

Host City Volunteers Focus Group 2

15th November 2011, 19:00

Room CEE1, Glasgow Caledonian University

Focus Group 2 (MP3).mp3

Participants

MODERATOR

C2

CC2

L2

M2

H2

J2

[0:21:48]

MODERATOR: Ok everyone, I was expecting a couple more people-

C2: But they got lost.

MODERATOR: Well, I'm just slightly concerned, but perhaps they'll come in in a few minutes time, so perhaps we'd better start. I'm hoping that we can wrap up by about 20:45, because that's what I said to everyone, so if people have got things they need to rush off to, or trains or buses they want to catch, so hopefully we'll be done by then. But yeah, thank you all for coming to this discussion group, and congratulations for finding the room, that's great [*laughs from others*]. You're here, partly because you've all completed the survey that we sent out recently, so first of all thanks very much for doing that, we really appreciate your time. And we've invited you all along because you were all Host City Volunteers, and we're interested in hearing more about your experiences and things that you've been up to since the games, basically. So just a few ground rules to start with, because I don't know if people have been in discussion groups like this before: it's really about getting you guys to talk, it's not about me talking. We want to hear your opinions, anything you've got to say. Everyone just jump into the conversation when you want – don't feel that you have to raise your hand or wait to be called on, just normal conversation. And there aren't any right or wrong answers, so don't be worried that I'm going to be sitting, thinking "I didn't want them to say that" – I want you to be as honest as possible, that's the way that the group works, basically, so please feel free to say whatever you'd like to say. So I thought, perhaps, if we start by just going round and introducing ourselves – so if we say our name, and where we're from, and then perhaps you guys can say why you decided to become a Host City Volunteer. I'm Raf, and I'm actually quite a way from home, because I'm originally from London. [*to C2*] Perhaps you could go next?

C2: Hi, I'm C2. Glaswegian, obviously, by the accent. I did the Commonwealth Games and I'm doing Skill Match for the European Championships and I just love talking to people, I love finding out- I'm really interested in other people's lives, so that's a great opportunity to – particularly with Skills Match – because I can just talk and talk and talk [*laughs from the group*] so that's perfect for me.

MODERATOR: Well you should get on alright tonight, then [*laughs from all*].

CC2: Hi, I'm CC2. Despite the accent, I've lived in Cumbernauld for twenty years. I did City Host because I didn't get Clydesider! [*he laughs*] My wife and my son got Clydesider, and then I heard about City Host, but actually, in hindsight, I enjoyed doing City Host – I think it was a better gig [*murmurs of agreement*] than some of the jobs that were given out in Clydesider. And it was a chance to represent the city, and it was a fantastic opportunity to talk to people and help people round our city, and just take great pride in our city.

[0:25:00]

MODERATOR: Thanks.

L2: My name is L2, and I retired to Glasgow about twelve years ago. I come from Edinburgh originally, and I left Scotland for forty years, so Glasgow is still a bit of an unknown territory to me in many ways. I love it, I'm very happy here, and I do different kinds of voluntary work and I had the best time at the Commonwealth Games.

MODERATOR: Thanks L2.

M2: I'm M2, I come from Glasgow. I've always lived here. Like L2, and with L2 [*L2 laughs*] we do other volunteering work, and have done for a number of years together. I love Glasgow, I love

everything about Glasgow – the people particularly – and professionally I’ve seen a cross-section of people in Glasgow. Like everyone has said, I just wanted to be part of it, and promote Glasgow in a way that hadn’t been seen before, and hadn’t been done before, I don’t think, prior to this. I had a great time, it was fantastic.

MODERATOR: Thank you.

H2: Hello, my name is H2 and I live in Glasgow – well, Bothwell, near Glasgow. I’m not as adventurous as the rest of them, but I was involved with the Commonwealth Games. Since then, I’ve done nothing, however now that I have retired, I think that I would like to help out in some way, in Glasgow. I worked in Glasgow, I was born in Glasgow, I worked in Glasgow for 51 years. So I think I can contribute some way along the line, maybe just a little bit of help from organisations, which I’ve heard of, but never been involved with, so that’s where I’d like to be.

MODERATOR: Ok, thanks H2.

J2: Hello, I’m J2, like the girls over there [*gestures to L2 and M2*] I’ve been a giver since 1968. I came up through the Boys’ Brigade, and when I was too old as a boy, I became an officer and I’ve been involved with youth clubs, paying forward I suppose. I was involved with the Special Olympics in 1989 and 1990, which was the whole of Strathclyde, and that was superb. First volunteer in, the September before the Games, and last volunteer out, the September after the Games. I got involved as a Host City Volunteer Team Leader. I didn’t apply to be a Clydesider because I was caring for my mum and dad, who both passed away just before the Games, so that gave me a chance to get involved. [*looks up*] Sorry. [*gentle laughs from group*] But I loved it, and we were just chatting there, H2 and I were just chatting – every day was glorious [*murmurs of agreement*] except the Saturday [*laughs from group*]

CC2: Yes. Heavy rain!

J2: I was on High Street and I got soaked to the skin! [*more laughs*] But it was great, I loved it. [*to C2*] Like you, I’m just making my appointment for the European Championships.

MODERATOR: Ok. Right, well, thanks everyone. You might have noticed these three visual aids in front of me, we’re going to be talking about each of these three things this evening, basically. So we’re going to start off by thinking about local community, then we’re going to think about other people – so that might be neighbours, or friends, or just people that you’re acquainted with, and then we’re going to think about Glasgow as well, so we’re going to be thinking about these three different settings. We’re interested, first of all, in local community – do you feel connected to your local community? I’ll throw that out there for anyone to jump in, do you feel connected to your local community?

[*slight pause*]

M2: I would say yes, I do. I live in – can I name, can I say where I live?

MODERATOR: Yeah.

M2: I stay in Garrowhill, which is in the East End. Built in the 1930s, so there’s quite an established community element, if you know what I mean – there’s the church, there’s schools, there’s houses, there’s, you know, shops, transport links. So that was already set up, and I’m still classed as an ‘incomer’ if you like – I’ve only been there 25 years [*laughs from the group*]. But within that community, there are things that still go on, that encourage folk to come and meet. The local church, for instance, so there’s always things going on in the local church, there’s the community

hall still in operation, which a lot of areas have seen the demise of. So I would say yes, I do. I volunteer in my local community as well, I'm a volunteer tutor with adult literacy and numeracy, so I have a lot of contact with the local community, I do feel connected with people. And I know my neighbours, which is something that is rare these days. [H2 murmurs in agreement]

[0:30:00]

C2: I must admit I am not. I don't feel particularly connected to my neighbourhood. It's probably me, more than anything else – I'm not a churchgoer, I don't really get involved in that. I work three days a week. I do work for, I do volunteer for things like the food bank and so forth, but that's not really a community activity. I don't think I really looked to do community work – I was looking more for things that I wanted to do, and to get involved in something that was interesting to me. I'm not a churchgoer, so that wasn't something I wanted to do. The neighbourhood itself, it's mostly landlords that own the flats that I live in, so it's a lot of rented, there's a lot of students coming in. I live in the West End, and Glasgow University has built enormous amounts of Student Living accommodation down there, and there's a lot of changes going on in the West End as well. The Western is being knocked down. I quite like it, I think everything should have a continuity, I think. I love where I live, I do, I love the buzz and excitement that the West End has. I love Byres Road, and Great Western Road and so forth, but I don't feel as if it's got a kind of village feel to it. There's a lot of transient feeling, because it is a university part, so there's lots of people coming and going. My neighbours, if I accidentally meet them on the stair, I'll nod and they'll nod very politely back, and then we'll just go our separate ways and we might not see each other again, ever, you know? That doesn't bother me as such, I'm quite happy with that – I don't know if I would like that kind of claustrophobic feel that my neighbours knew everything about me, that sort of Miss Marple, you know, where they're all peering through the curtains [laughs from the group]

J2: The net curtains [laughs]

M2: That's me! [laughs]

C2: I think I'm quite happy with that, I like a certain amount of disconnectedness between myself and my neighbours, so no I think I'm fine that way.

MODERATOR: Ok, that's two quite different experiences. Anyone else?

J2: I know my neighbours, I'm involved in the church so I know all the old ladies. My neighbours have actually got spare keys for my house, should I not waken up to open the curtains. If they see them closed at ten they chap the door and make sure I'm alive [laughs from group]. But I also do a lot in the community up in Glasgow North and Bishopbriggs because I'm involved in Rotary up in that area, because I worked in Springburn for thirty years. Although I stay in Scotstoun, I travel over to Springburn to do all my voluntary Rotary stuff. Being involved in the community, it's not just local – it's national, and it's international, because you're looking at communities that you can give something to, so you're providing a service locally, nationally and internationally.

MODERATOR: Ok, thanks. Anyone else?

L2: I feel very connected to my community. I live in Dennistoun, and there's a conservation society in Dennistoun and once a month some of us get together to clean it up, to clean up the litter. The council kindly give us bags and those picker-up things and gloves and things, and a group of us get together and we do that. I'm also on the board of management for the Citizens' Advice in Parkhead, which is – we don't have many meetings, but it's a quite important thing to do, because that organisation is vital to Parkhead.

J2: Brilliant.

L2: And I also volunteer and work with M2 with the Home Library service from Shettleston Library. So, there's a lot of stuff going on in Dennistoun which I like being involved in.

J2: I was brought up in Dennistoun.

L2: Sorry?

