

Dundonald Office

Grants Customer Survey

February 2008

Housing
Executive

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1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

1.1 As part of the Customer Satisfaction Survey Programme agreed with Design and Property Services, the Research Unit conducted a telephone survey of people living in the Dundonald Grants Office area who had applied for and received a grant from the Housing Executive to repair, renovate, replace or adapt their home.

1.2 The aims of the survey were:

- to evaluate grant applicants' perceptions of the grants process;
- to assess whether applicants thought they had a say in the services they received;
- to identify the priorities of applicants;
- to measure overall satisfaction with the service;
- to evaluate grant applicants' views on electronic delivery of services; and
- to identify shortcomings in the service and improvements required as perceived by the applicants.

In addition, the survey was carried out in support of the Dundonald Grants Office's Charter Mark application.

1.3 The Research Unit consulted with Design and Property Services on the aims of the survey, questionnaire design, survey methodology and sample frame.

2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

2.1 It was agreed that the sample frame should include grant applicants in the Dundonald Grants Office catchment area whose application had been completed within a 12 month period, i.e. between October 2006 and November 2007. This was agreed as an appropriate cut-off point, bearing in mind resource constraints and the length of time grants customers could be expected to remember details of the application process. The Housing Executive's computerised Grants Management System identified a total of 397 grant applicants to be included in the sample frame.

2.2 The agreed survey methodology was a telephone survey. The sample frame included applicants who had received Home Repair Grants, Disabled Facilities Grants, Renovation Grants and Replacement Grants

3.0 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.1 The questionnaire was designed to assess satisfaction levels with all stages of the grant application process. As the process varies somewhat for Home Repair Grants, the questionnaire design took account of these differences.

4.0 FIELDWORK AND RESPONSE RATE

4.1 The Research Unit carried out the interviews by telephone during January and February 2008. Interviews were conducted over a period of approximately 15 days. It was agreed that a quota of 100 achieved interviews would be sufficient for analysis.

4.2 From an eligible population of 397 households, the research unit selected two stratified random samples of 100, proportionate to each grant type. Once the first sample was exhausted, the second sample was used to ensure the target of 100 interviews was achieved. The sampling and response information are in Table A.

TABLE A: SAMPLE AND RESPONSE INFORMATION

Grant Type	Sample Frame	Sample	Achieved Interviews
Home Repair Grants	159	80	40
Disabled Facilities	157	80	40
Renovation Grants	78	38	19
Replacement	3	2	1
TOTAL	397	200	100

4.3 As a consequence of setting a target of 100 achieved interviews, the Research Unit did not contact some applicants in the sample. To make allowances for this fact, the results of the survey were weighted and grossed, to provide findings which would be considered representative of the eligible population of Dundonald grant applicants (Table B).

TABLE B: EFFECTS OF WEIGHTING

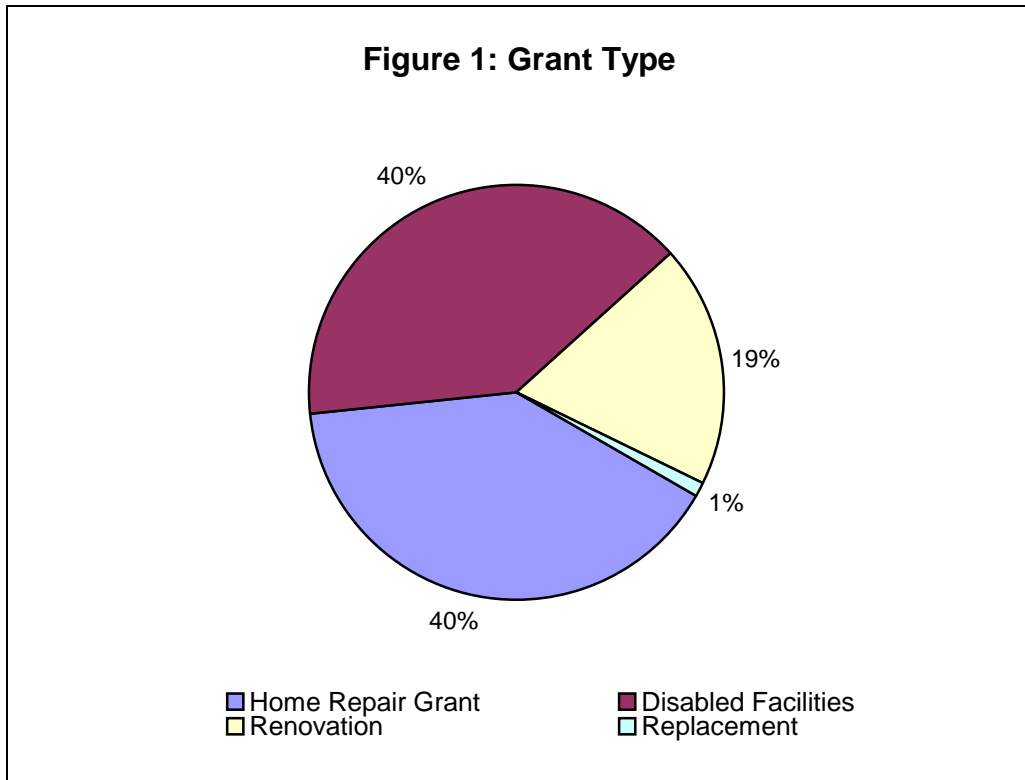
Grant Type	Achieved Interviews	Grossed by weight of	Sample Frame
Home Repair Grants	40	3.975	159
Disabled Facilities	40	3.925	157
Renovation Grants	19	4.105	78
Replacement Grants	1	3	3
TOTAL	100	-	397

