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Spatial Narratives of Happiness in Everyday Environments

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Lay Summary

The current literature in architecture and urban studies has neglected to adequately address people’s demand for happiness. This study was conducted to better enable architects, urban designers and researchers, as well as community activists and decision makers to understand the nuances of multi-level spatial properties that affect user emotive experiences and happiness. The study informs our theoretical understanding of spatial happiness by presenting a robust reference in place-based happiness studies introducing a critical catalogue of previous work and potential connotations in other disciplines. Additionally, a qualitative method toolkit hitherto lacking, is provided to inform our empirical understanding of people’s narratives of spatial happiness. Can urban environment make us happier? If so, to what extent and in what ways is our happiness related to the built environment? How do spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness and what are the sonic values of a happy place? What spatial elements kindle positive experiences and invite happiness for children? And finally, what is our spatial vision for the cities that will not only accommodate our physical needs but also provide a setting that will nurture strong communities and enable them to flourish? The research shows that there are no ultimate happy cities, but cities could always become happier. Happy cities, similar to the notion of happiness, are a process of becoming, and a journey rather than a destination. Happy places provide physical and emotional comfort and promote health and wellbeing while encourage positive and meaningful experiences and encounters. This study explores diverse viewpoints, narratives and approaches that promote spatial qualities such as encounter-ability or utilising wellbeing functions and visual and sonic expectations of place with emphasis on methods that can encourage systematic local approaches rather than universal remedies. The study participants provided positive narrations of flow-inducing places including places that ease the engagement of all senses as well as the natural settings including waterfronts and greenspaces. The results also shed light on the role of memories on positive or negative affect generated by users’ individual and social recollections and the happiness that could stem from familiarity, attachment or taking pride in a place. Furthermore, urban settings that facilitate social connection and provide infrastructures of citywide attempts at setting identity or expressing people’s anxieties and desires to the mechanisms of power were appreciated by the study’s participants. The significance of this study is in recognising
that collaborating closely with people who have lived experience of spatial settings remains essential to ensure that the undertaking research and designing solutions fit people’s requirements and hopes. The study, involving more than 100 participants in exploratory methods, was able to put in context a set of professional practices that demonstrate the role these methods could play in design and architecture and how we can combine social and spatial values with research and intervention; for the challenging yet rewarding recognition of spatial happiness.

Keywords: spatial happiness, happiness, qualitative, narratives, happy places
Dedication

This is dedicated to my parents, Katan and Hamid, who have made the world a happier place to live in for many people with their incredibly giving nature, who have made the happiest moments of my life, and will not hesitate to call me the happiness of their lives, well, most of the time ...
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In the following chapters, I have purposefully entwined my personal experiences, upbringing and viewpoints where relevant. I believe it is only fair to the readers, you, to have a better understanding of who the author of these lines is, who I am and my reasoning roots. So, I have provided glimpses into my life and myself to ease your way into reading this work. Qualitative research is a shared experience and communication with participants is a two-way street, how to listen actively, offer understanding or communicate ideas effectively. Similarly, my interactions with the study’s participants and involved communities were reflective of both my person and the participants. For the last few years, this PhD project was the main drive of my life, and so I have poured heart and mind, soul and body into these lines. I have grown along with this thesis, my thoughts were sharpened throughout the readings, my words were cultivated through my encounters. There were also unprecedented incidents that shaped and continue to shape the world and its political dynamics to this day; the calamity of war was imposed on Ukraine, Iranian women are leading a revolution against the tyranny of theocracy, the global pandemic has affected all lives, Black Lives Matter protests aim to stop systematic racism, and wildfires around the world has rang the warning bells of global warming, just to name a few.

Now that I have established I need to offer an insight into myself, I find it extremely challenging to discuss who I am. I am an architect and a consultant in spatial analysis with a Master of Science in Spatial Design; Architecture and Cities from The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. While completing my PhD in Architecture I was teaching at the University of Edinburgh for Architectural Theory programme. I am passionate about promoting people’s wellbeing through architecture and urban design and my ongoing research interests focus on the correlation between happiness and spatial design. My work has been exhibited in the London Festival of Architecture (LFA) 2017 (in collaboration) and at the UCL Doctoral School exhibition in London as The Best Hundred Research Images of 2018. I was awarded multiple grants for my research; including Edinburgh University Student Experience Grant¹ (Innovation Initiative Grants Edinburgh CCC was an innovative project working closely with communities of Edinburgh to assess what works and what matters to Edinburgh citizens. See more: https://sgsahresearch.com/portfolio/negar-ebrahimi/ (accessed 20 September 2022)
2021) in support of innovative projects and initiatives (Lead applicant), Social Responsibility and Sustainability Award 2020 (Lead applicant), Institute of Academic Development (IAD) Action Fund 2019\(^2\) (Lead applicant), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funding award\(^3\) for the FoSS 2019, and Festival of Creative Learning (FCL 2019) Award.\(^4\) I have led a number of collaborative and interdisciplinary research projects and presented/published the results in academic platforms such as “CHASE Doctoral Researchers event at The British Library, London (July 2019)” and professional construction programmes such as ScotlandBuild 2019 (Glasgow, SEC Centre).\(^5\) To widen the reach and impact of my research, I have also published blogs via diverse platforms such as SGSSS, SGSAH, GenderEd and so on.\(^6\) My work was selected for the 195th RSA Annual Exhibition - Royal Scottish academy of ART and ARCHITECTURE 2021. “The RSA Annual Exhibition is the most extensive exhibition of contemporary art and architecture in Scotland. Having been a mainstay of the academy’s calendar since its inception 195 years ago, the Annual Exhibition has evolved over the years, showcasing Scottish art alongside invited international artists, often including topical or political elements, to give an uncensored, independent voice to artists on issues that matter to them.”\(^7\) I was a guest lecturer at Southern Illinois University of Carbondale for master students in architecture for the global architecture class on the subject of spatial happiness. For the same subject, I was later invited to present the first talk of the artist Future Forum 2022 series with Gods House Tower art and heritage venue in Southampton.\(^8\)


\(^6\) See: [https://sgsahblog.com/2021/03/03/hitting-the-yellow-brick-road/](https://sgsahblog.com/2021/03/03/hitting-the-yellow-brick-road/) and [https://twitter.com/genderpol/status/1367407008283041792](https://twitter.com/genderpol/status/1367407008283041792) (accessed 11 September 2021)

\(^7\) The exhibition was held April and May 2021.

\(^8\) See more: [https://godshousetower.org.uk/eventer/futures-forum-1-where-is-my-happiness/edate/2022-03-03/](https://godshousetower.org.uk/eventer/futures-forum-1-where-is-my-happiness/edate/2022-03-03/) (accessed 11 June 2022)
In 2020, as a Young Women Lead (YWCA @youngwomenscot) committee member\(^9\) I worked on an equal rights and inclusion report with The Scottish Parliament; and I also received the Clinton Global Initiative recognition of Commitment to Action (CGI U).\(^10\) When I am not working, I would be reading Persian poetry, while drinking excessively, well, green tea 😇. To clear my mind, I would feed the swans at Saint Margaret’s Loch; having done so regularly in last couple of years, I can now say with some certainty that they appear to enjoy it as much as I do. During the global pandemic, I developed new habits like many others, like doing origami or playing online chess daily with my father.\(^11\)

Apart from the previous lines that is my ego biography, summing up some of my success stories and perfect for my LinkedIn page, there were numerous less successful attempts too. I would say ‘less successful’ instead of unsuccessful not because the rejection was not painful or the challenges were few, but simply because the privilege of trying again only comes with disappointment, and I believe these experiences paved the path for successful ones, one thing led to another and by sheer power of not giving up, I was able to try again, and again, and well yes, again, until I was able to accumulate as I deemed necessary for my research. I am not afraid of sharing my vulnerable side, as I think it will offer a thorough insight to readers for seeing my position as the researcher and author. I would like to finish this “who am I” statement with a poem that I relate to, from a Persian literary legend Rumi, with the same title.

What am I?
What is to be done, O people?
for I do not recognise myself.

---

\(^9\) I worked on an equal rights and inclusion report with The Scottish Parliament in order to address the gaps between policy making processes and academic research. See more: https://archive2021.parliament.scot/gettinginvolved/115492.aspx (accessed 11 September 2021)

\(^10\) CGI U is an educational program and conference where student leaders, activists, social entrepreneurs and civic society members come together to address some of the world’s most pressing challenges. Each CGI U participant makes a Commitment to Action, a concrete plan for a social enterprise or charitable project that makes a measurable difference in education, environment and climate change, peace and human rights, poverty alleviation and public health. See more: https://www.linkedin.com/in/negar-ebrahimi/detail/overlay-view/urn:fsd_profileTreasuryMedia:(ACoAAe09z8BxQosIvFH9b-rT-aK-O2y3QIIE4,1605911243869) (accessed 11 September 2021)

\(^11\) That does not tell you much, right? You’ll find more here: www.linkedin.com/in/negar-ebrahimi
I am neither Christian, nor Jew, nor Gabr [Magian], nor Moslem.
I am not of the East, nor of the West, nor of the land, nor of the sea;
I am not of Nature’s mint, nor of the circling heavens.
I am not of earth, nor of water, nor of air, nor of fire;
I am not of the empyrean, nor of the dust, nor of existence, nor of entity.
I am not of India, nor of China, nor of Bulghar, nor of Saqsin;
I am not of the land of ‘Iraqi, nor of Khurasan.
I am not of this world, nor of the next, nor of Paradise, nor of Hell;
I am not of Adam, nor of Eve, nor of Eden and Rizwan.
My place is the Placeless, my trace is the Traceless;
‘Tis neither body nor soul, for I belong to the soul of the Beloved.
I have put duality away, I have seen that the two worlds are one;
One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} Loosely translated from Persian,
Introduction

In 2016, a research was initiated by the Edinburgh City Council, in which all citizens were invited to join the discussion through an online poll. Edinburgh city vision for 2050, was aimed to create a vision for the future of Edinburgh: what are the Edinburgh urbanites priorities for their city? Remarkably, for Edinburgh to be a happy city, was one of the emerged themes. Unsurprisingly, political figures and campaigns promise the golden days of happiness to their voters while the world countries comparative happiness level rankings have become a national agenda, and a symbol of the country’s development in recent years. An example would be this quote by the ruler of Dubai (UAE prime minister) Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum:

“Yes, we seek to make people happy, and making people happy will be our objective and mission until it becomes a permanent and deep-rooted reality” (Al Maktoum, 2017).

In fact, UAE has a Minister of State for Happiness to work towards the happiness of the people through the country’s National Programme for Happiness and Positivity in order to turn UAE to one of the happiest countries in the world.

There is no use in neglecting happiness, clearly a great number of people want to be happier, or less unhappy at least. Yet, only in recent years some scholars have started undertaking scattered studies on the relationship between happiness and spatial design. Scientifically studying happiness per se, was not long ago considered “fuzzy” whereas now has become our time’s zeitgeist. Studies like the Edinburgh city vision reveal a demand for happier cities, and in my research, I will critically examine the notion of happiness and how applicable it is to the urban context. In the process I provide practical methods to study and document the interrelations of emotive

---

13 See more on: https://edinburgh.org/2050-edinburgh-city-vision/ (Last seen on 8 June 2019)
16 Ibid. See page 58.
experiences and place, as well as design solutions to build a city that we all want to live in happily, without leaving it to chance.

We are indeed aware of some spatial forces behind our actions, or for that matter, inactions. No one has ever doubted how a door enable us to move through, a possibility that a solid wall robs us from. In fact, we are so innately adopted to architectural manipulations, no one is shrinking from how decisive architecture can be, when a window not only guide our gaze, but also the rays of sunlight. The list goes on beyond the simplicity of doors and windows. As Henri Lefebvre, sociologist and philosopher elaborates in his celebrated The Production of Space, we are impacted by architecture at all levels, “Facades were harmonised to create perspectives,” and “Streets and squares were arranged in concord with the public buildings and palaces of political leaders and institutions.” Which in turn affect us “From family dwellings to monumental edifices, from 'private' areas to the territory as a whole.”

Thus, spatial possibilities are woven into the fabric of existential possibilities. James Gibson, the perceptual psychologist, defines spatial possibilities as affordances. In his book, The Design of Everyday Things, cognitive science researcher Donald Norman argues that spatial affordances are present in our lives even when they are not visible. In fact, unperceived spatial affordances could be as influential as the visible ones. The question that how much our immediate spatial setting fit our lives, and how we are influenced by the city in turn, is an ongoing debate. In other words, the moment you leave your home, you enter into a dialogue with the urban fabric. But in what ways we are influenced by this interaction, and to what extent our moods are influenced by the city? Since doors and streets do privilege some activities over others, what are the spatial components that influence our behaviour, or affect our happiness and emotive state?

In this study, I will address key research questions on the correlation between happiness and spatial design. Can urban environment make us happier? If so, in what ways is our happiness related to the built environment? And what are the spatial

19 Henri Lefebvre was a philosopher, critic and sociologist, widely acknowledged for his influential work on production of space and the right to the city concepts. Lefebvre, Henri. The production of space. (1991):47.


21 Ibid. See page: XV. Norman in the revised publication of The Design of Everyday Things, introduced the term signifiers to be used instead of spatial affordances. Describing signifiers as a better word to make sense of the virtual possibilities that design offers as well as the physical ones.

features of our cities that play a role in our happiness? To that effect, how the spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness and what are the sonic values of a happy place? What spatial elements kindle positive experiences and invite happiness for children? And finally, what is our spatial vision for the cities that will not only accommodate our physical needs but also provide a setting that will nurture strong communities and enable them to flourish? But before that, what do we call a fulfilling and happy life? Personal and societal dilemmas such as “What is happiness?” have been in the open for a while without a comprehensive answer, since living in the age of technological wonders constantly changes how we live, or how we perceive life per se. Understandably, a fundamental question without a sophisticated answer could be likened to a sharp double-edged sword. So, the primary question is how to define happiness, and then how spatial structures may impact our happiness, and finally how to improve the built environment accordingly.

Drawing on these questions, the first chapter is centred in the discovery of happiness notion in diverse disciplines and its potential relations to the ways in which we understand the world we live in. Exploring happiness studies in economy, social and cultural examples and investigating their probable connections to the spatial structures. Discovery research in this chapter is grounded on curiosity, asking open questions from different perspectives and weaving through different material with the thread of happiness and place, to find new insights and new tools that can increase understanding of happiness and possible spatial interconnections. This approach also aided to confront the literature gaps that currently limit understanding and recognising happiness in spatial domain.

I will begin with focusing on why now, more than anytime, there is a need for finding methodical ways to boost happiness. In the following sections of chapter 1, I put forward firstly the meanings associated with happiness throughout time, by way of relating some of the crucial moments in the history of happiness. Then the reasons why it is essential to acknowledge social roots of happiness. In order to reflect the multi-dimensional nature of happiness, the study literature review aimed to cast light on it from different angles, to represent a high-resolution image of happiness. Since there are too many considerations that play a role, the insights are too dynamic, and the possibilities are endless. The central idea of an analytical approach to happiness in this study is to create a committed reference for the topic of spatial happiness. The
strategy is to use a wide gamut of perceptions and philosophies, analysing diverse narratives and accounts, all with the purpose to better understand and to identify happiness in a way that assists a shared understanding of it. In order to do so, I develop an explorative assessment towards a wide array of perceptions on happiness.

This indeed results in fragmentation, that in relation to narrative form, is a methodology per se as well as being a representation of diverse aspects of happiness studies. Fragmented narrative consists of pieces or episodes of text that do not necessarily follow on from each other in chronology or premise, e.g. nonlinear meaning making processes and multi-mediated connections, providing a context for reflexivity as well as offering novel ways of “making sense of social life and expressing knowledge”.23 In contrast with traditional research, fragmented narratives distribute power more evenly, as “the piece can simultaneously make the author’s particular set of arguments and allow for alternatives by revealing the practices at work in the interpretive process” resulting in learning something important about the topic while “the outcome is not completed, controlled, or predicted by the form”,24 this interpretive form of inquiry is aligned with the study findings regarding happiness, and spatial happiness, as a process rather than a destination, that will be discussed in later chapters. Fragmented discourse functions as a creative force that enhances the study by way of an organic form to step outside of the box of conventions that often define narratives, and allows an unbiased exploration in literature, as fragmentation resists narrative expectations that might echo capitalist expectations or cultural and political orientations.25 The first chapter is also the starting point of my PhD studies, and therefore it is telling of my development as a researcher throughout this work.

23 See more on fragmented narrative as a method of interpretive inquiry: Annette N. Markham, “‘Go Ugly Early’: Fragmented Narrative and Bricolage as Interpretive Method”, Qualitative Inquiry, 2005. Page 814-6, and 821, 832 among others.
24 Ibid.
Next in the methodology chapter, I begin to explore a combination of qualitative research methods and examine the practical conundrums that might present themselves by way of studying spatial happiness. In response to the research objectives and aims discussed in the first chapter, the second chapter lays the methodological framework for an explicit and coherent study. The chapter begins with a review on previous studies development, discusses why the methods are adopted reflecting on their strength and limitations, and finally concludes in a pilot study to present some of the discussions and test the plausibility of the research agenda. The pilot study was able to locate some of the spatial dynamics behind our moods, such as the interplay between nature and urban space, the density of the urban configuration and the skyline in view, the property usage or the extent of which all our senses are engaged with the environment.

Given that inventive solutions often appear when diverse ways of thinking and viewpoints are brought together, the methods were designed and led to encompass diverse and interdisciplinary sets. Recognising the opportunity to speed progress towards refining our understanding of happy places by bringing together different disciplines, chapters 3, 4 and 5 explore distinctive approaches to the ways in which users experience different spatial settings.

Following the path from literature review explorations, chapter 3 is developed to reflect on playfulness in spatial design and the potential role children’s engagement could achieve in understanding play and happiness connotations. Therefore, in this chapter the research questions and the responsibilities that they carry are focused on what a happy place to children is, and how children would design a happy place, a playground. What spatial elements kindle positive experiences and invite happiness for children? Developing on *Designing My Happy City: Playground* workshop, sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) this chapter traces children, play and happiness, from theoretical connections between happiness and play, to the practical findings on what constitutes a happy place from a child’s point of view. The study revealed that children have a distinctive approach both of the notion of happiness and play, and the spatial requirements for their utmost enjoyment. Their identifications of favourite places reflect their wish for the pursuit of friendships, abundance, curiosity and connectedness to the people and animals, and home as well as natural and green spaces were highlighted in children’s indication of spatial happiness.
The exploration of spatial happiness continues through chapter 4, with a focus on the soundscape of happy places. Drawing on *Collective Sounds of Happy Places* Digital Workshop, sponsored by the Institute of Academic Development (IAD) 2020 Big Grant, participants’ respective happy places is analysed in relation to their sonic structures. Using “Graphic notation”, a form of writing music scores, to represent musical ideas of a happy place and documenting visual symbols shared by the study’s participants; the study captures people’s happy places during the lockdown and the sounds that are heard in those spatial settings and concludes in analysing the evaluated sounds. The results provide practical insight into the emotive categorisation of spatial sounds and user aural perception. The study was able to represent a spatial sound map and highlighting happiness sound marks, the sounds that are considered special either culturally or commonly by participants, such as birds chirping. The results also reaffirmed the spatiality of the soundscape, and the entwined relations of place and the source of the sound, revealing details of the participants’ interpretation of the spatial soundscape of happiness.

Chapter 5 has three linked ambitions: first, to focus in Edinburgh and gain a greater understanding of its local assets and happy places from the viewpoint of its communities. Second, to obtain a better awareness of how brain (body), social interactions and urban environment interact in users’ emotive experiences and happiness. And third, to develop new and advanced ways to engage with urban users, identify favoured spatial qualities and resolution of such conditions in people’s emotive experiences. The chapter draws on Edinburgh Collective Cognitive Cartography project led by the researcher in 2021, the methods used and the study development through findings analyses. The study participants provided positive narrations of flow-inducing places including places that ease the engagement of all senses as well as the natural settings including waterfronts and greenspaces. The results also shed light on the role of memories on positive or negative affect generated by users’ individual and social recollections and the happiness that could stem from familiarity, attachment or taking pride in a place. Additionally, urban settings that facilitate social connection and provide infrastructures of citywide attempts at setting identity or expressing people’s worries and desires to the mechanisms of power were appreciated by the study’s participants.
In the final chapter, the study closes with a reflection on the journey from identifying the research questions to the development and use of study tools and findings’ analyses. The methods used in the study provide a systematic guide to study and to better understand the urban kaleidoscope of emotive experiences, with an in-detail report on challenges, limitations and recommendations for future work, providing a catalogue of methods that may open up new avenues for discovery. Happy places, similar to the notion of happiness, are a process of becoming, and a voyage rather than a destination. And on this note, this study on the spatial narratives of happiness approaches a conclusion, but it is only the beginning for challenging yet rewarding recognition of spatial happiness.
Chapter 1. Literature landscape: stepping stones

Following the path from early to contemporary narratives of happiness, this chapter explores the theoretical and spatial architectonics of happiness. Chapter 1 is developed to understand what happiness is, why we need to study it and what are its spatial terrains. The meanings associated with happiness reveal the cultural, social, political and economic moment from which it has emerged. Hence understanding social relationships and its numerous economic, political and cultural expressions in our everyday lives is essential to understanding happiness and its spatial structures. In order to follow this line of enquiry, a critical approach is applied to diverse and multi-layered perspectives that affect the complex notion of happiness in different ways from aligning social and cultural mediums to matters of economy and community. At the end of this chapter we arrive at informed questions to develop the methodology inspired by the evaluated literature.

1.1. Studying happiness; why does it matter?

When confronting the question of what the importance of happiness is, some studies have focused on its rivalry with loneliness. Social isolation or loneliness can be costly to individuals as well as societies, but empirical evidence reveals that fulfilled and happy people are less likely to experience the negative conditions of loneliness and its successive physical and psychological effects. Premature death, health issues and depression among them. Happiness stands in war with loneliness, as Mijuskovic, clinical therapist and researcher in mental health argues, "The good or the happiness of the individual cannot exist apart from others. The individual not only needs the group in order to live but he needs their mutual support in order to be happy or virtuous." Recent reports reveal that just in the United States, 25 percent of people have no

friends at all, while only two decades ago the figures were less than half that.\textsuperscript{30} While loneliness is linked to increased risk of death from cancer and dysphoria as well as stroke and cardiovascular disease,\textsuperscript{31} it also indicates less prosocial behaviour and weaker social ties.\textsuperscript{32} In contrast, as Ed Diener et al. after evaluating 225 longitudinal studies revealed, happy people have more confidants, are more philanthropic and resilient, have a stronger immune system and live longer. Moreover, happy people make more money, are more productive at work, are more creative, are better leaders and negotiators, are more likely to be married and have fulfilling marriages.\textsuperscript{33} Diener, psychologist and a leading researcher in happiness studies, argued that “Happy people experience frequent positive moods, they have a greater likelihood of working actively toward new goals while experiencing those moods. Second, happy people are in possession of past skills and resources, which they have built over time during previous pleasant moods.”\textsuperscript{34} On the same ground, happy individuals “Are more likely to secure job interviews, to be evaluated more positively by supervisors once they obtain a job, to show superior performance and productivity, and to handle managerial jobs better.”\textsuperscript{35} As a result, happy workers could be disputably better citizens, considering that “Job satisfaction predicts organizational citizenship behaviour.”\textsuperscript{36} Other studies have found links between happiness and performance, showing that happy workers are productive with better performance at work, and are relatively healthier with better relationships.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{33} Ed Diener was a professor of psychology who coined the term "subjective wellbeing" as measurable happiness. Lyubomirsky is a professor of psychology in the University of California and author in happiness studies. Sonja Lyubomirsky, Laura King, and Ed Diener, “The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?,” Psychological Bulletin 131, no. 6 (2005): 803–55.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. Also see: Michael B. Frisch et al., “Predictive and Treatment Validity of Life Satisfaction and the Quality of Life Inventory,” Assessment, 2005.
Accordingly, happiness not only defeats the destructive effects of loneliness on every account but also paves the path for a greater personal and social wellbeing. While the spatial structures of loneliness and social isolation have been studied vastly, surprisingly little comprehensive research has been dedicated to the spatial dynamics of happiness.

Other studies in response to the importance of studying happiness, have taken a more direct approach, concentrating on its importance for people. As acknowledged by numerous reports, happiness is ranked “Very important” and considered at least once a day, by the majority of Americans. Some researchers have asserted happiness as a fundamental basis for positive mental health, with copious advantages for individuals and communities. Given the unyielding association of happiness with having a good life, an adequate perception of happiness appears indispensable. For some people, happiness is the main purpose of life. On the same ground, Daniel Haybron, author and researcher in moral psychology and political philosophy, states that we are morally bound to study happiness, or “We would be derelict in our duty as ethical theorists” for happiness is important simply because “Most people believe it to be extremely important.” Haybron then goes as far as claiming that “Any prudential psychology that lacks a credible account of happiness, is not in any sense reasonably well-developed.” This might be rooted in the great degree of which we consider happiness as a measure for a good life. Thus, significant choices are often based on the answer

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44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
to one simple question: will I be happy$^{46}$ if I move to another city or choose that job, marry or have a child, and so on and so forth. Predictably, political campaigns frequently pull on the happiness factor, as that is what directs our decisions.

In short, it is clear that even though studying happiness might not yield explicit answers, we need to study happiness if only to represent a thorough image of our era. Societal challenges of our time and ethical considerations in architectural studies demand reflections on happiness. As well as the simple fact that studying happiness is a tradition carried out by many before, as I expand on in the next chapter, and if history is any indication happiness will be studied long after we are gone. Apart from our debt to the future generations, within probing into the crux of happiness, indeed development is a natural outcome, if only because it is partly in better understanding the core to being human per se. And such study, does matter.

1.2. A critique of happiness

This study’s main intention is to shed light on the correlation between spatial characteristics and happiness. Having summarised that, it is only right to start with directly approaching the criticism that subjects happiness. In other words, the starting point of the critique of happiness has to be full acknowledgement of the critic points of view, so that we can define a framework that focuses on an agreed upon definition for the study’s subject. A good starting point is drawing on the crucial distinction between situated and contextualised happiness with a timebound ideology of happiness. Which requires a terminological enquiry into the concepts of qualitative state of being happy and what it constitutes. In order to do so, in this section I will examine the questions that have been raised about the perceptions of happiness and the scholarly debates that challenges its impact.

One major theoretical issue that critics question is the ability of the individual to form purely natural emotions. Drawing on Hegel’s definition of human being as a creature of habit, Žižek’s$^{47}$ account of Hegel draws on how our habits are adopted as automatic

$^{47}$ Slavoj Žižek is a philosopher, public intellectual and cultural theorist. Hegel is a philosopher considered as a founding figure in modern Western philosophy.
responses in a way that we lose our authenticity. According to Žižek, philosopher and cultural theorist, our emotional reactions are not purely natural, since “We learn to cry or laugh at appropriate moments (recall how, for the Japanese, laughter functions in a different way than for us in the West: a smile can also be a sign of embarrassment and shame).” If what we consider as our spontaneous emotional display is a mechanised performance that does not even require our conscious participation, then how can we feel happiness in regard to any external circumstances?

In Simone De Beauvoir’s metaphysical novel, All Men are Mortal, Fosca is an immortal man that his passion for life is destructed. Through the story of Fosca’s acquaintance with a young performer called Regina, Beauvoir, existentialist philosopher and feminist activist argues that our existence wouldn’t be fully realised without others. While Hegel argues that nothing “comes ‘naturally’ to human being” including death and breathing, Beauvoir shows that Fosca’s immortality does not free him from his natural longing to belong, and does not make him autonomous. Instead the natural and sincere demand on Fosca’s soul, is to become habituated to life, and to become a humanist “In pursuit of human goals of peace and happiness” as human ideal. If this is the case, happiness turns into the genesis of being human per se. To illustrate this point, let us reflect on mythology as a longstanding narrative of an applicable system of beliefs. Gilgamesh, is a Persian myth about the story of a man, king Gilgamesh, in his pursuit for immortality. During Gilgamesh’s journeys for the eternal life, he met a wise woman named Siduri. Siduri offers the king food but he rejects the offering, saying since he is in search of immortality he no longer has such needs. But Siduri informed the king that death is part of being human, “Instead of seeking immortality, he should take delight wherever he could. She said he should be proud of his children, delight in

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48 Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek, Mythology, Madness, and Laughter Subjectivity in German Idealism (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009). See page 102-3.
49 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
52 Gabriel and Žižek, Mythology, Madness, and Laughter Subjectivity in German Idealism. See page: 42, 101-104.
54 Gabriel and Žižek, Mythology, Madness, and Laughter Subjectivity in German Idealism. See page 12 and 25.
them holding his hand, and share his happiness with friends. These things, she said, were what it meant to be human.”

Simone De Beauvoir takes the principal argument for the interrelation between happiness and being human one step further, this time in her memoir *The Prime of Life*. For Beauvoir, the truth about world and our existence is determined and realised through happiness.

“I have never met anyone, in the whole of my life, who was so well equipped for happiness as I was, or who laboured so stubbornly to achieve it. No sooner had I caught a glimpse of it than I concentrated upon nothing else. If I had been promised renown and glory at the price of happiness, I should have refused. It was not merely this effervescent sensation in my heart, but also the belief that here lay the truth about my existence, indeed about the world.”

Can we experience pure happiness? For Beauvoir, our happiness is entwined in how we call ourselves human, and how we perceive the world accordingly. From a behavioural point of view, people do experience happiness in holding the loved ones or sharing with friends. Even if we were to experience life unchained from the mechanised societal habits, we might as well followed Fosca’s footsteps and believing in happiness as our ideal. Between the relative existence and ideal ground of experiencing emotions, happiness is experienced on an everyday basis throughout our lives.

Another much debated question is whether an external motive can bring us genuine happiness. One answer to this predicament would be the Hegelian conception of the truth. Which one is truth, what we mean to say, or what we actually say? In order to explain Hegel’s “True expression”, Žižek provides an example from our everyday lives. The pleasantries that we exchange with friends such as “Glad to see you! How are you today?” are rather out of politeness than literal interest. In fact, real interest possibly

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58 *Mythology, Madness, and Laughter Subjectivity in German Idealism*. See page 114.
would be received as a surprise or even nosiness. Here Žižek retells a Freudian joke, “Why are you saying you’re glad to see me, when you’re really glad to see me!?” At the same time, none of the words exchanged were insincere, as they were meant in a way, “In the same sense as I do ‘sincerely’ laugh through the canned laughter (the proof of it being the fact that I effectively do ‘feel relieved’ afterwards).” Neil Thin, social anthropologist and Richard Coyne, researcher in digital media and culture, among others, have discussed that the experiments on how imitating a smile will cause a lift in mood. Canned laughter or pretentious smiles, as it happens our part in its realisation does make us feel happy even though in response to a forced source.

Happiness, as an opposing condition to melancholy has also been challenged in regard to obstructing creativity. Does happiness suffocate creativity? Brian Massumi, philosopher and social theorist, in his The Politics of Affect convincingly argues that it would be naive to assume happiness and unhappiness are simply in opposition. Massumi claims that the same way that for Nietzsche good is not the opposite of evil and for Spinoza joy is not the opposite of happiness, there is an in-betweenness in which happiness and unhappiness are both co-existing. “The moment of joy is the co-presence of those potentials, in the context of a bodily becoming.” According to this approach, creativity would be as close to happiness as it is to melancholy. Richard Coyne, researcher and author of Mood and Mobility relates what the British cyclist, Bradley Wiggins, said right after his Olympic success: “There is almost slight melancholy. I realised on the podium that that is it for me. I don’t think anything is going to top that.” Wiggins’s melancholic mood in a happy moment, reveals that if one sets an unyielding distinction between happiness and melancholy, it will be more difficult to experience each of them fully, because none is fully realised or appreciated without the other. Brock Bastian, social psychologist and the author of The Other Side of

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59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
64 Ibid. See page: 44.
65 Coyne, Mood and Mobility: Navigating the Emotional Spaces of Digital Social Networks.
*Happiness: Embracing a More Fearless Approach to Living* takes a similar stance and argues that “being happy in life is not just about pleasure [...] Rather, happiness is often found in those moments we are most vulnerable, alone or in pain. Happiness is there, on the edges of these experiences, and when we get a glimpse of that kind of happiness it is powerful, transcendent and compelling.”

Woody Allen used the term Ozymandias Melancholia for the first time in his 1980 movie *Stardust Memories*. Ozymandias,67 king of kings; was a pharaoh, probably Ramsses II, that the ruination of his majesty in time became the subject of British sonnets in 1800s. In Smith’s words:

“In Egypt’s sandy silence, all alone,  
Stands a gigantic Leg, which far off throws  
The only shadow that the Desert knows:  
‘I am great Ozymandias,’ saith the stone,  
‘The King of Kings; this mighty City shows’  
‘The wonders of my hand.’— The City’s gone, —  
Naught but the Leg remaining to disclose  
The site of this forgotten Babylon.”68

The city, that was supposed to attest the grandeur of Ozymandias, now is gone. Nothing is left from Ozymandias’ statue but a leg, Ozymandias himself forgotten, like a shadow in a deserted place. Woody Allen describes Ozymandias Melancholia as that melancholic and unhappy feeling that we experience when we are happy or in awe, and we realize no matter how splendid and great something is at the time; its time

66 Professor Bastian is a psychologist at The University of Melbourne. Brock Bastian, *The Other Side of Happiness: Embracing a More Fearless Approach to Living* (Penguin UK, 2018). See the introduction. Also part one: fearing pain makes it worse.

67 “The name Ozymandias, Hellenistic Greek Οὐζμανδιάς, part of the prenomen of Ramesses II of Egypt (1279–13 b.c.), of whom a colossal 57-foot statue, now surviving only in fragments, once stood at Thebes. Use in English is probably largely after Shelley’s 1817 sonnet Ozymandias (written as part of a sonnet-writing competition with Horace Smith, whose poem also contains the name. Shelley’s source was apparently the Hellenistic Greek of Diodorus Siculus, who records the inscription on the statue.” Cited from: “Ozymandias, n.”. OED Online. September 2019. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/261402 (accessed September 30, 2019).

is going to pass. As the story of a forgotten pharaoh suggests, the richer our emotional experience of happiness, the greater the melancholic feeling or the idea of its loss.

Another perspective on the connection between creativity and happiness, as argued by Neil Thin in *Social Happiness*, essentially asserts happiness generative. Generative in the sense that happiness as an ultimate goal becomes instrumental in enrichening and developing creative activities and artistic endeavours.69 Furthermore as Émile Durkheim, one of the pioneers of modern social science argues, powerful emotions through binding individuals and creating communities, affect social movements that animate a better context for creativity.70 Empirical evidence supports that happier people exhibit better “Problem solving,” “Flexibility and originality” and “self-confidence” that is widely associated with creativity, and in general have “More creative ideas than their less happy peers.”71 In fact, a research by Shapiro and Weisberg shows that the most creative individuals were the ones “With elevated moods and without symptoms of depression.”72

A similar implication would be the cultural aspects of happiness and whether the results of happiness studies could be widely pervasive considering the cultural diversity among people. Towards this deliberation, *The Geography of Bliss* by Eric Weiner, New York Times bestseller author, and *The Key to Happiness*, by Meik Wiking the founder of the world’s first Happiness Research Institute in Denmark, and *The Atlas of Happiness* by Helen Russell, a journalist and bestselling author, provide intriguing insights into the cultural and physical environments of happiness.73 All mentioned books offer examples of rituals and customs in different countries across the world, displaying that despite the differences in approach and methods, people all over the

72 Lyubomirsky, King, and Diener, ‘The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?’
73 Eric Weiner is a New York Times bestseller author whose books have been translated into more than 20 languages, as well as a speaker and philosophical traveller. Meik Wiking carries the title of the happiest man in the world by The Times. Wiking is part of the advisory group to the Global Happiness Policy Report.
world seek happiness every day.\textsuperscript{74} While in Japan people draw on Wabi-sabi concept, meaning “simplicity and the beauty of age and wear” to snatch happiness,\textsuperscript{75} in The Netherlands the notion that “a good neighbour is better than a distant friend” has created the National neighbour’s day as a chance to get neighbours together over a cup of coffee.

So far in the course of this chapter, I have demonstrated diverse scientific, philosophical, behavioural and popular notions that challenge our understanding of happiness. As I have discussed, happiness is arguably a solid cause of beneficial outcomes from many perspectives.\textsuperscript{76} This conclusion in-itself, could be problematic and raises the valid question that what is the downside of happiness? Accordingly, in the last part of this chapter, I will address the dark sides of happiness.

One way of probing into the costs of the happiness maladaptation is to start with deliberating the palpable appreciation of being in a happy state, and the tendency to overreach.\textsuperscript{77} We are justly alarmed by our vulnerability to the unknown that will follow a sheer moment of happiness. Even more so when we know that we are happy, because it is then that we want the goodness of it to become more intense or last longer. And sometimes when we want to deal with the frustration of inconsistency, the negative affect becomes the recipient of our attention. Whether it is from a single-minded centre on one life domain or it is struggling to cope with the loss of happiness or finding a way to endure its inconsistency,\textsuperscript{78} as I have argued in \textit{The Economy of Happiness} section in more details,\textsuperscript{79} the “Virtue of moderation”\textsuperscript{80} should be considered while seeking happiness. Although the harmful repercussions of obsessive behaviour are not exclusive to happiness, it might be more likely for happiness to become a focal point in our lives due to its positive qualities.

\textsuperscript{76} June Gruber and Judith Moskowitz, eds., \textit{Positive Emotion; Integrating the Light Sides and Dark Sides} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid. See page 41-5.
\textsuperscript{79} See page –.
To name one example on absolute idealism of happiness, let us consider Karl Marx, the political philosopher of 1800s. Marx’s doctoral dissertation was: *The Democritean and Epicurean*, which played a vital role in shaping his well-known work that was published jointly with Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.\(^81\) Epicurus’s ideas or the Epicurean approach was centred on happiness as the goal of life. According to Epicurus, “it is impossible to live wisely, honourably, and justly without living pleasantly.”\(^82\) Hence, “one must practise the things which produce happiness, since if that is present we have everything and if it is absent we do everything in order to have it.”\(^83\) It is noteworthy to mention Epicurus’s conception of happiness consists of friendship as he argues: “of all the things that wisdom provides to help one live one’s life in happiness, the greatest by far is the possession of friendship.”\(^84\) Marx’s theories are cogent illustration of how an extreme adaptation of happiness ideal or exhausting its salient human experience as an instrument for ulterior agenda can do harm rather than good. For Marxism became official practice in many countries such as the former Soviet Union, however, the communist utopia that was predicted by Marx not only failed to form “Real happiness”\(^85\) but also mostly turned into oppressive policies in practice.

Another descriptive position on the dark side of happiness could be demonstrated by way of breaking happiness to its constituent middle level positive emotions like contentment, awe or amusement.\(^86\) For instance, the downside of excessive contentment can be clearly seen in the case that individuals become discouraged from self-improvement, developing intimate relationships, and involvement with social institutions.\(^87\) In other words, while pursuing happiness is rewarding, in its excessive

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\(^82\) Epicurus (341-270 BCE) was a Greek Ethics philosopher. See Ad Bergsma, Germaine Poot, and Aart C. Liebfroer, ‘Happiness in the Garden of Epicurus’, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 2008.
\(^83\) Ibid.
\(^86\) Gruber and Moskowitz, *Positive Emotion; Integrating the Light Sides and Dark Sides*. See page 55-68.
\(^87\) Ibid.
form might lead to a restraining force that dissuades the pursuit of opportunities and rewards.\(^{88}\)

At this point of discussion, it has become apparent that one can debate happiness downsides for pages, as well as its upsides. In order to step away from generating an abstract discussion, I think it will serve to face a simple question. Jenny Pope, the Edinburgh based artist, has a playful collection of tools and toolboxes for unconventional but nevertheless needed traits. (Fig. 1) Tools such as the *Illogical Fears Unpicker*, *Everything Crap Deflector* or *Finding Meaning Scoop*. The question is, if we had access to a *Happiness Button*,\(^{89}\) were we going to press the button? A button is a term used colloquially to describe a triggering spot that causes an instant emotional reaction to surface. For example, we can talk about who or what pushed our button, eliciting certain emotions. Similarly, in relation to happiness it is meant to convey two questions, first, if happiness was easily obtainable at the press of a button, would you have chosen a happy outcome versus an unhappy one? And second, would you prefer to press the button for instant happiness or would you prefer to pursue happiness on your own and despite potential hardships? The “Happiness Button” question in essence attempts to provoke a sincere appraisal of our expectations of life and what we seek, a question that we need to face in order to truly criticise the role of happiness in our deeply rooted fears and dreams. Probably some would not press the button, and some would.\(^{90}\) But those who are tempted even slightly, are the ones whose existence justifiably demands comprehensive studies on happiness, even if we can write books of its dark side. The happiness button is powered up by the desire of many people who believe in happiness and strive for its experience.

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\(^{88}\) Ibid.


\(^{90}\) For records of both sides see: Marianne Hewlett-Leemans, ‘If There Were a Happiness Button, Would You Press It?’, LinkedIn Articles, August 2016, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/were-happiness-button-would-you-press-marianne-hewlett. And Dacher Keltner and Shuka Kalantari, ‘Three Good Things’, Greater Good Magazine, Science-based insights for a meaningful life, February 2018, https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/podcasts/item/3_good_things. (Last accessed September 2023) The “Happiness Button” enquiry was also examined by Dacher Keltner, professor of psychology at University of California Berkeley, during the Human Happiness course over the years. According to professor Keltner, most of students, said “No.” as “happiness without their own personal pursuit really doesn’t mean much at all.” This question will be addressed again in the discussion chapter.
Figure 1. Tools and Toolkits of Jenny Pope. Source: Artists personal archive. Pope has crafted a set of tools for everyday emotive experiences such as “panic button”. The question is, if we had access to a functioning “Happiness Button”, were we going to push the button?
1.3. Theoretical explorations in happiness

The ontology of happiness and definition of the key terms

Happiness as a state of mind, happiness as an emotional condition and happiness as its hedonistic capacities differ in what they promise. For instance, the term *pleasure* is what Aristotle refers to as the most closely tied to the nature of human beings.\(^{91}\) Whereas he deems happiness as a virtue that requires particular sort of refinement or even sophistication. For Aristotle, even though pleasure is a more connatural sense, there are numerous things that we do even if they brought no pleasure, however we have happiness as an ultimate goal for everything that we do. It seems where pleasure is pure instinct, happiness is not only the matter of physical, but also moral education. That is, both *hedonic* and *eudemonic* aspects of happiness, has an undercurrent of a moral sense that is gained and cultivated through education. As Schiller, the 18th century poet and philosopher elaborates, “Happiness, is the business of physical and ethical education, to make beauty from beautiful objects is the task of aesthetic education.”\(^{92}\) This distinction is further exemplified by Tal Ben Shahar, writer and scholar in positive psychology, in his book, *Even Happier*. Shahar analogises happiness to a tree. The roots of the tree are the fixed basis for our well-being, whereas “The height of our happiness is like the leaves—beautiful, coveted, and yet ephemeral, changing, and withering with the seasons.”\(^{93}\) Pleasure is happiness in a way, but it is more like “Experiencing an ephemeral high that withers with the leaves”,\(^{94}\) it nurtures from the roots and nourishes them in return, yet, happiness is a more meaningful and long-lasting sensation that runs deeper like the roots.

Many categorisations have been proposed to further distinguish all forms of happiness, for instance, through a hierarchical model of happiness high-arousal pleasure is perceived as excitement and associated with higher levels of dopamine and low-arousal pleasure as contentment and associated with higher levels of serotonin, while positive emotions and happiness are generally linked with greater frontal activation.\(^{95}\)


\(^{92}\) Schiller is a philosopher, playwright and poet, known for his influence on German literature and his work “Ode to Joy”, set to music by Beethoven. Friedrich Schiller and Reginald Snell, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (Courier Corporation, 2004). See page 83.


\(^{94}\) Ibid.

While the nuances surrounding happiness connotations are acknowledged, to distinct the conceptions of happiness are not of practical import in this study’s context. Instead, the question of this study is to find how happiness is best implied given our interests in the matter and through understanding what happiness entails, that is the possibilities that could enable the spatial user to engage in diverse kind of positive emotions. Since all conceptualisations of happiness, although they are not equivalent, are all significantly positive states of being, the word happiness here is used at its full capacity. Because of this, I explore the complexity of happiness as a favourable state of being in general, and as experiencing positive moods and emotions. For purpose of this research and in order to stay relevant to the growing body of literature, the term “happiness” is comparable to the World Happiness Report terminology and is identified as a general sense of subjective wellbeing, namely the quality of life evaluation comprising “a reflective assessment on a person’s life or some specific aspect of it”; as well as “affect, a person’s feelings or emotional states, typically measured with reference to a particular point in time” consisting of both frequent pleasant emotions as well as infrequent unpleasant emotions, and “Eudaimonia, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, or good psychological functioning” associated with high levels of autonomy, personal growth and positive social relations.

It can be argued that we learn happiness by experiencing it first-hand before we even fully understand it, and it is anticipated that happiness could be achieved as a consequence of the qualities of certain kind. This, in turn, brings happiness under the orbit of social interactions, since the criteria for the experiences that could be labelled as happy, partly, are grounded in our social life. To that effect, experiencing awe, 

98 Ibid. Also see: Urry et al., ‘Making a Life Worth Living: Neural Correlates of Well-Being’. Page 367.
empathy, or even mindfulness are all nuances of happiness. Emotive states such as joy, pride and contentment are labelled as the hallmark of happiness in the psychological literature, and their beneficial influence is widely showcased in empirical research through the process of recovery from negative experiences including depression and trauma. Positive emotions primarily set in motion a broader array of emotive clusters and actions, so not only they are intertwined but they also initiate other positive nuances, for example “an experience of contentment could lead to thoughts about new challenges to take on, leading quickly to experiences of pride or excitement.” Such emotive states in a short span of time are often described as raw emotions, leaning towards affective aspect, for instance contentment is linked to the intensity of experienced comfort, whereas in the long term the descriptions shift from emotion to cognition and their intensity becomes dependant on their frequency over time, in the case of contentment, it is regarded as the extent to which an individual considers her or his hopes and objectives to have been met. The intensity of an affective experience is evaluated by hedonic level, which together with the frequency of a socially constructed sense of satisfaction correlate to the overall happiness.


100 Academic literature utilises both “emotional” and “emotive” words to describe user experience. Oxford dictionary defines “emotional” as “based on or appealing to the emotions”, whereas the definition of “emotive” is “relating to emotion”. This subtle nuance appears to signal “emotive” creates some distance between the researcher and the users’ emotions, revealing a more academic stance to describe and analyse. Additionally, while “emotional” means “arising from or arousing intense feeling”, the word “emotive” is explained as “arousing or able to arouse strong feeling or emotion”. Hence, the word “emotive” appears more descriptive of affordances and the built environment ability to affect users’ experience. And therefore, the word “emotive” was found more expressive within the context of this study, to better describe the purpose and focus of the discussion, and to present a more extensive understanding of the debate. See: "emotive, n. and adj.". OED Online. September 2022. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/61263?redirectedFrom=Emotive (accessed November 28, 2022).


According to this categorisation even joy is perceived as a social emotion,\textsuperscript{104} so it is not surprising that the predominant causes of joy have been reported as social relationships and achievements.\textsuperscript{105}

It is particularly important to note that the ambition of this project is to explore the criteria that enable all these diverse narratives of happiness to emerge, enrich and flourish in a positive way. In terms of the collective interpretations of happiness, explaining what happiness is not might prove less complicated. Since happiness is not just about fulfilling all of our desires or merely fleeting feelings like having fun.\textsuperscript{106} It is also not about a non-stop flow of positive emotions, nor is it entirely centred on pleasure.\textsuperscript{107} Too much hedonism call to mind the adventures of Pinocchio on the Pleasure Island, where he turned into a donkey for excessive pleasure-seeking.\textsuperscript{108} (See chapter appendix) If happiness was an eternal climb towards attainment it would have been a Sisyphean labour. Defining happiness as the outcome of utopian circumstances also sounds like flying too close to the sun, and that is what brought Icarus back to his labyrinthian prison.

Neil Thin, social anthropologist, in \textit{Social Happiness Theory into Policy and Practice} argues that happiness is not an ultimate satisfaction with life. He claims that we all strive towards a more joyful life “By engaging better with our fellow humans. That’s what social happiness is.”\textsuperscript{109} Thin’s argument is practised in our everyday social interactions or within our communities. For instance, talking out issues, experiences and difficulties, that once voiced and shared, makes us realise our grievances are not as deadly, and our endurance facing them not as shabby as we originally feared. Seeing there are listeners giving advice, offering help, or simply staying with us listening to our burdens, it is also not as lonely to shoulder challenges anymore. Healthy communities answer to our deepest cravings with a compelling and warm

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{104} Ibid. See page 79, 83 and 189 among others.
\bibitem{105} Ibid.
\bibitem{108} Carlo Colladi, \textit{Pinocchio} (Yesterday’s Classics, LLC, 2010).
\bibitem{109} N. Thin, \textit{Social Happiness: Theory Into Policy and Practice, Social Happiness: Theory Into Policy and Practice}, 2012. See peage: XII.
\end{thebibliography}
acceptance, and when we seek a “witness to our existence”, where could we find a more abundance of it apart from community. Social happiness is concerned with the paradox of a solitary birth and a solitary death, with being alive and its intertwined everlasting strive for experiencing a sociable existence. Therefore, social happiness is a crucial contextual factor that informs but can also be impacted by the meanings associated with happiness.

According to Thin, happiness, as a primary reason of our being, is an underestimated force in many discourses. Thin then explains happiness must be considered as the “expected outcome of the realisation of human rights and as a crucial contributor to their realisation.” Therefore, “employing a happiness-focused approach justifiably merits investment.”\textsuperscript{110} Some empirical research equals socially oriented happiness with public role obligations in some cultures including more conservative societies; and individually oriented happiness with personal accounts of categorical pursuit.\textsuperscript{111} Thin recognises the culturally constructed qualities of happiness as well as their temporality, and the realisation of happiness and its determining role in social development or “true progress” remains intertwined with the composition of social happiness in his view.\textsuperscript{112} In the same way, Freud, neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, in his analysis of \textit{Civilization and its Discontents} brings happiness under the purview of society, and the drive for its development.

“The question of the purpose of human life has been posed innumerable times; it has not yet received a satisfactory answer and perhaps does not admit of one…We will therefore turn now to the more modest question of what human beings themselves reveal, through their behaviour, about the aim and purpose of their lives, what they demand of life and wish to achieve in it. The answer can scarcely be in doubt: they strive for happiness, they want to become happy and remain so.”\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{111} Yukiko Uchida and Shigehiro Oishi, ‘The Happiness of Individuals and the Collective’, \textit{Japanese Psychological Research} (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1 January 2016).
\textsuperscript{112} Neil Thin, Ritu Verma, and Uchida Yukiko, ‘Happiness: Transforming the Development Landscape’ (Bhutan, 2017). See pages 105-6, 76, 69, 260 among others.
Freud then concludes that even though achieving happiness as a developmental process cannot be entirely fulfilled, we neither should or essentially can abandon our endeavours in its fulfilment. In other words, irrespective of happiness narratives and their capacity to fully convey its principle, the focal point of this project is to by studying people’s behaviour with regards to happiness, venture to “bring its realization somehow closer.” Because as Freud fervently admonishes, “We must not – indeed cannot – abandon our efforts to bring its [happiness] realisation somehow closer.”

A historical narrative of happiness

We are surrounded by agencies that advertise their services and products based on a branded and generalised idea of happiness, blending modulations of the cultural, political and economic spheres. Whether it is a Chinese takeaway restaurant called Happy Rice or a Jehovah’s Witnesses’ call for followers, the fact that the concept of happiness is a selling point remains the same. (See chapter appendix) As a consequence, the public is engaged with the notion of happiness in their everyday lives, but interestingly when asked, many need a moment of consideration to define happiness coherently, and then it is periodically characterised as an ambiguous term. So although happiness has been intertwined with our everyday lives for a long time, the designations we associate with happiness remain equally arbitrary at this point. What follows is a review on how throughout our history many attempted to reveal the nature of happiness. As Darrin M. McMahon, historian and author, in his book, Happiness: A History, quotes Anthony Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury “If ‘philosophy’ be, as we take it, the ‘study of happiness’, must not everyone, in some manner or other, either skilfully or unskilfully philosophise?”

Herodotus, ancient traveller, in the first volume of The History, distinguishes happiness from being fortunate and regard happiness as an “Honour”, and that only through uniting and retaining the greatest number of advantages one is “Entitled to bear the

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114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
name of ‘happy’.\textsuperscript{119} In Herodotus view, Happiness belongs to Gods and the happiness of mere mortals is indebted to the divine powers.\textsuperscript{120} Socrates on the other hand, declares that the search for happiness is a natural longing and happiness is within the human reach. “What being is there who does not desire happiness?”\textsuperscript{121} That is as decisive as Socrates have typically been, then he starts his interrogative usual manner with continuing: “How can we be happy? –that is the question.”\textsuperscript{122} For his successor, Aristotle, happiness is the dominant good that by exercising virtuous activity could be achieved. Aristotle sees happiness not as “A state of mind, but rather whatever it is that constitutes the good for a human being.”\textsuperscript{123}

At the end of an era and the beginning of another, it is Boethius, signified as “The last of the Romans and the first of the Scholastics”\textsuperscript{124} who in his On the Consolation of Philosophy, refers to “The search for wisdom and the love of God”\textsuperscript{125} as the significant means to “Human happiness”.\textsuperscript{126} But moving forward, the happiness spectrum shifts weight from “Wisdom” to “God”, and the notion of religion becomes dominant in the search for happiness. As Aquinas declares: “Perfect human happiness (Beatiutudo) consists in the vision of the divine essence.”\textsuperscript{127} Yet, different approaches underplayed the happiness treatment. Whilst Christian teachings were mostly focused on escaping the wretched life on earth and breaking through the confinement of this world to a happy heaven\textsuperscript{128}, some philosophers associated happiness with the practice of the eternal happy life on earth. For one, Mulla Sadra, considered the happiness of the afterlife will be realisable through the imaginative faculty’s transition from potentiality to actuality.\textsuperscript{129} Others such as Rumi, also noted on why exercising happiness is particularly significant, and that is because “If something is known by formal knowledge, it changes the reality of it.”\textsuperscript{130} A parable in Rumi’s Masnavi casts light on

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{120} Ibid. 173-190.
\item \textsuperscript{121} “Happiness: A History.” See page 25.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{123} Aristotle, Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, ed. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): XIV.
\item \textsuperscript{124} René Descartes, “Philosophical Essays and Correspondence,” Hackett Classics Series (2000): 146.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Nicholas White, A Brief History of Happiness (2008): 35.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid. See: vii-58. For a review on the literature also see: ‘Happiness: A History’. 141-172.
\item \textsuperscript{129} S Rizvi, ‘Mulla Sadra’, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2009.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
the reason why following religion seemed like a guaranteed path toward happiness when one “Does not know the path”. From Rumi’s perspective, religion is a “True guide” in the pursuit of happiness that will lead followers to become whole like a “Bright sun”.

A man searched for a home once hurriedly
A friend led him to a ruined property

And said, ‘If this just had a roof, you could
Live next to me then—wouldn’t that be good!

Your family would be so comfortable
If adding one more room were possible.’

The man replied, ‘Yes, that would be such fun,
One can’t live off “If only . . .” though, can one?’

All people are in search of happiness,
And, due to false hopes, they feel deep distress.

Both young and old are searching hard for gold,
But real from false can’t easily be told:

If you’ve a touchstone, then you can decide,
If not, then pledge yourself to a true guide.

Recognize false dawns from the dawn that’s true,
The colour of the glass from the wine’s hue,

You will see different colours few have seen
And bright pearls in the place where stones have been;

What are mere pearls when you’ll become the ocean
And that bright sun with its revolving motion!\textsuperscript{131}

Let us now consider the age of Enlightenment. The spirit of Enlightenment, in general, was a moderating tide for the rigid religious beliefs. Martin Luther’s life in 16\textsuperscript{th} century, as a man who had formerly “Starved and flagellated himself in his anxiety to be worthy of God” altered to a man who “Saw merit in drinking deeply of God’s creation”, could be a revealing example to the radical change in the meanings allied to the concept of happiness.\textsuperscript{132} In his ground-breaking view, Luther declares that being a justified man is contingent upon “Experiencing the world as a pleasure garden for the soul.”\textsuperscript{133} In spite of that, Luther himself did not overcome the paradoxes in the values attributed to happiness, since in his recommendations to prince Anhalt he acknowledged “A Christian should be gay” and “Joyful in all things”; “But then the devil shits on him.”\textsuperscript{134} Nevertheless, the reflective shift from “Finding your way to an everlasting happy heaven while ‘the gate is narrow and the way is hard, and there are few who find it”\textsuperscript{135} to seeking “Pleasure” that is often considered as a momentary sensation and a short-lived experience,\textsuperscript{136} is noteworthy.

“What is happiness?”\textsuperscript{137} Nietzsche (19\textsuperscript{th} century) asks, in \textit{The Antichrist}, “The feeling that power increases, that resistance is overcome.”\textsuperscript{138} Yet another major alteration in the values correlated with happiness, as there is an undercurrent of the idea that we do have authority over our happiness. The notion that this power could be used systemically to advance the condition of human beings, was set in motion earlier by Francis Hutcheson in the 1720s, who regardless of religious and aristocratic extremists, proposed that “The point of morality, and hence of governance, is to achieve the ‘greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.’”\textsuperscript{139} One question that needs to be asked, however, is whether Hutcheson’s quantitative approach in the production

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\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. 172.

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid. 171.

\textsuperscript{135} Matthew 7:14


\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.

of happiness is neglecting the quality that needs unalike degrees of measurability. There are also obvious moral issues that utilitarian epistemology brings about. Michael J. Sandel, author and political philosopher, draws a good illustration of ethical objections to utilitarianism in his book, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* Sandel invites the readers to rethink the ancient Romans throwing Christians to the lions in the Coliseum for sport. Now, the violent spectacle was a source of collective pleasure to a great number of Coliseum ticket buyers, although it abused the rights of the individual Christians, who needless to say, suffered severely to death. The point is, the utilitarian reasoning justifies the mentioned situation through measuring the quantity of pleased people.\(^{140}\) In order that this may be understood within the context, we must here call to mind, that around the same time, The Rationalists believed that “The happy and prosperous condition” will consist in “The greatest possible felicity” of people.\(^{141}\) Except, according to Leibniz in particular, the nature of pleasure, is to transit from a “Less to a greater perfection.” Leibniz in his *The Monadology*, emphasises that “Happiness is to persons what perfection is to beings. And if the dominant principle in the existence of the physical world is the decree to give it the greatest possible perfection, the primary purpose in the moral world or in the city of God ought to be to extend the greatest happiness possible.”\(^{142}\) So in contrast to other theorists in the political and legal context such as Jeremy Bentham, Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson, who followed the “Happiness as the greatest good, for the greatest number” calculus to construct social policy basis,\(^{143}\) the rationalists’ foremost message was that the highest happiness will be accomplished for the intellectuals. Since to perfect our logic, namely the quality of our reasoning, is the only path to the “Man’s highest happiness.”\(^{144}\) In Descartes own words, “the greatest joy” we are capable of is in contemplation, similar to the way in which “the supreme happiness of the next life” is in the contemplation of divinity.\(^{145}\) This account could imply an incentive interpretation, if one is to deploy thoughts because of the happiness they are able to conceive, then


\(^{142}\) Ibid.

\(^{143}\) Thin, *Social Happiness: Theory into Policy and Practice*, 2012.

\(^{144}\) René Descartes, Benedictus de Spinoza, *The Rationalists*. See page 372.

the widely known Rationalists’ aphorism, “I think, therefore I am” by Descartes, in a playful twist could be described as: I am happy, therefore I am.

Bentham’s use of the principle of greatest happiness terminology, was influenced with the “Principle of utility” by David Hume, the Scottish Enlightenment philosopher and economist. Later it was inflected by John Locke’s view of inalienable rights in his Second Treatise of Government, which in turn appealed to Thomas Jefferson. The indication that ethics should be measured not by reference to a precedent moral law such as natural law, common law or empirical municipal law, but by reference to the efficacy in creating happiness for the greatest numbers, was the driving element for Jefferson to enumerate “The pursuit of happiness” in the Declaration of Independence as a pre-political right. That is, happiness is a right fundamentally attached to individuals as human beings. Although Jefferson placed the word “Happiness” only in the declaration and not the constitution, and then as mentioned by Benjamin Franklin, everyone is free to “Pursue” happiness, but catching it is another matter indeed. Critics like Shahar question the behaviour of people in the United States for being obsessed with happiness, although it is seldomly taken into the account that at least in the United States, by law, people are privileged to this obsession, or even obliged to it, to the extent that even if they want, they cannot abandon their right to happiness.

In the 19th century, science becomes central to culture. Darwin, naturalist and the author of On the Origin of Species, considered the welfare of the communities not in their physically strongest members (as he would have assumed for other species), but in the mutual support between all their members. “Communities, which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best.”

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147 Ibid. See page 34.
words, from an evolutionary perspective, to explain why the human mind works the way it does we need to study the phylogenetic history of happiness. The fact is, we consider happiness like a proxy for wellbeing as Haybron suggests.\textsuperscript{153} According to psychologists like Diener and Lucas, “A happy society is one where most universal human needs are met.”\textsuperscript{154} The constant association of conditions that reflect on our basic needs with our happiness results in social interaction becoming an important human need. The need that “Can be discovered by examining the characteristics of societies in which people flourish.”\textsuperscript{155} For instance, let us consider laughter, generally regarded as a natural by-product of being happy. According to Martin, Laughter is a vital social way of communication, “Designed to capture the attention of others, to convey important emotional information, and to activate similar emotions in others.”\textsuperscript{156} The positive psychology of mirth, suggests that laughter reduces the tension and anxiety, subsequently stimulates more flexible thinking.\textsuperscript{157} These sorts of reflections expose that happiness in respects that make a difference to our social lives, could be our survival instinct in a liveability context.

In the same way that Darwin renders happiness as sympathy, Bertrand Russell identifies happiness as being affectionate. In his book, The Conquest of Happiness, Russell argues “Fundamental happiness depends more than anything else upon what may be called a friendly interest in persons and things.”\textsuperscript{158} If you have had the experience of opening the latest product of a famous tech company first hand, or at least witnessed a soccer or baseball fan glow with happiness when their team has won, you know what does Russell mean by “Any pleasure that does no harm to other people is to be valued.”\textsuperscript{159} But then again, to put one’s happiness in hands of the capital producers, is to hand over a power to those companies to impose a specific formula for happiness on the society. Russell doesn’t stop there however, and aligned with Darwin, raises the importance of having a friendly manner with our fellow creatures,

\textsuperscript{153} Haybron, ‘What Do We Want from a Theory of Happiness?’
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid. 84.
because “If all our happiness is bound up entirely in our personal circumstances it is
difficult not to demand of life more than it has to give.”

between the notion of happiness through time in a nutshell as follows: “Happiness: luck
(Homeric era), Happiness: Virtue (classical), Happiness: Heaven (medieval),
Happiness: Pleasure (Enlightenment) and Happiness: A Warm Puppy (contemporary).
Does that look like progress? Darrin McMahon doesn’t think so.”

As indicated previously, Happiness has been always challenging to describe. For lack of a better
word, and considering a precise definition of happiness has proved elusive, perhaps
*Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* is a good way to portray happiness. Kövecses writes
that words “Reflect some underlying conceptual reality, hence it is possible to recover
the content and structure of concepts through language.” Bearing that in mind, there
are certain happiness capacities that could be identified as “Difficult to define” but a
“Matchless” and “Very good” state of being that might be subsumed under the term
*Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* as well. *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious*, fashioned by popular culture, represents “A formative power summed up in a single word” or as Jane’s character in Mary Poppins describes, “Something to say when
you don’t know what to say” but at the same time every person that voices it, is
aware that this word is for something specific that worth sharing. As if to say: “There’s
something here, but you’ve got to experience it for yourself.”

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160 Ibid. 85.
163 According to OED, the term *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* was made popular by ‘Mary Poppins’ movie in 1964. However, the oral uses of the word go decades prior to the Walt Disney film and song. There are different accounts of the associated meanings and the origins of the word. A published note in Daily Orange (Syracuse University) March of 1931 by H. Herman mentions the word as the only satisfactory way of explaining something fabulous: “I have found that this expression of mine is very adequate in any type of appreciation. When asked how you liked a certain movie, or what your opinion is of Santa Claus, you can merely answer, ‘Supercalifiawjilisticexpialadoshus’ and you will have condensed many thoughts into one.” “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious, Adj.” OED Online. June 2019, Oxford University Press, www.oed.com/view/Entry/194228?redirectedFrom=Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious (accessed June 11, 2019). See also: Christopher K. Richardson, “Encountering the Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious: The Roles of Art in Religious Learning,” *Rockbridge Unitarian Universalist Fellowship* (Buena Vista, n.d.).
164 Richardson, ‘Encountering the Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious: The Roles of Art in Religious Learning.’
165 Ibid.
166 Ibid.
Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious has no English antonym: which works well with outlining a thorough image of happiness. According to Marcel Proust, “Happiness serves hardly any other purpose than to make unhappiness possible.”\textsuperscript{167} Although his notion of unhappiness was “To be separated from Maman.”\textsuperscript{168} The point is that the English antonym for happiness is unhappiness, which is exactly that, the absence of happiness, and not an entity or state of being per se. If defining happiness in a fixed manner has proved to be challenging for bold thinkers of all time,\textsuperscript{169} then voicing the Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious term is equally challenging, and just trying to pronounce it or even hearing this word is rather amusing and in fact, might have already brought the reader of these lines into a smile. The point being that the act of identifying someone or something as happy is what matters in the end, instead of the analytical positions we adopt in doing so. But again, how can we spread happiness without knowing its nature?

It can be argued that we have an operating definition of happiness that has lasted from Aristotle’s time to our own, which goes like this: you can identify happiness when there is evidence of someone having a good life. Experiencing happiness is as close as we can come to experiencing the best way to live. The history of happiness illustrates the change patterns and dynamics over time. It is of import particularly since our social dynamics will change with time and apart from figuring out the structures that shaped our societies, history of happiness also demonstrates the structures that continue to shape our outlook. The history of happiness also reveals that happiness is a persisting feeling, or at least concept, reflecting on many generations that are continuously trying to unveil its elements and meaning. Presumably, through comprehending what happiness truly meant, we can also gauge the interconnection of present, past and future.

\textsuperscript{168} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{169} Haybron suggests that from the 1980s, philosophers mostly gave up on settling on a unified theory of happiness. In his view, even empirical researchers: “Have (wisely) avoided taking a firm stand on the definition of happiness.” See: Haybron, ‘What Do We Want from a Theory of Happiness?’
Figure 2. Office for Emergency Management/Office of War Information war poster 1941–1945 US. Highlighting the Pursuit of Happiness as an inalienable right. Photo from Wikipedia.
Defined by happiness; the study of a novel, a painting and a short animation

So, it seems happiness, at least theoretically, is rather a nebulous term. It might prove to be more appropriate to claim that ‘happiness’, the word, transcends the capacity a mere word possibly could be associated with meanings. Just as happiness, the phenomenon, transcends purely political, social, economic or cultural contexts. But this is just another proof of how happiness is intertwined in our everyday lives, and even though people’s intuitions on the subject of happiness vary widely, every definition is legitimised by people’s entitlement to it. In effect, as Haybron suggests, “The concept of happiness is a folk notion employed by laypersons who have various practical interests in the matter, and theories of happiness should respect this fact.” In spite of how we choose to define happiness, it is undeniably the elephant in the room, and our lives are defined by happiness to some extent. As Bertrand Russell in *The Conquest of Happiness* speaks about fear of public opinion, he structures his discussion around the point that “Very few people can be happy unless on the whole their way of life and their outlook on the world is approved by those with whom they have social relations.” Is it permissible to conclude that we are coerced into a definite definition of happiness, dictated to us by social practices?

For as long as my generation has been told stories, no matter how diverse images of fantastic beasts and mighty Gods were envisioned in different cultures around the world, most of the stories have been given the same ending. In fact, one of the most prominent folklore storytelling patterns is the ending of the stories; a settled and content couple who will live happily ever after. Is there a distributional effort to educate next generations on how to define happiness? Or as Adorno put it into words, is there a “Determined resolution in the ritual conclusion – the happy ending.” Although it was during the eighteenth century that fairy tales’ audiences came to anticipate a certain structure and character arrangements, it was not until the nineteenth century that writers such as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen and Andrew Lang established a literary institution for fairy tales as we know them today. The genre is

170 Haybron. See 305-6.
171 Ibid.
arguably indebted its popularity to promising happiness at the end of the story, because “To read a fairy tale, is to follow the narrative path to happiness.” Children’s literature scholar and author, Zipes, in his book *Happily Ever After* holds the view that in fairy tales, even tragedy leads to happiness, proviso that we could read the symbols “properly”. While this could be attributed to literary techniques such as a plot twist as well, the fairy tale narrative style and happily ever after formula are consistently popular to this day. Zipes congruently projects an imperative image of the discourse, “The culture industry compromises our notion of the pursuit of happiness gleaned from fairy tales.” The culture industry term was introduced by philosopher and sociologist duo T.W. Adorno and Horkheimer in 1947. In their book, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer discuss that mass production of fabricated cultural values through media, has made culture, defiantly so, an integrated industry to the capitalist economy. I will expand on the economy of happiness in the next section.

Happiness as an ideology, commands what the culture industry defines as a good life to the point of a compulsory way of being. As Adorno suggests, nothing will be left to the conscious mind but to relent to the “Superior power of the advertised stuff and purchase spiritual peace by making the imposed goods literally its own thing.” As I discussed earlier, for Nietzsche happiness is freedom. In the current epoch, it appears his yearning to distance society from the limitations of religion, has come to fruition, except according to Adorno, the restraining chains are still there, only altered in their shine and glamour. Comparably, Adorno, believes that to promise happiness is to promise “A state where freedom would be realised” and that is contradictory with

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175 Ibid. See: 5-6. Professor Jack Zipes is a scholar in comparative and children’s literature, folklore and cultural studies.  
176 Ibid. See page: 4.  
178 Ibid. See page: 6.  
180 Ideology here refers to a system of values concerning the governing social conduct, explicitly: “A systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics, economics, or society and forming the basis of action or policy; a set of beliefs governing conduct. Also: the forming or holding of such a scheme of ideas.” See: “ideology, n.” OED Online. September 2022. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/91016?redirectedFrom=ideology (accessed September 06, 2022).  
181 Ibid. See: 47-8 and 104.  
182 Ibid. See page: 17.
what sense of wellbeing the industrialised character of happiness stimulates in essence, because it not only turns people into conformists and blocks the growth of autonomous values for happiness, but the substitute fulfilment itself, “Cheats people out of the same happiness which it deceitfully projects.”\textsuperscript{183} For Adorno, the fabricated projection of happiness for a modern human, is alike to Odysseus’ encounter with the Sirens. “The song of the Sirens, which tells of all that has ever happened, promises happiness... Death, however, is the price the Sirens exact for their enchantment.”\textsuperscript{184} The speculative discussion on a “Universal inclination towards happiness”\textsuperscript{185} could be also seen in Immanuel Kant’s \textit{Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals}. In which, on the principle of ethics, he elaborates that it goes without saying that everyone prefers pleasure over pain, the problem is when we let pleasure to rule our behaviour. Kant holds that freedom as the opposite of necessity, is also opposed to being slave to indulgence in pleasures, and that sometimes, taking pains will improve and enlarge our natural capacity to be happy. In spite of Kant’s unyielding maxim of dutiful instructions, still, Kant acknowledges that we have an indirect duty to seek our own happiness.\textsuperscript{186}

Kant’s unbending ideals could be grasped in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s novel of sentimentality, \textit{Julie}. As I mentioned earlier the idea of romantic love and a content family was associated with happiness ever since the 18th century, along with the rise of Romanticism. Rousseau in \textit{Julie} praise the heroic suicide of the male character, when he recognises that he cannot unite with Julie.\textsuperscript{187} For Rousseau, if Lady Fortuna does not grant a happy ending for the couple in love, death is more honourable, and more liberating than a life without happiness. And in dire circumstances that happiness could not become realised, drastic measures must be taken, hence Rousseau commends the suicide. Goethe in one of his early works, \textit{The Sorrows of Young Werther}, similarly martyriseth Werther who killed himself from pains of impossible love. Werther’s, is probably the most celebrated suicide in literature.\textsuperscript{188} Still, Kant’s principle of happiness is perhaps best illustrated in the Socrates decision. For Socrates,

\begin{flushright}
183 Ibid. See page:106.
184 Ibid. See page: 6.
186 Ibid. See: 7-43.
\end{flushright}
freedom was in choosing to take the hemlock rather than acknowledging his viewpoints fraudulence in public eyes and live freely. Did he find happiness in his choice? In Jacques Louis David Neoclassical masterpiece, *The Death of Socrates*, unhappiness is all for Socrates followers and family. Socrates himself is illustrated in a solemn pose, his strong body flooded in light, free from broken shackles underneath his bed. Nothing but glory for those who do not falter from their moral principles. (Fig. 3) The prosecution charged Socrates for not recognising the gods that the city worships\textsuperscript{189} and for the Athenians, “Rejection of traditional views about the gods would damage the welfare of the city.”\textsuperscript{190} A very utilitarian approach for a city that boasts democracy, favouring the happiness of a greater number over the greater loss of a few. Interestingly Thomas Jefferson, who followed the “Happiness as the greatest good for the greatest number” calculus, named *The Death of Socrates* painting as the best treasure the “salon” exhibited at the Grande Galerie du Louvre in 1787.\textsuperscript{191}

\textbf{Figure 3.} Jacques-Louis David-1787. Oil on canvas. Dimensions: 51.0 in × 77.2 in, Location: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo from Wikipedia. The Death of Socrates displays the gravity of fidelity to virtue and the pursuit of happiness.

