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The urban politics of greenspace:
exploring community empowerment for greenspace aspirations, justice and resiliences

A participatory action research project in Glasgow

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Abstract

Over the past decade, greenspace policy has grown in prominence, associated with providing opportunities to address health inequality, urban regeneration and climate adaptation. In parallel, within community development, the discourses of community empowerment and resilience are employed as a response to the same challenges. Yet in Scotland's urban neighbourhoods of highest deprivation, there remains the triple jeopardy of living in proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and 'the absence of environmental goods'; all of which can be summarised as poor access to good quality greenspace. At the same time, in relation to the lived experience of socio-political marginalisation, both community empowerment and resilience are contested concepts.

The aim of this thesis is to identify the enablers and constraints to fulfilling local greenspace aspirations as rights. Central to realising this aim is the theorising of a trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice (comprising distributional, procedural and recognition dimensions) and an eco-socialist positioning to inform community and urban resilience strategies. First, clarity is sought by distinguishing between five primary discourses. These pertain to climate policy, city planning, public health, community development, and community transformation. Greenspace is then presented as a 'boundary object' that intersects the discourses of resilience; and social, environmental and climate justice concerns.

The significance of this research is to foreground greenspace aspirations from the perspective of people living with area deprivation. Located in one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Glasgow, five interrelated participatory action research projects were undertaken over two years, culminating in a neighbourhood greenspace network. Using participatory inquiry generated critical awareness of greenspace inequality and demonstrated local motivation to work collaboratively for greenspace action. It also exposed the deficits in procedural practices to facilitate inclusive decision-making. Conceiving these tensions as *the urban politics of greenspace* draws attention to the forms, spaces and levels of power within and between local authority and neighbourhood 'social worlds'.

The empirical findings provide important insight into the visceral experience of greenspace inequality; reflect wider concerns about community engagement practices; and problematise empowerment in relation to greenspace policy and land reform. Notwithstanding, this study identifies the potential for developing greenspace networks to provide a 'one-stop shop' for bottom-up deliberation and instituting local greenspace priorities. However, in recognition of individual and organisational resilience factors in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the participatory action research projects also highlight the importance of local authority actors playing a leadership role in procedural implementation, and in facilitating the visions that transpire. In order to do this, existing community engagement budgets and priorities need to be reappraised. Further, a more radical community development practice is required to pursue a rebalance of distributional environmental burdens and benefits, rights and responsibilities.

Improving the accessibility and quality of greenspace as a right, I argue, is political. It establishes a coherent thread through diverse greenspace policy objectives and serves to crystallise the strategic and operational gaps between the five discourses of resilience. By doing so, it shifts the debate from assets to rights in order to address sustainability *and* inequality for neighbourhoods experiencing multiple deprivation.

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Thesis Bookmark

To be used as an aide-mémoire, there is a separate six-page handout with reproduced explanatory figures and summary details of the participatory action research projects.

Acknowledgements

First, my thanks go to all my community colleagues who gave their precious time and talents to participate in this research. In your already busy lives, you accepted my presence with generosity.

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And lastly, to Adrian who managed my insecurities with love and patience, and to my three mentors:

Yes Sheila, books are wonderous things;

Yes dad, I still (almost always) stop to notice how the light shines through the trees;

And yes mum, everyone who reaches should be able to touch the stars.

Author's declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Printed name: Shivali Fifield

Signature:

Abbreviations

CCF	Climate Challenge Fund
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
DRS	Development & Regeneration Services
GCPH	Glasgow Centre for Population Health
GICEF	Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund
HPAG	Heckley Path Action Group
LCA	Local Context Analysis
N&S	Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services
NPF	National Performance Framework
PAR	Participatory Action Research
RQ	Research Question
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SURF	Scotland's Regeneration Forum
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

Chapter 1: Introduction to the thesis

1.1　Introduction to the research

This thesis uses an environmental justice frame and participatory action research to trace local greenspace aspirations and assess to what extent they are supported by the local authority's approach to community empowerment and resilience. Undertaken in a Glasgow neighbourhood ranked in the most deprived vigintile by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD, 2016), my purpose is three-fold:

- First, to explore the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions, and how this might inform our understandings of community engagement.
- Second, to examine the current practice of community development and to what extent it provides space to challenge the environmental injustice of greenspace inequality.
- Third, to explicate the intersections between greenspace aspirations, environmental justice and the five primary discourses of resilience.

By problematising the current discourses of 'empowerment' and 'resilience', I hope to discover the points of synergy and discord between policy rhetoric, strategic neighbourhood implementation and local meaning-making in relation to greenspace inequality. The significance of this research is to foreground greenspace aspirations from the perspective of people living with area deprivation, and to introduce an environmental justice frame to community and urban resilience strategies. The intention is to explore a shift in focus: one from assets to rights, in order to address sustainability *and* inequality in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Hargreaves et al., 2008).

Having presented the thesis aim and objectives, this chapter proceeds by summarising my research motivations, and how participatory inquiry became the principal component of my feminist-informed methodology. Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) 'trivalent' conceptualisation of environmental justice comprising distributional, procedural and recognition dimensions is then introduced, and its relevance to urban Scotland greenspace explained. This is followed by my research rationale for using Glasgow as a single case study, a reiteration of this

study's contribution and the four research questions. The chapter ends with an overview of the thesis structure and presentational comments, including the provision of a Bookmark as an aide-mémoire.

1.2   Research motivations & feminist-informed methodology

I choose the term 'feminist-informed' to refer to the diverse body of feminist theories and research all rooted in feminist normative concerns of challenging positivist, value-free epistemology; patriarchy; unequal power relations, including the researcher-and-researched relationship; and a commitment to self-reflection (Ackerly & True, 2010; Gobo , 2008; Olesen, 2013; Skeggs, 2001). Hence, I intentionally use an 'I-approach' to stress my personal, interpretive and reflexive practice; and offer 'the natural history of my research' (Silverman, 2013:355) to give insight into how my motivations shaped my methodology. My research strategy is detailed in Chapter Five and the critical standpoint of eco-socialism (Benton, 1996; Fitzpatrick, 2014b; Goldblatt, 1996; Pepper, 1993) and its alignment with environmental justice is explicated in Chapter Two.

1.2.1 Motivations

I was born in India to a poor family and then settled in London as a young child. There, my mother met my English stepfather with whom we would spend Sundays walking along the river and through the parks being happy. I know that nurtured my love of the outdoors and my environmental activism spanning over thirty-five years, including local conservation campaigns and awareness-raising on a wide but interconnected range of issues. My professional career has centred on tackling social and health inequality, working cross-sector in both London and Glasgow, in the fields of youth work, rough sleeping and refugee integration. Over the years, I have heard and seen the solace that parks, greens, riversides and wild spaces can give to people, especially when they feel socially isolated. It is perhaps no surprise then, that this thesis adopts an eco-socialist standpoint, concerned with how we integrate social, environmental and climate justice politics and practice.

My research journey began in 2013, when I gave up paid work to focus on parental care and took the opportunity to undertake a master's degree in environmental sustainability, followed by a master's in research and this doctorate in urban studies. Interested in the barriers to public engagement with climate change (Poortinga et al., 2011; Spence & Pidgeon, 2009; Spence et al., 2012; Whitmarsh & Corner, 2017; Whitmarsh et al., 2013), and the need to include low-income communities to inform socially just climate policy (Preston et al., 2014; Sheppard et al., 2011), I used action research with low-income households to explore the role of deliberative workshops in facilitating carbon literacy[1] and self-identified healthier and greener practices (Fifield, 2014; 2016).

The crucial difference between my approach and the predominant focus on individual carbon reductions promoted by the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund,[2] is that I sought to combine a climate justice frame (Bulkeley et al., 2015; Fitzpatrick, 2014a; Preston et al., 2014) with an asset-based approach to health and wellbeing (Foot, 2012; Foot & Hopkins, 2010). I developed a series of five 'Well & Green' workshops and, by providing a creative space for deliberation, the outcomes were that participants were able to appreciate their own assets as low to average carbon users; understand the structural constraints to more sustainable practices; as well as make personal 'well & green' resolutions; which in turn consolidated a group identity and social networks (Fifield, 2016).

Participants' value for the softer, health and wellbeing outcomes over 'complex and confusing' carbon calculations, which often act 'as a barrier to progressive activity' (Changeworks, 2015:3), is reiterated by recent qualitative evaluations of community projects funded by the Climate Challenge Fund in more deprived areas (Changeworks, 2015; KSB, 2015; Meyerricks, 2015; Meyerricks et al., 2016). It is also repeated in the evaluation of similar government funded initiatives in England & Wales, in which top-down carbon reduction monitoring is reassessed

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[1] Carbon literacy is the understanding of the carbon impacts of our individual and collective actions which contribute to climate change (Astbury & Tate, 2012:4).

[2] The Climate Challenge Fund was launched by the Scottish Government in 2008 to support community-led carbon reduction initiatives and is discussed in Chapter Two.

in favour of nurturing community groups' experiential understandings of sustainability (Cinderby et al.,2014; 2016; Dunkley & Franklin, 2017).

Notwithstanding, the strengthening of pro-environmental and pro-social attitudes does not address the wider societal and infrastructural challenges experienced in deprived neighbourhoods which constrain low-carbon practices: such as inefficient transport and energy systems; and poor housing quality and food networks, which also contribute to fuel and food poverty (Gough et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2013). Partly in recognition of this, the Scottish Government funded PhD studentship to evaluate Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) community projects, and consequent policy brief (Meyerricks, 2015; Meyerricks et al., 2016), recommends 'a political focus on environmental justice' and community-led participatory research projects to tailor to local priorities.

> *'Participatory approaches can prioritise research topics which community groups identify as valuable to them, making research outcomes more robust and tailored to specific needs in local areas, which in turn can help policy makers identify areas of priority in Scottish Communities'* *(Meyerricks et al., 2016:5).*

Although unaware of this policy brief at the time, I too came to this conclusion while scoping possibilities for this thesis. Through the relationships that I had built during the 'Well & Green' workshops, I was invited to meet other community members and organisations. While looking out of people's windows and walking around the neighbourhood, I was able to ask about their surroundings, perceptions and attitudes to the environment. I realised that, despite my best intentions, I too had imposed a preconceived climate agenda in my workshops and that, this time, I would start my research wherever the conversations took me.

Unexpectedly, what emerged was a history of environmental burdens in the shape of poor access to good quality greenspace and proximity to derelict land, combined with diminishing resources for community development projects. Notwithstanding, there remained some energy, tinged with anger, to do 'something' about it and agreement for me to be involved, as long as it wasn't too much extra work for anyone; for even at this early stage it was noted that we were all female and juggling multiple responsibilities. As the research

progressed, I was introduced to more local women committed to change. By using appreciative inquiry (Bushe, 2013), so that we could envision and constructively act on aspirations rather than get stuck in a legacy of disappointments, the five participatory action research projects that inform this thesis took shape.

1.2.2 Methodology

Participatory action research played a pivotal part in my multimethod design, which also included 'active' participant observation (Spradley, 1980:58) and semi-structured interviews (Yeo et al., 2014). A participatory inquiry paradigm foregrounds collaborative forms of action research to facilitate experiential ways of knowing (Heron & Reason, 1997), with an emphasis on creating positive change *with* others (Mcniff & Whitehead, 2013; Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

Working with the lived experiences of residents and community practitioners during my two years of fieldwork, the aim was to co-produce knowledge and insight into the enablers and constraints to fulfilling greenspace aspirations. I therefore use the term 'community colleagues' (Janes, 2016) to stress this particular form of participatory research within a community development context (Frisby et al., 2009; Langan & Morton, 2009; Reid et al., 2006). In collaboration with community colleagues, participatory action became part of my research journey to both develop my skills as a community facilitator and to challenge local environmental injustice from the perspective of largely marginalised voices (Frisby, 2006).

In addition, I was keen to understand how the evolving discourses of 'empowerment' and 'resilience' (which was often used interchangeably with 'sustainability') were influencing community colleagues and community planning structures. Hence, through theoretical exploration and discursive inquiry, this thesis also attempts to understand how these nebulous concepts operate at micro-organisational and meso-neighbourhood and city scales in relation to greenspace policy.

As such, this study is rooted in a critical realist epistemology to the natural world (Irwin, 2001). Critical realism distinguishes between the natural order and objects of study in the natural world and the categories and discourses used to

describe and understand them (Bhaskar, 1989). Similarly, according to social constructivism, perceptions, motivations, and concepts such as community, are not an objective reality but a process which is defined and constructed through social relations (Delanty, 2003). Hence, combining a critical realist and social constructivist approach to our environment recognises the independent reality of environmental problems, as well as our subjective orientation towards the phenomena (Castree & Braun, 2001). I therefore use the term 'socio-environmental' (Holifield et al., 2009; Walker, 2009) to emphasise how our engagement with the environment, including greenspace and climate change, is constructed from the locus of individual and social material needs, our values and our understanding of wellbeing.

1.3   A trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice

Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) 'trivalent' conceptualisation of environmental justice comprises distributional, procedural and recognition dimensions. Here I explain its rationale to establish the normative frame to my investigation.

1.3.1 Distributional & procedural dimensions

Ikeme (2003:204) suggests that environmental justice should be considered as 'a broad overarching concept' encompassing distributional and procedural dimensions. In his analysis of the different philosophical roots of 'equity' and 'justice', he argues that distributional justice considers the equitable sharing of environmental burdens, benefits and responsibilities, and is based on a consequentialist or welfarist (goal-based) paradigm concerned with outcomes (Dworkin, 1981a; 1981b; Rawls, 2005). In contrast, procedural justice is concerned with parity of participation as an a priori principle and is rooted in a deontological (rights-based) paradigm, concerned with process and the rule of law (Fabre & Miller, 2003; Nozick, 1974).

Given what is deemed as an 'equitable' or 'fair' distribution is dependent on the definition, measurement and historical distribution of burdens in environmental and climate policy (discussed further in Chapter Two), procedural justice is also required to ensure that those who are affected the most by distributive

decisions are 'fairly' represented in the decision-making (Gardiner, 2010; Ikeme, 2003; Klinsky & Dowlatabadi, 2009; Stern, 2008).

1.3.2 Recognition

Taking this further, Schlosberg (2004; 2007) argues for a 'trivalent' conceptualisation of global environmental justice which includes recognition of diverse cultural identities in order to enable participatory democratic rights (Young, 1990). That is, in order to gain respect and meaningful involvement, the recognition of difference defends the space to explore the diversity in experiences, values and practices (notably of Indigenous peoples) not represented by the dominant norm (Whyte, 2017). Originally conceived in relation to a global movement, a trivalent conceptualisation is equally applicable at an urban scale (Bulkeley et al., 2014b). For, while the European principle of participation is codified in the *Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters* (UNECE, 1998) and at a national level by the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015,* parity of participation remains dependent on capacity and opportunity (Fraser, 2005).

Hence, this third dimension draws on Fraser's 'recognition' of the underlying structural practices that contribute to existing economic and cultural injustices, and consequent political marginalisation of certain groups such as the working class, women or minority ethnic (Fraser, 1997; 2005). Recognition is therefore pivotal in orientating us to the interrelationship between unjust distributive and procedural mechanisms and the inherent power relations within 'the complex geographies of inequality' (Bulkeley et al., 2014b:39). It serves to interrogate the objectives and impacts of interventions, so that they do not exacerbate the uneven experiences of environmental costs and benefits but improve 'the practices and materials of everyday life' (Agyeman et al., 2016:321). Thus, it is the procedural and recognition dimensions of environmental justice that align with community development's vision for inclusion and community empowerment (Barr & Hashagen, 2000; Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011).

Since the 1980s, the local and global lens of environmental justice has drawn attention to the inequitable exposure of communities in poverty to

environmental burdens, largely due to their lack of recognition and political power (Walker, 2009; Whyte, 2017). Its interpretation continues to evolve and underpins concepts of climate justice, just sustainability and just transition (Agyeman & Evans, 2004; Agyeman et al., 2007; Agyeman et al., 2016; Heffron & Mccauley, 2018; Schlosberg, 2013). Figure 1.1 offers my representation of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of justice at an urban scale which is used in this case study.
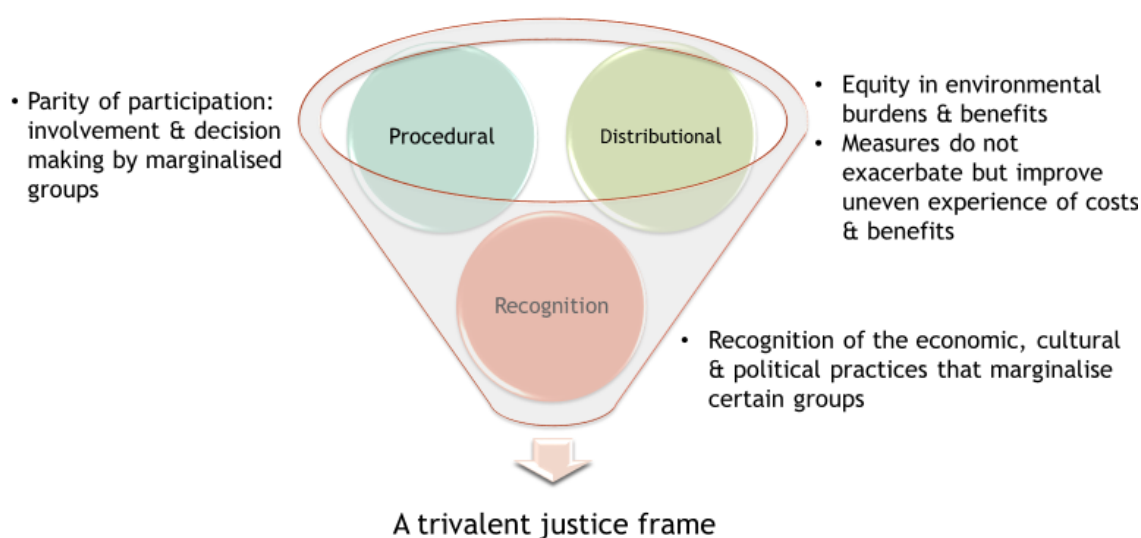
Figure 1.1: Representation of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice
Source: author's own.

1.4 Scotland & greenspace inequality

In order to explore the interrelationship between environmental justice and greenspace, I first explain key terminology to discern greenspace quality and then relate this to urban Scotland.

1.4.1 Greenspace defined

The typology of open space set out in the *Planning Advice Note PAN 65: Planning and Open Space* (Scottish Government, 2008) differentiates between 'civic space' (consisting of paved or hard landscaped areas) and 'greenspace'.

Summarising the PAN65 typology, greenspace scotland,[3] the national lead for local action on greenspace, defines greenspace as:

> *'Any vegetated land or water within an urban area. This includes:*
> - *parks, gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments*
> - *green corridors like paths, disused railway lines, rivers and canals*
> - *derelict, vacant and contaminated land which has the potential to be transformed' (greenspace scotland, 2019).*

Hence 'greenspace' is used as a general descriptor, whereas 'green infrastructure' in recent planning terminology is associated with positive attributes.

> *'Green infrastructure includes the "green" and "blue" features of the natural and built environments that can provide benefits without being connected' (Scottish Government, 2014b:72).*

Although the terms are often used interchangeably, the definitions highlight that 'greenspace' is not necessarily accessible or quality space, but that it is imbued with the promise of becoming so.

In addition, 'urban vacant land' is defined as land located within settlements of over 2,000 in population, which is unused for the purposes for which it is held and is viewed as an appropriate and ready site for development. Whereas 'derelict land' has been 'so damaged' by previous development that it requires 'rehabilitation' before further development (Scottish Government, 2019a:8). Data on both types of sites are collated annually from local authorities for the *Scottish Vacant & Derelict Land Survey*. This does lead to a blurring of distinction between 'urban vacant' and 'derelict' land in everyday discourse but has specific implications for urban regeneration and community development.

1.4.2 Scotland

In Scotland, distributional environmental injustice has been disproportionately experienced in deprived neighbourhoods from the cumulative impacts of polluting factories, legacies of contaminated land and landfill, and proximity to

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[3] The organisation 'greenspace scotland' refers to itself in lower-case in all its literature.

derelict land because of rapid deindustrialisation (Fairburn et al., 2005; Dunion, 2003; Poustie, 2004; Richardson et al., 2010; Scandrett, 2007). In the *Scottish Vacant & Derelict Land Survey* 2018 (Scottish Government, 2019a:2-4), 82% of all 'derelict and urban vacant land' was classified as derelict; and 58% of people living in the most deprived decile in Scotland were estimated to live within 500m of derelict land, compared to 11% in the least deprived decile.

As well as these infrastructural incivilities, there has also been an overall reduction in local environmental quality across Scotland, the indicators of which are: litter, dog fouling, graffiti, fly-tipping, detritus and weeds (KSB, 2016; KSB, 2017a). This coincides with a 9.6% real reduction in spending on local authority environmental services[4] and a 27% real reduction in street cleaning services from 2010 to 2018 (LGBF, 2019a). Savings to environmental services budgets are shown to have a disproportionate impact on areas of deprivation (Hastings, 2007; KSB, 2017a), so that an increase in these 'street-level incivilities' (Curtice et al, 2005) further contributes to the physical degeneration of place. This in turn encourages anti-social behaviour and consequent perceptions of safety (Brook Lyndhurst, 2012; Curtice et al., 2005; Cummins et al., 2005; Ellaway et al., 2009; KSB, 2017a; Milne & Rankine, 2013).

Moreover, in their analysis of environmental quality between 2014 and 2017, Keep Scotland Beautiful[5] (KSB, 2017a) identify that quality is declining more severely and at a faster rate in the most deprived communities, increasing the gap between them and the most affluent. This, they argue, makes poor local environmental quality a social justice issue which impacts on other policy areas and requires strategic as well as locally coordinated action.

It is this combination of 'street-level incivilities' and the 'absence of environmental goods': namely 'pleasant places to walk or sit' and 'safe play areas', which Curtice et al. (2005) first empirically identified as being the most prescient for residents in deprived neighbourhoods. That is, interview

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[4] Environmental services include waste management, street cleansing, road services, and trading standards and environmental health (LGBF, 2019a).

[5] Keep Scotland Beautiful is a national charity that works with Local Authorities to conduct local environmental quality audits collated by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (KSB, 2017a; LGBF, 2019a).

respondents with the highest levels of perceived incivilities and absence of environmental goods were more likely to report feelings of anxiety and depression.

There is now a growing body of Scottish research on 'green health' (CRESH, 2019; James Hutton Institute et al., 2014) investigating the ways in which access to good quality urban greenspace mediates health and wellbeing outcomes by promoting physical activity, mental and social health, and reducing health inequalities (Ord et al., 2013; Pearce et al., 2016; Ward Thompson et al., 2013). Recent studies suggest there is a positive impact of greenspace on cognitve development and decline (Cherrie et al., 2018; Richardson et al., 2017), and that the health gap between richer and poorer people may be smaller in neighbourhoods with more greenspace (Mitchell et al., 2015).

This research substantiates the World Health Organisation's (2016) *Review of Evidence*, summarising the health and community cohesion[6] benefits of urban greenspace, particularly for deprived neighbourhoods and vulnerable groups. Further, building on theory and previously small-scale experimental evidence that exposure to nature may be associated with greater pro-environmentalism, Alcock et al. (2020) found that the more individuals visited nature for recreation and the more they appreciated the natural world, the more pro-environmental behaviour they reported.[7] Using survey data from a nationally representative sample (N=24,204) in England, the authors importantly note that positive associations between pro-environmental behaviours and high neighbourhood greenspace (the measure for 'exposure to nature') were present for both high and low socio-economic status households. This suggests that access to local greenspace could mediate both pro-social and pro-environmental behaviours necessary to respond to our climate emergency.

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[6] Community cohesion is understood as the social support, connectivity, trust and reliance on others (Allik & Kearns, 2016).

[7] Pro-environmental behaviour measures included: recycling; buying eco-products; buying local produce; active travel; participating in environmental or conservation activities.

1.5 Research rationale

1.5.1 Glasgow & the triple jeopardy

Having introduced the importance of good quality urban greenspace and identified distributional inequality, Glasgow, as Scotland's largest city, serves as an exemplar for an in-depth study on this environmental injustice. The city has the largest percentage of derelict land as a percentage of total area by local authority (3.3%), with 60% of people living less than 500m from derelict land (Scottish Government, 2019a: Table 10). In addition, the city has the largest amount of derelict and urban vacant land in Scotland located in its 15% most deprived datazones[8] (Scottish Government, 2019a: Table 11). This, Maantay (2013) suggests, makes it a significant environmental burden and injustice.

In her spatial analysis of Glasgow, Maantay (2013) reconfirms that the neighbourhoods of highest deprivation and worse health deciles spatially correspond with proximity to derelict and vacant land (Maantay, 2013; Maantay & Maroko, 2015). Moreover, Glasgow has the least publicly accessible greenspace per 1000 people (greenspace scotland, 2018a: Appendix 6.4), which arguably contributes to consistent greenspace concerns in deprived areas, including poor neighbourhood design and amenities; proximity to derelict land; and poor environmental quality (GCPH et al., 2012; GCPH, 2013; GCPP, 2011; GoWell, 2015; 2016).

Both the Glasgow Centre for Population Health and GoWell research and learning programme (GoWell, 2017) have undertaken studies to gain detailed understanding of the influence of spatial and environmental factors in shaping population health outcomes, as well as the impact of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal on health and wellbeing. Together with the immediate visual effects of physical and environmental deterioration, the perceived safety of greenspace, play areas and local shops are shown to inhibit social and physical activity, as well as wider perceptions of people and place (GCPH et al., 2012; GCPH, 2015; Mason et al., 2011; Mason et al., 2013; ODS Consulting, 2014).

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[8] Scotland has 1,521 hectares of derelict and urban vacant land in the 15% most deprived datazones, of which 614 hectares is in Glasgow (Scottish Government, 2019a: Table 11).

These studies, including qualitative street audits, provide further localised evidence of the psychosocial impacts of poor quality environments on residents.

Thus, in Glasgow's neighbourhoods of highest deprivation, environmental injustice comprises a triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and the 'absence of environmental goods'. It is the visceral experience and response to this long-term injustice which is explored in this thesis.

1.5.2 An urban environmental justice frame

Agyeman et al. (2016) acknowledge that using a trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice entails a continuing expansion of what counts as environmental justice activism, policy and practice as it is applied to diverse forms and scales of space. This thesis seeks to embrace the substantive and theoretical pluralism inherent in an environmental justice frame (Agyeman et al., 2016; Schlosberg, 2004; 2007; 2013; Walker, 2009; Walker & Bulkeley, 2006) by developing its application to the Scottish context of urban multiple deprivation.

I begin by using the traditional methodological approach of identifying *distributional* disparities in the access and quality of greenspace. In addition, environmental justice researchers recognise the need to be both 'theoretically grounded and practically engaged' (Holifield et al., 2009:608). Hence, my participatory action research, as praxis, experiences the *procedural* processes involved in articulating and taking forward socio-environmental aspirations in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In doing so, it necessarily explores issues of *recognition* in relation to greenspace marginalisation and (non)recognition or devaluation of place, and consequent meaning to the people who inhabit those places (Walker, 2009).

As such, and partly as an effect of focusing on aspirations over grievances, this account is an interrogation of policy and practice pathways, rather than place-specific mobilisation and community protest traditional to environmental activism (Bickerstaff & Agyeman, 2009; Jenkins, 2018). By beginning with local proximities of injustice, this thesis considers the implications for wellbeing and empowerment arising from greenspace policy, and how this is entwined with the

micro, meso and macro discourses of resilience which are introduced in the next chapter. Drawing on Bulkeley et al.'s (2015:25) terminology of an 'urban politics of climate change', I therefore phrase my observations and this thesis as *'the urban politics of greenspace: exploring community empowerment for greenspace aspirations, justice and resiliences'*.

1.5.3 Contribution & research questions

This study seeks to combine understandings of environmental justice theory with community development practice. Applying Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) conception of environmental justice to an urban scale, will determine to what extent the current practice of community empowerment provides opportunities for collective meaning-making and decisions on greenspace policy in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation. The impact of my research will be to explore the potential of focusing on local greenspace aspirations which necessarily intersect with social, environmental and climate justice concerns. In doing so, I hope to offer a perspective which moves away from a legacy of piecemeal activities, towards inclusive actions that can contribute to healthier and greener environments and 'resiliences' for disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

This thesis uses a combination of participatory action research (PAR), discursive inquiry and theoretical exploration to answer the following four research questions (RQ) which are addressed progressively through Chapters Six to Nine.

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

1a: What are the greenspace aspirations and actions that transpire?

1b: To what extent are residents and practitioners encouraged to identify local greenspace aspirations and actions?

RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

RQ4: What can an environmental justice frame contribute to the five discourses of resilience in Scotland?

1.6   Thesis outline

This chapter has explained my motivations and rationale for undertaking this research. Chapter Two aims to establish the ideological and contextual groundwork to this thesis by exploring the distinctions within, and overlaps between, the discourses of sustainability, environmental justice and resilience. It does this in three parts. First, it offers my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies to explore the range of socio-economic and political responses to sustainable development and thereby climate and environmental policy. This also locates my eco-socialist standpoint and its alignment to a trivalent justice frame. Second, it gives a brief history of the environmental justice movement in the United States and how the trajectory differed in the United Kingdom, including Scotland, to morph into a wider policy discourse on sustainability and resilience. Third, it distinguishes between five primary discourses of resilience that permeate Scottish policy in relation to climate policy, city planning, public health, community development, and community transformation. The chapter ends with a summary of the interrelationships between these 'resiliences' and the implications for local environmental justice that are critically explored in this thesis.

With the backdrop drawn, Chapter Three filters the focus to Scottish greenspace policy in order to map the urban scene for this study. It begins by considering the evolution of greenspace as a positive construct and how it is instrumentalised across national policy strands. As such, greenspace is presented as a 'boundary object' (Clarke, 2005) which intersects the five discourses of resilience at national, city and neighbourhood scales. Next, it examines the distribution dimension of urban greenspace inequality in more detail. The policy and practice concerns of addressing greenspace inequality are then translated to Glasgow, setting the socio-environmental context to the participatory action research (PAR) projects.

As the last literature review chapter, Chapter Four turns attention to the contested concept of empowerment in the field of community development. The aim is to provide the theoretical context for investigating the procedural and recognition dimensions for environmental justice. It describes how community development practice has forked along two distinct strands which are commonly

described as radical and pluralist/reformist. Community engagement and empowerment are then considered within these two models, followed by a broader conceptualisation of power and community resilience which informs the analysis of the PAR projects.

Chapter Five details my feminist-informed research strategy to empirically address my research questions. It comprises methodological pluralism and a multimethod research design in order to interrogate the multiplicity of relations that greenspace embodies. As part of my feminist ethic, I introduce the themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity which guide this study. The chapter ends by outlining my analytic framework using thematic analysis; the discursive analytic tools of interpretative repertoires and subject positions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell, 1998); and situational maps and analysis (Clarke, 2005). As such, the chapter acts as a bridge between the literature review and theoretical exploration of Chapters One to Four, and the empirical data and analysis of my fieldwork in Chapters Six through to Nine.

Chapter Six presents the five PAR greenspace projects and a progressive situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) in order to answer my research sub-question 1a. I review the interpretative repertoires adopted by community colleagues to illustrate the social processes and tensions to fulfilling greenspace aspirations at a micro-organisational level.

Chapter Seven builds on the previous chapter by using Clarke's (2005) Social Worlds/Arenas analysis to answer my research sub-question 1b. I explore how greenspace actions were influenced by the arenas of Glasgow local authority, environmental grants, arts grants, and action research practice operating at a meso-neighbourhood and city level. Conclusions are then drawn from both Chapters Six and Seven to comprehensively answer research question 1.

Having illustrated the enablers and constraints to greenspace aspirations and actions, Chapter Eight returns to my trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to extrapolate the implications for community resilience and empowerment in answer to research questions 2 and 3.

Chapter Nine concludes this thesis by considering the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions of my research. The empirical comprises a

summary of findings from the PAR projects and recommendations to better support greenspace aspirations and redress environmental injustice. The theoretical situates the previous chapters' findings more broadly to draw conclusions on *the urban politics of greenspace* and 'resiliences' in answer to my culminating research question 4. I propose that, as well as a 'boundary object' (Clarke, 2005) intersecting the discourses of resilience, greenspace serves as a boundary object at the intersection of social, environmental and climate justice concerns. Hence, a reorientation towards first responding to local aspirations and addressing greenspace inequality would normatively and practically contribute to community and urban resilience strategies. Lastly, I consider my methodological contribution to socio-environmental participatory inquiry. I return to the themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity, which constitutes a closing evaluation on my researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships (Frisby, 2006).

1.6.1 Presentational comments

Exploring community empowerment for greenspace aspirations, justice and resiliences is of course complex, and the analysis that emerges comprises diverse actors operating in and across multiple 'social worlds' (Clarke, 2005). To aid the narrative that unfolds, there is an accompanying Thesis Bookmark with key explanatory Figures and summary details of the PAR projects reproduced. Pseudonyms are given to all places and the five PAR projects are in italics.

Chapter 2: Socio-environmental ideologies, justice & resiliences

2.1 Introduction

When I began this research project, I started with the open question: 'What are the socio-environmental concerns and aspirations in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation?'. It soon became apparent that improving local greenspace was the persistent aspiration at a local scale, but that decisions on greenspace were governed by Glasgow local authority's strategic aim of creating 'a sustainable and low carbon city' (GCC, 2017a: Theme 5) and *City Development Plan* (GCC, 2017b) which prioritised larger regeneration projects. At the same time, at a community planning scale, the strategic theme was for 'resilient and empowered neighbourhoods' with an emphasis on social regeneration (GCC, 2017a; GCPP, 2017a).

This chapter, therefore, is an exploration of the distinctions within, and overlaps between, the discourses of sustainable development, environmental justice and resilience. Each of these multi-scalar and multidimensional concepts are associated with extensive literatures beyond the scope of this thesis to consider comprehensively, but the aim is to disentangle each of their meanings by examining their usage in different political and policy contexts. The purpose is to provide the ideological and contextual lens for interpreting *the urban politics of greenspace* and consequent implications for Scottish neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation.

I begin by offering my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies as a way of understanding sustainable development through the spectrum of socio-economic and political responses. Drawing on Hopwood et al's (2005) positional mapping of views, my matrix is intended as a simplified heuristic to the motivations governing the multifarious strands of environmental and climate activism at global, national and regional scales. It also positions the eco-socialist standpoint of this thesis and its alignment to a trivalent justice frame.

The chapter continues with a summary of the environmental justice movement in the United States and its influence. The trajectory of environmental justice as a policy principle is then traced in the UK and Scotland to outline how the

discourse of challenging local environmental inequality has been largely overshadowed by one of sustainability, climate adaptation and resilience.

This leads to an examination of the concept of resilience which has come to dominate planning and community development discourses, serving as an extension to sustainability by incorporating social dimensions more relevant to a UK context (Brown, 2014). I distinguish between five primary discourses of resilience circulating Scottish policy, and the chapter ends with my representation of the interrelationships between these 'resiliences' and this study.

2.2   Socio-environmental ideologies & sustainable development

Drawing on environmental social theory, this section situates the contested concept of sustainable development in relation to a spectrum of socio-environmental ideologies, in order to understand how it is employed to legitimate environmental and socio-economic policy.

Sustainable development entered mainstream discourse with the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future* (WCED, 1987) and its definition as:

> *'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987:43).*

The report acknowledges that while global trade and industry has increased overall prosperity and welfare, it is dependent on natural resources which has led to environmental degradation and now threatens long-term existence. It thereby advocates a more integrated approach and 'changing the quality of growth' (WCED, 1987:48). This, it argues, means that economic growth for human development is prioritised in 'developing nations', but that wealthy nations have a responsibility to address global inequality in consumption and ecological integrity. For this reason, Ratner (2004) describes sustainability as 'a dialogue of values' and 'difficult trade-offs' between social, economic and ecological goals, dependent on the priorities of individuals, communities and nations.

Similarly, Hopwood et al. (2005: Figure 1) provide a comprehensive mapping of opinions on sustainable development along the axes of socio-economic and environmental views and identify three strands which reflect the broad consensus of political perspectives as 'status quo', 'reform' and 'transformation'. Figure 2.1 offers my interpretation as an updated matrix of socio-environmental ideologies: namely 'neoliberal' as status quo; 'light-green' as reform; the addition of 'deep green' as 'radical'; and 'eco-socialist' as transformational. I have positioned these along the axes of strong sustainability - weak sustainability; and ecocentrism - anthropocentrism.
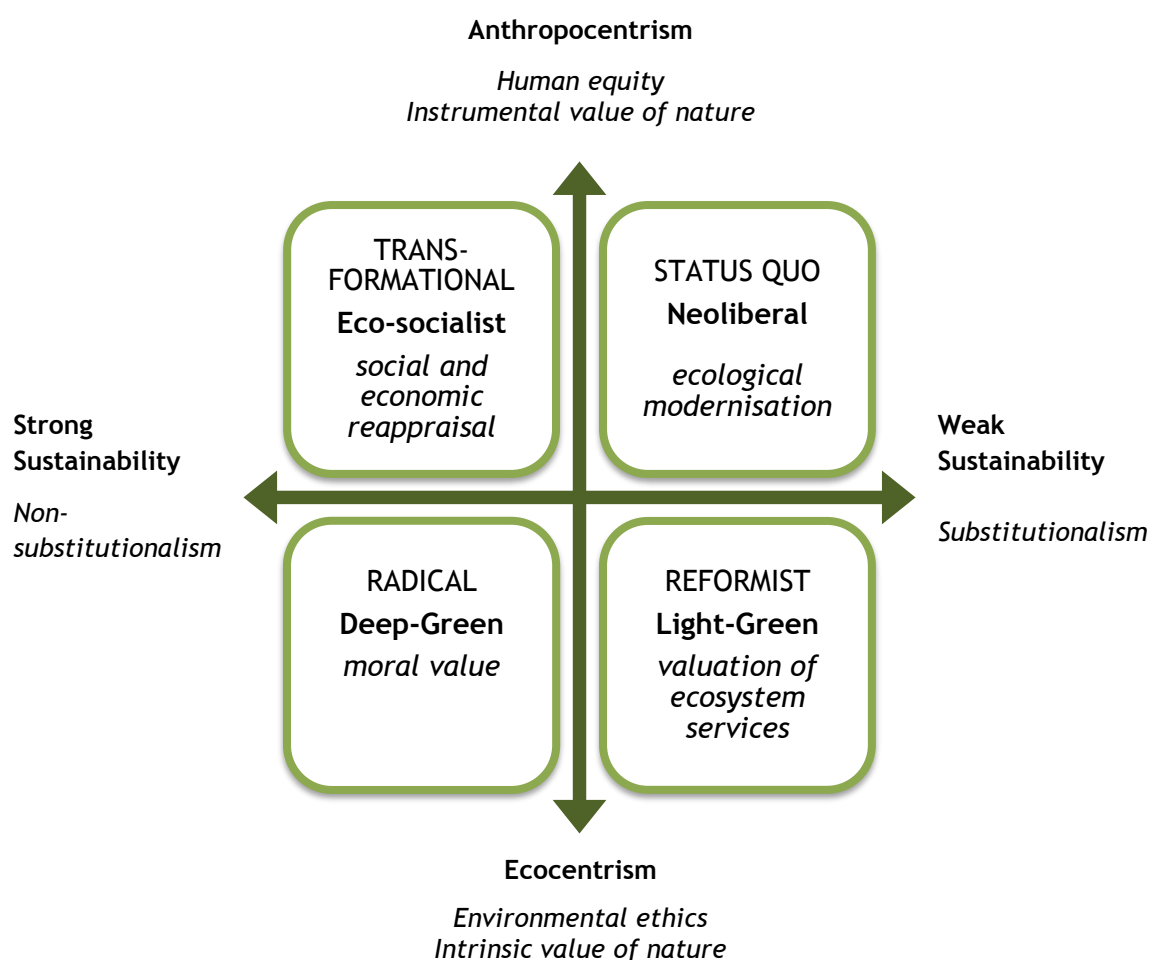
Figure 2.1: Matrix of socio-environmental ideologies in relation to sustainable development
Source: author's own.

The horizontal axis of sustainability denotes the position towards natural resources. Strong sustainable development emphasises the biophysical limits of earth's resources and the imperative to maintain complex bio and ecosystems intact for planetary and human existence (Boulding, 1993; Daly, 1974; 1992). In contrast, a weak model assumes that the depletion of natural resources can be substituted with manufacturing and resource-saving technologies (Lomborg, 2001; Simon, 1980; Solow, 1974).

The vertical axis denotes the balance between environmental and human rights. Ecocentrism is weighted towards the moral value of the natural world beyond its use as a resource for human projects (Smith, 2011), whereas anthropocentrism centres on human needs. Thus, where we place ourselves along the continuums of strong versus weak sustainability and ecocentrism versus anthropocentrism, will direct the calculation and distribution of natural resources for economic growth, and how human needs and rights are defined. Given the caveat that there are numerous strands and arguments developed over time within each quadrant, I shall summarise the current key features of each socio-environmental ideology, beginning with the top-right neoliberal status quo approach. Working clockwise I will end with transformational eco-socialism which is the standpoint of this thesis.

2.2.1 Neoliberal status quo

Neoliberalism, encompassing the economic principles of privatisation, marketisation and deregulation, sees the market as the optimal mechanism for producing and allocating goods and services (Castree, 2008). Hence the neoliberal status quo position supports a capitalist economic growth model of weak sustainability (Hopwood et al., 2005); in the belief that technological innovation will result in increased substitution of natural materials and efficiencies, so that a 'competitive equilibrium' for exhaustible natural resources is maintained (Solow, 1974). The perspective of 'ecological modernisation' centres on the role of technological solutions to address environmental problems (Hajer, 1995). In this context, it reflects a commitment to the status quo and a positive-sum game by relying on business and profitable

enterprise to mediate the tensions between market-based society and inevitable environmental degradation (Hajer, 1995; Hopwood et al., 2005).

The neoliberal position is also strongly anthropocentric arguing that only through continuing economic growth and a free market economy will global poverty be alleviated. Moreover, advocates claim that population growth and the scarcity of raw materials will act as an incentive to stimulate further enterprise and human ingenuity, and that any environmental harm can be offset by light-touch environmental regulation (Lomborg, 2001; Simon, 1980). The power of this position is that it promotes an optimistic business as usual model to increase 'resource productivity' and consumption (OECD, 2015).

This has been the most common ideology for sustainable development, often depicted at the centre of three interlocking rings comprising economy, society and environment sectors. However, Giddings et al. (2002) contend that this model assumes a level of independence within each sector rather than an interdependence between sectors. For example, opponents argue that the combined impacts of population growth and over-consumption will overshoot any improved resource efficiencies (Ehrlich, 2002). Moreover, Stern's (2008) economic appraisal identifies that unfettered market forces have failed to internalise externalities so that greenhouse gas emissions and climate change represent 'the biggest market failure the world has ever seen' (Stern, 2008:1); as well as generating increased global income inequality within and between countries (Davies et al., 2011; Fosu, 2010; Milanovic, 2005).

Thus, it is argued, ecological modernisation without institutional and economic reform will favour existing elites to consolidate their global economic advantage (Hajer, 1995; Harvey, 1996). Similarly, in relation to urban climate change initiatives, Bulkeley et al. (2015) emphasise the contested terrain of assembling new relations between actors and infrastructure networks to test socio-technical innovation. This tends to privilege already dominant actors, leaving existing issues of unequal access to services largely unaddressed.

2.2.2 Light-green reformist

The reformist position, which I term light-green, has gained traction in the past decade and stems from various incarnations of neo-Malthusianism: citing the

interdependence of human and non-human ecological systems, accompanied by warnings of imminent environmental catastrophe without planetary stewardship (Ehrlich, 2002; Lovelock, 2006; Mckibben, 1990; Meadows, 1996; Meadows et al., 2004). Also referred to as the New Ecological Paradigm in environmental sociology (Dunlap, 1996; Taylor, 2000) it can be regarded as a mid-point along both the sustainability and anthropocentric axes.

Increasingly science-knowledge productions emphasise the non-substitutable contribution of ecosystem services (Chapin Iii et al., 2000; MEA, 2005; Steffen et al., 2007; 2011), and so advocate quantifying the use-value of environmental assets (Defra, 2011; Juniper, 2013) and accounting for the costs of pollution and degradation (Trucost, 2013). In addition, intrinsic value is quantified by a 'willingness to pay' calculation and a cost-benefit analysis. Both mechanisms are advocated within ecological economics to raise the status of environmental assets and, along with stronger regulation and polluting tariffs, aim to redress market failure within a capitalist mainstream discourse (Beder, 2006; Common & Stagl, 2005; Edwards-Jones et al., 2000; Pearce, 2002).

Yet, the reframing of ecosystem value, political ecologists argue, encourages the marketisation of conservation activities and risks instrumentalising environmental goods to unstable abstractions; in which services valued by humans outweigh non-economic justifications and lead to unintended consequences for biodiversity (Büsher, 2012; Castree, 2013; Peet et al., 2011; Redford & Adams, 2009; Robertson, 2012).

The seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015 and to be achieved by 2030 (United Nations, 2019), arguably reflect the reformist position of environmental governance. This can be summarised as: in order to simultaneously end poverty and protect the planet, global economic growth can be managed by ecological modernisation combined with incorporating hitherto neglected ecological costs; and by implementing more comprehensive international treaties, such as the United Nations *Paris Agreement* on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 2015). However, critics point to the insufficient progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by using market logics and seek to politicise environmental and climate issues in opposition to what they see as 'neoliberal hegemony' within the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change (Chatterton et al., 2013; Klein, 2014; Pleyers, 2015; Routledge et al., 2018; Scandrett, 2016).

Articulated as a call for climate justice, the opposition rejects capitalist solutions to climate change, framing this as a question of human and collective rights; and emphasising the strong connection between uneven Global North-South development and the unequal impacts of climate change geographically and socially (Chatterton et al., 2013; Pleyers, 2015). The climate justice movement first coalesced in 2007 against the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP)13 in Bali, and orchestrated stronger direct action at the COP15 in Copenhagen, December 2009 (Chatterton et al., 2013; Scandrett, 2016; Zee & Batty, 2009). This, Chatterton et al. (2013) outline, articulated a new political agenda for mobilising climate activism.

A decade later in September 2019, to coincide with the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York, the *global climate strike* (global climate strike, 2019; Singh et al., 2019), with over seven million participating, was an emphatic demonstration of international youth solidarity against the failures of adult reformist institutions to address our now climate emergency.

2.2.3 Deep-green radical

Sharing roots with the light-green preservation and conservation movements of the twentieth century, the most radical deep green position emerged during the 1970s and 80s as an inversion of capitalism. For example, the philosophy of deep ecology prioritises environmental value and rights as separate and autonomous to human needs; refutes economic and political reductionism; and argues for a radical revaluation in our socio-environmental relations and how to co-exist with the non-human world (Naess, 1989). Although deep ecology has been caricatured as promoting an essentialist and over-romanticised idyll of simple communal living with minimal consumption, an evolving philosophy of ecologically-orientated ethics presents a critique of both 'anthropological despotism' (neoliberal) and 'pastoral stewardship' (light-green) positions (Smith, 2011:37).

Another strand that I place in this quadrant, and encompassing a range of subjects, are writings in 'more-than-human geographies'. These challenge our modernist division between human and nonhuman, subject and object (Haraway,

2010; Hinchliffe et al., 2005; Latour & Porter, 2004; Whatmore, 2002); and experiment with appreciating nonhuman difference and vitality (Bennett, 2010; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1993). Although these monographs do not always adopt a specific socio-economic positioning, they politically destabilise both mainstream capitalism (neoliberal status quo) and mainstream environmentalism (light-green reformist), adding further complexity to how we negotiate morality between human and nonhuman existence.

2.2.4 Eco-socialist transformational

Lastly we come to the eco-socialist position, which advocates transformational change in the material conditions and social structure of society, in order to overcome both environmental crises and social injustice (Fitzpatrick, 2014a; Pepper, 1993). While it has roots in Marxism (Benton, 1996; Dickens, 1992; Marx, 1969; Marx, 1992), it also acknowledges that both capitalist and state socialist post-war models are the structural causes that have led to industrial pollution and environmental degradation (Goldblatt, 1996). Hence, there is a greater emphasis on working interdisciplinary to develop an integrated model for environmental and human wellbeing. This model needs to comply with the biophysical carrying capacity of the planet (Boulding, 1993; Daly, 1992); and remain within the socialist tradition of challenging capitalist economic rationality to favour state regulation, community ownership and progressive taxation (Fitzpatrick, 2014b; Goldblatt, 1996).

This then represents a strong sustainability and anthropocentric position and reflects Giddings et al's (2002) nested model of sustainable development: which shows economic activity as a subset of wider human activity, which is itself a subset of, and bounded by, the limits of the environment.

Within the Marxist tradition, Smith (2007; 2010) and O'Connor (1998) argue that neoliberalism and globalisation has led to a new phase of the commodification of nature, reducing it to use and exchange values[9] that have transformed our social relationship with the natural world. This has led to further 'alienation' (Marx,

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[9] This includes the payment of ecosystem services through market mechanisms such as carbon trading/ offsetting, and nature/ ecological credits (Smith, 2007).

1992) as well as economic and ecological crisis. Similarly, the Marxist geographer Harvey (1996:11) talks of the 'processes of valuation' to denote how certain practices take precedence over others and how 'the process of money valuation' dominates our socio-environmental relations. Adherents to this argument consider social justice inherently limited in a capitalist regime of uneven development (Byrne, 2005; Somerville, 2016) but the challenge for eco-socialism is to find an alternative.

> *'Alternative modes of production, consumption and distribution as well as alternative modes of environmental transformation have to be explored if the discursive spaces of the environmental justice movement and the theses of ecological modernisation are to be conjoined in a program of radical political action' (Harvey, 1996:.401).*

The alternative which has gradually gained momentum, is the transformational socio-economic paradigm of 'steady state', first outlined by the economist Daly (1974; 1992). For advanced economies, Jackson (2009) explains this as 'decoupling' economic activity from natural resource depletion so that, notwithstanding technological efficiencies in energy production, there is an overall reduction in resource use in relation to gross domestic product. He also argues that we need to 'redefine prosperity' by overturning the social logic of consumerism, addressing income inequality and building social relations for cohesion and improved wellbeing. This is reiterated by empirical evidence from the richest twenty three countries highlighting the strong correlation between income inequality and increased health and social problems for all income groups (Costanza et al., 2014; NEF, 2016; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).

The call to reject self-interested individualism and see ourselves as 'persons-in-community' (Daly, 1992; Daly et al., 1990) is reinforced by research into values as predeterminants to behaviours. Schwartz (1994; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987) identifies ten universal value types, distinguished by their motivational goals, along the two bipolar dimensions of self-transcendence - self–enhancement; and openness to change - conservation. Self-transcendence includes values of universalism and benevolence, which are oppositional to the self-enhancement values of achievement and power. Drawing on Schwartz's universal value types, extensive empirical and theoretical studies show how environmentally driven behaviours seem to share underlying altruistic or self-transcendence values (De

Groot & Steg, 2009; 2010; Schultz & Zelezny, 1999; Stern, 2000; Whitmarsh & O'neill, 2010).

Grouzet et al.'s (2005) goals motivation analysis, consisting of eleven personal goals and aspirations, also supports Schwartz's universal values. The bipolar goal dimensions are intrinsic (inherently rewarding to pursue, including community feeling) – extrinsic (dependent on external approval and rewards); and self-transcendence - physical self (including hedonism and financial success). Combining the two models of values and goals, it is argued that in order to address 'bigger-than-self' problems such as climate change, we need to promote socially desirable narratives that will emotionally engage self-transcendence values to encourage both pro-social and pro-environmental self and social identities (CCBRP,2013; Crompton, 2010; Crompton & Kasser, 2010; Holmes et al., 2012).

Fundamentally then, an eco-socialist perspective, and the standpoint of this thesis, considers that environmental and social costs and benefits are inextricably entwined; and political-economic practice should therefore be directed towards reducing the environmental and social impacts of uneven economic development on global, national and urban scales (Martínez-Alier, 2012). The alignment of an eco-socialist standpoint with Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent justice frame thus becomes evident, in that both seek to address the inequality in distribution of environmental benefits and burdens and consequent health and social impacts for the most marginalised in society.

2.3   The trajectory of environmental justice

Agyeman & Evans (2004) outline how the concept of environmental justice is both a vocabulary for mobilising political action; and a policy principle to evaluate the distributional patterns of environmental costs and benefits among social categories, and parity of participation. The trajectory of environmental justice in the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK) illustrate these two distinct but inter-related dimensions. This section begins by tracing the roots of environmental justice in the US as a focus for local activism and a powerful national social movement which established the underpinnings for a global climate justice movement (Agyeman & Evans, 2004; Aitken et al., 2016;

Chatterton et al., 2013). It then considers the policy-led route in the UK before focusing on the Scottish context.

2.3.1 Environmental justice in the United States

Rachel Carson (1963) first used an injustice frame to highlight the negligent use of pesticides and other chemicals in industry and US government practices, and the consequent harm to individuals and the environment. In tracing the trajectory of environmental discourses since the nineteenth century, Taylor (2000) argues that by bridging environmental with human concerns, Carson laid the foundations for the US environmental justice movement.

In recognition that 'no segment of American society should have a monopoly on a clean environment' (Bullard, 1993:319), the movement developed during the 1980s in response to the racial disparities in exposure to environmental hazards; and the disproportionate negative impacts of environmental laws, policies and processes. A combination of community activism and pioneering scholarship unwrapped how environmental injustice and racism were outcomes of inequality. Specifically: between the distribution of wealth, real estate practices, and land use planning; and the siting of municipal and hazardous waste and disposal facilities, which placed African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans with more health and environmental risks than the rest of society (Adeola, 2014; Bullard, 1990; Cutter, 1995).

Taylor (2000) also suggests that the movement created a new 'environmental justice paradigm'[10] that was distinct from the previous elite conservation interests of traditional, White, middle-class and primarily male dominated environmental groups; to one which emphasised the relationship between social inequality (including race, class and gender) and the environment. Supported by a growing body of accessible research, technical advice and policy statements (Energy Justice Network, 2019; Schweizer, 1999), a network of grassroots community activism gained momentum across the US to promote a civil rights

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[10] Taylor (2000) outlines four paradigms for the American environmental movement as: 'exploitative capitalist', 'new environmental' 'romantic environmental' and 'environmental justice' which broadly align with my matrix as: neoliberal, light-green, deep-green and eco-socialist respectively.

and social justice agenda by challenging urban environmental problems (Bullard & Wright, 2008; Taylor, 2000).

The 'environmental justice paradigm' (Taylor, 2000) was codified in the seventeen *Principles of Environmental Justice* (NRDC, 1991) adopted at the First National People of Colour Environmental Leadership Summit, held in Washington DC. The principles reflect a transformational, strong sustainability and human equity position. They include: an acknowledgement of the ecological limits to production and consumption; the right to clean air, land water and food, and safe work environments; universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous waste; the rights of Indigenous peoples; and full participation at every level of decision-making. These principles provided the theoretical underpinning for a transformational global climate justice movement and were adapted to become the *Bali Principles of Climate Justice* (2002) followed by the *Universal Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth* (WPC, 2010).

Thus, the US environmental justice movement has been pivotal in mobilising collective action on a local scale and influencing environmental policy on federal and state scales (Agyeman et al., 2016; Schweizer, 1999). Notwithstanding its significant achievements, Bullard & Wright (2008:251) use the environmental clean-up in post-storm Katrina New Orleans, after the 'worst environmental disaster in US history', to emphasise that environmental racism continues in the unequal enforcement of environmental, civil rights and public health laws.

> *'Once again, local residents were "left on their own"- running the risk of getting left behind in their quest for a safe, clean and healthy environment'(Bullard & Wright, 2008:253).*

2.3.2 Environmental Justice in the UK

Drawing on social movement scholarship, Taylor (2000) accounts for the rise of the environmental justice movement in the US by the convergence of four factors, which I have arranged into two sets of two factors: microstructural network recruitment and resource mobilisation; and framing processes and political opportunities. This section considers how these factors translate to the UK and Scottish context.

Microstructural network recruitment and resource mobilisation

Network recruitment and mobilisation in the US was 'a method perfected by the civil rights movement' (Taylor, 2000:564), dependent on activists with extensive community networks and strong institutional connections. This included pre-existing social relationships in religious, community and trade union organisations which could mobilise people rapidly and provide support across groups; as well as supporters within academic, legal and policy fields who could promote the wider justice discourse.

Although links were also beginning to be made in the UK between ethnicity, poverty and facility siting of hazardous substances (Walker et al., 2000), commentators observe that, compared with the racial grassroots politics of the US,[11] there was no 'justice' vocabulary seeking to mobilise minority ethnic and low-income groups (Agyeman, 2000; Agyeman & Evans, 2004). Instead, while the strength of environmental activism remained at a grassroots level, the focus was most often to challenge place-specific conditions such as industrial pollution and air quality, rather than a coherent programme of regulatory change for diverse interests to coalesce (Bickerstaff & Agyeman, 2009; Jenkins, 2018).

Two observations can be drawn from this. First, that the civil rights movement is a critical demarcation between the US and UK in the trajectory of environmental activism and goes some way to understanding the absence of a sustained environmental justice social movement in the UK (Agyeman & Evans, 2004; Bickerstaff & Agyeman, 2009). Yet, and notwithstanding the diversity of migration pathways, settlements, cultural heritage and history of race relations in the UK, all minority ethnic communities are more likely than the majority White British group to live in the most deprived neighbourhoods in England (Kelly & Ashe, 2014, Scottish Government, 2014a).[12] This does raise the unanswered question of the extent of environmental racism that exists unchallenged.

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[11] From the 2011 census: minority ethnic groups comprised 15% of England's population compared to 4% in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014a) and 23.5% in the US (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

[12] From the 2011 Census: in Scotland, over a quarter of the African ethnic group lived in the most deprived decile; and the Caribbean or Black group was also over-represented in the most deprived deciles (Scottish Government 2014a: Chart 1.23).

Second, it draws attention to the important combination of social capital and institutional enablers necessary to address environmental inequality at a local activist scale. Although the first observation is not a focus of this study, the second is an important recurring theme.

Framing processes and political opportunities

In the UK, Walker (2009) describes how, similar to the US, research began by drawing attention to the spatial and socio-economic inequalities relating to industrial pollution and air quality (ESRC Global Environmental Change Programme, 2001; Walker et al., 2003). This then broadened to encompass a wider range of topics including food systems, public transport, environmental services and greenspace (Hastings, 2007; Lucas, 2004; 2006; Lucas et al., 2004). However, and as noted above, in contrast to the bottom-up mobilisation against environmental racism (Agyeman, 2000), Agyeman & Evans (2004) outline how environmental justice emerged as a top-down policy concept in the UK towards the end of the 1990s.

Key catalysts were the campaigns and investigations of Friends of the Earth in England, Wales & N Ireland and Friends of the Earth Scotland; the ratification of the *Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters* (UNECE, 1998); and the UK election of a New Labour government in 1997 with its social exclusion agenda (SEU,1998; 2001). Hence, political opportunity came in framing environmental inequality as an indicator of social exclusion which required a more integrated policy framework to address social and environmental objectives.

> *'If social justice can be thought of ensuring that all people have at least a basic set of minimum conditions to achieve a healthy life, then having a healthy, safe environment and access to enough environmental resources for all people is a central part of this social justice goal.*
>
> *Environmental justice is concerned with ensuring the environmental part of this social justice goal' (ESRC Global Environmental Change Programme, 2001:4).*

The link between regeneration and environmental initiatives was acknowledged in principle by the UK government's sustainable development strategy (Defra,

2005; SDC, 2002) which, Agyeman & Evans (2004) argue, was further enhanced by the European Union's proactive position on more equitable and participatory environmental policy. Thus, the authors advocate that the conditions were favourable for the discourse of environmental justice to morph into one of 'just sustainability': to include national concerns for sustainable development and social inclusion; and global environmental concerns such as climate change and intergenerational justice. More recently, an argument is made to unite climate, energy and environmental justice concerns under the auspices of 'just transition' processes (Heffron & Mccauley, 2018). This entails shifting to a carbon-neutral economy without disadvantaging workers and communities currently dependent on fossil fuel industries (FoES, 2019).

2.3.3 Environmental justice in Scotland

Along with New Labour's election as the UK Government in 1997, came the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 in which environmental policy was devolved to Scotland, creating further political opportunity within a social justice agenda (Scottish Executive, 2002a). An additional stimulus was the concerted mobilisation and networking of protest activism, spearheaded by Friends of the Earth Scotland and sharing similar objectives to the US social movement (Scandrett et al., 2000).

The first campaign explicitly using the language of environment justice was at Greengairs, North Lanarkshire in 1998. The catalyst was a plan to dispose of the toxic waste of 'others' in local landfill sites which permitted higher levels of contamination than in England and Wales. In this case the waste was being transported from a wealthy English county, exemplifying the inequality and 'disconnected geographies' between consumption responsibility and population proximity to landfill sites (Walker, 2009:623). Thus, Dunion (2003) describes environmental injustice in Scotland as:

> *'A result of practices or policies which, intentionally or unintentionally, disparately impact on the living conditions of people in low-income groups and whose experiences and preferences are often not taken into account by decision makers' (Dunion, 2003:12).*

The community protest was successful in ending the toxic dumping and gained additional measures and reparation monies from the landfill operators. Using

Greengairs and other examples of local campaigns in working-class areas, Friends of the Earth Scotland intentionally launched a campaign for environmental justice to coincide with the inauguration of the Scottish Parliament, using the strapline:

> *'No less than a decent environment for all, no more than our fair share of the Earth's resources' (Scandrett et al., 2000).*

Hence, with devolution, there seemed an opportunity to combine activism with transformational policy reform on a range of environmental issues such as tackling pollution, reducing landfill waste, improving energy efficiency in homes and industry, eradicating fuel poverty, and improving public transport (Dunion, 2003). From the end of 2001 to 2007, both Scandrett (2007; 2012) and Slater & Pedersen (2009) note the sympathetic leadership of Scotland's First Minister, Jack McConnell (BBC News, 2002), who embraced an environmental justice discourse and clearly linked it to the challenges of combining sustainable development with economic progress.

During this time, the Scottish Executive (2002b) adopted a wide approach to environmental justice as an integral part of environmental and public policy, including reducing landfill waste; and addressing derelict land and poor environmental quality. This was arguably accelerated by the election in 2003 of seven Scottish Green Party Members of Scottish Parliament and reflected in the Introduction of the *Partnership Agreement,* which set the tone for the second Scottish Labour & Liberal-Democrat coalition government's programme.

> *'We want a Scotland that delivers sustainable development; that puts environmental concerns at the heart of public policy and secures environmental justice for all of Scotland's communities' (Scottish Labour Party and Scottish Liberal-Democrats, 2003:5).*

It is in this period that a commissioned research programme gauged the correlations between poverty, poor health and poor environmental quality (Curtice et al., 2005; Fairburn et al., 2005) that was referred to in Chapter One as the focus of my environmental justice frame. That is, the triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and 'the absence of environmental goods' (Curtice et al., 2005).

