



Omagh Office

Grants Customer Survey

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 Omagh Grants Office area who had applied for and received a grant from the Housing Executive to repair, renovate, replace or adapt their home. A previous study was conducted in 2004; comparisons with the earlier study, where possible, are included in this report.

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 Omagh 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 Omagh Grants Office catchment area whose application had been completed within a 12 month period, i.e. between March 2007 and February 2008. 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 662 grant applicants to be included in the sample frame.

2.2 The agreed 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 April 2008. Interviews were conducted over 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 662 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	442	134	67
Disabled Facilities	114	34	17
Renovation Grants	82	24	12
Replacement	24	8	4
TOTAL	662	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 Omagh grant applicants (Table B).

TABLE B: EFFECTS OF WEIGHTING

Grant Type	Achieved Interviews	Grossed by weight of	Sample Frame
Home Repair Grants	67	6.60	442
Disabled Facilities	17	6.71	114
Renovation Grants	12	6.83	82
Replacement Grants	4	6.00	24
TOTAL	100	-	662

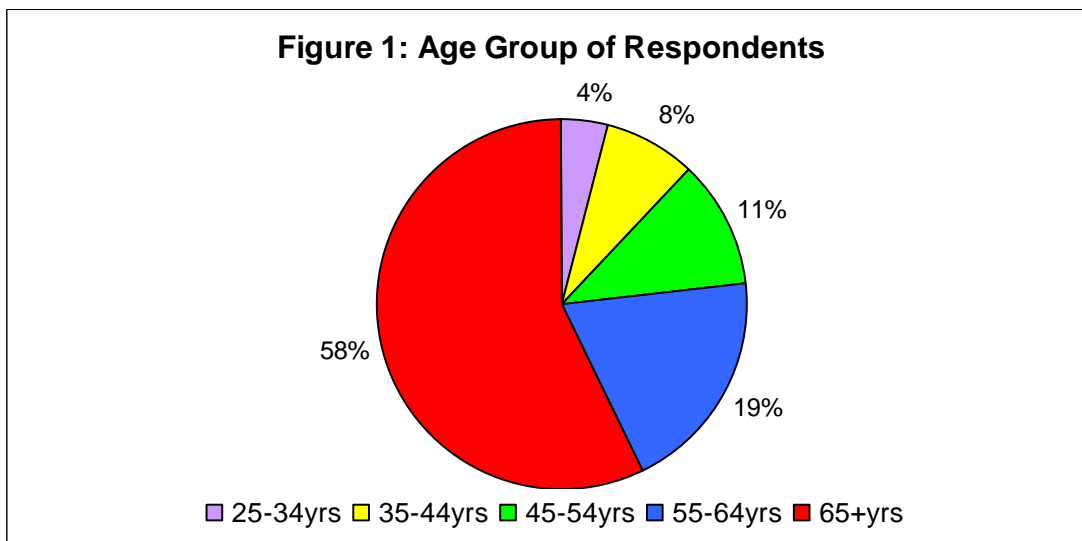
4.4 It should be noted that the application of weights to the data sometimes has the effect of creating tables where column figures do not equal the total. This is due to the rounding process associated with weighting but has negligible effect on reporting.

COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS

5.0 RESPONDENT PROFILE

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

5.1 More than half (56%) of respondents were aged 65 or older, 19 per cent were between 55 and 64 years old, 11% were aged between 45 and 54 years old, 8% were between 35 and 44 years old and 4% were aged between 25 and 34 years old (Figure 1, Table 1).



