
Chapter 4

Response rates

The target response rate for the 2015-16 English Housing Survey (EHS) household interview was 60%. This chapter provides details of the final response rates and information on action taken to maximise response.

Overview

- 4.1 The target response rate for the EHS is set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It is monitored closely by NatCen through analysis of electronic data reports and direct contact between interviewers and their team leader. NatCen sets and monitors targets for coverage within each wave and monitors response at an area and interviewer level. When response rates fall below the target, remedial action is taken.

Interview survey

- 4.2 In 2015-16, interviews were achieved at 13,468 households. This represents a response rate of 55%. More details on the response rate to the EHS interview survey in 2015-16 are provided in Table 4.1.
- 4.3 Of these 13,468 interviews, 81% were conducted with the household reference person (HRP), 18% with the HRP's partner and 1% with a proxy respondent (a person responding on behalf of the HRP), Annex Table 4.3.

Table 4.1: Interview survey response rate, 2015-16

<i>All issued households</i>			
	Number (N)	Issued cases (%)	In-scope cases (%)
Total issued addresses	26,260		
Not yet built/under construction ¹	30	0.1	
Demolished/derelict ¹	61	0.2	
Vacant/empty or derelict housing unit	945	3.6	
Non-residential address ¹	430	1.6	
Address occupied - no resident household ¹	167	0.6	
Communal establishment/institution ¹	69	0.3	
Other ineligible ¹	87	0.3	
total ineligible addresses	1,789	6.8	
Total in-scope addresses	24,471	93.2	
Not issued			
Issued, but not attempted	32	0.1	0.1
Inaccessible	24	0.1	0.1
Unable to locate address ¹	54	0.2	0.2
Unknown whether residential: Info refused	1	0.0	0.0
Unknown whether residential: no contact	31	0.1	0.1
Residential but unknown eligibility: info refused	10	0.0	0.0
Residential but unknown eligibility: no contact	79	0.3	0.3
Other unknown eligibility	29	0.1	0.1
Info refused about whether address is residential	4	0.0	0.0
Info refused whether resident(s) are eligible	1	0.0	0.0
Eligibility not confirmed: language barrier	13	0.0	0.1
Other unknown eligibility	23	0.1	0.1
Total unknown eligibility	301	1.2	1.2
Office refusal	720	2.7	2.9
Information refused on no. of dwellings	120	0.5	0.5
Information refused on no. of households	122	0.5	0.5
Can't identify target respondent(s): info refused	259	1.0	1.1
Refusal before interview: by selected respondent	5,519	21.0	22.6
Proxy refusal	86	0.3	0.4
Refusal during interview (unproductive partial)	35	0.1	0.1
Broken appointment, no re-contact	1,053	4.0	4.3
Total refusals	7,914	30.1	32.3
No contact with anyone at address	1,451	5.5	5.9
Multi dwellings - No contact made with selected dwelling	13	0.0	0.1
No contact with responsible adult	190	0.7	0.8
Contact made at dwelling, but not from selected household	83	0.3	0.3
Total non-contact	1,737	6.6	7.1
Ill at home during survey period: Head Office	12	0.0	0.0
Ill at home during survey period: Interviewer	216	0.8	0.9
Away or in hospital all survey period: Head Office	36	0.14	0.1
Away or in hospital all survey period: Interviewer	244	0.9	1.0
Physically/mentally unable/incomp: Head Office	20	0.1	0.1
Physically/mentally unable/incomp: Interviewer	278	1.1	1.1
Language difficulties: Head Office	36	0.14	0.1
Language difficulties: Interviewer	157	0.6	0.6
Lost productive	2	0.0	0.0
Interview achieved but resp requested data deleted	5	0.0	0.0
Other unproductive	45	0.17	0.2
Total other unproductive	1,051	4.0	4.3
Full interview	13,465	51.3	55.0
Partial interview	3	0.0	0.0
Total interviews	13,468	51.3	55.0

notes:

1) For the purposes of sampling, these cases are considered out of scope of the EHS.