However, in their legislative and policy review between 2002 and 2007, Slater & Pedersen (2009) suggest that adopting such a broad umbrella for environmental justice, while gaining rhetorical and political momentum, masked the complexity of addressing the impacts of post-industrial decline: entangled as it was across environmental, regeneration, energy and transport domains; so that creating an explicit policy and legislative pathway was unclear. Where there was tangible progress, was in more clearly demarcated environmental regulation and participatory procedures supported by international and European Union obligations. This included improved transparency and public engagement requirements for the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and a commitment to planning policy and land use reform. An Environmental Justice Fund was also launched in 2007 targeted at communities affected by negative environmental impacts from industry or pollution (Slater & Pedersen, 2009).

While Slater & Pedersen (2009) find the expansion of environmental justice as potentially confounding social policy, Scandrett (2007:2) suggests that it may also have had an unintended consequence by diverting attention away from policy areas 'most directly affected by environmental justice'. This included detrimental decisions on land use planning and pollution control that ignored the demands and rights of communities campaigning against unwanted polluters. His critique emphasises the dilution of planning reform to favour business and developers' interests within a market-driven economy, rather than comprehensively challenging unsustainable development as the root cause of environmental injustice (Scandrett, 2012). This remains an important observation in relation to the most recent *Planning (Scotland) Act 2019,* in which equal right of appeal, a long-term campaign to enable communities to appeal planning approvals, continues to be omitted (Planning Democracy, 2019; Poustie, 2007; Slater & Pedersen, 2009).

Notwithstanding these concerns about extending an environmental justice frame, Scandrett (2012:250) later concedes between 2002 and 2007 marked the 'high point' of environmental justice policy aligned to a narrative of social democracy. Similarly, the argument put forward in this thesis is, that using an environmental justice lens highlights the ongoing practices and impacts of greenspace inequality and negation of community interests.

In May 2007, the Scottish National Party, for the first time, gained power to form a minority government, followed by Scotland's first majority government in 2011.[13] During this time, as with the rest of the UK, environmental justice as a policy discourse was replaced by a wider global agenda. This also coincided with the economic crisis in 2008 and consequent austerity measures; and the scientific consensus of anthropogenic climate change (IPCC, 2007), along with *The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009* committing Scotland to an 80% reduction on 1990 greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Later the same year, the government raised climate justice as a political commitment at the *Human Rights and Climate Change Conference* held in Glasgow.

> *'Nationally and internationally the effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by people who are already in vulnerable situations because of factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, minority status and disability. These groups also tend to have a more limited capacity to adapt to changing situations…. National and international efforts to address climate change should be based on the principle of climate justice and the "polluter pays" principle' (Scottish Government et al., 2009:1).*

In reference to the development of social justice and social policy in Scotland, Scott & Mooney (2012) outline how the goals of social justice were repeated by successive governments but were moulded by neoliberal policies for economic growth and competitiveness which constrained transformational social reform. They also suggest that from 2011, egalitarianism and solidarity were more noticeably invoked as part of a Scottish identity, driven by the desire for nation building under the Scottish National Party's political agenda of sub-state nationalism. The latter is perhaps demonstrated by the Scottish Parliament becoming the first legislative body in the world to explicitly recognise and support global climate justice (Scottish Parliament, 2012), followed by the government's launch of the Climate Justice Fund in 2012 to support vulnerable communities in Africa. Hence, 'championing climate justice' was integral to demonstrating 'Scotland's place in the world' (Scottish Government, 2013:21; Scottish Parliament, 2012).

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[13] Following the fifth Scottish Parliament election in May 2016, the Scottish National Party are in their third term in government, two seats short of an overall majority.

While the launch of the Climate Justice Fund is commendable in acknowledging North-South global responsibilities, Scandrett (2016) notes how the Scottish Government came under some criticism for actively promoting a progressive foreign affairs agenda, while failing to meet its own ambitious domestic targets and continuing to support the fossil fuel industry. Moreover, a global climate justice discourse provided an alternative 'just' policy path for the government while distancing them from the domestic environmental justice discourse promoted by the previous Labour-led administrations (Scandrett, 2012; 2016). In the third *Climate Change Plan* (Scottish Government 2018b), out of the eleven times climate justice is mentioned, ten refer to the success of the global Climate Justice Fund.

Domestic climate justice and the Climate Challenge Fund

In the UK, the distributive dimension of climate justice is concerned with ensuring that a rapid reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is least detrimental and most beneficial to the poorest households; and that existing and projected social vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change are reduced (Lindley et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2014; Schaffrin, 2014). In the second *Climate Change Plan* (Scottish Government, 2013:65), the government's stated vehicle for 'ensuring that climate justice is delivered to those most vulnerable', was the extension of the Climate Challenge Fund to reach '"disadvantaged" and "hard to reach" communities' (Scottish Government, 2013:65).

Launched in 2008, in the same year that the Environmental Justice Fund ceased, the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) is a Scottish Government programme that supports community-led carbon reduction projects. In its initial phase, the Fund supported a range of capital bids targeted at pro-environmental groups to encourage a range of innovative low carbon projects. With the expansion of CCF in 2012 to disadvantaged groups, the focus has been on smaller one to two-year projects promoting carbon literacy through energy efficiency advice; lower carbon travel options; community growing initiatives; and waste reduction (Changeworks, 2015; KSB, 2019).

Since its launch, the CCF has awarded over £104 million to 1,100 projects across Scotland (KSB, 2019) and, between 2012 and 2015, a quarter of all project

awards were allocated to the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland (Changeworks, 2015). Although this has helped to normalise a climate mitigation narrative; as suggested in Chapter One, directing the Climate Challenge Fund towards disadvantaged groups risks misplacing responsibilities onto those who often have the least ability to reduce their consumption because of structural constraints (Gough et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2013). Not only does this go against the principles of climate justice, the Fund's objectives focus greenspace activity towards food growing. This emerged as a critical factor in the participatory action research projects. Also, interestingly, in the single mention of domestic climate justice in the third *Climate Change Plan* (Scottish Government, 2018b), the role of CCF has noticeably shifted to the discourse of community empowerment.

> *'Continued Scottish Government investment in the CCF helps ensure that communities are empowered, equipped and supported to deliver low carbon solutions to local issues on their own terms' (Scottish Government 2018b:36).*

In conclusion, when exploring the history of climate justice and its meaning in relation to Scotland, Aitken et al. (2016:247) categorise the 'flavour' of climate justice in Scotland as advocating a global human rights-based approach with 'transformative potential', while implementing a 'status quo' domestic agenda.

This section traced how an environmental justice discourse has expanded across geographical and conceptual scales of activism, research and policy (Agyeman et al., 2016; Holifield et al., 2009; Schlosberg, 2013; Walker, 2009; Walker & Bulkeley, 2006). It distinguished between two paths: the social movement and activism so pivotal in the US; and the evolving academic and policy discourse in the UK and Scotland which has encompassed wider global concerns for sustainable development and climate justice, a trend reflected across Western Europe (Köckler et al., 2017).

Yet, in order to maintain its political programme and not become subsumed within the opaque meta-narrative of sustainable development, Walker & Bulkeley (2006:657) emphasise the need for environmental justice to maintain a critical engagement with the 'underlying causes and dynamics of inequities at different scales'. This argument could refer to Scotland, where the push for

local environmental justice seems to have been overtaken by a rhetoric of global climate justice driven by political and economic motives. In contrast, this thesis embraces the principles underpinning a transformative approach: which advocates for new economic frameworks and policy mechanisms in order to achieve local, global and intergenerational climate justice. In addition, and specifically, it seeks to identify, at an urban scale, the policy place and space to challenge greenspace inequality and how this might inform the circulating discourses of resilience.

2.4 The discourses of resilience

Resilience is used in a psycho-social context to mean 'the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness' (OED, 2017). A second definition of resilience is in a material context as the 'ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity' (OED, 2017). The concept's 'malleability and plasticity' (Brown, 2014:38) has contributed to its increasing usage as a bridging concept in a range of environmental, public and social policy domains, but similar to sustainability, this has also contributed to its increased conceptual vagueness (Brown, 2014; Shaw, 2012).

A focus of this thesis is how the often-muddled policy rhetoric of 'resiliences' is experienced in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Hence, the aim of this section is to discern between five primary discourses of resilience. As I will refer to the discourses instrumentally, the purpose here is to provide a summary of each of them as they are promoted, rather than an in-depth analysis of each diverse field. I also develop a preliminary evaluation, noting the omission of an environmental justice frame. The section ends with my representation of the macro, meso and micro interrelationships between the discourses that are critically explored in this thesis.

The five discourses that I have identified simultaneously operate at national, city and neighbourhood scales and pertain to climate policy, city planning, public health, community development and community transformation. The first two emphasise material planning processes, although social processes are increasingly acknowledged. I distinguish between the latter three as evolving conceptualisations of asset-informed approaches to wellbeing and community

development. The specific models of community development are explored in Chapter Four.

2.4.1 Discourse 1: Climate resilience - incremental adaptation & emergency planning

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations, 1992). identifies mitigation and adaptation as two strategies to respond to climate change. Mitigation aims to limit greenhouse gas emissions through energy saving practices; while adaptation aims to address the adverse impacts of climate change, often through localised initiatives to reduce current vulnerabilities (Füssel & Klein, 2006; IPCC, 2007; Klein et al., 2003). Hence, *Discourse 1: Climate resilience* operates at a macro UK and Scottish national level to emphasise responding to the direct risks from extreme weather events associated with climate change, which is termed as 'incremental adaptation planning' (IPCC, 2014).

Measures favour technological innovation which are considered within an economic cost-benefit analysis and risk management plan for the built environment, infrastructure, public services, agriculture and forestry (Cabinet Office, 2016; Defra, 2018; Scottish Government, 2018a; 2018b). At a meso level, community resilience within this discourse is framed as public engagement in being prepared for, responding, and recovering well from emergencies (Cabinet Office, 2016; Deeming, 2015; Ready Scotland, 2018).

2.4.2 Discourse 2: City resilience – urban governance & planning

Discourse 2: City resilience follows from *Discourse 1* but seeks to adopt a systems approach to adaptive planning within urban governance. The literature draws on social-ecological perspectives[14] (Allen et al., 2014; Folke et al., 2010; Holling, 2001; Nelson et al., 2007) and sees urban systems as negotiating complex trade-offs in planning choices: between perceived socio-economic needs and current efficiencies; and investment in innovative adaption to sustain

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[14] These are concerned with the interdependence of human and ecosystems; and resilience as the cyclical processes of self-organisation, learning, innovation and capacity to absorb change while sustaining a baseline of stability (Folke et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2007).

ecosystem services. Increasingly, this discourse also includes dimensions of social wellbeing (Armitage et al., 2012) and public participation in decision-making to deliver 'socially aware planning' (Baldwin & King, 2017:6).

So, whilst the resilience concept was originally framed around emergency planning for large scale shocks through incremental adaptation, it has expanded and evolved to consider the essential components of a city's resilience: directed towards pre-empting disruptive events (acute shocks); *and* addressing physical and social vulnerabilities that erode coping abilities, such as inequality, inadequate infrastructure and environmental degradation (chronic stresses) (100RC, 2019). This is illustrated by Arup's (2015) *City Resilience Framework,* developed for the 100 Resilient Cities network (100RC, 2019) and adopted by Glasgow for its Resilience Strategy (GCC, 2016). The framework comprises four dimensions: health and wellbeing, economy and society, infrastructure and environment, and leadership. It defines city resilience as:

> *'The capacity of cities to function, so that the people living and working in cities- - particularly the poor and vulnerable – survive and thrive no matter what stresses or shocks they encounter' (Arup: 2015:3).*

Thus, 'city resilience' has emerged as 'the systematic approach to urban sustainability' (Pitidis et al., 2018:1), promoted as a win-win scenario that can address social inequality, promote a green economy, create attractive urban areas, and also establish a competitive advantage over other cities (GCC, 2016; Rockefeller, 2016).

2.4.3 Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital

As a psychological and social concept, resilience has its roots in both child development and adult mental health (Antonovsky, 1987). It builds on the concept of wellbeing defined as:

> *'A sustainable condition that allows the individual or population to develop and thrive. It is the combination of feeling good and functioning well' (Harrison et al., 2016:10).*

White (2010) suggests wellbeing is best understood as a process that comprises material, relational and subjective dimensions. Hence, adult resilience is understood as comprising a combination of material conditions, social relationships and intrinsic psychological factors to support wellbeing *and* the

ability to cope with a shock or crisis (Reich et al., 2010). White (2010) goes on to emphasise two important aspects of wellbeing. First, the holistic quality of the concept; and second, the opportunity to focus on the 'well', which shifts from a deficit to a positive policy approach when working with disadvantage. This lends itself to interventions that centre on psychological and social asset-based approaches which have become popular for health improvement.

Assets are described as:

> *'Any resource, skill or knowledge which enhances the ability of individuals, families and neighbourhoods to sustain their health and wellbeing' (Foot, 2012:8).*

The public health literature in Scotland highlights that all asset-based approaches begin by drawing attention to what is working well within the topics that people care about, and using this as the foundation for enhancing skills and building connections (GCPH & SCDC, 2015; McLean & McNeice, 2012). As such, asset-based approaches to health improvement are intended to promote self-efficacy and share a common set of goals of increasing social connections, confidence, aspirations, and thereby wellbeing and resilience (Foot, 2012; Foot & Hopkins, 2010; GCPH, 2012; Marmot Review, 2010; McLean & McNeice, 2012).[15]

It is the principles and practice of an asset-based approach, using methods such as asset mapping, participatory appraisal, story-telling, appreciative inquiry, and co-production that are extended to community practice (Foot & Hopkins, 2010; GCPH & SCDC, 2015; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; McLean & McNeice, 2012). Promoted by public health, this third resilience discourse is therefore directed at a micro-organisational scale. It draws on Kretzmann & McKnight's (1993:5) conceptualisation of community development as 'asset-based, internally focused and relationship driven'. Their focus on strengthening networks of relationships between and among residents, associations and institutions reflects Putnam's (1995:664) conceptualisation of social capital as a resource for action: enabling people 'to act together effectively in the pursuit of shared objectives'.

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[15] This summary of wellbeing and asset-based approaches is adapted from Fifield (2016:10).

Similarly, high levels of social capital are correlated with positive health outcomes, wellbeing and resilience (White, 2010).

2.4.4 Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development

Increasingly, assets have taken on more tangible values within a community capitals framework for community development and resilience at a meso-neighbourhood scale (Emery & Flora, 2006; Flora & Flora, 2008). This incorporates mapping and consolidating six forms of capital or community assets: economic capital (.e.g. income and assets); built (e.g. access to amenities); natural (e.g. access to green space); human (e.g. skills and education); cultural (e.g. heritage and traditions); and social, all of which can generate economic as well as wider non-financial and intrinsic benefits (Flora & Flora, 2008; Green & Haines, 2015).

The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC, 2019a; 2019b) uses this assets/community capitals approach, so that assets are conceived as increasing social capital, encouraging local control, and the collective management of physical assets. This shift in emphasis from an inward, asset-based approach to health and wellbeing, to a more outward assessment of capital, has been influential in shaping recent concepts such as public health co-production (Foot 2012; Foot & Hopkins 2010) and community practice (Chanan & Miller, 2013). Both concepts are related to community empowerment (to be explored further in Chapter Four) and have objectives to broaden networks and leverage external resources to support health *and* regeneration goals. Thus, 'asset-based community development' has become the mainstream approach to building community resilience (Christie, 2011; GCPH, 2018b) and is embodied in the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015*.

2.4.5 Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change

More recently, an understanding of the dynamic nature of resilience has seen the discourses of community resilience morph into 'breakthrough' (Wilding, 2011) or 'transformational community resilience' (Hodgson, 2010; Hopkins, 2010; 2013; Mguni & Caistor-Arendar, 2012; Seaman et al., 2014; Twigger-Ross et al.,

2015). This is advocated to move beyond the ability to recover and return to the status quo (reactive resilience), towards adapting and shifting to a fundamental change in circumstances (proactive resilience): notably austerity and climate change. To this end, a working definition by Glasgow Centre for Population Health is offered as:

> *'Developing the capacity for populations to endure, adapt and generate new ways of thinking and functioning in the context of change, uncertainty or adversity' (Seaman et al., 2014:3).*

Thus, in response to economic recession and the impacts of austerity, Scotland's Regeneration Forum (SURF, 2019a) refers to community resilience within a social justice frame to address 'an accumulative sense of economic and political abandonment' (Milne & Rankine 2013:18). For example, their *Alliance for Action* programme (SURF, 2019a) focuses on strengthening local assets by developing practical and strategic partnerships to support place-based community regeneration.

Equally, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has associated the concept of community resilience with the process of socially just climate adaptation in the UK (Preston et al., 2014), in which reducing social vulnerability to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change is a key objective (Lindley et al., 2011; Twigger Ross et al., 2015).

> *'The ability of communities to reduce exposure, prepare for, cope with, recover better from, adapt and transform as need to the direct and indirect effects of climate change, where these can be both shocks and stresses' (Twigger-Ross et al., 2015:17).*

In their evidence review of the broad field of community action on climate change and the concept of climate resilience in the UK, Twigger-Ross et al. (2015) identify that, hitherto, climate resilience remains largely used in relation to the direct shocks of climate change associated with *Discourse 1: Climate resilience*. However, encompassing and extending *Discourses 3 & 4,* the authors advocate using 'community resilience' intentionally to act as a bridging concept that can encompass ideas such as increasing social capital, self-sufficiency and sustainability. Activities could then include currently diverse community action on food-growing, community renewable energy projects and specific local

strategies to reduce social vulnerability to the direct impacts of climate change, such as flood risk management (Jones & Clark, 2014; Wolf et al., 2010).

In addition, Twigger-Ross et al. (2015) draw on international disaster resilience literature and Cutter et al.'s (2010) five critical capacities framework (comprising social, institutional, infrastructure, economic and community) to specifically stress the importance of strengthening institutional capacities in order to progressively address the particular needs of disadvantaged groups. Moreover, there is explicit acknowledgement that community action in low-income areas is often motivated by concerns other than climate change, and actions should therefore begin by dealing with daily concerns aimed to increase community wellbeing. This resonates both with the evaluation of Climate Challenge Fund projects discussed in Chapter One, and environmental psychology literature which emphasises the relevance of different frames and tailored messages for climate communication (Bain et al., 2012; Corner et al., 2012; Hulme, 2009; Jasanoff, 2010; Whitmarsh et al., 2013; Whitmarsh & Corner, 2017).

2.4.6 Preliminary critique of the discourses of resilience

Having distinguished between five primary approaches to resilience, here I offer a brief critique to establish the parameters of my inquiry. The key point of overlap between them all is an asset-based approach to developing the existing capacities of place-based communities. Yet, this is constrained by the economic and political factors inherent to the current neoliberal status quo ideology outlined in section 2.2.

Thus, in relation to *Discourses 1 & 2,* Broto & Bulkeley (2013:1934) rename the extensive range of urban climate plans, initiatives and projects 'urban climate change experiments'. They then apply a critical lens, informed by Foucauldian governmentality (Dean, 2010), to explore the nature of urban climate change governance in eight cases of climate experiments in different international urban contexts. The authors describe their observations as an 'urban politics of climate change' (Bulkeley et al., 2015:25): in which the process of transforming the physical landscape tends to reinforce existing patterns of advantage and disadvantage; and raises questions of inclusion, responsibility, power and

compromise. Likewise, while the growing influence of city networks such as 100 Resilient Cities (100RC, 2019) may support knowledge transfer, it may also perpetuate dominant practices (Broto & Bulkeley, 2013; Bulkeley et al., 2014b; Bulkeley et al., 2015).

Similarly in relation to *Discourse 2,* Coaffee et al. (2018) summarise empirical studies to highlight how there remain significant gaps between urban resilience theory and implementation. Practically, they refer to the challenges of moving beyond silos in public administration towards coordinated and collaborative decision-making with different stakeholders; and of encouraging flexible, long-term adaptive processes over regular short-term routines that maintain the status quo. They also raise the paradoxes within the nature of resilience systems, so that decreasing exposure to one risk may inadvertently increase risk to another and potentially exacerbate existing inequality.

Thus, in spite of a gambit of frameworks and metrics, implementing mainstream measures that marry the objectives for urban sustainability, resilience and social justice remain a multi-scalar challenge (Coaffee et al., 2018; Pitidis et al., 2018). Notwithstanding, Bulkeley et al. (2015) also raise the potential for the extensive range of urban climate plans, initiatives and projects to unfold progressive forms of urban transition. One in which municipal authorities can play a leadership role by enrolling and concentrating institutional resources, partnerships, knowledge and private capital to realise new low risk socio-technical regimes. In order to capture the multidimensional justice issues raised by climate policy, Bulkeley et al.(2014b) therefore propose that Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conception of justice be pursued at this urban scale of climate governance.

Turning to asset-based approaches to community resiliences advocated in *Discourses 3, 4 & 5,* another paradox is apparent: in how a resilience discourse can overshadow the root causes of vulnerability by overplaying capacities, and thereby avoid questions on why the vulnerability exists in the first place (Brown, 2014; Harrison, 2013; Twigger et al., 2015). In other words, it risks obscuring the wider determinants of wellbeing and health inequality, such as socio-economic and cultural conditions, and the natural and built environment (Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991; 2007; Edwards & Tsouros, 2006; The Marmot Review, 2010).

Hence, critical reflection on their practical applicability is provided in Chapter Four in relation to the factors influencing community empowerment.

The next and concluding sections introduce how the discourses of resilience are deployed in Glasgow and the concerns of this study.

2.5   Glasgow's resiliences to what, where & how?

In September 2016, instigated by becoming an initial member of the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities network (100RC, 2019), *Our Resilient Glasgow: A City Strategy* (GCC, 2016) was launched embodying *Discourse 2: City resilience.* It states that while 'adaptation to climate change remains a principal focus' GCC, 2016:12), the strategy includes 'four strategic pillars of resilience' as a 'whole systems approach'. The strategy is intended to integrate existing city-wide initiatives under a common vision, including the Strategic (GCC, 2017a) and City Development (GCC, 2017b) Plans mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

> *'Four strategic pillars of resilience: empower Glaswegians; unlock place-based solutions; innovate to support fair economic growth; and foster civic participation' (GCC, 2016:24-25).*

At a community planning level, the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 Part 2* legislates that each of the thirty-two Community Planning Partnerships in Scotland produce a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan to cover the whole local authority area, as well as Locality Plans for area-based improvement (Scottish Government 2016a). In response, *Glasgow's Single Outcome Agreement* (GCPP, 2013), driven by the principles of 'equality, sustainability and early intervention' (GCPP, 2016:7), underpins the ten-year Community Plan (GCPP, 2017a). With its three focus areas of 'economic growth', 'resilient communities', and 'a fairer more equal Glasgow', the Community Plan (GCPP, 2017a:3) employs *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development*.

The key vehicle for delivering 'resilient communities' is Glasgow's Thriving Places area-based initiative, targeted at the nine most deprived neighbourhoods in the city.

> *'Our Thriving Places approach to area focused regeneration in Glasgow has made great progress. It is a better way of working between organisations and communities at a very local level, making better use of existing resources and assets to achieve better outcomes. It is making connections with people in neighbourhoods, supporting them to identify, articulate, and fulfil their aspirations that they have for themselves and their communities' (GCPP, 2017a:14)*

Each Thriving Places neighbourhood has a dedicated 'community connector' with a small budget and links to the sector health improvement team, suggesting practical alignment with *Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital*. The Thriving Places initiative and associated Locality Plan, therefore, theoretically provides an opportunity to identify locally led responses to greenspace aspirations, supported by community planning processes and local authority leadership to increase 'resiliences'.

This research was conducted in one of the Thriving Places neighbourhoods (to which I have given the pseudonym Colvin) and sought to actively engage with the practice of community development and the opportunities arising from the Thriving Places initiative. Using participatory action research to foreground greenspace aspirations, the objective was to critically assess the potential for mobilising existing assets to challenge the environmental injustice and triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and 'the absence of environmental goods' (Curtice et al., 2005); all of which can be summarised as poor access to good quality greenspace.

2.6   Conclusion to this chapter

This chapter's aim was to navigate the discourses of sustainable development, environmental justice and resilience in order to identify intersections and relevance to Scottish neighbourhoods experiencing multiple deprivation. Delineating the differences between socio-environmental ideologies and their approach towards sustainable development is important if we are to understand the drivers and tensions within greenspace policy. Similarly, tracing the trajectory of environmental justice activism and literature identifies the politics of recognition (Young, 1990) and how it unfolds in different contexts. This provides the necessary background for considering the recognition dimension of greenspace inequality in relation to the PAR projects discussed in later chapters.

A key observation, at this stage, is that a focus on local environmental injustice in the UK and specifically Scotland has arguably been obscured, first by discourses of sustainability and then of climate and city resiliences. Although these discourses are essential, they operate at a macro and meso scale. The three questions that the participatory action research drew me to were: first, why, despite the focus on sustainable development, does local environmental injustice still exist? Second, within the evolving discourses of resilience and community empowerment, to what extent are there opportunities for addressing greenspace inequality at a neighbourhood scale and what could this look like? And third, given that both urban regeneration and climate adaptation are dependent on good quality greenspace, what contribution can an environmental justice frame make towards the aspirations for city and transformational community 'resiliences'?

Figure 2.2 is a representation of the interrelationships between the five discourses of resilience operating at multiple scales in this case study. The Thriving Places neighbourhood of Colvin is introduced in Chapter Five.
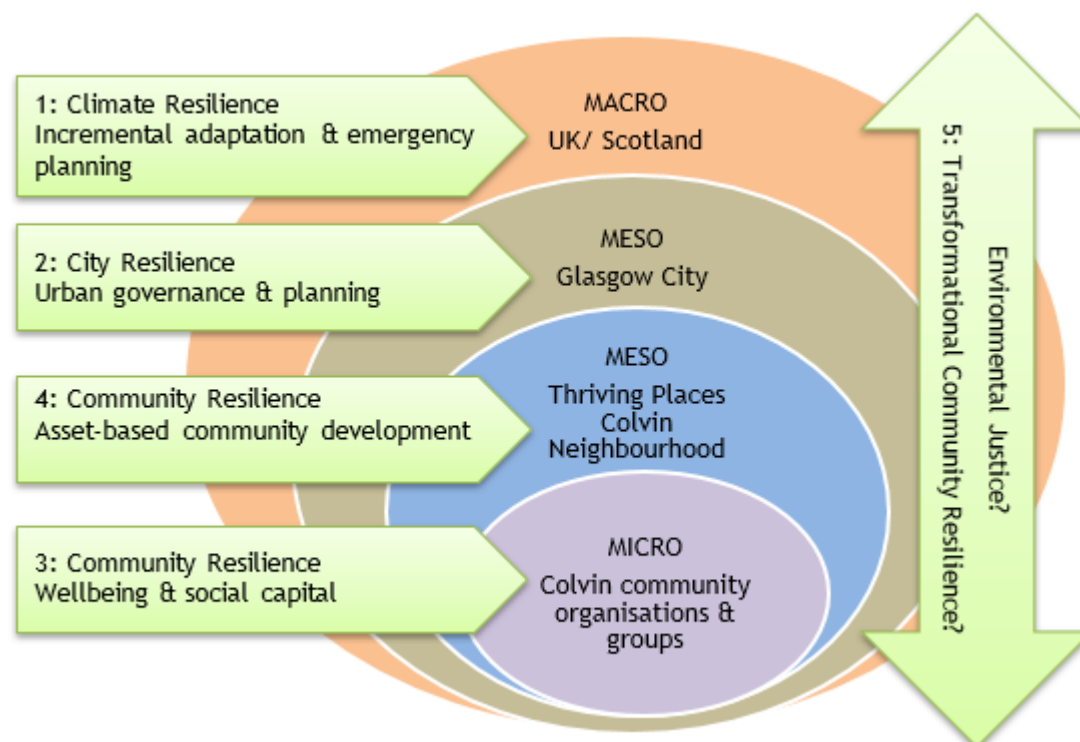
Figure 2.2: Micro, meso & macro interrelationships within this case study & corresponding five discourses of resilience
Source: author's own.

Chapter 3: Greenspace policy & inequality

3.1   Introduction

Chapters One and Two introduced the key themes in this thesis including Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice (Figure 1.1) and the five discourses of resilience (Figure 2.2).[16] I also summarised how Glasgow's disadvantaged neighbourhoods are subjected to the triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and 'the absence of environmental goods'; all of which can be summarised as poor access to good quality greenspace. Having established the parameters to this thesis, the aim of this chapter is to provide a more in-depth analysis of the distributional dimension of greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice. This is done by juxtaposing the importance of greenspace as a positive asset, with the uneven distribution of accessible and good quality greenspace which is compounded by living in proximity to derelict land.

Greenspace as a concept and object of policy has come into increased prominence over the past decade and the chapter first provides an overview of how greenspace has been instrumentalised across multifarious policy strands. Given that a key objective of this thesis is to interrogate the discourses of resilience and the implications for local environmental justice, I define and present greenspace as a 'boundary object' (Clarke, 2005) which intersects the discourses at national, city and neighbourhood scales.

This is followed by an account of how the value of greenspace for wellbeing has evolved in relation to the National Outcomes for Scotland (Scottish Government 2018c). Performance against the National Indicators as well as additional urban data are next interrogated to expose the uneven distribution of greenspace benefits at a national scale.

The policy and practice concerns of greenspace inequality are then translated to the Glasgow context by examining its municipal policy framework. A participatory inquiry paradigm underpins this thesis and hence the discussion

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[16] Both Figures are reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark.

points to the specific opportunities and challenges confronted by community colleagues. This sets the socio-environmental context to the first research question explored through the participatory action research (PAR) projects and considered in Chapter Seven.

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

3.2 Greenspace & national policy

Chapter One provided a definition of greenspace which highlighted the difference between its use in planning as a general descriptor for 'space' (Scottish Government, 2008), and its more common association with positive attributes, also referred to as 'green infrastructure' in planning policy (Scottish Government 2014b). To understand this further, Table 3.1 summarises the key national strategies and their references to greenspace that are referred to in this thesis, along with the associated resilience discourse. This is followed by a summary of the National Outcomes in relation to greenspace and its contribution to wellbeing.

The purpose here is to illustrate the pivotal role of greenspace as a 'boundary object' that intersects the discourses of resilience. In Clarke's (2005) methodology of situational analysis, which I detail in Chapter Five, she describes boundary objects as either human or nonhuman things 'that exist at junctures where varied social worlds meet in an arena of mutual concern' (Clarke, 2005:50). She continues to identify two analytic uses for identifying boundary objects. First, they help frame the broader situation of inquiry. Second, by studying the discourses that circulate boundary objects, it can reveal the distinctive positions actors take in relation to them and offer insight into more complex dynamics. By referring to greenspace as a boundary object, I employ both usages. In this chapter, I seek to emphasise not only the centrality of greenspace but also how its utility is interpreted through the spectrum of policies and resilience discourses operating at multiple scales. In addition, by using local greenspace as the boundary object in my Social Worlds/Arenas analysis (Clarke, 2005) offered in Chapter Seven, I explore the circulating discourses operating at a meso-neighbourhood and city scale that influenced greenspace actions.

Table 3.1: Key national strategies in relation to greenspace & the discourses of resilience

Resilience Discourse	Source	Reference to greenspace
Discourse 1: Climate Resilience - incremental adaptation & emergency planning	*Getting the best from our land. A Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016-2021.* (Scottish Government, 2016c).	'Sustainable land use' principles.
	Climate Change Plan. The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032. (Scottish Government, 2018b: chapter 6).	'Increasing natural capital and ecosystem services'.
Discourse 2: City Resilience - urban governance & planning	*Scottish Planning Policy.* (Scottish Government, 2014b: s.193-218; s.219-233).	'Valuing the natural environment'. 'Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure'.
	Ambition, Opportunity, Place. Scotland's Third National Planning Framework. (Scottish Government, 2014c: s.413-418).	Outcome 3: 'A natural and resilient place'.
	Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Part1.3.	Local authority duty to have an Open Space Strategy.
Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital	*A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland. Quality Action Plan.* (Scottish Government, 2017a).	Action 10: 'Promote greater use of outdoor learning and physical activity'.
	Health Inequalities Policy Review for the Scottish Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities. (NHS Health Scotland, 2013: s.4.2.4).	'Improving the availability of good quality open and green space across the social gradient' to impact on health inequalities.
	Let's Get Scotland Walking. The National Walking Strategy. (Scottish Government, 2014d: Aim 2).	'Better quality walking environments with attractive, well-designed and managed built and natural spaces for everyone'.
Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development	*Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.*	Part 9: Allotments. Part 4: Community rights to buy land.
	Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016.	Part 5: Right to buy land to further sustainable development.
	Place Standard – How Good is Our Place? (NHS Health Scotland et al., 2017).	14 questions include: streets & spaces; natural space; play & recreation; care & maintenance.

3.2.1 Greenspace & the National Outcomes

Introduced in 2007, the National Performance Framework (NPF) and associated National Outcomes and Indicators, is a single framework to which all public services are aligned (Scottish Government, 2016b). It was refreshed in 2011, 2016, and then fully revised in June 2018 (Scottish Parliament, 2018). With the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Part 1,* there is a duty on Scottish Ministers to regularly review the National Outcomes for the purpose of improving wellbeing and 'the reduction of inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage' (Part 1:1.4). Hence, the NPF has come to reflect the influential discourses and changing emphasis in Scotland's policy framework.

Between 2007 and 2018, the Framework comprised sixteen National Outcomes to achieve the five Strategic Objectives for Scotland: to be 'Wealthier and Fairer, Smarter, Healthier, Safer & Stronger and Greener' (Scottish Government 2016b). During this time the National Outcomes for the Environment and Communities remained unchanged.

> *Environment National Outcome 2007-2018: 'We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations' (Scottish Government, 2016b).*
>
> *Communities National Outcome 2007-2018: 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others' (Scottish Government, 2016b).*

Then in 2016, the fifty National Indicators that measure performance towards the National Outcomes were expanded with an additional five (Scottish Government, 2016b),[17] two of which reflect the evolving recognition of the value of greenspace.

1. Increase natural capital - measured by a Natural Capital Asset Index to account for Scotland's ecosystem services and contributing to the Environment Outcome.

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[17] The other three new indicators were in relation to employment and pay.

2. *Improve access to local greenspace* – measured by the percentage of adults within five minutes walking distance of their nearest local greenspace and contributing to the Communities Outcome.

With the NPF revision in 2018, the National Outcomes reduced to eleven[18] and the Environment Outcome was updated to give greater emphasis to greenspace with the removal of the term 'built'.

> *'Environment National Outcome 2018: 'We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment' (Scottish Government, 2018c).*

Moreover, the 'Vision' for the Outcome begins with: '*We see our natural landscape and wilderness as essential to our identity and way of life*'; and, as well as achieving its carbon reduction and sustainable planning targets, aims to '*ensure all communities can engage with and benefit from nature and green space*' (Scottish Government, 2019b). This commitment to positive engagement is repeated in the National Outcomes' visions for Communities and Children & Young People. For the latter, it is practically reflected in the Scottish Government's pledge to extend free early learning and childcare to 1,140 hours per year by August 2020 (Scottish Government, 2017a). This includes ensuring children have daily active outdoor play.

> *'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (Health & Social Care Standards, Statement 1.32, Scottish Government, 2017b).*

A further observation in relation to the Communities National Outcome specifically, is how its revision noticeably shifted to embrace the theme of empowerment, along with the addition of new indicators for 'social capital', 'places to interact', 'loneliness' and 'community ownership'.

> *Communities National Outcome 2018: 'We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' (Scottish Government, 2019b).*

The revised NPF thus acknowledges the important role of green infrastructure to achieve its 'Purpose' of 'increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive growth' (Scottish Government, 2018c). In relation to green infrastructure, this

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[18] The 2018 NPF has eighty-one economic, health, social and environmental indicators aimed to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

thesis explores to what extent this purpose is delivered in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation.

3.3   Analysis of accessibility & perceptions of greenspace

This section reviews quantitative data relating to greenspace accessibility and satisfaction as progress towards the Environment and Communities National Outcomes. It begins with a summary of comparative performance against the relevant National Indicators from 2013 and 2018, followed by a more in-depth exploration of the most recent data to identify key characteristics in relation to neighbourhood disadvantage. The National Indicators cover both rural and urban neighbourhoods and so the final sub-section reviews additional data referring specifically to urban greenspace.

3.3.1 Performance against the National Indicators in 2013 & 2018

Table 3.2 sets out the three National Indicators referring to greenspace and environmental quality in relation to wellbeing. All three are monitored by the annual *Scottish Household Survey* which is a representative sample of around 10,500 adults in private residences covering all 32 local authorities ordered by urban-rural classification and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) rank by postcode (Scottish Government, 2019c).

Table 3.2: National Indicators in relation to greenspace for wellbeing

National Indicator	National Outcome	Date Introduced
Visits to the Outdoors	Environment	2007
Access to green (and blue) space	Communities	2016 (addition of blue space in 2018)
Perceptions of local area	Communities	2007

Source: author's own.

The *Equality Evidence Finder* (EEF, 2019) provides an online interactive dashboard to the equality evidence held on the National Indicators. From this, it is possible to trace trends in data based on SIMD rank, which is used as a proxy for socio-economic status. Table 3.3 provides a comparison of summary data from the three indicators in 2013 and 2018. It highlights the consistent inequality

of outcomes dependent on where you live. Although there is an overall upward trend for 'Visits to the Outdoors', the inequality gap between the most and least deprived quintile has significantly increased from 15 to 23 percentage points. Moreover, there is an overall downward trend for 'access to greenspace'. The inequality gap between 'perceptions of the local area' remains at around 45 percentage points.

Table 3.3: Comparison of summary data against National Indicators for the most & least deprived quintiles in 2013 & 2018

National Indicator	Date & SIMD quintile			
	2018		2013	
	Most deprived quintile	Least deprived quintile	Most deprived quintile	Least deprived quintile
Visits to the Outdoors % of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week	45	68	36	51
Access to green (and blue) space %of adults who live within a 5 min walk of their nearest greenspace	58	69	62	73
Perceptions of local area % of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a very good place to live	31	75	30	75

Source: Equality Evidence Finder Data explorer-Socio-Economic Status (EEF, 2019).

3.3.2 Visits to the Outdoors

The National Indicator for 'Visits to the Outdoors' is measured by the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week for leisure or recreation and includes both urban and countryside greenspace. Table 3.4 provides a summary of data as reported by the *Scottish Household Survey 2018* (Scottish Government, 2019c). It highlights that a far greater proportion of adults in the least deprived quintile are likely to visit the outdoors weekly (68%), and that 18% of adults in the most deprived quintile (this includes both urban and rural areas) had not visited the outdoors in the previous year compared with 5% in the least deprived quintile. Weekly visits to the outdoors are recorded as much higher for those with 'good/very good' self-perception of health (65%), compared with 'bad/very bad' self-perception of health (28%), with 39% not visiting the outdoors at all. Overall, households living in urban areas are less likely to visit the outdoors weekly. The performance against this National

Indicator therefore underscores the necessity for accessible local urban greenspace, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation which have higher rates of poor health.

Table 3.4: Frequency of visits made to the outdoors in 2018 by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, self-perception of health & urban/rural classification

Frequency of visits to the outdoors	Factors (% of adults)					
	Most deprived quintile	Least deprived quintile	Bad/ V. bad health	Good/ V. good health	Urban household	Rural household
One or more times a week	45	68	28	65	57	69
At least once a month	18	16	15	17	18	12
At least once a year	19	11	19	11	14	8
Not at all	18	5	39	7	11	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Extracts from column percentages, *Scottish Household Survey 2018,* Tables 10.7–10.10 (Scottish Government, 2019c).

3.3.3 Access to local green space: proximity, use & satisfaction

The *Scottish Household Survey 2018* only reports on the accessibility standard of walking distance to the nearest greenspace.[19] Therefore the data used to gauge frequency of use and satisfaction with local greenspace is taken from *The Scottish Household Survey 2017* (Scottish Government, 2018d). As with 'Visits to the Outdoors', Table 3.5 emphasises how proximity and self-perception of health are important factors in how frequently greenspace is accessed.

Table 3.5: Frequency of use of nearest greenspace in 2017 by proximity & self-perception of health

Frequency of use of nearest greenspace	Factors (% of adults)				
	5 min walk or less	6-10 min walk	11 min walk or more	Bad/ V. bad health	Good/ V. good health
Several times a week	46	24	13	24	40
Once a week or less	36	49	48	30	41
Not at all	18	27	39	46	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Extracts from column percentages, *Scottish Household Survey 2017*, Tables 10.15 & 10.16 (Scottish Government, 2018d).

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[19] 'Blue space' was added in 2018 but is covered previously by the Scottish Household Survey's greenspace definition which includes canal path, riverside and beach.

When this information is combined with area deprivation, Table 3.6 shows how adults in the most deprived neighbourhoods are less likely to be within five minutes walking distance from their nearest greenspace and are less likely to be satisfied with it, both of which contribute to the frequency of use and health inequality.

Table 3.6: Proximity, frequency of use & satisfaction of nearest greenspace in 2017 by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

	SIMD quintile (% of adults)	
Proximity of nearest greenspace	**Most deprived quintile**	**Least deprived quintile**
5 min walk or less	58	68
6-10 min walk	22	20
11 min walk or more	18	12
Don't know	1	0
Total	100	100
Satisfaction of nearest greenspace		
Satisfied/ Fairly satisfied	64	83
Not satisfied/ No opinion	36	17
Total	100	100
Frequency of use of nearest greenspace		
Several times a week	30	41
Once a week or less	39	42
Not at all	31	17
Total	100	100

Source: Extracts from column percentages, *Scottish Household Survey 2017*, Tables 10.19-10.21 (Scottish Government, 2018d).

3.3.4 Perceptions of local area

Separate to the performance indicator of people rating their neighbourhood as 'a very good place to live', The *Scottish Household Survey* also monitors perceptions of neighbourhood problems which are categorised in four groups: general anti-social behaviour, neighbour problems, abandoned vehicles, and rubbish and fouling. Continuing the trend seen over the last decade, the most prevalent issues cited in 2018 are in relation to 'rubbish and fouling': with over 40% of those living in the most deprived quintile perceiving these issues as 'very or fairly common', compared to 20% of those living in the least deprived quintile (Scottish Government 2019c: Tables 4.17-4.18). As indicators of low

environmental quality, this data underscores the correlations between perceptions of local area, proximity and use of local greenspace.

3.3.5 Greenspace & urban Scotland

The three National Indicator sets discussed so far cover both rural and urban datazones within the SIMD ranking. To gain further insight into the specific urban picture, the online quantitative *Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017* (greenspace scotland et al., 2017) is the fifth wave of data on public attitudes to urban greenspace and so provides useful trend data. The overall representative sample of 1,000 adults living in urban areas includes 370 respondents (37%) from the Glasgow & Clyde Valley area, and a sub-sample of 130 (13%) from the 15% most deprived urban datazones in Scotland.

Table 3.7 gives a summary of the findings from the *Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017* (greenspace scotland et al., 2017) in relation to proximity and frequency of urban greenspace use, with comparisons between 2017 and 2011. While both this survey and the *Scottish Household Survey 2017* (Scottish Government, 2018d) indicate a downward trend in visits to greenspace, there are two key differences between the two sets of data which are important to note. First, that frequency of visits to local urban greenspace is recorded as higher than the overall combined urban-rural figure: with 43% visiting at least weekly compared with 30% of urban-rural respondents in the most deprived quintile. [20] Second, and conversely, accessibility is lower: with 42% of urban respondents in the most deprived areas living within five minutes walking distance from their nearest greenspace. The *Scottish Household Survey 2017* is the source for the National Indicator but, as shown in Table 3.6, records 58% for urban-rural respondents in the most deprived quintile. Therefore, in urban areas of deprivation, the National Indicator masks both greater demand for greenspace and less accessibility.

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[20] The *Scottish Household Survey 2017* records 30% of adults in the most deprived quintile reported visiting their nearest greenspace at least weekly and 31% not at all (Scottish Government, 2018d: Table 10.21).

Table 3.7: Proximity, frequency of use & views on nearest *urban* greenspace in 2017 by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

| | Date & SIMD rank (% of adults) | | | |
| | 2017 | | 2011 | |
Proximity of nearest greenspace	**Most deprived 15%**	**Urban Scotland**	**Most deprived 15%**	**Urban Scotland**
5 min walk or less	42	44	52	48
6-10 min walk	29	30	25	30
11 min walk or more	24	23	22	21
Don't know	5	3	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100
Frequency of use of nearest greenspace				
Several times a week	43	43	45	54
Once a week or less	51	53	45	37
Not at all	6	4	10	9
Total	100	100	100	100
Views on nearest greenspace				
'The quality of my local greenspace has reduced in the past 5 years' - (Total Agree)	50	40	35	33
'I would like to have more of a say in how my local greenspace is managed' - (Total Agree)	60	50	46	43
'I would like to get involved in activities to help improve my local greenspace' - (Total Agree)	49	43	34	34

Source: Extract from column percentages, Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017, Tables 2-5 & Chart 13c (greenspace scotland et al., 2017).
Note: 2017 was an online survey whereas 2011 and previous surveys conducted in 2004, 2007, 2009 used a telephone methodology. The sample profile and most question wording remained the same.

Furthermore, while both surveys reflect similarly low levels of satisfaction in deprived areas, the *Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017* asks additional questions about the urban experience. This identifies that 50% of respondents in the most deprived areas agree that 'the quality of my local greenspace has reduced in the past five years', which is significantly higher than in 2011.

The survey also asks respondents about their expectations of local greenspace compared with their experience and identifies considerable difference between the two. For example, over 70% strongly agree that greenspaces should be 'attractive places', 'contribute to being a great place to live', 'where you can relax and unwind', 'encourage physical activity', and be 'good places for children to play'; but less than 45% strongly agree that they are (greenspace

Scotland et al., 2017: Chart 5). In addition, in the most deprived areas, in response to whether 'greenspaces should be good places for children to play', there is a statistically significant drop in expectations from 2011 to 2017 (84% to 67% 'agree strongly'). In the 2017 data, there is also a continuing gap between expectation (67%) and perception that 'my local greenspace is a good place for children to play' (42% 'agree strongly') (greenspace Scotland et al., 2017: Chart 9a & 9b).

Most interestingly, and perhaps because of the gap between expectation and experience, a higher percentage of respondents from the most deprived areas 'would like to have more of a say in how my local greenspace is managed' (60%); and 'would like to get involved with activities to help improve my local greenspace' (49%), also shown in Table 3.7. These tensions between expectation and experience, and the motivation to do something about it, were explored through the participatory action research projects.

The *Planning Advice Note PAN 65: Planning and Open Space* (Scottish Government, 2008) advises on the role of the planning system to provide, manage and maintain open spaces and has an expectation that local authorities will develop an open space strategy. This was codified as a local authority duty in the *Planning (Scotland) Act 2019* and the strategy is intended to work across local authority departments and in partnership with relevant public, private and community interests. However, as a non-statutory service, budgets for greenspace are under increasing pressure. As a consequence, and along with the reduction in spending on environmental services outlined in Chapter One, between 2010 to 2018, the spend on local authority parks and open spaces reduced in real terms by 31.7% (LGBF, 2019a). Greenspace scotland et al. (2017) note that, mirroring the reduction in expenditure, quality ratings and greenspace use for urban Scots both peaked in 2009 and that, since then, there is an overall downward trend in weekly use: from 63% in 2009 to 43% in 2017. This is the lowest figure since the survey started in 2004.

Greenspace scotland (Greenspace scotland, 2018b) therefore attribute austerity measures to the deterioration in the quality of local parks and greenspace. This is exacerbated by staff reductions with the in-house skills to support Friends of

Parks and other community groups. Similarly, the residualisation of local authority services places increasing demands on the third sector, which fuels competition for funding from the Lottery and charitable trusts, who in turn are under pressure to restructure their funding priorities. Consequently, they conclude:

> *'Local action on greenspace and green networks is not realising the ambition of national policy or meeting the aspirations of communities' (greenspace scotland, 2018b:2).*

These findings have important implications for the procedural dimension of environmental justice which is explicated in later chapters.

3.4 Glasgow's opportunities & challenges for greenspace

So far, this chapter has outlined the national aspirations that stretch across the multifarious strands of greenspace policy, followed by a scrutiny of performance in relation to urban greenspace benefits. This highlighted the disparities between the two and continuing socio-spatial inequality. This section returns to the specific context of Glasgow and serves as a foreword to the PAR projects. It first summarises the municipal framework that holds the potential to address greenspace inequality. I then review the challenges to achieve the three requirements of: improving the quality of existing greenspace; increasing greenspace accessibility; and reclaiming derelict land for community benefit. The section ends by turning once more to the United States and recent concerns for environmental justice, compounded by the risk of green gentrification.

3.4.1 Opportunities to address greenspace inequality

As noted at the beginning and end of Chapter Two, Glasgow's *Strategic Plan 2017-2022* (GCC, 2017a), *Resilience Strategy* (GCC, 2016) and *Community Plan* (GCPP, 2017a) outline a commitment to reducing inequality and increasing 'resilience'. In relation to land use, the *Glasgow City Development Plan* (GCC, 2017b) sets out the ten-year planning priorities for the development and regeneration of the city. It has four strategic outcomes: 'a vibrant place with a growing economy', 'a sustainable place to live and work', 'a connected place to move around', and 'a green place which is resilient, accessible and attractive'. It is the fourth outcome which promotes the redevelopment of vacant and

derelict land and improvements to the accessibility and quality of green space (GCC, 2017b:23). This is further developed in *Glasgow's Open Space Strategy: Consultative Draft October 2018* (GCC, 2018a), which sets out a strategic approach across all council services to open space investment, use and management; and includes an Accessibility Standard and Quality Standard. The Accessibility Standard goes further than the National Indicator of five minutes walking distance to the nearest greenspace by stating '400 meters actual walking distance'.

> *'Accessibility Standard: All homes (including purpose-built student accommodation), outwith the City Centre, should be within a 400m actual walking distance of a good quality, publicly useable open space of 0.3ha or more' (GCC, 2018a: 20).*

The Quality Standard requires a 75% score against a Quality Assessment Matrix assessing size, configuration, surveillance, accessibility, aspect, setting and use of greenspace (GCC, 2018a: Annex 1). Supporting the strategic development process is the European Union's *Horizon 2020 Connecting Nature Programme* (Connecting Nature, 2019), of which Glasgow is a nominated city. The initiative is a €12m five-year project, working across twenty cities, to foster the introduction of 'nature-based solutions'. This is described as a range of nature and natural features to preserve and restore ecosystem services, such as increasing green infrastructure to mitigate against heat and flood risks (European Commission, 2019). Hence, the Connecting Nature programme, separate from the 100 Resilient Cities network (100RC, 2019), provides additional financial and knowledge resources to strengthen Glasgow's resilience to climate change.

Thus, the meaning and importance of greenspace has clearly gained prominence in municipal policy, further demonstrated by the publication of *A Vision for Glasgow's Parks and Greenspaces* (GCC, 2019a) towards the end of my fieldwork. Table 3.8 provides a summary of Glasgow's key plans and programmes in relation to greenspace and the associated resilience discourse, along with the designated lead local authority department. In my Social Worlds/Arenas analysis (Clarke, 2005) offered in Chapter Seven, I describe each of these departments as 'social worlds' from the local authority 'arena' that influenced greenspace aspirations, and so introduce the terminology here. The three corporate 'social worlds' are

Land & Environmental Services (which restructured to form Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services in April 2019), Development & Regeneration Services and the Community Planning Partnership. As with Table 3.1, Table 3.8 illustrates how greenspace acts a boundary object that intersects the discourses of resilience.

Table 3.8: Glasgow's key plans & programmes in relation to greenspace & the discourses of resilience

Corporate social world	Source	Reference to greenspace
	Discourse 1: Climate Resilience - incremental adaptation & emergency planning	
Land & Environmental Services	*EU* Horizon 2020 Connecting Nature *Programme*. (Connecting Nature, 2019).	To implement nature-based solutions projects in urban settings: 'solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience'.
	Discourse 2: City Resilience - urban governance & planning	
Land & Environmental Services	*Our Resilient Glasgow: A City Strategy*. (GCC, 2016). Pillar 2: Unlock place-based solutions.	3 Goals: 'Create an integrated resilience exemplar in the north of the city'; 'Tackle the local impacts of global climate change'; 'Unlock the community, environmental and economic potential of derelict and vacant sites in Glasgow'.
ALL	*Glasgow City Council Strategic Plan 2017 to 2022*. (GCC, 2017a). Theme 5: A sustainable and low carbon city.	Strategic priorities: 63: 'Give all children better access to outdoor play.' 71: 'Promote and enhance our city's natural resources including nature reserves and public parks.'
Development & Regeneration Services	*Glasgow City Development Plan*. (GCC, 2017b). *Glasgow City Development Plan. Action Programme June 2017*. (GCC, 2017c).	Strategic outcome 3: 'A green place which is resilient, accessible and attractive'. 12 policies, including: CDP1 The Placemaking Principle; CDP2 Sustainable Spatial Strategy. CDP6 Green Belt and Green Network; CDP7 Natural Environment; CDP11 Sustainable Transport. Action 1: £3m Vacant & Derelict Land Fund to remediate and reuse vacant & derelict land. Action 18: Forth & Clyde canal regeneration.
Land & Environmental Services	*Glasgow Open Space Strategy: Consultative Draft October 2018*. (GCC, 2018a).	Vison: 'By 2050, there will be a network of good quality, well-distributed, multi-functional open spaces, and connecting infrastructure, that contributes positively to: the city's liveability; health and wellbeing and long-term resilience'. 26 Actions for play, recreation, growing, walking, cycling, habitats and climate resilience.
Land & Environmental Services	*Our Dear Green Place: A Vision for Glasgow's Parks and Greenspaces* (GCC, 2019a)	Vision: 'Parks and greenspaces will be lively, welcoming and safe places; sustainable, well connected and accessible to all, providing opportunities for activities and shared use for current and future communities'.
	Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital	
Community Planning Partnership	*Glasgow Community Action Plan 2018-2020*. (GCPP, 2017a).	'Childcare Priority Area': Action 1 'Premises open space identification'. Thriving Places: 'Resilient Communities Focus Area': Action 17 'Implement Locality Plans'.
	Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development	
Development & Regeneration Services	*Stalled Spaces Programme*. (GCC, 2019b).	Programme to bring stalled sites/ vacant land or under-utilised open space back into community use with Vacant & Derelict Land Fund. 2018/19: £60,000 Stalled spaces grant.

3.4.2 Challenges to addressing greenspace inequality

The data analysis provided in this chapter identifies several factors contributing to urban greenspace distributional injustice. To summarise for Glasgow, in order to address the triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and the 'absence of environmental goods' (Curtice et al., 2005), the following three requirements need to be met:

1. Improve the quality of existing greenspace - to address perceptions and expectations.
2. Increase greenspace accessibility - which entails increasing the quantity of publicly useable greenspace.[21]
3. Reclaim derelict land for community benefit - which contributes to improving the quality and increasing the accessibility of publicly useable greenspace.

The plans and programmes captured in Table 3.8 represent a set of opportunities for Glasgow to address these objectives. However, alongside this are a set of challenges which became pertinent to the PAR projects. Hence, in explicit recognition of the iterative process inherent in a participatory inquiry paradigm, I introduce these here to further establish the socio-environmental context. I begin by reviewing the financial constraints and the need for local coordination to improve greenspace quality and accessibility. This is followed by the specifics of remediating derelict land for community benefit.

Financial constraints

…improving the quality of existing greenspace

The online *Local Government Benchmarking Framework* (LGBF, 2019b) indicates that in 2017/18, Glasgow City Council spent £29,851 (net) per 1,000 people on parks and open spaces, compared to the Scottish average of £20,179 (net). This was the third highest expenditure out of all the local authorities and reflects how councils with higher levels of deprivation consistently spend more in this

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[21] Publicly usable/ accessible greenspace is defined as all greenspace except for private gardens (greenspace scotland, 2018a).

area (LGBF, 2019a). Notwithstanding, it is significantly less than the £34,879 (net) the council spent in 2013/14 (LGBF, 2019b), and reflects greenspace scotland's (2018b) noted correlation between austerity and the deterioration of local greenspace quality.

...increasing greenspace accessibility

For the purposes of city boosterism (Boyle, 1999), we are reminded that Glasgow derives from the Gaelic 'dear green place' (People make Glasgow, 2019) and has 91 public parks and gardens (GCC, 2017b). *The Third State of Scotland's Greenspace Report* (greenspace scotland, 2018a: Appendix 6.5a) confirms that Glasgow has the largest percentage (10%) of public parks and gardens among all the Scottish local authorities. However, as noted in Chapter One, this masks the fact that it also has the lowest percentage of publicly accessible greenspace per 1,000 people: 11 hectares compared to the average 27 for urban Scotland (greenspace scotland, 2018a: Appendix 6.4). It also has less than 1% 'open semi-natural' greenspace[22] compared with the average 8% for urban Scotland (greenspace scotland 2018a: Appendix 6.5a). Hence, in order to achieve its Accessibility Standard (GCC, 2018a), Glasgow will need to invest in not only improving the quality of existing greenspace but also increasing the quantity.

Local coordination

...between social worlds

A key observation from the analysis provided in Table 3.8, is that there are three distinct policy strands which are led by different corporate 'social worlds' (Clarke, 2005) within the Glasgow local authority 'arena'. These are:

- *Land & Environmental Services*[23] - for public greenspace, and green infrastructure;

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[22] Open semi-natural greenspace is defined as 'areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with natural habitats (except woodland) for example scrub, health and rough grassland' (greenspace scotland 2018a).

[23] Glasgow's Land & Environmental Services restructured to become Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services in April 2019.

- *Development & Regeneration Services* - for planning and remediation of derelict and vacant land;
- *Community Planning Partnership* - for the Community Action Plan and the Thriving Places area-based initiative.

One of the tasks that confronted the PAR projects was to determine to what extent the three social worlds overlapped to tangibly support their local greenspace aspirations and actions.

...between community engagement and responsive actions

The *City Development Plan* (GCC, 2017b) has two overarching policies which are applied to all development proposals: the Sustainable Spatial Strategy and The Placemaking Principle. The latter is described as a 'design-led approach' with the aim of 'improving the quality and attractiveness of the environment, reducing health inequality', and 'attaining the highest sustainability levels' (GCC, 2017b:30). One of the preferred engagement methods is the charette which the Scottish Government describes as:

> *'An interactive design process, in which the public and stakeholders work directly with a specialised design team to generate a community vision, masterplan and action plan' (PAS, 2019).*

However, the emphasis is on new or large 'transformation regeneration areas', where applying the six placemaking principles in a long-term vision is arguably more straightforward to achieve. The risk is, that with shrinking financial and human resources, the needs of non-targeted neighbourhoods are overshadowed.

One way intended to avoid this is through the community planning process and Locality Plans. For existing places, the *Place Standard* tool (NHS Scotland et al, 2017) is promoted as the mechanism for identifying local priorities (GCC, 2017c), comprising physical, environmental and social elements of a place. It comprises fourteen questions that act as prompts for discussions with local groups and 'pinpoints the assets of a place, as well as areas where a place could improve' (NHS Scotland et al, 2017:1). Although this can be a constructive engagement tool, evaluations of case studies suggest significant officer support is required for effective facilitation, this includes timescales of up to six months to undertake the mapping exercises adequately (KSB, 2017b; NHS Health Scotland,

2017). In addition, the biggest challenge highlighted by officers is to the Place Standard implementation, which requires cross-departmental agreement and investment to take forward actions (KSB, 2017b; NHS Health Scotland, 2017).

Similarly, the link between the *Open Space Strategy* (GCC, 2018a) and localities is through the fifteen *Local Context Analysis Stage 1* (GCC, 2018b), which provide an initial analysis of the amount, distribution and quality of open space in each area, cross referenced to a digital Open Space Map. This is intended to be the first stage of public engagement that will inform the *Stage 2* process to 'address deficiencies in accessibility, quality and quantity' and bring forward a 'green network masterplan' (GCC, 2018b: s.6.1).

> *'Action 1 We will engage with local communities in the preparation of Stage 2 Local Contexts to ensure the city' s open spaces provide for their needs' (GCC, 2018a:13).*

The challenge centres on the process (familiarisation with a digital map) and timescales for engagement, priority setting and decision-making, where once again, the focus is on new development.

> *'Re-focussing and rationalising the Council's investment priorities and maintenance regimes and making effective use of the planning process to enhance the open space required to support new development, will play a significant role in delivering the benefits the Accessibility and Quality standards are intended to achieve' (GCC, 2018a: s.4.11).*

The juxtaposition of using community engagement tools to identify greenspace priorities and aspirations, with doubts about the practically of implementing the findings, identifies the risk of raising undeliverable expectations. As well as not addressing the distributional dimension, this has consequences for the procedural and recognition dimensions of environmental justice which were experienced by community colleagues. The motivations and implications for community engagement processes is explored further in the next chapter.

3.4.3 Reclaiming derelict land for community benefit

A further financial constraint centres on the routes to remediate and reclaim derelict land. The annual *Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey*[24] informs the planning and reuse of urban vacant and derelict sites, and measures progress on housing and regeneration outcomes. It states that in 2018, 73% of all vacant and derelict land was in private ownership and over 85% of all reclaimed land was used for residential or business development (Scottish Government, 2019a: Tables 17 & 20). This reflects the heavy dependence on private sector funding.

For example, in Glasgow, of the 65 hectares which were brought back into use, only 5 hectares were solely funded by the public sector, with the remaining coming from the private sector or mixed public-private partnerships (Scottish Government, 2019a: Table 22). These figures indicate the importance of land economic value for regeneration purposes because, as Adams & Tolson (2019:383) note, markets reflect the 'prevailing power and social relations that characterise particular places at particular times'. Thus, for neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation with low land value, the opportunities for reclaiming land through private development are outweighed by the financial risk of low return.

Moreover, and as noted in Chapter One, the key difference between vacant and derelict land, is that the latter requires 'rehabilitation' (Scottish Government, 2019a:8) and hence additional investment. All of which undermines the prospects of urban regeneration in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. To partly address this, since 2005, a key source of public funding for Glasgow has been the Vacant & Derelict Fund. Between 2005 and 2018, the fund contributed to the reclamation of 132 hectares across 72 sites, 67% of which are in the 15% most deprived datazones. Nevertheless, the level of vacant and derelict land in Glasgow stands at 1,005 hectares[25], of which 82% is derelict (Scottish Government, 2019a: Tables 24 & 26).

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[24] Although the title of the publication is 'vacant and derelict land survey' and is often abbreviated as VDL, the Tables of analysis are reported as 'derelict and urban vacant land' (Scottish Government, 2019a).

[25] Between 2012 and 2018, the level of derelict and urban vacant land in Glasgow reduced by 19% from 1,239ha to 1,005ha (Scottish Government, 2019a: Table 5).

