figure 75 - bottle tops found at excavation of 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

**Figure 76 - detached ring pulls excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

**Spiking drinks**

The practice of spiking drinks was mentioned as a common occurrence by homeless colleagues in Bristol and York. Typically, drinks are spiked with benzodiazepines such as Valium or Rohypnol (the 'date-rape drug'). Drinks are often spiked with Ketamine which was developed as a veterinary tranquilizer. Most commonly it was cited that drinks are spiked in order for a theft to be carried out. All colleagues with whom I worked perceived spiking to be an everyday reality. Most colleagues with whom I worked were in receipt of some form of anti-anxiety or anti-depressant pharmaceutical drug and benzodiazepines are easily obtained on the thriving pharmaceutical drug black market (see also Chapter Five & Chapter Eight). Pharmaceutical packaging found at various sites across Bristol and York confirmed the presence of a variety of benzodiazepines in circulation.

## 7.1d Eating artefacts

Data reveal that eating is an activity less commonly represented in the material culture of contemporary homelessness in Bristol and York than one might expect. Reasons for this include that appetites are often grossly suppressed by excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs (illegal and pharmaceutical) and addictions can

cause severe digestive problems resulting in people eating poorly and infrequently. Related to this is the fact that food is widely available for free across Bristol and available at several places in York so that cooking and preparing food is less of a necessity for homeless people in Britain than it might be elsewhere (for example, America). People with drug addictions often crave sweet things when they are withdrawing (for example, from crack cocaine) making sweets particularly attractive. Those artefacts related to eating had several common features. Sweets and chocolate bar wrappers were commonly found artefacts (Fig 77). Crisp packets, take away food packaging and take away cutlery were also common suggesting that portability and affordability are significant. One York based colleague suggested that well-represented among people who become homeless are those who have come through institutional channels (for example, having spent time in children's homes, prison and the armed services) and as a result have little or no knowledge about nutrition and food preparation. 'A lot of people wouldn't even know how to cook, even if they had a kitchen they wouldn't know how [to cook a meal]. You just get fed places,' Rich told me.

**Figure 77 - food wrappers excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

Food packaging was useful in terms of dating contexts on each excavation site due to the presence of Best Before dates. At 'The Pavilion' we found a chocolate bar wrapper with the price labelled in shillings and pence and an advertisement for the 1963 James Bond film 'Dr No', which suggested we were excavating a context contemporary to pre-decimalisation (Fig 78). Food packaging was equally useful in determining the regularity with which a site was appropriated by homeless people because we could check changing styles and the condition of packaging to estimate with some certainty how long it had been since deposition. In the southern corner of Trench 2 at 'The Pavilion' (York) we excavated six Walker's Ready Salted crisp

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packets dated between 1991 and 1993. The style of packaging proved helpful in determining dates during which the site had been most active, for example, we excavated several Mars bar chocolate wrappers and also two Wispa chocolate bar wrappers at 'The Pavilion' (York) and were able to estimate, from changes to the design and size of packaging the consistency with which the site was used (Fig 79).



**Figure 78 - Dr No featured on wrapper & pre-decimal price, York (photo: Ruby Neale)**

## 7.1e Tobacco smoking artefacts

Tobacco smoking artefacts and accessories were present at all sites. In some cases, (for example, the phone boxes on the junction of City Road and Ashley Road [Bristol] and at 'The Pavilion' [York]) a disproportionately high concentration of cigarette ends were found which colleagues attributed to the use of cigarette ash in the preparation of crack cocaine for smoking (see below). At most sites tobacco related artefacts included pouches (Amber Leaf, Golden Virginia, Cutters Choice), cigarette packets (Superkings Blue) and the cellophane wrappers in which tobacco is packaged. Data reveal strong preference for Amber Leaf tobacco within the homeless communities of Bristol and York which might be explained by the fact the brand is sold in 12.5g pouches with rolling papers and filters for under £3.50. Consistent use of tobacco at both excavation sites was evidenced through the presence of contemporary tobacco smoking paraphernalia and clay pipe fragments dating to circa 1840s (York) (Fig 80) and the eighteenth century (Bristol). The early twentieth century is not represented in tobacco related artefacts and might be explained by the biodegradable nature of hand rolled cigarettes and on-going usefulness of tobacco tins common to this period. Cigarette lighters or fragments of

these were found at most sites visited in Bristol and York. In Bristol, two lighters excavated at 'Turbo Island' were found to have rubber bands tied around them, the significance of which is unpacked in the next section of this chapter.



**Figure 80 - tobacco products c.1840 to 2011 excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

## 7.1f Drugs related artefacts

Artefacts relating to drugs – pharmaceutical and illegal - were in high concentration at most sites. It must be re-iterated that not all homeless colleagues engage in drug taking but many do or have used illegal drugs in the past and most colleagues were in receipt of pharmaceutical drug treatment for anxiety, depression or other illnesses. I present data relating to pharmaceutical drugs first and move on to present data relating to illegal drugs.

**Pharmaceutical drugs**

The highest concentration of material culture relating to pharmaceutical drugs was Diazepam packaging (Fig 81). Diazepam is a form of benzodiazepine and has a relaxing or sleep inducing effect. It is often prescribed to people who suffer social anxiety or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Most homeless colleagues were or had recently been in receipt of Diazepam or an alternative benzodiazepine. Diazepam packaging was found in high concentration at 'Turbo Island' and 'The Dungeon' (Bristol) and at 'Monkgate Bush' (York). After Diazepam packaging, the most commonly found pharmaceutical drug related artefact was packaging for opioid drugs, for example, methadone bottles, brown glass and safety caps typical of methadone bottles, sublingual buprenorphine and Subutex blister packs (heroin replacement drugs) (Fig 82). Other pharmaceutical drug packaging commonly found during fieldwork conducted for this thesis include blister packs of mirtazapine (a noradrenergic and specific seratonergic antidepressant or NaSSA) of which side effects can include blurred vision, dizziness, vivid dreams, aggression and restlessness and sertraline hydrochloride (Lustral) which can also have similarly severe side effects (see also Chapter Eight).
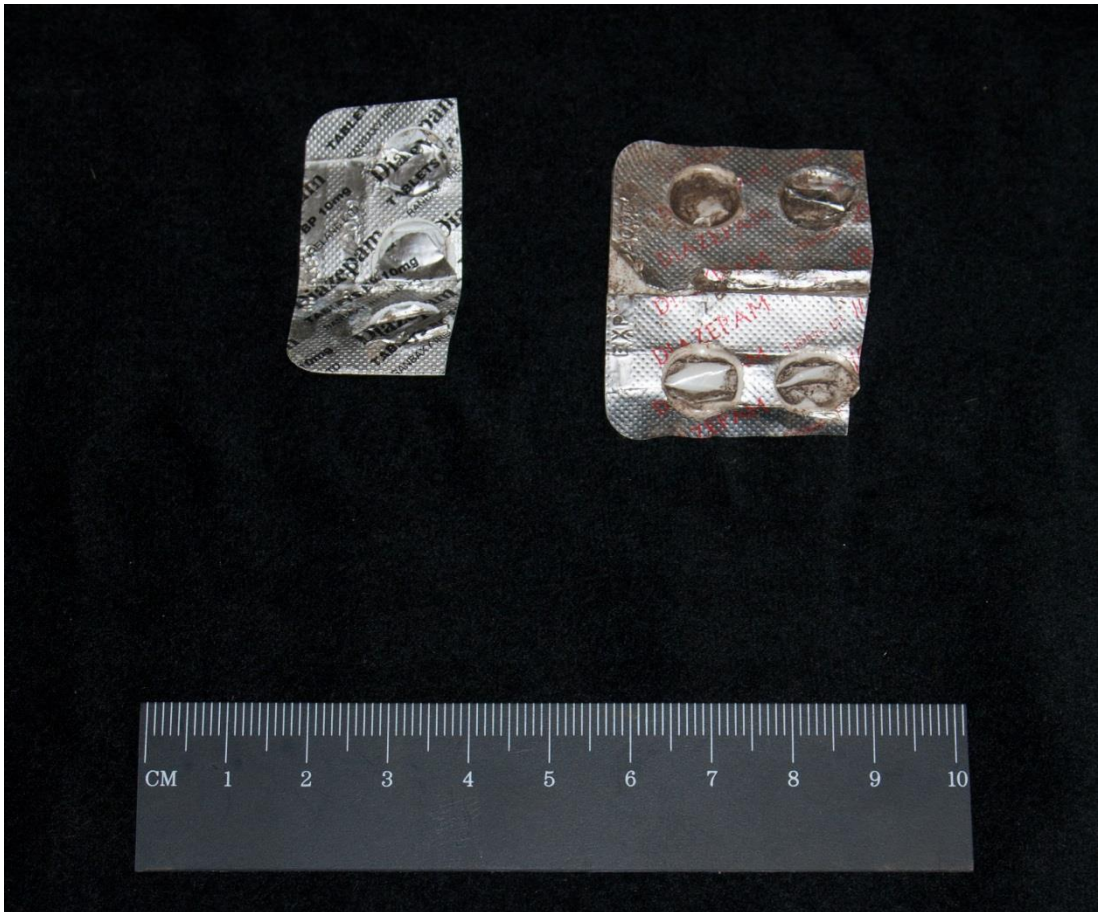
**Figure 81 - Diazepam packaging excavate at 'The Pavlion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**
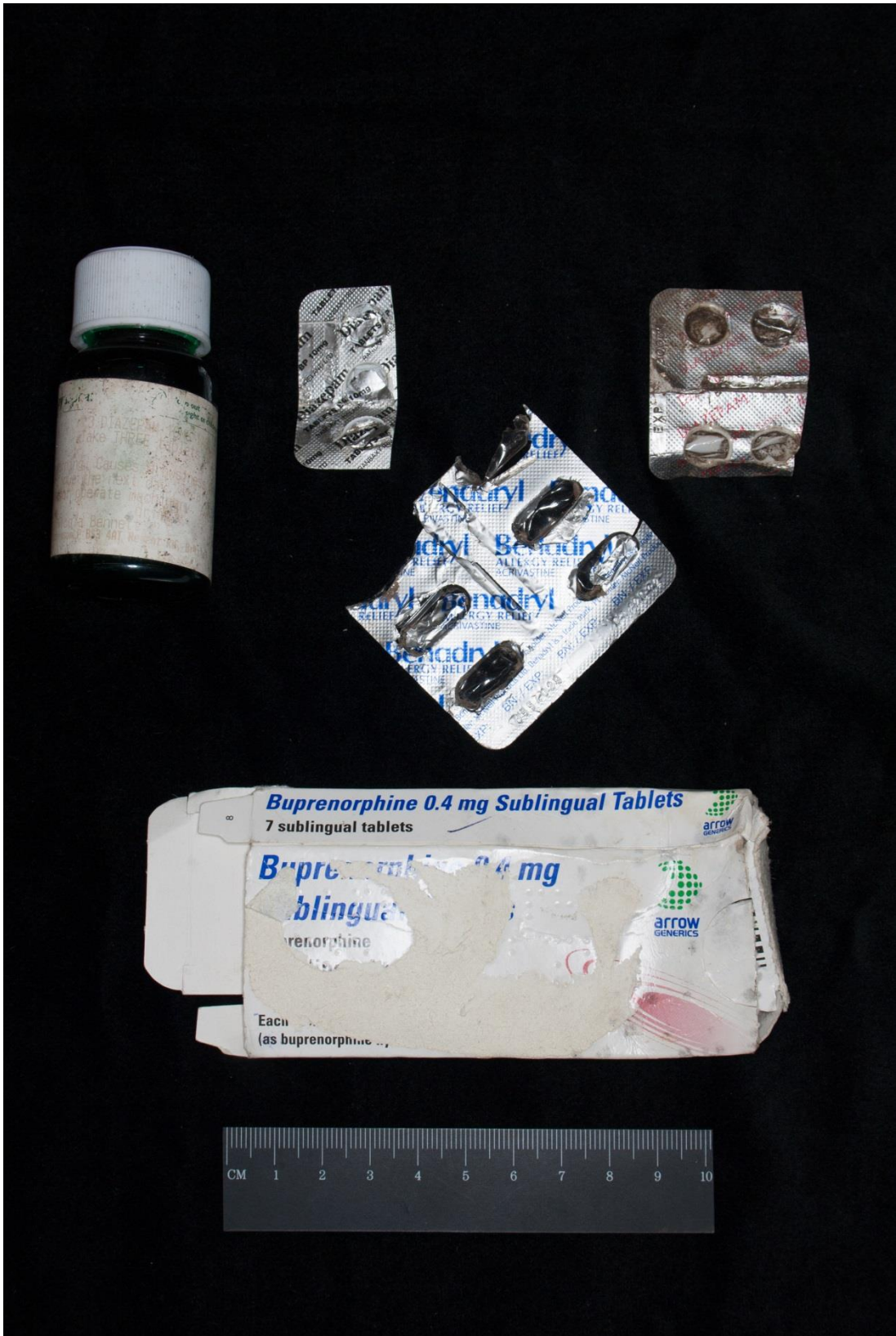
**Figure 82 - assorted pharmaceutical packaging excavated at 'Turbo Island', Bristol and 'The Pavlion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

Hay fever tablet packaging was found at the excavation of 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and also at 'The Pavilion' (York). Excavations took place in December 2009 (Bristol) and October 2011 (York). It was strange to find packaging for hay fever tablets during winter months and the presence of more than one packet made their presence seem significant, a pattern. Consultation with colleagues revealed that hay fever tablets are often 'cut' with crack cocaine (see below). That is, a street dealer might buy a quantity of cocaine (or powder sold to them as cocaine) and 'cut in' powdered hay fever tablets to increase the volume and sell on as 'pure' cocaine.

**Recreational or illegal drugs**

Illegal drugs were well represented by material culture as data reveal. Experiencing sites with homeless colleagues revealed that many 'ordinary' objects are quickly adapted for use in drug taking rituals. In order to simplify this complex area data are presented according to types of drugs and in order of drugs most commonly evidenced by material culture encountered.

**Artefacts relating to the consumption of heroin**

Heroin can be smoked or injected depending upon the preference of the user, their tolerance and experience with the drug and its preparation. Data from sites visited in Bristol and on several sites in York reveal that heroin is probably more commonly injected by homeless people from these cities. Colleagues interpreted this was due to heroin users typically progressing from smoking to injecting the drug and that users who inject usually have a higher tolerance to the drug. However, some evidence of heroin having been smoked was found at 'The Dungeon' (Bristol), 'Museum Gardens' and 'The Pavilion' (York). I present data relating to smoking heroin first and move on to present data concerning injecting.

Tin foil was found in high concentration at 'The Dungeon', 'Camp of Thieves', 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol) and at 'The Pavilion', 'Monkgate Bush' and the 'Bin Cupboard Behind Greggs' (York). Tin foil was sometimes found in a roll, as it is sold, and sometimes found in small squares with 'tracks' across it which indicate

where heroin has been smoked in lines. This process is often referred to as 'chasing the dragon' (Fig 83). At the sites mentioned above, tin foil was also found in fairly high concentration in small screwed up balls. Alongside these artefacts several pen casings typical of the plastic part of a biro pen were found. Colleagues explained these are used as straws through which heroin vapour is inhaled (see also crack cocaine, below).



**Figure 83 - Tin foil with heroin track marks found at 'The Dungeon', Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

Artefacts relating to heroin injection were typically found in combination, for example, used hypodermic needles were the clearest indication that heroin had been injected (Fig 84). The context in which hypodermic needles were found was significant. In some cases, needles were clearly discarded with apparent lack of care, for example, 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol) and 'Monkgate Bush' (York). Needles were found at the site 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol) positioned on a ledge and in such a way that it appeared the user intended to use the needle again. Colleagues explained that the practice of re-using needles is a last resort but it does happen despite the known associated health risks. Hypodermic needles were often found accompanied by other artefacts necessary in the preparation of heroin for injection. Some drug users use a needle exchange programme whereby they are able to obtain injection packs which contain a clean needle, sterilising wipe, an ampule of purified

water and citric acid which is necessary in the 'cooking' of heroin for injection and a steri-cup in which the citric acid, water and heroin can be heated and drawn hygienically into a syringe (Fig 85). These packs are supplied in Bristol by the Bristol Drugs Project and in York by a group called Compass or the York Drugs Resource Scheme. The material remains of these packs or some of the items supplied, along with small pieces of cling film in which heroin is often sold by drug dealers, were identified at many sites throughout fieldwork. Such sites also commonly revealed artefacts fashioned from everyday items adapted for use in the ritual of preparing and injecting heroin as I will now explain.



**Figure 84 - used syringe found at Monkgate Bush, York (photo: author's own)**

**Figure 85 - items from safer injecting pack excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Tom Fitton)**

At 'The Dungeon', 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York) we found metal spoons. Initially, the ordinariness of these everyday items meant they were recorded but their significance in context was not registered. We found three metal spoons at 'The Pavilion' (York). Colleagues explained that spoons are often retained by heroin users because they are used for 'cooking up' heroin (Fig 86). Arc Light homeless centre confirmed they use only plastic spoons in their café to make it more difficult for drug users to obtain necessary equipment. At 'The Dungeon', 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol), 'Monkgate Bush' and 'Museum Gardens' (York) we found beer cans with the bottoms ripped off but a small strip of can retained and bent in the shape of a handle, 'so you can hold it while you're cooking [heroin] without burning yourself', one colleague told me. Similarly, citric acid wrappers and in one case, a jar of vitamin C powder was found alongside ripped cans (Fig 88). Colleagues explained that citric acid is needed to mix with heroin to dissolve it so that it can be injected. Vitamin C powder apparently works just as well. The process of mixing citric acid with water and heroin is considered a peculiarly European preoccupation by American heroin users and is explained by the different forms of heroin available to street users in Europe and America.

Figure 86 - spoons excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Ruby Neale)



Figure 87 - can bottoms or 'cooking tins' used in the preparation of heroin for injecting found at 'The Dungeon', Bristol (photo: John Schofield)

Data show that several artefacts are likely to be found at sites where heroin is used regularly. These include needle caps – orange or clear white hard plastic – the intention of which is to give protection from possible injury after a needle has been

used. Most heroin users in Bristol and York are also eligible to collect a free 'sin-bin' or sharps box in which they are strongly encouraged to deposit used needles and bring back to the needle exchange. Data from two sites visited, 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol) and 'Monkgate Bush' (York) revealed that sin bins are sometimes not returned to the exchange places, rather discarded in the bushes, along with used needles. Consultation with colleagues who themselves used heroin revealed that the presence of needle caps and sin-bins on the ground or in bushes 'shows the place is being used by people at the worst end of it [heroin addiction]…Too out of it to care if someone steps on a needle. You need to watch out because if there's a needle cap or an empty sin bin around, you got to ask where the needle is', one colleague warned me. Data reveal that there is distinct etiquette involved in the use of heroin and that behaviour has as much to do with the *individual* person's attitude towards others as it does the effects of the drug. An analogy can be made here between people who leave picnic rubbish on the beach. The activity itself, for example, using heroin or picnicking does not belie a natural proclivity to behave in a certain way. The individual people involved and their social attitudes are the difference between people tidying up after themselves or expecting someone else to. I argue that this contrasts with the common public perception that all heroin users are feckless. Data reveal that some people use heroin but do so in ways that are arguably more socially responsible.

Another material feature we came across with some regularity in Bristol and York was the practice of putting used needles into empty drinks cans and squashing the top of the can so that the needle is trapped inside. While this is by no means the ideal way in which to dispose of a used hypodermic needle data reveal it to be relatively effective in terms of reducing the chance of a needle injury. It is unknown whether this practice was first developed within homeless heroin using communities but its effectiveness in reducing harm from used needles is acknowledged by professionals within clinical medicine, for example, a letter in *The Lancet* from a British clinician

recommends the practice as a way to counter the dangers of used needles in developing countries where funds for professional needle disposal kits are low[36].


**Artefacts relating to the consumption of crack cocaine**

Cigarette lighters with rubber bands tied around them were excavated at 'Turbo Island' and recorded at 'The Dungeon'. This pattern led colleagues to explain that the lighters had likely belonged to crack cocaine users (Fig 88). Colleagues employed experimental archaeological method to interpret the lighters by explaining how crack cocaine users often use a rubber band in the construction of crack pipes. Jane identified that the burn marks on the lighters were consistent with the way in which a lighter is held upside down by the crack cocaine user. During the 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) excavation, Jane explained that the crack cocaine user would take a plastic bottle, preferably a 200ml plastic bottle and use a cigarette to burn a hole in the side of the bottle. The casing from a typical biro pen is then inserted into the hole and sometimes chewing gum is used to plug the edges so that the pen case fits neatly into the hole. The user would then take a piece of tin foil and pierce it several times to make tiny holes, effectively making a gauze, which is then placed over the open part of the bottle and attached around the neck of the bottle using the rubber band. Cigarette ash is tapped onto the tin foil gauze before adding the crack cocaine. The user then lights the crack cocaine using the cigarette lighter (held upside down) and inhales through the pen case which functions as a pipe. Jane's explanation was useful in explaining the presence of several lighters with rubber bands around them (at 'Turbo Island') but this expert knowledge became more valuable during 'The Pavilion' (York) excavation. At 'The Pavilion' we excavated several fragments of lighters and several rubber bands or pieces of rubber band. Although none were attached, the presence of these artefacts, along with tin foil and plastic bottles with cigarette holes burned in them, in close juxtaposition, would suggest a similar method of crack-pipe construction took place. This theory was further backed up during the finds cleaning process when a conversation between a homeless colleague

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[36] http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(05)78046-6/fulltext

and a student revealed a similar interpretation of finds that had previously been offered by Jane. Additionally, when pieces of tin foil excavated at 'The Pavilion' were cleaned, tiny holes were perceptible in some of them, further suggesting its use as gauze.
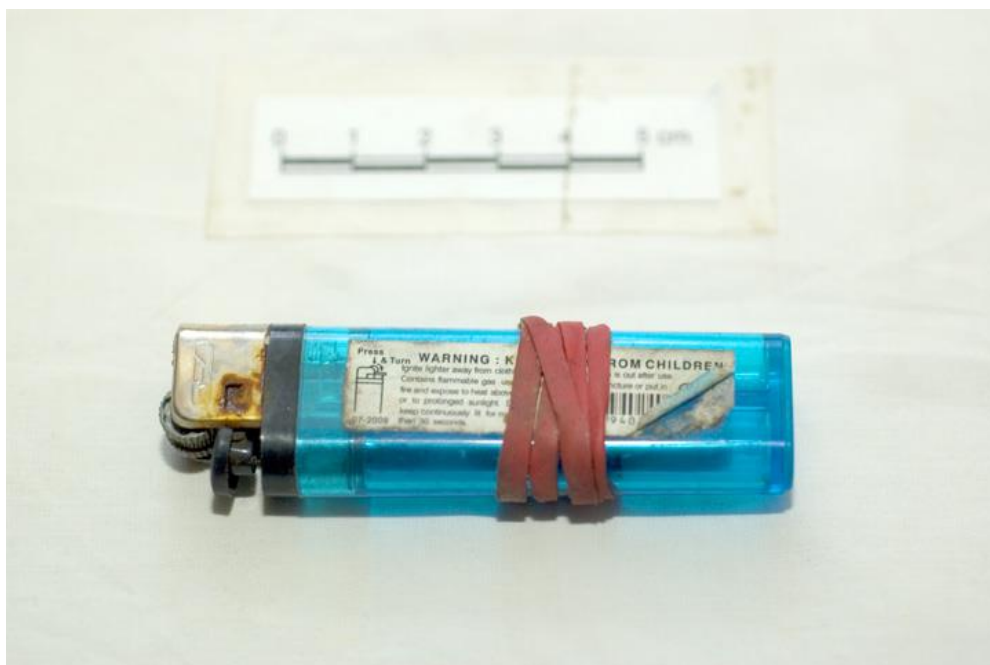


**Figure 88 - lighter with rubber band excavated at 'Turbo Island', Bristol (photo: Matthew Smith)**

We often found cling film which colleagues identified as 'wraps' in which heroin and crack cocaine are sold. One colleague explained that some dealers use a colour code: B for blue cling film = B for brown, heroin. W for white (clear) cling film = W for white, crack. It was explained that when a person scores drugs, the exchange of money and drugs is necessarily fast and discreet. There is no time to explain which parcel of cling film contains which drug. It also avoids the street dealers, usually teenage boys who are far less likely to receive a prison sentence if caught in the act of drug dealing, handing the wrong drugs to the wrong person, a situation that is likely to erupt into a scene and draw attention. Bristol colleagues explained that drugs are not always packaged in colour coded cling film but they frequently are in St Paul's (Bristol). York colleagues did not recognise the practice. York data reveal no blue cling film recorded or excavated at any sites visited.

## 7.1g Coins

Coins were found on both excavations but were noticeably absent from artefacts recorded during other fieldwork perhaps due to their on-going usefulness and the likelihood they would be picked up. At the 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) excavation we recovered several coins from inside the bush during the surface collection. Coins were predominantly British coppers, 1p and 2p pieces. We also found two low denomination Polish coins, reflective perhaps of the ethnic diversity within the homeless population in Britain. The presence of a 1901 penny allowed us to date a context in Trench 2 ('Turbo Island', Bristol) to just before this time. Similarly, in Trench 1, again at the 'Turbo Island' excavation, the presence of a 1971 penny deposited alongside the remains of a lens from a pair of sunglasses of the style worn by John Lennon moved us to confirm the layer we were excavating dated to the early 1970s. At 'The Pavilion' we identified several contemporary British copper coins (1p and 2p pieces and some silver coins, 5p and 20p pieces). These coins were found during surface collection and had perhaps been overlooked due to autumn leaves being abundant on the ground.

## 7.1h Recreational artefacts

Deciding how to categorise artefacts as 'recreational' was a difficult process and rested largely with the wider context in which they were found. For example, condoms and condom wrappers found at the graveyard behind St Paul's church (Bristol) were felt by colleagues to relate specifically to prostitution on account of the volume of drug paraphernalia also found very close by. Whereas condoms and wrappers found at 'The Dungeon' and 'The Pavilion' might be the result of sex generally or possibly prostitution between drug users, that is, a drug user having sex with another drug user in return for drugs. In this subsection I present data relating to recreational artefacts excavated at 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York) and material culture recorded at other sites visited.

Among artefacts categorised as 'recreational' we found a high concentration of material culture related to telephone communication. Data reveal some historic consistency in telephone communication being important to homeless people (for

example, at 'The Pavilion'(York), we excavated a 1990s British Telecom phone card (Fig 89) and several fragments of an early model of Ericson mobile phone, including an Ericson phone cover). Fragments of more contemporary mobile phones and accessories (for example, chargers, were found at 'Turbo Island', 'Camp of Thieves', 'The Dungeon', 'Under the Bridge' and 'Bushes off Midland Road [Bristol] and 'The Pavilion' [York]). Significantly, colleagues explained that mobile phones are a primary target for street robberies because they are easily sold or swapped. Bristol based colleagues explained that older mobile phones which predate inbuilt GPS systems are worth more money because they are valued at a premium by drug dealers who do not wish to be located for obvious reasons. A very high concentration of fragments and partially deconstructed mobile phone chargers were recorded at the 'Bushes off Midland Road' (Bristol) which was explained by the place functioning as a wire stripping 'factory' (see Chapter Six). After telephone related material culture, the second most common recreational artefact recorded at sites was reading materials (for example, books, magazines and newspapers). Books were recorded 'Under the Bridge', at the 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol) and at 'Monkgate Bush' (York). Consultation with colleagues indicates that books are available through book swaps at several church groups. Street robberies (for example, where a bag or briefcase is stolen) can also result in books making their way to homeless places, according to colleagues. Marbles were excavated at 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York). Older colleagues explained that, before mobile phones (with inbuilt games) became cheap enough for homeless people to afford, marbles had featured commonly as a way to pass time. Attractive features of marbles include the fact they are portable and aesthetically pleasing and that marble games can be played by any number of players (Fig 90).

