



Public Attitudes Survey 2018

KEY FINDINGS

Published January 2020

Housing
Executive

Acknowledgements

The Housing Executive would like to thank all of those who contributed to the survey, particularly:

- Those members of the public who participated in the survey, whose good will and co-operation were fundamental in the success of the research;
- Ipsos MORI Northern Ireland for completing the fieldwork.

Contact details

For further information about the survey please contact:

The Research Unit

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

2 Adelaide Street

Belfast

BT2 8PB

Email: karly.greene@nihe.gov.uk

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction..... | 6 |
| Background to the Survey..... | 6 |
| Presentation of findings..... | 7 |
| Section 1: Contact with the Housing Executive..... | 8 |
| Section 2: Housing Executive services | 10 |
| Section 3: The Housing Executive's involvement with local communities..... | 12 |
| Section 4: Reputation of the Housing Executive | 13 |
| Section 5: Welfare Reform | 15 |
| Section 6: Attitudes to local neighbourhoods..... | 19 |
| Section 7: Community relations | 21 |
| Section 8: Equality issues | 26 |
| Section 9: Housing Policy in Northern Ireland | 29 |
| Section 10: Internet access..... | 30 |
| Section 11: Housing aspirations of the over 55s (<i>457 respondents</i>) | 32 |
| Section 12: Housing supply and demand..... | 34 |
| User guide | 37 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1: Top 5 reasons respondents contacted the Housing Executive in the past year | 9 |
| Table 2: Top 5 communication channels with the Housing Executive that respondents were happy to use | 9 |
| Table 3: Respondents who knew about the services provided by the Housing Executive..... | 10 |
| Table 4: Respondents who knew about the other services provided by the Housing Executive | 11 |
| Table 5: How do you feel about your most recent dealings with the Housing Executive? | 13 |
| Table 6: Respondents' views on the Housing Executive (%)..... | 14 |
| Table 7: Respondents' awareness of, and feelings about, welfare changes | 16 |
| Table 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that changes to the benefits system were required?..... | 17 |
| Table 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the benefits system has been improved as a result of welfare reform? | 18 |
| Table 10: Where would you go to get advice or help if you were negatively impacted by changes to the benefit system as a result of welfare reform? | 18 |
| Table 11: Respondents' views on how their neighbourhood is changing | 19 |
| Table 12: Agreement with statements about the Housing Executive | 22 |
| Table 13: Agreement that sectional symbols reflected negatively on estates or areas in Northern Ireland | 22 |
| Table 14: Respondents' views on why some people do not want to live in a mixed religion estate or area | 23 |
| Table 15: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household mixed with people from a different community or religious background | 24 |
| Table 16: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household attended shared events/activities/projects which included people from different religious backgrounds..... | 24 |
| Table 17: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household attended shared events/activities/projects which included people from different ethnic backgrounds | 24 |
| Table 18: Respondents who thought there was prejudice against people with specific disabilities ... | 28 |
| Table 19: Respondents who said they would be very/slightly concerned if a property in their immediate neighbourhood was converted for people with a specific disability or health issue..... | 28 |
| Table 20: Top 10 uses for the internet, and confidence using the internet for these purposes..... | 31 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: How would you rate, overall, the way in which the Housing Executive provides its services? | 14 |
| Figure 2: Impact of welfare changes | 15 |
| Figure 3: Main priorities for housing over the next 5 years (% of respondents) | 29 |
| Figure 4: Ways in which respondents or household members accessed the internet most often (%) | 30 |
| Figure 5: Do you think your accommodation will continue to meet your needs in the longer term, as you get older? (%) | 32 |
| Figure 6: Is the housing market in Northern Ireland supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand? (%) | 34 |
| Figure 7: Tenure breakdown of respondents (%) | 35 |
| Figure 8: Age of household reference person (%) | 35 |
| Figure 9: Gross household annual income (%) | 36 |
| Figure 10: Employment status of household reference person (%) | 36 |

Introduction

Background to the Survey

Since 1984 the Housing Executive has conducted surveys of public attitudes to monitor public opinion in Northern Ireland of its services and other housing related issues. The 2018 Public Attitudes Survey is the thirteenth in the series. It examines the views of all tenure groups. Until 1994 the Public Attitudes Survey was the main vehicle through which the Housing Executive assessed the opinions of its tenants. With the introduction of the Continuous Tenant Omnibus Survey, the Public Attitudes Survey was no longer required to monitor customer satisfaction with services used exclusively by Housing Executive tenants. However, since the Housing Executive provides services to all tenure groups, the Public Attitudes Survey continues to play a unique and vital role in monitoring the opinions of owner-occupiers, social housing (Housing Executive and housing association) tenants, and people living in privately rented and other accommodation.

The Housing Executive commissioned Ipsos MORI¹ to conduct the fieldwork for the 2018 Public Attitudes Survey. The research focused on the perceptions and experiences of people living in all tenures and covered a range of issues. The specific objectives of the survey were to explore the views of the public in the following areas:

- Current living arrangements (tenure, time in property);
- Awareness of Housing Executive services;
- Views on community relations;
- Involvement with local communities;
- Views on welfare reform;
- Views on neighbourhoods;
- Perceived reputation of the Housing Executive;
- Housing aspirations (among over 55s)

¹ <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/ipsos-mori-northern-ireland>

Presentation of findings

This report presents the key findings of the 2018 Public Attitudes Survey. It is accompanied by appendix tables which cross tabulate findings by four key variables:

- Tenure² i.e. owner occupiers³, social housing tenants⁴ and private renters and others⁵
- Age of household reference person
- Religious background of respondent
- Location (urban or rural)

The report outlines the overall Northern Ireland figures and highlights any differences by the four key reporting variables. Where appropriate, comparisons with the 2012 survey are included. However, it should be noted that following an extensive consultation process there were a number of changes to the questionnaire prior to the 2018 survey. It is not possible to provide 2012 comparisons for any new or amended questions (even minor amendments can affect interpretation of a question), or where definitions have changed.

The appendix tables present percentages to one decimal place. For ease of reporting, percentages reported in the commentary are rounded, and therefore may not add to 100%.

² The tenure groups have changed since 2012 so no direct comparison is possible.

³ Respondents who owned their home outright, were buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan, or were part buying/part renting through co-ownership.

⁴ Housing Executive or housing association tenants.

⁵ Respondents who lived in private rented accommodation. 'Others' refers to a small number of tenants who lived in their accommodation rent free.

Section 1: Contact with the Housing Executive

(Appendix tables 2.1 – 2.5)

22%

of respondents had contact with the Housing Executive in the past year.

Contact with the Housing Executive in the past year varied by tenure:

Social housing tenants (62%) were most likely to have contacted the Housing Executive, followed by 22% of privately rented tenants, and 7% of owner occupiers.

Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to have had contact with the Housing Executive in the past year, ranging from 26% of those aged 16-34 to 20% of those aged 65+.

Method used for contacting the Housing Executive (the last time contact was made)

75% of respondents used the telephone.

17% of respondents visited their local office.

