

Interview 1

So this piece of research is about food waste in the home and there's a lot of research that's already been done about how much or how little food people waste and how that makes them feel. Then there's also been a lot of research done previously on how people take preventative measures to overstocking, so for example having too much food in the house. So we're looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle, so we're interested in the practical side of food waste prevention from real people like yourself, so in other words how people like you ensure that they make use of the food that they have already purchased. So to start off with can I ask you to introduce yourself. So tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

So my name is ... [respondent 1] and I shop for myself and my partner. I also have non-perishable food in the household so that if any of the children that don't live with us come round there's stuff available for them. So essentially I'll go to the local supermarket maybe 2 or 3 times a week and that will be to purchase food predominantly that is coming close to its use by date so there's a two pronged attack there. 1) That it is economically viable for us to do it that way but also it's reducing waste for the supermarkets as well because you're buying stuff that is coming close to the use by date rather than buying stuff that has a long date and then they have to throw their food away. So that's really what we do regularly.

So you've just mentioned that you shop for food 2 to 3 times a week, do you do another really big shop or something like once a...?

I do one major shop maybe once a fortnight, so that will be the things like your washing materials and things like that, shampoos and things but the perishable items I'll do more regularly.

Where would you say you typically shop for food?

I typically shop for food in Asda, that's my predominant, because it's round the corner, but I have also started to shop in Aldi as well because it's a new supermarket that's just opened.

If I could be so rude, how much do you think you spend on food on average per week? Or if it's easier for you to work out per shop or per month.

I think I probably spend between £60 and £90 but that includes things like the shampoos and all the other stuff, everything totally between £60 and £90 a week.

Yeah, and that would cover you and your partner who you shop for?

Yeah everything.

Ok yeah, and when you do your shop would you say you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh, I try not to purchase frozen food because if I have anything, if I've made a big batch of something I like to freeze it up, so if you buy frozen food from the supermarket it's taking up space in your freezer that you can't freeze your cooked food if you see what I mean.

Yeah, so you tend to be doing more little shops of fresh food as and when.

Fresh food yeah.

Ok that's fine, thank you. So now I'd like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. Most people can remember at least one occurrence, if not more, where they had to waste food, however you might be different. Personally I'm intrigued to know if I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

That to me would be buying food that you don't necessarily use. So for instance in my previous work place I had a colleague who would go out and spend £150 a week on food and if it was the day before the yoghurts were due to be the use by date she would already be throwing them in the bin, which completely horrified me but that's my understanding of food waste.

So the definition we are using for the purpose of this interview is very similar, so any food that is going to waste, but we are also taking into account drinks, so any food or drink such as milk or fruit juices or things like that would also be classed as food waste. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

I don't think I do because I use food past its use by date so I actually don't throw things away. I can't remember a time where I've done that, unless it's been a big party or something and we've got so much food left over or maybe, I don't even think we do it with bread, no, on a weekly basis I don't waste anything.

So it would be very occasionally.

Yeah.

Ok and you've already touched on this a little bit but if you would throw anything away, so you say you do use things past their sell by date, what would you think you would usually throw away or what stage might you throw it away?

The only things that would be thrown away would be things like for instance if vegetables were rank then obviously they would be thrown away but if you find something that is in the bottom of your chiller draw that you hadn't seen and it's disgusting then that obviously gets thrown away, but when you're buying fresh vegetables generally I take them out of their plastic wrapping that has got the use by date on them and I put them in the fridge and you use your eyes and your nose to determine whether they are good enough to cook, so that would be the only time that anything got thrown away, and I only buy enough fresh stuff for us to use for the next up to a week so there isn't too much stuff in there. And things like garlic that may get lost at the bottom of your fridge; I now buy a jar of garlic so I don't have to peel fresh garlic.

So how do you assess whether any particular types of food or drink are still good to eat, so how do you sort of...?

Well say for instance there's a yoghurt in your fridge and the use by date was 2 weeks ago or something like that it's just simply opening it up and having a look at it.

So looking at it, smelling it, that sort of thing.

Yeah because with yoghurt and cheese and cultured stuff like that I don't particularly take any notice of the use by dates because the very method of them being cultured is that they have cultures in them so they're going to last a long time before they start growing any mould on them basically so I don't take any notice, but it's a case of... and things like meat as well, even if you've got things like beef and it starts to go a different colour it's only because it's oxidised, it's not because it's going off so once you peel the wrapping

back you can tell with beef whether it's good enough to use. You can tell with pork and chicken because it starts to sort of sweat a bit, so it's a case of using your nose and your eyes to tell.

Would you be able to tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste any food or drink?

Yes, we had some people staying with us and I bought extra food and my daughter is vegetarian so I had bought an absolute shed load of vegetables so there was like lots of squash and carrots and root vegetables, there was just too much for me to use and I sort of didn't realise that it was going off.

Yeah so you just said what happened was that you had people to stay and you just overstocked because you wanted to cater for the guests and you didn't need as much food.

Yeah.

So how did that make you feel?

It made me feel guilty because I shouldn't, well yeah, I shouldn't have bought so much, I should have kind of thought about how much I needed to buy before I went out and panicked bought loads because she was coming over sort of thing.

Yeah. When you say that it made you feel guilty, in what kind of way did it make you feel guilty?

Because I'm in a situation where I can go out and buy stuff and the economy at the moment that we have in this country is that people are using food banks and things, so potentially that food didn't have to go to waste, it could have gone to the food bank if there had been provision for it.

Yeah so do you think it was more from an ethical perspective of having the food going to waste?

Yeah definitely.

Would you say there's any sort of financial aspects that come into that feeling of guilt?

Not really no. No because I'm quite a savvy shopper so I always save money on what I buy anyway. I don't go out and buy the most expensive products so the financial aspect doesn't come into it necessarily.

Ok so you didn't feel guilty that you wasted any money by throwing it away.

No it's more to do with the ethics.

Ok that's fine. If you had to compare that sort of feeling when you had to throw the food away to something totally un-food situation related, what could another situation be where you would feel a similar sort of guilt, annoyance or guilt?

Maybe if I wasn't able to help my children in some way with something that they needed, for instance if my daughter wanted me to babysit and I couldn't babysit I'd feel guilty about that.

Yeah, that's fine. So obviously it's not nice to feel guilty or annoyed or anything like that which is the feeling you described. In fact most of us when we do experience this feeling we try to avoid this happening in the future and we adjust to prevent such a feeling. So my next question aims to address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit any amount of food that you throw away, that

again includes any food or drink so again if you think about if you ever throw away any drink. So I will ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away?

Only buying what I need when I need, so for instance if you know that you've got something coming up in the next few weeks like a birthday or something, working out what you need, ingredients you need, checking your cupboard to make sure you haven't already got it and only buying what's necessary at the time, so not looking too far forward and bulk buying stuff that necessarily is going to go out of date before you get a chance to use it.

Looking from the angle that any strategies, if you've already got the food so for example you've done your food shop but then you come home and your partner says let's go out to eat and you think oh bother I've got all this food in the fridge. So from that perspective, is there any strategies that you have in place of what you do with the food then?

Yeah because that's actually happened before where I've put the slow cooker on and we've got a stew in the cooker and then I come home and he says right let's go out, and I'll just switch the slow cooker off and we'll have it the next day or I can batch some up and I can put it in the freezer for another day. So that's the kind of thing I do, I never look too far forward or make too much food that we're going to be eating for a week sort of thing. I only ever try and make enough food that there's 2 days necessarily at a time.

Yeah ok, and if you do cook, do you ever have any leftovers?

Yeah.

So what would you do with those?

I would put it in the fridge and we'd either have it the next day. So for instance Sunday dinner you can have bubble and squeak the next day so you could cook it up slightly differently. Last night I made paella, I've got it for lunch today and we're having what's left of it tonight for tea with some fishcakes so you just sort of cook the rest of it up and eat it the next day or freeze it.

How much effort do you perceive this to be?

No effort.

Ok.

Really because you know that you're going to be cooking enough to last for more than one meal so it's a case of just putting it in the fridge and reheating the next day so it's sort of a lifestyle that I've become used to.

And do you ever recommend this to any other people?

Yeah.

So who would you...?

My kids. Definitely because they are all really busy the 2 that don't have family, my daughter does it anyway that has family, she uses the slow cooker, she cooks up batches of food and stuff like that. But the other 2

where they're in and out at different times, they live together, they may necessarily make a meal, they can batch it up and leave it for the other one that's not there.

And if you think back on how you learned about this method, was it any sort of family, friends, the media?

Yeah my mum.

Your mum.

Definitely yeah, so using up food, leftovers, things like that, making soup from the meat that's left over from your Sunday dinner and stuff like that so yeah learnt it definitely from my mum.

And would you say that there's anything you learned from the media? So maybe anything that you've read in a magazine, any TV programme or anything like that?

Not really, I mean certainly it has become more prevalent in the news about reducing your waste. I think certainly people are being encouraged not to bulk buy food now and to buy only what they need, but it's something that I've kind of done for a long time anyway.

So it's no news to you.

Not really.

Ok. So when you've used the strategy or any of your strategies of maybe not overstocking or making use of the leftovers you have or not letting food go to waste, so how does that make you feel?

It makes me feel like I've achieved something. It makes me feel like I'm in control.

In control, ok.

Yeah because I think that in the 21st century women have to tick so many boxes and they have to multi task with so many things that if you can have an element of control somewhere in your life it's quite an achievement actually.

So again if you were to have to think about another occasion that's totally food unrelated where you get that same kind of feeling, what sort of occasion might that be?

Christmas, because I have to organise everyone's Christmas presents and I have to come up with ideas for everybody and everyone else's so I've got to have this whole list, almost like a spreadsheet of everybody on it and what they want and then you're buying that and you're buying that and everyone comes to me and I end up having to do the online shop for most people as well.

So is then again that sense of control and achievement.

Achievement.

Ok so we're going to change the focus a little bit now in that because you are a person that rarely ever wastes food and seems to have quite good strategies and ideas of what to do with food. So I've got 4 scenarios here which are scenarios where people have found themselves in a situation where they don't really know what to do, they've overstocked on food or they're in a situation where they have too much food and they don't really know what to do with that. So if I ask you to take almost the role of an agony

aunt so to speak and read through these different scenarios? So one of them is a single person who finds it difficult to deal with multipack sizes and the other one is a family who has recently moved and they've got a large apple tree. If you read through the scenarios and let me know what you would respond to these people.

Ok. Right so the lemons, what that person could do with that is they could 1) make a lemon drizzle cake, 2) they could slice up the lemons and bag them up and put them in the freezer so then they've got individual slices of lemon for whatever they need to use it for. The other thing that they could do is they could also press the lemons and put them into ice cube compartments so that they've got individual compartments of lemon juice so if you needed that for any flavourings for any cooking that you're doing it's there and it's kept and it's not going to go off or anything like that. Right so with the apples, there is a number of different things that you could do with that. You could obviously be making some apple pie, apple chutney, stuff like that. The other thing that they can do is they could contact the church to see if the food bank want any of them or they could contact their local schools to see if the schools want to take them to help the children with cookery lessons or anything like that. If they are eating apples rather than cooking apples they could send them to the schools to have them for healthy snacks at break time. Is that it, just the 2?

Yeah you can do the others if you like, the others on the back.

Number of fresh items they've ordered have a sell by date of tomorrow. So the only thing that I would suggest for that is if the freezer is full is to cook them up and then they'll keep for another couple of days in the fridge whatever the items are.

So prolonging the shelf life through cooking it.

Yeah. Cooked far too much pasta this evening. Make a pasta bake with the rest of the pasta, throw in a tin of tuna and some sauce, put that in the fridge or the freezer.

Then just sort of cook it up the next day?

Yeah.

Ok yeah thank you. So if I just briefly summarise what you just said and then correct me if I'm wrong or make any additions to what I've just said. So you said that you buy food for you and your partner and then occasionally you have guests which is a scenario where you then would purchase more to accommodate that. You do your main shop at a big supermarket, you do a big shop sort of every fortnight and then you top that up with sort of more targeted shops of things that you find are going out of date or some things you fancy so fresh food. You tend to buy a lot of fresh food as oppose to frozen food because you do like to make use of your leftovers or sometimes batch cook to freeze meals and to plan ahead. Then in terms of the actual waste of the food, you don't find yourself often in situations where you do actually end up wasting any food because you do either make it into another meal like you mentioned you make your leftover veg into bubble and squeak or something or you would just put it in the fridge and are quite happy to have it for lunch the next day or take it to work or have it in the evening again so you don't feel that you often waste any food so that you are quite happy to use these strategies to avoid wasting food and this does actually make you feel quite in control and gives you a sense of achievement and that if you do find yourself in a situation where you then have to waste food which may be because you've overstocked because you had family coming and you didn't quite know what your plans were or how much people would be eating or what they fancied sort of thing, that then it does make you feel quite

guilty, not necessarily from a financial aspect of the waste of food because you said that you're quite a savvy shopper and you do watch what you spend anyway but it's more from the ethical perspective of having to waste food and that going to waste really when other people haven't got any. So is there anything that you'd like to add or that I've got wrong?

No that's a perfect synopsis.

Great thank you very much.

Interview 2

This piece of research is all about food waste in the home so there's a lot of research that has been done about how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and then further research about prevention strategies that people have got in place of preventing food waste from happening in the first place so that would be things like having a supermarket shopping list and all those kind of strategies. This research is a little different in that we're interested to find out what strategies people have got in place post-purchase behaviour. So what we're trying to find out is what kind of strategies people like yourself have got in place to make use of the food they've already purchased rather than throwing it away. So to start off with if I could ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

In terms of my household who do I shop for?

Yeah.

Ok so I shop for myself, my husband and our daughter.

Where would you say that you typically shop for food?

Probably mainly Lidl but our closest is Tesco so if we need anything quickly it will probably be Tesco.

How often do you shop for food?

Once a week.

Once a week. So do you tend to do a bigger shop once a week?

Bigger shop once a week, if we find that we need anything quickly then obviously it might be that we pop to the shop a couple of times a week but our main shop is done once a week.

Sorry is that mainly at Lidl then that you would do that?

Yes.

You wouldn't necessarily do online shopping then if they don't offer it?

No I don't do online shopping.

Ok. So how much would you say you typically spend on your food shopping per week?

If it's me £30, if it's my husband probably more. I get really funny if our shopping is above £30, I don't feel like we need to spend, because we only have our daughter half the time so some weeks we won't have to buy for her lunchbox, some weeks we do so it depends on what we need to buy. But most of the time our shopping is more of a fill up than it is a big shop where we have to buy everything. I like to do it between £20 and £30 per week.

Ok yeah, and would you say that you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh definitely, with the view that it can be frozen if needs be.

Ok and do you buy more fresh or more convenience products?

Probably half and half. Are you talking cupboard food in terms of tins or ready meals or things like that?

More like ready meals and things like that.

No we don't tend to buy ready meals at all, our dinners are always...

Cooking sauces as oppose to making your own sort of thing.

Well my husband likes to cook so he'll try to make stuff from scratch but yeah I would probably say half and half, half fresh, half convenience yeah.

So I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occurrence where they had to waste any food that they already purchased however you might be different. Firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Any food that goes in the bin or out of date so that you can't use it. I try to be quite aware of dates so that if we buy some fresh chicken or something that we make sure we cook it before it goes out of date, even if it's cooked and then eaten the next day. I would say mostly we waste maybe fruit. I'm a terrible waster of fruit because we'll buy it and then I won't eat enough of it before it's gone mouldy or something, or veg, and then it obviously needs to be chucked in the food bin but I don't know, is a food bin counted as food waste?

We are not too concerned about any things like vegetable peelings or something like that...

Anything that you can recycle yeah.

...you would throw away anyway. So it's mainly about situations where you might have something in the fridge that you then throw that away. So we're adopting the definition that food waste means any food or drink, so thinking about any kind of drinks as well so milk, fruit juices etc. that ends up in the bin. However things like maybe vegetable peel or something you would throw away anyway because you wouldn't eat it. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you throw away food?

Probably every week, yeah. I would say mainly actually stuff where we overcook and then it gets left in the fridge and it's in the fridge too long and we have to chuck it, more so than stuff that's gone out of date, so that's probably more what we chuck away but yeah probably every week.

And at what stage might you throw something away?

In terms of if it's gone out of date or if it's mouldy, is that what you mean?

Yeah so how would you assess whether you would throw anything away.

So if something was mouldy I would definitely throw it away, bread or anything like that. In terms of obviously if it's a use by or a best before, if it's a best before then obviously I'm not so worried but if it's a use by then definitely chuck it. I'd say we're not that strict on what we throw away, which is really bad I know but... I'm better, I will happily have something that's been refrigerated for a couple of days, I'm happy to reheat it and eat it, whereas my husband's not, he's very much if it's 24 hours old, it's gone. So I think we probably have differing views in when we chuck stuff away definitely.

So would you say that you kind of visually assess it?

Yeah, yes, probably more so by looking but obviously then knowing when we put it in the fridge as to when we then chuck it, how many days it's been.

Do you ever kind of taste it or smell it to see if it's still ok?

Milk definitely I would smell but no probably don't taste it, just in case.

That's fine. You mentioned that what you end up usually throwing away would be meals you've overcooked and then they've been in the fridge, and then you've mentioned the fruit so would you say that these are the kind of two, probably the two things that you...?

Mainly yes because things like meat we'll always make sure we put them in the freezer if they're getting too close to their use by date so then we can use them past... but yes I would say fruit and when we've cooked too much.

Yeah can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to throw any food away or any drink and just explain what kind of led to it being thrown away?

Yeah so I'm trying to think what we made... I think we did something like sausage and mash and there was way too much mash so we put the mash in the fridge thinking that we would use it the next day with something, and I think we ended up maybe buying dinner that night or it didn't end up getting used anyway, and I think it had been in there a week and we said ok no, this is not going to be very nice anymore let's chuck it so the mash just went, it was a tub full of mash. But yeah I think that was probably the last thing that we chucked. I'm trying to think if I chucked anything yesterday, no, I think I just do it without thinking. I know I do it without thinking.

Yeah, so when you do have to throw any food away, how does that make you feel?

I actually, we lived in our house for probably a year before we started using our food bin, it was always there but I was very conscious because where we lived before, we did use the food bin and then when we moved into our own house we didn't and my husband wasn't so bothered but I said we really need to start using the food bin because the amount of food that we chuck actually in the bin is really bad. So we probably introduced the food bin about a month ago, so yeah. I personally don't like it because, not so much from an environmental point of view but I hate the fact that we've paid for it and it goes in the bin.

Ok so it's more the financial implications of it then.

Yeah definitely. I don't like throwing anything away that we've paid for because obviously we could have saved that money had we not bought it.

Does it make you feel guilty if you throw any food away?

Yeah I feel guilty to an extent. We try to obviously teach our daughter that there's lots of people who don't have all this nice food but I think she very much lives in a society where she thinks it's ok to throw the food away and she doesn't actually think about the repercussions and the fact that this could have been saved for someone else or that other people really value any sort of food that they have, so yeah definitely. I feel guilty from a point of view of that we don't necessarily think about it enough, that's how I feel guilty I think. That I definitely live in a household where it's not necessarily thought of that we're lucky to have the food that we have and the fact that we throw it away, definitely yeah.

Ok. If you had to compare the feeling you have when you throw the food away, so you mentioned that it's a bit annoying that it's kind of wasting money, if you had to compare this feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste so what could another totally different occasion be that gives you the same kind of feeling?

Probably when we buy things for our daughter and it never gets played with and then goes to a charity shop. Yeah so again it's just a waste of money, it's money that is just completely wasted because she hasn't done anything with it, or clothes that she's never worn that have been paid for.

Yeah, so obviously it's not very nice to feel annoyed or like you've described, and most of us when we do expect something negative to happen we adjust for such a feeling to happen again. So my next questions aim to address any of the kind of practical strategies that you have got in place to try and avoid, to limit the amount of food that you waste, so feel free to use any specific examples. So what would you say your practical strategies are to limit or avoid throwing away food?

Definitely, probably in the past six months I've tried to buy less. Like I say, I have a limit for what I want to spend and I very much do a scan of the kitchen before we go shopping so that I know if we need to buy something or if we don't. I mean there is always things that you forget, for example I don't want to end up with six cartons of passata in my cupboard when there are already three in there so yeah definitely do a scan before we go shopping so that I know exactly what it is we need. But I take lunch to work every week, every day so I kind of have the same things that I buy every week that are my consumables that obviously I know I use in the week to go to work, and then me and my husband try and have some sort of menu plan for the week so that we know we're buying specific things for specific nights, which obviously can change but in general we try to make sure that we've got five meals for five nights so that we know we're not overbuying food. I don't think we really do anything else. Yeah I would just say we just try to limit how much we buy and then try and menu plan.

So you've just mentioned that your husband likes cooking from scratch and home cooking so do you ever have any leftovers?

Yeah, yeah, sometimes purposefully, we will say ok this can do us two nights so we make sure we halve it and sometimes not, sometimes we just do too many potatoes or whatever it is. But yes we do definitely. I would say most times he cooks we have leftovers.

Yeah so what would you do with those?

They go in a tub in the fridge and it's one of our dinners the next night usually and if not we sort of leave it a couple of days, but if it hasn't been eaten then... but yes in general. We do a big cook on a Sunday with the family and there's always stuff leftover then but yeah it generally becomes... my husband plays football on a Monday so it's easy for him to just come back and heat something up rather than obviously cooking for half an hour before he can eat.

So how much effort would you perceive that to be?

As in cooking more?

Yeah so any of your strategies you've mentioned to limit...

How much more effort?

Yeah how much effort.

Not a lot. No I wouldn't say it's a lot of effort.

And would you ever recommend that to other people?

Definitely. We never used to menu plan and then it got on my nerves that we never knew what we were having every night. So I think menu planning works for a number of different reasons, especially what you're buying when you go to the food shop, trying to eliminate waste and obviously then knowing what you're going to have each night. But like probably a lot people we then have a night where we see what we've got left in the fridge and ok this is the dinner you're having because this is what we've got left so yeah, yeah definitely.

And where would you say you learned about this method?

Not from my parents. Probably more friends, more friends who lived on their own before I did and you sort of walk into their kitchen and see their chalk boards with Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and all their menu plans and I just think it's much easier. My husband used to literally go out and buy his dinner every single night from the supermarket and I said no, no more, no more we'll do a weekly shop and obviously a plan for the meals and it's much easier because obviously some nights we have our daughter and some nights we don't so we need to plan for when she's going to be there and when she's not.

So when you used to go out every night to buy for that dinner that night, did you have more waste?

I wouldn't say so because he was literally just buying for him. It was before we lived together so he was literally just buying for him so he would eat whatever he bought, so no I wouldn't say he had more waste then. I'd almost say now that there are more of us there's more waste because there is more mouths if you see what I mean.

Yeah ok. So when you have used one of your strategies, so for example, you have leftovers and you portion them out for the next day and then make another meal out of it, how does that make you feel?

Quite happy.

Ok.

Only because I quite like my dinner when I get home and it's much easier to heat something up than... I'm not talking about obviously ready meals you can heat up but we don't buy ready meals. I don't do a lot of the cooking so it's kind of hard for me to judge. I'm happy to do the cooking but no my husband likes cooking so a lot of the cooking is down to him but it's nice, I get home and I can relax because I think ok we don't need to prep and do all of dinner until we can kind of sit down and enjoy it.

Ok.

I don't mind having the same meal twice.

So it does make you feel happy. Can you then think of another totally unrelated to food waste situation that would make you feel equally happy?

Having an afternoon nap. Sleep and food make me happy. I don't know. Anything that makes me happy really. A sunny day. Food is a massive emotional thing isn't it, well for some people, and we're total foodies so the happiness I have when I have food is quite happy.

Ok so we're now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit. I've got four scenarios here where people have too much food for various reasons. If I could ask you to just quickly skim through these, you don't have to read them out loud, and just see what kind of advice you could offer these people.

Do you want me to do them as I've read them or once I've read all of them?

However you would prefer to do it.

I don't know what I'd say to 'Delilah' [fictional agony aunt] about her online shopping. It's part of the reason I don't do online shopping personally, because I've had experience and I know that sometimes your dates can be... whereas at least if you're in the supermarket you know what dates you're buying. I would probably just say if she can cook it, cook it so that it's cooked and then obviously she can spread it out and if she leaves it a couple of days she might have a bit more room in her freezer or eat the stuff that's in her freezer so then she's got room to put the stuff in there. I'll read this one. Four lemons, I'd probably make a cake. It uses them up and sometimes, especially with a lemon cake or something you'd use more than one lemon, the zest and the juice so I'd probably make a cake. I have an apple tree in my garden and they all fall off. I don't know. I'm not actually aware whether food banks take fresh stuff, could she give the apples to food banks? I don't actually know the answer to that.

I don't know myself, but that would be maybe an option finding out.

No I don't know either. But I would yeah... I would definitely say if she's got loads and loads of apples either ask her neighbours or something because they might want to cook with them or try and give them to a food bank. Yeah I would just keep the pasta for the next day. Maybe use it in a different way, maybe do a pasta salad or something so that it's a different meal but she is still using the food.

Yeah thank you. So that concludes all of the interview questions. If I could just briefly summarise what you've said and then please feel free to correct or add to it as you see appropriate. You do your shopping for yourself and your husband and then occasionally you've got your daughter so that's on a weekly rotating basis so it depends, between two or three people you would do it for. You mainly shop at Lidl;

occasionally you top up what you need at a local Tesco that is close by. You say that you try to keep within a £30 limit and that you're overall quite organised with kind of prepping ahead and making a shopping list...

Yeah I try to yeah.

...so that you do not overstock in the first place. You did say that what you tend to throw away most would be fruit that's kind of gone off or any kind of leftovers that you've had from cooked meals that you've put in the fridge and thought that you were going to do something with it but then circumstances... you know, it just doesn't happen so you then would throw them away. You did mention that you do kind of go by sell by dates and use by dates but you would also use your visual assessment and smell and you would just see if food was still good to eat and be happy to still consume it as well. You did say that it made you feel a little annoyed if you throw the food away from a perspective that you don't like throwing anything away that you've paid for but other things, so you mentioned that for you the environment aspect of it wasn't such a strong influence in this so it would be mainly the financial implication of wasting the food that would annoy you. You did say that one of your main strategies of avoiding food waste would be to maybe meal plan ahead and make a shopping list and then if you do have any leftovers you would keep them and then make another meal out of it rather than throwing it away. You did mention that it was something that you mainly picked up from friends rather than your family, as opposed to something that say you'd got from your upbringing.

Yes definitely.

And then you did also mention that it makes you feel quite happy if you do make use of any food that could otherwise have been thrown away. Is that quite... sums it up?

Yeah that's exactly what I said yeah.

Ok thank you very much.

Interview 3

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home. So a lot of research has been done on how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and there's also been a lot of research that investigated the strategies people have got in place of trying to prevent food waste from happening so that's to be organised and have a supermarket shopping list, those kind of strategies. This project is a little bit different in that we are trying to establish the strategies people have got in place post purchase so we are trying to find out what normal people like yourself are doing to avoid wasting any food they have already purchased. Ok? So if I could start off by asking you to introduce yourself so tell me a little about your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

Ok, basically I will do my shopping every two weeks, I go between Tesco's and Aldi because I don't like all the products from Aldi and I don't like all the products from Tesco's and I buy for two just me and my husband and because we don't want to waste a lot of food that's why we do the shopping twice a month. Initially we started doing shopping once a month and we see first of all we run out of food very quickly and second of all

we wasted a lot, especially meat because I don't like to freeze all fresh meat so some of them were just wasted because we bought too much just for the two of us. That's it basically.

So you do it every two weeks.

Every two weeks yeah.

So do you still do kind of little shops throughout so if you run out of things?

Yeah because now I work ... very close to Tesco's so I just go downstairs and I do some of my fruit shopping and not meat because there's not much, or bread and all those things I buy daily basically but fruit is like twice a week I buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

Ok, the more sort of staple foods you would go to Aldi and Tesco's ok. Do you do any online food shopping?

No, I used to and it was awesome because it would save me a lot of money but then I don't know why I just stopped doing online shopping, maybe because I bought a car. First of all I did the shopping before I bought the car and then when we got the car we started doing everything in Tesco's and Aldi and Aldi doesn't have an online shop, at least from my knowledge.

Yeah I don't think that they do.

Yeah but I used to do it on Tesco's online. But now I go to the shop and if I go to the shop I can buy more stuff that I usually don't buy online like chocolate.

The little treats. So how much would you say that you spend on your food shopping?

£120 a month on those probably two shopping trips between Tesco and Aldi and summing up the little Tesco's visits probably would go up to £170.

So £170 in total?

In total I think so.

For the month.

Yeah, I think so.

Ok and when you do your food shop do you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh.

More fresh, yeah? And why is that?

The taste of the food is better. I only freeze them if I see that the period is over, if the validity of the food is extended I usually do fresh. I only freeze the food when it's already cooked and I want to save it for next week or something.

Ok, and then another question I have is whether you buy more fresh or more convenience products or ready products?

No, fresh.

Fresh, ok. Yeah?

Yeah, no not convenient. Convenient you mean like ready/prepared meals?

Yeah things like ready meals or any sort of ready sauces or something like that sort of thing.

No because now I do my own sauces with my Thermomix machine.

So you do your own then? So now I would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased so most people can remember at least one occasion where they had to throw away any food that they had already bought, however you might be different, so firstly I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste what do you think that means?

When you just throw the food away, that is food waste for me. For me as well, when you don't finish your meal and instead of keeping it for the next day you just throw it away. That's food waste as well.

So for this interview we are pretty much adopting that definition that food waste is any food but also thinking about drinks so things like milk or fruit juice or any fizzy drinks that are not consumed and end up in the bin.

Ok.

Ok? So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Not very often, milk definitely not, drinks not at all, fizzy drinks maybe I'll say fruit, when we buy too much fruit and we don't finish them and then the fruit start ... with the green...what do you call the green...?

Mould.

Mould, exactly and I need to throw it away or bread, the sliced bread, because it's just the two of us sometimes we buy two pack for two weeks and we don't eat it all and they start getting mould. On those occasions I need to throw the food away but it doesn't happen very often.

Would you say weekly or monthly?

Probably monthly or in 15 days, two weeks but not as often.

Not very regular.

No.

Ok, and what would you say that you usually throw away, so what types of food?

Fruit, bread, veggies.

Ok. And at what stage might you throw it away?

When there is mould. And sometimes not when the validity is past but I try to consume all the products until the validity date but sometimes one or two days after they are still fine.

So you would still use them?

I would still use them. Not yoghurts or eggs.

Not yoghurts or eggs.

I would throw that away.

But any other products you kind of would?

Yeah.

So how would you decide whether you use it or not?

If they are still like, the smell for example or I try, for yoghurts usually one day is fine but I try usually a little bit before I eat them all. But I am really afraid of eggs and all the lactic products like milk and all those things.

Ok so you would kind of visually assess it and then smell it and maybe try it and see if it's still ok.

Yeah.

Ok. So can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you wasted some food or drink? Just kind of explain what happened and what were the circumstances that led it be wasted?

Yesterday I threw bread away because there was mould on it. And I wanted to make a sandwich and when I took the bread out of the package there was green on the side, basically and I threw it away. And the bread was not too old, it was from last week.

Oh ok yeah.

And it got a little bit of mould. And I just threw everything away.

Yeah. Ok, so when you had to throw that bread away how did that make you feel?

Oh I don't like it. I don't like it. First of all I don't like it because I pay for the food and I don't like to just throw it away and I also think about the environment and throw all the food away and people that might need food as well. I don't like to throw food away, I hate it.

So there's different implications, I understand that. Ok, do you feel guilty if you throw it away?

Yeah, completely.

Yeah?

Yeah. I prefer to freeze them, for example, if it was a type of bread, the sliced bread you can't have frozen because then the water will basically kill the bread but if it was a different type of bread like the ones I do at home, like the ones I do with the Thermomix you can slice it and then you can freeze it and you can re-use it. But this type of bread you need to throw it away.

So if it was a whole loaf of bread that you'd home baked then you could freeze it.

Yeah. I freeze most of the products that I can instead of throwing them away.

Ok, so you've mentioned that you feel guilty about throwing the food away and that you don't like throwing the food away so how strong is that feeling would you say?

How strong?

Yeah. So do you feel very guilty or is it more low?

It's guilty, I feel not very guilty because everyone does it at some point but I don't like to do it. So medium guilty I would say.

If you had to compare that feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste so in another totally different occasion what could that occasion be? So another occasion that would make you have the same feeling. It doesn't have to be related to food.

When I eat chocolate and I shouldn't for example, when I am on a diet. Maybe, that feeling.

Yeah? Ok?

Guilty. Always guilty.

So obviously it's not nice to feel guilty or having to do something you don't like to do, like you just described, in fact most of us when we expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling from happening so my next questions aim to address the practical strategies that you have got in place to avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier so I will ask you what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

Yeah, first of all I try not to buy big amounts of food when I do the shopping, I try to buy, as I told you, most fresh products as I can and when I have things at home that I don't use I freeze what I can. For example the meat instead of freezing the whole meat sometimes I cook the whole package and then I freeze the prepared meals so I can take for lunch in different days of the week.

So you would bulk cook in advance and meal prep ahead.

Yeah, but since I have the machine, the Thermomix, I feel that I don't waste as much food as I used to because I can reuse different types of food that I usually throw away and do other things like the ketchup. Like if I buy two packets of tomatoes and I only use one then I use the other ones to do the ketchup sauce.

Ok.

For example. Instead of throwing it away because it already passed the validity. I try to reuse as much as I can.

Ok so you would just make something out of it and you've got a kitchen machine that enables you to help the food prep and do that. So when you, you mentioned that you like to buy fresh food and that you don't buy a lot of ready meals or convenience products so would you say that you mainly cook from scratch?

Yes, yeah.

Ok, and then when you cook do you often have any leftovers?

Yes for the next day, I usually do more so that I can bring for lunch on the next day.

Oh ok, so you purposely cook bigger portions so that you...

Yes, yes, yes, for me and my husband.

...so that you can take it for lunch. Ok.

Yeah, yeah. Also because my cooking machine doesn't do meals for two, it does meals for four to six so I always do the proportions that they ask so I have more food to take on the next day.

So it's kind of depending on the recipe so you would follow that.

Especially soup if I do on a Monday I have soup until Wednesday or Thursday because it's only me.

So you would cook a soup and then you'd take it, portion it up...

For the whole week the same soup basically.

Ok. And how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Fairly big effort. I'll do it, I've always done it so...

It comes naturally.

...it comes naturally yes.

Ok. And do you every recommend this strategy to other people?

Yes but it depends on your household, like for example my habits changed a lot since I have the cooking machine. Before then I didn't cook much meals at home, I would buy everything from the restaurant so not cooking myself because I am not a very good cooking person but yeah, it depends on the household.

So do you find that ever comes up in conversation, when you have conversations with other people?

No.

No?

No

Ok. So where would you say that you learned about this method of not throwing the food away or making use of leftovers?

Probably from parents, my mum especially, she does the same so my father used to take the meals for lunch for the next day and I've done that since I am working. I usually bring the meals so that's how I reuse maybe. I don't know it comes naturally, I don't know how to answer the question to be honest.

So it's probably from your...

I never thought about it to be honest. I never thought about it. I know that I do because I prefer to use the food than throw it away. But for example ... [respondent's husband] he's never done that, ever, in their house they don't eat the food from the previous day. They throw it away or they give it to the chickens or

the animals instead because they don't like the taste of the food from the previous day, and ...[respondent's husband] only started eating the food from the previous days since we moved in together, otherwise he would just throw everything away.

So he's learned it from you.

He learned it from me, yeah. Otherwise he didn't have anything to eat because I wouldn't cook twice.

So would you say that any kind of media takes any influence on this or has given you any ideas on how to reuse food?

Not that I am thinking no, I don't think so. Maybe I am not aware of, I might have seen something on the TV or radio but...

...but not that you can actively...

...no, no, no.

Ok. So when you, when you just for example you've mentioned that you might have too many tomatoes and then you would use the tomatoes that you want but you have some leftover that they don't look too good and you would otherwise throw them away but you mentioned that you would make ketchup with them. So when you used one of those strategies, how does that make you feel?

Smart.

Ok.

Yeah because I am not throwing food away and it feels good because I can reuse and I can save money as well.

Yeah? So is the money side of things something that plays into that quite a bit?

To be honest I never thought about that as well but now that you ask, yeah, it makes me feel smart because I am not buying more and I am not...I am saving money because I am not buying ketchup. I make it myself, and I am not throwing food away, so it makes me feel good.

Ok. Yeah? So if you had to compare that feeling that you said it makes you feel smart to a situation again totally unrelated to food what could another occasion be that makes you feel smart or gives you that feeling?

I don't know. I don't know. A feeling...the same feeling in a different situation?

Yeah.

Hmm, that's tricky, I don't know.

If you can't think of anything then...

No. Situation which I have the same feeling as when I have when I am saving food or I don't know, I can't think about anything.

That's fine.

Sorry.

That's fine. So we are going to change the focus of the interview a little bit now, I've got here, I've got four scenarios where people have had too much food and I'd like you to sort of briefly read through them, you don't have to read them out loud if you don't want to and to see what kind of advice you could offer those people.

To each?

To each yeah, so they are printed in black on, so...

Ok.

Yeah.

Ah so the ones in black only.

Yeah.

Ok. Huh, this is tricky. So she's done online shopping and the fresh items the sell by date is the next day, she cannot eat them and she cannot storage them, she can give them away to charity for example or someone who needs it, if she cannot reuse them nor do anything with them. I would never throw them away, I would give it to someone that can actually use it. Yeah, yeah actually I remember a situation when I go on holiday and I have my fridge full of stuff I give to my friends if they are here, if they don't travel at the same time as we do, and they use the products, I usually don't throw things away. And when I go for more than two weeks I clean my fridge so the fridge can, I can turn it off. So I clean the fridge and freezer and I'll give my food, I won't throw it away and this is, this is the advice I would give to 'Delilah' [fictional agony aunt].

Ok.

She can throw the lemons or she can do ice cubes of lemons, so she can reuse for lemonade, she can store them in packs in the freezer, she can bring water with lemon to work. Four lemons is fine for individual person for 2 or 3 weeks. They have expiry date, very long expiry date. But yeah but I would, I do that in the summer, I cut the lemons and I squeeze them and then I do like a lemon juice and I put in the ice cubes and it goes in the freezer and every time we want a little bit of lemonade we put the ice cube in the water.

Ok.

That is really good. I would suggest that.

Yeah.

Again in here, so if she cannot eat the whole fruit and she doesn't want to cook she can store in the freezer or she can give the fruit away to people that actually would eat it or need it. Ok here 'Delilah' [fictional agony aunt] has cooked a lot of pasta, she can bring the pasta to work the next day or she can eat it for dinner or for lunch another week if she freezes it basically instead of it going to waste.

Ok so you suggest of freezing it or just putting it in the fridge and having it for another meal.

...yeah for the next day.

Ok so that concludes all my questions so if I just briefly summarise what you have just said to me and if you just correct me or add to it as and when. So you live in your household, it's you and your husband, you do shopping about twice a month in Tesco or Aldi and then you top it up as and when you need it so you said there's a little Tesco Express close to your work where you can just conveniently pop into and get a few bits. You said that overall your food shopping comes to about £170 per month. You said that you do buy more fresh than frozen food and that you do cook from scratch a lot so you do tend to buy a lot of fresh food. In terms of wasting any food you said that you don't waste a lot and you think that's maybe like once a month or every other week or around that time. You said that it's mainly bread or any fruit that starts to mould that you would waste. In terms of assessing whether any food is still good to eat you said that you kind of would maybe look at the expiry dates and you would take it seriously for some sort of products so mainly milk products or eggs but for other things you would just visually assess it or smell it or taste it to see if it's still good to eat and you don't like throwing food away so that does make you feel quite guilty for various implications, so the financial implication of obviously you've paid for the food and you don't like seeing it go to waste but then also other people so ethical implications cause there's other people that haven't got any food to eat but then also looking from the sort of environmental aspect of wasting food not being good for the environment. You did say that you recently bought a cooking machine which helps you cook a lot more from scratch or make use of ingredients you wouldn't have otherwise used or you would otherwise have thrown away. You did say that consequently also because you bought the machine you do tend to follow recipes that are usually for four to six people so that is obviously bigger than your household size but you said that you quite like it because you do like to take your leftovers to work the next day or you would freeze some to sort of prolong the shelf life of them so you don't perceive that to be any effort and you say it comes quite naturally to you. You did say that you probably learned it from your mum but it's not something you've necessarily really cautiously picked up from her because you just feel that it's always come to you and...

Makes sense.

...and makes sense to you to do that. You did say that you haven't conscientiously taken anything in from the media in regards to this but you did mention that for example your husband he wouldn't habitually make use of food from his supper and then he would throw it away.

And initially when we started living together I would cook for us and for the next day and he never took the meals for the next day. He would go to Tesco's and buy something for lunch just for him and I would bring the meal for myself. But his habits started to change a little bit as well. Sometimes he doesn't take food like rice, he doesn't eat the rice from the previous day for example. So if I do risotto and if I have a portion for the next day for him he won't eat it, it would just be only for me, for example, because he doesn't eat the rice from the previous day, which is weird because it's fine.

So there are little differences between yourselves but you said that you've reduced the amount of food that you waste because you do take it to work now or you've got this machine which enables you to cook a lot more than you previously would have done. Is that all correct?

All correct. Yes. Thank you.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

No.

No?

No.

Ok, thank you.

Interview 4

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home. A lot of research has been concerned with how much or how little people waste and how that makes them feel and then a lot of research has looked at the preventative measures people take to prevent overstocking so buying too much food so making lists prior to shopping. We're looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle so it's that of post purchase behaviour... Yeah so we're looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle at post purchase behaviour. So what we're most interested in is the practical side of food waste prevention from real people so in other words how people like you ensure that they make use of the food that they have already purchased. So to start off with, if I can ask you to introduce yourself and tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour, so for instance, who do you shop for?

I shop for myself and my 2 roommates/flatmates and our pets.

Ok so is it 3 adults then?

Yeah 3 adults.

Ok and you house share?

Yeah we house share and we swap the shopping so I do the shopping and then someone else will do the shopping another time.

So you don't have separate food for each of you?

No.

So you share the cost of the food?

We share the whole...

Ok. So how often do you shop for food?

Normally every week, normally on the weekends.

Ok so you do like a big shop during the week.

A big shop yes.

Then do you sort of do little shops throughout the week to get more stuff?

Yeah it depends on if we planned our meals or if we just did like a general food shop but if we planned our meals then we try not to go to the shop but sometimes obviously we do go to the shops in the week.

Ok and typically where do you shop for food?

We try to go to Lidl and Aldi to keep the cost low.

Ok and if I could be so rude how much do you typically spend say per week or per shop whatever is easiest for you?

I would say between £50 and £70 per week.

Ok and then the little shops would be on top of that?

Yes.

Ok and how much do you spend on those do you think?

Another £20 probably.

So do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh food.

Ok and why is that?

I don't know. I think it's just more appealing to me to buy fresh food than frozen food.

Ok so when you say that you do your big shop and you mention that you go to Lidl for that, your little shops where would you go for those? Again a supermarket or would you go to more private shops?

No again it's a supermarket, it's basically what is someone's been on the way and what's close.

Ok, I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occurrence if not more, however of course you might be different. So firstly I'm intrigued to know when I say food waste, what do you think this means?

Food waste is if I buy something then I basically throw it in the bin a week later, I didn't use it.

Ok so yeah for this interview when we refer to food in any of the questions it would include any drinks as well, so food and drink, so that could include milk and fruit juices, any fizzy drinks you might have thrown away but we are adopting the definition that food waste means food or drink that ends up in the bin. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

It kind of depends on the shop we do. If there's like a plan of what we cook then I would say we don't really waste a lot but if it's more like, we do a general food shop then it's kind of an over shop and we do throw away a lot of fruit and veg.

Ok so would it be on a weekly basis or monthly basis, how regular would you say it is?

I would say like twice a month.

So what would you say that you usually throw away?

Vegetables mostly.

Ok and at what stage might you throw them away?

At a very late stage.

Ok so why might you throw it away?

Because we planned wrong for meals or we just thought oh I'm just going to buy something, I'm going to use it for whatever comes up and it just kind of gets forgotten about or we eat out.

Ok but if you think about it when you do throw it away, how do you assess whether you would keep it or not keep it?

I try to not throw away a lot, and I think we're mostly successful with it because we do use the veg really until there's no point in keeping it any longer.

So when you say there's no point in keeping it any longer how would you assess that?

If it's gone bad.

Do you look at it or smell it or taste it?

Yeah I look at it and then obviously sometimes you do the touchy thing.

So you touch it and see if it's still ok.

Yeah.

So is it just mainly fruit and veg or do you have any other products that you end up throwing away regularly?

Yoghurt maybe, that's like a thing that we would sometimes forget is in the fridge and then if it goes over the date too long.

Ok so would you look at the date and if it's gone over you throw it away?

I'd look at the date and if it's just gone over a couple of days I would still eat it and if it's gone a bit longer open it and see if it's still fine but if it's not then I would throw it away.

Ok so you would assess it and then look at it, taste it.

Yeah.

Ok. So can you tell me about a specific time in the not so distant past that you wasted some food or drink? And just explain to me what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it being wasted.

The last thing I can remember is probably orange juice which I opened and then kind of forgot in the fridge and then the next time I wanted to have it I kind of forgot that I opened it and it was in the fridge for a bit yeah.

Ok and how long was it in the fridge for do you know?

A couple of days I would say.

So when you had to throw that orange juice away how did that make you feel?

Not really great, a bit angry with myself because it was just a waste.

Ok so do you feel guilty if you throw food away?

I do.

Ok and why is that?

Because it's just a waste, not just of food obviously but it's just a waste of my money. Other people would probably sometimes still eat what I throw away.

So if you had to compare that feeling of, you said you were annoyed with yourself, if you had to compare that feeling of being annoyed to something totally unrelated to food waste, so another totally different occasion where you were equally annoyed, what would that occasion be?

I don't know.

It can be anything.

Driving probably.

Driving ok, why does driving annoy you?

It just gets to me.

The general thought of having to drive or if something happens?

No if something happens in the car not in general.

Ok, so obviously it isn't nice to feel annoyed like you described when you had to throw the food away, in fact most of us when we expect to feel something negative we try to prevent such a feeling. So my next question aims to address the practical strategies regarding how you try and avoid and limit the amount of food you throw away. Please feel free to use specific examples if it makes it easier. So I will ask, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away? So please give me as many strategies as you can.

I do check the dates in the fridge and see like kind of stock rotation, see what has to go and see what I've got and what I can make out of it. For example if I have a lot of veg left and I know I won't eat it in the next couple of days and I can't make anything out of it then I make my own veg stock that I can then put in the fridge and use for cooking or just today we bought a cheese board a couple of weeks ago, there was some leftover cheese which was still fine but as we're going on holiday I knew after the holiday I would have to bin it so I made a cheese sauce for pasta to just use it up. Then with fruit I try to, if it gets a bit to the limit then I try to bake with it or make a pudding out of it, see what I can do with it.

So you would just open the fridge or see what kind of food you've got lying around and then decide what you could do with it before you throw it away.

Yes.

Ok so when you cook, do you ever have any leftovers?

Yes.

So what might you do with those?

If there are leftovers I take them to work or someone else in the house will take them to work the next day.

Ok. How much effort do you perceive that to be?

None really.

Ok and how much effort do you perceive it to be the strategies, you mentioned that you would make a pudding out of any fruit or to recycle food that you would otherwise throw away?

It's a little effort but nothing too major really, it's not a big effort if you get to the point of doing it, it's more the thought about doing it and that's the effort.

Ok and do you ever recommend the strategy to other people?

I would yeah.

Do you ever do it?

I do sometimes I would say.

Ok and in what sort of situations would that be?

The other day at work we had quite a few bananas that were going and I just said why don't we make a banana bread with the children out of it so the children had something to do and they had something to take home, so I would say I would mostly do it at work so I can involve the children in using some of the things that we have.

Ok and where would you say that you learned about this method?

Probably online.

Ok, so where would that be if you say online?

Like on recipe websites where you just look something up and then you see if you have, for the banana bread for example, if you have brown bananas use them for it or it's easier for that.

So do you look at food blogs and stuff as well or...?

Yeah I've got a couple of food blogs that I follow and they're just if you have this veg over or this or this you can swap it for something or put it in as well.

Ok and what about family and friends?

Not so much, my family yes but friends I wouldn't say I can recommend any hacks.

I meant where you learned about...

Yeah probably family, not friends no.

Ok so when you say family, would that be your mum or...?

Yeah my mum, she uses up a lot of, I don't think she has a lot of food waste so she uses a lot up.

So you're quite used to cooking and...

Yeah.

So when you have saved some food so to say or used a strategy and food does not end up getting thrown in the bin, how does that make you feel?

Quite proud, it makes me feel good.

Can you describe another occasion when you felt the feeling?

Not driving. I don't know, if I accomplish something I would say I get the feeling.

Ok so any sort of tasks.

Yeah.

Ok so we're going to change the focus of the interview a little bit now so I'm going to ask you to do a little bit of role playing. So I'm going to ask you to assume the role of an agony aunt advising other people with their questions about food waste. So I've got 4 scenarios where people have found themselves in a bit of a pickle and they have got too much for food for one reason or another, and if I just can ask you to read through the scenarios so they're the ones in black and then just see what you could advise people.

Do you want me to read them out loud?

You don't have to.

Ok.

Have you read all 4 of them?

Yeah.

They're the same just sort of in black if it's easier to read but they're the same 4 scenarios.

So you want me to start with the scenario on... well if it's a sell by date I wouldn't say you obviously have to eat them by that day, it's that just shops are like to sell it by then but you still have some time to eat it so I would just leave it in the fridge for a bit longer until you want to use them and until you see that you really can't use them anymore but I wouldn't like put them in the bin or anything, I would just leave them in the fridge a bit longer because the sell by date is obviously not a use by date.

Ok.

With the 4 lemons, I don't know you could put some hot water and make a hot lemon or make a lemon cake, lemon drizzle or something like that, that's really easy to do, or use it for cooking as well like the zest you can use quite often for something.

So what would you use that for, the zest?

With like some fish or something, make like a lemony sauce for fish or anything. With the apple tree again you can bake with it or make like apple sauce and the person says they're not much of a cook but I mean like apple sauce is not very hard and even when she says some of them start to rot, even if they're quite close to being off you can still use them and make like an apple pie or something out of that.

Yeah, there's one more.

Yeah with the pasta I would just say take it to work the next day maybe or if she has someone that could take it to work she can just put it in a container and put it in the fridge until the next day and take it to work and reheat it, heat it up.

So what would you do if you had the pasta but not necessarily the sauce?

Maybe fry the pasta with some vegetables or some egg, make some fried noodles out of it, or you can always still freeze it.

Ok, so would you be happy to freeze pasta?

Yeah.

Ok so that's concluding the questions I have. So let me just briefly summarise about food waste and ways in which you try to avoid and reduce the amount you waste, and then you can correct me at any point or add to it if I get it wrong or if you've got any other points you want to raise. So you live together with 2 other people and you house share and you share the cooking and the shopping and everything with that so you would do the weekly shop one week and then someone else might pick it up the next week or something but you don't sort of have your own, each do your own shopping. You usually go to Lidl or Aldi do a weekly shop and then you top that up with whatever you need throughout the week, whatever that might be, you go to the supermarket that's on the way anywhere. To do that you reckon that you spend between £50 and £70 per big shop and then maybe £20 to top it up with whatever you're buying throughout the week. You did say that you don't necessarily think you waste a lot but you do waste some sort of, what you habitually waste would be fruit and vegetables and maybe yoghurt.

For the vegetables it would mostly be something like lettuce which you really can't cook, it's more like salad bits not like leeks or something that you can use.

Ok and then you would assess the fruit and the veg and see how long you can use it for rather than going by any kind of sell by dates you see on them.

No if they still look and smell good to me and there's nothing wrong with them then I wouldn't just throw them away because of the sell by date.

Ok and then you mentioned yoghurts that were similar or the same, that you would do the same.

Yes.

You did say that you do feel annoyed if you have to waste any food because you do feel it's a waste of money and you feel it's wrong to waste food.

Yeah I think it's pretty wrong to waste it yes.

You mentioned that you usually regularly assess what you have stock and then plan according to that what you can make out of it. So if you have a lot of vegetables you mentioned that you might make like a stock paste or cook with them or if you've got any fruit or something then you would then bake accordingly so you're quite happy to look at what you've got in stock and then make something out of it. When you do cook and have any leftovers then you would just take them...

Take them to work and I can reheat them at work and then just eat what I've got left.

Yeah and you don't really perceive that to be much effort or anything.

Oh no, I think it's easier to take that than to make myself some lunch in the morning.

A little bonus there. So you did mention that you learned some of these things online so through looking up for recipes and stuff like that and then that your family would influence you in that as well and that if you do manage to make something out of fruit that would otherwise be thrown away that it would make you feel quite, it would be like an achievement or you would feel quite proud.

Yes, yes.

Does that sum it up?

That's fine yeah.

Yeah, ok thank you very much.

Interview 5

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home, so there has been a lot of research on food waste that has been done on how much or how little food people waste and how that makes them feel and then further there has been a lot of research into the kind of strategies people adopt in order to avoid food waste happening in the first place, so thinking about things like having a shopping list and planning meals ahead and that kind of thing. So the research that we are doing is a little bit different in that we are looking at food waste from a different angle so that from a post purchase behaviour, so what we mean by that is, what we are interested to know is what kind of strategies normal people like yourself have got in place to avoid food waste when they have for some reason over stocked on food, so if you find yourself in any situation where you do have too much food in the house what kind of strategies do you use to avoid this food going to waste, so that is the angle we are looking at.

Ok.

So if I can just ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your shopping behaviour, so for instance who would you do your food shopping for?

So I shop for myself, my husband and my two children.

Ok and how often would you say that you shop for food?

I would say probably twice a week, one big shop and then an additional shop.

Ok and where would you do your big shop?

Mainly Tesco's.

And then your little shop?

It could be Lidl or it could be Waitrose depending on which way I am travelling, Waitrose is nearer but sometimes Lidl has better deals so I might go there.

Ok and do you ever use any online shopping?

Yes.

So would you usually get your big shop online?

Yes big shop online.

Ok and then you would kind of top that up throughout the week?

Yes as and when.

Ok, how much would you say that you would spend on food per week?

Probably around £90 or £100.

And do you purchase more fresh or frozen food?

More fresh.

Yes and why is that?

Because of a diet that I am on it leans more towards preparing fresh foods, so I would plan to have that in my weekly planner anyway, so mainly fresh.

Ok and then do you tend to cook from scratch more or do you buy more ready meals or more frozen?

From scratch.

From scratch ok. I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, most of us can remember at least one instance where we had to throw food away, however you might be different, I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste what do you think that means?

Food that you've bought that you don't ever touch and has gone out of date and therefore ends up in the bin or if you over buy or over cook and then the leftovers end up in the bin, anything that ends up in the bin.

Ok yes, so for the purpose of this interview it would very much the definition of any food but also including drinks, so thinking about any milk or fruit juices or fizzy drinks, things like that, that are not being consumed and end up in the waste bin.

Ok.

So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Probably once or twice a month.

Ok.

I would generally... over the last couple of years I have been more organised around my food and therefore plan a bit better and understand that you shouldn't really buy stuff for the sake of it and throwing it out, so I do plan a lot better, so just a couple of times. But then on the other hand because I now don't pick at my children's food probably their leftovers do end up in the bin more often than not because I don't want to pick at it, so that just comes back to my way of eating at the moment because beforehand I probably would have just finished what was on their plate, it does end up in bin so actually maybe once or twice a week from that respect so just their little bit of leftovers.

And that's what is left on their plate?

Yes.

Are there particular types of food that you say that you tend to throw away, or drink?

I don't tend to throw drinks away that often and food wise, generally it would just be the odds and ends off of their plate maybe whatever they have had for their evening meal, it might be chicken nuggets or sausages or things that I know that I am not allowed to eat at the moment, they will just go in the bin.

Ok yes and then why would you throw something away, how would you assess if it is still ok to eat or not if (inaudible, 05.49)?

Ok so if I bought something and it had gone past its date, its used by date, if I was the one eating it, I would test it by, if it was a yogurt and it was blown I wouldn't eat it but if it was maybe three days over or five days over and it wasn't I would just eat it but I wouldn't give it to my kids.

Ok.

So I don't mind if it affects me but I would mind if it affected them and I was the one who fed it to them, so anything like that or meat that maybe smells a bit off if it's on its date, then I would maybe cook it for longer than I would do normally and eat it myself but I wouldn't give it to my children.

Ok and then in terms of any vegetables or fruit so how would you assess whether that's still ok?

Vegetables and fruit I am quite good with and would buy them quite regularly to know that they were going to be within the time scales and if I thought that we were running out of time on them, I would just cook

them off and then put them in something that I would then just keep for another day maybe the next day or the day after as part as another meal, so I am quite good at making sure that they are used.

Ok, can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink and just explain what happened and what the circumstances were?

So probably mainly over Christmas, when we had family and friends round for food, that there may well have been things that I knew that my family weren't going to eat in our household and that were starting to go past their best, maybe like the cream and things that were leftover because I knew I wasn't going to eat them, they did just end up in the bin but I tried to palm people off with some stuff as they left, just to take it out of my house but I think that would be one of the main reasons where maybe I bought things that I wouldn't normally have because other people were coming but then knew that because I wanted to eat healthily that I didn't want it left in the house as a temptation.

Yes.

So things like cream, custard, puddings that were leftover, thing like that over Christmas would be the main thing.

Although you said you were able to give them to other people and haven't actually had to waste them, how did that make you feel?

On one side it does make me feel bad that I have thrown food away and that there would be somebody out there that could eat them and it is just a waste but from the other point of view I knew I didn't want to eat them, so for my benefit I had to get rid of them.

Yes so that kind of conflicting view of that you are also on a diet.

Yes, so I had felt good that I had made the decision that I wasn't going to eat them because that's how I should be feeling at the moment but I also felt bad that either I paid for it or it was just going to waste.

Ok yes, when you say you were feeling bad that it went to waste what's kind of underpinning that?

That it's going to landfill so from that point of view, putting more rubbish into the ground but also for people that can't afford to buy food or are struggling financially and go without meals and for me to throw it away that doesn't feel right that there would be someone out there who could eat it.

Do any kind of financial implications come into that?

Not personally no.

So you don't kind of feel annoyed at yourself that you wasted the money that you spent on the food?

It didn't come to mind but I suppose if I did waste quite a lot then yes that would annoy me that I had spent all that money and it hadn't been eaten.

Yeah that's fine. So if you had to compare that feeling of feeling bad that you didn't make use of the food or that you had to throw food away, if you had to compare it to a situation totally food unrelated where you feel that equal feeling of feeling bad what could such a situation be?

Oh I don't know really, can't really think of anything sorry.

No that's fine, obviously it's not nice to feel bad and usually when, most of us when we expect to feel a negative emotion we adjust to prevent this from happening again, so my next questions aim to address any kind of strategies that you have got in place to try and limit or avoid any food being thrown away and the amount of food you waste, so what would you say that you do to try and avoid food waste?

So what I do in general or what I will do in the future?

What you do currently.

So plan meals in advance and be wary of what dates are on things and when I am going to use them, so that might be where my top up shop would come in, if I knew that the date wasn't going to be long enough for the time that I wanted it on my big shop, then I would leave it and plan it into my little shop, so more about planning the meals and making sure that I have got the right things for the right days, so mainly about planning and organising.

Ok so you said that you are quite good at planning your meals ahead and kind of having a shopping list and being quite strategic with that. So if you ever find yourself in a situation where you do have too much food though, what would you try and adopt to try and stop throwing it away?

So if it was things like meat and vegetables, I would prepare something and maybe freeze it or put it back into the fridge if I knew I was going to use it the next day, so mainly cook things off or if my online shopping did come and it had a shorter date than I liked then I would probably freeze it straight away on that day and prolong the life of it that way. So more about being aware of the dates that are on things and then as I say if they do start going short of time then cooking them, so that I am still able to use them.

And you mentioned that you mainly cook from scratch and do your meal prep at home, do you ever have any leftovers so not necessarily speaking about the kids leftovers which you said that you dispose but anything that hasn't been plated up?

So generally we would have a roast dinner on a Sunday and there would always be something leftover but then it would be used on the Monday, we would have it as a dinner or as part of our lunch on the Monday, so it would always be used the next day, so generally vegetables sometimes or potatoes that are leftover, maybe a little bit of meat but it depends on who has eaten what really but yes it is always eaten the next day.

So you then just keep it for the next day and make something out of it?

Yes.

How much effort do you perceive that to be?

Less effort because I don't have to cook the next day.

Yes, do you ever recommend this to other people?

The group, ... [a weight management group] that we attend is quite an open and honest group so I would say that we quite freely talk about how we deal with food in general, we spend a whole morning talking about

food, so I would say that I would talk to them about how I plan stuff and how they (inaudible, 14.22) as well, so yes I would.

Ok and where would you say that you learn about the method of kind of being more aware and trying to avoid throwing away food?

I would say obviously it has been on the news quite a lot over recent years, I wouldn't say necessarily it was a thing that happened over my childhood, I don't ever remember it being a huge issue but the way I was brought up compared to the way the way I bring my kids up is slightly different. My mum was on her own so it was just me and her, so it was very much more prepared food and maybe ready meals because there was fewer of us, it was easier for her. So I wouldn't say necessarily it was from that, I would say it is more over my adult life and since I have had children and being more aware of the things that I am teaching them and how I should act in front of them and the habits that I should instil into them.

Yes.

So I would say it is more over my adult life maybe from news and from reading articles and also my ... [weight management] group because it is all about food.

Ok, when you do find yourself in a situation where you have saved some food, so you have made something out of the food rather than throwing it away so for example the leftovers of the roast, you would make them into another dish or you would keep it for the next day, how does that make you feel?

It makes me feel good because I am not cooking again and also the less effort that I put into things, but also then knowing that I could just use up exactly what I've bought so financially we are no worse off because we have prepared another meal from it but also we are not wasting it.

Ok, so is it overall quite a positive feeling?

Yes.

Ok and if you had to compare that to another situation totally food unrelated, where would you say it would give you the same kind of feeling?

I am not very good at comparing to other things I don't think I have an answer for that one.

That's fine. We are now going to change the focus of the interview a tiny bit in that I have got four scenarios here of situations where people have found themselves in the situation where they have too much food for various reasons and I would just like you to read through them and just see what kind of advice you would give to them.