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid. See page: 191.
Taking strides forward, Steve Cutts, the creator of the short animation *Happiness* and merciless critic of the advertised or even capitalised style of happiness, has likened people’s pursuit of happiness to a rat race.\(^{192}\) Alcoholic drinks, medical supplements, big brands marketed by many means identifiable in our everyday lives, all are accounts that assert the status quo, and urge the audience to ask, is Black Friday sale guaranteed means to a happy, meaningful life? Kant renders that because of the dignity of human beings, to use them as means to any agenda is morally wrong.\(^{193}\) And that is the point that the rats in Cutts’ animation, relentlessly going to “nowhere” from a “maze” to another, brings to mind instantly. (Fig.4) According to William Davies, political theorist and the author of *The Happiness Industry, How the Government and Big Business Sold Us Well-Being*, this maze is the by-product of a marketing trick to sustain a balance between happiness and unhappiness, “The market must be designed as a space in which desires can be pursued but never fully satisfied, or else the hunger for consumption will dwindle.”\(^{194}\) Seeing people just as consumers of whatever promoted by capitalist corporations that Cutts in “Happiness” displays through interestingly familiar yet creative visual appearances to construct constant mood shifts from a bittersweet undercurrent sadness to an inescapable humour during the film. But is this really the message that we should take from the rat race scenario?

Of course, a definition of happiness that is heavily disciplined by the market and materialism culture is not a blameless motive for those who are sceptical towards happiness itself. Certainly, the commodification of anything, would results in chastised and hard-pressed feelings, not to mention the capitalist systems are not kind to people, as they systematically reinforce exclusivity.\(^{195}\) In fact, allowing the mechanisms of power to frighten us out of our rightful designs on happiness, will be surrendering to a far stronger order. For the materialist culture no longer just prescribes the route to happiness, but also dictates how we must feel about happiness too. To that effect, any anticipation that the capitalised model of happiness might be fruitful, turned into passé the moment pursuit of happiness became the happiness of pursuit. Still, even Steve


\(^{193}\) Kant, *Moral Law Groundwork Metaphys*.

\(^{194}\) Davies is a political theorist in consumerism and happiness studies, see more on: William Davies, *The Happiness Industry, How the Government and Big Business Sold Us Well-Being* (Verso, 2015). See page 99 and109 among others.

\(^{195}\) Apart from more explored examples of social status, another example for this could be seen in capitalist systems that reinforce nondisabled as normal. See more: Mills and Sanchez, *Crip Authorship, Disability as Method*. Page 61 among others.
Cutts’ rats do not concede to the disappointments and relentlessly try to feed the hunger for that seemingly elusive happy state of being. Or as Davies argues in *The Happiness Industry*, critically examining defining features of capitalist ideology and neoliberal capitalism creates openings for “happiness in spite of unhappiness: hope.”\(^{196}\) The temporal subjections of happiness are more or less severely advertised among capitalist societies, and even to the strong-willed people, they might become forced decisions rather than suggestions. This is a crucial a reminder not to entirely blame and medicate “individuals for their own misery, and ignore the context that has contributed to it.”\(^{197}\) With regards to the moral attachments such as productivity and efficiency\(^{198}\) as well as indictments of capitalist society that Davies and Cutt elaborate, there is a need to develop an operative context that outlines co-ordinates of happiness meaning. For that reason, I venture the notion of “intellectual happiness”, that is the extent to which people distinguish and perceive the reasons to their happiness. That includes knowing the dynamics of social formations and deeply rooted capitalist web of structures as well as temporal ideological beliefs and spatial agency. By spatial agency I mean the power to corporeally, and spatially disrupt normative order, in other words, the ability to perceive and act autonomously despite and possibly because of the confining social structures.\(^{199}\) Intellectual happiness is an affective form of intellect, meaning it is not localised as purely cognitive and carries emotive values in knowledge production and ethics,\(^{200}\) and starts from knowing oneself and introspection combined with external observation, resulting in the promotion of empathy towards others as well as oneself. This quote by Mimi Khúc, scholar and writer of things unwell, could be helpful in endeavours of galvanising structures of intellectual happiness:

“Come to know yourself as a human being with needs and limits, an interdependent being who inherently needs structures of support to survive. Come to know yourself as a being within systems that take your time and energy and spoons in varying ways and to varying degrees. Come to know yourself not as a perpetual failure within neoliberal capitalism but as something more than


\(^{197}\) Ibid. See page 12.


your productivity. You are differentially unwell at all times, endlessly navigating your shifting needs, limits, and the demands placed on you. Come to know yourself as inherently worthy...” 201

Regardless of the model on which we build the foundations of happiness, happiness is as adjacent to a fulfilling life as one can seek. Churchill’s saying about democracy, could be applicable to our discussion on happiness too; “It is the worst goal you can choose to achieve in life, except for all the other forms that you might seek.” Happiness, the ideology, is a question of meaning. It is like David’s painting, it is important what elements the narrative has included or excluded from the frame. If we lose the bigger picture, the collective inclination towards happiness can easily turn into the Happiness-ism. Because, once a positive emotion is desired, there is a tendency to overreach. It is particularly important to note this point, that regardless of how we define happiness based on our time or circumstances or choices, as Socrates, Julie or Cutt’s rats were in their own circumstances, we are defined by happiness to a certain degree in our lives as well.

201 Khúc is a PhD scholar and writer of things unwell, see more on her work: https://www.mimikhuc.com/about (last viewed October 2023) Mills and Sanchez, Crip Authorship, Disability as Method. See page 26-7.
Figure 4. A screenshot from the short animation “Happiness” created by © Steve Cutts. Visit www.stevecutts.com to see “Happiness”. This scene pictures relentless rats in long maze-like queues surrounded by agencies that promise happiness.
The economy of happiness

While one might argue the model of happiness that has been celebrated by mechanisms of power is not completely reflecting reality, it is undeniably tenacious. We hear it rehearsed daily on advertisements ruled by commodity exchange, mass media driven by the interests of the market or even politician’s election promises. This was well expressed by Neil Thin in his book, *Social Happiness Theory into Policy and Practice*: “Sometimes, happiness is seen as a utopian ideal because it is a belief in ‘complete’ well-being that can never happen to us in real life and that would rob us of the will to do anything if it did.”\(^{203}\) He continues that the illusory theories of happiness, such as *living happily ever after* or religious notions of heaven, “Violate our normal understanding of the happy life as one full of motivation, action, and interest.”\(^{204}\) For Thin, to set the goal as Hutcheson or Bentham did, the greatest happiness for the maximum number is to assess happiness as a matter of economy. Or according to Coyne, “The quantification of emotion also brings it under the purview of economics.”\(^{205}\) But the question is, can we really separate happiness from the economy at all?

The Scottish economist, Adam Smith, elaborates on the correlation between happiness and economy in his book, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations*. Smith argues: “No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable.”\(^{206}\) On the same ground, Smith argues that commodity exchange in consumer societies promotes the labouring poor members’ welfare, and in general, its positive outcome outweighs its shortcomings.\(^{207}\) Smith also introduced the idea of invisible hands in *The theory of moral sentiments*. Invisible hands in a nutshell, is the concept that we vote with our wallets and to satisfy the demand the market moves forward. The same ‘self-love’ that governs the market structure, both on the consumer and producer part, in time will


\(^{204}\) Ibid.


\(^{207}\) Ibid. See: 1265
assist consumer capitalism to reach an equilibrium. The striking underlying notion of ‘self-love’ as the reason behind our actions induces that not only it is futile to separate happiness and economy, but it may be impossible as well.

So far, I discussed that the cynicism towards contemporary models accompanying social relations is not limited to the concept of happiness. Of course, any standardisation in its extreme form could not be healthy. Ordering factors in response to the natural "Longing for happiness" in human beings, in their struggle to sustain our craving for happiness, could turn into additional chaotic resources themselves. Including the excessive capitalist consumerism. Facing this issue, happiness can turn into a cause for Emotional labour. Emotional labour as Coyne suggests, could happen on an everyday basis. Every time that we do not feel like smiling, yet we do, in our encounters with colleagues, clients or the staff of a coffee shop. A huge part of social life has the same defect, accordingly that does not mean that there is something wrong in pursuing happiness, it just means that we might want to reconsider our means to it. In fact, some social considerations clearly deprive us of impulsive happiness. In Russell words, “At every moment of life, the civilised man is hedged about by restrictions of impulse: if he happens to be cheerful he must not sing or dance in the street, …for fear of obstructing pedestrian traffic” and “All this makes zest more difficult to retain, for the continual restraint tends to produce weariness and boredom. Nevertheless, a civilised society is impossible without a very considerable degree of restraint upon spontaneous impulse, since spontaneous impulse will only produce the simplest forms of social cooperation, not those highly complex forms which modern economic organisation demands.” “As long as any pleasure does no harm to other people is to be valued.” Happiness is to be valued providing “The virtue of moderation” is taken into the account.

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212 Ibid. See page: 84.

213 Ibid.
1.4. The spatial structures of happiness

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair…”

In the very first words of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens renders two extensively unalike social consequences constructed in the cities of London and Paris. This formulation represents an undercurrent concept to the Dickens’s perspective, the notion that our lives are conditioned by the spatial setting we are living in on many levels. In the same spirit, whenever I discuss my PhD research with people out of the professional architects’ circles, I am encouraged by the spontaneous responses on their version of a happy place: “I like to see the sky while walking” or “I’m happiest when in nature”.214 And through it all, it seems that there is a collective sense of how a city can provide a better condition to realise happiness for its dwellers. Indeed, for happiness to occur, the contextual possibilities should function in a situated setting. Unexpectedly, these expressions have not been voiced and projected in academic resources in the same way.

There is a relatively small but growing body of literature that is concerned with the spatial aspect of happiness, and then it is mostly focused on the spatial design that provides adequate living conditions for residents. In other words, much of the current literature is more concerned with averting unhappiness rather than generating happiness. However, several lines of evidence suggest that for “Happy cities”, “Space is of paramount importance—in the broad sense of the notion, involving relationships between buildings and parks, between people and buildings, between parks and people, and also the relationships between residents.”215 To be added to this list is urban infrastructure for walking and cycling as well as richer leisure-time, games and

214 From random encounters in a book group at Edinburgh Central Library to the targeted talk I gave to a group of artists at the God’s House Tower Arts and Heritage gallery, people were always generous with sharing their happy places with me. See: Futures Forum no.1: Where is my happiness?

This thread of literature associates urban happiness with “liveable cities” or according to Jan Gehl, cities for people. Gehl is an architect and author advocating the quality of life in cities. Gehl argues that urban designers should incorporate the “human dimension” in design to ensure improvements in “living conditions, happiness and dignity” of the city inhabitants, and lively, safe, sustainable and healthy cities. A more recent parallel to people-centred city planning is Soft City introduced by David Sim, an architect and urban expert. Sim presents the soft city as responsive, straightforward, sociable, sensory and small (correlating with human scale) that can contribute to stronger communities and “healthier and happier lives”.

Building on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and other economic measures of wellbeing, variables such as community life, gender equality and freedom are indicators of assessing the quality of life. All of which, could be studied, triggered or blocked through architecture. Alain de Botton in his The Architecture of Happiness describes the significance of our home in our happiness. According to de Botton, “Although this house may lack solutions to a great many of its occupants’ ills, its rooms nevertheless give evidence of a happiness to which architecture has made its distinctive contribution.”

According to Thin, “Architects and town planners have doubtless always been aware that their work influence people’s happiness, but they have done little to engage with other disciplines to understand these influences.” In many ways it is safe to assume architects and urban designers usually design based on their own ideas of happiness, rather than a collective understanding of it. Regardless, the design process could be interpreting notions of happiness into form. As Charles Montgomery, urbanist and

216 Ibid.
219 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a widely accepted measure for economic performance and social progress of countries, although it has been criticised for its shortcomings such as disregarding hours spent on house chores for working hours, environmental quality and so on. See J-P. Fitoussi. Stiglitz, Joseph E., Amartya Sen, “Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress,” 2017.
221 Brdulak and Brdulak, Happy City - How to Plan and Create the Best Livable Area for the People, 2017. See page 109.
222 Alain de Botton is a philosopher and a founding member of the school of life.
author of *Happy City* suggests, everyone including non-designers will be engaged with translating happiness to form on a daily basis. Our everyday decision makings are our search for happiness, from choosing where to live to which car to buy.\(^{225}\) “It happens when planners, politicians, and community boards wrestle over roads, zoning laws, and monuments. It is impossible to separate the life and design of a city from the attempt to understand happiness, to experience it, and to build it for society. The search shapes cities, and cities shape the search in return.”\(^{226}\)

Montgomery also argues that although recent studies such as the Cato Institute data shows that “High levels of economic freedom” and “High average incomes” strongly associate with happiness, “Being rich and free” does not necessarily make us happier as data suggests.\(^{227}\) Montgomery probes “Why wasn’t the half-century surge in wealth accompanied by a surge in happiness? What was counteracting the effect of all that money?”\(^{228}\) While Montgomery is asking a valid question, he stops short from examining the other shifts in social paradigms that play a part in people’s assessment of being rich and free, besides their happiness. For instance, reviewing women’s movement for equal pay and opportunity or body image campaigns questions to what extent the relative definitions of freedom are a shared acceptance. And by doing so, reminds us that we need to consider that a linear narrative of people’s notions of happiness will not be comprehensive. In other words, if we agree with Montgomery’s assessment on 50 years increase in wealth did not result in happiness upsurge, the fault with this comparison would be negating many other dynamics such as the rise of mass media usage or revelation of gender or race inequality during last decades.

Years before Montgomery’s *Happy City*, the influential author Italo Calvino in his *Invisible Cities* describes an imaginary city called Zenobia as a happy city. Calvino portrays Zenobia as a city with bamboo and zinc houses, many platforms and multi-levelled crisscrossing balconies, water storing barrels in suspended sidewalks, cone-roofed belvederes and weather-vanes. He continues:

\(^{226}\) Ibid.
\(^{227}\) Ibid.
\(^{228}\) Ibid.
“What is certain is that if you ask an inhabitant of Zenobia to describe his vision of a happy life, it is always a city like Zenobia that he imagines, with its pilings and suspended stairways, a Zenobia perhaps quite different, a-flutter with banners and ribbons, but always derived by combining elements of that first model.”  

For Calvino, the chore of happy cities lies in their ability to mobilise their inhabitants’ aspirations. Calvino concludes a happy city is one that “through the years and the changes continue to give form” to the desires of its citizens, and unhappy cities are those “in which desires either erase the city or are erased by it.”

The Happy City book is consistent with Calvino’s underlying account and provides insights for enabling inhabitants’ desires, or a recipe for happy cities as Montgomery phrases. Namely, the city should actively maximise joy and minimise hardship, foster health and strengthen friendship and family bonds, be resilient against financial or environmental distresses and provide freedom of life and movement while recognising our common fate and enabling empathy and support.

Similarly, empirical reports based on local and global authorities’ datasets confirm the mentioned framework for happy cities. In the UK, Happy city Index (HCI) report as a part of the National Wellbeing Programme renders wellbeing conditions at a city level for policymakers. The aim of the programme is to provide an explanatory system to “measure what matters”. The Happy City Index (HCI) was developed by Happy City and the New Economics Foundation (NEF) to assess a city’s capacity in providing the conditions that create ‘sustainable wellbeing’. Similar to Montgomery and Calvino’s perception, the report defines sustainable wellbeing “as providing equal opportunities to thrive for present and future generations.” The HCI report ranks UK cities happiness based on urban criteria of safety, housing, transport, and greenspace as well as community’s reach to participation, culture and education. Namely, access to

230 Ibid. See Thin Cities 2 section.
231 Montgomery, Happy City: Transforming Our Lives through Urban Design. See the second section: the city has always been a happiness project.
232 Sam Lewis, Saamah Abdallah, and Happy City measurement and policy team, ‘Happy City Index 2016 Report’, 2016. See page 3.
233 Ibid.
museums, heritage and sightseeing sites, tours and viewing centres, enterprises and volunteering hubs and outdoor spaces for exercise.\textsuperscript{234}

*The global happiness policy* reports acquire similar comparative framework to advise governments in order to increase happiness levels in the city.\textsuperscript{235} The report draws on happiness as the framework for sustainable development due to the UAE government’s initiative to fulfil agenda 2030, the Paris climate agreement objectives, UN charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Connected neighbourhoods through activities, parks and greenspaces, and active commuting facilities including walking and cycling capacities, as well as availability, simplicity and usability of services are addressed in the report as enablers of urban happiness.\textsuperscript{236} The report also introduces the concept of “happy cities in a smart world”, initiating a conversation on urban technologies that could make cities happier.\textsuperscript{237} According to the report, the focus of smart cities needs to be shifted from technology to “higher wellbeing” of people to ensure inclusive urban facilities, redefining “smarter” as a wise adoption of resources, methods and high technology benefits.\textsuperscript{238}

Another relevant study is *The World Happiness Report 2020* that ranks the happiness of cities around the world by way of comparing life evaluation measures.\textsuperscript{239} Global ranking of cities happiness based on life evaluation and subjective wellbeing measures of Gallup World Poll and shows Finland’s Helsinki, Denmark’s Aarhus and New Zealand’s Wellington as the top three Happy cities.\textsuperscript{240} The report also discloses that both momentary experience of happiness and joy and levels of life evaluation positively

\textsuperscript{234} Ibid. See page: 27-8.
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid. See 158-174.
\textsuperscript{238} Ibid. See 184-6.
\textsuperscript{240} Ibid. See page 50-3.
affect regional wellbeing.\textsuperscript{241} Such reports represent viable advice on the production of happy places but they are derived solely based on quantitative dataset from an exclusive source. Furthermore, the fundamental assumption for such reports’ analyses is that their data is comparable, however since that database is not holistic and excludes many contextual elements the comparison credibility is reduced. For instance, the Happy City Index (HCI) considers voting for elections as a community participation measure neglecting numerous social and political dynamics that influence participation periodically.\textsuperscript{242} Finally, data gathered and analysed by governmental agencies such as the global happiness policy reports might exclude sensitive data due to political transparency and accountability issues.

Moving forward, the key term that is the chore of this study is \textit{Spatial Happiness}, and it could be defined as the spatial qualities that affect users' happiness. The “architecture of happiness” in particular in the context of spatial features was used by Alain de Botton in his book with the same title published in 2006. Botton used the term to relay stories on how different places affect our senses and personal experiences of dwellings, and the book is targeting the general public.\textsuperscript{243} There are also similar hints in books that are written for architects by architects, such as \textit{Thinking Architecture} by Peter Zumthor. Zumthor that is the winner of 2009 Pritzker Prize and 2013 RIBA Royal Gold Medal, in his book discusses architectural elements and their impression on our emotions and moods.\textsuperscript{244} The “urban happiness” term appears to be coined by Frank Lloyd Wright in his 1958 book, The Living City. Wright was more focused on designing a good society through functional architecture and urban planning, advocating democratic and self-sufficient farming in 1 acre per person cities and so his ideas were more targeted towards decision makers and designers.\textsuperscript{245} The following diagram maps the literature review on the spatial structure of happiness, modelling the field researchers and theorists as well as attributes and relationships between diverse sources. (See figure 6 and chapter appendix)

\textsuperscript{241} Ibid. See 54-5. 
\textsuperscript{242} Lewis, Abdallah, and Happy City measurement and policy team, ‘Happy City Index 2016 Report’. Also see this study’s chapter 2, previous research evaluation section.
\textsuperscript{243} de Botton, \textit{The Architecture of Happiness}.
\textsuperscript{244} Peter Zumthor is a renowned architect and winner of multiple architectural prizes. See: Peter Zumthor, \textit{Thinking Architecture} (Basel, Boston, Berlin: Birkhauser, 1999).
\textsuperscript{245} Frank Lloyd. Wright, \textit{The Living City} (New York: Bramhall House, 1958).
This implies the spatial happiness term could be an evolution or rather organic confluence in nomenclature, joining the two concepts and bringing these notions together for a more comprehensive approach. To the best of my knowledge, the term spatial happiness, although implied, does not appear in this form with an established definition in the current literature. This per se verifies the significance and necessity of conducting the current study.
Figure 5. This diagram maps the literature review on the spatial structure of happiness, modelling the field researchers and theorists as well as attributes and relationships between diverse sources.
Happy-go-lucky; happiness, luck and spatial design

The word happy stems from the early Scandinavian happ, meaning “chance, good luck, success” and “lucky, to happen by chance”. Accordingly, a happy person is one favoured by fortune; fortunate or lucky. Luck is the chance occurrence of situations that are to our interests, and it is assessed as a force or agent granting success, seemingly without any personal acquisition. Here lies a fundamental and theoretical approach, that “luck pervades our lives” and that inevitably luck should be addressed in the architecture of our everyday places. Is there a way to design lucky places? I will explore this question through deliberating two similar but slightly rephrased questions, first, in what ways architecture can be the agent of bestowing success to its users, and then, in what ways architecture can increase the chance of a favourable situation.

In order to characterise the spatial aspect of success and happiness, we need to decipher into the correlation between happiness and a sense of achievement first. To explicate, one approach is that happiness is an achievement de facto. Julia Annas, the author of The morality of happiness, explains that the things that we consider will make us happy, to some extent will do so through a sense of successful achievement and “Just having the stuff” is not all we want. By aiming certain things and then achieving those things, we have also “achieved a certain kind of affective state” that is pleasurable. It would be problematic and perhaps unnecessary to detect whether our happiness is the consequence of our achievement or the reason for it, for its behavioural formation could be traced back to our childhood. An ongoing 10-year study on Pedagogy of Children Values at Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) is investigating indicators of “growing up Happy” through questioning “What makes

251 Annas, Moral. Happiness. See page 86.
children feel happy?” the study findings suggest that children’s perception of their achievements is a direct stimulator of their happiness. Correspondingly, in a study that I conducted with about 50 elementary school children in Edinburgh to capture their idea of a happy place, children associated a sense of achievement with their happiness. Children were asked to draw a happy place, the question was: “What does come to your mind when you think about a happy place? Where can you be happy?”. When analysing children’s work, one of the repeatedly drawn objectives of happiness were acts of winning, for instance in a football match, or achieving medals and trophies. Comparably, reading and writing were mentioned frequently by children that could be referred as studying, doing homework, getting good grades and being successful at school, and/or obtaining a sense of growth and advancement in relation to their personal skills. Gold medals and winning trophies also indicate a desire for achievement in a social sense. According to the Pedagogy of Children Values findings, about 20% of children who participated in the study reported “Experiences of being positively accepted and recognized by their friends (to have a lot of friends, to play altogether)” as their happiest moments. Therefore, the relationship between happiness and success is constantly regulated through a sense of achievement in both personal and social dimensions.

For that reason, it seems permissible to question that in what ways architecture can be the agent of bestowing a sense of achievement and success to its users, and through that inspire happiness. The first answer to this inquiry appears obvious, I am referring to the experiences of failure and success that lies within the processes of wayfinding. The flustering sense of disorientation and the thrill of successfully finding our way in an unfamiliar environment, both are rather common experiences. The delight of “Aha moments”, when one finds one’s path after walking in circles for a while, is a pure form of urban-achievement experience for people. Whether it is the wayfinding self-efficacy or pleasure in exploring, the wayfinding experience is most

253 See chapter 3 of this study for more details on the research.
255 For “Aha moments” analogy I am indebted to Professor Richard Coyne. See Vertigo in Coyne, Mood and Mobility: Navigating the Emotional Spaces of Digital Social Networks.
pleasurable when it is a balanced combination of adventurous and unadventurous choices in navigation. This requires a form of complexity in urban morphology that organically shaped cities pioneer. Since a satisfying experience of wayfinding does not necessarily requires an orderly designed urban network of streets, instead it appears in a network that “Can be organized into a coherent pattern”\(^{257}\) by users mentally, “Just as this printed page, if it is legible, can be visually grasped as a related pattern of recognizable symbols, so a legible city would be one whose districts or landmarks or pathways are easily identifiable and are easily grouped into an over-all pattern.”\(^ {258}\)

Kevin Lynch, urban planner and author of *The Image of the City* argues that the “Environmental image” is the key to wayfinding experience, and it is a consequence of interlaced factors such as street arrangements, route sings, remarkable buildings and so on and so forth. According to Lynch, what entice us to appreciate the wayfinding process is “Imageability”, which is the “High probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer.”\(^ {259}\)

Lynch argues that when the “mishap” of disorientation transpires, a “Sense of anxiety and even terror that accompanies it reveals to us how closely it is linked to our sense of balance and well-being.”\(^ {260}\) I appreciate Lynch’s use of the word “mishap” in order to re-establish my argument on luck, and wayfinding manners’ connection to our happiness. “The very word ‘lost’ in our language means much more than simple geographical uncertainty; it carries overtones of utter disaster.”\(^ {261}\) In clear contrast to the urban setting that incites feelings of being “lost”, an imageable city stands, a city that inspires proximate opportunities for users to be in the right place at the right time, an ability that would be empowered if users can conjure up a mental image of the city based on their surroundings.

One critic to this argument could be the wayfinding technologies that change the equation dramatically. The interaction between the observer/user and the city no longer solely lies within the physical capacity of the spatial setting, but also in GPS


\(^{258}\) Ibid.

\(^{259}\) Ibid. See page 9.

\(^{260}\) Ibid. See page 8.

\(^{261}\) Ibid.
navigation systems and our smartphones’ apps. Although these technologies are not flawless yet, and there is always the possibility of running out of phone battery or losing the Wi-Fi connection, they are hinged to our urban experiences and tamper with our wayfinding gains or losses. Yet, these devices of wayfinding can turn into disorienting tools themselves. Disorientation is the unsettling feeling of being unfamiliar with one’s surroundings, and “Unable to determine how to correct the situation.” Accordingly, we might think that the goal of navigation search in virtual environments is to create a situation where everyone is oriented properly all the time and knows exactly where everything is and how to get there. Whereas what we are sometimes dealing with is the exact opposite, when using navigation apps leave us allegedly more disoriented, for instance when we find ourselves disoriented because Google maps says, “Turn left here” and there is no street on the left side.

That being said, urban spaces, perceptibly in historic cities, seldomly are designed with digital technologies in mind. (Although being entangled with digital technologies might appear deceiving to some urbanites that the space is constituted with digital technologies, whereas we know that it is not the case.) One should also mention here that using navigation apps deprive us from experiencing the city fully in a way. The modern city is a moment, it’s there a second and the next it’s another. Since the feel of the space is constituted with presence and communication and the frenzy of activities, it is an ongoing experience (like the flowing water through the river) that would be missed if we have our heads in our smartphones constantly. So despite this stricture, we are yet to imagine a world that we do not have to carry our bodies in space and set foot to find our way physically.

Now apart from the personal sense of achievement, is there a spatial translation to the social aspect of achievement? I think this is where technology and social media underlies the triangle of happiness, achievement and place. The thousands of photos that are posted daily to capture and share a happy moment in a specific place are in a way revealing of this often unacknowledged connection. We share photos proudly when we visit new, famous or out of ordinary places. Merely visiting a place de facto turns into an achievement, which we commemorate through taking and sharing photos.

Lynch in *The Image of the City* recounts an interview in which the interviewee relates the pleasure of “going to places”.

“You cross Baldwin Avenue, you see all of New York in front of you, you see the terrific drop of land (the Palisades) . . . and here's this open panorama of lower Jersey City in front of you and you're going downhill, and there you know: there's the tunnel, there's the Hudson River and everything. . . . I always look to the right to see if I can see the ... Statue of Liberty. . . . Then I always look up to see the Empire State Building, see how the weather is. . . . I have a real feeling of happiness because I'm going someplace, and I love to go places.”

The interconnection of happiness, achievement and place is so profound that even pertains a certain photography culture in some places, the Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy is a concrete example of holding a place-based photography culture that tourists from all over the world follow.

Prior to embarking upon the second question, it is worth mentioning that there are other spatially related factors that can instigate a sense of achievement and happiness too. Finding an urban hidden gem, an awe-inspiring building or vista in an unexpected location often grants a moment of revelation, and euphoria. More typically, however, is the pleasure of seeing an iconic urban scene unscathed. It is as if as long as the predominant city elements are intact, we are able to recognise ourselves in relation to the space. It is as if such landmarks mark the city and citizens both, with permissible anticipations. Everyday life provides us with examples such as Edinburgh castle for Edinburgh citizens or piazza San Marco for Venetians, when the mere existence of these urban personas provides an expectation for citizens, the solid anchoring feeling that is more one of relief— the pleasure of reassurance and the comfort of stable circumstances. The reason is that when the society is hurting, the urban scene will not remain unscathed. The urban environment “Reflects political realities and provides a litmus test for the health of our society and democracy.”

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263 Kevin Lynch, ‘*The Image of the City*’, (MIT Press, 1960), See Page 49.
movement protests gave a clear demonstration of how bruised the urban stage will become if people are suffering and unhappy.\(^{265}\)

Now let us explore in what ways architecture can increase the chance of a favourable situation. For this, we have only to understand luck as what it is; being in the right place, at the right time that indeed could be prompted through spatial design. There is a robust body of evidence on the exact opposite case, crime maps across the cities from all over the world exhibit that urban crime hotspots are linked by the interaction of space-time indicators and crime events.\(^{266}\) Oscar Newman, architect and city planner, in his 1972 book \textit{Defensible Space}, argued that cities could be designed to minimise crime, claiming that urban design is a more effective solution to decrease violence and crime than improving any other social conditions.\(^{267}\) Newman’s critics argued that territorial rights and community’s pride, that were the basis of Defensible Space concept, are only applicable to homogeneous demographics, whereas many urban neighbourhoods are “a cosmopolitan mix of age groups, ethnicities, cultures, and social identities. Here, (dis)orderly behaviour itself may be differently interpreted and experienced.”\(^{268}\) Another liberal criticism of Defensible Space theory is the comparative analyses of civil crime,\(^{269}\) and the inherent assumption that the state legal systems have legitimacy among people, however being legal does not necessarily mean morally legitimate. The distinction of the two is demonstrated by the supreme example of totalitarian governments that would administer oppressive conceptions of order, contrasting the common moral values, as well as the exploitation of human rights by their law enforcement agencies. Yet, despite these strictures, Newman’s findings were irrefutable in exposing the casual link between physical form and reducing crime.\(^{270}\)

\(^{265}\) #BlackLivesMatter movement uprisings worldwide in 2020, after George Floyd was killed at the hand of police officers in Minneapolis showed how civil unrest results in urban destruction.


\(^{267}\) Minton, \textit{Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-First-Century City}.


\(^{269}\) Newman’s Defensible Space theory initiated the “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” or CPTED to enhance the quality of urban life. See: Oscar Newman and Institute for Community Design Analysis, ‘Creating Defensible Space’ (New York, 1996).

\(^{270}\) Ibid. See page 25-30 among others.
In order to outline the spatial co-ordinates of violence and crime, the Problem Analysis Triangle is of help, as it encompasses potential intra-communal nonconformity and deviation in legal systems. The crime triangle apexes consist of victim, offender and location. Considering “It is the coincidence of these three in time and space that allows for a crime to take place, by working on the location, crime can be reduced even if there is still an offender and target [victim] present”\textsuperscript{271} For instance, defined and highly accessible routes combined with high visibility from the neighbouring houses and local businesses, might mean the offender would find it less likely to get away with theft.\textsuperscript{272} In this precise sense, it is true that one could be in the wrong place and at the wrong time. This brings us back to the conceptual opposition, except for reducing the risk of being in the wrong spatio-temporal condition, in what ways architecture can promote users’ being in the right place, at the right time?

One interesting proposition here is the 15-minute city plan, a scheme that Paris mayor, Anne Hidalgo, used in her 2020 re-election campaign.\textsuperscript{273} The 15-minute city offers neighbourhoods that provide citizens with 15-minute walkable access to primary public amenities, and eventually will improve overall health by way of increasing physical activity levels.\textsuperscript{274} The idea is plausible considering the extent of which it will affect the timing of our presence in urban setting. Walkability per se, is the capacity of the built environment to positively affect users’ walking,\textsuperscript{275} and is strongly linked to physical and mental health.\textsuperscript{276} Similar projects were proposed across the world including “Walkable London” by Zaha Hadid Architects that was initiated based on the campaigns for the pedestrianisation of oxford street in London.\textsuperscript{277}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{272} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{275} Ibid. Also see: Filipe Moura, Paulo Cambra, and Alexandre B. Gonçalves, ‘Measuring Walkability for Distinct Pedestrian Groups with a Participatory Assessment Method: A Case Study in Lisbon’, \textit{Landscape and Urban Planning}, 2017.
  \item \textsuperscript{276} Weng et al., ‘The 15-Minute Walkable Neighborhoods: Measurement, Social Inequalities and Implications for Building Healthy Communities in Urban China’. Also see: Mohammad Javad Koohsari et al., ‘Validity of Walk Score® as a Measure of Neighborhood Walkability in Japan’, \textit{Preventive Medicine Reports}, 2018.
  \item \textsuperscript{277} See the \textit{Walkable London} proposal by Zaha Hadid Architects here: https://www.walkablelondon.co.uk
\end{itemize}
While it is yet to be seen the pros and cons of a 15-minute city in practice, seeing that Hidalgo was re-elected it seems Parisians were favouring the proposed urban arrangement. To turn a critical gaze on the 15-minute city concept however, the fact that it is actively advocated by the Chinese government does make it susceptible to scepticism.\textsuperscript{278} While the Chinese government announces its own policies as “Socialism with Chinese characteristics”, given that how extensively the political and human rights were undermined by the Chinese authorities in Hongkong, Taiwan and Tibet just in 2020, “Chinese Characteristics” is loosely pointing to intensified efforts to exert control.\textsuperscript{279} Considering the Chinese government tendency to maintain a relatively autonomous social and political beliefs, one cannot help but be more sceptical towards the greater extent that 15-minute cities will generally allow effective centralised domination and surveillance. Very roughly, then, we might describe 15-minute cities as a patchwork of segregated neighbourhoods that will increase encountering chances through the neighbourhood but will decrease encountering chances with other communities; and by doing so, allow the government to establish a more centralised hegemony through tracking individuals’ behaviours. Additionally, considering the inherent unfeasibility of 15-minute cities to be neutral towards the dynamics of social classes as well, the final outcome is that 15-minute cities could provide lucky places, more likely in a world that is free of political and economic manipulations.

What remains vital to this discussion, is that taken together, the aforementioned spatial features are able to add up to a higher quality of life, and vice versa. The spatial layout through interface and interrelated connections has a high degree of influence over seemingly random movements of citizens. Luck, or patterns of encounter are undeniably entailed by the relational system of urban spaces. And so, to create places that suffocate, break or disrupt the human spirit, or enrich, uplift, and inspire; are bound to spatial design; and to live a life in the latter, is indeed lucky.


The overall landscape of academic research is lacking in intellectual deliberation the notion of luck deserves. After all, luck is entangled with our everyday lives, we wish luck when we mean well, and we blame a frustrating situation on the lack of it. In Woody Allen’s 2005 Match point, Chris Wilton the leading character starts the movie with the following monologue.

“The man who said ‘I’d rather be lucky than good’ saw deeply into life. People are afraid to face how great a part of life is dependent on luck. It’s scary to think so much is out of one’s control. There are moments in a match when the ball hits the top of the net, and for a split second, it can either go forward or fall back. With a little luck, it goes forward, and you win. Or maybe it doesn’t, and you lose.”

More importantly, “There certainly are instances where luck plays a substantial role in the acquisition of apparently bona fide knowledge.” A renowned example of a scientific key discovery that was gained through luck, though possible apocryphal, is the accidental discovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming. Whether luck holds any power over our actions or not, it has been creating hope in face of inexorable danger for many over centuries. British soldiers for instance, used to carry amulets to protect themselves from bad luck. According to a newspaper article during the first world war, “In St Thomas’s Hospital every [soldier] had some mascot... And no baby in the children’s ward played more assiduously with its gifts than did these huge bandaged fellows.” Some of these amulets or charms that used to carry the soldiers’ hope in the face of trepidation are now museum objects, but many people still carry objects that they believe will bring them luck. (See chapter appendix) Though it might seem paradoxical to conduct research on luck by design rather than leaving it to lucky guesses, the concern is that we need some way of understanding luck in order to justifiably design for happiness.

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280 Woody Allen, Match Point (UK and US, 2005).
281 Pritchard, Epistemic Luck. See page 1.
282 Ibid.
283 Daily Mirror, published in 27 December 1915, UK. This is a quote from the Horniman museum archives that is on display. (By March 2020)
Happiness playgrounds

The origins of the word *play* speak clearly of the connection between happiness and play, as *play* cognates with Middle Dutch *pleyen* meaning “to dance, leap for joy, rejoice, and be glad⁴⁴, making playgrounds preceding places designed to engage in happiness as well as a good starting point to study spatial happiness. If we consider play designed interactive experiences; place could be where it happens, but also could be the interactive anchor that shapes the play.⁵⁵ The raised question here is that what spatial qualities in a playground can induce play and happiness?

Typically, the identification of play and work is often observed as two opposing activities. Understandably so, since there is a pointlessness aura entwined with play, to play is to have no care towards an ulterior motive.⁶⁶ While work is done with regard or to satisfy certain outcomes, playing is pursued and performed merely for the sake of play itself. As Friedrich Schiller, 18th century philosopher suggests, we find meaning in life if only we find value in things for their own sake; “Humanity, in every sense, is precisely play, and it is play alone that makes man complete.”⁶⁷ This is what brings play under the surveillance of happiness. In Aristotle’s view, what is done for its own sake is noble. And to play, is to exercise the virtue of action for its own sake. Hence, regarding play as a virtue makes exercising it a constituent of happiness. For Aristotelians, “Happiness consists in, and only in, virtuous activity.”⁶⁸ At the same time, play is also an *Instrumental good*, bearing in mind that any virtuous activity, “involves the pleasure of contemplating one’s own virtuous actions.”⁶⁹ This in turn feeds into a sense of satisfaction with one’s life in general that unfolds on a long-term basis. This opposing flow of play with the restless and relentless drive of our lives, is precisely the happiness of play: “play is characterized by calm, timeless ‘presence’ and

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⁶⁷ Schiller and Snell, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*.
⁶⁹ Ibid. See page 194.
autonomous, self-sufficient meaning _ play resembles an oasis of happiness that we happen upon in the desert of our Tantalus-like seeking and pursuit of happiness."

The terminological concept also implies that play is not purely amusement. To play properly involves a certain seriousness in engagement. Each game or sport is founded on framing rules that must be followed. The crucial point is that while the rules define the game formally, they do not shape its efficiency. Instead, it is the playground that conditions the play. Brian Massumi, philosopher and social theorist, in his *Parables for the Virtual* expands on the field of play as a field of possible activities and how playground functions to induce the play.

“The play sensation is a channelling of field-potential into local action, from which it is again transduced into a global reconfiguration of the field of potential. Sensation is the mode in which potential is present in the perceiving body. The player plays the field of potential directly. Potential is the space of play—or would be, were it a space.”

If we consider play designed interactive and embodied experiences; then place could be where it happens, but also could be the interactive anchor that shapes the play and facilitates its conditional arrangements. Therefore, the field of potential, that is place, not only is able to promote the play, it can also be an elemental aspect of play. For Massumi, the space is the literal field of probable activity that modifies the players’ choice. Understanding the notion of field is significant due to its determining ability in user perception. For one, our being and situatedness are inseparable from place, and for another, the perceptual field is a dynamic experience based on the sensibilities and possibilities of the lived body. Similar to Massumi, Merleau-Ponty, philosopher

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291 Ibid. The serious circumstances and real stakes of play could be seen in sports or gambling. Also see: Flanagan, *Critical Play: Radical Game Design*.
292 Brian Massumi is Professor in the Department of Communication Sciences at the University of Montréal. Massumi is a philosopher and social theorist in fields of architecture, cultural studies and art. See: Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 2013.
293 Ibid.
and public intellectual, considers the field as the manner in which the space becomes perceptible to its users.

“When through the water’s thickness I see the tiling at the bottom of a pool, I do not see it despite the water and the reflections there; I see it through them and because of them. If there were no distortions, no ripples of sunlight, if it were without this flesh that I saw the geometry of the tiles, then I would cease to see it as it is.”296

According to Merleau-Ponty, both the lived body and the field of potential interact through “contextual presence” as well as constant “immersion, awareness and actions”, making it so that the field and the body integrate seamlessly for an action to unfold, that is the play activity in this discussion. 297 Here lies the point of distinction between the body and field relations and spatial stimuli, or the field as an intentional element of play and the space in which play occurs. One example could be found in this description of Boston’s North End by Jane Jacobs, urban theorist and activist, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

“Mingled all among the buildings for living were an incredible number of splendid food stores, as well as such enterprises as upholstery making, metal working, carpentry, food processing. The streets were alive with children playing, people shopping, people strolling, people talking. Had it not been a cold January day, there would surely have been people sitting. The general street atmosphere of buoyancy, friendliness and good health was so infectious that I began asking directions of people just for the fun of getting in on some talk. I had seen a lot of Boston in the past couple of days, most of it sorely distressing, and this struck me, with relief, as the healthiest place in the city.”298

Jacobs describes a safe and warm environment sustained by descriptive corporal activities, continuously filled with textures of goods in the street shops and noises of

conversations, for people to stroll or communicate and exercise their rights to the city, and cause the perception of a healthy place, and in this environment even the streets become the field of play.\textsuperscript{299}

In addition to the complexity of preplanning a field for play that conditions high potentiality, contextualising play for its own sake per se, shows the fundamental enigma in designing a place for play. Considering the functional facet of design that seeks fulfilling a necessity or utility, preplanned design seems paradoxical in essence with creating a field to realise play for its own sake. In relation to this, Gadamer, a decisive philosopher in hermeneutics, in his \textit{Truth and Method} on humanistic philosophy, elaborates that play has its own seriousness, a set of determining and "purposive relations" that are curiously suspended.\textsuperscript{300} In other words, "The player knows very well what play is, and that what he is doing is 'only a game'; but he does not know what exactly he 'knows' in knowing that."\textsuperscript{301} Now the question of our starting point returns; how to design a playground that provokes happiness? A sequential approach to the nexus between play and happiness would be to capture how "playful creativity of childhood"\textsuperscript{302} responds to the question of where can we be happy? Our knowledge with regards to the children's views on happiness and the relationships between play and place in creating happiness needs to be scrutinised. Understanding children's perspective will not only provide us an awareness on what happiness means, but also methods for spatial quality elevation. Bearing in mind that facilitating the happiness of children, as proto-adults, also offers an insight into adulthood and the processes of becoming.\textsuperscript{303} It is also noteworthy that one essential function of play is to prepare the children for adulthood; in that effect the growing up physical spheres educates, limits and imposes on children.\textsuperscript{304} It could stretch or block the potential capacity for "self-actualisation"; which is realised through the built environment's

\textsuperscript{299} Parts of this section were presented at the "Playing in the Cities" panel discussion by the author during the We Play Festival at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh September 2023.
\textsuperscript{301} Ibid
\textsuperscript{303} According to Thin, children could be seen as proto-adults, hence children studies sheds light on childhood as well as giving an insight into adulthood and the processes of becoming. See page 227.
“Variety and freedom” or intimidating “and domineering traffic or a sense of danger and insecurity on the streets.”

Tim Gill, the former director of the Children’s Play Council and author of *Urban Playground*, argues that the cities we live in do not promote health, as urban developments are centred on car mobility rather than children’s happiness. Gill concludes that features of a “playable neighbourhood” are “limited traffic, large yards, and extensive scenery” as well as public areas including streets that appease “children’s appetite for play.” In addition to “accessible green public space”, reliable public transport, active frontages and “good walking and cycling networks”, Gill also advocates urban opportunities for informal meetings and traffic calming devices. Despite Gill’s critical views on how built environment is “shaped more by adult wishes for visual appeal and space for relaxation” than children’s wish for play, the book does not provide children’s views on playgrounds directly and this is acknowledged by the author as emphasis on accounting for measurable change in public domain.

On the subject of playful or playable places, there are also speculative links to smart cities, where it is assumed that embedded sensors and coded interactive elements provide urban dwellers with enjoyable experiences through high-tech urban art and communicating installations. Anton Nijholt, professor of computer-human interaction at the University of Twente Netherlands, in his *Making Smart Cities More Playable: Exploring Playable Cities* suggests that the objective of smart cities is not its digital smartness, it is rather enhancing the city’s efficacy through technology as a tool. Efficacy could be enhanced across diverse venues such as accessibility, waste and energy management as well as the city’s attractiveness and interactive playfulness, with the goal to generate the “most ‘liveable’, ‘happy’, or simply ‘best’ city.”

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305 Ibid.
307 Ibid. See page 9-10.
311 See page v among others.
312 Ibid. Also see page 55.
Interestingly, a criticism against the instrumental technology of smart cities also stems from a utopian vision of a governed society, where with the promise of healthier and happier cities for all, a 1984 Orwellian scenario of mass surveillance and depression epidemic unfolds.³¹³

Playfulness in the context of smart cities is the result of playing with how our senses are engaged with the setting and spatial design, and in a way challenges the usual urban conformations. For instance, Nijholt refers to giving life and character to often invisible urban infrastructures, such as a lamp post that is capable of conversation or performance. Such immersive settings and art installations deliver awe and curiosity in the short-term encounters and cultivate appreciation, contentment and a sense of belonging in the long term, overall elevating the urban enjoyments and the users’ happiness.³¹⁴ Current architectural examples could be the big swings on the edge of a mountain such as Nevis Swing in New Zealand or Vivaldi Park Sky Swing in South Korea,³¹⁵ optical illusions and aural and visual manipulation particularly used in Masonic architecture through intriguing use of lighting, colour and forms,³¹⁶ and gaming landscapes such as skateboarding spaces.³¹⁷ Such places provide opportunities for richer engagement with architecture and urban environment by allowing moments of discovery and repurposed activities, adding liveliness to the cities through defying the conventional spatial arrangements.³¹⁸

In the light of this, it appears that the less conformed creativity of children may act as the hinge on which playful narratives in spatial design could swing. Overall, to better realise both consuming and generating processes of playfulness in spatial design

³¹³ Davies, The Happiness Industry, How the Government and Big Business Sold Us Well-Being. See page 208-9. 1984 is a classic literary example of dystopian fiction and is a novel by George Orwell that cautions against the consequences of mass surveillance.
³¹⁵ See TripAdvisor photos here: https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/AttractionProductReview-g294197-d17553457-Vivaldi_Park_Ocean_World_Luge_Sheep_Farm_Sky_Swing_tour_with_round_trip_shuttle-Se.html (accessed May 27, 2022).
studying user experience appears crucial.\textsuperscript{319} Children as stakeholders and beneficiaries of playable cities\textsuperscript{320} could provide valuable data regarding playful experiences and understanding playgrounds as experienced by children could facilitate the recognition of spatial happiness.

\textsuperscript{319} Nijholt. See page 5.
\textsuperscript{320} Ibid. Page 14.
Sense and intelligibility

Sherlock Holmes in *The Final Problem* describes Moriarty by saying: “He is the organizer of half that is evil and of nearly all that is undetected in this great city … He sits motionless, like a spider in the centre of its web, but that web has a thousand radiations, and he knows well every quiver of each of them.”

Contrary to the spider’s ability to understand the smallest movement on its net, if we consider the urban network of streets a web of thousand possibilities; no one could possibly be aware of all the occurrences. Despite radio reports on traffic accounts and place reviews on google maps, everyday many urban incidents are left unnoticed, many streets will remain a mystery to most of us and many allies remain unseen. Then again, is there a connection between how much of a mystery the city is to us, and our happiness?

The quality of enigmatic places is partly due to the overall intelligibility of urban networks and morphology. Urban intelligibility, by means of how consistent parts of the city are with its overall design, the synergy and accessibility of urban networks and correlating landmarks, as well as the complex spatial elements that influence environmental variables such as visual field, sounds and light can affect users’ conception of place. Unintelligible urban networks patently bring more suspenseful moments to our experience of the city. A concrete example here is provided by considering user exploration of a maze or labyrinth. Typically, a maze despite having regular grids is difficult to navigate mainly due to the inconsistency and unrepresentative pathways that render it unpredictable.

Embedded in the suspense that users might feel at every turn or corner, there are layers of vertigo and curiosity. Unsteadiness or confusion of not knowing where you are, and a suspenseful curiosity to understand your whereabouts or what wonders or horrors could this environment hold. Coyne in his book *Mood and Mobility* describes vertigo as a “Disoriented, unsettled feeling we get in the face of rapid change. It’s also

about going around in circles.”

On that account, certain spatial geometries ally with our body in affecting our moods, but not necessarily in a positive way. The pull of contrast and recurrence when we are taking tentative steps in an unfamiliar part of the town. Or the thrill of not being sure what is the probable outcome of taking a turn in our urban journeys; implies that an unintelligible city is a vortex of possibilities. Ripe with opportunities for exploration. Such urban context would be generating plenty more moments of mystery, which often are followed by the moments of revelation.

While the suspense of what one may encounter suddenly, trying to navigate through an unintelligible network of streets, might put us in a vertigo mood, it might as well trigger our curiosity. Curiosity has been defined as a reward-seeking motivational system which in turn, is essential to our sense of subjective well-being. “Curiosity is an appetitive state involving the recognition, pursuit, and intense desire to investigate novel information and experiences that demand one’s attention.” Kashdan et al. studied a group of participants to examine how curiosity and hedonistic behaviours correlate with sustainable well-being in everyday life and concluded that curiosity as “An open, exploratory orientation to everyday activity appears to be a pathway to the continual building of meaning in life, with the simultaneous existence of a positive present (presence of meaning) and future (search for meaning) time orientation.”

On this note, we can conclude that curiosity is authoritative in promoting our positive moods, which leads us to the indication that by defining and measuring intelligibility in its urban form, we will be able to establish a responsive happiness prototype. Bill Hillier, urban morphologist and theoretician suggests that urban intelligibility is measurable in how parts resemble the whole system. Or in other words, if and to what degree perceiving the bigger picture of urban networks can be conjured up from perceiving its parts. In principle, the city would be intelligible if we can easily summon the general pattern of it simply by “Moving around from one part to another.” In an unintelligible structure “Well-connected spaces are not well integrated.” Namely, we have local

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324 Coyne, Mood and Mobility: Navigating the Emotional Spaces of Digital Social Networks.
325 Ibid.
328 Ibid.
patches in the urban street network that are relatively secluded from the city and responsively their relations mislead us about our location in the space. This matches our perception of what it would be like to move through a labyrinth.330

Unintelligibility does not confine to the lack of resemblance among the parts of the urban streets network to the whole; but also, other contrasts in the urban environment such as the contrasts in scale, dimensions, vista sounds or usage. Kevin Lynch, pioneer urban planner in *The Image of the city* had delineated the idea of legibility as visibility. Lynch named social influences, history or even the name of an area amongst the other influences on Imageability.331 It is safe to say, how we remember a perceptual image of the city is not merely grounded in its spatial form but on the city’s transpatial relations as well. Transpatial term portrays a field of joint actions, the borders of which outlined less by spatial features and more by the social conducts of users.332 The transpatial term provides a firm framework to describe uneven edges of spatial and social structures that influence the emotional experiences of people in an urban complex, such as curiosity or feeling safe. For instance, Shirley Ardener, a pioneer anthropologist and researcher in gender based social maps, denotes gender norms namely respectability or properness as prevalent principles of social order that regulates the spatial distribution.333 Ardener in her *Women and Space* book, describes gender, age and class as complexities that redistribute movement in space and its inhabitation.334 Ardener also refers to her studies to highlight hearing and the interpretation of sounds as a crucial determinant of perceiving social maps. For instance, she quotes: “The boundary between the ‘public’ and the ‘private’ may, in some contexts and under some conditions, be measured primarily by earshot”

330 Ibid. See page 94.
334 Ibid.
concluding that “A map of significant spaces identified by gaze might not coincide with a map of significant sound zones”.

The coordinates of intelligibility which I developed to address spatial curiosity, also appertain to the notion of safety. Building up expectation could lead to elation but could also result in confusion and feeling threatened in the unfamiliar surroundings. Both curiosity and safety inscribe their spatial probability into the extent of which the city is intelligible or imageable. While higher intelligibility does not leave much space for curious encounters, weak imageability fails to foster a sense of safety in urban users. Although the spatial balance between the two has yet to be properly studied, it seems urban impressionists like Gustave Caillebotte had found the golden ratio. For instance, his work, Paris Street, Rainy Day, represents an urban junction in Paris, with wide cobbled stoned streets. Even if the painting did not have Paris in its title, by seeing it one is instantly reminded of Paris. The image of Paris is represented sharply, yet at the same time there are streets in this lined boulevard and shops, subtly touched by enough light to pique the viewers’ curiosity, that viewers would not know of. There are also representations of people from different social status that emphasises the representation of an intersection, both in spatial and transpatial ways. (See Fig. 6)

We are therefore led to regard the strong correlation, or high intelligibility of urban segments, as a spatial happiness determinant. Furthermore, Within the complex correlating spatial features, to what extent our immediate environment indicates of our general understanding of the city and vice versa, is not limited to the city visuals and includes all our senses as well as social perceptions. One promising route of in this context less studied enquiry is to look at the prevalence or absence of the sonic trajectory of happy places or spatial labels of sound identification. How the spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness? What are the sounds of a happy place? How can we ask people with no background in music to express the sounds of a place that has made them happy? These questions will be examined further in chapter 4.

335 Ibid. See page 40-1.
336 Paris Street, Rainy Day by Gustave Caillebotte (1877). Oil on canvas 83-1/2 x 108-3/4 inches / 212.2 x 276.2 cm (The Art Institute of Chicago). View this work up close on the Google Art Project. Also see the Art critical conversations with Beth Harris and Steven Zucker. Khan Academy. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8d45ETI78o (accessed 11 September 2022)
Figure 6. Paris Street, Rainy Day by Gustave Caillebotte (1877). Oil on canvas 83-1/2 x 108-3/4 inches / 212.2 x 276.2 cm (The Art Institute of Chicago). View this work up close on the Google Art Project. The painting renders a high imageability of an urban scene, showing a crossroad of social and spatial properties in Paris.
Community happiness and its spatial dimension

If there is one thing on which we all can agree due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is that how we are all linked into one community, such that one cannot properly exist without considering the entwined relationships of the global community. As it was demonstrated by the 2020 global pandemic, even our rudimentary health is not conceivable independently. In short, it simply is not possible to separate individual and community wellbeing and happiness. As Tabensky suggests, the best life “Can only be lived if an entire community, and not merely a subsection of a wider community, within which a given life is couched, is a flourishing one.” Tabensky, researcher in philosophy and ethics, in his book Happiness: personhood, community, purpose; draws on how happiness realisation is deeply rooted in our communities, to the point that even understanding human joy is about rejoicing in the joy of others, and the relevant comprehension is essentially learnt and implemented in the community. Tabensky characterises communities as the “Circles of love within which we dwell” and emphasises that even the conditions of our direct circles are “Dependent on our community at large.” To summarise, there is no sense in which one’s happiness could justifiably studied or realised independently from that of one’s community. Or as Tabensky phrases, my continued happiness “Contributes to, and is constituted by, the overall happiness of my community.”

On the other hand, to account for community happiness, we need to account for the corporeal base of a community, its built environment. While there are definitions of happiness that does not state a spatial connection, it could be claimed that spatial setting is an essential dimension to the definition of community happiness. The Oxford dictionary defines community, from the original French word communauté (joint ownership), as “a place where a particular body of people lives.” Similarly, community happiness stems from an environment “Where human needs are met, individuals and groups can act meaningfully to pursue their goals and be satisfied with

337 Pedro Alexis. Tabensky, Happiness: Personhood, Community, Purpose. (Routledge, 2017). Tabensky is a professor at Rhodes University and director of Allan Gray Centre for leadership ethics (AGLE).
338 Ibid.
339 Ibid.
340 Ibid.
their way of life.” Correspondingly, for a city to fulfill its purpose of existence and be justified, it needs to be enabling the individual's wellbeing and common good proportionately. This also entitles us to assume living in a neglected or disadvantaged neighbourhoods may prevent both individual and community from realizing fulfilment and happiness, and hence in an increasingly mobile world, the quality of life a city offers appeals to people to the extent that many would favour immigration. Collective accounts of Happiness therefore, decidedly depend on local amenities. It does not come across as a surprise that community facilities and spatial elements condition the purviews of happiness.

Community is the narrative that “Locate us as part of something bigger than our individual existences, make us feel less insignificant, sometimes give us at least partial answers to questions like who am I? Why am I like I am?” Community as a conscious being, bound its members by the memories of a shared past and the promise of a shared future. Community roots us as part of a city building and nation making process, through becoming connected with other residents and fosters a stronger sense of belonging. Henri Lefebvre, contemporary philosopher and sociologist also draws on the “Organic character” of community as a social organism. Community life as a blend of general or partial assemblies, strengthens the feeling of belonging by means of groups, urban settings or social relations. A sense of community is also a sense of ownership that motivate the community members and drives them to improve, care and maintain the community. In other words, Community is a “property” per se, adding the quality of “also belonging” to the same totality of the subjects of

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344 Ibid. Also see: Musa et al., ‘Enhancing Subjective Well-Being through Strategic Urban Planning: Development and Application of Community Happiness Index’.


348 (Kofman and Lebas,1996)

349 K. Worpole, No Particular Place to Go: Children, Young People and Public Space. (Groundwork UK., 2003).
and therefore playing a crucial role in having a meaningful life and sense of fulfilment. Community is “A sense felt by a group of people when their life together takes on a full meaning.”  

In recent years a number of studies were motivated by recognising the community happiness connection to urban developments. For example, Musa et al., a group of environmental researchers, propose a framework for community happiness index by studying variables of sustainability, social, economic and environmental aspects of happiness in cities. Noise pollution, transport and mobility adequacy, neighbourhood connectedness, tolerance of diversity, sport facilities, green and natural environment, as well as physical built environment are all variables that were found interrelated to the community happiness. Musa et al. research confirms people’s assessment of their happiness and experiences of life are indicated on the provisions of urban amenities and infrastructures and their sustainable development.

A 2014 report by the Happiness Research Institute that explores the reasons of high happiness levels in Denmark also draws on the urban facilities that can enable and improve community engagement and social cohesion.

“During the summer, Danes love to spend time outside. The green spaces of Copenhagen are used for both leisure and work. An urban oasis like the Copenhagen Harbour Bath also facilitates community activities and improves social cohesion.”

The significance of urban contingency in community happiness becomes more perceptible when we understand although basic living standards are indispensable to happiness, when the baseline has been met happiness is induced more with quality of

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352 Ibid. See introduction including page 1,3,4.
354 Ibid.
355 Meik Wiking, ‘The Happy Danes: Exploring the Reasons behind the High Levels of Happiness in Denmark’, *The Happiness Research Institute*, 2014. The report that is funded by the ministry of foreign affairs of Denmark, investigates why Danish people are among the happiest in the world.
356 Ibid. see page 47.
human relationships than income.\textsuperscript{357} It can easily be discerned that the quality of social relationships largely relies upon the shared space and urban facilities. The Young Foundation report on community strength index reveals the extent to which community ties are shaped and cultivated by places that provide opportunities for encounters, relationship growth and support.\textsuperscript{358} The report highlights the following indicators of the community strength, public spaces for community events such as a communal Sunday lunch or volunteering coordination, storage space for sharing networks where locals lend and borrow items from tools to baby-slings, community transport and accessibility to services, community kitchens to cook together and share food, community housing and community orchards, and even streets that allow community activities such as weekly runs.\textsuperscript{359} Other studies show that in-store shopping as a measure for relating to and interacting with others as well as increasing social inclusion through extended socialising can increase wellbeing and happiness.\textsuperscript{360} It is inevitable to conclude community happiness and the local living conditions are mutually connected, and that community’s societal and spatial development can enhance collective hope, pride and happiness, all of which could be put into effect through bottom-up planning.\textsuperscript{361}

To address community effectively, by default it is necessary to expand consciousness loops by engaging the community members. Edith Turner, anthropologist and social activist similarly suggests that community “can only be conveyed properly through stories” since it is not an object nor a mode, but an active state of being.\textsuperscript{362} To realise the significance of community role in happiness studies and conduct the research accordingly, the critical response is this acknowledgement both in research methods

\textsuperscript{358} The Young Foundation is a UKRI accredited research organisation and its mission is to develop better connected and stronger communities across the UK. See Jana Tauschinski, Tirgan Sogomonian, and Victoria Boelman, ‘Flipping the Coin; The Two Sides of Community Wealth in England’, n.d. Page 11-2.
\textsuperscript{359} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{362} Turner, Communitas; The Anthropology of Collective Joy. See introduction.
and the theoretical explorations. Participatory approaches to understand what is affecting communities’ happiness and drawing on principles of empowerment; will ensure the driving spatial models of happiness that place priority on making the best use of community built environment. Collecting data through participatory methods is a process that in short term, will encompass the community in documenting a record of spatial effects and their capacity on happiness, while building relationships, developing a vision of the future, and investigating spatial resources to support happiness attainment. In long term, it will strengthen civil society by engaging people as rightful owners of the city. According to Beaulieu, “Each time individuals use these abilities, the community in which they live is strengthened and these people feel a sense of empowerment.” The descriptions of community happiness is considered in devising this study’s data collection methods and information analysis.

1.5. Conceptual framework and research questions

To this point, the sections of this chapter are shaped in autonomous yet interconnected ways, interweaving thresholds and threads, providing stepping stones to guide the study sub-objectives. As the study aims to document and analyse the spatial narratives of happiness in everyday environments, it maintains a fragmentary dialogic method to represent diverse aspects of happiness studies. Fragmented discourse consists of pieces or episodes of text that do not necessarily follow on from each other in chronology or premise, through which fragmented narrative allow space for reflexivity and “helps us not only understand how people are experiencing everyday life but also, as scholars, explore new ways of making sense of social life and expressing knowledge.” In many ways, fragmented narrative is a political positioning by the researcher per se, as it can resist normative forms of inquiry, that are supported, and in turn reified, by the traditional academic systems. But this positioning rather than limiting the narrative to the researcher’s outlook and the obvious implications of doing so, distributes power more evenly, as “the piece can simultaneously make the author’s

365 Ibid.
particular set of arguments and allow for alternatives by revealing the practices at work in the interpretive process".\textsuperscript{366} This interpretive form of inquiry is aligned with the study findings regarding happiness, and spatial happiness, as a process and an ongoing journey rather than a fixed destination, and will be discussed further in later chapters as well. Fragmented discourse was a creative force that enhanced the study by way of an organic form to step outside of the box of conventions that often define narratives, and permitted an unprejudiced exploration in literature, as fragmentation resists narrative expectations that are limiting, such as being limited to the researcher’s experience, or echoing capitalist expectations or cultural and political orientations.\textsuperscript{367}

One of the significant argumentations of this chapter is devoted to playfulness in spatial design and the potential role children’s engagement could achieve in understanding play and happiness connotations. As it was revealed in sense and intelligibility section, a less studied line of enquiry is to look at the prevalence or absence of the sonic trajectory of happy places or spatial labels of sound identification. How the spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness and what are the sonic values of a happy place? Another issue that could carry the theoretical concept was the significance of community role in happiness studies and the need to conduct the research accordingly. Participatory approaches and community engagement in data collection and analyses appear essential to understand what is affecting communities’ happiness and its spatial characteristics. On this note, the literature review chapter is concluded.

\textsuperscript{366} Ibid. 
Chapter 2. Methodology

In response to the research objectives and aims discussed in the previous chapter, the second chapter lays the methodological framework for an explicit and coherent study. The chapter begins with a review on previous studies development, discusses why the methods are adopted reflecting on their strength and limitations, and finally concludes in a pilot study to present some of the discussions and test the plausibility of the research agenda.

2.1 Previous research evaluation

Previous research on wellbeing and spatial properties as well as user emotive and cognitive engagement with urban environments provides insightful observations on preceding approaches. Research on how urban spaces influence well-being figure prominently in quantitative methods. A number of researchers have traced the geography of happiness through social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. For instance, Quercia et al. have studied the routes that people find stimulating and pleasing, based on the digital traces left behind by users of online services like Flickr or Foursquare. Quercia is an urban computing researcher and his “The Shortest Path to Happiness” suggests an algorithm that recommends happy routes instead of shortest ones supported by the collected crowd-sourced ratings and metadata. In another study Quercia et al. analyse the wording and subject of Twitter posts and respective users’ community characteristics to explore potential domains of community happiness. The study concludes that happiness is not only an individual characteristic but also has community indicators.

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1 See more details in chapter 1 of this study, spatial happiness section.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
Another large data study which suggests an online datamining approach within the UK is *Mappiness*. *Mappiness* is an application for smartphones that surveys the users’ happiness and their proximate environment in order to map happiness.\(^6\) The terrain of mentioned studies expose that urban physical characteristics are closely linked to the individuals and communities subjective wellbeing,\(^7\) and provide an analytical confirmation with the support of big datasets, without limitations of small population samples or self-reported evaluations in response to surveys.\(^8\) However on a critical appraisal, smartphones’ apps or Facebook and Twitter datasets fail to represent a demographically inclusive result, as not everyone has access to or is active in such platforms, and certain age groups or economic background with more users might overrule the findings.\(^9\) Other related reports including *The global happiness policy* reports, *The World Happiness Report* and the Happy City Index (HCI) also draw on quantitative methods with limitations such as exclusive or politically charged datasets. I discuss these reports in more details in the first chapter of this study, spatial happiness section.

In comparison, much of the previous research on the emotional response to the built environment has been exploratory in nature. For instance, *Feeling Maps*, a research method for urban studies has been carried out by Yodan Rofè and his research team in urban planning studies.\(^10\) Mapping feelings is an ethnographic description of space that associates the results of surveys with a contextual understanding of place.\(^11\) The study shows positive feelings were associated with gardens and natural landscapes and visible signs of children or care in the environment, in contrast to negative feelings experienced in ruined opportunities and unrealised potential of space.\(^12\) However, it should be acknowledged that the method was applied in the Israel and high levels of


\(^7\) Quercia, Séaghdha, and Crowcroft, ‘Talk of the City: Our Tweets, Our Community Happiness’. see page 558. Also Quercia et al., ‘Tracking “Gross Community Happiness” from Tweets’. See page 3.

\(^8\) Quercia et al., ‘Tracking “Gross Community Happiness” from Tweets’. See page 1.

\(^9\) Ibid. see page 4.


\(^11\) Ibid.

\(^12\) Ibid. See page 133.
exposure to Israeli-Palestinian conflict could have influenced data and its collection process. Comparably, researchers in environmental psychology developed a method by using Emotiv EPOC, a mobile EEG recorder, to assess participants’ levels of emotional engagement walking through different urban areas. The results are consistent in highlighting the role of green spaces on positive spatial experiences and their limitations are due to the present technology and device capacities such as inconsistent documentation or sensor movement while walking.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, it appears that only a few aspects of happiness association with urban design is studied and although these studies clearly reveal that there is a relationship between spatial design and users' happiness, a vast void remains to investigate the significant relationships of the spatial elements and our happiness further. (See figure 1 and chapter appendix)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Concerns</th>
<th>Principal Researchers</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wayfinding - community happiness on social media</td>
<td>Quercia et al., 2012 - 2016;</td>
<td>using quantitative methods including data from: - social media platforms e.g. Facebook and Tweeter - phone apps - institutional polls such as Gallup World Poll - national data sources</td>
<td>• urban physical characteristics are linked to the individuals' and communities subjective wellbeing; analytical confirmation with the support of big datasets • Happy City Index measuring green space, safety, housing, transport, as well as community’s reach to participation, culture and education</td>
<td>• disproportionate representation and biased datasets • data must be converted into comparable formats • governmental agencies might exclude sensitive data due to political accountability issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental influences on happiness such as pollution, noise and green spaces</td>
<td>Mackerron et al., 2012-2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional experience of place</td>
<td>Rofè et al., 2013</td>
<td>• exploratory • ethnographic</td>
<td>positive feeling associated with gardens, big views and natural vistas</td>
<td>research was conducted in a conflicted area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aspinall et al., Coyne, 2013</td>
<td>EEG technology assessment in urban experience</td>
<td>lower frustration and higher meditation when moving in green spaces</td>
<td>device and technology limitations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1. Literature review on previous studies methodology. It is evident that most research was carried out via quantitative methods.**

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13 Peter Aspinall et al., ‘The Urban Brain: Analysing Outdoor Physical Activity with Mobile EEG’, 2015, 272–76. Also see chapter 5 in this study, the section on Edinburgh Brain-walks and literature review on Neurourbanism.
14 Ibid.
2.2. Research strategies

More than three decades ago, Lincoln and Guba, the authors of *Naturalistic Inquiry* book, raised a question, “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” In order to develop a solution to this demand, qualitative researchers by focusing on constantly altering values for quality within the local contexts have contributed vital assessments about best practices for research. Qualitative research is the “detailed examination of the elements or structure of something, typically as the basis for discussion or interpretation” and entails evaluation of constitutive components, their roles and their relations within the subject matter. There are limitations to qualitative approach e.g. inflexible and time-consuming framework for data analyses as well as researcher’s critical role in analysing and interpreting the data. However qualitative methods suit the purpose of this study, that is to explore general relationships and underlying themes of spatial happiness with detailed temporal and contextual dynamics in response to the study’s questions that were identified in the first chapter. Also considering the literature review in previous section, there is an urgency to address the gap in qualitative analysis that outweighs other implications.

The study is also exploratory in nature, as it practices casual connections between variables of spatial characteristics and users’ happiness. Furthermore, based on the research framework outlined in the previous chapter, the study needs to take place in form of transdisciplinary case study analysis. The case study approach permits complementary evidence to the studies sub-questions and provides a “well-documented and systematic examination of the process, decision-making and

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18 Ibid.
20 See chapter 1 of this study, the conceptual framework and research questions section.
outcomes of a project”. Additionally, mixed methods were used in data analysis to enable a more sustained approach to the research objectives, since using a combination of methods enhances “rigour, breadth, complexity, richness, depth and creativity” of the research. Mixed methods also permit the researcher to plot a more sustained advancement through the course of research as “it allows the limitations of one method to be offset with another”.

Since the significance of participatory approach was highlighted in the previous chapter, “community happiness and its spatial dimension” section, another research strategy scaffold is a participatory action advance. Participatory action research (PAR) or action research blends the production of knowledge and research, education or socio-political action together. Although most social research is driven by societal change, participatory action method is unique in the sense that it has “action as an embedded and critical element of its approach.” The strength of PAR is its community locus, but its forte simultaneously “limits its full applicability in broad social research.” Overall, PAR methods such as systematic workshops admit applied research, are collaborative and relevant, meaning the research is aligned with the community’s interests, and result in “practical outcomes and positive change”.

As such, to shed light on the correlation between spatial characteristics and happiness, a set of exploratory, comprehensive and qualitative methods is proposed to interlink spatial and observational analyses. Qualitative exploration gathers the individual perspectives and obtains evidence about the ideals, behaviours and their spatial foundations as well as the social contexts that generate them. A major advantage of using a combination of qualitative methods is the collective nature of documented information. The creative qualitative methods such as cognitive semi-structured interviews with designers (peer reviews), walking tours and urban photography, hands
on activities and participatory cognitive mapping, focus groups, and self-narrative workshops\(^{30}\) used in concert provide a beneficial insight into the interpersonal subtleties of data concerning the meaning people ascribe to a happy place and can benefit the study to further decipher user behaviour from varied aspects and smooth the path towards user-based design. An outline of the research methodology is presented in figure 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research concerns</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Research grant</th>
<th>Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot study - study to test the plausibility of the research agenda. Can urban environment make us happier?</td>
<td>• 21 participants • 14 peer reviewers</td>
<td>• exploratory • ethnographic participatory approach for practical outcomes and positive change</td>
<td>Festival of Creative Learning (FCL 2019) award by the University of Edinburgh ≤ £500 Grant to design and lead a creative workshop including hands on material and catering</td>
<td>generating questions, identifying unstated gaps in literature and initiating research where the discipline requires clarification and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What spatial elements kindle positive experiences and invite happiness for children?</td>
<td>• 54 participants • 6 peer reviewers</td>
<td>walking tours and urban photography, use of poetry and diary, graphic notation, hands on activities and participatory cognitive mapping, focus groups, and self-narrative workshops</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) award for the Festival of Social Science (FoSS 2019) ≤ £1000 Grant to bridge academic research and the public via participatory event including hands on material and catering</td>
<td>- formulating new approaches based on synthesising previous work and applying existing methods to new applications - generating novel interdisciplinary methods and frame the outcomes critically to fill researcher-identified gaps and extend knowledge. - data collection, documenting and evaluating required information and organising data - open up avenues for the conversation on spatial happiness within the discipline and with the communities through participatory approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness and what are the sonic values of a happy place?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>mixed methods also permitted to plot a more sustained advancement through the course of research by offsetting the limitations of one method with another</td>
<td>IAD Action Fund - Institute of Academic Development 2019 (Lead researcher) ≤ £1000 Grant for the creative approach to research including producing artwork, musicians honorarium, video editor honorarium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the spatial properties of our cities that play a role in our happiness? What is our spatial vision for community happiness?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>The University of Edinburgh Student Experience Grant (Innovation Initiative Grants 2021) in support of innovative projects and initiatives (Lead researcher) ≤ £2500 Grant for the innovative approach to research and community engagement including hands on material, participants' photography equipment and brainwave recording device</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{30}\) See Bochner, ‘Criteria Against Ourselves’. Bochner argues that self-narratives are vital in finding adequate language that is true to experience meaningfully. For Bochner, self-narrative workshops are scholars’ best hope of fashioning experience in language due to the existential qualities of the data collected and their exceptional reliability to the experience.
2.3. Pilot Study

To cast light on what forms a beneficial methodology could take, and refining the prospective methods through practice, a pilot study was designed interlinking spatial and qualitative analyses in form of a workshop. The “Urban life, the untold dimension of happiness” workshop was held as a part of Edinburgh University Festival of Creative Learning 2019 and was able to successfully gather in-depth data on how the spatial structure of diverse urban scenes in Edinburgh is connected to the workshop participants’ happiness by means of their endorsed descriptions. The creative and alternative qualitative methods used in concert provide an insight into the interpersonal data concerning the meaning people ascribe to a happy place and can benefit the study to further decipher user behaviour from varied aspects and pave the path towards knowledge-based design. In order to fill the gap within the current literature landscape and thematically aligned with emerged foci, participatory data collection was designed and led as follows.

