My year as ICE President coincides with the Institution’s bicentenary, ICE 200. The enduring success of ICE exemplifies the importance of innovative and forward-thinking infrastructure, which meets the needs of society.

I very much welcome Copper Consultancy’s report on public attitudes to infrastructure. The report makes a major contribution to our understanding of the public’s aspirations for UK infrastructure. At a time when infrastructure is key to the future of the UK’s economy, the report’s findings are not only timely but also encouraging. It emphasises that, just as our engineering ancestors did 200 years ago, it is crucial that engineers use their skills and imagination to meet the challenges of our time.

The report shows the public can link positive change to infrastructure investment if they understand the benefits as outcomes and impacts to them. Engaging and educating the public – who are ultimately the customers and end users in delivery of infrastructure – is therefore crucial. To achieve this, we need to change the language around the subject and make the profession of civil engineering more accessible.

Our industry must also do more to engage more people from a range of diverse backgrounds, demographics, and across generations, by telling a coherent, compelling story. This will help to improve public understanding of infrastructure’s true value, beyond the broad national picture. It can also serve to increase awareness of what engineers actually do – and thereby increase the numbers of young people wanting to enter the profession.

Current and future engineers must be ready to adapt their skillsets to new technologies so that they are able to deliver modern and innovative solutions to meet the changing needs of the public. It is our industry’s responsibility to support the transformation of our profession and of infrastructure itself, thus transforming the lives of all the people who rely on infrastructure in their everyday life.

It is now up to us all to take the findings of this report forward and to proactively tell our stories to the public – demonstrating the transformative powers of engineers.

Together, we can transform infrastructure and transform lives.
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Introduction

This independent survey seeks to build our collective knowledge of the public understanding about infrastructure and housing.

This report’s predecessor – Independent Survey of Attitudes to Infrastructure in Great Britain 2015 – identified the British public’s aspiration for world leading infrastructure. The inaugural report found that when infrastructure benefits are made clear, the public understood the investment.

It identified that people wanted leadership from industry and they wanted decision makers to provide clarity and ensure delivery. People also felt that infrastructure happens ‘to them’, not ‘for them’.

The public welcomed the benefits that infrastructure brings and was keen to be involved in supporting infrastructure in a more direct way.

In this report we have set out to:
- identify and understand more about the gap between the public’s aspiration for infrastructure and development and the view from people that infrastructure happens ‘to them’, not ‘for them’
- identify what the public sees as the benefits of infrastructure
- understand the public perception about what exiting the European Union means for infrastructure and housing
- test the public’s views on the UK’s capability of delivering the investment needed
- measure public priorities for infrastructure investment since the previous report
- measure the appetite for involvement in shaping infrastructure and development.

This research points to a missing link between the investment criteria for a project and the benefits that the public can identify with, especially before a project is completed.

The public wants to know what investment in infrastructure and housing means. The economic arguments are accepted, but people want to understand the benefits to everyday life. The study identified an investment-benefit disconnect.

The public is not supported in visualising meaningful project benefits until they are realised.

Infrastructure and housing is perceived as positive and necessary, especially as the UK exits the European Union. The perception of the UK’s capability to deliver is rising.

What has this report told us?
The report sets out a series of recommendations:

- **Develop a positive narrative** – the public wants to understand our industry’s success
- **Connect investment to benefits** – link investment to day-to-day meaningful benefits
- **Explain priorities** – articulate how each sector contributes to the overall picture of infrastructure investment
- **Combine housing and infrastructure** – the public sees infrastructure and housing as interlinked; separating the two serves to undermine project benefits
- **Explain how infrastructure and housing will form the spine of post-Brexit UK** – the public is united around the need for investment once we leave the European Union and sees infrastructure and housing as an essential part of the UK’s future
- **Connect** – we cannot rely on a transactional relationship with the public – industry needs to build long term, meaningful relationships with society to maximise opportunities to shape projects
Methodology

Copper identified a need to understand more about how we can best involve the public in initiating, planning and building infrastructure and development. Industry is missing an opportunity. The public is often the sector’s strongest advocate once projects are delivered. This advocacy is not as common before the benefits of each and every project can be realised.