Ok I would maybe say either take something out of the freezer and cook it that she will be able to use over the next few days or cook the food off for a longer life and then maybe just have it in fridge or ask a neighbour whether they have got any space in their freezer or family and friends that have a big freezer that might be able to store it for them, yes that is the kind of thing I would do, cook it or put it in freezer.

Yes.

Ok I'm not too sure about fruit and how you can prolong their life and whether you can freeze fruit, I am not really sure but maybe keeping it in the fridge will prolong its life a bit longer or find some recipes that she

could use the lemons in but maybe for the next time although it was cheaper to buy four, if you are not going to use four then just buy one.

Yes.

So with the apple tree I would suggest either if she wants to use some for herself to find out ways to prepare them, so by peeling them, chopping them and freezing them she would then be able to use them or offer them to her neighbours or some people use Facebook as a way of getting rid of things, they offer it out for free to somebody that is going to use them. There are lots of cases like that locally that have fruit trees and don't use their fruit and they just offer it out to make chutney or whatever during the autumn, so that's what I think of that one.

Ok.

So if I cooked too much pasta personally I would just keep it for the next day and use it in a meal the next day.

Ok.

I know some people are a bit more aware of dates and what's happening to the food but I think if I heat it through properly then there's not going to be anything on there that has grown on there that is going to harm me, so I would definitely just use it the next day.

Yes, so you would just put it in the fridge and use it the next day.

Yes.

So that is all of my questions so far, so if I just summarise briefly what you have said and then please feel free to correct me or add to it.

Yes.

So you said that because you were following a special diet you are quite organised with the food that you buy and you are quite on top of making sure that you use up, so you perceive yourself to be quite organised in the first place and make sure that you do eat the food that you have bought and therefore there is very little waste anyway so you said mainly on average sort of waste about once or twice a month but what you do have more waste of is kind of the plate waste from the children where just they haven't finished their meal but equally you're not picking it up so that would go in the bin. You did say that generally when you have to throw food away, so you have just mentioned that over Christmas you have over catered on nice food that one buys for Christmas that you did try to distribute it amongst friends and family but then that uncertain items, you did throw them away and that was quite a conscious decision because you made the decision that you did want to follow that diet and that was more important to you than throwing the food away but overall you did feel bad about throwing food away from the two aspects, that was first of all there are other people that might struggle to buy the food or that are struggling to have meals and then also that it would go into landfill so the kind of ecological and environmental implication of it really. You said that you cook from scratch mainly so you are quite happy to do that and then any kind of leftovers you have that haven't been plated up already then you would just keep them for the next day. You perceive that to be no effort but in a way it is quite a good thing because you then don't have to cook the next day or it saves you the work for the next day. In terms of

being influenced to do this, you say it wasn't necessarily your family or friends or your upbringing but it was more from personal experience from the awareness that was raised about the issue in the media and that you are a bit more conscientious about it now that you are a mum, that you try to set a good example for your children. So would you say that sums it up ok?

That sums it up fine thank you.

Thank you.

Interview 6

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home, so there is a lot of research that has been done on how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and then there has been further research exploring the kind of strategies people use to prevent food waste from happening in the first place, so being organised, having a shopping list, that kind of thing. So this research is a little bit different in that we are focusing on post purchase behaviour of consumers so...

What you do with any leftover food.

Yes, so what we are most interested in is the practical side of food waste prevention from real people so in other words, how people like you ensure that they make use of the food they have already purchased.

Yes.

So to start off with if I can just ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

So I shop for myself and my husband, our two children who are 8 and 10 and we very often have a language school student living with us as well.

Ok and how often would you shop for food?

We will shop every weekend, is our sort of weekly shop but very often like this morning I had to go and get milk and bread or I might need to if I decide what I am cooking that evening I might pop out and grab a couple of peppers or something like that.

So typically where would you say that you shop for food?

We try and shop in Aldi or Lidl, occasionally we go to Asda or Macro which is a wholesaler, so we buy toilet rolls and big things from there.

So would it be your big shop that you do in Lidl or Aldi?

Yes, our weekly shop.

Then your top up shop throughout the week would you do them still there?

Yeah probably still there as well yes.

Ok, if I could be so rude to ask, how much would you say that you spend per week on your food shop?

I would say on average about £80 a week, some weeks it might be £60 but then we may go to Asda and buy branded things like tomato ketchup and things we can't get and we might just do that once a month. So I would say on average I would say about £80/90.

Would you say you purchase more fresh or more frozen foods?

I mean certainly when it comes to vegetables fresh and fruit, but obviously we have a range of each.

Ok, would you say that you purchase more fresh or more convenience products?

Fresh definitely yes, we both like cooking and part of my degree was in nutrition actually.

Ok, so I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occasion where we had to throw away any food that we have already purchased, although you might be different. So to start off with firstly I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste what do you think that means?

I think it means food that I bought to eat and it has either been left in the fridge until it goes off or it's over its used by date. Also I think of food that I have cooked in our household, very much a roast dinner every Sunday and there is always more of it and therefore leftover, so yes that is what I define, two things one is that we have actually sort of cooked and not eaten and other is stuff that we never even used in the first place.

Ok, so we are adopting the definition for this interview that food waste is any food but also including drinks, so thinking about things like milk or fruit juice, fizzy drinks that kind of thing as well, that ends up in the bin, so that isn't consumed and ends up in the bin.

Ok.

So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

I think we are pretty good, I mean clearly there is always a little bit of wastage and we have one of the food bins. Bread perhaps, wraps that we haven't used for the kids lunches but I don't think massively we waste food no.

Would you say maybe weekly or...?

Oh yes on a weekly basis but not a massive amount.

Ok yeah, so is there something in particular that you would say that you usually end up throwing away?

Like I said maybe the odd bits of bread, we might buy wraps for the children's lunches, we might buy loaves and it might well be that they have had a couple of school dinners and so we do end up with some sort of hard wraps, fresh bread, if it is a baguette half of that will get eaten, that would be the main thing I would say.

At what stage would you throw something away?

When I wouldn't eat it, I would use something that is maybe a day or two over its used by date. As I say I do enough about food, what is safe and what isn't safe, and I would eat bread, certainly if it was going to be toasted if it had been there for too long but I wouldn't unnecessarily throw it away, I don't just look at the date on it and fling it straight in the bin.

Ok, so would you kind of assess it and sort of look at it visually or smell it?

Yes or maybe taste, like last night I had some cream in the fridge which I had only opened two days before but I was about to give it to the kids or considering using it up, so I did taste it and made sure it wasn't gone off and then gave it to them.

Ok, can you tell me about a specific example in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food?

Yes actually I can. At Christmas I think we always overstock and my husband always does a massive gammon and he boils it in coke, he lets everybody taste it and it is usually in the fridge, it is pretty much preserved for a couple of weeks and then after that I start to think hold on a minute, this is probably not safe now, so I try and get rid of it before he realises. So yeah that was quite a big lump of meat that was wasted, as it goes I didn't actually waste it because we have a dog, so the dog had it but it wasn't used as human food after that point.

So when you had to dispose of that gammon how did you feel?

Yes wasteful, money, effort that he had put into it. There is definitely a feeling of guilt and I think I said, my mum is quite frugal and I don't think our generation is anywhere near as frugal but the guilt has been passed on yes.

So what would you say underpins that guilt?

Money.

So the financial implications of it?

Yeah I'll be honest I don't think of farmers or, I do if it comes to non-food like recycling it and getting rid of rubbish, I sort of think of landfilled sites. When it comes to food the only thing that really makes me feel guilty is if I'm spending money and throwing stuff away.

Yes.

What else I could be spending that money on really.

Ok so if you had to compare this feeling of guilt because you had to throw that gammon away to something totally unrelated to food that would give you an equal feeling?

It might be something which I do with my kids that I don't need to do, like take them to an ice cream parlour after school one day because it's a nice thing to do, I know I can't really afford to do it but I still do it, so yes it is a using money wisely thing I think.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel guilty like you described and in fact most of us when we do feel or expect something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling. So my next questions aim at the practical

strategies regarding how you try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so please use any specific examples if that makes it easier, so I will ask you what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

We try and make a list of what we are having to eat very roughly on a weekly basis, I'll have a quick look at what is in the fridge freezer and I will mentally think, ok I could buy potatoes to go with that or I could buy rice to go with that, so we have rough idea of what we are cooking, not necessarily on what night but roughly what meals are there. We then write a list so we definitely go shopping with a list because it may be one or the other of us that actually does the shopping. We also have an Alexa so she has a shopping list, so as we're in the week we will go Alexa add this to my shopping list, so that reads it back so we don't miss anything out. What I'd really love to do is have of list of, almost like the online shopping thing, have a massive spreadsheet of everything that our household needs and tick it off every week but I have actually never had the time to do that, so that doesn't happen, so it is generally a case of looking. So we make lists and then I usually use the fresh stuff first, so if we have got vegetables, we might do our shopping on Saturday or a Sunday morning, so the vegetables largely will be used in a roast dinner on a Sunday. Then at the beginning of the week I would start to perhaps make a bolognaise with all the other fresh start so nothing in the way of fresh food is going to waste and we will very often if there is roast dinner leftover, my daughter or my husband or whoever might have bubble and squeak, so we just throw all the potato bits that are left over and have that on probably on the Monday or Tuesday. As I've said we have a dog, so any amount of meat would be put in a freezer bag and frozen so we can give him the odd treat. Interestingly he has to have a raw diet, so he has raw meat but he has vegetables and the other day I bought basically pureed vegetables for 79p in a Chinese container and I thought why am I doing that, so when I cooked the roast dinner on Sunday I put all the peelings in a massive pot pureed it up and now he has that instead of me paying somebody else for it.

Wow you even use the vegetables peelings.

Yes.

That's very efficient. So you mentioned earlier on that you tend to buy fresh ingredients and that you and your husband both like cooking so is it correct to say that you cook mostly from scratch?

Yes.

Ok and then when you prepare your meals do you often have leftovers, I know you mentioned that you do on a Sunday?

Not really because what we will do I suppose if we made too much bolognaise we would freeze it down.

Ok so you would freeze it all.

Yes totally, I mean at Christmas we have turkey leftover so I make turkey curry and put that in the freezer.

Ok so you make another meal out of it?

Yes.

So how much effort do you perceive that to be?

It is just what we do but as I say we do obviously have a busy life with kids and students and whatever and I did think we had a vegetarian student recently I could go and buy a couple of ready meals, it's just not on our agenda we just don't ever buy ready meals, we do occasionally have a take away. So I don't think of it as a massive effort really, I just don't think of it as an effort.

Ok so do you ever recommend this to other people?

I guess I would do if it came up in conversation yes and I would also listen to other people's recommendations yes.

Do you find that it does come up in the conversation ever?

No not really, I can't think of the last time, I might recommend my dog food puree to a couple of people I know but yes.

So where would you say that you learned about this?

My degree was in hospitality so part of that was cooking, I have always worked in pubs and restaurants and I guess because my husband likes cooking and watching cooking programmes as well, we do use fresh stuff, I don't know about learned, I think it is just common sense when you have kids or when you haven't got a lot of money, I mean we are not completely skint, but when your kids are very young you actually are and you think how can I save money and you look at what you do and the fact that you are throwing loads of food away and how much you are spending on food and you just realise that you need to get a bit more organised.

So more learning by doing kind of from yourself?

Yes.

So you mentioned that your husband likes watching the cooking programmes, so would you say that the media takes a bit of influence on your approach to waste?

Not really no, no, I mean, I'm just trying to think, was there a programme... I'll tell you what we have watched, I suppose it is more to do with shopping but it's when they replace people's food with the cheaper food and stuff like that. No I wouldn't say the media has a great influence.

So when you have been able to use food that would otherwise be thrown away so you mentioned the cream or the vegetable peelings you made into dog food, how did that make you feel?

Well whilst I was doing my dog food, vegetable puree the other day I did weigh it up actually, I thought obviously this makes a bit of a mess, I have got a massive pan that is dirty, I have got a liquidiser that is dirty and it didn't puree that easily and I thought this is a bit of aggravation but when I worked out in my head that I had made probably about ten of these pots which I have been paying 79p for, £7.90 yes, it took me about ten minutes so yes it is worth it, yeah it makes me feel good.

So if you had to compare this feeling of feeling good to a situation again that is totally unrelated to food what kind of situation could get you an equally good feeling?

Maybe when you use your Boots card, vouchers, instead of actually paying with your own cash, maybe that sort of thing, just something that is not spending my money.

Ok for getting something for nothing.

Yes.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, so I am going to ask you to do a little role play, so I have got four scenarios here of situations where people have found themselves in a situation where they had too much food, so if you could just read through these and just see what kind of advice you could give to them, if you have got any ideas?

Shall we do one at a time?

Yes.

Ok, actually I am just going to read them first. Ok so I am going to start with the Italian one is that alright?

Yes.

So the pasta, it seems awful to throw the pasta in the bin. I actually am unsure on whether you can freeze pasta, I think you can but I never have, what I might do is put it in a container and drizzle a tiny bit of oil on it, so it doesn't go too dry and I would use, sometimes I buy kale and bacon and basically maybe make a pasta salad out of it or something like that for lunch the next day, so I would use the pasta for lunch the next day. Apple tree, I wouldn't personally make chutney but my friend would. I tell you what I would probably do if I had loads and loads of apples I'd put them outside the front of my house and tell people to take them. We did used to have a pear tree and my husband did look into making pear cider or something but it never actually happened. I would probably, yes actually this is what I have done, certainly with rhubarb which we also had, was to peel it or boil it and then freeze into packs so when I want to make an apple crumble I can. When you are a single person I would make what the recipe tells me too and I would freeze it, when it comes to buying four lemons, I mean we are all faced with this aren't we, it is relatively cheaper to buy 4 lemons for £1 than 1 for 50p, however I personally if I don't need 4 lemons would only buy 1 for 50p. I mean lemons do keep for a while and my kids might use lemons on waffles or pancakes, I would consider what to do with them all before I buy them. Online shopping, they have a sell by date of tomorrow, that is fairly bad, I wouldn't be overly happy if I received a load of veg where the sell by date was tomorrow, however the freezer is full what can I do? I mean you can cook things for example in the slow cooker, so maybe I would put a load of stuff in the slow cooker to be cooking over night, I might make soup out of it, once it's cooked it can stay in the fridge for three days depending on what it is. Yes so I suppose I would cook it all off really, yes that's it.

Thank you, so that is the end of all the questions I have. If I just briefly summarise what you have said and then feel free to correct me or add to it, so you usually shop for yourself, your husband and your two children, you do occasionally have a student, so it is usually the four of you but it might be more people. You tend to do a big weekly shop, usually one of the smaller supermarkets, so Aldi or Lidl and then as and when required you would top that up throughout the week. Your average spend on the food would be between £80 and £90 and that weighs out bigger shops and smaller shops so averaging that out. You do tend to cook from scratch and buy more fresh food than frozen food although also you do have the odd frozen item that you would purchase. You said that you are generally quite organised and you do make a shopping list and you do look what is in you fridge to have a bit of stock rotation and make use of fresh items before you do that. You did say that you don't waste food a lot but maybe on a weekly basis there are the odd bits of bread or wraps or things that have gone hard that kind of thing that you would waste.

The odd yogurt maybe that is going out of date.

You do look at sell by dates but you do also use your, you described as common sense to just look at it assess it, smell it, taste it if it is still good to eat and then see what you think.

I understand the difference between a used by and a sell by date and yes.

You did say that it does make you feel a little bit guilty if you do have to throw any food away from a financial point because it is wasting money that you didn't need to waste from that point of view. You did say that if you had any leftovers you would maybe make another meal out of it so make bubble and squeak out of any leftover veg or anything you have from your Sunday roast dinners or make a curry out of any meat that is leftover and you would freeze it for another day or have that the next day. You did say that you don't necessarily perceive it to be that much effort but it is some part of your daily routine of how you kind of do it...

Yes I don't see it as a...

...and weighing that up you consider it worth it for you to do that.

Absolutely yes.

You did mention that it is something you have learned just from experience, it is not necessarily something you have picked up from the media or anything, it is something that you and your husband have, and your background in hospitality that you kind of have the knowledge.

Yes, I mean I think you look at every way as you get older of where you can save a tenner here or a tenner there and you look at your food consumption and wastage as much as you might look at your mobile phone bill or who you are getting your electric off of sort of thing, every little helps.

So is there anything else you would like you add?

I think it is a really interesting subject and I think we probably, as a family, not even consciously do quite well with it and I know there are programmes that a lot of people are watching on how to save your money on your shopping but I think this is another really good idea. I mean we all have these brown food waste things now and everybody uses them, I don't know if people know what's done with it or why it's done with it, I think they make energy out of it but I am not 100% sure.

I think they do yes. A lot of councils do yeah.

And also it is a very messy business, nobody wants to touch rubbish let alone food waste so yes it's an interesting subject but I do think that there is certainly room for people to be informed about things they could do, like the whole dog food stuff, maybe everybody who has got a dog already know this. But maybe people who haven't got a dog could donate their leftovers, meat and stuff because it is always appreciated, anyway that's all.

Thank you very much. I'll just stop the recording.

Interview 7

So the project is all about food waste and there is a lot of research that has been done about how much and how little food people waste and how that makes them feel. So as I mentioned to you briefly earlier this piece of research is more about strategies people put into place when they have already purchased food, so it's of the strategies of post purchase behaviour and how they deal with over stocking. So to start off with can you just briefly introduce yourself in terms of your shopping behaviour, so how many people do you shop for?

It is usually two of us live in the house and I tend to do a big supermarket shop once a fortnight and then just top up from the village in the meantime.

When you say you top it up from the village is that because there's fresher food or because it is more convenient?

Yes it is when I run out of vegetables and fruit basically, so everything else pretty much I'll have got from the supermarket shop and then when I have ran out of the fruit and vegetable I need to buy some more.

Ok and then you do that more targeted shop when you go to the village?

Yes.

Ok, where would you say you typically shop for food?

When?

Where?

Tesco.

Ok and how much would you say on average you spend per week or per month?

Fortnightly it will be about £150.

And that covers the two of you?

No it's probably a bit more than that actually because of the top up, so it is probably £180/£190 a fortnight.

A fortnight?

Yes.

Ok and do you usually buy more frozen or more fresh food?

More fresh really, I tend to cook from scratch mainly.

Ok that's fine. Now I would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food you have already purchased, most people can at least remember one occurrence where this has happened to them, however you might be different. So to start off with, when I say or speak about food waste, what would your understanding of that be?

Well I guess in this context its stuff that I have bought and then not used because it has gone out of date, so that's what I would be thinking of when you say food waste.

Yes so for the purpose of this interview the definition we're adopting for this is any food or drink, so including things like fruit juice or milk, so any drinks as well that aren't consumed and therefore end up in the bin.

Ok.

So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you have to waste food?

I don't know because it is not that often, the most likely things will be yoghurt, I have got a carton of yoghurt in my fridge which needs to go in, well actually it doesn't need to go in the bin because it is only a couple of weeks out of date I'm sure it is fine. I might have to throw away the end of a salad bag because it has gone off because it has been open for too long or sometimes spinach like that as well. I don't know what else I throw away, not that much I don't think.

And how regularly do you think that occurs?

Well it maybe once a week, I mean the yogurt pot isn't because the yogurt is a silly example. I will say once a week but I don't know if it would even be as much as that though actually.

So very rarely.

Yes very rarely.

Would you say that then for example the salad or the spinach those kind of pre-bagged things, are they kind of typical examples of what you would waste regularly?

Yes those are the most likely things, the most common things because otherwise I pretty much eat what we have got.

Yes, so why might you throw something away?

Because it has gone off, those would be the reasons. The only other thing that might get thrown away is if I brought something because I thought my husband was going to eat it and then it goes out of date because he doesn't or forgets about it or whatever, so that might be corned beef, a packet of corned beef that I'll have bought because he is going to have it and then he hasn't and so that's had to go.

And how do you assess whether it is still ok to use or whether you would throw it away?

Ok so the meat like that would be a date, so if it is more than a couple of days then it will have to go. The salad would be what it looks like, you know when it goes all slimy and yucky or it smells funny then that will go.

So you wouldn't necessarily strictly go by the sell by date but sort of more assess it and smell it.

Yes because some things are fine.

Can you tell me about a specific example in the not too distance past where you had to throw any food or drink away and sort of explain what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it?

Yes, a nearly full carton of fruit juice because I don't drink it and my daughter was home for breakfast, just one breakfast and I said don't open the carton unless you take it with you and my husband said I'll drink it, I said well make sure you do, and it sat in the fridge for a week and then he hadn't drunk any of it so in the end I had to throw it away.

Ok and how did that make you feel?

Really annoyed, really annoyed, I know it's not a lot of money, I can't even remember what the juice cost, it was cranberry light so it doesn't cost a lot of money but it is just irritating because if she hadn't have opened it or if he had drunk it, it could have been here and she could have had it over Christmas when she's home, so yes I was annoyed.

Annoyed ok, so if you had to compare that feeling of being annoyed to something totally un-food related, what would maybe another occasion be where you feel that same level of annoyance?

It is probably only a par with something stupid like, now this sounds like I am really annoyed with my husband all the time and that is not true but when he switches the channel without actually saying are you watching this.

No that's fine.

So it's not a huge annoyance it is more just like, 'oh come on'.

Yes and the reason for that like you mentioned, it's not necessarily the money with occasional wasting.

No it's just the fact that it is then wasted and she could have managed without that juice or she could have taken it with her, either of those would have been fine.

So obviously it is not nice to feel annoyed.

No.

And have that sort of annoyingness described by yourself and in fact most of us when we feel or we expect to feel something negative, we adjust to prevent that happening again. So my next question aims to address the practical strategies you have put in place regarding how you try and avoid and limit the amount of food you waste.

Yes

So feel free to use any specific examples.

Ok.

So do you ever have leftovers?

Yes and I usually freeze them or put them in a box and have them the next day.

And is that quite regularly?

Yes.

Ok and do you perceive this to be much effort?

No it's fine, it's good, it's just planning and effective use of the freezer, so it's good.

Do you ever recommend that strategy to other people?

No but only because it doesn't come up in conversation really, I have probably said it to my children but that's probably only because that is what you do.

So where would you say you sort of learned about that method?

Probably from my mum, because that is what she did, she did loads of cooking when I was growing up and then we always used to joke with her that we were either eating experiments or leftovers with my mum.

Or both.

Or both yes, do you know when she got married, she made a resolution to, this is nothing to do with this but when she got married she made a resolution to try a new recipe every week and she stuck to it and she still does it now and my dad's dead but my mum still does it, she still cooks new recipes all the time, she is always looking for new things, it's really good.

So would you say that any friends have given you any tips on this as well?

Not specifically but when you read recipes quite often they'll say batch cook, more than one, then freeze it, this freezes well, or whatever so it is kind of just common sense I think.

And would you say there is any influence or advice you have taken from the media?

Well yes if I read a recipe in a magazine and it might say this freezes well, so I might think, ok I'll do it twice or I'll cook it ahead or whatever but not anything specifically this is how you can avoid waste, I haven't really thought about it I suppose, it is just what I do.

Something that comes naturally to you.

Yes.

And then if you, for example, if you open your fridge and there is more food than you expected, what would you typically do with it?

I am quite organised so when I shop I do have a list and I have made a menu plan for the week, so I know what I have got. What I am most likely to have is extra vegetables but then I will make a soup out of what I have got and then freeze some of it and eat some of it. I don't tend to have that much extra, like now the fridge is full but I know it is all going to get eaten in the next few days because I know what's in it. So I know what I am cooking each night or it might change I might say we will have tomorrow's meal tonight or whatever, so I don't tend to have the wrong things in the fridge.

So when you have like you just described you've got a surplus of vegetables and then you make a soup out of this rather than wasting it, so how does that make you feel?

Oh I love doing that, it's great and my husband always laughs because he says, has this one got chilli in as well, and the answer is usually yes but I like making soups, especially this time of year, it's just really nice.

So if you would have to describe another occasion totally food unrelated which gives you the same sort of nice feeling what would that be?

It's a bit sad really but I just like being organised, so knowing that I have written all my Christmas cards, I have posted all the ones that needed to be posted and I have got all the presents now, there is only one more thing to come in the post, I just like having things sorted really.

Yes, that's fine. So now we are going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, so I have 4 scenarios here, where people have over stocked on food for various reason or had a surplus of food and if I could get you to read through the scenarios and almost take the role of an agony aunt, answering and how you would help.

Ok, well I haven't done online shopping very often so I don't know but I think I would contact the supermarket and I would be a bit cross with them because that is not really on because if you were doing your own shopping, you would make sure you would look for the latest sell by date, so I think I would contact them and ask them, which only passes on the waste and I appreciate because they aren't going to do anything with it, so that would be really annoying. It is also really frustrating because if her freezer is full to bursting and she can't cook up some stuff so that would be annoying and it would be lovely to say cook it and give it away, but that is not always practical, so I think you would have to get in touch with the supermarket and say this is not good enough and I want stuff with a reasonable sell by date please.

Yes.

You can freeze lemons, so I would suggest slicing them up and then freezing them separately and then when they are frozen you can put them in a bag altogether and then you can just get out what you need, which is quite useful for gin and tonics but also quite good if you are having fish or whatever or whatever you need your lemons for, you have just got your slices ready.

Yes.

I have got a really easy minimal cook apple chutney recipe which I would pass on and it is really delicious chutney, it's really good, so that would be good. But also cooking apple, stewing apple is so easy and then freeze it in portion sizes, so that would be good, apple cakes are good and again you can freeze those or eat them obviously. I just got some stewed apple out of the freezer this morning because I need some space for Christmas stuff, so I thought I better eat this apple, so yes that's what I say about apples. Yes that chutney recipe is really good; I need to do it again. Well I used to have chickens who would eat left over pasta, so that was really good or use it for lunch tomorrow so if you go to work you could make up a pasta salad or my daughter always used to, she still does actually I think, she would cook a few, like batch cook tuna pasta and then she would take one to work each day, so if you have got a lot of pasta you could do that. That's about it really, chickens or lunch tomorrow I think.

Thank you very much. So if I just recap what you said briefly and then you can correct me when I am wrong or feel free to make any additions to anything.

Ok.

So you do a bi-weekly shop, well a bi-monthly shop.

Yes.

But then you top that up with more fresh produce which you conveniently get in the village as and when you require it. You estimate that to be approximately around £180 or £190 for yourself and your husband and you do your main shop in Tesco and then use more local shops in the village. You don't consider yourself to be wasting huge amounts of food or drink, usually if it is then it might be something that you bought for someone else to consume and they didn't fancy it or you bought a pack and it was salad and it has gone a bit off but you wouldn't necessarily just go by the sell by dates to assess whether it is good to use but sort of open it and see whether it is, taste it, smell it, look it and see if it is still ok to use.

Yes, I have just thought very occasionally tins, I did find one not that long ago that was eat by 2014 and I thought ok well that is probably too long. I can't remember what it was it might have been baked beans or something like that, again I would have bought that when the children were home, so that needs to go, so something like that and I guess sometimes in the summer when I eat more salad, occasionally that will go off but not that often because I do tend to eat quite a lot of salad.

If you do have to waste any food it does make you feel quite annoyed but if you do manage to averse having to waste the food it does make you feel quite good and you are quite pleased with yourself because you like to be organised and everything. You do tend to if you over cook use any leftovers or freeze them, or if you have any surplus of fresh food in the fridge you would make maybe a vegetable soup or something, so you would be quite happy to batch cook and freeze, so sort of think ahead.

Yes that's fine that's good.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

How many people are you talking to?

30.

That's not very many though it is, how many have you done so far? I'm just interested in what other people say.

I have done about 10 so far, so still have about 20 to do.

Oh brilliant and what sort of answers are you getting?

Varied, very varied.

Interview 8

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home so there's a lot of research that's been done about how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and there's also been a lot of research that kind of investigates what strategies people have got in place to try and reduce the amount of food they buy, so to try and reduce overstocking so having shopping lists and all that kind of thing. What we're looking for is food waste from a different angle so that of post-purchase behaviour. So what we are really interested to find out is what real people, in other words how people like you make

use of the food they have already purchased. So if I could ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

Myself and my husband.

And how often do you shop for food?

Generally on a Tuesday and a Thursday.

Ok so twice a week.

Or maybe Friday, say Tuesday and Friday.

Yeah and typically where do you shop for food?

Aldi.

Aldi, ok. How much would you say that you spend per week?

On food only or my whole shop?

On food only if you can say, but if it's really hard to segregate and you don't know how much your food shop is...

Well put it this way I go into Aldi with £25 but with that sometimes I have to buy toilet rolls and bleach and polish and all that lot.

Yeah, and is that for both shops?

Yeah.

So it would be £50?

Yeah it has sort of juggled. Yeah, so £50 a week to do my shopping, which isn't a lot. I expect on food, I expect it's around about £35.

Yeah so £35 per week. Would you say that you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

I go for fresh but I do go for the frozen as well, but I go more for fresh but then I'll often freeze it.

Ok and do you buy more fresh or more ready-made?

I don't buy that much of ready-made but I will occasionally, then they'll go into the freezer. They're for emergencies, a quick meal, you know when you need something quick. Generally if I buy, say meat for instance I buy a big packet and then I will wrap them up separately in cling film and then freeze them in a bag so that I haven't got to defrost the whole lot and then have that wastage. If we haven't... because you don't want to eat the same, if it's six chops and you've got six in a packet you don't want to eat chops, chops, chops three days running so I'll freeze them and I'll just take out what I want.

Ok so you mentioned that you mostly go to Aldi, would you ever do any online shopping for food?

I never do online shopping no, because I like to see it because I try to go for the freshest date. Bit naughty but do you know I do have a conscience as well, if I know I'm going to cook that night I will quite happily take something which is right near the date on purpose, leaving the fresher stuff for the other people because I think well that's good enough, I'm using it tonight, leave that for other people. So I'm a conscientious shopper.

Ok so I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occurrence, if not more where they had to throw away any food that they purchased, however of course you might be different. So firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Throwing stuff away that's really mouldy and gone off.

So we're adopting the definition that food waste means any food but also drink, so thinking about things like milk or orange juice or fizzy drinks, so any kind of food and drink.

No I wouldn't throw it away. Even if the fizzy drink was flat I'd drink it to get rid of it because I can't let it go. I think that's good enough for me.

So anything that, any food or drink that ends up in the bin. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

I should say... it's hard to say because the other day I pulled out my salad box, you know the box at the bottom of the fridge, and I trimmed off the manky bits off of the lettuce and they went down into the food... what's it called? The food incinerator. It's not incinerator, it's... whatever it is. Because it was just so fine, but it was not necessary to chuck whole leaves away and that was only because it was in a fresh bag. The last thing I threw away was a cucumber and I was really cross with it because it was at the bottom of the fridge and it had all gone... but I did eat some of it because I used a potato peeler and peeled off all the manky bits. The inside was all nice.

So you still used some of it?

I really, you know... gosh if I was to put it into a... apart from that cucumber, and that was only half a cucumber, even that I begrudge. Anyway if I was about to chuck away, I reckon about, in quantity I reckon about a month or say every six weeks.

Ok so very very little.

Very little, and that's only where... like I say if the lettuce is going brown or even slimy I will take off those leaves and dispose of them and wash it, and I'll even wash all the slimy bits off and have it. That's perfect.

Ok so is there anything that you say that you would usually end up throwing away?

Every other sandwich here. Actually no I don't like bad stuff so I wouldn't sort of... if I was going to make you a sandwich it would all be fresh. Sorry what was that last question?

Is there something that you usually end up throwing away? So is it often that it's the same stuff?

No I guess really my biggest waste, if you'd call it, is anything that's salad but I have not, if a tomato was going a bit funny I would chop off the bits and that would get chucked but the rest of it I'd eat. I'm not one

to say well that's had it, it's going in the bin, just because half of it is no good doesn't mean that the other half isn't.

So at what stage might you throw something away?

When it's black, slimy or stinks. Meat if it was chicken or pork, I would not chuck it away if it was out of date but I would inspect it if it was say a couple of days out of date and you'd feel it slimy or something or you'd feel it stinks or something like that then it'd have to go, but I would think of the dog first but I don't want to give the dog the runs. But animals you see, animals can eat things which we can't and foxes especially, foxes, if it's meat or something like that I'll take it for a walk with me when I take the dog in a bag and then when I get to the fields I fling it in and I think well that will feed a fox because a fox their gastric juices they break down things totally different to what we do so I try not to waste.

Ok so can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you wasted some food or some drink and just say what happened?

Yeah the cucumber had gone slimy so that had to go. I cooked some cookies and they were rock hard and they've been in the fridge now, sorry they've been in the cupboard since the beginning of December, well say mid-December because I cooked them and they went rock hard and they were horrible, and I thought oh god. I tried eating them and I thought I'm not wasting them and I ate a few and in the end I thought I'll feed the birds and Jack liked it, he loved it so yeah.

So when you had to let's say throw the cucumber away, how did you feel?

Sad because I really hate waste, and it made me sad, but I did try and save some of it. Actually it was about three quarters length out of a whole one, it was about three quarters length, but it had all gone, and I did feel it a couple of days beforehand and I took it out of the plastic and I washed it and I peeled it and I thought that will do but I've got to use it up, but as it happened we had a takeaway so... you know and I was cross because I wasn't able to use it but then I forgot about it and then I went back and said oh no so it had to go. Yeah it makes me really miserable.

Ok and why is that? Why would you say that makes you sad and miserable?

Because I think the world could really do without wasting food and the amount of people who are starving, it really upsets me. Especially, not just the world, even in this country so many people would have loved that and they've got children and that and they can't, and it makes me cross because I think to myself flipping hell that could have fed not just us but you know... I just don't like to see something being wasted like that.

So if you had to compare the feeling you had when you threw the cucumber away to something totally unrelated to food waste, what could another occasion be where you feel equally sad and miserable like you described?

When I see... recently you mean?

Just any time, anything.

If I see people without and they're struggling. It's like the other day, I saw, the day before yesterday actually when I was walking the dog I saw a van go by with a car on top and I thought I wonder if that car has been repossessed because they can't pay their bills. Then it goes over in my mind and I'm thinking I wonder if

people are out there hungry tonight, not just on the streets but people in their homes even because people always assume that it'd be a one parent or people on the dole or people who are on the streets, but it's not always. Sometimes it's families, real proper families where they've got a husband, they've got a wife, they may even be working but they just cannot meet the bills. So the first thing to go, because the bills are so important, the first thing people neglect on is their food and very very often people will feed their children and not their self because they can't afford to buy... we've all been there. I've been there where you think to yourself I just haven't got enough food but as long as the children are all right I'll be quite happy with a bowl of cereal or some toast or something and you do it. It's like even if bread has got bits on it, spots, I pick them spots off, I will not... the bread would have to be really green before it goes down that thing and even the birds can't have it then.

So when you throw any food away and you did say that you felt a bit annoyed with yourself and it makes you sad, is there any financial implications that feed into that?

No because cucumbers are not that expensive at Aldi, they are relatively cheap so I just bought another one. But if it was say a dinner, let's say, and because I spent such a little amount on the main part of the dinner a week, whether it's meat or fish or whatever, if that's gone and it can't be saved that really gets to me and I think oh why is it I've missed that. Because I've got two fridges you see and sometimes I put the stock in the other fridge and the kitchen fridge is the ones that we're using all the time, and I might go out there and I think right I'm going to have fish tonight let's say and I pick up fish and I think oh it ran out maybe three or four days ago and I think it looks ok but then I open it and I think no, it's gone and then it crosses my mind, could I get away with it and I think no, and that makes me angry. It makes me cross and I'm cross with myself because I think especially when afterwards you're looking around and thinking well what are we going to eat tonight and then we end up with say just egg and chips or something because we haven't got anything to go with it. I think oh well do you fancy a sandwich? Yeah a sandwich will do. I think good.

So obviously it's not nice to feel sad or annoyed like you just described...

Also, sorry I'm cutting in, also it's a lot of vitamins gone. Fish is good for you and the vitamins are whizzed away into...

So is that something you're quite conscious of, so would you kind of plan your week ahead to see...

Well when I get my money I generally buy enough to see through the week and then I try to separate it up, but very often at weekends we'll have takeaways so really I've only got to worry about the Monday to Friday because my husband buys the takeaways. But even then if there's too much it goes into a plastic box, you know these plastic boxes, it goes in the fridge and I make sure I eat it up the next day. One thing I cannot stand and that is people who, you see it on television, they'd have a meal or something and then they chuck it and scrape it in the bin and I think what are you doing, why couldn't that dinner have been used tomorrow and that makes me angry because I think you know... I don't like that. You don't do that do you?

I don't personally. I'm quite cautious. I work in an office so I would take it for my lunch the next day. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies regarding how you try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away. So please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier. So what would you say that you do to try and avoid or limit the food that you throw away?

If I bought meat, this is an example, I may buy say six chops in a packet. I may buy, because I like fish, my husband likes steak so I'll buy one piece of steak for him and some fish and I think well I'll have the fish so

that's another meal. Then maybe I've got, I don't know, some mince or something to make spaghetti bolognese so then with what goes in the fridge I separate chops, straight away as soon as I've bought them I separate them out, wrap them up with cling film put them in a freezer bag and then they're in the freezer but I might leave a couple out if I say to ...[respondents husband] "do you fancy chops tonight"? If he says "no" and it's say a Friday and we've got the weekend to go I'll think that's all right it's going in the freezer and if he says "no", as long as I know that I'm still within a few days because it's lovely and fresh I'll leave it out in the fridge but I'll keep a note of the sell... I say I don't take note of the sell by dates, not sell by dates, use by dates, I don't because I do use my common sense but saying that I wouldn't just chuck them in the fridge. I put them in order so the freshest... if something has got say the 25th February or January or December. Say something said the 25th, that can go at the bottom, maybe 23rd it might go there then maybe the 20th might go there do you know what I mean? So I automatically grab at the top. If I'm getting a bit near the date I don't panic but if I feel that we're not going to be using it in the next couple of days like I've got some chops out or he wants a takeaway tonight or something like that then I'll think well that's all right I'll pop it in the freezer. So if he suddenly did want chops I'd get them out in the morning so that they're defrosted for the evening, and if he suddenly says no we won't have them chops then I'll say well we've got to have them tomorrow because I have defrosted them and I can't put them back in the freezer again and I will make a point, and if he doesn't eat it I'll cook them anyway and I'll eat it and he can have something else, a sandwich or whatever.

So you would divide things up and then put them in there.

I would divide it up yeah. If it's a packet of fish let's say because my husband is not so keen on fish, if it's a packet of fish and it's got four little kippers in there say, I might have two but the other two I won't freeze them I'll just, because I know that it's for me, I'll think right I'll either eat them tomorrow or I'll eat them the next day because they've been opened and the packets been opened and it's got more chance of going off, but I do... I'm very fussy about making sure it's got a box of its own even. I don't mix with other meats and all this sort of thing, it's got to go in its own little... because my fridge in the garage has got four boxes, the bottom ones are the vegetables and then I've got a box so there's never contamination of it dripping down. I have a thing about contamination; every bit has got to be cleaned.

All right so when do you cook do you ever have any leftovers?

Yeah, yeah very very often because I put more in than what I should. Vegetables we use up and then I scoop the rest into a plastic box and then they go in the fridge, and if it's mashed potato even, whatever is left, scrape every single bit, it goes in a box, it goes in the fridge. Then the next day it will be used for whatever meal we're having. I'll say oh we've got some mashed potato already made up, I've only got to put it in the microwave and I'll just make sure it's well heated up. It's never got to the point where it's not used up, and vegetables the same.

So you'd be quite happy to keep it.

Yeah, obviously I wouldn't freeze that but if it was mash or vegetables it's used up because the next day we'll want a dinner again and it's used, and if there's not enough mash, there's only enough for him let's say, I'll be quite happy to put a jacket potato on for me. So I'm not fussed, I would never ever chuck it away because it always gets used. If the worst really comes to the worst and we haven't used up the mash and vegetables I'll see it and I'll think right that's got to be used up. Right what are we doing tonight oh dear we're having

takeaway, I'll think well that's alright I'll squidge it all together and you know you mix it all together your veg and your potatoes and you fry it, make bubble and squeak, that's lovely for lunch, or breakfast even.

Ok so how much effort do you perceive that to be?

How much effort what sorry?

Do you perceive it to be to do all the strategies you've mentioned so like to...

Nothing, no effort at all, I find it very easy. I couldn't sleep at night if I chucked food away. If I'd made ...[respondents husband] a dinner let's say and he says oh I don't want it and I've already cooked it, which I don't do, I always make sure that he does want it before I cook it now because I really can't abide food waste but if I did have a dinner, what was cooked and it's not used it will have cling film across it and it will go in the fridge and then it has to be eaten by the next day, I'd prefer the next day really and he'll have it then or if he doesn't I'll say well I'll have to eat that then because I don't want that sort of sitting in the fridge for ages. I'm an easy person when it comes to eating, I'll eat anything. I don't mean when it's gone off, I mean I'll be quite happy to say ok I had that dinner yesterday, he didn't eat his but I'll eat it today because as long as I've got something there in my stomach I'll be quite happy, instead of getting something else out of the freezer or something else out of the fridge what will do for another meal. Are you with me?

Yeah. So would you ever recommend this to other people?

Oh all the time. My daughters, I say to them do not throw food away, and I've seen where people will go through... this is what gets me really cross, people will go through my fridge and say that yoghurt ran out three weeks ago or something, I'll say there's nothing wrong with that yoghurt leave it alone, but if that yoghurt disappears and I know it's been chucked out I will get very angry because I'll think what a waste, have you got money to burn then you know. Because I was brought up, you do not waste. My dad and my mum were very very careful and I suppose being brought up, I was born in the 50s, 55, we went through the 60s and we did have a fridge because a lot of people didn't but we did have a fridge but my mum she never threw food away, she would buy, actually my mum used to buy daily, she'd buy it on the way home from work but a lot of food would be... being that she had four children, it got eaten up pretty quick but she used to say no if you chuck food away, you don't deserve to have it. That was my mum and dad's attitude, even with, not just food but clothing, don't just chuck things out. Have you got money to burn, that's how they'd... are you made of money then, that sort of attitude. I suppose that's always stuck with me so even if I don't particularly like something that's in the fridge and I've bought it and I think I don't really like that but I will not, I will eat it, even if we have had takeaway and there's whatever is leftover I'll say right I'll have that tomorrow and it can go, either I'll cling film it over and then I'll heat it up tomorrow and I'll eat it or it will go in the plastic... if it's been on my plate I don't bother putting it in plastic boxes but if anything's gone in plastic boxes I'll use it up, but I really don't like the words "you should chuck that away" I think there's nothing wrong with that, leave it alone. It's like jars as well, just because the jar says use before blah blah blah, I think well it tastes fine, why... like at Christmas my husband was going through the fridge and I'm frowning thinking leave things alone, and he says do you realise this ran out six months ago, I said there's nothing wrong with that but he won't touch it but I would.

So do you often recommend it to your daughters?

Recommend my ideas for food?

Yeah.

I do. Cheese for instance, my youngest daughter she listens to me, because I say to her, I say even if cheese has gone mouldy on the outside there's absolutely nothing wrong with it on the inside, you just trim it and then the cheese is perfect because after all when they make cheese they let it mature. If you went into a cheese place where they make cheese they often let it go, it's all gone mouldy on the outside and then they cut it, trim it and it's fresh. So I said cheese does not go off like that, they make it that it does, you know, you just trim it on the outside. I suppose really... what is the other thing I was just about to say... oh yes, and I was saying this to her yesterday, I was saying... bread, she'll pull bread out and go "oh mum it's on its way" and I'll say "yeah that's all right", she goes "no I'm using it" and she'll pick all the little dots off and she goes it's good enough for toast.

So you would recommend it to your daughters?

I definitely would.

Ok.

I'd recommend it to anybody. I've got to be honest with you, some people are stupid and I call them stupid and they don't deserve to get on. That's what my mum used to say if you waste stuff you don't deserve to get on. I used to do a bit of cleaning for different people and one woman I used to go to used to rile me up, obviously it weren't my business because it was her food but I'd empty the bins and I'd look in there and there would be a bag of potatoes let's say, or a bag of carrots, bags of vegetables, not even slimy, not even got specks on them or anything and I look and I'd think what on earth, has she put them in here by accident or something and then I look and the date might be a couple of days out of date and I think why don't you use you noddle, potatoes and carrots it's obvious when they've gone off because they'll... you know you'll pick them bits off or you dump them if they've gone real, if you can't save anything from. I just think what is wrong with the woman, but it weren't my business, and I've got to be honest I used to bring them home. I did, I thought if you don't want them I will.

So you've mentioned briefly that this is something you've learned from your mum.

Yes.

Would you say that you've taken any hints and tips or anything from the media?

No not really, well starving people and that?

No so what to do with food instead of throwing it away?

If I was in a supermarket and I see things, ...[supermarket name] are really bad at this, they don't reduce their bread enough. Late at night you'll go in there, you'll see their crusty sticks, loaves, bread and they're all going in a bin liner and I went up one day and I went what you doing, what you doing and he goes huh, and he sort of looked at me this boy and I said I want a crusty loaf and there's none on the shelves and you're putting them all in the bag and he said well it's all go to be dumped. I said you've got two hours yet before the shop shuts, I said why aren't you reducing it? He says no we're not reducing it. He said it's going in the skip. I said well can I have one then please because I want a crusty loaf. I said it's not off is it? He said no it was cooked today. I said well can I have one then please and he said I'm not allowed to let you have it. I said why? He said because it's gone in the bag now. I was very angry. I said damn shop. I said they deserve to

have shoplifters. I tell you now, I said I don't care they deserve to have people take from them because they don't... I said I'm not coming in here again, I said I'm appalled. All the cakes were going in there and everything. I said what's wrong with you, why can't you reduce them? At least let other people... if the worst comes to the worst send them to the soup kitchens and things. Oh you can't do that because the homeless if they get ill they'll blame us. I said get ill, they go through dustbins for their food so I don't think they're going to worry about whether something was cooked early in the morning and it's... it didn't make sense to me and I think to myself the government, I was angry, not just with the shop but I was angry with the government because they put rules over that sort of thing don't they. But lately I noticed that the government are saying that food mustn't be wasted like that and end up in skips. Not just bread, I'm talking about like beef, chickens, turkeys, they end up in the skip because my husband used to work at ...[supermarket name] years ago, at ...[supermarket name], and he said you would not believe the amount of meat that ends up in the skip out the back. He said and we're not allowed to do anything with it. I said it's disgusting, and that makes me angry, I feel like spitting in their face, not that I would. But recently I noticed that the government are trying to, they're saying they've got... shops have got to phase out use by dates and I think that is a fantastic thing. People have got to go back to their common sense. You know when something is off and if they don't well then people shouldn't be cooking, they shouldn't be in a kitchen, they shouldn't even be handling food they should be spoon fed like a baby if they can't tell when something's off. They've got to use a little bit of common sense. I've never, and I've eaten food sometimes which is a couple of days or so out of date or maybe even about four days out of date, but I've never been ill from food poisoning, never, apart from once sorry. I bought chicken and chips from a fish and chip shop and...

So you've never poisoned yourself.

And I ate it and I really enjoyed this chicken, I thought it's nice and I was in a terrible mess the next day. I won't go into details.

All right so we're going to change the focus of the interview a little bit. So I've got some scenarios here where people had too much food for whatever reason. If I could just ask you to, it's always the black boxes, to just quickly read through them and see if there's anything you could advise them.

Have I got my glasses? Oh yeah. Is this what people have actually said?

This is all scenarios we have made up to just see what people would advise them.

I would say if somebody is living on their own and they're on a tight budget either buy some food and freeze it, because it's not really breaking down the vitamins. It's like even frozen vegetables, if you can't buy fresh, I do admit they are a bit dearer when you're buying frozen to if you'd bought fresh but I could have some potatoes and I do put potatoes in the fridge, they tell you not to but I've had potatoes in the fridge for about two months and they haven't even... I've got potatoes down there now which I bought in the beginning of December and they're still as fresh as the day that I bought them. Sorry I... so I'm reading this.

Just the black ones.

Do you want me to read it out?

You don't have to no.

Right lemons. I had this, we bought some lemons at Christmas and it had four in a packet. My husband was saying well we only need one, I said no four in a packet that will be all right because you can, if you feel that you're not going to use them, slice them up, put them on a tray with some greaseproof paper, parchment paper whatever you call it and lay them on individually, cover them again with a bit of parchment paper, put them in a freezer and when they're frozen take them out, throw the whole lot into a bag, don't let it defrost obviously but when they're frozen take them all off, and they'll fall off and then put them in a bag and they're all individually frozen, put them in your freezer and then when you, it's sliced lemon I do agree, I wouldn't put a whole lemon like it but you slice it up, like I say, freeze it, put it in the freezer and when you want to take out some lemons for whatever you've got some lemons there. You can freeze them quite chunky, just not the whole lemon otherwise you're back to square one, it's going to take you ages to defrost it. Another thing, the reason why I wouldn't put the whole slices, all the slices, I'd do them individually is because if you put the whole lot into a bag it's just going to be one big lump so that's what I would suggest. If she's not going to use them up, slice them, freeze them individually, pop them into freezer bags and put them in the freezer. They're ideal for drinks or if you want a bit of lemon with your fish or whatever, you just take out... I suppose... I don't know if you could do it in quarters let's say if you wanted, I don't know I've never tried it. Slices I know you can so I don't see why not. You can always make the slices a bit thicker. Is it just that one?

There's another page.

Right. Right she's had her online shopping delivered; there are a number of fresh items that have a sell by date of tomorrow. Well that's ok, well it depends on how many she's got because a sell by date doesn't mean that they're going off, a sell by date is something the shop has to put on because they don't want to get sued. That's why you'd even have a sell by date on a tin of baked beans, it doesn't mean they're going to go off, those tin of baked beans are sealed so they would last years in your cupboard but they have to put a sell by date on to cover them because somebody could say I've been very ill because of your baked beans and it would be devastating for the company, like Tesco, Sainsbury's or whoever because it could cost them thousands of pounds if they were sued, if somebody really was pig-ignorant and say right I'm going to take you to court or whatever.

So would you just suggest to keep it?

Well this is it. She says it's near a sell by date of tomorrow and from the sell by date you usually get a real good few days before it's a use by date, and even when it's a use by date you can still go a few days after that. So if it come to that, I would use up, the meat for instance, if it's beef leave it longer. If you had maybe five items and they're all near their, the sell by date is tomorrow on five items I'd say right ok, the beef is ok because you can mature beef for so long. If it's chicken or pork or fish, they're the bits that I would use up first. Either that or I would squash them in the freezer somehow. I'd take out something that's not quite necessary maybe. But if she cannot put it in the freezer take it out of boxes even because boxes take up a lot of room. So if you've got lots of things and they're all in their boxes in the freezer, they're taking up a lot of room and if the worst comes to the worst and your freezer is so chock-a-block I would take them out the boxes, get a pair of scissors, cut round the instructions, sellotape it back on, back in the freezer again and you'd be surprised of how much more room you've got in your freezer. So again I would try and get them in the freezer if you're not going to use them, or put them into an order where the fish, pork and chicken is used up first, and if she can't, no she can't get any more in her freezer, yeah that's all I could suggest, but don't get frightened about use by dates, I certainly wouldn't get frightened about because that's not to

cover you, that's to cover the shop, sorry the sell by dates, that's got nothing to do with the customer whatsoever, the sell by dates, really. It's only to cover them. So if you took a pack of sausages back and they'll just say well sorry we've... but saying that, a shop will honour you if something is off and it's obviously off and the use by date hasn't even come up yet, but you haven't got to take the meat. All you do is take the packet and you just go in there with the packet, like I've done many times if I had... I had some chicken once and I do admit it was about three, four days and it had gone slimy so I thought... so that went for the foxes but I kept the packet and I took the packet back and I said look, and truth be I did buy it a bit late from the shop and it was near the mark but I said to them it's off and they said oh no, no, no, I said I haven't bought the meat and they said no that's ok, we don't want the meat as long as we've got the packet just go and choose yourself another one or you can have your money back. ...[supermarket name] were ever so good, if you ever took something back like that they would give your money back and a replacement and a lot of supermarkets do do that, but I wouldn't... I meant that was my fault, the chicken was a little bit you know... sorry, right I've done that one. I've done both sides. Well the apples, either put on your social media, your local, I would say Burton and Winkton because I live in Burton, Burton site and would say look there's a lot of apples here, if anybody wants some please come and get some, and you'll be amazed because everybody goes "can I have some?" "Can I have some?" and all these people come crowding in and help themselves so that's good because you're helping. Other than that I would take, and funnily enough I would go for the windfalls first because the other ones that are still on the tree are not bad. It's the ones that fall down I would go for them first and even if I couldn't cook because she's saying she's not much of a cook isn't she? Is it she says I'm not much of a cook and I do not know what to do with it? I'm not much of a cook and do not know what to do with it. Ok if it came to that it's not rocket science to peel them, chop them up, peel them and if there's any manky bits just chop that bit off and dispose of it, chop up the apple, put it in a little bit of water, boil them just slightly so they start cooking and getting a bit mulchy then let it cool down and scoop it into freezer bags and then you've got cooked apple already frozen so if you did feel like cooking and you wanted to make an apple pie or some whatever, do it separately though not in one big lump otherwise you'll have tonnes of apple, unless you're making lots of apple pies and then you can just take out a bag full and think right I'm going to try and make an apple pie. Don't put sugar with it and all that lot, just literally boil the apple, but not in loads of water, you just put enough so it doesn't boil and the steam with the lid on will cook the apple, just maybe 5/10 minutes and stick a knife and you'll see it going nice and soft, or even pulp it, it won't hurt it. Let it cool, pour it into your freezer bags, tie it all up and put it in the freezer. If the worst comes to the worst and you still haven't used it because you don't know how to cook I would give it away to your family and whatever, or try and make an apple pie which you've got to eat up. Right, last one. Pasta, I would put it in little plastic boxes and I'd put it in the fridge and I'd use it up the next day. Chuck it in, you don't have to make the same meal, you could vary it so you cook your pasta, you could... I don't know what she was making here, let's say she was making spaghetti bolognese, if it's in the boxes you could maybe add an entirely different sauce to it and maybe add some peas and things, kind of like making a different meal if you like. So if you're thinking I can't eat the same thing again, but then that wouldn't worry me. I have frozen spaghetti when I've made a spaghetti bolognese and I've frozen it, it's not, you wouldn't want to give it to Gordon Ramsey if he visited you, "I'm not eating this, rubbish" or words to that effect, but I mean if you're sort of ok with it, there's nothing wrong with it and I took it out the freezer and I just microwaved it. To be honest with you I wouldn't microwave it because I have microwaved it and it tends to go really soft. What I would do is take it out the freezer, let it defrost and then drop it in some boiling water literally just for, as you drop it in the boiling water just until it starts simmering and there's enough heat in there and then drain it straight away. You don't want it cooking but it just warms it up and that's just like it's fresh. Have I done the other side?

Yeah you've done them all. Thank you. That's great, thank you very much.

That's all right.

I'll just stop the recording.

Interview 9

So the research is all about food waste in the home so there is loads of research that's been done about how much or how little people are wasting and how that makes them feel and there's also been a lot of research into the kind of strategies people have in place of trying to prevent food waste from happening so having like a shopping list and that kind of thing. What we are trying to look at is food waste from a different angle so of post purchase behaviour, so what we are interested to find out is how people like you ensure they make use of the food they've already purchased so just to start off with if I could just ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your shopping habits, your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

Just myself.

Just yourself. Yeah?

Yeah, oh and my partner. But these days, some nights, not all nights.

Not all nights, ok. So how often would you say that you shop for food?

Try and do it once a week but I pick up odd bits in between as well.

OK. And where would you say that you typically shop for food?

Tesco's.

Is that for all the shops?

Yeah Tesco's mainly and then my in-betweens there's a corner shop at the end of the road, a Co-op so I just go there.

So you go to that, ok. How much would you say that you spend on your food shopping per week?

Probably about 60-70 pounds but quite a lot is like health foods so it's a lot more expensive.

Yeah. So do you, you just mentioned that a lot of it is health food so do you purchase a lot of fresh as opposed to frozen food?

Yeah all of mine is fresh; I don't purchase any frozen food.

Okay and is it more fresh or more processed? All fresh?

Yeah all fresh, I barely get any processed.

So why would you say that you do that?

I just like the healthier options, I like to make my sauces and things myself rather than buy jarred stuff, I just think it's bad for you really, you know what's going into it then.

Okay so do you cook from scratch quite often?

Yeah, every night.

Okay, do you ever, you mentioned that you do your shop in Tesco's, do you ever do online shopping?

Yes, every time.

Every time. So your weekly shop with Tesco's is online.

Yeah, you try going into Tesco's and try finding all those little health food additives and bits that you've got to put into it, it doesn't work.

Ok.

No, I do it online.

Ah, so you do your weekly shop online and then you top it up by just going to the Co-op at the end of the road. Ok, so now I would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occurrence where they had to throw some food away, however you might be different. So firstly I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Like having half of your plate full and putting that in the bin still afterwards, that kind of thing.

So we are adopting the definition that food waste is any kind of food but also drink - so things like milk or fruit juices or fizzy drinks, that kind of thing - that end up in the bin. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Not very often at all. No. Barely. Obviously odd bits like peelings and things like that go in the bin but I don't waste any food that's on the plate. And we don't drink out of... we only have tap water really so there's no juice wastage or anything like that. Yeah I don't think much at all.

Yeah. Do you ever have any bits that would sort of go out of date or anything or you would look at that you'd think that might not be that good anymore?

No, I tend to use it all up and then I usually over-make my food as well and then freeze half of it and then reheat that the second week if I don't want to do another shop because of money or anything like that and it can be quite expensive, I tend to make enough for a couple of weeks. So yeah, I kind of get away with it that way.

So you'd say that you hardly ever waste anything.

Maybe the odd onion here and there but that's about it.

So would you say that you could maybe identify anything that you usually throw away?

Not really, like banana peels? I don't really know, no, I don't really throw away anything really.

Okay. At what stage, so how would you assess whether something is still good to use or whether you would throw it away?

I usually leave it if it's been in the fridge for three days it then goes into the freezer. I tend to put all my vegetables in the fridge as well so they keep a lot longer and I keep a very minimum amount of everything so that I don't tend to have to throw it out at the end of the week. That's why I go and do the top ups so if I do need something extra rather than it sitting there and going off I go and buy it if I need it. So yeah, if it starts going mouldy and stuff it goes in the bin. Three days is usually, but I freeze most of it so yeah.

Okay, can you think about a specific time in the not too distant past that you did waste any food or drink?

I had to chuck away half a curry but that was because my freezer defrosted itself and my chicken went off. So yeah, that was probably the only time that I have done anything like that.

So it was that your freezer defrosted itself and it wasn't fit for consumption anymore.

Yeah, definitely.

When you had to throw that curry away how did you feel?

Wasting, I felt like it was wasted, that could have done me another day, it could have done my lunch. Yeah, no, I didn't like it.

Didn't like it. So do you feel guilty if you throw food away?

Not really, bit annoyed because obviously I then have to cook something else that night instead and it's obviously wastage so... but I don't really feel guilty about it.

If you had to compare that feeling of kind of feeling annoyed to something totally unrelated to food or food waste so totally another different occasion, what would you say that occasion could be?

It's like a missed opportunity kind of thing, like having to do something when you really didn't need to do it in the first place, that kind of thing.

Ok. Would you say that, so you mentioned that you were annoyed because obviously you then had to cook another meal either for that dinner or you could have taken it for lunch or whatever, would you say that any financial implications play into that?

Yeah definitely, I was definitely annoyed that I then had to go and spend money on food when I'd already prepared it the week before ready for that day. So yeah I was definitely annoyed that I had to spend more money. The chicken cost a lot of money in the first place anyway so yeah.

Ok, so obviously it's not nice to feel annoyed like you just described and in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we prevent from such feeling to happen again so my next questions try and address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid and limit the amount of food that you throw away so please feel free to use any specific examples if that helps, so what do you do to try and avoid the amount of food that you throw away?

As I said earlier I tend to make a lot in one go and then freeze it so I can have it another time when I don't want to cook or I don't have the money for food that week, yeah I tend to keep my stuff at a minimum so, yeah, I tend to think that helps with wastage, I don't seem to waste much so must be doing something right.

So it would be mainly batch cooking and then...

...minimum storing yeah, minimal storage.

Yeah?

Yeah.

So, although you mentioned that you often batch cook but if you to make a dish do you usually have any leftovers?

No, no I tend to plan for the whole week before I do my shopping and I write a list of everything and do like a timetable of what I am going to have each day and when I am doing my shopping list I'll do it from that, from the recipe, so each meal will have its own recipe and that will be my shopping list and I'll just times that by like two or something so it does a couple of days, so yeah I never have something in my cupboards that I am not going to use that week. There's never ever really in there, I mean there's a few like jars of sauce that they are going to go down to the food bank instead of staying here because they have stayed there too long but it's one of those. Yeah I don't think I do that much.

So, when you say that you batch cook and you sort of batch it up for other days, for other meals and kind of plan your meals ahead and all that sort of, your strategies that you have got in place, how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Sometimes quite a lot of effort but that's why I do the batch cooking cause the nights that it's, the nights I think it's an effort they're the nights when I'll have my frozen dinners but the night when I am just doing my shopping list and things like that it's just, it's a quiet night when I am sat there on my own it only takes an hour or so to do it all and order it all so it would be different if I was going to pick up all the shopping but because I am doing it online it's not too much of a stress, it's not too bad at all.

So and then sort of, you know, portion it up, the meals and everything, do you perceive that to be much effort?

No, not at all, I prefer batch cooking I feel like I've done a lot more rather than cooking for one meal and then have to do it again and again and again, I much prefer that.

And do you ever recommend this to other people?

Yes. Definitely.

Does it ever come up to like...?

Yeah I'll speak about it to my friends, like any friends that are looking to do more of a healthy eating option and things like that it's a much easier way of staying on track not having those odd bits of rubbish foods in your cupboards just having what you know you are going to eat for the week and what's healthy for the week, it's a lot better for your diet if you are doing what I am saying.

And where would you say that you learned about this method?

I did the Joe Wicks plan and The Body Coach and that taught me a lot about batch cooking and cooking healthier and from scratch and it worked really well for me so I kind of just adopted it and taken it on in normal day to day life.

And would you say that you take any kind of strategies that you have got in place to reduce the amount of food that you waste, have your family and friends got any influence on that?

Not really, I mean my mum and dad never wasted much, she never had odd bits that you weren't going to use in the cupboards either so I kind of probably got that from her as well.

