

Research Project:

**National Customer Satisfaction Survey
to Support the Building Standards
Verification Performance Framework**

2019 National Survey Findings

December 2019



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Report prepared by:

Pye Tait Consulting
Royal House 110 Station Parade Harrogate HG1 1EP
Tel: 01423-509433
Fax: 01423-509502

Email: info@pyetait.com

Web: www.pyetait.com

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the author.

Report commissioned by:
Building Standards Division
Local Government and Communities Directorate
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Livingston
EH54 6GA

Tel: 0300 244 4000
E-mail: buildingstandards@gov.scot
Web: www.gov.scot/bsd

© Crown Copyright 2020

Applications for reproduction of any part of this publication should be addressed to:
Building Standards Division, Local Government and Communities Directorate,
Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston, EH54 6GA

This report is published electronically to limit the use of paper, but photocopies will be provided on request to Building Standards Division.

Contents.....	3
Tables and Figures.....	4
Executive Summary	5
1. Introduction	8
1.1 Background to the survey	8
1.2 Changes from May 2017	9
1.3 Methodology	10
2. Achieved Sample and Respondent Profile	12
2.1 Total survey responses	12
2.2 Respondent profile	14
3. Overall Satisfaction	18
4. Meeting Expectations	20
5. Timeliness and Keeping Customers Informed.....	24
5.1 Timeliness.....	24
5.2 Keeping customers informed	26
6. Quality of Service	28
6.1 Advice, guidance and staff service.....	28
6.2 Inspection visits.....	33
6.3 Meeting the requirements	35
7. Communications.....	37
7.1 Channels of communication.....	37
7.2 Written information and documentation.....	38
7.3 Electronic communications	39
7.4 E-building standards	41
7.5 Improving communications in the future.....	41
8. Accessibility.....	43
8.1 Making contact with the building standards service	43
8.2 Visiting the offices of the building standards service	45
9. Conclusions and Findings	46
9.1 Conclusions	46
9.2 Forward considerations.....	47
Appendix 1: Results by Local Authority Size	49
Appendix 2: National Survey Questionnaire	66
Appendix 3: Survey Invitation Email	74

Tables and Figures

Table 1 2019 headline results and comparisons	7
Table 2 Achieved sample and response rate	12
Table 3 Achieved sample and response rate by local authority	13
Table 4 Overall satisfaction with Building Standards service by local authority.....	19
Figure 1 Customer type.....	14
Figure 2 Use of an agent (direct applicants/submitters only)	14
Figure 3 Customer type by category of application.....	15
Figure 4 Categories of building work	16
Figure 5 Reasons for making contact with the building standards service	17
Figure 6 Overall satisfaction with the building standards service	18
Figure 7 Extent to which service met expectations	20
Figure 8 Timeliness of service aspects (all customers)	24
Figure 9 Timeliness of service aspects (direct applicants/submitters)	25
Figure 10 Timeliness of service aspects (agents).....	25
Figure 11 Satisfaction with the way kept informed.....	26
Figure 12 Quality of advice and guidance received (all customers).....	28
Figure 13 Quality of advice and guidance received (direct applicants/submitters only).....	29
Figure 14 Quality of advice and guidance received (agents only).....	29
Figure 15 Quality of staff service	30
Figure 16 Quality of staff service (direct applicants/submitters only)	31
Figure 17 Quality of staff service (agents only).....	31
Figure 18 Whether an inspection was carried out by building standards service staff.....	33
Figure 19 Satisfaction with inspection visits (all customers)	34
Figure 20 Satisfaction with inspection visits (direct applicants/submitters)	34
Figure 21 Satisfaction with inspection visits (agents)	35
Figure 22 Awareness of Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP)	36
Figure 23 Channels of interaction	37
Figure 24 Quality of written information and documentation	38
Figure 25 Whether visited the building standards section of the local authority website	39
Figure 26 Satisfaction with electronic communications.....	40
Figure 27 Ease of contacting the local authority building standards service	43
Figure 28 Building standards service staff are accessible to meet in person	44
Figure 29 Building standards service staff are approachable	44
Figure 30 Whether visited the offices of the local authority building standards service	45
Figure 31 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the building standards service offices	45

Supplementary Figures are presented in Appendix 1 (not listed above).

Executive Summary

The remit of the building standards system in Scotland is to protect the public interest by setting out the standards to be met when building or conversion work takes place, to the extent necessary to meet the building regulations.

In 2019 the Scottish Government commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to undertake the sixth annual national customer satisfaction survey for building standards.¹ The purpose of the annual survey is to obtain nationally consistent customer satisfaction data across all 32 local authorities in Scotland and to enable comparison analysis between years.

The survey aligns with Key Performance Outcome 4 (KPO4) of the 'Building Standards Performance Framework for Verifiers' (operational from May 2017).² The purpose of KPO4 – titled 'Understand and respond to the customer experience' – is for local authority verifiers to monitor customer satisfaction with the building standards service and ensure it meets or exceeds customer expectations.

Approach to delivering the survey:

- The 2019 survey questionnaire broadly replicated the 2018 version with a minor change to how respondents selected the local authority their response related to (a copy is presented in Appendix 2);
- The scope of the survey was all building standards customers between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, defined as:
 - a. Applicants for building warrants (including any agents);
 - b. Submitters of completion certificates (including any agents); and
 - c. Others that have interacted with the building standards service.
- Local authorities supplied their customers' contact details (name and email address only) to Pye Tait Consulting for the express purpose of being invited to participate in the survey;
- The survey opened on 30th September 2019 and closed on 1st November 2019. It was hosted online and customers with email addresses were directly invited by Pye Tait Consulting to participate;

¹ The fifth national customer survey took place in 2018 and the final report is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-customer-satisfaction-survey-support-building-standards-verification-performance-framework-2018-national-survey-findings/pages/2/>

² The Scottish Government (2017) Building Standards Performance Framework for Verifiers. Available <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516415.pdf>

- Local authorities were at liberty to promote the survey link to their own customers (i.e. those within scope) as appropriate;
- For customers of one local authority the survey automatically assigned their responses to that local authority; while customers of multiple local authorities were presented with links for each local authority of which they had been a customer and thus could complete the survey multiple times, once for each local authority.

Achieved sample:

Total email addresses supplied to Pye Tait from local authorities: **23,522**³

Total survey invitation emails sent by Pye Tait: **18,408**⁴

Total survey responses received: **2,752**

Response rate: **15.0%**⁵ (against 18,408 emails sent).

Respondent profile:

- The majority of surveyed customers (67%) stated that they were direct building warrant applicants and/or direct submitters of completion certificates during the 2018/19 financial year (the period in scope of the survey);
- Nearly a third (31%) classified themselves as agents, i.e. acting on behalf of applicants;
- A small minority (2%) defined themselves as an 'other' customer type;
- The majority of customers (72%) had submitted applications for domestic work only, 13% submitted applications for non-domestic work only and 16% submitted applications for both domestic and non-domestic work.

³ This number includes repeat email addresses supplied by more than one local authority.

⁴ Unique customers, i.e. following a de-duplication of customer email addresses supplied by all 32 local authorities.

⁵ For comparison purposes, the national response rate in 2018 was 16.9%. However, higher volumes of customer email addresses were supplied by local authorities this year than in 2018, resulting in the highest number of responses to date since the first survey was run five years previously.

Table 1 2019 headline results and comparisons

Key	Numerical rating questions	Percentage questions
Green (G)	7.5 and higher	75% and higher
Amber (A)	Between 6.5 and 7.4	Between 65% and 74%
Red (R)	6.4 and below	64% and below

Note that the colour-coding metrics have changed in 2019 (from previous years) to reflect The Scottish Government's updated performance measurement requirements.

Scotland	Scotland 2019	Scotland 2018	Scotland 2017
OVERALL SATISFACTION			
Overall satisfaction with the service (score out of 10)	7.4 (A)	7.0 (A)	6.7 (A)
Extent to which service met expectations (score out of 10)	7.4 (A)	7.0 (A)	6.7 (A)
Very/fairly satisfied with the timeliness of various aspects of the service	60% (R)	56% (R)	53% (R)
Kept very/fairly well informed about the progress of an application or submission	61% (R)	54% (R)	51% (R)
Strongly agree/agree to some extent that sufficient advice and guidance was received to meet needs	69% (A)	66% (A)	63% (R)
Strongly agree/agree to some extent that building standards service staff were polite and courteous	84% (G)	83% (G)	81% (G)
Yes - an inspection visit was undertaken by building standards staff	66% (A)	64% (R)	63% (R)
Very/fairly satisfied with the quality of the advice and guidance received from inspection staff	77% (G)	83% (G)	78% (G)
Yes – aware of the need to notify the building standards service prior to commencing warrantable work	97% (G)	98% (G)	98% (G)
Satisfied with the <u>accuracy</u> of written information (score out of 10)	8.1 (G)	7.9 (G)	7.8 (G)
Satisfied with the <u>quality</u> of written information (score out of 10)	8.0 (G)	7.8 (G)	7.7 (G)
Building standards service staff are accessible if I want to meet them in person	59% (R)	57% (R)	57% (R)
Building standards service staff are approachable	74% (A)	73% (A)	70% (A)
Very/fairly satisfied with the reception service	87% (G)	84% (G)	82% (G)

1.1 Background to the survey

The building standards system in Scotland was established under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act gives powers to Scottish Ministers to make building regulations, procedure regulations, fees regulations and other supporting legislation as necessary to fulfil the purposes of the Act. The purposes include setting building standards and dealing with dangerous and defective buildings.

The remit of the building standards system is to protect the public interest by setting out the standards to be met when building or conversion work takes place, to the extent necessary to meet the building regulations.

The standards are intended to:

- Secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings;
- Further the conservation of fuel and power; and
- Further the achievement of sustainable development.

The role of the building standards verifier is to protect the public interest by:

- Providing an independent check of applications for building warrants to construct buildings, provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or to convert buildings;
- Granting or refusing building warrants;
- Carrying out an independent check of construction activities through the process of reasonable inquiry; and
- Accepting or rejecting completion certificates.

Verifiers are appointed by Scottish Ministers and the Act provides for a variety of verifiers should they be required. At present, the only appointed verifiers are the 32 Scottish local authorities, each covering their own geographical area.

In 2011 Pye Tait Consulting, on behalf of the Scottish Government, developed a set of nine national Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs), which were implemented as

part of the 'Building Standards Verification Performance Framework' and launched on 1st May 2012. The intention of these was, through more accurate and effective comparisons, to ensure consistency and quality in terms of outputs and overall service, along with a greater focus on peer review, benchmarking and sharing of best practice. Additionally, the KPOs underpinned a strong culture of continuous improvement.

In 2013/14 the Scottish Government commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to develop and run the first national customer satisfaction survey for building standards. This was based on the need to obtain nationally consistent data on customer perceptions of their local authority building standards service. The first survey provided baseline data for trend analysis in subsequent years and was repeated in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.⁶

1.2 Changes from May 2017

In 2015, the Scottish Government commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to evaluate the performance of local authorities in their role as verifiers,⁷ with an aim to inform Scottish Ministers in the lead-up to the next appointment of verifiers from May 2017. The evaluation identified various considerations including the scope for a review and refresh of the performance framework.

In 2016, the Scottish Government completed this review in consultation with Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) and with independent input from Pye Tait Consulting. The 32 local authorities were re-appointed on 1st May 2017 for varying lengths of time based on their prior performance: 17 local authorities for six years; 12 local authorities for three years; and three local authorities were re-appointed for one year, of which two have been subsequently re-appointed for a further three years, and the third for two years, subject to a mid-point review.⁸ The new 'Building Standards Performance Framework for Verifiers' was also implemented from May 2017.⁹

Two of the seven new KPOs, categorised under 'Quality Customer Experience', aim to ensure that verifiers adhere to the commitments in the building standards customer charter and meet or exceed customer expectations. The 2019 survey aligns with KPO4 – titled 'Understand and respond to the customer experience'. The purpose of this KPO is for local authority verifiers to monitor customer satisfaction

⁶ The Scottish Government (2014) National Customer Satisfaction Survey to Support the New Verification Performance Framework (Phase 2 report). Available at: www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00456855.pdf

⁷ The Scottish Government (2016) Evaluation of the performance of local authorities in their role as building standards verifiers. Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00495402.pdf>

⁸ Further details about the 2017 re-appointment of verifiers are available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/verification/>

⁹ The Scottish Government (2017) Building Standards Performance Framework for Verifiers. Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516415.pdf>

with the building standards service and ensure it meets or exceeds customer expectations.

This report presents the findings from the 2019 national customer satisfaction survey.

1.3 Methodology

The 2019 survey questionnaire broadly replicated the 2018 version (a copy is presented in Appendix 2). Two minor changes were made for 2019:

- In order to minimise selection error, customers were no longer presented with a drop-down list of 32 local authorities to manually select which to provide feedback about. Instead, this information was either pre-filled (for customers of one local authority) or a dynamically controlled reduced list was presented for customers of more than one local authority (typically agents);
- A question which sought customers' consent to Pye Tait sharing their contact details and individual responses with the relevant local authority, was removed. This was due to the lag between the customer receiving the service and the survey findings being made available. Instead, customers were encouraged to contact their local authority directly to discuss any specific issues.

The scope of the survey was all building standards customers between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, defined as:

- Applicants for building warrants (including any agents);
- Submitters of completion certificates (including any agents); and
- Others that have interacted with the building standards service.

Local authorities supplied their customers' contact details (name and email address only) to Pye Tait Consulting for the express purpose of being invited to participate in the survey. On advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) following GDPR coming into force in May 2018, the national customer satisfaction survey is in the legitimate interests of the buildings standards system and its customers. However, prior to GDPR, customers may have previously opted out of being contacted for the purpose of this survey, and local authorities double-checked with these customers if they still wished to opt out of their details being shared with Pye Tait.

The survey opened on 30th September 2019 and closed on 1st November 2019. It was hosted online and customers with email addresses were directly invited by Pye Tait Consulting to participate. Local authorities were also at liberty to promote the survey to their own customers (i.e. those within scope) as appropriate, with some promoting the survey via social media channels.

When completing the survey, customers were presented with a link relating to the specific local authority to which their response related. Customers of multiple local authorities were presented with links for each local authority of which they had been a customer and thus could complete the survey multiple times, once for each local authority.

A note about the analysis

For most survey questions, the findings contained within this report have been cross-tabulated by type of customer (see Figure 1). It should be noted that the findings have not been subject to statistical tests to determine the significance of any apparent patterns and should therefore be treated as indicative. Percentages shown in charts and tables may not add up to precisely 100% due to the impact of rounding.

Certain charts in this report refer to a base number of 'respondents' (meaning total customers answering that particular survey question) and others refer to a base number of 'responses' (total boxes ticked for survey questions where customers could choose more than one answer).

2. Achieved Sample and Respondent Profile

2.1 Total survey responses

Total survey responses for Scotland (including the national survey response rate) is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Achieved sample and response rate

A	Number of customer email addresses supplied by local authorities to Pye Tait Consulting This number includes repeat email addresses, i.e. where the same customer's details were supplied by more than one local authority.	23,522
B	Of these – number of unique customers invited to participate in the survey: This number follows a de-duplication of repeat email addresses where supplied by more than one local authority.	18,408
C	Total survey responses for Scotland: Customers attributed their survey responses to a particular local authority. Respondents could complete the survey more than once to provide feedback about more than one local authority if they had been a customer of multiple local authorities.	2,752
D	Response rate for Scotland (C as a percentage of B):	15.0%¹⁰

A breakdown of the achieved sample and response rates by local authority is provided in Table 3.

NB: The response rate for Scotland is not directly comparable with individual local authority response rates. The response rate for Scotland is based on total unique customers on a national level (i.e. following a de-duplication exercise) whereas the response rate for each local authority is based on total email addresses supplied by that local authority.

¹⁰ For comparison purposes, the national response rate in 2018 was 16.9%. However, higher volumes of customer email addresses were supplied by local authorities this year than in 2018, resulting in the highest number of responses to date since the first survey was run five years previously.

