



**CREATING INCLUSIVE SPACES IN DERBYSHIRE REFUGEE SOLIDARITY:
NAVIGATING SPATIAL CHALLENGES FOR COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND COMMUNITY**

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METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research methodology systematically explores the intricate dynamics of Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS), focusing on the interplay between the community centre and the communities it fosters. The study commences with a visual ethnographic approach, extensively examining the architecture and dynamics of the St Marys public community centre utilized by DRS. Utilizing visual ethnography to explore memory enables systematic analysis, facilitating the investigation of rituals and community dynamics within a space (Hackett et al. 2016). Through sketches, photographs, and on-site notes, the spatial design, layout, and utilization are methodically scrutinized. This foundational step aims to comprehend spatial and interpersonal influences on user experiences within the community centre.

To back up ethnographic analysis, voluntary work at DRS has been undertaken to enhance the depth of understanding regarding the utilization of the space and to allow for a nuanced analysis of societal impact. Volunteering at DRS involves active participation in the community centre's activities and interactions, providing an immersive experience for the researcher to gain insights into the daily operations, community interactions, and the overall atmosphere of the space.

The subsequent phase involves in-depth, semi-structured interviews with British DRS volunteers, chosen for their insider perspectives and alignment with ethical considerations. This exploration captures volunteers' authentic expressions regarding experiences, motivations, and challenges, shedding light on their views of DRS as a spatial entity and observations of how refugees engage with the community centre.

To establish a theoretical foundation, a comprehensive literature review defines societal integration for displaced groups and explores the formation and impact of collective memory in spatial contexts. This critical examination provides clarity on overarching research themes throughout the entire thesis.

SPACE 1: OLD MARKET SQUARE, NOTTINGHAM

By focusing my research on Old Market Square, I was able to document a Ukrainian anti-terrorism protest taking place in the square. Upon approaching the square from the Alchemist Building, I immediately observed a significant commotion and heard chants echoing sentiments like 'free Ukraine' and 'Putin is a terrorist.' As I looked around to identify the source of these chants, I noticed a large gathering of people holding signs, forming a crowd outside the Market Square building. To promote their ideals, protesters utilized propaganda, including posters and handmade flags, to capture the attention of passers-by, diverting them from their intended path to take notice of the demonstration.

During the protest, it became apparent that families and younger groups tended to avoid this specific area of Old Market Square. However, as the protest started to disperse, a more diverse range of age groups began to reclaim the space.

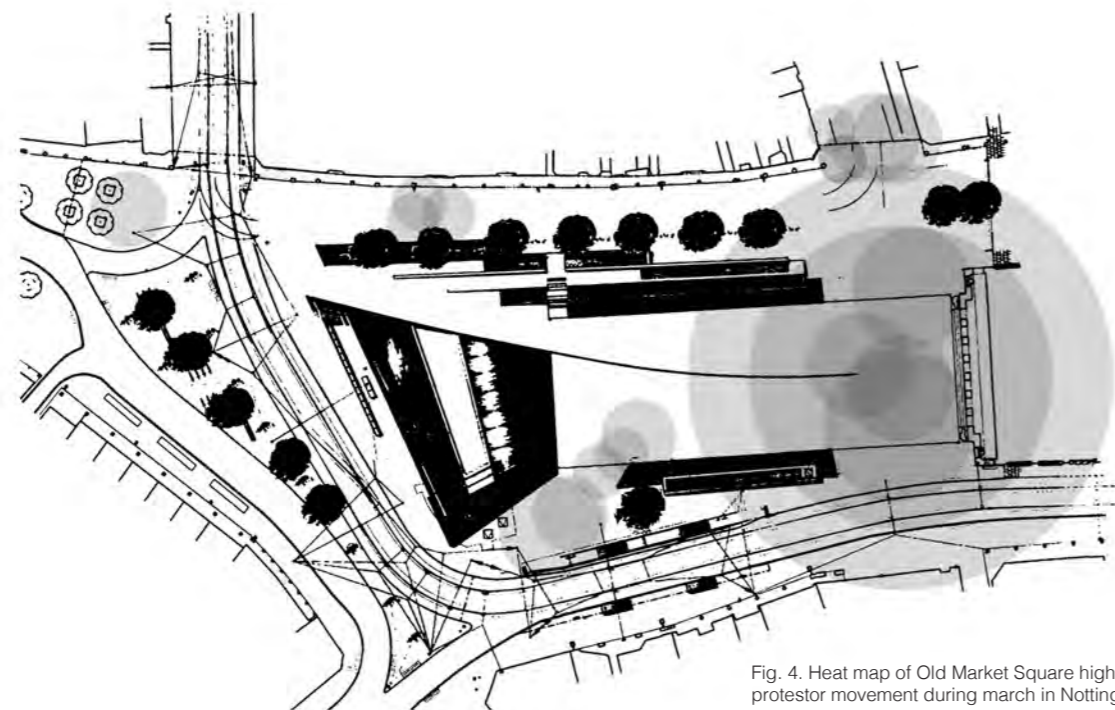


Fig. 4. Heat map of Old Market Square highlighting protestor movement during march in Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 5. Sketch showing the dispersal of the protestors in Old Market Square Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).

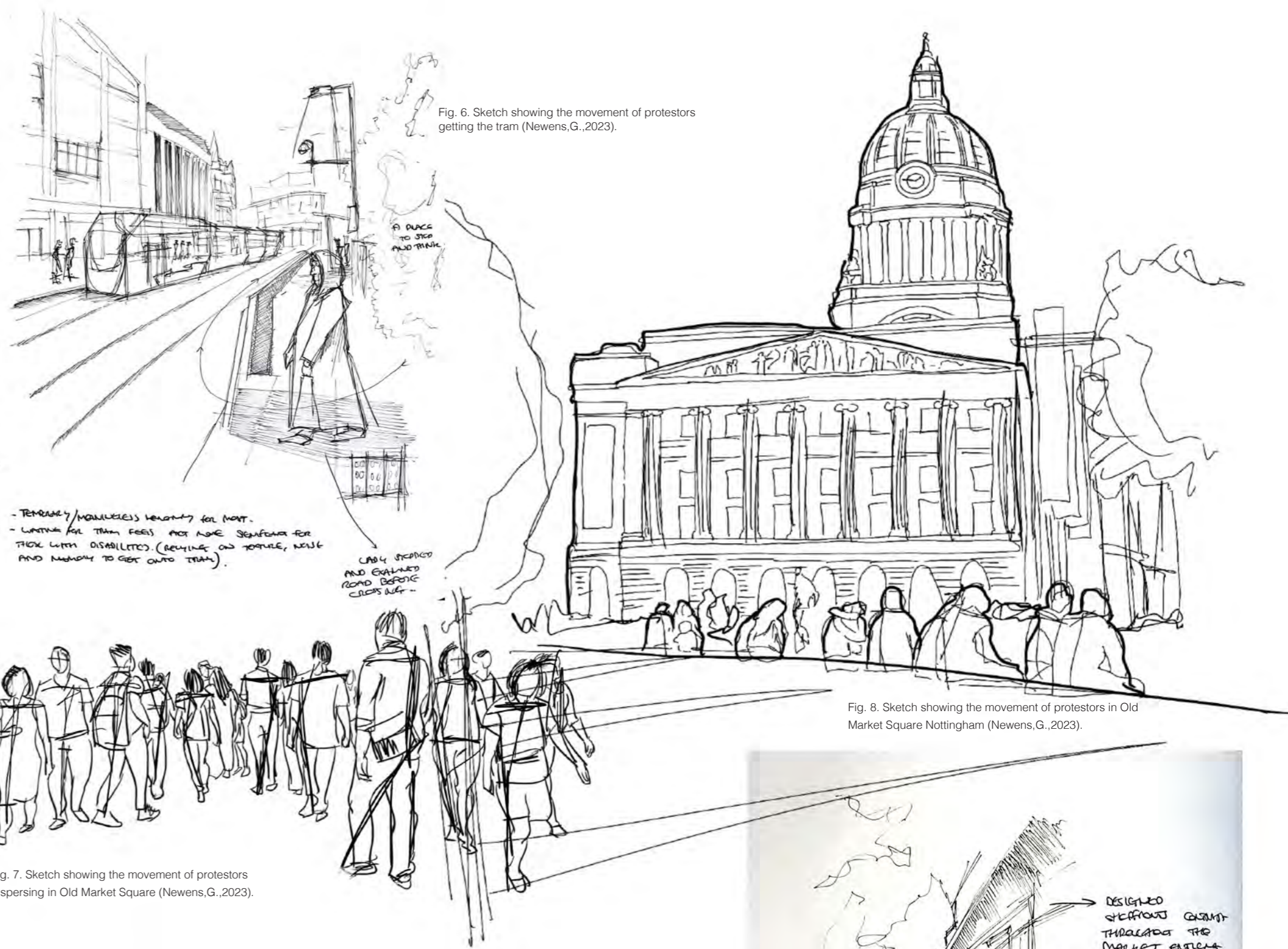


Fig. 6. Sketch showing the movement of protestors getting the tram (Newens,G.,2023).

Fig. 8. Sketch showing the movement of protestors in Old Market Square Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).

Fig. 7. Sketch showing the movement of protestors dispersing in Old Market Square (Newens,G.,2023).

Upon further analysis of how people utilized Old Market Square during the protest, I observed that most groups had their phones out, recording the demonstration. This act could be interpreted as a means of creating a collective memory for future recollection purposes.

As the group of protesters began to disperse and relocate within the city, it dawned on me that Old Market Square could serve as a platform to support various movements and protests, showcasing the diversity of causes and perspectives. This highlights the square's potential as a tool for creating collective memories through its architecture and open space, which are free for interpretation and use.



Fig. 9. Sketch of pedestrians analysing Size shopfront (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 1. Photograph of Ukrainian war protest flags in Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 2. Photograph of protestors in Old Market Square in Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 3. Photograph of protestors in central Market Square in Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 10. Sketch showing Volunteers planting in Grassroots Community Garden (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 11. Sketch showing Volunteers engaging in conversation on Grassroots Garden Benches (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 12. Sketch showing Volunteer selling Grassroots Garden produce (Newens,G.,2023).

SPACE 2: GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY GARDEN, NOTTINGHAM



Fig. 13. Sketch showing Volunteer planting flowers in heart shaped planter (Newens,G.,2023).

When analyzing the grassroots community garden, I observed that a sense of personalization and memory was achieved through the customized shapes of the planters built by volunteers using old timbers. These planters adorned shapes such as hearts, which held personal sentiment for the community. Additionally, being a community garden that encourages refugees and displaced individuals to participate in planting fosters interactions and the sharing of stories between volunteers and displaced individuals. This promotes a sense of collective memory through ongoing conversations and shared experiences within the garden.

During my visits, only volunteers were present in the community garden. Even then, these volunteers had the opportunity to alter and manipulate the garden's design by planting specific flora in designated spaces, fostering a sense of ownership.

Furthermore, the community garden features numerous cozy nooks and spaces intended for people to engage in conversation, with benches and seating areas scattered throughout. I noticed that volunteers often gathered in these spots, engaging in conversations over teas and coffees obtained from the drink station. These facilities contributed to a strong sense of community, as everyone had a purpose and a common goal—pruning, tending to dying plants, and preparing the garden for autumn.

The grassroots community garden is run by the organization Nottingham Refugee Forum. Many volunteers spend their afternoons here, creating a busy atmosphere. The majority of people in the garden are approachable and eager to help others, fostering a welcoming environment that encourages individuals to share their experiences openly in this inviting space.

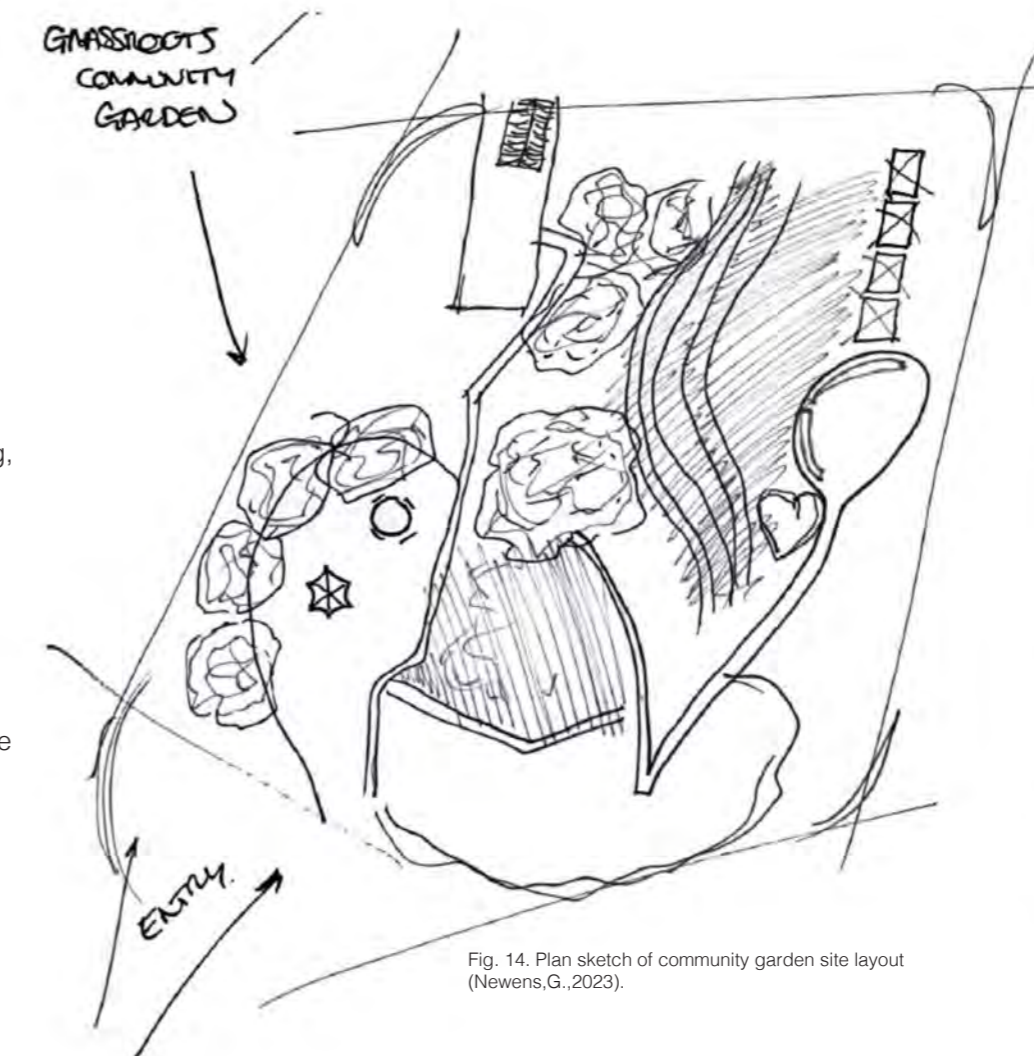


Fig. 14. Plan sketch of community garden site layout (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 15. Photograph of volunteer built timber shelter in community garden grounds (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 16. Photograph of volunteers planting in the Grassroots Community Garden (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 17. Photograph of community Garden once Volunteers left the site (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 18. Photograph of Gallery visitor viewing digital art installation (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 19. Photograph of Gallery visitors analysing experiential installation (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 20. Photograph of Gallery visitors analysing art piece in conversation (Newens,G.,2023).

