

## Guidance for Conducting the In-depth Interviews

Before the interview explain:

*The research is completely confidential. Although there is always a small possibility – in any research activity - that people can be identified by their disclosures, we are taking every step possible to protect your anonymity. For example:*

- *Respondents' names will not appear on the recording or on the paperwork that goes with it. All transcripts are fully anonymised. We will give you a 'false' name to use during the interview.*
- *Names and addresses are stored with a firm of solicitors away from transcripts. Names and addresses can therefore only be accessed by myself and one of my colleagues.*

*The only time we cannot fulfil these obligations is if you indicate that you intend to harm yourself or someone else in the future.*

At the beginning of the interview explain:

*Before we begin the interview I would like to collect some background data from you, i.e. your age, job, income etc. But first I need to check that you have understood what I have told you about the research.*

1. *Do you feel you have been given enough information about the research project and the way in which your contribution will be used?*
2. *Do you understand how the transcript of the interview will be anonymised, kept confidential, safe and secure?*
3. *Do you understand that the interviewer cannot promise confidentiality if you indicate that you deliberately intend to harm yourself or someone else in the future?*
4. *Do you understand you can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting me?*

Identifier Code:

**Background Data**

Age:

Place of Birth:

Religion:

Nationality:

Occupation:

Highest Educational Qualification:

Marital status:

Current Living arrangements/or living arrangements before custody:

single   
never married   
married   
attached but unmarried   
separated or divorced   
widowed

living on your own   
living with partner/spouse   
living with children   
living with friends   
living with parents   
other (please state)

Approximate income per annum:

Less than £5000   
£5-10,000   
£10-15,000   
£15-20,000   
Over £20, 000

How long have you lived in Stoke-on-Trent/Newcastle/North Staffs?

Where did you live before that?

OR

Have you always lived in the same town/on the same estate?

## **Interview Schedule**

### **First Interview**

1. I was wondering if we could start with quite a broad question. Could you begin by telling me the story of your life in North Staffordshire? Start as far back as you can remember and take as much time as you need. I will just take a few notes so that I can ask you some more questions later.
2. Can you tell me some more about how Stoke/Newcastle/N.Staffs has changed since you've been living here?
3. Can you tell me the story of your family life?
4. Can you tell me about your experiences of school?
5. Can you tell me about your experiences of work and employment?
6. Can you tell how religion has impacted on your life?
7. Can you tell me how politics has impacted on your life?
8. Can you tell me how issues to do with race have impacted on your life?
9. Can you tell me (some more) about the incident we have already mentioned/you were convicted for/ that was reported in the newspaper?
10. Can you tell me about any similar incidents you have been involved in?

### **Second Interview**

If not covered:

11. Returning to the incident we discussed, how did other people who witnessed what was going on respond at the time?
12. Can you tell me about how people reacted to you when they found out about this incident? (Police, courts, friends, relatives?)
13. Can you tell me about any other times in your life when you have come into conflict with someone who was from a different ethnic or religious group to you?
14. Can you tell me about anything that you have read, seen or heard recently that has made you concerned for people living locally?
15. Can you tell me about any (other) times in your life when you have been involved in crime – either as an offender or as a victim?
16. Have you ever had any contact with the British National Party, for example, in recent local elections? If not, have you ever been contacted by other local councillors or politicians who have promised to tackle the issue of asylum-seekers in Stoke-on-Trent?

17. Have you ever voted for a far-right party, like the BNP or National Front? If so, have you ever thought of joining one of these parties?