Table 3 Achieved sample and response rate by local authority

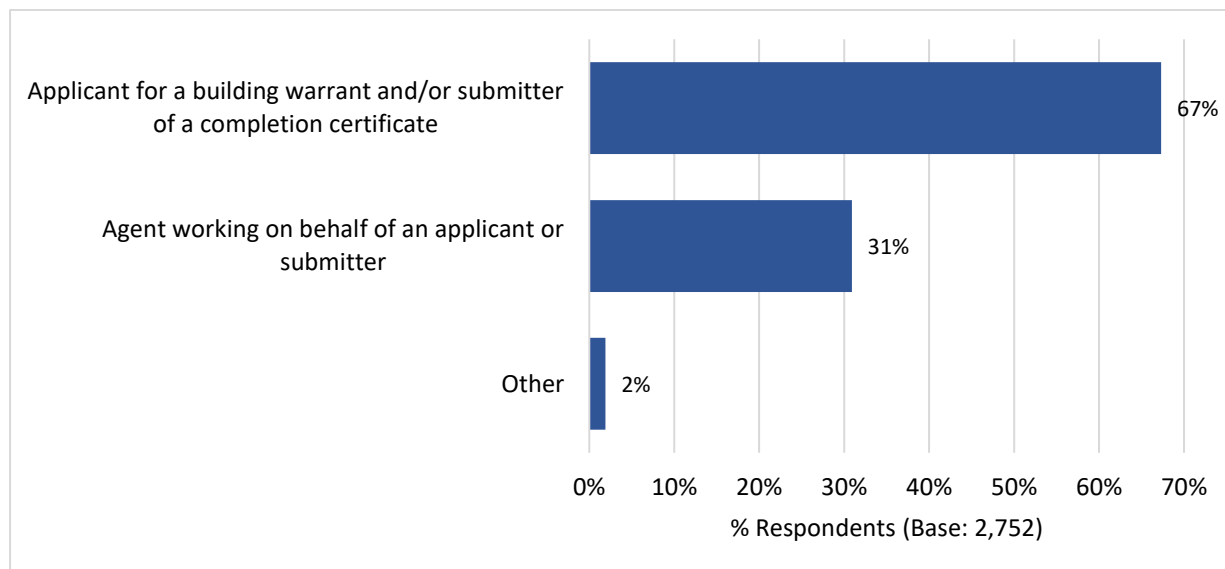
Local authority	A: Total email addresses supplied by local authorities to Pye Tait	B: Total email addresses that were unique to each local authority	C: Actual survey responses attributed to each local authority (self-selected by the customer)	D: Response rate: Actual responses attributed to each local authority (C) as a % of total email addresses supplied by that local authority (A)
Aberdeen City	653	403	70	10.7%
Aberdeenshire	1421	1166	189	13.3%
Angus	392	249	42	10.7%
Argyll and Bute	152	123	23	15.1%
City of Edinburgh	2314	1625	282	12.2%
Clackmannanshire	224	114	26	11.6%
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	249	222	46	18.5%
Dumfries and Galloway	505	407	103	20.4%
Dundee City	536	340	53	9.9%
East Ayrshire	429	298	34	7.9%
East Dunbartonshire	893	565	106	11.9%
East Lothian	311	88	28	9.0%
East Renfrewshire	524	265	35	6.7%
Falkirk	479	271	57	11.9%
Fife	1254	919	149	11.9%
Glasgow City	1410	719	128	9.1%
Highland	1960	1685	249	12.7%
Inverclyde	239	131	24	10.0%
Midlothian	278	105	18	6.5%
Moray	650	491	92	14.2%
North Ayrshire	567	359	66	11.6%
North Lanarkshire	1933	1484	187	9.7%
Orkney	324	312	75	23.1%
Perth and Kinross	998	673	128	12.8%
Renfrewshire	619	292	61	9.9%
Scottish Borders	575	400	73	12.7%
Shetland	143	122	25	17.5%
South Ayrshire	541	365	64	11.8%
South Lanarkshire	1315	868	129	9.8%
Stirling	512	377	70	13.7%
West Dunbartonshire	140	98	18	12.9%
West Lothian	982	684	102	10.4%
Customers of multiple local authorities	Included in above totals	+2,188	N/A	N/A
Total	23,522	18,408	2,752	15.0%*

*The total Scotland response rate is determined by calculating column C as a percentage of B.

2.2 Respondent profile

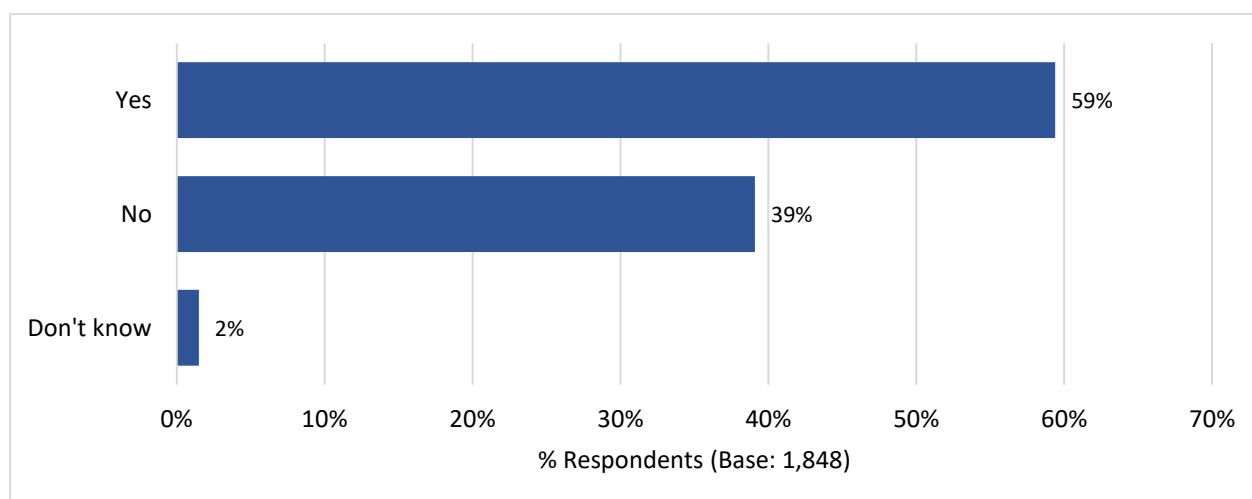
The majority of customers responding to the survey (67%) were direct applicants for building warrants and/or submitters of completion certificates¹¹ in the 2018/19 financial year (the period in scope of the survey). Just under a third (31%) were agents acting on behalf of applicants, while the remaining 2% fell outside of these categories (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Customer type¹²



Among direct applicants, more than half (59%) confirmed that they used an agent to act on their behalf as part of the application process (Figure 2).

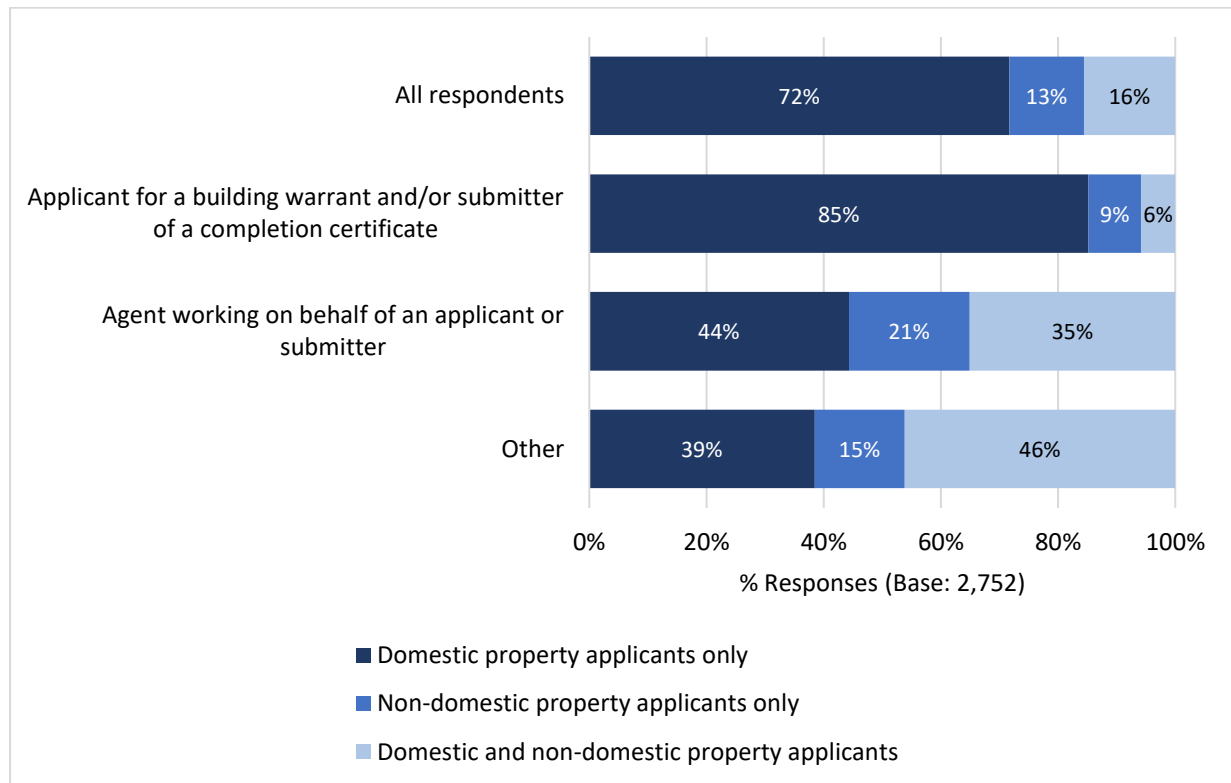
Figure 2 Use of an agent (direct applicants/submitters only)



All customers were asked to state the category (or categories) of work for which they had submitted an application. The majority of customers (72%) had submitted applications for domestic work only, 13% submitted applications for non-domestic work only, and 16% submitted applications for both domestic and non-domestic work.

Direct applicants responding to the survey were primarily domestic customers of the building standards system, whereas agents spanned a mix of domestic only, commercial only, and combined (domestic and commercial) customers (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Customer type by category of application



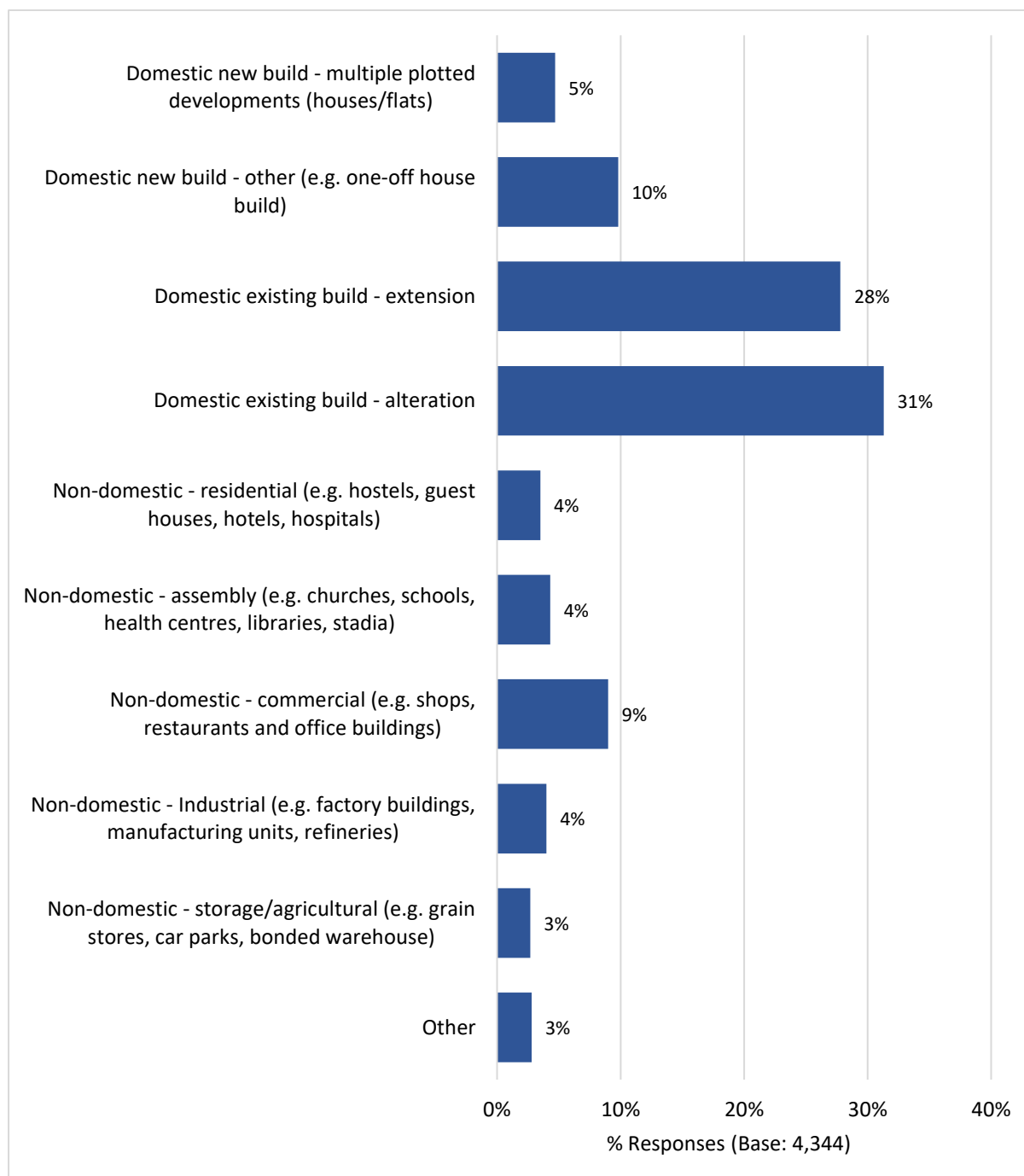
¹¹ From this point forward the term 'direct applicants' is used for ease of reference when referring to direct applicants for building warrant and/or direct submitters of completion certificates.

¹² Proportions in certain Figures and Tables may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

A more detailed breakdown of the categories of building work for which surveyed customers had applied, is shown in Figure 4.

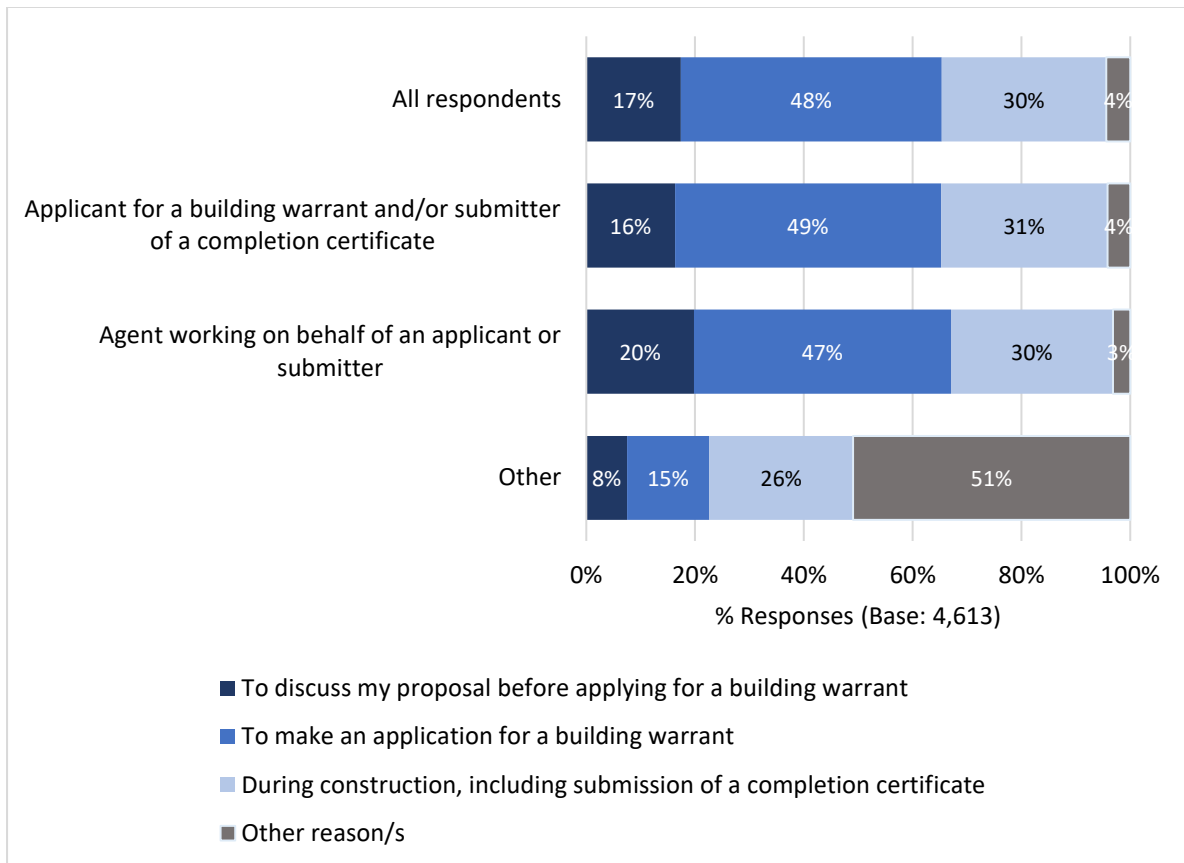
Applications relating to 'Domestic existing build' (either alterations or extensions) account for the majority (59%) of responses.

Figure 4 Categories of building work



The most common reason why surveyed customers made contact with their local authority building standards service was to prepare an application for a building warrant (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Reasons for making contact with the building standards service



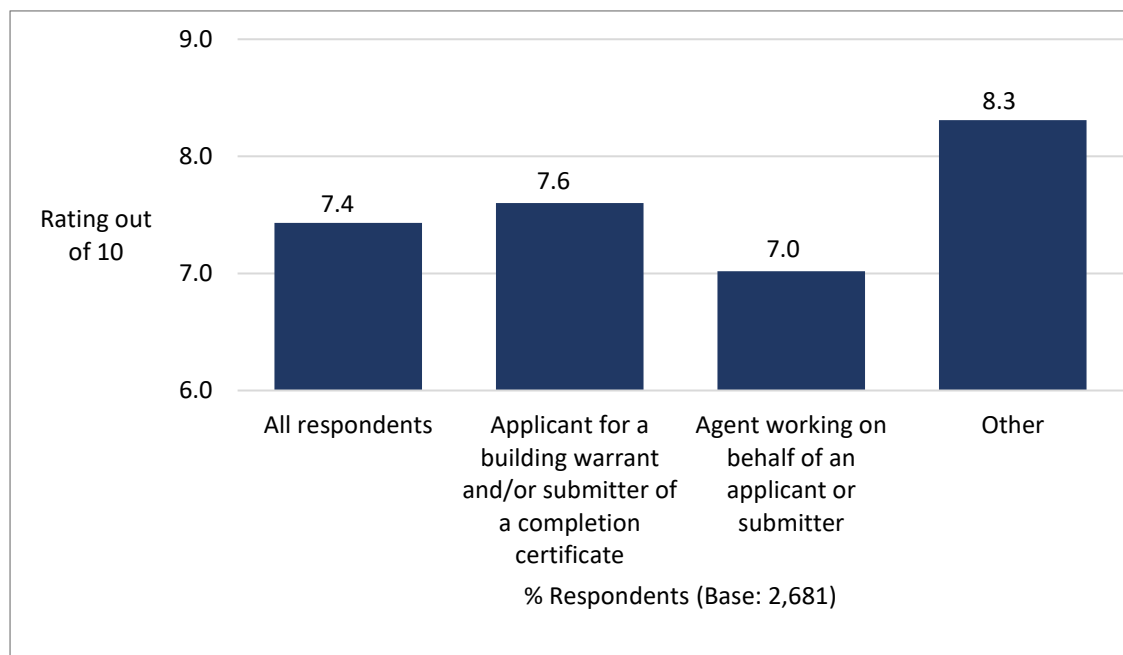
3. Overall Satisfaction

Surveyed customers were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the local authority building standards service on a scale from 1 'not at all satisfied' to 10 'completely satisfied'.