So when you do make use of all the food that you have and you don't end up wasting anything how does that make you feel?

Good, yeah, yeah, it's much better.

Would you be able to describe another situation that gives you...?

I don't know really, it's just that I know I've used it all up I haven't wasted at all and that I probably got food in the freezer for the next week so I don't have to go shopping immediately either so yeah, it's kind of good.

Ok so we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit now, so I've got four scenarios here where people have had for one reason or another too much food, if you could just read through them, the ones with the black writing and just see what you could advise the people.

Okay, so one by one.

Yeah.

Do you want me to read them out as well?

You don't have to read them out.

So the one that is saying, so do I just say what I'd advise them?

Yeah, yeah.

So the one that is saying her freezer is bursting and her online shopping is about to go out of date she needs to go through her freezer and start using some of that before she orders again. There shouldn't be too much in the freezer at any one time anyway cause it will break your freezer as I know.

Is that how your freezer broke?

I don't really know, mine is meant to be a defrost one, a non-frost one so I don't think it copes with anything in there to be honest but yeah, it needed re-doing anyway, yeah.

So your advice would be to have a look at...

Start eating some of that stuff up in your freezer before you do any online shopping for any fresh food. See what you can use up before you start shopping or else it's just going to sit there and yeah, just sit there.

Ok.

The one that's cooked far too much pasta she needs to freeze it, well hopefully she's got room in her freezer

Yeah, they are not the same people.

Yeah, they need to, she needs to freeze that pasta or have it for her lunch tomorrow. She doesn't need to eat it all in one go or chuck it away. So the lady with the apples, I am sure there is stuff you can do, she needs to google that, just google what to do with rotten apples, I am sure there's something you can do with them. I am sure you can like turn it into pulp and use it to fertilise or something, can't you? I am sure she could do that. So the one with the lemons I think if she planned her weeks better and if she knew that she could only get four lemons at a time she could have worked like something else into her week to use up the rest of the lemons. So I think maybe she needs to plan her weeks better. She needs to plan her weeks so that she uses all of the food that she buys.

Is there anything you could think of what you could do with lemons that you have got spare?

Well, I always have lemons in my water each day. So I cut a couple of slices off each day and leave them in my cup, I don't chuck them away each time either, the whole way through the day they'll stay in my cup and I will just refill the water all day and then I 'll just have lemon water with it.

Ok so that would be something she could do with it.

Have some lemon water.

Okay, that's fab, thank you very much. That's the end of my questions if I could just summarise briefly what you've said and then please feel free to correct or add or whatever. So you've mentioned that you shop for yourself generally but then occasionally you would have your partner staying over as well so you kind of shop for one, occasionally two people, you do a weekly shop at Tesco's which you do online and then you top up as and when with bits that you need at the corner shop at the corner. You say it's about 60-70 pounds per week because you do...

Yeah it probably lasts me a couple of weeks actually, I probably do it once every couple of weeks just because it will cost me that for the week and then my frozen food, my leftovers will do me the next week afterwards. Yeah, that's probably... but then I've got the in-between ones that add on a little bit as well so yeah probably about £50-60, probably about right actually.

You did say that you do follow a healthy eating plan or try to eat healthily and therefore you cook from scratch and you buy a lot of fresh food, you did say that you hardly ever, you do your meal prep ahead and you do your shopping list ahead and work out the quantities you need so you hardly ever have any waste in terms of bits that you would throw away. You do tend to batch cook and portioning up the meals to have another week or have it sort of the next day. If you do have to throw any food away you did say that it makes you feel quite annoyed rather than guilty, annoyed that you would then have the inconvenience of having to cook again and obviously there will be the financial implication of being annoyed that you have to spend money on food that you'd already prepared. Yes, so you do the batch cooking mainly and plan ahead you did say that it was mainly from following a specific...

The Body Coach.

...eating, so it was the Joe Wicks thing that kind of taught you how to batch cook and all those kind of things. And that you may have picked it up from your mum subconsciously as well but you try to not overstock in the first place and have only the food that you are really going to be eating at home. Is that all correct?

Yeah that's all right.

Yeah?

Yeah.

Thank you.

Interview 10

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home so there's a lot of research that's been done on how much or how little food people waste and how that makes them feel, and then there's further research that's already been done on how people then would prevent food waste from happening in the first place, so make a shopping list and try to not overstock on their food. We're looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle in that we're looking it from a post-purchase behaviour angle. So we're interested in how people like yourselves deal with any surplus of food that they have in the home, and what they would do with it rather than throwing it away. Ok so to start off with if I could ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so for instance, how many people do you shop for and who do you shop for?

So in terms of... do I need to say my name?

No.

So in terms of the number of people I shop for there's myself, my wife, our two kids so we have a four and a half year old and a nine and a half year old. What was the other part?

Who do you shop for?

Who do you shop for, so yes that's who we shop for.

Yeah so it's a family of four.

Yeah it's a family of four, all omnivorous, not pescatarian or vegetarian or vegans or anything else so a regular all-consuming family.

How often do you shop for food?

We shop for food, we will do a home delivery of shopping once a week, get delivered via online ordering, and then typically we will do possibly two top up shops for fresh fruit and vegetables to avoid wasting food so we buy as we need.

Ok, so where do you usually shop for your food?

So typically we would use somewhere like Tesco or Asda, Sainsbury's for online shopping and then locally we have a Co Op that we do sort of top up shops with or on the way home stop at Sainsbury's or wherever is closest really, wherever is in passing.

And if you don't mind me asking, how much do you spend on average for your shopping per week?

Just on food groceries or on sort of...?

The food.

On the food side of things so discounting things like washing detergent and things like that I would anticipate we spend probably in the region of about £60-£80 on food.

Ok, and do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

I try not to purchase... we do purchase things that can be frozen, purely because of convenience for the kids but there will always be a fresh element to accompany it. So if they were having god forbid the much maligned chicken nuggets, or shall we say chicken fillets, then we would ensure there's some fresh vegetables, peppers, carrots, broccoli, green beans that sort of thing to sort of counter the muck.

But would you, in terms of veg and stuff, would you then buy fresh veg as opposed to frozen?

I prefer fresh veg myself so I wouldn't think to buy frozen vegetables, except for peas, frozen peas.

I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased so most people can remember at least one occurrence where they had to throw any food away or even more, however you may be different. So first of all I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

So food waste to me would be discarding of food, now my brother has a different opinion on this because he would throw anything just because he doesn't like the date on it, for me food waste would be food that is perished or in the state of rotten or perished things. So I would count that as the food we don't use but also then the food that is leftover on a plate sort of after a Sunday lunch, if you've got a few pieces of broccoli or string green beans left in a pot I would regard that as food waste. So basically anything that is fine to eat that isn't eaten, but then also food that goes past its useful or consumable state.

Yeah so for the purpose of this interview we're adopting the definition that food waste is any food, but also drink, so anything like fruit juice...

We don't waste drink.

...I'm not talking about wine, well it could be wine as well, but things like fruit juices or milk or any fizzy drinks or something like that so that would then also be classed as food waste. So any food or drink that ends up in the bin.

Ok.

Ok, so if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

I would say, per day or is this sort of...?

General so...

So I would say that something, some form of food waste ends up either down the sink or in the bin on a daily basis in our house sadly, certainly five days of the week.

Ok, is there something you particularly throw away, so what do you usually throw away?

Typically it tends to be things like bananas tend to be a classic because kids can be a bit fanciful they'll be like "we love bananas" so you'll load up on bananas then they'll be like "we don't really want bananas". There will be elements of a meal I guess, so remnants that the kids just don't quite finish or something like that. Normally if I'm around on a weekend there is no waste because I will literally just "I'll have that, I'll have that" because I do not like throwing food in the bin, so typically if they sort of leave vegetables and things like that I won't throw them in the bin I'll eat them. But yeah that's it predominantly.

Yeah so would you say sort of fruit like bananas or is there anything else that you would...?

Yeah I would say, sorry, so typically it would be fresh produce. I won't throw if it's tinned and it's passed its date it's fine in my mind, just a quick sniff. Milk in the office here, people will not necessarily consume it all so sometimes that goes down the bin or down the sink. But yeah predominantly it will be fresh fruit more than vegetables because I guess vegetables I'll just sort of roast if they look a bit wilted and manky.

So at what kind of stage would you throw anything away?

It would normally be if... say if it's dairy like milk if it's gone solid or lumpy, down it goes, sort of have a look on the date. If something smells bad, I'm not too bothered if a bit of broccoli has gone slightly yellow, it's fine by me so it would typically be if I think it's going to poison someone in the house or if it just smells like it's died then I will sack it off.

So you would visually assess it and smell it.

Yeah I wouldn't just cut up an orange, look at it and say oh no and throw it away. I've even gone to the deprived stages of slicing off a bit of cheese to assess whether it's all right, yeah that's ok.

Ok can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink? And just explain what happened, what were the circumstances that led to being happening.

Yeah so Sunday roast a couple of weeks ago I guess. Just I think huge in terms of volumes, but yeah it was just a case that a bit of food that was on the plate that was caked in gravy and those sorts of things, cold because the kids take so long to eat it, it didn't quite appeal to my palate so there's bit of stuff there that was left, a few bits that hadn't been caked that we thought we would save and put in the fridge and sort of reheat but we never did and sort of forgot about it at the back of the fridge so that went in the bin sadly.

Ok so how did that make you feel when you had to throw it away?

I hate throwing food away so yes, we always talk to the kids about obviously there's people starving in the world, it's wrong that we don't finish food and we throw food away so morally I don't feel so comfortable with it. And obviously there is an economic figure attached to what that food costs so to me it's wasting

money but then obviously the time that goes to earning money and all sorts of equations like that so it's not good generally.

Ok so the moral implications as well as the financial implications.

Yeah primarily the moral ones I suppose but yeah I guess a capitalist dog, I do think about money sometimes.

So if you had to compare this feeling you had when you had this bad feeling of having to throw the food away to something totally unrelated to food waste so what would another occasion be where you would have the same kind of feeling?

Well it's predominantly a feeling of guilt so I suppose it would be attached to a sense of... I don't know, having when others don't so it might be the opportunity to have an experience that others might not otherwise get, be like a holiday or a present, an experience, so yeah that sense of imbalance and sort of lack of appreciation, so occasions such as that I suppose. I don't know if that really answers it but...

Yeah so obviously it isn't nice to feel bad or guilty like you've just described yourself, in fact most of us when we do feel or expect to feel something negative adjust to prevent such a feeling happening again. So my next question aims to address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food you waste. Please feel free to use any specific examples if it makes easier. So I will ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you waste?

So in terms of our shopping strategy we tend to buy the bulk non-perishable items or items that we know we're going to use specifically for a meal, we will purchase ahead so we will sit down and look and we work out a menu for the week so we know what we're going to eat and we know what we're going to have with meals and those sorts of things, and yes look at our shopping patterns I suppose and understand how we eat things and when we eat things. In the summer we know we eat more sort of salads and those sorts of things, winter it's more vegetables so we adjust in that sense because we know we're eating different things. We will tend to, as I say, buy fresh produce as and when we need it to limit food waste. In the holidays the kids' eating habits change so we're sort of always allied to that so we adjust what we buy during those periods. Yeah and I suppose just ensuring that we know that if the kids waste a load of food one week, we'll think well I'm not going to cook that for you again so it will just be a case of changing perhaps what we cook or what we put with food items, not necessarily based on what we think is great but what the kids are going to eat because they're predominantly the ones who will waste food not us.

So if you found yourself in a situation where you were at home and you open your fridge and it's just full to the brim, what would you then...?

Yeah so we do look at trying to work out what we're going to eat over the week, the first place we start is look at what we've got in the fridge and the cupboards and think do we need to use anything up or if we do need to use something up what can we buy to eat with that stuff. So we always start with what we've got to try and ensure that nothing goes off in the fridge, always start at the bottom draws where all the fresh veg is kept and those sorts of things to see what's in there, and then we'll sometimes be a bit creative and create a meal out of bits and bobs just to avoid wasting certain things. So it should be a case of looking at what we've got presently, checking the dates, seeing if anything's going to go off and then sort of building a menu around that.

So when you cook do you ever have any leftovers?

That don't get on the plate?

Yeah.

No chef's honour, it ends up in my tummy or I get the bigger bowl. Yeah or the cat, the cat does appreciate the odd bit of chicken and those sorts of things. So if there was a roast chicken, we'd strip the chicken down totally and let the cat have all of the bits that I don't fancy and then I'll eat the rest. But yeah normally we cook to what we need, so yeah wouldn't over provide but when I do I'll pick and I'll eat it.

So you eat it there and then?

Yes whilst it's fresh.

Ok so how much effort do you perceive it to be to subbing around it and trying to avoid the food waste or try to not have any leftovers?

I don't... Yeah I suppose it's more I don't see it as an effort I just see it as sort of a necessity, not obligation but I just think it's the right thing to do so I see it as necessary effort so I don't really see it as effort, I just see it as this has to happen, this is the way it has to be and I don't want my kids to be wasteful, I don't want to be wasteful or my kids. So yeah it's just ingrained as business as usual so I don't find it an effort at all really, and if it is an effort I'm willing to make that effort.

Yeah and do you ever recommend this to other people?

Yeah, my brother, my parents. My dad is very... he is coming from the money perspective less maybe than the moral perspective but he's very much sort of where I've got a bit of it from. But my brother is terrible, his wife is a vegetarian, a fussy vegetarian and they will throw swathes of food, it is upsetting to the point so I will say regularly 'you do realise you can eat that and you do realise you can do that'. If you go to the good old Co Op down the town they're doing their 10p for anything that's gone past its best so save yourself a truck load of money, they spend a huge amount of money and I would anticipate an unnerving amount of that goes in the bin so I will regularly bang the drum.

So how would you say that you learned about this method?

I don't know. I'm not sure if I consciously learnt about it. I suppose you become aware of things I guess through subversion in the media and those sorts of things. There will probably be someone in my past that's told me about it. I know that for ...[respondents wife] my wife's point of view, she used to go to junior church and various things like that when she was younger and that was a sort of a big thing about being mindful about wasting and those sorts of things and sort of sharing, so it's a good moral bit from her perspective but that wasn't where I got mine from I suppose, mine's just personality wise or kind of certain things I respond to in the media, food appeals on television and educational programmes I suppose things like that.

So when you can make something out of food that would otherwise be thrown away, so if for example you opened your fridge and you look at some veg and you think that doesn't look that great but I'll use this now...

Broccoli ice cream.

Yeah, broccoli ice cream for example. So if you were to then save that broccoli by making an ice cream, how does that make you feel?

It makes me feel good, as I say I really hate throwing food away for a couple of reasons. So if I can reuse something and it tastes good, well not reuse something but if I can make good use of something rather than throwing it away and it tastes good then that's great and I'll sort of self-five, a bit of a celebration and I'll think that's quite a nice thing. Often we've done bits, created bits from bits of roasted broccoli, I'm picking on broccoli, on puff pastry and it's quite nice to discover nice little cheats and new recipes and sorts of things so no it feels good generally.

So if you had to compare that feeling to another situation totally food unrelated what could a situation be that makes you equally feel good?

I'll be sort of virtuous, helping somebody out, passing savings onto other people so if you found 10p and you give 10p to someone or a quid and you give the quid to charity or something like that, it's kind of like yeah the money I would have wasted or the food I would have wasted I'm passing on so that feels good. So other like for like comparisons in terms of feeling is when you get a freebie I suppose, you think ooh free parking, unexpected free parking or unexpected 10% discount somewhere or finding out someone takes NUS that you didn't know so you've saved a little bit of money, that sort of little buzz.

Yeah ok. So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I've got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in a bit of a pickle in that they've got too much food for various reasons. If I ask you to take the role of an agony aunt or uncle to just read through the problems and see what sort of advice you could give them.

Did you want me to answer each at one time?

Yeah.

Yeah so... do I need to read these out?

No.

Ok so the first one somebody has over ordered, well not over ordered but has a number of things that have got a short sell by date. I would suggest either checking with a family member or a neighbour, ... [fictional agony aunt], seeing if somebody else could make good use of them. Put it in something like a lasagne type of thing that you make up with the goods, cook them all and then they're ok so you get an extra bit of time out of it. I would say adjusting what you're going to eat that week maybe, I don't know.

Yeah.

That one?

Yeah. They're printed on black on the other side if it's easier for you to read.

Oh right ok. So the lemons, I would suggest to the person, whilst it might be cheaper to bulk buy, ultimately if you're not going to use it then it's a bit of behavioural economics supermarkets use to get you to buy more than you possibly need so with buy one get one frees. If you've got a neighbour or somebody that might

utilise lemons then see whether a bit of group purchasing power and say well if I get four lemons and I'm going to use two then do you want to split the difference, something like that. I would look at creative ways of using lemons so either Googling menu opportunities. But yeah I struggle when people find it difficult to find pack sizes to suit my needs and budget, I would still anticipate that one lemon would still cost less than four lemons, so whilst it might seem better value if you're not going to use it ultimately you're paying an extra 20p for something you're not going to use and just toss in the bin so I would say refrain from what you think it is in budget, or go and shop in the smaller local fruit and veg shops or something like that.

Like a greengrocer?

Yeah.

Ok.

I would suggest Google it, have a look and see what you can do with apples. Again ask around, put a little notice out saying free apples if anybody wants them; help yourself or pick them and put them out the front of the house if people want it. It's a strange one. You either look for recipes if you like apples, find recipes that you can do with apples or offer them to somebody else. Leftover pasta, for me there's no such thing as leftover pasta so that's just called extras or lunch for tomorrow so yeah I'd be sort of like well pasta tends to keep ok so I would say keep it stored in a cool environment and reuse it, get it out for lunches, be a bit more mindful when you're preparing meals to weigh food, that's what I tend to do although again because I'm greedy I always put a little bit extra in for the chef. Yeah so I'd work out your measures beforehand and anything that's leftover think about utilising for lunches, all those sorts of things, pasta seems to keep all right, unless it's covered in fresh cream and egg.

So would you just pop it in the fridge or...?

Typically I would pop it in the fridge and then eat it, save it for lunch. This is where you tell me that you shouldn't refrigerate pasta or something.

No, no.

Oh right ok. Like oh my god my pasta is in the fridge.

No, no, no.

Yeah I would pop it in the fridge typically I suppose. I've never tried freezing pre-cooked pasta; I don't know if that's possible, I suppose it is.

I think so. I think I have.

Yeah.

If I have bolognese or something for dinner I think I have.

Yeah and you can buy those sort of frozen packs of food so yeah could even freeze it potentially but yeah I certainly don't do wasting pasta.

All right, thank you very much. So that's it from all of my questions. So if I just briefly summarise what you just said and then if there's anything wrong just correct me or any additions you want to make also correct

me. So you're a family of four and you do your food shops for yourself, your wife and then the two children, you do a weekly big shop and then top that up with fresh produce as and when you need, again in the supermarkets so you get a supermarket online delivery and then sort of pop to smaller supermarkets to get what you need as and when. You think that you spend about between £60 and £80 on the food once you've discounted everything else from your food shopping bill. You say that it's sometimes quite difficult to know what you need because the children have different tastes and they like one thing one week and not necessarily another. Then obviously when you've got things like school holidays and stuff your needs do change but you think that you're quite aware of that and then you're happy to sort of cater for that in advance. You seem to be quite organised in that you make a shopping list or look at what you've already got in stock and what you want to eat and do a bit of meal planning ahead and reduce the waste from that angle, but you did say that you do still have some waste almost on a daily basis in terms of that if you dish out to the children and they might not eat all of it, you might eat it, you might not eat it or sometimes you buy something that you think the kids like and then that week they're not into bananas or something like that so they then don't like it. Overall you do try to reduce your food waste by also not being too lenient on things like sell by dates or best before dates kind of things and you would, opposing to that, just visually assess things or smell it or taste it and see if you can still use it and then maybe roast veg if it doesn't look that appealing anymore, so you're quite happy to do that. It does make you feel guilty when you do waste any food from a moral perspective with there obviously being a shortage of food for other people and the financial implication of just throwing money away. You did say that when you do manage to avoid wasting food that it does make you feel quite good and quite sort of virtuous. Does that sum it up?

On the money, I should have just said that from the outset, it would have been much quicker.

Right thank you very much.

Interview 11

So like I briefly said before, the research we are doing is about food waste from a different angle, so from that from post purchase behaviour, so for various reasons you find yourself in a situation where you have over stocked on food or you have too much food and your kind of strategies that you have in place to avoid that food going to waste. So to get started can I ask you to introduce yourself in terms of if you can tell me a little bit about your shopping behaviour, so for example who do shop for?

Ok so I'm ...[respondents name], I live here with my wife ...[respondents wife's name] and we tend to shop in Tesco, we tend to bulk shop, we don't like the idea of daily shopping, but do do so on an as needs basis I suppose. One or two exceptions to that would be milk and other things that we might buy more regularly.

So do you shop for the both of you?

We sometimes go together or we sometimes go individually, it depends who is around and what's going on. Invariably we shop with a list, so it doesn't really matter who goes because it is driven by the list.

So do you have any other people living in the household that you need to shop for?

No, nobody else.

So it is just the two of you?

Yes.

So you shop for the two of you. So would you say then that you go on a weekly basis to do the bulk shop?

Probably fortnightly, I would imagine.

So fortnightly bulk shop.

Typically yes.

Ok, if I could be so rude, would you be able to tell me how much on average you spend per week or per shop?

Probably more when I go because I tend to be a bit more susceptible to impulse and tasty little morsels sitting on the shelves, so the last time I went, ok it was with guests here, £160 I think it was.

And then that's for both of you for the fortnight.

So that would be the fortnight plus the weekend of guests.

Yes, and then when you do your shop at Tesco you said do you tend to purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Very little frozen, very little frozen, only ice cream and chips and peas.

So most of it would be fresh and then you tend to stock that up if you ran out of anything in the mean time?

Yes.

Ok and then where would you go for that, would that be more locally?

Again yes locally, so the milk, I said milk didn't I, occasional fresh vegetables but to be honest that two week window probably keeps us going with whatever fresh stuff we are buying until we buy some more fresh stuff.

Ok great, so now I would like to ask you a little bit more about wasting food that you've already purchased, so most people can remember at last one occurrence if not more where they had to waste any food that they had already purchased, however you may be different, so when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

It means that I have got some potatoes that have sprouted, a lettuce that has rotted, some cheese that has got mould on it and I have to throw it away.

Yes ok, so for the purpose of this interview we do have the definition that food waste would mean any food but also drink that would end up in the bin, so for example milk or fruit juice, we would class that as waste.

Never thrown that away.

P2: The fresh stuff goes to the compost.

Ok so you do have compost. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Never.

Never, that's very good.

I threw an egg away two weeks ago and ...[respondent's wife] been away so we got a little bit out of kilt with stock I suppose and I threw an egg away, guilty.

So if you had to think about situations where you do throw something away, what would it usually be that you throw away or at what stage would you say you throw it away?

Only if it is rotted, to be fair we would occasionally find a bit of cucumber rotted in the salad box or something like that but rarely, and that would be the time it might get thrown away I suppose.

P2: Well to the compost.

I think I threw an onion away while you were away as well that had been lying away too long and it had gone completely soft and squidgy. So yes it has got to be deteriorated to quite an extent before I throw anything away.

Ok so you said it had to be quite deteriorated, so you would only throw it away if it had really sort of gone off.

Yes.

But how would you assess whether it had gone off or not?

Inedible.

So would you kind of taste it, smell it or touch it?

Taste it, smell it, poke it, prod it, look at it.

Then in terms of sort of sell by dates or used by dates would you...

I don't take any notice of them at all, none at all.

That's fine. So you have just mentioned the egg but can you tell me about a specific time in the not so distant past where you had to waste some food or drink and then sort of what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it?

Honestly I cannot imagine or remember any time I have thrown away drink. I cannot even conceive how that could be possible. Food yes, I have already quoted egg, I have already quoted some salad lying around too long in the salad box.

P2: Fruit occasionally.

And the occasional fruit, so it is that type of fresh produce I suppose, perhaps a little bit of packaged pre-processed meat, that sort of thing as well maybe.

P2: Very rarely.

And the circumstances would be because plans had changed I suppose or something untoward had happened that meant that the list that drove our shopping had not, you know the reality of that two week period hadn't been what we'd anticipated.

So if you think about a specific item that you had to throw away recently, how did that make you feel?

Bad, waste of money.

So is it more from the waste of money perspective?

Waste of money.

Do you feel guilty throwing it away?

Yes.

And then if you had to compare that feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste, where you had the same kind of feeling or sort of bad feeling, what could that situation be?

Goodness knows, goodness knows... well the only similarity I can think of off the top of my head would be, I don't like waste full stop, I don't like throwing anything away really and particularly if it signifies that I have wasted some money.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel in that way and to feel sort of bad and that you feel annoyed with yourself because you have wasted money and in fact most of us when we do have these kind of feelings, this negative feeling, we adjust to prevent any such feeling so that it doesn't happen again the future. So my next questions address practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific example if that makes it easier. So what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away?

Well the shopping list would be the main thing I suppose because without that I'm sure we would waste more than we do, so always trying to anticipate that two week period, when are we in, what meals might we be having and so on. Secondly if there is a situation which arises where we can see that something has been brought and it's not going to get used then we would freeze it and then if something has been prepared and is surplus that also would be frozen. So funnily enough tonight we are having bubble and squeak for dinner and that bubble and squeak has come out the freezer, so that is some vegetables that could have been wasted, could have been wasted before they were cooked, could have been wasted after they were cooked but were frozen and tonight will be made into bubble and squeak.

So that kind of leads me on to my next question of do you ever have left overs?

All the time but they get frozen.

P2: All the time.

Ok so what you might do with these, so it would be that you might freeze them?

Yes.

Ok and do you perceive this to be much effort?

Effort, no.

So do you make that into another meal?

Yes like those frozen vegetables, so left over vegetables from a roast dinner, there was no prospect they were going to be used in the immediate future after that roast dinner, stick them into a container and into the freezer and then out today for a bubble and squeak.

Yes.

Do you know what bubble and squeak is?

Yes I do, do you ever recommend this strategy to other people?

To our kids.

P2: The children.

To our kids who take no notice whatsoever.

P2: They are more wasteful than we are.

Ok so thinking about...where would you say you learnt about that sort of method?

Being a poor student in my case.

P2: And a poor housewife.

So would you say it was sort of any family or friends that might have influenced that as well?

Yes certainly parents.

P2: Parents.

Yes, I can remember my parents never wasting anything, now they didn't have freezers and all the stuff we have got today but they managed by careful shopping and instilling in us that you weren't to get down from the table if there was anything left and all this kind of thing, waste just wasn't useful.

And do you think there is anything you have learnt about this from the media?

No.

Or any sort of paper articles or TV programmes?

No.

P2: Drummed into us at a young age.

So when you are able to then kind of save some food and then maybe freeze it and take it back out rather than wasting it, how does that make you feel?

No feelings, just seems a very normal thing to do, so it doesn't have any feeling attached to it.

Ok, so now we are going to change the focus of the interview a little bit. So I have got four scenarios here, which are people who have found themselves in a situation where they have got too much food and they don't know what to do with that and if I could ask you to take sort of maybe a little bit of the role of an agony aunt. If I give you the two scenarios then if you could just let me know what your advice to them would be. So one scenario is about an online food shop that gets delivered and then the other one is about some pasta that gets over cooked.

I have never done online shopping so it is kind of interesting, I do online shopping but not groceries. So you can't specify a date can you when you do online shopping clearly from this, because one answer would be perhaps to say to the supplier in future, don't send me stuff that runs out so quickly, but can you do that I don't know?

I think usually on some items they can guarantee that it will last so many days but I don't always know whether that is always across the board.

So my first answer would be don't get into this situation again in the future, check the dates and if you can't guarantee getting fresh stuff online without a longer date so you avoid wasting it, then don't buy that stuff online, would be my answer to that. Now you are going to have to take a hit with the stuff you have got now unless you know a friendly neighbour or somebody you would give it to, so you may have to waste what you have got now because your freezer is full, it says here but in future don't get into that situation.

So is there anything you could think of they could do with the items they have got now?

It says they can't put it in their freezer.

Yes.

So apart from having a pig out meal and eating it all, the only thing you could do is give it away I guess.

Yes and the other scenario?

Freeze it, if there is too much pasta, freeze it, have it another day.

Ok so do you think that pasta is something you can freeze?

Yes, in fact, I don't know what it is but if it is spaghetti bolognaise and you have got some pasta and you have got some meat too then plate it up as a meal and just take it out as a meal and stick it in the microwave when you need it.

Yes.

We do that a lot, the reason being that often times only one of us might be here looking for a meal, in fact that is me tomorrow and so I will look for a previously plated up meal in the freezer.

Yes that's great. If I briefly summarise what you have just said about the food waste and the ways you try and avoid and reduce it. So you do a bulk shop fortnightly and you go to the supermarket for that and you do perceive yourself to be quite organised in terms of that, you think ahead of the situations arising and those kind of meals you would like to have and then have a list and then do that shop. Occasionally if you ran out of anything you would go sort of more locally and top that up but it's not very often. You don't think that you have a lot of food waste or hardly ever and then when you do have any leftovers you either put it in the compost or if it is still ok to eat then you would freeze it or make it into another meal. You don't really perceive that to be any effort and you say it is kind of something you learned by doing...

Necessity.

...necessity and picked that up. You did say that if you did have to throw anything away that it does make you feel quite annoyed in terms of being annoyed of wasting, the financial impact of wasting the food.

Good summary.

Is there anything else I have missed or you would like to add?

No I think that is a good summary.

Yeah, alright, great.

Interview 12

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home. So there's a lot of research that's been done about how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel, and there's also been a lot of research that looked at preventative measures people take to try and avoid overstocking or avoid food waste so that will be things like having a shopping list and those kind of things. What we are looking at is food waste from a different angle, so that of post-purchase behaviour. So what we are most interested in is the practical side of food waste prevention from real people. In other words, we are looking to find out how people like you ensure that they make use of the food that they've already purchased. So if I could just ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

Ok I shop for myself and my two children. Yeah I don't really do a shopping list; I just... whatever I feel would suit the week.

So how often do you shop for food?

Twice a week.

Twice a week, ok and typically where would you say that you shop for food?

Tesco.

Tesco, ok, and do you always go to the shop or do you do online shopping as well?

No I always go.

Yeah, so if you had to estimate, how much do you think you spend on your food shopping per week?

Between £100 and £150.

Is that for yourself and your two children?

Yeah, yeah.

Does it cover your husband as well?

Yes.

Yeah so your husband as well. Do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh.

Yeah and why would you say you do that?

Because then when it does go out of date I can put it in the freezer.

Yeah and do you buy more fresh or more convenience food, like readymade food?

No fresh, I make it from scratch.

Yeah ok. When you say that you usually go to Tesco's, do you go to a bigger one or do you go to a smaller one?

No I go to the big one.

The big one ok. So I'd now like to ask a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occasion where we had to throw some food away that we've already purchased, however you might be different. So firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I speak food waste, what do you think that means?

Throwing it away.

Yeah so throwing any...

Yeah.

Ok so we're adopting the definition that food waste means any food but also think about drinks that end up in the bin. So drinks could be things like milk or fruit juices or fizzy drinks or anything like that, if you ever throw any of those away. If you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Just before my food shop I usually go through the fridge and throw quite a lot out that's gone out of date, and anything fizzy that's been left open and not drunk goes down the sink.

Ok so you mention you do your shop twice a week, so would you do that twice a week?

Yeah.

Ok and what do you usually throw away? So is there something you usually end up throwing away?

Mainly meats, so anything like beef and chicken, if it's a day out of date it's gone. If I don't catch it before putting it into the freezer. So if it's like the day before and I know I'm not going to use it on the day it goes out of date it goes straight into the freezer.

Ok and so why might you throw something away? Would you say it's usually meat that you then end up throwing away?

Yeah.

Ok and you mentioned fizzy drinks that have gone?

Yeah usually if it hasn't been drunk I just think it's... well I don't really try it; I just think it's just gone off.

Ok so why might you throw something away?

I'm usually scared in case it's gone off or yeah.

Ok, so how would you assess whether you would throw anything away?

By looking at it.

Yeah ok, so would you just go... you mentioned you look at the date, is it just the date that you look at or do you...?

Yeah I look at the date and I think is it a chance to take and usually meats, I don't take a chance so I just throw it.

So how would you assess, for example, for any sort of loose foods such as vegetables or anything like that?

I usually feel them and smell them.

Yeah ok. Can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you wasted some food or drink and just kind of explained what happened or what were the circumstances that led to it happening?

What do you mean? Sorry.

So just think about a time not too long ago where you had to waste some food or drink?

It was probably yesterday. I made a spaghetti bolognese and I had leftovers so I put it in the fridge and I didn't have it the following day so I threw it out.

Ok yeah. So when you had to throw that spaghetti bolognese out how did that make you feel?

Upset because I could have had that as a meal, so I'm putting money down the drain.

Ok so is it mainly the money side of things that make you upset?

Yeah, yeah, and the quantity of meat because usually I buy quite, like not small packs, usually it's a big bulk for all the family I'm throwing it away, it does upset me.

Ok so when you say that it upsets you, why is that really?

More the money side than anything because meat is quite expensive, and it's not money I can easily throw away but I just don't take any chances with the meat mainly.

Ok and do you feel guilty if you throw food away?

Yeah, yeah because there are people out there that probably would eat it and it probably isn't good me throwing it away, but I'm so cautious.

Ok if you had to... so you mentioned that you felt a bit upset when you had to throw the food away, if you had to think of a situation that's totally unrelated to throwing food away what could another situation be that gives you the same kind of feeling?

What away from the food?

Yeah it doesn't have to do anything with food.

Probably losing money or wasting money, yeah.

Ok, so obviously it's not nice to feel upset like you've just described and in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling. So my next couple of questions aim to address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid and limit the amount of food that you throw away so feel free to use any specific examples if that makes easier. What would you say that you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

Try and catch it before its best before date and put it in to the freezer, and then obviously it has a longer life so I can use it when I feel, or I'll try and plan a week and set all my dates of when everything goes off and try and do those meals ready.

So you mentioned that you usually tend to cook from scratch, so do you have any leftovers or do you often have any leftovers?

Yeah a lot.

A lot, ok and what do you usually do with them?

Depends what it is. If it's something like a spaghetti bolognese or a cottage pie or something, I'll put it in the fridge but I have to use it the next day and if I don't use it by the next day then I do throw it. Things like stew and stuff like that I don't tend to keep.

Ok why is that?

I don't know. I feel like because everything's... I don't know. I don't really know why I throw it. I don't know. I guess because everything is mixed up in gravy and all that, I feel like it could like contaminate one another so I don't... but then I could say the same for spaghetti bolognese. I don't know, I honestly don't know. I'm questioning myself now.

So when you mentioned that one of your strategies would be to plan ahead and look at the food you've got and kind of freeze the meat so that you don't throw it away or you keep any leftovers such as spaghetti bolognese or cottage pie, how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Quite a lot, yeah.

Ok, would you say that's why you often then end up throwing it away?

Yeah... more for the washing up side of things. I'm like do I really want to waste more washing up on packaging it all the way and it's easier just to what it's cooked in, throw it straight into the bin usually.

Ok so would you actually say that it's quite a lot of effort keeping leftovers and stuff?

Yeah, yeah, because I never remember the next day that I've cooked something so I usually cook something from scratch again. Or that night I've cooked something, I'll then do something in the slow cooker and I'll completely forget about it and then I see it in the fridge and I don't even think twice, I just throw it.

Ok. So when you do keep a bolognese or something and you do eat it and don't throw it away, how does that make you feel?

Good because I'm getting more for what I've bought, because it makes another meal basically. Cause I can change it up and have the bolognese and a jacket potato or something and it's completely different but the same meal and it's a little bit less effort than making a whole new meal from scratch.

So you say it makes you feel good, if you had to again think about a totally/completely different situation from food, what could something else be that makes you feel equally good?

I don't really know.

No that's fine. Just if you can think of anything.

I can't think of anything. I can't really think of anything.

Can't think of anything ok. Where would you say that you learned about keeping the leftovers or freezing the meat?

My mum.

Your mum ok.

Yeah but she's very... like she would not throw anything away, she will keep going and keep going, she would. Then if she ever saw me doing what I do with my fridge she'd probably go mad because she's always taught me to just keep going, use it all. Even if you've eaten off the plate, she'd wrap the plate up and put it in the fridge and put it back in the microwave the next day, she's very religiously on it.

Ok so she would waste very little?

Yeah.

And then you say that you learned it from her?

Ish yeah but then the bad habits I've learned from my mother in law, she throws quite a bit away so with the kids I don't like thinking meat could get them ill if I save it for too long so I do tend to throw it away.

Do you think you've taken any influence from the media? So anything you might have read anywhere in a magazine or you watched on television?

Good or bad?

Either.

Yeah well on the TV they did a meal and they didn't finish it or whatever and they had leftovers and they actually put it into the freezer and did it that way and that kind of surprised me because I didn't think you could freeze something that's been cooked, that shocked me, but I haven't yet tried it.

You haven't tried it?

No.

Ok. Was that a TV programme you saw that on?

Yeah it was on a cooking programme and he said if there's a lot leftover put it straight in the freezer and use it when you want and there's a meal there ready.

But you haven't tried it?

No I haven't tried it yet.

Ok. So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit now. I've got four scenarios here, it's always the ones written in black. They're people who have had too much food for various reasons. So if I could just ask you to have a skim through those and just see if there's anything you can advise those people.

Do I read it out?

You don't have to read it out loud.

No, ok. Ok so do I give just feedback on it?

Yeah so anything you can think of. So for example for the four lemons, anything that you can think of that you could do with the other three lemons.

I'd probably... well what I'd do with the other three if they were leftover, I'd probably just cut them all up and put them in water or put them in lemonades and just yeah... yeah.

So make a lemonade or slice them up.

Yeah make a lemonade or even use it with meals, so I've got fish or whatever I'll use the lemons there or in a drink or even in tea, hot tea and lemon.

Yeah.

Yeah. This one sounds like me. I do cook quite a lot of Italian food and I do cook far too much. I do agree though, it does feel like a waste throwing it in the bin. What I would do is probably put it in the fridge and use it the next day, or even try doing the freezer thing and then cooking it when I feel. I would probably, with this one, if that was me I would probably make up the meals ready. Yeah probably make up the meals ready, but then I'd be cautious of how long I'd give myself putting them in the fridge. But to be completely honest I'd probably go back to Tesco and say they haven't got a long sell by date and probably get longer ones. But yeah I'd probably make up all the food ready and put them in the fridge. This is a good one. My mum and dad had an apple tree in their garden and they used to do quite a lot with it. They used to do apple crumbles using the cooking apples, but another thing they did was anything they didn't use, put it in a basket and put it outside the front, and usually by the end of the day all the apples would be gone because everyone else would use them. But if not, my mum would either put even apples in the freezer or even make a puree out of them, she'd do quite a lot with apples so that's a good one. Even the rotting ones, she'd even cut them up and give them to a rabbit or something, she would, she wouldn't waste anything.

So you would just suggest to make apple crumble or purees or cook them or freeze them or put them outside for...

Yeah, other people, yeah.

Ok thank you. That's great. That's all the questions I had. If I could just briefly summarise what you just said and then if there's anything I've got wrong please correct me or anything else you want to say just add to it. You do your shopping for yourself, your children and your husband. You usually do it twice a week, go to Tesco's. You said you spend between £100 and £150 per week on your food shop. You do actually go to the shop and do it all rather than doing it online and you do tend to buy more fresh food and cook from scratch rather than buying it already frozen or ready-made. You did say that you usually throw quite a lot away or you often throw things away and you would kind of empty out your fridge before you do a new shop. But if you do catch the food in time before throwing it away, if it's still ok to use you would maybe cook ahead or you would freeze it so that you don't have to throw it away. You did say that it did make you quite upset when you have to throw food away because of the money side of things because you feel it's wasted money and money you shouldn't waste otherwise and then equally that when you do make use of food or don't throw food away you feel quite good because you've got something for nothing.

Yeah, yeah exactly.

So you did say that your main strategies of preventing food from being thrown away that you've already purchased would be to either freeze anything before it goes out of date or if you've already cooked it then you would keep the leftovers but you usually only would keep them for a day. You did say that you're quite cautious with how long you keep things and you would use the sell by date or use by date to assess that, and you mentioned that because you've got two small children you wouldn't really like to risk it, to make them ill, you'd rather throw it away than take the chances on that. You did mention that for more loose items like fruit and veg you would just assess it and smell it if it's still ok to eat. You did also mention that you do feel that it's something you learned from your mother and your family and that your mum is quite... she would make use of a lot but then your mother in law for example would be throwing a lot away so you mentioned you've kind of got a bit of both from them that led you to how you are now, and that you did recently see something in the media about freezing food that you've already cooked but you haven't tried it yet but it might be something you'd consider in the future. Is that all correct?

Yeah that's all correct, yeah.

Ok thank you. I'll just stop the recording now.

Interview 13

So we have already spoken a little bit about the research, so the research is about food waste in the home, a lot of research has been done on how people prevent food waste in the first place and then how much or how little they waste and how that makes them feel. Our study is a bit different in the fact that we are looking at how people like you deal with food waste or food that would potentially be wasted once you have already purchased it, so various situations lead you to have an over stocking of food and how you deal with that in order to not waste it. So if I start with a few introductory questions

Yes

If you tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour so in terms of...so the first question would probably be who do you shop for?

Myself and husband

So two people

Yes

Do you often have any visitors?

No very often but Christmas we will occasionally we have somebody for a meal but it is occasional.

Ok so for the majority of the time would be for two people.

Yes.

Ok and how often would you say you shop for food?

In dribs and drabs probably, I might go into Waitrose a couple of times in the week, usually once a week and I also go to a farmers shop.

Ok so do you do a few smaller shops opposed to a large/big shop?

When I run out I go and get, I am very conveniently place for shopping, yes.

And then what sort of things for example would you get in the village as opposed to going to a bigger supermarket?

Milk usually, milk I run out of more often than not, I don't buy anything else there not really, not regularly anyway.

And then you mentioned that you go to a fruit and....to like a farm shop or something?

Yes, I buy fruit there and I mean most of that has come round...these are Waitrose but most of it is from the farm shop but I grow most of my own greens anyway.

Oh ok.

Yes, especially in the summer, you know I don't have to shop too much and we have got loads of fruit trees.

That is very convenient, very impressed. So how much would you say on average would you spend on your food shop?

On just the food?

Yes, if you had to have an estimate, maybe per week or per month or per shop you do?

Probably £30 to £40 probably.

Per week do you think?

Yes but in the summer of course it will be less because we have our own vegetable.

You have your own vegetables, ok and then when you do your food shop in the supermarket for example, do you tend to buy fresh food or more frozen food?

No, nearly always fresh, I might buy some frozen peas but that is about all, I have a stack in the freezer of my broad beans, runner beans and lots of fruit as well so you know that is how I manage.

That is fine, so if I now ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, most people can remember at least one occurrence if not more where they have had to waste any food, so firstly I would be intrigued to know...when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

Well vegetables, that would upset me, but I always make sure I use them, so I never throw vegetables away or fruit, except I did have an aubergine that went bad on me and it had been in the fridge less than a week, so when I went away I thought fine I will use that as soon as I get back...bad, now that's rare, really rare, I think it was from the farm shop not Waitrose, so I shall complain to them, I'll take it to them and show them.

So if you had to give a little definition about food waste what would you say...?

I am appalled at what I read, absolutely appalled and when I see these women pushing these trolleys piled high of fast foods, goodness knows what they spend on it all, it is all rubbishy stuff as far as I'm concerned, I am absolutely horrified.

So do you think that most of that will go to waste?

Yes a lot of it will go in the bin, a lot of it.

Yes, for the purpose of this interview we are using the definition of food waste as any type of food or drink, so drinks included that end up in the bin post purchasing. So you have already mentioned that you don't often waste food, which is good, if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Once in a blue moon, interpret that as you like, these two occurrences that I have mentioned to you are so, so rare you know, I would say once every six months maybe an aubergine or something that has gone bad but no more.

Would you say there was a typically thing that you have that then ends up not being used or been thrown away?

I don't understand the question.

So what would you say if you do have any food waste what would it usually be?

Well it is not waste it is food that has gone bad because I haven't used it fast enough and as I said it was an aubergine this weekend and mascarpone that I opened without thinking.

How would you assess whether something has gone bad?

Well I opened the aubergine, it was obvious and the mascarpone the same, I torn away a little bit of the foil you know and it was not nice at all.

So do you look at things like the sell by date or the out of date?

I don't go by sell by dates to such an extent, I know some people will throw it away on the day but no I think there is leeway...certainly say things like carrots, onions gone past their sell by date, I will make soup with them perfectly all right. Perfectly!

And how would you assess for example if you had any food that was past their sell by date, how would you assess whether it was still ok to use?

Common sense really, for me it is.

Yes, so for example would you open it, look at it and smell it.

Yes that's right.

Ok, you have already mentioned that a little bit but can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste some food and what happened and what were the circumstances that lead to it?

Well I can't actually so because I have told you, there hasn't been this has been a rare occurrence for me really rare.

So was the mascarpone you had, which you planned to make a cake with, you were out of another ingredient...

That's right, so the cake had to be delayed the making of it and the mascarpone had gone bad in the end because I had gone away.

Yes so you had gone away had planned to make the cake weren't able to make it as soon as you had planned and by that time the mascarpone had gone bad

Yes

Ok so how did that make you feel?

Annoyed because I don't like throwing things away and it's probably the expense, what a waste, my mother still echoes in my ears, 'think of those people in China, those starving millions', you never had that said to you did you ...[interviewer's name]?

Oh yes I did yes, did it make you feel quite guilty in away?

Not guilty really, I don't know how I felt, just very annoyed that it had happened and once again I have got to go out and buy or do without I would probably do without rather than buy.

So if you had to compare that feeling that you had when you had to waste the mascarpone to a feeling to a different occasion when you had that feeling that is totally un-food related, what would such an occasion might be?

Could you give me an example, something unrelated?

So you said you felt quite annoyed that you had to throw that away so is there another situation where you feel really annoyed in a similar way?

No I'm not coming up with examples.

No that's fine, I don't think so not the same sort of thing no, that's fine you don't have too.

If something went to seed in the garden for instance, I would be cross with myself for not picking it sooner, yes because I would blame myself really, that's food wastage isn't it.

Yes, that's absolutely fine, so it is obviously not nice to feel annoyed and having to get to that situation where you do feel like that and in fact most of us, if we have ever encountered this we will try to avoid that in the future, so every time we kind of feel something negative we try and avoid that not happening again. So if I ask now what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away?

I won't be making that same mistake again I don't think and I shall examine my aubergines very carefully at the farm shop or grow my own next summer, that is another possibility.

So if you

Most of the things that are grown in the garden and the excess I will shred the beans for the meal that night and any excess will go into the freezer, so there is no wastage there. From going to seed it is just keeping a close eye isn't it, really or filling my freezer a bit fuller.

So you generally have the possibility to have freezer storage.

I have got a freezer in the garden and I have got this one here.

So you can freeze quite a lot.

Not a huge amount.

So it does allow you to freeze quite a bit to avoid food waste.

Yes.

So for example if you cook a huge meal, do you ever have any leftovers?

Yes, that's for tomorrow.

Ok that's fine, that would be my next question, so it would be, what would you do with the leftovers?

My husband would sometimes oblige but I think he has got to the age now where he is saying that is enough you are cooking a little bit too much for me, so I'll say, right I'll cut down and yes we can warm these up for tomorrow', it goes down alright he is very amenable.

Ok and how much effort do you perceive that to be?

None at all, it is automatic at my age.

And do you ever recommend that to other people?

I might come out with, 'oh make soup with it', if they say they have got a lot of something in the garden you know, or that they have bought, yes just make soup with it, freeze it.

And if you think about where you learnt about this method...

Can't remember my mother's soups actually but she must have done the same sort of thing I imagine but of course they used to go shopping every day in those days, it was just around the corner and she didn't work, that was her job in the morning, go and buy everything fresh for that day. So I don't think she wasted I don't think people did, they couldn't afford to, I mean life was pretty tough then compared with now really.

And then thinking about....would you say that you learnt it by doing what to do with leftovers as you went along or did you maybe pick it up from any family or friends?

Yes I had two children they were good at finishing off always, especially at adolescence, huge appetites, so I am sure I just picked it up as I went along.

And do you ever kind of watch any...do you think you have had any tips or anything from the media, any television programmes you may have watched?

Not about waste I think they have encourage it, all these food programmes, I don't know whether you have thought about it, it is probably not relevant for your survey but all the ingredients that are in the food and time, and they make a huge job of it and I think the average young woman who has got children out at work, very busy life, she hasn't got time for all that, she thinks, 'oh I would love to make that', but she has just not got time for it and she wastes money on fast food instead.

So when you managed to do something with some of your leftovers or if you have managed to avoid food waste, how does that make you feel?

Fairly content I suppose, I am not jumping for joy because it is automatic yes, I'm sorry there is not an awful lot of reaction there.

No that's fine, I mean people feel differently about different things, so it's almost an automatic thing, so it doesn't necessarily....

Yes it is, yes, I mean I will come in from the table, put cling film over the top and put it in a little Tupperware and little plastic box and in the freezer it will go if we are not going to use it tomorrow and the next day.

So we are now changing the focus of the interview a little bit in that I have got four scenarios here which are different issues people had were they have had too much food on various occasions and if I could ask you to take the role of almost an agony aunt like you see in newspapers where people write in with their questions and if you read through the scenario and just see if you have any tips to give to these people, so if I give you the first one and give you a moment to read through that, where a person had some online shopping delivered.

If she has got some spare time I would say she has got to cook it in the next day or two, I wouldn't say that day, very often they can go over that date but cook it in some way then it will last in the fridge for a day or two as well once it is cooked, if she has got no room in the freezer. Reduce it, if it is tomatoes you can reduce it to very small quantities, make a sauce with it, I think that's what I would say. I do rely on my freezer so much but cooking is another good way and preserving.

And then would you then keep it in the fridge or would you sort of cook into...

Yes you can keep it for probably about four days once it has been cooked yes, meats certainly you could, I am almost totally vegetarian but I am sure meat would stay that long once it is cooked.

So it would be to extent the shelf life by cooking

Like people used to preserve in the old days didn't they and bottle and all that sort of thing, well that is too much effort for anybody but it is the same idea really.

And then store it in the fridge?

Yes.

Ok and then I have got one more scenario, where a person has cooked too much pasta it is the bottom scenario there.

We if you have eaten all the sauce, just make some more, pour it on the cold pasta put it in the microwave for a couple of minutes or a minute and there is your dish for the next day, not difficult, I wouldn't throw it.

Ok so rather sourcing another sauce and making it into a different dish for the next day...

Yes

...rather than throwing it away.

Or it could go in the oven couldn't it with the sauce on top, cheese sauce or tomato sauce.

Would it be ok if I left you these different scenarios and then if you can think about it, you don't have to do it now but just if you can think about it and if you have any tips for the other two scenarios, if you could write them down and pass them to ...[research team names] or our email is on the sheet as well so you can just email it through, just if you do have the time and you would like to do it.

I can see what my husband says about it too.

I think some time its case where after I leave you might think, 'oh I should have said this', or 'that might be an idea'. So if I just briefly summarise what you just said about the food waste and the waste in which you try avoid or reduce it and then just correct me if I summarised it wrong or add to it if you would like to add.

Ok.

So in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so you usually shop for yourself and your husband and you do fairly little shops, either in Waitrose or you buy fresh fruit in the farm shop, food and vegetables. In the summer you grow a lot of your own fruit and vegetable, so you would then use that up as you go along or as you need it and then freeze any excess to be used in the future. You don't often have any food waste because you do more targeted shops and only buy what you need. There are occasionally for various reasons situations where food waste does occur but that does make you feel quite annoyed or it is a waste of money in your opinion. In terms of when you cook, you do try to cook as you need and that's changed over the years and if you do have any leftovers you would either use it the next day and then incorporate it in your meal or you would maybe freeze it and use it.

I mean nowadays I will often cook for two days to save myself if I am busy in the garden all hours you know I have got a meal ready you know, just to warm up, so I would have half the lasagne or half of whatever I made.

That's fine, you don't necessarily think that you learnt using the leftovers from your mum or from your family but something you picked up as you have gone along but certainly the mentality of not wasting food has been passed on to you.

I think it is so much easier for retired people, they have got time to think about it you know, first thing in the morning I will think what are we having tonight and take it out of the freezer, whereas you youngsters are at work you know, it never enters you head till you are on your way home and I can understand why so much fast food is used and I wouldn't like to be eating like that but you know it is an necessity for some people. So I am in an enviable position now, I can shop when I want and I can do what I want with my food and grow my own and so on, not everyone is so lucky.

So is there anything you would like to add, that you haven't said yet?

I have got this strong feeling about young women with these enormous trolleys, unless they have got huge freezers at home, it is going to go to waste and I wish I could give an answer to them, I don't know what to say really.

Is there any advice you could give them do you think?

I mean can't they make an arrangement with the neighbour that they do half the shopping one day and the neighbour does half another day and they only buy what they need and not excess. Again it is time, you know, and imagination and what can we do with what's left, rather than buying new, use up that and you have got to have some intelligence and imagination to think about it I suppose and time is of the essence, so I don't know what the answer is. Has anybody else come up with answers?

It is just various tips for something that some people might have...

I'll think on that one/

...some people do find that there is a certain thing that they keep buying and actually not end up using it but then maybe having a strategy for not throwing it away but doing something else with it.

That would be tins for me, I buy many tins of tomatoes and many tins of beans and so on but they are never thrown away, sell by date is years ahead isn't it, usually for them?

Ok thank you very much.

Interview 14

So the purpose of this research is all about food waste. There's been a lot of research that's already been done on how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel. There's also been a lot of research into preventative measures people are taking in order to avoid the amount of food they waste, so this could be things like making a shopping list prior to going shopping and meal planning ahead and those kind of things. So what we're looking at is food waste from a bit of a different angle, so that of post-purchase behaviour. So we're interested to see what kind of strategies ordinary people like yourself have got into place of trying to avoid throwing food away that you've already purchased, so you've got food in the house for various reasons and you've got too much of it and what do you do with it rather than throwing it away. So if I could just ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your shopping behaviour. So for instance, who do you shop for?

Just me.

Just yourself, ok, and how often do you go food shopping?

I usually do a fairly big shop once a week and then top up odds and ends as required.

Ok, and where do you go for your big shop?

In the high street in ...[local town] usually.

Ok so do you tend to go to the supermarket or do you tend to go to local shops?

I tend to go to Tesco's in the main and other places as required.

Ok and is that the same for the topping up shops throughout the week?

Yeah.

Ok, and if I could be so rude, so how much would you say that you spend on average per week on your food?

On food, I suppose about £35.

Ok, and do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Quite a bit of fresh but at this time of the year some frozen vegetables as well.

Ok yeah.

Because I find that a packet in the freezer serves individual portions easier than trying to buy individual portions of things like swedes for example.

Yeah ok, and do you ever do any online food shopping?

No, never.

No so just go to the supermarket, ok. So I'd now like to ask you a bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occasion where we had to waste any food that we've already purchased, however you might be different. Firstly, I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Things that you've bought that have either gone bad before you can use them or things that you've bought that are more than you really need to eat.

So we're adopting the definition that it is food, but also including drink so thinking about anything like fizzy drinks or milk or fruit juices, so we would class those as food waste as well, that end...

I don't drink fizzy drinks. I don't have milk in coffee. I only have milk in my cereal every morning. I don't have fruit juice at the moment because I tend to prefer to eat the fruit in total rather than juiced.

Yeah so it would be any kind of food or drink that's not been eaten and that ends up in the bin. So how often, if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Hardly ever, I'm very careful. The one problem that I struggled with before Christmas was that I only eat two slices of a small loaf of bread a day and by the end of the week it was going mouldy. So what I'm doing now is when I buy a loaf I put half of it in the bread bin and I put the other half in the freezer so that when I finish the half in the bread bin I get the half that's in the freezer out and use that and it stays fresh. So I'm not having to throw bread away because it's going mouldy now.

Yeah, ok, I was just going to ask you if there was something that you would usually throw away and at what stage you might throw it away so...

Well a small loaf lasts me the week, and by the end of the week before, at the beginning of December I had noticed that it was beginning to smell mouldy and then it was starting to go mouldy by, if I'd bought it on Tuesday, by the following weekend. So this was how I came up with the use half and freeze half, and that's working really well.

That's good.

I haven't thrown any away since.

That's really good. So why might you throw something away?

If I buy vegetables and when I come to prepare them I find that there is a bad bit or a bit in there that's been damaged, I cut that off and throw it away. But what I tend to do is to buy meat and vegetables to go with it that I cook in a bulk that would serve four and then I freeze half and keep the other half and use it in two days, so I serve one up as a plate to eat now and one as a plate in the fridge for tomorrow.

Ok and the other...

And the other half goes in the freezer.

Ok so would you if you had any items in your fridge that are out of date, would you throw them away or would you...?

It would depend on how close to out of date they were and what they looked like and smelt like. If I wasn't happy with how they looked and smelt then yes I would throw it away, I wouldn't eat it if there was any risk to my personal health. Living on my own I need to be careful that I'm as careful with myself as I can be.

Yeah, would you, you just mentioned you would see if they smelled all right or tasted all right so would you kind of smell them to see if they're still ok to eat or would you...?

Yes and look at them because sometimes even by the sell by date you can look at it and you say "I don't like the look of this".

Yeah ok.

You peel the plastic back and it's all watery or slimy or something, in the bin I'm afraid.

Yeah, no that's fine, it's just about assessing how you would...

If it happened more than once or twice with a product from the same place I would be tempted to take it back and point it out to them that this is the sell by date, and here we are on the sell by date and look at it and smell it. Most of the firms, Waitrose and M&S and Tesco's, if they can see that what you're saying is legitimate they'll either give you your money back or they'll replace it.

Ok so can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste any food or drink?

Well the last one was the bread, and that was, it must have been the beginning of December because I've only, I've been away for Christmas for two weeks and I'd frozen two loaves before that so that would take it back two weeks so it would have been the first week in December when about four slices and the crust at the end went mouldy.

Yeah so it was that the packet was too big for your needs and then it was just...

Well I don't know whether they had changed something in the preservative in the loaf, because I've bought the same loaf for perhaps two years, I always buy the Warburton's wholemeal and a small loaf because I don't need more bread than that, and the small loaf has always lasted me exactly the week to do one double sided sandwich per lunchtime.

But you noticed a change in...?

But the previous week I had noticed that it smelt a bit mouldy towards the end of the week and I looked at it and there wasn't, I couldn't see any mould on it but then the next day when I looked at it, it was mouldy so out it went I'm afraid. I didn't even give that to the birds.

So when you had to throw the bread away, how did that make you feel?

Rather annoyed.

Ok.

Because apart from vegetable peelings and things, and I haven't got a thing for the garden because I don't do enough gardening to warrant putting compost down on it so I haven't got a compost pile, it goes in the bin I'm afraid, the exteriors of the vegetables that I don't use. But I try to use everything, and I try to only cook as much as... if I'm doing something that's just an individual meal I try to cook just as much as I can eat and by now I know what my stomach will and won't accommodate. Sometimes I'll cook something and I don't particularly like the taste of it, and then I'm afraid I leave some and throw it away, and that's me because I've put the wrong seasoning in it, that's not the food's fault.

Yeah so when you do then have to throw it away, how does it make you feel?

Annoyed with myself...

Annoyed yeah.

...because I'm wasting money.

Yeah so is it the wasting money part of it that you're annoyed about?

Well I'm a single pensioner on a fixed pension income and I have to be careful, and the price of food is going up quite noticeably over the last six months or so, so I do have to be careful with how I spend my money on food.

Yeah so would you say that you also feel guilty for any kind of other reasons about throwing the food away?

No because I won't throw it away unless it's inedible.

Ok yeah. When you said that you feel cross with yourself for throwing if that has to be thrown away, if you had to compare that feeling of being cross to any situation that can be totally unrelated to food, what other kind of situation could there be? If you can think of something that could make you cross.

Things that make me cross, cruelty to animals for a start, and cruelty to children, and generally disrespecting each other. The way that people talk to each other these days, I have to admit that with my fairly strict upbringing of politeness and courtesy, I find quite lacking sometimes. But trying to get someone to see my side of the thing is not always easy. The other thing that really infuriates me is being in a committee meeting and everybody having their electric telephone/mobile whatever in their hand and using while you're trying to conduct a committee meeting. How you can concentrate on what the committee is supposed to be discussing when you're typing something on a handheld electronic device, or you're looking something up on the internet or you're checking your WhatsApp or whatever is going on, that is a bit beyond me.

Yeah so that would make you equally cross?

Yes it does.

Ok.

In fact I've just finished as chairman of a committee and at the start of each of my committee meetings that I was chairing, I asked everyone in the room to turn their mobile phones and their handheld computers off, except the secretary who was taking the minutes on them of course.

So that would be...

Interference in personal... not personal space because it's not space but personal preferences and the way I was taught to behave in business, and let's face it I left school in 1950, it's a long time ago.

So such a situation would make you equally as cross as...

Yes, yes, oh it would make me crosser than food.

Crosser than that ok.

Crosser than food yes.

So obviously it's not very nice to feel cross, and in fact most of us when we do expect a negative feeling to happen we would adjust to prevent such a thing. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies that you have got in place regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier. What do you do to try and avoid the amount of food that you throw away?

Only buy the things that I want, that I like eating or that I'm prepared to experiment with eating or that I need.

Ok so you've just briefly touched about it that if you do make a recipe and it is for four then you would still cook it for four but then you would freeze it for example.

Yeah but if I was trying a new recipe I would try it for one, and I would only buy the ingredients for one, and if the recipe in a book or something was for four I'd cut down the quantities accordingly.

Ok.

Because there's no point in buying food for a meal for four, making a meal for four, eating one and deciding you don't really like it, you've then got three to throw away and I would try not to do that. So I would start with one and if I liked it then I'd do four and do my normal division.

Your division routine, ok. So do you tend to cook from scratch usually?

Most of the time yes.

And then would you habitually cook so that you have leftovers?

No.

No so do you happen to have leftovers often?

No, very rarely.

Ok, if you do have anything left over what would you do with it?

I would probably reheat it and have it for my lunch the following day as opposed to my main meal. Say for example I made a shepherd's pie and I had it for my main meal today and I'd got enough for the main meal tomorrow and a bit leftover then I would have it for my main meal today which is at about half past six in the evening and I would have it, not for lunch tomorrow because I've already got the main meal and I wouldn't want to eat the same thing twice, I would probably put it in the small plastic box and put it in the freezer and freeze it for a couple of days, and then get it out and have it for lunch.

