

# 1 Introduction to the Survey

## 1.1 Introduction

### The Scottish Household Survey is:

- a face-to-face survey of a sample of people in private residences in Scotland
- interviewer-administered in people's homes
- voluntary
- Scotland-wide; it covers all 32 local authorities
- three surveys in one: Transport and Travel in Scotland Survey, the Scottish House Condition Survey as well as the Scottish Household Survey
- long-running since 1999
- wide-ranging in topics covered, including evidence on the physical condition of Scotland's homes
- a provider of robust evidence on the composition, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of private households and individuals

The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) asks questions of a random sample of people in private residences in Scotland. This current report summarises the answers to those questions. Questions are asked face-to-face by an interviewer in homes all over Scotland. Participation is voluntary, and is important in helping us make representative estimates for Scotland.

The survey runs continuously. The survey started in 1999 and up to 2011 followed a fairly consistent survey design. From 2012 onwards, the survey was substantially redesigned to include elements of the Scottish House Condition Survey<sup>1</sup> (SHCS) including the follow-up physical survey component. The SHS is now essentially three surveys in one: Transport and Travel in Scotland Survey (TATIS), the SHCS as well as the SHS. The survey is run through a consortium led by Ipsos MORI.

The SHS is designed to provide reliable and up-to-date information on the composition, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of private households and individuals, both nationally and at a sub-national level and to examine the physical condition of Scotland's homes. It covers a wide range of topics to allow links to be made between different policy areas.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.scot/SHCS](http://www.gov.scot/SHCS)

The specific aims of the survey are to:

- Meet central and local Government needs for priority policy relevant data across a broad range of topics (including needs for continuing time-series of data collected by the SHS and SHCS previously);
- Be understandable and useful to stakeholders and so lead to a high level of buy-in and use of the SHS;
- Have built in flexibility to respond to different data needs regarding geography and frequency (e.g. to provide some data annually at Local authority level, and some biennially at national level), and changes to these requirements over time;
- Align with other surveys and data vehicles (in particular the Scottish Health Survey and Scottish Crime and Justice Survey);
- Produce high quality data in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics<sup>2</sup> so as to provide data that is suitable for the production of National Statistics publications in a cost effective way;
- Permit disaggregation of information both geographically and in terms of population sub-groups (such as families with children or households in the social rented sector);
- Allow the relationships between social variables within households to be examined. This will support cross-analysis on a range of issues;
- Allow detailed follow-up surveys of sub-samples from the main survey sample, if required.

Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) is being used to collect the survey data. This has a number of important advantages over 'pen and paper' interviewing techniques, including faster interviews, automatic edit checks and a quicker flow of information from the survey interviewer to the survey database.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/)

## 1.2 Reporting

The SHS results have been reported **in a series of annual reports between 1999 and 2018**<sup>3</sup>. The annual report is designed to act as an introduction to the survey and to present and interpret some of the key policy-relevant results at a national level. From 2017, an accompanying SHS 'Key Findings' report has also been published. **Complementary local-authority tables** will be published soon after. Findings from the physical survey component and other house condition information will be published through a separate **SHCS 2018 Key Findings** report usually scheduled for publication later in the year. Findings from the SHS travel diary are published in **Transport and Travel in Scotland (TATIS)**, usually released around a similar time to the SHS annual report.

Whilst this publication focuses on a number of key results, the SHS collects a wide array of information and so the SHS Project Team can be contacted for any additional analysis requests or enquiries<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, SHS data is published through the Open Data Platform<sup>5</sup>, which provides a range of official statistics about Scotland for information and re-use. In 2018, the Scottish Household Survey Interactive Dashboard<sup>6</sup> was produced for the first time which links to the Open Data Platform. This dashboard aims to help Local Authorities more easily access results. The dashboard provides the ability for anyone to compare variables over time and between Local Authorities and allows users to choose a local authority and examine trends affecting their local area. It also contains maps showing which LAs are significantly higher/lower than Scotland. For more guidance on how to use and analyse the data within, see the associated learning tutorial which contains a series of questions to answer by using the interactive dashboard.

