

Summary of this Participant Information Sheet

This Participant Information Sheet explains Stage 1 of a PhD research project exploring how people experience, remember, and make meaning from local places in and around Kington.

Taking part is completely voluntary. If you choose to take part, participation involves a one-to-one interview about your experiences and associations with local places. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded so it can be transcribed accurately for research purposes. If you prefer not to be recorded, written notes will be taken instead. You are always in control of what you share and how much detail you include.

The interview material will be analysed as part of the PhD research. It may also help inform the later development of creative project materials, such as the Oracle of Place cards and guidebook. Taking part in this interview does not mean you are agreeing to take part in any future workshops, activities, or public events. Any later stage would involve separate information and consent, and would only take place after separate ethical approval from the University of Worcester.

Some selected written extracts from your interview may, with your separate permission, later be considered for inclusion in the guidebook or related project materials. If this happens, you would be contacted again, shown the exact extract, and asked whether you approve its use and how you would like to be identified.

This document explains what taking part involves, how recordings may be used, how your information will be stored and protected, your right to withdraw, and the limits of withdrawal once material has been published or publicly shared with your permission.

Please take time to read the full information carefully.

You are encouraged to ask questions before deciding whether to take part.

Rebecca Burns

PhD student

Email: burr1_25@uni.worc.ac.uk



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND PRIVACY NOTICE

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Oracle of Place: Can Oracle Cards Mediate Community Connection to Place*

VERSION NUMBER: V3

DATE: May 2026

This research has been approved by the Education Culture and Society Research Ethics Panel in line with the University's Research Ethics Policy, reference number: ECS25260029-R2.

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project.

Before you decide whether to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done, what it will involve for you, what information I will ask from you, and what I will do with that information.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Thank you for reading.

What is the purpose of the research?

This research explores how people experience, remember, and make meaning from local places such as streets, routes, landmarks, shops, meeting points, and overlooked everyday spaces in Kington.

In many communities, important knowledge about place is carried through personal memory, everyday storytelling, shared experience, and repeated use, rather than through formal records. This stage of the research looks at how residents describe the places that matter to them, how place-based memories and stories are formed and shared, and how local places may become meaningful over time.

The stories and reflections shared in this interview will be analysed as part of the PhD research. They may also inform the later visual and interpretive development of the Oracle of Place cards and the project guidebook, a possible future creative output that may include selected place-based reflections, images, and prompts.

While your personal knowledge and memories are the starting point, the research is focused on local places and how they are understood, remembered, and related to. This is not a study of individuals' personal life histories.

The research forms part of a PhD at the University of Worcester and focuses on the town of Kington, Herefordshire.

Who is undertaking the research?

Name: Rebecca Burns

Position: PhD Student

Role on the project: Lead researcher

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited because you are an adult (18+) with personal experience of, or a connection to, Kington and its everyday places and have expressed an interest in being involved.

I hope to recruit up to *30 people* for this part of the study.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to take part in this study.

Your participation is entirely voluntary.

It is important that you can give your informed consent before taking part in this study. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about the research before you provide your consent.

What will happen if I agree to take part?

If you choose to take part in an interview:

- You will be invited to take part in a one-to-one conversation lasting approximately 30–60 minutes.
- The interview will focus on your experiences of local places and what they mean to you.
- You can choose whether the interview takes place online or in person. In-person interviews will take place in a neutral, publicly accessible location agreed in advance.
- The interview will be audio recorded, with your consent, so it can be transcribed accurately

- You control what you share and can pause or stop the interview at any time.

Will I be recorded and how will the recordings be used?

With your consent, interviews will be audio recorded to produce an accurate transcript.

Recording method:

- **For in-person interviews:** Audio-only recording will be used (no video).
- **For online interviews via Microsoft Teams:** Teams records both audio and video by default. However, you can turn off your camera before the recording begins, which means only audio will be recorded. If you choose to keep your camera on during a Teams interview, the video component will be deleted within 24 hours and only the audio recording will be kept for research purposes.

You will be reminded of these options at the start of any Teams interview, and you can choose what you are comfortable with.

How your interview material may be used

If you choose to take part, your interview material will be used for research analysis. Separately, you may also choose whether selected written extracts may later be considered for public-facing project materials.