Physical survey

- 4.4 Not every household taking part in the interview survey is eligible to take part in the physical survey. Cases eligible¹ for the physical survey are identified by the computer-assisted personal interviewing program as part of the interview survey. Interviewers are then responsible for securing the consent of the householder to a physical survey. The interviewer explains the purpose of the survey and describes briefly what it will involve. If the respondent is willing, the interviewer arranges a fixed appointment for the physical survey. The interviewer is provided with the times the surveyor is available on their laptop computer to help make the appointment.
- 4.5 Of the 9,780 interviewed households eligible for the physical survey, 74% agreed to have a physical survey against a target of 80%.
- 4.6 In 2015-16, 6,248 physical surveys were achieved. Of these, 6,054 were surveys in occupied properties. This represents 83% of households which agreed to a physical survey at the interview against a conversion rate target of 85%.
- 4.7 The remaining 194 surveys were conducted at vacant or derelict addresses. This represents 28% of the vacant addresses eligible for a physical survey. This is below the target of 30% conversion rate for such properties. More details on the response rate to the physical survey for the EHS in 2015-16 are provided in Table 4.2.

¹ See Chapter 1 on sub-sampling for more information on how addresses are deemed eligible for the physical survey.

Table 4.2: Physical survey response rate, 2015-16

<i>all addresses eligible for physical survey</i>			
	Number (N)	Cases eligible for PS (%)	(Cases agreed to PS at IS (%))
Occupied addresses			
Total occupied addresses eligible for physical survey	9,780		
Eligible but refused appointment at interview	2,510	25.7	
Eligible and agreed appointment at interview	7,270	74.3	
Total unproductive	1,216	12.4	16.7
Incomplete survey	1	.0	0.0
Refusal on doorstep	317	3.2	4.4
Refusal to HQ	657	6.7	9.0
Household missed appointment	20	.2	0.3
Surveyor missed appointment - no contact	1	.0	0.0
Surveyor missed appointment - rescheduled	1	.0	0.0
Not referred for PS- eligible but non/late transmission	~	~	~
Speculative call - no contact	212	2.2	2.9
Other reason for non-survey	7	.1	0.1
Full survey (paired cases)	6,054	61.9	83.3
Vacant/derelict addresses			
Total vacant/derelict addresses eligible for physical survey	689		
Eligible but refused appointment at interview	36	7.3	
Total unproductive	459	66.6	70.3
Incomplete survey	~	~	~
Refusal on doorstep	134	27.1	20.5
Refusal to HQ	45	9.1	6.9
Household missed appointment	13	2.6	2.0
Surveyor missed appointment	~	~	~
Spec call no contact	242	48.9	37.1
Address untraceable	~	~	~
Other reasons for non survey	25	5.1	3.8
Survey achieved (vacant)	188		
Survey achieved (derelict)	6		
Total vacant/derelict physical surveys achieved	194	28.2	29.7
Total physical surveys achieved	6,248	59.7	78.9

Notes:

1) for the occupied addresses the cases eligible for a physical survey is the total occupied addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the cases agreed to a physical survey at interview survey is the total occupied addresses who agreed to have a physical survey at the interview.

2) for the vacant addresses the cases eligible for a physical survey is the total vacant addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the final column is the percentage out of all the eligible occupied addresses excluding those who refused an appointment at the interview stage (not all the vacant addresses were contacted at the interview stage so did not have the chance to refuse).

3) the cases eligible for a physical survey is all the occupied and vacant addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the cases agreed to a physical survey at the interview survey is all the occupied and vacant addresses who did not refuse to have a physical survey at the interview stage

4) A small number of unproductive cases in categories 'no longer usable as dwelling', 'dwelling demolished' and 'dwelling derelict' have been added to the 'other reasons for non survey' category.

