



UK Household Longitudinal Study

Wave 12 technical report

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Contents

Introduction	1
1. Fieldwork design	3
2. Contact and co-operation	6
3. Movers and tracing	12
4. Translations	14
5. The interview	16
6. Briefings and interviewer materials	19
7. Response to web survey	22
8. Overall response	26
9. Data preparation	32
Appendix A – Wave 12 interview content	35

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Introduction

The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) is known to sample members as Understanding Society. This major longitudinal household panel survey started in 2009, and is the largest study of its kind, with around 40,000 households interviewed at Wave 1. The study collects data from household members aged 10 and above on an annual basis.

It is commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and led by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex.

This report gives details of Wave 12 of Understanding Society, which was undertaken by Kantar Public and NatCen Social Research, working in consortium.

Overview of methodology

Households were issued in 24 monthly batches, starting in January 2020, with all households being issued in the same quarter as they were in previous waves. The sample was separated into two issue modes: 'CAWI first' and 'CAPI first'. The allocation of households to issue mode was done by ISER.

Changes had to be made to the fieldwork approach in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Before this point 70% of households were issued CAWI first and 30% CAPI first. From the April 2020 sample (month 4 of 24), all households were issued CAWI first.

Fieldwork before March 2020

Fieldwork for the CAWI first sample followed a sequential mixed mode design. Households were initially invited to take part online. At the end of the initial web fieldwork period any individuals or whole households that had not taken part online were issued to a face-to-face interviewer.

The January 2020 sample was with interviewers for about 6 weeks, and the February 2020 sample about two weeks, when all face-to-face fieldwork was halted because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fieldwork from March 2020

CAPI fieldwork was stopped in the middle of March 2020. At this point letters were sent to any adults that were 'live' in field (i.e. those from the January to March sample months that did not have a final outcome) to explain that interviewers would not be able to visit, and to ask them to complete online.

All interviewer fieldwork from this point was conducted by telephone, although this was undertaken by the same panel of face-to-face interviewers that were already working on the study. Any sample months that had already started fieldwork (up to the March 2020 sample) remained with the same interviewers to contact and interview by telephone. For the April 2020 sample onwards, any households that did not complete online were issued to interviewers to contact and interview by telephone. Interviewers could also encourage adults to complete the survey online during this time.

Face-to-face interviewing was also used for a portion of fieldwork for the last 3 sample months (months 22 to 24, issued in October to December 2021).

Survey elements

As with previous waves, there were a number of different elements to the study:

- A household enumeration questionnaire, completed once per household to confirm who is currently living there;
- A household questionnaire, completed once per household to gather some household level information;
- An individual questionnaire, completed by anyone aged 16 or more in each household;
- A paper self-completion questionnaire, completed by children aged 10 to 15;
- Consents for linking to administrative records.

The median questionnaire lengths were 3 minutes and 59 seconds for the household enumeration grid, 11 minutes and 31 seconds for the household questionnaire, and 41 minutes and 42 seconds for the individual interview.

Survey content

The Wave 12 survey covered many topics, including some sets of questions that are asked every year, and other 'rotating' content that had been included in some previous waves but not all. Additional modules were added in Spring 2020 to gather data on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. A full list of modules included in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Outputs

Data from Understanding Society is deposited at the UK Data Archive after each wave is completed. As more completed waves of data have become available the number of research projects using Understanding Society data have increased. The latest publications, working papers and media coverage of Understanding Society are available on the study website (www.understandingsociety.ac.uk).

1. Fieldwork design

This section gives details of the sample that was issued at Wave 12 and the overall fieldwork design.

1.1 Increasing online interviewing

Online interviewing was used for the first time on the main Understanding Society survey at Wave 7. Since then an increasing proportion of households have been issued web-first. On wave 12 the intention had been to issue 70% of households web-first, and this was the approach taken for the first 3 months of fieldwork. However, the approach to fieldwork had to be changed in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and so from the April year 1 sample (month 4 of 24), all households were issued web-first.

This meant that, overall on wave 12, 96% of households were issued web-first and 4% were issued CAPI-first.

1.2 Allocation to issue mode

Sample issued in the first 3 monthly batches

A fifth (20%) of the Understanding Society sample is 'ring fenced' to be issued CAPI first. This is so a representative sub-sample is available to use as a control group for research looking into the effects of mode on Understanding Society.

Once the ring fenced sample was excluded, ISER used a model to allocate households to mode. The 12.5% of non-ring fenced households (10% of all households) least like to respond online were allocated to the CAPI first group. The remaining households were then allocated to CAWI first.¹

Sample issued from month 4 (April 2020) onwards

Restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic meant no face-to-face interviewing could take place in the UK from the 23rd of March 2020, and a decision had been taken to stop face-to-face fieldwork on Understanding Society a week before this. From this point on all households, including the ring fenced sample, was issued web-first.

1.3 Sample

The majority of Understanding Society sample was selected at Wave 1, for details of how this was done please refer to the Wave 1 technical report. Since Wave 1 some households have dropped out of the study, either due to adamantly refusing, continuous non-participation, or moving to an unknown location. Additional households have also been created where households have split, for example, where grown up children have moved out of their parents' home. Additional sample was introduced to the study as part of an immigrant and ethnic minority boost (IEMB), conducted alongside Wave 6 of Understanding Society, for further details please refer to the IEMB technical report. This IEMB sample was incorporated into the main part of the study for the first time at Wave 7.

¹ After this a small number of adjustments were made for the sake of practicality. For example, each wave a small number of households are issued to the same address. The most common cause of this is a grown up child moving out of their parents' home (e.g. to attend University) so that a new 'split off' household is created for them. They later move back to their parents' address and inform ISER of this between waves. Therefore at the next wave both the original household (containing the parents) and the split off household (containing the grown up child) are issued to the same address. Interviewers are aware of this situation and know how to deal with it so that the two households are merged back together. To ensure this would happen any households issued to the same address were issued CAPI first.

The total number of 'active' households issued at Wave 12 was 21,161. This included four different sample types:

- The general population (GP) sample, originally sampled at Wave 1 of Understanding Society – 13,403 GP households were issued at Wave 12
- The ethnic minority boost (EMB) sample, originally sampled at Wave 1 of Understanding Society – 1,655 EMB households were issued at Wave 12
- The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and Northern Ireland Household Panel Survey (NIHPS) samples that were incorporated into Understanding Society at Wave 2 – 4,661 BHPS/NIHPS households were issued at Wave 12
- The immigrant and ethnic minority boost (IEMB) sample, originally sampled at Wave 6 of Understanding Society – 1,442 IEMB households were issued at Wave 12.

The BHPS/NIHPS sample was all issued in year 1 of fieldwork, and the IEMB sample all issued in year 2.

The number of individuals in the issued sample is shown in table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Number of individuals in the issued sample

	Adults (16+)	10 – 15s	Under 10s
GP	25,795	2,404	2,761
EMB	4,204	612	658
BHPS/NIHPS	9,111	813	981
IEMB	3,348	518	664

1.3.1 CATI only sample

Within the sample, there were a small number of issued households (n=142) who had previously indicated they would prefer to take part by phone. Because of the changes to fieldwork meaning all households were issued web first and followed up by telephone for the majority of fieldwork, these cases were treated the same as the rest of the sample for Wave 12.

1.4 Fieldwork structure

Sample was provided to Kantar in eight quarterly batches. This ensured each household was issued in the same quarter as it had been at previous waves. Each quarterly sample was then split into three roughly evenly sized monthly batches. Sample was then issued to field in 24 monthly batches, the first in January 2020 and the last in December 2021.

Where households were issued to the same address as the previous wave they were allocated to the same sample point and each sample point was usually issued in the same month as it had been at Wave 11.

In previous waves, allocating sample to the same interviewer that had contacted the household at the last wave was a priority for face-to-face fieldwork. The switch to a sequential web then telephone approach meant that it was more practical to conduct fieldwork with a smaller group of interviewers who were not necessarily geographically close to the households they were issued. Interviewer continuity was therefore not prioritised at Wave 12.

1.4.1 Fieldwork timings

The CAWI first sample had an initial web fieldwork period of 5 weeks. At the end of 5 weeks any households that had not completed online were issued to an interviewer. Both the CAWI first and CAPI first sample was issued to interviewers at the same time, 19 weeks before the end of fieldwork.

