**File:** **P8\_GMT20210816-120454\_Recording.m4a**  
**Duration:** **1:25:00**  
**Date:** **29/09/2021**  
**Typist:** **696**

START AUDIO

[0:08:22]

Ian: Yes hi. Can you hear me okay?

Respondent: I can now yes. Big apologies. I’ve been trying to get on for ages. Slightly ironic really given the subject of the call that I couldn’t get on.

Ian: No worries at all. I always worry that I’ll send people the wrong link and stuff, because obviously I’m doing several and I’ve got to set up the link and then make sure I send the right link to the right person.

Respondent: Yes no, you sent the right one, but it’s just my laptop wasn’t connecting with anything this morning, sorry this afternoon. Anyway, here we are.

Ian: Great. Well thanks very much for agreeing to speak to me and for your time.

Respondent: No problem.

Ian: I know you replied to the email saying that you’ve read the information and you understand why I’m doing this.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: And what I’m going to do with, obviously I’m recording this, and parts or all of it might be transcribed to use in reporting with [REDACTED ORG NAME] or reporting with my stuff in the university, but you’ll remain anonymous. Anything you say will be just attributed to a number rather than your name.

Respondent: Okay.

Ian: Also if we need to we’ll anonymise any other people or places that you talk about. Sometimes with this kind of stuff it’s not usually the case we need to do that but I just need to make sure. That’s our standard protocol in the university.

Respondent: Absolutely fine. I understand.

Ian: Excellent Do you have any questions for me before I start?

Respondent: Not at the moment, no. That will be fine. Let’s see how we go.

Ian: Just ask any questions anytime you want as we go. Basically I’ve got a set of questions that I’m asking everyone the same. Because you are not a resident some of them we might just skip over or I might just ask them anyway and see what we get as you say, okay?

Respondent: That’s fine, yes.

Ian: Great. I know you’re not a resident in this area but how long have you worked in the area?

Respondent: Since 1973.

Ian: Okay. You’ve not lived in [REDACTED ORG NAME] area but you’ve worked?

Respondent: Yes. In a previous life I worked… Oh I said ’73 didn’t I? Sorry, I didn’t mean ’73. I meant a bit later than that. Sorry, I should have said ’93. Yes, I’ve worked in the area for Northumberland Wildlife Trust who have a number of nature reserves in the [REDACTED PLACE NAME] area, one of which includes [REDACTED PLACE NAME] . I’ve worked there both as a volunteer but also as a member of staff. I was head of conservation there until relatively recently, since which I’ve been working with the [ANON ORG]on projects in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area, and also for the [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] CPO, which is in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area.

Ian: Excellent You might not be able to answer this but I’ll just ask anyway. What do you think are the main differences between the four [REDACTED ORG NAME] villages?

Respondent: It’s an interesting question because I think it does look about, right I want to try and answer this in an honest way, I think there is a definite hierarchy between if you like affluence and I’m guessing slightly educational levels and things like that. [REDACTED PLACE NAME] for instance tends to be where more affluent people are living but may not have actually grown up there. Maybe sometimes their income is as it were.

[REDACTED PLACE NAME] has a higher level of degradation and unemployment etc. [REDACTED PLACE NAME] seems to be a little bit more on the up and up now, but was always, in my recollection was almost synonymous with [REDACTED PLACE NAME].

[REDACTED PLACE NAME] is different again. They are not particularly well integrated I think is the way I would put it, in terms of residents and activities. I would say that they are actually, it’s always been a difficult area to try to work in, because there is quite a strong sense of place and less of meshing. Yes. I think that’s been pretty consistent since I’ve been working in that area.

Ian: Yes. Great. You have answered that very well, thank you. The other side of that is do you think, in effect what do these four villages have in common?

Respondent: What do they have in common? Well, they do have, I think, a strong sense of place. It’s actually also an asset. I think the sense of community tends to be one of the strengths there. I would say, and perhaps I’m being slightly biased in saying this, is that I have noticed a greater cohesion over the last few years. That’s partly I think because we’ve had funding in which has helped bring people together to work on common themes. I think there is also, oh gosh, how do I describe this? It’s a people thing. I think people identify with each other quite well, even from different communities, and certainly within their own communities they certainly do. Yes.

I can’t think of anything else off the top of my head. Something might come up to me Ian and I’ll come back to it if that’s alright?

Ian: Yes, course. Right, so I’ll go more onto you now, which probably you can a bit more easily answer. I know you mentioned a bit about the different roles you’ve had as a volunteer for the Wildlife Trust and as a member of staff. But if we just think about just the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area for the purposes of these questions how would you describe your role in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area?

Respondent: Right. I have to say I wear a number of hats. I think my role, I’ve tried to be a facilitator and an enabler, and also, well enabler/involver, because I’m very much of the thought that if there’s a problem you are part of that problem unless you do something about it. Some of that is about trying to break down any barriers, whatever those barriers may be, so in some cases I know in the area they have problems with let’s say environmental problems with litter and things like that.

We’ve engaged in a voluntary capacity, this is for me as well, I undertake litter picks but also then try to share the opportunities with people in that local area and outside that local area really. It’s about taking pride in your local community. Although I don’t live there I feel like I’m part of that local community, and interestingly somebody actually said that to me a couple of weekends ago. Which I was actually quite proud of if I’m perfectly honest with you. I do feel a sense, you know, I don’t live there at all but I’m there all the time, so I don’t think actually having bricks and mortar makes an awful lot of difference in some respects.

Ian: That’s what I said to [ANON]. She was like, “I’ve got some people you might want to speak to but they don’t live here.” But if people spend time there working like yourself you’ve got just as much insight as anyone.

Respondent: Yes. My other thing in terms of role is I guess I’m also trying to look to improve people’s lot, whether that’s their environment or opportunities, volunteering. I manage the [LANDMARK] so partly that’s about sharing people the vision of the past as well, because it’s a place to be proud of. It’s not just a place that you come from. It’s a place that has got a past.

Not all of our places have got a glorious past. Some of them have a bit of both. But you know, it all makes people who they are, places what they are, and as I said before, if you want to make changes to places you’ve got to get off your bum and do something about it, otherwise you are just sitting moaning about things all the time. It doesn’t do any good.

Ian: Brilliant. I know you have done various different things around the area, but the project that you mentioned there is around the [LANDMARK]. Is that your primary focus most recently?