Further technical information on the SHS will also be published through the **Technical Reports**. The Technical Reports comprise of two documents; one providing details of the **questionnaire**<sup>7</sup> used during 2018 fieldwork; and a more detailed technical report detailing **the methodology and fieldwork outcomes**<sup>8</sup>. From 2018, the Technical Report is now accompanied by a visual summary.

A number of other Scottish Government (SG) publications covering previous years are also available. A comprehensive listing of all publications is available from the SG website. For ease, recent SHS publications are also listed below<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationAnnual>

<sup>4</sup> [shs@gov.scot](mailto:shs@gov.scot) 0131 244 1685

<sup>5</sup> <https://statistics.gov.scot/home>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationAnnual/SHSDashboard2017>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationQuestionnaire>

<sup>8</sup> [www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationMethodology](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationMethodology)

<sup>9</sup> [www.gov.scot/SHSPublications](http://www.gov.scot/SHSPublications)

## **2017 SHS Publications (published in September 2018)**

Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2017 Scottish Household Survey

Scottish Household Survey: Key Findings Summary Report

Scottish Household Survey: Data Comic

Scottish Household Survey: Inequalities Data Comic

Scottish Household Survey: Climate Change Topic Report

2017 Local Authority Tables

Bespoke Report - Fife

Local Authority Services and Performance Dashboard

Scottish Household Survey: Behind the Numbers 2017

Scottish Household Survey: Methodology and Fieldwork Outcomes 2017

## **Glossary and annexes**

Guidance on using the information in the report and a glossary with detailed definitions of some of the key terms are included as annexes in this report. Additional annexes present results on the main classificatory variables used in this report and provide guidance on assessing confidence intervals and the statistical significance of the results.

### **1.2.1 Other Scottish Government reporting on SHS data**

Other SG reports also use substantial amounts of SHS data. A couple of examples include:

#### **Social Tenants in Scotland, 2017<sup>10</sup>**

This is the annual statistical compendium publication on Social Tenants in Scotland. It presents an overview of social tenants and social rented housing in Scotland for the year 2017, covering information on stock, households, housing flows, and rents and incomes. It includes trend data for earlier years and comparisons to other housing tenures and to other UK countries where possible. It is based on analysis of a range of existing Official Statistics data sources such as the SHS, the Family Resources Survey (FRS), and Scottish Government Housing Statistics, along with figures (not Official Statistics) from the Scottish Housing Regulator Social Housing Charter Indicator Data.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-tenants-scotland-2017/>

## Child poverty measurement framework

Data from the SHS is used in the child poverty measurement framework. The baseline report for the framework was published on 26 June 2019, as an annex to the Child Poverty Progress Report<sup>11</sup>. Another annex provides ethnicity breakdowns for each of the indicators in the framework, where possible.

### 1.2.2 Additional SHS use in performance frameworks, funding allocations and modelling

The SHS directly measures almost one fifth of the National Indicators in Scotland Performs (see 1.2.3 for more detail) and it underpins large shares of many other published performance frameworks. This includes: half the Housing and Regeneration Outcomes Framework, a quarter of the Child Poverty Measurement Framework, half the Active Scotland Framework indicators, and key satisfaction with public services indicators in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)<sup>12</sup>.

SHS is the only source of Fuel Poverty evidence (which combines household incomes with dwelling characteristics and energy efficiency modelling) and the only nationally representative source of data on energy efficiency, house conditions and quality. This evidence is used extensively in the design, targeting and funding allocations for SG energy efficiency programmes.

The Travel Diary component of the SHS is the only data source on personal travel patterns, which underpins analysis of future transport needs and economic business cases that are used for allocating billions of pounds of funding for national and local transport infrastructure investment projects.

