

C & G interviewing Franco about Sheffield's Harcourt Road

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The interview was conducted in Hong Kong Cantonese.

The following is the English translation of the transcript.

C: Clara Cheung, G: Gum Cheng, F: Franco

G: [00:03] It is now August 28, 2024, 4:41 PM. We're here in the City Centre at 226 Studio, and now I'm interviewing Franco.

F: [00:17] Hello.

G: Hello, Franco. This interview is mainly about your life on Harcourt Road in Sheffield, things that you've experienced there, or anything related to Harcourt Road. First, let me ask some basics: How long have you lived on Harcourt Road?

F: [[00:43] I moved in around October 2019, and I've lived there up to now... So that's almost five years.

G: [00:52] At the same location the whole time?

F: [00:53] Yes, the same location.

C: [00:55] When you first found this place, was there a specific reason? Were you already keen on living on Harcourt Road, or was it just some coincidence—some stroke of fate—that led you here?

F: [01:07] Actually, I had a purpose. Back then, my department was the Department of Politics, located on the next street over... I've forgotten that street's name—it's where The Wave is now. My department had one of its buildings there. I'm more of a night owl, so I usually stayed in the department until quite late. At that time, I had to move out because my landlord wanted to sell the property where I was living. That place used to be really far away, although the rent was cheap. But I thought, "Hey, this might be a chance to move somewhere closer to my department." So I went on SpareRoom (the rental website) and stumbled upon this place [on Harcourt Road]. It was one of a few places on Harcourt Road, and it was the closest to my department—just two or three minutes away. That's how I found No. XXX Harcourt Road, which is also where I met David (laughs).

C: [02:05] He was your landlord?

F: [02:07] Yes, my live-in landlord. At first, we didn't know each other well, but I would say over time we got to know each other. One reason I really liked that place is because he's a live-in landlord—I'm someone who really needs peace and quiet, and after talking with him, I felt he needed a quiet environment, too. Another very important thing is that if I ended up in any dispute with the housemates—if we couldn't communicate—he would step in. So the main reasons were the location and having a live-in landlord.

G: [02:47] When you first moved in, you were a student, right?

F: [02:55] Yes.

G: [02:56] So, as a student living there, was there any special discount or arrangement for students?

F: [03:07] We didn't have anything like that. I just knew that Harcourt Road...My rental agreement is called a Lodger's Agreement. That means I only rent one room, not the entire property, so I'm a lodger. And then there are those who are actual tenants—I know there are not just a few houses, but quite a large portion (though I'm not sure if it's as many as half). Those places are all rented out to students, while the rest are occupied by local residents. I actually already knew the area a bit because, when I was an undergraduate, I had a friend who lived at No. XX. So I'd visited before. After a few years, I thought, "It's OK," and since living there would be closer to my department, that settled it.

C: [04:01] On Harcourt Road where you're living, do you find there are a lot of your classmates or schoolmates in the neighbourhood? Do you know any of them?

F: [04:13] That's interesting. After I moved there, I realised that many of the people living on that street are students, and mostly local students (based on their age). But as far as classmates, I know... I'm not sure if some heard how close I lived, and when they had to move, they also moved to my street. I've forgotten the house number... It was an odd number, but it was sold recently.

C: [04:38] Classmates from the same department?

F: [04:39] Yes. He moved in there for a while. But then that landlord also wanted to sell, so he moved out. Later, when he had to find another place, I said, "Hey, my landlord has a room for rent," and they talked and got along well. So we ended up living together.

C: [05:02] So overall, how have you felt about living there these five years?

F: [05:10] It's complicated. Generally speaking, it's okay—people get along, and when we see each other, it's pleasant. But the house next door to us is a student house, specifically rented out to students who usually switch every year. Typically, they move out on the last day of June, and a new group comes in on July 1. The landlord rents it out in one-year increments, from what I know. In my experience, the group that moved in July 2020 during COVID was the worst. Me, David, and Philippa basically ended up “at war” with them.

C: What was going on?

G: [06:11] Because there were no physical classes to attend—everything was online?