6% of respondents sent a letter/e-mail or used the Housing Executive's website.

Table 1: Top 5 reasons respondents contacted the Housing Executive in the past year

| | % of respondents |
|--|------------------|
| <i>Reason for contact</i> | |
| Housing maintenance or repair | 48 |
| Finding accommodation or applying for social housing | 23 |
| Rent payments | 11 |
| Housing Benefit or Universal Credit queries | 10 |
| Advice on housing or homelessness | 7 |

(Base: Respondents who had contacted the Housing Executive in the past year. Respondents could give more than one reason for contact.)

71% of respondents said they would prefer to use the telephone to contact a government department or public-sector organisation.

72% of respondents said they would be happy to use the telephone as a communication method with the Housing Executive. A higher than average proportion (79%) of respondents who were social housing tenants would be happy to use the telephone as a communication method with the Housing Executive.

Table 2: Top 5 communication channels with the Housing Executive that respondents were happy to use

| Happy to use: | % of respondents |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Telephone | 72 |
| E-mail | 24 |
| Visit the office | 21 |
| In writing | 17 |
| Visit to home by staff | 8 |

(Base: All respondents. Respondents could give more than one answer.)

Section 2: Housing Executive services

(Appendix tables 3.1 – 3.16)

Knowledge of the **main services** provided by the Housing Executive ranged from 83% of respondents who knew the Housing Executive assesses applicants in housing need, to 28% of respondents who knew the Housing Executive lets and manages 86,000 social homes.

Table 3: Respondents who knew about the services provided by the Housing Executive

83% knew the Housing Executive assesses applicants in housing need.

75% knew the Housing Executive is responsible for assessing and assisting people who are homeless.

66% knew the Housing Executive administers a single waiting list and allocations policy with housing associations.

58% knew the Housing Executive administers Housing Benefit, to both Housing Executive and private sector tenants (57% in 2012).

38% knew the Housing Executive aims to improve standards in private housing by providing grants (52% in 2012).

36% knew the Housing Executive helps vulnerable people e.g. through the Supporting People programme (36% in 2012).

31% knew the Housing Executive provides serviced sites for Travellers (37% in 2012).

28% knew the Housing Executive lets and manages 86,000 social homes.

(Base: All respondents)

Fewer respondents knew about the **other services** provided by the Housing Executive.

Table 4: Respondents who knew about the other services provided by the Housing Executive

50% knew the Housing Executive manages the Boiler Replacement Scheme (35% in 2012).

50% knew the Housing Executive is responsible for promoting home energy efficiency (53% in 2012).

47% knew the Housing Executive aims to improve the environment in Housing Executive neighbourhoods.

46% knew the Housing Executive works with other bodies to reduce anti-social behaviour in its neighbourhoods.

42% knew the Housing Executive manages the Affordable Warmth Scheme⁶ (43% in 2012).

37% knew the Housing Executive works with residents to improve standards and develop the community's skills and opportunities (41% in 2012).

32% knew the Housing Executive employs neighbourhood officers to provide services directly to tenants (29% in 2012).

23% knew the Housing Executive manages an equity sharing scheme (21% in 2012).

(Base: All respondents)

⁶ The Affordable Warmth Scheme was known as the Warm Homes Scheme in 2012

Section 3: The Housing Executive's involvement with local communities

(Appendix tables 3.17 – 3.21)

33%

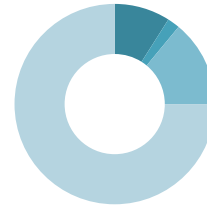
of respondents knew the Housing Executive supports the formation of community groups in its neighbourhoods.

19%

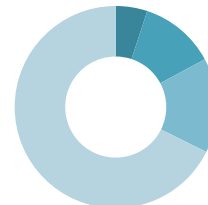
of respondents knew that Housing Executive staff carry out voluntary work for local charities.

29%

of respondents knew the Housing Executive helps communities carry out re-imaging works in their neighbourhoods.



75% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Housing Executive should continue to develop and grow the activity of offering financial assistance for projects which provide training and employment opportunities within local communities.



69% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Housing Executive should focus on delivering social housing.

Section 4: Reputation of the Housing Executive

(Appendix tables 4.1 – 4.4)

Half of respondents thought that in 2018 the Housing Executive had a very/fairly positive image in the public eye, and less than one-fifth (15%) thought it had a fairly/very negative image. The remaining respondents thought it had neither a positive or negative image (20%) or didn't know what kind of image it had (15%).

Social housing tenants (63%) were most likely to think the Housing Executive had a very/fairly positive image in the public eye, while private rented tenants (37%) were least likely to think this.

Respondents who lived in a rural area (55%) were more likely than those who lived in an urban area (47%) to think the Housing Executive had a very/fairly positive image in the public eye.

Views of respondents who had contacted the Housing Executive in the past year

The majority of respondents (72%) said they felt very/fairly positive about their most recent dealings with the Housing Executive. Owner occupiers were most likely to feel very/fairly positive about their most recent dealings with the Housing Executive (79%), followed by social housing tenants (73%) and private renters (61%).

Table 5: How do you feel about your most recent dealings with the Housing Executive?

| | % |
|----------------------|-----|
| Very/fairly positive | 72 |
| Neither | 10 |
| Fairly/very negative | 18 |
| Don't know | <1 |
| Total | 100 |

Older respondents felt more positive about their most recent dealings with the Housing Executive than younger respondents (53% of respondents who were aged 16-34, compared with 84% of those who were aged 65+).

Respondents rated the Housing Executive on a scale of 1 to 5 for a series of statements. Table 6 shows that for most statements, respondents selected between 1 and 3 on the scale, although a fairly high proportion of respondents indicated that they didn't know.

