

DISPLAY OF FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS AT FOOD BUSINESS PREMISES IN ENGLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND AND WALES

Report prepared for



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1 Executive Summary

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is a Food Standards Agency (FSA)/local authority partnership initiative operating in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (NI). It provides information about hygiene standards in food premises at the time of inspections carried out by local authorities to check compliance with legal requirements. This transparency allows consumers to make informed choices and provides an important incentive for businesses to achieve and maintain compliance with food hygiene law.

The scheme covers businesses supplying or serving food direct to consumers such as restaurants, takeaways, cafés, pubs, hotels, schools, hospitals, care homes, supermarkets and other retailers. In Wales, since the end of November 2014, the scheme has also applied to food businesses that supply food only to other businesses and that are inspected by their local authority (such as food manufacturers and wholesale providers).

There are six hygiene ratings on a simple numerical scale ranging from '0' (urgent improvement necessary) to '5' (very good). Ratings are published on the FSA website (and via phone apps), and there is open access to the data. Businesses are given stickers showing their rating for display at their premises – those in England and NI are encouraged to display these, while those in Wales are now required by law to do so.

Since 2011, the FSA has been tracking the proportion of businesses displaying their ratings by means of covert audit and has investigated more about the rationale for and perceived impact of display and non-display of food hygiene ratings via a business telephone survey. This report provides the findings of the latest audit and telephone survey.

It should be noted that there are differences in the profiles of FHRS rated businesses in each country (e.g. types of business, distribution of ratings), so the findings for England, Northern Ireland and Wales should not be directly compared.

1.1 Rates of display

- Of those premises audited, 57% in England, 68% in NI and 73% in Wales were displaying their food hygiene rating somewhere on the premises. This includes businesses where the rating was visible from the outside and those where the auditor had to enter the premises to see the rating.
- Of those premises audited, 41% in England, 46% in NI and 59% in Wales had their food hygiene rating visible from the outside.
- In England, the change from 2014 is not significant for those displaying anywhere on the premises but the increasing trend of greater display across the years has continued (43%, 52%, 53%, and 57% for the years from 2011/12-2015).
- In NI, display rates have increased significantly since 2014 from 56% to 68% for those displaying anywhere on the premises, and from 40% to 46% for those that are visible from outside).
- In Wales, where display is now compulsory, there was a large increase in rates of display anywhere on the premises of 26 percentage points from 2013 when they were last surveyed (47% to 73%).

- In all countries display rates continue to be correlated with rating; seven in ten in England and eight in ten in NI and Wales of 4 or 5 rated businesses display their rating somewhere on the premises. These higher rated businesses were significantly more likely to display than businesses with a rating of 3 or less (a quarter in England, a third in NI and half of businesses in Wales).
- It is not possible to detect changes in display over time for businesses with a 0-2 rating in England and NI due to small sample sizes.
- In Wales there has been a significant increase in display amongst businesses with a 0-2 rating since 2013 (increasing from 17% to 47%), which illustrates the impact of the statutory scheme.

1.2 Motivation and impacts

- Customer perception continues to be the main motivation for businesses to display in England and NI - 72% in both countries say they display so that customers can see they are hygienic.
- In Wales the most commonly cited reason for display is because it is compulsory (62%), with the second most common reason being so that customers can see the business is hygienic (58%).
- Around a third of businesses displaying their rating in England (35%) and Wales (33%) and around two fifths in NI (42%) perceived a positive impact on their business. In England the 2015 finding represents a fall back to 2013 levels. In Wales, perceptions have remained steady since 2013, while in NI perceptions of a positive impact remain higher than they were in 2013.
- The main reasons for non-display in England were having a low food hygiene rating (25%), head office policy (15%) and the non-compulsory nature of the scheme (12%). In NI and Wales the numbers of establishments that did not display their rating were too small to permit the reporting of the reasons for non-display in percentage terms, but the most common reasons cited were: NI - because it was not compulsory; Wales - the business was in the process of decorating or 'spring cleaning'.
- Three in ten businesses in England that did not display their rating said they could be encouraged to do so if their rating was better/higher (30%) and, to a lesser extent, if it was compulsory to do so (14%). In NI and Wales, amongst the small numbers of businesses that did not display their rating, a higher/ better rating was the most common response when asked what would encourage them to display.
- In both England and NI, four in five of those with a 0-4 rating had made changes to the business to try and improve their rating (this question was not asked in Wales).

1.3 Safeguards

- A majority of businesses recalled receiving an inspection report letter: 79% in England, 88% in NI and 93% in Wales.
- There were high levels of awareness of businesses' right to appeal (78%, 83% and 87% in England, NI and Wales respectively), their right to a re-rating (70%, 75% and 78% in England, NI and Wales respectively) and to their right to reply (69%, 71% and 74% in

England, NI and Wales respectively) but low levels of take up of each of these processes (between 1% and 5% in each case).

1.4 Compulsory display/statutory scheme

- In England, more than a half of businesses (51%) felt that making it a legal requirement to display ratings on all entrances would be a very good thing; a further quarter felt it would be a fairly good thing (24%), while 6% felt it would be a bad thing. This question was not asked in NI.
- In Wales, the vast majority of businesses felt positively about the scheme being statutory: – 83% gave positive comments, while 19% gave a negative comment (and some people made both positive and negative comments).

2 Background, Research Objectives and Method

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) was formally launched in November 2010 and operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (NI). It is a local authority/FSA partnership initiative which provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food premises at the time they are inspected to check compliance with legal requirements – the rating given reflects the inspection findings. The scheme enables consumers to make informed choices about where to eat out or shop for food and, through the power of these choices, encourages businesses to improve hygiene standards.

The scheme covers businesses supplying or serving food direct to consumers such as restaurants, takeaways, cafés, pubs, hotels, schools, hospitals, care homes, supermarkets and other retailers. In Wales, since the end of November 2014, the scheme has also applied to food businesses that supply food to other businesses only and are inspected by their local authority (such as food manufacturers and wholesale providers).

The ratings range from 0 (urgent improvement necessary) to 5 (very good).

The ratings for businesses in all three countries are publicly available via the FSA website, so consumers may look them up if they wish¹.

All businesses receive a sticker showing their food hygiene rating. In England and NI, businesses are encouraged, but not required, to display these at their premises in a place that can be easily seen by customers (see below). Previously FHRS certificates were also given to businesses. These stopped being issued in July 2014 but are still valid for display in premises inspected before this date.

In Wales, display of ratings by businesses at their premises became law at the end of November 2013 when the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 came into force; the sticker for Wales is shown above. Certificates have not been issued in Wales since the introduction of Act. The Act provides enforcement powers for failure to display the sticker via the use of Fixed Penalty Notices², or prosecution through the Courts.



¹ See www.food.gov.uk/ratings

² The current fine is £200, reducing to £150 for early payment

In 2014, GfK NOP was commissioned by the FSA to repeat research with food businesses in England, Northern Ireland and Wales that had been given a rating as part of the FHS. The previous research was conducted in England and Northern Ireland in 2011/2012, 2013 and again in 2014; in Wales previous survey waves took place in 2011 and 2013³. As was the case in previous waves, the research recorded the proportion of businesses displaying FHS stickers/certificates at their premises by means of a covert audit, and aimed to provide data to help understand more about the behaviours and attitudes of businesses via a telephone survey. The research also aimed to look at any differences in display rates and attitudes towards the schemes over time.

The premises included in the research had all been inspected and given a rating as part of the FHS and were sampled from the database of premises held by the FSA. In England and NI, the sample included some businesses inspected before July 2014 (when the certificate ceased being issued). In Wales, all sampled businesses had been inspected in the previous 12 months, i.e. since the introduction of the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013.

Fieldwork in England and NI ran between February and March 2015; in Wales, fieldwork took place in November and December 2014.

2.1 Overall objectives

The display audit and business survey set out to

- ascertain how many food businesses that have been given a food hygiene rating display this at their premises, and where this was displayed
- examine reasons for, and impact of, display/non-display and find out what would encourage display
- determine awareness and use of safeguards and attitudes towards the statutory scheme.

In addition the survey sought to find out

- the proportion of businesses displaying their rating by rating (0 to 5), by type of business and by region
- whether display rates have changed over time compared with audits conducted in 2011/12 and 2013 in Wales and in 2011/12, 2013 and 2014 in England and NI
- what could be learned from the findings in Wales relating to the requirement for compulsory display of ratings.

2.2 Audit of businesses

A covert audit of businesses was first carried out by the GfK Mystery Shopping team to see whether businesses were

- displaying their rating sticker (or certificate in England and NI)
- making it clearly visible from the outside (only if the sticker were not visible on the outside of the premises did the auditor enter the premises to look for evidence)
- displaying alternative formats to the sticker (certificate) showing a rating

³ see http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/732-1-1244_FHS_Report-13_December_2011_-_FINAL.pdf;
http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/758-1-1303_FS244011A_GfK_report_-_FINAL_FOR_PUBLICATION.pdf;
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fhrs-display-research-report.pdf> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FHS-FHS%20display%20report%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

Representative samples of premises were drawn in England, NI and Wales from the FHRS database. The total number of businesses audited is as follows (full details are provided in Appendix A).

- England - 429
- NI - 445
- Wales - 430

2.3 Quantitative survey

Following the audit, a telephone survey was conducted to find out

- whether businesses are aware of the scheme
- what would encourage them to display their rating if they are not doing so already
- the reasons for and the impact on business of displaying their rating
- what improvements have been made to increase their rating if they received a rating less than 5
- awareness and use of safeguard measures (right to appeal, right to a revisit for re-rating following improvements, and right to reply)
- attitudes towards compulsory display

The total number of businesses interviewed per country is as follows:

- England - 506 (of which 240 had been audited)
- NI - 510 (of which 244 had been audited)
- Wales - 500 (of which 233 had been audited)

Further details of the telephone survey (profile of respondents, copy of questionnaire, etc) may be found in Appendices A and C.