F: [06:14] Yes, they were stuck at home. On top of that, their mindset was such that... I recall that on their first day moving in, David and Philippa—who normally greet new neighbours around July 1 or so—went to say hello and tried to let them know that we all have to get up early, we're young professionals, etc. But this was the first group of students who flat-out didn't want to talk. They were like, “I pay rent here, I'll do what I want.” Then they partied every night, playing... Sometimes it wasn't just loud; even if they were in the basement, we could hear the bass. Even if the volume isn't super loud, that low-frequency vibration... Our houses are terraced, especially my and David's rooms which are adjacent to theirs. They're old properties, likely with wooden structures, so our rooms would literally vibrate.

C: Shaking?

F: Shaking, so you couldn't sleep. That period made me become much closer with David and Philippa (laughs), because we had to communicate a lot more. COVID was one thing, but that group was another...

C: [07:35] So how did you handle it? Did you try talking to them next door, or...?

G: [07:47] For instance, does David know the next door landlord?

F: [07:53] He does. He's known that landlord for decades. But apparently, the landlord is a typical businessperson—“Got it,” but doesn't do anything, because those students are his customers. David asked him about soundproofing—whether he could install something—but that landlord...

G: [08:21] He's not willing?

F: [08:22] He was willing to do it, but only if David split the cost 50-50. It was really

expensive, and David thought, 'Hey, this isn't our responsibility.' Also, even if you installed something, you couldn't block out all the noise.

G: Low-frequency vibrations can't really be blocked.

F: [08:42] Even if David watches TV—he lives in the room downstairs—and he doesn't even have the bass setting on, but if he's watching a movie with sound effects, engine sounds, or other bass, I can hear it. Sometimes I have friction with him, but that's still okay. But that group next door basically had parties all year. We tried speaking to their landlord, but it did no good. David also said it was a waste of breath; after all, he's a businessman. At most, you can keep pestering him like calling the government for updates, that sort of thing. The second thing we did was call the university's security service. If you know the house next door is students, you can call them 24 hours a day, and they'll come over to check. They did come to investigate, but there was not much they could do, since they weren't the police. At most, they knocked on the door—but the students were all in the basement, they might not even hear it. And even if they did, the security staff could only tell them to turn it down—there was no consequence if they refused. They would just say, 'I pay my rent,' so it didn't work. Luckily for us, it was during lockdown, so we reported them—twice, when they threw parties despite the lockdown.

C: [10:31] During lockdown, gatherings weren't allowed—there were limits on how many people could meet.

F: [10:33] Right, there were limits. You weren't allowed to visit other people's homes. It was the second wave, so it was quite serious. David and I talked about it—though we didn't want to do it unless it was a last resort—and we were calling security, but the security folks would come and say there was nothing else they could do. Finally, once, near Christmas or some other time, I reported them. They got really scared. The next day they were still upset, telling us, "Don't call the police again," but they were also scared. After that, they calmed down a bit, but still got loud sometimes. For a period it was slightly better because David's sister would occasionally come stay with us. She told me, "If you can't sleep and they're too noisy, knock on my door. I'll sleep late; I'll go talk to them." She actually had better luck talking to them. But she told me, "I understand why you and David have said so much about them, and my mom also talked about them, because when I knocked on their door, I saw the entire group was doing ketamine, not just weed or alcohol. That explains it."

C: [11:47] They couldn't control themselves?

F: [11:49] Right. But they were also quite clever academically—they graduated with first-class honours, ironically. Anyway, David and Philippa had previously dealt with disruptive students and had contacted the university's communication team. During COVID, they got in touch again, but it took forever. Finally, in maybe February or March, because we had called security so many times, that team was under

pressure, so the university's discipline team reached out to our student neighbours, told them there was a serious problem, and that they needed a meeting with them about disciplinary measures. That finally scared them, and they started behaving.

G: [12:58] How many of them lived next door, do you know?

F: [13:02] I think six or so? I asked David, and our house basically mirrors theirs, so they probably have five or six rooms.

G: [13:20] And at parties, there are obviously more than six.

F: [13:22] More than six, definitely. Our university even made BBC news once—there was a party at Ranmoor, and someone snitched, so the police and the security showed up to catch them. I'm not sure if they arrested anyone, but it hit the BBC.

