# Appendix 21: Flood Evaluation

## Participant focus group analysis and report

Two focus groups were held with members of Flood’s community cast, whose role it was to animate the floating city and amplify the moments of emotion and drama in Part Two: Abundance, Part Three: To The Sea, and Part Four: New World. Each group contained a variety of community cast members who had worked on different episodes.

24 community cast members participated across both groups, which were facilitated by a Research Fellow from the University of Hull.

## Participant profile

* All of the community cast members were Hull2017 volunteers.
* Most said they had limited experience of acting or performing on stage, other than during school or college.
* A few people said they had experience of performing with an amateur dramatic society or community theatre, and a couple of people mentioned they’d provided technical support to local theatre groups.
* Everyone clearly had a wider interest in theatre.

## Getting involved

As Hull2017 volunteers, the community cast members had heard about the opportunity to be part of the production through the Better Impacts system.

For many people Flood represented an opportunity to be part of something. Some said they had wanted to do something outside of their comfort zone or to improve their confidence. It was mentioned that this was the first performance opportunity of the year for Hull2017 volunteers, which appealed to those with an interest in acting.

Other motivations for getting involved included:

* Seeing Part Two or Part Three (for those involved in Part Four)
* It looked fun
* To overcome motion sickness
* Involvement of Mark and Emma from Middle Child
* Slung Low’s reputation
* The storyline

It should be noted that several participants mentioned that they’d been unaware that they were attending an audition for Flood, because it had been advertised as a workshop.

“It's interesting because right back to when you were interviewed because you're asked to choose what sort of things you want to be involved in, but there's also you choose your favourite three and I have to admit cast community was not on my list whatsoever…I spoke to a few people and they were telling me about it and I thought, it sounds really interesting...I think what actually happened was, they hadn’t got the 40 they needed, so they just threw it out wider. It was very unexpected for me because I kind of just went with it really.”

## Experience of being in Flood

All the community cast members were extremely positive about their experience of being in Flood; everyone said it had met or exceeded their expectations. Even the adverse weather conditions – both during rehearsals and the live performances – didn’t dampen their enthusiasm.

The overwhelming emotion they felt was pride. Some said they felt nervous just before the live shows, although this subsided after each performance.

“As the nights went on I just got more and more confident and really started to throw myself into it, you know, cos to start with, I was like, don’t get it wrong, don’t get it wrong, I was very rigid, I had to make sure I did everything as it was written, and then by the end of it I was, well what if I throw myself into it a little bit more!”

The training for Flood was well-received and it appeared to be pitched at the right level. Some were surprised at what they were asked to do on set – like driving a boat – despite having no previous experience, but they were closely instructed by the production team. Indeed, it was reported that community cast members had been encouraged to try things outside of their comfort zone throughout the project.

The production team appeared to understand how far they could push people.

“Don’t you think they also knew how far they could push each person, not just as a whole, but they knew if they were asking too much of you, or if you could be pushed a little bit further, they just knew.”

Most participants felt they’d had adequate rehearsal time; some would have liked a bit longer, but they acknowledged the importance of not over-rehearsing. They also recognised that Slung Low had built a certain amount of flexibility into the production to accommodate any mistakes from the cast.

Expectations were already high, but the level of responsibility given to the community cast, and the all-round professionalism of the production, were far beyond what most people were expecting.

“Now that was one of the things I never expected that we’d be in costume and the things so when they said, you’ve got a costume fitting I was like, have we?! I thought we’d do it in our normal clothes.”

For most community cast members, the highlight of the project was the camaraderie of being on set – *“you were all in there and supporting each other and you're all starting from the same stage”.* Everyone expressed disappointment that the experience had come to an end, but quite a few of them said they’d kept in touch with one another. They also relished the opportunity to do something different.

One of the only disappointments was that community cast members in Part Two and Part Four weren’t able to watch the episodes they performed in. Some said they had also been slightly disappointed that the community cast – or a local choir - weren’t given the opportunity to sing the music which accompanied the live performances.

“There was just one thing that one or two people made a comment on, and I have to say I thought was a disappointment, was that we weren’t asked to sing the music for Holy Island, which was beautiful, really nice music, and there’s plenty of choirs in Hull that could have done that, but it was done by a choir in Sheffield. It was just a production thing and it’s nothing major, but it would have been nice to have done that as well.”

## Challenges

The main difficulty for community cast members was working in cold, wet and windy conditions, both during rehearsals and the live performances, which created significant physical challenges.

“To have so many layers on, you couldn't actually bend very easily, so getting into that boat, especially that wooden one, the very first time I’d seen everyone else just stepping into boats, and I thought, right, I’ll just step in, and my foot went didn’t it, and it slid, it’s quite a long way down into the keel of the boat, and my foot slipped, and I went all the way in and luckily I was so padded with all these layers but after that I was always just a little bit more careful, so I was sitting on the edge and sliding in. It was always wet and always slippery.”

Even then, most people said they eventually acclimatised and some felt it had helped to forge bonds between the cast members.

“I think that's why we bonded so much. It's because we were in this extreme absolutely drenched cold, wet wind and you just looked after each other.”

There was also a risk of motion sickness, but the Slung Low team had advised all the community cast members to drink Coca Cola, which seemed to do the trick.

“The other thing we got to do was watch the film for part three, which was the one that was on television, and I thought that was really nice that we were invited back to see that.”

## Audience reaction

There was some discussion about how Flood was received by audiences. There was a feeling that the four episodes didn’t work as standalone pieces, and Parts Two, Three and Four would have benefited from a short recap of the story so far.

“I really expected when I started the program that they did some sort of very quick recap on what happened in part two and then led into that.”

There was also some frustration about the limited availability of Part Three on BBC, which restricted the potential audience.

Having said that they felt the narrative itself was interesting, engaging, and encouraged debate about the issues it presented.

Some felt the audience experience of Parts Two and Four had been hampered by the poor weather conditions and poor lighting, although some felt that certain audience members hadn’t dressed for the cold.

**“**The night that my guests came and basically all of them except my husband and son went home after Part Two because they were too cold and they did not stay and watch Part Four with me in it, and I haven’t quite forgiven them yet! And I’d said to them, dress really, really, really warm, and they hadn’t.**”**

It was suggested that encouraging audience members to move around might have prevented them from feeling so cold.

## Working with Slung Low

All the community cast members were very complimentary about the Slung Low production team, who made them valued and integral to the project. One person described them as *“very egalitarian”.* They were treated the same as the professional cast, and it was mentioned on several occasions that they felt like they were part of a family.

“It was like at the end of that first week, it might have been the first night, when he said over the radio, everyone back to the flat for pizza and drinks, and I didn’t think he meant us, and I started walking home when he goes, ‘No I mean you as well’.”

“Some of my friends were in the Lillian Bolloca piece at the Guildhall, and they did not get this experience at all, in fact the comment from one or two that I spoke to was, the only people that talked to us were the band, none of the professional actors. What we got was a real family.”

Being in Flood demanded a significant commitment from the community cast members, which some found challenging.

“Fitting it in around all my kids and my family and school and all that kind of stuff. As I said I've got a brilliant husband because I just said, "That's it, I'm doing it, deal with it, get on with it." I think that was my biggest challenge that I had to overcome was finding babysitters and stuff like that.”

Despite this, Slung Low were understanding and supportive if the volunteers were forced to miss rehearsals.

“I had some fight choreography for a weekend but I couldn't make it and you know when you’re thinking, that’s it, they’ll kick me out, but they were just so accommodating, they bent around us, there was never a problem, they’d just reorganise.”

They were also attentive and accommodating of the needs and physical limitations of the cast.

“At the time I had an injury as well, so they positioned us so we were both seated, and that was done on purpose because we didn’t think we could stand for that long.”

With Slung Low’s professionalism and support, community cast members said they’d felt empowered to try new things and push themselves out of their comfort zone.

“If he turned around to me and told me to jump in the water and I said, ‘do you think I may need a lifejacket, I can’t swim’, and he’d said, ‘you’re alright there’ll be somebody there to catch you’, I think I might just have done it.”

There was also a clear sense that community cast members really trusted the production team; despite the obvious perils of working on set (the fire and explosions for example) they reported feeling completely safe with the production team.

“The detention centre would go up in flames and the wind would really take the flames, but you just thought, no I’m fine, because you knew they wouldn’t do it if they thought it wasn’t safe.”

There was also very positive feedback about the Slung Low Producer, Alan Lane, who they felt had acted in a friendly, supportive and professional manner. A number of people commented that they were impressed by his patience and problem-solving skills on set. He was also very supportive and often offered words of encouragement to the community cast members.

“He was so positive, he told you constantly that you were doing well, you got lots of positives from him, you’re doing brilliantly, I know it’s hard, it looks good from here etc”

The professional cast members also made the community cast feel welcome.

“The thing was not knowing who everybody was when we got there, you could not tell who were the professionals and who were volunteers and I was quite shocked when, oh you’re not on the volunteers? You’re one of the professionals! You know, they were so lovely and ordinary, nobody said, ‘Oh I'm above you’ or ‘I’ve done this all my life’.”

## Impacts

Participants said they’d learnt or developed a number of practical skills from being in Flood, such as how to drive a boat and how to throw accurately, whilst a number of people said it had helped them to develop their teamworking skills.

The opportunity to work with the same group of people on a regular basis also enabled them to develop friendships and expand their social networks.

“I’ve made friends with one of the cast, we’ve been messaging each other.”

“I think because we were such a small group, we sort of just I don't know just became best friends didn't we? All of us.”

Many of the community cast members said that Flood had given them the opportunity to learn how to take artistic cues and direction, and having an earpiece was a new experience for most.

One person said it had reaffirmed their desire to pursue a career in the arts, whilst quite a few said they would keep an eye out for other participatory theatre opportunities, and for future Slung Low productions.

“From that experience I've grown to have patience for acting and want to do more and want to set my actual foot on the acting field.”

“I do tell you one thing though, if I can and if Slung Low do something at the next city of culture and I can find the pennies in my pocket, get a ticket, I will be going and see it, definitely.”

Although being in Flood didn’t challenge their understanding of theatre, they felt the experience had been enlightening in terms of understanding how theatre is produced. They were particularly impressed by how quickly the production team were able to transform the set during the omnibus performance.

“I don’t think it was challenging but it was interesting to see during the rehearsals because they were rehearsing different bits at different times so it was disjointed. It felt disjointed to start with and then all of a sudden it all just sort of came together”

They were also impressed by the professionalism of the paid actors, even when things went wrong during the live performances.

“We had one night when things went really badly and the mics failed on two of the main actors, and watching how they just did it, they just carried on and then adapted what they were doing and we were all like, ooooh.”

A number of people said that the Victoria Dock setting had challenged their perception of where theatre could be produced.

“For me it didn't challenge the form, but it did challenge where you could actually do it, cos I never imagined you could actually do it in a dock. That was quite something.”

## Summary

Being in Flood was an overwhelmingly positive experience for all the community cast members. They felt valued and trusted by the Slung Low team and this was reciprocated by the cast themselves, who felt invested in the project and determined for it to succeed.

The experience undoubtedly pushed community cast members outside their comfort zone, although the Slung Low team appeared to understand each person’s limitations and none of them reported feeling uncomfortable with anything they were asked to do. The training was well-received and appeared to be pitched at the right level.

The main benefits of working on Flood were:

* Feeling included / part of a family;
* Learning how to work as a team;
* Learning how to take direction;
* New experiences – being pushed outside of their comfort zone;
* Increased confidence;
* Learning about outdoor theatre;
* Feeling valued (by Slung Low, other cast members and audiences);
* A renewed interest in theatre and Slung Low’s work.

The only negative aspects of the experience were:

* Music performed by a Sheffield choir rather than a local ensemble;
* Not being able to watch their live performance and limited availability of Part Three: To The Sea;
* The four episodes weren’t standalone;
* The conditions and lack of spotlighting made it a challenging audience experience;
* The end of the experience.

## Focus Group 1: Transcript

It has happened to me before, get all the way through and then it's not actually recorded and so, I'm going to record it twice.

Okay. It's a bit of a funny one, this one, because I guess you all know each other really well.

Part Four know each other and Part Two know each other.

Yeah.[crosstalk 00:00:30]

Four people from Part Two and four people from Part Four.

I didn't even know that theirs was different. Was it not possible to be in both if you wanted to.

No.

Continuity.

Yeah.[crosstalk 00:00:40]

We all died in the first one.

[inaudible 00:00:49]

Okay.[crosstalk 00:00:52]

You know I didn't know that I have learnt something new today. So basically we do an icebreaker for people who don’t know each other looks like.

Hi.

Hi.

Hello.[crosstalk 00:01:12]

Couples win.

How much yeah cake coffee?

Please help yourself.

Tea?

What we were just about to do is to go around and introduce our selves so if you can say your name and answer this quick questions so prior to taking part in the Flood community cast. Do you have any prior experience of performing for[inaudible 00:01:44]I will start off. My name is Catherine and my most pirate say significant experience as a performer was when I was 12 and I was the lead in the school play and is something that you know my mother is still very proud of and probably my greatest achievement today so who would like to go next?

I'll go first. My name is Debbie I was in Flood part two and prior to that apart from school. I didn't do anything performing-wise, not on this level at all

My name is Sue I was in Flood two and prior to this I performed in an acapella band for a number of years and I also trained as a drama therapist.

My name is also Sue and prior to Flood I hadn’t really done any performing at all since school or college.

My name is Josh I was in part four. Prior to that no real real experience apart from age 5 I played Joseph in the school play.

My name is Cath and I was in part four and I was leading the school play when I was little from school. I not really done anything since then apart from being in class where I was singing on stage but with other people so thank you.

My name is Caroline I was in Flood part four. I've really just performed as a musician as pianist and sing choirs but I’ve not done any acting before.

Ian part four, done loads of stuff since I was a kid, both as a techie and on the stage.

Joe, part four, done loads in youth theatre, community theatre, T.V, film extra work.

Wow! Those are professionals.

No. That is just a bit.

I'm Garry I was in part two. The only performance I’ve ever done is dancing really, I’ve done some in public.

Hi welcome help yourselves with tea and coffee. Grab a seat. Okay so my first question is, and especially as most of us haven’t taken part very often, what made you want to involved in as a community cast. What made you sign up?

I think we[inaudible 00:04:19]do something out of the comfort zone, I’m a non-swimmer. [inaudible 00:04:28]

Oh! Wow!

As, actually, quite a few people were.

Wow! Is there anyone here that was afraid of water.

[inaudible 00:04:42]

Why? Why on earth would you sign up for this?

Well you just said it's a challenge it's something out of the comfort zone why not. You only get this one opportunity to be to do stuff like this, so…

Are you still afraid of water?

Yeah, but I’d do it again!

Because of the cast, they were just superb to us.

Yeah.[crosstalk 00:05:06]

I think it was the bonding of the community itself that made you feel that you can do anything.

Everybody helped everybody, it was like a big family really wasn’t it.

I did it because I wanted to get involved in performance as part of the year, and also the fact that it was something that was a longer project, cos most of the other opportunities were short things and I like the idea of a longer project where you could to work with a team of people over a long period of time.

I've also wanted to be in a big cast for something, i loved doing school plays. I think as you get a bit older it gets knocked out of you a bit, so when the chance came up I thought I really want to do this, I really want to be in this so that's why it's fantastic.

I sort of Part Two and once I’d seen Part Two and I got the opportunity on Four I thought, I can’t pass this up, it looked fun, it looked part of a group, I thought I’ve got to do this, so I just signed up. But again, comfort zone, I didn’t know what I was signing up for.

Not really.

I signed up because I think I was offered Two but I couldn’t because I was busy doing other things, so I thought, yeah I’ll do Part Four, and I'm glad I did because I was much more involved.

I signed up from a masterclass, I didn’t realise it was an audition.

Yeah.

I didn't know it was an audition.

[crosstalk 00:06:41]

We didn't realize it was audition either[crosstalk 00:06:42]

That's like half of part four!

There was 75 places, they said it was a workshop for the Flood, and you turned up and there was 75 people in the room. It literally was. It was a workshop but you’re suddenly thinking, this is an interview, cos there was only like 18 places or somethng.

They named down in different colors right now.

I know people who said they did know it was an audition and they didn’t get given the part, so it seems like maybe you were less nervous.

I did and I just [crosstalk 00:07:20]

It takes a particular person to throw a bomb at the front of a car.

My secret violence inside.

That was Part Four, Part Two we just turned up, there was no auditioning, we just did it.

It was on the water.

Yeah.

That was very straight on to the water.

Straight into the boats yeah.

Straight on getting a boat.

Who can drive a boat? Right you are driving one.

Somethings in land and then first on water[inaudible 00:08:05]

[crosstalk 00:08:12]That one time we did the battle.

Then we hid under the trees.

Yeah.

When it rained yeah.

[inaudible 00:08:20]because it wasn't actually finished.