J2: I was brought up on Roslea Drive.

H2: I worked in Dennistoun. 61 years.

J2: '64-'74.

CC2: It's all happening in Dennistoun...

J2: Lulu stayed round the corner. I was pally with Billy. [*laughs from group*]

H2: Billy Connolly?

J2: No no, Lulu's younger brother.

MODERATOR: H2 or CC2, do you want to jump in at all?

[0:35:00]

CC2: I feel connected – I live in Cumbernauld, which is a new town. I know all my neighbours, we've had fundraising things in our house for neighbours – a Blether With The Neighbours, we call it. Usually on a Saturday morning, we have breakfast, and we just put on a breakfast and people come down and have a blether, so we've done that. I'm connected with the church – I work for a charity, a debt management, debt counselling charity, which is UK-wide but we have the office based in Kirkintilloch. So I'm quite connected with the community and known in the community of Kirkintilloch, because of our debt management services, that we offer through the church. I'm connected with the community in Cumbernauld, and embedded in the community in Kirkintilloch, and the various areas that the charity covers: Kirkintilloch, all that area, across to Stepps, across to Bishopbriggs, Cumbernauld, pushing up towards Stirling. I go on the radio – Revival Radio – once a month and talk about debt [*laughs from the group*] and how to avoid it, how to get out of it-

H2: Are you there to get them out of debt, or-

CC2: Yes, we put in place – it's a charity called CAP, Christians Against Poverty – and it's a completely free service, and we've help people who've got uncontrollable or unmanageable debt. We put plans in place and then we talk to all the creditors on their behalf.

H2: Is this through gambling and things like that?

CC2: All sorts, yeah – relationship break-up, unemployment, illness, addiction, gambling, drugs, shopping... And people that just have no idea how to manage money. You know, they've just run up loans and debts and credit cards. And it cuts across all sectors – mental health is a big issue in it as well, but it cuts across all sectors. So you would think, generally, it's one end of the socioeconomic group, but we've had, would you believe, accountants as clients. We've had surgeons, doctors, solicitors, who get in an uncontrollable mess.

H2: Are these people who all live in Cumbernauld?

CC2: It's all over – so we go across to the Campsie villages, across that way, and then we go up, right across all of Kirkintilloch, Cumbernauld, and then imagine going across and down towards Motherwell, so Stepps, Bishopbriggs, I'm trying to think what else is over that way.

C2: It's quite a large area.

CC2: It's a very large area, we cover a huge area. In fact the one area we don't go into yet is Dennistoun, which we're looking to try and- Dennistoun, Shettleston, that bit within the motorway, we don't yet have that service in there. But we have, we've got about twenty current clients. Over the years, we've got about forty people out of debt, so forty families. Some go bankrupt, some do repayments, some sequestration.

C2: I've never heard of it.

CC2: I know CAB offer the service, but the difference with Christians Against Poverty is that we do home visits. A lot of people who can't face it, the shame of it, or the embarrassment of it, and don't want to come out and talk to somebody or whatever it might be, we do home visit and home support, so we go in, and in our first visit we assess not only the debt situation, but we also look at – is there food in the cupboard? We've had homes that have just, they've just disintegrated, because of mental health, so we've got a team from church that will go and clean and tidy the house, so that it gets this sense of normality and structure back in the home.

C2: You really need to teach them at school level, I think.

CC2: Yeah, we do. I agree.

C2: Because we never got any of that, and how are you supposed to balance a budget when you're 16, 18?

CC2: We do. We have a thing called the CAP Money Course, so we do that, the idea to get people not going into debt, and we run that in the church, probably about four times a year. We also run it in schools, but universities is also our big concern, because there's a lot of student who get into uncontrollable- free overdraft, they spend it.

MODERATOR: Perhaps we can have a chat about that afterwards, CC2 [*laughs from group*]. H2, did you want to chip in to this idea about connectedness to the local community?

H2: There's tears in my eyes for all they're involved with, because where I live the community seems to be quite buoyant. I don't see any need for charity. We get involved with places in Bothwell through the Rotary and things like that, where we have nights at the golf club and things, and generate money. In Bothwell, where I live, I got involved with the twinning, whereby we twinned with a town in France, near Paris, Jouy-en-Josas, and we have lots of nights at the golf club, playing golf. My community is vibrant, I don't see any, shall we say, people that require money. No doubt there's a hidden people, who are in debt – I don't know them, I've never met any of them. So I would say that, as a community, Bothwell is very good. Lots of things going on for children: Scouts, Cubs, all these other things. I have ten grandchildren so I know where I run them all in cars... [*laughs from group*] they do all these events. I've got to say, I've no doom and gloom – the place is vibrant. Maybe there is something there required – I don't know.

[0:40:00]

J2: A volunteer taxi service?

CC2: [*laughing*] Yeah, it sounds like you're running a taxi service...

H2: I do, I can assure you I do that all the time.

CC2: You'll have to get a meter installed, H2. *[laughs]*

J2: Could I give a wee suggestion, CC2? Contact the Trades House, and-

CC2: Trades House?

J2: Uh-huh, in Glassford Street and North Parish Washing Green Society. North Parish Washing Green Society help folk who are having issues, but they're in the North Parish of the city. It's the second oldest charity in the city.

CC2: Right, okay, I'll get the details from you before I go, J2. I'll pass it on because they're looking for centres to set up there.

MODERATOR: Great. Everyone forming new connections already. Let's move on then, and think about this second setting, of other people, so neighbours, friends, or other people that you might meet. A few of you have mentioned this already, in your first answer, but do you feel that you have strong connections to other people?

H2: Can I go back to the neighbour one?

MODERATOR: Yep.

H2: I had a neighbour from hell. Quite honest with you, years ago. It really upset my whole family, and it was terrible terrible, way back then. I'm not saying violence would have come into it, but it was getting to that stage. It was getting aggressive, et cetera. And now that, when they left, it was amazing how our whole family really got on with one another, because it really affected our family, having bad neighbours, and the way I would like to live is 'Love Thy Neighbour' – that's the way I would like to live. But it didn't work then, I'm afraid.

MODERATOR: Ok. Thanks for sharing that, H2. Has anyone got any other thoughts?

J2: That's quite valid, because when you think about it, I do a lot, as I said, with Rotary, and there are some people who, just by being me, you inadvertently rub them up the wrong way, or say something that's taken out of context. So you've got to be extremely careful when you're involved with other people, especially if you're trying to encourage them and build them up. I'm sure that you'll *[gesturing to CC2]* find that-

CC2: Oh yes *[laughs]*.

J2: I'd be lost without other people, because they're the folk that I can turn to. If you don't get to know them, how can you – and forgive me because this is going to sound bad – how can you use them? Because you use friends – you don't abuse them, but you use them *[murmurs of agreement]*. So you've got to build up friendships, so you can use their skill set, and their network, for the advancement of whatever it is you're trying to do.

MODERATOR: Anyone else got any thoughts on that?

M2: I think it's quite apparent from what everybody's said, in the people around this room, we all have a common factor here. You've mentioned it, *[gestures to C2]* I'm sorry I've forgotten your name already-

C2: C2.

M2: C2. We're all clearly interested in people. We've all got very similar backgrounds in so far as we all have a strong connection with people, or interest in people, and I think that's really important, whether it be a neighbour, or whether it be somebody out in the community, or whether it's through work. Recently, what concerned me was yes, I knew my neighbours, and I knew my neighbours well, I've got two – well, they're not children now, I've got two young adults so within the community I know lots of people. But I recognised that I didn't know many people from other countries, people that are coming into Glasgow – refugees, asylum seekers, whatever. And recognising that, I decided to look into finding some avenue where I could- to help me better understand why people were coming, who, why and where they were coming from, so I volunteered at an international café in Royston, which is the original area I came from, in the North. That really, really opened my eyes to why these people were coming here – their needs, their wants, and their personal stories. It just really helped me to understand better, particularly in light of the recent atmosphere, with Brexit and all the- whatever, the political situation just now. I just think that, perhaps, that's where they should be trying to focus some attention just now, so people have more avenues in terms of understanding, and we'd all get along better in situations, whether it's bad neighbours or whatever, we can understand it and debunk some of the myths that are around asylum seekers and refugees and that stuff. It was really eye-opening, I have to say.

[0:45:00]

J2: When you were saying that, I taught in Springburn-

M2: I went to school in Springburn.

J2: We had a lot of asylum seeker kids coming in. And it was fascinating when you got to know the kids – and the parents, at parents' night – the skill set some of them had, but because they were refugees they weren't allowed to work. And we were missing out on a tremendous opportunity-

M2: A rich seam of experience-

J2: Exactly [*murmurs of agreement*].

M2: Technically or otherwise. That is just left lying there.

J2: And you couldn't get them involved in anything. The girl was going to be school dux, but she couldn't get involved in any of my young engineers activities, because I was taking kids away, but I couldn't get her away because she never had a passport. They had lost all their papers, you know, when they left the country. Poor girl.

M2: It's just the lack of understanding, that's what made me get involved, because I felt I couldn't understand fully the bigger picture. And by doing that, it really helped me. Perhaps, if that was available to more people – how you would go about that, I don't know, there would obviously need to be a need for it, or a want for it, for people to strive to do it, but again, going back to the community element, it's really about trying to encourage diversity amongst the community and it's so important and will continue to be really important in the future, I feel. We just need to find better ways of trying to get the local indiginate people involved and stretching out.