1. Research use

If the interview is recorded, the audio recording will be used to create a transcript and support research analysis. If you choose not to be recorded, interview notes will be used instead.

Audio files, interview notes, and full transcript will be stored securely on University-approved systems, such as University OneDrive or SharePoint, and accessed only by the researcher and, if necessary, the supervisory team.

2. Use in public-facing outputs (optional)

With your separate permission, selected extracts may later be considered for inclusion in the project's guidebook or similar project materials. If this happens, you will be contacted and asked to review and approve the specific extract before anything is shared publicly.

Can I take part without being recorded?

Yes. You can choose not to be audio recorded and still take part. In that case, the researcher will take written notes, which will be used as research data in line with your consent choices.

Identifiability

Although steps will be taken to protect your identity, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed in a small community where places, relationships, and local details may make someone recognisable. As a general principle, interview transcripts used for analysis will normally be pseudonymised. This means identifying details will be removed or replaced with a participant code, while the researcher keeps a separate secure key linking the code to your identity. If you later wish to be named in a public-facing extract, this would be discussed and agreed separately.

How can I withdraw from this study after agreeing to participate?

You can withdraw from participating in the study during data collection at any time without giving a reason and without negative consequences.

If you take part in an interview

- You may stop the interview at any point.
- You may ask for your interview recording, transcript, and interview notes to be withdrawn up until September 2028, after which analysis and writing will be substantially complete and it may no longer be possible to identify and remove your contribution in full from the research record.

If you request withdrawal before this point, your recording, transcript, and/or interview notes will be securely deleted and will not be used in the research.

If you later approve a specific extract for public use, you can withdraw that approval up until the point of publication or public sharing. After material has been published or publicly shared, complete withdrawal may not be possible, although requests for removal or anonymisation will be considered where feasible.

What are the benefits for me in taking part?

There may be no direct personal benefit.

However, many people find value in reflecting on their relationship with place and contributing to a shared community project. It is hoped that your participation will help build a deeper understanding of how place-based knowledge is held, shared, and sustained.

Are there any risks for me if I take part?

This is a non-clinical study, but there are some important risks and sensitivities to consider. These include emotional discomfort, the possibility of being identifiable in a small community, and the limits of confidentiality if concerns about harm arise.

Some people may find that talking about places connected to memory or change brings up emotions. If this happens:

- You can skip questions, take a break, or stop altogether
- You are never required to share anything you are uncomfortable with

If the conversation raises difficult feelings and you would like support, I can signpost you to appropriate services such as Mind, Samaritans, Citizens Advice, or your GP.

In a small community, specific place details can sometimes make people identifiable. You will be informed about this. Research transcripts will normally be pseudonymised, and if a selected extract is later proposed for public use, you will be asked separately how you would like to be identified.

What information will you collect about me?

To participate in this research project, I will need to collect information that could identify you, called “personal information”. Specifically, I will need to collect information including:

- *Your name and contact details*
- *Audio recordings of interviews, if applicable*
- *Interview notes, if you choose not to be recorded*
- *Consent choices relating to recording, withdrawal, and future contact*

A note about other people you may mention

During a research conversation, you may naturally refer to other people, such as family members, neighbours, or other local figures, by name. Those individuals have not consented to be part of the research. As a general principle, names of third parties will be pseudonymised in transcripts and any published material. In a small community, even a pseudonym can sometimes make someone identifiable; where that risk exists, identifying details will be generalised or removed entirely. If a story or extract contains third-party information that could still identify or harm someone, it will not be used in public-facing materials.

I will use your personal data in the ways needed to conduct and analyse the research study.

The UK is bound by the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation which is now the “UK GDPR”. Under UK GDPR we are required to provide a justification (what is called a “legal basis”) in order to collect personal information. The legal basis for this project is “task carried out in the public interest”.

The University of Worcester acts as the “Data Controller” for personal data collected through its research projects and is subject to the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. We are registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office and the contact details of our Data Protection Officer is infoassurance@worc.ac.uk

For more on our approach to Information Assurance and Security visit:

<https://informationassurance.wp.worc.ac.uk/>

You can find out more about our approach to dealing with your personal information at:

<https://informationassurance.wp.worc.ac.uk/data-protection/privacy-notice/>.

