

WARM HOMES EARLY YEARS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY



A Department for Social Development Scheme

Northern Ireland
Housing Executive

<http://www.nihe.gov.uk>

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Research Unit
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Executive summary

Household characteristics

- Equal proportions of respondents were male and were female (59%) (the remaining 4% did not provide details).
- 42% of respondents described their household as Catholic and 40% as Protestant.
- More than half (58%) of respondents stated that they had a long-term illness/health problem/disability which limited their daily activities.
- Almost two-fifths (36%) of respondents were married and one-fifth (20%) were widowed.
- 54% of respondents were aged 60 and over and almost one-third (31%) were aged 40-59.
- More than two-fifths (44%) of respondents lived in single person households and more than one-third (35%) lived two adult in households.
- More than four-fifths (81%) of respondents had no children in their household.

Insulation measures installed

- Four-fifths (80%) of respondents stated they had loft insulation installed and almost one-quarter (24%) of respondents said they had cavity wall insulation installed.
- Most respondents stated that their homes had changed for the better after they had been insulated (loft insulation (84%), cavity wall insulation (77%; 48 respondents)).

Heating

- Almost all (98%) respondents said they had received a new central heating system through the Scheme.
- In relation to the installation of heating, the majority (85%) stated that their home had changed for the better.
- More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents had oil fired central heating installed and 30% had a mains gas central heating system installed. The heating system installed was still the main source of heating for the majority (96%) of respondents.
- One-third (33%) of respondents stated that they had been unable to adequately heat their home in the last 12 months. The main reasons given were: the cost of domestic heating fuel (72%); low household income (49%) and money needed for other priorities (29%).
- High proportions of respondents said they satisfied with various aspects of their heating system
 - The type of heating system 88%
 - The cost of running your system 60%

- The amount of heat that you can get 78%
 - The control over the level of heat 78%
 - The ease of use of the system 84%
- Prior to the installation of their new heating system, more than half (52%) of respondents had a solid fuel open fire or room heater connected to radiators. Less than half (47%) of these 132 respondents stated they had their solid fuel open fire/room heater removed as part of the Scheme. More than half (55%; 34 respondents) were satisfied that they could no longer use their solid fuel open fire/room heater and 31% (19 respondents) were dissatisfied.

Energy saving measures used

- Respondent were asked what energy saving measures they carried out in their homes.
- Switch off lights when not in use 93%
 - Only boil as much water in the kettle as needed 90%
 - Fix dripping taps 90%
 - Close curtains at dusk 81%
 - Defrost fridge/freezer regularly 74%
 - Don't leave TV on stand-by 68%

Complaints

- The majority (91%) of respondents did not have to make a complaint about the Warm Homes Scheme, a small proportion (7%; 19 respondents) said they did complain.
- Of these 19 respondents, seven said they were told who they should contact to make a complaint, 10 said they were not told who to contact.
- Six respondents stated they were satisfied with the outcome of their complaint and 13 respondents said they were not satisfied.

Overall satisfaction with the Warm Homes Scheme

- The majority (87%) of respondents reported that overall they were satisfied with the Warm Homes Scheme; a small proportion (6%) said they were dissatisfied.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The Warm Homes Scheme is an energy efficiency scheme, funded by the Department for Social Development (DSD), to provide insulation measures and heating systems for eligible households. The Scheme is a central element of the Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy. The purpose of the Scheme is to improve domestic energy efficiency and therefore reduce energy consumption in eligible households in the owner-occupied and private rented sectors.

The Scheme was originally introduced in July 2001 for eight years. In July 2009, a new Warm Homes scheme was introduced. This new Scheme is being delivered by H&A Mechanical Services and Bryson Charitable Group. The Housing Executive is the contract administrator and the quality assurance contractor for the new Scheme.

There are two elements to the Warm Homes Scheme. Warm Homes offers insulation measures to eligible households; Warm Homes Plus offers insulation and heating measures to eligible households. The full range of measures available under both elements of the Scheme includes:

- cavity wall insulation;
- solid wall insulation;
- loft insulation;
- hot water cylinder jacket;
- the installation of a fully controlled energy efficient oil or gas central heating system, where no system currently exists;
- the conversion of an existing solid fuel or Economy 7 heating system to oil or gas.

1.2 Aims of the survey

The Housing Executive, as quality assurance contractor for the Warm Homes Scheme, regularly assesses levels of customer satisfaction with the different elements of the Warm Homes service, with a view to identifying areas for improvement, where appropriate.

The Housing Executive requested that a survey should be carried out to seek the views and experiences of the respondents who received help under the Warm Homes Scheme in the early years of the Scheme (i.e. between 2009 & 2011) to evaluate the effect this has made on their home.