Do you the people who came a bit late want to grab some coffee. Tea [inaudible 00:08:30]you have to have because I ordered this especially for you. It is actually delicious and we'll get we fired them because they are the nicest. Even though they're [inaudible 00:08:41]free and so what were your hopes an expectations when you signed up. What did you…?

I just didn't want to drown, anything else was a bonus.

Just thought it will be a bit fun.

I was in the middle of into the light at that point, so I was in the middle of a big rehearsal, and I really loved the fact that I was doing something really intense so I was looking for something similar and that popped up and it was like, "Oh yeah!" It could be the same and it was the same but so different. Yes it was intense but it was so different from it.

I think I was just looking for this new experience. I don't think I'd ever do it again.

You wouldn't do it again?

I think I would now but at the time I thought, this will be the first and the last time I ever do anything like this. It’d be a shame not to grasp it really, but having the experience, I’d gladly do it again.

I just wanted it to be special but I had another hope as well, I have really bad motion sickness because I have problems with my inner ear, and I was really quite nervous about being on boats and moving pontoons and so I was hoping that I would not be travel sick! And I wasn’t so that was good.

Hi welcome take tea or coffee.

[inaudible 00:10:09][crosstalk 00:10:11]I think. Well we have to change positions[crosstalk 00:10:34]

Any other hopes and expectations? We’re just talking about what did you hope to[ achieve, what did you expect?

just get more confidence, and I think I got it from it.

I think it was about being part of something as well. To be part of something because everybody who I’d spoken to had been in something prior to that, and they’d really loved being in something, so I wanted to take the opportunity to be in something. If it became available. It's available I've got to try it. He said like workshop I think[crosstalk 00:11:24]go see this workshop and od something huge yeah[inaudible 00:11:35][crosstalk 00:11:45]It was a necessity to [crosstalk 00:11:59] Yeah go see this workshop but I didn’t expect that!

The thing that I didn’t expect was for us all to be so close afterwards, I don’t know whether it was just being isolated on the water for so long, just getting cold and wet.

We’re from different backgrounds and everything.

It was an unexpected bonus, I didn’t go into it to do that, but it was an unexpected bonus.

I think for us as well we had the bits where, we were suddenly then divided into three islands, and then you were suddenly thrown into a situation of getting to know your island really, really well, because your island was a community, and we spent so long just sitting around our islands just waiting.

Yes.

They know our islands [crosstalk 00:12:20]

Chatting.

Yes.[crosstalk 00:12:25]

The reason I was interested, is because I’m a bit of a groupie at Middle Child, I wouldn’t say I follow them around everywhere but I’ve followed them around in Edinburgh and I was in their pantomime about 5 years ago, which was brilliant, and the fact that Emma and Mark were in it attracted my attention, I’d also heard of Slung Low, and god they really came up to expectations, it was the most brilliant production.

Yeah.

Their reputation preceded them in a positive way.

I've never heard of them.

Some of the other people in Part Two had heard of them and they were saying he was doing it because he’d heard of them and they were so good.

I think the story as well.

Yes but we didn’t really know that at the start.

The part two that we did was the first volunteer opportunity to perform in the year because it came up in sort of February time and I remember thinking, oh brilliant, I didn’t know that was going it happen, and dived in on it as quick as I could, because I didn’t know how many of those opportunities would be available.

There were lots of opportunities after that.

Because one of the things on this selection sheets was mass performance cast so I ticked that as my top priority. Because when they did this London opening ceremony for the games, I’m watching all those people, all those ordinary people just being in it, a tiny little part of being in a huge mass performance cast and I thought I really want to do that.

That was the main reason I wanted to be a volunteer.

The thing that came home to me was that York do this with their mystery plays every so often, and while we were doing that I thought, god, I wish we were doing this every five years or something like that, I know the expenses, it was just something that really needs to come back to Hull and bond the community together, because I know it does in York with the mystery plays, lots of people from different backgrounds getting involved with it, it takes over.

It's really, really interesting you mentioned confidence did anyone else have any personal sort of expectations or hopes or..

I think I've been completely unaware of what it was going to entail, because I watched Part Two and I think our experience of part four was so different to what I was expecting because I was probably expecting it to be a bit like part two again.

Yeah.

It was totally.

Completely different and I sort of watched part two and seen the residents earlier and it was like, you saw Part Three, I was just expecting more of the same, and it just wasn’t.

Yes because part two and three you were much more static weren’t you, you were like a background chorus, whereas we were actually doing things and…

We were running on stage and giving people things and saying, run one of you, run!

And nobody fell in.

Yes.

Nobody not once.

We got-[crosstalk 00:15:35]

Oh! Yeah.

We were supposed to be like a [inaudible 00:15:46]that was based on the [inaudible 00:15:49]

We did have choreographed moves that we had to learn, so we were supposed to be a movement chorus as well as singers.

They kind of made it up and it changed from night to night! They’d say, Oh! It might be better if you did that let's try that.

[inaudible 00:16:02]

The professional cast member on our island had a tendency to improvise!

She was-

Every night it was different!

She would pretend to pass whisky round the group.

Or a joint.

Or joints.

Yeah.

She entertained every night.

She did.

At the end of the day it’s just the joy of chucking yourself in at the deep end, into the unknown, knowing that you’ll benefit from it.

Yeah.

You'll benefit from it.

You can you imagine if you told somebody that you're going to stand in Victoria Dock in in freezing weather and get rained on, by the Humber, it’s not even clean water, you wouldn’t think we’d enjoy it!

On the last night we were all like, we’d do it again, we’ve done it twice but we’ll do it again!

Did it live up to your expectations?

It exceeded.

Yes definitely.

Far more.

Because it wasn't just being in Flood I mean I don’t know about part two but there were also all sorts of other things that they tried with us that I’m not sure if they even used, so they actually filmed us all doing little movements on the dock, and we were thinking they might play some of them against the screens, so we got filmed in close up.

Some of them were on the screens.

I saw one that was walking past when they were rehearsing when the islands rescued-

I never thought I’d be comfortable with someone filming me like that.

We did have a very cold night didn’t we.

Just learning how to do something and not being embarrassed about doing it, not being nervous, and thinking, I don’t care if I’m making an idiot of myself, it doesn’t actually matter, everyone’s doing it.

Some of the gear that we had on, you think, never in a million years, when you’re out in public.

No that was one of the things I never expected that we’d be in costume and the things so when they said, you’ve got a costume fitting I was like, have we?! I thought we’d do it in our normal clothes.

I just thought it would be in a normal class where[crosstalk 00:18:52]

The other thing we got to do was watch the film for part three, which was the one that was on television, and I thought that was really nice that we were invited back to see that.

Yeah[crosstalk 00:19:12]

I wanted to watch it they filmed it and that was amazing.[crosstalk 00:19:19]

You do it just for a second.

Then of course you fell about laughing [crosstalk 00:19:29]

Yeah he was a brilliant producer because he didn't ever get grumpy. He didn't ever even when something was a total, total F up.

Yeah.

He just said "Oh! So what."

Well he didn't say that saw what [crosstalk 00:19:47]

Slightly sub-optimal!

He said if you don’t sort that out you wont get any apple crumble!

It felt like he was part of the family it was one big family [crosstalk 00:20:06]

There was no them and us.

Little boy.

Yeah.

They were the friendliest bunch of actors I've ever been with.

The thing was not knowing who everybody was when we got there, you could not tell who were the professionals and who were volunteers and I was quite shocked when, oh you’re not on the volunteers? You’re one of the professionals! You know, they were so lovely and ordinary, nobody said, ‘Oh I'm above you’ or ‘I’ve done this all my life’

I'm an act-or

[crosstalk 00:20:38]

You’re stood around chatting with them. Normal ordinary conversations.

Yeah.

The tone was set from the very first email you got, it was very different to any other email from city of culture, it was very friendly, very professional but very friendly, and you thought, ooh, wow, and right from the very first rehearsal they said you're not extras you're community casts, don’t ever call yourselves extras. You’re a non-speaking cast.

Yes.

If there’s anything to take from this, some of my friends were in the Lillian Bolloca piece at the Guildhall, and they did not get this experience at all, in fact the comment from one or two that I spoke to was, the only people that talked to us were the band, none of the professional actors. What we got was a real family.

It was like at the end of that first week, it might have been the first night, when he said over the radio, everyone back to the flat for pizza and drinks, and I didn’t think he meant us, and I started walking home when he goes, "No I mean you as well." And then you know they just like it's good and it was that unnecessary little things that we didn’t miss out on.

Yeah.

Yeah and providing the lunches when they brought out those curries and everything and all the food that we had.

They really were very egalitarian.

That was their reputation, when I looked up on their website and start working with them I remember thinking, oh this is how they are, this is how they work, and they totally stuck to it, they’ve got an ethic I think and they worked to it.

But it wasn’t just an ethic it was actually there.

The actors were saying to me, oh Slung Low are great, we work with them repeatedly because it’s so good.

What did you all like best about your experience of being involved in Flood?

Can’t pick, seriously can’t pick.

What a question!

Well I just think unless you worked with Slung Low again I don’t think you’d find another company like that would you, John’s just said about the other group.

I’ve actually done community cast on a few other things and it's been great, but not like that.

Not like that.

I know it makes for me it's the thing I will remember the most and I’ve done so much fantastic, interesting stuff but it’s the thing that will stand out for me. It’s the whole experience, but equally when I’ve been asked to pick one experience on the City of Culture stuff that you’ve done, it was driving a boat on fire, because it’s something I would never normally have done, and I think it was those different experiences you got with them whatever your one was and your little role, it was something that you would never ever have done.

We were totally trusting in them weren't we.

We did.

They gave us the options for life jackets but nope we don't want the life jackets, we’ll all drown.

Will be fine. Will be fine.[crosstalk 00:23:51]

Drown. Firing up in our boats.[inaudible 00:23:56][crosstalk 00:23:59]

Just drag to John and Caroline will be fine[crosstalk 00:24:02]Were still just gobbling the flames over your head-[crosstalk 00:24:12]

[inaudible 00:24:11]and now do gown.

But you trusted them yeah.[crosstalk 00:24:16]

But you’d built up that relationship by the time you got to that point, so you just went "Okay then."

I never once felt unsafe.

No.

No I didn't.

No.

The detention centre would go up in flames and the wind would really take the flames, but you just thought, no I’m fine, because you knew they wouldn’t do it if they thought it wasn’t safe.

Yes.[inaudible 00:24:35][crosstalk 00:24:34]

Again like every night. With two, it was build the gates[crosstalk 00:24:44][inaudible 00:24:52]and it's a couple of [crosstalk 00:24:57]but when the wind was a bit high in that and the flames were coming closer. We were all hearing what Alan was saying on our headphones and he was always so concerned, come on Nadia, make sure you get right in the corner, it didn't matter who you were because they cared. If he turned around to me and told me to jump in the water and I said, "do you think I may need a lifejacket, I can’t swim” and he’d said, “you’re alright there’ll be somebody there to catch you”, I think I might just have done it.

Shirley was even more scared than me, she couldn’t even go on the xx, and they got her actually on the last night, driving the boat out!

By the end of it they’re putting four or five of you into one this really small inflatable boats, I mean if it's four or five of you, you’re jumping in and out quickly by the end of the fortnight.

It was actually seven for us and we did nearly sink the boat.

It was filled with water[crosstalk 00:26:29]are we going to make it.

Yes it’ll be fine.

There was one night where it must have rained a lot it was very wet because I knelt forward to put the fire out in the fire boat and I was like, oh….

Yes.

Yeah I think that was the same night when you were there[inaudible 00:26:54]and it rained [inaudible 00:26:58][crosstalk 00:26:59]where you just knew that the boats weren't going to sink you know so [inaudible 00:27:05]it cuts off[inaudible 00:27:08]you're sitting there waiting for your turn to move and you're just bailing all the time. I mean I couldn't myself before without in a boat bailing out.

It was normal.[crosstalk 00:27:20]

I couldn’t imagine myself before that sitting in a boat bailing it out, it becomes normal!

That was failing.

[inaudible 00:27:41]You'll be fine you'll be fine. I don't know it's funny[inaudible 00:27:54]

Was there anything you didn't like?

I don’t think there was anything.

There was one night where it was really, really cold, I think that was one night in September, a rehearsal, there was me and Sean not wearing enough clothes because it had been a sunny day. Once you get out on the water and it gets dark, it gets really really cold, my teeth were chattering.

One performance was really, really cold, and it was raining.

The boats were just blowing.

My gloves got wet through, and I was trying to tie up boats and things, and my hands were starting to go and that wasn’t very nice.

Did anyone get ill from the cold?

No.

No.

We have many layers on! Even our costumes were warm.

You were supposed to drink Coca Cola when you got out the water.

They told us that the water coming down on you is the dock, and it was blowing straight in our faces, you know you were swallowing mouthfuls.

Yeah.

I had a little bit of dock belly and I thought because I was thinking I'm not drinking all that sugar a day for anybody, I’m not doing it, and then I had one little bit of Coke I was alright.

They had had the water tested so they knew it wasn’t lethal!

We did a little bit of research.

Because I think at the time we did it. They weren't telling us anything about it they just said wash your hands and we thought, whats the point, we’re covered in it.

Very funny. You have to do a couple of [crosstalk 00:30:37]Lisa been a politician [inaudible 00:30:46]trying to do this really serious thing and not laugh.

Oh I did.

[inaudible 00:30:57]Jumping on right to the next question, which is, what were the physical challenges of being with all-

The cold[crosstalk 00:31:02]

I've never been in such extreme conditions for such a long time and I think the first night they turned the water off

Yeah.

Because it's not like [inaudible 00:31:26] said.

[inaudible 00:31:29].

Amazing at what you are and we [inaudible 00:31:32] lots of rehearsals and they kept saying, "We're going to have [inaudible 00:31:35] to just do it because so they said, "Bring all the[inaudible 00:31:39] and they turned the rain on and we're all just hot."

It was a few days before the [inaudible 00:31:47] they drunk for a few days and they [inaudible 00:31:50].

I was ill prepared that night, I tried a civil testify, I tried different outbids and different layers every time and there was always something that could yeah, yeah.

After the first night everybody had to change what they had to they had because it just wasn’t enough.

Yes it wasn't enough.

You never, as where you were [inaudible 00:32:09].

Even waterproof clothes and boots, after about 3 or 4 nights, you just couldn’t get them up to….

You had to take them home every night and get them all dry again.

The secretary of our school dragged mine out one day. It was in the middle of the night and it was really, really wet and I'd washed all my clothes and I went straight to work. I had them all wet and I'm like,"[inaudible 00:32:32] you've got heat in your room." And the secretary [inaudible 00:32:34]my clothes [inaudible 00:32:35] straight there [inaudible 00:32:37].

[inaudible 00:32:39] the pond.

Yeah, mine smelt of fire. What about the fire thing.

Yeah

Well you did have [inaudible 00:32:47] as well.

I think if you talk about physical challenges as well, to have so many layers on, you couldn't actually bend very easily, so getting into that boat, especially that wooden one, the very first time I’d seen everyone else just stepping into boats, and I thought, right, I’ll just step in, and my foot went didn’t it, and it slid, it’s quite a long way down into the keel of the boat, and my foot slipped, and I went all the way in and luckily I was so padded with all these layers but after that I was always just a little bit more careful, so I was sitting on the edge and sliding in. It was always wet and always slippery.

You eventually learnt that you had to climb over the barrier and you had to have quite long legs, because if you had long legs it was easier. So physically there were challenges but you got used to it in the end

It felt quite unstable that boat. You never went over though.

You have to go over the top of the... so I mean yes physically it was a long journey but you got used to it.

You do. Yeah.

[inaudible 00:33:42] you're using and how to get in and out of the [inaudible 00:33:47].

That was quite [inaudible 00:33:47] wasn't it?

It was out of state but it [inaudible 00:33:51] because it never went over. I mean we were like stood up in it looking down and ...

Yeah it didn't but one night I tried to get out of it because you were desperately saying," I've got to get off, I've got to get off. So I tried to jump out and I literally fell in the water. That was funny, because they got in your needed to be back to do your next fit. And I thought, "Oh shit I better get out of this."

And I tried to jump out and nearly fell in the bloody water.

Yeah.

Absolutely. Found out a [inaudible 00:34:19].

Because each boat had its own little idiosyncrasies.

Yeah [inaudible 00:34:23].

But there's [inaudible 00:34:25].

Yeah.

Presumably you had to have a level of physical fitness?

No not really.

I’m sure if anyone had said they were disabled or in a wheelchair or anything they would have got them on there.

We had one lady who had difficulties with her leg, so between us we made a little team around her and helped her get on and off the boat.

When it came to the first position we were in, we were standing there for quite a while, they said, right Pauline, do you want to sit down, and at the time I had an injury as well, so they positioned us so we were both seated, and that was done on purpose because we didn’t think we could stand for that long.

Yeah.

I think that's partly why, I think that's why we bonded so much. It's because we were in this extreme absolutely drenched cold, wet wind and you just looked after each other.

Yeah.

We didn’t want to exclude her because of her leg, she was part of the team.

