

**Embargoed until 10:01, 27 January 2019**



## **EFFORTS NEED TO FOCUS ON BUILDING LEGAL CONFIDENCE AND CAPABILITY.**

The Legal Needs Survey<sup>1</sup>, published today, continues to show significant disparity between how different groups of consumers are experiencing the legal services market. As such, the Legal Services Consumer Panel calls on regulators and policy makers to prioritise their resources, efforts, and intervention powers on groups of consumers, and areas of law, patently in need of assistance. There should be a shared and focused effort towards the single aim of building overall legal confidence and capability.

According to the findings of the research, 36% of all adults in the UK have low legal confidence<sup>2</sup>. 53% have medium level confidence and only 11% have high confidence. This matters greatly because those with low legal confidence have a lower understanding of their rights, find it less easy to deal with their legal issues, are less likely to get professional help, and they are also less likely to be satisfied with the service they receive. These are difficult but not insurmountable issues that can be tackled through joined up working amongst government, regulators, the third sector and consumer groups.

The research also highlights much lower levels of shopping around (21%) than our own Tracker Survey research has shown in recent years (28%). This finding is exacerbated by the finding that 45% of those with low legal confidence<sup>3</sup>, found it difficult to search for prices compared to 17% of those with high legal confidence. Price is one of the key choice factors when shopping around. Therefore, regulators may in future need to target their new price transparency rules to ensure that it addresses the disparity between the shopping around ability of those with low legal confidence and high legal confidence.

Sarah Chambers, Chair of the Legal Services Consumer Panel said:

*"I would like to congratulate the LSB and the Law Society for this mammoth piece of research that offers the sector and beyond a rich data source and insight into the legal needs of those who use legal services.*

*We must now take the findings and insights from this research and develop policies that address barriers to legal services and improve legal capability. This aim is likely to*

---

<sup>1</sup> The largest ever survey of legal needs in England and Wales was jointly commissioned by the Legal Services Board and the Law Society.

<sup>2</sup> Confidence they could personally achieve a fair and positive outcome in legal scenarios.

<sup>3</sup> In contentious cases meaning legal matters that take place between two or more parties, such as a court hearing or a tribunal hearing to resolve a dispute

*be most effective if we adopt a collaborative approach amongst the breadth of stakeholders operating in and around the sector. And as always, the Panel will work hard to facilitate solutions.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information contact Lola Bello, Consumer Panel Manager, on 020 72710077.**