

Focus Group Schedule

Introductions

Welcome to this session

- Reiterate the right to leave at any point.
- Explain that the session is being recorded and how the session will proceed.

Joining and Attending Growing Together

Could you tell me how you found out about the growing together project?

- E.g. word of mouth, referred through a particular service

What is it about Growing Together that attracted or encouraged you to join?

What (if any) are the barriers that prevent you from attending the Growing Together project?

- Examples might include travel, motivation to leave the house, weather etc
- Follow up key points made e.g. You mention that sometimes it is difficult to leave the house, do you think there have been fewer days that this has happened since joining the project? What are the key things that help you to get out of the house?

Enjoyment and Importance Growing Together

On a post-it note, write, or draw a picture/symbol to represent the three most important/ enjoyable things about the Growing Together project. Which one of these that is the most important/enjoyable thing? If you would like me to write these down for you please let me know.

- Examples might include the exercise, being with other people, being in nature, having a reason to get out of the house, having no pressure to turn up somewhere, being involved in food growing etc.
- Ask participants to share their responses and ask group members if they have the same point/share these thoughts.
- Follow up on any points raised regarding relationships and social interaction. E.g. You mentioned that social interaction is an important/enjoyable aspect of the project. How has the project helped you to interact with others and what impact has this had on you? Has the project also influenced your relationships with people outside of Growing Together. If so, how have they influenced them and what impact has this had on you?
- Follow up on any points made regarding nature connection/being in nature. E.g. You mentioned that being in nature is important. Why do you feel being in nature is such an important element of the Growing Together project? How has being in nature benefitted you? Do you feel that you engage in more nature-based activities outside of Growing Together as a result of your participation?

Impact on wellbeing

How has taking part in growing together influenced your wellbeing, for example your feelings of anxiety, depression, your self-esteem and confidence?

Are there any particular aspects of your wellbeing that you feel have been influenced the most?

- Examples could include social connections, loneliness, anxiety, depression, sense of purpose, confidence, self-esteem
- Follow up on the points made e.g. you mention that participating in the project has influenced your feelings of anxiety, what impact has this had on your life?

Has taking part in Growing Together influenced your ability to manage your mental health?

- E.g. do you find it easier to get out of the house and do day-to-day activities such as cooking and cleaning? Have you moved from supported to independent living?
- Are there fewer days where your mental health is particularly bad? Do you think it has reduced the number of visits to your GP, the use of Care Co-ordinators, Community Mental Health Teams, A&E and crisis services, or the need to go to inpatient hospitals for your mental health?

The Pandemic and Growing Together

How has the coronavirus pandemic affected your feelings of isolation and wellbeing?

How has the coronavirus pandemic affected your ability to attend Growing Together?

- What is the impact of this on your feelings of isolation and wellbeing?

How has the coronavirus pandemic altered how Growing Together is run?

- What impact has these changes had on you and your experience at Growing Together?
- Are there any of these changes that you believe have improved Growing Together?

Improving Growing Together

Is there anything that would improve your experience at Growing Together?

- Ask participants to expand on why this would improve their experience if possible.

Final Question

Is there anything you want to tell me that I have not asked?

Close the session

Thank you for your input

Explain how the data will be used and what will happen next

Reiterate that everything is anonymised so they can't be identified themselves.