

Transcript: Exeter Tree Tales Podcast

Treelands Podcast Mini-Series

Hosted by Rose Ferraby, with Jos Smith and Luke Thompson as guests.

Intro:

Welcome to this Treelands podcast. This mini series was developed by the Lestari in association with Stellaria Media in 2023 on behalf of Forest Research as part of their work to explore the cultural and social value of trees outside of woodland. Despite making up around a fifth of the tree cover in Great Britain, trees outside of woodland, particularly in rural and peri urban areas, remain an understudied part of the treescape. This project is funded and supported by Defra as part of the Nature for Climate Fund program of work. You can find out more information about the project by following the links in the show notes. We hope you enjoy listening.

Rose:

In 2016, a small team of us worked with the local community in Exeter to create Exeter Tree Tales. It was a collection of people's stories about their arboreal connections around the city, together with an artist's map plotting their locations. We've come back together seven years on to share some of the findings and reflect on the project, what it can reveal about our cultural connections to trees, and how this might influence broader thinking into the future.

Rose:

Well, it's a sunny, late summer's day and we're sitting in the garden next to a beautiful apple tree surrounded by tall trees. But with the sounds of the modern world circling around us. And I'm here with Josh Smith and Luke Thompson. I'm Russ Herby. I'm an artist and archaeology, and I work around people's relationships with landscape through time.

Luke: I'm Luke Thompson. I'm a writer and publisher of Gilmore Press, and I teach writing and publishing at Falmouth University.

Jos: I'm Jos Smith and I'm a lecturer in literature at the University of East Anglia. I work in the Environmental Humanities, and I'm also a poet and a writer. My background is in writing about nature, writing the history of nature writing.

Rose: And we've come back together to talk about the Exeter Tree Tales Project, which we created in 2006.

Jos: At the time I was working at the University of Exeter, I was writing about the arts and environmental charity Common Ground. That archive was at that time only recently bequeathed to the University of Exeter. Common Ground were an environmental charity who had begun with members of the Friends of the Earth. They splintered away from Friends of the Earth when they felt that environmentalism was becoming too professionalized, too specialized and too scientific. And they wanted to work with artists and with local communities to find ways of encouraging people to become the experts in their own place. They were advocates of what's become quite a common term now: *local distinctiveness*. One of the projects that Common Ground were involved with was Flora

Botanica. The project ran for several years. There's an enormous archive of kind of holdings and writings and letters in Exeter University, held in its special collections. And amongst that there was a particular big map that I unfolded from the archive one day, which was done as a result of work that Dan Keech was doing for the Flora Botanica project. And this map was called Tree Tales of South Northamptonshire. It was a very beautiful map that had a border with leaves of all the trees that were featured on the map and written onto the map under particular trees were stories and histories of these trees. And I thought that was a fascinating idea, that the trees weren't just placed in the landscape, but they really had the stories written on the map as well. This was in the mid 1990s, and that map spawned a lot of research done in that area that I think Dan was involved with, which was collecting just stories about local trees. And he began to collect and publish articles about of these stories and tales of trees further afield as well. And at that time there was a lot going on in the news about what was happening in Sheffield. The local council had outsourced the maintenance of the roads and pavements to a private company, and the private company felt legally obliged to remove a lot of trees from the pavements. So they were removing a lot of old trees and planting new saplings. They described it as replacing them. And this caused outrage in the city, not only because people loved the trees, because trees were important to that city, but because they had a really distinctive history. They were part of the place. And I think there was one road in particular called Rustlings Road, and they were proposing cutting down all the trees on Rustlings Road and replacing them with saplings that probably wouldn't rustle in quite the same way. It was such a utilitarian view of trees as somehow pavement furniture rather than trees is an intrinsic part of the place, part of the living ecosystem of the city and the social world of the city as well. And I think that's a really important part of that. Those trees were really seen to be part of the community. So we began wondering what could we do in Exeter that could stave this off, because this argument seemed really horrible, that you can just replace a tree with a sapling that didn't really square. But there was a lot going on around ecosystem services at the time. And this idea that the value of a tree in the city was determined by the way it cleaned the air and that you just had to replace it with another tree that would soon come to clean the air as well. But that didn't really speak to the history and heritage value that trees might have that is really fundamentally irreplaceable. We thought, well, what is the cultural heritage of the trees in Exeter? And you can do a little bit of digging yourself. But actually what we really wanted to do was to open up and reach out to people around the city and hear what trees they valued and what histories they had in their heads, in their families. Written down in archives. We wanted to draw out a really heterogeneous collection of stories and begin to archive and make them visible to everyone. So I think at the time there was a funder called the Culture Capital Exchange, which was trying to fund partnerships between universities and cultural organizations. And I was then at the University of Exeter, and I was working on Common Ground, but also with Common Ground a little bit. And so I proposed beginning a project that would partner in the University of Exeter with Common Ground. And we were successful in the bid to begin to make a map and an archive of stories of Exeter's Tree Tales. So we needed a project officer and we were lucky enough to get Luke Thompson, who would be the kind of lead on the project. And we also needed an artist to create the map, the visual representation of all of these famous trees. And we were lucky enough to get Rose Ferraby. And so, yeah, and that was, that was really the beginning. The three of us were going to set out to make a map and collect stories of Exeter's trees.

