

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2017**

### **Participation**

A record number of Highways Authorities (112) are participating in the Survey this year, a further increase of six from last year's record total.

There continues to be good representation in the Survey across England with 107 English Authorities and five Scottish Authorities taking part. Four Authorities are new to the survey this year: Manchester City Council, North East Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Council and Salford City Council.

Over the 10 year history of the survey a third of the London boroughs have taken part, across the rest of England virtually all the Highways Authorities have now asked for their public's views, using the generic NHT survey questionnaire, at one time or another during the survey's 10-year history, the exceptions being Birmingham City Council, the Isle of Wight, Leicester City Council, Rutland, Sefton and St Helens. A total of eight Scottish Authorities have participated, the majority of those on a regular basis.

### **Choice of Questionnaire**

Authorities this year had a choice of whether to take the original 12-page questionnaire or opt for the new 8-page version, introduced in an attempt to attract a higher response rate and a younger demographic.

47% of the 401,341 questionnaires ordered were the 12-page version and 53% the eight page.

In order to produce an 8 page version of the questionnaire a number of questions had to be removed. After consultation with participating councils, the detailed questions on Public Transport, Information from the Council, Tackling Congestion, Taxis Minicabs & Community Transport, Rights of Way, Provision of Cycle Routes and Bus Stops, were removed from the 12 page version of the questionnaire. As a result, those authorities that selected the 8 page version no longer have a complete set of KBI and BI scores. The following KBIs and BIs are affected: Public Transport - KBI06 or KBI07 and all BI scores, Rights of Way - KBI16 and WCBI17 to WCBI23, and Tackling Congestion – KBI19 and TCBI09 to TCBI14.

### **Sample Sizes & Response Rate**

Response rates showed a small increase on last year at an average of 25% as against 24.5% in 2016. The continued use of a reminder part way through the field work period has helped to keep response rates well above average for a survey of this type. In addition a small 'push to web' pilot was carried out where initially a random sample of respondents received only a letter advising they could complete the survey on line, non-respondents later received a further letter and a paper questionnaire.

There was little evidence that Authorities, choosing the 8-page questionnaire, had significantly better response rates, when compared to their results from 2016, when all authorities used the 12 page questionnaire. Neither did the number of younger people completing the survey show any significant increase.

Respondents that received a questionnaire in the post were again given the option to complete the survey on line. 10,373 questionnaires were completed on line in 2017, equating to 10.4% of the total. This was an increase of 3696 from 2016; in 2015 the total figure was 3263.

### **'Importance' and 'Satisfaction'**

Question 1 of the survey asks the public 'How important do you consider...' key aspects of Highway and Transport service, and Question 2 asks the public to rate, 'how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with....' those services.

For most of the service areas specified, the 2017 results show the proportion of the public that rate services as important far exceeded the proportion of the public that were satisfied with the services provided. The largest difference, by far, is for Highway Condition, but there are also significant differences for 'Reducing Traffic' and for 'Pavements'. As in 2016, 'Taxi Services' is the only service area where satisfaction rates exceed the importance rating.

### **'Acceptable to reduce' and 'Not acceptable to reduce'**

Questions 3 and 4 in the Survey ask the public to select those service areas for which it would be acceptable to reduce service levels and for which areas service levels should be maintained at the current level.

As in 2016 the 2017 results highlight the Maintenance & Management of 'Roads' as the service the public least wants to see reduced, followed by 'Drainage' and 'Pavements'. The service the public considers could most readily be reduced is the Management and Maintenance of 'Country Paths & Rights of Way'.

### **Latest Trends**

The following observations are based on the change in KBI results for the 99 Authorities that took part in the survey this year and last, and are slightly different to the change in NHT Survey Averages between 2016 and 2017. They do however provide a more representative indicator of the change in satisfaction levels over the period.

Overall Satisfaction results (KBI01 and BKBO2) are largely unchanged. The KBI results for Public Transport and Road Safety generally showed a small year on year decline in satisfaction levels, apart from the Taxi and Community Transport results which were unchanged. Cycle routes and facilities (aspects) (KBI14) showed a decline, the other Walking, Cycling and Rights of Way results have not changed.

The Highway Maintenance & Enforcement results are similar to last year's results and this represents a consolidation of performance in a very difficult financial environment.

### **Comparing results with the National Survey**

The results of the NHT Survey this year are broadly in line with the results from the National Survey, which was run for the third time this year. This is not unexpected given the coverage of the NHT Survey in 2017.

There was very little difference between the NHT Survey results and the National Survey results for the majority of the KBIs, with the exception of Accessibility where the National Survey results show higher levels of satisfaction than those of the NHT Survey.

Looking at the trend in results from last year, the National Survey results show some improvement in Cycling KBIs whilst the NHT Survey results show a slight decline in satisfaction for this area. The only other notable changes in the National Survey results were a small improvement in Street Lighting and a small decline in Traffic Levels and Congestion.

### **Theme Results**

The Theme reports, which proved popular last year are available again providing an Authority with an analysis of their results for the Survey's key themes: Accessibility, Tackling Congestion, Road Safety, Public transport, Walking & Cycling and Highway Maintenance & Enforcement.

These theme reports, which are available on request via the NHT Survey results website, show overall theme results and results for each benchmark indicator within the theme. The reports identify the best performers in 2017 for each theme.

**Detailed reports** can be found on the web site <http://www.nhtnetwork.org/nht-public-satisfaction-survey/findings/>