Person1:    IFrom your point of view, what is sustainability in terms of software?

Person2:    [Laughter] My background isn't software development.

Person1:    Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Person2:    I'm a chemist, originally.

Person1:    Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Person2:    I got forwarded into programming somehow, and then my PhD was modelling, not software development.

Person1:    That's all right. You do develop software, right?

Person2:    I, I, so … I don't know what people mean by sustainable software.

Person1:    Yeah. That's the point of my work. That's what I'm trying to define.

Person2:    Be- because my, my PhD was kind of environmental chemistry. To me sustainable is from a, from an ecologic point of view, whatever, is making sure things don't disappear, or, or maintaining -- maybe it's the same in software, but maintaining, maintaining a suitable environment for things to survive.

Person1:    Yes. Yes, it is, it is related to that software-wise.

Person2:    Okay.

Person1:    Uh, for example, uh, there are attributes or features of the software itself that leads us to believe that it's sustainable. For example, when it's well documented, when it's open source and there's version control and there's a, a community around it, for example. That's what I gather from other people, uh. Do you have any fresh perspectives on this? I mean, any attributes of the software itself that you think helps it to stay alive in the future?

Person2:    Ah, well we use version control, so we've got [inaudible 3:17] and, and we're, we're probably going to make open source, but we haven't released a version yet, so that's still under debate. Um, we, um, um, we are using a code, at the moment on our [inaudible 03:36] code we are using Pilot, which is kind of a code checker --

Person1:    Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Person2:    -- that warns you every time you haven't got a doc string in a method or function or class. So, you know, because we're trying to make our code as high a score as possible, it's kind of forcing us to documentation, like the doc strings, and … well often just comment, because you know. It doesn't check for comments, it just checks for doc strings and, and it actually checks text. So you know, it's actually advantageous for us to actually spend a minute writing a suitable doc string.

Person1:    Mm.

Person2: So I guess, we offer it in a sense, because yes, we're using SEN, we're using doc strings, um, and they probably going to make it open source, to some extent. At the moment, I'm, um, at the moment I'm positive that it's actually public if you know where to look.

Person1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Person2: So we -- but we are also collaborating with various people around the UK. So, you know, I was in City1 yesterday talking to people we collaborate with. But we've got developers in City2 and City3, and you know, so. And, and we think it's going to get you know, funding for -- an X amount of funding so once we've started and the ball rolling and we've got various people on, on the project. We think, we, we hope that, that you know, even if, even if there's a turnover of people, there's going to be enough people interested at any one time to carry the project forward.

Person1: Yeah, so regarding the software that you've developed, was there sustainability consideration?

Person2: No. No, not to begin with but you know, in the last two years, there will probably become more of a consideration than at the beginning.

Person1: Yeah. And have you worked on a project that you considered not to be sustainable?

Person2: Um, I, I, I guess my PhD, because I was University in the UK using the code I was using, you know, to, to that extent.

Person1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Person2: And well, I finished my PhD and there was no more funding, and, and maybe [inaudible 06:00]. So I've wrote the code, [inaudible 06:01] code, so you know, I -- and to your definition, it's not sustainable, but it maybe is sustainable because if somebody else asked me for the code, I'd give it to them. I guess, if you don't really, you don't really spend the time to make it suitable for the people when you know --

Person1: Hm.

Person2: -- the likelihood is that it's not going to be used again in the future. So, under, under your definition, then I guess it's unsustainable, but it was never meant to be sustainable.

Person1: I see.

Person2: Just for me, for myself to get a PhD.

Person1: Yeah.

Person2: To do my own research. So yeah.

Person1: That happens a lot.

Person2: Maybe that's not sustainable, but, yeah, as I say, it wasn't meant to be and yeah.

Person1:    Yeah, it happens a lot in research software development, to the effect that after the PhD, the PhD student finishes, gets a PhD, then the software kind of dies. And, uh, but it varies depending on the nature of the research. Yes, so Person2, that's all I have for you today.