NatCen
National Centre for Social Research

Understanding Society

Innovation Panel Wave 3

Technical Report

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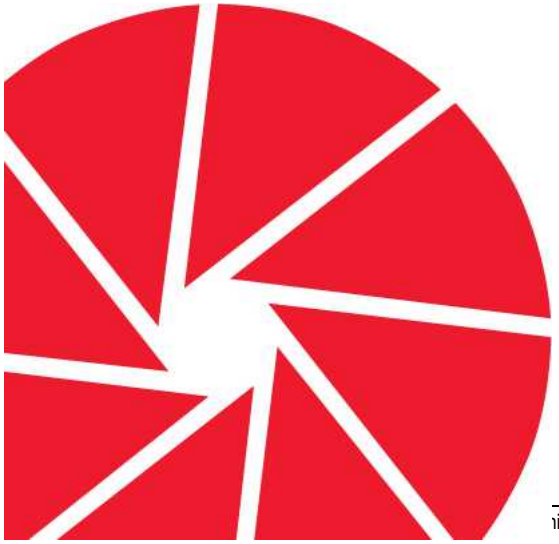

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report provides an account of the methodology used in the third wave of the Innovation Panel (IP3) of *Understanding Society*.

Understanding Society is a major household panel study which has been commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Taken as a whole, it is the largest study of its type in the world; interviewing people in a total of 40,000 households across the UK. It is led by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex. The survey will also be known as the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) among the academic community.

Understanding Society will provide valuable new evidence about people throughout the country, their lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs, and will enable an unprecedented understanding of diversity within the population. The survey will assist with understanding the long-term effects of social and economic change, as well as policy interventions designed to impact upon the general well-being of the UK population. The data will be used by academic researchers and policy-makers within government departments, feeding into policy debates and influencing the outcome of those debates.

The survey will collect data from all household members aged 10 and above on an annual basis. Annual interviewing will allow us to track relatively short-term or frequent changes in people's lives, and the factors that are associated with them. As the years of the survey build up we will be able to look at longer-term outcomes for people in the sample.

The Innovation Panel has been designed, and established as a separate panel, to enable methodological research such as testing new question formats, methods of asking questions and different data collection modes. Examples of methods testing in the Innovation Panel have included:

- Comparison of different incentive types on response rate
- Testing of different question formats to inform design at future main stage waves of the survey where a mixed mode design is planned

The Innovation Panel was also designed to be the forerunner to the next wave of the main survey, as conclusions from the Innovation Panel are considered in the development of the main stage instruments. The Innovation Panel is conceived of as part of the larger study and will contribute to the total sample of 40,000 households. It is important to note that the Innovation Panel is not a pilot panel and has not been established to replace the need for normal questionnaire pilots and dress rehearsals.

1.2 Aims of Innovation Panel 3 (IP3)

IP3 is the first stage of *Understanding Society* Wave 3 and will be the second wave of longitudinal data collection.

The main elements tested in IP3 were:

- Feeding forward data from IP2;

- Investigating whether we lost any benefit from the higher IP1 or IP2 incentive when reverting to £5 from £10 (in terms of response rates, efficiency of fieldwork and costs);
- To test whether using or not using showcards gives the best comparability to telephone interviews (where no showcards can be used);
- Looking into the best way to administer life and job satisfaction questions (such as with or without showcards and using different ways to display the response categories);
- Improving measures of household wealth and asset holdings;
- Looking at the wording of an identity question and the effect of its wording on item non-response;
- Comparing potentially ambiguous questions with improved versions; and
- Investigating the administration of different cognitive function tasks.

2 Sample Design

The original Innovation Panel sample comprised randomly selected addresses sampled from the small user Postcode Address File (PAF) with a target sample size of 1500 households.

An initial household interview was conducted with one adult in the household using a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) which enumerated the household, established eligibility and collected information at the household level. Individual CAPI interviews were then attempted with every adult (age 16+) in the household. Adults also completed a paper self-completion questionnaire. A separate paper self-completion was given to all young people in the household aged 10-15.