However, using an environmental justice argument and evidenced health and social cohesion benefits from New York, Maantay (2013) makes the distinction between reclaiming land for profit-making development and for community use. Given that in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods land value is low and therefore profit unlikely (Adams & Tolson, 2019), coordination and investment for community use could result in substantial public health gains. Maantay (2013) notes that Glasgow local authority owns over half of its vacant and derelict land and hence there is an opportunity for more strategic intervention. There are, however, two important contingencies for success. First, that this needs to comprise locally led plans devised to support a range of communal facilities such as community gardens, passive and active recreation areas and links to existing green networks. Second, that it requires a database of publicly owned sites, standard protocols for leasing land and ongoing local authority input to support the logistics of community management (Maantay, 2013).

Two popular initiatives that could be incorporated into such an approach are community gardening and the stalled spaces programme.

Community gardening for reclaiming land

There has been a recent emergence of community gardening[26] studies in Glasgow, centred on the politics of community growing and drawing parallels with other urban cities (Crossan et al., 2015; Crossan et al., 2016; Cumbers et al., 2018; Traill, 2018; White & Bunn, 2017). These have deliberated on the transformational potential in reclaiming abandoned spaces as practices of soft activism for the 'right to the city' (Harvey, 2003); and offering alternative communal practices linked to social and use-value rather than exchange-value (Cumbers et al., 2018).

The interest in community gardening will undoubtedly increase with *Part 9* of the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* requiring local authority's to regularly review their food growing strategy; and the *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016* strengthening community rights to buy vacant or derelict land to 'further

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[26] Community gardening refers to collective spaces where gardeners work together to grow food in contrast to individual allotments for personal use.

sustainable development'. While the individual, social and environmental benefits of community growing are unquestioned, I also noted in Chapter One how many projects, the majority of which are funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, retain a level of conditionality in participation. Further, while Glasgow and Edinburgh studies have explored the dynamics within community growing groups, this has often been with an emphasis on the collective and collaborative experience (Cumbers et al., 2018; Mcvey et al., 2018; White & Bunn, 2017; Witheridge & Morris, 2016). In contrast, in her critique of community growing in a Glasgow West End neighbourhood, Traill (2018) offers a more nuanced account: in which she notes that while promoting 'communality' within its closed group, this is not synonymous with 'community' and, despite good intentions, can be exclusionary in practice.

Following on from this, and in recognition of the heterogeneity inherent in communities of place, it is important to return to an environmental justice argument for the unconditional right to accessible and good quality greenspace for a range of passive and active recreation (Maantay, 2013; Maantay & Maroko, 2015).

Stalled Spaces programme for reclaiming land

Initiated in 2011, Development & Regeneration Services annually uses some of its grant from the Government's Vacant & Derelict Fund to develop temporary projects on derelict or 'under-utilised open spaces'. Under the *Stalled Spaces* programme (GCC, 2019b), a one-off grant of £4,500 is awarded to groups and organisations, often used to initiate small landscaping or food growing projects. The programme has been duplicated in other local authorities and has been commended for providing local opportunities and raising the profile and legitimacy of community-led food projects (White & Bunn, 2017).

Yet, standing alone, the programme belies the level of human and financial investment that is needed to maintain growing or other greenspace projects long-term. The fragility of local collective endeavours is raised as a consistent concern. These cannot rely on volunteer activism alone but require a diverse set of skills for greenspace management, fundraising and community facilitation (Cinderby et al., 2016; Crossan et al., 2015; Meyerricks, 2015; Traill, 2018;

White & Bunn, 2017). These skills, along with the importance of connectivity and multifunctionality in greenspace design, are also highlighted in international reviews on promoting equitable greenspace interventions (Boulton et al., 2018; WHO, 2016; WHO, 2017; Zuniga-Teran & Gerlak, 2019).

In conclusion, in order to meet the three requirements for greenspace distributional justice, as well as a commitment to financial investment and community engagement, strategic and local coordination between corporate social worlds is required to carry out diverse strands of greenspace policy. Maantay's (2013) proposal for the remediation of derelict land outlines a policy programme which counters the risk of fragmented pockets of activity in Glasgow which have a history of disintegration (GCPH et al., 2012; ODS Consulting, 2014). It also incorporates the aims of the *Open Space Strategy* (GCC, 2018a) and *Local Context Analysis Stage 1* (GCC, 2018b). Moreover, in her focus on bottom-up locally led coordination that can draw on officer expertise, she encapsulates the objectives of community planning and Locality Plans.

Undertaken in a Thriving Places neighbourhood with targeted resources to deliver 'resilient communities' (GCPP, 2017a:3), the empirical part of this thesis explores the interplay of these opportunities and challenges to address greenspace inequality.

3.4.4 Green & equitable neighbourhoods not green gentrification

Lastly, Gould & Lewis (2017) argue that a coordinated approach, supervised by non-market actors and regulation, is also required to ensure that any improvement in greenspace and remediation of derelict land is prioritised for existing community benefit over economic development. In Chapter Two, I traced the roots of the environmental justice movement in the United States and it is here that awareness of a paradoxical challenge is emerging: one of 'green' or 'environmental' gentrification (Anguelovski et al., 2017; Anguelovski et al., 2019; Checker, 2011).

This is a process which, as a result of disadvantaged communities gaining new environmental goods such as recreational spaces and parks, has made their inner-city neighbourhoods newly attractive to private developers. The consequence is a gradual displacement of residents by wealthier arrivals who are

able to enjoy the clean green amenities that long-term residents have 'fought for during decades' (Anguelovski, 2016:23). In addition, using New York as a case study, Checker (2011) and Gould & Lewis (2017) point to 'green growth coalitions' of wealthy residents, political actors and developers who, in the quest for the sustainable city, use 'urban greening' as a deliberate regeneration strategy to increase property prices and attract wealthier residents.

Hence, green gentrification as a process of land revaluation and consequent displacement can be either an unintended or planned outcome (Anguelovski et al., 2019). Acknowledging this tendency, the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2017) identify the importance of planning and designing multifunctional urban greenspace with the local community and developing health and equity outcomes to monitor the impacts of greenspace interventions for marginalised groups.

These observations extend the critique of *Resilience Discourse 2: City resilience* referred to in Chapter Two, providing a salutary warning to how and where Glasgow implements its 'nature-based solutions', and who benefits. For example, a critical review of international urban resilience initiatives exposes how green infrastructure for climate adaptation can exploit land use planning to either negatively impact on low-income communities, or favour elite areas at the expense of others (Anguelovski et al., 2016; Anguelovski et al., 2019). Thus, in this relatively new terrain of 'urban climate change governance' (Bulkeley et al., 2015), reflected in both national and local strategies for resilience and economic development, there are promises to create socio-technical reconfiguration, green infrastructure and political transformation for Glasgow. Yet, lessons from abroad, and particularly the United States, underline how an environmental justice lens is critical if new opportunities do not exacerbate existing socio-spatial inequality at a neighbourhood level.

3.5   Conclusion to this chapter

This chapter has highlighted an increasing appreciation of the importance of accessible and good quality greenspace as an environmental and community asset, and thereby its pivotal role in achieving the National Outcomes for improving wellbeing and reducing health inequality. Yet, scrutiny of performance against the National Indicators shows significant distributional disparities exacerbating neighbourhood deprivation.

I also proposed that the multifunctional nature of greenspace means that it acts as a boundary object intersecting the discourses of resilience across diverse policy streams at national, city and neighbourhood scales. This was illustrated in Tables 3.1 and 3.8 and, together with Figure 2.2, establishes a framework for exploring the intersections between greenspace aspirations, environmental justice and multi-scalar resiliences.

Having established the extent of urban greenspace inequality, the Glasgow picture was explored in more detail. Its municipal policy framework is aspirational and suggests opportunities for delivering equitable greenspace policy. However, in relation to the three requirements of: improving the quality of existing greenspace; increasing greenspace accessibility; and reclaiming derelict land for community benefit, both financial and strategic challenges were highlighted. It is against this socio-environmental context that the PAR projects explored in this thesis articulated their greenspace aspirations for distributional justice. In order to provide the theoretical context to understanding the procedural and recognition dimensions which impacted on their greenspace actions, Chapter Four, examines the contested concept of community empowerment.

Chapter 4: Community development & empowerment

4.1 Introduction

Community empowerment is both an aspiration and justification for policy and practice, as promoted by Glasgow's *Resilience Strategy* (GCC, 2016) and *Community Plan* (GCPP, 2017a) introduced in previous chapters. The aim of this chapter is to critically engage with the concept drawing on community development literature. The reason why I am interested in community development is because of its consistent involvement with the nature of community and its relationship with the state and third sector, and thereby implications for social welfare and democracy (Taylor, 2011). As such, its concern with empowerment aligns with the procedural and recognition dimensions of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice (see Figure 1.1 reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark) and gives rise to the third research question considered in Chapter Eight.

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

The chapter begins by considering the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of community development, and to what extent community development theory has hitherto addressed socio-environmental concerns. Through comparative analysis between the radical and pluralist/reformist approaches, the intention is to understand the drivers that underpin current community development practice; and to situate the Thriving Places area-based initiative that this research sought to engage with.

This is followed by an initial summary of how power has been theorised by the two approaches in relation to community participation. I continue by identifying Gaventa's (2006) conceptualisation of power as a useful way to understand the dimensions of procedural power; and a Bourdieusian perspective as recognition of inequality in social capital. The theoretical analysis is then applied to the discourses of community resilience introduced in Chapter Two.

Lastly, GoWell's (2011) model of community empowerment is introduced as a way of drawing together the multidimensional dynamics of power and resilience

factors which were explored through the participatory action research (PAR) projects. The chapter ends by revisiting the research questions before presenting my research methodology in Chapter Five.

4.2   What is community & community development?

There can be communities of identity and interest, place, or both. I first decipher the concept of community and the 'what' 'how' & 'why' of community development. The 'what' introduces the principles of community development and the 'how' returns to asset-based approaches introduced in Chapter Two. The 'why' then distinguishes between two main approaches described as radical and pluralist/reformist (Chanan & Miller, 2013; Popple, 2015). This is followed by briefly tracing the history of the two approaches to gain further insight into the ideological debate that shapes community development practice. Lastly, consideration of how community development literature has hitherto regarded socio-environmental concerns, and comparisons with my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies (Figure 2.1), serves to situate the community development context to this study.

4.2.1 What is community?

Taylor (2011) highlights how the concept of community is used in three general and often overlapping ways: descriptive, normative and instrumental.

> *'Descriptive: a group or network of people who share something in common or interact with each other;*
>
> *Normative: A place where solidarity, participation and coherence are found;*
>
> *Instrumental: (a) An agent acting to maintain or change its circumstances; (b) The location or orientation of services and policy interventions' (Taylor, 2011:45-46).*

Somerville (2016) employs the descriptive and normative functions and draws on Bourdieu (1990) and Delanty (2003) to describe a community as having a shared attachment, either to a set of practices or a place that gives a sense of belonging. He also uses community instrumentally, describing community as a site of tension and conflict with the 'neoliberal forces of exploitation'. Forces

which, he argues, require grassroots politicisation to challenge and overthrow in order to create 'a beloved community':

> *'In which the ethics of care and recognition that define community generally are enhanced by ethics of justice and freedom that work to abolish all exploitation and domination' (Somerville, 2016:261).*

Thus, the pervasive use of the imprecise concept of 'community' also indicates the term's symbolic and emotive value. This can, however, have negative repercussions. In her exploration of the discourses of community, Taylor (2011) traces how the concept is often reified to the exclusion of recognising heterogeneity (such as race, disability and gender) and power differentials which challenge the illusion of social cohesion. An additional strand is developed by Colclough and Sitaraman (2005) who consider the changing nature of place and community to identify communities *in* place rather than *of* place. The former stresses the common experience that occurs within a place and which may comprise individuals with diverse interests and backgrounds. This reflects modern flows of movement and attachment, rather than historical networks associated with traditional close-knit communities of place (Stacey, 1970).

I therefore employ the descriptive and instrumental function of 'community' when describing a group of people *in* a neighbourhood who have a common spatial experience and also a willingness to act communally (Byrne, 2005). However, I make no assumptions about a uniform experience of participation or solidarity. Instead, I acknowledge the multiplicity of communities of interests and identities within a place which may overlap, as well as being a subset of wider communities beyond place.

4.2.2 The 'what', 'how' & 'why' of community development.

Gilchrist & Taylor (2011) collate a number of different definitions for the 'what' of community development, all of which have the objectives of facilitating a group process by bringing people together to address a common concern, and to develop their confidence and skills by doing so. In addition, community development, as an occupation and a practice, includes a set of core values encompassing human rights and social justice, social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity (Brennan & Israel, 2013; Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011; SCDC,

2019a). From the 1990s, definitions also include terms such as empowerment, citizenship and organisational or community capacity building (Barr & Hashagen, 2000).

Gilchrist & Taylor (2011) identify three central methods for community development: informal education, collective action and organisational development. Today, these methods, using asset-based approaches, can be described as the 'how' of community development and are reflected in *Community Resilience Discourses 3, 4 & 5* outlined in Chapter Two and represented in Figure 2.2 (reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark).

Taylor (2011:22) also identifies four recurring themes in post-war community policy and practice arising from the ideological assumptions on the source of community problems and thereby the target for intervention. These can be considered as the 'why' of community development and are: within the community itself, systems failure, structural and economic causes of exclusion, and government failure. When communities are believed to be the source, this implies increasing a community's capacity, skills, resources and cohesion. A system failure implies improving the effectiveness of service provision, perhaps by decentralisation and community planning. Structural and economic failure implies a critique of the capitalist economy and structural change. A government failure implies reform of the state apparatus such as introducing marketisation or public-private partnerships.

The four themes are not mutually exclusive but the ideological driver, combined with the socio-political context, will shape the emphasis in policy and targets for intervention. For example, the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* primarily targets communities and systems over structural reform. This is embodied in *Resilience Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development* which has become the policy driver for regeneration. The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC, 2019a; 2019b), which is the national lead for community development, thus describes community development as:

> *'In practice, community development supports communities of place and identity to use their own assets to improve the quality of community life;*

> *[and] helps communities and public agencies to work together to improve services and the way in which decisions are made' (SCDC, 2019a).*

Popple (2015) distinguishes between this pluralist approach to 'community development practice', and radical 'community action' which was traditionally class-based and focused on structural, rights-based issues. The pluralist approach works with participative models to improve the accessibility and accountability of public services, and support groups to overcome problems through mutual support. The radical draws on critical theory and seeks to challenge the status quo. For example, in Glasgow, this would be the campaigns for improved housing conditions between the 1970s to early 1990s which were seen as the anchor of Scottish community work (Bryant & Bryant, 1982; Cooke & Shaw, 1996; McCormack, 2009). More recently, Chanan & Miller (2013) use the term 'reformist' over 'pluralist' to denote the prevalent discourse as reflected in *Discourse 4: Community resilience*.

4.2.3 The radical & pluralist/reformist approaches

With its roots in British colonial administration, the history of community development has been summarised by a number of authors (e.g.: Butcher et al., 2007; Craig, 2011; Ledwith, 2011; Popple, 2015). For the purpose of this thesis, interest begins in the late 1960s when, under a Labour government, attention and resources looked to using community development as a policy instrument for tackling poverty and social unrest in the UK arising from the economic downturn (Popple, 2015; Taylor, 2011).

1960s-1979

The rapid expansion of government funded community workers was intended to mitigate the impacts of post-industrial decline and urban deprivation by assisting people to use welfare services; increasing the range of statutory and voluntary community projects; and mediating community relations (Ledwith, 2011; Popple, 2015). For example, by the late 1970s, under the Urban Programme-Urban Aid scheme and the region's 'areas of need' policy, the Strathclyde Region, which included Glasgow, established an ambitious community work programme employing over fifty community workers (SRC, 1978). During this time, the National Community Development Project (1968–1976) was also

launched with Ferguslie Park, Paisley as one of the twelve neighbourhood Community Development Projects intended to find local solutions to area deprivation (Robertson, 2014).

Both programmes supported a social pathology model of poverty which located causes and solutions centrally with individuals who, it was felt, required social support to succeed economically (Popple, 2015). Notwithstanding, staff from the Community Development Projects soon began to articulate a Marxist structuralist critique to explain poverty as arising from capitalist relations and social structures which perpetuated elite vested interests (Craig et al., 1982). This ultimately led to the withdrawal of funding but not before it marked an important junction between pluralist and radical pathways in the evolution of British community development (Ledwith, 2011; Popple, 2015). As a consequence, a strong theme during this time was the often conflicted role of the community worker: as an instrument of the welfare state, while simultaneously supporting grassroots self-organisation to challenge the impacts of economic inequality (Ledwith, 2011; Popple, 2015).

An example of this is from the community work programme established as part of the social work course at the University of Glasgow. This was the first student training unit for community development in the UK and was based in Crossroads, a local voluntary organisation. As fieldwork teachers, Bryant & Bryant (1982) saw the approach of the Crossroads community work programme as a challenge to the 'social planning approach' (Bryant & Bryant, 1982:211) of local authority-based community work. The authors provide an insightful analysis of the proactive organisational support that the staff and students gave residents to support grievance-centred local action for housing reform and tenants' rights. Between 1971 and 78, they claim that their 'local community action' had:

> *'An emphasis on grass roots organising and intensive neighbourhood based work; the uneasy ideological mixture of socialism and libertarianism; the commitment to learning through collective action and a scepticism about abstract theory; the focus on issue-centred groups and the mistrust of political parties and established organisations' (Bryant & Bryant, 1982:209).*

However, the authors also note that this style of community action was only possible because of the interplay of factors including the left-wing social and

political context of Glasgow at that time; the community organisation they were located in; the radical left-wing values of the staff; and the expectations of sponsors of the fieldwork units.

The University of Glasgow continues to have an important influence in community development practice and the current role of community development students undertaking fieldwork is referred to in Chapter Seven.

1980s

With the election of a Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher in 1979, the tide changed, and commentators note an evolving pluralist community development agenda. This went beyond the role of community development workers towards outward partnership building, within a prescribed discourse of the mixed economy of welfare and New Right ideology (Barr, 1995; Cooke & Shaw, 1996). For example, the City Challenge programme (1992-98) funded thirty-one regeneration partnerships over five years comprising community and private sector involvement for the first time, and became the model for the Single Regeneration Budget (Chanan & Miller, 2013). Meanwhile in Scotland and led by the Scottish Office, the New Life for Urban Scotland (1988-98) focused on four peripheral housing estates to bring together housing, economic and training agencies to pursue area-based regeneration over a decade. Although the principle of partnership included resident engagement, in his review of regeneration initiatives in Scotland, Richardson (2014) identifies criticism of community participation practices as a recurring theme.

Richardson (2014) also notes that although physical housing renewal was largely successful, social and economic regeneration was not. Hence, alongside these government programmes, during the 1980s and 1990s, supporters of a radical paradigm in Scotland continued to argue for community work to assist groups to define their own issues. This was in recognition that there would be multiple identities and differences within groups but also a solidarity compatible with a common experience of material inequality, from which social alliances could then be formed (Cooke & Shaw, 1996).

1997 - 2010

Popple (2015) notes that the pluralist approach, albeit with the more nuanced ideology of The Third Way (Giddens, 1998), was further emboldened under New Labour's *National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal* (SEU, 1998; 2001), launched to tackle neighbourhood-based social exclusion. The strategy was envisaged as an innovative catalyst for turning around the multiple and persistent problems experienced in the poorest neighbourhoods. This form of community practice was advocated to give communities a clear leadership role by emphasising community participation and capacity building, as well as encouraging a wider spread of public service involvement to improve interagency work and local service delivery (Butcher et al., 2007; Chanan & Miller, 2013; Taylor, 2011; Twelvetrees, 2008).

However, critics highlighted the false ideal of a homogeneous community which overlooked divisions and competition between groups; and a citizenship that already had the capacity and resources to address their needs (Barr, 1995; Berner & Phillips, 2005; Mayo & Craig, 1995). Further, in their overall evaluation of the Strategy, although AMION (2010) identify some local improvements in health and crime indicators, this was offset by the economic downturn of 2008 and the gap between these areas and the rest, which had not dramatically reduced.

2010 to present

To attempt to address the challenges of previous neighbourhood regeneration strategies, in their twelve pillars for reformist community practice, Chanan & Miller (2013) provide a revised framework that marks the transition from 'one-way provision' to 'co-production'. This is when service professionals work in partnership and act as mediators between community groups and wider public services to deliver neighbourhood improvements. As already noted, the emphasis on community participation in community planning and public health co-production has continued to gain momentum and is reflected in the seven *National Standards for Community Engagement* (NSfCE, 2016), aimed to facilitate the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.*

However, Chanan & Miller (2013) do acknowledge two constraining factors which echo AMION's (2010) findings. First, that neighbourhood partnerships, no matter how active, are dependent upon macro governing and economic structures that need to address the degeneration of post-industrial cities. Second, that their model of a vigorous community sector is dependent on high social capital and effective community activity, which is lacking in areas of multiple deprivation because of the contributory factors of poverty, exclusion and disadvantage. The recurring theme of social capital will be scrutinised towards the end of this chapter.

From a radical perspective and in opposition to what she sees as 'neoliberal hegemony', Ledwith (2011; 2016) argues for a reorientation towards a 'Freirean-feminist pedagogy' for community development. Drawing on Freire (1970; 1974) and the Gramscian concepts of 'hegemony' and 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971), she advocates promoting critical education to challenge the 'common sense' assumptions of capitalism. Ledwith and other radical proponents argue that by deliberating on prescient concerns, a critical consciousness of socio-political injustices is generated and can act as a catalyst for grassroots collective action. From this, networks and alliances can be established and transformational reform realised (Beck, 2016; Beck & Purcell, 2015; Mayo, 1999; Purcell, 2005).

> *'With a view to developing a new consensus about what it means to be more fully human and to relate in more equitable ways' (Beck & Purcell, 2015:14).*

In addition, since the late 1970s, there has been a strong radical tradition in Glasgow for using the creative arts to deconstruct and politicise the experience of inequality (e.g.: McCormack, 2009; Meade & Shaw, 2007; Orton; 1996). More recently, Beck (2016) describes engaging groups in creative processes of 're-seeing and re-naming their world' (Beck 2016:1) in order to work with the psycho-social roots of many people's political disengagement. This 'prefigurative democratic work' (Beck, 2016:1), of envisioning a more just and equitable society, is intended to catalyse a more critical process of collective reflection and action with marginalised groups. Similarly, eliciting the 'psycho-geography' of neighbourhoods through space mapping can uncover how urban space impacts

on people's behaviour and emotions and the way space is controlled (Beck & Purcell, 2015; Purcell, 2012). These contemporary interventions do not seek to assertively (re)organise neighbourhoods but prioritise understanding the lived experience in order to lay the foundations for activism.

Summary

The radical and pluralist/reformist approaches to community development have historically been ideologically opposed to one another. Yet, it is useful to recognise the strengths and risks in both. The focus on transformational imaginings and politicisation is the spirit of radical community development, encouraging self-organisation at a grassroots micro-level in order to mobilise against social injustice. However, as Somerville (2016) observes, the examples of current radical community practice in the UK, although creative and inspirational, are often insubstantial initiatives with 'fuzzy' outcomes.

Juxtaposed to this, the reformist regeneration and welfare agenda acts at a meso-neighbourhood scale and is directed towards public sector efficiency and mutual self-help. Yet consistently, critics fear that this tends towards engaging with already competent and cohesive groups, characteristically associated with higher socio-economic status, for involvement in a top-down public sector-led agenda rather than a community-led one (Barr, 1995; Cooke, Ian & Shaw, 1996; Craig, 2007; Hastings & Matthews, 2015; Hastings et al., 2015). It also serves to marginalise critical analyses of structural inequalities and undermine collective oppositional action to address these problems (MacLeod & Emejulu, 2014; Somerville, 2016).

In conclusion, in their most recent appraisal of inequality and community development from a radical perspective, Shaw & Mayo (2016) remind us of the continual tensions between policy interests and community needs, and public policy and citizen action; and that community development remains a political project and instrument.

4.2.4 Community development & socio-environmental concerns

In her influential commentary on public policy in the community, Taylor's (2011) overarching question is: how far can the concept of community be applied to tackle the current challenges of poverty and social exclusion, and the consequent implications for civic participation and democracy. This section considers how the traditional social justice focus of community development has largely neglected an environmental justice lens in the UK in recent years. I first identify socio-environmental activism as independent community action, and then reflect on the surprisingly limited consideration of environmental justice in current community development theory and practice.

Tracing the discourse of environmental justice in Scotland in Chapter Two, it was noted that campaigns against unwanted polluters remained as single issue concerns for local activism, albeit with the proactive support of environmental organisations such as Friends of the Earth Scotland (Dunion, 2003; Scandrett, 2007; Scandrett et al., 2000). This included a collaboration between Friends of the Earth Scotland and Queen Margaret University to offer the Higher Education Certificate in Environmental Justice. Introduced in 2000 and rooted in Freirean pedagogy, the course provided a centre for dialogue and support to community activists facing local environmental problems over several years (Scandrett, 2007).

There are also two noteworthy but very different examples of this type of independent community action in Glasgow which predated an explicit environmental justice discourse, although they clearly articulated the intersections between environmental and social injustices. Cathy McCormack's (McCormack, 2009) account, of Easthall Residents' Association campaign (1980s-1990s) against excessively damp housing conditions, is an example of how working with radical community artists can offer a different voice and representation to develop a community's cultural confidence (Orton, 1996). Together with the community artist Barbara Orton, residents created the play *Dampbusters* and TV and film work which contributed to developing critical awareness of the links between cold, damp houses and poor health; and poor housing conditions, fuel poverty and global warming.

> *'It wasn't until we got energy audits done that we realised …we were paying all this money to heat our houses and it was going through the walls to add to the greenhouse effect' (McCormack, 2009:140).*

The group's activism eventually resulted in a solar housing project of thirty-six houses which was completed in two years and reduced fuel bills from £40 to £5 per week. It seems incredible that this innovative project did not lead to more initiatives.

> *'Aye it was a triumph for us. But what was even more of a triumph was that our solar housing project demonstrated the even wider local and global environmental implications' (McCormack, 2009:73).*

The second case is the Pollok Free State campaign (1994-1995), instigated by a local activist and resident Colin McLeod against the construction of the M77 motorway through the woodlands and parklands of Pollok Estate. With the support of residents as well as a range of environmental activists, including Glasgow Earth First!, the campaign attracted considerable media attention and is still cited as an example of local resistance against the establishment (McGarvey, 2017; Routledge, 1997; Young, 2015).

Examples of independent community action concretise several themes. First, the role of community arts in offering new spaces for prefigurative critical consciousness (Beck, 2016) and equally importantly, enjoyment. Second, the inherent complexity of socio-environmental action which is intersectional by nature and therefore often requires external expertise and multiple collaborators. This in turn, however, may sometimes lead to tense relations arising from different objectives and diverse interests (Franks, 2012; Routledge, 1997). Third, and most importantly, they highlight the consistent relevance of an environmental justice frame in low-income neighbourhoods.

Yet, radical community development theory has seemingly failed to harness the potential for using environmental justice as a generative theme for critical consciousness in the UK. Where socio-environmental references are made, they tend to relate to ecological sustainability, global climate justice and the radical work of environmental community projects in the Global South (e.g.: Craig, 2011; Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011; Green & Haines, 2015; Ledwith, 2016; Popple, 2015; Somerville, 2016; Taylor, 2011). While crucial on a macro scale, this serves

as another example of how local environmental injustice can be overshadowed by the discourses of sustainable development, as was explored in Chapter Two. This is reconfirmed by Popple (2015) who suggests that in the last decade, although examples of direct community and social action may have increased in the UK, often as a response to austerity or climate change, they are more likely to be in the realm of independent campaigns and protest movements and outside the professional community worker role.

Similarly, both Ledwith (2011; 2016) and Popple (2015) acknowledge that post-modern critical theories and social movements, including feminism, anti-racism and the green movement, have demonstrated success in collective action. Popple (2015) also notes how the green movement specifically has had success in linking local activism with an anti-neoliberal and anti-globalisation critique. Further, in his conclusion, Popple (2015) suggests that the green movement is in the early days of its relationship with community work towards the 'protection of the environment' (Popple, 2015:149). What is absent is extending this observation to include local environmental justice concerns in community work practice.

Hence, in my review of recent publications on community development, both radical and reformist perspectives seem to overlook how community development can practically address the challenges of local greenspace inequality. For example, while Ledwith (2016) links the lack of critical community development with the crises of social injustice and ecological unsustainability, she draws on the Transition Movement (Hopkins, 2010; 2013) as an innovative example of community action. Although inspiring, this is largely a middle-class movement for low-carbon transition. Likewise, Popple (2015) refers to the broader environmental movement in relation to ecological citizenship and community projects supporting personal carbon reductions. Another example is how Ledwith (2016:98) uses community food growing as an important activity for facilitating bonding social capital but does not go beyond this to identify greenspace inequality as a focus for her Freirean-feminist pedagogy to create 'communities in action'. These examples illustrate Meyerricks et al.'s (2016:5) observation, quoted in Chapter One, that community projects in disadvantaged

neighbourhoods, with a focus on environmental sustainability, could also benefit from a political focus on environmental justice.

From the reformist position, Gilchrist &Taylor (2011:99) suggest that for disempowered people experiencing poverty in the UK, 'the environment might not seem a major priority, even though pollution, traffic, diminishing resources and rising costs of energy hit the poor hardest'; and that, 'communities will only be motivated to protect their environment if they feel that they have some stake in it at local or personal level'. This further emphasises the need to align social policy and activism with local environmental justice concerns.

4.2.5 Situating community development in this thesis

Comparing the reformist and radical approaches to community development with my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies offered in Chapter Two (Figure 2.1 reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark), similarities can be drawn between reformist community practice and the 'reformist light-green' socio-environmental ideology. Both have objectives to mitigate the excesses of neoliberal economics and work through consensus. Similarly, radical community development and eco-socialism share their political roots in socialism. However, as noted above, both community development approaches have yet to shift from a theoretical global justice discourse to a coherent position on localised practice. That is, one that integrates socio-environmental aspirations with environmental justice in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Thus, rather than solely characterise the frictions between bottom-up mobilisation versus institutionalisation, or creativity versus bureaucracy (Martinelli et al., 2010), my purpose for undertaking participatory action research was to understand the enablers and constraints to pursuing greenspace aspirations under the current practices of community development. In order to do this, a more detailed analysis of the procedural and recognition dimensions for addressing greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice is also required.

4.3. Community participation & procedural power

Power can be defined as the ability to act or not act (agency), and the ability to influence processes and actions (Brennan & Israel, 2013; Giddens, 1984). A key objective of this thesis is to understand the nature of community empowerment in relation to facilitating greenspace aspirations and addressing greenspace inequality as an environmental right. Hence, this section explores power through an ideological and conceptual examination of community engagement theory and how this might inform our understanding of the procedural dimension of a trivalent conception of justice.

I begin by reviewing the 'tyranny of participation' critique (Cooke & Kothari, 2001) in both international and UK literature to consider the ideological assumptions and practical challenges to community participation. This leads to a more thorough conceptualisation of the forms, spaces and levels of power (Gaventa, 2006).

4.3.1 Participation as procedural power & tyranny

Traditionally in community development, and as reflected in the history summarised above, theories of power were broadly divided into two: a radical structuralist theory, in which there is a hierarchical state structure and power is a zero-sum dynamic with winners and losers; and a pluralist analysis, in which hierarchies can be negotiated and power can be mutually enhanced, denoting a positive-sum dynamic (Taylor, 2011).

Following on from this, the radical position stresses that within a capitalist discourse and the structural nature of poverty, a transparent definition of empowerment is crucial because the poor cannot be powerful in a zero-sum analysis (Barr, 1995, Berner & Phillips, 2005; Mayo & Craig, 1995). In contrast, the pluralist position trusts in facilitating increased opportunities for participation, so that policies and services become more democratic and accountable, while maintaining the socio-political status quo (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011; Popple, 2015; Taylor, 2011). The pluralist analysis has morphed into reformist community practice (Chanan & Miller, 2013) and is the mainstream justification for community participation. However, the underlying assumptions

about increasing agency through participation need to be interrogated and prompt questions for analysing the procedural dimension of addressing environmental injustice.

The 'tyranny of participation' critique (Cooke & Kothari, 2001) emerged in the late 1990s in international development in response to participatory rural appraisal and associated methods, which were advocated as mechanisms for empowerment and bottom-up planning (Chambers, 1997). The critique accused participation strategies as more rhetoric than substance, subject to manipulation by external agencies and expert-orientated research intent on pursuing their own agendas (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). This was followed by the question of whether the participation of poor people actually furthered their social and economic good (Mosse, 2001).

In the 'tyranny' critique, a Foucauldian analysis of power and Gramscian common sense and hegemony were referred to in order to argue that participatory approaches in themselves, did not radically alter existing power structures, professional positions or knowledge systems (Cleaver, 2001; Gaventa, 1980; 2004; Kothari, 2001). A Foucauldian analysis describes how power circulates both horizontally and vertically, between and within groups, through networks and dynamics, to influence decisions and normalise behaviour (Foucault,1979; 1980). In addition, a Gramscian perspective (Gramsci 1971) on the social construction of hegemonic power, highlights how power is created and maintained in subtle and diffuse ways through ostensibly humane and freely adopted social practices including, critics suggested, participatory practice (Cleaver, 2001; Kothari, 2001). Thus, if participation was to shift from being more than a method to a political methodology for empowerment, a deeper analysis was required to understand and reflect on the 'very minutiae of social life' (Cleaver, 2004:272).

The 'tyranny' critique was mirrored in the UK (Jones, 2003) where critics suggested that participation was an insidious mode of inclusionary control: so that by offering a promise of greater resources, it immediately constrained challenges to the prevailing hierarchies and inequalities, and thereby induced conformity and co-option (Craig, 2007). Consequently, a more thorough analysis of power relations in UK community practice has emerged. From a reformist

perspective this stresses the need to ensure power structures are scrutinised and the values and principles of community practice are explicit (Brennan & Israel, 2013; Butcher et al., 2007; Fisher & Sonn, 2007; Hustedde & Ganowicz, 2013). Whereas a radical perspective argues that any engagement initiative needs to be accompanied with politicisation, in order to mitigate the risk of corrupting the balance of rights and responsibilities between citizen and state; and tokenistic community participation that merely suggests active citizenship (MacLeod & Emejulu 2014; Somerville, 2016).

This directs us to the differences between participation and consultation, which draws on Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation. The ladder steps from non-participation; to tokenistic: informing, consulting, placating; and then to degrees of citizen power: partnership, delegated power, citizen control. Even current proponents of a pluralist/reformist paradigm admit that community engagement does not always equate to effective participation, and that community practice continues to struggle with issues of representation; multiple and conflicting interests and identities; and levels of decision-making in neighbourhood regeneration (Chanan & Miller, 2013; Taylor, 2011).

The concerns of representation, leadership and participant burnout is a consistent theme of research and practice (Barr, 1995; Bryant & Bryant, 1982; McCormack, 2009; Richardson, 2008). More recent research highlights how this can be exacerbated by not paying due regard to 'easy to ignore' groups (Lightbody, 2017) and different communicative capacities (Bartels, 2016), both of which can lead to consultation fatigue and the perceptions of tokenism (Weakley & Escobar, 2018). Hence, although there are a growing number of online resources to support implementation of the *National Standards for Community Engagement* (NSfCE, 2016; SCDC, 2019c), there remain considerable barriers to community engagement with the planning system and wider community planning structures (Weakley & Escobar, 2018; yellow book ltd, 2017).

Since the Christie Commission report (Christie, 2011), it is incumbent to embrace community participation in the design and delivery of public services. Equally, Weakley & Escobar (2018:8) stress that the value of public consultation depends on 'the type and quality of processes put in place and whether they

meet good standards of inclusion, participation and deliberation'. Identifying these recurring themes, in which participation is framed as both a route to empowerment and tyranny is an important prelude to understanding the procedural challenges that were faced by community colleagues in this study.

4.3.2 Forms, spaces & levels of power

The debate thus far clearly identifies the need for greater conceptual and theoretical coherence on the aims of participation and the potential to transform power relations (Gaventa, 2004:21). Here, three sets of ideas are helpful: forms, spaces and levels of power (Gaventa, 2006). First, Lukes' (2005) three forms of power identify how power is exercised, which can be summarised as:

- *Power to command* - such as the state or elite decision-makers;
- *Power to set the agenda* - as gatekeepers and filters, such as public servants and the local authority;
- *Ideological power* – that shapes meaning and the boundaries of knowledge to sustain the status quo. This form of power can be internalised as unconscious coercion, engendering marginalisation and powerlessness, and mirrors Gramscian 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971).

Second, drawing on Lefebvre's (1991) concept of space as arenas of bounded participation, Cornwall (2004) reflects on the spatial practice of citizen participation in governance to distinguish between 'invited spaces' and 'popular spaces'. 'Invited spaces' evokes the dynamics of the reformist agenda in which institutional bodies increasingly instigate engagement as a governance requirement. 'Popular spaces' denotes arenas in which people come together at their own instigation, offering the potential to develop alternative discourses and action that shift from the 'framing of needs as demands for rights' (Cornwall, 2004:6). The third component is how participation can operate at local, national or global levels.

These ideas are further developed by Gaventa (2006), who renames Lukes (2005) three dimensions of power as 'visible', 'hidden' and 'invisible' forms of power; and adds 'spaces' and 'levels' of participation to create a 'power cube'

(Gaventa, 2006: Figure 1). Thus, participation can be subjected to different forms of power operating at different levels. Spaces can be 'closed', where elites as experts make decisions; 'invited', where users or citizens are involved but the boundaries are regularised; or 'claimed' spaces (renamed from Cornwall's 'popular') which are created organically through common interests.

Further, taking a complex systems approach, Conn (2011) suggests an additional or more evolving image of participation that moves away from an invited/popular (or claimed), or top-down/bottom-up conceptualisation. This is described as two relational systems which 'continue to co-exist alongside each other interacting and co-evolving in a shared social eco-system' (Conn, 2011:5). This allows for both co-evolving systems to negotiate what complexity theory calls the 'space of possibilities'. Achieving the 'space of possibilities' reflects the nirvana of a co-production approach to community practice: one in which emergent organisational forms are possible and where citizens become 'collaborative problem solvers' (Conn, 2011:9), thus indicating a degree of procedural power.

These interrelationships between the forms and spaces of procedural power at a local level were explored through the PAR projects as the empirical part of this thesis will show.

4.4   Recognition of social capital & resilience factors

Notwithstanding the aspirations for procedural power within reformist practice, the radical critique consistently points to the (non)recognition of marginalised groups. Thus, the final concept to interrogate in this chapter is social capital, which is seen as pivotal to empowerment and to the discourses of community resilience introduced in Chapter Two (see Figure 2.2 reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark). Here, I augment Putnam's (1995; 2000) conceptualisation of social capital by introducing a Bourdieusian perspective. This directs us to the recognition of socio-economic and political inequality in how social capital is reproduced, and the consequent implications for parity of participation within a trivalent justice frame.

This insight is applied to reappraise *Community Resilience Discourses 3, 4 & 5.* GoWell's (2011) two-tier model of community empowerment is then offered as a framework for envisioning the multidimensional factors to empowerment discussed in this chapter.

4.4.1 Social capital: bonding, bridging, linking; & social control

In Chanan & Miller's (2013) reformist community practice strategy, they include the dynamics of social capital as working both horizontally through personal transformation and social networking, as reflected in *Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital;* and vertically up Arnstein's (1969) ladder, as reflected in *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development.* Drawing on Putnam's (2000) tiered appreciation of social capital as bonding, bridging and linking, Taylor (2011: Figure 11.1) describes this an 'empowerment tree'. Bonding ties are mobilised within groups providing solidarity and support, while bridging capital links to outside the group to form wider networks and exchange of ideas. Linking capital refers to the interaction between groups and power structures to deliver resource-rich networks and influence beyond the confinements of a small, closed network (Lin, 2000).

The risk in this conceptualisation, is that social capital presents as a free and easily created resource, not something which requires investment and consolidation. Likewise, the 'tyranny of participation' critique warns against an over-optimistic notion of citizenship and agency; and challenges the assumption that equality already exists at the outset of socio-political practices, so all that is required is a reorientation of engagement systems (Cleaver, 2001). For example, Dalton (2017) argues that socio-economic status provides the skills and resources that enable people to participate in public sector community engagement processes, which further increases their political acumen. Consequently, expanding the expectations for participation may increase the participation gap between higher and lower socio-economic groups to reproduce existing inequalities.

To unpack this further, Portes (2000), summarises three interpretations of social capital: as a resource, as goal orientated, and as social control. Thus, *Discourse*

3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital utilises bonding social capital as a resource and goal orientation on a horizontal, micro-organisational scale. In contrast, social capital focusing on influence and control, and framed by Bourdieu's (1984) social stratification theory, is helpful in emphasising the structural enablers and constraints to bridging and linking social capital, thereby directing us to the recognition dimension of a trivalent justice frame.

Bourdieu's (1986) deconstruction of capitalism as comprising the creation and movement of economic, social, cultural and symbolic forms of capital, reminds us that levels of social capital are directly correlated and constrained by socio-economic factors and consequent power relations. He argues that our total level of capital dictates our 'habitus', which then delineates the social positions that can be adopted in each field of play (for example: economic, educational, policy or political) with corresponding sets of rules, strategies and tactics (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Each habitus comprises multiple communities which cut across multiple fields, but it is the habitus (consisting of the total capital and how it is constituted) that acts as the structural force which organises the enactment and internalisation of social practices (Bourdieu, 1984). Similarly, it is the differentials and distribution of the forms of capital within each habitus, and thereby the level of agency and power exerted in each field, that creates the inequalities borne out of capitalism. Hence, social capital networks become a means of both inclusion and exclusion, and of maintaining dominant hierarchies (Byrne, 2005; Somerville, 2016).[27]

If we maintain the analysis of social capital within a Bourdieusian frame, then the ability to increase bonding social capital within one's own habitus is far more achievable than extending social relations, beyond low-income neighbourhoods, to increase bridging and linking social capital between different fields of play and habitus. As a consequence, traditional participation models too often fail to deliver because they adopt a pluralistic approach which can ignore non-negotiable differences in power, culture and resources in the policy

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[27] This summary of Bourdieusian theory is taken from Fifield (2016:12).

field (Cornwall, 2004); and communicative capacity in the consultation field (Bartels, 2016).

Thus, in order to create Conn's (2011) 'space of possibilities', the most recent evaluations reiterate that new engagement processes are necessary to work with marginalised groups. This entails using deliberative learning tools that nurture trust and support interactions between actors from different social worlds[28] (Conn, 2011; Weakley & Escobar, 2018; yellow book ltd, 2017); and can be flexible and responsive to participants' objectives rather than the engagers (Dalton, 2017; Lightbody, 2017).

4.4.2 Community resiliences reappraised

Somerville (2016) argues that a Bourdieusian frame is the most appropriate in understanding more fully the multidimensional dynamics of social capital in the UK, rather than an overemphasis on Putnam's (2000) description of bonding, linking and bridging social capital which is divorced from economic capital (Defilippis 2001). This also provides an additional perspective and critique of *Community Resilience Discourses 3, 4 & 5.*

First, in relation to *Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital:* Kretzmann & McKnight's (1993:1) intention for community development was to challenge the social pathology assessment of 'troubled' and 'deficient' urban neighbourhoods in the United States, which had led to a legacy of paternalism and institution-led expertise to mend 'poor communities'. Inspired by examples of skilled community leaders, they argued for a shift away from objectifying neighbourhoods as a problem in need of fixing, towards seeing residents as creative subjects with 'gifts, skills and capacities' (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993:4); and the ability to map and mobilise these assets for local inclusion and control. This was an essential reorientation of perspective, but it was not envisaged as a replacement for external resources.

> *'First focusing on the assets of lower income communities does not imply that these communities do not need additional resources from the*

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[28] The concept of social worlds was introduced in Chapter Three and my Social Worlds/Arenas analysis (Clarke, 2005) is detailed in Chapter Five.

> *outside. Rather, this guide simply suggest that outside resources will be much more effectively used if the local community is itself fully mobilised and invested' (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993:5).*

Translating this to today's urban Scotland, McGarvey's (2017) structural critique of poverty, which simultaneously admonishes a social system that has eroded personal responsibility, emphasises why this reorientation remains crucial. Equally, an over-emphasis risks ignoring the material resources that secure psycho-social assets (Friedli, 2013). That is, if individual wellbeing and resilience is socially contingent (Brown, 2014; White, 2010), the dilemma remains of how to boost social capital among people experiencing poor health and social networks. It follows that a systematic evaluation framework is required to understand the processes, contributions and scales of effects that can be achieved by psychological and social asset-based interventions alone (Friedli, 2003; Foot & Hopkins, 2010; GCPH, 2012; GCPH & SCDC, 2015).

Similarly, with regard to *Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development*: while Emery & Flora (2006:19) describe social capital as the 'critical resource' for creating a system of positive community change, they also indicate a Bourdieusian frame to stress that social capital is 'influenced by the stock and flows of other capitals'. That is, 'spiralling up' is marked by an initial injection of financial and human assets to reverse the deterioration of infrastructure and hope, which can then become 'a mutually-reinforcing spiral of community development'.

Moreover, if structural and material factors underpin resilience for people and places (Reich et al., 2010; White, 2010), *Discourse 4: Community resilience* obscures the current tension between reduced local authority resources threatening existing infrastructure and public services; and a community empowerment rhetoric encouraging responsibilisation onto already burdened communities, without the economic and material resources that are required (Cole et al., 2011; Hastings et al., 2015; MacLeod & Emejulu, 2014).

Equally, as case studies in North America (Green & Goetting, 2010), Europe (Moulaert, 2010) and England and Wales (Richardson, 2008) have illustrated, an asset-based approach to neighbourhood-based community initiatives remains limited without the support of multi-scalar governance and financial processes

to sustain community innovation. Hence, at a neighbourhood level in places of multiple deprivation, where the material, relational and subjective dimensions of wellbeing (White, 2010) are compromised, the notion of social capital appears as equally contested as resilience.

The preliminary critique of *Resilience Discourses 3 & 4* similarly applies to *Resilience Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change*: so that it can appear somewhat naïve and contradictory to extend the notion of community resilience without addressing the structural determinants discussed. Alternatively, we can see this discourse as aspirational and proactive. It is uniquely positioned to support a broad range of regeneration and low-carbon activities initiated at a micro-level to improve wellbeing and bonding social capital (*Discourse 3*); which in turn, can establish the foundations for consolidating community assets (*Discourse 4)* when aided by financial initiatives.

Yet, as noted in Chapter Two, while both regeneration (SURF, 2019a) and climate adaptation discourses (Twigger et al., 2015) for transformational community resilience identify greenspace for its utility (development or food growing), neither is explicitly directed towards addressing current greenspace inequality. Addressing this apparent (non)recognition is, I will argue, integral to achieving the objectives of city and transformational community resiliences.

4.4.3 A model of community empowerment

Within the context of area deprivation and regeneration, the interdependence of the micro and meso resilience factors influencing community empowerment is reflected in GoWell's (2011) two-tier illustrations reproduced in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

First, Figure 4.1 outlines a three-stage process to individual and collective empowerment: developing capability through information and critical awareness, influencing decisions and being accountable, and instituting and reviewing actions.

A model of community empowerment
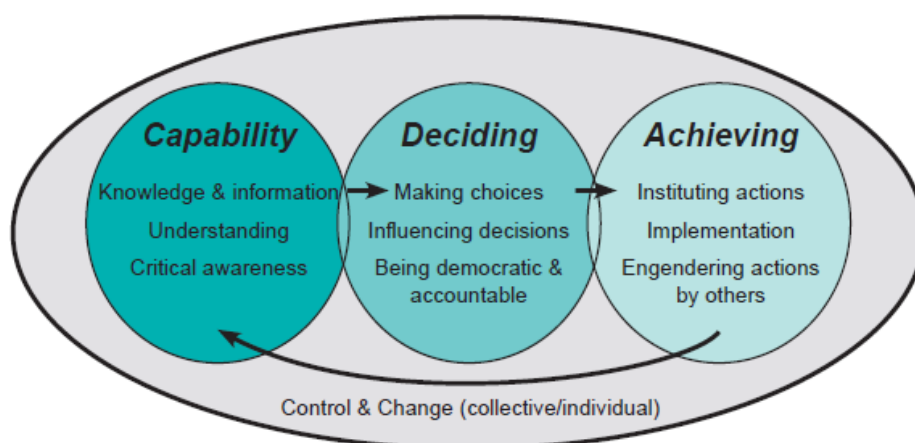
Figure 4.1: A model of community empowerment
Source: GoWell (2011).

Thus, a definition of community empowerment is offered as:

> *'A community's capacity to make effective choices, and then transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes' (GoWell, 2011:9).*

This aligns with a radical approach to community development and can also be seen as recognition of the individual and collective resilience factors that underpin *Discourse 3: Community resilience –wellbeing & social capital.*

Second, Figure 4.2 identifies the factors that can influence community empowerment as the regeneration strategy, neighbourhood and community context, and organisational context. This reflects the meso-dynamics inherent to *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development* and aligns with the objectives of reformist community practice to improve procedural processes.

Factors influencing community empowerment
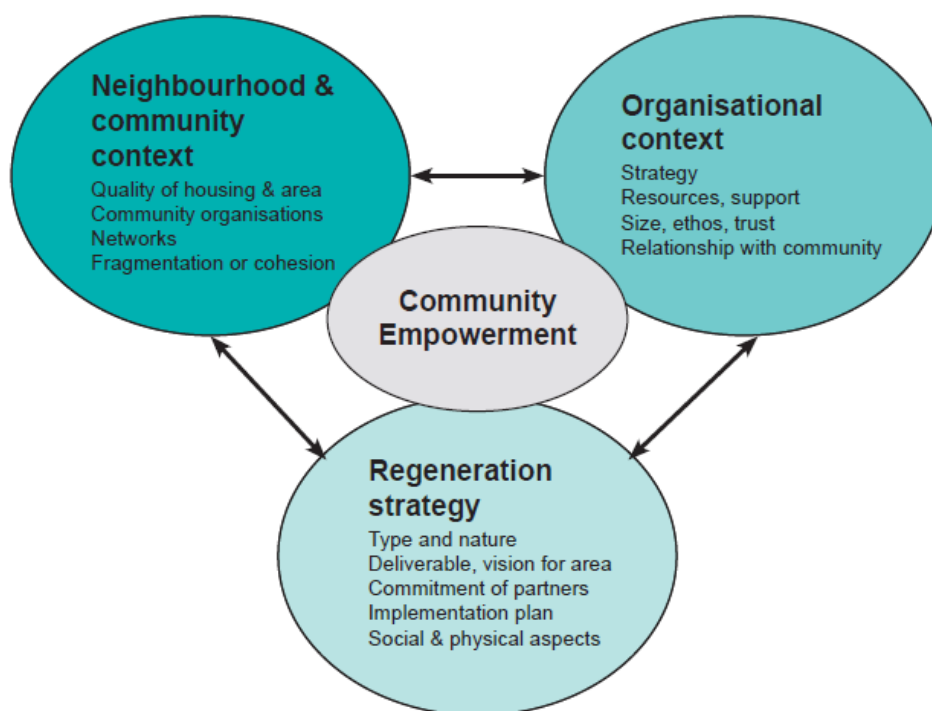
Figure 4.2: Factors influencing community empowerment
Source: GoWell (2011).

This chapter began by outlining the radical and pluralist/reformist approaches to community development which are most often presented as competing. In his most recent work however, Popple (2015) suggests that a combination of both approaches is needed, a thought which is also encapsulated in Figures 4.1 and 4.2. He outlines how radical community work can provide an ideal politicised vision as a catalyst for collective action; and pluralist/reformist theory can be beneficial in providing marginal gains in participative democracy at a neighbourhood level. Similarly, when asking 'whether neighbourhoods can save the city', Moulaert (2010:5) identifies the need for 'social innovation': which he sees as the synthesis of local radicalism to respond to the experiences of social exclusion, 'or the absence of existential quality of life'; with proactive institutions and policies to develop services and citizen rights.

Adopting an eco-socialist standpoint, the current role of community development could therefore be interpreted as bipartite. That is, of assertively protecting rights by facilitating critical awareness of structural inequalities and their impacts at a micro-organisational scale, as well as facilitating cooperative

strategies of asset and capacity building for civic engagement at a meso-neighbourhood scale (Minnite & Fox-Pixen, 2016). For this to happen, community colleagues would need to claim their procedural spaces (Cornwall, 2004; Gaventa, 2006) and set the agenda (Lukes, 2005). Further, in recognition of differing capacities, resources and motivations for participation, the purpose could be for shaping and directing decision-making rather than necessarily full control (Jackson, 2001; Lightbody, 2017; SURF, 2019b).

The empirical part of this thesis uses participatory action research to trace local greenspace aspirations and assess to what extent they are supported by the local authority's approach to community empowerment. GoWell's (2011) two-tier model of empowerment will be returned to in Chapter Eight, as it provides a useful framework to situate the relations within and between the social worlds of Glasgow local authority and the Thriving Places neighbourhood of Colvin in which the PAR projects took place.

4.5   Community empowerment to address greenspace inequality

Adopting a feminist research strategy is not necessarily about finding gaps in the existing literature, Ackerly & True (2010:81) argue, but more about reviewing the landscape to explore new perspectives for 'neglected questions'. The literature review part of this thesis has applied Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to address the neglected question of urban greenspace inequality. This final section brings together the theoretical themes explored thus far and how they contribute to addressing the four research questions.

Chapter Three identified the opportunities and challenges to addressing the distributional dimension of greenspace inequality. To address the triple jeopardy in Glasgow's neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation, this was detailed as: improving the quality of existing greenspace; increasing greenspace accessibility; and reclaiming derelict land for community benefit.

This chapter has explored the historic tensions between the radical and pluralist/reformist approaches to community development. It has examined the different objectives for community engagement, as well as noting the absence

of an environmental justice frame. Together with the socio-environmental context established in Chapter Three, this situates the first research question.

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

Chapter Two introduced the five primary discourses of resilience (Figure 2.2) and how they are deployed by Glasgow City Council, including the Thriving Places area-based initiative as the vehicle for delivering 'resilient communities' (GCPP, 2017a). This chapter has developed the discussion on community resiliences to highlight how the concepts of social capital, assets, empowerment and community resilience are co-dependent. Thus, critical engagement with the role and interpretation of social capital offers a lens through which to explore the current paradoxes inherent in *Community Resilience Discourses 3 & 4*. This situates the second research question.

RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?

This chapter has sought to locate the procedural and recognition dimensions of addressing greenspace inequality by exploring the multifaceted concept of community empowerment. The procedural dimension of community empowerment was scrutinised by interrogating the 'tyranny of participation' critique (Cooke & Kothari, 2001), and introducing Gaventa's (2006) power cube as a way of conceptualising the forms, spaces and levels of power in relation to community participation. A Bourdieusian analysis of social capital was then applied to surface the recognition dimension and the constraints to parity of participation without assertive intervention.

I also proposed that GoWell's (2011) two-tier model of community empowerment graphically outlines the interdependence of micro and meso resilience factors to empowerment. These theoretical conceptualisations are used to analyse the PAR projects in consequent chapters and situate the third research question.

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

Acknowledging the eco-socialist standpoint of this thesis, my last research objective is to explore the contribution of an environmental justice frame to

inform the five discourses of resilience and shape *Resilience Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change*. Chapter Three identified greenspace as a boundary object that intersects the five discourses and hence its pivotal position in contributing to multi-scalar resiliences. As well as establishing the context for the participatory action research projects, it situates the fourth and final research question.

RQ4: What can an environmental justice frame contribute to the five discourses of resilience in Scotland?

The next chapter presents my feminist-informed research strategy to empirically address these questions. Chapters Six through to Nine comprise my fieldwork and analysis.

Chapter 5: A feminist-informed research strategy

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present my case study research strategy which used methodological pluralism and a multimethod approach to answer the four research questions outlined at the end of Chapter Four.

Chapter One introduced my motivations and rationale for undertaking this thesis and how participatory action research became the principal component of my feminist-informed methodology. This chapter begins with an overview of the case study design. This is followed by a justification and explanation of each component, beginning with my research strategy and methodological pluralism using micro-ethnography, participatory action research and discursive interview. Next, Colvin as the case study neighbourhood is presented, along with Marig Co and Heckley Hub as my initial host organisations. Using examples from my early phases of fieldwork, I then detail my multimethod design.

A feminist ethic underpins this thesis and I highlight the consistent principles and questions which shaped my research strategy, field relations, participation and analysis. The chapter concludes by shifting from the practical tools of fieldwork to my analytic framework.

5.2 Overview of case study design

I chose the analytic features of case study research for theoretical generalisation (Silverman, 2013; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014:16) gives a twofold operational definition of a case study. First, that its scope is an empirical in-depth inquiry within its real-world context. Second, that its features include relying on multiple sources of evidence that can be triangulated, and that prior theoretical conceptualisation (as illustrated in the previous chapters) is beneficial to guide data collection, production and analysis. I used a generic purposive sampling approach (Bryman, 2012) to identify Glasgow as a single case study for an in-depth analysis.

Chapters One and Three provided evidence of why Glasgow serves as an exemplar to explore local greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice.

Similarly, Chapters Two and Four identified the Thriving Places area-based initiative as an opportunity to explore the discourses of community resilience. With its focus on building 'resilient communities', the community planning initiative is pivotal to the *Community Plan* (GCPP, 2017a) and integral to Glasgow's *Resilience Strategy* (GCC, 2016). Colvin, as one of the areas targeted by Glasgow's Thriving Places initiative, thus exhibits characteristics of a critical case, described as one that offers a better understanding of the parameters of the general problem (Flyvbjerg, 2013; Gobo, 2008; Yin, 2014). Using Colvin as my case study location, and working with community colleagues, facilitated an exploration of community development practice and how the discourses of empowerment and resilience are experienced in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The four research questions (RQ) are addressed progressively through Chapters Six to Nine. In order to answer these questions, I used methodological pluralism. The feminist researcher Kitzinger (2007:126) advocates methodological pluralism to achieve 'the best possible "fit" between research objectives and research method'. Similarly, Seale et al. (2007) suggest a pragmatic approach to methodology that can adapt to different situated research contexts. The methodologies I used were micro-ethnography, participatory action research and discursive interview.

Gobo (2008: Table 2.2) categorises methodologies by the pivotal cognitive mode that is used: ethnography as an 'observing' methodology; action research as a 'transformative' methodology which is 'operative'; and the discursive interview which focuses on 'listening'. This is a helpful distinction which clarifies how a methodology will be deployed and data produced. The methodologies also transfer loosely and overlap across the three interpretivist paradigms of constructivism, participatory and critical theory (Lincoln et al., 2013), which are discussed in the next sub-section.

In the spirit of the 'researcher-as-interpretive-bricoleur' aiming to produce practical and pragmatic knowledge (Lincoln et al., 2013; Seale et al, 2007), my multimethod research design had four primary methods for data production: participant observation, participatory action research, deliberative workshops,

and semi-structured face-to-face interviews. I use the term fieldwork to encompass my whole research process involving observation and interaction with community colleagues in relation to these methods.

My fieldwork spanned across twenty-four months and comprised five phases, beginning in June 2017 and ending in June 2019. Fieldwork was weekly until March 2019 when it reduced to fortnightly and then monthly. During this time, I supported five participatory action research (PAR) projects which are discussed in the next chapter. These were: *MarigSpace, Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG), Make Marig Muddy, Arden Play Campaign* and *Colvin Greenspace Network*. From July to September 2019, I refrained from active participation to allow for reflection, analysis and the writing up of my thesis, although I remained in regular contact with community colleagues. Table 5.1 provides a summary of my methods; PAR projects with phases of fieldwork; and corresponding methodology, matched with Gobo's (2008) cognitive categorisation and the three interpretivist paradigms.

Table 5.1: Summary of methods, PAR projects with phases of fieldwork, associated methodology with cognitve mode & research paradigm

Four Methods • **Participant observation** • **PAR** • **Deliberative workshops** • **Semi-structured interviews**	Five PAR projects: • *MarigSpace* • *Heckley Path Action Group* • *Make Marig Muddy* • *Arden Play Campaign* • *Colvin Greenspace Network*	Fieldwork phase: 1. Jun 17-Sep 17 2. Oct 17-July 18 3. Aug 18-Dec 18 4. Jan 19-April 19 5. May-19-Jun 19	Methodology, cognitive mode & aligned research paradigm
Participant Observation	• **Marig Co community organisation**	Phase 1	**Micro-ethnography** *Observing* Constructivist
Participatory Action Research (PAR)	• *MarigSpace* • *Heckley Path Action Group*	Phase 2	**Participatory Action Research** *Transformative* Participatory & Critical theory
	• *Make Marig Muddy*	Phase 3	
	• *Arden Play Campaign*	Phases 3 - 5	
	• *Colvin Greenspace Network*	Phases 3 - 5	
Deliberative Workshops	• *MarigSpace* • *Heckley Path Action Group*	Phases 1 – 2	**Participatory Action Research** *Transformative* Participatory & Critical theory
	• *Make Marig Muddy*	Phase 3	
	• *Arden Play Campaign*	Phase 5	
	• *Colvin Greenspace Network*	Phases 3 - 5	
Semi-structured face-to-face Interviews	**Community colleagues External officers External community practitioners**	All Phases	**Discursive Interview** *Listening* Constructivist & Critical theory

5.3   A feminist-informed research strategy

This section begins with a discussion on my ontology and epistemology and how they shaped my feminist-informed research strategy.

5.3.1 Ontology & epistemology

Ackerly & True (2010:81) suggest that feminist researchers will often work within a broad 'multiperspectival' theoretical paradigm because we are interested in complex situated phenomena. Ontologically, this assumes a multiply constructed world and thereby contested concepts which are our focus for scrutiny. My study is influenced by the interpretivist paradigms of constructivism, critical theory, and participatory inquiry (Lincoln et al., 2013).

As noted in Chapter One, I root my study in a critical realist epistemology to the natural world (Bhaskar, 1989; Irwin, 2001), and a social constructivist approach to socio-environmental and social relations. In addition, critical theory and its ontology of material-realism recognises that power relations are socially and historically constituted, and mediated by the social relations of capitalist production, consumption and hegemonic discourse (Kincheloe et al., 2013). Within its diversity of traditions (including eco-socialism and feminism), theoretical arguments and empirical research seek to critique material discrimination with the objectives of political and emancipatory impact (Ormston et al., 2014).

I also draw on Heron & Reason's (1997) participatory inquiry paradigm which foregrounds collaborative forms of action inquiry to facilitate experiential ways of knowing and critical subjectivity. Exploring local (and perhaps competing) meaning-making, and the possibilities for action, hold the most potential for answering my research questions. The three consistent themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity permeate across these interpretivist paradigms, providing a thread of coherence and feminist orientation to my work, and are discussed towards the end of this chapter.