SPACE 3: NOTTINGHAM CONTEMPORARY

Focusing on Nottingham Contemporary as a space for cultivating memories, I observed a profound sense of reflection among visitors. The gallery prompts individuals to engage in thoughtful contemplation when viewing artworks and interacting with others. The uniqueness and scale of the exhibited pieces make a lasting impression, remaining entrenched in people's minds subconsciously, as art is inherently subjective. This allows nearly everyone in the space to form their opinions.

Additionally, upon entering the gallery, I noticed groups of students, highlighting that the community outside still comes to experience the diverse artworks. The gallery's subjective nature makes it accessible to all, providing a platform for everyone to express their opinions on the art. Furthermore, exploring the basement revealed a memory café and events space, strategically positioned to encourage people to reflect on memories through literature, books, artworks, and accessible collector's items for the public.

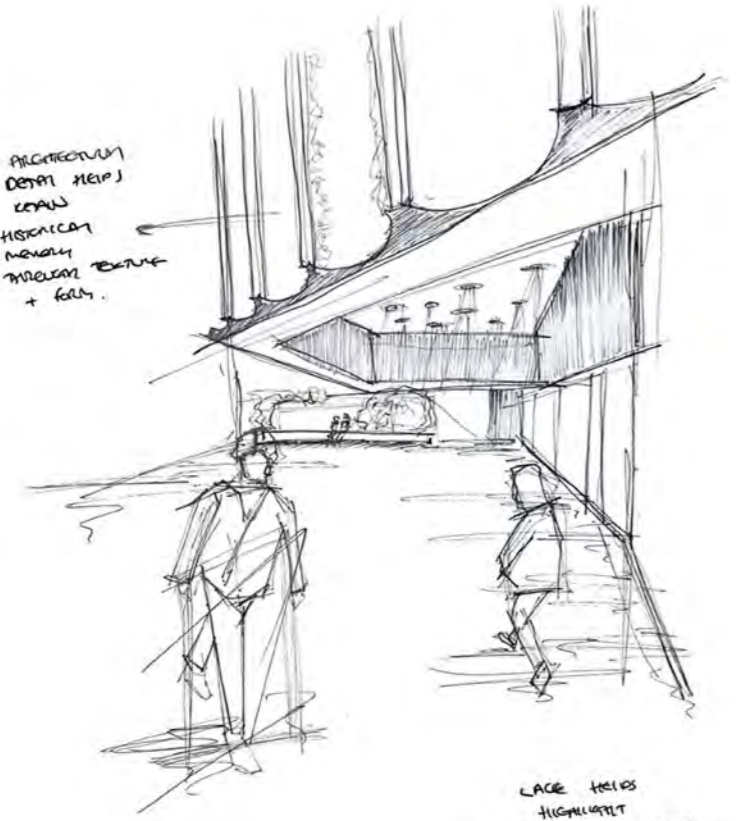


Fig. 21. Sketch of Gallery entry porch architecture and its recollection to the lace industry in Nottingham (Newens,G.,2023).

LACE HELPS
HIGHLIGHT
HISTORICAL
IMPORTANCE
OF A TRADE
WHICH
OPERATED IN A
MACE -> NO MORE
DE TO CREATION.

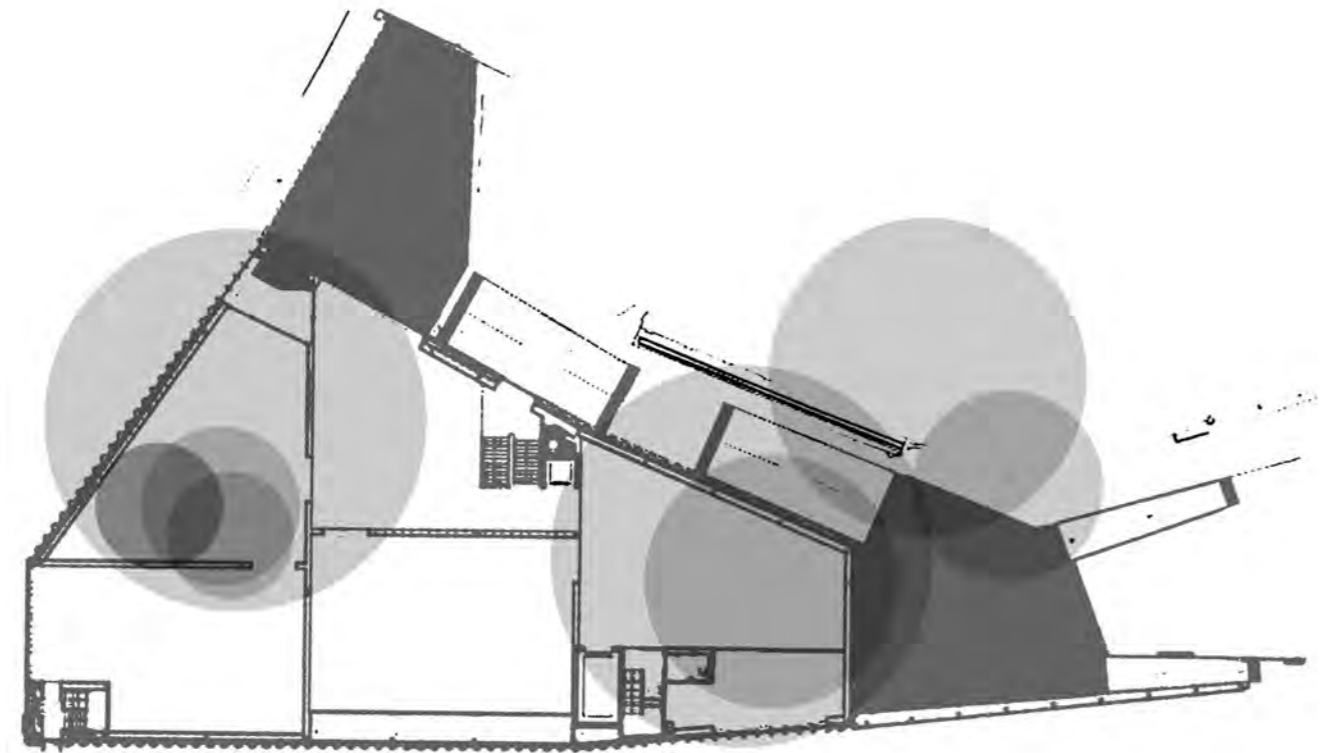


Fig. 22. Heat plan highlighting the density of gallery visitors and their movements within the space (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 23. Sketch of gallery visitor sketching outer views in window bench (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 24. Sketch of gallery visitors engaging in conversation about artwork on walls (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 25. Sketch of gallery visitors engaging in immersive installation (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 26. Sketch of group of gallery visitors walking towards the Contemporary (Newens,G.,2023).

SPACE 4: NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE (THEATRE)



Fig. 27. Sketch of visitors engaging in conversations about the play (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 29. Sketch of people dispersing once the show is over outside the foyer (Newens,G.,2023).

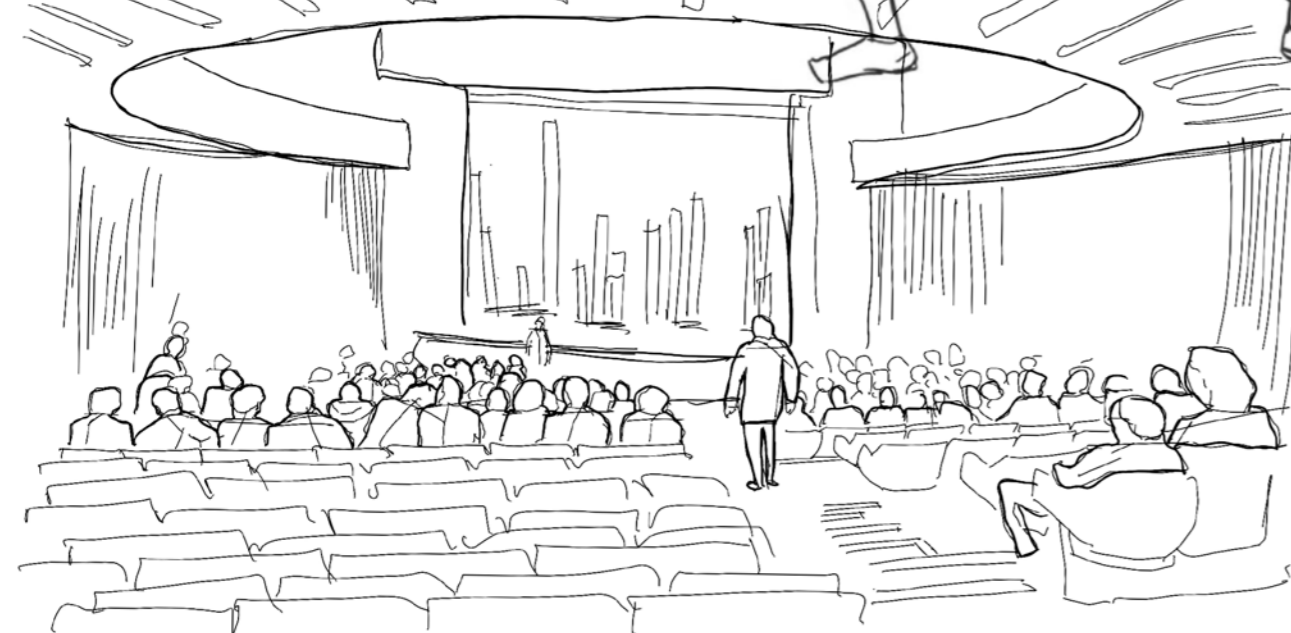


Fig. 28. Theatre full of people waiting to see the show (Newens,G.,2023).

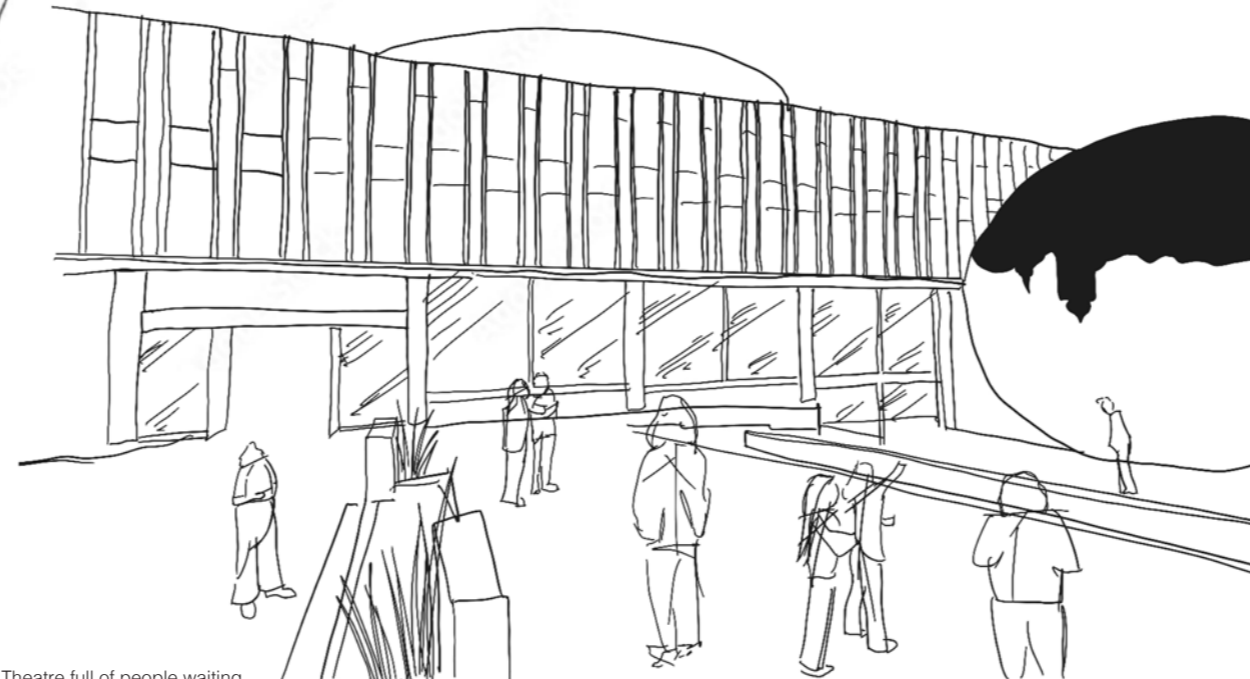


Fig. 30. Sketch of people dispersing once the show is over outside the foyer (Newens,G.,2023).

When analysing the Nottingham Playhouse, a sense of shared and collective memory is achieved through the broad range of communities and families that visit by House, who, as a collective experience the place in the barbers and facilities at the playhouse has to offer over a range of generations.

I found it really interesting to see how groups and the community interacted once the place is actually finished, and someone go to the bar to recollect on the ply. Others would immediately leave the theatre while the majority of people tended to gather outside the theatre in the open for your area to reflect on what I just saw and talk and communicate with others, but I felt towards the ply which they just experience.

Along with this also found it interesting the stock just a position and contrast between the outside area and the bar weather is a large atmosphere a lot of music and a lot of talking a lot of movement between people in comparison to inside the theatre with people tend to sit in silence and witness the show. Both spaces promotes the ability to create a sense of collective memory through communities. However, it's done in very different ways due to the atmosphere achieved in the space and the activity that people within the spaces are consuming..