Due to the longitudinal nature of *Understanding Society*, those interviewed at wave 1 of the panel were invited to participate at subsequent waves creating a named sample. The issued sample for IP3 involved returning to individuals whom had been interviewed at both previous waves and those who had just been interviewed at the first wave. Consequently, the issued sample for Innovation Panel 3 (IP3) was a combination of productive and unproductive households.

2.1 Allocation of selected sample to random experimental groups

All experiments run on IP3 had been carried on previous waves and, therefore, the allocation of households into the treatment groups was influenced by previous allocation. All allocations were made by ISER and delivered to NatCen in the form of a feed forward file.

3 Experiments

IP3 included a number of experiments which allowed us to test different modes of data collection. There were two types of experiments: Procedural (e.g.: incentives experiment) and Measurement (e.g.: use of show cards, question phrasing and sound recording).

3.1 Incentive experiment

The basis was the continuation of a previous experiment run on earlier waves of the Innovation Panel. However, for IP3 the issued households allocated to one of six treatment groups. The aim was to investigate whether we lost any benefit from the higher IP1 incentive when reverting to £5 from £10 (in terms of response rates, efficiency of fieldwork and costs).

The six incentive groups were:

Group 1: Continue to receive £5 (as at IP1 and IP2)
Group 2: Continue to receive £10 (as at IP1 and IP2)
Group 3: Reduction to £5 from receipt of £10 at IP1 and IP2
Group 4: Continue to receive £5 as at IP2 (reduction from receipt of £10 at IP1)
Group 5: Continue to receive £5 or £10 if all eligible household members take part (as at IP1 and IP2)
Group 6: Continue to receive £5 as at IP2 (formerly £5 rising to £10 at IP1)

The incentive for the youth self completion was exempt from the experiment and remained £3 regardless of the treatment group the household was allocated to.

3.2 Show card experiment

The aim of this experiment was to test whether using or not using show cards gives the best comparability to telephone interviews (where no show cards can be used).

Interviewers were required to either conduct the interview using a show card booklet, or administering the questions in the read out format. The routing for the questionnaire was determined by the feed forward allocation to either the show card or no show card experimental group.

3.3 Question phrasing experiments

There were different variations of certain questions in the interview which allowed us to test how question wording affects the reliability of measurements. For example, there were two variations in questions about dates: the first was a traditional explicit request for the date and the second was driven by what the respondent said (e.g.: “I’ve lived here about 6 months”).

Another example of the phrasing experiment was the format of some attitudinal questions: whether a branched or un-branched version of the attitudinal scale encouraged a more reliable measure of direction and strength of attitude.

3.4 Job and Life satisfaction experiments

There were two questions in the CAPI asking respondents to measure their satisfaction with their life and also with their job. There were a number of different ways these questions were displayed to the respondent, their position within the questionnaire and how the questions were administered.

3.5 Wealth and Asset Measures

This is a split ballot measurement experiment involving evaluating four design protocols for the collection of debt and asset data for the purposes of measuring wealth. The main concern was whether disaggregated reporting of component elements of wealth yielded more accurate data than aggregate reporting, on the one hand. And on the other, whether reporting was more accurate by a single knowledgeable person in the household or by individual household members about their own holdings.

4 Contact and Co-operation Procedures

Approximately six weeks prior to fieldwork beginning, sample members received an Inter-panel mailing. The purpose of the mailing was to remind them of their involvement in the study, provide them with some findings (in the form of a participants update[1]) and supply them with a change of address card which they could return to ISER with updated address details should they be moving house. This letter was signed by Professor Nick Buck of the Institute for Social and Economic Research.

A week before fieldwork began, an advance mailing was sent out to all individuals containing a tailored advance letter and incentive.

4.1 Advance letters

Nine versions of the advance letter were designed for IP3. Each version had different wording dependent on which incentive amount the participant was to receive and what their previous survey status was (i.e.: interviewed at IP2, not interviewed at IP2, rising 16). The advance letters were printed on *Understanding Society* letterhead, and signed by both Professor Nick Buck and the interviewer who was making contact with the household. Letters were posted by interviewers, along with a high street gift voucher (either £5 or £10 depending on the household incentive group).

The appropriate letter was also sent to the addresses of suspected split off movers (sample members who had contacted ISER since their last interview with a change of address). If the split off mover was found at a different address, interviewers were required to administer a new letter and incentive if the sample member completed the interview with them.