2.4 Changes from previous audits/surveys

The following points highlight changes in the design and content of the 2014/15 research programme and that of earlier audit/survey waves:

- The FHRS was put on a statutory footing in Wales in November 2013. The legislation includes provisions making it compulsory for businesses to display their rating at their premises. This means that the scheme in Wales is not directly comparable to that in England and NI. As the image below shows, the stickers issued to businesses under the new statutory scheme in Wales are different to those issued under the voluntary scheme as they now include the Welsh Government logo as well as the FSA logo. In this report, unless otherwise specified, the audit results refer to display of the statutory scheme sticker.



- Businesses in England and NI were asked new questions to explore whether those with 0 to 4 ratings made any changes to improve their rating⁴.
- Businesses in all countries were asked new questions about their knowledge and claimed use of safeguard measures: right to appeal, right to a re-visit following improvements, and right to reply.
- Questions were also added on attitudes to compulsory display of ratings at premises in Wales and on the potential for mandatory display of ratings in England.
- Questions were removed on awareness of publicity.

2.5 Notes on the report

The following points explain the way in which the results have been reported.

- There were two samples used in the telephone survey – the first was the sample of businesses visited during the audit, the second was a representative sample of premises drawn from the FSA database and used to ‘top up’ the telephone survey to circa 500 interviews overall in each country. To assist the reader, charts relating to audit results have a different colour scheme (blue palette) to those depicting telephone survey results (green palette).
- The terms business, premises and outlet are used interchangeably to describe the businesses included in the research programme.
- Both the audit and telephone data have been weighted. Charts in the report show the unweighted base sizes, while tables show unweighted and weighted base sizes. Details of the weighting schemes can be found in Appendix A.
- The differences noted in the report are statistically significant (those that are not significant have been identified as such) based on a two tailed significance test at the 95% confidence interval. This means that there is a 5% chance that a difference detected in the data will be due to chance. Sub-groups with a sample size of less than 30 are too small for statistical significance testing so comments on groups of this size should be treated with caution. Any subgroups with less than 100 cases are denoted by ** in tables and should also be treated with caution.
- In the charted data, significant differences between survey waves are marked with a vertical blue arrow, while a slanting blue arrow shows a significant trend across time.
- In the tables, ‘*’ indicates a proportion of less than 0.5% but greater than 0. ‘-’ indicates a zero proportion.
- Where sample sizes are low, analysis of some of the telephone survey findings are based on the results of England and NI combined to give a “total” figure. These figures give a roughly equal weight to each country and have not been adjusted to be proportionate to the number of businesses in each country.

⁴ Copies of the audit and telephone questionnaires are included in Appendices B and C

3 Audit results

This section reviews the findings from the audits in England, NI and Wales examining the proportion of premises displaying an FHRs sticker (certificate), the ease of visibility and a profile of those displaying their rating. For Wales, findings are shown for the statutory scheme sticker unless specified otherwise. In addition, the section looks at whether the FHRs rating was displayed in alternative formats to further ascertain businesses' willingness to display consumer information and business promotional material with food hygiene ratings at their premises.

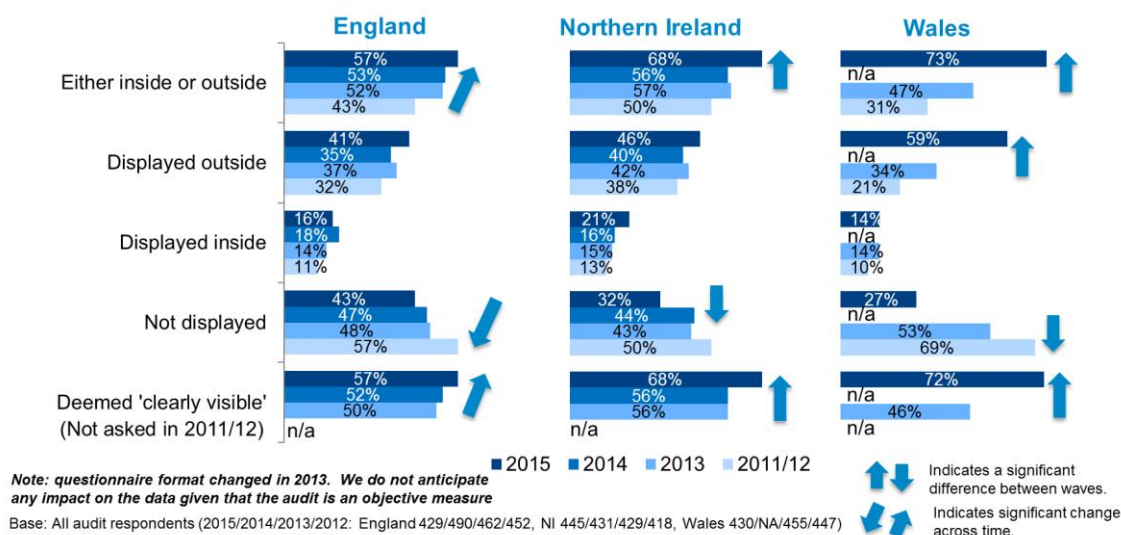
3.1 Proportion of businesses displaying a sticker (or certificate)

Chart 3.1 shows that in England the proportion of businesses displaying their food hygiene rating somewhere on the premises (i.e. outside or inside) has gradually been increasing since 2011/2012 (from 43% in 2011/12 to 57% in 2015). In NI there had been a significant increase in display rates since 2014 (from 56% to 68% in 2015).

In England 41% of businesses display a rating visible from the outside of their premises; the same was true for 46% of audited premises in NI. However, around one fifth displayed the rating inside the premises only: 16% in England and 21% in NI (in both countries, 92% of these premises had their own entrance but displayed inside only; the remainder did not have their own entrance because they were part of a food shopping mall etc).

In Wales, display rates have increased significantly by 26 percentage points since 2013 which corresponds with the introduction of the statutory scheme (47% displayed in 2013 increasing to 73% displaying the statutory scheme sticker in 2015 – chart 3.1). In around three fifths of premises the statutory scheme sticker was visible from the outside (59%). Of the 14% of premises where the statutory scheme sticker was visible only from the inside, the majority had their own entrance (88%), so could have displayed outside. Of those premises with their own entrance(s) visibly displaying the statutory scheme FHRs sticker outside, the vast majority displayed it on all entrances - 96% (this includes premises which had only one entrance). A further 3% had it displayed on at least one of their entrances where there was more than one entrance. Overall, of those premises with their own entrance, 59% had the statutory scheme sticker on display at ALL possible entrances.

Chart 3.1 Display rates (statutory sticker in Wales)



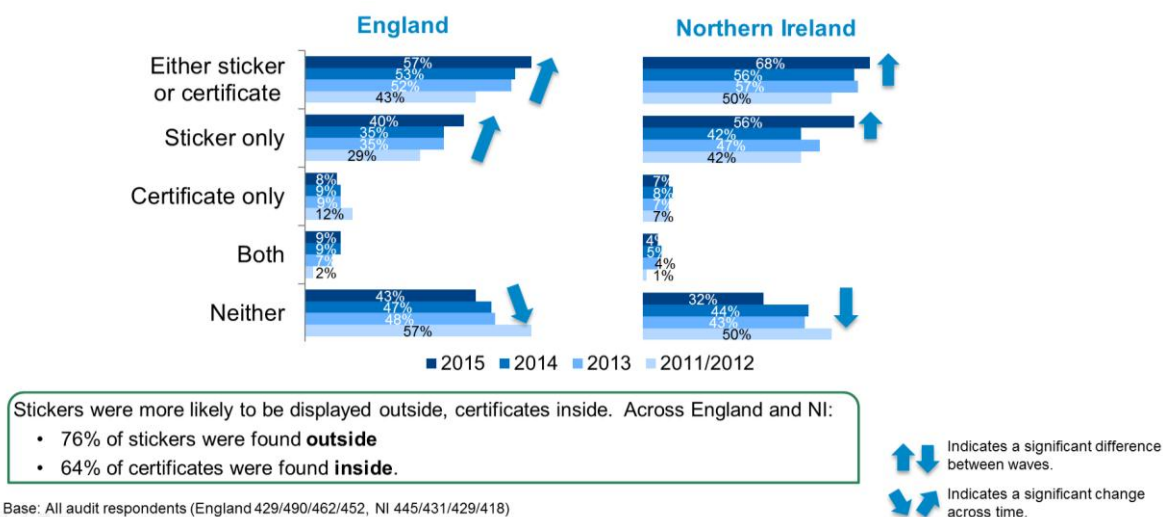
3.2 Mode of display

In 2015, the sticker remained the most common form of display of the food hygiene rating in both countries:

- In England 40% of businesses displayed the sticker only and the proportion doing so had increased over time (29% in 2011/12, 35% in 2013/14). A further 9% of outlets displayed both the sticker and the certificate (chart 3.2).
- In Northern Ireland 56% of businesses displayed the sticker only and the proportion doing so had increased significantly since 2014 (42%). Four per cent displayed both the sticker and the certificate (chart 3.2).

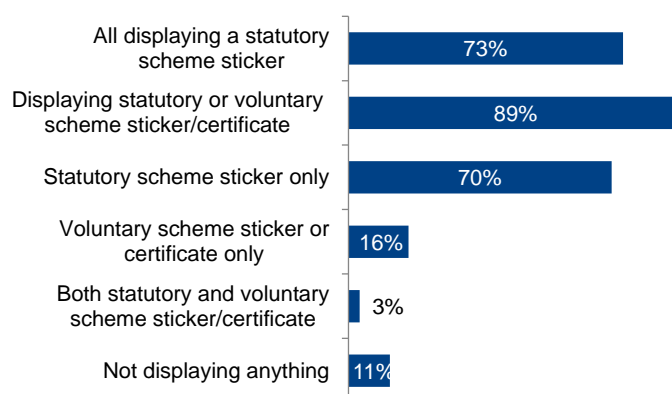
The trend towards displaying the sticker only is not surprising as certificates have not been issued since July 2014 (although if the business has not been inspected since then, it will still have a valid certificate).