Story from Tree Tales (read by Luke Thompson):

May 29th Exeter by James Cousins.

May 29th large branches of oak trees were placed at tradesmens doors and windows in commemoration of King Charles the second. In the evening, boys would go round and beg for the branches and make alcoves with them in different parts of the city. At night they were illuminated with candles which the lookers on would give the occupiers some pence. During the day, the cathedral and other parish bells would be rung and boys and girls wore gilded oak apples and leaves.

Rose: What do you remember about the beginning of the project?

Luke: I guess one of the first things we did was figuring out how to get word out about what we were trying to do in a way that was accessible. Both Jos and I were coming from a kind of academic backgrounds, but we wanted to be going a long way beyond institution. So it was finding ways of reaching out to as many people and finding as broad media for reaching out. So that included social media, which was Facebook really was the most one at the time. And we did interviews on the radio and we did some adverts in papers, I think. That developed gradually by word of mouth about the project too. So people started bringing their friends to these meetings - we had regular meetings. That's kind of one of the dominant memories of the project for me is those meeting. We gathered together and tried to help to focus a group of really desperate people, people from very different backgrounds with very different interests in approaches to trees. But all sharing this one love for and an appreciation of the project, I think, and they all contributed something very, very different. Huge amounts of passion and engagement, lots and lots of stories. And that was the way into a range of communities, I think from people campaigning for the preservation of conservation, particular trees to people working, growing trees and giving them a way of other people to grow and just people who used trees as part of their play or part of their daily walk, as sense of security, just a really, really broad range of relationships with trees across Exeter.

Jos: I remember it led to some quite interesting tensions as well in those meetings, where people came with very clear ideas about what trees were and how we should think about them. And there was one particular meeting I remember, which was it was a real revelation where there were there were two women who had a real sense of trees magic and the way they could feel the spirit of trees. And then on the other side of the room, there was a couple who liked to itemize all the Latin names of trees. And it was really important to understand exactly which tree you were looking at. And it was really interesting to see them come into conversation and really listen to one another. And of course, there were tensions in the room slightly, but at the same time, it made you realize that, you know, a tree is never just a tree. We have really various ways of relating to trees and all of them are valid, and all of them are important.

Luke: I think in terms of the project that tension happening and us watching it and figuring out when we need to intervene, and when we don't was I think was maybe a moment when we realized we were doing something right, because we weren't just reaching out to one particular group of people. We had this magical sense of trees, of one particular group of

people who valued the economical benefits of mature trees. We had a range of people who had completely different ideas, and somehow we'd managed to get the message, the idea over to all of these different people and in a way that attracted them to those meetings.

Rose: I think what I remember from those meetings was that it showed how often those voices get lost in these narratives, especially in cities with so many different people, and so many different kinds of attachment, those sort of small voices, normal voices, the people, the everyday often gets ignored.

Luke: I think The lost voices was one of the moments I talk about most often when talking about this project and one particular voice we remember, Si Egan who had turned up in Exeter in a bit of a state. He was homeless and struggling with addiction and he had his first night there. He didn't quite know how he was going to make it through the night, and he wrote about his night basically clinging to a tree in the shelter of this tree and feeling like it was holding a sort of hostile world just for that night to get through to the morning to start getting himself together

Story from Tree Tales (read by Luke Thompson):

Si's Tree by Si Egan.

