**The impact of coronavirus on**

**food and eating in the East of England**

**Participant Information Sheet**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether to do so, it is important that you understand the research that is being conducted and what your involvement will mean.

**Introduction**

As someone who lives and/or works in the East of England, you are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether to do so, it is important that you understand the research that is being conducted and what your involvement will mean. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**What is the purpose of this study?**

Researchers from across the East of England want to find out how coronavirus and the associated restrictions are affecting how people do everyday activities relating to food, such as shopping, cooking, and eating. We are also interested in how you feel about these changes.

**Do I have to take part?**

It is completely up to you whether or not you take part in this study. Agreeing to join the study does not mean that you have to complete it. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw or not to take part for any reason will not affect you or your care in any way.

**What will happen if I take part?**

**Because of the ongoing social distancing measures no one will ask to meet with you in person.** All research will be organised remotely. A researcher will arrange a telephone or video call with you to talk about the research and to interview you. The length of the call will depend on how much you have to say, but we will allow a minimum of 45 minutes for each call.

The call will be arranged at a time that is convenient for you. We would like to talk to you about your experiences during of the coronavirus outbreak and how you are managing with food and eating at home and/or work.

If you would like to, we also invite you to take photographs or videos about food with your phone and send them to us. This could be a meal you have prepared, or the inside of your cupboards, shopping reciepts, food bank parcels, or anything else you would like to record. The pictures should be related to food and not include people. You might also want to keep a diary and then send it to us. All of these activities are optional and you will own any images you record.

**Will the information I provide be confidential?**

Yes, any information you provide will be treated as confidential. The only exception to this is if we were concerned about someone’s safety.

With your permission, we would like to audio record our conversations with you. This recording and any personal data such as names and addresses will be stored securely at the University of Hertfordshire. All personal information will only be accessible by the research team.

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

We will use findings from the study to write reports, articles and conference presentations. We will explain this in more detail when we talk to you. You do not have to be identified in our findings if you do not want to be.

**What are the benefits of taking part?**

The research will help us to understand how people are managing their food at this difficult time and will allow you to contribute with your views and experiences.

**Who is carrying out the study?**

The University of Hertfordshire is leading this study. This study has been approved by The University of Hertfordshire Health, Science, Engineering & Technology Ethics Committee with Delegated Authority. The UH protocol number is HSK/SF/UH/04132.

This research is supported by the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration East of England (ARC EoE) programme. Any views expressed are those of the research team, and not necessarily those of the NIHR, NHS or Department of Health and Social Care. The Principal Investigator is Professor Wendy Wills (w.j.wills@herts.ac.uk), Centre for Research in Public Health and Community Care, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AB.

**Contact information**

If you would like further information or to discuss taking part, please get in touch with the research team:

Email **covid19foodstudy@herts.ac.uk**

Telephone **Claire Thompson** on 01707 289345

If you have any complaints about how the study has been carried out, please contact the University Secretary and Registrar: Sharon Harrison-Barker at the University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AB.