Do you feel British?

Are you happy to be retiring?

Who influences children the most?

Do we need a new political system?

Understanding Society

A5Leaflet_final.indd 1 22/09/2010 12:08

We would really like you and your household to take part in *Understanding Society*, the biggest study of its kind in the world. With your help we can paint a unique picture of life in the UK and how it's changing.

To take part you just need to answer some questions about your day-to-day life – your family, job, education, health, interests and opinions. With your help we can understand the impact of the changing world around us. For instance, how has the credit crunch really affected people across the UK? Are people leading a healthy lifestyle?

You can make a real difference by taking part. The results of the study will help decision makers to design policies to improve everyone's lives, as well as fuel debate in universities, colleges and media across the world.

People often tell us they enjoy taking part in the study. We very much hope you'll join in.

www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants
Freephone 0800 252 853
contact@understandingsociety.org.uk

Conducted by NatCen on behalf of the University of Essex
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Want to be an Early Bird?

Understanding Society

IP4 Early Bird Information Leaflet_incentive_v10.indd 1 24/01/2011 10:44:14

Want to be an Early Bird? This time around we're giving you the opportunity to get in touch with your interviewer to arrange a time for your interview. By doing this you'll be able to pre-book an appointment at a time which is convenient for you. If you do get in touch to make an appointment, we'll give everyone in your household who is interviewed an extra £5 to say thank you.

How? Get in touch with your interviewer **between 22nd February and 7th March 2011** (<<Mob_Phone>>). Either send an SMS (text) or leave an answer phone message with the information listed on the right. Your interviewer will call you back within 24 hours.

When? You can pre-book your interview for any day between 8th March and 8th April 2011.

Then what? Your interviewer will call you back to confirm your choice of interview date and time. Everyone interviewed in your household will get an extra £5 so book an appointment now.

Just send us an SMS (text) or leave an answer phone message, with the following information:

1. Your name

2. Your telephone number

3. Your reference (<<EBRef>>)

4. Preferred date & time of interview that is convenient to you

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contact@understandingsociety.org.uk

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IP4 Early Bird Information Leaflet_incentive_v10.indd 2 24/01/2011 10:44:14

Want to be an Early Bird?

Understanding Society

IP4 Early Bird Information Leaflet_non incentive_v10.indd 1 24/01/2011 10:43:15

Want to be an Early Bird? This time around we're giving you the opportunity to get in touch with your interviewer to arrange a time for your interview. By doing this you'll not only be able to pre-book an appointment at a time which is convenient for you, but will also make your interviewer's life much easier as they will not have to make repeated telephone calls or visits to your home in order to try and reach you.

How? Get in touch with your interviewer **between 22nd February and 7th March 2011** (<<Mob_Phone>>). Either send an SMS (text) or leave an answer phone message with the information listed on the right. Your interviewer will call you back within 24 hours.

When? You can pre-book your interview for any day between 8th March and 8th April 2011.

Then what? Your interviewer will call you back to confirm your choice of interview date and time. Be an Early Bird, and book an appointment now.

Just send us an SMS (text) or leave an answer phone message, with the following information:

1. Your name

2. Your telephone number

3. Your reference (<<EBRef>>)

4. Preferred date & time of interview that is convenient to you

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IP4 Early Bird Information Leaflet_non incentive_v10.indd 2 24/01/2011 10:43:16

Understanding Society: Information for Participants

IP4 Survey Info Leaflet_v1.indd 1 21/10/2010 16:28:26

Understanding Society...

is a very special study that follows the lives of tens of thousands of people who live in the UK, collecting information about the events and people that affect them.

This information is used by social scientists, policy makers and economists to help make better decisions about things that affect people's lives. In the past, studies like this have contributed to changes in the law, given insights into human psychology, and helped doctors treat ilnesses more effectively.

You are important to us

Households were specially chosen to take part in this study to represent hundreds of other people living in the UK. If you live in one of those special households, or with someone who has taken part in *Understanding Society* before, you can take part in the study.

By taking part, you are helping to create a record of how life in the UK is changing and what impact those changes have on you and the other people you live with, for example, how a new job or birth of a new baby affects your health and well-being, your financial circumstances and personal relationships a year or two years later.

What do I have to do?