This tree just outside the cathedral holds a special memory for me. I arrived in Exeter in 1999, homeless and alcoholic and drug user. Unable to find anywhere to stay and my first night I tried a bench on the cathedral green, but my paranoia got the better of me. Every noise in the distance became a threat. 16 years ago, this tree was noticeably smaller, really more like a large bush, at least from what I remember. I lay down beneath it, using its shed leaves as camouflage to hide me from the monsters of my imagination. Like the city and its people, this tree provided me with a sense of safety and protection. The tree has grown and so have I. I'm no longer an alcoholic, though I do drink. I have a small flat to call home in the city centre and a great part time job. I only wish that the help I had was there for everyone who has to sleep on the streets. Sadly, that has also changed.

Jos: It was really memorable and the fact that that stayed with him and that he was drawn to contact us to really say 'this tree matters to me'. You know, he still thinks about it now. And he's not homeless anymore, but he still thinks about, you know, that tree with really warm memories. And he wanted that tree to be put on the map, which is just so lovely. What I remember that was quite interesting, was someone got in touch to say that there was a particular plane tree planted from a seed that had come from the island of Kos where Hippocrates had lived, and it's Hippocrates that the doctors make that Hippocratic oath, too. And one of the doctors who bought this seed back to the UK from Kos and planted it in the hospital grounds and it was still growing there. I mean, that's the kind of history that you couldn't possibly know just by looking at the tree.

Luke: It was actually the chaplain who wrote that piece.

Jos: Was it?

Luke: Yeah, the lead chaplin of the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. Yeah. And he said it was still growing 30 years on. So that's almost 40 years now.

Rose: And I suppose that these sorts of stories contrast with what we're used to with trees in terms of celebrations of more famous trees out in the landscape, isn't it? It's sort of showing that everybody stories and connections are important.

Jos: Yeah, that's it. I mean, I think that the Woodland Trust have done a fabulous work around raising attention around national trees, trees of national interest. But I think at the time then they were quite loaded towards kind of historic importance. You know, the Robin Hood Oak, the Wordsworthian Yews. And we wanted to really advocate for the more ordinary, the everyday. And it was it was amazing how vibrant some of the stories were that people were coming up with.

Rose: What are some of the other ones that you both remember and that stayed with you?

Luke: Sometimes I think it was the approach or process and the passion of the people in their connection to the trees in their particular areas and landscapes. So I remember somebody who did pages and pages and pages of snippets on the Alphington trees. That was really nice and it was almost taking you down the walk that she goes. There was a hanging tree, I remember. And also I quite liked how as you read through, you find the same places. So these people who don't know each other at all, have never had any connection with each other a lot of the time clearly walking the same way or they've crossed the same paths and you see the same places emerging within different stories, which I think is something you maybe had fun with on the map?

Rose: Yeah, that lovely sense of people criss-crossing across the city. I like the idea of visibility and invisibility. I think that there were lots of trees that, you know, I myself particularly noticed, which after those discussions I started to really notice all the time. But also the trees that had disappeared and all of this idea that sort of came up with this idea of the ghost trees in Exeter and the ones that people had loved and disappeared and they left a gap. This lovely sense of a city being things that are present and things that have gone. But it's people's memories that keep them as assemblages in the city and trying to piece that into a visual map, that was a sort of interesting creative process to go about.

Jos: And it's the stories that keep most trees alive, those ghost trees alive, because people still tell stories and they're they're part of the place. I think generally another thing that came out was the emotional complexity. You know, this wasn't just people feel that trees are wonderful. Trees have really, you know, sometimes emotions of hope and promise and sometimes emotions of grief and remembrance. There was a kind of fascinating story about a Second World War bomb crater in which a family had planted a chestnut tree in memory of their son who had died. And I remember thinking that that was kind of a just a really interesting example that where the bomb crater itself is a kind of site of trauma, but then to grow a really painful memory inside that bomb crater, to plant something that's going to live and grow and then, you know, produce chestnuts that will bring joy and wonder to people. There's this kind of amazing way of kind of remembering, but also looking to the future.

Story from Tree Tales (read by Luke Thompson): The Chestnut Tree, Argyll Road by Niels Svendsen. In 1942 during the blitz of Exeter, a bomb fell on our field in Argyll Road. I was 13

years old at the time and our house shook, but we were not hit. The next day, whilst my father started to repair the broken windows, my older brother Jorgen and I went to see the bomb damage. It was a large crater in the middle of our seven acre field made by 1000 pound bomb. It missed the cow, but there was a lot of shrapnel near the crater. A week later we were told that my brother Axel had been killed in his Spitfire over France. We were all very upset and it was my older brother Jorgen, who had the idea that we should plant a tree in the bomb crater in memory of Axel. Walking in our wood, he found a small chestnut tree which he dug up, and we four brothers ceremoniously planted this sapling in the middle of the crater.