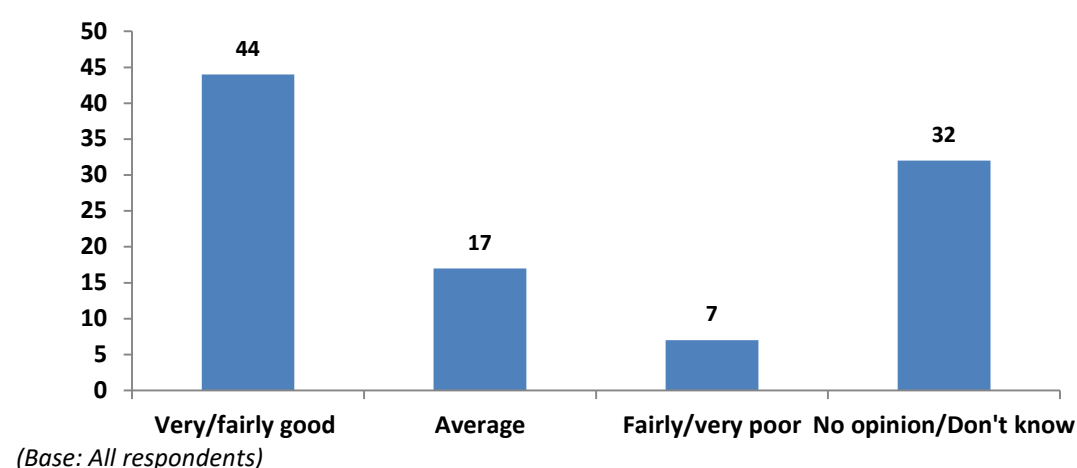
Table 6: Respondents' views on the Housing Executive (%)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | Don't know |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|---|---|----------------------------------|------------|
| Customer orientated | 20 | 20 | 22 | 6 | 5 | Not customer orientated | 27 |
| Open | 20 | 20 | 22 | 5 | 5 | Blinkered | 28 |
| Flexible | 15 | 19 | 22 | 9 | 7 | Bureaucratic | 28 |
| Efficient | 19 | 21 | 24 | 8 | 5 | Inefficient | 24 |
| Ethical | 22 | 19 | 23 | 4 | 3 | Unethical | 29 |
| Innovative | 19 | 18 | 24 | 8 | 6 | Old fashioned | 26 |
| Fair | 24 | 23 | 21 | 4 | 6 | Unfair | 22 |
| High expertise | 20 | 22 | 24 | 4 | 4 | Low expertise | 27 |
| Trustworthy | 25 | 25 | 22 | 3 | 4 | Untrustworthy | 22 |
| Motivated employees | 15 | 15 | 24 | 4 | 3 | Unmotivated employees | 39 |
| Communicates well | 19 | 17 | 20 | 7 | 4 | Does not communicate well | 33 |

(Base: All respondents)

44% of respondents said the way in which the Housing Executive provides its services was very/fairly good. A fairly high proportion (32%) said they didn't know.

Figure 1: How would you rate, overall, the way in which the Housing Executive provides its services?



Opinion varied by tenure, ranging from 70% of social housing tenants to 31% of private renters who thought the way in which the Housing Executive provides its services was very/fairly good.

Section 5: Welfare Reform

(Appendix tables 6.1 – 6.13)

Awareness of changes to the benefits system

Approximately half (52%) of respondents had some level of awareness about recent and ongoing changes to the benefits system.

40%

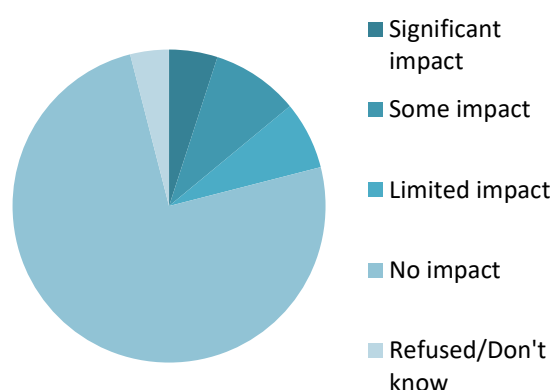
of respondents were aware of the changes but not in detail.

12%

of respondents were fully aware of the changes.

Social housing tenants (56%) were most likely to have some level of awareness about welfare reform.

Figure 2: Impact of welfare changes



82% of respondents who had some level of awareness of the changes to the benefits system said it had *limited* (7%) or *no impact* (75%) on them and their household.

14% of respondents who had some level of awareness of changes to the benefits system said it had *significant* (5%) or *some impact* (9%) on them and their household. No further analysis is possible due to small numbers.

Table 7: Respondents' awareness of, and feelings about, welfare changes

| Welfare change: Introduction of... | Respondents who had some of level of awareness of change | Respondents who felt very/fairly positive about the change |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Benefit cap | 43% | 44% |
| Bedroom tax | 60% | 17% |
| Universal Credit | 57% | 25% |

Benefit cap

The introduction of the benefits cap was the welfare change which had the lowest level of awareness overall. Awareness varied by tenure, ranging from 39% of respondents who lived in social housing, to 47% of respondents who rented privately. Respondents who were aged 65+ were least likely to be aware of the introduction of the benefits cap (30% compared with 43% overall).

Social housing tenants were least likely to feel very/fairly positive about the introduction of the benefit cap (33% compared with 44% overall). There were also differences by religion and location, with Protestants (51%) more likely than Catholics (37%), and respondents who lived in rural area (58%) more likely than those in an urban area (38%) to feel very/fairly positive about the introduction of the benefit cap.

Bedroom tax

Almost two-thirds (60%) of respondents had some level of awareness of the introduction of the 'bedroom tax'. A higher than average proportion (70%) of respondents who lived in social housing were aware of the introduction of the 'bedroom tax'.

Respondents who were aged 65+ were least likely to be aware of the introduction of the 'bedroom tax' (49% compared with 60% overall).

Of those respondents who were aware of the introduction of the 'bedroom tax', less than one-fifth (17%) felt very/fairly positive about the change. Due to small numbers, no further analysis is available for this sub-group.

Universal Credit

Almost three-fifths (57%) of respondents had some level of awareness of the introduction of Universal Credit. There was little variation by tenure. Respondents in the 35-44, and 45-54 age groups were most likely to be aware of the introduction of Universal Credit (both 68%).

Overall, one-quarter (25%) of respondents who were aware of the introduction of Universal Credit felt very/fairly positive about the change. A higher than average (30%) proportion of respondents who were owner occupiers felt very/fairly positive about the change (no analysis of the other tenures can be carried out due to small numbers). There was some variation by religion and location. Respondents who were Protestant were more likely than those who were Catholic to feel very/fairly positive about the introduction of Universal Credit (28% compared with 18% respectively). Respondents who lived in a rural area (35%) were more likely than those who lived in an urban area (21%) to feel very/fairly positive about the introduction of Universal Credit.

The majority (91%) of respondents who felt very/fairly positive about the introduction of Universal Credit said it had limited/no impact on them. Due to small numbers, no analysis can be carried out on respondents who said the introduction of Universal Credit had significant/some impact on them.

Table 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that changes to the benefits system were required?

| | % |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Strongly/tend to agree | 41 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 22 |
| Tend to/strongly disagree | 13 |
| Don't know | 24 |
| Total | 100 |

(Base: All respondents)

Respondents who lived in social housing were least likely to agree that the changes to the benefits system were required (26% compared with 41% overall). There was also some variation by location: 38% of respondents who

lived in an urban area agreed that the changes to the benefits system were required, compared with 47% of respondents who lived in a rural area.

Table 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the benefits system has been improved as a result of welfare reform?

| | % |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Strongly/tend to agree | 32 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 23 |
| Tend to/strongly disagree | 18 |
| Don't know | 27 |
| Total | 100 |

(Base: Respondents who thought the changes to the benefits system were required.)

It was not possible to carry out analysis by sub-group due to small numbers.

78% of respondents were *not* aware of the Fresh Start agreement and the availability of Welfare Supplementary Payments for some people affected by welfare reform. Less than one-fifth (16%) of respondents had some level of awareness (fully aware of/aware of but not in detail).