C: Because there were too many people? They wanted to arrest them for what?

F: It was a social-distancing violation.

F: [13:55] From my perspective, there are two sides: I understand that students—especially local ones—pay a lot of tuition fees through loans; you can't expect them to stay locked inside all the time. It's not feasible for anyone. But at the same time, I'm really sensitive to noise while sleeping. I don't know... Interestingly, after all that, I actually got along quite well with one of them when we crossed paths just before they moved out.

C: [14:35] It's interesting that you say you and David and Philippa got closer through dealing with all these external troubles.

F: [14:53] That's part of it. And because of COVID we were all in the house more. Since I'd been living there a while, I came to interact more with Philippa. Some other tenants, who didn't stay long, never even knew Philippa lived next door. But during COVID, everyone was in the same house, so we inevitably spent more time together. David's schedule can vary—sometimes he stays home a lot, sometimes he's at his studio. Before COVID, I was mostly in my department, so we wouldn't see each other that often, except when paying rent or if we needed to discuss something.

C: [15:40] What about other neighbours on Harcourt Road, further along the street—do you know them?

F: [15:45] I know some of them, but not too well, because I'm someone who prefers solitude—I tend to keep to myself. I know Simon... I'm not sure if he remembers me,

but I recall the first year (2019) I lived there, there was a Bonfire Night event, and apparently each year, Simon would invite local residents of Harcourt Road, including students—my friend who used to live at No. XX told me he went to Simon's once to watch the bonfire and have pizza.

C: [16:21] How do you watch a bonfire? People set them off in Crookes Valley Park?

F: [16:26] No, they went to Simon's house—he opens his home, and I'm not sure if it's open to people at different times, so they can come and chill.

C: [16:43] So it was a casual get-together?

F: [16:45] Yes. That's how I got to know him. Another acquaintance is a previous tenant living above Philippa because Philippa's house is... we all signed confidentiality stuff, but I think it's OK. Philippa's place is split between the lower two floors (where she lives) and the upper two floors (which she rents out). I was friendly with the old tenant upstairs—he liked drinking Chinese tea, and he used to invite me over. He also knew a lot of people living on Harcourt Road, so through him I met one or two others. But basically... how to put it... I guess you'd call it a 'nodding acquaintance'? Sorry, my Chinese is becoming rusty. (laughs).

G: That's about right.

F: [17:41] Another interesting one is a woman named Sarah—at least I think that's her name—her husband is a Philosophy lecturer at the university. If you walk down Harcourt Road, you might notice a little community library outside their house. But I haven't seen them in a long time.

C: [18:08] They're very nice; we've met them.

F: [18:10] Yes. But if you asked me to recall exactly how they look, I'm not too sure... Anyway, they sometimes hold gatherings. If I see familiar faces, I'll say hi or "good morning," but it doesn't go much deeper. Another person I know is Simon the decorator—hired by Philippa and David. For example, right before coming here today, I saw him working around house number forty-something, so we chatted a bit because we often bump into each other. Also, I believe Harcourt Road has a street party coming soon?—somewhere around the start of term. And there's usually a summer one too?

C: [19:11] In June or July. We participated.

G: [19:14] It was in July, yes.

F: [19:17] So we do have those. But I'm not sure how many students actually join. I remember, when I was an undergrad, my friend said it was very lively, but after COVID it seems more subdued—mostly local residents.

C: [19:36] A quick comparison: You rented places elsewhere before you lived on Harcourt Road. Does Harcourt Road give you more of a community feeling, or is it basically similar?

F: [19:56] I do think it's friendlier here. Previously, I lived in Nether Edge, farther out—which might be an area with Indian or Middle Eastern communities. It was about 45 minutes to campus, but the rent was super cheap. My landlord was a Chinese friend who gave me a good deal to support my PhD. It was extremely quiet there; I barely saw anyone.

Harcourt Road feels different—for example, I once visited Simon's house, and he had lots of decorations brought from China... Hard to describe, but Harcourt Road feels like a mix of different backgrounds. That other place never gave me that sense—though I was barely there, always going to campus early and coming home late, so maybe I just didn't notice.

