**Greg Watts, 2017**

**“How tranquil spaces can help people feel calm and relaxed in cities”**

Watts, G. (2017) *“How tranquil spaces can help people feel calm and relaxed in cities.”* [ONLINE] Available at: https://theconversation.com/how-tranquil-spaces-can-help-people-feel-calm-and-relaxed-in-cities-82358 [Accessed 11 January 2019].

* Tranquillity is mainly found in **natural outdoor environments**.
* Places where man-made noise is at a low level, but where **natural sounds** – such as bird song – can be relatively high.
* If a place has a **water feature, lots of greenery, a view of a religious or historic building** - research shows these features help to boost the tranquillity of a place.
* **Close proximity to water** was also shown to be good for tranquillity because it is naturally nice to look at and is relaxing to listen to.
* **Reduce man-made noise.**
* Having “natural” sounds can also help to make a place feel more tranquil. This could be done by installing a **water feature or pond.**

**University of Sheffield, 2010**

**“Tranquil scenes have positive impact on brain”**

University of Sheffield. (2010) *“Tranquil scenes have positive impact on brain.”* [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/09/100914095932.htm [Accessed 11 January 2019].

* The findings demonstrated that tranquil environmental scenes containing **natural features, such as the sea, cause distinct brain areas to become `connected´ with one another** whilst man-made environments, such as motorways, disrupt the brain connections.
* People experience tranquillity as a state of calmness and reflection, which is restorative compared with the stressful effects of sustained attention in day-to-day life. It is well known that **natural environments induce feelings of tranquillity whereas manmade, urban environments are experienced as non-tranquil.**

**Greg R. Watts and Robert J. Pheasant, 2015**

**“Identifying tranquil environments and quantifying impacts”**

Watts, GR and Pheasant, RJ (2015) *“Identifying tranquil environments and quantifying*

*impacts.”* Applied Acoustics, *89.* pp. 122-127.

* The concept of tranquillity implies additionally a consideration of **visual intrusion of man-made structures and buildings into an otherwise perceived natural landscape.**
* For the purposes of this study, the extent to which a place is considered to be tranquil is defined by how much individuals think a **particular setting is a quiet, peaceful and attractive place to be, i.e., a place to get away from “everyday life.”**
* Contextual features include listed buildings, religious and historic buildings, landmarks, monuments and elements of the landscape, such as **traditional farm buildings, that directly contribute to the visual context of the natural environment.** It can be argued that when present, these visually cultural and contextual elements are as fundamental to the construction of ‘tranquil space’ as are **strictly natural features (e.g. grass, shrubs, trees, water, rock etc).**

**The Landscape Institute, 2017**

**“Tranquility – An Overview”**

The Landscape Institute. (2017) *“Tranquillity - An overview.”* [ONLINE] Available at: https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2017/02/Tranquillity-An-Overview-1-DH.pdf [Accessed 11 January 2019].

* The Oxford English dictionary definition of tranquillity is ‘**the quality or state of being tranquil, calm’.** The term tranquil is then defined as ‘**free from disturbance, calm’.**
* The Cambridge Dictionary describes tranquillity as ‘**a peaceful, calm state without noise, violence, worry etc.’**
* The term is also defined in the glossary of the third edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) (LI and IEMA 2013) as **‘a state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape’**
* The Campaign to Protect Rural England’s (CPRE’s) definition of tranquillity is more strongly related to their ‘countryside mandate’ namely ‘**the quality of calm experienced in places with mainly natural features and activities, free from disturbance from manmade ones’.**
* In Wales, the definition of tranquillity that has been adopted by both Welsh Government (Welsh Government 2012) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW 2016a) is “**An untroubled state, which is peaceful, calm and free from unwanted disturbances.** This can refer to a state of mind or a particular environment. Tranquillity can be measured in terms of the absence of unwanted intrusions, or by a balancing of positive and negative factors. These include the presence of **nature, feeling safe, visually pleasing surroundings and a relaxing atmosphere.”**
* Consistent with the definitions provided above, **tranquillity cannot readily be defined as an environmental characteristic or quality as it is a state of mind that is being described and thus human perceptions as well as factual evidence must be considered in any studies relating to the term. Tranquillity is, in effect, an umbrella term used to refer to the effect of a range of environmental factors on our senses and our perception of a place.** (p3)
* In 1999, the Government’s ‘Quality of Life Counts’ (QoLC) publication identified 150 indicators for sustainable development in the UK, providing a baseline assessment against which progress could be monitored. This document was updated in 2004 when it included the results of a 2001 DEFRA commissioned survey investigating the reasons for visits to the countryside for the purposes of the ‘access to the countryside’ indicator. **Tranquillity was cited as the most commonly mentioned reason for visiting the countryside by 58% of respondents in this survey**. (p.5)
* ‘Other aspects of landscape perception may be more subjective and responses to them might be more personal and coloured by the experience of the individual. Such factors include a **sense of wildness, sense of security, the quality of light and perceptions of beauty and or scenic attractiveness.** (p.6)
* Participants were asked a series of questions to allow a picture of the **public understanding of tranquillity** to be developed.