The Research Unit collected data to provide information on:

- the household;
- Warm Homes measures installed;
- aspects of the Warm Homes Scheme;
- the quality of the insulation installation service; and
- the quality of the heating installation service.

1.3 Methodology

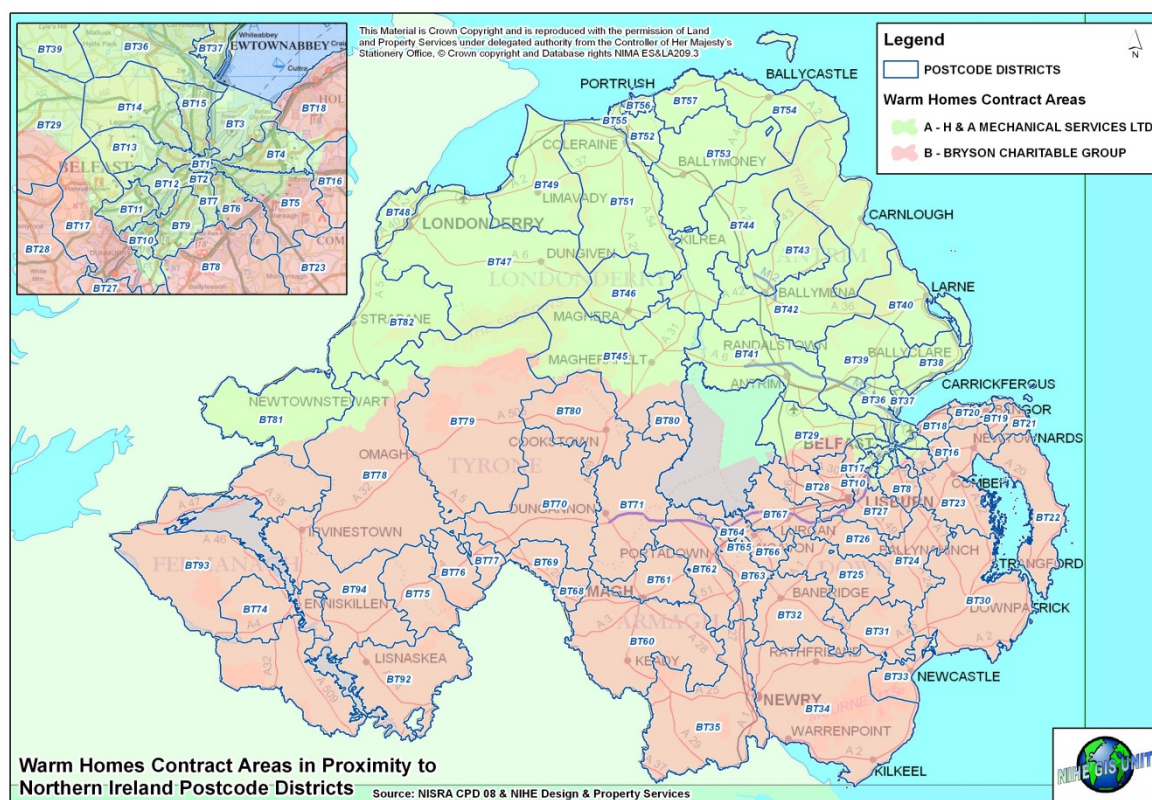
1.3.1 The sample

The Grants Department provided the Research Unit with addresses of all households that had received help under the Warm Homes Scheme (i.e. insulation measures; heating measures; compact fluorescent lamps or a mixture of all three) during the financial years 2009 - 2011. This sample frame did not identify the type of Warm Homes grant awarded to each household.

The Research Unit drew a random sample, using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. The sample consisted of 500 addresses, 250 randomly selected from the records of each of the two Scheme Managers (Bryson Charitable Group and H&A Mechanical Services).

NB: The Warm Homes Scheme is demand-led and Warm Homes do not have installation target quotas for each area, which may result in geographical variances in uptake of the Scheme, i.e. there may be more urban than rural applicants or vice versa, which may impact on the age profile of the sample.

Map 1: Installer areas in Northern Ireland



1.3.2 Fieldwork

On 21 March 2014 the Research Unit sent a questionnaire, along with a letter explaining the aims of the survey to each address in the sample. Reminder letters and a second questionnaire were sent on 18 April 2014 and a final reminder was sent out on 16 May 2014 asking respondents to return their completed forms by the end of December.

