



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Community Life Survey January 2018 User Event: One year on

1. Overview

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) held an event for users of the Community Life Survey on 31st January 2018. The event included presentations from:

- David Knott, Director for the Office of Civil Society, DCMS: Introductions and use of the Community Life Survey within DCMS.
- Rosanna White, Statistician, DCMS: Updates and developments to the Community Life Survey.
- Karl Wilding, Director of Public Policy and Volunteering NCVO: Use of the survey data outside of government.

There was also an opportunity for attendees to discuss their views on current survey data dissemination methods, as well as to make suggestions for future development.

The event was attended by over 40 survey users, including from the Office for Civil Society (DCMS), other government departments and charitable organisations.

2. Feedback from user lead session

Since this event, we have used the feedback to inform developments to the way data from the survey is presented. The table below outlines the feedback we received and the steps we have taken to address this since the event:

Dissemination methods identified as useful:		
<p>Feedback received:</p> <p>Attendees were asked to feedback on which current dissemination methods they find most useful. The most common response was the data tables, followed by the statistical bulletin and being able to access data at the UK Data Service. Responses given included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data tables. • Statistical Bulletin. • Being able to access data from the UK Data Service. • CSV files. • Some users preferred to be able to access the underlying data to conduct their own bespoke analysis, whereas others found being able to easily read the key findings and commentary around this more useful. 	<p>What we've done in 2018:</p> <p>We have continued to make data available in the data tables and statistical bulletin and will ensure data continues to be available from the UK data service.</p> <p>We published the 2017-18 statistical bulletin and associated tables on 26th July 2018, making improvements based on feedback from the event (see actions under 'dissemination methods identified as useful to develop further' section below).</p> <p>Within the department, we held a learning and development session shortly after the publication to disseminate the findings to a wide range of DCMS colleagues, ensuring they were aware of the key survey findings and understood how to interpret the data.</p> <p>Following the publication, we have responded to ad hoc requests for data, ensuring these are published on the Community Life Survey Ad-hoc statistics page.</p> <p>We have also introduced new dissemination methods in the form of fact sheets and focus reports (see section below for more details).</p>	<p>Next Steps for 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging the feedback on usefulness of CSV files, we are investigating ways to automate the production of the CSV files to be able to produce these for all publications. Unfortunately the current method of producing these is incredibly time consuming and the team does not currently have the resource to do so. • Archiving of 2017-18 data on the UK Data Service.

Dissemination methods identified as useful to develop further:

Feedback received:

Interactive tools and infographics were the most common suggestions for improving data dissemination. The introduction of focus reports were also considered a useful development.

Responses given include:

- Interactive tools.
- Infographics.
- Focus reports.
- Increased range of demographic information such as ethnicity and region.
- More granular geographic data.
- Simplifying tables by removing historic face to face data.
- Repository of analyses from external organisations using CLS data.
- Pivot tables.
- Sharing of information about questionnaire changes to users.
- More information about the sampling methods used.

What we've done in 2018:

Improvement of data tables

The CLS data tables have been updated based on feedback from the event. The following changes were implemented for the [July 2017-18 publication](#):

- Regional breakdowns for the majority of tables.
- Consistent demographic data used throughout including, age, gender, disability, region, urban/rural classification and index of multiple deprivation quintiles.
- Including data collected from the online/ paper self-completion survey only. This was in response to feedback stating that presenting this alongside the historic face to face data could be confusing.

Introduction of fact sheets

Several users said that they would find infographics useful. In response we have developed 'fact sheets' which summarise key topic areas to one page using infographics, charts and brief text descriptions.

The first fact sheet around loneliness was published alongside the main release on 26th July 2018, volunteering and charitable giving fact sheets were published on 5th September 2018. All fact sheets can be found alongside the [2017-18 publication](#).

Next steps for 2019:

- Continuation of factsheet production.
- Explore resourcing options to develop an interactive tool for the survey data to allow users to easily access the data they require.
- Investigate the feasibility of using statistical modelling techniques to produce small area estimates for key survey measures.

	<p><u>Introduction of focus reports</u></p> <p>On 10th May 2018 we published the first Community Life Survey focus report on the theme of diversity, which included key measures broken down by a range of demographic characteristics in response to feedback from the user event and other stakeholders. This included a greater granularity of ethnicity data in response to the government's Race Disparity Audit. We have since received feedback that this report has been useful to users.</p> <p>On 17th January 2019 we published our second focus report on the theme of loneliness in response to the launch of the cross government loneliness strategy; 'A connected society: a strategy for tackling loneliness'</p>	
<p>Other Suggestions for development</p>		
<p>Feedback received:</p> <p>Several users said that they would benefit from more granular geographic data, ideally by local authority. Currently this is not available due to small sample sizes however we recognise that given the nature of the survey, local area estimates would be beneficial to a wide range of users.</p> <p>Some users also said they would like more opportunities for collaboration similar to the user event.</p>	<p>What we've done in 2018:</p> <p>We have been investigating the feasibility of using modelling techniques to provide small area/ local authority estimates. This work is in the initial scoping phase which involves working with the Office for National Statistics small area estimates team.</p> <p>We have liaised with a small number of key stakeholders to establish the key measures to focus on for initial test analysis, with the intention to expand the measures used once we are satisfied the methodology is appropriate for the Community Life Survey.</p>	<p>Next steps for 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore the option of using statistical techniques to provide small area/ local authority estimates. • Plan for a user engagement event in late 2019 to reflect on survey developments and progress.