MODERATOR: So from what you've said just then, and from what other people have said, it seems like your connectedness to the community and to other people is partly based on the activities that you're doing and the things that you're involved in, would people agree with that? Does that chime with other people's experience?

[*murmurs of agreement and nods from group*]

CC2: Definitely. I mean, we're in the final stages, coming back to your *[gestures to M2]* point about the refugees, must be 6 or 8 months ago, Glasgow put out for families who could take in a young person, from Syria. I think there were about two nights at the City Chambers, and we went along just to an information evening, and we're in the final stages now, we've got to do the interview panel. They've done all the health checks and the PVGs and all that stuff. We, and they, were amazed at how many people turned up for these days to offer to take in a young person, a 16-18 year old from Syria, to be able to finish their education, and try and resettle their lives. As I say, we're in the last stages, and we have an advantage because we've got two spare rooms, so we can take in siblings. But I know at the time, the lady from Glasgow City Council was just bowled over by the queue that was out the door *[impressed murmurs from group]* of people who were coming forward to say "we've got a spare room, we can take somebody".

M2: It needs to be put out more, because there's things that somebody says to you and you go "what was that? Sorry, go back. When did that happen? I never heard that."

CC2: I'll tell you what it was, it came out just as Trump was putting in his travel ban. Literally came out just after Trump put in his travel ban and said we don't want any refugees here. I remember putting a note out to some friends saying "don't worry, the city of Glasgow will pick up the slack from President Trump. We'll get it sorted." Because at that time, I think a lot of them were coming in to the southeast of England, and they were looking to then move them through the rest of the country. It was when the Dubs bill was going through and all that was happening. That started a process and Glasgow said "we can take" however many the quota was.

M2: Quite a few went to Bute.

[0:50:00]

CC2: Yeah, there were some who went to Bute, there was some groups of girls came in, I think, who lived in the community, together, in halls, but helped and supported. And then they're now looking to bring them in and spread them across the city. I picked it up via a friend who shared it on Facebook, that's how I picked it up – she'd seen it, and she'd shared it and we saw it. But interestingly out of that, as we've gone through the interviews, the lovely girl from Glasgow Council – "girl," should be "lady" – it shows my age, doesn't it? *[laughs from group]* Everybody's a girl.

J2: They're all girls here – sorry girls, you know what I mean.

CC2: And she said "have you thought about respite care?" and me and my wife said yeah. Because we're empty-nesters, we've got a big house with, kids have flown off through university and now they've off in Edinburgh and wherever else. So they're also going through the process of putting us in to do respite, so you might have children for a weekend, every other weekend, or something like that. Just to give the parents a break, or whatever the issue is, to support them.

C2: It's quite interesting what's out there, because there was an advert on, and it's about Christmas, and Christmas Day, and inviting someone into your home for a Christmas meal. And I thought, that's a really interesting idea. I wouldn't do it because I'd probably poison you, I can't cook *[laughs from group]* maybe not a good idea for me to do that.

CC2: You can't kill with chicken.

C2: Oh, I'd probably undercook it or something and you'd end up with salmonella poisoning. But I thought it was a brilliant idea, to invite someone in, and it could be anybody, you know, from old to

young, or a family or something, and I thought “what a brilliant idea”. I hope that takes off, and people really do that.

M2: Idealistically they’re great ideas but frankly, one of the considerations that I would have, certainly, would be the impact of that on the rest of my family. I toyed with fostering a number of years ago, and in the end I decided against it, because my daughters weren’t keen, they really weren’t, for having someone else in the house. So, the consideration of all of those things, I think, has a part to play, the impact of that on the rest [*murmurs of agreement from C2 and CC2*]. See before we move on? I don’t know if you’re a Sunday Times reader – not everybody is, occasionally I’ll dip into it – there’s a great article about a couple who took in an asylum seeker/refugee from- was it Iraq? It was a twenty year old guy, it’s really interesting, so if you can get it online, read it.

CC2: I recall there was something about the challenges they faced with him-

M2: But it was a really great article, it was really well balanced. Did you read it? No?

CC2: No, but I remember hearing about it

M2: It was just on Sunday-

CC2: This Sunday? Right, OK.

MODERATOR: It’s interesting what you say though, M2, because one of the things we’re interested in is what stops people feeling or getting involved in their community or feeling connected to other people around them. I don’t know if anyone’s got any-

C2: I think it’s lack of information, really-

CC2: Yeah.

C2: It isn’t a village that we have any more, and there isn’t that feeling of a village any more, there’s a lot of people who come into the city, so you’ve got a lot of strangers, really. I feel that about where I live, because I really don’t know anybody, so what you really need, is a lot of information about where to go, whether, it’s your library. The library is a great hub, and to see- if you want anything, go to the library, you might not be the generation where you go on the internet now, or you might not know how to work the web. It’s places like that, that you really need to be aware that that’s actually happening. A lot of it, that I get information, is word of mouth. Like somebody was saying “oh, there’s that Glad Café down in Pollokshaws, that helps out quite a lot” and then somebody was saying to me “have you heard about Meet Up UK?” and I said I haven’t heard about that and that was a couple of years ago so I do that, and that’s great for people who want to get healthy and fit, or they’ve just come from a completely different country and they want to meet up and have coffee, or whatever it is. Or they’re widowed, or they’re on their own, and they want to have some. So the meet up has groups for every conceivable thing that you could possibly imagine and then some, so that’s a great place to actually go on and have a look. I’ve joined the coffee group, I’ve joined the walking group, but I have said to the guys that run it, I said “I’m only coming out during the summer, and spring, and not if you’re climbing Munros, I’m not doing that.” [*laughs from group*] You’re on your own for that one. But stuff like that. And I was at a coffee meet up on Sunday, and there was a couple from Turkey, there was a girl from Spain, somebody else – there was a couple of Glaswegians, obviously – and just it was fascinating talking to them about it. She was wanting to meet people from Glasgow, she was at Glasgow University doing Modern Languages and he was at Glasgow University doing Maths, and so they said they’d heard about it – I can’t remember where they said they’d heard about it – but they’d come along, and they were really interested because

they wanted to learn to speak English slash Glaswegian, so they could understand, and really get around, so that was really good, I'm really glad somebody told me about that, but it never would have occurred to me to look up, specifically, for something like that. Until somebody actually gave me the name, that was the label that I looked up. Yeah, the library's great because it has things like the Glasgow Life, which does walks for people who are of a certain age, you can go out or you can go to- that kind of thing, but it needs to be more out there, there needs to be much more done to actually get the word out that you don't have to sit in the house, or if you need help then look for that. So I do feel as if- I mean, I did a lot of the work myself to try and find where to go and who to speak to, and did all the steps to get me, but I think for some people, maybe they need a bit more help than I.

[0:55:00]

J2: CC2 mentioned it, when you mentioned your having spare rooms – I've got three bedrooms upstairs that I never use – I'm never upstairs. And of course, because I spent all my time caring for my folks, the house is looking tired, so I'd need to call in your team beforehand. *[laughs and jokes from group]*. But it's fascinating you should say that, because just as you spoke, I'm saying it would be great to have folk that could feel free to come in, they've got their own room upstairs, nobody would be bothering them, but the house is tired. I know that. Which is why I've never entertained it. But when you mentioned that you had a team that did that... *[laughs from group]*

CC2: I don't think you quite fulfil...

J2: I was paying attention, CC2! *[more laughter]*

MODERATOR: So it's partly about the awareness, do people think there are other reasons that prevent people from feeling connected to their local community, or to other people around them?

M2: I think a lot of it depends on the people themselves and what's going on in their life, the age that they are, what they're doing professionally – there's a whole number of things. I think you'll find a lot of people who volunteer and do things in the community are very much self-motivators, so you will seek out, as you've said C2, about doing your own work to find- you know your interests, you know what you wanted. Even dropping a couple of generations, my kids volunteer as well, and have done from a young age. Perhaps it's because it's what they've known, from me. But they would have sought it out through the internet, as opposed to myself, I would have, like yourself, would have just – and have done – sought out things by other means, whether it be- it's great for you to say about the library, we love it when people are promoting the library-

C2: Oh, I love the library. That was my sanctuary as a child.

M2: And mine. But sadly it's starting to curl up at the edges, I'm afraid, unfortunately, and I think Glasgow Life really need to do-

C2: More

M2: some more work towards that.

C2: They're not getting the funding, really, it's really bad.

M2: But they are still the hubs of communities and they still try and use that as a base... *[sighs]*.

C2: There was a wonderful book, I think it was Ally Smith wrote, about libraries?

M2: She did.

C2: That was a great book, I loved that.

M2: Oh, it's a great book.

C2: She's a great writer. And I love the "Aye, Write" festival, which goes on in the Mitchell Library, and you'll probably all know about that as well but that's fabulous, that really promotes Glasgow, I think, as well.

M2: It does, internationally as well as nationally, in fact. I'm doing a, with my learners just now, it doesn't cover just literary events, it covers adult learning as well. So it encourages the learners as well. This year, what they're doing is they're encouraging them, they're trying to encourage other skills, so for instance tomorrow night we're doing a sewing class round about Aye Write. So they're really trying to reach out, not just thinking about the literary world, they're trying to sort of reach out and attract other people as well. Not to just see it as just for bookies, people who are interested in books, but other things, so there's learning to sew, there's learners coming in to facilitate it, but they learn to sew, it's all about Aye Write, so it's just being creative. Organisations need to be more creative at encouraging people-

[1:00:00]

C2: Yeah, I mean somebody said to me, and I said no it's not elitist, the Aye Write festival, because I went to one and it was about maps-

M2: I love maps.