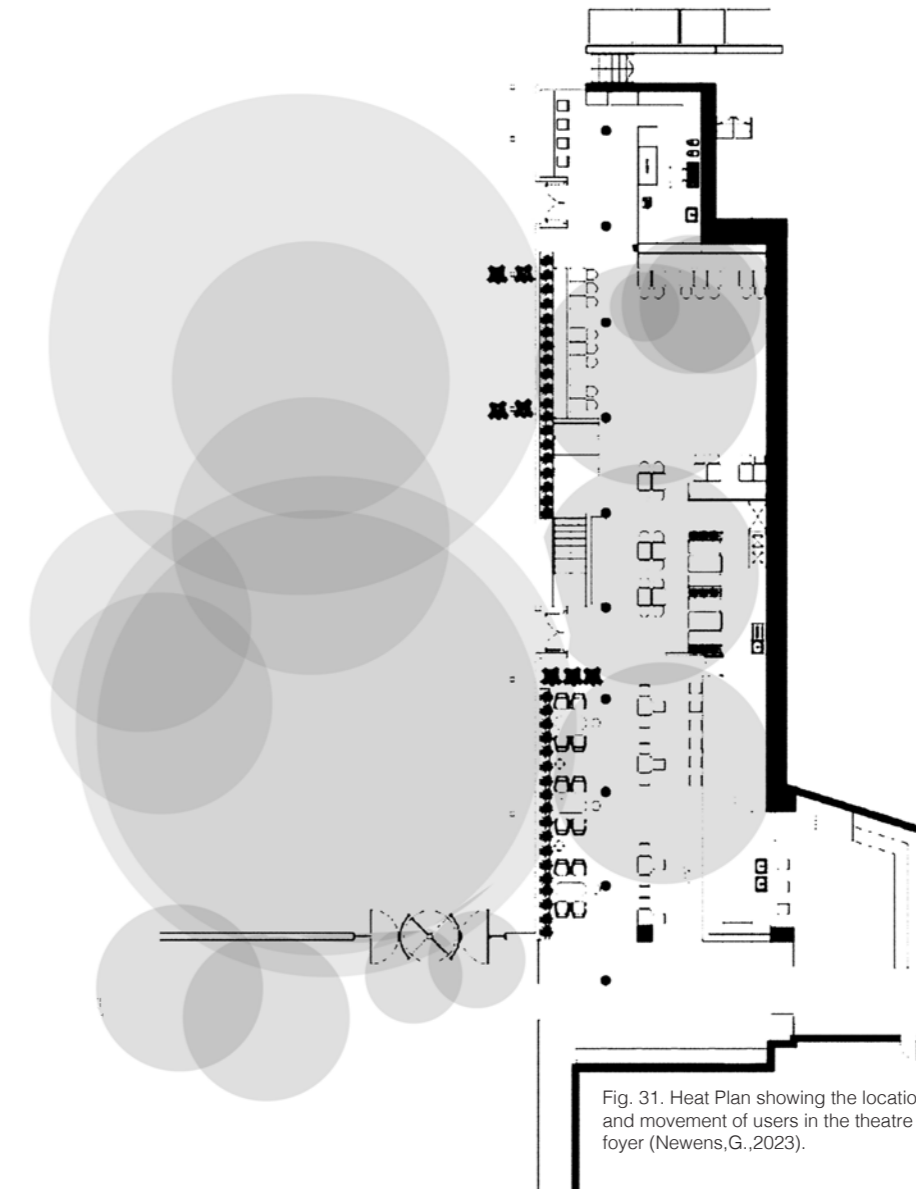


Fig. 31. Heat Plan showing the locations and movement of users in the theatre foyer (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 32. Photograph of theatre full of people watching the show (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 33. Photograph of people using the theatre bar facilities upon entry (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 33. Photograph of Playhouse Installation (Newens,G.,2023).

CHOSEN SPACE 5: DERBYSHIRE REFUGEE SOLIDARITY

By creating plans and engaging in visual ethnography, I have had the opportunity to examine the spatial dynamics and functionality of the Derbyshire Refugees Authority. This exploration has enabled me to understand how the architecture and layout of the facilities contribute to fostering solidarity and shaping the users' experiences, ultimately aiming to build a sense of community and collective memory.

During my voluntary work at the refugee center, I actively communicated with volunteers to gather their perspectives on the space and how it is utilized by refugees and displaced individuals. This hands-on experience allowed me to delve deeper into the study of the place, comprehending its functionality and observing the movement of people within the space.

Initially, it became evident that certain areas of the refugee center were focal points for gatherings, such as the main desk where volunteers provided assistance. This space was consistently surrounded by visitors and refugees seeking support or access to facilities like the music room or clothing. The proximity to board games, art supplies, and interactive equipment made this area the most utilized within the building during my initial study. Through the use of these facilities, it became apparent that conversations and interactions flourished, creating an environment conducive to the formation of collective memories and a sense of community through shared engagement in activities.

Similarly, spaces like the communal kitchen and outdoor garden were hubs for interaction, with a majority of people located there during my initial entry to the refugee center. These areas, too, served as places for social connection and community-building within the center.



Fig. 34. Photocollage of DRS kitchen as a conversation space (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 35. Photograph of visitors sign in space (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 36. Photocollage of most densely populated part of the community centre (Newens,G.,2023).

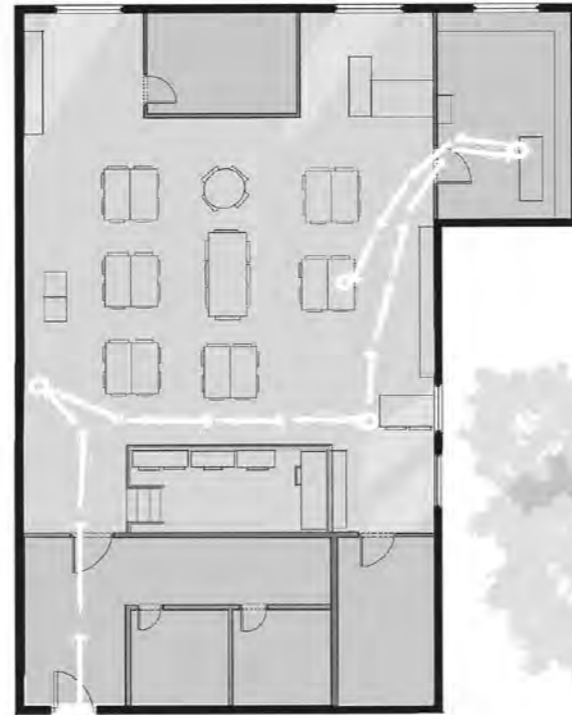


Fig. 37. Plan showing the average movement of users in the space upon entry (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 38. Heat plan analysing the location and density of users in DRS (Newens,G.,2023).

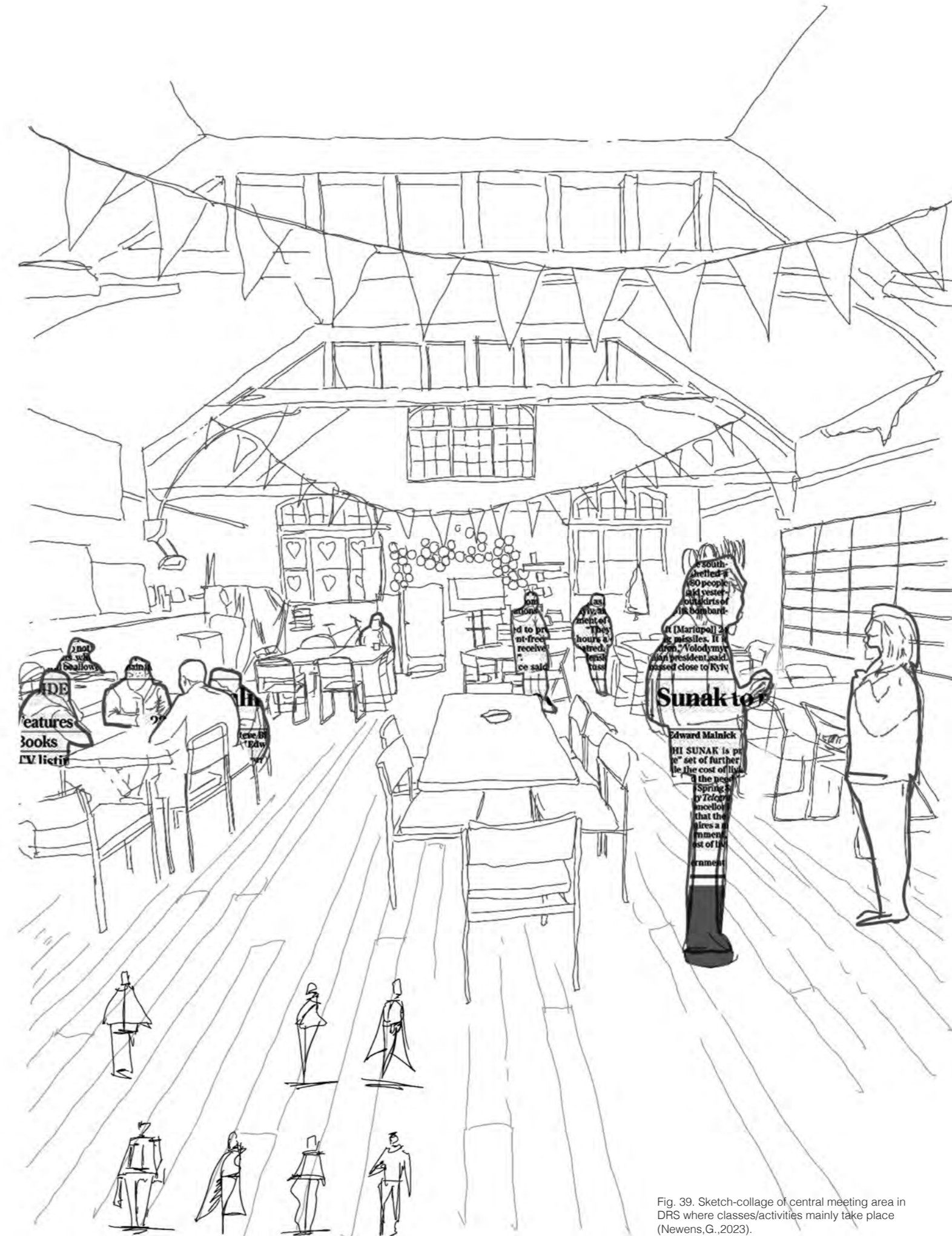


Fig. 39. Sketch-collage of central meeting area in DRS where classes/activities mainly take place (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 40. Sketch-collage of users interacting through means of conversation and board games (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 41a. Sketch-collage of users interacting through means of conversation in DRS communal garden (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 41b. Sketch-collage of users interacting through means of conversation in the community kitchen in DRS (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 42. Photograph of entrance to Derbyshire refugee solidarity (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 43. Photograph of entrance to Derbyshire refugee Solidarity positioned in the grounds of St Marys Church(Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 44. Photograph of St Marys Church which acts as an overflow space for the refugee centre (Newens,G.,2023).

 = 70 Refugees in Derby

 = 70 Refugees which DRS can accommodate



Upon entering Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS), I was struck by the proximity of the community centre to Saint Mary's Church, which looms prominently over it. Interacting with volunteers and understanding the space's users revealed that a significant portion of the refugee centre's visitors follow Islamic or Sikh beliefs. The juxtaposition of the refugee center within the church grounds raised concerns about potential conflicts between religious groups.

Photographs of the entrance to DRS emphasized the imposing presence of the church, possibly contributing to a sense of foreboding upon entry. This could inadvertently deepen feelings of displacement among refugee center users, who may feel their cultural and religious needs haven't been fully considered, fostering an initial negative perception and evoking memories of past displacement.

Conversations with volunteers shed light on the church serving as an overflow space for DRS, highlighting the shortage of facilities to accommodate the refugee population in Derby. This situation, while indicative of a limitation, also presents an opportunity for refugees to be exposed to new cultures and activities within the church, including music and historical lessons, potentially fostering positive connections in the community and promoting memory production.

Fig. 45. Visual Graph highlighting the amount of refugees in Derby in comparison with the amount of refugees DRS can accommodate (Newens,G.,2023).

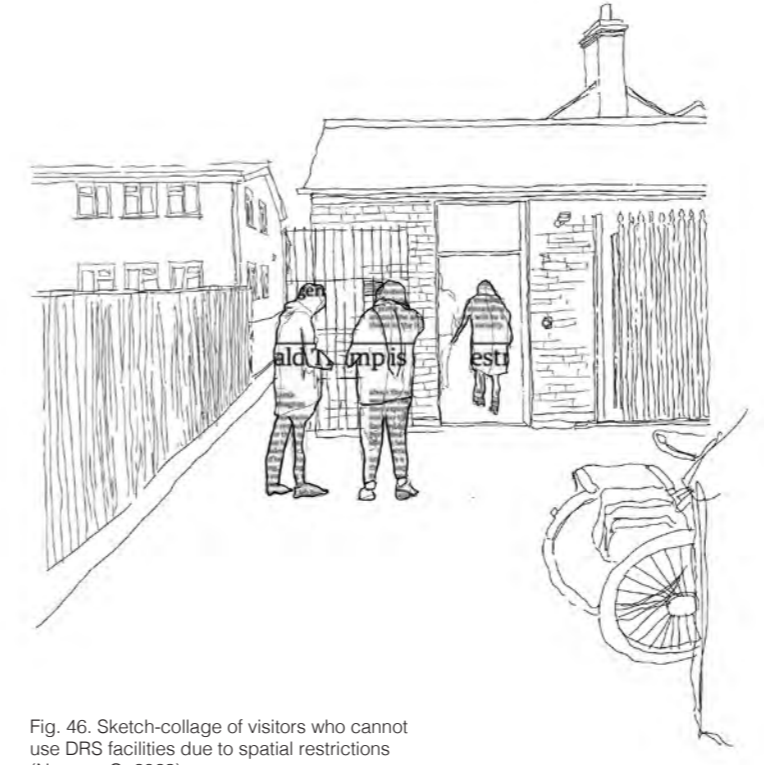


Fig. 46. Sketch-collage of visitors who cannot use DRS facilities due to spatial restrictions (Newens,G.,2023).

Fig. 47. Isometric of DRS location in comparison with St Marys Church which acts as an overflow space (Newens,G.,2023).



 Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity  St Marys Church (DRS Overflow space)





Fig. 48. Photograph of St Marys Church Architecture (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 49. Photograph of DRS 1960s brick community centre (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 50. Photograph of DRS 1960s brick community centre (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 51. Photograph of social housing neighbouring DRS community centre (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 52. Photograph of DRS internal characteristics (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 53. Photograph of DRS community garden (Newens,G.,2023).

Upon closer examination of the architecture of the refugee center and its surroundings, it becomes evident that the space wasn't purposefully designed for its current use. The 1960s brick community center, with its traditional architectural detailing and finishes, reflects the characteristics commonly associated with community centers, including emblematic crosses and timber sash windows.



