

# Participatory Research Fund Project Supporting ARU Hoarding Research

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## Overview:

**Hoarding Disorder** is a largely misunderstood mental health condition affecting about 2.5% of the population. Hoarding consists of excessive accumulation and difficulty discarding along with clutter that precludes the use of active living spaces in the home. There are numerous challenges to this psychiatric condition including: a) affecting not only the individual and their household but also a wide array of community and service provider stakeholders; b) that those affected often demonstrate little insight, and c) scarcity of treatments.

The **ARU Possessions and Hoarding Collective** was established to advance our understanding of human relationships with their possessions and of hoarding disorder. It aims to do this in a safe, inclusive and open environment for all stakeholders.

## Aim and objectives:

- To promote routine consultation, user involvement and, where appropriate, co-production with relevant stakeholders.
- To support the ARU Hoarding Conference held on May 10th 2023, attended by 140 individuals including individuals who hoard, family members, charity providers and service providers).

## Funding of £825 was used for:

- Consultation and lived experience feedback about all online and public facing materials.
- Supporting the May 10<sup>th</sup> ARU Hoarding Conference to ensure visitors felt welcomed, included, and comfortable voicing their views.

No.	Year	Object Description	Reason for Keeping
00001	1998	Teardrop bear	I was given it at birth and that sleep with it now.
00002	2012	Wedding dress	Can't decide on keeping or selling
00003	2010	Coffee maker	The first machine I ever had. It's the same one I've had since I was 16. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00004	2010	A box of paperclips	A box of paperclips. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00005	2011	A family photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00006	2011	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00007	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00008	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00009	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00010	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00011	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00012	1992	My son's baby photo	My son's baby photo. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years. I've had it for 14 years.
00013	2011	Purple glass cross	Special present from my daughter. I really love it.
00014	?	Viola + bow	My half-sister gave it to me, and as well as being an object that I am looking after that belongs to someone else, it is also a reminder to me because I play the viola and I enjoy playing this instrument and I believe my playing brings many other people.
00015	~2010	Ice skates	Special present from my daughter. I really love it.
00016	2017	2x Chinese symbol piques	My half-sister gave it to me, and as well as being an object that I am looking after that belongs to someone else, it is also a reminder to me because I play the viola and I enjoy playing this instrument and I believe my playing brings many other people.
00017	?	Photo albums + cat's book	My half-sister gave it to me, and as well as being an object that I am looking after that belongs to someone else, it is also a reminder to me because I play the viola and I enjoy playing this instrument and I believe my playing brings many other people.
00018			

Do you want to know more or be involved?

## Stakeholders involved:

Those with lived experience, family members of individuals who hoard, service providers, and general public. Service providers encompass a wide array of stakeholders including those involved with mental health support and provision such as psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health nurses and those in primary care such as GPs and social prescribers. Additionally, professionals from environmental health, fire services, housing association officers and other local authority representatives as well as charities and professional declutterers.

## Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement elements:

Consultation on the ARU Possessions and Hoarding website, the ARU Hoarding Conference Website, Eventbrite text and introductions, slides and messaging on the day (see below for itinerary). Throughout all activities attendees asked questions and engaged in extensive discussion.

Feedback about the conference was actively sought and offered throughout, along with a subsequent survey.

The majority of respondents to our survey (27/29) said they learned something new with half saying they learned a lot:

"It felt like a really positive, collaborative event. I've mentioned it to some colleagues since who also have personal experience of relations who hoard and now we know about the collective we'll be more closely monitoring your research!"

"Very informative and good to know that so many people are working hard to try and help people that suffer Hoarding Disorder"

"I immediately 'mind-mapped' my own reasons for collecting (I didn't like the negative connotation of 'hoarding') and will start to investigate ways to positively reduce my collections."

### ARU Hoarding Conference: Understanding Hoarding Disorder: supporting those living with the condition

DATE: 10 May 2023 TIME: 13:00 pm COST: Free VENUE: Cambridge campus [Book via Eventbrite](#)

Whether you struggle with hoarding, are affected by hoarding, or are a service provider who addresses hoarding as part of your role, you're invited to find out more about the condition and the latest support strategies at our one-day Hoarding Conference in Cambridge.

Hoarding disorder is a mental health condition affecting 2.5% of the population. Hoarding involves clutter in the home environment taking up active living spaces as well as excessive acquisition and difficulty discarding possessions.

A wide array of service providers can be involved in supporting those who hoard: raising unique challenges for the individuals, their families and service providers.

We invite all interested stakeholders, including individuals who struggle with, or have family members affected by hoarding, as well as service providers who might interact with those affected by hoarding. Please join us for an afternoon aimed at increasing awareness of the different voices to ultimately provide better support for all.

**1-2 pm** Professor Nick Neave will deliver a talk about the Hoarding Research Group at Northumbria University and the North East Hoarding Partnership.

**2-3 pm** Refreshments, relationship building and interactive art activities facilitated by Inbal Leitner.

**3-4 pm** Expert panel discussion and Q&A: how to provide better support for individuals, their families and service providers.

This event will take place in LAB026 in the Lord Ashcroft Building on our Cambridge campus.

Home Science and Engineering Research Our research institutes and groups The ARU Possessions and Hoarding Collective

Our research institutes and groups

Applied Ecology Research Group

ARU Centre for Mind and Behaviour

ARU Centre for Societies and Groups

The ARU Possessions and Hoarding Collective

Behavioural Ecology Research Group

Biomedical Research Group

Cambridge Centre for Sport and Exercise Sciences

Computing, Informatics and Applications Research Group

Cyber Security and Networking Research Group

Engineering Analysis Simulation and Tribology Research Group

Forensic & Investigative Sciences Research Group

Future Cities Research Network

Interdisciplinary research in sustainability and the environment

Platelet Research Group

Telecommunications Engineering Research Group

Vision and Hearing Sciences Research Group

### The ARU Possessions and Hoarding Collective

The ARU Possessions and Hoarding Collective is a group of academics and professionals who aim to improve understanding of how people interact with their possessions.

Many individuals report complex relationships with their possessions, including acquiring too many and trouble with organising them, leading to clutter and difficulties discarding them. At times, such behaviours can become excessive, resulting in problems in everyday life and even hoarding disorder, which is a mental health condition.

As part of our activities, we research hoarding and how it can affect individuals and their wider surroundings and family members. We are also interested in how service provision is currently delivered, and how it can be improved.

All are invited to join us for the **ARU Hoarding Conference at our Cambridge Campus on 10 May 2023**

### Our people

- Dr Sharon Morein
- Dr Jane Scott
- Dr Emma Kaminsky
- Vanessa Ferguson
- Dr Sanjay Ahluwalia
- Stuart Brown (external)
- Dr Keong Yap (external)

### Academic publications

### Press and social media coverage

### Additional information and support

- [Information about hoarding disorder from the NHS](#)
- [Information about hoarding from Mind](#)
- [Guidance on hoarding from Cambridge Insight](#)

Email us on: sharon.morein@aru.ac.uk