5.3.2 Feminist-informed research

In Chapter One I outlined the normative concerns of feminist theories and research. Skeggs (2001) notes how there has been a shift from traditional ethnographies on women, rooted in a theory of gender oppression from the late 1970s, to research informed by feminist theory and a political commitment - which is where I locate this thesis. Thus, in Chapter Two I outlined my eco-socialist standpoint and how I understand environmental injustice as an example of social inequality that requires a contextualised understanding of intersectionality and power relations (Anthias, 2013; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Haraway, 1992; Hill Collins, 2009). It also requires an emphasis on the words and voice of those experiencing injustice (hooks, 1989) by using a participant-centred methodology, while simultaneously using critical exploration to identify hegemonic pressures and systems that produce inequality (Kitzinger, 2007).

Acknowledging my feminist and eco-socialist critical orientation is in the spirit of Weber's identification of value relevance in social research in order to challenge existing normative standards of value, which 'can and must be the objects of dispute in a discussion of a problem of social policy' (Weber, 1949a:56). As such, I am also committed to writing this thesis with intellectual integrity and reflexivity to serve as a counterpoint to my value-orientation (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Weber, 1949b).

5.3.3 For methodological pluralism

Having provided the context with my paradigm pluralism, I proceed to justify my methodological pluralism in relation to micro-ethnography, participatory action research and discursive interview.

Micro-ethnography

My fieldwork began in the ethnographic empirical tradition of participant observation, as I was conscious of not wanting to impose my own value-orientation without understanding the contexts and relations in my case study neighbourhood of Colvin. I adopted a role similar to a community development student placement in a small community organisation (Marig Co): observing and

learning as well as providing proactive organisational support (Bryant & Bryant, 1982).

Ethnographic methods and styles continue to grow and diversify so that Bryman (2012:465) suggests that whether a qualitative study is ethnographic has become 'to a significant extent a matter of degree'. Traditional ethnography has a naturalist emphasis on a period of prolonged participant observation in a social setting, studying behaviours, rituals and actions (Gobo, 2008; Silverman, 2013). However, rather than gain a 'thick' descriptive analysis of cultural rituals (Geertz, 1993; Gobo, 2008), my objective was instrumental in specifically exploring how socio-environmental concerns and aspirations were understood and addressed. Thus, my methodology can be described as 'micro-ethnography' (Wolcott, 1990).

> *'Drawing on the ways that a cultural ethos is reflected in microcosm in selected aspects of everyday life, but giving emphasis to particular behaviours in particular setting rather than attempting to portray a whole cultural system' (Wolcott, 1990:64).*

Participatory action research

Action research approaches can be found in educational, management, health and social care disciplines as a way of developing practitioners' practice in the work setting (Day, 2002; McGill & Beaty, 2001; McNiff, 2016; McNiff & Whitehead, 2013). Although multifarious and intentionally eclectic (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), they draw on Kolb's (1984) experiential and reflective learning cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualisation and experimentation.

> *'The action researcher is committed to learning from investigation, making decisions about necessary change, applying these and then evaluating the consequences… this is done with the complexity of the world as it is and the researcher is usually an active participant within the application and as well as in the investigative and evaluation phases' (McGill & Beaty, 2001:21).*

Ladkin (2007) suggests that the diversity of disciplines and consequent practices has made action research slippery to define, and it may be better understood as an orientation towards collaborative inquiry rather than a particular methodology. Similarly, practitioner researchers within social work, teaching and nursing highlight the parallels between a person-centred approach,

collaborative relationships and an action learning epistemology (Day, 2002). Following this vein, McNiff & Whitehead (2013) state that action research should avoid a dogmatic set of techniques but should be conducted within a set of intrinsic values-based principles, including social justice and participative living. This is echoed by Reason & Bradbury (2008) who stress that it should also produce practical knowledge for participants that is useful for everyday living.

Hence, action research complements asset-based approaches and is advocated within public health as offering the flexibility and responsiveness required for community-based research (GCPH & SCDC, 2015b).

> *'For example, action research is appreciative in that it recognises strengths and assets as a starting point for inquiry and builds and embeds resilience and capacity through the processes of research itself' (GCPH & SCDC, 2015a:3).*

Although the definitions between action research, participatory research and participatory action research can be blurred, Brydon-Miller et al. (2013) clarify that the difference between action research approaches and participatory action research is that the former is co-inquiry to improve practitioner practice, while the latter foregrounds social justice by addressing concrete community problems. Somerville (2016) describes this as when:

> *'Researchers enter into an open-ended dialogue (typically using techniques of participatory action research) with local communities as co-researchers focused on particular community problems and needs, as a result of which the learning and practices of those communities (as well as that of the researchers) is enhanced' (Somerville, 2016:157).*

As such, each participant is regarded as an active and equal collaborator to the project .The displacement of the researcher's position of privileged expertise to one of co-inquirer resonates with feminist critiques of the social construction of knowledge (Haraway, 1991; Oakley, 1998; Skeggs, 2001) and, together with creating practical knowledge for 'human flourishing', is pivotal to Heron & Reason's (1997:274) participatory inquiry paradigm.

As well as its epistemology, Brydon-Miller et al. (2013) trace the varied origins of PAR along theoretical and social movement routes. Although the terminology can shift between action research, participatory (appraisal) research or participatory

action research (PAR) across different global and community contexts, The conceptualisation of PAR in social theory is associated with critical theory as an explicit driver for social change (Kemmis, 1982; 2010; Morgan & Ramirez, 1984; Noffke, 2002). This also intersects with Freirean critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970; Horton et al., 1990) which has heavily influenced radical community development, as outlined in Chapter Four. For example, Ledwith (2016) suggests that action research offers community development an opportunity to extend the Gramscian-Marxian concept of 'praxis' as action orientated towards changing society (Gramsci, 1971; Hartley, 1987). Praxis is the combination of 'critical action arising from critical thought' (Deeley, 2015:61). This can be understood as the embodiment of a Gramscian/neo-Marxist and my eco-socialist understanding of critical theory: which seeks to make visible hidden power relations within existing ideology as a prerequisite for transformational change (Held, 1990; Horkheimer, 1972).

In reviewing the current literature on PAR in the UK and North America, a final distinction can be discerned between two models. The first is the more traditional form of consultation or evaluation which is designed and conducted by lay co-researchers, often in a public health context such as 'community-based participatory action research' in North America (e.g.: Janes, 2016; Maiter et al., 2008; Stanley et al., 2015) or 'community-led action research' in Scotland (SCDC & Poverty Alliance, 2018). The second, is PAR which is interested in collaborating with community organisations, such as 'feminist participatory action research' (Frisby et al., 2009; Langan & Morton, 2009; Reid et al., 2006). The model I adopted is aligned to the second, although I draw on the epistemological and practice issues raised in both fields when evaluating my methodology at the end of Chapters Six and Nine.

Discursive interview

Although both ethnography and transformative research methodologies use the interview as a method, drawing again on Gobo's (2008) heuristic of methodologies, I used a semi-structured interview format discursively. That is, in addition to key themes, I also wanted to identify the primary discourse resources (Foucault, 1970) and subject positions adopted by interviewees

(discussed further in my analytic framework). Kitzinger (2007) suggests that studying talk 'as a form of action' gives insight into how oppressions and resistance are actually performed, which can critically augment 'talk about experience' gained through traditional ethnographic in-depth interviews.

5.4 Introduction to Colvin, Marig Co & Heckley Hub

This section introduces Colvin neighbourhood and Marig Co and Heckley Hub as my initial host community organisations. It is intended to provide the micro-organisational and meso-neighbourhood context to Glasgow's discourses of community resilience first introduced in section 2.5.

Colvin is one of the nine areas targeted by Glasgow's Thriving Places initiative promoting *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development*. It was historically part of a key district for heavy manufacturing, but following de-industrialisation, the neighbourhood suffered from poor planning with few amenities and transport links. New housing replaced most of the post-war accommodation in the 1980s, but this has contributed to 97% of the population living within 500 metres of derelict land, primarily attributable to previous industrial contamination (Understanding Glasgow, 2018; Adams & Tolson).

In Chapter Two, I summarised how the priorities of the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) shifted, from supporting capital bids in its initial phase, to current annual funding cycles for smaller carbon literacy and behaviour change projects. In Colvin, this trajectory is reflected in Marig Co and Heckley Hub community organisations, both of which were established as CCF capital projects in the spirit of *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience*.

Formed in 2008, Marig Co is based in an office at the bottom of a complex of multi-storey flats ranked in the most deprived vigintile by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD 2016). The organisation is of particular interest because it was established to deliver a visionary zero-carbon self-build training and resource centre and community hub. While discussions over land transfer progressed, Marig Co focused on delivering training programmes for unemployed residents in sustainable construction techniques, and several pilot self-build

projects supported by the Scottish Ecological Design Association. These included initiating Marig Community Garden in 2011 and some eco-arts works. Sadly, by the end of 2016, the land was not secured and the ambitious community self-build programme became undeliverable. As a consequence, the organisation experienced significant upheaval and reduction in size during the year preceding my fieldwork.

At the start of my research, Marig Co*'s* main activity was running a weekly youth group. They employed two part-time members of staff as a volunteer coordinator and youth worker. The only remaining board member was now the Chair and the new committee were keen to reappraise the organisation's objectives. I was introduced to the group, in March 2017, by the Vice-chair who had previously attended the 'Well & Green' deliberative workshops I facilitated in 2016 (Fifield, 2016).

Two miles away, Heckley Hub is located at an intersection between neighbourhoods ranked within the most and least deprived quintiles in Scotland. It was established in 2007 to renovate derelict buildings along the Heckley canal and build a community hub and social enterprise. It successfully opened in 2011 with the aim of providing recreational and occupational opportunities with an outdoor focus. Although a much larger organisation, with a turnover of approximately £400,000 and a strong reputation, it too was experiencing significant management and funding challenges when I was introduced to them via Marig Co. For the previous two years Heckley Hub had been reliant on two annual grants to fund eight staff: the Climate Challenge Fund for four workers to support local food growing, outreach to primary schools and active travel initiatives; and the Empowering Communities Fund to support social inclusion.

Both Marig Co and Heckley Hub are active members of a local network of community organisations called Connecting Colvin. This was established as part of an eighteen month *Animating Assets* action research project (GCPH & SCDC, 2015b) investigating the impact made by asset-based interventions on health and wellbeing, thus promoting *Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital*.

Both organisations were also involved in an action research project facilitated by Glasgow Centre for Population Health and Glasgow's Resilience Team called *Weathering Change: community resilience in the face of climate change* (GCPH, 2018a), promoting *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience*. The two action research projects will be discussed in Chapter Seven as part of my Social Worlds/Arenas analysis of action research practice.

Located in one of the nine Thriving Places areas, Marig Co and Heckley Hub can be seen as typical examples of small and medium-sized community organisations: reflecting the aspirations and challenges of living and working in a low-income neighbourhood; which has been the consistent target for regeneration initiatives; and now engaged with the asset-based community development approach adopted by Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. The organisations also have the potential for socio-environmental action and empowerment, given they were established with an ambitious environmentally focused ethos, received significant funding, and were previously involved in action research projects.

Thus, using Colvin for my single case study, provided an opportunity to observe the micro-processes of community organisation; in relation to the meso-dynamics of neighbourhood asset-based community practice; embedded within the macro discourse of city resilience and national climate resilience. These interrelationships and the corresponding five discourses of resilience are represented in Figure 2.2 and reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark.

5.5   For multimethod design

Plano Clark & Ivankova (2016) differentiate between mixed-methods research, which is a process of integrating quantitative and qualitative methods; with multimethod, which integrates multiple methods of either quantitative, or in this case, qualitative methods. Yin (2014) summarises that case study evidence may come from six sources: direct observation, participant observation, interviews, documents, archival records and physical artefacts. By using a multimethod design, I was able to mitigate against bias and weaknesses associated with any single method and produce multiple sources of evidence to develop 'converging lines of inquiry' (Yin, 2014:120).

My objective was to use data triangulation and situational analysis (detailed in section 5.7) to increase the trustworthiness of my findings (Bryman, 2012; Schwandt et al., 2007), and produce an interpretive and reflexive bricolage of interconnected representations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013:11). Although Silverman (2013) questions the suitability of triangulation with a multimethod approach and suggests it may confuse constructivist and naturalist models of qualitative inquiry, I adopted Yin's (2014) approach to gathering different sources of data, with the aim of exploring complex dynamics and conflicted processes of meaning-making and action. This maintained the spirit of a constructivist ontology rather than pursing a realist objectivity, which Silverman (2013) cautions against.

This section gives a detailed description of the four primary methods summarised in Table 5.1 at the beginning of the chapter. These were participant observation, participatory action research, deliberative workshops, and semi-structured face-to-face interviews. I use examples from Phases 1 and 2 of my fieldwork with text boxes to highlight my conceptual development and 'key events' (Emerson, 2007). This also gives the background to the participatory action research (PAR) projects detailed in Chapter Six.

Fieldnotes

I wrote descriptive fieldnotes to capture informal one-to-one and group discussions, and for reflection (USC, 2017). As much as possible, fieldnotes were written directly after each encounter either in my field diary or on my computer database with the following 'DSTAR' structure:

- Date, time, situation, participants;
- Situation - description;
- Task – activities observed;
- Actions - agreed with community colleagues;
- Reflection - including my own subjective positioning and any methodological and theoretical ideas that came to mind.

As well as using the DSTAR structure, I lent heavily on my previous managerial experience to maintain a strategic focus to my engagement and evaluation. This

was combined with a more observational assessment of group relations which I have developed as a group facilitator over twenty years. Conscious of maintaining a critical and analytical eye on processes, my fieldnotes were a way of reflecting on the dynamics of my field relations with community colleagues, practitioners and external officers.

5.5.1 Participant observation

Participant observation was my initial method during Phase 1 of my fieldwork. Spradley (1980:58) lists five types of participation for ethnographers who become part of a group with corresponding degrees of involvement and emotional resources, outlined in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Types of participation for ethnographers

Type of participation	Degree of practical involvement and emotional resources
1. complete	high
2. active	medium-high
3. moderate	medium-low
4. passive	low
5. non-participation	none

Source: Spradley (1980:58).

Based with Marig Co, my participant observation could be termed active with medium-high involvement, in that it consisted of a weekly day-placement over a four-month period. This included weekly team meetings with the two part-time staff, the Chair and Vice-chair of the management committee. Outside of this, I was tied to a steady stream of emails, texts, telephone-calls and one-to-one conversations.

It was through this minutia of active participant observation that relationships were consolidated both within Marig Co and externally through the Connecting Colvin network. For example, in October I organised a 'Let's get into Nature Space' for a family fun-day hosted by Heckley Hub, to which I invited a range of wildlife engagement officers keen to engage with residents. This in turn raised

my own profile with Heckley Hub and secured the foundations for their *Heckley Path Action Group* PAR project.

Through discussion with Marig Co community colleagues, the idea of participatory action research developed from abstract theory to a more concrete conceptualisation of what we wanted and was possible to explore, as illustrated in Box 5.1.

> **Box 5.1: From 'resilience' & 'environmental justice' (June 2017) to 'improving local greenspace' (October 2017)**
>
> *An early dilemma for me was how to explain 'socio-environmental concerns' to Marig Co – none of whom had come across the term before, and for whom 'resilience' and 'environmental justice' were also not an immediate touchstone. The mismatch between the language of critical theory, my research questions and theirs, and the consequential journey of co-production and meaning-making, was an essential part of our intersubjectivity.*
>
> *For example, Marig Co community colleagues would ask how they 'could help me' and would repeatedly say, 'Sorry, I don't think you're getting what you need from us are you?' Although I stressed that being part of the group was what I needed, this only began to make sense towards the end of Phase 1 of my fieldwork, when we began to identify MarigSpace PAR project as the lever for re-engaging with local residents, and I finalised my PAR working title:*
>
> > **Exploring residents' aspirations and actions to improve their greenspace.**

5.5.2 Participatory action research

The five PAR projects are summarised in Table 5.1. During Phase 1 of my fieldwork, two projects: *MarigSpace* and *Heckley Path Action Group,* emerged from exploring greenspace aspirations to improve the quality of existing greenspace with Marig Co and Heckley Hub community colleagues. These became the focus of my fieldwork during Phase 2. As these projects came to an end, conversations with new groups led to forming *Make Marig Muddy* and contributing to the *Arden Play Campaign,* both of which wanted to reclaim derelict land for community benefit. As a consequence, and working with the Thriving Places Community Connector, community colleagues agreed to come

together to increase greenspace accessibility by creating Colvin *Greenspace Network.* As co-facilitator, this became my principal focus during Phases 4 and 5, when I also began to reduce my direct involvement from weekly to fortnightly and then monthly participation. The PAR projects are detailed in Chapter Six, but I describe my use of audio-visual materials and deliberative workshops below.

Using audio-visual materials

The increasing accessibility of visual digital technology has made it easier to use social knowledge (Emmel & Clark, 2011; Gubrium et al., 2015). Pink (2007) outlines how visual research materials serve three interrelated functions: as a visual record, as representations of research experiences, and as material artefacts. As part of my PAR methodology, all three functions were important.

The subjective experience of urban greenspace in Glasgow has been emphasised by the growing practice of qualitative street audits which have highlighted the perceptions of availability and accessibility of greenspace (GCPH et al., 2012; GCPH, 2015; ODS Consulting, 2014; Seaman et al., 2010). My aim was to extend this practice by creating an accessible digital diary for the PAR projects. Emmel & Clark (2011) suggest that using visual and audio materials not only augment more traditional ways of capturing data for analysis and investigation, such as fieldnotes and interviews, but also encourages 'reflection, categorisation, and interpretation' of the geographical place under investigation (Emmel & Clark 2011:8). The methodology of action research is perhaps more favourable towards these methods as 'expressive performances' (Pink, 2007) because it is intentionally participant-led and partial, as opposed to the challenges of representation and objectivity confronted by more formal photo-elicitation methods (Emmel & Clark, 2011).

The voice recordings and photographs were always taken by colleagues and serve as an expression of their inquiry and interests within the research context. Using mobile phone applications and compiling online photograph albums was an excellent way to collaborate and sustain our motivation, as well as maintaining a record of our action research and real-time mapping. We used the online *Google Photos Albums Sharing* with the explicit consent of all community colleagues and

host organisations. Colleagues were able to comment on the photographs and organisations were able to use them on their Facebook pages to generate more interest. Marig Co and Heckley Hub also included the online links as part of their outcomes for funders and to apply for further grants.

Although in the beginning I took the lead in uploading the photographs, this too became a task for community colleagues and, in this way, the online photo albums embodied new experiences and understandings as cultural artefacts (Pink, 2007). Box 5.2 gives an example of this with our *Canal Photoshoot*, which marked the beginning of the *Heckley Path Action Group* PAR project. This was the first time Marig Co and Heckley Hub had worked together and symbolically marked the beginning of collaborative action between the two community organisations and their previously territorial youth groups at either end of the canal path.

Box 5.2: Heckley Canal Photoshoot, September 2017

We invited the two youth groups from Marig Co and Heckley Hub to walk along the canal. This was the first time the two groups had met.

I wanted to use the activity of taking photographs and voice recording young people's initial impressions of the canal path as a way of connecting with their personal socio-environmental concerns in a fun way, hence calling it a photoshoot.

Results

13 young people and 9 adults collaborate.

Altogether, 113 photographs are taken of litter, puddles and overgrown verges on either side of the footpath. Below is a collage of a selection of these photographs. One young person also takes 4 short videos of litter with a voice-over explaining that this is 'wrong'.
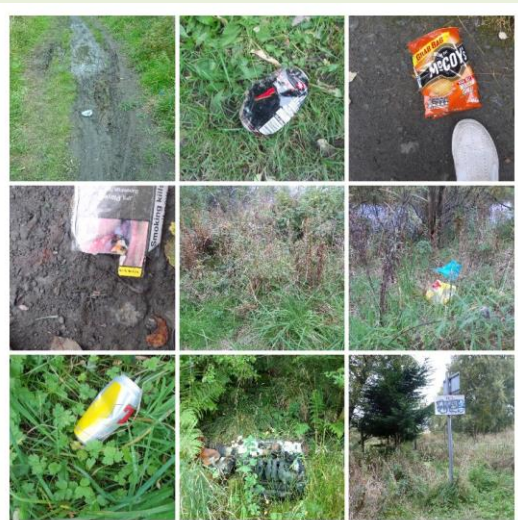
Source: S Fifield (September 2018).

Another young person records four minutes of comments from other participants. All the young people choose to focus on what they see as the negative aspects of the path which was 'spoiling this beautiful area'. The predominant focus of the audio data is on the litter and the need for litter bins, and the narrowness of the overgrown path.

Triangulated with data collected by surveys and previous consultations it serves to emphasise the ongoing socio-environmental concerns about the path particularly from the perspective of young residents.

5.5.3 Deliberative workshops

I facilitated deliberative workshops to identify greenspace aspirations and actions for all the PAR projects. My facilitation of the workshops can be seen as part of the 'beneficence' (Gobo, 2008) or 'reciprocity' (Maiter et al., 2008) of participating in my research, 'which then itself becomes part of the research process' (Skeggs, 2001:440).

The workshops used appreciative inquiry methods such as envisioning, story-telling/restorying and mixed media (Gubrium et al., 2015). Bushe (2013) describes appreciative inquiry as a four stage process: discover - dream - design – destiny. In summary: discover and appreciate what currently works, dream and innovate to imagine what could be, design and co-construct the steps for change through dialogue, and execute the actions to achieve the destiny together. Importantly, appreciative inquiry exclusively focuses on aspirations and strengths to foster positive emotions and develop collaborative and transformative action (Ludema & Fry, 2008). Box 5.3 gives an example of how this influenced my own practice and complements the insight provided in Box 5.1.

> **Box 5.3: From 'socio-environmental concerns' (March 2017) to 'greenspace aspirations' (October 2017)**
>
> *When initially developing my research design for ethical approval, the research questions used the terminology of 'socio-environmental concerns'. However, during the first set of deliberative workshops for Marig Co, I realised that, although my facilitation and use of appreciative inquiry focused on aspirations, my research questions hitherto had not.*
>
> *By amending my terminology, from 'socio-environmental concerns' to 'greenspace aspirations', I further shifted my alignment to an asset-based approach for mobilising action. Simultaneously, using a justice framework ensured that I maintained a problem-focused theoretical orientation.*

During Phase 1 of my fieldwork with Marig Co, it became apparent that their priority for 'resilience' was for organisational stability to achieve their charitable purposes. The first two workshops I facilitated therefore, had a broader focus on organisational visioning, team building and planning. From this, it was agreed that three interrelated project plans would be developed: young people, training and volunteering, and a community greenspace project (*MarigSpace*) that I would co-coordinate with the Chair. Community colleagues fed back that this became the catalyst for new conversations and acted as a break from the organisational 'firefighting' of the previous year.

As each of the PAR projects progressed, deliberative workshops marked the critical points of our journey. All the workshops were voice-recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis. Table 5.3 provides a summary of the sixteen deliberative workshops undertaken, including the number of attendees and size of datasets.

Table 5.3: Summary of deliberative workshops undertaken with PAR projects

PAR projects – Deliberative workshops - verbatim voice-recorded				
PAR Projects Dataset	**Fieldwork phase**	**Workshop**	**No. of attendees**	**Size of dataset (pages)**
MarigSpace	Phase 2 (planning)	Workshop 1	7	5
		Workshop 2	7	5
	Phase 2	Workshop 1	4	5
		Workshop 2	4	5
Heckley Path Action Group	Phase 2	Workshop 1	11	6
		Workshop 2	11	6
Make Marig Muddy	Phase 3	Workshop 1	8	4
		Workshop 2	5	3
		Workshop 3	10	4
Arden Play Campaign	Phase 5	Workshop 1	6	5
		Workshop 2	7	5
Colvin Greenspace Network	Phase 3	Workshop 1	12	7
	Phase 4	Workshop 2	7	5
		Workshop 3	16	7
	Phase 5	Workshop 4	18	12
		Workshop 5	12	8
Total		**16 Workshops**	**145 contacts**	**92 pages**

5.5.4 Semi structured face-to-face interviews

In order to reflect the diversity of experiences and understandings within this case study, I conducted five groups of discursive semi-structured face-to-face interviews.

1. Community colleagues **-** residents and community practitioners involved in the PAR projects (18 interviewees)
2. External officers - within the sector Community Planning Partnership (CPP) with whom we engaged (7 interviewees)
3. External officers **-** with citywide responsibilities (4 interviewees)
4. External officers **-** with national grant making responsibilities (2 interviewees)
5. External community practitioners **-** outwith Colvin but within the sector CPP (3 interviewees).

Interviews were conducted during all phases of my fieldwork. With community colleagues, these provided individual insights into personal motivations, as well as dynamics within and between community groups and organisations. With external officers, they provided wider operational, strategic and policy insights; and with external community practitioners, I was able to gain a broader appreciation of the range of greenspace activities in the sector.

A semi-structured interview format ensured that relevant issues were covered as well as allowing for flexibility and probing (Yeo et al., 2014). Individual interviews varied in length between 30 and 90 minutes and took place in either offices or community building locations. All interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis. Table 5.4 provides a summary of the thirty-four interviews conducted and size of datasets.

Table 5.4: Summary of the five groups of face-to-face semi-structured interviews

Community colleagues involved in PAR projects			
Semi-structured interviews – verbatim voice recorded			
Dataset	**Fieldwork phase**	**Interviewees (pseudonyms)**	**Size of dataset (pages)**
MarigSpace	Phases 1 & 2	Lucy - Chair	3
		Kim - Vice-chair	3
		Donna – Board Member	2
		Mary – P/t Vol Coordinator	3
		Kirsty - P/t Youth Worker	2
Heckley Path Action Group	Phase 2	Ann - Manager	10
		Maureen - Deputy	4
		Keith - CCF Worker	20
Thriving Places Connector	Phase 2	Kate	22
Arden Play Campaign	Phase 2	Arden Resource Centre Managers n.1 & n.2	15
Community Activist	Phase 2	Tony	4
Colvin Minister	Phase 2	Rector	16
Community Development students	Phase 2	Student n.1 & n.2	18
Marig Community Garden	Phase 2	Worker n.1	22
	Phase 2	Worker n.2	10
	Phases 3 & 4	Lynne - Garden Manager (twice)	45
External officers within the sector Community Planning Partnership (CPP)			
Semi-structured interviews – verbatim voice recorded			
External officers within the sector Community Planning Partnership	Phases 2 & 4	Health Improvement Senior (twice)	50
	Phase 2	Grants Manager – Colvin Housing Association	22
	Phase 2	Senior Environmental Officer – Colvin Housing Association	22
	Phase 2	Community Planning Worker	20
	Phase 3	Councillor n.1	20
	Phase 3	Councillor n.2	8
	Phase 3	Senior CPP Officer	20

(Table 5.4 continues on the next page)

Table 5.4: Summary of the five groups of face-to-face semi-structured interviews (continued)

Dataset	Fieldwork phase	Interviewees (pseudonyms)	Size of dataset (pages)
External officers with city-wide responsibilities Semi-structured interviews – verbatim voice recorded			
External officers with city-wide responsibilities	Phase 2	Senior Officer - Neighbourhoods & Sustainability	15
	Phases 1 & 2	Officer - Neighbourhoods & Sustainability (twice)	20
	Phases 1 & 2	Public Health Researcher (twice)	20
	Phase 3	Senior Countryside Ranger	13
External officers with national grant making responsibilities Semi-structured interviews – verbatim voice recorded			
External officers with national grant-making responsibilities	Phases 2 & 3	Grantmaker	10
		Grantmaker	10
External community practitioners outwith Colvin but within the sector CPP Semi-structured interviews – verbatim voice recorded			
Community practitioners outwith Colvin but within the sector Community Planning Partnership	Phases 1 & 3	Thriving Places Connector (twice)	40
		Family Learning Officer (twice)	40
		Community Gardener	20
Total		**34 interviewees**	**549 pages**

My criteria for selecting interview candidates followed a sequential/contingent sampling approach (Bryman, 2012). I began with Marig Co community colleagues and external officers who had responsibility within the sector Community Planning Partnership and citywide strategies. For key officers, I conducted two interviews to elicit their evaluation of the Thriving Places roll-out. This augmented the more informal day-to-day discussions I was able to have with community colleagues which I recorded in my fieldnotes. I identified interviewees through word of mouth, strategic documents and websites, or by attending local meetings and then following up with an introductory email. Other community colleagues were included as the PAR projects progressed.

As illustrated in Boxes 5.1 & 5.3, as a result of my active participant observation, I was able to shift from the abstract concept of 'socio-environmental concerns' to 'greenspace aspirations and actions'. This was reflected in the wording of the Participant Information Sheet and topic guides which evolved to replace 'environmental' with 'greenspace' action. Version two of the topic guides used for interviews with community colleagues and external practitioners are at Appendix A and B respectively.

The interview questions were based on the participant information sheet which stated that my research was interested in five aspects of how greenspace action and resilience are understood in low-income neighbourhoods. These are reproduced below.

1. What communities, practitioners and organisations think are the most important issues to address in relation to greenspace action.
2. What actions are taken by communities and practitioners to support greenspace aspirations and action.
3. How resilience is understood by communities, practitioners and organisations in areas of multiple deprivation.
4. What actions are taken by communities and practitioners to support resilience.
5. To what extent communities and practitioners feel there are increased opportunities to act on greenspace aspirations and resilience because of city initiatives such as the Resilience Strategy and Thriving Places.

My interview style was based on Rapley's (2007:25) format for 'mundane interactional methods for cooperative interviewing'. This consisted of active listening, using follow up questions and some reflection on my own or others' ideas on the specific subject. Overall, I adopted Rapley's (2007:18) 'central rationale for qualitative interviewing': in that I focused on the interviewee's talk rather than follow a predetermined agenda and trusted in the process of gathering 'contrasting and complementary talk on the same theme'. Similarly, depending on the interviewee, and at what phase I conducted the interviews, proxy words and concepts were used.

In addition, and in line with a constructivist ontology (Gubrium, 2012), I was aware that my questions and interaction orientated the trajectory of talk (Rapley, 2007; Willig, 2014) and were contributing to a situated and co-constructed socio-environmental narrative. For example, usually the day after every interview, my practice was to email interviewees thanking them for their participation, along with a summary of our conversation and my perception of the key points that were raised. With practitioners, this would often result in a further email dialogue on the prescient topics, which then shaped future meetings and actions. Similarly, after every PAR meeting with community colleagues, I would email a summary of our agreed actions. Colleagues said that this was very helpful as a co-learning tool and in focusing our attention, but I was also aware that it aided the shaping of our greenspace narrative and journey.

5.6   A feminist ethic

My research design was approved by the University of Glasgow, College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee (Application No: 400160128) and is at Appendix C. As mentioned in my motivations for undertaking this research in Chapter One, I initially began with a climate justice perspective towards socio-environmental concerns and understandings of resilience. Through my active participant observation in Phase 1 of my fieldwork, this evolved towards addressing the prescient concern of greenspace inequality. As such, the title of my thesis also shifted, from specific reference to climate change to greenspace aspirations. Nevertheless, given that my eco-socialist standpoint, methodology, case study location and groups remained the same, it was not necessary to request an amendment to the approved ethics application.

As part of explaining my feminist-informed research strategy at the beginning of this chapter, I raised the three themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity that have permeated my methodological pluralism and are integral to a feminist research ethic (Ackerly & True, 2010; Skeggs, 2001). This section explains how I mitigated against the risk of harm (in its broadest sense) to all participants in the process of addressing each of these themes.

5.6.1 Voice

Anonymity

Although the research design was considered low risk by the Ethics Committee, I decided to give pseudonyms to all people, organisations and locations because of my focus on asking critical questions of asset-based community development, greenspace policy and local authority practices. However, given the specificity of my research data, complete anonymisation and protection of confidentiality was not possible. All the participants were informed of the risk to anonymity and gave explicit consent to participate in this research, considering the impact of personal identification to them was low (Elliot et al., 2016).

Consent

How I explained my research was context and audience dependent and revolved around the two versions of my research title for community colleagues and a broader professional discourse respectively:

- *PAR working title v2:* **Exploring residents' aspirations and actions to improve their greenspace;**

- *Thesis title v2:* **Exploring community empowerment for environmental/ greenspace action and resilience.**

I operated a staged approach to negotiating informed consent (Webster et al, 2014), providing more detailed information depending on the level of engagement with participants. As a way of negotiating ongoing consent, I would give regular informal updates on my research at various meetings. This gave me an opportunity to remind others that I was still taking fieldnotes and gain further feedback.

If children were involved in any activities, this was always with their adult carer or youth worker who gave personal and organisational consent to participate. Consent to voice record was asked at each occasion and verbatim quotes approved. Signed consent was obtained to use online photographs for shared group access, along with additional permission for me to use anonymised and non-anonymised photos for this thesis.

Multivocality

All feminist qualitative research shares the assumption of intersubjectivity between researcher and participant and the mutual creation of data (Olesen, 2013). In both ethnography and action research, 'participatory' extends this by utilising the concept of 'care' (Gobo, 2008:137), in which participants explicitly have an element of co-production in the research design and findings (Olesen, 2013. However, it is important to acknowledge that I was the motivating coordinator and exercised power and responsibility for the overall project and its representation (Stacey, 1988).

Using a transformative methodology was my attempt to partially address the inescapable power dynamic between researcher and researched. By using a self-reporting method in Chapter Six, the intention is to illustrate multivocality and lived experience. Self-reporting has been a key resource for feminist qualitative research. Notwithstanding, it risks reification, essentialism and false representation if it is used uncritically and as the only method of interpretation (Kitzinger, 2007; Olesen, 2013). By using multiple methods, and Clarke's (2005) situational analysis to illustrate different perspectives in Chapter Seven, I also demonstrate critical reflection on my responsibility as a researcher (Frisby, 2006).

Trustworthiness of my interpretation

Unlike the traditional question for ethnography: 'in what way did my physical presence change participants' talk or behaviours from the norm?' (Gobo, 2008), a feminist-informed approach anticipates that both researcher and researched will be affected by the research process (Ackerly & True, 2010). The consequent methodological concerns are therefore more complex and nuanced between observer and participant, and the researcher is challenged to maintain sufficient cognitive and empathic involvement as well as detachment and reflexivity (Gobo, 2008).

Hence, Lincoln & Guba (2007) introduce two primary criteria for evaluating interpretations in qualitative research: trustworthiness and authenticity. The four sub-criteria of trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability

and confirmability) are addressed by using a multimethod design and triangulation to corroborate my findings.

To achieve a degree of congruence, verbatim quotes are used. For interviewees, as already mentioned, my email post-interview contained a summary of the discussion for further comment, which also allowed for informal testing of my interpretation by respondent validation. Towards the end of Phase 4 of my fieldwork, and as part of the *Colvin Greenspace Network* PAR project, we were invited to give a presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group. In it, community colleagues gave an outline of each of their PAR projects and how they experienced the enablers and constraints to their greenspace aspirations and actions. To produce the presentation entailed three group meetings with five community colleagues, and the summary is presented at the end of Chapter Six as an expression of our co-production.

The authenticity criteria are addressed at the end of Chapter Six as part of my evaluation of the PAR projects.

5.6.2 Transformative action

My methodological pluralism aimed to embody critical research praxis with a commitment to questioning the absence of accessible and good quality greenspace; and a willingness to engage in social action by working with the voices and experiences of residents and practitioners. As such, I envisaged this project as an exploratory and iterative co-creation of building knowledge in action, including approaches such as appreciative inquiry and audio-visual methods to reflect agency and different ways of knowing (Brydon-Miller et al., 2013; Heron & Reason, 2008).

However, I did not explicitly draw on Freirean popular education (Allman, 2001; Freire, 1970; 1974), because this too can be criticised for being externally driven: in which the researcher, as the middle-class academic, maintains a privileged status by adopting the role of a Gramscian traditional intellectual and catalyst for critical consciousness. This arguably still objectifies participants as passive and alienated rather than aware of their conditions of injustice (Emejulu, 2015; Romero, 2002). Instead, Reid et al. (2006) suggest that small-

scale feminist participatory action research is better suited to having 'modest' goals for individual or collective action. They propose a conceptual and methodological framework that:

> *'Validates individual actions, instigates collective actions, and connects a multitude of actions with the broad goal of social change' (Reid et al., 2006:328).*

This is reiterated by Darby's (2017) feminist PAR case study with a small English community organisation. Similarly, I was mindful of not making unreasonable demands on people juggling with multiple priorities in low-income neighbourhoods during a time of austerity. In the early phases, this often left me feeling I was making 'little or no progress in my research in spite of participating in a lot of activity' (SF, Fieldnote, October 2017). Overall, my aim was to collaborate with residents to improve local greenspace as well as encourage their 'right to be heard and to participate in research' (Webster et al., 2014:109).

5.6.3 Reflexivity

Frisby (2006) suggests that long-term feminist participatory action research is a promising methodology to critique community development processes and power relations with marginalised citizens. Nevertheless, she stresses how it still demands researcher reflexivity if it is to avoid reproducing power imbalances between researcher and study participants, particularly given the power, privilege and social locations of each (Frisby, 2006:440). Below is my interpretation of Frisby's (2006) critical questions on the researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships, which are addressed at the end of Chapter Six.

Roles

- To what extent and in what circumstances is it appropriate for me to act as mediator, negotiator, advocate or volunteer for the community organisation?

Responsibilities

- Where are the boundaries to my research project and how political is the action?

- How do I maintain integrity in my research focus when there may be different activities that community colleagues prioritise?

- How do I avoid raising expectations about the potential for change?

Relationships

- How do I negotiate personal relationships and the boundaries between researcher, facilitator and co-inquirer during the PAR projects?

- How do I deal with the feelings and emotions embedded in the researcher-participant relationship, including leaving the field?

- How do I negotiate the insider-outsider dynamics?

5.6.4 Summary

In summary, as a feminist researcher, this thesis serves as an account of my investigation. In relation to the themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity, the purpose of my fieldwork was to demonstrate the following.

Voice: A commitment to multivocality which foregrounds the voice of local greenspace aspirations. This is combined with critical discursive inquiry to explore the power relations inherent in addressing greenspace inequality. That is, using a trivalent justice frame (Schlosberg, 2004; 2007), the process across time and space; dynamics between structure and agency; meanings and subjectivity (Skeggs, 2001).

Transformative action: A participative epistemology which stresses the importance of generating action for social change through cooperative inquiry (Heron & Reason, 1997; Reid et al., 2006); but also a willingness to reflect on the challenges and contradictions that arise from this position (Brydon-Miller et al., 2013; Ladkin 2007).

Reflexivity: A feminist reflexivity and an awareness of my subjectivities as a middle-aged British Asian woman, researcher, feminist and environmentalist.

5.7   Analytic framework

In this section, I first outline my analytic path for managing my data for theoretical-deductive thematic analysis, abstraction and interpretation. I then describe the discursive analytic tools which contribute to my interpretation. These are interpretative repertoires and subject positions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell, 1998), and situational maps and analysis (Clarke, 2005).

Spencer et al. (2014a) differentiate between structural and substantive understandings of data analysis. The structural is interested in the mechanics of talk from a socio-linguistic perspective, for example conversation analysis (Peräkylä, 2007; Silverman, 2013; Wodak, 2007); while the substantive is associated with thematic analysis and a focus on what is said as:

> *'Windows on the participants' social world, referring to and representing feelings, perceptions and events that exist apart from the data themselves' (Spencer et al., 2014a:272).*

My thematic analysis draws on critical theory, Foucauldian discourse analysis and discursive psychology. This approach considers discourse as reflecting hegemonic practices, situated power relations and the interplay of structure and agency (Bryman, 2012; Hepburn & Potter, 2007). The consequent analysis of the implicit factors underpinning my research questions is intended as an 'empathic interpretation' (Willig, 2014:138), and complements the explicit account of colleagues' understandings and motivations for greenspace action.

5.7.1 Analytical path for thematic analysis

Thematic analysis involves systematically coding data to identify patterns and clusters of meanings. These are then integrated into higher order key themes to address the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Spencer et al., 2014b). Table 5.5 provides a summary of the datasets used, which comprised the verbatim transcripts of the semi-structured interviews and deliberative workshops, as well as my fieldnotes and other written material.

Table 5.5: Summary of datasets

Method	Dataset	No. of interviewees / workshops	Size of dataset (pages)
Semi-structured Interviews (verbatim voice recorded)	Community colleagues involved in PAR projects	18	199
	External officers within the sector Community Planning Partnership (CPP)	7	162
	External officers with city-wide responsibilities	4	68
	External officers with national grant-making responsibilities	2	20
	Community practitioners outwith Colvin but within the sector Community Planning Partnership	3	100
Total		**34**	**549**
Deliberative Workshops (verbatim voice recorded)	*MarigSpace*	4	20
	Heckley Path Action Group	2	12
	Make Marig Muddy	3	11
	Arden Play Campaign	2	10
	Colvin Greenspace Network	5	39
Total		**16**	**92**
Other written materials	Fieldnotes of informal discussions and reflections		**150**
	Emails and texts (approx.)		**40**
	Flipcharts from PAR workshops (approx.)		**40**

Table 5.6 summarises my analytic path for each dataset which is based on Braun & Clarke's (2006) recursive, six-stage theoretical thematic analysis, with the addition of Clarke's (2005) situational maps at stage five.

I used MindGenius Business 6 mindmapping software at stage one to identify potential themes, sub-themes and patterns. At stage two, using NVivo 11 software package for qualitative analysis, an initial coding scheme was generated, broadly guided by my overarching descriptive themes. All the datasets were coded in full and the first cycle codebook was then applied to my fieldnotes and email correspondence. This contributed to rich thematic descriptions of each verbatim dataset. Next, I identified relationships between codes and levels of analysis to produce my second cycle codebook at stage three. A word document of this, comprising the main categories, codes and a sample of subcodes is at Appendix D.

Table 5.6: Summary of analytic path for each dataset

Stage	Familiarisation with data
Stage 1	Manually transcribing and familiarising myself with the substantive content of each transcript within the dataset. Rereading fieldnotes and email correspondence.
Stage 2	Producing an **initial coding scheme** guided by seven overarching descriptive themes: • asset-based community development • situated individual and organisational capacities • greenspace concerns/ aspirations • greenspace action • Community engagement/ empowerment • resilience discourses • the role of action research and researcher.
	Initial descriptive analysis of verbatim material
Stage 3	Indexing and coding data extracts to identify categories. This included identifying interpretative repertoires and subject positions, enablers and constraints as my **second cycle codebook.**
Stage 4	Reviewing and refining thematic sets of data extracts to check for coding congruence to generate a **thematic map of the dataset.**
	Abstraction and interpretation of data for explanatory analysis
Stage 5	Using situational and positional maps for micro-organisational, and social worlds/arenas map for meso-neighbourhood level of analyses.
Stage 6:	Comparing thematic map with my draft literature review. Selecting data extracts for **reporting my findings** and identifying gaps requiring further investigation for my literature review.

5.7.2 Interpretative repertoires & subject positions

A Foucauldian thematic perspective considers the discourse resources available to us as having both a performative and regulatory function (Foucault, 1970; Foucault, 1980; Hepburn & Potter, 2007; Willig, 2014). Similarly, discursive psychology focuses on the action orientation of language 'to do things' as people construct versions of their social world, reflecting situated meaning-making and justifying action (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell, 1998: Willig 2014). Using Willig's (2014) approach of applying both Foucauldian and discursive psychology strategies, my aim was to identify the discursive resources available to actors by using the analytic tools of interpretative repertoires and subject positions in relation to greenspace, empowerment and resiliences.

In discursive psychology, language is organised into discourses which make available particular interpretative repertories (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). These provide us with a lexicon of everyday assumptions, metaphors and taken-for-granted explanations for construing our world. For example, 'Colvin*'s* always forgotten about, so what's the point'. Similarly, contextually situated, subject positions reflect the various attributions of identities or roles that we uptake to carry out diverse tasks. For example, being a mother, wife, management committee volunteer or part-time worker; and all the nuanced relations that are involved in doing so. Adopting a Foucauldian and critical perspective, the historical and socio-political context of discourse produces subjectivities (Dreyfus, 1982) and the intersectionality of oppressions (Hill Collins, 2009; Ledwith, 2016). Yet within this, we have multiple selves and can adopt different interpretative repertoires to construct shifts in attitudinal positions. For the PAR projects, I traced changes in subjectivities towards my overarching themes.

Further, Ackerly & True (2010) stress that subjectivity is a crucial component of feminist-informed research, in which the researcher attends to the subject positions of both the participant and herself. These can be understood as situated within the socio-political context of the research field; and also within the research process itself, which 'both instantiates and conditions relations of subjectivity that inevitably bear on the research' (Ackerly & True, 2010:23).

5.7.3 Situational maps & analysis

I considered the various discursive perspectives, as reflected by the range of interpretative repertoires and subject positions, at stage three of my analytic path. I then drew on Clarke's (2005) situational maps and analysis to describe and further interrogate the 'situation of action' at stage five.

Intended as a postmodern revision of the grounded theory approach, Clarke (2005) seeks to extend the Chicago School of symbolic interactionism and an ecological social worlds approach (Strauss, 1978; 1982) to account for feminist and critical epistemology. She argues that, in the broader situation of inquiry, material and discursive elements and the multiple perspectives of different actors are co-constitutive and, drawing on Foucault (1973), create the current 'conditions of possibility'.

> *'The fundamental question is "How do these conditions appear - make themselves felt as consequential –**inside** the empirical situation under examination?"' (Clarke, 2005:72, author's emphasis).*

Clarke (2005:86) offers three kinds of maps as analytical tools for situational analysis:

- **Situational maps**[29] - for articulating the elements in a situation and conducting relational analyses.
- **Positional maps** - for plotting discursive positions.
- **Social Worlds/Arenas maps** - for cartographies of collective commitment.

She applies situational analysis to ethnographic and interview data, and to narrative, visual and historical discourses, seeing her maps as a complementary analytic tool for the researcher as 'bricoleur' (Clarke, 2005:146). Although she does not specify action research, I found her modes of mapping an effective way to explore relations within and between social worlds during my fieldwork, and reflect on the forms, spaces and levels of power (Gaventa, 2006) introduced in Chapter Four.

At the beginning of Chapter Three, I introduced the concepts of social worlds and boundary objects which I explain further here. A social worlds perspective describes the collective and communicative aspects of different groups which reflect regularised practices and serve as organisational and cultural boundaries (Shibutani, 1955). I used situational and positional maps to examine the micro organisational processes within the social worlds of the PAR projects which are discussed in Chapter Six.

A further appeal of situational analysis is in Clarke's emphasis on the significance of nonhuman actants, this time drawing on actor network theory (e.g.: Callon, 1986; Latour, 1993).

> *'Nonhuman actors/actants/elements pervade social life, constituting, constraining, and enhancing it, providing opportunities and resources, surveilling and patrolling' (Clarke, 2005:78).*

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[29] Clarke (2005) uses the term 'situational maps' to encompass the three modes of mapping that inform her situational analysis, as well as one of the three techniques.

There can also be implicated actors/actants who are either physically present but 'invisibled' or only discursively present (Clarke, 2005:46). As illustrated in Boxes 5.1 & 5.3, I initially used socio-environmental concerns as a non-directive 'sensitising concept' (Clarke, 2005:77) to identify possible PAR projects, but it quickly became evident that local greenspace was, in Clarke's terminology, an implicated, nonhuman actant, and a boundary object of mutual concern (Clarke, 2005:50-51).

In section 3.2, I also outlined how Clarke (2005) identifies two analytic uses for identifying boundary objects. The first is to frame the broader situation of inquiry, and I proposed that conceptually, greenspace acts as a boundary object that intersects the multi-scalar discourses of resilience. The second use is to reveal the discursive positions in relation to boundary objects by using a Social Worlds/Arenas analysis. This facilitates meso-level interpretations by locating social worlds within their larger organisational 'arenas' of commitment. As the PAR projects progressed, the characterisation of greenspace took form and centrality so that I was able to construct a Social Worlds/Arenas map using local greenspace as the boundary object.

The question of 'invited', 'popular/claimed' or 'space of possibilities' (Gaventa, 2006; Cornwall, 2004; Conn, 2011) has further metaphorical meaning in relation to addressing the distributional injustice of greenspace inequality. Hence, in Chapter Seven, I offer my Social Worlds/Arenas map to graphically illustrate, and then explicate, how local greenspace aspirations from the social worlds within Colvin neighbourhood arena were influenced by the social worlds and arenas of Glasgow local authority, environmental grants, arts grants, and action research practice operating at a meso-neighbourhood and city level.

5.8 Conclusion to this chapter

This chapter has given my rationale for adopting methodological pluralism and a multimethod research design informed by a feminist ethic. I also outlined my analytical path for thematic analysis, including the discursive analytic tools of interpretative repertoires and subject positions, and the three mapping modes of situational analysis.

In summary, my aim was to gain both a substantive understanding and dynamic conceptualisation of greenspace aspirations and actions within my participatory action research relations. In other words, to trace the 'micropolitics' (Emejulu, 2015; Foucault, 1979) of community development and the management of urban greenspace. Specifically, how do community colleagues understand and give meaning to their greenspace aspirations? How do they articulate their capacities and power for greenspace action? How are competing repertoires and positions of power negotiated and operationalised between social worlds?

The answers to these questions are explored in Chapters Six and Seven. The consequent implications for environmental justice and multi-scalar resiliences are discussed in Chapters Eight and Nine. The merits and limitations of my research design are also discussed in Chapter Nine.

Chapter 6: Greenspace aspirations – a micro-organisational analysis

Some of the content in sections 6.3 and 6.6 of this chapter have been published as: Fifield (2018), Exploring community aspirations and actions for local greenspace. *Radical Community Work Journal* 3(2). *Voices from the field: A snapshot of practice* [online].

6.1   Introduction

This is the first of three findings chapters in this thesis which progressively address the research questions. This chapter introduces the five participatory action research (PAR) projects and traces their greenspace aspirations and actions. The projects were: *MarigSpace, Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG), Arden Play Campaign, Make Marig Muddy* and *Colvin Greenspace Network*. Aided by the analytical tools of interpretative repertoires and subject positions, and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005), I also illustrate the individual and micro-organisational resilience factors to fulfilling their aspirations to answer my research sub-question 1a.

RQ1a: What are the greenspace aspirations and actions that transpire?

In order to fully answer research question 1, Chapter Seven builds on the description of the enablers and constraints to greenspace action. It does this by offering my Social Worlds/Arenas analysis of the circulating discourses at a meso-neighbourhood and city scale which influenced community colleagues during Phases 1 to 4 of my fieldwork (June 2017 - April 2019).

Chapter Eight then draws on the actions of *Colvin Greenspace Network* during Phase 5 (May – June 2019) to appreciate the accumulative journey of the PAR projects; and to consider the intersections between addressing greenspace inequality and the discourses of community resilience in answer to research question 2. The implications for community empowerment for environmental justice are then explicated to answer research question 3. Chapter Nine addresses research question 4 by theorising the contribution of a trivalent environmental justice frame to all five discourses of resilience.

Presentational comments

Skeggs (2001) reminds us that, when interpreting and representing findings, feminist researchers need to ask:

> *'In whose interests? (cui bono?)' and 'does this analysis re-inscribe the researched into powerlessness, pathologised, without agency?' (Skeggs, 2001:437).*

These words echoed in my mind throughout my fieldwork and analysis and have particularly shaped this chapter, in which all the content has been read and augmented by community colleagues from each of the PAR projects.

To facilitate my representation, I use the present tense to convey the immediacy of our deliberation and action, and text boxes to highlight 'key events' (Emerson, 2007) and comments from community colleagues. Italics are given to the PAR projects; and I use bold italics to the interpretative repertoires which shaped our greenspace narrative, including the three requirements for addressing greenspace distributional injustice introduced in Chapter Three. The Thesis Bookmark reproduces the four research questions, key explanatory Figures, and summary details of the PAR projects and community colleagues for ease of reference.

6.2   Overview of chapter

In Chapter Three, I identified three requirements for addressing greenspace distributional injustice in Glasgow: '***improve the quality of existing greenspace***'; '***increase greenspace accessibility***'; and '***reclaim derelict land for community benefit***'. The next three sections describe how community colleagues articulated their greenspace aspirations in relation to these requirements at a micro-organisational level during Phases 2 to 4 of my fieldwork.

Chapter Five introduced Colvin Thriving Places neighbourhood, Marig Co and Heckley Hub community organisations, and the Connecting Colvin network. Towards the end of my active participant observation and Phase 1 of my fieldwork, the first two PAR projects began to take form to '***improve the quality of existing greenspace***'. These were *MarigSpace* coordinated by Marig

Co, and the *Heckley Path Action Group* (*HPAG*) coordinated by Heckley Hub. These were undertaken during Phase 2 of my fieldwork and are discussed in section 6.3.

Section 6.4 then summarises the activity during Phase 3. As a consequence of new and renewed greenspace conversations between community colleagues, combined with the opportunity arising from the Thriving Places initiative, the foundations to *Colvin Greenspace Network* were established to '***increase greenspace accessibility***'. As part of this, was my collaboration with *Arden Play Campaign* and *Make Marig Muddy*, which are also described to illustrate the challenges for independent groups to '***reclaim derelict land for community benefit***'. Notwithstanding, section 6.5 presents the 'modest' transformative action (Reid et al., 2006; Reid & Frisby, 2008) of *Colvin Greenspace Network* during Phase 4.

The chapter ends by addressing Lincoln & Guba's (2007) criteria of authenticity, and Frisby's (2006) critical questions on the researcher roles responsibilities and relationships as a way of evaluating my participatory methodology.

Table 6.1, also reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark, gives a summary of each of the PAR projects, fieldwork phase and the pseudonyms of the key community colleagues referred to in the following chapters.

Table 6.1: Five PAR projects, fieldwork phase & key community colleagues

Fieldwork Phase 1. Jun 17-Sep 17 2. Oct 17-July 18 3. Aug 18-Dec 18 4. Jan 19-April 19 5. May-19-Jun 19	Five PAR Projects	Community colleagues (pseudonyms)	
Phase 2	*MarigSpace*	**Lucy**	Chair
		Kim	Vice-chair & Community Development Student
		Donna	Board Member & Community Development Student
		Mary	P/t Volunteer Coordinator
		Kirsty	P/t Youth Worker & Community Development Student
Phase 2	*Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)*	**Ann**	Manager
		Maureen	Deputy Manager
		Keith	CCF Worker
		Martin	Project Worker
Phase 3	*Make Marig Muddy*	**Sophie**	Group Leader
Phases 3 – 5	*Arden Play Campaign*	**Jane**	Group Leader
Phases 3 – 5	*Colvin Greenspace Network*	**Kate**	Thriving Places Community Connector
		Lynne	Marig Community Garden Manager
Phase 2		**Tony**	Community Activist

6.3   Phase 2: *MarigSpace* & *Heckley Path Action Group* PAR

This section begins by giving a background to the *MarigSpace* and *Heckely Path Action Group (HPAG)* PAR projects. This is followed by a summary of the key activities and learning from each; and a situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) in relation to organisational capacity (as a proxy for 'resilience') and the PAR projects (as a proxy for improving the quality of existing greenspace).

It is important to reiterate that this account was drafted directly after the two PAR projects ended and reviewed and validated by community colleagues. Comments were mainly textual rather than on content. For example, Donna suggested more photos to be included, which I explained was difficult for maintaining anonymity. She also asked for her pseudonym to be changed, which suggests her own investment in the narrative.

6.3.1 Background to the PAR projects

The task for *MarigSpace* PAR project is to create a small community greenspace 15m x 20m, outside the multi-storey flats where Marig Co is based. This is substantially motivated by the proactive position of Colvin Housing Association who manage the properties. Since the spring of 2017, the housing association took over from the council in cutting the grass of this previously under-utilised open space bordering on derelict land. The improvement in upkeep from six weeks to fortnightly maintenance encourages more residents outside, and the Senior Environmental Officer, responsible for the land maintenance, is keen to support Marig Co to further improve the plot.

During the summer, the officer approaches Mary (volunteer coordinator) with a donation of £750 from their contractor's demolition community benefit fund. Although several ideas are discussed, no further action is taken until *MarigSpace* PAR is envisioned during the first set of deliberative workshops in the autumn. It is acknowledged that none of the training projects, previously carried out by Marig Co, directly benefited their immediate site and that this could be a focus for the young people and training and volunteering project plans that are also discussed.

At about the same time, the second bigger PAR project is to improve the canal path between Heckley Hub and Marig Co community organisations with the formation of *Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)*. Heckley Hub is adjacent to a wildlife reserve on one side of the Heckley canal and sits along a well-tended path which is part of a National Cycling Route. This path runs along neighbourhoods ranked in the least deprived quintile in Scotland (SIMD, 2016). Heckley Hub also sits at the junction which crosses over the canal to begin the canal path on the opposite side. This is a shorter path alongside datazones ranked within the most deprived quintile in Scotland and leads towards Marig Co. The path is overgrown, a site of anti-social behaviour and has consistently been raised as a local socio-environmental concern, including a regeneration report from 2010 and three surveys between 2016 and 2017.

The one-mile pedestrian route from Heckley Hub to Marig Co community organisations, includes half mile of the canal path, in contrast to two miles by

road with two bus journeys. Hence, making the canal path more accessible could encourage active travel in an area of multiple deprivation, which is already available on the opposite more affluent side. This makes it the obvious prescient focus for our PAR project.

Despite the canal path project being mentioned consistently since the start of my fieldwork, it takes several months before the two community organisations can meet and agree the project focus. Although initially a frustration, I recognise that the first three months were necessary to immerse myself in the understanding of the place (the organisations and networks) and the neighbourhood spaces (e.g. canal path), so that I could be trusted to support these greenspace aspirations. Figure 6.1 provides a timeline for the two PAR projects.
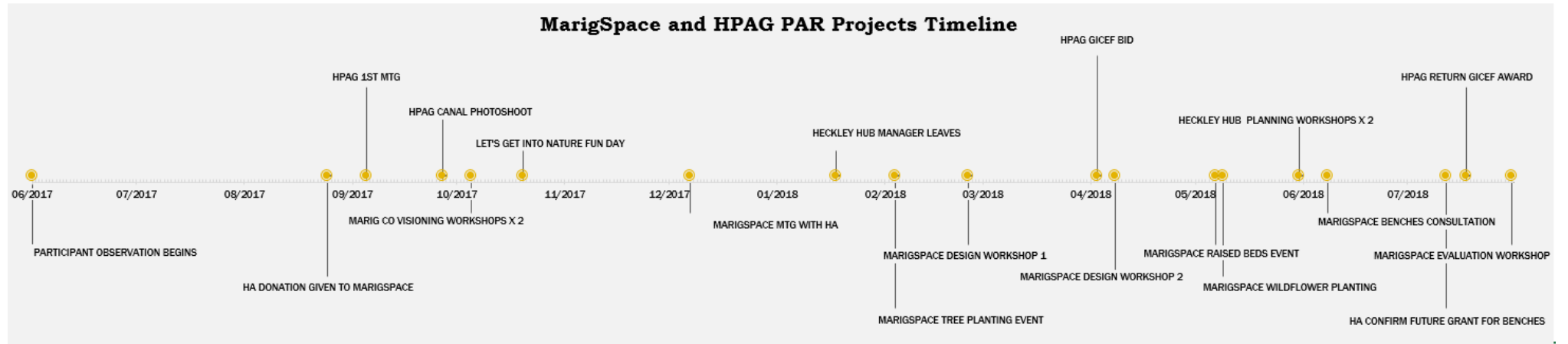
Figure 6.1: Timeline for *MarigSpace* & *Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)* PAR projects

6.3.2 *MarigSpace*

Aim

> *'To create an outdoor community space for people to come out and chill for a bit'* (Design Group Workshop 1, February 2018).

Lucy (Chair) has lived in Colvin for over fifty years and was instrumental in creating Marig Community Garden in 2011. She remains passionate about outdoor activities and she sees *MarigSpace* as Marig Co's opportunity to visibly reengage with the flats' residents after the disappointment of not delivering on the eco self-build community hub.

At the first planning meeting with the Senior Environmental Officer, he stresses how the residents are 'hard to reach and don't engage', and we agree that the critical factor is to encourage residents to get involved in the planning and upkeep of the plot. Mary (volunteer coordinator) reminds us that she was offered fifty free tree saplings from Keith, the CCF Worker at Heckley Hub, and we agree to organise our first tree planting event in the New Year. Except for the weekly youth group which Kirsty (youth worker) started in 2016, comprising 8-10 core members, this is Marig Co*'s* first activity for over eighteen months.

'Was a grand wee day! Think everyone enjoyed it and the atmosphere was great! The way a community should be ☺' (Kirsty, Tree Planting, Text, February 2018).

Appendix E provides a summary report of PAR activities and learning: the highlights of which were the initial tree planting event with 18 residents and 16 children, and workshops to design the plot and build raised beds. Box 6.1 gives a 'before and after' illustration.

Box 6.1: MarigSpace, February & July 2018

Source: S Fifield (February 2018).

I took the photographs above on the morning before our first tree planting activity. My two immediate observations are: that this scene could be from many places in Glasgow; and the contrast of the neatly cut grass undertaken by the concierges compared with the adjacent vacant site.

Below are photographs of the willow saplings we planted as a wind break with the wildflower bed in front, and the raised beds that were built and are now maintained by Marig Co youth group.

Source: S Fifield (July 2018).

'I don't particularly like gardening. ...but I loved hearing them talk about the outside space as somewhere to sit with others' (Kim, Design Workshop, Email, February 2018).

Early on, through discussion in our design workshops, we identify that an immediate 'quick win' would be accessible seating to encourage more social interaction between residents. This is poignantly framed as wanting to promote a 'friendly and tidy' community space, 'to come out and chill for a bit', rather than any expectation to 'do gardening'.

Following an outreach session of door knocking to gauge support, in July we submit a request to the housing association for sturdy outdoor seating. The Grants Manager first raises concerns about vandalism but after some discussion, agrees to prioritise seating at the next round of community benefit fund. *MarigSpace* PAR ends in July 2018 with a deliberative workshop to consider our learning.

6.3.3 *MarigSpace* situational analysis

Despite the relative success in encouraging the flats' residents to participate in the initial tree planting event and the support gained for seating, a number of resilience factors influence the pace of our journey and the decision to end the PAR project in July.

Situational maps and subject positions

Clarke (2005) suggests that situational maps lay out the most salient elements in the research situation of concern. This promotes a relational analysis which is intentionally heterogeneous and messy rather than singular and linear.

> *'People and things, humans and nonhumans, fields of practice, discourses, disciplinary and other regimes/ formations, symbols, controversies, organisations and institutions, each and all can be present and mutually consequential' (Clarke, 2005:72).*

An example of how I used situational maps for relational analyses is at Appendix F. It identifies the key elements and interpretative repertoires that shaped *MarigSpace* PAR. Undertaking this type of analysis emphasises how the PAR,

although the main activity during this time, remains an outlier in Marig Co's social world: in which the all-female staff and management committee contend with multiple challenges, often in quick succession. These include housing, relationships, personal health problems, family illness, bereavement, children's welfare, welfare benefits, and negotiating part-time work and study.

> 'It's just life, it gets in the way of doing stuff!' (Kim, Vice-chair, December 2017).