The web survey remained open throughout fieldwork so the CAWI first sample could still complete online after they had been issued to an interviewer. For the CAPI first sample in months 1 to 3, these were all also invited to take part online in March 2020. Once interviewer fieldwork started, interviewers were able to assist with online completion (e.g. re-supplying sample members with their login details and the web survey address) if sample members had a strong preference for completing online rather than by telephone.

Table 1.2 Fieldwork timings

Fieldwork weeks	CAPI first sample (months 1 to 3 only)	Web first sample (all sample from month 4 onwards)
Web fieldwork (5 weeks)	No fieldwork for CAPI first sample	Sample members invited to take part online
Interviewer fieldwork weeks 1 to 10	Assignments with original interviewer - interviewers aimed to have final outcomes for all sample after 10 weeks	Unproductive households issued to interviewers in CATI assignments (web survey remains open throughout fieldwork)
Interviewer fieldwork weeks 11 to 19	CATI re-issue period	CATI re-issue period

In reality, there was some flexibility around these timings. Original interviewers could hold on to sample after 10 weeks of fieldwork if there was a good reason to do so. For example if they had made contact with a household and that household were willing to take part but unable to do so until later in fieldwork.

2. Contact and co-operation

Understanding Society puts much effort into contacting respondents and keeping them engaged with the study. As well as contact for each year's interview, there are also between wave mailings and emails to sample members to feedback findings from the study and encourage people to keep their contact details up to date. This chapter describes the contact strategy for Wave 12, including the between wave mailings.

2.1 Advance mailing

The advance mailing varied a little depending on whether sample members were part of the CAPI first sample or the CAWI first sample.

For the CAPI first sample, all eligible sample members aged 16 or over were sent a letter shortly before the start of face-to-face fieldwork for that month. The letter explained that an interviewer would call soon. A change of address card was attached to the bottom of the letter, and the mailing also included a freepost return envelope for the change of address card.

For the CAWI first sample, all eligible sample members aged 16 or over were sent a letter on the first day of web fieldwork for that month asking them to complete the survey online and providing the web address and their login details for doing so. The letter also explained that, if they were unable to complete the survey online, an interviewer would contact them as usual. The letters also included a change of address card and freepost return envelope. If an email address was available, these sample members were also sent an email with a unique link to start the web survey.

There were 10 different types of advance letter, depending on individual circumstances, as well as 2 types of letter for new entrants in households completing by web. In part different letter types were to deal with different incentives types and mode types, but they also used slightly different messages tailored to the circumstances. The letter types are shown in table 2.1.

For all addresses in Wales, the letter was sent in both Welsh and English. Individuals who had previously been interviewed in one of the other 8 translated languages (Bengali, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi Gurmukhi, Punjabi Urdu, Turkish, Urdu) were sent a letter in that language.

All letters were designed with Understanding Society branding, and were signed by the Director of Understanding Society.

Letters were sent to the most up to date address available for each sample member. If a sample member had moved from this address and so did not receive their letter, then interviewers were able to give them a generic copy of the advance letter.

All advance letters were accompanied by an information leaflet, including further details about the study.

2.1.1 New entrant letters

For the households issued CAWI-first at Wave 12, it was necessary to have a mechanism to contact individuals who had been added to households during household grids done on the web. Letters were sent to these individuals to provide them with their web login details and ask them to take part in the study online. These letters also included a change of address card and freepost return envelope.

Table 2.1: Letter types used at Wave 12 by issue mode

Household type	Adult type	CAPI first	Web first
Responding household at previous wave	Productive adult at Wave 10	Letter 1 (£10 unconditional incentive)	Letter 2 (£10 unconditional incentive)
	Unproductive adult at Wave 10	Letter 3 (£10 conditional incentive)	Letter 4 (£10 conditional incentive)
	Rising 16s ²	Letter 7 (£10 unconditional incentive)	Letter 8 (£10 unconditional incentive)
	New entrants	n/a	Letter 11 (£10 conditional incentive)
Unproductive household at previous wave	Adults	Letter 5 (£20 conditional incentive)	Letter 6 (£20 conditional incentive)
	Rising 16s	Letter 9 (£20 conditional incentive)	Letter 10 (£20 conditional incentive)
	New entrants	n/a	Letter 12 (£20 conditional incentive)

² Rising 16s were sample members that had recently turned 16 and were therefore being asked to complete the adult survey for the first time at Wave 12, while in previous years they may have completed the youth paper questionnaire. They received different letters to those who were adults at Wave 11, although the incentives were the same.

Fig 2.1: Example Wave 12 (CAWI first) advance letter, including change of address card, and information leaflet



Understanding Society

RESP_Name
ft_Address1
ft_Address2
ft_Address3
ft_Address4
ft_Address5
ft_PostCode

Postal_Date

It's time for your Understanding Society interview

Salutation

Thank you for being part of Understanding Society. Every time you're interviewed it helps us understand more about life in the UK today.

Interviewing you every year helps us see what's changed and what's stayed the same in your life - this is why we'd like you to complete your interview again this year.

Thank you for your support

We're very grateful that you take part in Understanding Society. To say thank you we've enclosed a £10 gift card which is activated and ready for you to use. If you're able to complete your interview online by Early_bird_date we will send you an extra £10 gift card as a thank you for completing your survey early.

Have questions or want more information?

Call our participant helpline on 0800 252 853 or email us contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk. We'll be pleased to hear from you and answer any questions you have.

With many thanks,

Professor Michaela Benzeval - Director, Understanding Society.

Understanding Society is being conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This means your personal details will be kept strictly confidential and you and your household will not be identifiable from the data.

Your continuing participation is very important to us. Please let us know if you move by using the form on the Understanding Society website at www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants. Freephone 0800 252 853 or return this card in the Freepost envelope (no stamp needed). To say thank-you we will send you a £5 voucher.

Name: RESP_Name
PID: ft_PID
MOVING FROM
ft_Address1
ft_Address2
ft_Address3
ft_Address4
ft_Address5
ft_PostCode

MOVING TO
New Address: _____
Home Phone: _____
(inc STD code)
Postcode: _____
Mobile: _____
E-mail address: _____
Date of move: _____

Please let us know who will be living with you at your new address. Please list their full names below as we may like to ask them to take part in Understanding Society in the future. If possible, please provide their mobile number.

Name: _____
Mobile: _____
Name: _____
Mobile: _____
Name: _____
Mobile: _____
Name: _____
Mobile: _____

Freephone 0800 252 853

Contact us:
Participant helpline: 0800 252 853
Web: www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants
Email: contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk
For details of the study's privacy policy, please see <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants/gdpr>



Understanding Society

Keep in touch with Understanding Society

You can find out more about us on our website: www.understandingsociety.ac.uk

You can contact our participant helpline by email: contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk

By Freephone: 0800 252 853

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Building a picture of the UK one interview at a time

Your annual interview

Everyone who takes part in Understanding Society is an individual - your life and experiences are unique. There's no one else in the Study like you and we can't replace your interview with anyone else's.

From across the UK, tens of thousands of individuals take part in Understanding Society and together these interviews help us to build an accurate picture of life in the UK today. Through Understanding Society we can see where people's lives change, what stays the same and the experiences of different generations. It helps us understand which government policies have worked, and which ones haven't. How families and communities change over time and how social and political opinions develop. Understanding Society plays a key role in medical research, helping us better understand health and treat diseases.

In the last year, information from Understanding Society has been used to look at:

- the links between housing and mental health
- modelling the future pensions needs for the UK
- how happy children are
- measuring poverty in the UK
- cost-cutting in housing
- commuting times and changing work patterns
- plan local services for older people
- the gender pay gap
- how families organise paid and domestic work
- young people's use of social media
- whether flexible working is good for our health

And much, much more. You can find more information about how Understanding Society is being used by looking on our website: www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants

Our participants also tell us that their interview is a chance to reflect on their own life, to take stock and see what's new or not, each year.

Whatever your reasons for taking part - thank you. Your interview makes a difference.

Understanding Society and confidentiality

We take great care to protect the confidentiality of our participants. Your personal details such as name, address and date of birth are removed from your survey, so that you cannot be identified. Your details are never made available to researchers or other companies who might use them for marketing purposes.

Is my information secure if I do the survey online?

Yes. The information you provide online is secure. You are issued with a unique log-in for the survey. The information you give us is downloaded on to secure servers.

Who checks that Understanding Society keeps information secure?