Respondent: I’ve had two. One is I actually work for the [LANDMARK] project, so I’ve been involved there as a volunteer first and then more latterly I’m actually working with local people to open the tower. We are developing a large walled garden so we can get people growing food and plants and all sorts of stuff. That is my, if you like currently that’s my key role in the local area.

But I’ve also, I think the one that I’ve been more significant on is since I started working in that area I’ve been looking at the coast and the degradation of the coast along this part of Northumberland. Up until most recently I was involved in trying to get the community heard, if that’s a way I can put it, the fact that they were living in an area that had a degraded environment and a degraded coast and everyone was ignoring them.

With my Rivers Trust hat on I’ve managed to get that brought to, well national attention to be honest, because it’s been on the telly all the time, hammering on about how rubbish it is. Now I’ve got County Council doing something to improve it, and I think that’s got to be to the benefit of the local area once it gets started. That’s been going on for 30-odd years. I’m not saying I solved it, but we found a way to facilitate getting the public, local public involved and raising the profile of a local issue to a county/national level.

Ian: When you say the degradation of the coast are you talking about, is it [REDACTED PLACE NAME] that has the beach?

Respondent: No, it’s [REDACTED PLACE NAME]. [REDACTED PLACE NAME] has had coastal coal dumping back in the ’60s and before that. But then it had a lot of landfill, and the landfill is eroding out onto the beach, which included asbestos, arsenic, lots of unmentionables and no one gave a damn about it really. Local people did but they weren’t being listened to.

We facilitated a beach clean with the Rivers Trust, which was something I’ve been doing anyway, and got involved with the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area with Councillor [ANON COUNCILLOR] Dunn and set up a group looking at the river, which the river itself is actually a degraded river and has failed various tests on its water quality over the last few years from the environment agency.

Normally, I have to say, it probably would have been ignored because it’s not a major river like the Cocker or the Wansbeck, but we highlighted the fact that it needed attention. We’ve been looking not just in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area, we’ve looked at the whole catchment which of course then impacts on the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area to do with water quality, flooding, that sort of thing. If it starts up in the uplands and comes all the way down that’s where you get your problem.

But we focused on the coast initially because that’s where the eyesore bit of it was, if you like. Then we’ve also got mine water, which is a legacy issue from the mining past of the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area, which was actually breaching into the watercourse as well.

They are all mixed up, so inevitably one thing, you can’t look at it in isolation. You have to look at them collectively. The key thing for me was again it was about public engagement. Actually, if people don’t care about their river then it doesn’t make any difference whether you make it any better. If they don’t care about it and they don’t understand it then the money will get spent elsewhere, simple as that.

Ian: Can you talk to me a little bit about that part of your role then? I was going to ask and then you kind of touched on it anyway, for example, so you’ve mentioned getting people together to clean up the beach.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: That’s coordinating and getting bodies on the beach.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: The other stuff you’ve said is like public engagement, which is I guess getting people aware and interested in issues.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: Could you just talk a little bit about how that works for you, how you go about doing those things and getting things done?

Respondent: Yes. Well, initially the first thing was talking, this is from a purely project point of view, was talking to the agencies who have got a responsibility for that and seeing what their current and future plans are. Then if they don’t mesh with what you think is required we then went to community and got representatives from the local community to tell us what their priorities were that overlapped with what other organisation’s priorities were.

We had to inevitably throw into the mix of that things that we felt were important but hadn’t been included in those discussions.

I think, if I’m honest, what we came out with was we were throwing in the things that the people thought were too difficult, like dealing with the legacy of open-cast mining, dealing with a polluted coast.

Also actually finding out what local people actually want is actually really quite difficult. I would say that in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area [REDACTED ORG NAME] facilitated us going out and asking people so we were able to put out a big map of the catchment and ask people what they thought was important to them or where there was a problem or an opportunity. I have to say we got more problems than opportunities.

But most people were surprised to know that the catchment was quite so big and that it included areas like Ashington to the south and then all the way up into the uplands. It just told me that people were disconnected from that particular thing that flows right through that community. They didn’t really value it as such or understand. That was one way.

The second way of engagement was actually doing things and telling people about it and asking them to come along. Beach clean is a good example. When we organised that we got 75 people turned up, which I think is tremendous. But I also got other partners engaged, so we got the sea fisheries committee who obviously look after the marine interests of it, so they came along. We got veterans, you know the Help [ \_\_\_ 0:26:34]. We got them along. They brought a coffee bar which helped as well.

County Council who at one point, you know, I talk about the \_\_\_, so the multiple of levels of different engagement, you know you have got the councillors who [aren’t necessarily]- are engaged but the council officers who sometimes may not be. They are actually putting across a broad vision rather than us looking at the specific issue. For us it was about highlighting that issue.

The other thing we were able to do first of all was actually raise the profile through the press and once we’d done that once it then started to roll. We highlighted, well everyone looks for bad news don’t they, so you highlight the bad news story, it gets people’s imagination and suddenly the thing starts to move on.

We were then able to talk to academia and get them to do some science on it as well. That generated more information and we were getting public engagement because people came then to tell us about things that they were aware of. We started to document some of this, which I don’t think had been done consistently previously.

But we also were very, very, if I’m honest I think probably the key thing is we got the local MP to come and have a look at it. This is where you might need to do your redacting. She didn’t even know it was part of her patch. That told us quite a bit about, well for one thing it’s a massive constituency. It goes all the way up to Berwick from [REDACTED PLACE NAME]. It’s massive. She can’t possibly know all of her patch.

But at the bottom end of it was a particular problem bit, so we are now able to share the fact that this was a particular problem environmentally. It also cut across one of her particular little things she was keen on, which is eider ducks. She just got the area designated, which helped the area enormously with pushing.

But she was able to talk to local people, which I think sometimes is the voice that doesn’t get heard. Everyone, being totally honest everyone looks at who has been elected to what, and you’ve got a Labour constituency down there and she’s a Tory, so we have got those politics as well that you’ve got to get across. I think the politics of isolation and what have you are actually quite critical in areas like that to be honest.

Ian: Sorry, I’m working from home.

Respondent: Oh don’t worry about it. It’s alright

Ian: Give us two seconds. Sorry.

Respondent: No problem. You just take your time.

[Break in Conversation 0:29:53 – 0:30:39]

Ian: Right. Sorry about that.

Respondent: No problem at all. Don’t worry.

Ian: You talked about the bigger strategic things so obviously that’s important. Getting the agencies involved, I guess this is based on your contacts and knowledge.

Respondent: That’s right, yes.