Ok yeah. How much effort do you perceive that to be?

Well seeing as I don't do very much else it's not a lot of effort.

Ok and do you ever recommend this to other people?

It doesn't usually come up in conversation because most of my friends have either got husbands or partners, or they're in the same situation as me and they cook for themselves, and how they deal with their food is not really my business.

Ok yeah, so where would you say that you learned about this method?

Common sense I would think, and the restrictions that having a limited income place on you. I will look to buy the cheapest things that I can get, and if I find that the cheapest thing is not the best thing taste wise then I'll go up a bit and get the next best thing up and so on, but if the cheapest is fine then that's ok. For example in the fridge at the moment I've got a large gammon steak which I got from Tesco's which was £1.25, but I will only eat half of that at a time so I will cut it in half, cook half, not tomorrow because I've got fish tomorrow, the following day and then the other half I will wrap in cling film and put back in the fridge and have the following day, in a different way, so that I'm not having the same meal twice, I may be having the same meat twice but not cooked in the same way.

Ok yeah, and would you say that that's something you've learned from your family or from any friends or was it more yourself?

No my... well I suppose my cooking experience is from growing up and being married and having a family, and then living for the last 30 years on my own, and for 30 years I've just been cooking for me so it's experience really.

Yeah would you say that you ever take anything, any tips or any hints or anything, from the media?

No I sometimes get hints out of the daily newspaper.

Ok.

But I tend not to watch cooking shows on television and things like that because of the methods that they use for cooking have got too much butter and too much fat and too much salt and too much sugar.

Ok yeah.

Particularly Nigella of course with her butter and cream. I try to keep to a healthy mixed diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and keep as healthy as I can, and I'm lucky. I enjoy particularly good health.

That's very good. So when you do make use of food rather than throwing it away, how does that make you feel?

Happy to have eaten it all up.

Yeah.

And glad that I haven't had to throw it away.

Ok so quite a positive feeling of feeling happy?

Yes, oh yes. I'm quite happy to eat leftovers, as long as I'm eating them constructively, you know properly. If say for example there was something leftover and the following day something cropped up and someone invited me out for a meal or I went out for a meal and I didn't want a meal when I came home, well I would throw that, if I had taken it out of the freezer and defrosted it I would throw that away because I wouldn't want to trust using it after it had been de-thawed for more than a day after being frozen.

Ok because it had been frozen before?

Yeah, well it hadn't been frozen before, well it had been cooked before and then frozen, but that very very rarely happens. I'm on my own eating 95% of the time.

Oh right, ok. So we're going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I have got some scenarios here where people have found themselves in the situation of having too much food, and I'd just like you to see whether there's any advice that you think you could give to them.

Right.

So they're all here, they're always in the black writing in the boxes.

I'll just put the light on so we can see what we're doing. That's better. It gets dark so quickly at this time of the day.

It does.

Mind you, it's half past four so it's getting better. Oh my, I'd go back and complain definitely.

Ok so you would go back to the shop.

I would get back in touch with whoever supplied them and say look this is not acceptable. I got caught like this once, buying a pack of lemons because it's cheaper. It isn't if you're on your own and they're going to be thrown away. What I did with it when I had them was that I cut them into pieces and froze them and put them in a plastic box in the freezer and then gave it to my son and his wife because they drink gin and tonic, and I know they put lemon in their gin and tonic so that's what I did with the lemons.

Ok.

Yeah I've got an apple tree at the bottom of my garden as well which occasionally produces massive quantities of apples which I have to admit if I don't eat them, they're not eaters they're cookers, as they ripen I pick them off the tree and cook them. I will also cook them and then freeze them, but quite a lot I leave on the ground for the birds and the animals and the insects, and they love them.

Ok yeah.

But I don't call that waste. It's only waste if you throw it away. You're providing food for the insects and the birds in your garden if you're leaving it there for them to eat and they do eat huge quantities of it, it's not the hugest apple tree in the world but if anything does fall off and I don't need to use it or it's really badly damaged, I will leave it for them to eat and they will within a few days. It very rarely sits out there on the grass and rots. My son also has to deal with the same thing because he's got four apple trees in his garden...

So they've got plenty.

...and they've got a great big barrel that they put out at the front of their house and they've got this scoop thing that they scoop them all up and put it in this barrel on wheels, put it out at the front of the house and say please help yourself to all the people that go past.

Ok so passing it onto people that would like it, ok.

And that's one way of giving it.

Giving it away yes.

Pasta, pasta. I've never tried freezing cooked pasta so I don't know whether it works or not, but I would be looking to do other things with it because I don't just eat pasta as spaghetti bolognese or something like that. I do all sorts of different things with pasta. In fact I eat more pasta and rice than I do potatoes.

Ok so what would you do with the pasta then?

I would serve it with... I would mix small quantities of vegetables in with it and serve it with a meat in a sauce, or put it in a tomato sauce and serve it with a meat that wasn't in a sauce. I would put it with tuna and onions and other things in a casserole and bake it in the oven in a cheese sauce or something like that.

So plenty of different things that you could do with the pasta.

Yes. I have found that the quantities that they say on the packets of pasta for a single serving are about twice as big as they need to be for me so I weigh it before I cook it and count it down.

Ok so you are kind of...

I'm not used to talking this much. This is the one thing you don't do when you live on your own. I hope it's gone away but I'm not sure.

That's fine; we are through with the questions anyway so we have finished all the questions.

Interview 15

So this research is about food waste, a lot of research has already been done on how much we waste and what kind of strategies people adopt to reduce food waste so in terms of having a shopping list and prevent over stocking in the first place but quite different to that we are looking at the strategies

consumers like yourself were put into place, they find themselves in a situation where they have already purchased food and for various reasons have more food leftover than anticipated or haven't used the food for various reasons and strategies you would adopt to avoid that food going to waste. So to start off with if you could just briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits and who you shop for?

Ok so we are quite planned in our household, so our household is two parents and two kids, we are quite planned so we generally sit down at with weekend with a calendar and we will write out menu for the coming week and convert that menu to a shopping list and then buy specifically what we need, so that avoids a great deal of food waste straight away just by buying to a shopping list and... carefully planned shopping list. Naturally there is occasions when things are on offer and so we end up buying you know double the amount or what have you, but then, a) we have space to store it so it is not issue and I guess if it is perishable then we would freeze or not buy unless we thought it would really be used.

So you mentioned that...is it a weekly shop that you do, you sort of set out your menu for the week?

Yes I mean it is not regimented but generally we probably do a big shop once a week, although now the boys have got various clubs and societies, like tonight we will drop them at brass band practice and I will have a clear hour, so I will likely drop them and then go do a shop, take it home put it in the fridge and then go pick them up again. So now we have multiple times in the week were we have got that kind of thing going on and so we might split it up now and do maybe two or three shops a week.

And where would you sort of typically shop?

Our favourite shop is Lidl just for convenience a narrow range more that, than price, the fact that they have done half the work for you know, they have selected the baked beans so I don't have to choose from a range of plenty and we know the shop layout, so it is very quick and easy to go in there but then you can't buy everything so it may well be a Sainsbury's once a week and a Lidl once a week, something like that.

Yes

But 90% by volume at Lidl.

And how much if you don't mind me asking do you think you spend per shop or per week?

Probably per week something like £80 that doesn't include drink, yes £80 for food.

Ok and if you would include drink as in sort of fruit juices and milk and stuff or would you class that as food?

Yes, fruit juices and milk I class... as far as I'm concerned drink, is alcohol.

Oh right that's fine.

So we do bulk wine orders or what have you.

Ok that's fine, and when you shop do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

The vast majority by volume is fresh, we buy very little frozen and some of that is driven by that I have to pick up the boys from band and it will defrost on the way back, so yes very, very little is brought frozen actually, very little.

Ok so I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food you have already purchased, most people can remember at least one occasion where they had to waste food, however you might be different but when we talk about food waste, what would your understanding of that be?

Anything that is or was once edible that ends up in the bin.

So when we spoke about food waste for this sort of interview, we include any food or drink so think about food waste as including things like any leftover fruit juice and milk or anything else that you have as well. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Well in my thinking, almost everyday something is wasted in my view, so like yesterday I saw my wife peeling mushrooms which to me is just a ridiculous thing to do with your life and you know I would almost class that mushroom peel as being a waste. There was a time where she peeled cucumbers, which again is ridiculous, and I would class that as food waste but I'm guessing you are not quite having that in scope, so the question was how often?

Yes how often would you say that you waste food?

Probably once a week there is something that annoyingly has to go in the bin you know, a crust of bread that gets forgotten or left or something like that.

So what would you say that you usually throw away, was there specific food you usually throw away?

No, I don't think there is any regularity in it because if there was we would do something about it. Well this time of year for example you buy a big crate of clementine's and we store them in a cold conservatory but there is always one at the bottom that goes bad and gets thrown, that is the only regular thing I can think of.

And at what stage would you say you throw anything away?

So we don't we eat mould deliberately, so if there is something mouldy, you can cut the mould off you might get away with it, I do that before my wife sees it but yes if it is unusable i.e. gone mouldy or not fit to eat.

So how would you assess whether it is fit to eat, so do you go by sort of sell by dates?

No not worried about sell by dates not at all, I wouldn't throw something if it has gone past its best before date only if I felt it was no longer safe to eat but that exception is not formed on the basis of any real knowledge, as I say if something is hairy then it will normally get thrown but yes if there is a rotten apple I'd always cut it in half and try and eat the other half.

So would you sort of visually assess it or smell it or taste it?

Yes I don't really have a sense of smell so it would be visual assessment, purely visual assessment.

And could you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink, so sort of what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it being wasted?

So I think Thursday or Friday night last week, my wife cooked a dish that she had never done before it was pak choi with rice and something else, it was a bit grim, we all ate it because we had no choice but to eat it, so the kids really didn't like it and we said well it's your choice, you either eat it or you go to bed hungry, so it is not like we would not like it and then eat something else but invariably there is a bit left in the pan and

that was then sat on the hob till Saturday and we would normally have had every intention of eating it Saturday lunchtime but for whatever reason.....no Saturday lunchtime we had guests and we didn't serve guest leftover, so the leftover was leftover and by then I think Sunday morning we gave up on it and put it in the bin.

Yes

But that is kind of unusual because we had guests we couldn't serve leftovers to our guests and it was disgusting.

So how did that make you feel having to throw that away?

Dreadful, I wept into the bin as I did it, it didn't make me feel good at all, I have a big problem with food waste and yes it didn't make me feel good at all and just to put that into context on Friday I always bring a packed lunch with me to work and on Friday I was in meetings and it was... unexpectedly the meeting I went to was catered so I had Danish pastries and croissants and that and near the end of the meeting I couldn't let them go to waste so I took all of those with me to my teaching and handed them out to the students and I ate one myself and consequently I got home from work and I hadn't eaten my lunch, so my lunch box went in the fridge and Saturday evening came back out the fridge and it was microwaved and that was my tea, so that was a microwaved stale cheese sandwich from Friday that I eat for my tea on Saturday night.

Ok

Yes we are normally quite good. Whenever I do throw food away, I feel guilty because of carbon and the fact that half of the world is hungry.

Ok, so if you had to compare that feeling you felt when you had to throw the food away to something totally unrelated to food waste, what would another situation be where you would feel that same sort of feeling of annoyance or guilt?

An unnecessary car journey, so driving a car when you don't need to, I always ride a bike to work, Friday last week it was raining, it was cold and I thought, ok should I take the car and actually I didn't and I felt good about it when I got home at night thinking, well ok I saved the planet today but, yes, an unnecessary car journey might be similar.

Yes and you've just mentioned that you don't like throwing food away for the carbon footprint, so the environment or ethical reasons that other people are going hungry and do any financial sort of aspects come into the feeling of guilty of it?

Yes maybe to an extent, we have plenty of money we don't need to worry about you know 20p worth of mushroom peel, so I don't think finance really comes into it, no I don't think so.

So obviously it is not nice to feel guilty or annoyed that you have to throw anything away and in fact most of us when we do feel such feelings we try to adjust to prevent such feelings. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so I will ask you what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so if you give me as many strategies or examples as you can as we go along. So do you ever have any...you have briefly touched on this already, so if you have any leftovers or do you have any leftovers regularly?

Yes, its unpredictable how much kids are going to eat and we always...we are not a family that will load a plate and put it in front of children, we would rather put the sauce pans on the table and within reason they take what they want and so their portion size is quite variable, depending on what they having been eating during the day, depending on what they have been doing, so yes I would almost say everyday there is leftovers.

Yes

And then typically those leftovers will be eaten by the adults for lunch the next day typically.

So would you take it as a packed lunch to work or something?

Yes although my wife works at home very often so if that is the case it is just easier for her to just chuck it in the microwave.

Yes of course and how much effort do you perceive that to be?

None at all.

Do you ever recommend that to other people or does it ever come up in any conversations you have with other people?

No, I think food waste is quite a private thing, I wouldn't have any clue whether my friends are wasting food or not and I wouldn't feel it my place to advise or impose or intrude. I guess it could hypothetically happen if I was in their house and saw them wasting food but I can't recall a situation when that has ever happened.

And where would you say you kind of learnt or adapted the method of not wasting food or avoiding to waste food?

I think some of it is just part of your personal values, so I don't think you learn it, it is common sense and quite obvious isn't it? But your values to not waste come from your upbringing, so my parents were quite poor and they wouldn't waste anything, you know I remember eating a roast chicken dinner, you would have roast chicken, then it would be a chicken pie and then it would be chicken lunch boxes and then she would boil down the bones to get every last thing off and then turn it into chicken stock and then she would grind up the bones and turn them into sausages, I made that last bit up. But everything was always completely used and I remember my grandmother during the winter have a pot on the stove that she heated up every day for our lunch and everything went into the pot you know, plate scrapings with a silicone spatula and then heated up to the boil every day for lunchtime you know, so literally nothing was wasted and I think that comes from - like in terms of my gran - it comes from the war because with rationing for sure you didn't waste anything.

So you have just mentioned that your upbringing would have a little bit of influence on that.

Influenced my values.

Values to not waste any food, would you say that is also influenced by your friends or by the media... anything...?

No I don't think so I think I am an independent mind enough to not....no I don't think friends or media have any impact on it. I could imagine the media giving you strategies but as I said all the strategy's seem quite

common sense to me, given that I am vaguely competent in the kitchen you know, if you have got too much milk then you make a rice pudding or something, you don't need help or support with that.

So when you have been able to avoid any food going to waste how does that make you feel?

Good, yes good, good.

Do you particularly think about it or is it something that you do so regularly and it's ingrained in you that you don't...

No it's automatic but on the odd occasion where you think 'oh god' you know 'this milk is starting to go sour' and then you find a way of averting that calamity and yes there is a sense of reward.

And if you have to compare that again like you did before to a situation that is totally un-food related, what would another situation be where you feel like this?

I shouldn't give the same example but I did feel jubilant on Friday evening getting home from work in the rain and the cold on my bike having saved the car so that would apply equally there as an example. Another example...and food waste isn't about making money, it isn't about money for me but a completely unrelated example might be when you know, you do find a fantastic offer in a shop or something and you....yes the sense that you are getting something for nothing or... say Saturday morning I logged on to my online banking and I realised I got £300 cash back from a new mortgage deal and through realising I could go on and take another mortgage deal which saved me £300 in January and I just felt happy that I checked it on Saturday because if I had waited until Monday then it would have been too late to get the new mortgage for the 1st of January, so yes just something... a win of some kind.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I have got four scenarios here of situations where people have found themselves in a spot of bother where they had too much food for various reasons and I'd like you to take the role of an agony aunt, so to speak.

Can I be an agony uncle instead?

You can be an agony uncle, to see what sort of advice you could offer them in the various situations they are just repeated in black so they are easier to read.

Okay. Dear Delilah ...[hypothetical agony aunt] ...online shopping delivered yesterday, a number of fresh items I ordered have a sell by date of tomorrow...Well I wouldn't worry about the sell by date to start with, so there is some things that sell by dates maybe be more important than others, so I would kind of prioritise those, if it really is fresh on processed stuff then it doesn't matter in the slightest. Yes and you could always look at combinations so if it is something that really does need to you know, salmon there for example, well if it's fish, then also consider what's in the freezer, it might be that there is a bag of chips in the freezer, so eat the fish and chips and then you can obviously you have got some space to freeze some of the other stuff but I wouldn't worry in the slightest by the sell by dates on unprocessed food. Processed food it's kind of fine for a few more days but I don't think there is limits to it.

Yes.

Alright.

Yes.

Dear Delilah...[hypothetical agony aunt], I am a single person. I find it difficult to find packed sizes to suit my needs and budget. I recently bought a pack of four lemons as it was cheaper than individual one. However, I don't know what to do with the ones I have left, any suggestion on what to do would be appreciated. Ok, 75grams of granulated sugar in your Thermomixer, 10 seconds speed 10, then add two lemons and some water and make some lemonade, I mean lemons keep forever, I mean they look dreadful because the skin goes all hard and that but the lemon inside is perfect so I mean lemons easily will keep for three months, they are still usable after three months, so I would just chill out if I was you Delilah... oh, it's not Delilah, is it? I am Delilah. I wouldn't worry at all but if you are really that worried about it then lemon drizzle cake would get rid of a couple or make some lemonade which is dead easy to do, ok?

Yes?

I've recently moved. I have a large apple tree at the bottom of the garden which produced a lot of fruit. Some of it is still on the tree and some of it has already fallen off and it starting to rot. I hate to see so much...all this food going to waste but I am not much of a cook and don't know what to do with that. You don't have to be much of a cook to process apples, so you can easily just pulp it with some sugar and stick it in a jam jar and that will then keep for years or if you have got a cold garage you can stick them in boxes, go to Lidl you can pick up the shallow, big boxes very easily so you don't have too much apple on apple contact and they will literary keep till March in your garage. You can freeze it but that is a bit of a pain in the backside and it takes up too much space. If you are going to store it in the garage just make sure every week or every couple of days you go through and pick out the rotten ones. And give them away, if you put the box at the end of your drive saying, 'take me away', then it is far better for someone else to use it, than for it to go to waste and pick them from the tree rather than letting them fall because once they are fallen they are bruised and they will go bad. And apple crumble is dead easy. My family and I love to cook Italian food and cook it at home, however I cooked far too much pasta this evening and don't know what to do with it. Seems a waste to throw it in the bin but I do not know what else I can do with it. Why don't you just heat it up tomorrow and eat it tomorrow, it is kind of obvious you have cooked for tomorrow or if you are really worried about not wanting to eat the same thing tomorrow, put it in an oven proofed dish and grate parmesan all over it and put it in the oven for a pasta bake. I wouldn't freeze pasta, you can probably freeze pasta couldn't you, cooked pasta? I have never done it, I mean I have frozen a lasagne before and that's pasta so presumably you could freeze it but it is not a problem that we have ever had, we just eat it the next day, not complex but equally figure out how much to cook in the first place you know, avoid the issue. Quite often I would use my phone and I would google how much...I did it last night, how much turkey per person at Christmas for example so you are not over preparing in the first place because people get kind of carried away and go, 'oh I want this huge turkey', and then are battling it for the next week, whereas I would google how much turkey does each person eat and basically buy the right amount.

Yes thank you that's fine. So if I just quickly summarise what you have said overall, so in terms of your shopping habits you are quite planned and you write your shopping lists and then do either a targeted weekly shop, depending on your situation and then in the week do two or three shops throughout the week. You mainly shop at Lidl occasionally at Sainsbury's to top up on the items you can't get in the smaller supermarkets and you'd say you spend about £80 per week for the four you, so that is the two children and the parents.

And that £80 a week is more because we would by choice buy, organic and stuff, so it is not that we eating huge volumes it is just our choice of things.

Yes, in terms of food waste you'd considered that to be anything that could be eaten but is going to waste, so then for you that would include things like any peels off vegetables etc. which you said would be something you quite regularly throw away but other than that you don't really consider yourself to be a huge food waster or have huge issues of finding yourself in a situation where you throw the same item away week on week because you would adopt strategies of not buying it in the first place or finding ways of using it.

Yes.

When you do find yourself wasting food it does make you feel quite guilty and annoyed, mostly from an ethical perspective of having an impact on the environment and there being other people who have not got enough food rather than financial implications playing into this. You do tend to have leftovers quite regularly and are quite happy to just heat them up the next day and have them for lunch then, that would be something you do quite regularly and you'd say that it was sort of common sense that you figured out yourself how to do this and that the values to use up food came from your upbringing and that influenced...

Yeah.

...that sort of thing. In terms on how it makes you feel to avoid any food waste it does make you feel quite good again having a rewarding feeling of doing your bit or getting something, like a reward or something, for free out of this. Is there anything you would like to add?

No I was just thinking (inaudible 26:10) purchase choice but we tend to buy organic specifically to reduce food waste, so I think if you buy organic carrots we don't peel them, if we bought non-organic carrots we would peel them, so yeah, specifically buying products that don't require processing or don't generate vast food waste.

Yeah?

Yeah. Nothing else I don't think.

Okay, thank you very much.

Is that it?

That's it.

Interview 16

This piece of research is all about food waste in the home. There is a lot of research that has been done on how much or how little people are wasting in terms of their food and how that makes them feel, and then there has also been a lot of research that's been done on strategies that people adopt in order to avoid

them wasting food, so that would include things like planning meals ahead and having a shopping list prior to purchasing. So the research we are undertaking at the moment is looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle, so we are looking at it from the angle of post-purchase behaviour, so what we are interested in finding out is how normal ordinary people like yourself avoid throwing any food that they have already purchased away. So in order to get us started, if I could just ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your shopping behaviour, so tell me a bit about your shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

I shop for my husband and myself.

Ok.

I usually plan what we are going to eat for the week and have a shopping list, occasionally I have to buy one or two extras during the week but it is usually milk or something I have run out of. I am a bit mean so I am quite careful, being pensioners we have to be careful with what we spend but we eat well, we live well, so it is not really a problem.

So you just mentioned that you do your shopping list and everything, how often do you shop for food?

About once a week.

And is that a kind of bigger shop?

That's the big shop yes.

And then where would you go for that?

Usually Tesco in ...[local town], it depends, sometimes Waitrose in ...[local town] because occasionally I am in ...[local town] so it is more convenient to do a shop there, but yes usually Tesco I think because it is the most convenient one and Lidl, quite often I'll go to Lidl first and then Tesco.

Ok, so would you do the shop in Lidl first and then go to Tesco straight after?

Usually Lidl first and then Tesco.

What makes you go to the two?

Quite often because Lidl on certain items are usually a bit cheaper than Tesco and I have my list and I cross off what I get in Lidl and then the rest is usually from Tesco.

Is it a case of you would buy what you can get in Lidl?

Yes.

Because it is obviously a smaller choice.

Yes.

And then what you can't get there you would go...

That's right because you are limited in Lidl.

Yes ok, and for your smaller shops so you mentioned that you sometimes have to top up on your milk or anything...

Wednesday's I am usually in ...[local town] with ...[weight management group] and so any shopping I have to do I usually go into Waitrose or Tesco in ...[local town] and get any bits and pieces from there.

You said you usually do your weekly shop, how much do you think you spend on average per week?

On average, it varies; obviously some weeks are much easier than others, somewhere between 70 and maximum about 100 pounds.

Ok yes and when you do your food shop do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Usually fresh.

Ok and why is that?

I don't know really, it depends; there are certain things I do buy frozen, some fish and prawns and things like that. Vegetables I try and buy fresh, quite often I will go up to the shop up the road, Ferndene, it's a sort farm shop, and they have nice fresh vegetables.

So would you do that on top of your weekly shop at Tesco or is that more when you run out?

If I have run out or if I haven't got a big shop, I will just go up to Ferndene because they do do meat, it is mostly meat and vegetables and things like that and they are good and they are quite reasonable.

Ok sure. So I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occurrence, or if not more, where we had to waste any food, however you might be different, so firstly I am intrigued to know, that when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

Things that I haven't used that have rotted, I presume that is what you mean. We have very little food waste, we have a pony, we have chickens, we have a dog, if there is anything left on our plates, a bit of fat or something like that it goes in the dog's bowl. Vegetable trimmings, there are some obviously, onions you couldn't give to a chicken but most vegetable trimmings get liquidised and cooked, mixed with bran or corn and given to the chickens.

Ok.

And anything that can't be given to the chickens goes on the compost heap.

Ok so you're very efficient in that way, so just to clarify that for the purpose of the interview, so the definition of food waste we are using, is any food but also thinking about drinks, so that would include things like milk or fruit juices or any fizzy drinks or something like that, that would go into the bin. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you actually waste food?

I honestly don't know, not very often.

Not very often and that's because you then would give it to the chickens?

Yes.

So it wouldn't actually go in the bin.

If there are any carrots that are going soft, the horse gets them chopped up in his feed, that's if they haven't been chopped up for the chickens first.

Ok so would you say that there is usually something, so if you think that, if you then think of maybe not putting it in the actual bin but you mentioned the horse and the chickens, so is there anything that you would say that maybe habitually occurs or that you often find, I'm left with this and this is going to the pony or in the compost or something?

No, sorry.

No that's fine.

Only thing that I have wasted recently was a couple of limes, that I think I got at Christmas for something when we had visitors and for some reason didn't use and they just went like hard bullets, those did go in the compost but that is the only other thing that I can think of that I have actually wasted.

Yes and why might you throw something away or decide that you won't eat it?

I don't throw away, if there is any food, if I have made for instance chilli con carne and I've made too much it will go in a pot and in the freezer, so if I go to see me daughter then I have got a meal for ...[respondents husband's name] my husband and he can go and get it.

Ok.

Quite honestly we just don't waste anything.

Well that is a good thing. So in terms of maybe coming back to thinking about you said that you compost or you use it for the chickens or the dog or the pony, so at what stage might you decide that you give it to them?

When the carrots start going a bit soft, we find that quite often the root vegetables that we get in the supermarket don't last very long so I will trim the ends off, peel them and those trimmings go to the chickens and I will then slice up the carrots and things, part boil them, blanch them and pop them in the freezer. We found that the carrots we get in a net for the horse which are so cheap, about £3 a bag and are kept up in the second stable last, for some reason, much longer than the ones we get in the supermarket, I don't know why but they do. So the horse has them and I usually take a whole pile to make soup, carrot and coriander soup or something like that, leave some for the horse, poor creature and we just don't waste. I think it is probably because of my age, having been born during the Second World War and coped with rationing as I was growing up, you just didn't waste. My mother would have gone spare if we had wasted anything.

So if you have got any kind of items with a sell by date or something in your fridge and they had gone past their sell by date would that then prompt you to throw them away or would you...? How would you assess...?

No. I would probably use them. What annoys me is when you get something that says best before, it may be best before but there is nothing wrong with it after that date. If there is something that actually says you

have got to use it before then we try and use it before or if it has gone past it, if it is something like a bit of pâté, sorry but the dog gets it.

Yes that is fine, would you assess it or look at it?

I'd assess it and look at it but I know what is in the fridge, I know when it has got to be used by, so we sort of use it as is and when necessary.

Ok, so you mentioned that you in the not too distant past threw the limes away.

Yes.

Is there any other example you think about in the not too distant past that you wasted some food?

If it is anything it is probably vegetables that I haven't used or that I have forgotten about. The odd carrot which has started to go black, then I will dump those but I can't really think of anything. Occasionally it has been a bit of lettuce or something in the fridge that I've totally forgotten about but apart from that, no, we waste very very little in this house.

Yes, so coming back to then you mentioned the limes... or if you do have anything, it might be that you have forgotten about it or for the limes you mentioned that it was, was it before Christmas that you bought them?

I bought them before Christmas and they got stuck at the bottom of the fruit bowl and I forgot about them.

Ok. When you had to throw them away, how did you feel?

Cross.

Yes ok.

Because I like limes, I like them with a gin and tonic.

Do you at all feel guilty if you throw it away?

Yes.

And why is that?

I am cross with myself because I should have known they were there and I should have picked up on it earlier and done something about it, even if it was just squeezing out the juice and freezing it for some recipes or something.

Yes, if you say that you do feel cross but also a little bit guilty, are there any financial implications that play into that?

No not really, I suppose it should. I probably am a bit cross about it because it is money wasted and I don't like wasting money.

But it is not the first thing... it's not the primary?

No.

Ok, if you had to think about a situation, that can be totally food unrelated, that would make you equally cross than when you had to waste the limes, what could such a situation be?

I don't know, I don't know.

That's fine if you can't think of anything that's fine

I can't think of anything at the moment, I probably will after you have gone.

You can always email it through if you do. Obviously it is not nice to feel cross like you described, so in fact most of us when we do expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent this happening or such a feeling. So my next questions aim to address any kind of practical strategies you have in place to try and avoid or limit the food that you throw away. So please feel free to use any specific examples if it makes it easier, so what is it you do to try and avoid and limit the food that you actually throw in the bin?

Most of the vegetables, if I have got a glut, it gets cooked and put in the freezer and we very rarely waste food. I am trying to think of something that we have thrown away.

I suppose in a way then, you having a compost is also a way of avoiding the waste because it wouldn't go into landfill or you wouldn't actually throw it in the bin.

No because we have got the horse we have two middens up at the top, one for the horse poo and one which we chuck everything in, I keep a bucket in the kitchen and it's got trimmings in it, onions, bits and pieces that I couldn't give the chickens, I mean I had a red cabbage yesterday which I noticed was beginning to go off, so I cut those bits out and I wouldn't give those to the chickens so they went in the compost bin and the rest of it got chopped up to make a red cabbage sort of casserole with apples and onions to go in the freezer, which we will have sometime probably over the weekend.

So you would cook meals ahead and then freeze them to then have them...

Yes.

So that would be something to prolong the shelf life or avoid throwing it away.

Yes.

Do you tend to mainly cook from scratch?

Yes.

When you do cook do you ever have any leftovers?

Oh yes sometimes we have leftovers, if there is only a few spoonful's it will go in the dog's bowl, and she loves it, she even likes a curry. But if there is a bit, enough to make a meal, my daughter lives up in Cheshire, so occasionally I go up and stay with her, so there is always something in the freezer that ...[respondent's husband] can fall back on and he can sort of cook some rice or potatoes and vegetables that he needs.

Yes, so you would just then portion that up and freeze it?

Yes, just portion it up and freeze it.

Ok and how much effort would you perceive that to be?

No effort at all.

And is this anything that you ever recommend to other people?

No I just assume other people do these things.

That's fine, thinking about how you learned about this or tried to avoid the food waste so where would you say that you learned about this method?

I think growing up, as I said, during the war, the last of the rationing come off I think in 1957 and I would have been about 15 and it was just something that you just grew up knowing you didn't waste, you ate what was put in front of you unless it was something that you absolutely hated, my mother expected us to eat it, I mean she was very tolerant, I mean I cannot stand tripe and I will not eat it and she said that's fine, if there is something you really hate it's fine, don't have it, have the vegetables. We weren't forced to eat something that we absolutely loathed but we weren't expected to waste what was on our plates either because you didn't have the choice back then that you have now, even lemons were scarce. My parents grew as much as they could vegetable wise and we just grow up learning to be careful.

Yes, so would you say that, other than your sort of upbringing and your family, would you say that there has been any media influence that makes you a bit more aware about it or showed you how you could use food?

Yes I think some of the cookery programmes are fascinating and I think at the moment some of the current ones about diets and things like that are absolutely fascinating. I do get a bit cross when I see recipes for four people and there are only two of you. ...[weight management group] have a book which I use quite a lot, recipes for two and it is sensible portions, cutting things down from a four portion to a two portion doesn't always work or give you the result you want but yes I try to be as imaginative as I can with food. I do like new recipes and find new things but that will come in with the planning and everything.

Yes, so when you do make use of any food that otherwise would be thrown away, so you just mentioned that you had the red cabbage that wasn't looking that great anymore, you picked off the bits that weren't that great and then probably if you had kept it a couple of days longer it wouldn't have been...

It wouldn't have been very nice at all.

So you mentioned that you made the casserole with it, so how did that make you feel when you then...?

Cross because I bought the red cabbage because my son and daughter-in-law and two grandchildren were staying, ...[grandchildren's names], my son and daughter-in-law have gone vegan, so they won't have any dairy products, any meat, which is fine and I got the red cabbage because I thought they were probably staying a bit longer than they actually did, so it was a bit of a leftover and a bit frustrating, so yes it was a shame that it got left.

But then you did manage to make something out of it so when you think about that part of it, that you did manage to make something out of it rather than throwing it away, how does that make you feel?

Good, yes because one, I like red cabbage and I do like making a casserole out of it and we will probably have it with some lamb or something like that at the weekend.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I have got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in the situation for various reasons they have too much food. So if I could just ask you to read through the scenarios, so there is one on each page and it is always the one in the darker writing and just ask you what your advice would be?

Gosh I don't know that one is quite hard. Freezer is full to bursting and you can't... Well one, I am not a great fan of online shopping because that is the one thing that does worry me, if they haven't got something that you want they will give you something else and I don't know what you could do if your freezer is full to bursting and you have got fresh items... reorganise the freezer, I honestly don't know.

So would that maybe be take something out of the freezer and put it...

Freeze it, yes.

Ok.

Pack of four lemons, I would pare the rind and put it in egg boxes and grate it, so that if a recipe calls for lemon rind, I have got it in the freezer and the same with the juice, squeeze the juice out and freeze it and that is the one thing I don't like about BOGOF, I hate BOGOF's.

Thank you.

Large apple tree, I don't have any problems with apples, I make chutney. Anything that is rotting on the ground I leave for the birds, anyway the chickens would have it. I'd make chutney, I would freeze some for the winter and if I had that much, probably put a box outside the front door and say help yourself.

Ok, so share it with other people if they want any.

Yes.

Ok.

Pasta, that would get chopped up for the chickens or the dog, or else I would make something else with it, it certainly wouldn't go in the bin, it would go to the chickens or the dog.

Ok thank you. So that is all of my questions. So if I just briefly summarise what you said, and then please feel free to correct me or interrupt or add to as and when you find appropriate. So you said that you generally shop for yourself and your husband and you tend to do a bigger shop once a week and then if you need anything else you just top that up and you would usually go to Tesco but then depending on sort of where you are throughout the week, you might go to Waitrose in ...[local town] or you also go to Lidl or something.

Yes, it depends whether I have an appointment in ...[local town] or whatever.

You said that you usually spend anything between 70 and 100 pounds for the week on average and that depends on which week it is. You tend to buy a lot more fresh food than frozen food because you prefer it and that you do tend to cook from scratch, so you don't necessarily buy a lot of readymade items of food.

Very, very rarely do we have a readymade item, occasionally and it is very occasionally we might have a Saturday evening in and we will get one of those £10 meal deals or something like that.

M&S kind of thing?

Yes.

So you do not have a lot of food waste, however you do have a compost and then you do have the dog, the chicken and the pony, so you don't, although there might not be an awful lot of food that goes into the actual physical bin that is being collected you do throw other bits away but then you would give them to the chickens or to the pony.

Yes all my vegetable peelings when I am peeling potatoes, even the outer bits of leeks, swede, parsnips, any root vegetables, bits of cabbage stalk, broccoli stalk, all get put in the liquidiser, then I usually cook it and mix it with grain and bran and they have that as an evening meal, they see me coming with a saucepan and they come charging down the paddock, it's quite sad really.

Well know it's good, it doesn't get wasted that way. Then on the other hand anything that you then absolutely cannot give to the chickens or the dog, so you mentioned onion peel or something, then you would compost that.

Yes, it all goes in the compost.

Yes, so generally you said you don't really waste any food, you did mention that...

We do waste I suppose the sort of outer leaves, the outer leaves of cabbage were going to the chickens. They love bananas, if the bananas have gone too soft they will have those but ...[weight management group] the other day we were given a recipe for banana ice cream and I have to say it is seriously nice. Peel the bananas, chop them up freeze them, then put them in food processer with a teaspoon of mixed spice or cinnamon, whiz it round and it is seriously nice.

Ok.

So bananas don't have a chance these days of going black and horrid.

The chickens are unlucky there. You did mention that you had some limes which you bought before Christmas and you kind of forgot about them and that would be the only occasion really you can think about wasting any food, so it might be something like some vegetables or some fruit that you have bought but you have simply forgotten to use but that would be very rare. You did say that it made you cross...

Yes I make a list of try and work out before the end of the week what we are going to have next week. I love cooking, I like going through cookery books, looking for new recipes, so I always write down the ingredients, that's fine and there are times when you think I have bought that but I am only going to use that amount and then occasionally you do find something is leftover and that can be a bit frustrating but on the whole it can be frozen or used in something else, so very rarely do I waste food, I suppose it does happen on occasions but it is very, very rare.

So you did mention that in terms of the strategies you have got in place to avoid wasting any food, would be things like you might go to your fridge and you see that there are any carrots that don't look so nice

anymore or about to go off or something and then you would just peel them, blanch them and freeze them rather than throwing them away. So you would kind of meal prep ahead and then freeze that or if you do cook and you over cater, you are quite happy to then freeze that because then it comes in handy for you for because you would have a meal to rely on.

Yes, there are times when I go out in the evening with Women's Institute and I'll leave ...[husbands name] here and he will get something out of the freezer and there is usually a choice.

Yes, so in a way it is quite a good thing if you do have that, so you don't perceive that to be a lot of effort or any effort at all to kind of plan ahead or look at your fridge and then if you do have to make a meal out of something you don't perceive that to be any effort.

No.

You did say that it was mainly your upbringing and your family influence that kind of taught you how to make use of food and avoid any food waste, is that?

Yes that is absolutely right. I was born up in Somerset and my parents had a house in Southampton and my grandfather insisted that my mother move up and stay with them because Southampton was obviously going to be bombed and I think my grandmother and my mother both had a big influence on what we ate and how we ate and how we managed, I mean I still enjoy foraging.

So you say that would be the main influence but then you also like watching programmes on the media and if there is any new things you can pick up on food then you do.

Some of them are absolutely fascinating, some of them I wouldn't use probably because they would cater for a larger number than I would, especially now the children have gone vegan, it does make life a bit difficult. I have to admit some of the recipes are very very good, very interesting and it is amazing how much we are eating a lot more vegetables and fruit since they have become vegans.

So was it quite recently that they become vegans?

...[respondent's daughter's name] watched a programme on television, I think it was Countryfile, talking about animals and she saw this programme about how animals are treated and it quite upset up her and both she and ...[respondent's son-in-law's name] had been vegetarians at some stage in their lives and she just said I don't want to do it anymore and they both went vegan. My eldest granddaughter has said, no she is not going to be completely vegan because she still likes fish and prawns and things like that and she is quite happy to be vegetarian, my youngest granddaughter just turned round and said no I am a carnivore, ten years old, no I'm a carnivore. So when they come up it is quite interesting trying to cater for everybody, it's quite fun in the kitchen.

They have got you to try loads of new recipes I suppose.

Yes and some of them I must admit I quite enjoy and ...[respondent's son-in-law's name] is a baker, working in Somerset and he doesn't put additives in his, he is absolutely anti-additives in food and likes everything fresh and tasty, which I agree with.

So did I summarise everything you said quite accurately?

Yes I think so, yes.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I don't think so, we do try to be careful with even plastics, the horses bedding is made from plant material, so that is easy to be recycled and we have a guy who comes and empties the middens about once a year and that goes to a farmer, so what I don't use he has, the one I use is very little, so it all goes somewhere where it is going to be used properly.

Ok thank you.

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So I am sure ...[researcher name] has told you a lot about the research already but it is investigating how people cope with food waste in their homes, so this is post purchase so when they have already purchased the food, rather than making strategies of not buying too much food in the first place or how it makes them feel etc. So if I could firstly ask you to introduce yourself, so if you tell me a little bit about your shopping behaviour, so who do you shop for where do you usually shop, how often would you shop, is it a weekly or monthly shop?

Well we are very fortunate in being very close to the village, so we do quite a lot of casual shopping but probably our main shop would be, I don't know no once a week probably, we used to do that when we were working but I suppose now it's less than once a week, you sort of do it a couple of weeks but not as big and as I said because you're so convenient here to the village shops, at lot of it is sort of casual shopping down there.

And where would you usually shop in the village?

Yes

...Well there are some independent shops and there are some extremely good vegetable shops, extremely good butchers but there is also a Tesco express and a small Sainsbury's and so we obviously do do bits there as well.

And when you do your sort of bigger shop?

That depends actually, there is a very good Waitrose in ...[local town] which is three miles away, there is a large Tesco's in ...[local town], there is a Lidl's in ...[local town] and because we have another daughter living over Hedge End where there is a big Sainsbury's and a big Mark's and Spencer's, when we go over there which possibly might be once a month, we would possibly go a reasonable shop there just because there are things we can't get locally.

And then how many do you shop for is it the two of you?

Mostly the two of us.

And then would you say you purchase more, I mean you have already said you purchase a lot of fresh fruit in the village but do you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Oh definitely more fresh. Sorry, I also forgot to say we probably get most of our meat in a farm shop which is probably about 4/5 miles away, particularly meat.

So overall you don't mind doing sort of more little shops targeted to what you actually need.

Yes

If I could be so rude, how much would you be typically spending on a weekly shop?

It is very difficult to say.

I suppose it is hard to tell if you are doing loads of little ones.

I would have said £50 but I don't know.

(Respondent's husband) I would say more than that.

Would you?

(Respondent's husband) if you take everything.

I don't £70, it sounds awful for two people, is that a month?

No a week, they do say that it is between £35/50 per week people tend to spend on average, so that could be about right.

I suppose if you average it out over a year, sometimes we wouldn't spend, sometimes we would spend more, it depends whether we had the shop up at Hedge End or Waitrose or whatever, whether we have just this particular week spend food shopping.

Ok, I suppose when you do loads of little shops it is hard to have that overall figure as if you were going to a big supermarket once a week but that's fine. So if I ask you now a bit more about wasting food you have already purchased, so most people can at least remember one occasion on where they had to throw away food they had already purchased, so when I say food waste what do think that means?

I would have thought you were talking about food that you haven't actually eaten that had been bought to eat and had prepared and therefore it hadn't been eaten and then we throw it away but I wouldn't say we were going to throw it away that's the trouble.

Well that is a good thing I suppose, so yes for us that, for the purpose of the interview would be any food or drink that ends up in the bin.

Yes for the purpose of the interview.

So it's not really about food that you do still use for other purposes. So how often would you estimate that you waste food?

Very, very little because I tend to recycle it one way or another, I mean say if you had a joint that you kept, one would plan that you would obviously use it again either reheat it or whatever it is and if there are any bits left after that, process it in some way and possibly even freeze it.

Yes

I very rarely throw away anything.

Ok and what would you say if there ever was such an occasion what would you throw away or at what stage might you throw it away?

If something obviously was in any way dangerous and bad because it had been ignored or something, then yes I would throw that away.

Yes can you think of any specific food groups or foods you would throw away more than others?

Sometimes possibly in the summer milk goes off and on the whole I wouldn't use it but it can be used for scones and things. Possibly sometimes fruit or vegetables might not be able to be used and therefore I would throw that away but although I don't do it here, in all previous times we've had a compost heap therefore it would go on the compost heap but presumably you count as throw it away.

That would still count as being food waste.

I can't think of anything else really.

No that's fine. If things have gone past their sell by date would you then necessarily throw it away based on that or would you go and sort of assess it?

I would assess it.

So look out for the sort of taste or smell?

Within reason obviously I mean if it was for some reason a month out of date, then I would have thought probably it wasn't too good but I mean certainly not on the days where I clear my cupboards of food, I would assess what I thought by smell or look or whatever.

Ok sure, can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste food or drink and then sort of what happened or what led to the circumstances of it happening?

I think there were some oranges at the bottom of the fruit bowl that I had to throw out because there was nothing I could do with them. I think we had some camembert cheese that had really become too high to sort of go visit again, something like that.

What would you say why the waste occurred, so for example you mentioned the oranges, was it that they were in the bottom of the fruit bowl and you forgot about them or...?

Yes, not purposely but we presumably forgot about them all you know, we had others that went on top and therefore they weren't used. And similar with the camembert you know it was something we hadn't eaten for two or three days or whatever it was a week and you know it almost walked out the fridge.

So thinking about that then, how did that make you feel having to throw away that food?

Very annoyed because you feel it is your own fault, so it is guilt.

Yes

It is not necessary to do that, I mean it is necessary to throw it away if it's bad, what I am saying is you know, one should be organised enough not to do that.

And then would you say you feel.....so you said you felt annoyed and guilty, so from what perspective was that?

The perspective of not coming up to standard, if you like, of managing your food but also because you are very conscious of a lot of people who want food and you're throwing away something that in any other circumstances could have been used, so it is those two sides really.

And then would say that maybe any financial issues, the financial aspect of wasting food would play into that or is that less so?

Yes, probably less so but I mean you would think it was a waste of money to have bought it and not used it but I am not sure that would be primary I think the main thing is the fact, the annoyance that you haven't managed it properly.

So obviously it isn't nice to feel annoyed or guilty about anything really and most people if we do feel that way we do try to you know, adjust and prevent such a thing from happening again i.e. you know, you may not have bought the following week a cheese because you thought I might not eat it. So my next question aims to address any practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food you waste, so feel free to use any specific examples for this, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away?

Organise once buying so you don't over stock which is definitely one thing and being aware of the state the food was in.

So do you ever sort of have leftovers and what do you do with them?

Yes quite often I have leftovers, leftover vegetables it's sort of the obvious typical English thing, I don't know whether it is national or international, is bubble and squeak that sort of thing that you do or use it in stews or in frittata or something like that. Meat again can be made into a different type of dish depending on what it is that you have got leftover but there are vast things like shepherd's pie and things like that, that you can actually use meat that the first serving was in a different form.

And do you perceive this to be a lot of effort or are you quite happy doing this?

I am quite happy doing it; it gives me a sense of achievement.

Yes it is quite nice if you know, if you are conscious about throwing things away then if you can make something out of that, so do you every recommend this to other people?

I try, yes I do think having talked around since I have been doing you know, talking to people about this and recruiting them, that it is quite a generational thing that people of in my sort of age bracket tend to be more conscious of this because....although I was still just a child in the war but it was very much the ethos of ones parents and grandparents right throughout their life because of having to cope in the war with you know

little food and therefore the wastage you know, is something that really one looked down upon, it was not good and I think you 'll find that people of our age think much more high about it than many people of a younger age who haven't had to have that restrain.

Yes, so then if you say you do tend to use leftovers for other dishes or try to avoid any food waste, do you think that is something you learnt from your family?

Yes I think so, yes I think it is definitely something that has been passed on from relations of the generation before rather than just doing it. Yes I think it is definitely something you picked up from the generation before but I'm not sure the generation coming after us have the same....perhaps they think oh gosh you know, she is doing something else, it can almost be a joke in what will we have this served up with next.

Making it into something again and again. So when you are able to make something out of or to use any potential food that would go in the bin otherwise, how does it make you feel?

Well pleased, just satisfied that I...yes fulfilling, it sound ridiculous that it makes you feel fulfilling making a shepherd's pie but I mean, that's the sort of thing, so instead of throwing that away, I am actually going to produce a good meal with it and therefore that's good.

So you just mentioned that it does make you feel good and that it does give you a good feeling, if you have to compare it to a situation totally food unrelated that would give you such a feeling what could that be?

Do you mean including recycling or just any situation?

Just any situation that would give you the same kind of feeling of achievement and feeling good.

Well completing some tasks as well would be good, say completing a piece of I don't know craft work or something, similar in a way, not quite as esoteric as making a shepherd's pie but anyway.

No thank you. So we are going to change the focus of the interview a little bit now and I am going to ask you to do a bit of role playing, so the situation is that you would play the role of an agony aunt and people have written different questions to you and I would like you to imagine to anonymously reply to the person with the problem, so if I hand you two scenarios here, so if we take the scenario which is the first one, which is about the person who has moved with the apple tree.

So what do you want me to do?

So if you had to give that person any advice or reply to that person as a role of an agony aunt so to say, what would your advice be?

I would say that I am assuming they have a freezer in which case I would certainly process quite a lot of the apples either in pieces or in a puree and freeze it so that I can use, it is a very simple process just boiling it up with sugar or whatever and then you can re-use it in various forms later on, if I am not able to do it at the moment. But that seems like apple pie and that are very simple and you can always, if you are not a cook yourself there are a lot of products that can be used nowadays like ready rolled pastry and things and you can make various products with the apples that way, which wouldn't necessarily need you to be a brilliant cook.

That's great thank you and then if I give you one more scenario to read, it is about the single person.

You can certainly extend it....it depends on one's ability as a cook as such and it's not something you would continually want to do, every time you buy four lemons, but I mean you can create lemon curd from that by making it into a similar to jam but its lemon curd, using lemons for that but lemons can also be stored in water and kept. Then of course lemons are excellent for...not talking about food waste but are excellent for cleaning ones hands and feet and things, there is that duty, you don't have to just use lemons in cooking but if you are talking just about cooking...

No it can be quite general

Yes use them particularly for cleaning, cleaning stainless steel at times and also, personally with hands and feet and things like that, they are extremely good with. It is very annoying for individual people that things are in packets and you can only get them cheaper by buying them in bulk, can't think of anything else that I immediately do, ok?

Yes thank you, is that a scenario that you can relate to, I mean there is two of you and when you go food shopping do you find it annoying that packet sizes are usually bigger, does that not affect you so much?

Pack sizes can be bigger, when you have got two of you, you know if you have got four of something and there is two of you, there is a way in which you can use two at a time, whereas if you have one person you're faced with four rather than two if you know what I mean.

Yep

So no not a major problem

Thank you very much, so if I just briefly summarise what you said and then if you correct me if I am wrong anywhere or if there is anything you would like to add at any point. So firstly you said that you tend to do a bigger shop about maybe once a week or less than once a week and then top up or buy more targeted what you actually need from the local community in independent shops and you have got small little supermarkets in the village you can use for that as well and that in the first instance does allow you to buy what you need. Overall you do tend to have little food waste that actually goes into the bin because you tend to process a lot of the food in terms of if you have any leftovers you would do another dish with them etc.

Yes

Is that correct yes?

Yes

That's fine and then you do say that if you do manage to process any food that would otherwise go to waste or any leftovers, that this gives you a good feeling or a feeling of achievement and that you do feel very annoyed or guilty almost, throwing anything away and in terms of the advice you have given for the two scenarios, one of the large apple tree, it would be to process the apples and either freeze them for another time or make any apple sauce or purees for example, or bake any cakes that don't necessarily require huge cooking skills. And then for the second scenario which was the large pack sizes of lemons for single people, it would be that lemons could be either used for lemon curdle for cooking but that lemons are also very good for cleaning purposes. Is there anything else you feel that you want to add?

I don't think so, really you have got to keep thinking about the passion of shopping I am not sure that I have done really a clear picture on that.

If maybe later on when we analyse the data, would you be happy to provide a short written piece maybe on the tips for lemons that you provided because that might be quite useful, if you didn't mind at some point.

Yes

So just writing it down, something you would do with that sort of food then we can incorporate it on the website. Thank you very much.

Interview 18

This piece of research is all about food waste in the home, there is a lot of research that has already been done about how much or how little people are wasting and how that makes them feel and also research of the kind of strategies people adopt to prevent food waste from happening so for example making a shopping list prior to purchase. The focus of this research is a little bit different in that we are looking at post purchase behaviour, so we are looking at how people like yourself are dealing with over stocking of food, when they find themselves in a situation where they have got too much food in their house and what kind of strategies you adopt to make use of that food rather than wasting it.

Ok

So could I ask you to just quickly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

I just shop for myself and my partner and we tend to do a Tesco's online shop, so that way we can look into the fridge and the cupboards or I do the look in the fridge and the cupboards and my other half actually does the ordering.

How often would you say that you shopped for food?

It's not every week, I used to shop every week when I went to the supermarket but when it's online, I tend to shop every week to 10 days.

Ok, so you mentioned that you usually shop for Tesco's, is that typically where you would shop for food?

Yes only because they were first to do the online deliveries, we just haven't moved.

Ok

And also we like to get their points which is not relevant to your research but we like to get their points, we have got a visa card with them as well, so we get quite a lot.

So when you do your online shopping you say that's about 7-10 days, do you then sometimes still pop into the shop to pick up anything during the week if you run out of anything?

Not so much fresh food, which you would think because I grow quite a lot of vegetables but it is more often wine to be honest or cat food or something, on the odd occasion I would pick up some salad, we have got a tortoise so he needs fresh salad. Not as often as you might think, not as often as other people do.

Ok and where would you go for that?

Often next door to Tesco's or ...[respondent's partner] will go to Morrison's because it is on the way home.

Ok and if I could be so rude, how much would you say you spend per shop or per week?

It varies between £80 to £130-£140 we do a bigger shop every now and again and then a slightly smaller shop.

And then do you purchase more fresh or frozen foods?

We don't purchase a lot of frozen because we re-did the kitchen and our freezer is quite small which is really annoying, so we don't have much frozen. I am a vegetarian so we have quite a lot of fresh in terms of vegetables and salads and stuff like that.

Yes and then would you say you purchased more fresh or more processed food?

I don't really like processed food so we don't do a lot of processed food, I never know whether things like pasta, fresh pasta or pasta that has got a filling is processed, I don't call that processed but obviously it is made but we don't have a lot of what I would call processed, so I am not quite sure how you are defining processed, you know where you have a whole meal...

Probably like a whole meal of...yes

Like sausages, vegetarian sausages are processed.

Yes perfect thank you. So now I would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most people can remember at least one occurrence where they had to throw any food away that they have already purchased, of course you might be different, so firstly I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Any food that I am not eating.

We are adopting the definition that is any food or drink so including any kind of fruit juices or fizzy drinks or milk or something like that that ends up in the bin.

Ok, a lot of ours doesn't end up in the bin because we have chickens and I have begun composting.

That wouldn't necessarily be classed as

Ok so is the composting not the bin?

Yes, so if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Well Christmas has been a bit different but other than Christmas not very often at all, I would say once a month something like that.

What do you usually throw away?

Well, lettuce that I haven't eaten or the tortoise hasn't eaten and that has gone all slimy, that goes in the composter, often cheese because we have had it too long, we are not big cheese eaters so it has gone mouldy, I know you can cut it off but my other half has a thing about eating it, whereas I would eat it. We do buy processed chicken slices for the dog and the cat and when that smells that goes in the bin doesn't go to anyone else.

So at what stage would you throw food away?

Normally when it is pretty much rotten all the way through, I am quite happy to cut the rotten bits off, so if I am cutting up the vegetables then we get those but if ...[respondent's partner] is cutting up the vegetables we don't get those because he has got a thing about it. If there is a lot of mould on it or if it really smells, so I sort of use the sell by dates and used by dates but only as an indicator

So you don't very strictly go by them?

No because they are more a shelf life for the supermarket rather than for us, and I hate wasting food so I always do try and use it.

So you use your common sense to see if they are still ok to use.

Yes

Ok, so can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink and then sort of what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it being wasted?

Christmas is a bit different because we had Christmas and then we went on holiday, so we were away for five days so we knew some of the things would not be good enough by the time we got back, so what we had was some dips and some of those dips have got mayonnaise in and things like that. When we bought them we probably realised that we weren't going to eat them all but those went into the bin because I wasn't prepared to give them to anyone else in my household, I would say we used about 40% of them or something like that.

Ok so when you had to throw them in the bin, how did that make you feel?

It always makes me feel really bad because one I think it is a waste of money and two I hate filling up landfills because where we are we don't have...where my parents are in the midlands they have a food recycler...

Yes

So you can put out food for the dust bin men, whereas where we are, we can't do that it all goes in the main bin so I do compost things I shouldn't compost but I thought that was pushing it a bit too far.

So do you feel guilty if you throw food away?

Yes

What would say underpins that feeling of guilt?

I think it is because when I was growing up we didn't have an awful lot of money and sometimes food was a little bit short, I mean we didn't starve but you knew we were having things that were cheap and now you

think that it's such a waste when one bought it, so it is a waste of money. Also I always think well you know you could have done something else with that money, so I could have spent it on something nice, I mean it's probably only something like three pounds but these things are going to add up eventually, it's a waste of money because you think how long it takes you to earn that money.

So if you had to compare that feeling of feeling bad about throwing the food away to something totally unrelated to food waste, what would you think could be another situation where you feel equally bad?

It's still throwing other things away that go into the bin and go into landfill, so if you have...I try not to hoard because you can't keep hoarding in the house because there is not enough room but I do keep things I shouldn't keep because I don't want to put them in the landfill, so it's still things going to the landfill that I absolutely hate because when I used to drive into Salisbury I used to have to go past the landfill and you can see it getting bigger and bigger because they have made it into a hill and the smell was horrific and obviously that is what I am contributing too.

Yes

So it is the environmental impact because plastic things are not going to break down.

So it isn't nice to feel bad like you described and so in fact most of us when we expect to have a bad feeling happen or feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling, so my next question aims to address the practical strategies regarding how you try and avoid, limit the amount of food you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples as and when they arise, so I will ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

First of all I order less because as I say I am checking the cupboards and going round making sure we actually need things before we order them, so that works really well. I also do a bit of stock location in my fridge, so I have always got the things that need to be eaten on the middle shelf because sometimes ...[respondent's partner] cooks before I get home, so I try and make sure they are in the middle so that he will see them hopefully and I will be aware of the things that are going out, so we do it that way. I do check the dates so that even if I don't want to eat something I will eat it that night because I know it is going out of date, if it's getting out of date I'll think about who else could eat it, the dog, the cat, the chickens, so it goes there. We do try and come up with different recipes as well for things, so we google them on the internet if we have got something odd that's left to see what we can do with it. We give it away, so by a mistake we ordered five packets of bananas, not five bananas before Christmas, so we gave it to ...[respondent's partner] son and next door have got three kids so we gave some to them and we had milkshakes, so no banana was wasted.

So would you usually say that you cook from scratch, when you cook at home?

Yes normally yes, I mean if we had pasta then we would put a pasta sauce on it...

Yes

There is the odd meal where we have sausages, vegetarian sausages, chips and peas and things like that but I always worry what is in these things you know, the sort of chemicals and preservatives.

So when you do cook your meals do you ever have leftovers?

Yes, if we have leftovers ...[respondent's partner] will take it for lunch.

Ok

We tend to have a Chinese most Fridays which is not on your list, so we have lots of Chinese containers, so I would pack them up and freeze them or pack them up and he will take them to work.

Ok, so how much effort do you perceive that to be?

None at all because it saves time, well would he make lunch, no he wouldn't make lunch, so it does save money and it saves him having to pop out and get a meal. Or I will freeze them and if I am in on my own then I will have to defrost them, I mean as I say we haven't got a lot of space in our freezer but I do put them in there and then I defrost them if I am on my own or if he is on his own we do it that way.

Ok and do you ever recommend this strategy to other people?

It is a bit sensitive isn't it because we have got friends who struggle financially who I think waste a lot of food, we have tried suggesting things like that but it is sort of a thin line between we think you haven't got enough money to how you can save food, so no, but my parents always do that sort of things they are quite economical with food, although they do eat really well.

So where would you say that you learnt about this method?

From my mum, she is a big person on freezing she has got a big freezer.

Yes and overall of not wasting food or making use of anything?

I think it is partly, you sort of learn it when you are sort of going through your career and you haven't got much money and then you have to find ways in using things and it just seems such a waste to waste food. So if we have a Chinese we would have it on a Friday, we will box it up put it back in the fridge and we will have it on a Sunday and we will quite often have the noodles with an egg or two during the week and it's just common sense. My mum is always re-using stuff you know, she would always take a bit of something and if something went wrong we had a lot of jellies rather than cakes you know, she wouldn't waste food, so maybe it comes from her.

Yes

She was always telling me about the starving children in Indian, when I was kid if I didn't eat all my food, so I think it gets into you, doesn't it.

So would you say that there is any kind of media influences on this, so is there anything you have learnt from the media?

No but I am very much aware there is one of them, is it Jamie Oliver or someone who's promoting the food waste issues in supermarkets and the fact of how much goes into landfills and stuff and whereas it can be used for charities and things like that and also the misshapen vegetables, I have my own misshaped vegetables so I would use them I wouldn't just throw them away.

Ok, so when you mentioned you have got something in your fridge and you google what you can do with it rather than throwing it away, so how does that make you feel?

Well its quite interesting because you come up with new recipes you know, things that you haven't come up with before so then you can either use those when you, not trying to get rid of food or you know when you're at the end of food....because with a household of only two, a lot of portions are more for four so you often do have bits and you think what are we going to do with this other half and then we save some of the good ones that we like and then we would use them again.

So when you make use of food that otherwise would be thrown away how does that make you feel?

Really good, I know it's really sad but yes, because you think it is like a meal for nothing isn't it, so it is quite good that you have used it and especially if it tastes nice, nothing worse when it tastes horrible but yes it does make me feel good.

Yes

I don't know how ...[respondent's partner] feels, he is not a waster either really he probably feels quite good about it.

So can you describe another occasion when you felt this feeling of feeling good, so something unrelated to food waste that would make you feel equally good?

Growing my vegetables and actually picking them and seeing them really healthy and big and expecting them to taste good.

Ok, so we are now going to change the focus of the interview

One thing I do, do which I haven't mentioned, I saw on the internet about making Christmas reefs and it says to use like oranges and lemons, you slice them and then dry them out, so when mine are getting towards the end, I slice them and dry them out and keep them for decorations, so that might be interesting for you.

So I am now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, so I have four scenarios where people have found themselves in a bit of a situation that they had too much food for various reasons and if I can ask you to almost take the role of a bit of a agony aunt to see whether you can advise them with anything, so it's the black boxes

Just the black ones?

Yes

Well first of all the sell by dates are not necessarily the eat by dates are they, so I suggest that she had a look at the items and then see how she felt whether they thought...because different things do last longer, so if it is something like fresh cream you know, that is going to be potentially used before something else, so to look at them and put them in some sort of order in terms of when she thinks they are going to be inedible, so you can actually organise them rather than just looking at the sell by date. Also if you don't open things, so if you think about planning ahead and don't open it because then it starts going off a lot quicker if you open it, so sometimes I won't open cream or crème fresh, if I just want a little bit I will think, I will just leave that because I know I am probably not going to use it for a couple more days, so then I'll use it another day and try and substitute between the two.

Yes

Ah see, she could make my Christmas decorations. Well I suggest that she googled to find what you could do with lemons, she could do lemon drinks, lemonades, lemon milkshakes, can you do lemon milkshakes, I don't know probably a lemon cordial you could probably do.

It might curdle

Yes, so can't do that one but yes I would google it and I think...lemons last quite a long time don't they, you know they are still ok, you can also clean your microwave with a lemon.

Ok, so would you make the cleaning agents out of it?