Fig. 54. Sketch of DRS brick 'institute' facade detail (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 56. Sketch of St Marys Church brick detailing/facade characteristics (Newens,G.,2023).

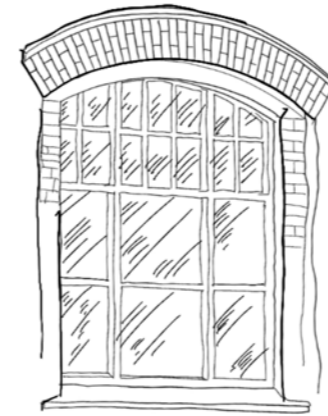


Fig. 58. Sketch of timber shash windows in DRS (Newens,G.,2023).

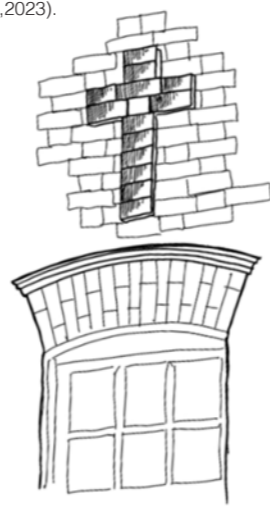


Fig. 55. Sketch of DRS brick cross facade detail (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 57. Sketch of DRS timber paneled front door/porch (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 59. Sketch of DRS brick building facade (Newens,G.,2023).

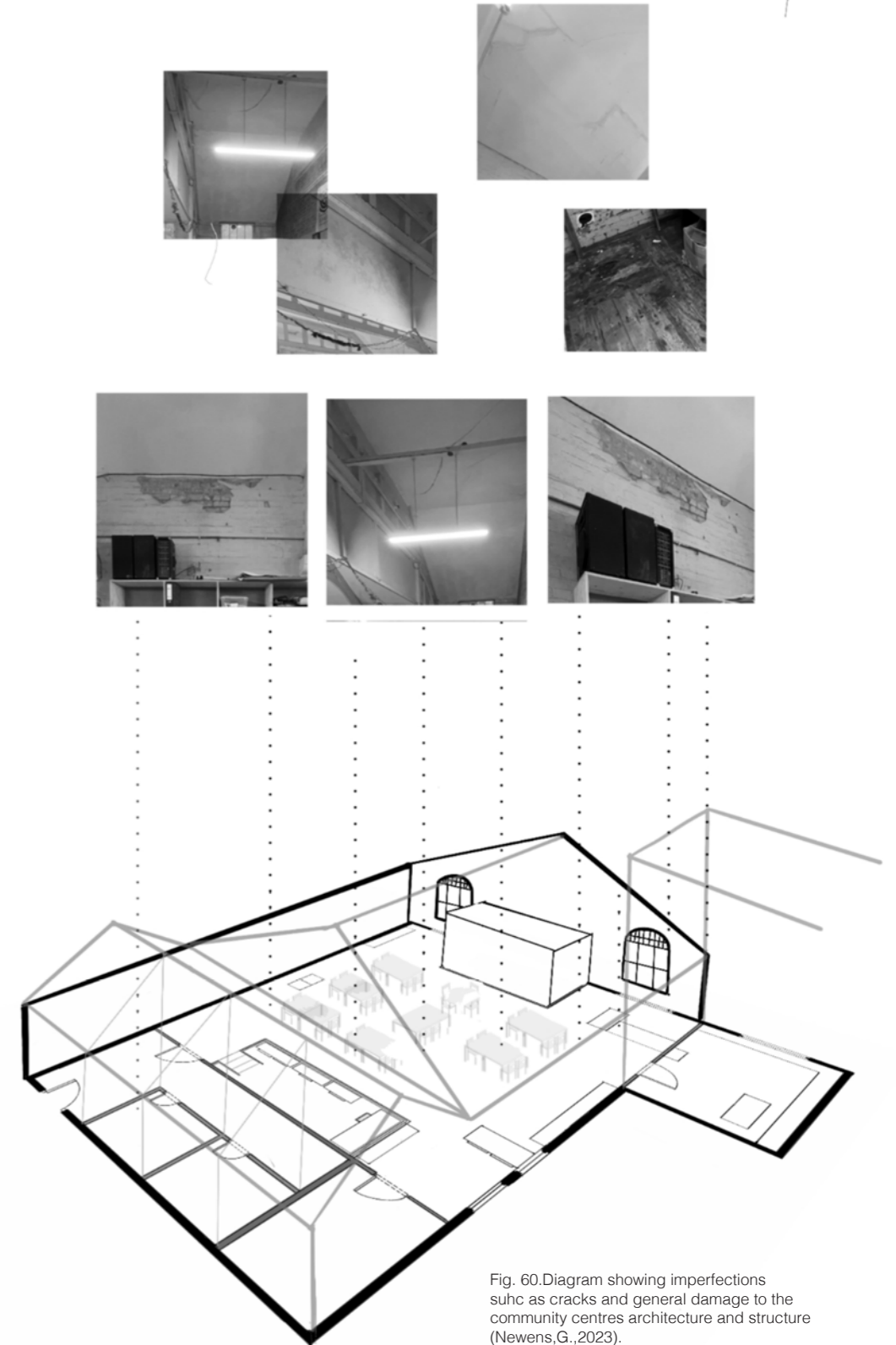


Fig. 60. Diagram showing imperfections such as cracks and general damage to the community centres architecture and structure (Newens,G.,2023).

These design choices, however, do not align with the diverse user base originating from various European and Middle Eastern countries. While one could interpret these features as a means to expose users to different facets of British architecture, there is a disconnection between the design and the cultural backgrounds of those utilizing the space.

For the users to truly establish a sense of community and collective memory within the refugee center, both facilities and architecture should be tailored to accommodate their religious and cultural needs. This observation is supported by the evident lack of utilization of the external spaces surrounding the refugee center, as depicted in photographs and sketches. These areas remain largely empty, suggesting a missed opportunity for DRS groups to engage with and make use of the external environment.



Fig. 61. Map highlighting the distance and journey between Derbyshire refugee solidarity, the 'Holiday Inn' and Derbyshire City Centre (Newens, G., 2023).



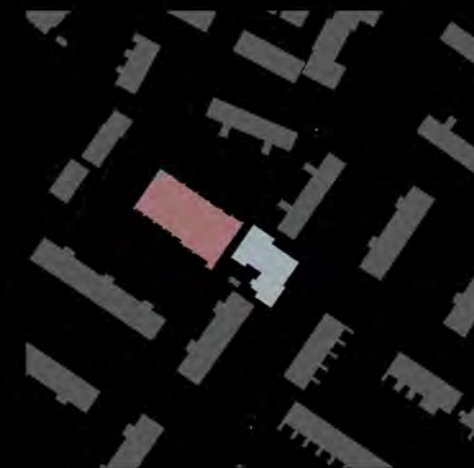
Fig. 62. Collage showing the journey refugees must take between the Holiday Inn in which they reside and DRS (Newens, G., 2023).



Fig. 63. Photograph of Derbyshire Coach station Holiday Inn where 200+/- refugees temporarily reside (Newens, G., 2023).



Fig. 64. Photograph of motorway bridges refugees must walk over in order to get to or visit DRS, enhancing a sense of displacement (Newens, G., 2023).



- St Marys 'Overflow' Church
- Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity
- Social Housing

Fig. 65. Map showing residential, communal and religious spaces (Newens, G., 2023).



- Visitor Journey
- Private Land
- Public Roads
- Public Footpaths
- Bike Storage
- Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity

Fig. 66. Infrastructure map showing entrance points to DRS from the city, and what buildings visitors pass/interact with (Newens, G., 2023).

To comprehend the journey taken by refugees from Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS) to the Holiday Inn, where over 200 refugees reside and utilize Topsham Refugee Solidarity's facilities, I decided to walk the route myself. Documenting my journey through a photomontage allowed me to grasp the diverse spatial experiences of users between the Holiday Inn and the refugee center.

The walk involves traversing multiple motorways and passing through deserted, dilapidated areas of Derby, creating a stark contrast with the city center. This journey, away from the urban hub, may contribute to a negative impact on refugees' collective memory, deepening feelings of displacement.

While the Holiday Inn is positioned closer to the city center, the array of facilities and classes offered by DRS gives the community little reason to visit the city center. This underscores the significance of the refugee center as a focal point for community interactions, fostering the growth of collective memory within this specific spatial context.

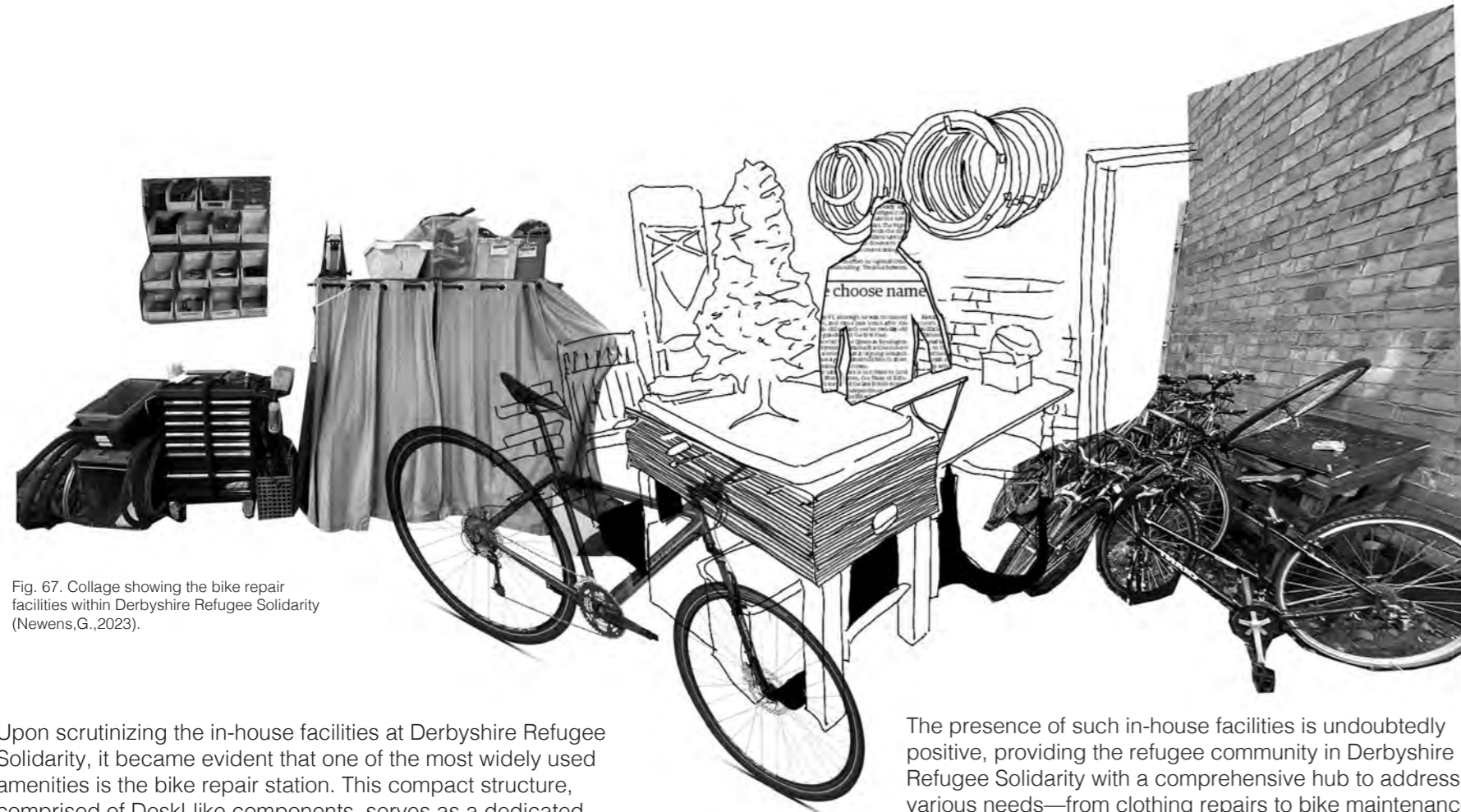


Fig. 67. Collage showing the bike repair facilities within Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (Newens,G.,2023).

Upon scrutinizing the in-house facilities at Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity, it became evident that one of the most widely used amenities is the bike repair station. This compact structure, comprised of Desk-like components, serves as a dedicated space for repairing and fixing bikes for refugees to use in navigating the city.

The presence of such in-house facilities is undoubtedly positive, providing the refugee community in Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity with a comprehensive hub to address various needs—from clothing repairs to bike maintenance and language classes. This fosters a strong sense of community and purpose within the space, facilitating the creation of positive shared memories among its users.

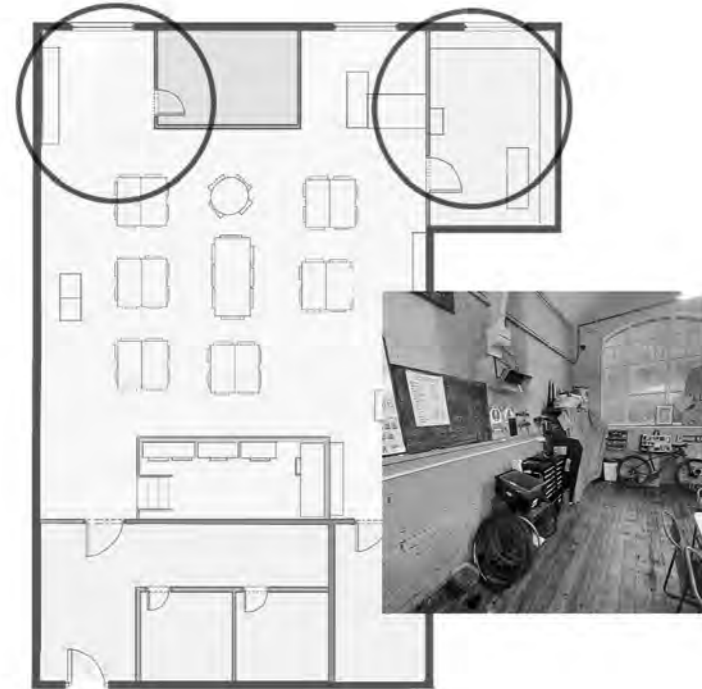


Fig. 68. Plan showing the location of bike repair facilities in accordance with the designed layout of the space (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 69. Photograph showing covered bike repair facilities (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 70. Photograph showing bike repair facilities manufactured using second hand pieces of furniture/ donated equipment (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 71. Sketch showing bike repair facilities at 'RideDirect' located a short walk away from Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (Newens,G.,2023).