Understanding Society is compliant with the ISO 27001 data security protocols and procedures, which is an international standard for information security management. We are regularly inspected by an independent auditor as part of our ISO 27001 certification. Our framework partners, NatCen Social Research and Kantar Public, have also achieved ISO 27001 certification.

Is Understanding Society compliant with the GDPR?

Yes. We are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation.

For more information on data security and GDPR go to: www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants/data-confidentiality

2.2 Incentives

The incentive amounts at Wave 12 varied depending on whether a household had taken part at the previous wave. The majority of sample members were sent an unconditional incentive in their advance letter, but not all. Table 2.2 details the incentives for adults.

Table 2.2: Incentive amounts for adults

Adult type	Amount and administration of incentive
Previous wave responding adults and rising 16s in productive households at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher included in advance letter
Adults that had not taken part at the previous wave but were in households that were partially productive at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
Adults in households that were not productive at the previous wave	£20 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
New entrant adults to households that had taken part at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
New entrant adults to households that had not taken part at the previous wave	£20 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)

All incentives were 'Love2Shop' gift cards, that could be used at a variety of shops. Where incentives were conditional, the CAPI script prompted interviewers to hand these out at the end of the interview. The CAPI script also asked interviewers to check, at the end of the interview, that respondents had received their advance letter and incentive. If they had not, the CAPI script prompted interviewers to hand out another voucher of the requisite amount.

2.2.1 Youth incentives

Young people aged 10-15 were given a £5 gift card for completing the paper youth self-completion questionnaire. For CAPI, this was partially unconditional as interviewers would hand out the voucher at the same time as the paper questionnaire, so it was not conditional on the questionnaire being completed. However, it was not completely unconditional as interviewers would not hand out vouchers if they were not able to make contact with the household, or if the young person or their parent refused to accept the paper questionnaire.

Where households completed online or by telephone, the youth paper questionnaire, along with the £5 voucher, was sent to a parent with a covering letter asking the parent to pass both the voucher and the questionnaire on to the young person to complete and return in the freepost envelope provided.

2.3 Between wave mailings

A mailing was sent to each household once every six months. This included:

- A covering letter
- A short booklet or postcard highlighting some recent findings from the study
- A change of address card and freepost envelope in which to return it.

The purpose of these mailings was to thank respondents for their participation with the aim of encouraging future participation, and to encourage them to keep ISER informed of any changes of address.

In addition to this, 'likely mover' mailings were sent once a quarter to any adult that had been interviewed in the previous three months and said they expected to move in the next year. These included a letter, a change of address card and a return envelope. The letter asked the sample member to return the change of address card in the event they did move.

2.4 First contact with sample members

2.4.1 Before mid-March 2020

Interviewers were instructed to attempt contact with all households within two weeks of the start of fieldwork to minimise the time between sample members receiving their advance letters and receiving a visit from their interviewer. Where households had been productive at the previous wave, interviewers were instructed to attempt first contact by telephone so they could make an appointment to complete the survey. This approach was considered to be both more efficient for interviewers and more convenient for sample members.

For households that had not taken part at the previous wave, first contact was attempted face-to-face with the exception of the small number of telephone only households. Households that have not taken part at the previous waves are less likely to take part at the current wave, and in in-person visit from an interviewer is less likely to elicit a refusal than a telephone call. Where interviewers had made repeated unsuccessful face-to-face contact attempts they would start attempting contact by telephone.

2.4.2 After mid-March 2020

The approach changed in March 2020, after which *all* contact attempts by interviewers were made by telephone. No more visits to households were made for the rest of the wave with the exception of a few weeks in the final quarter of 2021 where interviewers were told they could make face-to-face visits either:

- If it was the respondent's preference to complete an interview in person.
- If they had been unable to make contact with the household by telephone.

This has been planned as the start of a return to face-to-face interviewing on Understanding Society but "Plan B" Covid measures introduced by the UK Government in December 2021 meant face-to-face interviewing on the study was stopped again, and the remainder of Wave 12 interviewer fieldwork was conducted by telephone only.

2.5 Sample information sheets

The majority of information about households and sample members was held electronically on interviewers' encrypted CAPI laptops. However, a sample information sheet was also produced for each household so that interviewers would have some basic information easily to hand. The front page of the sample information sheet included household level information including: mode allocation (CAPI first or web first); outcome last wave; and the day and time the household questionnaire was completed at the last wave. The back page had individual level information including: first names, ages and genders; outcome at the previous wave; incentive type; and language interviewed in at the last wave.

The sample information sheet also included web login details for each sample member. This was so, if sample members expressed a strong preference for completing online, the interviewer could facilitate this.

2.6 Doorstep documents

Interviewers were provided with a number of materials that they could use on the doorstep to help with contacting sample members and persuading them to take part. All materials were Understanding Society branded. These included:

- **'Interviewer cards'** – these were for interviewers to use as calling cards (if they had called at a household and no one was in), appointment cards and broken appointment cards. Aside from the Understanding Society logo and a freephone number for either Kantar or NatCen these cards were

blank for interviewers to include their own message or write in appointment details. Interviewers were asked to always include their name on the card and encouraged to include their mobile phone number if they were willing to do so.

- **Laminated generic advance letter** – as this was Wave 12 of Understanding Society, and the study branding had remained the same throughout, interviewers found that holding a document with the Understanding Society logo visible when they first attempted contact was useful as sample members would recognise the logo and immediately know why the interviewer was there. This laminated copy of the advance letter was a useful document for interviewers to hold in this situation, it could also be shown to respondents who might not have received their advance letter. Interviewers also had non-laminated copies that they could leave with respondents.
- **‘Information for participants’ leaflet** – these leaflets included some information about Understanding Society, they were primarily aimed at new entrants to the study but interviewers could also give them to continuing sample members who wanted a bit more information.
- **Case study leaflets** – eight of these were produced to be used with respondents who might need a bit of persuading to take part. They emphasised the importance of the study by highlighting a particular policy area, detailing some findings from Understanding Society data in that area, coverage in the media and implications for policy.

These documents were only used in the early part of fieldwork. After March 202 all interviewer contact with households was by telephone and so these was no need for doorstep documents.

3. Movers and tracing

As with any longitudinal study, tracing people who move is a crucial part of maintaining a representative panel. The overall strategy for tracing movers has multiple strands, some of which are undertaken by ISER. These include:

- Providing a change of address card (and freepost return envelope) with mailings to sample members, and at the end of interviews for those that did not receive an advance letter;
- Offering multiple options for sample members to update their contact details – posting a change of address card, a freephone telephone number, and through the Understanding Society website;
- Offering sample members a £5 gift card in return for updating their address;
- Between wave mailings (and corresponding emails) to sample members between fieldwork waves;
- During interviews, collecting a variety of contact details (and then verifying these at later waves) including email addresses, mobile and work telephone numbers, and a stable contact;
- Interviewer tracing of movers during fieldwork;
- Using commercial databases to try to find sample members that are known to have moved.

This chapter focuses on the tracing of movers during fieldwork by interviewers.

When trying to contact households and individuals, interviewers could encounter two different types of move. A **whole household move**, where none of the sample members were still living at the issued address, and a **split off move**, where one or more sample members had moved from the issued address, but at least one sample member remained at that address.

3.1 Tracing procedures

Tracing procedures were covered in interviewer briefings, and also detailed in interviewer instructions. Interviewers were instructed to start tracing procedures as soon as they became aware of a household move in order to maximise the time available to trace and then interview sample members.

The methods used by interviewers to trace sample members included asking current occupiers or neighbours, using telephone numbers, and contacting stable contacts. Interviewers were also provided with letters they could use to help with tracing:

- A **tracing letter** – this was for use in situations where the interviewer made contact with someone who did have contact details for a sample member, but was not comfortable giving these to the interviewer. The tracing letter was addressed to the sample member and left with the contact to pass or post to them. This letter asked the sample member to get in touch with ISER with their new contact details;
- A **stable contact letter** – this was for use if interviewers were unable to contact stable contacts by phone or in person, the letter was posted to them. The letter asked stable contacts to get in touch with ISER and provide new contact details for the sample member.

In-field tracing efforts were limited to some extent by the switch away from face-to-face interviewing in March 2020. After this interviewers could only use telephone numbers when attempting tracing, or posting a letter to a stable contact.

