



# The Phoenix Project

## Overview & Progress

**Prof Viv Hope**

on behalf of

The Phoenix Project Team

**PHOENIX** “A survey of **P**eople and **H**ouseholds’ **O**ngoing **E**fforts in **R**esponse to the **N**ational COVID-19 Guidance and its **I**mpacts **Across(X)** the North West”

It is funded by LJMU.

The core project team at LJMU is:

### **Public Health Institute:**

Vivian Hope; Harry Sumnall; Hannah Timpson; Zara Quigg; Gordon Hay; Ivan Gee; Conan Leavey; & Lorna Porcellato.

### **School of Psychology:**

Pooja Saini; Caroline Brett; & Mark Forshaw.



- The Government's COVID-19 restrictions & guidance have had a major impact on society, and will have long-term effects on well-being.
- It is important to understand these impacts and any associated harms that may arise to inform future responses.
- The formulation of messaging around the Government's restrictions and guidance could be viewed as focusing on **'traditional' family units**.
- The UK population is **culturally & socially diverse** with a wide range of household & family structures (e.g. stepfamilies, inter-generational households, separated parents, and non-cohabiting couples).
- Communities (e.g. BAME and LGBTQ+) with extended family units, people living alone, and/or households spanning several dwellings **might perceive, act and be impacted differently**.
- BAME communities are **disproportionately affected**, with elevated COVID-19 infection, hospitalisation & mortality rates.



## Objectives:

To carry out quantitative and qualitative research to examine **how the Government's restrictions, guidance and communications** in relation to 'social distancing' **have been perceived**;

To understand how this has **impacted the health and well-being** related outcomes of people across the **North West region of England**; and

To explore how these **impacts on** health and well-being related outcomes vary across population groups, specifically people in two minority groups; the **BAME and LGBTQ+ communities**



Phase 1

- Baseline survey

Completed

Phase 2

- Follow-up Surveys

In progress

Phase 3

- Interviews

In progress



## *Baseline Survey:*

27<sup>th</sup> April

to

15<sup>th</sup> May

- 25 minutes long, exploring:
- *Demographics, Restrictions/guidelines, Impacts, Views on easing restrictions, Protection-Motivation Theory, PERMA profiler, WEMWBS 7, Life satisfaction, Brief Resilience Scale, Violence, and Smoking/Vaping & Alcohol use.*
- Recruitment through networks and Facebook advertising.
- 2,082 started questionnaire.
- **1,604 useable responses (77% completion rate).**
  - 970 (47%) opted into being invited to take part in follow-up surveys
  - 628 (30%) opted into being invited to take part in telephone/online interviews



## Follow-up surveys:

- Minimum of three follow-up surveys planned
- Three to four weekly intervals
- 12 minutes, standard measures repeated in different waves

**Follow-up 1:** 21<sup>st</sup> May to 9<sup>th</sup> June

- 691 participants completed the questionnaire (71% response rate)

**Follow-up 2:** 16<sup>th</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> June

- So far 590 participants (as of 14:00 on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020).

**Follow-up 3:** 7<sup>th</sup> July to 20<sup>th</sup> July

- Planning stage



## Interviews:

- 45 to 50 telephone / online interviews
- 20-35 minutes long
- Semi-structured & recorded
- Topics covered: *the impact of COVID-19, people's interpretation of the Government's restrictions and guidance in relation to 'social distancing' and how these impacts may have varied across population groups, specifically, in the regions' LGBTQ+ and BAME communities*
- Include 15-18 participants from both BAME and LGBTQ+ communities (with overlap)
- Recruitment started on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020
- 37 interviews arranged so far, with 27 of these completed (as of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020)



As follow-up surveys and interviews are ongoing and analysis in progress, we will present only a few **initial and preliminary findings**.



The baseline sample (n=1,604):

- Women aged 40-70 years, particularly from Merseyside, over-recruited - this is common with online surveys.
- Under-recruited younger people.

We aimed to over-recruit BAME and LGBTQ+ participants:

- This worked well for LGBTQ+ participants, but not BAME participants.
- LGBTQ+ participants (n=192, 12%) demographically similar to the NW regional population.
- BAME participants (n=60, 3.7%), younger and less likely to be male than the sample overall.