Jos: Yeah, that was a lovely one.

Luke: There's got to be another project in commemorative trees, hasn't there? Because that sense of how long the tree last, there's something about the planting of it and the length of the tree lasting is to do with the memory and if not the grief, the memory.

Jos: Grief isn't something that we control. It's something that happens to us and lives inside us for, you know, who knows how long. And I think that the life of a tree is longer than the life of a human, isn't it. It will outlive us, but we don't know by how much.

Luke: And it kind of stitches periods together, doesn't it?

Rose: It goes to sort of generations, doesn't it. That idea of generational time and the natural world and the things that connect us back and forward?

Jos: Yeah, and nonhuman generations, and human generations set within non-human generations and then human epochs or something.

Rose: And I think that's one of the things that often fascinates us about trees, isn't it, especially older trees, is that you can say, 'Gosh, when that tree was planted, this thing was happening in history', or opens up the landscape in a different way. You suddenly see the landscape changing around the trees, which in terms of a city that changes so fast, it gives you a different sense of time and our own importance, doesn't it?

Luke: That was actually something I liked as well. How those the historic moments crisscrossed in the same way as we said that the stories do. There was one we thought of where the tree that I think had been bombed in two world wars, if you remember that one. But it had survived. Yeah, but as a slightly lesser-tree. I think from one of them maybe it was split completely in two and I think it was in one of the parks. I think it's quite a lot of those sort of criss cross moments as well where the small story and the big story come together. Or the very specific and the national come together. Another one was the Luccombe Oak wan't it.

Jos: Yeah the Luccombe Oak. That was a bit of an eye opener because it was a tree that was actually created in Exeter. Exeter was home to a lot of 19th century plant hunters, people that go out around the world and bring back specimens. I guess these people had a very different understanding of a garden or like a wood. But what was the guy's name? William Luccombe. He created the Luccombe oak by grafting, perhaps a Turkey oak and a Cork oak. So there was no Luccombe oak before he'd done that. So the Luccombe oak is Exeter's own

oak tree. And that just it does it a slightly strange thing to your mind when you think about these trees being created, anew. Which of course is no news when you think about all the apple trees, the fruit trees that are all made from hybrids. And we came across some specific cider apples that were created in Exeter as well, the Royal Wilding.

Story from Exeter Tree Tales (read by Jos Smith):

A dissertation on Cider and Cider Fruit by Hugh Stafford.

The colour of the Royal Wilding cider without any assistance from art because of a bright yellow rather than a reddish beerish tincture. Its other qualities are a noble body, an excellent, bitter and delicate - excuse the expression - roughness and a fine vinous flavour. All the other qualities you may meet within some of the best South Hams cider, but the last is peculiar to the Royal Wilding and the white four only, and you will in vain look for it in any other.

Rose: It was that that Jim put into his song wasn't it?

Luke: Yes, we invited Jim to give us a song based on the stories that were coming in and the managed to weave in a lot. And he started off as a Wassail,

Jos: Jim Causley, yeah, that's right. That was wonderful. Yeah. He wrote a whole new song for Exeter's Trees.

Jim Causley's Exeter Tree Tales Song

Jos: And when we launched the book in the city, which was just such a wonderful event, it was so full of people. And Jim played the song that he'd written and people read from their parts of the book. Si came along and read. He was really nervous, but he read and it was really powerful to see him read the story of his tree that meant so much to him when he was living in the street and Rose presented. You presented your map, didn't you? That was a really nice thing to reveal.

Rose: Yeah. And it was lovely to see not just people who'd been involved in the project, but broader Exeter residents and friends and people from the university and coming together and sort of really being aware of that. And the other stories that came out during that opening - people started to really talk about their trees, didn't they?

Luke: Could have done another book couldn't we?

Rose: Yeah, it sort of makes you realize how everybody has these stories. And everyone loves talking about them and it's good to share them.

Jos: Well, that was a really interesting thing. There were almost tensions about the fact that, you know, in making a map that it was going to be complete. And people felt like, yeah, cool but what about my tree? You know, is this this map doesn't represent my tree. I think we really have to emphasize the fact that: make your own map, make another map. You know that no map is in a final a map is just a story of a particular moment in time. And the maps should be more open ended.