At the end of both interviews, before the tape is turned off explain:

1. *Providing I strictly preserve your anonymity, do you give your permission for extracts of this interview to be used for my research project (including its research publications)?*
2. *Do you give your permission for extracts from your interview to be stored in an academic data archive, providing I carefully vet those who have access to this archive and legally require those accessing the data to honour my commitment to protecting your anonymity?*
3. *Do you consent to your interview responses being compared with official records about your offending behaviour?*
4. *Is there anything else you want to ask me or tell me before I turn off the recorder?*

## **Information for Interviewees**

This sheet provides information for respondents who may become involved in the research project about the perpetration of 'racially motivated' crimes. The research is being undertaken by a team of researchers at Keele University: Dr David Gadd, Dr Bill Dixon, Professor Tony Jefferson and Dr Ian Loader. If you have any questions or concerns about this research you should feel free to contact the researchers involved in this project. The researchers can be contacted in writing (c/o the Department of Criminology, Keele University, Staffs, ST5 5BG) or by telephone (no. 01782 583084).

### **What is the research about?**

One of the main aims of the research is try to make sense of why it is that some people become 'involved in' or 'accused of' activities that come to be understood as 'racially motivated' forms of crime. The research is based exclusively in North Staffordshire. The research will explore what these activities meant to those who were accused of perpetrating them. What were their reasons for getting involved? How do these incidents connect to the individuals' experiences of living in Stoke-on-Trent and/or witnessing the changes the area is undergoing?

### **What is being asked of me?**

In order to explore these relationships and experiences the research will adopt a 'life history' or 'narrative' approach. This means that if you decide to get involved in the research you will be encouraged to talk about your life in your own words. The interviewer will help you identify which things you most want to talk about. The interviewer will be interested in hearing which things you think have been most important to your life.

The interviews will require you to spend about ninety minutes with the interviewer on two separate occasions. Sometimes, when people discover they have a lot to talk about, the interviews last longer than this – but that is always up to the interviewee.

The interviewer will need to record the interview so that he has an accurate record of what has been said. This ensures that what you say is not misrepresented. The interviewer will also show you how to turn off the recorder during the interview so that you retain control over the process.

### **What can I expect from the research?**

The research is an opportunity for you to tell your story. It will help others understand what your life has been like, and why you have become involved in the things you have.

You will be offered a small sum of money to compensate you for your time and any travelling costs you have incurred. This money will be paid to you in cash (or as a postal order) at the end of each interview.

You can expect your responses to be kept confidential. The interviewer will explain to you how he will ensure the transcript of your interview is (a) fully anonymised and thus made very difficult to trace back to you (b) kept in a very secure place (c) does not incriminate you.

The only time the interviewer cannot guarantee to keep responses confidential is when interviewees explicitly indicate that they intend to harm themselves or someone else at some time in the future.

If you wish to have a copy of what you have said during the interviews the interviewer can arrange this for you. Equally, if you do not want the interviewer to anonymise your responses do let him know.

**What if I am unsure about getting involved in the research?**

Before committing yourself to becoming involved in the research you should feel free to ask the interviewer to address your worries or concerns. During the research you will not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. If you change your mind about being involved in the research once the interview is underway you can terminate the interview at any time. You will be free to withdraw from the research without having to explain your reasons for doing so.

**What will happen to the research data once the interviews are over?**

Once the interviews are over the research team will begin studying the various responses they have received from people. The research team will want to use anonymised extracts from these responses to write academic books and articles. These books and articles will help practitioners, policymakers and other academics to better understand the issues the research addresses.

Anonymised extracts of what you have said could be archived so that other academics can study them. However, the interviewer will not make arrangements for this to happen without securing your expressed your permission to do so (at the end of the second interview).

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Sex**                      Male                      Female      [Please circle]

**Age**                      ..... years                      [Please write in]

### How long have you lived in Stoke-on-Trent?

All my life    Less than 5 years

5 – 10 years    10 – 20 years

20- 40 years    More than 40 years

[Please circle]

### Which area do you live in now?

(Burslem, Cobridge, Chell, Shelton, Meir, for example)

.....