Because I've been a bit worried about that because I have problems with my joints, so I was a bit worried about the in and out of boats and wandering around on stage, and at one point there was a bit more kneeling down and in the end I ended up in a boat, kneeling up in a boat, throwing tennis balls wrapped in duct tape that were meant to be grenades, and they were sort of, one night I said, I’m sorry I don’t think I can kneel down and they said fine, don’t kneel down then, and in the end I was wearing knee pads and they were quite happy for me to be sort of wearing knee pads and getting myself all sorted out.

I mean on your island got pushed about a bit didn't you? So you know that was physical enough wasn't it, you know when you're sacked.

When they're sucked and you're all falling over and you're being dragged around.

Well, there are stage ways of doing it.

You were taught techniques.

We were taught the techniques. So, it looked like somebody was having their hat pulled out and dragged along by the hat but we weren't.

Yeah we have to look around.

Yes.

Look around the[inaudible 00:36:34].

Yeah.

When we did the audition part and they offered me this particular part, I thought yeah, it’s my acting skills, I don’t think it was, I think it was basically because I had stout legs and could carry half a tonne of water.

[inaudible 00:36:50] say what your part was.

I was the guy in the deep sea diver suit, I got drowned.

Something about the hotel toilet man. [inaudible 00:37:08] plugging me in [inaudible 00:37:10] was executed.

[inaudible 00:37:12] you don't have to do it at all. Did you want the [inaudible 00:37:14].

They half-filled the water and its like [inaudible 00:37:19] to make it. That was my physical thing. But also, getting changed, we had these dry suits and everything, and then having to get the dry suits on was a pain, there was a tiny little hook, all that was daunting to start with, we did it five times in the rehearsal and I thought, I can’t do this, I’m absolutely bushed, I was so tired, but when you do it once, it was so much easier.

Didn’t you find that you didn’t want to let them down?

Exactly.

We were all very invested.

Yes.

Were there any other challenges not necessarily physical?

Well some of us had to learn to throw tennis balls accurately.

I mean I got sworn at a few times for getting a bit too close to the waterspout, so he got me in the face.

We had throwing lessons at the field, we got better!

Obviously as well learning to work as a team. especially for us because we're all supposed to be in unison.

And learning to take direction.

Yeah

Alan did tell us we were rubbish at throwing.

In the nicest possible way I was rubbish.

When we first started it we were given the movements and then you [inaudible 00:39:15] and then you go tattoo. We don't only go, "No, no wait until I say." [inaudible 00:39:21]when I say I go that's when you do it. Not until I say go, it took us a while to get used to that. To know when you actually do the move and so we would all do the move at the same time.

I think, having done bits of theatre before, the challenge of working with an earpiece in, it was very difficult and at times very disorientating, particularly for some of the bits I did where you are having to communicate to somebody on land and then you're communicating with Alan through the ear piece and like when lighting the fire boat you need to talk to the person who is lighting the boats, so you daren’t take one of your earpieces out cos Alan would kill you but you’d have to take it out quickly so you could talk to the person lighting the boat, and then quickly putting it back in again, so that took a lot of getting used to working with an earpiece.

If you box change channel and you box [inaudible 00:40:12].

You've got all the new [inaudible 00:40:12].

My bad if I [inaudible 00:40:15]so many layers on [crosstalk 00:40:17].

Especially if you're on the stage, because I [inaudible 00:40:21] all the time basically. You can really [crosstalk 00:40:24].

I used to go hunt in the tents and do that.

Yes if you lost the sounds you were lost really.

Yeah because I love whenever you bend it over.

[inaudible 00:40:33] adrenaline yeah [inaudible 00:40:35]

Oh yeah.[crosstalk 00:40:37]

You get to see their faces like [crosstalk 00:40:41].

Serious panic.

Yeah. The goat of static yeah.

You could see where you lost and your eyes were like, "Oh!"

Is she saying something to me, I can’t hear them!

We could see what we were looking across, you could see when people would lost it because they would go ... and then you just say .. and they would follow you and looking at you like [crosstalk 00:41:03].

The flimlights that we have. We checked them as we were going onto the set were working, and it was quite a long way through, it was almost at the end, and the set was splitting apart and you were there trying to get [inaudible 00:41:25] into your pocket so you just knew that it was going to be very wet down outside because you lost some water in and then you get to it and you think, I really desperately want to check [inaudible 00:41:35][crosstalk 00:41:36] and you just have to hold off the hook and pray but your hands were quite numb by that time holding the button down.

We haven't talked to you about the first time on the performance. We didn't have them

Yeah we never practiced with them.

Yes and they decided that for the battle scene we all needed to shine, the attacking force had to shine torches at the audience.

At the audience.

These torches had two settings. So if you pressed it once you had a beam, but if you pressed it again it was a strobe, and people were pressing them to make sure it works, but that turned it to strobe!

He said it would kill us.

They did change the torches by the end.

But the thing is, they gave you the torches if you’re in one of the boats, you've got one driver and [inaudible 00:42:33]and you've got to have [inaudible 00:42:38].[crosstalk 00:42:40] and I've got one stiffed in my pocket and I couldn't to it. It's torture. [inaudible 00:42:50] the throwing hand.

They weren’t like physical challenges but they were challenges, cos you were like, how do I solve this problem.

And not to be late for the cue or whatever.

Then he would say I want more grenades and I had already thrown them all so the next night you think, well instead of taking two I’ll take four, you know so you've got them in all your pockets [inaudible 00:43:20]. I want more grenades. I physically cannot carry anymore with me. Yeah.

Do you know anyone who dropped out who didn't enjoy the experience.

No one dropped out.

They never came to any [inaudible 00:43:35] she was given a part ...

And then never.

But never.

No one was dropped out who started.

After the first very [inaudible 00:43:46][crosstalk 00:43:47]

Someone dropped between two the first time and two the second time.

For the proper rehearsal I think there was a couple of people who hadn’t come, because they’d told them what was going to happen, and fair dos, cos we didn't know till we turned up, how physically challenging it was.

Actually some people were saying I can’t do all of the performances because of other commitments and they were saying that’s fine just come and do the ones you can, cos we don’t want you to miss out, and that was lovely.

Yeah.

Because we don't need to miss out.

[inaudible 00:44:27] and they were both fine,

I had some fight choreography for a weekend but I couldn't make it and you know when you’re thinking, that’s it, they’ll kick me out, but they were just so accommodating, they bent around us, there was never a problem, they’d just reorganise.

That's it.

Yes.

If you email them, they’d be like, don’t worry, you were just spread out a little but on [inaudible 00:44:57] .

What was the main emotion that you felt during your time in Flood?

Pride, I think, proud to be in it.

Not something you do every day is it.

There was the bonding thing, and that made you feel good to be part of it.

Excited as well, every time we were in the school hall, I remember I’d had a headache all day and I really didn’t feel good at all but as soon as I turned up and started talking to everybody and I just felt infinitely better.

I was like, this is the highlight of my day!

Mine was, why was we chosen! That was a big thought at the beginning, how did we, out of those 75 people…?

Did you ever ask?

No, no and I think we should have.

I'm still convinced it's me legs.

I still wouldn't don't [inaudible 00:45:59]and I felt [inaudible 00:46:02] in the room and I thought [inaudible 00:46:09] and then I would kept wondering why? What were they actually looking at that point, I don’t know, and we still don’t know.

I mean I was a bit offended when he said you look like a bunch of thugs!

Yes.

I think we were picked for our looks then

[inaudible 00:46:35] and if you put a [inaudible 00:46:39].

You really would not want to run into some of them, on the docks!

We were all angelic.

Everything else was peaceful.

It was yeah. We were like can we be [inaudible 00:46:55].

We get hammers and flaming torches, come on!

[inaudible 00:47:00].

It made me remember something actually, it wasn’t disappointment because everything was fantastic, but there was just one thing that one or two people made a comment on, and I have to say I thought was a disappointment, was that we weren’t asked to sing the music for Holy Island, which was beautiful, really nice music, and there’s plenty of choirs in Hull that could have done that, but it was done by a choir in Sheffield. It was just a production thing and it’s nothing major, but it would have been nice to have done that as well.

Especially as I thought they’d picked Holy Island on the basis of who had previous singing experience. To make it worse he did say you'll be singing it tomorrow night and the next night he goes, "Now we've decided you’re not going to sing it cos it’ll be distracting for the audience”.

It would have nice to be [inaudible 00:47:56]

Yes.

We weren’t disappointed.

[inaudible 00:48:01].[crosstalk 00:48:02] I looked at it and it was such. That's not here I won't get back for that [crosstalk 00:48:16]

How did you feel during the live performance?

Nervous for starters very, very nervous.

As the nights went on I just got more and more confident and really started to throw myself into it, you know, cos to start with, I was like, don’t get it wrong, don’t get it wrong, I was very rigid, I had to make sure I did everything as it was written, and then by the end of it I was, well what if I throw myself into it a little bit more! So yeah, you grew into it, more confidence.

Don't you think that was partly them instilling it.

Very much, very much. Yeah. Because I mean it was, sometimes the comments were, go on Ash, get into them!

And then did do more.

Yeah we can't see that.

As Gloriana went into the distance right at the very, very end.[crosstalk 00:49:18] and then we got that comment from Allan at the end that you just can’t repeat, and he gave us a different one every night, and you can't say what they were because not for the recording, but they were always so funny, you could have taken it as really really rude, but actually we all just laughed, it meant we’d done it really brilliantly.

Usually he said fucking awesome. [crosstalk 00:49:40] or variants on that but the "f" word was always there.

Or, you glorious bastards!

You took as meaning that you've just thought it was great.

I've never heard anybody but it was never offensive.

I’ve never heard anyone swear so much in a totally non-offensive way!

I think on the very first rehearsal, it was almost like he was a naughty schoolboy that had been told, these are volunteers, please watch your language.

When he realized we just laughed at him when he did that.[crosstalk 00:50:29]

He then let loose.

But that was part of what created the atmosphere wasn't it, that we were all in it together and it was just fun?

And the other thing he was so positive, he told you constantly that you were doing well, you got lots of positives from him, you’re doing brilliantly, I know its hard, it looks good from here etc

He meant it, it wasn't one of those things when you smile have a nice day and they don't mean it. He kept saying, I know you’re suffering, I know you’re suffering.

If something did go wrong he’d just say, that’s live theatre for you, and it was fine, it didn’t matter.

That was one of the things I enjoyed the most I think, although at the time is was quite scary, it was the night where it all went wrong, we had one night when things went really badly and the mics failed on two of the main actors, and watching how they just did it, they just carried on and then adapted what they were doing and we were all like, ooooh.

We had the broken boat at the back of them.

And they ran to each other to speak into each others mics, and then they ran in between and they tried to fix the mics, and they just carried on and they were just as calm as anything, and then right at the end where they have to go from the wilderness and drive to the house for the big ending, the boat failed, and I remember we're all like, oh god, and he was just like, drop the motor on, drop the motor. Just drop the motor on, drop it in, drop the motor on and off you go. There you go. We were like, oooh. The cast was just behind there.

He’s got a phenomenal brain hasn’t he to be able to control all that.

Yes, he just problem solved everything didn’t he, just really fast.

The boats were a bit dicey weren't they? Do you remember when they brought that boat over for me, because they'd arrived at the island and as she walked past me she went, I cant remember what she told me but it had live wires hanging out and she said, "don't touch the wires, they've just given them a temporary repair” and so you know [crosstalk 00:52:46]

That was like [inaudible 00:52:46] and you just have [inaudible 00:52:49]

You still had [inaudible 00:52:51] and it worked but they just go with it.

That was one of the interesting things, apart from the joy of being in it, was absolutely fascinating to see how a theatre company works. The cast house that they’d got, and they pull of these sheets up, it was really interesting to see how it was all blocked out and planned and that was so fascinating

How did you all feel at the end?

It's a bit sad because it all ended. I just wanted to do it again. There’s part of me that really wants to do it again. It’s like the bit at the end of Finding Nemo with all the fish and they’re like, what now?

How do you top this, you mean.

we were quite lucky at the start of the year, we weren’t too sad when it finished because we knew we were going to be doing it again.

You did it for a week didn't you? [crosstalk 00:54:30]

We did it for a week and then immediately we did it the next week as part of the double bill, so we did it for a fortnight and I think we were all getting a little bit tired by the end.

We did a week in April.[crosstalk 00:54:42]

I could do with a little break now but I don't act usually want to not do it again [crosstalk 00:54:48].

It's a sense of relief after two weeks cos you get your life back, but then it was, I’m not going to die again!

I wanted to do it again and do it better, cos every night I wanted to throw my grenade better and get the timings right and get coordinated with Hannah who was in the other boat, so every night I wanted to do it better, and I had one night where it was like, wow.

This has been an experience for us hasn’t it, talking about it with people who were there, cos my family are sick of me…did I ever tell you I was in Flood?!

[inaudible 00:55:22] but you can really talk about it when you’re with other Flood members?

[inaudible 00:55:34] how were they [inaudible 00:55:37] and you know the arrow [inaudible 00:55:40] an you get rained on and drenched [crosstalk 00:55:47].

See my naivety on the original brief it said, half basin, so I was thinking there was only going to be a little bit of water, so it was a different to what I thought.

At least you knew it was a dock and not a canal.

I think we've kind of covered this already but one of the specific questions was how did Slung Low and the wider team support you?

[inaudible 00:56:44] just none of the family. [crosstalk 00:56:43]

[inaudible 00:56:46] the, you know giving you a jacket. You know those really [crosstalk 00:56:50]

And communication. They communicated with us.

That's another question, how did they communicate?

Really, really, really well. They emailed you and then if you had any questions you could email them and they would immediately email back. They would answer any question that you have straight away and they communicated through the Facebook page for those of us that wanted to do things that way.

Sally was immense.

Yes Sally was lovely.

What I liked was you'd be there and you’d be worrying about something because you either didn’t hear it or you didn’t have a piece of equipment or whatever, and as everybody is rushing around you looked a bit like, god, don’t know what I’m doing, but they saw it, and they came over to you, and they were like, are you alright, what do you need.

They were watching us.

What they were doing to sort you out and make sure you're alright you know and I jus felt so included.

We’d be coming off in our boats and Allan was down there waiting for the first boat.

Would come off of the direction and [inaudible 00:58:05].

I mean literally take [inaudible 00:58:09]. If you needed a hand getting off your boat [inaudible 00:58:18] [crosstalk 00:58:21]. If you needed a hand getting off your boat then Alan would be there to give you a hand.

[inaudible 00:58:24] down the gym.

They were helping you get on the [inaudible 00:58:29].

Physically I don’t know how they did it, they must have been so exhausted.

You don't have to do it, do you have to keep being so friendly and so enthusiastic and so energetic with us when they've got all these on their minds [inaudible 00:58:49] [crosstalk 00:58:53].

I think they never made whatever worry you had they never made you feel as if you were trouble. In the first part we had a part where they have to take some of us off to the wilderness and I was one of the ones picked to go onto the wilderness on the first night. When I got on that bit there’s fires there, and I didn’t know where I was going, I was quite disorientated, and then I was sort off perched down, well at the time I couldn't squat down. I was sort of in a corner and I was really worried because there wasn't a barrier there and I didn’t feel safe. I came off and I just quietly mentioned to Sally, I didn’t make a fuss, I said, if I have to do it can you give me some tips, but I said," I was quite worried." And she said, " oh well being worried about it and looking disorientated is good." So I thought, okay, it is what you would look like, and the next night, as we got there, they all did it, they picked so many people, I want that one, that one and that one to go, and I wasn’t one of them, and I just knew that was because of my comment, but they didn’t make a big fuss of it, they didn’t say, Sue and Shirley don’t want to do that because they’re, you know, they remembered, then they actually said, if you get picked to go on and you don’t want to, just shake your head or look away, and they’ll pick someone else.

Tonight we're taking seven.

That was my defining moment of wow!

Exactly mot so much help.

It has nothing to do with the cast but I was doing some training at the disability trust building which is a bit further up the dock and they recognized me, which was nice, and couldn't stop singing the praises of Sally because she was doing drama classes with the residents, I don’t know how many she’d done, she’d done quite a few with the team, and they were absolutely ecstatic with the effort and time that Sally had put into making them feel part of the community project.

When they went to the school and took them through all the moves that we did.

I'll make sure that gets back to ...

I have emailed them back on that one, she was delighted to hear, but it was worth knowing, I thought they made a big effort to get to know the locals.

Yeah.

And because of that Victoria dock and that area looked after them, so there were attempts to rock the set, and vandals came and things, but people were watching all the time, Alan would get a phone call from someone saying, there’s someone on your set, and the residents actually became part of the team as well.

Yeah.

Because they really engaged them and they gave them tickets and they told them exactly what was going on, they felt part of it.

They gave them headsets and battery packs as well, because there were some people were sat on that balcony watching it, but I turns out they’d been given them by the team.

One night some scallies came on bikes and they were riding round causing problems, and instead of saying get security to go and get them, he said go get them, bring them up here and give them headsets, so they brought them into the set and they watched it.

