



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

From Plate to Guide: What, why and how for the Eatwell model

Annexe 2: Qualitative research phase two

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Define research & insight

PHE externally commissioned two phases of qualitative research in conjunction with Define Research and Insight. This document provides the findings from the second phase of research.

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I Introduction

Project Background

The 'eatwell plate' in its current form is used across government and by healthcare professionals, schools and industry to convey nutritional information about dietary guidelines. A plate is an established model for conveying nutritional information and has been tested extensively with consumers and health professionals¹.

Given potential impending changes to the eatwell plate content², the eatwell plate is under review³. Qualitative research has been commissioned to support this review by exploring ways to improve communication of information and messages so that the plate does the best possible job in supporting consumers to eat a healthy diet in keeping with government advice.

Specifically, the research needs to assess amongst consumers:

- to what extent the current visual approach and style is still appropriate and/or how it can be improved to be optimally engaging and accessible
- how consumers respond to changes that are made to the content of the plate to reflect new recommendations in terms of population intake of sugars and fibre⁴
- what supporting information/messages need to be included within or alongside the plate to ensure consumer take out and response is in line with objectives
- how the execution of the plate can be optimised for maximum accessibility, engagement and understanding across the diverse consumer audience

Two phases of research were required:

- Phase one: To inform design direction by understanding responses to the current plate alongside initial suggestions for changes in execution, content and supporting messages
- Phase two: To test the new/updated plate visual (developed in response to findings of Phase one) to understand whether this delivers across the plate's objectives

¹ the plate design was chosen following qualitative research into consumer acceptability on the presentation of nutrition information. Other countries' visual approaches to communicate food-based dietary guidelines vary, for example, including a pyramid, food circle, pagoda and rainbow.

² The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) recent report on Carbohydrates and Health proposes revising recommendations on sugars and fibre

³ it was last reviewed in 2007

⁴ details as per publication of SACN (see above)

Both phases included fieldwork in each of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

This report details of the findings of Phase two in England. Separate reports are available for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. An overarching PowerPoint presentation summarises the all nation picture for Phase two.

Separate reports are also available for Phase one findings: individual reports for each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and an overarching PowerPoint presentation summarises the all nation picture for Phase one.

B. Research Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of the research was to 'Inform the development of the eatwell plate so that it best meets consumer needs (for accessibility and understanding) while delivering nutritional guidance in line with updated government policy'.

The overall objective of Phase two of the research was to test the updated plate designs (developed based on insight gathered from Phase one). Specific objectives and questions to help gather feedback from the updated plate include:

- what messages and information are communicated clearly (and which if any are less clear)?
- how do consumers understand the overall design and different components, labels and messages in the updated plate designs?
- to what extent do design approach alternatives affect: overall appeal, accessibility and understanding?
- what else might be required to optimise the plate or support it to ensure that consumer take out is as intended?
- what is the optimal solution from the consumer perspective but (to deliver Government guidance as intended) across the different designs and design components shown?

C. Method and sample

Individual depth interviews, lasting 40 minutes each, were used to assess understanding and usability across the audience. See Appendix for copies of the recruitment questionnaire and discussion guide.

The overall sample of 80 respondents was recruited to represent key criteria as below:

Audience criteria	Splits by depths	Total depths
Lifestage	Young Independent	21
	Younger family only	19
		80

	Younger family + older family	21	
	Older Independent	19	
Gender	Male	32	
	Female	48	
Internet accessibility	Internet-enabled	77	
	Not internet-enabled	3	
SEG	BC1	20	
	C2DE	60	
Ethnicity	Non-EM	39	
	Afro-Caribbean	13	
	African	10	
	Chinese	4	
	South Asian	9	
	Other (Mixed Race)	5	

Additional criteria and definitions of the above were as follows:

All to have sole or joint responsibility for household food shopping.

All to be undertaking at risk behaviours in relation to their own or their family/children's food consumption, and relevant to the eatwell plate changes, ie consuming high fat and/or high proportion of processed or convenience food and/or snacks.

Across Younger family (at least one child aged 5-11 but no children over 11) and Older family (at least one child aged 5-11 but have older children at home in addition), thorough mix of:

- size of family
- composition of family
- spread of age - ensure good spread of ages 5-11 within sample
- representation of boys and girls
- single and two parent households
- age of parent (to fall out naturally but be monitored for spread)
- gender of parents: include at min 6/max 8 mums, min 2/max 4 dads

Spread of warmth to C4L, approx 50:50 to be warmer:colder (warmer = more aware/signed up in past, colder = not heard of it/low awareness).

All family respondents to be sole or joint carers of children in household in which they currently live.

Across Young independent (all to have no children):

- ensure a mix of single and partnered

Across Older independent (all to have no children at home - can be no children at all or empty nest):

- ensure a mix of no children at all and empty nest
- ensure a mix of single and partnered

Spread of age falling out by life stage (to include representation of 18 to 60+).

At least half to be frequent internet users with access to internet at home and/or have a smart phone and to have used apps (can be both) None to have:

- any specific dietary requirements within family, ie serious allergies or medical conditions which dictate dietary requirements

Ethnic minority respondents clustered in appropriate locations. South Asian respondents to include even spread of: Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani.

Fieldwork dates and locations

All fieldwork (split between London, Essex, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester) was undertaken between 15 and 25 September 2015.

Team

The research team included: Joceline Jones, Dulcie Denby-Brewer, Katie Wise, Kirsten Sear, Marnie Mochnacz and Roberta Herrick.

II Conclusions & recommendations

1. Overall, findings were remarkably consistent between the four nations, with only minor nuances around views on the inclusion of some items within the plate.

Respondents across the four nations demonstrated a similar spread of views as well as overall preferences in terms of each of the core design elements under consideration (see below).

In terms of items to include in the plate, respondents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland appeared to demonstrate stronger feeling overall around butter being a better choice than low fat spreads (versus respondents from England), and therefore belonging in the fats and oils section or dairy section rather than the occasional foods section.

Several respondents in Scotland also mentioned that it would be valuable for information supporting the eatwell plate to include detail and guidance on alcohol. It was not suggested as an inclusion in the plate itself; but when considering overall consumption, some were interested in recommended guidelines for alcohol at the same time.

2. Consistently across the nations, as in Phase one, a spread of attitudes and behaviour towards food was seen within the audience.

As noted in Phase one, respondents in this study fell into two broad groups, or more engaged and less engaged:

Those who are more engaged are likely to know more about nutrition and nutrition issues (even though their diets may not be ideal) and have a pre-existing sense of risk. They enjoy food shopping and preparation and are more likely to buy fresh or component foods.

Those who are less engaged tended to have less knowledge about nutrition (as well as less of a sense of risk) but also be less engaged by food itself, finding food shopping a chore and including more pre-prepared foods in their diets.

In reality there would be people who fitted into those categories as well as those on a continuum between the two extremes. Furthermore, external pressures such as time available, budget, fussy children and dieting impact on food behaviour.

However, it is useful to consider these two extremes as they have different needs and responses to the eatwell plate (both current and new designs), engaging with them at different levels broadly in line with their engagement with food and nutrition per se. Needs of the less engaged are a priority, however, since they have more needs in terms of behaviour change and more barriers in terms of current knowledge and understanding with regards to healthy eating.

In light of this, this report distinguishes between the more and less engaged where relevant.

3. Beyond the broad differences in attitude which affects depth of engagement and take out (as noted above), no differences were noted between other respondent types in the sample.

Responses to the visual and messaging content tested within both design approaches was markedly consistent across the sample. While differences in attitude affected overall level of engagement with the plate and range of messaging taken out, no differences were noted on the basis of demographic group (socio-economic group, gender, age or ethnicity). This highlights that the current design is delivering ubiquitous cues that are both widely understood and perceived as relevant.

4. Both designs performed well but a further optimised approach is likely to be achieved if the most successful elements of each design are drawn together.

Overall, responses indicate that either overall layout approach tested in this stage is fit for purpose, as both designs performed well in terms of overall comprehension when seen in its own right⁵.

However, in terms of specific design elements, different elements from across the two designs were strongest. There is also consistency in which are most useful and clear to consumers, whether more or less engaged and irrespective of SEG, gender, nation or ethnicity.

An optimised design would therefore draw the strongest elements from each design. These are detailed below.

5. In general terms, consumers prefer *more rather than less messaging*, as this increases the value they get from the plate.

Although additional messaging is likely to be overlooked initially by those who are less engaged, its presence does not put them off. Furthermore, it was clear that all consumers get more out of the plate in terms of learning when more messaging is present. Findings were clear in terms of which tested messages worked best for comprehension and understanding (see point 8 below).

Different messaging components highlight different time periods for which to consider messages around consumption, with a mix of daily and weekly. While this confused some consumers initially, a balance of daily and weekly messages was generally understood to

⁵ ie first and without any comparison to the other design

indicate that the plate broadly applies to both time periods (and this was felt to make sense).

6. Both designs share a common weakness in terms of the hydration visual and message being recessive (and hence sometimes missed).

An optimised design will improve the stand out of both hydration visual and message by:

- increasing size of both visual and copy relative to the plate
- or reorganising layout so that it is not lost

7. Consumers found the inclusion of calorie information helpful and this should be retained.

The border in Design one with calorie information was welcomed. Daily calorie limits are felt to be a very useful part of the information provided as they set the food guidelines in the context of overall quantity and limits.

However, not all understand calories and some have questions around size of person/child limits. These additional information needs would ideally be addressed in supporting face to face or written information

8. Respondents also liked the border which was felt to bring several positive elements to the design.

In the first instance, it created a positive visual effect by given a sense of balance and order to the overall visual impression.

However, it also performed a function in terms of overlaying a time period to the guide by putting it in the context of a day (through the daily calorie limit). Although other elements of the plate indicate alternative time periods (eg fish consumption over a week, occasional foods), respondents felt a strong 'daily' message was helpful to encourage appropriate proportions, variety and hydration during that short period.

9. In principle, consumers find the idea of including a packaged food traffic light panel useful.

The packaged food traffic light panel addresses a key facet of current food consumption (packaged food) and therefore allows consumers to both assess their current choices and choose healthier options amongst foods recommended by the eatwell guide (eg leaner meat).

However, most felt that the panel needed some further explanation to make it useful. That is, they wanted an explanation in supporting information of how the panel is intended to work and, for some, total recommended limits on sugar, salt and fat.

10. Different category labels and messages across the eatwell guide designs performed more or less well and the following table summarises the strongest options/copy direction (as tested) by component.

Overall guide	Header	Eatwell Guide
	Sub-header	Use the eatwell guide to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group
Green segment	Segment label	Fruit and vegetables
	Segment message	Eat at least 5 different fruit and vegetables every day
Yellow segment	Segment label	Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other carbohydrates (or different order of initial items)
	Segment message	Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with lower salt, sugar and fat
Pink segment	Segment label	Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
	Segment message	Eat more beans and pulses, choose less red meat and eat oily fish at least once a week / eat fish twice a week
Purple segment	Segment label	Oils, fats and spreads
	Segment message	Choose small amounts of unsaturated oils and spreads
	Segment label	Occasional foods
	Segment message	As little as possible and in small amounts
Blue segment	Segment label	Dairy and alternatives OR Milk, cheese, yoghurt and dairy alternatives
	Segment message	Choose lower fat and lower sugar options
Hydration	Message	Water, lower fat milk, unsweetened tea and coffee all count. Limit fruit juice to 150ml a day, including that in smoothies

Of the two alternative approaches tested for the purple segment, moving the occasional foods out of the plate and to the side sends the clearest and most consistent message to consumers.

Placing the occasional foods on the side (Design one) was felt to convey that they are not being recommended as part of a healthy diet. Furthermore, outside of the plate, the label 'occasional' was more likely to be interpreted as less than daily (more likely, once to several times a week, or at weekends).

