CO-RESEARCHING VISUAL AND MOBILE METHODS WITH ROMA COMMUNITIES: A TOOLKIT
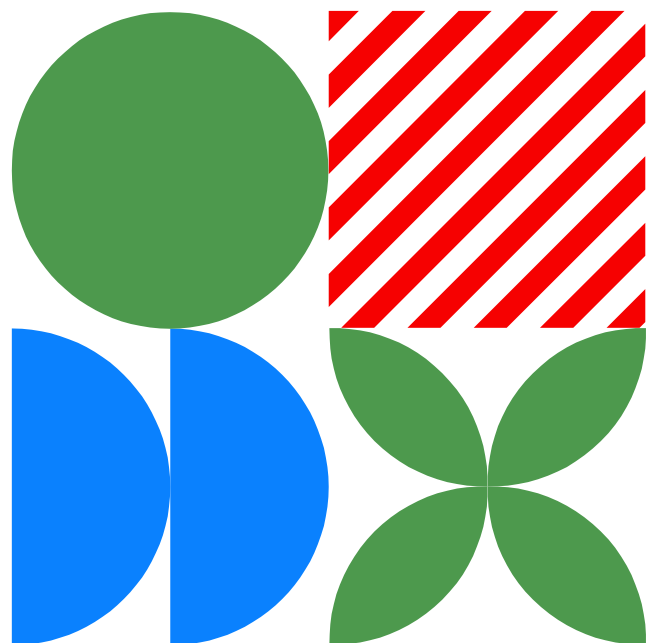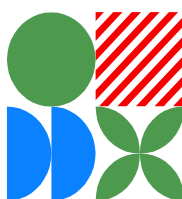
Table of Contents

About This Toolkit

This training toolkit was developed as part of the AHRC-funded **RomaPlaceAge Project: Co-Producing Integrated Place-Based Supports to Enable Healthy Ageing-in-Place for Roma Communities** (February 2024–February 2027).

The aim of RomaPlaceAge is to inform the co-design of place-based interventions to support healthy ageing for Roma communities in mid to later life across three localities in the UK: Glasgow, Luton and Peterborough.

Guided by the principles of Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Roma community organisations and members have been involved as active and equal partners in all stages of the research (James & Buffel, 2023). A total of 27 members of the Roma community have been recruited and trained as community researchers. All community researchers are well-connected members of the Roma community and are remunerated for their time, expertise, and contributions to the project.

This toolkit builds on the **Phase 1 RomaPlaceAge training**, which introduced community researchers to the foundations of community-based research and qualitative interviews (Woolrych et al., 2025). **Phase 2** focused on deepening this knowledge through the introduction of two participatory visual and mobile methods: **go-along interviews and photo diaries.**

The training was conducted in accessible, trusted community locations provided by our local partners:

- Luton Roma Trust (Luton)
- Community Renewal Trust, *Rom Romeha* (Govanhill, Glasgow)
- COMPAS (Peterborough)

To support participation, each training day included refreshments, lunch, regular breaks, and opportunities for Q&A and reflective discussion. The training was designed to be welcoming, inclusive and dialogic, emphasising shared learning and mutual respect.

These methods were introduced and practised across two days of training in each locality. This toolkit shares the structure, activities and learning from those workshops so that others including practitioners, researchers and community groups, can adapt and deliver similar training in their own contexts.

A **full slide deck** and all project materials referenced in this document are available to download at www.romaplaceage.com or can be requested from the project lead Professor Ryan Woolrych at *r.d.woolrych@hw.ac.uk*. Materials are also available in Czech and Romanian translations to support wider accessibility and community use.

Why This Toolkit Matters

Visual and mobile research methods offer powerful ways to centre the lived experiences of marginalised communities, especially those whose voices are often excluded from policy and planning processes (Bartlett et al., 2023; Glaw et al., 2017). This toolkit demonstrates how go-along interviews and photo diaries can be used to explore ageing, place and wellbeing within Roma communities, while also building capacity among community researchers themselves.

By sharing a participatory, rights-based training approach grounded in trust and mutual learning, this toolkit supports others including community organisations, researchers and practitioners, to adopt more inclusive, empowering practices in their own work (Fudge et al., 2007). It reflects a commitment to co-production, not just as a method, but as a way of working that values community expertise and shared knowledge-making.

How to Use This Toolkit

This is a practical toolkit and guide designed to support others in delivering training on visual and mobile research methods. It shares not only activities and resources, but also insights and reflections drawn from real-world experience with Roma community researchers. It is intended for those who wish to work with community researchers using creative and place-based approaches. It is designed to be used, adapted and reimagined in other settings.

Each section provides:

- Overview and Practical Delivery – summary of activities with instructions
- Themes and Discussion – issues, questions and reflections emerging from activities
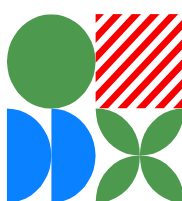- Future Takeaways – lessons for adaptation and reflection

Training Workshop 1: Go-Along Interviews

Overview

This is Phase 2 of the training programme for co-researchers. Phase 1, held over two days, introduced Roma researchers to the fundamentals of research, including ethics, informed consent, and how to conduct qualitative, semi-structured interviews. Phase 2 built on this foundation through two workshops. The first workshop brought the researchers back together to reconnect with the RomaPlaceAge project, reflect on their growing role as co-researchers, and develop their skills by learning go-along interviews as a mobile, place-based method. Designed as both reflective and practical, the workshop also created space to explore participatory visual methods in a supportive, peer-led environment. Alongside conceptual discussions about the meaning of place and the value of mobile methods, researchers collectively navigated ethical considerations, shared concerns and built confidence through hands-on problem-solving. The session culminated in a practical activity - *Your Neighbourhood, Your Story* – in which community researchers led short go-along interviews in their local areas, generating rich narratives of ageing, identity and belonging. The workshop reinforced a collaborative ethos of learning by doing, reflection, and mutual support.

Reorientation and Group Reflection

The session began with a reorientation activity to ground community researchers in the goals and progress of the RomaPlaceAge project. Participants were invited to reflect on their experiences as community researchers so far, share feedback on conducting interviews following the Phase 1 training and discuss key themes or stories that had emerged from those interviews.

This reflection created space for identifying with the stories emerging from the research, building collective confidence as a group of community researchers, and recognising both common threads and areas of difference across local experiences. It also helped transition the group into thinking more visually and spatially about the environments shaping Roma experiences of ageing and wellbeing in relation to their homes and communities.

Exploring the Meaning of Place

Before introducing the go-along, or walking interview method, participants were encouraged to reflect on the idea of **place** – not just as a physical space, but as something experienced emotionally, culturally and socially.

The discussion drew on everyday examples:

- A community space that you use e.g. to meet other people.
- A place that means something to you as a member of the Roma community.
- An outdoor space such as a park or green area.

As the conversation unfolded, many participants naturally drew on stories and reflections from the interviews they had recently conducted with older Roma community members and their own experiences. These insights helped to ground the discussion, linking what were initially abstract concepts, such as belonging, exclusion, or change, to specific places and lived experiences within their communities.

Introducing the Go-Along Interview Method

We then introduced the **go-along interview**, a method where the participant leads the interviewer on a walk through places that hold personal meaning. It is a way of understanding lived experience in context, capturing the textures, sounds, feelings and rhythms of everyday life (Bartlett et al., 2023; Carpiano, 2009; Castrodale, 2018).

A short presentation guided the group through the key features of a go-along interviews:

- **Participant-led**: The route and stories are chosen by the participant.
- **Mobile**: The interview takes place on the move, engaging with lived environments.
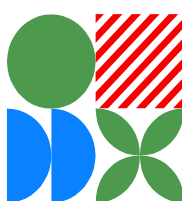
- **Context-rich**: Observations, memories, and emotions emerge in relation to places.
- **Flexible**: The walk may shift direction, linger, or follow spontaneous paths.