Ian: Getting stuff in the press, how does that work after that? You get a couple of stories in the press about, as you say, negative stories, “Look at this area.” Getting scientists involved getting some numbers. “It’s polluted, it’s terrible. The rest of the rivers in the area are beautiful and this one is a disgrace etc.” How does that transfer to getting 75 people at the beach? How do you get them to know about this story, know they’ve read on it and act on it kind of thing?

Respondent: Well, some of it is by direct action. For instance although I didn’t organise them it was recognised that things like litter picks were a good way of getting local people out and doing things and taking some pride in their local area. We did support those. We did one on the river for instance, got 16 bikes out I think, something like that and a car, all sorts of stuff where it had just been literally thrown in, you know. That gave us the one-to-one engagement with people which is equally important.

But it also starts to create a network I think as well. I have to wear these different hats at this particular moment. I am working at the [LANDMARK] on the weekend because we’ve got it open. It's only open on the weekend. I’m working with local volunteers and we’ve got people from the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area coming in, and they know me. We have now been able to get things like the flower arranging group coming to work on a site. We’ve got those new members.

We’ve got local history happening. We’ve got people coming and telling us about when they were bairns they used to go to the [LANDMARK] when it was totally wrecked, and they used to run around the top, you know which you’d be, “Ahh.” about now. People would come saying, “We used to come. Although we lived in Ashington we used to come here for our holidays.”

I think the other thing is in terms of population you forget that areas have a transient population that might well be people that come on holiday, particularly in that area. But I think it’s three caravan sites, three or four anyway, so those people are actually part of that local population, our local community. I think it’s not happenstance that these things happen. There is a method to it.

But also obviously key now is social media. We have been using social media, Facebook pages, a bit of Twitter, don’t like Twitter personally, but you know, we’ve done a bit of that. We’ve made videos. We have got a YouTube channel, so we’ve put a video of all of the walkovers that we did. I walked the entire river and all its tributaries and I put a summary of that on YouTube so people could walk through the river and see the whole thing, that sort of stuff.

We’ve got websites. The [LANDMARK] has got a really good website which is only just online this last week, which shows all of the previous work and pictures.

The other thing is engagement. Although we’ve had, the obvious one is school engagement isn’t it? We had every single primary school in the area come to [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] whilst we were restoring it and doing something there, so every child in the area knows about it. You then get the knock-on that every parent in the area knows their child knows about it, might want to come and visit and actually then might want to take an active engagement in it. Active engagement for me includes pride, so knowing something is there and knowing it’s important to me is we’ve ticked the box.

But I don’t like box ticking but you know what I’m saying when I say that. I mean we’ve actually achieved our aim when I say tick the box in that particular instance.

Finding ways then, I mean it’s always difficult to have engagement with people because it’s costly. If you put an event on you’ve got to find a budget for it. As always that’s difficult. Of course we’ve had COVID as well over the last couple of years which has made things absolutely in some cases nigh on impossible to do. We had a number of tree planting events planned where we could have got local people in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area actually planting trees near the river in their patch. We would have taken that as an opportunity to show them what was in the river, stuff like that and the fact that it’s actually getting better already.

The other thing we have done using social media, and technology I guess, was we got some eDNA studies done on the river so we could actually work out what fish species were in there, because there is actually no data in there at all. Then to be able to tell people that salmon are still using the river was really, really important as an indicator of quality.

We also, I’ve done a radio programme with Alnwick, Lionheart Radio it’s called. It’s a community radio station and we have, once a fortnight, we have a programme called The Weekending Show. We used to go into the studio during lockdown doing mini-interviews or dialogues, and they’ve been broadcast. We’ve used that, not every week or every other week but we’ve been using that as a medium to get some of these messages across, which admittedly is a limited audience.

However, it has then been transferred into a podcast which is now available and we’ve been telling people about the podcast and asking them to go and do it. We’ve done interviews with volunteers, put them on there. That means they go and tell all their friends. They all listen to it.

I’ll give one example, which is not actually in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area but forgive me, just to demonstrate what I’m getting at here, we saw two lads cleaning up the river, just down the road from the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area. But we found them pulling out cans and bottles and stuff out the river. We didn’t know who they were so we put a little piece on Facebook saying, “We’ve seen this.” Not filmed, just literally a photograph of cans and bottles in the river. We said, “We’ve seen two lads doing this. We’d love to know who they are so we can thank them and recognise them properly.”

Within about two hours of having that on we had 19,000 hits on that and it had been shared about 25 times, which was great, and it continued to do that. We never found out who they were, but actually I think that doesn’t really matter. It actually got the message across. I think social media does give people that platform. I tend to think of it as more positive than negative, because quite often you’ll find somebody who will come on and they’ll have a moan about car parking or something like that. But actually generally people like to share things.

I think the other side to it is it allows people to interact. If you have got somebody, it gives people a way to volunteer for instance. It gives people a way to share as a memory or a photograph or a skill or something like that, which would have been that much more difficult beforehand. We are trying to make best use of it as we can. Rome wasn’t built in a day but we are getting there I think.

Ian: Yes. I do want to focus a bit on the social media aspect actually. I think the first thing to pick up on, which I guess you kind of went over there was, I wanted to say how has the pandemic affected the way you do your engagement and do everything else? You touched on the fact you’ve done YouTube videos and stuff, but yes, how has, just thinking about the pandemic, what has that changed in terms of how you do that community role?

Respondent: It made it for a while a lot more difficult because a lot of the work we were doing was face-to-face with people. We lost that. I have to say, because some of our projects for instance on the River Lyne with the Rivers Trust, we had a steering group that met every couple of months and we were able to date that and get new things and blah, blah.

It went online and it was a nightmare, because nobody could get the technology to work properly. I was trying to run through what I, because I was still working, I’m self-employed so I was still going out doing work and I was meeting farmers and things, but I wasn’t able to work with communities or anything like that. But I could meet an individual and we could socially distance somewhere and we could talk about things, and I could come back and come back with plans.

But then trying to share that with other people was actually really difficult because normally you get a map out or something and you’d show them on a map. You were having to do that with shared screen, and someone, forgive me for saying this, someone’s dog might start barking or the kids would come in or whatever, and it made…

I also think it became something that people thought was easy to do so they increased the number of meetings. We had a monthly steering group instead of a quarterly one, which meant that from one month to the next we might not have achieved very much, which normally in three months you probably would have done. It became a little bit micromanagement. I found that quite difficult. I personally found that quite difficult to deal with because it meant I wasn’t, especially in a pandemic because you were already being limited with what you could do anyway.