Table 10: Where would you go to get advice or help if you were negatively impacted by changes to the benefit system as a result of welfare reform?

| | % of respondents |
|---|------------------|
| Advice service eg. Citizen's Advice Bureau, Advice NI, Housing Rights | 54 |
| Family | 26 |
| Friends | 14 |
| Community organisations | 11 |
| Local representatives (Councillor, MLA, MP) | 10 |
| Housing Executive | 9 |
| Other | 9 |

(Base: All respondents. Respondents could give more than answer)

Section 6: Attitudes to local neighbourhoods

(Appendix tables 8.1 – 8.6)

79%

of respondents felt very/fairly proud of the general image of their neighbourhood (79% in 2012).

There was some variation by tenure. Respondents who were owner occupiers (86%) were most likely to feel very/fairly proud of the general image of their neighbourhood, followed by 72% of respondents who lived in social housing, and 66% of respondents who rented privately.

Respondents who were aged 65+ (86%) were most likely to feel very/fairly proud of the general image of their neighbourhood.

More than four-fifths (84%) of respondents who lived in a rural area felt very/fairly proud of the general image of their neighbourhood, compared with 77% of respondents who lived in an urban area.

Table 11: Respondents' views on how their neighbourhood is changing

| | % |
|-------------------------|----|
| Changing for the better | 21 |
| Not really changing | 46 |
| Changing for the worse | 10 |
| Don't know | 23 |

(Base: All respondents)

Almost half (46%) of respondents thought their neighbourhood was not really changing (59% in 2012).

Almost one-quarter (23%) of respondents did not know, or did not give a response, in relation to how their neighbourhood was changing. This was a large increase since 2012 when 6% of respondents did not know.

Safety in the.....

Home

97%

of respondents felt very/fairly safe in their own home during the day (97% in 2012).

Respondents who were private renters (93%) were least likely to feel very/fairly safe in their own home during the day.

There was little variation by age, ranging from 95% of respondents aged 16-34 or 55-64, to 98% of respondents aged 65+ or 45-54.

94%

of respondents felt very/fairly safe in their own home after dark (93% in 2012).

Respondents who were private renters (90%) were least likely to feel very/fairly safe in their own home after dark.

There was little variation by age, ranging from 92% of respondents aged 16-34 to 97% of respondents aged 45-54.

Neighbourhood

96%

of respondents felt very/fairly safe walking alone in their neighbourhood during the day (96% in 2012).

There was little variation by tenure.

85%

of respondents felt very/fairly safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (80% in 2012).

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 81% of private renters to 88% of owner occupiers.

Respondents who were aged 65+ were less likely to feel very/fairly safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (80%).

Section 7: Community relations

(Appendix tables 9.1 – 9.23)

16%

of respondents felt very/slightly concerned about community relations in their local area (21% in 2012).

There was little variation by tenure, ranging from 14% of respondents who lived in social housing to 18% of private renters.

There was little variation age of household reference person.

53%

of respondents felt very/slightly concerned about community relations in Northern Ireland as a whole (44% in 2012).

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 38% of respondents who lived in social housing to 60% of owner occupiers.

Respondents who lived in a rural area were more likely than those who lived in an urban area to feel very/slightly concerned about community relations in Northern Ireland as a whole (64% compared with 49% respectively).

Table 12: Agreement with statements about the Housing Executive

| The Housing Executive should.... | % of respondents who strongly/tended to agree |
|---|---|
| work with residents to tackle anti- social behaviour | 82 |
| evict tenants who repeatedly carry out anti- social acts | 80 |
| not permit sectional symbols on its properties | 59 |
| be concerned <i>only</i> with the provision of decent housing | 36 |

(Base: All respondents)

Table 13: Agreement that sectional symbols reflected negatively on estates or areas in Northern Ireland

| Do the following reflect negatively on estates or areas in Northern Ireland? | % of respondents who strongly/tended to agree |
|--|---|
| Kerb paintings | 71 |
| Paramilitary memorials | 67 |
| Flags | 63 |
| Bonfires | 63 |
| Murals | 63 |

(Base: All respondents)

71% of respondents who strongly/tended to agree that one or more of the sectional symbols reflected badly on estates or areas in Northern Ireland thought the Housing Executive should assist the community in removing them. There was little variation by tenure, ranging from 72% of respondents who were owner occupiers to 68% of respondents who lived in social housing.

Religion and ethnicity

71%

of respondents would like to live in a mixed religion estate or area.

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 75% of respondents who were owner occupiers to 60% of respondents who lived in social housing.

79% of respondents who would like to live in a mixed religion estate said that to them, a mixed religion estate meant 'about half Protestant and half Catholic'.

Table 14: Respondents' views on why some people do not want to live in a mixed religion estate or area

| | % |
|--|----|
| Fear of intimidation | 39 |
| Fear of not being accepted by 'the other side' | 30 |
| Personal/family safety or security | 17 |
| Need to be near family/friends for support | 15 |
| Would restrict expression of cultural traditions | 10 |
| Children attending local schools/playgroups etc. | 10 |
| Work locally in their estate/area | 6 |

(Base: All respondents. Respondents could give more than one answer)

Table 15: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household mixed with people from a different community or religious background

| | % |
|--|-----|
| Always | 45 |
| Frequently | 32 |
| Occasionally | 16 |
| Never/never had opportunity ⁷ | 3 |
| Refused/don't know | 5 |
| Total | 100 |

(Base: All respondents)

Table 16: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household attended shared events/activities/projects which included people from different religious backgrounds

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Always | 31 |
| Frequently | 31 |
| Occasionally | 23 |
| Never | 6 |
| Never had the opportunity | 3 |
| Don't know | 5 |
| Total | 100 |

(Base: All respondents)

Table 17: Respondents' views on the extent to which they or members of their household attended shared events/activities/projects which included people from different ethnic backgrounds

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Always | 21 |
| Frequently | 19 |
| Occasionally | 25 |
| Never | 11 |
| Never had the opportunity | 19 |
| Don't know | 5 |
| Total | 100 |

(Base: All respondents)

86% of respondents felt very/fairly favourable about people from a different religious group to themselves.

77% of respondents felt very/fairly favourable about people from a different ethnic group to themselves.

⁷ Combined due to small numbers

Views about bonfires

45%

**of respondents
strongly/tended to agree
that bonfires are a
legitimate form of
cultural celebration.**

Approximately one-quarter (26%) of respondents tended to/strongly disagree, and 20% neither agreed nor disagreed that bonfires are a legitimate form of cultural celebration.

There was some variation by religion. Two-thirds (63%) of respondents who were Protestant, compared with 30% of respondents who were Catholic, strongly/tended to agree that that bonfires are a legitimate form of cultural celebration.

83% of respondents strongly/tended to agree that the organisers of bonfires should be held to account if there is any property damage or injury as a result of their bonfires.

52% of respondents strongly/tended to agree that the Housing Executive should not permit bonfires on its land.

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 43% of respondents who rented privately to 57% of respondents who were owner occupiers.

Section 8: Equality issues

(Appendix tables 10.1 – 10.16)

More than one-third (37%) of respondents said they didn't know how the Housing Executive treats people of different religions who apply for a *home*. More than half (52%) said the Housing Executive treats all religions who apply for a *home* equally.

