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## **SURVEY: FALLING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN LEGAL SERVICES**

The public is less trusting of lawyers, less confident that their consumer rights will be protected and less confident to complain than they were a year ago – according to new research released today by the Legal Services Consumer Panel.

The final of four briefing notes summarising the results of its new tracker survey shows that public confidence in the legal services market has continued to decline since the Panel's first tracker survey in 2011. However, this problem is not unique to the legal services sector as measures tracking public confidence have fallen at a similar rate across the main professions over the same period.

Key findings in relation to customer satisfaction with legal services:

- Public confidence in the market continues to fall mirroring trends in other economic sectors – people are less confident than last year about their consumer rights being protected or in complaining about lawyers
- People in Wales, C2DEs and BME groups are less confident than other population groups
- The proportion of dissatisfied consumers who do nothing is still 42%
- Trust in lawyers is now at 42% continuing the decline from 47% in the 2011 exercise; trust in other professions is also still falling
- There are significant gaps in trust between ABC1s and C2DEs and between the White British and BME populations

Elisabeth Davies, Chair of the Legal Services Consumer Panel, said:

*“Government wants consumers to play their part in stimulating growth through their shopping habits, but our evidence shows they are becoming less trusting of professionals and less confident that regulation will protect them. The legal services reforms will not fulfil their potential unless this situation is addressed.*

*“The consistent message in our recent work – and which will underpin our response to the Ministry of Justice review – is the need to maintain a strong safety net to protect consumers alongside market liberalisation reforms. Consumers need assurance that quality standards will be upheld, that regulators are active and on their side, and that whatever their legal need, they can complain to an independent body if things go wrong.”*

**-ends-**

**For more information, contact Steve Brooker, Consumer Panel Manager, on 020 7271 0077.**

### **Notes to editors**

1. The Legal Services Consumer Panel was established under the Legal Services Act 2007 to provide independent advice to the Legal Services Board about the interests of consumers of legal services in England and Wales. We investigate issues that affect consumers and use this information to influence decisions about the regulation of legal services.
2. The briefing note released today can be found here [http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research\\_and\\_reports/index.html](http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research_and_reports/index.html)
3. The Panel's first three briefing notes – on the use and funding of legal services and shopping around – can be found here [http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research\\_and\\_reports/index.html](http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research_and_reports/index.html)
4. The raw survey data that underpins all four briefing notes is being released today [http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research\\_and\\_reports/index.html](http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research_and_reports/index.html)