I just think communication, although technically people started to then get better at it, I guess that made it a wee bit easier. The biggest problem for me with the Rivers Trust hat on was I couldn’t get the other agencies to engage properly because they weren’t allowed out. They were working from home. They weren’t allowed out of the office. They still aren’t, which is crazy. Things took longer, therefore became more expensive, and I found it frustrating because we weren’t getting answers, which we normally would have been able to do relatively straightforwardly.

Also on that side obviously a lot of our activities we match funded with volunteer time. We were unable to deliver any volunteer time, and that meant it looked as if we had not done very well. The volunteering interest was there, and in fact at [REDACTED PLACE NAME] with the [LANDMARK] hat on we actually managed to do volunteering because we had a large site that we could get a small group of volunteers into every couple of days.

They came in and they did a bit of gardening in this case, which was good for them as well because it meant they weren’t stuck in a house all the time. I think a lot of organisations when they read the COVID guidelines, the first thing they read was, “Thou shall never meet.” Whereas we went on the basis of, “Thou shall never touch.” We worked within the guidelines in a sensible fashion and it was fine. If we hadn’t we’d have been miles behind where we are. I think that’s worth saying.

The other thing for COVID that massively impacted, well it dropped my wages quite considerably I have to say, because I’m self-employed and I couldn’t sign up for anything, it impacted on funding from external organisations as well because they didn’t have the time to put in an offering and stuff. It created some opportunities because one or two new funding streams came on board, but quite honestly they were so admin heavy that they weren’t worth going for in some instances.

What else did it do? Well I don’t know anyone that has actually had COVID if I’m perfectly honest with you. That’s the other thing that is crazy.

Oh yes, it has impacted in strange ways. For instance, this year we can’t get tree stock because the nurseries weren’t able to get out and harvest seeds and materials. Consequently that’s now having an impact a year and a bit later. The prices have gone up, so when you put a bid in for something at a fixed price and your prices change you are in a bit of a quandary. Yes. But I think there will be loads of other things as well I think.

But sorry one other positive I guess is that it made people look at the environment and think more about it and how valuable it was to them, and I say environment in its widest term. We did have people coming along doing a bit of gardening and they were all coming along. I’ve had comments from, I got one from a girl the other day, she said, “This is my safe place now. I can come here and I can do what I want and I don’t feel pressured.” A lot of people did feel a lot of pressure I think working from home etc., so they were looking for new and different things to do.

I think if you can facilitate that that’s great.

Ian: I was thinking about that actually. I wondered in a broad sense you could tap into that, because obviously we all know the last couple of years people have been trying to move house to get a garden or trying to just appreciate the outdoor space around them.

Respondent: Yes. You can but, and I am saying this with a great degree of insider knowledge, is in order to capture that you’ve got to have the resources to capture it. Nobody wants to pay for that resource. [ANON ORG]is me and one other guy, and we both work a couple of days a week. We’ve had a lot of volunteers who have come forward who want to do work with the Rivers Trust. But that means that we’ve then got to spend all our time supporting that rather than just delivering, which is what we are doing at the moment.

I’m not saying that that’s a bad thing. It’s a good thing, but actually it means you need to have additional resources to be able to facilitate that, because volunteering isn’t free.

Ian: Yes.

Respondent: It needs to be supported and supporting volunteers can sometimes be difficult, especially if you end up with… You often end up with the ones, with the people who are most critical in terms of society of need. They need more than others, so they need more support and time than others. Whereas you might get 12 people who just want to come out and plant trees, or you might have one person that wants to come out and plant trees but needs a lot of help and support to do that. Which ones are the ones you are going to…? It’s fairly obviously you’d go for the ones that don’t need that support because you’d get more done. That’s being honest.

We never turn anyone down by the way. I mean otherwise I wouldn’t be in work, would I? For God’s sake, look at the state of us.

But I think the other work that is impacted by COVID, and this might sound like a bit of an aside although I hope it doesn’t, but with the Rivers Trust I was setting up a green gym project, which was with the Newcastle NHS Trust. It was for their staff, so it was very much a precursor to what we’ve got now. We were looking for ways of engaging their staff and the environment from a stressful job situation to going out and meeting new people, doing new things, doing things that they felt were good and actually being supported on that.

Now I did that purely voluntarily but we did it with the Rivers Trust hat on so that we had an insurance cover. Now that just stopped altogether during COVID. Yet I was just talking to them this morning actually ironically. The whole thing is actually, the demand for it has actually shot up, as you can imagine. Loads of people want to come out but we just can’t find the time to do it all as much as we would like. I’m praying for it now look.

Ian: (Laughter)

Respondent: But what I’m trying to do is do that, find a way to facilitate that as one of the other things that we’ve got going on so we can add that on and it doesn’t become more of a burden. I suggested that they come and do their Rivers Trust volunteering in [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] while I’ve got it open and I can supervise them while I’m working there. We’ll find a way of doing it.

I think that’s the other thing. People have become very inventive and they’ve gone, “Right, let’s make this happen. Come on.” Having a bit more determination because they want to get out, they want to do things and they think things are important. I think that’s really good.

Ian: Yes.

Respondent: I’ll shut up now.

Ian: One more second. I’m just getting the dogs banging on the door. One sec.

[Break in Conversation 0:50:35 – 0:51:00]

Right. Sorry about that. I’ve been working from home for a long time now and it’s never normally as manic as this, but everyone has one of those days.

When you were talking about getting people to volunteer and stuff and then using social media, can you just talk a bit about that? You said you don’t use Twitter much, but have you been using Facebook?

Respondent: Yes, we tend to use Facebook because Facebook, which started off as a young thing has actually become the domain of older people who tend to be the volunteers that you generally get. But I’ve also found that we’ve started to get younger people coming through Facebook who may use it as a means of messaging. But they use TikTok and all that other stuff in their normal interactions with each other. I forgot, the last couple of weeks we’ve had three 17-year-olds come through Facebook who want to do something.

Ian: Do you have a Facebook group for the [LANDMARK]?

Respondent: I have one for the [LANDMARK], and I manage the Rivers Trust one as well. The Rivers Trust one, to be honest we’ve got four, which is a pain. We didn’t set one up for the River Lyne project, but we set one up for all the other projects because it was a way of actually demonstrating direct. The funders ask, you know, for what do they call it, the demographics and stuff and whatever, you know, which are of limited use I think in many respects. But for putting a message out or whatever that’s great.