By contrast, the design that included occasional foods within the plate itself (Design two) was thought to communicate that foods are accepted - or even recommended. Furthermore, as the plate copy variously gives advice for daily or weekly consumption, those consumers most keen to retain these foods in their diet found reason to believe that 'occasional' was legitimately interpreted as daily (just not at every meal).

Respondents often liked the larger, centralised header, although this was sometimes criticised for being lower case.

The centralised header in Design one was large and easy to read and therefore often preferred overall on the basis of clarity and easy of reading.

Some respondents were critical of the use of lower case or mixed case and felt the ideal title would have both 'Eatwell' and 'Guide' capitalised.

The new drawn approach (consistent in both designs) was well received.

Respondents were mainly positive about the illustration style. Although a few felt the style is aimed at children, they recognise that it has strengths for adults and parents as well. Indeed, most felt the style would appeal across ages and was therefore very inclusive.

All food items were felt to be clear and illustrated in an appealing way, with a couple of exceptions that need adjusting for clarity, as detailed in the following table.

Butter	Needs to be packaged and labelled to clarify
Potatoes	Colour needs adjusting so that they are not misinterpreted as sweet potatoes.
Central meat item	Meat type needs clarifying
Bread rolls	Need clarifying for some by lightening slightly

As indicated in this section and through this report, there were specific suggestions for additional information content to be supplied to answer key questions.

Where supporting/secondary information can be supplied (eg via face to face communication or linked to but removed from the main eatwell guide page), respondents were looking for the following additional information:

Fruit and vegetables	Details on what constitutes a portion size to meet the 5 a day requirement
Traffic light panel	Explanation in supporting information of how the panel is intended to work and, for some, total recommended limits on sugar, salt and fat.
Purple segment - Oils and fats	Explanation on the difference between saturated and unsaturated fats and further guidance on healthier oils to choose and use Explanation as to why butter is in the occasional foods section and why low fat spread is healthier for you
Purple segment - occasional foods	Guidance on recommended consumption levels to qualify either 'occasional' or quantity
Pink segment	For some, links to recipes to inspire/facilitate use of pulses Guidance on which meats are leaner choices
Drinks?	Some seeking guidance on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fizzy drinks and alcohol as part of overall consumption picture (even if just a formal line on not being recommended/included in guide) • sweetener consumption • caffeine and why tea and coffee is acceptable

III Detailed findings

1. Audience landscape/overview

1.1 Audience mindset and behaviour

As in Phase one, the most marked difference between respondents in this research was in their relationship towards food buying, cooking and eating. This cut across regions and demographics (both across the UK as a whole and within each of the four nations) and did not appear weighted towards gender. It is not quite as simple as having two distinct groups (more likely there is a continuum), but for the purposes of development and to help with understanding differences between interpretation and needs, we have grouped respondents into the following broad categories, based on attitudes, knowledge and behaviours with regard to food. These differences were reflected in their responses to the current eatwell plate and to the different designs (and elements) shown.

More engaged (ME)

Some respondents could be classified as 'more engaged'. For this audience, shopping for ingredients and cooking was more of a pleasure; they genuinely enjoyed cooking more adventurous and aspirational meals and planning and cooking from scratch. For them, fresh ingredients such as fruit and vegetables, fish and less conventional cuts of meat as well as the ingredients such as kidney beans, couscous, olive oil or lentils were part of their cooking repertoire.

They were also more likely to be aware of food issues (such as obesity) and to know more about how food contributes to their overall health. This knowledge may not be detailed but what they do know they try to apply, in order to make healthier choices.

Less engaged (LE)

Other respondents could be classified as 'less engaged'. For them, food shopping was more of a chore. They tended to cook more convenience foods such as ready meals and frozen foods, choosing foods that were quick and easy to prepare (eg ham sandwiches) and less adventurous ingredients, such as tinned fruit, frozen peas and sweetcorn (for children in particular) and chicken breasts and minced beef⁶. This audience was likely to use low fat spray oil for cooking as opposed to olive oil and spend less time planning meals in advance.

As might be expected, this latter group also had less sense of any personal/health risk resulting from their dietary habits and less knowledge overall about how food contributes

⁶ However, both more engaged and less engaged appeared to have high levels of chicken consumption

to health. This doesn't, however, mean that they have no knowledge at all. Quite a few of the less engaged were aware of 'headline' information such as '5 a day' being important, wine or fat being hailed as 'good for you'⁷, wholegrain being 'healthier, or sugar being 'bad', etc. However, most had little understanding of why, or any real sense of impact, so this was less likely to drive choices (unless fitting with their general food preferences, in which case it was used as a justification).

Overall, while the less engaged understood the role of the plate and the messaging that it was delivering, they generally had little understanding of the specific benefits of healthy eating and this kept their overall engagement relatively low.

As such, the less engaged (LE) could be considered the most critical audience for the eatwell plate, as they offer the greatest challenge both in terms of the levels of education about diet they require and extent of dietary behaviour change.

Irrespective of level of engagement, a range of external pressures could impact on their food preferences and dietary behaviour. For example:

'Fussy' children were often accommodated by giving them a different (usually less healthy) meal to the rest of the family. This also worked the other way, however, with some less engaged mothers having children (usually teenaged or in their early twenties and interested in sport/fitness) who expressed a preference for more healthy food than their mother was cooking for the family.

Some of the young independent respondents who worked full time or were students acknowledged that, despite being more engaged overall and having healthier preferences, they had many takeaways, snacks or ready meals due to **time pressures or keeping more unusual hours**.

Others had **budgetary constraints** which meant that they felt they could not afford the best, fresh ingredients, and sometimes felt they even struggled to afford fresh fruit or vegetables.

Some of the older female respondents were on, or had been on, diets such as high protein diets, which had influenced the types of foods they were cooking and eating.

⁷ For example, respondents were often aware of recent media activity highlighting a shift in thinking and claiming that items that had previously been seen as 'unhealthy' and to be avoided (such as wine and fat) have health benefits; however, knowledge is vague

1.2 Recognition and recall of the current plate

The current plate was shown at the end of the interviews to prompt recognition and any potentially useful comparison with the new designs.

However, the new designs often prompted a sense of recognition prior to this point in the interview: there was a general sense of familiarity about the concept of a divided plate⁸.

I've seen things like it before, that's the first thing I thought. It's all fairly common sense. (Male, 38, Young Family, C2, Birmingham - more engaged)

I done something like this with my little boy at school. They were teaching the kids about healthy eating and I saw it then. (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I've seen things like that before. I used to do Slimming World and they had a chart like that showing you how much vegetables and that you should have. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

The current plate was felt to look clean and clear and 'plate like' (with the knife and fork). However, it was felt it provided less clear messaging than the new designs overall. This lower clarity was linked to the following on the new designs:

- improved clarity of images (as a result of labelling of foods)
- additional direction around healthy choices given by the additional messaging around the plate that respondents welcomed from the newer versions

Too much graphic on it, not striking enough, it's not got the same message... It is not quite clear. (Male, Young Independent, 35, C2, Manchester - less engaged)

It's harder to identify, it all looks a bit muddled. (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

It's good to have real pictures. But, I think the good thing about illustrations is that you can label things. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

It's in plain English but it's not very informative, it's a basic guide... I'd have the same rough idea but I wouldn't know enough about what to do because it's mainly just pictures... I think you need more information about the foods and what to do, the other one gives a clearer understanding of what you need. (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

It doesn't say wholemeal, it doesn't say low fat, unsweetened or any of that! It doesn't tell people what they actually need to do. (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

⁸ Recall in Scotland, Wales and Ireland tended to be higher overall with wide and more specific recognition of the current plate

2. Response to food range and overall illustration approach of the new designs

2.1 Overview

In general, respondents were very positive about the illustration approach and the range of foods shown.

Some felt that the illustration style looks as though it would appeal to children but this is not a negative. Indeed, some of those who had been given a version of the guide to look at in advance had taken the opportunity to show the plate to their child or others in the family.

I showed it to my son, he's 5 years old so he can read now and I'm always encouraging him to eat healthily, I showed him this and said if you eat like this you'll grow up big and strong... I also showed it to my husband and my niece because she eats too much junk food, they thought it was good (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

Most food examples are familiar and clearly recognisable and would be found in respondents' cupboards.

In terms of time period the guide applies to, respondents tended to take cues from different components (specific messages relating variously to a day or a week and the shape of the device). While these pointed them to different periods, this did not confuse; rather they tended to draw the conclusion that there was some flexibility and more general applicability - inferring spread of foods and general proportions to consider over meals, days and/or week.

To be honest, I think it could be any period of time. it could be daily, weekly, or in general. Within a day I suppose, you can pick different amounts from each group for your different meals but then I thought you could do it over a week. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

It is more of a routine. (Male, Younger Family, 37, E, Manchester - less engaged)

I think this is overall throughout the day really (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

I don't think it suggests any time frame really ... It says every day, and occasional foods is once or twice per week, it's just in general. (Male, 38, Young Family, C2, more engaged, Birmingham)

I think this is in general, just a good proportion of these things all the time (Female, Younger Family, 35, C2, Essex - more engaged)

It's like a clock because it's a circle. It's what you should eat throughout the day. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - less engaged)

I'd say like daily, not per meal. (Female, Young Independent, 17, D, London - less engaged)

It's daily I think, I'd say every day you should try to get a balance of these foods, you should eat fruits and vegetables every day... you should eat healthy everyday (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

I would say over 24 hours because you've got to have a mixture every day. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

I just think it means every day... not you should eat all of that but you need those things. I don't know why, just make sure you eat this and then eat more good stuff than bad stuff. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

2.2 Illustration style

Respondents were mainly positive about the illustration style. Although a few felt the style is aimed at children, they recognise that it has strengths for adults and parents as well. Indeed, most felt the style would appeal across ages and was therefore very inclusive.

Even for younger children like my son they can understand a lot from the pictures, the variety of foods (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

It is very simple. I'd say it is simple and effective, similar things in regards what you should have on your plate. Almost childlike, I'd would say. My daughter would like it. You know exactly what it is telling you. (Female, Older Family, 37, C2, London - less engaged)

The illustrations and layout of the food items were felt to be bright, clear and appealing and labels help to clarify what some items are. The overall approach with colour was felt to add to both engagement and usability.

I think it's quite easy to see what to buy - you can see what's written on the packets and everything else has a distinctive shape. (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

I can identify everything! (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - less engaged)

The colours are clear and the sections stand out. They're all different. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I like the colours that they picked. They really stand out. (Female, Young Family, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

For some (tend to be the more engaged with food) the images may feel a little simplistic, but they recognise the need to keep things simple for others.

2.3 Responses to segment sizes and range of illustrated items

Having a wide range of food items in each segment was felt to convey three specific things:

- the core illustration is a guide (rather than a plate)
- the core illustration relates to more than just one meal
- which items sit within each food group

In terms of the spread of items shown in both designs, this was felt to be optimal by most. The range looked familiar and respondents claimed that most of the items were to be found in their cupboards. Where items were unlikely to be found or chosen, these were broadly accepted as things others might buy or a healthy recommendation, and sometimes a reminder for foods they had lapsed on.

It's the same kind of but we eat more junk and less fruit. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

It's good and it reminds you of foods you haven't had in a while - like I haven't had cauli for ages. They're all readily available in the supermarket. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

It looks pretty similar to what we eat. Although we have less dairy. It tells you to buy low fat and wholegrain. You know when you go shopping what to look for. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

While the overall range was accepted, there were a couple of illustrations that were more difficult to identify. There were also some comments on size of food segment, which highlight needs for potential additional supporting/secondary information. These are identified by food category below.

In the **green fruit and vegetables segment** there were no significant criticisms of the range of items.

As in Phase one, there was relief that frozen vegetables were included, along with tinned sweet corn, as this gave this section an accessible feel for those respondents who had 'fussy' children or tended to buy less fresh produce.

I see your tinned foods and the frozen peas as well. So it's saying regardless of what state it's in the veg is still good for you. (Female, Young Independent, 25, C2, Leeds - less engaged)

In both designs, this segment was felt to stand out most, which was felt to be a positive, since it implicitly presented fruit and vegetables in a strong light.