In the afternoon [inaudible 01:02:59] there was always going to a one direction [inaudible 01:03:08]. Talk to them so like you know...

[inaudible 01:03:14]. Yeah.

That's what to do and the [inaudible 01:03:23] [01:03:23]

The little boy that went passed every night with his mama that went home from school was the executive director.

Do you feel you received sufficient training?

I wasn't supposed to be driving the boat so the night that Hannah couldn’t come to rehearsal, [inaudible 01:04:08]. In my defense it was [inaudible 01:04:15] but apart from that [inaudible 01:04:23] and he said but we will never ask you to [inaudible 01:04:32] At the very first workshop he said there’ll be people with flamethrowers and you might get to do this and you might get to do that, and he said, but we’ll never ask you to do anything that we haven’t shown you how to do, and that was true.

They gave little practices in the boats, and after the rehearsals they’d say, anybody who wants to have a go in a boat, stay around for a few minutes and we’ll take you out, and they did.

They did?

[inaudible 01:04:44] and just practice it over and over again until we [inaudible 01:04:51] and they just take the boat go sit over there and practice it til you’re happy, and they said, do you need a hand, we said no, we just need to practice it to get more confident.

Don’t you think they also knew how far they could push each person, not just as a whole, but they knew if they were asking too much of you, or if you could be pushed a little bit further, they just knew.

Do you feel like you had adequate rehearsal time?

Oh yes.

I think that we could have done the boat a few more times, because it was tricky on our side anyway [inaudible 01:05:41]. I never did work out which waterspout went first, so I feel like we could have done more on that.

[inaudible 01:05:52].

As for us, for Part Two, I think the second time round we only had two rehearsals, I couldn’t make one of them but they said it didn’t matter, and by the second night, we just turned up and they didn’t even say anything, we just turned up and got on with it.

[inaudible 01:06:23] strangely. [crosstalk 01:06:27]

The thing is however long you rehearse something, you would always like another rehearsal and you always say that.

And then before the first [inaudible 01:06:39]

But you did because we were all copying you.

You always naturally want more rehearsal time because you want it to be, actually when it came to that first performance we were actually fine.

From his point of view, controlled improvisation, the spontaneity of that, can look much better than something which is over rehearsed.

There's a lot of flexibility built in so it worked.

I was fascinated by the whole process because the battle, we started at the end, then the week after we started at the beginning, and then we’d maybe do the middle, and we never did the whole thing until he was like, right, we’re going to do it all, and that was like, oh that’s how it goes!

The only time we did it from start to finish was on the field wasn’t it.

We just kept doing isolated scenes [inaudible 01:07:53] [crosstalk 01:07:55].

We'd read the script about Ask being drowned in the diving suit, but the first we rehearsed from me with that [inaudible 01:08:11] and watching that and they'd already rehearsed several times by then. Watching that, I mean, I knew it was you in there and I knew you weren’t really being drowned, but I was like, wow.

[inaudible 01:08:33] a few times.

It was good. I'd love to see it, I’ve never seen it!

One thing I think we would have all liked, cos we’ve seen Part One, we’ve seen Two and they’ve seen Four, we’ve never seen it all the way through.

The didn’t film it did they.

Yeah it was on that [inaudible 01:09:12] island for quite a long time.

It is a little bit

Have you seen that.

I kept it [crosstalk 01:09:23]

There are video clips on the new work [inaudible 01:09:31]

[inaudible 01:09:34].

The survivors guide.

Yes it's called that.

A few video clips on the new bit, Flood Survivors Guide.

In fact we're on the background [crosstalk 01:09:43]

[inaudible 01:09:46] it's a little bit more.

What was the training that was provided? [crosstalk 01:09:55]

They were called rehearsals.

We had a fight director.

We had a carrier

A photographer [inaudible 01:10:17]

The fight director did the studio, didn't he?

Yes. We had a choreographer for our island to show us how to move around and look busy, how to inhabit the space.

We had a choreographer rehearsal in the park to taught us the moves, then they Youtube video’d it and sent it to us, so that every move had a name, and whenever the name was said we all had to do the move together, so it was supposed to be like a dance.

It sucks now he can't get any of them out of our heads.

Once we got on set [inaudible 01:10:58] and then get it on [inaudible 01:11:03]

They adapted it a bit in the second part our moves were change quite a bit.

Can you think of any ways that the trainings or the rehearsals could have been improved?

No.

No.

I mean it was really windy and wet but there’s not much you can do about that. The only issues were all issues were beyond their control, when it was really windy or really cold, or when a boat broke, and you had to hang around until the boat was represented.

What was the strength of it being site specific of it being outside at Victoria Dock. Obviously we've talked about it being cold, but what were the strengths and weaknesses from a production point of view?

[inaudible 01:12:02] .

The weather was the obvious thing, other than that it was no different from being indoors, it was on water, so that was a little bit different.

They made use of the dark.

And the hydrasheild.

The dock created an amphitheatre effect.

I think from my perspective the weather didn’t make any difference [inaudible 01:12:30] [crosstalk 01:12:31] for the audience it was very challenging I think the audience experience on a bad night probably wasn’t as good.

That was the only negative thing I ever heard.

I think some of the problems with the audience is that they didn’t dress for the weather. When you look at this some of them…

Somebody was [inaudible 01:13:02] [crosstalk 01:13:02].

Was that you couldn't control what was going to happen so there was really loud helicopter one night wasn’t there, that's really distracting because it sounds like it should be part of this and it isn’t.

The night when that boat went down the Humber, that was beautiful.

Then there was the night of the full moon as well. [crosstalk 01:13:42].

The night that my guests came and basically all of them except husbands and son went home after Part Two because they were too cold and they did not stay and watch Part our with me in it and I haven’t quite forgiven them yet! And I’d said to them, dress really, really, really warm, and they hadn’t.

I think it was standing still as well though.

If you can move around a bit it makes such a big difference.

The feedback I got from audiences was, apart from the fact they enjoyed it, there was the cold issue, the actual volunteers in uniform were so helpful to them and that came across very much.

The other thing I heard was audience members saying they couldn’t see some of it, because a lot of ours wasn’t as lit up as yours, and so a lot of people said you couldn’t see it because it was quite dark.

I think particularly when Part Two was first put on it was further back but when it was moved forward it was much better.

I know they had difficulty with some of the set sinking at some point, you know for Part Two.

Before we started the house was supposed to be underwater.

I was always amazed with the technical achievement, there were cables everywhere, there was no water pouring over it and nothing ever went wrong really.

No one got electrocuted [crosstalk 01:15:49].

No but I mean they could have done, there were a lot of risks.

One night someone’s coat got melted on a fire, and that was the only thing that ever happened.

To what extent did Flood challenge your understand of theatre?

Totally, you just think theatre in a theatre.

I don't think it challenged my idea of theatre because I’ve seen things like Passion plays and things, I think I knew things like that happened, it was just fantastic to be allowed to be part of one really.

I thought that sort of theatre was more for theatre professionals, not amateur theatre.

That is Slung Low’s speciality though, doing outdoor theatre and thing that nobody else does.

[inaudible 01:16:41] [crosstalk 01:16:44]

I think there was so much technology involved, there were so many things that could have gone wrong but it was all part of it and she said, it was like live and if things went wrong it didn’t matter.

I haven't realized it all had to be relayed through headphones, it hadn’t occurred to me, because I’d not seen it before, that the cast were going to be so far away that audience couldn't hear them so that was new for me. Theatre coming through a different medium almost [inaudible 01:17:19]

The fact that you were talked through every move, you don’t have to remember everything, you will be cued into everything.

You didn't need to remember.

[inaudible 01:17:30] .

It’s like Pavarotti singing and then the lead director must tells him, just move from there, to there, to there, cos they don’t rehearse the performance with these people, they just tell them where to go. They sing, they know the words but they don’t know where they’re going to be standing exactly on the stage.

And I was like because [inaudible 01:17:49].

What about the multi methods the different sort of, if we had film, theatre, TV, how about that?

Are you here [inaudible 01:18:08].

Is it six.

[inaudible 01:18:12]

This is the first session [crosstalk 01:18:19].

I found it real interesting cos it was over such a period of time, that you ended up wanting to know, like a TV series, you want to know where it was going and what was going to happen next.

The thing is I hadn’t even seen Part Two, I couldn't get tickets for it, I didn’t get a volunteering opportunity to see it, so I’d not seen it at all, I’d seen Part One and Part Three, so I have no idea what the story was about. We're doing this part four and I was thinking I don't actually understand. I don't understand who the characters are or anything.

They’d done Part Two as a series of podcasts so when I discovered that I went and listened to them.

They sent us the script before the first rehearsal, not the full script but our script, and out of context part three really made no sense whatsoever, and I was thinking, I don’t think I’d really go and see this if I wasn’t in it, but once I’d heard the podcasts of part two, it all made sense.

In what ways are you proud of your personal contribution to Flood?

Massively

Because they couldn't have done it without all of us, and they kept telling us that.

I don't think we could quite believe that to start with, we were going, really, really, and by the end we were like, actually, yeah! I think for me it made it a Hull production, even though it was a Slung Low production, it was a Hull production.

Also having Mark and Emma from Hull really made it Hull, because they’re Hull through and through, being Middle Child, and that was really important, that they actually had Hull actors on board as part of the main cast.

I think if I’d have known what the part was, I don’t think I’d have gone for it, cos it was beyond what I thought I could do, but once it was thrust upon me, it’s like, I’m nervous, but I’m getting into it..

To be honest I thought you were one of the professionals.

I did.

Just very proud.

Has Float made you think differently about yourself?

It has made me less embarrassed to be if you like, let’s face it, once you’ve stood there and pretended to cry in terror that far away from a camera, and you’re thinking, I’m probably making a right twit of myself and I don’t care, and someone’s got this footage, so it’s like, I’m allowed to be me, even if some people find that a bit annoying or a bit out there, I’m allowed to be me and I’m allowed to enjoy being me, so that’s what it’s given me.

For me, I know it's going to sound a little stupid but for me, no amount of weather will ever frighten me now, it sounds really daft but outdoor shifts and things, cos I know how to, it doesn’t bother me, I’ve done the extremes, when someone says it’s raining we all laugh and go, that isn’t rain! Piece of cake.

The Sunday boring shoots .

[inaudible 01:22:07] .

He was like, I'm just okay and he stood behind me and [inaudible 01:22:13][crosstalk 01:22:17].

Have you developed any skills?

Resilience.

I can throw accurately now, I’m serious, so I'm quite proud of myself, I can throw accurately whilst kneeling in a rowing boat!

I can put a fire out because I remember when I tried to put it out the first time I couldn’t get it out. I didn't manage to flick the thing in the right way, so I drove round for the next hour with the boat on fire.

Any other skills?

[inaudible 01:23:10] in the end because I started involving in a huge Christmas play. [inaudible 01:23:26] I think it's not, it's just got me back into acting.

Anyone else?

It got me back into acting, I’m starting tonight rehearsing for a village Christmas play, starts at half seven, I think it’s more or less, just got me back into acting.

It just made me think you can achieve something no matter what age or ability you are. You think you fit into that system, you put yourself into a box, and you think, well I wont do x y and z because I‘m scared of such and such, and it teaches you to not be scared to try something just because you might be trying something that you think is outside your box.

Indeed, in the words of Henry Ford, if you think you can, or you think you can’t, you’re probably right.

Very true. And you compared yourself.

Yeah.

I can see already and feel. What relationships did you develop and have these connections continued? Do we have any proposals?

We're all going to be party thing on Tuesday.

We've all booked the [inaudible 01:24:43] over email. We've all booked the same party [crosstalk 01:24:47].

We’re doing the celebration events together but they’re all different.

Have you met any connection in developing a relationship with Victoria Dock residents or the production team?

I’ve made friends with one of the cast, we’ve been messaging each other.

[inaudible 01:25:39] [crosstalk 01:25:47]

I’ve joined all the Facebook and Twitter things for Middle Child and Slung Low.

Follow them on Instagram [inaudible 01:25:52] and doing somethings [crosstalk 01:25:57].

We promote them now as well, obviously, cos we’ve had such a good experience and I want other people to have that.

You felt like yes I know them. Sort of the [crosstalk 01:26:12].

[inaudible 01:26:21] I didn't know anybody [inaudible 01:26:25].

I know people need to go so the final question really quickly. Has your experience affected how you feel about Victoria Dock?

I didn't even know it was there. I really didn't know it was there and I took the dog for a walk and I was like, " Oh my God! This is, I really didn't know it was there I just go there all the time when I'm walking the dog.

You live nearby?

No I don't live nearby.

But you go especially to walk the dog, wow![crosstalk 01:26:52]

You can go to the coast if you like.

Yeah, yeah. How far is it [inaudible 01:27:08] and back?

[inaudible 01:27:12].[crosstalk 01:27:15]

It was just really nice to see it being used in that way.

It felt like it joined it to Hull.

I’d never been on Victoria dock, I knew there was a housing estate called Victoria Dock, never been anywhere near it, got lost looking for the community hall, but there was a little park, these oblongs full of water with ducks on them and I’m thinking, this is very nice, so yeah, I’d never seen the basin before.

Did anyone have any preexisting notions or ideas about Victoria dock? [crosstalk 01:28:01]

No

Just wondered where it is and how do you get there.

I just knew that Peter Levy lived there.

That’s the downside!

Well, unless anyone's got any other questions, comments, things I should have asked.

Just invite them back.

We need to have them back.

I'm interviewing Allan tomorrow so I'll [inaudible 01:28:29] him.[crosstalk 01:28:30]

When you talked about how you wanted us all to film a little segment to [inaudible 01:28:36] expenses because the stores are getting funding and such as that.

Have you done that?

Yeah we all did our video. It's just been an absolute positive experience.

[inaudible 01:28:48] I could cope with having Brett holding a filming camera asking me to do something. I could not still couldn't actually manage to do a selfie of myself like that.

If you want to their still looking for, actually cos Vicky is a resident and the residents they were just so overwhelming positive they want to put up a blue pack to [crosstalk 01:29:18]. Honestly I tried so hard to get them to say anything negative, they were just so positive.

[inaudible 01:29:31].

To that level of.

They all just worked so hard and they were such a pleasant bunch, there wasn’t a nasty one among them.

You can know, so [crosstalk 01:29:44]

When you see him tomorrow say thanks from all of us.

Will do.

I think there should be one last question which is do you feel that the money spent on bringing Slung Low to Hull was well spent. And the answer to that question is honestly, honestly, honestly thank you it's a huge piece of feedback seriously. I don't care how much it cost. It was money well spent, and it’s touched so many people.

And it [inaudible 01:30:09]

You've inspired the residents because they want to [inaudible 01:30:16][crosstalk 01:30:19]. The residents are going to send in those so [inaudible 01:30:25]. So thank you everyone so much for coming I really appreciate it. [inaudible 01:30:39] but yeah.

Been a pleasure thank you for letting us [crosstalk 01:30:44]

You've got my contact details so if you think of anything have them call me.[crosstalk 01:30:50] is anybody going to.

Yeah it's just like a good reunion.

[inaudible 01:31:03].

Because we can't go through the celebration we [inaudible 01:31:06]

That's what happens. I was worried about maybe the [inaudible 01:31:14].

They were prepared, they were told, they were involved in it.

I think to begin with they were a bit concerned [inaudible 01:31:29] area but thousands of people came to watch the fireworks from there and they [crosstalk 01:31:37].

Because that [inaudible 01:31:38] was really well used.

They funded.[crosstalk 01:31:47]

I've got the right state.

I need [inaudible 01:32:07]

For earlier in December [inaudible 01:32:14]because of all the things that they're doing.[crosstalk 01:32:17]

Bye.

Bye [inaudible 01:32:20]. Take care.

Bye.

Thank you. [inaudible 01:32:29]

[inaudible 01:32:30].

I need to hide I've got [inaudible 01:32:37].

Have I given you a good apology?

No.

Well yes.

[inaudible 01:32:44] the photo shoot in the [inaudible 01:32:53].

Fruit season[inaudible 01:33:03]

We're investing I talked about [inaudible 01:33:07][crosstalk 01:33:08]

No you don't need to know that. I just walked pout.

I'm offering you a free service. I will train your staff for you.

[inaudible 01:33:17]should be re-booked.

[inaudible 01:33:20] I thought[inaudible 01:33:26].

Yeah it's [inaudible 01:33:29]

[inaudible 01:33:30].

Even in [inaudible 01:33:33].

No [inaudible 01:33:35].

No yeah. Absolutely.

The [inaudible 01:33:40].

Oh yeah. I'll be there for Christmas.

Can I interview you I said well, no I'm off to [inaudible 01:33:45] the ferries and I'll pick you up from your house and park in your [inaudible 01:33:49]

Wow! [inaudible 01:33:51] service.

## Focus Group 2: Transcript

Welcome everybody. Thank you so much for coming. I'm Catherine Alexander and I'm a researcher here at the University. I'm completely impartial and independent. We want to hear the good, the bad and the ugly, so please be very honest and open. Try and speak up and don't speak over each other. To let you know, the toilets, if you go out to the right, the women's are on the right and the men's are on the left. We're not expecting any fire alarms this evening, so if they do ring we're going to have to ...