1.3.3 Response rate

The response rate was 55% with a total of 258 completed surveys received. On completion of the fieldwork, it emerged that 29 people who had received help from the Warm Homes scheme had moved home and three had died. There was a difference in response rate between the two scheme managers, as detailed below:

	Response
Bryson Charitable Group	62%
H&A Mechanical Services Ltd	47%

2.0 Household characteristics

The survey gathered information on age, gender, marital status, long-term illness/ disability and ethnicity of respondents, and also the number of adults and children in the household.

2.1 Gender of respondents

Equal proportions of respondents were male and were female (59%), the remaining 4% did not provide details (Appendix Table 1).

2.2 Religion/ethnic origin of respondents

More than two-fifths (42%) of respondents described their household religion as Catholic and 40% as Protestant. Small proportions of respondents described their household religion as mixed (4%), none (3%) and other (1%) (Appendix Table 2).

Most respondents (92%) described their ethnic origin as white; 8% did not record their ethnicity (Appendix Table 3).

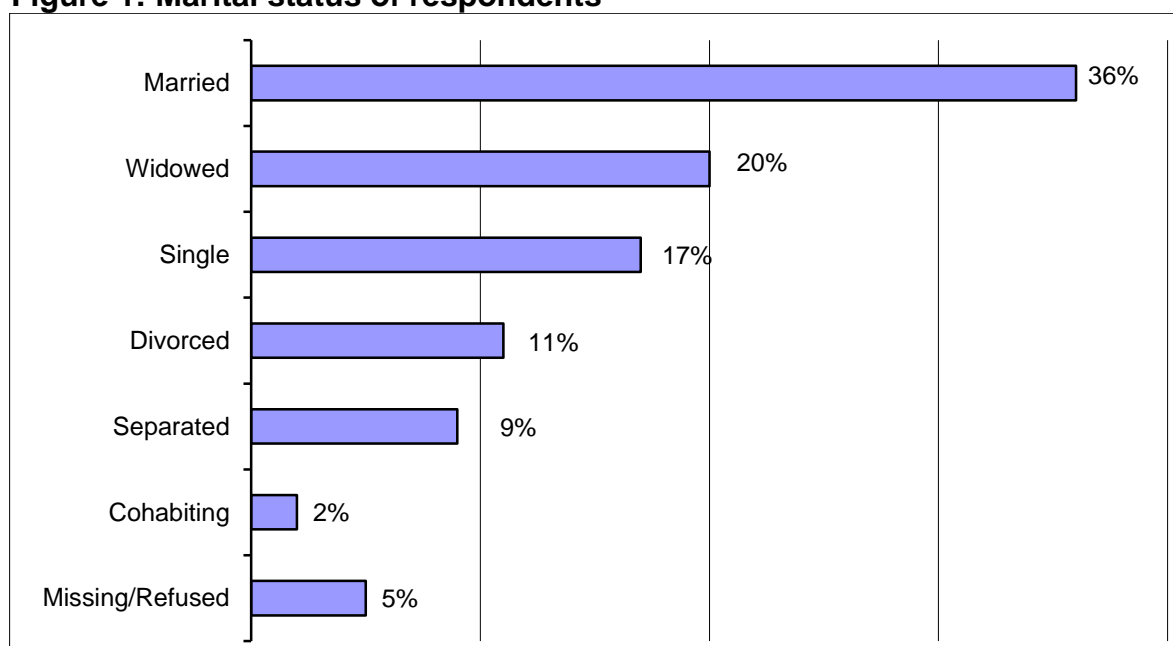
2.3 Long-term illness/health problems/disability of respondents

Almost three-fifths (58%) of respondents stated that they had a long-term illness/health problem/disability that limited their daily activities or the work they could do. More than one-third (37%) did not have a health problem (Appendix Table 4).

2.4 Marital status of respondents

More than one-third (36%) of respondents were married and one-fifth (20%) were widowed; 17% were single and 10% were divorced (Figure 1; Appendix Table 5).

Figure 1: Marital status of respondents



2.5 Age of respondents

More than half (54%) of respondents were aged 60 or older, almost one-third (31%) were aged 40 to 59 and 6% were aged 25 to 39 (Appendix Table 6).

2.6 Number of adults in each household

More than two-fifths (44%) of respondents lived in single adult households, 35% lived in two adult households and 15% were in households comprising three or more adults (Appendix Table 7).

2.7 Number of children in each household

More than four-fifths (81%) of respondents had no children in their household. Smaller proportions of households had one child (7%) and two or more children (6% (Appendix Table 8).

The age profile of respondents and the large number of adult households are a reflection of the eligibility criteria for the scheme.

3.0 Warm Homes measures

Respondents were asked what Warm Homes measures they had installed under the Scheme.