4.4 It should be noted that the application of weights to the data sometimes has the effect of creating tables where column figures do not equal the grand total. This is due to the rounding process associated with weighting but has negligible effect on reporting.

COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS

5.0 GRANT TYPE

5.1 Equal proportions of respondents had received a home repair grant (40%) and a disabled facilities grant (40%) and almost one-fifth (19%) had received a renovation grant. A smaller proportion (1%) of respondents had received a replacement grant (Figure 1, Table 1).



6.0 CONTACT WITH GRANTS OFFICE

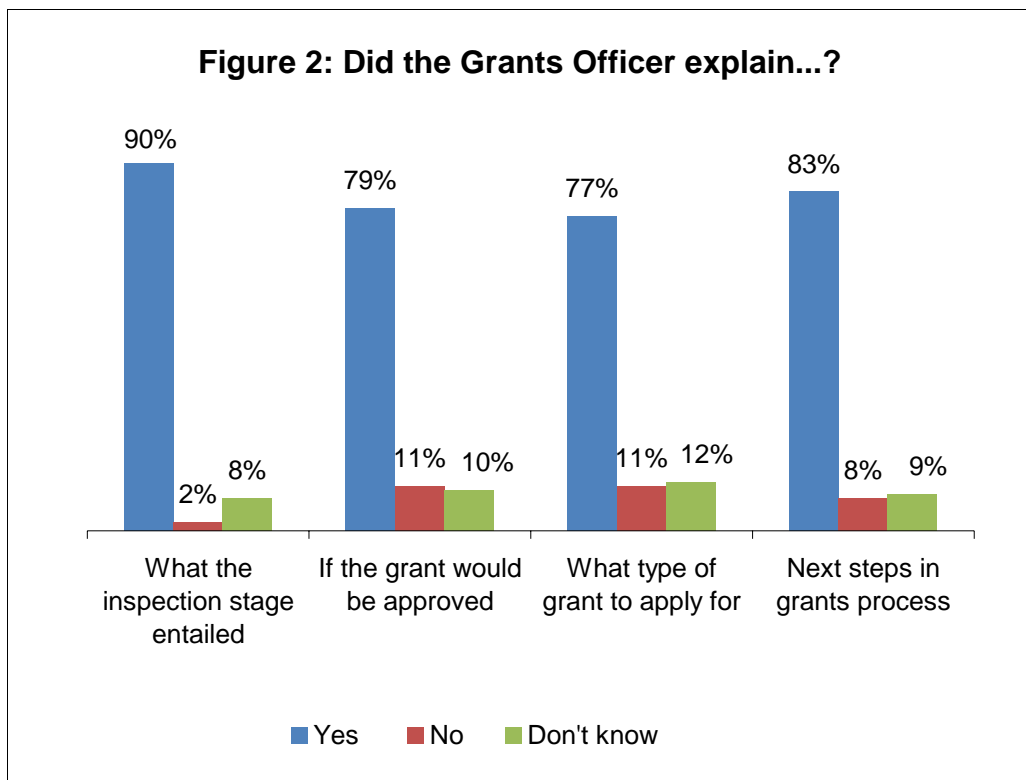
6.1 Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents said they had been involved in every stage of the grants process, 31% had been involved in some of the stages and 5% said they had not been involved at all. Where respondents had not been involved the interview was carried out with their nominee (Table 2).