Sample

“Urban life, the untold dimension of happiness” workshop engaged 21 participants from the university staff and students as well as external participants, 15 female and 6 male, aged between 19 to 48 and from a diverse professional background and occupation fields. The number of participants allowed a broad array of standpoints that benefitted the research by employing participants’ opinions through hands on activities and discussions formed in groups in answer to the questions probed by the researcher. Participants were assigned in groups of 4 to 6 members that put contributors at greater ease and encouraged them to voice their opinions within their groups and subsequently with the whole class. The sample does not represent any specific group in terms of ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic characteristics. An

1 See more on the workshop on FCL website:  
Or the Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences website:  
https://www.sgsss.ac.uk/news/urban-life-the-untold-dimension-of-happiness/  
(accessed May 2022)  
The method and findings were presented in academic platforms such as “CHASE Doctoral Researchers Event at The British Library, London (July 2019)".
inclusive approach is necessary in order to edify the spatial dynamics behind our moods and feelings in urban space, and our happiness in particular. (See chapter appendix for more details)

Ethics Statement

All the participants were well-informed about the study objectives and methods prior to their participation in the research and filled a written consent sheet. Each participant had selected a username prior to collecting data (e.g. Nico10, soul, me...) and no personally identifiable information has been collected. To protect the confidentiality of research participants, study codes are used. (See chapter appendix)

Image Selection

Provided photos represented the various activities occupying different spaces of urban plots, and therefore offered dissimilar sceneries to investigate how the spatial structuring of space is connected to human happiness. The photo selection was centred on the general criteria that wide variety of comparable traits would be presented by the image, e.g. the green spaces, land use and pedestrian activities, buildings’ material and active or passive urban facade, the area reputation or how dense the urban fabric is and so forth.

The Experiment

This study by initiating qualitative research questions and discussions was able to obtain in-depth descriptions of the participants’ spatial comprehension. Participants were allocated in groups of 4 to 6 members and expressed their thoughts’ and feelings about the spatial characteristics that are affecting our moods and about their personal experiences for approximately 2 hours.

Before the experiment begins:

Participants were notified by an email in sufficient time prior to the workshop day on how to familiarise themselves with the EthnoAlly app, in order to enquire any uncertainties during the workshop from the researcher.

During the experiment:
On the day of the workshop, and as the first activity, participants were asked to draw and illustrate a happy place. The question was: “What does come to your mind when you think about a happy place? Where can you be happy?” participants were told that this activity is not to showcase their drawing talents or lack thereof, but to better understand what kind of place come to their mind when they think about happiness. This activity also served as an icebreaker due to the simplicity of drawings. After 3 minutes, each person shared their drawing with their groups and conversed the reasons behind their illustration. Afterwards, each group voted for one drawing to get presented to the whole class. And hence all the groups were presented by other groups’ notions as well.

Once all the groups shared their voted drawings and their conceptions regarding the first activity, the author presented a short interactive presentation on some of the repetitive spatial patterns correlating with happiness that had emerged from the participants’ discussions. The interplay between nature and urban space, the density of the urban configuration, the skyline in view, to what extent all of our senses are engaged with the environment, the comfort that comes with being familiar with our surroundings, and then the awe that one will feel taking a turn and seeing a striking building where it was not expected; and so on and so forth. Accordingly, our moods are influenced by a combination of all these urban factors that participants personally felt strongly about. However, there are some spatial characteristics that we might prefer but on a more subconscious level. The next exercise was designed to take a deeper look in users’ emotions, in order to turn them into metaemotions. In other words, the next activity was planned to raise awareness of the qualities, the capabilities in space that enable us to be happy while in urban space and to nudge participants in being actively aware of the spatial forces behind their actions, or inactions.

Each group had colour stickers, Emoji stickers and was presented 15 sheets (See chapter appendix) containing the following on one side:

1. A photo from an urban scene in Edinburgh

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2 Coyne, Mood and Mobility: Navigating the Emotional Spaces of Digital Social Networks. See page: 99.
2. A map of the area with the specified location that the photo was taken

The aim was to see how participants equated the mood inspired by an urban scene to a colour, or an Emoji, bearing in mind that while we might not be able to put our finger on exactly how we feel, relating colours to an urban scene might be easier to do.

Participants were asked to talk about the urban scenes on their tables with their teammates, associate colour stickers and Emoji stickers with the photos and try to analyse spatial elements that each photo represents. Participants were encouraged to draw and write what comes to their mind on the photos freely. Later, each group ranked the 5 top places that they thought they will be happier in, the places that throughout their discussions they have arrived at the conclusion that are providing a better setting to feel positive emotions. Each group shared their top places with all the class afterwards. Some of the groups also shared the photos that they believed represented a situation that will affect mood intensely but in a negative way.

Over the succeeding final minutes, the researcher concluded the workshop by summarising the outcome of the event debates and how the rearrangement of interrelations between urban elements can play a significant role in our moods. Then participants were encouraged to experience city through the lens developed throughout the workshop and share their stories of mapping feelings via EthnoAlly app. EthnoAlly is a user-friendly app that can be used to collect location-based data. Participants were particularly requested to try to get connected to their emotions and navigate the origin of their feelings in their surroundings. And collecting data in answer to questions like “Why I feel the way I feel?”. In order to facilitate data collection and the stories of mapping feelings in urban space, participants were told that they are welcome to use the app anytime or anywhere. It could be the top 5 places that groups came up with or everyday urban journeys to work, school or home, or it could be their personal favourite places in the city. A comprehensive guide on how to collect data with EthnoAlly app was presented by the researcher.

After the experiment:
Participants were asked to use the EthnoAlly app to collect location-based data about happiness. Training regarding using the application and adding the data to the cloud was provided. Participants were notified about the spatial characteristics that are affecting our moods and were encouraged to comment on these through the EthnoAlly app, noting their immediate environment and use the application as an urban diary, and actively collect data on their everyday journeys. This data is available through EthnoAlly data cloud.³

**Qualitative Analysis**

This study measured the perceived spatial quality of 15 urban scenes based on how photos were ranked by the participants, as well as associated keywords, colours, and Emoji stickers. Additionally, a detailed examination of the participants' elaborative location-based observations, attached photos and comments will be assessed to uncover any themes and categories that could be identified as happiness determinants in urban space.

**Photographic Record**

The workshop was recorded by two separate HD camcorders. The focus of filming was to capture the discussions and participants’ contribution.

**The Workshop Results Overview**

Based on the qualitative data collected throughout the workshop that I described in the previous chapter, a set of themes emerge that accounts for mapping happy and unhappy places in Edinburgh. In order to portray the exclusive spatial qualities of the places that people, in this case the study’s participants, deem better venues for happiness, an overview of data analyses follows. Comparing visual accessibility, location in the street network, the sky area in view and so on and so forth will put the study’s provided data in a broader context of urban structures.

Draw a Happy Place; Analysing the Workshop Drawings

Participants were asked to draw a happy place as the first activity of the workshop based on their own lived experiences. The question was: “What does come to your mind when you think about a happy place? Where can you be happy?”. The results are impressive in their commonalities and reveal a strong connection between nature, people and happiness. (Fig. 7) The significance of the revealed data is multiplied by the fact that I hadn’t provided any basic information about what urban elements are reported to impact our happiness to the workshop’s participants yet. Based on a critical inspection of the drawings made by the participants, particular categories have emerged, highlighting the spatial qualities that participants associated with happiness. In the following section, I will examine the pervasive themes or concepts among the study’s participants, such as the interplay between nature and urban space, the movement flow and co-presence possibilities, the density of the urban configuration and the property usage. I will elaborate on each theme to support the initial experimental evidence in order to identify possibilities for future research.

The positive impact of natural environments and green spaces on our moods was identified as a key psychological and biological factor that relates to happiness in several studies. Particularly a research study called Mappiness provides vigorous data supporting the connection between happiness and environmental factors exclusively within the UK.4 Mappiness is an application for smartphones that surveys the users’ happiness and their proximate environment by means of satellite positioning (GPS) and only in Edinburgh, more than 10000 peoples’ responses have been counted in the study’s conclusion.5 The association of nature and happiness partly could be rooted in the Restorative Environment theory, initiated by Kaplan in 1995.6 Kaplan proposes that focused attention can become fatigued in everyday urban environments and restoration is possible in a setting that arouses fascination. According to Kaplan, Directed Attention Fatigue (DAF) occurs when the attention is forced and effortful.7 Soft fascination, on the other hand, is effortless, has a moderate intensity and occurs

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5 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
in a setting that is aesthetically pleasing like natural environments. As a consequence, the attentional system finds an opportunity to rest and recover.\(^8\) In addition to nature’s restorative quality, it’s relation with happiness is explicable in terms of how natural contexts are providing a situation with lower negative circumstances, such as air and noise pollution.\(^9\)

As well as the sun, trees, animals and mountains or coastlines, some of the workshop’s drawings include people or animals. (Fig. 7) This could be originated from prosocial qualities and the relationship between happiness, human connection or caregiving, empathy, and trust.\(^10\) How the spatial qualities facilitate or discourage human connection or in other words, the spatial affordances that the urban setting offers, is another acknowledged theme by the workshops’ participants. Spatial affordances refer to what Gibson signifies as the common relation between practical capabilities of the physical domain and the users’ behaviour.\(^11\) For instance, the movement flow in a street is connected to many spatial factors such as how that street is located within the urban street network, the density of the urban configuration in addition to the property usage around that street and the activities that are offered through the space of that street. In short, according to the workshop drawings, the ways in which we are able to experience co-presence while inhabiting or moving in space, affect our emotions. For designers and policymakers, the workshop drawings are an indication of the fact that inclusive settings’ that boost empathy could promote happiness.

Another highlighted theme in some of the drawings is the notion of home or being grounded in a certain physical place. There are drawings that are clearly illustrating a home, namely a place that a dog is waiting for its owner’s arrival, or a place within a neighbourhood with TESCO. (Fig. 7) However, there is also a drawing that shows a church. There is a non-accidental connection between this illustration on a happy


\(^9\) Mackerron and Mourato, ‘Happiness Is Greater in Natural Environments’.


place and the idea of home. The church as a home to the local community also feeds to our yearning for solidarity, and a place to belong to.

There are contradictory views considering the kind of a space that a home is. For instance, Augustine values the promise of a home to a degree that he declares one cannot live happily, being away from where one belongs to. For Augustine the idea of home fulfils the yearning to have somewhere to return to, which in turn is essential to a blessed and good life. On the other hand, Mary Douglas in her elaboration on the idea of home suggests that despite our affectionate projections of the home-based regular patterns, the tyranny of home is patent. Douglas in her article, *The Idea of a Home: A Kind of Space*, indicates that: “Happiness is not guaranteed in a home. It is possible to be happy in a hotel or a transit camp, but they are nonhomes.” While home might not guarantee happiness as Douglas phrases, still it does offer many opportunities to be happy. According to Douglas, home is the space in which our ideas are realizable. It has a high capacity to form memories and patterns of everyday doings and anticipate the future. Accordingly, home is representative of our general future plan and a wide range of activities is acceptable in a home that are not expected from a hotel to fulfil, such as giving birth. On another note, this finding confirms the expected connection between happiness and the space of the home that is deeply structured in time. As I elaborate in the first chapter, it was expected that participants will associate happiness with a place that will grant it over time and not a place that offers momentary feelings of wellbeing.

The results in this section indicate that the pilot study was effective in discerning some of the spatial qualities that participants spontaneously linked with happiness. I will address the identified themes further in future work and build upon the analysis of the pilot study’s method strategy; in addition to considering the other compounding

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13 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 See the ontology of happiness page 5.
influences and the limitations of the study, such as the point that observing a photo of an urban scene does not capture the affective experience of ‘being there’ fully.

Figure 3. Some of the Study Participants’ Drawings of a Happy Place. Nature and people are a shared element in most of the drawings.
Keywords and Colour Codes, the Visibility and Street Network Analyses

Participants were presented with colour stickers, Emoji stickers and photos from diverse urban scenes in Edinburgh. (See chapter appendix) Respondents were asked to talk about the urban scenes with their teammates, associate colour and Emoji stickers with the photos and try to analyse the spatial elements that each photo represents by drawing and writing what comes to their mind on the photos. Later, each group ranked the top happy places among the urban scenes as well. The association of the mood inspired by an urban scene with a colour, or an Emoji was inspired by reflecting on the point that while we might not be able to pinpoint how we feel in space, relating colours to an urban scene will be more informative. interestingly, the results were observed to report a common view amongst participants. (See chapter appendix)

The majority of adoptions shows that the colour choices are not random, and the results are consistent. In all cases, the informants reported that there is a positive connection between the green spaces, the skyline in view and happiness, using the keywords like “Green”, and “Blue sky” or “Skyline” in addition to “Low-rise buildings”. These elements were also attached to “Smiley” and “Happy face” Emoji stickers and the warm colours of yellow and orange that relatively represent active emotions (feelings that comprise physical arousal) of pleasant nature.19

As participants have informed the study, skyline has enormous significance in how we gravitate ourselves to our environment. In order to gain the means to discuss it, I shall have to recount a personal experience. When I first arrived in London to study at UCL, I was in a melancholic mood. During the 5-hour flight, cherished memories and relations weighted heavier by second. I left Tehran wrapped in a sentimental cloud, that in turn made the unknown situation that to be faced more looming. Upon arrival and Leaving Heathrow airport, my clammy hands dragging my luggage; I had the eerie feeling of standing close to the edge of a cliff, not wanting to fall down but also could not resist the temptation of peaking a glance at its hollow bottoms. Surrounded by uncertainty in an unfamiliar environment and strangers, I was taking heavy steps towards the taxi stop when I took a look at the sky, and it was like suddenly everything

looked brighter. London airport was sparkling in the sun, and sky as blue as ever, the same sky I would see back home. I was instantly anchored to my surroundings instinctively; the setting suddenly was not as unfamiliar, or as unfriendly anymore. Now reflecting on my instincts; I am reminded that the phrase “The sky is falling” is often used to describe an imminent danger or disturbing calamity.\(^{20}\) The more hidden perception would imply that as long as the sky is not falling, all could be considered well.

One could assert how the skyline in view regulates our sense of security as it is described by the award-winning author and journalist Johann Hari, in his book *Lost Connections; Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression - and the Unexpected Solutions.*\(^{21}\) Hari draws on “Disconnection from natural world”\(^{22}\) as one of the reasons of depression in our modern societies. Similar to E. O. Wilson’s *Biophilia,* Hari explains that our intrinsic inclination to affiliate with life and lifelike processes is a constant pull that makes us miserable when divested of the settings we were evolved to live in.\(^{23}\) There are not many chances to gratify our connection to “The landscapes in which humans have lived for most of our existence, and for the natural web of life that surrounds us and makes our existence possible”\(^{24}\) in many cities, even the skyline is needled with high-rise buildings. Nevertheless, even then more skyline in view would be more akin to the savannas view of the sky that were our habitat for millions of years.

A number of cross-cultural social studies put this concept to the test by showing partakers distinctive landscape photos including of natural and manmade dwellings, “What they found is that everywhere, no matter how different their culture, people had a preference—for landscapes that look like the savannas of Africa. There’s something about it, they conclude, that seems to be innate.”\(^{25}\) The instant affiliation to nature in

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\(^{21}\) Johan Hari suffered from depression from early ages. In a quest to uncover what are the reasons of depression, he made a journey around the world, finding prominent figures and social scientists who were studying the causes of depression and anxiety, and sharing his findings in his internationally bestseller book: Johann Hari, *Lost Connections; Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression - and the Unexpected Solutions* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Circus, 2018).

\(^{22}\) Ibid. See page: 230-3.


\(^{24}\) Hari, *Lost Connections; Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression - and the Unexpected Solutions.*

\(^{25}\) Ibid. And also see: O. Wilson, *Biophilia.* Page 203-7 (e-book).
the middle of any urban structure would be to raise one’s head and see the sky. In short, it is no accident that the workshop’s participants chose photos with bigger sky area.

This is obviously not a declaration of compulsory Alfresco settings, nor a complementary opposition to environments unalike the “human optimal genetic memories”\(^\text{26}\). It is rather a warning bell for architects and urban designers to be mindful of their ways of framing, taunting and poking the sky. Between us and this blue mass, there is a complex relationship that has been forming through thousand years of our survival consciousness. Lost caravans have found their way into oases in deserts following the bright stars of the night sky; expectant tribes have danced with dry throats, drumming their instruments for rainfall; sailors have gauged the upcoming storms and tidal waves, knowing that the sea is reflecting the colours of sky. On the one hand, seasonal rain showers in countries like Bangladesh has misplaced many, and the issues of sinking island nations are more troubling as ever due to the worldwide climate catastrophe. One the other hand, meteorite showers have helped scientists to explore the origins and mechanisms of life in our galaxy as sources of extra-terrestrial materials. In 2020, an Indonesian villager made the headlines when a meteorite crashed his roof, bringing him some unexpected wealth and attention, quite possibly changing the course of his life.\(^\text{27}\) Whether it is to keep an eye on prominent dangers or to hold one’s breath at its marvels, a clear view of the sky instinctively anchor us to our surroundings. The savanna sky effect or as Wilson call it “Savanna gestalt”, according to Wilson is a combination of abundant resources (abundance of food, plant and animals in savanna), holistic views with retreating seclusions (clear view to detect the situation or food and opportunities for refuge in case of possible danger), and proximity to water sources (for consumption if water and food as well as a defence barrier).\(^\text{28}\) I rendered a brief explanation here, but I will develop the larger

\(^{26}\) O. Wilson, *Biophilia*.


\(^{28}\) Ibid.
theme as I go along in following chapters as the connection between the skyline and happiness was repeatedly mentioned by the study participants.²⁹

The participants on the whole demonstrated a negative outlook towards places that are dominated by cars. There was a sense of associated memories with places and their function amongst participants. These views surfaced mainly in relation to comments on “My friend’s flat” or “Bad food” and “Great bookshop”. There were also some observations about urban furniture such as street lighting, store signs, and flower boxes. What stands out among the suggested keywords, are keywords like “Curved” and “Organic shape” of roads and buildings that were associated with happiness in contrast to buildings with “Sharp angles”. (See chapter appendix)

The recurrent themes in the workshop data allow mapping emotions, specifically the happiness map, featuring places with a high potential of encouraging positive feelings as well as places that are most likely to stimulate unhappiness. (Fig. 3) To further analyse the findings, a comparison between the sky area³⁰ of these places was performed. The space-geometric measure of sky area signifies the extent of the visible sky from a given vantage point, in the case of this study where the photos were taken. As Figure 4 shows, there is a significant difference between the two groups, the sky area of the documented happy places always being notably more than the sky area of the unhappy ones. (Fig. 4) Participants’ affective decisions are also assessed according to whether or not they correlate with the Visibility Graph Analysis (VGA). VGA represents visual distance from all spaces to all others and refers to how visually accessible locations are. Red spaces have higher visual accessibility and easier to access, while blue spaces have lower visual accessibility whether there are hidden or appear more difficult to reach.³¹ What is striking about the VGA analysis results is that the documented unhappy places are visually less accessible, and their visibility is restricted compared to the happy places. (Fig. 5) This finding, while preliminary, suggests that there is an association between visual accessibility and users’ happiness.

²⁹ See chapter 5 of this study.
Taken together, these results provide important insights into the correlation between happiness and spatial design and indicate pathways for further research. A positive correlation was found between the sky area, visual accessibility and happy places and the findings of this research, therefore, open up the prospect of understanding how we are affected by the spatial configuration. There is abundant room for further progress in determining how our land use and our memories interact with the other mentioned variables such as sky area. More information on the aforementioned criteria would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy on this matter. Therefore, despite these promising results, questions remain, what are the spatial properties that influence our happiness? And more importantly, how to improve the interplay of the built form and happiness.

Figure 4. The settings that are most likely to encourage Happiness and Unhappiness within the larger Edinburgh map of street network. Drawing by the author.
Figure 5. Evaluation of the skyline in view and its correlation with reported spatial happiness.

Drawing by the author.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sky Area</th>
<th>Happy Places</th>
<th>Unhappy Places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1600.37</td>
<td>589.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>637.35</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1039.72</td>
<td>365.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1012.92</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Visual Graph Analysis (VGA) for the documented places vicinity in Edinburgh. Showing higher visual accessibility by red areas. Drawing by the author.
Peer review additional feedback on the workshop results and method

In order to further examine the workshop methods and findings, a reflective report was presented in annual review session held by ESALA in May 2019, where a group of urban design and architecture PhD students as well as school tutors and lecturers were present. The interactive presentation used Mentimeter tool to collect the feedback of 14 present peers. Participants ranked “home and sense of belonging” as the most significant spatial narrative of happiness followed successively by the “interplay between nature and urban space”, “the visual accessibility” and “the skyline in view”. Other participants' keywords are dominated by examples of natural and green environments such as “forest”, “beach”, “botanical gardens”, and “a park!”. Participants also expressed general statements such as “a happy place may be a place away from where I would otherwise be unhappy.” (See chapter appendix) The session was helpful in terms of participants’ engagement evaluation and the discussions provided useful recommendations for the study methodology.

2.4. Conclusion

In addition to the absence of sufficient qualitative methodical data with regards to studying happiness and its spatial dimension, participatory methods are not a permissive way of data collection but rather indispensable ways of documenting affective domains. In response to the highlighted themes that has emerged throughout the first chapter and the pilot study, and in order to capture a comprehensive assessment of “What” and “How” dynamics of spatial arrangements correlate with our happiness, a set of affective and sensory practices were conducted. The narrative enquiry and experimental approach aided the study of both independent and interdependent variables that affect spatial happiness within their context. The purpose of the study as demonstrated earlier in this chapter as well as the first chapter, is to stimulate further analytical discussions on spatial happiness and document its narratives with regards to the three main questions.

The first research question concerns with playfulness in spatial design and the potential role children’s engagement could achieve in understanding play and happiness connotations. The dedicated case study was organically formed as a result
of providing a community participation opportunity for children to express their perception of happy places and model their own version of a happy playground, as well as providing a nurturing setting for children’s “sense of competence, belonging, usefulness, and personal power”.\textsuperscript{32} The methods used were advantageous on several accounts including but not limited to expanding children’s communication sphere through drawings and modelmaking instead of emphasis on verbal expression,\textsuperscript{33} responding to the need for including children’s perspective in research and design, as well as providing perceptions of happiness and play embedded in childhood, and the study of roots of adult happiness.

The second research question explores a less studied line of enquiry and studies the prevalence or absence of the sonic trajectory of spatial happiness or emotive labels of sound identification. In order to study the sonic values of spatial happiness a creative and interdisciplinary approach was devised to enable an original way of engaging with our everyday environments, documenting spatial narratives as well as allowing participants to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories behind the sounds. The third research question emphasises the community role in happiness studies and accordingly advocates a community engagement approach to document what is affecting communities’ happiness and its spatial characteristics. A variety of methods including urban photography, diaries, brain-walks and poetry were jointly used to record a contextualised snapshot of communities of Edinburgh during the pandemic, documented to capture the interrelated narratives of spatial happiness for individuals and communities.

As concluded in this chapter, qualitative methods are shared experiences relying on the communication between the participants and the researcher. Due of which, each chapter begins with snippets of spatial narratives of happiness drawing on the author’s experiences. The aforementioned snippets are windows to the context that has given rise to the research questions therefore they are exploratory, as well as providing glimpses into the background of the researcher as an individual who questions and analyses the data, thus they are allowing a space for reflexivity as well as rendering a

\bibliographystyle{acm}  
\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{32} William Michelson et al., \emph{The Child in the City: Changes and Challenges}, Reprint 20 (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1979). See page 245.
\bibitem{33} Ibid. See page 196.
\end{thebibliography}
pragmatic distillation of the lessons learnt from studying happiness, therefore they are also explanatory. These snippets are also visualisations that permit “feeling the data” rather than simply reading the data, which in turn is essential to emphasise the affective values of the study, therefore they are exhibitory in their own right as well. By feeling the data, I mean the ability to provoke emotions and reperform entwined agentic processes while conveying the data, delivering a more comprehensive perception that consists of an emotive impact in addition to a cognitive impact. Since the snippets offer an experience characterised by the author, who is taking responsibility to present relevant and personal interpretations to aid the reader engage further and more deeply in order to assimilate the meaning of what is presented, they also expand the potential of data comprehension.

Each case study’s method is developed in its respective chapter within the boundaries and directions that were set in the methodology chapter and includes a synthesis of published systematic reviews and insights on relevant literature and details of the method design, application and findings. The methodology was adopted to further evidence on spatial narratives of happiness from diverse aspects, and findings from different case studies complemented each other, providing a more comprehensive documentation within the study’s context. The methods reflect the researcher’s commitment to inclusive, ethical and engaged research environments in all steps throughout the research. More details of each case study are documented in respective following chapters.

Chapter 3. Children; Play and Happiness

In the first chapter it was discussed that considering the connection between play and happiness, playgrounds as preceding places designed for happiness provide a good starting point to study spatial happiness. Following the path from literature review explorations, chapter 3 is developed to reflect on playfulness in spatial design and the potential role children’s engagement could achieve in understanding play and happiness connotations. The study of children’s happiness is beneficial on several accounts including but not limited to inclusivity towards children’s perspective, providing perceptions of happiness and play embedded in childhood, and the study of roots of adult happiness. Therefore, in this chapter the research questions and the responsibilities that they carry are focused on what a happy place to children is, and how children would design a happy place, a playground. What spatial elements kindle positive experiences and invite happiness for children? Developing on Designing My Happy City: Playground hands-on workshop, supported by a grant awarded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), this chapter traces children, play and happiness, from theoretical connections between happiness and play, to the practical findings on what constitutes a happy place from a child’s point of view.
When I turned 20, my father gave me an unforgettable birthday present. He donated all the surgery expenses for 10 children with clefts. Similar to the international Smile Train charity and the Operation Smile in UK activities, it was to give children with untreated cleft lip and palate the reconstructive care they need, and the ability to smile.¹ Indeed, I still cannot think of anything more heartwarming than the gift of a smile, to a child. And by natural desire for its continuation as an architect, what is equally heartwarming is the study that questions children’s happy place, by connecting their perceptions of happiness and space. Therefore, in this chapter the research questions and the responsibilities that they carry are focused on what a happy place to children is, and even taking a leap towards how children would design a happy place, a playground. What spatial elements kindle positive emotions and invite happiness for children? Happiness and ecstatic experiences that is achievable through the complex possibilities for play that are place bound, through a kind of spatial osmosis. “Children soak up their environments, so it makes sense to ensure that the environment of play is as rich as possible.”²

3.1. Conceptual framework, research questions and objectives

As I mentioned earlier in the first chapter, the social values attributed to happiness transcend purely political, ethical, economic or cultural contexts that given the folk interest in the matter, are all legitimised by people’s entitlement to happiness.³ All the variations in the definition and perceptions on happiness, compel us to acquire novel ways of studying it. One of the themes that directly resonates in this topic is to study children’s perception of happiness. As Victoria Derr, researcher in place-conscious community engagement and her co-authors suggest; drawing on more than 40 years of participatory practices with young people, “Not only are children’s perspectives important in their own right, but their positive outlook is infectious for adults as well as an inspiration for intergenerational action.”⁴ Furthermore, our perceptions of happiness are deeply rooted in our childhood, making the study of children’s

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¹ See more about these charities: [https://smiletrain.org.uk](https://smiletrain.org.uk) and [https://operationsmile.uk](https://operationsmile.uk)


³ See chapter 1 of this study.

happiness, a voyage back to the processes that has shaped our notions of happiness, and the study of roots of adult happiness. According to Anna Freud, the renowned pioneer of psychoanalytic child psychology, “The development of the child in the early years, determines the normality, the abnormality, the happiness, and the unhappiness; of the adult human being.” Researchers such as Neil Thin believe that people’s happiness would not be limited to their social standing if we educate children based on their own happiness. “If we bring up children for the sake of their happiness, this is different from, and better than, bringing them up for the sake of their future roles as income providers, as soldiers, or as perfect examples of beauty or skill.” Thin discusses that childhood studies must be analysed through a lens of happiness to investigate some conceptions further, among them notions of “Childhood as an exceptionally happy phase in life” and “Adults can become happier by recapturing the joyfulness and playful creativity of childhood.” While these claims are supported by international reports such as The Jacobs Foundation international report on children’s wellbeing, Thin does not expand on children’s happiness from their own perspective. What he does mention however, is that happiness would be fulfilled through the realisation of human rights, that could be exercised through autonomous participatory approaches. Health and social research practices oftentimes have regarded children within the sequential course of developmentalism and as “human becomings” rather than “human beings”. Martha Driessnack, clinical researcher in child-sensitive approaches, argues that in order to understand the opinions of children research methods need to “shift from seeking information about children to

7 Ibid. See page 10.
8 Ibid.
10 Ibid. See page xii.
12 Martha Driessnack is an associate professor of Oregon Health and Sciences University (OSHU). Her research revolves around child-sensitive approaches to data collection See https://www.ohsu.edu/people/martha-driessnack-phd-ppcnp-bc (last viewed September 2021)
seeking information from them”\textsuperscript{13} while conventional methods namely questionnaires or directed interviews are often “adult-cantered, adult-dominated, and biased”\textsuperscript{14} and few methods elicit children’s voices.\textsuperscript{15} This study offers a rich array of ventures to revisit some myths on cheerfulness of childhood narrative in literature. It is apparent that an inclusive research on happiness, and therefore happiness realisation, requires participatory and comprehensive understanding of children’s notion of happiness as rightful urbanites. After all, urban design for wellbeing cannot chase after social and demographic change, it should take the lead.

On one hand, few studies focus on advancing children subjective wellbeing and far fewer with a spatial approach,\textsuperscript{16} despite the \textit{UN Convention on the Rights of the Child}, and the importance of recognising the full growth of children’s personality that is enabled in “an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding”.\textsuperscript{17} Article 31 of the same treaty guaranties the children’s right to “engage in play and recreational activities” as well as participation in “cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity” and States Parties should recognise, respect and promote equal opportunities accordingly.\textsuperscript{18} The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has been measuring national well-being since 2010, and since 2014 children’s well-being was also measured in a separate framework for children aged between 10 to 15.\textsuperscript{19} The ONS children’s well-being agenda comprises subjective and objective indicators to discover children’s impression on notions such as their personal well-being, relationships, health and the

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Ibid.
  \item Ibid. See page 10.
\end{enumerate}
contexts in which they live.\textsuperscript{20} The \textit{Children's Views on Well-Being and What Makes a Happy Life} report indicates that “Children's happiness depends on having positive, enjoyable things to do and safe places to be.”\textsuperscript{21} Although the children's interest for “places to have a good time” or “fun”, and the association of children's school and their happiness is mentioned, the descriptions remain focused on the activities that they offer, such as sports, art and gaming, and narratives of spatial quality is overlooked.\textsuperscript{22} The \textit{Public Health of England} report that was the government’s response to the conference on Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision and wellbeing\textsuperscript{23} does acknowledge that the mental wellbeing of young people is impacted by place and recounts a positive association between wellbeing and the following places, “Personal space at home (bedroom), friends’ houses, coffee shops and cafes, outdoor spaces, sports facilities (and clubs/teams), and youth centres/agency spaces.”\textsuperscript{24} However the report fails to detail any findings on promoting subjective wellbeing.\textsuperscript{25} In terms of the spatial properties for playgrounds, perhaps the case study reports offer the most detailed spatial accounts, such as an observational study on four Danish playgrounds by health and sports researcher Lise S. Peterson and geoscience researchers Anne D. Refshauge and Ulrika K. Stigsdotter. According to the mentioned study, the design of playgrounds dictates activity level and play types, improving children’s cognitive, social and emotional wellbeing through play that is pleasurable and creative.\textsuperscript{26} The study describes some of the potential affordances playgrounds should provide as variety of play opportunities including dramatic or quiet as well as active and passive or solitary and group plays, the playground surroundings and presence of nature, in addition to opportunities for sensory exploration.\textsuperscript{27} While such studies render a more specified spatial account on playgrounds, they remain heavily influenced by the observer or the number of observers\textsuperscript{28}, as well as failing to involve

\begin{footnotes}
\item[20] Ibid.
\item[22] Ibid.
\item[23] Public Health England, ‘Universal Approaches to Improving Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing’.
\item[24] Ibid.
\item[25] Ibid. see page 13 and 15.
\item[27] Ibid.
\item[28] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
the subjects of investigation “as much as possible as collaborators in the research itself”\textsuperscript{29}, a condition that Robin C. Moore, landscape architect and urban childhood researcher sustains as a necessary basis for effective research.\textsuperscript{30}

On the other hand, the growing body of participatory placemaking literature still lacks autonomous reflections on participatory research and design with children.\textsuperscript{31} The studies on interactive design interventions have been predominantly fixated on adult users, “Although children are the future of the city, know very well what they need to enjoy life in the city, and have the right to express these needs.”\textsuperscript{32} This is disconcerting particularly since sustainable development would be feasible only through including children in placemaking.\textsuperscript{33} It is equally disconcerting that various studies on conceptions of happiness, which touch upon cultural or social oriented SWB, completely neglect analytical research on children’s conceptions of happiness. Precisely when one would expect children’s viewpoint is imperative, given children are still in the process of learning and exploring the cultural and social structures in question.\textsuperscript{34} In order to “Suit the action to the word, and the word to the action” as Shakespeare urges in Hamlet and take a step towards an autonomous legitimation of what spatial qualities make children happy; I designed and led \textit{Designing My Happy City: Playground} workshop, sponsored generously by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), in the Festival of Social Science (FOSS) 2019, an annual UK-wide festival that aims to bridge the gap between academic research and the public.\textsuperscript{35} This chapter traces children, play and happiness, from theoretical

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{ibid} Ibid.
\bibitem{slingerland2020} Slingerland, Lukosch, and Brazier, ‘Engaging Children to Co-Create Outdoor Play Activities for Place-Making’.
\bibitem{ibid} Ibid. Also see: Sharon Egretta Sutton and Susan P. Kemp, ‘Children as Partners in Neighborhood Placemaking: Lessons from Intergenerational Design Charrettes’, \textit{Journal of Environmental Psychology}, 2002.
\bibitem{moreinfo} For more information on the workshop visit the \url{https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/research-office/2020/01/14/our-researchers-and-public-engagement-in-the-festival-of-social-science/} or ESRC website \url{https://esrc.ukri.org/public-engagement/festival-of-social-science/}
\end{thebibliography}
connections between happiness and play, to the practical findings on what constitutes a happy place from a child’s point of view.

In order to look afresh at the complex notions of happiness, play and children, all within the context of architecture; this chapter is based on a participatory workshop. The section aims to stimulate further research on the children’s contribution to our understandings of happiness and its spatial narratives. Designing My Happy City: Playground workshop\textsuperscript{36} was a hands-on workshop tailored for primary school children, providing kids with crafting material to design their favourite playground in groups; and permitted a closer look at patterns of users’ experience in playground settings, that is vital in promoting its spatial quality. For a city to be user-friendly, the design process should be inclusive, bottom-up and community-based, as “There should be more than one voice in a healthy society.”\textsuperscript{37} Designing My Happy City workshop was able to encourage participants interaction, and collect data through the participants’ outputs. Exploring the design of a playground, in the hope of enriching it and of expanding the range of children participation may contribute to other urban settings in terms of their style and functionality. Participants were encouraged to rethink their everyday places and model creative solutions for a happier city by considering a spatial layout that allows happiness and positive emotional states like awe, empathy and curiosity to emerge. I shall point out that as the research was carried out in Edinburgh and in order to appropriately address the relevant local factors and community issues, the workshop was also aiming to bond the Edinburgh primary school students with The University of Edinburgh and its ongoing research projects. So as to, within its scope, broaden the academic research impact and bridge the gap between scholarly debate and the wider community.

During the workshop, participants first discussed what is play, what activities a playground allows and how is an environment that will encourage play and creativity.

\textsuperscript{36} The workshop was supported by a grant awarded by the Economic and Social Research Council, ESRC. I was awarded to lead “Designing My Happy City: Playground” workshop in the Festival of Social Science (FOSS) that was held from 2-9 November 2019. FOSS is a UK-wide annual festival that aims to enable the public to engage with social science research and to support social science researchers to engage with non-academic audiences. For more details, visit: https://esrc.ukri.org/public-engagement/festival-of-social-science/festival-events/ or #esrcfestival.

Through recreational architecture means, students brainstormed their favourite places for having fun; identifying the significant elements about where they like to play while working in teams. All the groups wrote or drew their team descriptions on sticky notes that were presented to all. After evaluating the pros and cons of playground structures based on personal experiences, children created their favourite playing spaces that can be enjoyed by the community. This was achieved through creating creative models using various crafting material that was provided. Finally, participants described why they designed their playground the way they did and described how their design will improve the people’s experience in city. What follows is dedicated to the methods used and the analysis of the collected data through Designing My Happy City: Playground project.

**Sample**

“Designing My Happy City: Playground” workshop engaged 54 participants from the primary school students, 31 female and 23 male, aged between 5 to 11 and from a diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. This was achieved through collaboration with the Smart Cookies after school club, that works with schoolchildren from various schools of different neighbourhoods. The number of participants provided an extensive range of viewpoints by engaging children’s ideas through hands on activities and discussions formed in groups. Participants were assigned in 5 groups of 10, that put contributors at similar age and a balanced gender mixture around the same table. This was done to harmonise the participants’ efforts and encourage them to voice their opinions within their groups. The sample does not represent any specific group in terms of ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic characteristics to ensure an inclusive approach. (See chapter appendix for more details)

**Ethics Statement**

An information session was held before the event with all the participants parents/legal guardians and relevant descriptions of the workshop had been sent as an email prior to the workshop day. Participants were fully informed of the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research prior to the event. It was ensured that children

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38 For more information visit: http://we-are-smart-cookies.com
know their participation is voluntarily and they are free to stop their participation at any
time. Extra care was applied to ensure ethical standards through written and verbal
explanations both prior and during the event. The researcher’s contact data was
shared with participants and they were encouraged to contact the researcher anytime
should they want to raise an issue even after the workshop. The workshop had level
2 Ethics approval and parents’ signed consent forms were gathered by the researcher
with the help of Smart Cookies club and is stored by ESRC, additionally 3 filming and
photography notice and ESRC stand were placed in the event room. (See chapter
appendix) In conclusion to implementing such measures, participants were able to use
the art supplies to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories in a safe and
responsible manner.

**Hands on Material Selection**

Each group were provided with hands on material that were selected to be useful for
creative engagement and inspiring ideas as well as being safe for children’s use. A
wide variety of crafting materials, modelling implements, neutral and colourful supplies
were provided and therefore the representation of a broad range of ideas by children
was warranted. This also provided an opportunity to note which colours or materials
are preferred by children.

**The Experiment**

This study by initiating qualitative research questions and discussions was able to
obtain child-generated reports of the participants’ spatial understanding. Participants
were allocated in 5 groups of 9 to 11 members of similar age and a balanced blend of
gender to ease the communication. This was achieved by workshop facilitators’ help
that were familiar with children in order to create a comfortable setting and inspire
children to share their ideas freely. Each group had a dedicated facilitator to prompt
the questions and ensure children’s wellbeing at all times. The workshop was held on
Thursday 7 of November 2019 for approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes in Broughton
After school club.

Before the experiment, a briefing session was arranged with 7 facilitators (the
gatekeepers or after school club personnel) to explain the event agenda, activities and
goals to the workshop facilitators and incite their full collaboration within the itinerary. During the experiment and in first part of the workshop, each table became a focus group in which children reflected on “What makes them happy” and “Where they have been happy”. Discussions on what play is, what activities a playground allows and how is an environment that will encourage play and happiness were initiated by the facilitators and children were provided with sticky notes and drawing implements to express their opinions. Next, children proceeded to model a happy playground in their groups with further discussions on their ideas of how a happy place will look like. The workshop was recorded by HD camcorders and Zoom voice recorders. The focus of recording was to capture the discussions and participants’ contribution. Additionally, a photographic record was maintained to capture snapshots in different stages of the children’s activities.

3.2. The Workshop Methodology Overview

Participatory placemaking in its current framework, goes back as far as 1960s, and the urban renewal movements after destructive wars in North America and Europe.39 At the time, some planners were advocating adult engagement in placemaking due to the improbability of inclusive cities when the decision making is decisively top-down.40 The wave was accentuated in 1970, with rising concerns on the environmental issues, and UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) initiated a research study to deliberate people-centred approach to the environmental problems.41 The recognition of young people’s voices in expressing their lived experiences and hands-on resolutions was first documented by Kevin Lynch. Lynch in his Growing Up in Cities draws on a series of international interviews with children that was sponsored by UNESCO and carried out by a group of researchers systematically. Children were questioned on “How they used, thought about, and felt about their surroundings.”42 Lynch argues that the surfaced similarities support the

39 Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer, Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
“Universal experience of being a child” and that “Relevant international studies could be developed on that assumption.”43 The definite ways in which Lynch findings contribute to urban planning studies, in his own words, are:

“To help document the human costs and benefits of economic development by showing how the child's use and perception of the resulting micro-environment affects his life, . . . and to suggest public policies for improving the spatial environment.”44

And “To show, by small concrete examples, [...] how a research of environmental quality may stimulate local research, which in turn can affect local or national development decisions.”45

Lynch concludes that improving the quality of life in our urban environments are impossible without considering children and youth’s voice, as he reasons, “Simple and modest as these studies are, we feel that they will prove crucial in managing the human environment of the future.”46 Although Lynch studies confirmed that children's playfulness and imagination, could be a great source of inspiration for designers and their explorative way of thinking is imperative to sustainable communities and cities, it took decades for his efforts to be recognised by urban decisionmakers. It was not until 1989, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)47 implementation by the United Nations, that children’s rights to participation—including their voice in decisions

43 Ibid.
45 Ibid.

47 See more on the “Convention on the Rights of the Child” by UNICEF. The initial CRC adoption contains 41 articles that are designed to ensure children’s protection from harm, provision of basic needs, and participation in decisions that affect their lives, followed by 13 articles related to implementation. UNICEF, “Convention on the Rights of the Child.” UNICEF.org. http://www.unicef.org/crc (Retrieved October 2020)
that shape their environments; was officially acknowledged. According to the UNICEF handbook on child-responsive urban planning, children’s engagement in urban decision-making will lead to “more sustainable built environments” and “civic trust” while empowering stakeholders and communities. And above all, participatory practices are essential to the children’s development, fulfilment and happiness. Which in turn is reliant on the children’s apprehension that “they can actively play a part in shaping their surroundings, that what they say about where and how they live will be listened to and that the key to their future lies in their own awareness”, as it is only through autonomous participation that children acquire the confidence and competence to expand their activity sphere, step by step and through practice.

By way of a necessary reflection on how the recognition of sustainable placemaking requires children’s involvement in design and planning processes, the need for a thorough study with children was unrelenting. Furthermore, by sharing their perspective, participants allowed the voices of their generation to be heard, and for the local community to be directly included in research. Although participatory design and planning with children is receiving a growing body of literature, for children of Edinburgh to share their ideas of a happy city was a novel approach that to the best of my knowledge has been less often remarked and studied. Designing My Happy City: Playground workshop at its core, could be seen as a local assessment of whether and in what ways “A place good for youth is good for us all.”

The project also offered an authentic way to primarily understand how children experience the spatial elements of a happy place.

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48 Ibid. Also see Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer, Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities.
49 Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer.
52 Ibid. See page: 209.
54 Ibid. This is a quote by Stanley King, President of The Co-Design Group, Vancouver. King is co-author of Youth Manual: The Social Art of Architecture Involving Youth in the Design of Sustainable Communities.
The central premise that runs through all the methods used in *Designing My Happy City: Playground* project is to give children’s voices the recognition it deserves. As it became apparent that failing to do so, would turn their lived experiences and perceptions of happiness into an unresolved aporetic divergence in this research. Children with their unbridled imagination, contribute genuine and creative solutions to the fields of urban design and reflect the needs of people from all walks of life, animals and ecosystems. The act of picturing and crafting places with other people “Cultivates a sense of hope and possibility” for communities, and we need to create openings for children to be a part of such achievements and strong democracies.

3.3. The Workshop Results Overview

This section will evaluate the points that led to reassessment and expansion of children’s views as the result of their engagement with the design of a happy place.

**Draw a Happy Place; Analysing the Workshop Drawings**

In order to effectively communicate with children and enhance their joyful participation, they were asked to draw pictures to communicate their interests and identify the spatial elements of a happy place. Children were encouraged to draw a happy place that they wish to be at, or a place where they have previously experienced happiness. The workshop facilitators at each table continuously stimulated the discussion around the table through questions like “Where Have You Been Happy?” and “How does your happy place look like?” The first discovery of the workshop unfolds through observing children in action, when all the groups become energetically engrossed in this seemingly new activity, painting a happy place. Without questioning how a place can be happy, children rather start describing their memories or imaginary circumstances of happiness, while their brush never leaves the surface of the paper except for changing the colour. Their eyes fixated on their paintings unless they stop to make eye contact with their group members momentarily, and then they quickly continue with their animated brush movements. It appears as if the focus is not the aesthetics of the painting per se, but the deliverance of ideas and an implied happy place. According to

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55 Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer. See page 2-5.
56 Ibid.
Matthews, educator and the author of *Drawing and Painting: Children and Visual Representation*, “co-ordination of body movements” are the “beginnings of visual representation” in children’s paintings.⁵⁷ Children’s responsiveness to the first workshop activity, highlights their internally driven belief in probable expressions of a happy place, as it could be argued that children express their enjoyment or curiosity when they choose to engage in an activity.⁵⁸ (See chapter appendix for images of children activities during the workshop)

The drawings could be gauged as a reflective evidence for what children find imperative to a happy place and reveal 4 keys to predict the spatial compatibility with happiness stimulation for the workshop participants. These keys could be summarised as follows: activities, people, animals and elements. (See chapter appendix) More than 40 percent of the workshop’s drawings include elements such as natural elements _ the sun, stars, trees, clouds and mountains, as well as water. (see figure 1) The current literature landscape has identified the vital role of nature in children’s learning processes.⁵⁹ But it seems that children’s fascination with nature is not limited to its ability to stimulate learning; as we get to know the world we are living in, we start bonding with its familiar traits. The daily rise of sun and the appearance of stars at night, anchor us to the world and are entwined with our experience of life.

We are in awe of nature, it never ceases to make us wonder, as we keep “Rediscovering the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.”⁶⁰ It is no surprise that tourist attraction maps often highlight best points of the city for sunrise or sunset watching and at times, stargazing hotspots.⁶¹ I do remember coming back from

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⁵⁹ Alison Clark, 'Views from inside the Shed: Young Children’s Perspectives of the Outdoor Environment', *Education* 3-13, 2007. Also see Harriet Dismore and Richard Bailey, ““If Only”: Outdoor and Adventurous Activities and Generalised Academic Development’, *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 2005.


⁶¹ Parts of this discussion was published in SGSASH (Scottish Graduate School of Art and Humanities) website, see: https://sgsahblog.com/2021/03/03/hitting-the-yellow-brick-road/ (accessed 11 September 2021) Also see TripAdvisor's reviews for sunrise/sunset watching in Edinburgh.
a magic show in Edinburgh fringe festival before it got cancelled due to the 2020 pandemic and seeing the blue moon in the sky; I asked myself why this full moon is more awe inspiring than all the tricks I had just watched in a regular show from Las Vegas. We live in a world that we are barely familiar with its mysteries and how it really works, the global disruption due to the Covid-19 crisis demonstrates that overestimating our understanding would be problematic in face of challenges. That is to say, when we expose our uncertainty, we are dealing with the hunger in us to understand, a pull that ignite our senses and gravitate us towards the “magic” in the natural world. All the natural elements in children’s drawings are indicators of their appetite for nature and therefore the need for intertwining urban and natural environments “As essential a part of the basic infrastructure of a settlement as electricity, water, sewage and paving.”

Children also drew flowers, or fruits on the trees, like a cherry tree. Both empirical and theoretical studies have attributed children’s fascination to the interactive nature of such elements. A case of foundational approach to the study of “active investigation” was concluded by the co-author of the National curriculum Sue Waite in her article, Memories are made of this, in which Waite investigates outdoor learning benefits by means of 334 survey practitioners with children aged between 2 and 11. Waite argues that active investigation is a form of play that incorporates autonomy and perceptible contact that increases memorability. Waite quotes one of her survey results that draws on “happy hours” of active investigation with plants and animals.

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/ShowUserReviews-g186525-d190124-r161007770-Calton_Hill-Edinburgh_Scotland.html (Date accessed: 11/11/2020)

Blue moon is the phenomena of having 4 full moons within a season.


Sue Waite is Associate Professor (Reader) in Outdoor Learning in Plymouth Institute of Education at Plymouth University and co-author of the National curriculum. Over the last 20 years, she has conducted and published research on how place, people and pedagogies interact to support positive social effect in play, learning, health and wellbeing through the great outdoors.

Sue Waite, “Memories Are Made of This”: Some Reflections on Outdoor Learning and Recall”, Education 3-13, 2007. See page 339.

Ibid.
“Caravan holidays in west Wales, small site with no onsite entertainment so I spent many happy hours catching frogs, playing ball games, picking apples, blackberries. I often went to the beach, rock pool rambles with my brother and parents. I loved looking at nature, freedom to wander around the local fields. I learnt to love wildlife, family life and time to explore things for myself with no adult interruption.”

This was previously discussed by architect and artist Simon Nicholson in 1971, as the possibility of discovery, and the spatial variables that escalate its likelihood. For instance, where deciduous trees are reportedly popular and more accessible for climbing and swinging, fruit trees are able to provide distinctive opportunities for children’s engagement with smell, taste, gravity, material and so on. Senses are awakened in nature largely, however the field components, can ignite even more sensations; “Children find flowers necessary for aesthetic (beautiful), atmospheric (nice-smelling) and restorative reasons (making people happy). Alongside aesthetics, being able to explore and interact in and around the flower garden was also important to the children.” Through this study’s drawings that included plants and animals, (more than 11 percent of drawings was dedicated to animals) an intriguing point is conceived, children are interested in spatial settings that allow and encourage interspecies emotive engagement. Clearly plants, fruit trees and bushes can draw birds, butterflies and bees, while providing routes for cats and dogs; and children are seeing themselves at the linchpin of this interaction. In a radical interpretation it is arguable that children are also implying no one’s happiness would be complete without the happiness of its companions, including other people or animals. Although the fanciful creatures and real-world living beings are sometimes blurred into one in children’s drawings, for instance unicorns and the child’s pet are both drawn, children showed an explicit awareness and interest in nature. The models also largely display settings

68 Ibid.
70 Ibid. See page 93-94.
71 Matluba Khan, ‘Environment, Engagement and Education’ (The Uninversity of Edinburgh, 2017).
for outdoor play, showing a clear inclination by the study participants. The literature on play-informed research supports the notion that outdoor play provides a beneficial environment for initial engagement in play and facilitates creative thinking as well as acquisition of new knowledge through supporting the child-initiated activities, high levels of involvement with surroundings and flexibility and originality.\(^\text{72}\) (See chapter appendix for more details)

Another distinguished pattern in depictions draws on a sense of achievement. Trophies and medals, tri-level podiums (similar to the Olympics podiums) and even scenes from sports such as football\(^\text{73}\) that displays scoring a goal or goal celebration. On the surface, it is relatable that one would feel happy, living life by simple standards, of either winning or losing a competition or a medal. Winning a medal is associated with sentimental narratives such as one’s parents might burst into tears of joy and pride, or one would become popular among friends and celebrated by teachers. It could be also linked to our emotional and cognitive responses as a recipient of approval. A pat on the back, hearing “You worked hard to make it here, well done!” could be considered a powerful drive, as it not only gratifies our ego but also reduce our anxiety.\(^\text{74}\) However, what we encounter here exposes an inherent implication to the obvious connotation; since goal celebration is a collective performance of happiness by the team including the coaches and the team supporters. In this perspective, drawings are not only signifying individual achievement but are also striving for a communal and social achievement. This could be also analysed under the purview of children’s co-operative play, where the play is organised centred on specific groups or rules of participation that seeks a common goal and achievement.\(^\text{75}\) In other words, for children to see themselves as contributing members of the society is a sense of accomplishment per se; which was justly fulfilled through this workshop by recognising children as significant urban users. I expand on the spatial representations of “a sense of achievement” in another chapter explicitly.\(^\text{76}\)


\(^{73}\) Football or American soccer.


\(^{75}\) See more on co-operative play in Khan, ‘Environment, Engagement and Education’.

\(^{76}\) See chapter 1, the section on happiness, luck and spatial design.
I turn now to one of the principal findings; a decisive and immediate common theme that emerges from children’s drawings is the notion of love. A central expression from the drawings on which all other themes are more or less reliant, and quite surprisingly does not traverse the architecture discipline literature justly. More than 40 percent of the drawings were centred on some expression or form of affection, while around 30 percent of the drawings were arranged based on interaction of children and other people. The family and friends, people who will hold your hand and stand by you, people who are close enough to inflict pain, and even then, their major influence on our happiness is undeniable. In that sense, drawings on eating with others is not only a display of satisfying hunger, it is potentially an expression of sharing warm moments with others. So are other patterns such as gatherings, party hats, and decorated Christmas trees. Taking this into consideration, we face a fundamental challenge; what are the spatial representations of love and affection? This is a challenge not because it is difficult to grasp but because it is an unfamiliar ground in urban studies as I mentioned earlier.

It is rather the logical consequence of any attempt of love and affection to be boundlessly place based. Considering the set of implications which are associated with affection, the physical presence of bodies in a restricted place is an irreplaceable constitute wherever a communing practice is happening. Even in a virtual interaction this shared place is existent, although virtually. Hence experiencing affection is subject to spatial affordances, for instance, getting closer in a compact space, is the potentiality that is able to push the relationships into process. The very expression “getting closer”, can be understood both as a corporal experience and a cordial one. In 2019, Netflix released a drama series called Love Alarm. Love Alarm revolves around the story of an app with the same name, a technology that notifies the users whether someone within the vicinity of a 10-meter radius loves them. The series was popular and one of the top Netflix releases of 2019; and it seems the idea is to some extent stemming from our innate understanding of love. Even when we fantasise about love; we are thinking in terms of an intimacy that is boundlessly place based. However, 

77 Anna Freud explains that it is normal for a child to hit her or his mother one moment and love her the next; there are diverse tendencies but expressions of underlying love. See more on Freud, The Harvard Lectures.

the idea is relatable based on our perception of intimacy, this could be connected to what Edward Hall describes and Sanchez quotes as intimate distance; “The presence or absence of the sensation of heat, created by another body, points to the line that separates between intimate space to that which is not.”

But perhaps the supreme example to comprehend the spatial contextualisation of love, is the study of dating and courtship. Data from China’s leading online dating site suggests that online dating users favour geographical proximity for their potential partner. “‘The nearer the better’ as a general attitude for the proximity preference” does not only summaries the users’ attitude for finding a partner, it also indicates the role of spatial clusters in maintaining a relationship. Understandably so, since spatial layout provides a setting that appropriates the identified system of values and a way of dealing with socially accepted behaviours of dating and courtship. Machicon is a form of group dating in Japan since about a decade ago. Machi means neighbourhood and Kon means dating. Machicon means dating within the neighbourhood, and reportedly has revitalising effect on local businesses as well. Dating and its urban mannerism is the outcome of choices that follows the spatial layout, whether creating opportunities or averting the decisions, the timing of a relationship is embedded in sociable spaces. This opens up whole new possibilities for future research in urban studies, what are the spatial implications of dating and courtship? In what ways and to what extent are urban spaces welcoming or clashing with courtship dynamics? Interestingly, the sociability measure of public spaces has been utilised by people rather than researchers, as we have seen in numerous dating hotspot lists online; traversing this into design and policy making processes however, remains to be

carried by researchers, a responsibility that has been neglected gravely. Everyday life provides us with countless examples, but they must be studied in detail if we are to reflect further than basic observation.

Exploring individual accounts of children who were describing a happy place, exposes a number of direct spatial representations in children’s drawings as well. The most prominent one is home; where kids keep their teddy bear and watch TV on a bean bag, and where in a healthy setting they receive unconditional love and a solace that shield them like a cocoon from unhappiness. Other direct spatial representations are including but not limited to; tree houses and pools. These representations document the complexity of the children’s play and their sensory awareness and excitement, as well as the ways in which they negotiate and imaginatively appropriate “their everyday environments.”

I am reminded of another Japanese example here, Ashiyu or foot baths along the street that are public and open pools of spring water, enticing citizens to take a few moments from their urban journeys to rewind and relax. This is aligned with the definition of play that I mentioned in preceding sections, as foot bathing would not help people to get to their destination, if anything it will stall them from their purpose; similar to play, this will be performed for its own sake and with no ulterior motive as “The promise of happiness is happiness itself.” Such examples could be translated into urban design strategies such as thinking of streets as “places” or deciphering local urban clusters as an “extension” to home. Japan Ashiyus and children’s drawings, by calling attention to the correlation between happiness and playful activities, prompt us to cultivate the objectives of design. Indeed, communication is a foundational purpose of street networks, however streets are also places of “encounter and exchange” and the rhythm of streets can be tuned to inspire more pleasant experiences and serve multiple objectives. In that sense, not only streets have the potential to become “places” in the city, but also “the healthiest places”, as jane Jacobs in her *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* describes.

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85 See more on Ashiyu or foot Onsen(spaa) on Japan travelling agency, Japan Experience website. [https://www.japan-experience.com/to-know/understanding-japan/ashiyu](https://www.japan-experience.com/to-know/understanding-japan/ashiyu) (Date accessed: 11/11/2020)
“Mingled all among the buildings for living were an incredible number of splendid food stores, as well as such enterprises as upholstery making, metal working, carpentry, food processing. The streets were alive with children playing, people shopping, people strolling, people talking. Had it not been a cold January day, there would surely have been people sitting. The general street atmosphere of buoyancy, friendliness and good health was so infectious that I began asking directions of people just for the fun of getting in on some talk. I had seen a lot of Boston in the past couple of days, most of it sorely distressing, and this struck me, with relief, as the healthiest place in the city.”

Moving forward with the workshop drawings’ analyses, it is noteworthy that more than 15 percent of children’s drawings were dedicated to activities. For instance, some paintings reveal a specific situation that draws on feeling safe and being in a familiar setting. A bed, tucked under the blankets, hugging a teddy bear, perhaps listening to the voice of a parent reading a bedtime story. As an activity that is repeated over and over, the bedtime routine almost turns into a ritual that its repetition triggers the experienced feelings. In that sense, children’s drawings are imitations of the rituals that instigate happiness. Feeling safe is an intrinsic human need that the narrative of this picture embodies powerfully and also reflects on the high intellectual realism of the children’s visual representation. Apart from this emotional bubble of safety and craving for a bedtime routine involving stories with happy endings and sweet dreams, children also are curious for the unknown. As children learn and explore their surroundings, they are often trustful and inquisitive, “Playing with the possible connections and sensual variations.” This inherent curiosity is an essential and continuous process for their development. This is evident from the sequences of children’s painting and the formal vocabulary of the repeated patterns, the acts of reading, even watching TV, and exploring elements of nature, animals and different environments. Children’s curiosity provides them with opportunities to engage their proactive senses and experience life more profoundly. While there is a substantial

90 Ibid.
body of literature that supports safety as a liveability criterion for happy cities,\textsuperscript{91} it is not the same with curiosity, although any spatial feature can be an object of peruse for children.

This cannot be fully grasped unless explained through opening a point of divergence from the workshop results. In order to expand on the evident connection between the spatial consequences that will appease both curiosity and safety, I will momentarily expand on these before readdressing the rest of workshop results. It seems preferable to begin with curiosity, that is the less studied in spatial terms between the two.

I can now return with more insight to the central argument which I have left in suspense for many pages; in the following section I will expand on the workshop models’ analyses.

3.4. Modelling a happy playground; design analyses

One of the most interesting sections of the study grew in response to children being asked to create models of their favourite playground, where they can be happy. The results reflect the inner and surrounding worlds of these children and too often produce a parallel insight with the first activity drawings. Here, I will explore the children models and their visual patterns in more details.

Figure 1. Keys to the Children’s paintings and the number of their mentions.
Observing the children’s models, a prominent feature that is impossible to disregard, is the overindulgence use of colours. Abundance in colour, could be partly due to an innate inclination towards aesthetics of joy. It could also denote the joy that we experience facing abundance per se, akin to the excited delight of a child in a candy shop. Abundance accompanies a sense of safety, it was demonstrated in 2020 when due to the Covid pandemic people rushed to the supermarkets to stock up on toilet paper, there was not an actual threat to toilet papers’ deprivation, but rather to its abundance. This could root deeply in our evolution history, as Noah Harari in his *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* suggests “Where wheat became particularly abundant, and game and other food sources were also plentiful, human bands could gradually give up their nomadic lifestyle and settle down in seasonal and even permanent camps.” 92 For children to reflect on the principal connection between civilisation and abundance, the persisting psychological origins determinants of our happiness could be arguably specific to our historical and evolutional consciousness loops.

The use of colours per se, could also juxtapose our in comparison colourless cities, providing an outlet for the study participants to utilise play as an act of protest and exploration. Through which children reveal an intimate understanding of the city spaces, as well as reshaping the imagined place aligned with their own political interests.93 Considering children had a wide variety of material with diverse shades and hues and they still opted for vivid rainbow-like combinations, it becomes clearly evident that children were deliberate in how colour elicits our emotions and is connected to our happiness.94 At some instances, even the wooden or the white coloured base boards were coloured by children. (See chapter appendix) Despite the studies that unanimously confirm the use of colour for a certain emotive stimulus, the notion has a limited sway in architecture landscape both in literature and practice.

92 Professor Noah Harari is a historian and author of a bestseller science book, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*.
Among the earliest published accounts on the chromatic stimuli of emotions, *Theory of colours*, first published in 1810 by the well-known poet and writer Goethe stands out. Since Goethe emphasises a subjective perception of colour, rather than optical qualities, as recorded by Newton. Goethe classifies colours into positive and negative clusters, for instance, yellow and red-yellow (orange) are colours in the positive cluster that are arousing, and energetic; interpreted to happiness, joy and pleasant traits. The energetic and active nature of red for instance, is applied by many politicians; including Nicola Sturgeon the first minister of Scotland when she was interviewed for the second vote on Scottish independence. Bright red in cinema is used as a “visual caffeine”, activating latent passions and symbolising power. In her book *If It’s Purple Someone Gonna Die, The Power of Colour in Visual Storytelling*; Bellantoni describes bright red as visually aggressive, as it can raise heartbeat rate and anxiety levels, and a warning signal in cinematic visual effects. Bellantoni, author and colour consultant, associates yellow with happiness, reflecting that the colour is linked with the sun with a warming effect, while it is also used in caution signs as it stands out and is able to give a warning effect as well. Similarly, the commercial software tool *Colour Wheel Pro*, identifies certain colours to specific traits based on the colour theory by Bauhaus that uses a digital colour wheel, comparable to Newton’s; to analyse the interflow of colours. An artist who has deliberately used colours to create a definite spatial atmosphere is Mark Rothko, the abstract expressionist painter who is renowned for his Rothko rooms. Rothko rooms are

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97 Scottish independence has never been so certain, The Scottish National Party leader, Nicola Sturgeon tells The SNP. See more on SNP or The Guardian news YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ja-kKMI7KvQ (Date accessed: 30/11/2020)
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid. See page 36 as well as 69, 76-82. Also see: Tom Clarke and Alan Costall, ‘The Emotional Connotations of Color: A Qualitative Investigation’, *Color Research and Application*, 2008. See page 407.
101 Colour Theory which Johannes Itten draws on in his *The Art of Colour*, was built on previous works of Newton and Goethe among others. Itten later left Bauhaus and established his own architecture school. See more on the programme webpage: http://www.color-wheel-pro.com/color-theory-basics.html. Also see: Nijdam, ‘Mapping Emotion to Color’.
102 There was a Rothko room installation in Tate Modern including nine paintings that Rothko donated to the Tate. The room had a reduced light and a compact space, so the layered surfaces slowly reveal
meticulously designed meditative rooms with Rothko’s large sized field-colour works that kindle visitors emotive responses accordingly. It is apparent that the current literature on chromatic architecture and urban design does not extend the insight and practical framework the credit it is due. Having found yet another niche in architecture and urban studies, I would like to now shift back to the spirit of this study’s workshop and the emerged themes.

Considering the details of installation in children’s models, there are elevated stages and multilevel surfaces. Despite the intricate quality of these raised surfaces, they resemble the tri-level podiums in children’s drawings that I drew on earlier. In its three dimensional form, its construction transmits certain contingencies of pride expressions, socially elevated state and standing tall in front of others. It is difficult to discern to what extent this is cultivated through narrative conception of self or an intuitive social force, and to what degree it is an inborn characteristic and inclination towards competence, or a universal imposition to reciprocity; nevertheless, it is fundamentally social and lends force to the community aspect of happiness. The notion that needs further exploration and I will address in another chapter. The elevated stages in children’s models cogently remind us of attempts to establish an identity, the systems of legitimate expectations as a member of a particular society, and an entitlement to happiness by means of this collective membership. A concrete example of a collective pride that identifies a community by setting it apart from others would be the national anthems, such as the British national anthem that represents Britain in sporting events, and actually references the word happy.

“God save our gracious Queen, Long live our noble Queen, God save the Queen: Send her victorious, Happy and glorious, long to reign over us.”

Children’s Models are similar to the drawings in representing nature articulated with the happy place. It is no coincidence that nature is the most highlighted theme in the their solemn character. See more on Tate Modern webpage: https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern/display/in-the-studio/mark-rothko.  

Ibid.  

See chapter 1 of this study, the section on community happiness and its spatial design.
workshop results. As Richard Louv, the prized author of Vitamin N suggests; for a healthy, happy and fulfilling life, nature can make all the difference. Looking back at my own experience, I was born and bred in Tehran, the capital of Iran, a metropolis where you can find whatever a city of that scale could offer. But every summer for a month, my whole family would gather at my grandparents’ mountain cabin up in the northern highlands of Mazandaran province, Pirclom, a kind of a place that has wild boars, Persian leopard, golden jackals and wandering bears. A kind of place that you can drink from one spring and bathe in another, you might encounter a pack of wolves if you go deep into the lower Caspian Hyrcanian Forests, and if you swing on the lemon tree, the clouds would be under your feet. In that place, I was beaten by scorpion 4 times, learnt how to ride a horse bareback by falling on the poisonous bushes numerous times, and was chased by wild dogs with my life on the line, yet the whole year I was counting days to go back to that place again. Although I loved the city, the happiest time of the year even freezing cold or poisoned or chased after, was when I was in nature. Correspondingly, Richard Louv in his bestseller book Last Child in the Woods, reflects on art critic Berenson and psychologist Erickson’s narratives of greatest happiness, on the harmony one can experience due to the spirit of place in nature. Louv quotes Berenson’s poetic account of such harmony;

“In childhood and boyhood this ecstasy overtook me when I was happy out of doors. . .. A silver haze shimmered and trembled over the lime trees. The air was laden with their fragrance. The temperature was like a caress. I remember . . . that I climbed up a stump and felt suddenly immersed in Itness. I did not call it by that name. I had no need for words. It and I were one. Surely most children are like that. I have retained that faculty through the years.”

107 Caspian Hyrcanian Forests are UNESCO World Heritage Site due to their outstanding universal value. See more on The United Nations World Heritage Website: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1584/. (Date accessed: 1/12/2020)
108 Bernard Berenson was an author, art critic and historian. Erick Erickson was a professor at notable universities such as Yale and Harvard and the winner of Pulitzer Prize for his work on the Theory on Psychological Development. See more: Louv, Last Child in the Woods. See Part II, Why the young (and the rest of us) need nature.
109 Ibid.
Another thread is depicted here for architecture studies. What spatial features can be attributed to harmony? A literal translation in urban design would be the agreement of parts to the whole, where elements, despite their discrepancies, form a consistent order with accordance to the whole.\textsuperscript{110} It is more convenient to find examples of spatial dissonance rather than harmony, taking Edinburgh’s Princes Street for example, the spatial harmony is broken by the visual pollution of aerial wires and various commercial signs that compete in standing out of the context rather than blending in. In comparison, island of Burano in Italy, Amsterdam in Netherlands and even the Victoria Street in Edinburgh share a regularity in spite of diverse distinctive aspects. For instance, the buildings might follow the same order of width and height but restrictedly differ in colour or form design. Here the spatial key to happiness could be synthesised as the balance of a well arranged, intelligibly rhythmic and user-friendly scaled pattern.

Within the domain of nature, there are multi-sensory experiences with plants and animals that I reflected on earlier in the discussions over children’s drawings. Accordingly, animals and plants are underpinned in happy place models as well. Since there is no seemingly distinction between wild and domesticated animals for children, it could be implied that to some degree, children are associating animals with toys, children’s book or cartoon characters. Presumably, it is the huggable and cuddly teddy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh or Paddington; rather than a wild bear roaming in their modelled happy place. To that end, the animal’s presence is partly due to the cuddly characteristic of children’s toys. Paul Shepard, author and environmentalist, in \textit{The Others; How Animals Made Us Humans} imputes the cognitive component to the need for security the child craves, where the “plush comfort” and “ever-loving presence” of the toy are reminiscent of simultaneously soothing mother’s embrace in moments of distress.\textsuperscript{111} Regardless of its causes, clinical studies suggest that hugging is related to higher levels of oxytocin (OT) hormone that can reduce blood pressure, distress and negative feelings.\textsuperscript{112} In fact, the butterfly hug method, is such a powerful self-
healing method with immediate benefits that is recommended for trauma patients.\textsuperscript{113} Now what would be the projections of this revelation in architecture discourse? In his recent book on \textit{Network Nature}, Richard Coyne draws on Shepard’s account of animals and hugging trajectory for children and suggests a transference between cuteness and the “Organic and blobby biomorphic architecture”, regardless of its effective or ineffective imitation.\textsuperscript{114} Apart from the connections of form and shape in design however, I think the underlying idea here is the solidarities of friendship and familial love through which a sense of emotive security develops; and cuddling is one of its particular expressions. And architecture can influence the valuable time we spend with our family and friends, and the memories we build in our homes or encountering places, are affected by their spatial settings. Noting that the common pattern that is repeated here affirms earlier discussions on the essential demand for a closer look at spatial ties of love and friendship.

I have now mentioned the emergent concepts of the study of what children will include in their ideal happy place, but before moving forward to the next section; the expert group additional feedback on the study’s results and method, I will briefly explore the spatial connections of love from this point onwards; as it is a novel discourse and hence cannot be explained clearly in a reduced word limit. One way to conceive the subject is to unwrap shrouded layers of love, for instance, love as an emotional attachment\textsuperscript{115}, could be a sense related to objects, including spatial components. As cognitive science researcher Donald Norman, designer and the author of \textit{Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things} suggests, “Some objects evoke strong, positive emotions such as love, attachment, and happiness.”\textsuperscript{116} Here I am extending the

\begin{footnotesize}


\textsuperscript{116} Professor Norman is the director of Design Lab at University of California and the author of renowned books such as \textit{Emotional Design} and \textit{The design of everyday things}. See: Donald Norman, \textit{Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things} (New York: Basic Books, 2004). See page 25 (eBook).
\end{footnotesize}
sentiment to space as one can relate to loving or hating a place comparably. The love
for a place could spring from previous positive experiences and the cherished
memories\textsuperscript{117} that the place evokes, or from representing the elements that we love,
for example we might love our room or home because it has gathered our favourite
colours, surfaces, material or objects and properties within its space. This is widely
used in emotional branding,\textsuperscript{118} for instance if one enters an H&M shop without knowing
if it is located in Israel, Hong Kong or Switzerland, there would not be a way to find out
based on the architecture as the H&M shops spatial arrangements are identical. One
might also develop a sense of emotional attachment to place due to its efficiency and
utility. Iranian’s midlands region residential architecture like the traditional architecture
of Yazd and Kashan cities, comprises a room called\textit{Shah-neshin}. The word that
literally translates to the king’s seating, was the best space of any house that provided
the best accommodation; including astatic views towards the inner courtyard,
elaborate decorations and pleasant air conditioning sustainably circulated due to wind
catchers.\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Shah-neshin} was the most beloved part of the region’s houses, even
today that many of the older houses, some goes back to more than 200 hundred years
ago, have turned into hotels and tourists’ accommodations, the \textit{Shah-neshin} rooms
are in high demand and more expensive. When the spatial qualities emanate special
meanings, the architecture can become the key to love and happiness. Or as Norman
concludes his book, “Love comes by being earned, when an object's special
characteristics makes it a daily part of our lives, when it deepens our satisfaction,
whether because of its beauty, its behaviour, or its reflective component.”\textsuperscript{120}

Another way to digest the notion of love in architecture, is to focus on the represented
spatial aspects of it in literature and linguistic expressions. For instance, the use of
“falling in love” which indicates a physical and spatial dimension to the act of loving.
Romantic love’s classic example would be \textit{Pride and Prejudice} by Jane Austin. If the
lead character, Elizabeth Bennet had not gone to Mr Darcy’s residency, Pemberley,
their love story would have been over before it begins reciprocally. Indeed, if there is

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid. See page 129 and 451 (eBook).
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid. See page 451 (eBook).
\textsuperscript{119} The city of Yazd is a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its exceptionally elaborate construction
systems and outstanding universal value. See more on The United Nations World Heritage Website:
\textsuperscript{120} Norman, \textit{Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things}. 
no encountering place, there would be no love to begin with. And even though some initial encounters are happening in digital spaces nowadays, there is no doubt in the users’ mind of these virtual meetings that if they are to proceed with the relationship they would be meeting in person. Even matrimonial love is place based, not only home becomes the centre of marital love, but also the contract of marriage or civil partnership is legitimised by the reginal laws. In Scotland, the Gretna Green parish used to be a popular destination for couples that could not obtain the marriage license in England and Wales or not as quickly, since the Scottish rules differed. On an equal footing, pure love is also practiced and sustained through a spatial basis, and spatial intimacy in love trails intimate loss. As it is seen in One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez; “A person does not belong to a place until someone beloved is buried there.”