We set out to test that the public:

- views project benefits in a different way to industry
- often identifies project benefits which are not captured by industry, leading to missed opportunities
- supports common sense, value for money projects
- understands that infrastructure is of national importance and accepts the need for investment
- has a strong social conscience about what we should invest in
- feels that infrastructure and housing growth is important for the UK’s future outside the European Union.
In July/August 2017 a representative sample of 2,007 UK adults took part in a survey about infrastructure and housing in the UK, conducted through the TLF Research Online Panel – https://www.tlfresearch.com. The survey was preceded by focus groups in London, Birmingham, Bristol and Holmfirth, Yorkshire to understand in depth what people saw as the main infrastructure and housing issues facing the UK. The questionnaire for the survey was designed to provide quantifiable information on people’s views about these issues.

The research is structured as follows:

1. What infrastructure is for
2. Public perceptions of infrastructure priorities
3. Public perceptions of the UK’s infrastructure & housing heritage
4. Public perceptions of housing
5. Leaving the European Union
6. Public involvement
7. Conclusions and recommendations
What infrastructure is for

Perceptions on the purpose of infrastructure

The public has a good understanding of what infrastructure is and how it benefits the country as a whole.

People also have a good understanding of the consequences of not having good infrastructure.

The people of the UK are able to prioritise what is nationally important infrastructure. But they feel less supported in being able to identify the benefits of specific projects.

The UK’s infrastructure is like the body’s skeleton: it is the fundamental framework.

54-year-old female, South East

Without infrastructure, the UK would come to a standstill.

38-year-old male, Birmingham

Without it we would still be in the dark ages.

68-year-old male, Southampton

It provides jobs, services, heat, gas, light, foods, factories etc.

46-year-old female, South East
The top three responses were:

- Helping the national economy in the long run: 78.9%
- Helping to connect cities across the UK: 64.8%
- Improving my own community as a result of new infrastructure: 42.6%

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<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Helping the national economy in the long run</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making my own quality of life better</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to connect cities across the UK</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving my own community as a result of new infrastructure</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping to create jobs near where I live</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the economy where I live</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
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</table>

We need power, roads, water, buildings etc. These are the structure, foundation, the muscle and blood of our economy and society, we cannot function without blood pumping to our economic muscles. 63-year-old male, Sheffield

Spending on infrastructure is often regarded as a bell-wether of the health of a country. The state of the infrastructure in the United Kingdom rightly receives close, indeed increasing, attention. 28-year-old male, South East
Whilst respondents emphasised national benefits when considering priorities for infrastructure, people were also conscious of:

- how investment in infrastructure can benefit their own local community
- day-to-day quality of life
- their own life experiences.

People also take a long term view of the strategic priorities, in particular the benefits for future generations.
Public perceptions of infrastructure priorities

Investment priorities

Housing and renewable energy remain top of the public agenda. But, since the 2015 report, housing has overtaken renewables in the order of priorities.

Technology is seen as a driver for a change in customer demands. The disruptive nature of technological advancements was recognised as playing a major role in how we use infrastructure.

Traffic jams cause stress, loss of revenue for firms etc.

68-year-old male, South East

We need to think of smarter and more efficient ways we can live in harmony with our environment, through technological advancement of infrastructure.

32-year-old male, Birmingham

Investment in motorways and major A roads is the biggest upward change in position since 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank in 2015 report</th>
<th>Change in ranked position since 2015</th>
<th>Rank in 2015 report</th>
<th>Investment priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Renewable energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Motorways and major A roads</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Railways</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Flood defences</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>National grid/connections to move energy around the country</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Waste facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nuclear power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Airports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Leisure facilities/stadiums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Coal and gas power stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ports and freight</td>
</tr>
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</table>
With this question the ‘don’t know’ option provides insight. Almost everyone has views on the condition of roads, railways and housing stock. But where there is less exposure to a project or tangible benefit explained to the public, there is less understanding. This is illustrated by figure 2.1, which shows the percentage of respondents who selected ‘don’t know’ when asked to identify an infrastructure priority.

Infrastructure helps the country move forward with the latest technology.

45-year-old male

The public’s priorities for investment do not necessarily relate to the perception of their current condition.
The perception of the condition of UK infrastructure

Respondents were asked to rate the current condition of infrastructure. They could categorise each one as ‘very good/among the best in the world’, ‘fairly good but not great’ or ‘ageing/not good enough’. There was also a ‘don’t know’ option.

