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## **Taking a Softer Approach: Exploring the Home as a Service Design for Sustainability and Happiness**

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The home is complex, full of meaning and symbolism. It is dynamic in its conceptualisation from the many evolving dialectic practices of individuals, objects and society that comprise it. It is through these engagements that identity and habits are made in the home. This space, in turn, strengthens these personal and social routines that extend far beyond the domestic space. Their alternation could thus lead to more sustainable and happier lifestyles.

However, the concept of sustainable development runs in paradox to how we conduct ourselves in everyday lives. Sustainability is currently for many people unconceivable as it challenges normative ways of life. In the domestic space, we are surrounded by energy using objects of convenience and comfort, which often play a central role in the ongoing process of homemaking but that for many result in unsustainable lifestyles. Sustainable interventions must therefore not only replace these methods of home creation but offer options that satisfy these needs in a more fulfilling way.

But sustainable interventions in the home tend to be addressed mostly from a built environment and technological point of view, ignoring the happiness/wellbeing aspects of home experiences that could play a vital role. These approaches only appear to treat the home in its utilitarian role i.e. as a place of shelter. They subsequently focus on increasing sustainability through variables outside of the individual's control or issue them with information, treating them as rational recipients. But people tend to behave illogically and are influenced by a variety of cultural, social and political factors. It is therefore not enough to simply remove control or provide information to influence behaviours.

This research explores the home through a service design for sustainability and happiness lense. This creative approach challenges people to rethink or reflect on their own daily unsustainable actions. Starting by examining what makes people happy in their home experiences and how this may overlap with sustainable lifestyles, the study offers an alternative viable approach to enact intrinsic change in social practices in disruptively innovative ways to counter our planetary crisis.

For this qualitative study, photo elicitation was used with family households from similar socio-economic backgrounds in a UK town. This method was a non-intrusive way to capture domestic routines and experiences from the perspectives of participants. It also encouraged participants to reflect, engage and become more self-aware in their home experiences. Participants were asked to create a visual narrative of two typical representative days of their home life – one working and one non-working day – using photography. They were then interviewed individually about the significance of the images they captured. The results were analysed through thematic analysis to locate where happiness and sustainable practices overlapped in the home and where they did not. The results reveal insights on what makes the ideal home for happiness and sustainability, and implications for service design, which can be further developed in future work.