On the whole, customers are increasingly satisfied, returning an average rating of 7.4 out of 10. This compares with an average score of 7.0 in 2018 and 6.7 in 2017. The most common (modal) rating was the perfect mark of 10 out of 10 (Figure 6).

Direct applicants are more satisfied than agents, although the gap between the two has narrowed since 2018. The average applicant rating stands at 7.6 (increasing from 7.5 in 2018) while the average agent rating has increased to 7.0 (from 6.3 in 2018).

Figure 6 Overall satisfaction with the building standards service



Average ratings differ slightly by type of application, being 7.5 for domestic customers only, 7.4 for non-domestic customers only, and 7.1 for mixed (domestic and non-domestic) customers.

The overall satisfaction within each local authority is displayed in Table 4. Average scores range between 4.8 and 8.9, and most local authorities score 7.5 or above; four local authorities score below 6.5, and five score between 6.5 and 7.4 (inclusive).

Table 4 Overall satisfaction with Building Standards service by local authority

Key	Numerical rating questions	Percentage questions
Green (G)	7.5 and higher	75% and higher
Amber (A)	Between 6.5 and 7.4	Between 65% and 74%
Red (R)	6.4 and below	64% and below

Note that the colour-coding metrics have changed in 2019 (from previous years) to reflect The Scottish Government's updated performance measurement requirements.

Local authority	Overall satisfaction score	Number of survey responses
Aberdeen City	8.0 (G)	70
Aberdeenshire	8.6 (G)	189
Angus	8.9 (G)	42
Argyll and Bute	8.5 (G)	23
City of Edinburgh	5.4 (R)	282
Clackmannanshire	8.9 (G)	26
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	8.5 (G)	46
Dumfries and Galloway	7.1 (A)	103
Dundee City	7.6 (G)	53
East Ayrshire	8.2 (G)	34
East Dunbartonshire	4.8 (R)	106
East Lothian	6.9 (A)	28
East Renfrewshire	8.1 (G)	35
Falkirk	7.9 (G)	57
Fife	7.5 (G)	149
Glasgow City	5.4 (R)	128
Highland	7.7 (G)	249
Inverclyde	6.3 (R)	24
Midlothian	8.8 (G)	18
Moray	8.0 (G)	92
North Ayrshire	8.6 (G)	66
North Lanarkshire	7.5 (G)	187
Orkney	8.6 (G)	75
Perth and Kinross	8.3 (G)	128
Renfrewshire	7.2 (A)	61
Scottish Borders	7.4 (A)	73
Shetland	7.6 (G)	25
South Ayrshire	7.7 (G)	64
South Lanarkshire	8.0 (G)	129
Stirling	7.4 (A)	70
West Dunbartonshire	8.1 (G)	18
West Lothian	8.7 (G)	102
Scotland (national comparison)	7.4 (A)	2,752

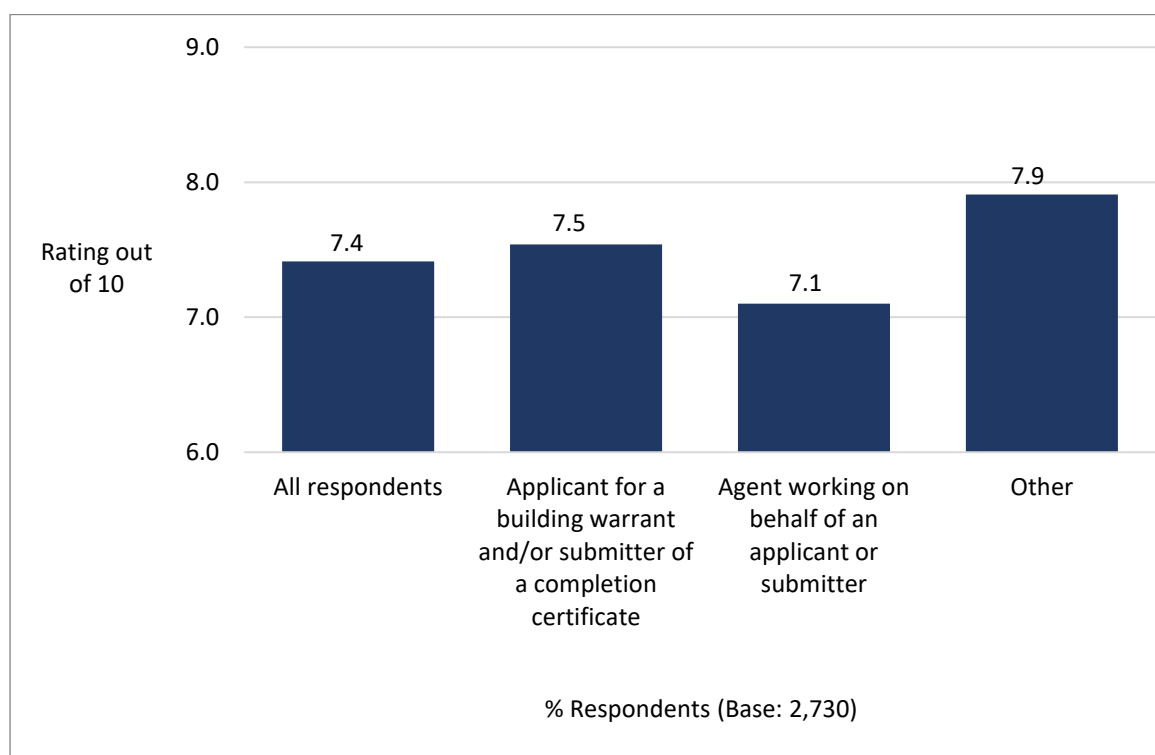
4. Meeting Expectations

Surveyed customers rated the extent to which they felt the local authority building standards service had met their expectations, on a scale from 1 'not at all' to 10 'completely'.

On the whole, expectations appear to have been reasonably well met, with customers returning an average rating of 7.4 out of 10. This is an increase from an average rating of 7.0 in 2018. The most common (modal) rating was the perfect mark of 10 out of 10 (Figure 7).

As with the scores for overall satisfaction, direct applicants are more satisfied than agents and the difference between the two has narrowed since last year. The average applicant rating stands at 7.5 (a slight increase from 7.4 in 2018) while the average agent rating is 7.1 (an increase from 6.3 in 2018).

Figure 7 Extent to which service met expectations



Average ratings differ slightly by type of application, being 7.5 for domestic customers, 7.4 for non-domestic customers and 7.2 for mixed (domestic and non-domestic) customers.

Respondents were asked to provide a reason for their rating in response to this question. Analysis involved ordering all responses from highest to lowest score, then dividing them into approximate thirds based on the number of respondents:

- The 'top group' (809 respondents) gave a perfect rating of 10;
- The 'middle group' (886 respondents) gave a rating of 8 or 9; and
- The 'bottom group' (1,035 respondents) gave a rating between 1 and 7.

Reasons for a rating 10 out of 10

The most common reasons for customers providing a rating of 10 out of 10 include:

- Fast, efficient, smooth, seamless and helpful service;
- Easy, timeous and clear process;
- Excellent and prompt communications;
- Professional and fair approach taken by first-class, knowledgeable and approachable staff, with excellent problem-solving.

As was the case in 2018, these customers complimented the overall speed of service, including granting the building warrant, and the helpfulness of staff throughout the application process. Staff are described as helpful, well informed, informative, professional and approachable.

“Always available to discuss matters - clear guidance - helpful service - easy to deal with in conversation or online.”

Agent

“All conditions for the warrant were explained pre-build. All inspections required to secure the warrant were explained, with no long delays waiting on inspections during the build. It all went to plan.”

Direct applicant

“The building standards officer was very empathetic to our particular needs (self-build, by myself). He always had a positive attitude towards any problem we encountered and made the whole Building Control process very smooth.”

Direct applicant

Reasons for rating 8 or 9 out of 10

Most common reasons given for a rating of 8 or 9 out of 10:

- Generally, a good, efficient service, supported by prompt and pragmatic communications and guidance;

- Courteous, knowledgeable and helpful staff;

Negative points generally related to applications and requests taking longer than expected to process (often reported at completion stage) as well as a perceived slowness among local authorities in responding to communications, e.g. email or telephone.

“As a professional architect, I go through a lot of building warrant applications and deal with a lot of building standards officers. Honestly, [they] tend to go out of their way to get things done, often chasing up for additional information, and not being afraid to get in touch via phone/email instead of just formally responding. They tend to reply promptly to emails and have no issue with sitting and discussing solutions that may not be the norm.”

Direct applicant

“The process was reasonably straightforward. My only concern was the length of time it took to get the building warrant approved.”

Direct applicant

“At first I was given incorrect information....Once given the correct information, the service was very good.”

Agent

“Everything went according to plan without undue delay. The person dealing with it visited the site and had open and reasonable discussions with the builder. I felt everything was being dealt with well.”

Direct applicant

Issues raised by respondents providing ratings of 1 to 7 out of 10

The issues raised by respondents giving comparatively lower ratings are similar to previous years. These include “lengthy” timescales taken by local authorities to respond to customer requests and process applications; difficulties faced in being able to contact the building standards service; and apparent inconsistencies in the quality of service both within and between local authorities.

“It was very difficult to reach the building officer. The person assigned to our case changed on so many occasions and even when we did manage to contact [them] they were not very helpful. Then in the end, restrictions that were enforced on our build were let go (not enforced) with subsequent builds.”

Direct applicant

“The local authority were unable to administer building standards correctly and in a timely fashion ... I was asked to change items on the warrant drawings that hadn't

been picked up at the warrant stage by the officers which subsequently meant I had to pay my architect for the changes. I had already paid the local authority to check the drawings once.”

Direct applicant

“It’s difficult to gain advice and even speak to an officer nowadays. Some are more helpful and more efficient than others. The service is not consistent.”

Agent

“Staff are generally very helpful, but continuing cut-backs and staff shortages lead to long delays in response.”

Agent

“It has taken 3 years to obtain plans approval since submission, which is entirely down to the [local authority] department's inability to manage the process and documentation.”

Direct applicant

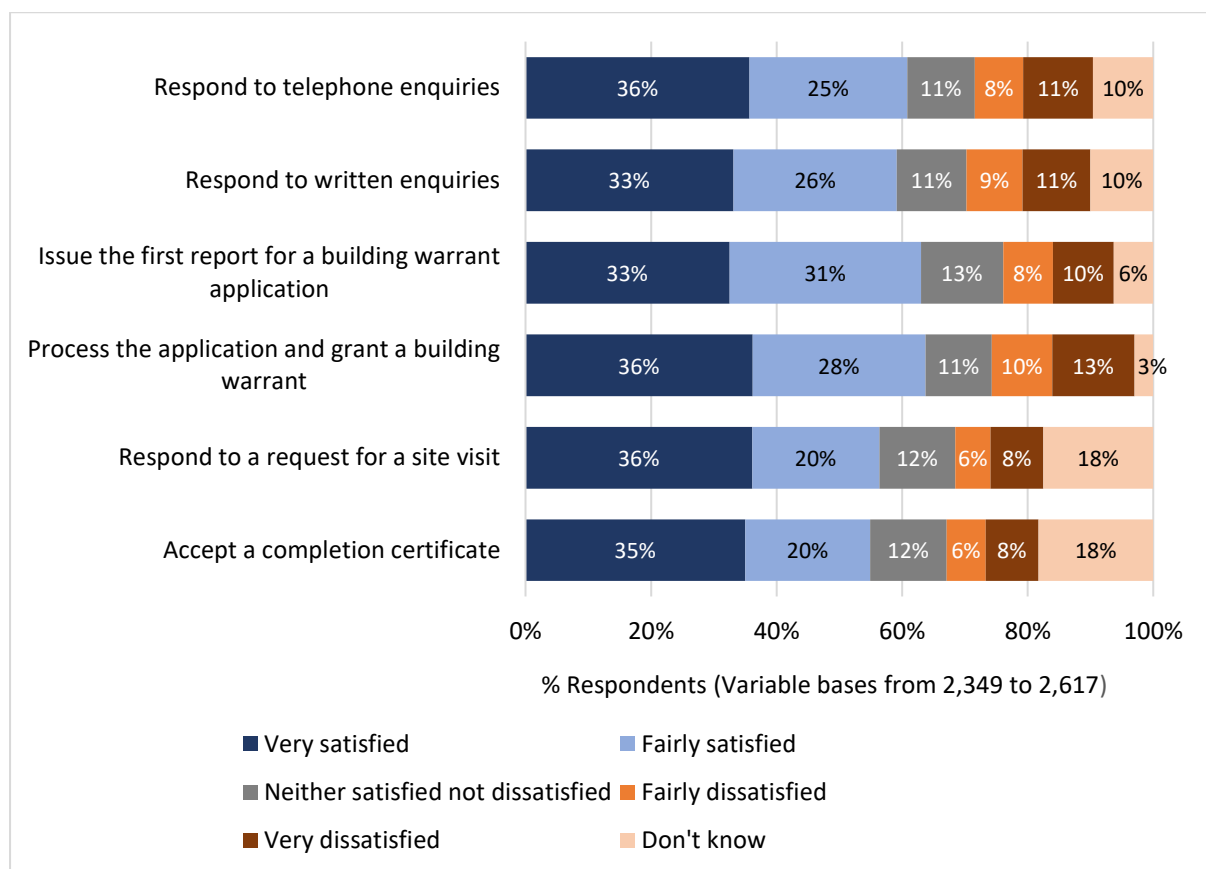
5. Timeliness and Keeping Customers Informed

5.1 Timeliness

Three in five customers (60%) are satisfied with the timeliness of various aspects of the service they received, which is a slight increase from 56% in 2018.

Among the 18% of dissatisfied customers, most criticism relates to 'processing the application and granting a building warrant' (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Timeliness of service aspects (all customers)



Direct applicants responding to the survey are more satisfied than agents with respect to the timeliness of most aspects of the service, however in a change to the past three years, agents are more satisfied than direct applicants with the timeliness of 'Response to written enquiries' and 'Issuing the first report for a building warrant application'.

The 2019 breakdowns by applicants and agent are shown in Figures 9 and 10, below.

Figure 9 Timeliness of service aspects (direct applicants/submitters)

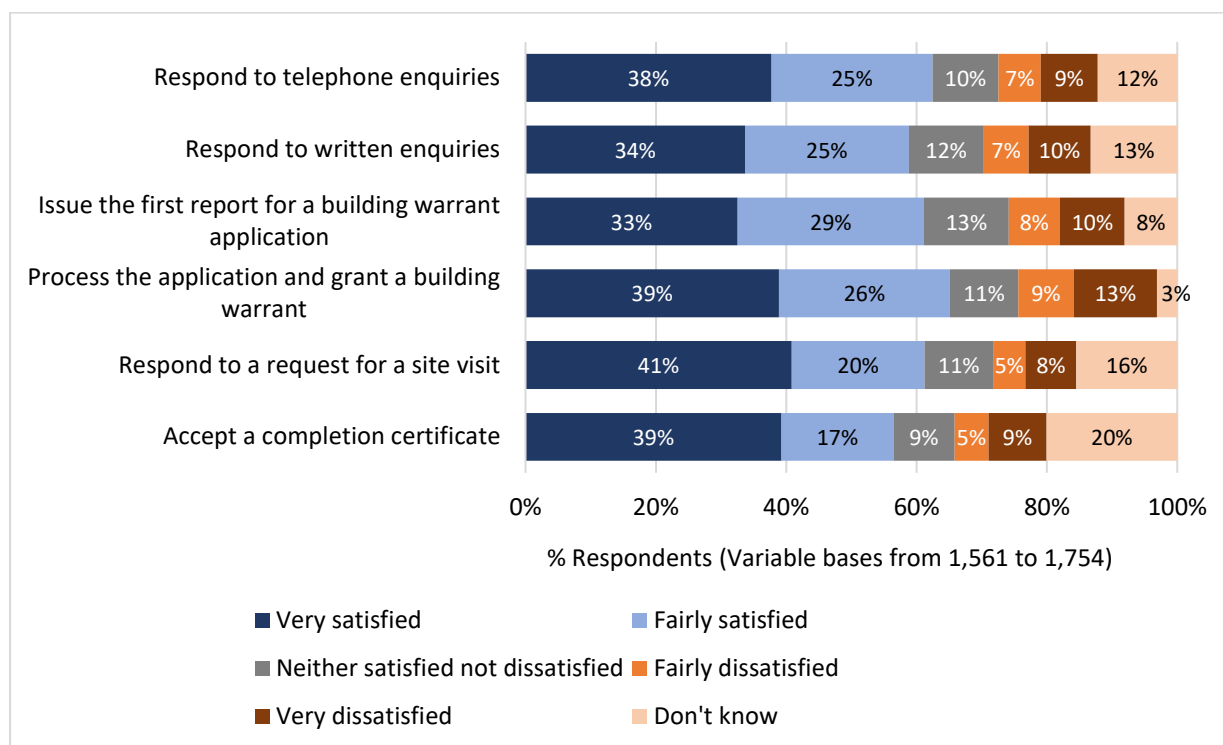
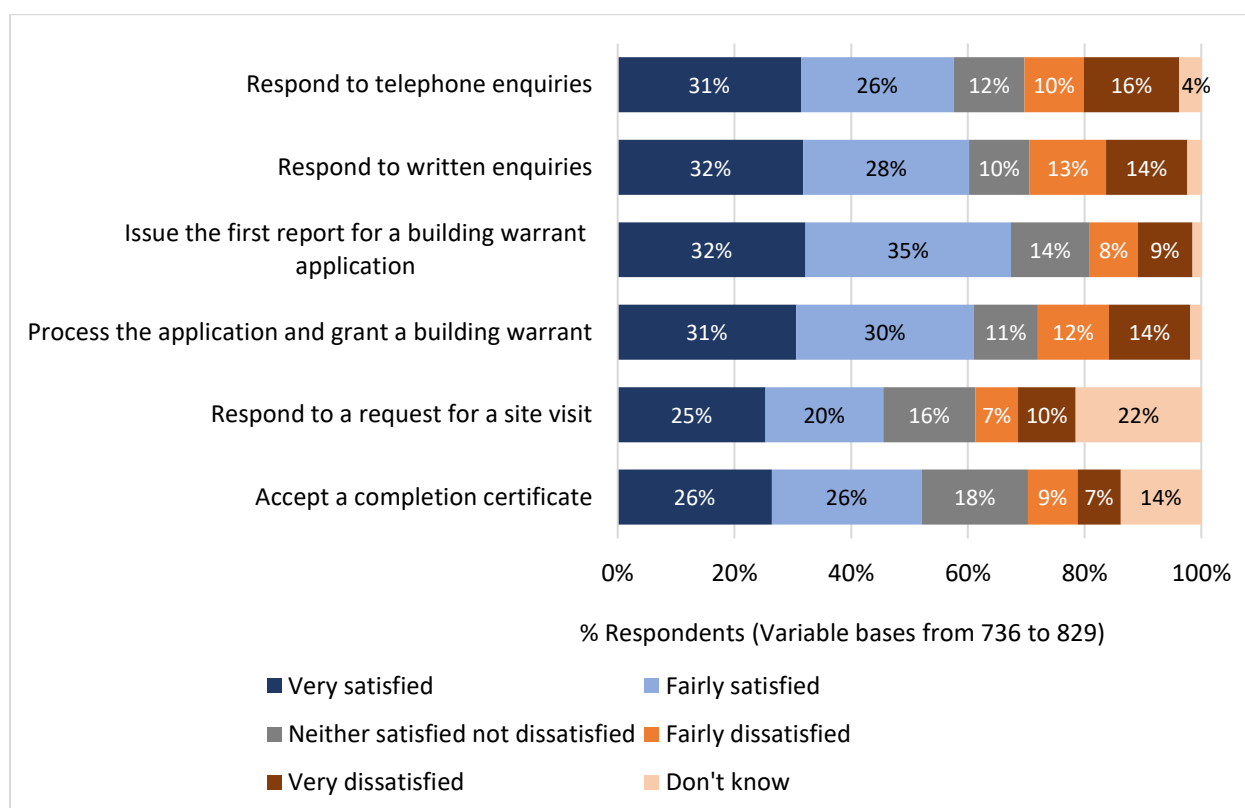