[crosstalk 00:00:34].

Run outside really fast. Help yourself to refreshments as we go along. This shouldn't take longer than an hour and a half. We can take a break halfway through let me know if people are getting ... We can just get it over and done with and get you home especially with the snow you've got far to go. We'll need sledges maybe by the end of it.

There's no right or wrong answers. We had a really nice session with the group before. Just have it more like a chat and then catch up, so hopefully that's how it'll be for you guys too. What we're going to do is start off, go around. I don't know if everybody knows each other because I know you were in different parts. If you just say your name and what kind of experience you have as a performer before being involved in Float. I'll start, I'm Catherine and my most significant experience as a performer I would have to say was when I had the starring role in a school play at age 12, which is something I'm very proud of. Apart from that I'm much more inexperienced than any of you. Who would like to go next?

Yeah.

I'm Roy.

Hello, Roy.

Hi. The only time I've ever taked on any kind of acting was in The Flood. That was-

Were you the man in the boat taking the ... ?

No.

Okay.

I was in part four. I was on [crosstalk 00:01:55] Island.

[crosstalk 00:01:55].

One of the villains, wore my mask [inaudible 00:01:58]. I thoroughly enjoyed it, great experience, I don't think I could ever surpass what I've just done. I met a great set of people including the actors, we had a great comradery between ourselves. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I'd love to do it again if it ever came up. [inaudible 00:02:16].

That's good to hear, thank you very much.

I am Andy, I was also on Flood part four. I was on the good island [crosstalk 00:02:25]. I've never done acting before and I’ve got no neutrals or negatives to contribute to this meeting, just positives, it's been just wonderful. I wish everyone could do it so they could appreciate how special acting can be, even though I had no speaking part.

I am Judy I was also in part four. The last acting would be at school in the King and I. I was lady [inaudible 00:03:02] sing but I was only about 13, 14 years old.

20 years ago.

Other than that, nothing else, same thing, fantastic experience, didn’t really know what I was letting myself in for, but fantastic experience.

My name is Les. I suppose I started in my 22 years of the armed forces because I fooled everyone into thinking that I was being good.

[inaudible 00:03:36].

[inaudible 00:03:38] anyway, after that since I left, I'm heavily involved in our local amateur dramatic group, do pantos every two years but absolutely nothing I've done before was anything like Flood. It was completely different but thoroughly enjoyable.

Thank you.

Mine is Paul, my acting experience is not so much but I’ve done everything else in terms of back stage set building, props, front of house, that’s what impressed me I think, in part two, it was just watching Slung Low get the whole thing ready and it was extraordinary and watching day to day as the set was built and all the work was done was really amazing.

Thank you.

Hi I'm Barry. One previous thing before Flood I played Jo Jo More Moriata and the [inaudible 00:04:45]. That was back when I was 20 so it was 40 years ago. Never did anything else since. Never did anything like Flood, never been anything where the crash helicopters and the blow things up and they set things on fire.

Give you a bath.

Give you a bath. I was the one that fell in but I did carry on. Thoroughly enjoyable, bloody great laugh, although it had a serious side when you look through the actual performance and the message it was conveying.

Thank you.

Hi everyone, my name is Sanchez. Just like everyone else I have no experience in acting. Was involved in primary school for me, lower primary school back home in South Africa where I was taking part in a trail of [inaudible]. I was one of the guys who was there and that was the only time. That is like 30 old years ago until I met Slung Low. I'm a volunteer in city of culture 2017. I've taken part in the Flood three where we assassinated ... If I may use that word, killed the immigration officer in the Flood.

Well you kicked him to death.

And we flushed him off!.

You were in the boat?

Yeah we were on the boat.

You're the scary people.

It was a very out of this world kind of an experience because having a stage on the water is for me something new. I do watch movies and i always see wrong things but when I was involved in something rich, I could criticize easily. I didn't find any fault.

It was perfect.

Yet.

Thank you.

Hi, I'm Alison. I was in Flood part three as well. The only sort of performance I've done is when I was dancing. I did ball room dancing from about the age of eight, up until about 18. My only one claim to fame is I got to dance in front of the Queen at the closing ceremony for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. We were all the ones that were driven around in the little Morris Minors and then we got out and we had to do a Viennese Waltz whizzing around in the pouring rain, my shoes were ruined, my dress all my bits fell off it but it was a fantastic day and I couldn't have done anything else better until Flood and that just blows anything else out.

You had practice with the pouring down rain then.

Yeah. That's my two little highlights that I've done. That's it pretty much.

That's great, thank you.

I'm William, I was in part three, when it comes to acting experience I want to be an actor when it comes to it. I've done quite a bit, as much as I can do really. I felt when I saw Flood Three, of course I was interested in it with it being an acting thing, but I thought it was just going to be another run of the mill thing, and what did I know. It was a lot more than that and absolutely incredible. I've never seen anything like it and I doubt I ever will, the floating stage.

Brilliant, great. Okay, I'm going to start off with talking about what made you decide to get involved? How did you first hear about it or what made you-

It was advertised, I would imagine for most of the volunteers on the Better Impacts website and being a volunteer as much as we all say we haven’t done a lot of acting except for Les, in the sense we're volunteers and we put a front on every time we put that uniform on and we go out there doing all sorts of stupid things. If you'd seen the one at Burton Constable.

The radio one.

No, where they took the photographs, I had my face painted white with a little red hat lipstick on.

Is that the surprise that you're not supposed to be telling us about?

Yes, that's the one so ... You'll find out what it's about when ...

[inaudible 00:09:48]. Is everyone a volunteer?

Yes.

You all-

You're safe then.

We are all a front when you're on the pod, as most of us have been on and people are coming up to you and asking you all sorts of questions. You're answering them with confidence and thinking I haven’t got a blood clue what they’re asking. You’re trying to sound confident.

A lot of volunteers have that façade of calm assuredness when they're talking to people. Behind their eyes their brain is frantically going, oh god, but you can usually get the answer for them.

It's interesting because right back to when you were interviewed because you're asked to choose what sort of things you want to be involved in, but there's also you choose your favourite three and I have to admit cast community was not on my list whatsoever. It seemed to happen was that I spoke to a few people and they were telling me about it and, it sounds really interesting. Of course, it wasn't going to be anything for me. Three weeks later I think they hadn't quite filled, did we need 40?

Something like that.

I think what actually happened was, they hadn’t got the 40, so they just threw it out wider. It was very unexpected for me because I kind of just went with it really.

What were your kind of hopes and expectations then when you signed up?

To be honest when I saw it. My sister was a volunteer as well. She volunteered first of all with ticketing for part two. When I saw the opportunity I thought that's what it was. I thought it was go along and find out about wayfaring and ticketing. We ended up in a room being asked to do [inaudible 00:12:00]. I'm thinking, "Maybe got this wrong." I was with Jynette, I think you might know and so when I turned up I didn't realize it was an audition.

A lot of people have said that actually. The funny thing is that a lot of people [inaudible 00:12:20] who did know didn't get it. I wonder what that's about.

I think some of the people that maybe did know were trying quite hard to get in.

Ours wasn’t an interview or audition or anything really was it?

No, it was you're all here [inaudible 00:12:39].

Yeah, they wanted 15 people.

The number of people. [crosstalk 00:12:40]. It might be different for [inaudible 00:12:46] was it?

Flood four was different because [inaudible 00:12:52] I tried Flood part two as well. I couldn't do Flood part two even though I was offered it because I couldn't give the time at that time. Because it was just a sign up and whoever they took, but by Flood Four, they were looking for specific people which is why Roy had a speaking part, Ash who died had a speaking part. When we did our audition it was very much a how do you move around the space? They just wanted you to talk naturally in front of people so they were looking, they took a whole lot more people on but to find specific people for specific parts.

Did you know that when we did part two they said, right you may be in part four as well?

I don't think anybody was.

No, because [inaudible 00:13:33] they decided they would open it up which was exactly the right thing to do.

[inaudible 00:13:36] maybe people who were on the [inaudible 00:13:42] actually [inaudible 00:13:49]. They were looking for ... I think each part was something different [inaudible 00:13:53]. Each bit was doing something different just trying to find the best way to get the volunteers involved.

He was also changing his mind all the time which he had to do as the thing developed. If you actually read the book, it's slightly different to the plays.

Carry on.

He had to change it all the time. I supposed every director does.

I think with my experience that if Slung Low, Alan, was not so adaptable to changing circumstances and I'm talking minute by minute, Flood would not have been a spectacular success it was.

Nowhere near.

I went to see part two, I managed to get tickets I was sat there on my tea break, waiting, frantically refreshing trying to get on the thing to get tickets because I had heard it was brilliant. Managed to get tickets, then I was, "I hope it comes on my BI." Because I hadn't gotten my uniform at that point. I was waiting to go an collect my uniform. I was, "I hope, I really hope. Fingers crossed." Lo and behold, within like a few weeks of me getting my uniform it was on and I was like, close my diary, I'm doing it. I told my husband, "You won't see me for most of July. That's it, bye. If you want me I'll be in the dock." He was completely understanding about it because being a volunteer for me was like a big leap anyway. Because I've had a bad experience in my previous job so I kind of went back in myself, so doing this and doing Slung Low, I want to cry with joy and excitement, every time I talk about everything. Sorry.

No, that was actually my next question because quite a few people have said that they had a personal experience for getting involved too. In the previous focus group one guy was saying that he really wanted to improve his confidence and someone else had a fear of public speaking and things like that so did anyone else have apersonal reason did you hope to achieve a personal outcome?

Mine was that I was due to retire. I can't retire anytime because I was self-employed for so long. As I was I retired in February. It felt just right, I started volunteering in the September when the pod first opened and took on from there.

Wave 1

Wave 1. Looking at an alternative, my wife had retired a little before me and she said it's just like waiting to die. For me I had a whale of a time.

[crosstalk 00:16:51].

I've done everything stupid, real, totally off the wall, things I've really enjoyed. I don't think there's anything I haven't enjoyed.

I think for me it was the ... I've done stuff like staging before but I've not been on stage really. When I didn't want to go too far in terms of acting I didn’t even know how would I manage that and as you know we didn't kind of do that in part two which was actually fine for me. The story grabbed me as well, as an amazing story story, it ticked lots and lots of boxes for me, it just worked perfectly.

I think with me it was just going into the unknown, never ever done it, went there not a clue expecting and each time we went to rehearsals for me I was [inaudible 00:17:42] expanded and [inaudible 00:17:45] feel of it, you're thinking [inaudible 00:17:51]. For me it was the going into the unknown, not knowing what to expect and Alan made you feel really at home, at ease, really calm, [inaudible 00:17:58] not once.

He swore like hell at you!

It was fantastic for me, [inaudible 00:18:08].

He was there all the time. He hadn't written part four when we were talking to him during part two.

[crosstalk 00:18:19] just released it [crosstalk 00:18:21].

That was just extraordinary watching that process take place. You're wondering what was going to happen-

Yeah because I don't think he knew what was going to happen.

Really when we were involved.

It's amazing.

He crafted the parts as he went on depending on how the previous one was received.

For me taking part in Flood Three was from part two I've somehow got to volunteer on Flood Two's ticketing and as that was going on I was staged at the changing area at the hall where the Flood Two guys were gathering. Then I overheard Allan, goes, "Guys, I want you to ace ... " I think this was the last show of Flood Two. He went, "Guys, I want you to ace this because whoever is coming after you I want you to raise the bar so that they cannot reach what you've achieved." When he walked out, I was standing outside, I went, "No I want to take part in the next one." Imagine, I've just heard him saying they should raise the bar and now-

[crosstalk 00:19:45].

I want to go into the next group to raise the bar higher. He went, "Oh, relax, you'll get your chance what's your name?" I told him Sanchez, he's. "Okay, you'll get a chance." Then he went on. Then I saw it on my BI, "Oh no, now this is my chance." Clicked on it and scheduled everything as well, [inaudible 00:20:13]. From then on I've never looked back. Even the role that I took as you said that Allan is a guy who just made changes here now and there as we go along. He didn't choose the role to smash somebody's face. I was somehow drafted that, "Okay, you do it." The person whom I was going to smack down is like higher, taller than me and huge.

He was a big block.

I was like, "Oh, no maybe Paul will do it."

Did you feel that it was you doing that or did you feel it was the character?

It was mostly the character.

Then you succeeded.

It was amazing.

You were the bets guys for the job. You led that first punch brilliantly.

From that experience I've grown to have patience for acting and want to do more and want to set my actual foot on the acting field.

Ladder.

Yeah, climb the ladder alone.

Essentially he was the main character pretty much. He was the one who got the lines, he got to punch the man, he got the shot right in his face when they were doing the cameras.

Am I sensing a bit of jealousy?

He was the right man for it, he was brilliant.

[crosstalk 00:21:59]. Brilliant.

We all got surprised when we were told that our take is going to be on the telly.

[crosstalk 00:22:07].

Wow.

[inaudible 00:22:11]?

No we didn't.

Would you have done it if you had known? Would that have encouraged you or would it have put you off?

[inaudible 00:22:17].

Either or I would have withdrew back, self-criticism would have kicked in. It really did bring my confidence up.

In a killer.

What was good was that he didn’t really pull any punches in terms of, as we gathered that first time. We knew what we were up against and he told us straight, what I think was good testimony I think [inaudible 00:22:55].

Just what I was going to ask because it was quite a big ask wasn't it?

Yeah, from that first meeting to the next rehearsal three people dropped out and then we just continued going like that really. You guys by some point, you all were being given a role to do, did you get that option of [inaudible 00:23:13]?

It was really weird because we were selected because we auditioned but everyone involved was so different, I don’t know what I did to be honest, we were ... I don't know [inaudible 00:23:27] we ended up going to rehearsal and we got selected and went to another rehearsal and we were put into islands and all I remember was I was kept … Because you kind of define what you were doing you [crosstalk 00:23:36].

[inaudible 00:23:38] and handed me the mic [inaudible 00:23:44] talk you through it [inaudible 00:23:53] or something like that but it was ... [inaudible 00:23:58].

They supported you into feeling like you were able to do it?

Absolutely yeah. It did with everybody they always put you at ease.

There was one night where you lost your voice didn’t you.

No I think [inaudible 00:24:17] I think I overdid it and I think [inaudible 00:24:20]. The next day my voice had completely gone [inaudible 00:24:26] no voice. Don't worry my love, I'll sort it through [inaudible 00:24:33].

[crosstalk 00:24:30].

[inaudible 00:24:35] when I was rehearsing with it. [inaudible 00:24:37] to come back but at first I'm thinking, "I'm not going to be able to do this on the night." For two, three nights.

They're going to replace you with [inaudible 00:24:42].

Not necessarily I just thought, "I'm going to let this show down." But he kept saying, don’t worry about it, I got a ton of makeup and all the audio things. It worked, it was fantastic.

Would you say that it exceeded your expectation?

Absolutely.

I mean for us on part two, we didn’t really know what we were going into unitl we turned up and they were like, do this and do this and stand over there and you and you you’re refugees and you and you you’re island people, but before that, and the promise of course was, you will not get wet. He’s one hell of a liar.

Our least rehearsal was a bright, sunny afternoon wasn't it?

Yes it was, it was beautiful.

We did the whole thing without the rain and then when that rain first ... I don't know whether you guys know this but when we first started doing things he said, you know where the water is coming from, its water straight out of the dock, what I’d advise you to do is get some cans of coke, have a drink every night, and yeah it worked.

[crosstalk 00:25:56].

[crosstalk 00:25:56] coke every night.

[inaudible 00:25:59].

Well you should know.

Yeah I would know, I got more of it than anyone.

People said in the previous group. There was a couple of ladies that said, "Oh, I'm not going to drink that because no one is going to make me drink 12 teaspoons of sugar." She didn't and she was ill that night. Ever since then she continued to drink it and she was fine.

I did substitute with Brandy. [crosstalk 00:26:28] I don't know whether it was because the water had warmed up but I didn't bother, the second time [inaudible 00:26:32] it was a [inaudible 00:26:35] first couple of nights. Well I got the Brandy going again. [crosstalk 00:26:40] it was this torrential rain I think.

It was cold when [crosstalk 00:26:46].

I think somebody managed 12 layers of clothing on them. It took three or four nights to get things right, I mean waterproof sprays, goodness knows what, waterproof clothing I think the first few nights as to what would work best.

What did you like best then about your experience [inaudible 00:27:08]?

Working with everyone

The camaraderie.

The unity.

[crosstalk 00:27:15].

[inaudible 00:27:20] what it was, you were all in there and supporting each other and you're all starting from the same stage.

There was about three women on the refugee island with us who weren't very confident on wobbly platforms.

Understandably.

Which [inaudible 00:27:46].

It was all their fault.

[inaudible 00:27:53] no problems for us [inaudible 00:28:01]. You help people and by the end of it I think every one of them didn't give a monkeys whether it was wobbly or not.