We discussed why go-along interviews are effective:

- They prompt **memory and storytelling** based on sensory and emotional triggers.
- Walking side-by-side can feel **less formal and more conversational**.
- They offer researchers a window into how participants **see, use, and feel about their environment**.

The session also covered **ethical considerations**:

- Ensuring informed consent for recording, stopping, or photographing along the route
- Sensitivity to physical ability, comfort and public exposure
- Safety in navigating traffic, weather and personal boundaries

Finally, we reviewed a simple **Go-Along Interview Guide** (see templates), designed to support community researchers with conversation prompts, observational ideas, and space for notes. We used this opportunity to gain further feedback on the questions and changes that needed to be made to the research tool.

Learning from Other Places

To help community researchers visualise the method in action, the research team shared images and quotes from go-along interviews conducted in previous research projects (see the example below). The example sparked rich discussion in the training workshops, with community researchers drawing on their own experiences of the role of gender and visibility in public space. It illustrated how go-along interviews can surface both the practical and emotional textures of place, revealing how age, identity and everyday routines intersect and how visual and mobile methods can expose both barriers and opportunities to ageing well.

Example: Everyday Routines, Deeper Meanings – A Go-Along Interview in Kolkata

In a previous project exploring ageing in low-income neighbourhoods in the Global South, a go-along interview was conducted with an older woman in Kolkata, India. As part of her daily routine, she guided the researcher to a communal water station where she regularly collected clean water (see *Image 1* below). At first glance, it was an ordinary stop. But through conversation, the deeper significance of the space emerged.

She spoke of the increasing physical difficulty of this task in later life, especially due to mobility issues. Yet, she also described the water point as a site of connection, a space where she could meet and speak with other women, exchange news and feel part of a shared rhythm of life. This example highlights how go-along interviews can uncover deeper meanings of place: how routine environments carry stories of resilience, gendered labour and informal community. It also opened up rich discussion among Roma community researchers, who recognised similar dynamics in their own communities, where everyday tasks and spaces are deeply tied to identity, belonging, and the challenges of ageing**.**

Image 1: An older woman using a water station in Kolkata, India

Common Challenges

The group collectively discussed challenges that might arise when conducting go-along interviews, drawing on both anticipated concerns as well as lessons learned from previous

research projects. The research team shared scenarios encountered in earlier studies, which helped to open up discussion around how these issues might play out in the specific contexts in which Roma community researchers were working.

This collective reflection highlighted several shared practical concerns:

- Cold and wet weather (especially in Scotland!)
- Health and mobility limitations among older participants
- Concerns about being visible as a "researcher" in public
- Recording difficulties (e.g. background noise, equipment)
- Nervousness about guiding a walk or being interviewed outdoors

By situating these challenges within real-world examples and inviting discussion around them, the session helped normalise potential difficulties and encouraged the group to think collaboratively about how to approach and adapt the method in ways that felt practical, respectful and community-led.

Alongside these practical concerns, the group also reflected on cultural issues specific to conducting research within Roma communities. For many participants, questions of trust, visibility and representation were deeply tied to histories of discrimination and exclusion. Being seen as a 'researcher' in public space could evoke fears of surveillance or misunderstanding from outsiders. Language differences and varying levels of literacy also shaped how comfortable participants felt with recording devices or written materials.

These reflections underscored the need for sensitivity not only to logistical barriers, but also to cultural context. Building trust, ensuring choice around participation, and recognising diverse experiences within Roma communities were seen as essential to making visual and mobile methods both respectful and meaningful.

Discussing Practicalities and Building Confidence

A key part of the training involved creating space for open, collective discussion about the practicalities of conducting go-along interviews – particularly around recording. Rather than treating these as individual technical tasks, we approached them as shared challenges that could be explored and problem-solved together.
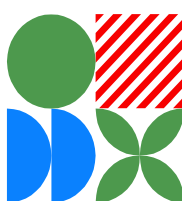
Participants expressed concerns and questions around how to record while walking – what kind of equipment to use, how to position microphones, and whether taking photos during the walk would feel intrusive or natural. These conversations became important confidence-building moments. As a group, we explored a range of options, from use of lapel microphones and mobile phone audio apps, to approaches for respectfully taking photographs.

By sharing experiences and hesitations in a supportive environment, community researchers were able to identify practical strategies that worked for them. Together, we reached a consensus on how to approach audio and visual documentation in ways that felt comfortable to the community researchers. This collaborative process helped demystify some of the challenges and built a sense of shared confidence moving into the practical exercise.

Crucially, it also highlighted the importance of creating space within the training to challenge academic preconceptions about how go-along interviews would take place, ensuring the research design was not shaped in advance, but emerged through dialogue with community researchers themselves.

Activity: Your Neighbourhood, Your Story

The practical component of Workshop 1 centred around *Your Neighbourhood, Your Story* – a participatory go-along interview activity designed to bring theory into practice through lived experience. In small groups, community researchers were invited to guide a walk (50–60 minutes) through a local area that was meaningful to them.

The structure of the walk varied slightly across the research sites. In some locations, the group began by brainstorming together in the workshop space, identifying local assets and deficits, from parks and shops to derelict spaces or community hubs, and co-constructing a walk that reflected shared experiences and spatial dynamics. In others, a community researcher took the lead, guiding the group through places tied to their own everyday routines, histories and values. This flexibility allowed the activity to respond to local context and researcher confidence, while modelling different approaches to facilitation.

To support preparation, participants worked together in the workshop setting to reflect on key prompts that would help shape their walk. These included:

- Areas they feel connected to or disconnected from
- Places that show change, challenges, or support
- Places they enjoy spending time in or avoid

During the walk, participants were encouraged to stop at 3–5 locations to reflect and respond to prompts from the Go-Along Interview Guide. The walks were informal, flexible and shaped by the community researcher's own story and pace.

These were not just practice runs but also meaningful explorations in themselves, surfacing deep insights around place attachment and belonging. Observers from the research team participated as listeners and notetakers, offering reassurance and support where needed, while giving space for co-researchers to lead. They also raised reflections on how communities had changed over time and how participants' own journeys as migrants into these neighbourhoods had evolved, shaping their sense of identity and connection.
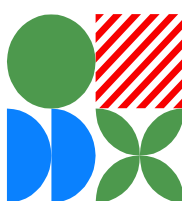
Some groups chose to take photographs, others recorded short conversations, but all reconvened for a group debrief at the end of the activity. This exercise helped to build skills and confidence in using mobile methods, while reinforcing collective learning and deepening group trust.

"Voices from the Walks"

The *Your Neighbourhood, Your Story* activity generated rich insights across all three research sites. In carrying out the go-along interviews, a number of stories emerged that spoke to experiences of ageing, identity and place across the Roma communities. We have highlighted a number of these with photographs taken during the go-along interview.

Place Maintenance and Pride in Community

Across sites, participants highlighted both pride in their neighbourhoods and frustrations with how these places are perceived, especially by outsiders. Issues such as litter, poor housing conditions, or neglected public spaces were seen not just as environmental problems, but as sources of stigma. At the same time, there was strong pride in maintaining homes and green spaces, with community researchers often emphasising their own efforts to care for the areas around them.

