

The People and Nature Survey

Moving from Experimental Statistics to Official Statistics

The People and Nature Survey builds on the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey which ran from 2009 to 2019. While the People and Nature Survey has similar objectives to MENE, the move to an online panel method for data collection is a noteworthy change in methodology (MENE used face-to-face methods).

The People and Nature Survey for England gathers evidence and trend data through an online survey relating to people's enjoyment, access, understanding of and attitudes to the natural environment, and its contributions to wellbeing.

The People and Nature Survey and MENE are hugely valuable datasets and given the shared aims between the surveys, they target a similar set of users. In terms of trustworthiness, both surveys use broadly similar frameworks for production. These include, but are not limited to, the impartiality of skilled people working on the statistics, and effective business systems and processes within Natural England to support statistical functions.

The UK Statistics Authority designated the original MENE releases as National Statistics. Due to the change in methodology between the People and Nature and MENE surveys, and following discussion with the Office for Statistical Regulation, initial releases reporting the results from the People and Nature Survey were designated as '[Experimental Statistics](#)', a form of Official Statistics that are in the testing phase.

Our clear aim in doing this was to ensure that we tested the implications of the noteworthy change in data collection methodology between MENE and the People and Nature Survey – and that we did this in a transparent way before we moved to full Official Statistics status.

Now that we are in the second year of the survey (which started in April 2021), we have developed a collaborative analysis framework, refined our data quality assurances to capture additional metrics on quality and finalised an optimal bespoke weighting scheme approach. Our assessment is that products from the People and Nature Survey are now of sufficient statistical quality to merit ongoing production as Official Statistics.

We will continue to listen to users and to review our approaches to ensure that we maintain the standard required of all products presented as Official Statistics.