Where interviewers successfully traced a household, they were able to visit the new address straight away if it was in their area. If the new address was further away they would assign the household an outcome code of “moved out of area” and enter the new address in their electronic contact sheet. This would create an update within the sample management system, alerting the sampling team that the household required re-assigning to a new interviewer. Whilst working by telephone only, for the majority of Wave 12 fieldwork, this geographical consideration was dropped, and interviewers could attempt contact by telephone whether the new address was local or not.

Where interviewers exhausted their tracing options and were unable to find a new address, cases were passed back to ISER for further tracing. This was done via a weekly file, produced throughout fieldwork, which included all individuals that had moved and were untraced. If this second stage of tracing was successful, an address update would be returned to Kantar and then re-issued to field.

3.2 Split off households

If an interviewer identified a sample member that had split from their original household, they would attempt to find a new address for that sample member in the same ways used for whole households moves, although in many cases the remaining household members were able to provide a new address for the person that had moved out. Where interviewers found a new address, they entered this in the electronic contact sheet. This then caused an update in the electronic sample management system, and a new household was created for that individual, then issued to field.

3.3 Institutions

With the exception of those that were in prison, sample members who had moved to an institution remained eligible for interview at their new address. Interviewers were instructed to attempt to interview participants where possible, but briefed about the need to contact gatekeepers in advance in some circumstances, and also about allowing for sensitivities relating the reasons for the participants moving into an institution (for example a nursing home).

4. Translations

At Wave 12 the questionnaire was translated into nine different languages to help the survey be inclusive of people that would otherwise be unable to take part, in particular those in ethnic minority groups. For other languages, interviewers could still attempt to interview people, but would use someone else in the household to translate.

The web version of the questionnaire was not translated, so translated interviews could only be conducted face-to-face (or by telephone).

4.1 Formal translations

For the nine translated languages, core survey materials and the questionnaire script were translated into these languages. The interview was conducted in translation either by an interviewer that had been accredited in that language, or by an interviewer accompanied by an interpreter. When interviewing by telephone, as for most of Wave 12 fieldwork, using an interpreter was not a viable option, so translated interviews were conducted by an accredited interviewer.

The table below shows the nine languages in which the translated script and materials were available, and also the number of individual interviews conducted in that language.

Very few translated interviews were conducted at wave 12 (just two). They were more difficult to conduct due to the change to fieldwork procedures and most interviews being completed online. Whilst this is a big drop in the number of translated interviews conducted at wave 10 (the last wave to be completed before fieldwork changed due to Covid-19 restrictions), this does not appear to have caused serious drop out of the survey. There were 100 individuals who conducted a translated interview at wave 10. Of these:

- 11 did a translated interview again at wave 11
- 43 completed an interview in English at wave 11
- 1 had a proxy interview done about them at wave 11
- 17 could not be contacted at wave 11
- 13 refused to take part at wave 11
- 10 were not interviewed at wave 11 because they were not able to do a translated interview (although 5 of these went on to complete an interview in English at wave 12)
- 5 were unproductive for some other reason.

At wave 11, there were 26 individuals who conducted a translated interview. Of these:

- 7 completed an interview in English at wave 12
- 8 were not interviewed at wave 12 because they were not able to do a translated interview
- 3 could not be contacted at wave 12
- 4 refused at wave 12
- 4 were unproductive for some other reason at wave 12.

Table 4.1: Number of translated interviews conducted in each language

Language	No. individual interviews
Bengali	0
Gujarati	0
Polish	0
Portuguese	0
Punjabi Gurmukhi	0
Punjabi Urdu	0
Turkish	0
Urdu	2
Welsh	0

4.1.1 Accreditation of interviewers

In order to conduct interviews in translation, interviewers had to be briefed on Understanding Society and had to pass an accreditation process. They were sent an extract of the questionnaire that had been translated into the relevant language, then had a telephone call with a translator who spoke the language. The call would be conducted in the relevant language and the interviewer would run through the questions they had been sent with the accreditor acting as a respondent. If the accreditor was satisfied that the interviewer was fluent in both reading and speaking the language, then the interviewer was allowed to conduct translated interviews.

4.2 Informal translations

If a sample member did not speak English or one of the nine translated languages, they could still be interviewed. In these cases the interviewer would use someone else to translate – usually another household member.

4.3 Welsh translations

For all households in Wales, advance letters were sent in both English and Welsh. The youth self-completion questionnaire was also translated into Welsh. However, no interviews were conducted in Welsh and the Welsh youth questionnaire was rarely used.

5. The interview

The main component of the Wave 12 interview was the individual adult questionnaire. This was administered using a CAI script, and interviews were attempted with all individuals aged 16 or more in the household. The majority of interviews were completed by web (82%). Most of the remainder (16%) were conducted by telephone, with just 2% of interviews conducted face-to-face. The CAPI questionnaire also included a self-completion (CASI) section. For CATI the majority of the questions from the CASI section were asked by the interviewer, with just the most sensitive ones left out for telephone interviews. Other elements of the Wave 12 interview were:

- The household enumeration grid and household questionnaire (completed once per household)
- The youth self-completion questionnaire for 10-15 year olds (on paper)
- A proxy interview for adults that were unable or unwilling to complete a full interview.

A full list of the topics covered by the Wave 12 questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

5.1 Questionnaire length

The questionnaires were heavily routed depending on an individual's circumstances so the length of interviews varied. Interview lengths were generally longer for people who were employed, had children, or were being interviewed for the first time.

Table 5.1 shows the median interview lengths for different sample types for CAWI interviews only. Table 5.2 gives median interview lengths by sample type for CAPI and CATI interviews. We have included these together since very few CAPI interviews were completed at wave 12, and the overall median interview length was similar for CAPI and CATI (45 minutes 30 seconds for CAPI and 46 minutes 32 seconds for CATI).

Table 5.1: Median interview lengths (minutes) by sample type – CAWI interviews

Questionnaire element	GP	BHPS	EMB	IEMB	Total
Household questionnaire (including enumeration)	16:01	16:26	18:23	17:32	16:16
Individual adult questionnaire – total	40:44	39:54	40:10	40:08	40:28

Table 5.2: Median interview lengths (minutes) by sample type – CAPI/CATI interviews

Questionnaire element	GP	BHPS	EMB	IEMB	Total
Household questionnaire (including enumeration)	15:34	14:41	15:54	16:18	15:23
Individual adult questionnaire – total	47:36	43:28	46:60	48:16	46:30
CAI proxy questionnaire	4:21	4:13	3:03	4:09	4:08

5.2 Questionnaire programming

The CAI instrument was programmed using Unicom Intelligence software (previously known as IBM Data Collection), which is able to handle the complexity of the Understanding Society questionnaire. The same script was used for CAPI, CAWI and CATI, with some minor modifications to allow for mode type. Two scripts were created, the first was at household level and included the household enumeration grid, the household questionnaire and administrative content such as call records. The second was the individual level script which included the adult interview, proxy interview and administration of the youth self-completion questionnaire.

5.3 Youth self-completion questionnaire

Youth questionnaires for sample members aged 10 to 15 were completed on paper, although the individual level script included information to help interviewers administer these. Firstly interviewers sought verbal consent from a parent or guardian, then asked the young person if they would complete the questionnaire. The interviewer used information from the CAI instrument to fill in some details on the front of the questionnaire, before handing it to the young person along with an envelope in which to seal it when completed, and a £5 voucher. Ideally the young person would complete the questionnaire while the interviewer was in the household, but this was not always possible.

Interviewers could also leave questionnaires with parents to be given to the young person.

Interviewers were encouraged to go back to households to collect completed questionnaires, but as a last resort sample members could be left with a reply paid envelope in which to return the questionnaire themselves.

The procedures above only applied to the very early part of fieldwork before Covid restrictions meant all fieldwork was conducted by web and telephone only from March 2020. After this the interviewer's role was limited to reminding households to return the questionnaire if they were still conducting telephone fieldwork with that household after the youth questionnaire had been posted.

5.3.1 Households completing via web or telephone

Where the household completed the survey online or by telephone, questionnaires were posted to a parent (who had completed online or by telephone) with a request to ask their child to complete and return the paper questionnaire.

Where a questionnaire was not returned, a reminder was sent later in fieldwork. This reminder included another copy of the questionnaire.

Fig 5.1: Youth self-completion questionnaire – front cover

Your
questionnaire

Self-completion questionnaire (10-15 yrs)

+										+	
INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN FROM CAPI SCREEN											
Serial								Person number			
First name				Interviewer number				Month			
+										+	



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6. Briefings and interviewer materials

6.1 Briefings

Two different types of briefing were used for Wave 12 of Understanding Society:

- 'Refresher' briefings for interviewers that had already worked on Wave 11 of Understanding Society;
- 'Full' briefings for interviewers that had not previously worked on the study.

