**GAPL Welfare and Wellbeing topic guide**

**Introduce the project and the interview**

Hi, my name is Shane Doheny and I’m a researcher at Cardiff University. We are carrying out a research project which is looking at the experiences of older people living in six rural places in Wales and England. You probably hear a lot about how older people are becoming more important as a group of people in society, and so politicians are more interested in older people, as are health care, housing providers and social services.

From our point of view there is a lot we don’t know about the lives of older people particularly in the countryside, and so we are trying to build a detailed picture of people who are living in rural areas. We are particularly interested in the role that income plays in shaping older people’s experiences of rural living so that we can better inform debates about the development of social policies for older people.

To date we have conducted a survey of households our six study places and now we are undertaken some interviews with a small number of older people in each area. The interview should last about an hour and all information you provide me with will remain anonymous, that is we will never use people’s real names when we use quotes from the interviews. If there are any questions you don’t feel comfortable answering then please tell me and we can move on to others.

**About you**

Who lives in the house with you

How did you come to live here in this house and in this place (how long lived here)

If moved here – Why did you move here, where did you move from

What did you do prior to retirement – work, socially, volunteering, etc.

Would you say you had close friends living locally

Your immediate family – where do they live, level and means of contact

**About your place**

Can you tell us a little about what it’s like to live in [name of place]?

What are the things that you particularly like…

Anything you dislike (encourage him/her to expand on responses)

Is the fact that this place is rural important to you (in what ways)

Interactions with landscape and nature – types and meanings Do you do anything here that

you would never be able to do in an urban environment/anywhere else

How do you do your shopping for food and everyday goods – how easy/ difficult

How do you get to medical services – hospitals, GPs, dentists – how easy / difficult

Does having access to a car make living here easier

How, if at all, have your experiences of living here changed over time

How, if at all, has the place changed since you’ve been here

What’s it like for older people living here – prompt for positives and negatives

**An average week in your life**

Could you describe what an average week is like for you in terms of what you do, where you

go, how much time you spend in and out of the house, socialising, shopping, etc.

**Involvement in local life**

Do you think that there is a sense of community in [name of place]

Why do you say that

Do you feel part of this community – in what senses

Do you belong to or attend any activities organised by groups or organisations in the local

area – prompt for types and frequency of activities, groups

Would you say that you ever feel isolated living here

Do you feel you are able to influence decisions made by others about what happens in [place]

Do you think local organisations and other people living here listen to the voices of older people in [place]

**Care, support and dependency**

To what extent would you say that you provided care or support for other people in [place] – prompt childcare, care of older people, sick, infirm, home, income

And to what extent would you say that other people living in [place] or local organisations provided care or support for you – prompt family, friends, neighbours, voluntary sector services, local authority (getting to the shops, post office, medical facilities, etc.)

To what extent do you feel you could describe yourself as an ‘independent person’

**Income**

We are particularly interested in the types and levels of income that older people are living on in rural places. Would it be possible to give me an indication of the different types of income coming into your household – state pension, other pension, other sources of income, state benefits, savings – prompt for levels of income if you feel this is appropriate

Does the income coming into your household allow you do all the things that you need or want to do – buying food, travelling, going out, buying presents, going on holiday, etc. – prompt for details

Would you say that you ever experienced times when it has been difficult for you to make ends meet in relation to the money coming into your house – rephrase if necessary to indicate that we mean by this they don’t have enough money to pay bills, buy food, have holidays, repair their houses, and then prompt for reasons for response and examples of types of individual and situations – prompt for reasons for response and examples of difficult financial situations

Has the recent recession and its impacts on savings rates and share prices caused you any problems

Do you worry about what the types of cuts to public services being discussed by the government might mean to you – prompt for reasons and details

**Perceptions of poverty**

More generally, do you think there are other older people living in [place] who are struggling to make ends meet – prompt for reasons for response and further details if agree

What do you think are the basic things older people need in order to live in this area;

And what should be done to help older people who get these things

Does not having enough money stop older people getting involved in the community in [place]

Do you think that it is easier or harder to live on a low income in a rural place such as [place] than it is in a larger town or city – prompt for reasons

Do older people living on low incomes or struggling to make ends meet talk with others about any difficulties they might be having – prompt family, friends, neighbours, local organisations or groups

**Futures**

How do you see your future here (place, mobilities)

What has happened other older people you have known in the area

Do you think your family/friends can provide you with any help you might need as time moves on

Do you think you might look for help from local social or health care providers

At what point do you think you might move (where’s the tipping point)

**Ask if they would be prepared to do some further work with us. This may include taking some photographs, filling in a weekly diary about life in [place] or doing a couple of shorter follow-on interviews during the next 12 months.**