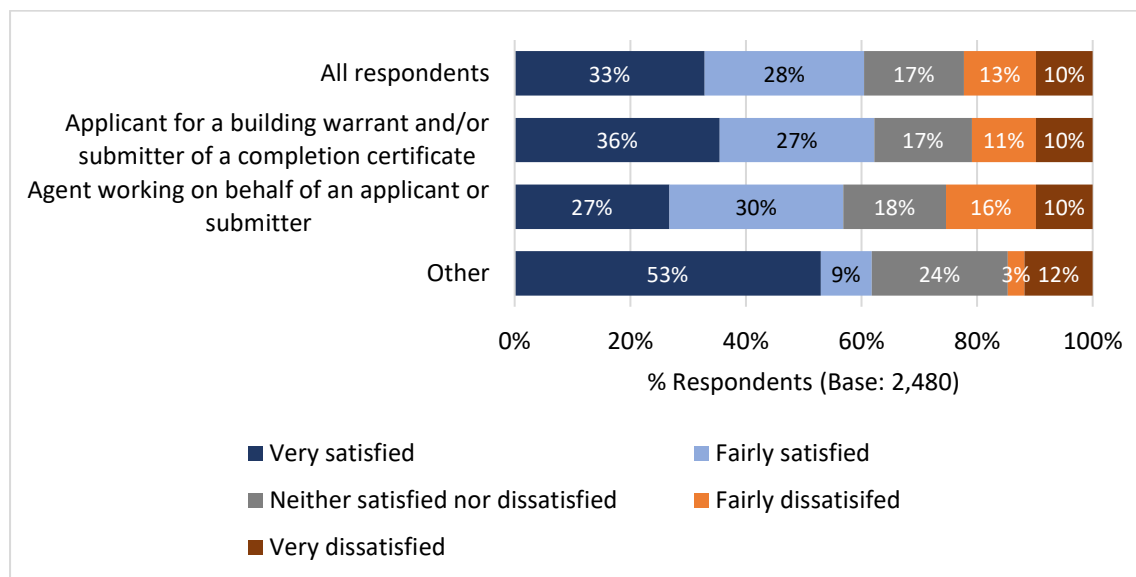
Figure 10 Timeliness of service aspects (agents)



5.2 Keeping customers informed

Just over three in five surveyed customers (61%) are satisfied with the way they were kept informed about the progress of their application or submission. This is an increase from 54% in 2018. Under a quarter of customers (22%) are not satisfied and this is highest among agents (Figure 11). However, this is an improvement on the 32% not satisfied in 2017 and 27% not satisfied in 2018.

Figure 11 Satisfaction with the way kept informed



Among respondents stating ‘fairly dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’, 513 provided supporting reasons. These customers primarily gave examples relating to communication, either in the initiation of communications or responsiveness. This was consistent between agents and applicants.

The main reported issues include slow and inadequate communications, with limited interaction, transparency and guidance from local authorities on progress. Customer perceptions were that resource mismanagement and a lack of resources were the main causes of issues. Staff holidays, high case officer turnover and the e-portal are cited as common responses from local authorities to justify delays.

“All I received were multiple responses explaining there was a staffing issue. We had no opportunity to plan the works with the clients as the timeframe was a complete unknown.”

Agent

“We had an application that lay on the officer’s desk for 6 weeks as they were off sick and on holiday. Nothing was put in place either to inform us of the situation.”

When dealing with certain "Senior" officers you often get no feedback or returned messages."

Agent

"I felt that I had to chase constantly for an update, no-one ever came to me without being asked to."

Direct applicant

"The phone always rang out, we were later told there were technical problems with the phone but not given another number. We were left with email only."

Direct applicant

"I had to email every week for an update and the response was always the same: 'we are understaffed'."

Direct applicant

"It has been over 8 weeks since additional information was submitted in response to the initial report and still no response despite several chases."

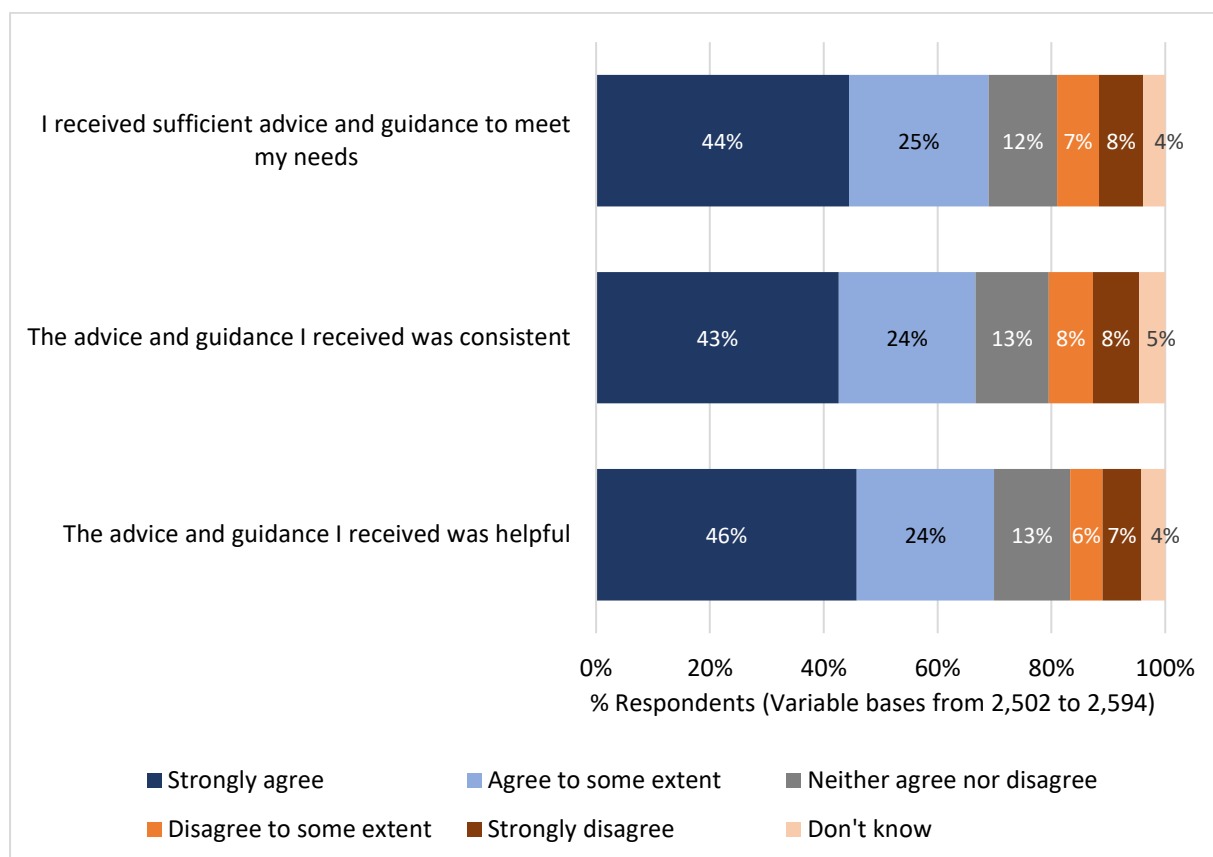
Agent

6. Quality of Service

6.1 Advice, guidance and staff service

Over two thirds of surveyed customers (69%) agree that they received sufficient advice and guidance from the local authority building standards service. This is a slight increase from 66% in 2018 and 63% in 2017. A majority of 67% feel the advice and guidance they received was consistent and 70% found it generally helpful (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Quality of advice and guidance received (all customers)



The strength of satisfaction is very similar among applicants and agents, although agents agree to a slightly lesser extent than direct applicants that the advice and guidance received is consistent (Figures 13 and 14, respectively).

Figure 13 Quality of advice and guidance received (direct applicants/submitters only)

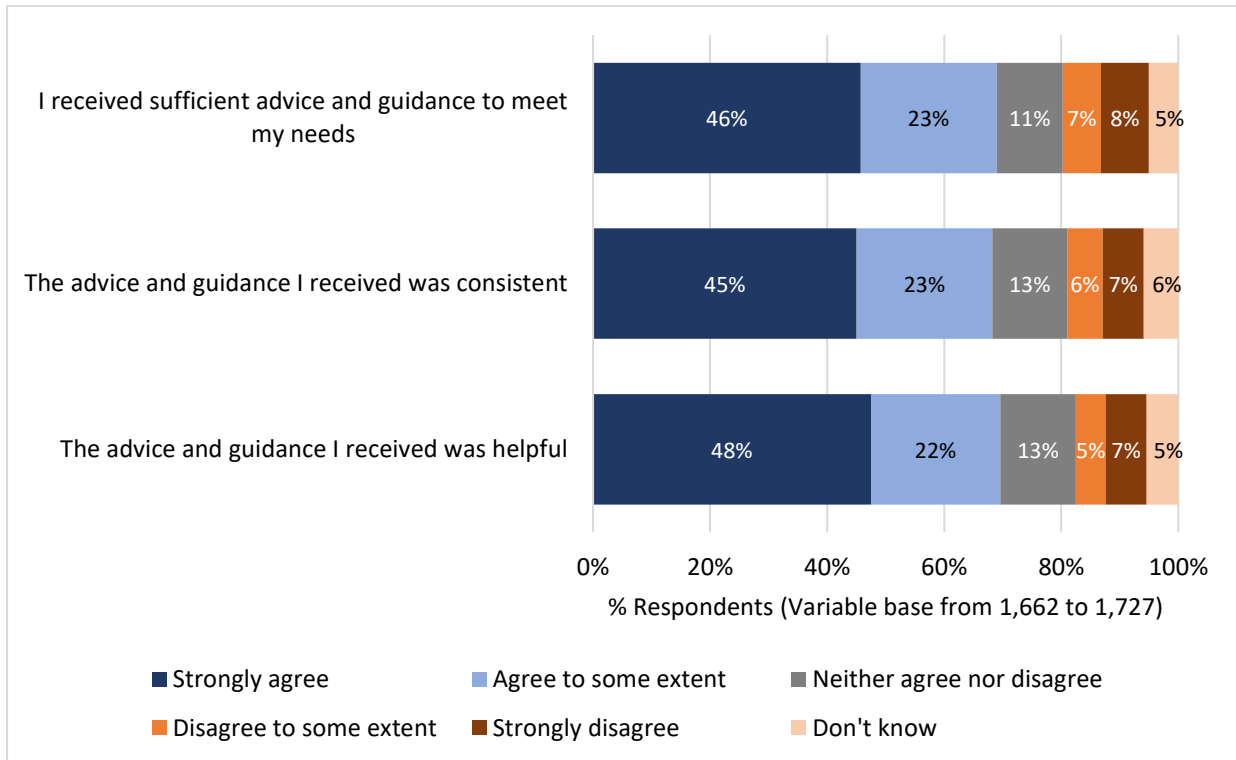
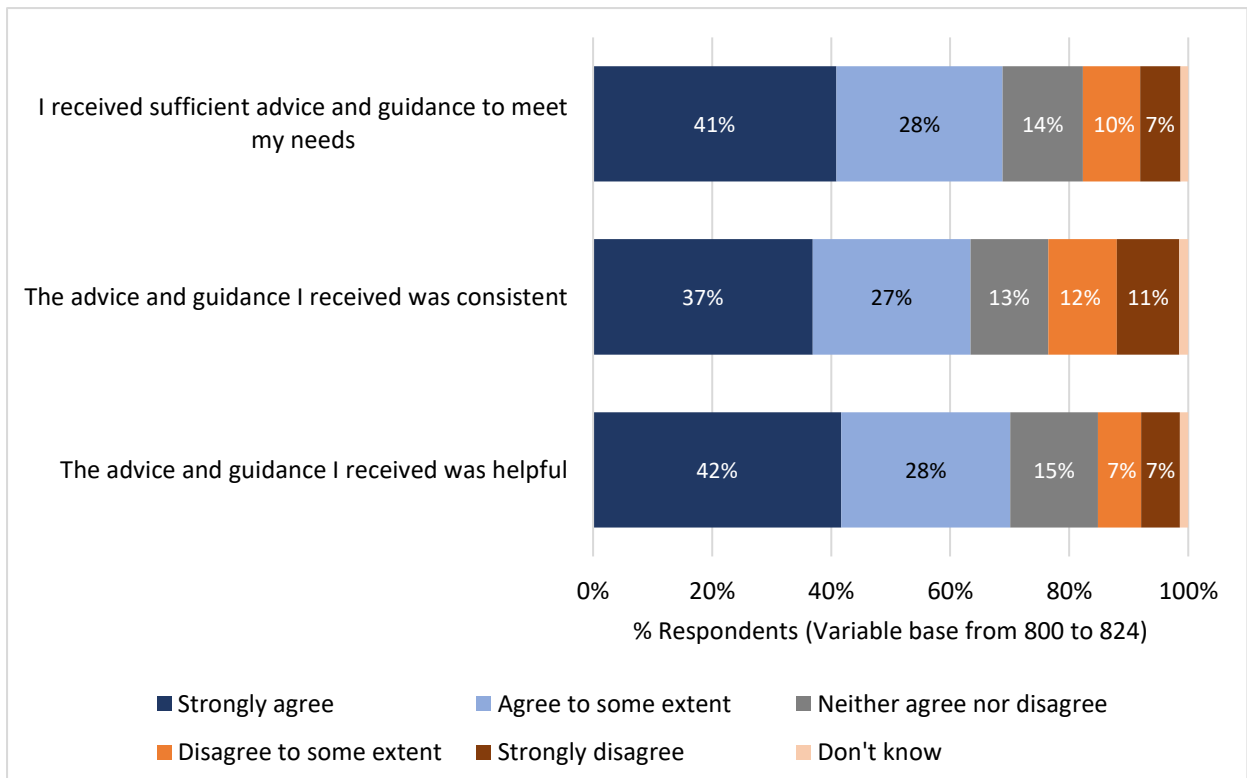