Both types of briefing were conducted face-to-face and were usually with groups of around 15 interviewers. The majority of briefings for Wave 12 were refresher briefings. Researchers from Kantar and NatCen³ ran the briefings and in many cases a researcher from ISER also attended and presented part of the briefing.

All briefings were conducted in January and February 2020. From March 2020, the switch to web and telephone fieldwork only for the reset of Wave 12 meant fewer interviewers were required than on previous waves (since interviewers were not required to be local to the households they were contacting) and so no further briefings were required after this.

6.1.1 Full briefings

Full briefings lasted around 6 hours and covered the following:

- An introduction to Understanding Society, the background to and purpose of the study;
- Examples of the impact Understanding Society had had so far;
- Information about the sample, different types, length of time in the study;
- Multimode elements of the study and interviewers responsibilities for web first households;
- Procedures for contacting households, minimum call requirements and tracing movers;
- Materials provided to interviewers, what they are for and when to use them;
- Achieving a high response rate, avoiding refusals;
- The questionnaire, different components, topics covered by each, and who should be answering each element;
- Rules for who should be included in the household enumeration grid;
- When and with whom to conduct proxy interviews;
- Procedures for administering the 10-15 paper questionnaire;
- Consents for data linkage;
- Special procedures: translations; interviewing people in institutions; interviewing people with disabilities;
- The importance of collecting and updating contact information.

³ Each agency was responsible for briefing its own interviewers due to slight differences in administration and fieldwork management structures.

The briefings also included a session with interviewers using their laptops to follow sections of the CAPI script that a researcher led them through. This was used to ensure interviewers knew how to access all the different elements of the CAPI script.

For NatCen interviewers there was further content on using Kantar's CAPI systems, and briefings therefore lasted longer. NatCen interviewers were using a "virtual machine", this is a copy of Kantar's interviewing systems and software that was installed on NatCen's CAPI devices. It meant that NatCen interviewers used Kantar's sample management and interviewing software. This was unfamiliar to NatCen interviewers and so the briefing took them through exercises on how to use these systems.

6.1.2 Refresher briefings

Refresher briefings were shorter (around 3 hours) and were designed to help motivate interviewers as well as build up their knowledge of the study and of certain fieldwork procedures that were not always correctly followed. The refresher briefings were therefore much less formal and involved discussions with interviewers about their experiences so far on the study.

6.2 Interviewer materials

Interviewers were provided with a range of materials to help them when conducting fieldwork. These included a set of project instructions which included all of the information covered in briefings as well as further details such as a full list of outcome codes. These were intended as a reference document that interviewers could use if they needed reminding of any fieldwork procedures.

Other materials included:

- Sample information sheet – one per household, these included a few details about each household and the sample members living there, most of this information was held electronically on interviewers' laptops;
- Copies of advance letters, including a laminated copy;
- Interviewer cards to be used as calling cards, appointments cards and broken appointment cards, other than the Understanding Society logo and a freephone telephone number for either Kantar or NatCen these cards were blank for interviewers to write a message or appointment time on;
- Information for participants leaflets;
- Case study flyers – these were eight flyers that highlighted different findings from Understanding Society and how these had been used. The purpose of the leaflets was to help interviewers demonstrate the purpose of the study to any sample members that queried this;
- Showcards;
- Incentives for use where sample members had not received an incentive in their advance letter;
- Youth self-completion questionnaires, envelopes marked 'confidential' to seal them in, and pre-paid return envelopes;
- Data linkage consent leaflets and a consent flowchart to demonstrate the information flow during the data linkage process;
- Change of address cards and pre-paid return envelopes;
- Thank you leaflets;
- Tracing letters and stable contact letters, envelopes and stamps;
- Translation cards to help identify the language of non-English speakers.

Most of these materials were no longer used once all fieldwork was conducted by web and telephone.

7. Response to web survey

Chapter 8 looks at overall response to Wave 12. This chapter just focuses on response to the web survey.

7.1 Household response rate

Overall, across the whole of Wave 12, the proportion of households issued CAWI first that fully completed by web was 39%.

The whole household response rate was higher for households that were productive at the previous wave (43%), than households that had been unproductive at the previous wave (8%). Table 7.1 shows the full household web completion rate broken down by previous wave response and by sample type.

Table 7.1: Household web response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

	Households issued CAWI first (n)	Fully productive web households (n)	Household web response rate (fully productive) (%)
Households that were productive last wave			
GP sample	11,417	5,224	46%
EMB sample	1,303	395	30%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	3,907	1,665	43%
IEMB sample	1,016	307	30%
Households that were not productive last wave			
GP sample	1,487	124	8%
EMB sample	305	20	7%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	381	35	9%
IEMB sample	426	20	5%

7.2 Individual response rate

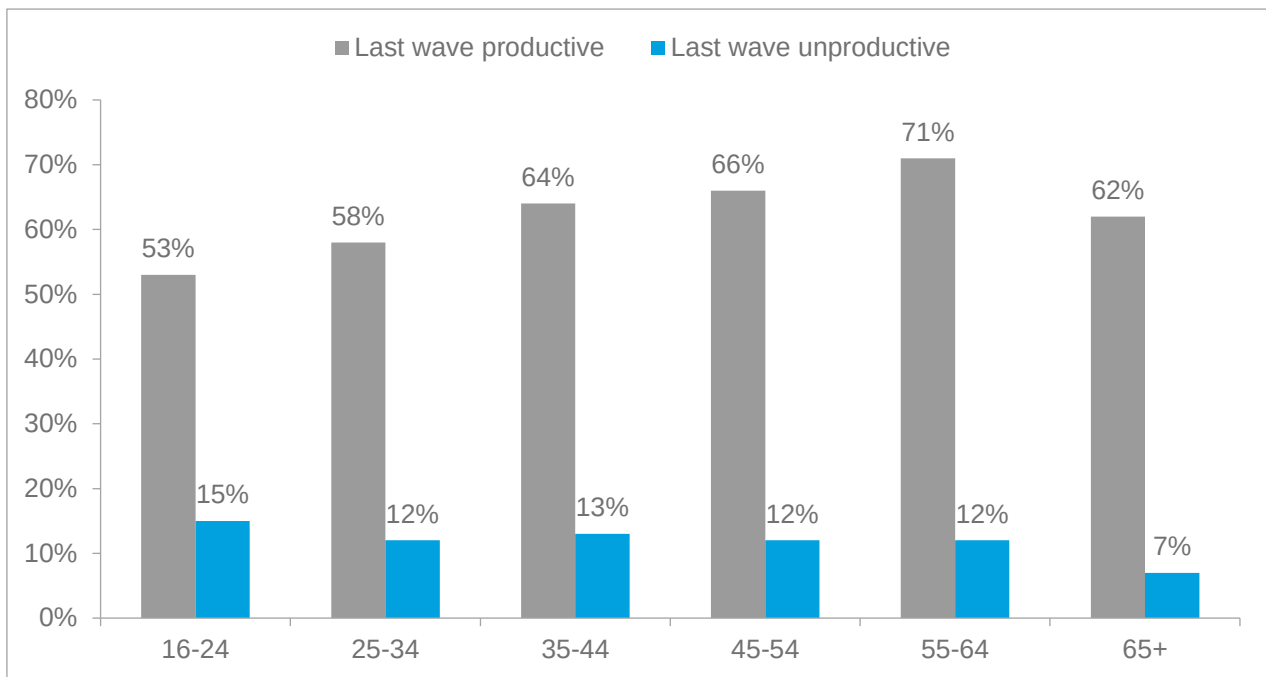
Of adults that were issued web first, 50% completed online during the web fieldwork period. This was much higher for individuals that had taken part at the previous wave (63%) than those that had not been productive at Wave 11 (12%). There was also some variation by sample type, as shown in table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Individual web response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

	Adults issued CAWI first (n)	Adults that took part by web (n)	Individual web response rate (%)
Adults that were productive last wave			
GP sample	19,101	12,609	66%
EMB sample	2,645	1,367	52%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	6,786	4,333	64%
IEMB sample	1,844	893	48%
Adults that were not productive last wave			
GP sample	6,136	824	13%
EMB sample	1,461	157	11%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	1,784	258	14%
IEMB sample	1,524	110	7%

For last wave productive adults the web response rate increased with age up until the 65+ age group where response was a little lower than 35 to 44 year olds. For adults that had not taken part at the previous wave those aged 16-24 were more likely than other age groups to complete online. These results are shown in chart 7.1.