A generic version of the advance letter was also produced for interviewers to use on the doorstep. Interviewers were provided with spare copies of this letter to administer to household members who had misplaced their copy or who had not received one. These letters were also given to new entrants if an interviewer came across them in a household.

4.2 Incentives

As mentioned in section 3.1, there were six treatment groups receiving either £5 or £10. As mentioned above, the incentive was sent as part of the advance mailing as an unconditional incentive.

Those individuals in the £5 rising to £10 incentive group, who fulfilled the whole household completion condition, received their additional incentives from the interviewer. Any incentives that were not administered during fieldwork were sent to respondents after the first issue period had completed.

4.3 Contacting sample members

First contact was a personal visit from an interviewer who invited the household members to take part in the latest wave of the survey. First contact by telephone was not allowed- the sample members are in the process

[1] Two versions of the update were produced due to the interview content: those sample members with a HID ending in an odd number were sent a report containing environmental findings, and those with a HID ending in an even number received the report containing financial management findings.

of establishing a commitment to the survey and it was felt that telephone contact would not be appropriate at this stage. Interviewers were required to be flexible and make appointments where necessary, in order to achieve full interviews with all sample members.

4.4 Tracing sample members

Those individuals that had moved since their last interview were traced by interviewers in the field. Interviewers were required to complete a number of tracing activities in order to find a potential follow up address. Any individuals who could not be traced using these methods were returned to ISER for further tracing. Any address updates that were received by ISER during the fieldwork period were communicated to the NatCen Operations department who transferred the information to the appropriate interviewer.

5 The Interview

The survey instrument for IP3 was a CAPI interview and additional paper self-completion for adults, and a paper self-completion for young people.

The CAPI itself carried questions on a variety of topics including household finance and benefits, pensions and savings, family networks and childcare, neighbourhood, employment, and politics. A completely new element for the sample was the introduction of a number of tasks that specifically focused on a respondent's cognitive ability.

5.1 Cognitive Function

This module was introduced to assess the cognitive ability of the IP sample. There were three tasks included in the module: F-A-S (measure of verbal fluency), Prospective memory (measure of memory for future actions), and Serial Seven's (measure of concentration and memory ability). Each of these tasks were administered within the standard protocol guidelines and offered to each sample member. Interviewers were required to record the outcome of these tasks in the CAPI, and on the recording sheet where appropriate. Interviewers were prevented from providing sample members with specific performance feedback during the tasks.

5.2 Sound recording

Certain sections of the interview were recorded, with the permission of the sample member, to establish whether questions are asked in the best possible way and the processes by which the respondent arrives at the answer they report (i.e.: do they ask the interviewer for clarification in order to respond appropriately etc). This is especially pertinent with respect to understanding how individuals understood and processed the cognitive function tasks.

5.3 Self-completion questionnaires

There were two paper self-completion questionnaires: one for adults and one for young people aged 10-15. Interviewers were asked to encourage respondents to complete the questionnaires while they were still at the address or to collect the questionnaires when they returned for a second or subsequent visit. This was to ensure that we secured a high response rate for this important element of the study. As a last resort, interviewers were able to leave a questionnaire, together with a reply-paid envelope, for respondents to complete at a later time.

Interviewers asked a parent or responsible adult for verbal consent or assent before giving a self-completion questionnaire to a young person. Parents were not permitted to help the young people complete the questionnaire; though if they were anxious about its content they were shown a blank questionnaire so that they could assess the nature of the questions. If the young person needed help with the questionnaire, they were encouraged to ask the interviewer for assistance. Blank envelopes were given to the young people so that they could seal the questionnaires before returning them to the interviewer, preserving confidentiality within the household.

The adult questionnaire contained questions on feelings, relationships, friends and sleep behaviour. The youth questionnaire contained questions on leisure activities, family and friends, school and future aspirations, and nutrition.

6 Fieldwork

This section outlines the content of the interviewer briefings, describes the materials used during the Innovation Panel and provides basic information about the interview period.