 What is tranquillity?

 What makes an area tranquil?

 If an area were described as tranquil, what features would it have?

 Where are tranquil areas you know of?

 What factors cause tranquillity?

 What makes an area more tranquil?

 What makes an area less tranquil?

 When you are in what you consider to be a tranquil area what do you feel?

 What does a tranquil area look like?

 Do places become more/less tranquil over time?

* The answers to these questions were understandably varied but a number of themes emerged which were consistent across many of the participants as follows:

** Perceived links to nature and natural features - seeing, hearing and/or experiencing nature and natural features.**

** Landscape - experiencing (particularly in visual terms) the landscape or elements of it including wild landscapes and rolling countryside as well as characteristics such as fields, moors, woodlands, flora and fauna, natural colours and open views and the sound of water.**

** The importance of wildlife – seeing wildlife behaving naturally, hearing birdsong.**

** Peace, quiet and calm – the absence of noise and the feeling of ‘getting away from it all’, including a need for solitude.**

* Similarly when asked “**What is not tranquillity?”**, there was a degree of consistency in the detractors that were listed as follows:

 Presence of humans/too many people - Certain behaviour/activities undertaken by people which created unwanted noise and disturbance.

 Negative impacts of various forms of transport including vehicle noise.

 Negative impact of various forms of development including commercial and industrial development (p7)

* **‘Relative Tranquillity’** which is defined as ‘the degree to which relative tranquillity can be perceived in the landscape’.
* The Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty contained in Appendix 1 of the Guidance details the sub-factors and associated indicators that should be regarded in the assessment process and includes the following under ‘Relative Tranquillity’:

 Contributors to Tranquillity – Presence and/or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, stream, sea, natural sounds and similar influences

 Detractors from Tranquillity – Presence and/or perceptions of traffic noise, large numbers of people, urban development, overhead light pollution, low flying aircraft, power lines and similar influences. (p8)

* The inclusion of contextual features in the TRAPT was supported by earlier research by Herzog et al (1992) who identified five main visual factors in the characterisation of ‘tranquil space’, namely:

** Mystery – how much a location promises more to be seen.**

** Focus – the extent to which a location offers one or more focal points.**

** Coherence – the ease with which an individual can organise the components of a scene.**

** Unstructured openness.**

** Surface calm**

* Indeed as Herzog et al (2011) found when studying the potential links between tranquillity and preference in places of worship, participants felt they could achieve tranquillity in most houses of worship, thus confirming that tranquillity can also be achieved within a building in an urban area. (p12)
* Kaplan identified four components that help to mitigate the stress of **‘directed attention in ‘restorative environments’** in his Attention Restorative Theory (ART) as follows:

** Being Away – the setting need not be distant, easily accessible natural environments were noted as an important resource.**

** Fascination – ‘soft fascination’ elements such as clouds, sunsets and snow which hold the attention but allow for thinking about other things ( as opposed to hard fascination which is very intense) .**

** Extent – or a sense of extent – such as a path or trail. Historic buildings are noted as promoting a sense of being connected to the past and therefore to a larger world.**

** Compatibility – the perception that there is a link between the natural setting and human inclination.** (p14)