3.1 Loft insulation

Four-fifths (80%) of respondents stated they had loft insulation installed and the majority (84%) of these respondents said their home had changed for the better as a result. Seven percent said their home had not changed, 5% did not know and 1% said their home had changed for the worse as a result of having loft insulation installed (Appendix Tables 9 and 10).

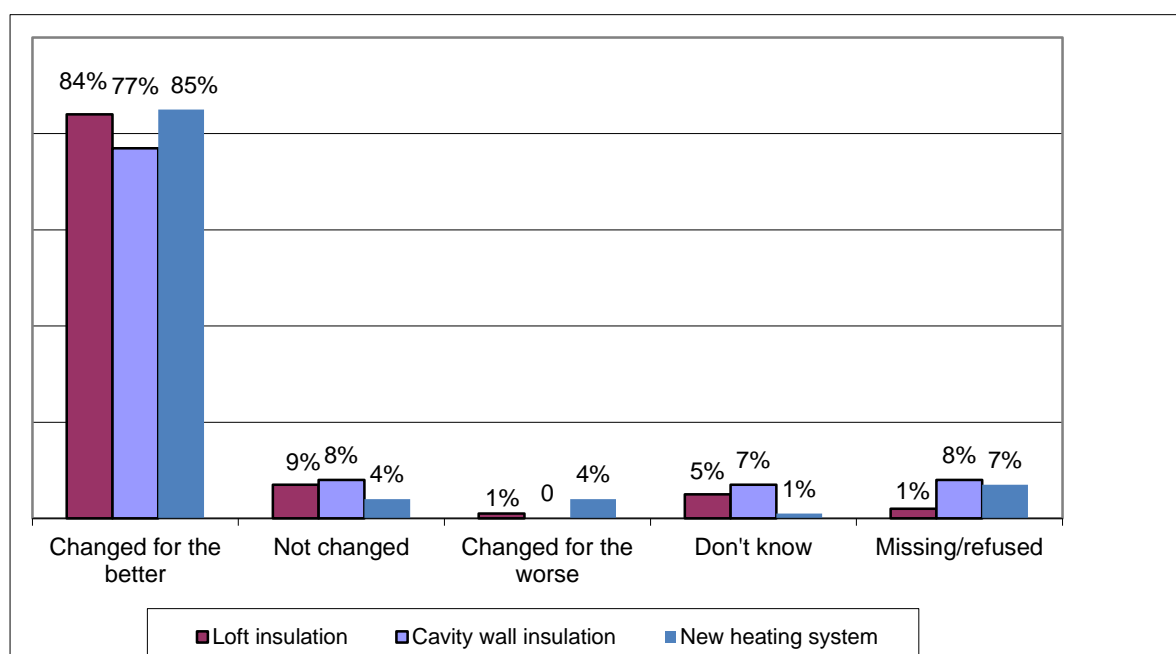
3.2 Cavity wall insulation

Almost one-quarter (24%) of respondents said they had cavity wall insulation installed. Three-quarters (77%; 48 respondents) stated that their home had changed for the better as a result of having cavity wall insulation installed (Appendix Tables 9 and 11).

3.3 New heating system

The majority (98%) of respondents had a new heating system installed with the more than four-fifths (85%) of respondents saying their homes changed for the better as a result; equal proportions (4%) of respondents said their home had not changed or changed for the worse (Appendix Tables 9 and 12).

Figure 2: Has home changed as a result of insulation work?



4.0 Heating system

The majority (98%) of respondents received a new heating system under the Warm Homes Scheme.

4.1 Type of heating system installed

More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents had an oil fired central heating, less than one-third (30%) had mains gas; small proportions of respondents had wood pellet and open fire with radiators (<1% in each case), this was still the main source of heating for the majority (96%) of respondents (Appendix Tables 13 and 14).