6.1 Briefings

Seven full-day briefings were carried out by the NatCen research team, with input from the ISER team who provided background to the experimental nature of the study. Each briefing covered the background to IP3, its main research objectives, the study timetable, sample design, survey design (including experimental elements), an overview of the survey instruments and procedures, methods for minimising non-contact and maximising response rates, and a demonstration of the CAPI instrument.

All seven briefings were conducted in the standard format with a member of the NatCen research team leading a group of interviewers through the content of the day and dealing with any questions that arose. The locations of the briefings mirrored those from the second wave of the Innovation Panel, namely London (x 2), Bristol, Liverpool, Derby, Leeds and Glasgow in order to give a wide geographic spread.

The briefings took place between 6th April and 13th April 2010, with a total of 120 interviewers attending the briefings. A debrief also took place on 30th June with twelve interviewers in London. Feedback forms were sent to all interviewers working on the survey who returned them to the operations team.

6.2 Materials for interviewers

Interviewers' materials for this survey are listed below

- Project instructions providing information covered in the briefing along with supplementary reference material
- Address Record Forms (ARFs)
- Advance letters (discussed in Section 4.1- see Appendix A)
- Information leaflet
- High street vouchers to be sent as incentives with the advance letter and as additional incentives (discussed in Section 4.2)
- Appointment cards to be used on the doorstep
- Show cards to be used as part of the CAPI interview
- Adult self-completion questionnaires and youth self-completion questionnaires (discussed in Section XXX)
- Feedback forms for respondents to return to operations
- Cognitive function recording sheet
- Participant's Update 2 (interviewer use only)

6.3 Fieldwork progress

The launch of the survey was slightly hindered by a number of contributing factors, namely confusion over allocation to the show card experiment, and a small number of minor technical issues with the program. Fieldwork progress, overall, was at a slower rate than originally expected resulting in an extension to the first

issue period to allow for complete coverage of cases. First issue fieldwork ended on 7th June. To maximise response some cases were re-issued, and fieldwork was finally completed by 27th June 2010.

6.4 Booking in

On completion of the data collection in each household, all elements were 'booked in' to the NatCen operations department in Brentwood and were reconciled.

7 Response

7.1 Household response

1513 addresses were issued to interviewers, of which 62 (3.9%) were classed as ineligible. An extra 75 households were identified during fieldwork[2], making the total number of eligible households 1526. Interviews were achieved at 1027 households, a response rate of 67%. It is worth noting that the issued sample for IP3 contained a mixture of both productive and unproductive IP2 households. As a result of this, the response rate was lower than expected. A detailed breakdown of household response is provided in Table 7.1 on Page 15. This shows, for example, that 4.3% were not contacted and 17.1% of households refused to participate. The table also provides a detailed breakdown in each category.

A significant amount of effort was put into raising the response rate and the achieved number of interviews. Many cases that were initially returned as unproductive were reissued – for example because a householder could not be contacted or because they refused to participate. The fieldwork period was also extended by 2 weeks to provide interviewers with more time to secure interviews.

It is noteable that household response varied by incentive type with treatment group 6 (£5, ex £5-£10) obtaining the lowest response rate (59%), compared to a range of 63%-72% for the other groups. Further detail about this can be seen in Table 7.2, which shows the lower refusal rate among those who received a £10 incentive. The non contact rate was low for all groups, apart from a group 3 (£5, IP1, IP2) who had a 9% non contact rate. Table 7.3 details the reasons given for refusal by incentive type. From some interviewer comments at the debrief it is not clear that this experiment was fully implemented as designed. For instance, some interviewers seem to have forgotten that they administered an extra £5 for those respondents in the £5 rising to £10 treatment group. Some also appeared to pursue getting a response irrespective of the treatment group. Most interviewers were also working on two Understanding Society waves, and because of this some had trouble distinguishing the different requirements of IP3.

7.2 Individual response

7.2.1 Response to interview

Within productive households, the overall co-operation rate for adults aged 16 and over was 82%. Of those who did not respond in person, a further 7% were collected by proxy interview (see Table 7.4 on Page 17). Table 7.45 on Page 18 provide further details about the way that individual response varied by both age and sex and by incentive group. This shows that response was higher among women (72%) than men (58%), and response increased with age from 60% among 16-24 year olds to 91% among those aged 65 and over. Response based on incentive type also differs between groups.