Yes, you would just put a bit of water in, slice your lemon and put it in and it cleans it nicely, so I have done that before when my lemons are old (inaudible) but yes she can do lots with them. She could do a lemon cake, I mean she could cook with it, she can clean with it, apparently they are quite good, because they are quite acidic or as I say you can dry them and use them as decorations or give them to friends or have a gin and tonic.

Ok

I like lemons just in your kitchen as a decoration, I often have lemons going off so I use them for all sorts of different things.

Yes

Well pasta, she can obviously freeze it but you can put pasta in an omelette to make a Spanish omelette, so she cooked it, she cooked it already ok. When I have got too much pasta I make a pasta salad, so you would do it with beans, you know the tinned beans that's quite nice. So she could do salad, she could freeze it, she could put it in an omelette, if she has got chickens, chickens like pasta, dogs like pasta. She could invite friends round and do something with her pasta, for lunch or something or she could keep it and use it for her lunch, take it into work cold. Am I doing the right thing here?

Yes

There is no right or wrong answers?

No

...[research team] will laugh at my suggestions. Well she needs to use the fruit that has fallen already and make chutney or apple crumble, I make apple crumble, I have a tree in my garden and I always make lots of apple things and I take some to the old man down the road, I don't think he cooks very much, so he always gets lots of apple things. Apple chutney, you can make lots of things like apple sauce and then if she has got somewhere to store her apples, she should pick them and put them in water and if they come off then she needs to store them in a cool dark place and then she will have lots (inaudible).

Ok and how long would she be able to keep them for?

You can keep them all over winter I think, mine lasted quite well but you need to check them on a regular basis and then take out the ones that are not doing too well, as long as you store them with a distance they shouldn't contaminate each other but you can't do that with the ones that have dropped on the floor.

Ok, so that is all of my questions for the interview

That was quick, oh not that quick actually

So if I just summarise what you have just said and please correct me where I am wrong or add to it as and when you feel appropriate. So you shop for you and your partner and you do an online shop every 7 to 10 days, you generally go and do that at Tesco's. You also grow your own vegetables...

And fruit, I have a big garden

...and fruit, so you tend to buy more fresh rather than frozen food because you have a small freezer

I would buy more frozen if I had a bigger freezer because then you have less wastage then because you can just defrost what you have got but ours is quite small.

And then in terms of fresh vs. processed you do tend to buy more fresh food although you have the odd sort of meal where you incorporate any processed foods, you do tend to cook from scratch.

Yes, it is very rare, the only things that we would probably have, is a tin of soup or something, although we make a lot of soup, that is another good thing to freeze.

So in terms of throwing food away you would usually kind of assess whether it is still ok to eat, so you wouldn't strictly go by any sell by dates or anything like that. You do tend to often give it to your dog or to your chickens or to compost

Friends and family

Or friends and family rather than ending up throwing it in the bin.

Yes

You did say that it makes you feel bad when you have to throw food away from two kinds of aspects, so the financial impact of wasting money but then also the environmental impact of it ending up in landfill because it is unrecyclable where you live.

Yes because it all goes in together, particularly where we are, it is not as if they pull it out and compost it or use it for fuel or whatever they use it for.

Yes, so it would be those two factors that underpin that bad feeling or feeling of guilt of having to throw the food away. You did say that when you do find yourself in situations where you do have too much food then you would maybe....and it is still ok to eat and you know that you are not going to eat it, so you would maybe give it away to friends and family.

Yes we don't do that very often to be honest, I think because we don't over order, we don't give away much, we don't waste much.

You said that you stock rotate your fridge, so you do look at what needs to be eaten and then kind of adjust...

Yes, so fresh stuff on the left and the old stuff is on that side and fresh stuff is on that side because you always grab from that side.

So then you would kind of rotate it so that the waste doesn't occur and you are quite happy to make use of any kind of leftovers you have or actually it is quite handy because it saves cooking another day or your partner can take it in for lunch. It does make you feel quite good when you are able to make use of something rather than throwing it away

Something for free

Does that sort of sum it up?

Yes that's good.

Interview 19

This project is all about food waste in the home, so there is a lot of research that has been done about how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel. There has been further research about the strategies people have got in place about how to prevent food waste from happening, so this could be anything from having a food shopping list prior to going shopping to trying not to over stock on food. What we are most interested in, is the practical side of food waste prevention from real people, so in other words how people like you ensure that they make you use of the food that they have already purchased. So if I could just ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

I shop for my family we have three, me, my partner and my little boy.

Ok.

I do the food shopping before I go to the shops.

Ok so how often do you shop for food?

I think every two weeks.

Every two weeks yes.

Yes or 10 days.

So do you do a rather big shop when you do it every two weeks?

Yes a big shop.

Ok and then do you still go to the shops throughout the week to buy any more items?

Yes usually fruit because I buy fruit but I don't buy a lot because it goes bad and we run out of fruit quite often, so when I run out fruit because my little boy likes fruit as well, I buy every time I run out but just for fruit I would go to the shop, a little, just for three.

Just for three, yeah, and where would you say that you usually do your food shopping?

I go to Aldi and Lidl, sometimes Marks & Spencer's, sometimes Waitrose because they're closer.

Because they are close by?

Yes.

Yes ok and then when you do your little shops throughout the week, when you mentioned that you need to get more fruit, where would you go for that?

I would go to the closest shop like Lidl or the Co-op.

Yes ok and do you ever do any online shopping for food?

No.

No, so you always do your own shopping, ok and how much do you pay for your food shop, for example, per week or if you do it every two weeks if it is easier to say for that?

Probably about £85 for two weeks.

Ok and that would be for the two weeks and then the little shops where you buy some fruit would be about...

About £10.

Ok, so that would then make it about £45 per week maybe?

Yes.

Ok and do you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

I think more fresh, I buy frozen food as well but not as much as my freezer is not big enough, so I just keep in mind that so when I go everything fits but just thinking about the space but it is more fresh.

More fresh, ok and do you buy more fresh or more convenience products, so more fresh or more ready meals?

Yes I buy a few ready meals, yes like soups and fish cakes and things like that, maybe three or four, for three days.

Ok but the rest would be fresh?

Yes.

So I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most people can remember at least one occurrence where they had to through any food away that they have already brought, however you might be different, so the first thing I am intrigued to know is when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Putting the food in the bin.

Yes.

That is not being consumed.

Yes, so we are adopting the definition that food waste means any food but also thinking about drinks, so that could include things like milk or fruit juice or anything like that, that ends up in the bin.

Ok.

Ok so if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Drinks I don't think I waste any drinks. I try not to throw away food but sometimes the bread, maybe some of the bread that goes mouldy or some of the food that I cook and I kept but it is not being consumed and it has gone bad so I waste that but I don't think I waste fresh food that is in good condition, just when it has gone bad.

Just when it's gone off ok and how often would you say that happens?

Maybe once a week, maybe once every two weeks.

Ok and is there something that you usually throw away?

I suppose just bread because it has gone mouldy.

Ok.

It's the only thing I can think of or some fruit if it has gone bad but I don't think it has been very often.

So at what stage might you throw something away, so how would you decide whether something needs to be thrown away?

If the bread has gone mouldy, I open and see the food that has not been cooked and not been eaten and it started to smell, I throw it out.

So would you kind of visually assess it and then you mentioned you would smell it to see if it is still ok to eat?

Yes.

Ok, so can you tell about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or some drink and just explain what happened?

It is usually my partner that does more of the throwing because I try to save it but he always say it is a bit dangerous, if I eat that I can get poorly or because I am pregnant and we need to be more careful, usually it is just food that has not been eaten after I cooked it and put it in the fridge and I think it was last week maybe but it wasn't much.

So what was it last week that you would have thrown away?

I think it was some meatballs.

Yeah ok. So you cooked them and there was stuff leftover and you put it in fridge and thought you were going to have it again but you didn't.

Yes.

Ok, so when you had to throw those meatballs away, how does that make you feel?

Not good because I don't like wasting food.

Ok and why is that?

I suppose because I come from a country that you see maybe more...they teach children not to waste food or value more the food because a lot of people don't have food, so that is why I think I don't like it, so I try not to buy a lot, so it is not wasted. If it is a loaf of bread I think it's because I don't eat much bread now so I know he is going to eat the bread and he doesn't, so I thinking just a small one.

So it doesn't make you feel good when you have to throw away...

No.

Does it make you feel guilty?

Yes, yes.

And how strong would you say that feeling is?

I suppose not so guilty because I know the food I am wasting has gone off because I wouldn't throw away food that is ok to eat but if it has gone off I just throw it away but it is not a lot.

Ok so you have mentioned that it doesn't make you feel good, so if you had to think about another situation that is totally unrelated to food waste, what could another situation be that gives you the same feeling you have when you throw the food away?

That makes me feel guilty?

Yes so you said when you throw the food away, the meatballs, that made you feel not good, so what could any other situation be, that also doesn't make you feel good or gives you the same sort of feeling you had when you threw the meatballs away? Just if you can think of a situation.

Well if I go back to my country and I see children working or something like that or people asking or begging and things, yes that makes me feel sad and I think about the food wasting.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel not good described by yourself and in fact most of us when we feel or expect something negative to happen, we adjust to prevent such a feeling from happening, so my next questions aim to address the practical strategies that you have got in place regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away. So use any kind of specific examples if that makes it easier, so I will ask what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

What I would do?

What do you currently do to avoid food being thrown away?

I just cook the right amount so I don't keep it in the fridge and I just try to consume it the same day. I don't try to buy lots of the same thing, like fresh food and I organise, so I put in the fridge the things by date, I will

eat the things that need to be eaten in the date and leave the other things, you have more time to eat them at the end and if I have too much fresh, like chicken or beef or something I will put in the freezer so it is not wasted.

So you mentioned that you mostly cook from scratch but you do occasionally have things like fish cakes or something, so you mentioned that you do have leftovers, so what do you usually do with them?

I put them in the fridge in a container, cover them and then try to use them by the next day, take it to work.

So you would take it for lunch maybe, take it to work yes?

Yes try to use them for dinner.

How much effort do you perceive that to be?

No, not much effort no.

And is this something that you ever recommend to other people?

Not really.

And where would you say that you learned about this?

I think maybe my mum.

Yes.

Yes my mum doesn't like wasting food, I don't think we wasted food when I was living with my mum.

So your family you would say yes?

Yes.

Is there anything you would say that you learned from the media?

No.

No ok. So when you do have any leftovers and then you do make use of them rather than throwing them away, how does that make you feel?

Better, good. Yeah it makes me feel good.

Yes and so we are now going to change the focus a little bit now, so I am going to ask you to do a little role playing. So I have got here four scenarios, they are always the ones written in black on the page, so if you could just read through them and just see if there is any advice you could give to these people?

I read all four of them?

Yeah you can read them like this or there are four versions with the black, however you find it easier.

Ok so what do I do?

If you just see if there is any advice you could give to these people of what to make with the food.

This one I have an apple tree, my friend has an apple tree and she gave me apples and she grows vegetables in the summer and she gave me some of that so maybe give them away if you know you are going to grow too much, give away to friends and family some apples or some vegetables that you have spare and also you can freeze them because she told me you can freeze the apples and make some crumble.

Ok.

I don't know about the online shopping cause I don't do online shopping. This one who has done too much pasta, pasta without the sauce you can maybe try to do another type of food fritters or something with the pasta, you can maybe find some recipes you can use to use the pasta that's been cooked.

Yes.

With the lemons, if it is just one person it is cheaper to buy, sometimes that happens.

Ok thank you, so that is all of the questions for the interview. If I can just briefly summarise what you have just said and then please feel free to correct me if I have got anything wrong.

Ok.

So you are a family of three and you do your food shopping every other week so you said maybe every 10 days or every two weeks. You said you go to various places but usually Lidl or Aldi and occasionally you would go to M&S or Waitrose. You do tend to buy some more bits throughout the weeks but that would only be fruit, you said your son really likes fruit, so you would go and buy some more fruit for him. In terms of the food that you waste you said it would usually be some bread that has gone mouldy or that has gone off, so you would waste that or any food that you have cooked and then has been leftover and you put it in the fridge and you kind of thought you were going to use it but didn't get the chance to use it so you would then throw it away. You did mention that usually you would be quite happy to keep things longer than for example your husband would be, and that he would throw things away sooner than you would. You did mention that it did make you feel quite bad that you have to throw food away, so you mentioned your upbringing, so in your country people struggle to have food, so you feel bad about it from that perspective.

I also remember something, when I go to parties with my child for children, I see lots of waste of food at the party and there is so much food and then after that you can see all sandwiches that have been put in the bin, (inaudible, 21.41) because it's still ok but it is just a big waste when you think about it.

Yes, you did say that you tend to cook from scratch and that any kind of leftovers you would put them in the fridge and you would either take them to work as your lunch or you would make another meal out of it and you don't perceive that to be a lot of effort, it is something that you just do and something that you said you probably learned from your family and from your mum because you said she wasn't very wasteful with food, is that accurate?

Yes.

Thank you very much.

Interview 20

Right so this piece of research is all about food waste in the home, so there has been a lot of research that has been concerned with how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel. There is a lot of research that's look at the preventative measures people take to avoid wasting food, so things like having a shopping list and being organised and things like that, so what this project is looking at is that of post purchase behaviour, so what we are most interested in is to see the practical side of food waste prevention from real people, so in other words how people like you ensure that they make use of the food that they have already purchased. So can you introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so tell me a little bit about who you shop for?

Ok, so there is two of us living in the house, my partner and me and we tend to do weekly shopping which is a bit bigger normally, it tends to be in Lidl we prefer that, and sometimes if we need little bits and pieces during the week then we go and just buy one or two things. Yes so we just shop for the two of us.

Ok, so how often would you say that you shop for food?

Weekly definitely, there is no definite day when we go, it is always a different one, depends on how busy we are or what we are doing in the week or how quickly we finish whatever is in the fridge but yes it tends to probably be on a weekend day, like on a Saturday morning or Sunday when we go and then we do probably about a £40 shopping in Lidl and then just bits and pieces through the week, if we need something fresh.

And for those bits and pieces throughout the week, where would you go for those?

I would still go to Lidl.

Ok, so do you ever do any online food shopping or mainly just...?

I used to, I used to use Tesco mainly and I used to order it back to the house. It was mainly when we didn't have a car, so it just made it a lot easier and even though we bought the car we carried on still doing it because it was just more convenient and you could sort of sit at home and do your online shopping but I realised after a while how expensive it was and then we switched to Lidl, and the price and the freshness of the food has changed drastically I think in our house.

Ok yeah, so you just mentioned the sort of freshness of the food, so would you say that you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

I think since we have been shopping in Lidl we maybe buy more fresh, definitely more fresh now yes.

Ok and do you buy a lot of convenience products or is it mainly fresh food?

I do have to say we do buy, when we do this big shop we do buy a bag of frozen chips which is just for convenience, if you just want to whack something on quickly then you have a backup there in the freezer and meat we buy, I probably buy them fresh the packaged ones and then freeze it myself.

Ok, I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most of us can remember at least one occurrence where we had to waste any food that we have purchased, however you might be different, so I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

I think it is just when you either buy things for home, you put it in the fridge and then you either forget about it or you don't use it and it goes bad. One or two is when you let's say make too much of a meal and then it just stays left over and it gets forgotten again and not eaten I guess.

So we are adopting the definition of food waste meaning any food but also thinking about drinks so anything like fruit juices or milk or fizzy drinks, anything like that that ends up in the bin. So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

It depends how often I clear my fridge out. I think we tend to be quite good actually. It is not just to do with the reason that we are watching what goes to waste but it is to watch your wallet at the same time, you don't want to buy too many things which are going to go in the bin because you are just wasting your money. So we tend to not buy any fruit juices really, I buy squash and that lasts us a very long time and we actually like drinking water, if I buy any sort of soft drinks for home to have guests or something we tend to buy a few fizzy drinks or something which lasts longer. Same with the milk for example we buy long-life milk, which might not be as healthy as the fresh one but for us it just works better because I can just buy a load of it and then it doesn't go bad.

So not very often?

Not very often.

Would you say on a weekly basis there is something that you waste?

I'm sure there is.

Or a daily basis?

No definitely not a daily basis, probably about once a week I would chuck one or two things away.

Yes ok, would you say there is a particular type of food or drink that you usually throw away?

Probably the things that go quicker which would be certain types of vegetables, carrots for example I just don't find a good way of storing them, because I buy it on my weekly shopping but actually I might not use it straight away so yes it happens quite often there, probably that is the most thing I would waste.

So at what stage might you throw something away?

What stage, ok just because it says on the box let's say that it said sour cream or something that it has the date that is finished, it doesn't make me chuck it away, if it wasn't opened then I just keep it in the fridge until I need it, within a reasonable time and open it when I need and then see if it is good or not, just smell it, taste it and if its good I use it, if it has really gone bad then it is going.

So you kind of would like assess it, smell it, taste it.

Exactly I'm not so fussy or my partner either.

Ok can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste some food?

Well actually we have meat...what is the day today Friday? I think we have cooked a roast chicken, probably on Tuesday and I still have a bit of that chicken left in the fridge and that is probably going to go because yes,

it might be a bit too risky to eat that now, that will be the most recent one, not in the bin yet but it really should be.

Ok so if you just sort of describe what happened and what the circumstances were to it being wasted.

Yeah, so we cooked the roast chicken and we had a meal each out of it on that evening and then a little bit more on Wednesday and then because I don't like to waste food I sort of left it in the kitchen just in case if someone is going to eat it but then it didn't happen, we then cooked something fresh as well and then it just stayed in there and got forgotten about.

I know you have just mentioned that you haven't thrown it away yet but thinking about something that you have thrown away or that you are throwing it away tonight, how do you feel about having to throw it away?

I feel like it would be good to have a dog or a cat to feed it to because it is food at the end of the day and yeah I feel guilty chucking it away.

Yes what underpins that feeling of guilt?

Sorry?

Why do you feel guilty?

Because I probably did look at that chicken a couple of times when I opened the fridge before it went bad and I should have probably eaten that rather than a fresh cooked meal, which will last longer. So yes it is probably not the money part of it because it is my money so if I want to throw away my money I can throw away my money, so it is not the money part of it it's just that...how can I say, I think in all of us there is a feeling that we shouldn't waste food or we should recycle, we shouldn't do this and that and I myself try to follow these, not rules, but habits or good habits and yes it just makes me feel guilty if I don't.

So is it you are a little bit annoyed with yourself?

Yes, yes.

Ok, if you had to compare this feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste, say another totally different occasion that gives you the same kind of feeling, what could that be?

For example clothes?

Yes anything.

Yes definitely clothes, I hate throwing away clothes because I think I could definitely use that someday if lose more weight or if that comes back into fashion even if it's within ten years and I would rather throw it up into the loft and sort of keep it there for a good while rather than throwing it away, especially if there is nothing wrong with it in that perspective.

Ok so obviously it is not nice to feel guilty like you described, in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative, we adjust to prevent such a feeling from happening. My next questions aim to address the practical strategies regarding how you try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you

throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier, so I will ask what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

Ok a specific example comes to mind, for example we tend to make a roast chicken probably like once a week and we don't eat the whole chicken at that time, so what I do is I will ask my partner to take the bone off and use the chicken, the meat part of it and sort of take it apart put it in a container and I can always use it for a salad, so that is I think a good example. What I do is when we cook a meal we tend to cook a bit more so whatever is left of it I can then bring it to work with me for lunch instead of going out and getting something in town and I will eat it until it is finished, sometimes it's a bit boring but yes it definitely works and yes containing everything in the fridge for example in the right way. If you open something, some sort of cheese or salami or whatever, I always make sure I put it into a container which is sealed down so it doesn't get air and it last a lot longer.

Yes.

Sometimes I feel like I am going off course from the question.

No so just addressing, coming back to the question, any strategies you have to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you waste, so the ones you have mentioned were...

There is another one actually which is going back to your wallet as well I think, as well as just being organised, so what we do sometimes which I try to follow but it doesn't happen all the time, I have a little organiser on the fridge and it has got a menu part of it which has got Monday to Sunday and you can sort of plan what you are going to cook, so sort of make a plan and on Saturday I write down what we are going to have and you know on Monday we might have fish or on Tuesday we might have mince or chicken on Wednesday and things like that and then for the Sunday when we do the shopping, we buy those things we need for it so we know exactly what we need for the whole week and then you don't actually have to do those little shopping's in-between and I can always bring the leftovers for lunch the next day. So that is a good strategy but you have to be organised to do that which doesn't happen every time.

Ok so you just mentioned that you do tend to cook from scratch and that you do have left overs and sometimes purposely cook more to have leftovers, so what do you usually do with you leftovers?

So a definite one is to bring it in for lunch the next day, it is good in the office because I have a microwave and I can just heat up any type of food really. Although my partner doesn't have the same opportunities, he is working in and out so he is not accessible for a microwave for example, so he needs to take sandwiches so I am the one who can eat the leftovers through lunchtime. Yeah that would be it. Very rarely, although ...[respondent's partner] can be very good at that, we use the leftovers to do something else with it, I got an idea from my colleague ...[colleague's name], she said for example that when she makes a roast chicken or something then leftovers she can do a curry with it or some other meals and that is actually a good idea, I will definitely try that.

Ok so how much effort do you perceive that to be, to have your strategies in place to reduce food waste?

I think it is just all about organisation like in your life and in your head, it doesn't have to take a long time at all or effort, it is just thinking ahead I think, yes, planning a head.

Yes so would you perceive it as a lot of effort?

No, not at all, it really doesn't have to be, it's really not but it's just a fact of you thinking ahead a bit, that's it, but it's not a big effort at all I think.

Ok and do you ever recommend this strategy to other people?

Yes I think this meal planning for the week is quite nice because it's not just helping your wallet and your food base but it is also helping your diet as well because you can sort of nicely put it together that you eat all types of nutrition and all types of food and you can keep it quite exciting for yourself, so you don't have to think on the spot like what do I have in the fridge I can make this or that with it, it can be quite interesting.

Yes so do you ever find yourself in the situation where you do actually recommend it to people?

Oh I see, yes, this meal planner I was going on about it to quite a lot of people actually, I was quite proud of myself, so yes.

Are you on commission for selling meal planners?

I could be, I could make a living from it.

With ActiFry's...

Oh yes.

...and other things, so where would you say that you learned about this method?

I didn't actually learn, it's just a funny thing, I went into Wilkinson and they had these fridge planners.

Not necessarily about the planners but your strategies to avoid....so everything that you've mentioned that you do to avoid wasting food.

It is just self-thinking really, what can I do or... yes just self-thinking really, I don't think I have ever read much about it although in general I don't read much about things.

Would you say that you have learned any of it from your family or your friends?

Let's see... no, actually no, I don't think I did. I did sort of fly out from home quite early so I think it does all come down to me really.

Yes, do you ever take any influence from the media on this?

I don't know where I get the set of mind of it from. I can't think of it if I've seen any adverts like that, I am just thinking of social media now... you know, about food waste, I don't think so, it could influence me but I don't think I have seen many of it.

You don't feel like...?

No I don't feel like it did.

Ok, so when you use one of your strategies and end up not throwing food away, how does that make you feel?

Good because it makes me feel like I have achieved something that I wanted and I had a sort of result of me putting not too much effort, just a little effort, sort of thinking ahead bit of it and yes and it makes me feel good about it that I did something.

If you had to describe that good feeling, again thinking about a different occasion that's totally unrelated to food that gives you an equality good feeling, what could that be?

For example about recycling your rubbish or about the clothes if I can put them to good use for example I can take them to these recycle centres for other people or I can just give them to any family members who would make some good use of it. Yes the recycling bit as well, I do actually like to follow the different bin sort of rules and it makes me think that, oh yes I have made a little difference.

Ok so we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little in that I have got four scenarios here of situations where people have found themselves having too much food and if you could just read through them, you don't have to do it like that, it's up to you and just see what advice you could offer to them. You can read them out loud if that helps you but you don't have to.

Ok, so Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] could give the food to her neighbour rather than chucking it away, just give it to someone nearby or whoever is easier to, because if she can't cook it... yeah if she can't cook it and eat it, she can't put it in the freezer, she should definitely just give it to someone.

So is that for the online shopping scenario?

Yes online shopping scenario yes.

Yes.

Right. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] I am a single person and find it difficult to find pack sizes that suit my needs and budget. I recently bought a pack of four lemons as it was cheaper than an individual one; however I now do not know what to do with the others I have left. A suggestion of what to do with them would be appreciated. Well again, lemons might not be something you can freeze but again she could give it to someone or she could think of a meal which she could use it for, so she wouldn't have to chuck it away, yeah.

Ok.

Dear Delilah...[fictional agony aunt], my family and I love Italian food and often cook it at home. However I cooked far too much pasta this evening and do not know what I can do with it. It seems a waste to throw it in the bin but I do not know what else I can do with it, please could you help. Yes I don't know where she works but I would take it to work for lunch and yeah take it to grandmas place or something, I am sure someone would like to have it or have some friends over and just eat it together. Again try to make a use for it but yes have some friends over or give it to someone that is easy, a neighbour or friend. Next one. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] I have recently moved and have a large apple tree at the bottom of my garden which has produced a lot of fruit, some of it is still on the tree and some has already fallen off and is starting to rot. I have to see all of this fruit go to waste but I'm not much of a cook and do not know what to do with it. Please could you advise me with a suggestion you have. Well I would give her a recipe for an apple pie, yes seriously though, she is literally asking for a recipe isn't she, so yes definitely find a few, she could make some I don't know some Jam, she can make some cakes with it, some biscuits or whatever.

Right ok, so that completes all the questions that I have. If I just briefly summarise what you said, please feel free to add or correct or anything as well. So it's you and your partner, you do the shopping for both of you and you usually would go to Lidl and do a big shop once a week but it is not necessarily on a set date, you top that up as and when required but again you would go to Lidl for that. You used to do online shopping but now find it doesn't really meet your needs anymore so you've changed. You do tend to buy more fresh food and you do cook from scratch. You said that you very rarely waste any food and that you often would buy something and freeze it or you would cook meals out of it, so you might roast a chicken and then have some for lunch or make other meals out of it. You did say that it does make you feel guilty when you have to waste any food, not necessarily from the financial implication of the waste but from more of the point of view that you feel that it's something one shouldn't do. You did say that you do have a lot of strategies of trying to avoid wasting food in the first place and you are quite organised in your shopping and seeing what you have got. You purposely cook more often so that you then have something you can take for lunch the next day, so you wouldn't throw any leftovers away. It does make you feel quite good when you do make use out of food rather than throwing it away. So is that dressing it quite adequately?

Yes pretty much yes.

Ok, is there anything else you would like to add?

No not really, I think we have said it all.

Ok thank you.

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So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home. So there has been a lot of research done about how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and there's been a lot of research on the strategies people have developed in order to prevent food waste from happening but all this research is mostly focused on pre-purchase behaviour so it may be being organised and having a meal plan, making a shopping list before going shopping so those kind of tips. What we're interested in is strategies people have got in place post-purchase behaviour so what we're really looking at is... we're trying to find out, in other words, how people like yourself make use of the food that they've already purchased rather than throwing it away. So to start off if I could just ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

I shop for myself and my family which is my husband, two children and a cat, does that count?

Yeah.

Yeah so I generally shop for us.

Ok and how often do you shop for food?

We tend to do a bigish shop for sort of basics about once a week and then go and top up, well it depends how efficient our big shop has been, but then top up throughout the week for stuff like bread and milk and fruit and stuff.

Yeah, and where would you say that usually you shop?

I try to shop in lots of different places to be honest. Yeah generally I would say Lidl and Asda, sometimes Co-op, those are the main ones, occasionally Tesco, but yeah I'd say that's probably...

And is that for both shops, so the big shop and the top up shops?

Yeah generally. We'll get... oh Wilkinson as well is another one. We generally tend to have a list of stuff that we can get and if we can get it locally, like ...[local town] high street has Wilkinson, Lidl and then a few little local grocers and that sort of thing but it's little and often when we go to the local grocers, it's generally those ones. Then what we can't get in the high street we'll go to Asda to get. Cat litter is a main one that we tend to go to the big supermarkets for and that sort of thing.

So the more staple stuff.

Yeah and like cleaning products and stuff we'll get wherever we happen to be. I'd say most often is Lidl for food.

Ok yeah, and then how much you say that you spend on average per week?

I'm not 100% sure to be honest. I would say probably just on food on its own I would say we probably spend about £100 a week thereabouts.

Yeah ok.

It's difficult to say but yeah probably thereabouts.

Yeah it's difficult to sometimes separate when you buy shower gel and all that type of thing as well.

That's it so I'd say probably just for the food stuff, our big shop tends to be generally about £60 and then we'll top up a few times a week of about £20ish or whatever so yeah it probably averages out to about £100 a week.

Ok and do you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

We pretty much cook everything from scratch so we'll have things like fish fingers and chips and that sort of stuff in the freezer for an "I can't be bothered day" but generally we tend to buy the raw ingredients, the fresh ingredients and then cook it all up and then we'll freeze that. We'll make a big batch of something and we'll freeze it into bits, but yeah generally fresh.

Ok and do you ever do any online food shopping?

No.

So you always go to the shop and get it?

Yeah I always tend to go and look at it. I have done it in the past but it tends to be, they tend to give you the stuff that's right on the edge of its date and that ends up always going bad before we eat it so we tend to just go and sort of shop ourselves.

So I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most of us have had to waste food that we've already purchased, however you might be different. So firstly I'm intrigued to know, when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

My head immediately comes to the food waste bin that we've got, the sort of biodegradable bags that get collected once a week and how frequently we fill that so it would be just anything edible and biodegradable that we waste. So I would include cat food and stuff in that as well. Yeah generally that's the sort of classification I would look at.

Yeah so our definition of food waste would be food but also any drink so including things like milk or fruit juices or any things like fizzy drinks, any of that kind of thing that you might have that you don't consume but ends up being thrown in the bin.

Chucked away yeah, ok.

So how often would you say that you waste food?

It's pretty much a daily habit depending on how fussy our kids are. I include tea bags and stuff in the food waste so...

No because you would waste them anyway.

Ok cool. Yeah I would say over the course of a week we will fill one of the 20 litre I think it is food waste bins, over the course of a week we will usually fill that so it's...

So it's almost daily?

Yeah there is something that goes in the bin almost daily. I tend to cook extra quite a lot because I can never tell how hungry everyone is going to be so I tend to make a big portion for everyone and then often some of that will go in the bin or peelings and stuff, that fills up quite a lot.

Yeah so things like peelings or something we wouldn't necessarily...

Yeah I would say maybe if it's food that I've prepared and then thrown away because it's not been eaten or used up, it's probably about half to a third of, so between five and ten litres of that 20 litre food waste is that and then the rest is peelings, tea bags.

Yeah so things like peelings and tea bags you would throw away anyway so thinking about any food that you would have otherwise consumed. So would you say there's something that you usually end up throwing away?

If I sort of overcook and make like too much pasta for example and we've got it left in the thing, I generally, because we tend to map out our food for the week in a vague sense, we'll sort of have several meals that we can make with the food that we buy then I'll make them, that's for that day so if I have made too much pasta or too much sauce or anything like that, that will tend to be chucked unless there's enough that we can fridge it and use it the next day for lunches and things. Cat food, we always end up throwing about half of

the cat food we give her on a daily basis because she'll sort of pick and choose what she wants and then leave the rest, she's quite fussy. But yeah it can vary a lot depending on who's about, what we're doing, what we're making, if we're catering for people or not so yeah it can vary quite a lot but I would say it's generally food waste. We don't tend to waste that much as far as drink. So we always get through the milk before it goes bad and again cheese, we tend to get through that. Sometimes cold meats, stuff like sandwich meats or bacon or something like that we'll tend to get and occasionally that will go bad and we'll have to throw it before we sort of use it a lot. It's difficult because it being after Christmas I'm going through a list of stuff in my head that I've had to throw away recently.

So at what stage would you throw something away?

To be honest I'm terrible about use by dates, I tend to do the smell check or even the taste check first before I throw anything away. If bread goes stale or it gets that kind of tacky texture to it then I don't always wait for mould to come up on the bread, but I don't tend to pay that much heed, I'll kind of look at the date and sort of say it's roughly around then and I'll smell it or taste it or check it before we chuck it. I don't think... I think it's been months and months since we've got to that stage on milk. Again cheese, anything really I tend to just smell it first and occasionally we have cooked a meal and gone actually this doesn't taste too good and that whole thing has gone in the bin but that's very rare that that happens.

Ok can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to throw any food or drink away and just kind of explained what led to it being thrown away?

Ok well just then when I said that, I mean we did... we tend to buy our meat and freeze it and then get it out as we need it and one of the things that we did recently was we did some pork schnitzel and made it, lovely meal and it was off somehow or it had gone bad in the thawing process so that all had to be thrown which was really gutting. Then mash actually frequently gets chucked away.

Mashed potato.

Because I always make too much mash and my husband loves it and I'm not that bothered so mashed potato frequently gets chucked. It seems to be like the extra bits that come with a meal that we throw quite frequently so mashed potato or extra pasta that kind of thing. Yesterday I threw away a handful of pasta because it wasn't eaten and it was just sort of sat there on the side and I thought it's not enough to make a portion so I threw it, and like I said pretty much daily I'm throwing away about half the cat food because we do sachets for her so she'll eat about half, we give her one sort of twice a day. But yeah is that the sort of...?

Yeah so when you had to throw those pork schnitzels away you mentioned that had gone bad in the thawing process or any other kind of food that you do throw away, how does that make you feel?

That particular instance I felt gutted because I was really looking forward to that meal. I tend not to think too much about it when I'm actually scraping it out of a dish and kind of getting rid of it. It's when I go to put the bins out and I think oh gosh this is really heavy there has obviously been a lot of waste this week, that is when I tend to feel a little bit guilty I guess.

Ok.

Or I guess I could be more efficient with it.

Ok so when you say that it makes you feel guilty, what kind of underpins that? Why do you feel guilty about it?

I don't really know. I think you know when you're growing up and your parents are like "there are starving children in Africa" and that kind of thing, "don't waste your food because somebody is going hungry today" I don't know I think I just have that echoing in my head so I do tend to feel a little... I don't know that there's much more that I could do. I tend to get a bit peeved if my kids, if I cook a meal and my kids are just like "no I'm not eating that" or they'll have a little bit and then they'll leave it, that rankles a bit, that annoys me.

So it's kind of that guilty or annoying feeling but you don't quite know exactly why you feel guilty about it.

I don't know. It's hard to kind of pin down exactly what I feel. A lot of the time I don't think about it at all, it's just more waste, it tends to be however quickly the little bin fills up and I have to empty it into the big bin and the big bin fills up, it's however quickly that happens that makes me then go "oh dear".

Do any financial implications come into that when you throw the food away?

Not usually. If for example I'd bought a bag of apples or a bag of pears or something like that and then nobody has eaten them all week and then I have to throw them away because they've all gone squashy and horrible that makes me think what a waste, there was no point in buying that, but I would say that we use quite a lot of the food that we make and we tend to try and be as economical as we can, so I can't really... occasions like that where I do have to throw a load of stuff away because it's just been sat there, it doesn't happen that much but yeah that is when I tend to think what a waste of money, we could have got something else or just not bought it. Every now and again I'll fancy a lemonade and so my husband will go and get a massive bottle of it and he will generally drink the fizzy drinks in the house or the juices or that kind of stuff, I'm either hot drinks or water generally so usually that gets used up but there have been occasions where we've bought a big bottle of lemonade or something and I've then tipped it away a month later when it's completely flat and rubbish. So that again is like what was the point in getting that.

But not necessarily, you don't necessarily...

No I wouldn't say it's frequent enough for it to be an issue.

Ok that's fine. So obviously it's not nice to feel guilty or a little bit annoyed about, or the feelings that you've just described yourself, and most of us when we kind of expect something bad to happen we prevent such a feeling from happening. So my next couple of questions are around any kind of strategies that you've got in place so any of the practical strategies you have in place to try or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so please use any specific examples if that makes it easier.

Well to be honest we used to be very wasteful and then there was a period of time where finances were really tricky and we're starting to come out of that but I feel like the strategies we did put in place have really helped. So we tend to before we go shopping we'll make a list, before we make the list we check what's in the freezer, what we've already got, map out a lot of... not necessarily on Tuesday we are going to have this and on Wednesday we're going to have that but just what do we fancy this week to eat, what can we get, what have we already got, we tend to use up what we've already got first if we can unless it's going to last for months and months in the freezer or something. But yeah so we've kind of put a lot of those strategies into place and occasionally I will have a day where I batch cook loads of stuff, portion it out into different meals for the week and then just freeze it all. So yeah freezer space is really important. Generally we tend to

try to do that, it doesn't always work out and rather than kind of immediately going... I don't know I'm trying to think of an example but "oh we low one cereal, we'll go and get seven boxes", we tend to be like ok just this specific thing, go and get that, just replace it as we need it rather than getting the same things every month which we used to. We used to generally have a checklist of we'll just get this, this and this staples and then occasionally we would just kind of be like we haven't got space in the cupboard, chuck the old stuff away and put the new stuff in and that was the first thing to go when we needed to and were actually thinking about it and especially with the kids as well because they sort of naturally create a lot more waste and a lot more financial strain so since having the kids it's kind of been an on-going process of trying to minimise the amount of stuff we chuck or buy in the first place. Yeah with things like fruit and veg, unless we know specifically what meals we're going to be making we tend to get it during the weekly top ups rather than during the massive shop because we can get a bit carried away and then come home with a massive trolley or bags and bags full of stuff that will then just sit in the fridge and go so we tend to try not to do that so much, just get enough for the next couple of days and then go back and top up whatever we need or whatever we decided we're going to have the following day and that's helped a lot. So yeah just basically thinking about it a bit more and planning.

So you've mentioned very briefly that you mainly cook from scratch and that you do occasionally have leftovers, so what would you usually do with your leftovers?

If it's enough... it depends how many portions I can make with whatever, so if I batch cook for example which is I'll do a massive pot of bolognese and then I'll do some of it for spag bol and some of it for lasagne and some of it for you know... if I'm really organised then I will bag it up into individual portions but that doesn't always happen. So if it's enough to kind of use again then I will portion it up and I'll either put it in the fridge and we'll have it for lunch the next day or for dinner the next day or I'll freeze it, like if it's a sauce that can be kept then I'll just freeze it in freezer bags or Tupperware or whatever and then try to remember it's in there and get that out the following week so it's already a meal I haven't got to cook. So generally that's what we tend to do. If it's just a little bit then that will be thrown.

Ok. You've just briefly mentioned that you do a lot of batch cooking for example and you would, if there is enough to keep for the next day, you would keep it. So how much effort do you perceive that to be?

I don't know really. I would put the same time and effort into doing a huge batch of something as I would into doing a smaller batch of it. So if I was just cooking say for one meal it would probably take me 10-15 minutes less time than it would to make a huge batch of it because of the prep of the veg and then maybe a bit longer for the cooking time or something like that so I would say it's probably a similar effort. This week I was mega organised so by Monday afternoon I had cooked enough meals for the whole week, which is great, I was really proud of that, but that doesn't always happen, that doesn't frequently happen. Or we tend to do slow cooker meals, in which case it's just chuck a load of stuff in, walk away, go back to it several hours later and it's done. So I would say no it's probably not that much more effort really to... it maybe even saves effort in the long run to make a big batch of something and then not have to cook again, other than reheating what I've already made for the next week or so, so yeah it's just finding the initial time. Yeah I don't know, I would say it's probably not that much more effort to do big batches for me.

Would you say that you ever recommend any of your strategies you've just kind of drawn up on for preventing food waste or for bounding the amount of food that you waste to other people?

Yeah definitely I would say to everyone batch cook and freeze because if you have the freezer space, it's just brilliant. It's definitely a time saver. I have been but I now couldn't cook up a big meal and then just leave half of it to be thrown the next day. Occasionally we'll forget to put it in the fridge in which case it does then have to be thrown and I'm gutted, but yeah no I would definitely say freezer space. Just get loads of little Tupperware's and freeze stuff so yeah I would definitely.

Do you find that ever does come up in conversation you have with anyone?

Yeah occasionally, occasionally. I've had conversations with someone who is along the lines of "I made so much of this, this and this and I just didn't know what to do with it", to which my response is always just "and then you froze it" and "now you don't have to cook at some point in the future". I mean I wouldn't say it comes up all the time, every now and again we'll have a conversation and it will come up but semi-frequently. I don't really have a gauge for that.

No you have had that before.

I have had that conversation before for sure.

Ok and where would you say that you learned about this method or your strategies that you have in place for ...

Oh we were really poor when I was growing up so it was eat it up, wear it out, do whatever you can and we're a big family so there wasn't always very much leftover but any leftovers that there were of anything went straight in the fridge and they were eaten the following day regardless of... or they were saved up and there was leftover night with several different meals, a bit of several different meals that you could just pick and choose from, so yeah that was very much a thing from my childhood and also from "The Incredibles".

Ok tell me more about that.

Just that in that film there is a scene where the family are having dinner together and it's leftover night so it's like steak and pasta and various different bits and pieces of different dinners and they're all just sitting, and that's what's for dinner, it's all the dinners we've had this week which I don't know, I don't know why that stuck in my head but it did. Probably because I sat there and went "I do that".

So would you say that you take any sort of emphasis, any sort of influence from the media on these strategies or any that you have got in place?

Only from "The Incredibles", no. Not so much. I did briefly look at, a couple of times I watched... oh gosh I can't remember it; it's the Greg Wallace one.

Eat more for less or something.

Something like that, yeah it was that kind of thing. I can't remember what the title was, oh Eat Well For Less, that's the one. So yeah I sort of watched that and that was really interesting as far as cost cutting goes but there wasn't a huge amount, or certainly in this couple that I watched, there wasn't a huge amount about waste management, it was more just how to reduce your food bills.

Ok yeah. So not very consciously...

So I would say... no not really, not actively looking for a solution. I think just also from my childhood just we didn't really have a lot so we had to make what we had go a long way and that was quite tricky to teach my husband actually. He was in a slightly more affluent family than I was growing up and so you made a dinner and whatever you didn't eat just went to the dog or something or got chucked or fed to the chickens or something, I don't know whichever point it was and yeah I did live with him and his mum for a year or two and the wasteful habit that we tended to get in was not great so when we did then move out and were trying to support ourselves I was like "oh god we need to sort this out really quickly". But a lot of my focus around the thinking about altering meal times and that kind of stuff and food habits has generally been from a money saving point of view rather than a waste point of view.

Ok. Yeah. So thinking about when you do throw any food away and you kind of mentioned that it does make you feel a little bit guilty. If you had to think about a situation that's totally unrelated to food waste, what could another situation be that gives you that equal feeling?

I don't really know. I don't know. I'm struggling to kind of think of a comparative guilt. I guess as the kids grow out of clothes I like to be able to take them to a charity shop and then sort of pass them on. I'm a big fan of charity shops as well so if I'm going through the clothes and I'm having to just chuck stuff away because it's got a hole in it, it does give me a little pang of that's a shame.

Oh because it could have gone to...

Because it could have gone to the charity shop rather than just having to be thrown, but I mean kids wear stuff out and I'm glad they wore it out rather than just outgrew it and I threw it away. I don't know I'm quite conscientious about that kind of thing anyway.

Ok yeah.

Yeah I don't know. I feel like most of the time I do what I can. Also I'm a bit of a hoarder so I don't tend to throw things away lightly.

So, for example, when you mentioned that you batch cook or include meals so that you make sure that you use up all the food that you've got in the house rather than throwing it away.

Yeah I do try to.

So when you do apply one of your strategies and you do save food from being thrown away, how does that make you feel?

Obviously it's not a perfect strategy or a perfect method and there are a few times where I'm just like do you know what sod it I can't be bothered, but no I feel quite good. I definitely feel that there have been significant improvements in the amount of waste and the amount of cost that we've managed to pull back. I feel quite, I guess quietly pleased. Yeah I don't know. I mean obviously I think there are things that we could do to improve it possibly but with the best will in the world you're never going to be perfect, especially with kids who decide that yesterday they loved baked beans and today they despise them and will never eat them again.

If you had to compare that feeling, you just mentioned that it was quite pleased to something again totally unrelated to food waste, what other situation could give you the same feeling?

I don't know. I guess if I can help somebody in some way I get that kind of little boost or if I can do someone a favour. If I can't then it's a bit like I'm really sorry but I can't. But yeah I guess it's like a little "oh I did a good, yay" so yeah being able to help somebody out, do them a favour. Even if it's just can I have an onion, I have run out of whatever, yeah here you go I've got plenty. You get a little feeling of "oh yay I helped". So it's a similar sort of feeling I guess.

Ok. I've now got four scenarios where people have had too much food for various reasons. So we're going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I'm just going to ask you to just look at these four scenarios, they're the ones in the black writing on each of the... and just see if there's anything you can think of that you can advise them.

Online shopping delivered yesterday, a number of the fresh items have a sell by date tomorrow... I don't know. This is why I don't do online shopping. I guess I'd invite a bunch of people over and just do a massive meal, maybe, depending on what it is that they've got. I kind of feel like if your freezer is full to bursting you don't need to be doing a big shop. Yeah I don't know, I would say maybe... I don't know can you take it to a food bank if it's got a short date? I don't really 100% know that actually. Yeah I don't really know that one.

Ok yeah that's fine.

So yeah probably invite a bunch of people over for dinner because I've got way too much. Actually I did that, there was one time that I did a huge amount of batch cooking because I was heavily pregnant and knew I wasn't going to be doing a lot of cooking for the next month or two so I did a massive amount of batch cooking and had loads and loads of meals all ready, cooked, frozen and then it was just pasta and bits and pieces to add to it and left the freezer open and it all defrosted so I had dinner parties every night that week, just invited everyone I knew, just come over, just come over and eat my food. Have some food; here you go do you need something. So I just did that because I didn't know what to do with it. So I have been there kind of, so I'd probably do that. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], my family and I love Italian food, often cook it at home however I cooked too much pasta this evening, don't know what I can do with it, seems a waste to throw it in the bin. You can put it in the fridge and have it the next day if you've got too much. I personally quite happily would have... if I enjoyed the meal on day one I would enjoy it on day two, maybe even on day three but I'm not too worried if I have the same thing several times. My husband gets a bit fussy about that and doesn't like to have the same thing over and over again. I don't know; store it for the next day I guess. Recently moved, large apple tree, it's tricky. Lots of fruit, some of it's on the tree, some has already fallen off and starting to rot, hate to see all of this going to waste. My mother in law has an apple tree and we used to have an apple tree in our place and we could never get through it so I would often just get a load of cardboard boxes and bags or whatever I could and just put the fruit out for people to help themselves to. I mean I'd cook and preserve as much as I could but there's only so much you can do with an entire trees worth of apples for one household so yeah I'd tend to just give it away, bring it into work, let people help themselves if they fancied something so generally give it away. Obviously some of it would have to go to waste and then it would just go on the compost heap. Yeah that's probably what I'd do with that one. Person finds it difficult to find... lemons; yeah you'd just make a cake, just make a cake or have lemon water. I love lemons; they never go bad in my house.

So when you say lemon water...?

Just slices of lemon or squeeze a lemon into some water and drink it.

So just add it to water.

Yeah. Yeah get some gin. Too many lemons is never a problem.

Thank you. That concludes all the questions that I have. If I can just briefly summarise what you said and then please feel free to sort of correct or add when wrong, if there's anything you'd like to add. So you do your shopping for yourself, so your family of four and the cat, so you and your husband, your two children and then you've got a cat. So you say that you go to various supermarkets to do a bigger shop throughout the week but you tend to get fresh bits throughout. So once a week you do a bigger shop and then throughout the week you get top ups so that you don't get carried away buying any food that you don't need in the first place.

I mean try to. I try to stay clear of chocolate and stuff.

You did say that you're quite organised and that you would for example freeze any, if you buy big batches of meat you would freeze it up into portions or you would batch cook and freeze it up into portions and that you do still, because you have two children you would evidently have any waste in terms of sometimes they don't finish what they're eating or you don't always quite know what they do like or don't like the next day. So you do have waste on a daily basis and then you do have a food recycling bin that gets collected. You did say that it makes you a little bit guilty, so not too much of a strong feeling because you feel like you are quite economical anyway and you do plan ahead and you do try to not be very wasteful in the first place.

As much as I can be yeah.

In terms of the strategies you said that you mainly batch cook, so other than being organised and everything you would batch cook and portion things up so you'd then freeze them.

Try to.

If you've got anything left over that can make another meal, you would either put it in the fridge or you would freeze it rather than throwing it away. You did mention that that was something you've learned from your family and your upbringing rather than from the media or any other kind of...

It is in the media. There are a few places. I've noticed a couple of things and I go "I do that". But yeah no generally it's sort of a common sense approach I think personally.

Yeah. Then in terms of the effort you said you don't perceive it to be an awful lot of effort. We are finished unless there's anything else to add.

I think it's probably done to be honest.

That's fine. Is that all correct?

Yeah that sounds about right.

Fab thank you.

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So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home, a lot of research has been done on how much or how little people waste and how that makes them feel and a lot of research has looked at the preventative measures people take to prevent overstocking, so buying too much food in the first place, so that would include things like making your shopping list and having strategies in place to avoid food waste from that angle. We, however, are looking at food waste from a different angle, so that of post-purchase behaviour. So what we are most interested in is the practical side of food waste prevention from real people, so in other words how people like you ensure they make use of the food they have already bought, ok?

Right.

So if I could ask you to start off with, to briefly introduce yourself, so tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

I shop for the other two people at home, so that is my wife and our two-year-old. I do my main shop, it's a bit tricky, I do 40% at Aldi, 40% at Sainsbury's and 20% top up at Tesco because there is a Tesco Express next to my home. I tend to buy staple food from Aldi because it is a lot cheaper and I buy the branded stuff from Sainsbury's because I have a thing for (inaudible, 01.38) and Tesco simply because it is convenient, it is across the street, so I just cross the road get a pint of milk or bread or whatever, yes that is about it.

And then how often would you say that you shop for food?

Very frequently, so I do maybe three to four shops a week, so I will do a Sainsbury's shop once a week, usually at the weekend or one online order a week and then Aldi three times a week and Tesco maybe once or twice a week.

So if I could be so rude to ask, how much would you say you spend on average on food, so however it is easiest for you to assess, could be per shop or per week or per month?

Per month on food.

So however easier you find it to...

Maybe about £300/350.

Is that for the month?

Yes.

And that is split across all the little shops that you do?

Yes, that's maybe because I don't waste food, so when it comes to food waste, I am very much against it so I make sure that I don't over spend on things that we end up wasting. There may be one reason why, it is not as high as I was told by others, they are spending over £500 if you have a family of three, I am not going to spend £500 because I am not going to let £150 go in the bin.

And then when you do your food shop... so you mentioned that you buy your staples at Aldi and then the more branded products you go to Sainsbury's, presumably because they are not available in Aldi?

Yes things like pampers, Cow & Gate, baby wipes, all of this stuff, the shampoos, shampoo for my wife, deodorant for myself, I think we tend to stray away from Aldi for personal care stuff as much as we can.

Yes.

And then we go in Sainsbury's and just get all of them and you buy stuff just because they are nice and it is not Aldi, so for a change we can buy this or that.

So do you purchase much frozen versus fresh food?

No we are quite adverse, maybe because of where we come from, it has to be freshly cooked and things like that, and we don't have a freezer at home which is a good thing, saves on the electricity, but yes it is mostly fresh. So I buy a pack of beef, cook it then and there, then I buy a pack of chicken after two days or so, once we run out of beef or likewise. I don't think we have bought anything frozen since we have moved into the flat and that has been about four months, except from frozen pizza that we just keep on the counter overnight and we bake it, apart from that it's zero frozen food.

So you just mentioned that you don't have a freezer?

Yes.

So you wouldn't kind of buy frozen vegetables to keep them?

If we did have a freezer the only thing we would put in it would be ice cream and some nuggets for the kids but apart from that we would not buy frozen meat or anything.

So it is mostly fresh.

Yes, I wouldn't freeze meat either.

Ok, I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most people can remember at least one occurrence if not more, however of course you may be different. So first of all I am intrigued to know that, when I say food waste what do you think that means?

Simply throwing away food that you have not consumed, you have bought something and it has run out or you have cooked something and you have forgotten it or it has been in the fridge for two weeks and you open it and it smells nasty and you just throw it away. Then you buy something that you want to eat but you don't finish it, you order something without thinking about it, and you think it is not what I want, so all of that counts as food waste. Even if you buy for the kids, like nuggets and chips, you say make up your mind, nugget, chips and chicken and then he gets all three because sometimes he can be pampered and then he does waste a lot, so all of that from fresh produce to things you buy in the kebab shop that you don't finish eating, that's waste.

Ok so anything that would then go in the bin, so for this interview we are adopting the definition that food, or drink, that goes in the bin is food waste, so we would include things like milk or fruit juice or any kind of drinks as food waste as well.

Ok.

If you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Very rarely, the last two/three weeks we may have thrown away three chicken strips because they had expired, I wanted to eat it but I thought no I am not going to risk it and some leftover tuna that smelt quite bad so I didn't want to risk eating that either, apart from that I finish almost everything.

So what would you say, you usually throw away?

Most of the time it tends to be fruits, vegetables, sometimes tomatoes that stay in the fridge for too long and they go mouldy, and sometimes a little bit of cooked food, you simply forget that it is in there and if I can't eat it then it goes in the bin.

And at what stage would you say that you would throw it away?

If it is anything for our kid, anything more than a day old we wouldn't give it to him, for him its different, for me two weeks max, I have got a very good system, I can digest a lot.

So how would you assess whether it is still ok to eat for example?

By the look of it, how it smells, yes those two mostly. But with things like milk I would probably taste it, if it is not too sour drink it, I know it sounds nasty. I rarely taste it but if it doesn't look nice and if it doesn't smell nice then I wouldn't have it but I usually don't let my wife do that either, I usually categorise her as another child so hers is a maximum of 24 hours, so her and our son get the nice stuff, anything that is not nice I take it on myself to make sure that it does not go in the bin but if push comes to shove then yeah it does end up in the bin.

So do you go by sell by dates or best before dates to assess it as well or is it more the smelling or...?

Yeah if it is not cooked I go by the sell by date, so again for our son, one day before the sell by date that is the last day that he can have it, so things like yogurt.

The day before?

Yes the day before the sell by date, things like yogurt, if it comes to that then I will eat it. If it is cooked food then again not more than 24hours for him, especially things like chicken, if its vegetables it is not as bad as chicken for example but something like chicken then 24 hours for him but for me it is quite different, about a week maybe, worst case scenario I keep these things for months, but if you forget it, it ends up in the fridge for about a week.

Yes, so can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink?

Friday night, Saturday I threw away three or four chicken strips, they were mouldy they expired on the 3rd of December so it was more than two weeks, so it was beyond my comfort zone so I had to throw it out.

So what would you say happened or what were the circumstances that lead to it being wasted?

We got it for him because he likes chicken but he was sick so he didn't go to school, so we forgot to put those with his sandwiches, then I forgot to eat them and they just ended up in the fridge right at the back, so we couldn't see properly, so we just missed it, I missed it.

So how would you say that made you feel?

A bit bad, it's not because of the money that's a waste, it is because of the fact that I know that there are other people without food and when we waste food it's a bit selfish maybe. If you try to put a number on it, it is just being pedantic and you just look like scrooge but it was just three strips of chicken, it doesn't cost much, it's ok, it's not like you are throwing away an entire Turkey in the bin so in terms of money, it is not a big issue. I know that it adds up if you keep doing it but since you don't do it much, so I know it is just maybe maximum £5 that we waste but it is just the fact that I know that those three strips could be someone's meal, even kids in this country they go without food, so if I let me child waste food or throw away food or spit food out then it's again food waste, yeah I feel a bit horrible that I'm not doing the right thing by people who don't have food and I am not teaching my kid that's wrong to treat food like that.

Yes, so if you had to compare this feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste, so say another totally different occasion, so what would that occasion be?

Maybe not recycling your recyclables, not throwing away your garbage properly, just maybe throwing away a piece of plastic or something on the road, something like that or if you see a lamppost outside with the light on at two in the afternoon and you can switch it off but you don't you just keep it switched on. You don't switch off your lights in your office because you think it's Uni paying for it so it doesn't matter, so I would compare things like that to those things but my wife doesn't agree but I tend to think that is something quite similar.

Yes ok. So obviously it is not nice to feel bad or guilty or annoyed like you just described by yourself, in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative, adjust to prevent such a feeling. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples if it makes it easier.

Ok.

So I will ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away?

If I am in total control of the kitchen then I know how many onions I have, how many cloves I have, for example, I am a bit on the OCD side, but since it's split between myself and my wife, I know exactly how much we have and she knows how much we have, so I said if it comes to the point where we end up throwing out at least one type of food a week then we put a post it note on the cupboard right on top of the fridge because that is where most of the food is and say "look we have this amount of food, we have got half a box of tuna cooked, it was cooked on this date so we have to eat it", things like that and she said no. I am going to try and press it to her again. Things like that, another sticker on the door of the cupboard that has all the onions and things like that, so that we know we have got six onions left and I don't end up going back and buying a bagful of potatoes when we have still got six potatoes. So simple things like two post it notes, on two locations, on two cupboards so that we know exactly how much food we have, so when I see that we cooked tuna two or three days ago, my son can't eat it, my wife doesn't like to eat so I have to make a sandwich or something like, so that then it doesn't go in the bin, it goes in my stomach, things like that. Mostly that and then before we go to a proper shop... so things like Sainsbury's is very straight forward, we know if we are running out of pampers, even if you stock it, it doesn't go to waste, so it is mostly non-food things, so we are not really concerned about what we get from Sainsbury 95% of the time. If I am going into Aldi, she will go through the entire kitchen and she will tell us, look we have got this many left and I know what I going to cook, so I am in charge of all the meat, she is in charge of all the veg. So if I know I am going to cook chicken, beef and pork this week, I know I need three onions for the entire week and things like that,

especially if you have got five onions, that is enough for the week, so leave it at that, so she tells me then I make up list and then I go and do the shop at Aldi. The things at Tesco are pretty straight forward so things like a pint of milk, box of chocolates for the kids, chocolates don't get wasted. Yeah that's about it.

So are there any situations where you, coming back to the sort of focus of the post-purchase behaviour, so if you find yourself in the situation where you have the food for various reasons, what would your strategies be to then avoid that being wasted?

If it is something like tuna or something, I would just make a sandwich out of it, I will eat it for breakfast or when I am watching Netflix at midnight. If it is something like leftover chicken, I will just quickly fry it and put some cheese in it and just have it on my own, things like that. So I will try and make something different from what we have leftover but it is very plain like lentils then I would have to eat it with rice or any veg. So usually there are two types of lentils, so she cooks lentils in the morning and then there is lentils leftovers for two days so I have to finish that before I get into the new one, so that is how the cycle works, I always end up eating the old lentils, Sri Lankans eat a lot of lentils. So where I come from, we come from the south, that's where my ancestors come from the south so we are used to lentils, so we have to eat lentils and my son loves lentils, so he gets lentils today and tomorrow and then she cooks another lentils tomorrow night or Wednesday morning and then I finish what was cooked today, and the cycle continues so it doesn't end up going to waste. I don't know how I learned it to be honest, it's a bit strange, maybe from my grandfather, he said you don't waste food and I saw him eating everything and finishing everything. He was not greedy, he ate a lot of food but whatever was on his plate he would finish it, even curry leaves he'd eat it, he said these are good for you, curry leaves aren't for you know, there is no Michelin star, you eat it, he was very much against food being thrown away so I think I got caught up in it when I was very young and since then I have been very strong on it. Even if you go to a restaurant, I tell my wife, make up your mind and make sure you eat it, if you are not sure ask the waiter and make sure you get what you want, and don't say it is not nice for example, I get really ticked off especially with my sister-in-law who makes a fuss most of the time, so we go to a restaurant but she'll say "oh I don't like this" it's like, "no you will finish it". I am not a control freak but when it comes to wasting food I get a bit like Elizabeth from The Apprentice.

So you have just mentioned already that you do occasionally have leftovers.

Yes.

So is that quite regularly?

No quite infrequent, so maximum once a week, if at all, if not everything ends up...

And then what would you do with those leftovers, so would you make them into another meal or just heat them up the next day?

Yes so things like lentils I'll just put them in the microwave, have it with the rest of the food or if it's something like chicken or fish, I would fry them up again for example and put some cheese on toast and have it with the chicken for instance. Yes so on a Sunday we put a whole chicken in the oven, if we are really hungry then we finish half of it, more than half, all the leftovers on Monday I just put them in a frying pan and butter up some vegetables and then put them in the frying pan, fry them up and just have it with bread, so I finished that, so the entire chicken was finished in two days, my son didn't get chicken the second day so he had to eat something else, but we finished it. So if it is plain mostly I would eat it as it is, heat it up, if it is something like meat, then I would try something different.

And how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Not much I think because I am used to it, physical it is not much at all, in terms of time it doesn't take much time at all but mentally it is a bit of a pain because I am a food freak when it comes to waste, so it is always on my head, on my mind saying do this, do that, so when it comes to planning food it has become sort of a regime now, Chinese on Wednesday's, pizza on Friday's, you say what's this, that is the way it is so we don't waste food. So I make up a routine for us every week so we don't end up wasting food. If you have leftover pizza and Saturdays usually we don't have a big lunch because we go out and we have snacks and all of that, so we come back we would have a sandwich or something and then remember there is pizza, and then we heat it up and then we have it and it's gone and then I know that food is finished and nothing has gone in the bin and I feel happy, it's like I have done a PHD or something, I feel better than doing that.

So do you ever recommend it to other people?

Yes close family, like my mum, my sister, sister in-law, my brother in-law finishes his food so not a problem, so anybody that is close to me who is not finishing their food, I say you could have served less for an example, even if we go out for a wedding back home Sri Lankan weddings are massive where you get such a lot of food, it's like King Henry VIII banquet. I see people serving such a lot of food and you can't finish it, I say do you need this, they say no its free food, I say it doesn't matter if it is free food or not just serve what you can eat and go for seconds, no-one is going to bill you for it because it is free food and things like that, I make nasty comments to people, even my mum says, you can't finish that, just finish what you can eat and then go back but I wouldn't say to people I'm more or even colleagues because then I think it becomes a bit intrusive or an invasion of their personal space because I wouldn't like someone coming and telling me you shouldn't be eating leftover tuna from two days ago because it is my system. So likewise I wouldn't try telling no-one, but family I would tell them don't waste food.

And you have already mentioned that your grandfather sort of influenced this a little bit but where would you say that you learned about this method or your strategies that you have got in place of not wasting food?

