

What is the Happy Homes Research Project?

The Happy Homes Project (HHP) is a research collaboration between The School of Architecture at the University of Reading, Pollard Thomas Edwards (PTE) and Cambridge University. We want to identify which spaces, elements and architectural details in your home spark joy or positive emotions in you and your family members. Some of the themes to be explored are connection to nature, sense of community, sense of belonging, health and wellbeing, among others. One of our main goals is to identify where social value happens in housing.

What is Social Value?

You may have heard of the term Social Value. It means the added benefit to people; it is not a monetary value. According to the Quality of Life Foundation, social value is 'the level to which individuals may feel their lives to be happy, active, sociable, interesting and meaningful'. The social value of architecture is in fostering emotions whether through connections with nature or offering opportunities for an active lifestyle and in providing the flexibility to pursue autonomy, according to the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Why are emotions important in housing design?

Currently there are a number of existing software that allow architects and other professionals in the building industry to visualise technical data when designing a house. This technical data (such as energy use) allow the design team to take decisions and make adjustments to provide the best design option. Unfortunately, emotions are hardly ever discussed in building performance evaluation in housing. To date, there are no existing tools or software to visualise quantitative data (social value, emotions, wellbeing, etc) to be used in early design decisions. If we can identify which spaces and elements of the home provide positive emotions, health, wellbeing and a sense of community to residents, etc., architects will be able to make early design decisions to create homes where residents will feel more happy, active, sociable and safe.

What do I need to do?

You have three options to choose to participate:

- 1) Interview:** A face to face 45-minute recorded interview with you at your home. I would like to tape the interview and transcribe section later. Copies of the transcript will be available on request and any changes which you ask for will be made. With your consent, we would like to take a few photos of spaces or architectural elements in your home relevant to the study and/or how the spaces are used. You will be asked to give your consent before taking any photograph
- 2) Focus Group:** You can also participate in a 45-minute recorded focus group with other participants within your building. A few photos will be taken and you will be asked to give your consent before taking any photograph.
- 3) Online or paper survey:** You can participate by answering an online survey or request a paper survey

To participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form and you will have time to read the information and the opportunity to ask any questions that you might have before giving consent.

You can choose not to participate or not to answer any questions. You are free to withdraw at any time at any stage. Your identity will remain confidential, your name and all identifying information will be removed from the written transcript. Photos will not be linked to any personal data, quotes or other identifiers

Why have I been invited to participate?

The architectural design of your home makes an interesting case study to review. We want to understand how you, the resident, experiences your home. Your participation is very valuable because you have that lived experience in your home and your feedback and thoughts will inform key design considerations in future projects and contribute to literature in the housing industry, research and academia.

What is involved during the interview?

The interview is a casual talk with friendly staff members from the University of Reading and PTE. During the interview, you and a member of the team will walk around your home (only the spaces you want to show us) to identify the spaces and elements that from your experience create joy, positive emotions, wellbeing, a sense of belonging, safety, etc. To collect all the information the team will use voice recording (you will be asked before the interview to give your consent to be recorded).

With your consent, the team would like to take photographs of yourself using your home before the interview. You also have the option to only give consent to take photographs of specific spaces only and specific architectural details.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to say no. You can choose not to participate or not to answer any questions. You are free to withdraw at any time at any stage.

Do I need to provide personal data?

You will be asked to provide some demographic information, for instance your age range, number of family members, ethnicity, etc. This information is important to better understand how different residents and family sizes experience social value at home. Your identity will remain confidential, your name and all identifying information will be removed from the written transcript. Photos and quotes will not be linked to any personal data.

Is my participation confidential and what will be done with the findings?

This project has been subject to ethical review, according to the procedures specified by the University of Reading - Research Ethics Committee. Ethical review is required in research projects to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants. Your name and house number will be anonymised, all identifying information will be removed from the written transcript. You will be asked before the interview to give your consent for taking photographs. PTE and UoR will use your feedback and the photographs to produce reports and a toolkit that will help to visualise social value in housing. The reports will be shared and published but your personal details will not be displayed.

How long will you keep the data?

All the original data will be kept secured by UoR. Only the research associate, principal investigator and research supervisors will have access to the raw data. The data will be kept securely and when and stored for 10 years in line with the Research Councils UK (RCUK) and destroyed after that. Copies of any outputs, such as articles or presentation slides, will be available on request.

PTE also values your privacy and will protect your personal data. We will not share your data with any other organisation outside PTE and (case study partner name).

You can find more information about PTE's privacy policy at https://pollardthomasedwards.co.uk/site/assets/files/1027/pollard_thomas_edwards_privacy_policies.pdf

Who is the main contact of the Happy Homes Project?

If you have any questions, please contact:

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