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 45% of respondents who rented privately to 58% of respondents who lived in social housing (who thought the Housing Executive treats people of all religions who apply for a *home* equally).

Respondents who were aged between 16 and 34 were least likely to think that the Housing Executive treats people of all religions who apply for a *home* equally (45% compared with 52% overall).

More than two-fifths (44%) of respondents said they didn't know how the Housing Executive treats people of different religions who apply for a *job*. Half (50%) said the Housing Executive treats all religions who apply for a *job* equally.

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 42% of respondents who rented privately to 53% of respondents who lived in social housing (who thought the Housing Executive treats people of all religions who apply for a *job* equally).

Responses also varied by age of respondent, ranging from 46% (16-34) to 54% (55-64).

Religious mix in neighbourhoods/areas

67%

of respondents thought it should be Housing Executive policy to promote a religious mix in NIHE neighbourhoods.

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 61% of respondents who lived in social housing to 69% of respondents who rented privately.

The majority (70%) of respondents indicated that they were happy with the religious mix of the area where they lived.

44% of respondents lived in a mixed religion area and wished to continue doing so.

13% of respondents lived in a Protestant area and wished to continue doing so.

13% of respondents lived in a Catholic area and wished to continue doing so.

The remaining respondents were made up of those who would prefer to live in an area with a different religious mix to the one they lived in at the time of the survey, those who said the religious mix of the area they lived in was not important, and those who didn't know or did not give an answer.

Prejudice against people with disabilities/health issues

36%

of respondents thought there was prejudice against people with disabilities in Northern Ireland (29% in 2012). Almost half (49%) of respondents did not think there was prejudice, and 16% of respondents did not know.

Table 18: Respondents who thought there was prejudice against people with specific disabilities

| Disability/illness | Respondents who thought there was prejudice (%) |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Mental health issue(s) | 93 |
| Learning disability | 89 |
| Physical disability | 87 |
| Communication difficulties (speech) | 85 |
| Sensory disability | 79 |
| Hidden disability | 71 |
| Progressive (incurable) illness | 61 |

(Base: Respondents who thought there was prejudice against people with disabilities in Northern Ireland)

Table 19: Respondents who said they would be very/slightly concerned if a property in their immediate neighbourhood was converted for people with a specific disability or health issue

| Disability/health issue | Respondents who would be very/slightly concerned (%) |
|-------------------------|--|
| Drug addiction issues | 58 |
| Mental health issues | 19 |
| Learning disability | 8 |
| Physical disability | 4 |

(Base: All respondents)

Section 9: Housing Policy in Northern Ireland

(Appendix tables 3.22 – 3.24)

75%

of respondents thought the Housing Executive should continue to sell houses and flats to eligible tenants

There was little variation by tenure, ranging from 71% for private renters to 76% for owner occupiers.

74%

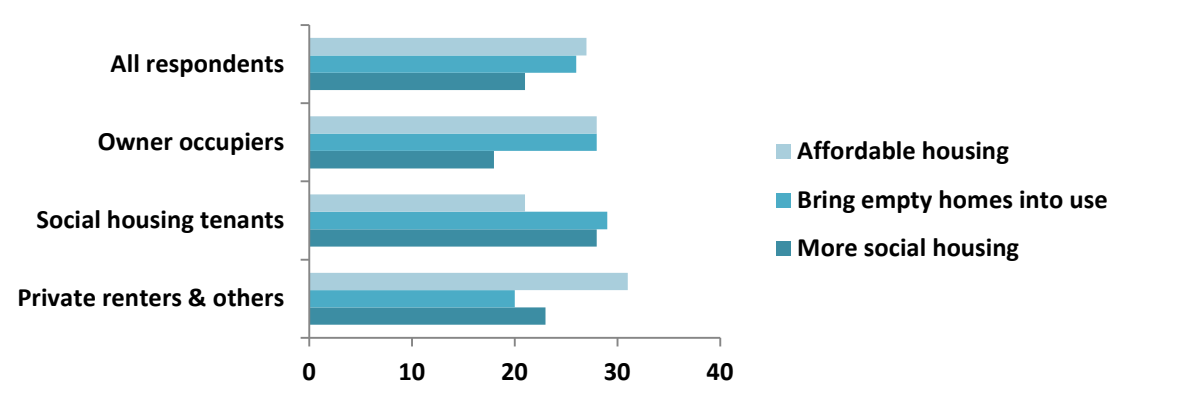
of respondents would *not* object to new build social housing in their area

There was some variation by tenure, ranging from 66% for owner occupiers to 92% for social housing tenants.

Housing priorities over the next 5 years

Figure 3 shows the 3 main priorities⁸ for housing over the next five years as suggested by respondents⁹. Affordable housing was the top priority overall (27%), followed by bringing empty homes back into use (26%), and more social housing (21%). There was some variation by tenure.

Figure 3: Main priorities for housing over the next 5 years (% of respondents)



⁸ The full list of priorities can be seen in Appendix table 3.24.
⁹ Respondents could identify more than one priority.

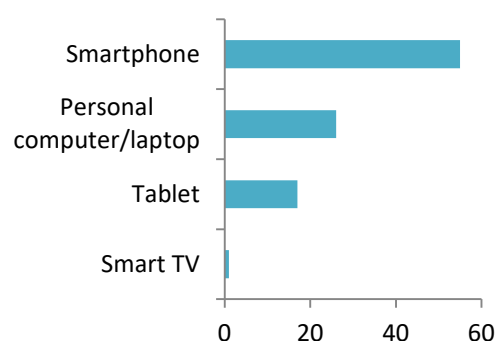
Section 10: Internet access

(Appendix tables 7.1 – 7.24)

75%

of respondents said they or a member of their family had access to the internet (68% in 2012)

Figure 4: Ways in which respondents or household members accessed the internet most often (%)



Access to the internet varied by tenure, ranging from 84% of respondents who rented privately, to 59% of respondents who lived in social housing.

Access to the internet decreased with age, with less than half (46%) of respondent who were aged 65+ having internet access.

Respondents who lived in an urban area were slightly more likely to have access to the internet than those who lived in a rural area (77% compared with 71% respectively).

More than half (55%) of respondents said they (or a household member) used a smartphone to access the internet most often.

Higher than average proportions of respondents who lived in social housing (61%) or private rented accommodation (71%) used a smartphone to access the internet most often.

A lower than average proportion of respondents who were aged 65+ (20%) used a smartphone to access the internet. The majority of respondents in this age group used a computer/laptop (39%) or a tablet (34%) to access the internet most often.

