Interview transcript: Adam Badger Pilot Interview

Ashling: (Interviewer) Okay, um… Do I need to ask for your consent first? Yep (laughs)

Adam: So... just to take notes and record some bits and pieces

(Unintelligible)

Adam: And it might be good to introduce yourself as well. I know who you are, obviously

Ashling: (laughs)

Adam: But in the name of practice, um… either introduce yourself or yourself and the project is always good to do.

Ashling: Okay, um… well I’m Ashling and I’m interviewing you today um, about your sense of home um, for a geography project. Um… so the first question (audio break) is um, where do (audio break) you live?

Adam: Uh, so currently I live in East London, uh in a place called Docklands, um which is in the kind of \*gestures\* that bit of the Thames. Um, yeah and I’ve lived here for nearly 12 months now, I guess.

Ashling: Okay. And what kind of um… place is it you live? Is it a house or a flat? Or…? What kind of place?

Adam: Yeah. So, it’s ah, it’s a house. It’s an end of terrace, uh, house so it’s attached to other houses. Um… (click) and yeah, I’ve always lived in flats previously, um… since I’ve lived in Egham actually(!) that was the last house that I lived in. But uh… yeah, it’s the first time back in a house in a long time.

Ashling: Great, um… when you... who do you live with? And would you include pets?

Adam: (Sucks in breath) So I don’t currently live with any pets but I don’t live on my own either. I live with one housemate. Uh there used to be two housemates, um… (click) but, but one of them lost their job and unfortunately couldn’t, couldn’t stay here, couldn’t justify staying here in London basically. Uh, so that obviously makes things a little bit tricky with rent and stuff because things have gone up there. Um but in terms of pets, I don’t live with any at the minute um but in my kinda family home we always had a cat. Uh who I would’ve said was part of the family in their own way, um, I suppose y’know? Like eh, there wasn’t (scrape) too many restrictions on where the cat could go, it was loved like a family member, if not like a child. Like a part of the family nevertheless.

Ashling: Um, the place you currently live in, would you associate that with home? Or is that more just a place you’re living in?

Adam: Yeah, I mean, to some degree certainly I would associate it with home, um, but not at the expense of associating other places with home, if that makes sense? So, I’ve got like a kind of like “home home” which I think will forever be my home, which is, is like family home. Um, and that, I don’t live there but there’s still a kind of homely reminiscence about it, if that makes sense? Like if I think about it, it still feels like my home. Um, but equally I would say that this is my home too! Uh, it’s full of my stuff, it’s full of my kind of things, it’s how I… um, maybe not how I like it, I’d like more and interesting things, um… but it’s got my things in it for better or worse. Um… And yeah, I would consider both as my home but in different ways. Because I think the longer that I’ve been away from my family home, the less and less it feels like home. So, if I said, “Oh, send it to my house” or “Send it to my home” I would mean here. Uh, whereas when I was at university and I said “Oh, send it, send it to my home” I would’ve meant my family address, if that makes sense?

Ashling: Yep. Um, is there anywhere else that you would call home, other than those two places?

Adam: (Pause) Mmm… Probably not… (pause) uh… (audio break, something about moving as a child) …house as a child or anything, if that makes sense. Like I was always in the same place. Uh there are other places that have been my home but I wouldn’t call them home anymore. Does that make sense? So if I think about them, like if I think about my old flat, I’ve still got one of my old friends lives in that old flat, y’know. Um, (crackly audio) but I don’t think of it now as my home, I think of it as my home last year, does that make sense? A home that I’ve had, um, and not, not a home that I have, basically.

Ashling: Yeah.

Adam: Um… But yeah, the things that happened there at the time made it home, but not, not anymore.

Ashling: Mmhm, um… (pause) Has being at home… (pause) has the pan- (unintelligible) Has the pandemic changed your routine that you, um, around your home?

Adam: Yeah, I mean to some degree, I guess there are some things that have changed and (crackly audio) gone and some things that are new. Now, I’m not a particularly routine person, um, like I’ve always spent time working from home, it’s just part of being a student I suppose for a lot of people. And I’ve stayed in the bosom of the university for a long time. And so, there’s always been a lot of things like working from home, it’s now obviously a lot of people are doing. Uh, (pause) …started to try and do is start (audio break) bed, at not a reasonable time, at least the same kind of time every night, y’know, and getting up at a regular time, uh, which is more of a routine than I’ve ever really had before. Uh, usually if I was working late, I would just carry on and then lay in and have the next day off or go back to work but start in the afternoon or whatever. That doesn’t happen so much anymore, there’s a bit more regularity. I think there’s other kind of routines that have settled in around mealtimes and what I’m doing for meals, I think, the fact that I’m all… (audio break) working at home means there’s become a routine around that. Whereas in the past it would be like breakfast and possibly lunch or lunch and possibly dinner would be had outside of the home and it might be a packed lunch or a packed dinner or leftovers, or I would be buying something. So, there’s been like routines around food out of necessity, now there’s nothing quite as easily available, I suppose. Uh but yeah, I’ve been trying to implement routine to some degree as a way to try to keep myself sane, um, with varying degrees of success, I think.