We’ve just, we haven’t done this during the recent months but we have now Ian, we have just set up our webpage so that we can start having an interactive bit for volunteers. We are using Google Platform to allow people to indicate when they are available, that sort of thing. We can put an event on and they can volunteer directly and say, “Well I’m available between 11 and 2.” Something like that.

That bit hasn’t quite gone live yet, and I’m not quite sure how it will work but I hope it will, because the biggest challenge I have with managing volunteers is that bit. It’s keeping track of who is doing what and who just wants a newsletter and who wants to do something and that sort of thing. I’ve not found a satisfactory way of doing that yet, other than people just messaging me and me then writing it down on a bit of paper.

Ian: Yes. You’ve used Facebook for a while. You’ve now decided to go to a website.

Respondent: Well, we are using both. Facebook, we will be using Facebook but when people volunteer with us they will have a Google login to their members only site of the webpage so that we can then interact on that.

Don’t ask me how it works. Someone else is doing it for me.

Ian: I think I know the sort of programmes you are talking about.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: The [LANDMARK] and River Trust Facebook, are they groups or pages, do you know?

Respondent: Oh, good question. I think they are groups.

Ian: Yes. Are you an admin on them?

Respondent: I’m not on the [REDACTED PLACE NAME] one at the moment because Barry who manages it has just been away and I’ve been keeping asking him and he keeps on forgetting to put me down. But I can post onto it but I just can’t, I’m not moderating it. That’s less useful for me. But what I do is when I go on I just put my email address on and just ask people to contact me and they do it directly.

With the Rivers Trust one though, yes, I manage the whole thing so I can manage content. I can, you know, throw people off if they tell me to shut up or whatever. But we’ve never had a problem really, which is fine.

Ian: You mentioned earlier that you’ve got these groups, which you said is essentially where you put out information.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: I’m guessing when you are doing litter picks and stuff like that you use Facebook for that?

Respondent: Yes. Well, I mean we go through some of the traditional things as well, putting up posters if we needed to, that sort of thing. But yes, generally litter picks is a good example because I have a separate page for that altogether, which mean we have a much wider constituency than the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area. But if we put one on in [REDACTED PLACE NAME] it will go to everybody in that group. But I would then duplicate that into my own group and people just share it.

That’s one of the other things that Facebook allows people to share a post, so there are various groups in the [REDACTED ORG NAME] area, and they seem to be relatively well networked now. Possibly getting better than it was.

Ian: Yes, so you’ll use various groups if you are asking for someone or getting out information, you’ll post on your own Facebook pages that you manage, but you’ll also put stuff out on other local groups.

Respondent: That’s right. I hope that some of the people that follow our group actually share stuff for us. For instance, the Northumberland Volunteer Agency are in Ashington. They’ll send things out and it will go into their newsletter as well, which is the other thing we’ve used as well of course, is newsletters. For all my volunteers for instance at [REDACTED PLACE NAME] I do a monthly newsletter. That goes out to them and it gives them forewarning of anything that is coming up.

I can obviously just drop them an email if I need to if there is anything that is urgent, like I did this weekend. “It’s only me this weekend. I need two people to help me.” That sort of thing. “I’ve got biscuits.”

Ian: Once you’ve got people who have already volunteered once you don’t necessarily communicate with them through Facebook anymore. You’ll have an email group.

Respondent: Yes. We do both. Although I’d like to get the newsletter… It’s slightly complicated sorry because I’m jumping between different organisations here I know Ian, so forgive me. We don’t do that with the Rivers Trust. With the Rivers Trust we just put stuff on, we put stuff on, we put stuff on. If we are advertising an event we put it on as an activity with a date and everything and people can actually logon and sign up if they want to.

On one or two occasions we’ve put an Eventbrite things on. We’ve booked it as an event so we know when people are coming. The only problem with Eventbrite is people say yes and never do because it’s free. I was thinking about that for the [LANDMARK], but then thought, “Do you know what? We are better with the direct thing because then it’s an easier way, because you are keeping in touch with people that way.”

Anyway, yes, so that’s what we generally do. I think I’ve lost the train of thought I was saying now so forgive me for that.

Ian: No. I was just asking you if Facebook is good way of getting people involved? I just wondered if then once you have the volunteers you’ll move to a separate communication channel with them? I guess obviously if you have got people in your groups that aren’t currently volunteering, if you just kept talking about, “We are meeting on this date. We are meeting on this date.” You guess some people might think, “Oh, I didn’t know about that. I’ll join in as well.” But obviously some other people might go, “Well, I’m not interested in that.”

Respondent: Exactly right. Basically what I’ve got is, with the [LANDMARK] we have a newsletter that I produce because when the [LANDMARK] project set up they set up a Friends of [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK]. Then if you were interested you signed up, ended up on a mailing list. I got that mailing list and I’ve trimmed it down, because I sent out an email saying, “Is anyone still interested in this? If you are you have to tell me otherwise you are coming off the list.” Then I’ve been adding new volunteers to that list.

But I’ve been asking them, “Is it okay for you to be on a general mailing list, and then when there is something specific that you express an interest in – I ask them that at the start – then is it okay to mail you about those particular things?” If you like I’ve got a friends group and a [LANDMARK] group and a gardening group. Some of the people are in all three, and some of the people are only in one.

It means I can communicate with individuals or a group of individuals if I need to. But if I’ve got something that is of relevance and I want to shame people into helping us because they’ve said their volunteer I’ll send it to everybody on the hope that I will get something from some of the people who have expressed an interest but haven’t done anything yet. I say shame but I’m using that in a jokey way.

Ian: Encourage.

Respondent: Encourage, yes.

Ian: Remind people and encourage them.

Respondent: I mean ironically I’ve actually had three people this weekend who have come up and said, “Oh, I’ve been meaning to do this for ages and keep on forgetting.” You’ve got to keep yourself in front of people I think. That’s where Facebook potentially falls down because people read it like a newspaper and it’s not a call for action, whereas sometimes you need a direct call for action by going directly to the people you know about.

Ian: That’s email you are talking about here isn’t it? You have got your email lists. It’s not direct messaging.

Respondent: Yes. But with the newsletter attached to it. A direct message isn’t necessarily always… You want to inform people as well. I use the newsletter of telling people what has happened and also what’s coming up. Also I like to joke as well, and I like, what I’ve been doing is I started off putting my own photos in and stuff, but now I’m getting photos from the volunteers and putting them in.