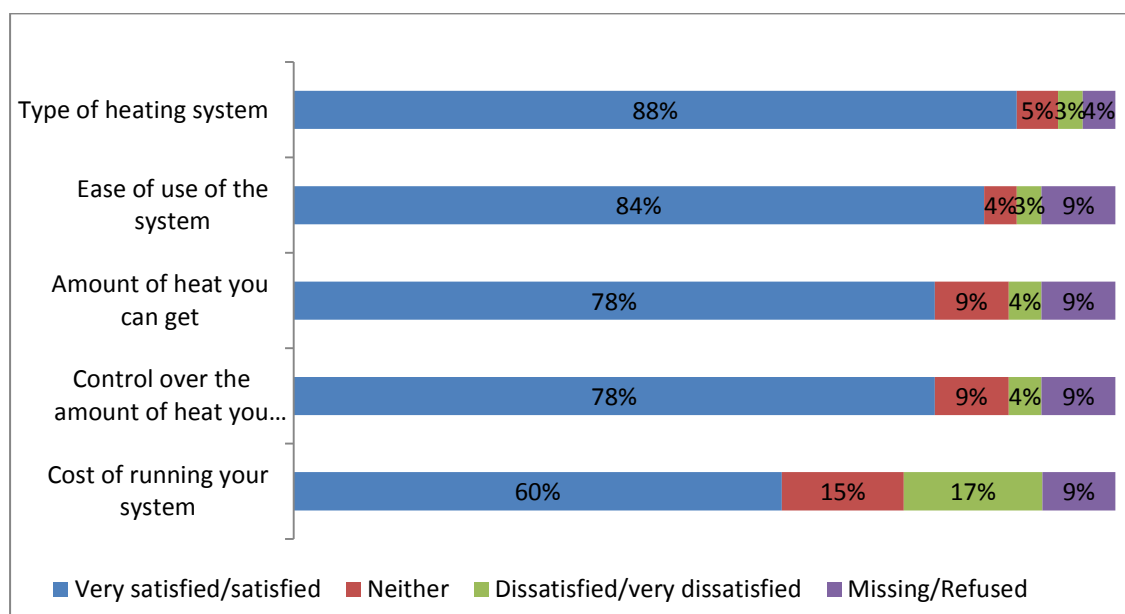
4.2 Ability to adequately heat home

Respondents were asked if, in the last 12 months, they had ever been unable to adequately heat their home. One-third (33%) of respondents said they had been unable to adequately heat their home in the previous 12 months. The reasons given included; the cost of domestic heating fuel (72%; 62 respondents), low household income (49%; 42 respondents), money needed for other priorities (29%; 25 respondents) and 20% (17 respondents) gave other reasons including heating system broke down and poor fitting doors and windows (Appendix Tables 16 and 17)

4.3 Satisfaction with heating system

There were high levels of satisfaction among respondents with various aspects of their heating system - the type of heating system (88%), the ease of using the system (84%), the amount of heat you can get (78%) and the control over the level of heat (78%). Almost one-fifth (17%) of respondents were dissatisfied with the cost of running the heating system (Appendix Table 18)

Figure 3: Satisfaction with aspects of heating system



Base:166 respondents

4.4 Solid fuel open fire/room heater

Respondents who received a new heating system were asked if they had a solid fuel open fire or room heater connected to radiators prior to the new system being installed. Just over half (52%) of respondents said they originally had a solid fuel open fire or room heater when the new system was installed (Appendix Table 19).

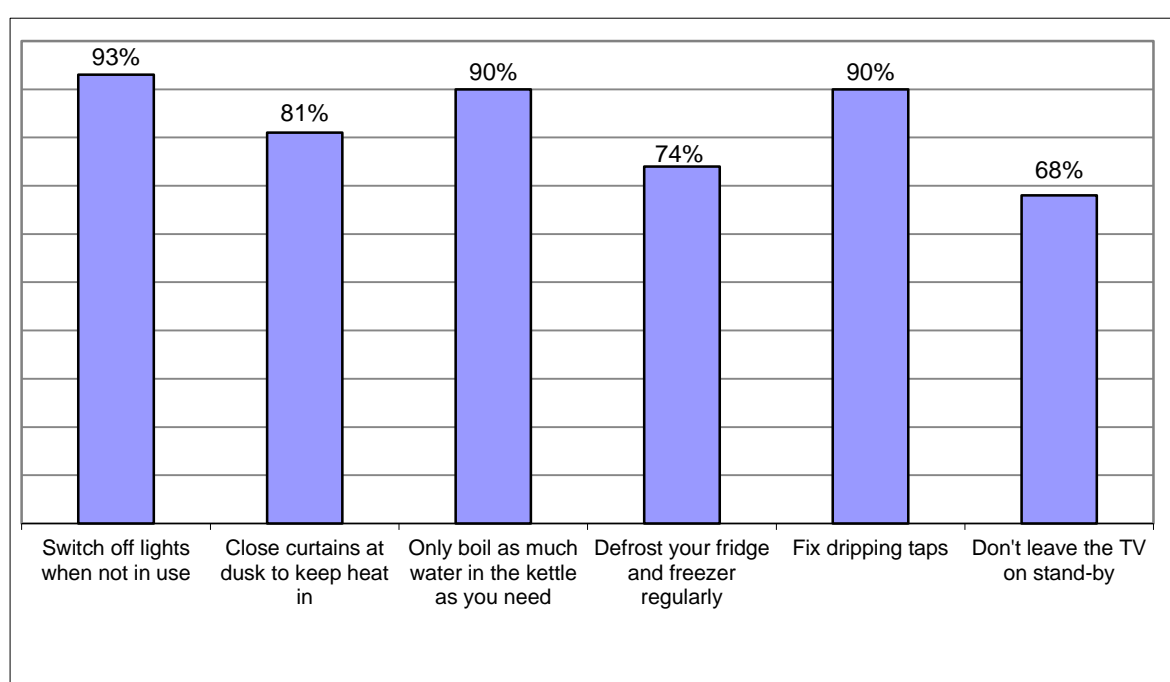
Of these 132 respondents less than half (47%; 62 respondents) stated that they had their solid fuel open fire or room heater removed as part of the scheme. More than half (55%; 34 respondents) were satisfied that they could no longer use their solid fuel open fire/room heater, 15% (9 respondents) were neither satisfied or dissatisfied and almost one-third (31%; 19 respondents) were dissatisfied that they could no longer use their solid fuel open fire/ room heater. Reasons for dissatisfaction included: ‘would be easier to heat house with a dual system’, ‘reduces my options’ and ‘I was getting more heat from solid fuel open fire’ (Appendix Tables 20 and 21).