My mum is very frugal but my father is very wasteful, so I think I have seen my father wasting money, wasting food, lots of thing's and my mother trying to alternate things, regulate things with the family so we don't go bust, so I mean bust as money and friends and things like that. So he would bring lots and lots of food so what she would do is say, you're not eating this until next week, so simple things like rations, we say "can I have pasta tomorrow?" She'll say "no you are having rice tomorrow and the day after". So I learned it from her, and I have seen her finishing off all the leftovers for example, so since we cook our food in clay pots, so the nicest bit is at the bottom, once everything scraped off and put in the dishes, I have always seen her putting a bit of rice, stirring it up and eating it, I thought she was being a pig but then when I grow up and I was about 10/12 and I could understand, she gave me a spoonful of that and I realised that was the best bit, the end of it and now I do it when I am home. So I think I have learned it from my grandfather and I have seen it from my mother doing it because we come from a male dominant society, men normally don't go in the kitchen, so I have never seen my grandfather, or my father for that matter, in the kitchen. So I have seen my mum doing it most of the time, so I have learned it from her. But then he taught me the hardest... back home because it's such an unequal society, we can afford to have servants and daily helpers who come in on a daily basis and things like that. There is one man who has been with us for 20+ years, he comes in once a week, cleans the house and the garden or whatever and he gets some money and he gets three meals. He used to come on Sundays and Sundays as Christians was the biggest day for us, so we would have

roast pork, fried rice with beef, a very very heavy meal, so one day he came in and mum was in a very good mood and she put all the stuff together nicely and we had a really good lunch, so he gets a lot of food but then when he came back the next Sunday, he was thinner than usual, he looked a lot weaker than usual and I asked him "what's wrong", he said "after eating that food I couldn't digest it for a week, so I had to stay out of work for a week" and I realised ****, I mean we didn't give him poison we gave him the usual food we eat on a Sunday. It is not Christmas dinner but it is Sunday food for Christians, he is a Christian but he has never eaten that, he said "I have never had fried rice with beef, chicken curry and then roast pork and it was too heavy for me to digest, I couldn't digest it so I was puking, I was purging" and since then I realised that there are people... there is talk about when you go to Africa, if you give them flour the first thing they do is not make roti out of it, they actually put water in it, stir it up and drink it because they don't have time to do it but I didn't have to go to Africa to figure that out, I have people in my house who can't digest the good food that we give them, since then I realised, I think it is a sin to waste food because that is the most basic need, even more than clothes, we can be naked but we can't go hungry can we. I can sleep on the street, I don't need a Gucci jumper or something but I need food, doesn't matter if it is Michelin star or something, I keep saying Michelin Star because I keep seeing Sri Lankan friends going "I went to a Michelin Star restaurant and I had a main this big".

Very small then

That's a lot of money for a small piece of meat but it's food at the end of the day, so if we waste it and if we deprive others of that chance I think it is a bit of a sin.

So do you think that you learned about this from any friends or the media?

No, not really from my friends because most of them don't cook, they are not in charge of the kitchen, their wives cook it for them or they are still unmarried so they are still mummy's boys, so they have no clue of food waste, they just buy something and then eat it, that's it. But in terms of running the kitchen, I watch sometimes, you know things like how to save and all those things you get on BBC and ITV, I just laugh at those people because I do that already and you know before the narrator says I say you shouldn't have done it and things like. I find some of those things amusing, how people sort of... food and things. I think mainly from my upbringing, from what I have seen, what I have been taught, that's what I think is the strongest influence.

So you don't really find that these sorts of media programmes, although you watch them, you don't really feel that you learn anything from them?

Not really because I am programmed already, so I think maybe they just reinforce my beliefs, to make me look like a psycho and that is it yes.

So when you do use one of your strategies and you avoid any food going to waste, how does that make you feel?

Good, yes I feel happy, this week I have not wasted anything, even if things like... I know it's a bit of a foody, some greed, but it has come to a point that it's "are you not eating that, fine I'll have that as well". So I come to a point that I have 80% of what I am used to having as my meal because I know I get 10% from my wife and 10% from my son, so I get two pieces of beef from him and then some leftover chicken from her, "I'm not up for eating that, that looks horrible", "it's not horrible it's just the skinny bit of the chicken, give it, I'll have it", and then things like cartilage they are quite nice and they good for health, cartilage are good for

hyper tension, so I know that if you eat it, it is good for your health, if they don't like it I will eat it. So I put in 80% and I know I get 10% each every day, so I have half a slice of bread from him, half a glass of juice from her, so yes 20% of my dinner is sorted.

So if you had to describe that feeling which you said is quite a good feeling and compare it to a totally sort of food unrelated occasion where you also feel this good, what could that be?

It's a bit strange but maybe an old person, help an old person cross the street, somebody carry their groceries. I know it's not directly influencing anybody else outside of the home but I know that at least what we buy we eat it and finish it. So it ends up in our system, instead of in the bin. So I know that supermarkets in France, they have been ordered to get rid of their waste in a responsible manner, I think I read this article about this restaurant in Germany which fines customers if they don't finish their food, I don't know if it is wrong, whether it's just bogus or not, but I know the supermarkets in the UK just throw away their food, they don't give it away to charities or food banks. So yes it just makes me feel good that I haven't wasted food and I know I can't always buy somebody a meal or I can't cook somebody a meal but at least I make sure that that part doesn't go to waste. I was quite notorious when homeless people or some beggar would come to my place when I was kid, I would probably pack him lunch, I wouldn't give him money and he would just throw it away and once I almost punched a homeless guy back home, so I've calmed, I was about 12 and I gave him a full pack of rice with lots of fish and big things, he just asked for 20 rupees, I said I don't have money because I am a kid but I have lunch and he just threw it on the ground, I said you (inaudible, 30.21) and I almost punched him and my neighbour's stopped me from doing it but then I got in trouble from mum, she said they don't want food they just want money.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit in that I have got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in a bit of a spot of bother in that they have too much food and they didn't know quite what to do with it. If you could sort of almost take the role of an agony aunt or uncle, you know how, remember when you could write to, for example, a newsletter or something like that, and just see what sort of advice you could give them to the different scenarios, so I have got the scenarios here.

Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], that's a nice name.

Yes, so they are all on the first page but if you want to flip it over it is written in black each scenario, if it's easier for you to read.

Ok so you want me to read out...

Yeah you don't need to read it out, if you just read through it and then see what you could advise.

I think supermarkets are quite notorious for doing this, they do this on purpose, so they get rid of their close to being nasty food, so what I tell the missus is that I always check the sell by date when the delivery comes in, so if the chicken is going off tomorrow, I would say I don't want this take it back and in my comments I always put instructions for the driver or the packing guy, I say don't give me close to expired stuff, I am not going to take it. I think Sainsbury's have now made a note of it, so I have not noticed strawberries that are going off tomorrow that's coming in, so they give me at least a four to five day window. So I write a big paragraph saying, I have got a two year old, I am not wasting food, I haven't got a big fridge so don't send me these things, I know what to do, things like that maybe. So if you check expiry date on delivery and also put a nice comment because I think it goes through to the fulfilment team and they know this person knows

they are up to something nasty and they can't put in Strawberries or something that goes off tomorrow, so then they don't try being smart with you, that's what I do.

And in this situation now, obviously they have got the food in their fridge, is there anything you could suggest that they do?

Anything not to waste it, so if you are friendly with your neighbours, when I lived in London I had a neighbour she was a Swiss lady, she was very lovely and she ordered lots of food that she didn't need but she ended up giving me a lot of food, that is why we love her. She either cooks it or she doesn't, so she'd bring me fresh strawberries and say to me it is going to go off in two days and I can't finish this with my husband or I have cooked this beef casserole and it is too much for us, so I have given you half of it. If you are friendly with your neighbours you can give it to them, you can say look this is fresh strawberries, you have got three packs and you can't finish them off, so here is one pack for you. The other thing we do is since our kid goes to pre-school we send stuff with him, so we say give these to your friends, and they haven't gone bad, so things like Capri Sun, we got him a pack of Capri Sun mango and he doesn't like it, it's not bad for kids either so that's why we got it for him. So we ask the pre-school, can we send this and they said yeah the kids will love it, so we send it on Friday and all the kids finished it and then we got cheese strips for Halloween, he didn't eat it so we sent all of that to his pre-school and all the other kids finished it, things like that. So if you can find a place where you can send away food that would otherwise go to waste, that might help. If not if he had a panettone or something and he couldn't finish it, so what I did I bought a small pack of custard and I just bought it to ...[work room] and told all my colleagues and said there is panettone and you can finish it and that is gone in one hour, instead of that having to be in the fridge for one week. So sometimes I will just bring the whole thing somewhere and give it to people, it's my money so I would rather have the food in someone's system at least, as long as it doesn't end up in the garbage.

Yes.

When life gives you lemons you make lemonade. If there is anything leftover I make lemonade. With things like if you boil carrots, instead of throwing away the water you drink it because it is very healthy, it is very nutritious for you and you really feel it when you drink it, so just make lemonade out of it. Make a lemon based desert or make a dish that needs lots of lemon, something like that and then it doesn't go to waste. But then on the other side you think that buying a pack compared to just buying one is cheaper but then think if you end up throwing away two lemons, it would have been cheaper just to buy the one in the first place, so that is what I do, so yes that is what I would tell them. With the apple tree what I normally do is if I have excess apples, I just chop them up and put them in a roast, so if I am putting chicken on or something in the oven I throw in two apples chopped up with it.

Ok.

With the other veg, the apple gives it a nicer smell and you can actually eat it with the other veg and my son loves it. Apple is very good as a side when you are drinking and it also helps with hangovers, so you put a bit of salt and pepper and you eat three/four apples when you drink, it is a lot better than eating chicken, so for your health it is a lot better and we do this a lot at home and it's also a cheap alternative so you just chop up the apples and eat it with vodka or something. Or again give it away or just start a natural compost, if you have a garden then you can start compost and you can put all of this there or just give them to a food bank because it's your apples, things like that I think would help. If I have leftover food, because I try to have a set regime, so I always say look then I can have this for lunch tomorrow and then the day after, so I plan my

week based on PHD and things like that, so I know we don't cook so much on a Monday night because I get free lunch, so if you had ...[a work event] or whatever so I know I am getting lunch on Wednesday. If we have leftovers what I would do is I just say I can have the rest of this for lunch on Tuesday and Wednesday, so I would just pack it into boxes and then find me something else and I would pack that as well and then I would make two lunch packs for myself, so I would make sure that none of that goes to waste, so if you can take it to work and then that helps because food doesn't always go bad if you have cooked it properly, if you just keep it a couple of days and then finish it, that is about it.

Yeah, fine, thank you. Thank you very much. Good tips Delilah. So if I can just briefly summarise what you said, so you tend to do a couple of food shops per week that are more targeted, you vary between different supermarkets where you buy fresh food and then in others you tend to buy your branded products etc. You spend about £350 per month you would say on average but that includes yourself, your wife and your child. You do think that you don't necessarily have a lot of food waste because you are quite happy to eat leftovers and you do make other meals out of it. You are quite against wasting any food so it does make you feel bad or guilty, not necessarily from a financial aspect but also more from an ethical perspective of that there are other people that are going hungry in the world and that you find it morally wrong to waste the food.

Yes.

When you have managed to not waste any food you do find that is quite a good feeling and quite a positive feeling.

And the last thing, if someone has cooked something for you, they have made an effort, sometimes it's not always the nicest, instead of criticising them, you just get on with it and try and finish it, so that is what I say, just finish your food.

Yes.

If I spent two hours in the kitchen making Sri Lankan chicken curry that takes a long time and somebody complains that it has not got enough sauce, just put some salt on it, it is not an excuse for someone to leave it, now finish it.

And then the other thing would be... I've lost the plot now... that you do generally...you're quite happy to eat things beyond their sell by date or to just assess them or smell them but you wouldn't necessarily be happy for your wife or your child to do that because obviously you have got a two year old and you feel you have to be careful about that.

I wouldn't, even with my wife I tell her to stay away from it because, I don't know, I shouldn't let her do it because she is my wife and she is responsible for our kids, so if she gets ill after eating something, it is not a sexist thing but I went to a boys school and we ate all sorts of crap since we were 6, since we started in grade 1 and now I am used to it, so I am used to eating nasty food and I have had diarrhoea for example and things like that, I drink water from unclean taps and things because we're used to it because of things like when we play football or we go to a tournament, it is just really nasty food that you get served, you have no other option but to eat it. When you come to a different country with greater set of standards, what's wrong with the pack of beans that have been out for two or three more days and I know that the sell by date is, again, a precaution, it doesn't mean that it will go nasty on the day or the day after it, just keep the seals

covered and I think food tends to stay at least two or three days beyond that date, so as long as you eat it within period I think you'll be all right.

Yes, so is there anything else you would like to add or that I have missed?

No not really, I hate wasting food so I do whatever I can to make sure I don't waste food.

Ok thank you very much.

Interview 23

So this piece of research is all about food waste in home, so a lot of research has already been done about how much or how little food people are wasting at home and also how that makes them feel. Then there has been further research about people's prevention strategies to food waste, so looking at things like having a shopping list prior to going to do the food shop to prevent food waste from happening in the first place. This research is a little different in that we are looking at post purchase behaviour, so we are interested in strategies people have got in place of how to prevent throwing away any food that they have already purchased. So could I ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

So I shop for a family of three including myself, so it's my partner, my 23 year old son and myself. So I do my shopping on a weekly basis normally, sometimes on a two weekly basis, it depends on how quickly we are consuming the purchased food or also depending on some offers maybe that's available, so if I over purchased in the previous week on something, so it will probably delay the second shop and I shop online.

Ok, which supermarket do you go too?

Waitrose.

Waitrose.

It is either Waitrose or Ocado but I would buy the Waitrose food mostly from Ocado but Ocado is complimentary because they do have a different variety of food sometimes that I buy from Ocado specifically because they do have something that Waitrose doesn't have?

So would that usually be the supply that you use for...?

Yes so it's one or the other.

When you do your online shopping, do you still go to the shop sort of throughout the week if you run out of little things?

Very rarely but we do have a local shop in the village that would have the staple food like if we ran out of milk, for example, or I don't know ice cream.

Something you fancy, if I could be so rude to ask, how much would you say that you spend on average on food per shop?

If I do it on the weekly basis it's normally between £80 and £100 for a week and if I buy something on top of it in terms of the household items like washing powder and things like that obviously or if I buy expensive items like Manuka honey for example, which will be something like £50 a go so that will throw the limit but again I am not buying it on weekly basis, so it is maybe once in two months I purchase that kind of thing.

Ok would you say that you purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Fresh.

Ok and why is that?

Because I am trying to consume it within the week, so I do tend to cook from scratch and we use a lot of vegetables, my son is a vegetarian so probably that will... and again if I buy for example meat so it comes in the packet of 400 grams, I will then divide it and freeze it myself rather than buy it already frozen.

Ok, so I now would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most of us can remember at least one occurrence where we had to throw away any food that we have purchased, however you might be different. So firstly I am intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Something that has to be completely thrown without any second use of it basically put in the bin and the bin is sent to the collectors, so that would be the wasted food.

Ok so we are adopting the definition that food waste means food but also including drink that ends up in the bin, so thinking about drink, examples would be like milk, fruit juices or any fizzy drinks that you don't consume. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

I would say very rarely, if ever, because we have a bit of a garden so we compost food, I mean the leaves and peelings and things like that, so it goes into the compost. So the bits of bread I use it either to make croutons or if it is too stale it goes to a special bin where I just use it for the garden, so I just put some water on it and it ferments and it's used for food for a plant.

Ok.

So occasionally fruit goes off especially during the winter time the cold time when it is a bit frozen and it goes off before it can be consumed, it happens normally with the citrus, like lemons and easy peels but again it goes to the compost, it doesn't go to the bin, saying that I'm not binning anything.

So would you then class the compost as waste?

I wouldn't class the compost as the waste because it is sort of recycling and I recycle it on the premises so I wouldn't say it is wasted so it's used in a different way.

Would you say there is usually a type of food that you usually end up throwing away? Is there any specific type of food that you often find that you throw away?

No I don't think so, as I said I try to recycle, I mean cooked food can't be used in the compost but again if it is thrown away, maybe like a bit of pizza that nobody would eat or somehow left on a plate, so it would be little bits of food from the plates maybe, we don't have a dog, used to have a dog who would have taken care of it, so that goes to the bin.

When you assess whether you would still consume food or whether you might throw it away and that could also be whether you would then throw it in the compost, at what stage might you throw something away?

When it has visible sign of decay like unpleasant smell or unpleasant look, so something that would revoke me from eating or it can't be processed and you can't just fry it or reuse it any way.

Ok, so you would visually assess it?

Yes, I would visually assess it, I will smell it, yes.

Yes ok, can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you wasted some food or some drink?

I think during the Christmas time we slightly over consumed on the cheeses and some juices because we normally buy freshly squeezed juice and the online shopping arrived with the same expiry date, so we drank one bottle of orange juice and had to put the second one in the compost because it had an alcohol type, so it started to ferment and with the juice it can go to the compost. With the cheese because it will attract the vermin so it had to go to the bin, so it was probably about 200g of cheese gone.

Ok.

If I would notice it earlier I probably would have frozen some cheese but I didn't and at Christmas it is a time when it happens or a very hot day in the summer, which is really rare in this climate, you have to wait for one.

When you had to throw the orange juice or the cheese away, how did you feel?

I felt really guilty because I come from the background where I grow up with this courtesy of food and it was almost like a crime to do it when I was a child, and still I retain that unpleasant taste when I have to just throw things and people are starving and you are just quite a nasty person would is just throwing it, so that is how I feel, so I think waste always comes with a bit of a shame.

Ok.

It can be anything, not just food.

Not just food, ok. If you had to compare this feeling to something totally unrelated to food waste, what could another occasion be that would give you that equal feeling?

I think anything that would kind of overusing the power of human over the nature in a way, when you unwillingly break or accidently break the branch of the tree or something that you are causing harm and that associates with this, not like you stealing from somebody but it's in a way like you do some harm to nature by doing it.

Ok yes thank you. You mentioned that you feel guilty about throwing the food away from your background and you do feel guilty that you've have experienced lasting of food and there is other people who haven't got any food, so you said it's shameful to waste, are there any financial implications that play into that feeling of guilt as well?

I am not a rich person and I do try to save, so my wages...I would probably be really skint if I lived on my own, so my partner's wage sort of compliments mine immensely, double, triple, I don't know. So if I were on my own I would be much more careful with what I am buying, I probably would be under buying rather than over buying. So I would probably buy less and then go into the shop during the week to buy extra when needed. Because I am not that constrained with the money, so I tend to have a list and buy everything, still in the list thing. Internet buying helps, when you buy from home you can always go and check whether you have something left and how much you need to order. When you are in the shop I used to tend to over shop... what was the question?

Were there any financial implications that play a role into that guilt?

It would have been in the past but not as much now.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel guilty like you have just described and in fact most of us when we feel or expect something negative to happen we prevent from such a feeling to happen. So my next questions aim to address any practical strategies regarding how you try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier, so I will ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

I think I mentioned before that I normally divide meat in to smaller portions so I don't have to defrost big chunks of meat, so I defrost as much as I need to use at the time of cooking. I do croutons and I mean we cook our own bread so basically we wait until we have almost finished the loaf before we start to make another one and get some frozen dough as well for if we need to cook it quicker. If I cooked a big meal and I would not put everything on the table so I would put in a dish and the fresh things I would put the cling film round and put it in the fridge and then would cook with it again, for example I can do an omelette or reheat it maybe or do something with it, make another dish out of it. That is basically it, so try to either reuse or store in small bits.

Ok, so you mentioned previously that you like cooking from scratch and that you often cook from scratch, so do you often have any leftovers?

Depends what I cook, so for example if I cook lasagne, I normally cook for six portions because it tastes nicer when it is in a big portion so we will eat three in one go and the other three would stay in the fridge until the next day maybe, so we do save it rather than...

So you would make a bigger portion and save the rest?

Yes.

Ok, how much effort do you perceive this to be, so all those strategies you have just mentioned so from making your croutons or saving any leftovers?

It is nothing really in terms of it doesn't take extra time because you are normally do it between something else, if you're in the kitchen waiting for something to be cooked or if there is stale bread there, I'll just cut it

up and put it in a lower shelf in the oven, so it either cooks at the same time as everything else that is cooking or just sit there as it wouldn't get any worse if it stays for another few minutes. In terms of sealing the remaining food, you just cut it at the same time, so again it is not much time you spend on a special preparation for saving it.

Ok so you don't perceive it to be much effort?

No.

Do you ever recommend this strategy to other people?

I think my son picked it up naturally, so I can see that he is not throwing things, he reuses things or saves or if he cooks for himself, so again he would cook from scratch, he is a better cook than I am and would put the cling film over something that is a bigger portion and it goes in the freezer because he buys the vegetarian food for example, he would use the Quorn meat and keep another portion sealed and then would go back have the other portion, so he doesn't cook big portion he cooks for one. I normally cook either for three or for two so it is easier.

So you think that your son...

My son picked it up but I don't go specially telling... I do express my disappointment if I am throwing it away, if something needs to go to the bin for example, I would make sure that everybody in the household knows that, "why did you ask to buy this if you are not going to eat it, can you please next time, so I am not buying it next week, so you'll have holiday from it". Sometimes you are fed up with having something and it just naturally doesn't appeal to you for whatever reason and then you have a break and come back to it.

Ok so where would you say that you learned about this?

I learned it from probably my childhood, I grew up in a sort of Soviet Union, so where we either grow our food, it was seasonal as we had an allotment and preserved food, so from summer and preserve it for winter and also in that time you buy in the shop buy portions, so you go and you take your own jar to buy as much salad cream or milk. So it hasn't been prepacked, nothing had been prepacked, so cheese would be cut for you, sausage would be cut for you, so you go and buy 100g of that 200g of that, so you sort of know the weight and how much you consume and also there were limits. There was a period where you had special food vouchers that you would use so then you buy what you have to the portions because you don't have enough. So you wouldn't waste anything, it comes from the scarcity of the food because I've been on the other side, so that is why I think when people, when they see the big bins in front of people's houses, it's like what is going on, why are you buying so much. I mean I wouldn't tell them but I would think about it, it is such a waste, it doesn't make sense.

So you would say that it was your upbringing that you learned this from?

Yes.

Would you say that there are any influences that you took from the media?

With the media, media played backwards on me because I did study marketing, so normally I take the messages a negative way, when somebody is trying to give me ideas. If you buy three you buy something free, so I don't necessarily buy into it, I make my own judgement when I buy things.

So you don't think any kind of media presence has necessarily influenced but it was more your family upbringing?

It's more family upbringing. I think the recent media has only confirmed the fact that human activities is having a negative impact on our environment, whatever humans seem to be doing has a negative impact on our environment and obviously watching the telly and it just confirms what is already embedded into my psyche I think.

Yes ok, so when you have use for one of your strategies, so for example preserving the bread or all those many strategies you've mentioned, how does that make you feel?

I don't know, it doesn't make me proud or anything special, so sometimes my partner laughs at me, saying you're squirrelling things but it is sometimes nice just to have little things that you do like sometimes go for the croutons with a bit of salt or something... no special feelings about it. You know what you have because you normally know what is in your fridge, you know what is around and I know that I don't have anything laying the corners that is wasted or something that is too much somewhere that I am not aware of. Normally all these little bits are known to me and used, I make sure that it is used, if I'm high on croutons I will probably cook more soup during this period to lower the stock, so it does give you ideas of what to do and if you have stuff that needs to be eaten just think of a menu that you can do to get rid of that, the stock that is close to the expiry date.

So you wouldn't necessarily say that it gives you a great...so mentioned it doesn't make you particularly feel that good.

It is more of just the pragmatic practicality of running the household. So obviously in the back of your mind if you are not feeling negative so it is more positive then it stays with you, so then you don't have to get specifically excited about it but you are not negative, so it can count as a positive.

Yes, we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, I have got four scenarios here, so they are the ones in the black writing on each of the page, where people have found themselves in a situation of having too much food. I would like to ask you to just read through them quickly and see if there is any advice you could offer.

So Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] would be replying to me?

Yes.

So I am writing it to her and she's sort of replying... So with the extra food call her friends and have a party. Pickle things or at least cook them, so then you can store it longer as cooked food and change your shopping strategy for the next time.

Ok.

With the lemon that's easy to just put some sugar on it and put it in a glass jar, so it gives the juice and then you can have lemonade, so it is not a problem at all.

Ok.

I have got apple trees. So some fallen fruit that has already lost their shape and form you either put in compost so it can be used as a fertiliser or just leave it for the birds to finish. I would guess that Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] would have some nice recipe of apple pies for the apples that can still be used. You can bake it, if it is cooking apples and you can make jam, preserve and the apples still on the tree you can then take them and store them if they are not bruised, so they store for longer and then again you can eat them or cook with them. Sometimes in the village you can see nice people putting baskets out to say help yourself, so people who might not have apple trees can have them.

Ok.

Pasta, with pasta you can make a salad, I'm not a pasta salad fan but salad is one of the things. Omelette with...sometimes pasta can be fried a bit, cooked pasta, fried a bit with an egg, not especially a brilliant dish but it is still edible. Yeah there are I guess the main use but I wouldn't over cook on pasta anyway, you just cook it for two or three, you don't really know how much to go for, it is better to under do it than overdo it, really I'm not a big fan of pasta salads but the pasta salad probably would be an option.

Ok, so that concludes the questions I have. If I can just briefly summarise what you have just said and then please correct me if I am wrong or wherever you would like to make an addition. So you usually shop for a household of three, so your son, your partner and yourself. You do a weekly or bi-monthly shop depending on how you are getting on, you usually do an online shop or Ocado or Waitrose, you mentioned that very rarely you would top things up throughout the week but that rarely happens. You did mention that your average spend per week would be between £80 and £100 on food. You did say that you consider yourself to be wasting hardly any food at all because you do compost which you then wouldn't class as food waste and then you do have a lot of strategies in place to avoid the food from being wasted, so you would make use of any leftovers you have or you would make croutons out of leftover bread or put it into compost to make fertiliser out of it, so you have a lot of strategies in place there. You did mention that Christmas was a time where people overstock and that you ended up throwing some juice and some cheese away but you felt quite guilty about it because you did mention that in your upbringing you were taught not to waste food and that you felt it quite...

In quite a harsh way yes.

You did say that it made you feel quite guilty of wasting the food. When you talked about all your strategies that you have got in place for not wasting food, you did mention that it comes naturally to you to have these strategies in place and that is not necessarily perceived to be a lot of effort and then equally it doesn't necessarily give you a very positive feeling but it doesn't give you a negative feeling but it doesn't also give you a very strong positive feeling but it is more something that comes naturally.

Normal behaviour, yeah so why would you do different?

Yes, so it comes naturally to you to not waste food.

It is like when you breathe, you're not feeling happy about breathing, but the fact that you are staying alive you are fine.

Yes, is there anything you would like to add?

No I think you have summarised it perfectly fine.

Thank you very much.

Thank you, it was fun.

Interview 24

So like I just briefly said so this piece of research is looking at strategies people, like yourself have in place, food that they have already purchased going to waste, so any surplus you might have for various reasons, it could be over stocking from food shopping etc. and how you would avoid that going to waste. So if I could just start of by asking you to very briefly introduce yourself and tell me a bit more about your shopping behaviour, so in terms of food shopping, so who do you shop for?

Now I shop for the family, so it ranges between four and ten people I suppose.

So is it four regularly?

Well I have five children but one of them is not at home at the moment so four children, but one has just moved out but seems to come back, a bit like boomerangs so it varies, there is definitely four of us that are here full time...no actually there is five of us that are here full time.

But could be up to ten?

Yes

So how often would you do your food shop?

I probably go to the supermarket everyday but I don't do big shops every day.

Ok, so do you sort of do a big shop occasionally or do you just do little shops?

No I do little shops all the time.

Yes

Because I have to go to get...we seem to get through huge amounts of milk and bananas, so I always shop for milk and bananas so I just pick up things as I need them each time I go.

Ok and where would you say you typically do your food shop?

Which supermarkets?

Yes, or is it more private stores?

No, locally we have a Waitrose and a Tesco's, so I probably go to those two and Lidl's up the road, so I go to all three.

Yes ok and do you purchase much fresh or much frozen food?

No I tend to buy fresh

Yes ok and if you don't mind me asking how much do you think you sort of spend if you can sort of average it?

I knew you were going to ask me that, I should have checked really and looked to see how much I spend.

It is probably hard to say if you do it almost daily

Yes, I probably only spend about £40 a week, I don't know I would have to check, perhaps a little bit more.

Ok now I would like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most people can remember at least one occasion where they had to waste any food that they have already purchased but you might be different. So firstly I am intrigued to know that if I speak about food waste what would your understanding of that be?

My understanding of it is I suppose, is anything that is bought, purchased and not used, which is food waste I suppose.

Yes, so for our research we are looking at the definition of classing anything of food waste, that is food or drink so that can include fruit juices, milk or anything like that as well that is not consumed and ends up in the bin. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you had to waste food?

Very rarely, really not much waste at all, I suppose my family eat so much that there is not much that is left over and if there is something left over it just goes in the fridge and it gets used the next day, so there is very rarely food waste.

Yes

Having said that I bought food last week and everyone seemed to be ill and then there was food waste, normally I would put something in the freezer if it is not used you know but I did find myself throwing out some stuff that I probably wouldn't have done normally.

So what would you usually then say might be some food that would end up being thrown away?

I suppose for your research thing, there is so little that I would throw away really, I mean sometimes I suppose, if I have got some spinach or something that has started to go you know a bit icky in the fridge then I might chuck that in the compost but yes...

But very rarely?

Yes, I mean I don't buy excessive stuff and then don't use it, if I have stuff for whatever reason then I just pop it in the freezer.

So at what point do you sort of go and think 'oh this isn't quite right anymore, I'll throw that away?'

If it is mouldy or smelly, I mean I don't go by the sell by, used by dates unless it is something that is dodgy that I know that you can't keep but you know I tend to look at something and I think 'ok that smells fine and that looks fine, I can still use that'.

You just mentioned that something that would be dodgy to then use past the pass the sell by date, what sort of foods would you class as that?

Actually there was something that I did throw away the other day but I think it was because everyone was ill, but something like rice, if you have cooked too much rice and you can't keep it, you know then I might have to throw something like that away and not keep that and eat it.

Yes

Meat if it looks fine and it smells alright then we would still eat it.

So can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you have wasted some food or drinks and what happened and what led to it being happening?

Well like I just said really, I bought food and everyone was ill and no one seemed to want to eat anything at all and you know I didn't freeze it and I did throw it away, you know I had some fish that I couldn't do anything with so it just went in the bin.

And how did that make you feel?

Frustrated, waste of money and you know food, not very good, it's a rare thing to do.

So if you had to compare that feeling of frustration you just mentioned to a situation totally food unrelated, where you would feel the same level of frustration then what could that be?

Oh gosh

Just if you can think of something

I can't think of anything really....I just felt it was a complete waste of...I hate throwing food away and it seems like such an awful thing to do really and I think I was just cross with myself, sort of thought well ok, no one is going to eat it so I ought to have done something with it beforehand really.

That's fine, so obviously it is not nice to feel annoyed or frustrated like you just mentioned and in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative, adjust to prevent such a feeling, so my next question would aim to address the strategies that you have got in place regarding how you would try to avoid or limit the amount you throw away, so what do you do to try and avoid and limit the food you throw away?

Well as I say, if I knew that something wasn't going to be used I would freeze it or cook it up and freeze it or if the worst came to the worst give it to the dog.

So you have just very briefly touched up on it before, so do you ever have left overs?

Rarely

And then if you do what would you do with those?

I would use them to make up another meal, are you talking about left overs from a meal?

Yes

I would just use them in another meal or we would have it for lunch or the next day.

Ok and how much effort would you perceive that to be?

None whatsoever, I'm always quite pleased if I have got some left overs, makes a nice change saves me cooking something else.

Do ever recommend that to other people?

Would I recommend it?

Yes, or do you ever find yourself in a situation that you do?

No not particularly

And where would you say you learnt about that, so using left overs or avoiding food waste?

I don't know, maybe it was the way I was brought up, maybe that I did catering but not necessarily that is through catering, it will probably just be that I don't like wasting food and I feel that too many people throw away food because it's got a sell by date on it, so they just chuck it out, I think that's awful, I think it is a complete waste so it just goes against the grain I think.

Yes, do you ever find yourself taking in any advice on this from the media, so do you watch any sort of programmes where you think 'oh that's something I didn't know that I could keep' or something like that?

Not really, I don't think so.

So you very briefly touch on it that it makes you feel quite pleased so when you do avoid throwing something away and you can make something out of it, how does that make you feel?

It's just more efficient isn't it really, it saves money, it's a win, win situation really isn't it, and yes I don't like having to throw away things. Although we do compost, I suppose it is recycle but even so it seems like a waste.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, I have got some scenarios here where people have been in a situation of having either over stocked or having too much food for various reasons and if I could ask you to almost take the roll of an agony aunt, so read through the scenarios and see what advice you could give those people through those scenarios.

So the situation about the online shopping I would just suggest that they look at the sell by date and it is not something that has to be used if it is a sell by date so depending on what the food is, I suggest that they look at it and pop it in the fridge and if it is something that has to be used rather than a sell by date then just prepare the food, cook it and keep it and then...ok yes I mean you don't need to eat it by tomorrow because it is a sell by date and not a use by date so that would be the straight forward thing on that one. And why are they ordering so much food if they are not going to eat it anyway, perhaps order a bit less and perhaps use the stuff in the freezer rather than ordering more fresh stuff, recycle it.

Yes and on the back as well?

Ok so a single person, so if she has got four lemons she can always...if she is using one lemon for something she can always cut up the other lemon and freeze it or again use it to putting in dishes or give it to somebody else if it is cheaper to buy a pack of lemons rather than four lemons just pass them on to somebody else if she can't use them or freeze them, I have had lemons and just sliced them up and put them in the freezer.

Ok

If you cook far too much pasta then it's an ideal thing, you can pop it in the fridge and eat it the next night again or use it for another meal, make a different sauce and eat it the next evening or you can still freeze it, in fact I would just put it in the fridge and just eat it the next day.

Yes sure thank you. So if I just briefly summarise what you just said and if there is any additions you would like make or correct me if I am wrong, so you usually shop for about four people but can be up to ten, you do lots of shops throughout the week, so you don't necessarily do a big massive shop, you use any of the local supermarkets that are around you, so that could be Lidl, Waitrose, Tesco's, all in close proximity to get those. You said you are quite organised in the first place, so you buy what you need...

I wouldn't say that I'm organised and I buy what I need, I would say that I tend to think, 'oh well that's a good deal, I'll buy that and we will have that tonight for supper or something', but I am not very organised that I have a list and go shopping with that and only buy what I need, my husband would completely disagree with that.

Ok

But I'm used to cooking for...it's rare that they is only four of us so you know, so I tend to buy for more.

You said you hardly ever waste any food and it doesn't often happen, so it could be sometimes something like maybe some spinach or anything that you perceive to overcook but it is not so safe to reheat, so something like rice, usually if you had any leftovers you would use them for another meal or freeze them or put them in the fridge or something. It was only recently when some family members were ill that you then found yourself in a situation where you had to throw something away.

I kept it too long and it had gone off.

Yes and that made you feel quite frustrated because you felt it is wrong to throw away food and also the money implication of it, it's a waste of money.

It is yes

You don't really perceive it to be much effort to make anything out of leftovers or freeze anything and it is quite pleasing if you do avoid wasting any food, is that right?

Yes that's right.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

It is quite interesting isn't it though, I mean I have got some friends who will do a big huge shop on a weekly basis and they will go through their fridge and just chuck out things because you know, this has gone past their sell by date or something and just chuck it out, it just seems so wasteful to do that with any but yes.

Interview 25

So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home and it's looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle, so there has been a lot of research that was previously done into how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and then there has also been a lot of research that looked at the kind of preventative measures that people take in order to avoid food waste occurring in the first place, so for example making a shopping list prior to going shopping and all these kind of measures. What we are looking at is food waste from a bit of a different angle, so it's from that of post-purchase behaviour, so we are interested in what normal people like yourself do in situations where they have over stocked on food or they have got too much food in the house and we are looking at all ways you deal with this surplus of food and strategies you adopt to, rather than throwing the food away. So if I could ask you just to very briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits, so for instance who do you shop for?

Two thirds of the year for just my husband and I, the rest of the year is when we have the kids, our grandchildren and then obviously we go from 2 to 18 maybe just a weekend or for a week so that it is quite different.

So generally it would be yourself and your husband.

Yes.

Ok and how often do you shop for food?

I don't like shopping so I stick to once a week.

Ok.

And if I run out then I would just go and get it.

Yes, so you tend to do a big shop and then top that up with a little shop as well?

Yes.

Ok and where would you say that you typically shop for food?

Where I tend to go for food... on Saturdays I go to the market but mainly it is the supermarket and then Saturdays I just top up or if I fancy something I get it at the market.

And is there anything specific you would go to the market for, so would it be something like maybe meat or fruit and veg or something like that?

It's for fruit and veg.

Fruit and veg, ok. Do you ever do any online shopping for food? Do you ever have any delivered?

I did for a couple of years a long time ago and I didn't like it.

Ok, so when you do your big shop for the week, how much do you think on average that you spend on that?

For the two of us it will be about £60, something like that, £50/£60.

Yes and do you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

More fresh.

Ok and do you tend to cook from scratch or do you buy many ready meals?

No I cook from scratch.

Ok yeah, thank you. When you say that you do your shopping at the supermarket is it more the big supermarkets or do you go to the smaller ones?

It depends, if one week I do a bigger shop and then I find the following week I don't need so much, so I just tend to come to the local one, otherwise I go maybe to the big one in ...[local town], to Tesco.

Ok, so I would now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most of us can remember at least one situation where they had to throw away any leftover food, however you might be different. So firstly I am intrigued to know that when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

To me it is food that when I am cooking or having bought it when I go and cook it it's gone rotten otherwise (inaudible, 04.26).

So for the purpose of this interview we are extending this definition of food waste to also included drinks, so we would class as food waste also things like throwing away milk or fruit juices or any kind of fizzy drinks that you'd opened and then hadn't consumed, so it is about thinking about any food or drink that is not being consumed and that is being thrown away in the bin. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Not very often, if there is any food leftover and if it is just enough for one instead of two then I would freeze that because I travel a lot to go and see people, so my husband stays behind so he would get it out of the freezer, I freeze it, no I don't throw very much.

Yeah and do you ever have any kind of salad in the fridge, any vegetables or cheese or something that you would then throw away or do you tend to use everything that you have?

We avoid this, I make soups and the only thing I have to throw away is if I buy the bags of salad, after about two or three days they go all soggy and horrible then I have to throw it away but the veggies, at the end of the week when I have done the shopping, I just make a soup or roasted veg or something like that, not very often because they tend to last a week if they are in the fridge, they do last a week except for salad, lettuce, things like that.

So why might you throw something away, do you kind of go by the sell by date or do you assess it?

No, no because things can last longer than it says, so I throw it away when it has gone rotten, or I smell it.

Yeah so you would just physically assess it?

Yes, it's like yoghurts, yoghurt pots say the 10th of January, I only throw them away if they are fermenting or when I try them and they are off, otherwise they do last, and the same with the cold meats and things like that. I've got a relative who is a chemist and I remember a long time ago he told me they put a date because they have to but most meats and sealed things can last one week more and they do, so I only throw it away when it has really gone off.

Ok, so you would just kind of look at it and see if it's still ok to eat and if it is you would.

Yeah, and I'm here doing this, I haven't poisoned myself or anything yet.

Can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink?

I think it was just after Christmas, I think I had some salad, the bags they went because I bought them before the kids came home, I bought it 4/5 days before but by the time I use it, it had gone bad, it's mainly the salad, the bags of salad.

Yes, so you said that your kids were coming home, so you had bought them or maybe thought that you would use them and then your kids come home and you haven't.

Yes

Ok, how did you feel when you had to throw the salad away?

Well I don't like it because I am throwing away my money maybe.

So do you feel guilty if you have to throw any food away?

Not guilty, I just don't like it, it's just a waste.

So it is more the financial aspect rather than...?

Well no as well, when I go to the market I see, say I'm going for salad, a bag that is reduced because of today is the day, then I will change, I will get that because I know the supermarket will throw it away as well, I will buy that and I will have it in a day so rather than it getting thrown away by them.

Ok, if you had to compare this feeling of kind of feeling annoyed that you had to throw the salad away and it's a waste of money to something totally unrelated to food, what could another situation be where you feel equally annoyed about wasting something?

About wasting something else apart from food?

Yes, totally food unrelated, so any kind of situation where you feel equally annoyed?

Time, yeah, waste of time.

Waste of time, so someone wasting your time?

Yes.

Ok.

Someone wasting my time or I come into the shop wanting to buy something, I can't find it, I go back home empty handed, I don't like that either. It's great when I come and I get all my food because I don't like shopping, so I go shopping when I have got a list of things to do and then I want to do it all in one, but if they haven't got it, it wasn't worth it.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel annoyed or wasteful and in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we adjust to try and prevent this from happening again. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies that you have got in place to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away so please feel free to use any specific examples if that helps you, so what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

I do my shopping once a week, that is for the two of us and it works out right and then I always have my list, always my list, mainly because I forget some things as well and then I have to have another trip to the shop, have to spend time again in and out so I just... and before I go out to shop I go and look in the fridge to see what I have got, I might not need to get as much and if you see my shopping list it would be, say potatoes, if I've got it but it wouldn't last me a week I would put a half there meaning I don't want a full bag, say we've got four, I only need another four or eight, three packets or something so it tells me how much I need to get, so I look at the fridge first and see what I have got in there.

Ok, so you kind of look what you have already got?

Yes.

If you, for example, you've mentioned this very briefly already so coming back to any situation where you do have too much food left over for various reasons, so what would you do with that rather than throwing it away?

If it is fresh, if I can't use it before then I will freeze it, if I can freeze it I will make something and then I will freeze it.

Ok so that could be something like soup or...?

Anything.

Ok and then do you ever have any leftovers when you cook?

Yes, I would just freeze them in the Chinese plastic...

Takeaway boxes.

Yes, it's ideal for one person so I just put it in there.

Yeah and how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Sorry.

How much effort do you perceive that to be?

None.

No effort?

It comes automatically.

Yeah?

Yes.

And do you ever recommend this to other people?

Oh yeah, my daughters obviously, my daughter does the same, she does a shop and then half way through the week she will replace things (inaudible, 13.42-14.00) but I think it is because they have seen me all their lives and now they are doing it in their own families as well.

So you have passed it on to someone?

Yes.

So where would you say that you learned about this?

Well I've seen it from my mum as well, she was quite (inaudible, 14.24) with food, from her, unconsciously for being, you know we were eight, so we had to manage the food and the finance.

So you explained that it was sort of from your upbringing and that you learned it from your mother and do you think there is any influence from the media, do you ever watch any kind of programmes or read any articles?

I don't read articles, I watch the programmes when they do programmes about food wastage, I watch them but really it's me. There was something in the newspaper the other day that Marks & Spencer's just after Christmas threw over £10,000 worth of food, that's wrong, they should be fined, Tesco do it as well and Waitrose, I mean they all do it, they just throw it away rather than give it to people that need it or take it to the homeless or soup kitchens or whatever, it really really gets to me because it is like being stubborn, like saying they cannot have it and we cannot get any money out of selling it but they are not going to have it either for free, its being stubborn and very selfish.

And then when you watch these kinds of programmes does that influence your own behaviour?

Yes, well it makes me think that I am kind of doing the right thing really but little me is not going to change anything, that's what gets me, it is really getting people to think the other way.

So when you have used one of your strategies, so for example you made a soup out of vegetables that you would otherwise throw away or they would be leftover, how does that make you feel?

It's good, it's good, it's good because I like doing things like that, helping as well but it also makes me, I like seeing the fridge empty and put fresh food in rather than just keeping an old carrot together with the new ones, I study all the food and things I'm going to eat and then put a weekly batch in there.

Ok.

Now I feel pressured to do well.

So we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, so I have got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in a situation of having too much food for various reasons and if I

could just ask you to, I've got two here, so if I could ask you to read through the ones in the black and then just see what sort of advice you would give to these people.

Lemons, well lemons last a long time in the fridge, if she puts them in the fridge in the bottom draw with the fruits it will last a long time. I have got lemons in there that have been there a while, since before Christmas because my kids like gin and tonic and all that stuff and we had a big piece of salmon, so I bought two packets of four, so eight lemons and I think all four are actually all right, they are actually fresh, so I just put them in the fridge. Cakes or lemon drinks, honey and lemon very nice. This I do at home because we have got two apple trees, cookers as well for cooking apples so we pick them up, I go and look for the ones that have fallen and I stew them and put them in the fridge, in the freezer and when we see that they are all ready then we pick them and then we put them in a box in the garage and we pick them in September because we went on holiday in the middle of September, so we pick them up in October when we come back and we are still eating them.

Ok so you would then just pick them out as you want to eat them?

So yes I pick them out and store them properly and yes, last night I had two, I stewed them and I had some with my breakfast this morning and if they are soft I still stew them and just put them in the freezer. I do that yeah because I've got apple trees.

Yes ok thank you.

But that is thinking ahead and thinking with your initiative obviously because especially some people (inaudible, 20.26).

So that's all the questions from me so far, so if I just briefly summarise what you have said and then if anything is wrong then please feel free to correct me or add at any point where you would like to. So you said that generally it is the two of you, so you and your husband and then occasionally you have got all you children and grandchildren come in, so then there will be more people to cater for but generally it would be the two of you. You don't particularly like food shopping, so you tend to kind of hold on and do it when you really need to, so you tend to do a big shop once a week in the supermarket but then you also go to the market to buy any fruit or veg and do that. You said that you generally buy more fresh products and that you cook from scratch and you don't really perceive that to be that much effort. You said that you don't tend to waste any food because if there are any vegetables that are not looking too good then you would just make something out of them, so you would make another dish like a soup. You do assess the food to see if it is still good to eat so you wouldn't necessarily just go by the sell by date on products and just blank out throw it away but you would sort of look at it or taste it to see if it is still good to eat and then would still eat it. You did say that occasionally that you do waste food, and you mentioned that it was the salad that you had bought just before Christmas before your children came was one of them because it doesn't last that long. You did say that you do find it annoying when you have to waste food because it is a waste of money and you don't feel that it is right to waste food. You don't perceive it to be any effort to make use of any leftovers or avoid the food waste and that when you do manage to make a dish out of something rather than throwing it away that it does make you feel quite good. Does that sum it up?

Yes.

Ok thank very much.

You see we've had four kids as well so obviously now it isn't a problem but when they were little and I wasn't working money was a big thing to us so I think it depends on what you have had to do in the past that makes you do something now.

Yeah, thank you.

Interview 26

This piece of research is all about food waste in the home so there's been a lot of research that's been done on how much or how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and further research about prevention strategies people have got in place helping them to avoid food waste from happening in the first place. This research is more looking at food waste from a different angle so from that of post-purchase behaviour so what we're interested to find out is the practical side of food waste prevention, so in other words how people like you ensure that they make use of the food that they're already purchased. So if I could just ask you to briefly introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping habits.

So normally I buy my food online. So I like to buy my food every three weeks, the bulk of everything so dried products and cleaning products and dried foods. At that time I also buy a little fruit and veg but I do try and keep the veg fresh, I try and buy that regularly. I do buy a lot of frozen veg as well so I keep my food in the freezer. Usually when I buy my food on the very day I repack it into freezer bags so I can put it in the freezer so it doesn't waste. I do however keep some food in the top part of the fridge and I try and meal plan to make sure that my food doesn't go to waste. So Sundays usually I try and cook ahead and so on, so I usually use my vegetables towards like a stew or something, that's usually for lunches or something. Then the evenings it's just usually a lot of fresh food and if I see that the day's about to expire... well I try and look at the dates obviously because I don't like to waste the food and waste money so I try to cook in order of date as well.

Ok so you mentioned that it's every three weeks that you say you do your online shop?

Yeah.

And where would you do that?

Normally Tesco.

Tesco ok.

Yes because it's most convenient at the moment. Then the small bits normally Marks and Spencer because that's right by my gym so.

Ok so you would get any fresh produce you need as and when in there?

Yeah.

Ok and who do you shop for?

Ok so I normally shop for myself and sometimes for myself and my housemate, depending on if she wants some other things as well.

Ok. So you mentioned that you do buy some frozen veg, so would you say you buy more fresh or more frozen food overall?

I think it's a balance because I don't really like to eat too much frozen food because I don't like preservatives so yeah I prefer fresh. So when I can buy fresh I do try and buy fresh.

Ok yeah, and do you buy more fresh or more processed food?

Fresh food yeah.

Fresh food, ok. So your bigger shop you would do at Tesco, the big supermarket and then the smaller ones you would do at the smaller M&S one?

Yeah, the smaller M&S yeah.

Ok. So I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occurrence where we had to waste any food that we purchased however of course you might be different. Firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

What I understand by food waste is throwing away food that is out of date or approaching end of date or food that looks off.

Ok so we're adopting the definition that food waste means any food, but also drink so thinking about examples might be milk or fruit juices or fizzy drink, all that kind of thing, that end up in the bin so that aren't consumed and end up in the bin. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Personally not so much. If I was to waste food it would probably be like a fizzy drink because I don't like fizzy drink and neither does my housemate but we do have fizzy drinks sometimes when friends come over and then if it's left over it's just left in the fridge until it's flat and we have to throw it out. Personally in terms of fruit sometimes I may have a few pieces and then I get over it and it just kind of sits there and then I throw it out.

Ok if you could just specify anything that you say that you would usually throw away or that you throw away more often.

So probably fizzy drink and milk because that goes out of date pretty quickly. Sometimes fruit I think comes next and veg some I do.

And how often would you say that you...?

For instance this week it's happened three times already.

Is that pretty average or is that sort of an exception?

That's an exception because I think we're throwing out quite a bit of things. But yeah fizzy drinks, I threw out some coca cola, I threw out some milk as that had gone off and threw out some green beans because I'd gotten over them.

So would you say it is on a weekly basis usually?

Yeah on a weekly basis maybe once.

Ok. So why might you throw something away?

Usually because it's out of date or I'm not interested in eating the item anymore.

And when you say it's out of date, so how would you assess that?

So out of date I look at the date that's on the product and if that date has gone by, normally on the day it's still fine and I think maybe a day or two afterwards is ok, maybe three days after then I throw it out. But things like chicken, on the day or day before because I'm a bit scared about that.

Ok yeah so would you just look at the date or would you also visually assess it or smell it or taste it?

I'd look on the date depending on the item, like I said chicken date without even assessing because I'm just scared of salmonella and all that. Then other types of food like fruit, fruit usually I keep it beyond the date because if it still looks good I think it's still fine. Veg, I mean you can get green veg and all sorts that will still look good a week later, even cabbage and so on so I don't mind keeping that. Onions I can keep even two weeks after. Eggs I can still keep the week after, if I do the egg test and it's still fine so yeah.

So you mentioned the egg test so how would you assess that, tell me more about that.

So water in a jug and then you put the egg in. Sinks, floats, sinks, floats... oh gosh now I'm having a brain moment. One or the other, sinks/floats it should tell you whether it's still off or on, or if you crack the egg if it smells.

So you would kind of visually assess any fruit or veg you have, whether it's still ok to use and then maybe with eggs...

So if the fruit is a little soft now obviously then maybe... if it's soft I mean what I normally do is chop it up and put it in a plastic bag for smoothies and put in the freezer, but if it's really really bad and started getting mouldy then I'd throw it out but if it's just soft it's still good enough for a smoothie so I still use it.

So you kind of visually assess it as well as just looking at the dates.

Yeah.

Yeah, ok. Could you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink and explain what led to it being wasted?

This morning. Yeah I had to throw out some vegetables because we are planning on moving soon so I just figured it's going to go bad between the move and everything and I'm not going to have a chance to actually eat any cooked food, I'll probably be eating take out so it's going to go off so unfortunately we had to throw it out.

When you had to throw out the vegetables, how did that make you feel?

I didn't feel too good about it because I'd felt as if I'd wasted money and why did I bother buying it if I don't end up using it.

Ok so you said you don't feel good about it. So is it mainly the financial aspect that underpins that?

The financial aspect and then I also think about the people who don't have that, so you've just thrown something out somebody else could have used it.

Ok and do you feel good if you throw food away?

Yeah I do, I do.

Ok and why's that?

Like I've just mentioned it's wasting so I mean it has other implications on the environment and financial, why did you bother buying it and so on and so forth, and other people could have benefited from that food rather than me so I shouldn't have bothered in the first place.

Ok if you had to compare the feeling you felt when you throw the food away to something totally unrelated to food waste, so another totally different occasion, what would you say that occasion is or was?

Like throwing away clothes when you can give them away to charity.

Ok.

There's always somebody who can do with that, with that thing that you can't...

Ok. So obviously it's not nice to feel bad or guilty like you just described, in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling. So my next questions aim to address the practical strategies that you have in place regarding how you try or avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier.

So to try and avoid waste I normally keep a running shopping list. So I have one on my phone, I have one on my Tesco food app so I know exactly what I need on a three week basis, so that's almost a month. Then on a weekly basis I just write on my phone what I actually need to buy. So eggs for instance I know that I do eat a lot of eggs, so if I buy 12 eggs that should be enough. Sometimes I buy 15 and I know if I buy 15 that's wasting because I'm not going to really use them. Another thing, if for instance fruit I mentioned earlier on, if I bought fruit and I thought I would eat it but don't get a chance, try and chop it up and put it in a freezer bag and put it in a fridge freezer for a smoothie at a later point in time. If it's meat and maybe I ended up going out for dinner instead of being able to eat at home I've got freezer bags, I don't mind freezing, because I know if you freeze meat it's not going to go bad in at least a month or two, you can still eat it. I used to throw it out before I realised you could actually put it in the freezer so yeah I try and find alternative means. If not then if I've got time at that particular moment, if it's mince or something then make a chilli con carne and put it in a piece of Tupperware and then just keep it in the fridge and I can serve it up through the rest of the week or something.

Ok, yeah that's fab. So when you cook, so you mentioned that you like fresh food because you don't like the preservatives so would it be accurate to say that you cook from scratch?

Yeah, yeah I think almost every day yeah. I like to make my own food yeah.

Do you ever have any leftovers?

Yeah I do a lot. So the leftovers are usually my lunch meals for the week. Like I mentioned I do cook quite a bit on Sunday because mid-week I don't have time between thesis writing and going to the gym and everything so whatever leftovers I have that's what I eat. For lunch just now I had leftovers from three days ago for instance yeah.

Ok so you would portion them up and keep them in fridge.

Yeah I'll portion them up and keep them in the fridge yeah.

So thinking about all these strategies you've just mentioned to me, so for example packing up the fruit into bags for smoothies or freezing the meat or cooking ahead, how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Well it doesn't take that much time in your day. I mean it's just five minutes or something, it's not a lot of effort, you can do that whilst watching a show on your iPad or something, you're going to go and sit down anyway so I don't see that as an inconvenience.

Ok and is that ever something that you recommend to other people?

Yeah I would recommend that so like I said before I buy my groceries every three weeks so I just know that when the groceries arrive, because I select the time period anyway for them to arrive, so I already know that maybe for the next 15 minutes I'm going to be packing and sorting my food and figuring out what I'm going to be eating when and dates, first in, first out type of thing and yeah so if you just schedule it in advance and keep it in mind then it's not time wasted it's planned for so I would recommend other people to do something like that too.

Is it something that ever comes up in conversation with other people? Were you happy recommending it to other people?

Yeah if it was my housemate because she used to always keep her food in the fridge and then throw the meat out and it used to really annoy me so I bought her freezer bags and then she started packing her meat and food. If she doesn't want something she will offer me. So for instance eggs, she doesn't like to eat the egg white but likes the egg yolk and she used to throw it away all the time and it really used to annoy me so I just thought you can give it to me then or you can put the egg white in the bowl and you can use it for something else, whilst you're cooking pasta or something yeah.

Ok. Where did you learn about this method or your strategies you've just mentioned?

I can't say I really learned about them anywhere but maybe it's got something to do with heritage because I'm from Africa, Zimbabwe to be particular, and it's a 3rd world country, when I go home I do see a lot of poor people as well and I know what poverty looks like and you don't want to waste food so it was just something inborn so to say or inherent where you just know not to waste. Growing up it was always you don't waste

food and where I come from you don't look at the date per se on things like eggs and so on, like that's where I learnt the egg method because we used to do that when I was growing up, if it smells then you throw it away. If the vegetables look all right you can still use them, if there's a part that's not looking good then you cut it off, you use the rest. Meat, as soon as you buy it, we don't really keep it in the fridge, put it in the freezer directly so it's habits I kind of grew up with and then I've just adapted them to life here.

Ok, would you say that you've learnt anything in this regard from the media?

Yeah I do watch a few shows on Channel 4 on food waste, and there's another on buying... I've forgotten what it's called now... is it Greg from...

MasterChef.

MasterChef yeah, then he goes into the family and so on and recommends what people should buy and people who over spend or just waste food and so on, so those shows got me really interested in how to plan my food and how to buy what is necessary, not what is unnecessary and how to also then cook some of those leftovers so if you've got vegetables and so on you can make them into a soup rather than throw them away etc.

So would you say that you've actively taken on some advice that you saw on those shows?

Yeah because I like those kind of shows so yeah.

Ok yeah. So when you've used this, one of your strategies, and you end up making use of food that otherwise you may have thrown away, how does that make you feel?

Resourceful. It makes me feel resourceful and yeah just good that I've actually managed to figure out what to do with it instead of throwing it away.

Ok and now thinking about another totally unrelated occasion that would give you an equal feeling, what could such an occasion be?

I think similar to an earlier example like you've got something you don't want that you don't fit anymore, you don't like, instead of throwing it in the trash maybe you can take it to a charity shop or offer it to a friend or someone and they may make use of it instead of just throwing it away.

Ok. We're now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit. I've got four scenarios here where people have got too much food for various reasons. It's always the ones written in the black in the box. If I could just ask you to read through them, you don't have to read them out loud, and just see what kind of advice you could give them.

Ok so I can read and then just give you the advice.

Yeah that's fine.

Ok well for Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], firstly I would say you could buy less lemons. But if you have to buy a pack of four lemons I would say you can always make a lemon pie or you can make lemonade or you can freeze them for other purposes later or use them in your tea etc. but if the option is for four lemons and I really want one, I would just look for a shop where they sell loose lemons.

Ok.

Ok so the 2nd scenario about the apples. I would get in touch with someone who has got like a food market on weekends that's done in the town centre, I think, on Saturdays and Sundays or something, you've got people who have got food trollies and they sell fresh fruit, perhaps I would get in touch with them to see if they would take on my extra load of apples and sell them rather than watch them rot and go to waste. Ok so with regard to the Italian food and the pasta, well she's mentioned that her family does love Italian food so she's cooked too much and her family are too far out the way, why not package some of that and give it to the family so they can also enjoy it since they love it already. Alternatively why not pack that as packed lunches for a few days later. You can pack it and put it in the freezer and then defrost it even three days later and so on and it's still all right, rather than throwing it away.

Ok yeah. Thank you.

Ok so about the fresh items ordered online. Firstly she can actually return those if she checked the date because you have that option but if she didn't do that and she kept it all I mentioned earlier on that you can chop your fruit up and put it in freezer bags for use later such as smoothies so she could do that rather than throwing it away. Oh but she also mentioned that her freezer is full to bursting so I cannot put them in there. Give them away to some friends. Yeah so eat them with other people.

Ok yeah. Can I ask you one more question which I forgot to ask you right at the beginning? How much would you say you spend on average per food shop or per week on your food?

Per week I think maybe about £30 yeah. That's including if I include the three week budget. So if I look at my three weekly budget that's maybe about £110 and then per week to top up things maybe another £15, £10 to £15.

Ok so £30 per week then would equal out.

Yeah somewhere there.

Ok thank you. So let me just briefly summarise what you just said and then please feel free to add or correct where necessary. So you do shop for yourself and occasionally your housemate, usually on a three weekly basis so you do that mainly at Tesco online because it's most convenient for you and then you would do top up shops at Marks and Spencer because that's again in a convenient location for you. You mentioned that you spend about £30 per week on your food. You buy mainly fresh items and you like to cook from scratch and like to have fresh food but you would buy things like frozen vegetables for example as well. Because you do your three weekly shop you would then kind of plan ahead on your meals and you would kind of portion up any kind of meat or something and freeze it to help you make use of anything. You did mention that you waste food approximately on a weekly basis and that could be items such as milk or any vegetables that have gone bad or items like that. You did mention that it made you feel quite bad for wasting and guilty about wasting the food, mainly for the financial reason of being annoyed that you wasted the money you could have otherwise spent. You did say that you do try and avoid wasting food by if you've got any fruit, for example, you would portion that up and freeze it for a smoothie or you would still assess whether the food is good to eat past the sell by date maybe. So if it is vegetables you would just look at them and still use them and portion them up. You did say that it makes you feel quite good and resourceful of making use of the actual food that you manage to use rather than throwing it away and that you mainly learned of this through your family and friends, but that you also take interest

in the media portrayal of this. So you mentioned that you watch a couple of shows on this which gave you some tips on how to make use of food that otherwise would have been wasted, is that correct?

Yes that's correct, yeah. Pretty accurate.

Ok.

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So this should be recording now. So like I said a little bit in the introduction the research that we're doing is about food waste, looking at it from a bit of a different angle in terms of that we're looking at food waste and the strategies that people like yourself employ to avoid throwing food away they've already purchased. So it's not so much of looking into not overstocking in the first place as in only buying the things you need but if you find yourself in a situation where you do have food that's about to go off or that you have got left over, what sort of methods you employ to deal with this so it doesn't get wasted. If I ask you to quickly introduce yourself, so tell me a little bit about your shopping behaviour, for instance how many people do you shop for?

Mostly two, but we do entertain as well, so myself and my husband. We're often on a diet so I wouldn't have said that we have a regular shop at all, I've never ever done that because we've not always lived in one place so I've never had a Monday I go shopping and I buy these things and I don't plan meals at all. It's a case of looking in the fridge and thinking what shall I have. I plan if I'm entertaining, if I don't entertain... things might sit in the fridge, I might buy them and think that will be nice to have but I won't necessarily think what day or what meal we're going to have it at, but I will assume that I will eat it before it will go off. Sometimes that doesn't happen and then I'll have to reorganise things and see how I can use it, which might be bunging it in the freezer or might be recycling it into something else so that's how it is.

So typically where would you say you shop for food?