The fact that someone takes a great picture of a bumblebee or something and you shove that online or on your newsletter, it means that one person will see it and then their friends probably look at it. We’ve been coming in just through that route as well.

Because one of the other parts of my role in volunteering, it’s about getting people to the site and seeing the site and then going away and thinking about the site or wanting to come back. It’s not necessarily always aimed 100% about getting people secured to do something there. It’s a bit of both.

Some people as well, the other thing I’ve got to say is we’ve got loads of people from outside of the area. People who were born in the area who live abroad or whatever have started to sign up, and Facebook is really the easiest way to engage with them on that basis.

Ian: What sort of numbers have you got in the groups then? Did you say you have got some that are expats?

Respondent: Yes. I’ll be honest I can’t remember off the top of my head. The Rivers Trust one has really increased since I’ve taken it up. I’m blowing my own trumpet here but it’s really increased since I took it on about a year and a half ago. I put something on every single day, just one thing, and I put quirky things on as well which are usually the ones that get the biggest hit. I think our numbers, when I first started I think we had a couple of hundred, but I think we’ve got over a thousand now on that group.

Which is not huge, but you know, it’s good enough. The [REDACTED PLACE NAME] one I’ve got to admit I don’t know, because I’m not an admin so I don’t necessarily get that detail I’m afraid. It’s popular though.

Ian: It’s primarily broadcast as the organisational trust, where you are putting stuff out?

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: Do people post directly or comment on stuff you have posted out? What does the group allow kind of thing?

Respondent: Yes. They do.

Ian: People can post stuff on that page as well?

Respondent: Yes, absolutely. They don’t tend to do it on the Rivers Trust one, which is strange. But they can and they have. But we always get loads of comments, especially if you put something up which is slightly controversial. I tend not to point fingers at people so I’ll maybe put a picture up of, forgive my French here, but a chair floating down a river. You’ll put something like that up and someone will come and have a go at Northumbrian water or something like that.

I wouldn’t want to be doing that myself, and sometimes stimulus is a good way of getting a response from people.

I was just going to say on the other side of it, on the [REDACTED PLACE NAME] one is we’ve had people putting up pictures of their visit and saying, “What a great site. I recommend people to go.” That sort of thing. That’s also positive. Of course if they then tag you in something, because both of our sites are linked to Twitter, so you get the tags and it floats up somewhere else as well.

I’m getting distracted now because there is a guy who has just suddenly come up and started cleaning my windows. (Laughter)

Ian: What was I going to say? Oh yes, so when people are posting and commenting and stuff like that, you did mention before in a joking way that you would moderate and tell people and stuff like that. But what sort of stuff do people comment? What sort of comments do people make, and what sort of stuff do people post? Is it always really targeted and on brand and about a specific project?

Respondent: It is. We can moderate things. I don’t think it’s too strict about that. Generally people are putting things on that are pleasant and proper. But you occasionally get something like, I mentioned before about car parking for instance, so somebody had put up, you know, “Busy day in [REDACTED PLACE NAME].” Then someone put up and said, “Oh God, imagine what it is going to be like when the [LANDMARK] opens. There will be people parking all over the place.”

We have gone on and said, “We are asking people not to park on the grass and that sort of stuff. But at the end of the day if they do that you can’t really blame the fact that it’s a site as such.” We are trying to be responsible is the way. I would put a very well-balanced responsible reply to those things. But not be controversial because I think if you start peeing people off then they just, you know, that’s when it becomes difficult.

Ian: Yes. You don’t want bad feeling about the site locally.

Respondent: Far from it. What we are also very keen on doing is cross posting. If somebody like [REDACTED ORG NAME] for instance puts something up then I’ll share it. I’ll like theirs. That’s equally important with your [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] hat on, you go on and like someone else’s post in that area because it then means that they are getting more exposure as well.

[ANON] and I talked about this a few weeks’ ago. She actually rang me up and said, “Thanks for saying such-and-such.” I said, “Oh no, that’s what it is all about, isn’t it? That’s how Facebook works.” If one person likes something or shares it then you double your audience almost straightaway.

Ian: Is there a certain sort of thing, because the way you’ve mentioned this with your [LANDMARK] hat on, as a person I guess it’s the same as the group, so as the [LANDMARK] group is there certain things that you would like or cross post or share? Do they always have to be within a certain type of brand?

Respondent: No, not really. I guess a brand would be local. But I’m not against putting on something which absolutely on the face of it might not have any major connection. But we’ve got quite a lot of different things with [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK], because we’ve got the history. We’ve got, well, nostalgia is one thing. We’ve got the garden, and then there is sustainability issues.

I think recently, I can’t remember whether this is the right site actually, but for example someone put something saying that Royal Mail had recently announced that if you come across elastic bands on the street disregarded from the postman you can put them in the mailbox and they will go and get reused. We posted that on, that sort of thing. It’s just about being a good citizen, that sort of thing I guess.

We are keen on that, but then again there is a good news story or sometimes we put on, we’ve had one about a missing dog, “Has anyone seen this dog?” I’ve seen similar ones but not on our post where somebody has gone missing. It doesn’t matter whether that person is in Southend or whatever you might want to share it. You just don’t know whether you might make a difference.

But things that are massively… We don’t go for politics necessarily. But if people put politics on and want to talk politics that’s up to them. Occasionally we might have an opinion but it wouldn’t be my opinion. (Laughter) It would have to be a collective one.

Ian: Yes.

Respondent: With my Rivers Trust hat on it is slightly the opposite. We can be a little bit more controversial with that one because we are not a political party as such, and we do want to make changes and sometimes you’ve got to challenge to make that change. Social media is one of those means by which you can do that. People have a go at the environmental agency or something like that. They’ve got a right to reply. They can criticise us if they want to. That’s fine. It’s a right to reply, but we tend not to do that.

Ian: Yes. I’m noticing that we are at the end of time, which is frustrating because I feel like we could have-

Respondent: Carry on, I’m fine. Don’t worry.

Ian: We’ll maybe keep going until half past if that’s alright?

Respondent: Yes of course.

Ian: Right. I’m just really interested in the way that you are using Facebook in various ways so I want to stay on that.

Sorry, I thought I cut you off.

With [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] you will promote. The way you talked about this, not so much like I’m just talking about the [LANDMARK] and [LANDMARK] volunteers, you are actually doing stuff in the wider community, lost dogs, good news stories, etc. I guess that’s around, yes you tell me actually, what’s your reasons for not just sticking to stuff about the [LANDMARK] and actually doing this other stuff?