# What are you doing in response to the government's COVID-19 guidance about staying at home?

**I am staying at home, only leaving for food shopping, exercise and accessing medication/medical needs.**

**I am staying at home, only leaving for food shopping, exercise, accessing medication/medical needs, and to go to work.**

**I am not following the stay at home guidelines, but I am only leaving home when it is essential.**

**I am not leaving my home at all.**

**I am not following the stay at home guidelines.**

**93% were following 'the stay at home' guidelines**





Three-fifths (59%) of participants reported **'Cleaner air'** was a positive impact.



Nearly half (47%) reported **'Spending more time at home'** was a positive impact.



The following were seen as positive impacts by about two-fifths:

**'Having more time for reading'** (42%),  
**'Having more time for DIY and/or gardening'** (39%),  
**'Having more time to watch TV or movies'** (38%),  
**'Spending more time with my partner'** (37%), &  
**'Having more time for hobbies'** (35%).





Over three-quarters (78%) of the participants reported **'Not being able to see my friend'** as negative impact.



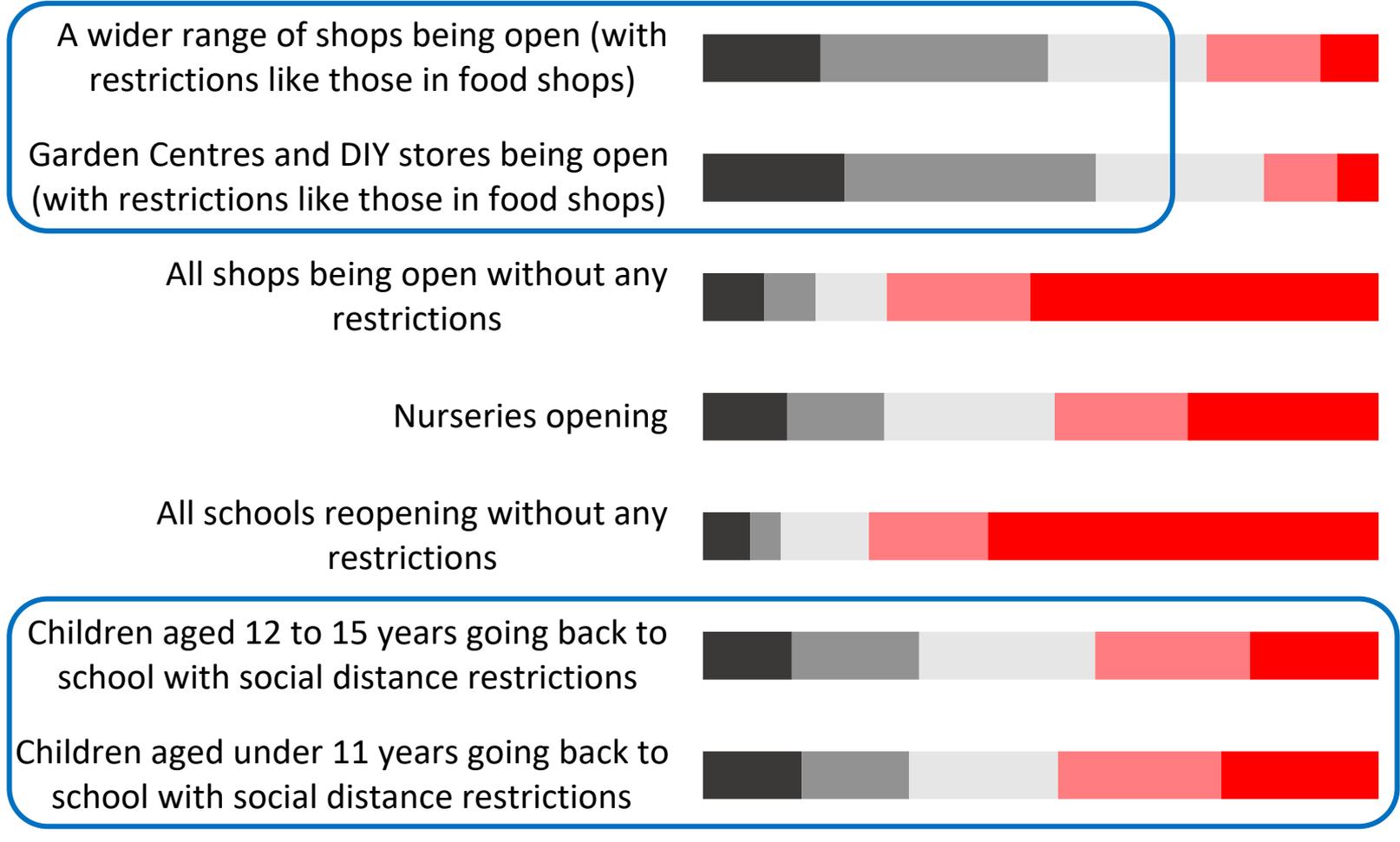
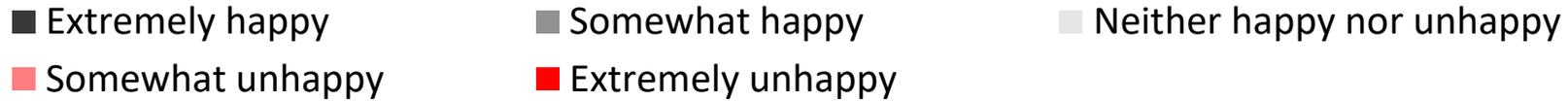
Nearly three-quarters (71%) reported **'Not being able to travel far'** as a negative impact.