However, it's essential to recognize the potential drawbacks. Relying on the refugee center for everyday needs may inadvertently hinder refugees from integrating into wider communities. This reliance might limit their exposure to new people, impeding the chance to understand and embrace the diverse cultures of the country they now call home.

Further research unveiled a nearby bike repair company with four mechanics, just a short walk away from the refugee center. This discovery presents an opportunity for refugees to access services beyond the center, encouraging integration into the broader society. Such a move could enhance the sense of community, allowing for the formation of positive memories in the new city without solely depending on the facilities provided by the refugee center.



Fig. 72. Map photo-montage of Ridedirect bike repair facilities in accordance with DRS inadequate facilities (Newens,G.,2023).

Upon examining the activities at Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity, it's evident that arts and crafts hold significant popularity within the community. This creative outlet provides a means for individuals to express their emotions and showcase their personalities, contributing to the overall ambiance of the space. Engaging in arts and crafts not only allows the DRS community to share their cultural backgrounds but also facilitates interactions and connections among visitors.



The walls of the building are adorned with a myriad of artworks and religious emblems, creating a personalized and culturally rich environment shaped by the people who utilize the space. This artistic expression becomes a tangible representation of individuals' experiences and memories, visible for all to witness.

Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity facilitates this creative expression through multiple arts and craft stations and donations from the general public. These contributions often include paints, watercolors, and various equipment, providing users with the means to express themselves artistically. This emphasis on creative expression not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the space but also fosters a sense of community and individual empowerment among those within DRS.

Fig. 73. Section drawing of DRS with refugee made personalisation walls adorned with artwork and religious emblems (Newens,G.,2023).



This collage shows the ability personalise pieces of artwork and religious emblems have on the space to add colour and light and create a vibrant and intriguing atmosphere, which softens the architecture makes the space more relaxing and fun for its users.

Fig. 74. Collage showing personalisation walls/spaces in Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity adorned with artwork, photographs and religious emblems (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 76. Photograph showing refugee's personalised walls in DRS adorned with personal and religious emblems (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 77. Photograph showing personalised elevation in DRS adorned with personal and religious emblems (Newens,G.,2023).

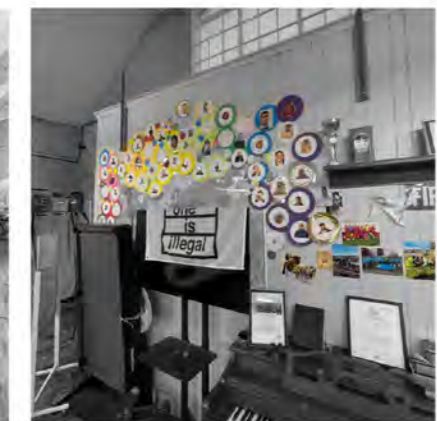


Fig. 78. Photograph showing volunteer accounts made by the volunteers and refugees and fixed to the walls (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 80. Sketch of Volunteer playing musical instrument throughout DRS (Newens,G.,2023).

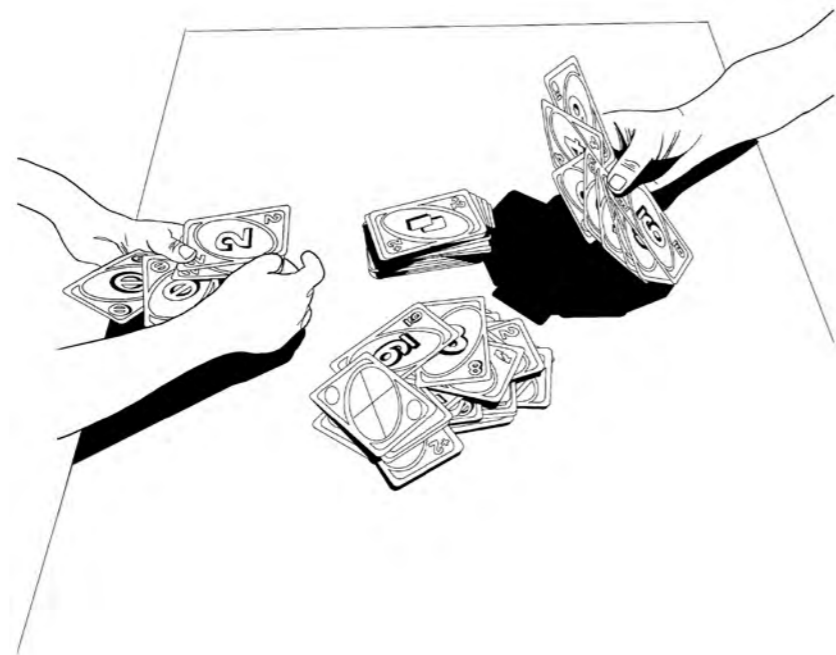


Fig. 82. Sketch of 'UNO' played by George (myself) and refugees/visitors (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 84b. Sketch of Volunteer sewing/ stitching damaged clothing for refugees and visitors at the sewing station (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 81. Photograph of music room/ facilities which are fully accessible for all visitors/volunteers (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 83. Photograph of volunteers and visitors playing board games (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 84a. Photograph of volunteers playing board games with visitors (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 85. Photograph of Volunteer sewing/ stitching damaged clothing for refugees and visitors at the sewing station (Newens,G.,2023).



Fig. 86. Photograph of sewing station located on the stage in the DRS community centre (Newens,G.,2023).

Another means through which a sense of community is fostered within Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity is the constant presence of music playing throughout the center. This not only features music from diverse cultures, aligning with the backgrounds of many visitors, but also incorporates live music performed by the center's multi-talented volunteers and through the dedicated music room. This creates a tranquil ambiance, where refugee requests contribute to the formation of new collective memories while simultaneously triggering recollections from their past lives.

During my volunteering experience, I discovered that playing board games, such as Uno, emerged as an excellent way to connect with visitors and form friendship groups within the community. This lighthearted activity fosters a fun atmosphere, offering opportunities for conversations to unfold, allowing me to learn more about others and their unique stories. Many refugees shared displacement narratives and memories of playing ball games in their homelands, contributing to the development of a more profound sense of community.

Additionally, the center provides clothes repair facilities run by dedicated volunteers who weekly mend damaged pieces of clothing, flags, and bedding for the refugees. This initiative has established close relationships between the volunteers and returning refugees, as personal belongings become a window into their lives. Such services not only contribute to the sense of community but also create a positive collective memory within Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity. The center becomes not only a place for people to connect but also a vital resource for refugees to navigate life more easily in Derby.



Fig. 79. Photograph showing volunteer playing musical instrument in the DRS main hall surrounded by visitors (Newens,G.,2023).

ESSAY

INTRODUCTION

Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity ('DRS') appears not only as a support organisation but as a communal hub where diverse communities converge, determined to forge shared collective memories amidst the challenges of displacement. This essay embarks on a comprehensive analysis of DRS, exploring community building, societal integration challenges, architectural adaptations, and the profound impact of neglected architecture on refugee well-being.

As an organisation dedicated to supporting and connecting displaced individuals, DRS mirrors the broader challenges faced by refugees in their pursuit of community, understanding, and integration. The examination delves into various aspects, including conversation spaces, personalised environments, architectural considerations, and the geographical context. This reveals a subtle interplay between achieving a sense of collective memory through community and navigating the complexities of broader societal integration.

Grounded in ethnographic observation and visual analysis, this research paper recognises the unique insights these methods offer in understanding the lived experiences within refugee spaces. Through this in-depth analysis, the essay aims to untangle the intricacies inherent in creating inclusive refugee spaces, moving beyond physical confines to embrace a broader narrative of integration within Derby's societal fabric.

The thesis contends that, while DRS excels in fostering internal community bonds, it encounters challenges and subtleties in reconciling this with the imperative of external integration—a delicate dilemma influenced by its architectural choices and geographical location. This exploration, at its core, sheds light on the nuanced dynamics of creating inclusive refugee spaces within a broader societal context, aligning with the central aim of this thesis.



Fig. 90. Photo-collage showing the entrance to DRS with visitors talking prior to entry (Newens, G., 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

LITERATURE REVIEW - REFUGEE DYNAMICS: INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

The term 'refugee' encapsulates individuals displaced due to external aggression, seeking refuge outside their homeland. In *'What is a Refugee'* Maley (2016) categorizes causes of displacement, emphasizing political, societal, or environmental instigators like external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing (Maley 2016). Maley deliberates on the critical distinctions of refugee terminology, advocating to "prioritise the protection that is made available to someone in need" (Maley 2016, p. 37), thereby facilitating their seamless integration into host societies. In *"Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Britain,"* Burnett and Peel (2001) highlight the challenges faced by refugees in the UK. The dispersal of refugees to "areas that have previously had little experience of working with refugees" (Burnett and Peel 2001, p. 485), under the 1990 Immigration and Asylum Act, impedes integration efforts (Burnett and Peel 2001). Discrimination based on race, religion, and nationality exacerbates the lack of communal support and spaces (Burnett and Peel 2001). This review underscores critical gaps in refugee integration, emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive strategies. It exposes challenges in communal spaces, urging societal reconsideration of integration policies to bridge gaps and fortify support structures. The insights resonate with Derby's context, emphasizing the pressing need for inclusive integration strategies into the wider Derby community to benefit societies' refugee understandings.



Fig. 87. Collage showing individuals displaced due to political, societal, or environmental reasonings integrating into Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity and Derby's wider communities (Newens, G., 2024).



Fig. 88. Sketch showing a displaced individuals ideas of memory and how collective memories are retained consciously and subconsciously in the brain (Newens,G.,2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW - MEMORY'S IMPACT ON DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS:

Memory encapsulates the brain's capacity to pursue a specific narrative of the past (Altanian 2017), crafting a specific historical account. *'Archives against Genocide Denialism?'* Altanian (2017) delves into memory's influence on displaced individuals, clarifying its role as the conscious and subconscious reflection on emotional or physical events, highlighting its significance in our present and future lives (Altanian 2017). This intricate relationship with memory highlights its impact on emotions, often an uncontrollable response triggered by the "significance that allows the process of memory to be undertaken" (Altanian 2017, p. 15). Notably, those exposed to momentous or traumatic events, such as refugees, are more predisposed to introspect and be emotionally triggered by such memories. Other ideas explored in *'Memory: theories and debates'* posit memory as a construct that determines one's character (Sutton. Et al, 2010). Shaped by an individual's motivations, aspirations, and goals, rather than merely an emotional trigger, significantly determines one's character where people "maintain their sense of self" (Sutton. Et al 2010, p. 212). These diverse perspectives significantly shape the psychological responses of refugees and displaced individuals, influencing their coping mechanisms and sense of self amid traumas. This substantiates the ongoing exploration into how memory retention moulds their relationships and community dynamics within detached societal frameworks, underscoring the pivotal role of memory in their experiences and the importance of memory building within a community centre space.

LITERATURE REVIEW: COLLECTIVE MEMORY'S CRUCIAL LINK TO REFUGEES AND SOCIETAL INTEGRATION

Collective memory refers to the shared recollections and representations of the past within a group or society. *'Memory without Monuments'* delves into this concept, portraying it as shared knowledge, beliefs, and cultural references shaping a community's perspective (Anderson 1999). It clarifies how collective opinion emerges from shared experiences, "where the past is not as much separate from, as subsumed in, the present" (Anderson 1999, p. 16). Without this shared perspective, the cohesion within cultures, religions, and communities might disintegrate, and prove destructive to the linkage between a society (Anderson 1999). Moreover, *'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity'* highlights the pivotal role of collective remembrance in preserving historical events, traditions, and shared traumas as the "only thing that can preserve the past" (Assmann and Czaplicka 1995, p. 130). It stresses that specific societal groups, like displaced individuals and refugees, hold accurate collective experiences vital for educating future generations (Assmann and Czaplicka 1995). This distinct knowledge enables societies to "reconstruct shared moments" in time within its "contemporary frame of reference" (Assmann and Czaplicka 1995, p. 130).

These texts emphasize the potential of collective memory within refugee community centres to shape societal understanding. Displaced individuals often hold pivotal collective experiences for educating future generations. Integrating these memories within Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity promotes inclusivity and a sense of belonging, seen in personalisation and artwork, enriching cultural heritage. Acknowledging diverse narratives promotes unity among refugee communities, offering a shared historical perspective despite the restricted connection with broader society.

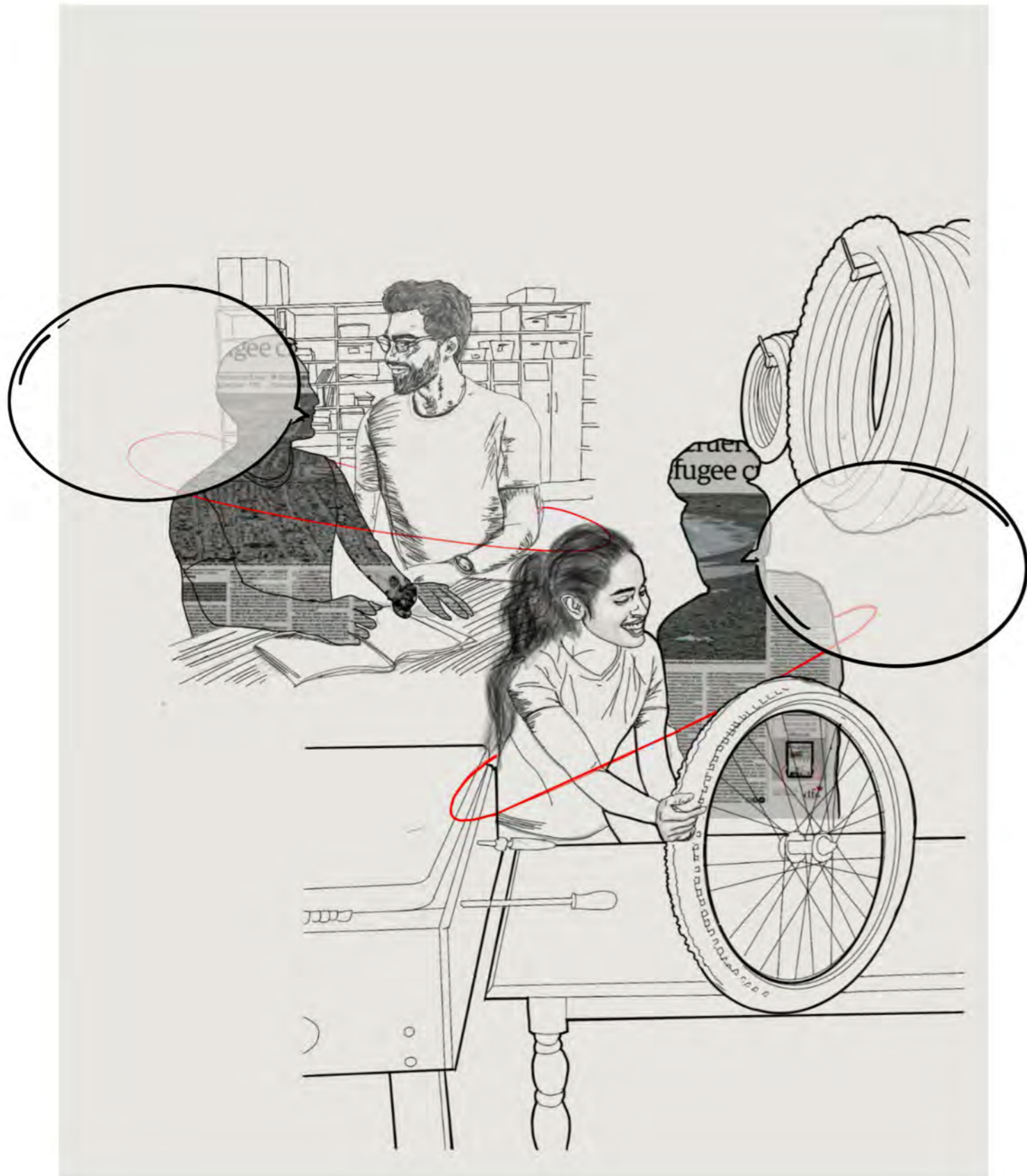


Fig. 91. Sketch collage showing DRS facilities such as bike repair or language/calligraphy classes promoting conversation and a sense of community through volunteer and refugee collaborative involvement (Newens,G.,2024).

