

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, OX3 0BP

Direct Line for Supervisor: Prof. Helen Walkington. hwalkington@brookes.ac.uk 01865 483185

Researcher’s Name: Michael Borchart. Email: 15069028@brookes.ac.uk Tel: 01844 291221

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***PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET***

***What are the benefits of allotments, is there a geography to these and can they be replicated elsewhere?***

You are being invited to take part in my university research project. Before you decide whether or not you want to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

This study aims to establish three main factors which are: what are the benefits of allotments, whether these benefits are geographically variable, and from this understanding, how these benefits could be replicated elsewhere.

**Why have I been invited to participate?**

You have been invited to participate in the current study as I understand that you have an interest or participatory role in an allotment.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be asked to complete this questionnaire about your allotment experience, including why you took an interest in allotments and the benefits you have experienced. This questionnaire consists of 27 questions across two sections and should take approximately 20-30 minutes.

**Do I have to take part?**

*No, taking part is entirely voluntary*. *This information sheet is for you to keep.*

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There are no direct benefits to taking part. However, outcomes of the study could provide further knowledge on the benefits of having an allotment and how these benefits can be promoted in the future.

**Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?**

The questionnaire is to be completed anonymously, and each completed questionnaire will be referred to by number so that it cannot be traced back to any participant unless by their consent. At the end of the questionnaire, there is the option for you to provide contact details should you be happy for me to contact you with any further questions. All completed questionnaires will be kept secure, while subsequent computer files will be password protected. If no publication is planned, all data will be deleted by July 2018.

**What should I do if I want to take part?**

If you would like to take part, please complete the attached questionnaire and return the completed form to me.

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The questionnaires will be analysed as part of my dissertation for my degree at Oxford Brookes University. If you wish to be sent a summary of the findings, please let me know via my email address at the top of this page.

**Contact for Further Information**

Please don’t hesitate to contact me or my supervisor with any other questions or queries about this study. Our contact details can be found at the top of this letter.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

***Michael Borchart***

***Undergraduate geography student, Oxford Brookes University***

**Questionnaire Issued to: East Ward Allotments**

Section 1) **INDIVIDUAL ALLOTMENT HOLDER EXPERIENCE**

The following questions aim to establish the experience you have gained from your allotment. Some of these questions may have long answers for which boxes are provided.

If completing digitally, please click on the appropriate check boxes where provided

1. How many years have you had this allotment for? (*If less than a year answer in months)*

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| --- | --- | --- |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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1. Did you have to join a waiting list to get your allotment plot? [ ] Yes [ ] No *If so, how long did you have to wait?*

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

1. In the summer season, **approximately** how many hours do you spend on your allotment a week?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

1. Are you the only person who manages this allotment? [ ] Yes [ ] No
2. If you answered no to the previous question, please expand below on how many people you share your allotment with, and your relationship to them (**e.g.** spouse, child, friend, neighbour).

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| --- | --- |
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1. Please describe your reasons for originally taking on an allotment in the space below.
2. Below is a table containing ten perceived benefits of allotment gardening. *Which (if any) of these do you experience?* ***Please mark any benefits below which you have experienced with an X.***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical Activity/Exercise |  | SocialInteraction |  |
| Reduced stress |  | Improved Diet |  |
| High quality produce |  | Sense of Achievement/ Self Reliance |  |
| Reduced food expenditure (in shops) |  | Being Outdoors/ Contact with nature |  |
| Learning new Skills (Education) |  | Wildlife conservation/Maintaining biodiversity |  |

1. Of the **benefits in the table** above which you have experienced, please write the three **most important to you personally**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **1)** |
|   | **2)** |
|  | **3)** |

1. Please list below any **other** benefits you have experienced from your allotment.
2. Have you realised any **unexpected** benefits from your allotment?

[ ] Yes [ ] No*. If you answered yes, please list any unexpected benefits in the box below.*

1. Please use the space below to list any **downsides** to having an allotment.

1. Are you aware of any social **events** which take place on your allotments (**for example** BBQs, fundraising, and community events)? [ ] Yes [ ] No. *If you are aware of events, describe these below* ***and indicate if you have attended any.***
2. Allotments have been recognised as places where **relationships** develop across different ages and ethnicities. Allotment participants have also been found to continue horticultural **traditions**. Have you experienced any of these whilst being an allotment holder? *Please use the box below to answer.*

1. What do you use your allotment plot for? **Select all of the following which apply with a cross** in the corresponding box.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Crops |  |
| Livestock |  |
| Ornamental Plants/ Flowers |  |
| Other  |  |

1. If you grow crops on your allotment, do you grow similar plants yearly or experiment with different varieties?
2. In the space below, list the main crops (or flowers) which you are growing this summer.
3. Do you try to maintain any productivity on your allotment outside of the summer season? [ ] Yes [ ] No *If you do, please expand on the techniques which you use here.*
4. Do you use any techniques on your allotment to manage animals/ plant species? These include methods to protect your crops from animals and pests, and any conservation methods to maintain animal and plant biodiversity. *If you do, please use the space below to describe these techniques.*
5. Does the environment **surrounding** the allotment site (i.e. urban, semi-rural, rural) create any significant advantages or disadvantages for you and your allotment?
6. Do you have any ideas of how the allotment committee could improve your allotment experience?

Section 2) **INDIVIDUAL ALLOTMENT HOLDER DETAILS**

The questions in this section include personal details about you as the allotment holder. The aim of these questions is for the researcher to identify and analyse any demographic patterns between allotment holders.

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1. As of 1st August 2017, please give your age in years:
2. **(i)** Please select your employment status with an X from the options below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full time employed |  |
| Part time employed |  |
| Self employed |  |
| Unemployed |  |
| Retired |  |
| Other |  |

**(ii)** If applicable, please describe your profession in the space below:

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| --- |
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1. **(i)** Which of the following household income brackets applies to you? *Please select your household income from the options below*. **Why is this being asked?** The researcher would like to establish whether there is a possible relationship between economic income and allotment uptake.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Under £15000 (per annum) |  |
| £15000-£19999 |  |
| £20000-£24999 |  |
| £25000-£29999 |  |
| £30000-£34999 |  |
| £35000-£39999 |  |
| £40000 and above |  |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 **(ii)** How many adults are there in your household?

1. In the space below, please indicate your nationality. **Why is this being asked?** The researcher aims to investigate the ethnic and social diversity of allotment holders, across different allotment sites.

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| --- |
|  |

1. Indicate your gender from the options given: [ ] Male [ ] Female [ ] Prefer not to say
2. Aside from your allotment, do you have a private outdoor space of your own where you live? [ ] Yes [ ] No
3. Finally, how far do you travel to reach the allotments from your home? Please indicate below **approximately** how long it takes you to reach the allotments and specify how you travel to your allotment.

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| --- |
|  |

END OF QUESTIONS. **If you have completed this digitally, please ensure you have saved the document with your answers.**

**Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

This questionnaire is anonymous, however if you would be happy for me to contact you with any other questions about your allotment based upon your answers in this survey, please leave contact details below.

Phone:

Email: