

West Grants Office

Customer Survey

January 2013

Northern Ireland
Housing Executive

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	
i. Background to the Survey	3
ii. Research Methodology and Sample.....	3
iii. The Questionnaire	3
iv. Fieldwork	4
 COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS	
1.0 Respondent Profile and Grant Type.....	5
2.0 Contact with Grants Office.....	6
3.0 Completing Grant Forms.....	8
4.0 Payments and Contractors	9
5.0 Communication from Grants Office	10
6.0 Internet Access.....	11
7.0 Further Comments.....	11
TABULAR REPORT	12

INTRODUCTION

i. Background to the Survey

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 West Grants Office area who had applied for and received a grant from the Housing Executive to repair, renovate, replace or adapt their home.

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 West Grants Office's Customer Service Excellence Standard. The Research Unit consulted with Design and Property Services on the aims of the survey, questionnaire design, survey methodology and sample frame.

ii. Research Methodology and Sample

It was agreed that the sample frame should include grant applicants in the West Grants Office catchment area whose application had been completed within a 12 month period, i.e. between August 2011 and July 2012. 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 and Private Sector Management System identified a total of 281 grant applicants to be included in the sample frame for the survey.

The agreed methodology was a telephone survey. The sample frame included applicants who had received Disabled Facilities Grants, Home Repair Grants, Renovation Grants and Replacement Grants. However, with reduced availability of funding, discretionary grants for renovation, replacement and home repair assistance are only available in exceptional circumstances and mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants therefore accounted for almost two thirds (64%) of the overall sample.

iii. The Questionnaire

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

iv. Fieldwork

Research Unit staff carried out the interviews by telephone during November/December 2012. Interviews were conducted over approximately 20 days. It was agreed that a quota of 100 achieved interviews would be sufficient for analysis.

From an eligible population of 281 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

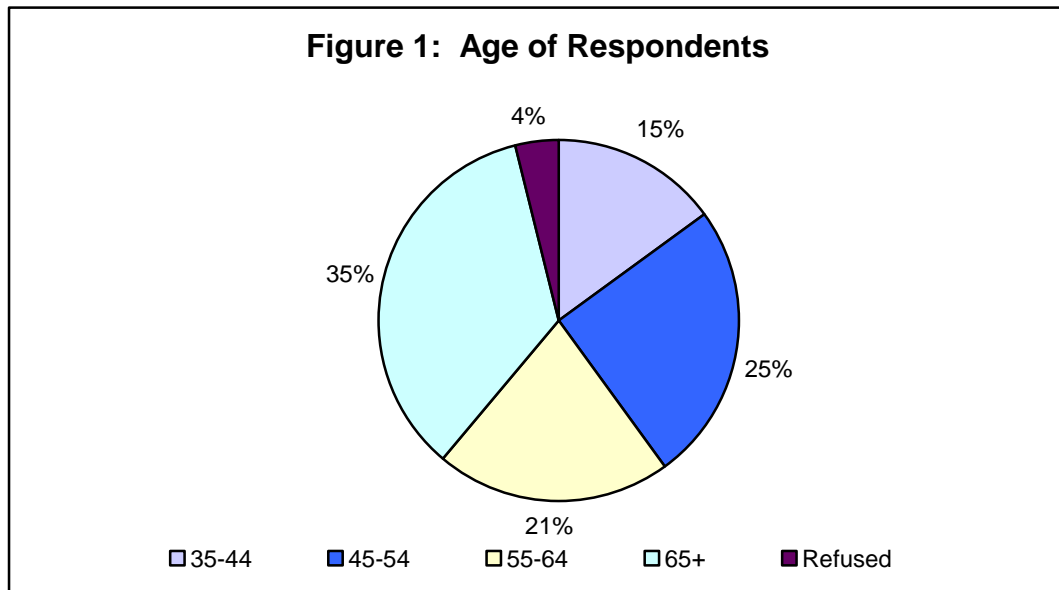
Grant Type	Sample Frame	Sample	Achieved Interviews
Disabled Facilities	179	132	61
Home Repair	20	13	9
Renovation	56	37	21
Replacement	26	18	9
TOTAL	281	200	100

Commentary and Analysis

1.0 Respondent Profile and Grant Type

1.1 Age of respondents

More than one-third (35%) of respondents were aged 65 or older; 25% were aged between 45 and 54, 21% between 55 and 64 15% were aged 35 and 44. The remaining 4% of respondents refused to state their age (Figure 1, Table 1.1).