The various personal burdens justifiably preoccupy everyday living and make it difficult for Marig Co colleagues to plan ahead. These individual resilience factors (Reich et al., 2010) have consequences for organisational resilience; so that colleagues are unable to take advantage of several external offers to deliver free training to the novice management committee, or complete funding applications. Likewise, the aspiration for fortnightly activities to deliver the design for *MarigSpace* is unfulfilled, and completing tasks are notably reliant on the motivation of external practitioners including myself, Keith (from Heckley Hub) and the housing association. For example, the housing association's Grants Manager circulates a grant opportunity in March but Marig Co do not respond. And although community colleagues conduct the door knocking survey at the end of May, there is a month's delay between the Grants Manager asking for quotes for bench options and them being provided. Had this been quicker, perhaps the benches could have been approved and installed before the end of summer.

There is also the legacy of the unfulfilled 'community self-build and ecology training centre' and 'becoming a sustainable community development trust for the community', which has clearly left a symbolic print on Lucy and Mary of unresolved expectations and complex neighbourhood relations. In our final deliberative workshop to evaluate the PAR project, the main reflection is that residents are keen to participate in improving their greenspace. However, the ability to continue with *MarigSpace* relies on identifying a named worker to coordinate activities and keep residents updated by maintaining an active personal presence and on social media. This is jeopardised by a lack of funding.

In addition, key shifts in positions are articulated in relation to Marig Co as an organisation. Kim and Donna (who, together with Lucy, are the most active

board members) have recently decided to resign. Both live locally and came to Marig Co on placement as community development students from the University of Glasgow. They enjoyed the PAR as a personal and practitioner learning experience and want to continue to participate in *MarigSpace*, but neither now feels they have the skills or time required to address organisational resilience issues. In the meantime, ever-determined Lucy has co-opted a couple of new members through the PAR. She is optimistic that things will improve and is now resolute that committee training and staff management will be prioritised and are pivotal to organisational success.

Notwithstanding the challenges, the group acknowledge new critical awareness of the value of greenspace. For Kirsty, the part-time youth worker and flat resident, this is reflected in how she shifts from an observer of poor greenspace, to an engaged actor. For Kim and Donna, there is now a connection between greenspace aspirations and community empowerment, as illustrated in these comments.
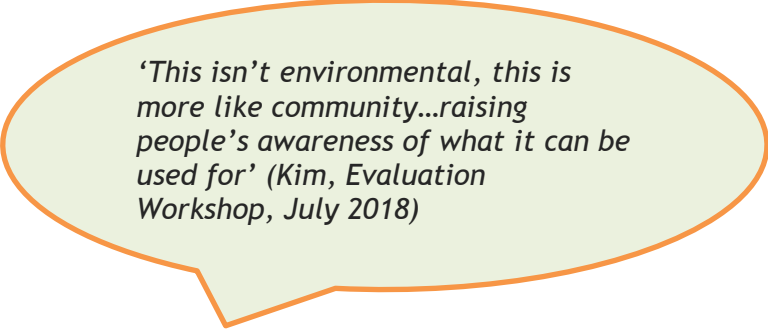
Before:

'If you're staying somewhere, then you want it to look good. You want the young people to have places to go, and even adults for places to sit… when we were growing up it was like a big community… see now, it's just like big bits of square ground it's not getting used either' (Kirsty, Interview, June 2017).

After:

'We've got lots of greenspace, but I wouldn't have thought about let's go and do something with it [before]' (Kirsty, Evaluation Workshop, July 2018).

'Well in terms of greenspace in Marig, there are a lot of spaces that are under-utilised and I suppose MarigSpace was about wanting a public space and having residents involved in something like this- developing it and all the benefits that would bring, and bringing people together in the process, and having their say on how things are done' (Donna, Evaluation Workshop, July 2018).

'This isn't environmental, this is more like community...raising people's awareness of what it can be used for' (Kim, Evaluation Workshop, July 2018)

Positional analysis of interpretative repertoires

Clarke (2005:126) argues that positional maps are useful in marking the major positions taken in the data on the central discursive issues. The purpose is to create a neutral representation of the positions along two main axes reflecting more (+++) or less (---) dimensions (as opposed to 'good' or 'bad'). Mapping the circulation of interpretative repertories highlights the multiple and sometimes contradictory positions that are adopted simultaneously but with differing emphasis depending on the time and place. At this stage, the focus is on the mapping of positions, rather than associating them with specific individuals or groups, in order to develop a heterogenous assessment of multiple dynamics operating simultaneously.

Figure 6.2 uses Clarke's (2005) positional map to lay out the significant positions taken during Phases 1 and 2 of my fieldwork in relation to organisational stability (as a proxy for 'resilience') and *MarigSpace* PAR (as a proxy for improving greenspace). This depicts a broad shift in an upward direction for both. I place Marig Co's inherited vision of an 'eco self-build community hub' in the centre to illustrate the range of positions taken in relation to this legacy and situated context.

In summary, the organisational interpretative repertoires that are circulating at the beginning of Phase 1 (P1) focus on the hurt and mixed emotions towards Marig Co's past. This shifts during Phase 2 (P2) to an arguably more realistic short-term vision of creating **'an outdoor community space'** with existing resources, people and abilities. Similarly, individual repertoires shift from **'not being particularly into gardening'** to acknowledging personal enjoyment in participating in outdoor greenspace activities, seeing others' enjoyment, and wider wellbeing outcomes that were unanticipated.

+++

Importance of organisational stability (resilience)

Marig Co must focus on Board training and support. (P2 end)

Marig Co can demonstrate it's 'for the community' by creating a community outdoor space: 'a nice place to sit and have conversations…having something that people can see and keeping it simple'. (P2)

Marig Co needs to have Board training but it is difficult to organise. (P2)

'The biggest bit of resilience for us is to build a resilient organisation so that people can't knock it back'.(P1 beginning)

Marig Co's vision was to lead a zero-carbon self-build community hub. But the Board was over-reliant on (well-meaning) professional architects and outsiders, and local folk were *'forgotten'*. (Legacy)

'The youth group are always asking for outdoorey stuff now'. (P2)

'I wasn't sure at first about the tree planting. On the day it was great though!'(P2 beginning)

Marig Co is still recovering from previous Board's resignation and is firefighting to keep afloat. (P1 beginning)

There was a lot of personal effort given to create Marig community garden which isn't appreciated. (P1)

'I don't particularly like gardening'. (P2 beginning)

---   **--- Importance of *MarigSpace* PAR (improving greenspace) +++**

Figure 6.2: Positional Map of Marig Co positions in relation to the importance of organisational capacity (ie resilience) & *MarigSpace* PAR (ie improving greenspace)

Feedback from reading draft chapter, August 2018

'I think it is a fair reflection. I have found some of it difficult and recognise my own shortcomings however I don't feel it is negative and does give a true picture of how it is' (Kim, Email).

'It's great' (Linda, Text).

'You could have said a lot worse' (Karen, Email).

6.3.4 *Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)*

Aim

> *'To improve the canal path from Heckley to Marig for all the community'* (First meeting of HPAG, September 2017).

As illustrated in Box 5.2 *Heckley Canal Photoshoot*, an early tangible outcome from the *HPAG* is introducing the two youth groups from Heckley Hub and Marig Co to each other and consequently organising outdoor activities together. This culminates in a joint summer programme coordinated across the previously territorial youth groups. Heckley Hub is also awarded a small Paths-for-All grant to carry out some soft landscaping along the canal path for the end of the year 2017.

However, the 2018 New Year sees Heckley Hub firefighting the fallout of the previous manager's rapid departure. Ann, the deputy, suddenly finds herself alone in negotiating the annual audit and finance cycle and making decisions on staff redundancies. In this context, the *HPAG* temporarily dissolves and my reciprocity centres on supporting grant applications and using this as a way of exploring greenspace aspirations. The catalyst for the *HPAG* was a footpath survey with 144 residents (Petrov, 2017), carried out by a community development student on placement at Heckley Hub in May 2017. Hence, I suggest the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund (GICEF) as a possible funding option. The staff team are keen to apply with an emphasis on *'doing action not more consultation'*.

Ann (now acting Manager) talks to me about being a single mum juggling many balls and how she is swimming through a tide of organisational disruption. She is frustrated that the funding is top-down and many of the outcomes she has inherited are 'unachievable'. Notwithstanding, the canal path project is something she feels excited about and delivers on the aspirations identified in recent neighbourhood consultations. She arranges a meeting with the GICEF grant manager in early March and invites me to attend. The conversation is fruitful and she is strongly encouraged to apply.

'I would really love to see a project go ahead, I think it is a good fit for the local community and wider area. I'd really love to come up with a 'what's on the doorstep' activity guide, something fun and interactive for the younger age group and families, encouraging them to engage with their local environment, a bit like the booklets you get when visiting Forestry Commission visitor sights. On the longer term, I have an ambition to look into the possibility of creating a dedicated heritage trail encompassing a living museum to the lost industrial communities, possibly a heritage wood leading to the Antonine Wall, including cycle paths that break off from the canal' (Ann, Acting Manager, Email February 2018).

The GICEF is a European Union Fund and therefore particularly detailed with a complex match-funding requirement. During March, we embark on an intensive month of sharing ideas. Staff members say that this has regenerated enthusiasm but also frustration about the abrupt endings of previous projects exploring local natural and historical heritage where 'staffing and funding is critical'. I suggest we could 'dust' these off to redesign a vision which can build on the legacy and knowledges created from previous projects, as outlined in Box 6.2.

Box 6.2: Heckley Path Action Group - GICEF Application, April 2018

Vision

'To design and create an accessible and interactive canal path from Heckley to Marig for all the community'

Aims

We will create an interactive nature walking trail for all ages and abilities to encourage its active use as a community resource.

We will engage with local community organisations, residents and young people to design the trail; and work with Scottish Canals, Paths for All, FrogLife, Scottish Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Sustrans (and others) to support the community's design and coordinate the development of the trail.

Outcomes

- *Encouraging active travel and outdoor activities will improve health and wellbeing.*
- *Local environmental quality will be improved wrt litter, antisocial behaviour and improved greenspace.*
- *The canal path and marsh will be more attractive, safer and accessible for residents and visitors.*

The pace and stress of audits, funding and staffing, dominate March and April. But at the end of May, I'm asked to facilitate two visioning and planning workshops comprising eleven full-time staff and sessional workers. After reflecting on a turbulent couple of years, a committed and skilled staff team co-produce an inspiring vision and identify project workstreams. As we reflect on the success of the workshops, Ann is informed that Heckley Hub has been awarded the GICEF to recruit a project manager and youth worker.

The elation is quickly muted by a flurry of emails and telephone calls about match-funding which become convoluted and stressful. After almost a month of discussions and financial summersaults, Heckley Hub make a 'pragmatic decision' to return the award in order to focus on building internal organisational capacity and financial stability.

> '*And it was just going to push us closer to the wire… it was a real learning curve because it was a challenging application, there were very challenging conversations to be had to secure it. It was hugely disappointing because the application scored so highly in the process… and I was keen to secure a fund and keen to open up a discussion on greenspace… to start from scratch' (Ann, Acting Manager, Interview, August 2018).*

The *HPAG* experience contributes to Ann's 'baptism of fire' into funding processes and negotiating management board competencies, but also an opportunity to reappraise organisational priorities. In mid-August, after almost two months from our last conversation, I meet with Ann, now appointed as the manager, and Maureen her new deputy, to consider our learning from the *HPAG* and GICEF application process.

The time lag is partly due to the 'chaos' of summer in terms of staff-cover and organising summer activities, but it is also because of (what we can now admit to) a breakdown of communication and trust between us. Thankfully this is resolved but emphasises the fragility of the PAR insider-outsider relationship. The three of us talk animatedly about new prospects and it is noted that the GICEF application will be used as a template for future funding so will not be wasted.

6.3.5 *HPAG* situational analysis

Positional analysis of interpretative repertoires

As in Figure 6.2, Figure 6.3 lays out the significant positions taken by Heckley Hub in relation to organisational stability (as a proxy for 'resilience') and *HPAG* PAR (as a proxy for improving greenspace). The two positional maps illustrate the tensions between aspirations and realities in a small and medium neighbourhood community organisation respectively, both of which have a legacy for improving greenspace.

+++

Importance of organisational stability (resilience)

Heckley Hub needs to prioritise balancing the budget and building relationships with existing funders. This will provide a robust platform for future projects.

'We're here to serve the people who live in this area…but our existence depends on the financial balance sheet'.
We now need to reappraise and be more 'community focused'.

'We can use the *HPAG* strategically for a new income stream'

'Heckley Hub Board need to develop their competencies and governance'.

Heckley Hub's previous vision was over-reliant on charismatic leadership which agreed big projects which were unrealistic and undelivered.
(Legacy)

'It would be good kudos to get the GICEF grant…to network with others and deliver an achievable greenspace project'.

'Heckley Hub needs to raise its presence within Connecting Colvin network'.

HPAG encapsulates local greenspace aspirations (in contrast to legacy of unfulfilled greenspace ideas).

Heckley Hub is still 'tidying up mess' after management upheaval of previous two years.

Heckley Hub greenspace projects are determined by CCF targets which give little flexibility.

'The canal path isn't part of our core work'.

---   **---** **Importance of *HPAG* PAR (improving greenspace)** **+++**

Figure 6.3: Positional Map of Heckley Hub positions in relation to the importance of organisational capacity (ie resilience) & *HPAG* PAR (ie improving greenspace)

> Feedback from reading draft chapter, August 2018
>
> *'Did I really say that? – Yeah – still good to go, thanks' (Ann, Phonecall).*

6.3.6 Section summary

Both Marig Co, and Heckley Hub were established with significant funding from the Climate Challenge Fund to promote innovative low-carbon community projects in the spirit of *Resilience Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience*. Yet, a decade later, both organisations are grappling with the rudiments of individual and organisational resilience factors in relation to *Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital* and *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development*. Notwithstanding, the PAR projects stimulated critical awareness of poor greenspace as an indicator of inequality and a desire to focus on bottom-up aspirations to **'improve the quality of existing greenspace'**.

Postscript: Phase 4

Although both PAR projects end in July 2018, discussions between the two organisations continue and, as part of the *Colvin Greenspace Network*, a small grant from the area community planning partnership and Colvin Housing Association is awarded to the *Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)*. Between February and March 2019, seven local people spend two-hours per week clearing litter and overgrown vegetation along the canal path, followed by a community lunch. However, Ann is still pursing officers in the Local Authority and Scottish Canals to take forward the necessary hard landscaping and safety issues such as lighting.

6.4   Phase 3: *Colvin Greenspace Network, Arden Play Campaign & Make Marig Muddy*

During the summer of 2018, I am busy conducting interviews with residents and community stakeholders, from whom I hear more accounts of previous unfulfilled greenspace aspirations. This includes a group of nine local mothers who have campaigned for a playpark on derelict land adjacent to Arden Resource Centre for over eight years. I am also introduced to another group of three mothers who recently met at the toddlers' group at Marig Community Garden and want to reclaim the derelict 'wee field', adjacent to the community garden, for *'outdoor play'*.

Hence, by the beginning of Phase 3 of my fieldwork, various greenspace ideas converge and gain momentum, no doubt partly stimulated by the activities of *MarigSpace* and *HPAG* PAR projects. But there are also two other key enablers who have increased their presence in Colvin: two ward councillors newly elected the previous year; and Kate the Thriving Places Community Connector, appointed before Christmas to mark the beginning of the Thriving Places initiative in Colvin. From both her previous work in the neighbourhood and her recent community consultation, she too now frames '*increasing greenspace accessibility'* as a way of responding to local concerns and aspirations. Kate and I discuss the opportunity for residents and community organisations to coordinate greenspace actions and co-produce a neighbourhood greenspace plan. Importantly, Kate sees this as informing a revised and more 'community-led' Locality Plan[30] for the area.

This section begins by summarising the foundations to establishing the *Colvin Greenspace Network* by organising events at the local Square, followed by the challenges that confronted the *Arden Play Campaign* and *Make Marig Muddy* as independent community action '*to reclaim derelict land for community benefit'*. Figure 6.4 provides a timeline of key activities.

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[30] Kate*'s* community consultation and the process of the Locality Plan is explained in Chapter Seven.
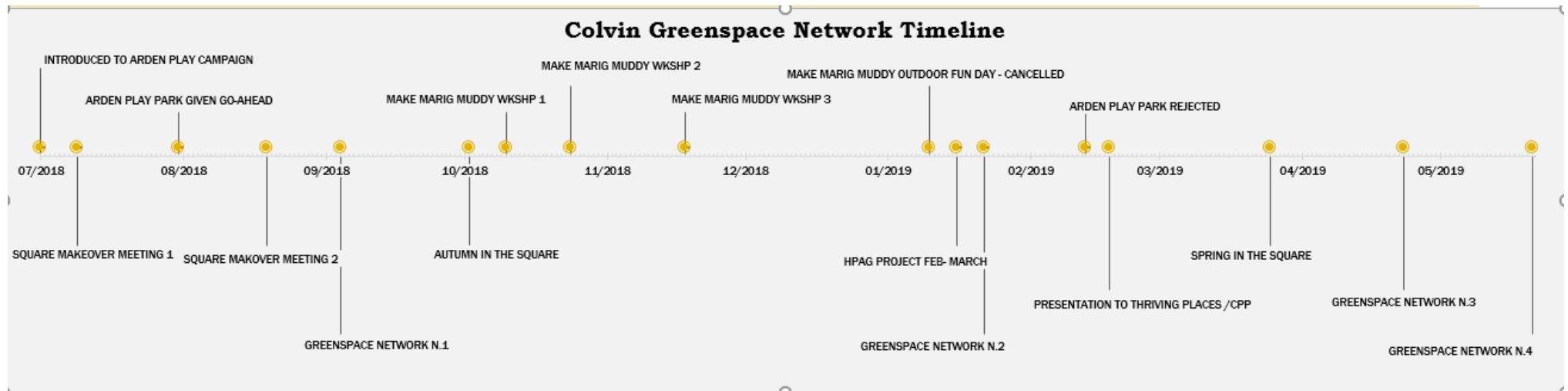
Figure 6.4: Timeline for *Colvin Greenspace Network*, *Arden Play Campaign* & *Make Marig Muddy* PAR projects

6.4.1 The Square 'makeover'

For Colvin, the most tangible impacts of the Thriving Places initiative are the recruitment of Kate as the Thriving Places Connector, and the Health Improvement Senior taking over the coordination of the Connecting Colvin network from the new year. The history of the network is discussed in Chapter Seven but suffice here to note that this serves to reinvigorate the network, with Kate acting as a valuable neutral 'connector' in a neighbourhood of historically complex relations.

As well as the canal path and the '*outdoor play'* aspirations, my interviews highlight consistent calls to make the local Square more of an *'outdoor community space'*, with people remembering how much it was used in the past. However, a combination of poor maintenance, no bins and no seating has lent itself to be used primarily as a dog latrine. Giving the feedback from interviews at the Connecting Colvin network coincides with the council's Development & Regeneration Services inviting applications for their *Stalled Spaces* programme (GCC, 2019b).

> *'We are looking for projects that are innovative & socially engaged that can breathe life into stalled spaces & create a positive impact on the area' (Stalled Spaces Flyer, 2018/2019).*

The turnaround for applications is only a few weeks and the forms are very detailed, but I offer my support and Kate organises a meeting as outlined in Box 6.3. Although we do not apply for a Stalled Spaces grant, we are encouraged to meet again to organise events in the Square and to form the *Greenspace Network* to create '*safer & nicer spaces'.*

> **Box 6.3: The Square 'makeover'- Stalled Spaces Programme, July 2018**
>
> *Kate calls a meeting to consider a Stalled Spaces application for the Square. The day is sunny and warm and the meeting is surprisingly well-attended.*
>
> *I give an overview of the Stalled Spaces grant and folk begin to talk excitedly about a 'makeover' and 'co-designing' a community space. They talk about how the Square used to be a really popular meeting space but how nothing has happened there for years.*
>
> *The councillor is very supportive and suggests the community council (who are not present) could ask for some funding for events.*
>
> *But no-one is willing to commit to the stalled spaces funding.*
>
> *(SF, Fieldnote, July 2018).*
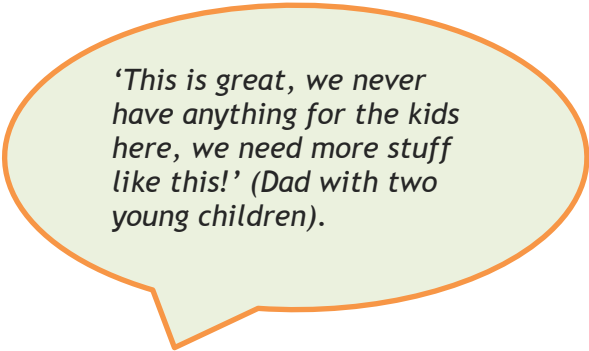
At the follow up meeting for the 'Square makeover' in early September, there are 22 attendees, including 11 residents, and it is the first-time the main community organisations (Marig Co, Heckley Hub, Marig Community Garden and Colvin Housing Association*)* and residents have sat around the same table to work together.

'This is great, we never have anything for the kids here, we need more stuff like this!' (Dad with two young children).

councillors, we gain confidence to organise 'Winter in the Square'. This includes a lantern parade and Christmas Lights funded by the community council. Community councils are the linchpin in the community planning structure, but hitherto were a 'site of silence'

During the October school holidays, we coordinate free outdoor games, crafts, den building and food on the local Square with over 250 families participating. Building on the learning from 'Autumn in the Square', and with support from the

'There's been more joint work in last month than in the last 8 years' (Jane, Arden Play Campaign).

(Clarke, 2005:85): acting as an interface for the community planning partnership and councillors but not an active participant within the Connecting Colvin network. However, by the end of Phase 3 they begin to have more of a presence in supporting outdoor activities.

By April 2019, free events are organised for every school holiday and a dedicated Events Group, chaired by Kate, is asking for grants from the area community planning partnership to keep the momentum.

6.4.2 *Colvin Greenspace Network* - **Workshop 1**, **September 2018**

Following agreement to organise 'Autumn in the Square', Kate and I feel optimistic about our first workshop to develop a neighbourhood greenspace plan. Out of the twelve attendees, the majority are members from the *Arden Play Campaign*, the newly formed *Make Marig Muddy* and a couple of project workers. Led by their talk, we are all inspired to act collectively **'to banish no hope'**. As with *MarigSpace,* this is poignantly framed as wanting to promote **'safer and nicer spaces'** in general rather than any expectation to 'do gardening', which is seen as a separate project. Most important, is to create play opportunities within '400m actual walking distance', as stated in Glasgow's Accessibility Standard (GCC, 2018a:20) and envisaged in *The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland Quality Action Plan* (Scottish Government, 2017a). Led by the mothers, we articulate a six-month timeline of tasks for the two play projects which are discussed next.

6.4.3 *Arden Play Campaign*

I first give an overview of the derelict Arden field site and two previously failed officer-led greenspace projects. This is then juxtaposed by the hurdles faced by the *Arden Play Campaign* and their eight-year play park campaign.

The derelict site is owned by the council and has a community resource centre at one end. The council took over the resource centre ten years ago promising a range of indoor and outdoor activities which was welcomed by residents. However, when interviewed, the centre managers recount a 50% budget cut and staff reductions in the first year which, they said, led to a number of 'poor decisions' including a mountain bike BMX track.

> 'So, what basically happened was the organisation opened, applied for money for the BMX track – at a substantial cost I mean we're talking £40k. And it turned out to be more of a complex programme than what they were expecting. So, they didn't expect it to be so complex in terms of dangerous. The first day it was opened somebody was seriously injured and it's never been used since' (Arden Resource Centre Managers, Interview, July 2018).

The managers go on to talk about a Stalled Spaces award to build a Disc Golf course in 2016. Heckley Hub was contracted to install the pitch, but ongoing maintenance costs were not factored in, creating tensions between the two organisations and the course becoming overgrown and unopened. Both failed projects emphasise the need for specific skills in the project planning and maintenance for greenspace projects, as discussed in Chapter Three.

I am also struck by the apparent lack of '**community engagement**' for these projects. In contrast, the *Arden Play Campaign*, who meet at the centre, have been campaigning for a playpark on the site with little progress.

> 'Well, as far as my knowledge is working here for the last ten years, that's something that's been high on the community members' agenda – is getting a playpark within this area' (Arden Resource Centre Managers, Interview, July 2018).

When Kate introduces me to the *Arden* group, I am struck by their energy and commitment to the playpark but also their frustration at not getting any definitive answers about the land use. Although they were initially told the project would be too costly because of contamination and mineshafts underground, they have seen other neighbourhoods with playparks erected and feel '**forgotten**'. There is also a complex relationship with the resource centre: in that they were encouraged to become a constituted group in order to apply for activity grants not available to the council, but don't feel they have had consistent worker support for the more substantial playpark installation.

However, there is now renewed optimism because of Kate*'s* recent assistance and one of the councillors - who has persuaded the council to conduct another land-survey. Kate and Kirsty 'vouch for me' as 'someone who knows more about this type of stuff', and I'm invited to a meeting to hear the outcome from the land survey, described in Box 6.4.

> ### *Box 6.4: Arden Play Campaign - Playpark meeting, August 2018*
>
> *Seven of the Arden Play Campaign are sitting on one side of the table with the community planning and council officers on the other side.*
>
> *The land surveyor says the group have the go-ahead for the land.*
>
> *Everyone cheers.*
>
> *Jane from the Arden Play Campaign points to the plans they've drawn up for the play park in consultation with the preferred providers to the council.*
>
> *Then the land surveyor says it will cost about £150k to prepare the land and that the group will need to fundraise for this as well as the playpark installation.*
>
> *The community planning manager continues by saying that this is just the start of the project and that it will take significant planning with community consultation.*
>
> *The talk continues and I feel the initial energy and optimism in the room plummet. I feel frustrated for the group and put my hand up.*
>
> *'Sorry, but can I ask a stupid question, if the land is contaminated, is it not the council's responsibility to clean it? And also, seeing as there's no playpark within at least a mile from here, why do the group have to do more consultation and fundraise for it?'*
>
> *The council officer explains that the council have no money, but a consultation will help lever funds. The community planning manager agrees and explains that it's really important to carry out a 'comprehensive' consultation with the local residents overlooking the site. She will send a survey to the group and can help collate the responses.*
>
> *Jane is glaring at me and I feel she's telling me to shut up - and so I do.*
>
> *(SF, Fieldnote, August 2018).*

Postscript: Phases 4 to 5

Between September 2018 and February 2019, the *Arden Play Campaign* dutifully conduct the two-page survey by door-knocking the adjacent streets to the overgrown and derelict site. In March 2019, contrary to the information above, the group are informed that 'unfortunately', the site is too contaminated to dig foundations for a playpark, but they can investigate other options which 'don't require digging'. As Jane said the first time we met, and the group repeat to me: **'hope lifts and then gets let down again'**.

Discussing this turnaround of events with council colleagues they draw my attention to how the news coincides with Glasgow City identifying a '£550 million finance crisis'. What this example illustrates about power relations between social worlds is explored in Chapter Seven.

My relationship with the *Arden* group is intermittent while they conduct the survey but becomes more active again in the last few months of my fieldwork when, as part of the *Colvin Greenspace Network*, I agree to help them with a new project plan. We organise visits to different '***outdoor play***' projects and they develop new ideas for '***an outdoor community space for people to come out and chill for a bit***'. This includes a 'no-dig' adventure playground, a 'step-challenge path' to encourage walking around the field, and a wildlife corner. As one of my last acts of reciprocity, I arrange an action meeting with the health improvement team, the Arden Resource Centre managers, Colvin Housing Association, councillors and the countryside ranger to support their plans, along with a list of grant options. The centre managers do not attend, and I am told that the architect and land surveyor have still not managed to meet the group and give approval to their multifunctional greenspace vision.

6.4.4 *Make Marig Muddy*

The three mothers from the toddlers' group at Marig Community Garden attend the September greenspace discussions from which several observations are made. First, that although the project workers from Marig Community Garden are sympathetic to the group, they do not have the resources to support them in their desire to reclaim the 'wee field'. Moreover, the project workers and newly appointed manager (Lynne) tell me that the garden acquired the lease to the front end of the field a few years ago. This was with the intention of creating a market garden, but the idea was dropped because of a lack '***community engagement***'. This will be explored more in Chapter Seven, but for Sophie, the leader of the group who has grown up in the area, she feels strongly that more could be done to encourage local people to participate in greenspace activities. The other two mothers are from the new housing estate and bring additional enthusiasm.

Not wanting to become entangled in historic tensions between local organisations, the three are keen to create a new constituted group for the 'wee field' and we agree to collaborate on the *Make Marig Muddy* PAR project.

Aim

> '*To create community nature spaces for muddy play and reclaim local space for community use by bringing in agencies to provide activities for all ages*' (Make Marig Muddy, Workshop 1, October 2018).

In our first deliberative workshop in October, we agree the tasks for constituting a group and all three efficiently complete them. Through contacts made during Phases 1 and 2 of my fieldwork, I facilitate a second planning workshop with wildlife engagement officers eager to support the *Make Marig Muddy* project. Apart from this small amount of facilitation, it is really Sophie who drives the project forward. This includes visiting other projects, community groups and talking to councillors and officers.

> '*We're empowering ourselves by doing this*' (Sophie, Make Marig Muddy, Workshop 1, October 2018).

The group emanate exuberance as they acknowledge growing confidence and capacities in attending meetings and articulating their vision to reclaim the 'wee field'. Sophie tracks down the Senior Countryside Ranger who is equally enthusiastic but also stretched for capacity. We are told that the countryside ranger service has had its staff team reduced by half since 2012; and, until talking to Sophie, they have had no direct links with the Thriving Places initiative and are already at full capacity with their schools work and practical conservation. And yet, the ranger comments, 'community engagement and the natural heritage is our remit, that's our bag!'. She continues by talking about 'being invisible' and hard to reach.

> '*If I could get a specific webpage where I could put people's names and emails, but I can't put phone numbers or anything like that*' (Senior Countryside Ranger, Interview, November 2018).

The ranger directs us to a colleague who will be able to organise the land survey, and the councillor has arranged for a site visit from another officer to support the process. However, despite several telephone and conversations

there is no clear direction on how to take things forward and the survey is not completed.

At our third workshop, again attended by wildlife engagement officers, the group finalise arrangements for an 'outdoor fun day' in the 'wee field' early in the New Year to gauge local support. This will comprise tree planting, nature crafts and games, scavenger hunts and food, as well as recruiting volunteers to support *Make Marig Muddy* in future activities.

Between November and December 2018, *Make Marig Muddy* are the subject of conversation everywhere I go, and Sophie is invited to join several management committees, all of which she says is 'a bit overwhelming'. At the same time, the group are working through the internal dynamics that often accompany new endeavours compounded by individual resilience factors. For Sophie and her two children, this includes temporarily moving in with her parents while waiting to be accommodated by the council.

By the end of the year, the group is fragmented, and frustrations are building about the perceived lack of support from council officers. At the same time there is a sense that other community organisations are now 'taking our ideas'. While we talk about using this as an opportunity to work collaboratively between groups, Sophie, in particular, feels that 'everyone wants a piece of the action' and is reluctant to get drawn into 'other people's agendas'.

> *'When we started, we thought it would be a lot easier than this didn't we?... its taken three months to find the right people and now everyone has plans - and they never did before' (Sophie, Make Marig Muddy, Workshop 3, December 2018).*

Early in the New Year, myself and the wildlife engagement officers preparing for the 'outdoor fun day' receive the following email.

> *'I'm just writing to apologise as due to unforeseen circumstances we will have to postpone our first [Make Marig Muddy] event' (Sophie, Make Marig Muddy, Email, January 2019).*

Postscript: Phases 4 to 5

After three months of living with her parents, Sophie is resettled in the adjacent neighbourhood and, although we keep in regular contact until the summer, she has lost touch with the other group members, 'still feels drained' and wants to concentrate on her new home.

6.4.5 Section summary

This section outlined the key achievements as well as constraints during Phase 3 of my participatory action research. It highlighted the increased opportunities arising from the Thriving Places initiative to promote bonding social capital: illustrated by the 'Square makeover' and establishing the Events Group in the spirit of *Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital*. However, this was not enough to facilitate the leverage required ***'to reclaim derelict land for community benefit'*** for the *Arden Play Campaign* and *Make Marig Muddy*.

The *Arden Play Campaign* and *Make Marig Muddy* share similarities and subject positions. Both groups are driven by mothers who have greenspace aspirations for ***'outdoor play'*** for their children; both recognise that the remediation of derelict land provides opportunities to realise greenspace assets; and both are extremely capable and creative in their vision. Both also struggle to move forward in delivering their vision, arguably because of a lack of bridging and linking social capital. As examples of independent community action, they encapsulate the individual and organisational resilience factors that require recognition and assertive support to realise the ambitions of *Discourse 4: Community resilience – asset-based community development*.

The implications for community empowerment will be unpacked in Chapter Eight, but it is helpful, at this point, to clarify two significant challenges to procedural processes. First, as indicated in Chapter Three (section 3.4), there is an operational divide between key corporate social worlds. Development & Regeneration Services are responsible for planning and remediation of derelict land, while Land & Environmental Services are responsible for public greenspace and green infrastructure. Each operate at meso-city and planning sector levels

but neither has direct links to community planning and the Thriving Places initiative at a micro-neighbourhood scale. Consequently, each social world holds its own expertise and resources. Navigating the maze of local authority officers and permissions to use the 'wee field', experienced by *Make Marig Muddy*, repeats the quagmire of challenges confronted by the *Arden Play Campaign*, Marig Co's initial failed eco self-build project, and obtaining wider stakeholder buy-in for the Heckley to Marig canal path.

Second, although there are numerous outreach agencies and grant opportunities connected to local and national strategies on improving greenspace, they require explanation and coordination. As reflected in the constructive relationship between Kate and me, these are a set of skills which necessarily complement the current skills of community development workers. Yet, our close partnership has happened by chance and not design, and both of our positions are due to end in April 2019. With respect to my own subjectivity, moving beyond piecemeal actions to fundamentally shifting relations to address greenspace inequality becomes my primary focus in Phases 4 and 5 of my fieldwork.

6.5   Phase 4: *Colvin Greenspace Network*

This section illustrates the relational shift between organisations so that positions towards a collaborative approach slowly begin to consolidate. It provides a summary of the second meeting of the Colvin *Greenspace Network* in which the aims and objectives are finalised, followed by an account of our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019.

'I think the first step is just to get us all thinking less territorially' (Martin, Heckley Hub).

6.5.1 *Colvin Greenspace Network* - Workshop 2, February 2019

Notably, because of the constraints to their aspirations described above, *Make Marig Muddy* and *Arden Play Campaign*, who led the first workshop for the *Colvin Greenspace Network*, are both absent from the second one. In contrast, this second workshop comprises seven managers and workers from Marig Co, Heckley Hub, Marig Community Garden and Colvin Housing Association. This alters the atmosphere and focus of deliberation. Although everyone talks about the desire to work collaboratively, organisational constraints remain at the fore.

Nevertheless, the conversation navigates from an initial resistance and 'being meetinged out', to becoming more solution led and strategic. This is particularly promoted by two new workers to Colvin: Lynne, who has taken over as manager of Marig Community Garden, and Martin, a project worker from Heckley Hub.

> *'I just feel all the time, that we've all got so much going on and so much we have to do ourselves – but what's good about coming to things like this is seeing what other people have got that we haven't got, what skills other people have got that we haven't got, and not reinventing something else. So we've got a garden which we've got limited staff to do a lot of work to keep the garden going but other people have got youth groups – can they bring their youth groups to the garden? What can we offer? ... But if we just sit in isolation, we don't know what other people want from us. We don't want to do something that someone else down the road is doing and that's silly. We want to add value' (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Greenspace Network Workshop 2, February 2019).*

The meeting is further animated when I signpost to unspent council environmental funds for the neighbourhood, provoking frustration and anger. Notwithstanding, the exchange below also suggests increased critical awareness of environmental injustice on which the group can coalesce.

> *'So, nobody knows that pot of money is there. How are we supposed to act on that?' (Maureen, Heckley Hub Deputy Manager).*
>
> *'Yeah coz I'm a worker on the ground, and I've never heard of any money and it's probably every single year we don't spend any' (Worker 1, Marig Community Garden).*
>
> *'Well we know now!' (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager).*

By the end of our deliberation, and drawing on ideas from our first workshop, the vision, aims and objectives of the Network are confirmed, as illustrated in

Box 6.5. It is clarified that the Network has formed to discuss and coordinate a local greenspace plan and strategy. This is not intended to interfere with local organisations and groups who will lead on their own greenspace projects but will use the Network for support and collaboration.

> ### Box 6.5: Greenspace Network Workshop 2 - Outcome of deliberation, February 2019
>
> **Vision**
>
> - *To have quality outdoor spaces for the community - Working collaboratively to share resources and expertise.*
>
> **Aim**
>
> - *To develop a neighbourhood greenspace plan to inform the Thriving Places Locality Plan.*
>
> **Objectives**
>
> - *To coordinate improving greenspace projects that have been consistent aspirations from the community.*
> - *To identify and apply for funding linking to national and city strategies and local priorities.*
> - *To work in partnership with agencies to develop local opportunities.*

6.5.2 *Colvin Greenspace Network* presentation to Thriving Places Steering Group - Workshop 3, March 2019

At the Network's second workshop, I also mention that I have been asked to do a presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group, comprising health improvement, community planning officers, councillors and community connectors from the other Thriving Places neighbourhoods. I invite colleagues to present their own PAR projects and suggest this could be an opportunity to discuss their experiences of the enablers and constraints to greenspace aspirations. From the discussion that unfolds, it is agreed that we should request a local authority link worker who can support the network by providing advice on land use, opportunities for funding and linking to council strategies.

Consequently, I and colleagues from *MarigSpace (*Mary*), HPAG (*Ann and Martin*), Arden Play Campaign* (Jane) and Marig Community Garden *(*Lynne*)* co-produce our presentation. Colleagues comment that the process over several weeks has

been an 'invaluable' way of getting to know each other as well as reflect on our journey. Figure 6.5 is an image we produce as part of our presentation to summarise the enablers and constraints as described in this chapter. It illustrates how the scales are still tipped against community colleagues realising local greenspace as a natural asset, and thereby the justification for piloting a link officer from the newly formed Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services for the Network. I will return to this Figure at the end of Chapter Seven in answer to my research question 1.
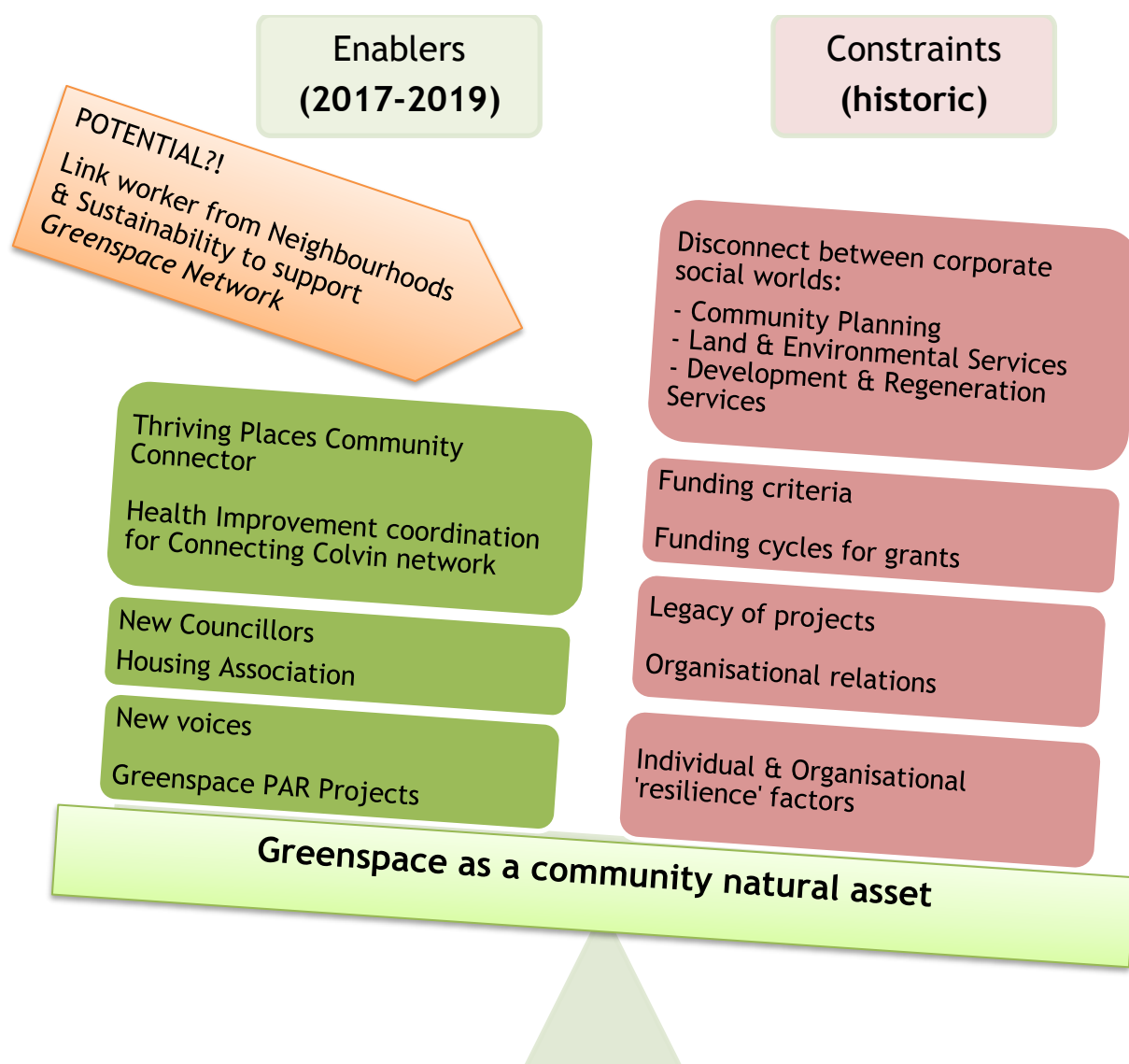
Figure 6.5: Current enablers & historic constraints to greenspace aspirations & actions – co-produced with community colleagues, March 2019

At the steering group presentation there are sixteen attendees including us. The audience are interested in the links I make between Glasgow's city, community and greenspace strategies, and the National Outcomes and accessibility standards referred to in Chapter Three. As with the previous workshops, the deliberation that follows demonstrates growing critical awareness of greenspace inequality and the disconnect between national and local strategies and community practice.

> *'How are we occupying spaces – we need to think strategically. And I'm thinking of the two community gardens there are in [our neighbourhood] and the sustainability of them is very difficult. Very difficult so we've got to be realistic about this. So the continuity of that-so if people have the ability to see that as part of a wider strategy for the area is very important at least for us' (Community Connector outwith Colvin, Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

> *'We need to know how to get our ideas fed into the process into that larger strategy. We've developed the community garden over the last 10 years and it's a good community asset and it's mostly been funded through CCF. But that has quite a limited legacy for the community. But we've got a network of greenspaces which include the canal path and [local wood] that has in the past been a really important community connection….People in the local area have been talking about this for decades and we've got ideas, but how do we feed those ideas in' (Martin, Heckley Hub, Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

Moreover, if senior community practitioners and councillors are vague about local strategies, action plans and allocated funding, how are they able to advocate for Colvin?

> *'The council are really slow and institutional. They're going through a restructure and to be honest with you, I don't know anyone until they touch base with me' (Councillor, Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

Land & Environmental Services formally restructure to become Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services from the new Financial Year. Although my fieldwork is meant to end, I agree with Kate to continue to co-facilitate *Colvin Greenspace Network* during the summer to sustain momentum and broker relations with the new organisational structures. Hence, as an action from our presentation, I am tasked with inviting the new Sector Head of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability Services to the next Network meeting in the hope of identifying a link officer for the group.

As co-presenters, we feel elated that we've managed to agree an operational way forward. I see this as the progressive outcome of my participatory action research over the past nineteen months and the consolidation of discussions and relations within and between the different organisations to raise critical awareness of greenspace inequality.

The outcomes of the *Colvin Greenspace Network* meetings in May and June, and the implications for community empowerment, environmental justice and community resiliences are discussed in Chapter Eight.

6.6 Evaluation of the PAR projects & reflection on researcher roles, responsibilities & relationships

This chapter has illustrated the contribution of participatory action research in facilitating greenspace aspirations. To examine this further, this section begins with a review of participatory epistemology and Lincoln & Guba's (2007) criteria of authenticity as a means of evaluating the PAR projects. It then addresses Frisby's (2006) critical questions on the researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships, introduced in Chapter Five as part of my feminist ethic.

6.6.1 Four ways of knowing & evaluating authenticity

Heron & Reason (2008:367) posit an 'extended epistemology' comprising experiential, presentational and practical ways of knowing, in addition to abstract propositional knowledge which tends to dominate academia. These supplementary ways of knowing, they argue, are intentional and validated in co-operative inquiry and action research practice. Similarly, Ospina et al. (2008) highlight that potential research participants may often be suspicious of academia, and that participating in action research is driven by wanting to increase practical insight and local knowledge; whereas the researcher is also interested in producing transferable academic public knowledge.

This was reflected in all five PAR projects: in which our shared research question was 'How do we improve our local greenspace?'; but with each project illustrating different experiential experiences of participation and 'resiliences'. Within this, the conscious focus for community colleagues was task-orientated to develop presentational (designing greenspace) and practical knowledge (grant

applications and creating greenspace), whereas mine was also propositional. That is, the driver for 'research' was mine (in which community colleagues participated), whereas the 'action' (in which I participated) was theirs.

The four ways of knowing neatly align with Lincoln & Guba's (2007) five criteria of authenticity for evaluating the wider political impact of research. These are: fairness; ontological authenticity (increased critical awareness); educative authenticity (increased understanding of different perspectives); catalytic authenticity (stimulation for action); and tactical authenticity (whether the action is effective and empowering). Although the authenticity criteria remain controversial, they have affinity with action research (Bryman, 2012) and therefore seem appropriate to assess the PAR projects.

This chapter has striven to represent the PAR projects in a transparent way, respecting different viewpoints to achieve fairness. The PAR projects suggest that community colleagues developed understanding of their collective need to address greenspace aspirations and were able to co-construct new narratives for greenspace action, indicating ontological authenticity. Similarly, the possibility to co-produce a neighbourhood greenspace plan illustrates 'opening communicative spaces' (Kemmis, 2008) and facilitating improved relations for partnerships and educative authenticity. Finally, *Colvin Greenspace Network* demonstrates accumulative catalytic authenticity in the way community colleagues were motivated to improving local greenspace, and tactical authenticity in how we collaborated to shape the activities and outcomes.

6.6.2 Researcher roles, responsibilities & relationships

Bryman (2012:15) reminds us that the 'messiness of social research' is often hidden in the 'implicit template' of writing up the research process. A possible remedy is to use extended reflection that 'can take rawness into fuller and more explicit account' (Clarke, 2005:15). Hence, in Chapter Five, I presented my interpretation of Frisby's (2006) critical questions on the researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships. Drawing on the reflections from female North American researchers from both the traditional PAR model of consultation and evaluation within a public health context, and feminist participatory action research, I now apply these questions to my own fieldwork relations.

My fieldwork was conducted against a backdrop of niggling doubts, punctuated with moments of exhilaration, about my methodology and my skills. This account aims to strike a balance between acknowledging what I now understand as the common insecurity of the researcher, and a more objective analysis of my reflexive practice seeking to accommodate and adapt to the 'vicissitudes of research' (Bryman, 2012:15).

Roles

To what extent and in what circumstances is it appropriate for me to act as mediator, negotiator, advocate or volunteer for the community organisation?

Maiter et al. (2008) suggest that an ethic of reciprocity is an essential component of community-based PAR. They emphasise 'reciprocal dialogue' (2008:307) between researcher and participants communicating as equals, as well as knowledge and social exchange for contributing to the research study. Thus, the researcher is an active participant in the process of trust building and providing useful resources. In this research, it was soon apparent that I was most useful to the community organisations for networking, project planning and fundraising. This acknowledged our power and knowledge differentials in an egalitarian format of mutual benefit and diverse expertise. Moreover, acting as a volunteer, I was able to articulate the aims of the PAR projects to the Connecting Colvin network and introduce new dialogues, illustrating the advantage of being an outsider in a network of historic relations.

Responsibilities

Where are the boundaries to my research project and how political is the action?

Throughout my fieldwork, the boundaries of my research necessitated considerable permeability in order to establish a common purpose. Attempting to link issues such as global capitalism, environmental degradation and climate change with their local impacts; and understanding this as the intersection between global and local climate justice, and environmental and social injustice – was mainly irrelevant. My research position was therefore not of naïve radical

activism, but more to gain insights into current community practice and the 'micropolitics' of negotiating urban local space and place (Amin et al., 2000; Emejulu, 2015; Foucault, 1979).

How do I maintain integrity in my research focus when there may be different activities that community colleagues prioritise?

My biggest challenge was maintaining an experiential and non-directive position, rather than promoting my own desire for socio-environmental action. Instead, patiently observing and supporting greenspace aspirations highlighted the reality of shifting norms of visioning and practice. Moreover, alongside the acknowledgement of reciprocity, was an evolving understanding of our individual and collective limitations (Maiter et al., 2008). In these relational processes, the dynamics often comprised a staccato of energy and action, followed by episodes of silence as community colleagues carried on with their other tasks and lives.

Within this, a tension of priorities was inevitable. For example, after being awarded the GICEF grant, Ann asked me to take a back seat while she negotiated the budget and recruitment of staff. As Grant et al. (2008) identify, power is not only with the researcher (there would be no research without consent). In this instance, although Ann demonstrated ownership of the project, I did have to wrestle with my own feelings of exclusion and anxiety that I would not be invited for further involvement. Power relations appeared to be inverted and, with the decision to return the award, I was left selfishly preoccupied about the future of my thesis.

How do I avoid raising expectations about the potential for change?

Dotted around Glasgow are numerous greenspace projects that are now neglected, often because there is no longer a funded worker to coordinate local involvement. Conscious of this, it was difficult to strike a balance between using appreciative inquiry to facilitate aspirations and tempering this with caution as we managed our limited resources and capacities, along both material and emotional dimensions. Notwithstanding, community colleagues directed the PAR projects and although they might mirror a similar trajectory of unfulfilled aspirations, they also highlight small gains and importantly suggest the need for an environmental justice frame.

Relationships

How do I negotiate personal relationships and the boundaries between researcher, facilitator and co-inquirer during the PAR Projects?

Within 'feminist participatory action research', Reid & Frisby (2008) caution against an idealised research strategy which seeks to fully engage with participants in all phases of participatory research. Similarly, Janes (2016) notes:

> 'I recognise that the "full model" of participation is not only oppressive but conflicts with a central tenet of the work: engaging the complementarity of different knowledges, skills, interests rather than the tyranny of everyone participating in everything' (Janes, 2016:82).

I was funded through a full-time scholarship, whereas community colleagues were juggling multiple demands. Throughout my fieldwork I questioned the merits of my approach and whether conforming to a more orthodox methodology would have been more appropriate to study community development processes. Was my attempt at contributing to socio-environmental action seen as facilitative, or confusing and muddled for community colleagues – neither external researcher nor community volunteer but a bit of both? Thankfully, colleagues were very receptive to my input and gracious at overlooking the occasional hiccup.

Decisions on how much disclosure of individual dynamics to include in this thesis was a consistent dilemma, especially as personalities, relationships and networks were pivotal to processes. By using pseudonyms and a range of methods, I hope to highlight ambiguity and complexity without violating the trust and rapport with community colleagues.

How do I deal with the feelings and emotions embedded in the researcher-participant relationship, including leaving the field?

My personal relationships with participants naturally developed over the months of fieldwork and I was unprepared for how intense some of these were, particularly in the early stages of the PAR projects which suitably challenged and developed my researcher skills. Throughout the research, I reminded colleagues that this was a time-limited study, but my aim was to be an active participant so

that we could work together on theirs and my objectives through the research process. Nevertheless, personal biases inevitably shaped how I conducted my fieldwork and it was important to acknowledge points of frustration and ethical considerations of interpretation and representation with my supervisors.

Further, I remained an 'interloper' (Frisby, 2006:440) and could adopt a range of subject positions which kept my options open in a way that community colleagues could not. Most importantly I could walk away: this was my research and not my life and this privilege and power asymmetry underpins the ethical considerations of my methodology.

How do I negotiate the insider-outsider dynamics?

Fals Borda (2006) reminds us that negotiating the insider-outsider dynamics creates subtle shifts in power over the inquiry, the action orientation of the research, and the interpretation of the outputs. In this project, I adopted three researcher subject positions: practitioner action researcher seeking to develop my own community practice; outsider researcher participating in socio-environmental action in collaboration with insider community colleagues; and outsider researcher engaging in qualitative academic research. Acknowledging my 'researcher positionality' (Herr & Anderson, 2015) indicates transparency in the multiple interests that directed my contribution. It also underscores my action researcher praxis, which sometimes required 'trade-offs' (Ospina et al., 2008) between my activism and my research, usually in preference for the former.

Notwithstanding, in her account of using lay co-researchers,[31] Janes (2016:75) describes an encounter when she was told by a community colleague that she was 'pimping the poor'. She suggests:

> *'That working with community may be neither emancipatory or egalitarian but complicated and colonial' (Janes, 2016:75).*

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[31] Janes (2016) critiques the practice of using lay co-researchers in 'community based participatory action research', known as 'community-led action research' in Scotland (SCDC & Poverty Alliance, 2018). Nonetheless her argument is helpful in considering my own methodology of collaborating with community colleagues and organisations.

Given my heritage as a British Asian woman born in India to a poor family, this post-colonial critique is personally difficult but even more necessary for me to consider. Hence, I return to the insider-outsider dilemma when considering the interpretative repertoire of McGarvey's (2017) *'poverty safari'* at the end of Chapter Seven.

6.7 Conclusion to this chapter

This chapter has used the five PAR projects to illustrate the greenspace aspirations and actions that transpired to answer my research sub-question 1a. In their overview of negotiating the challenges of PAR, Grant et al. (2008) make three observations which I find helpful. First, and reflecting the sentiment of 'modest' transformative action (Reid et al., 2006; Reid & Frisby, 2008), that although PAR is associated with emancipatory intent, most often change is slow and at a smaller scale: requiring time to build relationships, and needing to be flexible to new opportunities as the collaboration progresses. Within the context of resource-limited commitment from community colleagues and differences in subject positions and priorities, I have given evidence of an emerging narrative of questioning poor access to good quality greenspace tied to post-industrial place.

Second, they argue that PAR should be 'research that *also* leads to community development' (Grant et al., 2008: 598). In this instance, the PAR projects were able to contribute to micro-organisational relations to support greenspace aspirations, with each project illustrating differing aspects of the four ways of knowing (Heron & Reason, 2008).

Thirdly, that credibility is achieved by capturing the experience and interests of participants. This chapter has sought to reflect the greenspace aspirations of community colleagues and how this directed my research path, ending with a reflexive account of our relations as part of my feminist ethic. Chapter Seven turns to a Social Worlds/Arenas analysis and critical discursive inquiry which locates the PAR projects within the wider power relations that influenced our greenspace actions.

Chapter 7: Greenspace action - a meso-neighbourhood analysis

7.1   Introduction

This chapter seeks to expand on the previous micro-organisational analysis of the five PAR projects by adopting Clarke's (2005) Social Worlds/Arenas mapping approach. Clarke (2005:110) explains that a Social Worlds/Arenas map locates the research project within its broader situation to facilitate meso-level interpretations of a dynamic situation. I use this analytical tool to explore how greenspace actions were influenced by the arenas of Glasgow local authority, environmental grants, arts grants, and action research practice. Using local greenspace as the boundary object, I review the interpretative repertoires and material resources in relation to key social worlds within these arenas. In doing so, I seek to explore the multiple discursive constructions and 'micropolitics' (Emejulu, 2015; Foucault, 1979) operating at a meso-neighbourhood and city level in order to answer my research sub-question 1b.

RQ1b: To what extent are residents and practitioners encouraged to identify local greenspace aspirations and actions?

The chapter begins with explicating my Social Worlds/Arenas map of the *Connecting Colvin network & greenspace.* It then considers three sets of oppositional interpretative repertoires (given in bold italics). By using the preposition 'with' between the two repertoires in each set, I seek to emphasise the complexity of forces that circulated simultaneously and are concomitant rather than mutually exclusive. These are:

- ***'being forgotten…what's the point'*** with ***'community engagement'***, which circulated between Colvin and Glasgow local authority arenas.
- ***'safer and nicer spaces'*** with ***'meeting CCF targets'***, which played between the arenas of Colvin and environmental grants.
- ***'poverty safari'*** with ***'authentic action research'***, which considers the legacy of the arts grants and action research arenas and the implications for negotiating the insider-outsider dynamics for greenspace 'modest' transformative action.

The chapter ends by comprehensively addressing my research question 1 on the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions.

7.2 Social Worlds/Arenas map: Connecting Colvin & greenspace

Figure 7.1 offers my Social Worlds/Arenas map of the *Connecting Colvin network & greenspace* to graphically illustrate the key arenas and social worlds which influenced greenspace aspirations and actions during my fieldwork. A Social Worlds/Arenas map lays out the actors in a 'social world' of collective activity within their larger organisational 'arenas' of commitment and embodied knowledge, which are themselves nested in wider 'domains' (Clarke, 2005:110).

For example, each of the community groups and organisations discussed in Chapter Six are their own social worlds of action (centre dotted squares) as well as being part of the Connecting Colvin social world (centre green circle with blue dotted outline).

As noted in Chapter Five, local greenspace in the arena of Colvin neighbourhood served as the implicated, nonhuman actant and boundary object that determined and delimited my mapping process, always conscious of its partiality. I located myself within the social world(s) of Connecting Colvin, and the PAR projects revolved around formal and informal organisations of 'collective commitment' (Clarke, 2005:112) within this circle, as explored in Chapter Six.

The social world(s) of the Connecting Colvin network are themselves located within the wider arenas of Colvin neighbourhood (wider green oval) and Glasgow local authority (outer dotted oval), situated in the domain of Glasgow city.

'The diagram is great! It completely makes sense and really shows that it's not all about us!' (Kim, Kirsty, Donna & Jane, Group feedback, May 2019).
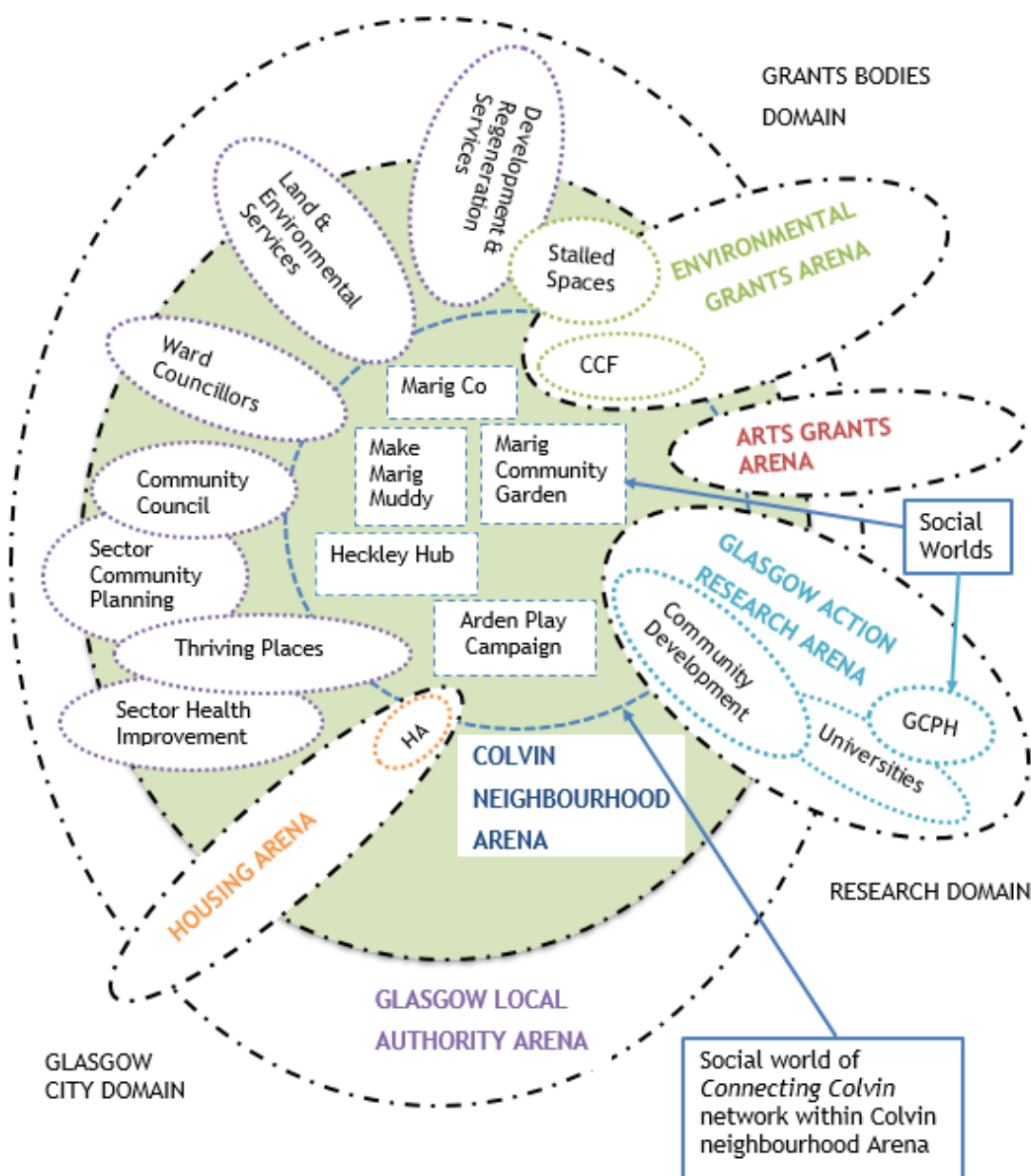
Figure 7.1: Social Worlds/Arenas Map: Connecting Colvin network & greenspace

Connecting Colvin Social World within Colvin neighbourhood and Glasgow local authority Arenas; and influenced by the Arenas of Housing, Environmental and Arts grants, and Glasgow action research.

Source: author's own - using Clarke's (2005) Social Worlds/Arenas mapping analysis.
Note: Land & Environmental Services restructured to form Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services in April 2019.

In addition, my map highlights the various social worlds (dotted ovals) that influenced Colvin greenspace from the arenas of Glasgow local authority, housing, environmental grants, arts grants and Glasgow action research practice, which differentially enabled or potentially constrained actions. Social worlds are actor-defined and so simultaneously may have a presence in multiple worlds, arenas and domains, and I have drawn important overlaps where this is the case. For example, Colvin Housing Association (HA, in orange oval), which donated grants to *MarigSpace* and *Heckley Path Action Group* (*HPAG)*, is situated in the housing arena which straddles across the arenas of Colvin and Glasgow.