The size of this segment was seen to be relatively large but as they expected. However, many respondents recognised that their own diets, and in many cases their family's diets, failed to achieve this portion size.

This is saying you need to eat a lot of veg and fruit because it's quite a large part, like a third of the graph. (Female, Young Family, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

Within the **pink protein segment**, not all items in the protein section were easy to identify. Specifically, the chicken and meat object above the steak were not always recognised.

Some also struggled to identify the nuts at a glance. While some recognised walnuts and peanuts in their shell after studying, others were less clear. Some suggested that a packet with the label (unsalted) 'nuts' might be a better alternative, as it would widen the potential nut suggestions and remove any potential confusion.

In terms of range of foods, this felt appropriate to most, who understood that protein could come from different sources. Lentils were most familiar and used as a pulse.

However, those who were big meat eaters (and included little by way of pulses currently) were surprised to see meat and pulses in the same category. Some also questioned why nuts were present.

The size of the pink segment surprised some, who felt that carbohydrates section should be smaller, and proteins (sometimes called the 'meat' section) larger.

In the **yellow carbohydrate segment**, there were questions about whether some of the items included were appropriate or realistic.

For example, some held the view that bagels and white carbohydrates are unhealthy.

Bagels are bad for you. (Male, Young Independent, 35, C2, Manchester - less engaged)

There's things in there that I wouldn't think would be alright, like bagels, pasta and rice. I thought those were unhealthy. (Female, Older Independent, 64, C1, Birmingham - less engaged)

Others felt that wholegrain pasta and brown rice were unrealistic for their households with children, and some did not eat couscous.

There's no white rice. I don't think white rice is a problem. It should be in the chart if potatoes and spaghetti are in there. (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

In terms of illustration style, some also mistook the potatoes for sweet potatoes given the dark brown colour. Having higher knowledge overall, these respondents were then more likely to query why they were in the 'carbs' section and not with vegetables.

As in the first phase of the research, respondents were sometimes surprised about the comparative size of the carbohydrate section on the plate (especially women). There was an impression that carbohydrate intake should be lower than was shown on the plate, and 'proteins' should be greater for a healthy diet, unless exercising or training.

Within the **blue dairy segment**, all items were easy to identify and most felt relevant. Skimmed milk and cheese in particular are familiar and consumed regularly.

That's dairy like milk, cheese and soya. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

So this is cheese and milk and you should have less because it's smaller. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - less engaged)

Alternatives would be things like soya, coconut things. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

Dairy alternatives are things like almond milk and soya milk. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

A few respondents felt some items (cottage cheese, soya milk) were surprising on the basis that they unlikely choices for themselves. However, there were no issues with clarity.

Cottage cheese, I didn't know that was good for you. I assume it'd be better than soft cheese. (Female, Older Family, 40, D, Birmingham - less engaged)

For some, the dairy section is missing butter, which they classify as a dairy product (however, for others, as detailed below, butter was felt to belong to Fats and Oils).

I don't understand why it is not in (butter) dairy. Cheese is fatty too. (Male, Older Independent, 69, E, Manchester - less engaged)

I would have thought it (butter) would be with the dairy. (Male, Older Independent, 54, D, Manchester - less engaged)

Blue is felt to be an appropriate colour for the segment, and the size also looks appropriate for most respondents. The exception was some parents who felt the segment was a little small versus what they would expect for a healthy diet for children.

This segment also helps with clarification that the guide relates to overall diet rather than a plate indicating each meal (as you would not have milk on 'your plate').

Within the **purple oils and fats segment**, many respondents felt that butter was missing as this is widely consumed and used for cooking and is the same type of product as the low fat spread shown. Furthermore, many respondents also felt that it was a healthier choice than spreads which they considered 'adulterated' or because they had read that some fats are good for people.

I know butter's full of fat, but I think it's better for you because it's not full of additives. You don't know what they put in it to make it low fat (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

It's funny because lately there seems to be a switch and people talking about butter being better than margarine because they have trans fats in. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I don't know why butter's there. I'd put it with the oils because it's the same fat as spreads. Maybe you can get healthier spreads and oils. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - more engaged)

I automatically assumed (butter) would be with the oils and spreads or dairy. I always thought butter was healthy. (Female, Younger Family, 33, E, Manchester - less engaged)

In light of this, respondents were generally seeking clarification of why butter is not included in the oils and fats section and need a clear line on this to give the categorisation (and rest of the plate) authority.

The size of the segment for oils and fats was not surprising as most expected this to be small.

Within the **purple occasional foods** (or 'treats') segment, the examples given were felt sufficient to convey the range of treat foods consumed and likely to be in cupboards. Respondents were also able to allocate (unillustrated) foods to this category.

These are food to eat less often, like sauces and cakes and crisp and biscuits. (Female, Young Independent, 28, E, Birmingham - more engaged)

Those foods are higher in fat, they're also made with chemicals and things whereas all the other foods are natural... they're saying have them but less, not as your main food, just occasionally (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

They should include pizza. I know it's probably in the purple section but, I just thought that it's my favourite and the chart doesn't tell me which category it goes in. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

I'm surprised the sauce is in there. All my nieces and nephews have sauce on everything and I didn't realise it's a bad thing. It's just a sauce. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

The only question was around butter: as mentioned above, there was confusion as to why it was placed with treat foods rather than in fats and oils, and explanation is required in secondary supporting information.

I do have butter and I know that's not good for you... although is it, I've heard the spreads are worse... it seems to change all the time (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

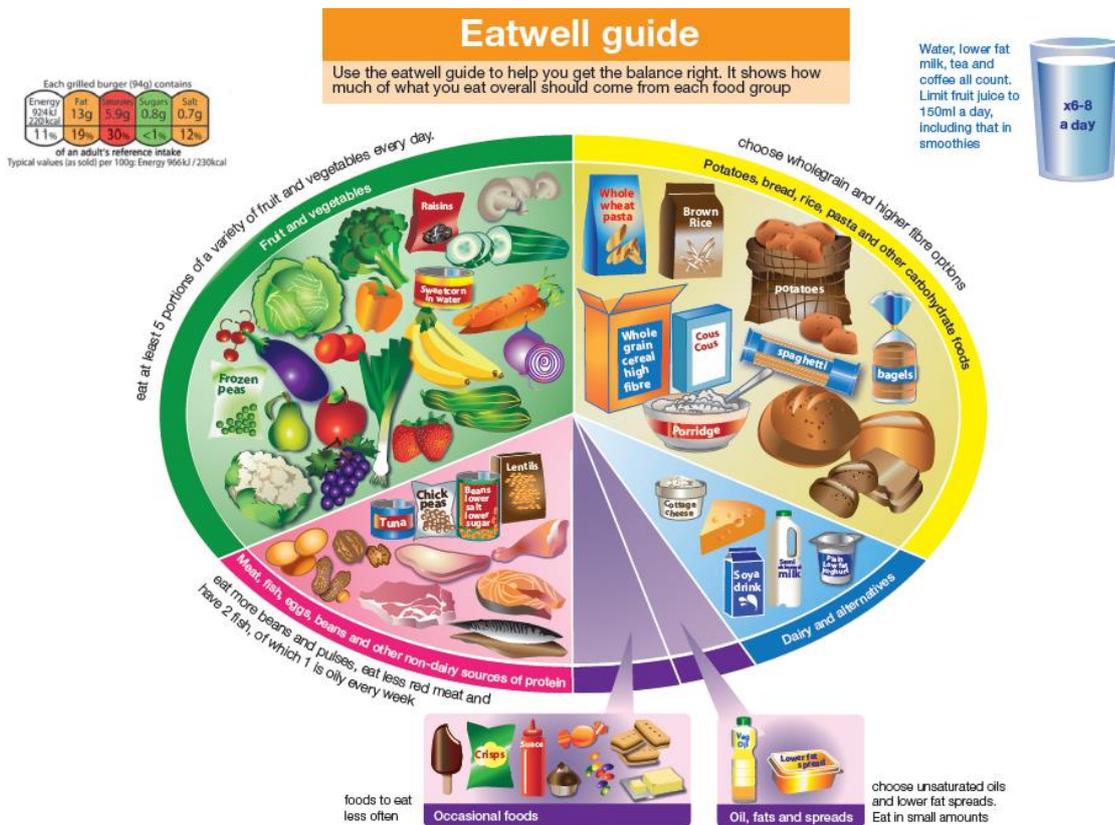
Consideration of the size of the segment for occasional foods depends on the design approach as while guidance is given in Design one (where the foods are within the chart), proportions are not defined in Design two (where the foods are outside of the chart).

In Design one, the size of the purple segment allocated to foods was felt to be ‘probably right’ and potentially quite a lot smaller than average consumption. Consumers considered the segment in terms of ‘snacks’, ‘puddings’ and ‘treats’.

According to the graph the purples are small sections so don't eat them every day because they are high in fats and perhaps sugars but definitely they are the things most people want to eat (Female, Older Family, 43, C2, Essex - less engaged)

In Design two, no direction on proportion was given beyond the label ‘occasional foods’ and additional message ‘eat as little as possible and in small amounts’. Some were comfortable that this meant ‘weekends only’ or perhaps ‘every other day’. Others were seeking more explicit guidance around limits. In this design, consumers were more likely to talk about the group of foods as ‘treats’ (versus snacks or puddings).

3. Response to new Design one



3.1 Overall response to Design 1

20 of the 80 respondents in England had been given this version (Design 1) to look at prior to the interview. A further 20 looked at this version first within the interview without having seen either option in advance.

Amongst those respondents who saw this version first, most felt it conveyed clear messaging and information and there was no evidence of misinterpretation when left to interpret the plate in their own time.

It's telling you to eat 5 out of that section, choose the different stuff like wholegrain. Eat dairy and low fat spreads. It's quite clear in what it's saying and telling me to eat healthy. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

It's making me think about a plate and what portion of veg and carbs you should have on there. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

It's a good way to break it down. There's no percentages but you can use it like a pie chart. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Pre-tasked respondents talked about the prominent centred heading combined with the 'plate' providing clear guidance as to the function of the guide.

When observing respondents looking at the design for the first time, most focused on the 'plate' itself, with the headline being of secondary reference, but these respondents reached the same conclusion.

However, some specific elements of the design do generate queries (see detail in following sections) and, for a few respondents, impressions were hard to form at a glance. They needed to interrogate each element in some detail before forming an impression.

More widely across the sample, when the traffic light packaged food panel was noticed and examined, this could confuse respondents as to the core message of the plate.

Detailed responses to the different design elements within this option are given below.

3.2 Heading and Sub-heading

Eatwell guide

Use the eatwell guide to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group

The centred and prominent heading directly above the plate aided comprehension for respondents, many of whom took their cue for the topic/focus directly from the word 'eatwell'.

That's a good title, it's showing it's about eating healthy, it's self-explanatory (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

I do like 'eatwell guide'. It is telling me, if I want to have a balanced diet, to me it's saying, follow this. This is what you should be doing. (Female, Older Family, 33, D, Manchester - less engaged)

It's telling you how to eat well and look after yourself. It's helping you. I like guides. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

Eat well guide, it's telling us how to eat well, a guideline to how to balance your food (Male, Young Independent, 39, C2, Essex - less engaged)

It sums up the chart. It's advising you to eat healthily. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - More engaged)

I like the title in the middle because your eye automatically focuses there. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

Others highlighted the positive tone of the name, which was felt to be encouraging and inherently flexible rather than dictatorial.