1.2 Ethnicity of respondents

The majority (98%) of respondents described their ethnicity as white. The remaining 2% of respondents refused to state their ethnicity (Table 1.2).

1.3 Household Religion

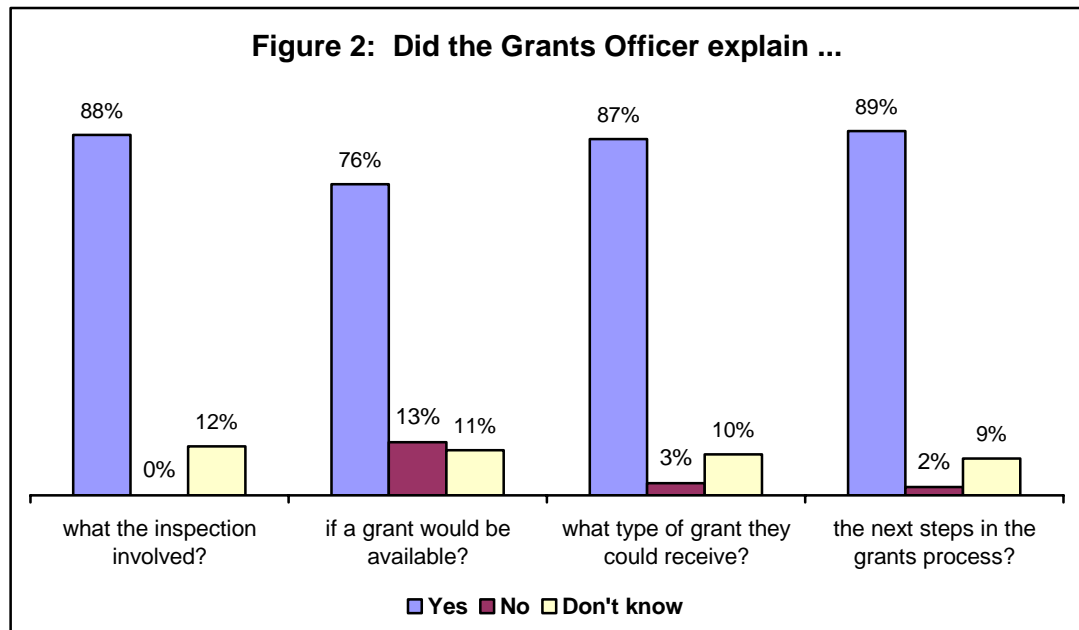
The majority (64%) of respondents described their household religion as Catholic, 28% described their religion as Protestant, 2% as mixed religion and 1% as none. The remaining 5% of respondents refused to state the religion of their household (Table 1.3).

1.4 Grant Type

The majority (61%) of respondents had received a Disabled Facilities Grant, 21% had received a Renovation Grant and the same proportion had received a Replacement Grant (9%) and Home Repair Grant (9%) (Table 1.4).

2.0 Contact with Grants Office

- 2.1** The majority (78%) of respondents said they had been involved in every stage of the grants process; 21% had been involved in some of the stages and 1% stated that family had dealt with the application (Table 2.1).
- 2.2** More than three-quarters (88%) of respondents stated they were aware of their case officer at an early stage in the process, 4% stated this was not the case and 8% could not remember (Table 2.2).
- 2.3** Most respondents (77%) had been offered a Preliminary Test of Resources, 8% had not, 14% could not remember and 1% stated a Preliminary Test of Resources was not applicable (Table 2.3).
- 2.4** Almost all (97%) respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the preliminary contact from the grants office; 2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 1% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied (Table 2.4).
- 2.5** The majority (94%) of respondents said the grants officer had made an appointment to visit them. Of those respondents who said an appointment had been made, all (100%) said the appointment had been kept (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).
- 2.6** Respondents were asked a series of questions to establish if the grants officer had explained the grants process to them. The majority of respondents (88%) said the grants officer had explained what the inspection stage involved (Figure 2, Table 2.7).
- 2.7** More than three-quarters (76%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained whether he/she thought the grant would be available (Figure 2, Table 2.7).
- 2.8** Similar proportions of respondents said the grants officer had advised them on the type of grant they could receive (87%) and explained the next steps in the grant application process (89%) (Figure 2, Table 2.7).
- 2.9** Almost all respondents (96%) were very satisfied/satisfied with the inspection stage of the process (Table 2.8).