Images 2 & 3: Govanhill, Glasgow – illustrate poor place maintenance and upkeep

Green Spaces and Public Places

Parks and green areas featured prominently in many walks. These were often described as spaces of relaxation, socialisation and connection across generations. In some cases, participants shared concerns about underused or contested green spaces, where questions of who belongs, and who feels welcome, shaped everyday access and use.
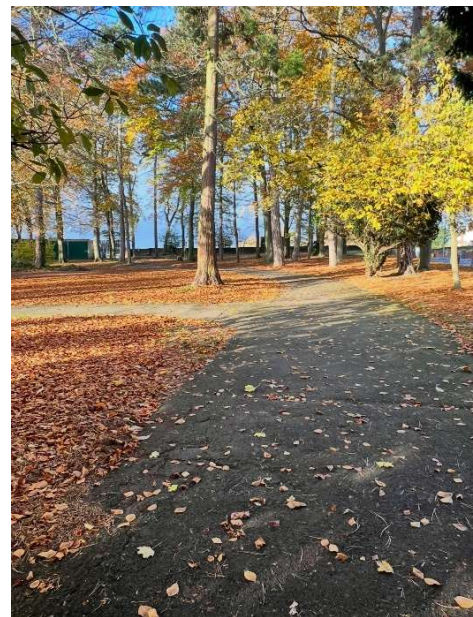

Image 4 (left): Co-researchers discussing Govanhill Park; from left to right: Sona Balogova, Helena Sandorova, Marek Balog, Francisc Tarcsa and Jana Puskova
Image 5 (right): An image taken by Alina Jantea of a park in Luton
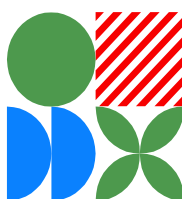
Images 6 & 7: Illustrate backyards being poorly maintained, Govanhill, Glasgow

Community researchers also shared personal backyards: Helena described hers as a sanctuary, while Jana highlighted its underuse due to limited shared upkeep in her block.

Image 8 (left)*:* Helena Sandorova (right) enjoying her backyard with Maria Demeterova (left)
Image 9 (right): Taken by Constantin Iacovita from his window, illustrating his enjoyment of watching the pigeons

Everyday spaces as Sites of Belonging

Local shops, street corners, and market areas emerged as important places of familiarity and social connection. In several cases, participants shared stories of respectful relationships with shopkeepers, or of certain businesses going out of their way to make Roma customers feel welcome. These small but meaningful acts created a sense of inclusion in an environment that could otherwise feel unwelcoming.

Images 10 & 11: Illustrate certain shops are sites of place identity and belonging

The Home as Both Anchor and Barrier

Many participants reflected on the importance of home, not just as a private refuge, but as a space of social gathering and cultural continuity. At the same time, poor housing conditions, lack of accessibility, and overcrowding were frequently raised as barriers to ageing well. Stairs, pests and damp were common issues, particularly for older adults living in tenement flats or temporary housing.

Images 12 & 13: Photos of the homes of Roma families living in Govanhill (left) and Peterborough (right)

Space of Work and Employment

For some community researchers, the neighbourhood walk became an opportunity to reflect on their histories of work, both past and present, and the ways that employment has shaped their identities, routines, and sense of purpose. These reflections often emerged not as planned stops, but spontaneously, as participants encountered places that triggered memories or ongoing roles.

Florin Covaci, for instance, led us past several sites where he had previously worked. As we paused, he spoke candidly about the pride he took in having worked hard his whole life, and the frustration he now felt as health challenges made it increasingly difficult to stay employed. For Florin, these were not just buildings – they were symbols of independence, contribution, and being part of something.

Others, like Diana Ferar, used the walk to highlight ongoing contributions they were making to their communities. She described her role as an informal translator and cultural bridge whilst working for a local optician. She expressed a sense of value and purpose, helping others.

14
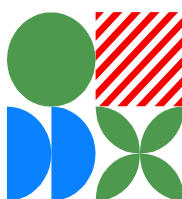
Images 14 & 15: Former places of employment for Diana Ferar (left) and Florin Covaci (right)

Spiritual and Third Spaces

Places of worship, community centres, and informal gathering spots were described as essential to wellbeing. In particular, churches were often seen as safe and affirming spaces for spiritual life, cultural identity, and social support. However, issues of access – especially for older people with mobility difficulties – remained a concern in some areas.

Images 16 & 17: A church space in Govanhill – meaningful space engagement and interaction – but physically inaccessible to some

Ultimately, the walks were a powerful way for older Roma participants to express their relationship with place – not just through words, but through movement, memory, and embodied experience. Each route opened new conversations about how people navigate, shape and survive in their communities.

These reflections helped lay the groundwork for the next phase of the project – using photo diaries to explore place-based ageing in even more personal and creative ways.

Closing Reflections from Day 1: Debriefing the Go-Along Interviews

After completing the *Your Neighbourhood, Your Story* activity, community researchers and team members returned to the community venue for a shared debrief. This was a vital space to pause, reflect and exchange experiences from the go-along interviews not just to evaluate the method, but to deepen collective learning and connection.

Participants spoke honestly about the challenges they encountered. Some found it difficult to balance walking and talking, trying to stay present in the moment while also remembering to ask questions or follow prompts from the Go-Along Interview Guide. Others noted the occasional discomfort of attracting attention during the walk, especially when using audio recorders or taking photographs. These concerns were discussed openly, and the group reflected together on strategies for managing future interviews, including ways to feel more confident in public space and ways to present the research to others when approached by community members.

Yet the overall tone of the debrief was one of energy and enthusiasm. Many described the walk as empowering: a chance to showcase their community and highlight places that mattered to them. It also prompted some to challenge their own perceptions of space. For instance, those who had previously associated certain areas with fear were able to reframe those feelings through the experience. Several participants expressed pride in guiding others through neighbourhoods they knew intimately, offering perspectives that are often overlooked or misunderstood.
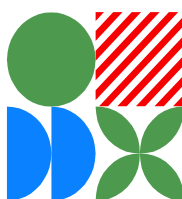
The benefits extended to the wider team. For academic partners, these walks provided invaluable insight, not just into the built environment, but into daily life, personal memories, and the social geographies of the Roma community. In some cases, community researchers invited team members to pause outside (and even inside) their homes, opening spaces that had previously been private or 'invisible'. This generosity reflected a deepening of trust, and an evolving sense that this project was not just about research, but about relationships.

One Roma co-researcher, reflecting on the walk, remarked: *"It's nice to be seen with a member of the research team as it brings a sense of value to the work we are doing."* A simple statement but one that captured the spirit of the day: recognition, respect, and the growing visibility of Roma voices in shaping knowledge about ageing and place.

The debrief closed with a sense of momentum. While the go-along interviews had served as a training exercise, they also served as powerful acts of co-production in themselves. Furthermore, they set the tone for the **next training workshop: photo diaries.**

Key Takeaways for Workshop 1 – Go-Along Interviews

1. **Start with grounding and reflection.**
   Begin by reconnecting community researchers to the broader aims of the project and encouraging shared reflection on previous research activities. This builds continuity and confidence.

2. **Build conceptual depth before practice.**
   Encourage participants to explore the meaning of place – socially, emotionally, culturally – before introducing methods. This helps link lived experience to research design.

3. **Introduce go-along interviews as relational and flexible.**
   Emphasise the participant-led nature of the method and its power to evoke memory, feeling, and spatial storytelling.

4. **Use real-world examples to demystify the method.**
   Show images or quotes from previous projects to ground theory in practice and encourage cross-cultural recognition.

5. **Normalise practical and emotional challenges.**
   Encourage open conversation about the realities of conducting mobile interviews e.g. weather, equipment, visibility and solve them collectively.

6. **Empower through co-creation.**
   Allow participants to shape the research tools and walk design. Avoid imposing rigid structures; adapt to local realities and personal styles.

7. **Value the walk as research.**
   Treat the 'practice' activity as meaningful data collection in itself. Powerful stories emerged, trust deepened, and visible pride took centre stage.

