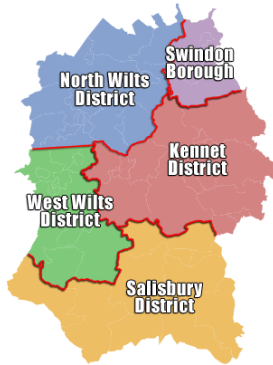


Case Study: Wiltshire Police Authority 'Safe and Satisfied' Resident Survey 2008/09

AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In September 2008, Wiltshire Police Authority commissioned M-E-L Research to run its first ever resident baseline survey. The Authority aims to ensure Wiltshire and Swindon is the safest place to live in the UK, and that its community receives an efficient and effective policing service. Reflecting this, the research was termed the 'Safe and Satisfied' Survey.



Wiltshire Police Authority represents a population of 635,000 residents across the shire county of Wiltshire and the unitary borough of Swindon. The two areas are very different; Wiltshire is typically a rural area with rolling countryside and several market towns, whereas Swindon is predominantly an urban area (as shown on the map below). This poses a tough challenge in making sure the survey was fully representative, and catered for all communities.

Our baseline survey has given the Authority its first overall picture of the public's view on the quality and standards of local policing, as well as their opinions on how safe their area is as a place to live. The survey has helped the Authority (a) identify priorities for the longer term policing plan and local Policing Pledges; (b) highlight local areas where services appear to need improvement; (c) identify the population groups with greatest need for support; and (d) set clear benchmarks against which future improvements can be measured.

The Authority is now sharing the results with Force officers and CDRP local partners, to identify actions required and further issues – such as communication – that need exploring.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

The survey centred on a face to face household interview with 1,250 residents. To make sure respondents were representative, a rigorous sampling frame based on census output areas was used to achieve a minimum of 50 interviews in each of the 20 community areas in the shire areas, and 250 in Swindon. Random sampling points were selected in which to complete surveys. For example in each community area, five random sampling points were selected in each of which ten interviews were completed, in order to achieve the minimum 50 surveys for that community area. This technical rigour was key to the project's success. Results are also mapped using M-E-L's Insite CACI GIS system so that hotspots could be identified.

CLIENT SERVICE AND SUPPORT

The project was led by M-E-L's consumer research client account manager Helen Clive, who was formerly principal research analyst at Worcestershire County Council. Helen said about the project *"What attracted me most about this project was the opportunity to provide the authority with some real insight in to what residents thought of the area they live in and the police force serving them. We developed a strong relationship and worked well in partnership with client officers. I hope the work will give Wiltshire Police Authority the confidence to develop policing priorities, knowing that they really understand what the customer wants."*

The fieldwork was organised by Azim Khan, our long-established field and client services manager, and the interviews were carried out by our dedicated 'policing confidence' field team of 20 specialist trained interview experts.

This project was delivered through our 'Policing Confidence' Expert Practice Centre led by Anne Forshaw - one of several specialist Expert Practice Centres operating across M-E-L's Citizens and Neighbourhoods Team.

For further information about our work with Wiltshire Police Authority, please contact Helen Clive @ helen.clive@m-e-l.co.uk or call 0121 604 4664