Can I just say that. Have you all watched the old cartoons where they put their feet down and everything starts to spread and spread and spread until they fall?

It's exactly what happened. I got [inaudible 00:28:35] on the raft and I got one foot on the jetty and one foot on the boat. Of course the wind distribution altered so it starts to part. I'm not good at the splits. Never been good at the splits.

You got the chance to find out, what didn't you like? What was the worst part?

The end of it.

Yeah knowing you weren't going to come back again.

Especially the very last night, it was quite sad really cos we’d been together for five weeks and practically every night and most weekends and knowing that you weren’t going to see each other for quite a while unless you bump in to each other. That was probably the hardest time for me.

I remember sitting, the very last night we were going to the island when they were going off into the sunset and turning around and looking at everybody behind the set and everybody had tears in their eyes.

[inaudible 00:29:26].

Yeah but the actors and the crew and everybody was really emotional knowing that that was it.

Yeah, it's like losing a family almost. It's better somebody dying but like watching somebody go off into the sunset and knowing they're not going to come back.

The last night they took everybody to Attic as a bit of a celebration. We all had a get together, had a drink, had a dance.

[inaudible 00:30:03].

[crosstalk 00:30:04].

I didn't ask that one [crosstalk 00:30:05].

Where were you until five? In Attic.

[crosstalk 00:30:15].

I felt really old until I got really drunk and then I felt I was a teenager. I don't know [inaudible 00:30:27].

[inaudible 00:30:30] I left as the function room was shutting.

What time was that?

I don't know, can't remember.

4 a.m.

Gone midnight.

To what extent was it a challenge then being involved in Flood?

Fitting it in around all my kids and my family and school and all that kind of stuff. As I said I've got a brilliant husband because I just said, "That's it, I'm doing it, deal with it, get on with it." I think that was my biggest challenge that I had to overcome was finding babysitters and stuff like that. I've got a wonderful family and a wonderful husband.

You need to copy the recording.

I suppose for me it was easy because I'm retired, there's only me and my wife. I don't have any commitments anymore so I go and pick my granddaughter up once a week but other than that…

Were there any physical challenges or emotional challenges or?

Hopping in and out of the boat I think for a week [inaudible 00:31:46] and climbing in and by the end of it we're all jumping down the thing and skipping.

Which is exactly what I said about the three women who were very nervous when they first went on the jetty, you could see the white knuckles when they were gripping the rails.

There was a couple afraid of water. [crosstalk 00:32:12].

You bounced and rolled as you walk down it which is quite interesting.

Did you [crosstalk 00:32:17].

In the end [inaudible 00:32:21] he's rocking it and they're [inaudible 00:32:21].

No I found it pretty hard to fit round sixth form. Getting to go and do Flood on a night and then having to wake up the next day to do school. It's quite a juxtaposition but it's incredible, who gets to do that?

If you want to be an actor then it’ll look great on your CV.

Writing terrible essays and getting to die of cold on a boat, fantastic, I'd do it again.

My big challenge was persuading my boss to let me have an hour off every day so that I can make the rehearsals and the performances.

Must have been a fairly understanding boss.

She's not bad. I think [inaudible 00:33:12] I have to make time [inaudible 00:33:15] she kept me going.

I think the challenge for [inaudible 00:33:17] where we weren't getting the cues right. We have these movements to remember and although Alan did prime us in terms of the song I think we have to know where to do the actions and how many we had to do. It was a little bit of a challenge here at the start but by the end I think we got-

By the end you fell into it.

I don't know if you know this but the choreography [inaudible 00:33:44] she had a YouTube so we were able to watch the sequences

To practice.

Yes and practice.

I think it was the ones he threw [inaudible 00:33:55]. The extra [inaudible 00:33:59].

What were the main emotions that you felt when you were performing Flood?

Worrying in case you got it wrong. That was mine, in case you did something stupid like falling.

You don't worry about getting it wrong. You worry about if you get it wrong can you pull it back?

Yeah, well that's it.

[inaudible 00:34:25] that experience.

If you forgot your cue Alan was always there to help you out, he was always there instantly, or someone else, and even if you did go wrong, the audience would never know anyway, that’s the beauty of it.

The fact that we had a different channel than the audience also made me feel at ease because whenever anyone forgets his line I could hear Allan saying it, "Oh okay there’s a cue." That really made it quite easy. The fact that the audience had to put their headsets on was one of the things that made me to go down there and take part in Flood Three because that was in my time of watching theater, I have never seen a stage outside the theater. Let alone it being on top of the water and in the community area where people are resting for the next day. There was no noise to distract them, that on its own made me to go like, "Oh wow! This is awesome. This is unique, I've never seen such a thing. Let me take part."

The fact that I did take part made me to go on and went like, "Oh wow! I'm in the right place at the right time."

I think because we were such a small group, we sort of just I don't know just became best friends didn't we? All of us.

Family.

Just like a little family because we were stuck on that [inaudible 00:36:17] I said [inaudible 00:36:20] didn't we? We were really sad. We cried when she got shipped out [crosstalk 00:36:23] and it was like, "Bye Jessica, we're going to miss you." So many random tweets on Facebook from [inaudible 00:36:31] because we lived on there for a week, literally that was our home. Got there at lunch time and then we'd have rehearsals and then we did the live dress rehearsal for the people watching. That was really ... I don't know it took it to that next level because it's like, "Oh, this is real. This is [inaudible 00:36:49] water [inaudible 00:36:54]. This is serious." Then I think we all kind of got that didn't we? It just.

On the last night or one of the nights we all had a picnic in the rain.

Cake and coffee in the middle of Victoria Dock, soaking wet. It was brilliant.

So one of those things that stick with you for the rest of your life.

It's called triumphing over adversity.

Because our part was really short as well. We would have to be on the jetticare [inaudible 00:37:24] they did the whole performance [inaudible 00:37:30] and then we got [inaudible 00:37:35]. Then we had to stay for the rest of it. We did two one throughs with filming on two nights. For like [inaudible 00:37:41] the whole of our shift we would just sat on [inaudible 00:37:45] in the middle of Victoria Dock. We went from glorious sunshine, t-shirts, the best t-shirts laying there, sun bathing to six or seven layers on the last night because the heavens opened and it was proper rain although the telegraph said it wasn't convincing.

It was real rain.

Yeah their little review in the back of the telegraph said something about the fake rain wasn't very convincing. It was torrential for the last two days of filming.

We had a similar experience because it was sunny because we had done the rehearsals and gone straight across. On each evening of the first, it went round the island twice. [inaudible 00:38:25] why are we going round twice? I think I'm going to use people [inaudible 00:38:29] really.

How did you feel during the live performance?

Buzzing every single night, especially when two, three hundred people turn up, no nerves whatsoever.

There's something about when you get the bug that you're doing something in front of people. It's like listening to live music. It's always better than listening on the radio or on disc. Taking part in it, takes it up that level and you just think, yeah.

The hardest part of me was knowing that there was no chance. Once you got to live shows you could actually miss a show. Allan had said early on to us that if you need to miss something you can get away and miss it but you knew full well that any one of our parts, if weren't there, the show probably wouldn't work or it wouldn’t go ahead in the same way, so there was a bit of pressure in that sense that we weren't allowed to be part of it any more, we were there, we were tied in [inaudible 00:39:46]. That was nice to have that sort of pressure [inaudible 00:39:51].

In other words you should have crawled on there with some broken legs and a broken arm.

[crosstalk 00:39:53] said, "I'm sorry but we've got [inaudible 00:39:58] get somebody else to do it." [inaudible 00:40:00] quite easily [inaudible 00:40:06].

It wasn't just the words because I was lucky, I was in a position where I could see what was going on, there were lots of people were doing specific [inaudible 00:40:15] Flood part two through the radio, you didn't get as much instruction from Allan, if you saw ours and listened in on it, we would get instructions left, right and centre, and if someone had been missing I don't actually think it would have worked at all because you've never known where to stand.

We didn't have that much instruction. We didn't need that much instructions where to stand. I think Les tied one boat up and I tied another boat up and that was it, because I don't know [inaudible 00:40:42] and that was about it [inaudible 00:40:47]? The rest of it was just the [crosstalk 00:40:49].

[crosstalk 00:40:51] individual [inaudible 00:41:00]. It was quite fun, I totally enjoyed it.

There’s nowt like messing about on boats.

It was fascinating too, our instruction was when we arrived in the island [inaudible 00:41:18] just occupy the island so we deliberately just stood around just chatting. We chatted about all sorts of things and the actors [inaudible 00:41:27] and what they were going to be doing next. That was really special and then we moved in position, we did that funny thing with our headphones.

You were one of them-

I was yes [crosstalk 00:41:41].

I've seen part one and part three but I haven't managed to see the other two parts which is ...

[crosstalk 00:41:49].

Yes, which is I'm so jealous that I wasn't involved in there because I was a volunteer as well and yeah it's an amazing opportunity.

My wife she's a volunteer and she's done dancing, ballroom, tap dancing, all her life. When I got the opportunity to do this she was so jealous and envious even now she says, I can't believe [crosstalk 00:42:14] because it's something I've never even thought about it in my life.

I think the only part I haven't seen properly was part two because we're stuck in the middle of it.

We'd really like to go watch it because [inaudible 00:42:37] back to al to [crosstalk 00:42:40].

Absolutely. [inaudible 00:42:43] I managed to turn round once and see the helicopter crash once.

There must be some amazing footage because on one night we had a camera man with us actually on stage and I'd love to see, I know they cobbled some bits together for the story so far, but we've not seen those bits I'm sure they'd be absolutely fascinating to watch.

I think there's a website that they've put together.

If you go to the website there's various [inaudible 00:43:06].

There's a little documentary.

No, I think I see everything that has been done so far but I'm saying Brett was there, being actually on stage with all the rain falling and watching what was going on.

Risking life on camera.

It's like Flood ... What was it called? There's a separate website where there's podcasts and things. Anyway, how much support did ...

Flood Survival.

That's it, Flood Survival.

Survival Tech.

How did Slung Lowsupport you as community cast members?

We were just part of the team, they didn’t treat us in a different way and speaking to some other people who have done similar things, they've said to me that usually if you're a part of a community cast you don't feel as included. At rehearsals we would all sit and eat together, all sit together and apparently that is unusual that that would happen, that the paid actors would be sitting with you but [crosstalk 00:44:17].

[crosstalk 00:44:18] and that's it. Then you just get together when you're actually performing [inaudible 00:44:27].

When you went down onto the dock below the bridge, everybody was just milling about together. I think the most interaction I got was the night after I fallen in and they were all coming in asking if I was alright!

I know I turned one of the young ladies into a Werthers addict.

Yes you always had a bag of sweets with you.

Always. Every night.

Yeah.

How did they support you more general then to ...

I think because we were stuck on the boat we obviously didn't have much interaction with them when we were sort of rehearsing things because they were in the caravan or the main island [inaudible 00:45:15] and all that kind of stuff. I think for me and he started it, was the chorus as we tootled down, that we got as we saw [inaudible 00:45:23] because we didn't meet them all in the same place, we just came and met them under the bridge. It was killers as we came down because it was all they would shout out after we did our first choreographed fight scene on that boat, we got called brutal, we got called evil, we got called all sorts of stuff. Then for some reason killers just stuck because we could be walking along the side with my family and they'd be like, "Killer." My kid would be like, "Why are they calling you killer mummy."

"Oh, because that's just my job when I'm down there." I'd say, "Hi." Even as I said when I was showing my friends around who came from America in the summer, we walked along there and doing this and doing that. Allan was there [inaudible 00:46:10] and he was talking to my friends and telling them all about it and how wonderful we all are and how wonderful everybody in every part been and he can't wait for part four [inaudible 00:46:19]. It was the fact that he took the time to talk to my friends as well. Because I was just walking past, we were on our way to the Deep, and I was like, "Oh, yeah this and this and this." Then he just came in over the ... "Hi Alison ... " I was like, "Okay then, all right [inaudible 00:46:35]."

I started every night for part two, Alan would gather us together, so it was almost like the battle speech, tonight and you're doing really well. If you could just tidy up a little bit on that. The actors were as you said [crosstalk 00:46:55]. We were the community.

Then even during the performance really. [inaudible 00:47:04] our island where obviously you're not part of the main action but you still acting.

Acting, yeah.

You know during some of that, the actors would be making sure we're all okay and don't forget when this happens we're going to do this, sort of those stuff, that support and lead even during the performance.

It was the same for us, it was [crosstalk 00:47:28].

When you looked at the actors in part two and every night they throw themselves in, at that Dock, every night. You know you must have been reaching a point where you think, oh here we go again.

[inaudible 00:47:47] every single one of them did.

I think eventually we all did, didn't we? Certainly-

Sam did.

Nadia did. She was [inaudible 00:48:02].

[crosstalk 00:48:03] part three.

[crosstalk 00:48:05]. I can't remember his name.

He did go [crosstalk 00:48:12].

Matthew, I can't remember his name.

[inaudible 00:48:15] in part two. I don't know how he managed it.

He started in the water in part four didn’t he.

Do you feel you received sufficient training and rehearsal time?

Yeah.

[crosstalk 00:48:30].

We had a fight director just to go through all of the various sort of things [inaudible 00:48:41] pyrotechnics and all very professionally set out.

[crosstalk 00:48:51].

Very professionally set out.

Yeah I got taught how to fall.

Yeah, simple thing just simply [crosstalk 00:48:59]. I had a section where I had to pull someone by the hair, she leads you onto ... Gives you the impression that you're actually pulling them by the hair, what a great way, I’d never have thought of that.

When you see the fight scenes, I mean the closets one we saw was [inaudible 00:49:29], elbows even and all these sort of thing. God that must hurt, and then when you're really close up and you see it, it’s totally different, that far away but the timing on it is spot on. Because he goes like that, he falls back.

[inaudible 00:49:48] we got the impression that he knew it we were all being looked after [inaudible 00:49:55]. He did say that [crosstalk 00:49:58].

Yes, I don't like meetings.

I do like meetings.

Allan doesn't like forms or meetings. He'd rather spend hours and hours and hours with us telling us about things than spend half an hour in a meeting. That's the way it should be.

Yes, that's how life is.

You can't think of any ways that it could have been improved or?

Just made it longer.

Got it carried on a little bit.

[crosstalk 00:50:27] rehearsal time.

Sorry.

Undoubtedly it could have been improved-

If you work fulltime there’s no way you could have improved it because otherwise it would have had an impact on our jobs.

[inaudible 00:50:47] I remember when we did the first battle scene I [inaudible 00:50:50] I was in a boat [inaudible 00:50:53] island, finished that then we [inaudible 00:50:54] I think. Going back a few days later, okay the next thing [inaudible 00:50:59] I just ended up being in this boat [inaudible 00:51:04]. I've not done this before [inaudible 00:51:16] just easy. It was just really easy.

My lines were recorded so I had some lines but they were pre recorded then so all I had to do was wave my hands around because you only had to mime because people were that far away they couldn't really tell.

They couldn't see.

Can't see.

There was just no pressure at all because once it was recorded that was it, it was fine [inaudible 00:51:43] to remember.

The teacher [inaudible 00:51:47].

How did the sites specific nature so being outdoor, Victoria Dock, how do you think that affected your overall experience?

I mean there were some performances in that first week where it was such a perfect evening, so calm on the dock. It was just amazing being part of it, just taking a second in the middle of performance just looking round and taking it all in and being in that setting was incredible. Sometimes really clear nights, fantastic moon, just unbelievable really took my breath away sometimes.

The outside bit. There was one night in the first set of performances where it was really windy. They’ve got two tents on the raft we're on which act like sails.

We crashed.

We crashed. [inaudible 00:52:55] they all stood looking at us, the rest trying to heave it against this sail which it was possible but only just to get it round so everybody could get off.

When we got there, Allan in his best Anglo Saxon went, "Will you get that [inaudible 00:53:16]."

[inaudible 00:53:23]. It was amazing, I don’t think I would have done it if it had been inside, I think [inaudible 00:53:30].

Well I think it wouldn't have been flat if it was done inside because I don't think there's a theatre in the land that you could have put this inside it.

You certainly couldn’t have crashed a helicopter and blew it up like you did.

This kind of performance theatre is as fantastic as it is because it's done where it is.

You know while we stood there in the rain it was absolutely beautiful really because there was rainbows, [inaudible 00:54:04] but it was quite, like those films you watch where it’s torrential rain in the middle of New York. It was really something quite extraordinary really. I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like that in terms of the effects that you actually got. I mean the audience wouldn't probably have been able to see that but we did and that was pretty unique.

You weren't affected by the cold?

it was [crosstalk 00:54:28].

it wasn't really cold when we did it [crosstalk 00:54:30].

We really had a good time in Flood Three because even when it rains, when I was coming out of home while it's raining, I was, "Oh yeah it's raining." My wife went, "Really, since when you're happy when it's rained." I don't like the rain but then when I was going for it and then it was raining I was like, "Wow, yeah." She was, "Why, you're not going to get."