C2: Because I sometimes just pick, you know, the joker card, and I think "right" but it was all about Glasgow, and it was absolutely amazing. The guy worked at Strathclyde University, and that's what he taught, and it was about Glasgow from the very beginning. He'd done this book, and there was maps on things like – the temperance society had asked for a map of all the pubs in Glasgow in the 19th century, and he put the map up, and he said the red dots are the pubs and it was like it had measles, you know? [*laughs from group*] It was just the most fascinating conversation and that's the thing – sometimes you go to a talk and you think it's going to be as dry as dust but it was absolutely amazing and he said round about the same time as the police force were starting and he said, could you imagine being a policeman with all those pubs and all the drunks coming out of them? But that was- it's stuff like that, and I keep saying no it's not elitist, you need to go along, you'll find somebody who's really interesting and they'll take you on a wee journey somewhere that you hadn't even considered going. I went to listen to Joan Bakewell, and she was actually chairing the committee about women who were born in the fifties who've missed out on the state retirement pension there and she says there's a website, you go into the website and you put your name on the petition, so we're trying to get 100,000 names and I thought if I hadn't gone along there then I never would have known that and never would have done that. So I always say it's not elitist – go along.

M2: It's getting them through the doors. They need the confidence with which to do that, whether they're being taken by the hand or they try and do that themselves. And once they've experienced it, once they've just seen it, you know, people then lose their fear and they find that places are so welcoming, people are welcoming, they find a common bond with other people, but it's just getting them to make that first step, and that first step is clouded by the other issues that's happening in their life. Whether it's employment, or family, or health issues, or whatever else – it's what we do about them that's really important as well.

MODERATOR: Do other people agree with that?

CC2: People's lives are so busy. When I was working full-time, I travelled away 90% of the time, I was away from Glasgow working, Monday to Friday away in the UK or Europe. So, coming home, I'd step off a plane on Friday night. I knew the community at Glasgow airport well – far too well. *[laughs]* And that Friday night, Saturday, Sunday would be time, usually at church, so with the community at church, but that Friday Saturday Sunday, that was family time, that was the only time I saw them. So the chances of really getting- either it was midweek, in which case forget it because I wasn't physically here, and then something at the weekend, it would be very specific for family. And there's a lot of people like that, or the expectation these days of you're in your office for eight-thirty and you stagger out at six-thirty/seven. Because there's a standard of expectation.

C2: I went to a retirement seminar that they did – I'm a civil servant, for my sins, it's really not as exciting as it sounds *[CC2 laughs]* and-

CC2: Unless you're MI5, or something.

C2: I wish...

CC2: You say that, though.

C2: I mean I'd have to deny it, wouldn't I? *[laughter]* I was actually in my forties at the time and I thought it was a brilliant idea, because there was a space came up, because normally you don't get it until you're actually retiring, which is actually no good whatsoever, because it's too damn late. But the guy that did it was amazing and he came from a company, he was a consultant, he was absolutely brilliant. He said the statistics were, at the time, women live longer, they have exterior things to their family and work. Men usually are about work, he said, and we've had conversations with both sexes about what you do when you retire, and he said that one of the things that the men forget to do is tell their wives what they think they're going to be doing when they retire. He said one of the guys actually said to him "oh, I'm really looking forward to it, I won't have to get out of bed at half six in the morning, I'm going to lie in, and this is what I'm going to do – I'm not going to do anything." And what he forgot to do was tell his wife that, so he got up to go to the loo – as you do as you get older – and he came back and the wife had made the bed and cleaned the bedroom. *[laughs]* He said one of the things you need to decide is one: what are you going to do when you retire? Because if you don't have a hobby now, are you suddenly going to have one when you're fifty or sixty? And he said it's actually the things that keep you living longer, because you've invested into something that's actually going to make you feel as if you're connected to a part of the community, or something outside work, because once work's gone, it's gone. He said, if you're the person that works for fifty years for a company, and that's all you ever did, what's the rest of your life going to be like? Where's the community? Where's the connectedness to the community you live in?

[1:05:00]

M2: That's quite important, isn't it?

C2: Yeah, he said – and I know there's a slight gender bias here – but he said that women are actually much better than men at connecting themselves to other people, or communities, or whether it's through their kids, and local schools or the churches, or whatever it is they do. "What I keep telling people," he says, " apart from the money, which obviously is very important, we look at the health statistics." Between the ages of sixty and seventy, whatever you want to do – do it then, because once you get past seventy, it falls off the edge. Your health starts to decline. So if you want to go hot air ballooning, go then. If you want to do a cruise round the world, go then, he says. If you want to join something X,Y,Z, whatever it is – golfing, skiing – do it then. Partly, I think, with regards

to the community, it's – are you connected already? If not, maybe you should start. And also, how healthy are you? What do you want to do? And the finances as well. All of that is relevant to-

H2: Excuse me, but what's wrong with starting at seventy?

C2: Skiing at seventy?

CC2: I mean, you can do, but... If you're healthy you can.

H2: That's why I'm here. I worked all my days, I didn't have all that much time other than to spend with the children – my own children – that's all the time I had. [C2 *nods in agreement*] I couldn't afford any other time to do anything else, so I'm quite happy to start now because all I've got is grandchildren now. My children grew up, I've got grandchildren now and I'd like to get involved – you guys, you all talk about various things and I can't really pick up all the charities that you're talking about. Now, I would like a list [C2 *laughs*] I would look at a list and say "well, I want to get involved in that, because that charity plays football, you know, that's the one I want to get involved in. Something that I know about and I can get involved with. [to CC2] I don't know about debt, and how to deal with that, and how I would deal with somebody that's got debt-

CC2: They'll train you [*laughs*]

H2: Well, maybe that's the one?

MODERATOR: Can I ask though H2, what it is that's making you feel like you want to get more involved?

H2: Because I'm here on behalf of Glasgow. I was born in Glasgow, worked in Glasgow for fifty-odd years, and I want to give something back to it. What I can, I don't know.

J2: Remember that sixty's the new forty [*laughs from group*] and eighty is the new sixty, so you've got plenty of time.

H2: So I'm sixty then... Right, okay...

J2: My sister phoned me when she was sixty and said "I feel old". So I says, sixty is the new forty and she went "Oh this is great, I feel young again!" [*laughs from everyone*] and her whole attitude changed, so get that mindset. Sixty is the new forty.

H2: I certainly don't feel seventy.

J2: You don't look it.

CC2: You don't look it.

M2: You've made both a really good point – you're absolutely right, it's an individual thing. There's not just a certain pattern of behaviour when you get to this age, and then that age, and you have to do this by that time. Everybody is so individual. Yes you've worked all your days, and your time has been apportioned to work, and a very small area for play, so as you've grown older and as you've retired, now you're faced with having a lot more time, and probably financially you're fine, and health wise you look, you know, in peak fitness, so now you have that time to do it and it's the right time for you because mentally, you're here, you're engaged and you want to do it. And I think C2 was making a really valid point about particularly women, because normally you're more in touch with the community from an earlier point in your adult life, simply because you've maybe married into the community, you have children so you have that outreach and you have the connections

through the children and then clubs and things like that that you've made. So that pattern of behaviour starts a lot earlier on just by the choices that you have made, perhaps, through children or through clubs and whatnot. And I can very much relate to that, and that probably helps so it's set up that pattern of behaviour and it becomes routine, so when you do retire, it's just natural to then do more and use the time that you have. [to C2] Like yourself, I'm a retired civil servant, I'm retired now-

[1:10:00]

C2: Lucky you.

M2: I know, I got out early. So as I say, it's routine to me, it's part of my life – this is my work. A big portion of it is, that's what I class as my work, although I do work as well. But that's – that's not my full-time job, but that's the interesting part of my life, so – but it happens at different stages. What's right for you is now, and gosh, [to L2] I'm sure you don't mind me saying this, but L2 is eighty!

[gasps from everybody]

J2: No way.

MODERATOR: No...

M2: Yes! So there's never a cut off point, is there? It's about an individual.

L2: No there isn't. I recently got involved with the Three Rs Association at Strathclyde University and the only qualification for entry into that is that you've gone to some classes at some time. And I went to some classes way back in, I think even before I came to live in Glasgow. I did a bit of Tai Chi and I did a class about film – all fantastic, but not academic, just recreational classes. And once you'd done that, you're then qualified to join. And I think sixteen different clubs in this association, covering almost every subject you can think of. There's, you know, History and there's Architecture and there's film- no, there isn't film actually, because when I mentioned film they said "no, we don't have a film club – would you like to start one?" But there's theatre, and so many different clubs that you can join and they have lots of activities, involving days out, and weekends. There's masses to do, I mean it really involves so many different interests. I would recommend it, it's great.