5.0 Energy saving measures used

Respondents were asked what energy saving measures they used to save energy in their home. The measures used covered areas such as:

- switching off lights when not in use;
- closing curtains at dusk to keep the heat in;
- only boiling as much water in the kettle as needed;
- defrosting fridges and freezers regularly;
- fixing dripping taps; and
- switching the TV off and not leaving it on stand-by (Appendix Table 22) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Energy saving measures used



Switching off lights

The majority (93%) of respondents said they switch off lights when not in use.

Closing curtains

More than four-fifths (81%) of respondents stated they closed their curtains at dusk.

Boiling the required amount of water

Nine-tenths (90%) of respondents said they boiled only as much water in the kettle as they needed.

Defrosting fridge/freezer

Almost three-quarters (74%) of respondents defrost their fridge and freezer regularly.

Dripping taps

Nine-tenths (90%) of respondents stated they fix dripping taps.

Turning off the TV

More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents said they do not leave their TV on standby.

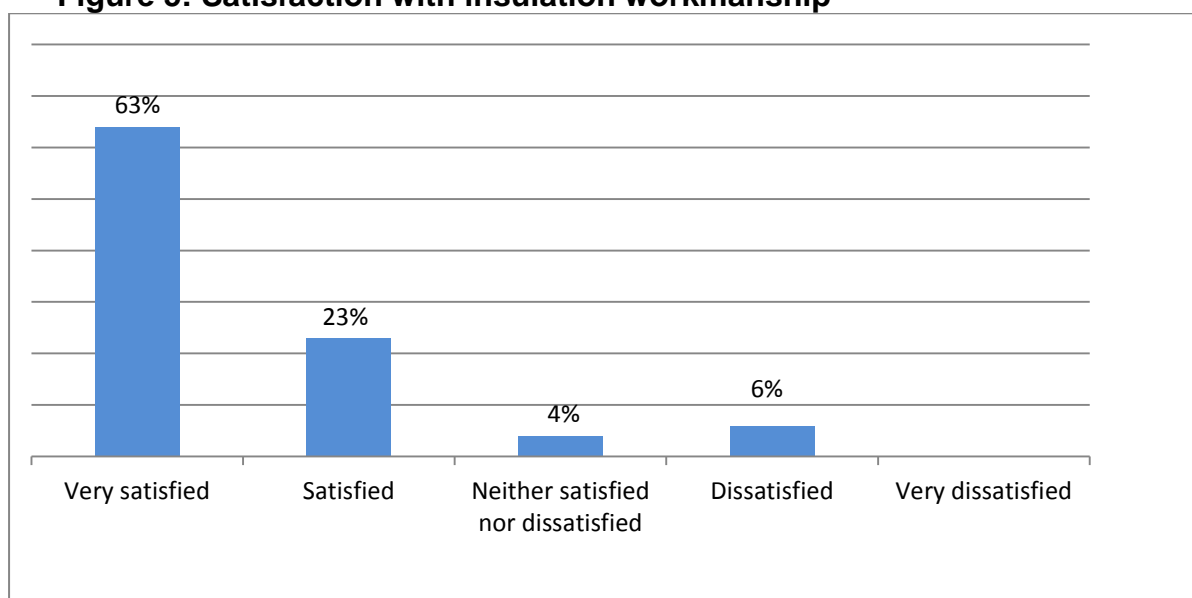
6.0 Complaints

Respondents were asked if they had to make a complaint about the Warm Homes Scheme. A small proportion (7%) of respondents said yes they had to make a complaint about the Scheme. Of these 19 respondents, seven reported being told who they should contact in the event they wanted to make a complaint, 10 said they were not told who to contact and two said they didn't know. Thirteen respondents said they were dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint and six stated they were satisfied (Appendix Tables 23-25).