Chart 3.2 Mode of display in England and NI



The display of the statutory scheme sticker in Wales in 2015 was not yet universal amongst those businesses that had been inspected since November 2013 when the new Act came into force: 73% were displaying their statutory rating sticker somewhere on the premises (chart 3.3). Small proportions of businesses were continuing to display a voluntary scheme sticker/certificate (16%) or nothing at all (11%). Three per cent were displaying both a voluntary and a statutory rating. In the majority of cases (76%), the rating under the voluntary and statutory schemes was exactly the same⁵. However, of those that were displaying only the voluntary scheme sticker 18% had a higher rating under the voluntary scheme which may be the reason for showing this and not the statutory scheme sticker.

Chart 3.3 Mode of display in Wales



Base: all audit respondents Wales (430)

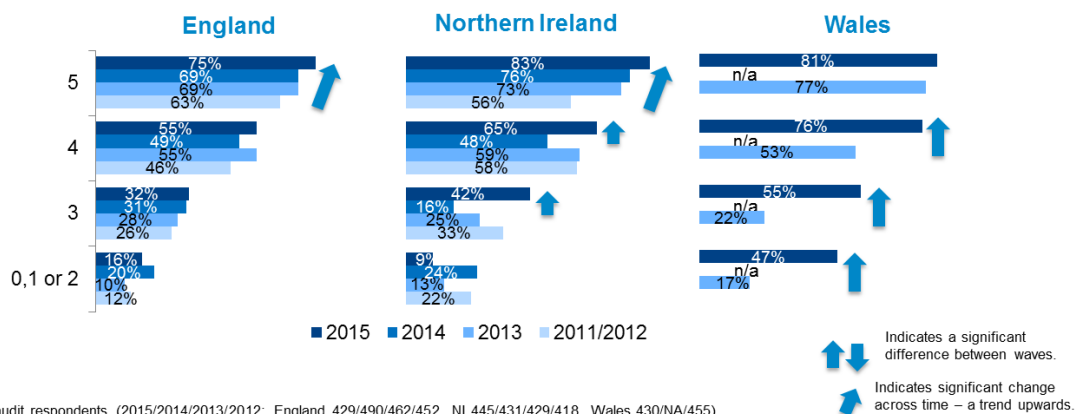
⁵ Findings must be treated with caution due to low base size of 69 (unweighted)

3.3 Display by rating

In England and NI, outlets with a higher rating remained significantly more likely than those with lower ratings to display their rating anywhere on their premises, either outside or inside (chart 3.4).

In Wales, those with a higher rating were also significantly more likely than those with a lower rating to display their rating somewhere on the premises (either outside or inside). As expected, since the statutory scheme was introduced in Wales, there has been an increase in display across all ratings. For those with a 0-2 rating, the display rate has increased from 17% in 2013 to 47% in 2015⁶; for those with a rating of 3 from 22% to 55%⁷; and for those with a 4 from 53% to 76%.

Chart 3.4 Display by rating outside or inside of the premises (Wales statutory sticker)



Base: All audit respondents (2015/2014/2013/2012: England 429/490/462/452, NI 445/431/429/418, Wales 430/NA/455)
 Base of ratings: 2015 England 5 (225), 4 (97), 3 (65), 0-2(42) NI 5 (223), 4 (140), 3 (63), 0-2 (19) Wales 5 (208), 4 (117), 3 (58), 0-2(47)

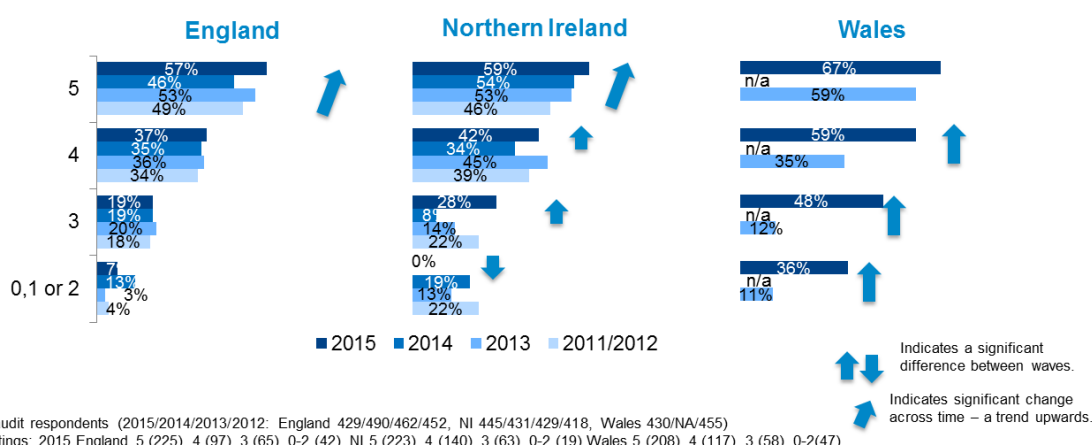
⁶ These findings should be treated with caution due to low base sizes. Ratings of 0-2; 2013 (88), 2015 (47).

⁷ These findings should be treated with caution due to low base sizes. Ratings of 3; 2013 (100), 2015 (58).

When the findings are considered in terms of the proportions displaying their rating on the outside of the premises, a similar pattern is observed: the higher their rating, the more likely the business was to visibly display this on the outside of their premises (Chart 3.5). This was true across England, NI and Wales.

As was the case for display anywhere on the premises, since the statutory scheme was introduced in Wales, there has been an increase in display *on the outside of the premises* across all ratings. For those with a 0-2 rating, the display rate has increased from 11% in 2013 to 36% in 2015⁸; for those with a rating of 3 from 12% to 48%⁹; and for those with a 4 from 35% to 59%.

Chart 3.5 Display outside the premises by rating (Wales statutory sticker)



3.4 Display by business type

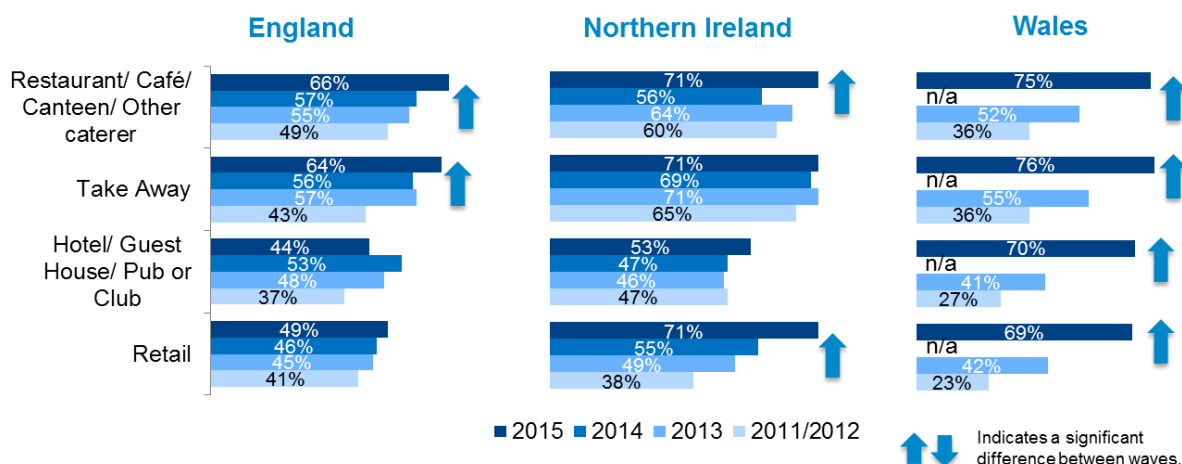
When the findings relating to display anywhere on the premises are considered by business type, in England there were significant increases in display amongst restaurants/cafes/canteens/other caterer and takeaway outlets, while in NI significant increases in display were evident for Restaurants/cafes/canteens/other caterer and Retail outlets (chart 3.6).

As expected, given the statutory nature of the scheme in Wales, increases in the rates of display were evident across all business types.

⁸ These findings should be treated with caution due to low base sizes. Ratings of 0-2; 2013 (88), 2015 (47).

⁹ These findings should be treated with caution due to low base sizes. Ratings of 3; 2013 (100), 2015 (58).

Chart 3.6 Display by business type



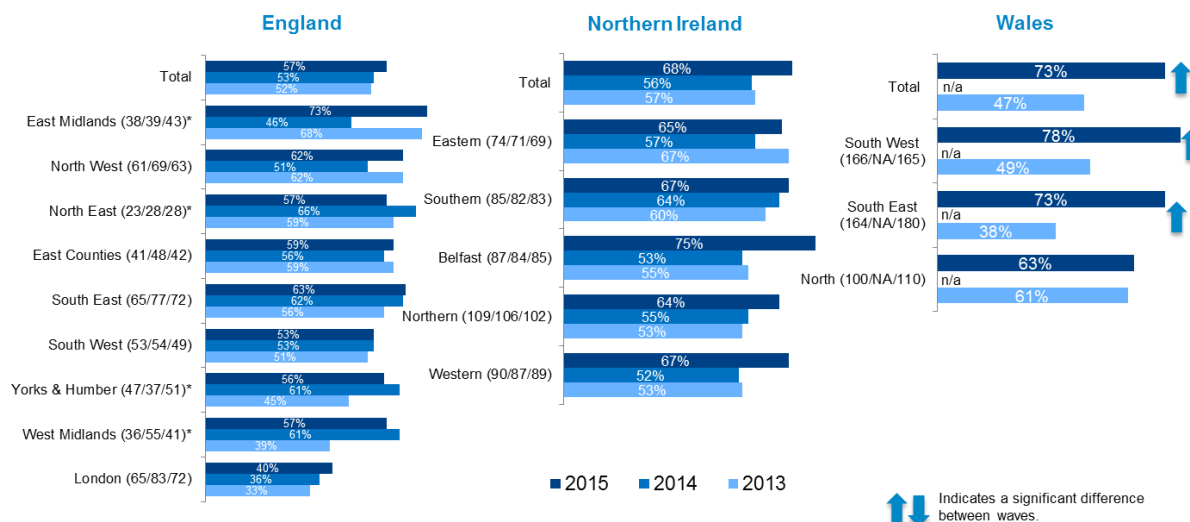
Base: All audit respondents (2015/2014/2013/2012: England 429/490/462/452, NI 445/431/429/418, Wales 430/NA/455/447)

3.5 Display by region

Commentary on the findings for display by region in England and NI is hampered by small base sizes. However, in England, London has consistently been the region where businesses are least likely to display their ratings (chart 3.7).