CC2: It's interesting that, we're talking about this process, particularly for a man, and making the transition, because I've- as I said, I'm only fifty-three, but I've had to sort of take forced retirement through illness, so I've come through my treatment and come out the other side of it. I used to do project consultancy, so I'd be going into organisations and taking hold of things (that had usually gone wrong) and dragging them back on track and getting them sorted out. When it all came to a shuddering halt, and then I went through my treatment and they said "well, you may never get back to that" and I'm doing the work I'm doing with CAP which is really rewarding – it's the most frustrating, rewarding job I've ever had in my life, because people just don't do paperwork, all that sort of stuff, but actually there's been times where it's almost been like a mourning process of leaving work. I don't know, H2, how you felt on the last day as it were, and in some respects you probably knew that day was coming, and you could plan, whereas with me it was, we knew there was something that was wrong, this is the diagnosis, this is the treatment, and that's you. I'm hoping that I'm going to look as good as L2 when I get to eighty [L2 laughs] but it's interesting that that process, and it really was at times a mourning for not having, although in some respects now I've got all these opportunities, at a relatively early age, and I've got involved in a number of things, but that sense of not being, or being out of what I used to do, in the thrust of the working environment, and the position I had-

L2: Not having a purpose.

CC2: Yeah, not having a purpose. And in some respects I look back now and I think, well actually, all the jobs I did in the past- some of them I'm really proud of, and you look back and you say, "well I contributed to society" so I did projects with the Royal Mail, sorting out their sorting systems and I did a project for CalMac prior to them getting ready for the bid – and we won it – so you look back and you say I can see the advantages. But some of them I look back and go, well all I did was to shovel more profits into some big corporate monster [*laughs and sympathetic agreement from group*]. We did the project, it was all great, wonderful, but we just shovelled more profits. And some I did – we did Heathrow Terminal 5 opening, and we all know what happened the day that opened. But in some respects I've had this real dilemma between, going between pining for that position, and that work, and yet actually trying to wake up to that fact that I've got this great opportunity that's been given to me, where I can go and actually pick and choose what I want to do. And I'm still doing a bit of contracting stuff, but I choose it, on my terms, whether or not I want to do it.

[1:15:00]

MODERATOR: I was going to ask CC2, and everyone else chime in as well, whether you think you can get that sense of fulfilment through volunteering, which quite a few of you have mentioned that you do. I don't know what people think about that...?

CC2: Definitely.

M2: I think that's reflective yeah, that mirrors that. And I don't think that ever goes away – I still have that pining for a professional role-

CC2: Yes, yeah.

M2: -and I don't think that ever leaves anybody, regardless of what age you retire, I think you always have that. If you've had that level of decision making and-

CC2: -seniority, and responsibility-

M2: -well that takes a long – well, I've still got it and I've been retired a few years. And you, you'll look for that fulfilment in other things. To a certain extent I've found it, but it's a living document – it moves, it changes – but you're right, having the choices is the key, and a lot of people unfortunately don't have those choices, and that leads to isolation in the community, you know, which is a shame. [*to H2*] But yeah, my story's probably reflective of yours, it's good that you can manage to have those choices.

H2: And I've got, you know, my wife's really supportive, and we talk it through. Where I am at the moment, with the work I do, it's through the church, but it's actually a paid role-

M2: Lucky you!

H2: You don't do it for the money, trust me! Compared to what I used to make... I think I earn in a month what I used to earn in about a day, or thereabouts...

M2: It's not the motivation, is it.

CC2: No, it's not the motivation, but you, when you actually get somebody into the debt program, and you're able to help them, and you're able to sit down with them and say "you know what? We can sort this out?" and you do the sums and you can pass it back, and you can work through, and you really support them through the process, and then, the day they go debt free, it's just fantastic.

C2: Amazing!

CC2: Absolutely fantastic. So the rewards come, but they come in different ways. And I have to sort of stop myself sometimes, and say ok, so you had that, you did this, you did that, but that's gone. You've just got to say, that's gone. And actually, you've got a golden opportunity now, to do all sorts of stuff. You just lift the lid slightly and you realise there's so much out there that you can actually get involved in.

M2: It's all about value as well.

J2: Could I ask, there was something you said, Margaret, and something that H2 said – do you feel that, now that you've retired, the network of people that you knew prior to retirement, the network of folk that you knew in activities that were outside of work, have they helped you? I'm thinking of something you just said, CC2, about your wife being very supportive – but the other people, you know, within your community group, have they been supportive and opened your eyes through various opportunities, and have helped direct you? [to H2] You said, about selecting that, you indicated that you were almost isolated because you were working, and you were spending time with family, so your network of volunteering was restricted to the Rotarians and the golf course, but these people are going to influence the way that you're thinking at the moment, I would have thought.

H2: I would like to think that. I think that when I went to the Rotary, and got involved in the golf club, it also meant that these were charity nights we had, and raising funds, so I'm thinking about the golf club, everybody talks and plays golf and all that. They do generate a lot of cash for charity, especially ours. I would like to think that I contributed to that throughout my life, at least financially, but I haven't done anything like what you guys have done.

CC2: You're still in Rotary, are you though, H2?

H2: Eh?

CC2: You're still in Rotary, are you?

H2: No.

CC2: Oh right, ok.

J2: But he supported Rotary, because they meet in the golf club.

CC2: [referring to J2] There's a Rotarian sitting right across the table from me.

J2: That was the first thing I said! By the way, I'm not in the directory.

CC2: There's got to be a Rotary in Bothwell.

H2: I wouldn't – no, no thank you.

J2: [producing Rotary directory] The minute you said that I was out with the directory [laughter from group].

CC2: I was a Rotaractor.

J2: Well I'm thinking about the girls as well – Dennistoun hung up their clogs two years ago so I'm trying to expand my club into theirs.

[1:20:00]

H2: I'll tell you a wee quick story, there was a lad in our golf club who now stays in Barbados. He was in the oil industry, and he was an engineer – I don't, a mechanical engineer or whatever – but he was involved in the oil industry, and he was in the North Sea for quite some time, and then he went out to Texas, and he met this young lady, a nice lady, and her father was a billionaire. Oil billionaire. Unfortunately the father died, so left all the money to the girl, and they got married. So he became a philanthropist. And all he does is go around giving his money away. And – in Bothwell – the parish church is, how old is it, I think the nave goes back about fourteenth/fifteenth century, something like that, and he gave £600,000 to that. Now, how do you feel about that? I mean, him giving money like that?

CC2: Have you got his name and address? [*laughs from group*] I could happily spend £600,000 in CAP.

H2: He goes to these nights at the golf club, and it's at the golf club, and they all have the auction, "I'll give £500 for this football strip" or whatever, and he'll come in and give £2,000 – you can't beat that. There are other ways of doing and giving in charity, and that guy, he's got lots and lots of money, and that's all he does is go round-

CC2: Just give it away

H2: Giving it away.

C2: He doesn't give much of himself though, really.

M2: No, he doesn't, but then he could give nothing.

CC2: Yep.

H2: Yes, yes.

M2: Rather than think about his motivations, look at what that can give to the community or the church or whatever. Unless it's ill-gotten gains, which I don't imagine it is, if he's been working-

H2: No, no, no.

M2: -so it's not, you know, proceeds of crime or anything like that. I'd happily take it – if he's wanting to give it out, then take it and put it to good use. He may want the accolade, he may want public plaudits, however, the church is going to get that, so why not take it.

J2: He's giving what he can – I give what I can. Crazy thing is, I get into trouble, for giving. [*to CC2*] and I don't mean financial trouble [*CC2 laughs*] for giving what I can, because people say I give away all my ideas for nothing, and what I should do is monetise them, then I can give my money away – I can do more.

M2: But would that be you?

J2: That's it, exactly. It isn't me.

M2: It's about your motivation, and what you strive for.

J2: That's right. And it's great, that he's willing to do that, yeah, you know, you want the name and address, but you would just be another hook, you know.

H2: Yes, but every charity has your name and address, because the amount of stuff I get through the door, I get attacked from all sides.

M2: Can I go back to a point that J2 made just before?

J2: Oh, what did I do?

M2: No, you made a point about, you compared myself, what I said, to H2, about when you're getting involved-

J2: Your influences?

M2: Uh-huh. But the point being is that I think there is very much a gender split, to a certain extent as well, and I think you can look at it from a sort of generational thing as well. So perhaps people of – retired now, maybe sixties/seventies, you will find that a lot of men particularly will have mirrored your experiences, have worked forty/fifty years, and perhaps haven't been involved through voluntary work, because frankly, they didn't have the time. So it was either work or your family, basically. Whereas perhaps women, as I said earlier, have more of an opportunity to get involved earlier. And younger, as well.

MODERATOR: That's interesting. One of the things that we're also interested in is kind of whether anything has changed, or stayed the same for people since that Host City Volunteer experience. We've kind of heard from people in the room that you've got different levels of connectedness to the community and other people, but something that you've got in common, and one of the reasons why we brought you together, is that generally, your levels of connectedness have, from what we've seen in the questionnaire, your levels of connectedness have sort of stayed the same from before the Games to now. Would people agree that that's a fair assumption? [*nods from group*] Lots of you seem to be nodding, so why do you think that's the case? Why is it that your levels of connectedness haven't really changed since the Games?

J2: The Games was just, how can I put it, it was another-

H2: It was an event.

[1:25:00]

J2: It was a major event, and because it was on an event that was transient, it was coming and it wasn't going to come back here again in my lifetime, it was an opportunity to spare some of the time that I do, to do that, but we'd already been invited as Rotarians to get involved as team leaders for Host City Volunteers. So there was a number of us volunteered because we were already involved.

M2: So you had been approached – likewise, so had we because we already volunteered for Glasgow Life. I think that then spurred us on a wee bit more, to volunteer for it. Would I have done it- I would have done it, probably, as an add-on, to what I already do. [*murmurs of agreement from J2 and others*] It kind of made it easier as well, because you already had that connection-

J2: Yeah.