8. **Debrief with intention.**
   Create space to reflect, share learning, and acknowledge emotions. These conversations surface insight that is critical to inclusive, ethical, community-led research.
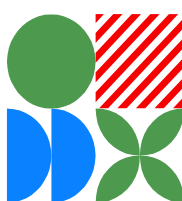
Training Workshop 2: Photo Diaries

The second day of the training focused on how photo diaries can help explore ageing, place, and health and wellbeing. Building on the momentum and insights generated during the go-along interviews, we used this session to deepen our understanding of the everyday experiences of Roma communities, and to explore how photography can support older Roma people to share meaningful stories about ageing in place.
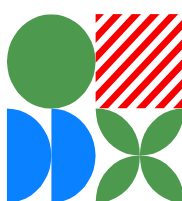
Welcome Back

We began with a warm welcome and check-in, giving community researchers space to reflect on their experiences from Workshop 1. Several participants shared moments that had stayed with them from the go-along interviews, whether it was a story told while passing a familiar shopfront, or the feeling of being trusted with someone's personal narrative during the walk. These reflections set the tone for the day ahead.

We then introduced the focus of the session: how photographs can be used not just to document people's environments, but to tell stories, spark memories and capture subtle aspects of everyday life. One of the guiding quotes we returned to throughout the day was: "A picture paints a thousand words." Photos can say things we struggle to put into words. They hold memories, emotions, and everyday moments. A simple image, such as a path, a door, or a cup of tea, can open rich stories about connection, care, struggle and belonging.

Reflecting on Community Researchers' Own Photographs

Ahead of Day 2 of the training session, community researchers had been invited to take a small collection of photographs that represented different aspects of their daily lives and neighbourhoods *(see templates).* Prompts encouraged them to capture something that reflected their everyday routines, something that made them feel connected or cared for, something that contributed to their wellbeing and something that caused frustration or difficulty.

This activity became the emotional and reflective heart of the morning. Each researcher shared a selection of their images and described what they meant to them in the context of health and place. The conversations that followed were deeply personal and rich with insight.

Photographs of kitchen scenes (see the images below) were taken independently by a few co-researchers and they sparked a discussion about the enjoyment of cooking and the social importance of food, but also about the gendered expectations placed on Roma women within the home. The images prompted reflections on how domestic roles, though often framed as routine, carry emotional labour and unspoken pressures that shape women's everyday experiences.

Images 18, 19, 20 & 21: Importance of cooking and balancing gendered roles

Several participants had taken photos of family. These opened conversations about the centrality of family within Roma communities, not only as a cultural touchstone, but as a key support structure in later life. Family emerged as a profound source of care, belonging, and meaning, shaping how older Roma people experience connection, identity and intergenerational responsibility in the context of place.

The photographs also created opportunities to talk about memories tied to place and significant life course events, helping discussions move beyond descriptive detail of what was visible in the images toward deeper reflections on lived experience and personal history.

Images 22 & 23: Central role of family in the lives of the Roma family

Other photographs drew attention to physical and environmental challenges. One image of a steep stairwell led to a discussion about how housing design and maintenance can restrict mobility, particularly for older people with health conditions. These images brought to light frustrations and barriers, spaces that make it difficult to get out, engage with others, or feel safe at home.
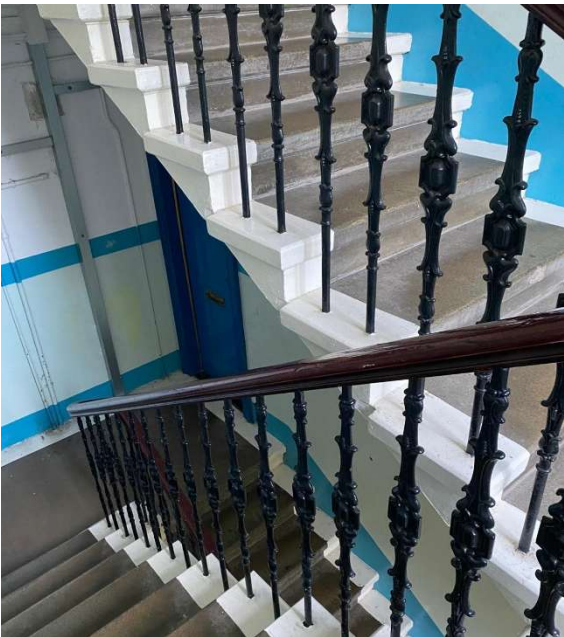
Image 24 (left): A flight of stairs in an apartment block illustrates the challenges for ageing Roma in navigating everyday space
Image 25 (right): Florin Covaci photographed his backyard to document how garbage and fly-tipping have attracted rats, making the area unusable

Together, the photographs offered a layered and multifaceted view of daily life. They captured not only moments of joy and comfort, but also the constraints, inequalities and expectations
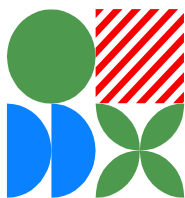
that shape being Roma. Importantly, the visual method opened up conversations that may have remained hidden in a standard interview or even a walking tour. It made visible the intimate, emotional and often gendered geographies of everyday life and reminded us of the power of imagery to reveal what words alone may not.

Crucially, the photo diaries also illuminated the physical, social and cultural values that underpin experiences of ageing in Roma communities, from the significance of intergenerational care and cultural continuity to the challenges of navigating inaccessible housing or public space. These insights deepened our understanding of what healthy ageing in place means within different Roma contexts, foregrounding the everyday practices important to the Roma community.

Importantly, by creating and reflecting on their own mini photo diaries, community researchers gained first-hand experience of the method. This was very much a *learning by doing* exercise. It allowed participants not only to understand how photo diaries work in theory, but to feel how they unfold in practice. How prompts can trigger memories, how images can open up storytelling, and how everyday scenes can carry deep personal meaning.

Everyone engaged fully in the process and reported finding it both enjoyable and illuminating. As well as revealing personal insights, the activity also fostered a sense of connection across the group. Seeing each other's images and hearing the stories behind them offered new perspectives on shared places, revealed unexpected commonalities (and differences), and deepened the sense of trust and solidarity within the team. The mini photo diary thus functioned as both a research training tool and a community-building experience.

Introducing the Photo Diary Method

After the photo reflections, we introduced the concept of photo diaries more formally. We explained that a photo diary is a collection of images taken by participants over a period of time to tell a story about their everyday life. The strength of the method lies in its flexibility; people can take photos when and where they feel comfortable and later talk through their meaning through photo-elicitation interviews and other approaches (Glaw et al., 2017; Harper, 2002; Johnsen et al., 2008).

We explored the reasons this method is particularly valuable in co-produced, community-based research. Unlike more structured interview formats, photo diaries allow participants to

collect their own images in their own time and on their own terms. This shifts ownership of the research process, giving individuals greater control over what they choose to share and how they represent their experiences. It also helps to challenge some of the power dynamics associated with sit-down interviews, something that many community researchers discussed being problematic in earlier phases of the research.

Looking at Examples and Opening Up Dialogue

To further build confidence, we shared photo diary images from previous funded research projects undertaken by the project team. These included:

- Urban regeneration and change in UK neighbourhoods, showing how physical and social transformations affect feelings of place attachment and belonging
- Ageing in urban environments in India, including images that captured everyday participation as well as barriers to using public space
- The experiences of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as they navigated unfamiliar surroundings, built new routines, and negotiated their sense of belonging

As an example, the following images were taken by a community co-researcher in a project exploring the impact of urban regeneration on communities in East Manchester, reflecting on the challenges of maintaining a sense of belonging in rapidly transforming regeneration contexts, in this case during a process of housing market change in the local area.