I like 'eatwell guide', I doesn't tell me I have to eat this way, it is what is recommended daily dosage and what things are (Male, Young Independent, 35, C2, Manchester - less engaged)

It makes sense to me. It says this is what you should look at to eat well...Guide suggests it's not set in stone and can be flexible. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

It tells you you're going to eat well if you follow the chart. It's telling you it can guide you if you don't know what to eat. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

The sub-heading was also felt to be succinct, accessible, friendly and clear. The concept of 'food groups' was widely understood, even by those less engaged with food overall:

This tells you how to get the balance right of what you should be eating from each food group as a guide. (Female, Young Independent, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

I think that's quite easy and it's making it clear. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

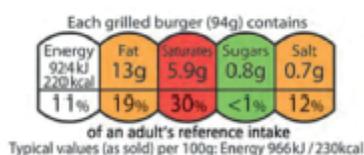
It makes sense. It's not hard to figure out what the chart is. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

This tells you the foods you need to eat to get it right. But I don't think it matters because if you look at the pie chart it explains itself. (Female, Younger Family, 34,C2, Birmingham - more engaged)

I think it's very helpful. It's explaining that this will help you to get a balanced diet.. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - more engaged)

It's telling you to get the balance and what percentage should come from each section. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

3.3 Traffic light packaged food panel / RDI panel



The example traffic light packaged food panel included in this design was taken from a burger and was for illustrative purposes only.

RDI panels (or 'traffic lights' in respondent terms) had wide recognition and were felt to be familiar from packaging. More engaged respondents (most of whom knew how to use them) felt this was important to know about.

I'm familiar with this; I see them all the time in Tesco. It's showing you recommended daily intake is and how much fat there is. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I've seen the labels before. It's telling you how much sugar, salt and saturates is in there. Maybe it's showing you to look at the labels. (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

I've seen these on packets, it tells you how much salt, fat and so on is in things, that's very good because looking at those will give you a rough idea of what you're putting in your system... but those people who don't understand it will just think "oh to hell with it" so I think it needs a little explanation or put in a simple format (Female, Older Family, 43, C2, Essex - more engaged)

This is guidance about what's in food, it's on packets ... people can look and have a good idea of what they're consuming... it's good, it encourages people to keep track, people don't know! It can be quite scary when you look, I was scared by Lucozade drinks! They're all sugar... you'd never put even half that amount in your tea! (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

However, while many respondents (both more and less engaged) felt the panels and knowing how to use them were valuable to know about, they also questioned whether the guide was the right place to show this, since it requires further explanation and is not at a comparable level to the other visual information that is included.

I don't know if it adds anything really, it doesn't quite fit ... but I suppose some people might not be able to understand the labels. You'd need an explanation and a description but that should be its own thing. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

It seems out of place; it doesn't relate to the rest of the page. It has a different colour coding and it just looks like it was randomly placed there. It would be more useful if it told you how much fruit and veg, carbs and meat it had. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Specifically, it provides discriminatory/choice information by product, rather than headline information for overall healthy eating and drinking consumption. In this way it has links to the written messaging around the plate segments.

The most literal respondents also sought links between the colours in the panel and the segments on the plate, which confused them.

The food label doesn't relate to anything, like the colours or the food on the plate though. (Male, Younger Family, 37, C2, Leeds - less engaged)

On balance, respondents felt that information explaining the value of the traffic light packaged food panels and how to use them was helpful to healthy eating and, on this basis, were keen to include it in the ideal design. Indeed, the majority of respondents included the icon on their final ideal plate design.

I like this here because it makes me think about looking at the packaging. (Female, Older Independent, 60, Bristol - more engaged)

The food label is very important, if I walk into a store and I want to buy things to be healthier I'm now going to look at that first before buying, especially canned or packaged foods (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

That's a diagram showing the calories and everything, it explains how much you should take of each... I think that's a good idea, the colour and everything explains it more, if it's 50 calories you need to add it all up throughout the day (Male, Older Independent, 74, C2, Essex - more engaged)

However, to fulfil requirements, the specific example needs to be developed to be generic and supported with appropriate explanatory 'how to use' information. As such, it may be better signposted from the main guide/page (eg use the traffic light panels on packaged foods to help you choose healthier products) and explained in supporting secondary information.

It's good, it might get people to check that labels more. They could explain how to read it and then it might be useful. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

3.4 Hydration message

Water, lower fat milk, tea and coffee all count. Limit fruit juice to 150ml a day, including that in smoothies



Overall visibility of the water visual and copy was low on this design. Both image and copy tended to be the last thing to be examined on the page, possibly due to the paler colouring and size compared to the vibrancy of the plate and traffic light panel.

I just noticed that the water in the upper right hand corner and it mentions 6-8 glasses. But my attention went only to the main diagram. (Female, Young Independent, 28, E, Birmingham - more engaged)

I really didn't look at that bit on the top right hand corner, I don't know why... I don't drink enough water. (Male, Older Independent, 68, C2, London - less engaged)

However, once interrogated, respondents felt the messaging was clear and were able to relate the guidance to their own consumption.

It's saying you should drink 6-8 glasses a day but it needs to be clear how big the actual glass is. Maybe make the writing bigger. Is it pints or litres? (Female, Young Family, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

It's having 6-8 glasses of water and then limiting fruit juices. They're full of sugar, juices and smoothies. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

It's saying to drink water, tea and not so much juice or smoothies. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Most had existing knowledge about the need for hydration but the specific content of the messaging was sometimes new.

Some were aware of the levels of sugar in fruit juice and felt that the limit needed to be clear.

Juice does have a lot of sugar in so that sounds right. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - more engaged)

Juice I understand because there's lots of sugar. You should eat the fruit rather than ink the juice. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

For these respondents, if they had seen the alternative copy first (which mentioned 'unsweetened') they noticed its omission here and felt it should be included.

Tea and coffee drinkers were generally pleased to see that tea and coffee are included and count towards the six to eight glasses of fluid a day.

A few, however, felt the guidance of six to eight glasses of fluid a day was unachievable or that other types of drinks should be included with guidance as well

Overall, although the imagery and messaging is sometimes overlooked on the page, the hydration message is around in respondent consciousness. Many respondents feel comforted that it's not just water that counts, that the coffee and tea they drink also contributes.

On balance, the copy was felt to be useful as the fruit juice limit is news to some who are unaware of sugar levels. However, these respondents would have welcomed more explanation on the following (eg in secondary supporting information):

- why fruit juice should be limited to 150mls per day
- what tea and coffee is permitted and counts towards the fluid allowance

They say tea and coffee is not that great because of the caffeine content. (Male, Young Family, 36, C2, London - less engaged)

3.5 Purple segment approach



Overview

The purple segment on Design one placed occasional foods and oils, fats and spreads together by using the same colour; however, within this, they were divided into separate sub-sections.

First impressions from respondents tended to be that the images were outside of the plate as call outs simply because they did not fit into the segments.

Some also felt that that using call outs meant that these purple sub-sections dominated the visual design, at the expense of other elements.

Overall, this approach was felt to convey that some 'treat foods' are permitted - or even recommended - within a healthy diet. While some welcomed this as either 'realistic' or fitting with their desires, this jarred for others who felt it contradicted health messages they had heard from elsewhere. When these foods are included within the plate, there is also an impact on how 'occasional' is interpreted: although the foods may not be related to every meal, 'occasional' was more likely to be interpreted as daily (just less frequently than regular meals).

To have these occasional foods in there, because I thought it's a daily thing it's telling me to eat less of them but every day is ok even though it says less often. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

This is telling you to have crisps, chocolates, sweets on a smaller scale. (Female, Older Independent, 49, D, Birmingham, less engaged)

I suppose this is telling you it highlighting not to eat as much of the sweets and the chocolates and stuff like that. (Male, Older Family, 43, D, Leeds - less engaged)

By contrast, the purple segment approach in Design two was felt to give a much clearer message about these foods not being recommended as part of a healthy diet. Occasional was also more likely to be interpreted as less frequently than daily (eg weekends or a couple of times a week).

Occasional foods

For those pre-tasked with Design one, or seeing this first⁹, respondents tended not to make an explicit connection between both food groups. Rather, they just took out messaging from the relative sizes of the portions and headings.

A couple of respondents felt that despite the segment being split, the same colour meant the foods were interchangeable so they could overall consume any 'purple' food to the same proportions as dairy.

⁹ and therefore having not had assistance in interpretation from being exposed to Design two

I would assume that I can eat more oil, fats and spreads because it looks bigger. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

Having foods from the occasional food groups 'on the plate' was interpreted to mean they were 'allowed' as part of a balanced diet, which both surprised and pleased some respondents. They were pleased for both being positioned as legitimate and reflecting people's diets today.

Interestingly, when included within the plate, the individual items were as likely to be described as 'snacks' (as 'treats') which gives them a place in daily diets.

However, there was some surprise that they would fall within recommendations.

That confuses me because the dairy section is the same size as the occasional foods section. I would have thought a glass of milk would be better than a can of pop. (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

Specific considerations also arise around the label 'occasional foods' and messaging - see Section 3.5 below.

Oils, fats and spreads

Oils are widely used in diets, both by those with and those without a deep fat fryer, so the segment was easily recognised and respondents understood the recommendation to use sparingly or in small quantities.

It's saying not have too much oil, just a little bit when you're cooking (Male, Young Independent, 39, C2, Essex - less engaged)

As mentioned earlier, seeing the low fat spread prompted a discussion about the merits of low fat spreads versus butter. A few respondents disagreed with the recommendation of spread, believing that butter is better for them (and should therefore be either in this segment or in diary). This was in contrast to the other nations where respondents were more likely to criticise or question the recommendation of low fat spread over butter.

Respondents sometimes struggled to identify the butter image in the occasional foods segment, which possibly contributes to the confusion over where it *is* in the design (firstly) and then where it *should* be - especially as the segment title references *three* products (oils, fats and spreads).

3.6 Segment labels

Green: fruit and vegetables

The 'fruit and vegetables' label of the green segment was felt to be clear and no questions were raised.

Yellow: potatoes, bread, rice pasta and other carbohydrate foods

The word 'carbohydrate' (often shortened to 'carbs') was familiar as were most of the images shown therefore this segment label was felt to work well.

Pink: meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

The title generally worked for respondents by listing out the items that qualify as protein.

The only issue was some confusion about 'non-dairy' sources (eg beans and pulses) in this section for those whose thought that that the protein food group only includes meat. However, given the category defines itself, this did not undermine the plate overall: rather, it connected respondents to the idea that protein includes a broader group of foods.

Blue: dairy and alternatives

'Dairy' is well understood term and felt to encompass each of the illustrated items.

The word 'alternatives' can lead to queries but take out is generally not inappropriate. Some assume it to mean lactose free alternatives (eg soya milk), others (with lower awareness) assume it to mean lower fat choices. Others are unsure what 'alternatives' relates to but assume it does not apply to them as they can't see anything they don't recognise in the segment.

Alternatives... I'm not sure what they mean, what can be the alternative for semi skimmed milk? Or Soya? I don't know what the alternative can be if you're already having the low fat option (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

Alternatives they mean a substitute, for instance instead of full fat milk have low fat milk (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

Dairy alternatives, I'd assume that's better for you, I don't know. (Female, Older Family, 40, D, Birmingham - less engaged)

Alternatives means you could replace it with something else. (Female, Older Independent, 64, C1, Birmingham - less engaged)

Purple: oils, fats and spreads

'Oils, fats and spreads' was felt to be very clear but is likely contributing to the confusion about butter outlined above. Three items are mentioned but only two are shown. As butter is notably absent as a choice in the segment, there is some assumption that it is simply just 'missing' as an illustration, especially if it is not easily recognised under 'occasional' foods.

Purple: occasional foods

The labelling of treats as 'occasional foods' was felt to be slightly at odds with common language but to give an indication around frequency. However, 'occasional' was also open

to interpretation. While some felt this was a couple of times a week or weekends only, others assumed (from inclusion within the plate on this design) that daily was likely to be acceptable, just not as part of each meal and in a lower quantity than other foods.

Occasional means once in a while. But if this is a daily chart, I think this is saying you can have a bag of crisps but not eat them all day. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

'Occasional' it is not banned. My occasional is not somebody else's occasional. (Female, Older Family, 38, E, Manchester - less engaged)

Occasional means not on a daily basis and as a treat. Cut down and leave these alone, like once a week. (Female, Older Independent, 59, D, Leeds - less engaged)

I'd say occasional was about once a week but I reckon the kids have things like this a bit more often. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

I think an occasional treat would be once or twice a week. (Female, Young Family, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

However, some also felt the word 'occasional' linked too specifically to 'occasion' which would make them more infrequent than treats.