**Figure 89 - 1990s BT telephone card excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Ruby Neale)**
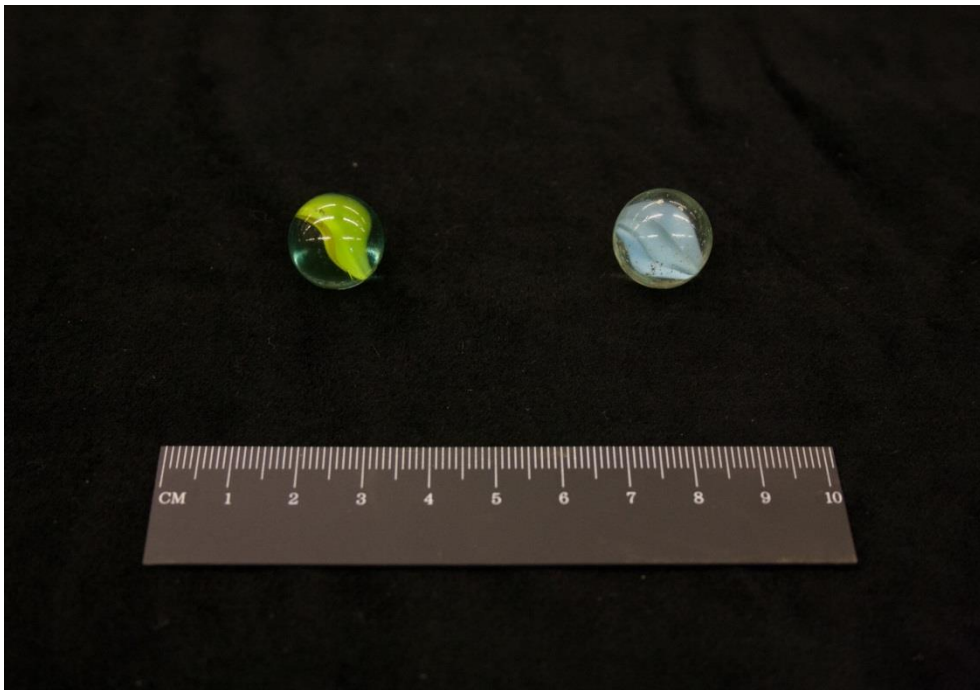


**Figure 90 - marbles excavated at 'Turbo Island', Bristol (L) and 'The Pavilion', York (R), (photo: Tom Fitton)**

**Miscellaneous artefacts**

Miscellaneous contemporary artefacts recorded or excavated during fieldwork include fragments of a vinyl record and party poppers ('The Pavilion', York). Posters were found in particularly high concentration at the 'Camp of Thieves' (Bristol) and explained by the proximity of the site to Broadmead shopping area where advertising hoardings can be accessed (for example, at bus stops) and where posters are often sold from the pavement. The location of the posters within the 'bedroom' areas of the Camp of Thieves made the areas feel personalised. Again, at the 'Camp of Thieves' a screwdriver was recorded which colleagues immediately identified as a burglary tool for jemmying windows, that is, the primary function of the tool was not prioritised by colleagues. At 'The Pavilion' (York), excavation revealed a small collection of children's toy money. These artefacts are the only existing archaeological evidence for children being party to and present within contemporary homeless culture in the U.K. (Fig 91).



Figure 91 - toy money excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Ruby Neale)

## 7.1i Graffiti

Graffiti was present at several sites visited throughout fieldwork. In some cases, graffiti functioned as a form of communication within the homeless community. For

example, 'Under the Bridge' [Bristol] graffiti messages included names, requests for individuals to get in touch - 'J.J Ring Me, Spence', (Fig 92) and what colleagues interpreted as coded messages concerning drugs, for example, 'Dog is Dead', 'Rossi on Blackburn' (Fig 93).



**Figure 92 - 'JJ Ring me, Spence' graffiti, 'Under the Bridge', Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

Perhaps the most evocative piece of graffiti recorded 'Under the Bridge' is 'Home Sweet Ho…' written in blood. The irony of its location and chosen medium speak for themselves (see Fig 50). Graffiti was not confined to writing in ink (or blood). Tree graffiti was found at 'The Dungeon' which read '666' and a paving slab at the 'entrance' to the 'Camp of Thieves' read 'Peace, Love & Unity' in red paint (all in Bristol) (Fig 94).

## 7.1j Artefacts carried by homeless colleagues

With no official place to call their own homeless people are forced to carry items on their person the majority of the time or risk losing things by storing them in, for example, grit bins. Most colleagues travelled with a bag (for example, a small backpack or plastic carrier bag). One afternoon in Bristol I sat down with Andrew, Punk Paul and Liam and, at their suggestion, recorded an inventory of their belongings. Andrew was quick to explain that the contents of his bag changes daily, if not more regularly. 'I pick up whatever I think might be useful to me, stuff I see in skips or on walls[37]. That means something has to go because you can't keep everything. So I swap things with other people, stash stuff in places. So, what I show you today might not be there tomorrow!' Punk Paul and Liam nodded in agreement. Punk Paul said he would go first. In his shoulder bag he carried: a woolly hat, two pairs of socks, a jumper, a carton of pineapple juice, some chocolate buttons, a *Big Issue* magazine, a small pouch of tobacco and matches and a Gotland vase circa 1970 (Fig 95). I was intrigued by the vase. Punk Paul told me he bought it for 50p

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[37] It is a city wide local custom in Bristol that people recycle unwanted items by putting things just outside the boundary of their house e.g. on a garden wall, and others take what they want.

from a 'Bring & Buy' stall outside the Magpie squat on the corner of Picton Street (Bristol), 'I just think it's lovely,' Punk Paul told me. Andrew then offered to share the contents of his bag. He carried with him: a T-shirt, a pair of socks, a sleeping bag, a pair of gloves, a First Aid kit, a DVD about meth amphetamine in Brooklyn and a set of headphones. Liam opened his bag next. In it he had: a pair of grey tracksuit bottoms, a pair of jeans with a belt, a pink mobile phone and a packet of Haribo Tangfastics (sweets). None of the men carried a wallet. 'Wallets are too easy to steal', Andrew told me, 'you keep any money you have in your pants or socks.' I asked whether anyone carried a key and the three men sniggered, 'a key for what?' Punk Paul asked. The men's bags were characterised in the main by survival and warmth. There were few signs of *social* or *financial* capital (Bourdieu 1977).



**Figure 95 - Liam, PP & RK discussing PP's Gotland vase, Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**

On both excavations – 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York) we found artefacts relating to the historic use of each site. To distinguish this material culture from that relating directly to contemporary activities I term this category 'historic artefacts'.

## 7.2 Historic artefacts

Following counter mapping exercises excavation was carried out at two sites of contemporary homelessness. Colleagues identified 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) and 'The Pavilion' (York) as social places and, as a team comprised of homeless people, students and professional archaeologists, each site was collaboratively excavated using established archaeological methods (for example, surveying, surface collection, stratigraphic excavation). We wanted to see what an archaeological approach could reveal about the function of these places in the recent and deeper historical past. In this section of the chapter I present data on artefacts dating from the 1970s and earlier.

**'Turbo Island', Bristol: historic artefacts**

The name 'Turbo Island' is a reference to a colloquial term for homemade cider known as 'turbo' cider (Kiddey & Schofield 2009, 2010 & 2011) - firmly associated with homeless drinkers in British popular imagination. Since the late 1970s the site has been referred to by local residents, homeless people and local police as 'Turbo Island' and has been synonymous with homeless people and street drinkers, indicating a degree of homeless 'ownership'. The triangle of land was once inhabited by three buildings 71, 73 and 75 Stokes Croft (see Fig 96). The site received a direct hit from a 500 kilo bomb during World War II and excavated archaeological data reveal historic contexts predating the Second World War to be confused in places, consistent with explosion. Material culture dating from and predating the explosion includes a high concentration of window glass, brown beer bottle glass and ceramic building material (for example, fragments of roof tiles, grout, cement and small pieces of brick). Also included is a large volume of pottery, the majority of which was nineteenth century cream ware. One fragment of Delft ware was excavated and thought to be part of a charger plate (Fig 97). Several pieces of Mocha ware were excavated along with fragments of beer mug and clay pipe which dated from between the late seventeenth and mid eighteenth century.

**Figure 96 - Holdcroft's shoe shop c.1935 which occupied the site of 'Turbo Island' (photo: courtesy of John Holdcroft)**



**Figure 97 - Delftware fragment excavated at 'Turbo Island', Bristol (photo: Matthew Smith)**

Of interest to the academic and professional archaeologists was the fact that homeless colleagues were fascinated by clay-pipe stem and tiny sherds of pottery, particularly beer mug fragments. Such finds are often deemed quotidian but to homeless colleagues they were intriguing, their fragmented and partial nature inconsequential. What mattered to colleagues was the existence of time depth, 'proof' that *their* place had history, aspects of which colleagues identified with (for example, smoking and drinking beer). Presence of artefacts 'from so long ago' and typical of social activities relevant to the lives of colleagues was enough that connections were made between 'then' and now and a dawning *sense of belonging* and place in the longer history of 'Turbo Island' was perceptible, illustrated in part by colleagues' desire to show others the 'things *I* found'. A sense of continuity and relationship between the past and present – past *in the present* - sparked the interest of several homeless people who worked on the excavation and remain core members of the homeless heritage team. For students, the discovery of a used hypodermic needle in a context dated to the 1980s was alarming and a conversation generator (Fig 98). The needle came from a period in time strongly associated with HIV infection and AIDS – the needle represented fear of death, infection, disease, extreme 'Otherness' (Said 1979). In accordance with our previously agreed Health & Safety procedure I wore protective gloves and personally removed the needle to a safe place immediately. This one artefact symbolises effectively the mystery, fear and pity readily associated with homelessness in the popular imagination but remains just one (extreme) end of the familiar social status. For most students and professional archaeologists, this was the first time they had seen a hypodermic needle outside a medical context. The needle was to homeless colleagues as commonplace as pieces of clay-pipe and fragments of cream ware are to the average British archaeologist.
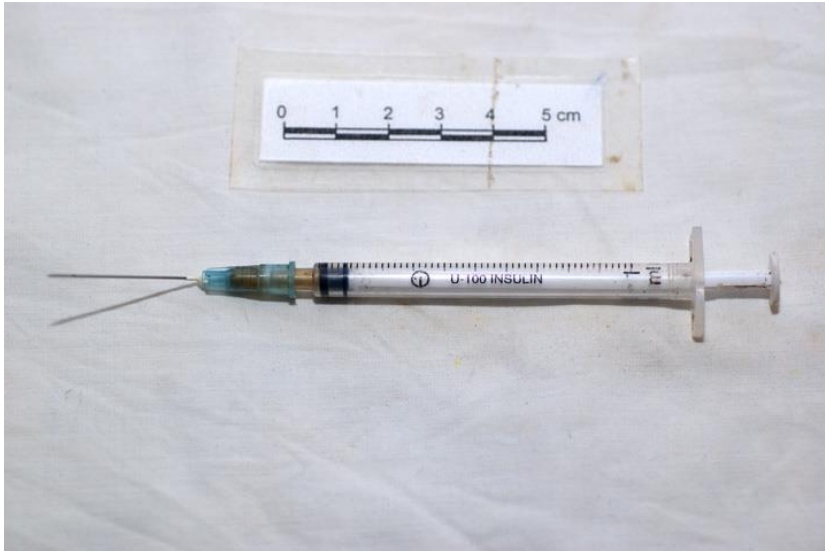
**Figure 98 - used syringe excavated at 'Turbo Island', Bristol (photo: author's own)**

**'The Pavilion', York: historic artefacts**

'The Pavilion', as York based homeless colleagues named it, was a cricket pavilion in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital. The Pavilion has been demolished since we undertook excavation of the site. Bootham Park Hospital and the grounds in which 'The Pavilion' stood date to 1777, when the hospital was purpose built as one of England's first lunatic asylums. The hospital continues to care for people with mental health issues. Documentary research revealed that the hospital grounds had been used as recreational space by staff and patients throughout the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was confirmed by a high concentration of brown beer bottle glass and nineteenth and early twentieth century pottery (Fig 99). Earlier finds include ceramic building material (for example, window glass and fragments of roof tiles which indicate the presence of a building that likely predated the twentieth century cricket pavilion). The York-Scarborough railway line arrived in 1845 and was routed through (now, beside) the hospital grounds, reflective perhaps of the impotency of mental health patients to complain about the noise and grime that came with passing steam trains. The construction of this part of the railway line might explain a context in which was found a high concentration of clay pipe fragments and coal slag (Fig 100).

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**Figure 99 - nineteenth century beer bottle glass excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Ruby Neale)**



**Figure 100 - close up of nineteenth century clay pipe bowl excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: author's own)**

As with the 'Turbo Island' (Bristol) excavation, homeless colleagues in York were far more interested in fragments of clay pipe and tiny sherds of nineteenth century pottery than they were contemporary artefacts and, as with the Bristol excavation,

the reverse was true of student volunteers. Although it was of interest that crisp packets and their Best Before dates proved most useful in demonstrating to homeless colleagues how stratigraphic excavation methods aid dating contexts. Within the first three days of the excavation it was not uncommon to overhear homeless colleagues offering interpretations of *historic* finds using the correct archaeological terminology, speaking in terms of 'context', 'cuts' and relationships between artefacts and the wider context of the site. For example, 'someone was having a picnic here…Bottle of beer under the tree in the sunshine', was one plausible explanation for a volume of brown bottle glass in the corner of Trench One. Other historic artefacts excavated at 'The Pavilion' include buttons and what we think is a hairpin, certainly a hairpin shaped badly decayed iron object contemporary to the mid nineteenth century (Fig 101).



Figure 101 - nineteenth century iron object (hairpin) excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: Ruby Neale)

## 7.3 Discussion of Artefacts Data

Central themes that emerge from consultation of artefacts found on homeless sites in Bristol and York include portability, adaptation and questionable ownership. Data reveal that homeless people must usually carry belongings around with them. The short inventory of homeless peoples' bags reveals that homeless people are likely to discard things that are not easily portable in favour of maintaining a collection of belongings that are immediately useful. Analyses of types of food packaging reveal

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that homeless people are more likely to consume foods that require little or no preparation such as ready to eat or take away foods including sweets and crisps. Portable bedding and items adapted for use as temporary shelter are equally well represented. The creative adaptation of objects, materials and the built and natural environment is a strong theme in homeless culture. Andrew's 'skipper by the river' is a good example of this, as is 'Under the Bridge' (Bristol) and the 'Monkgate Bush' (York).

A further theme which emerges from analyses of contemporary homeless material culture concerns ownership status. Unlike a home, car, office or curtilage where ownership of articles 'inside' is bestowed upon items due to their position within the boundary of the private space, the 'ownership' of homeless peoples' things is less readily determinable. Put simply, it is hard to tell if someone has discarded things for good (for example, shoes beside a bed made from a pizza box) or if things are positioned purposefully, that is, they are still *owned* by (and useful to) someone. For example, two tourniquets tied off the ground around the strut of the bridge ('Under the Bridge') suggest they are *stored* for reuse rather than discarded. Opposing this, a single shoe lying on its side at the 'Camp of Thieves' suggests it is no longer *owned* by anyone. Homeless artefacts appear to occupy a peculiarly liminal realm between lost and found, between owned and discarded. This conundrum is important to consider in terms of the ethical treatment of other peoples' belongings. For example, bailiffs must abide by laws and regulations before entering a person's home but no such rules exist to protect a person's home space if the space appropriated is unofficial as many homeless home spaces necessarily are. This results in the frequent confiscation, removal and destruction of homeless peoples' property and ultimately unequal treatment of private property. Data from the UK and North America show that homeless peoples' property is routinely 'removed', 'confiscated', 'destroyed' - one might say stolen - by police and other authorities, revealing the degree to which the property of homeless people is treated differently from that of non-homeless

people. Examples of this happening come from London[38], Sacramento, California[39] and Vancouver, Canada[40].

In the next section of the chapter I explore the significance of working collaboratively on *all stages* of production of the past. I unpack how the archaeological process can offer therapeutic benefits to people who have experienced marginalisation or trauma and explore inherent theoretical considerations and implications.

## 7.4 Finds processing: a safe and supportive social environment

On site, finds from each excavation were gathered in bags and boxes, marked appropriately and brought respectively to the University of Bristol and the University of York where the excavation team were granted use of necessary facilities. Permission was sought from both universities for everyone involved in each part of the project to be granted full supervised access to drying and teaching rooms, loos and café areas. It is testament to the progressive attitude of each university's archaeology department that all homeless colleagues who wished to remain actively involved in the project were granted access without hesitation and on the same grounds as students. Everyone was asked to gather at the respective department at 9.30am on a particular day. Homeless colleagues, people often labelled 'hard to reach' or 'difficult to engage', were on time and ready to work, a significant outcome in itself. Questioning colleagues about this I was repeatedly told, '[the project] was interesting! I wanted to be there,' the significance of which will be further unpacked in the next chapter. In keeping with university guidelines, each team was given a tour of facilities and health and safety briefing.

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[38] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/police-seize-possessions-of-rough-sleepers-in-crackdown-on-homelessness-8631665.html

[39] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEqUL1AI6_M

[40] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1YXVUOEoGU

Post-excavation work is generally considered an essential but unglamorous stage of archaeological work, perceived as less important than excavation or the presentation or exhibition of findings. Feminist scholars have critiqued this misconception as reflective of gender bias (Conkey & Spector 1984) or a function of 'woman at home ideology' – finds cleaning as domestic work (Gero1985). However, I argue that the finds cleaning process was one of the *most valuable* and important stages of the homeless heritage project and has potential to function explicitly as therapeutic work more broadly with marginalised or traumatised people. I will now unpack how we approached cleaning and interpreting finds.

The collaborative process of cleaning and interpreting finds began by creating *a safe and supportive environment* in which students and homeless colleagues could work together. In Bristol and York, we worked in laboratories seated around a large table. In each case, the group seated around the table was a coalition of people who had previously worked together on excavation and group dynamics were enhanced by working relationships developed earlier. Everyone was shown how to clean and dry finds and the need to maintain context and trench information was strongly reiterated. In Bristol, finds were cleaned and processed by the homeless heritage team (comprising students and homeless people) (Fig 102) before a University of Bristol Masters student (Gillian Crea) made a detailed finds report the subject of her 2010 MA dissertation. In York, finds were cleaned (Fig 103) and processed before the team split into two groups each comprising homeless colleagues and students who worked together to create spread sheets into which they entered data concerning finds excavated at 'The Pavilion'.

**Figure 102 - Rich, DD, Prof Mark Horton & AD finds cleaning, University of Bristol (photo: John Schofield)**



**Figure 103 - Dan, Lisa, Ruby, Richard & Navid conducting data analysis, University of York (photo: author's own)**

In both cities, homeless colleagues were initially keen to pick through the finds bags to see which contained artefacts they had personally excavated. Individuals were proud to associate with specific finds (for example, because they were considered particularly 'old' or 'weird' or 'funny') and a sense of *personal responsibility* for specific artefacts was palpable. As finds cleaning progressed familiar banter ensued as students teased one another about being 'processual' or 'interpretive' and discussions around, for example, historic glazing techniques arose. Homeless colleagues offered plausible explanations for a high concentration of window glass

and roof tile (excavated at 'The Pavilion') being found in Trench 2 and students asked questions about more contemporary artefacts. 'Why does it have a hole in it?' A student held up the plastic Coca Cola bottle he was cleaning. 'That's because they use it to smoke drugs from', a homeless colleague replied and proceeded to show the student how the hole was made with a lit cigarette (Fig 104). This information exchange has clear methodological implications for collaborative archaeological work more broadly and is a subject returned to in the final chapter (see Chapter Nine).



Figure 104 - cola bottle with hole burnt in it excavated at 'The Pavilion', York (photo: author's own)

From the outset, it was never intended that homeless people would be the subject under study, but rather homeless *material culture*. Correspondingly, I took the decision never to ask homeless people how they came to be homeless although I was happy to listen if people wanted to talk. However, seated around the table cleaning finds some colleagues felt motivated to speak about their experience of homelessness in detail they had never previously entered (in my company). While cleaning finds from 'The Pavilion' (York) excavation, one colleague was cleaning a decayed

polystyrene cup when he noticed it read '*Women's Royal Voluntary Service'* (RVS) (Fig 105).



**Figure 105 - Women's Royal Voluntary Service polystyrene cup, York (photo: author's own)**

'They [the Women's RVS] used to run the café in the hospital when I was an inpatient there [Bootham Park Hospital],' our colleague proffered. He then spoke candidly about his experience of having spent time as an inpatient at Bootham Park Hospital (York) several times during the 1980s. He remembered the medication he had been given (Largactyl) 'known as the liquid kosh'. He talked about other patients who were given electroconvulsive therapy, 'you'd see someone led away from the ward and then wheeled back. It was scary,' he told us. All the time, he continued to carefully clean artefacts and place them in the tray to dry, his eyes and hands occupied while he spoke. It was as though *handling material* connected to the time he spent living homeless and in and out of the Bootham Park mental health hospital gave his experience authenticity, made his memories *more real*. Part of our colleague's self-identity was, in a small way, confirmed by the tangible remains of a polystyrene cup.

I believe there are several significant factors to consider which might perhaps have more profound consequence. Firstly, the group situation was *safe and supportive*. It

was not a 'cold' group of people brought together by their mutual alcohol or drug problems as most 'group therapy' sessions currently available to people with addictions, well represented among the homeless population, seem to be. Instead, it was a group of people brought together by their *mutual interest* in archaeology. The *focus* and *reason* for being together was *not* addiction or the trauma homelessness. The process of working together on site for ten days prior to sitting around the table meant that the group were comfortable in one another's presence and this greatly aided the nurturing atmosphere. Some people spoke and others listened in turn. Secondly, finds cleaning is a fiddly process that requires a person's hands remain occupied. Hand to eye co-ordination is important if one is to avoid slopping muddy water about and means that eye contact with other members of the group is fleeting. The 'front brain' is occupied – in everyone around the table – and attention is focussed on the 'mundane' job in hand, for example, cleaning the mud from artefacts. This allows the 'back brain' to wander in a similar way to that induced through meditation. Thirdly, there was *no expectation* that people should 'open up' or recall traumatic experiences but when they did, the group was supportive and this, I argue, took a lot of the pressure from the situation. Equally, there was no expectation that anyone should respond verbally or make a suggestion, diagnosis or comment. Rather like a Quaker meeting, the words, the scenarios, some of which were quite frightening images of loneliness and desperation were able to 'just be' – and the group returned to the task in hand, that of finds cleaning. Finds cleaning, this mundane but necessary stage of the archaeological process functioned to keep people 'on track' and the wider objective – *the archaeological process* - (for example, preparing artefacts for analyses, identifying themes and emerging narratives) was a comforting path to which we returned regularly. The supportive and nurturing social environment in which post-excavation processes took place was paramount. This supports recent findings from neuroendocrinological work on stress, the brain and the social environment which shows that self-efficacy and self-esteem thrive in such scenarios (McEwan 2012).


Neuroscientist Bruce S. McEwan has observed that the adult human brain has neural plasticity, that is, although neural pathways form during early years of development

(and may be negatively affected or under-developed in cases of abuse or neglect) the brain retains adaptability into adulthood. Stress is a state of mind that involves both the brain and the body. Stress is common to people who have experienced trauma or abuse and McEwan identifies isolation, PTSD and anxiety as conditions particularly linked with stress (McEwan 2012:17182). Such conditions are acutely well represented among homeless people. McEwan's findings suggest that neural plasticity can be affected by the social environment in health damaging *or health promoting* ways. McEwan's paper finishes by suggesting that:

*'...a future research goal should be to provide a neurobiological framework for understanding positive health, positive effect, and self-efficacy and self-esteem and how these components are biologically embedded in a nurturing environment'* (McEwan 2012: 17184).

I suggest that the positive and supportive social environment offered by archaeological work and apparent associated health benefits offer a potentially rich avenue for further collaborative research between archaeologists interested in how the discipline might function in socially useful ways and neurobiologists keen to explore non-pharmaceutical approaches to treatment of trauma.

**Classification and developing narratives**

There exists a wealth of literature on the problems of classification of archaeological material and arguments surrounding the topic are well-rehearsed (see, for examples, Adams & Adams 1991, McGuire 1993, Little 1994, Knapp 1996 and Whittaker et al 1998). Of most significance to this thesis perhaps is the concern that classification is a subjective intervention which actively contributes to object biography and the function of archaeological data in the present. Traditionally, classification might involve typological grouping on the basis of the composite material of a find which can be useful in differentiating between artefacts and determining their function (for example, flint, bone, CBM, metal, worked stone etc.). In cataloguing finds from two contemporary sites we were faced with an enormous 'miscellaneous plastic' category

which at first meant that few distinctions or meaningful comparisons could be gleaned. Following numerous discussions and conversations as a team of homeless people and archaeology students themes such as 'sleeping', 'eating' and 'communication' began to emerge more strongly.

A key concern remained that data revealed homelessness to exist as *both* an ideologically constructed concept and simultaneously a phenomenological experience lived out by human agents whose different creative responses to homelessness were best represented using interpretive archaeological methodologies. For example, if we had retained a typological focus the theme of multi-functionality and adaptation of environment and materials risked being lost. For example, beer cans would remain beer cans rather than reappear as 'sin-bins', bridges might be perceived to offer shelter but their function as home space to which people return or store belongings would evade narration. It was decided collectively through a series of animated discussions between members of each group that the best way to present data and findings was to make our methodology explicit at the beginning of each exhibition and offer multiple interpretations of material under thematic headings. For example, under the heading 'sleeping' we included photographs and audio recordings of a variety of places identified by homeless colleagues as places at which they had slept, drawing out characteristics and comparable features and provided an installation of a 'skipper' built from wooden pallets, cardboard and blankets. Taking a thematic approach to the presentation of data allowed us to represent the ways in which human creativity is as much shaped by constraints as it is access to resources, highlight diversity and reflect the individual human agency of those people inadequately often referred to collectively as 'the homeless'. The intention behind presenting data in this way was to challenge the discourse that seeks to homogenise homeless people and support punitive responses to poverty and create a platform from which negative stereotypes may start to be deconstructed. In the next section of this chapter I focus on the impact of co-presenting lectures on this work and describe two co-curated interactive public archaeological exhibitions.

## 7.5 Presentation of findings

*'Do something, create an event, a happening, and watch what ensues – it can be very revealing of underlying structure.'* (Shanks 2012:39)

Throughout fieldwork it was made clear to homeless colleagues and students that the intention was to present findings collaboratively. This was achieved through a variety of co-authored articles in diverse publications including *The Big Issue* (Kiddey & Schofield 2009) and *British Archaeology* magazine (Kiddey & Schofield 2010). Two further papers were published in academic journals *Public Archaeology* (Kiddey & Schofield 2011) and the *Journal of the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology* (Kiddey & Schofield in press) and a book chapter, all of which contained comments verbatim from homeless colleagues (Kiddey 2014). Colleagues were encouraged to co-present at a variety of conferences. For example, homeless colleagues Jane, Danny, Deano and Whistler co-presented a paper titled 'Punks & Drunks: counter mapping homeless heritage' at the conference of the Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG) at the University of Bristol in 2010 and Andrew, Jane, Dan and Mark co-presented a paper called 'Stories from the Street: contemporary homelessness as heritage' at the postgraduate conference in historical archaeology at the University of Leicester Centre for Historical Archaeology in 2011. Papers were put together by colleagues and me collaboratively with each colleague taking responsibility for a particular theme or aspect of homelessness they felt comfortable speaking about. For example, Jane presented on her 'Hot Skipper' (Bristol TAG 2010) and Andrew explored the theme of 'anti-homelessness tactics' using photographs of locations at which sheltered areas had been fenced or grilled off and rendered inaccessible (Leicester 2011).