6.2 The majority (93%) of respondents said the grants officer had given his/her name and 7% said he/she had not done so (Table 3).

6.3 The majority (97%) of respondents said the grants officer had made an appointment for a preliminary inspection. Of those respondents who

said an appointment had been made, all (100%) said the appointment had been kept (Tables 4 & 5).

- 6.4 Respondents were asked a series of questions to establish if the grants officer had explained the grants process to them. The majority (90%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained what the inspection stage entailed (Figure 2, Table 6).
- 6.5 More than three-quarters (79%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained whether he/she thought the grant would be approved (Figure 2, Table 6).
- 6.6 More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained what type of grant they should apply for (Figure 2, Table 6).
- 6.7 More than four-fifths (83%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained the next steps in the grant application process (Figure 2, Table 6).



- 6.8 The majority (95%) of respondents were satisfied with the inspection stage of the process and 6% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ([Table 7](#)).

TELEPHONING THE GRANTS OFFICE WITHIN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

- 6.9 More than a quarter (26%) of respondents had telephoned the grants office at some time while awaiting approval of their grant application. Of these respondents, more than four-fifths (84%) had been told the name of the person dealing with their call, 4% had not been told the name of the person taking their call and 12% did not know. All respondents said staff had been polite (100%) and knowledgeable (100%) and 96% said staff had not been in a hurry or rushed when dealing with their query ([Tables 8, 9 & 10](#)).
- 6.10 Of the respondents who had telephoned the grants office (26% of all respondents) the majority (92%) said the person who took the call had been able to deal with their query. Of the 8% of respondents who said this was not the case, all said they had been put through to someone who could deal with their query ([Tables 11 & 12](#)).
- 6.11 Of the respondents who had telephoned the grants office, all (100%) were satisfied with the overall service they had received ([Table 13](#)).

VISITING THE GRANTS OFFICE WITHIN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

- 6.12 Nine percent of respondents had visited the grants office within the previous 12 months. More than half (55%) of these respondents had visited the grants office to submit documents and a similar proportion (56%) had called to make a general enquiry ([Tables 14 & 15](#)).
- 6.13 All respondents (100%) who had visited the grants office said counter staff had attended to them within ten minutes ([Table 16](#)).
- 6.14 Of the 9% of respondents who had visited the grants office, more than two-fifths (44%) had an appointment to see a particular member of staff; all those who had an appointment (100%) had spoken to that member of staff. All respondents (100%) who had an appointment stated that the member of staff had seen them within ten minutes ([Tables 17, 18 & 19](#)).

- 6.15 Of the respondents who had visited the grants office more than three-quarters (78%) said the person who dealt with their query had provided identification. All respondents (100%) said the staff who had attended to them during their visit were polite, knowledgeable and were not in a hurry or rushed ([Table 20 & 21](#)).
- 6.16 All respondents (100%) who had visited the grants office said the advice given to them by staff in relation to their query had been very helpful/helpful ([Table 22](#)).
- 6.17 More than three-quarters (78%) of respondents who had visited the Grants Office had their query dealt with at the counter area, and 33% had been taken into an interview room. All respondents who had visited the grants office (100%) were satisfied with confidentiality at the counter area and the interview room ([Tables 23 & 24](#)).
- 6.18 Of the 9% of respondents who had visited the Grants Office, 11% had read the leaflets and posters on display in the office; all (100%) said they had found the information useful and up-to-date ([Tables 25 & 26](#)).
- 6.19 None of the respondents who had visited the grants office said they had a disability that made physical access to the building difficult for them and none had a disability that made it difficult to access information and services provided by the office ([Tables 27 & 28](#)).
- 6.20 All respondents (100%) were satisfied with their visit to the grants office ([Table 29](#)).

7.0 COMPLETING GRANTS FORMS¹

PRELIMINARY FORM

- 7.1 More than three-fifths (61%) said the preliminary form had been clear and the same proportion (61%) said the preliminary form had not been difficult to complete ([Figure 3, Table 30](#)).