Occasional is not so often. It's saying birthdays, Christmas. Because in real life, when's occasional other than special occasions? (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

3.7 Segment messaging approach

Design one had additional messaging relating to *three* category segments (in addition to the purple segment), rather than each segment.

Pink/protein: eat more beans and pulses, eat less red meat, have two fish, one of which is oily every week

Not all were aware of the term pulses.

It's telling you to eat more baked beans and pulses but I don't know what pulses are. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

I'm not too sure what pulses is. but the others I'd eat. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - less engaged)

What's pulses? (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

However, overall, the information about pulses being a protein and to eat more frequently was new to some and many were interested and engaged in the information about red

meat and fish too. Therefore, for some, the messaging delivered four *new* pieces of information (less red meat, more pulses, fish twice a week and oily fish once a week).

This says eat more beans and pulses and eat less red meat. And it also mentions fish so that makes me think I have to eat 2 types of fish every week. (Female, Young Independent, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

In the little heading round the side it say to eat less red meat and have two fish. These are your proteins: nuts, eggs, lentils and chick peas.(Female, Younger Family, 34,C2, Birmingham - more engaged)

All of these messages are quite interesting, I didn't know you should eat more beans and pulses, I didn't know about red meat, I knew about fish and oily fish, 5 a day I was aware of and wholegrains, there's things I would try! It's all quite easy things to put in place (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

However, some felt the fish instruction was slightly hard to read.

It's too complicated to say eat fish twice, of one oily. (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Including 'every week' in the additional messaging about fish helped respondents to identify the recommendation for fish consumption. For some, it also raised questions about what time period the plate applies to.

Any confusion tended to be resolved or less evident when more daily cues were given (such as via the calorie information in Design two). When different time cues stood out clearly (week and day), the plate was more likely to be understood as applying across a week with a good balance each day.

Green/fruit and vegetables: Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

This message was felt to be a very familiar one for all respondents, although many admitted that they and their children did not always achieve this.

'Every day' was at odds with the weekly message in relation to fish, which jarred for some. As noted above, however, on thinking through the different time cues, most were able to understand that the plate related to proportions as a whole over any general time period, with messaging giving specific recommendations for consumption within a day or week.

The mention of 'portion' did raise the question of what this means in relation to specific fruit and vegetables and some wanted this clarified either in the visual or in secondary supporting information.

Yellow/starchy foods: Choose wholegrain and higher fibre options

All respondents knew about the merits of choosing wholegrain and high fibre options, but not all of them are doing so.

It's telling to choose wholegrain rather than going for refined stuff so that's good for you.
(Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

You need to choose higher fibre options. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Those with children claim that they sometimes influence their purchasing.

Purple/occasional foods: foods to eat less often

The additional message of 'foods to eat less often' was largely overlooked as it was felt not to add anything to the heading, 'occasional foods' (but simply repeat it).

Purple/fats and oils: choose unsaturated oils and lower fat spreads. Eat in small amounts

Respondents, particularly those who are less engaged, were somewhat unclear about the differences between saturated and unsaturated fats and, as a result, did not take a great deal of notice of this messaging. It doesn't answer for them why butter is not on the 'plate' because they don't know how saturated and unsaturated fat relate to different products.

Those who are more engaged had more to say about the matter, with a few having strong views about low fat spread being 'worse' for them and butter being better for them. These respondents were also more likely to question why olive oil isn't a specific recommendation.

In light of these queries, secondary supporting information is likely to be helpful to resolve queries: about the place of butter, explanation of saturated/unsaturated and the place of different varieties of vegetable oil.

'Eat in small amounts' was felt to be a clear message supporting their spontaneous take out from the size of the segment. Direct repetition in this way was felt to stress importance for some.

You only use small amounts. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

3.8 Segment colours

Design one has a shaded background to the segments (in contrast to Design two which has solid colours behind the images). No criticisms were made spontaneously of the approach of Design one. Only a few respondents noticed the difference between them and both preferred Design two.

4. Response to new Design two



4.1 Overall response to Design two

Design two differed from Design one in the following ways:

- the occasional foods purple segment was removed from the plate all together and the items left separate at the bottom left hand side of the page
- there was a border added all around the page
- the heading was top left
- there was a daily calorie allowance icon added in the bottom right hand side
- no packaged food traffic light panel was included
- additional messaging related to all five segments rather than three
- all copy (sub-header, category labels and additional messaging in relation to the segments, occasional foods and water) differed in detail to Design one

On this version, consumers tended to focus on the plate initially, with the heading and calorie guide being examined second. The hydration message and occasional foods were explored last (order varying between individuals), reflecting their relative size.

For those who were pre-tasked with this design (20 respondents) it was clear that they had looked at the plate, but also the heading and messaging copy to aid comprehension.

All clearly understood that the plate was offering guidance around healthy eating. Key take out included the need to eat different proportions of food groups overall and the opportunity to make healthier choices within that food group.

In general, respondents liked the overall impression created by this design and, in particular, the border.

The border highlights everything and it looks nice. Makes it look complete. It works well. (Female, Older Family, 40, C2, Leeds - less engaged)

I do like the border, it makes it look a bit neater and more presentable. (Female, Young Independent, 28, E, Birmingham - more engaged)

The border is good because it makes you look at the things inside the box. It makes it all stand out more. (Female, Young Independent, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

The border makes it look better. (Female, Older Independent, 50, D, Leeds - less engaged)

I prefer the border. I don't know why it just looks better. (Male, Younger Family, 37, C2, Leeds - less engaged)

Response to the different design elements within this option are detailed below.

4.2 Heading and sub-heading

eatwell guide

Use the eatwell guide to help get a healthier and more sustainable balance of the food you enjoy. It shows you how much of what you eat should come from the different food groups overall.

Overall, the heading was initially overlooked by many respondents and there were some problems with comprehension of the sub heading which was felt to be wordy and difficult to understand on first reading.

On Design two the heading was all in lower case and enclosed top left hand side within the border. This was felt to make it look both neat and self-contained. However, often the heading and sub-heading was missed initially when respondents looked at the page, as the plate dominated.

When the heading was noticed, the name 'eatwell guide' was liked and felt to convey the purpose of the plate clearly in a positive tone.

It is not telling you what to eat, it is advising you. (Male, Young Independent, 35, C2, Manchester - less engaged)

It's saying eat well to stay healthy. It's a guide to help you. (Female, Older Independent, 60, Bristol - more engaged)

It's a guide to eating well. It just is what it says. It says it's a guide to help you. I think it's really good. . (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

The heading is fuss free and tells you what it is. it says have a look and eat a bit better. Guide's good because it says come and take a look. It's not saying 'you have to do this' (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

It says how to eat well. It's a guide so it's a suggestion, not telling you you have to do it. It's a nicer because you're not being told. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

It sounds alright. It's a guide to eat well. It's saying it's a guide to help you eat healthy. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

The rather complex syntax of the sub-heading caused some respondents to struggle initially with full comprehension or engagement with the content. However, most understood what the sub-heading is conveying in the most general terms (even if there are certain words that are confusing or raise questions), eg sustainable.

That sounds fine. It's like it's saying to show you how much of each food you should have. Sustainable is like an ongoing thing. Like to stick with it. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

Sustainable, so don't take too much, or too less, just take what you need... eating lots you get just as much out of it as a smaller portion (Female, Older Independent, 49, E, Essex - less engaged)

Sustainable... does that mean substance that keeps you going longer? Like porridge. Salad and vegetables don't because you're always hungry after you've ate your salad. (Female, Older Independent, 61, D, Bristol - less engaged)

The subheading is self-explanatory, when you look at the diagram, you know what to go for, what will help you health wise, what to abstain from (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

Respondents generally understood that the plate applied to different short time periods - potentially a day, a week or overall. The words 'overall' in the sub-header and 'guide' in the title specifically helped the plate be flexible in this way.

Some respondents felt some of the concepts included in the sub-header, however, were unnecessary (or incorrect). Specifically, 'food you enjoy' was felt to be too subjective to include.

I knew it from looking at the chart but it's probably good to have it there. I don't like 'food you enjoy' because I would look at it that it's appealing but all the food I enjoy is the bad stuff! (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

4.3 Calorie border



Respondents felt the daily calorie limit information was useful to have, as it was news to some or a reminder for those who knew already.

That's what we're supposed to be taking in... I never knew that before, that for a woman it's 2000 and for a man it's 2500 for all food and drink, yes that's very useful I wouldn't know how to work it out though (Female, Older Independent, 49, E, Essex - more engaged)

Yeah, it's helpful to have the calories there to know I was eating the right amount every day. If I had that up in my kitchen I'd look at it. (Female, Older Independent, 50, D, Leeds - less engaged)

I would definitely include the calorie information because it's a good guide. (Female, Older Independent, 60, Bristol - more engaged)

I think the calorie information is important because even though I know in my head, it's good to be aware for the rest of the day. (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I would add the calories bit because I think it's a good reminder. I would never even think about it. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Yeah, it makes sense with the label so you don't need to work it out. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

The border holds it in. I don't like it without the border and I like the calorie thing because it's important. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

A lot of people these days are into calories so they might look at the tin to see the calories any way. (Female, Older Independent, 61, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Of particular importance was the fact that ALL DRINK was included as well.

I prefer the title in the corner and as part of the border. It's more information with the calories included. I never knew that it included drinks as well. (Female, Young Family, 26, D, Leeds - more engaged)

Some were surprised at the figures as they were different to what they had they thought.

Some pointed out that it would be useful to know the limits for children, therefore this information would ideally be provided in supporting information.

4.4 Hydration message

Water, lower fat milk,
unsweetened tea and
coffee all count.
Limit fruit juice to
150ml a day, including
that in smoothies



20

As with Design one, overall visibility of the water visual and copy was low. Both image and copy tended to be the last thing to be examined on the page, possibly due to the paler colouring and size compared to the vibrancy of the plate and traffic light panel.

I didn't really look at that. I did see the picture of the water but I didn't read it. (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I don't notice any water there at all. It doesn't tell you a lot about drinks to be honest. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Leeds - more engaged)

However, once noticed, respondents found the copy easy to understand.

It's a good guide about liquid intake, 6-8 cups a day of fluid for one person, if you like milk, try low fat, don't put sugar in things (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

They were also often pleased that tea and coffee counted towards their six to eight a day.

Overall knowledge about sugar levels in fruit juice was mixed. While the more engaged were aware that sugar levels are high and fruit juice should be limited, others were surprised, thinking that fruit juice is good for you (and therefore recommended). Therefore, for some, the fruit juice limit message is surprising and new.

I think that's good, I didn't know fruit juice was bad for you or that you had to limit it and I didn't know tea and coffee counted, I just thought you had to have eight waters so that's very informative and the image alone tells you a lot (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

They're saying that because of the sugar, because even fruits have sugar (Female, Older Family, 43, C2, Essex - more engaged)

Limit fruit juice to 150ml a day including that in smoothies, that's good, I'm not a fan of juice, I think it's more important to eat the actual fruit... they contain a lot of sugar (Female, Younger Family, 35, C2, Essex - more engaged)

Including the word 'unsweetened' in this hydration message was felt to be helpful in several ways:

- raising the issue of sugar more generally (and therefore helping resolve any queries about the need to limit fruit juice)
- as a guide to help with tea and coffee, reinforcing that added sugar is not recommended

Unsweetened... that's no sugar or sweeteners. It's important to have that so people know to cut down on sugar. (Female, Older Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Unsweetened means no sugar in it. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

Unsweetened, that's good because I think some people do have a lot of sugar in their tea and once you've had a few cups throughout the day that's all adding up! They need to know that doesn't count, I really think it's best to break it down for people (Female, Older Independent, 39, C1, London - more engaged)

Also in this one in the drinks section it says about "unsweetened tea", they didn't say that before, so this explains more, a lot of people have tea but it's very sweet! Otherwise people who have lots of tea each with sugar there would really be no point in eating healthily (Female, Younger Family, 41, C1, Essex - more engaged)

It means no sugar and no Sweetex. It's very clear. (Female, Older Independent, 61, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Overall, however, the hydration message would benefit from further supporting information to clarify use of sweeteners and rationale around high sugar levels in juices and smoothies.