Clarke (2005) also stipulates that the boundaries of each social world are intentionally dotted to indicate their constructed nature and the possibilities of permeability to accommodate change (Clarke, 2005).[32] The following analysis explores the extent of this in relation to greenspace aspirations and actions. For each arena, data from different actors serves to represent various positions or characteristics of the different social worlds. Hence, analysing the circulating interpretative repertoires, and 'sites of silence' (Clarke, 2005:85) in the data, can highlight the performance and flow (or not) of discourses and how this mediates structures, agencies and commitment to action *between* arenas and worlds (Clarke, 2005:113).

7.3 Colvin neighbourhood & Glasgow local authority arenas: '*being forgotten…what's the point*' with '*community engagement*'

This section considers the combined interpretative repertoires of '*being forgotten…what's the point'*, alluded to in Chapter Six and which permeated Colvin neighbourhood arena at the start of my fieldwork. These are then considered through the interpretation of '*community engagement'*, theoretically explored in Chapter Four.

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[32] Clarke (2005) also suggests that social worlds can be subdivided into subworlds and that maps can be drawn to illustrate relative size and/or power. I have not chosen this route in order to retain a meso-level of analysis.

I begin in the arena of Colvin neighbourhood (wider green oval) with a summary of the *Connecting Colvin Survey* (Connecting Colvin, 2016), which repeated residents' sense of *'being forgotten'* and consequently *'what's the point'*. I then give examples of *'community engagement'* as practiced by the three corporate social worlds in the Glasgow local authority arena introduced in Chapters Three and Six. These are the Community Planning Partnership and the Locality Plan; Land & Environmental Services and the Open Space Strategy; and Development & Regeneration Services and canal regeneration. The vignettes illustrate the pervasive ambivalence towards *'community engagement'* and its purpose.

7.3.1 *'Being forgotten…what's the point'*

The *Connecting Colvin Survey* (Connecting Colvin, 2016), was a door to door survey of 10% (n.606) of the neighbourhood, conducted by a small group of residents over a three-month period, supported by Marig Community Garden and Marig Co and funded by the sector health improvement team. It asked three questions: what do you like about living in Colvin?; what would you like to see changed?; and what can you do to make a difference? The survey was a significant achievement for the Connecting Colvin network, albeit its management was a cause of tension between some organisations. The findings outline that although there was a strong sense of mutual support from neighbours and place attachment, this was mitigated with despondency at

'*being forgotten*' and powerlessness at the lack of regeneration, as shown in Box 7.1.

> **Box 7.1: Connecting Colvin Survey (2016) - 'Being forgotten' quotes from respondents**
>
> *"More investment. No money goes to [Colvin]"*
>
> *"I would like to be part of change. But nothing will happen, because [Colvin] is like no man's land"*
>
> *"Nothing can be done!"*
>
> *(Connecting Colvin, 2016:22).*

These sentiments are also highlighted in external consecutive research (GCPH & SCDC, 2015b; GCPH, 2018). Similarly, between Phases 1 and 3 of my fieldwork, '*being forgotten*' was often the description residents gave me about Colvin. This was quickly followed by '*what's the point*', reinforced by the lack of any follow up actions from the survey, including having '*safer and nicer spaces*'.

> *'I know that was one of the themes that came out that people said there were too many – just associating greenspaces with abandonment, isolation, being forgotten by the council, just neglect basically. So, it was just a manifestation of the social neglect' (Worker 2, Marig Community Garden, Interview, July 2018).*

7.3.2 '*Community engagement*'

Community Planning Partnership: Colvin Locality Plan

Box 7.2 provides a snapshot of the consultation process for the three Thriving Places Locality Plans for the sector, in which the community planning officer rushed from one neighbourhood network meeting to the other as the sole mechanism for face-to-face '*community engagement*'.

> **Box 7.2: Colvin Locality Plan - Community planning officer's presentation to Connecting Colvin Network, September 2017**
>
> *The officer arrives hurriedly and late to the meeting. He apologises that the draft plan was only circulated to a couple of organisations the week before.*
>
> *He outlines that the plan is a requirement from Scottish Government as part of the Community Empowerment Act, but has been written last minute and, 'is really a corporate plan of a plan' and, 'not yet connected with the other Locality Plans'. The plan needs to be finalised by the end of the month (in two weeks time).*
>
> *Kim asks if there could be a section summarising the Community Empowerment Act and how residents could contribute to the plan.*
>
> *The officer does not reply directly to this question but suggests that a 'communications or marketing strategy is needed for the plan'.*
>
> *After the officer leaves, individuals comment on the 'lip service' and 'comedy of consultation'.*
>
> *(SF, Fieldnote, September 2017).*

The consequent *Colvin Locality Plan* (GCPP, 2017c) comprises a history of the area, an overview of local organisations, and findings from two surveys to demonstrate how local people have been involved. The first is the *Connecting Colvin Survey,* and the second is a short piece of '**community engagement'** conducted by community planning staff in an area not covered by the Colvin survey.

> *'It was a very short window to do some consultation, we didn't have enough time to do what we had to do. It coincided with the holidays coming up, so lots of groups that we wanted to visit we couldn't because they were finishing up' (Worker, Community Planning, Interview, May 2018).*

Against this backdrop, the initial scepticism voiced by some community colleagues towards the Thriving Places initiative is perhaps understandable. This was underscored when Kate, recruited as the community connector, felt pressurised to undertake her own '**community engagement'** event.

> *'Come along and have your say to shape the future of your community... Thriving Places – putting the community first' (Community Connector, Poster, March 2018).*

She was not surprised when the event was unsuccessful and consequently adopted a more person-centred outreach approach: by building on her existing networks from previously working in the neighbourhood and developing personal relationships with residents and organisations. From this, Kate heard the recurrent themes of consultation fatigue and the accompanying interpretative repertoires of '**being forgotten**' and '**what's the point**'.

> *'I think we need to do something in order to gain the trust, because when I spoke to local people and I say, how come you didn't come to the meeting, they were like that, what's the point, it's the same stuff all the time. So, we need to change that. We need them to be like, oh right, okay, they actually did that. They said they were going to do it and they did it' (Kate, Community Connector, Interview, April 2018).*

The Colvin Locality Plan was published in October 2017, stating it was in its early stage of development but that, by October 2018, there would be 'a detailed action plan with clear goals set for the next 10 years' (GCPP, 2017c:14). Yet, no formal follow-up to the plan was communicated until March 2019, when an email was circulated by the same planning team (now called Community Empowerment Services) advising of a review and an online survey of people currently 'directly involved in Thriving Places'.

> *'To ensure it meets the statutory Locality Planning requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This review has a learning focus with an emphasis on identifying ways to strengthen and improve the programme' (Planning officer, Email, March 2019).*

On inquiry, two separate community planning workers intimated the online survey was not 'really resident friendly' and, although they felt obliged to complete it, dismissed it as being 'too vague, missing the point and a waste of time' (SF, Fieldnote, March 2019).

> *'They've got a centralist approach to planning coz they don't have any time to do anything on the ground…You know, they'll get the answers that they want from that… I was unable to complete it because I couldn't understand what they wanted me to do' (Community Planning workers, Recorded conversation, May 2019).*

Land & Environmental Services: Open Space Strategy & Local Context Analyses

As noted in Chapter Three, the *Glasgow Open Space Strategy: Consultative Draft October 2018* (GCC, 2018a) can be considered an example of best practice: in line with *Planning Advice Note PAN 65* (Scottish Government, 2008), it asserts the interrelationships between different council services and their open space responsibilities; and sets Glasgow's own greenspace Accessibility and Quality Standards. The accompanying Local Context Analyses (LCA) which covers Colvin, acknowledges that the neighbourhood falls below the city average for good quality greenspace and correlates this with the areas of highest deprivation and poorer health outcomes (GCC, 2018b). It also identifies improving the quality of publicly useable greenspace as a priority, including the Heckley to Marig canal path, and cites the Locality Plan's reference to the *Connecting Colvin Survey*:

> *'It highlights that some local people feel open spaces could be better cared for and that there are concerns over being able to access sports and recreational services' (GCC, 2018b: s.3.5).*

Hence, there appears to be a robust corporate overview of greenspace inequality and an aspiration for engagement.

> *'Consultation on this LCA is your opportunity to inform the Council of the open space issues that you think are important to your local area…The Stage 2 LCA process will build on the Stage 1 analysis and the public response to it… to bring forward a "green network masterplan"' (GCC, 2018b: s.1.2).*

Comments on the draft Open Space Strategy and LCA Stage 1 were to be made between October and December 2018 via the online Glasgow Consultation Hub. Notification of documents were sent to Marig Co who forwarded it to the Connecting Colvin network. Yet, when I mentioned the documents, neither the Thriving Places Steering Group nor the ward councillors were aware of the strategies and all the community organisations, including Marig Co, claimed they had not received any notification. As a consequence, no comments were given.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (mentioned in Box 7.2) formalises community planning partnerships with a strong focus on Locality Plans and an explicit emphasis on tackling disadvantage and inequality. In two surveys of community planning officials across Scotland, carried out in 2016 and 2018,

Weakley & Escobar (2018)[33] reveal a social world where the principle of inclusive community engagement is valued and, in response to legislation, there is increasing use of public consultation as evidence of community input. Simultaneously, there is acknowledgement of weak practice, compounded by mistrust from both officials and community members that participation processes will have any impact on policy or decision-making.

In the Glasgow local authority arena, The Locality Plan and Open Space Strategy - LCA Stage 1 consultations are illustrations of this ambivalence towards *'community engagement'*, from which I make three observations. First, that both *'community engagement'* processes were unclear in identifying their audience and subject for engagement. Second, both relied on email and an online interface which excludes many residents and is easily overlooked by community organisations. Third, and partly as a response to this pattern, no attempt was made by community colleagues at a practitioner or organisational level to engage with the consultation documents. This suggests a troublesome reciprocity: whereby corporate bodies superficially perform the function of *'community engagement'*; and consequently, organisations and residents are silenced from important local decision-making processes, contributing to a self-fulfilling prophecy of *'being forgotten'*. Box 7.3, as a continuation of Box 6.5, attempts to captures this, as well as my own moment of frustration with the interplay of dynamics.

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[33] The authors note that the survey included managers and officers working across a range of policy areas.

> ### Box 7.3: Greenspace Network Workshop 2 – LCA discussion, February 2019
>
> *Group members are agitated that no-one has bothered to consult them on the LCA (which is not quite accurate).*
>
> *Maureen, who was previously a community connector in another neighbourhood, angrily talks about this being yet another example of 'ignoring local voices and participation'.*
>
> *I give an introduction to the LCA and digital map. But it soon becomes evident that the relevant information needs to be concisely delivered in a dedicated session, reflecting the gap between planning documents and community practice.*
>
> *I remind folk about the summary of available environmental grants which I circulated. The group thank me for making it simple to use but say they haven't had the time to look at it yet.*
>
> *After further chat agreeing the vision and objectives of the network, I offer to provide a one-pager on Glasgow's key policy documents that cover greenspace, outdoor play and health and wellbeing. Maureen says this would be fab and all nod their heads.*
>
> *I come away half wondering why I offered, pretty sure it will be another unread document.*
>
> *(SF, Fieldnote, February 2019).*

Development & Regeneration Services: Canal regeneration charettes

During the time of my fieldwork, Development & Regeneration Services was a site of silence in the arena of Colvin neighbourhood. That is, the subject position of land surveyor occupied a powerfully absent relation to our greenspace aspirations to **'reclaim derelict land for community benefit'**.

In contrast, I observed charrettes used for **'community engagement'** for the major canal regeneration projects on either side of the Heckley to Marig canal path (the focus of *HPAG* PAR). Yet various attempts from Heckley Hub and councillors to contact relevant officers about their short canal path in between **'were forgotten'**.

'Just a wee light, a wee light and a proper path. People, they spend so much money on shit like, I mean come on, what are they spending money on, metal horses, right. Metal horses, how much did that cost?[34] Like millions of pounds. How much would a wee bit of concrete and a light on that big bit of mess down there would have been? It wouldn't have cost anywhere near a horse's ear, right, let's face it, it really wouldn't have…do you know what, this is it, people are living in squalor. Wee Betty can't go to the shops for milk without feeling unsafe and having to step over big twigs and trees and leaves. But, come on we'll build two big metal horses heads so that people on the motorway can pass and say, look at they big horses heads. Never mind about wee Betty and her milk' (Community colleague, Heckley Path Action Group, Workshop 1, May 2018).

Box 7.4 is my observation of one of the charrettes which employed external consultants to facilitate a 'community-led design approach'. I was invited by a fellow PhD candidate researching the charrette model, who informed me that the cost of this consultation was forty thousand pounds jointly funded by the Scottish Government and the local authority.

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[34] The metal horses refer to The Kelpies 30-metre-high horse-head sculptures at the Forth & Clyde canal.

> ### *Box 7.4: Canal regeneration - charrette observation, May 2018*
>
> *I arrive at the second out of three workshops and am surprised at how well attended it is by local authority and Scottish Canals officers.*
>
> *There are only two local organisations represented – one of which is the Salvation Army who need to protect their building from demolition. There are no residents. Then, a group of 12 Syrian refugees arrive with an interpreter.*
>
> *The event opens by a leading consultant in charrettes. He gives a presentation about the 'Making Places Project' which will contribute to the Locality Plan. What follows is a lengthy explanation of how this is the beginning of a 20-year development plan, accompanied by lots of slides with too many words interspersed with photos of design projects from around the world. This is clearly targeted to a professional audience and I'm finding it hard to keep up.*
>
> *The following discussion centres on 'the principles of design and the Place Standard to identify the future needs for housing, business, connectivity and wellbeing'. This is not about immediate or even medium-term improvements.*
>
> *I glance over at the bemused group of refugees and reflect on their subject position as representatives from the local community.*
>
> *(SF, Fieldnote, May 2018).*

7.3.3 Section summary

This section described how '**community engagement'**, as practiced by corporate social worlds in the Glasgow local authority arena, paradoxically reinforced the reciprocal repertoires of '**being forgotten'** and '**what's the point'** within the Colvin neighbourhood arena. The *National Standards for Community Engagement* (NSfCE, 2016) reflect the aspirations for community participation in the design and delivery of public services (Christie, 2011). Yet, although these examples of '**community engagement'** may serve to endorse bureaucratic processes, they risk inhibiting rather than promoting deliberative consultation on a micro-scale, especially if timescales are incongruent. This is illustrated in Box 7.4 in how Development & Regeneration Services and Scottish Canals were willing to undertake engagement to consider long-term and often intangible objectives but failed to engage with *Heckley Hub* on short-term greenspace actions.

The practice of the Locality Plan consultation, as illustrated in Box 7.2, undermined Kate's frontline relation building work and why she was keen to support *Colvin Greenspace Network* as a demonstration of 'community-led planning'. Similarly, consultation on the Open Space Strategy and LCA Stage 1 was perceived as tokenistic. For the Local Context Analysis Stage 2, if it is to meet the standards of 'inclusion, participation and deliberation' for good public consultation processes (Bynner, 2019; Weakley & Escobar, 2018:8), officers will need to broker between the robust greenspace analysis on a meso scale, and more facilitative dialogue on a micro community scale. For Thriving Places, it will then be incumbent for community planning officers to relate this to the 'priority area of childcare' and 'focus area of resilient communities' in their Locality and Community Plans (GCPP, October 2017a; 2017b).

7.4 Colvin neighbourhood & environmental grants arenas: '*safer and nicer spaces*' with '*meeting CCF targets*'
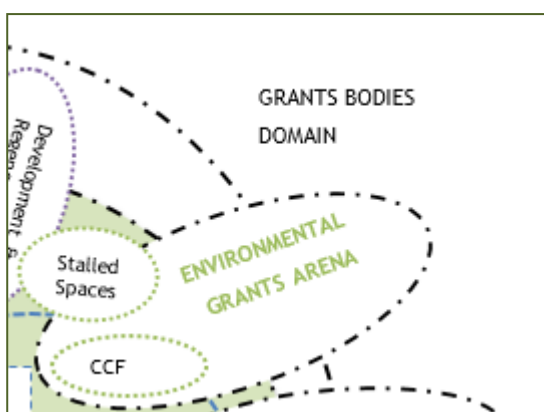
This section considers how Colvin's greenspace aspirations, for creating *'safer and nicer spaces…to come out and chill for a bit'*, were influenced by the environmental grants arena. I begin by highlighting the diversity of resources to support greenspace aspirations, tempered by acknowledging the constraints to access. I then draw attention to the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) and its dominant repertoire of '*meeting CCF targets'*, which shaped the social worlds of Heckley Hub and Marig Community Garden who were both dependent on the Fund for their greenspace activities.

7.4.1 *'Safer and nicer spaces…to come out and chill for a bit'*

National grants

While conducting the PAR projects, numerous start-up grants to '*improve the quality of existing greenspace'* were available to local organisations: including Paths for All, Grow Wild UK, Young Placemakers, Action Earth, Foundation

Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Central Scotland Green Network, Greggs Foundation and Tesco's Bags of Help. Similarly, regular offers were made of free saplings, plants and bulbs from various organisations but often in a rushed and haphazard way, such as this from Colvin Housing Association's Grants Manager:

> *'Hey – we've got a ton of saplings from Woodland Trust, they've arrived today at our depot and will be out for delivery tomorrow. Do you want some? Where should I send them?' (HA Grants Manager, Email, March 2018).*

Hence at the start of my fieldwork, opportunities to create '***safer and nicer spaces'*** were theoretically plentiful but, as the PAR projects illustrated, practically hard to reach because of a lack of coordination and capacity.

In addition, wildlife engagement officers, from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, BugLife, FrogLife and Butterfly Conservation, all have specific national funding to work in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation but required my invitation to Heckley Hub's family fun-day (where we had a 'Let's get into Nature Space' in October 2017) as an introduction to Colvin. All the officers were delighted to have this opportunity and I was told by one of them that they had tried to make contact before but there was 'a communication breakdown'. On hearing this, colleagues admitted it was often difficult to follow up on messages which didn't seem to have immediate relevance. This raises the question of how these wildlife 'community engagement' projects access other similar neighbourhoods.

One of the ways, I later observed, is through events such as the city-wide *Glasgow Wildlife Garden Festival May -June 2018* which, following the October event, held an afternoon at both Heckley Hub and Marig Community Garden. Although these events are good for awareness raising, I speculated on the likelihood of double-counting contacts in funding reports if all the outreach agencies were present at each event. Although this is inevitable, it raises the question of duplicating resources. Talking about this with the Senior Countryside Ranger she agreed, noting that competition between providers can also lead to distorted reporting.

> *'Organisations are always wanting to blow their own trumpet but not necessarily wanting to blow the trumpet of all the partners. So, you*

> *know, a lot of the time, they claim ownership of a project that often can be, you know, a mixed bag of people' (Senior Countryside Ranger, Interview, November 2018).*

Moreover, these 'pop-up' activities do not facilitate improving local greenspace as biodiverse habitats, which requires a more sustained workplan of activity with local groups and officer input. In our post-interview email exchange, the Ranger acknowledged that our conversation had got her 'creative juices flowing'.

> *'I'm going to have a brain storming session with my team at our December monthly meeting to see how we can better delivery towards the Thriving Places' (Senior Countryside Ranger, Email, November 2018).*

When I searched for the team again in June 2019, I found a dedicated webpage with a named contact and a specific section on 'Supporting Communities in Greening Glasgow' with reference to Thriving Places.

Glasgow's Stalled Spaces programme

The Stalled Spaces programme of grants has become popular in encouraging community greenspace projects, and I have included it in my map as a social world that straddles Development & Regeneration Services and the environmental grants arena. However, as noted in Chapter Three (section 3.4.3), the very nature of its short-termism risks perpetuating a practice of greenspace dysfunction. This is illustrated by the unused Disc Golf course at the Arden field, and numerous other abandoned projects across Glasgow which might have benefited from more coordinated support.

Nevertheless, the programme has an appeal and, as Box 6.3 highlighted, provided a pretext to bring organisations together, from which we were able to consolidate the narrative for '*safer and nicer spaces*'; which in turn acted as the catalyst for *Colvin Greenspace Network*. Although there remained challenges for community groups to work collaboratively to access the grant, this underscores the potential for developing the programme.

7.4.2 *'Meeting CCF targets'*

The Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) is a powerful nonhuman actant which has normalised a behavioural change, climate mitigation narrative. However, as well as raising climate justice concerns in relation to the Fund's objectives in low-

income community projects, I highlighted how these groups often find carbon communication a hindrance to engagement, and value health and wellbeing outcomes over carbon savings (Changeworks, 2015; Cinderby et al., 2014; 2016; Dunkley & Franklin, 2017; KSB, 2015; Meyerricks, 2015). This section unpacks how '*meeting CCF targets*' delimited greenspace actions to create '*safer and nicer spaces*' within Colvin neighbourhood arena.

The PAR projects identified how, within the social world of the Connecting Colvin network, food growing was seen a separate activity to creating '*safer and nicer spaces*'.

> '*Just transforming derelict green space into nice green space, and I don't think that needs to be particularly extravagant, it just needs to make it looked after, cared for, make people feel that they are valued, because their surroundings are nice*' (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Interview 2, January 2019).

Yet, the two greenspace organisations in the arena of Colvin neighbourhood (Heckley Hub and Marig Community Garden) were primarily funded for their community food growing and carbon reduction programmes. Moreover, the demands of '*meeting CCF targets*' precluded them from diversifying to wider greenspace aspirations. Keith (the CCF worker for Heckely Hub) had considerable environmental and CCF knowledge from other projects, while Lynne (the manager for Marig Community Garden) had managed community projects in International Development but was new to CCF. Both had been in Colvin for less than a year and shared three frustrations.

First, with the climate justice implications of expecting behavioural change from low carbon users.

> '*And I mean, there's a questionnaire we're supposed to be filling out with people, and I've phoned up CCF so many times and said, look, do I have to do this? I'm just mortified that we would need to be asking people these questions, who have pretty much zero carbon footprint to start with, and you should really be asking these questions to the people who are driving four by fours …But instead, we're saying, do you buy goods with excess packaging, do you do this, to people who've only got access to their local shop along the road*' (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Interview 1, November 2018).

Second, with how onerous and misleading carbon calculations were to report.

> *'The Climate Challenge Fund's approach to calculating carbon, in my experience is broken. It just doesn't reflect accurately what's happening on the ground. It's very easy to state you have done x and y but in reality that's not the case….what we do on the ground and what's told to the government, the relationship between those two might be fundamentally different. For example, the 3:1 ratio is agricultural level growing. When you build a garden in a school you're not going to get that-but that's the calculation they use. So, therefore the numbers are much higher than they actually are in reality' (Keith, CCF Worker, Heckley Hub, Interview, April 2018).*

Third, with how the pressure of **'meeting CCF targets'** fuels competition between organisations.

> *'The CCF project is a prime example of siloing, there are two other projects near us who are CCF funded, same fund, similar area, so what do you do, you are all competing. We were successful, unfortunately they were not, so their charity, their organisation will now no longer exist. So, the aspect of partnership in that atmosphere is not really possible' (Keith, CCF Worker, Heckley Hub, Interview, April 2018).*

These concerns reflect numerous conversations I and others have had with CCF funded projects (see also: Dunkley & Franklin, 2017; Fifield, 2016; Meyerricks, 2015; Traill, 2018). Notwithstanding, Keith and Lynne also brought fresh perspectives and energies to the social world of Connecting Colvin and thereby opportunities for greenspace action. Because of their previous experiences, they were both keen to respond to creating **'safer and nicer spaces'**. For Keith, his understanding of greenspace engagement and expertise in schools made him keen to support the *MarigSpace* project even though it was beyond his remit.

> *'You can see that the legacy of many CCF projects across the city and across Edinburgh where I was working before, every school has wooden planters for growing in the middle of the school and they are not used. What we built is an interactive space where people can play, people can sit on grass, there is no grass in this playground, we built grass. And they have got trees and they are alive because there is more to them. That's not allowed in CCF' (Keith, CCF Worker, Heckley Hub, Interview, April 2018).*

For Lynne, when she arrived at the garden, she met a number of challenges. Although it had a good reputation for its growing achievements and some loyal volunteers, the garden had engendered a sense of conditionality and gatekeeping which Lynne was keen to dismantle. For example, the garden was

only open a few days a week and people felt they could only enter for specific sessions and tasks.

> *'I find the Garden, it's more skills that are needed, but it's trying to get people to feel, it is something that they can come and share, and be involved in, and that's my challenge, is to get people feeling they can come and feel welcome and part of, and active'* (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Interview 1, November 2018).

Moreover, as already noted, Lynne felt compromised by **'meeting CCF targets'** which she felt undermined relationship building and hindered fostering aesthetic appreciation and wider greenspace aspirations.

> *'Wouldn't it be nice just to have some benches here, just somewhere? There's a nice view from here, people could just come and sit and could do this. But, we've got to put all these beds in, because we've got to grow stuff'*

> *'But that's what you keep hearing, oh but they give us lots of money. But what's the point in having lots of money if you then can't actually do what you want? If you set up what your organisation should be doing, not doing much of it because you're so busy trying to fulfil the CCF goals, which are kind of at polar odds to the community goals that you've got. And you're kind of pushing the community aside and saying, but we've got to do this to get the money, so that we can do this. And we'll grow potatoes, coz we've got to grow potatoes, coz we've got to weigh them – it's crazy!'* (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Interview 2, January 2019).

This tension between creating '**safer and nicer spaces'** and **'meeting CCF targets'** were crystallised by *Make Marig Muddy*.

> *'I think it's fantastic what [Make Marig Muddy] are doing down there, but they tend to think that we should be doing all sorts of things, because we're here, and we think, well actually, we've only got so many hours in a day, and we would love to do it, but we can't physically do it, because we haven't got the money, it doesn't necessarily fit with our funders aspirations, and the staff are already over-stretched as it is'* (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Interview 1, November 2018).

Even so, through the process of the PAR projects, Lynne was able to reconsider her organisation's ambition as outlined in our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019.

> *'[Make Marig Muddy] encouraged me to look at ways we could enhance our section of the field - not to put in a market garden (yet) as previous plans had drawn up - but to simply make it pretty for dog walkers and*

> *residents overlooking it. A bit by bit approach is how we are taking it - so imagine the entrance to the field - not as it is now but with a wild flower meadow down the left-hand border and the beds on the right brimming with herbs and flowers. This will hopefully give a taster of what's possible and get people enthused to believe that we mean business and that together we can make things happen'* (Lynne, Marig Community Garden Manager, Thriving Places Steering Group: Presentation, March 2019).

Following this, Lynne installed a 'secret garden gate' between Marig Community Garden and the 'wee field'; and, as part of the garden's open day in June, Box 7.5 describes how she asked me to gauge local interest in developing their plot as *'an outdoor community space'*.

Box 7.5: Marig Community Garden open-day - 'wee field' engagement, June 2019

It's all very haphazard. Lynne only asks me a couple of weeks beforehand if I can arrange some activities in the 'wee field' to run alongside the garden open day. She's had different groups of corporate volunteers who have done a lot of restructuring to the garden and erected a 'secret gate' to the wee field!

Of course, I say 'yes' and ring [countryside ranger] to see if they can lend a hand. We arrange some stalls, logs and den building; and Butterfly Conservation come along to help with bug and butterfly spotting.

The day is warm and sunny – always a help!

We have at least 20 families in the field and we get a great response for lots of doable (as well as a few undoable) ideas. I also get 11 residents who give me their details and say they are keen to volunteer!!!

I wish Sophie could see this…but when I spoke to her she didn't want to come….

Lynne is really grateful and sees the day as an endorsement of what she wants to do - without drawing too much attention from her managers or funders: 'just some simple guerrilla tactics – beauty on a shoestring!'

My only concern is whether anything will happen at all…

(SF, Fieldnotes & email correspondence, June 2019).

For Heckley Hub, in April 2019, I received a telephone call from Ann (the manager) to tell me that CCF had not renewed their funding. Rather than the tone of devastation I was expecting, she sounded pragmatic. Ann said that she had half expected it and had already prepared for redundancies, 'taking the opportunity to clear the rest of the dead wood and focus on new stuff' – which included the canal path and training in landscaping and horticultural skills.

Thus, by the end of my fieldwork, both Marig Community Garden and Heckley Hub greenspace organisations had reassessed their objectives and were pursuing alternative opportunities to *'improve the quality of existing greenspace'*.

7.4.3 Section summary

This section first highlighted the tensions between the funding opportunities for greenspace action, which circulated at a meso scale from the environmental grants arena, and the realities of access and coordination from the social world(s) of the Connecting Colvin network. I also noted the number of wildlife agencies funded to outreach areas of multiple deprivation, which may portray a picture of activity but risks masking the extent of greenspace inequality. Insights into the social worlds of Heckley Hub and Marig Community Garden then conveyed how the Climate Challenge Fund created a path dependency of *'meeting CCF targets'* which superseded local aspirations for *'safer and nicer spaces'*. Notwithstanding, the PAR projects served as a catalyst for reappraising the power relations between these two competing repertoires.

7.5   Colvin neighbourhood, arts grants & Glasgow action research arenas: '*poverty safari*' with '*authentic action research*'

This section considers the influence of arts-based grants and Glasgow action research arenas through the oppositional interpretative repertoires of '*poverty safari*' with '*authentic action research*'. The latter is the aim of action research (Heron & Reason, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 2007); while '*poverty safari*', and the associated subject positions of insider-outsider, came into prominence during this study as the critical antithesis. I first summarise the emergence of '*poverty safari*' as a critique of the third sector and particularly top-down community development initiatives and arts-based grants. I then summarise the range of '*authentic action research*' activities, including my own, that were conducted with (or on?) the social world of Connecting Colvin.

7.5.1 *'Poverty safari'*

My fieldwork coincided with the publication of Darren McGarvey's (2017) *Poverty Safari: Understanding the anger of Britain's underclass*, which gives a raw account of growing up in Pollok, Glasgow. His book was awarded the 2018 Orwell Prize for Political Writing and gives voice to the pervasive resentment (which outsiders often confuse with apathy) towards the trail of initiatives 'parachuted' onto deprived neighbourhoods from a 'self-perpetuating poverty industry'.

> '*This sector, which comprises arts, the media, charities and NGOs, behaves much like an imperial power; poorer communities are viewed as primitive cultures that need to be modernised, retooled and upskilled…It's a steady procession of well-meaning students, academics and professionals, descending into the bowels of poverty, taking what they need before retreating to their enclave to examine the artefacts they retrieved on the safari*' (McGarvey, 2017:98).

Throughout summer 2018, I heard McGarvey's name everywhere in the mainstream media: he was appearing on talk-shows, book festivals and conferences, including Scotland's Regeneration Forum's Annual Conference

where he gave a talk titled *'Whose Regeneration?* (SURF, 2018). In it, he requested the audience to have more humility and 'immerse' themselves in a community in order to respond to local needs and understand the psychological stresses of poverty.

As part of his working-class treatise, McGarvey (2017:68) cites Tom Leonard's (1980) satirical poem *liaison coordinator,* written in Glaswegian dialect, to criticise middle-class professionals who are 'exploitative and patronising'. Although McGarvey acknowledges this is a generalisation, he argues that the stereotype has become entrenched, making genuine dialogue harder. This observation was confirmed by how I was introduced to his work. Loki (McGarvey's local rapper name) was brought to my attention by Tony, a prominent local activist. Tony had just written an open email to the Connecting Colvin network challenging the efficacy of Thriving Places and the lack of action in addressing food poverty and local needs.

> *'Hi there,*
>
> *I am a local community activist and the founder of two of the highest liked voluntary social media pages that serve the [Colvin] community.*
>
> *With the greatest of respect I have no idea what you guys are doing in this community apart from sending out e-mails. What is Connecting Colvin actually doing to help this community on the ground?' (Tony, Community Activist, Email, April 2018).*

To him, Thriving Places and a community connector were another example of ineffectual interventions and the latest version of *liaison coordinator* which ignores basic material needs. In a consequent email conversation between us, he wrote:

> *'I am busy, (I am being truthful not arrogant) doing real things every day that help local people on the ground, anti-social behaviour, food and fuel poverty, housing issues, court issues, physical health issues, mental health support…'(Tony, Community Activist, Email, April 2018).*

His angry words echoed McGarvey's and circulated in local Facebook chats with more support than condemnation.

7.5.2 Arts grants arena & legacy

McGarvey first coined the phrase *'poverty safari'* in 2016, reacting to a grant given from Creative Scotland to an artist/activist/lecturer who was to spend a year restricted to living in Glasgow as a way of highlighting spatial inequality. The contemporary art project was, perhaps unwisely, called the Glasgow Effect: a term often used to describe Glasgow's high levels of excess mortality (Walsh et al., 2016). McGarvey saw this as a cruel parody and another example of middle-class privilege 'attempting to mimic the painful reality of many Glaswegian lives' (McGarvey, 2017:204). Picking up on its publicity as an, 'action research project', 'to test the limits of a sustainable practice', he also writes how these phrases are 'high status language that sets alarm bells ringing'.

> *'Her concerns, pertinent as they might have been, were not shared in those communities where people have little time or headspace to consider carbon footprints' (McGarvey, 2017:203).*

Similarly, Tony, spoke disparagingly about an architect, linked to the Glasgow School of Art, who was initially employed by Marig Co to design the eco self-build community hub (see section 5.4). He felt that Marig Co had wasted 'tens of thousands of pounds for architectural drawings that are now totally useless', and pointed out that none of the pilot self-build projects were functional despite the environmental and local community awards received. When I asked Lucy about these claims, she wasn't keen to talk about the projects at first. Initially the Vice-Chair of Marig Co, now the Chair and only remaining original Board member, she was still coming to terms with the legacy. However, as we got to know each other better, she recalled spending days collecting empty food tins as recycled material for one of the projects and 'crushing them like someone stupid'.

There was also an arts project on the site earmarked for the community hub to 'create a new living myth' (Findlay, 2018), but which Tony described as:

> *'They buried 356 wee dolls in a hole in the ground costing £23,000 to give us memories' (Tony, Community Activist, Interview, April 2018).*

The same architect had been the subject of a recent newspaper article and blog (Findlay, 2018) which questioned the merit of his 'transformational long-term

projects' and, quoting Tony, implied they were an example of the 'poverty industry'. Supported by Creative Scotland, a Glasgow University and a Lottery grant, the architect's latest project, in another neighbourhood, was a rope sculpture to commemorate the shipyard industry. This was burnt down by local young people two days after it was erected. In the article, the architect refuted his work demonstrated the '***poverty safari'*** narrative, stating that in both Glasgow neighbourhoods he had given a long-term commitment to the area:

> *'Either by being directly employed and managed by a local group or based my practice there and tried to invest in the place' (Findlay, 2018).*

In Colvin, the local rector was ordained in 2008 and it was initially his vision to build the carbon neutral 'urban sanctuary'. When interviewed, he spoke about the architect contacting him through word of mouth and together they planned to create the community self-build project from reclaimed materials, and established Marig Co for this purpose.

> *'And I loved this idea...because you're building it out of rubbish, you're using the rubbish rather than binning the rubbish; and using local people who are often regarded as kind of rubbish by society and you give them skills and confidence to say, we've built a building. And then going forward that is useful and is then efficient and meets people's needs... so that would've been the dream' (Rector/ Initial Chair Marig Co, Interview, May 2018).*

When I asked around, there were very few people who remembered the buried art project less than five years previous, but many were grateful for the construction skills that were taught over a three-year period by Marig Co, funded as part of the self-build programme. After the land failed to be secured in 2016, the rector dropped the plans and withdrew from Marig Co. Although he knew and respected Tony'*s* opinion, the rector spoke of his frustration and stress at having to respond to local critics, and a 'community dynamic that is so profoundly suspicious of any spending of money'.

> *'And I understand the logic that looks back and says Marig Co has spent £500,000 in the last seven years, what has been achieved, you've wasted, you've spent £100,000 on plans for a building that is never going to exist. And it's like well, if you want a building there is no other option but to spend money speculatively because you can't get planning permission for an unplanned building, you can't get funding for a building without planning permission. It all goes back to the fact it all needs to come*

> *together. And it takes time. And I think people are quite impatient and*
> *sceptical and make it more likely that things don't happen, so they sadly,*
> *I think, become a self-fulfilling prophecy of this kind of genuine concern*
> *that money isn't being wasted probably actually makes it more likely to*
> *be wasted' (Rector/ Initial Chair Marig Co, Interview, May 2018).*

Equally, he now reflects that as his first ministry, 'middle-class' and new to the neighbourhood, he was perhaps 'naïve' and 'overly ambitious'.

> *'We were trying to work with people who for the last forty years had*
> *been crushed by a lack of work and aspiration. And I think that has been*
> *telling' (Rector/ Initial Chair Marig Co, Interview, May 2018).*

'Poverty safari' encapsulates the overall wariness of outsiders, new initiatives and especially the suspicion of arts-based projects and their legacy. Similarly, it raises the dissonance between an unintelligible narrative of 'sustainable practice' and a necessity for employability skills. In the case of Marig Co, what was valued was the opportunity to develop practical skills, but it is undeniable that the few people who were paid were external professionals: including the architect, sustainable build manager, accountant and trainers funded by the Scottish Ecological Design Association. The rector ended our interview reconciled to working at a more relational level of need.

> *'And yeah the way forward I don't know. So, for me part of it is that*
> *being, and just trying to understand the place a whole lot more, and*
> *perhaps maybe not terribly hopefully, I don't know, but just recognising*
> *that some things maybe aren't going to change very much. But actually,*
> *if you're still here on a human level making those interactions and*
> *connections between individuals that's all you can do' (Rector/ Initial*
> *Chair Marig Co, Interview, May 2018).*

7.5.3 *'Authentic action research'*

In Chapter Five, I described how the definitions between action research, participatory research and participatory action research (PAR) can be blurred. I offered some clarification by differentiating between developing practitioner practice in the field (action research) and PAR methodology which foregrounds collaborating with community colleagues to address injustice (Brydon-Miller et al., 2013). At the end of Chapter Six, I justified my PAR 'extended epistemology' (Heron & Reason, 2008) and evaluated the PAR projects against Lincoln & Guba's (2007) authenticity criteria. This section situates my inquiry within the broader

practice of action research in Colvin; juxtaposed with the interpretative repertoire of '**poverty safari'**, to ask critical questions of how current action research, including my own, is identified and practiced.

> *'But most people, despite their noble intentions, were just passing through on a short-lived expedition. A safari of sorts, where the indigenous population is surveyed from a safe distance for a time'* (McGarvey, 2017:11).

Colvin has been the consistent focus of research activities because of its history of limited investment and health inequalities. I will first discuss the two largest research projects conducted in recent years by Glasgow Centre for Population Health and partners, followed by the role of community development student placements from the University of Glasgow.

Animating Assets 2014-2015

Animating Assets (GCPH & SCDC, 2015b), was an 18-month action research project to support asset-based approaches for health and wellbeing. Funded by the Scottish Government and local health improvement teams, it worked across several sites in Central Scotland with the aim of using appreciative inquiry to support collaborative ways of working, 'maximising capacity for communities and local partnerships' (GCPH & SCDC, 2015b:9). In Colvin, *Animating Assets* facilitated four local events and coordinated a digital diary which highlights how public health practitioners and community organisations valued meeting together, learning about each other and sharing ideas. The events served as the catalyst for establishing the Connecting Colvin network, which in turn supported the *Connecting Colvin Survey* (Connecting Colvin, 2016) discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

Thus, *Animating Assets* seems to have addressed Lincoln & Guba's (2007) criteria for authenticity. Equally, one could argue that it does not require '**authentic action research'** to recognise the value of networks to address 'poor connections and lack of awareness of each other' (GCPH & SCDC, 2015a:14); or to state that it is important to build relationships and be solution focused. Further, it is acknowledged that the 'language of assets' required explanation, and that encouraging positive conversations for collective action is just 'a new way of describing good "community development"' (GCPH & SCDC, 2015a:20).

The health improvement team funded a local organisation to coordinate the network between 2015 and 2017 but, at the time I began my participant observation, Connecting Colvin was barely functional. There was also clear frustration that no actions from the survey had been taken forward but no sense of how to address this. Poignantly two years on, the challenges *Animating Assets* identified, of time and resource constraints for organisations, and the fragility of partnerships because of political or historical issues, had not improved.

> *'To me there does seem to be some kind of block as to moving to the next … I felt that the first Connecting Colvin meeting I went to there was a lot of talk about all these things and a lot of frustration about you know, that there's a lot of talk you know…but I don't know if it's that people don't want to take ownership of actually doing the plan and taking it forward or , I'm not sure…something needs to happen' (Donna, Marig Co, Interview, June 2017).*

> *'And so therefore you just had a, kind of, drift in to, back into the way they were before. Just doing their own thing and so [Connecting Colvin] became this. Yeah, some people will come along to it, but it's not got an agenda, it's not got a plan, it's not got a vision. And that's where it's at, at the moment' (Health Improvement Senior, Interview 1, November 2017).*

However, with the Health Improvement Senior chairing the network meetings from January 2018, and working alongside Kate as the Thriving Places community connector, the forum was reinvigorated as an information sharing hub from which we could create the *Colvin Greenspace Network* PAR project. The key enabler, therefore, seems to have been funding from health improvement for the *Connecting Colvin Survey, and* providing community development support to broker organisational relationships within the network. This was slowly beginning to deliver small but tangible local impacts in the spirit of *Resilience Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital.*

Weathering Change 2014-2016

Between 2014 and 2016, the Connecting Colvin social world was also involved in a series of action research activities funded by Glasgow's Resilience Strategy team and in collaboration with Glasgow Centre for Population Health. The findings from the community consultation and workshops are published in *Weathering Change: community resilience in the face of climate change* (GCPH,

2018a). The report reiterates wider findings (see Chapter One) by acknowledging that focusing on climate change was not an effective engagement tool and was not an important local concern for low-income groups who also experience the most financial and infrastructural barriers to low-carbon practices.[35] Instead, the same concerns from the *Connecting Colvin Survey* of '**being forgotten**' were repeated: specifically in relation to the lack of decent facilities, quality of parks, bus services, food options and youth activities. In addition, it identifies consultation fatigue; the fragility of organisational partnerships; and that 'encouraging local participation, project buy-in and facilitating joint work' was challenging (GCPH, 2018a:37). Thus, the report states the need for dedicated community development staff and statutory agencies to work differently.

> *'There is a pressing need for collaboration and resource pooling to find productive uses for vacant and derelict land, to link up existing growing projects, to improve active travel and to incorporate climate change thinking into future placemaking processes' (GCPH, 2018a:3).*

As such, the *Weathering Change* report (GCPH, 2018a) can also be regarded as a series of recommendations to help meet the three requirements to address greenspace inequality and promote *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change*.

The report was shared at *Glasgow's Healthier Future Forum 21, Resilience in Glasgow: Where next?* (GCPH, 2018b) and I was able to speak to the principal research officers later that month. In our interview, they were candid about the specific challenges of this project: which involved multiple partners and stakeholders, and topics that did not immediately resonate with local people.

> *'I do feel a bit like, okay, we've done this. So what?...And now I suppose to some extent we've moved on to other bits of work' (Public Health Researcher, Interview, May 2018).*

Hence, there was also a recognition of the tensions between wanting to learn how to approach the topics of climate change and resilience through action research, and not having the 'levers of action' to encourage third sector and

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[35] Given the raised awareness of the climate emergency during 2019, concerns about climate change may have increased.

public sector actors to work more effectively to 'operationalise the learning' (Public Health Researcher, Interview, May 2018). This was underscored with the admission of 'not knowing very much about Thriving Places' because another social policy research hub was undertaking action research with the community planning partnerships. These factors may have contributed to the delay in finalising the report and the omission of inviting participating community organisations to the forum. When I raised this, the information was received with concern and regret, and the organisations were duly contacted with an apology and copy of the report.

Community Development, University of Glasgow

The third significant actor in the arena of '***authentic action research***' is the social world of Community Development studies based in the School of Education, University of Glasgow. As noted in Chapter Four, their programmes have been instrumental in informing community practice and encouraging grassroots participation since the 1970s. Currently, this is through the *Activate Introduction Programme* (University of Glasgow, 2019) which included six of my community colleagues. The department supports a steady stream of practitioners in community placements across the city and each placement provides invaluable additional capacity to community organisations. But in the social world of Connecting Colvin, current third year students also spoke about fluctuating supervision and 'pointless projects' with no follow up.

> *'I think, well I think they need to stop. I think research for research sake for a start, right, is a horrible thing. Nobody is learning anything from that and nobody's gaining anything from it. So, all the kind of research that they make us do for nothing is pointless. Make us do something worthwhile, right' (Community Development Student 1, Interview, April 2018).*

For these students, they positively channelled their frustration and agreed with their lecturers to work as a group to create a practical local resource which was 'worthwhile'.

The students also mentioned the Colvin Community Development Day facilitated by a lecturer from the Community Development programme in June 2016. The event was very enjoyable, raised a lot of issues and engaged particularly well

with young people. However, no one was aware of any formal feedback from the event. Directly referring to this, Kate, the community connector was adamant that our *Colvin Greenspace Network* PAR workshops should have clear actions 'and not just be a fun development day' (SF, Fieldnote, September 2018).

There were also at least five other externally funded one-off pieces of action research I observed while conducting my own. This included a series of 'citizen science projects', funded by Scottish Canals along different sections of the National Cycle Route and canal path (on the opposite side to the *HPAG* Heckley to Marig route). Partly because of poor publicity, the first year students conducting the project struggled to find any participants, and although the principal researcher acknowledged the project could have been delivered in a more effective way, this is what had been funded and would contribute to 'big data analysis' (SF, Fieldnote, March 2018).

Started during Phase 4 of my fieldwork, the latest of these action research projects was a set of five events, over three months, to support partnership working between residents and the Thriving Places initiative. Under the auspices of the 'Place Principle' (SCDC, 2019d; Scottish Government 2019d), the literature promotes reformist community practice (Chanan & Miller, 2013) to facilitate improved collaboration between public, private, third sector and communities for place-based regeneration. Although valid in identifying shortfalls in existing community planning structures, the project struggled to find four interested residents, and needed to extend its timeline. This perhaps suggests a mismatch between its aspirations for 'community empowerment' and 'community led planning' and the practical concerns of already overly stretched community colleagues.

This account serves to illustrate the multiple social worlds of action research and their plurality of meanings and practice that acted on the social world of the Connecting Colvin network. Moreover, the procession of research projects did not seem connected to each other or to community colleagues. This arguably reflects McGarvey's (2017) complaint of activities that are 'parachuted' in and *Tony's* criticism of a 'poverty industry' and 'poverty vultures'.

> *'[Colvin] is a feeding ground for consultants, architects, administrators, and people in higher education who come here to learn about poverty'* *(Tony, Community Activist, Email, April 2018).*

Notwithstanding the merits of individual projects, my impression was that they were often conducted along parallel lines to the organisations' social worlds of activities and commitment: to be tolerated but not necessarily integrated - and therefore easily '*forgotten*'.

However, *Animating Assets* and *Weathering Change* did provide the context for my own project: the former establishing the principles of asset-based approaches; and the latter marking new spaces to explore greenspace inequality and the discourses of resilience. In addition, the canal footpath survey (Petrov, 2017), conducted by a postgraduate in community development, could easily have become another '*forgotten*' project but instead provided the evidence and justification to form the *HPAG*. A possible way forward, therefore, is to find more ways to connect hitherto fragmented action research projects which cover both practitioner (developing practice) and community-led (challenging injustice) objectives.

> *'So, the stuff about the Place Principle is more about what [organisation A] do and what they want from the Scottish Government - there's a very small team and they do what they do'*
>
> *'And [organisation B] - great, great stats, great information, great figures...But you know, I think you can spend all your life counting beans and forget to plant some'* *(Health Improvement Senior, Interview 2, March 2019).*

Feedback from reading draft chapter, May 2019

'Your paper is on the ball... think because it hits home' (Kirsty, Email).

'It makes me feel a bit sad because while all this is happening nothing gets done. Somehow we need to find a way to get everyone together, to work in real collaboration' (Kim, Email).

7.5.4 Negotiating the insider-outsider dynamics continued

McGarvey's voice felt like a gunshot from the subject position of the researched, which is usually masked or filtered by the position of the researcher. I read McGarvey's book between Phases 2 and 3 of the PAR projects and for a few weeks was frozen with fear: that I too could be condemned as a middle-class academic, appropriating 'environmental justice' for my own ambition; and introducing yet another term to reinforce the obvious experiences of inequality.

Yet, by the end of his book McGarvey is more contrite, acknowledging the complexity of the insider-outsider dynamics and the need to take responsibility for our prejudices and actions in order to find common ground; highlighting the risk of self-righteous anger or complacency on multiple levels.

> *'I was so consumed by my own anger and moral certainty, it had blinded me to the fact that Ellie Harrison, in all her middle-class glory, was not an enemy but an ally in the war I'd been fighting all my life' (McGarvey, 2017:213).*

I eventually allowed myself to be reassured by McGarvey's account of the Pollok Free State campaign (referred to in Chapter Four), which he observed growing up in Pollok and regards as 'the epitome of community ethics' (McGarvey, 2017:209). He acknowledges that when he investigated Ellie Harrison's motivations, they were not dissimilar to the politics of the Pollok Free State (or my own). That is, the 'deep principles of social equality, political participation and the environment' (McGarvey, 2017:209) are deeply entwined. Be that as it may, practising these politics can appear 'detached and indulgent' and it is therefore beholden on the outsider to situate them in local practical concerns.

Mine was a new approach with the Connecting Colvin social world. My model of participatory action research began with an open socio-environmental agenda and was intended to be grassroots and self-directing. This does not fit neatly with time-limited action research projects funded with specific objectives and directed towards 'stories of success' (a theme I explore in the next chapter). Similarly, I adopted a more pro-active researcher positionality (Herr & Anderson, 2015) than the other action research projects discussed, wanting to capitalise on the privileges of being an outsider by asking the stupid questions and building new relations.

However, this also makes negotiating the insider-outsider dynamics more complex, as explored through my researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships (Frisby, 2006) at the end of Chapter Six. Yet, perhaps this complexity, and consequent outsider discomfort, needs to be embraced if we are to overcome the stereotype of middle-class safarist: whether as practitioner, researcher or both. Following twenty months of weekly fieldwork, this unsolicited text was received after a farewell drink.

> *'Shiv, the people who actually matter in [Colvin] (community) respect you and some are a wee bit weiry because someone (outsider) is actually taking an interest. It's new!….You are valued and are seen as trying to help the community. Not just for your own benefit ie funding/wage'* *(Kirsty, Text, February 2019).*

The comment is generous and reflects the specific time and place of endings. Nevertheless, it summarises the paradox explored in this section. I was touched by the sentiment, saddened by the comparisons, *and* of course also delighted I had such a perfect quote for my thesis.

7.6 Enablers & constraints to greenspace aspirations & actions

This last section draws on the conceptualisation of the forms, spaces and levels of power (see section 4.3) to explicate the findings from Chapters Six and Seven and fully address my research question 1.

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

In answer to my research question 1a, Chapter Six traced the five PAR projects and described the greenspace aspirations that transpired, with Figure 6.5 (reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark) illustrating the enablers and constraints to their greenspace actions. The PAR projects offered non-directive 'popular spaces' (Cornwall, 2004) for envisioning: in which community colleagues created a collective desire to improve their greenspace as a natural asset and co-constructed narratives for greenspace action. However, by exploring the micro-organisational processes, I identified individual and organisational resilience factors that constrained greenspace aspirations, especially in relation to accessing environmental grants for further resources.

The key learning for me, is how crucial it is to facilitate previously 'invisibled' (Clarke, 2005) voices to be heard. As well as the overall need to *'improve the quality of existing greenspace'* and make them *'safer & nicer spaces'*; local mothers energetically highlighted the lack of access to *'outdoor play'*, and thereby the need to *'increase greenspace accessibility'* and *'reclaim derelict land for community benefit'*.

Equally, pivotal to 'opening communicative spaces' (Kemmis, 2008) for greenspace aspirations, was the introduction of new actors instigated by the Thriving Places initiative and the 2017 Council Elections. This positively coincided with the arrival of new managers in the two greenspace organisations of Heckley Hub and Marig Community Garden. The combination of new voices helped to soften a legacy of fragile relations within the Connecting Colvin network, which in turn facilitated the formation of *Colvin Greenspace Network*.

> *'It's very hard for organisations here to say nice things about other organisations and that's improved, it's much more positive' (Arden Resource Centre Managers, Interview, July 2018).*

Notwithstanding, the overriding constraint was the operational disconnect between the Community Planning Partnership and the Thriving Places initiative, Land & Environmental Services and Development & Regeneration Services. This was the justification for requesting a link worker to help tip the balance in favour of local aspirations, the outcome of which is discussed in the following chapter.

In order to answer my research sub-question 1b, this chapter has explored the interwoven tensions between different social worlds and arenas that acted on local greenspace at a meso neighbourhood and city scale during the project. By exploring the oppositional interpretative repertoires and subjectivities which circulated simultaneously, I have sought to metaphorically layer the micro analysis presented in Chapter Six and expose the power relations that permeated our greenspace actions.

The repertoires of *'being forgotten'* with *'community engagement'* highlighted how Glasgow local authority arena retained bureaucratic power 'to set the agenda' (Lukes, 2005), while ascribing a powerless subjectivity to the Colvin neighbourhood arena. This raises a paradoxical 'Catch-22' for the social worlds

between the two and reflects the 'tyranny of participation' debate explored in Chapter Four. On the one hand '***community engagement'*** from the local authority arena is regarded as top-down tokenism and therefore '***what's the point'***; on the other, it is the only form of participatory action that is encouraged and consequently accepted within Colvin's social worlds as giving voice so as *not* to be '***forgotten'***. This thorny dilemma is illustrated by the Connecting Colvin Survey and the *Arden Play Campaign* described in Chapter Six.

Further, the *Arden Play Campaign* playpark meeting, described in Box 6.4, illustrates how the dominant local authority arena can use procedures to foster a sense of powerlessness in Colvin's social worlds. Using the combination of terminology from Lukes' (2005) and Gaventa's (2004) three forms of power: as ability 'to command' (visible); 'set the agenda' ('hidden'); or 'ideological power' ('invisible'), we can see how the group's response to carry out further '***community engagement'*** fits with the third form of internalised unconscious coercion and enacts Gramscian 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971).

Interestingly, Weakley & Escobar (2018) identify a trend of more proactive engagement between elected members and community planning officials across Scotland. In Colvin, the ward councillors did become important mediators between the local authority and neighbourhood arenas. Nevertheless, their role is ambiguous: able to instigate a conversation because of their relative power position in the local authority arena; but not necessarily able to influence continuing dialogue, which remains in the power of the corporate social worlds and their officials who 'set the agenda' ('invisible').

Similarly, local aspirations for '***safer and nicer spaces'*** were undermined by the distorted dominance, or 'power to command' ('visible'), of the Climate Challenge Fund's '***meeting CCF targets'*** exerted from the environmental grants arena.

Finally, continuing my consideration of the researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships (Frisby, 2006), placing the paradoxical repertoires of '***poverty safari'*** with '***authentic action research'*** raised the spectre of perpetuating the subaltern community, or 'ideological power' ('invisible').

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the pervading sense of being stuck in the space between greenspace aspiration and action, community colleagues did achieve small gains, and Chapter Eight considers the implications for community empowerment, environmental justice and community resiliences.

Chapter 8: Community empowerment for environmental justice & community resiliences

8.1   Introduction

Chapters Six and Seven illustrated the enablers and constraints to greenspace aspirations and actions that acted within and between the social world(s) of the Connecting Colvin network and the arenas of Glasgow local authority, environmental grants, arts grants, and action research practice. This chapter returns to a trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to extrapolate the implications for community empowerment and community resiliences.

The chapter does this in four parts. First, I revisit Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation to interpret my findings hitherto presented from Phases 1 to 4 of my fieldwork.

Second, I extend my meso-neighbourhood analysis, in order to consider the procedural opportunities and challenges to addressing greenspace inequality. I do this by presenting the deliberation and consequent outcomes of *Colvin Greenspace Network* during Phase 5 of my fieldwork.

Third, I extend my micro-organisational analysis, to explicate the recognition dimension. Using the themes of 'pace and continuity' and 'stories of success', I reiterate the capacity constraints to parity of participation. I then include my observations on social capital and resilience factors to answer to my research question 2.

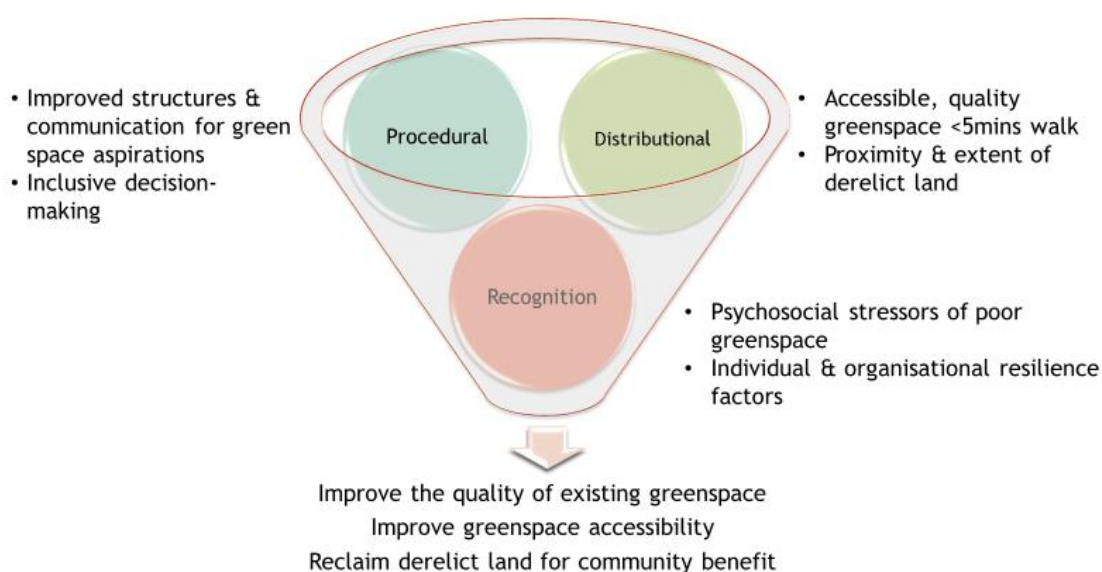*RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?*

Lastly, I situate the discussion within GoWell's (2011) two-tier model of empowerment, followed by a discussion on future possibilities for recognition to answer my research question 3.

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

8.2   Greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice

The call for *'safer & nicer spaces'* is no doubt echoed across post-industrial communities marginalised to poor greenspace quality and derelict land. In Chapter One, I offered Figure 1.1 (reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark) as a representation of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice at an urban scale. Figure 8.1 offers an updated version to specifically account for urban greenspace inequality as explored in this thesis.

- Improved structures & communication for green space aspirations
- Inclusive decision-making

Procedural   Distributional

Recognition

- Accessible, quality greenspace <5mins walk
- Proximity & extent of derelict land

- Psychosocial stressors of poor greenspace
- Individual & organisational resilience factors

Improve the quality of existing greenspace
Improve greenspace accessibility
Reclaim derelict land for community benefit

Figure 8.1: A trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality as an urban environmental injustice
Source: author's own.

From a distributional perspective, in Glasgow's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, Chapter Three detailed the triple jeopardy and identified poor greenspace quality, poor greenspace accessibility and proximity to high densities of derelict land as complicit in the practice of inequality. This is typified in Colvin and serves to reemphasise how 'generalised social injustices are manifest in environmental conditions' (Schlosberg, 2013:40).

Drawing on the findings from the PAR projects, the lens of distributional injustice can also be used to situate the friction between creating *'safer and nicer spaces'* and *'meeting CCF targets'*. That is, by illustrating the imbalance of pursuing individual carbon mitigation targets to the detriment of improving

the accessibility and quality of existing greenspace - without conditionality, in low-carbon neighbourhoods.

Procedurally, an environmental justice frame draws attention to the need for improved structures and coordination between the social worlds and arenas of Glasgow local authority and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This is fundamental to addressing the legacy of *'being forgotten'* and necessarily includes access to decision-makers in order to reform the less than adequate *'community engagement'*, and establish the foundations to more inclusive decision-making.

The recognition dimension underscores the psychosocial stressors of poor access to good quality greenspace and living in proximity to derelict and vacant land (Maantay, 2013; Maantay & Maroko, 2015). These serve to compound the individual and organisational resilience factors that constrain capacities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In addition, this framing positions the interpretative repertoire of *'poverty safari'* as pointing to the structural factors and discursive practices that contribute to marginalisation; and *'authentic action research'* as simultaneously wishing to be a critique and refute of elite voyeurism.

8.3   Procedural opportunities & challenges

Using Schlosberg's framing provides conceptual resources for understanding the different dimensions for community empowerment. In Chapter Four, I suggested that, in the context of low-income neighbourhoods and constrained capacities, the priority for community empowerment could be for shaping and directing decision-making (Jackson, 2001; Lightbody, 2017; SURF 2019b). In other words, the ability to claim one's own 'popular space' (Cornwall, 2004) and 'set the agenda' (Lukes, 2005), which aligns with the procedural dimension for environmental justice.

In Chapter Six, I described how the PAR projects and creation of *Colvin Greenspace Network* illustrated 'opening communicative spaces' (Kemmis, 2008) necessary for collective reflection and collaboration. This was followed in Chapter Seven by a discourse analysis of the powerful arenas which delimited local greenspace aspirations and action. Notwithstanding, it was evident towards

the latter half of my fieldwork that Glasgow's policy framework towards greenspace was consolidating, as indicated by the publication of the draft *Open Space Strategy* (GCC, October 2018a). Further, the restructuring of Land & Environmental Services to form Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services in April 2019, suggested a positive transformation of a key corporate social world to support the strategy, including its *Vision for Glasgow's Parks and Greenspaces* (GCC, 2019a) due to be published later that summer. Hence, in order to explore the evolving potential of addressing the procedural dimension of greenspace injustice, I agreed with Kate (Thriving Places Community Connector) to continue co-facilitating *Colvin Greenspace Network* as Phase 5 (May – June 2019) of my fieldwork.

This section therefore considers to what extent *Colvin Greenspace Network* was able to shift from creating a 'popular space' (Cornwall, 2004) for envisioning and 'opening communicative spaces' (Kemmis, 2008), during Phases 3 and 4 of my fieldwork (August 2018 – April 2019), to establishing the foundations for 'setting the agenda' (Lukes, 2005) as I exited the field at the end of Phase 5 (June 2019). I first highlight the opportunities for improved structures and coordination that arose following our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019 (described in section 6.5.2). Using further examples of '*community engagement*' during Phase 5, and the combined experiences of the PAR projects, as of September 2019 (given at a 'catch-up and handover' meeting), I then review the persistent challenges to accessing decision-makers and more inclusive decision-making.

8.3.1 Phase 5: *Colvin Greenspace Network* - Opportunities for improved structures & communication

As before, I use the present tense to convey the immediacy of the deliberation and action of the *Colvin Greenspace Network* PAR project.