Responses to these co-presented papers were illustrative of the powerful way archaeology can function as socio-political action and bear witness to a plurality of ways to experience places, revealing archaeology to be an effective tool through which counter narratives may be materialised and used to challenge dominant

heritage interpretations. Similarly, responses to co-presented papers revealed a wider appetite for non-traditional heritage, that is, appreciation of human experiences that have commonly been disregarded by the heritage industry. For example, at TAG 2010 Deano spoke for a short while about busking as a homeless work practice upon which he relied for his living and performed on guitar an extract from the song 'The Boxer' by Simon & Garfunkel. The conference session audience were moved to spontaneously join in the chorus revealing an uncommon emotional and physical response to an academic paper. Negative stereotypes were challenged in both directions. For example, at the conference in Leicester in 2011 our co-presented paper was received well. During the plenary, historical archaeologist Dr Sarah Tarlow said that our paper had 'made her think'. Jane was pleasantly surprised by this comment because, as Jane perceived it, she had spoken in front of a room full of 'top people who've written books', people she perceived to be 'posh' and had imagined would look down on her (and other homeless colleagues). Jane said the experience had challenged her preconceptions about 'posh' people in much the same way that conference audience members spoke of the way in which each presentation 'made them think' differently about homelessness and addiction. In both cases, collaborative archaeological methodologies and co-presentation of findings led to the creation of a productive platform which *centralised the humanity of the individual homeless people involved* and facilitated a more critical, nuanced appreciation of the concept of homelessness and its phenomenological physical reality. Homeless knowledge, like academic knowledge, is not a coherent body but rarely do such diverse dialogues converge. Unification in the way described can be shown to have had positive outcomes for individuals and the broader public understanding of homelessness. Theoretical implications for the archaeological discipline were also significant. These impacts are more fully unpacked in the penultimate and final chapters of this thesis. I return now to the development of two co-curated exhibitions on the heritage of contemporary homelessness in Bristol and York.

**'A History of Stokes Croft in One Hundred Objects' (Bristol exhibition, December 2010)**

The title of the exhibition was a play on that of a recent BBC Radio 4 series, 'A History of the World in One Hundred Objects'. The Bristol homeless heritage team took temporary possession of a squatted shop (37 Stokes Croft) for a week before Christmas in 2010 (Fig 106) and plotted how we would use the space.



Figure 106 - exterior of 37 Stokes Croft, venue for 'A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects', Bristol (photo: author's own)

Exhibits included a collection of counter maps, photographs and the eight minute film made by the BBC on our excavation at 'Turbo Island'. Historical research included documents, photographs and an audio interview with a gentleman called John Holdcroft who had been a young boy and resident of 75 Stokes Croft during the war (Fig 107).

**Figure 107 - images of wall in exhibition explaining John Holdcroft's memories of growing up at 75 Stokes Croft (photo: author's own)**

In the interview, John explained how he had left his parents' house to cross the street and play with a friend the afternoon the 500 kilo bomb hit their shoe shop. John explained how his parents escaped unharmed but Mrs Parsons, the butcher's wife and his neighbour, was killed. Jane took charge of arranging the section of the exhibition that displayed a painting by John Holdcroft of his parents' shop, post-explosion, photographs of Stokes Croft before and during the war and of John himself, and a table and chair at which people could sit to listen to John's recorded memories of the street in the 1930/40s and the day the bomb struck (Fig 108).



**Figure 108 - image of audio feature at 'A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects' exhibition (photo: author's own)**

Using the squat wall, Jane annotated 1940s photographs to indicate the wall (foundations of John's parents' shop) upon which homeless people now regularly sit (Fig 109).



Figure 109 - image of annotated photograph of 'Turbo Island' c.1935 showing where people now sit on the wall (photo: author's own)

Andrew suggested he 'do a Tracey Emin' by constructing an installation 'skipper' from wooden pallets, cardboard, sleeping bags and blankets. Jane took a collection of photographs taken during field walks around Bristol and drew links between them, annotating and explaining how she perceived them to be related, writing on the wall in marker pen and drawing lines and arrows between the images (Fig 110).

Jane and Patch: skipper by King's Square, 2010

Is this my guardian angel or a trick of the light? Why I am I still alive?

Light on left shoulder

My street Bruvs
some of..!!

Local cop !!..
nice man with another street Bruv !!

on way home from Cambridge University marmites 1st night under the stars, Sat round fire chilling !!

This whole project has given me positivity, focus + Hope.
XX
Jane + Patch
XX

We all love you
It's a beautifull world (and Sometimes Perfect)
Love Jane + Patch
+ Bruvs + marmite! ♡
X

SMACK-HEADS. CRACK-HEADS

**Figure 110 - Jane's wall at 'A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects' exhibition, Bristol (photo: author's own)**

My presentation of our research findings takes the form of this thesis. My colleagues' presentation of findings were various and creative, as illustrated. Providing a plurality of perspectives from which to view material culture generated enabled visitors to conceive of 'Turbo Island' and the surrounding local area from a variety of viewpoints. Jane suggested we set out finds across a central table labelled 1-100 and the policewomen with whom we excavated 'Turbo Island' offered us some crime scene police tape which we wound around the table of finds (Fig 111). Danny took charge of what he called the 'video room' in which we showed our short BBC film (appendix 3). Danny showed people into the room and answered questions from the audience. Joe kept a steady stream of teas and coffees going and took pride in maintaining the small kitchen area we set up in a corner.
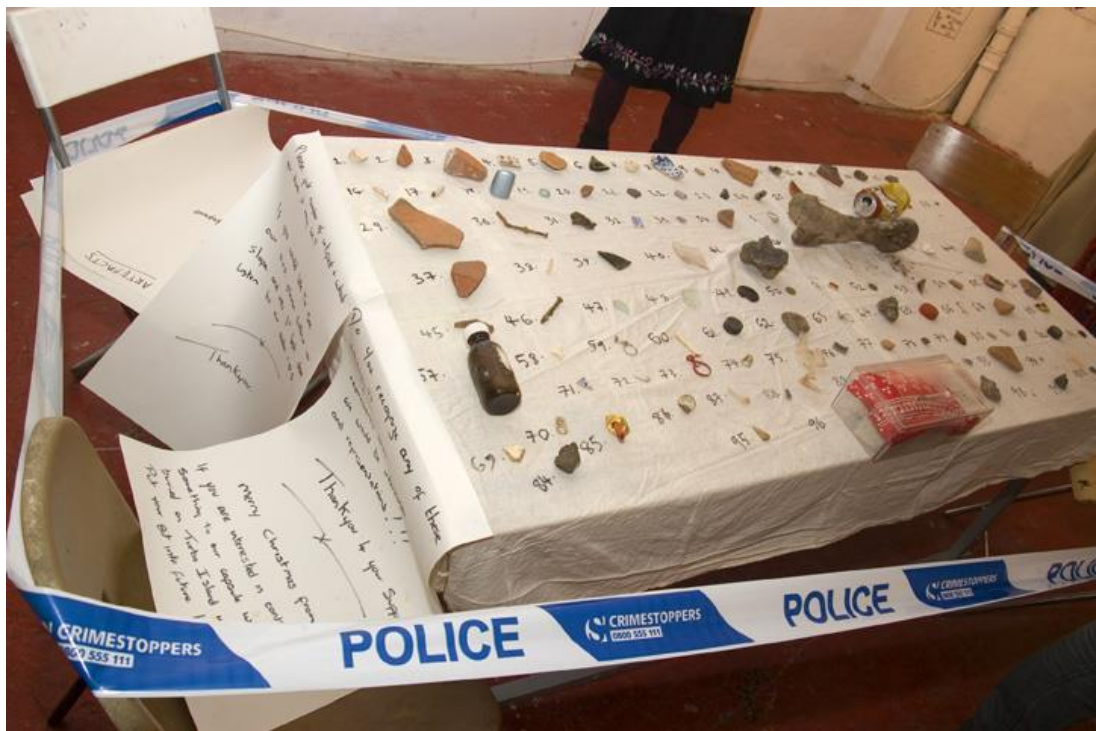


Figure 111 - police tape around table of one hundred objects, Bristol (photo: author's own)

When people visited the exhibition they were encouraged to walk around and stop in the video room to watch the film. Some people entered and read every interpretation board. Others entered, looked around and left. Some people stopped to talk with homeless colleagues. The exhibition was open for four days from 3pm – 9pm and every member of the homeless heritage team turned up on time and ready to work. Comments from local people included that the exhibition challenged their perception and understanding of contemporary homelessness and addiction. Comments from

homeless colleagues included, 'This whole project has given me positivity, focus and hope' (Jane). Danny said, 'I ain't done a days' work since I got chucked out the army for being mental. I've really surpassed myself working on our gaff, every day.'

**'Arcifacts' (York Exhibition, March 2012)**

'Arcifacts', the York based exhibition, was a title coined by the York team through combining the words 'artefacts' and the name of the homeless centre through which we met, 'Arc Light'. As with the Bristol exhibition, the process of producing the interactive archaeological exhibition was collaborative. The team split into smaller groups so that those keen to conduct historical, documentary and map research worked in the public library (Fig 112).



Figure 112 - DC & RN conducting map research at the public library, York (photo: author's own)

Some people took responsibility for sourcing necessary materials and equipment (for example, boards, panels, chairs, paper and pens). Feedback from the Bristol exhibition included that some visitors would have liked an exhibition guide and this

inspired the York team. Exhibition guides were prepared and four finds from the excavation were photographed made up as postcards (Fig 7.46).



Figure 113 - postcards and memorabilia for sale at the 'Arcifacts' exhibition, York (photo: author's own)

Guides, postcards and badges could be bought for a small fee, the object being to raise funds for future archaeological projects or visits to places of archaeological interest. Hooded tops were made that displayed the 'Arcifacts' logo and exhibition dates. These jumpers were a further tangible sign that we operated as a team. The process of organising postcards, badges, hooded tops, panels, chairs and all other necessary equipment involved team members taking responsibility for, for example, making phone calls, obtaining estimates and prices, ordering printing, typing text for interpretation panels. Such skills are both transferable to other parts of colleagues' lives and functioned as opportunities to prove themselves to themselves, elicit feelings of trust, compassion, experience teamwork and a sense of personal achievement, the broader significance of which is unpacked in the next chapter.

The York Conservation Trust (YCT) was contacted to ask whether we might borrow one of their empty historic buildings. The YCT were kind enough to lend us

Wealden Hall, a late fifteenth century timber framed hall at 51 Goodramgate, York (Fig 114). A central ambition had been to occupy a building of historic character, importance and traditional heritage value within the city walls and rather than a marginal space (for example, a squat) on the outskirts of the city. It was important the exhibition was made accessible to passers-by and those whom perhaps would not consider contemporary homelessness a topic of interest.



**Figure 114 - exterior of Wealden Hall venue for 'Arcifacts' exhibition, York (photo: author's own)**

As with the Bristol exhibition, our approach to developing the exhibition was to work collaboratively on a series of interpretation panels which were intended to be read chronologically (for example, beginning with methodology). Each panel explained a different stage of the archaeological process (for example, counter-mapping, identifying the excavation site, the excavation and finds cleaning process). Other panels were thematic, for example, landscape, eating and mental illness (Fig 115).
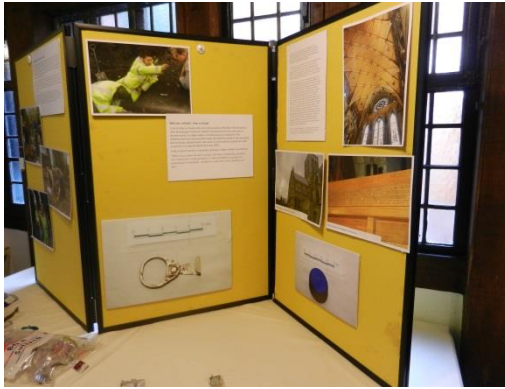
Figure 115 - interpretation panels were thematic, York (photo: author's own)

The back room of Wealden Hall was turned into a mini-cinema using a projector, screen and chairs borrowed from a community project. The film documentary made by PB about the process of engaging York based homeless people in archaeological work was shown regularly (appendix 7). The Arcifacts exhibition provided a counter heritage narrative to historic York as it is more commonly interpreted (Fig 116).



Figure 116 - 'Arcifacts' exhibition, York (photo: author's own)

## 7.6 Discussion

In this chapter I have explored how artefacts feature as contemporary homeless heritage and sought to convey the extent to which reduced access to resources actively shapes how homeless people use materials (for example, the multi-functionality of cardboard). I explained why a thematic narrative structure was necessary to preserve examples of re-use and adaptation of materials. I have argued that to focus on the materiality of contemporary homelessness is to reveal the creative capacities of individual human agents who experience homelessness. An archaeological approach, I have argued, challenges dominant ideological constructions of homelessness as homogenous 'social fact' which have the effect of denying the individual humanity of homeless people (Somerville 2013). I explored ways in which the archaeological process can be therapeutic. For example, working through memories with artefacts to recover identity, self-esteem and potentially improve cognitive function and learning abilities. I have suggested that further work is necessary to reveal the extent to which such approaches might complement the use of pharmaceutical drugs in the treatment of trauma related conditions such as depression and anxiety.

This completes the trio of chapters in which data is presented. Over the past three chapters I have sought to present data as it was encountered throughout fieldwork and draw out central themes, flashpoints and concerns. In the next chapter, I examine how historic attitudes may be shown to haunt contemporary homeless legislation and explore what an archaeological approach has to contribute to our wider understanding of homelessness in twenty-first century Britain.

# Chapter Eight: Policies & Praxis

## 8.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to unpack how this archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness might contribute meaningfully to a deeper understanding of the social status as an ideologically and socially constructed concept and simultaneously a phenomenological and individual experience. I consider memory and identity work in relation to archaeology and contemporary homelessness and analyse how this relates to psychological observations concerning the qualitative benefits of hope and its role in motivating people. I apply perspectives arising from an emerging 'meta-field' that spans humanities-neuroscience (Stafford 2011) which recognises memory as *creative and re-creative practice* and offers rich potential for archaeology to function therapeutically.  I draw on data presented earlier to identify gaps in current homelessness provision and suggest practical steps which could be implemented at relatively little cost which would prioritise the individual humanity of homeless people and offer a more dignified and skill-enhancing route away from 'street life' for those who choose to take it.


Later in this chapter, I review current homelessness policies to show how they retain historic rhetoric. I argue that an historical archaeological view of homelessness reveals the way that 'common rights' (for example, rights to subsistence) have been gradually eroded leaving those who find themselves homeless with little more than the 'right to be dependent'. The section concludes that people reduced to state dependency (well-represented among homeless people) continue to be constructed as pathological 'scroungers', exported to less desirable parts of the country where their plight is less visible and that this procedure of enforced migration is facilitated through current housing and homelessness policy.

## 8.1 Memory & Identity

Data presented earlier show contemporary homeless heritage exists as material traces but also strongly as intangible heritage (for example, memories of people and events). In this section I focus on how memories shape homeless perceptions, function as catalysts for behaviour and may be employed in aiding reconstruction of identities.

Archaeologist Michael Shanks has observed that:

*'...a key component of archaeological thinking is...personal standpoint, in a context of sometimes considerable <u>state</u> investment in heritage and stewardship of the remains of the past'* (Shanks 2012:38-29, emphasis in original).

In the case of homeless heritage 'personal standpoints' often directly contravene those memories of the past preferred by the state. For example, states increasingly do not recognise (even less memorialise) homelessness and associated social deprivation and yet such life-ways radically shape and reshape the environment in which we all exist. As data reveal, state intervention often attempts to make homelessness *less visible* through breaking-up homeless camps and confiscation of homeless peoples' belongings. I argue that archaeological work on intangible forms of 'uncomfortable' heritage such as contemporary homelessness can aid critical analysis of social policy through acting as witness. In this respect, archaeological work can help marginalised groups and isolated individuals reconstruct their identities through redemptive work that seeks to emplace people in locales in which they exist, whether officially or not. The archaeological framework can be a useful tool through which communities and individuals can peacefully reclaim a sense of belonging, express non-conformity and reveal injustice.

**Flashpoints & triggers**

Data presented in Chapter Five show how anniversaries can act as flashpoints that increase the vulnerability of homeless people (for example, leading to increased use of drugs and alcohol in a bid to escape associated emotional pain). Such anniversaries include birthdays, particularly the birthdays of children, Christmas and the days between Christmas and New Year and the anniversaries of the death of friends. Several homeless people with whom I worked in Bristol found the date they were discharged from the armed forces to be troublesome because it symbolised 'where it all went wrong'. This is typified by a comment by Pops (Bristol 2009), 'I got discharged from the army on the 23rd September 1995. I went on the piss because that's what we always did on leave. I suppose I'm still on the piss because I never went back'. Specific anniversaries are indelibly associated with particular people or events and the *memories* of these are often painful and difficult for homeless people to articulate for a number of reasons.

As argued in Chapter Four homeless people are vulnerable through the fact they have nowhere safe to which to retire and there exists, in some quarters, intense pressure from *within* the homeless population to avoid so-called 'mainstream' activities rather remain 'one of us'. I have discussed the threat of and given examples of actual physical violence that characterises much homeless culture and argue that one way to avoid physical harm from attack is for homeless individuals to develop a reputation for being fearsome. For some homeless people, this way of operating acts as a form of self-protection through indicating that they are not someone to be 'messed with'. This phenomenon is well recognised in psychological literature and described as manifest 'nerve' (Anderson 1994:92, cited in Cohen 2001). Individually, homeless people are no more likely to be prone to violence than the rest of the population but there exists pressure of extreme force within the homeless *habitus* to *appear* to be so (Bourdieu 1977). Signs of weakness make a person more vulnerable to physical, mental and emotional bullying and sexual assault. Talking about memories that are painful and depressing with other homeless people or staff at services can make a person appear 'weak' and leave them exposed. With few reliable relationships, as Whistler put it to me, '…drugs and drink are short cuts.

Might not be good ones but they're short cuts to *wiping out your memories*,'
(Whistler 2010, Bristol, pers comms, my emphasis).

Akin to the role played by particular anniversaries is the memory of experiences and
events evoked at particular *places* encountered within the city (for example, the
deaths of friends). Such memory triggering encounters are sometimes materialised in
ways imperceptible to others. I will explain. It is hard for non-homeless people to
imagine why anyone would make themselves 'intentionally homeless'. 'Intentional
homelessness' is a legal definition applying to people who deliberately did or failed
to do something which would have prevented them from becoming homeless. For
example, if a person left accommodation in which they could reasonably have stayed
or failed to pay rent they would be classed 'intentionally homeless'. The reasons why
people who have experienced homelessness leave accommodation once they are
housed are complex and might include loneliness, inability to cope with tenant
responsibilities, institutionalisation or a sense that 'the street' was the more
manageable option (McNaughton 2008). Punk Paul (Bristol) experienced
'intentional homelessness' several times and wrote the following poem whilst living
in temporary accommodation:

*Bedsit Land*

By Punk Paul

In a room

A small square room

Space is cramped, no room to move.

Boxed right in

Feeling low, money tight

I'd like to know,

What's it all about?

Punk Paul told me, *'thing is right, you find yourself homeless…on the street…and you **dream** of having a…place of your own. When you get it, it's shocking… I… couldn't hack being inside…you **remember** that feeling of being the master of your own time* [when living on the street]*, which you're not when you're in temporary* [accommodation] *and the street seems the better option then. So you leave and they class you 'intentionally homeless''* (my emphases)

The role played by memory as a catalyst for behaviour has received scant attention from scholars of homelessness (Hyde 2005). Another example comes from Jane:

*'...where they* [Bristol City Council] *wanted to house me temporarily at Jamaica Street* [ECHG homeless hostel, now St. Mungo's Homeless Hostel on Jamaica Street]*, there was these marks on the wall from where I got beat up by* [someone] *and when I saw them there, it was like…whoah! It all came flooding back…the attack, what he did and it was like….them scuff marks on the wall **made me remember** all this deep stuff…I was back to being scared…it was a horrible feeling. It all came back….all **the memories**…No way was I stopping there. So I turned the place down and now they say I'm 'intentionally homeless' again'*

(Jane, pers comms Bristol 2011, my emphases)

Similarly, memories of individual deaths are evoked at specific sites which now function as navigational points within local homeless cognition (for example, 'The Dead Building' and 'where Josh died' (Bristol). Perhaps more sinister is the way in which the perception exists among colleagues that their own death will likely be painful and lonely. Listening to colleagues discuss memories of death it is its frequency and ubiquitous dark nature that confirms that *imagined* death ceaselessly looms a perennial landscape feature, affecting homeless people in mental and emotional ways and impacting how individuals think of the city and themselves. As discussed in Chapter Five there are few opportunities for homeless people to attend funeral services or mark the passing of friends. Bound in 'homelessness as

pathological failure' ideology is the notion that 'they bring it on themselves' which supports the preposterous suggestion that homeless people experience death differently (less acutely) from other humans.

Archaeologists have studied material remains associated with death and funerary practices since the discipline first emerged and across all cultures and deep time we consistently see materialised the human need to memorialise, commemorate or mark the passing of people who have died (Parker Pearson 2003). The vast majority of homeless colleagues with whom I worked had witnessed death in traumatic and often violent circumstances and associated memories were hyper-visual where colleagues spoke of images 'stuck' in their mind. Manifest in these 'stuck' *memories* is 'survivor's guilt', felt viscerally and often functioning as a trigger for relapse or further descent into self-destructive behaviour. I argue that archaeological work of the type described in this thesis can function to work through difficult memories and could be integrated with specialist bereavement counselling to help reduce episodes of relapse which, from observations made during field work, have a domino effect within the local homeless population.


Homelessness studied at an individual level, such as that afforded by an ethnographic archaeological approach, reveals that memory functions as a strong catalyst for behaviour. Memory practices central to heritage work can help strengthen self-esteem and improve emotional durability. This claim is supported by a recently published edited volume that sought to bring together work on memory and perspective from disciplines as diverse as art and cognitive psychology, anthropology and neuroscience (Stafford 2011). It is suggested that memory and creativity are incontrovertibly linked and that the *environment* in which creative memory practice takes place affects brain activity and its microanatomy (Stafford 2011:10). In short, given supportive and nurturing environments in which to conduct creative memory practices such as those central to heritage work, adult brains are able to develop *health promoting*, rather than destructive, brain responses. I suggest this exciting area warrants further collaborative research to assess the extent to which archaeological memory practices can function therapeutically.

**Memory, identity and self-worth**

Psychologist, Stephen Lyng, has found that:

*'...people who are denied the possibilities of fully realising their species nature through material production and who are separated from their fellow community members that they cannot live as part of a fully developed moral community do not possess the experiential resources needed for a unified definition of self'* (Lyng 1990: 869).

To be defined by a lack of something – home*less* – creates problematic identity challenges. Archaeology as a contemporary material and creative practice involves working back and forth between material culture (landscapes, places and things) and intangible heritage (memories, stories and experiences). Through this work, narratives emerge that inform identities and challenge dominant stereotypes of 'the homeless', a homogenous and dehumanising term. Through locating individual peoples' experiences of homelessness within the 'familiar' city landscape and working with materials that contribute to the creation and recreation of places identified as homeless by homeless people, colleagues are supported in the reconstruction of narratives which tell their personal stories in their own words (Tarlow & West 1999, Graves Brown 2000). Such work enables colleagues to be architects of their heritage and their ownership of it aids the development of self in important ways. The archaeological process facilitates the development of a sense of self-identity through supporting the emergence of a diverse collective identity and in so doing enhances ontological security. Archaeological work of this kind can help to validate life experiences of individual homeless people and function to reiterate their individual agency. Work of this nature is empowering through its potential to critique perspectives on the physical manifestation of social policies, providing evidence of injustices and highlighting gaps in provision and features which could feasibly be improved.

It has been argued that identity is a feature peculiar to modernity (Giddens 1995, Thomas 2004, Tilley 2006, Shanks 2012). As the influence of the state, the church and traditional institutions decline, our identities are increasingly 'achieved' rather than ascribed (Tilley 2006:10). Archaeologists tend to agree that identity has been linked with status, in part symbolised through material culture, for thousands of years, across many cultures. Characteristic of the twenty-first century is aggressive individualism in a climate of hyper-consumerism which increasingly links the construction of self-identity with economic power to buy 'stuff'. Personal qualities freely available to everyone such as honesty, reliability and kindness are less highly valued than they have been at other times. Compassion cannot be sold for profit which makes it less 'valuable' under capitalism than, for example, a particular brand of car. Giddens (1995) and Tilley (2006) for whom ours is an age of 'high-modernity' or a 'post-traditional' age have observed that traditions, once integral to the construction of identity, are no longer a way of life but a choice (see Tilley 2006:11). *Choice* implies personal responsibility because it is possible to make 'wrong' or 'bad' choices. In a climate in which identity relies increasingly on material association those people who find themselves unable to afford choice are at risk of feeling inadequate and excluded and go to extreme lengths to 'achieve' the identity they feel is acceptable. An example might be that cited by Owen Jones in the 2012 preface of his book *Chavs: the demonization of the working class* in which he reveals that he was not surprised that looters targeted shoe shops during the London riots of summer 2011 because the 'right sort' of trainer is a status symbol of huge importance within what he defines as contemporary British working class culture. The 'right sort' of branded sportswear is, Jones argues, made all the more valuable by the neo-liberal destruction of almost all other working class institutions (for example, industries, manufacturing, council housing and trade unions) from which identity was once derived (Jones 2012).

Michael Shanks agrees that the modern identity construction process is fraught with risk and constrained by access to resources:

*'When who you are, including your history, is no longer given by traditional institutions and cultures, but is constantly at risk, if who and what you are is subject to changing expert research, or to loss of employment, the challenge to individuals is to constantly construct and reconstruct their own identity…You might not even be able to create a coherent and secure sense of self-identity, not least because you may not have the resources…'* (Shanks 2012:37)

This is particularly true for homeless people and a problem recognised by social reformer Mary Higgs over a century ago (Higgs & Hayward 1910). For example, with very limited access to bathroom facilities it is difficult to conform daily to an expected level of personal hygiene resulting in the misconception that homeless people are dishevelled and dirty *by choice*. One might argue that homeless people represent one group who continue to have their identities ascribed by institutions as academic, professional, religious and political discourse often inadequately define 'the homeless' in terms of 'risk factors' or 'social fact', where individual humanity is lost (Somerville 2013).

A significant strength to approaching homelessness from an archaeological perspective is that archaeology deals with the 'uncanny', in the Freudian sense (Moshenska 2006). In bringing to light the secret and hidden – phone cards, take-away forks, duvets - the archaeological process renders the unfamiliar (homelessness) familiar in a multitude of ways (Graves-Brown 2000 & 2011). Working collaboratively with homeless people on their heritage – incorporating their biographies, their frailties, bravery and personalities – we facilitate a reflexive 'remembering' of who they are, from where they have come and crucially where they might go next. In piecing fragments into narratives, sharing names for places and expressing how the city is experienced from homeless perspectives, colleagues locate themselves within a larger story of place and this is empowering. In the next section of the chapter, I focus on practical ways in which archaeological work may be shown to offer therapeutic benefits to people who have experienced marginalisation and poor mental and emotional health.

## 8.2 Praxis: practical ways in which archaeological work can have therapeutic benefits

In this section of the chapter I unpack ways in which archaeology as contemporary material practice can have therapeutic benefits. I argue that to add the development of healthy lifestyles and improved inter-personal relationships to the reasons why we do archaeology poses no threat to the serious business of understanding the diverse human past.

