

Inland Waterways: Measuring Volume – Visitors and Visits



Association of
Inland
Navigation
Authorities

Inland Waterways Visit Survey

The Inland Waterways Visitor Survey (IWVS) is currently conducted by independent market research agency BDRG Continental. The IWVS is a telephone survey set up to measure:

1. the number of people who visit the waterways
2. the total number of visits they make
3. overall satisfaction with their visit, including their propensity to recommend
4. the general image of canals amongst the general public.

A nationally representative sample of 1,600 adults is interviewed each month. Data is weighted on a monthly basis to the national GB population profile in terms of region, sex and age.

The questionnaire is executed using CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing), which ensures interviewers are guided automatically and logically through the questionnaire.

A Random Digit Dialling (RDD) approach is used. This is a system which offers a totally geographically unclustered sample that includes ex-directory numbers. Geographically unclustered sampling is vital since an individual's usage of waterways is determined in part by their proximity to waterways (either living or working).

The survey asks people about their behaviour in the last two weeks. Two weeks is used as it is short enough for people to remember which still giving a good time period to survey.

Measuring volume

Two elements of volume are recorded through the IWVS – visitors and visits.

1. Visitors

- a) Number of people who have visited in the last two weeks/typical two weeks.
- b) Some of those people will only visit once, others may visit every day. An individual is only counted once, regardless of how many times they visit.
- c) An average is taken of the 26 two-week blocks in a year when reporting the annual figures.
- d) For 2010, an average of 3.8 million people visited one of BW waterways in a typical two week period.

2. Visits

- a) Total visits made to one of BW's waterways over the year.
- b) This is a measure of footfall and is irrespective of who is making the visit.
- c) For 2010 there was a total of 290 million visits made to BW's waterways.

Questions asked

- Q1 Firstly, I am going to read out some activities that you may have taken part in recently. For each one, can you tell me whether you personally have taken part in this activity in Britain within the **past two weeks**? So firstly, have you.....[rotate activity list].... on a stretch of inland water which is used by boats, for example a canal, river or lake.
1. Been on a boat with an engine
 2. Been on a boat without an engine? Please
 3. include activities such as canoeing, rowing boats and sailing boats
 4. Been fishing
 5. Been cycling
 6. Walked a dog
 7. Visited a specific attraction, heritage attraction or museum
 8. Taken a walk or a ramble for leisure
 9. Taken a run or jog for leisure
 10. Used or walked along only in order to get somewhere else? For example, to get to work or to go shopping
 11. Bought food or drink in a pub
 12. Just sat or stood by the water as a break in the day to relax (always penultimate activity)
 13. Used or visited for some other purpose? (**SPECIFY**)
- Q2. **[For each activity at Q1]** On how many days in the past two weeks have you personally.....[read out activity]....on a stretch of inland water used by boats, for example, a river, canal or lake in Britain?
WRITE IN NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN 1 AND 14.
- Q3. **[For each activity at Q1]** And thinking about the last day you have.....[read out activity]....which river, canal or lake did you do this on?
RECORD ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:
- a) Name of Waterway (if known):
 - b) Nearest Town / Village:
 - c) Name of County:

Additional questions follow asking about party size, spend, satisfaction and the general demographics of the respondent/visitor.

How do the questions work?

- Question 1 Visitors. If a respondent has taken part in at least one of the activities they are counted as a visitor. They are only counted once regardless of how many activities they may have done.
- Question 2 Visits. The number of occasions the respondent has taken part in each activity is counted. For example, they may have walked the dog five times and visited a canalside pub once, so one visitor making six visits.
- Question 3 Location: Responses are coded to identify visits made to BW waterways. This allows us to report on visitors and visits to BW waterways and those under the jurisdiction of any other navigation authority.