¹ A large proportion of respondents had used FOLD to complete the forms and documentation and therefore couldn't answer questions relating to Grants forms. This explains the high proportions of 'don't know' responses in this section

SCHEDULE OF WORKS

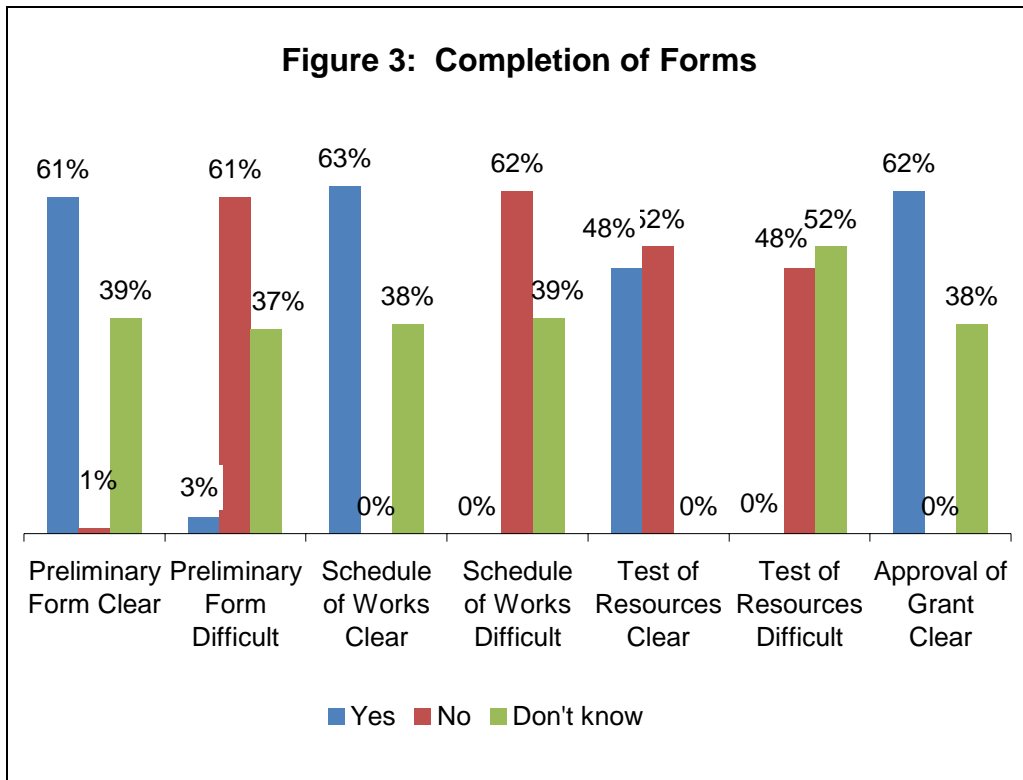
7.2 Similar proportions of respondents felt the Schedule of Works package had been clear (63%) and had not been difficult to complete (62%) (Figure 3, Table 30).

7.3 TEST OF RESOURCES FORM

Almost half (48%) of respondents who had completed the Test of Resources form had found it clear and the same proportion (48%) had not found it difficult to complete (Figure 3, Table 30).

