



Mapping undocumented physical and social community adaptation due to Covid-19

Project Information Sheet for Participants

What are the aims of this research project?

This survey has been produced as part of the project **Mapping undocumented physical and social community adaptation due to Covid-19**.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many public spaces have been deliberately adapted or changed. For example, 'Spaces for People' supported temporary measures to create safer areas for active travel and social distancing in Scotland. This scheme was funded by the Scottish Government with funding provided to councils and statutory bodies (administered by Sustrans Scotland) ([information source](#)). However, in other cases, people and communities have voluntarily changed the physical form or the use of spaces in different ways. This project aims to produce a crowd-sourced database of 'bottom-up' community adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic, capturing the locations and characteristics of local-level physical changes which may reflect adaptive capacity and resilience, and revealing new insights into how communities have responded to the pandemic. This research is interested in changes to spaces which meet three criteria:

- They occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020 to present)
- They have taken place in locations which are public (not within private gardens or houses, or similar)
- They have been made by local people, households, community groups or businesses (rather than by public sector or government bodies)

There are three main types of changes to spaces which we would like to find out about:

- Evidence of people visiting spaces that had not usually (or not often) been visited before the COVID-19 pandemic. Example: a new path forming on land, or an existing path getting wider.
- Spaces which have been adapted or improved. Example: a regular public litter pick within a park.
- Spaces which have undergone significant change or transformation to a new use. Example: a road verge being transformed into a community growing area.

Who is funding the project?

This is a Rapid Response project funded by the Macaulay Development Trust.

Who is involved?

This research is being undertaken at the James Hutton Institute. The project is led by Dr Laura MacLean within the Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences (SEGS) Department, who is working with colleagues in SEGS and in the Informational and Computational Sciences (ICS) Department.

Who is eligible to participate in this survey?

All adults (aged 18 or over) who are resident in Aberdeen, Banchory, Ellon, Peterhead and Portlethen are invited to complete the survey, if they know of any changes to spaces in the settlement which meet the criteria described above in 'What are the aims of this research project?'. These five

settlements have been chosen as they represent an urban area and communities with different levels of out-commuting by residents (identified through assessment of estimated pre-Covid residence-workplace links), and may feature potential differences in social capital (identified through assessment of variations in estimated local election turnout, estimated incidence of long-term health problems or disabilities and estimated crime rates) (other settlement-level indicators reflecting health and land use were calculated). Community groups, other organisations and facilities, and individuals will be/are being identified using publicly-available online resources and data, and contact details for these (email addresses, phone numbers, social media accounts) will be/are being sourced from the public domain for targeted communication about the survey; additionally the survey will be/is being publicised/promoted more widely.

What will I be asked to do today?

The online survey form contains eight questions (not including the consent form) and asks respondents to describe and provide information about one change to a space, including identifying its location on a map. Completing a single online survey will take approximately 5 minutes. If you wish to provide information about changes in more than one place, this is fine: please complete more than one survey to do this.

No questions in the survey ask you to provide any personal or identifying details about yourself or anyone else: please do not provide such information in your responses in text boxes, and please do not identify non-public locations.

If you would prefer to complete the survey via phone (i.e. the information and questions would be gone through by a researcher, who would record your answers on the online form), please contact Jonathan Hopkins on 01224 395312 or jonathan.hopkins@hutton.ac.uk and we can arrange a time to call you.

Before the first question in the survey, there is a consent form. If you opt to complete the survey via phone, a researcher will produce a written consent record (including participant name, date and location) confirming that the project has been explained to the participant, that the participant has been asked if they have any questions, and that the participant has confirmed they understand the project and agreed to take part. This researcher would then sign the note, store this securely and not associated with survey response data, and share the note with you via email.

Will my taking part in the questionnaire be kept confidential?

The survey does not ask respondents to provide any personal or identifying details about themselves or anyone else: respondents are asked not to provide such information in responses. If these details are provided by respondents in text boxes then the relevant data will be redacted, or responses deleted (either during data collection, or after dataset download) – any personal or identifying details inadvertently collected will be similarly deleted. Locations provided by respondents which are judged to be non-public by researchers will be deleted alongside linked question responses. The final dataset will therefore be anonymous and will be stored securely at the James Hutton Institute.

What will happen to the information I provide?

Participants are asked to provide information in the form of text responses (three questions), multiple choice options (three questions), a location on a map (one question) and a date (one question). If you select 'Find my location' on the map, and the survey website has access to your location (a prompt to allow this may appear in your browser), the survey will record the location which is identified unless the location is changed or deleted. Locations judged by researchers to be non-public, and linked question responses, will be deleted and not included in the final dataset.

The use of survey software (Esri ArcGIS Survey123) means that research data will be transferred to, and stored at, a destination outside the UK and the European Economic Area (data centres in the USA, as part of the James Hutton Institute's ArcGIS Online service). Although no questions in the survey ask you to provide any personal or identifying details, identifiable data will be removed whenever possible, and any data transfer will be done securely and with a similar level of data protection as required under UK law.

These data will be downloaded and anonymised (if necessary) at the end of the project, and will be stored securely at the James Hutton Institute. Anonymisation will be documented along with any additional cleaning of the dataset.

The final, fully anonymised dataset (including location data and questionnaire responses, but containing no personal or identifying data about respondents) will be deposited in a publicly accessible repository (e.g. Zenodo, <https://zenodo.org/>) and these data (and/or processed/analysed data) will be published online so they can be used for future research and learning.

If participants request to complete the survey via phone call, then contact details (e.g. phone numbers, email addresses) will not be linked to survey responses or stored in a database specific to this research project or shared outside the research team. Phone calls will not be recorded. Written consent notes will not be linked to survey responses.

Data, analysis and results may be published in reports, publications, presentations, web pages, datasets, articles and other research outputs. Words provided in text responses may also be quoted in these outputs. It will not be possible to identify participants from the outputs.

The James Hutton Institute ("us", "we") is the data controller for any personal or identifying information collected or otherwise processed for the purposes of this study. We will process this information in conformity with UK data protection legislation. Our main privacy notice, www.hutton.ac.uk/terms, explains in more detail what we do with personal data as well as your rights under data protection legislation. If you have any queries about your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer on dpo@hutton.ac.uk.

Do I have to take part?

No, participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any point without giving reasons and without any negative consequences.

How can I withdraw from the study if I wish to?

Please contact the lead researchers as soon as possible (laura.maclean@hutton.ac.uk; jonathan.hopkins@hutton.ac.uk). Once the data is anonymous, and/or when outputs have been published, it is not possible for data to be removed.

What are the benefits of taking part?

There will be no direct or personal benefit to you from taking part in this research. However, the research could support learning within and across communities about initiatives near to them, and could help to inform better policies and community-level interventions.

Personal Risks

There are no risks to taking part.

Ethical Review

The project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee of the James Hutton Institute.

Further Information

For further project details, please contact:

Dr Laura MacLean (laura.maclea@hutton.ac.uk)

Dr Jonathan Hopkins (jonathan.hopkins@hutton.ac.uk)