In Wales, there has been a significant increase in display since 2013 in all regions except the North.

Chart 3.7 Display by region



Base: All audit respondents (England 429/490/462, NI 445/431/429, Wales 430/NA/455 - See bases in brackets 2015/2014/2013)
 * Small bases mean that the large changes may be due to sampling error only rather than as a result of real change

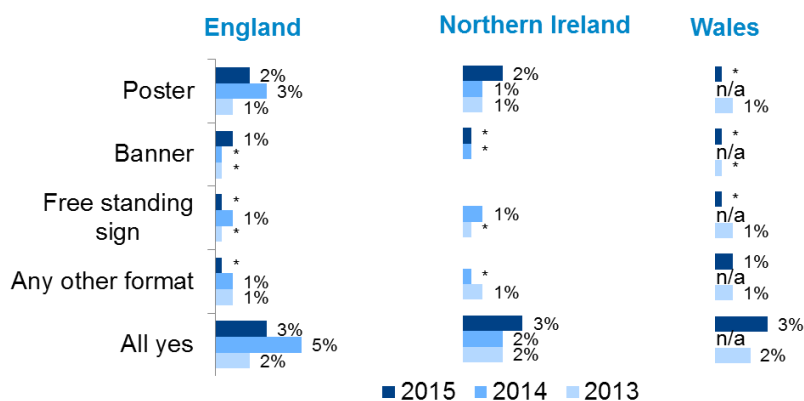
3.6 Alternative formats for displaying ratings

As part of the audit, GfK Mystery Shoppers observed whether businesses were displaying the food hygiene rating in other formats e.g. a poster, banner, free standing sign or another format (the images to the right show some examples of alternative formats of display).



Only a very small proportion of businesses were displaying their rating in alternative ways: 3% in each of England, NI and Wales.

Chart 3.8 Alternative format of display



This chart has been rescaled to show small percentages clearly

Was the FHRS rating displayed in an alternative format?

NB: * Denotes less than 0.5%

Base: All audit respondents 2015/2014/2013 (England 429/490/462, NI 445/431/429, Wales 430/NA/455)

4 Business telephone survey

As in previous years, the telephone survey was undertaken to explore the reasons for and impact on businesses of displaying a food hygiene rating at their premises and, for those not displaying, the reasons for this and the factors that might encourage them to do so. In addition, this year the survey explored businesses' attitudes to compulsory display of ratings at premises and their attitudes to the FHRS more generally, such as awareness and use of safeguards.

In England and NI, small numbers of businesses who had been audited and were at risk of not completing the full telephone survey (e.g. due to time pressures), were allowed to complete a very short route through the questionnaire to confirm basic information about display.¹⁰ As such, these businesses are *not* included in the bases for most questions asked in the telephone survey.

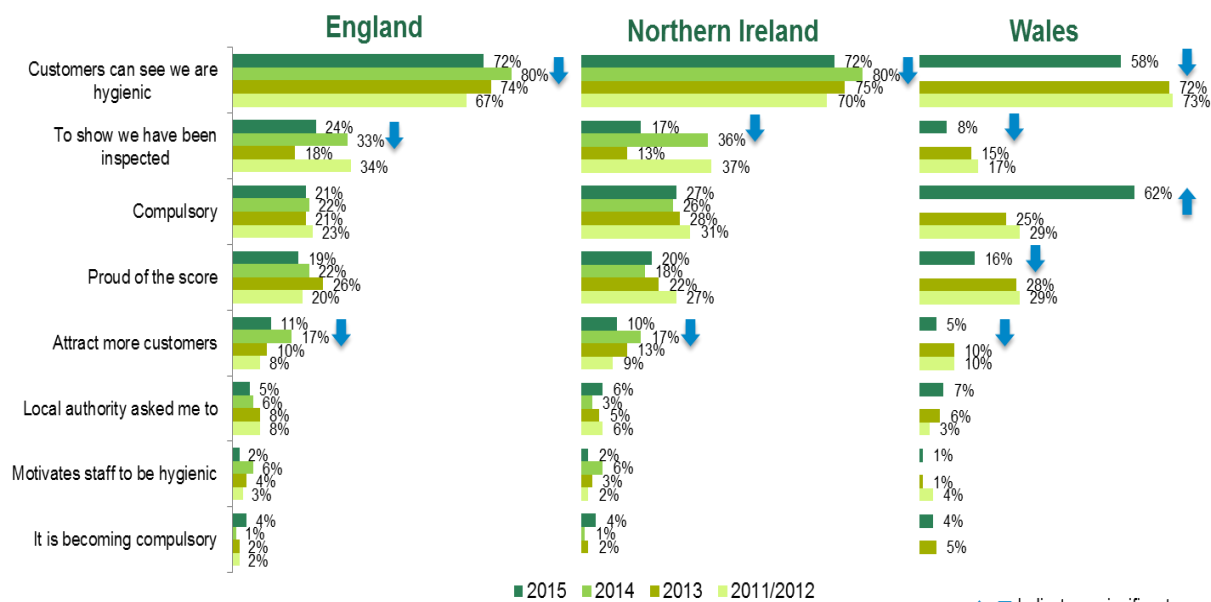
4.1 Reasons for display of ratings

All long interview respondents claiming to display a food hygiene rating were asked to state their reason(s) for doing so (chart 4.1). In England and NI, similar to previous waves, the most common drivers to display were linked to customer perception: customers can see we are hygienic; to show we have been inspected and proud of the rating (score). Another common reason given was the belief that it was compulsory to display. The proportions of businesses saying they display so that customers can see they are hygienic and to show they have been inspected, has declined significantly since 2014.

In Wales, there was a huge rise in the proportion of businesses who said they display because it is compulsory (from 25% in 2013 to 62% in 2015). This is unsurprising given this is the first survey undertaken since display became a legal requirement in Wales. This corresponds with a significant decline in the proportion of businesses giving reasons for display which were linked to customer perception.

¹⁰ The numbers of audited businesses that completed a short route through the survey were England 6 and NI 22

Chart 4.1 Reasons for display



B18 Why do you display the Food Hygiene Rating in your premises?

Base: All long interview respondents with FHRS on display (England 362/337/316/296, NI 409/403/372/308, Wales 467/NA/340/245)

↑ ↓ Indicates a significant difference between waves.

4.2 Impact of display

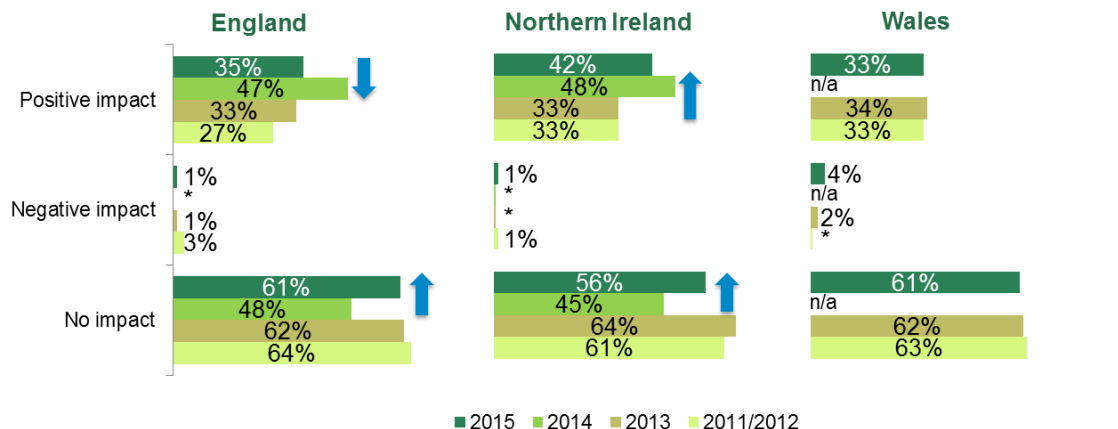
All respondents who claimed to be displaying their food hygiene rating were asked to state, what, if any, impact or impacts displaying the rating had had on their business (chart 4.2).

In England and NI the proportion of businesses saying that display had had no impact on their business had increased since 2014 (to 61% in England and 56% in NI, these proportions were similar to those reported in 2013). In England the proportion of businesses mentioning a positive impact had dropped from 47% in 2014 to 35% in 2015, bringing the findings back in line with those reported in 2013 (in NI, the proportion of businesses mentioning a positive impact had also decreased since 2014 but this was not statistically significant).

The findings in Wales were similar to those reported in previous research waves, with one third of respondents mentioning a positive impact (33%) and three fifths saying that display of the food hygiene rating had had no impact on their business (61%).

Very few businesses (4% or less) in any of the three countries mentioned that display had a negative impact on their business.

Chart 4.2 Impact of display



NB: * Denotes less than 0.5%

B19 What, if any, impact or impacts has displaying the Food Hygiene Rating had on your business?

Base: All long interview respondents with FHRS on display (England 362/337/316/296, NI 409/403/372/308, Wales 467/NA/340/245)

↑ ↓ Indicates a significant difference between waves

4.3 Nature of impacts

Respondents were also asked about the nature of the positive or negative impacts of display.

Across all three countries, the three most common positive impacts reported related to customer perception (chart 4.3), namely: greater customer confidence, better reputation amongst customers; and more customers.