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

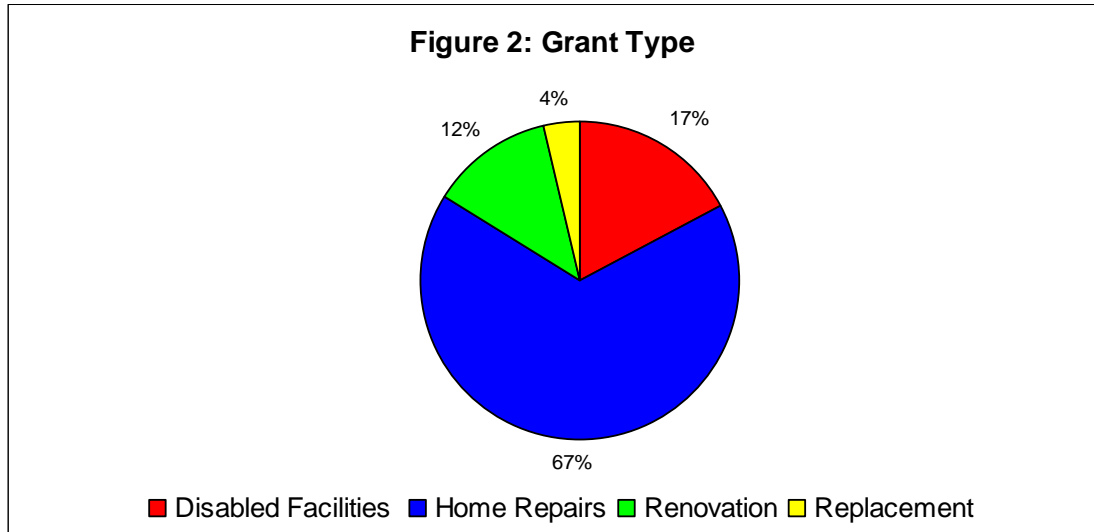
5.2 More than two-thirds (65%) of respondents were retired from work, 19 per cent were not working at the time of the survey, 6% described their employment as 'other', 5% were working in part-time, 3% refused to answer the question and 2% were working full-time (Table 2).

HOUSEHOLD RELIGION

5.3 Almost two-thirds (60%) of respondents said their household religion was Catholic; 30% described their religion as Protestant, 7% refused to answer, 1% were mixed religion and 1% described the religion of their household as 'other' (Table 3)

6.0 GRANT TYPE

6.1 More than two-thirds (67%) of respondents had received a home repair grant, 17% had received a disabled facilities grant, more than one-tenth (12%) had received a renovation grant. A smaller proportion (4%) of respondents had received a replacement grant (Figure 2, Table 4).



7.0 CONTACT WITH GRANTS OFFICE

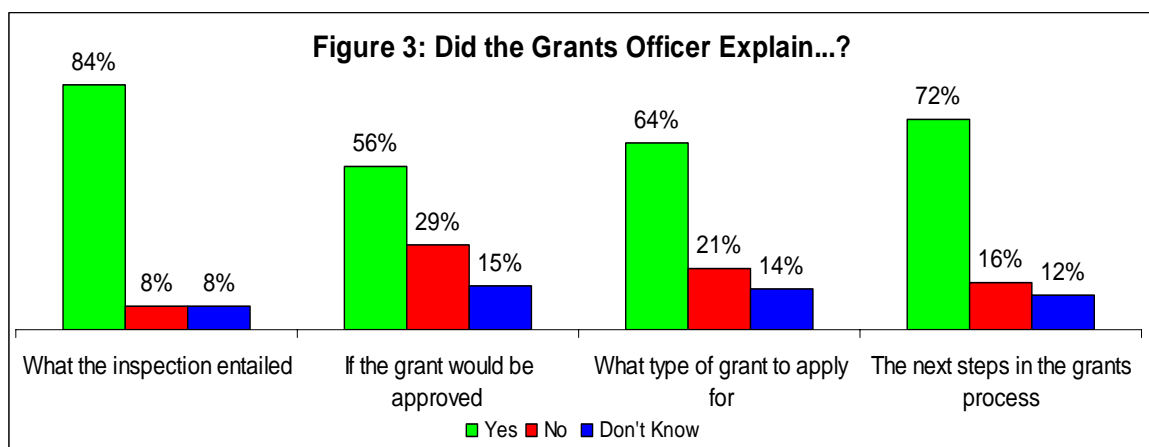
7.1 More than four-fifths (81%) of respondents said they had been involved in every stage of the grants process; 19% had been involved in some of the stages (Table 5).

7.2 The majority (89%; 74% in 2004) of respondents said the grants officer had given his/her name and 11% did not know (Table 6).

7.3 The majority (95%; 91% in 2004) 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 7 and 8).

7.4 Respondents were asked a series of questions to establish if the grants officer had explained the grants process to them. The majority (84%; 89% in 2004) of respondents said the grants officer had explained what the inspection stage entailed (Figure 3, Table 9).