I shop locally. I probably principally shop in the supermarkets. I'm not... I like to do the whole healthy organic stuff but I'm a bit lazy and I don't spend a lot of time hunting it out. I like free range eggs and free range meat, and we have very good local suppliers so I try and do that but that's not to say I don't buy things in supermarkets because I do, and I buy a lot of veg in the supermarkets because I don't tend to think that they're any worse, I think they source their veg quite well. So I'm lucky I can afford to go to Waitrose, but I also shop in Tesco, Lidl, wherever I happen to be really, and if I'm doing a larger shop I probably would go to Tesco, a large Tesco where they have got lots of choice but I do like going round Waitrose too because they have all sorts of interesting things.

So how often would you say that you go shopping?

Oh dear, how often... it's more a case... I'm very fortunate I'm retired so my time is my own, so I do it as and when. So if I'm out I might pop in somewhere to get some things because I'm out and I'm going past somewhere but I don't necessarily go and do a weekly shop. So it's probably almost every day I buy something, but not every day, I could go three days and not buy any food. And we eat out a reasonable bit as well, so there are times where I think well I'm not going to need to shop, and we've got a flat in London, we

go up there so then I've got... I have spent a lot of time thinking about food because I have done a lot of carrying food up and down and that sort of thing so the logistics of keeping food from going off and not wasting it is something I've been very conscious of for a long time.

Ok, if you don't mind me asking, how much do you think you spend on food per week or per month?

That's a really... I really couldn't tell you.

Have you got a rough idea? No that's fine.

No. I know you probably really want that figure; I wish I could help you. I'm not particularly economic. I mean I don't buy scallops every day but because we're always on a diet, we probably have more of a vegetarian diet than we might otherwise have done. I don't buy a lot of large joints of meat. We don't have a Sunday roast every week, we haven't ever done that because we've never lived a lifestyle where we did that. That's not to say I don't cook them sometimes because I do, but I don't go and buy joints very often. I might buy a chicken, but quite often it will be fish, we eat a lot of fish, but not protein at absolutely every meal. So lots of veg, but I do buy expensive ingredients, I don't worry about that. I buy a lot of smoked salmon and I might buy a pre-prepared fish mousse or something like that which is quite expensive. I don't make everything from scratch but I do like to cook from scratch as well. So I wish I could tell you a figure but it would be just plucking something ridiculous out of the air for no reason.

No that's fine, that's fine, especially when you do little shops it's hard to tell.

Yeah I just can't tell, and also as I say because I'm up and down to London, because there's no regularity sometimes I might buy too much and we don't eat it. I do have to then deal with the food waste issue, so there just isn't continuity with my lifestyle I'm afraid, but then you probably need people like me as well as people who live a very regular life.

If you do go shopping would you say you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

I buy very little frozen food. I freeze it a lot myself, but I buy very little frozen, very little. Probably I'd buy prawns and frozen vegetables, mainly petit pois... don't like peas, only petit pois... but yeah a few frozen veg, but yeah not a lot actually, very little frozen food really, and I don't buy that many tins. Tins of tomatoes, a few pulses, but I don't really use tins very much, so it's more fresh food yeah.

Mainly fresh, ok. That's fine. So I'd now like to ask you a bit about wasting food you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one time, or more, where they had to find themselves in the situation where they had to waste food or didn't exactly not to do with, however you might be different.

No, no I don't suppose I'm different.

So firstly when I talk about food waste what would your definition of that be. So what would you understand food waste to be?

The sort of thing where I would be most likely to waste food is when I've entertained and I've made things, mostly which I like, but there's too much left over and my husband has gone away, which often always happens, seems to happen when we entertain, and there's food left that I don't necessarily want to eat and it will go off and it isn't freezable. If it's freezable I'll almost certainly freeze it, but if it's not, like there might be salad and if it's a big bowl of salad, when you entertain you want to have a big bowl because it looks

mean if you have a teeny bowl and then people eat a quarter of it. Now I'm not a great salad lover and I'm not going to sit and eat salad I don't like for the next three days. So that's the sort of thing. I probably would leave it in the fridge with a wet cloth over it, keep it a crisp, for a day or two and I might have a bit and then there will come a point where I'll think I've had enough of that and I'll stick it down the waste disposal, or put it on the compost heap. I will put salad on the compost heap, so that isn't wasted in the same way. But what would I throw away? I suppose the things I would throw away are things which have been in the fridge just too long really, and even I can't eat them. Dairy things probably, but they've probably been in there six to nine months by the time I think it's ready and time to throw them away.

They're ready to walk out themselves.

Well they aren't open, they're probably fine. I've had cream cheese that I've had a year, and it's unopened and it's fine. You have to be careful that you haven't got people round and they look at the sell by date, but it's fine. If it's open then obviously it's going to go off, as soon as something's got mould on it I probably will scrape the mould of the top and use what's underneath.

Yeah so for the purpose of this interview we also count drinks into the food waste, so that would also include things like milk or fruit juices so we would...

I don't drink fruit juice anymore, too fattening.

So when we talk about food/ drink, it's not just solid foods but we'd also class drinks as a waste so if you'd ever have any smoothies or drink and that sort of thing.

No, no I don't have fruit juice, I suppose no is the answer because I nearly always use up the milk. I think if it went sour I might throw a little bit away or I might make scones with it, but I probably wouldn't make scones with it realistically unless I had people coming round. So I might throw a bit of milk away but it's very rare because we nearly always drink it before I buy it again so no I don't think we throw any drinks away. I can't think of any drinks I would throw away really, we certainly don't throw any alcohol away, that doesn't happen, so there aren't any other drinks really. We don't drink fizzy drinks and things like that. I suppose if we had a party and people do that annoying thing where they open a tin and drink three slugs of a beer and then they go "this is warm I don't want it anymore" then you've got to throw it away haven't you but hopefully my kids have grown out of that now, but that's not something that happens to us regularly, and that's other people doing it not me. Even I can't recycle old beer.

No there is a limit. So if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you waste food?

Well I suppose there is always food packaging in my bin, whether there is food in it, you know... I do find the amount of food packaging annoying, I mean it's convenient but it's very irritating. How often do I actually throw food itself away? Not a lot, there's not very much really I would say. I'm trying to think what I would throw away. It would have to be something that was off or... I give food away sometimes. If somebody is coming round, like I told you, I had all these cakes so I will take some of them to the choir that we sing in I'll get rid of some of them that way and put some in the freezer. I don't really throw very much away.

Are there particular foods that you say, if you do happen to throw away...?

Old fruit I suppose is probably, but then again some of that I would put... I wouldn't put citrus on the compost but I would put apples on the compost heap. Citrus fruits, if they've gone off that's probably the

biggest thing I would throw away and I try not to do it very often, but if they've been sitting out in the fruit bowl rather than the fridge they might go off. A few oranges here and there I suppose, but not very many.

So at what stage might you throw it away, so would it be if it's...?

It would be having mould on it. I don't throw things away if it hasn't got visible mould. I don't take any notice of dates.

And how would you then sort of assess whether anything is still fit for consumption?

Well obviously looking at it, and smelling it, yeah. With meat or fish if a packet is blown but I might still use it depending on how it is when I've opened. Even if it's blown slightly I might still think well I could make a curry with it or something.

Ok.

I don't think we've ever been ill from food poisoning at home, so I think stomachs are more resilient than people give it credit for.

Can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste some food or drink, and what sort of happened, or what were the circumstances that led to this happening.

Well I suppose those bananas I was telling you about, because I didn't waste them in the end because I made them into banana cookies. I suppose the sort of thing that might happen is if I bought yoghurt or cream and I haven't used it up because I've had people round and then we haven't eaten it all because we're always on a diet it's the sort of thing that's difficult to use up because it's so calorific. I don't usually... I try, I will probably whip it up and put it in the freezer but then whipped cream isn't always easy to use from the freezer so there might be times where I'll think shall I do that? Ugh, no I'll just chuck it, but it's pretty rare. So I suppose it's when I've over catered on an entertaining basis, and that's usually because one doesn't want to look parsimonious when you're having people round. So I can't think of anything specific that I've thrown away. I do really try and recycle everything. I think a lot of people in my generation take quite a pride in it actually, not wasting things and reusing things. You think no I'm not going to throw it away, I can do this with this or I can make into a crumble or I can make it into a pie or I can put it under some mash. You feel you're quite inventive, I think that's something that came from our parents' generation really, they couldn't afford to throw anything away. And somebody else has spent time creating that food, growing it or nurturing it and then slaughtering it or whatever, to just chuck it away seems sort of wrong really.

Yeah so if you just let me know when you do have to throw anything away, how does that make you feel?

Annoyed, annoyed. I think I had to throw a fish away... that's right, my husband, he bought a turbot and then I think we were going to eat it one night and then we were invited out and then we had to go out the next day as well and I think I thought great big turbot, expensive fish, really nice fish and then he had to go away, so I was left with this turbot which was already two days old and it was starting to whiff a bit, so I roasted it and took it all off the bone and I think I had one meal from it and then there was the rest of all that turbot, and I just didn't fancy it, and I couldn't think of anything to do with it, and I think I did just chuck that. That was probably about a month ago, and that really annoyed me, but I was more annoyed with him than anything else for having bought the ruddy thing, it wasn't the right... you know, he just hadn't...

Yeah, so when you say you feel annoyed, what sort of causes that annoyance? So would that be more of a financial implication of having to throw it away or...?

No, no, no it's not financial. It's dislike of waste. I wish he hadn't bought it because we didn't need it. I'd already catered, it was an extra thing that he bought because he thought that would be a nice thing to have but I already food which I then put in the freezer because we didn't eat it, I can't remember what it was, but something else that I was... and so it sort of put out my vague planning I suppose, and then it was wasted and that made me feel irritated, but more irritated with him than generally because it needn't have happened, and it wouldn't have happened.

Yeah so if you had to compare that sort of feeling to any situation totally food unrelated, what could that sort of situation be, that sort of feeling of annoyance?

I suppose somebody forgetting to come to an appointment or something and that would be irritating, yeah that sort of thing. I can't really equate it with anything else.

Ok that's fine. Yeah so obviously it's not very nice to feel...so it's not very nice to feel annoyed, like you described, and then often when we do we do kind of try for it not to happen again because it did annoy us so much that it happened in the first place.

Yes, yes, that wasn't a very helpful example was it because it was my husband doing it? It wasn't me doing it.

It's fine. So I'll ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the food you throw away? So if you give me as many strategies that you can, or examples as you can.

Right well I try not to buy things that I'm not going to be easily able to recycle. So if I buy something pre-packaged, which I do, I do buy things like bought fishcakes. I can't be bothered to make fishcakes and the ones you buy are good, and if we don't then eat them within the time that I think we're going to, I stick them in the freezer and then we eat them at some point. Occasionally I have to throw things away from the freezer, that is occasional, but mainly I would say we eat most of it. So I'm quite careful I suppose, it's not really that conscious. I'm quite careful about how much of things I buy I make sure that I can use them. The sort of things I do with vegetables, for example, you know how you buy a packet of carrots, if I've got vegetables getting old in the fridge and I think I don't fancy eating those as vegetables, I'll make soup. I make a lot of soup, and I'll make soup out of leftover salad actually. Sometimes if I don't put the salad on the compost heap I would stick it in a blender with some stock and recycle salad, even with the dressing on you can do that. If I had a couple of courgettes, a carrot, an onion, as long as I've got an onion and a leek or something I can make a soup with any old vegetables really. Maybe not aubergines, it doesn't work very well with aubergines, but yeah I make a lot of soup and then eat it and also freeze it. So that's probably what I would do with that. Meat obviously, well we don't have a lot of meat. Leftover meat I would probably... what would I do with it? Chop it up, put it in a stir fry or something like that. Fish is probably more difficult. If a fish goes off you're a bit stuffed really. I probably would throw it away if a fish doesn't get eaten, but I don't tend to buy it if we're not going to eat it, so it doesn't happen very often.

So when you do cook do you often have leftovers?

On a day to day basis?

Generally, day to day or if you, you mention you cater for...

No not really. If we do... say I make a stew or something then I will freeze the rest or have it the next day or in a couple of days' time. Things last quite well in the fridge so yes I sometimes have leftovers but I can always deal with them. I don't tend to throw leftovers away unless it's something, I suppose a stir fry is the sort of thing that's possibly quite hard to eat again once you've stir fried it, but I probably wouldn't do more than we would eat. There might be a tiny bit, maybe a table spoonful of something left over but no not really. If I entertain that's when it's more likely to be stuff that I can't recycle.

So you then would... if you overcooked you would use it the next day or see if you could freeze some of it.

Yes, yes.

And how much effort do you perceive this to be?

How much effort? The recycling? Well not much because I suppose it's sort of second nature to me to think like that. If I could cook a chicken I would always make stock with the bones before I throw them away for example. I've just always done it, it hasn't occurred to me not to do that really. So I'm sort of in a cycle of... I don't think of it as effort, it's just something I do really. I probably don't waste... do you know this is quite interesting because I would never have said I'm not someone, I never waste food, I wouldn't have said that but actually I obviously don't waste food very much, and I hadn't really realised that. I mean I don't like the idea of wasting but I didn't realise how little I throw away because I really don't throw away very much at all, and I think I must have just got into the habit over many years of buying the right amount. I probably didn't so much when my children were young, I probably had more waste then because of catering for a family. But it's only the two of us, so quite honestly it's not rocket science to get it right and not to have any waste. The only time I do is when my husband goes AWOL with the food shopping.

Ok do you ever recommend this to other people? So what you do with leftovers or how you deal with it.

Certainly my children have been trained yes, and I will certainly bang on regardless to anybody who suggests I should have thrown something away. If they say "oooh you've had this" or "look at the sell by" then I'll certainly treat them to a lecture about how you trust your nose and your taste buds.

You touched on it a little bit with it's something that you've learned from your mum, for example, but where would you say you learned about not wasting food?

Well definitely from my parents. They were both young in the war, and I think that lesson you don't... I mean I don't throw away rubber bands, I stick the soap together still and things like... I'm quite extravagant in other ways but there are certain things that have stuck, and not wasting food... I think it's come also from an irritation, as I've got older, with all the health and safety stuff like sell by dates and best before dates, which I think are completely ridiculous, and food which is obviously palatable you can't send to food banks because it's out of date, who's date? It's not off. It's not going to poison anyone. Who is it in government who says you can't give this to charity because it's not, it's past some arbitrary sell by date? I find that sort of thing really, it makes me really cross. My irritation about things like that far surpasses any of the other irritation things you've been trying to get from me, my irritation levels, the general government policy about it, and the non-action on packaging, the packaging industry. Why don't we have paper bags anymore? Why don't we have cardboard, things which can be recycled? Why have we got so much plastic? I find all that intensely irritating because I think it's very very easy actually not to over buy and not to... I mean sell by dates really it treats the nation like babies; if you can't say to people trust your nose. Anyone can smell if something's off,

it's really not difficult. They say well you've got to read the date on it... so that makes me more cross than anything else.

Would you say there's any media influence or anything you learned from the media?

Only that I'm usually annoyed when I read things in the media. So nothing has changed my view about all this, put it like that. So no, I mean I'm only pleased if I read something which agrees with me.

But you wouldn't necessarily say that you've picked up any tips of what to do with food waste from the media?

Not specifically, I suppose occasionally I must have done. I can't remember any specifically but I certainly will quite often Google things, like the bananas which you didn't have your recorder on when I was telling you, but I didn't know what to do with these bananas apart from banana bread so I actually did Google it. I thought recipes for old bananas and a whole page came up so I just picked a banana cookie and it was really good, and I froze the rest of them. So that's quite an easy thing to do. There are tips available for anybody who wants to find one, it's a case of do you want to or is it just easier to throw whatever it is away? If I wasn't retired and I didn't have the leisure to make banana cookies with my leftover bananas maybe I would be more inclined to throw them away. I'm very conscious that I'm at a time in my life and I'm able to make these decisions and to be holier-than-thou about it, but I realise that a lot of other people are not in a position to make the choices that I make. But I certainly did still do what I've described to you all through my life, even when I did have more time pressures I still did things like boil up the chicken bones and make stock and make soup and I still didn't throw things away if I could possibly avoid it. In fact I can always remember in the family I was famous for always having a big pot on. If we had a big roast for 15 people, whereas a lot of other families would just throw all the leftovers in the bin, I'd just say stick everything in my big pot and they would all scrape all their plates off and I would make some big soup with it. Cauliflower cheese, potatoes, everything went in, all the leftover veg, the gravy and all the bones and everything. So yes it's obviously quite deeply engrained in me isn't it?

So when you do find yourself in a situation where you actually don't throw the food away and you do make something out of it, how does that make you feel?

Oh very smug. Yes well the banana cookies were great, they went down a treat and people asked for the recipe so yes I felt terribly pleased with myself. Yes I think it's quite rewarding. You feel you're not... yes it's a rewarding feeling isn't it to feel you've done the right thing I suppose.

So if you had to compare that rewarding feeling to something else...

Oh golly, you want another rewarding feeling?

Yeah, or something where you...

When I've lost some weight and I can get into something that I would otherwise have had to throw away, or send to the charity shop. I suppose yes, it's like reusing anything that perhaps you thought was defunct. Finding another use for something is always rewarding but I'm not particularly practical like that. It's not something I'm that good at doing. Yes it is very rewarding. I can't think of a particular thing to compare it with.

So we're now going to change the focus of the interview a tiny bit, in that I've got four scenarios here of situations where people have found themselves in a bit of a pickle in that they have got too much food or they don't know what to do with it. So if I could ask you to take the sort of role of an agony aunt.

Ok, oh I love telling people what to do.

And read through these scenarios, they're the same back and front and there's a different one.

Ok.

Thank you. And just see what advice you can give to people in those sort of situations.

Dear Delilah...[fictional agony aunt] right... a number of items with a sell by date of tomorrow, I'm not going to be able to eat them all by then and my freezer is full, what can I do? Eat them. Ignore the sell by dates is the answer to that one, and use your nose, eyes and nose. I mean sell by dates... well I suppose also, if you have the time, you should ring your online supplier and say you've sent me things which are about to go out of date. But frankly depending on what they were, if they were things where I could eat them within what I consider to be a sell by date I wouldn't bother, but otherwise I suppose that's what you could do. That's that one. I'm a single person and find it difficult to find pack sizes to suit my needs, I recently bought a pack of four lemons... lemons... hmm lemons are not easy. If you haven't got time to find a recipe, I mean I would make lemon drizzle cake obviously, I would think of a recipe that uses lemons if I had time but if you haven't got time obviously that's another matter. I would slice them up and freeze them in slices to put in gin and tonic. I suppose you could juice them and freeze the juice. Not much you can do with lemons really so I'd say that. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], I have recently moved and have a large apple tree that produces a lot of fruit, some of it is on the tree, some of it has fallen off... not a cook. Well I suppose take some to a local hospice in a bag, give it to charity, take it to any group of needy. If they're eating apples... well you're not much of a cook, well I can't think really what else, if you don't want to cook, I don't want to make suggestions for someone who doesn't want to cook anything. Otherwise Google some answers. Italian food, I often cook far too much pasta and I do not know what to do with it, we seem to throw it in the bin. Well depending on what sauce you've got on it or if you haven't got a sauce on it I would probably put some oil on it when you've cooked it so it doesn't all stick together and then put it in the fridge and think about it for a day. Then I suppose one of the best things to do is just to make another sauce or have another sauce and cover it with sauce and put breadcrumbs on the top and make a gratin with it, so make a sort of oven baked pasta dish with it because it's always fine like that, that's what I'd do. Yeah that's probably what I'd do, make an oven baked pasta dish with some mozzarella and tomatoes and stuff like that, easy to find a recipe. Do you want me to give you recipes? You don't want recipes, no.

No.

No.

They're all the same scenarios, they were just highlighted on the page. It's just the four in total.

Right, right. I've done those, right.

So you've done all those. So if I just summarise briefly everything you've said. Correct me if I'm wrong or make any additions as and where you deem appropriate. So in terms of where you shop, you say you kind of, or your shopping habits, you don't do a large weekly shop or a large bi-weekly or monthly shop so you

kind of get what you need as and when you do need to based on your plans. You tend to buy in the supermarket because you find it convenient and you're happy with the quality they provide, but you do then also sometimes go to a local butcher or get eggs or something like free range eggs etc. You're not quite sure on how much you spend on average because you do it as ad hoc and as and when you need it.

Yes that's right. I'm not tied to a budget luckily so I know I don't spend too much on it.

You generally cater for yourself and for your husband, and occasionally you cater for more people and then that would be reflected in your shopping obviously. You don't think that you waste a lot of food and you do sometimes find yourself in the situation where you do have to waste because you over catered if you catered for a large party etc. and then don't quite know what to do with it the next couple of days. You would freeze it generally or are quite happy to make use of leftovers or anything you can recycle into other...

Or I might give it away as well.

...or give it away yeah.

Yeah I often say to people, will you take a portion of it back home and I'll put it in some foil or something and give people some to take away. Yes so I tend to... I am very averse to throwing it away.

You get quite annoyed if you do have to throw anything away because of the implication of... that it's been produced by someone and the ethical implication of having to throw something away rather than that being driven by a loss of money for example or throwing anything away. It does make you feel quite rewarded if you can make something out of food that would otherwise be wasted, and you would consider yourself quite... that you don't waste a lot of food and that you always try to make something out of anything, either being freezing or making it into another dish or anything. So is that pretty much summing it up?

Yeah that's pretty much it, yes. In fact I've got another very good example. Christmas cake, we eat Christmas cake, we love Christmas cake but Christmas cakes are always too big and I have a really nice recipe, and I'm not going to make it smaller because it's too much fiddle to try and work out how to make it smaller. So a couple of years ago I made one and we ate about half of it, just under half of it, and I thought you know you can't recycle it really because it's a difficult thing to recycle Christmas cake. So I took all the icing off it and I cut it that there were two, there was a proper half and then I cut it that way and put the two slices together and then the next year I had just a flatter one and I re-iced it. I put it in the freezer for the year and nobody knew that it was just the same cake. So that was reusing that you see. I felt that was quite inventive.

Yeah.

I may have to do it again this year. I made the same cake again, it's this high but next year it might be that high.

It might be a bit lower.

Because that's an expensive item to make because you know it's got half a bottle of Drambuie in it so yeah, so I found that very rewarding doing that. I mean you can give some things but you can't always make it work. Anyway so was that helpful? I don't want to keep you.

Yes thank you very much. That's fine. I'm just stopping recording.

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So I've sent you the participant information sheet and you've had time to read through and everything. So this research is about food waste in the home. A lot of research has been done on how much and how little people are wasting and how that makes them feel and then moreover there has been a lot of research on the prevention strategies people have put in place to avoid food waste happening in the first place so having a shopping list and those kind of strategies. So we're looking at it from a bit of a different angle that is post-purchase behaviour of avoiding food waste so how normal people like yourself deal with situations when they have overstocked on food or they have got too much food in the house and the kind of strategies you have in place for not letting that go to waste.

I'm sure it must happen a lot because we're not all brilliant are we.

So to start off with if I could just ask you to introduce yourself briefly in terms of your shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

I just shop for myself generally, but then there might be times when I'm obviously entertaining and I will shop then for, I'd do a greater shop, but at the moment that's not really happening a great deal.

So where would you say that you regularly shop for food?

Ok well I regularly shop on my way home from where I work to where I live so that would be on my route home but occasionally I will go to another, a purposeful destination so for example I might occasionally go and shop in somewhere like a Marks and Spencer's Simply Food but because that's not my regular pattern I would tend to shop in Aldi and Sainsbury's because they are on my route home and that seems to be my pattern, wherever I am I'll tend to shop according to the convenience, which is what supermarket strategies are all about, making sure they're within a few minutes distance within people's homes.

So how often would you say that you shop for food?

Probably two to three times a week actually. I don't tend to do a big shop.

Ok so do you do more little, targeted shops?

Little, yeah little.

Ok and how much would you say that you typically spend per week?

I would say... oh it's quite hard actually, but I would say between £30 and £50 on an average week.

On an average week yeah, so £30-50. So would you say that you buy more fresh or more frozen food?

Definitely fresh.

Ok and why is that?

Because I am able to call into the supermarkets on my way home and pick up fresh items. I prefer not to eat... I prefer not to buy frozen, I prefer to buy fresh and freeze it myself and I prefer, yeah so I would occasionally... say for example I've just recently bought two turkey crowns reduced in the frozen section because they were a bargain and that's my favourite so I'd done that but I wouldn't ordinarily go and buy a frozen chicken or something like that.

Ok yeah. Do you ever do any online shopping for food...

No.

...or is it mainly that you pick up on the way home from work?

Yeah.

Ok. Do you buy more fresh or convenience products?

I'm tending not to buy convenience products because of the cost, the price of them. I think they're more expensive and I do always think well I could just do that myself so I tend to buy ingredients, as it were, to then combine, but that doesn't mean I don't ever.

Yeah but habitually more fresh.

Yeah, yeah that's right I do tend to do that.

So I'd now like to ask you a little bit about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most of us can remember at least one occurrence where we had to throw away some food that we'd already purchased, however you might be different.

I must confess I do try not to throw food away because of the waste and because of how unfortunate other people are in this world, it does happen, and I think that's one of the reasons why I tend to shop more frequently because if I do a big shop with all the plans to make all my meals for the week and things like that, inevitably something gets forgotten. I'm trying to think. For example, I would maybe buy a broccoli head and sometimes that would start to slightly change colour because it's been in the fridge too long but then I would think oh that's ok, I'll make some soup. In fact yeah thinking about waste, I do really try and keep it to a minimum but I do keep things for a while in my fridge and I think to myself oh my goodness I must use them.

So firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

I think that's wasting food that could have been at some stage eaten, as opposed to banana peel or something like that. Yeah that's what I'm thinking of as food waste.

Ok so for this interview we're adopting the definition that food waste includes any food but also thinking about drinks, so anything like for example milk or fruit juice or any kind of fizzy drinks, that kind of scenario that end up in the bin.

Ok yeah, yeah, ok.

So can't be used and end up in the bin. Ok so if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

No more than twice a month I'd say, and that actually what you've just said has prompted me to think about soy milk because sometimes I buy that in litre cartons and sometimes I'm just not around enough to drink enough cups of tea and have enough cereal and that does actually end up getting thrown away, but I don't think of that as being as substantial as actual food items being wasted but that's interesting so yes I have actually recently thrown some soy milk, not in the bin but down the sink.

Yeah so what do you usually throw away? Are there any items that you tend to...?

It probably tends to be things like maybe I might have kept onions a bit too long or something like that and they might have gone off a little bit. Fruit is never wasted, I never leave fruit because I love fruit. It's probably vegetables, it's probably fresh veg that's been hanging around too long or it's had to be docketed quite considerably in order to use the best bits, cut off the baddy bits.

So at what stage might you throw it away?

Ok well sometimes when you open the fridge door it's quite obvious that there's something in there that needs to be addressed. When it comes to things like milk, you can't buy small cartons of soy milk and certainly the one I have a preference to, so what happens with that that tends to take on a different consistency so it goes quite thick and it also starts to separate when you put it in a hot drink so that will alert me to the fact. I'll probably, before I get to the stage where I have to throw it away I will probably think to myself what can I make with what I've had in the fridge for a long time as opposed to leaving it until that stage, so it might be something's just nearing its life and I'll think right ok, quick, I'll do a stir fry or something like that. Even if say an onion has gone a bit bad on the outside I'll try and peel it to see if there are any good bits still inside that I can do that. So I would tend to think I was going to do that and now I can't do it because it's gone off, that doesn't happen, to be fair, very often but it would be me thinking I need to use that up and then I've either left it too long or I have to cut off bits of it yeah, so that would be when. Does that answer the question?

Yeah. So do you kind of go by the sell by dates of the items as well?

Frankly I ignore those completely. I use my judgement, my eyes, my visual senses and my smell basically. I think if it looks all right then... because if you think about eating mouldy cheese, some cheese you pay to be mouldy so I don't necessarily think if something's got a little bit of mould on the outside of it, if I chop it off, if it's gone through then yes absolutely but most of the time I'm terribly disappointed if that's happened because I think that's a waste.

So can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you had to waste some food or drink, and just explain what happened and what were the circumstances that led to it being wasted?

Yeah just after Christmas I had to throw my soy milk away because it had travelled with me around the country because not everybody has soy milk so I take it with me, so consequently it won't have been refrigerated so to some extent it's not surprising and I did have a bit of a clear out before Christmas and I thought that needs to go because it's been in the cupboard too long, but it's mainly leeks and onions and that sort of thing and it was just because I was heading back to the Midlands to be with family for Christmas, I had a bit of a clear out but it wasn't too much to be fair and then when I got back I had to sort my soy milk out.

So when you had to throw the soy milk and...

The onions. Clear-out yes.

Your pre-Christmas clear-out. When you had to throw some items away how did you feel?

Well I don't really lose too much sleep over an onion because they do keep for a long time don't they? Because I actually shop at Aldi it can sometimes feel a little bit easier because the actual items are a little bit cheaper but that doesn't always sit comfortably even though perhaps I only did spend 47p on the soy milk or 49p, whatever it is, I can't even remember. I think that's the wrong attitude. I don't think you should just think oh well it only cost me 20p or whatever, I think it's about the waste. So I don't like doing it and in the instance of the soy milk I could understand it and I thought well it's been useful while I've been away, at least I've been able to have my soy milk with my cups of tea but ok so I've now got to throw it away so that's kind of understandable. It does make me think right I've got to make sure I use up my things before I buy more, and I've got to know what I've got in my cupboard before I go shopping. Yeah so not too bad because the value of the products but still I don't like it, I don't like food waste full stop.

What's underpinning that not liking of the food waste?

Because it's just like you're throwing money away aren't you, because I bought it, I bought it knowing that I'd need it and then as a consequence it's down to me to be responsible to actually use it up and make the most out of my shopping and my food that I've actually bought because I'm on a limited income at the moment so it's like I can't afford to throw things away. I've also seen programmes as well where I've seen people where they've had really good intentions and gone and done a big fresh healthy shop and then they've been busy at work or things have happened and they've ended up just not wanting to cook when they get in and then going and getting a whole load of takeaways and then throwing a whole load of food away. Well I'm not like that but I do think you do have some responsibility and the best I can do is support charities obviously but also make the best out of what I've got and not waste it. My rubbish bin, I probably don't put out black bin waste less than every three weeks so it is quite... but my mum is unbelievable, anyway that's another story, she's a different story yes.

So if you had to... so you said that on this instance you did not feel necessarily that guilty about throwing...

I didn't feel that bad because probably the value of the items but say if it was things like if I'd spent £3 on a punnet of raspberries well they would just never stay in my fridge, they'd never stay long enough for me to throw them out but I'm trying to think of say something that I'd bought... if I'd spent, you know it's hard to put a price on it but if I'd... I know actually, I threw away a melon because I'd had this melon for a long time. It was quite a while ago so it might not be that recently but I've just remembered it now and when I cut into it it almost exploded because it had fermented inside and I remember thinking oh god that's really annoying because I really like melon but I just, it was one of those things where you had to spend a bit of time preparing it, sorting it all out, getting rid of all the seeds and all the juices and everything and I just never got round to it and I thought I must eat that melon, I must eat that melon. Literally I've never seen anything like it, it was amazing and I haven't bought a melon since actually but that's not because of that but I did feel I was a bit miffed that I had to throw that away but I was more miffed with myself that I hadn't got round to eating it. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

If you had to think about a situation totally unrelated to food waste where it could be a situation that makes you equally annoyed or miffed, what could such a situation be?

Clothing. The propensity to buy cheap clothes and then just chucking them away because they don't fit anymore or whatever, I think that whole when you buy t-shirts for £1.50 or whatever I think there's a real problem in society as far as that's concerned because we can just get whatever we want whenever we want it, we don't necessarily always take care of our things so much, so that's the sort of thing. I don't support shops that sell very very cheap clothes.

So obviously it isn't nice to feel annoyed or miffed or have that kind of feeling described by yourself when you have to throw anything away. In fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling from happening. So my next questions aim to address the kind of practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away so please feel free to use any kind of specific examples if that helps. So what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

Well to be honest it is about planning. It's about thinking about what you want to eat and planning. One of the things that helps me avoid waste is having a freezer because if I think to myself I need to use that up, I'll look to see what I can combine it with with cupboard ingredients like, I don't know, tinned chickpeas and lentils and things like that and probably make some soup out of something. So the fact that I've got a freezer is a big part of me, because I think to myself I'd almost prefer to spend two hours cooking something that's going to result in a meal that even if I don't want to eat it at the time but I've got a container that I can put it in and freeze it to then minimise the waste. Also thinking about when I do shop I like to have fresh ingredients so it's always nice to cook with fresh ingredients and I'm not well established in my home at the moment but having things like fresh herbs and things like that so I do... that's actually prompted me to think about something else that I do, I'll buy fresh herbs from the supermarket and I'll try and cook with them but I have also bought herbs and not managed to get round to using them because I've intended to make them so that's another thing that I didn't remember before, but I have thrown herbs away. It's nice then to cook a lot of portions of something and then put it in the freezer so that's what I try to do to avoid waste. I like all the fresh ingredients to start with and then I'll make, because I'm spending the time doing it if I'm doing it for one portion it takes a little bit longer but not proportionately to make six portions so that will mean that I'll then cook a lot and then freeze it in meal sized portions.

So you just mentioned that you tend to cook from scratch and like to use fresh ingredients, so when you cook do you ever have any leftovers?

As in from the meal that I've cooked?

So do you general bulk cook?

I will bulk cook yes so I will always have leftovers. I'll always cook something. So for example yesterday I made a big Asian salad so I've got three pots of that in the fridge, one of which I bought to work, and I also made soup and I've made four portions of soup so I will always make more than I actually will consume at that time because I'll make it for future consumption and either keep it in the fridge and use it and potentially the same thing three days running or I'll put it in the freezer.

Ok and how much effort do you perceive that to be?

Overall in a week not a lot but I do tend to want to have cooking sessions as opposed to coming in after a day's work and then thinking about cooking from scratch. I would never do that for a dinner party but I'd plan that and shop accordingly and spend all day probably preparing for it, but for my every day I'd rather

spend two hours/three hours on a Sunday evening cooking and then having half a dozen portions of something in the freezer that I can just come in, take out in the morning and then have that ready at night so I don't have to do the whole thing all over again. So I would probably say I cook, really cook, about once a week, but that's done for the rest of the week or some future time dependent on how I feel like.

So you wouldn't necessarily...

I don't think that's much of an effort.

Ok.

And it's certainly not an effort that I'm upset about making because I think you know what you get when you put things... and I have an allergy which is why I drink soy milk so it's easier for me to understand things from scratch and to know what I've put in myself because you're never sure of salt content and fat content unless you read all the small print so yeah.

Yeah, ok, and do you ever recommend this strategy to other people?

Well yeah because I suppose the sort of people that... yeah I would do, I would, but I wouldn't necessarily recommend it I would more say well I tend to do this as opposed to, and it works for me but everybody is different. I've got a friend who lives locally and when you go to her fridge it's like oh that's a bit sad but she buys everything fresh and does everything on the day so she never keeps a fully stocked fridge whereas sometimes mine can be a bit stocked up with things but yeah. I would more say well that's what I tend to do as opposed to recommending it because you never know what people's capacity is. I can eat the same thing four days on the trot, some other people wouldn't be interested in doing that.

So where would you say that you learned about this method>

Well not necessarily from my mum. I think it really started from living in a family with two very good cooks so I never used to do that much cooking. Then when I lived on my own when I first moved to London I remember thinking well this is nice but I don't want to be doing this I'd rather be going out after work and having a drink with friends and then coming home or eating out when I used to work as a professional in London. So I think I probably started to do it myself actually and I suppose actually my sister, when she had children she would make a meal for her and her husband and then she'd pulp up, she'd make plenty and then she'd mash up and put it in ice cubes instead of buying baby food and she'd put it in the freezer so she could have like a tray of roast chicken dinner which was just a mash up of everything and the gravy, almost everything so that's what she used to give her babies as children when they were starting to go onto solid food. So as a consequence I think it was about making things and freezing them for convenience and also because I don't mind cooking at all and I don't begrudge the effort as I said before but I don't love it, it's not oh I can't wait to get home tonight and start cooking, whatever, I don't feel like that. It's funny because I absolutely love food as well, it's interesting but yeah it probably stemmed from that actually, from my sister doing that sort of thing and then kind of thinking well if I'm going to make it. The other thing is portion sizes in supermarkets, if you buy smaller amounts you tend to feel like you're paying more money because you pay for the packaging and they always say if you buy extra you get better value so you'd end up buying larger portions of beef or chicken or whatever because they seem to be better value so then it prompts you to actually cook them and do something with them rather than just leaving them. I genuinely could not remember the last time I actually threw any meat away. I just definitely wouldn't throw. I really can't

remember at all. That's interesting just talking to you about it now, thinking about that. If I had to throw chicken away I wouldn't like to do that.

Ok you've kind of touched on it a little bit earlier that you saw some shows on TV or something.

Yeah about people and their waste, yeah.

So would you say that you take any influence from the media on the way that you...?

Oh definitely, in terms of how much food waste there is, in terms of what supermarkets do. There was a series by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall I don't know how many years ago now but a good few years ago about supermarket waste and I just think it's appalling. I think people are getting a bit savvy now and I think if you're a savvy shopper you can get some absolute bargains dependent on when you do go shopping because they'll reduce things. I think what's really prevalent to my mind at the moment is the responsibility for supermarkets for all manner of things and also packaging as well. So I would be influenced by the amount of food waste there is in this country. I'd be influenced by the amount of starving people there are in the world. I'm also influenced by how far things come. I used to live in a country where you tended to eat seasonal vegetables which I think is great because if you buy strawberries in the winter over here they don't taste of anything so what's the point, and I think that's much better than flying whatever from wherever just so you can have something like coconut in wherever or something that's unseasonal paying a lot of money. So I tend to take information like that, the sort of global information as well as taking pride in myself and thinking well I'm not like that, I don't throw a lot of food away, making myself feel better about myself really because I don't do that.

Ok, do you ever take any tips or hints on how to, more from a practical side of things, on how to avoid the food waste or something that you could do with it?

I more police myself when I shop because I am careful and I love a bargain but I do have to sometimes check myself and think actually is that really a bargain, are you really going to use it because I suppose maybe odd times in the past I've thought oh yeah, oh definitely, and then haven't used it. So you learn with experience not to do that sort of thing and what suits you but I can't think of anything other than that.

Ok that's fine. When you have used one of your strategies so for example you open the fridge, there's something in there and you think well this needs using up and you make it into a meal or something, how does that make you feel?

Kind of a bit annoyed with myself that it has got to that stage but also I don't think oh well thank goodness I haven't thrown that away. I don't particularly like to be forced into doing something that I don't necessarily want to do but knowing that I put myself in that position in the first place. So I would say on the whole I'd feel positive about being able to use something. Things like the internet and stuff where you can do these searches and you can do ingredients and then it will come up with a recipe for you, I think they're incredible because you can say you've got all manner of stuff in your cupboard and generally my concoctions do tend to be soups and they don't always work out that well but hey-ho, if you've got a good stock that always helps but yeah I'd say on the whole I feel positive but I do try not to have to be in that position I suppose.

Ok yeah, so if you had to compare that positive feeling again to a situation totally food unrelated, what kind of situation do you think that could be?

So feeling positive about something ... about waste?

It doesn't have to be waste related.

Oh that's definitely, I get a nice positive feeling when I get a bargain. Just recently I've bought myself some boots and I tried to get some, I knew they'd be quite tight fitting around my calves so I needed to get some jeans that weren't very thick jeans and I would never normally buy super skinny jeans because... but in order for me to wear my boots I've bought these super skinny jeans and I went onto the Marks and Spencer's website to see what they've got in the way of jeans and leggings and they had some ones for £10.99 so I got a bargain so I can now wear my new boots. It's a bit like a false economy really but I knew I needed them but they're going to be really good boots for walking and things and they're knee length boots. So that made me feel really good because I would never buy super skinny jeans because I just haven't got the figure for those but I do need something that is very tight fitting around my calves so I can wear my new boots, so that was good.

So that sort of positive feeling when you have a bargain, when you get a bargain.

And funnily enough that led me to a Marks and Spencer's to pick them up which was just a Simply Food with some household items and that ended up in me buying two ready meals from the reduced counter and thinking they were absolutely delicious, they were a real bargain, they were very very nice, but thinking about the packaging that they were supplied in and that's got me thinking about how on earth are the supermarkets going to ever stop offering convenience meals which are, and especially the likes of Marks and Spencer's, they are delicious. These were reduced from £5 to £1.25 and it was, it was lovely, but I just thought I would never buy that ordinarily. So the fact that me saying at the beginning that I don't buy convenience foods, I have actually just done two but it was because they were reduced, but generally not a habit. That was just a one off. And it was lime soy ginger chicken or something, balanced for you which was delicious actually, it was really good food, but I brought the plastic trays in to be recycled.

So we're now going to change the focus of the interview just a little bit. So I've got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in a bit of a situation where they had too much food for various reasons.

Right ok.

If I could just ask you to read through them. So they're on all the different pages, yeah.

Oh I see, the others are not back, so this is the one yeah.

Yeah so just see what sort of advice you think you could give to these people.

Do you want me to do one at a time?

Yes please.

Yes ok. So the first one is about online shopping and things with a sell by date of tomorrow. First of all I would advise the person to look at the fresh items to see what state they were in and fair enough her freezer is full to bursting which kind of indicates that this might happen quite a lot and she uses a lot of her ingredients. You could always make something with them and give them away, like a soup kitchen or something. But I would see actually, because of the sell by date, I would actually look at the products

themselves and think can they go in the fridge, will they be all right for a couple of days, that kind of thing. I wouldn't necessarily just chuck them out because of the sell by date. Then yeah make something, give it to friends, give it to neighbours or something like that because presumably unless a refund can be had I don't know what the online shopping rules and regulations are if they say everything we deliver to you will have a sell by date of seven days from the delivery day then I would say go back to the person obviously and get a refund for those items but don't send them back and use them anyway. Ok so this one is about a single person finding it difficult to buy, yeah absolutely. It's hard to alter your shopping patterns I think, so in other words the regular place always has the lemons so I would tend to see what I could do by looking online at a recipe. I recently bought a pack of four lemons because it was cheaper than an individual one or how often does that happen, it happens a lot so yeah I would look to see what I could do this time with lemons. What I tend to do, just as a side with lemons is slice them up and put them in the freezer ready for the gin and tonic that is what I would say as Delilah. Slice them up because they don't take up a lot of room in the freezer and they even chill your gin and tonic when you're ready for them. I have recently moved, I have a large apple tree at the bottom of my garden... starting to rot... yes, yes. Oh crikey ok. I would advise them to harvest as much of the fruit as possible and cook it and then freeze it. So if this is all about apple trees I would think about cooking apples with a little bit of sugar and again freezing it, that would be what I would do if I had an apple tree. But also in a garden it's not too bad to have things that rot because you can potentially put them in a compost bin and then recycle that for your garden later on, although I'm not that much of a gardener but that would be something that you could actually do because leaves mulch down don't they, and so anything mulches down, and you can get these compost bins but you have to be careful with rats I think so that's what I would recommend. Cook as much as you can, put it in pots for your apple pies and things like that. Wow pasta is a real issue isn't it in terms of knowing how much to cook. If we all got that right there would be a lot less waste in the world because... it's like those gadgets that you put the spaghetti through per portion. I would always err on the side of caution when cooking pasta in the first instance and don't put as much in as you think you're going to need because it expands anyway, and I would make a pasta salad and have it for lunch the following day. Yeah so and give it to everybody in the family, they take the whole thing, everybody has pasta salad for their lunch the following day whether they like it or not, but yeah that's what I would do, add it with some fresh ingredients as well, make a nice cold pasta salad because you can eat it cold as well as hot so yeah.

Ok fantastic, thank you. So we've now come to the end of the interview and the questions.

Ok great.

So if I could just briefly summarise what you've just said and then I'm happy for you to...

I can correct you yeah.

Correct or chip in.

I am the expert on myself.

Yeah on yourself. So you shop for yourself and you tend to do that more targeted and do that on your way home from work or as and when convenient, it often happens to be Aldi but depending on where you are you would also then go to other places. Overall would be more fresh ingredients because you like to cook yourself as opposed to frozen food so you said you might sometimes buy chicken or large portions and then you would freeze it up rather than buying it frozen in the first place.

Yeah absolutely. Rather than frozen to start with, yeah.

So that would be something you'd like doing. In terms of food and drink that you said that you throw away so it doesn't often happen because you said you're quite organised and you're quite targeted in what you buy but then occasionally it does happen and it tends to be any fruit...

No fruit, but sometimes vegetables.

No fruit but sometimes vegetables. You mentioned that it sometimes is the soy milk because the cartons are quite large and you struggle to get through that on your own or things like herbs because you bought them to cook with...

Cook with, you use half of them and then you leave the other half in the fridge that sort of thing, yeah. But then I would also think about buying more of the stuff in the first instance to use the extra herbs, which probably has some kind of backward logic to it but yeah.

You said that you are generally quite opposed to food waste and you don't like it from the moral obligation that there are other people who struggle to have food and the sort of economic, you touched upon that it's wasting money as well as just ecological impact of food miles.

Another example thinking about it is if I do cook a chicken I will make stock from the bones as well and strip the meat off the bones because I don't mind throwing away bones obviously, and the other thing I don't mind throwing away either is if I buy meat and I trim it in some shape or form. You know if you buy fish and it's got skin and things like that it can all be a bit honky can't it. But yeah I was just thinking about that, I do trim things but I don't consider that to be waste I think that to be my preference, it came like that and I don't like all that much fat so I chop it off. Sorry to interrupt you.

So overall you'd say that you don't throw a lot away but on occasion it does happen. You did say that you don't necessarily, it does make you feel a little bit annoyed when you throw it away but not to the point that...

I'm beating myself up.

Yeah that you're annoyed that...

Yeah because I feel that on the whole I'm a lot better than... well I don't know most people but I do feel like I'm fairly minimal with my waste.

Yeah and you mentioned that part of that would also be that because you're quite careful of what you shop or where you shop that you wouldn't necessarily feel that guilty about wasting the money, if it was a small mandatory item that was wasted.

For example if I had a chicken in the fridge and I just hadn't got round to cooking it and I realised that it had gone off I would think that would be criminal, absolutely criminal. I would just be like... I just couldn't cope with that, because that is just so unnecessary, absolutely, so yeah... if it's like 50p's worth of herbs it's not too bad but it is really the principal because it's just annoying. Unnecessary, I think that's the key word; I think food waste is unnecessary if you're careful and you plan.

You did say that your strategies to avoid the food from being wasted would be to be organised in the first place and have a more targeted shop but then also you would bulk cook so you would generally...

That's by far and away the main one.

...you tend to not just cook one portion but always cook a bit more because that helps you throughout the week with meal planning and you're quite happy to do that so sort of by default there would always be leftovers that you can then...

Yeah I would absolutely say whenever I cook, unless it's breakfast, I will always cook more than I actually need for the purposes of future meals yeah.

Yeah and you did mention you don't really perceive that to be any effort because it kind of helps you in your home.

Yeah if I'm going to cook, and I prefer the end result of home cooked food, and if I'm going to cook I may as well cook a lot which saves me having to cook again type of thing, so yeah definitely.

In terms of places where you kind of learned this strategy, you mentioned that it might have not necessarily have been your upbringing, so you did kind of reflect that it might have not been your mum but it might have been your sister when she had little children and the fact that when you moved to your professional job, just kind of learning by doing of that being the best system that works for you.

Yeah that's right, and also being single as well. That whole thing about if you do cook a chicken, you've got the opportunity to have all the extra stock from the bones and then you'll have several portions. Yes it's nice to have a roast chicken and the only other roast chicken that you can buy are roast chicken cold portions and they are never as nice as hot roast chicken so it's nice to be able to have that food and that ability to then have the best food and then be able to make use of it through a freezer or lots of other meals yeah.

So it's kind of mostly learning by doing then, and you are kind of finding out that that's the best...

Yeah and it kind of fitted with my lifestyle when I was working in London.

Yeah that best suited you.

Because I thought I don't want to be... my neighbour used to regularly bake and I never bake a great deal but I never really either wanted to cook when I got home from work if I'm getting home at seven/eight o'clock I don't want to eat at like nine/half past nine by the time you've pulled everything together so it kind of evolved from there. but thinking about it my mum is very much against waste as well so that probably will have had some kind of impact, sort of message in my being.

Yeah, but the more practical strategies that you adopted from yourself and working out what works best for you.

Yeah and lifestyle, and convenience for me, yeah absolutely and not having to have a family to provide for as well and things like that. Knowing it was just me which is that whole thing... if I did have a family I don't think it would be fair to expect them to eat the same meal four nights a week but because it's me I'm quite happy to do that because if I like what I've cooked, then the other thing is I'll eat it because I won't want to waste it, whether I like it or not so yeah that's good.

Then lastly it was you did touch up on the media has made you probably a bit more aware of it.

Yeah, yeah definitely, and I think you can organise yourself. Luckily you do have to have the money to be able to afford a freezer if you want to do what I do. I don't think that's anything too far out of the norm but then I am reminded by the media that there are a hell of a lot of people in this country that are in very very dire situations and cheap food is often the worst food that's for you isn't it? Yeah so I do get the guilt stories from the newspapers and you think I mustn't do that, yeah I mustn't do that. So they are a useful source of information generally there I'd say.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Yes I'm sorry I couldn't remember all my items of food waste.

That's all right.

It's because I'm thinking as it turns out I'm not quite holier-than-thou am I really?

Yeah well it tends to be fairly little.

Yeah but it's funny isn't it what you remember because you think on the whole my overall approach is... but I think it's really important this sort of thing, finding out what happens to people but I do think there's other things to play other than just your education and your social upbringing as well as your preferences, there's lots of things in the mix here, but I do think we've got the opportunity to have whatever we want whenever we want it if you earn a reasonable wage, and I don't think that's necessarily a good thing really, I think you should have to work a bit harder for what you get really but I'm old. Ok thank you.

All right, thank you.

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So this piece of research is about food waste in the home. There's been a lot of research that's been done already about how much or how little people are wasting and how that makes you feel and moreover a lot of research has looked at preventative measures that people have got in place to avoid food waste in the first place, so for example having a shopping list and avoid overstocking. We're looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle so from that of post-purchase behaviour, so what kind of strategies people have in place, like yourselves, for when they have found themselves in the situation where they've either overstocked or they have too much food in the house for various reasons and what kind of strategies you adopt to prevent that food going to waste. So if I start to just ask you to introduce yourselves in terms of your shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

P1: So ...[husband's name] tends to do the main weekly shop.

P2: Yeah so I'll go to Waitrose or Tesco, sometimes I go to Lidl and I'll have some meals in mind but for example just today I've been through the freezer to see what we've got and we have loads of stuff that we haven't used so this week that's what we'll be using up.

Then how many people would you typically shop for? So would it be the two of you?

P2: Just the two of us yes.

P1: Two of us currently but obviously now they're coming home from university, yeah so there will be eight of us at Christmas.

Ok so how often per week would you shop? Do you do a weekly shop or...?

P2: I generally do a weekly shop and then top up. More and more we're using things like Tesco Express now much more than we used to. It used to be one big shop and then top up with milk or whatever but I find that we're using more Tesco Express of a night just to get what we need in.

P1: I would tend to go to ...[local town] Tesco's on a Wednesday and stock up on anything, mainly milk, things that we've run out of.

P2: (inaudible, 02.31) on a Saturday.

P1: Yeah or maybe some fresh produce if we haven't, if we've run out of that.

And then when you do do your food shop do you tend to buy more frozen or more fresh food?

P2: More fresh than frozen, although often I'll then put it in the freezer.

P1: We tend to have, well we always have frozen peas, we used to get frozen broccoli until we realised how much nicer fresh broccoli was. Actually we've recently bought, to try and avoid wastage, is in Tesco you can get those small packages of mixed vegetables that you can just put in the microwave, so I mean that's more expensive obviously but you feel like you're not wasting it so we've done that, it's an easy way of getting vegetables into your diet without... especially if you're in a hurry or you've not got much time. What often happens is it gets late in the day and you think oh I've got to go and cook something now and so it's what have we got so it's got to be something fairly quick if we haven't planned.

And if you know this and you don't mind me asking, how much would you say you spend on average on your food shop?

P2: I would say £60-£70 a week.

Ok, yeah.

P1: But isn't that your shop?

P2: That's my shop and then yours...?

P2: Yeah so then on top of that I would think another £20-30 maybe during the course of the week including milk and things so it's probably about £100 a week roughly.

Yeah. So now I'd like to ask you a little bit more about wasting food that you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occasion where they had to throw any food away, or more, however you might be different. Firstly I'm intrigued to know that when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

P1: It means food that you've purchased that goes off/goes out of date that you don't end up using so it goes in the bin or composted or whatever.

Yeah so for this interview we're exactly using that definition but we're also including drink so we would class drink as food waste as well, so anything like milk or fruit juices or fizzy drinks or something you might have that you then dispose of.

P1: Yeah I wouldn't say we waste much drink. I mean maybe if we've gone away and we've had some milk in the fridge and we come back and you have a sniff and you think... you know if it's in a cup of tea you can tell can't you? But we do freeze milk, it comes out all right so I wouldn't say we waste that much in the way of drink cause obviously there isn't a sell by, well apart from milk. Orange juice lasts quite a long time doesn't it would you say? Well you're more sensitive. This one's more sensitive and also you will tend to be more draconian with sell by dates and things and use by so you'll inspect things to see if it's use by.

P2: Whereas that doesn't bother me.

P1: Whereas we will eat it if it's not going, you know if it's not physically mouldy or whatever we will still eat it but you're much more...

(Inaudible, 05.51)

P1: Yes.

And why would you say that is?

P3: I think with stuff like meat I'm a lot more careful but now I'm shopping for myself I am much more, I will look at dates and make an effort to go to the back of the shelf to buy the longest lasting thing and only buy what I know I can eat before the date, but I guess it's just habit. But if it's obviously fine, if it's fresh stuff and you can tell it's fine then I would eat it but if there was mould on it I would be less likely to eat it whereas they probably would.

P1: Whereas if there is mould here we probably just cut the mould off and eat it but not tell you. Obviously meat you have to be very careful with.

P3: But you would still eat meat that has gone off whereas I would not want to.

P1: Well when you say gone off, if it was...

P3: Past its use by.

P1: If it had gone sort of grey...

P3: Dad would still cook it if it was grey.

P1: Yeah but obviously things like... I mean we've never given ourselves food poisoning have we?

P2: No.

So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

P1: I would think that the greatest wastage is I would say bread and fresh produce.

P2: Bananas, we often throw away bananas.

P1: Yeah because you don't like ones that are...

P3: Brown and squidgy.

P1: Where the skin has gone black or brown or speckled even whereas you'll eat them. You're quite good, you'll make banana custard or whatever and find a way of using them. Bananas tend to get used quite quickly. Satsuma's, I suppose if they're not the ones that if they're not easy then they'll probably get left until they get a bit dry.

P3: I'd say salad.

P1: Yeah but we buy a lot of bags of salad and they don't last very long, especially if I always wash it so if you wash it and then put it back in the bag, I suppose it's still a little bit damp, maybe that makes it go off a bit quicker so we quite often have a half used bag of salad in the fridge and then it goes slimy so you really... sometimes we'll pick bits out but it's not very nice. Bread, maybe our bread bin isn't air tight enough but that we will end up... again because we might buy a fresh loaf on Saturday so then obviously we'll eat that because it's fresh but we might already have a bag of sliced bread open and some of us prefer that as toast, for toasting. You like the wholemeal with seeds or whatever it is, the seeded one so I tend to buy that.

P2: So we sometimes have two loaves on the go.

P1: So that's it, we don't all eat the same bread. I will eat the Warburton thins or crumpets. So quite often we will have quite a few bread products on the go and so that leads to wastage. So I suppose if we all insisted that, if we said you've all got to eat that... I mean we did used to buy, when the children were younger, the 50/50 bread because they would choose white and there's not a lot of nutrition in a lot of white bread and I would want them to eat brown or wholemeal but obviously the 50/50, that worked quite well.

So how often would you say then that you waste it?

P2: We throw food away once a week.

P1: I would say on a weekly basis probably if I'm honest, even having picked off the mould we still would waste probably on a weekly basis.

On a weekly basis, yeah.

P1: Of bread and also I would think with fresh food as well, the vegetables, they last a bit longer but... potatoes, yeah potatoes because obviously sometimes you want new potatoes, sometimes you want potatoes that are suitable for mashing and perhaps there's a few potatoes left but there's not enough to make a Shepard's pie or something or it might be that it's new potatoes and you want a different sort so then quite often you'll discover there's various bags of perhaps two or three potatoes of one sort and they've then started to seed and obviously when they start going green you really don't want to eat those.

P2: I'll pick off the sprouts but I don't do green, but I will pick off...

P1: I'm sure you have been ill once eating green potato I think. Yeah they're toxic aren't they so I think you've got to be careful if they started sprouting.

And then when you do look through your food, so at what stage would you say you might throw away? So how do you assess whether you would keep it or throw it away?

P1: Probably if I know realistically we are not going to use it and it's beyond using.

P2: Generally when we bring a new load of food in we need more room in the fridge so we throw some stuff out.

P1: Yeah normally if ...[respondent's husband] is shopping and I know he is coming back with a lot more food then I will go through the fridge, the fruit basket, the vegetable basket and the fruit bowl and just sort of weed out anything and clear space. Quite often the sort of things we take out then will be say we've cooked a load of mince and there's been a bit leftover and so it's put in a polythene box and we think we might use it at some point and then it doesn't get used.

P2: Absolutely, we are not very good at using up scraps.

P1: Or there might be a piece of Shepard's pie left which has probably been there and we don't get round to using, perhaps we've forgotten about. What else do we throw out? We tend to have, what I tend to do is if I've over catered we'll tend to put the food say in the fridge but realistically it often doesn't get eaten apart from potatoes which...

P2: I'll fry up.

P1: You'll fry up so boiled potatoes we purposefully cook a few more so those can be chopped up.

So if you do find anything that's passed its sell by date, so how would you assess whether you keep it or not?

P1: I would look at it. It depends whether it's for me or for us or if it's for... like you wouldn't want to be served up with anything... and there are things that I would eat that I wouldn't serve up to the family. I remember once, mushrooms, I looked at some mushrooms and thought they're fine, they were well past their sell by date but they didn't look mouldy or anything so I fried them up and I can't remember what I did with them but...

P3: They were horrible.

P1: ...I must confess yeah you could tell, they didn't taste very good. Yeah generally unless stuff is actually rotting or sprouting or mouldy...

So you would sort of assess, like smell it or look at it?

P1: Yes I'd use common sense yes. I suppose the other thing is when you open a tin, often it says you have to use it up, or even a jar it says you should use this within a certain timeframe, well I don't necessarily stick with that but you probably would wouldn't you.

P3: I would use... if it was a jar and it was two weeks, I would probably use that until there was maybe mould or it smelt weird.

P2: Another thing we're bad at is opening more than one jar of the same thing because we don't look to see what needs finishing. So jam for example, we'll have two strawberry jams on the go.

P1: Yeah but they might be different flavour jams.

P2: Well they're both strawberry jams and we'll waste.

So can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past where you had to waste some food or drink and what were the causes that led to it to happen?

P1: I suppose the most recent case it was a, I suppose a near miss. ...[respondent's daughter] we were bringing her home from university, she's not long been home and I know that she likes pineapple. So I happened to be in a shop and I saw a pineapple and I thought oh she'll like that so I bought this pineapple on a whim because I saw it there and then it sat in our fruit bowl for I don't know how long it was there for.

P3: Yeah because I don't buy them because I know I can't be bothered to chop them up so I just wouldn't buy it. So I said well I'll eat it if you chop it up.

P1: If you do it.

P3: It had probably been there at least a week and I could see it was going a bit manky.

P1: So I was probably prompted by knowing that you were coming to visit and then we thought we really ought to tackle this pineapple which it was...

P3: It had gone brown and mushy inside.

P1: It was a bit brown and mushy but we were able to eat some of it, but if we'd have left it another day the whole thing would have had to have gone in the bin, so I suppose that was...

P3: Half of it still got thrown out because it was brown.

P1: A lot gets thrown out anyway because there's a lot that you can't eat in there. But we'd lost a percentage of it because it was just touch and go whether you could still eat it, so we did eat it but it wasn't that much hassle. Which is why I think sometimes... you know I've always thought in the past to buy a pot, you see in Tesco or Waitrose or whatever these pre prepared chunks of pineapple and you think well that's not a very cost effective way of doing it but actually in reality it's probably...

P3: Yeah I am very cost aware but I sometimes buy pre prepared mango because I know that for the hassle of cutting it up and how much would likely get thrown away I'm a lot more likely to eat it, and actually it is very expensive but the value that you get is actually kind of worth it if you want to eat the mango.

P1: And sometimes you feel, well even the pineapple even if we'd eaten it the day we bought it, I still feel that's an awful lot of waste that you have to throw away anyway because you can't eat all the skin can you. It's like crab, not that we cook crab very often, we never cook crab but you know when you see them in a restaurant and all this shell and everything, and the amount of meat you get from it you think well that's not food waste as such but that's an awful waste of a creature for what you're getting out of it.

So generally when you have to throw any food away how does that make you feel?

P1: Yeah I feel guilty.

P2: I feel cross that we've wasted the money.

P1: He feels cross and I feel guilty.

So you said that you feel cross that you wasted the money and then where would your guilty feeling come from? Would that be financial implications as well or would it be different?

P1: Just that you see pictures across the world of those who have nothing and we have so much and it's just easy come, easy go and you feel quite powerless to make a difference really because it's such a global issue, but obviously if you've just thrown a load of food away and then you sit down and watch the news and you see refugees and people, you know children...

P3: There are people in the UK mum.

P1: Well people in the UK as well who have to, yeah who...

P3: See I'd say I feel guilty financially because obviously it's my money now that I'm spending but also I feel environmentally I know the impact of where my food is coming from and so for throwing that away knowing the environmental cost, that is part of why I'd feel bad.

P2: Whereas I don't feel that guilt at all, I just feel cross.

P1: You just feel cross that we've wasted the money yeah.

Ok. If you'd have to think about a situation totally food unrelated where you'd feel equally cross and you'd feel equally guilty, what sort of situations could that be?

P2: Got me a Christmas present that I didn't want, it's a waste of money.

P1: Scraping the car. I don't know. I'd feel guilty. It could be the other way round, you could feel guilty.

P3: I thought you meant with an ice scraper, I thought you meant getting the ice off.