They still put the sprinklers on us as well as the rain.

We have one night when it was particularly wet.

Kind of empty.

That was ...

[crosstalk 00:55:11].

[crosstalk 00:55:13] photos because I was [inaudible 00:55:14].

Wow, [crosstalk 00:55:16] it.

[crosstalk 00:55:18] it was perfect.

Looking across there, you know.

Yeah [crosstalk 00:55:21].

If somebody said, "Well, that's the view across the bay in St Tropez or something like that” you’d say, oh it’s nice isn’t it, but if you said it’s the view across the harbour in Hull you’d say, don’t be stupid.

That wasn't very smart because [inaudible 00:55:43] just putting a t-shirt on [inaudible 00:55:49] sweater and [inaudible 00:55:49]. I wanted to jump in.

That was during the flood.

Like now I'm glad I didn't now. [crosstalk 00:55:58] all about that.

Well I did one night but you can only get so cold and then you stop feeling it.

[crosstalk 00:56:08] we knew where the rain was moving to and you could brace yourself and it’d go full in your face.

There was times where you didn't get it at all weren't and then there was other times when it just-

I hardly got wet most nights.

You stood in the right place.

I chose my corner very carefully.

Yeah, I was [inaudible 00:56:31] which tend [inaudible 00:56:35] 90% of the time was in on the island and he just [inaudible 00:56:46]. That was a [inaudible 00:56:50] wet though.

Did it challenge your understanding of theatre then with it being outdoor and [inaudible 00:56:59]?

I think it challenged everybody.

I don’t think it was challenging but it was interesting to see during the rehearsals because they were rehearsing different bits at different times so it was disjointed. It felt disjointed to start with and then all of a sudden it all just sort of came together, so it was it was interesting to see how they planned the rehearsal schedule and which bit they were rehearsing it was fascinating to watch that. It turned [inaudible 00:57:24] needed to [inaudible 00:57:27] half an hour or so then they let you go. It was interesting to see how that was planned and how it was scheduled and then just starting to ...

I got more of a feeling of it being film making rather than theatre in a way because of the setting and where we were and how the action took place.

You've got a grace of depth [inaudible 00:57:47] on any stage. I don't think there was a stage anywhere that goes back until 300 yards.

I think seeing in that very last week where they did the double bill of part two and four and then the interval watching them through the set.

Rebuilded this.

Yeah rebuild in 40 minutes. That was incredible.

In the dark.

Not challenging for us but interesting to watch.

The only time I've ever seen theatre of any sorts outside I was lucky enough to go to [inaudible 00:58:23] and watched an opera in the gardens of [inaudible 00:58:28] which they do all the time apparently but I could only afford it once. It changes the dynamic of any performance because you have this depth, you have this never ending stage and it just changes everything. You stand on a stage and you know five yards back is a back curtain. Two yards that way and you're off stage and on that you’re not. Two yards that way they're still watching you.

It’s interesting to hear you say that because Allan used to moan about the final scene when Nadia gets taken to the distance like it actually wasn't big enough. On the radio he said, if we just add another 200 meters if ...

We've been doing it on [inaudible 00:59:23].

We knew there was a helicopter and it could be written, I never imagined how it was going to happen I didn't realize it was actually a remote control helicopter. I don't know what I imagined was going on there but I thought it was quite remarkable really but again it’s that almost filmmaking nature rather than theatre.

I think that was one of the best bits.

Yeah, [crosstalk 00:59:42] for that helicopter. There was an advert I don't know if it was their volunteer hub or it was some random thing I've managed to [inaudible 00:59:55] following the Flood on the [inaudible 01:00:00]. Clicking along there was an advert for the pilots for that [inaudible 01:00:04] I said to my husband, "Uh, do you still have your helicopter?" He went, "No, I took it apart and built a drone." I was like, "Uh, I wonder if a drone would work and then obviously, no a drone wouldn't have worked because you can't put people on a drone."

[crosstalk 01:00:18].

[crosstalk 01:00:20].

It looks like a helicopter.

They sent a request [inaudible 01:00:25] I think the guy that actually did it I mean he obviously flies during the day time but he also flies at night these amazing sort of ... to him it was nothing.

Yeah it was like the guy that came. We didn't see the guy but in part three they did the drone shot, when they were going up from ... Because they sort of flew over to let the people know on the TV that it was done in a dock. The drone guy just sort of flew over. It was [inaudible 01:00:53] lived on the dock and he's probably [inaudible 01:00:59] flying this over the dock and then [inaudible 01:01:03] went round a couple of times and then it just literally just went up and [inaudible 01:01:07] see it and [inaudible 01:01:10] on the TV and then when you see the beginning part of it it's like, "Ah, now it makes sense."

For me it didn't challenge the form, but it did challenge where you could actually do it, cos I never imagined you could actually do it in a dock. That was quite something.

What about the multiplatform because it was film, it was theater it was the multimedia aspect of it. Do you feel that that worked?

Without a doubt, you're looking at something from four different perspectives really. You had three islands, you had one island, you had, it baffled the mind in a lot of ways because you could have been moving around the world. You had these three islands and you got the one island then you had the boat and all the rest of it going on.

I just felt sorry for the guys that were pulling [inaudible 01:02:15] across the dock. They're hand pulling.

[inaudible 01:02:17] by then.

No, Allan said it was just a pain in the arse to run. Then [crosstalk 01:02:24].

It was always breaking down.

It was too big, it would have taken too long for him to go all the way around the dock to reset it. It was quicker to just pull it backwards and then pull us [inaudible 01:02:34] and pull it backwards.

[inaudible 01:02:34].

Once you get it moving it's not that hard.

What were the like strengths and weaknesses about it being on film, on live performance?

It you couldn't get tickets for it then you were kind of stuck because I know people who didn't get to see part two while people who didn't get to see part four, they really got it that they couldn't always get tickets for it.

Yeah even at the end when it was the omnibus.

Yeah, like my friends in Scotland as well they wanted to see part three because I was in it but it got taken off for the golf, it was on I think an hour later in Scotland than it was in England but then the golf overran, so they ended up having to find it on iPlayer.

[crosstalk 01:03:20].

In that last week though, they did two, three and four together, as much as it was made a long evening for people.

The idea was always to make it a project over a year and how that worked, it worked very well I thought.

I didn't know really much about Flood so I decided to watch Part Three on TV and to be honest we were told it was a standalone thing and you can get away with watching it. It wasn't standalone because there was a whole story that I didn't really understand, I was in Flood part four and [inaudible 01:03:55] didn't really understand, it wasn't until I watched Flood part two that I was like, "All right, okay." Because one didn't really tell you anything, they just found a girl, and it was two that actually gave you the keys to the entire story. That was probably the only weakness you have and it goes back to what you said, if you didn't see Flood part two or four, you kind of come away thinking…Part Three as a standalone was like, there’s a backstory to it, why is that woman important to her, who’s this guy...

Yeah it couldn't be a standalone [inaudible 01:04:31].

If you don't know three, it wasn't but if you know two it was.

That's right, [inaudible 01:04:41].

I really expected when I started the program that they did some sort of very quick recap on what happened in part two and then led into that.

I think the weakest part of part two [inaudible 01:04:55]. When they actually got it right, you was expecting a cheer to go from the island [inaudible 01:05:02] but it didn't [inaudible 01:05:07] from it in any way only [inaudible 01:05:10]. And waiting for it to happen [inaudible 01:05:14].

Sorry.

I think one of the strengths of it is the fact that the four individually don't follow on from each other. They made no attempt to flow part one into part two and part two into part three because I can't see that really working. What he’s done is he’s done part one there was a gap and it goes to part two, part two finishes and then you go to however far in the future to part three and that worked extremely well.

He could have finished it at part two-

Extremely well.

He could have finished it at part two and said that's the apocalypse, everybody is dead.

The survivors were.

Then you come back to the survivors three and four. Part two was the possibility that's it no more.

Part three was the link part that wanted because part three was in the future looking back at the past. It was kind of that bit in between which I think was quite clever in the way they did it.

[crosstalk 01:06:33].

Yeah because it was like being in part three, I was like, "How does this actually relate to part two?" Obviously because part four hadn't been written nobody knew what was going to happen in part four. We were are like itching to find out what went on in part four, who died, who lived and whatever else, because we're all survivors and stuff. It was just ... I think it just added to that extra attention.

Not being elitist because I was in part four. I actually thought the one that could have stood on its own the most was part four because I think part two was the one that explained what was going on. We needed part one, I disagree to slightly, I think one, two and three flowed into each other into the gap to part four. I think because one is basically to find Nadia, they take her to the detention center, the next part of the story flows through, part two, the only thing that didn't explore very much was the love story that was there. It was a bit too quick on the love story. Trying too many ideas in and out.

Then two did kind of flow into three, I know it had the girls from the future looking back but actually that [inaudible 01:07:48] whereas four is that one that's two or three years in the future when we got that, it sat slightly better away from the other ones.

There had to be a big gap between certainly two and four, because they’d set up a democracy on one and theocracy on another and dictatorship on the third [inaudible 01:08:17].

[inaudible 01:08:17] it was great [inaudible 01:08:18]. It was a great story to see and actually discussion because I didn't realize that a lot of people were [inaudible 01:08:28] prompted a lot of people to talk about the things, what is really [inaudible 01:08:35]. It got people to talk about the things, global warming, [inaudible 01:08:42].

What were the main themes do you think of flood?

Exodus, right and wrong.

[inaudible 01:08:52] it was Helena. She really wasn't keen on the whole violence thing and Alan just completely made her feel at ease with it all. She didn't have any part in the violence she was sat up on the top, looking like she was asleep. She just sat up there minding her own business, she didn't move, she didn't scream, she didn't shout she didn't do anything he said, "You would be a key part in it ... "

As you are.

"If you didn't sit like that looking completely out, well I just can't be bothered with any of it, you get on with it. I'm just going to sit here I've had enough."

That actually reflects the silent majority.

That's what he said to me, he said, "You know it's not about the violence." It's not about this, it's to about that. It's about most of the world just ignore it."

I think there was a lot of things in there, I think you were dead right about exodus, it’s about immigration. I think about human nature as well, I think it's about how people would behave in the situations which they found themselves whether the right reasons or the wrong reasons. The fact that in your part there was hope after all and led from there. I think there was a lot of interesting ideas that went through and reading it from the page I think you got a chance to read through that and get those ideas as well.

Some of the best stories are all found in conflict. Star wars yeah it's about family conflict, it might not be the best story ever but [inaudible 01:10:39]. With them, Shakespeare, that’s another family conflict thing. With this, you’ve got the father killing the son, which I found to be just a brilliant ending [inaudible 01:10:53].

If you look around at how many people would actually support the idea of [inaudible 01:11:01]. There are people out there who believe that England is for the English alone and like to know how many of them are really English.

Dig deep, a lot of disappointment [inaudible 01:11:19].

There are a great many people out there who think that England is for the English and they don't know where the hell they come from.

Well my dad does, he thinks England is for the English and for him alone. His father was a Russian refugee and his-

Imagine that.

His great-great-grandfather was a Georgian in the Georgian ... He married an Irish woman and we were born in Canada and I just think, "How can you sit there and say that England is for the English."

Absolutely. I trace my family tree back to 1762 and he was an American.

Imagine that.

He's the only foreign person we've got but he's a direct great-great five times great grandfather of mine.

Your own blood.

He was an American.

Yes but if you go back to [crosstalk 01:12:18]>

[crosstalk 01:12:19] this country was just being invaded left, right and center by-

[crosstalk 01:12:28].

Everybody. Germans, the French, the Norwegians, everybody was just invading this country, concrete bits of it and we're mongrels.

It's what makes us strong.

[crosstalk 01:12:43] and now his English is [inaudible 01:12:49].

I'd first say British but that’s just me.

For me criticism comes and goes as long as I'm alive I'm happy.

It was fascinating to watch the author every day he was there he was very keen on how people were receiving it, talking to people, the audience reacton. It was like his baby, he really did look after.

Wouldn't you if you’d written it.

The only thing about the story was that it was very lefty because it was all about society not being able to trust those in power and even though sometimes the person in power ... I mean it's all part story but it did come across as quite, don't trust government, but then ultimately what was created was government because that’s what renaissance island was wasn’t it, it was the three different types of government you can have, like you say, autocracy and democracy.

It was like the Calais story [inaudible 01:13:57] and talked of immigrants [inaudible 01:14:02] the reason why we held the mobile phone [inaudible 01:14:04] story. He observed people trying to get a signal in Calais. That's where that little signal came from we didn't do that.

I think he wanted to write a political play because he’s a political writer, but I suppose he could have done it from a less left wing.

To do it from a right wing becomes very difficult without making yourself look like a reincarnation of Hitler, Mussolini, whoever, you go back to them and [inaudible 01:14:48] and totally [inaudible 01:14:52] you will do as I say. That doesn't wear with people now, even the Albion island people out there who believe England is for England they want to be able to criticize as well. They forget that under dictatorship if you criticize you’re the next one that disappears.

[crosstalk 01:15:20].

Number two [crosstalk 01:15:23].

I didn’t get any particular political leaning within it, I think there's more of had to do with human nature and how we govern ourselves, I didn’t get a particular political leaning within the performances.

For me it was more like foreseeing what might come about in future because realistically we're in an island and the ice up there is somehow melting.

We're going to be the first one.

In future this is the reality. It's more like every other Hollywood movies where it subconsciously keep you awake or inform you of some things that might come about. Being part of this for me was the best thing in my life.

That nicely brings me onto the next and the final sort of section is in what ways if any are you proud of the personal contribution you made at Flood?

Just answered that.

I think it's just the real stepping out ... For me it was stepping out of my comfort zone definitely. Doing something that I've never done and I sort of fallen into it by accident to be fair and just thought let’s go for it because I'm never going to get this opportunity again. I did make friends [inaudible 01:16:58] because it was very wobbly. The first few rehearsals we did were the flotation device after that. Yeah, just being out of my comfort zone and doing something different.

For me it was just a continuation of this thing I've got since I retired, having a whale of a time, done all sorts of stupid things and all sorts of really good things. This was one of the best parts of taking part in because it was so extraordinary. It was so different.

I think for me it was the pride was everybody being involved I think was the fact that we’ve taken on board this city of culture and lets go and do this, we'll look after that, we’ll look after that, gosh that looks a bit dodgy, I don’t know how we’re going to do this but we'll get in there and do that as well. It was just a total feeling of we can do this and then people-

We don't know if it's going to work but we're going to do [inaudible 01:17:59].

Then people [inaudible 01:18:02] because [inaudible 01:18:04]. It was that encouragement and it was that was me watching people really getting so much [inaudible 01:18:13] making it happen, making it work.

I mean what I said earlier about the women who were dodgy on the raft. You could watch them grow into it. You watched the confidence grow, Leanne and the girl with the straight hair, she was terrified. By the end of it she was just taking it all in. Gareth is rocking it and [inaudible 01:18:40] whereas at the beginning she would have been crawling off if it had done that.

I think it was nice for your family and friends to come along and see you in it as well [inaudible 01:18:56]. I remember the night we were going back and all your family were there, dockside, giving us a standing ovation. Yeah, I think there's a real pride there having your friends and family there to come along and enjoy that with you.

For me putting theater and telly together was a stand out because from what I understand theater and television are two different things. In part three since we got to be on the telly it also brought another light, shed another light in my mind, "Oh okay, no wonder people who are in theater are also on the telly." Because on the telly you go like, "Cut, okay, action." On the theater it goes and it rolls.

And it’s got to continue.

You work on it as you go but when it's put together it was a really ... A good thing for me to see that's happening. And being part of it as well.

For pride, everybody who took part should be proud of their little bit. Because we all had one little bit which on their own was nothing. When you put them all together those little bits grow into something magnificent and that's what we all did. That's what we should be proud of, not what I did, not what you did but what we did.

That is a lovely quote and I can imagine it quite clearly being on publicity materials!

[crosstalk 01:20:47].

You just got yourself a new job as marketing manager.

Well, I tell you what, when I go back to a stage theatre it's not going to feel right now.

Well, that's one of the quotes than Allan said, "We want to ruin ordinary theatre for everybody who comes to see it."

Yeah but I'm keeping the eye on Slung Low’s website because Allan said, "Well, we're coming to York some time we're not quite sure when but we're coming up to York to do something."

I'll be hanging from the roof of the Minster or something.

[crosstalk 01:21:25].

Redo the massacre in Cliffords Tower tower.

What relationships did you develop with sort of each other or the local community or [crosstalk 01:21:41]?

Well, certainly the three of us have bumped into each other umpteen times since. I was watching in Zebedees Yard watching [inaudible 01:21:55] and she went, "Oh [inaudible 01:21:59]."

[crosstalk 01:22:03]. It sounds like a cult.

I think for me it was definitely just family. Just a new little family because it was only 11 of us volunteers. Sally ended up having to come and [inaudible 01:22:29] to stop the boat from crashing into the caravan but that was about it. Sally one of the community, she came on with us. It was just family. I mean I was doing ... I can't remember if it was ... Bleached or the bricks in C4Di building, and what was her name?