G: [21:24] You've lived on Harcourt Road for five years now. Do you feel it's like "home" there?

F: [21:30] Good question. I've never thought about it, but I'd say yes. Although I'm not sure if it's because of Harcourt Road itself or not. But if you ask about No. XXX where I live, I genuinely feel a homey vibe. Aside from our bedrooms, the main common area is the kitchen. We have to go down one level from the front door. From the street side, it's basically a basement, but from the back side, we have a garden. The kitchen design feels very home-like—maybe a bit old, but not in a run-down way. It has some of Philippa's paintings hung up, giving it a homey vibe. Honestly, I have at times thought about moving out to find a "fresh environment," hoping for new stimulation, but I always change my mind. That might be how you know it feels like home.

G: [23:04] Maybe because you're used to it?

F: Yes, exactly. I'm used to David. We do have friction, but we communicate, and issues go away quickly. If I moved somewhere else, most places have live-out landlords, and I'd worry about living with students I can't get along with, because I've had that experience before. It's partly luck. And David... I wouldn't say he's like my father, but he's a good friend and gives a real homey feel. If I need help, he's always willing. So it's not just the interior design—it's that warmth.

G: [23:55] Downstairs, there's a workshop, right? I've never been there. Have you?

F: [24:02] I'm trying to remember how to describe it... He actually has three rooms,

each with a different purpose. Upstairs is the “packing room,” which used to be my room. It’s kind of funny—I’ve almost stayed in all his rooms. Initially I rented the tiny room by the front door, the cheapest one. But after COVID, I found it too small, so I moved to what’s now the “packing room.” But the issue with that room was, it might have a west-facing slope or something like that. It only got sunlight in the afternoon, and since it looked out onto Harcourt Road, the natural light wasn’t great. At that time, some students had their speakers right up against our shared wall, which caused trouble. Later on, a different tenant left, so I moved into the room I have now, which faces the big hole.

C: [25:16] The “Harcourt hole” (laughs).

F: [25:16] (Laughs) Yes. So there’s the packing room—he and two friends started a new business, and they asked me to sign as a witness (laughs). Anyway, the room next to the front door is his studio for sound engineering, basically for mixing. Another room in the basement has machines for cutting wood, etc. So I’m not sure which one you meant specifically, sorry (laughs).

G: [26:04] I’ve never been, just curious.

F: [26:10] He basically has two separate businesses in those rooms.

C: [26:18] Do you learn more about Sheffield’s history or the neighbourhood’s background by talking with Philippa and David?

F: [26:26] I heard quite a bit from them. For instance, I asked if the houses were really old. They said they were built in the 1930s. Sometimes we chat about random things—for example, the official area name. I’m not sure if it’s called Crookes or not.
C: It probably isn’t.

F: Maybe it’s Crookes Vale? The street above us might be Crookes... it is not Crookesmoor Road though. I’m not sure. Philippa or David told me that back in the ‘80s, when Philippa and her then-husband bought No. XXX, they almost couldn’t get a mortgage because the next street over was really rough. But somehow, our house was mapped into a different zone, maybe Broomhill or something else, so they were able to get a mortgage. We’re right at the boundary.

C: [27:49] So if you were part of Crookesmoor, it would’ve been too rough.

F: Yeah. My friend who used to live at No. XX said once he met someone at a random event—maybe in London—who said, “Yeah, I was a cop patrolling there in the ‘80s or ‘90s.” So I asked David if it used to be rough. He said it was. I asked why it’s not like that now. He said he’s not sure.

C: [28:21] Yes, we also interviewed some people who lived here in the 80s. They mentioned drug dealing, and dealers...

F: I can't even imagine it now. Because these days, the neighbourhood has a mix of students and residents, and you don't really see that. But it might also explain why this neighbourhood developed a strong community group—like Simon's group that runs an email list and website. I'm surprised that a single neighbourhood could organise something to this level.

C: [29:29] Over the past five years, how do you find safety here?

F: [29:35] I think it's very safe. Sometimes I check the crime rate map. There are occasional anti-social behaviour incidents, but not necessarily on our street. Maybe some car theft, but not necessarily targeting us. Plenty of people park here; I often see City Council staff writing tickets, since it's near the university...but I feel safe. Even at night, it's quiet, but I don't find it unsafe.