Images 26 & 27: Community change and regeneration in East Manchester

As we looked at these examples together, community researchers responded with curiosity and recognition. Some were surprised by what others had chosen to capture, while others noted similarities with their own lives, such as moving to a new place, adapting to change, or
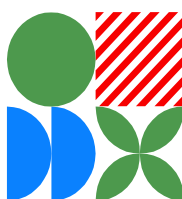
dealing with exclusion. For example, the following images were taken by a refugee and asylum seeker living in East Manchester, who reflected on the challenges of settling into a new community and navigating unfamiliar systems. These stories deeply resonated with many Roma community researchers, who had also experienced migration and the complexities of making a new life in the UK. Sharing these experiences not only affirmed common ground but also encouraged new opportunities for dialogue within the training about identity, belonging and the emotional dimensions of place – across different migrant journeys and contexts.

Images 28 & 29: Negotiating community spaces for refugee and asylum seekers

These images became springboards for deeper discussion about visual images. The group talked about what makes a photo meaningful, how much context a picture needs, and the difference between spontaneous everyday photos of place and more deliberate or posed images. Practical concerns also emerged: What if someone doesn't want to take photos? What if they worry their life isn't "interesting enough"? These questions led to thoughtful conversations about how photographs can reveal the taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life, challenging the idea that a life must be "interesting" to be worth documenting, and highlighting the power of ordinary moments to tell meaningful stories.

This process did more than introduce examples, it helped community researchers connect emotionally with the method. It highlighted the power of photography to evoke stories, surface memories and capture complex experiences of place. And in doing so, it also prompted participants to reflect on and share their own experiences of settling into new communities and witnessing changes in their neighbourhoods. We worked through these questions together, creating a supportive and open space for dialogue.

Supporting Materials and Tools

We then introduced the resources that had been prepared to help community researchers support others through the photo elicitation process. This included a *How to Do Photo Diaries Step-by-Step*, *Photo Diary Interview Guide for Community Researchers*, and an accessible *Participant Information Sheet: Photo Diaries* **(see templates)** to share with those taking part. We read through these together, pausing for clarification and encouraging suggestions for improvement. The feedback was constructive; community researchers offered thoughtful ways to make the instructions even clearer and more user-friendly, particularly for people with lower literacy or less experience with photography.

Guiding the Photo Elicitation Interview

The session then moved into a discussion of how to guide a photo elicitation interview, using participants' own photographs as a way to start a conversation about ageing, wellbeing and place.

We talked about the interview setting – such as finding a quiet, comfortable space, laying the photographs out on a table or other flat surface, and inviting the participant to choose where to begin their story. Community researchers found this approach helpful and empowering, as it transferred control to the participant. Rather than working through each image in a fixed order, the emphasis was on participants guiding the journey themselves, pausing, jumping between images, or skipping any they did not wish to discuss.

There was particular emphasis on the importance of active listening. Rather than filling every silence or trying to interpret the photos ourselves, we discussed the value of waiting, being present and providing the space for participants to reflect. From this, an important lesson emerged: some photos may stir emotions or memory, while others may seem mundane but hold deeper resonance. The key is to remain open, compassionate and curious.

Community researchers were encouraged, when applying the photo-elicitation interviews in practice, to take a few moments afterwards to jot down their own reflections – what stood out, what surprised them, and how they felt the process went. These reflections were intended to form part of the reflexive diaries we asked them to keep across the project, supporting critical consideration of their positionality, including their dual role as researchers and Roma community members. In doing so, the process aimed to acknowledge how identity, trust, and

lived experience shape the research encounter, and how these insights are central to the integrity and depth of co-produced knowledge.

Ethics, Consent, and Care

We then discussed the topic of ethics and consent, which we originally covered in phase 1 training workshops, although this time, with a specific focus on the use of photographs. Participants reflected on situations that might feel tricky; for instance, taking pictures inside the home, places of worship, or service settings where others are present. We talked through how to manage these scenarios and the different types of consent issues that arise when photographing people or identifiable spaces.

Consent also extended to how images might be used or shared after the research and limits to anonymity in photographs. We discussed the idea of *negotiated consent*, highlighting that in some previous research projects, participants actively chose not to be anonymous and wanted to be seen within the research, including being visible in photographs. For some, this visibility helped foster a sense of ownership and representation. We reiterated that this is absolutely fine, provided that participants are fully informed about how the images will be used and their consent is clearly recorded.

Some community researchers spoke about how taking or sharing certain images could stir up strong emotions. Others noted that participants might worry about "doing it wrong." We reassured everyone that there is no right or wrong kind of photo. We encouraged flexibility; some participants might prefer to take part with a friend or with a researcher by their side. Others might need extra support or reassurance along the way. We also discussed the important role of the community researcher in offering both practical and emotional support – being sensitive to individual needs, adjusting the process when necessary, and holding space when photos evoke difficult or transformative memories. While photographs can help generate powerful and previously unspoken stories, they can also revisit past trauma or negative experiences which were particularly pertinent to the Roma community. Managing this carefully, while gently encouraging participants to share what matters to them, was seen as central to the ethos of the project.

Finally, we discussed the technical and ethical considerations around storing and transferring images. Once photographs had been collected, we explained the processes for securely

transferring them to the community organisation or research team, along with the responsibilities of the community researcher in this. These practices were designed to protect participants' contributions and maintain trust throughout the research process.

Group Debrief and Closing Reflections

The session ended with an open group debrief. Community researchers reflected on what they had learned and how they felt. Many spoke about their enthusiasm for using images. Several said they were surprised by how transformative the use of photos could be, even when the subject was something ordinary.

We also discussed next steps. Community researchers were encouraged to use their reflexive diaries to document their experiences capturing their thoughts and emotions as they practise go-along interviews and support others with photo diaries. Beyond individual reflection, we emphasised that this is not something they are doing alone. Plans have been made to support community researchers collectively, including reflexive sessions once they've had a chance to try out the methods, as well as informal opportunities to come together such as social gatherings in the case study sites. These group spaces offer a chance to share learning, build confidence and foster solidarity within the team, both between academic and non-academic partners. In addition, day-to-day support continues, for example, through our WhatsApp groups and check-ins, helping ensure that everyone feels connected, valued and able to reach out when needed.

In summary, community researchers said they felt more confident in using photo diaries and in guiding others. As the session closed, there was a strong sense of energy and commitment to bringing this method into the next phase of the RomaPlaceAge project.

Key Takeaways for Workshop 2 – Photo Diaries

1. **Lead with connection and care.**
   Start by reconnecting with previous activities and inviting personal reflections. This maintains momentum and deepens trust.

2. **Frame photos as stories, not snapshots.**
   Use guiding phrases like *"a picture paints a thousand words"* to emphasise the value of everyday imagery and encourage diverse interpretations.

3. **Make training personal and experiential.**
   Having participants take their own photos and reflect on them proved essential. It built confidence, surfaced insight, and modelled the emotional power of visual methods.

4. **Highlight family, care, and space.**
   Many images reflected gendered roles, intergenerational ties, and barriers to accessibility. Allow these themes to emerge organically and hold space for emotional discussion.

5. **Use examples to build recognition and dialogue.**
   Sharing photo diaries from other communities helped open conversations around migration, regeneration, and belonging, creating empathy and shared reflection.

6. **Support with tools, not rules.**
   Offer clear, flexible materials (guides, info sheets, consent forms), but always check that they work for your group. Adapt language, examples, and processes as needed.

7. **Reinforce participant control.**
   In photo elicitation interviews, let participants lead. Trust the stories behind the images, and hold space for silence, emotion, and layered meaning.

8. **Emphasise care and consent.**
   Go beyond procedural ethics; discuss emotional impacts, visibility, and negotiated consent. Make space for vulnerability while supporting autonomy.