I wasn't sure about unsweetened. I presume it means tea without putting sugar in, rather than tea you buy without sugar. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

Some were also looking for further recommendations on specific types of liquid, for optimal hydration.

I think the liquid needs more, it's a bit brief, I know what counts but not how much I need or how to divide it up, how much water, how much milk would be advisory... liquid intake is equally important (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

4.5 Purple segment approach



Overview

For Design two, the purple segment contains 'oils and spreads' only and the 'occasional foods' have been removed from the plate and put to the bottom left hand side of the page, with the messaging 'as little as possible and in small amounts'. This approach makes the pink (proteins) and blue (dairy) segments slightly larger.

In this design, respondents tended to notice this group of foods, which they generally referred to as 'treats', last with their core attention being given to the plate itself.

Overall, respondents were split in terms of whether they preferred this design versus Design one. Some were in favour of including occasional foods within the plate as this legitimised their consumption ('everything in moderation') and gave some indication of portion size. However, many others (both more and less engaged) were in favour of removing the foods from the plate (as per Design two) to be clear that these foods are not healthy and what a healthy diet is comprised of.

I think it's better to have the unhealthy foods in the corner - it's not good for you and you shouldn't eat it so it's separate. (Female, Older Independent, 61, D, Bristol - less engaged)

When it's separate it's better because it says it shouldn't even be in your diet, you can do without it, if you never ate it nothing would happen to you! (Female, Younger Family, 35, C2, Essex - more engaged)

They're removed the snacks, I think that's alright because it's separate from the main food, people know to avoid them more whereas the other one people might think they can have them? (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

However, it was clear that across the sample, splitting out the foods from the main plate conveyed very clear messages that the occasional foods as illustrated:

- are not recommended for consumption
- do not contribute to a healthy diet
- are 'treat' foods that should be eaten in small amounts only (and not every day)

For a couple of respondents, removing the occasional foods also meant that the plate looked clearer and neater.

Occasional foods

For both those who were pre-tasked with Design two or started with this design in their interview, messaging was felt to be very clear.

Having the 'treats' removed from the plate conveyed clearly that these foods were not recommended foods for a healthy diet.

They're just bad for you, as simple as that, you can indulge yourself once in a while but it's not something you should take maybe once a month or something? (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

That's chocolate, ice cream, biscuits, crisps... it's telling you there's something wrong with them if they've put that there... It's saying you can have them but only small amounts, not every day, they're treats (Male, Older Independent, 74, C2, Essex - more engaged)

Some respondents noted that inclusion of these foods on the page suggested they were still 'allowed' to a degree. However, situated outside of the plate, the foods were positioned as occasional 'treats' rather than everyday foods.

The additional message was generally understood as communicating that *only small amounts should be eaten*.

However, some felt that this might be open to interpretation or abuse, as people could create their own definition of 'little'.

For those who had seen Design one first, impressions of taking occasional foods out of the plate were mixed. Those who felt the alternative design (occasional foods within the plate) gave them tacit permission to include them, were often inclined to prefer that approach. Where this was the case, they rationalised the approach as more realistic and on the basis that such foods 'should be allowed' given they are freely available and widely consumed/liked.

However, others felt it was more appropriate to separate the foods to be clear that they are not healthy.

It should probably be out of the chart because it shouldn't really part of your day. In the first one it's quite a big proportion to have each day. (Female, Older Family, 36, Bristol - more engaged)

I like this because they say that they're outsiders the other one was saying you can have biscuits every day. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

It's saying it's a treat and it's not something in your diet. It's good; they should be treats and not part of packed lunches. It's better to have it separate. (Male, Older Family, 45, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Oils & spreads

Some respondents mistook the low fat spread image to be butter (label is very small when at real size) which raised the debate about butter and where it should sit. As mentioned earlier, some felt it should be in this category, while others felt it should be in dairy.

Either way, butter was often missed as residing in occasional foods and would benefit from improved clarity to help resolve this and ensure that consumers don't reach their own conclusions about it sitting (but unillustrated) in either the blue or purple segments. For example, redrawing the butter to be packaged and labelled is likely to help.

As raised with Design one, there some respondents also question the healthiness (or otherwise) of low fat spread. Some feel that these are not good for you.

Some also feel olive oil is missing. While vegetable oil potentially covers this it is seen as a different product by some. Others feel olive oil should be the recommendation given what they believe are comparatively higher health benefits.

4.6 Segment labels

Green: fruit and vegetables

As with Design one, the 'fruit and vegetables' label of the green segment was felt to be clear and no questions were raised.

Yellow: potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

Design two lists food types in a different order to Design one and adds the word 'starchy'.

Overall, the order in which the foods were listed had little impact. However, the word starchy lacks meaning and could therefore be omitted.

The term 'starchy' was understood and used by some ('starchy foods, starchy carbs'), more likely the more engaged respondents.

Starchy carbohydrates means foods with starch. (Female, Older Independent, 49, E, Essex - more engaged)

However, many did not know what starchy means, and where understanding is low, there was some assumption that starchy foods are not particularly good for you.

I don't know what starchy carbohydrates means. (Female, Older Family, 40, C2, Leeds - less engaged)

I think starchy carbs are fatty, stuff that would sit on your belly. They are bad for you. (Female, Young Independent, 28, E, Birmingham - more engaged)

I wouldn't have the starchy because I don't really know what that it is. Carbohydrate and starchy are the same, ain't they. (Female, Older Independent, 61, D, Bristol - less engaged)

Starchy carbohydrates? I think it's better to just say carbohydrates, I don't know what it means, if they're starchy are they more bad? (Male, Younger Family, 41, C2, Essex - less engaged)

Pink: beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

This label varied from Design one by using the term 'other proteins' rather than 'non-dairy sources of protein'.

Overall, this label was felt to work well and not pose any problems. 'Beans, fish, eggs and meat' were easily understood and familiar. The term 'other proteins' helped create understanding of the category as being about different sources of protein; which was useful given that respondents expected the proteins section to be all about meat and this therefore helped extend the definition of the category.

There was some confusion about what pulses are: what they are per se and whether nuts are pulses, given they are illustrated within the segment but not named.

Blue: milk, cheese, yoghurts and dairy alternatives

Overall, labelling the segment in this way created no issues with understanding.

Alternatives mean you can use normal cheese or cottage cheese, semi skimmed milk or soya milk... it's the healthier options (Female, Older Independent, 49, E, Essex - more engaged)

Some recognised it was more in line with the other labelling approaches than simply listing 'dairy and alternatives'.

However, while listing out the elements of the dairy section (rather than just using 'Dairy and alternatives' as in Design one) gives strong cues to consumers as to what is in the segment, it also provokes a question about butter and why it is not included in the segment.

Purple: oils and spreads

This design omitted the word 'fats' from the category label, just using 'oil and spreads' instead.

Using the word 'spread' helps with identification of the packeted block as a spread. However, again a question about butter is raised - in terms of whether or not it should be included in this section as a 'spread'. As mentioned earlier, confusion about butter is compounded where it has not been easily spotted in another part of the eatwell guide.

Therefore it will be important to:

- make butter stand out more clearly in the occasional foods section (eg by labelling 'butter')
- include supporting secondary information about where butter is placed and why

Purple: occasional foods

The labelling of external food items as 'occasional foods' was useful as it was felt to present them as a clearly different category to the *everyday* categories shown within the plate.

Displayed and named in this way, respondents were likely to call the foods 'treats' which is relatively useful, as there is implicit understanding that they are not part of a core diet.

Use of the word 'occasional' was open to some criticism, however, by those respondents who wished to have more direction on how often or how much. In this context, 'occasional' was felt to convey 'not all the time' or 'infrequently' but was open to interpretation.

4.7 Segment messaging approach

This design had additional messaging relating to all categories of the plate. On balance, respondents tended to favour this approach as, in most cases, the message had value to them. Responses to each of the specific messages in this approach are detailed below.

Pink/protein: eat more beans and pulses, choose lean meats and have oily fish at least once a week, choose from sustainable sources

Respondents welcomed the advice provided by this additional messaging which they felt was clear.

It's saying don't have meat every day, have the beans or egg to get your proteins (Female, Older Independent, 49, E, Essex - more engaged)

From looking at this I could eat more of certain foods and do away with others so we could eat more beans and pulses but less red meat, choose lean meats and oily fish... it's advising me what will be beneficial to me health wise (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

Many already knew about choosing lean meats, and many were eating a good deal of chicken breasts/fillets in preference to red meat. Fewer were having (or liked) oily fish.

Only a couple of younger respondents had strong feelings about the sources being sustainable.

Others tended to question or ignore 'choose from sustainable sources', through lack of meaning or lack of interest.

Sustainable sources? What is that? Is it where you buy it from? Or whether it's frozen or fresh? (Female, Younger Family, 35, C2, Essex - more engaged)

I'm not really sure what they mean by sustainable sources. Are we talking save the planet? (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

Blue/dairy: choose lower fat and lower sugar options

Again, respondents felt this message was very clear and a helpful instruction or reminder. They were aware that 'lower' options exist so direction was welcomed. However, they are most familiar with lower fat options so lower sugar is sometimes missed or means less to them initially in terms of choices they might make.

This message did not seem an extreme 'ask', as respondents felt that they were mostly choosing lower fat milk (semi skimmed) already.

It's good to explain about lower fat and sugar. The other one just says dairy products so you might not know. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - more engaged)

It tells you to choose lower fat and lower sugar options. It's got more information and it's clearer to read. (Female, Younger Family, 25, Bristol - less engaged)

It's good it says lower fat so people know to look for it when they're shopping. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

Green/fruit and vegetables: eat at least five portions of different fruit and vegetables every day

As with Design one (which holds a very similar message) this was felt to be clear, partly because the five-a-day message is very familiar.

However, there is some question about what a portion size is, which would ideally be clarified either in the visual or in secondary supporting information.

As mentioned earlier, 'every day' was at odds with the weekly message in relation to fish, which jarred for some. Most however, were able to understand that the plate related to proportions as a whole over any general time period, with different messages giving specific recommendations for consumption within a day or week.

Yellow/starchy foods: choose wholegrain versions, choose those with less added salt, sugar and fat

On Design two the additional messaging does not mention 'higher fibre' options and includes the suggestion to 'choose those with less added salt, sugar and fat' instead. This prompted interest and discussion amongst some respondents who are aware that some (surprising) foods contain high levels of salt or sugars. As such, this was felt to be useful to retain.

Some respondents felt that choosing wholegrain was quite a hard ask for those with families (where children would definitely prefer non-wholegrain versions) or some who disliked wholegrain.

Overall, however, this message as tested was felt to be clear in its direction and broadly accepted as a recommendation.

Purple: choose small amounts of vegetable oils and spreads

The additional messaging on this design was felt to reinforce take out from the visual: that these foods should be taken in small amounts only.

Therefore, overall, while it was generally accepted, the additional messaging is not adding value or providing 'news'.

4.8 Leaner, Lower, Less



Design two incorporated 'Leaner, Lower, Less' as a stamp in the middle of the plate, roughly lined up with and roughly linked to the segments beneath the line by colour. Overall, it was felt to add little value to the design and could be omitted (as was the case in the other nations).

I wouldn't take much notice of that. The sections on the chart are smaller so you know to eat less any way. (Male, Younger Independent, 28, Bristol - less engaged)

A couple of respondents welcomed the information as giving direction, however it was also noted that 'leaner, lower, less' essentially repeats the more detailed message on the outside of the segment.