C: [30:22] Your window overlooks that hole—"Harcourt Hole." Have you ever spotted animals around there? We've heard that there are badgers and foxes. Not sure if the hole attracts wildlife.

F: [30:41] I don't see many. I see animals in the garden. In the hole, I haven't noticed. In the back garden, I've seen what might be a rat—quite large, with a long tail. Once, I opened the door to the kitchen, and it stared at me, then ran off. But as for the hole, I haven't seen wildlife there. It's overgrown with plants. I haven't seen animals.

C: [31:30] So it's mainly lots of plants?

F: [31:32] There are lots of plants, mostly just left there. **David** said that before the 2008 financial crisis, some wealthy individual from the Middle East—

C: [31:45] A boxer, a pretty famous one.

F: [31:47] Yes, he bought that land intending to build private accommodation. David and our neighbour's landlord both opposed it. After the 2008 financial crash hit, nothing happened, and the hole is still there.

C: [32:09] So David told you this as part of local community history?

F: [32:12] Sometimes in conversation, yes. Because I noticed that hole had been there since I was an undergraduate—at least ten years. I'd wonder why it was still there. He'd also mention that The Wave Building was torn down and rebuilt, and how the locals all knew there was a dam underneath, so they had to tear down and

rebuild. David laughed that everyone knew about the dam except the people who built it in the first place.

C: [33:01] Apart from going to campus, are there certain shops or parks you frequent in this neighbourhood?

F: [33:13] You've probably heard of Beanies. I go there often. Things are pricey, but they have organic produce. I study health policy, I've become more aware of what to eat. Of course, I sometimes stress-eat, anyway (laughs). There's an American group—might be from the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) or an NGO—talking about the “dirty dozen” or something. Certain items have more pesticides, like lemons and apples. In Hong Kong, produce looks so “perfect,” but at Beanies, lemons can look rough, maybe with spots or discoloration. But that's actually more natural. Since COVID, I go to Beanies more—maybe every other day. Some vegetables must be organic, and if I can't find them at supermarkets, I'll check Beanies.

G: [34:35] It seems like on Harcourt Road itself, there's nothing you can buy—no shops.

F: [34:43] (Laughs) Exactly.

G: [34:44] So how do you go about your daily life here?

C: [34:52] Just Beanies, campus, and home (laughs)

F: [34:53] Pretty much (laughs). Before COVID, that was my routine. There's also a Sainsbury's across the street, and up by Beanies there's an Ozmen—which I think is frequented by people from a Middle Eastern background. I drop in sometimes. Sure, you can just live that way and be fine. During COVID, I went further out to Broomhill for a while because there are three supermarkets there. But then I felt I wasn't walking enough, so I started going to that Tesco Superstore near Ponderosa—walking downhill is nice, but coming back up is tough. Sometimes I also go to the big Sainsbury's in the Moor Market.

C: [35:54] So basically heading to the city centre?

F: [35:55] Yes, exactly. If you limit yourself to just Harcourt Road or Crookesmoor, it's okay, but if you want more options, you can head in those directions I mentioned. Actually, Clara, you described it well—before COVID, I'd just go to class, and even after COVID, I often didn't go back to the office. I could just stay around here. I do go to Beanies every day or every other day. But the city centre? Maybe once a week, or if I'm meeting someone. It works fine. I'm still a pretty solitary type of person (laughs).

C: [36:42] Do you visit those two nearby parks often? It's great that you live right next to Crookes Valley Park.

F: [36:52] Yes, Crookes Valley Park is great. I walk there more often than Weston Park. Weston Park is pretty, but Crookes Valley is a bit less crowded by university folks. If I need to clear my head from research, I go there more often. Sometimes I do walk Weston Park, and if I'm with friends, we do a circuit: Crookes Valley Park, Weston Park, then Ponderosa. We just walk it all.

