

# Progress Report

## Chairman's Introduction

The economic squeeze and efficiency programme means the need for the industry to work together is increasing. At the same time, the mechanics of doing that (eg investing in collaborative work, attending joint meetings and seminars etc) becomes more difficult. Travel and training budgets are being squeezed and anything that might be considered 'nice to do' can fall prey to the ethos of only doing things perceived as 'must do'.

It is cheering that, with this backdrop, the Government is investing in the Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP). There will be more of this below but, with this the biggest area of investment in our sector, it is clear we must work together. It is pleasing that public satisfaction is viewed by HMEP as a crucial outcome just as it is by the NHT. Perhaps the NHT Survey, and all the valuable benchmarking and service improvement opportunities that spring from it, will duly be seen as a 'must do'! In the meantime, we have seen an understandable drop in take up of the Survey this year.

Can I urge those authorities that are taking a year off to keep a close eye on the progress of the 2011 Survey, the progress of HMEP and the NHT's contributions to it? Even if your authority is not participating this year we all expect there will be a lot to learn from the data and service improvement activities, of those that are.

With that customary plug for the Survey may I also promote the annual NHT competition! The details are below but with endorsement and support from the HMEP there are even more good reasons to get involved this year!

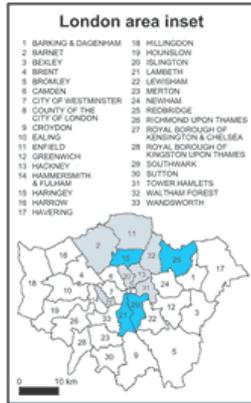
### Peter Radford, Somerset County Council



**Survey**  
Public Satisfaction

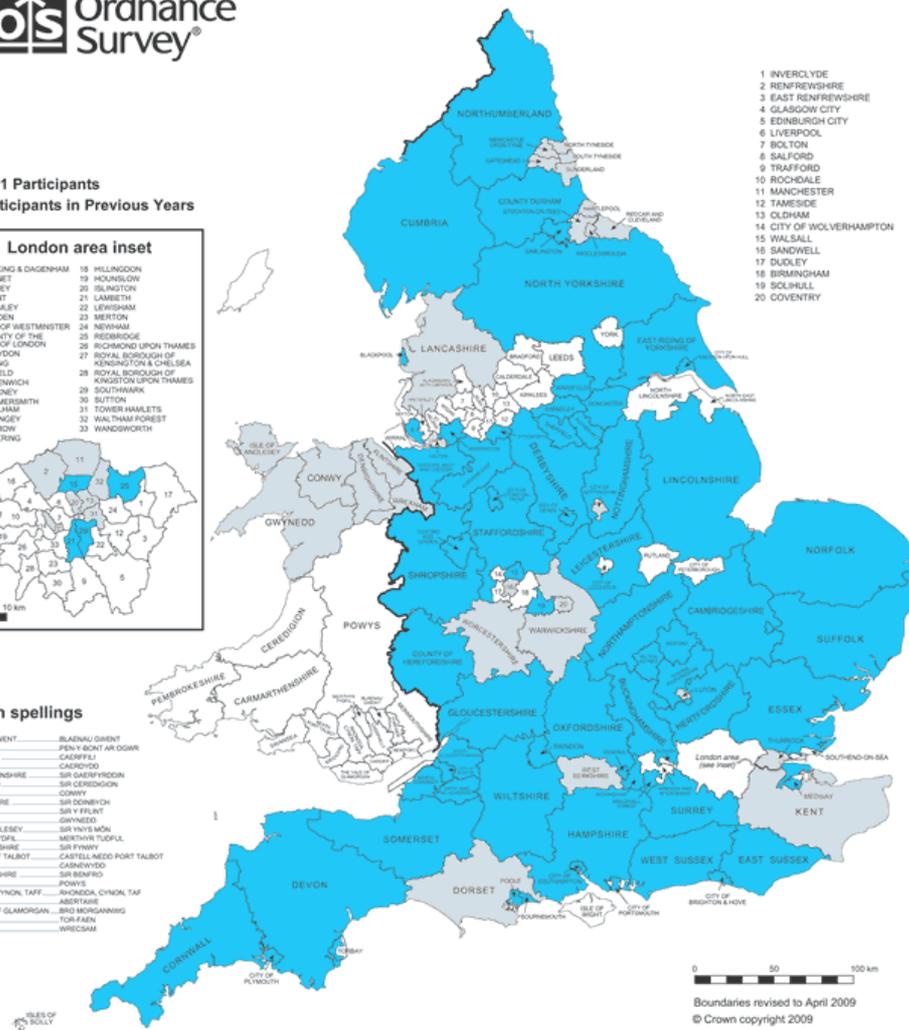
Thanks to Ipsos MORI's (IM) patience, a couple of authorities were given a bit more time to put together business plans, which enabled them to take part again in the Public Satisfaction survey. The final total for 2011 is 70 Councils including four new to the survey – Bracknell Forest, Brighton & Hove City Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council and Medway Council. East Sussex is taking part again after a year out. This year's map is shown below and a full list of participating authorities is available on the NHT Public Satisfaction Survey web site [www.nhtsurvey.org](http://www.nhtsurvey.org)