M2: You were personally contacted, "are you interested, would you like to do this?" Perhaps maybe Joe Bloggs who didn't have that, would've required that wee bit more, self-motivation, and perhaps were looking for something. As I say, for me it was just an add-on to what I already was doing.

C2: The thing that I'm doing just now, which is the Skills Match, has been really interesting. I have loved it, absolutely loved it. But what is, you know, there's lots of things I've learned from it, because people come in and they're very nervous, it's as if they're sitting an exam, you know. [*CC2 and others laugh*] I'm saying to them, it's volunteers. This isn't elitist, I said to them, they're

volunteering, that's it, you're exactly the same as everybody else. But what's really great about it is that Skills Match is actually matching the person to the job, as it were. Part of that is they want the person to feel happy and comfortable doing something that will make them feel happy and comfortable. They're not masochists, you know, doing something that will make them like Mother Theresa and giving of their life 100% and they're saying, you know, "well of course I'm absolutely fabulous". That's not what it's about, it's actually about you're enjoying yourself, you're actually having fun, you're doing something that makes you feel really good about yourself. It's something that you like to do as well, some people. I've tried things, and I've thought "no, actually I don't want to do that, it's not really me." That's fine, ticked the box, gone onto something else. Watching people as they come into the Skills Match, and talking to them – which of course I love, I love to talk to people – and they're saying "I do this" and I'll say "well what about this? Have you thought about that?" See if somebody could have sat down with me thirty years ago and said actually, you would have been brilliant at this – oh my god I would have loved that. Because careers guidance, don't even get me started at school [CC2 *laughs*]. But this is great, this was really good, because we were sitting and we were talking about the jobs, because they were specific jobs, you know, that are involved in the European Championships, and there are people who are absolutely perfect for that job, so I'm saying- and in some cases they've said something else, and I'm saying "actually, I think you would be perfect for this job – what do you think?" You know, and saying to some people, well, you can't drive so that job really wouldn't be great, because you really need to be able to get to A, B or C at certain times. And that's been- I would love to do that kind of job, I thought this is the kind of job that I really would love to have done. But nobody ever sat me down and said to me, so for me it's been a massive learning curve. I've enjoyed every minute of it, because I'm helping people to find- ok, it's a volunteer job, it's not a job for life, but to see them, you know, sort of really perk up and say, oh, that sounds absolutely brilliant, that's perfect for me. So giving back, and giving somebody something to look forward to as well, that's been absolutely brilliant. I- I just love it, I just think it's fantastic, and I could sit and talk to them- well, you're only given half an hour, so I had to right, C2, you've only got half an hour, not three hours, you know [*laughs from group*] because I could just sit and- and I've met the most fantastic people. And I could just sit and talk to them for hours. And it's great, if they go on to do other things, volunteering, of course I won't know about it, but that would be great, because I could think I had a wee part in that, I had a wee step in that, I pushed them a little, and they're going on to do other things. But yes, I do think you need to do something that you find fun and interesting, and it's maybe within your kind of wheelhouse, as it were, you know, it might be pushing your envelope a little but you're going to be good at it, you're going to like it because you like art, or you like, you know, the media. I had a girl who's fantastic at photography, so she's going into the news and media part. Lots of different things, so yeah – get something that you really love to do, not something that feels like you're self-sacrificing, but something that's really going to make you feel good, and kind of almost like skipping home, as it were, when you've finished – that kind of thing.

[1:30:00]

M2: And it's a two-way process, isn't it?

C2: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

M2: It's give and receive, it's not just all give give give, there has to be some sort of-

C2: You have to get something out of it yourself, you really do.

CC2: It's interesting, I think – talking to my wife, when they did Clydesiders, one of the things that came out of that was people were put into roles where they really weren't, you know, square pegs in round holes [*agreement from group*]. And I think that was a big learning that came out of that, which hopefully they've taken on and applied to... But I know at times, my wife and stuff moved – my son was definitely a square peg in a square hole, he absolutely loved what he was doing. But a number of people I spoke to – and I think they had quite an attrition rate, going through, where people started, they were scheduled, and then they had volunteers that just didn't turn up. So it is important. Whereas I felt with the City Hosting-

M2: Which they didn't have any of those problems.

CC2: They didn't, no. Inevitably you're going to have some, but it was much – it came across as much more flexible, and I was team leader, [*to J2*] same as- we had the grey shirts, didn't we, for team leaders – you know. And again, I was working with some, eh, interesting people [*he laughs*] and getting them to, you know, people who'd never done anything like this before in their life, and needed encouraging and supporting to say, get out there! Smile at everybody, just smile – they'll come and talk to you [*he laughs, others nod in support*]. But I certainly got a sense that from the hosting – from the City Host Volunteers, they didn't have the attrition issues that the Clydesiders did. And some people were given really bizarre jobs, sort of really bizarre shifts, and you're thinking, crikey, I wouldn't do that if you paid me.

J2: Well I was saying to H2, about the drivers. I had a couple of friends who were drivers, and it was crazy some of the stuff they had to do, the hours that they were...

CC2: They didn't know Glasgow. Some of the drivers, they had people from London and they were put on driving in Glasgow! How can you drive in Glasgow if you don't know the city? [*laughs from group*] You know, how do you get to George Square?

MODERATOR: So generally, the Host City Volunteer experience was quite positive for people. [*nods and murmurs of agreement from group*]

CC2: The sense I get, is that it was a better-

M2: I didn't speak to anybody who didn't enjoy it [*agreement from CC2 and L2*] – even some of my learners, that I've come across through adult literacy, they were Host City Volunteers.

MODERATOR: But for you guys, you're kind of the 'no change' group, in a way, in that, as I've said, from what we could gather from the questionnaire, not a lot has changed for you since the Games. And again, if it was such a positive experience, why do you think it is that there hasn't been any change? Because that's really interesting, I suppose.

J2: Because I'm that bloody busy! [*laughs from group*]

MODERATOR: Uh-huh.

J2: I was busy beforehand, I made time for the Commonwealth Games, and I'm busy now.

M2: That's what I mean about it being an add-on.

MODERATOR: Yep.

M2: As you can gather from the rest of the guys here, we've all got other things in our life. It's not like we're sitting at home, feeling isolated, waiting for the next, you know-

C2: Knock on the door, yeah.

M2: Opportunity, our life carries on, and we are busy people. And I went back to my first comment, when I said we're pretty much all self-motivated people, so that- that will take you on. In so far as not moving on to other things – we probably have done, we've just not discussed it, you know? In respect of the Host City Volunteers, if that's just the thing that you want to know about, then perhaps no, nothing really for that has changed. What I would say though, is, that I don't think Glasgow has been very good about keeping in touch, or promoting other volunteers, eh, opportunities if you like [CC2 *nods*]. They very recently have launched a, I was directed to some sort of website that they've put on, simply because I already volunteer for them, and they want us to put your hours on – that's never materialised, so the thing is very much in a sort of fledgling stage. But the object of that was to drop in other volunteering opportunities-

CC2: Yes.

M2: -I've yet to see.

CC2: And I haven't seen anything.

J2: Yeah.

M2: Do you know the website I'm talking about?

CC2: There was Volunteer Scotland, there was-

M2: There's Volunteer Scotland, there's Creative Scotland as well, which is a fantastic- my daughters go on that, and there's far more opportunities if you're looking for things. Creative Scotland is also a very good one. But I wouldn't have heard of that necessarily if my daughters hadn't told me.
[*agreement from group*]

CC2: There was one which came out, where they were looking for volunteers for things like the MTV awards, for the Gymnastic Championships...

M2: Haven't seen that, [*chatter in agreement*]

CC2: but those emails – I never got them, or I'm not on the list, or whatever [*more noise in agreement – others hadn't received notice of opportunities*]

C2: I would have remembered the MTV Awards, I would have been right in there! [*laughs from group*] I would have loved that!

[1:35:00]

J2: I've been at other events, through Rotary, where there's been folk that I met as Host City Volunteers, who are not Rotarians, but they've been there volunteering. But, [*to CC2*] as you say, you don't get informed. I even contacted Glasgow Life, to try and build this link between the Rotary Clubs and Glasgow Life, and get us involved in other activities, because I know there's a lot on in the city, and it doesn't – it disappears into a black hole.

M2: They're just not joined up [*agreement from CC2 and J2*] and I think that's typical-

J2: They're missing an opportunity.

M2: -of organisations, particularly local government.

C2: Some of them are a bit inane, you know, there was a Facebook thing and I just don't do Facebook, I just don't. It's really rubbish, I don't want to see what somebody had for dinner. I really don't want to see photographs of it. So I looked at some of them, and I just thought no, they've not really picked up the way that they should have done, it's kind of floundering here. And I thought I'm really not interested in that, they needed to sort of look at it and then take it in a direction that would actually be a much more positive thing, than just this kind of chatter/Twitter thing that they were doing.

M2: I can't be doing with that either. In some respects, I feel that it's almost as if they've ticked the box now, they got the plaudits and the accolades and all the rest of it when it happened, it was such a success, we did so well, the people of Glasgow, blah blah blah and then, hmmm, you know?

CC2: There was a great pool, a resource, and they just didn't tap into it.

M2: And they didn't have the link there. They weren't prepared for it. And I'll take an example of a learner that we have, Jamie, he also was a Host City Volunteer, a couple of issues with learning and things like that, but a real positive kind of guy. He could have went on, probably, he could have probably used that experience to gain employment. He's been unemployed for a long time, this guy – if there had been links in place like something that [to C2] you've described there, some sort of Skills Match, some kind of link with careers, whatever, My World at Work – I don't know. But there could have been clear links to get people involved, to get them into employment. There should have been a better, sort of, pathway, to use that skill at the time when people are really motivated just after it, but there was nothing. It was a damp squib [*agreement from group*].