Telephoning the Grants Office within the previous 12 months

- 2.10** More than one-third (35%) of respondents had telephoned the grants office during the course of their grant application, in the previous 12 months. Of these respondents, 74% had been told the name of the person dealing with their call, 23% were unsure if they had been given a name and 3% said they had not been told the name of the person dealing with their call (Tables 2.9 and 2.10).
- 2.11** All respondents who had telephoned the grants office had found the staff polite and knowledgeable (100%). The majority (94%) said they had not felt hurried or rushed by staff dealing with their query (Table 2.11).
- 2.12** Of the respondents who had telephoned the grants office (35% of all respondents), 69% said the person who initially took the call had been able to deal with their query, 23% stated the person who initially took their call was unable to deal with their query and the remaining 9% could not remember (Table 2.12).
- 2.13** All respondents who had telephoned the grants office (100%) were very satisfied/satisfied with the overall service they had received (Table 2.13).

3.0 Grant Forms¹

3.1 Schedule of Works

The majority (92%) of respondents had dealt with the Schedule of Works package. Of these, 91% thought the Schedule of Works package was clear, 1% thought it was not clear (Table 3.1).

Contact by Case Officer

3.2 Two thirds (66%) of respondents had been contacted by their case officer after they received the schedule of works package, 28% could not remember if the case officer had contacted them and 6% stated that the case officer did not contact them (Table 3.2).

3.3 Test of Resources Form

Three-quarters (75%) of respondents had completed a Test of Resources form. Of these, more than three-quarters (88%) thought the test of resources form was easy to complete, 8% could not remember and 4% thought the form was not easy to complete (Table 3.3).

3.4 Grant Approval Document

The Grant Approval Document had been dealt with by 87% of respondents. Of these almost all (95%) thought the grant approval document was clear (Table 3.4).

3.5 Contact by Grants Officer

The majority (65%) of respondents stated the grants officer contacted them after their grant had been approved, 25% could not remember the grants officer contacting them and 10% said the grants officer did not contact them (Table 3.5).