Table 20: Top 10 uses for the internet, and confidence using the internet for these purposes

| Use for internet ¹⁰ | % of respondents who used the internet for this purpose | % of respondents who felt very/fairly confident using the internet for this purpose |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| General browsing | 76 | 95 |
| Social media | 54 | 97 |
| Online banking | 50 | 99 |
| General online shopping | 50 | 97 |
| News and weather | 44 | 96 |
| TV, movies, Youtube etc. | 40 | 96 |
| Clothes shopping | 37 | 98 |
| Planning journeys | 33 | 98 |
| Online learning/research | 32 | 96 |
| Grocery shopping | 25 | 98 |

Overall, respondents were confident using the internet for the purposes listed in Table 20. Respondents were less likely to use the internet to apply for jobs, apply for benefits, book medical appointments or web chat. Accordingly, there were lower levels of confidence using the internet for these purposes.

Housing Executive's website

Very few respondents had used the Housing Executive's website for any reason. No further analysis of this group can be carried out due to small numbers.

Approximately one-quarter (26%) of respondents thought the Housing Executive should offer more services online.

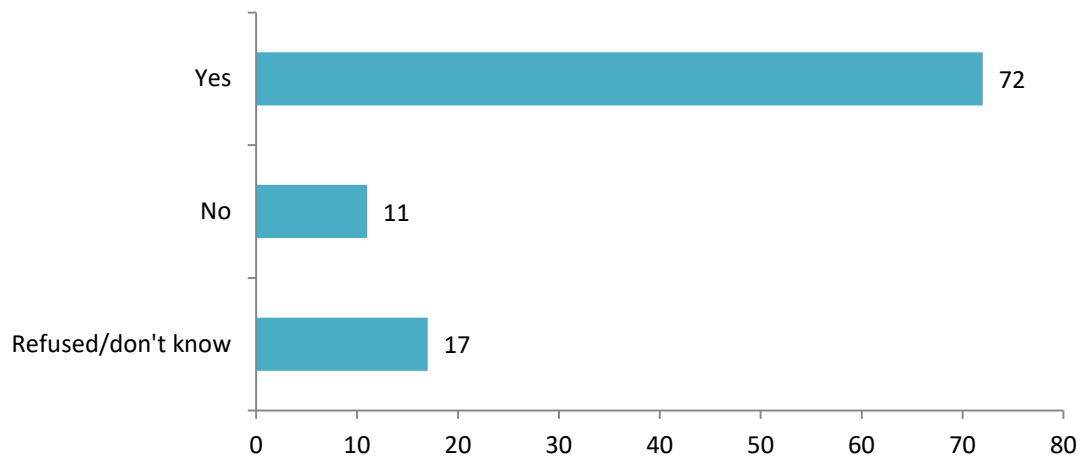
¹⁰ Other uses for the internet can be seen in Appendix Table 7.3

Section 11: Housing aspirations of the over

55s (457 respondents)

(Appendix tables 11.1 – 11.5)

Figure 5: Do you think your accommodation will continue to meet your needs in the longer term, as you get older? (%)



72% of respondents who were more than 55 years of age thought their accommodation would continue to meet their needs in the longer term, as they got older.

Respondents who rented privately were least likely to think their accommodation would continue to meet their needs in the longer term, as they got older (43% compared with 72% overall).

11% of respondents who were more than 55 years of age thought their accommodation would *not* continue to meet their needs in the longer term, as they got older.

51% of respondents who were over 55 years of age said they would be willing to move up to 5 miles from their current home if they had to change their current living arrangements. (31%

would be willing to move up to 1 mile away, 14% between 1 and 3 miles, and 6% between 3 and 5 miles).

The main reason people gave for not thinking about moving to another area was 'I've always lived in this area' (52% of respondents who would be willing

to move up to 1 mile away from their current home).

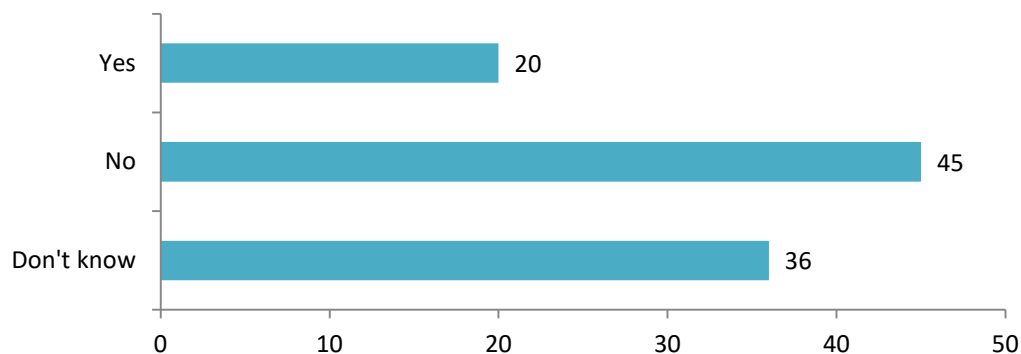
Less than 1% of respondents who were more than 55 years of age said that a member of their household had to move away from the area due to a lack of available housing.

Section 12: Housing supply and demand

(all respondents)

(Appendix table 12.1)

Figure 6: Is the housing market in Northern Ireland supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand? (%)



20% of respondents thought the housing market in Northern Ireland *was* supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand. Almost half (45%) said it *was not* and a fairly high proportion (36%) said they *didn't know*.

Among those respondents who thought the housing market in Northern Ireland *was* supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand there was some variation by tenure, ranging from 16% of private renters to 22% of owner occupiers.

Respondents who were aged 65+ (17%) were least likely to think the housing market in Northern Ireland *was* supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand.

Respondents who lived in an urban area (21%) were more likely than those who lived in a rural area (15%) to think the housing market in Northern Ireland *was* supplying the appropriate housing types to meet demand.

Section 13: Household profile

(Appendix tables 1.1 – 1.11)

The Public Attitudes Survey 2018 was a cross tenure, Northern Ireland-wide survey. In total, 1,000 surveys were completed. This section presents a profile of the households that were surveyed. Further household information is provided in the appendix tables.

Figure 7: Tenure breakdown of respondents (%)

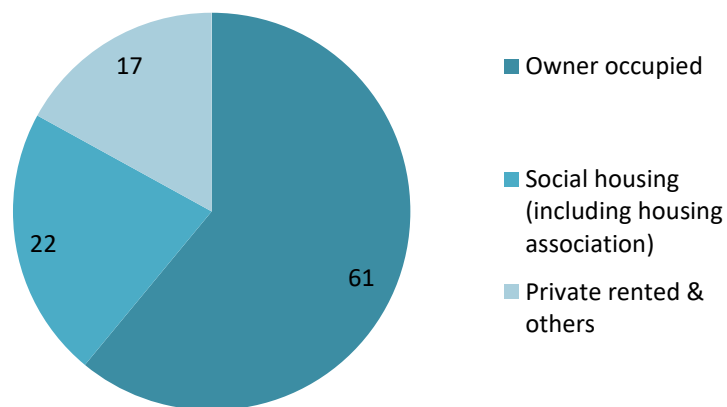


Figure 8: Age of household reference person (%)