9. **Celebrate diverse contributions.**
   There is no "right" kind of photo. Honour everyday objects and moments as powerful expressions of lived experience.

10. **Close with reflection and solidarity.**
    End with a group debrief, reinforcing that this work is not individual but collective. Support networks, shared reflection, and solidarity are just as important as method.
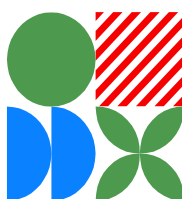
Acknowledgements

References

Bartlett, R., Koncul, A., Lid, I. M., George, E. O., & Haugen, I. (2023). Using Walking / Go Along

Interviews with People in Vulnerable Situations: A Synthesized Review of the Research

Literature. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *22*, 1–14.

https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231164606

Carpiano, R. M. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The "Go-Along" interview as a novel

method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. *Health &*

Place, *15*(1), 263–272. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2008.05.003

Castrodale, M. A. (2018). Mobilizing dis/ability research: A critical discussion of qualitative go-

along interviews in practice. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *24*(1), 45–55.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417727765

Fudge, N., Wolfe, C. D. A., & McKevitt, C. (2007). Involving older people in health research.

Age and Ageing, *36*(5), 492–500. https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afm029

Glaw, X., Inder, K., Kable, A., & Hazelton, M. (2017). Visual methodologies in qualitative

research: Autophotography and photo elicitation applied to mental health research.

International Journal of Qualitative Methods, *16*(1), 1–8.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917748215

Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*, *17*(1), 13–

26. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725860220137345

James, H., & Buffel, T. (2023). Co-research with older people: A systematic literature review.

Ageing and Society, *43*(12), 2930–2956. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X21002014

Johnsen, S., May, J., & Cloke, P. (2008). Imag (in) ing 'homeless places': Using auto-

photography to (re) examine the geographies of homelessness. *Area*, *40*(2), 194–207.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2008.00801.x

Woolrych, R., Marinov, A. G., Sixsmith, J., Hyde, A., Torak, P., Morteanu, C., Greenfields, M.,

Cisneros, R., Smolinska-Poffley, G., Puska, L., & Balog, M. (2025, January). *Training*

Guide for Community Researchers: The Case of the RomaPlaceAge Project.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/663b8050cec222721d6c4762/t/67d2db62e294f

55bf9073b7e/1741871972874/Training+Guide+for+Roma+Community+Researchers.p

df

Templates

Go-Along Interview Guide

What is a Go-Along Interview?

A go-along interview is a special type of walking conversation where the person being interviewed (the participant) takes the lead, showing the community researcher (that's you!) around their local neighbourhood. As they walk and talk, they share their everyday experiences of living in that place – both the good and the not-so-good.

These interviews are a chance to see the world through someone else's eyes, using walking and movement to spark memories, feelings, and stories that might not come up otherwise in a sit-down interview.

You don't need to be an expert interviewer – just bring curiosity, care, and a good pair of shoes!

What's the Purpose of the Go-Along Interview?

The purpose is to understand how people experience the places they live – what helps them feel supported, connected, and independent, and what makes their lives more difficult or challenging.

As a community researcher, your job is to:

- Listen carefully and support the participant to lead the journey.

- Ask open and thoughtful questions during the walk.

- Record the interview (with permission), take photos and notes, if that is appropriate.

- Pay special attention to the things that matter to the participant, including **places, feelings, stories, and memories.**

Step 1. Before the Walk: Getting Ready

1. **Route Planning**
   Ask the participant in advance to think about a local route that is meaningful to them, somewhere they go regularly, or one that tells a story about living in the community.

2. **Consent and Safety**
   - Make sure you've talked through the **Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for the Go-Along Interviews document**.
   - Remind them they can stop the walk or skip questions at any time.
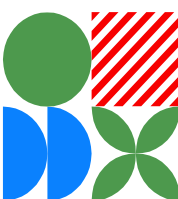
- o Be clear about what is being recorded (audio, photos) and why.
- o Agree on safety guidelines and be aware of any accessibility needs. Be mindful of their, and your, safety, comfort, mobility, preferred walking pace. Try to make sure participants feel safe, comfortable, and respected during the go-along.

Step 2. During the Walk: The Participant Leads

Start with a friendly invitation:

"Take me on a journey around your local neighbourhood. Tell me about what you see, what is important to you, and how it feels to live here."

The walk is led by the participant. Your role is to support, listen, and gently guide the conversation when needed. Let natural stories and reflections emerge but use prompts if things slow down.

Topics and Prompts to Use During the Walk

You don't need to ask all these questions – just use what feels right, based on where the participant takes you and what they choose to share.

Living in the Community
- Can you tell me about your experiences of living here?
- What are the best things about your community? What are the worst things?

Places Along the Way
- Where are we now? What happens in this place?
- Why is this place important to you? Probe: impacts on their health and wellbeing.
- Do you come here often? What do you do here? Probe: how it supports their health and wellbeing.
- Are there any memories connected to this place?

Feeling at Home in the Community
- How easy is it to get around the community?
- Are there places that feel welcoming? Or unwelcoming? Probe: how does this impact your health and wellbeing?
- What helps people stay active, get out, and keep in touch with others around here as they age?
- Are there places you avoid in the community? Why?

Places to Pause and Reflect
- Would you like to stop at any places that are especially meaningful?
- Can you take me to a place you really like – or don't like – and tell me why?
- What do you notice with your senses – sights, sounds, smells?

Barriers and Challenges
- Are there any difficulties you face getting around?
- What makes it hard for older people to use this space?

- What changes in this area would make your life easier or better? Probe: to improve your health and wellbeing.

Feelings and Attachment to Community
- How does this place make you feel?
- Do you feel at home, or welcome in this area, that you belong here?
- Have you noticed changes in the community over time? How have those changes affected you or people you know? Probe: how have these changes impacted your life and the life of others?

Practical Tips for the Researcher
- **Recording:** Use an audio recorder (with permission). Take notes or photos (again, with permission), especially of places they mention.
- **Pacing:** Let the participant set the walking pace. It's OK to pause or take breaks.
- **Weather:** Before the go-along interview, check the weather and dress appropriately. Bring water and wear comfortable shoes.
- **Interruptions:** Be prepared for unexpected things – traffic, people stopping to chat, or background noise. It's all part of the setting.

Step 3. After the Walk: Wrapping Up
Once you've finished the route:
- Thank the participant warmly.
- Ask if they'd like to share any final thoughts.
- Offer to sit somewhere for a short debrief, if appropriate.
- Remind them how their insights will be used in the project and how they can stay involved.

Take a few minutes as soon as possible after the walk to write down your thoughts in your **reflexive diary**. This is your space to reflect on how the interview went – there's no right or wrong.

For your reflexive diary, you might think about:
- What felt **interesting or surprising** during the conversation?
- What places, stories, or emotions stood out?
- Was there anything you found **challenging or difficult**?
- How did the **participant** seem to feel during the walk?
- How did **you** feel during the walk?
- What might you do differently in your next go-along interview?

Final Notes

Go-along interviews aren't about getting the "right" answers. They are about **listening deeply** and seeing how people connect with places in their everyday lives.

You're walking alongside someone – not just physically, but also emotionally and experientially. That's powerful.
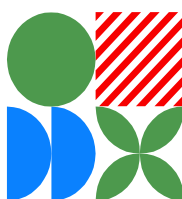
Go-Along Interview Information Sheet

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research study called *RomaPlaceAge*. Please take time to read the following information carefully and decide whether you would like to take part.

1. Who is conducting this research?

This research is being conducted by Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, in partnership with the following: Community Renewal Trust *Rom Romeha*, COMPAS Charity, Luton Roma Trust, Roma Support Group, Dundee University, Anglia Ruskin University, and Coventry University.