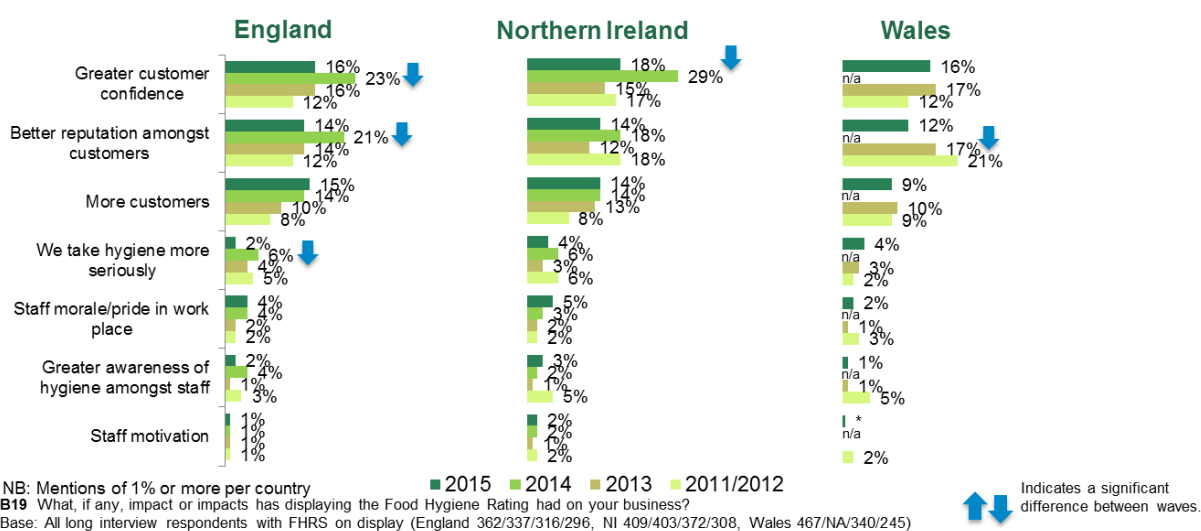
In England and NI, there has been a notable decline since 2014 in the proportions of businesses mentioning greater customer confidence. In England, there had also been a drop since 2014 in the proportion of businesses mentioning better reputation amongst customers.

In Wales, there has been a decline in the proportion of businesses saying display gives them a better reputation amongst customers.

The negative business impacts resulting from displaying the food hygiene rating most commonly mentioned by businesses were:

- England and NI: lower customer confidence and fewer customers resulting from the display of low ratings
- Wales: fewer customers, worse reputation amongst customers and lower customer confidence, all resulting from the display of low ratings.

Chart 4.3 Positive impacts of display



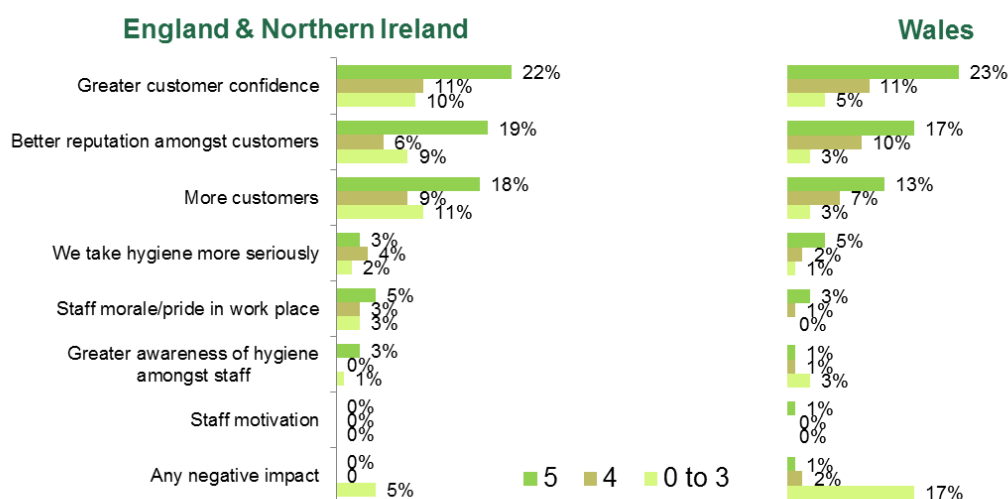
4.3.1 Impact of display by rating

Reported impacts of display are shown by rating in table 4.3 and 4.4. The findings for England and NI are considered together in this section due to small sample sizes.

Similar to previous waves, those with a rating of 5 were most likely to mention a positive impact of display on their business compared to those with lower ratings and this was the case across all three

countries. In contrast, businesses with a low rating were more likely to mention a negative impact of display (Chart 4.4).

Chart 4.4 Positive impacts of display by rating

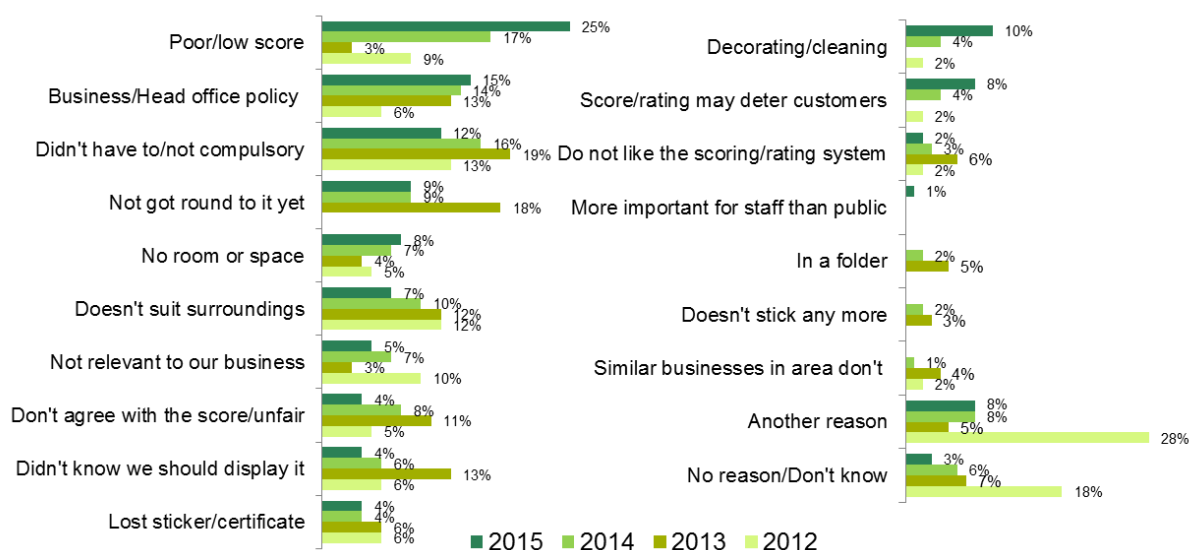


B19 What, if any, impact or impacts has displaying the Food Hygiene Rating had on your business?
Base: All long interview respondents with FHRS on display (England/NI 771 Wales 467)

4.4 Reasons for non-display

All respondents who said that they did not display their food hygiene rating were asked why this was the case. Chart 4.5 summarises the findings for England and shows that the main reasons for non-display were a poor or low rating (score) and head office policy.

Chart 4.5 Reasons for non-display in England



B20 Why is your Food Hygiene Rating not publicly on display?
Base: All respondents with FHRS not on display (England 71/181/68/52)

In NI and Wales, very small numbers of businesses reported that they did not display their rating. Chart 4.6 presents the numbers of respondents (as opposed to percentages) giving each reason for non-display. In NI, the most common reasons for non-display, mentioned by 7 out of 28 businesses, was because the scheme was not compulsory. In Wales, 3 out of the 8 businesses who said they did not display said this was because they were decorating or spring cleaning their premises.

Chart 4.6 Summary of findings relating to reasons for non-display of rating in NI and Wales

Northern Ireland (28)	No.	Wales (8)	No.
It is not compulsory	7	Decorating/Spring cleaning	3
No room/no space	4	Do not agree with rating	2
Poor/low score/rating	3	Lost the sticker	1
Business policy not to display	2	Does not stick any more	1
Do not agree with rating	2	Poor/low score or rating	1
Not relevant to our business	2		
Lost the sticker	2		
Decorating/Spring cleaning	2		

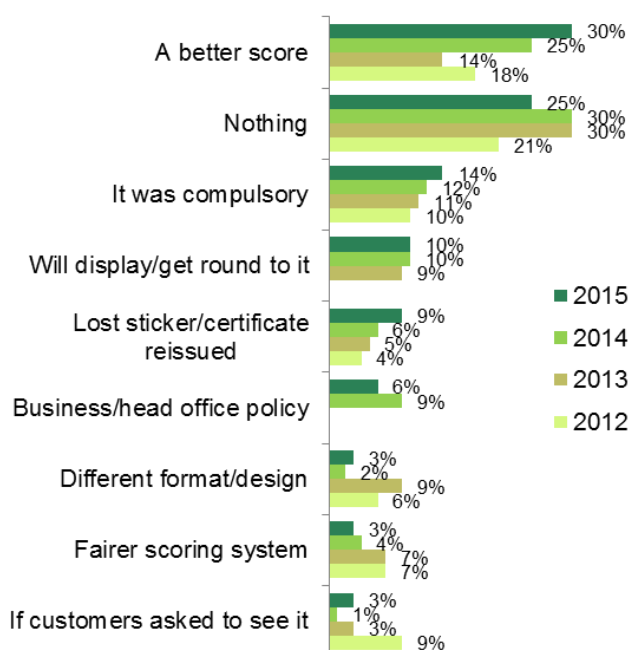
B20 Why is your Food Hygiene Rating not **publicly** on display?

Base: All respondents with FHRS not on display (Northern Ireland 28, Wales 8)

4.5 Encouraging greater display

All respondents who said that they did not display their food hygiene rating at their premises were asked what might encourage them to do so. Chart 4.7 summarises the findings for England and shows that a higher rating (score) was the most common response.

Chart 4.7 Encouraging wider use in England



B21 What would encourage you to **publicly** display your Food Hygiene Rating/Information Scheme Inspection Result?
 Base: All respondents with FHRs not on display (England 71/181/68/52)

In NI and Wales, very few businesses were not displaying their rating. Chart 4.8 presents the numbers of respondents citing each motivation to display (as opposed to percentages). In both countries, the most commonly mentioned response was a better (higher) rating (score), mentioned by 9 out of 28 businesses in NI and 3 out of 8 businesses in Wales.

