



REFERENCE GUIDE

Sample Survey Questions

What is the objective?

To understand, at a high level, how people think and feel about their food experiences in their community.

Why is this important?

Hearing from community members and stakeholders to identify food routines, habits, and perceptions is one of the richest data sources for understanding opportunities and challenges in a foodscape. While macro and eye level mappings help decode the offerings and spatial characteristics of neighbourhood places, talking with people can reveal patterns in their social environment and habits.

How do I do it?

To understand the experiences people have accessing food in their community, you need to ask thoughtful questions. Work backwards from your study goals to identify what questions to ask people. Begin by outlining the challenge and formulate a larger question that will drive your investigation. From there, consider what you want to learn about people's experiences. Finally, form specific questions so you can ask people about their daily behaviours. The worksheets that follow will help you with this process.

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

FORMULATING SURVEY QUESTIONS

Determining what questions to ask people to understand their experiences

WHAT IS THE CORE CHALLENGE?

To pick the right survey questions, reflect on the core challenge. A core challenge is the reason you are asking people about their everyday experiences getting and consuming food.

EXAMPLE

Many people in this neighbourhood struggle to afford healthy food. Even if people were to choose to spend their money on food, options are extremely limited. There are few places to buy groceries, local restaurants have a very homogenous offering, and corner stores (the lifeline of this community foodscape) do not provide people with a lot of choice.

WHAT ARE THE CORE QUESTIONS?

Next, consider: What is important to understand about people's experiences? This is what you want to learn about the core challenge.

- *What kinds of food would people want if they had more choices available to them?*
- *Are people seeing themselves represented in the food offerings they see around them?*
- *What are the food experiences and habits people do have that we should celebrate and lift up?*

WHAT MIGHT WE ASK PEOPLE?

Finally, consider: what parts of people's daily dietary habits and behaviours should you learn more about to understand people's experiences in relation to the core challenge?

- *What's your favourite thing to eat? Where do you get that thing now?*
- *Who cooks or cooked your favourite meal?*
- *What do you cook for celebratory meals?*
- *Where do you get the things you need to make those meals?*
- *What is a great memory you have where food was a core part of the memory?*

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

UNDERSTANDING FOOD BEHAVIOURS AND ROUTINES

Understand people's experiences by asking them about what they do, think, and feel. Ask simple questions. Consider these questions as a place to start understanding what it's like for people to spend time and access food in their community.

Ask people what they *do*

- What do people love to eat?
- How do people usually get the food they eat? (Walking, transit, cycling, driving?)
- Where do they get food? Where do they get groceries? Where do they eat out?
- When do people shop for food? Do they adjust their routine to accommodate opening times or transit timetables?
- What do they cook for celebratory meals?
- What compromises do people have to make regarding food?

Ask people what they *think*

- Do people think there are food options missing in their neighbourhood? If so, what?
- Why do they buy and consume food where they do? (Convenience? Price? Offering?)
- Do they consider others when making food choices (family, friends, etc.)? How does this impact their decision making?
- What are the biggest roadblocks to eating healthy (Price? Time? Know-how?)
- Why do people eat out?

Ask people what they *feel*

- How do people perceive the access to fresh produce and protein in their neighbourhood?
- Do they feel they can access foods they love to eat?
- How do they like to enjoy food?
- What are the environments and social situations they value when it comes to sharing food?
- Are there places in the community that they feel welcomed? Are there food offerings there? If so, what kind?

UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS TO COMMUNITY

Hearing how people move around, spend time, and relate to their community can reveal how the public realm facilitates or challenges accessing and consuming healthy food.

Ask people what they *do*

- Where do people like to spend time in the neighbourhood? Why do they go there?
- Who do they usually spend time there with?
- What modes of transportation do they use to get around?
- Are there streets or spaces they avoid? Why?

Ask people what they *think*

- What do people think about their neighbourhood?
- If they had the choice to move elsewhere, would they?
- What are their favourite places in this neighbourhood?
- What do they love about these places?

Ask people what they *feel*

- Do people feel safe and welcome in this community? Why?
- What do they wish they could do in this neighbourhood that they feel like they can't today?
- What neighbourhood qualities are most important to people?

SAMPLE SURVEY FROM LONDON

Hello! My name is _____. I'm here today talking to residents and locals about how you experience the city and interact with food in your neighbourhood. The answers for this survey are going to give local insight and experience into a project to improve food access and public spaces in Camberwell. The questions should only take 3 minutes of your time, and all of your answers will be completely confidential.

If the respondent wants more information about the project:

This project is being run by _____ – a local foundation focusing on the well-being of residents. We are studying childhood obesity and how the design of the city impacts health.

QUESTIONS

- What would you call this neighbourhood?
If needed: We want to understand how local people define their neighbourhood. What would you call the neighbourhood that we are in right now?
- What brings you here? Are you a...
 - Neighbour / Resident
 - Employee (of nearby institution / business)
 - Student (of nearby school)
 - Tourist
 - Attendee (cultural event or institution)
 - Other (please specify)
- Do you have a favourite activity that you like to do outside in the city?
For example: Sports, reading, art, walking/jogging
- Do you eat with your family outside of the home?
Prompts: Do you go for picnics in the city? Do you often go out to dinner with your family? What kind of food do you eat with your family outside of your home?
- How often do you eat out each week (not at school or at work – e.g., going to restaurants, purchasing takeaway, etc.)?
 - 1-5 times
 - 5-10 times
 - More than 10 times
- Can you name three places in this neighbourhood where you like to eat?

SAMPLE SURVEY FROM LONDON

- When you eat out, why do you eat outside of your home? (Choose up to three primary reasons)
 - Habit – it's just somewhere I go
 - It is in my budget/price range
 - So I don't have to cook at home
 - To eat something I can't cook myself
 - I can't access the ingredients that I need to cook for myself
 - It's somewhere to go with my family
 - It's a nice place to meet friends and be social
 - It's easy to get to from home/work/school
 - I like the food
 - I can buy and eat my meal quickly
 - I feel welcome
 - Other (please specify)

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Hand survey to participant to fill out on their own. Explain that demographic information is kept strictly confidential.

- How old are you? _____
- How would you describe your ethnic background? _____
- What gender do you identify as? _____
- What is your income bracket?
 - up to £12,500
 - £12,501 to £50,000
 - £50,001 to £150,000
 - over £150,000
- What is your postcode? _____
- What do you do for a living?
Potential prompt: Where do you work?