Leaner, lower, less.... you should try to take less of the red meat or have leaner meats and then the milk have lower fat options... just make better choices (Male, Older Family, 53, C2, Essex - less engaged)

Ok... it's saying eat leaner meats. The leaner it is the less fat there is? (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - Less engaged)

It means eat lower fat things. (Female, Younger Family, 26, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

Others were confused as it was not seen to link directly to anything. Where this was the case, it was felt to add clutter rather than value.

I didn't get that, I don't know what that means. (Male, Young Independent, 35, C2, Manchester - less engaged)

Leaner, I'd say that's lean meats that lowers the calories and then I'm not sure about the less. Less calories as well. (Male, Older Independent, 54, C2, Bristol - less engaged)

It took me a sec to understand. But then I see it follows the colours. It's a bit unnecessary. It's saying eat leaner meats, lower I assume is choosing lower fat alternatives and then less is have less. (Male, Younger Family, 34, C2, Bristol - more engaged)

I don't understand this. I know you should have less of these things but leaner and lower I don't understand. (Female, Younger Independent, 26, Bristol - less engaged)

However, given the volume of other messaging on the plate, this device often went unnoticed or simply lacked impact.

Appendix 1: Recruitment questionnaire

Job number 2057

RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE - NATIONS: Eatwell Plate Development

INTRODUCTION

RECRUITER SCRIPT: Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is (...) from **Define Research and Insight**. We are an independent market research company. We are looking for **members of the general public** to take part in an informal market research discussion about **food, drink, leisure and activity in families**.

We will be giving everyone who takes part a 'thank you' of £25. Any discussion will be completely confidential. People who take part in this research will be **interviewed on their own** for **about 40 minutes**.

So, I need to ask you a few simple questions first to see if you are right for our study - this will only take about 5 minutes. Please do answer all the questions honestly, we don't mind what your responses are as long as you say what you feel. This questionnaire is totally confidential and details of who you are won't be passed on to anyone else.

N.B. RECRUITER, ENSURE THAT RESPONDENT UNDERSTANDS THAT THE INCENTIVE RELATES TO ATTENDING THE INTERVIEW, NOT COMPLETION OF THIS RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE.

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **Please ensure that the respondent understands that anything they say in the discussion will not be used with their name attached and their name will not be passed on to anyone other than the researchers working on the project.**

SPECIFICATIONS

24 respondents for depth interviews of 40 minutes in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

PER NATION:

Audience criteria			Splits by depths	Total depths (c. 40 mins)
<i>Per nation</i>	<i>Lifestage</i>	Young Independent	6	24
		Younger family only	6	
		Younger family + Older Family	6	
		Older Independent	6	
	<i>Gender</i>	Male	Min 8	
		Female	Min 12	
	<i>Internet accessibility</i>	Internet-enabled	Min 12	
		Not internet-enabled	As falls out	
	<i>SEG</i>	BC1	Min 8, Max 10	
		C2DE	Min 12, Max 14	

Definitions

- Younger Independent - to have no children,
- Younger family - *to have at least one child aged 5-11 but no children over 11*, all to be sole or joint carers of children in household in which they currently live
- Older Family - to have at least one child aged 5-11 but have older children at home in addition, all to be sole or joint carers of children in household in which they currently live
- Older Independent - to have no children at home (can be no children at all or empty nest)

Additional criteria

- All to have sole or joint responsibility for household food shopping
- All to be undertaking at risk behaviours *in relation to their own or their family/children's food consumption*, and relevant to the eatwell plate changes, i.e. consuming high fat and/or high proportion of processed or convenience food and/or snacks
- Across Younger and Older Family only, thorough mix of:
 - Size of family
 - Composition of family
 - Spread of age - ensure good spread of ages 5-11 within sample
 - Representation of boys and girls
 - Single and two parent households
 - Age of parent (to fall out naturally but be monitored for spread)
 - Gender of parents: include at minimum 6/maximum 8 Mums, minimum 2/maximum 4 Dads
 - Wales only: Spread of warmth to Change4Life: approx 50:50 to be warmer:colder (warmer = more aware/ signed up in past, colder = not heard of it/low awareness)
- Across younger Independent
 - ensure a mix of single and partnered
- Across older Independent
 - ensure a mix of no children at all and empty nest
 - ensure a mix of single and partnered
- At least half to be frequent internet users with access to internet at home and/or have a smart phone and to have used apps (can be both)
- None to have:
 - Any specific dietary requirements within family, i.e. serious allergies or medical conditions which dictate dietary requirements
- Northern Ireland only: spread of religious denomination

SCREENING

Q.1 Do you, or any of your **close friends or family**, work in any of the following professions or industries?

Market Research	1	Marketing	2
Public Relations /Media	3	Advertising	4
Journalism	5	Fitness/exercise	6
Healthcare/Medicine	7	National/Local Govt.	8
None of the above	9		

RECRUITER NOTE:

- Exclude all those not answering code 9

Q.2 Have you ever taken part in a market research group discussion or a depth interview?

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| Yes | 1 | CONTINUE |
| No | 2 | GO TO Q6 |

Q.3 When did you last take part in a market research group discussion or depth interview?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|
| In the last 12 months | 1 | CLOSE |
| Over 12 months ago | 2 | CONTINUE |

Q.4 How many market research group discussions or depth interviews have you taken part in, in the last 3 years?

- | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------|
| 1-2 | 1 | GO TO Q.5 |
| 3 or more | 2 | CLOSE |

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **IF RESPONDENT HAS TAKEN PART IN MORE THAN 1 GROUP DISCUSSIONS/DEPTH INTERVIEW, THEIR LAST GROUP/DEPTH MUST BE MORE THAN 1 YEAR AGO**

Q5. What subjects have you been interviewed on before? (PLEASE WRITE IN) _____

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **WITHOUT PROMPTING DIRECTLY, CHECK RESPONDENT HAS NOT BEEN INTERVIEWED ON FOOD SHOPPING / FOOD PRODUCTS / HEALTHY EATING OR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES / FOOD LABELLING / DIETING / ALCOHOL OR EXERCISE ('Have you done any research on Transport - like what? Food and Drink - like what? Health and social issues - like what?')**

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

ASK ALL

Q.6 RESPONDENT AGE: (Write in)

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **ALL TO BE 18+**
- **AIM FOR A GOOD SPREAD OF AGES BETWEEN 18-60+**

Q.7 GENDER: (Write in)

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **YOUNGER/OLDER FAMILY SAMPLE: MINIMUM 6 AND MAXIMUM 10 DADS**

Q.8 SEG: OCCUPATION/WORKING STATUS OF H.O.H

CIRCLE AS APPROPRIATE:

A _____ B C1 C2 D
E

RECRUITER:

- **CHECK QUOTAS**

- **AIM FOR A GOOD SPREAD OF SEG WITHIN BC1 or C2DE RANGE**
- **FOR YOUNGER/OLDER FAMILY SAMPLE: AIM FOR A SPREAD OF WORKING/NON-WORKING PARENTS**

Q.9a Which of the following describes your circumstances

Living with partner and children	Code 1	YOUNGER OR OLDER FAMILY – GO TO Q10
Living as a single parent with children	Code 2	
Living with a partner and no children	Code 3	YOUNGER OR OLDER INDEPENDENT, DEPENDING ON AGE AND CHILD STATUS. GO TO Q7B.
Living alone	Code 4	
Living with parents or friends	Code 6	
Other	Code 8	CHECK WITH OFFICE

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **YOUNGER/OLDER FAMILY SAMPLE: ALL FAMILY RESPONDENTS TO HAVE CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME - MUST CODE 1 OR 2. ENSURE A SPREAD OF SINGLE/DUAL PARENT FAMILIES.**
- **NO YOUNGER/OLDER INDEPENDENTS TO HAVE CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME - MUST CODE 3-6, ENSURE A SPREAD OF 3-6**

Q.9b Did you previously have children living at home?

No – never children at home	Code 2	Categorise as YOUNGER INDEPENDENT if <40 OR OLDER INDEPENDENT if 40+
Yes – children moved out	Code 1	Categorise as OLDER INDEPENDENT (EMPTY NEST)

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **FOR OLDER INDEPENDENT, ENSURE A MIX OF CODE 1 AND 2 ACROSS SAMPLE.**

YOUNGER AND OLDER FAMILY ONLY

Q.10 How many children do you have and what are their ages?

Total number of children (Write in):

Children’s ages (circle) and mark M (male) or F (female) in box beneath to code whether boy or girl:

<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16+

RECRUITER NOTE - YOUNGER/OLDER FAMILY SAMPLE:

- **CHECK QUOTAS: ALL TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE CHILD AGED BETWEEN 5 - 11, WITH A GOOD SPREAD ACROSS SAMPLE, PLUS:**
- **YOUNGER FAMILY: NO CHILDREN OVER THE AGE OF 11**
- **OLDER FAMILY: TO HAVE AT LEAST 1 CHILD OVER THE AGE OF 11**
- **ENSURE SPREAD OF FAMILY SIZE (i.e. number of children)**
- **ENSURE GOOD MIX OF BOYS AND GIRLS ACROSS SAMPLE AS A WHOLE**

Q.11A And are you...?

The main carer for the children in my household, looking after them most of the time when they are out of school?	1	Continue
Joint main carer for the children in my household, looking after them most of the time when they are out of	2	Continue

school for at least two days a week?		
Not the main carer for the children my household when they are out of school	3	CLOSE

Q.11 WALES ONLY: Have you heard of Change4Life? What can you recall from it?

Never heard of it	1	
Heard of it but don't recall anything	2	
Remember a TV ad	3	
Seen other publicity at an event, in store, in magazines	4	
Signed-up to receive Change4Life materials/offers	5	
Downloaded/used a Change4Life app	6	
Visited the website	7	
Took home/tried Change4Life recipes	8	
Other, please state:	9	

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **FOR PARENTS, ENSURE EVEN SPLIT OF 'COLDER' (CODES 1 AND 2) AND 'WARMER' CODES 3-8)**

ASK ALL

Q.12 Do *you* or *anyone in your family* currently suffer from any of the following conditions?

Coronary heart disease	1	CLOSE
Alcoholic liver disease	2	CLOSE
Type 1 Diabetes	3	CLOSE
Type 2 Diabetes	4	CLOSE
Gluten intolerance/Coeliacs disease	5	CLOSE
Other serious food allergy that means you have to seriously restrict what you eat/have in the house	6	CLOSE
None of the above	7	Continue

RECRUITER:

- **NO RESPONDENT TO BE SUFFERING FROM ANY OF THE ABOVE CONDITIONS**

Next we'd like to ask you some questions about shopping and meals for YOU / YOU AND YOUR PARTNER / YOUR WHOLE FAMILY (as appropriate)...

Q.13 Within your household, are you...?

Fully responsible for food shopping and making meal choices	1	Continue
Partly/Jointly responsible for food shopping and making meal choices	2	Continue
Not responsible for food shopping and making meal choices	3	CLOSE

RECRUITER:

- **ALL TO CODE 1 OR 2**

Q.14

a) Which of the following foods have you/you and your partner/your family eaten in the last week?

b) And which yesterday?