7.4 APPROVAL OF GRANT FORM

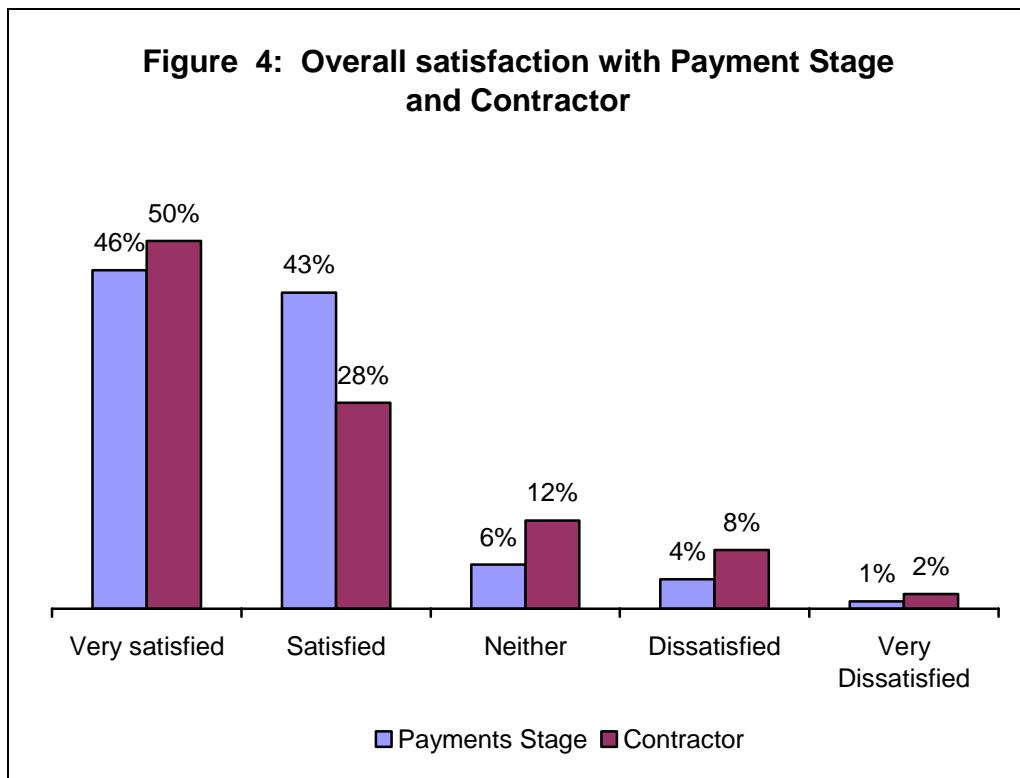
More than three-fifths (62%) said the Approval of Grant form had been clear. The Approval of Grant form does not require completion by applicants (Figure 3, Table 30).



8.0 PAYMENTS AND CONTRACTORS

8.1 More than four-fifths (89%) of respondents were satisfied with the payment stage of the grants process, 6% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 5% were dissatisfied. Reasons for dissatisfaction are not included in the report as numbers are too small (Figure 4, Tables 31 and 32).

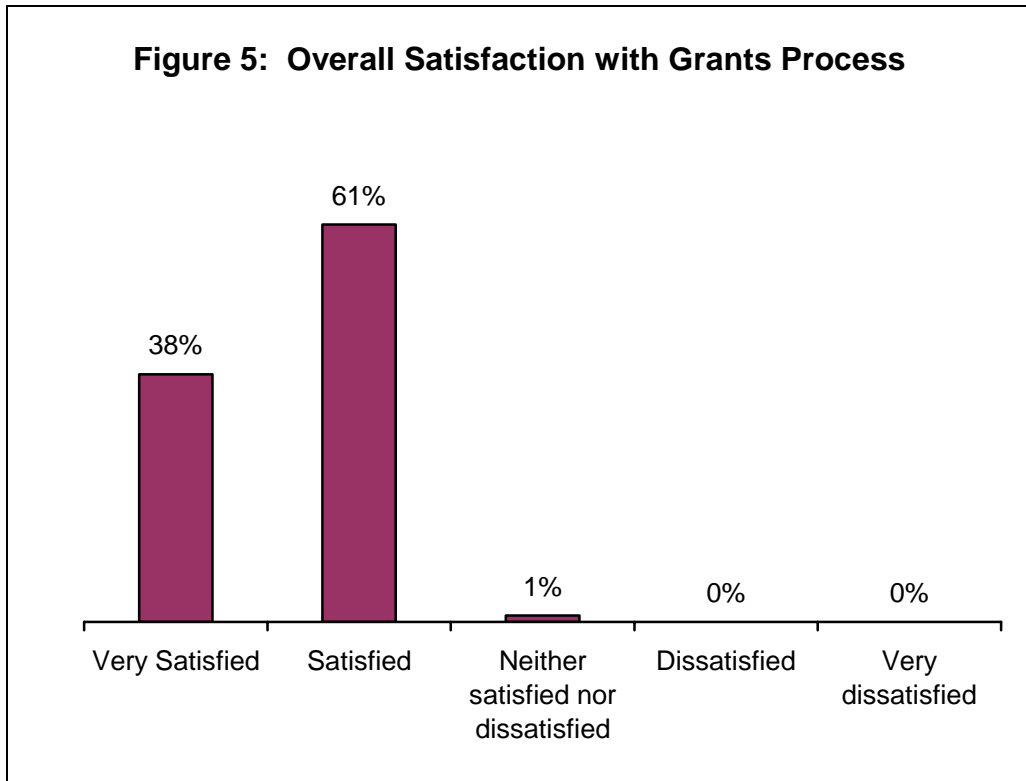
8.2 More than three-quarters (78%) of respondents were satisfied with the builder who had carried out the work, 12% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 10% were dissatisfied. Reasons for dissatisfaction are not included in the report as numbers are too small (Figure 4, Table 33).