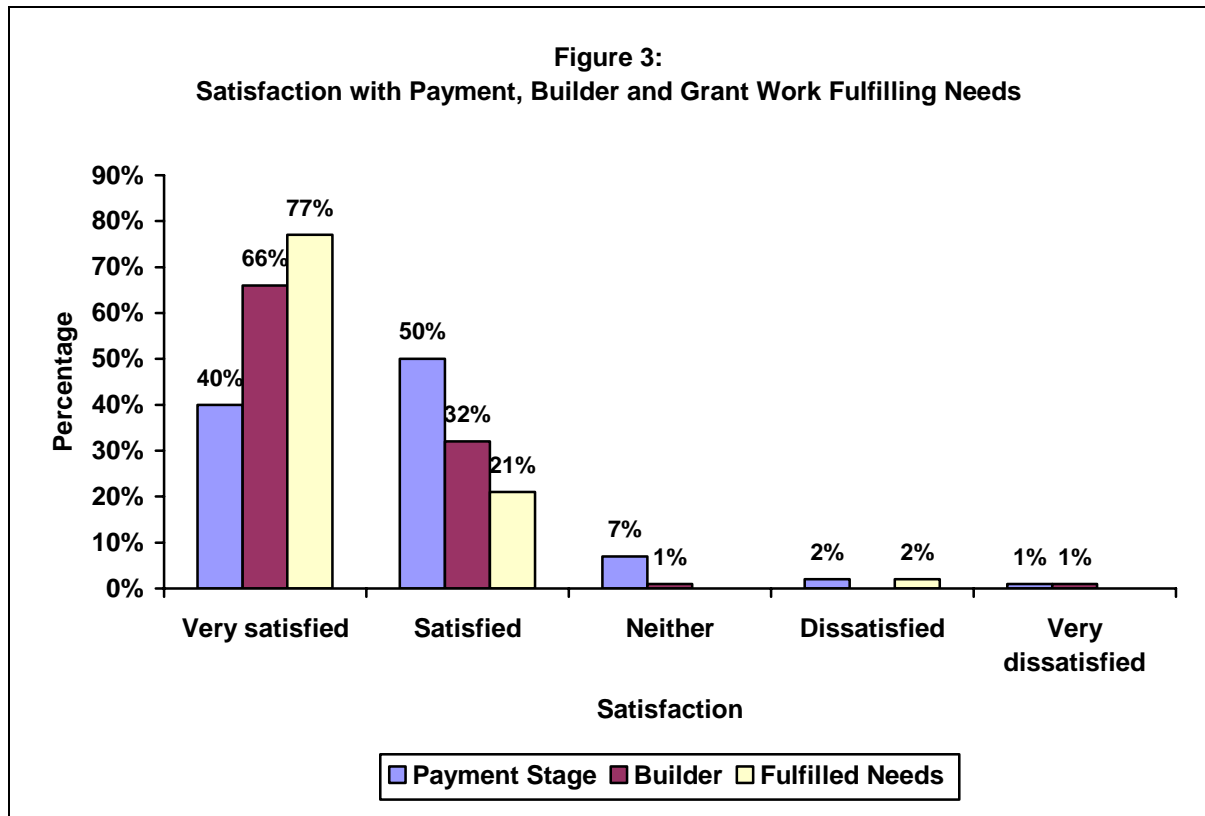
¹ Respondents who stated that someone else (family member/friend, builder or representative from Fold/Gable) had dealt with the grant forms on their behalf are not included in the analysis relating to the grants forms.

4.0 Payments, Contractors and Length of Time to Process Grant application

4.1 The majority (90%) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the payment stage of the grants process, 7% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 3% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied (Figure 3, Table 4.1).

4.2 Similarly, a high proportion (98%) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the builder who had carried out the work, 1% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and only 1% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied (Figure 3, Table 4.2).

4.3 All respondents who had received a Disabled Facilities Grant (61%) were asked if the work fulfilled their needs. Of these, almost all (98%) were very satisfied/satisfied that the grant work carried out had fulfilled their needs (Figure 3, Table 4.3).



5.0 Communication from the Grants Office

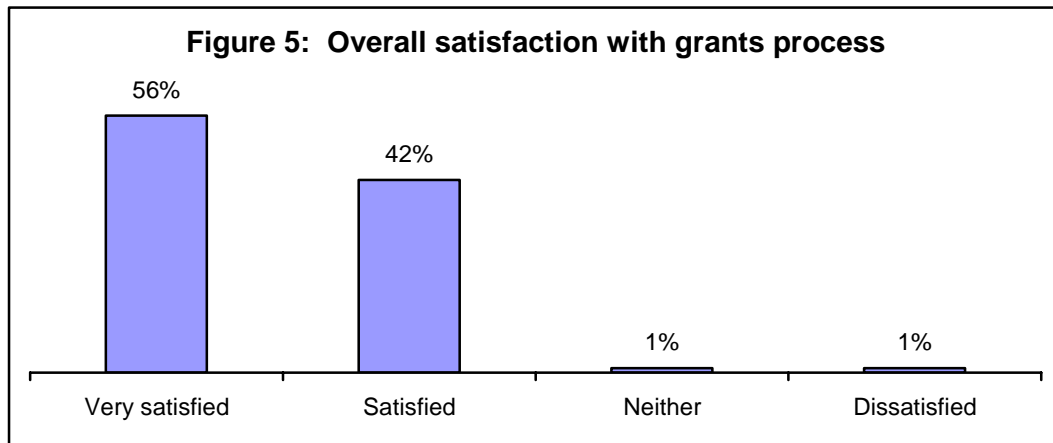
- 5.1** All respondents (100%) said a builder had been involved in the grant process; fewer respondents said an occupational therapist (61%), architect (87%) and/or Fold/Gable (16%) had been involved in the grant process on their behalf (Figure 4, Table 5.1).
- 5.2** The majority (96%) of respondents felt that the grants office had worked well with the builder, while 4% were unsure (Figure 4, Table 5.1).
- 5.3** The majority (85%) of respondents felt the grants office had a good working relationship with their Occupational Therapist during the grant process; 13% were unsure and 2% felt the grants office did not work well with the OT (Figure 4, Table 5.1).
- 5.4** Almost one-fifths (16; 16%) of respondents had received assistance from Fold or Gable during the grants process. Of those respondents nine felt the grants office had worked well with them, six respondents were unsure and the remaining respondent felt the grants office did not work well with Fold/Gable (Figure 4, Table 5.1).
- 5.5** More than four-fifths (87%) respondents had required assistance from an architect. Of these 71% felt the grants office had worked well with them during the grants process and 29% were unsure (Figure 4, Table 5.1).