7.0 Overall satisfaction with Scheme

A high proportion (87%) of respondents were 'very satisfied/satisfied' with the Scheme. Only 6% of respondents were dissatisfied (Figure 5; Appendix Table 36).

Figure 5: Satisfaction with insulation workmanship



8.0 Additional comments

Of the 258 respondents, 65 provided a total of 95 additional comments at the end of the survey.

The main comments were:

'Very satisfied with the scheme and works done'	(28%)
'Home much warmer now'	(12%)
'Radiators not working properly/need more radiators'	(11%)
'Home would be warmer if double glazing installed'	(8%)
'Heating very expensive to run'	(5%)
'Would like my open fire/back boiler back again'	(4%)

(Appendix Table 27)

Warm Homes Early Years Customer Satisfaction Survey Tabular Results

NB. Due to rounding some percentages do not add to 100%

Household characteristics

Table 1: Gender of respondents

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	125	48
Female	124	48
Missing/Refused	9	4
Total	258	100

Table 2: Religion of household

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Catholic	107	42
Protestant	104	40
Mixed Religion Catholic/Protestant	9	4
None	7	3
Other	3	1
Missing/Refused	28	11
Total	258	100

Table 3: Ethnic origin of respondents

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
White	258	92
Refused	20	8
Total	258	100

Table 4: Respondents with a long-term illness, health problem or disability

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes, has a disability that limits activities	149	58
No	95	37
Missing/Refused	14	5
Total	258	100

Table 5: Marital status of respondents

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Married	93	36
Widowed	51	20
Single	45	17
Divorced	27	11
Separated	24	9
Cohabiting	6	2
Missing/Refused	12	5
Total	258	100

Table 6: Age of respondents

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
25-39	15	6
40-59	80	31
60+	139	54
Missing/Refused	24	9
Total	258	100

Table 7: Number of adults in household

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
One	113	44
Two	91	35
Three	20	8
Four or more	19	7
Refused/No response	15	6
Total	258	100

Table 8: Number of children in household

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
None	210	81
One	18	7
Two	11	4
Three or more	4	2
Refused/No response	15	6
Total	258	100

Table 9: Do you recall what measures you had installed?

	Yes		No		Missing/ refused		Total	
	<i>Num</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>%</i>
Loft Insulation	207	80	51	20	-	-	258	100
Cavity Wall Insulation	62	24	196	76	-	-	258	100
New Heating System	254	98	4	2	-	-	258	100

Table 10: If you had Loft Insulation installed, do you feel your home has ...

	Number	%
Changed for the better?	174	84
Not changed?	15	7
Changed for the worse?	2	1
Don't know	11	5
No response/refused	5	2
Total	207	100

Base: 207 respondents who had loft insulation installed by Warm Homes

Table 11: If you had Cavity Wall Insulation installed, do you feel your home has ...

	Number	%
Changed for the better?	48	77
Not changed?	5	8
Changed for the worse?	-	-
Don't know	4	7
No response/refused	5	8
Total	62	100

Base: 62 respondents who had cavity wall insulation installed by Warm Homes

Table 12: If you had new heating installed, do you feel your home has ...

	Number	%
Changed for the better?	215	85
Not changed?	11	4
Changed for the worse?	9	4
Don't know	2	1
No response/refused	17	7
Total	254	100

Base: 254 respondents who had new heating installed by Warm Homes

Table 13: What type of heating system was installed?

	Number	%
Oil Fired with radiators	172	68
Mains Gas	77	30
Wood Pellet	1	<1
Open Fire with radiators	1	<1
No response/refused	3	1
Total	254	100

Base: 254 respondents who had new heating installed by Warm Homes

Table 14: Is this heating system still your main source of heating?

	Number	%
Yes	243	96
No	8	3
Refused/No response	3	1
Total	254	100

Base: 254 respondents who had new heating installed by Warm Homes

Table 15: What is your main source of heating now?

	Number
Oil Fired with radiators	2
Mains Gas	2
Coal fire	5
Dual system (oil/coal fire)	3
Total	12

Base: 12 respondents who had changed heating or who didn't have a new heating installed by Warm Homes

Table 16: In the last 12 months, have you ever been unable to adequately heat your home?

	Number	%
Yes	86	33
No	169	66
Refused/No response	3	1
Total	258	100

Table 17: Which of the following factors were responsible for your inability to heat your home?