[2] Additional households are identified when one (or more) households split off from the original household due to issued household composition changing (i.e.: an eligible respondent moves out of the household).

7.2.2 Self-completions

A total of 1423 adults completed a paper adult self-completion, equating to a 72% response rate. Of these 1423 adults, 789 were women (55%) and 634 were men (45%). There was also variation by age, with 22% of the respondents aged 65+, compared to just 8.7% of those aged between 16-24.

Of the 212 young people eligible for a youth papers elf-completion, a total of 158 completed the questionnaire. This equates to a 75% response rate.

Tables

Table 7.1 Household response

Base: All issued addresses *IP3*

Outcome	N	%
Issued	**1513**	
Not eligible	**62**	**4.1**
All respondents deceased	19	1.3
All respondents live outside UK	10	0.7
TSM only household	16	1.0
Issued household merged with another	3	0.2
Other ineligible	14	0.9
Eligible	**1451**	**95.9**
Additional households	75	
Total Eligible	**1526**	
Productive	**1027**	**67.3**
Refusal	**267**	**17.5**
Office refusal	22	1.4
Contact made but all information refused	3	0.2
Refusal before interview	206	13.5
Proxy refusal	10	0.7
Refusal during interview	1	-
Broken appointment, no re-contact	28	1.8
Non-contact	**69**	**4.5**
No contact after 6+ calls	59	3.9
Contact made but not with eligible respondent	8	0.5
Contact at hhold but not with responsible adult	2	0.1
Movers	**87**	**5.7**
Mover- no follow up address found	82	5.4
Mover- unable to attempt address	2	0.1
Mover- outside area	3	0.2
Other unproductive	**71**	**4.7**
Ill at home during survey period	23	1.5
Physically or mentally unable/incompetent	15	1.0
Unable to locate address	6	0.1
Inaccessible	1	-
Other unproductive	26	1.7

Table 7.2 Household response by incentive group

Base: All issued households *IP3*

	Incentive Group						
	£5 (IP1, IP2)	£10 (IP1,IP2)	£5 (£10 IP1, IP2)	£5 (ex £10 IP1)	£5-£10 (IP1)	£5 (ex £5-£10)	Total
Outcome	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Productive	63	72	65	66	67	59	65
Refusal	16	11	12	17	16	23	17
Non-contact	4	4	9	3	4	4	4
Other non-response	6	3	6	6	1	4	5
Movers (untraced)	6	4	4	5	6	4	5
Ineligible	3	7	4	2	6	6	4
Bases	*504*	*138*	*135*	*271*	*270*	*270*	*1588*

Table 7.3 Reasons for refusal by incentive group

Base: All households who refused *IP3*

	Incentive Group						
	£5 (IP1, IP2)	£10 (IP1, IP2)	£5 (£10 IP1, IP2)	£5 (ex £10 IP1)	£5-£10 (IP1)	£5 (ex £5-£10)	Total
Reasons for refusal	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Too busy	**34**	**25**	**49**	**29**	**26**	**34**	**32**
Looking after ill/elderly	3	-	-	3	-	4	2
Looking after child(ren)	3	-	14	3	3	2	3
Respondent almost never home	2	-	7	-	3	2	2
Stressful family situation	11	8	7	-	6	12	8
Too busy (not elsewhere specified)	15	17	21	23	14	14	17
Personal reasons	**5**	**17**	**-**	**5**	**-**	**-**	**3**
Unhappy about confidentiality	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Questions too personal	3	17	-	5	-	-	3
Attitudes to the survey	**34**	**8**	**29**	**26**	**37**	**30**	**30**
Respondent does not want to be bothered	15	-	29	13	20	12	15
Survey is too long	14	8	-	10	14	16	12
Survey is waste of time	5	-	-	3	3	2	3
Family pressure	**4**	**-**	**-**	**5**	**-**	**-**	**1**
Other family member opposes respondent participating	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Someone has convinced respondent to refuse	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other hhold member refused on behalf of respondent	-	-	-	5	-	-	1
No reason given	**5**	**17**	**7**	**5**	**11**	**8**	**7**
Other reason	**21**	**33**	**14**	**31**	**26**	**29**	**26**
Bases	*66*	*12*	*14*	*39*	*35*	*51*	*217*