To join in, all you have to do is answer some questions about your life and your opinions. If you are already a member of the study you will be familiar with most aspects of the interview. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour, depending on your circumstances. It will cover some of the key areas of your life such as health, employment, retirement, personal relationships, friends and family, childcare, and leisure activities. This year, we would also like to complete some activities which look at memory and numeracy.

Do you just want to talk to me?

We would like to talk to everyone aged 16 and over who lives in your home. With parents' consent, we would also like young people aged 10-15 to fill in a short questionnaire.

Are you new to this household?

You are being asked to take part because you are now living in the household of someone who has previously taken part in the survey.

Without your input, we won't be able to gain a complete understanding of how household and family circumstances may be changing.

What do I get out of it?

Each person in the household who takes part will receive a gift voucher, including young people aged 10-15 who complete a self-completion questionnaire. As a member of *Understanding Society* you will also have access to study findings and research updates.

Is the study confidential?

Yes, we always take great care to protect the confidentiality of the information you give us, in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The results of the survey will be used for research purposes only. You can ask to see your details at any time or to have them removed from our database. The data is and will remain anonymous – it will be impossible for anyone to identify you or your household from the study's results.

Who is doing the research?

Researchers at the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex are running *Understanding Society* together with NatCen, with funding provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

How do I find out more?

If you'd like some more information on the survey: visit **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**, email **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk**, call the University of Essex on Freephone **0800 252 853** or write to **FREEPOST RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS, Understanding Society, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ**. We'll be really pleased to hear from you.

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IP4 Survey Info Leaflet_v1.indd 4 21/10/2010 16:28:28

Information on adding economic records

Understanding Society

Consent Info Leaflet_economic records_v1.indd 1 30/11/2010 10:02:49

Introduction

Government departments and agencies collect a range of information about all of us for administrative purposes. This is so they can provide education and other services to us when we need them. While we can learn about people's lives, economic circumstances, experiences, behaviour and beliefs by asking direct questions, it can sometimes be easier to obtain some of this information from government departments. We would like to be able to use information from government departments in the future. This leaflet explains more about this. Please take a moment to read it.

What information would be added?

Records on economic circumstances including:

- National Insurance contributions, Benefits, for example Child Benefit or Income Support
- Employment and earnings
- Savings and pensions
- Participation in government schemes such as New Deal for Lone Parents or New Deal 25 Plus

From:

- The Department for Work and Pensions
- HM Revenue and Customs

Who will use it?

Like your survey responses, the additional information would be used by academic and social policy researchers for non-commercial statistical analysis. Any sensitive information would only be made available to them under restricted access arrangements which make sure that the information is used responsibly and safely. Names and addresses are never included in the results and no individual can be identified from the research.

Your permission – what does it cover?

Any information held by the government agencies can only be released with your permission. In order to access the information, we will provide some necessary personal details such as your name and address to the government departments and agencies holding the information. These details will only be used to ensure that the government agencies only give us your information. Before the departments and agencies send any information you have authorised back to us, your name and other details will be removed. None of your survey responses will be disclosed to these sources for any other purpose.

Like the answers you have given us in the survey, the information from other sources will be completely confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Your current or future dealings with any of the departments or agencies will not be affected.

How long does your consent last?

We would like to add information relating to your present, past and future circumstances. We are not putting an expiry date to this consent as we do not know exactly when we will obtain and add the information. We will remind you regularly of the permissions you have given, and you are free to withdraw your consent at any time.

What about data security?

Your name and address will always be confidential. Your anonymous records and your anonymous survey answers will only be used for research and statistics. We are very security conscious and all of our systems are password protected and accessed by a small number of authorised staff. The information we need to exchange with the government departments and agencies will be sent via secure transfer systems. We implement the most up to date data security protocols and procedures. Your personal details will be secure at all times.

What if you change your mind?

If you wish to withdraw your permission at any point in the future, please write to Freepost RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS, Understanding Society, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ stating: " I < your name>, currently living at < your address and postcode> am a participant on Understanding Society and I wish to withdraw my permission for administrative economic records to be added to my survey data." Please sign and date your letter.

Thank-you

If you have any questions or concerns, just call our Freephone number 0800 252 853 or write to Freepost RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS, Understanding Society, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ

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P3025 IP4 Economic Consent info

Consent Info Leaflet_economic records_v1.indd 4 30/11/2010 10:02:50