9.0 COMMUNICATION FROM GRANTS OFFICE

9.1 The majority (89%) said the letters they had received from the grants office had been clear. The majority of respondents (87%) did not find the letters they had received difficult to understand and 93% were satisfied with the letters they had received from the grants office (Tables 35 and 36).

9.2 Almost all respondents felt they had been fairly (99%) and sensitively treated (100%) throughout the grants process. Almost all respondents (99%) said they were satisfied overall with the grants process (Figure 5, Tables 37, 38 & 39).



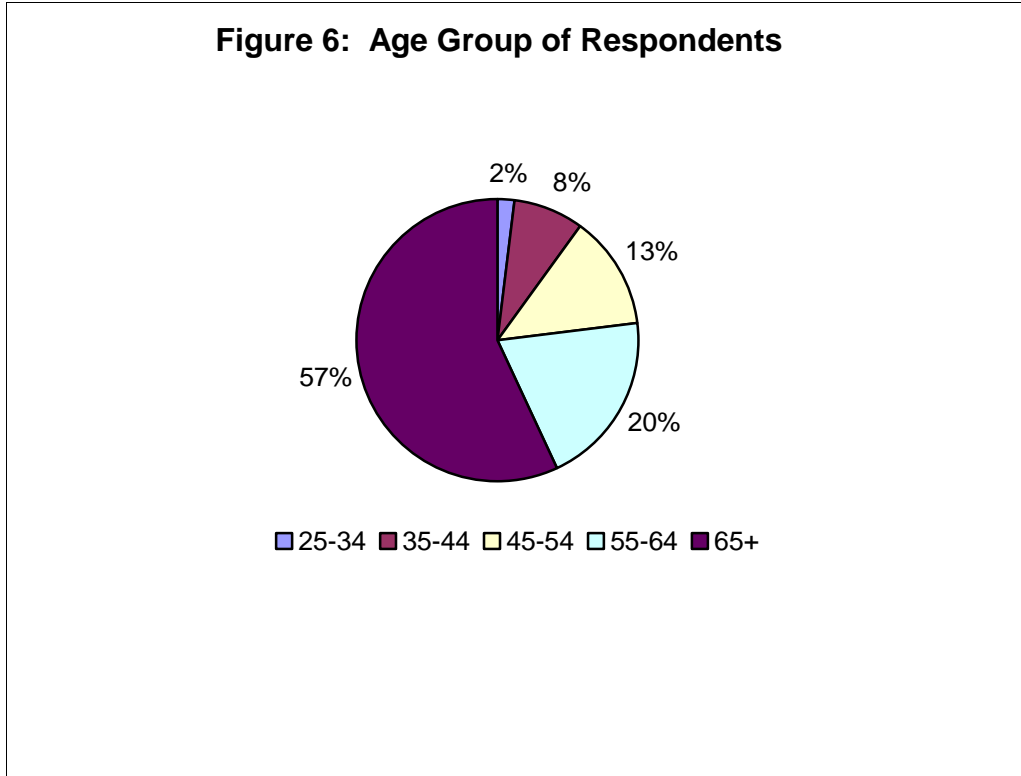
10.0 INTERNET ACCESS

10.1 Thirteen per cent of respondents had access to the internet. Of these respondents, 77% said they would be interested in accessing grants forms and documentation via the internet and the same proportion (77%) said they would be interested in receiving information and updates about their grant application via e-mail (Tables 41, 42 & 43).

11.0 RESPONDENT PROFILE

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

11.1 More than half (57%) of respondents were aged 65 or older, 20% were between 55 and 64, 13% were aged between 45 and 54, 8% were between 35 and 44 and 2% were aged between 25 and 34 (Figure 6, Table 44).



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

11.2 More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents were retired from work, 15% were not working at the time of the survey, equal proportions (4%) were in full-time and working part-time employment and 9% described their employment status as sick/disabled (Table 45).