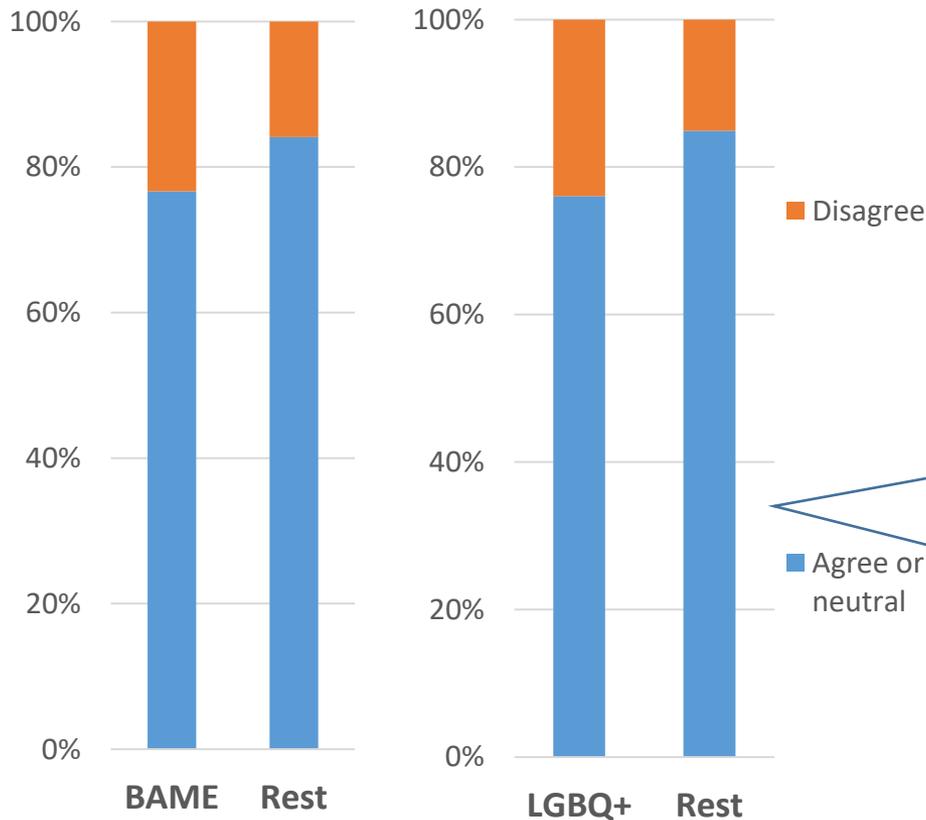
Just over two-fifths (44%) reported **'Having to queue to get into food shops'** as a negative impact.