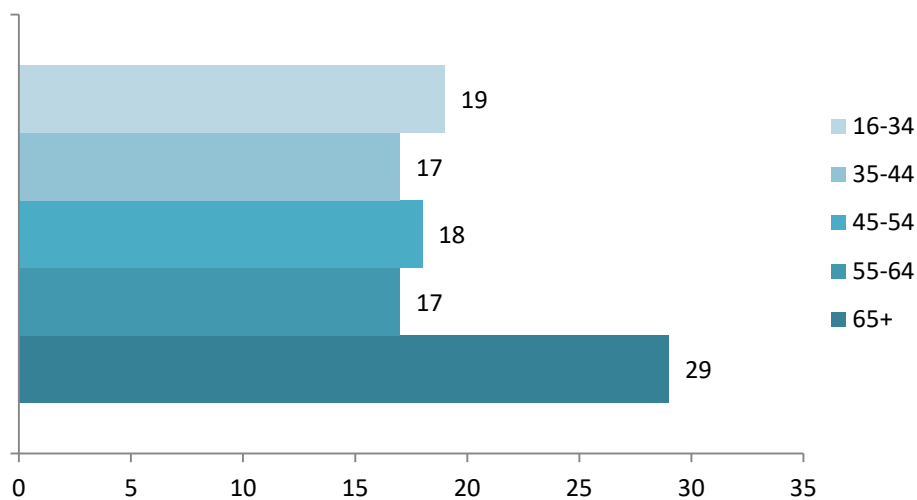


Figure 9: Gross household annual income (%)

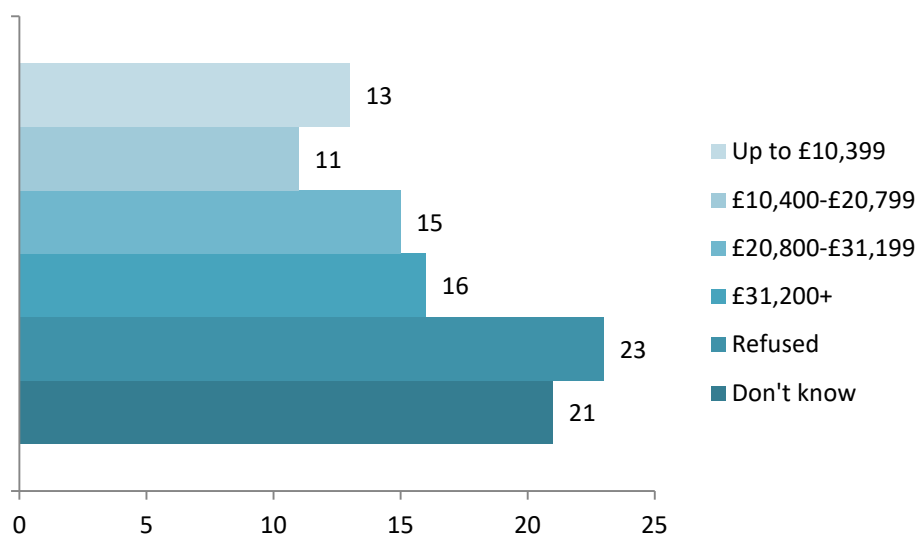
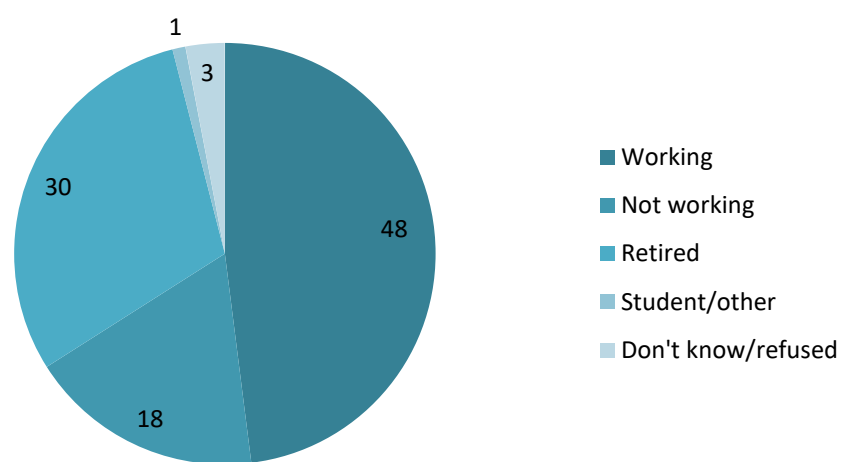


Figure 10: Employment status of household reference person (%)



Location

70% of respondents lived in an urban area and **30%** of respondents lived in a rural area.

User guide

Survey objectives

The objectives of the survey were to explore the views of the public in the following areas:

- Current living arrangements (tenure, time in property);
- Awareness of Housing Executive services;
- Views on community relations;
- Involvement with local communities;
- Views on welfare reform;
- Views on neighbourhoods;
- Perceived reputation of the Housing Executive;
- Housing aspirations (among over 55s)

The questionnaire

A consultation process was undertaken to ensure the questionnaire addressed the priorities of the organisation. All heads of department within the Housing Executive were asked for their feedback on the questionnaire from the 2012 survey. The questionnaire was designed by the Housing Executive's Research Unit in consultation with the project advisory group, which comprised representatives from the Communications Department and the Chief Executive's Office.

The questionnaire was developed in conjunction with Ipsos MORI. A final version of the questionnaire was scripted on the Computer Aided Personal Interviewing (CAPI) software package, UNICOM Intelligence SPSS software (formerly IBM SPSS Dimensions) which is fully compatible with SPSS V22. UNICOM Intelligence is an integrated suite of software tools for designing surveys and conducting CAPI and is a well-established tool used industry-wide in the administration of complex and large-scale social surveys.

The sample

In line with Public Attitudes Survey 2012, the Research Unit selected a sample of addresses from Land and Property Service's list of residential addresses (Pointer), using the sampling tool in Arcview, a Geographical Information System. To provide a random sample of Northern Ireland households, the sample was stratified proportionately by District Council area. The Housing Executive provided Ipsos Mori with an initial sample of 2,000 addresses from which a minimum of 1,000 interviews were to be completed.

Interview targets by district council area

| District council area | Target |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 75 |
| Ards & North Down | 90 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 106 |
| Belfast | 201 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 81 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 78 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 62 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 74 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 76 |
| Mid Ulster | 68 |
| Newry Mourne & Down | 90 |
| Total Northern Ireland | 1,000 |

During the course of the fieldwork, it was identified that a booster sample was required in certain District Council areas, due to a lower sample ratio and higher refusal rate in these areas. The Housing Executive provided Ipsos Mori with an additional 264 addresses.

Booster sample summary

| District council area | Target | Sample ratio | Refusal count* | Sample required |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 75 | 1.98 | 38 | 42 |
| Ards & North Down | 90 | 3.60 | 34 | 0 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 106 | 3.23 | 25 | 0 |
| Belfast | 201 | 2.02 | 58 | 100 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 81 | 2.29 | 21 | 0 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 78 | 4.58 | 22 | 0 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 62 | -0.22 | 10 | 0 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 74 | 2.07 | 32 | 30 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 76 | 1.59 | 30 | 62 |
| Mid Ulster | 68 | 2.15 | 23 | 30 |
| Newry Mourne & Down | 90 | 2.87 | 22 | 0 |
| Total Northern Ireland | 1,000 | | | 264 |

*Refusal count based on the 897 interviews which were completed up to 4 September 2018, when the sample booster analysis was conducted.

