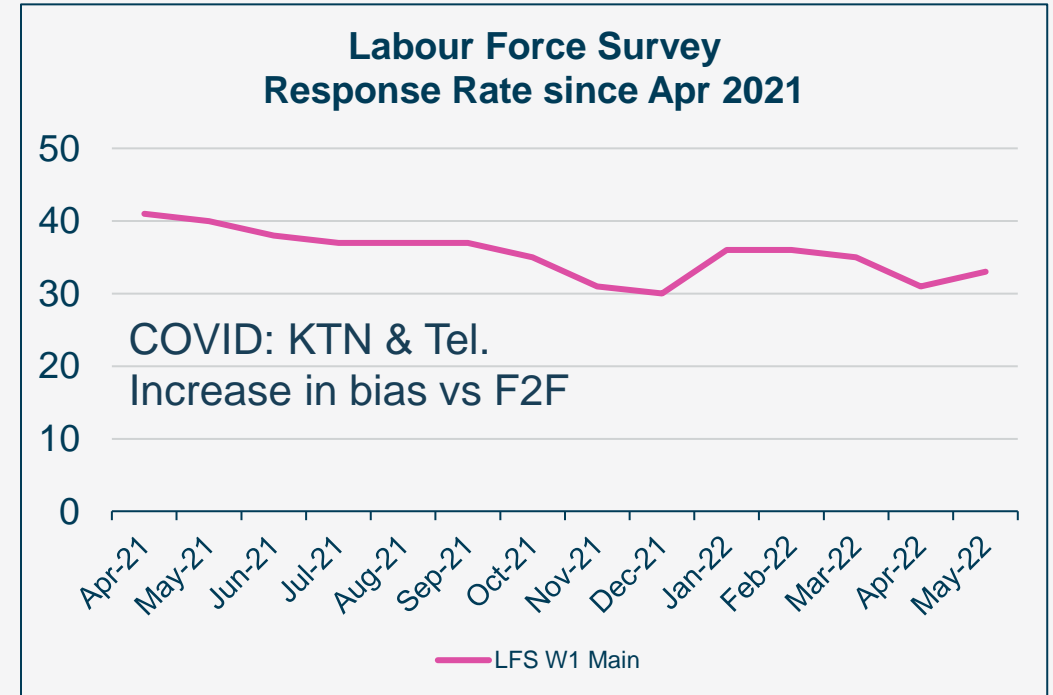# Operational Challenges

- 'Knock to Nudge (KTN)' – April 21
- Initial +10% response reducing
- Respondent behaviours evolving
- Top 3 operational challenges:

Labour Force Survey Response Rate since Apr 2021

COVID: KTN & Tel. Increase in bias vs F2F

LFS W1 Main

Insufficient field force resources (pandemic / cost of living / sample sizes)

'Knock to Nudge' leakage - not as effective as in-home interviewing

Escalating travel costs impacting calling patterns

Currently averaging only 1.5 calls per respondent in single time-slot.

Operational Challenges

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Escalating travel costs impacting
calling patterns