C2: They dropped the ball, they really did.

CC2: It was a real shame. Because people wanted to. One thing I found out of it, actually, was, because the City Host Volunteers was totally Council-related, and the people I dealt with who were managing it on behalf of the council, I found, were great people, really sparked up and really motivated, but I know a number of them went on to study, and actually left the council to go on and to do their studies.

J2: And they were also transient, because they'd been seconded-

CC2: Yes.

J2: From other departments.

CC2: But one thing it did, actually, help us with, in our thinking, was when the Syrian- when the information came out about the Syrian children open evening, and it was Glasgow City Council, it did actually make me think, "actually, yeah. I've interacted with people at Glasgow City Council before, when we did that, and that was a really good experience. They'd obviously planned it well, they engaged, they communicated well, so it gave me confidence, that when we went forward and we started looking at what was involved in doing it, and started engaging with the people – and actually that experience has been equally positive, with the people we've engaged with. So in my mind, it did take the mystique of "The Council" [*agreement from group*] away and give these people who represent the council- [to C2 and M2] you must know this from the civil service – the perception that people have of "The Civil Service".

M2: We were national government, not local government.

CC2: *[laughing]* Oh right, but it's the same sort of mystique, isn't it – the institution. Whereas suddenly you weren't dealing with Glasgow City Council, you were dealing with real people. So in some ways that gave us-

M2: Because you'd had a positive experience-

CC2: We'd had a positive experience, so we decided to say "yeah! Let's go and find out about it."

C2: At the coffee place that I was talking to different people, and there was other people I was chatting to, and one of the things that they were talking about was the amount of homeless people that were on the streets of Glasgow. We were also discussing, there was a magazine, just one of those free magazines that you pick up, called iOn, and one of the articles they did, it's normally just a lot of fluff stuff about, you know, fashion and things like that, but there was a piece in it, and it was about the people who'd set up charities that are the practical things, like Social Bite, there's a girl who does, who's set up a charity which uses all the food that we throw out, from the big supermarkets, restaurants and stuff like that, to feed the homeless. Now to me, I would have thought, now this is a perfect opportunity for Glasgow – while they're doing this, while we're centre stage for the European Championships 2018 – to connect all that, and it's not connected at all – there's no connection between what's happening with the homeless – as far as I'm aware, I could be saying the wrong thing about the European Championships – all these different fabulous charities, like the chap who runs the Social Bite, one of the women who was in the Skill Match, who was amazing, who could run a country, practically, as far as I was concerned, she's actually been at a lecture by him, and she said he's absolutely inspirational. What a fantastic guy, he, now why isn't he involved in this? Is he involved in this? Because I don't- I've not heard him.

[1:40:00]

J2: But Josh does a lot, you know, on his own.

M2: But this would be a fantastic opportunity to link all these things together.

J2: In 2009, I was in Canada, in Calgary, with Rotary. And when I came back I spent time with Bob Winter, because he was the Provost, giving him feedback on what had happened. In '88, Calgary hosted the Winter Olympics. And in the lead-up to it, and I've already had a meeting with Glasgow Life, to try and explain this to them – they say they're doing it, but I can't see it – in '88, for '88, if their local authority employees got involved, you know, they were working a forty-hour week. But if they got involved, they were paid forty hours, but they only worked thirty-six. They were given ten percent time, because they were volunteering. They were going to devote some time. And after the games, Calgary became the volunteer city, because not just the local authority, but all the major companies, had adopted this idea where their employees were working thirty-six hours, but they were getting paid for forty, and they were devoting half a day, or the equivalent, to, you know, the minor leagues ice hockey team, or *[to L2]* like you were saying, to clearing up the local area, with the pick-ups and the bags, and they were doing that in the community. They were doing all these different things, they were helping the homeless. And I came back, and I said, this is what you should do for the Commonwealth, so that you've got that legacy, as part of the legacy. "Yeah, great idea". I asked Glasgow Life if they're doing it, they're not. I've made the suggestion that they do it for other events, I don't know if they are doing it, but the likes of Josh Littlejohn-

M2: There is a push, to encourage the staff – whether or not the staff really want to do it, can I say – but there is a push for them to do that, for local events, because I know staff have done it.

J2: And they'll get recognition for it?

C2: No.

M2: They'll get time back, sometimes. But it's not always the case that they get their time back, either. And the people that I've spoken to, on more than one occasion, they feel a bit pressurised into doing this. I don't know if you've heard of – gosh, when I was in the Civil Service, there was, eh, Community 2000, was it called? Community 2000... and it was a very similar scheme where an employer would allow the employee to go off and do some volunteering and you would get the time back, or you would do it during your office hours, so you would take a day off – not a day off, but you would be there, rather than be on duty. [C2 *leaves the group*] And that's the way they worked it, and I know a lot of organisations have taken that on board, it's now Community something else, I don't know maybe it's ten thousand hours. And that has snowballed a bit, so most organisations do that.

C2: I have issues with that, because as a serving civil servant, they now have a system- I'm in indirect taxation, I'm in HMRC – and they're pressured into doing it, do you know what I mean-

M2: That's what I mean, it's become more of a pressure, they're pressurised

C2: The civil service are, they are looking to appear to be this fantastic...

M2: Remember "Investment in People"? Same idea.

C2: Well that's exactly the same idea.

M2: Tick a box.

C2: And part of your performance reports that you get must show that you have participated in some way other than just coming in and doing just the job that you're supposed to be doing, which is collecting taxes. So if you don't do it, then you're kind of a bit in trouble, really. Forcing people to do things is not the right way, and taking the plaudits as the civil service, on behalf of their staff, to make them look good, I also have issues with.

J2: Yeah.

M2: Of course.

C2: I mean, my parents always said "do good and disappear", you know, that kind of thing. You don't sit there and take bows.

MODERATOR: For those of you who are involved in volunteering, it's about, kind of doing it freely?

[*nods from everyone*]

C2: Absolutely. You volunteer because you want to do it, because you love doing it.

[1:45:00]

J2: I wouldn't have thought that it would have been volunteering – if you volunteer to, do a half day, then your employer acknowledges that, but I didn't realise it was being forced.

C2: Oh yeah, this is the new thing.

M2: But that, I think, is on the back of, if you look at the, the criteria if you like for claiming Jobseekers' Allowance. I'm not going off too much, on a tangent, but basically when you claim Jobseekers' Allowance, customers who come in now have to, there's a whole range of what they have to do. And part of that is, if they can't find paid employment, they will do voluntary work. And

if you don't do that voluntary work, you will be sanctioned. Right? So, how can that be voluntary, because they're forced into it. It's the same idea.

J2: Right.

M2: So that's, that's governmental, and obviously we're – well, I was governmental – but it comes from the top, so that kind of prevalent air seems to be...

[CC2 returns]

C2: I coined the phrase “Mandatory Volunteering” and that's basically what it is-

M2: That's exactly what it is. But that's an oxymoron, isn't it?

C2: Yes, exactly. And they do say to you, quite seriously, “no no, we're not forcing you to do that at all” but when you go and you sit with your manager, you know, senior management, and they say “we've noticed that you're not really participating” and things like that, “we've noted that down”. So yeah, I take issue with that – I love to volunteer, but somebody telling me that I have to volunteer – that I don't like.

M2: I think that's probably mirrored in other organisations as well – it certainly was my experience in Glasgow Life, and it was becoming so in the Civil Service, before I left. Which isn't good.

MODERATOR: So we've talked about, for most of you, there being quite a lot of continuity between pre-Games and now. Do you think that anything has changed for you, personally? Did the experience change anything for you, in any way? Perhaps we could each go round individually and reflect on that. [to C2] Do you want to...?

C2: Confidence, really. Because initially, when I first started, I was quite nervous about doing it, and not quite sure what the ropes were, and how you got involved in things like that, and committing yourself to doing something, that it might take away from - but now, I have no issues with that at all. I look at what is involved, what they're offering, and I- if I want to do it, then that's what I'm going to do, and I commit myself to X amount of time, or whatever. And with the Skills Match, I love it, I'm offering I'll do this, I'll do that, and I'm doing it in my own time. So yeah, it's given me a lot of confidence in actually going out there. And also, not just in the charity thing, I've also gone out and the Glasgow University had opened up Open Studies for, you know, older people – it's now called something else, I can't remember. “Learning something” but there's lots of courses and I've done a few of those on Art, I love Art, History and so forth so I've done Modern Art. There's a woman called Margaret who does walking history tours, of Glasgow, and she's amazing. She's about 70, and she could walk the socks off you [CC2 laughs]. She knows everything there is to know about Glasgow, and if I hadn't sort of started down that road, I would never have found things like that out. And these are things that I love doing, so I think it gives you confidence. And also, the kind of knowledge of where to start looking, you know, that kind of thing, so one thing leads on to the next, which is really brilliant.

MODERATOR: Ok, thanks. Just to say, it's fine to say if you don't think it has had any impact on you, as well [H2 laughs]. CC2, would you mind...?