Colvin Greenspace Network - Workshop 4, May 2019

Following our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019, and as agreed, I contact the new Sector Head of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services (N&S). After a short email dialogue, he confirms he will attend our next

Network meeting. To our delight, he is accompanied by the newly appointed Neighbourhoods & Liaison Manager and a Senior Parks & Development Manager. The Sector Head begins by explaining that his team aims to provide a *'neighbourhood model'* for community safety, street cleansing, parks and greenspace.

> *'Thirty, forty years ago everybody I think knew that well maintained and well used greenspaces led to a healthier happier longer life. Thirty, forty years ago you could have said it and could have thought it, but you can now absolutely prove it - that having well maintained greenspaces is the way forward' (Sector Head of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services, Greenspace Network Workshop 4, May 2019).*

Similarly, the Neighbourhoods & Liaison Manager stresses that her team is about improving links to local services. She tells us that our dedicated contact will be our current community safety officer, now renamed 'community coordinator' - who is also present and is well-known and liked.

> *'Well obviously a lot of people around the table know me, I've been here for years as community safety. My role has changed and we've now merged with Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services but it's the same focus for me in terms of making sure that everybody in the communities that I'm serving are getting what they need, try and direct them and get the assistance they need... It's dead interesting to hear the plans for some of these pockets of land and it would be great to see how these develop as we go on. And if there are any legal aspects as well, we'll do everything we can to progress that' (N&S Community Coordinator, Greenspace Network Workshop 4, May 2019).*

Including our guests and the two proactive councillors, the workshop has eighteen attendees. Referring to our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group (see Figure 6.5), community colleagues outline their greenspace aspirations and hitherto constraints to action. This now presents as a well-constructed argument and co-produced narrative of intent.

The Arden Play Campaign say, that although there is general talk about increasing opportunities for *'outdoor play'*, nothing has been coordinated. Heckley Hub note that Colvin is not included in the larger regeneration projects which are improving the canal path and green networks at either end of the neighbourhood. All community colleagues repeat that it is important to have a mechanism to inform the *Open Space Strategy: Local Context Analysis Stage 2*

and direct local priorities. The Senior Parks & Development Manager agrees and says she is hoping *Stage 2* will be more 'community focused with genuine consultation'. She also refers to the recently published *Vision for Glasgow's Parks and Greenspaces* (2019a) and says that with her new team, she hopes to extend the current 'Friends Forum', which supports the city's parks, to other greenspace groups like ourselves. Moreover, she hopes that the restructure will help resolve the common complaint of accessing relevant officers, especially as she now has responsibility for the countryside rangers and a part-time community engagement officer. The Sector Head nods encouragingly.

> *'So that is very much about engaging with groups like this, trying to understand what the problems are and join up what we do and hopefully get the biggest bang for our buck and try and make a difference in the community… I'm absolutely confident we can play an important role in a group like this – we don't have loads of money or resources but where we can bring resources we certainly will' (Sector Head of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services, Greenspace Network Workshop 4, May 2019).*

Someone cheers and the room laugh in camaraderie. We are so energised that people are keen to meet again next month to formalise a neighbourhood greenspace plan with short and medium-term objectives.

Colvin Greenspace Network - Workshop 5, June 2019

Our fifth workshop in June has twelve attendees, including the Senior Parks & Development Manager, and continues with positivity as we confirm our priority projects. We outline how each of them relate to national and local strategies, something which community colleagues are now familiar with. However, I notice how this is particularly welcomed by the Neighbourhoods & Sustainability officers, suggesting a worrying gap in their knowledge.

Two working groups are formalised: the Heckley-end and the Marig-end of Colvin. The Heckley-end will focus on the canal path which leads to a 'no-go' woodland area. Maureen (Deputy Manager of Heckley Hub) is the lead for the reinvigorated *Heckley Path Action Group*. It is warmly acknowledged that, following the initial 8 weekly sessions of path clearance at the beginning of the year, Heckley Hub has just received another grant from the area partnership's participatory budgeting awards. This reinforces that the project is valued locally and is about to enter its second phase of volunteer activity. The group discuss

how we can act as an endorsing voice to support larger grant applications in order to provide a more sustained volunteer programme. This could include training in soft landscaping and horticultural skills, and perhaps even create the interactive nature trail.

Still however, corporate stakeholder involvement, to address the hard landscaping and safety issues such as lighting, remains problematic. Maureen says that although they now have the correct contacts, they were told by a senior regeneration manager from Scottish Canals that with only four staff, he 'needs to focus on larger projects'. Reclaiming the 'no-go' woodland is proposed as a longer-term project for *'outdoor play'* possibly in partnership with Heckley Housing Association who, along with Colvin Housing Association, have recently joined the network.

Kate is the lead for the Marig-end which includes the Square, and as noted in section 6.4, this now has a dedicated Events Group organising free activities during the school holidays. There is some discussion about the dissolution of *Make Marig Muddy* before we return to the *Arden Play Campaign* as the focus for this working group. The Senior Parks & Development Manager says she is keen to provide officer support where she can and review any plans that we make.

Returning to my Social Worlds/Arenas map of *Connecting Colvin network & greenspace* (Figure 7.1 reproduced in the Thesis Bookmark), in which dotted lines are used to indicate the permeability of social worlds, the way that Land & Environmental Services has morphed into Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services does seem to suggest a significant reorientation. This is encapsulated by its new interpretative repertoire of a *'neighbourhood model'* and subject position of 'connector', which is evidently embraced by the officers who attended the May and June *Greenspace Network* workshops.

> *'So we're the connectors within that- so we hope that from that neighbourhood approach, to be able to present your voices within the larger organisations to signpost to get you to the right person and actually making a difference in local communities …In the past it was quite difficult to join the environmental and antisocial behaviour issues together. Now, with the new structure in Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services, we should be able to tackle all that at the one time... So, it's about the lighting, it's about the potholes, it's about the greenspaces. So, we can tackle some of those bigger issues at the same*

> *time, which has never been able to happen before. So it's really exciting. And we've got the buy-in from the top' (Neighbourhoods & Liaison Manager, Greenspace Network Workshop 4, May 2019).*

8.3.2 Challenges: access to decision makers & inclusive decision-making

The above account highlights the consolidation of grassroots collaboration happily coinciding with the formation of the Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services and a community focused *'neighbourhood model'*. This signifies increased opportunities to improve the structures and communication for greenspace aspirations, which is the first procedural component in Figure 8.1. However, the shift in job title from 'community safety officer' to 'community coordinator' is not accompanied with any increased resources or responsibilities in relation to greenspace and, so far, there has been no discernible change in the officer's role in relation to supporting greenspace aspirations.

In contrast, the Senior Parks & Development Manager does offer the potential to act as a bridge or 'greenspace connector' between *Colvin Greenspace Network* and the corporate social worlds of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services and Development & Regeneration Services. But her remit seems to have exponentially expanded from city parks to all of city greenspace, and already she is apologising for not returning emails and forgetting to forward information promised. As she explained to me, although *Colvin Greenspace Network* is unique in being a consortium it is the third Glasgow community group she has met, all of whom require 'considerable support', and she emphasises:

> *'I'm a gardener not a community worker' (Senior Parks & Development Manager, Conversation, June 2019).*

In this scenario, her additional part-time community engagement worker for the whole city will not be enough. This raises two interrelated questions pertinent to the second procedural component in Figure 8.1: to what extent will access to key officers and decision makers improve; and how will decision-making become more inclusive?

Access to decision-makers

From July 2019, although I remain in regular contact with Kate, I refrain from active participation in the *Colvin Greenspace Network* to allow for analysis and the writing up of my thesis. In September 2019, we agree to do a 'catch-up and handover' with community colleagues and a health improvement worker who is going to coordinate the *Greenspace Network* while Kate goes on maternity leave. This is important recognition for community colleagues and personal relief for me. Notwithstanding, Table 8.1 provides an update on the five PAR projects as of September 2019, which summarises the continued lack of access to decision-makers and consequent lack of substantial outcomes.

The PAR projects were a catalyst for community development and greenspace praxis by engendering critical thought about greenspace inequality. However, the impact of these procedural challenges is that critical action has been constrained. For example, Kirsty (flat resident and Marig Co part-time youth worker), says she is talking to Colvin Housing Association's Environmental Officer to help maintain the six small flower boxes that are perched on-top of the fencing outside the multi-storey flats. However, she was told that neither he nor the Grants Manager have authority over the seating request. Whether this is because of previous concerns about vandalism, or because the housing association still need to prioritise building remediations following the Grenfell Tower fire,[36] is unclear. Whatever the reason, maintaining flower boxes is not quite the *MarigSpace* vision ***'to create an outdoor community space for people to come out and chill for a bit',*** or the 'outdoorey stuff' her youth group are now asking for.

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[36] On 14 June 2017, a fire broke about in the 24-storey Grenfell Tower block of flats in North Kensington, London. The rapid spread of the fire is attributed to the building's cladding and external insulation.

Table 8.1: PAR projects update September 2019 - procedural challenges

Greenspace PAR project	Procedural challenges as of September 2019
MarigSpace July 2018: Petition request to Housing Association for seating outside multi-storey flats. Housing Association confirm they will prioritise at the next round of community benefit awards.	Aug 2018: Grants Manager reports that all monies are to be prioritised for essential works in the multi-storey flats, following the Grenfell Tower fire. March 2019: Thriving Places Steering Group agree that outdoor seating across all 13 multi-storey blocks would be an immediate benefit to residents at relatively low cost. However, no decision is made on who or how to escalate request. **Outcome: No seating to improve quality of existing greenspace.**
Heckley Path Action Group February – March 2019: 8 weekly volunteer sessions to clear litter and overgrown vegetation along the Heckley to Marig canal path. June 2019: Participatory Budgeting award for second round of 8 weekly sessions.	Jan & March 2019: Heckley Hub told by Scottish Canal officers that 'they are too busy' with the large regeneration projects. June 2019: No Agreement between stakeholders: Glasgow City Council, Scottish Canals and Historic Environment Scotland in dispute over responsibility for maintenance of canal path. **Outcome: No hard landscaping, seating, lighting or bins along canal path to improve accessibility.**
Arden Play Campaign August 2018: Land & Environmental Services gives go-ahead for play park. March 2019: Land & Environmental Services advise land not suitable for playpark foundations.	June 2019: Action meeting with community colleagues and practitioners to develop new project plan. Resource Centre Managers do not attend. September 2019: Follow up meetings with community planning, architect and surveyor to give final approval of plans is delayed. **Outcome: No playpark, 'step-challenge path' or wildlife corner for community benefit.**
Make Marig Muddy Jan 2019: outdoor fun day for 'wee field' postponed and group dissolve. June 2019: Marig Community Garden open day with activities in the leased area of the 'wee field'.	November 2018: Difficulties in accessing countryside rangers and council officers to agree permissions to use land and organising a land survey. August 2019: Garden Management Committee emphasise 'need to stay within remit of the organisation and current funder's outcomes'. **Outcome: No plans to reclaim the 'wee field' for community benefit.**

For Heckley Hub, the original vision '***to create an interactive nature walking trail'*** has been overshadowed by smaller-scale, canal path maintenance. While these short-life projects are commendable, they are arguably the landowner's responsibility – which is still under dispute. Once this is resolved, it may free-up resources to develop the nature trail with young people and wildlife agencies, as originally envisaged, and provide more canal-side community events.

Similarly, by September, *Arden Play Campaign* are still waiting for a meeting with relevant officers to approve their new project plan. What all three examples illustrate is, that at different scales and with different actors, having overcome the first hurdle of finding the relevant officers, community colleagues are confronted with the second, which is having leverage for a favourable decision.

Lastly, despite Lynne's (Marig Community Garden Manager) best intentions, she is told by her management committee that the organisation cannot go beyond their remit for food growing. Thus, for both the 'wee field' and the Arden field, creating opportunities for ***'outdoor play'*** remain unfulfilled aspirations.

Inclusive decision-making

As well as access to decision-makers, improved communication is essential to meaningful community engagement processes and sets the foundations for inclusive decision-making. In section 7.3, I provided examples of the 'tyranny' (Cooke & Kothari, 2001) of poor ***'community engagement'*** practices. First, from the sector Community Planning Partnership in relation to Colvin's Locality Plan; and then from the two social worlds of Land & Environmental Services and Development & Regeneration Services, in relation to the Local Context Analysis and canal regeneration respectively. These vignettes highlighted the need for proactive mediation between corporate social worlds, as well as between local authority and neighbourhood arenas, in order to facilitate more inclusive decision-making.

The following examples highlight the challenges still to overcome if the '***neighbourhood model'*** now promoted by Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services is to address the previous deficits in communication within and between the corporate social worlds. For example, we learn that the surveyors associated

with the Arden Field are not part of the '***neighbourhood model'*** but the parks development team - but not the team our Senior Parks & Development Manager is responsible for. Moreover, planning for greenspace infrastructure such as the canal path, or the *Horizon 2020 Connecting Nature Programme* (Connecting Nature, 2019) to foster nature-based solutions to climate change, operate from a separate division.

Box 8.1 gives a timeline of email correspondence for an Active Travel bid, which indicates that from these 'other divisions' there was no attempt to engage in a timely manner with the Thriving Places officers, Connecting Colvin Network, councillors or Scottish Member of Parliament before the bid was submitted. This seems bizarre since the bid stated Colvin as its starting location, and Heckley Hub is situated on the canal path and national cycling route. Of course, it could also be that, as with previous ***'community engagement'*** examples cited, email correspondence was sought but not acknowledged. Either way, I am conscious that I adopt the role of 'greenspace connector' between arenas to prevent a missed opportunity whereby local and strategic greenspace aspirations can constructively collide.

Box 8.1: Neighbourhoods &Sustainability City Way Network bid - Timeline of email correspondence, April - May 2019

Tuesday 16th April:

I receive an email from the Health Improvement Senior forwarded from a N&S contractor working on a bid for Sustrans funding. The grant will provide a walking and cycling route from Colvin to Glasgow city centre. The officer is requesting stakeholders for 'an email or letter of support for investment in active travel'. The deadline is Thursday 18th April before the Easter Weekend.

I'm asked if I could 'pull together a quick response' on behalf of the Greenspace Network. In liaison with Kate and Heckley Hub I write a letter outlining how this has been a long-held greenspace aspiration, but also indicating the need to engage with the Network and particularly Heckley Hub if the bid is successful – as there is no local awareness of the proposal.

Thursday 16th May:

I receive an email from the N&S cycling officer informing me that the bid was submitted on the 26 April and that:

'to support our funding bid we would like to show a video for a cross section of the communities and people involved. We will therefore be filming people exclaiming that "It's time for the [sector]!". The filming will take place on Tuesday 28th May. Would you, or any of your groups like to be part of the filming?'

Friday 17th May:

I respond to the officer and forward this to the Connecting Colvin network, specifically mentioning Kate as the Thriving Places Community Connector, key groups and organisations, and the ward councillors.

Monday 20th May:

The Scottish Member of Parliament emails the group wishing to give his support and requesting a copy of the proposals.

Tuesday 28th May:

Heckley Hub host a filming session which includes residents and other members from the Connecting Colvin Network.

(SF, Fieldnotes & email correspondence, April - May 2019).

The important role of a 'greenspace connector' is highlighted again by the Senior Parks & Development Manager, as outlined in Box 8.2. The '***community engagement'*** referred to is from a charrette carried out at the other end of the canal referred to in Box 7.4, which can arguably be summarised as needing ***'safer & nicer spaces'.***

Box 8.2: Development & Regeneration Services & Scottish Canals 'high-level' planning discussion, June 2019

At our June Greenspace Network workshop 5, the Senior Parks & Development Manager holds a hefty document, saying she has been invited by Development & Regeneration Services to attend a 'high-level' meeting with Scottish Canals and their environmental consultancy contractor as the Neighbourhoods and Sustainability representative.

The subject of the meeting is to 'gather ideas on how to reposition the canal at the heart of [sector] Glasgow'

She emails the Network group to feedback on the planning discussion led by the environmental consultancy contractor:

'The community engagement previously carried out has identified community interest in canal side attractions, public art, better connections, play, housing, canal events, safe lit routes'.

She also reports that, 'it was noted that any development would require further engagement with communities surrounding the canal'.

(SF, Fieldnotes & email correspondence, June 2019).

Two observations can be made from Box 8.2. First that our manager does, to a certain extent, act as a mediator between the social worlds of *Colvin Greenspace Network* and Development & Regeneration Services, in that she feeds back from the 'high-level' meeting. This is a helpful start. However, possibly because of the nature of the scoping meeting, there is no mention of the *Greenspace Network's* interest in developing the Heckley to Marig canal path. Second, this episode presents as another in a long trail of intangible ***'community engagement'*** processes: highlighting again, the mismatch of priorities operating between micro-community and meso-planning scales.

Critically, the Development & Regeneration officers, who attended this 'high-level' meeting, have significant regeneration monies and could lever influence

over their Scottish Canals partners to resolve the Heckley to Marig canal path impasse, but only if the subject is raised. Using Gaventa's (2006) power cube analysis, this serves as an insight into the 'closed spaces' where elite officers exercise 'hidden power' to make local greenspace decisions. Alternatively, the acknowledgement that 'further engagement with communities' is required, offers the potential to raise local priorities at the next stage.

Along with Community Planning, Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services and Development & Regeneration Services, there is one more emerging greenspace actor that needs to be integrated: Education Services in relation to learning and *'outdoor play'*. The expansion of early learning and childcare by 2020 and its focus on outdoor activity (Scottish Government, 2017a) is accompanied by a new tranche of funding directed at early years education services.[37] Hence, during the last phases of my fieldwork, there was rising interest from local nurseries to identify potential sites for outdoor play and forest schools.[38]

Both *Make Marig Muddy* and *Arden Play Campaign* were at first suspicious of the nurseries' interest in 'their' fields, and it was important to stress the benefit of collaboration and tapping into new funding sources. This was acknowledged at the last *Greenspace Network* workshop and encouraged by the councillors and Thriving Places officers. However, as of September 2019, there was little communication, neither between the different nurseries and the *Network*, nor between council officers and community planning. Not only does this risk time wasting by repeating previous discussions about permissions of use for the two fields, the nurseries are also in danger of competing against each other and excluding other groups wanting to deliver *'outdoor play'* and activities for all ages.

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[37] For example: Inspiring Scotland Community Play Fund and Outdoor Nurseries Social Enterprise Fund.

[38] The Forest School programme is part of Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland, supported by Scottish Forestry.

8.3.3 Section summary

All these examples from the last phase of my fieldwork (May – Jun 2019) and 'catch-up and handover' in September 2019, illustrate how community colleagues were still overlooked or waiting to be 'invited' (Cornwall, 2004) to participate in local authority-led greenspace decisions. In other words, the 'popular space' (Cornwall, 2004) we had claimed for envisioning and collaborating within our social world of *Colvin Greenspace Network*, was operating in parallel to the powerful social worlds which 'set the agenda' (Lukes, 2005). I exited fieldwork feeling both exhilarated at the increased attention to developing local greenspace, and troubled about the even greater need to develop a coordinated and inclusive neighbourhood greenspace plan; which would also avoid duplicating scarce human and financial resources.

8.4 Recognition for parity of participation & community resiliences

In order to address the deficits in procedural processes, it is also necessary to explicate the recognition dimension to addressing greenspace inequality. That is, as well as improving procedural structures, parity of participation is dependent on increasing the capacity of marginalised groups (Fraser, 2005). Hence this section returns to my micro-analysis of the PAR projects in Chapter Six to further explore the factors that bounded participation and communication at an individual and organisational scale. I do this by employing the themes of 'pace and continuity' and 'stories of success'. Next, drawing on the discussion in Chapter Four (section 4.4) on the recognition of social capital and resilience factors, the insights gained are applied to *Community Resilience Discourses 3 & 4 to* answer to my research questions 2.

RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?

8.4.1 Pace & continuity

I chose a chronological structure to this thesis to accentuate the slow and staccato pace of the PAR projects, reflecting the incessant juggling of burdens and priorities for individuals and organisations in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

For community volunteers it is recognition of their commitment against these odds because **'life gets in the way of doing stuff'**. Partly because of these constraints to participation, new voices of enthusiasm are quickly pounced upon by community and public sector organisations. Whilst motivated by sincerity, it can appear as an overriding desire for a talisman and contributes to the 'tyranny of participation' (Cooke & Kothari, 2001) dilemma. This was particularly noticeable with *Make Marig Muddy* and played a part in their breakup, which is acknowledged in the conversation exchange below.

> *Worker 1: 'I work with community groups all the time. And it's hard for them you know, they've got loads going on in their lives. It's hard to take on all those roles you know, the treasurer, the secretary, all the responsibilities'.*
>
> *Worker 2: 'It gets more difficult because what we do is we attach ourselves to community groups, and say that's good you're interested and we try to pull them in too many directions and we just need to be protective and respectful to people'.*
>
> *Worker 1: 'There's a limit to how much they can do. But that slows everything up because they want to do the things but it's up to them, but it's just, yeah I see it a lot. There's great will and passion for their group but keeping up with everything, they're not paid workers'*
>
> *(Conversation between workers, Thriving Places Steering Group: Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

For organisations, the theme of 'pace and continuity' is recognition of ever dwindling resources which makes time the most precious commodity. Thus, this quote from Maureen signifies a constraining interpretative repertoire which I heard, in various forms, repeatedly from community colleagues:

> *'Because time is such a massive commitment' (Maureen, Heckley Hub Deputy Manager).*

In tandem with the slow and staccato pace of community action, is a recognition of a cycle of recurring change rather than progressive continuity. When organisations and workers are preoccupied with funding and staff turnover, there is a short-termism in objectives, so that even within dedicated greenspace organisations there is little capacity for alternative aspirations.

Interestingly, Marig Co (which initiated Marig Community Garden) and Heckley Hub were founded at the same time with Climate Challenge Fund grants and

followed similar peaks and troughs in ambition and achievements. This included both their charismatic leaders leaving in 2016, leading to a period of recovery and refocus. Although such episodes can be an opportunity for renewal, in disadvantaged communities, it can detrimentally halt any existing activity while resources are directed to re-establishing governance structures.

When I first arrived in Colvin, I was frustrated at what I perceived as the lack of pace to address a legacy of unfulfilled greenspace aspirations. But I came to understand that this experience of individual and organisational capacity, and cycle of recurring change, had produced its own lethargy. This was somewhat out of self-preservation as well as a learnt scepticism of passing '***poverty safarists'***.

> *'The most important value is being present and consistently present, and that's valued by people…Interestingly after ten years of doing, I'm starting to think that the doing is less important than the being. I think there is something about being, and being around, and slowly, slowly people trust you and just say hello to you and expect you to be there'* (Rector/ Initial Chair Marig Co, Interview May 2018).

My role in the PAR projects was a combination of motivator, connector and administrator. Even though having the time and opportunity to build relationships was ultimately valued by community colleagues, after two years, the strategic benefits of creating *Colvin Greenspace Network* were only beginning to materialise. If the *Greenspace Network* is to survive and foster collaboration and solidarity, participation will need to be actively encouraged and early gains materialised, *'because time is such a massive commitment'*.

8.4.2 Stories of success

Throughout my fieldwork I was conscious of a subtle deceit between grant makers and grant recipients which I call the 'stories of success'. For national grant makers this stems from the motivation to target the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in order to meet their charitable objectives and government targets. This laudable intention can have two unintended consequences, particularly with annual funding cycles. First, because of the issues of pace and continuity, it can over-stretch already fragile organisations to reach their annual targets. Second, and as a consequence of the first, in completing their

evaluation forms, community organisations may over-estimate their outputs and outcomes. Equally, when talking to grant officers, there is an astute understanding of the limitations in delivering grant objectives and therefore a tacit undertaking to overlook the finer details in recognition of the neighbourhood and community context. For grant makers, the over-optimistic assessment of outcomes also favours the positive promotion of their key messages, highlighting how the 'stories of success' mask complex interdependencies.

This is not to deny the significant achievements of organisations, workers and volunteers, but it is to present a more nuanced and perhaps inconvenient narrative and recognition; which in turn can perhaps elicit more honest and constructive dialogue. For example, all the major grant makers offer support, particularly around governance, monitoring and evaluation. Yet, as with Marig Co, a combination of individual constraints and embarrassment can prevent organisations from being transparent about their capacities and soliciting help. In contrast, Ann, the new manager for Heckley Hub took the courageous decision to return the Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund for the canal path. She also advised other grant bodies that Heckley Hub had not used their grants exactly as directed. Cross-using grant monies 'creatively' is not uncommon but to admit to it is. The response from all the grant officers was to overlook the matter in this instance, and, with the help of external advisors and a largely new management board, Ann has created a more responsive and effective community anchor organisation, but at half its previous size.

For local smaller grants, there is the additional obligation to support groups and co-produce 'stories of success' for mutual kudos. However, the appeal of short-term outputs associated with short-term funding can undermine the pursuit of more coordinated and longer lasting but also longer-term outcomes. For example, the largest number of small grants in Colvin were donated by the area community planning partnership and Colvin and Heckley housing associations. Yet it was apparent that community colleagues were unaware of who received what, and there was no overall funding picture for different streams of activities: young people, greenspace etc. This fuelled secrecy, fragmentation and competition between groups in a relatively small neighbourhood area, no

doubt replicated across the sector and throughout Glasgow. Making this information more accessible could encourage collaboration for more strategic issue-based action, straddling both social and environmental justice concerns.

I observed 'stories of success' in every arena discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, which is perhaps inevitable when each social world is funding and target driven. However, when all these stories are combined from the arenas of local authority, housing associations, grant makers, action research, and neighbourhood community organisations, a distorted picture of community empowerment and resilience is easily produced.

8.4.3 Greenspace & Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital

Having a limited budget and the primary support coming from the social world of health improvement, the Thriving Places initiative has promoted *Discourse 3: Community resilience - wellbeing & social capital* at a micro-scale. Rejuvenating the Connecting Colvin network demonstrated the value of external, neutral support to nurture bonding capital and dampen a legacy of 'community politics' (a phrase borrowed from a community colleague). *Colvin Greenspace Network* was then able to build on developing social relations by using greenspace as a boundary object of mutual concern (Clarke, 2005).

For example, using Putnam's (1995) conceptualisation of social capital as a resource for action, it is noteworthy that all the neighbourhood action during my fieldwork revolved around the greenspace PAR projects as described. The exception was a coordinated programme of youth activities between Marig Co and Heckley Hub during the school holidays, which was also inspired by the canal photoshoot and reclaiming the Square. My subject position as the external greenspace action researcher encouraged all of these activities and serves to emphasise the interdependency between bonding and linking capital, and how it is the latter that delivers additional resources and expertise beyond the confinements of a small closed network (Emery and Flora, 2006; Lin, 2000; Mathie and Cunningham, 2003).

The *Greenspace Network* thus embodies Kretzmann & McKnight's (1993:11) conceptualisation of community development as 'asset-based, internally

focussed and relationship driven'. This was acknowledged in our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019.

> *Worker 1: 'I think we're in a much better place than where we were three years ago with organisations talking to each other and we have more examples of organisations working together. And sometimes that's a bit fragile but people do come back together quicker. I think [councillors] have been really strong supporters locally and you're both trying to do stuff for the community. Because in my time there've not been elected members who you would actually believe would not spend their time fighting with each other to gain political points.*
>
> *And this is the time to build on that when you've got strong political support, when you've got a voice, when you've got organisations and projects and people saying we think we've got a clue here we want to see some of this. We couldn't have done this three year ago or five year ago. But we might be getting close to actually achieving something'*
>
> *Worker 2: 'Plus, you've got legislative support, the Community Empowerment Act, Locality plan, Christie Commission, tons of stuff. The community council is one aspect but there are lots of approaches and the more you have the better – that's the way to generate power. I think you're right, what you're doing I think its correct as long as you have a strategic view of what you want to do, that's key and that people come together to do this and to create a vision'.*
>
> *(Conversation between Thriving Places Community Connectors, Thriving Places Steering Group: Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

However, Kate's post of Thriving Places Community Connector is not a permanent post. It began as an eighteen-month contract which was only extended a further six then twelve months in the last week each time. With Kate now on maternity leave and no cover for her post, combined with the issues of 'pace and continuity' and 'stories of success' that shape relations, ties are likely to once again fray and, in some cases, dissolve altogether. Without the guarantee of a long-term community worker presence, the bonding social capital gains may not consolidate, mirroring *Animated Assets* before and emphasising both the situated fragility and transience of social capital factors in closed and isolated communities like Colvin. This was summarised by the Health Improvement Senior and the reason why he took over the chair as part of the Thriving Places initiative in January 2018.

> *'And those divisions are historic, or they're competitors based on, you done this and that happened, this happened…*

> *'Animating Assets was interesting...And so we brought in people from outside and we got a lot of the organisations and some of the local people to come along. They seemed to enjoy it. They seemed to take part. They started, they expressed their vision, their thoughts of what they were doing. And then when that ended and there was no longer any external people, the divisions became apparent' (Health Improvement Senior, Interview 1, November 2017).*

The PAR projects graphically illustrated the motivational driver of greenspace aspirations to augment asset-based approaches which promote self-efficacy and social relations. Yet, this alone is insufficient to address the individual and organisational resilience factors that constrain greenspace action.

8.4.4 Greenspace & Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development

In Chapter Two, I outlined how *Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development* has become the mainstream approach to community empowerment, so that assets are conceived as increasing social capital, encouraging local control and the collective management of physical assets (SCDC, 2019a; 2019b). I positioned this discourse at the meso neighbourhood level. However, in Chapter Four, I also problematised encouraging asset management onto disadvantaged communities without the economic and material resources that are required (Friedli, 2013; MacLeod & Emejulu, 2014). Hence this thesis has advocated a trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice, and consequently a rights-based discourse to '*improve the quality of existing greenspace*'; '*increase greenspace accessibility*'; and '*reclaim derelict land for community benefit*'.

Having adopted this position, a community capitals framework (Emery and Flora, 2006; Flora and Flora, 2008) comprising economic, cultural, built, human, natural and social assets, provides additional detail to GoWell's (2011) empowerment model, and is a helpful analytical tool to reflect on the different components to asset-based community development and resilience. As well as indicating a Bourdieusian frame in appreciating the 'stock and flows of other capitals' (Emery & Flora, 2016:19), it identifies natural capital as an integral community asset. The PAR projects sought to prioritise natural capital as embodying '*safer and nicer* **spaces...to come out and chill for a bit**'. Not

imbued with any conditionality to 'do gardening' or *'meeting CCF targets'* but implicitly co-creating a community resilience narrative through sharing nurturing space for health and wellbeing.

This intrinsic value of greenspace for health and wellbeing, which can also be considered as a functional use-value for learning and recreation, is the consistent locus of value in greenspace and food growing research; and serves as a critical alternative to the dominant discourses of food growing and climate mitigation. As important as both these are, they arguably iterate a middle-class preoccupation and responsibility (in relation to climate justice) which has overshadowed a rights-based discourse to first prioritise reversing greenspace inequality. Through inclusive deliberation, this will certainly include community food growing and nature-based solutions to climate change but responding to locally identified aspirations should be prioritised, and unconditional environmental benefits maximised in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Emery & Flora (2006) also suggest that a 'spiralling up' of benefits can occur when there is a critical injection of economic *and* social capital which become mutually-reinforcing. In principle, Glasgow's regeneration projects should provide the economic capital, and the Thriving Places initiative, as noted above, intends to build social capital. The contribution of an environmental justice frame is that it places the health and wellbeing rights of the community and their greenspace aspirations above profit-seeking investments and increasing land value: which dominate regeneration strategies and, if unchecked, can lead to gentrification. In their Glasgow appraisal of the psychosocial stressors of living in proximity to high densities of vacant and derelict land, Maantay & Maroko (2015) cite 'just green enough' strategies in the United States as a way of avoiding green gentrification. This can entail creating 'informal greenspaces' alongside social housing; initiating 'clean-ups' of antisocial areas, often near canals; and working collaboratively to prevent speculative development (Hamilton & Curran, 2013; Wolch et al., 2014). Perhaps unsurprisingly, this mirrors the aspirations of the PAR projects for creating *'safer and nicer spaces'*. The prospects for instituting greenspace actions for community resiliences and justice are considered next.

8.5   Community empowerment for greenspace justice

This section considers how my trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality (Figure 8.1) intersects with GoWell's (2011) model of community empowerment introduced in Chapter Four. Overall, my findings problematise an over-optimistic assessment of community empowerment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Hence, to fully answer my research question 3, I continue with a discussion on the practicalities and possibilities for environmental justice and community resiliences.

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

8.5.1 Community empowerment reappraised

GoWell's (2011) two-tier illustrations of community empowerment are repeated in Figures 8.2 & 8.3 and reflect the multi-layered and interdependent processes that influence community empowerment in the context of area deprivation and regeneration.

The process of 'capability', 'deciding' and 'achieving' in Figure 8.2 corresponds to the micro-social processes within the social world(s) of the Connecting Colvin network, as explored through the PAR projects in Chapter Six. As noted in section 6.6, in answering our shared question of 'How do we improve our local greenspace?', community colleagues demonstrated increased 'capability' through acquiring experiential, presentational and practical ways of knowing (Heron & Reason, 2008). Likewise, the deliberation by *Colvin Greenspace Network* demonstrates 'deciding'. However, 'achieving' was constrained by individual and organisational resilience factors. This was explored further in this chapter by using the recognition themes of 'pace and continuity' and 'stories of success'.
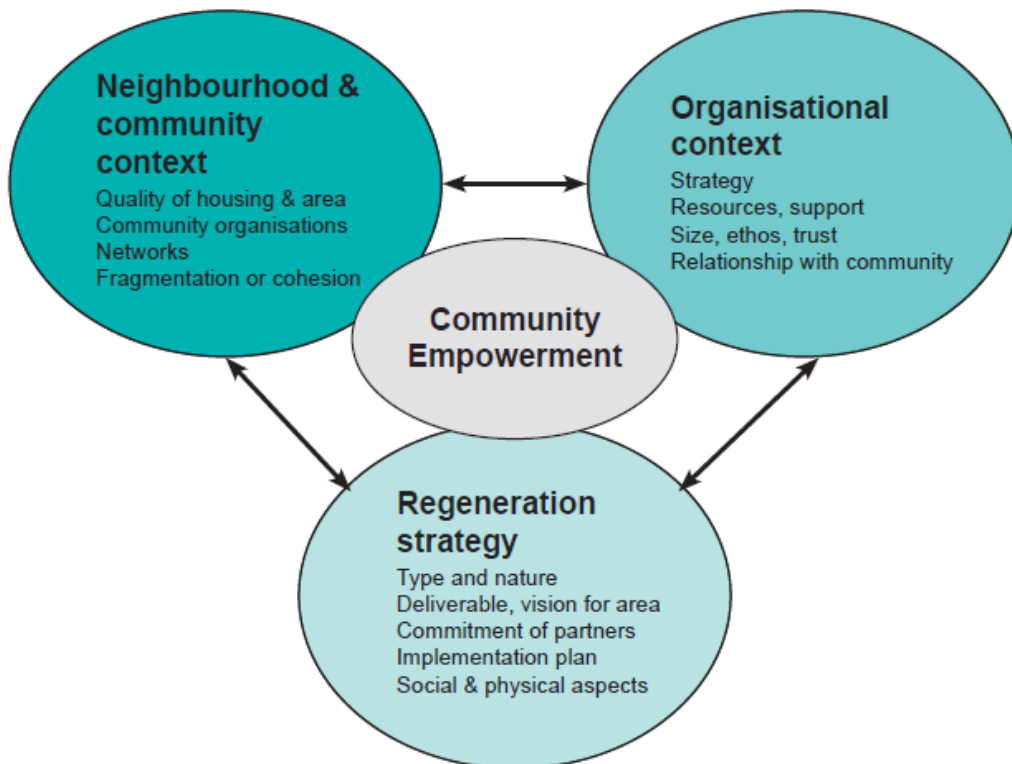
A model of community empowerment
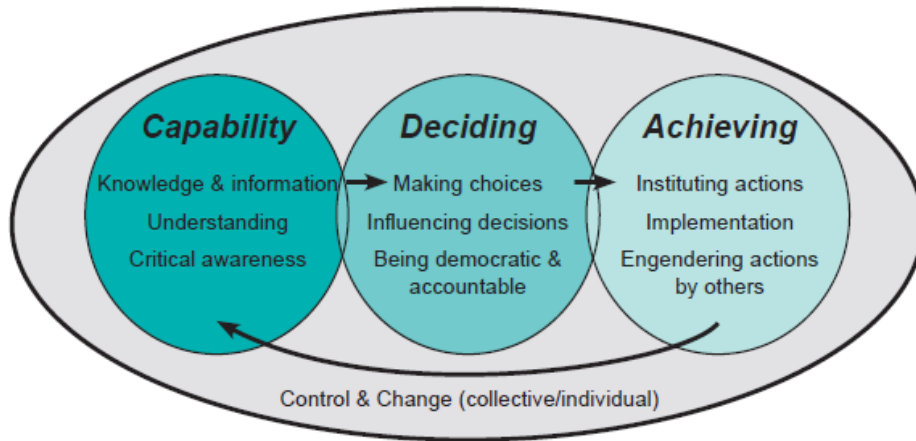
Figure 8.2: A model of community empowerment
Source: GoWell (2011).

Similarly, the regeneration strategy, neighbourhood and community context, and organisational factors that can influence empowerment in Figure 8.3, can be interpreted as the meso-dynamics between the Connecting Colvin network and the arenas of Glasgow local authority, environmental grants, arts grants, and action research practice, as explored in Chapters Seven and Eight.

Factors influencing community empowerment

Figure 8.3: Factors influencing community empowerment
Source: GoWell (2011).

Thus, in answer to my research question 3, this chapter has highlighted the persistent challenges to accessing decision-makers and more inclusive decision-making. My account concludes that the claimed 'popular space' created by *Colvin Greenspace Network* did not have the power to 'set the agenda' and to all intents was 'invisibled' by the more powerful social worlds of Neighbourhoods & Sustainability and Development & Regeneration Services, who continued to make decisions in 'closed spaces' (Cornwall, 2004; Clarke, 2005; Gaventa, 2006; Lukes, 2005).

Applying a Bourdieusian perspective, this emphasises the inequality in bridging and linking social capital between the social worlds borne out of socio-economic and political inequality (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). The lack of this recognition results in a lack of parity in participation and inclusive decision-making. In the field of greenspace management, the outcome is that the critical greenspace aspirations articulated by community colleagues are muted to smaller piecemeal activities, and the power to redress local greenspace inequality remains out of reach. The next sub-section considers what measures could be taken to address this (non)recognition.

8.5.2 Practicalities & possibilities for greenspace empowerment

The imperative for community participation in community empowerment and land reform legislation makes it incumbent on public services to develop more deliberative forms of involvement. In the context of greenspace in deprived neighbourhoods, the PAR projects and wider research evidence (greenspace et al., 2017; and see Table 3.7) also indicate local motivation to become proactive decision-makers. Yet, this chapter has identified that, in order to deliver greenspace aspirations and rebalance rights and responsibilities between the Colvin neighbourhood and local authority arenas, more is required to metaphorically overlap the social worlds.

An opportunity exists between the Thriving Places-led *Colvin Greenspace Network* and the Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services–led '***neighbourhood model***'. Both these social worlds have made promising starts. However, both require improved structures and communication to facilitate bridging and linking social capital for inclusive greenspace decision-making and, most importantly,

critical action to address inequality. Without this, the gains made by the *Network* will quickly dissolve and local greenspace aspirations will once more be 'invisibled' (Clarke, 2005). Similarly, individual organisations within the *Network* may continue with piecemeal outdoor activities, but these will be determined by fragmented and uncoordinated grants, funnelled into silos of funding sources and associated social worlds/arenas, and fuelling competition over collaboration.

This section therefore considers the measures required from both social worlds to facilitate greenspace empowerment. Referring to Figure 8.2, it begins with an analysis of *Colvin Greenspace Network* as a model of community empowerment. Next, referring to Figure 8.3, Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services is evaluated as an influencing factor. Having presented a relational conceptualisation of participation, I then draw on Conn's (2011:9) 'space of possibilities' to consider the potential of becoming 'collaborative problem solvers'.

Colvin Greenspace Network: a model of greenspace empowerment

The community planning partnership is intended to act as the broker between the present and future development of the city and, legislatively, the mechanism for community empowerment. Locally, this is primarily through the conduit of the community council. Yet, at our presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019, challenges experienced in relation to representation and participation from community councils were identified by all three Thriving Places community connectors that attended. Similar issues of legitimacy and accountability with community councils are reflected across the country and emphasise the need for reform (Escobar, 2014, SURF, 2019b).

In contrast, *Colvin Greenspace Network* has demonstrated how a deliberative approach can build critical consensus for transformative greenspace action. This reflects Somerville's (2016:261) argument that politicisation is necessary to challenge tokenistic *'community engagement'*. Developing the Greenspace Network therefore has the potential to work alongside, and potentially energise, the community council and Connecting Colvin network with the aim of developing collective greenspace capacities. This aspiration was initiated and outlined by one of the co-presenters at our presentation:

> *'The idea is not to copy the community council but the idea is to have a network so that we can focus on the greenspace in the area and then we hope to work with the community council and cross over on strategic stuff' (Martin, Heckley Hub, Thriving Places Steering Group: Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

The audience supported our approach at building consensus while also allowing interested groups to sustain their own momentum in tandem with formal community planning structures.

> *'Don't focus on who's not there, focus on who is…build it and they will come. If you get a group of people who say this is what we want to see in our area. Then the community council members will say, oh we should be coming to that' (Health Improvement Senior, Thriving Places Steering Group: Presentation discussion, March 2019).*

Importantly, in line with participative good practice, Greenspace Network participants would act more as delegates than representatives, articulating views and proposals agreed by their groups (Escobar, 2014). This would necessarily include the objectives for the priority areas of 'childcare' and 'resilient communities' in the *Community Action Plan* (GCPP, October 2017a), and the *Open Space - Local Context Analysis Stage 2* (GCC, October 2018a; 2018b).

To fulfil this transformational possibility of consolidating a critical voice for greenspace action, community colleagues will need to build solidarity and transparency from within the Network. Through discrete projects the Network could embrace a radical field of practice which foregrounds an intrinsic greenspace value for health and wellbeing, and functional use-value for learning and recreation. By doing so, it could become the essential actor and decision-maker in how the various strands of greenspace policy coalesce at a neighbourhood level and offers a template for other neighbourhoods to adopt.

However, as observed in appraising *Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital* above, in recognition of the structural and situated constraints that undermine the capacity of community colleagues, external coordination is pivotal to success. It is encouraging that a health improvement officer will continue to chair the *Greenspace Network* while Kate is on maternity leave. Yet, officers from both Thriving Places and Neighbourhoods &

Sustainability Services recognise that the Network requires a combination of community development and greenspace knowledge.

> *'This is difficult and that's I suppose where the biggest gap has been because you have community development workers who may know little or nothing about greenspace and you have greenspace folk who may know a little bit about community development but both fields ae changing all the time...They need someone to actually hold their hand for a while and give them a guiding walk...Yes they need an overseeing officer, someone that's got an eye on lots of different balls and can actually play the game' (Senior Countryside Ranger, Interview, November 2018).*

Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services: factors influencing community empowerment

Despite a favourable national and local policy context for realising greenspace aspirations, the potential for reclaiming and regenerating greenspace assets for the benefit of disadvantaged neighbourhoods remains unfulfilled. As well as a requiring an asset-based approach at a micro-organisational level to increase capacities, my trivalent justice frame identifies deficits in the procedural processes of **'community engagement'** and a failure of strategic coordination between local authority corporate social worlds.

Having a senior officer from Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services (such as the Senior Parks & Development Manager) to co-facilitate the *Greenspace Network,* and act as the 'greenspace connector' is essential. This would provide the bridging and linking social capital between the two social worlds and the local authority arena at large. This is what was envisaged in the request for a link worker from Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services because a community safety worker or engagement officer does not have the same leverage as a Senior Parks & Development Manager. However, given the manager's time and resource constraints, ongoing commitment to the group is tenuous. For example, between me exiting fieldwork and the 'catch-up' in September, there was no interaction, underscoring the persistent gap between the social worlds and resulting (non)recognition.

In their analysis of food growing in Glasgow, White & Bunn (2017: 335) suggest that the local authority arena has the potential of providing a 'diverse leadership role as a promoter, enabler and manager', and that existing food

growing networks provide a crucial mediator role between legislative and activist approaches. This view has gained traction in Glasgow with the creation of the *Glasgow Food Policy Partnership* (2019) to support a city-wide food strategy, comprising public, private and voluntary sector organisations. Similarly, the different strands of city-wide greenspace strategies need to have a vehicle to disseminate greenspace policy and proposals.

At a neighbourhood scale, the model of a neighbourhood Greenspace Network could act as an effective 'one-stop shop' for local greenspace deliberation, collaboration and action. *Colvin Greenspace Network* demonstrates the potential for creating a partnership approach between residents' voices, community organisations, schools, nurseries, housing associations and wildlife engagement projects. Each neighbourhood Network could also combine to create a sector-wide Greenspace Network. However, this is dependent on the three social worlds of Community Planning, Neighbourhoods & Sustainability and Development & Regeneration Services (and now Education Services) working collaboratively to fulfil the leadership gap. This includes providing timely facilitation to genuinely inform decision-making which, Weakley & Escobar (2018) identify, is not always guaranteed.

Such a neighbourhood model would respond to Maantay's (2013) recommendation (discussed in section 3.4) for more strategic local authority intervention but which is locally informed to provide multifunctional greenspace. Providing transparent information (including a summary of grant awards) and logistical support would also address similar concerns in recent studies exploring the work of community gardens in Glasgow (White and Bunn, 2017; Cumbers et al., 2018), in which the progressive potential of reclaiming vacant and derelict land was hindered by a locally competitive grant culture and obtaining land permissions.

The space of possibilities

In conclusion, although Glasgow has made significant progress in its greenspace policy framework, and in providing grants to develop under-utilised vacant and derelict sites, the PAR projects highlighted a lack of recognition of the multiple stressors in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation. This draws attention to the

practicalities of strengthening social capital for greenspace empowerment and the requirement therefore of additional facilitation and strategic coordination. Hence. a small redistribution of resources from the *'community engagement'* budget for large regeneration projects (such as charrettes) could support a neighbourhood greenspace network model to realise more immediate and tangibly relevant greenspace aspirations.

Importantly, this would move away from single interventions towards more coordinated greenspace planning at a neighbourhood scale. This would also act as the necessary first step to delivering the components of collaboratively creating good places as captured by the 'Place Standard' (NHS Scotland et al., 2017); 'The Placemaking Principle' (GCC, 2017b) and the 'Place Principle' (SCDC, 2019d; Scottish Government, 2019d).

In Chapter Four, I suggested caution towards Conn's (2011:9) conceptualisation of the 'space of possibilities' in which citizens 'become collaborative problem-solvers' as they co-evolve alongside local authority actors. The *Colvin Greenspace Network* has illustrated the activism of community colleagues to claim their 'popular space' (Cornwall, 2004). This has the potential to address the procedural dimension of greenspace injustice by creating a grassroots forum for constructive dialogue and acting as a bridge between the local authority and Colvin arenas. However, excavating the recognition dimension of individual and organisational resilience factors emphasises the requirement for the local authority arena to facilitate deliberative *'community engagement'* and a commitment to respond and coordinate the greenspace aspirations that transpire.

By supporting the spaces and conditions for marginalised groups to 'set the agenda' (Lukes, 2005) *and* providing the necessary scaffolding to implement the visions they create, it may be possible to create metaphorically and substantially green 'spaces of possibilities'. Critically, the PAR projects have illustrated the opportunity for using greenspace as a boundary object that intersects the discourses of community resiliences. In summary, collaboratively exploring greenspace aspirations, within a trivalent justice frame, can help navigate a path from mobilising bonding social capital *(Discourse 3),* to asset-based (*Discourse 4*) community empowerment and resiliences. The implications for

Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change are discussed in the next chapter.

8.6   Greenspace, justice & community resiliences

This chapter has explicated the procedural opportunities and challenges to improving structures and communication for greenspace deliberation and inclusive decision-making. This was followed by recognition of individual and organisational constraints to participation. Bureaucratic and resource barriers, combined with individual and organisational resilience factors (although perhaps alluded to using different terminology), are identified across community projects exploring capacity building (e.g.: Chanan & Miller, 2013; Cinderby et al., 2016; Richardson, 2008; Steiner, 2016; SURF, 2018). This study's unique contribution is extrapolating the opportunities for introducing an environmental justice frame to community resilience strategies.

Using an environmental justice frame, I argue, enables a more radical community development practice: one which assertively draws attention to poor access to greenspace as complicit in the practice of inequality. Equally it embraces a reformist approach to improve procedural processes so that local authority and community actors can instigate action which rebalances the distribution of environmental burdens and benefits. Without this framing, greenspace inequality will continue unchallenged.

Not only will this result in more of the same, but the increasing opportunities available for greenspace interventions risk being usurped by higher socio-economic groups who have more leverage and political acumen in participation processes (Dalton, 2017; SURF 2019b). As noted in Chapter Three, the lose-lose scenario is that environmental benefits are bestowed on more affluent areas with already good green amenities or, ironically, green gentrification occurs as an unintended or planned outcome (Anguelovski, 2016; Anguelovski et al., 2016; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Maantay & Maroko, 2015).

However, this discussion is also realistic about the current constraints within the social worlds of community development, planning and greenspace management in taking this forward. The identification of opportunities but also constraints,

serves as a counterpoint to the rosy homogenous picture often drawn by the discourses of community empowerment and resiliences which 'invisibles' a legacy of environmental injustice. Hence, this chapter ends with a final observation on the visceral impact of greenspace inequality in Colvin.

Chapter Nine extends a trivalent justice frame to include all five discourses of resilience presented in Chapter Two. It also offers concluding thoughts on *the urban politics of greenspace* and my contribution to knowledge.

8.6.1 Greenspace & communality

The social and psychological concept of resilience has its roots in both child development and adult mental health (Antonovsky, 1987); and it is to this that my inquiry unexpectedly directed me to in the shape and value of *'outdoor play'*, and *'safer and nicer spaces'* more generally. This same value has been successfully articulated by predominantly middle-class protagonists in the *North Kelvin Meadow campaign* (2019) and *Children's Wood* (2019), although this time in an affluent West End neighbourhood (Traill, 2018). Yet, less than three miles from North Kelvin, the right to accessible and good quality greenspace remains unmet in Colvin with consequent impacts on child and adult resilience.

Moreover, in her ethnography of community growing, Traill (2018) observes that it is having access to shared space which can host a multiple of different activities, such as growing, playing, or just sitting, that creates and sustains a sense of shared purpose and communality (Traill, 2018:78). t is this access to good quality greenspace, to promote individual health and wellbeing and a communality with neighbours, which became the focus for the PAR projects and this thesis. Understandably in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation this is unlikely to be the most immediate concern, which perhaps accounts for community development practice tending to pursue more obvious social justice concerns without integrating an environmental justice awareness. Although understandable, this tendency has left a profound legacy of environmental injustice, which compounds social and climate justice concerns.

In Colvin, the psychosocial impact of 97% of the population living within 500m of derelict land is inextricably linked to the memories of factories, houses, the

secondary school and community centre demolished in one generation. Using Colvin as a proxy for neighbourhoods battling against multiple injustices, the absence of good quality greenspace embodies the absence of hope. It is the physical manifestation of **'being forgotten'**. Now must be the time to genuinely work across social worlds and arenas to mobilise collective meaning-making and capacities for greenspace aspirations. For as Harvey (2003) argues, we have a right to create a 'qualitatively different kind of urban sociality'.

> *'The right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart's desire' (Harvey, 2003:939).*

Chapter 9: Conclusion: the urban politics of greenspace

9.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this thesis is to identify the enablers and constraints to fulfilling local greenspace aspirations from the perspective of people living with area deprivation; and to introduce an environmental justice frame to community and urban resilience strategies. The three research objectives, as outlined in the Introduction to Chapter One were to:

- Explore the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions, and how this might inform our understandings of community engagement.
- Examine the current practice of community development and to what extent it provides space to challenge the environmental injustice of greenspace inequality.
- Explicate the intersections between greenspace aspirations, environmental justice and the five primary discourses of resilience.

In order to address these objectives, I had four research questions. In this final chapter, I consider to what extent these objectives are met and what further questions remain. To do this, I structure this chapter by reviewing the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions of my research.

The empirical contribution addresses the first two research objectives by summarising the key findings in response to my research questions 1 to 3. The theoretical contribution addresses the third objective. It draws together the different argumentative threads that run through the chapters to answer my fourth and culminating research question: to consider the contribution of an environmental justice frame to the discourses of resilience. The methodological contribution returns to the themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity, as well as identifying possibilities for further research.

The thesis ends with a closing comment on the contribution of a trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to *the urban politics of greenspace*.

9.2 Empirical contribution: experience & response to greenspace injustice

The critical component of this thesis is in introducing an environmental justice frame to the experience of greenspace inequality in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In Chapter One, I outlined the relevance of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to urban Scotland greenspace. I drew attention to the importance of good quality greenspace to mediate the impacts of health inequalities, promote social cohesion and encourage pro-environmental behaviours. From a distributional dimension, I suggested that, in Glasgow's neighbourhoods of highest deprivation, environmental injustice comprises a triple jeopardy of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and the 'absence of environmental goods': namely 'pleasant places to walk or sit' and 'safe play areas' (Curtice et al., 2005). My aim was to explore the visceral experience and response to this long-term injustice.

Working with community colleagues, in a neighbourhood ranked in the most deprived vigintile by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, the PAR projects have provided valuable insights to address my first two research objectives.

9.2.1 Greenspace aspirations & community engagement

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

Chapter Six identified the tangible enablers and constraints to fulfilling local greenspace aspirations. The enablers included the new opportunities arising from the Thriving Places area-based initiative and the PAR projects themselves. The constraints included individual and organisational resilience factors, a legacy of complex community relations, and a disconnect between different local authority social worlds. Hence, in a presentation to the Thriving Places Steering Group in March 2019, the enablers and constraints were depicted as a scale still tipped against community groups realising local greenspace as a natural asset (Figure 6.5).

Using participatory inquiry demonstrated local motivation for greenspace action. The PAR projects opened 'communicative spaces' (Kemmis, 2008) in which community colleagues generated critical awareness of greenspace inequality and began to work collaboratively for action. This was illustrated by *Colvin Greenspace Network* and the request for a link worker from the newly formed Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services to support the network's greenspace aspirations.

As such, the PAR experience serves to qualitatively corroborate findings from the *Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017* (greenspace et al., 2017; and see Table 3.7): which highlight that a higher percentage of respondents from the most deprived areas view that the quality of their local greenspace has reduced; would 'like to have more of a say' in how local greenspace is managed; and 'would like to get involved with activities to help improve my local greenspace'.

In contrast to these self-directed examples of community engagement within the social world(s) of the Connecting Colvin network, Chapter Seven traced the ambivalent practices of community engagement from the local authority arena; and the consequent 'Catch-22' or 'tyranny of participation' (Cooke & Kothari, 2001) paradox ascribed to actors from both the local authority and neighbourhood arenas. This study therefore reflects the wider critique of poor standards of inclusion, participation and deliberation in the planning system and wider community planning structures (Weakley & Escobar, 2018; yellow book ltd., 2017).

In the context of neighbourhood deprivation, this study also illustrates the need to reappraise the motivations for community engagement and be responsive to participants' objectives (Dalton, 2017; Lightbody, 2017; SURF 2019b). That is, to metaphorically overlap the social worlds between the local authority and neighbourhood arenas with different communicative capacity, levels and forms of power (Bartels, 2016; Gaventa, 2006). As part of this and in order to avoid perceptions of tokenism, it is crucial to shift from 'engagement' and 'consultation' to agree and deliver on actions. This could offer a win-win scenario in reducing the onus on officers to conduct numerous engagement

activities with few outcomes, as well as responding to the prevailing perception of *'being forgotten'*.

In relation to the implementation of increasingly prominent greenspace policy, the PAR projects underscore how local aspirations in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are 'invisibled' (Clarke, 2005) by the promotion of wider community planning, regeneration and climate policy objectives. By using Clarke's (2005) situational analysis, what emerged was an undulating picture of micro-social processes and resilience factors at an organisational level, and the challenges of negotiating diverse social worlds from multiple arenas operating at a meso neighbourhood and city level.

Exploring the oppositional interpretative repertoires of *'being forgotten'* with *'community engagement'*, and *'safer and nicer spaces'* with *'meeting CCF targets'*, exposed the dominant discourses that delimit greenspace action. I call these entwined dynamics *the urban politics of greenspace*. Moreover, the simultaneously circulating repertoires of McGarvey's (2017) *'poverty safari'* with *'authentic action research'* exposed the predominant framing of communities as passive objects to be observed or directed, rather than active subjects with the right to direct.

RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?

In answer to my research question 2, Chapter Eight proposed that collaboratively exploring greenspace aspirations, within a trivalent justice frame, can help navigate a path from mobilising bonding social capital *(Discourse 3: Community resilience – wellbeing & social capital)* to asset-based community empowerment and resiliences (*Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development*). The contribution of this thesis is in identifying this potential at a time when the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* and *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016* are strengthening community rights in relation to greenspace assets.

The *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016* established the Scottish Land Commission and, in the last month of writing this thesis, it has launched its Vacant and

Derelict Land Taskforce along with a series of reports on the impact and consequences of vacant and derelict land (Scottish Land Commission, 2019). It concludes that there is a general lack of research focusing on the impacts of vacant and derelict land on affected communities, and that more detailed data analysis is required to understand the extent of harm on communities in relation to health, environmental, economic and perception of local area (PBA, 2019). As well as providing qualitative evidence to support Maantay's (2013) proposal for public investment in the remediation of derelict land for community benefit (see section 3.4.3), this thesis extends her spatial analysis of Glasgow with an exploration of the procedural and recognition dimensions necessary to support *Discourse 4: Community resilience - asset-based community development*.

In addition, on behalf of the Scottish Land Commission, Scotland's Regeneration Forum (SURF, 2019b) hosted a series of cross-sector 'reality check' discussions on the practicalities of urban land reform. Their report serves as a generalisation of this thesis' findings by reconfirming the shortfall in community engagement practices; the need for improved processes and protocols for land use; as well as local authority investment to support community involvement.

Importantly, the Scottish Regeneration Forum's report (SURF, 2019b:14) also emphasises the differing capabilities and expectations of diverse community groups, and the risk of exacerbating existing inequalities through 'poverty blind empowerment opportunities' which favour asset-transfer as the preferred outcome. Intended as a counterpoint to the pervasive research practices of observation and consultation, my participative inquiry augments SURF's findings by providing a microcosm of the lived experience of proximity to high densities of derelict land. It also offers a more action-orientated perspective on the practicalities and possibilities for addressing this environmental injustice in recognition of the current constraints to community resiliences.

9.2.2 Community development to challenge environmental injustice

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

The relevance of this participative inquiry is that it coincides with the growing literature on the health benefits of good quality urban greenspace, juxtaposed

with the distributional disparities exacerbating neighbourhood deprivation. Through an evidence review of quantitative and qualitative data, Chapter Three identified three requirements to address this environmental injustice: improve the quality of existing greenspace; increase greenspace accessibility; and reclaim derelict land for community benefit. Locating myself in one of the areas targeted by Glasgow's Thriving Places area-based initiative, gave me a unique opportunity to examine to what extent current community development practice offers the space to achieve these three greenspace requirements.

In Chapter Three (Table 3.1), I summarised the key national strategies in relation to greenspace and the opportunities therefore to address greenspace inequality. However, in Chapter Four, I noted how UK community development theory and practice has largely neglected an environmental justice lens. While acknowledging that social policy is the pertinent focus, this thesis highlights the critical unmet socio-environmental needs of disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the valuable contribution community development could make in facilitating recognition and procedural justice.

I have used the term community development in its broadest sense, drawing on both the radical and pluralist/reformist approaches to explore the recognition and procedural dimensions of a trivalent justice frame. In Chapter Four, in line with an eco-socialist standpoint, I proposed that in order to address greenspace inequality as an environmental injustice, it is necessary to adopt a bipartite approach to community development: drawing on radical theory to facilitate critical awareness of structural inequalities; combined with a reformist approach to facilitate civic engagement. Chapter Eight then drew on the actions of *Colvin Greenspace Network* PAR to examine the efficacy of this approach and the implications for community empowerment.

Two important findings emerged. First, my analysis identified deficits in procedural processes that hindered inclusive decision-making and action on greenspace aspirations. By conceiving these tensions as *the urban politics of greenspace*, attention is drawn to the disconnect between local authority social worlds, and the power relations between them and the neighbourhood arena. Second, in recognition of existing socio-political marginalisation, it clarified the

practicalities needed to address the procedural deficits and challenge greenspace inequality.

With increasing awareness of the importance of accessible and good quality greenspace for health and wellbeing as well as for environmental outcomes, international reviews have stressed how greenspace interventions need to be multifunctional and considered as long-term investments requiring a multi-disciplinary approach. In addition, increasing greenspace accessibility in disadvantaged areas needs to be planned and designed with the intended greenspace users (Boulton et al., 2018; WHO, 2016; WHO, 2017; Zuniga-Teran & Gerlak, 2019). These recommendations are also reflected in the Scottish research presented in Chapters One and Three.

The model of a neighbourhood greenspace network creates a 'one-stop shop' and 'partnership' approach which could direct and institute local greenspace priorities, and thus take collective advantage of the untapped opportunities available for transforming greenspace. However, as well as community development facilitation, the network model requires expert support to work across greenspace strategies, signpost to funding and mediate between stakeholders. Perhaps with a 'greenspace connector' and strategic local authority coordination, environmental rights and responsibilities could begin to rebalance. In disadvantaged neighbourhoods where even greenspace organisations are struggling, a critical recommendation therefore is to redistribute current community engagement budgets to support such an initiative. A Greenspace Network model could be piloted in each of Glasgow's Thriving Places areas to create a community-led greenspace plan which nurtures greenspace as a natural asset for community benefit.

Community development & environmental justice

Debates within community development revolve around whether communities are framed 'as active subjects in politics, as distinct from passive objects of public policy' (Shaw & Mayo, 2016:10). The PAR projects explored to what extent community groups have the agency (power) to mark out a claimed 'popular space' rather than an 'invited space' and to institute greenspace action 'as demands for rights' (Cornwall, 2004:6). Crucially, this thesis has located the

perception and utility of greenspace at the intersection of environmental politics and community empowerment rhetoric.

Rather than greenspace activities being marginalised to fragmented community growing and personal carbon reduction initiatives, I have asked, 'is it possible to foster greenspace aspirations to mobilise collective organisation and action?' In doing so, I respond to the question posed by Shaw & Mayo (2016).

> *'How might community development strategies contribute towards exposing and tackling the underlying causes of increasing structural inequalities **as well** as addressing their social effects in the short term'* (Shaw & Mayo, 2016:19, authors' emphasis).

My discussion has brought into focus *the urban politics of greenspace* at a neighbourhood scale. I have given examples of how to mobilise greenspace aspirations but also how conditions are currently constraining their success. Moreover, I have sought to move beyond the Cartesian dualism of social - nature to advocate for socio-environmental aspirations *and* rights to become a normative concern for Scottish community development practice.