[Please write in]

### What is your current occupation?

Working full time    Working part time

Unemployed    Retired

Student    Carer

[Please circle **all** that apply]

# **FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTIONS**

## **Background data**

(Collect on forms)

- Sex
- Age
- Length of residence in S-o-T
- Occupation

## **Introduction**

1. Form completion
2. Anonymity
3. The research
4. Recording
5. Role of the facilitators
  - BD: introduce topics; make sure everyone feels comfortable and has a chance to speak
  - DG: take some notes to help in transcribing the tape
6. Ground rules
  - Speak up
  - Let everyone speak
  - One person speaking at a time
  - Be sensitive about saying who-said-what outside the FG
7. Introductions
  - First names only
8. Topics for discussion
9. Clarifications and summary

## **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

### **Life in Stoke-on-Trent (SoT)/North Staffordshire (NS)**

SoT/NS often seems to be covered negatively in the papers and on TV, but ...

How do you feel about living in SoT/NS?

How has the area changed in your lifetime?

Why do you think Stoke is covered so negatively?

### **Identity**

People have very different ways of describing where they belong, or come from ...

Where do you feel you come from?

What makes you feel different to people in other parts of SoT/NS, other parts of Britain, other countries?

### **National context**

There is a lot of controversy over people coming to this country from abroad at the moment, but ...

What do you think about immigration and asylum-seeking?

How do you feel about the way the government is dealing with these issues?

What do you think about media coverage on TV and in national newspapers?

### **Local context**

There've been a lot of stories in 'The Sentinel' [local newspaper] about immigrants, asylum-seekers and how people react to them locally.

For example, one recent story ('Asylum seekers to solve doctor crisis', 21 November 2003) was about asylum seekers being recruited to work in the NHS in North Staffordshire because of a serious shortage of doctors.

What impact do you think immigrants and asylum seekers have had on SoT/NS?

How do you feel about this?

## **BNP/Far right**

As you probably know, the British National Party has done quite well in local elections in SoT and has two city councillors.

Why do you think parties like the BNP seem to be so popular in some parts of the city?

What do they have to offer that other parties don't?

What effect do you think their views and activities have on people from different ethnic groups and immigrants and asylum seekers locally?

## **Racially motivated violence**

Please take a moment or two to read this story from the 'The Sentinel' about an incident that happened a couple of years ago.

**[Show 'Brothers jailed for race attacks']**

How do you feel about this incident?

What do you think about people who attack other people because of their colour/race/nationality/religion?

How can this kind of violence be prevented?

# **Research Project on Racially Motivated Violence and Harassment**

## **Information for Focus Group Participants**

This sheet provides information for people who have been asked to take part in focus group discussions about racially motivated violence and harassment in North Staffordshire.

### **The research project**

The focus group discussions are part of a project being undertaken by a team of researchers from the Department of Criminology at Keele University. The members of the research team are Dr David Gadd, Dr Bill Dixon, Professor Tony Jefferson and Dr Ian Loader. The research is based in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.

### **What is the research about?**

The main aim of the research is to find out why people get involved in things that the law sees as racially motivated offending. The project is divided into two parts.

The first part of the research involves talking to people in detail about their lives, their attitudes towards race, and how they become involved in racially motivated crime. You are NOT being asked to get involved in this part of the research.

The second part of the research consists of focus group discussions and you have been asked to take part in one of these. The aim of the focus group discussions is to find out how people feel about living in Stoke-on-Trent, and how their lives have been affected by what has happened to the area in recent years.

Apart from this, we are particularly interested in what you think about

- The way immigration and asylum seekers are presented in the media and by politicians both in Stoke and in Britain generally.
- The impact that black, Asian and people from other minority ethnic groups have had on Stoke-on-Trent and how they are treated locally.
- The growing popularity of the British National Party (BNP) in Stoke-on-Trent and what they have to offer people in this area.
- Racially motivated violence and why people get involved in it.

### **What is a focus group discussion?**

A focus group discussion involves between 5 and 8 people getting together to talk about a particular subject like living in Stoke-on-Trent and how the area has changed. Discussions usually last for one-and-a-half to two hours. Participants may know each other quite well or be complete strangers.