- 7.5 Over half (56%; 69% in 2004) of respondents said the grants officer had explained whether he/she thought the grant would be approved (Figure 3, Table 9).
- 7.6 Almost two-thirds (64%; 67%) of respondents said the grants officer had explained what type of grant they should apply for (Figure 3, Table 9).
- 7.7 Almost three-quarters (72%; 80% in 2004) of respondents said the grants officer had explained the next steps in the grant application process (Figure 3, Table 9).



- 7.8 The majority (98%; 90% in 2004) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the inspection stage of the process (Table 10).

TELEPHONING THE GRANTS OFFICE WITHIN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

- 7.9 Almost one-third (29%; 45% in 2004) of respondents had telephoned the grants office at some time while awaiting approval of their grant application. Of these respondents, almost three-quarters (73%) had been told the name of the person dealing with their call, 17% did not know and 10% stated that they had not been told the name of the person taking their call. All respondents (100%) found the staff that they spoke to knowledgeable, the vast majority (97%) said staff had been polite and all respondents (100%) said staff had not been in a hurry or rushed when dealing with their query (Tables 11, 12 and 13).
- 7.10 Of the respondents who had telephoned the grants office (29% of all respondents) the majority (83%) said the person who took the call had

been able to deal with their query. Of the 17% of respondents who said this was not the case, all said they had been put through to someone who could deal with their query (Table 14).

- 7.11 Of the respondents who had telephoned the grants office, the vast majority (97%; 93% in 2004) were very satisfied/satisfied with the overall service they had received (Table 15).

VISITING THE GRANTS OFFICE WITHIN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

- 7.12 Ten per cent of respondents had visited the grants office within the previous 12 months. Almost two-thirds (60%) of these respondents had visited the grants office to submit documents and more than two-fifths (41%) had called to make a general enquiry (Table 16).
- 7.13 All respondents (100%) who had visited the grants office said counter staff had attended to them within 15 minutes, of these 50% said they did not have to wait at all to be seen by counter staff.
- 7.14 Of the 10% of respondents who had visited the grants office, almost one-third (31%) had an appointment to see a particular member of staff; all those (100%) who had an appointment had spoken to that member of staff. All respondents (100%) who had an appointment stated that the member of staff had seen them within 15 minutes.
- 7.15 Of the respondents who had visited the grants office, more than four-fifths (81%) said the person who dealt with their query had provided identification. All respondents (100%) said that staff who attended to them during their visit were not in a hurry or rushed and were knowledgeable; most respondents (91%) said the staff who had attended to them were polite.
- 7.16 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.
- 7.17 Almost three-fifths (59%) of respondents who had visited the grants office had their query dealt with at the counter area, and 41% had been taken into an interview room. Of those respondents who had visited

the grants office, 68% were satisfied with confidentiality at the counter area and all respondents who used the interview room were satisfied with the confidentiality.

7.18 Of the 10% of respondents who had visited the grants office, 20% had read the leaflets and posters on display in the office; all (100%) said they had found the information useful and up-to-date.

7.19 One-fifth (20%) the respondents who had visited the grants office said they had a disability that made physical access to the building difficult for them. No respondents had a disability that made it difficult to access information and services provided by the office.

7.20 All respondents who visited the grants office were very satisfied/satisfied with their visit to the grants office.

8.0 COMPLETING GRANTS FORMS

PRELIMINARY FORM

8.1 More than three-quarters (76%; 81% in 2004) of respondents said the preliminary form had been clear and 71% (72% in 2004) thought that it was not difficult to complete (Figure 4, Table 17).