2. Background

a) What is the research about?

This project explores the experiences of Roma people aged 40 and over living in their neighbourhoods. We are particularly interested in your views about your local area, daily life, and how your environment supports or challenges your health and wellbeing as you age.

b) Why have I been chosen?

You are being invited because you live in one of the areas being studied and are part of the Roma community. We want to hear about your lived experiences.

Who can take part?

- People aged 40 or over

- Living in one of the selected study areas (e.g. Govanhill, Luton, Peterborough)

- Identifying as Roma

3. Do I have to take part?

No - it's your choice. If you agree to take part, we'll ask you to sign a consent form. You can stop at any time without giving a reason.

4. What will I be asked to do?

You will take part in a go-along interview – a walking conversation in your neighbourhood. You will choose the route, and we will talk as we walk. The interview may take between 45 and 60 minutes.

- The interview will be audio recorded.

- The researcher will also take photographs (with your permission) of relevant places or scenes that you discuss during the walk.

- Some of these photos may include identifiable features such as your house, local landmarks, or areas closely linked to your life. These may reveal something about who you are, even if you are not in the photo.

You can always say **no** to a photo being taken, and please let us know if there were any photos you would like us **not** to use.

5. Will my information be kept confidential?
Your name will not be used in any reports or publications. However, we cannot guarantee anonymity in photos that show your surroundings or community[1]. You will be asked for your permission before any photo is used. Your information and photos will be securely stored.

6. What are the benefits of taking part?
You will have the chance to share your experiences and contribute to work that may improve support for Roma communities.

7. Will I be paid?
You will receive a £ (*insert amount*) voucher as a thank you for taking part.

8. What happens if I change my mind?
You can withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

9. Who do I contact if I have questions?
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:
[*INSERT NAME OF COMMUNITY RESEARCHER*]

Or the lead researcher for the project Sasho Marinov, email: am3021@hw.ac.uk ;
www.romaplaceage.com

---

[1] Participants may, in fact, choose to be identified in this research and their names mentioned, and that is totally acceptable. It is entirely up to them.
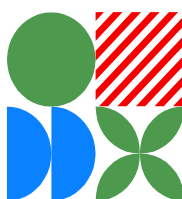
Instructions for Community Researchers – Before the Go-Along Interview Exercise

Thank you for being part of RomaPlaceAge! On Day 1 of the training, we'll be practising *go-along interviews*, a method where we walk through a local area while talking about places, stories, and experiences.

To prepare for this session:

Plan a Local Walking Route

If you feel comfortable, choose a short walking route (around 30–40 minutes) that's meaningful to you. This might include:

- Places you go regularly (shops, parks, services)

- Areas that you feel connected to – or disconnected from

- Places you like or dislike

- Places that are important in your life

- Spaces that show changes or challenges in the neighbourhood

Think of 3–5 places along the way where you could stop briefly and talk or reflect.

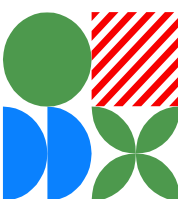*You don't need to explain everything in advance… just be ready to guide us through what matters to you.*

Photo Diary Exercise

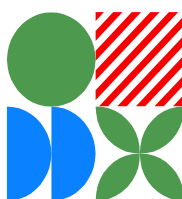*Before Day 2 of the training, co-researchers were asked to complete the following simple task*:

"**Please, collect 2-3 photos of places, object, or situations that:**

- Represent your daily life

- Something that helps you, or others, feel connected or supported (in your local neighbourhood/in the area you live)

- Help you feel well, active, or at ease (or happy?)

- Annoy or frustrate you"

How to Do Photo Diaries – Step by Step

RomaPlaceAge Project

This guide supports you in managing the photo diary process confidently and ethically. Your role is to explain the task clearly; support participants as needed and have a relaxed conversation about the photos they choose to share.

Step 1: Introducing the Photo Diary Task

- Explain the purpose: "We would like you to take part in a **photo activity** where you take up to 12 photographs over 1–2 weeks that show **what life is like in your community from your point of view"**
- Go through the <u>Participant Information Sheet</u> with them (you can read it together).
- Answer any questions participants may have, make sure they understand it well and that they feel comfortable.
- Emphasise that they are in control… they choose what to photograph and what to share**.**

Step 2: Supporting the Photo Activity

- Give them the photo prompt:

"The key thing is to take images that are important to you and your everyday life!" More details about the task and the things to photograph, see the **Doc. 2** (<u>Participant Information Sheet)</u> document in the section *What Will I be Asked to Do?*).

- They can use their phone, or we can provide a camera.
- Ask them to take up to 12 photos over 1–2 weeks.
- Make sure participants understand *they need to gain consent if they choose to take photographs of other people*.

Step 3: Arranging the Interview

- Contact the participant at the end of the agreed period (1-2 weeks).
- Help them share with you their photos securely.
- Agree on the best time and place to talk through their images – this can be at home, a quiet community space, or wherever they feel most comfortable.

Step 4: Doing the Photo Interview

Refer to the <u>Photo Diary Interview Guide</u> for more guidance and prompts!

- Sit together, with the images visible.
- Let participants take the lead.
- Be respectful, patient, and kind. Some stories may be emotional or hard to share.
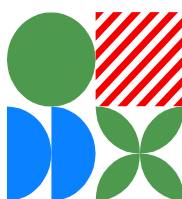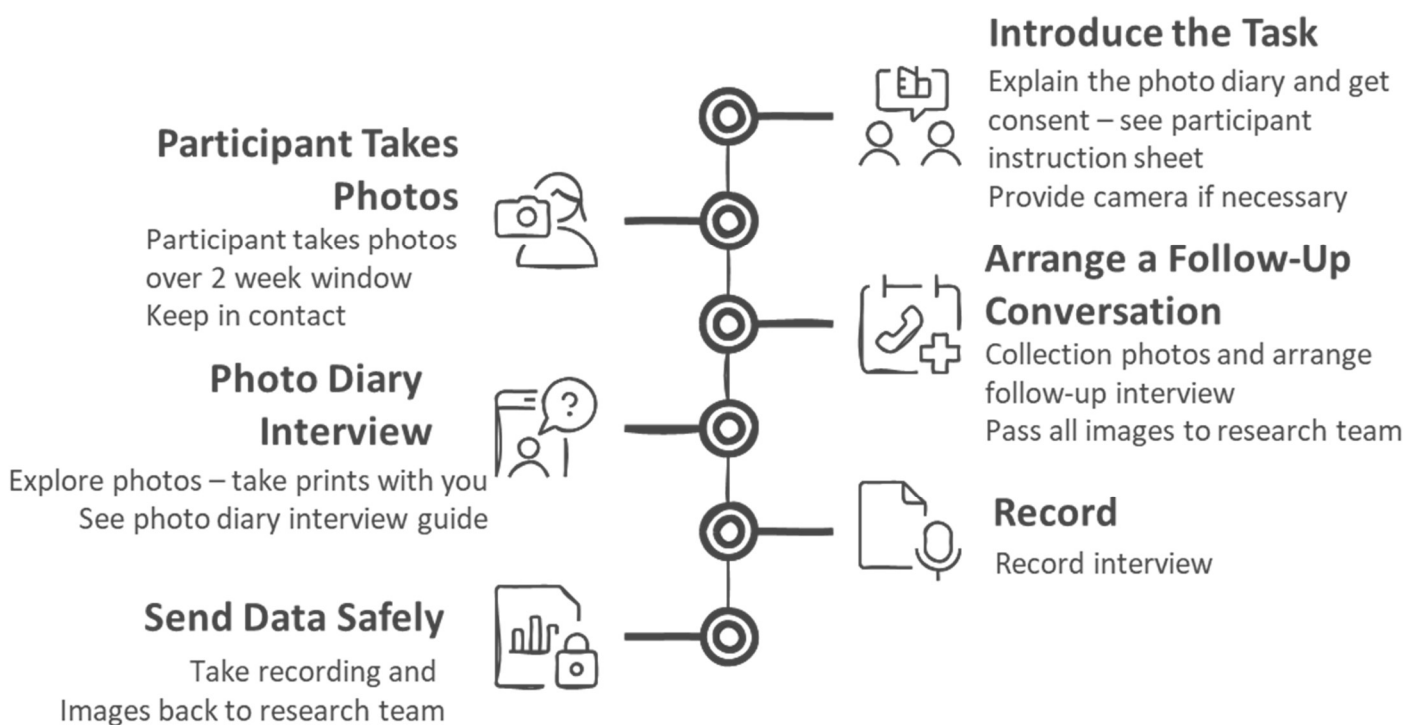
- If they don't want to discuss a photo, that's OK.

