# Sampling Design Report: Oxford Internet Survey 2005

Sampling was based on a two stage design. Firstly a random sample of 175 paired Output Areas (OAs) stratified by region was selected. Then within each selected OA a random sample of 10 addresses was selected from the Postal Address File (PAF).

**First stage: selection of OA sample points**

(1) Sampling points were allocated to each of the Government Regions in proportion to the population in each region.

(2) In each Government Region all OAs were paired with an adjacent OAs that is most similar in terms of its ACORN type

(3) Within (2) above, all paired OAs with a combined population of 60 or more people were listed in descending order of ACORN type, the most affluent pair at the top of the list and the poorest pair at the bottom.

(4) The populations of each set of paired OAs (of all adults aged 14+) were accumulated down this list. Using a random start and fixed sampling interval the required number of paired OAs was selected, giving each OA a probability of selection proportionate to its size.

**Second stage**

Within each selected OA, interviewers were issued with 10 randomly selected addresses from which they were expected to achieve a 60% response rate. A further three addresses were issued to be used only if six interviews could not be achieved with the original 10 addresses.

Out of a total of 3500 addresses issued, 450 lay in areas that interviewers felt unable to work in, such as very deprived inner city areas with very significant drugs problems and an area used by prostitutes or did not need to use the full list of addresses provided. In all, 3050 addresses were visited by ICM staff.

The outcome of these visits is shown in the table below.

| Address occupied | 93% | 2834 |
|---|---|---|
| Property vacant/no longer a dwelling/new building not occupied | 2% | 71 |
| Commercial property | 1% | 22 |
| Interviewer unable to locate address | 4% | 123 |
| Total | 100% | 3050 |

In cases where the selected addresses proved to be vacant, demolished or were commercial property, interviewers were allowed to go to the closest inhabited dwelling. In all, out of 3050 addresses visited by ICM staff for the purpose of this research, 392 were substitute addresses used because the original address proved to fall into one of these categories, with a completed interview being the final outcome.

At each address respondents for interview were selected by asking the person who answered the door if it would be possible to interview the person normally resident at that household aged 14 or over with the next birthday.

A person normally resident was defined as someone living in the household who is related to the person answering the door or living with someone in the household as a partner. In cases where the person answering the door did not know which household member had the next birthday a respondent was selected by choosing the person with a first name starting with a letter nearest the beginning of the alphabet. This rule was employed by interviewers on the first such occasion, and a person with a first name starting with a letter nearest the end of the alphabet on the second such occasion and so on.

In all, 326 respondents were selected by the alphabet rule, others were selected by the birthday rule.

**Outcomes**

The results of the successful contacts made at each address are shown in the table below.

| Addresses visited | 3050 | 100% |
|---|---|---|
| Productive interview obtained | 2190 * | 72% |
| Refusal by person answering the door | 567 | 19% |
| Refusal by selected respondent including terminated interviews | 103 | 3% |
| Unable to contact after repeated visits to address during fieldwork period | 170 | 6% |
| Not stated | 20 | 1% |

The high response rate achieved on this survey was aided by the fact that respondents understood that the research was being conducted for Oxford University and by the promise that ICM would pay £1 to the Red Cross for every successful interview.

*NB of the 2190 completed interviews, five had to be rejected as they had not correctly followed the routings on the questionnaire; hence the overall final sample size is 2185.

Reasons for refusal are given in the table below:

| Not interested. No wish to participate | 436 | 65% |
|---|---|---|
| Too busy | 168 | 25% |
| Ill/not well | 27 | 4% |
| Away for duration of fieldwork | 19 | 3% |
| Don't know | 13 | 2% |
| Not stated | 7 | 1% |
| Total refusals | 670 | |

**Weighting**

The profile of the sample achieved and the targets to which the sample was rim weighted are shown in the table below

| | Unweighted | Weighted |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 42% | 48% |
| Female | 58% | 52% |
| Age | | |
| 14–17 | 6% | 6% |
| 18–24 | 12% | 10% |
| 25–34 | 20% | 18% |
| 35–44 | 22% | 18% |
| 45–54 | 15% | 16% |
| 55–64 | 13% | 12% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 65+ | 12% | 19% |
| Social Economic Grade | | |
| AB | 22% | 23% |
| C1 | 29% | 27% |
| C2 | 23% | 20% |
| DE | 20% | 23% |
| Refused | 6% | 6% |
| Government office region | | |
| North East | 3% | 4% |
| North West | 10% | 11% |
| Yorks and Humberside | 9% | 9% |
| East Midlands | 6% | 7% |
| West Midlands | 9% | 9% |
| Eastern | 8% | 10% |
| London | 11% | 13% |
| South East | 11% | 14% |
| South West | 8% | 9% |
| Wales | 4% | 5% |
| Scotland | 20% | 9% |

|  | Unweighted | Weighted |
|---|---|---|
| ACORN |  |  |
| A Wealthy achievers, suburban areas | 8% | 9% |
| B Affluent greys. Rural communities | 8% | 8% |
| C Prosperous pensioners | 7% | 9% |
| D Affluent executives | 3% | 2% |
| E Well-off workers. Family areas | 4% | 5% |
| F Affluent urbanites | 4% | 4% |
| G Prosperous professionals. Met areas | 5% | 3% |
| H Better-off executives. Inner city | 15% | 16% |
| I Comfortable middle agers. Mature home owners | 5% | 6% |
| J Skilled workers home owning | 2% | 3% |
| K New home owners. Mature communities | 2% | 2% |
| L White collar workers home-owning areas | 6% | 5% |
| M Older less prosperous areas | 7% | 8% |
| N Council estate better-off homes | 13% | 14% |
| O Council. High unemployment | 7% | 5% |
| P Council. Greatest hardship | 3% | 2% |
| Q Multi-ethnic low income | 1% | 2% |