Transport and Housing Energy Efficiency data are crucial for informing carbon emissions, Climate Change policies<sup>13</sup> and progress towards Scotland's climate change targets.

SHS data is also a crucial element of National Records of Scotland (NRS) Household Projections<sup>14</sup>, which SG requires Local Authorities (LAs) to use at the core of their Housing Plans. Billions of Affordable Housing Funding is allocated across LAs using these projections. Planning essential services such as housing, schools and hospitals are based on NRS annual household projections.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-first-year-progress-report-2018-19/pages/6/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/>

<sup>13</sup> climate change Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP) or, as it is more formally known, Low Carbon Scotland <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00513102.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/households/household-projections>

Health data is used to calculate the Healthy Life Expectancy element of the Population Purpose Target, which is widely used, for example in projecting future costs to the NHS.

The environment and land use questions, together with data on the environment and wildlife categories from the volunteering question, provide a third of the Land Use Strategy indicators.

Neighbourhood perception, anti-social behaviour and supportive communities questions are used as Justice indicators.

SHS data is being used as part of current social security benefits delivery analytical work to model eligibility for winter fuel payments.

SHS data is also needed by Transport Scotland to conduct transport modelling and appraisals of major infrastructure decisions.

Housing data is used to determine the size of the Private Rented Sector and characteristics of households living across all tenures.

Going forward, the SHS can also provide evidence for new policy priorities, for example to develop and measure community empowerment and local democracy, to continue to understand and address inequalities across Scotland, and to further model eligibility for specific benefits, and changes to eligibility, as part of the SG taking on responsibility for the delivery of social security.

The survey is much valued by, and important to the work of Local Government and other agencies, who rely on it to understand their local areas, for benchmarking and to develop and monitor Single Outcome Agreements.

As well as enabling LA results to be published on an annual basis, the large sample size of the SHS enables important equality analysis to be conducted, including for those on low incomes and/or in poverty, and by protected equality groups, as well as urban/rural breakdowns. The large sample size is also needed to measure other rarely occurring characteristics in the population, including the true frequency of discrimination and harassment as this is not picked up by other data sources due to under reporting.

The survey is heavily utilised by research and academic institutions across Scotland and the UK who can download the data from the UK Data Archive or via specially prepared micro datasets. An example would be the use of SHCS data to model housing energy efficiency options as part of both the National Housing Model<sup>15</sup> and the TIMES climate change model<sup>16</sup>, and use of these models by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC)<sup>17</sup> when considering sector contributions to their mandatory reporting on Scotland's progress against its legally binding climate change targets.

### 1.2.3 National Performance Framework

The SHS is the source of information on 14 of the 81 national indicators in the refreshed SG **National Performance Framework**<sup>18</sup>. The SHS Annual Report provides estimates for 12 of these national indicators, an overview of these is in Table 1.1. One of the 14 indicators, state of historic sites, is based on the SHCS data, which will be reported on separately through the above-mentioned SHCS Key Findings report. The final indicator, journeys by active travel, will also be reported on separately by Transport Scotland within their **2018 Transport and Travel in Scotland report**<sup>19</sup> which will also include the SHS Travel Diary 2018.

**Table 1.1: National indicators reported in the SHS report**

National Indicator	Topic	Chapter
Satisfaction with housing	Housing	Chapter 3
Perceptions of local area	Neighbourhoods	Chapter 4
Places to interact	Neighbourhoods	Chapter 4
Social capital	Neighbourhoods	Chapter 4
Loneliness	Neighbourhoods	(Composite Indicator)
<i>Public services treat people with dignity and respect</i>	<i>Local services</i>	Chapter 4
Quality of public services	Local services	<i>Indicator in progress</i>
Influence over local decisions	Local services	Chapter 9
Access to green and blue space	Local services	Chapter 9
Visits to the outdoors	Environment	Chapter 10
Attendance at cultural events or places of culture	Environment	Chapter 10
Participation in a cultural activity	Culture	Chapter 12
	Culture	Chapter 12