Table 7.4 Individual outcome

Base: All aged 16 and over in productive households	*IP3*
	Total
Outcome	
Fully productive interview	82%
Full proxy interview	7%
Partially productive interview	1%
Partial proxy interview	0%
No contact	2%
Refusal before interview	3%
Refusal during interview (unproductive partial)	0%
Broken appointment - No recontact	0%
Ill at home during survey period	0%
Away or in hospital all survey period	1%
Physically or mentally unable/incompetent	0%
Language difficulties	0%
Moved out of UK	0%
Other reason for no interview	1%
Bases	1973

Table 7.5 Individual response by age and sex

Base: All aged 16 and over in productive households *IP3*

	Age						
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65=	Total
Outcome	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men							
Productive	54	75	69	77	79	89	58
Proxy	17	12	11	11	7	7	8
Refusal	15	7	11	9	9	2	7
No contact	8	4	6	4	3	0	3
Other unproductive	6	3	2	-	2	1	2
Women							
Productive	66	88	94	93	89	92	72
Proxy	6	8	3	3	1	4	3
Refusal	18	4	1	3	6	3	4
No contact	3	2	1	-	-	1	1
Other unproductive	8	1	1	1	4	-	2
Total							
Productive	60	82	82	86	84	91	81
Proxy	11	8	7	7	4	5	4
Refusal	16	5	6	6	7	3	4
No contact	6	3	3	2	1	1	1
Other unproductive	7	2	2	1	3	1	1
Bases							
Men	*133*	*113*	*166*	*169*	*148*	*215*	*944*
Women	*120*	*124*	*182*	*198*	*160*	*245*	*1029*
Total	*253*	*237*	*348*	*367*	*308*	*460*	*1973*

8 Data preparation

8.1 Data keying and scanning

Self-completion data was keyed by an external agency.

8.2 Data coding and editing

Most of the data validation of CAPI surveys is carried out in the field. Extensive range and consistency checks were included in the CAPI program, and prompt interviewers to clarify and query any data discrepancies directly with the respondent in real time. However, all cases are passed through an in-house edit to identify any further interviewer issues.

All self-completion data is also passed through an edit to check for any respondent routing and coding errors.

8.2.1 SIC and SOC coding

Two-digit SIC coding and four-digit SOC coding was carried out in the employment and proxy sections of the questionnaire. Each coder's initial batch of work was 'blind coded', i.e. a second coder independently coded respondent's answers to SIC and SOC without seeing how they had initially been coded. Any discrepancies between the initial coder's work and the blind coding by the second coder were resolved by a coding supervisor and feedback was given to correct errors or resolve any misunderstandings.

8.2.2 Cleaning of address information

Each respondent was asked to provide information about a stable contact that could be approached in the event of the individual or household having moved. These addresses were checked, with a software program called Match code, which checks and where necessary corrects postcode for each address.

Appendix A Fieldwork Documents

Letter A1- Interviewed at last wave, £5 incentive group

Last year you kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex. You may remember we sent you a short report of some of the findings a few weeks ago. As the study is concerned with how people's lives change over time, we would very much like to interview you again.

Understanding Society covers important subjects such as our health, our opinions, our families and our work. The findings from *Understanding Society* will help us build up a detailed picture about the lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs of people across the UK in the 21st century and provide an important understanding of diversity within the population. It will help us understand the long term effects of social and economic change in the UK and assist in future decision-making.

Your help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £5 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed.

If your household's contact details have changed please let us know by calling Freephone **0800 252 853** or emailing **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk.** For more information on the survey visit **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**

Your participation is completely voluntary but we hope you will find the time to help again with this important study and that you enjoy taking part.

Yours,

…….
Your interviewer
Understanding Society

……
Nick Buck
Director, *Understanding Society*

This study is being conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This means your personal details will be kept strictly confidential and you and your household will not be identifiable from the data.

