**Happiness & Environmental Quality**

There are good reasons for thinking that environmental quality (EQ) will be positively related to happiness, but the quantitative evidence for such a link remains limited. This thesis reports two related strands of work.

The first strand designs, implements and analyses data from two new cross-sectional surveys. It builds on earlier work by using spatial data at very high resolution; by simultaneously considering multiple EQ characteristics, around both homes and workplaces; and by investigating the sensitivity of results to the choice of happiness indicator.

The second strand pioneers a new methodology focused on individuals’ momentary experiences of the environment. It extends a protocol known by psychologists as the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) to incorporate satellite (GPS) location data. Using an app for participants’ own smartphones — ‘Mappiness’ — it collects a panel data set comprising millions of geo-located responses from thousands of volunteers.

In both strands, high-resolution EQ indicators are joined to the primary data sets using Geographical Information Systems.

Results of the first strand of work are mixed, but support some links between happiness and the accessibility of natural environments. The second strand demonstrates that individuals are significantly and substantially happier outdoors in natural environments than continuous urban ones. It introduces a valuable new line of quantitative evidence on this question, which has enormous potential for future development.