Chart 7.1: Adult web response rate by age and whether took part at the previous wave



Base: All web first adults. Last wave productive: 16-24 (3,217); 25-34 (3,741); 35-44 (4,385); 45-54 (5,488); 55-64 (5,431); 65+ (8,114). Last wave unproductive: 16-24 (2,841); 25-34 (2,145); 35-44 (1,661); 45-54 (1,652); 55-64 (1,237); 65+ (1,369).

7.3 Web completion during face-to-face fieldwork

So far this chapter has focused on web response before face-to-face fieldwork starts but the web survey remained open throughout interviewer fieldwork.

Overall, 12% of adult interviews on Wave 12 were completed by web after interviewer fieldwork had started. The breakdown of interview mode by issue mode is shown in table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Adult mode of completion by issue mode

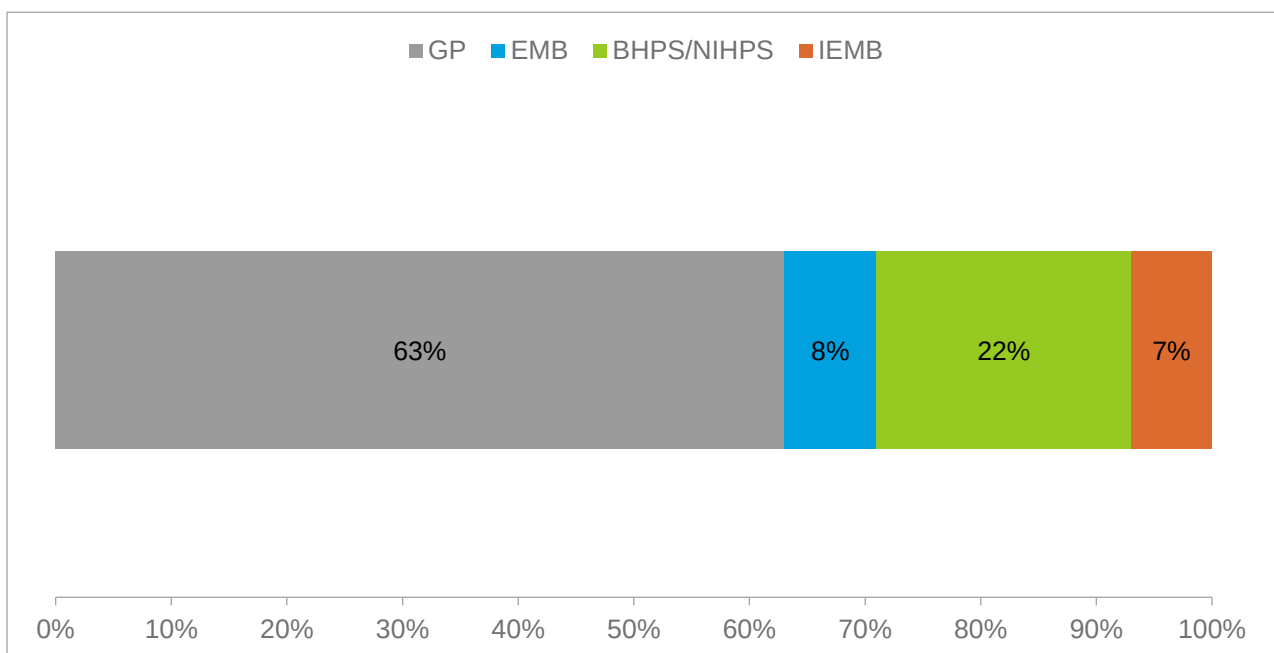
	CAPI first adults		CAWI first adults		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Web complete in web period	0		20,525	73%	20,525	70%
Web complete after f2f fieldwork started	413	36%	3,014	11%	3,427	12%
CAPI complete	390	34%	194	1%	584	2%
CATI complete	334	29%	4,298	15%	4,632	16%
<i>Base: all productive adults</i>	1,137		28,031		29,168	

8. Overall response

8.1 Household level response

A total of 21,161 households were issued at Wave 12. Of these, 13,403 were in the General Population (GP) sample, 1,655 were in the Ethnic Minority Boost (EMB) sample, 4,661 were in the British/Northern Irish Household Panel Survey sample (BHPS/NIHPS), and 1,442 were in the Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Boost sample (IEMB).

Chart 8.1: Issued sample (households) by sample type



8.1.1 Response rates

Table 8.1 details household response rates for the different sample types, dependent on whether the households had been productive at the previous wave. As would be expected, households that had been productive at Wave 11 were much more likely to be productive again at Wave 12 than those that had not responded.

Amongst the different sample types, the BHPS/NIHPS sample achieved the highest response rate, while the IEMB sample achieved the lowest.

Table 8.1: Household response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

	GP – productive last wave		GP – un- productive last wave		EMB – productive last wave		EMB– un- productive last wave		BHPS / NIHPS– productive last wave		BHPS / NIHPS – un- productive last wave		IEMB – productive last wave		IEMB – un- productive last wave	
Base: All issued sample																
Issued	11854		1549		1341		314		4235		426		1016		426	
Split households	435		48		49		12		133		12		32		13	
Total households	12289		1597		1390		326		4368		438		1048		439	
Base: Total households																
Ineligible households	108	1%	49	3%	11	1%	9	3%	43	1%	20	5%	13	1%	8	2%
Eligible households	12181		1548		1379		317		4325		418		1035		431	
Base: Eligible households																
Fully productive	8063	66%	303	20%	752	55%	53	17%	2987	69%	96	23%	489	47%	41	9%
Partially productive	2705	22%	207	13%	390	28%	38	12%	870	20%	67	16%	284	27%	40	9%
No contact	314	3%	323	21%	56	4%	59	19%	103	2%	57	14%	62	6%	156	36%
Refusal	501	4%	436	28%	67	5%	95	30%	204	5%	124	30%	98	9%	118	27%
Other unprod- uctive	598	5%	283	18%	114	8%	73	23%	161	4%	75	18%	102	10%	79	18%

8.2 Individual level response

Individual response rates were examined separately for adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave and those that had not. The response rate is calculated as the proportion of eligible adults in each group that gave interviews at Wave 12.

For adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave, the overall response rate was 85%. This varies notably by sample type, as shown in table 8.3. Response is lower for both the ethnic boost samples.

Overall, the response rate was 23% for adults that had not been interviewed at the previous wave, and 39% for new entrants and rising 16s⁴. Previous wave productive adults were the particular focus for maximising response at Wave 12 and so it is this group that are detailed further below.

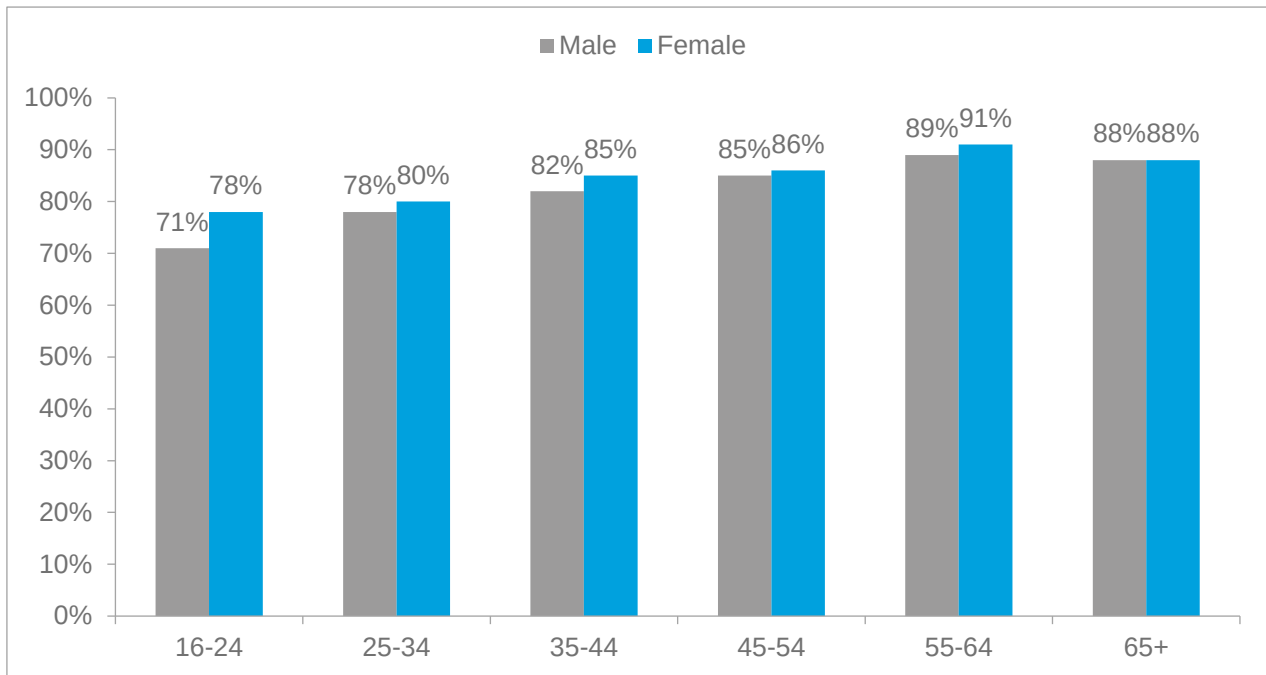
Table 8.3: Individual response rate by sample origin for adults interviewed at the previous wave