P1: No. No, or getting a speeding ticket. I was cross and you were guilty.

So obviously it's not nice to feel cross or guilty or have those sort of negative feelings described by yourselves, and often when we do have those feelings and we expect those feelings to happen again we adjust to prevent this from happening again. So now my next questions would be aiming to address the kind of strategies you have in place to avoid any food being thrown away. So I'll ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

P2: Well this week there's two examples. We did a veggie food one day and then I put it all into a Shepherd's pie yesterday, so reused it in another dish. Then a cake that we made last week that no one was going to it, half of it was left and I turned that into a pudding, so reuse food so we've done that twice this week.

P1: Recycling, but I think the bottom line is planning and I think sometimes you shop, during the week you shop and I cook so there's a bit of a disconnect and if I write a shopping list, quite often you don't follow it.

P2: I don't shop to a list no.

P1: No he doesn't shop to a list, not to my list so there's a bit of a lack of communication there I suppose. Also you don't always know who you're catering for because things come up and you're late at work or you go to friends, so it might be that you over cater or you have to rustle something up, life is busy and

complicated. I would like the idea... what I like is when on holiday you kind of, if you're in a holiday cottage and it's somewhere with a market, especially places like France you go out and you shop on a daily basis so we decide what we're going to eat today and it becomes, obviously you've got the time to do that and it becomes part of the activity whereas day to day quite often it's just one more thing you've got to do and tick off and you're relieved when the dishwasher is on and you've finished the meal and everyone is more or less fed. But we do have friends, they don't have a deep freezer, there's only three of them, they have one son and he's a very good chef and he works from home, he's not a professional chef but he will always go out and purchase the food everyday fresh which is obviously time consuming but I bet they don't waste anything really, but then they are a smaller family unit.

P3: But then equally for me at university in the first couple of years I would try and be cooking for myself and you end up buying a packet of three peppers and it's hard to get through all that as one person. But this year I've been cooking with two of my close friends so to be honest they do all the planning and order it all but we waste very little now because there's the three of us and because if you're cooking for other people you do plan more because there's other people involved and now because it's kind of centrally managed we waste very little compared to what we used to so it's been good.

So you touched on this a little bit already but do you often have any leftovers when you cook?

P1: Yes and then there's the dilemma... when the children... actually I hate waste so quite often when the children were little you'd cook something and they'd leave a lot on the plate and I would find, as lots of mums do, I'll just finish that up. Then of course you put a lot of weight on so the food waste is doubly bad I suppose because when I was a child when we were at primary school you would sit and have proper meals, you would dish them out, it was when there was the proper school lunches and you wouldn't be allowed to get up from the table until somebody had come round and said yes that's ok. In fact I think you might have had that did you when you were at school with school dinners?

P3: Yeah you had to ask before you could have your pudding.

P1: Yeah so that was kind of drummed into you, probably more so for us but I do remember it.

P3: You had to say you had enough of that taste to be allowed to eat the next thing.

P1: Oh that's where that came from, right. I mean that was good because obviously it meant that it was educating people to not waste food.

P2: But often we'll leave just a little bit left which will be enough for your lunch on your own the next day and then it doesn't get eaten.

P1: Because I might not be at home at lunchtime or I might be off meeting friends so I'm not actually here to eat the scraps.

But then generally would you say that you do try to keep it for another... to see if you can use it up or make it into something else?

P1: We would keep it, yeah, yes.

P2: Yes.

P1: Yes, yes. It's quite often just when you've got a little bit left, and to be honest quite often I think it's forgotten about or perhaps if you've just eaten a load of Shepherd's pie the night before, you look in the fridge and think oh Shepherd's pie. If I was to serve up Shepherd's pie twice in a row you'd probably all moan wouldn't you if you had the same thing twice, but then if you leave it that second night and do something different, the pie or whatever it is might well get forgotten.

So how much effort do you perceive that to be to reuse any leftovers?

P2: You've got to think about it, you've got to plan ahead and that's the thing isn't it.

P1: Yeah. You've got to prioritise it really. I suppose probably that's it, that it's not right up and top priority, it's something that sort of gets forgotten or isn't necessarily a high priority, if something gets thrown away it gets thrown away, it's more important that you're where you need to be or that you've made time for something else or someone else. But yes it's one of those things that you know you should do just like you should grow your own vegetables or you should walk more rather than using the car, there's an awful lot of shoulds that we feel we should be doing but actually in reality it doesn't happen as often as we would like it to.

And is making use of leftovers or reducing the food waste anything you'd ever recommend to other people?

P2: I wouldn't feel holier than thou to.

P1: I don't think we feel... we wouldn't be well placed to. We often say that your mum who is a different generation again, I don't suppose she wastes much food because she cooks a lot from scratch. Yeah I think a lot of it is, and I often think this, that you know when you're at school especially if you're academic you're sort of pushed away from domestic sciences, cookery is what the less academic do, that was certainly the case when I was at school so we only did fairly basic, I can't remember how long we did it for but, and I think our cookery teacher was fairly terrifying as well but I've often thought subsequently now as it happens that I'm at home and that's probably one of the things, one of the skills that would be most useful for me is household management and cookery. But it's not something, my mother was not a very enthusiastic cook, she did it but we didn't do a lot of cooking together at home, again she was say an academic probably and I suppose you kind of get this disconnect between what you're eating and where it comes from and it's not something that you invest a lot of time in to be honest. Whereas probably you did more cooking at home with mum, I don't know.

For those times where you do make another dish out of leftovers, where do you think you learned about this?

P1: I think our parent's generation were much, obviously those that lived in the war time...

P2: They were much better at it than we are. (Inaudible, 28.45).

P1: ...much better, much more resourceful. We've been spoiled because everything is on hand. If you talk to anyone in our grandparent's generation they'll talk about remembering when bananas first came back into the shops after the war and how they wouldn't be able to get fresh fruit. My grandmother she used to run a shop in London so she dealt with all the rationing and she'd ration out these small amounts and they would eke it out and they would make the very best of what they had and it would become quite a sense of

achievement and she'd often talk about, I think, my mother's dress that she made from the bathroom curtains because they happened to be the same gingham pattern that the school had, and my grandmother would always say to us, my grandmother really disliked waste and she would always say if you put too much mustard on the side of your plate she'd say that's how (inaudible, 29.56) Colman made his fortune, people taking a great blob of it and only using a tiny bit. Yeah so I guess that generation it was out of necessity but I suppose we've always, we've grown up in a time of plenty in a country that has plenty. It's like with everything if it's there available you don't really value it in the same way as if you actually knew real hunger or you had to produce the food yourself.

Do you think you take any influence from the media on trying to reduce your food waste?

P2: We know it's a bad thing not to try to...

P3: I wouldn't say it's the media personally.

P1: I don't know really. There's so many cookery programmes aren't there? There was a kind of make to amend type programme but I don't think that was for food was it?

P3: That was Eat Well for Less.

P1: Yeah Eat Well for Less, so we saw some of those, I don't know if they recycle food at all.

P3: (Inaudible, 31.08).

P1: I mean I think the media only has a role in as much as if you're watching the news and you see people who have so little and you're sitting there nibbling on this, that and the other and without giving it much thought, then obviously that's when the guilt comes in but I don't know whether it's really educating you not to waste food.

So when you are able to use any leftovers or avoid any food being thrown away, how does that make you feel?

P1: Virtuous.

P2: It feels much better doesn't it?

P1: We used to have a spaniel, yeah he used to get quite a few of the scraps didn't he, he'd sit and be like this, so I must admit even now if I have a leftover sausage or something I half expect to see him like this, I mean you used to tell me off for feeding him.

P3: Well it's not good for him.

P1: No but he enjoyed it. So yeah, I can't remember what the question was.

How does that make you feel if you avoid having to waste some food?

P1: Avoid wasting food, yeah I mean...

P2: I'd be pleased because we haven't wasted money.

P1: I guess actually if for every, I don't know, potato or whatever or unused salad bag you could actually put a price on it and then you put the money in a tin, that would probably have more of an impact to think that that was money that you'd wasted or if sometimes you have to throw, sometimes well we buy, if you buy three for two, sometimes we might buy ready meals or something if the kids are going to be here on their own or ...[respondent's husband] going to be here on his own then you might use two and then perhaps one doesn't, gets left and doesn't get eaten and you end up... we don't often throw loads away but then I suppose you can actually put a price on it so I guess if we worked out how much we've wasted moneywise on it.

P3: I'd almost say it's... like for me, not necessarily this year but before when I was buying in all the fresh food and trying to plan but it was almost a relief if I could then use up all that fresh food and it's kind of a vicious cycle because you want to have the fresh food in but then once you've got it you're in a constant battle to try and use it before it goes less good, so I think there is a sense of relief in using it up or being able to throw it out.

So if you had to compare that to a situation that is totally food unrelated where you'd feel that same kind of victorious or relief.

P1: When you've got an essay done or been sent off.

P3: Well if you're looking for just relief then yes but...

P1: Well if you've got something playing on your mind, something you've got to get done, dentist, going to the dentist, you know you've got to go, you're not looking forward to going but you've done it and you feel virtuous.

P2: Or when you buy something in the sale that you really wanted.

P1: Ok you get a bargain.

P2: Get a bargain, that sense of virtuous relief.

P3: I wouldn't call that...

P1: Yeah but it has to be something you wanted in the first place because no doubt you've done all the stuff about BOGOF and the over, you're drawn into it more than you want and I'm probably the most susceptible. If I go in and I didn't have a list I'll get side tracked and I'll come back with pineapples or cookies or whatever because I like to please people and I want to bring them things that will make them happy, but then quite often I'll make them annoyed because I bought something that I haven't thought it through and then it goes mouldy.

Right so we'll change the focus of the interview a tiny bit now in that I've got four scenarios here where people have found themselves in a bit of a pickle where they have too much food, and I'd ask you to take the role of an agony aunt so to speak to see whether there's any advice you can give to these people. So they're the black ones if you turn it over.

P1: Ok thank you. So which one? We choose?

If you do the ones in the black.

P2: In the black.

P1: In the black ok. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt] I had my online shopping delivered yesterday and a number of the fresh items I ordered have a sell by date of tomorrow. I'm not going to be able to eat them all by then and my freezer is full to bursting so I cannot put them in there. What can I do? Please help.

P2: You can either complain that you've been sold food that's...

P3: Normally it tells you though, if I'm ordering online it will say, if I'm buying raspberries, it normally says it has a use by at least three days in advance so I kind of am swayed by that so obviously it doesn't help here but for future reference have a look at how long, if it gives you a sort of guarantee on how long it should be.

P2: Or you'd make a virtue of cooking that stuff before other stuff.

P1: I suppose if it says my freezer is full to bursting well it might be that somebody else has space in their freezer so you could put it in somebody else's freezer. I mean I suppose the advice I would give is don't make the same mistake again, but then that's easy to say.

P3: You could say that some of it might not be mouldy by then, like you could still eat it the day after as long as you've planned that you're definitely going to eat it the next day it will probably be fine.

P1: Because the sell by date is not the same as the use by date is it?

P3: Yeah it's also a sell by date.

P1: And they were talking about getting rid of even the use by date weren't they so...

P3: Yeah so actually does say sell by date so the use by date will likely be at least another day, if not two.

P1: But if you're certain you're not going to be able to eat them all...

P3: Yeah but that's by the sell by date.

P1: Yeah well if it's not being able to eat them by the sell by date I'd say they'd probably be all right.

P3: Eat them anyway.

P1: You would probably have a bit of leeway so I would say ask a friend if they've got room to store them.

P2: Or not worry too much and just get on with it.

P1: Yeah get on with it but eat what you can, but then remember it next time and don't order so much fresh food. So this one. Dear... it's not Delia, is it Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt]?

P3: It's Delilah.

P1: I read it as Delia. I'm a single person, I find it difficult to find pack sizes that suit my needs and budget. I recently bought a pack of four lemons as it was cheaper than an individual one, however I now do not know what to do with the others I have left. Any suggestions on what to do with them would be appreciated. I know my mum says this sometimes that obviously she's on her own now and mostly just catering for herself and she does shop...

P3: Most of it is in packs of two.

P1: Yeah but I know she does often say I wanted just to get one of those but it came in a pack of four or she's like you, she's very astute and does all the calculations and then she's annoyed that if she buys just the one she's getting a bad deal.

P3: But equally if you buy one for 20p or three for 50p, if you're not going to use the other ones it's still cheaper, you're still only paying 20p. So it sounds like...

P1: It's a false economy yeah.

P3: I know, it's painful but I often have to think like that. But you can put them in the fridge, cut it in half and it will make the fridge smell nice.

P1: Yeah so it depends what it is, what packs they are.

P3: It's lemon.

P1: Yeah so lemons are the obvious one but it's a general thing, it's quite difficult to find pack sizes.

P3: But she's saying what to do with the lemons.

P1: Oh with the lemons specifically.

P3: That's what it says.

P1: Well lemons last though, don't they, quite a long time. I don't know whether you could...

P2: Yes.

P3: Make drinks, put them in sauces, make cleaning products.

P1: Oh yeah you could make cleaning products. I don't know whether it's...

P3: Make a lemon cake.

P1: Could you freeze lemon juice? So that's actually lemon juice. Every year pancake day I buy a whole bottle of lemon juice.

P2: And then we always throw out a whole bottle of lemon juice.

P1: Which then when we come to pancake day the next year I think I've got a bottle of lemon juice and of course by then it's gone off so then I go out and buy another bottle of lemon juice and we don't really use lemon juice in between. So yeah I mean I suppose if you're a single person you just have to accept that you're going to pay a bit more per unit, unless you do what you did, so you were catering...

P3: If you're not living with them then it would be more difficult to actually do it.

P1: But maybe there's lots of... I mean there are so many single households, so many more single households out there now and there's probably a lot of people who would really enjoy cooking with somebody else or there could well be people who enjoy cooking for somebody else and somebody who hates cooking, and

there may be a network of putting people together who could actually share food together. Like you found with the...

P3: Yeah we have at university a food sharing group so if you have three lemons leftover you'd put them in the group and I have used that a few times to give stuff away. There are hungry students who are keen to get free food. So if you had a similar thing in the community it could work.

P1: Yeah or any kind of community, a block of flats, an over 55's retirement where you get a lot of single occupancy or single households, it must be repeated in every single household in that particular year.

P3: Even doing your shopping with other people so for all the meals we have together we do one big shop but if you have a group of friends and everyone wanted one lemon and you can kind of club together and got your pack of four lemons then you're still getting the cheapness and you can share the cost of delivery. It requires more organisation.

P1: You can but that then would come back to the planning, you have to be very organised. Some people are really organised.

P3: We had a spreadsheet.

P1: Oh really?

P3: Yeah.

P1: Ok. Right. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], my family and I love Italian food and often cook it at home. However, I cooked far too much pasta this evening and do not know what I can do with it - we've all done that - it seems a waste to throw it in the bin but I do not know what else I can do with it. Please could you help?

P2: That's what we do do, we do cook too much pasta and we throw it away.

P1: We don't always throw it away because I have in the past...

P3: Make a salad.

P1: ...put it in a dish and put tuna on it and sweetcorn and cheese, but then you don't like that.

P2: Not very often. No but often pasta is exactly the thing that gets chucked.

P1: Yeah pasta gets chucked out a lot because it is quite cheap as well so it's quite disposable I suppose, but yeah you can make a salad out of it.

P3: The council give you the pasta scoopers so you know how much pasta.

P2: Yes.

P1: Oh they do. Yes at the New Forest show, the New Forest District Council they had...

P3: They had cups of rice portions and things for spaghetti, or you could just weight it.

P1: Yeah.

P2: But we're very bad at estimating how much. Rice you actually need or pasta you actually need.

P3: Whereas I calculate it in the packet and measure it.

P1: Then obviously if there's... it takes a while to stop cooking for five and you bring it down. I always peel too many potatoes because I think I'm still cooking for five of us. But then I notice when we go to my mum and she might be cooking for five of us and there will be three potatoes, we need to upscale this up a bit so it's I suppose if you're always catering for a set number of people at a set time I suppose you get more organised. But pasta I think... pasta, we've chucked our fair share of pasta in the past actually, but we have occasionally recycled it I think in pasta salads and put cheese on it and put it in the oven. The last one. Dear Delilah ...[fictional agony aunt], I have recently moved and have a large apple tree at the bottom of my garden, yeah we've got apple trees, which has produced a lot of fruit. Some of it is still on the tree and some has already fallen off and is starting to rot. I hate to see all of this food go to waste but I'm not much of a cook and do not know what to do with it. Please could you advise me with any suggestions you have. Well we have this.

P3: Give it to friends.

P1: It wasn't very good this year actually the apple crop.

P2: But it rots on the ground.

P1: But we do let it rot on the ground because the birds come for it so quite a lot of it gets eaten.

P3: So do the wasps.

P1: And wasps, the wildlife. Some of the apples aren't that great to eat but we have got, we were pretty bad at doing anything with it but then we got a device...

P3: We don't have it, we borrowed the...

P1: And then you bought me something, that thing from Ikea.

P3: Oh yeah that thing, yeah I did.

P1: Where you can just...

P3: It cores and slices it and then you freeze it. That's cooking apples.

P1: Yeah, so last year I did actually do quite a lot of it. I didn't peel them, I just cored and sliced, bagged them up and put them in the freezer. The trouble is if there's a bumper crop you try and give apples to people, especially in this area and everybody else has apple trees and everyone's trying to palm their apples off.

P3: There are still a lot of people we give them to. There are still quite a few people who would take them.

P1: Yeah when I was a child we actually had a small orchard at the bottom of our garden and we were constantly taking apples into school to our school friends and...

P3: You said you put a bucket by the gate and say free apples, take them.

P1: Or put a bucket... yeah. Of course they don't last. Although apples I think can't you put them in trays and in the dark?

P2: Yes. But we don't.

P1: But we don't do that. We do freeze them sometimes, but this year the crop wasn't that great was it?

P2: No.

P1: But because they're perishable you have to be organised again.

P2: And that's part of it, being organised.

P1: I think that's the bottom line, planning and being organised and making it a priority above other things.

Thank you. That was it in terms of my questions. If I just briefly summarise what you said and then if I got it wrong then correct me or feel free to chip in. So you do tend to do a weekly shop, that's mainly for the two of you but then occasionally your children come back from university then it's back to the five of you. You do a weekly shop which you then usually do and then you top that up as and when required. It could be anywhere, Waitrose, Tesco, Lidl, wherever you sort of fancy. You do tend to throw food away on a weekly basis and it often it is the same kind of items so things like breads or salads, just for the reason of there being different tastes and having different products on the go and that kind of thing. When you do throw it away you have quite different feelings so you're more annoyed that you wasted the money whereas you think it's more morally wrong to throw the food away when other people are going hungry.

P1: Yes but equally I have the tendency that I would eat it but I stop myself eating because otherwise you balloon. So I suppose I feel marginally better about wasting it than eating it to tidy it up and then feeling...

P2: Fat.

P1: Stuffed and fat, yes, so it's that kind of deal. So the money is less of an issue to me.

Yeah and when you do cook or when you do make something out of food that avoids waste it does make you feel quite good. You do often have any leftovers and try to save them but then in reality it doesn't always get used but you do try to make something out of it...

P1: Yes, and so the dog often got the leftovers.

...to avoid the waste in the first place.

P2: That's all a very fair summary.

P1: Yes that all sounds... yes.

P3: One thing that's annoying about the council here is they don't have food waste collections like quite a lot of local places that you have to...

Dorset has but then Hampshire doesn't.

P2: Yes.

P3: Yeah Dorset does and Cambridge, they don't have to but the council will take food waste whereas here they won't take it which I think is quite annoying that so much of it could be composted and stuff.

P2: But my mum who lives in Dorset who does that she says "tell you what's really annoying though is they don't then provide you with the little bags to put the food in".

I know I used to live in Dorset.

P2: So it becomes a sort of a pain to have to do your recycling.

P3: And you get fined if you don't do it don't you?

Yeah, and it can only be in those special bags that are sort of self-decomposing so it can be quite a hassle, and there's meant to be a ticket at the end of the roll that you put on and they leave you the new bags which then in reality they don't and you can't get the bags from anywhere so in the end you just put it...

P2: Yeah so it becomes a pain to recycle.

It's sort of business as usual.

P2: Just like when you come to recycle paper and you run out of the bin bags and you say blow it.

P1: But then I always feel worse about chucking out a load of paper, like you would say let's just stuff the paper in there with the general rubbish, I probably feel worse about wasting paper or recyclable material actually than food, so I suppose I think well the food will just rot down and won't be an issue whereas I suppose I would be more bothered about if we stuffed all those newspapers just into the black bin bag because we didn't have a see through clear one, I would feel quite guilty about that.

P2: But we don't recycle any food, don't put it on the compost heap or anything like that.

P1: We always meant to compost but we haven't.

P2: But we don't. (Inaudible, 51.07).

P1: But then here you might get all sorts of animals I guess.

P3: You get the foxes.

P2: I mean we get a lot of birds come and peck the bags and things, and obviously we've got all sorts of livestock going up and down the road so if you left out food...

Ok great, thank you.

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So like I've just said before this piece of research is about food waste in the home, and a lot of research has already been conducted on how much or little people waste and how that makes them feel and that has then led to research being done of preventative measures that people undertake to prevent food

waste, so for example having a meal plan for the week ahead or not overstocking food to avoid the waste. We're looking at food from a bit of a different angle and it is more about post-purchase behaviour so finding yourself in the situation where you have bought too much food and then what kind of strategies general people like yourself would apply to not letting that food go to waste. If I just start off with a couple of introductory questions to just introduce yourself, so could you tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour.

Well now that I am a single person I tend to go when I need it, not a whole week in advance. But I realise that's impossible if you're a working wife/mother or whatever, you probably have to do a shop once a week. But that was never possible for... my mother for instance, she used to go well every day/every couple of days to the shops and bring it back because you had to carry it back, you hadn't got cars and you only got as much as you could carry.

So who do you shop for when you go shopping?

For?

Yeah.

Me.

So just yourself, do you occasionally have visitors or would you say sometimes you shop more of...

No not now. No not now, no. No I'm terrified of having visitors because I'm a rather hopeless cook.

Ok so you would typically go to the shop as and when you needed for yourself.

When I need it.

Ok. How often do you shop for food? So every couple of days or...?

Probably but that's only for tiny little things like a bottle of milk or something. Today I went and bought some eggs because I'd ran out, some cheese because I'd finished it yesterday, a small bottle of milk and a packet of raspberries because I share supper with ...[a neighbour] actually once a week and I take a pudding and tonight it is going to be raspberries.

Ok that's very nice. So where would you say you usually go to do your food shop?

Well there's a Tesco Metro Express five minutes away so I go there. There's also a green grocer a little bit further up and I go there, they have most of my shopping. There's also a butcher but I hardly ever go there.

So are there any specific products that you buy in certain places? So for example, would you go to the green grocer to buy your greens and then go to Tesco Express?

Because at Tesco you can only buy big packets of things I go to the green grocer to buy one potato perhaps or they also have very good tomatoes there from the Isle of Wight so I get those loose. It's all loose at the green grocer, not done up in packets which I really approve of and you pull down a paper bag from the shelf and put whatever it is you want in it, just the amount you want. You don't have to buy a whole... the grapes for instance come in a little bag which is plastic but it's open so you can take out the amount of grapes you want, put them in your paper bag and the same with kale or greens, they're not, well yes kale is in a plastic

bag but I don't know if there's anything else. Tomatoes you just lift out of the box, eggs are in little paper, papier-mâché sort of egg boxes.

So it suits your needs better in terms of having the quantities you need.

Oh for a single person it is much better. I think probably Tesco works out cheaper.

Ok that's fine. What would you say you purchase more, do you tend to purchase more fresh or more frozen food?

Oh fresh, very little frozen because I've hardly got any freezer. It's a very tiny kitchen. My freezer is about that big.

Oh right, yeah. So it makes sense to buy the fresh food. So if we now move onto about a situation where you had to waste any food that you've already purchased. So most people can remember at least one occurrence, if not more, however you might be different. Speaking about food waste more broadly, so when I say food waste, what do you think that means?

Could you say that again?

Yeah so when I speak about food waste, what do you think that means?

Throwing away food that's not been eaten.

Yeah so for the purpose of this interview we are adopting the definition that food waste means any food but also including drinks, so anything like milk or fruit juices for example that end up in the bin.

Nothing in my case. I eat everything, even if it's mouldy.

So leading onto the next question, if you had to estimate, how often would you say that you have to waste food?

Never.

Never. That's a good thing.

If you were brought up during the war we had to empty our plates, you just had to at school and at home you wouldn't dream of leaving food uneaten on your plate, which is quite a difference from today's children, and certain foods were very scarce so they were very precious and that's stayed with me. I will tell you something I wasted recently though, it really really hurt. I was distressed the amount of... cheese comes in sealed packets and even at this green grocer sometimes it's too big and I thought well it will be nice just to, because sometimes I just didn't have any because I wasn't going to be using it in any great quantity, and I thought it will be nice to sprinkle on some soup or sprinkle it over something, say for a dish I'd made. So I bought a packet of grated cheese at Tesco, the cheapest cheddar grated and because I do sometimes rather like decent cheese I also during that period I had this packet I had bought tasty cheese and this packet of cheddar, grated cheddar sat in my fridge and it sat in my fridge and I only used little bits of it so it sat there more and more and more and then I realised some of it was going a bit mouldy so I tried to use a bit more of it and then I'd forgotten all about it and the next time I looked it was completely blue/green all over. Normally I don't mind mouldy cheese but there just wasn't any yellow in it, and in a situation like that I

would put it out for the birds but we've had a problem with rats so I thought well this is just stupid I'll have to put it in the dustbin and it really hurt.

So speaking about this situation you've just mentioned about having to throw the cheese away, so what would you say were the circumstances that led to it happen, so you having the other bit of cheese on the go as well and too much?

It was over buying. I shouldn't have... it didn't look a vast quantity but in fact I didn't use it in my cooking as much as I thought I would, so I shall not do it again.

As in buy a packet that big?

I wouldn't buy a packet of grated cheese under any circumstances because if it goes mouldy in the block and it really is unpleasantly mouldy you can just shave off the mould and you've still got perfectly good cheese underneath so it's much more economical to do that, it's more sensible, it's more economic.

Yeah and if you have any sort of particular type of drink or food that you would maybe look at or it's past it's sell by date how would you usually assess on whether it would be still ready to eat?

I don't take any notice. Whether it tastes all right or smells all right.

Yeah so you would smell it or taste it to see if it's still ok?

Yeah you didn't used to have that, this sell by date. My children when they come here they sometimes make a joke of going through the cupboard and finding some mustard or something that has a sell by date of 1992 or something like that because I don't eat much mustard. They make a hilarious thing about this and throw it out; well I wouldn't mind I'd just take off the dark brown stuff from the top and if I wanted it eat the decent mustard which is perfectly ok underneath.

Yeah so anything unopened or even opened you look at it and then cut off the mouldy bit and assess it if it's still...

I would smell it and taste it and if it tasted foul then I would throw it out.

Yeah, do you ever find that you ever have any drinks that you...?

No I don't. Alcohol is fine, I've got some of that, but orange juice I would drink it until the bottle is empty. I don't ever buy any exciting drinks.

That's fine, that's fine. You already touched on that a little bit about when you had to throw the cheese away, how did you feel when you had to do that?

Dreadful, really really horrible, and all the time I was racking my brains to how I could use it but I just couldn't think of any way of using it because there's much more than I could put in a cheese sauce or anything, anyhow I don't think it would be very nice. It might have been, it might have been like stilton or something but I didn't try.

So if you had to compare that feeling you had when you had to throw away that cheese to something totally unrelated to food waste, say another totally different situation, what would you say that situation could be where you felt the same feeling of annoyance?

Killing a slug or something.

Ok yeah.

Something which feels vaguely immoral and wrong.

Ok. Into that feeling of... so what underpins that feeling? Is it more from...? Does any financial aspects come into that?

Not really no. It's just immoral, the morality of it.

Of not liking to throw the food away.

Yes it just seems immoral to me when half the world has got such a tiny amount to eat.

Obviously it's not nice to feel like that...

Horrible.

...and to have that feeling and mostly...

And this is ages ago and I mean it's still here.

Yeah so you're still remembering it vividly. So in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative we adjust to prevent such a feeling so you've already said that you probably wouldn't buy any grated cheese anymore because...

That's right, I can't eat it quick enough.

So my next questions aim to address some of the practical strategies regarding how you try to avoid or limit the amount of food you throw away. Feel free to use any specific examples relating to food or drink if it makes it easier. So what would you do to try and avoid the amount or limit the amount of food you throw away?

Well since I don't throw any away it's rather difficult but I wouldn't buy so much cheese, of that sort of cheese.

And then generally you've already mentioned before so you're quite happy to just assess food and see if it's still ok to eat and then eat it.

Yes if it tastes ok. You can always see if it smells foul. If it really smelt foul which would be unlikely because I don't think I'd have it that long then you'd have to throw it away but I probably wouldn't feel terribly guilty about that except as far as that I'd bought it and hadn't eaten it.

So if you do for example cook do you ever have leftovers?

Yes.

So what would you do with your leftovers then?

Eat them.

So you'd keep them and eat them?

Keep them and have them the next day.

The next day, ok.

Or you can think of ways of using them in a different concoction. If you had say too much meat, you've got meat leftover then you can make a tasty risotto or a spaghetti bolognese or mix it with pasta or rice or fried up with some cooked potato that you've have leftover and some Brussel sprouts that you've had leftover, make a sort of hash, all sorts of things you could do but I would never not eat it.

So you would either eat the same dish again and just heat it up or you would make it into...

Yeah I have a microwave so I can reheat something.

Or make it into something totally different, a totally new dish.

Into something else. Preferably I would just reheat it because it's not my favourite thing cooking and I'd sooner just get on and eat it having taken the trouble to make it in the first place rather than do something else.

So overall do you perceive it to be much effort using leftovers or having to think what to do with them?

No, no. No because there are certain things you've done for years and so automatically you think... I don't mind having the same... my ideal is to cook something on Sunday say a stew, I wouldn't have a joint because that's too much of a good thing but if I've made a stew then my ideal would be to reheat some of it every day until Friday, or the following Sunday and then I wouldn't have to think about what to cook that evening.

Ok. So is that ever something you recommend to other people?

Yes. I don't know why, perhaps I'm peculiar at this, but everybody seems to get buried in their shop and I tell them I eat the same thing two days running, "oh I couldn't do that", well that's crazy I think. I'm quite happy to...

Have it again, yeah.

Yeah and again and again.

Where would you say you learned about that method?

Which method?

Of using leftovers.

It was probably laziness or the fact that when I first got married I was trying to do a degree and there just wasn't time to fiddle around so you take shortcuts.

So would you say that you learned anything like that from family or friends, any tips on this? Would it be something you learned from your mother maybe?

I don't think so because my mum wasn't a very enthusiastic cook either and I sort of kept out of the kitchen. We always had a joint on Sunday and then we'd always have it cold on Monday and possibly cold on

Tuesday. Yeah it wasn't from her particularly. I think it was just experience being quite young and newly married and trying to do a degree and taking shortcuts.

Sort of learning by doing and experiencing with different things with how to do it.

Trying to spend as little time as possible.

Would you say that maybe any media or TV had any influence on that or maybe nowadays do you ever find that you might get any tips or something?

Well it's probably more likely nowadays but I haven't got a television so I don't watch food programmes, I don't find it terribly interesting. I do occasionally in a magazine or something turn up a suggestion for utilising something and I think to myself well that sounds quite a good idea I might try it.

Is there anything you can remember that you sort of read?

No I can't.

No that's fine.

I don't think the media actually makes a great thing of this. They usually have instructions to go out and buy so much of this and that and the other.

So when you do make use of your leftovers and actually manage to use up everything and don't have to throw anything away, how does it make you feel?

Relief that I shan't have to think about it tonight.

So is that more in the sense of the relief of not having to eat it again or the relief of not having to think that it's going off, that you have used it all up?

No not really. It doesn't approach the moral sphere really; well I suppose it must do it a bit, but just relief that I shan't have to think about what's for supper tonight.

Ok. So we'll now change the focus of the interview a little bit. So I've got four scenarios here which are where people have had a bit of a problem where they've either overstocked on certain foods or found themselves in the situation where they've got too much food and they don't quite know what to do with it. There are four different scenarios. If I hand you two of those and if you take almost the role of an agony aunt and read through the scenario and see if there's any good advice, as a person who rarely has to waste any food, you can give them based on their problem. So if I give you one of them that you might relate to, it's a single person who is struggling to having to buy everything in big pack sizes so if you just read through that scenario and see if there's anything you could advise a person.

Well probably I'd... actually they do last a long time lemons and as they get older and more dried up they get almost more plentiful in juice, I don't know if you've noticed that but they're very very juicy when they're like little bullets, but I think perhaps I would squeeze them all and freeze the juice.

And what would you... so what could they do... they maybe bought the lemons to have it in a drink as a slice of lemon or something rather than...

Oh I see well they wouldn't be able to do that would they, although the juice would be just as effective.

I suppose yeah.

If they froze it in small tiny little... that might be a problem finding a small enough thing to freeze it in. I've never done it but I suppose what you might do is freeze them, I believe you can get something that crushes ice and it all turns like snow or something.

Yeah crushed ice.

You could freeze that and then just take out a spoonful and put it in your drink, it would be lovely. Actually that would be really delicious. You could make another fruit drink and put a spoonful of frozen... I think this is a great idea. Or little bits of lemon the ice would be just as effective, if you put it in a stew or with mince or with fish or anything, it's a wonderful addition, or a pudding with fruit, raspberries or something, fruit salad or prunes or anything like that, put a spoonful of crushed lemon ice in it, it would be lovely.

Yeah. If we go to the next scenario, and that's someone who has moved and they have got a large apple tree at the bottom of their garden.

Oh that would be a headache. Yes it would upset me a lot. I have a compost heap, that's quite important. So if she's got rotten fruit, put it in the compost heap, that does help with food waste although I don't put cooked food in. All my vegetable trimmings and for instance if I'd bought some apples and one of them had gone really bad I'd put that in, I do throw things like that away. Sometimes there's an apple at the bottom of the pile that had gone bad, I'm not mad about apples anyway. The compost heap receives everything that's not cooked but otherwise I'd put them in a box outside your house and say please help yourself to passers-by or give them away to friends or if it's not too bad, what I used to do but I certainly wouldn't do now because I'd never eat it it is make apple jelly.

Then how would you go about doing that? Is it quite hard to do?

Well you cook them all up into a mush and then you strain through a muslin bag perched on an upside down chair into a bag so you've just got the juice, you throw away the mush into a compost heap and then with the juice, I think it's a pint of juice to a pound of sugar or something, you boil it up and it all sets into a lovely transparent jelly you can have with toast or give it away to whatever it is, your church or your women's institute or sell it for charity or something, or all these boxes for charity, you know the Trussell Trust and things like that, there's always that.

Yeah so for people who aren't really great cooks that then couldn't do that so that would be your advice to maybe just share it with people.

Well maybe they wouldn't want to make the jelly. Yeah share it or it give it away to charity as I said, offer it to the food bank or whatever it is you've got locally. But a compost heap is brilliant.

So would you see the compost as wasting food?

No, no because that's all going back and it's going to get recycled into the garden and back into nature where it came from so I wouldn't call that a waste.

Yeah that's fine, thank you for that. Thank you. So if I now briefly summarise what you've just said and if there's anything that I've misunderstood then feel free to correct me or add to that as you wish as well. I think I've just realised I forgot to ask you how much do you think you spend on average on food when you go food shopping?

Not terribly much. I take out £50 a week for all my expenses except for luxuries, I have another fund for treats, but for all the essential things... that includes we have a little local cinema every four weeks and I buy a £6 ticket to go to that, that would cover it or if there are any charity donations in the street I'd take it out of that but it also includes the window cleaner if he came that week which is £10 and depending how the rest of it went I'd use it for any meals out I had.

So definitely less than £50?

Oh definitely less. On the actual food I get at Tesco and the green grocers it's probably more like £25-30.

Yeah that's fine. So you do shop for yourself and you do quite targeted shops as in you do prefer to go to the green grocer because you can buy the actual amount of food you need so you don't end up wasting any and you perceive it to be nicer and fresher.

Yes but you don't get a green grocers like that everywhere do you?

No unfortunately not, no you don't. Then you also use the butcher very occasionally and then go to Tesco Express down the road.

Yes and if I want fish actually Tesco do fish as well in...

Sealed.

You know, not loose fish. If you wanted to buy fresh fish that's not like that you go to Waitrose which has a fish counter but that's not everywhere either.

Yeah so you say that you don't usually have any food that needs wasting so you are very organised for planning ahead for meals in the first place or using up any...

It's hardly planning unless somebody has said they've bought something and made something and I think oh that's really rather nice and I might copy them. Usually I do what occurs to me on the spur of the moment when I go round Tesco and see something; I think I haven't had that for a long time or something like that.

Yeah so you would cook that and then any leftovers from that you would have the next day.

Have the next night.

So there wouldn't be any waste in relation to that.

Absolutely not, no.

In terms of assessing food that you have in the fridge whether it's still ok to eat so you would just sort of smell it or taste it and if it's...

Yes and look at it.

And look at it, if it's still good to eat you would eat it. You did say that you find it quite an annoying and upsetting feeling if you do have to waste food, more from a moral perspective rather than the financial waste of it.

Well it's that too, but it's much less than the morality.

Less so than the morality of wasting the food. Then for the different scenarios I gave you, you suggested maybe freezing the lemon juice in small portions, that then can be easily incorporated into various...

One big portion and then crush it all up.

Crush all it up, that can then be incorporated in different maybe desserts, in cooking or drinks. So for the apple tree, if one's not a great cook and doesn't maybe have the time to do things like apple jelly then...

Compost heap.

Compost heap or even be nice and put them outside in a box for...

Put them outside for people to help themselves.

Help themselves so they don't go to waste.

Or take them to a food bank.

Food banks.

Which churches usually have. I don't know whether they like having a box of not very fresh apples but I'm sure they could direct the person to where it might be useful.

Ok yeah. We've spoken about it... have you got any other comments you'd like to add, anything that maybe occurs to you now or...?

Well only that I heard on the news yesterday that East Anglia were going to stop all... they were going to put all the post sell by date or post best by, all the food that had gone past their date so they were going to put them in a box in the shop and charge a penny or something ridiculous for them and people were buying them. That seems a very good idea. Then anything left over from that they could take to the Trussell Trust. I believe a lot of supermarkets do do that anyway, don't they?

I think they do occasionally but I think it does depend on, obviously it's up to individuals to assess whether they're happy to eat things past their sell by date, so I don't know how far they are able to sort of...

Well we're talking about things like packets of rice or packets of tins, but even that's got best by dates, it's totty. We had in the war, I was quite young in the war but you had a tin for years before you opened it. It's nonsense. It would probably explode if it wasn't right. Yes something else occurred to me whatever was it... no it's gone. I can't remember what that was. Trickier with meat... oh yes I know. They also had this scandal on television, I heard about it I didn't see it, where one company was sending all their chicken, cut up chicken all wrapped up with sell by dates, they were sending them back to the maker and they were re-labelling them and sending them back again. Did you hear that?

No I didn't hear about that but I know that there were issues with things about that before, yeah different meats.

I don't know how they were told, but I think I would be a bit worried about... I would still eat it but I would cook it really really well, chicken or something like that if it smelt funny, looked funny. Actually if it looked funny as well I probably wouldn't eat it, I don't know what I'd do with it because there's not much you can do, put it in a dustbin I suppose. But it was really high...

Concerning.

Yeah because I think even if you'd cooked it and cooked it and cooked it and cooked it, it might have so many toxins in it that it would affect the taste.

Yeah and you wouldn't want to risk your health of getting ill.

No I wouldn't risk it.

Right so thank you very much for letting me audio record the conversation we've had. As part of the consent form you mentioned that you'd rather not do the video so that's absolutely fine.

What advantage is that?

It's not necessarily an advantage or disadvantage. So what we're aiming to do is at the end of the project there will be a website and there might be information about certain things where people can just share their tips for other people on how to avoid food waste.

But you don't need to be seen for that.

You don't have to be, no, it's just sometimes people find it more visual if they can see a video of someone giving them advice but it's not mandatory so that's fine. Thank you very much. I'll just stop the recording.

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So this piece of research is all about food waste in the home, so a lot of research has been done already on how much and how little food people are wasting and how that makes them feel and then there has also been further research into preventative measures people take to avoid food waste, so avoid over stocking in the first place so having a shopping list and being organised and that sort of thing.

Yes ok

What we are looking at is a few ways from a bit of a different angle, in that we are looking at food waste from the angle of post-purchase behaviour, so if you find yourself in a situation where you have bought too much food or you have too much food for various reasons, we are interested to see what people like yourselves are doing to avoid that food going to waste.

Right ok.

So, if I start off with just asking you to introduce yourself, so tell me a little bit about your food shopping behaviour, so how many people do you shop for?

Five, myself, my husband and I have got three children living at home, I have got another one but he doesn't live here.

So there are five of you.

Five of us yes.

Ok

And four dogs.

And four dogs, so how often do you shop for food?

Every two weeks, I do my big shop every two weeks, I am going this afternoon. I do odd bits in the week like essentials like milk and bread you know, anything that we run out of I'll just go off and get but my big shop I just do once every two weeks.

Ok and then when you....say you do little shops throughout the week is that to just top up your big shop or for example you would only get certain things at certain shops?

No it is just really to top up like if we get a bit low on bread or milk, I will just go off and buy that.

Yes

But it is only usually one or two bits you know, that we have run out of or getting a bit low on.

Yes and typically where would you say that you shop for food?

Normally Tesco's or Asda, those are the two I shop at mainly.

Yes and if I could be so rude how much do you think spend on average per shop?

What each time, my big shop?

Yes

Probably, I would say about £130, that's for the two weeks.

And then that lasts you?

Yes

Ok and when you do, do your shop, do you buy more fresh or more frozen foods?

More frozen I buy.

Ok and why would you say that is?

Because it keeps longer and it is just as good for you as what fresh is and it keeps longer, it doesn't go off. I have bought fresh stuff before and put it in the fridge and it doesn't get used and it ends up getting thrown away.

Yes

So if I buy frozen you know, it keeps ok.

So now I would like to ask you about wasting food after already purchased, so most people will remember at least occurrence if not more, where they found themselves in a situation that they had food which had been thrown away, however you might be different?

Yes I have thrown food away yes.

So firstly I am intrigued to know, when I say food waste what do you think that means?

What food waste?

Yes

When you throw food away.

Yes

Yes

So for the purpose of this interview we class food waste as any food but also drink, so anything like fruit juice or milk or fizzy drinks like any drink as well, that is not consumed and is thrown in the bin.

Right ok yes

So if you had to estimate how often would you say that you waste food?

Not very often, I normally go through my cupboards sort of once a year and throw away anything that is out of date and I must admit, I do normally get about a dust bin bag full of stuff that has just gone way past its date. But no we don't really throw food away that often, I mean I buy like the packs of killed meat and occasionally that will go past its sell by date, I don't mind if it is a couple of days past it but any longer than that then I will sling it, especially if it is like chicken or something because that does go off quickly.

Yeah, and what would you usually say would be stuff that you throw away?

It is usually meat, packed with meat in it you know, sometimes I will buy salami or I buy honey roast ham or garlic sausage or liver sausage that kind of meat and occasionally it will go past its date because it hasn't been eaten and I will just throw it.

Yes

But I do normally wait a couple days after the best before date.

Ok so you don't always go strictly by the date?

No not really.

Ok, so at what stage might you throw it away, so how do you assess whether you would keep it or not keep it?

It depends what it is, like I say if it chicken I probably wouldn't use that, maybe a day after the date but after that I would throw that because it is poultry and I am a bit wary about chicken and stuff like that but any other meat I probably would leave it two or three days before I throw it away.

And would you just sort of open it and see if it is still ok to use or would you just look at the date and say 'oh it's gone now?'

I would probably smell it and if it smelt ok, I have asked you several times if you think it is alright because he has got quite a good nose for stuff like that and if he says it's alright then I will keep it and normally it's you that eats it and he is still here so it hasn't done him any harm.

So you would assess it and see if it is still ok to eat

Yes

So can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distant past that you wasted some food or drink and sort of explain what happened and what lead to the circumstances of it being wasted?

I do sometimes use skimmed milk and that does go off really quickly once it is opened and it is only usually me that has that like only cereal and I have thrown that away because it goes all curdled, it goes all lumpy in the bottle and when you tip it out it is all lumpy and horrible and it smells really bad, so that is quite recent that I have done that.

Was that because the size was too big?

No, I normal only buy the pint cartons just for myself because I am the only one that uses that, the others all have semi-skinned but sometimes I'll open it and have a cereal and then I don't have any more and then it just stays out there and it goes off.

So when you had to throw that milk away how did you feel?

I thought to myself, 'well should I buy it again', sometimes I do buy it and sometimes I don't. I tend to go through phases when I really like having the cereal then I will go several weeks and I don't have one, see I am trying to lose weight that's what it is, I go to ...[weight management group] and it is not really going very well, I did lose three stone in no time at all when I first joined but I have put most of it back on.

It is hard isn't it keeping going with it.

Yes it is it is really hard, so in the New Year I aim to try a do a bit better with it.

So did you feel any sort of....did you feel bad about having to throw it away?

Yes because money is tight and I thought that could have saved me sort of 50p

Yes

I don't like wasting food I will be honest, I don't like to see food wasted.

And why is that?

Several reasons really, there is so many people in this world that haven't got food you know and I just think you know, we have got food and we shouldn't let it go bad but I think sometimes maybe I go a little bit mad with my shopping and then I think maybe I didn't really need to buy that but it is too late because I already have.

And when you mention about that you feel sort of bad and you didn't like to waste the food, could you let me know of another occasion that is totally food unrelated where you would sort of feel the same level of feeling bad about something?

I don't know what you mean sorry.

You said you felt bad because you had to waste the food.

Yes

And that sort of feeling of feeling bad, could you think of another situation, doesn't have to be anything to do with throwing food away but were you would also feel bad to the same level?

I do feel bad for quite a lot of reasons to be honest you, I suffer with mental health problems and I do get bad feelings quite often.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel that way and in fact most of when we do have to throw any food away you know, we feel guilty about that or it makes us feel bad then we try to adjust to prevent such a feeling, so my next question aims to address a practical strategy you have got into place regarding how you try and avoid to limit the amount of food you waste. So I'll ask you, what do you do to try and avoid, to limit the amount of food you throw away, so if you just give me any examples?

I always write a shopping list when I go shopping anyway and I do normally stick to my shopping list unless I see something you know, 'ooh that is worth having' and I'll buy it and normally it does get eaten but I think it is mainly perhaps the meat isn't it that gets thrown away

(Husband) yes it is not that much

I never know what to buy because sometimes the kids eat it and sometimes they don't, I mean you eat it sometimes

(Husband) Sometimes yeah

I do sometimes as well but my children are very awkward children to feed, they like things one day and then they don't like it the next, if that makes sense.

So if you find yourself in a situation when you have too much food in the house for various reasons, what would you do with the food, rather than throwing it away?

Probably just eat it, that's why I look like I do.

So would you say sometimes you would maybe freeze it or make it into another meal?

I don't really know, I don't do a lot of cooking, I mean I should do really, I am going to try in the new year because that might help me lose some weight, if I can cook my own meals for scratch.

And then when you do, do any dinners, do you have any leftovers often?

Yes normally on a Sunday, we always have a roast on a Sunday with roast potatoes and that, when ...[respondent's husband] cooks it and he always cooks too much and he has it the next don't you, he fries it up and has it on the Monday.

Ok so just keep them.

So that never gets wasted

So you don't throw that away?

No never.

So you just keep it for the next day?

Yes and I mean if anybody leaves anything on their plate that goes in with it as well.

So how much effort do you perceive that to be, do you think it is any effort having to re-use any leftovers?

No not really is it?

And is that anything you would ever recommend to other people?

Yes, I think so.

Yes, so where would you say that you learnt about the method?

(Husband) for me its...I was a gypsy, I was a traveller before I moved in here, my mum and dad always done the same, cooked more than what they wanted on the Sunday and use it the next day, so I mean that has been in my life full time.

Yes so it is sort of family and friends.

(Husband) yes through my family.

I mean my dad used to be like that as well you know, he'd have a roast dinner one day and then he would cook up some bubble and squeak the next day with the leftovers.

Yes and do you take any advice on this from the media as well, so do you ever watch any shows or anything where people tell you what you could do?

(Husband) I watch television where they have these families and have two celebrity type of people go in and say you didn't want all that and stuff that is going out of date the family go off and cook up a meal and come back and they would ask what it tasted like and they say well nice you know, we will go for that next time.

So do you then find yourself that you make use of that advice, that you then sort of think next time you look in fridge for example and you see something out of date or I could probably still eat that or would you just say you pretty much just know that anyway?

Yes I would eat it, make use of it.

Yes ok, so we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit, so I have got two scenarios here where people have had too much food, so one scenario is a lady and she had her online shopping delivered yesterday and a number of fresh items ordered have a sell by date of tomorrow,' I am not going to be able to eat them all by then and my freezer is full to the bursting, so I cannot put them in there, what can I do with them', is there anything you could advise her to do?

I would put it in the fridge, I think it keeps longer in the fridge, than it does if you keep it out, well I don't really put fruit in the fridge but I do keep vegetables in the fridge, like potatoes and if I have bought fresh vegetables I always keep that in the fridge, so yes that would be my advice put it in the fridge to keep it fresh.

Ok and then the other one is, 'my family and I love Italian food and I often cook it at home, however I cooked far too much pasta this evening and do not know what I can do with it, it seems a waste to throw it in the bin but I do not know what else I could do with it, so please could you help?'

Too much pasta, you could make a pasta bake with it I suppose.

So make it into another dish for the next day.

Yes, for the next day, you could do that because pasta keeps ok doesn't it, so yes that would be my advice on that one.

Good thank you, so that is all of my questions, if I just summarise what you said and if there is anything you agree with or don't agree with or would like to add just please feel free to interrupt and let me know.

Yeah.

So you are a family of five and you do your food shopping for the five and you do usually do every two weeks do a big shop either in Tesco or Asda and then if you need anything throughout the week you will just pop to the shop.

Yeah

You buy a lot of frozen food which you said because you find it easier because it keeps longer and it helps you with you two week shop. You don't necessarily throw a lot of food away but occasionally there might be something like a packet of meat that have been opened or you thought someone was going to eat it and then they didn't fancy it or any milk and you do feel quite bad if you have to throw it away for various reasons, so first of all you feel that is it a bit of a waste of money throwing it away and there is people that haven't got food and then you kind of thought I won't buy it next time.

Yes that's right.

You mentioned that you don't necessarily cook that often but then on a Sunday you would do a big roast and there would always be leftovers which you then just re-use the next and you don't perceive that to be any effort and you are quite happy to do that.

Yes no problem, just cook a bit extra on Sunday don't you and then he just has it the next day.

Does that sum it up ok?

Yes that's fine.

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So like I just briefly mentioned, this piece of research is looking at food waste from a bit of a different angle, so there has been a lot of research that's looked at how much or how little people are wasting and what sort of strategies they adapt to, to avoid having an over stocking of food in the first place, so making shopping lists etc. So we are looking at the food waste angle from the point of what strategies normal people like yourself have in place when they do find themselves in a certain situation where they do have too much food in the house and rather than throwing that away, any strategies you adopt to avoid this. So I have got a couple of questions I am going to ask you, firstly can I ask you to introduce yourself in terms of your food shopping behaviour, so for instance who do you shop for?

I shop for myself and once a week for myself and my granddaughter who is six, once a week she stays overnight.

Ok and how often do you do your food shopping?

Pretty much every day because I go to the local shop so I can buy milk and fresh things every day.

And do you do a weekly big shop or do you just buy everything locally?

Not specifically but I do go to a bigger supermarket, not on a regular basis but probably once a week or once a fortnight and do a bigger shop.

And where would you say that you usually shop for food?

Tesco.

Tesco Express?

Tesco Express, yes.

How much do you think you spend on your food shop on average or per shop if you like?

More now, I used to notice I could pay cash more or less every time I went but now I am taking my card so probably over ten pounds a time.

That would almost be daily if you go or every other day?

Every other day yes.

Ok and do you usually buy a lot of fresh food or do you tend to buy frozen food?

I buy quite a lot of frozen foods; I quite like chilled type of ready meals because I feel that there is actually less waste with them because I just eat what is there. Sometimes if I buy something fresh, I throw more of it away.

So you tend to buy things that are frozen ok. So now I would like to ask you a bit about wasting food that you have already purchased, so most people can remember at least one occasion or more where they had to waste any food that they had in the house, however you might be different, so firstly I am intrigued to know that when I say food waste, what would your understanding of that be?

Over buying I suppose, which is a downside of shopping in a supermarket that if I buy something that is pre-packed, even salad leaves which I like, rockety stuff, can go off before I have eaten it all. That's the downside of the supermarket you have to have the sizing that they've decided upon. Whereas if I bought more in the green grocer, which for some reason I don't, then I could just buy one carrot if I wanted too.

So for this interview, so we are adopting the definition of food waste that is any food or drink so anything including milk or fruit juices that are not being consumed but end up in the bin.

Yes.

If you had to estimate, how often would you say that you have any food that you waste?

I waste a lot of food.

On a daily or weekly basis?

Nearly daily, I either have gone off something or as I say I have had to buy a pack that you just don't want to eat endlessly. Last week I brought a pack of mince pies which there were six; I couldn't even bear the thought of eating one mince pie because you just get to the point where you feel I have to eat this which is not how you want to view your eating.

And what do you usually throw away, would you say there is the same kind of foods you throw away on a regular basis?

Cake stuff, sweet stuff, if I buy a little cake which by the way I could make, I throw it out because it does go off and even homemade cake I would throw some of it away because it goes off quicker I think.

So at what stage might you decide that you throw it away?

Probably sooner than some other people, well a cake if it is obviously stodgy you would know and I would not eat that. I do think nowadays people generally throw away things sooner and read the labels don't they and think 'oh I should throw this away' even though it still looks ok.

So if you had anything in your fridge that had a sort of sell by date on or something would you then assess whether it is still good to eat or do you throw it away?

I would probably throw it away I am quite affected by how appetising something looks.

Ok.

I am not very good at eating generally and something has to really grab my attention. I hate the thought of somebody saying we will take leftovers and make a meal out of it; I would rather go down to Tesco and buy something new.

Ok yes, so can you tell me about a specific time in the not too distance past that you had to waste some food or drink and then what sort of happened, what were the circumstances that lead to it?

I can't really apart from the mince pies that I looked at but then a friend came so that used up 2 of them, then I started eating them as pudding or something like that. I try not to waste something that has come from Marks & Spencer's, which they did.

So was it a pack of six?

A pack of six, I did manage to get through them but I did look at them one day before my friend came and thought, 'am I actually going to eat all of these'. I would like to say that I thought by this time of 2017 the supermarkets might have done more catering for single people because there are so many people that are living on their own and instead of wanting two for the price of one, I want half the amount for half the price.

Yes.

But nobody seems to, you do get meals for one which I buy that sort of thing and I think that as I say the fruit and vegetable is my own fault because the green grocer is just across the road from the supermarket so I could go there and buy my fruit and vegetables there.

So when you had to throw that away or throw anything away, how does that make you feel?

I feel as if I shouldn't be doing it but I think some councils take food waste away don't they?

Yes I think Dorset has a specific food bin but I don't think they do in Shropshire.

No, so that would make me feel less so because then I suppose they go and compost it.

Yes I think so.

That would make me feel better. Sometimes if I have old fruit I might take it out to the forest and leave it for the ponies.

So if it makes you feel bad that you throw it away, what do you think is the reason for it making you feeling bad?

Well because I feel that I shouldn't have probably bought it in the first place and that it's probably still edible quite often and I think that's been on the news recently about changing how they put dates on food because people are looking at the date and throwing things away, rather than trying to take a sample of the food and see if it is actually all right. I think people are too quick to throw stuff out which in my parent's day they wouldn't have done that. I think people over buy as well, you get attracted to buy something that you like and then I think I actually won't eat all of this.

So when you describe that it makes you feel bad that you have to throw it away, is that more from a financial perspective that you're wasting the money or are there other reasons?

Apart from that, I suppose the people who haven't got enough food to throw any of it away.

And if you had to compare that feeling of feeling bad about throwing it away to a situation that's totally unrelated to food, what could another situation be where you feel equally bad?

Well if I buy something that I then decide I don't like it anymore and then I have used it perhaps to the extent that I can't take it back to the shop, yes that makes me feel bad too, I think I have been too rash in buying things.

Ok, so obviously it is not nice to feel bad like you described and in fact most of us when we feel or expect to feel something negative, we try to adjust to prevent such a feeling.

Yes.

So my next question aims to address any practical strategies you have got in place regarding how you try to avoid or limit the food you throw away, so please feel free to use any specific examples if that makes it easier, so I am going to ask you, what do you do to try and avoid or limit the amount of food that you throw away?

Well I would say try not to do too much impulse buying because that is very easy to do but the downside of that is, people like me living on their own, your diet could shrink because you are saying to yourself ok I won't buy these things that I would quite like because if I waste them it will make me feel bad. So you might end up just buying bread, milk and jam, so that you are not wasting anything.

So then you wouldn't buy a bunch of bananas because it comes in a pack and you wouldn't want to waste it.

Yeah because if you waste it you are going to feel bad about it so I think that is quite bad because nutritionally I think maybe you're not having the right stuff.

Yes I see your point.

So again if one went to the green grocery you could probably buy two bananas.

So if you do find yourself in a situation where you do have too much food in the house, would you then kind of assess what you could do with it or would you then just throw it away?

I don't buy a lot of fresh stuff that I can't freeze.

So would you then freeze it?

Yes if it was fresh meat, I would freeze it straight away when I bought it or make it into something then freeze it.

So would you then batch cook and make something bigger?

Yes I might cook the whole pack of mince and then put it in the freezer I would feel good about that.

Ok.

When my granddaughter comes, she is difficult to feed as well. Say I buy cold meat that sort of thing, if you don't eat that I have to throw it away, so I have to keep pushing that for lunch time.

So what kind of point would say that you threw it away?

When she goes home because I don't particularly like it, I might put it in a sandwich or something to try to use it up but then again I would have bought a small pack originally, not a whole lot.

So would you then freeze it to take it out when she comes backs?

No I don't save it from one week to the next.

Ok, so when you do your cooking or you have already mentioned that you sometimes buy meals for one but do you ever have any leftovers when you cook?

Yes then I would freeze it or eat it the next night but two nights is about the limit that I would eat anything but I do have quite a lot of leftovers on my plate and that is quite a lot of waste and so does she so that just goes in the bin, I'm not going to recycle that.

No.

Or give it to the birds if it is chips or rice.

If you cooked and before you dished it up, if you then had any leftover would you...

Yeah I would keep it for the next night and eat it myself.

Ok would you just reheat it or would you make another meal out of it?

Might turn it in a curry or something.

Yes ok, so how much effort do you perceive that to be?

What to...

If you had any leftovers and to make anything else out of it or reheat it?

No, that's quite easy because that sorts out what to eat the following day.

So less meal planning for the following day?

Yes, I think it is harder when you are by yourself, you're not cooking for someone else so I think you do make less effort.

Would you ever recommend this to other people, so making use of leftovers?

No I think people of my generation that I talk to... in fact some of my friends make a lot more effort of batch cooking than I do, I don't like to stand in the kitchen and cook dinners, I would rather bake a cake than cook a dinner.

Ok, so where would you say that you learned about this method? So would it maybe be family or friends or the media?

I mean in my parent's day you could only keep stuff for a day or two because they had a fridge but no freezer and that was a luxury.

So you have already mentioned beforehand that you saw on the media certain things about food waste or changing the sell by dates.

Yes.

So would you then when you hear anything like that, that maybe the food would be able to be used longer than the sell by date, would you say that influences the way you look at the food before you throw it away?

Well yes, I would always look at the food anyway and if it looked alright, well any food, if it has not actually gone all mouldy and it smells alright I think you can eat it but I don't like doing that because I don't think it tastes as good and that's probably why people don't do it, I don't think you get such a good meal out of it, unless you have just made a curry and you mask the non-flavour of what you were cooking by the curry.

Ok so when you do use up any leftovers or make another dish out of it, how does that make you feel?

Ok because I have made another meal out of something.

So is there not a particularly good feeling associated with this or is it you just feel that that's fine that you have made it?

No I think that's what I would have felt.

Yes ok, so we are now going to change the focus of the interview a little bit and I have got two scenarios here where people have found themselves in a situation of having too much food and one of them you might be able to relate to and just to see, if you read through the scenarios, if there's any advice you could give to these people, so this is the first one.

Delilah...[fictional agony aunt] ... what am I reading?

This one.

Oh yes that's me, oh gosh, well I think that was silly, I would never buy a pack of four if I only wanted one, silly women, even if it's cheaper what's the point, it's not cheaper if she has thrown three of them away.

So is there any advice, anything you can think of what you could do with three lemons?

Squeeze them and make lemonade/juice or grate the rind and put them in cake, is that enough?

Yes and then I have got another one here.

My daughter has got one of these, yes I have had apples thrust upon me, well a lot of them do rot because when they drop off they get bruised. I would say make stewed apples and freeze them or you can wrap apples up and keep them.

So how would you wrap them up?

In newspaper I heard, use as much as you can throughout the winter, apple crumbles, plenty of apple cakes, even children like stewed apples or take them out to the forest and give them to the ponies.

Thank you, so that was all the questions I've had so far, if I just briefly summarise what you just said and if there is anything I got wrong then feel free to correct me or if there is anything you would like to add then feel free to add in. So you do your shopping mainly for yourself and then once a week you have got your granddaughter here as well. You tend to do smaller shops within the village and occasionally you would go to the supermarket to do a bigger shop.

And online shopping I do sometimes as well.

Oh and online shopping as well, ok. So you tend to go to the village predominantly and then go to the supermarket that's within there and you do tend to buy quite a bit of frozen food because you do feel that it helps with you portioning and meal sizes and they do offer meals for one because you would rather not cook every night. You have mentioned that although you do feel bad throwing food away, you do tend to throw food away regularly because it is unappetising or you want to have a varied diet and have the ability to choose from quite a lot of things...

I don't want it again yes. That's right yes.

...and you find that the downside of shopping in a supermarket is that they don't really cater for single people in the portion sizes they offer. You do occasionally when you have leftovers, you would either eat them the next day or make them into another meal and if you do buy fresh meat you would maybe batch cook it up and then portion this and freeze it or you would just freeze it straight away, the bits that you don't need.

Yes that's right.