■ 2011 Participants  
■ Participants in Previous Years



**Welsh spellings**

BLAENAU GWENT	BLAENAU GWENT
BREIDENL	PEN Y BONT AR DDWR
CARSPENL	CARSPENL
GARDIFF	CARDIFF
CARMARTHENSHIRE	SIR CARMARTHEN
CEREDIGION	SIR CEREDIGION
CONWY	SIR CONWY
DENBIGHSHIRE	SIR DENBIGH
FLINTSHIRE	SIR FLINT
GWYNEDD	SIR GWYNEDD
ISLE OF ANGLESEY	SIR YNY'S MON
MERTHYR TYDFIL	MERTHYR TYDFIL
MONTGOMERYSHIRE	SIR FYRWY
NORTH POYNT TALBOT	CARTELL MDD PORT TALBOT
NEWPORT	CARNEWYD
PENBRYNEN	SIR BRYNEN
POWYS	POWYS
RHONDDA CYNON TAF	RHONDDA CYNON TAF
SWANSEA	SWANSEA
THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN	BRO MORGANNING
TORFAEN	TORFAEN
WREXHAM	WREXHAM



- 1 INVERCLYDE
- 2 RENFREWSHIRE
- 3 EAST RENFREWSHIRE
- 4 GLASGOW CITY
- 5 EDENBURGH CITY
- 6 LIVERPOOL
- 7 BOLTON
- 8 SALFORD
- 9 TRAFFORD
- 10 ROCHDALE
- 11 MANCHESTER
- 12 TAMESIDE
- 13 OLDHAM
- 14 CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON
- 15 WALSALL
- 16 SANDWELL
- 17 DUDLEY
- 18 BIRMINGHAM
- 19 SOLIHULL
- 20 COVENTRY

The survey is almost complete! IM started sending out the first batch of questionnaires on 20<sup>th</sup> June and the second batch went out on 4<sup>th</sup> July. Response rates have not yet been finalised as completed questionnaires are still being received. A suggested press release was sent to all participants and it will be interesting to see whether the use of social networks by individual Councils e.g. Twitter, Face book etc. will impact on response rates.

The results of the survey will be available on the web site at the end of September and members should receive their KBI report in the post at about the same time.



Our last Progress Report mentioned the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme that was launched on 6<sup>th</sup> April by the Transport Minister Norman Baker MP.

HMEP are continuing to develop their work programme, and have recently written to all Chief Executives of English local highway authorities to seek their views on how HMEP should develop. They are also seeking more people to get involved in the programme, including the **Research and Data Management** workgroup, chaired by Steve Kent of Cheshire West & Cheshire, that was mentioned in the last NHT Update.

If you want to get involved in HMEP then contact details are available on their website or you can email the programme at [highwaysefficiency@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysefficiency@dft.gsi.gov.uk). HMEP also regularly send out news

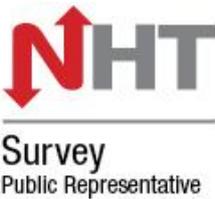
bulletins with the latest developments about the Programme, and you can be included in these by sending an email with the title '**Updates**' to the same email address.

Finally, under the **Useful Links** section HMEP have now included descriptions of the NHT, the Public Satisfaction Survey, the Customers Quality Cost (CQC) Report and the Performance Benchmarking Network.

More details of HMEP can be found on their website, which has recently moved from the address previously quoted to <http://www.dft.gov.uk/topics/local-authorities/hmep/>.