Oh yeah is it Rachel or something?

Something like that yeah. She was jogging down, she just moved houses, she's now living on that side of town rather than wherever she was living before. She was jogging round [inaudible 01:23:08] and I saw a [inaudible 01:23:11] I waved, [inaudible 01:23:13] she just gave me the biggest hug ever. I'm like, "Hi." She's like, "How are you?" [inaudible 01:23:18]. "What are you doing now?"

Is that Iris?

She was the one on the floating platform, she died in the first one. She was the daughter.

I can never remember names.

Catherine.

Yeah Catherine. She was [crosstalk 01:23:33].

[crosstalk 01:23:34]. Doing the bit on the badge I came of the art gallery in [inaudible 01:23:46] Street. She went, "Are you doing anything?" I went, "Not particularly, why?" "Come with me." I must have spent two hours giving out leaflets for their production which was on over the next three days. They practiced.

For me it was family because we had all sorts on there and we had a freeness in our boat.

[inaudible 01:24:13].

I thought these are weird people and then I’m getting lifts home with them at 11 o'clock at night and he says, "No, we're not like that cult you thought, we don't eat babies brains."

Fry them first.

I still haven't got my invite.

To me, Jill, she got me my first job, Saidia, she let me know about this play and now I’ve got this main role in it, just lots of other things have just come about from it.

She's really been a leap [crosstalk 01:24:52].

I don't know where I'd be if I didn't do Flood this year.

It's been a real community.

That's amazing.

I never got into the badge thing but you know volunteers get lots of badges, I think you've done it as well. I think [inaudible 01:25:07] identity of [inaudible 01:25:12].

[inaudible 01:25:11].

We all got bracelets.

Yeah, we all got little bracelet made [inaudible 01:25:22]. Bracelets.

You’re not going to have a tattoo like they did on Lord of the Rings?

I'm scared of needles.

[inaudible 01:25:29].

[crosstalk 01:25:30] safe.

Part three we've all definitely managed to get on the city of culture Christmas event. I think we're all together finally for the first time since Flood, we're all back together so if you’re around on the Wednesday there's a huge massive riot going on, it’s killers.

Had any of you been to Victoria Dock before Flood or did you have any ... ?

Yeah.

Yeah.

[crosstalk 01:26:00].

I've never thought of it as a stage or a theater with me in there.

Did being in Flood change how you felt about Victoria Dock? Do you feel linked to it now? Do you feel-

You’ve certainly got a little link to it. It's a good dog walking area.

How far is it to walk there?

I would imagine it's a mile, not getting on for a mile if [inaudible 01:26:36].

[crosstalk 01:26:37].

[crosstalk 01:26:39] point of view.

[inaudible 01:26:39].

It was nothing like that.

No, it was not buildings there it was just a disused dock, you can still drive around nobody bothered you [inaudible 01:26:52] up and down for half an hour.

You could actually walk from Hessle along [inaudible 01:27:02] the bridge over the warehouses, down the other side, cross over the bridge which is permanently closed [inaudible 01:27:11] walk across. Through there [inaudible 01:27:14] because there was no bridge in between [inaudible 01:27:20]? Then come back and walk all the way down and you still can actually, [inaudible 01:27:29]?

One of them.

One of them, something like that. You can walk all the way [inaudible 01:27:37] from there if you want [crosstalk 01:27:38].

[crosstalk 01:27:39].

Sorry.

[inaudible 01:27:42].

Yeah, it's one place you can't get lost.

[crosstalk 01:27:47].

[crosstalk 01:27:48].

[inaudible 01:27:50] walk dogs.

The Flood has ... Among the people that have got close to is Eni, sister Eni and Eni lives on the other side of Humber but she likes to cycle and also grew a passion of cycling. In the few months after the Flood we've been cycling throughout most of Hull, in and out telling you about going to Beverly and back, Hornsea on the trail. I've grown to really be attached to the family as you say because really Flood has opened different doors that I never knew. I never knew that I could cycle for so long. The best I could do was at home with my wife.

It's easier around Hull it’s flat.

I think these friendships built not just from being in Flood but just from being a volunteer. There were friendships that are built from being in Flood definitely. I think just the volunteer community has been one of the best parts of it for me, it's just ...

I think that comes about more because of the journey we've all taken. You were in wave 1, and you've got all the [inaudible 01:29:24] it will never work. It's a lot of rubbish, this place is a lot of rubbish. Then you don't hear any of that now or very little.

[inaudible 01:29:38] for years as long as I can remember Hull’s been a bit of a backwater, nobody ever wanted to come there, one of the main reasons I wanted to be volunteer was to stand up [inaudible 01:29:49]. This is what we can do and we proved it and I don't think anybody is ever going to match what [crosstalk 01:29:58].

[crosstalk 01:29:57].

[crosstalk 01:29:57] next week on the seventh. I don't know when the next one's going to be.

[inaudible 01:30:03].

No.

[inaudible 01:30:08].

Well Londonderry finished it with a chop. That's it we're not doing it anymore.

I think I heard something that it might be affected by the Brexit [inaudible 01:30:23].

Could be but no more than anywhere else in the country.

That may be the European city of culture.

[crosstalk 01:30:29] European one yeah.

European one, yeah.

You've had the mayor of London up here because he wants to do a similar-

Really?

Yeah he wants to do a similar thing for boroughs of London. The cultural borough of London and among [inaudible 01:30:47] as he said when you've got a place like this which has been lifted so much, why start from scratch, go and learn off them.

We've heard delegations from all the shortlisted cities for the next city of culture, they’ve had a good look and they’ve buttonholed volunteers here there and everywhere and when I asked why they were doing it they said, because you’re doing it so well we want to see if we can do it.

[inaudible 01:31:24] because when we were [inaudible 01:31:31] involved in a few things. I never imagined for one minute we'd be doing this sort of things with [inaudible 01:31:37] for all of us.

I's up there [inaudible 01:31:45].

I do tell you one thing though, if I can and if Slung Low do something at the next city of culture and I can buy the pennies in my pockets, get a ticket, I will be going and see it, definitely.

I'd like to take part in it.

[crosstalk 01:32:04]. We can hope.

I'm saving my holidays up.

I was involved with the MIcropolis for the Land of Green Ginger bit. I did-

[crosstalk 01:32:17].

Yeah [crosstalk 01:32:19].

[crosstalk 01:32:19].

Like from the greenroom to the building of the actual buildings to actually like manning the buildings as a volunteer and although dressed in green when they opened up to the public to even actually being called by [inaudible 01:32:35] on a Sunday [inaudible 01:32:36] please can you come and help us take it down? I was like, "Half an hour." So I scooted the other side of town to help them dismantle it all because they were in such a panic, they needed to be out and they wanted to be off doing other bits and pieces. They've got something coming up in Newcastle I'm trying to keep an eye out for. The actual cardboard city is going to be moved somewhere else and if it's reasonably local like Newcastle, I might go there and see that.

That's like with Flood, I mean I don't know if any of you guys are going on Saturday to the Christmas fare thing that they're doing. I'm even considering going to Leads to see the guys if I'm not doing anything because they've got a Christmas fare on.

I'm interviewing Allan tomorrow, I shall pass on your regards.

From all of us please.

[crosstalk 01:33:23].

Yes and I'm absolutely gobsmacked with just how overwhelmingly positive they all are.

You need to find [crosstalk 01:33:35].

Is this the same with the other group that you was ... ?

Sorry.

Was this the same with the other group that you had just before?

Yeah. I mean the residents I've tried really hard to get any of them to say anything bad at all about [inaudible 01:33:51] and they are just [inaudible 01:33:53] dedicated to [inaudible 01:34:00]. When they heard that you guys had made little video clips to give them feedback to help with them funding, they want to do that. I got in touch with Bret and he's agreed to give his time to volunteer to sew all little bits together. They just absolutely adore them.

Well they got a free show every night for a month.

[inaudible 01:34:19] a nuisance, just they've treated them with such respect because they were really worried at the beginning of the [inaudible 01:34:26] because the fireworks. Victoria Dock wasn't one of the allocated viewing areas but thousands of people came, parked on the grass.

Some of that was my fault. I kept sending people that way.

[crosstalk 01:34:37] finished some set of idiots broke in and vandalized and stole a lot of the stuff there.

You have to excuse me.

Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate. Thank you so much for all of your time. I really appreciate it, it's been great to speak to you all. I've been doing-

[crosstalk 01:35:00].

Community engagement in my 20 years of analysis and research and I've never seen the extent that [inaudible 01:35:10] to the point of knocking on doors, are you okay? What do you need? Going to the resident's association well in advance.

Thank you [inaudible 01:35:20].

[crosstalk 01:35:21].

[crosstalk 01:35:22].

Some of the volunteers [inaudible 01:35:29] Indian.

[crosstalk 01:35:35].

[crosstalk 01:35:38].

I've grown to be a vegetarian, my wife honestly my wife is a vegetarian [inaudible 01:35:47] vegan, I eat meat and I'm proud of that so involved [inaudible 01:35:56] has really brought me into joining in with them that, "Oh okay, vegetables are good and you can bring out a different dish." Can you remember I kept on asking for recipes, [inaudible 01:36:11] recipes.

I may be wrong but I can remember you saying meat was a way of conspiracy by the dentist or something. Something along the liens of that.

[crosstalk 01:36:24] Netflix it was really discrediting meat.

I think I got it wrong, what was it again?

If dentists you eat meat then it keeps them in the job.

It was a show I watched on Netflix which was really degrading meat by far in a way that if you see an animal you'd [inaudible 01:36:49].

[inaudible 01:36:50]. I'm just going to stop it.

I know there [inaudible 01:36:59] residents, all of the [inaudible 01:37:01] had finished, they really missed everybody and [inaudible 01:37:08].

[crosstalk 01:37:08] like when you take down your Christmas decorations [inaudible 01:37:14] there's nothing wrong but it just feels like there's something missing.

It was interesting cos I live in Hedon, I would actually detour to see what's happening, what was going on [inaudible 01:37:27] the stage I went to look and saw the barrels I thought, "This is interesting." [inaudible 01:37:34] and those barrels have no problem. It was just this fascination really.

Just when they did ... They accidentally sort of did some damage to the grass and just immediately they're like, "We're so sorry, this is what we've done but we're going to absolutely make sure that it's better than it was." The resident, he said to me, "Yeah right, as if you're going to be able to do that." They did and that's the fact that these people were really ... not suspicious I mean it’s your area isn’t it, some of the people I had spoken to left when it first opened and bought the first house and they just absolutely adore them. It's really remarkable, it's really lovely.

Honestly it makes me feel really warm and fuzzy. Just because as a researcher you're used to people complaining and moaning so it's ...

I went [inaudible 01:38:35] well I was one of the volunteers [inaudible 01:38:38] and a couple of [inaudible 01:38:41] went there separate nights and they both recognized me [inaudible 01:38:46] and actually [inaudible 01:38:48] and then again a couple of days later. [inaudible 01:38:51].

[inaudible 01:38:53]. I want to go see those.

Have you seen [inaudible 01:38:57]?

Where is it? [inaudible 01:39:05]?

[crosstalk 01:39:05].

It's online.

I've got a couple of [inaudible 01:39:10] volunteer, [inaudible 01:39:13] 21 of December.

I actually wanted to take part in that [inaudible 01:39:20].

[crosstalk 01:39:20].

[inaudible 01:39:23], yeah, the rehearsals for the-

Did you do it?

I did it, yeah.

[crosstalk 01:39:29].

[inaudible 01:39:32].

[crosstalk 01:39:35].

I actually knew [inaudible 01:39:38].

Did you?

Oh yeah [inaudible 01:39:40]. She was before [inaudible 01:39:46] she got involved in that she was always quite well known on [inaudible 01:39:49].

[crosstalk 01:39:50].

She was a big woman and she was a loud woman.

What did you think of her?

I thought she did a tremendous job and she took a lot of bloody stick at that time, and I couldn’t understand why. At the time I was in the Royal Navy, I went twice [inaudible 01:40:08]. The second time I came back I owed [inaudible 01:40:14] that's how long ago it was [inaudible 01:40:15]. I was only a [inaudible 01:40:20] boy. They said, "Don't [inaudible 01:40:23]." I said [inaudible 01:40:28] three weeks of being away and I got the company three [inaudible 01:40:31].

Why did you owe the company [inaudible 01:40:32]?

Because you're to buy your own bedding.

That's disgusting.

Yeah I've heard about this.

Everything like that.

That is madness.

Well I don't know because I didn't see one [inaudible 01:40:45]. I think that one was more of a [inaudible 01:40:49].

Headscarf.

Her life, yeah. It highlighted at the end how she was really-

Ostracized.

[inaudible 01:41:01] people don't know [inaudible 01:41:03].

I knew nothing about it until about [inaudible 01:41:08] I did a volunteer thing at [inaudible 01:41:09] about the [inaudible 01:41:15] then [inaudible 01:41:19].

Did anybody see the [inaudible 01:41:27] in the [inaudible 01:41:29]?

Yeah.

They had 900 [inaudible 01:41:34]. Each fish represented a ship, a fishing boat lost, over 6000 fishermen [inaudible 01:41:50]. It's a village.

[crosstalk 01:41:51].

It was absolutely scandalous going back [inaudible 01:41:56] really it's not that really long ago.

The fact that the men turned on her, you know.

Yeah, it's a man's world. They absolutely disagreed.

Because you've got to understand the mentality, [inaudible 01:42:12] was a rather clever girl and she went to grammar school and she had a chance to go to university. She didn't go because the argument was what's the point of educating a girl?

A girl. I thought that was an African-

[crosstalk 01:42:25].

Yeah precisely you've got to go to the third world to get that now but you're only going back 50 years.

[inaudible 01:42:35] in the [inaudible 01:42:38] because it was [inaudible 01:42:39].

It's just [inaudible 01:42:43].

It costed them money to [inaudible 01:42:47].

[inaudible 01:42:49].

None of these guys who were fishermen had a regular job. They were considered casual workers. The mayor being on the same ship for 10 years didn't matter. You were a casual worker and when they sold the ship you were [inaudible 01:43:05]. It went until I think Tony Blair was the prime minister that they actually got some redundancy money. That was about 30 years afterwards and a lot of them were dead.

[inaudible 01:43:22] on anything new.

I went to a meeting [inaudible 01:43:30]. I went to a meeting to be [inaudible 01:43:31]. One of the [inaudible 01:43:35].

Is that the [inaudible 01:43:41] or the other one?

No the other one.

[crosstalk 01:43:42].

[crosstalk 01:43:42].

It's such a shame that [inaudible 01:43:45] the same time. I really wanted to-

It's a real shame because the [inaudible 01:43:52] started way back at the beginning of the year and then the [inaudible 01:43:57].

I felt that like because it was so advertised as being sold out [inaudible 01:44:05] I thought that that one was sold out.

I think a lot of people got confused as well [inaudible 01:44:11]. It wasn't the one they wanted to go see, it was the other one and [crosstalk 01:44:16].

[crosstalk 01:44:17].

A couple of my friends have done that.

It's a real shame because they [inaudible 01:44:22] really. It was a [inaudible 01:44:24].

Community.

They [inaudible 01:44:28]. There was a lot of crowdfunding done upfront and promoted to try and raise enough money and just put the thing on and then [inaudible 01:44:36].

[inaudible 01:44:40].

[crosstalk 01:44:43].

They're doing another one [crosstalk 01:44:45].

Because everyone is complaining that we're not getting enough time to see these plays.

That used to be a conversation [inaudible 01:44:50]. We don't get enough time to see plays.

That's [inaudible 01:44:58] long sleeves and locked you up [inaudible 01:45:01].

Such as a [inaudible 01:45:05] expectation in the city now is fantastic.

I hope that continues.

Some of us have already attended [inaudible 01:45:17] what we're going to be doing next year.

Next year, yeah.

A lot of us I know have already started looking at that.

Well I hope they've put the money and the investment into the legacy-

They're trying to get investment, they have got some and I want to carry it on.

I believe [inaudible 01:45:35] Olympics or what he's done for our city, it's shame we've got to lose him. He's going to go somewhere else but somewhere else is going to benefit what we've had to-

[crosstalk 01:45:47].

No, not yet.

Soon though, he is definitely.

I mean a lot of them [crosstalk 01:45:53].

[inaudible 01:45:56] at the end of the year.

I think Martin is leaving the end of this year, he's got another job to go to. A lot of them have already started leaving.

[crosstalk 01:46:04] I know.

David's gone.

You certainly may need to carry on [inaudible 01:46:10].

No.

I would hate it to stop.

[inaudible 01:46:14].

I just wonder where the next one will be and-

[inaudible 01:46:22].

Thank you so much [crosstalk 01:46:24] than you for your time.

[crosstalk 01:46:26].

Yes [crosstalk 01:46:28].

Help yourselves to biscuits and [inaudible 01:46:31] and ...

I never thought for a minute [crosstalk 01:46:34].

So, we-