Respondent: I think it’s because we have a desire to be part of the constituency and the constituency isn’t just a building. I mean I very strongly feel that you don’t need to justify the project. That’s one thing. It’s cost nearly £1m, and that might sound like an awful lot of money to people, but we’ve actually had a lot of public engagement in that. But I see what it’s going to give now is actually the bit. We’ve got a building, two buildings actually, one of which is a volunteer hub.

What we need to be is, we need to be relevant and accessible and a friendly face I guess is one way of putting it. I don’t mean my face by the way. I mean my face, obviously, you know. I’d be better off with a mask on. But no, it’s about accessibility I think from that point of view. We could be strictly [LANDMARK] but we probably wouldn’t post very often in that case. There is a limit to how much you can put in.

But I mean the [LANDMARK] is a building, but it’s also got a history. It’s got a future and so we want people to be part of that future. We’ve got a ghost as well of course, but you know, it’s really hard to put pictures of ghosts on the website to be honest with you.

Ian: Is that a local myth? Is it such a well-known ghost?

Respondent: Yes, the white lady. Yes. She is in books from the 16th Century onwards and stuff. I’m saying nothing. I’ve got photographs.

Ian: I mean stuff like that is obviously great for public engagement and stuff I guess.

Respondent: Yes. Also one of our other aims within the project, and we’ve kicked it off but we haven’t done a lot of it, is about education and awareness, good citizenship if you like as well. We’ve had summer schools from [REDACTED PLACE NAME] in last week, and we had the kids doing archaeological digs. That archaeological dig included something about health and safety, about their own awareness. Then we did some stuff about colour and food and all sorts of things like that. The kids all got a meal, so there was a social service element to it as well.

Which is great, and those kids hopefully, they all went away and all waved and all looked really happy. Now it doesn’t matter how much that cost, that was invaluable to me. That was brilliant. We want more of that. Those stories we can report on. Then you’ll get lots of positivity out of that, which I think is really important. People need positivity, especially now I think.

Ian: Yes. Absolutely. If you do like educational visits and you have these lovely things happening, obviously the children at the time are getting loads out of it and stuff, do you then promote that on Facebook and stuff as well?

Respondent: Yes. We do. Obviously with permissions. We’ve got to get permissions for photographs of kids to be shared and stuff like that. But we can get around that by having views of them of you looking into them doing something so you can’t see their faces.

Yes we would. We have also engaged with Collingwood School in Morpeth, who generally take all of the special needs children from the whole of Northumberland. They are effectively adopting the site. We are aiming to specifically do videos and things like that with them. They value, in fact the pupils will do the videos so that we can share them online and show the sorts of stuff they are using the site for to show that it’s not just a building. It’s an experience.

I sound like a good salesman here by the way. But we don’t charge. That’s the other thing. It’s all free.

Ian: I would love to come down.

Respondent: You’ll have to, yes.

Ian: I’ve been working on and off with [ANON] since I started by PhD in 2016.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: I feel like I know at least by speaking about a load of things about the area, but the [LANDMARK] has only come up in this part. I’ve never heard of it.

Respondent: Oh right.

Ian: If I turned up this afternoon for example would it be open, or is it still on its way?

Respondent: The grounds are open but the building isn’t. We have to man it for health and safety reasons because it’s got these really narrow staircases going up onto the roof, which is, you know, the roof. It’s quite high. We don’t want anyone hurling themselves off.

Ian: Right. Yes, I’d honestly love to come down. To be honest since we’ve been talking I’ve had about 100 questions about the [LANDMARK]. Instead of wasting the little time we’ve got now I think I’m best just coming down.

Respondent: And having a chat about it, yes.

Ian: Finding out properly, yes.

Respondent: You are most welcome. I’ll be there tomorrow and there on Thursday and there on Saturday. No sorry, I’m not there on Saturday this week but I’m there on Sunday as well. We are open weekends until the end of August, so you are more than welcome.

But if you wanted to come down just let me know and I’ll arrange to be there.

Ian: It will be some point soon once [ANON] gets back off leave. I’ll have to come and have a meeting with her, so if I can try and coordinate it altogether.

Respondent: Well actually get her to come as well because I don’t think she has ever been.

Ian: Oh yes, that sounds like a date.

Respondent: Yes. We do have a kettle.

Ian: Right.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: Bring your own teabags though is it?

Respondent: No, we’ve got all of that as well. I’ve got Marks and Spencer’s best at the moment.

Ian: Oh wow.

Respondent: Aye.

Ian: For the volunteers.

Respondent: Yes. Marks and Spencer’s best and Aldi custard creams.

Ian: Right. I’ll just be asking everyone this kind of question because obviously a big part of my focus is about these online spaces like the Facebook pages and stuff. I haven’t had that much time to really drill down to everything on Facebook, but what I’m asking everyone, which I guess is a good way of summing up those social questions, is when you are creating this online space – I don’t want to use weird language that just makes you think, “What are you talking about?” – but your [REDACTED PLACE NAME] [LANDMARK] Facebook page, that is an online space where information is passed back and forwards and you create a sense of, you know, it helps you with doing what you do as you’ve been talking about.

If you had to pick three words, like three qualities or characteristics or values, you know, any three words that you think a really good online public space needs to have what would those three by for you?

Respondent: Stimulation or stimulating. Curious and fun.

Ian: Excellent Great. I guess the curiosity and stimulation stuff, I guess you are talking about sharing stories about history of places and things like that.

Respondent: Yes. We are trying to bring the place to life in words, because we haven’t got any 13th Century border reivers here or anything like that. But we can tell people about them, and actually I tell you what, it’s amazing what people don’t know about their local area, some of which is actually still current. I was talking to someone on Saturday about Brexit. I hate the word, but we were talking about prehistorical landslides in the North Sea and how the UK became an island. Actually you can use those little things to talk about history and language.

It was really strange actually. I’ve just been watching The Pub Landlord, you know the comedy guy, and he’s talking about English. He says, “Well British, ish, it’s not like a proper thing is it? We are all, ‘Yeah, ish’. It’s got ish.” He then goes on and talks about Geordies and all this sort of stuff. Actually I was thinking, “Actually I could use a lot of those lines in some of the things that I say, because they are observations, and that’s what comedy is often, it’s observation.

For me putting the site we’ve got into people’s mind is sometimes by giving them something weird that they remember. Talking about Brexit and prehistoric landslides, that person is going away now thinking about history rather than something else. We’ve had people coming back saying, “I came back. I wanted to have another look because…” That’s good.