Pure love’s persistence is only possible through the spatial persistence of love’s representational elements. For instance, in order to deal with the possible loss a therapist would advise: “Instead of returning to the ‘scene of the crime’ - where your ex-lover lives, or special places the two of you went to - find other interesting places to visit.”

Let me also clarify one important point, what I mean by pure relationship here is not related to sexual purity; rather “It refers to a situation where a social relation is entered into for its own sake.”

The accumulation of spatial particulars within the definition of the love could be also advanced through the definition of friendship. The Greek word Philia in Aristotle’s lectures that is translated to “relationship” and “to love” features even non-human relations. Aristotle ascertains friendship as the essence of justice and a well lived life, which is recognisable in and is the purpose of polis, the Greek word for city. In a general overview, how architecture facilitate friendship and living in relation to others, is the core to the spatial affordances of friendship. Behaviours that support operational values of companionship are fundamentally spatial and local. For Aristotle, virtuous

123 Ibid. See page 58.
125 Crisp. Also see: Mahzad Hojjat and Anne Moyer, eds., The Psychology of Friendship (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 2017). See page xi, and ix. Also see the first chapter of this study a critique of happiness section.
friendship is realised when “people actually like each other”, and as any city is bound
to govern some areas of social life; people could only meet and grow affection
towards others within their social and personal spheres, that is to say in spatial domain
and subjective field interactions. Indeed, online friendship although adequate at its
own level, with the current technology does not have the capacity for the “loving
attention to a friend” that comprises “understanding his or her needs and caring that
they are met.” The connection between emotional distance and physical distance
can perhaps be made clearer by an analogy. In Iranian central and southern regions’
architecture there is a traditional urban construction style called “reconciliation alleys”.
Reconciliation alleys were designed for warmer climates, and their narrow passage,
sometimes as narrow as just one meter width, provides passengers with the comfort
of the side-walls’ shadow, less humid airflow and vertical ventilation, as well as
informal encounters. The construction and scale of these alleys increase the
passengers’ co-awareness, and makes walking closely alongside others a natural co-
presence and movement pattern for two individuals. In other words, spatial field can
give agency of embracing social connection to its users, giving space to the rise of
communities in many forms or flourishing the existing communities. As the name of
such alleys suggests, it is the folk impression that people who have had a quarrel
would come out reconciled from a reconciliation alley.

Focusing on the spatial field within which people would be free to pursue and even
encouraged to practice conceptions that fortify friendship such as loyalty and
companionship, one salient example is a movie called Where Is The Friend’s Home?
(1987) by Abbas Kiarostami, the iconic Iranian auteur. The movie narrates the story
of a child in rural areas that accidentally take his classmate’s homework to home. He

126 Crisp, Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics. See the introduction page xxx.
128 M. Asghari and R. Vafaei, ‘Comparative Analysis of Climate and Morphology between Traditional
Patterns and Modern Approaches: The Case of Bushehr’s Traditional Context’, in Procedia
Engineering, 2015.
129 Ibid. see page 598-9. Also see: Hamed Mohammadi Mazraeh and Mahdieh Pazhouhanfar, ‘Effects
of Vernacular Architecture Structure on Urban Sustainability Case Study: Qeshm Island, Iran’, Frontiers
130 Multiple ranking polls has labelled Kiarostami among the top directors of all time. See more on him
and his movies here: https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/jul/04/abbas-kiarostami-master-
of-cinematic-poetry-peter-bradshaw. (Date accessed: 2/12/2020)
then with a great sense of justice embarks on a challenging journey to return the notebook to his classmate, without knowing his address. Despite the ostensibly simple storyline, the journey of finding the friend’s home touches upon profound dilemmas of fairness and loyalty in friendship; constantly situated and reshaped by social and spatial formations. As we see in the movie, the field of journey towards friend’s home becomes the imaginative space of constructing friendship and developing bonds. In other words, finding the friend or forming the friendship is only probable throughout a spatial occurrence. The spatial situatedness incessantly inculcate friendship boundaries on our moral compass and everyday matters.

**Expert Group Additional Feedback on The Workshop Results and Method**

With the ambition to incite a focused and specialised conversation on the workshop results and method, I arranged an expert group session on Zoom, with 6 participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. Participants were all professional architects, with equal number of men and women, and even ratio of PhD researchers to chartered and actively working architects participating. The focus group served the purpose of giving the research method and findings expert critical knowledge and extensive practical feedback; while giving professionals to engage with children’s ideas and experience first hand how it matters in design. Participants who were informed about the focus group layout and had sufficient time and opportunity to issue their concerns and comments prior to the workshop. Participants were also granted access to a digital shared folder consisting photos of the children’s workshop and their drawings and models before the online discussion. During the online event, 5 questions were asked from the group and after approximately 7 minutes group discussions for each question, participants had the chance to comment individually on a shared survey on the same question. The format of the session allowed an interactive debate where architects were comfortable to comment, and if needed the discussion was motivated by the researcher. The online event lasted about an hour. Here, I will recount each question and test the grounds of participants’ comments and observations.

**Q 1 -** Children were asked to design or recreate a place that they have experience certain emotions in, can you guess what is the space they are trying to make?
The first question was to test if the subject holds the collective prominence to stand out as a shared understanding between the professionals. Architects were quick to detect the principal happiness theme which might be largely persuaded by participants’ foregoing rapport with the researcher.

Q 2 - The workshop was titled Designing My Happy City: The Playground and was designed and led to document what children liked and did not like about the space. Using a recreation modelling strategy, children were asked to draw their happy place. The models are a happy playground remake. Children were asked to think about a place that has made them happy or imagine where they would be happy. What catches your eye as an architect in their drawings and models? Any spatial elements, colours, shapes, created places, activities, etc.

The majority of adoptions echoed children’s emphasis on the arrangements and recurrence of animals and people, variety of colours and nature. As a respondent noted:

“I feel these kids like nature, and even somewhat rural settings; I spot lots of animals and people instantly both in drawings and models.”

One participant pointed out the child-like quality of models.

“These models are exactly what you’d expect from children, the curiosity of the modelmakers is almost tangible.”

It is true that for most architects, it takes lifelong effort in design before their work becomes recognisable by sight, while for many this never happens. The genuine quality that emanates from children’s drawings and models, instantly gives an idea of the designer; and bears an imperative lesson for architects.

Q 3 - Considering the models and drawings, in your opinion what are the most and least important things for children that constitute a happy place?

The respondents unanimously reported nature, outdoor and green spaces, in addition to people and animals as the dominant threads in children’s work, in addition to a few subsidiary keywords e.g. “flowers”, and “colours” or “groups and gatherings” in addition to “toys”. For example, a participant reflected:
“The presence of natural elements in all models and most of the drawings is eye catching. So, I would go for natural elements as the most important things. I think kids must have loved seeing the sky at all times, as I don’t see any enclosed spaces, I’d say that is the least important here.”

And another commented:

“I think the emphasis is on people, animals, natural elements such as sun and some playing activities; and I reckon they put only the happy things in their happy places, so whatever they did not mention would be the least important.”

Q 4 - Do you think children had a more individual or collective approach to both their perceptions and creation of a happy place?

Participants reviewed the workshop photos for this question and their conversation concluded that children’s works, show singular traits but stay connected to the common themes; for instance, a participant responded:

“Almost everyone and everything is in touch with someone or something. The connectedness is not only about humans, but also animals, nature, movement and play. I can see equal and inclusive shares of space for humans and animals which I find very interesting.”

Q 5 - Do you think you would be happy in the places that children have imagined and modelled here?

Participants answer to this was yes, however some mentioned that they would require more features as they are grownups after all; or they would appreciate such places for a limited time. At the same time, it was agreed upon that most adults could relate to the shared fundamental values that children highlighted, and therefore the happiness would be contagious in children’s designed places. It was also mentioned that even seeing the children’s work had them smiling and this could be a telling sign about the quality of children’s suggested designs.
“I found peace in the places which have been imagined by kids. This makes me happier. Definitely I choose those places to spend time in and we need more of them in our cities.”

At last participants had a designated time to add any notes or comments on the methods or findings; which they mainly spent on thanking my efforts for the online event and sharing the study with them. My discussions with architects and my personal experience of studying children psychoanalysis, put me in a position to understand the focus group results more comprehensively. Architects receive demanding training to develop the required understanding towards architectural graphic standards and shared drawing language, in which every symbol and sign conveys a detailed and specific meaning. In that sense it is fathomable that the focus group participants were looking for literal meanings in children’s creations as they are used to. I would not have been surprised if they demanded a map legend, so they can follow the logic. The dispute that rises here is the nonfigurative and abstract nature of the children’s works. The works that could have been analysed only through deeper associations of narratives and stories behind the insubstantial elements that meets the eye. Over all, the expert group benefitted the research and the participants; some of the threads that I explained in length in this chapter were reaffirmed and architects were able to greet children’s original ideas as well as tackling their trajectories of a happy place.

3.5. Conclusion

Jane Jacobs in her *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* makes significant use of observing our own behaviour in cities closely. In her own words:

“We shall start, if only in a small way, adventuring in the real world, ourselves. The way to get at what goes on in the mysterious and perverse behaviour of cities is, I think, to look closely, and with as little previous expectation as is possible, at the most ordinary scenes and events, and attempt to see what they mean and whether any threads of principle emerge among them.”

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131 Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. See the introduction.
And when one looks closely; it becomes apparent what has been missing from the academic research in architecture discipline is the fundamental human aspect of our lives. If we accept that science is ultimately “for” people; we find ourselves wondering why arguably the most elaborate accounts of what makes us human are missing, notions such as love, friendship and happiness. This study was a novel approach to initiate “a closer look” at how life is lived through the lens of place, and to develop a methodical practice for further exploration into the how children perceive and understand the role of place in their happiness. Furthermore, how children’s and architects’ perceptions might influence their spatial expectations. The general framework was to discuss happy places with children in a manner that did not impose adult-centred approaches to knowledge and comprehension. The urgent need for observant studies is more evident because of the 2020 pandemic as the void in academic research and missing communicational bridges with the public, has led to unprecedented copious conspiracy theories.

Primary school students have a distinctive approach both of the notion of happiness and play, and the spatial requirements for their utmost enjoyment. Their identifications of favourite places reflect their wish for the pursuit of friendships, abundance, curiosity and connectedness to the people and animals; that lead to the view that a fitting follow-up research area is the study of spatial characteristics of love, since it was frequently referred to. The study also highlighted the vital role of key places for relationship forming and shared lived experiences for children such as home, education and community settings in relation to their happiness. Considering the children’s interest in play, playfulness in design and places with the immanent purpose of play could contribute to educational applications as well. The methods, discussions and outputs could be in the service of strategic and operational bodies working with children and for their happiness and mental health, e.g. local representatives; public health and urban design institutions; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) providers, children wellbeing Local Transformation Plans (LTPs); and will be of interest
to voluntary, community and social enterprise sector principals and researchers in design and in educational settings.\textsuperscript{132}

The architect expert group were inspired by the genuine quality of children’s designs, an excellent tribute to how even thoughts and discussions of a happy place can offer positive emotional responses. Nature was a constant value referred to by children in their conversation. What is also clear is the need for children to be enabled in spatial decision-makings. To explore the role of play in community architecture, the rightful architects are children. Their ideas ought to get reflected into the design process, and their vision should be considered in city policymaking for happier neighbourhoods. Recounting from \textit{Placemaking with Children and Youth}, in a hands-on project with children from two cities in US, a teacher asked what children saw in common between the two cities, and an eight-year-old said, “We are all trying to make the world a better place.”\textsuperscript{133} In short, I hope that this study paves the path for future observations on the human aspects of cities. After all, we are all trying to make the world a better place.

While the contributors to the research project demographics were documented carefully, methods were designed and completed with an equal approach to gender. However, gender identification oftentimes has its own implications that could be studied with a narrow focus in future. For instance, an international survey on the “frequency of feeling happy” for children of 10 years old that has been running for 8 years, indicates that gender and country can affect happiness and positive affect.\textsuperscript{134} In this study except for the sounds of a happy place chapter method, other methods had mixed gender participants. (See chapter appendix)

Another limitation is constructed within the drawing and hands on modelling techniques, namely the qualities of place that cannot be drawn or modelled easily by children. Other non-leading creative means could be investigated to complement the method used in this study. Despite the growing popularity of involving children voices

\textsuperscript{132} Public Health England, ‘Universal Approaches to Improving Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing’.
\textsuperscript{133} Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer, \textit{Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities}. See page 2.
in research and design, no previous reports were found with this study’s method in Edinburgh. The systematic review of this method that is presented here could be implemented in other contexts and research objectives as well. Particularly since the method presented a sensitive way to obtain children’s views without subjecting them to wearisome interviews or survey tolls with limited and fixed responses, in contrary, the method allowed gentle prompts and creativity stimulation and offered an informed insight into children’s values and opinions on happy places.
Chapter 4. Collective Sounds of Happy Places

The exploration of spatial happiness continues through this chapter with a focus on the soundscape of happy places. As it was discussed in the first chapter, user sensory experiences are closely linked to spatial perceptions, and one promising route of in this context less studied enquiry is to look at the prevalence or absence of the sonic trajectory of happy places or spatial labels of sound identification. Drawing on Collective Sounds of Happy Places Digital Workshop, sponsored by the Institute of Academic Development (IAD) 2020 Big Grant, participants' respective happy places is analysed in relation to their sonic structures. Using “Graphic notation”, a form of writing music scores, to represent musical ideas of a happy place and documenting visual symbols shared by the study’s participants; the study captures people’s happy places during the lockdown and the sounds that are heard in those spatial settings and concludes in analysing the evaluated sounds. The results provide practical insight into the emotive categorisation of spatial sounds and user aural perception.
When I was 10 I travelled to India, and I was mesmerised by the vibrant assembly of street sounds. Bright flashes of jiggling chimes coming from the women anklets, swishing sounds of women’s colourful Saris floating after them, and the jolly sounds of monkeys jumping and playfully hanging from buildings. Rickshaws horns, loud discussions and the entrance bell of temples _Ghanta sounds. But the most vivid memory I have is the echoes of a street performer, a snake charmer having a Cobra dancing to the tune of flute. It is not a picture that could be forgotten easily, when the snakes’ body becomes a vessel to carry the sounds of the flute, when the snake is resonating with the vibrations of the flute and resembling the sound in its movement.

Now years later, as an architect and urban researcher, the questions are lingering, how are urban sounds, or the sounds that are within our living places, bound to vibrate through us? How the spatial sounds affect our moods and happiness? What if we could document the sounds of a happy place? How can we ask people with no background in music to express the sounds of a place that has made them happy?

4.1. Conceptual framework, research questions and objectives

Despite the number of studies that have focused on sensory experiences and spatial design in recent years, the academic literature still prominently favours visual aspect of place;¹ what is more, the essential task of probing into the subject through participatory methods remains to be done extensively. Let us sketch the current literature as a starting point, precisely to highlight the need to open up a new approach to spatial sounds studies. The ethnographic enquiry into acoustic-orientated emplacement suggests that the multi-sensory character of affective experience necessitate a multi-sensory understanding of place.² Steven Feld, in his research on acoustemology of place, draws on what do we mean by “The sense of place”, and in what ways a place is actually sensed.³ Feld argues that soundscape, including an awareness of sonic presences, is a potent weight in people’s spatial interpretation.

³ Steven Feld is an anthropologist with extensive research background in sound, see more in: http://www.stevenfeld.net/articles
Feld argues that “Acoustemology, the exploration of sonic sensibilities, brings the ethnographer closer to understanding the significance of sound to experiential truth”⁴, which he derives from Merleau-Ponty, “Perception does not give me truth like geometry but presences.”⁵ Building on Feld’s work, Tom Rice in his research investigates patients’ experience of soundscapes at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and demonstrates that it is through experiencing the sonic dynamics of place that people become familiar with and understand the spatial settings, situate themselves within the space, and find orientation both spatially and socially.⁶ Rice argues that “In a sense the soundscape may be construed as a coercive influence, imposing upon patients a role which they may consider disagreeable or inappropriate. Sound therefore becomes implicated in the subtle articulation and exercise of power.”⁷ The empirical research validates that auditory stimuli (such as nature soundscapes) can affect the healthcare systems positively. “The impact of music, soundscapes, and noise, on medical outcomes and healthcare provision”⁸ and “The importance of the auditory (and, ultimately, the multisensory) environment”⁹ for health and well-being has been proven by several studies.¹⁰ And while the affective patterns of sound is seldomly considered appropriately in urban design and architecture, “The power of music to Pacify, excite and motivate has long been a theme of the sociology of music.”¹¹

The conclusion that could be drawn is that not only sounds are integral to how we cognise and recognise the reality of the place, but also to the existence of the place per se;¹² “Sound achieves creation in different ways. The presence of a new sound or song can create a new form of existence.”¹³ Shirley Ardener in her book, women and

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⁴ Rice, ‘Soundscapes: An Acoustemology of Sound and Self in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary’.
⁵ Feld, ‘Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea’.
⁶ Tom Rice is an anthropologist and his research is mostly focused on patients’ experience of hospital soundscapes. Rice, ‘Soundscapes: An Acoustemology of Sound and Self in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary’.
⁷ Ibid.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Ibid.
¹² Rice, ‘Soundscapes: An Acoustemology of Sound and Self in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary’.
space, in which she investigates spatial and social components of gender norms, quotes: “Aida Hawile once tellingly remarked that the boundary between the 'public' and the 'private' may, in some contexts and under some conditions, be measured primarily by earshot.”

Ardener then concludes that if we create a map of urban visual fields _a map of what we see, it might not coincide with a map of sound zones _a map of what we hear._ Which amounts to saying, not only the sounds we hear shape our experience of space by defining our comfort zone, but also they might be clashing with what is experienced by sight.

Sound is engineered in cinema, games and augmented reality to create certain atmosphere and even used to induce sleep or as meditation aid, however sound cultures are less explored and considered in spatial design and emphasis is mostly on sound diffusion in theatres or soundproof construction. RIBA _plan of work_ for construction guide highlights consideration of “acoustic comfort” for good health and wellbeing in different stages of design from preparation and technical design to construction, however fails to deliver a practical guidance. An example of public interest on acoustic comfort could be found in the architectural trend since 2018 in South Korea called “healing cafes”. Healing cafes are designed as an urban sanctuary to provide a relaxing environment and to promote fast healing from busy urban lives. Appreciation of nature, soft-lit nooks and massage chairs, while nostalgic hits and tranquil forest tracks are played, grind along to create a home like place to unwind.

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15 Ibid. See page 40-41.


17 RIBA plan of work was initiated in 1963 and since then it provides a framework for architects based on architects and clients feedback, technology advancements, economy and sustainability considerations. See: RIBA, ‘RIBA Plan of Work Overview’. Page 77, 81, 83 and 85.
Similar healing places have been emerging globally in cities like London as well where meditation tracks are played for mindfulness activities.\(^{18}\)

In light of such observations, there is an urgent need to further explore sonic patterns of happy places, and to uncover the spatial relationships that might exist between sounds and spatial features. Here lies the basis of the methodology used in this chapter, that sets out the methods used and key findings of an interdisciplinary Institute of Academic Development (IAD) funded project. Collective Sounds of Happy Places was a project to integrate spatial sounds that are associated with happiness and the context in which these sonic structures are heard. The final video was selected for the 195th RSA Annual Exhibition, Royal Scottish academy of Art and Architecture 2021. The RSA Annual Exhibition is one of the most extensive displays of contemporary art and architecture in Scotland as a mainstay of the academy’s calendar since its inception 195 years ago.\(^{19}\)

Collective Sounds of Happy Places was a Digital Workshop, sponsored by the Institute of Academic Development (IAD) 2020 Big Grant. IAD Big Grant is a series of programmes at The University of Edinburgh that has been at the forefront of encouraging Creative Learning through practice.\(^{20}\) This workshop aimed to help participants explore their happy places in the lockdown put in place for the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. During the workshop, participants from all across the world explored their respective happy places, breaking it down to its spatial features. Next, participants learnt and applied “Graphic notation” practices to the sounds they experienced in their chosen happy spaces, creating music scores. “Graphic notation” is a conceptual form of writing music apart from traditional notation. It is the representation of musical ideas using visual symbols and was employed to document


\(^{19}\) The exhibition was held April and May 2021.

\(^{20}\) For more information please visit @UoE_FCL on Twitter and Instagram or @FCLUoE on Facebook.
people’s happy places during the lockdown and the sounds that are heard in those spatial settings. Following the workshop participants’ scores were sent to a team of musicians to be recorded and accordingly the collective sounds of happy places were brought to life through a music piece. To explore participants’ happy places, watch the “Collective Sounds of Happy Places” video, that is composed of participant’ shared music scores, photos and videos of their happy places.21 The rest of this chapter devotes to the methods used and the analysis of the collected data through Collective Sounds of Happy Places project.

I must also add, by way of clarification, that the initial project was designed differently. The graphic notation scores were supposed to be created by the participants during an urban tour in Edinburgh. The researchers and participants would have gone on a tour stopping at three different urban spots in order to create the graphic notation scores to express the sounds in these places. The exact locations were selected based on a previous study on happy places in Edinburgh. At each of these urban settings, participants were to express their individual expression of the urban sounds. The tour would have concluded at the Reid Hall, in which performers were going to play the collected graphic notes and the collective sounds of Edinburgh that participants each had a part in composing. However, due to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, a lockdown was in place that prohibited the uncompromised project activities. Additionally, in order to reflect on the challenges presented by COVID-19, it was essential to address the pandemic both in methodology and research premise in order to justify the research’s accountability in a post COVID research context. In accordance with this mindset and researchers’ obligation to ensure the study remains relevant, the project was redesigned to capture not only the sonic structures of happy places, but also to document the 2020 pandemic influence in the ways in which we inhabit, experience and perceive the space. The sonic evaluation of our living spaces and experimental and imaginative approach to our everyday places was also beneficial to understanding the notion of happiness during the unprecedented time of global pandemic. The study findings reveal our emotions are closely linked to the

spatial and social context they happen in, which will be explained in more details in this chapter.

Sample

“Collective Sounds of Happy Places” workshop engaged 8 participants from across the world, all female and aged between 16 to 57 and from a diverse socioeconomic background. This was achieved through collaboration with the IAD and Festival of Creative Learning social media platforms. The event was open to all for registration and no music background was needed. The number of participants were regulated due to the final documentary duration, yet a wide range of viewpoints were captured. Participants submitted the requested material to the researcher independently. This enabled the participants’ unique take and allowed comparison between final video’s episodes. The sample does not represent any specific group in terms of ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic characteristics to ensure an inclusive approach. (See chapter appendix for more details)

Ethics Statement

An information session was held before the event with all the participants and relevant descriptions of the workshop had been sent as an email prior to the workshop day. Participants were fully informed of the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research prior to the event. It was ensured that participants knew their participation is voluntarily and they are free to stop their participation at any time. Extra care has gone to ensure ethical standards through written and verbal explanations both prior and during the event. The researchers’ contact data was shared with participants and they have been encouraged to contact the researcher anytime should they want to raise an issue even after the workshop. The workshop participants’ signed consent forms were gathered by the researchers and along with the information sheet are stored digitally by IAD and researchers. The performers were employed by researchers to perform a sound recording of graphic scores provided by the researchers within the agreed upon timeline. Each score needed to be recorded in accordance with provided accompanying visual materials, copyright of recorded
materials to be retained by the researchers in perpetuum. The services were to be performed in compliance with all applicable laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and orders of public authorities for the safety of persons and property, including government social distancing advice, recorded in isolation following government regulations at the time. The performers’ contracts are stored by the researchers, IAD, and ECA finance administration office. The researchers hold copyright of recorded materials in perpetuum as the sole copyright-holder. (See chapter appendix)

The Experiment

This study by initiating qualitative research questions and discussions was able to document sonic reports of the participants’ happy places. The digital workshop was done jointly with Lark McIvor, musicologist and University of Edinburgh PhD researcher. The digital workshop was an online platform to have a conversation about “My Happy Place” during the Covid-19 lock down. Before the experiment; participants were told that there is no limit to what place they find as their happy place, that whether it is a corner of their home or a nearby place they pass during daily walks, regardless of where it is, it is the place that has made them happy during the lock down. Participants were asked to provide and share photos and videos or soundtracks of their happy place prior to the event.

The digital workshops took place on Zoom and was presented as an interactive session by means of Mentimeter platform. During the first workshop participants were encouraged to describe the sonic structures of their happy places, break down the sounds that has made them happy and define the spatial context. Afterwards participants learnt to use “Graphic notation” and create a form of writing music apart from traditional notation. Graphic notation is the representation of musical ideas using visual symbols and gestural shapes to elicit the sounds, in other words, a visual indication of sound. An interactive presentation on the graphic notation method was taught to capture location-based data about sound. Participants were provided with all the tools and information needed to create their own happy place graphic notation score. Participants were notified that the scores will be played by the following musical instruments; violoncello, violin and flute. The discussion was recorded, facilitated and
prompted by the researchers in a comfortable setting to inspire participants to share their ideas freely. The workshops were held on two consecutive Thursdays, 16 and 23 of July 2020 for approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes. The workshops were recorded in Zoom. The focus of filming was to capture the discussions and participants’ contribution.

At the second event participants and researchers watched and reviewed the final video together, consisting of a performance of the sounds of collective happy places, brought to life by participants through a music piece, and relevant visual explorations of happy places from all across the world. The event culminated in a virtual drink reception; during which participants expressed their critical evaluation on the sonic structures of happy places that allowed a review collection built into the process of research. The method of data collection allowed participants to mediate their feelings into music, and by doing so it became possible to shed light on the sonic dimension of the spatial elements that realise a happy mood.

4.2. The Workshop Methodology Overview

In order to address the research questions and gain a comprehensive consideration of both visible and invisible (in this case sound) configurations of happy places, and due to the abstract nature of sonic perception, there was a need to incorporate a creative approach that would go far beyond the more strictly theoretical features of the research project. This was achieved through using an arts-based strategy in qualitative research by offering participants the opportunity to create an artwork around the theme. The collective sounds of happy places project was a combination of participants “Musical composition” and “Cinematic mapping”, as the research methodology in order to incite more expressive and performative input that could take the study of happy places into a new territory, and away from the sole focus on participants’ verbal explanations.

Giuliana Bruno, the university of Harvard professor that is known for her research on the intersections of the architecture, film, and media; in her award-winning book *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* defines Cinematic mapping as a
theoretical framework for critical engagement with practice-based research. Bruno indicates that “Film is a modern cartography, its haptic way of site-seeing turns pictures into an architecture, transforming them into a geography of lived, and living space.” Drawing on the contemporary French philosophers’ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari work, Bruno emphasises the film’s capacity to measure; “The screen, as the frame of frames, gives a common standard of measurement to things which do not have one—long shots of countryside and close-up of the face, an astronomical system and a single drop of water…. In all these senses the frame ensures a deterritorialization of the image.” That is, the cinematic narrative does not reproduce an unconscious spatial cognition; rather it constructs the unconscious, revealing the connections between emotions, sounds and place onto a plane of consistency. In other words, the cinematic way of data documentation is able to collect memories in the way we might preserve these memories in our image of the place.

The combination of musical composition and cinematic mapping also provided an authentic perception on the sonic dimension of happy places by stepping away from barriers in linguistic forms of expression. Participants’ use of graphic notations to express their personal impression of spatial sounds conjured a diverse artistic application for individuals, and abled diverse elements to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories behind the sounds. Overall, the collective sounds of happy places project was experimental in principle to appropriately respond to the research question and was able to collect novel data through documenting information in an original way of engagement with the spaces we occupy. To the best of researchers’ knowledge, there has not been an interdisciplinary project entwining architecture and music through this unique approach in order to address the gap in the literature in regard to the soundscapes of happy spatial settings.

23 Ibid. See page 9.
24 Ibid. In particular see “The map, the wall and the screen: part 2”.
4.3. The Workshop Results Overview

This section will assess the points of intersection and divergence with the workshop results.

Where Have You Been Happy? Analysing the Digital Workshop Discussions

Where have you been happy? How does your happy place look like? These were the questions that participants were asked. As it is evident in the generated word cloud, the references to the natural settings are significantly dominant, with the following words as the most prominent sentiments shared by the participants: nature, forest, green, natural, garden. (See chapter appendix for more details) Additional natural elements that were mentioned were prairie, beach, mountains, wild, near water, by the river, trails and so on, places that one can breathe “fresh air”, bask in the “sun” and “sunshine” enjoying the “breeze in the hair”, while “watching the skies”. Other descriptive words refer to a “peaceful” or “calm” place, where you can “watch birds”; and “rabbits”. Some participants also signified “safety”. A safe place, where there are “small children playing”. Several participants discussed a specific place, “Hong Kong” and “Ireland” which is possibly rooted in a general sense of belonging, that might stem from good memories from a place or the pull of a place that we call home. A “coffee shop” or “pub”; where one can “comfortably” sit around a “table” with “family” or “loved” ones and there are “voices of friends”, “other people talking” and “glass clinking”. Further mentioned spatial features were “spacious”, “open” and “colour”.

The second question was aiming to identify the sonic structures of a happy place, and participants were asked the following questions: “What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, what draws you to your happy place?” Once again, the prominent descriptive words are referring to the sound sensations of nature, such as “thunder”, “splash”, “wind” and “trees rustling”. It is noteworthy that although these sounds could be heard in cityscape, because of the usual urban noises it is not a common urban phenomenon. There is a simplicity to the voices of nature as well that is evident in many references of onomatopoeic words like
“splash” and “crows cawing”, “cat meowing” and “chirping”. (See Fig. 1 and chapter appendices for more details)

Some voices signify a co-presence and awareness of others in the place; “people talking (ambience)”, “laughing”, “rumble of voices” “whistling” and “chatting”. Participants also mentioned the sounds of “train”, “postman’s car”, “apples dropping”, “wooden floor” and “lawnmower” or “tractor”, that were connected to their routine days at home. This resonates the sensual link between our habits and what we find comfortable and safe, namely, the appeal of ordinary is conceivably intensified and stressed correspondingly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The happiness that is dawn from the ordinary lies within the sense of comfort that we feel in the absence of catastrophe. Another highlighted theme is a craving for animal sounds among the participants. “Geese hissing”, “dog barking”, “Crows pecking at the ground”, “birds landing on water” and “squirrels chattering”. Considering how the urban design of our cities treat “nonhuman” species, which is mostly focused on exclusion rather than inclusion, this is an informative finding. Particularly since the spatial design can produce a certain patterning of ecology.

The findings generally acknowledged that if we were to associate the entire soundscape of a happy places to a word, that would be nature. As we consider that the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was in place, it becomes even more feasible that there is an innate pull towards nature that is vast and immersing; and has an ability to make our problems looks smaller, or less significant.

To adopt a social point of view, one can also argue that nature is free from the social hierarchy that rules our behaviours in urban context, and is a connecting thread for people in that sense. This reminds me of the work of Edward Hopper, the American renowned painter, *nighthawks*, that portrays a diner in a darkened and deserted urban scene. (Fig. 2) Judith Barter, The Art Institute of Chicago curator and former Field-

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McCormick chair explains the painting details and argues that “There is no sense of real depth, when you try to go deep into this picture, it pushes you back to the surface.” The city is rendered sterile and superficial, and identical to this particular diner, does not offer a nourishing experience to its users, as we see there is no food on the diner’s counter, only drinks. Outside of the diner, there is no source of light, the streets are dark and empty, the only brightened vestige that captures the gaze, is the cash register seen from the shop window. The cash register along with the five-dollar cigar on the diner sign, reminds us of the capitalist links to auto-exploitation, where the achievement subject exploits itself until it completely burns out. The uniform facade with uniform windows, materialises a far-reaching system of control and hegemonic power, which its stability lies partly in keeping people isolated in order to diminish organised community activism. Situated in the evocation of this allegedly intricate context of powerlessness against the mechanisms of power, spatial users face discrimination and devaluation that is toxic to their health and happiness.

Barter continues that there are details in colouring and elements of nighthawks that “Set your teeth on edge”, like when you examine the diner closely, there is no entrance to the space and people relate to the exclusion that is depicted, as individuals with a collective consciousness. As there is “No way in or out to this hermetically sealed environment” it appears that the imagined city does not offer equal opportunities and freedom to explore, far from escaping the repressions or reaching dreams of liberation that was its utopian promise, the city has become yet another site of anxiety. What Barter describes, is an implied sense of loneliness that is similar to feelings that one might experience in some urban settings, but not likely in nature. Loneliness is literal for individuals but also figurative for societies at the same time, as it is tied to the urbanisation process and its intricate history of distinguishing humankind from the rest.

31 Dacher Keltner, The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence (New York: Penguin Press, 2016). See chapter 5 the section on transcending the power paradox as well as the epilogue.
of nature and separation from its original habitat. As David Harvey, economic geographer, in his *Spaces of Hope* argues, through making the city, we have condemned ourselves to live within its institutional limitations and dialectic built environment, through which we continuously reproduce ourselves. According to Harvey, “As we collectively produce our cities, so we collectively produce ourselves. Projects concerning what we want our cities to be are, therefore, projects concerning human possibilities”.\(^\text{34}\) So, the production of place is a process firmly connected to the individual and collective identity and who we aspire to become.\(^\text{35}\) As one participant remarked: “I enjoy the vastness of the mountains or fields. I love to think about how old this place is or how new it is. The fact that people have respected the mountain trails brings back my faith in humanity.” (See chapter appendix for more details)

From another perspective, while the nature soundscapes are rather predictable and inspire a sense of stability based on our general understanding, the modern city is a moment in a sense that it is consist of a frenzy of sounds, that are there a second and the next they are replaced with another, this is the spirit of oppidan sounds. The sociality that it represents in urban forms, suggests that the noisy vitality of urban sounds (formless sounds) is considered in opposition to the nature’s nonhuman sounds like the sound of water. One participant commented that: “Birdsong, bees humming, wind sighing. It is peaceful. It quiets my soul. The landscape and the sky have such a breadth to it, I feel free and refreshed.” (See chapter appendix for more details) Mobilised people, cars and their undertakings reshape the urban sonic configurations continuously, where nature benefits us with a certain liability that in a contemplative way does not cease to amuse and after thousands of years has remained a mystic pull to inspire art and culture in all forms, including poetry, painting and music. Another explanation is the immersive essence of nature aural diversities. The spectrum of different sonic layers that what we hear in nature have characteristic ambience sound potential that is in harmony with the environment that surrounds us. In other words, the acoustic environment and sound events correlate to the spatial field. The evaluation of participants’ shared impressions reveals the striking impact of acoustic environment on user spatial experience, but the study’s outcomes above all,

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) Ibid.
illustrate the natural environments' ability to enthuse a sense of place, and a happy one at that.

Figure 1. Participants’ descriptions of a happy place generated as a word cloud or tag cloud during the digital workshop. The digital workshop took place on Zoom and was presented as an interactive session by means of Mentimeter platform.
Figure 2. Nighthawks, by Edward Hopper. 1942. on display in Arts of the Americas in The Art Institute Chicago. Source: The Art Institute Chicago website. Nighthawks displays a diner in a darkened and deserted urban scene with seemingly no way out, highlighting urban exclusion.

Musical Composition and Cinematic Mapping; Analysing “The Collective Sounds of Happy Places”

The research project uses cinematic cartography to map people’s happy places during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, capturing the phenomenological relationship between architecture, space and soundscapes that affect our happiness. At its heart, the final movie is a 30 minutes documentary, mapping 9 happy places across the world with an all-female participants and original music, a series of experimental soundscapes.

Each of the nine episodes displays the graphic notation scores, followed by the videos and photos of participants’ happy places; building on the spatial themes that were inspired through the digital workshop. The workshop analysis accentuates happiness sound marks, the sounds that are considered distinctive either culturally or commonly, such as birds chirping and sounds of nature.

Both visual and sonic features of these happy places represent there is not a single meaning to happy places but a series of associations that affect us in many ways. These ideas are reflected on-screen through the use of photos and videos of nature, participants home or a deserted pub. Produced in collaboration with Scottish chamber orchestra musicians, the final film is strangely familiar in evoking memories of positive
sensations. The film promises to confirm the ways in which contact with nature benefits our mental wellbeing. And contribute new knowledge by exploring how people respond and internalise the various sounds of nature; where previous research was mostly focused on the aesthetic value.

The creative approach to recreation of sonic aspect of happy places through music, emphasises that individual maps differ, and that there are overlaps and underlays. It suggests too that the structural components of everyday life etched into a place do engage an individual's familiarity of a place and can construct positive feelings. Our ways of inhabiting everyday places over time and taken-for-granted routines that moderate the ordinary are consistently shaping and reshaping our perception of happiness and happy places. The film was able to achieve a thorough representation of the interactions between the sensory and the emotional in actual places, that perhaps no other form of representation would have been able to do full justice to the complex and multi-layered relationships of happy places soundscapes. The film moreover reaffirms that to compose a happy place, or a symphony of its sounds, each part of the multi-layered spatial arrangement needs to be in harmonic correspondence to other parts and the whole; so is the sonic and visual structures of spatial design.

**Participants’ critical review**

All of the participants were happy and excited for their contribution to the project, one particular participant who was a music psychology therapist even suggested that the project method would be of interest for therapeutic means. Some of the participants’ critical comments on the film are as follows.

“Very informative and inspirational! I like the approach of explaining the psychology, engagement, the explanation, then the experimentation. Fantastic experience! While watching and listening, I got to see a glimpse of what happiness to other people is, and the combination of images and music was quite easy to follow or easy to interpret! The nature (tranquil surroundings) is obviously dominant, however there are elements of family, holidays, possession, security, interspecies interaction, and human interaction, I couldn’t help but smile at some parts, which I think made me feel closer to others…”
And;

“Negar and Lark were so encouraging, and the content was so interesting. Stretched me to perceive my happiness in a new way. Concerning my personal feeling, while hearing the music and watching the videoclip, I tried to hear the music without watching the videoclip, then to watch the videoclip in mute mode and eventually to hear and watch simultaneously. While hearing the music, in general I had a kind of enigmatic feeling, difficult to explain, I closed my eyes and suddenly was thinking about non-Euclidean geometry!! Mainly with the parts that included cello sound! The parts with Flute was dominant very often that reminds me of birds chirping! It’s like everyone agrees that birds chirping is pure happiness!”

4.4. Conclusion

Participants were told to capture the sounds of their “Happy Place” during the Covid-19 lock down. It could have been a corner of their home or a nearby place they would pass during daily walks; no matter where it was, it was a place that has made them happy. In the end, all but one of the participants composed their happy places’ music scores based on nature and green spaces, which might not speak favourably of the architecture of our cities. For it seems all the facilities that architecture has provided for us, rather leave us with a hunger for wildlife. Andrea Palladio, one of the most influential renaissance architects, in his “Quattro libri dell'architettura” renders obtaining happiness as the reason cities were formed to begin with. Palladio explains, “It being very probable, that man formerly lived by himself ; but afterwards, seeing he required the assistance of other men, to obtain those things that might make him happy, (if any happiness is to be found) naturally fought and loved the company of other men: whereupon of several houses, villages were formed, and then of many villages, cities, and in these public places and edifices were made.” After centuries of building and rebuilding cities, it is about time to gauge how fruitful were our efforts, and if the cities we are living in are making us happy.

As discussed in this chapter through the example of nighthawks painting, the study participants’ inclination towards the nature soundscapes could be partially due to an aversion to the evocation of powerlessness in the face of the mechanisms of power, the powerlessness and isolation that is costly to societies and individuals’ health and happiness alike. Nature soundscapes also offered a sense of stability and respite in stark contrast with noisy vitality of urban sounds. Overall, based on the study results the nature soundscapes provided the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers with immediate effective range, and the chapter offers further discussions and examples to analyse potential reasons the study participants associated certain sounds to happiness including nature soundscapes. Future studies could apply methods to further distinguish the diverse sounds within nature and their emotive stimuli. The study participants were all female and therefore future work could explore gender specific latent connections between sonic perceptions and spatial happiness.

The study’s method provided a collective instrumental piece for flute and strings, tweaking heartstrings and mindful apprehension of place both in the making process for participants and perceiving the final work for audience, through revisiting our own experiences again and again. Tugging at the viewers and listeners imagination, every time that the movie or the music piece is watched or heard, it will create its own small web of time, parallel to its creation time concept, and so it is experienced as if it is happening now and in this moment, which is not the “now” of its creation time but the “now” of its watching timeline. There is an immortality to the cinematic mapping that other methods lack. Although other methods are capable of efficiently capturing emotive snapshots and they are true to the time and location of their creation, they also remain unable to recreate their existence, or respond to the paradox of not being time bound that is the wonder of a recorded movie or music piece.

The study was able to represent a spatial sound map and highlighting happiness sound marks, the sounds that are considered special either culturally or commonly by participants, such as birds chirping. The results also reaffirmed the spatiality of the soundscape, and the entwined relations of place and the source of the sound, revealing details of the participants’ interpretation of the spatial soundscape of happiness. The findings advocate a novel approach to the research on the impact of sonic and sensory dimension of spatial experiences on users’ emotive state, since the
current literature emphasises on sound diffusion or cancellation, such as soundproofing against the passage of noise or enhancing auditory experience in theatres rather than affective domains of sonic structures. This study provides a cornerstone for a construction guide with reflections on soundscapes to promote spatial happiness in different stages of design process.

Although the study reveals a certain sound volume is preferred by participants, it does not measure the exact decibel and high sound levels. Further studies could target measuring the mentioned happy sound marks and vibrations that sit within a comfortable range. Additionally, detailed soundscapes’ recordings analysis could shed light on the extent of which sound could transform users’ spatial experience, through a sequential study of gauging happiness before and after a positive sonic experience. Another suggestion for future research is to examine user spatial experience in digitally reconfigured soundscapes to gauge users’ place-oriented emotive impressions. This study explored a method to document how sound is evaluated in relation to happiness, using graphic notation combined with a digital workshop, and future studies could also draw on similar methods in order to discover how sound is conceptualised and or typologised in relation to other emotive states. Overall, the sonic sensory perception of happy places should be a point of consideration for architects, designers and urban decisionmakers. And the influence of this project continues to reverberate through the produced audio and video pieces, fostering creation and promotion of places that are not only visually pleasing but can also enrich a multi-sensory spatial experience.
Chapter 5. Community happiness, a case study of Edinburgh communities in the time of Covid-19

This chapter has three linked ambitions: first, to focus in Edinburgh and gain a greater understanding of its local assets and happy places from the viewpoint of its communities. Second, to obtain a better awareness of how brain (body), social interactions and urban environment interact in users’ emotive experiences\(^1\) and happiness. Third, to develop new and advanced ways to engage with urban users, identify favoured spatial qualities and resolution of such conditions in people’s emotive experiences. The chapter draws on Edinburgh Collective Cognitive Cartography project led by the researcher in 2021, the methods used and the study development through findings analyses.

5.1. Happiness in the time of Covid-19: a snapshot of Edinburgh during the global pandemic

I am in a long-lasting love affair with Edinburgh. But like all great love stories, my journey to a happy ending was not so smooth either. Right after I graduated from Bartlett School of Architecture, I travelled to Edinburgh for the first time. First in London King’s Cross station I had to change my ticket due to some Trainline issues, then I had to wait in the station aimlessly for hours. Finally, I got on the train but found a group of foreign teenagers have occupied my seat, and their homerun teacher asked me to change my seat, so they could be all together. No need to describe the stressful running-around-to-find-a seat turmoil that followed, during which a passenger spilled some coffee on my coat. After about seven long hours in a packed cabin, I tried to ignore the cramp in my foot and take my luggage from the overhead racks before

\(^1\) Academic literature utilises both “emotional” and “emotive” words to describe user experience. Oxford dictionary defines “emotional” as “based on or appealing to the emotions”, whereas the definition of “emotive” is “relating to emotion”. This subtle nuance appears to signal “emotive” creates some distance between the researcher and the users’ emotions, revealing a more academic stance to describe and analyse. Additionally, while “emotional” means “arising from or arousing intense feeling”, the word “emotive” is explained as “arousing or able to arouse strong feeling or emotion”. Hence, the word “emotive” appears more descriptive of affordances and the built environment ability to affect users’ experience. And therefore, the word “emotive” was found more expressive within the context of this study, to better describe the purpose and focus of the discussion, and to present a more extensive understanding of the debate. See: “emotive, n. and adj.”. OED Online. September 2022. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/61263?redirectedFrom=Emotive (accessed November 28, 2022).
leaving, only to discover someone has left with my umbrella mistakenly! That was the last straw, and not really sure what to expect from this preamble, I ascended Waverly stairs in a low mood. But then I fell in love with the city slowly and steadily. I was quite enamoured by the Christmas market. Enjoying the playful arrangement of merry-go-rounds next to the serious looking Scott Monument and the smell of food stalls while savouring some festive delicacies, all my senses were merrily engaged. I appreciated the pedestrian buzz in Royal Mile, and the silence of its adjacent closes, and the sudden contrast of the two that is separated by just a turn or a few steps. While one catered to my curiosity, the later provided an enclosed alcove and a sense of comfort, like a spatial cuddle embracing my body’s vicinity. Not to mention the bagpipe tune lingering in its cobbled stone streets, or its whimsical castles and cathedrals galvanising farfetched fantasies. Even its high street not as inundated with big retail and food chains as some European cities and had its own relevantly local one-off boutiques. And on top of Arthur’s seat, one can see St Margaret’s loch and North Sea, as well as the city and its hills all in one frame. And finally, Cupid shot its arrow; I was in Princes street when it started pouring showers, and a stranger gave me an umbrella; saying they have an extra. This act of kindness really warmed my heart, particularly since I believe that receiving help without “having to ask” is fostered and prompted by spatial identification and attachment to place.\textsuperscript{2} It was palpable that kindliness was palatable and enabled by the public and shared spaces, and accordingly “People who are not necessarily connected could come into contact with each other.”\textsuperscript{3} I felt the city, is shielding me like an umbrella, protecting me with caring hands. I felt an instinctive appreciation towards the city, I felt that as long as I am in Edinburgh, I can weather drizzle or tempest. Now living and conducting my research in Edinburgh for years, I cannot help but to wonder, is Edinburgh a happy city? Where are the Edinburgh citizens’ happy places and what are their spatial qualities?

5.2. Theoretical and conceptual framework
In a marginally different approach from previous chapters, this chapter attempts at studying happy places of Edinburgh, and examines the happiness potential of real-


\textsuperscript{3} Ibid. See page 18.
time urban experiences. This place-based approach not only allowed a deeper understanding of the local communities and more tangible experience for involved participants, but also provided a more socially and culturally sustainable evidence with regards to the spatial structures of happiness. While the Edinburgh city council online poll promotes citizens’ vision for Edinburgh as a happy city, the UK government Office for National Statistics dataset and the average ratings of happiness in city of Edinburgh exposes that currently there is not a quick fix for Edinburgh to become a happy city. (See chapter appendix for more details) Rather achieving citizens’ vision is only possible throughout a longer term gradual shift in design and policy areas impacting communities. As I follow this line of inquiry, I will draw on Edinburgh CCC (Edinburgh Collective Cognitive Cartography) project that I led from January to May 2021. Edinburgh CCC was an interdisciplinary research project generously awarded by the Student Experience Grants (Innovation Initiative Grants) of The University of Edinburgh aiming to explore the prospect of creating a happier Edinburgh. In this chapter, I will explore theoretical foundations and methodology development of Edinburgh CCC research project followed by the collected data analysis and the study’s conclusion. Edinburgh CCC was selected for the annual SGSAH (Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities) research exhibition and was presented at conferences including the GradNet Conference 2021 by the University of Southampton.

As may readily be noted, the research was greatly impacted, as anything else during the 2020 and 2021, by the global pandemic. What we first need to grasp is that the socially distanced participants, were by the ways of “New Normal” also socially excluded. The term social exclusion could be attributed to being geographically present in a society, but unable to participate in the normal activities despite of

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4 See more on: https://edinburgh.org/2050-edinburgh-city-vision/ (Last seen on 8th of June 2019)
6 I was the Edinburgh CCC project lead, and the first stage of the project was jointly done with a PhD researcher from the Edinburgh University School of Design. Edinburgh CCC was presented and published multiple times including the Annual Research Showcase SGSAH (Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities) and GradNet Conference 2021 by The Univeristy of Southampton. See: See more on SGSAH website: https://sgsahresearch.com/portfolio/negar-ebrahimi/. Also see @GradNetSoton for more on GradNet conference.
willingness, by factors beyond individual control.\textsuperscript{8} The implications of local residency without warranted entitlements emphasises the processes in which “The physical distancing of certain individuals, groups and communities from social and cultural facilities compounds their isolation and exclusion.”\textsuperscript{9} Communities all over the world are taxed and distressed by the chaotic nature of the pandemic, and as the bulk of community studies suggests the stress caused by disasters in this scale could “Erode both interpersonal relationships and sense of community. Regardless of how they are affected, post-disaster social relations are important predictors of coping success and resilience.”\textsuperscript{10} To name a few typical pandemic stressors; daily reminders of the pandemic related news, a sense of lacking controllability, personal harm or likelihood of losing acquaintances, financial distress and lack of interaction in community due to the lockdowns and disruption of everyday routines could be mentioned.\textsuperscript{11} Due to such considerations, the study’s findings should be seen disparate from previous research that their sample population was not exposed to the Covid-19 pandemic implications. To take these proportions into account, the research must be seen as an impressionistic snapshot of communities of Edinburgh during the pandemic, documented to capture the correlation between place and both individual and community happiness while acknowledging the sweeping costs and reverberations of the global pandemic and the methodological challenges and limits of the collected data.

In recent years a number of studies have been conducted in local wellbeing evaluations which, more often than not, are motivated by economic impulses and GDP or GPI measures of happiness. GPI is used by some legislation offices as a more

\textsuperscript{10} George A. Bonanno et al., ‘Weighing the Costs of Disaster: Consequences, Risks, and Resilience in Individuals, Families, and Communities’, \textit{Psychological Science in the Public Interest, Supplement}, 2010, See page 2.
\textsuperscript{11} Studies on disaster and community resilience suggest both perceived and objective stressors affect coping mechanisms for communities. See more: Anieh Y. Shalev et al., ‘Psychological Responses to Continuous Terror: A Study of Two Communities in Israel’, \textit{American Journal of Psychiatry}, 2006, See page 672. Also Bonanno et al., ‘Weighing the Costs of Disaster: Consequences, Risks, and Resilience in Individuals, Families, and Communities’, page 21.
comprehensive substitute for GDP since GPI takes additional measures such as negative consequences of crime and pollution or positive consequences of volunteering and education into consideration. For instance, Happy City Thriving Places Index (TPI) that accounts for local conditions for wellbeing in broad-spectrum values, such as transport, safety, local environment, people and community and so on and so forth. Thriving Places Index presents compelling evidence in support of place-centred approaches for local economic, social and cultural sustainable development, however it is only focused on England and Wales and does not offer any data of and for Scotland. Comparably, the Local Wellbeing Indicator 2017 report by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Public Health England (PHE), in collaboration with the What Works Centre for Wellbeing and Happy City, advocates local translations of holistic wellbeing indicators as place-based approaches are innately more practical in informing “Local decision-makers so they can better understand the wellbeing of their constituents, and how they can act to improve it.” The Local Wellbeing Indicator suggests a number of indicators including green spaces, housing, democracy and culture as place-based dynamics of wellbeing. Correspondingly, the Quality of Life foundation report asserts the built environment impact on the quality of life, that is, the extent to which people would perceive their lives to be “happy, active, sociable, interesting and meaningful.” The Quality of Life Framework report emphasises the substantial effect of our living places on our wellbeing from “Shelter, food and safety up to belonging, self-esteem and self-actualisation.” Happiness, then, is not simply a passing feeling. It is also an emotive reaction, triggered or conditioned through the


14 Ibid. Also see: https://www.thrivingplacesindex.org (Last seen on 8th of June 2021)


16 Ibid. See page 35.


18 Ibid.
spatial arrangements we live in. As the report highlights, “The houses we inhabit, the
neighbourhoods in which those houses sit, the communities that live in those
neighbourhoods, and the facilities, services, transport and open spaces that plug into
those neighbourhoods – all contribute to our health and wellbeing.” 20

Another example of place-centred methods is deep place approach, which suggests
that place-centred methods are the most effective means of tackling ecological issues
and seeks to influence policy and its delivery based on an empirical understanding of
the place; evolving around the central assumption that it is only by collaborative
approach with local communities that the distinctive range of challenges, assets and
opportunities for each community would be identified and sustainably developed.21
Deep place approach that was co-developed by researcher in socio-economic studies,
Adamson and Lang, has been undertaken for studies in a number of towns and
community states in wales such as Tredegar, Pontypool, and Lansbury Park since
2014 and have displayed that place-based approaches can improve the achievement
of local objectives.22

5.3. The experiment and study objectives
Considering the surprising lack of evidence on place-centred happiness studies
particularly in Edinburgh, Edinburgh CCC was designed and led to identify the local
assets, challenges and opportunities in greater depth compared to total place
approaches. The study suggests instrumental community engagement actions to
make sure Edinburgh is ahead of the curve in understanding urban based happiness
determinants with a local and regional understanding and global visioning. Gathering
the relevant data under one umbrella, creating a reference for the topic of place-bound
happiness and bridging between the public engagement activities and higher
academic research, while making a difference in the life of study participants;

20 Ibid.
21 Professor Dave Adamson is a researcher and consultant in sustainable developments and social
inclusion. Dr Mark Lang, is a socio-economic and public policy researcher who had mutually co-
authored the Deep place Study of Tredegar reports for the Cardiff university institute of sustainable
places research. Lang and Marsden, ‘Rethinking Growth: Towards the Well-
Being Economy’. See page
10-13.
22 Lang and Marsden. Also see: Dave Adamson and Mark Lang, ‘Toward a New Settlement’, 2014.
galvanising more engaged citizens through building an ambition in communities to be mindful of and inspired by the urban fabric.

In *Open Design* book series that were written for the task of probing into “Why, so often, do we build what no one wants?” authors describe that urban planning and intervention processes are often a disappointing ‘take it or leave it’ situation for the public. That is why “Whenever a new residential area is completed, the happiness of the people involved about the creation of something new is tempered by feelings of dissatisfaction, because the end result of the building process was not what they had hoped for.” The book that was published by The Delft University and based on empirical validation accumulated since eighties by the Faculty of Architecture of the Technical University Delft, promotes openness in urban planning and architecture as an enabling tool in architect’s hands for creative and appropriate design solutions. *Open Design* suggests the application of polder-models to resolve debatable issues through exchange of views and dynamic dialogue incorporating the outlooks of the non-professionals. Constructing on this, Edinburgh CCC created a safe and conscious platform to engage community members in discussions about a happier Edinburgh and was able to create a community for Edinburgh citizens and the university students to proactively involve in novel and creative urban and cultural activities and strengthen their bond to Edinburgh. (See Fig. 1)

The significance of initiating and motivating open discussions at this time was that due to the traumatic consequences of Covid-19 pandemic and its unexpected implications, the matters beyond our control sphere were enlarged. Which in turn, forced us to readjust our habits, our well-defined routines, and our settled lifestyles; in a nutshell, trying to find the familiar order within the chaotic world of new norms was “unsettling”. Although not everyone was affected by the global pandemic in the same way or to the same degree, the aftermaths undeniably impacted everybody in some ways. The World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health, articulated in 1948, delimits health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely

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24 Ibid. See page 5.
the absence of disease or infirmity.”

This description portrays the arenas in which individual health and wellbeing was threatened and discloses the fundamental deficiency of a constrained and locked down society in providing a healthy environment, as it was recognised previously; influencing even the transition to less or no restrictions entwined with issues such as “reopening anxiety.” To the people who were disconnected with others, their surroundings, and the city they were living in; perhaps anxious because of all the uncertainty or changes in the world they used to call normal; participation in Edinburgh CCC was acquiring a degree of control over the self-paced project and the commenced discussions. And to exercise control over things that one can control, aid us to recall our power, to recognise our strength, to expand our control domain and to reconcile with our happy memories and our happy places that was enabled because of the research timing. Edinburgh CCC provided an initiative to invite Edinburgh citizens to revisit and rediscover themselves and their surroundings. By doing so, the social and spatial connections are expected to be rebuilt, invigorated and enhanced.

Apart from the aforementioned framework, this project is a matter of posing the research questions explicit, simply because lack of evidence is disheartening. Recently I received my Covid-19 vaccine notice, and in its adjacent information booklet, it was mentioned that “There is no evidence...” with regards of vaccine effect on a number of underlying medical conditions. I found this wording deeply problematic, as “No evidence” here seems to point lack of comprehensive research.

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27 Eric Greitens in his book, Resilience, suggests that to exercise resilience one should start by taking control over one can. Greitens who was named by Time as one of the 100 most influential people has a Ph.D. from Oxford University, works with children and families in Rwanda, Albania, Mexico, India, Croatia, Bolivia, and Cambodia and his book was the New York Times bestseller. See: Eric Greitens, Resilience: Hard-Won Wisdom for Living a Better Life (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015). Also see the section on control: URBED, ‘The Quality of Life Framework’.

28 Parts of this section was published in the Annual Research Showcase SGSAH (Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities). See more:

rather than lack of negative correlation. And it is conceivable how intimidating or
demoralising this would be to people; in the vaccine booklet one would have wanted
to read a more reassuring phrasing, such as “Evidence confirms…” or “It is proven
that...”. Highlighting the difference between these approaches, this study aimed to
provide evidence for the disheartening holes in the expanding literature.

*Figure 1. Research Methods Agenda diagram drawn by the author.*
Sample

“Edinburgh CCC” project was executed in three stages engaging overall 16 Edinburgh residents directly, 12 female and 4 male, aged between 24 to 70 and from diverse urban neighbourhoods, ethnicity and socioeconomic backgrounds. This was achieved through an open call for participation issued by Eventbrite platform. The registration was open to the public and the participation opportunity was publicised through diverse social networks, academic and non-academic platforms, community notice board posters and word of mouth in order to widen the reach and ensure inclusion. The sample size and scope provided the appropriate range of viewpoints for the study method and analysis probable concluding. The project was designed and executed in different stages and activities. The first stage was of a self-paced 10-days journey with provided cultural probes and toolkits; which was followed by an online session to explore participants’ experiences, initiate discussions on Edinburgh and to connect like-minded people. Contributors’ shared interest in Edinburgh allowed honest and authentic conversations. (11 participants including 2 males and 9 females contributed to this stage.) There was a modest promotional gift offered for completing the full procedure. Finally, based on the preliminary research analysis and previous works, in the last stage Edinburgh brain-walks were planned and carried out. (5 participants including 2 males and 3 females contributed to this stage.) The sample does not represent any specific group in terms of ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic characteristics to maintain an open and inclusive framework. (See chapter appendix for more details)

Ethics Statement

The study received level 2 ethical approval, commented by the reviewers as “Thorough and thoughtful, this checklist details a phase of largely auto-ethnographic work for PhD studies.” (See chapter appendix) A risk assessment report was maintained and updated regularly during the course of the project based on the national restrictions and government advice. Participation information was detailed on the event registration Eventbrite pages in an accessible language and relevant

descriptions of the project. The information sheet and consent forms were sent as an email prior to the events. The informed consent forms were also provided in the activity packs. Participants were fully informed of the purpose and procedure, time commitment, reasonable alternatives to methods and intended possible uses of the research prior to the events. It was ensured that contributors know their participation is voluntarily and they are free to stop their participation at any time. Extra care was applied to ensure ethical standards through written and verbal explanations both prior and during the event. The researcher’s contact data was shared with participants and they were encouraged to contact the researcher anytime should they want to raise an issue even after the event closure. Ample time was permitted between the induction and completion of the consent procedure for the contributors to comprehend and give feedback, and voluntarily signed consent forms were gathered by the researcher. The study’s risk assessment and participation disclaimer were approved by the funding body. The pack materials were sanitised before being delivered to the participants and brain-walk tours were led in complete accordance with government social distancing rules at the time of the event. As a result of utilising such measures, participants’ engagement was boosted, and they were able to use the project provisions to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories in a safe and responsible manner.

**Hands on Material Selection and Activity Pack Design**

During the first stage of the project each participant was provided with an activity pack filled with probes, a wide range of hands on material for creative engagement and stimulating concepts and questions. The activity packs design was completed jointly with Yixuan Wang, University of Edinburgh PhD candidate in design. The collaboration was limited to the activity pack design, study’s first stage participants acquisition and workshop facilitation and was within the boundaries of raw data, and did not exceed to the EEG method design and data collection or any analysing or processed information of the overall study in any form. All analysed data and brain-walk information provided are conducted solely by the author. The wide-ranging crafting materials, mapping implements, drawing supplies, disposable camera and stamped postcards were provided to optimise the contribution ease and breadth; allowing the representation of a broad array of ideas and mind-sets. This also provided an opportunity to note which ways of expression or materials are favoured by participants.
The aim was to facilitate not just participation but also to give control over “how to participate”. By giving participants a chance to choose how they like to participate, the quality of their engagement was elevated. The results were further enriched by participants novel ways of engagement, for instance some participants drew on the tote bags that was meant as the pack containers. (see Fig. 2 and chapter appendix for more details) The Inter-subjective methods used in conjunction allowed not just applying the intention of the research but also implementing its aims along the way and permitted participants to go beyond being subjects of the study as active contributors and co-researchers.

The activity packs included 5 paper folders that were separated by colour with the following themes: I am, past, present, future and hypothetical. Each colour represented a sub-theme of the project and was in harmony with activity cards’ colouring layout. The design format was decided to set out a unifying narrative, the thread of time, throughout the various activities. And at the same time, accommodate contribution by allowing contributors to take up or drop the activities as they wish and within their preferred order. Each folder contained probes and methods to tickle the participants imagination, by providing material, activities and ways that provokes imagination. From the details such as the activity cards’ paper texture and colour to storyboards, diaries, the disposable camera with 80s vibe and stamped postcards. According to the participants’ feedback, the appeal of materials and activities that participants could hold and touch and see tangibly, the senses that were somewhat dormant or suppressed due to the global Covid pandemic were employed and teased and the packs design per se encouraged enthusiastic participation. Within the probe packages, participants found activity cards relevant to the folder theme, toolkits and guide cards. For instance, in “I am” folder there was a vintage looking local newspaper for participants to write an autobiographical column about themselves; or in the present folder there were prompts to incite poems or stories about Edinburgh with some inspirational notes to ease the partaking process such as:

- Write a poem. Let the city to be your muse. How do feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

- We believe that you have a wonderful story to share about Edinburgh. So, go on, just write it! You are a talented and qualified writer and the city is your
prompt. Write a short made up story or a true story in any genre that you want!

Friendly wording and evocative outlines and images were used to open a space of possibilities, allowing the participants to be creative in their forms of expression and a more casual approach towards possible responses. As a part of the self-pace stage participants also went on a walk in Edinburgh to reflect on their interaction with the urban fabric with a disposable camera, stamped postcard and street portraits manual. The walk theme was to take a stroll around the place that participants wanted to go when the lockdown restrictions were lifted. At the time of the experience people had to follow the government’s lockdown restrictions on and off for more than a year and their urban journeys had been limited. So, the line of inquiry targeted concerns such as:

“Where was the place that you wanted to go but you couldn't? A place that you missed or where you wanted to visit for the first time; or perhaps a familiar street close to your home, it could be anywhere. Take a short walk _not less than 30 minutes; around the place that you wanted to go when the lockdown is over. You can write in your notebook where is the first place you'd want to go after the pandemic restrictions are lifted and why. At the end of your walk, imagine you are sending the postcard to your future self, what do you want to remember about today 10 years later? or where would you suggest your future self to visit? You can go any time or any day, just enjoy the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the locations that you visit.” The informal modes of communication such as disposable cameras and postcards were attractive to the participants and its sentimental essence catalysed and prompted emotive engagement and responses among participants, permitting a closer look into a collection of local spatial cultures, aesthetic preferences and opening up space for chance observations.

The probes contained 3 maps printed on tracing paper, each with 3 fixed accompanying inquiry, and 3 additional maps to offer participants a chance for mapping their own interest and exploring their urban perceptions. Questions were ranged from more straightforward e.g. where your favourite places are to more expressive ones e.g. where comes to mind when you think of happiness or where do you go to daydream. Participants could mark the maps and use the note stickers as
well as designated colourful dot stickers to mark their answers. Overall, the design of
probe packs cultivated a narrative review, with a more subjective assessment towards
the intersection of people and places microcosm. (See chapter appendix for more
details)
Figure 2. Activity pack material and participants’ creative engagement e.g. drawing on the container bags. Photos Were exhibited at the SGSAH annual research exhibition credit to the author (principal researcher) and Yixuan Wang.
The initial approach and community involvement

Due to the limitations of the study, including the global pandemic restrictions and circumstances and the study’s number of participants, the study’s results are relative rather than absolute representative; nevertheless, the methods used and collected evidence offers a compelling outline of its specific local and temporal agenda. Providing a unique portfolio snapshotting the spirit of Edinburgh in spring of 2021, during different stages of a national lockdown. This project provided a platform for the community’s voices and active participation in research. By mapping Edinburgh and documenting the unprecedented Covid-19 new normal circumstances; this project linked the University of Edinburgh and its ongoing research projects to the public by means of an innovative study and aligned with the University of Edinburgh vision. Through providing an inclusive, bottom-up, and community-based platform, we were able to encourage students and citizens to be heard in a safe and cognisant environment; community and academics were connected; and new opportunities for urban design could be discovered for building a happier Edinburgh.

The project involved different stages and activities, the first stage was executed in the following order: a 10-days self-paced journey with provided cultural probes toolkits followed by an online workshop for discussion, sharing experiences and connecting like-minded people. The second stage was an urban walk in a happy route, premeditated based on what was built in the work; during which participants wore a mobile EEG device and their brainwaves were recorded. Due to the social distancing protocols, data collection procedures and participants’ accessibility needed to be revised and the mentioned combination was chosen to enable multiple data collection means, each with their respective allowances, in order to tackle challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and maintain academic integrity, the study’s credibility and timeliness of findings.31 This does not mean that data collection was compromised, for instance some studies support online video conferencing communication as “More open and expressive”32 where “Rapport between and among

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participants was built quicker” compared to the traditional face-to-face participation methods. The threat of coronavirus rather allowed an opportunity for probable paradigms and adoptable versions to qualitative researchers for similar circumstances including possible future pandemics. In this study, the participant-researcher “fusion of horizon” indispensable to the qualitative research, was engraved into the activity packs and face-to-face online discussions to support the participants’ free-flowing engagement and to admit obtaining and processing new knowledge.

5.4. The Study results overview

This section will evaluate and put into context the participants’ views as the result of their engagement with the research study.

Self-Paced Urban Probes and Activity Packs

Activity packs were designed to utilise an inter-subjective process between the researcher and participants. in order to encourage creative and rigour participation, several methods have been used together, including diary writing, mapping, creative writing and drawing, urban walks and self-directed photography. The mixed method approach provided an opportunity for the recording of places, events and emotions in their autonomous context, while “these social contexts are often not accessible to researchers” At the same time participants were able to reflect on the probes at their own pace, explore and response to the probes based on what matters to them, rather than focusing on particular viewpoints that often dominate interviews or focus groups’ discussions.

33 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
I will expand on the collected narratives from each probe cluster in the following sections.

**Diaries**

Diary analysis is an established method in social and qualitative research. Diaries are often used in mixed methodologies to capture a “more detailed” account of the research objectives with “greater depth”. Diaries could be likened to maps of emotional engagement, from everyday chores to long term dreams, diaries provide a broad structure for daily appraisals. Diaries contribute “selective recordings or representations of everyday life in process” to research, tracking “the diarist’s everyday life spaces” and activities in its context. In other words, diaries are about what we do or want to remember from a day, or what we want to do in a day; thus, offer a rich and meaningful glimpse into the perceptions and emotive states of the writers, documented close to the time and location they were experienced.

One of the decisive themes that emerges from diaries is the numerous ways through which thoughts of home engages the participants during the day. This is a thread that I have discussed in previous chapters as well, and its persistent presence in the study’s results itself indicates its significance in our happiness. The idea of home is indeed deeply rooted in our being human and ways of life, as Harari, historian and author of *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* argues:

> “Ancient hunter-gatherers usually lived in territories covering many dozens and even hundreds of square kilometres. ‘Home’ was the entire territory, with its hills, streams, woods and open sky. Peasants, on the other hand, spent most

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40 Milligan and Bartlett, *What Is Diary Method?*

41 See chapter 2 the pilot study analysis and chapter 3 (draw a happy place, analysing the workshop drawings).
of their days working a small field or orchard, and their domestic lives centred on a cramped structure of wood, stone or mud, measuring no more than a few dozen metres – the house. The typical peasant developed a very strong attachment to this structure. This was a far-reaching revolution, whose impact was psychological as much as architectural. Henceforth, attachment to ‘my house’ and separation from the neighbours became the psychological hallmark of a much more self-centred creature.”

Oxford dictionary defines home as “a refuge, a sanctuary, a place or region to which one naturally belongs or where one feels at ease.” Home is where we sleep, and from a survival perspective, people are most vulnerable during their sleeping hours. Therefore, home needs to be safe, and as we spend many hours of our days at home; home is a place to seek refuge from the outside world, the world that at times strive any “otherness”. In that sense, the comfort that home offers is partly due to how we are able to be true to “ourselves” while home. At home, there is less pressure to submit to the “sphere that is doled out to us” by social and cultural expectations that now and then crush our autonomous spirits. To be at home, is to be in “dominated space.”

Participants also draw on records of eating meals or preparation of meals, baking bread and having tea or prosecco with Scottish treats or drinking beer in the shared garden as well as going back to bed after waking up too early on a Sunday morning. (see figure 3 and chapter appendix for more details) Here, the ancient Chinese architectural practice, Feng Shui, provides an interesting example of how a seemingly straightforward daily occurrence could be associated with an ideological discourse on

42 Harari is a historian, philosopher and author of bestselling books such as a brief history of humankind. Noah Harari, Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind (Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication, 2014). See part two section on building pyramids.
46 Part of this paragraph was published by the author in the YWCA Scotland website. See more: https://www.ywcascotland.org/the-problem-we-all-live-with-by-negar-ebrahimi/ (accessed July 2022)
spatial happiness. Feng Shui offers a set of suggestions including the positioning or orientation of built environment, focusing on the configuration of home including eating or sleeping places in order to “provide ideal conditions for human happiness and wellbeing.” Although even today Feng Shui is practiced particularly in Chinese cultural boundaries, there are not many empirical studies on how Feng Shui affects user’s emotive experiences.

The impacts of home’s capability in providing comfort is not restricted to its spatial boundaries. For instance, diaries mention “Laundry” several times. Laundry is a good example of an urban expression for a domestic activity. As we see in cities like Venice, the hanged laundry in alleys turn into an urban characteristic. Public and private spheres blend and reform around the people’s ways of life with time and alongside technological and cultural changes; as evaluating history reveals “The change proceeded by stages, each of which involved just a small alteration in daily life.” For instance, in early nineteenth century United States, where socially responsible individuals were in high demand due to factors such as world wars, home was considered the place that nurtures moral citizens, the notion that was later altered alongside urban industrialisation in early twentieth century. Klimasmith, researcher and the author of At Home in the City: Urban Domesticity in American Literature and Culture argues that home possesses boundless cultural and social power, fostering “the development of personal, familial, and social relations” and “inspiring love, obeisance, and reverence”. Klimasmith continues that the “magic” of home is also because it provides a place to come back to. While the city requires motion and

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49 See the google search results here: https://www.google.com/search?q=venice+hanged+clothes+in+streets&client=safari&rls=en&sxsrf=A Oaemv1enQMSm_3DWk2wsQ08eNzOhwGrw:1633386953573&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved =2ahUKEwjwzZIJJ36LHzaJXUomFwKHf6xCOIQ_AUoAxOCAEQAw&biw=1146&bih=783&dpr=2

50 Harari, Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind.

51 Klimasmith is a researcher and academician in University of Massachusetts Boston. Klimasmith, At Home in the City: Urban Domesticity in American Literature and Culture, 1850-1930. See page 118.

