

**HOUSE CONDITION SURVEY  
2nd USER ENGAGEMENT GROUP MEETING  
TUESDAY 5TH JULY 2016  
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM  
THE HOUSING CENTRE**

- 1.0 Present:
- Joe Frey – NIHE (Chair)
  - Jahnet Brown – NIHE
  - Donna McLarnon – NIHE (minutes)
  - Sharon Jeffers – NIFHA
  - Claire Shortt – BCC
  - Noel Rice – NIHE
  - Robert Clements – NIHE
  - Sinead Collins - NIHE
  - Maryann Dempsey – DfC
  - Ciara Cunningham – LPS
  - Aidan Campbell – Rural Community Network

Apologies: Jennifer Doak, Suzanne Bagnall, John Downey

		Action
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Welcome and previous minutes</b> The previous minutes were agreed. All actions had been completed.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Fieldwork</b> Fieldwork is now underway with approximately 600 completed forms sent to BRE, and a further 50 undergoing the quality assurance process. The fieldwork is due to be completed by the end August/beginning of September.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Timescales and meeting user needs</b> On completion of the fieldwork the key variables will be quality assured, with some preliminary findings due in December 2016, and with key findings to follow in early 2017. Appendix tables will be published on the NIHE website in October 2017 and the main report will be published in December 2017.  J Frey asked the group if the proposed timescales would enable them to meet any commitments they had to provide specific figures. There was general agreement and J Frey responded to specific queries from members:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N Rice asked if the data on carbon dioxide emissions had been requested from BRE. J Frey advised that</li> </ul>	

these figures will be available after the SAP figures are produced in the summer of 2017, and will be requested closer to that time.

- S Collins raised the issue of the new NISRA rural definition which is based on drive times from a service provision location. J Frey/J Brown confirmed that the NIHE's GIS Dept can match HCS addresses to the new classification to ensure
- A Campbell raised concerns about the rising level of unfitness in rural areas. J Frey advised that there was an issue in relation to the consequences of the introduction of full rating for vacant properties which may have distorted unfitness levels in remote rural areas. However J Frey stated that there is evidence of a decline in the condition of former NIHE properties. Between 25,000 – 30,000 ex NIHE dwellings are now in the private rented sector and their condition is deteriorating for various reasons. He noted that it is not yet known what effect this will have on unfitness in rural areas. M Dempsey informed the group about the progress of the review of the fitness standard, and advised that it is still at a very early stage and no decisions have been made.
- S Jeffers explained the difficulty of obtaining a household profile of housing association dwellings due to the high turnover and ever changing picture, and asked if this would be available from HCS data. J Frey advised that HA data will be available at NI level, and would provide a household profile of HA dwellings.
- C Shortt asked how the changes in council boundaries would impact on making comparisons with previous surveys. J Frey explained that as some councils did not move fully into another it would not be possible to make exact comparisons, but that there would be a caveat in the report. J Frey asked if LPS had dealt with similar issues, but C Cunningham advised that LPS used administrative datasets rather than a sample so the same problem had not arisen. J Frey agreed that it may be possible to make an estimate depending on the size of the achieved sample in a particular RPA area, but that it would need to be made clear in the report that it is an estimate.

<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><b>Key outputs/release practices for Official Statistics</b>          Dates for release of key outputs will be agreed by the Steering Group and will then be announced. The group was advised that in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics it would not be possible for senior managers in NIHE to see statistics prior to the release date. It was noted, however, that where managers were part of the quality assurance process it would be possible to show them the statistics in confidence.</p> <p>J Frey asked C Cunningham about her experience of releasing Official Statistics. C Cunningham outlined the process including the need to announce the release date in advance and the rules around pre release access.</p>	
<p><b>6.0</b></p>	<p><b>Cavity wall insulation research</b>          J Frey updated the group on the progress of the CWI research. The HCS project team met with a company to discuss the possibility of using thermal imaging as part of the research. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thermal imaging is a cheaper and faster alternative to using borescopes. This would allow the potential to select a larger sample size within the same budget.</li> <li>• Thermal imaging is non-invasive (only dwellings identified as having a problem would need to have a borescope inspection).</li> <li>• Algorithms are used to calculate the SAP rating and the costs needed to bring cavity walls up to standard</li> <li>• The company who has developed the technology (IRT) is a UK wide company with no links to the NI CWI industry, so is therefore impartial.</li> </ul> <p>When asked about the cost savings J Frey explained that though indications are that thermal imaging would be a much cheaper alternative, more precise costings would not be available until the terms of reference are agreed. Terms of reference are to be drawn up for the research in consultation with the Energy Unit and Technical Standards.</p> <p>J Frey confirmed that the research is on target to begin in October 2016 and noted that the winter period is the best time of year to carry out thermal imaging.</p> <p>C Shortt drew the attention of the group to similar research into heat loss carried out by Spatial NI. This will be followed up to see if any of the research is of use to the CWI research.</p>	<p>JF</p> <p>DM</p>

<b>7.0</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> The next meeting will be held in September 2016. Date to be agreed.	DM
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