Rose: That cartography is interesting, isn't it? Cause I felt when I was making it, I felt strange about setting things down and there was a sort of loss of fluidity somehow, as you started to build it. So I think I've thought quite a lot since then about if I was going to make it again, how I would make it, and how you visualize what essentially are these sort of, as we were saying, sort of interconnecting threads and movements. So actually the trees, although they're set in a place, they're sort of almost moving by their very stories and the people around them and the life of the city. It's exciting because you think there are so many other ways we could communicate that and people could be making their own ways of it and things that are sort of more about movement or sound or film.

Jos: I think more more than a map, the idea of conversation was the most valuable thing that came out of it. The fact that people were just talking to one another about trees in a way that, you know, you talk to your family about the trees that you know around your place, but how often do you talk to another family or neighbour or something. When you all have conversations about the same trees that you live near and suddenly you realize that there are whole worlds that people hold in their heads, an association about a particular tree that you don't know about, and the more you talk about them, the more the more it opens up and makes visible to everyone the kind of the living heritage, the living maps that are out there.

Rose: And I guess the creation of community through the stories of trees and the sharing of those stories, you know, that was lovely about the launch, wasn't it? Was that people were suddenly talking who wouldn't normally have had a chance to talk or wouldn't normally meet each other.

Luke: We had no way of documenting those conversations.

Rose: And it also makes you wonder what conversations happened afterwards. The book went out into the world, didn't it, and how did people use it? We don't know!

Luke: And that little group of people, did they keep on meeting up and thinking about it? Because the idea of the project was it was almost experimenting with the template of what could be done in other places. For showing the importance of trees to a broad range of people what sort of cultural personal relationships.

Rose: What do you think now about how this all relates to those original Common Ground objectives?

Jos: I do think that there is that there's something a little bit more radical at work underneath the tree work here, which is about community and democracy and encouraging people to feel like they are the experts of their place and that they are invested and they should be a part of that places future in the decisions that are made about it. So much of what we do in modern life is atomized. You know, we're divided. We're kind of turned into individuals, and this is just a total resistance to that. It's about getting everyone outdoors and talking to one another and finding out what we all value together, even if we value those things differently. You know, it's about negotiating and compromise and having a

difficult conversations and respecting difference. And those are all really kind of important values. And trees are a really big part of that. I think we are seeing trees being managed by experts again. Trees are being talked about as providing ecosystem benefits, and those benefits are only measurable if you have the right knowledge about ecology and the right accountancy skills. And they can be a bit alienating for people who listen to the fact that, you know, the oak tree in the city centre is worth £10,000 a year or something. I don't remember would be. You might look at it and think, 'Well, okay, maybe, yeah. But I had my first kiss under the oak tree, so it was a little bit more than that to me'. And sharing that with someone, you know might have been homeless and taking comfort under that tree at some point. It's a different kind of value and I think it's a less replaceable value.

Rose: I mean, we've been talking about trees in cities, but if we're thinking about trees out in the countryside, in rural areas, you know, in this time where we think about tree planting and putting trees back into landscapes, is there something to learn here about how we involve communities and people in their local places in terms of putting trees back as well and creating new stories?

Jos: I think when you start thinking of trees as part of the fabric of culture rather than part of the landscape, then there might be different ways to think about tree planting that might be culturally significant rather than just about drawing down as much carbon as you can. I know scientifically, you know, we're thinking carefully about planting the right trees in the right place. But what about making that planting meaningful in particular ways? I mean, you know, you have the coronation trees, don't you? But that's always struck me as a little bit of a boring reason for planting a tree. Are there other events that might be a little bit more interesting and inspiring to people who live in a specific area? They should be locally specific. It's about trying to understand what matters to that community. Why might they want to plant a tree? What might they want to remember and think about? And I think maybe naming trees more. What other names could we come up with for trees? I mean, again, like the map, it doesn't have to be the final name, but just sharing the names that you have for trees with other people that you know in the area.

Rose: I think that came out quite a lot in the book? I remember someone talking about the octopus tree in the park, which all the kids played on and all the different names. Everyone knew the tree and had to send referrals to it.

Luke: We had the octopus tree, and we had the pirate ship in this project

Jos: The pirate ship! What a great name for a tree.

Rose: And is that curiosity, isn't it? Curiosity and the joy of it and the interactions with them.

Story from Tree Tales (read by Jos Smith):

Rougemont Mulberry by James Croden.

I remember one year around 1991 being in Rougemont Castle in late August at lunchtime. A very hot day. And seeing a businessman on his lunch break, on his hands and knees around the tree with a white shirt on and his sleeves rolled up and he had a plastic bag. His arms

were red and stained with the juice of picking up the red mulberries. He simply said, "People think I'm mad, but they make marvellous jam."