# When restrictions are eased, how would you feel about allowing the following to happen?



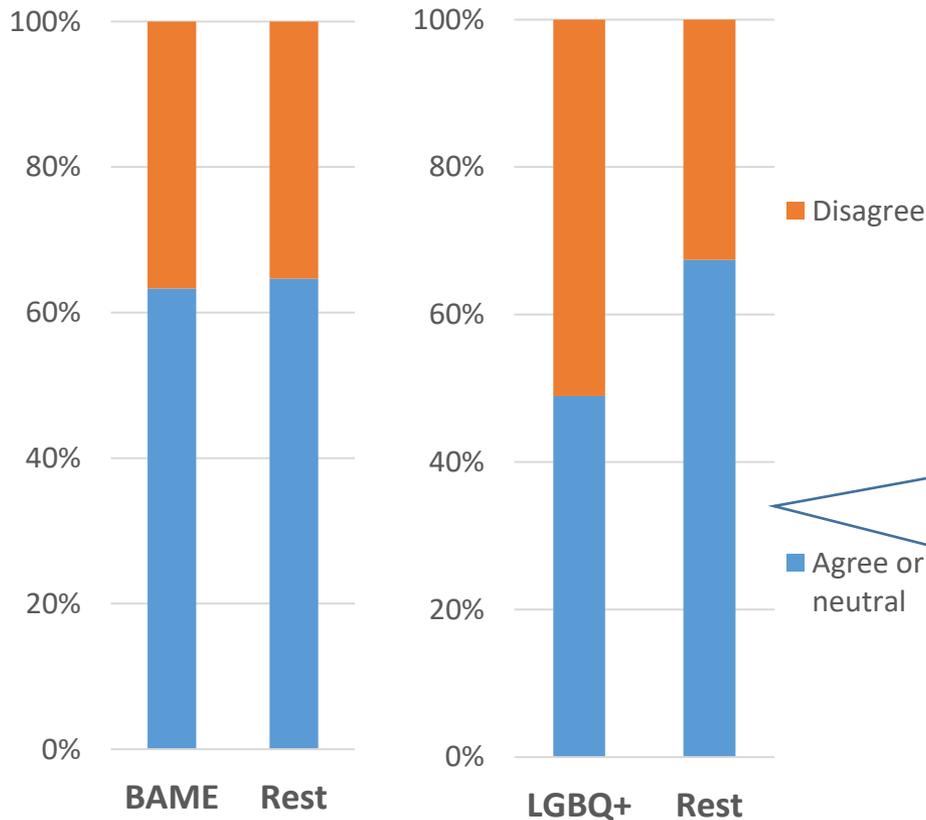
*How much do you agree that the government did enough to make its COVID-19 guidance about staying at home workable for different types of families or households in general?*



This difference is significant for the LGBTQ+ participants (adjusting for age, gender and area)



*How much do you agree that the government considered the impact on people like you when it was preparing its COVID-19 guidance about staying at home?*



This difference is significant for the LGBTQ+ participants (adjusting for age, gender and area)



The Phoenix Project is ongoing and more findings will follow.

Data produced will feed into Health & Equity in COVID-19 Recovery Plans Working Group (co-chaired by Lisa Jones, PHI), that will inform and support the recovery planning work of the Merseyside Resilience Forum.

Planned outputs include ones looking at:

- Impacts on LGBTQ+ and BAME communities,
- Health behaviours (Alcohol / Drugs / etc.) and resilience/well-being,
- Protection Motivation Theory,
- Wellbeing and social distancing behaviour / impacts ,
- Positive impacts of social distancing / restrictions, and
- Violence/ACEs.

<https://www.facebook.com/PhoenixProjectNW/>

[phoenix@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:phoenix@ljmu.ac.uk) or [v.d.hope@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:v.d.hope@ljmu.ac.uk)

**Thank you.**