You have certain rights in respect of the personal information the University holds about you. For more information about Individual Rights under GDPR and how you exercise them please visit:

<https://informationassurance.wp.worc.ac.uk/data-protection/requests-for-personal-data/>.

Will my information be kept confidential?

Yes.

Your personal information will be handled confidentially and stored securely. It will not be shared outside the research team except where you have given specific permission for a public-facing use, or where there is a concern about risk of harm.

- Interview recordings and full transcripts will not be shared publicly
- research data is pseudonymised by default
- attribution by name is only discussed later if a specific extract is proposed for public use
- Identifiable information is stored securely and separately from research materials

During the project, all information will be stored securely in line with the University of Worcester’s Policy for the Effective Management of Research Data and its Information Security Policy.

Specifically:

- Electronic data (including audio recordings, transcripts, and consent records) will be stored on University-approved secure systems (the University OneDrive and SharePoint), protected by password access and two-factor authentication.
- Audio recordings are used only to produce and check accurate transcripts. Once the transcript has been checked for accuracy, the audio recording will be securely deleted, this will normally be within 4-6 weeks of the interview.

- Transcripts will be pseudonymised as soon as practicable. Direct and indirect identifiers will be removed and replaced with a participant reference code.
- The link between participant identities and reference codes will be stored separately from research data in a secure location accessible only to the researcher.
- Personal contact details will be deleted once they are no longer required for the research. Where you have agreed that the researcher may contact you later about the possible use of a selected extract in the guidebook or related project materials, your contact details will be kept only for that purpose and securely deleted no later than three months after the final thesis submission.
- No research data will be stored on unencrypted personal devices or shared using non-secure platforms.

All data handling will comply with UK GDPR and University of Worcester data protection requirements.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The research will contribute to:

- A PhD thesis deposited with the University of Worcester
- Academic publications and presentations
- the development of the Oracle of Place cards and guidebook

Any public use of participant material will follow your consent choices.

A summary of the research findings will be made publicly available on the project website www.TheOracleOfPlace.com and, where appropriate and feasible, in local venues such as Kington Museum and The Oxford Arms. The project website will be maintained for a minimum of 18 months following submission of the PhD thesis, to ensure that participants and the wider community can access the published summary of findings during this period.

How long will you keep my data for?

Audio recordings will be deleted once the transcript has been verified as accurate, normally within 4-6 weeks.

Transcripts will be pseudonymised as soon as practicable after transcription. This means identifying details will be removed or replaced with a participant code. Where needed, contextual details may also be generalised or omitted to reduce the risk of indirect identification.

Pseudonymised research data will be retained in line with University of Worcester records retention and research data management requirements. Your contact details will be kept for longer, so that I can get back in touch with you if something you shared in your interview is later considered for the guidebook that accompanies the oracle cards. If that happens, I will contact you, show you the specific extract and ask for your permission before anything is used. Once the guidebook is complete, or no later than three months after the final thesis submission, your details will be securely deleted.

Identification and attribution in public-facing material

Your name and how you are credited

You may choose whether any material later shared publicly is:

- attributed to your real name
- attributed to the pseudonym
- kept anonymous

If any extract is proposed for public use, you will be contacted and given the opportunity to review the exact material and confirm how you would like to be identified at that point.

Research data used for analysis

- Audio recordings and transcripts used for research analysis will be stored on University-approved secure systems.
- Identifying details will be removed from transcripts as soon as practicable and replaced with a participant reference code.
- Access to identifiable data will be restricted to the researcher and, where necessary, the supervisory team.

What happens next?

Please keep this information sheet.

If you would be interested in taking part, please contact me using the details below and I will be delighted to answer any further questions you have about the research.

Our contact details are:

Rebecca Burns

Email: burr1_25@uni.worc.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the project at this point or at any later date you may contact the researcher (contact as above) or you may contact the Supervisor:

Dr. John Cussans

Email: j.cussans@worc.ac.uk

Allegations of Research Misconduct

To view University of Worcester's Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct please click [here](#). For information about who to contact please click [here](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

If you would like to speak to an independent person who is not a member of the research team, please contact the University of Worcester, using the following details:

Michelle Jellis

Secretary to Health and Sciences Research and Education & Culture and Society Research Ethics Panels

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