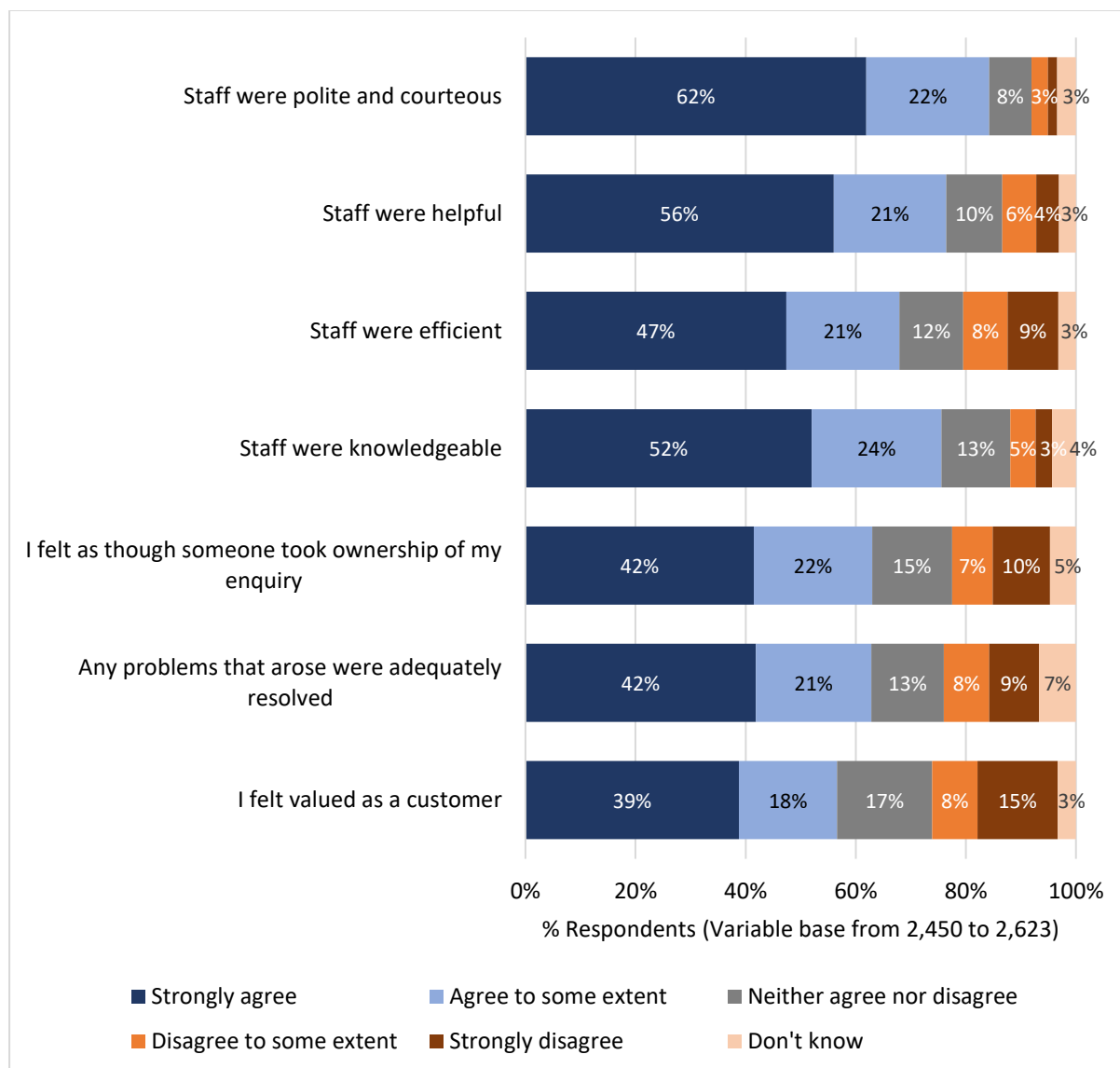
Figure 14 Quality of advice and guidance received (agents only)



The majority of customers (84%) agree that building standards staff were polite and courteous, which is 1% higher than in 2018. The strongest areas of disagreement

relate to feeling valued as a customer (23% disagree) and feeling that someone took ownership of the enquiry (18% disagree) – Figure 15.

Figure 15 Quality of staff service



The strength of satisfaction follows a similar pattern between applicants and agents, although higher proportions of direct applicants strongly agreed and were less prone to disagree than agents (Figures 16 and 17, respectively).

Figure 16 Quality of staff service (direct applicants/submitters only)

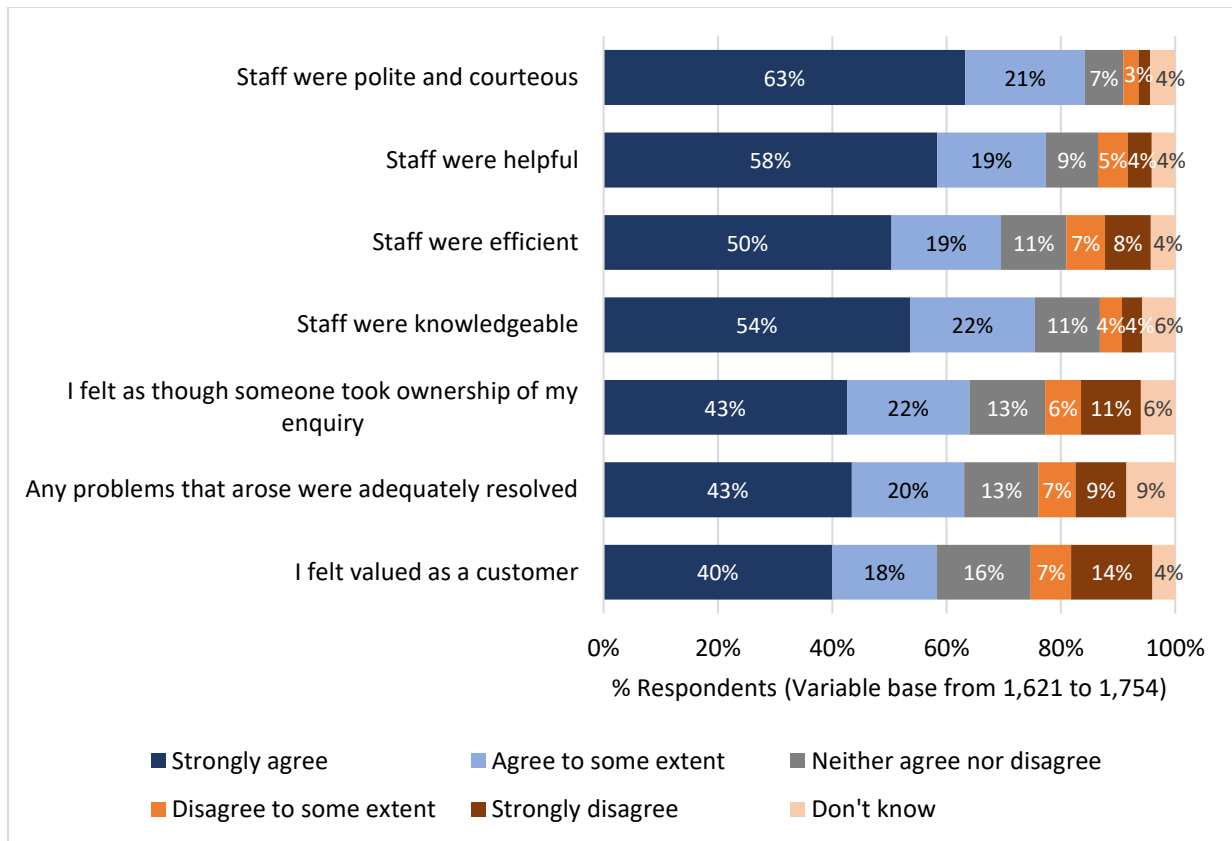
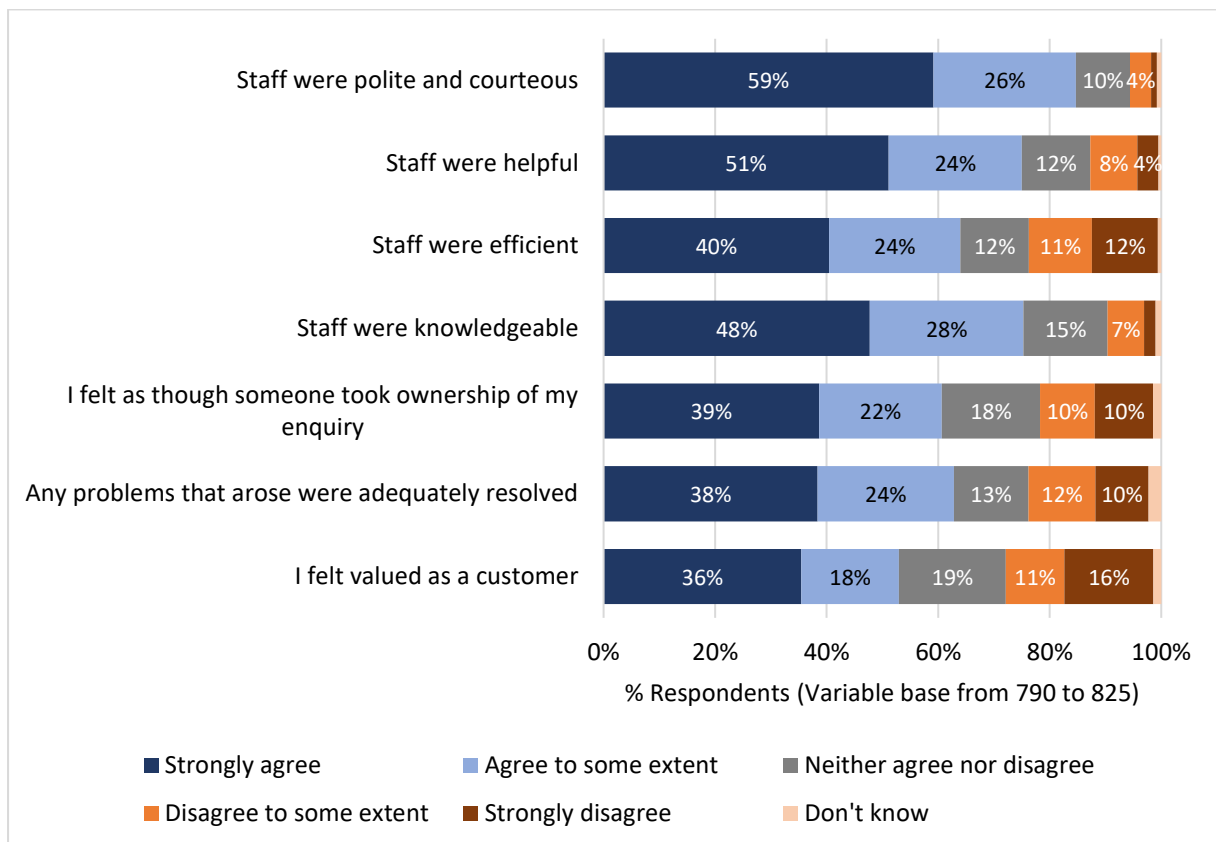


Figure 17 Quality of staff service (agents only)



Customers strongly agreeing and/or strongly disagreeing with at least one of the above statements were asked to provide their reasons.

Customers stating ‘strongly agree’

A total of 1,487 customers provided supporting reasons. The most common adjectives given to describe staff (from most to least cited) are as follows:

- Helpful
- Polite
- Quick
- Professional
- Efficient
- Knowledgeable
- Clear
- Courteous
- Prompt
- Friendly.

A small number of respondents, particularly direct applicants, commended building standards staff for helping them to interpret the standards and regulations and proactively helping customers to resolve any technical issues or sticking points.

“All the staff I spoke with seemed genuinely considerate of my needs as a novice self-builder. They made it clear they were there to help and responded willingly, it seemed, to my questions and requests for advice.”

Direct applicant

“On the whole, the staff are pleasant and friendly. We have never encountered any rudeness.”

Agent

“Despite being under pressure of heavy workloads the staff were always polite and courteous.”

Direct applicant

Customers stating ‘strongly disagree’

A total of 459 customers provided supporting explanations for their disagreement. Many reiterated concerns raised previously, including lack of responsiveness to queries, inaccessible staff, inefficiency, and inconsistency in the quality of service between different officers in a single local authority.

“In our experience the application was unnecessarily protracted and communication was poor at all stages. It was later established that the case officer, who we had been contacting, had been absent from work for some time and her case load had not been reassigned. We were not informed of this until the client attended the council offices in person.”

Agent

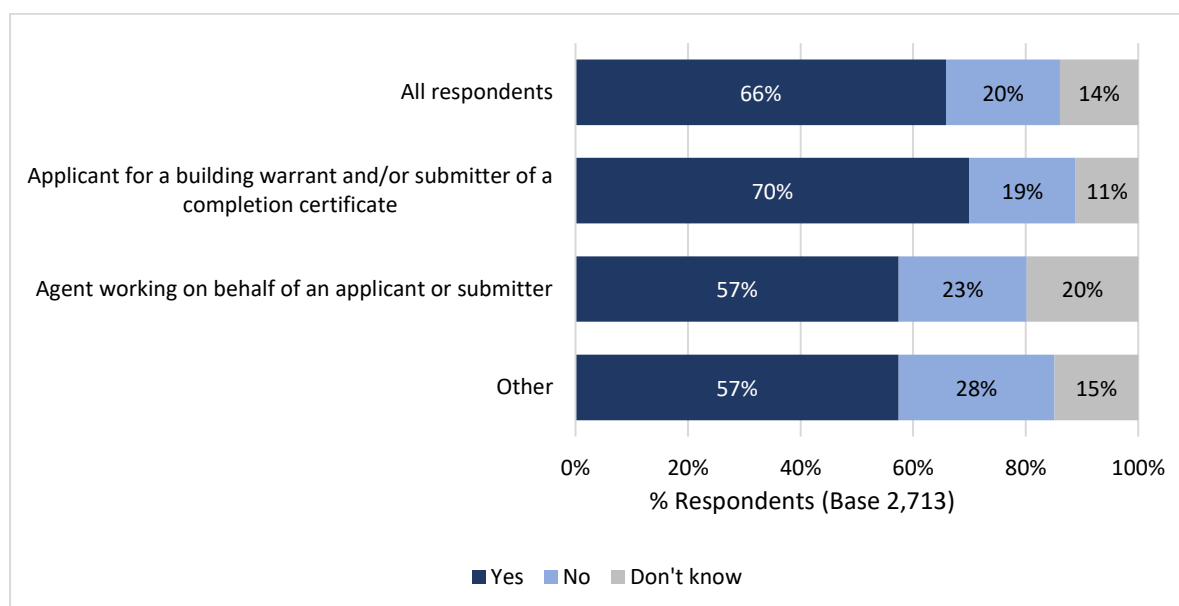
“Many of the staff had bad attitudes and made me feel silly for not knowing the process of getting a building warrant and like I was wasting their time. I wasn’t informed about different things I needed, and each stage felt difficult to get through as there was always something else I needed to do. They would say they hadn’t received documents I sent and never informed me when my paperwork was ready. It was ridiculous.”

Direct applicant

6.2 Inspection visits

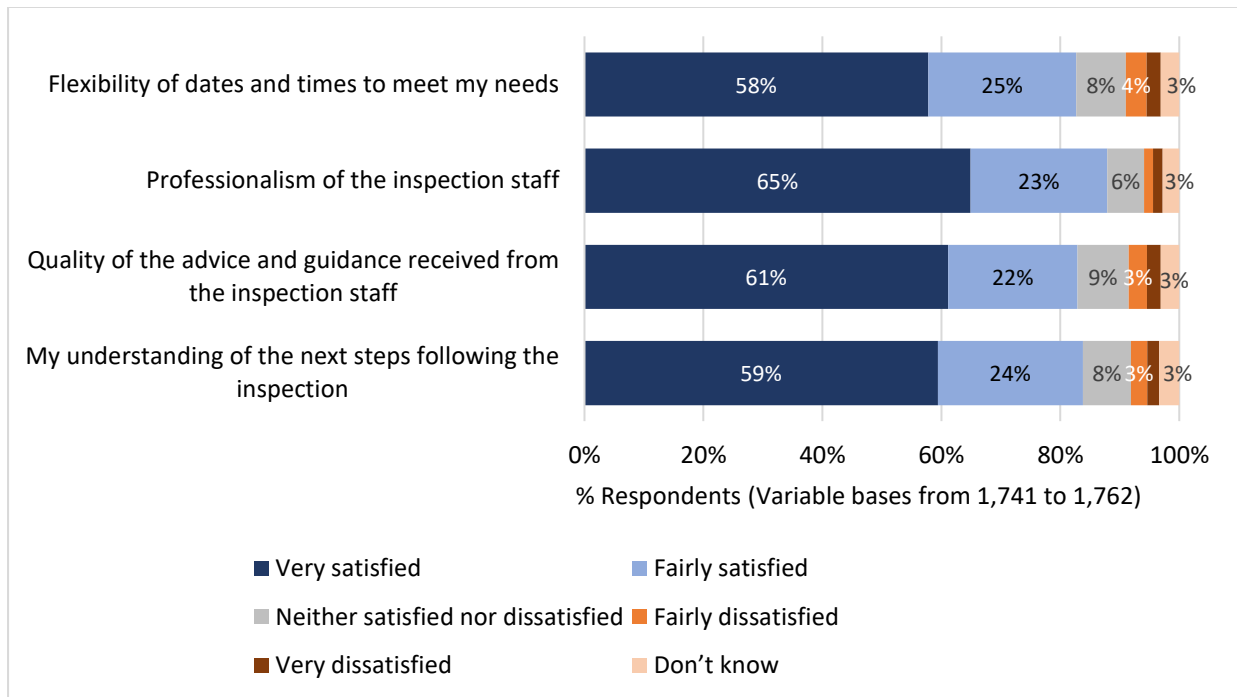
Two thirds of customers (66%) confirmed that an inspection visit was undertaken by building standards service staff (Figure 18). This is 2% higher than in 2018.

Figure 18 Whether an inspection was carried out by building standards service staff



Among customers confirming that an inspection visit had taken place, the majority (84% on average) were satisfied with various specific aspects of the visit (Figure 19). This is an increase of 1% on 2018.

Figure 19 Satisfaction with inspection visits (all customers)



Satisfaction levels are similar between direct applicants and agents (Figures 20 and 21, respectively).

