**Digital Intimacies Interview Guide**

**Research Question for Interviews**

Focus on: How do g*ay a*nd bisexual men use smartphones to enable and/or maintain intimacies and what are the consequences of this for their wider wellbeing?

**Scene setting**

Some of the questions will be quite broad and others more specific, you should feel free to answer in any way you want. There are no right or wrong answers, because what we’re really interested in is what intimacy means to you and what role you see your phone playing in the different kinds of intimate relationships that you might have, so it’s about trying to get a sense of things from your perspective.

As well as using interviews to learn about how gay and bi men use their phones in relation to their intimate relationships, we’re also interested in collecting visual representations of digital interactions in the form of screen shots. With this in mind, would you be comfortable sharing some screenshot examples of some of certain kinds of interactions that come up as we talk? We can think about what exactly you feel comfortable sharing as we go through the interview/at the end of the interview.

**Interview Questions**

***Opening question***

* What does intimacy mean to you?
  + Who is that with? Who does that exclude? Why is that?
  + Ask explicitly about what intimacy with other gay and bi mean means?
  + But think about who they establish intimate relationships with and ask about those relationships throughout the study? (partners, peers and not parents, siblings, children or co-workers?)

**Link –** so now we’re gonna think about what role your phone might play in the kinds of relationships and issues that you just mentioned. We’re interested in how you use your phone now, but also how things might have changed over time so…

***Focus on using smartphone/describing first practice in relation to other gay and bi men***

* *…can you tell me about when you first started using your phone to meet other gay and bi men?* 
  + *What motivated you to start using your phone to make and keep contact with other gay and bi men?*
  + *Can you tell me how you used your smartphone for that?*
  + *What did you like/dislike about this? Why?*
* How did this change how you interacted with other gay and bi men?
  + *Did you know many other gay and bi men before that?*
  + *How did you make and keep contact with other gay and bi men before you started using your phone?*

**Present**

* *Thinking about how you use your phone now, what has changed in how you use it to interact with other gay and bi men?*
* *How important do you think your phone is in establishing and maintaining these relationships?* 
  + - *Does this depend on the kind of relationship?*
    - *Can you give some examples of different relationships where the way you use your phone might be different?*
* *Can you think of times when you don’t use your smartphone in the relationships you have just described?* 
  + - *How does this change your interactions? What are the benefits of not using smart phone in these cases?*
    - *Are there things you can’t do in these cases? (e.g. what does a smartphone allow that in person doesn’t)?*
    - *What other technologies do you use if not ‘in real life?’*
* *Do you feel satisfied with the kinds of relationships you are able to make with other gay and bi men, whether those are sexual, friendship or romantic relationships?*
* *If you could change anything at all about the* *kinds of relationships you are able to have with other gay and bi men, would there be things that you would like to change?*

**Thematic Questions**

**Different Apps/Media**

**Link:** Now,I want us to think a bit more specifically about the different functions your phone has and the different apps and platforms that you use in your intimate relationship.

*Can you talk me through the different ways you use your phone to support your intimate relationships?* *Ask specifically about:*

* *Apps – various social media, real-time communication (WhatsApp, FB Messenger), dating and hookup apps.*
* *The phone itself – calling, texting, camera*
* *Could you talk me through each of these and tell me a bit about how you use it and the kinds of relationships it helps you to establish or maintain?*

**Place**

* *Do the ways you use your phone to make and keep contact with other gay and bi men change depending on where you are? For example, in your hometown, or somewhere new, or if you travel abroad?* 
  + *(If differences discussed) Why do you think there are these differences?*
  + *Can you give an example of a time when you have used your phone in a specific way in relation to the place you were in?*

**Exclusions and Discrimination**

* *We know that there are various kinds of discrimination and or exclusion that take place online and on apps, have you ever experienced anything like this that you would like to tell us about?*
* *In your view, what are the main forms of discrimination that happen online that you have witnessed?*
* *Do these shape how you feel about using your phone to make and keep contact with other gay and bi men?*
* *Have you seen instances where these have been challenged or confronted?*

**COIVD-19 and Pandemic Intimacies**

* *Has corona virus had an impact on intimacy in your life?*
* *Has Corona virus and lockdown changed the ways you used your phone to make and keep contact with other gay and bi men?*

**Future**

* *Thinking about how your life has changed and might change again, do you think you might change how you use your smartphone in the future?* 
  + *Do you think change in your relationships might change how you want to use your smartphone?*
  + *OR What do you think would change how you use your smartphone?* 
    - *If so, how has it affected you?*
    - *How have you managed or responded to this?*

**Cultural Representations**

**Link -** Part of the project is also looking at the ways gay and bi men, their intimacies and how they use their smartphones are represented in the media. So we’re interested in hearing about what people are watching or listening to. With this in mind:

* *Have you been watching any TV show or films, or listening to any podcasts, that represent gay and bi intimacies (either recently or a while back)?*
* *Do you follow any Twitter or Instagram accounts, or Facebook pages, that talk about gay and bi intimacies?*

**Collecting visual material**

As I mentioned at the start of the interview, we’re also interested in collecting visual examples of the kinds of digital interactions we’ve been talking about. Would you be comfortable sharing any screen shots of …. (keep notes of things discussed earlier that can be returned to here to collect screen shots)

**Concluding**

* *Considering that we are trying to understand the role that smartphones play in gay and bi relationships and intimacies, is there anything that you think we should have talked about that we haven’t so far?*

***Ask after recording finished***

* *Considering that this project is about how gay and bi men use their phones to have intimate relationships, what would you be interested in hearing about after we have finished these interviews and analysed our findings?*
* *Do you have any questions about the project or anything you would like to know more about?*