

Press release
14 February 2013

New research reveals gaps in Brummies' geography knowledge

New research has found that one in five (20%) people in Birmingham either have no idea that they are living in what's considered to be the UK's second city.

They instead believe that Manchester owns that title, despite the fact the population of Manchester is less than half that of Birmingham.

Further questions relating to their region left many stumped with a quarter of Birmingham respondents (25%) mistakenly thinking Cambridge was in the Midlands. Surprisingly, this misunderstanding was mutual. Over a third of those polled (35%) from the South East city, Cambridge, also believed they were part of the Midlands.

The survey, conducted by train company CrossCountry, found that famous landmarks and the geography of the rest of the UK also proved to be a challenge; 61% of Brummies didn't know that Glasgow was Scotland's biggest city and two thirds (65%) didn't know Bodmin Moor was located in Cornwall. However the majority correctly identified that the Angel of the North was located in Tyne & Wear (53%) and that York was once named the 'Kingdom of Jorvik' by the Vikings (60%).

Commenting on the findings, Carol Blackburn, Partnerships Manager for CrossCountry, said "Geographical awareness is not just something that you pick up from books and maps. It is also based on experience and our travels. I often hear people say 'my geography is awful' but it doesn't have to be. Getting out and about and taking advantage of the fact our rail services connect towns and cities up and down Britain can help people uncover some of our island's most breath-taking destinations."

VisitEngland's Chief Executive, James Berresford, said: "There's no better time than during English Tourism Week 2013 (16-24 March) to promote travelling around England by train! Recent research from VisitEngland shows day visits in England were up by 12% in 2012 compared to 2011 with people spending £57billion. This is great news and I would urge people to get out and about and discover all the England has to offer this year."

Notes to editors

OnePoll interviewed a random sample of 3,000 adults aged 18+ from 17 UK towns and cities through its online panel between 25th and 31st January 2013. The sample size offers a robust sample size for each city. Further information is available at www.onepoll.com.

CrossCountry started operating on 11 November 2007. The franchise, which is the most extensive in the UK, will run until 31 March 2016. For further information on CrossCountry services and future franchise plans log on to www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk.

CrossCountry is part of the Arriva group, which is owned by Deutsche Bahn. Arriva is a leading pan-European public transport operators with more than 42,000 employees and operations across 12

European countries. The link to Arriva is www.arriva.co.uk. The link to Deutsche Bahn is www.deutschebahn.com.

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CrossCountry facts and figures

STATIONS SERVED: 119

ROUTE MILES: 1,490

WEEKDAY SERVICES: 295

PASSENGERS CARRIED: Over 30 million passenger journeys a year anticipated

ANNUAL TRAIN MILEAGE: Approximately 16 million

EMPLOYEES: Approximately 1,600

LONGEST TRAIN SERVICE: 08.20 Aberdeen to Penzance (774 miles)

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