<sup>15</sup> <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/957eadbe-43b6-4d8d-b931-8594cb346ecd/national-household-model>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.parliament.scot/S5\\_Environment/General%20Documents/20160922\\_Scottish\\_TIMES\\_model\\_-\\_an\\_overview.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S5_Environment/General%20Documents/20160922_Scottish_TIMES_model_-_an_overview.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>

<sup>18</sup> Information on the suite of indicators which comprise the performance framework can be found at <http://www.nationalperformance.gov.scot>

<sup>19</sup> [www.transportscotland.gov.uk/analysis/statistics/publications/transport-and-travel-in-scotland-previous-editions](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/analysis/statistics/publications/transport-and-travel-in-scotland-previous-editions)

### 1.3 Comparability with Other Sources

**In some cases the SHS is not the official source of statistics on a particular topic, such as income, employment or housing.** The survey collects information on these topics to select the data of particular groups for further analysis or for use as background variables when analysing other topics. **The results are included in order to set the context for, and aid interpretation of the remaining chapters.** Where results are not the official source, this is indicated in the chapter introduction.

The SG conducts several major population surveys that are used to inform the policy debate in Scotland and in some instances, the surveys can be complementary. The Long-term Survey Strategy 2018-2022<sup>20</sup>, of which the SHS is a central element, is designed to improve the way population surveys are run and to increase the availability and use of survey data, both at a national and local level. A guide is available providing more information on Scotland's surveys<sup>21</sup>.

There are also a number of Great British (GB) or UK surveys that include a Scottish dimension i.e. the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS), which provide statistics for Scotland on employment, unemployment and economic inactivity. The results from both surveys are available from the Labour Market pages of the SG website.

**Table 1.2: Overview of the preferred sources**

Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ)	Demographic data (e.g. age, gender, religion, ethnicity or tenure) Economic activity & qualifications Disability/long term health condition
Scottish Health Survey (SHeS)	Smoking Health information
Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)	Fear and Perceptions of crime Confidence in the police
Transport and Travel in Scotland (TATIS)	All transport information, including the Travel Diary results
Family Resources Survey (FRS)	Scotland level household income estimates

<sup>20</sup> <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00533188.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> [www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/scotlandsurveys](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/scotlandsurveys)



The SHS will continue to gather information on a range of topics to contribute to the **Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) pooled sample**. Pooling samples across the SHS, SHeS and SCJS **enables detailed and reliable analysis of national estimates** by ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, education level and a wide range of other characteristics and estimates for low levels of geography, including local authorities.

**The latest estimates for the SSCQ 2017 were published in April 2019<sup>22</sup>**, the 2018 dataset is expected to be published in 2020. The SG recommends that users refer to the SSCQ publication as the preferred source of local authority data for these questions.

**Table 1.3: Topics covered in the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ)**

The Scottish Surveys Core Questions in 2018 covered:	
disability and long-term conditions	housing tenure
smoking	car access
provision of unpaid care	ethnic group
household type	religion
perception of local crime rate	marital status
highest qualification held	sexual orientation
economic activity	gender
local government satisfaction	self-assessed general health
country of birth	age

There are some key demographic and contextual SSCQs where data continues to be published in the SHS annual report at national level. This will therefore be published in the SHS local authority tables, as well as in the SSCQ. This includes gender, age, ethnicity, religion, economic activity and qualifications, disability/long term health condition, and tenure. **Due to its higher combined sample size, the SSCQ data on these questions will offer a higher level of precision for users seeking standalone estimates for these variables.**

Due to methodological difficulties, banded household income is not currently reported in the SSCQ and will continue to be published in the SHS annual report and local authority tables as another key contextual variable. However, it should be noted that the FRS<sup>23</sup> is the preferred source for Scotland level household income estimates.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/SSCQ>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-resources-survey--2>

## 1.4 Survey Design

The current survey uses a **fully un-clustered core and modular structure**, meaning some questions are asked of the full sample and others of a one-third sub-sample. The overall **sample size is around 10,500** though improvements from the old survey design means it is possible to obtain **local authority estimates on an annual basis** where sample sizes allow for robust estimates.

