**13.05.21**

**Well, well, I might might as well crack on with the questions that I've got. So so from the answers you provided in that form, you said that you've you own outright a like a flat in the house. Yeah, so it might. It may because the boxes weren't quite right, but I'm shared right.**

Shared ownership yeah, a flat that’s been split from a bigger house. That kind of split down Victorian house, neighbor below, neighbor above.

**Yeah yeah, yeah sounds like pretty much exactly where I'm sitting right now. Yeah, so can I ask how long you've you've lived there specifically?**

So being here just over 17 years? Yeah, yeah.

**So well, I bet you must have seen the area changed quite a lot in.**

So yeah, I have. Actually, you know new coffee shop on the corner, you know, just recently springing up all over the place. And yeah, I guess I have and. Definitely can't quite believe there's a Marks and Spencers in Dalston. Another one on the way and then now away and. Yeah. Yeah, so I guess shot wise it's changed and it loads of constructions buildings being regenerated. Uhm yeah, but you know, if you think back it's changed. But as it's happening over time you forget it's changed.

**Yeah yeah, that's true. I’ve been here since around 2009, which seems like yesterday. Where, where were you living those years ago?**

We’ve always been local, so before I moved here I was in a house share with a friend in Islington. It's just I moved to London in 97 and was just in various House shares, mainly Islington but flipped over the River once briefly …

**Really, so, I'm going to dive right in and you know, you know that my research main research question is about what nature means for different people, and my feeling is that that is it's kind of a bit of an open term, and different people think of it in different ways. So what does nature mean for you?**

So I’ve been thinking about this and I guess immediately I think about nature being outdoors, involving plants and wildlife and animals, yeah. And as I thought about it more, I thought, well, you know, let's think a bit closer to home and you know, nature could be happening in my fridge and there could be some mouldy tomatoes in there. So I guess I guess nature. Nature and natural, yeah, it comes just comes up. To me nature is something that's natural, so you know, just from my flat I can see lots of dog walkers going by, but those will be domesticated pets so. Yeah, so I guess I'm thinking around something that's living and is natural, yeah? Yeah, but not necessarily like Countryfile, right? Yeah, not that sort of like idlylic rural thing.

**What nature would you say so on like a daily basis?**

God well. I work in a prison. Yeah, and I work in Pentonville and I have worked in another prison before that, but Pentonville doesn't really have any gardens, so to speak. But as you come in, there's a massive grey planter and it's currently just bursting with tulips and spring daffodils and spring Flowers. And just to see the contrast of that against. Everything that's grey, yeah, stands out, so I say that and. My cycle to work. I might go through Clissold Park, an obviously that's got deers. Yeah, it's got a little aviary and just outside my flat there's a bath tub I don't really tend to it very well, but there's plants that grow in there and there's all the snails. There's baby snail on my door earlier. Hey, there's a daddy long legs in my bath the other day and I'm very kind and I try and encourage them outside. Send me yeah. So nature is all around us even you know, even if it's just a small flower pot or something.

**Yeah yeah that's interesting. Thank you man. I mean you know you said you mentioned you've got kind of know. You've got your bath out there, but you've got no like actual garden or like no outdoor space yourself?**

So yeah, I don’t have a garden, but I do have an allotment. Yeah, so my allotments at Springhill and I have to say I've had it for about 11 or 12 years. I know I was on the allotment waiting list for five years. As soon as I moved in the flat actually, so that tallies doesn't it. So here's have the allotment. Well, yeah. Man, it's like an Oasis down there. I don't know that I would have necessarily as explored that part of Hackney if I hadn't have been allocated a plot there and that that probably to me. Is where I think of being peaceful outdoors in London, so I grew up in a rural countryside background and that to me is going back to my roots as much as possible within London.

**What makes it? What makes it feel like that?**

Uhm? Putting on Wellingtons, I grew up on a farm so alright. Wellingtons other than growing up on a farm is when I got my allotment. So dirty getting muddy. Just it's just I've had loads of memories over the years of how I used to love worms when I was little. Soil that I'm most interested in my allotment and seeing what's in the soil or all the bugs and worms and other things. And I guess there's the constant battle with growing anything, so I planted some Savoy cabbage seedlings several weeks ago and only one survived. You know, I don't know what's been getting at them, whether it's a bird pecking at them. Or a fox digging them up. Something has eaten my seedlings as well.