52 Ibid. See page 135 among others.

53 Ibid. see page 204.
mobility from its inhabitants, home becomes the centre to the sphere of our movements, providing “happiness” and a “blessed sense of belonging”.54

The concept of “Hygge” provides a compelling explanation on the role of home in people’s happiness. According to Meik Wiking,55 a researcher at the Happiness Research Institute based in Denmark and the author of *Hygge: The Danish Way to Live Well*, Hygge is the Danish word for “creating intimacy”, “cosiness of the soul”, “the absence of annoyance”, “taking pleasure from the presence of soothing things” and in short “a feeling of home”.56 Wiking asserts Hygge or “Hominess” as the key to happiness and the reason for Denmark being one of the happiest countries in the world. He further elaborates the Hygge experience as the physical and symbolic aspects of home, the warmth and togetherness, the belonging and authenticity that resonate the atmosphere of home.57 This feeling of cosiness is associated with the idea of home, but it is not limited to the physical boundaries of a dwelling. Wiking examples the friendly atmosphere of an Oktoberfest German beer garden, where it is likely to hear the ‘Ein Prost der Gemütlichkeit’ song, that is ‘A Toast to Cosiness’.58 The distinction between a dwelling and the place of belonging is perhaps better presented by an analogy form The *Nomadland* movie that won multiple acclaimed cinematic awards and its distinguished dialogue where the lead character expresses that she is “Not homeless but houseless”.59 One of the study’s participants describes her happy place and the place she looks forward to getting back to, The North Edinburgh Arts

“for 12 years it has been my spiritual and creative home. I so miss the staff and views of the centre. The buzz and activity, the long chats, the great food and coffee and that sense of belonging. I miss the face to face connections, the creative possibilities, the opportunities to be myself, to share ideas, to be proactive, spontaneous and be part of something bigger than myself where I

54 Ibid.
55 Wiking is a happiness researcher, CEO of the Happiness Research Institute in Denmark, and author of several New York Times bestseller books.
57 Ibid. See chapter 2.
58 Ibid.
59 The 2020 drama film is written and directed by Chloe Zhao based on a book with the same title. The movie draws on concepts of home, community and resilience.
feel valued. Somewhere that has real people and makes a difference in the community that surrounds it.” (See chapter appendix)

It is certain that home is entwined with spatial narratives of happiness, and this could pose a challenge or an opportunity for designers and decision makers to create or restore home-like features such as togetherness in urban experiences. It would be meaningful to conclude the section on home with bits of a poem by this study’s participant on Edinburgh:

“A city with a special past
And architecture built to last
A vibrant open city
Monumental – pretty
Home to many races
A place that all embraces.
HOME.” (See the full poem in chapter appendix)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representative quotes</th>
<th>Major themes</th>
<th>Subthemes</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Everyday activities / neighbourhoods / domestic chores / eating at home / family and friends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “The first place I want to go when (the) lockdown is over is where the people are.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “In my pictures you will find lots of cafes, bars, restaurants, music venues, museums and galleries that I pass on a regular basis. In the first days that (the) lockdown is over these will be my priority. I think it will feel like a brand new city all over again since there will be so much more to discover.”</td>
<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>Local community / learning institutions / art and culture / food and drink / entertainment / discovery and trying new things / art galleries and music venues / sense of belonging / urban monuments / memories of place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “So many people are nervous to be around lots of people after lockdown ends. I am not. I am ready to be shoulder to shoulder in a crowd, bumping elbows at the bar, across the table at a cafe and holding hands on the dance floor.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Awaiting delivery of a gift from M&amp;S from a young American friend. I sent her some Scottish goodies she particularly likes, Buchanan’s peppermint creams, Tunnocks tea cakes and cup-ak-soup but can’t get in Boston...”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “A lovely day to heading into town along Queensberry Road and up to the Modern art galleries. I love the Dean gallery building and the glass box of the silhouette there. The coffee stall seems to be doing good business.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Stopped to speak to one of the gardeners (mentions a name) who has worked with the gardens team for (number) years and takes real pride in keeping things neat and tidy.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>7. “Down Victoria street into the grassmarket and one of my favourite music venues (...) then up to Chambers street and the museum looking forward to that opening again soon. Greyfriars Bobby has been given a blanket to keep him warm!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. “Stopped at a bench I have sat on before opposite Dancebase Studio one of my go to places to dance, to socialise, to share culture, escape into the music. (...) I was going to pass the Lyceum also much missed.”</td>
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<td>9. “My dad worked there for some years. Also, its where my mum met my dad!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. “Meeting choreographer at 4:30pm for walk? Curious, excited (...)”</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. “Follow up email from choreographer thanking me for a lovely walk, wasn’t about dance after all. Just wanted the company, in a way this was more special.”</td>
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<td>12. “The Place I most want to be at is North Edinburgh arts. For 12 years it has been my spiritual and creative home. I so miss the staff and the sense of the centre, the buzz of activity, the long chats, the food and coffee and that sense of belonging. I miss the creative possibilities to be myself to share ideas be proactive be spontaneous and be part of something bigger than myself where I feel valued. This has meaning and makes a difference in the community that surrounds us.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. “Today I am in good spirits, feeling hopeful (...) My focus today is getting organised for the week ahead at work and at home. I.e. scheduling, vacuum, groceries, team meetings.”</td>
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<td>2. “Sorted through a bag of baby clothes given by a neighbour who is moving to Newcastle for my impending grandniece.”</td>
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<td>3. “My partner does most of the cooking and prepares beef stew, nice and cozy... yum!”</td>
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<td>4. “Live catch up with the laundry and housework, something I do to avoid doing anything I perceive as difficult so its a win-win situation. The kitchen is very clean.” (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<td>5. “Another small thing that makes me happy, a trip to Lidl for the weekly shop! It seems like a day for household activity!”</td>
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<td>6. “A good windy day so outside with the washing, it always smells so good from drying outdoors. That makes me feel happy, such a small thing.” (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<td>7. “Managed to catch up with emails and WhatsApp so I might celebrate my successes today with a small refreshment later.” (Happy face drawing and cocktail glass drawing)</td>
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<td>8. “So slightly late, finally waking up and showering. Slightly stiff and sore feet, but that loosens up. Quickly have breakfast + think what plan is today. (...) Have become more politicised than ever before. Am now expressing my anger on Facebook.”</td>
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<td>9. “A bit’s quite busy, or felt safe enough. Happy to fill fridge + cupboard, just a thing you have to do. (...) All the courses this week are on a break. The plus side of Covid19 + lockdown is I can do all these classes from home. Already thinking what I’m having for tea... but lots to choose from after yesterday’s shopping.” (Dance classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative quotes</td>
<td>Major themes</td>
<td>Subthemes</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. &quot;Buying a bike is really exciting because I think it will allow me to see more of the city and explore since I don't have a car and I'm not super comfortable taking public transit with the covid situation.&quot;</td>
<td>Mobility / accessibility</td>
<td>Nature / outdoor activities / discovery and trying new things</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. &quot;I am also looking forward to going off to Portobello beach which is super exciting.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. &quot;I also took a picture of the train station. Soon after lockdown I hope to hop on a train and go somewhere, anywhere. Not because I don't love Edinburgh but because I can and cabin fever is real!&quot;</td>
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<td>4. &quot;Which took me to the bus stop in Forrest road where a no.41 show up immediately and took me home. I think I've done my 10000 steps today.&quot;</td>
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<td>5. &quot;Usually I have travel plans in place by now but nothing arranged yet. Soon, I hope, very soon.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<td>6. &quot;Almost empty bus. Only other person sitting downstairs. Feel safe, one person got off and another got on.&quot;</td>
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<td>7. &quot;I woke up feeling (neutral face emoji): a yellow face with open eyes and a flat, closed mouth that is considered to resemble a neutral sentiment) though. Think I just wanted to stay in bed. I am also looking forward to going to the castle market, a place I look forward to visiting every week.&quot;</td>
<td>Market / retail</td>
<td>Social connections</td>
<td></td>
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<td>8. &quot;I also took a picture of a storefront for let. So many places have closed during lockdown and I am excited to visit the new places that will emerge as the economy jumps back.&quot;</td>
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<td>9. &quot;I need to stock up on the appropriate cards. Off to the shops.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<td>10. &quot;Shopping, supermarket! Only way to go out!&quot;</td>
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<td>11. &quot;Shops shut for its Sunday + Covid lockdown. Pavements quiet mostly. (..) All these shut shops (sad face emoji drawing)&quot;</td>
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<td>12. &quot;I've found an outdoor boxing class in Inverleith park and I am excited to try something new, most same now people and get outside.&quot;</td>
<td>Outdoor activities</td>
<td>Park or green spaces / nature / local community / learning institutions / social connections / engaging the senses</td>
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<td>13. &quot;I am looking forward to doing this research project as part of this research project after work today. I am loving the way this project is getting me to think about my city in new ways.&quot;</td>
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<td>14. &quot;I am also looking forward to going for a bike ride after work to Portobello beach which is super exciting.&quot;</td>
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<td>15. &quot;I had my usual walk in the afternoon to blow away the cobwebs...&quot;</td>
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<td>16. &quot;Shame to see the seating areas boarded up, hopefully they will be open soon.&quot;</td>
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<td>17. &quot;Go out!!! Dean Street with friends. Take a walk. Take some photos.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<td>18. &quot;Out with friends. Take some walk on Meadows.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. &quot;What I want to remember for today, in 10 years time. Well I successfully walked over 10000 steps. I hope in ten years time being 80 I will still enjoy walking, hearing (not deaf), seeing (even in reading glasses) the city centre with its mix of old and new buildings.&quot;</td>
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<td>20. &quot;Princes street gardens, the newly refurbished fountain looks splendid and the spring flowers are coming through.&quot;</td>
<td>Nature / green spaces / body of water</td>
<td>Flowers / quiet / little traffic / seasons / sense of belonging</td>
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<td>21. &quot;The Ross Bandstand is such an iconic building so I hope the &quot;regeneration&quot; of the gardens does not include changing it.&quot;</td>
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<td>22. &quot;Ramsay Gardens at the top, again very quiet with little traffic.&quot;</td>
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<td>23. &quot;A bright day so work in the garden is called for.&quot; (Dried yellow Viola flowers glued)</td>
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<td>24. &quot;Must remember to put the clocks forward tomorrow, summer is on the way and that makes me feel happy.&quot;</td>
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<td>25. &quot;Go to see sunset on Calton hill&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. &quot;Children sounds of playing, daffodils out, sun at my back, church bells ringing all add to my smile.&quot; (Near statue in gardens/Princes street)</td>
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<td>27. &quot;Unbelievably sunny again. If rain was forecast I would plant the grass seed (needs watered)&quot;</td>
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<td>28. &quot;Over 10000 steps and an ice cream in Holyrood Park.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. &quot;Woke up to hear it raining.&quot; (Happy face emoji drawing)</td>
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Among the probe pack activities there was a section that encouraged participants’ poems with the city as their muse. Participants were asked to express how they feel about Edinburgh and being a citizen of this city. There were no restrictions on the poetry prose or structure and free verse (no rules) was allowed. This activity was one of the conceptual frames devised to address speculation on alternative presents or imaginable futures, rising form the “known” to provoke the “unknown”.

Poetic format was chosen since it offers a compelling medium for originality and freshness as well as its precision in carrying emotive weight through inspired words. By enabling emotional identification and compressed meaning expressions, poetry has been used in poetry therapy and community building capacities. Poetry demands specific attention to the materiality of language and the arrangement of words and therefore allows implied meanings that are more expressive compared to the actual characterisation of the text. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge in data analyses, since the format permits the creation of a unique meaning system and at the same time the implied meanings are open to interpretation. Poetry also invites the use of symbolic and metaphoric forms despite of the ways in which metaphors violate the maxim of words. However, social interpreting is an everyday process and the implicatures are quite common in our everyday conversations, making people communally trained and primed to look for metaphors and hidden meanings in their interpersonal communication.

The limits to poetic speculation are acknowledged and the results are not representative, and the outcome is pioneered in addition to the results of other probes and the context of the study. The poems are analysed based on their descriptive reflections and the types of transitive information they process.

60 Alex Wilkie, Martin Savransky, and Marsha Rosengarten, eds., Speculative Research; the Lure of Possible Futures (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).
62 Ibid. See page 3, 5-6.
63 Ibid. See page 11 and xviii.
64 Ibid. See page 12.
A participant (female, 25) expresses her feelings about Edinburgh in a poem and depicts Edinburgh’s spatial qualities such as closes and courts as well as the built material such as stone. She rhymes:

“Down a close; in a court
Walled in by stone.
It is silent, it is sweet.
What a time to be alone.”

This is in particular intriguing as the female poet uses the word “sweet” to describe the experience of being in a close or alleyway seemingly “alone”, and it could be argued that an underlying sense of security and safety was also present. Experiencing a narrow alleyway for an unaccompanied woman in some cities could have presented an unease or threatening ambiance. This is in part due to low accessibility and segregation of such places to the city’s prominent streets and movement networks, that in turn influence population density and user activities as well. Spatial distribution of crime is also affected by regional public transport facilities, number of police stations and their relative distance, and other demographic factors such as unemployment rates. A close could be likened to an urban nook, offering partial visual and sonic privacy and hence a more private setting and a recess from busier urban districts.

The poem continues:
“Even the birds, they have forgotten
This little surprise alcove.
In all this turmoil, this global worry
The city feels still without its flurry.
But it isn’t sad, it isn’t lonely.”

---

In this verse the writer again, chooses spatial process to explain the element of surprise that one would experience transiting from a high street like Royal Mile to one of its adjacent closes, where with just one turn or a few steps the configuration, usage patterns and visual elements of place are significantly different. I have represented an argument on the role of surprise element and urban sudden discoveries with happiness in this study's first chapter. After two more verses, (see the chapter appendix for more details) the poem provides a closure for the “turmoil” and “worry” expressed earlier with this clause on how the city maintains its own temporal and spatial entity:

“These walls are going nowhere
The heartbeat of the stone and hills
Has a very strong will
A will to endure
And it makes me strong and humble
These days are just a stumble
In the grand scheme of this city.”

Here the writer compares the dominant built material, stone, to endurance and resilience in face of hardships. The word “stone” immediately lend itself to a series of obvious implicatures, strength, stability and patience. The writer avers that she is strengthened in proximity to the stone walls that emanate steadfast perseverance during turbulent times. The word stone is repeated in different verses of this poem and could point to the primacy sensory of the material. This signals that the visual texture and physical feel of the built environment material could reinforce the affect field and therefore influence spatial happiness. Future studies could benefit from studying the ways in which diverse material such as glass, concrete, plastic or wood might impact spatial happiness.

67 See chapter 1, section on sense and intelligibility.
68 Norman, Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things. See section 3 and 4 for references to visceral design connections to the product material.
Another participant (female 64) uses contradicting verbal and visual metaphors to describe her feelings of Edinburgh:

“What does Edinburgh feel like?
Cold, windy, and warm, calm
What does Edinburgh look like?
Grey, looming, and colourful, elegant
What does Edinburgh sound like?
Bustling, loud, and quiet, murmuring”

It could be noted that the narrative is engaging opposing qualities such as “cold” versus “warm”, “grey” versus “colourful”, “loud” versus “quiet” and so on to express the duality of the poet’s emotional experiences in the city of Edinburgh. This could be a commentary on the dual nature of emotional experiences on a spectrum between positive and negative, and how colour would shine when put together with grey’s neutrality, or how quiet is appreciated more when there is a loud background. This may prove that it is impossible to draw a line in the middle and assume everything on one side would be pain and all the rest would be pleasure and happiness. It is apparent that hardly we can box our experiences in life and there are many instances that we experience both positive and negative extremes at the same time similar to the experience of “childbirth”, and there are many times that there is actually a cause affect relation between the two. This also provides an observation on the components of emotive field, that is the spatial happiness is not a utopian ideal for perfection, because “pleasant experiences are necessary but not sufficient to produce happiness” and therefore the extent of which we are experiencing emotive traits is where spatial design comes in and could be able to promote certain positive traits. This includes the momentary triggers and the process of longer-term meaningful experiences and the accumulation of momentary experiences. Consequently, the creation of a happy place would be an ongoing process with coexisting emotive zones.

69 Bastian, The Other Side of Happiness: Embracing a More Fearless Approach to Living. See the introduction.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
This verse is also particularly helpful in instilling diverse senses in its narrative, including visual and sonic through descriptions of colour or sound domains, inciting that the place is comprehended through all our senses and consequently needs to be designed for all senses and to be recognised as such. Whether it is through basic human senses or the emotive reflections, the verse underlies the edifice that orients our bodies onto the physical space and navigates our emotive conceptions, namely the corporeal experience of spatial identification through our senses.

The poem continues to create a number of spatial metaphors in relation to our body in final verses as well:

“To live here is to be satisfied, a little smug perhaps
To visit here is to be curious, and a little envious too
What joy it would be to see the city anew
With fresh, young eyes, enjoying a different view

What will Edinburgh feel like, look like, sound like
In the coming, altered days ahead?
Not too much changed, I hope,
Warmer, more colourful and whispering sweet nothings instead.”

This section begins with a positive note on keywords such as “satisfied”, “smug” (taking pride in the city) and “curious”\(^\text{72}\), opens into the “joy” and elation of seeing the city either from a new perspective or for the first time, and ends with a question about the future of Edinburgh, hinting at the poet’s contentment with its current state (a sense of validation through “not too much change, I hope”). The concept of being hopeful towards future also renders a positive notion that is reinforced by the place conditions in this poem, determining willingness for qualities such as more “warmth” and “colour” and wanting to experience growth.

\(^{72}\) A sense of curiosity could feed into happiness as previously argued in this study, see chapter 1 the section on sense and intelligibility for more details.
The use of poetry was helpful in stimulating novel renditions of spatial experience and community engagement. The poems provided a layer of cognition that is not solely verbal but has elements that can communicate meanings from a social context. The poems were initiated alongside the use of brain-walks, photography, activity packs and map-making to understand how users experience urban areas and how places function for them. Poems appear to suggest the significance of built material in our place-based emotions, for instance linking stone to resilience and strength on a sublime level. It is also noted that we perceive place through our senses and how or senses are engaged within the space is of vital importance to the spatial happiness. As the poems were able “to tap quickly into the affective realm of individuals, bringing feelings to the surface”\textsuperscript{73}, they also provided a means to reveal the complex nature of emotional experiences within a continuum between positive and negative. Making the creation of a happy place an ongoing process that enables the promotion of spatial positive traits. Poems render emotionally loaded internal and external representations of space, shedding light on how the two influence each other and our sense of spatial understanding. The use of poetry has limitations and the timing is important, as evidenced by the first referenced poem that was heavily influenced by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Future work could be focused on the built material conjectures in relation to happiness. In terms of the method evaluation, poetry could be utilised as timed or group exercises, to draw analyses based on the collective formations and/or “the amount of time spent”\textsuperscript{74} on each poem.

\textsuperscript{73} Mazza, 	extit{Poetry Therapy and Practice}. See page 59.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid. See page 60 among others.
Maps

Community mapping practices were emerged as practical local activism methods to document and increase community information and participation in 1980s and 90s.\textsuperscript{75} To put it simply, collective mapping is a powerful tool for “giving voice to people whose opinion are seldom heard and acknowledged” and provides street-level perspectives for researchers, designers and decisionmakers by “visualising a community on paper”.\textsuperscript{76} Collective maps identify community assets, potentiate sustainable capacity-enhancement approaches and increase a feeling of community identity.\textsuperscript{77} In general, accuracy of maps is dependent on its scale and purpose due to the maps subjectivity, since mapmakers might “add, delete or project at whim and in accordance with his or her purpose.”\textsuperscript{78} Such challenges are systematically minimised in collaborative and collective mapping approaches, as the cartography format admits individual preferences while highlighting the communal hotspots.

In this study collective maps composed a vital set of data to render mechanisms of social construction of place and also as a social effort to produce a representation of street-life flows, micro spatial cultures and emotive fields in a particular territory. Considering that communities can take many forms, namely “two people in conversation, cliques of friends, social networks, factions, art movements, political groups, special interest groups, trades and professions, as well as formalised professional communities”\textsuperscript{79} and so on, it is noteworthy to mention this study engages a reginal concept of community,\textsuperscript{80} the community of Edinburgh residents. Some of the participants were born and lived all their lives in the city of Edinburgh, while some were international students with relatively shorter experience of living in the Edinburgh. All participants were credible witnesses to the existence of the city, and their input

\textsuperscript{79} Richard Coyne, Derrida for Architects, Derrida for Architects, 2011. See page 81.
\textsuperscript{80} Henco Bekkering, Mapping Detroit: Land, Community, and Shaping a City, Mapping Detroit: Land, Community, and Shaping a City, 2015. See preface page x.
outlined a street-level version of spatial knowledge to better understand urban alliances and synergies.

The activity packs contained 3 pages of Edinburgh map printed on tracing paper, each with 3 fixed accompanying inquiry to be marked, and 3 additional maps to offer participants a chance for mapping their own interest. This was initiated to develop multiple maps recording diverse themes of emotive field in Edinburgh. The maps were accompanied by a mapping toolkit that explained the use of colourful dot stickers, sticky notes and markers for a narrative review of various spots in Edinburgh. Participants were encouraged to be creative in what they wish to map, whether it is their pet’s favourite place for a walk or the places that are good for shooting an Oscar-winning movie; this approach was engaged to gauge the themes participants find worthy of mapping. The maps were analysed individually and together, and the result is a map that simplifies places with a high potential for affective qualities while highlighting happy places in particular. The maps were used to portray the dynamics of urban space perceptions and experience.

A complete interactive map was created by the author based on the study participants’ maps that could be found via the following link: https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Edinburgh-CCC/Edinburgh-CCC (see the individual maps in chapter appendix). All the documented places by the participants are marked according to their frequency accompanied by the shared keywords and comments. The interactive map reveals shared social and spatial attributions of each location. The Edinburgh CCC collective map can be used to raise consciousness on local experiences of Edinburgh for residents and interdisciplinary researchers as well as a mobilising instrument for local activism or administrative interventions. For instance, local media could reflect on affective properties of certain regions to make the findings more visible.\textsuperscript{81} The participants’ map could also contribute to comparative studies in the wider context as a base for comparison. For example, studied together with the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 map, it appears that some of the relatively deprived areas in the city of Edinburgh like Granton offer multiple nodes of

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. See page 47.
spatial happiness according to this study’s participants, showing potential and hope for future urban investments.\footnote{Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 is a tool by the Scottish Government that identifies areas with relatively high levels of deprivation. See more: \url{https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/} Also see the interactive map: \url{https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTFTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/} (accessed August 16, 2022)}

Looking at the map of participants’ happy places (Fig. 4), the labelled green spaces, natural settings and entertainment facilities could be characterised as places that induce a spatial flow. Csikszentmihalyi, the psychologist who coined the term “flow”, defines the concept as “positive aspects of human experience _ joy, creativity the process of total involvement with life”\footnote{Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi is a psychologist and researcher who named the concept of ‘flow’ as a highly focused positive mental state. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, \textit{Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning} (Penguin Books, 2008). See preface.} that benefits the study of happiness and intrinsic motivation.\footnote{Ibid. see the introduction.} Flow is an optimal state of total absorption in an enjoyable activity to the extent that one could lose a sense of time, including during activities such as games, movies or books, arts and sports.\footnote{Ibid. also see the overview section.} According to Csikszentmihalyi, flow episodes promote embracing social connections as well; “And when the flow episode is over, one feels more “together” than before, not only internally but also with respect to other people and to the world in general.”\footnote{Ibid., \textit{Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning}.} Csikszentmihalyi argues that flow results in integration with self and others, drawing “the best from human beings” and in situations creating a committed bond with other people, a kind of connection that “is in itself an ecstasy”.\footnote{Ibid. See the section on complexity and the growth of the self.} In summary, flow experiences are enjoyable to individuals while benefit society through giving depth and richness to emotive experiences and learnt skills, leading to significant social contributions. In some ways flow is the “process of achieving happiness through control over one’s inner life”,\footnote{Ibid.} and thus it could be enabled and energised either through a figuratively familiar context that reaffirms users’ mindset and attachments, or through flow-inducing opportunities for user engagement.\footnote{Norman, \textit{Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things}. See the section on the multiple faces on emotion and design.} Flow-inducing places would be the spatial settings that can facilitate “thoughts, intentions, feelings and all the senses” to be focused on the same
activity, resulting in a harmonic experience.⁹⁰ Therefore urban design and architecture can empower flow-producing places, including but not limited to entertaining Street Art to achieve a particular effect, or managing the commercial banners and visual chaos and sonic pollution in some urban areas that break the urban rhythm by distracting pedestrian and vehicular users alike, disrupting the flow of the city dwellers.

The collected maps illustrate an inclination towards places close to a body of water. (See chapter appendix for more details) One labelled example is the Cramond Island, one of the smaller islands (about 19 acres) in the Firth of Forth. One point of interest in this island might be linked to its limited-time accessibility, as its connection to the mainland is only accessible during the low tides, being covered by seawater at other times. The combination of the visual proximity and the island’s limited accessibility provides a compelling place identity. Place identity and urban character that are largely assumed based on spatial practices that form and reform interfaces of accessible/inaccessible, visible/invisible, and public/private,⁹¹ all could be navigated within the geographical typology of the Cramond Island. Acknowledging the impact of waterfronts and bodies of water in people’s emotive experiences could highly stimulate urban developments in cities with the infrastructural aptitude.

An example for the purpose of clarity would be a research project funded by Una Europa and led by Edinburgh University researchers that I was involved with, Granton Hub: Cultural Heritage at the Edge.⁹² The project was set in motion to explore the evolving heritages of Edinburgh’s coastline and exposed that Granton’s history inspiringly represents different urban opportunities that deserve recognition beyond the hierarchical narratives of conquered turfs and big empires (Roman Empire’s Antonine wall in Firth of Forth); from eco and industrial tourism to reimagined public housing, Granton’s history is rich with the record of life and conditions of people of Scotland, including Granton’s industrial history (electric carriage to fishing and oil), mobility history (trams and railways), and ecological history (oyster reefs). However, 

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⁹⁰ Csikszentmihalyi, *Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning*. See the section on complexity and the growth of the self, as well as the anatomy of consciousness.

⁹¹ Dovey, Pafka, and Ristic, *Mapping Urbanities*. See page 12 and 144-5.

⁹² Granton is a district in the north of Edinburgh, Scotland. The project was presented in Granton hub exhibition, in Paris in March 2022 along with studies from 7 other towns across Europe, and at the first ever North Edinburgh Community Festival. See more in chapter appendix.
such profusion of potential is not manifested in the city’s redevelopments, community facilities and Edinburgh’s represented visual identity. “Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland, situated on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth.” and “The metropolis of Scotland, situated about 11/2 miles from the Firth of Forth.” These examples of how Edinburgh is defined in The Nuttall Encyclopedia and Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, centre Edinburgh’s character on its northern shores. But this significant connection is not embodied in today’s cityscape, and the image of city is more about old town and city centre streets and castle views and less of Edinburgh’s shore and coastline. Considering the participants’ mapped interests, Edinburgh can benefit from more integrated urban parts with its waterfronts and bodies of water.

Figure 5 shows the hotspot map created by linking the collected maps and reveals the clusters of spatial happiness, namely aggregation of labelled places in close proximity. The hotspot map can be read in different ways that are profoundly different, one approach is for researchers, urban activists and decision makers to initiate a sustained interest in the shown cold spots (low values for spatial happiness occurrence). Future work can examine the characteristics of the illustrated cold spots in more details and potentially implement the findings of this study to promote the emotive experience of the place. But the hotspot map also could be seen with a focus on the hot spots (high potential for spatial happiness). The hot spots can be used in urban management and planning for their potentiality for spatial pedagogy and creating positive societal and cultural change, since there is already a positive association and sense of emotive gratification for the hot spots, they are ripe settings for spatial stimuli and eliciting reward response in forming positive consequential habits. Positive habits can increase happiness through cultivating “a sense of being at home, a feeling of ease, a comfortable feeling.” For architecture and urban design to have an educational role is not the main focus of the study but could be included in the study agenda due to its indirect impact on increasing people’s happiness.

For instance, the hot spots can be used to mobilise constructive habits in citizens by launching activities that can cultivate intellectual or health benefits such as drinking more water. Since up to sixty percent of our body weight is water, and drinking water is decisive in cumulative and deleterious health factors, e.g. sufficient quantities of water consumption can contribute to reduced cardiovascular disease or dental health.\textsuperscript{95} Physical and mental health have a mutual connection to both happiness and the capacity to learn.\textsuperscript{96} Studies on health and happiness including the World Happiness Report 2012 emphasise that a higher level of happiness results in greater physical health: “Individuals with higher positive affect have better neuroendocrine, inflammatory and cardiovascular activity. Those with higher positive affect are less likely to catch a cold when exposed to a cold virus and recover faster if they do.”\textsuperscript{97} I have described the health benefits associated with happiness in chapter 1 on this study with more details.\textsuperscript{98} In short, “Good health enables us to play, to seek out adventures, to pursue happiness.”\textsuperscript{99}

Habits are the things people do automatically and in the absence of much conscious deliberation, their effortless and habitual immediate gratification provide comfort and is cognitively perceived as a reward.\textsuperscript{100} Considering that hot spots will increase the sense of gratification in users, planting drinkable water fountains and stations in proximity of hot spots, will increase the frequency of consumption in drinking habits. On one hand, “exposure leads to liking” due to the increased familiarity, and on the other the barriers to drinking water habits formation due to context are eliminated, for instance people would not think that “the water fountain is so far” or “it’s not easy to drink”. Distance, time and effort are all “frictions”, or barriers to performing a


\textsuperscript{96} Wiking, \textit{The Key to Happiness: How to Find Purpose by Unlocking the Secrets of the World’s Happiest People}. See page 9, 12, 84, 89 and 110 among others.

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid, page 89. Also see: Helliwell, John F. and Sachs, ‘World Happiness Report 2012’:page 76.

\textsuperscript{98} See this study’s chapter 1, the section on “studying happiness, why does it matter”.

\textsuperscript{99} Wiking, \textit{The Key to Happiness: How to Find Purpose by Unlocking the Secrets of the World’s Happiest People}. See page 89.

\textsuperscript{100} Wood, \textit{Good Habits, Bad Habits: The Science of Making Positive Changes That Stick}. See the section on “introducing your second self”, “1. persistence and change” and “14. happy with habit” among others.

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid. See the “14. Happy with habit” section.
behavior, and spatial arrangements have a significant impact on such frictions. Consequently, habits are triggered by the location and a specific combination of other elements (in this example the water fountains), namely, the context activates user behaviour repetition and stabilises drinking water habit, and the same could apply to other positive habits. Such methods allow urban design and architecture to mobilise their innate facilities while bridge the gap between providing information for users and activating the behavior.

To recapitulate, the community map of happy places highlights the places that inspire positive feelings as well as the ways in which happiness is manifested in the spatial structuring of the urban plots. The happiness map of Edinburgh illustrates the activities, movement and space usage patterns that is subjective to the related aspects of spatial arrangements in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. In that sense the emotional health of Edinburgh communities during the pandemic was also documented. The mapping activity presented a number of challenges as well, for instance the extent of details provided by the participants could vary based on the individual knowledge or engagement level. Future studies could consider mapping the greater Edinburgh area for a macro level collective mapping or smaller sections of the city for a more locally detailed accounts, and/or using similar methods for other cities. Another approach that researchers might find helpful is to encourage community mapping for imaginative alternatives of cities to redefine community needs and desires aligned with the space usage and facilities. Another promising route for this line of enquiry is to study the shape of city, neighbourhood, streets and the built environment on happiness. A recent study suggests that urbanisation influence rainfall both in and around the city, namely circular cities receive greater rainfall intensity and accumulation. Considering the literature on the effect of weather on people’s mood and cognition whether indoors or outdoors, future work can address the possibility

102 Ibid. see the section on “6. context.”
103 Dovey, Pafka, and Ristic, Mapping Urbanities. See page 2.
of correlation between the shape of built environment and people’s happiness and mood. Overall, the collected map provides a micro-morphology of emotive territories in Edinburgh and demonstrates expressive spatial traits that can contribute to happiness currents.

Figure 4. The map of participants’ happy places. The labelled green spaces, natural settings and entertainment facilities could be characterised as places that induce a spatial flow. Map drawn digitally by the author, see more on: https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Edinburgh-CCC/Edinburgh-CCC
Figure 5. The hotspot map was created by linking the collected maps and reveals the clusters of spatial happiness, namely aggregation of labelled places in close proximity. Map drawn digitally by the author, see more on: https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Edinburgh-CCC/Edinburgh-CCC
Photos

Participation included a walking tour in which participants took photos with disposable cameras. Photographs of urban features reveal the visual experience of the city and gather perspectives. Photograph documentation manual was included in the packs, (See chapter appendix for more details) and was composed to encourage participants to photograph anything that they find meaningful in expressing their experience of the place. The photography manual was titled “Edinburgh CCC street portraits; a photography experience capturing the life of the Edinburgh streets” and was accompanied by a list of things that participants could take notice of i.e. the architecture, wind, thresholds, feeling welcomed or safe and so on. The manual served as a prompt to encourage reflective photography and focus on the spatial arrangements, settings for activities and emotive experiences. Participants were also encouraged to write comments on their field trip and their photos afterwards. This was initiated to amplify the images by the details accompanying it.

The disposable camera films were developed by Boots\(^\text{106}\) and were sent to Germany for the developing process, taking about a month before they were back to Edinburgh. Disposable cameras unlike smartphones or other currently widespread digital cameras do not show the taken photos on the spot, instigating and a sense of curiosity towards the possible outcomes. These cameras also allow a limited number of shots, and intuitively incite a more selective approach towards taking photos, while accentuating an implication of singularity for taken shots. This is another reminder that the urban portraits album is the one and only composed evidence of its kind, at its time and place, co-created as a collective impressionistic piece to record the study participants’ emotive and spatial narratives during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Participants’ photos show informal observations of Edinburgh and broadly represent how people use and perceive urban spaces, and as “a picture can be worth a thousand words—it contains rich visual information that can be hard to collect otherwise.”\(^\text{107}\) There are also inherent spatial attributions that compel the photographers’ decisions

\(^{106}\) Boots photo developing services (Boots photo) is available in some local stores. More information can be found at: https://www.bootsphoto.com (Last seen June 2021)

\(^{107}\) Derr, Chawla, and Mintzer, Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities. See page 60.
on framing, light, colour, focus and perspective, in addition to the discernible notion of subjects and content availability. For instance, Princes street with high visual accessibility (larger field of vision) allows the photographer to capture extreme wide shot angles, and smaller alleys surrounded by relatively taller buildings encourage low angle shots. And photos with a main subject, such as shots from natural scenery, a specific building or urban sculpture, are often taken as medium shots within the background setting. Therefore, several compositional interpretations could be considered credible, such as deliberating the sky area as the photographers’ main interest in the figure 6, in which with occupying most of the shot’s expanse, the sky area appears the main subject of the photo. (See Fig. 6) Additionally, over 90 percent of the photos have captured the sky in some way (see Fig. 8) further establishing its importance in photographers’ eyes. Edinburgh’s skyline was also mentioned by a participant as the most beautiful place in Edinburgh: “For me it’s not a place, but the skyline. Whether seen from Holyrood, or top deck of a bus turning into the Princes street or from Regent’s place.” (See chapter appendix)

The geographer Jay Appleton in his 1975 book *The Experience of Landscape* explains why people assert certain moods and dispositions in characteristic environments.\(^{108}\) Appleton argued that most people have a compulsive desire for prospect-refuge environments, that is landscapes that provide the capacity to observe (prospect) and the ability to hide (refuge) due to survival prospects. He attributed this behaviour mechanism to the places that can “afford the optimum conditions”, comprising of observation field, accessible paths of movement and available places of refuge.\(^{109}\) He concludes that there is also an aesthetic pleasure in prospect-refuge favourable landscapes, where observer can experience intermediate satisfaction of such inborn needs.\(^{110}\)

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109 Ibid. see page 64.
110 Ibid. see page 73-5.
Figure 6. A participant’s photograph with the sky area occupying most of the shot’s expanse.

The sky is also a source of light in urban environment, and the interrupting objects, i.e. structures, buildings or trees, limit the penetration intensity and angle of light from the overhead sky, thus influencing the visibility, perception of colours and material of the built environment, orientation and emotive experience of the place.\textsuperscript{111} Appleton also points out several direct associations between people’s mood and atmospheric accounts, including being elated by sunshine or depressed by rain, and even climatic descriptions of our moods such as having a “a sunny disposition” or “his brows were clouded”.\textsuperscript{112} From astronomy to astrology, to calculate calendars or to determine the weather, looking at the sky have a powerful influence in how we live our lives. The beauty of an azure sky has carried the purpose of art through its diverse representations,\textsuperscript{113} in Greek mythology the home of gods was “a place of permanent

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid. See page 77 and 109-111.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid. See page 21.
\textsuperscript{113} Alain De Botton, \textit{The School of Life: An Emotional Education}, Penguin Books, 2019. See the introduction, section on art.
sunshine and clear blue sky”, and persisting beliefs for several thousand years in practices of fortune-telling and the alignment of planets, the sun and moon, suggest that from grand mysteries of life to small daily conveniences, whether with a tranquil acceptance of what is out of our reach or with the curiosity of a questioning mind, we have our eyes on the sky. And so the building regulations that control the cities skylines or price the air rights, although well intentioned, could do harm if they do not consider wellbeing and happiness implications in their planning as well. I have also discussed the correlation between visible sky area and happiness in the previous chapters to convey the argument.

Now we shall return to assessing the photographs. Another interpretation approach is through analysing the Expressive content, namely the particular mood photographs evoke. Gillian Rose, a cultural geographer, in her renowned book Visual Methodologies suggests that evaluating components of an image does not necessarily convey the atmosphere or the feel of it, while understanding the affective characteristics of an image is essential to its evaluation. Rose emphasises that expressive content analysis requires a more imaginative terminology that can express the mood evocation qualities, and permits descriptive words such as “comfortably” or “solemn”. This study’s collected photographic record shares a common thread in its affective features, and that is the sense of mobility. As participants walked through their chosen journey, they captured urban sequences while moving within the space. Thus, the photographs integrally indicate the physical and visual accessibility of place, the manner of reaching or leaving a place, as well as the horizon of movement and the possible obstacles on our way. A horizon “marks the edge of an impediment to the line of vision” that continuously expands into further field of vision upon

114 John et al., The Mythology Book. See the chapter on ancient Greece.
115 Martha McGill is a British academy fellow working on a project entitled 'Bodies, Selves and the Supernatural in Early Modern Britain'. See more on the Warwick university research website: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/people/research_staff/marthamcgill/resources/ (Last viewed September 2021)
116 See the second and third chapters of this study, analysing the workshop drawings section.
117 Professor Gillian Rose is a cultural geographer, a British Academy fellow and currently the head of school of geography and the environment at the University of Oxford. See: Gillian Rose, Visual Methodologies; An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials, ed. Robert Rojek, fourth edi (SAGE, 2016). See page: 101-3 and 122.
118 Ibid. page 101-3.
119 Appleton, The Experience of Landscape. See page 89-91.
movement.\textsuperscript{120} Appleton argues that contemplating the horizon “directs the attention particularly to speculation about what lies beyond it, and the horizon itself seems to be the key which can provide the answer to such speculation. Potentially, therefore, the horizon has a major role to play in the imagery of the prospect.”\textsuperscript{121} This means that a shift in the spatial arrangements, can stimulate a shift in mood or atmosphere, as it “gives ground for anticipating an extension of the field of vision in other directions.”\textsuperscript{122}

Another mood or affective characteristic attached to some photographs is the notion of familiarity with place. Photos of places that carry emotional comfort due to being familiar or representing a kind of connection to place. For instance, a participant writes about her photo from a shop she has taken:

"My dad worked there for some years. Also, it's where my mum met my dad!" (See Fig. 3 and chapter appendix)

This familiarity feeds into a sense of connection, belonging and ownership while providing a spatial platform for social interaction with others who share similar stories. Simple opportunities for striking small talk as mentioned by a participant’s diary will strengthen a sense of belonging and community, being “part of something bigger than” oneself and feeling “valued”. (See chapter appendix) This is further evidenced by the following note that accompanies a photograph from Princes street gardens.

"Stopped to speak to one of the gardeners (mentions a name) who has worked with the gardens team for (number) years and takes real pride in keeping things neat and tidy." (See Fig. 3 and chapter appendix)

Overall the photographs reveal an interest in natural settings and green spaces as over 47% of photos reveal a connection to nature. Participants also showed interest in cultural places such as museums, art galleries and public worship buildings, followed closely by active frontage in street level comprising doors and windows as

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid. See page 90.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
well as restaurants and retail windowfronts. It is also noteworthy that about 27% of photos included a form of urban art including urban sculptures or graffities. More than 70% of photographs contain a form of urban furniture including benches or flower boxes, as well as street lights and community notice boards. (See Fig. 8) Urban furniture might seem conventional, but their dominant presence in the collected photos cannot be ignored. Rather, urban furniture could be broadly considered a matter of convenience and comfortability that is able to instil happiness and positive spatial experiences. For one thing, the lack of sufficient urban furniture could spread uneasiness, for instance the scarcity of serviceable trash bins during the 2022 Scotland bin strike that began in Edinburgh,¹²³ created controversial reactions like unattended piles of garbage in street corners and discarded coffee cups on benches, resulting in a health warning issue.

Comparably, street lights can create a festive mood such as Christmas street decorations, while an out of order street light or its shortage are often used in cinema and horror movies to create a perilous atmosphere. Similarly, carefully staged and curated urban furniture can curate a particular urban feeling and collateral atmosphere. After a long walk, a bench can offer a retreat to tired feet, or the lack of comfortable seating arrangements might deprive friends from a chance to sit together, chat and catch up. A participant’s storyboard describes the combination of a bench and a garden as “an invitation” to chat, while another draws a “picnic table” in a garden for “community meals and conversations”. (See chapter appendix) In short, urban furniture pervasively chimes well with the people’s broader needs and provides the details of a setting that we either appreciate or despise, highlighting the role of community and, crucially, the role of shared public areas and street furniture in a fulfilling urban experience and the quality of life. The study signifies the need for local funding and resourcing for efficient urban furniture that is more and more part of public discourse, with community members becoming increasingly aware of the consequences of austerity, the cost of living crisis and funding cuts on their local spaces.¹²⁴ This approach to the collected data is productive in its revelation of

¹²³ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Scotland_bin_strikes (last viewed September 2023)
¹²⁴ Parts of this discussion was published in Scotsman, funded by the Scottish Universities Insight Institute. Regarding the Rising cost of living in the UK, see the parliamentary report on the house of Commons Library: Daniel Harari et al., ‘Rising Cost of Living in the UK’, UK Parliament, House of
everyday urban visual cultures, that is reflections of production and perception of everything that one is surrounded with in day to day life including buildings, landscapes, advertising, movies or paintings and in general any aspect of culture that communicates through visual means.¹²⁵

Efficient and functioning urban furniture maintains a comfortable and neat setting and at the same time promote a sense of safety through its well-ordered arrangements. This could be linked to the broken window theory (BWT) introduced by social scientists Wilson and Kelling that influenced policing of several cities around the world including New York City since 1990s.¹²⁶ While the theory has proved controversial in practice, its formulation is plausible, namely the approach that suggests urban infractions or visual cues of disorder e.g. a broken window, would lead to more severe civil tribulations and situational crime.¹²⁷ According to the broken windows theory (BWT) micro-events such as public intoxication, garbage and abandoned cars trigger a downward spiral of urban setting for criminal offenders to assume that residents are uncaring towards the neighbourhood happenings.¹²⁸ Therefore, the antithesis of the Broken Windows Theory means that mending the window, and well-designed spatial arrangements can “lead to the increased legitimate usage of an area; this in turn increases surveillance and can create a sense of pride in an area and a stronger community spirit. This ‘upward spiral’ can continue, with safety and increased legitimate usage both positively influencing each other.”¹²⁹ Although the required
surveillance that delivers security, could be regarded as demeaning and oppressive by itself.\textsuperscript{130}

The broken window theory highlights the symbolic messages that urban properties convey in informing our choice making through a developmental sequence,\textsuperscript{131} if an alley with a broken streetlight is too dark, we might prefer to choose another path or if there is a bench we would sit and chat with a friend. Urban furniture could be the thread that reflects and reinforces the patterns of movement in happy cities, even facilitating therapeutic practices for mental health. As demonstrated in the Breathing Space Bench project by North Lanarkshire Council and Breathing Space Scotland, with the ambition to create welcoming spaces for people to connect and communicate. According to the Depute Leader of North Lanarkshire Council (2016-2022) Paul Kelly, “Sometimes we all need a bit of time when things seem overwhelming. Sitting down to gather your thoughts or having a chat with someone about your worries or concerns can make a huge difference.” Breathing Space, a free and confidential phone service for people across Scotland offers specialist support to anyone feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed.\textsuperscript{132} Perhaps such semiotic impulses caused by urban furniture are the “invisible thread” that reflects and reinforces the cultural currents of happy cities, or as Italo Calvino portrays in his \textit{Invisible cities}:

“There runs an invisible thread that binds one living being to another for a moment, then unravels, then is stretched again between moving points as it draws new and rapid patterns so that at every second the unhappy city contains a happy city unaware of its own existence.”\textsuperscript{133}

While urban furniture might appear at the background of the urban stage, in fact it is at the forefront of how the place is experienced; playing a significant role in animating urban life.

\textsuperscript{130} Harvey, \textit{Spaces of Hope}. See page 164.
\textsuperscript{131} Herbert and Brown, ‘Conceptions of Space and Crime in the Punitive Neoliberal City’. See page 762. Also see Harcourt and Ludwig, ‘Broken Windows: New Evidence from New York City and a Five-City Social Experiment’. Page 280.
\textsuperscript{132} See “Park Benches promote mental wellbeing article published on Breathing Space website: https://breathingspace.scot/news/2022/park-benches-promote-mental-health-wellbeing/ (last viewed September 2023)
\textsuperscript{133} Calvino, \textit{Invisible Cities}. 
This section rests its analysis upon the foundation of the study’s collected photos. However, one criticism towards the photo assessment could lie in questioning the authenticity of what motivated the photos. Were the photos motivated by the participants’ appreciation towards the place or they were motivated by the advertised image of the place that was widely appreciated? Namely iconic places marketed for tourism or city representatives on postcards. For instance, a certain sphere that is doled out to place could regulate property usage and value, as a study on over 400,000 geotagged Instagram posts in Amsterdam by social scientists Boy and Uitermark shows. According to their findings, the city stand-out hot spots could be reassembled through social media\textsuperscript{134} as “Instagram users develop uneven networks, claim space and selectively imbue places with symbolic value.”\textsuperscript{135} Boy and Uitermark study suggests that Instagram elevated places uplift glamourous and high-end consumption settings that pinpoint centre stage, while other places “remain peripheral or are altogether ignored.”\textsuperscript{136}

It appears that there is no simple dichotomy to distinguish if an atmosphere is really imposed onto the space or an animated urban space categorically offers the coveted qualities that marketed representations, whether ostensibly or subtly, tend to grasp to. This could be considered in the calibre of chicken or egg casualty dilemma, and its underlying potentiality and actuality. Namely, the advertisement of the marketed places could alter perceptions, that could be partly due to Halo Effect, a term coined by the renowned psychologist Thorndike.\textsuperscript{137} As Thorndike observed, Halo Effect is “a tendency to make inferences about specific traits on the basis of a general impression.”\textsuperscript{138} According to the Halo Effect theory, instead of independently measuring separate features of a place; there’s a common tendency to create and maintain a consistent picture in order to reduce cognitive dissonance. Thus, the perception of a place might not be independent, but to some extent based on “a single,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{134}] John D. Boy and Justus Uitermark, 'Reassembling the City through Instagram', Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 2017.
\item[\textsuperscript{135}] Ibid. See page 613.
\item[\textsuperscript{136}] Ibid. See page 622.
\item[\textsuperscript{138}] Rosenzweig.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
overall assessment — a Halo of place. Although a general image of a place could be strengthened through marketing strategies, still there needs to be potential and inherent spatial qualities present. Additionally, a longitudinal study of the effect of online reviews on the general image of 21,338 hotels worldwide showed that the halo effect could explain up to about 50% of people’s opinion about the place that could vary due to a range of other variables. The report that was conducted by professor Nicolau et al. in economics and business administration studies concludes that negative predispositions have a stronger influence than positive impressions derived by a favourable image due to advertisement. Arguably although the halo effect plays a part in the perception of a place, it cannot overrule other variants nor is it as effective with positive impressions of place. Photos are in essence representations of the city and our corporal and emotional experience of it, and regardless of how selectively or distortedly they are framed, they render “visual traces” of actual urban spaces.

Moreover, regarding this study’s material, data collected from several methods were layered to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. Namely, in some instances, a background story by the participant accompanied the photos that allows further investigation. For example, one photo captures the Greyfriars Bobby statue and the participant has elaborated in the walk notes that “Greyfriars Bobby has been given a blanket to keep him warm!”. (See figure 3 or chapter appendix) This data shows that the participant was enticed to take the photo due to the blanket thrown on the statue, and warm feelings towards representations of belonging and familiar urban spots that communicate a sense of social connection could be detected from the comment. The person who put a blanket on the statue imperceptibly sent a message to all other passengers, “we might not know each other, but we share this public space and this statue, and we are connected through belonging to here.” Through assessing the collected data within its context, it appears

139 Ibid.
140 Juan Luis Nicolau is Marriott Professor of Revenue Management, with a PhD. in Economics and Business Administration, Full Professor of Marketing at the University of Alicante and former Dean of the College of Economics and Business of the University of Alicante. See: Juan Luis Nicolau, Juan Pedro Mellinas, and Eva Martín-Fuentes, ‘The Halo Effect: A Longitudinal Approach’, Annals of Tourism Research, 2020.
141 Ibid. see page 1-2 and 8-9 among others.
that although halo effect on generating a favourable image of place is very much plausible, it is not necessarily undermining the potential qualities of place. Instead, it highlights the internalised and complex processes that influence people’s perception and imagination of place, the processes that are “not just about the individual, but it is interwoven within communities, spaces, and time.”

Figure 7. Participants’ photographs. Greyfriars Bobby statue and an encounter in Princes Gardens.

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Figure 8. Percentage of the photographs containing a shared spatial and social aspect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial and Social Aspects</th>
<th>% of Total Number of Photos Containing the Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connection to Nature/Green Spaces</td>
<td>47.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication/People</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to Mobility e.g. Vehicles, Roads, Transport Stations etc.</td>
<td>32.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Frontage Street Level e.g. Windows, Doors, Winowfront etc.</td>
<td>37.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Drink</td>
<td>29.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops and Retail Outlets</td>
<td>30.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential Institutions e.g. Theatres, Dance Halls, Museums, Premises in connection with, public worship or religious instruction etc.</td>
<td>38.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Furniture e.g. Benches, Street Lights, Bus Stops, Litter Bins, Signage, Community notice board, Phone Booth, Flowerbox etc.</td>
<td>74.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky Visibility</td>
<td>94.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles including Public Transport</td>
<td>18.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Art e.g. Graffiti, Urban Sculptures etc.</td>
<td>27.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Digital Discussion Session**

The digital session was held online via Zoom on Monday 5 of April 2021 for approximately 2 hours from 07:30 PM. The digital discussion session was facilitated with warm opening conversations to form a comfortable setting and instigate participants to share their viewpoints with ease and enrich the shared experience through respectful communication. Online face-to-face communication requires
meticulous rapport composition with the participants to create an appropriate atmosphere for participant disclosure, as temporal relationship build up facilitates participation by permitting participants to reflect on and share their knowledge and practices.\textsuperscript{144} While the self-paced activity packs were allowed participants hands on and longer sequential engagement, the digital discussion session provided an elevated view of the experience and more spontaneous responses.\textsuperscript{145} The workshop was recorded and transcribed by Zoom. The focus of recording was to capture the discussions and participants’ contribution.

During the online session participants reflected on their overall experience with the self-paced activities, followed by discussions on “Edinburgh”, “What makes them happy” and “Where they have been happy”. There was also an opportunity for participants to express their opinions on the self-paced project. Some of the participants suggested that after working on the activity packs, they have become interested in knowing more about the Edinburgh, expressing their interest to take similar activities as a course on Edinburgh, in order to spend more time to understand and connect to their city. One of the reflection guides provided to the participants was to “Describe Edinburgh in 3 keywords”. Participants answers ranged from “Festival”, “Blossoms” and “Green spaces” to “History”. “Festival” is a characteristic of interest, as a participant repeated the word 3 times (instead of using 3 different keywords) to emphasise that Edinburgh festivals are particularly meaningful. This was also mentioned in a participant’s poem as the highlight of Edinburgh in June, as well as another participant’s story of the city that mentioned volunteering for the festival is the way participant shows her love to the Edinburgh. Edinburgh festivals such as Edinburgh Fringe, Edinburgh International Science and Edinburgh Jazz and Blues festival are not simply institutional collaboration pathways or culture hubs, but also a citywide attempt at setting identity, and should be considered as such. The term festival per se, is defined as “glad, joyful, merry” in Oxford Dictionary,\textsuperscript{146} making the

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize \textsuperscript{144} Uwe Flick, ‘An Introduction to Qualitative Research - Uwe Flick - Google Books’, Sage Publications, 2018. Also see: Moises C., Jr. Torrentira, ‘online data collection as adaptation in conducting quantitative and qualitative research during the covid-19 pandemic’, \textit{European Journal of Education Studies}, 2020. \\
\footnotesuperscript{145} Ibid.  \\
\end{footnotesize}
notion of festival a kind of cultural custom that is closely associated with happiness and place from a chronological perspective.

Festival could be defined as a set of activities that “Reflect urban culture characteristics sponsored by state enterprises and communities” with the central aspiration to “Improve residents’ life happiness”.147 Edinburgh festivals support a type of social connection that is cultural and inclusive, and as a “Way of experiencing the cultural debate”148 connect and reconnect communities and place creatively, a way that is not frivolous nor less intense compared to other forms of social interaction.149 As Mikhail Bakhtin, philosopher and literary critic, in his study of carnival suggests, there is also a historical weight to the scope of festivals’ importance, and carnival festivities as well as the rituals connected with them such as harvest celebrations were of immense significance during the Middle Ages and Renaissance likewise.150 Bakhtin describes festival as a life-affirmative celebration that is initiated by interrelated values such as belief in individual freedom as well as dialogic creativity and spontaneity, all of which might ensue chaos and destruction. For Bakhtin, festival is an expression of the betweenness, between creation and destruction, order and chaos, decrowning and crowning, and to embrace this betweenness is to liberate unclustered potentialities and to create enriching destructions.151 One example of this could be seen through the history of the Edinburgh Fringe and its influence on political and situational culture in 1960s, when according to critics, the festival’s impact shattered the “culture of deference” and changed the British society’s “attitude towards authority forever” and reformed the rules about “what could and could not be said in public”.152 Festival is a gate to a place where the carnivalesque man can wear a phoney mask, while he is releasing his deepest thoughts and subjective experiences through the exaggerated

149 Ibid.
The overtaking wonder of closeness and moving in unison within a symbiotic collective freed from the prevalent authority or social burdens, are not exclusive to festivals, other spontaneous events such as "political protests, sports celebrations, concerts" offer heightened exhilaration, albeit in dissimilar disposition and intensity. 

Accordingly, a study on the impact of music festival attendance on psychological and social wellbeing suggests high levels of happiness among music festival attendants, presenting an argument on the creation of festivals’ “Emotional Field” threshold; a mentally and socially situated field complementing the thematic space of a festival.

“The sheer enjoyment of festival participation was expressed strongly by participants and was so satisfying that they were continually drawn back to repeat the experience. The festival experience appeared to amplify the natural capacity of music to evoke emotional experiences and influence mood. It thus contributed to the development of ‘Emotional Field’, and a sense of subjective well-being or ‘Happiness’.”

In Edinburgh, both International and Fringe Festival were developed in 1947, as a “Means of resolving conflict to lift the levels of human thought and welfare” and to merge a moral and intellectual conduct to creativity in Scotland after the war. Edinburgh Fringe that is allegedly the largest art festival in the world, provides cultural customs in an urban scale, continuity of which highlights the role of place in

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habits and habit making, and activates a prolonged sense of belonging.\textsuperscript{160} Critic and the author of \textit{Travels in Hyperreality}, Umberto Eco, recognises these shared behavioural expressions as collective rituality, denoting that in cultural festivals “What counts is the collective rituality—as if that which used to be High Culture can be reaccepted and placed in a new dynamic provided it also permits encounters.”\textsuperscript{161}

The experience of a festival is partially owed to the “presence of the others”, and the “food and drink booths”, and the ritual that is part of the “general character of a cultural festival”, combining liminal, ceremonial and social elements.\textsuperscript{162} Festivals could be seen as a “Trigger event” that boost individuals’ satisfaction and happiness.\textsuperscript{163} The “event” here refers to the affective atmosphere created and transmitted through the condition of people in a spatial setting.\textsuperscript{164} Different kind of environments support different kinds of actions and to host such endeavours indeed structural foundations such as wealth of venues and theatres must be in place, as well as accessible networks to connect these venues for consecutive events; while a “Picturesque scenery” or places that are able to capture the imagination, will not go amiss to attract locals and visitors either.\textsuperscript{165} Although currently there is no definite set of measurements to gauge the degree of achievement or even evaluation of a so-called “Picturesque scenery”, urban attractiveness is a criterion steered by tourism policies and design trends and used widely by venues in their efforts to entice customers.\textsuperscript{166} Another spatial character of festival is mobility, reflecting on the “strong sense of

\textsuperscript{161} Eco, \textit{Travels in Hyperreality Essays}. Umberto Eco was a writer, academic and critic, his novel \textit{The Name of The Rose} was a world-wide bestseller and featured for several cinematic adoptions. Also see: ZHANG, DING, and DI, ‘Association Study on Urban Festival Activities and Residents’ Happiness: Taking Shanghai Tourism Festival as an Example’.
\textsuperscript{164} Adams, \textit{Designing Spatial Culture}. See page 84.
\textsuperscript{165} Visit Scotland., ‘Edinburgh Festivals Guide’.Eco, \textit{Travels in Hyperreality Essays}.
agility” that stems from the festival’s temporal nature, the temporality that by itself adds to the festival’s appeal and desirability.\textsuperscript{167} The spatial requisite of a well-received festival in a nutshell would be healthy places for cultural interaction. In that sense, festivals not only increase a brand identity and dwellers’ expressive spatial ties, they also feed into a craving for belonging to the place. Festivals also provide opportunities to incite wonder and awe, culture and distinctiveness as well as diversity and social interaction, the combination of which could animate happy instances and upraise the quality of life.\textsuperscript{168} The notion of belonging and its happiness imprints was described previously in other chapters as well.\textsuperscript{169}

To submit a critical scrutiny, it must be considered that festivals are also disruptive and confrontational in nature.\textsuperscript{170} Edinburgh Fringe for instance, each year instigate road closures or alternations due to accommodating measures that are implemented in order to facilitate the festival programme. And the great number of visitors on one hand prosper the local businesses while on the other hand falter the local residents’ routines, causing spatial amputation for parts of the city and excluding some people from the benefits through its course. In a way the question of “happy for whom” is magnified while reflecting on the potential urban festival associations with happiness. Indeed, some people might enjoy the festive opportunities regardless their potential interval to the daily routine whereas some prefer to steer away from the interruption. It appears the preferences vary due to the urban design and management issues or political interests rather than a conflict on festivals being a happy occasion.

For centuries, festivals were an opportunity to be an outlaw, to not comply with some of the ever-present rules set by society, religion and authorities, or simply a short break from some of the expected inhibitions. Providing an outlet for all the dissatisfaction that was caused by the mechanisms of power. And so festivals could be justified as a collaborative exercise of setting an urban identity, since they generate a platform that not only shapes the social relations, but also reshapes the spatial structure of the city.

\textsuperscript{167} Adams, \textit{Designing Spatial Culture}. See page 88.
\textsuperscript{168} URBED, ‘The Quality of Life Framework’.
\textsuperscript{169} See chapter 2 the pilot study analysis and chapter 4 the section on where have you been happy, analysing the digital workshop responses.
\textsuperscript{170} Mikhail, ‘Rabelais and His World’. Also see: Neil Ravenscroft and Paul Gilchrist, ‘Spaces of Transgression: Governance, Discipline and Reworking the Carnivalesque?’, \textit{Leisure Studies}, 2009.
The juxtaposition of festivals’ disruptive nature and collective form of festivals brings about a sense of connection and companionship through giving space to feelings and opinions that are often disregarded otherwise.

The digital session also allowed a detailed conversation on the role of green spaces and nature in happiness. Participants distinguished between nature and green spaces due to the usage etiquette and a more refined propriety is required in urban greenspaces compared to natural settings. For instance, it was mentioned that gardens or “Wee parks” could have been better if it was not spoiled with pet waste, indicating that some parks would become “A big dog toilet” and no more suitable for children’s play or “picnics”. During further discussions on participants’ ideas of how a happy place will look like and “where have you been happy?” and how are the environment or activities that will encourage happiness, participants mentioned keywords including natural elements such as “water / green / nature / desert” and “sunny / sunrise / dawn / bright” once again reinforcing the role of nature in spatial happiness, the urgency of which might have been influenced by the environmental and climate crisis in global proportions that can no longer be avoided. There were also keywords concerning situational circumstances like “friendship / meeting friends / prosecco / alone in a good way / walking / travel”; activities that could be studied in their inherently spatial capacities and occurrence.

Moreover, some explicit mentions of place comprising “tent / home / cathedral / Torcello Venice / bridge” or sonic potentials of “quiet / silence / music” and general emotive qualities such as “peaceful / different / rested” were discussed. As for all the word “home” represents, I have previously drawn on the sense of belonging, security and comfort earlier in the diaries section and in other chapters.

A specific spatial formation associated with happiness could be due to the shared evoked memories acting as an invitation for social relations, for instance encounters in a cathedral, is a reminder of a bonding sense that allows a basis for engagement or

171 See chapter appendix and the participants word cloud.
172 See chapter 2 the pilot study analysis and chapter 3 (draw a happy place, analysing the workshop drawings) among others.
communication with others. In other words, individuals can experience emotions related to the collective memory and collective identity “Outside of the context of their own personal experience and in relation to collective or society experiences in which only a part of the group members have taken part”. In that sense, the sentiments expressed towards a place like a cathedral, could be more related to a virtual community of possible actions rather than an existing one. By virtual community, I mean where there is a spatial possibility for a community to be formed, a given area where the “pattern of natural co-presence brought about through the influence of spatial design” on movement and other interrelated behavioural aspects of space usage nurtures patterns of socialising. Therefore, a cathedral not only functions as the city’s local storage for the memories of the past, but also as the city’s link to hopes for future and experiences of present. While a cathedral is a condensed representation of venerating previous generations and their labour and achievements, in a city that celebrates its evolving narratives, every street of the city could offer such stations of “meditative pilgrimage” to some degree, for instance through historic sites, memorials, sculptures and signs. One example that highlights the application of urban meditative stations is the city of Venice with more than 500 roadside shrines and votive niches that receive offerings such as flowers and candles by residents and tourists alike.

The notion of virtual community could be applied to the concept of “bridge” as well. Although the term instantly materialises the concept of mobility and probes its


174 Mustafa et al., ‘Critical Dialogues: Dialogue and Conflict Resolution-Special Issue’.


176 Ibid.


178 Ibid. See page 227.

179 The votive shrines of Venice offer historic, artistic and cultural value through urban glimpses into local traditions and social narratives. For instance, the shrine located in Calle Zorzi passageway reveals that the shrine has saved the neighbourhood from the plague and the World War I bombs. See more: Matteo Gabbielli, ‘VOTIVE SHRINES IN VENICE’, Best Venice Guides, 2018, https://bestveniceguides.it/en/2018/07/06/votive-shrines-in-venice/ (accessed October 2023)
protentional correlation to people’s happiness, bridge is also about making connections, capturing the aesthetics of its context\(^{180}\) or shortening the distance for better accessibility. The space of a bridge is about “transport”, yet it could be “more than a crossing”\(^{181}\), and it also brings “linkage and connection with the environment.”\(^{182}\) Located between opposite landscapes or interchanged banks of a river, and sometimes anchored into the mountains or connecting the city and its body of water, the bridge becomes more than just a transportation structure, and the “support for an indefinite number of different functions”.\(^{183}\) As Bennett, architect and the author of *The Architecture of Bridge Design* argues, a bridge could be designed as a “poetic escape from the tensions of the city itself.”\(^{184}\)

In order to explore how memories are viscerally grounded in user perception of place, it is helpful to reflect on the works of Donald Norman, the renowned researcher and author in cognitive design. Norman in his *Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things* describes people’s most beloved objects as symbols that set up “a positive frame of mind, a reminder of pleasant memories, or sometimes an expression of one’s self.”\(^{185}\), and later concludes that “Some objects evoke strong, positive emotions such as love, attachment, and happiness.”\(^{186}\) While Norman’s examples of such objects are inexpensive trinkets and frayed furniture, his observation could be applicable to a place or a building as well, when there is “a story, a remembrance, and something that ties us personally”\(^{187}\) to a particular place, or when we take pride in a place because of the meanings they bring to our lives.\(^{188}\) As he later suggests that people’s attachment to places, favourite locations or views and the meanings they represent could be more significant than people’s attachment to objects. Norman also argues that the positive or negative affect generated by users’ memories are immediate, long-lasting and powerful as an emotional trigger, and their sentimental

\(^{181}\) Ibid Bennett. See page 13.
\(^{182}\) Ibid. See page 8.
\(^{183}\) Ibid. See page 15.
\(^{184}\) Ibid. See page 14.
\(^{185}\) Norman is the director of Design Lab at University of California and is known for user-centred design and cognitive ergonomics. Norman, *Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things*. See the prologue section _three teapots._
\(^{186}\) Ibid.
\(^{187}\) Ibid.
\(^{188}\) Ibid.
value sometimes can overcome or overshadow other associations or evoked emotional experiences.\textsuperscript{189}

As projected by many participants’ inputs, there are elaborate links between our assumption of the place and our memories. (See chapter appendix) Participants who have had happy memories of a place or even its surrounding area are more likely to report that place as happy. This is anticipated if we reflect on our dynamic and reflective spatial perception process. Karen Till, cultural geographer and the author of \textit{The new Berlin: Memory, politics, place}, argues that our understanding of place is not direct or unmediated.\textsuperscript{190} According to Till, even though places are considered physically and temporally fixed, “their meanings are made and remade in the present. Places are not only continuously interpreted; they are haunted by past structures of meaning and material presences from other times and lives.”\textsuperscript{191} Although at first glance, the association of mementoes and place-bound happiness seems like an individual trait and could be discarded as a general attribution, in fact both “memorable” places and “commemorative” places could be categorised as places with high affordability in either creating or conserving memories.

Individual and collective memories mediate the flows of accumulation, dissemination and transformation of information in users’ spatial experiences, affecting the way people sense and make sense of the city. One way to portray the entanglement of place and memories is through Patrick Geddes’s representation of memory in his Act-Deed formula which is an analysis of the dynamic process of living in and acting upon the built environment.\textsuperscript{192} Geddes, human ecologist and urban planning pioneer, describes the perception of place as the conjunction of two worlds, “in-world” and “out-world”. For instance, everyday places such as a playground are out-world examples, and their in-world representation is composed of memories and dreams, the combination of which in turn lead users to act, plan and design, creating a cycle of life through space. Memory, in Geddes’s words, is “to recall in the evening, when going to

\textsuperscript{189} Ibid. See chapter 2: The multiple faces of emotion and design as well as chapter 4: Fun and games.
\textsuperscript{190} Karen Till is a programme director and lecturer at the Maynooth University. Karen Till, \textit{The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place}. (University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid. Also see: Elissa Rosenberg, ‘Walking in the City: Memory and Place’, \textit{Journal of Architecture}, 2012. See page 131.
\textsuperscript{192} Welter, \textit{Biopolis, Patrick Geddes and the City of Life}. See page 38-9 and 40-1.
bed, the garden one has played in during the day... The garden has come in with you; it is in your In-world now.” And the in-world reproduction process of the place has inferences connected to the users’ original place or event, emotive experience, aspirations and achievements redefined by the moment of the reproduction.\(^{193}\)

Geddes’s Act-Deed formula delivers a helpful rendition to cognise the ways in which intimately connected individual and local or temporal collective memories form “Hybrid layouts” where the city operates at the intersection of emotive and spatial infrastructures. That is, users’ experience in hybrid layouts could radically differ depending on their background or collective recollections. Understanding hybrid layouts can offer a radical rethinking of the term "city", and the necessity to incorporate in its definition the set of operational landscapes on which the city depends, including the individual and collective memories as well as future aspirations, and in the context of spatial happiness, to propose alternative urban development models that are aware and considerate to the existing hybrid layouts. Based on the study findings I propose a reformed place-perception model to depict the synergy of place and memories or aspirations that creates hybrid layouts and affects users’ spatial experience. (See Fig. 9) To expand the concept, I will refer to literature on the subject and then address the matter by giving an architectural example.

\(^{193}\) Ibid. Also see figure 9 in this section.
Perception of place is integral to the perception of time.\textsuperscript{194} The dynamic state of spatial cognition could be traced to two set of narratives; one is individual memory oriented while the other is collective memory\textsuperscript{195} oriented, socially constructed and reconstructed through temporal and spatial interweaved relations of culture, historical legacies or speculative futures, political forces, social order and conventions, kinship and so on. Although the dynamic perception of space might seem paradoxical with its inherent fixed geography, it is actually this dynamic perception that plays a crucial role in the spatial identity’s stability; through the “conception of the site as a stable ‘container’ of the past.”\textsuperscript{196} This process is triggered by memories and spatial characteristics that are involved in memory-making and is to some extent the reason why sometimes a small geographical shift will result in a massive cognitive shift. As multiple “temporalities collide and merge”\textsuperscript{197} even the individual memory oriented

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure9.png}
\caption{Place-perception model to depict the synergy of place and memories that creates hybrid layouts and affects the users’ experience and spatial happiness, drawn by the author.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{195} Rosenberg, ‘Walking in the City: Memory and Place’.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid.
spatial perception could induce social relations by evoking shared possibilities; and carries a latent closeness, providing a platform for engagement or communication with others. In other words, the time spent in the space is not linked with space linearly; and so, the visible (place) is perceived through an invisible order (temporal implications such as present moment, memories and fantasies or thoughts of future). Researchers in critical time studies and environmental humanities like Bastian expound on this complex flow as “Social time”, that is constantly produced and perceived communally, and therefore is not solely individuals’ concern to abide by.

Now considering that the fixed temporality of place could be challenged, then design could address the notion of time heads on, to customise the invisible order and facilitate design agenda. On this ground it appears viable to hack the temporal coding of the space, and create the ambiance that manifests connections to memories that are not necessarily historically existent (time as pace and sequence), but are rather associated due to their connection to a general idea and atmosphere. A good architectural example would be vinyl bars or LP pubs. These bars that generated decades ago in Japan and South Korea, are vinyl record stores and kissaten tearooms or coffeehouses merged together. Packed with vinyl records and requestable music or nostalgic offerings of bartenders, LP bars are sentimentally enriched environments that act like a rabbit hole, pulling users into another dimension; down the rabbit hole, and down the memory Lane. This might be due to how in some occasions the content and gist of an event is remembered rather than the exact specifications. If what we remember is more abstract sense of an urban setting rather than the exact spatial details, there can be a tacit knowledge of what a sentimental place would look like; which is per se subject to temporal reformations. In this sense, the spatial field is the birthplace of memory, but it also affects the ways in which memory is expressed. And

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198 Crang and Travlou, ‘The City and Topologies of Memory’. See page 173 on Michael De Certeau.
199 Dr Bastian is a researcher in critical time studies and currently a programme director at the University of Edinburgh. Pschetz and Bastian, ‘Temporal Design: Rethinking Time in Design’. Page 172.
hence it is able to affect memory long after its occurrence time, more explicitly, whenever it is recalled or retold.

Examples like LP bars reveal a number of concerns, first is the role of memory and memorialisation in uniting communities. Second is that our emotions are not completely inevitable but to a certain degree a choice for designers to shape its configurations. Both these concerns are projected in how the spatial field is put to the service of abstract purposes.\textsuperscript{201} As Lefebvre, the influential philosopher and sociologist suggests, the “fight for space” and “sort of reality that it constitutes”, is fought in order to hook an existence onto a place, since “groups, classes, or fractions of classes cannot constitute themselves, or recognize one another as 'subjects', unless they generate ... a space.”\textsuperscript{202} Lefebvre then continues that “like any tool of abstraction, abstract space is inherently violent.”\textsuperscript{203} This warns us of the third and serious concern over spatial ethics; not only to apply a framing structure that ensures users’ mental well-being, but rather to acknowledge the visceral perception of place and making sure users would be aware of the potential negative temporal connotations of a place. Product placement procedures in cinema that warns audience of sponsored content provides a good example of how it is essential for spatial ethics to notify users of the spatial horology and encoded memory that locates our emotional responses to the built environment. If users recognise that the spatial set up and arrangements can channel the memories and accordingly spatial cognition, they would be able to make more conscious decisions. This may not ensure social and spatial justice\textsuperscript{204}, but it is still crucial to create spatial principles and pave the path for equal opportunities.

As we go through life, the happiness and grief we experience are etched on our bodies. As our smile lines and frown wrinkles deepen, our joy and sufferings are carved in the lines of our faces. And so our faces mirror not only the passage of time

\textsuperscript{201} Henri Lefebvre was a philosopher, critic and sociologist, widely acknowledged for his influential work on production of space and the right to the city concepts. Harvey Molotch, ‘The Space of Lefebvre’, \textit{Theory and Society} 22, no. 6 (1993): 887–95.