Food		a	b
Dairy	Regular Cheese	1*	1*
	Lower fat cheese	2	2
	Full milk	3*	3*
	Semi-skimmed or skimmed milk	4	4
	Yoghurt	5	5
	Butter or spreadable butter	6*	6*
Take-away or eating out	Any	7*	7*
Meat	Fresh meat (unprepared in any way)	8	8
	Ready-made meals with meat in	9*†	9*†
	Burgers	10*	10*
	Bacon or sausages	11*	11*
	Pies	12*	12*
	Chicken nuggets or other prepared meat products	13*	13*
Fish	Fish fingers / frozen fish products	14	14
	Tinned fish	15	15
	Fresh fish	16	16
Pizza	Deep pan pizza	17*†	17*†
	Crispy/thin crust pizza	18	18
Vegetarian prepared food	Prepared vegetarian food (Quorn, veggies sausages, etc)	19	19
Vegetables	Fresh / Frozen / Tinned vegetables	20	20
	Potatoes – not chips	21	21
	Oven chips	22*†	22*†
Fruit	Fresh /Frozen / Tinned / Dried fruit	23	23
Snacks and sweet things	Crisps	24*†	24*†
	Biscuits	20*†	20*†
	Chocolate	25*†	25*†
	Sweets	26*†	26*†
	Nuts	27	27
	Cakes – homemade	28*	28*
	Cakes – readymade	29*†	29*†
	'Healthy' snack bars	30	30
	Puddings / desserts - readymade	31*†	31*†
	Puddings / desserts - homemade	32*	32*
	Ice-cream	33*†	33*†
	Cereals with chocolate or honey flavour/coating	34*	34*
	Drinks	Fizzy drinks (not diet drinks or fizzy water)	35*†
Squashes / cordials / Ribena, etc		36*	36*
Fresh fruit juice		37	37

RECRUITER NOTE:

- ALL TO CODE AT LEAST 5 FOODS MARKED * OR † IN LAST WEEK (COLUMN A)
- ALL TO CODE AT LEAST 2 FOODS MARKED * OR † YESTERDAY (COLUMN B)

Q.15. Can I ask you about your use of the internet and mobile phones? Which of the following statements apply to you ...

I do not have access to the internet at home (either through a computer or smartphone)	1
I have access to the internet at home (either through a computer or smartphone) and use it regularly (daily or most days) or fairly regularly(3 times a week or more)	2
I have access to the internet at home (either through a computer or smartphone) but do not use it regularly – I use it a few times a week or less	3
I own a basic mobile phone	4
I own a Smartphone but do not use apps	5
I own a Smartphone and have used apps	6
I do not own a mobile phone	7

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **At least half to code 2 and/or 6**

FURTHER DEMOGRAPHICS

Q.16 ETHNICITY:

White (Non-EM)	Code 1
Black African	Code 2
Black Caribbean	Code 3
Asian – Pakistani	Code 5
Asian – Indian	Code 6
Asian – Bangladeshi	Code 7
Mixed Race	Code 4
Other (specify)	Code 8

RECRUITER NOTE:

- **CHECK QUOTAS**

Q17 NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY: Regardless of whether they actually practice a particular religion, most people in Northern Ireland are perceived to be members of either the Protestant or Roman Catholic communities. Please indicate the community to which you belong by ticking the appropriate box below: Show respondent: **USE SHOW CARD**

(RECRUITER: If respondent expresses concern about revealing community, please reassure that we are asking this question to ensure that people who take part represent a range of the population and are not biased to one particular group. All recruitment screener data is kept fully confidential and is only used for the purposes of this research project)

I am a member of the Protestant community	1	CHECK QUOTA
I am a member of the Catholic community	2	CHECK QUOTA
Neither	3	SEE BELOW
I'd rather not say	4	CLOSE

CLOSING

I would be available to take part in a 40 minute interview on (date).....

At (time)

Thank you very much for taking the time today to help us

I confirm that this interview was administered according to the MRS Code of Conduct.

Signature of Recruiter:

Date of recruitment:

RESPONDENT DETAILS

Incentive agreed upon: £.....

Respondents Name

Home Address

Telephone Number

Interview length (minutes)

Recruiter:

Please confirm which method of recruitment was used in recruiting this respondent:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Telephone Conversation | 1 |
| Street Contact | 2 |
| Snowballing | 3 |
| Other | 4 |
- (Write in other):

Thank you very much for taking the time today to help us

I confirm that this interview was administered according to the MRS Code of Conduct.

Interviewer:.....

Signature:

Date of recruitment:

Appendix 2: Discussion guide

Eatwell Plate: Development Research - Stage 2 **Depth interviews - 40 minutes**

N.B. This Guide indicates the areas to be explored in the discussion, the likely order in which topics will be covered and the kinds of questions and techniques which may be used. There will be some flexibility of discussion, however, to account for each individual being interviewed.

Not all respondents will respond to the same level of language or explanation. While the questions below details how we intend to cover topics in our own 'language', efforts will be made to meet the communication needs of the individuals interviewed.

Timings on the guide are approximate and give an indication of where the emphasis in the conversation will be.

Overall objectives:

Overall, the research needs to inform the development of the eatwell plate so that it best meets consumer needs (for accessibility and understanding) while delivering nutritional guidance in line with updated government policy.

The research is being conducted over two stages.

The overall objective of phase two of the research is to test the updated plate designs (developed based on insight gathered from phase one). Specific objectives and questions to help gather feedback from the updated plate include:

- What messages and information are communicated clearly (and which if any are less clear)
- How do consumers understand the overall design and different components, labels and messages in the updated plate designs
- To what extent do design approach alternatives affect:
 - Overall appeal
 - Accessibility and understanding
- What else might be required to optimise the plate or support it to ensure that consumer take out is as intended?
- What is the optimal solution from the consumer perspective but (to deliver Government guidance as intended) across the different designs and design components shown

Stimulus and rotation:

1. New design eatwell plate - single purple segment and border
2. New design eatwell plate - split purple segment and no border
3. Existing plate

Intro and warm up (5 mins)

- **Moderator**
 - Introduce self, explain the process of market research to respondents (member of MRS, confidentiality and independence) and the format of the discussion
- **Introductions**
 - Brief background details of respondents ...
 - First name, family details/who's at home, working status, key interests, etc

Section 1: Response to existing plate (10 mins)

EXPLAIN TO RESPONDENTS:

- *Sessions with no pre-task: We want you to look at a visual tool that has been created to help consumers with understanding how to eat a healthy balanced diet.*
- *Sessions with pre-task: We'd like to discuss the illustration we sent you beforehand in a little more detail*

- **Lead with pre-placed design in pre-tasked interviews**
- **Rotate which design (1 or 2) seen first across interviews with no pre-task/pre-placement**

SHOW FIRST DESIGN

Moderator note: As well as verbalised response, observe overall 'journey' of interpretation, eg where respondents dwell/any bits initially ignored, etc

Pre-placed sessions only

- What did you think when you received this?
- How much time have you given it? Have you shown it to, or discussed it with, anyone else? *Explore any examples and if respondent has children, probe specifically if it was shared with them*

All

- **What do you understand from what you can see on this page? What is it trying to tell people who read/look at it? What else? What else?**
- **Discuss ALL spontaneous suggestions/interpretation of what the plate is saying/aiming to say ...**
 - And prompt if required, according to this, what should you be eating? Where do you understand that from?
 - And drinking? Where do you understand that from?
- **While allowing all spontaneously generated ideas/thinking first, look out for contribution of all specific design elements and, if not raised by respondent, probe as below:**
 - 'Plate':
 - What do you understand from/talk me through what this circular device is?

- Where do you understand that from? Look out for contribution of shape, title and sub-line to explaining
- Is there anything that isn't totally clear/that you have questions about?
- Overall timeframe:
 - What does the guide apply to?
- 'Segments' and groups of foods:
 - And what is each segment?
 - What does it say about the foods in this segment and what you should be eating? Where do you get that from?
- 'Foods':
 - Is there anything important that's missing in your view? Why should that be included?
 - Any foods that are not clear?
 - How similar/different does this look to your/your family's diet at the moment?
 - If you were taking direction from this, how easy is it to see what you might buy and eat? What would you change/substitute?
 - As relevant, what could change here to feel more like things you might change to? Why?
 - Butter: Why do you think this is not in the spreads and oils section?
 - Occasional foods: What does the term 'occasional' mean to you? What does this make you think overall about these types of foods?
 - Milk and alternatives: What do you understand by 'alternatives'?
 - Starchy foods:
 - What do you think of the range of foods shown? What does this make you think in terms of your own diet? What would be the ideal range to show here? Why?
 - What does 'starchy carbohydrate' mean?
 - Protein: is anything implied by the order of the items in the title (i.e starting with beans and pulses?)
 - Portions: What do you know/expect in terms of portion size? Is there anything in the design that is making you think this?
- Eatwell guide name:
 - What do you understand from the name of what we are looking at? Does it say anything in particular about what we are looking at? *Moderator: note contribution of terms 'eatwell' and 'guide'*
- Sub-line:
 - Which explanation of the eatwell guide is most helpful? What would be the ideal?
 - What does 'sustainable' mean?
 - Does this make any difference to overall understanding of the plate?
- Hydration:
 - What does it say about what you should drink?
 - Where do you get that from?
 - What does 'unsweetened' mean? *Understand if implies without sweetener vs without sugar.* Would 'unsugared' be clearer?
- Option 2 only: example of food label¹⁰:
 - Is this familiar?
 - What does it say?

¹⁰ Moderator note: Example is from a burger to demonstrate how labels work. Product would be removed on final design/adjusted to work as generic example

- Is this useful to cover in some way? Why? What would you like to understand from this/what is useful to people?
- Option 1 only: Total calories border:
 - What does this say?
 - How does it relate to the rest of the information on the page? *Moderator: note whether understand calorie guidance applies to each day*
- Option 1 only: Leaner, lower, less:
 - What does this say?
- **What questions do you have, if any? Anything that is not clear to you?**
 - Why that? What raised that? How much information do you need? Is there anything you think that the *plate* or *overall visual* or *other words* could tell you that would help?
- **Any other comments about the design?**
 - Is there anything you think could be better? Why? *Explore all spontaneous suggestions*

SHOW SECOND DESIGN AND EXPLORE COMPARATIVELY

- **Looking at this alternative design what, if anything, is better or not so good about it?**
- **Allow spontaneous ideas/thoughts to surface first and then probe as required to ensure full understanding:**
 - Segment labels:
 - Red, blue and yellow - which label options are preferred¹¹? Why?
 - Any other suggestions for improvement?
 - Segment messages:
 - Do you prefer more messages (one per segment) or less? Why?
 - Which are better of the red and yellow alternatives? Why?
 - Purple segment/placement of treat foods outside of 'plate' or as a segment:
 - Which treatment of the purple segment is preferable in your view? Why?¹²
 - 'Eatwell guide' name:
 - Any preferences for upper or lower case - do not probe but capture any spontaneous mention
 - Sub-line:
 - Which explanation of the eatwell guide is most helpful? What would be the ideal?

¹¹ understand ideal order and use of terms 'starchy'

¹² messaging take out from the different purple sections will be understood from detailed discussion earlier in the conversation (when respondents are being asked to explain everything the design is telling them). So we will understand variation by comparing take out between sessions and between designs. At this later point when discussing the 'ideal', we are asking them about preference so we could get a clear read on what messaging they would *prefer* in order to understand what they are 'hoping for' in terms of dietary guidance (eg endorsement of including high fat/sugar vs treating it as occasional). Responses will be considered in this light rather than as recommendations.

- Inclusion of border:
 - How helpful is it to include this?
 - Anything else you would want to know? Why?
- Inclusion of example food label:
 - Is it helpful to address food labels in some way? Why? What is useful/what help are you looking for here?

Section 3: Summing up (5 mins)

Wrap up discussion with respondent preferences and recommendations:

BEARING IN MIND WHAT PLATE NEEDS TO SHOW FROM GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES, ASK RESPONDENTS TO IDENTIFY IDEAL PLATE (CAN BE ONE DESIGN OR HYBRID) AND EXPLAIN REASONS WHY THEY WOULD CHOOSE A DESIGN ELEMENT OR INCLUDE SOMETHING SPECIFIC

FINALLY, SHOW CURRENT PLATE TO UNDERSTAND IF THERE IS ANY FURTHER LEARNING FROM COMPARISON - ELEMENTS TO RETAIN OR CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGN

- If you were in charge of developing this plate, from all the things we've seen today, what would you decide to change/include/exclude
 - If possible, which of those would be MOST important? Why?
- Any questions at all?
- Anything else that springs to mind?
- What else would you want to support you / what would be useful to you?

Thank respondents & close