After COVID, if the weather is good, I prefer walking catch-ups with friends rather than sitting for coffee. It's relaxing. If you look at the houses across the street—those even numbers—they face Crookes Valley Park. So that's how we ended up going to Simon's for Bonfire. I really enjoy walking around there. However, sometimes I see people swimming... they say the water's dirty and quite deep... it looks dirty with ducks and their droppings. I'm not sure what to say.

G: [38:45] You never joined them (swimming)?

F: [38:48] No, though one of my housemates did invite me (laughs). I said, "No thanks."

The university gym's pool apparently shut down permanently, I'm not sure if that means people end up going to Crookes Valley Park to swim—if they live nearby and there's nowhere else.

C: [39:29] Earlier you mentioned the community library. Have you used it or picked up anything?

F: [39:36] I haven't taken a book from it, but I have browsed and donated one.

C: [39:44] So from what you recall, what sorts of books do you see there, and what do you think of that little library?

F: [39:53] I think it's great—similar to a community fridge concept but for books. When I first looked, it was right when it started. I often passed by but suddenly saw this little bookshelf with actual books in it. By then I already knew Sarah, and I knew her husband was a philosophy lecturer, so I wasn't surprised—academics often have too many books and want to share instead of wasting them. And, after all, a book is knowledge, even if it's just printed text. I saw a lot of philosophy and history titles at first...

C: Possibly his own collection?

F: Probably so. Now I see some fiction, including children's books, so it's become more diverse.

C: [40:53] We've passed by a few times and found mostly fiction.

F: [40:57] Yes, because Sarah... I recall she works freelance or something related to publishing. Anyway, I bet they have a wide range of books at home. I think it's a great idea, but I don't know how many people actually use it. I'm a bit old-school; I need a physical copy to really absorb the content. E-books don't stick for me. So I approve of it in principle, but I'm not sure how often students use it. My own housemates—various cohorts of them—do read, so maybe they do. Also, there might be another community channel, like the Harcourt Road Community Group. Residents probably know about it, but students might not. In any case, it's a positive addition for the neighbourhood—a good practice to share.

C: [42:27] Speaking of the community group, are you in any of their WhatsApp or email groups?

F: I'm not, but David did ask if I was interested. He once asked a housemate, who joined. Maybe David forgot to ask me again... He only recently started using WhatsApp. I know there's an email list for the community group I joined, but not the WhatsApp group.

G: [43:09] You mentioned the students next door used to be very loud. Has it been quieter these past few years?

F: [43:16] You don't really know until September, because in July, they usually move in, and for the first couple of weeks, they'll have a housewarming party. I experienced it in early July when David was away—it was hot, so the windows were open. One night, I smelled charcoal burning, opened the curtain, and realised smoke was pouring in. With David not home, I just shut the window and went back to sleep.

C: [44:05] They were burning something?

F: Probably, burning in the back garden at midnight (laughs). I don't think that's a big deal—they might not realise how the smoke travels. Typically, second- or third-year students live there. For first-year students, they usually stay in university accommodation. For now, I think the new tenants might be OK. I bumped into Philippa once, and she said she had talked to them. But we won't really know until September. David's stance is that once or twice a year is fine, but if it's nightly parties, no way. Probably it won't be as bad as 2020's group. David said even that landlord complained about how filthy they kept the place, requiring a big clean up afterward.

C: [45:23] Every year, at the end of term, lots of students move out in summer and

dump tons of stuff on the street. What do you think about that phenomenon? You've moved houses too—do you find it hard to take everything with you? Is there a better way to handle it?

F: [45:53] This happens every year. I suspect many students just don't know ways to give stuff away. I totally get it. I've been in that situation myself. I've seen some who leave items outside with a note saying "feel free to grab," and I've taken a few things I can use. That's helpful. Also, the university runs a scheme—though I'm not sure how to access it—where they gather freebies from departing students, and new students can take them.

C: Is that organised by the Students' Union?