Chart 4.8: Summary of findings relating to what would encourage display of rating in NI and Wales

Northern Ireland (28)	No.	Wales (8)	No.
If we had a better score	9	If we had a better score	3
If it was compulsory	3	Will do so when I get round to it	2
If our lost sticker was re-issued	2	A fairer rating scheme	1
Others	3	If our lost sticker was re-issued	1
Nothing would encourage me	9	Don't know	1

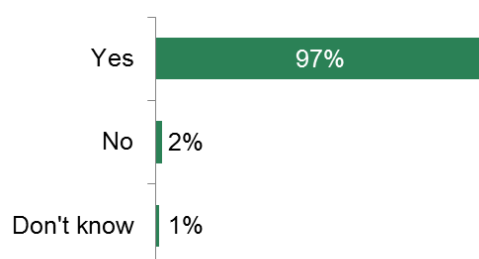
B21 What would encourage you to **publicly** display your Food Hygiene Rating/Information Scheme Inspection Result?
 Base: All respondents with FHRs not on display (Northern Ireland 28, Wales 8)

4.6 Attitudes to compulsory display

4.6.1 Wales

All respondents in Wales were asked whether they were aware that having their food hygiene rating on display at their premises was a legal requirement. Nearly all (97%) were aware that this is now the case (Chart 4.9).

Chart 4.9 Awareness of legal requirement to display ratings in Wales

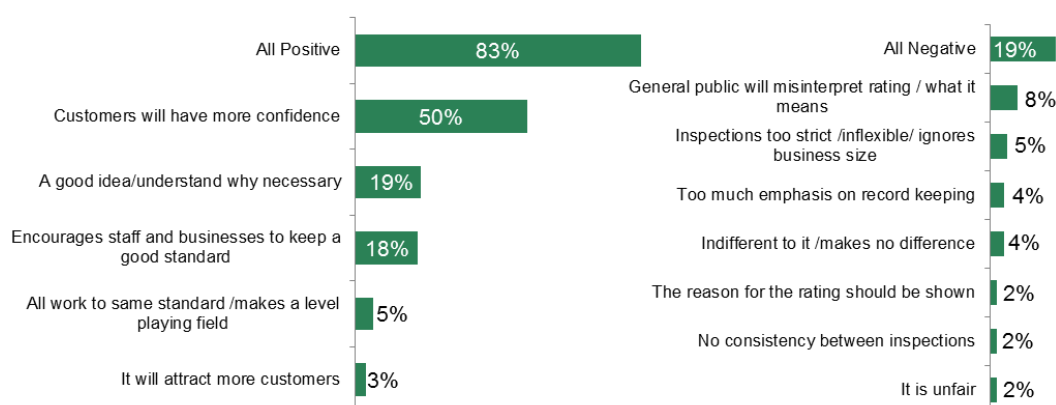


B21h And were you aware before this interview that it is a legal requirement in Wales to have your FHRs rating publically on display?

Base: If they are aware that they have received their FHRs. Wales only (474)

Asked to consider how they felt about the scheme, most had positive comments to make about the compulsory display of food hygiene ratings (83% compared to 19% who referred to it in a negative context). Customer confidence made up half of the comments in favour of display, followed by just under a fifth mentioning an impact on standards from staff and businesses and/or it generally being a good idea (Chart 4.10).

Chart 4.10 Attitudes to compulsory display in Wales



All positive: Rating 0-3 77%, 4-5 85%, no differences by type of business, Chain 91% Independent 81%

NB Positive and negative add to more than 100% because some people gave both.

B21ji. And how do you feel generally about the Food Hygiene Rating scheme now that it is a legal requirement to display your rating at each of the entrances to your premises?

Base: All who have FHRs in Wales (474)

Chart 4.11 reflects the range of feedback made by businesses that were interviewed relating to display being a legal requirement.

Chart 4.11 Selection of verbatim responses about the statutory requirement for display of FHRS in Wales

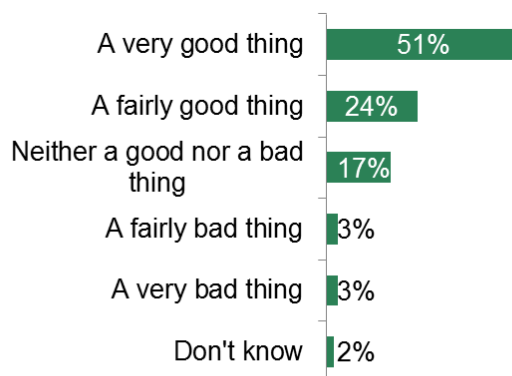


4.6.2 England

Asked how they would feel if a scheme were introduced whereby their business was required by law to display the food hygiene rating at all entrances to the premises (Chart 4.12), most of those interviewed in England (75%) thought that this would be a 'very good thing' or a 'fairly good thing'¹¹. There were no statistically significant differences in the findings by business type, but businesses that were part of a chain were more likely than independent businesses to say that they thought such a scheme would be a 'very good thing' (62% versus 46% respectively). Further, businesses with higher ratings were more likely than those with lower ratings to say the scheme would be a 'very good thing' (54% of those rated 4 or 5 versus 39% of those rated 0-3; in contrast those rated 0-3 were more likely to say it would be a 'fairly good thing'; 34% versus 21% of those rated 4 or 5).

¹¹ this question was not asked in NI

Chart 4.12 Attitudes to introducing compulsory display in England



B29ga. And how would you feel if a scheme was introduced where you were required by law to display your FHRs rating at all of the entrances to your premises. Would you say it would be a...
 Base: All who have FHRs in England (430)

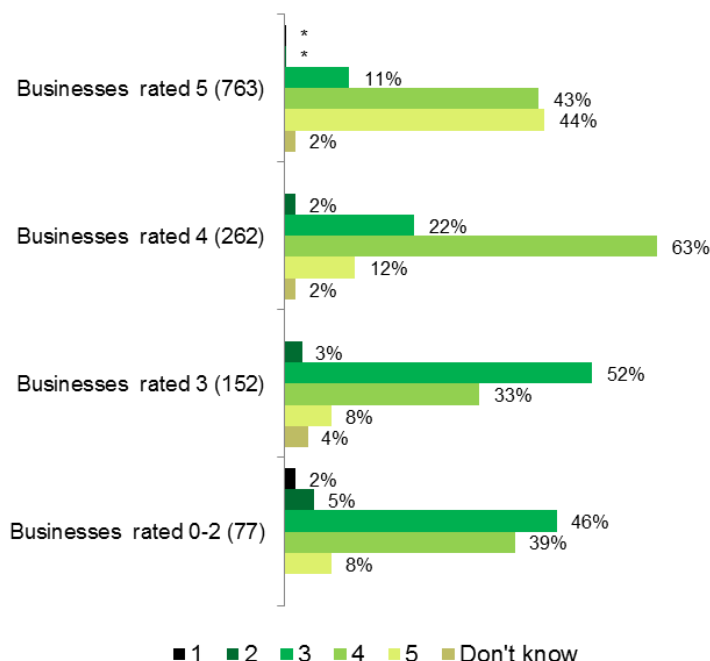
4.7 Attitudes towards the FHRs generally

4.7.1 Lowest acceptable ratings for display

All businesses were asked to think about the lowest rating they would be happy to display and Chart 4.13 shows the lowest that respondents would consider good enough for display by rating (findings are combined across England, Wales and NI).

The perception of what is 'good enough' correlates with the rating already achieved. Almost nine in ten of those already holding a rating of 5 said that a 4 or 5 would be 'good enough', with just 11% of this group mentioning a rating of 3 (and less than 0.5% mentioning a rating of 1 or 2). Half of those with a rating of 3 thought that this was good enough to display, while 33% of this group felt a rating of 4 was needed and 8% felt a rating of 5 was needed.

Chart 4.13 The lowest rating respondents would consider good enough for display (combined results across England, Wales and NI).



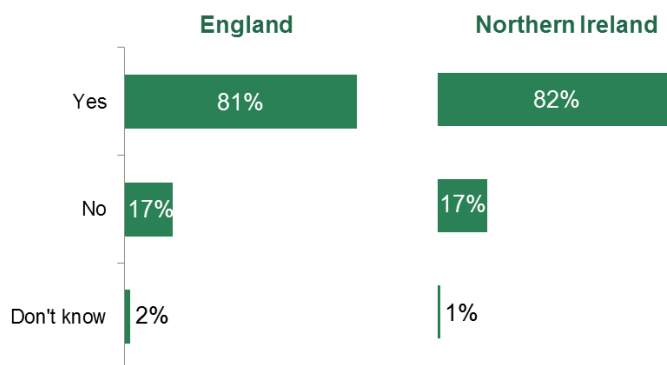
NB: * Denotes less than 0.5%

B21b What is the lowest Food Hygiene rating that you would consider 'good enough' to display at your premises?
Base: All who have FHRS (1344) Rating bases are in brackets on the chart.

4.7.2 Improving standards

Establishments with a rating of 0-4 in England and Northern Ireland who recalled receiving an inspection letter were asked if they had made changes at their premises to improve their food hygiene rating¹². Just over 8 in 10 had done so in both countries (Chart 4.14).