Figure 1.1 provides a visual representation of how the core and modular design is structured within each year (between 2015 and 2018) and how this rotates and replicates across subsequent years. This includes a **“core” set of 20 questions which have been designed to be asked in consistent ways with other surveys**, such as age and gender. The subsequent **“modules” of questions have been designed to be flexible in terms of topic, frequency and geography**. For example, questions asked of the “full” sample and asked on an “annual” basis would be able to provide local authority level data on an annual basis. Similarly, questions might only be asked of “1/3” of the sample on a “biennial” basis (i.e. asked every second year). Such questions could only get national level estimates every second year.

The survey questionnaire itself is **structured in three main parts**:

- Household (including ‘Random Child’);
- Random Adult (including ‘Travel Diary’); and
- Physical inspection of dwelling.

**Figure 1.1: Representation of multi-year core and modular design**

Module	Frequency	2015	2016	2017	2018
Core	Annual	█	█	█	█
Full	Annual	█	█	█	█
Full	Biennial	█	█	█	█
1/3	Annual	█ █ █	█ █ █	█ █ █	█ █ █
1/3	Biennial	█ █ █	█ █ █	█ █ █	█ █ █
Physical	Annual	█	█	█	█

The respondent for the first part of the interview must be a person in whose name the accommodation is owned or rented or who is otherwise responsible for the accommodation.

The **household reference person** is defined as the **highest income householder (HIH)**. In households that have joint householders, that is the person with the highest income. If householders have exactly the same income, the older is taken as the household reference person.

Details of all members of the household, including children, are collected during the household interview with the household respondent. This includes questions related to the composition and characteristics of the household, and involves capturing basic demographic information of all members of the household, such as gender, age and economic situation at this stage, as well as detailed information on dwelling characteristics as captured through the old SHCS (prior to 2012). **The topics covered in the Household section of the survey are presented in Table 1.4.**

Subsequently a child who is at school is selected from all household members under 16 (the 'Random School Child') and the household respondent answers questions about the school that child attends and the journey they make to go there.

**Table 1.4: Topics covered in SHS 2018 Household component**

Household Composition	People living in household, basic demographics
Accommodation	Property type, Tenure & Length of tenure, Ownership of property, Previous home
Household Services	Number of bedrooms, Internet access, Food waste/recycling
Driving and Transport	Cars, Fuel spend, Bicycles
Children & Young People	Schools
Childcare and Childcare Costs	Costs of childcare, reasons for childcare
Health and Disability	Long-term health condition/illness
House Condition Survey	Responding to emergency, Repairs, Satisfaction with accommodation, Heating (including type of heating, control, cost, and suitability), Renewables, Energy Efficiency and Insulation, Adaptations
Household Employment	Employment details including status, working patterns, type of work
Household Income	Householder/Spouse paid/self-employed/other jobs, Benefits, Other sources
Household Finances	Standard of living
Mortgages and Rent	Mortgage & Rent, Household costs including service charges and council tax, Managing financially

Once the composition of the household has been established, one of the adults in the household is randomly selected by the interviewer's computer to complete part two ('Random Adult')<sup>24</sup>. This covers behavioural and attitudinal type questions, such as satisfaction with local services, and captures further demographic information on the random adult. This element also covers the 'Travel Diary' component which asks about travel behaviours on the day before that of the interview day. In all households with a single adult the same person completes both parts, but as the number of adults in the household increases, the probability of the random adult being the same as the household respondent declines<sup>25</sup>. The topics covered in the Random Adult section of the survey are presented in Table 1.5.

<sup>24</sup> Adults who are household members but have been living away for the previous six months are excluded from the selection of the random adult. Children and students living away during term time are counted as household members but are excluded from the random adult and random school child selection.

