

# **Living in Lancashire Wave 25**



**Research Title:** Living in Lancashire Wave 25

## **Objectives:**

This wave of the Living in Lancashire panel focuses on:

- usage of public transport and car sharing and reasons behind these choices;
- preferences for how transport information is provided;
- awareness of Trading Standards; and
- looked at the trading standards problems people have experienced and how they dealt with them.

**Methodology:** mailed to all panel members (3031 residents), with a response rate of 80% (2430 questionnaires were returned)

**Conducted by:** Corporate Research and Intelligence team, Lancashire County Council

**Fieldwork:** 03/06/09 to 10/07/09

## **Summary Results**

### **Transport information**

#### *Transport usage*

- The most regularly used methods of travelling around were cars (74% used daily) and walking (65% used daily). Out of the public transport options listed the bus was used five times more frequently than the train. There are difficulties in encouraging rural communities and more economically prosperous people onto public transport as they tend to use cars more frequently.
- A quarter of respondents said that nothing prevents them from using public transport more. This is higher among people who have no access to a household vehicle (57%), are over 60 (46%), or live in council or housing association property (41%).
- The most common replies about what prevents people from using public transport more was the length of time needed to make the trip (50%), the high cost (34%) and the infrequency of travel (31%). Respondents from a BME background were more likely to say that unreliability (45%), a lack of information (25%) and difficulty using timetables (18%) prevented them using public transport more.

#### *Public transport information*

- Public transport users are more satisfied with public transport information overall compared to all respondents (54% versus 49% satisfied). And satisfaction with information also increases for people who don't have a car in their household (75% satisfied).

- Most people found it easy to access the information they needed and to understand it (78% and 80% very or fairly easy), with regular users saying it was easier to find and understand.
- Half of respondents use public transport information very infrequently or not at all (25% for both). Only one in ten people use it on a weekly basis, and one in six uses it on a monthly basis. People without access to a vehicle, or who live in council or housing association property, use transport information more regularly.
- Printed and online information were the most used sources of transport information (55% and 46% respectively). These are also the preferred methods, though online information was most preferred (53%). Real-time information is also more preferred than it is currently used. Printed information is used and preferred more, by older people, whereas online information is both used and preferred more by the younger age groups and the higher socio-economic groups.
- A quarter of respondents don't like electronic access to information (27%). The internet was the most preferred form of access (65%), with mobile forms of electronic communication being less popular except among people from a BME background and younger people.
- Preferred places to get printed timetable information were bus stations and stops (52% and 48% respectively). Many also liked information through their door (44%) especially popular among younger people and people from a BME background.
- The information considered most useful were bus routes displayed on printed maps (78% useful). Online transport information specific to the area and journey planners on the internet were also considered useful by at least two-thirds of respondents (69% and 67% respectively). More people thought that internet access on mobile phones was not useful (35%) than thought it would be useful.

#### *Awareness of travel schemes*

- Awareness of TravelWise Lancashire is fairly low (22% have heard of it), though it is higher in South Ribble (39%). The majority of awareness resulted from press and other media (50%) or from leaflets and promotional items (49%).
- A similar proportion had heard of Traveline (25%), higher among people who don't have a vehicle in their household (39%). Of the people who have heard of Traveline, most people have not contacted the service (47%). The most common way of contacting Traveline was via their website (31%) or by telephone (24%). Less than one in five people use the service regularly, most using it as an ad hoc reference for journey planning. Those who have used Traveline were satisfied with the service they received (85% satisfied), and found the information useful (90%).

- Most people don't share a car (66%), though more people do as a driver (18%) than as a passenger (13%) at the moment. Three in ten people who don't car share would consider it as a driver or passenger in the future. The main reason given for not car sharing in the future was that it wasn't convenient for them (51%). Another common reason was a lack of knowledge about who to car share with (27%), which presents an opportunity because this is something that the county council can influence through the car sharing website.
- The majority of respondents had not heard of shared wheels (94%), even fewer people had actually visited the site (2%). A significant number would consider registering on the website to help them find someone to car share with (18%). Of the handful of people (26) who have used the site, everyone thought it was easy to use.

## **Trading Standards**

- Three in five respondents felt informed about their rights as a consumer (60% informed), though the majority are only fairly well informed (53%).
- Respondents are less aware of the county council's Trading Standards service than they are of their consumer rights (58% had only heard of it but that's all, or never heard of it), though older respondents are more likely to know more about the service. This measure has fallen since the last survey in 2005 when fewer people said they hadn't heard of the service (8%, compared to 16% on this survey).
- Areas of work that people were most aware of are fair trading (66%), protecting children and young people (65%) and preventing illegal trading practices (60%). One in eight respondents weren't sure what Trading Standards does, more so among younger respondents and people from a BME background.
- People preferred information to be sent to them in written communications like leaflets (57%) and local newspapers (51%). Very few people didn't want information on trading standards. Preference for the internet was higher among the highest socio-economic groups and among younger respondents.
- Most people expect it to be fairly easy to find information or get advice on their consumer rights (46%), though a third did expect it to be fairly difficult (33%).
- The majority of respondents have not experienced a consumer rights or trading standards problem (57%), people with a disability or living in council housing were more likely to have experienced problems. The problem respondents had experienced the most was around fair trading (33%).
- Those people having a problem, a third go unreported (34%). When they were reported, respondents mostly contacted Trading Standards (31%) or sorted it directly with the trader (20%).
- The majority of problems do get resolved (41% all resolved, 25% some resolved). However, a quarter of problems remain unresolved (23%).

- Respondents' priorities for Trading Standards over the next three years are to protect older and vulnerable people (55%) and children and young people (47%), and to prevent illegal trading practices (44%).