Figure 4: Do you think the Grants Office worked well with ...

	Numbers %			
	Yes	No	Unsure	Total
The builder?	96 96%	-	4 4%	100 100%
The occupational therapist?	52 85%	1 2%	8 13%	61 100%
Fold/Gable?	9 56%	1 6%	6 38%	16 100%
The architect?	62 71%	-	25 29%	87 100%

Bases: 100 (builder); 61 (OT); 16 (Fold/Gable); 87 (architect):

- 5.6** The majority (98%) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the letters they had received from the grants office; 2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Table 5.2).
- 5.7** All respondents (100%) felt they had been treated fairly throughout the grants process (Table 5.3).
- 5.8** The majority (98%) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied overall with the grants process, 1% was dissatisfied and 1% was neither satisfied/dissatisfied with the grants process (Figure 5, Table 5.4).



6.0 Internet Access

6.1 More than one-third (35%) of respondents had access to the internet. Of these 34% said they would be interested in accessing grants forms and documentation via the internet, 63% would not be interested and 3% did not know (Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

7.0 Further Comments

7.1 The majority of respondents (62%) made no further comments on the grants process, 32% were satisfied with the service provided, 1% were dissatisfied, 2% said the process had taken too long and 3% made other comments (Table 7.1).

Appendix 1: Tabular Report

West Grants Customer Survey

Table 1.1: Age of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
35-44 years	15	15
45-54 years	25	25
55-64 years	21	21
65+ years	35	35
Refused	4	4
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 1.2: Ethnicity of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
White	98	98
Refused	2	2
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 1.3: Household Religion

	Numbers	Percentages
Catholic	64	64
Protestant	28	28
Mixed Religion (Protestant/Catholic)	2	2
None	1	1
Refused	5	5
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 1.4: Grant Type

	Numbers	Percentages
Disabled Facilities Grant	61	61
Home Repair Grant	21	21
Renovation Grant	9	9
Replacement Grant	9	9
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.1: Was the applicant involved in every stage of the process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes, every stage	78	78
Yes, some of the stages	21	21
No, (family dealt with application process)	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.2: Were you aware of your case officer at an early stage in the process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	88	88
No	4	4
Don't Know/Can't Remember	8	8
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.3: Were you offered a Preliminary Test of Resources?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	77	77
No	8	8
Don't Know/Can't Remember	14	14
Not Applicable	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.4: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the preliminary contact from the Grants Office?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	53	53
Satisfied	44	44
Neither	2	2
Dissatisfied	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.5: Did the Grants Officer make an appointment to visit you?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	94	94
No	3	3
Don't Know/Cant Remember	3	3
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.6: Did the Grants Officer turn up to the appointment?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	94	100
TOTAL	94	100

Base: 94 (respondents who had an appointment)

Table 2.7: Did the Grants Officer explain...