<sup>25</sup> Where the same person completes both parts one and two (i.e. they are both the household respondent and selected as the random adult) the CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) script does not repeat the questions common to both sections. This means that these respondents are not asked for the same information twice.

**Table 1.5: Topics covered in SHS 2018 Random Adult component**

Adult Characteristics	Basic demographics, Country of birth and date of entry
Accommodation	Housing experiences
Neighbourhoods and Communities	Rating, Strengths, Belonging, Involvement, Social Isolation & Loneliness, Anti-social Behaviour, Discrimination and Harassment, Community Engagement and Resilience
Education	Qualifications, Internet (including use and access, internet security)
Travel and Transport	Licence, Driving, Park and rides, Electric cars, Travel to work/ education, Congestion, Car sharing, Air travel, Public transport, Incidents, Journey planning, Road accidents, and Travel Diary
Volunteering, Local government & services, Culture & Sport, Environment	Perceptions of local government, Volunteering, Perceptions of local services, Culture, Sport, Views on Climate change, Access to outdoors, Greenspace
Health, Disability & Caring	Self-assessed health, Disability, Caring responsibilities, Smoking, Concessionary travel
Employment	Employment status & Government work scheme

If the household was selected to take part in the **physical inspection follow-up** the HIH is asked if they would be willing to arrange an appointment for this at the end of the Household component of the survey. Such surveys are **conducted by professional surveyors through a visual and non-intrusive inspection of the dwelling**. The surveyor will assess the condition, design and energy efficiency of the home, with much of their time spent surveying the outside, but they will ask to see all the rooms inside. Results from the Physical Survey will be reported on separately later in the year in the SHCS report previously mentioned.

Further information on the SHS Questionnaire can be found via the relevant technical report on the SHS website<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> [www.gov.scot/SHSPublications](http://www.gov.scot/SHSPublications)

## 1.5 Sampling

Since 2012, **the SHS sample has been designed by the SG**. The sample design was coordinated with the sample designs for the SHeS and the SCJS as part of a survey efficiency project and to allow the samples of the three surveys to be pooled for further analysis.

The SHS sample has been designed to provide the following:

- nationally representative sample of private households
- nationally representative sample of the adult population in private households
- annual publication of results at a local-authority level as well as Scotland.

To meet these requirements the target sample size for Scotland was 10,678 household interviews with a minimum local authority target of 258. From 2012 onwards, the physical survey of the SHCS has been incorporated into the SHS. A subsample of the main sample has been allocated to the physical survey, which has a target sample size of 3,004 for Scotland and a minimum target of 80 for each local authority. During the procurement of the 2018-2021 SHS, the target sample size was reduced from 10,678 to 10,450 and the minimum local authority target was reduced from 258 to 250 to introduce further cost efficiencies.

**The SHS sample is drawn from the small user file of the Postcode Address File (PAF)**. The overall design is a random sample, stratified to target a minimum of 250 interviews per local authority.

**The main features of the design are:**

- First stage, disproportionate stratification by local authority;
- Within each local authority, second stage systematic random sampling was used to select the addresses from the sample frame with the addresses ordered by urban-rural classification, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) rank and postcode;
- Once the overall sample was selected, systematic random sampling was used to select the subsample for the physical survey.

As the samples for the SHS, SHeS and SCJS have all been selected by the SG since 2012, addresses selected for any of the surveys are removed from the sample frame so that they cannot be re-sampled for another survey. This has helped to reduce respondent burden and has facilitated the development of the pooled sample. The addresses are removed from the sample frame for a minimum of four years.

The SHS response rate declined from 67 per cent in 2014 to 64 per cent in 2018 (the achieved sample in 2018 was 10,532 and 9,702 random adult interviews). Analysis carried out to date suggests that this has had minimal or little impact on the survey results. Further information on response rates and other such information will be available in the SHS 2018 Methodology and Fieldwork Outcomes report.