Fieldwork/Data collection

The fieldwork was split into three phases: a pilot phase followed by two phases of mainstage fieldwork. During the pilot phase, question wording and understanding was tested, alongside routing and filtering. A briefing session with interviewers was held to assess any concerns or issues experienced during the pilot phase.

Following a successful pilot, the mainstage fieldwork was launched with no changes to the questionnaire required.

Ipsos MORI sent advance letters to households to explain the purpose of the survey and to invite participation. Batches of letters were time-released to ensure a minimal gap between receipt of letter and a call from the interviewer.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Interviewing was conducted between 5th June and 19th October 2018. Interviews lasted 36 minutes on average.

The fieldwork was conducted by a team of experienced CAPI interviewers. Interviewers were fully briefed so that they understood the project aims and target audience, and were familiar with the questionnaire and any sensitive or complex questions within it.

Response rates

A total of 1,001 surveys were completed. One survey participant requested to be removed from the study, leaving 1,000 completed surveys and giving a response rate of 44%. This was based on a total sample of 2,264 (original sample of 1000 + booster sample of 264).

Weighting

On completion of the survey the data was exported into the statistical software package SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The targets for achieved interviews per District Council area were reviewed and corrective weighting was applied to the data where necessary.

The table below indicates the achieved number of interviews compared to the target, which was used as the basis for applying weighting.

District council areas achieved interviews versus target

| District council area | Target | Achieved | Deficit |
|------------------------------------|--------|----------|---------|
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 75 | 75 | 0 |
| Ards & North Down | 90 | 85 | -5 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 106 | 87 | -19 |
| Belfast | 201 | 222 | +21 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 81 | 65 | -16 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 78 | 75 | -3 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 62 | 102 | +40 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 74 | 61 | -13 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 76 | 70 | -6 |
| Mid Ulster | 68 | 60 | -8 |
| Newry Mourne & Down | 90 | 99 | +9 |
| Total Northern Ireland | 1,000 | 1,001* | |

*A completed interview was removed from the data following a request from the participant to be removed from the study.

Confidence intervals

Sample surveys provide estimates of the population and these estimates are subject to what was traditionally known as ‘sampling error’ but is now more commonly referred to as ‘confidence interval’. This indicates to the reader the +/- range in which the reader can be ‘confident’ that the true value of the statistic is found. There is an inverse relationship between sample size and confidence interval. As the sample size increases the confidence interval decreases. It is important that the confidence interval is calculated, even approximately to determine to what extent apparent differences, e.g. between years, are real, or simply the result of statistical vagaries. It has become normal practice to estimate the confidence interval at the 95% confidence level i.e. the results would be replicated nineteen times out of twenty if the survey were repeated.

Confidence intervals for Public Attitudes Survey 2018

| | % | | 5 or 95 | 10 or 90 | 15 or 85 | 20 or 80 | 25 or 75 | 30 or 70 | 35 or 65 | 40 or 60 | 45 or 55 | 50 50 |
|-------------------------|------|--|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
| Sample Size: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| All respondents | 1000 | | 1.4 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Owner occupied | 615 | | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.0 |
| Social housing | 220 | | 2.9 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 5.3 | 5.7 | 6.1 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.6 | 6.6 |
| Private rented & others | 165 | | 3.3 | 4.6 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 6.6 | 7.0 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 7.6 | 7.7 |
| Urban | 702 | | 1.6 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| Rural | 298 | | 2.5 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 5.7 | 5.7 |

Quality information

Project Advisory Group

A project advisory group (which comprised representatives from the Research Unit, the Communications Department and the Chief Executive's Office) was set up to ensure that the research met objectives and addressed the priorities of the organisation. This included an extensive questionnaire consultation process.

The sample

The sample was drawn from Northern Ireland's address database (Pointer) which is maintained by Land and Property Services and is used as the sampling frame for Government social surveys in Northern Ireland. A stratified random sample was selected to ensure the sample was representative by District Council Area.

Software

The questionnaire was scripted on the Computer Aided Personal Interviewing (CAPI) software package, UNICOM Intelligence SPSS software (formerly IBM SPSS Dimensions). UNICOM Intelligence is an integrated suite of software tools for designing surveys and conducting CAPI and is a well-established tool used industry-wide in the administration of complex and large-scale social surveys. This software facilitates advanced survey creation capabilities, survey building with complex logic, and enables collaboration and efficiency through one platform at all stages of design, implementation and delivery.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork was conducted by a team of highly experienced CAPI interviewers. Interviewers were fully briefed so they understood the project aims and target audience, and so they were familiar with the questionnaire and any sensitive or complex questions within it.

Pilot

A pilot phase was completed to assess the fidelity of the questionnaire and script, and to allow for any changes to be made ahead of the mainstage fieldwork. Question wording and understanding was tested, alongside routing and filtering. A briefing session with interviewers was held to assess any concerns or issues experienced during the pilot phase. Following a successful pilot, the mainstage fieldwork was launched with no changes to the questionnaire required.

Data

Although the use of CAPI minimises the risk of error, the Housing Executive's Research Unit completed a series of quality assurance checks on the data. This included checks for missing

data, inconsistencies, routing errors etc. At the end of the fieldwork period, 100 interviews were validated, representing 10% of the total interviews completed.

Report

The Research Unit completed quality assurance of the report and appendix tables.

This included ensuring numbers were robust enough to report, suppressing small numbers, and checking confidence intervals.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- The Public Attitudes Survey provides data at Northern Ireland level, as well as by tenure, age of HRP, religious background and location (urban or rural).
- The sample design and weighting processes ensure accurate and reliable data are produced.
- The quality checks built into CAPI reduce the risk of errors in the data.
- Thorough quality assurance processes are in place at all stages of the Public Attitudes Survey to ensure that high quality data are produced.

Weaknesses

- The Public Attitudes Survey has been carried out since 1984 and over time the questionnaire evolved to ensure it always dealt with current and emerging issues. Following the consultation process, a number of new questions were added to the 2018 survey, while others were removed. These changes were important to address the Housing Executive's key priorities, but mean that for some questions it is not possible to make comparisons with previous surveys.
- The sample size of a survey determines the level at which analysis can be carried out, e.g. geographical level. When deciding on sample size, the available budget and resources are taken into consideration. The original sample size for the Public Attitudes Survey 2018 was 2,000¹¹. This was large enough to provide robust data at Northern Ireland level. In most cases it also produced robust data for each of the subgroups (tenure, age of HRP, religious background and urban/rural location). In cases where numbers were too small to be robust, these have been suppressed in

¹¹ A booster sample was required in certain District Council areas, bringing the sample size to 2,264.

the appendix tables and guidance was given to use caution when reporting proportions. It was not possible to produce results at District Council level as numbers were too small.