# Participant information sheet

## About the project

We are researchers at [x] University and we would like to invite you to participate in our research project: **[x].**

This [x] exploratory project aims to fundamentally shift behaviours around food plastic packaging.   The findings of this research will be used to understand the plastic-related experiences of consumers and organisations in the UK, and to produce insights that will enable policymakers and industry professionals to understand and help bridge consumers’ attitude-behaviour gap in plastic packaging reduction.

By developing insights into consumer, business and waste management practices, this project will tackle key pinch points inhibiting the drive toward cleaner, greener growth.

Please take the time to carefully read through the following information about our project, in order to help you decide if you would like to take part in this research.

## Your participation

We are interested to find out more about your experiences in relation to food plastic packaging. Your involvement in this research will take place over the course of five-six consecutive weeks over a 10-month period. If you do decide to take part in this project, we will provide you with a couple of options for your potential start-end dates for you to choose between (for example, staring mid-November, or mid-January).

If you are happy to participate in the project, this would involve the following activities below. Unfortunately, we are unable to estimate the amount of time you will spend involved in the project over this period, but the types of activities listed below should help to provide you with an indication.

1. **Two interviews with one-two researcher(s) working on the project; one interview at the beginning and one at the end of the data collection period.**

We would anticipate that each interview will last around 1 – 2 hours long. The interviews will take place online, using the Microsoft Teams platform.

1. **Informal fortnightly conversations**

One of the researchers will spend time talking to you online via the Microsoft Team platform about you, your everyday life and your experiences in relation to food and food plastic packaging. These check-ins are anticipated to take no longer than 30 minutes each time.

1. **Written and visual diary entries.**

As part of this research, we will ask you to keep a written record (a diary) of your day-to-day encounters with plastic packaging which you will return to the research team each week. These encounters could be both inside and outside of your home, including your experiences of food shopping, unpackaging your food shopping and re-stocking your fridge and cupboards, meal preparations, social gatherings and lunchtimes at your workplace, for instance. We will also encourage you to keep a visual record to accompany your written diary entries. This will be through the use of photographs, drawings and/or short video recordings. These can be included with your weekly submission of your diary entries, emailed to the research team. If your diary entries are handwritten, these could be recounted over a phone call with a member of the research team or alternatively, they could be photographed and emailed to the team.

1. **Fridge and cupboard inventories**

In a similar manner to the written and visual diary entries, we will also ask you to keep and submit weekly written and/or visual records of your fridge and cupboard contents.

1. **Face-to-face visits**

If you feel comfortable, we would welcome the opportunity to visit you in-person, to understand more about your everyday experiences in relation to food plastic packaging on one or two occasions. These visits may involve spending time talking to you in your kitchen/dining area about your every food-related experiences, routines and waste practices or accompanying you on a grocery shopping trip, for instance.

## What if I change my mind?

Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you change your mind at any point during the research project and you decide that you no longer wish to participate (even after signing the consent form), you can withdraw by contacting a member of the research team and you will not be required to provide a reason for withdrawing.

**You can withdraw your data up until two weeks after the data collection period has ended.**  We **will extract all data you have contributed to the study and destroy it. Please note that it is difficult (and often impossible) to remove data from one specific participant when this has already been anonymised or pooled together with other people’s data. Therefore, you can only withdraw your data up to two weeks after taking part in this research project.**

**This is your opportunity to take part in a unique project that will help researchers to support consumers, organisations and policy makers take steps towards developing a more environmentally responsible future.**

**Payment**

**As a thank you for taking part in all parts of this study, you will receive a £75 gift voucher.**

**However, if you need to need to withdraw from the project before the data collection period has come to an end and you have already dedicated a significant amount of your time to the project beforehand, you may be compensated with a voucher for a reduced amount. The reduced amount awarded in the event of withdrawing from the project early will be at the discretion of the research team.**

## How will my data be stored and will my data be identifiable?

All of your data; interview recordings and transcripts, written/visual diary entries, cupboard and fridge inventories) will be stored in secured folders on the [xx]. Interview transcripts will be linked to a unique key code (pseudonymous identifiers), which will be associated with your email. Your data will be stored in encrypted files (no-one other than the research team will be able to access them) and on password-protected computers. We will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in our office. We will keep personal data that can identify you (e.g. your name, surname and email address) separately from non-personal information (e.g. your views on a specific topic). In accordance with University guidelines, we will keep the data securely for a maximum of ten years.

## Who will have access to my data and how will you use the data I have shared with you?

Members of the research team conducting the broader [x] project will have access to your data. All researchers working on the [x] project (x) have signed an ethics form and abide to the Code of Practice, [x].

We will also have a professional transcriber, who will produce a written record of your interviews. The transcriber will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement before they have access to the interview recordings.

**This study is funded by the UK Research and Innovation body (UKRI). When the research project has finished, your** anonymised data will be available to other researchers through a data archive in line with research funding requirements. **Any data, including visual data (e.g. photographs and video recordings) that contain identifiable data will be anonymised before it is deposited in the data archive. However, if it is not possible to anonymise the data, it will be excluded from the archive. Please also be assured that your personal information (your name, surname and email address) will not feature in any of the research outputs.**

**The [x] research team will use the data collected for research purposes only. When writing up the findings from this project, we would like to reproduce some of the data you share with us (e.g. excerpts from your interviews, photographs, video recordings or diary entries submitted to the research team), in the form of** research articles, academic journals and conferences, videographies, blog posts, online articles, social media communications and publications and reports for policy recommendations.

Although, if you do share photographs and/or video recordings of yourself with us and you are not comfortable with such photograph(s) and/or videos being disseminated at academic conferences and online journals, you can choose not to consent to this in the participant consent form. In such cases, you will not be featured in any footage that is disseminated and any footage where you are present will be blurred to ensure your anonymity.

Whilst we may use your exact words in our writing and publications, we will take all reasonable steps to protect your identity. As mentioned previously in this information sheet, we will anonymise all forms of data you provide us with, to ensure that your data will not be associated with your personal details, such as your name or email address. The only data connected to your data directly will be your age, general occupation, general region, household type and size. There is a small risk that you can be re-identified based on this information. However, we will do all we can to minimise any risk of re-identification.

If anything you tell us in the interview suggests that you or somebody else might be at risk of harm, we will be obliged to share this information with colleagues from [x] Research Ethics Committee. We will keep your personal information anonymous.

## Any questions or concerns?

**If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact the research team at:** [x]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Researchers | Co-Principal Investigator |
|  |  |
| Contact Address | |

If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact:

[x] can also be contacted via Microsoft Teams using the email address provided above.

|  |
| --- |
| This study has been reviewed and approved by the [x] and [x] Research Ethics Committee. |

For further information about how [x] processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our webpage [x] Thank you for considering your participation in this project.