**Physical exercise and serotonin**

Archaeological work involves physical exertion (for example, field walking, surveying, excavating). During mapping exercises conducted for this thesis homeless colleagues and I commonly walked for between four and eight hours each day. Excavation involves a different form of physical exercise and all colleagues commented that they felt happier and slept better after being involved in the project. Taking exercise outside during sunlight hours is well-known to enhance the release of endorphins and facilitate absorption of vitamin D which is necessary for the creation of serotonin, a neurotransmitter which regulates feelings of well-being and happiness. Serotonin is also known to regulate memory and learning (Fig 117).

**Archaeology and the team dynamic**

Archaeology is a team activity involving people working together in collaborative ways. The importance and significance of the team building aspect of the methodological approach employed during work conducted for this thesis cannot be over emphasised. Colleagues repeatedly commented that operating within a team which valued individuals and emphasised co-operation made the project appealing and inspired personal responsibility, as demonstrated by comments such as, '[operating as a team] feels like we have a part to play in something fun and serious at the same time', (Dan, York) (Fig 118). I suggest that the team aspect facilitates the opportunity for each person to show and receive compassion and act altruistically towards others which environmental psychologists recognise aids the development of nurturing environments conducive to learning (Gilbert 2010).

**Figure 118 - JH, MD, AD & JJ team photo at University of Leicester conference 2011 (photo: author's own)**

After collectively establishing some important ground rules (for example, acceptable ways to speak with one another) everyone was welcomed as part of the team on equal grounds. This model facilitated the emergence of increased 'social capital' (Field 2003) (Fig 119). For some colleagues this was the first time in many years they had spent time with people who had never had addiction problems or been homeless, which was deemed valuable. Similar outcomes were identified by sociological analysis of the Homeless World Cup, a programme set up in 2003 in order to engage homeless people in playing football[41]. Analysis from the Australian

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[41] http://www.homelessworldcup.org/poznan-2013

programme identified participation in the Homeless World Cup as beneficial particularly in terms of an increased sense of well-being and accruing 'social capital' (Sherry 2010:61). The author indicates that the 'team' model offers more than just access to sport, it offers a sense of 'social connectedness' that is felt by many participants to be *more* important (Sherry 2010:64, my emphasis).



**Figure 119 - widened social circles & increased 'social capital' - NT, DC, RK & AD at The Times Higher Education Awards 2012, London (photo: Kate Giles)**

**Trust**

Trust is a difficult concept for many homeless people (see Chapter Four). Addiction compounds problems due to the condition frequently involving lying, bullying and betrayal. The approach taken for this thesis can be shown to have helped colleagues develop trust and experience *being trusted* themselves in several ways. As colleagues began to take ownership of data and became more confident in directing how it was presented, trust began to develop. As trust developed so too did reliability (for example, homeless colleagues began to turn up for 'work' at pre-arranged times which had not been the case at the start of the project).

Experiencing being trusted is alien to most homeless people and a key component of compassion which is necessary for self-acceptance and well-being. In Richard's words, '…I was made up when you left me with the money [funds raised at the York exhibition]…no-one ever trusts me like that. And I didn't nick any!'

**Self-esteem & Confidence**

Self-esteem was significantly enhanced through involvement in the project. Colleagues attributed this to a) doing something genuine, fun and interesting b) increasing their social circle and making friends c) feeling valued d) feeling that they were contributing to something worthwhile and meaningful (Fig 120). In Jane's words:

*'Doing archaeology with the rest of the team…makes me feel fantastic. I like that we have a laugh and do something…important. Before I was homeless, I was an accountant and I never get to use those skills but helping with the exhibition… showed me that I still have got…talent.'*
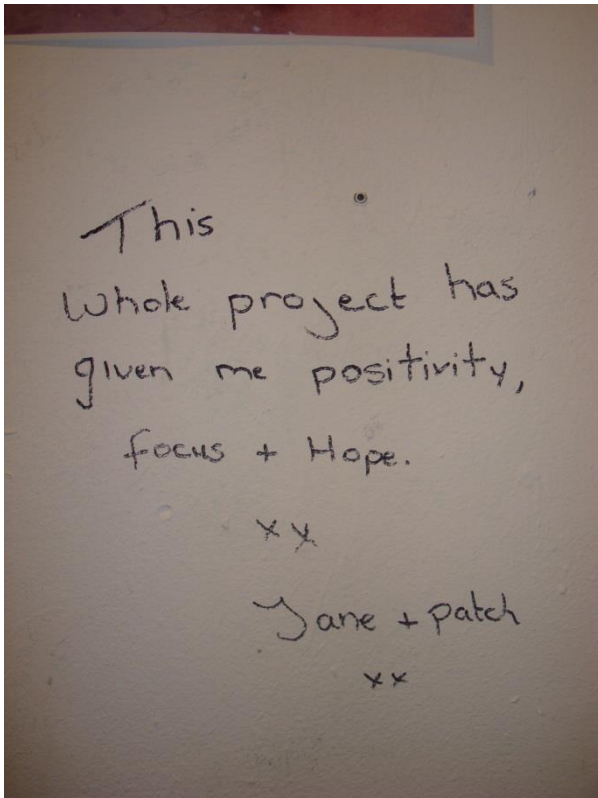
Self-confidence was also enhanced. For example, before becoming involved in excavation Lisa (York) was rarely seen without her hood pulled low over her face. Lisa quickly picked up archaeological methodology, was happy to be photographed smiling and said of her involvement in the project, '…it's exciting when you find something and everyone wants to see' (Fig 121). Dan (York) also reported (Fig 122):

*'Being outside, working with a nice group of people and doing something that's fun but also serious, it definitely made me feel more confident… if there's another excavation… I'll certainly be signing up.'*

**Figure 121 - taking part in the project enhanced confidence in those involved, York (photo: author's own)**



**Figure 122 - DC being interviewed by reporter from the York Press, York (photo: author's own)**

Andrew cited the project directly as having given him confidence in speaking with people in authority:

*'I feel more confident talking with doctors and people in authority now. I used to think they looked down on me but working on this project…going around all them universities, giving talks…I feel more confident talking with my doctors and key workers now and that's really helpful.'*

**Communication**

Having established clear communication channels for airing concerns or worries interpersonal skills were enhanced in all those involved in the project. For example, people were conscious of working as part of a team.  Each exhibition was hosted by the team offering colleagues the opportunity to speak face to face with members of the public (including police, probation officers, a magistrate and senior council workers). Such social mingling enhanced compassion and understanding in all directions (for example, homeless people revealed valid individual perspectives and professional visitors met homeless people as individuals in a positive context).

Written and technological communication skills were also enhanced. Colleagues were facilitated to use computers and the Internet whilst conducting finds processing and historical research (Fig 123). Several colleagues made professional telephone calls during the production of exhibitions (for example, to research printing costs). Colleagues co-presented findings through contributing to written articles and co-presenting lectures to diverse audiences (Fig 124). Skills described here such as communication, technological and inter-personal skills improved employability in everyone involved. This claim is supported by the fact that four colleagues have since gone on to find full or part time paid employment and several more have begun volunteer work at community projects, including archaeological and horticultural projects.

**Figure 123 - MK & DC undertaking data analysis & compiling spread sheets, York (photo author's own)**

Academic and professional heritage practitioners are increasingly required to provide measurable evidence of the impact of their work. I argue that to include improved participant health, well-being and social integration to the reasons we undertake archaeological work does not detract from our study of the past. On the contrary, identifying ways in which heritage work can be socially useful strengthens arguments for conducting archaeology and widening accessibility to heritage work. Recognising the past as a palimpsest of multiple perspectives enables increased groups to identify with and value the past as an important resource.

Historical narratives enable better understanding of the present and facilitate conceptions of 'the future', a concept noticeably absent from contemporary homeless perspectives. I contend that working archaeologically with homeless people can facilitate the creation of positive conceptions of 'the future' through generating a sense of hopefulness and personal achievement. Hope is a *forward looking* emotion and neurological response to sensory (in this case archaeological) input. Hope is distinct from optimism in the sense that hope may be understood to involve the creation of pathways and thoughts towards an *intended goal* whereas optimism is a less critical feeling that things will be generally satisfactory (Snyder1994:19, see also

Snyder et al 1991 & Tong et al 2010). Heritage work offers people the opportunity to consider their own experiences and perspectives in wider historical context and facilitates consideration of the future through its focus on chronology and change. For example, Jane commented (on the wall of the Bristol exhibition), 'this whole project has given me positivity, focus and *hope*' (see Fig 120). Asked what he thought about undertaking archaeological fieldwork Punk Paul (Bristol) said, '…the week we spent together was power, truth and *hope*…it was good to think we might actually change the world we live in' (Kiddey & Schofield 2011:21). York colleague, Richard, said, 'I'm really *looking forward* to cleaning the clay pipe because they was the things I actually dug up…I *can't wait* to show the stuff off, in the shop [exhibition]'. In this short sentence, Richard made a connection between his own action and *personal achievement* in the recent past and the future, which was conceived of as something *exciting*.

In this section of the chapter I have drawn on data to show how collaborative heritage work can have demonstrable therapeutic effects, enhancing physical and emotional well-being and contributing to the development of transferable life skills (for example, communication skills). In the next section, I identify what an archaeological view of homelessness might contribute to policy.

## 8.3 Current homeless policy: an archaeological contribution

It has been argued that homelessness is both rationalised and defined by moral and legal discourse (Neale 1997). For this reason, it is necessary to interpret homelessness:

*'...in relation to the prevailing politics and welfare ideologies of the day, because this influences the level of provision available from the welfare state and greatly impact the causes of homelessness. Yet, this approach to understanding the causes of homelessness should also be viewed within the wider context, that being that homelessness is a housing problem, but also one that also has implications for individuals' wellbeing…'* (Anderson & Christian 2003:107)

An advantage to working with homeless people archaeologically is that the approach prioritises materiality offering a more practical picture of how homelessness policies impact individual homeless people in tangible ways. For this reason, I argue that archaeology might usefully contribute to existing literature on homelessness which stems, in the main, from non-material focussed disciplines (for example, social policy and psychology). Archaeologically sourced data reveal that practical actions could be taken to positively complement current efforts made to engage those homeless people who want rehabilitation from street life.

**Safe and Supportive Environment**

In order to begin working meaningfully with homeless people a *safe and supportive environment* must first be created. As data in Chapter Seven (section 7.4) reveal the intangible elements of a safe social environment are paramount (for example, compassion and trust) but a physical environment in which intangible elements may be created – *a place* – is of course equally necessary. It was necessary for me to find places at which I was able to work with homeless colleagues in Bristol because none of the official homeless places in the city permitted me to use their premises to work with all homeless people who wished to participate in the heritage project (for example, I was refused space in which to work with homeless people at the £1.6m tax-payer funded Compass Centre which promised to offer Bristol's homeless people 'health and training services'[42]). By contrast, Arc Light homeless centre in York should be commended for the range of facilities they offer residents and those interested in working with Arc Light residents but the problem remains that not all homeless people in York are fortunate to be residents of Arc Light. Therefore, an initial practical step towards rehabilitating those homeless people who want help would be the development of a *physical environment* in which the necessary *supportive social environment* may be nurtured and at which everyone who wished to participate was made welcome.

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[42]http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/bristol/7425324.stm

Central to the development of the safe and supportive environment must be *collaboratively developed 'house rules'* (or code of conduct) to which everyone agrees to abide. Such 'house rules' might include how everyone can expect to be treated and spoken to. In facilitating those who desire such to *take personal and group responsibility for the environment*, ownership and a sense of belongingness is enhanced. Recent neuroscience work has found that safe and supportive environments physically aid learning and help to *facilitate an adapted response* to stress (McEwan 2012) - or positively affect behaviour. Similarly, a dislike of or inability to engage with paperwork can be regarded a characteristic of homelessness with some historic legacy and universality (Rauty 1998, Venkatesh 2009). Data presented reveal the degree to which 'word of mouth' proves to be a more effective way to communicate events and activities than, for example, the use of posters or 'sign-up' forms common to current best practice at homeless services. 'Word of mouth' as a communication strategy should be considered as valuable and necessary as written advertisements for events, activities or clubs aimed at engaging homeless people. I contend that informality is a characteristic commonly familiar to homeless people and that *informality as a strategic approach* towards engaging homeless people might help people who have experienced homelessness feel 'at home', aid attendance and retention of numbers. This need not impinge upon important health and safety considerations rather I advocate that the *style* of the safe and supportive environment and approach taken should be broadly informal (for example, with no divisive counters behind which 'staff work' for the 'service user'). If we want to be inclusive of people marginalised from 'mainstream' activities we must be flexible and tolerant of different models of working and recognise that engendering trust and compassion is necessary groundwork which must take place before any meaningful recovery can be self-realised (Lacan 1977).

Rather than setting out activity spaces as classrooms, familiar to school environments of which many homeless people had negative experiences, work spaces should be egalitarian and tolerant of non-conformity. For example, many homeless people have grown accustomed to wearing their outside clothes (for

example, heavy jackets) all the time out of necessity and sitting on the floor, cross-legged, with little or no eye-contact. To many homeless people, sitting upright on a chair at a desk is as strange an experience as it might be for non-homeless people to sit on a pavement for six hours. People feeling uncomfortable and socially awkward rarely excel at listening, learning or contributing positively and those places that make us feel 'out of place' are unlikely to be places to which we return willingly or regularly. Clearly, in 'western', British middle-class *habitus*, sitting cross-legged on the floor may be perceived to be 'unprofessional' or 'inappropriate' but in context it is non-threatening and unproblematic behaviour which should go unchallenged as something that may be overcome at a later date, for the sake of the wider aim. To suggest that informal environments help realise positive outcomes (for example, the development of trusting and productive relationships with vulnerable people from which sustained rehabilitation may take place) is not to pander to liberalism but to apply a well-established decolonised anthropological approach to working with a particular cultural group (Smith & Wobst 2005).

**Food: an opportunity**

Data reveal that all homeless people with whom I worked regularly attend 'food places' (for example, church cafes and soup runs). I suggest that food might be approached using the methodology developed for this thesis. Food represents an opportunity for people to learn life skills *coincidentally* which has been shown to be more effective than commanding people to learn the same skills (for example, computer literacy classes). I contend that learning skills as a *by-product* of a social project renders the need for skills more apparent to those involved and helps motivate people to *want to learn* without feeling patronised. Inherent to 'food' are opportunities to replicate many of the successful skill development aspects of this project – food as heritage. Taking food as a broad theme it is possible to incorporate horticultural skills (for example, through a working allotment). Food represents an opportunity to teach budgeting and financial skills (for example, shopping and preparing healthy meals from inexpensive ingredients). Cooking and the preparation of food, like archaeology, involve engagement in a 'contemporary material practice' (for example, stocking and maintaining a kitchen, taking different culinary

approaches). Compassion may also be experienced through cooking and eating together and in taking turns to clear away and wash up. Regional, national and international identities may be approached through food (for example, food as memory, exploring different cultures through food). A sense of self-worth and personal achievement may be experienced through preparing food for others. Recent NHS work has shown that combining talking therapy with cooking can be beneficial to people dealing with mental health problems related to loss and trauma[43].

**Support rather than pharmaceuticals**

All homeless people with whom I worked were in receipt of pharmaceutical drugs for conditions associated with homelessness (for example, anxiety and depression). Archaeological data recorded for this thesis show that drugs most commonly found at homeless sites include benzodiazepines and noradrenergic and specific seratonergic antidepressants (also known as NaSSA). These drugs can have negative side effects on cognition such as impairment to visual-spatial ability, speed of processing and verbal learning (Stewart 2005). Other side effects can include addiction, mood-swings, increased aggression, suicidal tendencies, blurred vision, vivid dreams or insomnia, weight gain or loss of appetite, confusion, dizziness and restlessness. Such side effects are often conflated with stereotypical *ideologically based* constructions of the pathology of homeless people, a problem recognised by clinicians in the British Medical Journal (Timms & Balàzs 1997). Timms & Balàzs advocate 'low-level support' for homeless people suffering anxiety rather than benzodiazepines which they acknowledge can have negative effects especially if ingested with alcohol or other illegal drugs; benzodiazepines also have a tempting 'street value' (Timms & Balàzs 1997:537).

I suggest that aspects of heritage work can function as 'low-level support' and help reduce the need for pharmaceutical drugs. Heritage work of the kind presented in this

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[43] http://www.eastlondon.nhs.uk/News-Events/Press-Releases/2013/Vietnamese-Mental-Health-Food-Project-Recipe-of-Life.pdf

thesis helps people involved feel valued as individuals, widens social circles, promotes physical exercise and enhances the development of healthy interests and behaviours. While I do not suggest there is no place at all for pharmaceutical drugs such as benzodiazepines, I advocate that a combination of positive attributes described above can help reduce anxiety and depression without the need for pharmaceutical drugs in many people to whom they are currently prescribed. Future studies might seek to gather quantitative data on the successfulness of non-pharmaceutical heritage based approaches to tackling anxiety, depression, loneliness and low self-esteem among homeless people and other groups of people who commonly suffer these conditions (for example, elderly people, long-term unemployed and single parents). Benefits to would also include increased independence and happiness in those involved, reduced instances of multiple addictions and negative side effects, a reduced black-market economy in pharmaceutical drugs and reduced costs for the National Health System.

**24/7 free access to public lavatories**

In Bristol and York there is a shortage of public loos, those that exist are often locked and inaccessible and this problem is worsening. According to figures sourced by the British Toilet Association between 2010/11 – 2012/13 government expenditure on public loos fell by 13% (or £10.4 million)[44]. Fieldwork data reveal that homeless people who are without access to loos 'choose' to defecate in bushes. For example, latrine areas were observed at the 'Camp of Thieves' and 'The Dungeon' (Bristol) and bushes close to the 'Monkgate Bush' (York). I argue that free access to public loos twenty-four hours a day seven days a week would benefit everyone. Aside from hygiene and sanitation considerations, having to resort to defecating and urinating in public is degrading and damaging to a person's self-esteem and contributes to negative stereotyping of homeless people. To recover from the trauma of homelessness, addiction or both a person must have confidence that their life is worth recovering and this requires dignity. Being forced to find places to

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[44] http://opinion.publicfinance.co.uk/2013/08/lifting-the-lid-on-a-public-inconvenience/

go to the loo in public and being denied proper access to hot water and soap serves only to demean homeless people and actively counters existing support approaches.

**Access to free drinking water**

Data reveal a total absence of evidence for drinking water at homeless sites in Bristol and York (see Chapter Seven, section 7.1c). Access to free drinking water is increasingly hard to find in British cities generally. The reinstatement of now defunct historic water fountains would enhance the likelihood that people would drink water when thirsty. Currently, a can of strong cider or beer is cheaper per litre than bottled water and colleagues with whom I worked had all experienced drinking alcohol when they were thirsty, '…sometimes you drink beer but really, you're just thirsty,' as Punk Paul put it.

**Extra outreach during wet weather**

According to data gathered for this thesis cold weather is more manageable for homeless people than wet weather (see Chapter Five, section 5.3a). Sites identified by colleagues as 'good' places to be homeless reveal that their capacity to enable a person to remain dry is prioritised over warmth, arguably because once a person's clothes are damp they will feel the cold more acutely regardless. Jacko commented that the homeless agencies (York) exercise extra caution when there is snow on the ground but that the same concern is not shown during wet weather. I argue this is partly to do with public perception and the likelihood that homelessness appears more *visibly* inhumane and Dickensian during snow. Data suggest outreach measures during times of heavy rain are of equal necessity.

In this section of the chapter I have drawn on data presented earlier to reveal how an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness might contribute to current homelessness literature. I have argued that efforts to engage homeless people should begin with the creation of an environment that is perceived by homeless people to be welcoming and non-judgmental. I have suggested that informal approaches may be considered strategic and consistent with decolonised anthropological approaches

which seek to recognise difference and support the development of a sense of ownership which in turn enhances the development of personal responsibility and compassionate positive behaviour. I suggested methodologies employed during this project are transferable and could be utilised in a similarly structured project based around food.

In the next section of this chapter I return homelessness policy and discourse (see also Chapter Three). I reveal how pre-welfare state attitudes and ideological assumptions may be seen to haunt contemporary legislation which have direct agency on homeless people and contribute actively to the production of the wider social environment.

## 8.4 Homeless policies past and present: from 'vagrants' to 'scroungers'

In this section of the chapter I reveal how historic attitudes to poverty, vagrancy and homelessness are retained in current policy. I track the continued upward trend to construct poverty and transience as criminality and discuss the resonant concept of 'deserving and undeserving' and its material consequences.

### 8.4a Constructing transience as criminality

In Chapter Three I showed how Vagrancy Acts of the fourteenth century sought to curb mobility among labourers and argued that one function of this was to force labourers to work for a rate of pay that suited landowners (Chambliss 1964). Vagrancy statutes remained little changed until the sixteenth century when England underwent dramatic physical change through piecemeal enclosure and the emergence of enabled capitalist industries. While enclosure served to restrict access to natural resources such as woodland and pasture from which everyone was granted the 'common right' to eke a subsistence living, peacetime unemployment, a series of poor harvests, high inflation and mass-migration combined to increase pressure on available resources and swell the number of poor people who 'wandered abroad' in

search of a living. The 1530 vagrancy statute constructed transient lifestyles as 'vagrancy' and conflated such directly with criminality (Beier 1985). A Marxist approach contends that the success of newly emerging commercial enterprises (for example, ship building, mining and cloth-making) depended upon the availability of surplus itinerant labour and by 1571 anyone found not enrolled in some 'honest work' could be taken for a vagabond and charged with vagrancy (Vagrancy Act 1571, amendment). Whether or not a person's way of life was considered 'honest work' was subject to the opinion of those (wealthy men) in powerful positions (for example, local magistrates and church-wardens). People whose way of life was felt to be 'crafty' or subversive under the new economic system, those whose livelihoods were not felt to serve the interests of the self-appointed new establishment were branded vagrant, a 'felon', and treated accordingly. I argue that the social status of landlessness was *constructed* as a criminal offence through legal discourse and public policy (Foucault 1991, Beier 1985). This resonates with policies enacted in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in several ways. The post-war National Assistance Act 1948, intended to 'repeal the Poor Laws', defines homelessness as 'persons without a *settled* way of living' (National Assistance Board, 1966, my emphasis) and equates 'homelessness' with *moral failure*, a theme revived aggressively in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 was brought in to amend and strengthen criminal law. Contemporary critics of the Act opposed its introduction for reasons including that it increased police powers to stop and search people at random and reduced peoples' right to silence by allowing inference to be drawn from an accused person's decision to say nothing. Section 80 of the Act is most relevant to this thesis. It repealed the duty on local councils to provide sites for traveller and gypsy communities whilst simultaneously withdrawing grants for the provision of such sites. The effect was that travelling lifestyles were criminalised in Britain. With no legal sites at which travelling communities could live together the *way of life* was made illegal. The long-term destructive effect of this is evidenced in part by the experience of several homeless colleagues with whom I worked who initially became homeless after their homes – three buses, a lorry and a wagon and horse –

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were removed or impounded by police and council authorities. On a wider scale, families were broken up, friends and community ties were lost and networks which had functioned to provide ontological security, a central aspect of 'home' as we saw in Chapter Two, destroyed. Skills related to employment and cultural identity (for example, horsemanship, fairground work, scrap-metal dealing, music festival and circus work) became fractured, lost or further criminalised, rendering swathes of travellers unemployed, disenfranchised and homeless.

The recent decision to criminalise squatting for residential purposes in England and Wales came into force under Section 144 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) on 1st September 2012[45], a further example of the increased criminalisation of transient lifestyles. Squatting for residential purposes was, to many homeless people, a legal and far cheaper alternative to social or private rented sector (PRS) housing; it preserved autonomy of space and had been a last remaining vestige of 'common rights to subsistence'. From the late 1970s forward squatting was politically constructed as an alternative 'choice' rather than a proactive response to the unquestionable housing shortage. A report[46] on 'hidden homelessness', that is, homelessness that is less visible than sleeping rough and escapes official statistics (for example, over-crowding, 'sofa-surfing' and squatting) published by Crisis in May 2011 shows that ten out of twenty six people interviewed had regularly squatted, revealing that squatting had *not* been a form of marginal tenure and strongly indicating that statutory homelessness *would rise* if squatting was made illegal. Statutory homelessness *has* since risen and those involved have been increasingly criminalised since squatting was made illegal in September 2012. It is (conveniently) impossible to accurately state how many people have been made homeless as a direct result of squatting being made illegal because 91% of local councils kept no record of whether or not people presenting homeless had previously relied on squatted properties[47].

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[45] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/section/144/enacted

[46] http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HiddenTruthAboutHomelessness_web.pdf

[47] http://www.squashcampaign.org/docs/SQUASH-Campaign-Case-Against-Section-144.pdf

## 8.4b Fixing poverty to place

The Poor Relief Act 1601 effectively 'fixed' poverty to a geographic location through establishing as law that each parish was responsible for poor people from that parish. Although the Elizabethan Poor Laws were composed as national legislation they were interpreted at a regional level, leading to local variation in application. Some parishes opted to pay poor relief in the form of food, clothing or apprenticeship (outdoor relief) where others set poor people to work in parish 'poorhouses' (indoor relief). As news spread of which parishes were the most generous people migrated in search of better deals. This led to the Poor Relief Act 1662 (also referred to as the 1662 Settlement Act) which tightened rules surrounding who could claim poor relief and *from where*. Under the 1662 Act, only those people who could prove 'settlement' (connection to a parish through birth, marriage or apprenticeship) were eligible for poor relief. Those poor people found to be from another parish were sent back or put to work. Several aspects of the Elizabethan Poor Laws haunt current homeless legislation.

The first familiar aspect is that national homelessness legislation is interpreted at a local level leading to regional variation in application. As was the case historically, word spreads among contemporary homeless people that certain towns and cities are 'better' places to be homeless, leading some homeless people to migrate (for example, of those I worked with in Bristol, the majority had migrated to Bristol from predominantly the ex-industrial north of England, Scotland, South Wales, Hungary and Poland, believing Bristol to be a 'better' city in which to be homeless than from where they had come). Migration is particularly high among single homeless men who are more likely to be deemed not in 'priority need', not vulnerable and for whom the chance of securing permanent housing in the current climate is extremely rare.

The second familiar feature is the notion of 'passing back' those people who require 'assistance' to the parish (local authority) from which they came. Section 18.8 of the

*Homeless Code of Guidance for Local Authorities*[48] states that where a person fits statutory homelessness eligibility criteria they might be referred to *another housing authority, where a local connection exists*. A local connection might include that the homeless person has been 'normally resident' or employed, has family or any other 'special circumstance' linking them to a particular place (for example, if the homeless person or a member of their immediate household requires specific medical treatment).

It is with some irony it now emerges that housing benefit claimants, many of whom are homeless, are being exported to less desirable parts of the country where rent is cheaper. Fieldwork for this thesis encountered two early examples of this (see also Chapter Five). Two York based colleagues, Ray and Richard, were single homeless men who were deemed not in 'priority need'. Both men were temporarily housed at Arc Light homeless centre until offers of longer term social housing could be made. After several months, Ray was offered a flat in Coventry and Richard, a flat in Grimsby. Both men had clear 'local connections' to York having been 'normally resident' in the city, having family members living nearby and recent employment records. Both colleagues were told that there was a lack of accommodation deemed 'suitable for statutorily homeless people' in York but that accommodation could be found for them in Coventry and Grimsby. Ray declined the flat in Coventry having tried it for two weeks and found, '…the whole block [of flats] was junkies and prostitutes and people shouting…I'm homeless but I'm not on drugs and, to be honest with you, it was scary.' Because he declined the offer of accommodation Ray was categorised as 'intentionally homeless' and went back to the bottom of the housing register on his return to York. Richard declined the offer of a flat in Grimsby on the grounds his family lived on the outskirts of York. Data reveal that two homeless people faced exportation from York *on the basis of their social status*, itself subjectively ascribed by punitive legal and moral discourse.