1. Return to 'pre-COVID' sample sizes

2. Re-instate more F2F interviewing

3. Expand recruitment efforts

4. Exploring options on pay/travel issues
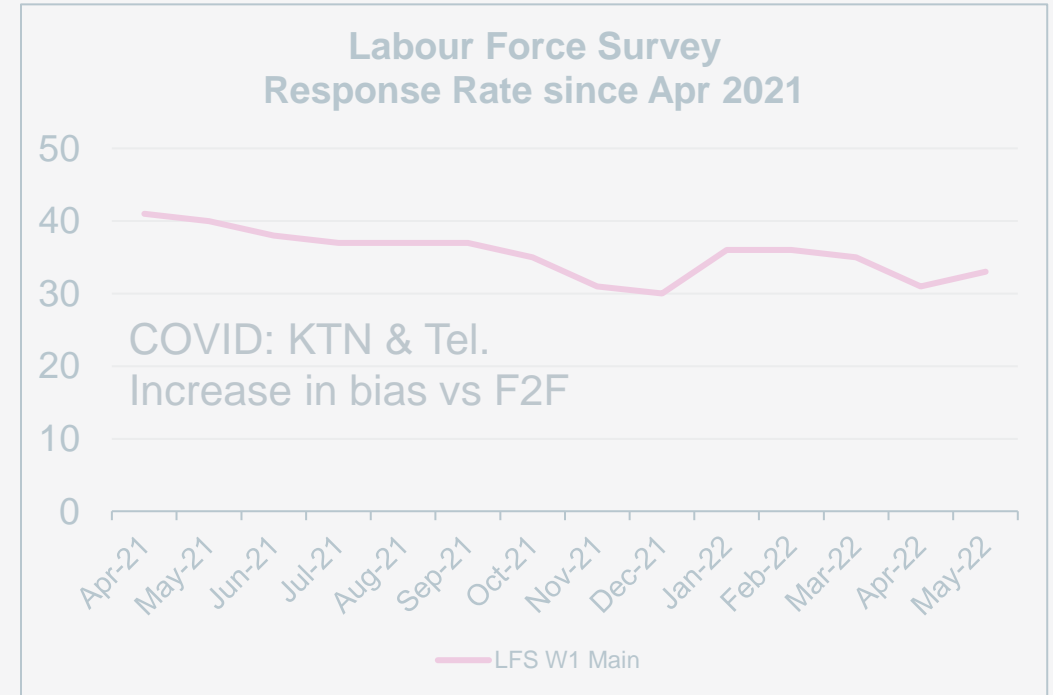
Strategic Challenges

Sustainability

Cost

Respondent Environment

Workforce

Quality

Addressing the Strategic Quality Challenge

Three priority areas for data collection

1. Reducing Bias

2. Reducing Attrition

3. Improving Response

- Ensuring representative achieved sample
- Focus on national and local improvements
- Drive to maximise inclusivity
- **Minimise variability in response across**
  - **Index of Multiple of Deprivation**
  - **Output Area Classification**
  - **Geographic Regions**
- Evaluation of proportional make-up of achieved sample for age, sex, disability, tenure, ethnicity, occupation, industry

Future of Face-to-Face Data Collection

- An intensely valuable asset – deployed sparingly…:

Targeted deployment in support of an online-first/telephone data collection approach

Complete within next 5 years

Where online/telephone data collection is not appropriate

Quality assurance and validation exercises

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Adaptive Survey Design & Responsive Operation

- Face to face data collection applied to specific sub-groups to reduce non-response bias:

| Invite all to take part online | Promote telephone capture for those who haven't responded | Follow-up on doorstep (knock-to-nudge), targeted at under-represented areas | Face-to-face interviews only where really needed |

Plus tele-matched calls for GB

Optimising inclusivity and response

- Funnelling from an online-first design to a multi-mode survey
- Telephone capture promoted in reminder letter
- Not all non-responding households receive field visits
- Focus on minimising variability in response rates geographically rather than maximising overall response
- Targeted use of resources, funnelling most expensive options towards those who won't respond otherwise

Adaptive Survey Design & Responsive Operation

- Face to face data collection applied to specific sub-groups to reduce non-response bias.

- In development (within a year):
  - Responsive operation - real time monitoring of non-response bias with live field interventions
  - Targeted community engagement

- For the future:
  - Over-sample under-represented areas
  - Targeted materials / communications
  - 'Signs of life data' and field intel. to inform field operations