Chart 4.14 Whether establishments with a 0-4 rating have done anything to improve their rating



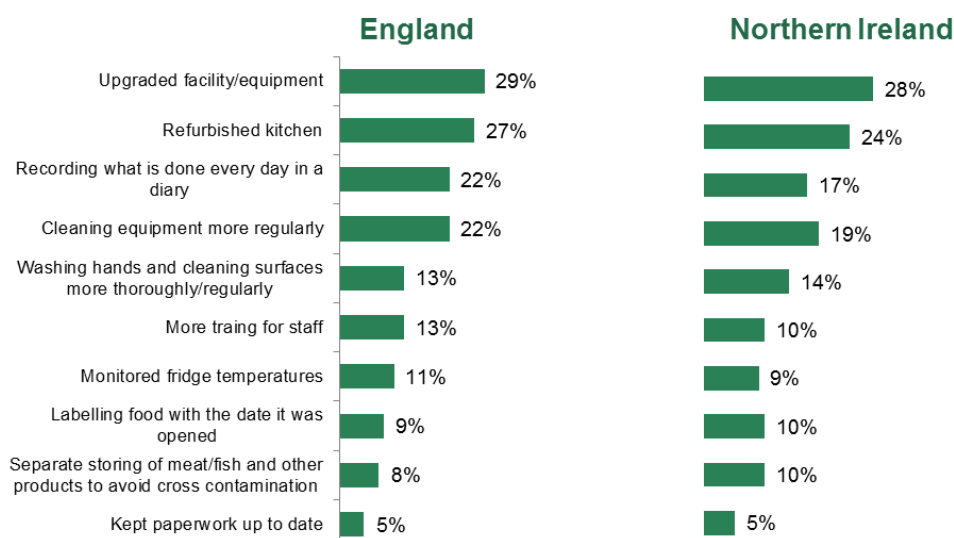
B9e Have you made any changes to the way you do things at your premises in order to improve your Food Hygiene rating?
Base: Those who received an inspection report letter and have FHRS Rating of 0-4 (England 160, NI 148)

¹² This question was not asked of respondents in Wales

4.7.3 Actions taken to improve ratings

A range of activities had been undertaken by those who had made changes at their premises in England and NI in a bid to improve their rating¹³. Upgrading facilities/equipment and refurbishing the kitchen were the most mentioned improvements in both countries. Chart 4.15 gives the full range of responses per country.

Chart 4.15 Actions taken to improve ratings



NB: Mentions of 5% or more per country

B9f And what changes have you made at your premises in order to achieve a higher Food Hygiene rating?

Base: Those who received an inspection report letter and have made changes to improve FHRS rating (England 128, NI 119)

4.7.4 Customer comments and use of the ratings for publicity

Chart 4.16 reviews the findings to four questions designed to explore the relationship of display of ratings and publicity for establishments in England and NI¹⁴.

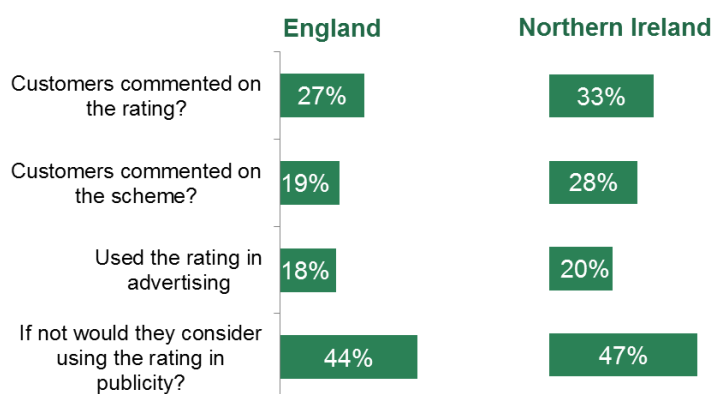
In England just over a quarter (27%) of respondents noted that customers had commented on the actual rating of their premises and a fifth (19%) said customers had commented on the wider scheme; percentages were higher in NI at 33% and 28% respectively.

In terms of using the rating to advertise or publicise the premises, approximately a fifth had done so (18% in England and 20% in NI); of those who had not, just under half would consider doing so (44% in England and 47% in NI).

¹³ this question was not asked of respondents in Wales

¹⁴ this question was not asked of respondents in Wales

Chart 4.16 Customer comments and use of ratings for publicity



B9g Have any customers commented on the Food Hygiene rating that has been awarded to your premises?

Base: All who have FHRS (England 430, NI 440)

B9h And have any customers commented on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in general to you or other members of staff? Base: All who have FHRS (England 430, NI 440)

B9i Have you used the rating you have been given in any advertising publicity or marketing

you have done about your premises? Base: All who know what rating they have been given (England 424, NI 434)

B9j Would you consider using the rating you have been given in any advertising publicity or marketing you have done about your premises in the future?

Base: All who have not used their rating in publicity (England 327, NI 332)

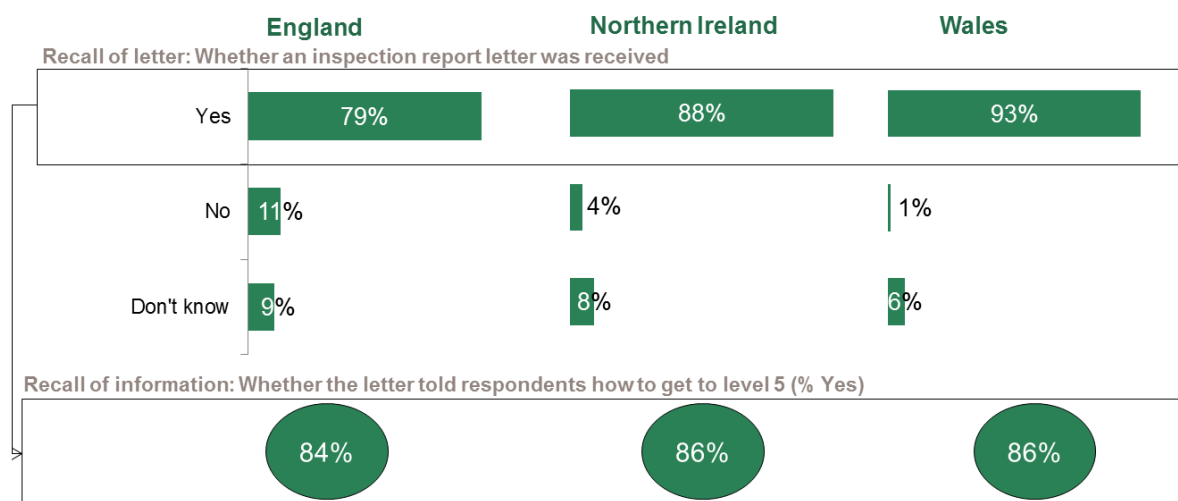
4.8 Inspection report letter and knowledge and use of safeguards

4.8.1 Inspection letter: recall of receipt and details of how to achieve maximum rating

As a new area of investigation in 2014/15, respondents were asked if they recalled receiving an inspection report letter and, if so, if they remembered whether it included information on how to ensure they achieved the highest rating (Chart 4.17).

Very high proportions remembered receiving an inspection report letter (79% in England, 88% in NI and 93% in Wales). Further to this, over eight in ten in each country recalled specific information about how to achieve a level 5 rating.

Chart 4.17 Measures of recall for receipt of inspection report letter and information about how to achieve a maximum rating



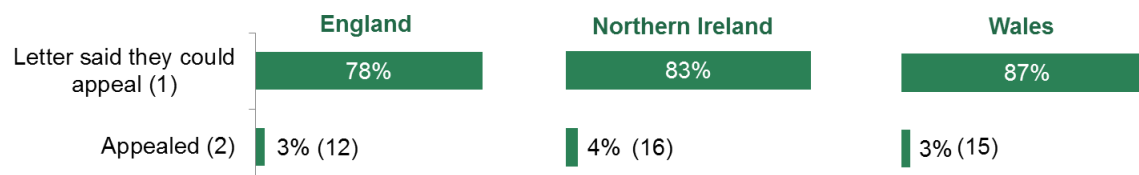
B21c. Did your business receive an inspection report letter from the local authority which told you your FHRs rating and contained your sticker to put on display? Base: All respondents with FHRs (England 430, NI 440, Wales 474)
B21d. Were you told in this letter about what improvements you would need to make to achieve the highest FHRs rating of 5 at your premises? Base: All respondents who received the letter and have a rating of less than 5 (England 117, NI 123, Wales 204)

4.8.2 Appeals process: awareness and experience

All respondents who remembered receiving an inspection report letter were asked if they recalled specific information about appeals (Chart 4.18). Over three quarters of respondents in each country who had received the letter recalled mention of the appeals process. Across respondents as a whole, only very small proportions had actually appealed (less than 5% in each country).

Amongst respondents that had appealed their rating, at least half in each country said that they had been awarded a higher rating. Numbers of respondents are presented in the tables below (as opposed to percentages) because of the low sample sizes. It is important to note that the figures regarding appeal numbers and results are self-reported – they have not been verified against other sources.

Chart 4.18 Summary of appeals findings: awareness, application and self-reported outcomes



Result of appeal (3)	No.	No.	No.
Awarded a higher rating	6	10	8
Rating stayed the same		2	1
Still waiting for an outcome	5	2	5
Don't know	1	2	1

(1) B21e. Did the letter inform you of your right to appeal the rating you had been given? Base: All respondents who received the letter (England 347, NI 387, Wales 443)
 (2) B21ei. Have you appealed the rating you have been given at this premises with your local authority? Base: All respondents who have FHRs (England 430, NI 440, Wales 474)
 (3) B21eii. And what was the result of this appeal? Base: All who appealed (England 11, NI 16, Wales 16)

All respondents that had progressed through an appeal were asked how fairly they thought the process had been dealt with by their Local Authority. Of the 43 respondents across England, Northern Ireland and Wales filtered through this question, no one thought the appeals process was dealt with unfairly and the majority (23 out of the 43) said that it was dealt with very fairly (Chart 4.19).