FOSTERING UNITY AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY THROUGH CONVERSATION SPACES

Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity ('DRS') plays a crucial role in bringing together individual stories and fostering unity within the refugee community through ongoing conversations influenced by its community spaces. Hirst and Echterhoff highlight the impact of everyday dialogue on collective memory, emphasizing its role in shaping it (Hirst and Echterhoff 2008).

In resonance with this perspective, DRS Volunteer A articulates the transformative nature of sharing journeys, stating that it "brings strength through mutual support; you feel like you're helping" (Appendix A). This first-hand account vividly illustrates the emotional depth inherent in these conversations. The importance of such exchanges within DRS becomes apparent when examining the impact of the physical environment on these narratives. Beyond individual displacement stories, there is a thematic unity observed in consistent client interactions and dialectics (figure 92). This collective engagement extends beyond mere storytelling. Bar-Tal (2007) underscores the pivotal role of collective memory, emphasizing its function as a binding force for individuals from diverse backgrounds, particularly in times of adversity. DRS spaces, encompassing language support stations, bike repair areas, music zones, and communal kitchens, actively foster dialogue (figure 91). These varied spaces serve as environments where people gather to share experiences, transcending the mere exchange of stories and contributing to the creation of a collective narrative.

Psychologist Daniel Bar-Tal's research emphasizes the crucial role of conversation within DRS, which acts as a conduit for fostering community and providing a backdrop for shared experiences to thrive (Bar-Tal, 2007). In societies facing conflict, collective memories intertwined with emotions such as hatred, fear, anger, and pride play a pivotal role (Bar-Tal 2007). This underscores the significance of DRS as a space where these complex emotions are processed through dialogue, contributing to the healing and cohesion of the community (Bar-Tal 2007).

In essence, conversation within Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity is not just a means of support but a vital component in building connections and sustaining collective memory. The spaces provided by DRS actively facilitate meaningful conversations and promote interaction, aligning with their intended purpose and design. This holistic approach not only supports individual well-being but also contributes to the cohesion of the refugee community.



Fig. 92. Photograph of the community kitchen in DRS promoting conversation through shared experiences of food and drink (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 93a. Photograph of volunteers and refugees taking part in English language classes, promoting conversation and a sense of communal integration (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 93b. Photograph of dying community garden with limited interaction between volunteers/refugees and its space (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 94. Photograph of DRS bike facilities offering inadequate equipment and space, hindering integration and communication with services offered in wider society (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 95. Photograph of game offering in DRS used by visitors, potentially hindering opportunity for societal integration (Newens,G.,2024).

SOCIETAL INTEGRATION - FACILITIES AS A HINDRANCE

Despite its commendable efforts in community building through conversation spaces, Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS) faces challenges in facilitating broader integration into Derby's communities and society. "Social spaces are essential, requiring facilities for social engagement" (Fitzpatrick 2014, p. 57). While these spaces encourage skill exchange and collective problem-solving, they also present potential drawbacks.

Beyond their functional roles, these spaces serve as meeting points where diverse individuals exchange skills, stories, and collaboratively address challenges. Bart de Bruijn (2009) underscores the transformative power of these activities, particularly in the educational state, highlighting how non-formal education contributes to self-reliance and empowerment (De Bruijn 2009). This educational aspect not only benefits individuals but also contributes to future reconstruction and economic development in areas of integration.

However, Professor Anouk Bélanger proposes a dual role for these social spaces— not just as places for integration but as spaces for forward-thinking and memory creation (Bélanger 2002). While areas like kitchens and clothing support foster community, they may unintentionally distance the internal community from the host society, as seen in spaces like the bike station within DRS (figure 94), restricting interaction with local bike companies just a short walk away (figure 96). Suggested limitations could hinder shared collective experiences necessary for true integration (Bélanger 2002).

DRS Volunteer A acknowledges the centre's limitations, recognizing its restricted capacity to accommodate a limited number of refugees. "It's better than nothing. Can't be helped. Sometimes the more people are here you can support in sharing our journeys" (Appendix A). These insights underscore the practical constraints faced, amplifying the struggle to foster community and collective memory within the confined spaces that facilitate the increasing influx of refugees in Derby.

In essence, the singular open space provided by DRS, intended to foster community among refugees, inadvertently perpetuates isolation and hinders wider integration, limiting social interaction with the broader society and the city they reside in. These challenges, as illuminated by Volunteer A, establish a tangible connection between the positive aspects of communal spaces and the barriers to broader societal engagement.

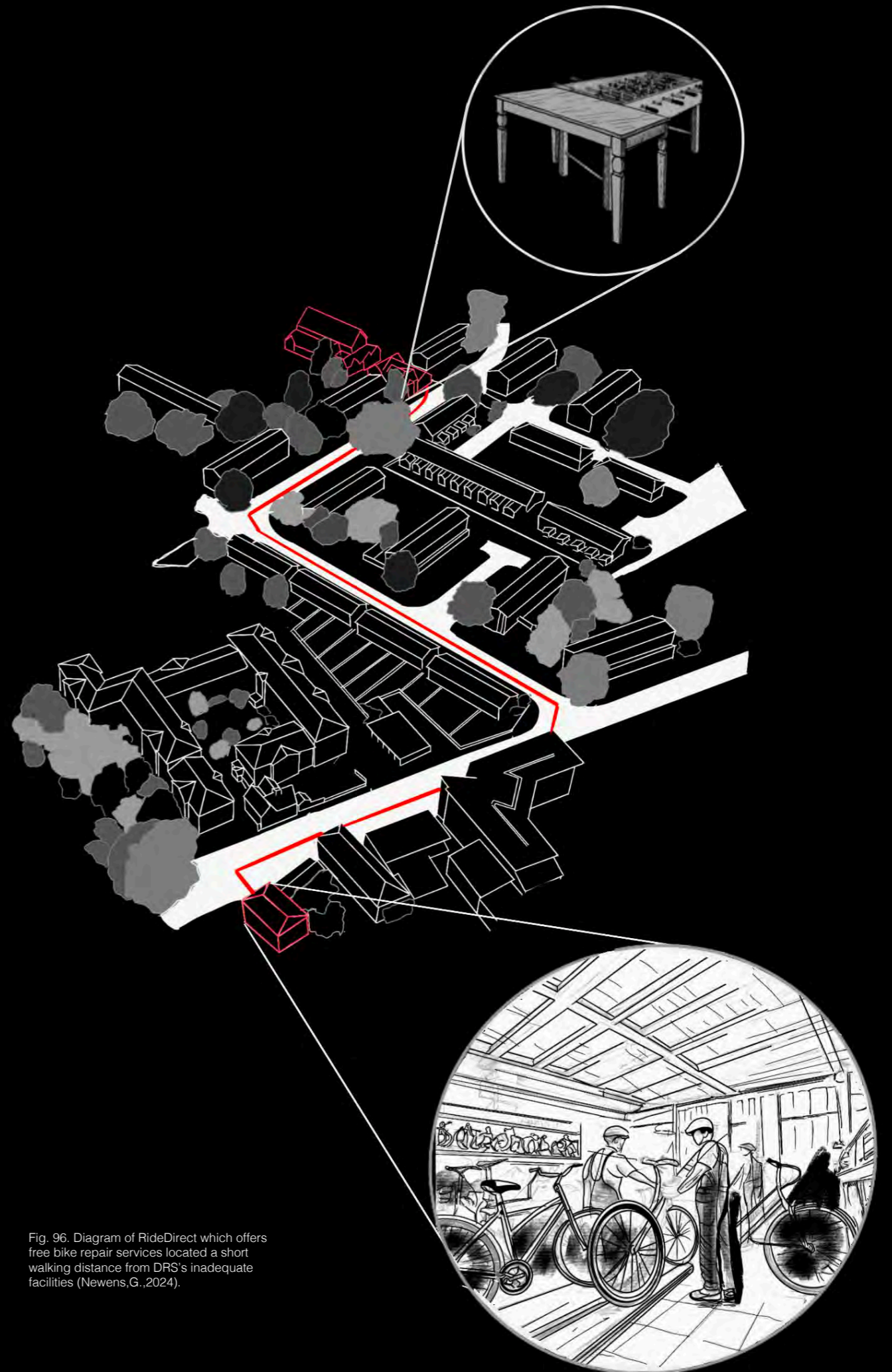


Fig. 96. Diagram of RideDirect which offers free bike repair services located a short walking distance from DRS's inadequate facilities (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 97. Collage interpretation of Derbyshire City Councils efforts to contain refugees and DRS through integration challenging government policies (Newens,G.,2024).

INTEGRATION CHALLENGES: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND SEGREGATION

Government strategies, aligned with Derby City Council policies, intentionally confine refugees, hindering integration. This confinement is amplified by Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS), unintentionally functioning as a communal space limiting refugees' interactions in wider society. The adaptability of DRS and the constraints of limited hotel accommodations (figure 98) pose challenges, hindering the expansion of social connections beyond confined spaces.

Gaim Kibreab's research underscores how government strategies, in line with Derby City Council's policies, confine refugees within spatially isolated 'containers', reinforcing detachment and preserving a collective national identity (Kibreab 2007). These policies aim to prevent, rather than facilitate, refugee integration into host societies, fostering exclusion. This segregation cultivates an 'us' versus 'them' mentality, further marginalizing refugees and obstructing integration. Volunteer B recounts a troubling instance where a government advisor's dismissive attitude towards displaced individuals aligns with Anthropologist Michel Agier's insights on how such attitudes hinder integration, fostering 'otherness,' and fracturing the community narrative (Agier 2011). Volunteer B's account exemplifies the dehumanizing impact of such policies: "She dismissed their humanity, treating them as if they had no place here, failing to recognize their needs and aspirations" (Appendix B).

The spatial limitations within accommodations like the Holiday Inn in Derby, where over 200 refugees have resided, severely restrict mobility, designating the refugee centre as their primary community space (Kibreab 2007). The impersonal nature of hotel rooms diminishes refugees' sense of belonging, highlighting the need for beautification to align the space with individual tastes and domestic cultures (Neumark 2013). This underscores the importance of DRS as a place for personalization, creating a sense of identity in the main space consumed by displaced groups in Derby.

Balancing support and broader engagement are critical for reshaping refugees' collective memory. Creating inclusive spaces that embrace diverse perspectives in design, achieving a personal sense of beautification for displaced individuals beyond these centres, nurtures a more resilient, integrated refugee community. Moving beyond these confines shifts their narrative, fostering belonging in the broader social fabric and transitioning their collective memory to shared experiences.



Fig. 98. Diagram of Derby Coach Station Holiday Inn where 200 +/- refugees reside for months due to government policy confined to their rooms (Newens,G.,2024).

THE ROLE OF PERSONALISATION IN DRS SPACES

The idea of personalisation and fostering a sense of belonging is often praised as a potent tool in building a strong sense of community during experiences of displacement. The decoration of walls at Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity with personal artworks, religious emblems, and motivational phrases is seen as a lively canvas intricately weaving together communal stories and diverse identities (figure 100).

Psychologist Dr Joti Brar-Josan praises the transformative impact of these personalized spaces, highlighting their role in giving refugees a sense of ownership. Brar-Josan emphasizes how these spaces ease the feeling of detachment and the constant search for a sense of belonging, creating a psychological and spatial connection (Brar-Josan 2015). They become sanctuaries where individuals can reclaim their sense of belonging, as Brar-Josan explains, "You lose the feeling that you belong to any particular group or a specific place, so you [are] always looking for a place, a group, or something to feel that you still belong to" (Brar-Josan 2015, p. 9).



Fig. 99. Diagram of volunteers and refugees interacting and expressing a sense of personalisation and belonging through artwork (Newens,G.,2024).

Furthermore, insights from Boccagni highlight that personalized spaces not only celebrate cultural diversity but also reflect individuals' efforts to personalize a place by infusing it with their own sense of identity and taste, including references to their biographies (Boccagni 2022). DRS Volunteer B emphasizes the significance of this ownership, stating "They've done it, and it is in a sense of ownership. They should take possession of the space because it is theirs" (Appendix B). This suggests that the community's contributions on the walls reflect their personal involvement and sense of belonging. This sentiment aligns with Neumark's research, which explains how each addition to the space celebrates beautification, aiming to improve the everyday living space by bringing it closer to one's tastes and domestic cultures (Neumark 2013).

However, a critical perspective arises when considering the unintended consequences of personalisation. While some refugees find comfort in the personal elements on walls, connecting to collective memory, the inclusion of religious symbols and cultural elements in celebrating diversity can unintentionally create tensions among different groups. Despite personalisation fostering unity and belonging, it requires careful handling of conflicts arising from diverse interpretations within the DRS community.

