

Progress Report

The start of the autumn was dominated by anticipation of the Comprehensive Spending Review and is now finishing with reports of international financial difficulties. We live in difficult times. Spending cuts are being considered at our local levels whilst we are seeing the demise of some strategic measures and organisations put in place to inform us of our performance. Simple and robust views of how our services are performing are needed to measure where we are now and where those often painful decisions will take us. It was the need for those simple and robust views that prompted local authorities to embark on the NHT Survey project in 2007. Many colleagues have commented recently that 'its time has come' to help guide us through the minefields ahead.

But customer views are one dimension. Business people (including Lord Sugar!) will tell you that that cost and quality are the two other dimensions you need on the weighing scales if you are to get your balance right; hence the NHT's work to add value to the survey data by bringing in those cost and quality dimensions. These dimensions are fundamental to driving and understanding the outcomes of any efficiency initiative.

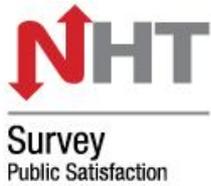
The DfT has recognised the challenge in front of us and was pro-active in seeking to provide help for the sector. This is coming in the form of a Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (reportedly pronounced 'haich Mep'). The idea is clearly a good one and DfT colleagues are to be congratulated in winning funding support through the CSR to take this forward.



The NHT will be actively working to support the DfT initiative and to help ensure its benefits are maximised so the NHT membership and the sector more generally can do the best possible job for the public, whatever resources are to hand.

There is more on the HMEP in the CQC Network update on Page 5, but watch this space, the programme is likely to develop quickly and the NHT will do it best to keep everyone informed and involved.

Peter Radford, Somerset CC, Chair: NHT Survey Committee



The 2010 Public Satisfaction data is now freely available for analysis on the web site www.nhtsurvey.org. The statistics for the database are staggering making this easily the largest and most comprehensive source of comparable data for Public Satisfaction with Highways and Transport having over 66 million records taking up 20gb of disk space!

NHT Survey Database Statistics	
Number of records	66,568,462
Disk Space Used	20 gb
Number of Scorecards	184,426
Answers to individual questions	31,779,483
Answers to multiple choice questions	34,423,459
Total Respondents	180,988

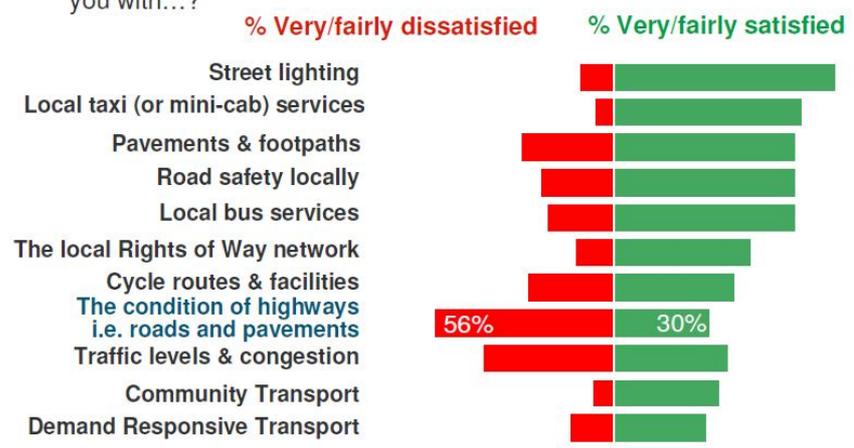
Lorraine Brown, Executive Director of Environment at Southampton City council recently said of the NHT Survey:

"We very much value being part of the NHT Survey and have found the resulting information from both years extremely useful. We are all in testing times and so data that helps drive performance and policies to match our plans are critical."

Given the last two harsh winters and consistent media coverage of potholes, it is no surprise that the question regarding Condition of Highways i.e. roads and pavements revealed the highest rate of dissatisfaction. The following slide from a presentation given by Ben Marshall of Ipsos MORI at the recent NHT Conference in London clearly demonstrates this, but also shows that levels of satisfaction with other services such as street lighting is good.

NHTS 2010: condition = worst

Q2. Thinking about roads and transport locally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...?



Ipsos MORI Source: NHTS 2010

Base: 81,164 adults across England & Wales, June-July 2010, %s based on all answering

The reporting available via the web site is very impressive; a huge amount of work has been done to provide participating Authorities with loads of information for very little effort. New features include icons on the Survey Results page that you can click to go straight to the relevant section e.g. Data Mapping

'Authority', 'Regional' and 'Authority Type' dashboards

Using the tabs (see image below) you can access graphs and reports for each theme. **Please remember to scroll down** as there are a number of reports available against each heading. In some instances you are also offered the ability to drill down for further information. Please see example below, drilling down in this instance presents you with a Highways Maintenance League Table of all 95 authorities..

Rank	Name	Avg
1	RB Kings Ingham & Chittas	61.06
2	Glynedd	57.55
3	Isle of Anglesey	57.55
4	Sirough of Poole	55.5
5	Nottingham City	55.59
6	Gateshead Council	55.59
7	Newcastle City	55.59
8	LG Wokington	54.61
9	Conwy	54.76
10	Milton Keynes	53.75
11	LG Southwark	53.71
12	Portsmouth City	53.65
13	LG Lambeth	53.57
14	Section on Tees	53.59
15	Cheshire	53.07

The latest report to be introduced by request is a Count of Responses by Question which should assist in determining statistical reliability. Go to Survey results 2010 > Who Responded > Counts by Question.

The NHT Autumn Conference 28/09/10

This year's conference at One Great George Street, London took the climate as its theme. It included dissemination of the Winter Resilience Review by David Quarmby CBE, chair of the RAC Foundation who was commissioned by the then Secretary of State for Transport to undertake the review following the two cold winters of 2008/09 and 2009/10. The review concentrated on the lessons learned from the last two winters and the salt crisis.