CC2: It's been really tricky, really, to be able to assess it, because, you know, there are a lot of things that haven't been a continuity in my life, which have sort of come in from left field, as it were. I really looked forward to it, when the opportunity came up, so I really embraced it. Would I say I gained any skills from it? Probably not, I just felt it was a great opportunity to use a lot of the skills that I've got already, and just have a chance to be able to use them, and because I was a team leader

as well, you were working with people and encouraging them to bring out aspects of themselves and that, in itself, to see people you were working with develop, was really rewarding. I suppose what it's done as well is given me the impetus now to be able to say, well actually, there is lots of other things, and through the council – whether that be through Cumbernauld, we're just on the edge of it, so we're North Lanarkshire but obviously Glasgow's just a skip down the road – there's lots of other ways, and I know the Council, they were saying to me, have you thought about this mentoring program that they had for young people, because we think you'd be good at doing that. What I felt was that it does open your eyes, it did open my eyes to all the other things that are available to get involved with. And at the time I was in work, but that was 2014 – wasn't it, the Games – whereas now, it does open up my eyes to these other areas, and where to go and get the information on them. So yeah, I'm now taking that opportunity from the stuff I learnt then, and to apply it now.

[1:50:00]

MODERATOR: Thanks. L2?

L2: Okay, well I'm one of the ones, I don't think it made any sort of ongoing impact on my life at all. I think it was a wonderful experience, I loved every bit of it, but it hasn't sort of brought any changes at all. So.

CC2: You were only a spring chicken anyway, you were only 75! *[laughs from group]*

MODERATOR: Can I just ask why do you think that is – is there anything that we could have done, that perhaps would have had an impact on you?

L2: No, I really- I have an incredibly busy life anyway, and that was just a period when I devoted as much time as I could to what we had to do, but outside of that – I do an awful lot of other stuff, so it didn't really change that at all. Would you agree, Margaret? That's just gone on the way it's always been – too busy really, you know.

MODERATOR: Thanks L2.

M2: I don't know, it's a really difficult one actually. There's elements that both of you guys have just said that I would say I would agree with. The confidence one, and then I ask myself – I probably was confident enough, however, I do remember at the time thinking I should really have gone for the team leader. That's what I remember, because I think perhaps the people that I mixed with, I thought, you know- maybe it's because I was bossy – I'm a kind of bossy person, or so I'm told. But you define- you find yourself being defined in a role, and if I think back, that's probably a missed opportunity for myself – I should maybe have done that. Whether that has changed me or anything – not really. Again, I would have carried on doing the things, and have done, and have probably done other things, too. Whether it's down to the confidence of doing that, I don't know, I just remember thinking that, this is a great opportunity for Glasgow. I remember thinking, God, this is great just standing here talking to people. The weather's fantastic, I can talk about Glasgow until the cows come home. This is wonderful, you know? So, I don't know. I loved it, it was great. But it hasn't changed me massively. I think what I was doing before is similar to what I'm doing now, and I'll continue to do that. If anything, I would say perhaps, it helps the younger generation. I saw lots of young folk coming through and thought "that's great." It encouraged my kids to think "maybe I should be doing something" and it really did probably spur them on to look for opportunities, which they've taken up. So I think maybe in a small way it's helped them, to see what's available.

MODERATOR: Ok, thanks. H2?

H2: My experience was I thoroughly enjoyed it, I met lots of people. I was positioned throughout the city at various places – the High Street, people know where High Street is, they'd say "where's George Square"? I'd have to get my map out, and I'll get you there. But I used to try and put in little things, you know, I was having a chat while directing them, meeting them at Central Station or whatever and having a chat with them coming off the train, where they were going, you know. Trying to say, well, there's a good Costa round the corner, or "do you know where the Counting House is?" you know, the pub – all the wee red dots – and pointing to all these sort of places. Yes, I met lots of nice people, and that was my memory of it – all the people from throughout the Commonwealth, who were, you know, I remember meeting this one guy. I can't remember his name, he was Nigerian [*he laughs*] I've got it here, I wrote it down, and we kept in contact for quite some time after it, by email. But just meeting people like that, it was advantageous to me. However, going back to your question, I know what the ladies and CC2 was talking about there, and I understand what they were talking about, but I thought really the question coming from you was what have you done from 2014 to now, 2017? In the form of hosting any events – I thought that was really the question.

MODERATOR: Well, just anything that people have been involved in.

[1:55:00]

H2: I've not been involved in anything since then. I've not been asked to, I wasn't asked to go in for the volunteer for 2018. I saw an advert for that one, picked it up in the library, and that's how I applied for it. So yes, I would like to be involved in 2018 – I thoroughly enjoyed 2014, and may it continue.

MODERATOR: OK, thanks H2. J2?

J2: Much the same – busy beforehand, brilliant opportunity during. Wish I could have done more, and wish that I'd been involved in other activities, but they were lacking. I've got my interview, I think on Friday, for-

C2: It's not me, I don't do interviews.

J2: I've got my ten areas that I've, you know – no, no, yes, no, no, yes – if you want to know the ten areas, I've got them here.

MODERATOR: Sorry, what's the interview for?

C2: Skills Match, the 2018 Skills Match.

MODERATOR: Oh, ok.

J2: Yeah.

MODERATOR: Well, good luck!

J2: I went online – there's the accreditation, which is mainly indoors. The cultural programme, which is indoors and outdoors. I just thought I'd let everybody know [*laughs from group*]. The next is hospitality, which is indoors. Media operations is in and out, but you've got to be fit and run around, so I'm struggling with that one. Protocol, indoors. Spectator services, in and out. Sport services, in and out, but again mobility which I'm struggling with. Technology, in and out. Transport, in and out. Driver – mibbe. Travel and accommodation, indoors. I don't mind – I love driving. Travel and accommodation – well strangely enough, I helped a young couple get their business going, in

accommodation, MyRentals. So I might sneak in there and try and put some accommodation in their direction.

MODERATOR: Great.

J2: Only kidding.

M2: Do you think the reason why you've become involved with this is because it's on the same scale, if you like, as the Commonwealth Games? Is that the attraction, do you think? [*murmurs of agreement from the group*]

C2: I think it's got the same buzz about it.

M2: That's what I mean.

C2: Yeah, I really do. I think it will be a really great shot in the arm for Glasgow, and it's always nice to be involved in that, you know? I mean, it's funny, when talking about it – my niece, for example, she's become involved in a much higher up kind of level. And it seems to be there's a certain level where things continue on and on, because there's a company called the Big Events Company, or something like that, and she does consultancy work for them, so she's going to be involved. She was involved in the Olympics, she's going to be involved in the Cricket World Series, she's getting involved in this. So maybe, it's much higher up where that continuity keeps going, like a circle, but down much lower it doesn't seem to be, you know.

J2: There is a team, you know. Don't ask me how I managed it, but I was invited to the memorandum of understanding, when they signed it, between the London Olympics and the Glasgow Commonwealths, where they were saying all of the skills and equipment would be transferred, after the London Olympics it would be transferred up to Glasgow. And that's when you began to find out that there are teams of people – volunteers and others, you know, paid employees – teams of people that go from one major event to another [*agreement from group*]

C2: They do.

CC2: Yeah, they were in Rio, and then...

J2: I'm not particularly interested in getting involved with that, but I was involved with, as I said, with the Special Olympics in 1989, right through to 1990, and that was the best year of my life, as a volunteer, the way you're in just now. I was in the office, and I was saying to H2, you know, you were working during the day, and then you're going in after dinner, at six/seven at night, and you're there until two/three in the morning. And you're getting so much done, because all of the employees, or the seconded staff, were out of your way, and you were able to focus on the job that you were doing. And there was a group of us, about a dozen to twenty people, who you really got to know, quite closely, and built long-lasting friendships. Maybe I'm hankering after that – I don't know. But the whole thing was a buzz – but there are so many other activities, and I'm heavily involved anyway, and it's constantly a buzz. But I used to do international- I was a referee for international table tennis tournaments. So, I used to be involved in scheduling all of that.

[2:00:00]

M2: You've had a foot in both camps, if you like, up there and down here. But this bit in the middle, I think, communication-wise, there's something not right.

J2: There's a disconnect.

MODERATOR: Ok. Guys, I'm just conscious of time – it is about quarter to nine. I'm just going to really quickly sum up what the key points are, that have been made tonight. So just, if I've got anything wrong, or I've missed something, then just let me know. So we talked about people in the room having varied levels of connectedness with all three of these aspects, really. Some of that is by choice, connectedness is often linked to the groups that you belong to – for some of you, the volunteering, that you're doing or not doing. In terms of why people feel able to volunteer, it's partly about seeing a need, there was a lot of talk about being aware of opportunities, and that being very important. It's partly about time, life stage, and maybe your existing networks as being important in finding out about those opportunities and being encouraged to do those opportunities. In terms of the Commonwealth Games, there did seem to be a general agreement that for most of you, most of things have stayed reasonably the same since the Games. And that's partly because some of you are too busy to be taking on anything else, there was perhaps a suggestion that there was a particular buzz about that event, and that you were willing to give a bit more time because of that buzz, but that subsequently you've just gone back to doing what you were doing before. And in terms of if anything has changed, some of you mentioned confidence, meeting people, perhaps feeling like you could seek out some of those other opportunities, but for some of you, you just reflected that it was a great experience, but not that much has really changed. So that's what I've mainly taken, does that sound like a fair summary? [*the group nods and murmurs in agreement*]

Great! Thank you so much to everyone for coming, it was nice to meet you all and hear about your experiences. Do take biscuits, particularly, on the way out, or grab a quick drink if you'd like to.