9.3 Theoretical contribution: an environmental justice frame for multi-scalar resiliences

Central to understanding the dynamics of greenspace inequality has been the theorising of an eco-socialist positioning and applying a trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice to the Scottish urban context. The procedural and recognition dimensions have implications for understandings of community empowerment and contribute to community development theory and practice.

In addition, in Chapter Two I sought to clarify the often-muddled discourses of resilience that permeate Scottish policy. I distinguished between five which simultaneously operate at national, city and neighbourhood scales and pertain to climate policy, city planning, public health, community development and community transformation. I continued in Chapter Three by identifying greenspace as a boundary object that intersects the five primary discourses and hence, I argue, its pivotal position in contributing to multi-scalar resiliences.

Drawing primarily on the discussion in Chapters One and Two and linking this to my findings, this section extends my theoretical investigation to address my third research objective and answer research question 4.

RQ4: What can an environmental justice frame contribute to the five discourses of resilience in Scotland?

I first return to my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies to review the value of greenspace as explored in this thesis. I then consider how my trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality intersects with social and climate justice concerns at an urban scale. Lastly, I propose that applying an environmental justice frame can help navigate through the discourses of resilience towards the aspirational fulfilment of *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change.*

9.3.1 The value of greenspace

In Chapter Two I offered my matrix of socio-environmental ideologies along two dimensions: strong sustainability - weak sustainability; and ecocentrism – anthropocentrism (Figure 2.1). My intention was to encapsulate the multiple constructions of nature which operate at the nexus of political-economic relations and consequent 'trade-offs' in our socio-environmental relations (Castree & Braun, 2001; Ratner, 2004). The matrix, as 'a work in progress', potentially offers a conceptual tool to appraise the ever-growing number of policies that purport to deliver on sustainable development.

Harvey (1996:199) suggests that at the centre of eco-socialist politics, is the challenge of negotiating the duality of values 'between the purely instrumental (mediated) and the existential (unmediated)' experiences of the world. In my matrix, I denote this as neoliberal and deep-green ideologies which prioritise the instrumental and intrinsic values[39] of nature respectively. Hence, in my quest to move beyond dualisms, this thesis first acknowledges the complexities of our socio-environmental relations; it then proposes a reorientation towards an eco-

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[39] I use the term instrumental to denote financial returns; and intrinsic to denote existential, health and wellbeing and other functional use-value(s) that are not immediately financial.

socialist positioning which more fully embraces our interdependence with the natural world.

This study therefore emphasises the intrinsic and functional use-value(s) of improving our natural environment for the mutual benefit of planetary and human health and makes a rights-based argument for its equitable access. The shift in framing is important because it destabilises the economic instrumental exchange-value of the natural environment, in favour of its non-monetary use-value(s) as a democratic right. If we accept this argument at a global and national scale, then we must also accept it at an urban and neighbourhood scale, and consequently implement the necessary processes for a socially fair redistribution of environmental benefit.

In the context of this thesis, an eco-socialist standpoint orientates to the multifunctional use-value(s) of greenspace for *'safer and nicer spaces'* and *'outdoor play'*; and advocates moving beyond the hegemonic practice of assigning land economic value, which currently dictates financial investment in the regeneration of derelict land. As Adams & Tolson (2019:397) identify, because the most deprived locations are 'stigmatised' and remediation costs uncertain, there is a lack of private investment for regeneration. Colvin therefore exemplifies the uneven geography of market forces (Harvey, 1996; Smith, 2010) and how, in the midst of market failure and consequent environmental degradation, greenspace inequality is 'invisibled'.

Further, the PAR projects illustrate how local greenspace value is marginalised as officer resources are directed towards larger regeneration projects, accompanied with substantial budgets, but often with no immediate benefit. Hence, in order to achieve the aspirations for improved health, wellbeing and 'resiliences' imbued in the National Outcomes for the Environment and Communities (see Chapter Three), a fundamental reappraisal is required to consider how we invest and manage the remediation of derelict land and greenspace quality in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation.

The socio-environmental desires and aspirations of community colleagues underscore the intrinsic value of the natural world which is instinctive to all of us. A (re)valuation of greenspace which prioritises addressing the multifunctional

use-value(s) of greenspace for social equity can promote social cohesion and pro-social behaviours (WHO 2016; 2017). It also provides opportunities for visceral engagement with nature to promote appreciation and pro-environmental behaviours (Alcock et al., 2020). This then becomes a mutually enforcing virtuous circle: in which creating accessible and good quality greenspace offers the physical and existential space to emotionally engage self-transcendence values for 'biggar-than-self' problems such as climate change (CCBRP,2013; Crompton, 2010; Crompton & Kasser, 2010; Holmes et al., 2012).

The converse is that the lack of *'safer and nicer spaces'* and *'outdoor play'* inscribes an additional process of socio-environmental 'alienation', as well as economic and ecological crisis (Harvey, 1996; Marx, 1992; O'Connor, 1998; Smith, 2007; 2010). If we rely on regeneration and climate adaptation strategies based on the current neoliberal practices of greenspace commodification, we can assume we will continue with the same exclusionary practices and outcomes.

9.3.2 An urban environmental justice frame

Environmental justice is concerned with challenging the commercial valuation of environmental goods over health and wellbeing; and identifying the spatial, material and social possibilities to redress current injustices (Martínez-Alier, 2012; Walker, 2012). Chapter Two traced the trajectory of environmental justice as a global movement and its critical contribution to the concepts of climate justice, just sustainability and just transition (Agyeman et al., 2007; Agyeman & Evans, 2004; Agyeman et al., 2016; Heffron & Mccauley, 2018; Schlosberg, 2013). Simultaneously, I suggested that, except for instances of independent community action, a local environmental justice lens in the UK and Scotland has become obscured.

Embracing its substantive and theoretical pluralism (Agyeman et al., 2016; Schlosberg, 2004; 2007; 2013; Walker, 2009; Walker & Bulkeley, 2006), I began this thesis by introducing my representation of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice (Figure 1.1). My aim was to apply the concept's political programme to the Scottish context of urban multiple deprivation. Hence, in Chapter Eight I offered my trivalent

conceptualisation of greenspace inequality as an urban environmental injustice (Figure 8.1). Here I argue, that as well as a boundary object intersecting the five discourses of resilience, addressing greenspace inequality is at the intersection of environmental, social and climate justice concerns at an urban scale.

Environmental Justice

Taking advantage of the political opportunities arising from Scottish devolution at the turn of the century, environmental justice became a prescient policy concern. The findings from the commissioned research programme (Curtice et al., 2005; Fairburn et al., 2005) identified what I call the 'triple jeopardy' of proximity to derelict land, poor environmental quality, and the 'absence of environmental goods'. Critically, this thesis has evidenced increasing greenspace inequality and therefore the theoretical and practical relevance of a trivalent justice frame to challenge this urban experience of (non)recognition. As well as its traditional roots in challenging the disproportionate siting and impacts of environmental hazards to the poorest communities, this thesis therefore argues for a recalibration towards the policy and practice pathways which intersect social and environmental concerns in Scotland's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Social Justice

The work of the Scottish Land Commission and community empowerment legislation suggests a new framing and political opportunity to align social policy with local environmental justice concerns and argue for more investment in remediating derelict land for community benefit. In addition, planners and local authority stakeholders need to be persuaded to prioritise small-scale neighbourhood improvements. Thus, in order to replace market-driven approaches, which tend to favour grander greenspace projects most likely to trigger gentrification, community activism is necessary to promote 'just green enough' strategies that are locally informed (Wolch et al., 2014).

In order to mobilise greenspace activism, this thesis has argued for community development practice to articulate and facilitate local greenspace aspirations as rights. The outcomes would be that greenspace is developed as a community

natural asset, which mitigates health inequality and the impacts of child poverty, by creating *'safer and nicer spaces'* and *'outdoor play'*. Project development would provide local opportunities for skills and employability in soft landscaping and horticulture, and early years and outdoor learning. In this way, it could be possible to shape a bottom-up path for more just *and* sustainable practices of everyday life (Agyeman et al., 2016; Schlosberg, 2013).

Climate Justice

This thesis has also raised the importance of a more prominent domestic climate justice policy programme. Bulkeley et al. (2015) remind us that we live in a time of urban climate change governance. While offering opportunities for progressive urban transition in which municipal authorities play a key role, the authors observe that current practice still favours 'the uneven geographies of opportunity, affluence and wellbeing' (Bulkeley et al., 2015:222). As part of the 100 Resilient Cities network (100RC, 2019), this is a critical challenge for Glasgow to negotiate.

Moreover, we no longer live in the potentially captivating era of 'climate change experimentation' (Broto & Bulkeley, 2013:1934) but in a climate emergency. This shift in discourse offers new hope for transformational urban redevelopment that can address social vulnerability to the direct (extreme weather events) and indirect (energy policy and food insecurity) impacts of climate change. Alternatively, the framing of 'emergency' might lend itself to the further imposition of neoliberal market-based policies. These may be quicker and more profitable to introduce, but risk overlooking climate justice imperatives.

Evaluating the distributional impacts of Glasgow's climate adaption measures was beyond the scope of this research; but without a justice frame, we risk leapfrogging and exacerbating existing environmental injustice if nature-based solutions favour affluent areas or result in green gentrification (Anguelovski et al., 2016; Anguelovski et al., 2017; Gould & Lewis, 2017). For this reason, Anguelovski et al., (2019:1071) argue that it is important to 'debunk the claim that urban greening is a public good for all', and adopt a more critical position in order to assess the conditions and contexts which can favour equitable greening measures. This has relevance to the current *Horizon 2020 Connecting*

Nature Programme (Connecting Nature 2019) Glasgow is involved in as well as its overall Open Space Strategy.

In conclusion, environmental justice as an analytic concept elucidates the ways in which the environment and social difference are enmeshed in the practice of inequality. Adopting a trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality can highlight who has benefitted the most and the least from regeneration, greenspace and climate policy; and is therefore (arguably) better equipped to identify remediating measures for the advancement of public health, equity in environmental burdens and benefits, and ecological sustainability.

9.3.3 An environmental justice frame for resiliences

Having traced how a trivalent conceptualisation of greenspace inequality intersects with social and climate justice concerns, I propose that an environmental justice frame serves to crystallise the strategic and operational gaps between the five primary discourses of resilience; and can help navigate towards the aspirational fulfilment of *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change.*

In their review of the policy context for environmental justice in Western Europe, Köckler et al., (2017) note that an explicit justice agenda is similarly absent in national domestic policy. Notwithstanding, as well as its analytic function of integrating social and environmental factors, they promote the vision of environmental justice as a powerful construct because, citing Walker (2012), it serves three functions: normative - how things should be; descriptive - how things are; and explanatory – why things are how they are. This then establishes a rights-based frame for future interventions (Köckler et al., 2017:628).

Chapter Eight and my empirical contribution discussed the relevance of mobilising greenspace aspirations in relation to *Community Resilience Discourses 3 & 4.* In relation to *Resilience Discourse 1: Climate resilience – incremental adaptation & emergency planning,* the acknowledgement of trade-offs between current socio-economic efficiencies and future ecological needs (Aitken et al., 2016; Armitage et al., 2012; Ratner, 2004), indicates the imperative for a trivalent justice frame to direct socially just climate policy at a national and city scale.

In the critique of *Discourse 2: City resilience – urban governance and planning*, I pointed to the necessity, but also challenges, to moving beyond silos in public administration in order to achieve the objectives of urban sustainability, resilience and social justice (Coaffee et al., 2018; Pitidis et al., 2018). This thesis offers the potential of a Greenspace Network model to not only build community resiliences, but also to act as the 'space of possibilities' (Conn, 2011) in which social worlds within and between arenas can overlap and collaborate. From this starting point, it then becomes possible to review the imbalance of resource allocation and implement the progressive greenspace policies, identified in Chapter Three, for community, city and climate resiliences.

Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience

Introducing a trivalent justice frame is explicitly value-laden (Agyeman et al., 2016) and positions itself contra to the more optimistic and arguably depoliticised discourses of resilience which mask the nuances of power that permeate *the urban politics of greenspace*. In Chapter Two, I outlined how *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change* has emerged as an aspirational response to urban deprivation that encompasses and extends *Community Resilience Discourses 3 & 4.* I continued in Chapter Four to draw attention to the structural limitations to these discourses and the (non)recognition of greenspace inequality.

The PAR projects went on to illustrate how collaboratively exploring greenspace aspirations, within a trivalent justice frame, can help navigate a path from mobilising bonding social capital *(Discourse 3),* to asset-based (*Discourse 4*) community empowerment and resiliences. Taking this further, if we begin with the aim of addressing the absence of good quality greenspace, we position its intrinsic and functional use-value(s) at the forefront of decision-making; and establish a coherent thread through diverse greenspace policy objectives. Improving the accessibility and quality of greenspace as a right, rather than an outcome dependent on other interventions such as housing regeneration or climate adaptation, is political. It reasserts the distributional rights to accessible and good quality greenspace; statutory procedural responsibilities for scaffolding action; and recognition of local aspirations.

Hence, greenspace becomes the nexus of urban socio-environmental relations and, by prioritising its value for health and wellbeing at a micro neighbourhood level, it secures a foundation stone to achieving *Discourse 5: Transformational community resilience to austerity & climate change*. Moreover, if the eco-socialist project is to conceptualise our precarious socio-environmental relations in ways that speak to and include the aspirations of the most marginalised groups, then challenging greenspace inequality is a tangible starting point. By doing so, we shift the discourse from assets to rights, in order to address sustainability *and* inequality for neighbourhoods experiencing multiple deprivation.

9.4 Methodological contribution: socio-environmental participatory inquiry

In Chapter Five, I outlined how the three consistent themes of voice, transformative action and reflexivity permeated my methodological pluralism and are integral to a feminist research ethic (Ackerly & True, 2010; Skeggs, 2001). As part of my critical research praxis, I then reflected on my researcher roles, responsibilities and relationships (Frisby, 2006) at the end of Chapters Six and Seven. Here I offer some final reflections on my research design, gaps for further investigation, and my methodological contribution to socio-environmental participatory inquiry.

9.4.1 Voice

Foremost, I have sought to reflect the interests of community colleagues. The PAR projects allowed me to understand socio-environmental relations from their perspectives, rooted in real-world concerns and aspirations which require specific responses. Moreover, this approach encouraged further participation and action because it was not imposed by a preconceived agenda.

In addition, by adopting a multimethod design which included active participant observation and interviews with key stakeholders, I was able supplement the lived experience of our PAR projects with critical ethnography and discursive inquiry. This intensive observation and dialogue: exploring multivocality; different forms of representation; and 'honouring many forms of action' (Reid &

Frisby, 2008:93) has, I hope, provided multidimensional conceptual and practical understandings of *the urban politics of greenspace*.

However, while Reid & Frisby (2008) argue for a feminist participatory action research which centres women's experiences in order to challenge patriarchy, I did not begin with this explicit focus and have not provided a gendered analysis. Instead, my intention was to contextualise socio-environmental relations within the everyday experience of injustice operating within multiple forms, spaces and levels of power (Gaventa, 2006). Notwithstanding, what emerged from the research process was the primary intersection between place, class and gender, in that all my principal community colleagues were mothers with young or school-aged children. Hence, it is their voice which is politically centred in this thesis. This provides another example of the labour, responsibilities, strengths and activism that women, as the dominant carers, continue to demonstrate in low-income neighbourhoods grappling with post-industrial decline. Their greenspace rights certainly warrant further dedicated investigation, which could be with a mixed methods research design across the nine Thriving Places neighbourhoods, leading to coordinated action.

As noted in Chapter Two, the subject of environmental racism is yet to be explored in Scotland. This may be partly attributable to the proportion of minority ethnic communities in Scotland and because, in contrast to the UK, the interaction between ethnicity, socio-economic position, spatial and health inequality is more nuanced; so that urban deprivation is most clearly associated with White working-class poverty (Walsh et al., 2019). For example, Asian and White Irish groups are more likely to be represented in the least deprived deciles in Scotland, unlike African and other minority ethnic groups (Scottish Government, 2014a). Notwithstanding, data analysis from the 2011 Census shows Glasgow as Scotland's most diverse city, with an increase in its minority ethnic population from 13% to 21% of its total population from 2001 to 2011 (Kelly & Ashe, 2014). There was also a corresponding increase and over-representation of African (15%) and Caribbean (11%), as well as White Scottish (11%) groups, in the most deprived decile in Glasgow (Kelly & Ashe, 2014). This is partly attributable to Glasgow's Asylum Support Service contract with the UK Home Office awarded in 2000 and indicates a further intersection of inequality that merits scrutiny.

Further, the participation of local African refugee mothers and children in 'Autumn, Winter and Spring in the Square' was widely remarked upon by practitioners and more established residents. The same families then attended Marig Community Garden's summer open day and showed interest in developing the wee field's 'nature space'. Practitioners' surprise at participation in greenspace activities was repeated when an outdoor play trip, organised by the adjacent Thriving Places neighbourhood, was completely subscribed by Chinese families. Both examples suggest possibilities for further involvement from minority ethnic groups in order to create accessible urban greenspaces for increasingly diverse populations.

In Chapter Three, I referred to the *Greenspace Use and Attitudes Survey 2017* (greenspace Scotland et al., 2017) to highlight the gap in expectation and experience of greenspace in Urban Scotland. This thesis has explored the visceral impact in relation to health, wellbeing and child poverty in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Yet currently, there is no large-scale or neighbourhood data collected specifically identifying gender, race/ethnicity, age, [40] households with children, or surveys including views of children. A helpful start for data analysis would be for future surveys on greenspace use and attitudes to include these categories, in addition to self-perception of health and urban/rural deprivation already collated. In this way we can begin to give voice, visibility and recognition to the muted experiences of socio-environmental injustice.

9.4.2 Transformative action

This thesis seeks to contribute to the debate on the diversity and complexity of participatory action research practice (Darby, 2017; Frisby et al., 2009; Janes, 2016; Reid & Frisby, 2008). While 'what "counts" as PAR may vary' (Grant et al., 2008:589), there are common goals of collaborating with the researched community; attempting to create action as a catalyst for social change; reflecting on the shared learning from the research project; and building

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[40] Greenspace Scotland (greenspace Scotland et al., 2017) does have some analysis by age but not gender (although it is collected).

capacities as an outcome (Brydon-Miller et al.,2013; Grant et al., 2008; Kemmis, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). My research journey took me towards an unforeseen direction: away from my previous work on developing carbon literacy and a 'well and green' narrative (Fifield, 2016), towards gaining an awareness of the impacts of urban greenspace inequality. I have argued that this local environmental injustice is 'invisibled' and my methodology was able to illustrate this practice, as well as collaborate with community colleagues to question its acceptance.

However, whilst I may have secretly harboured a more radical persuasion, as previously noted, I adopted Reid et al's (2006) positioning: that feminist participatory action research should be 'modest' in its goals, while remaining orientated towards improving unsatisfactory situations and challenging the passivity of traditional research practice. Similarly, at a time when participative research methods are increasingly advocated by claims of voice and authenticity, particularly for 'over researched' communities, Janes (2016) echoes Cook & Kothari's (2001) caution against assuming that participative approaches are synonymous with empowerment. That is, they may confound methods with outcomes and dislocate community actors from their socio-political context and constraints. This mirrors Grant et al's (2008) three observations of negotiating the challenges of PAR which I discussed in my conclusion to Chapter Six. Hence, my analysis and discussion endorse the argument for PAR to be cautious of emancipatory proclamations (Grant et al., 2008; Janes, 2016; Reid et al., 2006; Reid & Frisby, 2008).

Given this caveat, my use of Heron & Reason's (2008) extended epistemology and Lincoln & Guba's (2007) authenticity criteria to evaluate the PAR projects, illustrates how co-produced impacts can offer an alternative to the dominant measures of research impact which assume linear and top-down change (Darby, 2017). In contrast, Darby (2017) argues that co-designed research activities result in small-scale but 'meaningful generative effects' which she describes as process driven:

> *'Emergent and non-linear; responsive and relational; and empowering when rooted in reciprocal collaboration with research partners' (Darby, 2017:230).*

Nevertheless, despite one's best intentions, researchers are often operating in a milieu of multiple and disconnected research projects funded for specific objectives but engaging with the same 'over researched' groups, who are themselves competing for grants requiring specific outputs. In the context of neighbourhood deprivation, these numerous activities risk diminishing rather than increasing capacities.

Thus, to deliver realistic, if not transformative change, perhaps it is time for the academe and Scottish Government to pause and reflect on how to systematically use collaborative research to challenge and reduce inequality rather than risk contributing to the '***poverty safari***' (McGarvey, 2017). Scotland's Regeneration Forum's *Alliance for Action programme* (SURF, 2019a; 2019b), working in five sites across Scotland, is currently exploring how to deliver more effective cross-sector collaboration (including community representation, academics, local authority and cross sector stakeholders) in regenerating disadvantaged communities. Starting from 'local community assets and aspirations' and then linking with relevant national policies and resources, it potentially offers a model of good practice.

9.4.3 Reflexivity

Throughout my research journey, I have reflected on my researcher positionality (Herr & Anderson, 2015) and the insider-outsider dynamics. This has led me to consider more deeply the ethical questions raised by my research design and our practice more widely with 'over-researched' communities. Hence, I end this section by, once again, drawing on Janes' (2016) postcolonial critique to consider the differential value and compensation for labour between academic and community work/ers within my own context.

Thinking this would be a constructive way to build on previous findings, I made the conscious choice of choosing a neighbourhood experiencing the highest levels of multiple deprivation and which has been the site of extensive research. What I hadn't anticipated was the range and varying impacts of the action research arena on Colvin and my own contribution to this milieu. Although some honoraria is now good practice in relation to formally using lay co-researchers in 'community-led action research' (SCDC & Poverty Alliance, 2018), Janes' (2016)

notes the asymmetrical payment to academic versus community researchers. Moreover, compensation is not common across all participative research methods, so that none of the *'authentic action research'* cited in Chapter Seven used honoraria.

In addition, my general observation is that there remains a tacit belief that using participatory action research will, of itself, build community capacity, and that this is adequate recompense. This is a disturbing conceit and falls prey to McGarvey's (2017) *'poverty safari'* accusation. In my case, I volunteered my time and experience to demonstrate an ethic of reciprocity (Maiter et al., 2008) but I wonder if this is enough? Developing Janes' (2016) argument for equal compensation between academic and community labour, perhaps it is time for researchers to share their funding with participants who are requested to attend deliberative workshops and events under the auspices of action research? This would be proactive recognition of the knowledge and labour from low-income and marginalised communities who contribute to academic claims of authenticity.

In summary, I chose participatory action research believing this would be the most effective way of addressing my subjectivity for environmental activism and researcher integrity. At the end of this process I am more circumspect about my approach, which could be criticised for re-inscribing my academic epistemic privilege and leaving community colleagues with less than equal benefit. I hope however, this account reflects a practice which is more nuanced and reciprocal – acknowledging the dynamics of power, agency and work that can 'flow in both directions' (Janes, 2016:84).

9.5   Environmental justice & the urban politics of greenspace

In this thesis, I have sought to engage with the politics of social and environmental justice at a neighbourhood scale, and then consider the implications at a city scale. My intention was to apply a trivalent environmental justice frame to the legacy of greenspace inequality, and thereby challenge a business as usual model for regeneration and climate policy. Using a justice frame problematises our management of the urban natural environment thus far and is in recognition of the uneven impact of social and economic policy on urban, national and global scales.

Importantly, I have suggested that we need to understand our relationships to nature and the environment as a subjectivity. That is, the situatedness of our socio-spatial experiences will dictate our environmental relations and their value (Harvey, 1996; Irwin, 2001). In neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation, the socio-spatial experiences of inequality mean that the primary use-value is for accessible and multifunctional greenspace. Inevitably this reflects the modern-day experience of class, poverty and privilege in all but name. The recognition of different subjectivities directs us to the intersections between social and environmental injustice, and the imperative for regeneration and climate adaptation measures to progressively alleviate current inequality rather than assume a trickledown effect.

Following the *Special Report* from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2018), the discourse of a global climate emergency is (finally) gaining political momentum (Scottish Government, 2019e). On a national and city-scale this was given additional impetus with the announcement that Glasgow will host the United Nations 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in November 2020. Described as the most important gathering on climate change since the *Paris Agreement* in 2015 (ECIU, 2019), the summit will be used to showcase the United Kingdom and Scotland as leaders on climate action, and Glasgow as a sustainable and resilient city (BBC News, 2019). This thesis has sought to present a more nuanced picture and to emphasise the interdependence of individual – organisational – community - city and climate resiliences.

I have argued that using a trivalent justice frame, and conceiving greenspace as a boundary object that intersects the discourses of resilience, orientates us to addressing existing environmental injustice. In our unequal society, this is fundamental for securing the conditions for social and climate justice on micro, meso and macro scales. Greenspace policy acts as a proxy for our socio-environmental relations more generally, which is why it is multifarious and complex as it interweaves through all aspects of our lives. Perhaps that is also why it is so difficult 'to see the wood from the trees'. Yet, as Harvey eloquently reminded us almost a quarter of a century ago, not only does urbanised living risk accentuating social and environmental health impacts, but urban design also offers an opportunity to explore new socio-environmental relations within alternative spatial possibilities.

> *'If the current rhetoric about handing on a decent living environment for future generations is to have even one iota of meaning, we owe it to subsequent generations to invest now in a collective and very public search for some way to understand the possibilities of achieving a just and ecologically sensitive urbanisation process under contemporary conditions' (Harvey, 1996:438).*

In our neighbourhoods of urban deprivation, could we not begin by recognising greenspace aspirations?

Appendix A: Topic Guide for community colleagues (v.2)

*PAR working title v2: **Exploring residents' aspirations and actions to improve their greenspace**.*

WELCOME

- Introduce self and thanks for participation.
- Reminder of the purpose of the research (PIS)
  To explore how residents and community organisations grapple with poor greenspace. This includes working with you on a participatory action research project to improve your local greenspace. My research is also interested in understanding what you think has helped or hindered action – like becoming a Thriving Places neighbourhood and having a Thriving Places Connector.
- Confirmation of Name and contact details: email/ mobile.
- Go through Consent Form

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself, how long you have lived in this area?
2. Can you tell me why you are interested in being part of the PAR?

GREENSPACE ACTION

1. What do you think are the most important areas for improving greenspace in places like this?
2. What type of greenspace action has happened here and what have been the benefits?
3. Do you know how these ideas and actions happened? Who made the decisions?
4. Is there anything else you would like to see happen? Why do you think this hasn't happened?

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ABCD)

1. Have you come across the idea of working with a community's strengths or assets?
2. What do you feel are the key assets in this neighbourhood?
3. Glasgow's Thriving Places initiative is an asset-based approach to community development. How do you see Thriving Places supporting local assets?
4. What do you think are the benefits/ strengths of this approach? Are there any drawbacks/ weaknesses?

RESILIENCE

1. Do you have a vision of a 'strong' or 'resilient' community?
2. How do you think resilience/ or wellbeing can be strengthened in this neighbourhood?
3. What role do you think improving local greenspace has in improving resilience/ or wellbeing?

YOU & CLOSING COMMENTS

Is there anything else you would like to add?
Thanks and Close.

Appendix B: Topic Guide for external officers (v.2)

*Thesis title v2: **Exploring community empowerment for environmental/ greenspace action and resilience***

WELCOME

- Introduce self and thanks for participation.
- Reminder of the purpose of the research (PIS)
  As mentioned in my email to you, I'm working with groups in Colvin *to explore how residents and community organisations grapple with poor greenspace. This includes participatory action research projects to improve local greenspace. My research is also interested in understanding how Thriving Places as an asset-based community development initiative, Our Resilient Glasgow Strategy and the processes of Glasgow's Community Planning Partnership are enabling different conversations and outcomes.*
- Confirmation of Name/ Position/ Job title and contact details: email/ mobile.
- Go through Consent Form

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your work/remit/ geography and how long you have been in post for?
2. What is your specific role and responsibilities in relation to Thriving Places and/or improving greenspace?

Depending on work remit, reorder questions
GREENSPACE ACTION

1. What do you think are the most important areas for greenspace action in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation such as Colvin?
2. What type of greenspace action is taken by communities and practitioners?
3. How are these actions decided upon? (who has the power and how is this shaped?)
4. How do you see Our Resilient Glasgow strategy, Open Space Strategy, City Plan, Climate Challenge Fund or any other recent strategy or intervention supporting greenspace action/ improving greenspace?

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ABCD)

1. Have you come across the term asset-based community development (ABCD)? And how does ABCD relate to your work?
2. What do you feel are the key assets in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation such as Colvin?
3. How do you see Thriving Places initiative supporting these assets?
4. What do you think are the benefits/ strengths of this approach? Are there any drawbacks/ weaknesses?

RESILIENCE

1. What is your vision of a resilient community?
2. How do you think resilience is understood by communities, practitioners and organisations in areas of multiple deprivation?
3. What is the role of Thriving Places and the Community Connectors to support resilience?
4. Have you come across Glasgow's Resilience Strategy and if so, how does this fit into your work?

YOUR ORGANISATION /ROLE

1. Where are the strengths in how you work with other stakeholders and organisations? How can these be further improved? Can you give me examples?
   - Partnership working/ Connecting Colvin
   - Community engagement/ participation
2. What are your (the organisation's) strengths and capacities in relation to greenspace action/ resilience? Can you give me examples?
3. What are your (the organisation's) limitations and how can these be improved in relation to greenspace action/ resilience?

YOU & CLOSING COMMENTS

So my last two questions are asking you to summarise your thoughts on greenspace action and resilience...

1. What are your aspirations for strengthening resilience in Colvin and how can they be achieved? (what is your role to achieve them?)
2. What are your aspirations for improving greenspace in Colvin and how can they be achieved? (what is your role to achieve them?)

Is there anything else you would like to add?
Thanks and Close.

Appendix C: Ethics Approval Form

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

14/03/2017

Dear Ms. Fifield,

College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Project Title: Do we have to talk about climate change? Exploring the interpretations and practices of sustainability and resilience with low income communities.

Application No: 400160128

The College Research Ethics Committee has reviewed your application and has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. It is happy therefore to approve the project, subject to the following conditions:

- Start date of ethical approval: 1/04/2017_____
- Project end date: 1/04/2020_____
- Any outstanding permissions needed from third parties in order to recruit research participants or to access facilities or venues for research purposes must be obtained in writing and submitted to the CoSS Research Ethics Administrator before research commences. Permissions you must provide are shown in the *College Ethics Review Feedback* document that has been sent to you.
- The data should be held securely for a period of ten years after the completion of the research project, or for longer if specified by the research funder or sponsor, in accordance with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research:(http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_227599_en.pdf) (Unless there is an agreed exemption to this, noted here).
- The research should be carried out only on the sites, and/or with the groups and using the methods defined in the application.
- Any proposed changes in the protocol should be submitted for reassessment as an amendment to the original application. The *Request for Amendments to an Approved Application* form should be used: http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/staffandpostgraduateres earchstudents/

Yours sincerely,

Dr Muir Houston
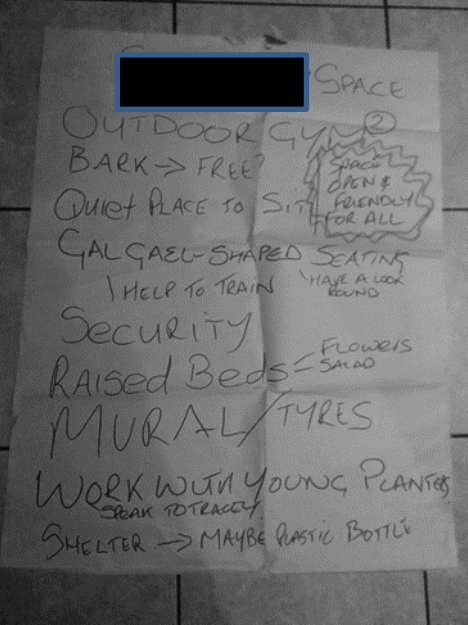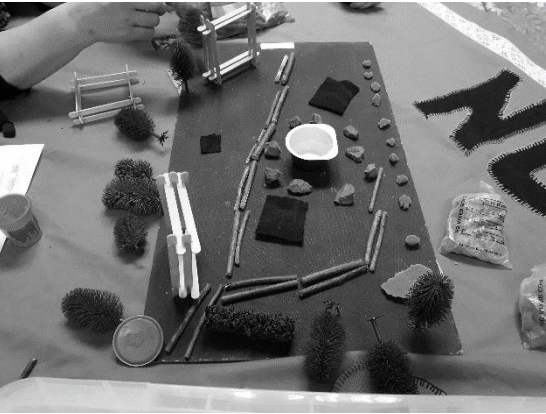College Ethics Officer

Muir Houston, Senior Lecturer
College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer
Social Justice, Place and Lifelong Education Research
University of Glasgow
School of Education, St Andrew's Building, 11 Eldon Street
Glasgow G3 6NH
0044+141-330-4699   Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

Appendix D: Second-cycle codebook extract

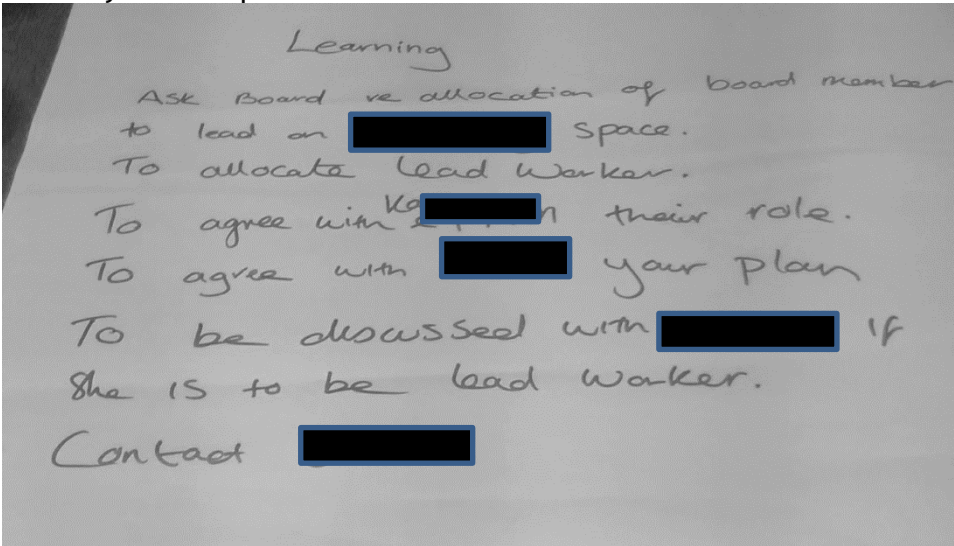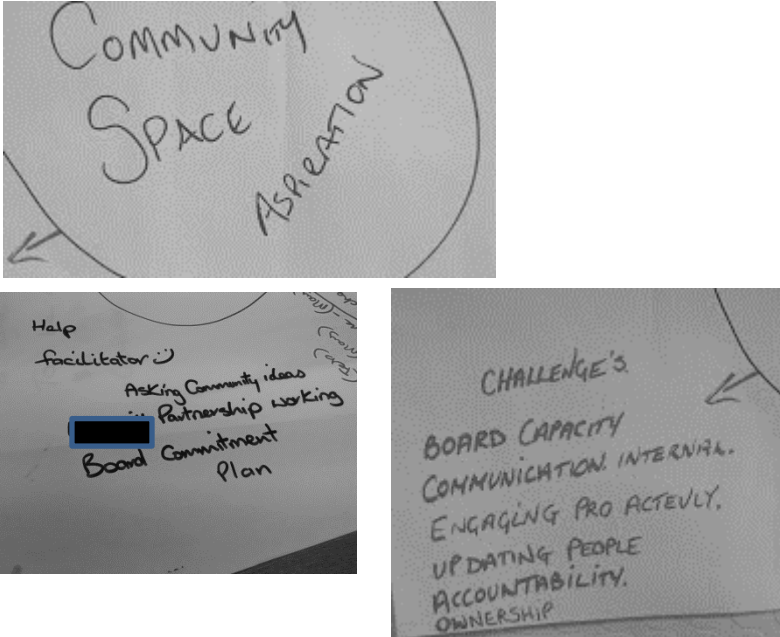| COMMUNITY-CAPITAL	frustrated	POWER	
built	hurt	individual	
cultural	sceptical-cynical	→ radical-conscientisation	
economic	'what's-the-point'-INT-REP	→ resident-participation	
human	ENABLERS	organisational	
natural	councillors	→ partnership-working	
social-capital	housing-association	→ power-between-orgs	
COMMUNITY-DEVELOPMENT	new-voices	understandings-of-power	
CONSTRAINTS	GREENSPACE-ABSENCE	→ 'community-engagement'-INT-REP	
'no-community-centre'-INT-REP	GREENSPACE-ACTIONS	→ decision-making	
'community-politics'-INT-REP	CCF	→ setting-the-agenda	
competition	community-clean-ups	RESEARCHER-ROLE	
DRS	community-garden	'action-research'-INT-REP	
funding	housing-association	catalyst	
organisational-capacity	local-Authority	'citizen-science'-INT-REP	
people	PAR-projects	'poverty-safari'-INT-REP	
size-of-project	youthwork	supporting-organisational-capacity	
structures	outreach-agencies	RESILIENCE-DISCOURSES	
stigma	WHO-DECIDES	SUBJECT-POSITIONS	
EMOTIONAL-RESPONSES	'meeting-CCF-targets'-INT-REP	insider	
'being-forgotten'-INT-REP	WHO-BENEFITS	→ CD-student	
'life-gets-in-the-way'-INT-REP	GREENSPACE-ASPIRATIONS	→ community-activist	
'apathy'-INT-REP	children's-play	→ community-representative	
angry	'safer-&-nicer'-spaces-INT-REP	→ mum	
deflated	unfulfilled	outsider	
energised	KEY-EVENTS	→ connector	
	OPPORTUNITIES	→ educator	
	PACE	→ facilitator	
		'people-as-assets'-INT-REP	
		THRIVING-PLACES	
		role	
		Thriving-Places-benefits	
		Thriving-Places-challenges	

Appendix E: *MarigSpace* PAR – an example of a summary report of activities and learning (August 2018)

| Marig Co **Community colleagues**	Additional Support
Lcy Chair & local resident **Kim** Vice chair & local resident **Donna** Board member **Mary** Part-time Volunteer Coordinator **Kirsty** Part-time Youth Worker & flat resident	Keith: CCF Worker (Heckley Hub) Lauren: Outdoor Nature Learning Engagement Officer Myself as PAR colleague and researcher
Activities	**Participants**
Tree planting Event 1 4th February 2018 12 -3pm cold but sunny afternoon *Key activities:* 50 saplings are planted including willow wind screen. *'My thought's of the garden project is as follow's, i love it, i love being full of mud, i love engaging with the community it's everything i love doing.it was great to see Marig Co working together. can't wait till the 25th Feb for our first Scaraway space garden meeting. I have contacted a few people today and they will be there. i'm so excited about it all'* (Lucy, Chair, Mobile-email 14 February 2018).	Marig CO community colleagues Keith, Lauren, myself 18 local residents including 2 multi-storey concierges 16 children under 14 years old *'Was a grand wee day! Think everyone enjoyed it and the atmosphere was great! The way a community should be ☺'* (Kirsty, Youth worker, WhatsApp, 18:14 4 February 2018).
Marig Space Design Workshop 1 25th February 2018 12.30 – 2.30pm	Marig CO community colleagues Lauren, myself

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Key activities:
The group design MarigSpace

'Thanks for today. These are my thoughts. I don't particularly like gardening. However I do like being part of a community and see that others get great enjoyment from being outside creating a nicer environment. I have enjoyed the planning today. The ideas that people have are really good. I loved hearing them talk about the outside space as somewhere to sit with others' (Kim, Vice-chair, Email, 25 February 2018).

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4 local residents
5 children under 14 years old
The group agree to meet again in March followed by fortnightly MarigSpace activities on Sundays. A couple of members will talk

to friends about sourcing tyres free bark chipping and compost. My task is to speak to Keith to confirm what level of support he can continue to offer. Lauren will lead on building a bog garden, and Mary will

contact Scottish Water, who approached her in the summer offering corporate volunteering. (SF, Fieldnote, 25 February 2018).

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MarigSpace Design Workshop 2
8th April 2018 12.30 – 2.30pm

Key activities:

'We decided to create a Facebook group…. This will be used to promote fortnightly sessions and one off events such as the raised bed building with Keith. We would like to visit 2 or 3 other community spaces and I will speak to Jacqueline about the small pot of funding she acquired for similar reasons. (Kim,Vice-chair, Email, 9 April 2018).

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Marig Co community colleagues
4 local residents
1 child under 14 years old

I was not present – suggesting the group is gaining confidence and autonomy.

Keith's session will kick start the fortnightly ones and we hope to be more outdoor from then on (Kim,Vice-chair, Email, 9 April 2018).

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Building Raised Beds Event 2

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Marig Co community colleagues

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7th May 2018 12.30 – 2.30pm Hot and sunny afternoon *Key activities:* 2 x raised beds built. Agreed that Marig Co youth group will decorate and maintain raised beds. *These photos were taken by Kirsty (Marig Co's part-time youth worker and flat resident. They are part of the shared online photo album for the PAR and have been used for social media and youth engagement.*	Keith, myself 2 flat residents & 2 local residents 4 children under 14 years old
Planting wildflower bed Event 3 9th May 2018 *Key activities:* Large bed for wild flowers dug and sown in front of willow saplings.	Marig Co community colleagues Keith Scottish Water corporate volunteers
MarigSpace Community consultation/ Flat outreach 29th May 2018 4-6pm *Key activities:* **Request to Housing Association for benches** 8th June 2018 email request for benches sent 15th June 2018 HA asks for quotes 12 July 2018 After further discussion with 8 residents, email sent with bench options.	Marig Co community colleagues 29 responses from 172 flats requesting benches for sitting outside. 8 flat residents to select type of seating.

12 July 2018 Immediate response from HA Grants Manager that community fund is now spent but that the benches will be prioritised for next round.	
MarigSpace **PAR Evaluation Workshop 3** 31st July 2018 5-7pm 	Marig CO community colleagues

Appendix F: *MarigSpace* PAR – an example of my relational analysis using a situational map (August 2018)
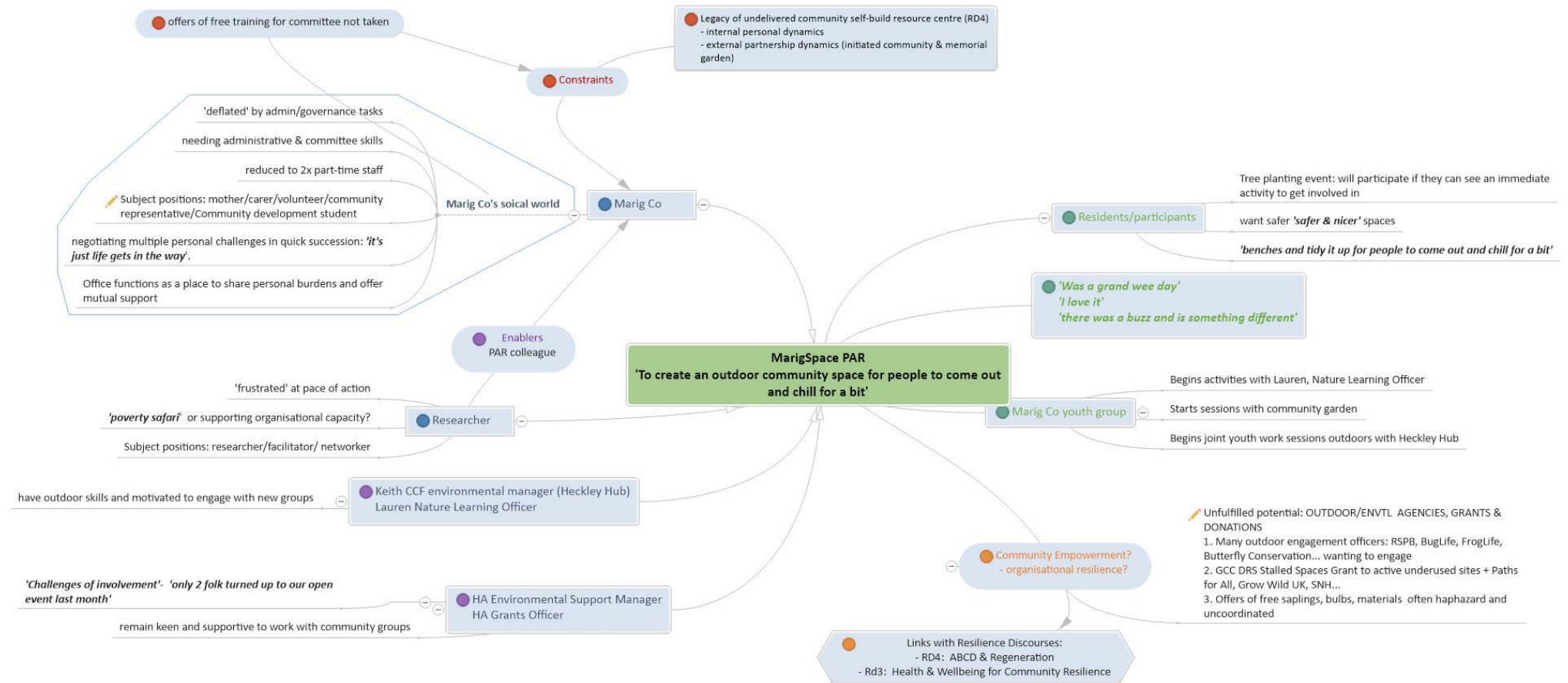
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The urban politics of greenspace:

exploring community empowerment
for greenspace aspirations, justice
and resiliences

*A participatory action research project in
Glasgow*

THESIS BOOKMARK

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THESIS BOOKMARK

Introduction

This thesis bookmark restates the research questions and reproduces the following Tables and Figures for ease of reference as the chapters progress.

- Figure 1.1: A trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice
- Figure 2.1: Matrix of socio-environmental ideologies
- Figure 2.2: The five discourses of resilience
- Table 6.1: Five PAR projects, fieldwork phase & key community colleagues
- Figure 6.5: Enablers & constraints to greenspace aspirations & actions
- Figure 7.1: Social Worlds/Arenas Map: Connecting Colvin network & greenspace

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the enablers and constraints to local greenspace aspirations and actions?

1a: What are the greenspace aspirations and actions that transpire?

1b: To what extent are residents and practitioners encouraged to identify local greenspace aspirations and actions?

RQ2: How do my findings intersect with the discourses of community resilience in Glasgow's places of multiple deprivation?

RQ3: What do my findings tell us about enabling community empowerment for environmental justice?

RQ4: What can an environmental justice frame contribute to the five discourses of resilience in Scotland?

A trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice
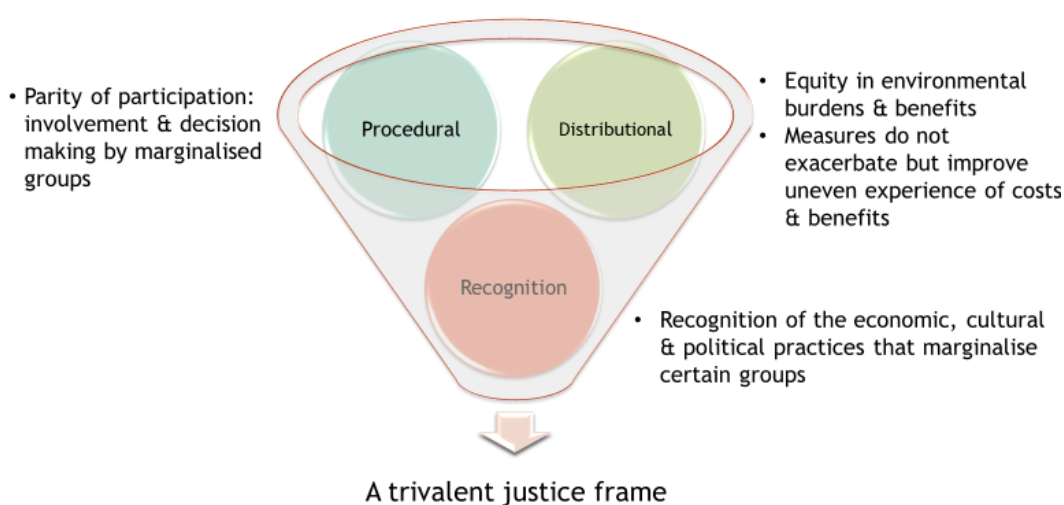
Figure 1.1: Representation of Schlosberg's (2004; 2007) trivalent conceptualisation of environmental justice (Source: author's own).

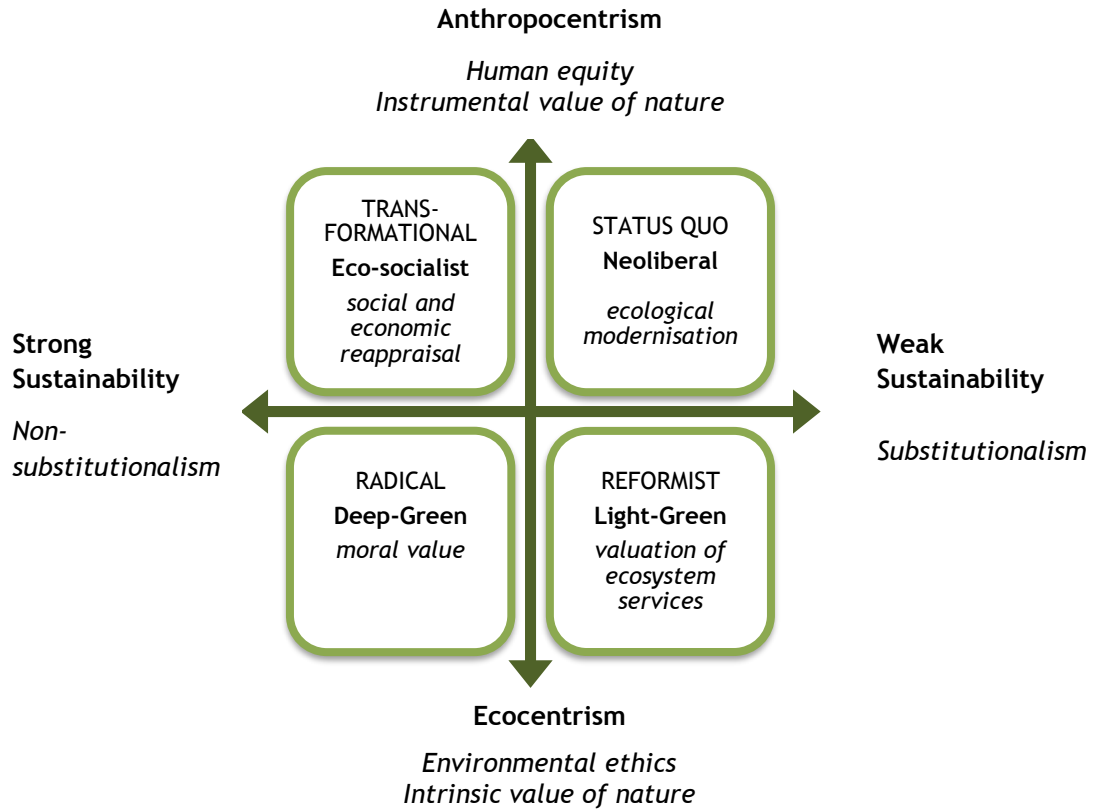## Matrix of socio-environmental ideologies

Figure 2.1: Matrix of socio-environmental ideologies in relation to sustainable development (Source: author's own).
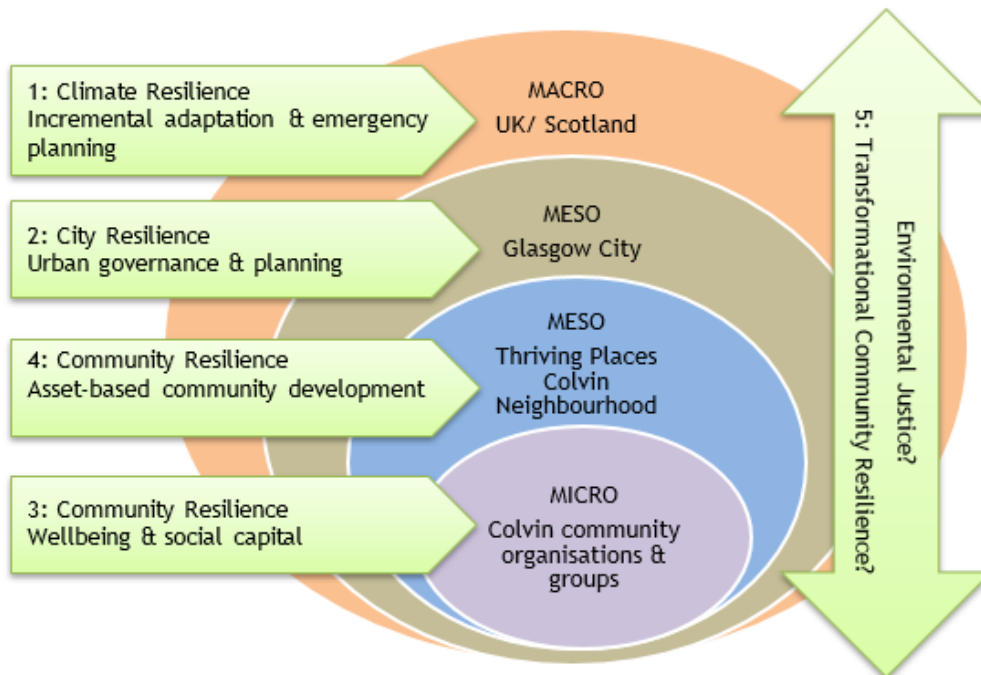
The five discourses of resilience

Figure 2.2: Micro, meso & macro interrelationships within this case study & corresponding five discourses of resilience (Source: author's own).

The five PAR projects & key community colleagues

Table 6.1: Five PAR projects, fieldwork phase & key community colleagues

Fieldwork Phase 6. Jun 17-Sep 17 7. Oct 17-July 18 8. Aug 18-Dec 18 9. Jan 19-April 19 10. May-19-Jun 19	Five PAR Projects	Community colleagues (pseudonyms)	
Phase 2	*MarigSpace*	Lucy	Chair
		Kim	Vice-chair & Community Development Student
		Donna	Board Member & Community Development Student
		Mary	P/t Volunteer Coordinator
		Kirsty	P/t Youth Worker & Community Development Student
Phase 2	*Heckley Path Action Group (HPAG)*	**Ann**	Manager
		Maureen	Deputy Manager
		Keith	CCF Worker
		Martin	Project Worker
Phase 3	*Make Marig Muddy*	**Sophie**	Group Leader
Phases 3 – 5	*Arden Play Campaign*	**Jane**	Group Leader
Phases 3 – 5	*Colvin Greenspace Network*	**Kate**	Thriving Places Community Connector
		Lynne	Marig Community Garden Manager
Phase 2		**Tony**	Community Activist

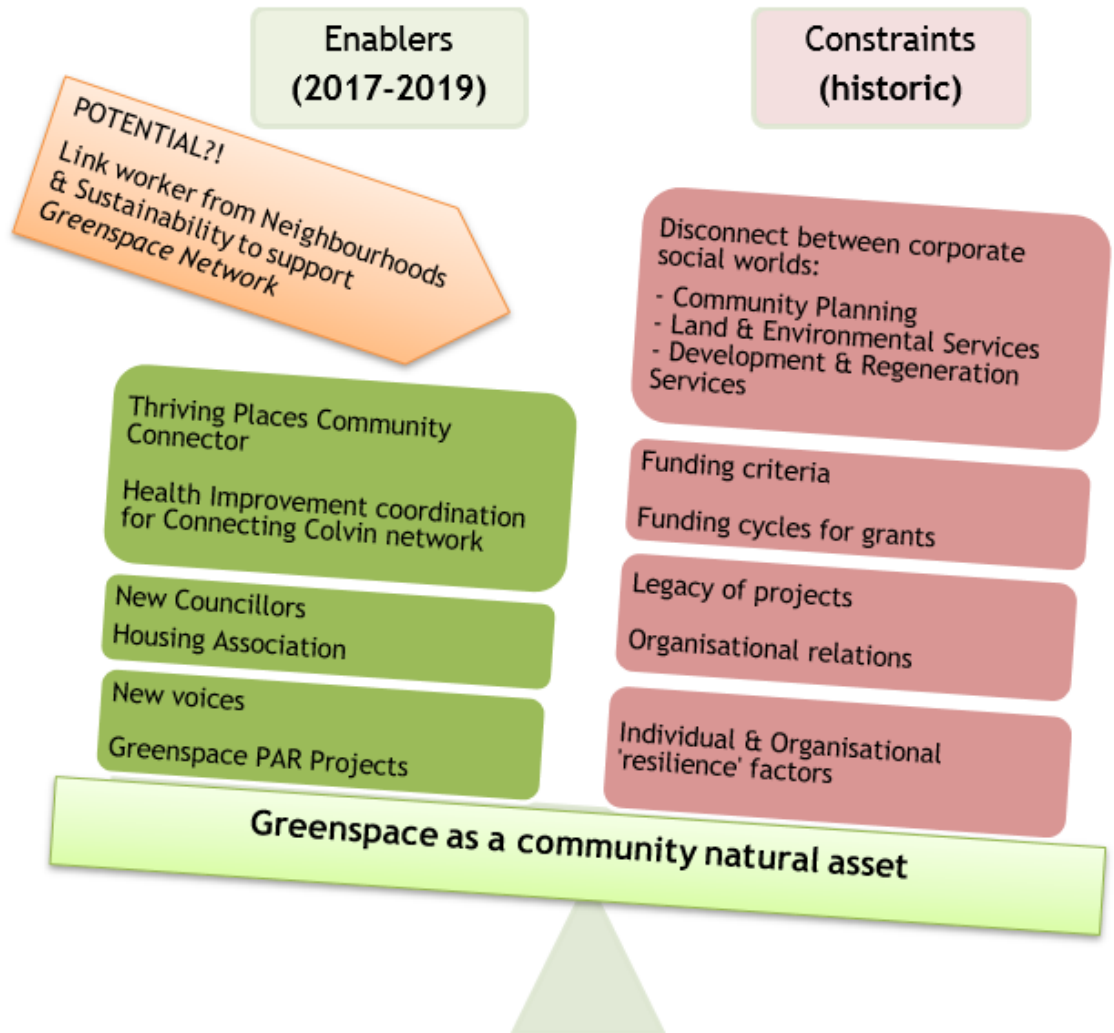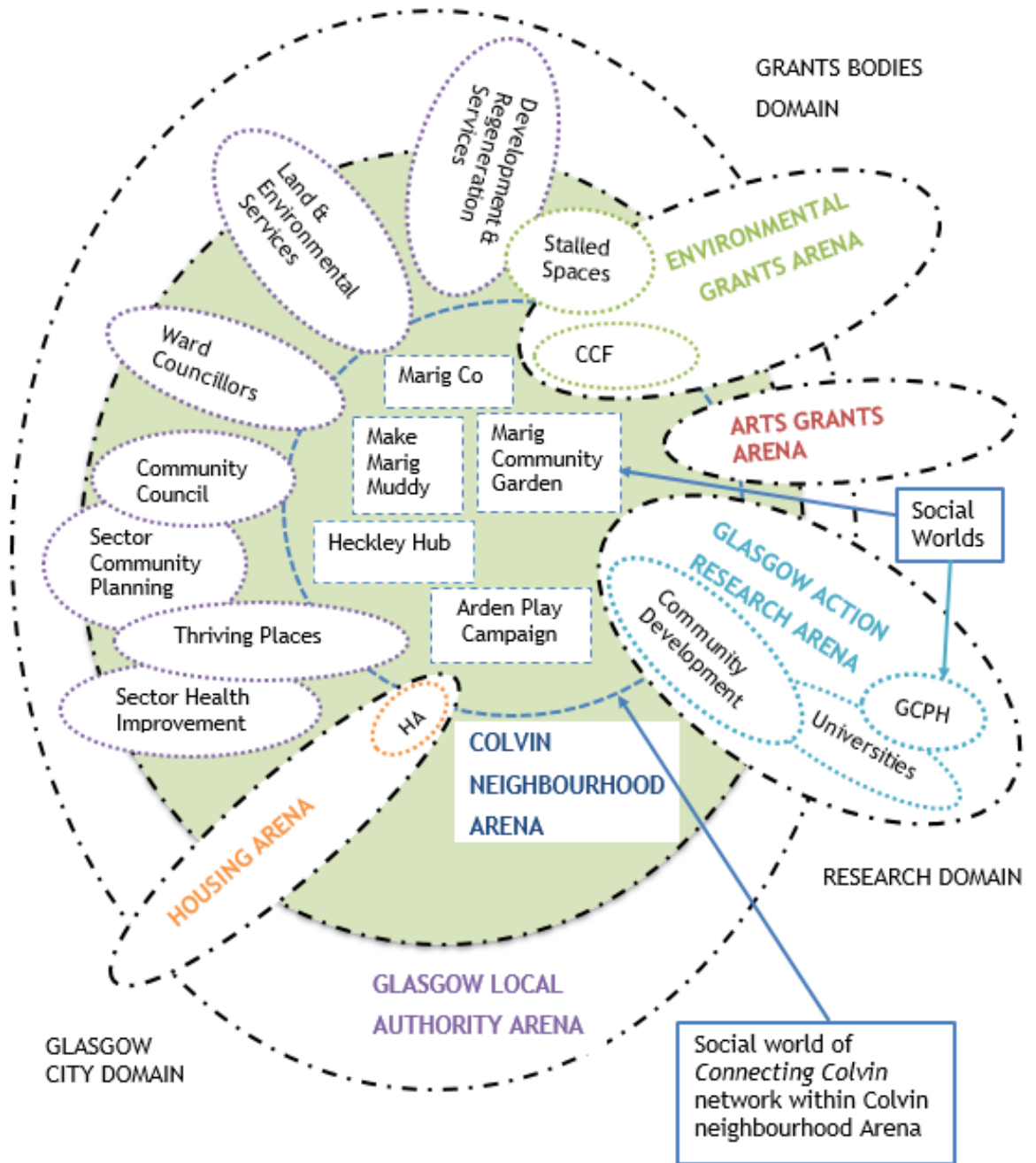**Enablers & constraints to greenspace aspirations & actions**

Figure 6.5: Current enablers & historic constraints to greenspace aspirations & actions – co-produced with community colleagues, March 2019
Source: author's own.

Social Worlds/Arenas Map: Connecting Colvin network & greenspace

Figure 7.1: Social Worlds/Arenas Map: Connecting Colvin network & greenspace

Connecting Colvin Social World within Colvin neighbourhood and Glasgow local authority Arenas; and influenced by the Arenas of Housing, Environmental and Arts grants, and Glasgow action research.

Source: author's own - using Clarke's (2005) Social Worlds/Arenas mapping analysis.
Note: Land & Environmental Services restructured to form Neighbourhoods & Sustainability Services in April 2019.