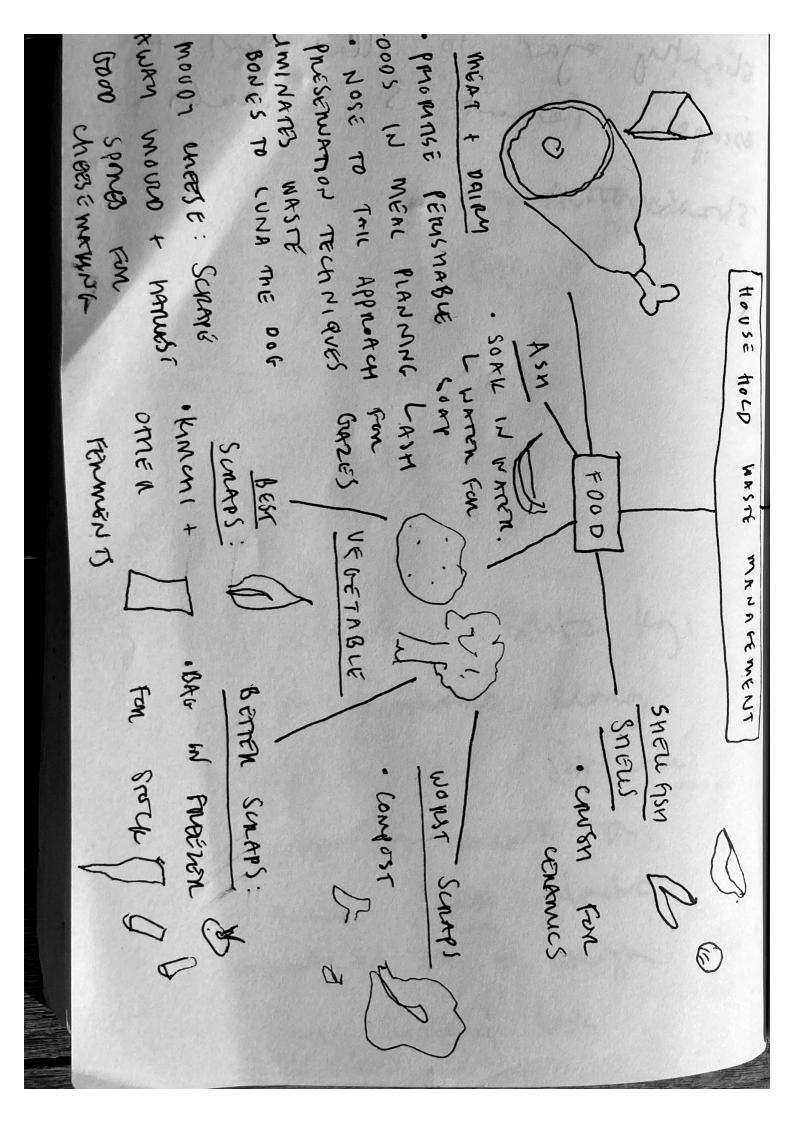
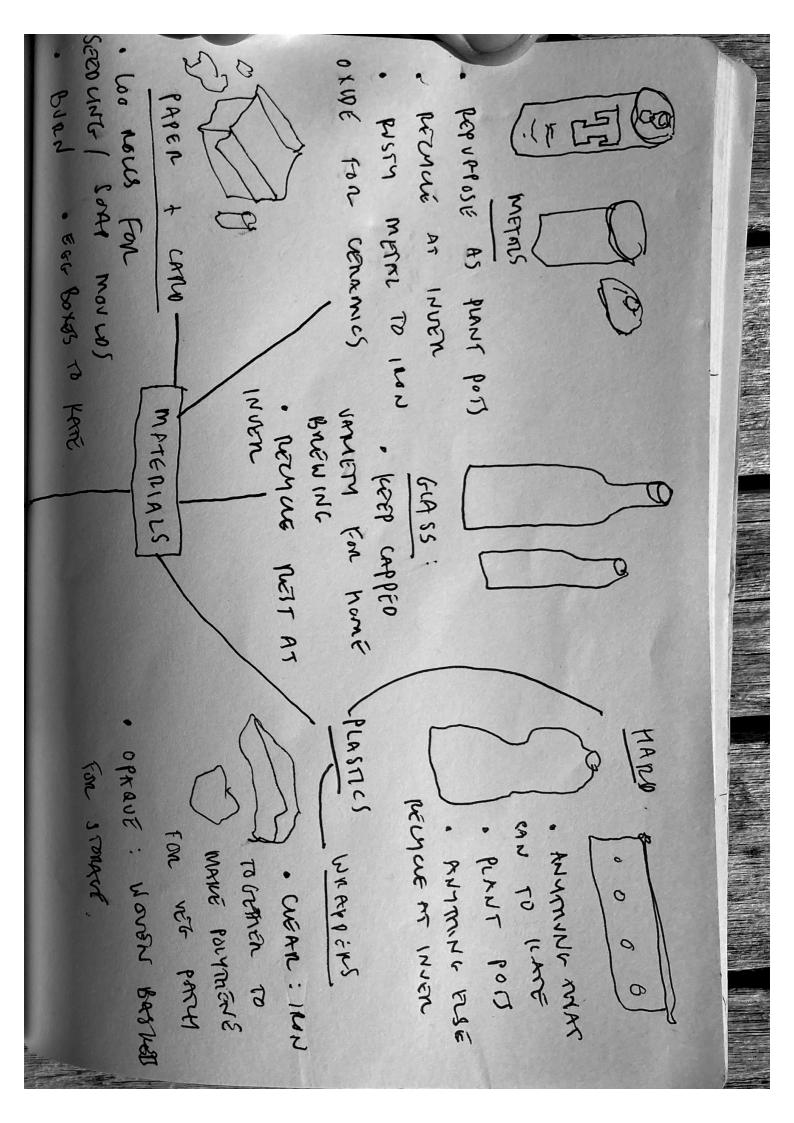