	Yes		No		Missing/ refused		Total	
	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%
The cost of domestic heating fuel	62	72	20	23	4	5	86	100
Low household income	42	49	40	47	4	5	86	100
Money needed for other priorities	25	29	57	66	4	5	86	100
Other	17	20	66	77	3	4	86	100

Base: 86 respondents who stated they had been unable to adequately heat their home

Table 18: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of your main heating system?

	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		Missing/ref used	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
The type of heating system	160	62	66	26	14	5	6	2	2	1	10	4
The cost of running your system	67	26	88	34	39	15	34	13	9	4	21	8
The amount of heat that you can get	122	47	80	31	24	9	8	3	2	1	23	9
The control over the level of heat	127	49	74	29	24	9	8	3	1	<1	24	9
The ease of use of the system	136	52	82	32	10	4	5	2	2	1	23	9

Table 19: When your new heating system was installed, did you originally have a solid fuel open fire or room heater connected to radiators?

	Number	%
Yes	132	52
No	109	43
Don't know	3	1
Refused/No response	10	4
Total	254	100

Base: 254 respondents who had new heating installed by Warm Homes

Table 20: As part of the scheme did you have your solid fuel open fire or room heater removed?

	Number	%
Yes	62	47
No	66	50
Don't know	3	2
Refused/No response	1	1
Total	132	100

Base: 132 respondents who originally had a solid fuel open fire/room heater.

Table 21: How satisfied/dissatisfied are you that you can no longer use your solid fuel open fire/room heater?

	Number	%
Very satisfied	22	35
Satisfied	12	20
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	9	15
Dissatisfied	10	16
Very dissatisfied	9	15
Total	62	100

Base: 62 respondents who solid fuel open fire/room heater removed

Table 22: Do you carry out any of the following energy saving measures?

	Yes		No		No response/refused		Total	
	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%
Switch off lights when not in use	241	93	10	4	7	3	258	100
Close curtains at dusk to keep heat in	210	81	41	16	7	3	258	100
Only boil as much water in the kettle as you need	231	90	20	8	7	3	258	100
Defrost your fridge and freezer regularly	190	74	60	23	8	3	258	100
Fix dripping taps	231	90	17	7	8	3	258	100
Don't leave the TV on stand-by	176	68	75	29	7	3	258	100

Table 23: Did you have to make a complaint about the Warm Homes Scheme?

	Number	%
Yes	19	7
No	234	91
Don't know	4	2
Refused/No response	1	<1
Total	258	100

Table 24: Were you told who you should contact in the event that you wanted to make a complaint?

	Number
Yes	7
No	10
Don't know	2
Total	19

Base: 19 respondents who made a complaint.

Table 25: Were you satisfied with the outcome of your complaint?

	Number
Yes	6
No	13
Total	19

Base: 19 respondents who made a complaint.

Table 26: Overall how satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the Warm Homes Scheme?

	Number	%
Very satisfied	166	64
Satisfied	59	23
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	11	4
Dissatisfied	15	6
Very dissatisfied	-	-
Refused/No response	7	3
Total	258	100

Table 27: Additional comments on the Warm Homes Scheme

	Num	%
No comment/response	193	75
I am very happy with the Scheme	27	10
Home much warmer now	11	4
Radiators not working properly/need additional radiators	10	4
Home would be warmer if double glazing installed	8	3
Heating very expensive to run	5	2
Would like my open fire/back boiler back again	4	2
Need additional insulation	3	1
Difficult to understand how to programme/operate system	3	1
Contractors very professional/excellent workmanship	3	1
Without the Scheme I wouldn't've been able to replace boiler/update system	3	1
I have coal in my bunker which I can't use	1	<1
Only problem I have now is condensation due to house being so well insulated	1	<1
House built in 1937 & original doors & windows still in place	1	<1
Open fire solid fuel was cheaper and heat stayed for longer	1	<1
I have arthritis and find it difficult to manage/carry wood pellets	1	<1
Had leaking pipe a year after heating installed, workmen came back & fixed it	1	<1
It would be helpful if grants were available to fix doors & windows in houses over 20 years old	1	<1
Would've liked thermostat in lounge not hall, lounge remains below comfort level	1	<1
A lot cheaper to run than Economy 7	1	<1
Floorboards in bathroom need fixed, they were not replaced properly by workmen	1	<1
Unable to control level of heat in the hall	1	<1
I didn't factor in the cost of wood pellets, may have been cheaper to keep Economy 7	1	<1
My heating broke down quite a bit, had to pay plumber to fix it, should be guaranteed for more than a year	1	<1
When heating turned off heat lost quickly through solid stone walls	1	<1
No one called out to check that works completed	1	<1
Disappointed I had to replace parts to the heating system just after guarantee expired	1	<1
I would love someone to tell me why my house is so damp	1	<1