HOUSEHOLD RELIGION

11.3 More than two-thirds (70%) of respondents said their household religion was Protestant; 10% described their religion as Catholic, 8% had no religion, 5% refused to answer, 3% were mixed religion and 1% said they didn't know the religion of their household (Table 46).

FURTHER COMMENTS

- 11.4 Almost one-third (31%) of respondents provided further comments about the grants process; of these, 44% were satisfied with the service provided and 34% said the process took too long to complete. A full list of comments is included in [Table 47](#).

TABULAR REPORT

DUNDONALD GRANTS CUSTOMER SURVEY

Table 1: Grant Type

	Numbers	Percentages
Home Repair Grants	159	40
Disabled Facilities	157	40
Renovation Grants	78	19
Replacement Grants	3	1
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 2: Was the applicant involved in every stage of the process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes, every stage	256	65
Yes, some of the stages	121	31
No	20	5
TOTAL	20	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 3: Did the Grants Officer give his or her name?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	369	93
No	0	0
Don't know	28	7
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 4: Did the Grants Officer make an appointment for a preliminary inspection?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	385	97
No	0	0
Don't know	12	3
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 5: Was the appointment kept?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	385	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	385	100

Base: 97 (Respondents who had an appointment made for a preliminary inspection)

Table 6: Did the Grants Officer explain....?

	Numbers %			
	Yes	No	D/K	Total
...what the inspection stage entailed?	357 90%	8 2%	32 8%	397 100%
...whether they thought the grant would be approved or not?	314 79%	43 11%	40 10%	397 100%
...what type of grant you should apply for?	306 77%	43 11%	47 12%	397 100%
...the next steps in the grants process?	330 83%	31 8%	36 9%	397 100%

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 7: Satisfaction with the preliminary inspection stage of process

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	161	41
Satisfied	212	54
Neither	24	6
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 8: Did you make telephone contact with the Grants Office at any time while awaiting approval of grant?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	102	26
No	283	71
Don't know	12	3
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 9: Did the person dealing with the call give his/her name?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	86	84
No	4	4
Don't know	12	12
TOTAL	102	100

Base: 26 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 10: Did you find the staff...

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%
Polite?	102	100	0	0	0	0
Knowledgeable?	102	100	0	0	0	0
In a hurry/rushed?	4	4	98	96	0	0

Base: 26 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 11: Was the person who took the call able to deal with your query?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	94	92
No	8	8
TOTAL	102	100

Base: 26 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 12: If no, were you put through to someone else who was able to deal with your query?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	8	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	8	100

Base: Due to the small numbers responding to this question we are unable to report the true base.

Table 13: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the telephone service?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	75	74
Satisfied	27	26
Neither satisfied/dissatisfied	0	0
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	102	100

Bas: 26 (Respondents who had contacted grants office by telephone)

Table 14: Have you visited the grants office within the last 12 months?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	36	9
No	361	91
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 15: Reason for visiting the Grants Office

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Submit documentation	20	56	16	45	36	100
General enquiry	20	55	16	45	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past 12 months)

Table 16: Approximately how long did you have to wait in the reception area before you were attended to by counter staff?

	Numbers	Percentages
No wait	16	44
Less than 5 minutes	16	44
5-10 minutes	4	11
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 17: Did you have an appointment to see a particular member of staff?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	16	44
No	20	56
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 18: Did you speak to that member of staff?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	16	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	16	100

Base: Due to the small numbers responding to this question we are unable to report the true base.

Table 19: How long did you have to wait to see that member of staff?

	Numbers	Percentages
1-10 minutes	16	100
TOTAL	16	100

Base: Due to the small numbers responding to this question we are unable to report the true base.

Table 20: Did the person who dealt with your query identify themselves?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	28	78
No	8	22
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 21: Did you find the staff...

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%	Total	%
Polite?	36	100	0	0	0	0	36	100
Knowledgeable?	36	100	0	0	0	0	36	100
In a hurry/rushed?	0	0	36	100	0	0	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 22: How helpful was the advice given by staff in relation to your query?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very helpful	20	55
Helpful	16	45
Neither	0	0
Unhelpful	0	0
Very unhelpful	0	0
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 23: Was your query dealt with ...?

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
At the counter	28	78	8	22	36	100
In the interview room	12	33	24	67	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 24: How satisfied are you with ...?