The CQC Reports have been of particular interest to HMEP and it is hoped that further development will take place to improve the reporting. One of the regional Groups intends to collate its own cost and quality data which will be reported alongside the Public Satisfaction Survey data, which should provide a much more accurate view.



The Public Representative (PR) Survey seeks to compare the views of elected members and Ward/Parish Councils with the views of the public. Following consultation with Councils that took part in the survey last year it was highlighted that the PR survey was too long and, because respondents did not provide details of their location, it was not possible to map the results.

The 2011 Survey will ask the importance, satisfaction and priorities questions but will then concentrate on the Highway Maintenance questions only, as this was the key issue for the public in the 2010 survey. Authorities have the option of two levels of service this year.

The Standard Service provides two links (URLs) to the online questionnaire, one for Councillors and one for Town or Parish Councils. Participating Authorities simply email the links to the appropriate people and the data is returned directly to the Public Representative Survey database for further analysis.

The Advanced Service offers the opportunity to compare the answers of Councillors with those of the public by ward or district and, if the information is pre-supplied, we can also provide results by political allegiance.

More information about the 2011 Public Representative Survey can be found on the web site [www.nhtprsurvey.org](http://www.nhtprsurvey.org) should you wish to take part please contact Jennie Simons (contact details below).



A joint Annual General Meeting of the Highway Works and Highways Design Benchmarking Divisions of the NHT was held on 21<sup>st</sup> June. The meeting was attended by more than 20 members representing both divisions. There have been two separate benchmarking 'clubs' since 2000 when they were first set up by the Five Counties Peer Group. Over the past four or five years there have been moves to align the clubs, with joint AGM's and shared conferences.

In the past year more questions have been asked, by both members and external organisations such as the HTMA and HMEP, as to why there is a need to have two separate clubs. Members want to be able to take a holistic approach to the measurement and reporting of schemes from procurement through design, construction and future maintenance and improvement and this proves difficult when data is held in separate databases.

Much of the discussion at the AGM revolved around cost if the clubs were merged. Traditionally members have paid a subscription to each club, and were given a discount if they were members of both. measure2improve, the club administrators, are reviewing a reduction in fees from the date of next renewal, which would give members access to all the measures from both clubs in a single database. New members would be expected to pay a one-off joining fee of £500 in addition to the annual subscription. A vote to merge the clubs was carried unanimously. Final details of the new fees will be available shortly, but no member will pay more than they are paying now and many members will see a considerable drop in their membership fees.



## 2011 CONFERENCE

This year's Conference is being held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at One Great George Street, Westminster, London. HMEP are supporting the conference, which takes as its theme '**Improving Public Satisfaction with Highway Maintenance**'. We are delighted that John Dowie, Director for Local Transport at the Department for Transport has kindly agreed to provide the key note address. We anticipate a very useful mix of presentations and case studies which has made the NHT conferences such a success in the past. The agenda is being finalised and will be available shortly. In the meantime if you would like to book your place please click [here](#) for more information and access to the flier/booking form.

## 2011 COMPETITION

*"Identifying, Delivering and Proving a significant efficiency/service improvement in any area of highway maintenance"*

This year's competition is being run jointly with HMEP. As in previous years the competition is open to all but with emphasis on entries from those in their early career year's, particularly the under 25's. The Department for Transport are sponsoring the first prize of **£500.00** and this year the judging panel will include Mostaque Ahmed, Chair of the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme. The runner up will receive a prize of **£150.00**. The winner, or winning team, will be invited to present at the NHT/HMEP Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> October and will also have the opportunity of presenting their ideas to the National HMEP Programme Board

To enter the competition please click [here](#) or visit [www.nhtnetwork.org](http://www.nhtnetwork.org). The closing date for entries is 10<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

## HTMA

The Club is in discussion with the HTMA Improvement and Efficiency Working Group about possible collaboration. HTMA has a stated objective to define and promote a consistent set of core highways performance indicators within a defined measurement framework, this objective aligns with NHT Benchmarking Club objectives and a strategic partnership is under consideration.

## NHT in the Regions

If anyone would like further information on regional group activities or to find out how to start up a new regional group, please contact [richard.whiting@measure2improve.com](mailto: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](mailto:info@nhtnetwork.org) Tel: 01443 832163

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