Figure 20 Satisfaction with inspection visits (direct applicants/submitters)

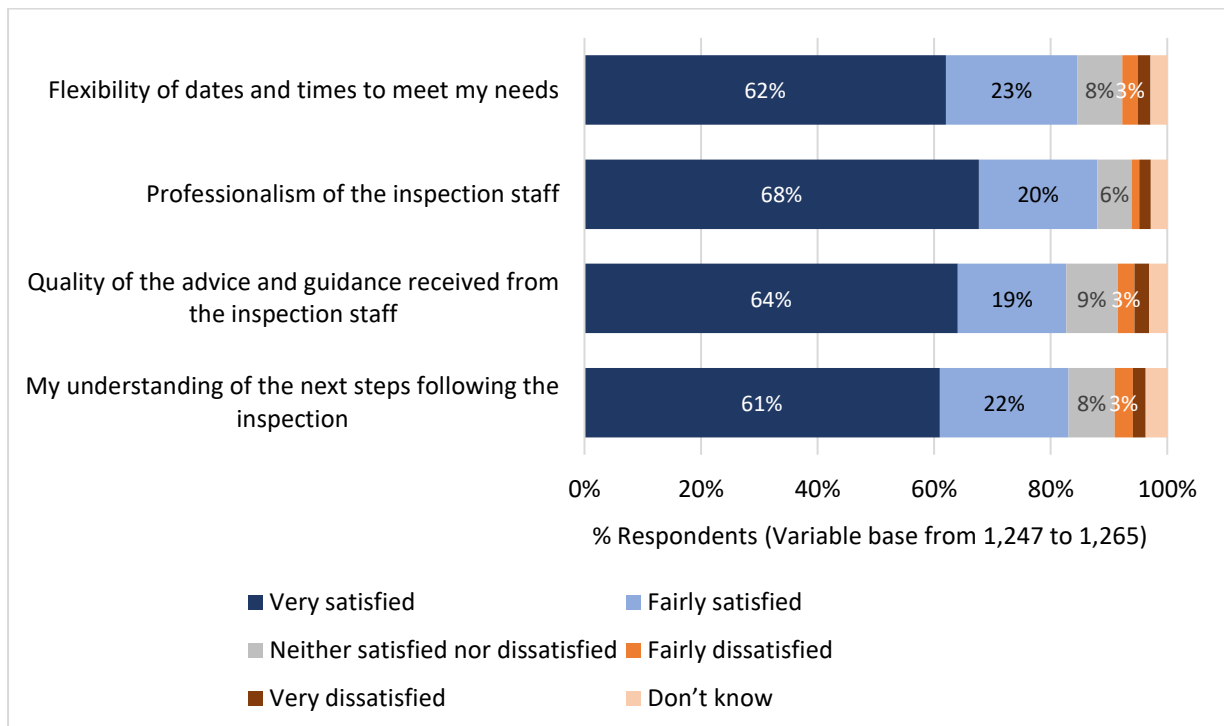
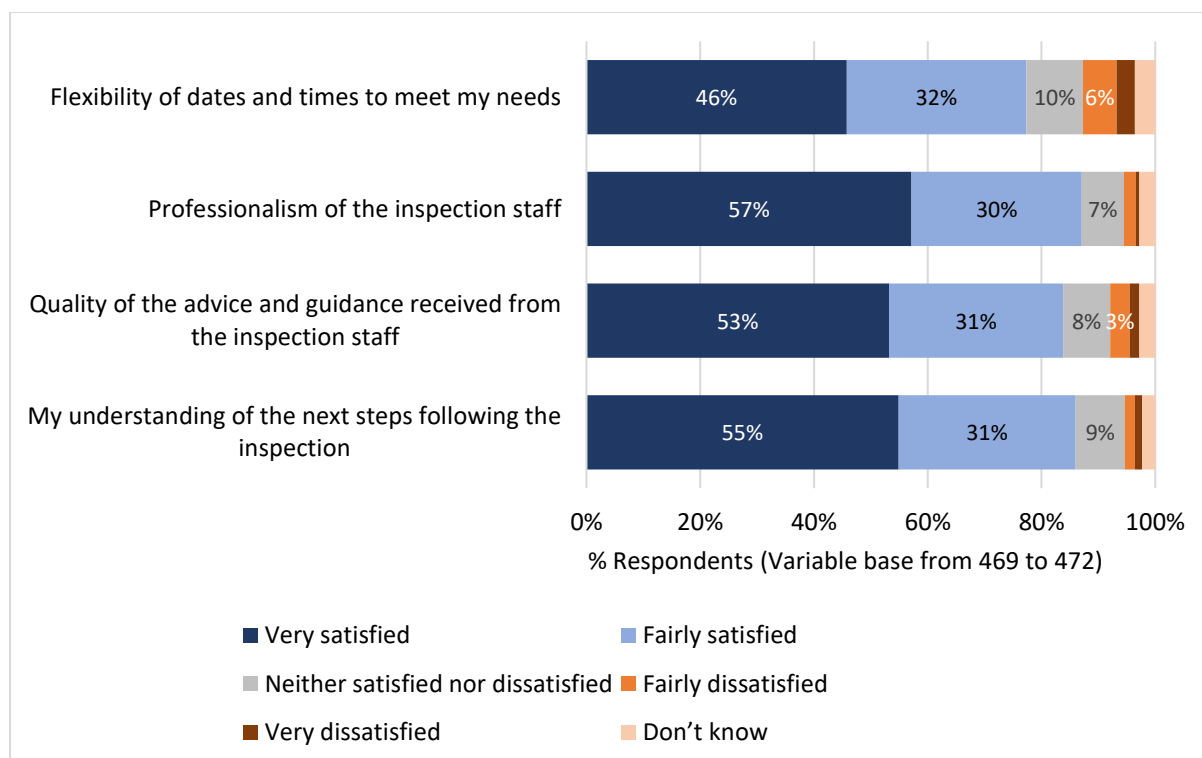


Figure 21 Satisfaction with inspection visits (agents)

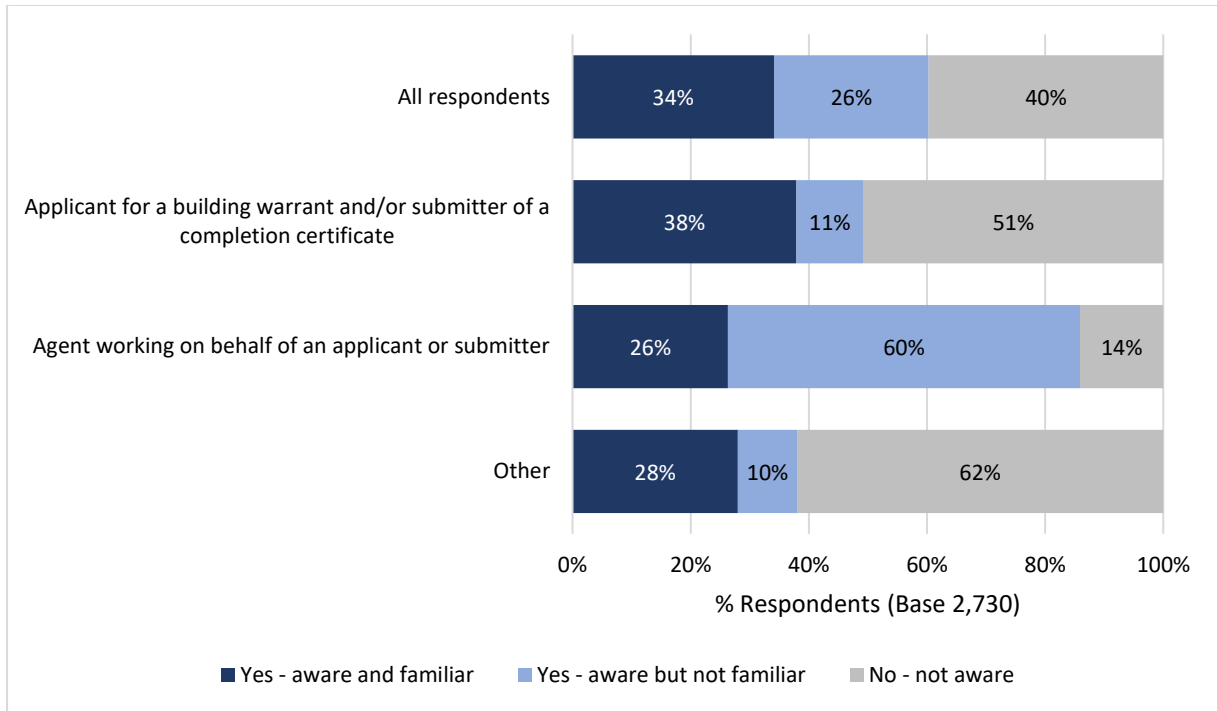


6.3 Meeting the requirements

Almost all surveyed customers (97%) stated that they were aware of the need to notify the building standards service prior to commencing warrantable work. This is a 1% decrease from 2018. Awareness is marginally lower among direct applicants (96%) than agents (over 99%).

Respondents were also asked if they were aware of and/or familiar with the Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP), which is issued by the local authority at the same time as the building warrant is granted. The majority of agents said that they are aware (86%), which is a decrease of 1% from 2018. Less than half of direct applicants are aware (49%), although this is a 1% uplift from 2018. Familiarity has increased from 35% in 2017 to 36% in 2018 and 38% this year (Figure 22).

Figure 22 Awareness of Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP)



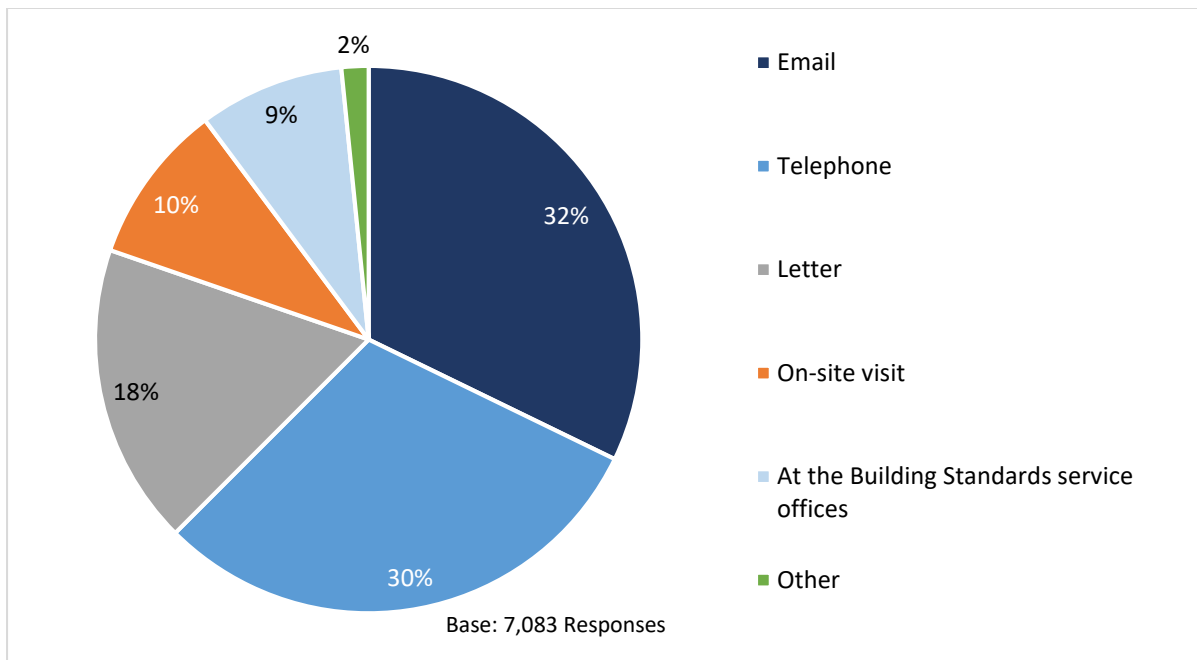
7. Communications

7.1 Channels of communication

Surveyed customers have interacted with local authority building standards using a variety of channels. Telephone and email communications are the most popular forms (together accounting for 62% of responses) followed by hard-copy letters and on-site visits (Figure 23). These results are almost identical to the findings from 2018.

On average, customers reported using 2.6 channels of communication and the proportional mix is broadly similar between applicants and agents, although direct applicants are more likely to interact via an on-site visit (20%) compared to agents (13%).

Figure 23 Channels of interaction



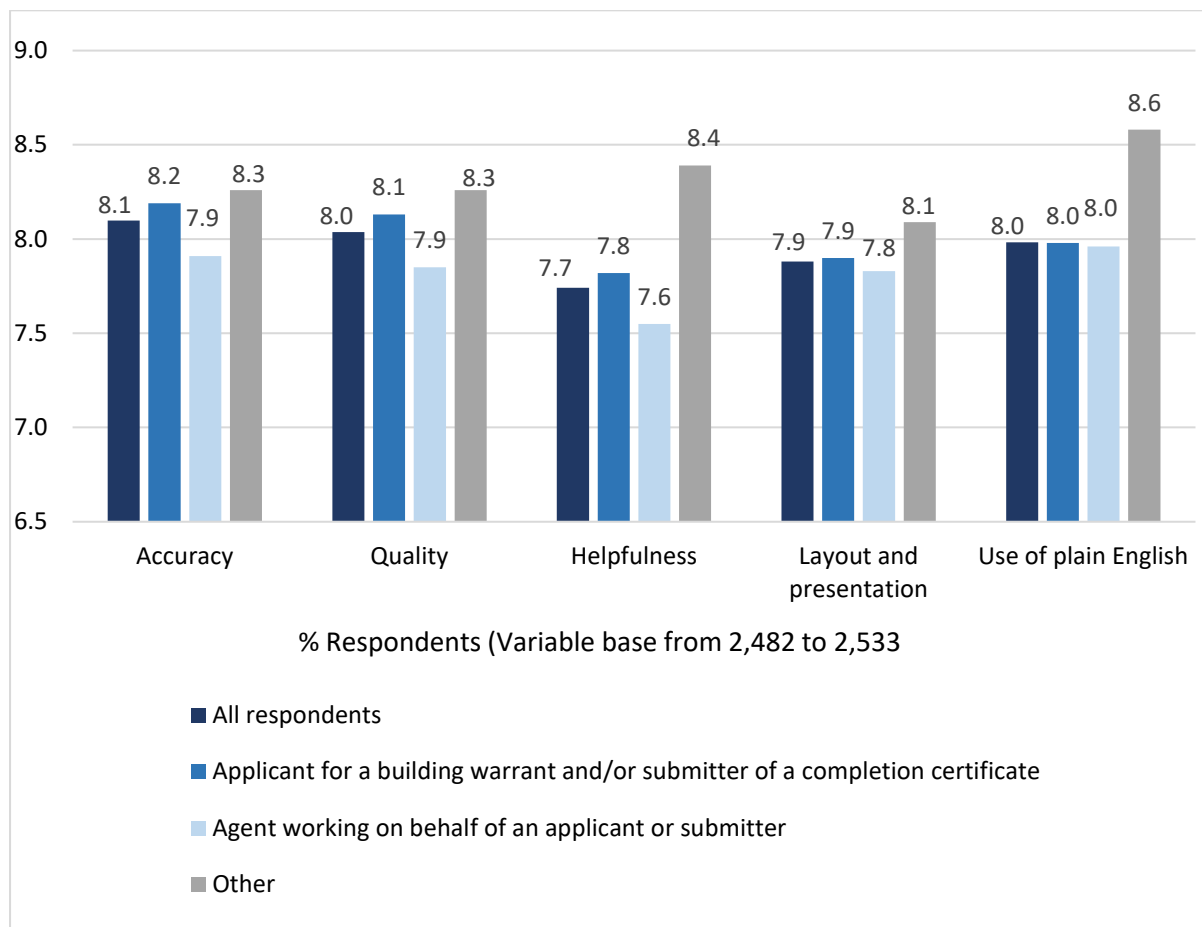
The 1% of responses classified as 'other' primarily stem from direct applicants interacting with the building standards service via an agent, architect or builder. Both agents and direct applicants using the e-portal and attending meetings were also stated.

7.2 Written information and documentation

On a scale from 1 'very poor' to 10 'very good', customers were asked to rate different aspects of the written information and documentation they received from their local authority.

The resulting average ratings fall between 7.7 and 8.1 out of 10, demonstrating an increase on figures of between 7.6 and 7.9 in 2018 and between 7.4 and 7.8 in 2017 (Figure 24).

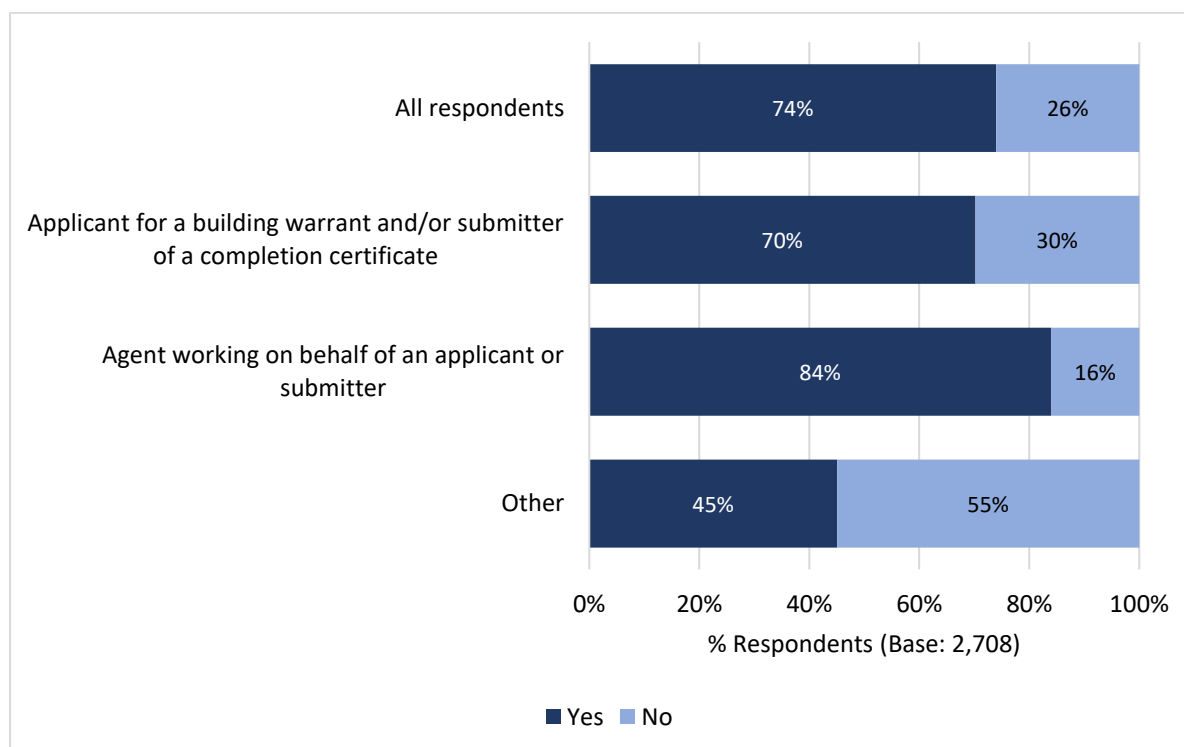
Figure 24 Quality of written information and documentation



7.3 Electronic communications

Just under three quarters of customers (74%) reported having visited the building standards section of their local authority’s website. This is a decrease from 79% in 2018. Instances of visiting the website are higher among surveyed agents (84%) than direct applicants (70%), although the gap has narrowed by 4% since 2018 – Figure 25.