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[48] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7841/152056.pdf

Such discourse and policy bear no concern for the ontological security of the people involved, an aspect of 'home' recognised vital by even right-leaning housing scholars (Saunders 1989). The political construction of benefit claimants, many of whom are homeless, as 'scroungers' aids the thinly veiled forced migration of poor people to parts of the country where education and employment opportunities are fewest. Children involved are consigned to dramatically reduced life chances on account of the social 'crime' of their parents and well-known long-term effects of deprivation caused by lack of employment, lack of education and lack of opportunities will be rendered conveniently less visible to those people deemed 'deserving' of a home in the city. The socio-spatial implications of this trend are extremely gloomy, suggestive of ghettoization and social divisions that will take generations to recover. Indeed, a current five-year study on the impacts on homelessness of economic and policy developments in England indicates that this process will become more familiar as the real effects of cuts to welfare budgets start to be felt (Fitzpatrick et al 2012)[49].


## 8.4c Vagrancy Act 1824 and its twenty-first century application

As England's industrial cities sprawled throughout the eighteenth century and population swelled through increased birth rates and immigration the Elizabethan Poor Laws became unworkable. Poor people travelled in search of work in numbers that rendered the old 'pass' system, whereby people were eligible for poor relief in their 'settled' parish, inadequate. This, coupled with migration from Ireland and Scotland and the return of wounded soldiers and sailors from the Napoleonic wars, left many no choice but to beg on the street '…by the Exposure of Wounds or Deformities to obtain or gather Alms…'[50] The Vagrancy Act 1824 was brought into force by way of countering these *early nineteenth century* 'social problems'. The aim of the Act was the '*punishment* of idle and disorderly persons and rogues and vagabonds' (my emphasis) and was condemned for its severity and 'catch all'

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[49] http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HomelessnessMonitor_England_2012_WEB.pdf

[50] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1824/83/pdfs/ukpga_18240083_en.pdf

approach even by contemporaries. Under the Section 3 of the Act, begging for subsistence was made illegal:

*'...every Person wandering abroad, or placing himself or herself in any public Place, Street, Highway, Court, or Passage, to beg or gather Alms, or causing or procuring or encouraging any Child or Children so to do, shall be deemed an idle and disorderly Person...'*[51]

Sleeping outside and having no 'good account' of oneself was also made illegal (Section 4):

*'...every Person wandering abroad and lodging in any Barn or Outhouse, or in any deserted or unoccupied Building, or in the open Air, or under a Tent, or in any Cart or Waggon, not having any visible Means of Subsistence, and not giving a good Account of himself or herself...'*[52]

The Vagrancy Act 1824 made it illegal to be homeless in Britain and it remains in force, partially amended, to the present day.

Homeless charities have campaigned for the repeal of Sections 3 and 4 of the 1824 Act for over a decade[53] expressing concern that to criminalise vulnerable homeless people for begging and sleeping rough does little to advance any positive change to their circumstance. Further criticisms include that to criminalise sleeping rough and begging without providing alternatives (for example, direct access accommodation

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[51] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1824/83/pdfs/ukpga_18240083_en.pdf

[52] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1824/83/pdfs/ukpga_18240083_en.pdf

[53] http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/39239/Response-DEFRA_Vagrancy_Act.pdf

and rehabilitation support services) is pointless and draconian. People whose behaviour is aggressive or threatening may be charged currently under the Public Order Act 1995 which makes the retention of Sections 3 and 4 of the 1824 Act unwarranted.

Furthermore, the historic language in which the 1824 Act is written (and more often recited) causes unnecessary obfuscation as I will now illustrate. Part of my preparation for counter mapping Bristol with homeless people involved understanding how those officially tasked with dealing with homelessness viewed and quantified the problem (see Chapter Four, section 4.2). 'Streetwise' is a partnership between Bristol City Council and the local police, the aim of which is to '…tackle street-based anti-social behaviour including begging, street-drinking and those rough sleepers whose behaviour has become problematic…'[54] I joined 'Streetwise' for their walk around Bristol on the evening of the 12th March 2011. I met John Atkinson (Bristol City Council Streetwise Co-Ordinator) and plain-clothed PC David Jackson at the police station (New Bridewell) and we set off on what they called 'walkabout'. During the walk I witnessed PC Jackson cite s.3 of the Vagrancy Act 1824 verbatim three times as he cautioned homeless people. Two people were reminded that begging is illegal and one man was informed that it was suspected that he was regularly sleeping in a tent close to the Jet petrol station on Coronation Road, Bristol and that this was also illegal under the Vagrancy Act 1824. One person informally cautioned that evening was a Bristol colleague who complained when I saw him a few days later:

*'They* [the police] *are always busting me for begging for arms. I ain't never begged for a gun in my life! I just ask for money!'*

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http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council_and_democracy/Our%20City%2025%20January%202012.pdf

My colleague clearly misunderstood the word 'alms'.

The 1824 Vagrancy Act has been in revived use since the early 1990s when homelessness became increasingly *visible* in London and other major cities. Between 2009 and 2013 there have been 242 charges made under the 1824 Vagrancy Act in Bristol and 165 charges made in York[55]. Charges include: begging in a public place, lodging in a barn, outhouse, unoccupied building or open air, vagrant – being found on enclosed premises and gathering alms or charitable donations under false pretence. Information supplied by the North Yorkshire police (made available through a Freedom of Information request) reminded that these are the number of *charges*, not the number of *people* charged, illustrating that some people are repeatedly charged for these 'offences' despite the lack of alternatives. This throws doubt on the efficacy of the system of arresting and re-arresting vulnerable people and represents a costly bill for the tax-payer (including police and court time).

## 8.4d Enduring concept of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor

The National Assistance Act 1948 was intended to repeal the Poor Laws and provide assistance for those people excluded under the National Insurance Act 1946 (for example, homeless and disabled people, unmarried mothers). The 1948 Act imposed a duty on councils to provide '…temporary accommodation for persons who are in urgent need thereof…'[56] (Part 3, s.21). In reality the introduction of the 1948 Act made little difference to homeless people for several reasons. Firstly, Britain was on its knees post-war and local councils had no option but to continue to house homeless families in pre-welfare state institutional buildings such as workhouses where residents continued to suffer overcrowding and insufficient facilities. Secondly, the introduction of the 1948 Act did little to combat the huge *social stigma* that had previously surrounded the workhouse. Thirdly, despite the 'rediscovery of

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[55] These figures came from the Avon & Somerset police and the North Yorkshire police respectively following two Freedom of Information requests made.

[56] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1948/29/pdfs/ukpga_19480029_en.pdf

poverty' (Lowe 2005: 148) circa 1950s/1960s, homeless families continued to be categorised according to subjective and ideologically loaded criteria which were developed from the Poor Laws so that 'the spirit of those laws continued' (Somerville 1994:163).

Under Part 3 legislation of the National Assistance Act 1948 (see above) homeless families were either rejected as 'ineligible' and 'removed' as had been the case with those 'undeserving' or 'casual poor' prior to the 1948 National Assistance Act (Somerville 1994: 163) or they were found to be in 'urgent need' which was defined as homelessness 'resulting from unforeseen circumstances' into which category bomb damage fell. Cities which had been strategically important during the war and which had received heavy bombing (for example, Plymouth, Coventry and London) struggled to find homes for many thousands of homeless families to whom they owed duty. In attempting to manage the situation, the new Welfare Department categorised homeless families according to two groups: those families of wage-earning men considered *victims* of the lack of available housing and *'problem'* families thought to have 'disordered' domestic lives (Noble 2009). Classification at this stage '…determined both the *quality* of temporary accommodation offered and the *likelihood of permanent housing*' (Noble 2009:123 – my emphases).

Families classified as 'victims' were thought suitable tenants for permanent housing and passed from Welfare to the Housing Department for permanent housing as soon as it became available. Families categorised as 'problem' families were not allowed to move through the housing allocation system precisely because they had been classified dysfunctional! Instead, they remained in overcrowded workhouses where they became subjects in the 'study' of problem families (Noble 2009). Mothers and children were housed at the institution and fathers were directed to find private rented accommodation or make use of hostels. Families were considered 'suitable' to be granted permanent authority housing only when *women* demonstrated certain domestic abilities and skills. This is demonstrated by the contents of a report prepared on a family who had received 'training' having previously been categorised a 'problem' family:

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*'Today I visited Mrs B in her flat in Homerton. The place was spotlessly clean and at 3.45pm the table was already laid for the two children returning home from school, there was a nice clean cloth on the table, cut bread and butter, jam and home-made cakes, made from a recipe she was given when attending one of our cookery classes. They have some furniture on hire purchase at 16s. a week, curtains at all the windows. At the moment, they are without floor covering but the boards were well scrubbed and mats put down, they are buying lino this week for one room and will do so each week until all the floors are covered, they have lino in the hall. The beds were new and had ample bedding on them…the flat was wholesome and fresh….there was a bright fire burning. I was very satisfied with all I saw'* (quoted in Noble 2009: 130)

Despite the many great professional accomplishments of women during the war 'modern' homeless legislation remained patriarchal and paternalistic, equating the nuclear family formation (male breadwinner/female at home) with 'decency' and delivering corrective 'training' to those whose homes were subjectively considered to be 'not up to scratch'. Failure to comply resulted in a family being refused permanent social housing. Furthermore, a level of disposable income was necessary for the 'transformation' of so-called 'problem' families to take place. Curtains, bed linen and lino were obtained for a price and 'respectability' relied on the purchase of such items. Home-made cakes, pressed tablecloths and cookery classes required that (women's) time was spent attending to those things (Noble 2009:130). Such significant ideological and gendered ghosts can be traced through subsequent homeless legislation and political dialogue. For example, 'hard working *families*' are praised by contemporary politicians and heterosexual marriage is incentivised through the tax system while simultaneously un/underemployed people and single mothers are treated as pariahs as though 'if only they could be bothered' there are

enough jobs for all unemployed people to find work[57] and being a single mother in receipt of state benefits represents a charmed life. For a necessarily condensed overview of significant post-war policies and publications I refer the reader back to the table first presented in Chapter Three (see appendix 1). I now turn to the ancient concept of deserving and undeserving poor and its current active incarnations.

A landmark change to housing policy came in the form of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977[58] which legally defined homelessness and included some 'non-traditional' households among those legally entitled to permanent social housing. There is not room here to enter a full discussion of events and attitudes that led to the 1977 Act (see Somerville 1994, Neale 1997, Pleace & Quilgars 2003) and some debate continues over its historiography (Crowson 2012). However, it is useful to reiterate that the ideological debate surrounding homelessness just prior to the 1977 Act swung between two discourses. The first characterised homelessness as a *structural* problem caused by lack of housing and therefore an issue that required state intervention. Opposing this view was that homelessness arose due to the pathological failure of the individual to make 'good' choices - an *individual* problem of no concern to the state. In the words of one Tory MP, speaking on behalf of the Association of District Councils in February 1977, homeless people were 'queue jumpers, rent dodgers, scroungers and scrimshankers'[59] (quoted in Crowson 2012:4). Capitalist ideology insisted that 'owning one's home is a basic and *natural* desire'[60] (my emphasis). Soon after, 1980s housing policies emphasised market solutions to housing while employment policy simultaneously became increasingly tolerant of high long-term unemployment (Glynn 1999:189). Parallels with the contemporary

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[57] TUC employment trends update (January 2012) shows how employment figures are manipulated. Employment has risen but 44% of people in part-time work would rather have full time work. Unemployment among women is at its highest rate since 1987 http://vimeo.com/35365823

[58] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1977/48/pdfs/ukpga_19770048_en.pdf

[59] From Hansard House of Commons debates (homelessness) 18th February 1977, vol 926, col 921

[60] 'Housing Policy: A Consultative Document', Department of the Environment (1977), p.50

dichotomy between a severe housing shortage and inflated housing costs coupled with spiralling zero-hours contracts and part-time employment are stark.

The availability, quality and perception of 'lifelong tenure' in council owned property decreased dramatically under the Conservative Government (1979-1997). Availability of council housing was swiftly reduced through neo-liberal policies such as the Right to Buy Act 1980 under which social housing tenants were incentivised to buy their property for considerably less than market value. Undersold stock was not replaced as unemployment rose, high-inflation increased demand for the little social housing that remained and led to increased numbers of homeless families being housed in private rented sector (PRS) accommodation or temporary 'B&B' style accommodation. From a local authority point of view, once a homeless family was housed in PRS accommodation on a twelve month tenancy the council could *discharge themselves of responsibility* for that family and if they became homeless again (for example, if they fell into rent arrears) they would not appear in official statistics as being homeless. Social housing that had been quickly constructed to meet the post-war demand received very little maintenance or modernisation and began to look and feel unkempt adding to the perception that social housing was unpleasant and that social *tenants* were the pathological problem (Jones 2012). Research published at the end of the 1980s shows increased levels of poverty, physical and mental health problems among people living in social housing at that time (Bentham 1986, Somerville 1994).

Fitzpatrick and Jones (2005) observe that services for homeless people received increased attention and investment under the New Labour government (for example, the Homelessness Act 2002 restored the duty on councils to accommodate eligible homeless people until they found 'settled' accommodation and expanded 'priority need' groups to include: 16-18 year olds and 18-20 year old care leavers, people deemed vulnerable through threat of violence or domestic abuse and those people vulnerable through having become institutionalised such as ex-prisoners and armed forces personnel). However, a strong level of 'social control' emphasis existed in the 2002 Act where homelessness was conceived to be 'anti-social behaviour'

suggesting the government at the time was concerned more by 'social cohesion' than 'social justice' (Fitzpatrick & Jones 2005). Examples of such 'social control' cited by Fitzpatrick and Jones include vendors of *The Big Issue in the North* being banned from Liverpool city centre following '…a 'drugs crackdown' by Merseyside police, with the ban only lifted after the publishers threatened legal action' (from *The Guardian*, 18th October 2003, cited in Fitzpatrick and Jones 2005:396). Attempts to stifle *legal independent street based work practices* such as selling *The Big Issue* magazine and busking illustrate a worrying trend with wider implications for how our shared 'public' spaces are controlled and who controls them (see Graves-Brown 2014 and also Chapter Six, section 6.3a).

A change to the Localism Act 2011 came into force 9th November 2012[61] which enables local authorities to discharge their statutory homelessness duty by allocating homeless families PRS tenancies *without agreement from the household* involved. Aside from the fact that local authorities can discharge responsibility for households in PRS accommodation in ways they are unable to do with social tenants, rent in the private rented sector is significantly more expensive. As the law stood before the recent change was made, homeless households were empowered to refuse PRS accommodation and instead wait for permanent social housing, arguably more secure accommodation. The recent change denies homeless households any involvement in deciding the type of accommodation they are allocated and puts vulnerable people actively at risk of repeated cycles of homelessness. This approach resonates with the enduring concept of deserving and undeserving poor in several ways. I will take each problem in turn.

Current welfare budget cuts have imposed an upper limit or 'cap' on housing benefit (see above) which means that many private rents exceed the housing benefit allowance, leading to the exportation of housing benefit claimants to 'less desirable' parts of the country. Despite a rise in statutory homelessness from 9,430 households

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[61] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2599/pdfs/uksi_20122599_en.pdf

in the quarter October to December 2009 to 13,230 households in the quarter January to March 2013[62], the present government disbanded its team of expert homelessness advisors[63] in March 2013. This decision followed hotly on the heels of a controversial blog post in *The Guardian* newspaper [64] which suggested that one of the government's chief consultants on homelessness, Andy Gale, had delivered talks to housing officials which emphasised how the change to the Localism Act 2011 (see above) could be used to build 'sustainable social housing communities', that is, give social housing priority to those people felt to 'make a special contribution'. Examples of such cited include, 'working families', ex-service personnel and volunteers[65]. Mr Gale is well-known as an expert speaker on housing and homeless policy (see his keynote speech at the Chartered Institute of Housing conference[66]) and was known to be a 'government advisor' by senior professionals in the housing sector, although the exact arrangement he had with the Department of Communities and Local Government remains a subject of tension[67]. What is clear is that legislative changes to the Localism Act 2011 allow local authorities to end their duty towards those homeless families they deem 'unsustainable' (undeserving) by exporting them to parts of the country where rent is cheaper, resources, employment and education opportunities are fewer and where social deprivation associated with such conditions will remain *less visible* to voters. Those families and individuals deemed 'undeserving' of infrastructural opportunities such as education and employment, healthcare, affordable public transport and a range of cultural facilities such as

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[62] http://data.gov.uk/dataset/statutory_homelessness_statistics_england

[63] http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/care/government-axes-homeless-advisors/6526319.article

[64] http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/patrick-butler-cuts-blog/2012/nov/13/beyond-cynical-ministers-housing-benefit-cuts-homelessness

[65] http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/galebriefing.pdf

[66] http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Event%20pdfs/Housing%20Advice%20Conference%20-%20Programme.pdf

[67] http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/patrick-butler-cuts-blog/2012/dec/13/housing-homelessness-politics-strange-tale-andy-gale

theatres, museums, parks and sports facilities, will be ghettoised, 'out of sight, out of mind'.

The recently announced pilot scheme called 'Help to Work' will force unemployed people to work for their benefits by requiring claimants to attend Jobcentre Plus five days per week between 9am - 5pm until they find a job, commit to a volunteer placement or intensive training - claimants will face 'losing their benefit if they fail to comply'[68] The scheme is ultimately unworkable for the practical reason that the resources necessary to accommodate *all* able unemployed people at the local Jobcentre Plus, all day, every day of the week, simply do not exist. Aside from the clear impracticalities involved in implementation, theoretically and philosophically the scheme is problematic and mirrors *nineteenth century* approaches to poverty which remain consistent with the Victorian concept of 'deserving/undeserving poor'. For example, the present day government acknowledge that they have 'introduced some measures to give Jobcentre Plus some choice over what support to give claimants'[69] and that 'support' will be dependent on 'local labour market characteristics'[70] In essence, the type of work (volunteer or training) claimants must engage in if they are not to lose their legally entitled benefit money will depend upon the area in which they are allocated housing. As we saw earlier the Localism Act 2011 and associated housing policy is currently being used to ensure that families and individuals deemed 'unsustainable' (undeserving) are increasingly exported to parts of the country with the fewest opportunities (education, employment and infrastructure). It might be argued that certain parts of the country (parts of Coventry, Manchester, Grimsby and Middlesbrough, for example) increasingly function as twenty-first century dumping grounds for those people deemed 'unsustainable' – workhouses of the twenty first century..

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[68] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/help-to-work-scheme-announced-by-the-government

[69] https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work

[70] https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work

To summarise, the concept of deserving and undeserving poor remains active within contemporary welfare legislation and policies related to housing. Those families deemed 'deserving' of assistance are those whose lifestyles directly support the (capitalist) establishment. For example, members of the armed services and those who volunteer for *recognised* charities are given housing preference over those who may have alternative work or volunteer for organisations not officially recognised (or explicitly but also legally challenge the status quo) (Peaker 2013[71]). Housing policy is increasingly enabling local councils to discharge themselves of responsibility for homeless households by allocating them accommodation in the (more expensive and less secure) private rented sector and a return of 1980s style pathological and individual explanations for poverty increase the likelihood of vulnerable people enduring repeated cycles of homelessness. Those people who become homeless are deemed 'unsuitable' (undeserving) for permanent housing in desirable locations (for example, York) and removed to parts of the country where problems associated with unemployment, poverty and deprivation are made less visible.

## 8.5 Discussion

In this chapter I have explored the role of memory and identity in archaeology and drawn on recent findings from neuroscience to suggest that archaeological work may function therapeutically as 'low level support' and facilitate the development of health promoting brain responses to stress in people who have experienced trauma or breakdown associated with homelessness and marginalisation. I have established how an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness can be useful in enhancing a sense of self-identity, self-esteem and belonging and enabling the development of transferable life and work skills, empowering individuals and inspiring personal responsibility. I have used archaeological data to identify gaps and

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[71] Giles Peaker, housing solicitor for Anthony Gold solicitors, sent me notes that accompany a public lecture he gave 17/07/13 to the Housing Law Practitioners Association in which Barnet Council's allocation of social housing 'preferences' were used as a case study. See appendix 8.

limitations in current homeless provision and suggested practical steps that could be taken to reduce some harm caused by homelessness.

I have I sought to identify the powerful way in which homelessness continues to be affected by historic attitudes and ideological bias and argued that such constructions pay inadequate attention to homeless peoples' individual humanity or capacity to learn new (or health-promoting) responses to stress which can aid independent living skills. I have explored the way that capitalist and gender-based ideologies affect housing and homeless policy in pernicious ways that risk causing increased social division. I have argued that current policies at times reflect the workhouse philosophy fostered throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and represent a move backwards in terms of social justice and welfare in Britain.

In the final chapter, I summarise findings and conclude by arguing that in its capacity as witness archaeology can be used to critique social policy in the past and present and advocate archaeology as activism, a powerful democratising tool in the modern world.

# Chapter Nine: Summary and Conclusion

## 9.0 Introduction

The purpose of this final chapter is to summarise findings and outcomes and discuss how this thesis contributes to wider debates within archaeology. In the first part of the chapter findings and outcomes from the homeless heritage project are explored. It is suggested that an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness contributes to existing literature on the subject by materialising the social status of homelessness and revealing how homelessness continues to suffer from being conceptually constructed according to nineteenth century ideologies whilst emerging physically as a diverse and phenomenological experience. Positive outcomes include that homeless people involved in the heritage project that forms the subject of this thesis experienced increased 'social connectedness' and well-being. Homeless colleagues also *actively chose* to engage with existing social and public services (for example, housing and addiction support services) with more substantial and robust commitment than had been the case prior to engagement with the heritage project. Reconnecting with family and 'self-realisation' (Lacan 1977) emerge as strong and important themes among outcomes from this project.

Following on, I discuss theoretical implications for the archaeological discipline which emerge from work undertaken for this thesis. Drawing on examples from data presented earlier I argue that advocacy might become an explicit reason to undertake archaeological work in the future. I suggest that where archaeology may be considered an 'intervention in the present' (Harrison 2010b: 336) – a methodology for engaging with the material world, heritage is the human context by which such engagement is made possible. Heritage, a mode of cultural production, facilitates redemptive and cathartic conversations about 'difficult' or distressing cultural practices and may be shown to be equally useful to work in the present as work in the deeper historic past (for example, work that explores colonialism or the Holocaust). It is argued that such conversations can produce more nuanced understanding which may be useful in identifying how future policy may be

improved to enhance social justice. Further to this, it is argued that collaborative archaeological work can function as 'low-level support' for people who have experienced marginalisation as a result of, for example, homelessness, addiction, institutionalisation or illness. The *archaeological process* involves memory and identity work which can function as witness to traumatic or painful experience. It is therefore argued that archaeology as a contemporary material therapeutic practice could align itself more insistently with counselling based and psychological approaches to treatment for trauma which aim to reduce reliance on pharmaceutical drugs. It is suggested that future research should be cross-disciplinary and seek to enhance understanding of the health benefits of collaborative archaeological work and also develop more holistic heritage interpretations which, it is argued, would increase accessibility, improve representation of diverse peoples and support the production of more inclusive, diverse and authentic narratives of the human past. Finally, the importance of sustainability and legacy is considered in relation to a therapeutic application of heritage work. An example is explored whereby the creation of a 'tool kit' is devised and its usefulness in enabling this project to have legacy is considered. A final conclusion is then presented.

## 9.1 Findings & Outcomes

The initial aim of the homeless heritage project was to see whether approaching contemporary homelessness archaeologically might contribute to wider understanding of the social condition which has traditionally suffered from conflation of poverty and criminality. In this section of the chapter it will be argued that a significant outcome to the project is a deeper understanding of the way in which homelessness in the twenty-first century manifests physically in diverse ways. This aids a conception of homelessness as an individual and phenomenological experience that counteracts definition and rationalisation in terms of nineteenth-century ideological constructions of vagrancy. A more surprising outcome from work undertaken for this thesis concerns evidence that collaborative involvement in archaeology as a contemporary material and creative memory practice can have therapeutic effects.

**Twenty first-century people / nineteenth-century policies**

Despite the best intentions of post-war welfare policy nineteenth-century ideological constructions of homelessness which conflate poverty with criminality continue to haunt homelessness policy which fails to recognise homelessness as a phenomenological and individual condition. Although several attempts have been made to repeal punitive approaches to homelessness inherent within the Old and New Poor Laws, changes have tended to be semantic (for example, current housing policy refers to those 'not eligible' for housing assistance rather than 'undeserving' but in reality little has changed). Today, as under the nineteenth-century Poor Law system, those 'working families' and ex-services personnel whose lifestyles are subjectively considered to contribute to the established order are given preference in 'sustainable social housing communities' (permanent housing)[72]. Statutorily homeless people including those whose paid or voluntary work (for example, people from travelling communities, grassroots organisations, 'bottom up' community projects etc.) is not 'recognised' by local councils are categorised as 'unsustainable' and offered the lowest quality accommodation where opportunities are fewest (for example, Ray abandoned the flat he was allocated in Coventry, Punk Paul left *'Bedsit Land'*, Andrew opted to remain living under a willow tree rather than accept a room in Victoria Street homeless hostel). I have argued that to 'house' people according to their ideologically ascribed social status is concordant with the *spirit* of nineteenth century Poor Law philosophy where those deemed 'undeserving' were forced to reside in over-crowded and inadequate accommodation (for example, workhouses). It is argued that current housing policy which increasingly seeks to export 'unsustainable' homeless households to poorly maintained housing in the least desirable parts of the country serves similarly to render statutorily homeless people out of sight of the majority of voters, conveniently cleansing scenes or evidence of homelessness from the view of the average voter. Such socio-spatial segregation increases the likelihood that children of those deemed 'unsustainable' will inherit the same disadvantages where 'escape' from these twenty-first century

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[72] http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/galebriefing.pdf

ghettoes will become comparably difficult to escape from as was the nineteenth century workhouse.

Therefore, approaching homelessness archaeologically from the perspective of a *range of individual homeless human agents* this project has enabled appreciation of why a homeless person might 'choose' to appropriate, for example, space beneath a weeping willow tree, space inside a bush or bin cupboard over conditions in temporary accommodation deemed 'suitable' for statutorily homeless people. I suggest this is because, although inadequate substitutes for an important element of 'home' – shelter – these spaces offer several intangible features which must be considered of *equal importance* – privacy, autonomy, safety and the ability to leave and return at will. Later in this chapter it will be argued that future homeless and housing policy must seek to provide opportunities for homeless people to *developmentally generate* the intangible features of the concept of home – autonomy, caring relationships, safety, the ability to leave and return at will and reliable emotional support that is not dictated by office hours. Only when intangible features are considered to be of *equal importance* to tangible features such as shelter and warmth, will the problems of homelessness be addressed with any hope of sustained recovery.

**Therapeutic outcomes**

A more surprising outcome to the homeless heritage project has been the degree to which homeless colleagues have reported that involvement in the collaborative archaeological process has been therapeutic. For the individuals involved, actions taken since being involved in the project have been momentous and dramatic. On a wider scale, it is suggested that an important element of work undertaken for this thesis has been the development of working methodologies for engaging with traditionally 'hard to reach' people which may be usefully transferred to similar projects intended to encourage the development of skills necessary for independent living. I will now outline what are termed therapeutic outcomes from the homeless heritage project.