SCHEDULE OF WORKS

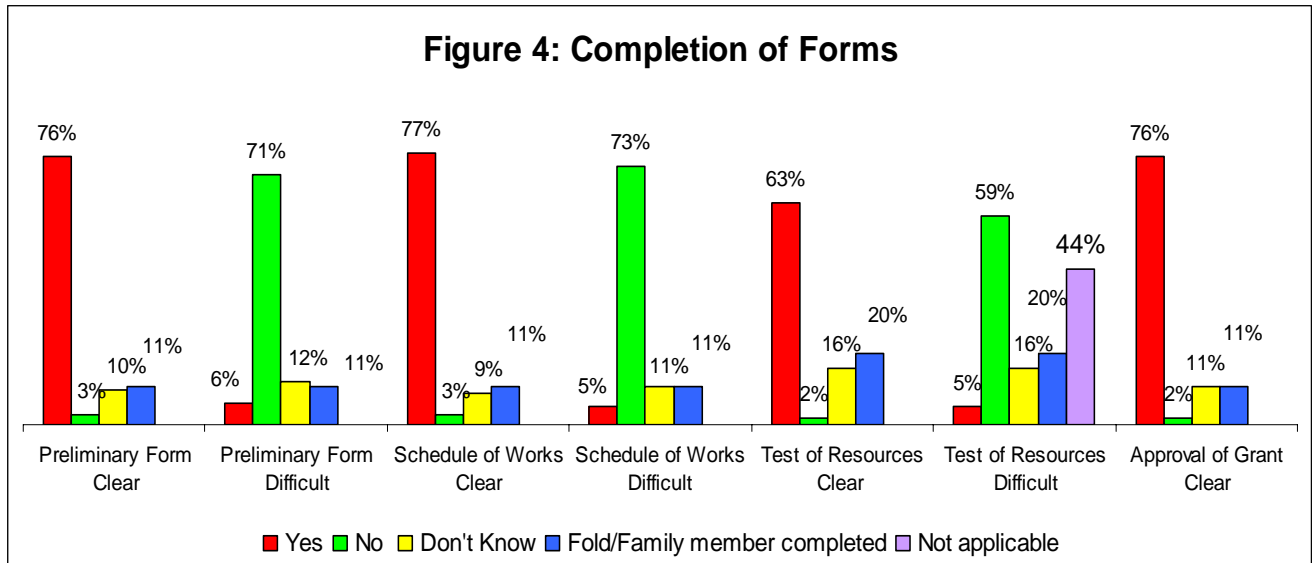
8.2 More than three-quarters (77%; 84% in 2004) of respondents felt the Schedule of Works package had been clear and 73% (81% in 2004) felt that it had not been difficult to complete (Figure 4, Table 17).

TEST OF RESOURCES FORM

8.3 Almost two-thirds (63%; 69% in 2004) of respondents who had completed the Test of Resources form had found it clear and almost three-fifths (59%; 66% in 2004) had not found it difficult to complete (Figure 4, Table 17).

8.4 APPROVAL OF GRANT FORM

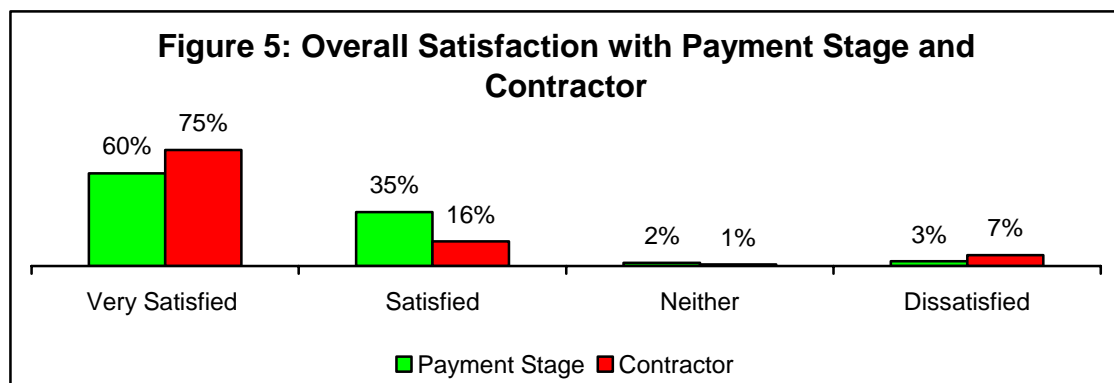
More than three quarters (76%; 93% in 2004) said the Approval of Grant form had been clear. The Approval of Grant form does not require completion by applicants (Figure 4, Table 17).



9.0 PAYMENTS AND CONTRACTORS

9.1 The majority (95%; 76% in 2004) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the payment stage of the grants process, 2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 3% were dissatisfied. Reasons for dissatisfaction are not included in the report as numbers are too small (Figure 5, Tables 18).