Figure 25 Whether visited the building standards section of the local authority website



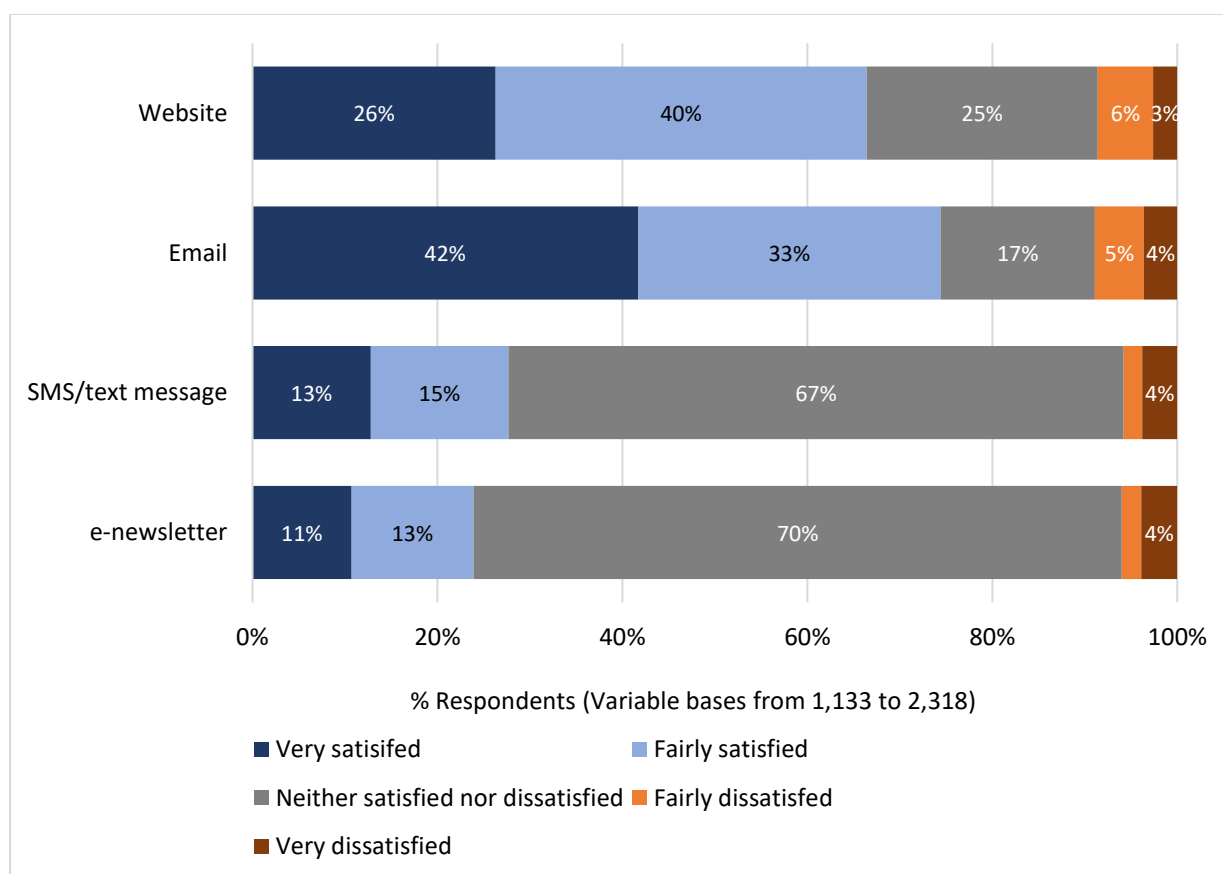
Customers were asked to rate their satisfaction with specific forms of electronic communication made available by their local authority building standards service.

Three quarters (75%) are satisfied with email communications – an increase of 4% from 2018. Two thirds (66%) are satisfied with the local authority’s website – a slight rise from 65% in 2018.

The base number of respondents rating their satisfaction with SMS/text message and e-newsletter communications is about half that of other forms, indicating that these methods of communication are not as widespread¹³ (Figure 26).

¹³ It is possible that some customers may have stated ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ with respect to SMS/e-newsletter communications where they had not actually experienced these communications, as opposed to leaving the question blank.

Figure 26 Satisfaction with electronic communications



Customers stating ‘very/fairly dissatisfied

Respondents stating ‘fairly dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with respect to at least one of the above forms of electronic communication were asked to give their reasons.

Based on 326 responses, the main themes echo those raised over the past five years. In particular:

- Emails are not always answered, or the speed of response is slow;
- Websites are confusingly laid out and unintuitive, making it difficult to find the information needed, and some information is significantly out of date.

“The website is poor, difficult to navigate and it’s difficult to find what you are looking for.”
 Agent

“I did not receive a prompt response to my email about arranging inspection visit and had to chase it up by phone.”
 Direct applicant

There were very few reasons provided by customers dissatisfied with SMS/text message and e-newsletter communications. Most seemed unaware that communications might be available through these channels.

7.4 E-building standards

Whilst a direct question was not asked on the topic of e-building standards, there has been some feedback consistent with the 2017 and 2018 reports.

The small number of customers commenting on the e-building standards portal note that it could be altered so as to be simpler and more intuitive to use, and that accompanying guidance would be beneficial. Some suggest that the portal could be extended to automatically include all correspondence related to an application.

7.5 Improving communications in the future

Customers were asked in what ways the local authority building standards service could improve its overall communications in the future. The main suggestions include:

- Returning phone calls and emails more efficiently and timeously, with many respondents suggesting this is non-existent;
- Improving response times on applications, or providing a more realistic timescale at the outset;
- Providing a capability to effectively track applications and responses;
- Being more proactive, customer oriented and commercially aware;
- Employing more staff;
- Ensuring greater consistency and clarity in the knowledge and quality of service from all staff, within and between local authorities;
- Improving navigability and functionality of the website to ensure it is more user-friendly;
- Using clearer (plain) English in written documents;
- Providing clearer and more specific instructions for the actions that applicants need to take;
- Providing relevant and up-to-date information, especially online.

“Overhaul the language and covering letter for the building warrant as it's confusing and unhelpful - a contrast to the help and friendliness of the actual staff working at the council. Plain English is needed with a step by step guide for applicants/recipients, including how to apply for a completion certification (there is nothing on this in the warrant that was sent to me).”

Direct applicant

“It would be very helpful if reports stated specifically what information the officer was looking to be provided ... rather than quoting the regulation.”

Agent

“Respond or provide acknowledgement of receipt of emails in a timely manner.”

Agent

“Provide a better website and explain conditions put on developments more clearly. Also, when quoting clauses from standards the current standard should be used. In one case a standard from 2000 was quoted and the latest standard was revised in 2016.”

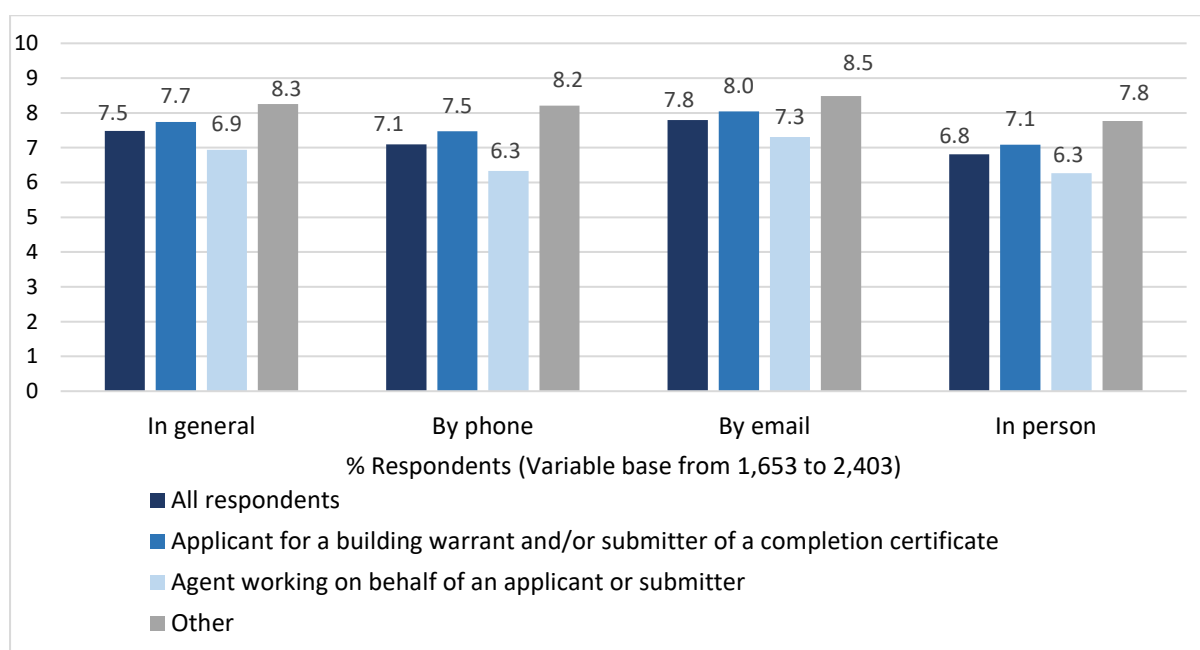
Direct applicant

8. Accessibility

8.1 Making contact with the building standards service

On a scale from 1 'very difficult' to 10 'very easy', customers were asked to rate how easy they found making contact with their local authority building standards service. Average ratings are similar for each contact channel, with email appearing to be the easiest.

Figure 27 Ease of contacting the local authority building standards service

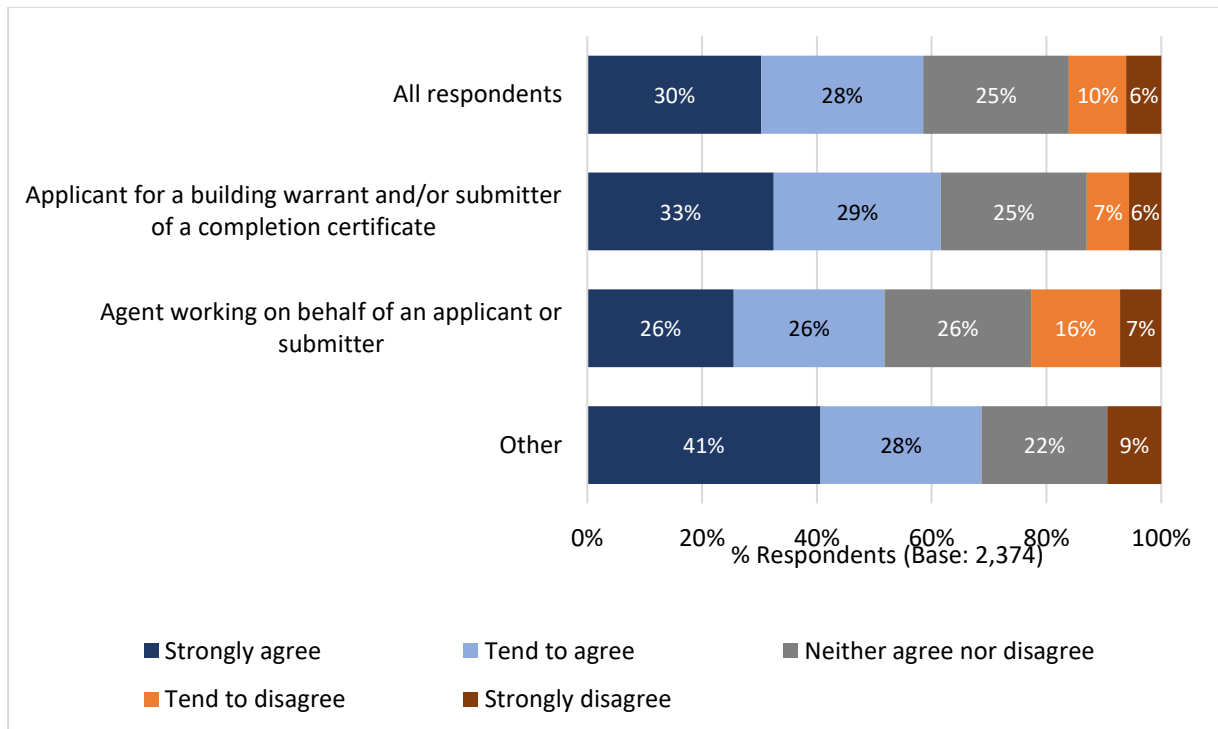


Those customers finding it generally easy to make contact described an efficient service with few or no issues, supported by helpful, prompt and approachable staff.

Customers providing lower ratings have had opposing experiences referring to unanswered emails, slow response times to communications, staff not being available and phones going to voicemail and messages being unanswered. Many customers put these issues down to staffing issues in the service.

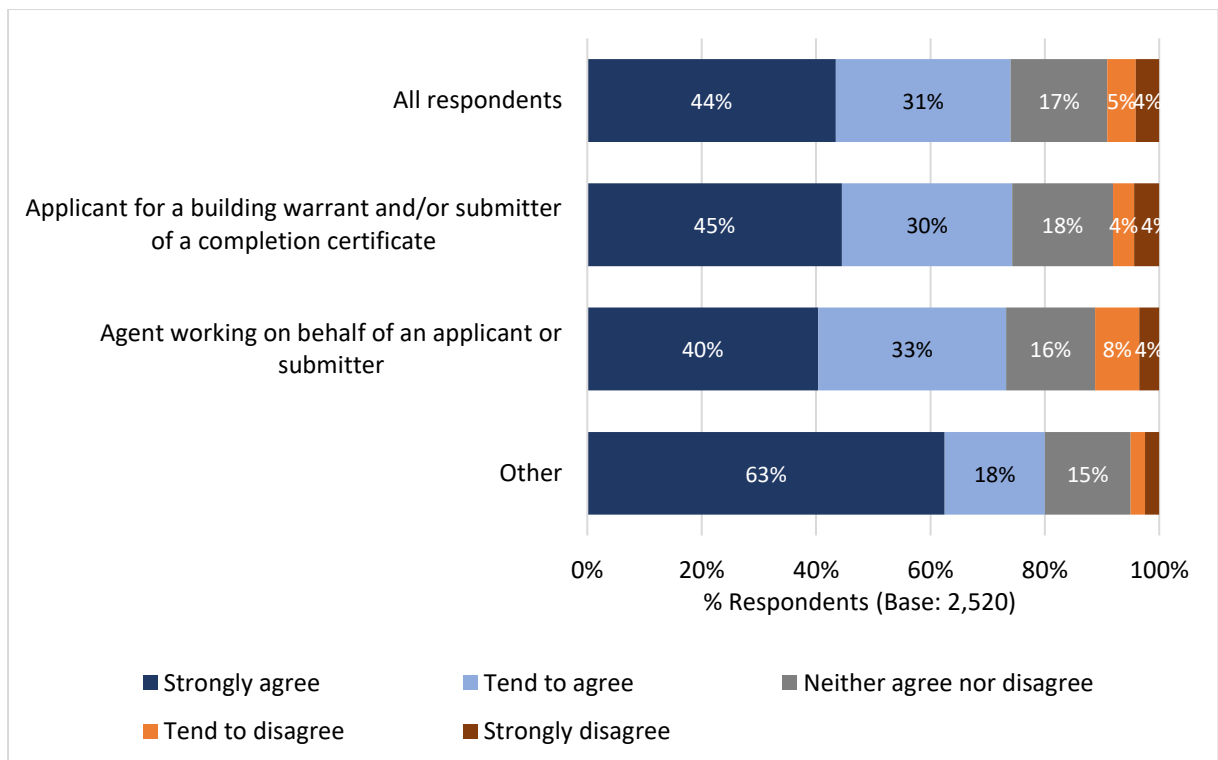
More than half of surveyed customers (58%) agree that building standards service staff are accessible if they want to meet with them in person. This is a slight increase from 57% in 2018. Applicants are more satisfied than agents, with 62% and 52% in agreement, respectively (Figure 28).

Figure 28 Building standards service staff are accessible to meet in person



Three quarters of customers (75%) agree that building standards service staff are approachable. This is a slight increase from 73% in 2018. The results are similar between applicants and agents (Figure 29).