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{204} See more on social and spatial justice interrelations: Jonathan Rokem and Laura Vaughan, ‘Geographies of Ethnic Segregation in Stockholm: The Role of Mobility and Co-Presence in Shaping the “Diverse” City’, \textit{Urban Studies}, 2019. In this article authors argue that social and economic equality is influenced by spatial configuration including urban mobility and co-presence patterns.
but also our emotive experiences. Could this be applicable to cities as well? Are the buildings, streets and the empty places in between, also reveal the emotional weight of what they have gone through? Can Place de la Concorde be free from millions of guillotined heads or can Germany truly break the wall between its west and east? Whether it is social memories or individual experiences, if memories of a place are truly etched into its existence, they would carry the emotional weight within their sense of place and impose it on users. It is the ethical right of users to know of the emotive possibility that a place is charged with; and to know that place might be planting the spatial occurrences in the mind of visitors, distorting the perception of place. In recent years, the public demand for heightened awareness of our surroundings’ potential affect field could be seen in the global movements to challenge statues of prominent figures involved with slave trade or colonial and racial slaughter in public domain. A recent example of people and activists’ attempt was Edward Colston statue in Bristol being pulled down during the Black Lives Matter protest in 2020 due to his slave-trading records. Overall, plausible inferences were discussed in this section that can support a space of effect cultivating narratives of happiness.

205 Part of this paragraph was published in an urban zine “Cooltsalon” vol.5 titled Urban Diaries by the researcher (co-creator). Cooltsalon originated in 2014 with the mission to give exposure to artist voices on the collective city life. See more: https://cooltsalon.com/portfolio/cooltzine-5-urban-diaries/ (accessed May 2022)

Edinburgh Brain-walks

In this stage, the research was executed within the novel research area of exploring happiness with the employment of a portable electroencephalography (EEG) device. We first look at the similar studies and related literature to portray the ebb and flow of this type of exploration. Next, I will draw on the development of this study followed by the analysis and findings. Let us note, incidentally, that this section refers to a different trajectory compared to other methods used. Brain-walks strategy was adopted mainly because investigations in the current literature landscape, as reviewed in the first chapter, present convincing and productive developments with regards to Neurourbanism in wellbeing studies. Thus, Neurourbanism was considered as a promising route of investigation, irrefutably not the only one, in order to look at the prevalence or absence of certain spatial trajectory in happiness. Another reason was the growing emphasis in urban studies concerning the effect of the built environment on wellbeing, to use “Scientific knowledge to inform urban design, including methods of neuroscience.” I had implemented methods to expand feedback loops in my research before, for instance liaising with an expert group on the children’s workshop in the third chapter. Here there was an opening to use an instrument technologically more sophisticated than the methods traditionally used, that could compare the authentic subject with its reflection and establish a more comprehensive understanding of possible explorations into the spatial narratives of happiness. Moreover, recognising the interlinked constituents of spatial qualities that affect users’ happiness and drawing on biological science and neurology relates a wider breadth of spatial experience and happiness studies.

Hence, brain-walks were implemented as an instrumental form of knowledge to initiate a methodical review and an inquiry into the dynamics of spatial happiness. Before

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207 See chapter 2 of this study, the section on previous research evaluation. Also see: Krzysztof Herman, Leon Ciechanowski, and Aleksandra Przegalińska, ‘Emotional Well-Being in Urban Wilderness: Assessing States of Calmness and Alertness in Informal Green Spaces (Igss) with Muse—Portable Eeg Headband’, *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 2021.


conducting the brain-walks, the possibility that such effort may fail for structural reasons was taken into consideration; however in which case the plausibility of the method could have been tested; hence it was decided to recognise the stimulating development in the literature about Neurourbanism. Under these circumstances, I designed and executed brain-walks as I explain further in the following section.

My work on Edinburgh brain-walks converge with new experimental studies in urban settings and dwellers emotive state by means of EEG recordings; building on their methods and results’ evaluation. EEG recordings, as a measure of brain activity and the autonomic nervous system (e.g. heart rate or brainwave lengths) responses, has become a relevant tool in urban studies, architecture and spatial cognition. Including recent studies in Edinburgh, where in one study EEG recordings were used to gauge older citizens’ experience of mood and mobility in urban environments, and in another EEG records were reviewed to assess the impact of natural versus urban scenes on people. The former was conducted by recording participants brainwaves during a walk in Edinburgh while the latter was documented in a laboratory setting and through testing visual stimuli such as showing selected photos. Following similar frameworks, related research was evolved around engaging EEG as a gear to integrate sensory stimuli e.g. aesthetic and environmental properties with wellbeing proxies in evidence-based urban considerations. The use of recorded EEG sessions to evaluate the impact of walking through diverse urban settings is also referred to as “Neurourbanism”.

Muse EEG device (similar to this study however this study engages an advanced model) initiated by the city council of Warsaw and Warsaw university, investigated emotional wellbeing and calmness of its partakers in urban informal greenspaces.  

Although the aforementioned studies are exploratory in nature, the results are quite consistent, particularly in accentuating the role of urban greenery in wellbeing. EEG methods used in extensive urban perception studies disclose a correlation between brainwave signals, wellbeing and the environment, such as a surge in alpha (8-13 Hertz – relaxed state) and theta (4-8 Hertz – state of creativity, insight and deep relaxation) waves or the cortex layer engagement.

**Edinburgh Brain-walks Materials and methods**

Conducted data via EEG device aimed to explore place-based emotive swings, locating what is working well in the city. The walk was an experience of being mindful of our environment, encouraging participants’ heightened senses to engage with the city, allowing a unique perspective and experience of Edinburgh. Participants were gifted a small bag of sweets upon completion of the procedure. Reports on participants age, gender and profession were recorded at the time of event registration by the participants. Edinburgh CCC brain-walks data was collected during May 2021, throughout morning or afternoon hours of Saturday. This was due to the Saturday’s farmers’ market schedule that was reported and evaluated as a location with high

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exposure to happiness spatial factors. Experimental walks were scheduled individually, and contributors completed a short self-reported mood profile questionnaire before and after each session. The questionnaires were devised based on Greater Good Science Centre (GGSC)\textsuperscript{219} scientific scales and measures for happiness and mindfulness. The questionnaires contained 4 statements to assess participants general mood, empathy and positive relations with self and others, curiosity and happiness. Phasing narratives of happiness was grounded in the first chapter’s comprehensive findings on the correlation of the cited emotive states with overall happiness.\textsuperscript{220} Research on this area emanates from psychology discipline as well as several supporting studies with relation to environmental psychology on Restorative Environment theory, suggesting that “places that provoke feelings of soft fascination” and “curiosity” are able to “make people feel calmer and happier.”\textsuperscript{221} Restorative Environment theory could be summarily explained as the restoration from fatigue caused by the focused attention in urban environments; that is possible in a setting that arouses fascination, e.g. soft fascination (moderate intensity) that occurs in settings that are aesthetically pleasing.\textsuperscript{222} The accounts were measured on a scale with a higher value demonstrating a higher sense of subjective well-being. The questionnaires were completed through an online platform (QuestionPro)\textsuperscript{223} with participants’ personal devices to facilitate participation ease, ensure government social distancing measures and save papers in the climate emergency.

The first question was used to measure participants’ general mood, based on the Emojis of Mood States that was chosen in answer to “Today I feel…” statement in pre-

\textsuperscript{219} The GGSC is a UC Berkeley centre and is part of the Berkeley university’s Institute of Human Development, for research since 1927. The Centre also partners with other academic groups such as the Institute of Personality and Social Psychology or the Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute. See more: https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/who_we_serve/researchers/scientific_scales_and_measures Also see: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes?_ga=2.122015691.1704329923.1623849783-1491758178.1623849783 (Last accessed on 16 June 2021)


\textsuperscript{223} QuestionPro is a survey software and online platform with professional surveys, working and supported by Google, Berkeley University and many more. See more on https://www.questionpro.com
walk survey and “Now I feel…” in post-walk survey. For the rest of statements, an interactive numerical rating slider from 0 = Strongly Disagree in left anchor to 100 = Strongly Agree in right anchor was provided that participants rated accordingly. Another statement was designated to measure the level of empathy in participants before and after the walk considering how participants rank the following statement in pre-walk survey “How much do you identify with (that is, feel a part of, feel love toward, have concern for) Edinburgh citizens?” and “How much do you want to be a responsible citizen of your community in Edinburgh?” in post-walk survey. Another set of statements were targeting participants’ level of curiosity. Hence in the pre-walk survey participants were asked to rate the following statement “Curiosity is the driving force behind many of the places that I go to or in choosing the routes that I take to work/university/grocery shopping etc.” and “I am curious to know more about Edinburgh and walk more often in Edinburgh streets.” In the post-walk survey. The remaining statement of the pre-walk survey addressed participants belief on the role of place in their levels of happiness, calmness and stress, measuring how they value happiness and prioritise positivity, and so they were asked to grade the next statement “I have some places in mind to go to when I want to deal with the stress due to personal matters or challenging events at work.” The final statement of the post-walk survey, “I look forward to each new day at Edinburgh”, was a happiness scale to measure the extent to which participants felt a positive emotional connection to their surroundings and experienced optimistic sensations during and after the walk. The minimum and maximum of given subscales, and the variance between participants’ answers (standard deviation and average ratings) were compared and analysed.224

(See chapter appendix for the full questionnaires)

The study route was assigned grounded on both directly reported happy places in Edinburgh by the studies participants (Including parts of Princes street or Victoria street and the Edinburgh farmers’ market) and the locations that could offer associated spatial characteristics with happiness (including taking turns that could provide awe through offering distinctive scenery or walking along green spaces) intermingled into one continuous path. A number of options were tested by the researcher prior to the

224 Catalino, Algoe, and Fredrickson, ‘Prioritizing Positivity: An Effective Approach to Pursuing Happiness?’
participatory sessions. The underlying selection criteria was to ensure diverse spatial features within one connected path that could be walked over a comfortable time limit and is accessible to all participant. These measures accentuated central urban sites with higher accessibility while facilitating travel for participants during the Covid-19 constraining measures. (See Fig. 10) A 360-degree photography record of the path was documented on the same day of the walks (after the participants walks were over). The photographic record captured the spatial qualities including street furniture such as benches, signage or trees and overall the spatial atmosphere along the designated path. The focus of photography was to seize the urban setting from the same viewpoint and as it was experienced by participants.225

The apparatus used in this study was the dry EEG Muse headband,226 the advanced model of low-cost portable commercial EEG recorders at the time of the research was conducted. The earlier models of the same device have been employed in several studies comprising medical and clinical interventions227 as well as mental health, cognitive and affective monitoring228 both for outdoor stationary or kinetic experiments.229 A systematic review of available low-cost EEG headbands in 2020 as health detection tools compared Neurosky MindWave, Muse, Emotiv Epoc, Emotiv Insight, and OpenBCI and affirmed a high accuracy score for the Muse device.230 Muse was also validated for effectiveness in event-related brain potential (ERP) research, as a device that provides researchers a reliable system for prospective ERP

225 Commercial EEG Muse S headband is a light EEG recorder with dry sensor technology able to record brainwave data outside the laboratory and in real-world environments. And has been used in number of urban studies including projects with the city council of Warsaw. See more: Krzysztof Herman et al., ‘Emotional Well-Being in Urban Wilderness: Assessing States of Calmness and Alertness in Informal Green Spaces (Igss) with Muse—Portable Eeg Headband’. Also see more on Muse gadgets and research projects on the company’s website: https://choosemuse.com/muse-research/


methods with ease in variety of novel contexts. Muse S is a soft headband with dry sensors that conceivably permitted participants to partake in research with more ease, compared to the rigid bands or wet devices that function with gel-on sensors, and provided an opportunity to probe into the emotive states of 5 participants (N= 5, 3 women, 2 men) while taking a pre-planned route in Edinburgh. The brain-walk route was decided based on the previous research findings on places and spatial elements reported as impactful on happiness.

Participation was open to all and voluntary, promoted through social media posts. A goodie bag was offered for completing the walk. The brain-walk event registration was particularly popular, and all the places were booked within a few hours upon availability. One of the participants self-reported epilepsy. Epilepsy is a neurological condition that affects the brainwaves and causes seizures. I communicated with this participant extensively prior to the event, explaining the event and asking on the participant’s condition. The participant expressed genuine interest for participation, acknowledging that the study might have a positive effect on her urban journeys. Although parallel studies often employ “healthy” contributors, I decided to stay true to the research agenda and direct the research “open to all” and “inclusive”, as indeed happy cities would need to be epileptic friendly as well. None of the participants reported use of medication that could change the level of chemicals or the performance of the brain at the time of the study.

Over the course of a 40-minute silent walk through Edinburgh, a participant that was wearing a dry EEG mobile headband (Muse S) and a guide (the researcher) took an immersive walk with a relaxed stride. Each walk’s duration slightly differed due to

232 Muse S features a wireless headband made of soft cloth with a central control unit sitting on the forehead and a set of sensors positioned along the band’s inner surface. There are 7 sensors including EEG to monitor brain activity, PPG for heart rate and pulse oximetry for blood oxygen saturation, as well as gyroscope and accelerometer for movement. See https://chosemuse.com/muse-research/
233 See more on NHS Health page: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/epilepsy/ (Last seen June 2021)
234 Olszewska-Guizzo et al., ‘Window View and the Brain: Effects of Floor Level and Green Cover on the Alpha and Beta Rhythms in a Passive Exposure Eeg Experiment’. Or: Olszewska-Guizzo et al., ‘Can Exposure to Certain Urban Green Spaces Trigger Frontal Alpha Asymmetry in the Brain?— Preliminary Findings from a Passive Task EEG Study’. Also see: Bayee et al., ‘Attentional and Affective Consequences of Technology Supported Mindfulness Training: A Randomised, Active Control, Efficacy Trial’. 
elements such as pedestrian crossing lights and so on. Participants were greeted by
the researcher at the meeting point and after a brief informative conversation had the
chance to ask any questions and feel at ease for the experience. Talking or excessive
muscular activity could affect the brainwaves recording hence participants were
informed that it is important for them to become immersed in the walking activity.
Focusing on each site and breaking down the urban elements that grab their
attention, through walking and seeing. Performed in silence, the walk was guided by
the researcher along a pre-planned specific route. At the beginning of each
session, the Muse S headband connectivity via Bluetooth and all sensors calibration were
checked by the researcher. There were 2 short surveys, one prior and one post walk
to record participants’ general mood. Overall, the study combined Neurourbanism
methods accompanied by additional questionnaires and heart rate monitoring.

![Figure 10. Route selection outline drawn by the author.](image)
Edinburgh brain-walks' data analysis

The EEG device records brainwave patterns, for instance, Muse devices were previously employed as an “attention recorder” monitoring alpha waves.\textsuperscript{235} The brain’s neurons, each independently linked to around thousands of other neurons, interconnect through electrical currents that travel along the complex networks of brain circuits, producing electrical pulses like a wave rippling through the crowd at a stadium, and cause synchronised electrical flows or brainwaves.\textsuperscript{236} Such communication and neuronal activities are considered as reflections of our thoughts, emotions and behaviours; and the frequency (cycles per second) of these oscillations are measured by Hertz (Hz).\textsuperscript{237} In order to accelerate brainwaves evaluation (neurofeedback field), they are categorised based on their oscillation frequency into 5 groups, including gamma (32-100 Hz), beta (13-32 Hz), alpha (8-13 Hz), theta (4-8 Hz) and delta (less than 4 Hz).\textsuperscript{238} As research indicates, each category is associated with corresponding emotive states or experiences as follows: gamma brainwave frequency range is associated with “Learning, cognitive processing, problem solving tasks, mental sharpness, organising brain activities”; beta frequency is linked to “Thinking, focusing, sustained attention, tension, alertness, excitement and high beta to anxiety”; while alpha range is correlating with “Alertness and peacefulness, readiness, meditation, deep relaxation including ‘Recalling’ in lower alpha and ‘Optimised cognitive performance’ in higher alpha”.\textsuperscript{239} Additionally, there are theta range emotional and informational values that are consistently present during “Creativity, insight, unconsciousness or optimal meditative state, depression, anxiety, distractibility” and delta frequencies that are related to “Sleep, repair, complex problem solving,

\textsuperscript{235} Aleksandra Przegalinska et al., ‘Muse Headband: Measuring Tool or a Collaborative Gadget?’, 2018.
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{239} Ibid. Also see: Nancy E. White, ‘Theories of the Effectiveness of Alpha-Theta Training for Multiple Disorders’, in Introduction to Quantitative EEG and Neurofeedback, 1999. See page 345-6 and 348 among others.
unawareness or deep-unconsciousness". It needs to be noted that there are some debatable research findings around several attributions, for instance clinical studies on theta waves indicate some emotional patterns occur in dissimilar behavioural states or reports on gamma frequency could be jeopardised due to overlaps with other hippocampal oscillation such as muscular activity or could be generally enhanced through regular meditation overtime, as observed in Buddhist monks. EEG recordings are considered particularly beneficial in measuring anxiety and stress; appraising high stress responses can be analysed based on a drop in high alpha power (11 to 12 Hz), and an escalation in the high beta wave (23 to 36 Hz). In order to analyse the collected data, the brainwaves’ stimulation were reviewed in relation to exposure to the environmental set ups with happiness factors.

The evolution of the power spectral density (PSD) graph displays the magnitude information about the frequency distribution of EEG signals calculated during the course of a session from the Ear channels. The average power spectral density recorded is divided into three parts of Start, Middle and End. EEG power was slightly more pronounced in the beginning of the sessions (red lines), and a notable mental dexterity is shown based on the left and right ears’ recorded EEG. Moreover, there was a noticeable peak in the delta and theta frequency range (below 8 Hz) in all participants, (Fig. 11) which as I mentioned earlier are the slowest wave brands in EEG spectrum and have been implicated in the deep relaxation or meditation state and daydreaming. The same results are evident in EEG Spectrogram graph that is a time-frequency spectrogram, showing the intensity of oscillatory activity over the

240 Ibid. Also see: Guozhen Zhao, Yulin Zhang, and Yan Ge, ‘Frontal EEG Asymmetry and Middle Line Power Difference in Discrete Emotions’, Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience, 2018.
course of the study. High intensity ranges are signified by red hues and yellow and low intensity regions are displayed by of green and blue tonalities. (Fig. 12) Theta waves have been monitored more regularly in avid meditators, and associated positively with memory, creativity and mental well-being.244 Based on this similar pattern a comparison between meditation and the study could be theoretically justified.

In their book on the science of meditation titled Altered Traits, authors draw on their findings from brain imaging laboratory at the University of Wisconsin and brought into play the term “spaciousness” in order to indicate the state of mind yogis experience due to constant meditating practices (average 10000 hours lifetime practice).245 According to the study’s findings, perpetual meditation enables yogis to “Experience an ongoing state of open, rich awareness during their daily lives, not just when they meditate”;246 and to generate feelings of compassion and to mobilise states of the spacious equanimity and openness as well as a sharp and unbreakable focus. The enunciated content brings to the light the discursive evidence of spatial allowances for mobilising positive emotive states and happiness. The implication of this argument is that it will allow an opening for discussions around spatial experiences potential to foster a beneficial meditative state of being. For instance, the Altered Traits brain lab denoted that yogis have “A spaciousness and vastness in their experience, as if all their senses were wide open to the full, rich panorama of experience”247, likened to an imagined bite into an apple, where brain elicits “Memories stored in different regions of the occipital, temporal, somatosensory, insular, and olfactory cortices to suddenly mesh the sight, smells, taste, feel, and sound into a single experience.”248 A comparable concept to spatial qualities for good reasons; let us recall the farmers’ market that was a part of the study. The market with the colourful stalls and appetising goods, reminds visitors of the familiar flavours and tease all their senses, from taste

246 Ibid.
247 Ibid.
248 Ibid.
buds to the negotiating conversations and social exchanges; allowing for each of corresponding cortical regions to oscillate in synchrony.249

Figure 11. The development of the power spectral density (PSD) graph during the course of a session from both the right and left Ear channels. Drawn by the author based on participants’ Muse EEG records.

249 Ibid.
As anticipated, EEG signals of the epileptic participant indicate discernible differences in spectral density and dexterousness (left and right synchronisation) compared to the rest of the data. Despite the disparity between left and right signals, the results overall follow the general emerged patterns; this could be seen through Spectrogram and Band Powers graphs. (Fig. 13) Band Powers graphs demonstrate the variations in the intensity of the 5 classified brainwave oscillations over time.
Figure 13. 2 participant's EEG Spectrogram graph and Band Powers graph. Representing the variations in the intensity of the 5 classified frequencies over time between the 2 participants. The epileptic EEG indicates a similar pattern for the left ear sensor and the asymmetry brainwave map.

Overall, on average participants spent more than 30 minutes of the session in a calm and serene state of mind (about 70% of the path). That means participants were present and experiencing about 150 natural breaths. The path provided participants with views of natural landscapes and greenspaces on several occasions during the walk, and although multiple studies have confirmed the impact of nature in reducing stress and anxiety, in this study other dynamics should be considered as well.

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250 Muse autogenerated session report. See more in the chapter appendix.
251 Olszewska-Guizzo et al., ‘Window View and the Brain: Effects of Floor Level and Green Cover on the Alpha and Beta Rhythms in a Passive Exposure EEG Experiment’. And: Neale et al., ‘The Impact of Walking in Different Urban Environments on Brain Activity in Older People’. Also see: Olszewska-
including the initial meet and greet with the researcher that might have affected the participants. Participants had average 4 recoveries, this number represents effort spent noticing the distractions and building up focus. Towards the end of the session, participants were generally calmer than the beginning, which is aligned with the participants questionnaire answers and verbal feedback, indicating that they were generally happier, more empathic and relaxed afterwards. (Fig. 14) Here is some comments from the study participants:

“Thoroughly enjoyed the process … You also toured my partner …; we enjoyed discussing the experience of our walks. I could see myself relaxing more towards the end, I became more generally at ease as we went along … Overall, I felt comfortable, and had been looking forward to the event …”

And:

“I really enjoyed the walk. It was a great experience, and very enriching.”

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**Figure 14.** All participants' scores percentage on average for pre-walk questionnaire and post-walk questionnaire (dotted bars). There is a steady rise among all positive emotional determinants after the study.

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252 Muse autogenerated session report. See more in chapter appendix.
The study’s findings are not representative due to a number of factors including mobile EEG technology limitations per se, as current technology offers limited capacity for non-laboratory accuracy and the novelty of related methods leaves many variables indiscernible.\textsuperscript{253} Among additional environmental variables that could be considered for future studies are temperature, humidity or air pollution. Gender specific latent variables were not modelled into the structure of data analysis. Future studies could include measures to test such variables in tandem as some studies suggest that there are gender-based behavioural tendencies, for instance, one study on empathy showed that women had higher cognitive and affective empathy compared to men.\textsuperscript{254} From another perspective, the same variables could be studied with a narrow focus on gender nonconforming behaviours (GNB) or diverse gender identities e.g. transgender, agender, genderqueer and so on and so forth. The study offered the participants an opportunity to become more mindful of their everyday environment and provoked their curiosity of Edinburgh, while probing into the Edinburgh citizens experience of the city, their needs and views and how the built environment relate to happiness. Although the task of questioning how spatial layout affects behaviours has a long way to definite determinants, the collected data provided through participants’ real time recorded brainwaves and the study surveys relays potential pathways that could lead to improved design solutions for public spaces, architecture and spatial experiences.

5.5. Conclusion

Previous chapters have explored studies in happy places, this chapter’s difference is that it was specifically directed based on the effects of Edinburgh city on the residents’ happiness. The study was conducted at the time of the global pandemic, and the results must be comprehended with this acknowledgment. The covid-19 crisis, likely one of the greatest threats to human health this century, had substantially influenced the study and its participants and in turn provided novel information and original

\textsuperscript{253} Herman, Ciechanowski, and Przegalińska, ‘Emotional Well-Being in Urban Wilderness: Assessing States of Calmness and Alertness in Informal Green Spaces (Igss) with Muse—Portable EEG Headband’.

convening formats. Lessons from carrying out qualitative research under lockdown with its practical and ethical considerations, and the study methods could be applied in the future studies on pandemic-related work and/or to document and analyse the interrelations of the place, spatial narratives and emotive properties in order to benefit architecture, urban design and planning.

In general, the study participants provided positive narrations of flow-inducing places including places that ease the engagement of all senses as well as the natural settings including waterfronts and greenspaces. The results also shed light on the role of memories on positive or negative affect generated by users’ individual and social recollections and the happiness that could stem from familiarity, attachment or taking pride in a place. The synergy of interwoven individual and local or temporal collective memories as well as future aspirations form “Hybrid layouts” where the city operates at the intersection of emotive and spatial infrastructures. Therefore, the spatial happiness in hybrid layouts could radically differ depending on their background or collective recollections. Recognising the dynamics of hybrid layouts carries a drastic rethinking of the term "city", and the necessity to incorporate in its definition the set of operational landscapes on which the city depends, and in the context of spatial happiness, to propose alternative urban development models that are conscious and considerate to the existing or potential hybrid layouts.

Urban settings that facilitate social connection and provide infrastructures of citywide attempts at setting identity or expressing people’s worries and desires to the mechanisms of power were appreciated by the study’s participants. Efficient and functioning urban furniture appeared significant in promoting a comfortable and happy place that can promote both social encounters and a sense of safety through its well-ordered arrangements. The vital role of urban furniture in setting a certain spatial atmosphere and promoting the quality of urban experience is to the extent that it can be even utilised for therapeutic purposes as shown through the example of Breathing Space Bench project by North Lanarkshire Council and Breathing Space Scotland. The collected data also confirms the significance of built material in our place-based emotions, for instance materials such as stone were linked to resilience and strength on a sublime level. The mapped happy places can be used in urban management and
planning for their potentiality for spatial pedagogy in order to create positive societal and cultural change and mobilise urban potentials.

The study also showed that spatial happiness is not a utopian ideal for perfection, and to trigger and increase the extent of which we are experiencing emotive traits is where spatial design comes in. This includes the momentary triggers and the process of longer-term meaningful experiences and the accumulation of momentary experiences. Consequently, the creation of a happy place would be a constant process with coexisting emotive zones. The tale of happy cities would be no slaying the dragon and no happily ever after, rather happy cities are outcomes of an ongoing effort that enables the promotion of spatial positive traits. That is why hundreds of countries that fall short in the classified comparative lists for their levels of happiness should not lose hope, and I urge their residents to not find themselves slightly unhappier after noticing their country is supposedly not a happy one. As this study illustrated, place can integrate emotive experiences into the fabric of users’ everyday existence, smoothly and powerfully, and it leaves us space to be intentional in the difficult task, and yet rewarding pursuit of happiness.
Chapter 6. Discussion

In the first chapter I raised the question of pressing “Happiness Button” composed of two underlying concepts, first, if happiness was immediately attainable at the press of a button, would you have chosen a happy outcome versus an unhappy one? And second, would you prefer to press the button for instant happiness or would you choose to pursue happiness on your own despite the potential adversities? The “Happiness Button” enquiry was also examined by Dacher Keltner, professor of psychology, during the Human Happiness course at University of California Berkeley over the years. According to professor Keltner, most of students, said “No.” as “happiness without their own personal pursuit really doesn’t mean much at all.”¹ This aligns with the study’s findings on happiness as an ongoing journey and its spatial translation as the process of placemaking rather than a utopian destination.

In this respect, the practical approach to urban studies and Patrick Geddes is of particular interest. Geddes, human ecologist and the Scottish pioneer of urban planning, endorsed a comprehensive “place” and “people” framework for urbanisation and even advocated methods of “city survey”, to achieve cities fit for health and happiness.² Although he was criticised for his complete emphasis on the survey³ method for the study of cities, since urban surveys despite offering vital information in urban development, are heavily subjected to the participants’ ability to respond and articulate ideas, that is in turn directly influenced by the level of education, instantly creating a disparity in results based on the participants social background. Other limitations are including but not limited to inflexibility in answers due to the fixed questions, potential lack of depth in answers and dependence on collection sample.⁴

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¹ See more in the first chapter “a critique of happiness” section. Keltner and Kalantari, ‘Three Good Things’. (Last accessed September 2023)
According to Geddes, it is important to recognise that cities are dissimilar and have their own strength and weakness, character and communities as well as past, present and future, and therefore there is no blueprint for an ideal city. Geddes decisively argued that “no such blueprint could even be developed and applied to cities in different geographical, cultural and political conditions. Besides, after all, cities like other living things were in a state of constant change.” Bearing this fundamental acknowledgement in mind, the discussion chapter positions on the study narratives that promote spatial happiness and placemaking process within its documented context. The previous chapters of the text presented an analytical overview of the social and spatial narratives of happiness literature and the data collection methods as well as the results obtained in the study. This chapter debates the study findings with respect to the research questions, and evaluates the theoretical discourse based on the findings which informs the practical recommendations presented in the next chapter.

6.1. Research question 1

What spatial elements kindle playfulness and happiness for children?

The first research question explores playfulness in spatial design and the potential role children’s engagement could achieve in understanding play and happiness connotations. The dedicated case study was organically formed as a result of providing a participation opportunity for children to express their perception of happy places and model their own version of a happy playground, which in turn provided perceptions of happiness and play embedded in childhood, and the study of roots of adult happiness. The hands-on workshop with children provided an embodied experience allowing the organic movement for play to be expressed, this was showcased through the children’s curiosity and enjoyment and choosing to engage fully, and presented embodied data consisting of the messages that children conveyed through their embodied presence. Including the responsiveness that highlights the

study participants’ focused conviction in probable expressions of a happy place. And the children’s unquestioning resolve to draw or model a happy place based on descriptions from their memories or imaginary scenarios. The expert group of professional architects after studying the workshop results agreed that most adults could relate to the shared fundamental values that children highlighted through their narratives, and therefore the happiness in children’s imagined space would be contagious. It was also mentioned that simply seeing the children’s drawings and models stimulated smiles, and this could be a telling sign about the quality of children’s suggested designs.

The analysis of children’s drawings and models clearly shows that for the study participants the narrative enquiry responded affectively in relation to the play and happiness criteria. There was a significant inclination towards nature, greenery including flowers or fruits on the trees, and outdoor play. This echoes the findings from previous studies that associate children’s preference of the natural environments and outdoor play to their facilitation of the child-initiated activities, high levels of involvement with surroundings such as climbing and swinging opportunities, as well as flexibility and possibility of discovery. More than 40 percent of the workshop’s drawings include natural elements such as the sun, stars, trees, clouds and mountains, as well as water, further suggesting the need for linking urban and natural environments to fulfil children’s narrative of spatial happiness. Nature and green spaces also offer interactive instances and rich sensory experiences through expanding the extent to which place could be discerned through the senses, for instance the smell of the flowers or plants could provide sensory information on the environment. This is in line with previous studies on children’s learning environments. The findings suggest that the importance of sensory information on highly embodied spatial experience could potentially extend to the cityscape design and intervention. It

8 Matluba Khan, ‘Environment, Engagement and Education’ (The University of Edinburgh, 2017).
is also noteworthy that the expert group unanimously reported nature and green spaces in addition to outdoor play as the dominant threads in children’s narratives.

A significant theme that children’s drawings and models bring to the foreground is the inclusive environments that encourage inter-species emotive engagement. From fanciful creatures such as unicorns to the child’s pet, and the bees and birds on fruit trees and bushes, the children’s rendition of a happy place embraces every being despite their differences. This is a reflective evidence that for the study participants, spatial happiness could be heightened based on the potentiality of inter-species emotive engagement and inclusive environments. The animal’s strong presence in the study participants’ narratives could also partly lie in the cuddly characteristic of children’s toys. This compliments clinical studies on experiencing higher levels of oxytocin (OT) hormone with hugging, that is able to reduce blood pressure, distress and negative feelings. The study’s findings could spark further discussions on the account of animals and hugging trajectory for children, for instance it could inspire biomorphic architecture.

The results also reveal affective qualities associated with spatial happiness including sense of individual and social achievement and pride, love, affection and friendship as well as curiosity. More than 40 percent of the drawings displayed some form of affection, while around 30 percent showed the interaction of children and other people. The findings propose that the experience of affection is subject to spatial affordances, for instance, getting closer in a small space is able to create physical intimacy. The very expression “getting closer”, can be understood both as a corporal experience and a cordial one, echoing findings from previous studies on dating and courtship. The

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study results reveal the embedded opportunities for affection and friendship in sociable places, such as informal encounters\textsuperscript{11}, co-awareness and organic co-presence and movement patterns, initiating new possibilities for future research in urban studies that concern with urban courtship dynamics and agential social connection. Since the behaviours that support operational values of companionship are essentially spatial and local, the role of architecture and the spatial affordances in facilitating friendship is vital. Future studies could address the spatial implications of dating and friendship in more details.

The children’s spatial narratives of happiness depicted “home” as a central place to everyday experiences of comfort, which resonates with the previous work on the impact of “Hygge” on happiness, that is the Danish word for creating intimacy and cosiness that results in “a feeling of home”, including the warmth, togetherness and belonging.\textsuperscript{12} Hygge could be expanded beyond the physical boundaries of home into the urban sphere, for instance through the rituals that instigate a sense of familiarity and feeling safe. Children’s spatial narratives of happiness by calling attention to the correlation between happiness and playful activities, encourage the cultivation of urban design objectives such as considering streets as “places” with possibilities of encounter and affective exchange rather than mere means of travel. The particular example of “streets as places” per se is supported by the excising literature.\textsuperscript{13}

Abundance in colour was another emergent theme and could be partially due to an innate inclination towards aesthetics of joy. It could also indicate the joy that we experience facing abundance per se, similar to the delight of a child in a candy shop, and complies with the studies on evolutionary origins of human psyche.\textsuperscript{14} The abundant use of colours could also imply a political protest against our relatively monotone cities, providing an outlet for the study participants to utilise play in order to reshape the


\textsuperscript{12} Wiking, The Little Book of Hygge: The Danish Way to Live Well. See the introduction.


\textsuperscript{14} Harari, Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind.
imagined happy place based on their own interests. In spite of the verifying literature that admits colours as emotive stimuli, the notion has a limited sway in architecture both in literature and practice. Previous studies have categorised colours into positive and negative clusters, often associating yellow and red-yellow (orange) with positive affect, happiness and joy, visually dispensing the warming effect of sun.\textsuperscript{15} Another spatial key to happiness discovered from analysing the participants’ narratives was the degree to which synthesised spatial elements were able to promote a sense of harmony, that is a balanced and well arranged, intelligibly rhythmic and user-friendly scaled pattern. The literal translation of spatial harmony in urban design could be the agreement of parts to the whole, where elements, despite their discrepancies, form a consistent order with accordance to the whole.\textsuperscript{16} Spatial harmony could be also defined as the opposite of spatial dissonance, and concerns with the interrelations of the components of an urban scene such as buildings or streets, all of which interdependent in creating an overall entity that is perceived by the user. Future line of research can be built on the correlation between spatial harmony and positive affect.

6.2. Research question 2

*What are the sonic values of a happy place?*

The second research question studies a less considered line of enquiry and explores the prevalence or absence of the sonic trajectory of spatial happiness or emotive labels of sound identification. In order to study the sonic values of spatial happiness a creative and interdisciplinary approach was devised to provide a space for innovation and research that promotes projects that are proficient at bringing together and intertwining diverse disciplines or intermediate positions between emotive experiences and spatial practice.


The data analysis revealed strong correlation between the natural settings and happiness. The study participants used keywords such as nature, forest, green, natural, garden, prairie, beach, mountains, wild, near water, by the river, trails and so on. During the discussion, more details were incorporated by the participants that added texture and richness to the narrative enquiry, including the following descriptions of spatial happiness: places that one can breathe “fresh air”, bask in the “sun” and “sunshine” enjoying the “breeze in the hair”, while “watching the skies”, a “peaceful” or “calm” place, where you can “watch birds” and “rabbits”. While the thematic analysis reflects on the theoretical patterns, it is through the stories shared by the participants that more elaborate rendering of happy places became possible. Participants also cited spatial affordances such as safety, comfortability and social interactions, depicting the following narratives: a safe place, where there are “small children playing”, a “coffee shop” or “pub”; where one can “comfortably” sit around a “table” with “family” or “loved” ones and there are “voices of friends”, “other people talking” and “glass clinking”. The findings suggest spatial happiness is a thread that is capable of uniting people, time, place, animals and plants due to its emotive appeal.

Similar identifying themes were extended to the spatial sonic structures by the participants, referring to the nature’s nonhuman sounds, such as “thunder”, “splash”, “wind”, “apples dropping”, and “trees rustling”. Indeed, these sounds could be heard in cityscape as well, that is if they are not lost among the usual urban noises, and one message for designers here is to create and promote oases of calm within the constant commotions of urban sounds. Drawing on the juxtaposition of formless urban sonic configurations and the immersive spectrum of nature aural diversities, one participant commented that: “Birdsong, bees humming, wind sighing. It is peaceful. It quiets my soul. The landscape and the sky have such a breadth to it, I feel free and refreshed.” An extension to the prominence of nature in study results is a craving for animal sounds among the participants. “geese hissing”, “dog barking”, “crows pecking at the ground”, “birds landing on water” and “squirrels chattering”. Considering how the urban design of our cities often exclude nonhuman species, the study findings emphasises the importance of inclusion in spatial happiness. Future studies could further investigate how spatial design can produce a certain patterning of ecology in order to benefit inter-species coexistence. The findings reaffirm the prior case study resulting terrains.
The collected data is significantly shaped by participants’ fixation on nature soundscapes, which in turn initiates questions on its contrasting qualities to the cityscape in terms of offering equal opportunities and freedom to explore away from anxiety. The social hierarchy that rules the urban context, the enforced materialisation of a far-reaching system of capitalist control and hegemonic power that strip place from potential nourishing affordances and encapsulate people isolated against the mechanisms of power, imposing discrimination and devaluation on the users that is costly to societies and individuals’ health and happiness alike. Support for this proposition could be found in previous studies for both architectural and happiness discourses. It could be concluded that promoting social connection through design and urban practices as well as participatory and community involvement in different stages of urban research and planning are vital in fostering spatial happiness.

Both visual and sonic features of study narratives of spatial happiness signify that there is not a single meaning to happy places but a series of associations that affect us in many ways, and it becomes apparent that individual maps differ, and that there are overlaps and underlays. The findings suggest that the structural components of everyday life encoded into the place do engage individuals’ familiarity and can construct positive feelings, all of which with regards to the frequency as well as intensity of experience could promote spatial happiness. Our ways of inhabiting everyday places over time and daily routines that moderate the ordinary are consistently shaping and reshaping our perception of happiness and happy places. The film was able to achieve a thorough representation of the interactions between the sensory and the affective in actual places, and moreover reaffirmed that composing a happy place, or a symphony of its sounds, is reliant on every part of the multi-layered spatial arrangement and their harmonic correspondence to other parts and the whole.

The findings advocate a novel approach to the research on the impact of sonic and sensory dimension of spatial experiences on users’ emotive state, contrary to the

previous literature that emphasises on sound diffusion or cancellation, such as soundproofing against the passage of noise or enhancing auditory experience in specific venues such as theatres rather than affective domains of sonic structures. This study provides a cornerstone for further reflections on soundscapes to promote spatial happiness in different stages of design process. The study enquired and documented how sound is evaluated in relation to happiness, employing graphic notation combined with cinematic cartography through a digital workshop, and future studies could also draw on similar methods in order to discover how sound or other sensory means of spatial perception are conceptualised in relation to happiness and other emotive states. Another potential orientation for future work is to further distinguish the diverse sounds within nature, their emotive stimuli and the exact decibel and measurements of the highlighted sound marks. The study participants were all female and therefore additional studies could explore gender specific latent connections between sonic perceptions and spatial happiness. Overall, the sonic sensory perception of spatial happiness should be a point of consideration for architects, designers and urban decisionmakers and the bourgeoning literature.

6.3. Research question 3

What are the spatial narratives of Edinburgh that play a role in community and individual happiness?

The third research question highlights the community role in happiness studies and accordingly employs a community engagement approach to enable an original way of engaging with our everyday environments, documenting spatial narratives as well as allowing participants to communicate ideas and stories behind their affective experiences. A combination of methods including urban photography, diaries, brain-walks and poetry were used to document a contextualised snapshot of communities

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of Edinburgh during the Covid-19 pandemic, capturing the interrelated narratives of spatial happiness for individuals and communities. A general finding of the study has been recognising spatial happiness as a process instead of a utopian ideal for perfection, a finding that is confirmed by several prior studies. Spatial happiness concerns triggering and promoting the extent of which we are experiencing positive affect, including the momentary triggers and the course of longer-term meaningful experiences and the accumulation of momentary experiences. Thus, the creation of a happy place would be a constant practice of fostering positive spatial traits with coexisting emotive zones. The case study assessment suggests that place can integrate emotive experiences into the fabric of users’ everyday existence intricately, opening up possibilities for participatory placemaking practices from which affective experimentation and agency could be encouraged, purposely transgressing the disciplinary barriers of urban design to generate outcomes with a critical and human value while animating intellectual debate and awareness.

The study further showed the transformative capacity of “home” in affecting happiness due to the numerous ways through which thoughts of home engages the user during the day. Home as the dominated refuge, the centre of strong attachment and familiar territory with psychological and architectural impact, is a consistent thread of spatial happiness that I have discussed in previous section as well. Home with high affordances of promoting comfort, sense of belonging and safety as well as being a pivot for developing personal and social relations in addition to instigating love and obeisance, provides a place to come back to. The impacts of all of which could be extended from private to urban quarters for the purpose of promoting spatial happiness. One tangible example from the study’s diaries was several mentioning of “Laundry”, that is a good example of an urban expression for a domestic comfort. As we see in cities like Venice, the hanged laundry in alleys turn into an urban characteristic. The potential of which is further evidenced in one participant’s poem that describes the entire city of Edinburgh as home:

“A city with a special past
And architecture built to last
A vibrant open city
Monumental – pretty
Home to many races
A place that all embraces.
HOME.”

The links between spatial narratives of happiness and home could pose a challenge or an opportunity for designers and decision makers to construct or restore home-like features such as togetherness in urban experiences, several approaches to which has been proposed throughout this study.

Another key finding from the case study analysis was the correlation between flow-inducing places and happiness. Previous studies in psychology have established flow as an optimal state of total absorption in an enjoyable activity to the extent that one could lose a sense of time, including during activities such as games or immersive entertaining events. Flow results in integration with self and others and cultivates social solidarity, while being enjoyable to individuals and giving depth and richness to emotive experiences and learnt skills. And by extension, spatial flow could be defined as the extent to which place is capable of promoting affective flow episodes. Flow-inducing places are able to facilitate a harmonious experience through concentrating all the senses as well as intellectual and emotive intentions on a singular experience. The findings suggest that urban design could affect happiness through empowering spatial flow, including but not limited to providing structures for entertaining Street Art or managing the commercial banners and visual chaos and sonic pollution in some urban areas that break the urban rhythm by distracting pedestrian and vehicular users alike, disrupting the affective flow domains.

The case study evaluation also confirmed the theoretical findings of the chapter 1, in particular the impact of elements of surprise and curiosity on spatial happiness, that one would experience transiting from a high street like the Edinburgh Royal Mile to

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one of its adjacent closes, where with just one turn or a few steps the configuration,
usage patterns and visual components of place are drastically dissimilar. The future
studies could develop strategies to increase such urban aha moments, for instance
the probability of multiplying aha moments through the integration of specific land use
such as unique shops in some less expected areas with low global and high local
accessibility links.

A narrative review of various spots in Edinburgh was mapped, with a creative
approach to evaluate the themes participants find worthy of mapping, including their
pet’s favourite place for a walk or the places that one wish to visit with friends. The
maps were assessed both individually and collectively, and the result is an interactive
map that marks places with a high potential for affective qualities according to their
frequency as well as shared social and spatial attributions, accompanied by the
participants’ keywords and comments. The Edinburgh CCC collective map can be
used to raise awareness on local experiences of Edinburgh for residents,
interdisciplinary researchers and as a mobilising instrument for local activism or
administrative interventions as well as contributing to comparative studies in the wider
context. For instance, studied jointly with the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
2020 map, it appears that some of the relatively deprived areas in the city of Edinburgh
like Granton offer multiple nodes of spatial happiness according to this study’s
participants, displaying potential and hope for future urban intervention.21 The clusters
of spatial happiness were also mapped, that is the aggregation of labelled happy
places in close proximity. The hotspot map could be studied diversely, one approach
is for researchers, urban activists and decision makers to initiate a sustained interest
in the shown cold spots (low values for spatial happiness occurrence). Future work
could also further assess the characteristics of the illustrated cold spots and potentially
implement the findings of this study to nurture the emotive experience of the place.
Another approach is to focus on the hot spots (high potential for spatial happiness)
and could be applied in urban planning for their potentiality for spatial pedagogy and

21 See the interactive map collected from the study participants and digitally drawn by the author:
Also see the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 that is a tool by the Scottish Government identifying areas with
relatively high levels of deprivation. See more: https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-
multiple-deprivation-2020/ Also see the interactive map: https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTFTT/9/-
4.0000/55.9000/ (accessed August 16, 2022)
creating positive social and cultural development. Since there is already a positive association and sense of emotive gratification for the hot spots, they are ripe environments for affective domains and eliciting reward response in forming positive consequential habits. Positive habits can increase awareness, health and happiness through cultivating comfort, ease and a sense of being at home. One example could be planting drinkable water fountains and stations in proximity of hot spots, to increase the frequency of consumption in drinking habits through exposure and increased familiarity as well as removing the barriers, all of which eliminates spatial frictions to the positive habit formation and enables the context to activate user behaviour stabilising the drinking water habit, that could be applied to other positive habits as well. The results encourage further experimental approaches to the study of spatial affordances in relation to forming positive habits and cultural change.

The findings suggest that for the study participants the density of the urban configuration and the sky area or the skyline in view are positively related to the spatial happiness. Over 90 percent of the shared photos have captured the sky in some way, displaying its importance in photographers’ eyes. Edinburgh’s skyline was also mentioned by a participant as the most beautiful place in Edinburgh: “For me it’s not a place, but the skyline. Whether seen from Holyrood, or top deck of a bus turning into the Princes street or from Regent’s place.” Paralleling previous studies findings that most people have a compulsive inclination for prospect-refuge environments, namely landscapes that provide the optimum conditions for an enhanced observation field (prospect), accessible paths of movement and available places of refuge. Additionally, there is an aesthetic pleasure in prospect-refuge favourable landscapes, since observers can experience satisfaction of such inborn needs. It is important to note the skyline in view is a dynamic spatial aspect for urban users and subject to mobility and the horizon of movement, providing a basis for speculating what lies ahead. The results imply that spatial happiness could be a potential variable for the building regulations that control the cities skylines or price the air rights.

The collected data reaffirms the inclination towards the natural settings, green spaces and a connection to waterfronts. Acknowledging the impact of nature, green spaces as well as waterfronts and bodies of water in people’s emotive experiences could highly stimulate urban developments in cities with the infrastructural aptitude. Additionally, the dominant presence of urban furniture in the collected narratives cannot be ignored. Urban furniture could be broadly considered a matter of convenience and comfortability, that is able to initiate social interactions and encounters, in addition to instilling happiness, a sense of safety and positive spatial experiences, overall affecting a fulfilling urban experience and the quality of life. This does not contradict the findings in previous studies regarding the increased safety due to the well-designed spatial arrangements and well-kept urban furniture. Urban furniture could be the thread that reflects and reinforces the patterns of movement in happy cities, even facilitating therapeutic practices for mental health, as demonstrated through the example of Breathing Space Bench project by North Lanarkshire Council in Scotland.

The study narratives indicate a strong correlation between festivals and spatial happiness. Festivals are not merely institutional collaboration trails, but also a citywide attempt at setting identity through a prolonged sense of belonging and supporting social connection in a cultural and inclusive way. Festival’s temporal and mobile nature in addition to its collective rituality and facilitation of encounters that also provides opportunities to incite wonder and awe, could be seen as a trigger event that boosts individuals’ satisfaction and happiness. This is consistent with several previous studies and further extended to other spontaneous urban events offering heightened exhilaration such as political protests, sports celebrations and concerts.


24 See “Park Benches promote mental wellbeing article published on Breathing Space website: https://breathingspace.scot/news/2022/park-benches-promote-mental-health-wellbeing/ (last viewed September 2023)

are also able to provoke an emotional field and affective embodied experiences, such as 'reciprocity of intention' within the body of the spectators, examples of which could be seen when the crowd cheer or dance to the tune of festival dancers and the loud buskers’ music. Providing opportunities to bring the body into focus and promote places that allow body to move, extend, the bodily functions as well as enhanced bodily experience, and even become more able in certain ways.

Other interrelated emerged themes include the multi-sensory spatial identification emphasising body as an integrated body, as well as the associated meanings and semiotic importance of built material such as immediate and sublime conjectures of strength, stability and patience to stone, the dominant built material in the city of Edinburgh. The findings indicate that the visual texture and physical feel of the built environment material could initiate or reinforce the affect field and therefore influence spatial happiness. Similar observations were made previously but primarily in the field of interior design, future studies could benefit from studying the ways in which diverse material such as glass, concrete, or wood might impact spatial happiness.

The findings imply that for the study participants, individual and collective memories mediated the dynamics of the spatial perception process and flows of accumulation and transformation of information in spatial experiences. The positive or negative affect generated by users’ memories are immediate and long-lasting emotive triggers, and their sentimental value sometimes can overshadow other associations or evoked emotive experiences. The study results support previous research on memories being viscerally grounded in user perception of place. Since both “memorable” and “commemorative” places could be categorised as places with high affordability in


Norman, Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things. See section 3 and 4 for references to visceral design connections to the product material.

either creating, conserving or conjuring up memories, it is essential to recognise the ways in which intimately connected individual and local or temporal collective memories form “Hybrid layouts” where the city operates at the intersection of emotive and spatial infrastructures. Understanding hybrid layouts promotes a novel comprehension of the term "city", and the necessity to incorporate in its definition the set of operational landscapes on which the city depends, including the individual and collective memories as well as future aspirations, and in the context of spatial happiness, to propose alternative urban development models that are aware and considerate to the existing hybrid layouts.

6.4. The influence of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the study

The devastation caused by COVID-19 in cities all over the world, compels a detailed acknowledgement due to its impact on the study methods as well as its reflection on the participants circumstances. With the exception of the pilot study and the workshop with children explored in chapters 2 and 3 successively, the rest of the study methods were either partially or entirely conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regarding the Collective Sounds of Happy Places discussed in chapter 4, the initial project was designed differently and due to the pandemic restrictions ethical and appropriate changes were applied. While the initial plan was to collect graphic notation scores from the participants during an urban tour in Edinburgh and concluding the event in a live performance based on the collected compositions, due to the lockdown in place and to reflect the COVID-19 challenges, it was essential to address the pandemic both in methodology and research premise in order to justify the research’s accountability and relevance. Therefore, the project was redesigned to document not only the sonic structures of happy places, but also the 2020 pandemic influence in the ways in which spatial happiness is perceived. It is also acknowledged that the same challenges were applicable to the study results, as the participants’ social interaction and urban mobility were restricted, however the findings present unexpected advantages as well, such as understanding characteristics of spatial happiness during the unprecedented time of global pandemic as well as the emotive comprehension that was possible because of the pandemic circumstances, including the sonic evaluation of participants’ living spaces and reminiscing in certain experiences that otherwise were rather ordinary to appreciate and their true worth were recognised.
were they were not commonplace anymore, allowing experimental and imaginative approach to everyday places under the “new normal” conditions.

Chapter 5 draws on Edinburgh Collective Cognitive Cartography project led by the researcher in 2021, and unlike chapter 4, it was entirely designed and conducted during the global pandemic, and therefore was able to fully utilise the challenges and openings distinctive to the COVID-19 pandemic in Edinburgh. The study participants were physically distanced and by the ways of “new normal” also socially excluded, as they were unable to participate in the normal activities despite their willingness, due to factors beyond their control. The implications of local residency without warranted entitlements and social distancing accentuated the isolation and exclusion for communities who were already taxed and distressed by the chaotic nature of the pandemic, such as a sense of lacking controllability, personal harm or likelihood of losing acquaintances, financial distress and lack of interaction in community due to the lockdowns and disruption of everyday routines. These conditions offered a distinct setting to study individual and community happiness, for one thing, it brought post-disaster social and spatial relations as key characteristics of coping and resilience into light and for another thing, provided participants with opportunities to engage and promote happiness, reflecting on the study’s values. To the people who were grappling with the uncertainty and constant changes, disconnected from their surroundings and the city they were living in, participation in Edinburgh CCC was acquiring a degree of control over the self-paced project and the commenced discussions, providing participants with an opportunity to exercise control over things that one can control, aiding them to expand their control domain and to reconcile with their happy memories and happy places as well as distinguishing between “familiar” and “pleasant” that was enabled because of the research timing. Edinburgh CCC provided an initiative to invite Edinburgh citizens to revisit and rediscover themselves and their surroundings that otherwise might have been too time consuming for many. Overall, the data collection was not threat-oriented but opportunity-oriented, for instance, the pandemic accelerated a combination of in person participation (chapter 2 and 3) and online digital workshops (chapter 4 and 5), permitting diverse modes of communication and participatory engagement.
It is also acknowledged that reverberations of the global pandemic did not affect everyone in the same way or to the same degree, for instance some studies show vulnerable communities were disproportionately affected\(^{29}\) due to their limited access to social and health infrastructures or greater exposure to the virus, all of which have spatial implications. Future studies could employ vulnerable and marginalised communities to document and analyse the interrelations of the place and emotive properties as well as potential studies on pandemic-related work. Another underlying lesson from the COVID-19 global transmission was that whether to study or to realise spatial happiness, it is impractical to separate individual and community wellbeing and happiness due to their interwoven roots.\(^{30}\)

6.5. The influence of participatory methods

The study methods reflect the values the research project instils. Participatory approaches were the organic form of enquiry to study spatial narratives of everyday environments, as capturing detailed emotive expressions of place was only possible through the process of spatial users' participation.\(^{31}\) The process that in its own right, was a step towards realising spatial happiness. The workshops and cultural probes as well as urban tours could be seen as urban prompts that strengthen the citizens’ agency through participation in academic research.\(^{32}\) As each method was structured on the basis of a set of rules, and was an embodied experience exploring the participants’ emotive trajectory in place, the methods were also able to reinforce the concept of play, which was previously established as an emotive component to happiness.\(^{33}\) Play as an embodied experience, even for virtual games with the current technological advancements, integrates our bodies into an element of its rules. Sometimes limiting our world to the game board, and sometimes extending our


\(^{30}\) See more on “community and its spatial happiness” section in chapter 1. Also see: Tabensky, *Happiness: Personhood, Community, Purpose.*


\(^{33}\) See chapter 1 and the section on “happiness playgrounds” as well as chapter 3 “the conceptual framework” section.
abilities beyond our mundane experiences, for instance every amateur chess player has had a king and its whole army unconditionally compliant. If we acknowledge this much, then we can better empathise with the study participants experience while engaging with the project. Through the study prompts that encouraged curiosity and original understandings of the place, through the recreational activities that elicited mindful movement from one place to another, and through highlighting the comfort and emotive support that place can offer based on the participants’ responses in affective and embodied ways. Ultimately pointing to the significance of affective presence of place in our everyday lives. As demonstrated by the participants’ feedback, appropriate measures were taken to elevate the participation experience, with the ambition to collect sincere, and authentic responses from participants through maintaining a safe space for intuition and insight. A future line of research could compare participants’ experience and the accuracy rate of study results between novel creative methods such as this study and other ethnographic methods such as surveys with fixed questions or structured interviews.

34 The FCL and ESRC feedback forms were collected independently by the awarding body. See chapter 5 “hands on material selection and activity pack design” section as well as the study appendices.
6.6. Summary of findings

The study concludes that for the study participants, special settings, when capable to deepen our satisfaction, whether due to visual or sonic aesthetics or because of the field of possible actions they provide, or their reflective affordances, can affect our happiness. Further use of comparable participatory and creative data collection methods could offer a flexible approach to future urban design and placemaking processes with regards to affective domains. A wide range of spatial qualities affect happiness on different levels, and therefore wide-ranging spatial policies could be implemented. For instance, participatory and inclusive approaches on the micro level, could lead to raised awareness among designers and communities on the meso level, which in turn could result in sustainable decision-making on the macro level. An example for micro spatial happiness in the case of this study could be developing tailored methods to pursue the research questions. (See fig. 1) Key conceptual building blocks for comparative line of research on spatial happiness and affective domains were introduced such as the “hybrid layouts” and “spatial harmony” terms. Spatial happiness process could be seen as the means of promoting the self-compositional development of our social ecosystems for the greater good, which, if well designed, has the potential to transform the structures of the urban development for the benefit of all the entities that conform it, as well as suggesting new planning models applicable to communities, cities, and even entire nations. The research confirms that for the evaluated case studies the centrality of affective registers promote ethical interactions and social sensitivities. The study narratives carry spatial hope, and within their own context they emerge realisable and capable to bring the best of every place to resurface.
Figure 1. A wide range of spatial qualities affect happiness on different levels, including the macro, meso and micro levels, some examples of which could be seen here, drawn by the author.
Chapter 7. Conclusion

Reaching the end of this study, the trajectory of findings indicate that this will be the beginning of further research in the spatial happiness field. Therefore, this closing chapter is structured in four main parts. Firstly, it provides an outline of the significance and main points explored in this research. Next, it refers to its theoretical and methodological as well as practical contributions. Finally, it reflects on the future of what this thesis proposes as spatial happiness.

7.1. Contribution to knowledge

Since the beginning of this PhD study, the literature on happy cities has been growing, showcasing that the subject chimes with the people’s broader beliefs. However, many unanswered questions regarding spatial happiness remain, even though happiness is a core value to the definition of urban planning practices such as placemaking.

“Placemaking: A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. It capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and wellbeing.”

A drawback of many of previous approaches to spatial happiness was the narrow focus on one or few spatial attributions. Such developments could give way to restrained environments that defeat the purpose of happy places in essence. Similar to what the architecture critic and author, Goldberger describes as “not a true public realm”:

“A measured, controlled, organized kind of city experience ... it disdains randomness, the difficulty, and the inconsistency of real cities. It is without hard edges, without a past, and without a respect for the pain and complexity of

2 See the first chapter of this study, the section on spatial happiness among others.
authentic urban experience. It is suburban in its values, and middle-class to its core."³

It would be a tragic misunderstanding to regard happy cities as places that force everyone into happiness or condemn other emotive states. In other words, a happy city does not aim for disregarding the complex emotions of its users by focusing on a sole emotive state, nor is it targeting an impeccable designed site. As these approaches contrast the essential constituents of happiness by defying authentic and meaningful experiences, and they fail to potentiate genuine positive emotional experiences in time. Spatial happiness promotes inclusive and accessible settings for dwellers, people and animals⁴, and therefore any attempts at glorifying certain parts of a city or gentrification would oppose the essence of happy places. The point of distinction for a happy city, is in understanding and acknowledging spatial infrastructures that carry emotional weights, both by users and designers or decision makers. Recognising the properties that tend to recur as happy places, will allow us to render the patterns that are helpful in providing some insights in how spatial arrangements are understood and felt and how we can improve their qualities based on the design or users’ requisites. Essentially, to exploit or abandon spatial arrangements that promote positive feelings is a choice made by decision makers and stakeholders, yet this view does not only serve the purpose of fostering wellbeing, as it also provides perceptions to an expressive urban representation that integrates emotional experiences into architectural properties. As Eamonn Canniffe, architect and author of *Urban Ethic: Design in the Contemporary City* argues, for a city to be ethical, individual expressions and community experiences need to be documented and represented.⁵

In that sense, there are no ultimate happy cities, but cities could always become happier. Happy cities, similar to the notion of happiness, are a process of becoming, and a journey rather than a destination. Happy places provide physical and emotional

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⁴ See chapter 3 of this study, the section on modelling a happy playground.

⁵ Eamonn Canniffe is an architect and author, currently a principal lecturer in the University of Manchester for Architecture and urban design. Eamonn Canniffe, *Urban Ethic: Design in the Contemporary City*, *Urban Ethic: Design in the Contemporary City*, Routledge 2006. See page 91.
comfort and promote health and wellbeing while encourage positive and meaningful experiences and encounters. This study explores diverse viewpoints, narratives and approaches that promote spatial qualities such as encounter-ability or utilising wellbeing functions and visual and sonic expectations of place with emphasis on methods that can encourage systematic local approaches rather than universal remedies.

7.1.1. Theoretical and methodological contributions

The study suggests instrumental community engagement actions to approach spatial happiness determinants with a local and regional understanding and global visioning. From explorations on transpatial urban relations to luck or patterns of encounter, this study gathers the interweaving thresholds and threads of happiness studies and its connotations with place under one umbrella in order to create a reliable reference for the topic of place-bound happiness. Constructing on the existing body of literature, the study framework bridges between the public engagement activities and higher academic research, while making a difference in the life of study participants; galvanising more engaged citizens through building an ambition in communities to be mindful of and inspired by the urban fabric.

The study methods due to their qualitative nature are not representative, but the collected data offers conclusive evidence in terms of the collected narratives. It is important to read the data and analyses with consideration of its explained context, as the conclusions’ might be subject to volatility in other circumstances. It is acknowledged that this study uses experimental methods and is not generalisable, therefore the intention is to highlight the potential spatial interfaces and their effectiveness in promoting happiness and positive emotive states. The experimental methods of data collection employed in the study warrant novel ways of addressing the research objectives and the methodologies documentation offers an in-detail account to qualitative and ethnographic approaches in architecture and urban studies.

This study provides a toolkit of methods and a set of criteria towards the absence of a spatial narrative of happiness and its acceptance for design and policy making purposes. Recognising the connection between spatial qualities and users’ happiness per se, ensures a step-change in mental health science and
architecture and urban design methods. On one hand, designers could recognise the importance of emotive research and inclusive methods for new developments, and on the other hand decisionmakers could adopt measures that will bring about better settings for higher quality of life, measures that hopefully will become common steps in design and urban studies, all of which could lead to evolving and comparative results in long time to ensure the benefits of happier life are made available to anyone interested. It is a common belief that everyone has the right to happiness, and freedom to its pursuit, however that’s too vague of a dream, leaving many variables neglected. Spatial design has the authority to provide opportunities for happiness to happen with ease, and such opportunities could be given to everyone fairly.

This study delivers a robust reference in place-based happiness studies rendering the current landscape of literature on the subject and presenting the “spatial happiness” term, that is the spatial qualities that affect users’ happiness. The literature overview in chapter 1 created a set of criteria to measure happiness spatially based on the theoretical interfaces and participants expectations. The importance of documenting narratives is in recognising that collaborating closely with people who have lived experience of spatial settings remains essential to ensure that the undertaking research and designing solutions fit people’s requirements and hopes. The study created platforms to use local and global data on spatial experience patterns by involving individuals and communities and enabling real-time documentations and methodical approaches.

Overall, the study engaged more than 100 participants that through different methods provided positive narrations of diverse spatial components. Novel methods such as cinematic cartography and the use of poetry, urban walks, analogue photography, diaries, brain-walks and many more in tandem were not previously used in this context to the best of the researcher’s knowledge. Each method presented challenges and limitations that could inform and provide opportunities for future research. For instance, the use of poetry has limitations and the timing is important, as evidenced by the participants’ poems that were heavily influenced by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Poetry in future work could be utilised as timed or group exercises, to draw analyses based on the collective formations and/or the amount of time spent on each
poem. Or latent mobile EEG technology limitations in Neourbanism field, as current technology offers limited capacity for non-laboratory accuracy and the novelty of related methods leaves many variables indiscernible. Among additional environmental variables that could be considered for future studies are temperature, humidity or air pollution or measures to test gender specific variables in tandem. The study was able to put in context a set of professional cultures that realise the role these methods could play in design and architecture and how we can combine social and spatial values with the research and intervention.

7.1.2. Practical contributions

Following the previous section, to develop a framework to measure the effects of place on happiness based on all studies in this thesis we can determine that nature, including waterfronts and greenspaces, has the greatest impact on people’s happiness. In chapter 3, due to the significance of promoting child subjective wellbeing and discerning what it truly entails, a workshop with primary school children was devised. Also, in chapter 4 the online programme with global reach allowed a culturally and geographically rich array of participation that lead to escalating understanding of sonic compositions in user emotive experience. Urban users’ happiness is subjective to flow-inducing qualities, the density of the urban configuration and the skyline in view, the property usage or the extent of which all our senses are engaged with the environment. In order to purposefully shape our relationship with conditioning spatial qualities in a practical framework to address the spatial affordances for positive emotive experience, the role of memories on positive or negative affect generated by users’ individual and social recollections and the happiness that could stem from familiarity, attachment or taking pride in a place should be recognised. Additionally, urban settings that facilitate social connection and provide infrastructures of citywide attempts at setting identity or expressing people’s worries and desires to the mechanisms of power were appreciated by the study’s participants. Other threads such as home, built material and urban furniture and urban visual cultures were persistent themes throughout the study as well. The documented Edinburgh maps of happiness in chapter 5 are constructive for designers and urban researchers or activists to understand how the landscape of the spatial narratives of happiness looks like now, and provide methodical steps to
potential approaches for future work in affective domains as well as a collective vision for what would be the people’s demands for future urban developments. Correspondingly, the findings also suggest that spatial happiness could spark a virtuous cycle by enabling and investing in measures such as belonging and taking pride in place, measures that in long term positively affect the community health, local economy and social cohesion for consistent growth.6

Figure 1. The development of a theoretical framework for Spatial Happiness Experience Index (SHEI)

Taken together, these findings can form a general framework and theoretical model for Spatial Happiness Experience Index (SHEI), conveying high impact and feasible spatial properties that affect happiness. This general model could be tailored based on the contextual indicators, local attributions and cultural or economic composites of future projects and studies in terms of selection of indicators and weighting variables, and its consideration will spark other examples and possibilities. (See Fig. 1) Measures such as SHEI provide an evaluative tool to gauge the quality of place and allow architectural and urban designers and planners to be intentional, and to be able to make conscious choices in design, policymaking and research process to create a setting that legitimises individual and social fulfilment, connection and happiness. With such tools at hand, failing to provide a platform for people’s basic right to the pursuit of happiness could be considered an act of wilful negligence. Spatial Happiness Experience Index could be studied alongside other quality of life indicators including Happy Planet Index\(^7\) and Community Happiness Index\(^8\), to open up avenues in architectural debate in order to better understand and promote the place of architecture in everyday life, through detailed analyses of emotive experiences and meaning in terms of spatial happiness.

And some of the structural contribution to the literature include:

- understanding the roots and effects of spatial design on users’ emotive experience and happiness
- developing and advancing spatial measures that provides better settings or increase the impact of positive experiences
- empowering the placemaking processes in urban and architectural endeavours through participatory research
- documenting narratives of expected quality values in spatial and urban experience in order to enrich spatial experience and improve overall well-being for spatial users in long term.

\(^7\) The Happy Planet Index is a measure of sustainable wellbeing that ranks countries based on how efficiently they are delivering happy lives since 2006. See: [www.happyplanetindex.org](http://www.happyplanetindex.org) by Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEALL) and New Economic Foundation NEF, ‘Happy Planet Index: 2012 Report. A Global Index of Sustainable Well-Being, 2012.’

\(^8\) Musa et al., ‘Enhancing Subjective Well-Being through Strategic Urban Planning: Development and Application of Community Happiness Index’.
• building an interdisciplinary field of place-based happiness

7.2. Towards a happy place

Configuring spatial happiness is like a game of Tetris, a puzzle game created in 1984. In this game, players complete lines by moving differently shaped pieces, and as long as the pieces would fit together any form of diverse shapes works in favour of the players. For happy places, despite the wide range of intertwined variables, many problems will be solved if the pieces fit well together and are harmonised. On the other hand, the game will be over if the interrelations of the criteria are neglected while the blocks would pile up with in between gaps. In general, the interrelations of spatial field and complex societal notions as well as the underlying context are all parts of the equation to any ongoing effort for spatial happiness.

The study’s findings would raise predictability in correlation between user experience and spatial happiness and paves the path for further reflections on how spatial happiness could be mobilised. The study participants’ narratives confirm that spatial happiness has now become a part of the argument in architecture studies and urban design, and with hope and determination could benefit the quality of life for people. And on this note, this study on the spatial narratives of happiness approaches a conclusion, but it is only the beginning for the challenging yet rewarding recognition of spatial happiness.

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9 In Tetris, a puzzle game from 1980s, players complete lines by moving differently shaped pieces, which descend onto the playing field. The completed lines disappear and allow players to proceed to fill the vacated spaces. The game ends when the pieces mismatch and the playing field has become full.
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Appendices
Chapter 1 Appendix

His head embellished with donkey's ears.

Only think of poor Pinocchio's sorrow, shame, and despair!

He began to cry and roar, and he beat his head against the wall; but the more he cried the longer his ears grew: they grew, and grew, and became hairy towards the points.

At the sound of his loud outcries a beautiful little Marmot that lived on the first floor came into the

Pinocchio turning into a donkey in the Pleasure Island. The illustration is from the first published translation into English by Charles Folkard. See more in: Colladi, Carlo. Pinocchio. Yesterday's Classics, LLC, 2010.
Whether it is a Chinese takeaway restaurant called Happy Rice or a Jehovah’s Witnesses’ call for followers, the fact that the concept of happiness is a selling point remains the same. Photos by the author in Edinburgh winter 2018 or taken from online merchandise, N/A, (‘Happy place framed print’, ‘round cotton rug’, ‘Happy place mug’, ‘Happiness postcard’, ‘Where happiness lives children book’), John Lewis website, 2018.
Tools and Toolkits of Jenny Pope. Jenny Pope, the Edinburgh based artist, has a playful collection of tools and toolboxes for unconventional but nevertheless needed traits. Tools such as the Illogical Fears Unpicker, Everything Crap Deflector or Finding Meaning Scoop. The question is, if we had access to a functioning Happiness Button, were we going to push the button? Image Source: Artists personal archive.
JULY 4, 1776

When our Declaration of Independence was signed loyal Americans were of one mind to protect "LIFE, LIBERTY, and the PURSUIT of HAPPINESS."

166 YEARS LATER

we are of one mind—Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito shall never take from the Freedom for which our forefathers sacrificed their lives —and Liberty.
Jacques-Louis David-1787. Oil on canvas. Dimensions: 51.0 in × 77.2 in, Location: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo from Wikipedia. Socrates argues that the search for happiness is a natural longing and happiness is within the human reach. “What being is there who does not desire happiness?” That is as decisive as Socrates have typically been, then he starts his interrogative usual manner with continuing: “How can we be happy? —that is the question.”
A screenshot from the short animation “Happiness” created by © Steve Cutts. Visit www.stevecutts.com to see “Happiness”. Cutts criticises the capitalised model of happiness that shifts a healthy pursuit of happiness to the hollowing happiness of pursuit. Still, even Steve Cutts’ rats do not concede to the disappointments and relentlessly try to feed the craving for that seemingly elusive happy state of being.
This diagram maps the literature review on the spatial structure of happiness, modeling the field researchers and theorists as well as attributes and relationships between diverse sources. The nomenclature, showcasing the formation of "spatial happiness" term as an organic confluence in architecture and happiness and bringing these notions together for a more comprehensive approach.

**Spatial Happiness**
- the spatial qualities that affect users' happiness

**Urban Happiness**
- The Living City
  - Frank Lloyd Wright
  - designing a good society through functional architecture and urban planning, advocating democratic and self-sufficient farming in 1 acre per person city
  - for decision makers and designers

**Sustainable Cities**
- The global happiness policy reports (2018-19)
  - happiness as the framework for sustainable development
  - connected neighbourhoods through activities, parks and greenspaces
  - active commuting facilities including walking and cycling capacities
  - availability, simplicity and usability of services

**HAPPY CITIES**
- Italo Calvino
  + mobilise inhabitants' aspirations
  + fiction
- Charles Montgomery
  + actively maximise joy and minimise hardship
  + foster health and strengthen friendship and family bonds
  + be resilient against financial or environmental distresses
  + provide freedom of life and movement while recognising our common fate and enabling empathy and support

- Happy city Index (HCI) in UK
  + safety, housing, transport, and greenspace + community's reach to participation, culture and education.
  + access to museums, heritage and sightseeing sites, tours and viewing centres, enterprises and volunteering hubs and outdoor spaces for exercise.

**Architecture of Happiness**
- Alain de Botton
  + stories on how different places affect our senses and personal experiences of dwellings
- Peter Zumthor
  + architectural elements and their impression on our emotions and moods
  + for general public and architects

**Smart Cities**
- The global happiness policy report 2018
  - happy cities in a smart world, using technology to increase levels of happiness

**Liveable Cities**
- Cities for people
  - Jan Gehl
    + human dimension
    + lively, safe, sustainable and healthy cities
    + walkable, cycling facilities

**Soft Cities**
- David Sim
  + responsive, straightforward, sociable
  + sensory and small (correlating with human scale)
Paris Street, Rainy Day by Gustave Caillebotte (1877). Oil on canvas 83-1/2 x 108-3/4 inches / 212.2 x 276.2 cm (The Art Institute of Chicago). View this work up close on the Google Art Project. Even if the painting did not have Paris in its title, by seeing it one is instantly reminded of Paris. The image of Paris is represented sharply, yet at the same time there are streets in this lined boulevard and shops, subtly touched by enough light to pique the viewers’ curiosity, that viewers would not know of. There are also representations of people from different social status that emphasises the representation of an intersection, both in spatial and transpatial ways.
Some of these amulets or charms that used to carry the soldiers’ hope in the face of trepidation are now museum objects, but many people still carry objects that they believe will bring them luck. Photos taken by the author from the Horniman museum archives. (March 2020)
In St Thomas’s Hospital every [soldier] had some mascot... And no baby in the children’s ward played more assiduously with its gifts than did these huge, bandaged fellows.