Chart 4.19 Views on fairness of Local Authority response to appeals

	England	Northern Ireland	Wales
	No.	No.	No.
Very fairly	8	7	7
Fairly	2	8	8
Neither fairly nor unfairly		1	
Not very fairly			
Not at all fairly			
Don't know/can't remember	2		1

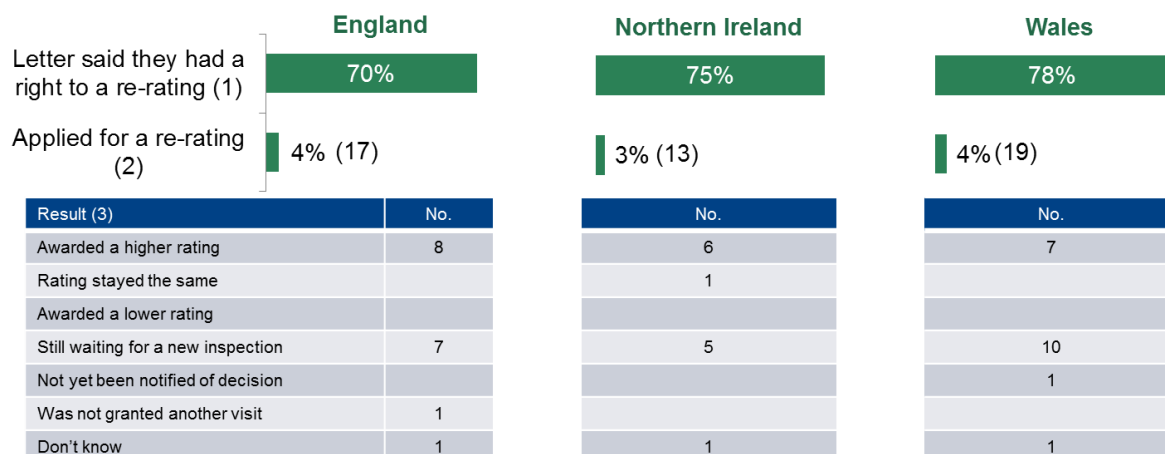
B21eiii. How fairly do you think your appeal was dealt with by the local authority? Base: All who appealed (England 11, NI 16, Wales 16)

4.8.3 Re-rating: awareness and experience

Respondents who recalled receiving an inspection report letter were asked if it contained information on their right to a re-rating (Chart 4.20). Slightly smaller proportions said they recalled this information than was the case when asked whether they recalled information about appealing their rating.

Across respondents as a whole group, very small proportions (4% or less in each country) had actually applied for a re-rating from their Local Authority. Amongst those that had applied (48 in total across the three countries), none were awarded a lower rating, but around half of cases in each country were still awaiting a new inspection. Numbers of respondents are presented in the tables below (as opposed to percentages) because of the low sample sizes. It is important to note that the figures regarding re-rating numbers and results are self-reported – they have not been verified against other sources.

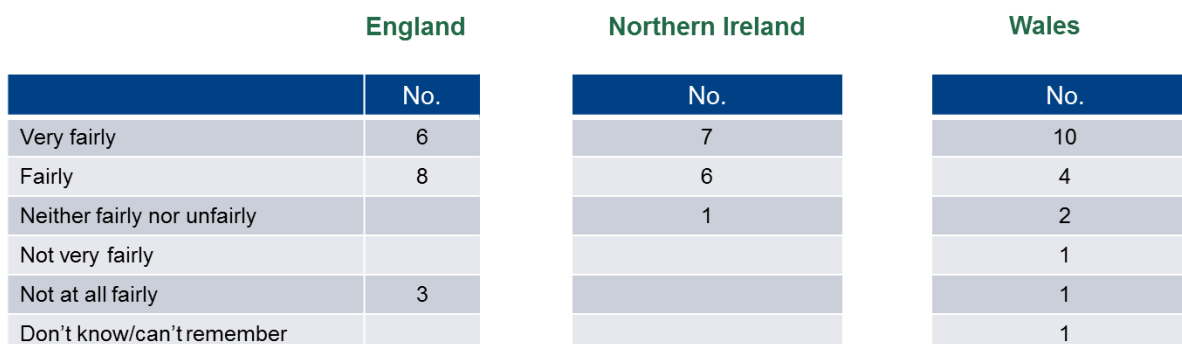
Chart 4.20 Summary of re-rating findings: awareness, application and self-reported outcomes



(1) B21f. Did the letter inform you of your right to a re-rating? Base: All respondents who received the letter (England 347, NI 387, Wales 443)
 (2) B21fi. Have you applied for a re-rating from the local authority? Base: All respondents who have FHRS (England 430, NI 440, Wales 474)
 (3) B21fii. And what was the result of this request for a re-rating? Base: All who applied for a re-rating (England 16, NI 13, Wales 19)

All respondents that had requested a re-rating were asked how fairly they thought the process had been dealt with by their Local Authority. Of the 48 respondents across England, Northern Ireland and Wales filtered through this question, the majority felt their application had been dealt with very fairly or fairly. However, 5 respondents said they felt it had been dealt with unfairly (Chart 4.21).

Chart 4.21 Views on fairness of Local Authority response to re-rating applications



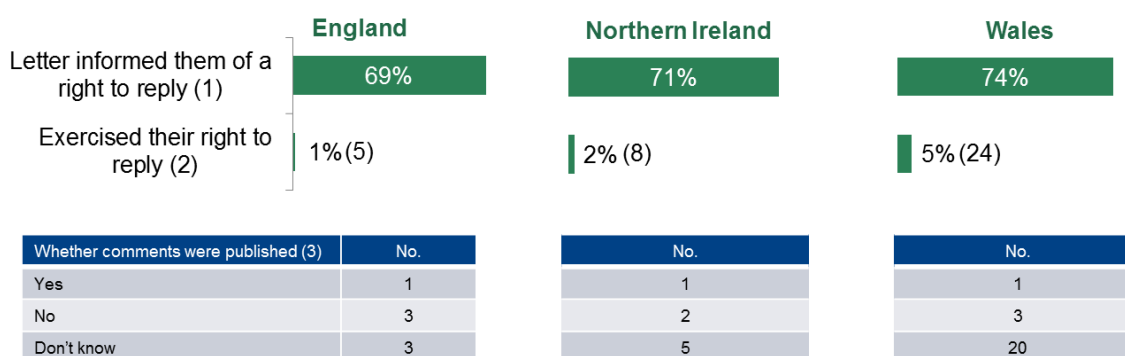
B21fiii. How fairly do you think your request for a re-rating has been dealt with by the local authority so far?
 Base: All who applied for a re-rating (England 16, NI 13, Wales 19)

4.8.4 Right to reply: awareness and experience

Respondents who recalled receiving an inspection report letter were asked if it contained information on their right to reply. In each country, a majority recalled this information, but recall was lowest for right to reply when compared to recall levels of the appeals and re-rating processes (see Chart 4.22).

Across respondents as a whole group, very small proportions (5% or less in each country) had actually exercised their right to reply. Amongst those that had done so (39 in total across the three countries), only three said that their Local Authority had published their comments, however, most (28) did not know whether this was the case. Numbers of respondents are presented in the tables below (as opposed to percentages) because of the low sample sizes. It is important to note that the figures regarding right to reply numbers and outcomes are self-reported – they have not been verified against other sources.

Chart 4.22 Summary of re-rating findings: awareness, action and self-reported outcomes



(1) B21g. Did the letter inform you of your right to reply? Base: All respondents who received the letter (England 347, NI 387, Wales 443)

(2) B21gi. Have you exercised your right to reply by sending comments to the local authority about the rating you have been given? Base: All respondents who have FHRS (England 430, NI 440, Wales 474)

(3) B21giii. And thinking about your right to reply were your comments published on their website? Base: All who sent in a comment (England 7, NI 8, Wales 24)

5 Overview and conclusions

In England and NI, rates of display have been increasing since 2011/12 and currently stand at 57% and 68% respectively, with 41% and 46% of audited premises in England and NI respectively visibly displaying their rating *from the outside*. As in previous years, the higher the rating awarded to the business, the more likely they were to display their rating, for example, amongst audited businesses with a 5 rating, 75% in England and 83% in NI were displaying their rating (since 2011/12 these proportions have increased significantly) somewhere on the premises. In contrast, amongst businesses rated 0-2, 16% in England and 9% in NI displayed their rating, but base sizes were too small to detect year on year changes amongst these groups.

While the steady increase in display in England and NI since 2011/12 is encouraging, the findings stand in contrast to those for Wales where a statutory scheme now operates. At present, draft legislation introducing compulsory display is being considered by the Northern Ireland Assembly, and in England, the FSA strategy for 2015 to 2020 highlights that pressing the case to extend this to England is a priority¹⁵. On that point, it is worth noting that there was considerable support for a compulsory display amongst respondents to the telephone survey in England, with 75% of those interviewed saying they thought it would be a very good or a fairly good thing.

In the absence of legislation to make display a statutory requirement, other means of increasing display rates in England and NI could include:

- More businesses being encouraged/coached towards achieving a higher rating (as the higher the rating, the more likely businesses are to display)
- A change in perception of ratings of 3 and 4 amongst businesses and customers to encourage greater voluntary display
- A belief among businesses that customers expect to see their rating on display (consumer-driven encouragement)
- Greater encouragement of multi-site businesses to adopt a company-wide policy to display
- Further encouragement to display by local authority officers

The introduction of compulsory display in Wales at the end of November 2013 has led to a significant increase in display there (although not universal display at this stage): 73% of audited businesses were displaying the new statutory sticker somewhere on their premises, up from 47% in 2013. Notably, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of 0-2 rated businesses displaying, from 17% in 2013 to 47% in 2015.

It is a legal requirement in Wales for establishments within the scope of the scheme to display their sticker on the outside of their premises, at or near each entrance in a conspicuous place: just over half of audited businesses were displaying the sticker on the outside of their premises (59%, up from 34% in 2013), and in the vast majority of these cases (96%), this was visible at all entrances.

Reasons for non-display in Wales include a reluctance to display a low rating or rating that the business did not agree with and cleaning/refurbishing of premises. A significant minority (16%) had

¹⁵ see <http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa150306.pdf>

not changed their sticker to the new statutory scheme sticker and continued to display the voluntary scheme sticker and/or certificate. While in some cases this may have been due to the fact that their rating under the voluntary scheme was higher than that under the statutory scheme (18% of this group had a higher rating under the old scheme), this was not the case for the majority of premises.

In conclusion, it remains that around a quarter of businesses in Wales are not displaying the new statutory scheme sticker at all, and, despite making display a legal requirement, half of premises with the lowest ratings are still not making this known to the public. This would suggest that a challenge in Wales will be to continue to communicate the requirements of the statutory scheme to food business operators falling within its scope (including the need to replace the old sticker/certificate with the new statutory scheme sticker, even when the rating has not changed) and the penalties for non-compliance. In addition, it may be desirable to harness greater media coverage relating to local authorities' use of enforcement measures, so that food business operators are aware of the consequences of their failure to comply with the full requirements of the scheme and can see the effects of adverse publicity.