Step 5: Recording and Reflecting

- Audio record the interview.
- After the session:
  - thank the participant for their valuable contribution!
  - when you have parted ways and you are on your own, take time to reflect in your **reflexive diary**:
    - What stood out to you?
    - What felt powerful or surprising?
    - Were there any challenges or things you could improve in your next interview?

Step 6: Storing and Sharing the Data

- Make sure you keep all photos and audio recordings secure and pass them to the lead researcher or the community organisation.
- <u>Once the transfer of photos has been confirmed by the research lead/community organisation, make sure no photos are left on your phone or computer!</u>

Introduce the Task
Explain the photo diary and get consent – see participant instruction sheet
Provide camera if necessary

Participant Takes Photos
Participant takes photos over 2 week window
Keep in contact

Arrange a Follow-Up Conversation
Collection photos and arrange follow-up interview
Pass all images to research team

Photo Diary Interview
Explore photos – take prints with you
See photo diary interview guide

Record
Record interview

Send Data Safely
Take recording and Images back to research team

Participant Information Sheet: Photo Diaries

About the Research

We are carrying out a study called RomaPlaceAge to better understand what life is like for Roma people in their mid and later life (aged 40+) in their local communities.

We want to hear about:

- What it's like to live in your neighbourhood
- What you like and don't like
- What matters most to you where you live
- How can ageing members of the Roma communities (aged 40+) be better supported now and in the future

Your views will help us learn how local areas can better support the Roma community as they age.

**Why Have I Been Asked to Take Part?**

You have been asked to take part in this study because you live in one of the areas that are part of our study – Luton, Peterborough or Govanhill – and are aged 40 and over. We would like to hear about your personal experiences of living in your area.

What Will I Be Asked to Do?

We would like you to take part in a **photo activity** where you take up to 12 photographs over 1–2 weeks **that show what life is like in your community from your point of view**.

You may want to take photos of:

- **Things you do each day like cooking, exercising, cleaning, working, relaxing**
- **Places you spend time – inside your home and outside, like the park, garden or street**
- **Your home, the street you live on, the wider neighbourhood**
- **Local places you go to like shops, the doctor, library, or community spaces**
- **Where you see or meet friends and family (home, outside, in other places)**
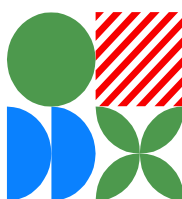
- **Things you don't like or find difficult, like spaces that feel unsafe, messy, noisy, or unwelcome**
- **Services or spaces you wish you could use but you cannot, like a clinic, support service, or community group**

There is no right or wrong answer to this – **the key thing is to take images that are important to you and your everyday life!**

How Do I Take the Photos?

- You can use your own mobile phone or camera, or we can lend you a camera if needed.
- Take up to 12 photos over 1–2-week period.
- A community researcher will help arrange a time to talk about your photos afterwards.
.

What Happens After I Take the Photos?

- A community researcher will **collect your photos or help upload your photos.**
- We'll then arrange a **conversation (interview)** to go through the pictures with you.
- You will **choose which photos** you want to talk about.
- You can explain what the pictures mean to you, how they make you feel, and what they say about your life.

This conversation may last about **45–60 minutes** and can take place somewhere comfortable for you.

What About Privacy and Consent?

- All your data will be kept private and secure
- Your participation is voluntary
- You can stop at any time without giving a reason
- **IMPORTANT: Photos are not always anonymous**. Even if names are not included, some images may still show people, locations, or personal belongings that may identify you or others – especially inside the home or in familiar local spaces.
- You have full control over which photos you share and what you talk about
- You can also tell us if there are any photos you do not want to be used in any reports or presentations
- If a photo includes another person (e.g. a family member or neighbour), please get their permission before taking the photo

What Happens Next?

Once you've finished:

- A co-researcher will collect the camera or help upload the photos securely
- We'll arrange a time to sit down with you and talk about your photos
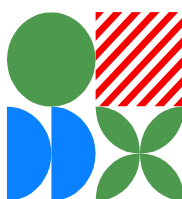
- You'll be asked to explain what the pictures mean to you and why you chose them

What If I Have Any Problems?

If anything goes wrong or you need help, please contact:

[*COMMUNITY RESEARCHER INSERTS NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION*]

Or the research lead for the project: Sasho Marinov am3021@hw.ac.uk
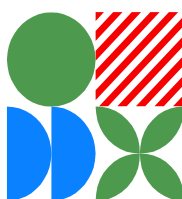
www.romaplaceage.com

Photo Diary Interview Guide for Community Researchers

RomaPlaceAge Project

This guide supports you in talking with someone about the photos they've taken as part of the research.

These images help us understand how people experience health and wellbeing in their neighbourhoods and homes.

Use the questions that feel natural. Let the person lead the conversation and remember that photos can be deeply personal.

Before You Start
- Sit together in a quiet, comfortable place.
- **Lay out their photos face up** (on a table or surface).
- Let them take the lead – they can choose where to begin and which photos they want to talk about.
- Reassure them: *"There's no right or wrong way to do this – just talk about what these images mean to you."*

Start by inviting them to share:
"Tell me about this photo."
"What does this picture show us?"
"What story does it tell about your everyday life?"

Explore what the photo shows:
"Can you describe what we're looking at?"
"Where is this?"
"What is happening or what usually happens here?"

Explore why it matters:
"Why did you choose to photograph this?"
"What does this place, object, or situation mean to you?"
"How is this connected to your health, comfort, or sense of wellbeing?"

Feelings and memories:
"What feelings come up when you look at this photo?"
"Do memories come up when you look at this photo?"
"Is this a place or thing you use often, or avoid?"
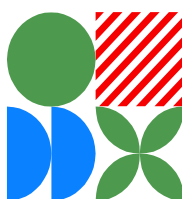
Link to place, ageing, and support:
"What does this photo say about living in your neighbourhood?"
"How does this support or challenge you (or others) as you age?"
"How could this situation be improved for you?

Tips
- Some photos may feel **intimate or emotional** – be respectful and non-judgemental.
- Give the participant space to pause, reflect, and choose what they want to say.

- Don't push – let them skip any photo they don't want to discuss.
- Be curious and compassionate – this is about learning from their lives.

At the End of the Interview

- Thank them sincerely for sharing their photos and stories.
- Ask if they have any final thoughts or reflections.
- Remind them how their contributions will help improve understanding of ageing, wellbeing, and place.
- Pass on the voucher as a token of appreciation.
- When you have a free and comfortable moment, make a quick note of your own reflections in your **reflexive diary** – what stood out? What surprised you? Or were there any challenges or things you could improve in your next interview?
- Pass all images and the recording back to the research team or contact the charity you are representing.