F: Not sure if it's run by the accommodations themselves. For instance, at Ranmoor/Endcliffe, I believe that at the start of each new academic year, they have a stand offering second hand items like kitchenware. As for the ones who can't take things with them, I don't blame them. If they're final-year local students, many move to bigger cities like London or Manchester for work. It's expensive to haul all that stuff to London, especially if it's not worth much. Ideally, they could find a place to donate rather than throwing it away, but I'm not sure what's available. The Students' Union might accept donations, but maybe they only accept so much before they run out of space, I'm not sure. A side note: I have a Thai friend from university. When he was in his second year, his house basically turned into a secondhand market because of a Thai community tradition—new arrivals receive items from older students. They even act as guides to help them settle in, which is really nice.

C: [48:28] A small community just handles it on their own..

F: Exactly. Unfortunately, the Hong Kong Society here doesn't do that, or at least didn't. I'm not sure if it's an official society or their own community group, but I find it interesting. Nothing goes to waste, and everything is useful for the next intake.

C: [49:04] Speaking of the university: You mentioned that you or your landlord once contacted a certain department to discuss issues with noisy neighbours. But the university is huge—who knows where to go or whom to talk to? Since you study at Sheffield, do you know if there's a specific department in charge of community outreach, or maybe that 'communications' department you mentioned earlier?

F: [49:37] Yes, as Philippa told me, there's a dedicated team that communicates with local residents, though I can't recall the exact name.

C: [49:57] We've heard from other neighbours who contacted the university about issues like this, and that's great. It's just that the university is such a big organisation with all sorts of administrative structures—people might not know where to start.

F: [50:11] Yes, exactly. Sheffield Uni has over 30,000 people—students and staff—so it's a big place with a lot of top-down bureaucracy. They're divided into specific roles. Based on what Philippa told me, she's known the manager there for a long time, maybe from past outreach efforts. But I'm not entirely sure how it all fits together. I recall there's a team dedicated to PR with local residents.

C: But as a student looking for off-campus housing, does the university help?

F: [51:05] Yes, they do. If you live in university accommodation, it's great—though expensive. It includes all bills, and you use the university's internet. Very convenient. In undergrad, I stayed in university accommodation all three years, which is actually unusual. Whether local or international, most people move out after the first year, partly for cheaper rent or wanting to share a house with friends for a homier vibe. Others might get a studio or live in West One apartments. The university has "Smart Move," run by the Students' Union, which is basically a property agency. It's trustworthy because it's regulated. My Chinese landlord asked me where to advertise, and I said "Smart Move," but he seemed hesitant because they do thorough checks, including city council's inspection schemes for safety, etc. His place was old and far away, so it was cheap but wouldn't pass. However, many students seem to find houses simply by spotting "To Let" signs on the street—like on Harcourt Road.

G: Finally, from our research on Harcourt Road, we see that many residents organise efforts—community campaigns, activism, band together to fight for certain causes, or events that really build community cohesion and harmony. Have you taken part in any of these?

F: Good question. I think the closest I've come to joining an event was probably Bonfire Night at Simon's place. I'm not sure if it's just that I tend to keep to myself, or if it's that Harcourt Road has changed over time. I know they used to be very organised, but I'm not sure what it's like now. For example, there's a Street Party—I usually don't attend because I have other things going on, but I'd like to see what they're up to. One time I passed by while doing something, and it seemed rather quiet. I'm not sure if that's because participation is lower these days. I really can't say, especially since students move in and out all the time, and from what I know, a few residents have also moved away in the past couple of years—at least one, maybe more. I'm not sure if that weakens the community's organisational strength compared to before, or if it's related to a common issue they used to have—like drug dealers. So I don't know. Actually, I almost forgot something: during COVID, the students next door were really noisy, and one time David asked me to go with him to the Harcourt Road community group meeting. I saw quite a lot of people—maybe twenty or thirty. This must have been winter 2020, or maybe autumn. We all met at The Dam House to talk about ways to communicate with the students. That's when I realised we were probably the most affected, though other neighbours said they had similar problems because their homes are also directly adjacent to student houses,

making it tough to negotiate noise issues. I'm not sure how many people were there—over twenty, certainly. Aside from going to Simon's that one time, that was really my main interaction and engagement with neighbours.

C: [56:50] That's good that David asked you along.

F: [56:53] Yes, so I could chime in if he missed anything (laughs). I'm not sure how it is now, whether the group still meets.

C: [57:17] Great, thanks so much. We'll wrap up here.