The public is clearest and most united in its views about housing and leisure facilities/stadiums, which are at the top and bottom of the rankings. The public is more exposed to these types of projects.

The people of the UK are proud of its infrastructure heritage but think that there is a need to improve.

Housing, railways, flood defences and fossil fuel power stations were more often identified as ‘ageing/not good enough’. At face value, this seems at odds with the investment priorities summarised earlier. For example, motorways and major A roads were seen as a greater priority for investment than railways, but the chart above shows that railways are considered to be in worse condition.

“Our infrastructure is failing and the benefits we had are not as they were.”

68-year-old female, Sheffield
Figure 2.3: Public perception of priorities alongside the perception of world leading infrastructure

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

Public perception of infrastructure priorities

1: Housing
2: Renewable energy
3: Motorways and major A roads
4: Railways
5: Flood defences
6: National grid/connections to move energy around the country
7: Waste facilities
8: Nuclear power
9: Airports
10: Leisure facilities/stadiums
11: Coal and gas power stations
12: Ports and freight

Public ranking of ‘very good/among the best in the world’ infrastructure

1: Leisure facilities/stadiums
2: Airports
3: Ports and freight
4: National grid/connections to move energy around the country
5: Motorways and major A roads
6: Nuclear power
7: Waste facilities
8: Renewable energy
9: Railways
10: Coal and gas power stations
11: Flood defences
12: Housing
**Perceptions of infrastructure and housing – rural vs urban**

Residents across the rural to urban spectrum agreed that improving the economy is overwhelmingly the main reason for investing in infrastructure. Improving the economy dominates as a reason for infrastructure investment for rural dwellers, followed by those living in towns. City dwellers were least likely to rate it as the main reason.

A reverse pattern can be seen when considering quality of life as factor. This is much more important to city dwellers.

There is agreement that the top four investment priorities are housing, renewable energy, motorways/major roads and railways. However, whilst the rank order is very similar there are differences between the segments in the strength of that support.

Rural dwellers place less emphasis than town or city dwellers on investing in renewable energy, housing, waste facilities and leisure facilities, but greater emphasis on roads and the national grid.

People in cities see waste facilities as more important than those living in towns and rural areas. For city dwellers, roads and the national grid are less important.

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**Figure 2.4 : What do you think are the three most important factors when deciding what infrastructure the country should invest in?**

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017
Perceptions of infrastructure and housing – regional variations and age variations

There is broad agreement across all areas on the strategic priorities for infrastructure investment. Helping the economy comes first, followed by connecting cities. However, there are nine key variations:

Scotland and Wales are more likely to see railways as a priority.

People in Northern and Central England place more emphasis than other regions on motorways and major roads. People in or close to Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham and Bristol also take this view.

Flood defences were priorities in Wales and Northern England with the latter focused to the East of the Pennines with the strongest support from people around Leeds and Newcastle. These regions were also more likely to see the condition of flood defences as ageing/not good enough.

All regions are agreed that more awareness and understanding of infrastructure projects and their benefits would do most to raise their interest in the subject.
Scotland is the region with the strongest support for building more housing.

Regions most likely to support protection of the green belt (see section 4 for housing data) are Northern and Central England, the South West and Wales. The same four areas are most likely to think that there is insufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision about infrastructure.

By contrast people in the South East and Scotland are most likely to think that information provision is better.

People in the South East place the most emphasis on ‘helping the national economy in the long run’ whilst people in Scotland and the north of England place more emphasis than other regions on ‘helping to connect cities across the UK’.

Londoners are much less likely than other cities to see ‘connecting cities across the UK’ as a priority but much more likely to emphasise ‘improving my own community as a result of new infrastructure’.

People in the South East and in London place more priority than other regions on improving airports.
Age and generational differences appear to demonstrate the most noticeable variations in terms of attitudes to infrastructure.

The most significant difference is a divide between the 45s+ and the 18-44s, and is about the difference regarding what infrastructure is for.

All age groups are broadly aligned on specific infrastructure investment priorities with housing (see section 4) and renewable energy the top two followed by motorways/major roads and railways.

However, over 65s also place more emphasis on the national grid, ports and freight and flood defences. Older people see motorways/major roads as more important.

The 25-44s place more importance on waste facilities and, consistent with their views on wanting benefits from investment in infrastructure, 18-24s place more emphasis than other age groups on leisure facilities and stadiums.

