



**The democratic approach to mental wellbeing: Exploring individuals' experiences of a mental health collective through a participatory appraisal approach.**

**Information Sheet: Research Focus Group**

I would like to invite you to participate in a research focus group at the Bridge Collective. My name is Gemma Budge, I am a trainee clinical psychologist studying for a doctorate in clinical psychology, with Plymouth University. This research project is being carried out, in collaboration with the Bridge Collective, as part of my doctorate in clinical psychology.

**What is the research about?**

This piece of research aims to explore people's experience of attending the Bridge Collective and what they think of the Bridge Collective's democratic working style. I hope this research will provide a rich description of the way the Bridge Collective works and identify ways for the Bridge Collective to develop and continue to support its participants. I also hope the research may help other organisations, such as the NHS, learn about democratic working styles to inform their work.

**What will my participation involve?**

The focus group will be between 1 hour and 1 and half hours duration. During the focus group you and your fellow participants will be asked a series of questions about your experience of the Bridge Collective and its democratic operating style including; how you feel the Bridge Collective's way of working affects wellbeing, the strengths of the Bridge Collective's way of working and the challenges of the Bridge Collective's way of working. I will try to make sure there is opportunity for all participants to contribute their perspective. You can chose how much you want to say in response to each question and there are no correct or incorrect answers to the questions, I am interested to hear your views.

**What will happen to my contribution?**

The focus group will be audio recorded on a dictaphone and I will transcribe the audio recording into a text document as part of the data analysis process. The audio recording and text files will be password protected and kept in a secure location in my file space at Plymouth University. These files will only be accessible to myself and my research supervisor, Annie Mitchell, and will be destroyed by the supervisor five years following the completion of the research project.

During the focus group you will be asked if you would like to write down a pseudonym, which means a different name for yourself. Your name or your chosen pseudonym will be used when I transcribe the audio recording and in the final research write up, so your contributions to the research remain anonymous. Your contribution within the focus group will not be anonymous to other participants in the

focus group as they will hear and respond to your comments during the session, and may also recognise your contributions if they are involved in the research at a later stage, such as the community meeting described below. If you chose not to use a pseudonym, your contribution will not be anonymous and people will be able to tell how you contributed to the research.

There will be opportunity at another group session in May to hear the results of the analysis and let me know what you think of the research findings. We will also be discussing what community development could come out of the research at this session.

If you decide to participate in the research you have the right to withdraw from participating at any point. If you decide to withdraw from the research up until a month after the focus group I will destroy all recordings of your comments and they will not be included in the final project write up. After this time it will not be possible to remove your data from the data analysis process due to the time constraints of the project, however I will remove any comments you have made from the final research write up.

If you have any questions, concerns, comments or complaints about the research please contact me on the below contact details. Should you wish to discuss your complaint with a senior member of staff at Plymouth University please contact: Sarah Jones, Research Administrator, Faculty of Health and Human Sciences, Floor 4, Rolle Building, Drake Circus, Plymouth, PL4 8AA. Telephone: 01752 585339, Email: [hhsethics@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:hhsethics@plymouth.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read this information

Gemma Budge

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