Letter A2- interviewed at last wave, £10 incentive group

Last year you kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex. You may remember we sent you a short report of some of the findings a few weeks ago. As the study is concerned with how people's lives change over time, we would very much like to interview you again.

Understanding Society covers important subjects such as our health, our opinions, our families and our work. The findings from *Understanding Society* will help us build up a detailed picture about the lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs of people across the UK in the 21st century and provide an important understanding of diversity within the population. It will help us understand the long term effects of social and economic change in the UK and assist in future decision-making.

Your help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £10 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed.

If your household's contact details have changed please let us know by calling Freephone **0800 252 853** or emailing **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk**. For more information on the survey visit **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**

Your participation is completely voluntary but we hope you will find the time to help again with this important study and that you enjoy taking part.

Yours,

…….

Your interviewer

Understanding Society

……

Nick Buck

Director, *Understanding Society*

This study is being conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This means your personal details will be kept strictly confidential and you and your household will not be identifiable from the data.

Letter A3- interviewed at last wave, £5 rising to £10 incentive group

Last year you kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex. You may remember we sent you a short report of some of the findings a few weeks ago. As the study is concerned with how people's lives change over time, we would very much like to interview you again.

Understanding Society covers important subjects such as our health, our opinions, our families and our work. The findings from *Understanding Society* will help us build up a detailed picture about the lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs of people across the UK in the 21st century and provide an important understanding of diversity within the population. It will help us understand the long term effects of social and economic change in the UK and assist in future decision-making.

Your help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £5 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed and if all members of your household participate this will be increased to £10.

If your household's contact details have changed please let us know by calling Freephone **0800 252 853** or emailing **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk.** For more information on the survey visit **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**

Your participation is completely voluntary but we hope you will find the time to help again with this important study and that you enjoy taking part.

Yours,

…… ……

Your interviewer Nick Buck

Understanding Society Director, *Understanding Society*

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Letter B1- Rising 16, £5 incentive group

Last year members of your household kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex and you may have completed a short questionnaire for the study. The study is concerned with how people's lives change over time and we would very much like to interview you this year. It is particularly important to follow the movement of young people from school and into college, university or paid work so we do hope you will take part.

Understanding Society covers important subjects such as our health, our opinions, our families and our work. The findings from *Understanding Society* will help us build up a detailed picture about the lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs of people across the UK in the 21st century and provide an important understanding of diversity within the population. It will help us understand the long term effects of social and economic change in the UK and assist in future decision-making.

Your household's help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £5 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed.

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Your interviewer Nick Buck

Understanding Society **Director, *Understanding Society***

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Letter B2- Rising 16, £10 incentive group

Last year members of your household kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex and you may have completed a short questionnaire for the study. The study is concerned with how people's lives change over time and we would very much like to interview you this year. It is particularly important to follow the movement of young people from school and into college, university or paid work so we do hope you will take part.

Understanding Society covers important subjects such as our health, our opinions, our families and our work. The findings from *Understanding Society* will help us build up a detailed picture about the lives, experiences, behaviours and beliefs of people across the UK in the 21st century and provide an important understanding of diversity within the population. It will help us understand the long term effects of social and economic change in the UK and assist in future decision-making.

Your household's help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £10 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed.

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Yours,

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Your interviewer Nick Buck

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Letter B3- Rising 16, £5 rising to £10 incentive group

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Your household's help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview that should last around half an hour.

As a token of our thanks, your £5 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed and if all members of your household participate this will be increased to £10.

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Your interviewer Nick Buck

Understanding Society Director, *Understanding Society*

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Letter C1- not interviewed last year, £5 incentive group

Last year members of your household kindly agreed to be interviewed for *Understanding Society*, a study conducted by researchers at the University of Essex but you were unable to take part. The study is concerned with how households change over time which makes it important to get a complete picture. So we would very much like to interview you this year.

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Your interviewer
Understanding Society

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Nick Buck
Director, *Understanding Society*

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Letter C2- not interviewed last year, £10 incentive group

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Your household's help in the past was very much appreciated and we would like you and your household to take part in the next stage of the study, which is being carried out by NatCen. An interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview.

As a token of our thanks, your £10 gift voucher for this year's interview is enclosed.

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Your interviewer Nick Buck

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