The graphs show where age variation has resulted in the broadest contrast in perception.

The 18-34s have a much more positive view on the condition of the UK’s housing stock.
Almost all the age ranges said there is not enough information to enable them to take a view on the future of infrastructure and housing, especially in the older age groups. However, 54.2% of 25-34s think there is enough information.

The 18-44s were also much more likely to see the UK’s renewable energy infrastructure, waste facilities, railways, flood defences, motorways/major roads, nuclear power and coal and gas power stations as very good/amongst the best in the world.
Public perceptions of the UK’s infrastructure & housing heritage

Perceptions of the UK’s skills and delivery capability
Since 2015, there has been a slight increase in the perception that we are capable of delivering infrastructure.

This paints a promising picture, with the large majority of people at least believing that the UK has the heritage to ‘deliver world class major infrastructure’.

“The UK boasts some of the world’s most spectacular infrastructure.”
69-year-old female, Sheffield
Figure 3.0: Which of the following statements about the country’s engineering skills and capabilities best matches your own view?

**The UK is an engineering country capable of delivering world class major infrastructure**
- 2015*: 42%
- 2017**: 46.8%
- Change since 2015: +4.8%

**The UK used to be a country capable of delivering world class major infrastructure**
- 2015*: 44%
- 2017**: 39.7%
- Change since 2015: -4.3%

**The UK has never been a country capable of delivering world class major infrastructure**
- 2015*: 3%
- 2017**: 3.9%
- Change since 2015: +0.9%

**Don’t know**
- 2015*: 12%
- 2017**: 9.6%
- Change since 2015: -2.4%
Public perceptions of housing

Perceptions of housing, the green belt and social housing

Housing was most respondents’ top priority for spending and was the most commonly stated example of infrastructure to be ‘ageing/not good enough’.

Figure 4.0: Thinking about the nation’s major infrastructure, how would you rate the current condition of housing?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017
Housing and the green belt
When asked to make a hypothetical choice between more housing or protecting the green belt, the public recognises the need for more housing.

Figure 4.1: Now turning to housing, which statement do you tend to agree with most?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

60.6%
It is important that we develop more housing

39.4%
It is important that we protect the green belt
Differences across voting behaviours are most pronounced on housing, with Labour voters placing more emphasis on building more housing. Those that said they voted Conservative, when asked to choose, would, by a small majority, opt for more housing in the green belt.

Respondents in rural areas place more importance than city dwellers on protecting the green belt. Even though protecting the green belt is more important to rural inhabitants than those in cities or towns, when asked to make the choice, more than half acknowledge that the need for more housing is greater than the need to protect the green belt.

The age group most strongly in favour of building more housing, even if it is at the expense of the green belt, is the 25-34s – 77 per cent would choose more housing over protecting the green belt.
Social housing and private housing

City dwellers are of the view that more social housing is the priority over building new houses for sale. Over two-thirds of rural inhabitants agree with them. The respondents that placed the most priority on building new houses for sale, albeit by only a small margin over rural dwellers, are those who live in towns.

Around 73% of respondents who say they voted Conservative are owner-occupiers, compared with 56% of respondents voting Labour. In contrast, 23% of those that say they vote Labour live in social housing. For those who say they vote Conservative, this was 12%.

Almost 75 per cent of 25-34s would opt for more social housing as opposed to houses for sale.

All other age groups including the 18-24s are roughly 60:40 split in favour of social housing.
Brexit, infrastructure and housing

When asked whether Brexit would make things better or worse for infrastructure and housing, nearly 40% thought it would be better compared with 23.9% who thought it would be worse. Around 36% don’t know. Of those who did not vote in the 2016 referendum on leaving the EU, the majority were in the ‘don’t know’ category.

People who said they voted to leave the EU are more likely to think that Brexit will be good for infrastructure and housing. Those who said they voted to remain are more likely to believe that it will be detrimental.

There is broad agreement irrespective of how people said they voted, notably:
- boosting economic growth and connecting cities should be the main strategic priorities for infrastructure investment
- housing, renewable energy and motorways/major A roads are the most important priorities for new projects, followed by railways
- over 60% of those who said they voted think there is not enough information about infrastructure and housing. More information about the benefits of specific projects would make them more interested in infrastructure
- leisure facilities/stadiums and airports are the best examples of infrastructure in the UK whilst housing, railways and flood defences were most likely to be classed as ‘ageing/not good enough’.

