



## Participant Information Sheet

### Qualitative interviews

### Service users

#### Research Project Title: The Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health Through Green Social Prescribing Project

You are being invited to take part in a research project called “**The Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health Through Green Social Prescribing Project**”. To help you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and take time to decide whether you wish to take part in the study. You may want to discuss it with others if you wish. The research team is happy to answer any questions you may have about the study. It is your choice whether you take part in this study. If you choose not to take part, this will not affect any support you are receiving from the green social prescribing project. Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The study is led by a team of researchers at the Universities of Sheffield, Exeter and Sheffield Hallam. It is a follow-on study for a large initiative looking at how connecting people with nature, through various different nature-based activities, can help wellbeing and improve mental health<sup>1</sup>. We are interested to understand service users' experiences of accessing and taking part in nature-based activities.

Our research activities will start from June 2024 and finish in June 2025.

#### **Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen as you were referred to the green social prescribing project and have attended an activity which aims to improve your health and wellbeing by connecting you with nature, e.g. you may have attended: a walking group, a community allotment, an outdoor swimming club, or other outdoor activity. We hope to speak to a range of people who have experienced green social prescribing activities so we can understand how the service is helping people.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep. You can still withdraw up to 48 hours after your interview without any negative consequences. You do not have to give a reason. If you wish to

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<sup>1</sup> It is run by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and supported by the Department of Health and Social Care, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, NHS England and NHS Improvement, Natural England, Public Health England, National Academy for Social Prescribing, and Sport England.

withdraw from the research, please contact Jill Thompson (*CONTACT DETAILS AT THE END OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET*).

### **What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?**

If you choose to take part, we may contact you to ask you a few questions about your experiences of the Green Social Prescribing project (interview). The person delivering the green social prescribing activity you have attended will discuss the possibility of you taking part in an interview and what it will entail prior to your agreement to take part in the interview. If you agree to take part in an interview, a member of the research team may contact you to arrange the interview at a time that suits you. The interview will be conducted over the telephone or using an online platform. The purpose of the interview is for you to share your views and experiences of the project you have received in more detail. The interview will last approximately one hour. Before the interview starts, the researcher will either ask you to complete a consent form, or if the interview is done over the telephone or virtually, they will talk you through the consent form. We would also like to speak with you again approximately 4 to 6 months later and we will discuss this with you.

The researcher will audio record the interview. After the interview the recording will be transcribed (a written version made) for analysis. All text will be anonymous, and information removed so that you cannot be recognized in any materials that arise from this work.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

This research is about understanding experiences, and we do not anticipate any severe risks to individuals presented by our research activities. There is a small risk that participants will be identified because of their roles in attending a Green Social Prescribing activity, but we will do everything we can to ensure confidentiality, including not storing your name and contact details with your interview transcript and ensuring only those researchers who require access can access these direct identifiers. If you are worried about these risks, you can discuss them with the research team (details listed at bottom of this form) and/or seek advice from colleagues or appropriate professionals before taking part in the study. You can stop the interview at any time without giving a reason.

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

The possible benefits from taking part in the study will be to people who design, deliver or receive Green Social Prescribing services in future. Participants will be helping to improve our understanding of how Green Social Prescribing services can better meet the needs of those that need them. Participants will receive a £20 gift voucher for taking part in the first interview and a further £20 voucher for taking part in the second interview.

### **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to members of the University research teams (Sheffield University, Sheffield Hallam University, University of Exeter). You will not be identified in any reports or publications. If you agree, we may share the information you

provide with other researchers. If you agree to us sharing the information you provide with other researchers (e.g., by making it available in a data archive) then your personal details will not be included unless you explicitly request this. We will never share your data with analytics/marketing or other private companies either now or in the future. By taking part in this research, you agree that members of the research team can use the data from the research activities to inform any outputs from the project, including reports to funders and academic publications. The data will be stored in accordance with UK Research and Innovation standards (<https://www.ukri.org/our-work/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/research-integrity/>) and may be used in anonymised form in future projects. Please note that any information you enter will be stored and processed using services provided by Google. These services have been the subject of careful assessment to ensure they comply with UK data protection law and the University's own privacy policies.

### **What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?**

'According to data protection legislation, we are required to inform you that the legal basis we are applying in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.>'

All interviews will be pseudonymised by providing you with a pseudonym (a different name) and changing the exact location of the green activity that you attend and removing any references that might be made to personal data within the interview transcript. No participant will be identified by name in any published material. All data will be held and managed in compliance with GDPR regulations.

### **What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?**

The interviews will be audio recorded using an encrypted digital recorder.

An anonymised transcript of the interview recording will be made by a transcription service outside the research team that complies with our Data Security standards.

The content of the transcripts will not be shared outside the research team. Transcripts, and consent forms will be anonymised, securely stored on university network drives and accessible only to the project team for the duration of the project. All physical copies of any documentation will be securely destroyed after a period of 10 years.

Due to the nature of this research, it is very likely that other researchers may find the data collected to be useful in answering future research questions. We will ask for your explicit consent for your data to be shared in this way.

The data collected during the study will be used to produce a project report, peer-reviewed journal article(s) and other outputs from the study. Your words may be quoted in the publications and other research outputs, but they will not be attributed to you nor will any information that may reveal your participation be published.

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

This study is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

### **Who is the Data Controller?**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Defra will act as the data controller for this study. This means that they are responsible for ensuring your information is looked after and used properly.

### **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This project has been ethically approved by the School for Medicine and Population Health (SchARR) ethics committee on 16/07/2024.

### **What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

At the University of Sheffield, Dr Jill Thompson ([Jill.Thompson@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:Jill.Thompson@sheffield.ac.uk) tel. +44 114 222 22075)

At the University of Exeter, Professor Ruth Garside ([r.garside@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:r.garside@exeter.ac.uk), tel. +44 187 225 8148)

At Sheffield Hallam University, Professor Chris Dayson ([C.Dayson@shu.ac.uk](mailto:C.Dayson@shu.ac.uk), tel. +44 114 225 2846)

You can also contact either Jill, Ruth or Chris if you have a complaint or concern about how the study is conducted. If you would like to contact someone else about this you can contact Dr Louise Preston , Head of Population Health [l.r.preston@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:l.r.preston@sheffield.ac.uk)

If you have a concern about how your personal data has been handled, please contact Luke Thompson – [luke.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:luke.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk), University of Sheffield Data Protection Officer if you are not satisfied with how your complaint is handled, you may then escalate the complaint to the ICO (Information Commissioners Office). Further information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

### **Contact for further information**

If you would like to contact someone for further information about this study, please contact Jill Thompson ([Jill.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:Jill.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk))

You will be given a copy of this information sheet to keep for your records. Thank you for reading it and for considering participating in this research.

A summary of the project findings will be available at the end of the project. If you would like access to the results, we can share this via email or post depending on your personal preference.

**Thank you for taking part in this project.**