	Numbers %			
	Yes	No	D/K	Total
what the inspection stage involved?	88 88%	-	12 12%	100 100%
whether they thought a grant would be available?	76 76%	13 13%	11 11%	100 100%
what type of grant you could receive?	87 87%	3 3%	10 10%	100 100%
the next steps in the grants process?	89 89%	2 2%	9 9%	100 100%

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.8: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the inspection stage of process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	55	55
Satisfied	41	41
Neither	3	3
Dissatisfied	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.9: Did you make telephone contact with the Grants Office at any time during your application?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	35	35
No	54	54
Don't Know/Can't Remember	11	11
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 2.10: Did the person dealing with the call give his/her name?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	26	74
No	1	3
Don't Know/Can't Remember	8	23
TOTAL	35	100

Base: 35 (respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 2.11: Did you find the staff...

	Yes		No		DK/Can't Remember		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
polite?	35	100	-	-	-	-	35	100
knowledgeable?	35	100	-	-	-	-	35	100
In a hurry/rushed?	1	3	33	94	1	3	35	100

Base: 35 (respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 2.12: Was the person who took your call able to deal with your query directly?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	28	69
No	8	23
Don't Know/Can't Remember	3	9
TOTAL	35	100

Base: 35 (respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 2.13: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the telephone service?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	18	51
Satisfied	17	49
TOTAL	35	100

Base: 35 (respondents who had contacted grants office by telephone)

Table 3.1: Do you think the Schedule of Works Package was clear?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	84	91
No	1	1
Don't Know/Can't Remember	7	8
Sub Total	92	100
Fold/ dealt with document	1	
Family/friend dealt with document	7	
TOTAL	100	

Base: 92 (respondents who dealt with the Schedule of Works Package)

Table 3.2: Were you contacted by your case officer after receiving the Schedule of Works Package?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	66	66
No	6	6
Don't Know/Can't Remember	28	28
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 3.3: Do you think the Test of Resources Form was difficult to complete?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	3	4
No	66	88
Don't know/can't remember	6	8
Sub Total	75	100
Family/friend completed form	15	
Fold completed form	2	
Builder completed form	2	
N/A	6	
TOTAL	100	

Base: 75 (respondents who completed the Test of Resources Form)

Table 3.4: Do you think the Grant Approval Document was clear?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	83	95
No	1	1
Don't know/can't remember	3	3
Sub Total	87	100
Family/friend dealt with document	12	
Builder dealt with form	1	
TOTAL	100	

Base: 87 (respondents who dealt with the Grant Approval Document)

Table 3.5: Were you contacted by the Grants Officer after you received approval?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	65	65
No	10	10
Don't Know/Can't Remember	25	25
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 4.1: Overall, how satisfied were you with the payment stage?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	40	40
Satisfied	50	50
Neither	7	7
Dissatisfied	2	2
Very dissatisfied	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 4.2: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the builder who carried out the work?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	66	66
Satisfied	32	32
Neither	1	1
Very dissatisfied	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 4.3 How satisfied/dissatisfied are you that the work carried out fulfilled your needs?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	47	77
Satisfied	13	21
Dissatisfied	1	2
TOTAL	61	100

Base: 61 (respondents who received a disabled facilities grant)

Table 5.1: Do you think the Grants Office worked well with ...

	Numbers %			
	Yes	No	Unsure	Total
The builder?	96 96%	-	4 4%	100 100%
The occupational therapist?	52 85%	1 2%	8 13%	61 100%
Fold/Gable?	9 56%	1 6%	6 38%	16 100%
The architect?	62 71%	-	25 29%	87 100%

Bases: 100 (builder); 61 (OT); 16 (Fold/Gable); 87 (architect)

Table 5.2: Overall, how satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the letters you received?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	41	41
Satisfied	57	57
Neither	2	2
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 5.3: Overall, do you think you were treated fairly throughout the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	100	100
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 5.4: Overall how satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	56	56
Satisfied	42	42
Neither	1	1
Dissatisfied	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 6.1: Do you have access to the internet?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	35	35
No	64	64
Don't Know	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 6.2: Would you be interested in accessing grants forms and documentation via the internet?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	12	34
No	22	63
Don't know	1	3
TOTAL	35	100

Base: 35 (respondents who had access to the internet)

Table 7.1: Would you like to make any other comments about the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
No comment	62	62
Satisfied with service	32	32
Dissatisfied with service	1	1
Process took too long	2	2
Other	3	3
TOTAL	100	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)