Jos: Rose, I wonder if you could tell us a bit about how you made the map and what it looked like in the end as well.

Rose: When I was listening to lots of the stories in those meetings, as I say, I was very aware of fluidity of it all and trying to connect somehow the sort of ecology of the trees with the stories that grew from it. So I got really interested in the idea of the texture of trees and how maybe the texture could come into the map in a way that was slightly more abstract maybe. But also these ideas of sort of cartographic principles of things being divided into squares and chunks, different scales of looking and how we might do that at the same time in the map. And those details of the stories versus the big picture of Exeter. So, I started going around Exeter and finding lots of the trees that people were talking about and collecting the leaves and making rubbings from them. And then I slightly had the problem of how to make this map something that was going to be easily reproduced into the book. So I began scanning them in and digitally assembling them. And this is maybe not how I normally work, but actually, in terms of the cartography it fitted with a lot of the work I do with maps and archaeology and digital assemblages. So started to piece them together and then to put them onto the map, basing it around the idea of the river, which created this thread through the city, the sort of lifeline through the city.

Jos: It's a really nice tension between the way maps bring to mind distanced observation and the way the rubbings bring to mind something really intimate and close, which I think was a lovely feature of that map.

Story from Exeter Tree Tales (read by Rose Ferraby):

Cherry Day Picnic, 10th of July 2016 by Emily Strongworthy.

Valley Park has many hidden gems, among them two glorious cherry orchards. On a sunny Sunday in July, 40 intrepid explorers came out with Devon Wildlife Trust and storyteller Clive Pigg to play Pooh sticks, explore the orchards, hunt for bugs and slow worms, and share cherry recipes and a picnic. Most who came along had never discovered the orchards before, despite living locally. Many imaginations went wild. Yarns were told, and cherries consumed. Hopefully this will become an annual event and a more regular stroll for those who attended.

Rose: It's seven years since we did this project, things have changed quite a lot in terms of work in nature recovery, tree planting. Things have changed in some ways, but in other ways not. In Plymouth this year we saw another massive felling of trees in the middle of the city and people being very upset again. Do you think lessons are being learned? Do you think we're at a time when things are changing?

Luke: They Plymouth one resonates with the origins of this, which was the Sheffield felling. There were already people sort of there were talks about these trees being felt that they would be felled, and it was a campaign group who were sort of trying to protect them. And then one night the council just went in and took them all down anyway.

Jos: I think probably for decades it's been going on, you know, councils, corporations come in and they just mow the trees down because they don't see them as part of the city. They

see them as decoration around the city. We need perpetual vigilance. Yeah, it'd be nice to see councils presented with authoritative information on this that that kind of, you know, says to them: You can't just do this. You can't just replace trees with like for like because that's just not possible. It's like, it's like cutting down a cathedral. You wouldn't cut down a cathedral and then plant a new one. It just doesn't it doesn't work like that.

Rose: Community knowledge and community care, a way of putting that to people, really showing that to the people who are making these decisions...

Luke: In time for it! I guess some of the people making these last minute decisions or the decision to go behind people back, they must be imagining that they're going to keep their jobs the next day, which isn't what happened to Plymouth. They had to resign after because of the strength of feeling that somehow they didn't predict. Maybe saying something like not just the strength of feeling of a group of people who they could brush off in some way, but the breadth of people involved and sharing that feeling, presenting that to someone ahead of time, maybe that at least would give the moments pause.

Jos: I think it has to be pushed up the pipeline in terms of scale as well, because that there is sometimes a danger or a feeling that if people do this cultural work and they come up with this amazing stuff that some private corporation like in Sheffield will just look at it and say, 'Yeah, okay, so I'm legally obliged to alter these pavements to make them fit with the health and safety codes so that we don't get sued in case someone trips on that'. And that outweighs, you know, your sentimental memories of these trees. So, you know, in a way, if we can get enough of this going on in local places, then at some point someone has to listen to it and begin to write policy that alters the legal landscape. So I think I think that's important, too.

Rose: I think it also shows the importance of listening, doesn't it? Yes. I mean, this is what the whole project was about, was listening to lots of voices. But it really shows the value of doing that right through into policy and keeping in mind the real connections and the real things that make that place and the people that make it

Jos: I think any city, any place has these stories that move there, whether they're historic stories or whether they're just stories of family history or community history or associations or affections or griefs or whatever it is: Those stories are there because they live in the space between us and the trees, I guess.