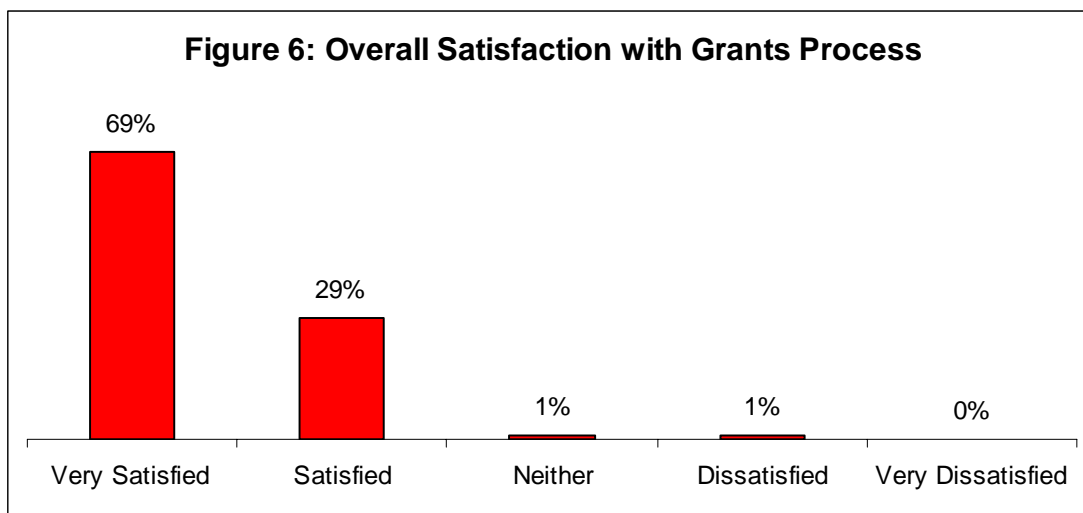
9.2 The majority (91%; 93% in 2004) of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the builder who had carried out the work and 8% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. (Figure 5, Table 19).



10.0 COMMUNICATION FROM GRANTS OFFICE

10.1 The majority (94%; 98% in 2004) of respondents said the letters they had received from the grants office had been clear. The majority of respondents (88%; 97% in 2004) did not find the letters they had received difficult to understand and 99% (95% in 2004) were satisfied with the letters they had received from the grants office (Tables 20 and 21).

10.2 Almost all respondents (99%) felt they had been fairly and sensitively treated throughout the grants process. Almost all respondents (98%) said they were satisfied overall with the grants process (Figure 6, Tables 22, 23 and 24).



11.0 INTERNET ACCESS

11.1 Sixteen per cent of respondents had access to the internet. Of these respondents, 75% said they would be interested in accessing grants forms and documentation via the internet and the same proportion (75%) said they would be interested in receiving information and updates about their grant application via e-mail (Tables 25).

12.0 FURTHER COMMENTS

12.1 Almost one-third (32%) of respondents provided further comments about the grants process; of these, 54% were satisfied with the service provided and 22% said that they would like more information available on the grants process. A full list of comments is included in Table 26.

Tabular Report

OMAGH GRANTS CUSTOMER SURVEY

Table 1: Age of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
25 - 34 years	27	4
35 - 44 years	53	8
45 - 54 years	72	11
55 - 64 years	126	19
65+ years	371	56
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 2: Employment Status of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
Retired	431	65
Not Working	126	19
Working full-time	13	2
Working part-time	33	5
Other (sick/disabled)	40	6
Refused	20	3
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 3: Household Religion of Respondents

	Numbers	Percentages
Protestant	206	31
Catholic	397	60
Refused	46	7
Mixed Religion (Protestant/Catholic)	7	1
Other	7	1
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 4: Grant Type

	Numbers	Percentages
Home Repair Grants	442	67
Disabled Facilities	114	17
Renovation Grants	82	12
Replacement Grants	24	4
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 5: Was the applicant involved in every stage of the process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes, every stage	534	81
Yes, some of the stages	128	19
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 6: Did the Grants Officer give his or her name?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	589	89
No	0	0
Don't know	73	11
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 7: Did the Grants Officer make an appointment for a preliminary inspection?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	629	95
No	20	3
Don't know	13	2
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 8: Was the appointment kept?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	629	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	629	100

Base: 95 (Respondents who had an appointment made for a preliminary inspection)

Table 9: Did the Grants Officer explain....?