Daily Mirror, 27 December, 1915

England

Luck and protection

Carrying a charm is as English as milk in tea or Sunday league football. If you took a walk in the countryside 100 years ago you might have met a farmer carrying a dried mole foot to ease a toothache, or a stone with a hole through it to protect his animals from witchcraft. If this man had joined the millions who fought and died in the First World War he would have done so carrying a charm, to give hope in the face of great danger. Today, some people in England still keep charms. Do you have a charm that brings you luck?
Participants’ Details
The workshop was held as a part of the Festival of Creative Learning 2019 sponsored by The University of Edinburgh on 21 of March. All the participants had been sent an email prior to the workshop day containing information regarding the EthnoAlly app and download link. Verbal concise explanations about the project was also provided during the workshop and participants were able to ask any questions they might have regarding the experiment. Additionally, the researcher’s contact data is shared with participants and they have been encouraged to contact the researcher for any questions. Study participants were from a diverse background, academic level, gender and occupation according to the shown pie charts.
Information Sheet for Participants in Research Study

We would like to invite you to participate in this study by researchers at Edinburgh University.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study will help us to better understand how the spatial elements relate to subjective well-being based on the collected data provided by participants who will use EthnoAlly app in Edinburgh and express thoughts and emotions during the walk. Participants can share their experience as notes, photos, videos and even interviews via EthnoAlly app. Participants will benefit from a deeper understanding of their surroundings and an awareness of the impact of urban space on our emotional state. Also understanding how spatial layout affects behaviour may lead to improved design solutions for e.g. public spaces, which will benefit the public in the long term.

What will I be asked to do?

You are encouraged to do a walking tour on your own, visiting the path your group came up with during the workshop and collect data based on your training with the EthnoAlly app. If you are interested, you are encouraged to map different times of the day, weekday and weekend, noting your immediate environment at your own pleasure. If you are interested in an urban diary, you can use the app as long as you want. EthnoAlly is a user-friendly app that can be used to collect location-based data about happiness. Training regarding using the app and adding the data to the cloud will be provided. Participants will be notified about the spatial characteristics that are affecting our moods and encouraged to comment on these while using the EthnoAlly app.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

Your participation in this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on the effects of spatial characteristics on individual ways of thinking and feeling. Participation is voluntary; and the participant may discontinue participation at any time.

Who will have access to my information? How will my information be kept confidential?

All data will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to the data collected in this study. No personally identifiable information (e.g., your name, e-mail address) will be kept in this study. All data will be handled according to the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be kept confidential.

What will happen with the results of this study?

Once the study has been completed the results will be published in a report. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study. Please do not hesitate to direct any questions you have to the researcher.

Negar Ebrahimi
PhD Researcher in Architecture. The University of Edinburgh, ESALA Room 5.09, 5th Floor, Evolution House Edinburgh, EH1 2LE email | www.linkedin.com/in/negar-ebrahimi
Photography/film consent form

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image internally to contribute to current research associated with this project. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

☐ I give consent to the use of my photography as described above.

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image externally to promote this project and the University. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

☐ I give consent to the use of my photography as described above.

The University of Edinburgh may wish to publish and release the photography and/or film footage as an Open Educational Resource using a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike Licence (CC BY-SA 4.0) which enables users to freely copy, distribute and perform the work, and modify or adapt the work as long as they credit the original author and redistribute any adapted works under an identical Share Alike licence.

☐ I give consent to the licensing of photography or film taken at this event as described above.

Signature: ............................................................................................................................

Name (CAPITALS): ..................................................................................................................

Date: .......................................................................................................................................}

Circle as appropriate: Student Staff No University connection
School / College: ....................................................................................................................
Department / Support Group: .................................................................................................
Matriculation Number: ............................................................................................................
Staff Number: ...........................................................................................................................
Email address: ............................................................................................................................

The University of Edinburgh is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, with registration number SC005336.
General Risk Assessment

Form RA1

(Refer to Notes for Guidance before completing this form)

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<th>School Assessment No:</th>
<th>FCL Low Risk</th>
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<td>Title of Activity:</td>
<td>FCL 2019, Urban Life, The Untold Dimension of Happiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location(s) of Work:</td>
<td>ROOM 5.2, Floor 5, Lister Learning and Teaching Centre, Central</td>
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Brief Description of Work:

The research only involves normal educational practices, such as regular teaching strategies and classroom management methods. On the event day, first, there will be a short interactive presentation on the concept of the research project and the event brief with participants sharing their thoughts on the subject in their groups and accordingly to the whole class (approximately 45 minutes). Each group will be asked to rank the provided photos of different urban settings based on their preference, as well as associating each photo with colour/happy-face/sad-face stickers in addition to three keywords for each photo. Next participants will be provided a map of the city that they will pin their top 5 photos on and with connecting those pins, they will have a path to explore. Then the instructions about data collection will be provided and questions answered (approximately 75 minutes). End of the workshop. Participants are asked to do a walking tour on their own, each will visit the path they came up with during the workshop and collect data based on their training with the EthnoAlly app. Interested. Participants are encouraged to map one weekday and one weekend and noting their immediate environment after the workshop day. EthnoAlly is a user-friendly app that can be used to collect location-based data about happiness. Training regarding using the application and adding the data to the cloud will be provided. Participants will be notified about the spatial characteristics that are affecting our mood and encouraged to comment on these while using the EthnoAlly app.

Hazard Identification: Identify all the hazards; evaluate the risks (low / medium / high); describe all existing control measures and identify any further measures required. Specific hazards should be assessed on a separate risk assessment form and cross-referenced with this document. Specific assessments are available for hazardous substances, biological agents, display screen equipment, manual handling operations and fieldwork. See [http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/risk-assessments-checklists/risk-assessments](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/risk-assessments-checklists/risk-assessments) for details.

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<th>Control Measures (i.e., alternative work methods / mechanical aids / engineering controls, etc.)</th>
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Participants will collect data from their everyday urban places, and therefore there is no specific risk to participants because of the experiment. At the same time participants will be asked to take every safety measure, including appropriate clothing and footwear based on the weather and do not do the experiment under dire weather circumstances. Participants will be notified to be aware of their surroundings during the path and respect the green and red lights while crossing the streets to minimise the possibility of any unwanted accident. Since the experiment will be happening in the streets of Edinburgh there is a very low risk of theft or accident however no additional risk will arise from the research. Participants will receive an information sheet that will clarify all the risks mentioned above. As well as the event agenda.

At the beginning of the event, students will be told where the evacuation doors are, and in the case of hazard, students should follow the organiser instructions calmly.

*Continue on separate sheet if necessary*

**Engineering Controls:** Tick relevant boxes

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Other relevant information (incl. testing frequency if appropriate):

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**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Identify all necessary PPE.

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Specify the grade(s) of PPE to be worn:
Specify when during the activity the item(s) of PPE must be worn:

Non-disposable items of PPE must be inspected regularly and records retained for inspection

Persons at Risk: **Identify all those who may be at risk.**

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<th>Academic staff</th>
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**Additional Information:** Identify any additional information relevant to the activity, including supervision, training requirements, special emergency procedures, requirement for health surveillance etc.

**Assessment carried out by:**

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<th>Negar Ebrahimi</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>4/02/2019</th>
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<tr>
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The “Urban life, the untold dimension of happiness” workshop was open to all and the event was promoted widely. The registration was sold-out due to popularity and the event had a long waiting list.
The “Urban life, the untold dimension of happiness” workshop was held as a part of Edinburgh University Festival of Creative Learning 2019 and was able to successfully gather in-depth data on how the spatial structure of diverse urban scenes in Edinburgh is connected to the workshop participants’ happiness by means of their endorsed descriptions.
Participants were asked to talk about the urban scenes on their tables with their teammates, associate colour stickers and Emoji stickers with the photos and try to analyse spatial elements that each photo represents. Participants were encouraged to draw and write what comes to their mind on the photos freely.
Urban Scenes provided for Participants in the Workshop
Planning permission for hotel

Tourist buses
Single malt platters always look inviting. It presents the perfect amount of sweetness to end a meal.
Car-dominated
detail

long walk uphill

Single fruit platters always look so chic, it presents the perfect amount of sweetness to end a meal.
Hostile

Far outside city centre
Fun, but wild animals locked up

nice
have to pay
Open Street.

Traffic.

V. Edinburgh.

Levels:

We know the space + it's happy!

Castle

GREEN!

ICE-CREAM

YUM!
Love this view

Happy times!
out

2

Saturday - local market
Sunday second-hand market
architecture  Sandstone  residential

Calm → alone  safety

industrial things
nature things
normal scenery

free path nice!

Cars on the Street

my friend's flat

too much road and cars

unattractive street lighting

Stout beautiful building lovely stone.
Give pedestrians more priority? + More space!

My friend made a beautiful night time painting of the cafe Picanie (purple).

MESS.
Temp. Construction = Traffic, Stress, Crowded
Roadworks + traffic = NIGHTMARE...!!!
Singles fruit platters always look so dull. It presents the perfect amount of sweetness to end a meal.
why is it raining again?! 😞

Single fruit platters always look so chic, it presents the perfect amount of sweetness to end a meal.
We are indeed aware of some spatial forces behind our actions, or for that matter, inactions. No one has ever doubted how doors enable us to move through, a possibility that a solid wall robs us from. In fact, we are so intrinsically adapted to architectural manipulations, no one is shrinking from how decisive architecture can be, when a window not only guide our gaze but also the rays of sunlight. The list goes on beyond the simplicity of doors and windows. As Lefebvre elaborates in his celebrated The Production of Space, we are impacted by architecture at all levels, “Facades were harmonised to create perspectives,” and “Streets and squares were arranged in concord with the public buildings and palaces of political leaders and institutions.” (Which in turn affect us “from family dwellings to monumental edifices, from ‘private’ areas to the territory as a whole.”) [1]

Presented in annual review session held by ESALA in May 2019, where a group of urban design and architecture PhD students as well as school tutors and lecturers were present. The interactive presentation used Mentimeter tool to collect the feedback of 14 present peers.
LET’S IMAGINE A HAPPY PLACE. WHAT DOES COME TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT A HAPPY PLACE? WHERE CAN YOU BE HAPPY? JOIN THE DEBATE!

Home
A park!
Sunny
Save quiet me along sunshine
Historical place
Free to investigate
Green, water, nice people
Fresh crisp air
Nature!

LET’S IMAGINE A HAPPY PLACE. WHAT DOES COME TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT A HAPPY PLACE? WHERE CAN YOU BE HAPPY? JOIN THE DEBATE!

Forests
Cloudy, green and cold!
Lively
Allotment woods my flat botanical gardens the Borders
Beach
Sunny
My study

Peer review additional feedback on the workshop results and method.
Literature review on previous studies methodology. It is evident that most research was carried out via quantitative methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Concerns</th>
<th>Principal Researchers</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wayfinding - community happiness on social media</td>
<td>Quercia et al., 2012 - 2016;</td>
<td>using quantitative methods including data from: - social media platforms e.g. Facebook and Tweeter - phone apps - institutional polls such as Gallup World Poll - national data sources</td>
<td>• urban physical characteristics are linked to the individuals' and communities subjective wellbeing; analytical confirmation with the support of big datasets</td>
<td>• disproportionate representation and biased datasets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental influences on happiness such as pollution, noise and green spaces</td>
<td>Mackerron et al., 2012-2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Happy City Index measuring green space, safety, housing, transport, as well as community’s reach to participation, culture and education</td>
<td>• data must be converted into comparable formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monitoring cities success in creating sustainable wellbeing</td>
<td>The New Economics Foundation, Happy City, The World Happiness Report, The global happiness policy reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• governmental agencies might exclude sensitive data due to political accountability issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional experience of place</td>
<td>Rofè et al., 2013</td>
<td>• exploratory • ethnographic</td>
<td>positive feeling associated with gardens, big views and natural vistas</td>
<td>research was conducted in a conflicted area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aspinall et al., Coyne, 2013</td>
<td>EEG technology assessment in urban experience</td>
<td>lower frustration and higher meditation when moving in green spaces</td>
<td>device and technology limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky Area</td>
<td>Happy Places</td>
<td>Unhappy Places</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600.37</td>
<td>589.94</td>
<td>637.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1039.72</td>
<td>365.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1012.92</td>
<td>512</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Chapter 3 Appendix

Participants' detail, Ethics and Workshop Results

The workshop was held as a part of the Festival of Social Science 2019 sponsored by The ESRC – the Economic and Social Research Council on 7 of November. This was achieved through collaboration with the Smart Cookies after school club that works with schoolchildren from various schools of different neighbourhoods. An information session was held before the event with all the participants parents/legal guardians and relevant descriptions of the workshop had been sent as an email prior to the workshop day. Extra care has gone to ensure ethical standards through written and verbal explanations both prior and during the event. The researcher's contact data is shared with participants and they have been encouraged to contact the researcher anytime should they want to raise an issue even after the workshop. The workshop had level 2 Ethics approval and parents’ signed consent forms were gathered by the researcher and is stored by ESRC. Study participants were from a diverse background, academic level and gender according to the following pie charts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being/will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.</td>
<td>I am the lead applicant and I have been trained through previous volunteering experience with vulnerable groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are researchers likely to be sent or go to any areas where there safety may be compromised.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could researchers have any conflicts of interest?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could the research induce any psychological stress or discomfort?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being/will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.</td>
<td>The research would be held in the form of a workshop for children; providing an opportunity for learning, playing and designing while having fun with other children. While these are all exciting on their own, their combination will be very interesting for the intended audience. The hands-on workshop supplies will encourage the participants to express themselves in a no-stress environment. The refreshments and promotional thank you gifts that participants will receive will promote their experience as well. but beyond all, to deepen the students understanding of happiness and play will support the children’s growth in many positive ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the research involve any physically invasive or potentially harmful procedures?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being / will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research does not involve any harmful procedures/material at all. The workshop will be like a regular school day, supporting the Scottish curriculum for excellence in the following areas: Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Community Learning and Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could this research adversely affect participants in any other way?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being / will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workshop will help students in building key skills in spatial thinking as well as experiencing design process. Encourage critical thinking on the role of play in community, and evaluating the pros and cons of playground structures based on personal experiences. And students will be able to discuss and design collaboratively to meet identified community goals and construct creative models using various crafting material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will any part of the research involve audio, film or video recording of individuals?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being / will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.</td>
<td>The event will be photographed for ESRC promotional uses. This information will be shared with the school organisers and participants beforehand as well as during the workshop and notice sheets will be placed at the venue. Also at the beginning of the event it will be mentioned that if anyone prefers not to be photographed they can relate this to the organiser. Audio recordings of the group presentation. The collected data will be anonymous and individual people will not be identifiable from the recording. The data being collected and/or analysed is of a nature where there is no risk placed on anyone involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the research require collection of personal information from any persons without their direct consent?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will the confidentiality of data, including the identity of participants (whether specifically recruited for the research or not) be ensured?</td>
<td>The project does not involve collecting data that, if disclosed outside of the research, it would place the participants at risk of any negative outcome. In order to ensure that the rights, safety and dignity of the participants are protected, no identifiable data will be collected. The data will be collected and/or analysed from the participants in groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will be entitled to have access to the raw data? Please provide names and positions.</td>
<td>Negar Ebrahimi - PhD Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How and where will the data be stored, in what format, and for how long?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workshop's crafts will be photographed for research purposes. The photos of the crafts will be stored on the personal device that only the researcher controls. The audio files will be stored in the University of Edinburgh data storage solution (Data Vault). The data will be collected and analysed completely anonymously. The data will be stored until it is published.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What steps have been taken to ensure that only entitled persons will have access to the data?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The data is collected anonymously and is stored securely in a way that only the researcher has access to it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How will the data be disposed of?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No personal data is collected and the collected data will not be kept in any insecure receptacle, the audio files will be disposed of after the research has been published. A record of the collected data will be kept securely for future references.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How will the results of the research be used?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will play an important part in collecting data on designing from a new perspective and share their ideas of a happy city. The research question is how children define a happy city? Participants will be able to have a say in the future of architecture and urban design as well as gaining personal skills by way of making models and crafting their favourite playground. The workshop crafts are analysed in light of the spatial characters that are defined by children as happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What feedback of findings will be given to participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is any information likely to be passed on to external companies or organisations in the course of the research?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the project involve the transfer of personal data to countries outside the European Economic area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research involves living human subjects specifically recruited for this research project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| If you selected yes, please give details of how this issue is being / will be addressed to ensure that ethical standards are maintained. | * None of the crafting and hands-on material that will be provided for the workshop will be hazardous, however extreme care will be taken in choosing sustainable and green products that contain no harmful ingredients for children.  

* Before the activity children will be organised by the intended school and will be present at the school venue for the event on the specified time. During the activity the children are supervised by the school organisers and the researcher, parents will be welcome to be present should they wish.  

* No personal data is collected. However in order to
record the discussions, and collect the post-it notes and crafted models produced through the event. Initial consent from the gatekeepers (school organisers) will be authorised, as well as an active consent from each individual child prior to the event.

* It will be ensured that all participants are fully informed of the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research prior to the event.

* It will be ensured that children know their participation is voluntarily and they are free to stop their participation at anytime.

* The researcher will liaise with the school to identify any issues that might occur during the activity based on the participants' individual history. Accordingly necessary steps will be taken to reduce the risk of these occurring, and a detailed action plan will be arranged. 

* An emergency plan will be arranged by the researcher with the intended school including the contact details of first aiders, the security and local police service and any other relevant safeguarding services.

* The event will be held at a school as part of the curriculum or an after school club, and the supervisory responsibility for the children attending the activity or event is by the intended school.

| How many participants will be involved in the study? | 50 |
Photography Permission Slip

We would like to record today's event and photograph you and your children enjoying the activities on offer. The University of Edinburgh or the Economic and Social Research Council may use some of the photographs taken in future publicity.

However, we need to ensure we have your permission for this. We'd be grateful if you could complete the form below.

I give permission for me and my child/children to have my and his/her/their photo used for the following:

☐ University of Edinburgh websites, publications and social media channels.

☐ Economic and Social Research Council website, publications and social media channels.

☐ University-associated third parties, on their websites, publications and social media channels.

I understand that the purpose of the above listed publications is to promote the Festival of Social Science.

I understand that my photo and my child/children's photo may appear on the Internet for an indefinite period unless I withdraw my consent.

I can withdraw my consent at any time by emailing N.Ebrahimi@sms.ed.ac.uk

I understand that if the photograph has already been used on websites, publications and social media channels, then the University will not be able to recall or delete all places where the image has appeared. However, the University will go to reasonable efforts to stop using the image in future.

I understand that I will not be notified prior to me or my child/children’s photo appearing in any of the places listed above.

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): _______________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date: _________________________________________________________
Filming and Photography

Photography and filming is taking place at this event today. If you enter this area, you may be filmed and have your picture taken.

By entering this area, you are giving consent to the organisers to film, photograph, and to make sound recordings of you, and to use such recordings and images at their discretion. You hereby release the organisers from any liability in connection with the above.

If you do not wish to be photographed or filmed, please speak with the photographer, videographer or a member of University of Edinburgh staff.

Many thanks, The University of Edinburgh Team
Designing My Happy City workshop funded by ESRC enabled primary school children engagement and data collection through the participants' outputs.
My visit to YP Edinburgh 186 - Designing My Happy City: Playground

What is your age? 10

1. Did you enjoy today's event? Yes ☑ No ☐ Don't know ☐

2. Please tell us something you learnt from the event:
   To be more careful.

3. What amazed you most about the event:
   That it was very fun.

Thankyou!

Some of the ESRC feedback forms from participating children
Without questioning how a place can be happy, children rather start describing their memories or imaginary circumstances of happiness, while their hands never leaves the surface of the paper except for changing the colour or material. Their eyes fixated on their work unless they stop to make eye contact with their group members momentary, and then they quickly continue with their animated movements. It appears as if the focus is not the aesthetics of the painting or models, but the deliverance of ideas and an implied happy place.
Children showing their models to their parents after the workshop.
Plants, fruit trees and bushes can draw birds, butterflies and bees, while providing routes for animals such as cats and dogs; and children are seeing themselves at the linchpin of this interaction.
The drawings could be gauged as a reflective evidence for what children find imperative to a happy place and reveal some keys to predict the spatial compatibility with happiness stimulation for the workshop participants: activities, relationships with people and animals as well as natural elements.
This team is going to win! Food is the best.
I like food
myself
being with my family.
the future
My Mum
Nidando
Being with my family
Ted's flowers
Cats
Reading
Playing with my dog
PsYm
Viksha
Mind
Dua
Food
Corn dogs
Sun
Rainbows
More than 40 percent of the workshop’s drawings include elements such as natural elements – the sun, stars, trees, clouds and mountains, as well as water.
“Collective Sounds of Happy Places” workshop engaged 8 participants from across the world, all female and aged between 16 to 57 and from a diverse socioeconomic background. This was achieved through collaboration with the IAD and Festival of Creative Learning social media platforms. The event was open to all for registration and no music background was needed. The number of participants were regulated due to the final documentary duration, yet a wide range of viewpoints were captured.
Information Sheet for Participants in Research Study

We would like to invite you to participate in this research study by researchers at University of Edinburgh. It is important to read the following information and discuss it with the researchers if you have any questions.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study will help us to better understand how the spatial elements relate to subjective well-being based on the collected data provided through participants who will share their photos, videos, audio files and graphic notations. Understanding how spatial layout affects behaviours may lead to improved design solutions for e.g. public spaces, which will benefit the public in the long term. Together we will also co-create a music piece to record our emotions during the Covid-19 pandemic in a novel way.

What will I be asked to do?

Participants are asked to share photos, videos, audio files from the places that had made them happy during the lockdown. During the workshop and based on their training, participants will create graphic notations from their happy places. Training regarding using the graphic notation method and adding the data to the cloud will be provided. Participants will be notified about the spatial characteristics that are affecting our moods and encouraged to comment on these with regards to their happy places. Any minors participating will require an adult to sign permission slips for the use of their photographs and short film taken as part of the study.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

Participants will co-create a music piece that reveals their emotions and memories in a way without any musical background. Your participation in this study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on the effects of spatial characteristics on individuals’ ways of thinking and feeling. Participation is voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled; and the participant may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

Who will have access to my information and how will my information be kept confidential?

All personal data will be kept confidential and only the researchers will have access to the data collected in this study. No personally identifiable information (e.g., your name,
e-mail address) will be kept in this study. All data will be handled according to the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be kept confidential.

**What happens to my submitted materials?**

By participating in the study, you are agreeing to the use of the submitted photographs, short film and graphic score for the workshop’s use. These materials may appear in a further musical form such as an installation, any and all materials used will be credited, copyright of these works remain with the workshop organisers to allow for subsequent public performance. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE CREDITED PLEASE INFORM WORKSHOP ORGANISERS.

**What will happen with the results of this study?**

Once the study has been completed the results will be published in a report. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study. Please do not hesitate to direct any questions you have to the researchers.

---

Negar Ebrahimi

*PhD Researcher in Architecture. The University of Edinburgh, ESALA Room 5.09, 5th Floor, Evolution House Edinburgh, EH1 2LE*

e-mail n.ebrahimi@sms.ed.ac.uk | www.linkedin.com/in/negar-ebrahimi
Consent Form

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image internally to contribute to current research associated with this project. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

☐ I give consent to the use of my photography as described above.

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image externally to promote this project and the University. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

☐ I give consent to the use of my photography as described above.

The Organisers may wish to publish and release the photography and/or film footage as well as any files including photos, audio/videos files and notation scores shared by the participants as part of the event, which enables Organisers to freely copy, distribute and perform the work, and modify or adapt the work and redistribute any adapted works under an identical event licence.

☐ I give consent to the licensing of photography or film taken at this event as well as any files including photos, audio/videos files and notation scores as described above.

Signature:  ........................................................................................................

Name (CAPITALS): ........................................................................................................

Date:  ........................................................................................................

Circle as appropriate:  Student  Staff  No University connection

School / College:  ........................................................................................................

Department / Support Group:  ........................................................................................................

Matriculation Number:  ........................................................................................................

Staff Number:  ........................................................................................................

Email address:  ........................................................................................................
Performer Recording Agreement

This Performer Recording Agreement ("Agreement") is being made between [us] ("Client") located at [university address] and [performer] ("Performer") located at [their address] on [MOMTH, DD, YR]. [Us] and [performer] may also be referred to as "party" or together as the "parties". This agreement will become effective on [MOMTH, DD, YR] ("Effective Date").

1. Recording Services. The client [us] wishes to obtain [performer’s] services for the following work with copyright retained by the client:

A sound recording of graphic score provided by the client within the agreed upon timeline, with accompanying video materials of a suitably high quality, copyright of recorded materials to be retained by the client in perpetuity.

The services are to be performed in compliance with appropriate social distancing, recorded in isolation following government advisement.

The performer agrees to furnish the labour, video materials and sound recording. Upon completion of the recording the performer agrees to send all recorded materials to the client.

1. Changes in the Services. The Client may request reasonable changes to the Services described in Section 1. Any changes to the Services must be in writing and signed by both the client(s) and the performer.

1. Recording Schedule. The Performer will complete the Services in accordance with the following schedule. The Client agrees that all dates are subject to change if Client requests any changes or additions to the Services.

Start Date: ______________________

Substantial (___%) Completion Date: ______________________

Full Completion Date: ______________________

Payment Schedule. The Client agrees to pay the Performer the Total Payment specified below for the Services in accordance with the following schedule:

Upon completion of all Services: ______________________

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: ______________________

1. Events Beyond Performer’s Control. Client agrees that if the Performer is unable to complete the Services by the Completion Date because of reasons that were not caused by the Performer (i.e., failure on the part of Client to provide music,) or because of events beyond the Performer’s control (such as fire, flood, acts of God, etc.), the Performer will not be deemed to have breached this Contract.

2. Safety Precautions. The Performer will take all reasonable safety precautions in performing the Services. The Performer will comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and orders of public authorities for the safety of persons and property, including government regulations on social distancing.
2. **Safety Precautions.** The Performer will take all reasonable safety precautions in performing the Services. The Performer will comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and orders of public authorities for the safety of persons and property, including government regulations on social distancing.

3. **Copyright.** The Client will retain copyright of recorded materials in perpetuum as the sole copyright-holder, however will acknowledge Performer in all instances where recorded materials in any part are in use.

4. **Termination.** The Client can terminate the Contract by giving written notice: (a) if the Performer commits any material breach of this Contract and fails to correct the breach within 5 days of notice of the breach; (b) if there is any repeated failure by the Performer provide the Services of an acceptable standard and to the reasonable satisfaction of the Customer; or (c) the IAD funding for the performer is not approved within 5 days of notice.

The Performer can terminate the Contract by giving written notice: (a) if the Client fails to make the payments required and set forth in Section 4 within 2 days of notice of failure to make a payment; or (b) if the Client commits any other material, non-financial breach and fails to correct the breach within 15 days of notice of the breach.

5. **Entire Agreement.** This document reflects the entire agreement between the Performer and the Client and reflects a complete understanding of the parties with respect to the subject matter. This Contract supersedes all prior written and oral representations. The Contract may not be amended, altered or supplemented except in writing signed by both the Performer and the Client.

6. **Dispute Resolution and Legal Fees.** In the event of a dispute arising out of this Contract that cannot be resolved by mutual agreement, the Parties agree to engage in mediation. If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, and legal action ensues, the successful party will be entitled to its legal fees, including, but not limited to its attorneys’ fees.

7. **Legal and Binding Contract.** This Contract is legal and binding between the Parties as stated above. This Contract may be entered into and is legal and binding both in Canada and throughout Europe. The Parties each represent that they have the authority to enter into this Contract.

8. **Severability.** If any provision of this Contract shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable. If the Court finds that any provision of this Contract is invalid or enforceable, but that by limiting such provision it would become valid and enforceable, then such provision shall be deemed to be written, construed, and enforced as so limited.

9. **Waiver.** The failure of either party to enforce any provision of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party’s right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Contract.

10. **Applicable Law.** This Contract shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the state where the Property is located, without giving effect to any conflicts of law provisions.
BY SIGNING BELOW, THE PERFORMER ACKNOWLEDGES HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONTRACT AND THAT THE PERFORMER IS SATISFIED WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THIS CONTRACT. THE PERFORMER SHOULD NOT SIGN THIS CONTRACT IF THERE ARE ANY BLANK SPACES. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A COPY OF THIS CONTRACT AT THE TIME YOU SIGN IT.

The Parties agree to the terms and conditions set forth above as demonstrated by their signatures as follows:

“VIDEOGRAPHER”

Signed: __________________________________________

By: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

“CLIENT(S)”

Signed: __________________________________________

By: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

Signed: __________________________________________

By: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________
# General Risk Assessment

## Form RA1

(Refer to Notes for Guidance before completing this form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Assessment No:</th>
<th>FCL Low Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of Activity:</td>
<td>FCL 2020, Collective Sounds of Happy Places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location(s) of Work:</td>
<td>Online Event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brief Description of Work:**

In an upside-down world, everyone is trying to weather the storm in a way, locked down in our homes and busy with social distancing. In response, we are inviting you to this online event, that is a place to have a conversation about “My Happy Place” during the Covid-19 lock down. It could be a corner of your home or a nearby place you pass during your daily walks, no matter where it is, it is the place that has made you happy during the lock down. This event is taking place on two consecutive Thursdays, during the first workshop you will learn to use “Graphic notation” and create a form of writing music apart from traditional notation. It is the representation of musical ideas using visual symbols. You will be provided with all the tools and information you need to create your own happy place graphic notation score. At the second event we are going to explore happy places from all across the world through sound. This will culminate in a performance of your collective individual works and a video followed by a virtual drink reception!

**Hazard Identification:** Identify all the hazards; evaluate the risks (low / medium / high); describe all existing control measures and identify any further measures required. Specific hazards should be assessed on a separate risk assessment form and cross-referenced with this document. Specific assessments are available for hazardous substances, biological agents, display screen equipment, manual handling operations and fieldwork. See [http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/risk-assessments-checklists/risk-assessments](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/risk-assessments-checklists/risk-assessments) for details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard(s)</th>
<th>Present Risk Evaluation</th>
<th>Control Measures (i.e., alternative work methods / mechanical aids / engineering controls, etc.)</th>
<th>Risk Evaluation after control</th>
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<td>Class display screen</td>
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<td>The event is online; therefore, some participants might lose some parts of the event due to their personal Wi-Fi connection issues, hence the</td>
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Created on 20/04/2022
Fieldwork | No Risk | No Risk | No Risk
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Emergency [In case of fire] | No Risk | No Risk | No Risk

organisers will provide participants with the event recording afterwards. Also, the organisers will pre-record their presentations and share with the other person in case of unforeseeable Wi-Fi issues.

Participants will collect data from their everyday places, and therefore there is no specific risk to participants because of the experiment.

The event is online.

*Continue on separate sheet if necessary*

**Engineering Controls: Tick relevant boxes**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Guarding</th>
<th>Extraction (LEV)</th>
<th>Interlocks</th>
<th>Enclosure</th>
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<td>Other relevant information (incl. testing frequency if appropriate):</td>
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**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Identify all necessary PPE.**

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<tr>
<th>Eye / Face</th>
<th>Hand / Arm</th>
<th>Feet / Legs</th>
<th>Respiratory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body (clothing)</td>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
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Specify the grade(s) of PPE to be worn:

Specify when during the activity the item(s) of PPE must be worn:

Non-disposable items of PPE must be inspected regularly and records retained for inspection

**Persons at Risk:** Identify all those who may be at risk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic staff</th>
<th>Technical staff</th>
<th>P'Grad students</th>
<th>U'Grad students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance staff</td>
<td>Office staff</td>
<td>Cleaning staff</td>
<td>Emergency personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractors</td>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>Others</td>
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Appendix A: Workshop Data
Participants' detail, Ethics and Workshop Results

Where have you been happy? How does your Happy place look like?

Participants' Happy Places
Participants' descriptions of a happy place generated as a word cloud or tag cloud during the digital workshop. The digital workshop took place on Zoom and was presented as an interactive session by means of Mentimeter platform.
Participants' details, Ethics and Workshop Results

What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

- splash
- chipping
- Wind
- rustling
- ruffling
- Crows cawing
- Water
- Stream
- Trees blowing in the wind
- chirping

What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

This is a trail in HK. It is right on mountain on the city center. Surrounded by nature, lights from building, frogs and insects, running water, warmth

- Birds chirping
- people talking (ambiance)
- cracking
- Rustling leaves
- pouring
- bubbling
- Trees rustling
What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>whistling</th>
<th>Apples dropping</th>
<th>Chatting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>glasses clinking</td>
<td>Cracking twigs</td>
<td>Bubbling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laughing</td>
<td>wooden floor</td>
<td>Birds landing on water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wildlife sounds</th>
<th>Squirrels chattering</th>
<th>gusts of wind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a gentle undulating landscape that meets the sky with the sound of wind through the grass, a quiet space punctuated by birdsong and the humming of bees.</td>
<td>Rumble of voices</td>
<td>JCB digging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractor</td>
<td>Sludge cutter</td>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

- Geese hissing
- Lawnmower
- Dogs barking
- Cat meowing
- Rain hitting a tin roof
- Crows pecking at the ground
- Heavy rain hitting the sidewalk
- Kettle boiling
- Postman's car

What kind of sounds are in your happy places? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, What draws you to your happy place?

- Grass under your feet
- The sludgy sound of mud when you walk through it
- The winds in the uk
- Birdsong, bees humming, wind sighing, it is peaceful, it quiet my soul. The landscape and the sky has such a breadth to it I feel free and refreshed.
- I enjoy the vastness of the mountains or fields. I love to think about how old this place is or how rare it is. The fact that people have respected the mountain trails brings back my faith in humanity.
- Thunder
- Raindrops
The workshop transcript

Greetings, researcher introduction in addition to answering questions, and recording notification to the participants were prior to this transcription and the following was in (15:32) in real session time.

Researcher (15:32)
Everyone has musical instinct, musical tastes and musical preferences. And that graphic notation allows us all to express that and to be able to try and find a way to write musical phrases that reflect our own environment in a way that makes us feel that we've been able to have a personal connection with it. So that'd be what I hope we achieve for today.

(...) who wants to be the next person?

Participant A
Hey, I'm [Participant A]. I'm (..) right now I'm in Canada, in Ontario and it's super dreary.

And guess one fact about myself is that I am like super obsessed with rabbits and (Laughter). Rabbits tattoo have a rabbit have all this like memorabilia

and whatever. So, it's something and I really hope that (..) today (..) really (..) create a very impactful project and I'm really excited to be a part of it and see what comes out of it after all done. So (...) yeah

Researcher
Should we go to [Participant B]

Participant B
(...). Yeah, sure. (..) So yeah, (..) I'm [Participant B], my name (..) in the south of Ireland. An interesting fact about myself I (...) before the pandemic, I like to fly planes. So I just started, kinda I did three flying lessons and obviously (laughter) it's not an ideal place to be in (.) in a fairly small space. So that's my, once the, this is all over
whenever that is, you know, I don't know next year or the year after that we the first thing I'll do is to fly again the plane and (...) that with a mask on (laughter) and then today, I suppose graphic notation or something that when I was reading the email, it just seems really interesting. And I, I was Googling to see what it was all about. So I'm looking forward to learning that and just like Participant A as well about creating something together. And I think it's I know it seems kind of groundbreaking to me because especially to something that is creativity during to the pandemic then I think that's, that's pretty cool.

Researcher

Yeah, totally on the same page with you. I think art is the only thing that can help us go through this. Although science will probably get us out of the situation. So, I'm gonna move on to the next person who is interested in volunteering (...)

Participant C

I think my name is wrong it should actually be [Participant C].

Researcher

Ah, I see.

Participant C

Somehow something got mixed up. So my name is [Participant C] and I'm in [city], Canada. One interesting fact is as a child, I was interested in conservation and there were very few whooping cranes in Canada at the time and a conservationist rather than give a number to one of the whooping cranes named it after me. I hope today to take away from this session, more of an understanding on how graphic notation works and take part in the process. I was really intrigued by the idea of linking composition to Happy Places. It's something that is an interest of mine, though I have limited musical ability. So that's what I hope to take away today.

Researcher

Awesome. Thanks. Who's next?

Participant D
I can go next.

Researcher
Yeah. Yes, please do.

Participant D
Yeah, my name is [Participant D]. I am currently in [city], (..) Ireland. Oh, (..) one interesting fact about myself is I was actually the first female to graduate from my undergrad University as a female percussionist.

Researcher
Yay! (Clapping)

Participant D
(Laughter) So, (..) yeah, that was, that surprised me to be honest, but cool. Oh (..) And (..) what I would like to take away from the session today is actually just the experience of creating a graphic score. I'm, I'm currently working on another graphic score. For, for a pianist and I think that just practising will help me get better at it. This is not really something I've done extensively, so (..)

Researcher
Thank you. And we have, hello there. Hi, [Participant E]

Participant E
Hello. So my name is [Participant E], from Brazil. That's where I am right now. I studied in Edinburgh sociology, master's degree and one thing about me, inspired before going to Edinburgh, I lived in Hong Kong. During the time I found out I was completely in love to everything related to place and space. So that's what I've been researching. And today I would like to, you know, take a different perspective on that. Especially because one of the things that I really loved about Hong Kong is the sounds of the city and it's so hard to capture that. So I'm very excited. About this today.

Researcher
Wow, beautifully said, thank you everyone. Really, really a pleasure to meet you all. And I hope whatever you want to take away from today, it goes as you wish for. My fingers are crossed and we will do our best.

Just got a message that we have someone in the waiting room who would like to join, (...) awesome. Ah, okay. Hello, welcome.

Participant G
Are you hearing me All right? All right. So we've got a chat going on as well. So if you have any questions, feel free to go in there. We were walking through an icebreaker. Would you be able to describe yourself in a sentence, your name, where you currently are? And an interesting fact about yourself and something you'd like to take away from the session today?

Researcher
I (...) think you're muted [Participant F]. There should be on the far left. There you go.

Participant F
My name is [Participant F] and I'm currently in my house in [city] right now in Ireland. I hope (...) to learn (...) how to do something new.

Researcher
All right, that's cool. Happy to have you with us. Do you have anything else to add?

Participant F
oh, (.) I don't know (laughter)

Researcher
Thank you for joining us today. Just take a deep breath, we haven't done anything yet. So you're right on time. No worries about that. Also, [Participant G] and [Participant H] have written their answers in the chat box, yes hopefully we would hear a happy place, Thanks! The only thing is that I would appreciate if you use your phone and go to menti.com and use the code 352069. So, you can interact with the slides. Anytime during the session,
you can add comments or interact and also you can add comments in the chat box as well. So, maybe you can mute your mic. Good. So, let's just start with the simple question that is really difficult to answer. Where have you been happy or how does your happy place look like? So it's it's basically thinking about the places that made you happy or if you want to imagine a place that is like a perfect place for being happy. How does that look like? So the idea is to break down the elements and characteristics of such a space, whether it's a spatial, or you know, the sounds of that space, just imagine whatever. And the way to do this is that to write your answers, this will show up as a word cloud here. As you write your answers. So go to the menti.com use the code and write whatever keywords that comes to your mind and you associate with a happy place.

Participant G
I think we have to write all of our words down and then once you've finished, click Submit at the bottom. I think we'll see it show up then.

Researcher
Right. You can write and as many words as you want. Yeah.

So it's interesting that we have names of specific places like Ireland or Hong Kong. This probably could be associated with memories, like how we feel attached to places that we had, you know, made good memories there and just thinking about them make us happy afterwards. And peaceful, interesting! Thunder! Wow, that's a first! But it's really it's really about music and the sound I guess.

I think we have all the answers. So we see mountains, nature, parks, green spaces. Do you have any comments or any questions you want to add to this?

Participant G
I just wanted to say that there's so much ambient sound potential in a lot of these ideas. I wrote some of them in the chat too, but ones that I really thought were really useful is that the concept of thunderstorms, we've got this very percussive sound to it because with with something like this, we get to kind of experience sound as the physical sound with the thunderstorm. But then we also have the lightning that says
after effect, it's a visual thing that we have almost an implied sound, which when we're doing something like graphics scores is a fascinating thing to look at. Because everything about a graphic score is a visual indication of sound. And that's exactly what a thunderstorm is in that sense. And then waterbeds with the sensation of movement in a space and its potential for movement and instability, also a very musical idea. And then the pub, of course there's so many different layers of sound and we have almost these different kinds of just sort of sedentary sounds kind of seeping through. You can almost feel it if you put your hand on the one of the pubs bars there. So it's a very physical sound to it too. So we've got a lot of potential with these spaces and especially with some of the videos and stuff that you guys have uploaded. So I'm very excited to see what we could bring out of this.

Researcher
Yeah, and we also have the word colour, but it was in different writings. So it's not as highlighted. And probably one of the most famous people who had talked about it is Mark Rothko, the colour-field painting giant who thought that his paintings actually has this meditating effect on people. So, lots of interesting stuff going on here. Cemetery. Now, (.) do you want to make a comment on that? I'm really curious, (..) of course if you're comfortable.

Participant G
Well, that was me. I was referring to Glasnevin. If anyone's been to if anyone's been to Glasnevin in Dublin. It's probably the most beautiful curated green space I've ever seen. There's this approach to nature, both being completely planned. And then these moments where it's just allowed to do what it needs to do. In particular, I believe it's Parnell has a grave that is just large green mountain and has just a single stone on it. Historically, it had been part of a series of graves. But since everyone wanted to visit his particular grave, they added a stone at the top so that it could be seen specifically, (...) seems to be where he was. Which kind of ruined what he wanted because he didn't want to be noticed for special distinction in the graveyard. But, they gave him the stone by the way, but it doesn't mean that he now has this very beautiful and elaborate grave, which is exactly what he didn't want but it makes this kind of sense of this quiet and then the sounds and the trees and the green space and then the green against the stone having this long kind of colour thing in the profile that you get
amongst there. Seen some other love for cemeteries. But I think anyone who gets a chance Glasnevin (...) it's a really beautiful place to go to.

Researcher
Cool! No more comments? I really appreciate if you have anything to say, just comment, and we would understand the reasoning behind these words.

Okay. So this is kind of similar but for this one I want to ask you to, you know, imagine and focus in one particular happy place. Perhaps the one that you share the photos or you want to, you know, write the graphic score on, what are the sounds in that space and try to break down the elements that are playing a part in that space. For instance, the material, is it like a wooden floor, is it like a you know, metal frame? Is it like a transparent glass? The things that are around you in that space. Everything that you might see, everything that catches your eye, everything that you would draw, if you want to draw about that space, you know, and make the connection. How would you translate that space into words first, and then we're gonna take that next step and turn it into music. So you can again you can write as many words as you want.

Hmm (...) sounds of water, elements of nature we are seeing. Wow these words that you're writing, apples dropping, that has like a certain Newton vibe to it!

Glass clinking, cheering with friends, laughing. Does anyone wants to make a comment on any of these sounds? Yeah, we've got sense of bubbling rustling, crushing, crumbling? These are fantastic range. Brilliant. Does anyone have a favourite sound or texture that might not even have been yours that really stood out to you?

And we are having more coming in. If you want to make a comment on any of these, this is a time.

Participant A
I (...) quite like the glasses clinking and I don't know why this in particular is so like calming to me. But like people talking in the background. Like that's the ambient sound that makes me fall asleep. Quickly. So and for me, that's silly, I also like kettle boiling.
Researcher
Maybe because you know there would be a hot cup of tea coming afterwards?!

Participant A
Yeah. Exactly. (laughter) And JCB digging. (laughter) Specifically

Researcher
Thank you, [Participant A]. Anyone else? I feel like you have something to say. But you're being shy. There are some in the chat box. We have someone mentioned that the sound of rain falling from the roof. Okay, should we move on then. This is a slide just to show you, from previous research that I've done. And you see that people have mentioned similar things like colours, nature, tree, garden and people, birds, playing you know all sorts of things that you mentioned in your own words. These things that we associate with happiness show us the connection between the spatial part of happiness and how it affects us and it's, it's really important to understand that there is this dimension to our happiness and you know, digging into it and understand what is affecting our moods and being more aware and more conscious of how we feel based on that. And actually, it helps us in other ways as well, like we can extend our understanding of it to all parts of our life. And you know, we'd know for certain that something makes us happy. So that was the general idea for the first part. And I'm not gonna make you wait anymore I know all of you are super excited for the graphic notation part. So [Participant G] is gonna take it away from here like.

Participant G
I'll just get that all queued up.

Researcher
Okay, sure. And of course, if you have any questions just pop it in chat box or you can say it out loud or you can put it in the comments!

Participant G
The rain is such a beautiful sound. I particularly love it when it dobs against the window and get the variance of texture and everything with it. I will start sharing my screen
here. We're going to open with this, right. So I have some videos that we playing some audio of if the audio doesn't come through, there is a link in your graphic notation resources. And then you can check all of those later. All right. Can everyone see my slides? Alright, everything's good. So first of all, we're going to talk a little bit about graphic notation. To understand graphic notation. It's helpful to understand where music notation began, and what it developed from. In essence, we started notating music because of Gregorian chants, and they're wanting to be a standardised way that chants were sang, this was to unite the Franco Flemish kingdoms. So this is really, really long ago and about 400 500 and we start to see things begin to develop and slowly we start to see that this begins to develop into a full notated system. But when it begins, what we find is that it's a little bit indecisive. As I said in the beginning, I'm a composer musicologist researcher, which gives me a lot of flexibility in what I can look at. So I was drawn to this project because of Negar when we were talking about collective spaces walking around Edinburgh, and what brought happiness when we're exploring these spaces, and what they sounded like and having this kind of actual textual profile to the places that we like.

Participant G
And, and I came to graphic notation through early music, which is why I tie the two together so closely in my own research. So initially, we're going to look at a brief history of graphic notation. I'm going to connect a little bit to contemporary and experimental notation. What constitutes a musical sound? Looking at a little bit about ambient sound and then we're going to close with some examples (..) right. So music notation, the farthest figure we see on the far left hand side are the earliest example we have neumes, and this was our first attempt at notating music. The issue with neumes is that we have these beautiful, very stylized lines which indicate melodic phrases and they're not necessarily individual notes. For instance, when you look at the Torculus that's two and a half notes. You have the two notes, and then you see something at the end. And then at the very bottom, in the far left corner, is something called the Quilisma. That's not just a note, but a performance indication. So this was very complicated. And at the time when it was first written, we didn't have any staves, which is how musicians usually line up where no lines on Stave gives us an approximation of pitch. So I would send you with a bunch of neumes that were meant to be more of a memory aid than anything, they didn't actually function to teach you the music. And
so over time, we continued to refine this process over and over again to try and make it more consistent so that we could learn from the page alone, which is a really fascinating concept that we were able to say I have the sound that I want to recreate, I can now put it on a piece of paper and give it to you. And you can make that sound happen for me. But we did lose some things by giving up on neumes. So some of the expression that we started to really develop as neumes isn't possible in modern notation. So in the 60s, composers said, well, I don't want to be limited by a stave. I don't want to be limited by what needs to be in specific timings. And so they decided that the way to work free from that was to either abandon the stave entirely and say we don't need approximation of pitch or to say, we can have a general outline of it that are going to be pictured so I'm gonna go through some examples of what they did. But first, I found this excellent graphic score that actually pulls apart from contemporary notation and modern notation. Into graphic notation. (Playing the example)

Okay, we're gonna break it down and pull apart Alright, so as you saw, we started with modern notation, and then this particular animation decided they were gonna break it down and pull it apart. So I'm gonna talk about some of the ways that we can do that and then talk about what we're going to try in this project. One of the biggest things about contemporary and experiments for notation is that we're redefining sound and redefining noise. So if you're in an ambient space, and you take a moment and listen to the sounds around you, what we're going to try and see is a change of perspective, where instead of hearing these as a sound or noise, we're going to hear them as textural sound and musical sound. And so we're going to try and move between those and to find the sounds, individuals Happy Places that you've been so kind to share with us and what they mean in our world. So, graphic notation, as I mentioned, began because of a desire for more freedom in our scores. As composers. It first appeared in the 1950s and was continually refined throughout the 60s 70s on and there are many composers today that are still working with this particular idiom. It's highly associated with the composer John Cage, and a movement of indeterminacy and indeterminants, it was the idea that music didn't have to be exact to be musical, and that improvisation allows a lot of freedom in a musical sense for both creator and performer. It was originally used by avant garde musicians. And one of the examples that I'm going to play today is by John Cage, and you'll definitely see this the height of performance art. And then it's also meant to convey performance styles not possible
with the modern stave. So I might wish to convey putting a fish in a bathtub as an idea for a musical sound. But I can't specifically notate that as clearly on a modern stave. So what I might try instead is to use a pictograph score. There are two branches of graphic notation primarily, this is when new notation systems are defined by a composer usually at the front of their score. That tells you that x means why and how to perform it and it's very specific directions on what to do. We're going to be working with is conceptual notation. This is unspecified and interpreted by the performer. So we're going to provide our gestural shapes to try and elicit the sounds that we experience and then have our performers interpret before us and then together we'll have created something that's greater than the sum of its parts in essence of our sounds of collective happy spaces are also creating a collective between creators and performers and then putting both of us in the role of innovators. This is the score that I was mentioned by John Cage. He starts his piece in the top left hand corner we see zero as the start point. And then underneath, he has his timecode. So he's given himself 30 seconds in this first part, to perform the given options in a rough approximation with the time that happens. The drawing at the beginning that start is a rubber fish hooked up to a mic. All my slides are rebelling against me. Can't see that yet. So what we end up with is that each symbol tells you what he's going to be doing next. And he's got a lovely talk. Where he tells all about this John cage is pretty keen to start it seems so let him go ahead with that. (Playing the example)

Here's where our excerpt of the score ends. We've gone from placing the rubber fish into the bathtub to then placing the ice in the glass. So the next example that I want to show you is a time based abstract representation. Initially we had the pictograph these are very clear drawings. It tells you what you want to have happen at a given point in time. This is a time based abstraction where the timeline is given. And its abstract shapes that are telling the musical input. So for instance, we see that big red square just over the jagged corner just off the right hand side. This particular part could be interpreted much louder because of the size that it is. Or it could be saying that it wants to expand that that frame of notes. So you could have a sound where you have a single sound that's quite loud in volume. Or you could have a sound that requires the performer to try and get that many notes together at the same time. Moving in a cluster cord. And the thinner lines. It's probably softer. It's probably a single note that's transitioning, but if they're connected we know that wants to be a slurred sound. So
what I mean that it has a connectedness that cat separates you have a droning up and
down sort of sound to it. Either of these can be used in our project that we'll be doing
today. If you want to try and do something a little bit more specific pictograph my next
example is from Cathy Berberian. She's performing a score she wrote in association
with another composer called stripsody. This is when graphic notation was at its
height, and it was really exciting to composers. So she partnered with a comic book
writer to be able to present as music I will give you a heads up the first time that she
starts making a noise. It's very loud. So you might want to adjust your volume a little
bit depending on where she comes in.  (Playing the example)

So as you can see, there's a lot of different ways that we can determine what musical
sound is. The fascinating thing about  Cathy Berberian presentation is that she took
the role of vocalist and completely redefined this. So for our experiments that we'll be
trying, we have three different instruments that we'll be writing for. We have a flute, a
violin and a cello. So these particular sounds, but you don't have to keep them in mind
when you're writing you're working on because you have been interpreting the sound
of your own environments, and then the musicians themselves will target that sound.
After your scores, so what constitutes a musical sound. Different things that came up
in Negar's presentation definitely had musical potential. We mentioned the
thunderstorm talked about bubbling, crackling, popping, snapping, squishing all of
these different types of sounds can be expressed in graphic notation. You can either
use these as pictures, you can use words, you can use abstract shapes. You can try
and convey things by breaking up the stave. One thing you can do is I've given you
three lines for each instrument they can keep in mind and work around those. And
then from there, you'll be able to just fill in what you want across lines as needed. So
what we want this to be as individualistic and interpretation of happy places and we
want it to be interesting or meaningful in a very personal way for you.

As composers, we will all face what all composers face and that our vision of it will
change depending on the performance interpretation of that vision as well. So (...) my
next slide is the most advanced form of animation that PowerPoint will allow. So we'll
see how this works. So this is a score that you will be using. I've got an outline of three
lines for each musical line character that you want assigned. When filling in your score,
we're going to start by putting your title in the very top in the centre this doesn't have
to be the same format you can be frog chorus at night. It can be smoke, rising from a campfire. Whatever title evokes that space for you is totally fine. The next thing you're going to want to do is in the top right hand corner, you're going to want to note your composer's name. Then you start with your shapes for me. I want the first sound to kind of sense some sort of (showing how to write graphic notation in real time on the screen to the participants)

In the kitchen, I can hear them shuffling things around. And it's much louder the clinking glasses as a continuous sound shape. Next thing that might happen is it might be even further away or even closer in the room. So right now there's someone in the other room having phone call, I might hear that conversation, little voices going on. As they get more excited and interested in whether it's talking about and it may continue and go up and down and then diminuendo outside, diminish herself entirely. Another event that we might get could be we get a much larger sound happen almost instantaneously at the same time. So we'd have another sound backups happen as it's happened when squirrel crawls into the outside of the house, and sometimes doesn't quite make his next landing and falls and then scuttles off on the deck. Like there's someone else in the kitchen again making this morning and then you get some more sound events happening as time goes by in these other places as well. So I've chosen my sense because I want them to be very abstract. What we'll probably get is that the lines going horizontally will be indicators of time, and you can choose if you want to be specific and write numbers about that for an approximation of when you want sound events to happen. And then we're going to have the middle line is probably an approximate pitch. So interpreter by a conservative performance, will probably have that been read about a middle C, a G, or an A. And if you want to know around the pitches that will be done, you can specify a pitch that you would like for a performer to do starting with a scale being the lowest note of C, D, E, F, G, if you want a certain one of those, you can absolutely write a note name for it as you prefer that it's a little bit more free. And you can leave that as well. If you'd like to add any indication of volume, you can use the shape of it as I've done, or you can use dynamics from traditional music notation. With a piano for soft or 14 for loud. You can also use English words. You can use Spanish words, you can use Irish words, you can use French words, if you want to use an indication that tells a little bit more information about the space that you're in. You can use something that is a drawing as well. So all of these
are completely usable and valid options. Let's see. So I have my sounds continuing off onto the page so that I have them kind of blend into nothingness. So we're going to start now working on your particular graphics scores. If you've got them queued up on your computer or you haven't print stuff, that's absolutely fine, and we'll start working. If you don't, you can either scan this code, or there's going to be one in the group chat box that should show up.

Researcher
Right okay, so has everyone downloaded their, (. ) their photos and audio files already? Okay, so if you've got your video from your happy place, put that somewhere in front of you and we're just gonna give some time to go and get that started. So I see [Participant A] got hers setup. [Participant D] Have you got yours? Okay, are you able to reach it where you are now?

Participant D
I'm just trying (..) sorry I just need to view my video now? Okay I'll try and do that here

Participant F
So I don't know if you saw my message but my when I was uploading it my video again it started over again. Just like it's refusing to upload now. So is it okay if I either like send it through messenger or like YouTube or something?

Researcher
Oh, that's fine. For now. You don't have to upload your videos. It's just you watching your own video. So we're gonna sort that out later.

Participant F
Oh okay sorry

Researcher
So, Kristen, here, you've got yours queued up and ready to go. Can you describe three of the sound that you're thinking of isolating in your piece

Participant A
I'm thinking of water droplets and birds chirping. And then like, it, I think a river or what river and waterfall kind of falling so like the sound of water.

Participant G
Oh, that's fantastic. What approach would you like to use? Do you want to do pictograph kind of styles or a little bit more abstract?

Participant A
I started with kind of both. So like I'm putting like a picture of a bird (Laughing). Just because I was putting like squiggles and I was like I could be anything so like, I really wanted it to be like a bird sound. So I put it in the flute part. And then I'm also using like timestamps as well. So yeah, and so like I'm creating like a movement and whatever, of factual like picture in kind of an abstract way with some clues. So it's more free for the musicians. Yeah, I don't know. (Laughing) Mixed approach.

Researcher
Are you working from a physical score with pen and paper? Or are you working on a digital score on the computer?

Participant A
I am using like a digital score.

Participant G
Well I commend you. That's fantastic.

Participant A
It doesn't have to be very pretty as long as it's legible.

Researcher
So now that you've got your score all queued up, and that's good to go. Perfect. All right. Just gonna see here. [Participant B]. Were you able to get yours downloaded?

Participant B
Yeah, I did Yeah.
Researcher
Perfect. Um, do you mind sharing what three sounds you're going to be focusing on in your piece

Participant B
Probably. The sound of the wind, because of the windy days kept kind of indicate movement of the clouds and kept coming in and out. So it was quite noticeable on the day. So that's something that stood out. Probably the sound of birds. A lot of different types of birds and sound of people as well. The audio was in. There was no one around, but I could hear everyone so yeah, that's, that's kind of, sort of.

Participant G
Oh, that's wonderful.

Participant B
And the space that I'm looking at is a natural space as well. Yeah. It's a wildlife park that's just happens to be local to us.

Researcher
I think it's interesting that we've all found that there are quite a few natural spaces that made us feel very at home in this particular group. So that's fantastic. Are you working with a paper score or a digital score today?

Participant B
I think I'm still sort of trying to grasp that side of it, I think whatever the non-digital, paper, I think, yeah.

Researcher
Okay. And will you be doing pictograph styles or something a little bit more abstract.

 Participant B
I think probably abstract. I think.
Participant G
Oh, perfect. All right. And for your dynamics do you want to have things written out to give cues in words or did you want the signs themselves to tell the story

Participant B
Possibly yeah I see how it goes. I practice and see what's possible without without going completely off the wall

Researcher
I think you have a lot of things to work with. And, we're very excited to get that. All right. So I'm going to just move to [Participant C]. [Participant C], have you got your video cued up?

Participant C
Yeah, I have the video here.

Researcher
Perfect. And are you using a paper score or a digital score today?

Participant C
Digital

Researcher
That's perfect. And do you want to do abstract or pictograph?

Participant C
Probably the pictograph one

Researcher
Awesome, right? What three sounds did you want to try and work on today?

Participant C
Probably like birds chirping and, (...) like wind rustling leaves. And children (...) like playing outside. The sound of them laughing and so.
Participant G
Oh, that's fantastic. All right. So what I'm gonna get you to do then is do you want to try and use a timeline frame at the top of your score?

Participant C
Yeah.

Participant G
So usually it's easiest when putting a timeline into divide between fives. So spacing out when you want sound events to happen between zero etc. But yeah, that sounds fantastic.

Researcher
All right. I'm just gonna check it out on [Participant D]. [Participant D], do you have your video cued up?

Participant D
Yes, I have it queued up and I'll be notating on paper and probably trying to do it somewhat abstract as well. Can I use colour?

Participant G
Absolutely. Yeah. Oh, that's one thing if you want if you want to use colour, and if you're working with paper and you want to use stamps, you can do that as well. I do know a composer who did one with her makeup one time. And so took a nice sheet of paper like this draw lines and then at different stages of getting ready. She put more and more makeup towards the end of the page. So do not feel limited by medium at all. If you're doing a digital space, and he wants to use photos as your score as well, you can do that too. Absolutely. Um, have you identified the three sounds that you want to isolate?

Participant D
Just three, I'm going to
Participant G
oh you can add more in but three basic ones. That are the most important ones in your sound profile.

Participant D
I think so I think I have the sound of the wind through the grass and birdsong. There are different birds. So would each one be considered a different sound then

Participant G
I would say what you could do is have them all the same sound and then differentiate them either by size or colour or you can give them different boxes for different birds. So each one would be considered a different sound

Participant G
I would say what you could do is have them all the same sound, and then differentiate them either by size or colour. Or you can give them different boxes in different names. So if you wanted to specify that specific bird, you could either do that by species, or you could name the bird which could also be a fun exercise if you wanted to do that.

Participant D
Yeah, not sure I would be able to do that, but I think

Researcher
That sounds awesome. All right, Lindsay, have you got your video cued up for yourself?

So you're just on mute now. So if you can unmute yourself, I'm just gonna make sure that we've got everything all set for you.

Participant F
I was getting that whole time. It's fine. Sorry.

Participant G
That's fine. So, are you working with digital or paper today? Digital. Perfect. And then do you think you're going to try and abstract shapes or are you going to be a little bit more pictogram, also, for anyone who has musical notation that they'd like to include in it as well (...) You can put some of that in as well if you'd like if you want to put in just like a crotchet note or half crotchet stuff through that's also fine.

Participant F
I'm thinking a mixture of abstract and traditional notation. But used in an untraditional way.

Researcher
Oh, I like it. That sounds good. What's the sounds you're going to be isolating in your project?

Participant F
So I'm thinking people talking, rain. Maybe a little bit of wind.

Researcher
Oh fantastic. All right. So I'm going to leave you well in hand with that. And then let's see. I have someone here. [Participant E].

Participant E
So I have never done anything like that before. So I have that nice feeling of not having an idea of what I'm doing. (Laugh) (...)

Participant G
So for your score, I think the thing that I would ask is, are there sound events that are changing in volume? If there's any ones that you want to be quieter or louder, your score and ways that you can try and do that either with colour it the size that you've got there looks fantastic for that. Is there anything else that you want to tell the performers

Participant E
I think I've used words that kind of give the feeling so falling, and rolling, and there's this difference in colour and the strength of the lines.

Participant G
That looks really good.

Participant E
Thank you.

Researcher
Perfect. All right. And so I have a message in the chat from Participant H. So your mic isn't working. to catch up, you're probably going to be more abstract. That's perfect. Then if you've got your video cued up and you've got a digital space for it, you can start working with what we're going to do now is give you five minutes to work on your scores. If you have any questions, I'm going to turn my mic off. But you can use the chat box to be able to just send me a private message and I'll work with you on it one on one we'll be able to get all that sort of addressed.

Participant G
Okay, so I've been asked to demonstrate some sounds. So I'm really quick to make use of my chalkboard to give some ideas of some of the things you can do in lifetime so I've got a set of lines here. And then I'm gonna go through with some gestures, a very sudden sound that jumps off in a nice clean break. That can also be shaded, textured so here I've created a pictograph from a texture. Now how to create an impressionistic shape and it's gone up and down here all around. So I'm gonna make this motion here. (Showing general graphic notation examples) Another thing I do is I set this here five to 10 block, these are just squares. let's say here, I have a theme. Here I'm going to start just on the sixth line and I've got the channel probably led to somewhere in here. Going over filling into the gap and then moving on to the next section. I want it to be very abstract or I can be very free with it and just say that I want to start over here so all of those are totally fine. Really clear ways to communicate to performers any shape, any drawing, any line all of those are totally fine.

Researcher
If anyone is done, feel free to upload your score, the completed scores file in the Google Drive where you uploaded your photos, there'll be a new one there. That'll say, completed scores, just put yours in there. And if you're comfortable, we'll look at it a little bit together. We can workshop any elements of it that you don't feel are working. But if you think it's totally golden and good to go, that's where we're going to be putting our pieces when we're finished. Alright, so I have a score that's shown up in the file here. Feel free to keep working on your own. I'm just going to go over it. I'm not going to address anyone specifically, who doesn't have a name attached to your file. So if you'd like to submit yours and not have your name, specifically show off the workshop part of it, that's totally fine. So I'm just gonna screen share here. All right. So I think everyone should be able to see what I'm looking at here. So this is fantastic. We've got three lines, and we have a lot of pictograph stuff happening. So in the opening, you've got bright sunny sounds. The zigzag line on the bottom line is probably we'll get our musical gesture from then will probably follow the blue line as there are colours we're probably getting a different feel on this line as well.

Participant G
We've got grapes, sense of something happening in the distance, a clinking of glasses, a really great place for sort of a key clicks on a flute or maybe the violin player tapping their bow against the wood. Then we've got the sound of the sort of sleeping now going to bed. In the next line. We've got this continuation with a phone ringing, and then more of the gestural lines coming up. We've got so many of some shoes clicking on the ground (..) idea of a parakeet or a parrot singing, which is going to be fantastic. I'll be interested to see if the performers interpret those notes in time or if they'll start doing something a little bit different with that. Here's brilliant one. Someone's calling from mom. It's going all the way up and down all the way through there. And then we've got some singing and some sounds brilliant, just fantastic. And in the third line, we're probably going to get punctuation on those three car sounds. We've kind of hinted that there's going to be a violin that's associated with this. So we'll see how that's interpreted with that line. And then we've got some thunderstorms. I like the comic book Bam. That'll be interesting to see what they do with that one. And then the dot for finale. That's brilliant. So what we see here is that there's a lot of differences in colour. There's a mix between abstract and graphic score. I think this will be something that performesers would really be able to engage with.
Researcher
This is fantastic. Does anyone have any questions about anything? With this

All right, perfect. Alright, so I have another one here now. When I start my screenshare again this is lovely. All right.

Participant G
So here we get a very, very standard graphic score lineup. Got this fantastic falling sound, and you get the sense of the gesture kind of moving down the sound. That's a very it's pretty loud sound. that's out there. I liked it. It's been highlighted. That'll emphasise the breaks between when the music's going to start happening again. Yeah, oh, that's perfect. And then the 2 bits at the bottom could be performed as a chord. So what you might get is two notes played at the same time. So you have a root and then (sounds) if you want that to be a stressed sound, you can add a little tiny line underneath the bottom of it. And that will tell them that it's something to be stressed. If you want it to be really set in and shruged off. If you put a little dot underneath you can do that. But they'll definitely be able to work with this even if you don't want to add that to it. Yet. Oh, I love this one. Because we get that sense of the two notes. And then we have the gestural movements along with another colour that's this overarching squiggle line. That's perfect. I have 5-10 15-20 - 30 That's perfect.

Researcher
Excellent. Does anyone have any questions about scoring at all? All right, perfect.

Participant A
Are we just uploading it to our own files?

Researcher
No section that we have with (..) when you're in the shared folder at the top where you see all the folders. There'll be a new one there. Now that'll say finished scores and then just go ahead and put yours in there.
We are quite lucky in this workshop to have people in so many different countries and different time zones working on this. We get a real sound sense of this universality of Happy Places. And sounds. And you guys have all done such interesting projects and approaches to sound. This was really fascinating. Thank you for letting me be part of it.

Participant G
Okay, so this one's really interesting because what we're going to have is we have a vertical space theme explored horizontally. So with the pictograph score here, each instruments gonna get a chance to go through and have a different colour that they're expressing as part of this image. So in the first section, we've got clouds and the rain, and then the next tunes are umbrellas, and come up with a way to interpret the umbrella as long as the rain sounds. And then we have a sense of some rainfall. Then we have some birds and the flutes going to get that I love how the violin gets to be a squirrel. I'm so excited to see how the violin interprets what they're going to be doing with that. And we've got it moving across the branch. We've got the falling of an acorn there. And then got the leaves and the trees interpreted by the flute, and then another squirrel so we have two different characters at the same animal time that are gonna be portrayed by different instruments. So what things that we could do at if you want to give the musicians more instruction, you can give little squeak sounds to the squirrels if you want them to pick speaks at different intervals. You can decide on if you want there to be louder by adding some thicker lines in different places. But they'll definitely have a fun time with this because it makes them have to think in a vertical rather than horizontal way. And a lot of times when musicians approach scores, we're very used to seeing horizontal lines. And we haven't been challenged with vertical ones yet but it's getting really interesting.

Researcher
Okay, we've seen that one before and then we have two more this is fantastic. Okay, so now we're getting a real sense of narrative going on. We've got another bird coming in more of the sense, (...) on the far left side, so we'll get the sound of this really loud. We have the strings. That's brilliant. I love how we've got the mountains in there probably going to get the peak.
Participant G
All right. I think this is part of the same score here. So we've now come to the end. Now come to the end here, and we have shapes falling and descending. We have a nice quiet move and then all sudden, we have slam coming in just abruptly changing where we think we're going. For lots of fun. All right.

Researcher
Okay, I have another score coming in here. This is so exciting. Brilliant. So I'll start my screenshare again. Okay, so now we're going to look at, so have wind, birds and people. I love the movement. With that cloud. There's a big woosh feel to it.

Participant G
And then having the rumble, we're probably going to get I imagine that the flute will be wanting to interpret winds. So we'll probably get like a kind of fluttering sound but there. You can tell them if you want it to be a sound or if you want it to be whispered. Use either a word or denote it with the (...) just kind of bracketing things off. If you want to do that as well. And then have a hush. Oh, I love the hush. So we have this sense of quiet coming in. And then oh, that's so brilliant. So there are lots of different ways that a performer can approach this with for we've got sounds like if a person's cold the singer starts stammering in their song because they can't get all the way through because they're so cold. So you might end up with something similar with the performer doing that. Oh, I love the lines. These are very descriptive for musicians to follow and gives them a good sense of vocal interpretation, for them to follow with that as well. I like how you used different shapes. So we have the whoop and the tweet and we have two triangle tweets. And then we have the shape, that's the circle. That's going to be brilliant. And then the repetition of the hush as well. Oh, you staggered them that's brilliant. We like to see that line up in, in scores because it allows for a sense of form to come into play. They've all come together. But there have slightly different moments in which they reach that point, which gives us that sense of tension that will build quiet and then build again. Other things you could do if you wanted to. You can use the bottom part of that staff as well. You've made really good use of the whole top half. If you want to add something that's below that line as well. Feel free to add something in that they have to use for either descriptors. Or instructions. But this will also tell you more details. This is so exciting. Okay, let's see. Right, and this is part
of the same score and the second part got hushed again. Lovely. That's going to be a really interesting one for them to interpret with that.

Researcher
Anyone have any general questions? Okay, perfect. So we're probably going to start wrapping up pretty soon. So if you have a score that's finished, go ahead and put it in there. If you want more feedback on your score or a little bit more time on that, that's totally fine. But we are going to be sending these to our musicians today so that they can start working on it. So, if you've got them ready, send them in. And if you need a little bit more time, feel free to let me know in the chat and I can keep working with you on it as well. And that we have till the 20th if you want to add anything to your photos and videos that you need to do to kind of switch things around oh yeah [Participant C] not to worry, you can change things. So, what we're gonna do, I think is we're gonna get another two minutes and then you can add in your scores but you can continue to upload after that. If you haven't submitted your score. By the end of the day. I'll just send you a follow up just to make sure that we've got everything from you so that the concert we can share your music with us because it's been so lovely having all of you here today.

Researcher
We're just gonna look at that one really quickly. Okay, so we have the three birds, and a massive piano building to fortissimo.

Participant G
And D crescendoing down the soft sides of apples perfect. I was hoping someone would put those in their score. And then we have rain falling. Tree, the leaves lovely. Oh, we have a cat. I am so excited to see how our performers would interpret this. It's always really interesting when you give a graphics score to a performer, especially give textual cues as to whether as an instrumentalist they're going to try and be a cat as a cellist, or if they're going to be a cat and mew. So I'm very excited to see which ones they'd interpreted. That's wonderful. One thing you could do if you want to give them more direction, is you can add a timeframe code at the top with 05 when you want the sound events to happen, if you're not too fussed about when they do, that's totally fine. If you wanted to add another colour in at some point, you can do that as
well if you want them to change tone. So what a musician usually means when they talk about tone is that they'll want something that will sound warm or cool. They may even use words like brittle. So if you want to use a colour that describes that for you as well feel free to add that to there's loads of them to work with. I'm very excited about the cat and that's brilliant, okay.

Researcher
Alright, so sticking to our timeframe, I'm going to go back to my slideshow and and we have some QR codes for you know, the feedback forms. And so here we go, (...) want to share screen so we have a survey for you to do if you're able to access it, we've got a QR code here. Okay, so I've got the QR code all set up here if you'd like to do a survey. I'm also going to put one in the chat box here (...) we will be sending you another survey at the end of the concert. So if you can't do this one that's totally fine. This one's more to make sure that we explained the material properly, and that we went through it in a way that made you feel comfortable and at your pace. And that you've left this workshop feeling that you're more aware of your happy space in a different way and that it's been something that's brought something of that for you. And there we go. So give it two minutes for this one to get set up. And if you would like to do follow up on this one, if you send me a message. So if there is anything that you need to follow up, let me know in the chat and then I'll make sure to sort it out.

next week we will see what we have made, created together and have a discussion on how it did end up in the end and our creation process. You can always contact us through email. And thank you so much for joining us today. We have about five minutes before our scheduled end time. If you want to leave early, that's totally fine if you want to very studiously finish scores while I'm here with you, we can do that as well. And if you have any questions, this is a great time to ask them.

Participant B
I like seeing everyone else's scores as well, for some ideas, inspiration, it's all really cool how they're all so different. And I think that's going to be so fun for the musicians to look through.
This is, this was a lot of fun. Yeah, I really enjoyed it. I think that's the quickest score I've ever composed.

Participant G
Very satisfying to do graphic score and sit down experience moment and then say yes, I am done. I can walk away.

Participant A
I agree. But that that was almost like, like, like I definitely overthought it but that's okay. Like I need to. I need to do things like this more often, I think. So this was nice.

Researcher
I really love that everyone was so good about sharing the sounds that really interested you in these places and things like that as well. And so I'm hoping that we get this concert together.

Participant G
And if you're interested as well, I'm doing more graphic rotation if do let me know because I can always send out more materials or if there's another community project that's doing something that then I'll let you know I hear about it for sure as well.

Participant D
I'd like to say thanks as well. I didn't realise anything like this existed. So I think I found a new hobby I just thought that I was also good! I came to know about places that makes me happy and their sounds too. What we get with your house and everything. I realised it's just really important. (...) Yeah, yeah, so I always wondered what that was like, to visualise sounds. You might think that there's not a disorder but when you visualise sounds it might differ. So I felt sounds in a different way and want to see them as well as hearing them. So yeah, and I definitely be interested in more projects like this.