Firstly, everyone involved in the project reports *feeling happier* than they did before taking part in the project and expressed desire to undertake similar educational projects in the future. In several cases (Jane, Andrew, Dan and Richard) a genuine interest in archaeology and social history was sparked and has led to colleagues following up the homeless heritage project with independent reading and library research into aspects of the past they found of particular interest (for example, the English Civil War and the Romans in York). Colleagues reported that the main reasons they were enthused by the project were that archaeological work – mapping each city, identifying places according to their use and significance, drawing and photographing, excavation, processing finds and developing exhibition narratives – was fun, interesting and involved learning or practising a variety of practical and social skills. The opportunity to make new friends and increase feelings of 'social connectedness' with people from a variety of social backgrounds (often with no previous experience of addiction or homelessness) was cited by colleagues as a major reason they felt happier and experienced enhanced self- esteem. Furthermore, colleagues found appealing that they were engaged in 'real' archaeological work and that the two exhibitions provided genuine opportunities to present homelessness from their perspectives and publically. The collaborative approach adopted throughout fieldwork enhanced a sense of ownership of the project and materials generated (for example, maps, photographs and a documentary film) and greatly contributed to colleagues feeling a sense of personal achievement, that work undertaken had been purposeful, a useful exercise that genuinely contributed to attempts to understand homelessness. Finally, colleagues reported that involvement in the project had given them opportunities to learn new skills which were transferable and relevant to other areas of their life (for example, learning to use the internet was perceived by colleagues to be the most useful transferable skill but experience of speaking and dealing with people from a wide variety of social backgrounds was also identified as helpful).

Of those people with whom I worked in Bristol, Andrew, Jane, Punk Paul, Disco Dave and Ratty are now housed. Of York colleagues, Mark, Dan and Richard have

now moved into independent housing. Several colleagues now have employment. Punk Paul is employed delivering vegetables and newspapers in Bristol and Mark is a full time delivery driver for United Parcel Service in York. After spending time as a volunteer on a community archaeological excavation of a Roman site, Richard secured a full time job as a cleaner at a hotel in York. Dan has part-time work as a gardener, volunteers in a charity shop and continues to give self-devised lectures on homelessness as heritage at several schools in York. Of those colleagues who suffered addiction to alcohol and/or drugs, several people have reported that their consumption has decreased markedly since taking part in the heritage project. Reasons include that they feel happier and continue to benefit from widened social circles which include people who do not have addictions, an uncommon luxury for the majority of homeless people in Britain today. Furthermore, several colleagues reported that involvement in the heritage project inspired them to engage with existing addiction services in Bristol and York. This outcome is particularly valuable because it suggests that colleagues have *actively chosen* to make this move rather than engage due to punitive external pressure (for example, threats from a court). As discussed earlier in the thesis (see Chapter Two) 'realising for oneself' is a far more powerful way to learn or accept something than is absorption of information through lecture or punishment (Lacan 1977).

Further to those positive outcomes described above, important identity work was undertaken by colleagues as a *function of the archaeological process*. For example, Andrew cited the project directly as having enabled and inspired him to reject his 'street name' Smiler (by which he had been known for twenty-five years) in favour of his birth name, Andrew. Andrew explained that the experience of counter mapping Bristol made him realise that he was tracing his *former* self – Smiler, the homeless heroin user. At the time, Andrew was moving into independent accommodation and no longer used heroin. The archaeological process, by which places were mapped according to *memory and meaning,* led Andrew to the realisation that the places - the social activities, people and 'things' which constituted them - were aspects of his (very recent) *past*. This is a good example of the powerful way in which archaeology can aid construction (or reconstruction) of

identity through locating aspects of it in *space and time*. The difference between Smiler and Andrew is fewer than five years but Andrew remained haunted by his street name and its associations. The active experience of being directly involved in the heritage process insisted that *change had occurred*. Following this powerful realisation, Andrew spent Christmas Day 2012 with his parents for the first time in over thirty years.

Reconnecting with family is a strong and happily recurrent theme among the positive outcomes from the homeless heritage project. Jane made contact with her children through Facebook in April 2012 and has since seen photographs of her grandchildren and made plans to visit her family in Brighton. Deano decided to look for regular work in Bournemouth and, still busking for a living, has moved to the city full time so that he can see his children more regularly. Richard resumed contact with his family in York and now shares a house with his father. Dan, now housed independently, had his parents to stay for a weekend for the first time in twenty years and had them back again for Christmas 2013. As data reveal (see Chapter Five) Christmas and family anniversaries are commonly among the most difficult times for homeless people, often a source of such emotional unrest that relapse (of addictions and poor mental health) is triggered. If one colleague had been motivated to resume contact with family following engagement with the homeless heritage project we might see no correlation. However, *several* colleagues were motivated to reconnect with their families and cite the project directly - involvement in the archaeological process – as having influenced their actions. For this reason, it is argued that involvement in the contemporary material and creative memory practice of archaeology can have therapeutic outcomes perhaps more familiar to fields of psychology and counselling where reminiscence and restoration are central features of the approach. Although by no means an anticipated outcome at the start of the project, increased 'social connectedness' and reconnecting with family are certainly positive outcomes and suggest there is potential for archaeology to function more explicitly as a therapeutic material memory practice in the future (see below).

## 9.2 Theoretical implications

In this section I discuss theoretical implications for the archaeological discipline which arise from work undertaken for this thesis. I begin by suggesting that further to archaeology as 'socio-political action in the present' (Tilley 1989) advocacy could become an explicit reason for undertaking archaeological work. I then move on to explore potential for archaeology to function more broadly as low-level support for marginalised people and align itself more purposefully with therapeutic psychological work as a form of witness and contemporary therapeutic memory practice.

**Advocacy: an explicit reason to undertake archaeological work**

Collaborative archaeological work conducted for this thesis suggests that archaeological work can function as advocacy in a number of ways. This raises implications for the discipline more broadly, in particular, the notion that advocacy for a particular group of people could become an explicit reason for undertaking archaeological work. Good archaeological work should be democratic and accessible to anyone who wants to participate because the past, a public resource, belongs to everyone. By focusing on *how* we recruit people into the business of archaeological work we move closer to representations of the past that are inclusive of diverse and varied ways to be human and, I argue, that representation in the past can help to further rights in the present through increased public understanding of 'alternative' life-ways (for example, different physical needs, varied cultural sensitivities). Potentially, collaborative archaeological work of the type undertaken for this thesis may be undertaken specifically to generate heritage based materials (photos, maps, recorded memories of people and places) which may be utilised in informing social policy to positively affect the future.  It has been almost twenty-five years since Tilley (1989) proposed that archaeology could function as 'socio-political action in the present' in which time there has been gradual but sustained interest in applying archaeological theory and methodologies to contemporary culture (see, for examples, Buchli & Lucas 2001, Byrne & Nugent 2001, Harrison & Schofield 2010, Reynolds & Schofield 2010, Zimmerman 2010, McAtackney 2011). Archaeology, a material resource, has been conceived of as a 'mode of cultural production' (McGuire 2006)

through which discussions about the past, the present and the future may be had. I suggest that aspects of the homeless heritage project functioned more specifically as a form of advocacy by offering representations of contemporary homelessness that countered historically developed ideological constructions of the social status. I turn now to discuss this in more detail.

Co-production of two inter-related public archaeological exhibitions – 'A History of Stokes Croft in 100 Objects' (Bristol 2010) and 'Arcifacts: unearthing York's homeless heritage' (York 2012) – can be regarded as having functioned as a form of advocacy for homeless people by centralising the individual phenomenological experience of homelessness and representing diversity (of experience and attitude) within homelessness. Once the doors opened at each exhibition the general public interacted with homeless colleagues as *empowered individuals* and this experience enhanced colleagues' self-esteem and confidence, as discussed above, but also impacted visitors' perception of homelessness in positive ways. An example comes from a comment in the Visitors Book from the York exhibition: 'this has radically changed my view of homelessness and drug addicts' (Comments Book, March 2012). Each exhibition space functioned as advocacy through granting homeless people the unusual opportunity of introducing themselves – individual people with names, faces, personalities and diverse backstories.

Each exhibition also enabled the experiences and perspectives of these individual homeless people to be considered by the general public via thematic structure *as heritage*. For example, rather than 'homelessness as social problem' or 'homelessness as deviance' (conceptual, immaterial) each exhibition presented 'homelessness as heritage' (tangible, material). Visitors to each exhibition were *already comfortable* with the practice of consuming heritage, an everyday and unthreatening social activity. Visitors knew how to walk around each exhibition space and read interpretation panels, as they wished. The social structure of each exhibition was commonplace and visitors picked up or disregarded exhibition guides, peered at and pondered over particular exhibits and artefacts, purchased a pin badge or postcard if they felt inclined to do so. The 'social environment' was one

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with which visitors were accustomed even if the subject – contemporary homelessness – was less so. The heritage model did not smooth over uncomfortable aspects of homelessness or seek to campaign for a particular approach to tackling the social condition but it effectively broke down invisible barriers between the general public and the concept of homelessness by facilitating the condition to be viewed from the perspectives of individual human agents and this can be regarded as a useful form of advocacy. The effectiveness of the heritage model was in part testified by the fact that, at both exhibitions, visitors commonly lingered in the centre of the room and spoke with individual homeless people about the exhibition, their role in its production and earlier fieldwork. Often, conversations between visitors and homeless colleagues moved quickly onto questions about the causes of homelessness or specific homeless encounters were recalled. Visitors often asked colleagues' advice on how best to handle being asked for money, what they could do for homeless people instead of giving money? 'A smile is always welcome,' Jane said, 'the worst thing is when you're ignored, like you don't exist.' These conversations were most unusual for the ways in which visitors felt able to ask questions about homelessness that they confessed had plagued them when they saw homeless people and from whom they felt distinctly distanced. The experience of being able to ask homeless people questions in a safe and supportive environment was cathartic and redemptive for everyone involved. Furthermore, the 'general public' who visited each exhibition included (of those who made themselves known) one magistrate, one probation officer, two police women, a Liberal Democrat councillor, the associate director of North Yorkshire mental health services, a curate and several housing and drug support workers. Usually, people whose professions bring them into contact with homeless and vulnerably housed people meet them in a custodial, legal or medical or pastoral environment where homelessness is conceived of as a 'social problem' or 'risk factor' and where homeless people are 'offenders', 'clients', 'patients' or 'victims' . At each exhibition those relationships were changed through the centralisation of the individual humanity and creative agency of homeless colleagues who responded refreshingly positively to the experience. In this way, heritage work can function as advocacy.

Furthermore, by making advocacy an explicit reason for undertaking archaeological work we necessarily foreground the need to enhance and further develop

methodologies for working collaboratively with people from diverse backgrounds, with diverse needs (for example, learning or physically disabled people, single parents, elderly people). In seeking to work collaboratively with more varied groups, particularly those who have traditionally not engaged with heritage based work and activities (for example, museums, heritage tours, academic study of the past) we seek to tap into previously overlooked or marginalised knowledge, skills, experience and perspectives which promises to enrich wider understanding of the human past in infinite and exciting ways. Archaeology has enabled deeper consideration of inequalities and injustice in the past. For example, women (Hourani 1990) and children (Schwartzman 2005), refugees (Glock 1994) and migrants (De León 2012), African-American slaves (Singleton 1985, Ferguson 1992, Orser 1996) and working class (McGuire & Reckner 2003) archaeologies have emerged, leading to the question - 'can archaeologists change the world?' (Stottman 2010) Archaeology as advocacy goes further in seeking positive change to social policy as an *intended outcome* of collaborative archaeological work with groups or individuals experiencing injustice or suffering misrepresentation.

**Archaeology as witness: a therapeutic memory practice**

Outcomes from this project discussed above suggest that archaeological work as a therapeutic memory practice could function more broadly as 'low level support' for marginalised people through facilitating memory and identity work, aiding learning and enhancing 'social connectedness'. For over a century, archaeology has borrowed theoretically from disciplines concerned by human behaviour and psychoanalysis and sociology have famously borrowed metaphorically from archaeology (O'Donoghue 2004, Foucault 1972). It is argued here that unintended *positive and voluntary* behavioural and attitudinal change in those involved in the homeless heritage project suggests potential for the development of a branch of therapeutic archaeology which would seek to align itself more intentionally and prominently with psychological work that seeks to develop opportunities for 'low-level support' and non-pharmaceutical approaches to conditions such as depression and anxiety. Such work would involve more systematic deeper recognition that archaeology as a

'contemporary material practice' (Shanks & Tilley 1992) involves a process whereby materiality and memory are used to construct narratives which, although possibly painful and traumatic, are *witnessed*. In his documentation of attempts by economic migrants to cross the Sonoran Desert in Arizona, De Leon (2012) suggests that archaeology can function as a tool to document the 'routinized and violent social process' (De Leon 2012:143). For legal and ethical reasons it might be impossible for anthropologists or sociologists to observe human behaviour (illegal migration across borders or the use or movement of illegal drugs) but archaeology is uniquely placed to *witness* these 'social activities' through traces of material culture 'regardless of time or space' (Rathje 1979:2). To bear witness is a recognised a powerful therapeutic tool in counselling and psychological literature (van der Hart & Nijenhuis 1999).

**Holistic heritage: a challenge to visual ideology**

Data presented earlier in the thesis reveal homeless landscapes to be partly characterised by a high level of superstition and super-natural belief (for example, Paul's concern over the possible site of the Newgate Prison graveyard, Andrew's experience of Mrs Baker from the English Civil War site). Such perceptions of place might until recently have been interpreted plainly as 'wrong' or 'delusional' – put down to the consumption of a high volume of alcohol or drugs or perceived due to the effect of subjectively defined 'mental illness' – in any explanation, such 'super-natural' perceptions of place being considered less authentic, less real than those explanations of place rooted in visual ideology. However, sleep deprivation affects homeless people most of the time due to the impracticalities, discomforts and dangers inherent to rough sleeping, as discussed earlier in the thesis, and recent neuro-scientific work has found that people who are sleep deprived place 'greater reliance on formal superstitions and magical thinking processes' (Killgore et al 2008:517). This has implications for rethinking the force of visual ideology in archaeology and for seeking continued development of methodologies that seek to record archaeological data in multi-sensorial ways which would facilitate the production of more accessible and democratic representations of the past (for example, interpreting archaeological data in ways that are directly accessible and

relevant to visually impaired people or wheelchair users). Equally, greater emphasis should be placed on the embodied and phenomenological ways in which people are in the world and affect the development of archaeological sites in multiple ways, within historically situated limitation. Heritage should be an equally embodied process – an absorption and reaction by the brain *and body* – phenomenological, multi-sensorial and individual.

**Sustainability: the importance of legacy**

The issue of sustainability in relation to community archaeology and heritage work must be considered if counter histories are to *remain* accessible and not simply drift back into the unknown at the culmination of a project or close of an exhibition. Without a sustained and deliberate strategy for ensuring the ongoing accessibility of materials generated through community archaeology and heritage work the whole exercise becomes pointless except for the fun and skills that individuals may experience and learn. This is particularly true of politically driven heritage work that seeks to challenge 'authorised' heritage perspectives and present alternative viewpoints (for example, strike histories, black and minority ethnic histories and working class histories). Ensuring heritage projects have a genuine legacy and retain momentum may broadly be considered to involve concerns over custodial relationships (for example, where archaeological or heritage material is deposited and its ongoing accessibility).

'Community', like heritage, is a slippery word, open to multiple interpretations and able to resist definition. Common criticisms of 'community' heritage or archaeological work include that it is too often a 'box-ticking' exercise that arose from New Labour notions of 'social inclusiveness', something that results in numerous case studies which do little more than uncritically demonstrate the 'importance' of community engagement (Watson & Waterton 2010). This thesis has demonstrated that there are numerous important reasons for undertaking community heritage work. For example, there is value inherent in accessing previously marginalised bodies of knowledge, diversifying heritage audiences and perspectives on places, events and artefacts. Engaging people from non-specialist backgrounds in

archaeological work can aid interpretation of material remains and help to reveal multiple perspectives on place, which enriches our wider understanding of how sites of archaeological interest come into being where complex and at times contrasting viewpoints are given *equal representation*, if not regard.. Equally, engaging non-specialists (sometimes termed 'non-traditional' heritage audiences, for example, people from low socio-economic backgrounds) in heritage based projects of the type described in this thesis can help to enhance a sense of belonging in those involved which can in turn help to *reduce crime* and improve neighbourhood relationships. However, without *ongoing* involvement of members of the source community (in this case, homeless people from Bristol and York) and the *ongoing accessibility* of archival materials generated throughout the project (for example, photographs, maps, films and collections) – one might argue that the work was, from a heritage point of view, futile. An innovative element of this community heritage project has been the way in which the community (homeless colleagues) were facilitated to undertake genuine archaeological work themselves and enabled to interpret and access archival materials *on their terms* and remain actively involved in ongoing aspects of the project and the social circle which developed from it.

Archaeologists, heritage professionals and academics have increasingly recognised that community engagement work can be valuable for the reasons cited above. However, less attention has been paid to what happens to materials generated through such action following the conclusion of the project. Until relatively recently, many community heritage projects have had few options but to take materials (for example, boxes of artefacts and files of photographs, flyers, videos and recordings of oral testimonies) to a local archive or records office. Or, they might take the 'stuff it in a cupboard' option, neither of which presents a satisfactory way to deal sustainably with archival material. Handing over material to 'official' repositories is sometimes considered problematic due to the colonial habit of appropriating and accumulating material culture and subordinating people whose material it is by manipulating and controlling such material or plainly hiding it from view, preventing its stories from being told (Stevens et al 2010:67). Similarly, stuffing archival material into a box and storing it in a cupboard, or in a loft or garage is equally likely

to result in the stories remaining 'hidden' and inaccessible. For these reasons, I suggest the onus is on archaeologists and heritage practitioners keen on revealing surprising and alternative histories to properly consider how their work may be conducted with sustainability designed in. The ongoing custody of materials generated throughout community engagement projects must be given appropriate attention from the outset. Legacy may take the form of specialist training of community members (for example, archivist training) or the creation of an annual or bi-annual conference along a relevant theme, the development of a 'tool-kit' thus facilitating replicability or the creation of a travelling exhibition which serves to perpetuate the alternative viewpoint and potentially inspire further projects and engage new audiences.

The legacy of the homeless heritage project which forms the subject of this thesis has been that photographs, maps and videos remain freely accessible via a website created by members of the homeless heritage team[73]. Funding is currently being sought to enable the creation of a 'tool kit' which would facilitate replication and adaptation of the homeless heritage project in other cities and towns and provide a step-by-step guide to running a similar heritage project with other marginalised groups (for example, elderly people, single parents or long-term unemployed people) and measuring its impact. Separate funding is being sought to create a consolidated touring exhibition that tells the story of the project so far and details the positive therapeutic outcomes from homeless peoples' involvement as colleagues. Homeless colleagues expressly suggested that the foyers and waiting areas of county courtrooms across the United Kingdom be sought as exhibition space for the travelling show on account of the likelihood that, according to Andrew, 'people who need this kind of thing…this kind of opportunity, are going to see it [the exhibition] if it's at the court.' Furthermore, following presentations on aspects of this work at various international conferences the author has been asked to write a book chapter on homeless *habitus* for an Oxford University Press edited volume on on *habitus*; the author has also been invited to present a paper at the Institute for Archaeologists

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[73] http://www.arcifact.webs.com/

annual conference in Glasgow 2014 and co-produce a series of workshops with a creative writer keen to engage long-term unemployed people in an archaeological creative writing project in Bournemouth.

## 9.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, taking an archaeological approach to contemporary homelessness has been fruitful in offering a *material* view of the 'familiar' social status which continues to be legally ascribed according to historic and politically developed ideologies. Collaborative archaeological methodologies have succeeded in prioritising the voices and perspectives of homeless people as individual human beings. In materialising homelessness in two British cities data gathered for this thesis reveal homelessness to manifest physically as a diverse, transient and phenomenological experience. The experience of homelessness in Britain may involve common characteristics (for example, abuse and addiction feature strongly, seasonal landscape characteristics are perceptible and death persistently shapes homeless landscapes) but the status of homelessness is experienced by *individual people* whose needs and responses vary. The individual humanity of homeless people remains lost to powerful homogenising ideological constructions of 'the homeless' which continue to conflate poverty with criminality.

Current housing and homelessness policy takes account of homeless peoples' need for shelter but does not sufficiently attend to the need for opportunities to develop intangible aspects of home which have been shown to be of *equal or more importance* (for example, safety, warmth, compassion, the ability to leave and return at will, sets of positive relationships). Heritage work such as that described in this thesis can aid the development of many important intangible aspects of home (for example, feeling safe, experiencing being part of a group who are compassionate towards one another, the ability to leave and return to a safe place). Data presented earlier reveal that collaborative heritage projects, such as that described, have the capacity to function as 'low level support' through the creation of what may be considered a 'safe and supportive social environment'. Nurtured by widened social

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circles, increased self-esteem and confidence, increased sense of self-identity and self-worth, homeless colleagues experienced far increased 'social connectedness' and several people reported experiencing the *self-realised* desire to reconnect with their families and engage with existing housing and addiction support services with commitment. It is argued that, in this sense, this project has actively contributed to crime reduction. It is therefore also strongly argued that *social support* of the type described here represents a far more effective and sustainable way to address problems of anxiety and depression in homeless people than widespread use of pharmaceutical drugs alone which is sadly the current norm.

Archaeological work can be demonstrably therapeutic and facilitate the development of healthier and happier communities. Success depends upon the enthusiasm and commitment of some key individuals (for example, workshop organisers, homeless service managers) and support coming clearly in the form of financial backing and promotion from those in important decision making positions (for example, people working at senior levels within heritage organisations). Alongside clear therapeutic benefits to individual members of the source community, the archaeological discipline and heritage sector more widely stand to gain theoretically and practically from genuinely facilitating communities to undertake archaeological work. For example, without insider knowledge or the credibility that comes with associating and collaborating with particular communities many fascinating aspects of human heritage are at risk of remaining hidden, side-lined and under-investigated. But for the last word on why projects such as this matter I turn to a comment made by one of the very first homeless people with whom I worked after a pilot phase of fieldwork. In his own words, Punk Paul said of the homeless heritage project:

*'Hopefully [this project has been about] constructing an insightful view on things and implementing change in society, making order of our modern times, seeing us as no different from the Egyptians or the Romans…I love you for being interested…The truth is if you dig deep enough you uncover the truth… The week we spent together was power, truth and hope. You have this big heart in a bigger community and it was good to think that we might actually change the world we live in. Inshallah!*

# Appendix 1: T1 table of homeless policies & major relevant publications post 1948

| Decade | Political Climate | Policy & attitudinal approaches to homelessness | Homelessness: perceptions & reality |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1940s /1950s | ***RELUCTANT CONSERVATISM***<br>➢ Modernisation of the Conservative Party (Butler) – this characterised the Conservatives until c.1975<br>➢ Keynes & Beveridge both essentially liberal but believed in the free market. Committed to less state intervention. | ➢ *Reluctant* acceptance that greater state intervention was necessary to provide for everyone<br>➢ freedom from squalor and poverty as essential as freedom from Big Government<br>➢ Beveridge (1945) *Why I Am A Liberal* | ➢ Homelessness considered to be a ***STRUCTURAL*** problem i.e. shortage of housing post-war |
| | ***DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM***<br>➢ Reformist wing of Labour party reached intellectual peak 1950s/60s with publication of Anthony Crosland's (1956) *The Future of Socialism* (Secretary of State for Education, Labour) & work by London School of Economics, led by R.M. Titmuss (Titmuss, Prof of Social Administration, LSE 1954-6) – key thinkers of the time<br>➢ 1945-51 – Labour Government | ➢ ***1948 National Assistance Act*** – designed to repeal the Poor Laws<br>➢ Labour Govt believed MORE state intervention was necessary to engineer a fairer society<br>➢ In keeping with Systems Theory, generally fashionable at the time, saw the national welfare 'system' as interconnected and therefore able to be manipulated | ➢ Homeless people still housed in poor law institutions e.g. workhouses<br>➢ Huge stigma remained around homelessness<br>➢ Homelessness increasingly perceived to be ***SOCIO-MEDICAL*** problem<br>➢ **CLASS & GENDER** based ideologies directly affected which families received permanent social housing |

| Decade | Political Climate | Policy & attitudinal approaches to homelessness | Homelessness: perceptions & reality |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1950s/ 1960s | | ➤ 1957 RENT ACT – provided for the decontrol of private sector rents<br>➤ 1960s –steep rise in homelessness due to rising rent, insecure tenure, low wages, shortage of housing<br>➤ Major report on homelessness (Greve 1964) commissioned by London County Council<br>➤ Ken Loach (1966) *Cathy Come Home* catapults homelessness into public consciousness<br>➤ *Shelter*, the homeless charity is set up (1966)<br>➤ 1966 NATIONAL ASSISTANCE BOARD surveys single homelessness for the first time & despite growing awareness of complexities of homelessness, policy response is that homelessness is due to *pathological* failures on part of homeless person<br>➤ Jung (1967) *Man & His Symbols* - surge in interest in science theory and psychoanalysis | ➤ Classification of 'victim' (deserving) or 'problem' (undeserving) families actively *determined the quality of permanent housing* granted.<br>➤ 1957 Rent Act led to sharp increase in homelessness due to evictions by landlords and steep rise in demand for homeless 'reception' centres or 'hostels'.<br>➤ This period characterised by sympathy for homeless families due to STRUCTURAL problems e.g. lack of housing etc.<br>➤ Increased disdain for single homeless, characterised as pathologically |
| 1970s | ***THE NEW RIGHT***<br>➤ Massive re-thinking of economic policy – mass unemployment Vs. high inflation<br>➤ Market given greater freedom | ➤ 1971 GREVE REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS – found homelessness was not due to individual pathology & recommends moving homelessness away from Local | ➤ 1971 Greve Report makes homelessness a 'roofless' not 'rootless' problem i.e. no provision for complex array of social problems that lead to homelessness |

| Decade | Political Climate | Policy & attitudinal approaches to homelessness | Homelessness: perceptions & reality |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Authority *Welfare* departments & to specifically set up Housing Departments.<br>➤ 1971 GLASTONBURY REPORT – found 'work-shy' husbands and drunkenness to be the CAUSES rather than symptom of homelessness i.e. lack of jobs/housing, inflation not considered<br>➤ *1977 HOUSING (HOMELESS PERSONS) ACT –* defines homelessness as it is understood in statutory terms as '…..'<br>➤ 1977 Act placed statutory duty on LA housing departments to PERMANENTLY house SOME categories of homeless people<br>➤ 1979 Thatcher leads massive round of welfare cuts and privatisation. | ➤ Lack of social housing being built<br>➤ 1977 Housing Act shaped the nature and focus of academic research into homelessness, rather than the other way around.<br>➤ 1977 Act required to give them advice and assistance i.e. dole money but not housing |
| 1980s | | ➤ 1980 Right to Buy sees huge stock of council housing sold off and not replaced<br>➤ Private rents high due to demand, unemployment soared due to spending cuts (mid 1980s)<br>➤ 1985 Housing Act (amendment)<br>➤ 1986 – publication of L.M. Mead's book, 'Beyond Entitlement: the | ➤ Homelessness rockets from 1979, through 1980s<br>➤ Under 1985 amendment of 1977 Housing Act, households accepted as in need of 'assistance' doubled.<br>➤ Lack of social housing + rise in homelessness = families living in temporary & B&B accommodation |

| Decade | Political Climate | Policy & attitudinal approaches to homelessness | Homelessness: perceptions & reality |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | social obligations of citizenship' | |
| 1990s | | <ul><li>1990 – publication of C. Murray's 'The Emerging British Underclass'</li><li>Government policy changed in response to the 'visibility' of homelessness e.g. *1990 ROUGH SLEEPER'S INITIATIVE* is developed (RSI)</li><li>1993 Isobel Anderson published a key paper in which she argues that homelessness was being 'reconstructed' by researchers who were overwhelmingly influenced by the government's own definition and response to the problem.</li><li>Anthony Giddens (1994) *Beyond Left and Right* published – in which he defined a 'risk' society</li></ul> | <ul><li>Rise in number of people 'visibly' homeless led to public perception that homelessness was down to INDIVIDUAL PATHOLOGY</li><li>Made worse by arrival of hard drugs on a wide scale in the UK</li></ul> |
| 1997 | ***THE THIRD WAY***<ul><li>New Labour: Blair looked to the Democratic party (under Clinton)</li><li>New Labour were heavily influenced by Giddens 1984 & 1994</li></ul> | <ul><li>1997 – publication of L.M. Mead's 'From Welfare to Work'</li><li>*Shelter* were brought in to work with the government for the first time</li><li>New Labour took on the idea of 'social exclusion' and the 'nature of poverty'. There was an assumption that 'exclusion' from mainstream society was a 'bad thing' per se.</li><li>The discourse around 'social</li></ul> | <ul><li>Neale (1997) found homelessness research to be empirical but methodologically poor and conceptually very weak. Most critiques of homelessness were broadly structuralist, portraying homelessness as a function of Thatcher's housing policy i.e. Left/Right fight overshadowing the ability to take</li></ul> |

| Decade | Political Climate | Policy & attitudinal approaches to homelessness | Homelessness: perceptions & reality |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | inclusion' promotes the need for moral and behavioural reform, rather than a redistribution of power and wealth. <br> ➤ New Labour sought a more 'consumerist' style to public service delivery, emphasising 'choice' | account of the deeper underlying causes. |
| | | ➤ Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 2002 – major move towards preventing those likely to become homeless from losing existing accommodation <br> ➤ Post-2002 – Local Authorities have been encouraged to broadly take a proactive rather than reactive approach to homelessness | ➤ |
| 2010 - 2014 | *COALITION OF CON-DEMS?* | ➤ Localism Act 2011 <br> ➤ Cap on housing benefit <br> ➤ Criminalisation of squatting for residential purposes (LASPO 2012) | ➤ Effectively allows councils to house homeless people in PRS accommodation without their consent <br> ➤ Cap on housing benefit forces exportation of claimants to least desirable parts of the country <br> ➤ Squatters join the ranks of statutorily homeless people in need of housing or face criminal records |