Developing housing is a greater priority than protecting the green belt, with those who said they voted to remain even more pro-housing than those who said they voted to leave (65% to 58% respectively).

There is near unanimity on the type of housing, with around 68% of those who said they voted to leave or remain opting for social housing to be built, compared with 32% advocating more houses for sale.

There is only slight difference of opinion on whether the UK has the engineering skills and capabilities to deliver world class infrastructure – 51.2% of those who said they voted to leave agreed that the UK has the skills needed compared with 44.4% of those who said they voted to remain.

Brexit and infrastructure – Conservative and Labour voters

People who said they voted Conservative in the 2017 General Election are more likely to have voted to leave the EU – 71% compared with 28% of Labour voters – and are much more likely than Labour voters to think that Brexit will make things better for infrastructure.

Respondents who said they voted Labour were evenly divided in the EU referendum (52% to remain compared with 45% who voted to leave). Their views on Brexit’s impact on infrastructure are consistent with this voting pattern.

Figure 5.0: Do you think Brexit will make things better or worse for infrastructure and housing?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

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<tr>
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<th>Labour</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
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<td>infrastructure</td>
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<td>Brexit will make</td>
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<td>infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>better</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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<th>10%</th>
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Voting behaviour

There is a high degree of agreement between voters for both main parties. For both Conservative and Labour voters, helping the economy is the top priority.

Labour voters are more likely to see ‘making my own quality of life better’ as an important priority for infrastructure investment but it is on the relative importance of some of the specific types of infrastructure spend that we can see bigger differences.

Labour voters are more likely to see housing as a priority and place greater emphasis on renewable energy, whereas motorways/major roads and the national grid are given less emphasis compared with Conservative voters.

Respondents across the political spectrum agree that more awareness, information and understanding, especially about the benefits of infrastructure projects, would increase their interest in the subject.

There are many aspects of the infrastructure debate where Conservative and Labour voters are in close agreement, however:

- over two-thirds of voters of all parties agree that there is insufficient information about infrastructure
- Labour voters are more likely than Conservative voters to think that our renewable energy is ‘not good enough’
- Conservatives are slightly more likely than Labour voters to see the UK’s leisure facilities/stadiums and ports and freight as ‘very good’
- both agree that airports are ‘very good’
- Conservatives are more likely than Labour voters to think that we still have the skills and capability to deliver the infrastructure we need.

Figure 5.1: If you had to make choices with the money available for investment, which of these infrastructure types, if any, would be your investment priorities for the country?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017
Public involvement

Societal engagement in infrastructure and housing

Only a minority of people think there is enough information about infrastructure and housing. The majority thinks that more information and understanding, especially about the benefits of infrastructure, would do most to increase their interest in the subject.

More information about proposed projects and their benefits would do more to make people more interested in infrastructure and housing.

Figure 6.0: Do you feel there is enough information available for you to provide a view on the future of infrastructure and housing?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

Recent ‘megaprojects’ including High Speed 2, Hinkley Point C and the third runway at Heathrow have attracted both support and scepticism.

21-year-old male, Glasgow

When it comes to big infrastructure projects, although there is lots of information out there I feel not enough reaches the little people – us – or maybe we just don’t know where to look.

31-year-old female, Birmingham

If we all know what the benefits were we would put up with the inconvenience and disruption in the short term.

21-year-old female, Yorkshire
Town dwellers felt the most deprived of information. People living in cities are happiest with the information provided about infrastructure, with countryside dwellers roughly in the middle.

“...There is probably enough public consultation, but there is no point in having it if the results are never listened to. I think this is what people really mean when they ask for more consultation; not that they weren’t consulted necessarily, but that the results of that consultation were ignored. People want their views to be acted upon.”

38-year-old female, South East

Figure 6.1: Do you feel there is enough information available for you to provide a view on the future of infrastructure and housing?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

Figure 6.2: What would make you more interested in infrastructure and housing?

Base: 2,007 UK adults aged 18+, 2017

The top two responses were:

- The benefits of infrastructure need to be more clearly explained (59.8%)
- More public awareness to help me understand more about it (57.2%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The benefits of infrastructure need to be more clearly explained</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More public awareness to help me understand more about it</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More public consultation on projects</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct contact from organisations that build infrastructure &amp; homes</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media coverage – TV and radio programmes about infrastructure</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Since the first report in 2015, the landscape has changed. The public views our country through the lens of Brexit.