'Live' experimental LMS data
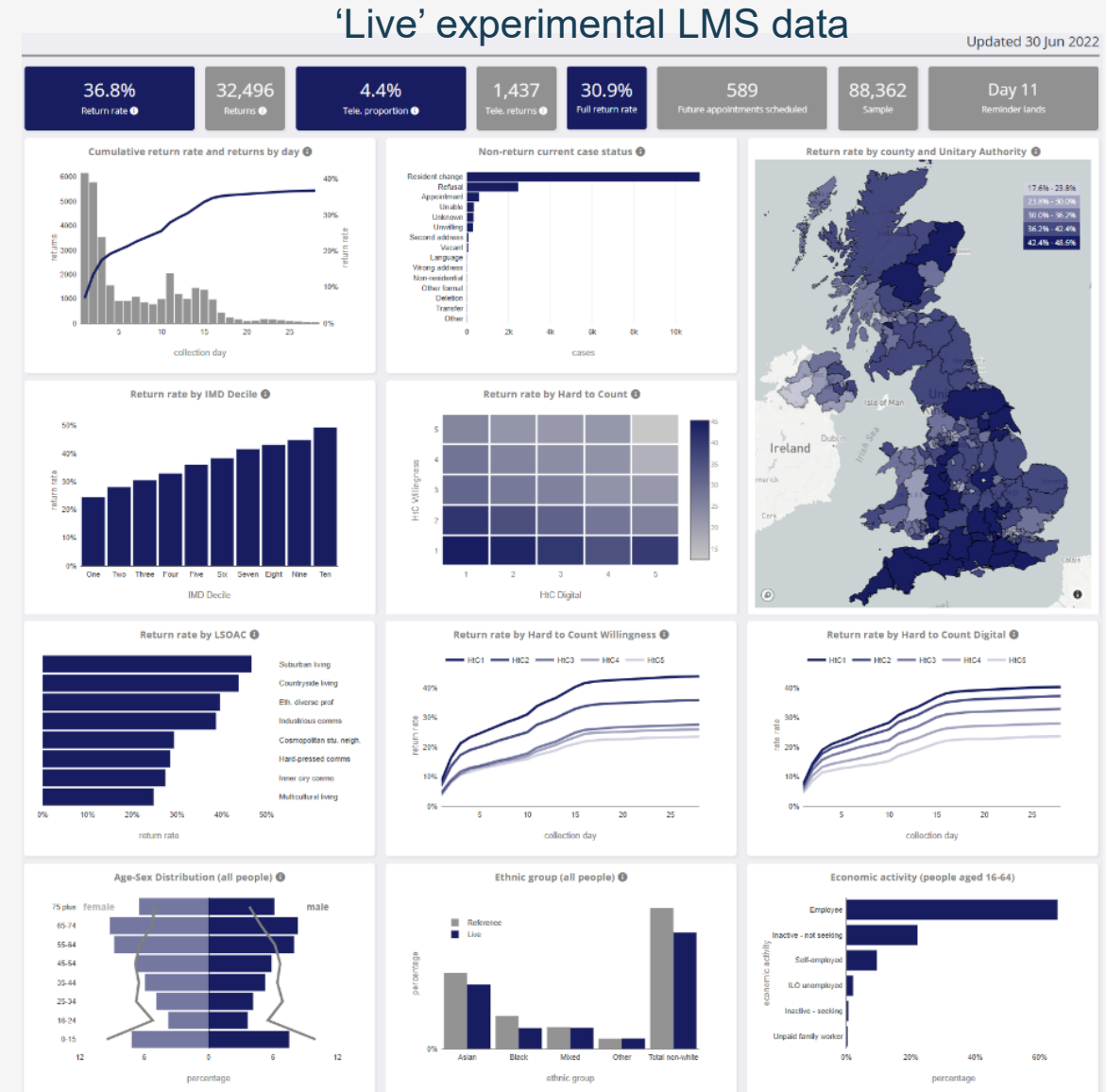
A Different Future Field Community. The Field Redesign Project…

- Set up at pace and is now working through potential options for a re-designed field community

- Smaller and focused where it counts, getting engagement in those hard to reach areas… Community Engagement Officers to help us do this ?

- Moving from a 3 month negotiated workload planning to weekly automated allocation which can be traded and moved from interviewer to interviewer to get optimum coverage

- Electric (or hybrid) vehicles – looking at a salary sacrifice scheme/car leasing scheme that would be attractive to our Field Community

- Multi-grade, more-diverse – create roles for mentors, trainers and introduce a clear progression pathway for our Field colleagues

A tougher role?

A Different Future Field Community. The Field Redesign Project…

- Merging my 3 field communities (Face to Face, Telephone Operations and our International Passenger Survey Interviewers) to operate as one Field Community, moving resource around where I need it, resolving those saturated areas and opening up a diverse role for my field communities

- Making their contracts more flexible that will meet the ever changing requirements and move them onto corporate systems and platforms that will negate the need for a heavily resourced support team

- Field tech refresh so they have the right tools for the job

- Standing up a Tech helpline to help our respondents with on line completion of our surveys

- Re-brand the Field Communities and exploit the ONS brand more so we have respondents who know who we are and why their help is so important

Thank you

Questions?

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