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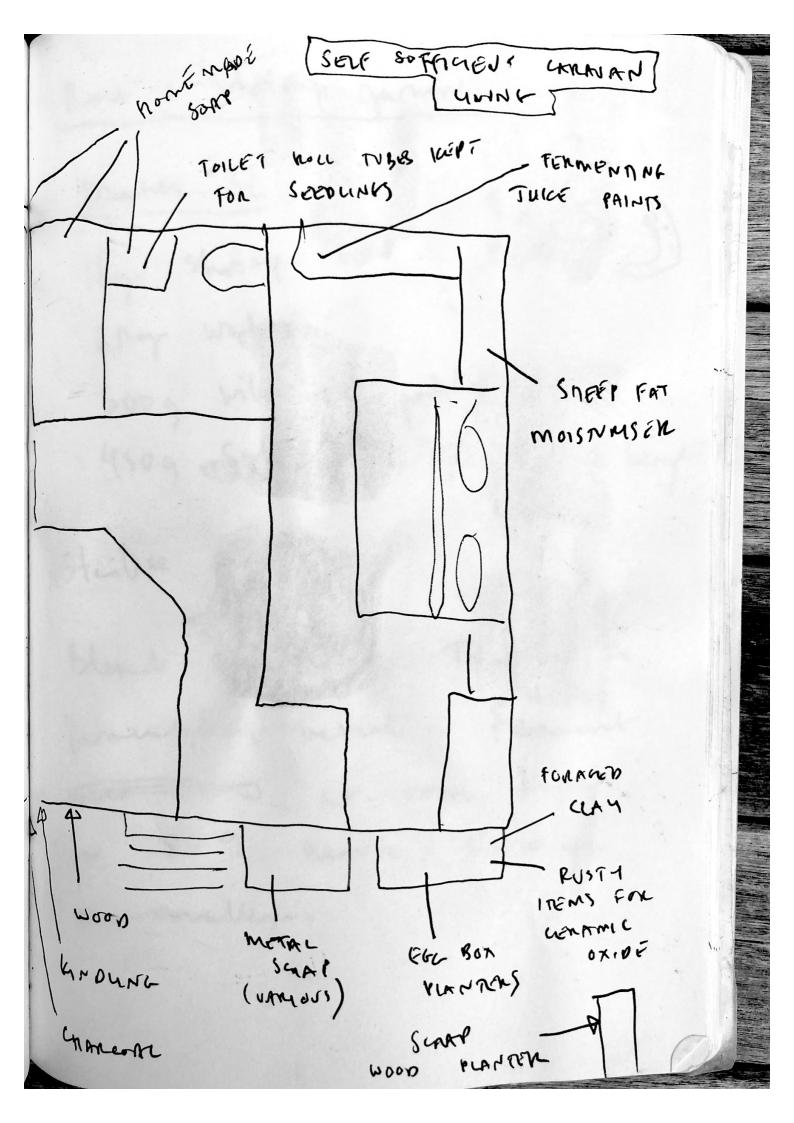
I'm not here to say that self-sufficiency is an easy or even possible practice for most people, but the idea has interested me for some time. At the start of March I took a job at an incredible restaurant in the Scottish Highlands and moved into the staff accommodation ten minutes down the road at a local caravan site, on the shores of Loch Fyne. Three weeks into working saw the restaurant close and cut-off dates to the furlough scheme meant that we would be without. We were given the option to stay, with free rent and groceries generously provided by the landlord and the restaurant, or to go home to our families. I chose to stay.

And then suddenly I had the time to do all the projects that I never had the time to do, to pay attention to the weather and the landscape and the possibilities within that. I love fermentation, preservation, and any way you can make something last much longer than it would go mouldy in your fridge. I've started making (non-authentic) kimchi every fortnight; whatever veg is looking sad before the next veg box goes in the kimchi tub, along with wild garlic and leeks, leek tops and cauliflower stems, all of the unwanted scraps suddenly become something magical and I eat it with every meal. I've got a wee veg patch here, a place for learning and experimentation.



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All of this got me to thinking about my waste. There isn't a recycling system at the caravan site so I take my recycling over to the restaurant bins, but before so I think: can this be used as a food container? If not, can it be used as a plant pot (tenants beer cans work excellently). I know a lot of you are thinking, this is all well and good but what am I supposed to do with this in my flat or wherever; but you CAN. You can still do something, if you have the time of course. Even if it is thinking of ways to use your waste, growing herbs on your windowsill, so much of this can be done in an urban environment. I don't have a greenhouse, and so my caravan is full of my tomatoes and cucumbers hanging in sunny windows. You don't need loads of space or fancy equipment - if you want to do it, just do it! Just try! If it doesn't work, at least you will know. And then move onto something that does. Whatever your environment, something will grow.



Basic Kimchi Recipe:

Mixed veg - try and cut them to equal thickness and have a nice mix of cabbage family (brassicas) and onion family (alliums)

Make a 5% brine and pour over prepped veg. Leave for 12 hours (overnight is best unless you're an early bird)

Strain, and make a paste. This usually contains ginger, garlic and Korean red chilli paste, as well as a dash of fish sauce, but there are loads of variations on this, even in Korean cooking. I've made some with loads of chilli, with no pepper and extra ginger (like a light summer kimchi), with shrimp paste or anchovies; theres some Korean recipes with oysters so theres loads of scope for experimentation.

I usually backstop with my previous batch. The extra liquid helps ensure the fermentation is anaerobic. You can use a little of the veg brine if its your first batch.