	GP	EMB	BHPS / NIHPS	IEMB
Productive	87%	76%	87%	71%
Proxy	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%
No contact	3%	6%	3%	8%
Refusal	8%	12%	7%	15%
Other unproductive	2%	6%	2%	6%
<i>Base: previous wave productive adults</i>	19559	2689	7250	1821

Response rates varied a little by gender with women a little more likely to respond than men in most age groups, and particularly amongst those age 16-24. For both genders there was a notable increase in response with increasing age. The 16-24 age group were particularly difficult to achieve interviews with. Chart 8.2 shows response rate by age and gender for adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave.

⁴ Rising 16s are sample members who have recently turned 16 and so are being asked to complete an adult interview for the first time at the current wave.

Chart 9.2: Individual response rate by age and gender



Base: All eligible adults that had been productive at the last wave. Men: 16-24 (1459); 25-34 (1608); 35-44 (1915); 45-54 (2520); 55-64 (2514); 65+ (3829). Women: 16-24 (1850); 25-34 (2185); 35-44 (2622); 45-54 (3140); 55-64 (3099); 65+ (4577).

8.2.1 Adult self-completion interviews

As part of the adult interview there was a self-completion (CASI) section. This only applied to the relatively small number of CAPI interviews that were conducted at Wave 12. Of 700 CAPI interviews:

- 429 adults (61%) completed the CASI section on the CAPI laptops themselves without assistance;
- 139 adults (20%) went through the CASI section with the interviewer due to difficulties using the laptop;
- 13 adults (2%) required help with the CASI section due to language difficulties;
- 66 adults (9%) refused the CASI section;
- 53 adults (8%) were not able to complete the CASI section.

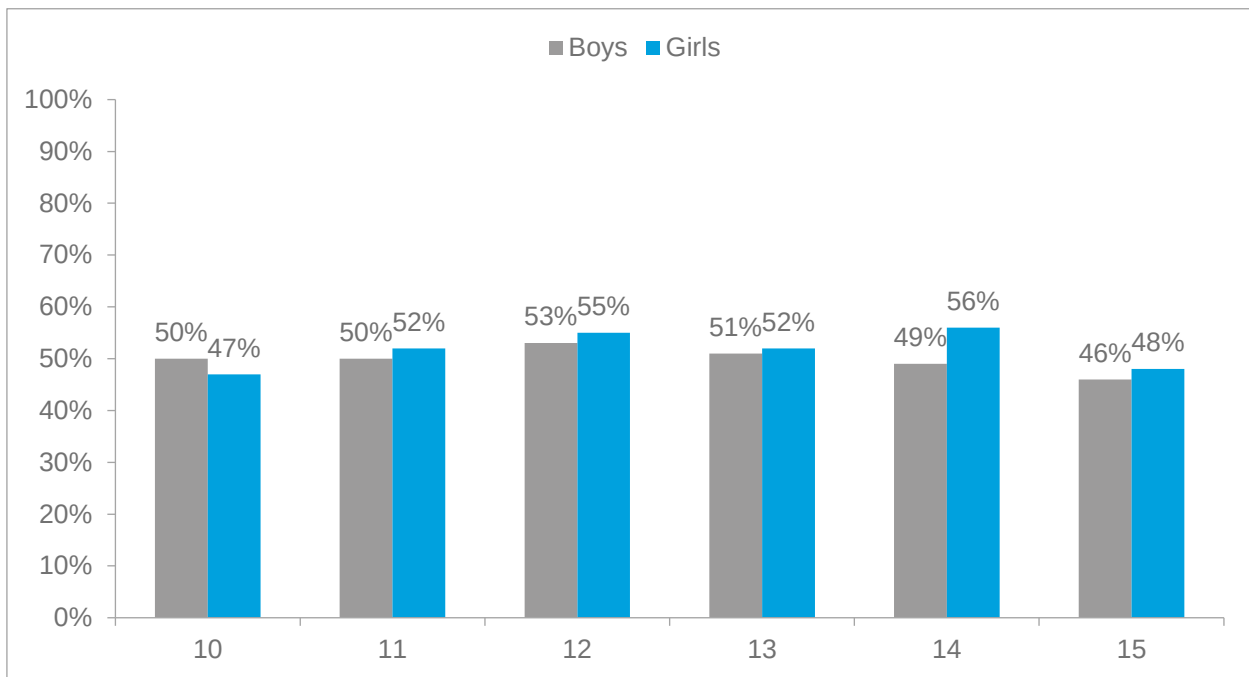
8.2.2 Youth self-completion questionnaires

In households that were productive (at least one adult completed an interview), 51% of 10 to 15 year olds completed and returned a paper questionnaire. This proportion varied a little by sample type, it was 53% amongst the GP sample, 52% amongst the BHPS/NIHPS sample, 44% amongst the EMB sample and 48% amongst the IEMB sample.

Response rates for the youth questionnaire were lower at Wave 12 compared with previous waves. This was because of the change to survey methodology necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic. At previous waves, interviewers had a role in handing out and collecting completed questionnaires. The vast majority of Wave 12 was completed when interviewers were not able to visit households and so questionnaires had to be posted to households and posted back by sample members.

Chart 8.4 shows the youth self-completion response rate by age and gender.

Chart 8.4: Youth response rate by age and gender



Base: All eligible 10-15s in productive households. Boys: 10 (268); 11 (280); 12 (272); 13 (305); 14 (288); 15 (282). Girls: 10 (247); 11 (252); 12 (287); 13 (256); 14 (296); 15 (259).

9. Data preparation

9.1 Combining CAPI and CAWI data

At Wave 12 there were two sources of CAI data to be merged – CAPI and CAWI (CATI interviews were also completed on the CAPI script). This meant the first stage of data processing at Wave 12 was combining the CAPI/CATI and CAWI data together.

There were measures in place within the electronic sample management system on Wave 12 to minimise the chances of duplicate interviews being conducted on CAPI/CATI and CAWI. Data was passed between the CAPI/CATI and CAWI systems daily but the transfer of information to and from CAPI/CATI was reliant on interviewers synchronising their laptops. In general interviewers would synchronise each day that they worked on Understanding Society but there could be circumstances under which they did not. There were therefore a very small number of duplicate interviews across CAPI/CATI and CAWI and the data merging process needed to take account of these. If both interviews were fully complete then the more recent interview was usually selected.

It was also possible for a respondent to start their interview on CAWI and complete it via CAPI/CATI. In these cases the interview would restart at the beginning of the first incomplete module (so respondents might be re-asked a few questions) rather than the specific question at which the interview had finished on CAWI. Such cases were extremely rare but, again, the data merging process needed to allow for this and stitch the two partial interviews together.

While Wave 12 used the same CAI script across modes (with routing to tailor question wording depending on the mode), there were some questions which had to be scripted separately for different modes because different question layouts were used. For example at some questions the CAWI script made use of drop down lists rather than standard response lists. In raw data there would be two versions of the question, one for CAPI/CATI and one for CAWI so the formatted data needed to draw data from both of these.

9.2 Data scanning and reconciliation

The vast majority of Understanding Society data was collected using CAI scripts. The scripts made use of consistency checks and range checks to clarify any data discrepancies with respondents as they arose. This means there was little need for any cleaning or editing of the data after fieldwork.