This shifts how the UK thinks and feels about our future and the kind of country we want to build. But some fundamentals remain. There is still a need for housing and the UK wants renewable energy.

This report shows us that there is an information deficit on infrastructure and housing in the UK today.

The national need is understood and accepted by the public. Beyond this broader picture, the public’s perception of project benefits becomes less tangible, judgement based and connected to personal experience.

Housing crisis
No matter where people live, study, work or how they vote, the public wants more housing at an affordable price. Investment in housing is considered a priority by the public.

Brexit lens
There is a mixture of views about what Brexit will mean once the UK has left the European Union. But infrastructure is seen as an essential part of the UK’s future. There is consensus that we must invest in the interest of the national economy.

The investment–benefit disconnect
Government and infrastructure is missing opportunities by not telling a coherent story about the real life benefits investment delivers. This lack of a coherent story is causing an investment–benefit disconnect which in turn means the public does not identify with what investment means to them until a project is operational, often many years after it is first proposed. Project promoters and Government need to be able to capture, explain and visualise the benefits of a project from the outset to secure investment and policy support from voters.
The most significant demographic finding has been the different perceptions of infrastructure and housing through the ages. There is an aspiration among younger people that makes them optimistic. They want a home, a job and they want to live in a modern world. They also understand that investment is needed in all forms of infrastructure and housing. The next generation also have the most positive outlook on the state of infrastructure and housing today – they simply want more of it.

Since 2015, the perception of the skills capability has improved. Government and industry need to maintain this momentum and attract more and more people into infrastructure and housing.

The public wants the UK cities to be better connected to deliver benefits.
Develop a positive narrative
The public is willing and ready to support investment, but they want to know what it means before doing so. The public considers infrastructure and housing investment good news. Successful project case studies help the public visualise the wider benefits of investment; negative examples do the reverse.

Connect investment to benefits
There is an investment-benefit disconnect in the UK. A project’s wider benefits are not linked to investment decisions in people’s consciousness. Industry and Government need to identify and demonstrate how the two are connected in order to gain support from people.

Explain priorities for investment
The public understands the economic reasons for investment. But beyond this, there is a lack of clarity leading to misunderstandings. The priorities and criteria that make up investment decisions need to be explained to earn public buy-in.

Show a joined-up plan – combine housing and infrastructure
The public identifies the benefits of multiple projects, often at the same time, and sees them as interconnected. We must demonstrate a housing and infrastructure plan which delivers meaningful benefits – both in the long term national interest and day to day.
Explain how infrastructure is the spine of the post-Brexit UK
Although the benefits and impacts of Brexit are yet to be determined, infrastructure and housing are recognised by everyone as playing a vital role in the country’s future. There is an opportunity for industry and Government to explain how infrastructure and housing investment will prepare the UK for the future.

Connect with society
Industry needs to build long term, meaningful and deep relationships with the public to build trust and buy-in so when projects are proposed, they are in the context of good ‘business as usual’ activity.
About Copper

Copper is a communications, engagement and consultation specialist for infrastructure and development taking projects from initiation through to operation.

Our strategic consultancy aims to reduce the risk of programme delays and attendant increased cost. Outcome based societal engagement is essential to project delivery. Effective communications and engagement with communities and representatives delivers a collaborative environment in which to co-design a people-focused future, for the UK and globally.

Our mission is to lead the infrastructure communications narrative and call to action many of the prominent bodies and organisations in our sector to support us in explaining the importance, value and benefits of infrastructure to the public.

We are also actively encouraging the housing and infrastructure sectors to create and plan co-ordinated projects which address the UK’s housing crisis, while maximising the economic growth, social value and wellbeing that can be delivered through forward thinking investment.

copperconsultancy.com
TLF was founded in 1996 to be a specialist provider of customer experience measurement and believes in building long term partnerships with clients. Our priority is to create a successfully run customer experience programme that not only delivers the data required but provides recommendations for actionable outcomes that can be used to continually improve the customer experience. Our approach is illustrated below.

As the UK’s leading specialist in customer experience research TLF conducts many projects for a wide range of clients as illustrated in the infographic.