Ian: Does that fall on you though to do your research about the site and find interesting stories and stuff?

Respondent: Or make it up. (Laughter)

Ian: Yes, but I mean a lot of this stuff you are talking about, it’s down to one person and yourself in terms of…?

Respondent: Yes it is. Yes, putting a dialogue together, that sort of thing. I can talk for England. You can probably tell that. I like to share my enthusiasm and knowledge, because I’m actually an ecologist working for the Wildlife Trust. That’s my main thing. I’ve done archaeology for the last six years. But actually putting the two together and bringing in…

People won’t care about something unless they know, feel part of something and value it. For me actually getting a little bit of that enthusiasm across in a story or whatever is actually sometimes quite difficult. But it’s rewarding.

The thing with the [LANDMARK] as an example is we have audiences that range from people who are relative experts in what you are talking about, someone going round going, “Oh, I noticed that in this building, blah, blah, blah.” You’ve got to try and explain it to them. Or not bullshit them, that’s the other thing. But then all the way down to the smallish children who Mum and Dad are fascinated by something but they are bored. You find a way to engage them with it as well by making things a little bit simple and exploring something about them and then trying to make them feel part of that as well.

I mean not everyone can do that, I realise that, and I’m not saying I can do it as well as some others. But actually some of it is just about tailoring what you are saying to the person that you are talking to and not just spitting out facts but making some of those facts into a story.

Ian: Yes.

Respondent: Yes, you are right, I’ve had to research that. Not research it as much as I’m just interested so I just soak it in, you know.

Ian: Yes of course.

Respondent: But other volunteers, you could quite easily see how they might be put off by that because you are walking about spouting off all this stuff and they have no knowledge whatsoever. But actually what I’ve found is we’ve got a really good set of volunteers, because they are happy just to chat with people, and people come to tell them stories about when they were kids and they used to come to this site and they used to break in and all this sort of stuff. It then becomes a social thing and it’s not a lesson.

I don’t want things to be a lesson. I want people to feel something about this site, if that makes sense?

Ian: Yes.

Respondent: Yes. It’s a marketing opportunity. That’s what I’m thinking of. I’m getting all of the toys and everything ready.

Ian: Someone like me who doesn’t have a Facebook account, so could never see stuff about you or on your page or that gets posted on other local pages, how do I get to know about what’s happening without just wandering onto the site? Yes, how do you reach people like me?

Respondent: Well, there is the wandering onto the site thing, because a lot of people have said, “Oh, I was just going down to the beach and I didn’t realise this was here.” That sort of thing, so there is that.

I mentioned before the radio and what became a podcast. That podcast actually went in the top 30 in the world in its category. That had quite a good reach. But it’s obviously limited in its own way.

Also writing in a magazine, online magazine. It’s online though. That’s again the only other thing, it’s online. But we have a press officer who is voluntary, so any opportunity like that comes up, so we’ve been approached by people like the paranormal groups as well. They want to do a film, which will go on YouTube. We could do stuff on YouTube.

I know all of these are technology solutions but it’s actually almost the norm now isn’t it? You sound antiquated from that point of view I guess in terms of that.

Ian: No, I wasn’t trying to do it as a critique or anything. I was just saying I am curious about all the ways. Do you use really traditional things like noticeboards?

Respondent: Yes we do. Well we’ve got a noticeboard outside that says, “We are open and we are free.” Which is, you know, we added the word free and our numbers went up. We’ve actually done a publication, which is called [REDACTED PLACE NAME]’s curiosities that you can buy. It’s in local outlets, you know. It’s £5 and all the money goes to the project.

I’m in touch with other groups as well, like Woodhorn Archives and people like that. We have just advertised on, we are having some themed events so we’ve gone for the Heritage Open Days, which are nationally publicised in brochures. I’ve got to talk to a lady this afternoon about getting the one for the Morpeth area. We would be down in the traditional leaflet saying, “Such-and-such is open on such-and-such a day.”

It’s early days. We’ve only been open six days, or three weekends. We’ve had nearly 2,000 people already, which I think is phenomenal. There is going to be a lot more I have to do I think, but I only work two days a week for them so at the minute I’m a bit limited in what I can achieve. I was just saying to someone yesterday with all the plans that they’ve got they are going to need somebody full-time. But you know.

Ian: It always comes down to resource doesn’t it?

Respondent: It does, yes. I think we would like to do one or two, I’m going to say quirky but they are not quirky in the field I’m working in, so I would like to get a jousting tournament going for instance. There is a field right in front of us that just lends itself to having Medieval jousting or a civil war re-enacting or something like that, which actually would grab the imagination of people. You would hope that that might go onto the local radio, local television, that sort of thing.

I’m actually, I’m well known to the local media because I am confident enough in front of the camera just to say what I want to say. I do radio and TV quite a bit. If they wanted to shove me out, as long as I wasn’t having to dress up as a monster or something then I’d be okay.

Yes, so there are lots of different ways. We’ve got to explore a lot of them though. But you know, hopefully that will come. Because there’s hardly any print media nowadays either is there? We used to get a free newsletter every Friday from the Guardian or whatever. It’s just gone. That would have been where we would have put a lot of stuff in the past. Libraries, blah, blah, blah, yes.

Ian: Yes. This is kind of what the main bit of my research is interested in, you know how these exact problems that everyone faces and the different things people try and do and what works and what doesn’t work.

Respondent: Once we run out of ideas, you know, I mean we can only really tell when we are doing huge sacrifices and things like that we’ve gone too far really.

Ian: Start with animal sacrifice and see.

Respondent: Yes. “Send out the carrier pigeons.” (Laughter)

Ian: Right. Excellent Thanks very much for your time.

Respondent: You’re welcome Ian. Good chatting.

Ian: Great. Yes, if you have any questions send me an email. If I think of anything else I might bother you again with a couple of things over email if that’s alright?

Respondent: Absolutely. But like I say you are welcome any time. Just let us know if you want to have a visit and I’ll try and sort something out.

Ian: Yes, I will definitely in the next couple of weeks, I’ll have to speak to [ANON], of popping in and having a look what it’s all about, definitely.

Respondent: Yes.

Ian: Right. Well, thanks very much for your time and your honestly and all the rest of it. I’ll hopefully speak soon.

Respondent: Cheers mate. Thanks very much.

Ian: Cheers. Bye now.

Respondent: Bye.

END AUDIO