The exception to this was the data from the youth self-completion questionnaires. As these were completed on paper there could be data inconsistencies such as missing data, routing errors, multiple answers at single choice questions, and values out of range. Youth self-completion questionnaires were scanned to capture the data, and then a series of checks were undertaken to find any inconsistencies. Rules were agreed for how to handle data inconsistencies and edits applied in accordance with these rules.

Scanned data needed to be reconciled against CAI data to ensure data was attributed to the correct sample member. This was done using serial number, name, date of birth and gender.

9.3 SIC and SOC coding

Questions from the employment and proxy sections of the questionnaire were coded to 4 digit SIC and SOC codes. The codes and verbatims were included in the data.

9.4 Data checking

Once data from all sources had been combined and formatted, a series of checks were undertaken to validate the data and ensure consistency of format. Three rounds of checking were employed:

- Administrative checks on individuals and households – these were to ensure that all households and individuals were included in the data with a final outcome, that individuals were finally located in one household, that outcomes were consistent with the presence of raw data, and that and joiners added to the household grid were accounted for.
- Structural checks on all files – these checked the format of files, and also that the right households and individuals were included in each file.
- Routing checks – these checked, for every variable, that a response was present when there should be a response, and not present where there should not be a response, according to questionnaire routing.

9.5 Data issues at Wave 12 and script changes affecting data

There were some small errors in and/or changes to the Wave 12 script. Most of these only affected a small number of questions, and were fixed during the course of fieldwork:

- The routing at NCRR12 incorrectly used the Grid variable LiveSP. This was fixed 3 months into fieldwork.
- New entrants in Households where other respondents have GPCompare, EMBoost or LDA=1 flags were not having these flags set. This meant they were not being routed into modules in the IV script that use these variables. This was fixed 5 months into fieldwork.
- The IEMB flag was not being populated for other respondents in a household with an IEMB sample member. This was fixed 7 months into fieldwork.
- The NPDEADD variable was being derived before the Remail question is asked in the Contact Details section, meaning respondents had given consent at NPDINDLEARN and had an email in REMAIL, but and NPDESENT were empty. This was updated 7 months into fieldwork.
- Respondents who selected "Other" at HLCK in the health service use module were routed to HLCKO to give a verbatim text response. Respondents who chose to respond DK/REF at HLCKO were not asked HLCKN97. This was fixed 7 months into fieldwork.
- The routing at Employer Link was specifically using the 9th iteration to have CurrJob=Yes, rather than the final loop. This was fixed 9 months into fieldwork.
- The Partner/Spouse flags in the individual grid variables were being left blank under some circumstances. This was fixed 9 months into fieldwork.
- Respondents who had more than one child still resident in the household in the newborn loop, and the first child entered was younger than the second child, were incorrectly shown TwinConf. This was fixed 14 months into fieldwork.
- The following Covid related questions were all introduced/amended/updated: (Pcovidtest, Pcovidresult, Pcovidpos), ADDRCHCK3, INTHHOLD, Mortgage Holiday questions (Mgholcov, Mgholncov, Mgholmcov, Mgholy4cov, Mgholoutcov, Mgholendcov) and Rent Holiday questions (Rentholcov, Rentholncov, Rentholmconv, Rentholycov, Rentholoutcov, Rentholendcov). These were actioned 14 months into fieldwork.

- The numeric range at questions BirthY, DIEPRISYR, MOVEYR and CDOBY was corrected, extending the range to 1900..2050 rather than 1900..2020. This was fixed 15 months into fieldwork.

Appendix A – Wave 12 interview content

Understanding Society includes many different topics in the questionnaire. Some topics are included at all waves, while others vary from wave to wave.

Table A1: Content of Wave 12 household questionnaire

Theme	Module name
HH Composition	Household grid
Consumption	HH: Consumer durables
Consumption	HH: Expenditure
Expenditure	HH: Fuel type and expenditure
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Financial strain
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Material deprivation
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Child deprivation
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Pensioner deprivation
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Food poverty
Housing characteristics	HH: Structural characteristics
Housing characteristics	HH: Home tenure
Housing characteristics	HH: Taxation
Local neighbourhood	HH: Neighbourhood conditions
Wealth and debts	HH: Assets

Table A2: Content of Wave 12 adult questionnaire

Theme	Module name
Individual interview modules (repeated annually)	
Basic Demographics	Demographics

Caring	Caring
Change in Characteristics	Annual event history
Childcare	Childcare
Employment	Current employment
Employment	Employees
Employment	Self-employment
Employment	Job satisfaction
Employment	Non-employment
Employment	Mothers return to work
Employment	Second jobs
Employment	Gig economy
Employment	Employer/workplace address
Expectations	Educational aspirations
Family relationships	No co-resident relationships (self-completion)
Financial behaviour and attitudes	Household finances
Financial behaviour and attitudes	Student loans
Health and social care utilisation	Health service use
Health status	SF-12 (self-completion)
Health status	Disability
Income and earnings	Unearned income and state benefits
Mental health and wellbeing	GHQ (self-completion)
Satisfaction	Life satisfaction (self-completion)
Technology	Device use and online activity
Political and social engagement	Politics (self-completion)
Individual interview modules conditional on age (repeated annually)	
Family relationships	Child development (self-completion)

Family relationships	Parenting styles (self-completion)
Financial behaviour	Pension drawdown
Young adults	Young adults
Individual interview modules (rotating)	
Employment conditions	Commuting behaviour
Employment conditions	Work conditions
Employment conditions	Annual work conditions
Health behaviour	Smoking
Local neighbourhood	Local neighbourhood
Local neighbourhood	Neighbourhood belonging
Political and social engagement	Groups and organisations
Political and social engagement	Political engagement (self- completion)
Political and social engagement	Political efficacy (self- completion)
Political and social engagement	Attitudes towards immigration (self-completion)
Political and social engagement	Socio-political values (self-completion)
Political and social engagement	EU membership
Political voting behaviour	General election (self-completion)
Political voting behaviour	EU election (self-completion)
Political voting behaviour	EU referendum (self-completion)
Political voting behaviour	Devolved election - Scotland (self-completion)
Political voting behaviour	Devolved election - Wales (self-completion)
Stable characteristics	Sex and gender (self-completion)
Time use	Domestic labour
Travel behaviour	Transport behaviour
Modules asked only once (included for new entrants)	
Chronic health conditions	Health conditions

Stable characteristics	Ethnicity and national identity
Stable characteristics	Family background
Stable characteristics	Fertility history
Stable characteristics	Initial conditions
Stable characteristics	Own first job
Stable characteristics	Partnership history
Stable characteristics	Religion
Administrative data linkage (asked at multiple waves where eligible)	
Education	National Pupil Database, England
Education	Early Years Census, England
Education	Individualised Learner Records
Education	National Pupil Database, Wales
Education	Northern Ireland Education data
Education	Scottish Education data
Young adults (aged 16-21) sub-section of adult questionnaire	
Young adults self-completion	Identity
Young adults self-completion	Social Networks
Young adults self-completion	Family/Meals
Young adults self-completion	Happiness and self-esteem
Young adults self-completion	Career Advice
Young adults self-completion	Health/alcohol
Young adults self-completion	Risky Behaviour/Drugs
Young adults interviewer administered	Future Intentions: Marriage
Young adults interviewer administered	Future Intentions: Children
Young adults interviewer administered	Future Intentions: Leave home
Young adults interviewer administered	Future Intentions: Job

Table A3: Content of Wave 12 youth self-completion questionnaire

Theme	Module name
Demographic	
Leisure	TV
Leisure	Screen and computer use
Leisure	Online social networks
Leisure	Activities outside school (gaming, cultural & social)
Family	Meals
Family	Household Chores
Family	Supervision
Friends	Friendship Networks
Friends	Boyfriend/girlfriend
Self-Esteem	
Happiness	
Local neighbourhood	
Fear of crime	
Education	Aspirations
Education	Truancy
Health	Disability
Health	Smoking
Health	Alcohol
Risky Behaviour	Binge Drinking
Risky Behaviour	Drugs
Risky Behaviour	Attitudes
Vandalism/Fighting	

Identity	Ethnicity
Identity	Religion
Political attitudes	
Future Intentions	Marriage
Future Intentions	Children
Future Intentions	10 years
Future Intentions	Leave home
Future Intentions	Future Job