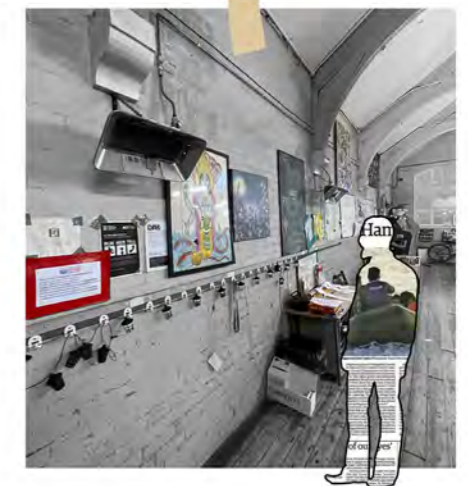
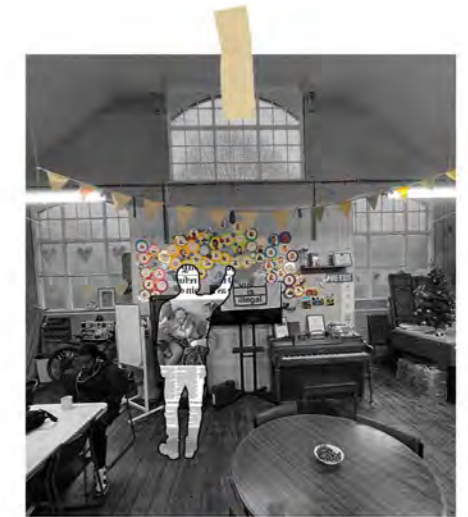


Fig. 100. Diagram of refugees pinning their artwork to DRS's walls to create a sense of beautification and community (Newens,G.,2024).

ACHIEVING COMMUNITY THROUGH RELIGIOUS INTEGRATION

Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS) faces both challenges and opportunities in encouraging religious integration within its mainly Muslim and Hindu demographic. The decorated walls at DRS, adorned with religious symbols and quotes, contribute to a visual tapestry of communal narratives and identities (figure 102). Insights from Miller (2005) highlight the empowering nature of personalized spaces, emphasizing the role of materiality in evoking the immaterial within religious practices.

Discussions on 'sensational form' challenge the conventional view of religion as solely a mental and ethical engagement, suggesting that religion includes performative and aesthetic commitments to sensory experiences (Meyer 2009). This aligns with the ongoing debate surrounding personalized walls and religious signage at DRS. Additionally, Miller's insights shed light on the potential challenges posed by DRS's location within a Church of England establishment, emphasizing inclusivity while unintentionally excluding diverse religious backgrounds (Miller 2005). This is echoed by Volunteer A when discussing conflicting beliefs, highlighting the limited choices individuals may face in this context: "Some people don't like it because it goes against their beliefs, but it's either sit in there or sit outside" (Appendix A).

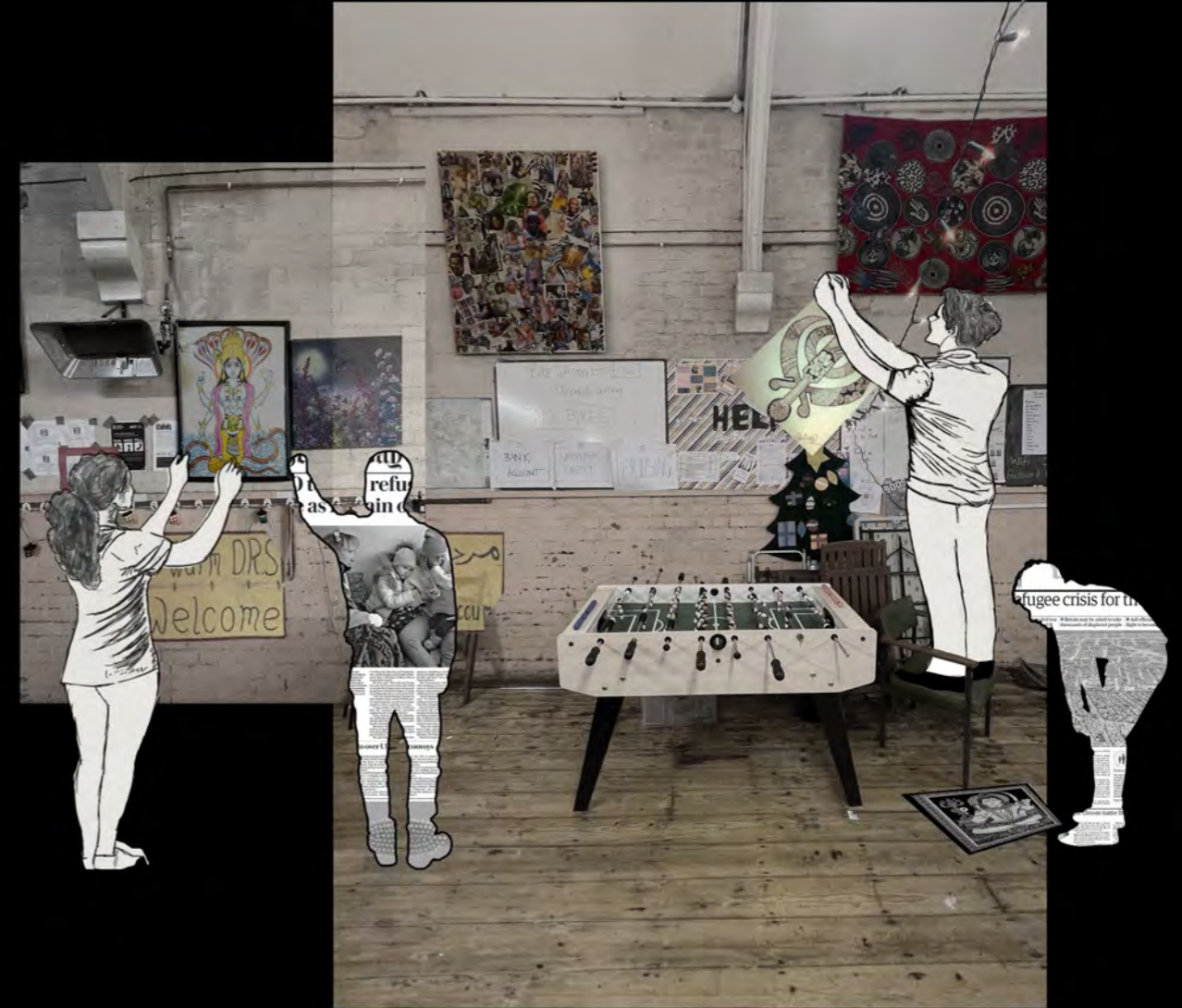


Fig. 102. Collage of volunteers and refugees pinning up contrasting religious emblems in order to achieve a sense of belonging (Newens, G., 2024).





Fig. 101. Sketch of a visitors hands when creating pieces of religious artwork to pin up in the community space promoting beautification (Newens, G., 2024).

Addressing the challenge of inclusivity calls for architectural adaptability beyond religious affiliations. Tailoring spaces to accommodate diverse backgrounds ensures an environment where everyone feels valued. This emphasis on architectural inclusivity promotes unity and representation.

Navigating this balance is crucial for DRS to authentically represent the diverse religious spectrum. It requires initiatives that create spaces fostering unity and inclusivity without marginalizing any specific group. Achieving this goal involves designing environments that resonate with various religious sensibilities while upholding a neutral ground, ensuring all individuals, irrespective of background, feel equally welcomed and valued.



Fig. 103. Photocollage showing DRS's community centre used for its intended purpose contrasting to its current use as a refugee centre (Newens,G.,2024).

 = 70 Refugees in Derby
  = 70 Refugees which DRS can accommodate

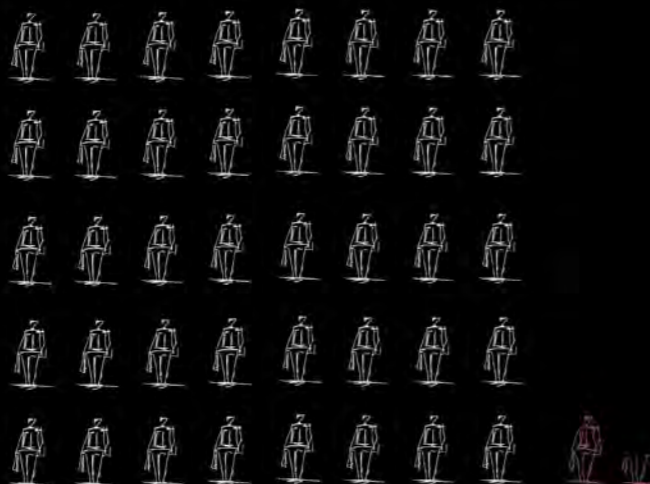


Fig. 104. Visual Graph highlighting the amount of refugees in Derby in comparison with the amount of refugees DRS can accommodate (Newens,G.,2024).

ADAPTABILITY AND SOCIETAL DYNAMICS OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

The reliance on outdated structures, exemplified by the 1960s brick “church community centre,” reflects a prevailing trend in accommodating displaced individuals. Reception centres, often housed in existing buildings, highlight the common practice of repurposing structures due to the absence of designs tailored to meet the specific needs of refugees (Strumse et al. 2016). This raises critical questions about the adaptability and appropriateness of pre-existing spaces for refugee use.

The heightened attention to the oversight in exclusively focusing on the architectural aspects of asylum accommodations sheds light on a significant societal problem. This oversight is a result of various issues, including a lack of research attention, an insufficient understanding of spatial requirements for marginalized groups, and tight financial constraints (Strumse et al. 2016). Consequently, spaces like the overflow area at St. Mary’s Church in Derbyshire’s refugee solidarity architecture may encounter challenges in effectively serving the intended purpose for refugee communities. Volunteer B’s observation, “I mean, as a space itself, the building is always going to be intended for the use of the church” (Appendix B), vividly underscores the difficulty of retrofitting structures originally designated for entirely different functions (figure 103).

The reluctance to modify existing spaces for refugee accommodation, often described as a “materialization of a fear of touching” (Zill et al. 2020, p. 4), stems from concerns about the transience of refugee needs and potential legislative alterations. The perception that modifying existing structures is a temporary solution restricts more permanent adaptations for refugees.

While utilizing existing architecture provides immediate shelter, it introduces integration challenges. Zill et al. (2020) emphasize the persistent lack of integration between architecturally accessible spaces for refugee centres and the wider society. Misconceptions or apprehensions about engaging with refugee communities further undermine the original intent of these spaces as inclusive hubs for communal interaction.

In essence, depending on existing architecture for refugee centres brings immediate relief but poses significant challenges due to design limitations, insufficient attention to refugee-specific architectural needs, and societal hesitations. Addressing these challenges necessitates comprehensive architectural considerations and societal shifts to fulfil these spaces’ intended purpose, fostering genuine integration and community engagement.

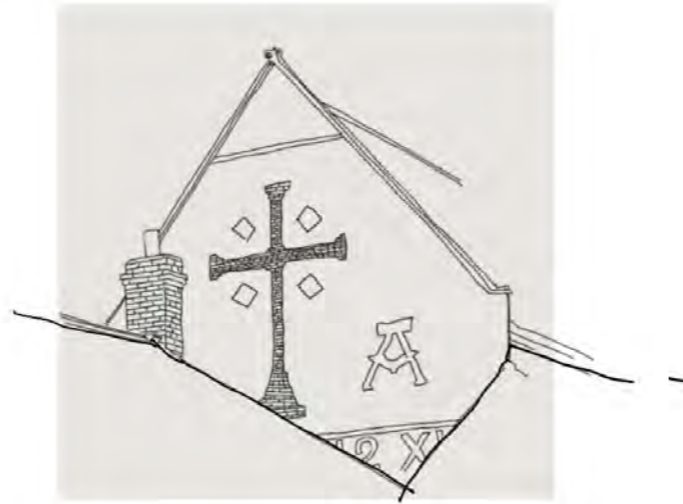


Fig. 105. Sketches showing British brick architecture details of the community centre which contrast to detail design of refugees cultures neglecting beautification (Newens,G.,2024).

NEGLECTED ARCHITECTURE: IMPACT ON DIGNITY AND WELL-BEING

The architectural state of Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS) starkly exposes a concerning neglect in care and maintenance, evoking a profound sense of disrespect for its refugee and asylum seeker occupants. Volunteer B's candid observation underscores the urgency for improvement, emphasizing the neglected environment's contribution to feelings of disrespect: "Unfortunately, if you do look up, you see all the cobwebs and stuff. I think that shows a bit of disrespect" (Appendix B). This sentiment aligns with research by Strumse et al. (2016), revealing prevalent issues such as moisture problems, deteriorating surfaces, and poor indoor climate within refugee centres across the United Kingdom and Europe. These structural challenges not only compromise the physical well-being of occupants but also symbolize societal neglect and a lack of consideration for those in need of communal spaces (Strumse et al. 2016).

The impact of architectural conditions extends beyond physical concerns to emotional well-being, directly linking to Zill et al.'s (2020) previous studies. The poorly maintained buildings within DRS, evident in drafty, run-down spaces, may instill a sense of detachment and neglect onto the occupants, influencing their emotional states and self-perception. This highlights the importance of previous explorations in the importance of beautifying the space to make it more personal and approachable for its users, allowing them to create memories and explore a sense of community (Grønseth and Thorshaug 2022) This directly highlights how poorly maintained environments hinder the creation of a welcoming, communal space where individuals can feel connected, impeding the formation of meaningful memories and community bonds.

In essence, the architectural condition of Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity, marked by its neglected state (figure 106), undermines the dignity of its refugee and asylum seeker users. The lack of care and maintenance not only impacts physical comfort but also perpetuates feelings of disrespect and neglect, hindering the creation of a space that fosters hope, community, and personal engagement—elements essential for individuals seeking refuge and support. Addressing these architectural shortcomings becomes imperative to provide a more dignified and welcoming environment for those who have already endured significant traumas.

