



## **WISE & SURFACE survey using semi-structured in-depth interviews**

### **Who we talked to**

We interviewed 200 people aged 65 and over in the Greater Manchester area, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. We used semi-structured conversational interviews to encourage the participants to talk freely about their opinions and experiences. Interviews took between 45 minutes and 2 hours depending on the personality and health of the participant but in general took roughly one hour.

We interviewed participants living in different types of location:

- 15 living in a major city or town centre
- 45 living in a major city or town district
- 52 living in a suburb or on the edge of a major city or town
- 13 living in a large town centre
- 30 living in a suburb or on the edge of a large town
- 19 living in a small town
- 26 living in a village

It proved impossible to gain a completely even spread of people across the different location types but the weighting towards the suburbs and districts is representative of the types of location generally chosen by older people in the UK. We spoke to older people living in their own homes, in sheltered housing and in older peoples' housing developments in both the social and private sectors. Contact was made through Housing Associations, the management companies of private older people's development and sheltered housing schemes, and community groups. In total, we interviewed 118 women and 82 men.

### **What the questionnaire entailed**

The questionnaire was used to ask participants about how they felt about their neighbourhood, their experiences when they went outside and their views about features in their neighbourhood. We explained to participants that by neighbourhood we meant the area that they walked in locally. The questionnaire was divided into 5 sections:

1. Personal information – this section sought to gain some information on the intervening variables that might affect a participant's ability to use the outdoor environment, such as age and health.
2. Getting outside – this section asked participants about being outside as a pedestrian.
3. Quality of life – this section asked participants about their feelings and opinions about living in their neighbourhood.



**WISE & SURFACE survey / What the questionnaire entailed (continued...)**

4. Urban form photographs – in this section we used sets of photographs to encourage participants to talk about their preferences and opinions of different features of urban form, including different types of neighbourhood, streets and outdoor spaces.
5. Detailed design photographs – in this section we used sets of photographs to encourage participants to talk about their preferences and opinions of different features of detailed design, including different types of footways, street furniture and paving.

At the end of the interviews some participants were asked if they would be willing to take photographs of their local neighbourhood, using a disposable camera. They were asked either to take only pictures that demonstrated what they liked about their local neighbourhood or only what they disliked. This meant that we were able to tell what the photographs represented without the participants having to make notes as they took the pictures.

**This profile published January 2011. For further information, please contact [idgo@ed.ac.uk](mailto:idgo@ed.ac.uk).**