Researcher
Oh, that's wonderful to hear. Thank you so much. (Final comments and end of the session)
Nighthawks, by Edward Hopper. There is no entrance or exit to the sealed space of the diner, and people relate to the exclusion that is depicted, the implied sense of loneliness that is similar to feelings that one might experience in some urban settings.
Participants' Details
Edinburgh CCC (Edinburgh Collective Cognitive Cartography) project that I led from January to May 2021, was an interdisciplinary research project generously awarded by the Student Experience Grants (Innovation Initiative Grants) of The University of Edinburgh aiming to explore the prospect of creating a happier Edinburgh. Extra care has gone to guarantee ethical standards through written and verbal explanations both prior and during the research. The researcher’s contact data is shared with participants and they have been encouraged to contact the researcher anytime should they want to raise an issue even after the study completion. The signed consent forms were gathered by the researcher according to the GDPR regulations. Study participants were from a diverse background, academic level and gender as illustrated by the following pie charts.
Participants’ detail, Ethics and Workshop Results

Edinburgh brain-walks Participants’ facts.
Information Sheet for Participants in Edinburgh CCC Research Study

We would like to invite you to participate in this research study by researchers at University of Edinburgh. It is important to read the following information and discuss it with the researchers if you have any questions. Participation is voluntary. Whatever your background or your experiences are, we love to know your thoughts and feelings. The more we know about you, the better we can serve the research purposes. There are no right or wrong answers or responses, and your honest and thoughtful engagement is appreciated. As one of the first Edinburgh citizens in this new, free offering community activity; your responses will be especially important to us. After reading the consent document, please sign below the page to proceed.

What is the purpose of this study?
Edinburgh CCC aims to provide a platform for the community’s active participation, plans for tackling the issues and ways for academics and community to collaborate for a better Edinburgh. This study will help us to better understand Edinburgh local communities, their needs and views and how the built environment relate to well-being and connected citizens. Based on the collected data provided through participants who will share their hands-on creations e.g. photos, drawings, video/audio files and writings. Understanding how spatial layout affects behaviours may lead to improved design solutions for public spaces and product design, which will benefit the public in the long term. Together we will also co-create a collective impressionistic piece to record our emotions during the Covid-19 pandemic in a novel way.

What will I be asked to do?
Designed by the university of Edinburgh researchers, this is an opportunity to get in touch with your creative side, become more mindful of your everyday environment and get connected to other Edinburgh citizens; with practical hands-on exercises to enjoy on your long lockdown days! This event constitutes of two activities, first participants will receive a package including a series of fun and engaging activities and probes for collective making, and work through its activities on a self-paced basis for 10 days. As a part of this project you will also go on a short walk in Edinburgh to reflect on your interaction with the urban fabric. You will be provided with all the tools and information you need to create your own take on the Edinburgh city. Your makings then will be returned to the University of Edinburgh researchers to be used in academic research on urban planning, intervention and policy making. At the second event which will be held online via Zoom, we are going to explore the participants experiences, sharing and communicating design processes and connect likeminded people. A friendly creative place to have conversations in the city and about the city, to give a platform to your voices. This will culminate in a performance of your collective individual works and a virtual drink reception!

What are the benefits of participation?
Participants will co-create a collective piece that reveal their emotions, thoughts and memories in Edinburgh. Your participation in this study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on the effects of spatial characteristics on individuals’ ways of thinking and feeling. Participants can expect interactive debate, partaking in urban design research and hands-on activities that will increase their spatial consciousness that affect one’s everyday life. The activity packages include some goodies e.g. tote bag, markers etc. and amzoon vouchers to thank your contribution.

Who will have access to my information and how will my information be kept confidential?
All personal data will be kept confidential and only the researchers will have access to the personal data collected in this study. No personally identifiable information (e.g., your name, e-mail address) will be kept after the data collection stage. All data will be handled according to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications. Researchers will not attempt to identify individual responses and collected data will be aggregated for analysis and publication purposes.

What will happen with the results of this study?
Once the study has been completed the results will be published in reports, conferences, journals and so on. Some of the research being undertaken will also contribute to the researchers’ doctoral thesis. The researchers may wish to publish and release the photography and/or film footage as well as any files including photos, audio/videos files and responses shared by the participants as part of the event, which enables organisers to freely copy, distribute and exhibit the work, and modify or adapt the work and redistribute any adapted works under an identical event licence.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study. Please do not hesitate to direct any questions you have to the researchers.
Consent Form

I give consent to the licensing of photography or film taken at this event as well as any data including photos, writings, drawings, audio/videos files and participants’ responses as described above.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image internally to contribute to current research associated with this project. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image externally to promote this project and the University. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media.

Signature:
Name (CAPITALS): Date:

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Information Sheet for Participants in Edinburgh CCC Brain-walk

You are warmly invited to participate in this research study by The University of Edinburgh. It is important to read the following information and discuss it with the researcher if you have any questions. Participation is voluntary. After reading the consent document, please sign below the page to proceed. Thank you!

What is the purpose of this study?
Edinburgh CCC aims to provide a platform for the community’s active participation, plans for tackling the issues and ways for academics and community to collaborate for a better Edinburgh. This study will help us to better understand Edinburgh citizens experience of the city, their needs and views and how the built environment relate to well-being. Based on the collected data provided through participants’ real time recorded brainwaves and the study surveys. Understanding how spatial layout affects behaviours may lead to improved design solutions for public spaces and architecture, which will benefit the public in the long term. Together we will also co create a collective impressionistic piece to record our emotions during the Covid-19 pandemic in a novel way.

What will I be asked to do?
Designed by the university of Edinburgh researchers, this is an opportunity to become more mindful of your everyday environment. Over the course of a 40-minute silent walk through Edinburgh, a participant that is wearing a dry EEG mobile headband (muse s) and a guide take an immersive walk, simply enjoying their surroundings. Talking or excessive muscular activity could affect the brainwaves recording hence it is important for the participant to become immersed in the walking activity. Focusing on each site and breaking down the urban elements that grab their attention, through walking and seeing. Performed in silence, the walk is guided by an architect along a specific route. There will be 2 short surveys, one prior and one post walk to record participants’ general mood. Conducted data via EEG device will reveal place-based emotive swings, locating what is working well in the city. The walk is an experience of being mindful of our environment, our senses heightened and engaged with the city, allowing a unique perspective and experience of Edinburgh.

What are the benefits of participation?
Your participation in this study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on the effects of spatial characteristics on individuals’ ways of thinking and feeling. Participants can expect partaking in urban design research and a novel experience that will increase their spatial consciousness that affect one’s everyday life. There is also the study’s goodie bag to give you some sugar after the walk!

Who will have access to my information and how will my information be kept confidential?
All personal data will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to the personal data collected in this study. No personally identifiable information (e.g., your name, e-mail address) will be kept after the data collection stage. All data will be handled according to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications. Researcher will not attempt to identify individual brainwave recordings and collected data will be aggregated for analysis and publication purposes.

What will happen with the results of this study?
Once the study has been completed the results will be published in reports, conferences, journals and so on. Some of the research being undertaken will also contribute to the researcher’s doctoral thesis. The researcher may wish to publish and release the photography and/or film footage as well as any files including brainwave records and survey responses shared by the participants as part of the event, which enables organisers to freely copy, distribute and exhibit the work, and modify or adapt the work and redistribute any adapted works under an identical event licence.
Consent Form

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I give consent to the licensing of brainwaves recordings at this event as well as any data including survey answers and participants’ responses as described above.

I give consent to the licensing of photography or film taken at this event. I understand that the University of Edinburgh may wish to use photography or film footage featuring my image internally and externally to contribute to research associated with this project and to promote this project and the University. This agreement applies to print and digital media formats including print publications, websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film and social media. (Yes/No)

Signature:
Name (CAPITALS): Date:


Email: n.ebrahimi@sms.ed.ac.uk
Dear Negar,

Subject: Outcome of ECA Ethics Review

Thanks for sending your work for ethical peer review. Please find the response below. The reviewer(s) will have responded with one of four possible opinions on its ethics. Please note that these are opinions not approvals. If you go ahead with the work (as described in your ethics checklist) then a ‘favourable opinion’ here means that we believe it will be ethical.

In this form the Further Comment section, below, will outline broad comments and any additional conditions or provisions that are being made along with the opinion.

✓ – Favourable Opinion

☐– Favourable Opinion with Additional Conditions (In this circumstance there is no need for you, the researcher, to respond to confirm the completion of these conditional actions. Please just apply the amendments requested in the conditions detailed below and it will be taken in good faith that you will do so.)

☐– Provisional Favourable Opinion (In this circumstance you, the researcher, should apply the amendments requested in detail below and should then evidence this in a response to the ECA Ethics Committee via the ECA Ethics Director.)

☐– Unfavourable Opinion (Please see Further Comments, below.)

Further Comment from Reviewer(s):

Thorough and thoughtful, this checklist details a phase of largely auto-ethnographic work for PhD studies.

Name and Signature of Reviewer (ECA Ethics Committee Member):

Rachel J. Harkness

If you require further information about this ethics review, you can contact the ECA Ethics Director, Dr. Rachel Harkness, on
Activity pack material
The design format was decided to set out a unifying narrative, the thread of time, throughout the various activities. And at the same time, accommodate contribution by allowing contributors to take up or drop the activities as they wish and within their preferred order. Each folder contained probes and methods to tickle the participants imagination, by providing material, activities and ways that provokes imagination.
STREET PORTRAITS
A photography experience, capturing the feel of the Edinburgh streets

Practical Notes

Hands-on Toolkit
Edinburgh CCC

Mapping Toolkit
Edinburgh CCC

Hello! We are so happy here! This is a 10-day project full of great food, thought, and imagining. As a project, you will also share work in Edinburgh on your interaction with the fabric. The package returned to the union Edinburgh researchers in academic research planning, interventions development and policies. Share what you are learning, express your feelings in any way you like, let your inner work! You will see one of the posters, mapping, and hypothetical ideas are no right or wrong. Just get your creativity flowing!

FUELED BY THOUGHTS ON EDINBURGH

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT EDMBURGH?

WHERE IS THE MOST GORGEOUS TOWN?

WHERE IS THE MOST GORGEOUS WIND?

TAKE BREAK

SHOW ME A LITTLE HELP

THE WEEK THAT WAS

Use the colouring sheets, notes, and markers various spots in it. Some maps have a what to be highly aware for you to take a map. Just to mention what is omnipresent. This of possible mapping from the complete list or map your area it could be anything
go shooting winning movies. or that aliens will be in Edinburgh thoughts are correct are welcome!
ter where I was in the world, Edinburgh would always be my adventures because I have a solid base to work from.

ways to interact, be open and all in this to gether. I'd say be open and honest.

would also be more opportunities to get to know people I'm happy to spend a few minutes in conversation now as there are more opportunities.

Equal Society. That makes me think of long term friends.

Promise you'll always remember you're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

Simple pleasures is that you need people. You matter how hard you try to be alone. Recognize this and I love you.
Write a poem. Let the city be your muse. How do you feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

Down a close; in a court walled in by stone. It is silent; it is sweet. What a time to be alone.

Even the birds, they have forgotten this little surprise alcove. In all this turmoil, this global worry. The city feels so still without its flurry.

But it isn’t sad; it isn’t lonely. These walls have seen it all before. So many feet; so many hurry. The city ebbs + flows as the people come + go.

It hums along steady as she rows. This is just another phase. The day may feel like a year. But what’s a year to

I am not a citizen, I of 489000 But I of a thousand years or hundreds of thousands. And thousands of years to come.

These walls are going nowhere. The heart beat of the stone and hills has a very strong will. A will to endure. And it makes me strong and humble. These days are just a stumble in the grand scheme of this city.
Write a poem. Let the city be your muse. How do you feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

PRESENT - EDINBURGH

What does Edinburgh feel like?
Cold, windy, and warm, calm
What does Edinburgh look like?
Grey, looming, and colourful, elegant
What does Edinburgh sound like?
Bustling, loud, and quiet, murmuring

To live here is to be satisfied, a little smug perhaps
To visit here is to be curious, and a little envious too
What joy it would be to see the city anew
With fresh, young eyes, enjoying a different view

What will Edinburgh feel like, look like, sound like
In the coming, altered days ahead?
Not too much changed, I hope,
Warmer, more colourful and whispering sweet nothings instead.
Write a poem. Let the city be your muse. How do you feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

A Year in Edinburgh

January, scarf and gloves, but not enough for the cold, north wind.
February, snowdrops on the castle hill,
Crocus in the Meadows, chaffs everywhere, makes us of good things to come.
March, Botanics and the Rhododendrons
April, May sometimes our only summer
June, start of festival Jazz & Blues
July, no kids at school, perhaps the beach
No stop August, festivals, fringe, people
September normality? With students arriving!
October, Shops filling up with Christmas Stuff
Bonfire, fireworks, frightened pets, sad November
Christmas. Hogmanay, celebrate December
with people, pantomime, eat, drink and party, and get ready to start all over again.
Write a poem. Let the city be your muse. How do you feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

Edinburgh, full of history
of colour and green spaces
offering many places
to walk and have some fun

A city with a special past
and architecture built to last
complete with hidden gems and blossoming trees
theatres that aim to please
and restaurants by the dozen

A vibrant open city
monumental - pretty
home to many races
a place that all embraces.

HOME.
Write a poem. Let the city be your muse. How do you feel about Edinburgh, and being a citizen of this city? Try to express your feelings in a poem.

PRESENT - EDINBURGH

What does Edinburgh feel like?
Cold, windy, and warm, calm
What does Edinburgh look like?
Grey, looming, and colourful, elegant
What does Edinburgh sound like?
Bustling, loud, and quiet, murmuring

To live here is to be satisfied, a little smug perhaps
To visit here is to be curious, and a little envious too
What joy it would be to see the city anew
With fresh, young eyes, enjoying a different view

What will Edinburgh feel like, look like, sound like
In the coming, altered days ahead?
Not too much changed, I hope,
Warmer, more colourful and whispering sweet nothings instead.
Edinburgh Walk

Sunday papers, and
reached for my patchwork
sewing, always relaxing.
Felt calmer and a bit more
in control of my day.

Had my usual usual walk
in the afternoon to blow away
the cobwebs, and tackled
the CCC project again, made
a start on this section again.

I still hear Sunday as a lazy
day, even in a pandemic, so
no new changes for me.

22 March 2021 - Monday

A good windy day so outside
with the washing, it always
smells so good from drying
outdoors. That makes me feel
happy, such a small thing.

Then another small thing that makes me
happy, a trip to town
for the weekly shop! It
seems like a day for
household activity.

Made good progress on
the baby clothes - sorted

Edinburgh Walk

Put aside, new baby grows,
and 14 hours so far. Should
be enough to keep the new
baby clothed for a while.

Revisited the CCC files
again, tried to identify
what to do next. Can't
decide so just hope away.

My turn to cook -
my partner mine
does most of the cooking -
and opted for beef stew,
nice and easy - yummy!

23 March 2021 - Tuesday

Definitely going to make a
start on other sections of the
CCC project. I'm aware that
I am using the 'non-
committee' sticker a
lot in this regard.

Whoop! Getting to grips
with CCC at last. I've caught
up with the laundry and housework,
nothing I have to avoid doing
anything I perceive as difficult.
So it's a win-win situation
The kitchen is very clean.
Coffee and that sense of belonging.
I miss the creative possibilities the opportunities to be myself, to share ideas, be proactive, be spontaneous, and be part of something bigger than myself while that has meaning, and makes a difference in the community that surrounds it.

I feel valued,

Phases to visit:
Although I took some photos of the gallery of modern art, I so somewhere I would revisit once restrictions have lifted, the place I most want to live is North & Dublin & Arts. For 12 years it has been my spiritual and creative home I so miss the staff and users of the city, the buzz of activity, the dog chats, the retail, food and

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some point today. Listen to a political talk re Baldwin/Blackburn, SNP the rest. Up to them to make the right decision. I have, as usual, more anger at Scottish Tories. Men ganging up on a woman. Have become more politicised they ever before. Am now expressing my anger on Facebook. Decided to stop this later this evening & will be chatting face to face (Messenger) with a few friends. It’s good. The only problem is it lasts for 2 hours. Sometimes I’ve had enough, but I’m too polite (and possibly don’t want to miss something).

to end the chat. Decision made. Have checked bus timetable. Going to do 30 minute walk to town. Princes St, Lyceum, Duncrue and perhaps down the High St to Holmwood. Put on the step counter watch, till up bird feeders 🐦

Walking through shops this afternoon, should think it over. Good afternoon. Over 10,000 steps and an ice cream on Holmwood Park — it’s the little things.

Street portrait notes:
Sunday 21/3

After lunch, catching bus to west end of Princes St. Cut along King St. Scott Road, Grassmarket, Victoria Street. Almost empty bus. 1 other person sitting downstairs. Feel safe.

One person got off, another got on, both of distance for social distancing. My worry is that buses so tied to me (now) will be unable to sustain this excellent service.

Shops shut — but the Sunday Good Lockdown. Pavements quiet mostly.

1st photo — my drawing (note me to of Irene the Flock — me)

2 & 3rd — see story.

4th on bus — Sunday trip next few Princes St.

Post all taken on my walk, finished on Niddrie St.
Saturday March 26/21

Today my focus is having a baby. I need to keep a rest day because I have been feeling a little more in the city and a little more in my own mind. I am busy, busy, busy, but it is a time for new beginnings. I will spend my days today thinking, planning, and preparing for the future. I can start by thinking about my goals and future plans. I can also start by preparing for the future by planning my days and creating a schedule for my activities. I can also start by working on my goals and planning my days.
April 2021 - Monday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Tuesday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Wednesday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Thursday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Friday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Saturday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.

April 2021 - Sunday
 allergies. I wish, 3 times a day, with 3 grains, so I am in the kitchen now, my reactions, I am taking antihistamines, and I am taking a shower. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day. I am taking a shower. It is a hot, sunny day.
Easter in Wohn

23 March 2013 - Theobald's Green
A rather beautiful day, definitely heavy rain for the past week. Today, my sister is coming home with a supply of carrots to allocate to families to be picked up by each family. It's hard to see in the very tangled trees
What thank you for the morning meal at the Green

23 March 2013 - Theobald's Green
A lovely day at the garden center. The weather is sunny, but the wind is still strong. The trees are swaying, and the birds are singing. It's a beautiful day in the garden center. The flowers are blooming, and the bees are busy pollinating the plants. It's a lovely day to be out in the garden center.

23 March 2013 - Theobald's Green
A lovely day at the garden center. The weather is sunny, but the wind is still strong. The trees are swaying, and the birds are singing. It's a beautiful day in the garden center. The flowers are blooming, and the bees are busy pollinating the plants. It's a lovely day to be out in the garden center.

23 March 2013 - Theobald's Green
A lovely day at the garden center. The weather is sunny, but the wind is still strong. The trees are swaying, and the birds are singing. It's a beautiful day in the garden center. The flowers are blooming, and the bees are busy pollinating the plants. It's a lovely day to be out in the garden center.
* Normal day
* Go out
* Go shopping
* Out with friends
  - Take some work on readings
  - Lay on the bed, ugh!
* Stay at home for insurance reasons
* Go to the sunset on the hill

---

Dear recognised by an acquaintance 20 years ago.
She contacted me, and we messaged and had
a lovely time catching up. She is doing great
and looking for a job. She mentioned
that she had been doing some gardening
recently.

Do you have any plans for today?

---

Monday 28th March and
last of the Easter break

Make up as lightly as possible
in the style of '40s or '50s

Check out the menu
in the restaurant

Have a drink with friends

Check out the gym

Check out the shops

---

An old friend from long ago
sent a text, saying they
were coming to visit this weekend.

Hope they have a safe journey.

---

* A smiley face
* A happy face
* A sad face
* A frowning face
5 young boys. They must have a fountain. I stopped at a bench & had a seat & just sat & looked around. Duncan & Timmy were on my lap. After a while, I went inside to get a drink. I went to the kitchen & got a glass of water. The boys were playing on the playground. I went to the living room & sat on the couch. I was reading a book. I read it slowly, enjoying every moment.

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1ST WEEKEND NOTES
Sunday 1/13
Rex & I went to the park. We played frisbee & had a great time. Afterward, we went to the library & read some books.

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY NOTES
Sunday 1/13
Walked down the street & took some photos. I was happy with the results. I decided to go back the next day & take more photos.

5 things I learned today:
1. Take time to relax & enjoy life. It's important to take breaks & recharge.
2. Appreciate the small things. Sometimes the little things can make a big difference.
3. Stay positive & optimistic. A positive attitude can make things easier.
4. Be kind & compassionate to others. Kindness can make a big impact.
5. Learn from others. Listen to their experiences & learn from their mistakes.

THE WEEK THAT WAS
Sunday 1/13
Woke up early. Did some chores & read the news. Enjoyed a latte at the coffee shop. Went to the gym for a workout. Had a great day.
Tuesday 23 March

Forgot to check my phone in the morning, so was late in getting up. This morning, I had to go to a meeting at 10 am and a conference at 1 pm. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am, so I had to wake up early to get ready. The conference lasted for the whole day. It was a busy day, but I managed to get everything done.

Wednesday 24 March

Forgot to check my phone in the morning, so was late in getting up. This morning, I had to go to a meeting at 10 am and a conference at 1 pm. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am, so I had to wake up early to get ready. The conference lasted for the whole day. It was a busy day, but I managed to get everything done.

Thursday 25 March

Forgot to check my phone in the morning, so was late in getting up. This morning, I had to go to a meeting at 10 am and a conference at 1 pm. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am, so I had to wake up early to get ready. The conference lasted for the whole day. It was a busy day, but I managed to get everything done.

Friday 26 March

Forgot to check my phone in the morning, so was late in getting up. This morning, I had to go to a meeting at 10 am and a conference at 1 pm. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am, so I had to wake up early to get ready. The conference lasted for the whole day. It was a busy day, but I managed to get everything done.

Saturday 27 March

Forgot to check my phone in the morning, so was late in getting up. This morning, I had to go to a meeting at 10 am and a conference at 1 pm. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am, so I had to wake up early to get ready. The conference lasted for the whole day. It was a busy day, but I managed to get everything done.

Places to Visit

Although I took some photos of the newly opened Theodore, I would like to see more.

- National Gallery of Scotland
- Edinburgh Castle
- Holyrood Palace
- The Royal Botanic Garden
- Lothian Burns Festival
- The National Museum of Scotland
- The Scottish Parliament

Good luck with your studies and creative work.

I hope this letter finds you well. Please write back soon.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

---

Note: The document contains handwritten notes that are not transcribed here due to the quality of the image.
Edinburgh, Capital of Scotland

Cultural Festivals
Entertainment
Restaurants
Shops

Beach
Leith - Port of Queensferry
Firth of Forth

The University of Edinburgh
Renaissance, 15th-19th Century
Centre for Research Collections
www.ed.ac.uk/cur
+44 (0)131 650 6279 in-country

We have great stuff

Coffee and that sense of hospitality, I realised the creative possibilities and the opportunities to be myself to show where it was possible to be authentic and be part of something bigger than myself, within the fabric, with a real meaning and make a difference to the community that surrounds it.
Extra cards! If you need more space for working on activities and expressing your ideas, here is your chancel! Use this blank canvas to create your masterpiece!

PORTABLE CONCERT TENT.

ARTISTS ACTIVITY LEADERS

LIL PLAY POOF ELDERLY + GRAND CHILDREN

FUTURE SPACE IN GREEN SPACES ACROSS CITY
Edinburgh, Capital of Scotland

- Seat of Scottish Parliament
- Extinct Volcano
- Old Town
- High Street
- Volcano Park
- Pentlands
- High Street
- New Literary Poetry Books Libraries Publishing
- Universities Galleries Museums Theatres Venues Shops
- Beach
- Leith Port in Olden Times
- Beach
- Firth of Forth

Also land of Trainspotting!
Extra cards! If you need more space for working on activities and expressing your ideas, here is your chance! Use this blank canvas to create your masterpiece!

My Happy Place and the place I look forward to getting back to — NORTHERN ARTS

For 12 years it has been my spiritual and creative home. I miss the staff and users of the centre, the buzz of activity, the long chats, the great food and coffee and that sense of belonging.

I miss the face to face connections, the creative possibilities, the opportunities to be myself, to share ideas, to be proactive, spontaneous and a part of something bigger than myself where I feel valued — somewhere that has real purpose and makes a difference to the community that surrounds it.
Picture your happy place. What is the
dominant activity in this place? What is
the role of this place in your life? How
can this place make you happy? Write,
draw or make a collage of your happy
place. It could be a place that you have
been previously happy in or a made up
place that you are the architect of.

This is one of my
all time favourite
places. It is Portobello
at a certain time when
the tide is out, you
can walk in the opposite
direction of the Prom. Towards
the water treatment centre.
It is never too busy. The
sound of the sea is soothing. Occasionally you can
see lots of wild birds feeding. Not
just seagulls. It relaxed me.
and you can see from the photo,
gives me joy.
We believe that you have a wonderful story to share about Edinburgh. So go on, just write it! You are a talented and qualified writer and the city is your prompt. Write a short made up story or a true story in any genre that you want; and Write Now!

Story

It's August 2017 in the centre of Edinburgh. It's my first day as an Edinburgh Festival volunteer and I'm ready to go. Hopefully I will be recognisable in my maroon logo sweatshirt with some maps, bus timetables, and a million things in my head. This is my way of showing my love of Edinburgh. Also as I've lived all my life here, and over the years have seen countless festival/fringe acts in a zillion venues, I reckon I was well qualified to do this. I was looking forward to sharing this and helping visitors.

We chose shifts of a few hours. The groups split so we could cover more areas of the popular tourist spots in the city centre. I was lucky to be paired with a young lovely student from Japan. She was a godsend. Not only did she speak excellent English, but French and her own Japanese. It could be a different person each shift sharing the space. The volunteers came from anywhere in the world and some would also have disabilities. Their reasons for volunteering ranged from an interest in the city or to further their knowledge of it, and even for the freebies (some free tickets, luncheon vouchers, travel concessions).

Generally we tried our best and if we didn't know, we would say and direct them to the tourist Information centre. Often it was just a smile or directing them to the right venue. Spending time with my fellow volunteers was the best part...even on rainy days.

I'm still friends with my first partner although she has now returned to Kyoto Japan. I continued to volunteer again in 2018 and 2019. Of course there wasn't a 2020 Edinburgh Festival volunteer programme. This wasn't the fault of Covid19. Already the plug had been pulled as it had been a pilot scheme and the funding from Camelot and the Council was to stop for 2020. A shame really as I'm sure us volunteers benefitted and those we helped were also happy with the service.

See 2-3 photos in disposable camera.
FUELED BY THOUGHTS ON EDINBURGH

WHERE IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN EDINBURGH?

INNOCENT RAILWAY TUNNEL
I only discovered it the other week. Lit by the walls are covered in graffiti. Long tunnel was fine with other people around Edinburgh's hidden gem? Why?

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT EDINBURGH?
It's my home. I have all the things I love on my doorstep. Shut at the moment but I'm looking forward to their reopen.

WHERE IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN EDINBURGH?

FOR ME IT'S NOT A PLACE BUT THE EDINBURGH SKYLINE. EITHER SEEN FROM LYROD, OR TOP DECK OF BUS TURNING INTO REGENT PLACE

CHANGE IT UP
You probably have some suggestions for how things should be in Edinburgh. Where to Strat?

IS EDINBURGH A FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING CITY?
See journal

JOURNAL IT
Use a journal to take notes and track your thoughts and ideas on Edinburgh. Start with a question about Edinburgh here.

SPEAK UP & ASK FOR HELP
When things get tough, don't just push through it. Where do you go to reach out for help?

Friends on Family

GET YOUR SPACE
If Edinburgh was a painting, how would you describe it? You can draw an image you have in mind or write your description here.

BOTANICS

TAKE BREAKS
Where to go once in a while to have a break?
**Fueled by Thoughts on Edinburgh**

**SET YOUR SPACE**

If Edinburgh was a painting, how would you describe it? You can draw an image you have in mind or write your description here.

**Where is the Most Beautiful Place in Edinburgh?**

Princes Street Gardens - I love the Ross Bandstand and the well-tended plants.

**Swanston Village**, you could be in the middle of the countryside, the houses are so quaint, and it is a great walk.

**Where is Edinburgh's Hidden Gem? Why?**

**Change It Up**

You probably have some suggestions for how things should be in Edinburgh. Where to Strat? Less litter would be nice.

**Cramond foreshore.** It is a short bus ride away, or a longer walk. It can be busy, but so peaceful on a quiet day.

**Take Breaks**

Where to go once in a while to have a break?

**Speak Up & Ask for Help**

When things get tough, don't just push through it. Where do you go to reach out for help?

Friends, older and wiser than me. They never let me down.

**Journal It**

Use a journal to track your thoughts and ideas on Edinburgh. Start with a question about Edinburgh here.
Fueled by Thoughts on Edinburgh

Romantic + Wild.

Set Your Space

If Edinburgh was a painting, how would you describe it? You can draw an image you have in mind or write your description here.

Where is the Most Beautiful Place in Edinburgh?

Hard to pick just one!
- Water of Leith @ Dean's Village
- View of the City from Arthur's Seat at sunrise

What Do You Love About Edinburgh?

- The green space
- The architecture
- The closes
- The waterway

Where is Edinburgh's Hidden Gem? Why?

I've only been here 3 months so it feels a little early to answer this question but...

Maybe the Royal Botanic Gardens?

Change It Up

You probably have some suggestions for how things should be in Edinburgh. Where to Strat?

I don't feel like I have been here long enough to answer!

Speak Up & Ask for Help

When things get tough, don't just push through it. Where do you go to reach out for help?

I haven't had to ask for help since I've been here. I don't know where I would go!

Take Breaks

Where to go once in a while to have a break?

To take a break I go to Holyrood Park. I feel removed from the city like I can be quiet, yet it is right down the road.

Journal It

What is Edinburgh like outside of a pandemic?

Use a journal to take notes and track your thoughts and ideas on Edinburgh. Start with a question about Edinburgh here.
Fueled by thoughts on Edinburgh

Romantic + Wild.

Set your space
If Edinburgh was a painting, how would you describe it? You can draw an image you have in mind or write your description here.

What do you love about Edinburgh?
- The green space
- The architecture
- The closes
- The waterway

Where is Edinburgh's hidden gem? Why?
I've only been here 3 months so it feels a little early to answer this question but...
Maybe the Royal Botanic Gardens?

Where is the most beautiful place in Edinburgh?
Hard to pick just one!
- Water of Leith @ Dean's Village.
- View of the city from Arthur's Seat at sunrise.

Change it up
You probably have some suggestions for how things should be in Edinburgh. Where to Strat?
I don't feel like I have been here long enough to answer!

Take breaks
To take a break, I go to this local park. I feel removed from the city and like I can be quiet, yet it is right down the road.

Speak up & ask for help
When things get tough, don't just push through it. Where do you go to reach out for help?
I haven't had to ask for help since I've been here. I don't know where I would go now!

Journal it
Use a journal to take notes and track your thoughts and ideas on Edinburgh. Start with a question about Edinburgh here.
If Edinburgh was a painting, how would you describe it? You can draw an image you have in mind or write your description here.

**SET YOUR SPACE**

**WHERE IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN EDINBURGH?**

*Cramond Island*  
*Arthur's Seat*  
*Pentland Hill*  
*Princes Street*

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT EDINBURGH?**

*Meadows, flowers, parks, Princess Street, mountains and sea.*

**WHERE IS EDINBURGH'S HIDDEN GEM? WHY?**

*Aberlady Bay, because people didn't know it's as beautiful as Portobello.*

**CHANGE IT UP**

You probably have some suggestions for how things should be in Edinburgh. Where to Strat?

*To care more about international students' feeling*

**TAKE BREAKS**

*Arthur's seat and Holyrood Park. Basically every day's spot*

*Where to go once in a while to have a break?*

**SPEAK UP & ASK FOR HELP**

When things get tough, don't just push through it. Where do you go to reach out for help?

*I am a Chinese student, and I can hardly make native friends here.*

**JOURNAL IT**

Use a journal to take notes and track your thoughts and ideas on Edinburgh. Start with a question about Edinburgh here.

*Why is it so hard for international students to make British friends, especially for Asian students?*
Picture your happy place. What is the dominant activity in this place? What is the role of this place in your life? How can this place make you happy? Write, draw or make a collage of your happy place. It could be a place that you have been previously happy in or a made up place that you are the architect of..

I feel the warm sun on my face and smile. The wind whips my hair. I am at the Market, a farmer’s market at Castle Terrace. I go there every week but I’ve never been there outside of lockdown, so this is what I hope it dream that it is like. I’m sitting at a picnic table, shared with a young family - it is packed and we are lucky to get a seat. We make small talk to the young family, no masks in sight. The music is light and quick - a fiddle and a guitar are playing for all of the people. We’re just finished strolling through the stalls, we’ve picked our vegetables for the week, chatted with the cheese vendor who sells the siliciot stones. Now we’re sat down to eat some breakfast. The sweet cake at the Italian bakery stand recommended the pastries we chose and our coffees are hot. Looking over the Castle looks over us, not looming but protective, an anchor that has seen so many markets, so many people come and go, just like us and somehow that makes me feel safe. Just another life passing in Edinburgh. Between the smell of coffee, the beautiful view, the crowds and the small talk, my heart is full and I feel at home.
Picture your happy place. What is the dominant activity in this place? What is the role of this place in your life? How can this place make you happy? Write, draw or make a collage of your happy place. It could be a place that you have been previously happy in or a made up place that you are the architect of.

My happy places are many and varied, cooied up in a warm bed with the wind and rain raging outside, a fancy restaurant with fab food and serious wine, a live band in a sweaty club, a walk up one of Scotland’s Munros on a sunny day. Which to choose and where to start?

I think, on this occasion and on this particular day, it would have to be climbing a mountain, somewhere remote like Ben Chonzie near Comrie, it’s a long walk in from the car park but it is flat and follows a good path. There is no sound of traffic, not even in the distance, and the air is filled instead with bird song and the bleat of sheep – there are a lot of sheep here!

The climb is gentle to begin with, following the map so that you don’t get lost and wander the hill for useless hours. The day is warm and as the climb gets steeper, you yearn for a light breeze to cool you down, this walking is hard work but somehow you feel it is stirring you up with real energy and anticipation of the view from the top, keep going.

On the way, there is wildlife aplenty, as well as the songbirds, there are mountain hares and ptarmigan who don’t run off when they see you coming, they seem quite used to people on the hill. If you are very lucky, you might see deer too. Getting steeper now and the sun is beating down, I might get a bit of colour today. Soon, I reach the scree field, so start picking my way carefully through the rocks, it’s a good excuse to slow down and get my breath back.

The summit is ahead, it is fairly flat and the views are spectacular, I can see the Cairngorms and the Lawers range but they are big hills for another day. Just time to have a sit-down and tuck into sandwiches and water before turning round and heading back the way I came, quicker than coming up but careful as my knees are not what they used to be.

A trip to the hills is filled with quietness for the soul, a workout for the body and a happy memory of a grand day out, especially if you can share it with a friend.
Edinburgh is definitely the friendliest place I’ve lived. It’s a very outward looking, internationalist city which is very welcoming of its arrivals. People are genuinely interested in you, without being nosy, and people give you the chance to join in when you want to but respect your own space when you need it.

By comparison, I found London to be very impersonal when I lived there.

When you tried to strike up a conversation with someone at a bus stop or anywhere else, folk looked you as if you just stepped off a spaceship. A very cold place to live. Edinburgh is full of warmth.

Edinburgh is a great place to live with things to do and sites to visit, you will never get out the local NCT courses and events which gives g

IS EDINBURGH A FRIENDLY AND WELCOME CITY?

I am biased as I’m a true Edinburgher, born and bred here. The city might not show its gallantry, and its reputation is sometimes quoted as ‘fair and easy’, but people come here and stay.

Inside is a quote from a relative newcomer of 10 years. He evidently thinks so.

From the rise of population year on year, you can see people from all over the world come here and stay. I even look at my street and see that the majority are originally from outside Edinburgh. They came and stayed.

Other than our festival, Edinburgh has other things to be proud of. For instance being the UK’s greenest major city. Also Edinburgh is a great place to live when you have a family. There are so many activities to do and sites to see, you will never be bored.

Edinburgh is a great place to live with things to do and sites to visit, you will never get out the local NCT courses and events which gives g

Edinburgh Population 2021

542,599

Edinburgh’s 2021 population is now estimated at 542,599. Its size, the population of Edinburgh was 495,946. According to the 2011 census, which represents a 1.83% annual change. These population estimates and projections are from the latest revision of the ONS Population Projections. These estimates represent the Urban agglomeration of Edinburgh, which typically includes Edinburgh’s population plus that of adjacent suburban areas.

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland and has been since the 14th century. Located on the shores of the Firth of Forth, Edinburgh has an estimated population of 495,946, which makes it the second most populous city in Scotland and the 7th in the United Kingdom.

City Size and Population Density

Edinburgh has a population density of 4,530 people per square kilometre, which makes it the 7th most densely populated city in Scotland. The total area is estimated at 520,000. The most dense area is in the centre of the city, while the population density decreases towards the outskirts.
When you spend so much time alone and you can't remember the last time you spoke to someone face to face...

and you feel lonely even when there are people around.

There could be a place you could go...

Where people knew that you were looking for some social interaction.

And you could do it safely while minding gov. guidance.

In this garden there could be benches you could sit at, as an invitation to others to come chat.
It wouldn't be a spot for people to stroll with their friends. But for individuals looking to find some social interaction.

The idea is to recreate some of those micro interactions left feeling connected that we have in regular life. So, hopefully people would to combat social isolation and loneliness this alone.
My Ideal Life in 5 years:

Extra cards! If you need more space for working on activities and expressing your ideas, here is your chance! Use this blank canvas to create your masterpiece!
Picture your happy place. What is the dominant activity in this place? What is the role of this place in your life? How can this place make you happy? Write, draw or make a collage of a place that you have been previously happy in or a made up place that you are the architect of.

I new buildings and I can look back to how that felt and the fact that I recorded it very quickly this notebook is full of photos.

In photos. Didn't do that in any of the photos. Too honest. I don't think in this instance it mattered. I was just taking photos of stuff that caught my fancy till camera ran out.

What I want to remember for today, in 10 years time. Well it successfully walked over 10,000 steps. I hope in ten years time being 80 I will still enjoy walking, hearing (not deaf) seeing (even if reading glasses). The city centre with its mix of old and the taste of the sea.
January 2020 – who knew things could change so quickly back then? We had no idea of how much our idea of personal freedom would change, or how much we took that personal freedom for granted.

If I was able to go back, hopefully with some useful information on what life was going to be like for one year (and more) thereafter, I would make a point of telling myself to make my home as comfortable as possible – I’ll be spending a lot of time there – to sign up to Zoom asap, and actually learn how to use it, and to never, ever take my garden for granted. Netflix would also be a good idea. I would also tell myself to get some earplugs as I will discover just how noisy my neighbour’s locked down adult children are. Also to make sure that I had lots of culinary bits and pieces in the cupboard as I would be doing much more cooking than usual.

Happily I would be able to say that the weekly shop would not be affected as supermarkets would be obliged to stay open. There would also be more opportunities to get to know people in the area a little better, everyone seems happy to spend a few minutes in conversation now as they are rushing nowhere in particular! Walking locally would become compulsory so should really get some proper walking shoes to cope with that.

Also, make sure you are sitting comfortably when sisters phone, they will be on the line for a long time.

One facility will be particularly appreciated in 2020, our corner shop, it never closed and seemed to have an endless supply of decent wine, snacks, fresh rolls and daily newspapers throughout the pandemic. Another bonus which will never been taken for granted again.

What place or device could I design/create to help cope with the pandemic? I’d love to have had a small studio or summer house in the garden to REALLY escape to, or send my partner for a bit of peace and quiet. Because most people don’t spend this much time together, it now seems important to have space dedicated to spending quality time apart. It must have a radio or music player to transport the occupant even further into peace/space. I appreciate that I am lucky to have a garden at all, I can’t imagine what it must be like for people who do not have outside space.

I sew so it could become a craft project too, and a nice environment to share with our ‘bubble’ friends who have no outside space of their own. Now, if only I could get the WiFi to stretch that far, I could encourage my partner and his buddies to stay out there to watch the football, golf, rugby ....
PAST – EDINBURGH

I love Edinburgh, I really do, I was born here - my parents and grandparents were born here. But my childhood and adolescence was spent travelling with my father, who was in the British Army, so I also have a love of travel. As Scotland is a small country on the edge of Europe, I like to think that Scots have a curiosity about the rest of the world and are keen to see what is beyond its borders. My father and mother came from poor working class backgrounds and, like a lot of young Scots in the 1950s, joining the Army was an escape from that poverty, an escape from Scotland and a chance to see the world. The travelling to other countries was so interesting but coming home to Edinburgh each year was my touchstone. It didn’t matter where I was in the world, Edinburgh would always be waiting for me, I feel confident in my travel adventures because I have a solid base to work from.

Whilst I intend to see more of Edinburgh and, indeed, Scotland, when the pandemic is under control enough to allow us to do that, I really hanker for a trip farther afield. What saddens me is that this will no longer be as easy to do as it was before Covid 19. Luckily I had trips to Venice and Prague in January and February of 2020, we were still able to travel freely before we became aware of the virus, and Brexit kicked in. I was proud to be a Scot and a European for most of my life, we have not yet had the opportunity to see what this looks like in 2021.

In the meantime, we must content ourselves with the immediate environs of Edinburgh, all five miles radius from our homes, and this has been a revelation in terms of the streets and walkways I’ve never been to before, to see other people’s neat front gardens and Water of Leith paths.

I do like to walk on my own, usually listening to music, I feel as if I’m doing myself some good. It is also nice to bump into people I know – in this part of town that is quite often – so an hour’s walk can take a good deal longer, thank goodness. I also like to walk with friends, it’s a great way to catch up and still stick to the current restrictions.

I try to see Edinburgh as our tourists and visitors see it but it is difficult as I am so familiar with the city, it must be lovely to see our streets, green spaces and historic buildings with new eyes. Perhaps I need to work on that.
Picture your happy place. What is the dominant activity in this place? What is the role of this place in your life? How can this place make you feel? To draw or make a collage of your happy place, it would be a place that you have been previously in or a made up place that you are the architect of.

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FUELED BY THOUGHTS ON EDINBURGH

I come to Edinburgh for:

- The food
- The history
- The art
- The people
- The nature

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT EDINBURGH?

WHERE IS EDINBURGH BEST WALKED?

CHANGE IT UP

WHAT PET DO YOU HAVE?

JOURNAL IT

THINK ABOUT THIS...

What would you change about Edinburgh?

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We believe that you have a wonderful story to share about Edinburgh. So go on, tell write it. You are a talented and qualified writer and the city is your setting. Write a short made up story or a true story in any genre that you want, and Write Now!

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FUELED BY THOUGHTS ON EDINBURGH

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—— End of Document ——
Picture your happy place. What is the dominant activity in this place? What is the role of this place in your life? How can this place make you happy? Write, draw, or make a collage of your happy place. It could be a place that you have been previously happy in or a made-up place that you are the architect of.

In this activity, with the outdoor and emoji stickers provided, we invite you to make little notes for yourself about your moods at your breakfast time of at least 7 days. Each day you can start with a blank page, either choose emoji stickers or draw faces by yourself to show your mood states for that day, and then you can write down your life because of that day, which can be the things that make you energetic and look forward to, things not that existed but you have to do, or it is even if it is just a casual day without any honor.

In addition to that, it would be wonderful if you could make little notes explaining why you have such a mood and what the factors help you identify whether the focuses of the day are exciting or boring.

Edinburgh is a great place to live! To do and above all else you will never out the local NCT 7 'women and every tech-goes-g

Edinburgh is very out looking international city which is very welcoming of it's arable.

People are genuinely interested in you, without being nosy. In people you give the chance in when you want to but respect your own space when you need it.

By comparison, I found London to be very impersonal when I lived there.

When you tried to strike up a conversation with someone at a bus stop or anywhere else, folk looked it you as if you've just stepped off a spaceship.

A very cold place to live.

Edinburgh is full of warmth
The Week That Was

Fueled by Thoughts on Edinburgh

We believe you have a wonderful story to share about Edinburgh. Go on, just write it! You are a talented and qualified writer and the city is your punch. Write a short piece on the city of Edinburgh and any genre you want, and feed us!

Extra care if you need more space for working on activities and expressing your ideas, here's your chance! Use the blank canvas to create your masterpiece!
THE WEEK THAT WAS

This week, write short records of your daily experiences and moods at your breakfast time, or choose a photo to sum up each day of the week and paste them below. You can also use the notebook and emoji stickers provided for your diary. Each day starting with a blank page, you can choose emoji stickers or drawn faces by yourself to show how you feel that day, followed by your goal of the day, which can be the things that make you energetic, and what you look forward to, or things that are not that exciting but you have to do.

Sunday
It's my birthday going to family for breakfast and having hourly visits from friends - cake I promise all day!

Monday
Looking forward to my outdoor exercise class. Goal: to complete 25kgs prep and send email.

Tuesday
House cleaning - hate housework. Goal: get to gym with the line project. Plant sunflower seeds - no after effects of 2-3 days class.

Wednesday
Georgina's day going - walking with a friend. Shopping around this morning. - tedious job. Mild anxious feelings have much to do this week.

Thursday
Feel mentally unfocus all over the place and angry. Walking with friends looking fwd to it.

Friday
Feeling calmer looking forward to leading my singing session. My gazebo arrived can't wait to see it assembled.

Saturday
Afternoon tea with family and looking forward to finishing this project. Cleaning bedroom ugh!!

Write a few sentences explaining your choice of words/photos/drawings
Where I go to be alone?
Shake off the blues?
Where I want to go, but
just haven't yet.
First place I will go when
restrictions are lifted.

In this study collective maps composed a vital set of data to render mechanisms of social construction of place and also as a social effort to produce a representation of street-life flows, micro spatial cultures and emotive fields in a particular territory.
A participant's map in its original scale.
Where do you feel attached to?
- Portobello
- Bught Park
- Grassmarket
- Fettes College
- Where do you go to daydream?
- Portobello Beach
- St. Leonards

Where do you go to meet others?
Where to socialise?
A complete interactive map was created by the author based on the study participants’ maps that could be found via the following link: https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Edinburgh-CCC/Edinburgh-CCC (accessed June 2022)
The hotspot map created by linking the collected maps that reveals the clusters of spatial happiness, namely aggregation of labelled places in close proximity. Map drawn by the author.
Participants’ photos were captured by disposable cameras and show informal observations of Edinburgh, broadly representing how people use and perceive urban spaces through rich visual information that can be hard to collect otherwise.
Participants' output in interactive digital discussion session

Where have you been happy? How does your Happy place look like? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, what draws you to your happy place?

Where is your happy place in Edinburgh?
Greetings, researcher introduction in addition to answering questions, explaining Mentimeter interactive slides and recording notification to the participants were prior to this transcription and the following was in (18:12) in real session time.

Researcher: So, for the ice breaker you can choose one or say it all! If you want to describe yourself in a sentence, how would that be or one interesting fact about yourself, or how would you describe Edinburgh in three keywords and what do you hope to take away from this discussion today, I can volunteer to start. (researcher’s response) Even if they know each other for decades there’s a still interesting things to know so maybe this is the time to reveal your secrets!

Participant A: I guess. Should I go first oh.

Participant C: Oh

Researcher: Yes, please.

Participant A: Sorry to beat you to it love. And I don't have any really interesting facts about myself and I once met Norman Wisdom now for these two young women, they won't know who Norman wisdom is! Still that's the interesting fact about me, I met Norman wisdom and he was a lovely, lovely, lovely man and I spent an hour with him he's gorgeous, Edinburgh in three key words... festival. festival and festival.

Participant A: And and and like you know I'm very happy to meet you actually I've obviously met participant B but no, we didn't meet with participant C and yes it's great to meet everybody.

Participant B: Anyway, anyway, very quickly and I'm participant B and interesting fact I've got one foot bigger than the other. And Edinburgh to me is blossom, green, spaces, and history. And what else are there, I hope to get this, I hope, to try and
encourage you to design a project like this again that would be less complicated or maybe you would run this as a, as an excellent course that is teacher led.

Participant A: um yeah yeah I think as a major workshop, it would really work actually.

Participant C: yeah and sign me up for that too! Okay, an interesting fact well I was twice recently, I mean before, before the pandemic I did a performance with the lyceum theatre, which was great and my experiences of dancing or singing or whatever. And and I've already got something from what we've been doing, because last the weekend I went up to my local park, the only park. And I realized how much they've been working on it, because it now has a couple of picnic tables and now we've got a few more rubbish bins there and for before there was a tennis court that hadn't been used and now it's turned into a basketball part and it's got, you know for football have a bit for the flooring, really complete balls and everything and I started thinking to myself that wasn't there before. So to say it's the only park and because it was a nice day there was folk actually using it, and it wasn't just for the dogs because, you know it's a shame, when it just becomes a big dog poop toilet.

Participant C: Maybe you got dogs! Like don't get me wrong my girls got dogs too, you know but it's just it annoys me when it's a new area and it's just way for people with dogs, where I think once you make it there for people but that people cannot always use unless for people to take their dog.

Participant B: oh that's what you're doing Friday morning, this one.

At this point the discussion ensued on participants engagement with the activity packs with comments such as “That was the other thing I don't think of myself as creative at all, you know, but it made me realize okay I'm not creative, but there is something there so it was quite nice actually.” And “And you know it that's a, that's a good thing, because it does remind you of things that maybe you've forgotten.” Or “I like the idea of the word cloud is a good starter for writing. You know, because there's always something there that you can work on, that you can pick out in order to start writing about something.” Also “this project was like a routine to me. And so, you know, and I think in a way people that have had a routine through lockdown maybe that's helped
them. Although I've no idea but I felt that way and now I do have one routine once a week (...) Which is a writing class it's a dancing writing task. And that's a creative task and so that's a nice thing to do with other people, and we meet, and we dance to music for three minutes, and then we write for the same music and so that's the only time I'd do any habit or anything and yeah.” And “I enjoyed the journal writing I've never really kept a diary and I thought you know first thing in the day, what does the day hold for me was quite interesting and actually writing it down and (...) and living it really because once I'd written it down that was that the plan for my day really, which was, that was an interesting experience I've not done that before I'm not sure if I discovered anything from deep down and meaningful but I probably live generally a quiet-ish life, but then, when I was writing about the sorts of things I like to do, which is to climb hills and go to sweaty clubs to watch little indie bands and. I don't really know I'm reminded of what I enjoy, and I know it's going to be there when all of this is over. Maybe not in the same format, but the same people will be there, the same places will be there, and I'll be able to re-engage with them and (...) and really just pick up where I've left. You know when you (...) you don't see somebody for a very long time.” Also “and I did quite enjoy the things that were new to me, and so the journal, I enjoyed the journal and enjoy my day going around for the walk but unfortunately for my pictures, the film ran out, so I didn't do all the things but it sort of clicked through the things I wanted like one of the pictures from where my dad and my mom were met. My dad used to work there and that's where my dad met my mom you know, and there is something quite special about that whole walk because I was mindful, you know, that there I was. And in fact, I noticed that in the park, the difference, so it shows you that already something is sort of has clicked in my brain like (...) that may only last for a very short time, yeah it just made me that wee bit more mindful of walking in the city from leaving the House after a while too.” And “The walk, (...) the walk was really interesting I hadn't thought like that before with a such different purpose, not just going from one place to the other, but actually experiencing that trajectory from one place to another, (...) yeah”.

Then the session moved on to the interactive slide with the following question: “Where have you been happy? How does your happy place look like? Describe a time that you were at your happy place, what draws you to your happy place?”
Researcher: All the explanation earlier was about this part that is interactive, so your answers will going to show up here when you put it in your phone.

Participant D: that yes, it might kind of, I definitely think that there are things that that we can appreciate that we were very lucky living in Edinburgh such a wonderful city. And although there's not lots of places we can go into at the moment, we can still see them and appreciate them and there's still a lot of joy to be had.

Participant A: it depends on the date for me.

Researcher: Feel free to write whatever comes to mind.

Participant D: I close my eyes somewhere anywhere, oh no. How many entries do we have?

Researcher: Yeah, I think you can add 10 different responses, it could be a word, or it could be a phrase. It could be describing an image and memory something from your imagination something from a movie it could be describing the sounds of a place, absolutely anything that comes to your mind. (...) It could be an activity you're doing in that place.

Researcher: let's move on to the next question. Here you can mark the map, you see that you can pin a place like this.

Participant B: My little marker. Somewhere in the north of Edinburgh.

Participant A: See definitely the Haymarket.

Participant C: So I know this is the map of Edinburgh but we were learning, we were learning Italian. My talent is very bad (..) very bad, just picked it up during the lockdown. Because before I use to go to Venice, maybe three or four times a year and other places as well, but Venice would be my, my preferred place. And I try to learn, but I'm not very good with languages, but people are so kind and they speak English
and and I can get by as much as I can I'm sure you're the same when you go to places you kind of you know, pick up some words.

Researcher: If you have any comments or anything else you want to say please do.

Participant C: it's really good to meet you, hopefully, in the not too distant future, we might actually find ourselves in the same room and your project I think is going to be very worthwhile I'm looking forward to it.

Participant D: So, if I may say it was so lovely today, so it was (...) and more that you're really lovely...

Participant A: Yes, and we'll discuss Norman wisdom another time it was (laugh) I've really enjoyed today.

(Final comments and end of the session)

(Next page) Diaries representative quotes and emerged themes table
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<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>Local community / learning institutions / art and culture / food and drink / entertainment / discovery and trying new things / art galleries and music venues / sense of belonging / urban monuments / memories of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “In my pictures you will find lots of cafes, bars, restaurants, music venues, museums and galleries that I pass on a regular basis. In the first days that (the) lockdown is over these will be my priority. I think it will feel like a brand new city all over again since there will be so much more to discover.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. “So many people are nervous to be around lots of people after lockdown ends. I am not. I am ready to be shoulder to shoulder in a crowd, bumping elbows at the bar, across the table at a cafe and holding hands on the dance floor.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. “Awaiting delivery of a gift from M&amp;S from a young American friend. I sent her some Scottish goodies she particularly likes, Buchanan’s peppermint creams, Tunnocks tea cakes and cup-a-soups but can’t get in Boston...”</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. “A lovely day to heading into town along Queensberry Road and up to the Modern art galleries. I love the Dean gallery building and the gentle chaos of the allotments there. The coffee stall seems to be doing good business.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. “Stopped to speak to one of the gardeners (mentions a name) who has worked with the gardens team for (number) years and takes real pride in keeping things neat and tidy.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. “Down Victoria street into the grassmarket and one of my favourite music venues (...) then up to Chambers street and the museum looking forward to that opening again soon. Greyfriars Bobby has been given a blanket to keep him warm!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. “Stopped at a bench i have sat on before opposite Dancebase Studio (...) one of my go to places to dance, to socialise, to share culture, escape into the music. (...) I was going to pass the Lyceum also much missed.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. “My dad worked there for some years. Also, it’s where my mum met my dad!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. “Meeting choreographer at 4.30pm for walk? Curious, excited (...)”</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. “Followup email from choreographer thanking me for a lovely walk. Wasn’t about dance after all. Just wanted the company. in a way this was more special.”</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. “The Place I most want to be at is North Edinburgh arts. For 12 years it has been my spiritual and creative home. I so miss the staff and the senses of the centre, the buzz of activity, the long chats, the food and coffee and that sense of belonging. I miss the creative possibilities the opportunity to be myself to share ideas be proactive be spontaneous and be part of something bigger than myself where i feel valued, that has meaning and makes a difference in the community that surrounds it.”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “Today I am in good spirits, feeling hopeful (...) My focus today is getting organised for the week ahead at work and at home. i.e. scheduling, vacuum, groceries, team meetings.”</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Everyday activities / neighbourhoods / domestic chores / eating at home / family and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Sorted through a bag of babies clothing (...) given by a neighbour who is moving to Newcastle for my impending grandniece.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. “My partner does most of the cooking and prepares beef stew, nice and cosy, yum!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. “Live catch up with the laundry and housework, something I do to avoid doing anything I perceive as difficult so it’s a win-win situation. The kitchen is very clean.” (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. “Another small thing that makes me happy, a trip to Lidl for the weekly shop! It seems like a day for household activity!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. “A good windy day so outside with the washing, it always smells so good from drying outdoors, that makes me feel happy, such a small thing.” (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. “Managed to catch up with emails and whatsapp so I might celebrate my successes today with a small refreshment later.” (Happy face drawing and cocktail glass drawing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. “So slightly late, finally waking up and showering. Slightly stiff + sore feet, but that loosens up. Quickly have breakfast + think what plan is today. (...) Have become more politicised than ever before. Am now expressing my anger on Facebook.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. “Aldi’s quite busy. ok felt safe enough. Happy to fill fridge + cupboard, just a thing you have to do. (...) All the courses this week are on a break. The plus side of Covid19 + lockdown is I can do all these classes from home. Already thinking what I’m having for tea but lots to choose from after yesterday’s shopping.” (Dance classes)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative quotes</td>
<td>Major themes</td>
<td>Subthemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- &quot;Buying a bike is really exciting because I think it will allow me to see more of the city and explore since I don’t have a car and I’m not super comfortable taking public transit with the covid situation.&quot;</td>
<td>Mobility / accessibility</td>
<td>Nature / outdoor activities / discovery and trying new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- &quot;I am also looking forward to going for a bike ride after work to Portobello beach which is super exciting.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- &quot;I also took a picture of the train station. Soon after lockdown I hope to hop on a train and go somewhere, anywhere. Not because I don’t love Edinburgh but because I can and cabin fever is real!&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4- &quot;Which took me to the bus stop in Forrest road where a no.41 show up immediately and took me home. I think I’ve done my 10000 steps today.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- &quot;Usually I have travel plans in place by now but nothing arranged yet. Soon, I hope, very soon.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- &quot;Almost empty bus. 1 other person sitting downstairs. Feel safe, one person got off and another got on.&quot;</td>
<td>Market / retail</td>
<td>Social connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- &quot;I woke up feeling (neutral face emoji: a yellow face with open eyes and a flat closed mouth that is considered to resemble a neutral sentiment) Frustrated. Think I just wanted to stay in bed. I am also looking forward to going to the castle market a place I look forward to visiting every week.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2- &quot;I also took a picture of a storefront for later. So many places have closed during lockdown and I am excited to visit the new places that will emerge as the economy jumps back.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3- &quot;I need to stock up on the appropriate cards. Off to the shops.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4- &quot;Shopping supermarket. Only way to go out!&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5- &quot;Shops shut for Sunday + Covid lockdown. Pavements quiet mostly. (...) All these shut shops (sad face emoji drawing)&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- &quot;I’ve found an outdoor boxing class in Inverleith Park. I am excited to try something new, meet some new people and get outside.&quot;</td>
<td>Outdoor activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- &quot;I am looking forward to doing the picture walk as a part of this research project after work today. I am loving the way this project is getting me to think about my city in new ways.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3- &quot;I am also looking forward to going for a bike ride after work to Portobello beach which is super exciting.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4- &quot;Had my usual walk in the afternoon to blow away the cobwebs...&quot;</td>
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<td>5- &quot;Shame to see the seating areas boarded up, hopefully they will be open soon.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>6- &quot;Go out!!!!! Dean village with friends. Take a walk. Take some photos.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7- &quot;Out with friends. Take some walk on Meadows.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8- &quot;What I want to remember for today, in 10 years time. Well I successfully walked over 10000 steps. I hope in ten years time being 80 I will still enjoy walking, hearing (not deaf), seeing (even in reading glasses) the city centre with its mix of old and new buildings.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1- &quot;Princes street gardens, the newly refurbished fountain looks splendid and the spring flowers are coming through.&quot;</td>
<td>Nature / green spaces / body of water</td>
<td>flowers / quiet / little traffic / seasons / sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- &quot;The Ross Band Stand is such an iconic building so I hope the ‘regeneration’ of the gardens does not include changing it.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3- &quot;Ramsay Gardens at the top, again very quiet with little traffic.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>4- &quot;A bright day so some work in the garden is called for.&quot; (Dried yellow Viola flowers glued)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5- &quot;Must remember to put the clocks forward tomorrow, summer is on the way and that makes me feel happy.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>6- &quot;Go to see sunset on Calton hill&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>7- &quot;Children sounds of playing, daffodils out, sun at my back, church bells ringing all add to my smile.&quot; (Near statue in gardens/Princes street)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8- &quot;Unbelievably sunny again. If rain was forecast I would plant the grass seed (needs watered)&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>9- &quot;Over 10000 steps and an ice cream in Holyrood Park.&quot; (Happy face emoji sticker)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10- &quot;Woke up to hear it raining (Happy face emoji drawing)&quot;</td>
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</table>
The use of recorded EEG sessions to evaluate the impact of walking through diverse urban settings is also referred to as “Neurourbanism”. Over the course of a 40-minute silent walk through Edinburgh, a participant that was wearing a dry EEG mobile headband (Muse S) and a guide (the researcher) took an immersive walk with a relaxed stride.
Glossary

Happiness
A general sense of subjective wellbeing, namely the quality of life evaluation comprising a reflective assessment on a person’s life or some specific aspect of it; as well as affect, a person’s feelings or emotional states, typically measured with reference to a particular point in time and Eudaimonia, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, or good psychological functioning.

Hybrid layouts
Entwined individual and local or temporal collective memories as well as future aspirations form "Hybrid layouts" where the city operates at the intersection of emotive and spatial infrastructures. That is, users’ experience in hybrid layouts could radically differ depending on their background or collective recollections. Understanding hybrid layouts can offer a radical rethinking of the term "city", and the necessity to incorporate in its definition the set of operational landscapes on which the city depends, and in the context of spatial happiness, to propose alternative urban development models that are aware and considerate to the existing hybrid layouts.

Intellectual happiness
The extent to which people distinguish and perceive the reasons to their happiness. That includes knowing the dynamics of social formations and deeply rooted capitalist web of structures as well as temporal ideological beliefs. Intellectual happiness is an affective form of intellect, meaning it is not localised as purely cognitive and carries emotive values in knowledge production and ethics, and starts from knowing oneself, resulting in the promotion of empathy towards others as well as oneself.

Spatial flow
Flow is an optimal state of total absorption in an enjoyable activity to the extent that one could lose a sense of time, including during activities such as games or immersive entertaining events. Flow results in integration with self and others and cultivates social solidarity, while being enjoyable to individuals and giving depth and richness to emotive experiences. And by extension, spatial flow could be defined as the extent to which place is capable of promoting affective flow episodes. Flow-inducing places are
able to facilitate a harmonic experience through concentrating all the senses as well as intellectual and emotive intentions on a singular experience.

**Spatial Happiness**
The spatial qualities that affect users' happiness.

**Spatial Harmony**
Another spatial key to happiness discovered from analysing the study participants’ narratives was the degree to which synthesised spatial elements were able to promote a sense of harmony, that is a balanced and well arranged, intelligibly rhythmic and user-friendly scaled pattern. The literal translation of spatial harmony in urban design could be the agreement of parts to the whole, where elements, despite their discrepancies, form a consistent order with accordance to the whole. Spatial harmony could be also defined as the opposite of spatial dissonance, and concerns with the interrelations of the components of an urban scene such as buildings or streets, all of which interdependent in creating an overall entity that is perceived by the user.

**Transpatial**
A field of joint actions, the borders of which outlined less by spatial features and more by the social conducts of users. The transpatial term provides a firm framework to describe uneven edges of spatial and social structures that influence the emotional experiences of people in an urban complex, such as curiosity or feeling safe.

**Spatial affordances**
James Gibson, the perceptual psychologist, defines spatial affordances as the common relation between practical capabilities of the physical domain and the users’ behaviour. For instance, the movement flow in a street is connected to many spatial factors such as how that street is located within the urban street network, the density of the urban configuration in addition to the property usage around that street and the activities that are offered through the space of that street. In his book, *The Design of Everyday Things*, cognitive science researcher Donald Norman argues that spatial affordances are present in our lives even when they are not visible. In fact, unperceived spatial affordances could be as influential as the visible ones.
Placemaking
A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. It capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness, and wellbeing.

Virtual community
Virtual community is a field of possible actions rather than an existing one, that is where there is a spatial possibility for a community to be formed, a given area where the pattern of natural co-presence affected by the spatial design on movement and other interrelated behavioural aspects of space usage cultivates patterns of socialising. Spatial configuration influences patterns of movement in space and accordingly tends to define certain patterns of co-presence and therefore co-awareness amongst the individuals living in and passing through an area. Space syntax theory defines such patterns of co-presence as the virtual community. Co-present people are not a community, but they are said to be the raw material for the creation of a community.

Restorative environment theory
The Restorative Environment theory was initiated by Kaplan in 1995. Kaplan proposes that focused attention can become fatigued in everyday urban environments and restoration is possible in a setting that arouses fascination. According to Kaplan, Directed Attention Fatigue (DAF) occurs when the attention is forced and effortful. Soft fascination, on the other hand, is effortless, has a moderate intensity and occurs in a setting that is aesthetically pleasing like natural environments. As a consequence, the attentional system finds an opportunity to rest and recover.

Imageability
Kevin Lynch, urban planner and author of The Image of the City argues that what entice us to appreciate the wayfinding process is “Imageability”, which is the high probability of evoking a strong image of the city in any given observer. This “Environmental image” is the key to wayfinding experience, and it is a consequence of interlaced factors such as street arrangements, route sings and remarkable buildings as well as social influences, history or even the name of an area.
Intelligibility
Bill Hillier, urban morphologist and theoretician suggests that urban intelligibility is measurable in how parts resemble the whole system. Or in other words, if and to what degree perceiving the bigger picture of urban networks can be conjured up from perceiving its parts. In principle, the city would be intelligible if we can easily summon the general pattern of it simply by moving around from one part to another. In an unintelligible structure well-connected spaces are not well integrated. Namely, we have local patches in the urban street network that are relatively secluded from the city and responsively their relations mislead us about our location in the space. This matches our perception of what it would be like to move through a labyrinth.

Visibility Graph Analysis (VGA)
VGA represents visual distance from all spaces to all others and refers to how visually accessible locations are. In this graph red spaces have higher visual accessibility and are easier to access, while blue spaces have lower visual accessibility whether there are hidden or appear more difficult to reach. In the pilot project of this study the VGA analysis results showed that the documented unhappy places are visually less accessible, and their visibility is restricted compared to the happy places, suggesting that there is an association between urban visual accessibility and users’ happiness.

Cinematic mapping
Cinematic mapping or cinematic cartography is a theoretical framework for critical engagement with practice-based research. It is based on the notion that film, in itself is a modern cartography, its haptic way of site-seeing turns pictures into an architecture, transforming them into a geography of lived, and living space. Giuliana Bruno, the university of Harvard professor that is known for her research on the intersections of the architecture, film, and media; in her award-winning book Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film argues that the screen, as the frame of frames, gives a common standard of measurement to things which do not have one—long shots of countryside and close-up of the face, an astronomical system and a single drop of water…. In all these senses the frame ensures a deterritorialization of the image. That is, the cinematic narrative does not reproduce an unconscious spatial cognition; rather it constructs the unconscious, revealing the connections between
emotions, sounds and place onto a plane of consistency. In other words, the cinematic way of data documentation is able to collect memories in the way we might preserve these memories in our image of the place. Cinematic mapping is used in this study as a research methodology in order to incite more expressive and performative input that could take the study of happy places into a new territory, and away from the sole focus on participants' verbal explanations.

**Graphic notation**

“Graphic notation” is a conceptual form of writing music scores apart from traditional notation. It is the representation of musical ideas using visual symbols and was employed in this study to document people’s happy places during the lockdown and the sounds that are heard in those spatial settings.

**Neurourbanism**

Research evolved around engaging EEG (Electroencephalography) as a gear to integrate sensory stimuli e.g. aesthetic and environmental properties with wellbeing proxies in evidence-based urban considerations. The use of recorded brainwaves or EEG sessions to evaluate the impact of experiencing diverse urban settings.

**Visual cultures**

Visual culture is the collective understanding of visual events through which forms of information, values or pleasure is received by people. The study of everyday urban visual cultures concerns with reflections on the production and perception of everything that one is surrounded with in day to day life including buildings, landscapes, advertising, movies or paintings and in general any aspect of culture that communicates through visual means.

**Halo Effect**

Halo Effect is a term coined by the renowned psychologist Thorndike. As Thorndike observed, Halo Effect is a tendency to make inferences about specific traits on the basis of a general impression. According to the Halo Effect theory, instead of independently measuring separate features of a place; there’s a common tendency to create and maintain a consistent picture in order to reduce cognitive dissonance. Thus, the perception of a place might not be independent, but to some extent based on a
single, overall assessment, a Halo of place. Although a general image of a place could be strengthened through marketing strategies, still there needs to be potential and inherent spatial qualities present. Additionally, a longitudinal study of the effect of online reviews on the general image of 21,338 hotels worldwide showed that the halo effect could explain up to about 50% of people’s opinion about the place that could vary due to a range of other variables. This study through assessing the collected data within its context, shows that although halo effect on generating a favourable image of place is very much plausible, it is not necessarily undermining the potential qualities of place.

**Social time**

The time spent in the space is not linked with space linearly; and so, the visible (place) is perceived through an invisible order (temporal implications such as present moment, memories and fantasies or thoughts of future). In critical time studies and environmental humanities this complex flow is referred to as “social time”, that is constantly produced and perceived communally, and therefore is not solely individuals’ concern to abide by.

**Spatial Happiness Experience Index (SHEI)**

Conveying high impact and feasible spatial properties that affect happiness according to the people’s narratives. This general model could be tailored based on the contextual indicators, local attributions and cultural or economic composites of future projects and studies in terms of selection of indicators and weighting variables, and its consideration will spark other examples and possibilities.
Presentations, publications, exhibitions

A list of selected conferences, publications and exhibitions related to this research by Negar Ebrahimi. The following links were all last accessed September 2022.

Keynote speech/lecture

- Presenter at the “Playing in the Cities” panel discussion for the We Play Festival at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh September 2023.
- The first talk of the artist Future Forum 2022 series with Gods House Tower art and heritage venue in Southampton, UK. (See more: https://godshousetower.org.uk/eventer/futures-forum-1-where-is-my-happiness/edate/2022-03-03/)
- Invited guest lecturer for Southern Illinois University of Carbondale, the global architectural history class (Online)
- “GRADNET 13th annual Conference” by The University of Southampton, UK, 2021.
- Professional construction program ScotlandBuild by British Property Federation, SEC Centre, Glasgow, March 2019. (See more: https://app.qwoted.com/opportunities/event-scotland-build-2019)
- ESALA PGR Research week 2019, The University of Edinburgh.

Awards and related honours

- Turing prize UoE 2022 - to work on PhD study for publishing purposes
- Edinburgh University Student Experience Grant (Innovation Initiative Grants 2021) in support of innovative projects and initiatives (Lead researcher). Edinburgh CCC was a project working closely with communities of Edinburgh to assess what works and what matters to Edinburgh citizens through diverse activities such as cultural probes,
online focus groups and brain-walks. (See more on the project first phase: https://sgsahresearch.com/portfolio/negar-ebrahimi/)

- The Clinton Global Initiative recognition certificate of Commitment to Action (CGI U 2020). CGI U is an educational program and conference where student leaders, activists, social entrepreneurs and civic society members come together to address some of the world’s most pressing challenges. Each CGI U participant makes a Commitment to Action, a concrete plan for a social enterprise or charitable project that makes a measurable difference in education, environment and climate change, peace and human rights, poverty alleviation and public health.

- Social Responsibility and Sustainability Award - UoE SRS 2020

- Scottish School of Social Science (SGSSS) PhD placement with The Young Foundation; London — January 2020-April 2020

- IAD Action Fund - Institute of Academic Development 2019 (Lead researcher). Novel approaches in qualitative methods and data collection including cinematic cartography and interactive digital workshops. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la5yODYmYj4)

- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funding award for the Festival of Social Science (FoSS) 2019. (https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/research-office/2020/01/14/our-researchers-and-public-engagement-in-the-festival-of-social-science/)


Exhibitions of this thesis’s artworks


- “Edinburgh CCC”, Scottish School of Art and Humanities Science (SGSAH) Annual research showcase 2021. (co-creator)
Publications

- “Urbanning happiness: the role of urban furniture” article in Scotsman, funded by the Scottish Universities Insight Institute, October 2023.

- Published in urban zine “Cooltsalon” vol.5 titled Urban Diaries by the researcher (co-creator), April 2022. Cooltsalon originated in 2014 with the mission to give exposure to artist voices on the collective city life. (See more: https://cooltsalon.com/portfolio/cooltzine-5-urban-diaries/)

- “Hitting the yellow brick road”, Scottish School of Art and Humanities Science (SGSAH), March 2021. (online, see: https://sgsahblog.com/2021/03/03/hitting-the-yellow-brick-road/)

- “The Problem We All Live With”, GenderEd., 2021. (online, see: https://twitter.com/genderpol/status/1367407008283041792 and https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/the-problem-we-all-live-with/) This article with slight changes is also published by YWCA Scotland. (online, see: https://www.ywcascotland.org/the-problem-we-all-live-with-by-negar-ebrahimi/)

- “Collective sounds of happy places”, Festival of Creative Learning, September 2020. (online, see: https://festivalofcreativelearning.wordpress.com/2020/09/)

- “Urban life, the untold dimension of happiness”, Scottish School of Social Science (SGSSS), March 2019. (online, see: https://www.sgsss.ac.uk/news/urban-life-the-untold-dimension-of-happiness/)