The key issues of the report were in regard to salt and the supply chain:

- Recommendation for next winter: strategic buffer stock of 0.25m tonnes, managed by HA on behalf of nation
- And review at end December whether more is needed
- DfT: systematic year-round process of monitoring and disseminating salt stocks and movements
- Already identified shortfall of UK production capacity to meet highway authorities re-stocking plans for November 2010
- Final Report will consider and recommend action for longer term measures for the salt supply chain

Matthew Page, an independent consultant specialising in walking and cycling as modes of transport, transport appraisal techniques and greenhouse gas emissions from transport, laid out challenges for a low carbon future.

- 1. Getting people to take the problem seriously**
- 2. Increase the supply of 'green' electricity.** Nuclear or renewable, to make electricity less carbon intensive and to increase supply to cater for transport demand.
- 3. Getting cycling and walking taken seriously** by the Public, Politicians and Practitioners

Matthew said: "There tends to be a focus on bigger, longer distance, more expensive and more energy intensive modes of transport but about the same numbers of trips are made by surface rail as are made by cycle, even at the moment. Walking is already very important and cycling could be much more important. Walking and cycling also tick other important policy boxes

- Public health benefits from exercise
- Sociable/community enhancing modes of transport
- Cause little danger to others

Three case studies were presented. The first by Somerset County Council on how they coped when it snowed.....a lot! The second by Nottingham City Council having achieved the highest Public Satisfaction scores in the 2010 survey, and the third by Gwynedd Council, fielding some of the best satisfaction scores in all aspects of highway maintenance.

The NHT competition winner this year was Babar Ismail of Mouchel who put forward an innovative

idea for alerting the public to major road/bridge works by using postcards instead of the usual letter in a brown envelope that is often destined for the bin before it has been opened.

The winner of the NHT Highway Works Benchmarking Division award this year was Lancashire County Council and the NHT Highways Design award went to North Yorkshire County Council.

measure 2 improve (m2i) is keen that all Authorities participating in the Public Satisfaction Survey get the most out of the data collected on their behalf. Andrew Willis of m2i demonstrated the new reporting available and how easy it is to access maps and reports.

m2i are also holding a series of workshops around the regions – please see ‘Dates for your Diary’ at the end of this report.

All the presentations are available to view or download from the NHT Survey web site www.nhtsurvey.org. Go to the ‘Library’ and then click on ‘Presentations’ in the left hand menu.



At the Conference Peter Radford of Somerset County Council and Chair of the CQC Working Party gave an update on the CQC saying: “The Dft is proposing new work on a Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP). It sought ideas in July/August. The NHT proposed using the NHT Survey and CQC methodology to identify and validate existing efficient services and to provide baselines and benchmarks to measure efficiencies going forward”

The DfT said they received 40 submissions from the sector related to the HMEP in the summer.

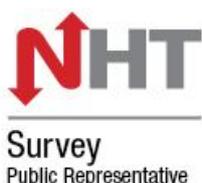
STOP PRESS! - As noted in the introduction the DfT proposals for the HMEP has been provided with funding in the October CSR to support its proposals. The intended work streams are being developed under the following headings:

1. Efficient operational delivery
2. Business Improvement
3. Capability and Communications
4. Research and Data Management

The NHT is working with the DfT so the NHT Survey data can be deployed to help customer views inform this work going forward. Clearly the NHT Survey is very well placed to determine customer baselines and benchmarks used to help identify good practice and measure efficiency.

Localism, Responsive, Transparent and Accountable – the NHT survey helps us answer all the DCLG’s challenges”

Peter’s presentation is also available to download from the web site and includes mini case studies from several authorities who saw strong improvement in their NHT results in 2010.



We have been asked to extend the period for returns to accommodate Parish Councils meeting following the summer recess. We are reviewing the reporting options and will shortly advise participating authorities when their reports are available.



The importance and value of benchmarking performance data is made clear within the National Infrastructure Plan. The NHT Highways Design Club exists to provide

a valuable means of benchmarking performance within Highways design projects nationally to our members, which include Highways Authorities, Government Agencies and private sector consultants and contractors.

We need to ensure that we are providing our members, with the information and services they need. We will do this by understanding and aligning the Club with Government and Industry requirements, setting out proposals for improving the Club, and encouraging and eliciting comment / feedback on these proposals from the members.



The Highway Works Division meets regularly to review benchmarking data and to develop our performance. We support the Public Satisfaction Survey and the Customer, Quality and Cost Analysis developed through the NHT Network. In the light of the budget cuts we will be working together to consider the effectiveness of our work and to share good practice.



South West

Members of NHT South West have recently submitted all their project, cost and comparator data for the region. The Annual Financial Report for the region is in the process of being completed and thanks to the reporting capabilities of the NHT Network, the South West Highways Service

Improvement Group will, for the first time, be including regional maps alongside performance graphs. The report will be issued to members by the end of November. Anyone interested in what the South West Group are doing should contact richard.whiting@measure2improve.com



North East

NHT North East have collected some model cost job data and using this data and the results from the NHT public satisfaction survey, hope to identify and publish good and alternate practice case studies. The North East region is currently working on delivery of Regional Frameworks and it is hoped

through this club that they will identify and share benchmarking information on areas such as Highways Surfacing and Highways Consultancy. Anyone interested in what the North East Group are doing should contact richard.whiting@measure2improve.com

Any Questions?

You will find a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section on the NHT Network web site

<http://www.nhtnetwork.org/Content.aspx?36> , but if your query is not covered there please get in touch with Jennie Simons at NHT Network email: info@nhtnetwork.org Tel: 01443 832163



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