Ashling: Okay… um have any of the spaces in your home changed since you- (audio break) in the pandemic?

Adam: Yeah so, I mean I suppose most drastically what, what is now the spare room, or my housemate’s office, um was not an office before it had somebody in it and they lived in it and it had y’know, my housemate was in there. Um, but he left. So that very drastically changed but not too much for me, like I don’t, uh, really go in there in the daytime to work. What I do, do is use that in the evenings now so uhhh… to play guitar or uhhh, like I’ve gotten into print making, for example like lino-cut printing and illustration and stuff like that, uh, so I’ll use it as a space for that. Um, but in the evenings whereas my other housemate has it in the day, if that makes sense? So that kind of space has opened up, um, otherwise… uhh… not so much. I mean when my housemate, before he left, he was working uh, at a Covid testing lab um, so there was an element of social distancing came into the home, like, particularly around cleaning stuff and making sure that we took care to clean his clothes or like make sure we put them out properly and some degree of separation which I’ve never had to do before, that was quite hard. Um, but now that he’s gone it’s kind of settled into a slightly different routine because we’re not kinda of having to think about that stuff, I s’pose.

Ashling: Yep. Um, when did the sense of home come about in the house you live in, was it instantly or did it take a couple of months?

Adam: (sighs) It’s a weird, like I really like the house, and like I said I lived in flats all of the time before but I grew up in a house. Like a very small house, this is also a very small house. Uh, so it’s that kind of that sense of homeliness about it anyway, I suppose. Uh, similar in layout in a lot of ways to my family home. Um, but we moved in just before lockdown, uh probably had about 4 or 6 weeks before the lockdown came into effect uh which is kind of (unintelligible) timing that we moved in. And… I don’t know, I feel like I developed a skewed sense of home towards this place. Like it very much feels like my home, I’ve spent a lot of hours in there and I’ve spent a lot hours in this shed doing work. Um, but part of the home, or part of feeling at home for me, kinda ends up trying to be part of a community which has become more difficult. So I feel like I’ve become very, kind of furthering in my very small local community of like neighbours, because they’re the only people we’ve kind of seen sort of over the garden fence and whatever, we had this lovely long hot summer which was great, um, however I haven’t been in the local pubs in the same way, for example I haven’t just wondered in and become a local like I have with the last place that I lived in, because you have to book a table, you can’t mingle in the same way like you order drinks to your table rather than meeting people at the bar or whatever, so it’s been mixed. Some things have been kind of really homely other things have felt like they’re missing, I think. Um, to a large degree, if that makes sense.

(Pause)

Ashling: Yep. (Pause) Um (audio break)

Adam: Kind of like I was just saying, ideally it would extend beyond the house, uh and I try to make it like that as much as possible like I feel, although I don’t think of it as home, I would feel at home in some local institutions that are around where I used to live for example, I could walk into a bar, know the people there, know the drinks that were on offer, know the prices of everything on the menu, know what I’m gonna have, know the barman, have a conversation. So, it feels homely, right? So, it has like a homely sense about it but I wouldn’t call it home. So, to that degree, yeah. I kind of, the sense of home extends beyond the house but during covid that’s just not been as possible. Um, so what I while I would like it to, it doesn’t at the minute. Does that make sense?

Ashling: Yep. Have you got any specific memories that you could associate your house with a sense of place?

(Pause)

Adam: Um, I don’t quite understand, can you rephrase that?

Ashling: Um.

Adam: I don’t really understand what you’re after.

Ashling: Like, um is there any sort of memories or things like, uh, always having a takeaway on a Friday night or…? That creates a sense of home…

Adam: I see what you mean, I see what you mean. I don’t know, I think… like there used to be in other places so exactly like the kind of takeaway on a Friday night or the film on a Friday night or whatever. Um… I feel like nothings quite had a chance to bed in here in the lockdown because it was like you build these things to do with being locked down, as kind of strategies to cope with that. And then lockdown eased so you start doing other stuff and build like new routines or at least I did, uh, within these new restrictions. And then lockdown started again and it feels like… but it’s not quite the same as the last lockdown, it’s like lockdown light in a way, right? Obviously now it’s over but really it was like what lockdown? You know? The shops were shut \*shrugs\* Um, so I feel like it was like things start and then they stop and then they start and then they stop and then they start and then they stop. Um, so not so much with this place. I think in the past, more so, like trying to eke out time to spend with loved ones or whatever at certain times. So, you can see it coming and take time away or like we all used to eat as a house on like Thursday’s, for example. Um, but that obviously has kind of stopped and changed because we’re always in and kind of sick of each other by this point! \*laughs\* Right. But yeah.

Ashling: Okay, that’s great, um, I think that’s, that’s sort of finished, so (audio break) -What sense of place means at all after this interview?

Adam: I don’t know, I think we’ve covered it, I don’t know. But I like that you’ve asked.

Ashling: Okay

Adam: thank you very much

Ashling: thank you

Adam: Forth wall! How was that? How did you find it?

(Recording ends)