	Confidentiality at the counter area*		Confidentiality in the interview room**	
	N	%	N	%
Very satisfied	12	42	12	100
Satisfied	16	57	0	0
Neither	0	0	0	0
Dissatisfied	0	0	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0	0	0
Total	28	100	12	100

Base: Due to the small numbers responding to this question we are unable to report the true base.

Table 25: Have you read any of the leaflets/posters/booklets on display in the office?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	4	11
No	32	89
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 26: Did you find the information...?

	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Useful	4	100	0	0
Up to date	4	100	0	0

Base: 9 (Respondents who had read leaflets and posters)

Table 27: Do you have a disability which makes physical access to the Grants Office difficult for you?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	0	0
No	36	100
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past year)

Table 28: Do you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to access information and services provided by the Grants Office?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	0	0
No	36	100
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past 12 months)

Table 29: Overall how satisfied were you with your visit to the Grants Office?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	20	55
Satisfied	16	45
Neither	0	0
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	36	100

Base: 9 (Respondents who had visited the grants office within the past 12 months)

Table 30: Completion of Forms

	Clear				Difficult to complete			
	Yes Number %	No Number %	DK Number %	Total Number %	Yes Number (%)	No Number (%)	DK Number %	Total Number (%)
Preliminary Form *	240 (61%)	4 (1%)	153 (39%)	397 (100%)	12 (3%)	240 (61%)	145 (37%)	397 (100%)
Schedule of Works package *	248 (63%)	0	149 (38%)	397 (100%)	0	244 (62%)	153 (38%)	397 (100%)
Test of resources Form **	117 (48%)	0	125 (52%)	242 (100%)	0	117 (48%)	125 (52%)	242 (100%)
Approval of grant Form *	244 (62%)	0	153 (39%)	397 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* *Base: 100 (All respondents)*

** *Base: 61 (Respondents excluding Home Repair Grant Applicants)*

Table 31: Overall, how satisfied were you with the payment stage?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	181	46
Satisfied	172	43
Neither	24	6
Dissatisfied	16	4
Very dissatisfied	4	1
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 32: Reasons for dissatisfaction with the payment stage

	Numbers	Percentages
Took a long time	12	60
Other	8	40
TOTAL	20	100

Base: 5 (Respondents who had been dissatisfied with the Payment Stage)

Table 33: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the builder who carried out the work?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	197	50
Satisfied	112	28
Neither	48	12
Dissatisfied	32	8
Very dissatisfied	8	2
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 34: Reasons for dissatisfaction with builder

	Numbers	Percentages
Bad workmanship	32	80
Other	8	20
TOTAL	40	100

Base: 10 (Respondents who were dissatisfied with builder)

Table 35: Do you think the letters you received from the grants office were...

	Yes		No		DK		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clear?	353	89	4	1	40	10	397	100
Difficult to understand?	8	2	345	87	44	11	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 36: Overall, how satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the letters you received?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	166	42
Satisfied	203	51
Neither	24	6
Dissatisfied	4	1
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 37: Overall, do you think you were treated fairly throughout the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	393	99
No	4	1
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 38: Overall, do you think you were treated sensitively throughout the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	397	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 39: How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the overall grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	150	38
Satisfied	243	61
Neither	4	1
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 41: Do you have access to the internet?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	51	13
No	346	87
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 42: Would you be interested in accessing grants forms and documentation via the internet?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	40	77
No	11	23
TOTAL	51	100

Base: 13 (Respondents who had access to the internet)

Table 43: Would you be interested in receiving information or updates about your grant by email?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	40	77
No	11	23
TOTAL	51	100

Base: 13 (Respondents who had access to the internet)

Table 44: Age of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
25 - 34 years	8	2
35 - 44 years	32	8
45 - 54 years	52	13
55 - 64 years	80	20
65+ years	225	57
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 45: Employment Status of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
Retired	269	68
Not Working	60	15
Working full-time	16	4
Working part-time	16	4
Other (sick/disabled)	36	9
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 46: Household Religion of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
Protestant	278	70
Catholic	39	10
None	32	8
Refused	20	5
Mixed Religion (Protestant/Catholic)	12	3
Other	12	3
Don't know	4	1
TOTAL	397	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 47: Further comments about the grants process (telephone service/letters/grants forms)

	Numbers	Percentages
Satisfied with service	52	44
Took too long to complete	40	34
Other (including bad workmanship, not enough money)	25	21
TOTAL	117	100

Base: 30 (Respondents who made further comments)