Two people known as *facilitators* organise the group and help participants to focus on the issues to be discussed. They also make sure that everyone feels as

comfortable as possible during the discussion. If you feel unhappy about the way the discussion is going, or don't want to talk about an issue that has been raised, you can tell the facilitators or leave the group at any time. The two main facilitators for this research project are Dr Bill Dixon and Dr David Gadd.

Focus groups usually take place in surroundings that participants know well. Light refreshments will also be available during the course of the discussion.

Discussions are recorded on tape so that the researchers can study what was said in detail. Extracts of some discussions may be stored in a secure archive for other researchers to study but they will not be able to identify individual speakers.

### **What can I expect from the research?**

Taking part in a focus group discussion gives you the chance to talk about your attitudes and experiences with other people. By doing this, you will also be contributing to a piece of research that will help national and local government and the criminal justice system understand how people feel about where they live, the problems they face, and why some people get involved in racially motivated offending.

### **How will the research be used?**

The researchers will use some of what is said during focus group discussions to write books and articles in academic journals. Some things may be quoted directly as participants in the group said them, but it would be extremely difficult for anyone reading the research reports to identify you from what you have said.

The researchers cannot guarantee that everything said during the course of a focus group discussion will be kept confidential because participants may talk about what they have heard. But the facilitators will encourage everyone to agree to respect each other's confidence at the beginning of each discussion.

### **How can I find out more?**

We hope this sheet explains why we are organising focus group discussions, what they are, and why we would like you to take part in one. But, if you have any other questions or worries about the research, or taking part in it, which we haven't dealt with here, please feel free to contact Bill Dixon at Keele University on 01782 583546.

Bill Dixon  
David Gadd  
Tony Jefferson  
Ian Loader

Department of Criminology  
Keele University  
March 2004

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Highest Educational Qualification:

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separated or divorced   
widowed

living on your own   
living with partner/spouse   
living with children   
living with friends   
living with parents   
other (please state)

Approximate income per annum:

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OR

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The interviews will require you to spend about ninety minutes with the interviewer on two separate occasions. Sometimes, when people discover they have a lot to talk about, the interviews last longer than this – but that is always up to the interviewee. When and where the interviews take place is up to you. The interviewer could meet you at his own private office at Keele University, or at a different place of your choosing. Transport can be arranged if you require it.

The interviewer will need to record the interview so that he has an accurate record of what has been said. This ensures that what you say is not misrepresented. The interviewer will also show you how to turn off the recorder during the interview so that you retain control over the process.

### **What can I expect from the research?**

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Anonymised extracts of what you have said could be archived so that other academics can study them. However, the interviewer will not make arrangements for this to happen without securing your expressed your permission to do so (at the end of the second interview).

## Brothers jailed for race attacks

Three brothers have been jailed for carrying out racially aggravated assaults. Sean and Joseph Tipping, both of Cleveland Road, Knutton, were imprisoned for a total of four years each while their elder brother Roy, aged 32, of Whitebeam Close, Chesterton, received an 18 month sentence.

Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court heard yesterday how the three had been drinking before approaching Warner Cinema, Newcastle.

Sean, aged 22, and 29-year-old Joseph, racially assaulted and occasioned actual bodily harm to a black student from Keele University, who was waiting for a taxi with his white girlfriend. Minutes later all three set upon a 50-year-old Turkish man in Maxims car park. They inflicted grievous bodily harm on him.

Peter McCartney, prosecuting, said: "The black student was waiting in the cinema foyer with his white girlfriend for a taxi. Joseph took exception to his presence and confronted him and said 'You should not be here. You are hard, you are black, you should be up for a fight you black b\*\*\*\*\*d'." The court heard the victim backed against a wall and Joseph and Sean punched him several times.

The victim's girlfriend asked Roy to help and he shouted to his brothers, the court heard. But as the victim ran off Roy stopped him and his brothers caught up and again punched him.

[Source: Extract from 'The Sentinel', 18 March 2003]