# Appendix 2: Route map of homeless peoples' journeys in Bristol
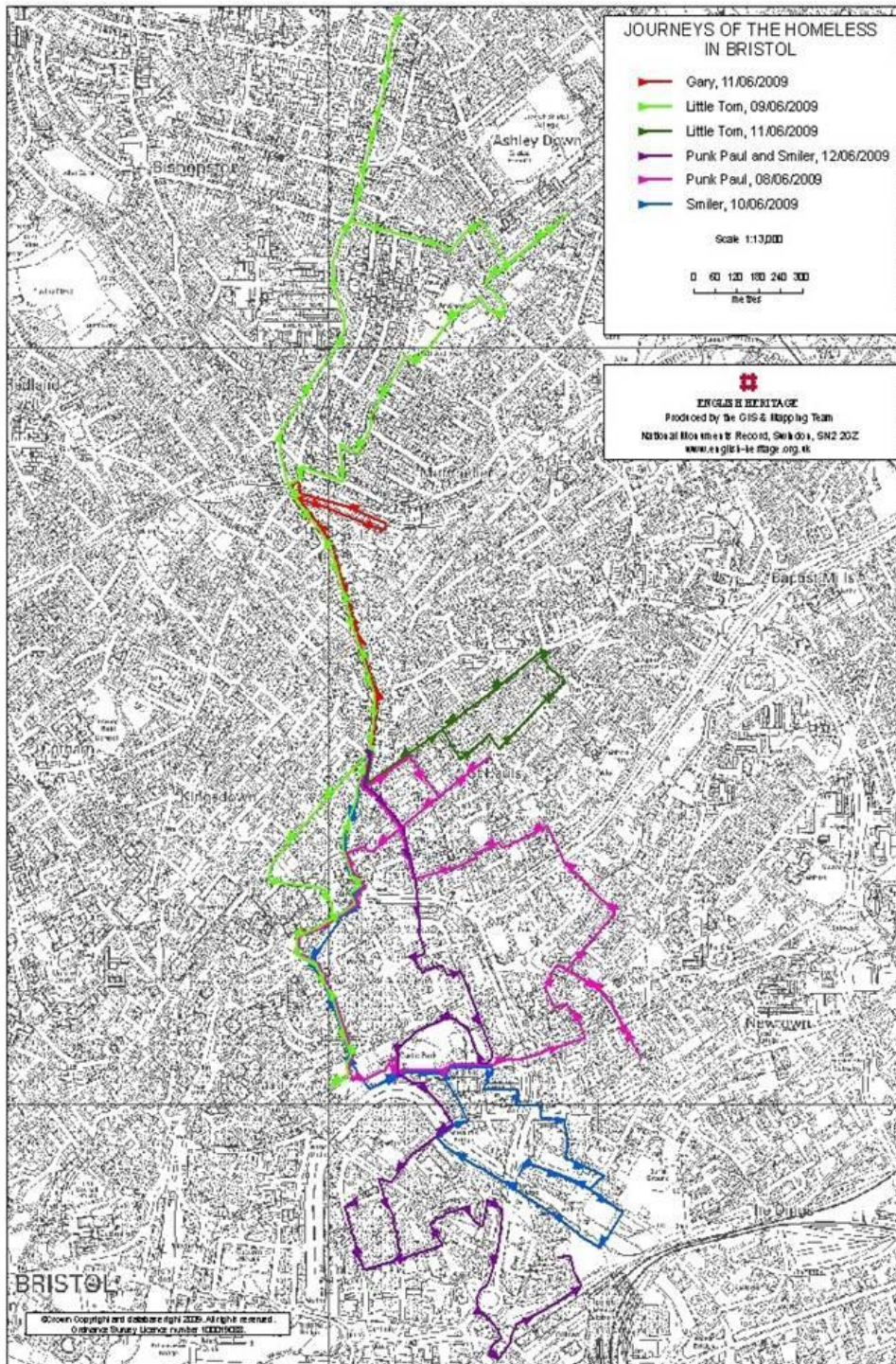
## Appendix 4: Designated Public Place Order (DPPOs) maps (a-g), Bristol



AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY

A report to evidence and support a request to Bristol City Council for a Street Drinking Ban (as provided by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001) in the area shown in the below map.
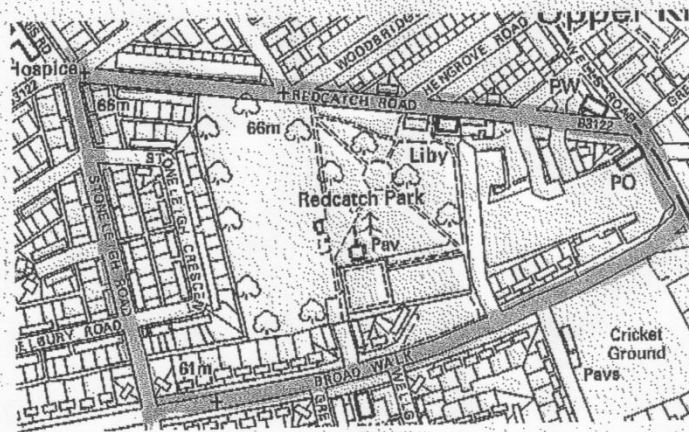
Produced by
PC 3544 Greg Macrae

DECEMBER 2007
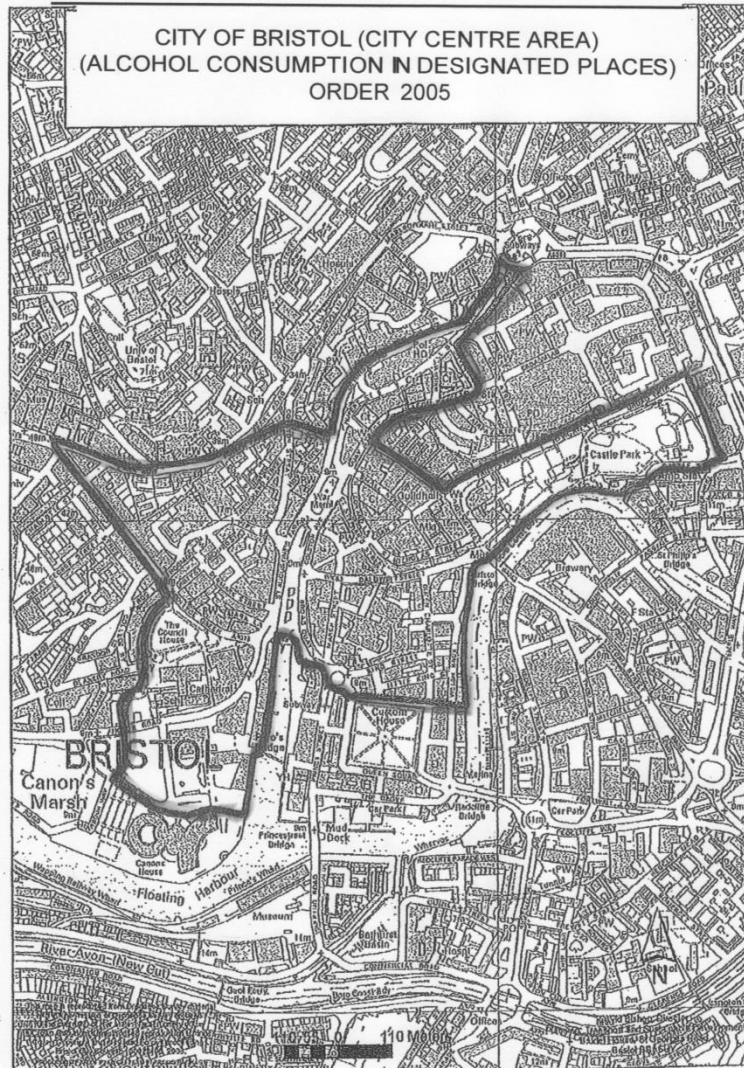
**CITY OF BRISTOL (CITY CENTRE AREA)**
**(ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PLACES)**
**ORDER 2005**

06-015

**Appendix 4 – Map A**

CITY OF BRISTOL (STOKES CROFT AREA)
(ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PLACES)
ORDER 2005

**Appendix 4 - Map B**

MAP 3

CITY OF BRISTOL (ST JUDES AREA)
(ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PLACES)
ORDER 2005
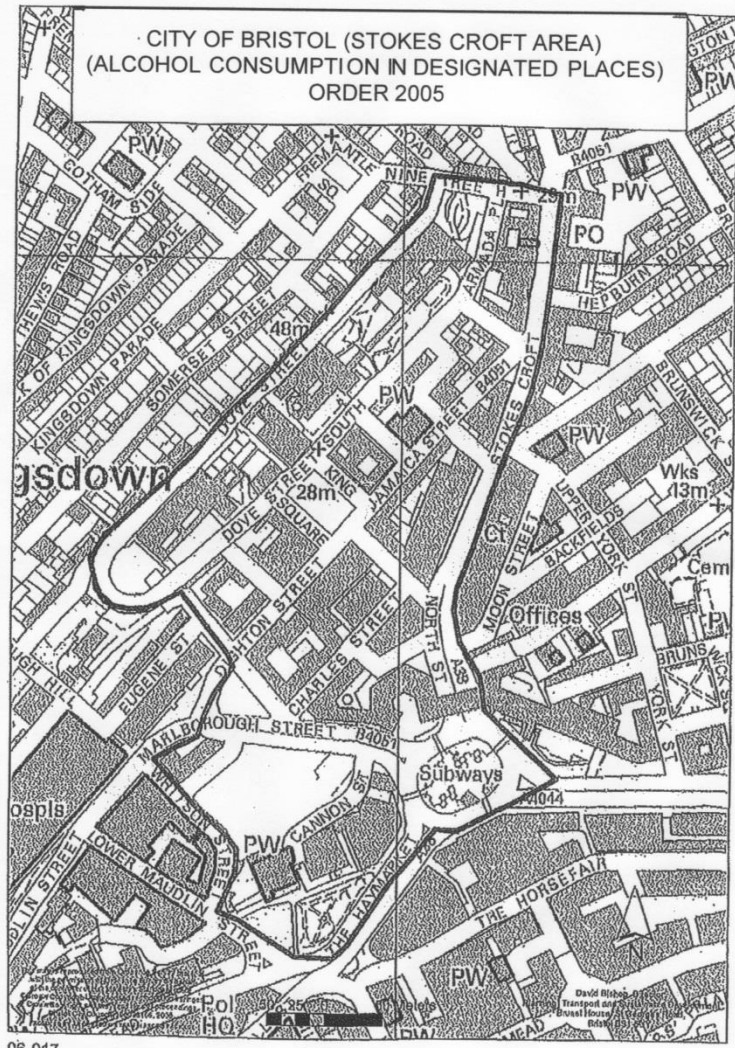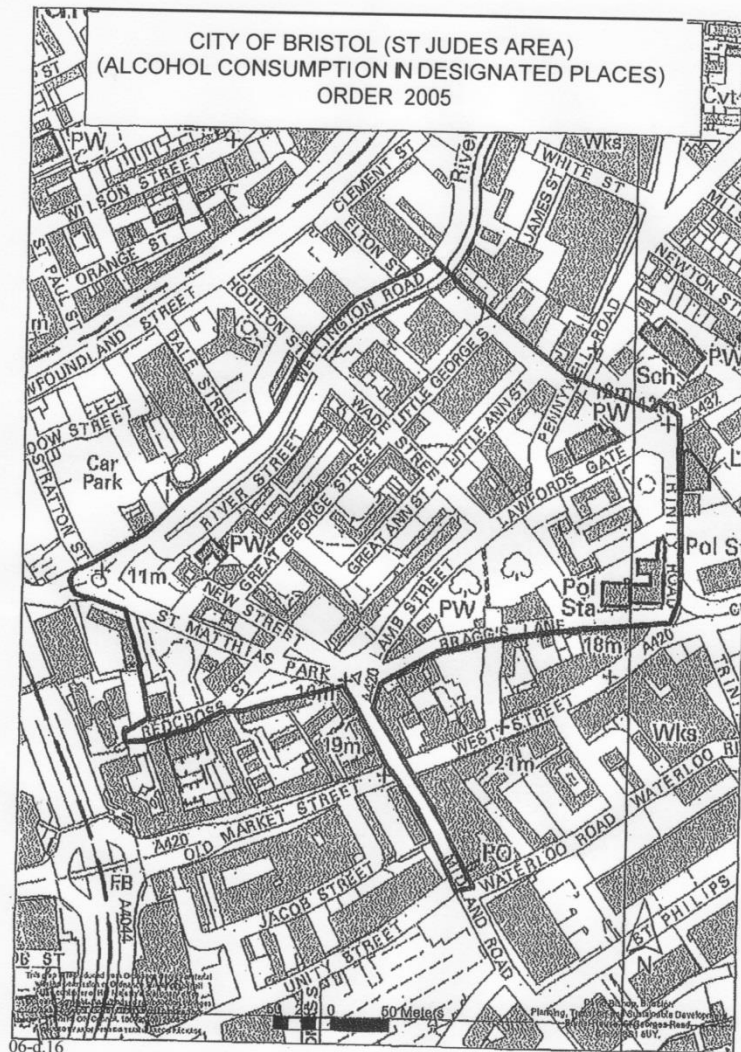
**Appendix 4 - Map C**

BY-LAW OF BRISTOL (QUEENS APPLY) (V8Bbft. A>
(ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PLACES)
ORDER 2005
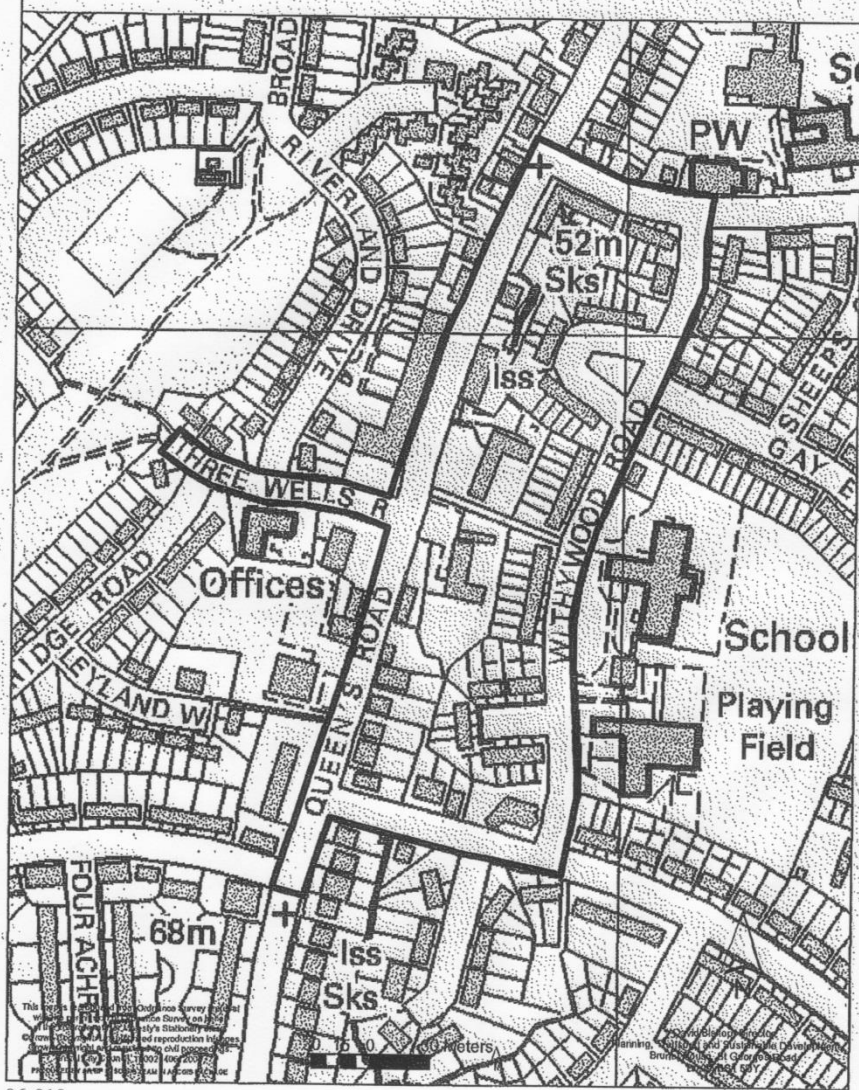
06-019

**Appendix 4 - Map D**

CITY OF BRISTOL (ST AUGUSTINES PARK, WHITCHURCH AREA)
(ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PLACES)
ORDER 2005
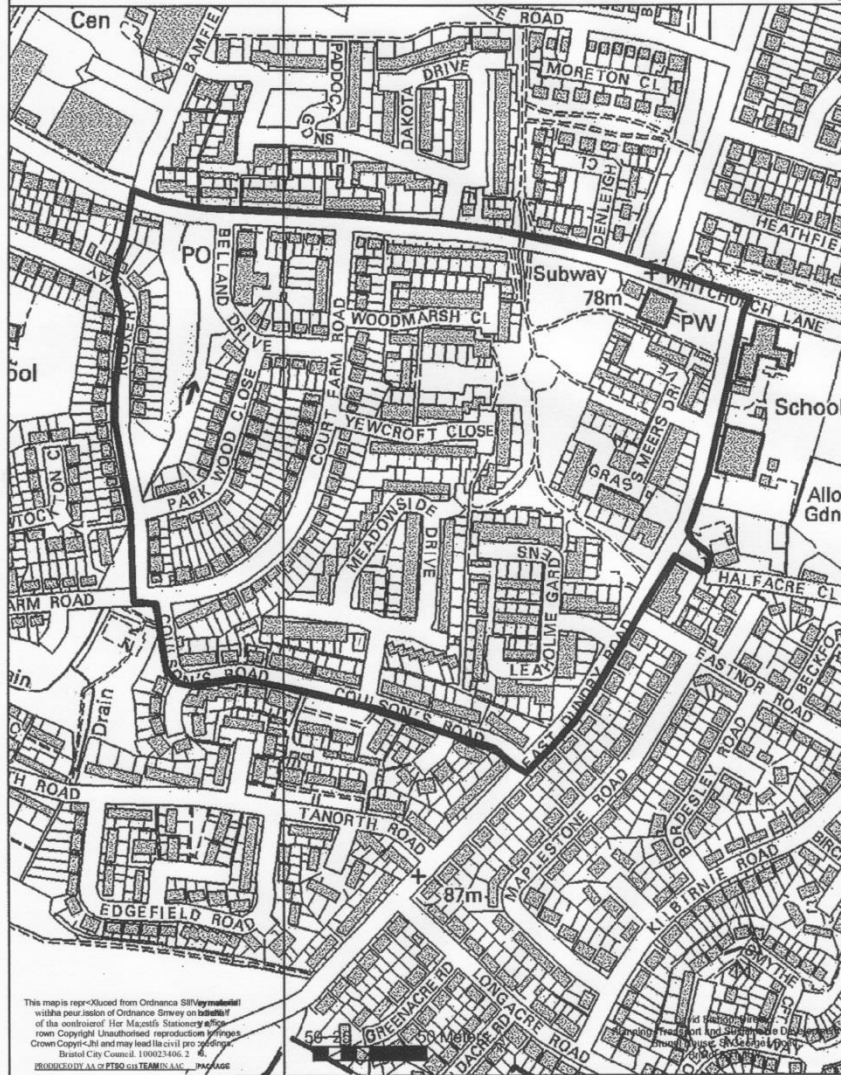
06-018

**Appendix 4 - Map E**
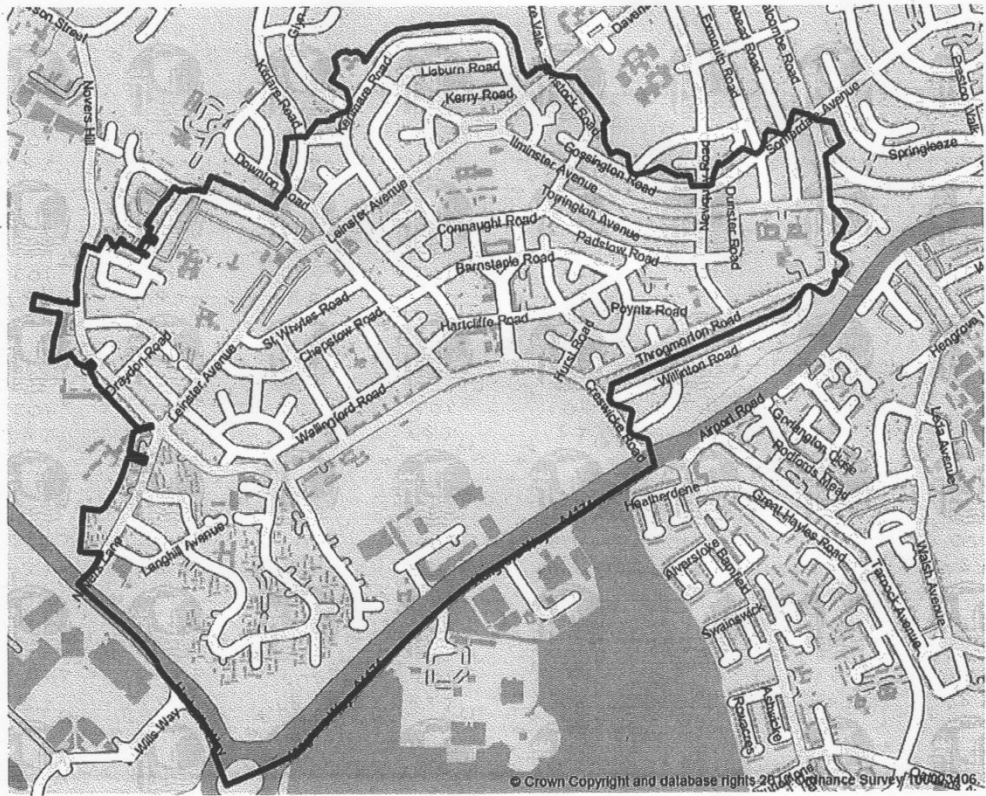
**Appendix 4 - Map F**
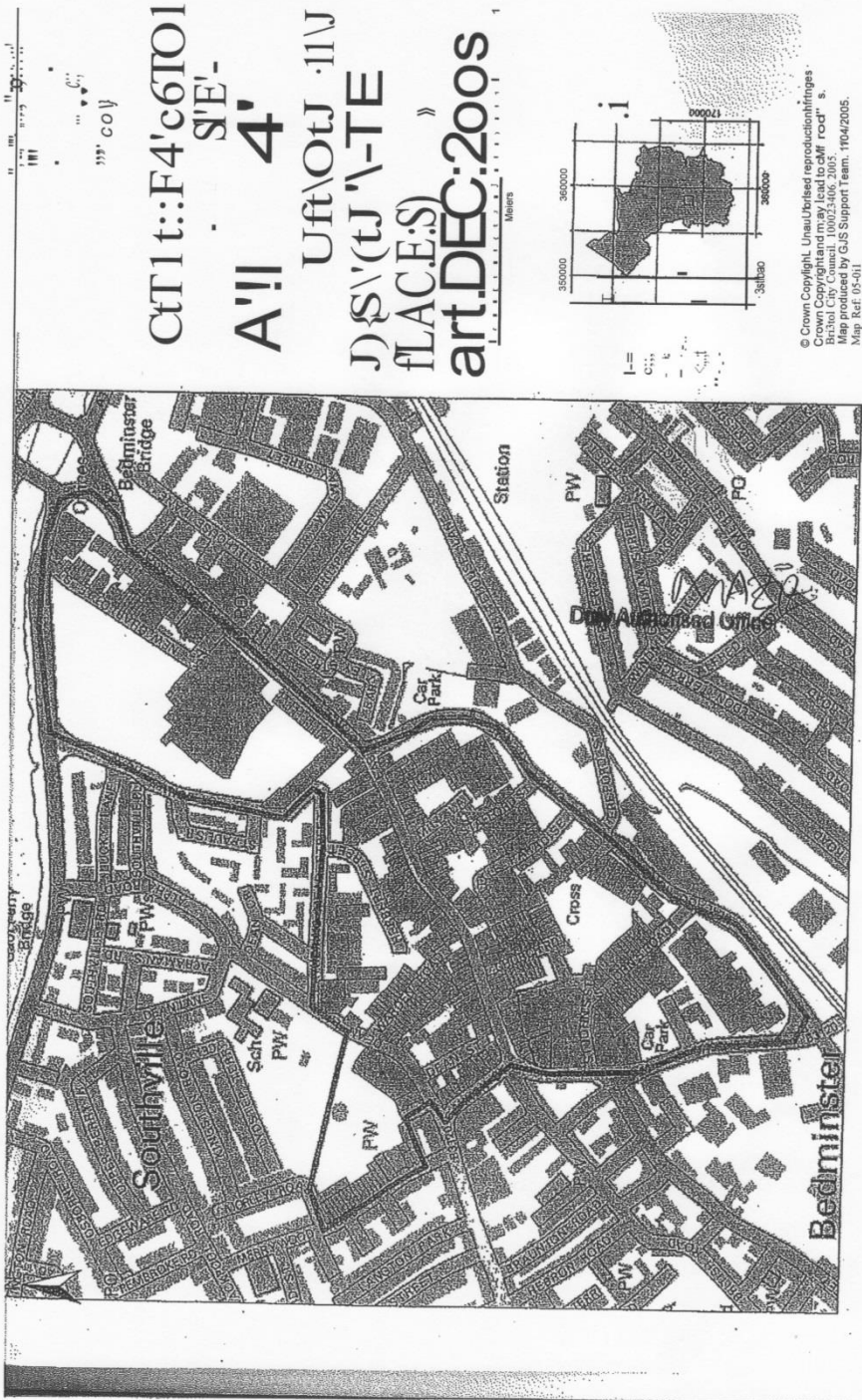
**Appendix 4 - Map G**