**I'm sorry to hear that**

So so so I was just going to say that you know, in some ways that's the fun of an allotment. You know, I'm not. I guess I'm not certainly not dependent on what I grow for my survival. Yeah, it's more. For me it's more about recreation experimental. It's quite so sure, it's lovely way to relax it. It kind of compensates for not having a garden. Yeah, I find it much more convenient to just be able to step out my front door or back door and. That would be my ideal, but actually I would then would have met lots of people.

**Yeah, yeah, what do you feel the relationship between like you say about this? Like kind of battle between what you're trying to do and then what nature does. Uh, the companies is your. Is it like that? First is your allotment? Is your allotment part of nature?**

Yeah, there's a part from the soil. Maybe you know what mine, the one comment I always get about my allotment is it's really neat, right? So I don't think my allotment is. I prefer the look of all the very natural overgrown ones, but I guess my personality. It's raised beds. And yeah, you know I I managed the soil in each of those beds an. Crew. So I love the I love the fact that there's so many plots. I think there's about 40 plots where mine is and everything's individual. So I like being able to look at everyone else is, but you know, mine's really organized and. Yeah. And it's been weird saying that, yeah. So it's like there's there's like a. Some of the other plots are more natural or more closer to nature. Yeah, because they're like untidy. I guess so I guess, so I I think probably people have got more knowledge about. Maybe they use them for different purposes, but we've got this current debate going on at the allotment about becoming organic and pesticide free, right? Man, I have to say it, I don't use any weed killers I just I just take it for granted that if something is infected it's infected and you know pull out the weeds by hand or not. So maybe that's quite organic in itself and you know, I just accept I try and use a bit of rum. As slug deterrent metal tape, you put round things and yeah I never know if that works or not. I think it does. I do think it does. Yeah, it seems to work. You know, just natural control methods. And there there's bindweed around the fence where I am, and so that's a continual battle at this time of year is starting to grow, but just just pull it out.

**Yes, yeah? Brilliant brilliant unlike you mentioned. Outside outside, outside Pentonville there being almost like tulips and things. How about like the minute between you go from your front door to when you guys hear allotment? Is that an area is devoid of nature in some way or? Do you ever notice any nature or things that you consider to be natural?**

Along that route. I guess so from my front door to my allotment. It's predominantly residential in the main road. Serve as the beautiful as I approached the allotment, there's beautiful Springfield Park so that snap nature. I guess. Several years ago the Council planted lots of trees on the pavements. The one that got put outside my front doors got disease on there so.

**Sorry to hear**

My neighbours got lovely blossom on theirs, but yeah, I just got a disease. But what I like is when these trees went in, you know it. It was several years ago, an summer, just trees. Other people that created a little garden around the base of their trees. Uhm? So I enjoy watching the trees in the blossom and my neighbors. I have this amazing. I don't know what it's called, but it blossoms just for about a week, a year. An often you'll see people having their photographs taken by it is and people come for wedding photos. It's stunning. Yeah, stunning. I'm just thinking, of course there must be nature. If I stopped to look. As I say, there's a snails and little creatures in pavement cracks. And as well as the green patches somewhere.

**Yeah, yeah, is that more nature?**

I guess it let's think about looking up and seeing sunsets and clouds and. I like it when the sun comes and moves around my flat during the day. I've got dual aspect, yeah? That's nature and seeing sunsets and things.

**Yeah, yeah, absolutely brilliant. Well, that's great. Thank you. But we kind of almost out of time and I don't want to keep you for. You could really, well, we'll talk about this when we talk again. OK, there's a week with his time, but I did. I just wanted to bring up at this stage. Pandemic just 'cause it's a bit of an elephant in the in the room I suppose. Yeah, I mean obviously it's changed all kinds of things for all kinds of people in all kinds of ways. But I mean, if you notice yourself looking at things differently over the past year or the way, if you appreciated things or the way you thought about your allotment, say.**

Well, when the pandemic happened last year I actually was living at… my mom died just before the pandemic and so I stayed in Sussex back in sort of my rural upbringing, although I was coming into London to work once or twice a week. I was predominantly based in the countryside and I fully appreciate it was just stunning for many years I've. I've just been driving down looking after my mom and suddenly I explored all this stuff that was on my doorstep as a child that I either didn't explored, forgotten about. I reconnected with so many childhood memories living back there and then when I came back pulled kind to London in December. Have I reached my? Definitely I've been going to my allotment more. Yeah, it's sort of yeah. So wanting to be outside, especially during the lock in lock down, that's been important. Having that space, it has been a bit of a lifesaver at times.