	Numbers %			
	Yes	No	D/K	Total
...what the inspection stage entailed?	556 84%	53 8%	53 8%	662 100%
...whether they thought the grant would be approved or not?	370 56%	193 29%	99 15%	662 100%
...what type of grant you should apply for?	442 64%	140 22%	93 14%	662 100%
...the next steps in the grants process?	476 72%	106 16%	79 12%	662 100%

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 10: Satisfaction with the preliminary inspection stage of process

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	423	64
Satisfied	225	34
Neither	7	1
Dissatisfied	7	1
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 11: Did you make telephone contact with the Grants Office at any time while awaiting approval of grant?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	191	30
No	424	64
Don't know	46	7
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 12: Did the person dealing with the call give his/her name?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	140	73
No	19	10
Don't know	32	17
TOTAL	191	100

Base: 21 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 13: Did you find the staff...

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%
Polite?	185	97	6	3	0	0
Knowledgeable?	191	100	0	0	0	0
In a hurry/rushed?	0	0	191	100	0	0

Base: 21 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 14: Was the person who took the call able to deal with your query?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	158	83
No	33	17
TOTAL	191	100

Base: 21 (Respondents who had contacted the grants office by telephone)

Table 15: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the telephone service?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	133	69
Satisfied	53	28
Neither satisfied/dissatisfied	6	3
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	191	100

Bas: 21 (Respondents who had contacted grants office by telephone)

Table 16: Have you visited the grants office within the last 12 months?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	66	10
No	596	90
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 17: Completion of Forms

	Clear					Difficult to complete				
	Yes Number %	No Number %	DK Number %	Fold/ family member complete d form	Total Number %	Yes Number (%)	No Number (%)	DK Number %	Fold/ Family member complete d form	Total Number (%)
Preliminary Form *	501 (76%)	20 (3%)	67 (10%)	74 (11%)	662 (100%)	40 (6%)	468 (71%)	80 (12%)	74 (11%)	662 (100%)
Schedule of Works package*	507 (77%)	20 (3%)	61 (9%)	74 (11%)	662 (100%)	33 (5%)	481 (73%)	74 (11%)	74 (11%)	662 (100%)
Test of resource Form **	237 (63%)	7 (2%)	61 (16%)	74 (20%)	379 (100%)	20 (5%)	223 (59%)	61 (16%)	74 (20%)	379 (100%)
Approval of grant Form *	501 (76%)	13 (2%)	74 (11%)	74 (11%)	662 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* **Base: 100 (All respondents)**

** **Base: 33 (Respondents excluding Home Repair Grant Applicants)**

Table 18: Overall, how satisfied were you with the payment stage?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	397	60
Satisfied	232	35
Neither	13	2
Dissatisfied	20	3
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 19: How satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the builder who carried out the work?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	496	75
Satisfied	106	16
Neither	7	1
Dissatisfied	47	7
Very dissatisfied	7	1
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 20: Do you think the letters you received from the grants office were...

	Yes		No		DK		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clear?	622	94	27	4	14	2	662	100
Difficult to understand?	53	8	583	88	27	4	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 21: Overall, how satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the letters you received?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	370	56
Satisfied	285	43
Neither	0	0
Dissatisfied	7	1
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 22: Overall, do you think you were treated fairly throughout the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	655	99
No	7	1
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 23: Overall, do you think you were treated sensitively throughout the grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	655	99
No	7	1
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 24: How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the overall grants process?

	Numbers	Percentages
Very satisfied	457	69
Satisfied	192	30
Neither	7	1
Dissatisfied	7	1
Very dissatisfied	0	0
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (All respondents)

Table 25: Do you have access to the internet?

	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	106	16
No	556	84
TOTAL	662	100

Base: 100 (all respondents)

Table 26: Further comments about the grants process (telephone service/letters/grants forms)

	Numbers	Percentages
Satisfied with service	113	54
Process too long and complicated	20	9
Would like more grants available, more money	46	22
Other (including bad workmanship, not enough money, process took too long)	34	16
TOTAL	211	100

Base: 32 (Respondents who made further comments)