# Appendix 5: T2 & T3 tables summarising place type characteristics and features

## Table 2 Sleeping Places characteristics & features

| Sleeping places | Shelter | Warmth: physical & emotional | Autonomy & privacy | Visible / invisible | Liminal space | Elevated or submerged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "The car park near the hospital" Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind | Group of people homeless together = perception of relations of home & emotional warmth | Shanty town aspect e.g. homeless people creating their own spaces | 'Hidden' from mainstream view. Access via route under the car park ramp. | Car park as semi-public space. | Submerged entrance. |
| "The Bear Pit Car Park" Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind | | Space at the top of the stairs utilised by one homeless man. | Space monitored by 'good' security guard. | Car park as semi-public space. | Top floor of car park. Direct access to flat roof. |
| "Cardboard Village" Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind. | Group of people homeless together = perception of relations of home & emotional warmth | Shanty town aspect e.g. homeless people creating their own spaces | Hidden from mainstream view but within CCTV monitored space. | Car park as semi-public space. | First floor. |
| "St Saviour gate multi-storey" York | Shelter from rain and wind. | | Space beneath return of stairs utilised by one homeless man. | Hidden from mainstream view. Monitored by 'good' security guard. | Car park as semi-public space. | First floor. |
| "The dungeon" Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind. | Physically warm beneath ground. Emotional warmth = pairs/groups sleeping in | Shanty town aspect e.g. homeless people creating their own spaces | Hidden from mainstream view. Hidden by tree cover (summer). | Public park as 'public' space. | Elevated from rest of park. View out across the park (winter). Submerged sleeping area. |

| Sleeping places | Shelter | Warmth: physical & emotional | Autonomy & privacy | Visible / invisible | Liminal space | Elevated or submerged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | the space together. | | | | |
| "The BRI" Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind. | Emotional warmth from group of homeless people sleeping at the site together. | | Out of mainstream view. Hidden by tree cover all year round (evergreen). | Liminal space in flowerbed directly between NHS hospital & street. | Elevated location, overlooking street. |
| 'The Bear Pit', Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind. | Emotional warmth from pairs or groups of homeless people sleeping at site together. | Some shanty town aspect e.g. homeless people creating their own spaces | Within view of CCTV and regular pedestrian traffic e.g. *perception* of safety. | Liminal space – perception is of the subways as neutral or public space | Sleeping areas elevated well above street level. View of all subway entrances and exits. |
| Jane's Hot Skipper, Bristol. | Shelter from rain and wind. | Physical warmth from hot vent. Emotional warmth from perception of safety and relationship with Patch (Jane's dog) and pigeon that shared Jane's space. | Autonomy and privacy e.g. space made personal through feeding pigeon, drying clothes and ability to return to skipper and leave at will. | Out of mainstream view. | Liminal space – bin store, perception of semi-public / communal use area. | Sleeping area tucked away, below street view. |
| Ramada Hotel bin store, Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind before roof was removed. | Hot vent present. | Space behind bin used to store belongings e.g. duvet, jumper. Intention to return to the space. | Out of mainstream view. Close to CCTV monitored area to front of hotel. | Liminal space – bin store, perception of semi-public / communal use area. | Tucked away from mainstream view. Elevated from street level via steps up from street to hotel entrance. |

| Sleeping places | Shelter | Warmth: physical & emotional | Autonomy & privacy | Visible / invisible | Liminal space | Elevated or submerged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "Bin cupboard behind Greggs", York | Shelter from rain and wind. | | Space behind bin used to store belongings e.g. duvet, jumper. Intention to return to the space. | Out of mainstream view. Close to CCTV monitored area e.g. back of shops and city centre. | Liminal space – bin store, perception of semi-public / communal use area. | Tucked away from mainstream view in courtyard used by commercial properties to store bins. |
| "Under the bridge", Bristol | Shelter from rain and wind. | Site used by many homeless people over period of many years. Continued use / group association. | Space personalised e.g. through belongings left signifying intention to return. | Out of mainstream view. Functions as 'secret' non-place. | Liminal space – perception the area is neutral / non-place. | Tucked away from mainstream view. Beneath street level. |
| Monk gate Bush, York | Shelter from rain and wind. | Sense that site 'belongs' to homeless people e.g. not used by non-homeless people. | Space known throughout homeless community as a place to which one can return if necessary. | Out of mainstream view. Functions as 'secret' non-place. | Liminal space – site of former graveyard. Perception the area is semi-public. | Entrance to bush 'hidden'. Elevated position and view out to three routes away/to the site. |
| Jacko's bushes by the Minster, York. | Shelter from rain and wind. | Sense of emotional warmth generated through proximity to Minster and family connections for Jacko. | Place functioned as a sleeping place to which Jacko regularly returned. | Hidden by tree cover (until trees chopped back by authorities). | Liminal space – green area between buildings and street. Sense of semi-public space. | Back protected by wall of buildings, view out towards three possible exits and entrances to bushes. Slightly elevated from street level. |
| Jane's place beneath the | Shelter from rain and wind. | Physical warmth provided by hot pipes. | Place to which Jane regularly returns. | Hidden from mainstream view. | Liminal 'non-space' – space | Submerged / below street level. |

| Sleeping places | Shelter | Warmth: physical & emotional | Autonomy & privacy | Visible / invisible | Liminal space | Elevated or submerged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dental Hospital, Bristol. | | | Jane's place e.g. sense of privacy and autonomy. | | utilised is space between building and ground level. | View out street level. |
| Andrew's skipper by the river, Bristol. | Shelter from rain and wind. | Physical warmth from small fire. | Place to which Andrew regularly returned. Belongings stored indicating ownership of space. | Well hidden from mainstream view. Obscured by tree cover. | Space no longer used e.g. old ferry landing. | Elevated with river on one side. Good view out. |
| Gary's place beneath the arches, Bristol. | Shelter from rain and wind. | Physical warmth from small fire. | Place to which Gary regularly returned/left belongings. | Well hidden from mainstream view. Obscured by tree cover (summer). Inaccessible 'non-place'. | Non-place formed in space beneath the bridge. Land perceived to be 'public' or neutral. | Elevated from street level. Tucked away with good view across to houses. |

**Table 3 - Food places characteristics & features**

| Place type: food | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| Begging spot: 'Outside Sainsbury's, by the cash machine' –Park Street, Bristol | Close to convenience shops and cash machines. On a route with major foot fall. |
| Begging spot: 'By the station', Station Road, York | Close to convenience shops and cash machines. On a route with major foot fall. |
| Begging spot: 'By Betty's', in between Betty's and the Halifax bank on Parliament Street, York. | Close to convenience shops and cash machines. On a route with major foot fall. |
| 'Somerfield skip' or Co-operative supermarket bins North Road & commercial bins on Cromwell Road, Bristol. | Regularly used commercial skip belonging to a major supermarket chain. |
| 'Budgen's skip', Micklegate, York | Regularly used commercial skip belonging to a major supermarket chain. |
| The Wild Goose café, Bristol | Free meals provided to homeless/vulnerable people by Christian volunteers. |
| 'The Nuns', Sisters of the Church, 82 Ashley Road, Bristol | Food parcels given to hungry and homeless people regularly. |
| 'The Methodists', Methodist Centre, Midland Road, Bristol | Free meals provided to homeless/vulnerable people by Christian volunteers. |
| Pip'n'Jay church car park & Redcliffe Wharf | Free meals provided to homeless/vulnerable people by Christian volunteers. |
| 'The Tabernacle', King's Kitchen, Easton, Bristol) | Free meals provided to homeless/vulnerable people by Christian volunteers. |
| 'Care Bears', Carecent, Methodist Church, York | Free breakfasts, clothes and advice offered to homeless and vulnerable people every day except Sunday, 8.30am to 10.45am |

# Appendix 6: Schedule of services for homeless people in Bristol created by Bristol Christian Action Network (last updated and latest available 2010).

Table 4 - Schedule of services available to homeless people in Bristol (2010)

PLACES IN BRISTOL OFFERING FOOD, HELP AND ADVICE

| WHO | WHAT | WHERE | WHEN |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bristol Methodist Centre | Free meals, support, advice, shower, laundry, clothing store | 31-33 Midland Road, St Philips | Mon 1.15pm-3.30pm Tue-Thu 10.00am-3.30pm Sun 3.00pm-4.45pm |
| Bristol Soup Run Trust | Soup, sandwiches, coffee, biscuits, toiletries, blankets and information | Pip 'n' Jay Church then Redcliffe Wharf | Every night: Pip 'n' Jay – after 9.15pm Redcliffe – after 9.40pm |
| Christ Church, Clifton | Saturday Breakfast Run | Watershed then Pip 'n' Jay Church then bus station | Saturdays Watershed 8.00am |
| Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland | Soup, sandwiches and drinks | Queens Road, Park Street, Watershed, City Centre /Broadmead, Bus station | Sat lunch 12noon-2.00pm |
| Elim Church | Free toast, sandwiches & cakes | Jamaica Street | Wednesdays 10.30am-12.30pm |
| Julian Trust | Hot food, sandwiches, breakfast Accommodation in dormitory for 18 people, washing, shower & laundry | Little Bishop Street, St Pauls Guest entrance in Wilder Street | Mon-Wed & Fri-Sat Hot food: 9.30pm-10.30pm Accommodation: 9.30pm-7am |
| King's Kitchen | Free full breakfast, drinks | Trinity Tabernacle, Hassell Drive, Easton | Tuesdays 5.00am-9.00am |
| One25 Drop-In Centre | Drop-In: support for women in street sex work aged 18+, free meals, condoms, showers | The Grosvenor Centre, 138a Grosvenor Rd, St Pauls | Mon-Wed & Fri 1.00pm-4.00pm |
| One25 Van | Van outreach for women in sex industry: condoms, food, advice, support | Yellow transit van around St Pauls and Easton | Mon-Thu 8.00pm-11.30pm |
| Open Door | Drop in, soup and rolls | Ivy Church, Ashley Hill | Tuesdays 12noon-2.00pm Term time only |
| Salvation Army – Bristol Citadel & Candle Community Centre | Meals, showers, drop-in sessions, Sunday lunch | 6 Ashley Road, St Pauls (corner of Brigstocke Road) | (As advertised in window) + first 3 Sundays in month 1.00pm-1.30pm |
| Salvation Army – Bristol Easton Corps | Monday Morning Breakfast Monday Morning Drop In – tea & toast, clothing, Monday lunch | Bus Station Hassell Drive, Easton | Mondays 7.30am-8.00am Drop in Mon 9.30am-12noon Lunch Mondays 12noon |
| Sisters of the Church | Food parcels & drinks | 82 Ashley Road, St Pauls | Most Sundays 2.15-4.00pm |
| St Nicholas Church | Tea, coffee, sandwiches | Lawford's Gate | Mon-Fri 10.00am-12noon |
| StreetLife | Hot & cold food, drinks, clothing | Brunswick Square | Second Saturday, 6.00-7.00pm |
| Wild Goose Coffee Shop | Free meals, support, advice | 12 City Road, St Pauls | Mon 12-2, Tue-Fri 11am-2pm Mon-Fri 8.00pm-10.00pm Sat 9.00am-12noon |

7 Jul 2010

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Localism Act in action
Case study of a new allocation scheme

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The stated purpose of the Localism Act amendments to allocation scheme requirements was to enable 'a more focused waiting list which better reflects local circumstances'. It should not be a surprise to see that divergences in allocation policies (or proposed allocation policies) that have resulted are actually along broadly political lines, rather than driven by local circumstances. Neighbouring councils can have quite different approaches, with the result that eligibility for social housing and priority within the list can vary from one side of a street to the other. The divide in London at least, and unsurprisingly, seems to be between the Tory boroughs on the one hand and the Labour boroughs (with some exceptions) on the other. Conditions for qualifying, additional preferences, implementation of flexible tenancy policies are the main differences.

Revised policies bring with them new issues and potentials for challenge. I'll try to flag some potential issues as we go on.

In the context of the Localism Act and the Allocation of Accommodation code of guidance of 2012, it is worth looking at one of the new Allocation schemes to see how the permitted changes have been implemented and to see some of the difficulties that might arise from that implementation.

London Borough of Barnet introduced a revised Allocation policy as of November 2012. Barnet also implemented a Flexible Tenancy policy in July 2012, probably the first. Barnet are currently consulting on reducing two offers to one, and offering private sector out of borough accommodation where affordability is an issue. (http://www.barnethomes.org/news/2013/07/have-your-say-on-how-barnet-council-allocates-housing/)

Barnet ended their choice based letting scheme in November 2011. The current scheme operates by direct offer, with up to two offers of 'suitable accommodation' made (subject to current consultation). Barnet's old waiting list had some 14,500 people on it. There are no figures as to those on the new list, but as we will see, it is likely to be hugely fewer.

I'll run through the main areas of post Localism Act changes in Barnet's scheme, highlighting some issues and failings of the scheme as published. Square brackets indicate my additions.

**Qualification.**

As well as the usual exclusions on eligibility grounds, Barnet's list of those excluded from the housing list includes:

a. Applicants with no local connection to Barnet as set out at Para 3.4 [save for applicants placed in band 4 as described below.]

b. Applicants who are overcrowded by only 1 bedroom and this is their only housing need

c. Applicants who have been convicted of housing or welfare benefits related fraud where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974. Any person caught by this may re-apply once this conviction is spent

d. Applicants who have refused two reasonable offers of accommodation under the terms of this Allocations Scheme, [see below]

e. Homeless applicants found to be intentionally homeless

f. Homeless applicants to whom the main homelessness duty has been ended due to refusal of a suitable offer

g. Homeless applicants placed in long term suitable temporary accommodation under the main homelessness duty unless the property does not meet the needs of the household or is about to be ended through no fault of the applicant see para 3,6

h. Applicants with lawfully recoverable arrears or other housing related debt within the meaning of this Scheme

i. Applicants whose income or assets exceeds the limits set by the Council (as these limits will change the Officers will use guidance to apply this test) [Current figures are: With child or children: household income is below median Barnet earnings (currently £36,200); A single person or childless couple and household income is below median Barnet earnings less 15% (currently £30,770) ]

j. Homeless applicants but assessed as having no priority need under the homelessness law

k. Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the Council in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation, unless an

appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained for a reasonable period. In assessing the application for registration, the Council will take into account the size of the debt, the means to pay and the degree of need

l. Applicants in breach of another condition of their Tenancy Agreement and this is accepted by both parties.

Barnet does state that a discretion is retained to waive these categories in exceptional circumstances.

Some of these exclusions are unclear. Others troubling.

At (a.), local connection, Barnet's scheme does not, as yet, take follow the requirement of The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012, in force from August 2012, which provides that local connection does not apply to a person who:

> 3(3)
> (a) is serving in the regular forces or who has served in the regular forces within five years of the date of their application for an allocation of housing under Part 6 of the 1996 Act;
> (b) has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner where—
> > (i) the spouse or civil partner has served in the regular forces; and
> > (ii) their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
> (c) is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service.

The intent to introduce this regulation was spelled out at 3.27 of Code of Guidance 2012.

The overcrowding by one bedroom (b.) is unclear. By what standard is this measured? The policy doesn't state, but if the measure is statutory overcrowding, is this reasonable? How does this not fall under the reasonable preference category for overcrowded conditions (4.4(c) of the Guidance), let alone be excluded from qualification?

The disqualification at (d.) for anyone refusing two suitable offers lasts for 12 months, para 4.25 (the second 4.25) of the scheme states:

> *An applicant whose housing priority has been reduced under 4.24 will not be entitled to be reconsidered for housing under this allocations scheme for a period of 12 months from the date that the Council notified them of its decision, except where there has been a material change in circumstances such that the offer of rehousing would no longer be suitable, for example because of an enlargement of the applicant's household or a deterioration in ill health.*

Quite what this means is unclear. If the circumstances had changed at the time of the second offer, that offer would not be suitable, so would not be a second offer. But if circumstances change in the 12 month suspension, does this mean a retrospective assessment of the suitability of the last offer in the new circumstances?

Homeless applicants placed in long term suitable temporary accommodation (g.). The policy goes on to state that a non-exhaustive list of 'long term temporary accommodation' includes "private sector properties let via the council or a housing association under a leasing arrangement, and non-secure tenancies on the regeneration estates."

It is hard to see the basis for this, where there has been no discharge of duty. Why not homeless reasonable preference (4.4(a) of the Guidance)? How come exclusion simply on the basis of the apparent security of temporary accommodation?

Homeless applicants assessed as having no priority need (j.). The Guidance states at 4.4(a) that reasonable preference **must** be given to:

> *people who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need)*

Barnet's exclusion from qualifying of 'homeless but not in priority need' would appear to run contrary to the requirement to give reasonable preference.

## Local Connection

Barnet specify local connection as:

> *Local connection within the terms of this scheme will normally mean that an applicant has lived in this borough, through their own choice, for a minimum of 2 years up to and including the date of their application, or the date on which a decision is made on their application whichever is later.*

> *Accepted homeless households placed by this authority in accommodation outside Barnet will also have a local connection as long as they fulfil the two year residential qualification (time spent placed by Barnet in temporary accommodation outside the borough will count towards time spent in Barnet.*

> *Local connection may also be awarded to people who need to move to a particular locality in the borough, where failure to meet that need would cause exceptional hardship to themselves or to others. Those without a local connection will not be eligible to be placed in bands 1, 2 or 3 until this condition is satisfied.*

> *People in the following categories will not normally be considered as having a local connection:*

- *Those placed in the borough of Barnet in temporary accommodation by another borough*

- *Those placed in the borough of Barnet in residential or supported housing by another borough*

- *Secure or flexible tenants of other boroughs*

- *Those who do not meet the residential criteria but who have family members in this borough.*

So, what if you have spent two years in Barnet but were placed there in temporary accommodation by another borough? Apparently you have no local connection as regarded as not being there 'by your choice'.

A decision that an applicant does not qualify is subject to a review process, which I'll come back to below.

## Preference and priority

The preference tables are attached at the end of these notes. The key point is that nobody without a reasonable preference under s.166A(3) Housing Act 1996 as amended will be allocated any band at all. Barnet label these as s.167(2) preferences, but that only applies to Wales.

A further significant element in Barnet's scheme awards an additional preference for Community Contribution (from Band 3 to Band 2). The terms of this are set out in the annex 3 to the Policy, attached at the end of these notes. What is counted as a Community Contribution is in most instances, strictly defined - eg Employment is one member of household in employment or self employed for 6 of the last 12 months. (Though whether full time or part time is not specified).

Voluntary work must be for a minimum of 10 hours per month and can only be for

> *a not-for-profit organisation that is registered with the Volunteer Centre Barnet or recognised by the Council, or a charity that is registered with the Charity Commission or is funded by the Council or another local authority or a faith based community group or organisation. Tenants and Residents Associations which are constituted are classified as not-for-profit organisation* [sic.] *They must be registered with Barnet Council or a Registered Social Landlord to qualify.*

In other instances, such as awarding a community contribution preference to 'older' residents or the disabled, where 'frailty or disability' prevents them from working, the decision is left as an exercise of discretion by the housing officer.

There is also an age distinction drawn. Someone who is under 25 would have to be volunteering for 20 hours a month for at least 6 months, rather than the 10 hours per month required of the over 25s.

Registered foster carers are acknowledged as performing a community contribution, although ironically, the bedroom tax penalty still applies.

On ex-service personnel, the Community Contribution is awarded as follows:

> *Applicants who have served in the British Armed Forces and lived in Barnet for at least 6 months immediately prior to enlisting, will qualify for a community contribution award automatically, with the exception of those*

*who have been dishonourably discharged. This includes people who have served in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and British Army.*

*Service with the armed forces will be confirmed with the Royal British Legion.*

The lowest band, band 4, is reserved for those owed a full housing duty under s.193(2) but without a local connection. The Scheme notes that this is very unlikely to result in an offer of social housing, but applicants may be helped to find a home in the private rented sector.

There has to be a question as to how far this can be described as a 'reasonable preference', when it is the lowest band for those considered to qualify for the housing list. There is, quite simply, nobody to be preferred to.

It also appears to be partially putting into practice the suggestion made by DCLG 'advisor' Andy Gale that councils should ensure that:

*the reasonable preference for accepted homeless cases to be reduced to the bottom of the reasonable preference groups to ensure that a social housing offer doesn't come before a PRSO offer.*
*([http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/2012/11/homeless-legislation-a-thing-of-the-past/](http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/2012/11/homeless-legislation-a-thing-of-the-past/))*

It is also worth noting that an offer of private sector accommodation, even out of borough, can be considered as a reasonable offer for the purposes of the allocation scheme as a whole. 4.23 states:

*Applicants may be offered a property in the private rented sector. These offers are subject to specific regulations that protect the health and safety of tenants. Full details of these regulations are available on request.*

There is, notably, no description of a process for rebanding if circumstances change.

**'Reviews and Appeals'**

S166A(9)(c) provides that the applicant has a right to request a review of a decision that they are not a qualifying person. There is no prescribed mechanism for an appeal, unlike s.202 and s.204 of Part VII Housing Act 1996.

Barnet, less than clearly, appear to have both reviews and appeals. The relevant section of the policy is attached. The mechanism for a review, at 5.4 is clear enough: written submissions and a 56 day review period. The only way to challenge a negative review, or review procedure is by judicial review, although not mentioned in the policy.

On reviews and/or appeals of suitability of offers, it is hard to know what to make of this:

> 5.5 Where an applicant wishes to appeal the suitability of an offer of accommodation under 5.1 of this policy, the property will be held available whilst the appeal is considered where this is not likely to lead to an unreasonable delay in letting the property.

> 5.6 Where an applicant requests a formal review concerning the suitability of accommodation under 5.3 of this policy, the property will not normally be held available whilst the appeal is considered. [5.3 has nothing to do with a formal review of anything!]

What is the difference between a review and an appeal? Why would one see the offer kept open while the other doesn't? We do not know. Any applicant considering requesting a review of suitability of an offer is going to have a hard time working out the possible consequences.

Again, the only route to challenge a negative review of suitability of an offer will be judicial review.

**Flexible tenancies**

While flexible tenancies do not form part of the main allocation policy, the separate Tenancy Strategy must be considered as part of the overall allocation policy dealing as it does with the forms of tenure to be offered, who to and for what period.

I took a critical look at Barnet's Tenancy Strategy, published in April 2012, here: http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/2012/07/barnets-brave-new-dawn/

The Strategy is at http://www.barnet.gov.uk/downloads/download/955/local_tenancy_strategy

In effect, all new secure tenancies will be flexible tenancies save for those offered to:

■ Secure tenants whose tenancy commenced before 9 July 2012 moving to another council property – already protected in law; [Actually no, only mutual exchanges, but that's fine if Barnet extend it to transfers]
■ Older people who are in receipt of the state pension and will occupy a general needs property. [...] The terms of Sheltered Housing tenancies will remain the same as they are currently and will be let as secure (life-time) tenancies;
■ Ex-armed forces personnel who have been both medically and honourably discharged and who have also seen active service; to be validated by the Royal British Legion;
■ Households where the applicant, their spouse or a dependent child is disabled in accordance with the criteria contained in Appendix 2.

■ These criteria would also be applied in the event that a household member becomes disabled during the period of a flexible tenancy and, as a result, become eligible for a life-time tenancy;

■ Households where the applicant or their spouse is terminally ill; this would also apply in the event that a household member becomes terminally ill during the period of a flexible tenancy and, as a result, become eligible for a life-time tenancy;

Tenancies will be offered as a 1 year introductory, followed by a 5 year term flexible tenancy.  Except if the applicant is single and under 25. Then the offer will be of a 1 year introductory tenancy followed by a 2 year flexible tenancy. The Ministerial Guidance on flexible tenancy was that terms should be 5 years save in 'exceptional circumstances'. Whether being single and under 25 counts as an exceptional circumstance is an open question. A 2 year term may be offered to a prospective tenant in other circumstances, "depending on their vulnerability and the outcome of the housing assessment."

The only challenge to being offered a flexible tenancy is a review of the fixed term offered - Localism Act 107B(2) . Save for a challenge to a 2 year term that has been based on the unspecified 'outcome of the housing assessment', or possibly the classification of under 25s are 'exceptional', it is hard to see challenges here.

The termination of a flexible tenancy is more opaque.  A review of the tenant's circumstances is to take place 8 months prior to the end date of the fixed term

> The tenancy review criteria will reflect the continuing needs of tenants, any assets they might have accrued or inherited, attitude to work / training opportunities that might have presented themselves and pressures on social housing. Tenancies will not normally be extended where one or more the following apply:
>
> ■Households with children with a gross income that is equivalent to the median earnings in Barnet [currently £36,200];
> ■A household with no children that has a gross income that is equivalent to the median earnings in Barnet minus 15% [currently £30,800. Note income not earnings. Including benefits/tax credits etc.?];
> ■A tenant or a member of their household who has been convicted of an act of civil disturbance or other criminal activity;
> ■The tenant has breached the terms of their tenancy and has failed to reach or maintain an agreement with the Council to remedy this breach. For example, there are rent arrears and the tenant has not agreed or maintained an agreement to clear these;
> ■The property is under-occupied by one bedroom or more;
> ■The property has been extensively adapted but for someone with a disability who no longer lives with the tenant (this allows the property to be released for someone who will benefit from the adaptations);
> ■Assets – the tenant or their spouse has assets or savings greater than the amount stipulated in the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme which would normally exclude someone from being granted a council tenancy [currently £30,000].

■The tenant is a young, single person on a flexible two year tenancy who has not worked or undertaken any training or education for a period of 6 months prior to the tenancy end date.

Notice to be served 6 months before the end date of the tenancy (Localism Act s.107D(3)

Tenants have the statutory right to request a review of the decision to terminate the flexible tenancy s.107E, within 21 days of the decision. Barnet's review procedure is for written submissions and an unconnected team leader or manager to conduct the review with 56 days. There is no provision for an oral hearing. (Whether an oral hearing should take place is a matter for regulation by Secretary of State under s.107E(4)&(5). No regulation has yet been made.)

There is no statutory provision for an appeal from the review decision, nor in Barnet's Scheme.  The question is what route a challenge to the decision could take. While there may be judicial review as a route, arguably there is an alternative route of a public law defence to a subsequent possession claim on the same grounds, making judicial review inappropriate.

Barnet generously state:

> Where a tenant wishes to appeal the termination of a tenancy and the notice period expires during the period of the appeal, the tenant will be permitted to stay in the property where this is not likely to lead to an unreasonable delay in
> the property being vacated.

But of course, until the review has been completed, it is likely that the Court would refuse possession, under s.107D(6).

Barnet's Scheme makes no mention at all of the requirement for a second notice, not less than 2 months prior to the end date of the tenancy, s.107D(4). This is a significant omission.

Barnet's scheme does note that a possession claim may be defended, although not wholly accurately:

> Our right to possession may then be challenged on the limited grounds that the landlord has made a legal error, a material error of fact, or that possession is not proportionate in all the circumstances.


### Challenges

Challenges to the 'reasonable preference' aspect of allocation schemes became very difficult after *R(Ahmad) v LB Newham* [2009] UKHL 14. Indeed, so did any challenges to the previous allocation schemes so long as they weren't irrational, or didn't comply

with the broad terms of the statute. However, the new post Localism Act schemes may well be subject to challenges. The introduction of flexibility for the Authorities to develop their own rules also presents issues of transparency, of reasonableness and of compliance with statute when the authorities chose to do so.

Save for a flexible tenancy possession claim, the only route of challenge to the allocations schemes or decisions made in allocation, is judicial review, once any review process has been exhausted if one is provided.

A problem in practice is that allocation issues are out of scope for legal aid. There is no funding for seeing applicants through a review, or for making transfer requests or applications for consideration.

However funding is still available for judicial review, so while advisors may not be funded to assist with allocation issues, if an issue suitable for judicial review presents itself, there is still funding available. (Subject to the latest proposals, at least.)

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