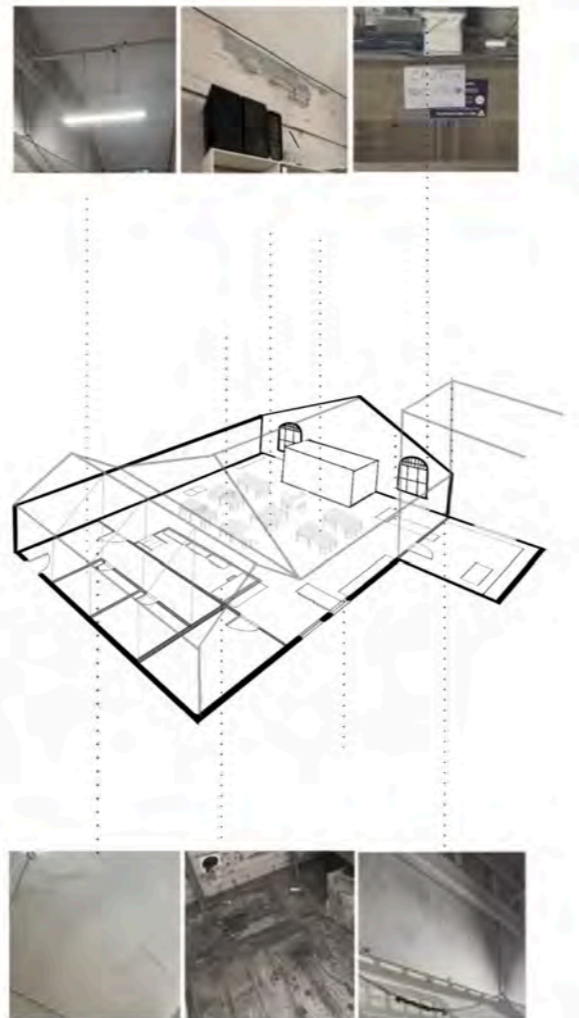


Fig. 106. Diagram showing imperfections and damages to the architecture, inflicting negative connotations (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 107. Sketch showing volunteers efforts to clean/repair the community centre in order to achieve a more inviting space (Newens,G.,2024).



Fig. 108. Photocollage of Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity as a space that challenged integration through its ability to create internal communities (Newens, G., 2024).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity (DRS) presents an exploration of community building, societal integration challenges, architectural adaptations, and the impact of neglected architecture on refugee well-being. Throughout this examination, it is evident that the effectiveness of community spaces is intricately connected to the balance between fostering unity and unintentionally sustaining isolation.

DRS's commitment to conversation spaces is admirable, fostering collective memory and connections among refugees. However, the integrated facilities, while promoting skill exchange, unintentionally hinder broader integration into Derby's communities. The singular communal space acts as a double-edged sword, nurturing community within its confines yet limiting interaction with the wider society. This challenge highlights the necessity for a more balanced and inclusive approach to design and utilization, ensuring DRS becomes a seamless bridge connecting refugees with internal community bonds and external societal integration.

Personalized spaces within DRS, decorated with artworks and religious symbols, contribute to a sense of belonging. While transformative, tensions arise from contrasting interpretations, requiring careful conflict resolution within the DRS community. Religious integration faces challenges, as insights on 'sensational form' and concerns about conflicting beliefs cause tension. Achieving inclusivity demands architectural adaptability beyond religious beliefs, ensuring environments resonate with various sensibilities. Balancing unity and representation are crucial for DRS to authentically represent the diverse religious spectrum of its spatial users, fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and welcomed.

Relying on existing structures for refugee centres, as seen in the outdated "church community centre," offers immediate relief but poses challenges in adapting spaces to meet specific refugee needs. This architectural approach, while providing quick shelter, requires a balance between preserving existing structures and implementing thoughtful adaptations to foster inclusive communal interaction. Contrarily, the neglected state of DRS's architecture undermines the dignity and well-being of its refugee users. Volunteer B's observations highlight the impact of a neglected environment on users' sense of disrespect, affecting physical comfort and emotional well-being. Addressing these architectural hindrances is crucial for creating a welcoming space that fosters hope, community, and personal engagement for individuals seeking refuge and support.

In navigating these challenges, it is imperative to recognize the need for inclusive community spaces beyond DRS's physical boundaries. A comprehensive approach to architectural adaptation, coupled with a societal shift in perception and refugee policies in the UK, is essential for reshaping refugees' collective memory and fostering a positive, integrated narrative within Derby's broader social fabric. Achieving genuine integration demands a delicate balance between nurturing displaced communities within specific spaces and allowing the opportunity to encompass the entirety of society.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH DRS VOLUNTEER A

Interviewer: So, would you mind giving a short introduction about yourself?

Volunteer A: Sure, my names *Volunteer A*, I'm 47 years of age, I've been volunteering now at DRS for just over two years now. I'm originally from Kurdistan, but have been a British UK citizen now for 15 years. I've worked with numerous refugee centres all over the east midlands as an interpreter and general English support tutor.

Interviewer: Amazing, so in comparison to other refugee centres you have worked at, what do you think to this space or building?

Volunteer A: The building. The building, yeah. The building, I think it works perfectly for the amount of people we have here now, that was a main issue with other places I volunteered at, but as a building, it could do with some TLC *laughs*. But, yeah. It's better than nothing. Can we help the people? Yeah, yeah, yeah. If we get a better place, or cheaper than Yeah. No, I think, I think it's great how we've got all the different stations to help people with specific needs.

Interviewer: And do you personally find the facilities here and the stations are used and positively contribute to the integration of refugees in society?

Volunteer A: I do, I do, especially the music place. We have a, uh, a storeroom. Uh, for instruments which tends to be popular, uh, kitchen. And there's some bike repair facilities, which do get used up but more in the summer you see.

We have calligraphy stations *points to stage* for writing which everyone benefits from even myself *laughs* if you need help with anything about the law. Yeah. Or help you about the law. For example, people who want a car. Or want to apply for universal credit. Yeah we have the facilities to help, and they could probably find better elsewhere, but nowhere will care as much as we do here. It rings strength through mutual support; you feel like you're helping when you can talk and get to know a person deeply.

Interviewer: Do you find throughout the year, you have more people coming in at certain times more than others and what impact does that have to the feeling of the space?

Volunteer A: Yes, when I first started here months two, or three or four you wouldn't find one place to sit, we would have to at times turn people away if we didn't have access to the church.

Interviewer: Wow that's a lot of people, where do they go?

Volunteer A: I would say at times around 200 people have been turned away, and you know we have no choice but to just say come back next week, and we just have to hope they do. It's better than nothing. Can't be helped. Sometimes the more people are here you can support in sharing our journeys, but not always.

Interviewer: And then when you go to the church, how easy is it to run classes or services going between buildings.

Volunteer A: We make it work, we have to separate ourselves and spread out. It's better than nothing. Can't be helped.

Interviewer: It's good how the activities and facilities become part of their journey. And with the church being involved, do you find it adds a different dimension to the sense of community?

Volunteer A: Absolutely. When we go to the church, it's a different atmosphere. Classes may have to adapt to the space, but it brings a sense of togetherness. We make it work. It's a shared space for everyone, regardless of background or status. It's better than nothing, and in the end, it helps us all feel connected.

Interviewer: That's incredible. Finally, looking ahead, how do you envision the future of this community space? Are there improvements or changes you'd like to see?

Volunteer A: Oh, definitely. As I mentioned, the building could use some tender loving care laughs. A better space would undoubtedly enhance what we can offer. More room, more facilities – it would be amazing. But one thing I hope never changes is the sense of care and support.

Interviewer: You previously talked about DRS being 2.5 miles away from Derby city centre. Does this faraway location affect how refugees feel about Derby?

Volunteer A: Yes, it does. The distance makes it hard for refugees to feel like they're a real part of Derby. It's like they're on the edge, not really in the middle of things.

Interviewer: So, being far away makes them feel a bit left out?

Volunteer A: Exactly. When you're not close to the busy part of the city, it's like you're not really part of it. It can make it tough to have good feelings and memories about Derby.

Interviewer: Do refugees say they feel a bit lost because of this?

Volunteer A: Yeah, many do. Some want to be more connected to the city. Being far away makes them feel like they're not fully part of Derby.

Interviewer: What could help with this?

Volunteer A: Bringing activities or support services closer to where people live would be great. Maybe working with local places so refugees can see more of Derby and have better memories.

Interviewer: So, it's not just about the centre of the city?

Volunteer A: Right. It's about feeling at home in all of Derby, not just in one part.

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW WITH DRS VOLUNTEER B

Interviewer: Do you find that people feel relaxed and safe in the centre?

Volunteer B: I do think so. They certainly say they do. People always say this is like home. Yeah. That's why now and again someone will try and steal something unknowingly because they see this as their home, and possessions here they see as theirs.

Interviewer: And what attributes does the community here have that allows users to feel safe and relaxed.

Volunteer B: Probably a sense and feeling of stability, were not trying to move them or get rid of them.. I mean... if I had it my way I'd accommodate every refugee in Derby.

Interviewer: What are the main causes for the community to feel that way, is it government policy or society making them feel that way?

Volunteer B: Exactly. Yes, the government in recent months have been trying to push the Rwanda Bill to relocate most refugees within this local area. And I've been in contact with this government official who's trying to push it further to get refugee and asylum seeker numbers down. But you've not needed them until this horrible woman and their policy. Yeah. It was all managed before, but it's unmanageable now. We've had, um, over 300 people since the beginning of October move here, and you're wanting to send them away again, it's not fair.

Interviewer: So does the Government official have any interaction with users of the centre, or is it a pick at random process.

Volunteer B: No, she doesn't have a clue, She dismissed their humanity, treating them as if they had no place here, failing to recognize their needs and aspirations, and why they're here in the first place. They wouldn't have gone through the trouble of getting here if they didn't have aspirations you know.

Interviewer: Definitely, and how do you keep record of who visits the centre and what there stories are?

Volunteer B: Um, um, So, cause we, we usually get about 100 people here every Thursday and every Saturday. And new people, now, could be Um, we signed them in. It's all very informal because it has to be. It's the nature of the beast.

But you know, so They'll sign in, tell me where they're from, and then depending where they're living and what needs they require whether it be clothing, language lessons, monetary requirements, you know.

Interviewer: And do you help any refugee in need?

Volunteer B: yes, depending on where they live. We take them into that room, they can get out of that horrible hotel room, get some clothes. Yeah. Um, which is why we have to be strict because we can only do new people because if we let everybody go in the back room, we can't let a hundred people in the back room otherwise all the clothes that have been donated to use will get taken (laughs).

I haven't got a hundred coats, I haven't got a hundred All the resources? Yeah. Anyway, so this is, this is since, that's the first, the third, fifth of October. Yep. This is all since then. (Shows attendance book) New people, new people, new people, new people, new people, new people, new people, new people. And all of them need, they've all got considerable needs. Yeah. Not just clothes, they might not have a phone, they might need, um Language support. Yeah, well, we do English classes. Yeah. But they're also, the difficulty is, that Again, these are people, in considerable need.

Unfortunately, I seem to have perfect recall of everyone who's had a bit. So I, no you're not new, no I'm new. And, we've recently got an influx of really nice trainers, uh, new trainers. And so all of a sudden, older refugees have been coming for months, suddenly turned up in flip flops. I've got no shoes, I've no shoes.

So, yeah. Reminds me of the YM. Oh, but you can't blame them. No. Yeah, it is. And it's all the government's fault.

There was no reason for it to happen. It's not our fault. It's deliberate government policy, we believe. Because doing this means that they can say to people in the UK, Uh, look, they're overrunning the place.

They're taking all our public services, the NHS, the schools, you know, and so they can make them into the bad people, the baddies.

Interviewer: Um, so, how do you think a sense of community is achieved within the space?

Volunteer B: Good morning! This is how a sense of community is achieved *hugs fellow volunteer*. This, like this. That's the most important thing.

Interviewer: So would you say general conversation and constant opportunity for getting to know others in the community.

Volunteer B: Yeah, definitely , we have so much to offer here, so many facilities and meeting points, it really offers up the floor for everyone to get to know everyone , everyone just Love, hugs, smiles, warmth, welcomes.

Interviewer: And with it being such an open and accessible space, do you feel that adds to that sense of community building.

Volunteer B: Yes, yes. Yeah, um, I think, I mean obviously colour and light, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And the fact that everything that is on the walls has been done by the community, because, you know, they've done it, and it is in a sense of ownership. They should take possession of the space because it is theirs, and the vibrance really adds to community building, with peoples stories and personalities being even more accessible to get to know, you know.

Interviewer: So it's it's like a form of customisation in a way. Yeah. As in their...

Volunteer B: print... yes that's exactly what it is.

Interviewer: How do you feel like the space and architecture could be improved structurally, or through design.

Volunteer B: It would be nice to have it clean. It would be nice to have it repainted. Because it doesn't feel great when you look up. Unfortunately, you don't look up, do you, in general life? But if you do look up, you see all the cobwebs and stuff.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think that shows a bit of disrespect, and they one hundred percent deserve better. So its cleaner. And spatially, this is the best we can get, but obviously I would like further funding to allow for better facilities that aren't made of second hand goods, but its part of the beats.

Interviewer: And would the government or derby council support with those spatial requirements and needs in any way or...

Volunteer B: I mean itd be great if the government invented a way in which spaces could be built solely for this purpose, instead of like, obviously this used to just be like part of the church, but it's purpose originally wasn't meant to be for this in a way, so it'd be great if, yeah, we could have a building that was built solely for this community, which didn't look like a 1960s brick buildings, *laughs*.

Interviewer: has the space changed due to the influx of people using it? So do you find that when you have so many people in it, the function of it is just,, completely different, and does that hinder peoples abilities to interact through classes, or do they become harder to manage?

Volunteer B: interesting. Well, that's the numbers have increased. We've had to adapt. You know, especially during the pandemic, you can imagine we only, because we had to be socially distant and everything, we only had a few. So I think as the numbers have increased, we've had to maximise the use of books, which is why the shelves have helped, because they, you know, there used to be lots of shelving everywhere, random tatty bits shelving everywhere, and now there isn't. And the stage used to be, again, full of junk. Um, but that's much better use of that space now. But you'd be surprised the busier we get, the more the community bond feels stronger, because you're forced to interact and get to know other people stories.

Interviewer: Sometimes because of the vast numbers here you overflow into the church, don't you find that has an impact of the community in any way.

Volunteer B: Well, we do have some people refuse because it can be cold and dark, and for religious reasonings obviously we can't force anybody to go but, yeah. So music happens in the church quote often, so that's definitely a good draw.

Interviewer: Do you think there's a way in which if this space was closer to the city, society could, integrate more into the DRS community, maybe promote the voluntary work?

Volunteer B: To be honest, its worked better for us here because our old spot, we used to be on the, uh, uh, the fruit market down on Checkers Road. The warehouse was dark, and, and, no, no lights, no heating. It was stuffed with rat worms. Rat poo everywhere. It was pretty horrible. And we didn't get any asylum seeker volunteers. But here we get more obviously like yourself. We have found some of the community find it hard to get here because we are so far away from the city, however in order to get a unit this size, we had to relocate. But ultimately, I do think if we were nearer the city it would make the place more attractive to both potential volunteers and asylum seekers.