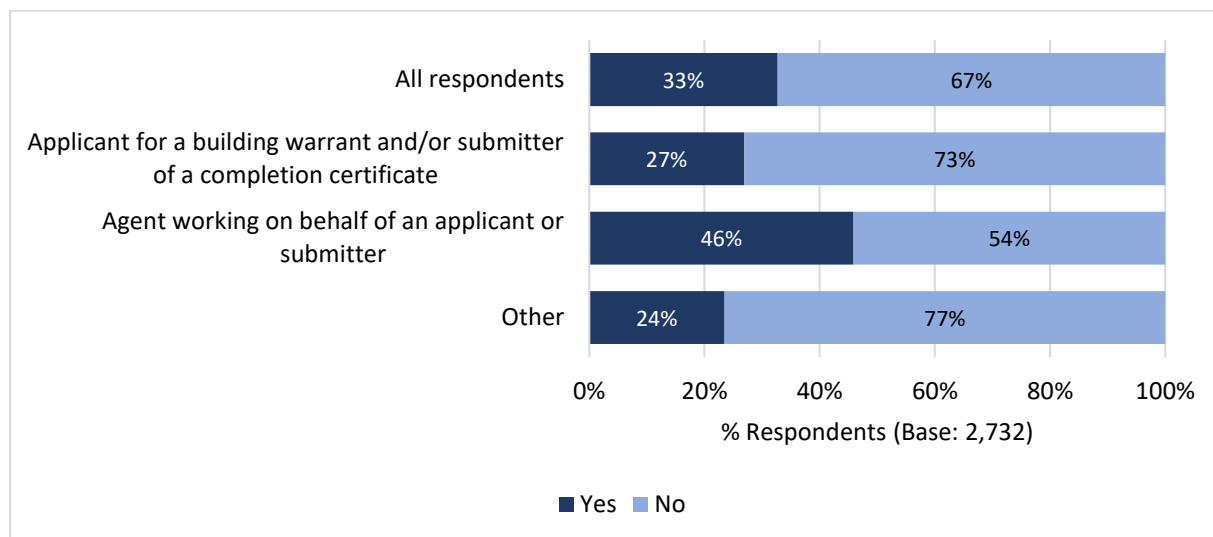
Figure 29 Building standards service staff are approachable



8.2 Visiting the offices of the building standards service

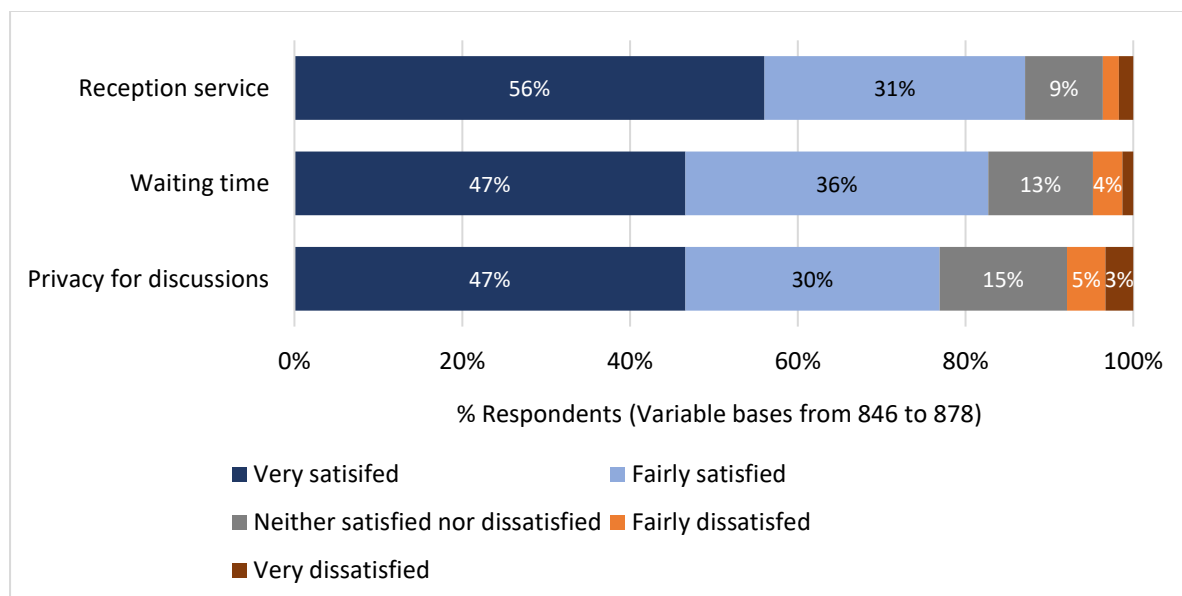
A third of surveyed customers (33%) reported having visited the offices of their local authority building standards service – a 9% decrease from 2018. Instances of customers visiting the offices has decreased among direct applicants (27%, down from 34% in 2018) and agents (46%, down from 56% in 2018) – Figure 30.

Figure 30 Whether visited the offices of the local authority building standards service



The majority of those customers who visited the offices of their local authority building standards service (82%) are satisfied with various specific aspects of their visit (Figure 31). This is a slight decrease from 84% in 2018.

Figure 31 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the building standards service offices



9. Conclusions and Findings

9.1 Conclusions

The sixth annual national survey of building standards customers in Scotland has achieved a respectable overall response rate of 15% and has successfully captured the views of different types of customers served by all 32 local authorities. Higher volumes of customer email addresses were supplied by local authorities this year than in 2018, resulting in the highest number of responses to date since the first survey was run five years previously.

Across almost all headline measures, customer satisfaction with the building standards service has risen in Scotland over the past year, with the overall score standing at 7.4 out of 10, compared with 7.0 in 2018. The gap has narrowed over the past 12 months between applicants and agents, with agents generally less satisfied but showing a marked increase on last year.

Customer expectations of the service have not generally changed in recent years, with the most important aspects being speed of response, efficiency and clarity of communications, ease of access to friendly and knowledgeable staff, as well as consistency in the quality of service within and between local authorities.

Most customers are generally complimentary about the service, either experiencing no issues or the satisfactory resolution of any queries or problems arising over the course of an application. However, it seems clear from the feedback that customers' emails, phone calls and voice messages are not always being answered in a reasonable timeframe, and that the length of time taken by local authorities to process building warrant applications (including cases that some agents consider to be 'straightforward') is often beyond what customers deem acceptable. This is a particular problem where delays can have a knock-on impact on applicants' plans and/or wider development activity.

Some customers are concerned that the level of service provided by their local authority is not sufficiently customer-focused and they largely put this down to under-resourcing. There are also suggestions that some customers are afraid to voice their concerns for fear that this could be to the detriment of their application.

Customers also commented that staff should be more understanding of their needs and offer greater levels of guidance and support when required as they move through what can be a stressful process. Customers requested improved clarity and guidance on the process as a whole (and associated terminology) to promote a more supportive journey for them.

Disparities prevail between different local authorities and satisfaction levels are lowest among the largest Councils (see Appendix 1). These continuing disparities are of particular concern in light of Scottish Ministers re-appointing some local

authorities as verifiers for shorter periods than others based on past performance and reported levels of customer service.

Finally, feedback on the e-building standards system suggests that the portal would benefit from ongoing review and enhancement to ensure it is simple and intuitive to use, with accompanying guidance for customers.

9.2 Forward considerations

These considerations are for the Scottish Government (Building Standards Division) to consider taking forward in conjunction with Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) and Building Standards Managers (BSMs) across the 32 local authorities.

Additionally, the separate consortium reports (x7) and individual local authority reports (x32) will help to pinpoint where customer service performance is relatively strong or weak.

The results enable customer satisfaction performance to be measured against the previous year, as well as future years, in the interests of continuous improvement. Any proposed mechanisms for improving customer service would need to be considered in relation to local authority resources.

On the back of the 2019 findings, it would appear that customer satisfaction and associated measures are moving in the right direction of travel, but that ongoing work is required to embed improvements further and deeper. Specific considerations for improving the customer experience are similar to 2018 and continue to apply as guiding principles for improvement and embedding change.

1. Identify ways of reducing the time taken for processing building warrant applications and completion certificates.
2. Whilst it may not always be possible to keep customers regularly updated on the progress of their application, ensure that customer email and telephone queries are responded to within an acceptable period of time.
3. Manage customer expectations around response timescales as best as possible from the outset, including clearer explanations to customers as to why applications may need to take a particular length of time and the types of delays that may be experienced that are outside local authority control.
4. Where customer feedback points to concerns that a local authority service is not meeting customer expectations, continue to work with senior Council leaders to put forward the case for more and better resourcing.

5. Explore and identify best practices among those local authorities with higher overall satisfaction scores and consider what opportunities exist and challenges need to be overcome to embed these more widely across Scotland.
6. Ensure that where building standards staff members change (or are absent for any reason), contingency procedures are in place to pick up cases or that there is a handover so that delays are minimised.
7. Maintain local ownership for improving the customer experience through effective use of Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs).
8. Continue to identify ways of working smarter and reducing any unnecessary bureaucracy.
9. The Scottish Government should continue to develop and improve the functionality of the eDev (eBS) portal to provide a more efficient and intuitive experience, as well as ensuring that local authorities are using the system to its full advantage. Suggested system and process enhancements include allowing the upload of multiple drawings at once and – ideally – enabling customers to log in and check on the progress of an application.

Binding these nine considerations together is the need for a customer-focused approach to be at the heart of all behaviour, and for this to be embedded through continuous improvement.

Some specific considerations relating to the delivery of any future national customer satisfaction survey for building standards are similar to 2018 and these continue to apply as guiding principles:

1. Local authorities should continue to capture, record and update customer email addresses to better enable electronic communications in the future, and to provide a larger potential sample size for future national surveys.
2. The e-building standards portal provides an additional opportunity to maximise the volume and accuracy of customer email addresses collected and held by local authorities. It can also standardise data capture to make national reporting easier, more efficient and more accessible.

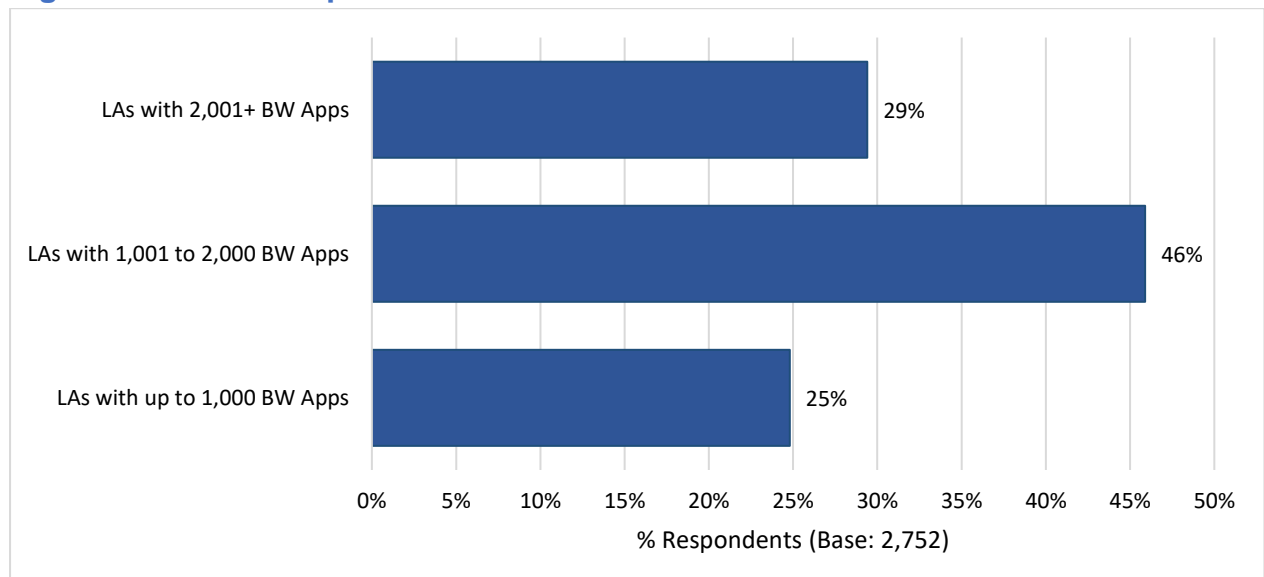
Appendix 1: Results by Local Authority Size

The charts in this section present the main survey data according to the size of the local authority. In this context, size is defined as the number of building warrant applications made by customers within the 2018-2019 financial year.

Three size bandings have been derived, as follows:

Small - Up to 1,000 applications	Medium - 1,001 to 2,000 applications	Large - 2,001+ applications
Angus Clackmannanshire Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Dundee City East Lothian East Renfrewshire Falkirk Inverclyde Midlothian Moray Orkney Scottish Borders Shetland Stirling West Dunbartonshire	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Argyll & Bute Dumfries & Galloway East Ayrshire East Dunbartonshire North Ayrshire North Lanarkshire Perth & Kinross Renfrewshire South Ayrshire South Lanarkshire West Lothian	City of Edinburgh Fife Glasgow City Highland

Figure A1.1 Total respondents



OVERALL SATISFACTION AND MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Figure A1.2 Overall satisfaction with the building standards service

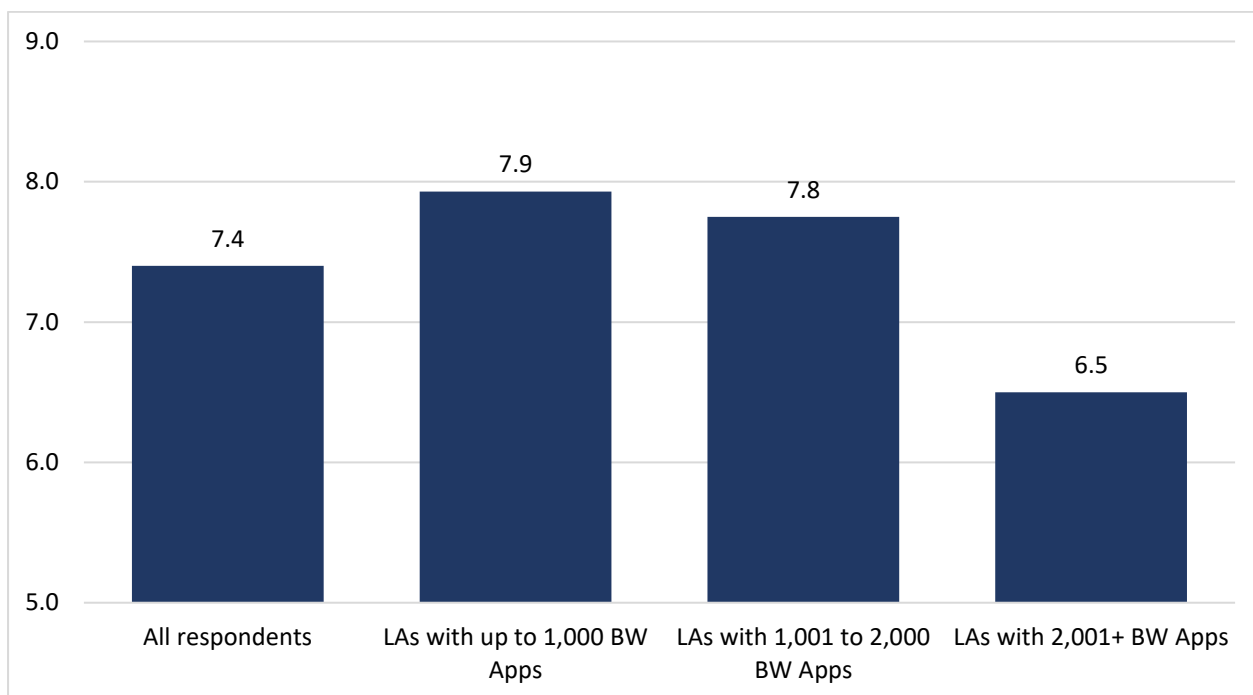
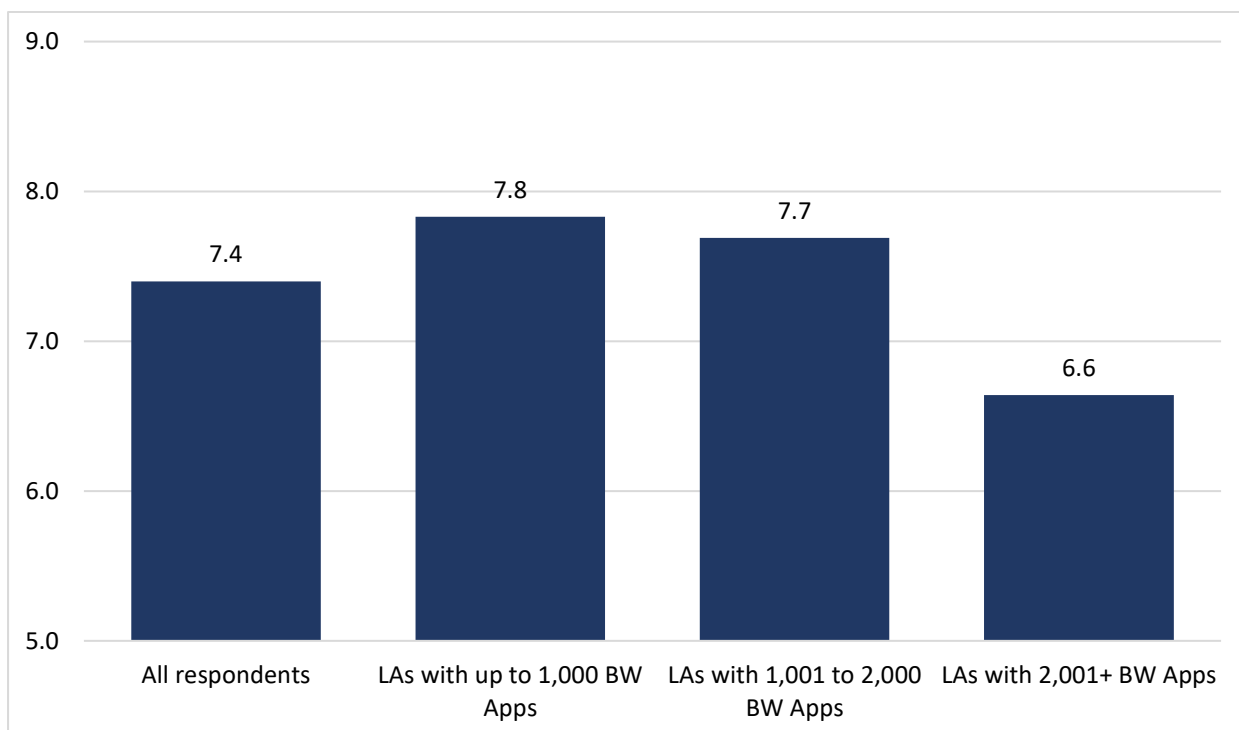


Figure A1.3 Extent to which the service met expectations



TIMELINESS

Figure A1.4 Timeliness – LAs with up to 1,000 building warrant applications

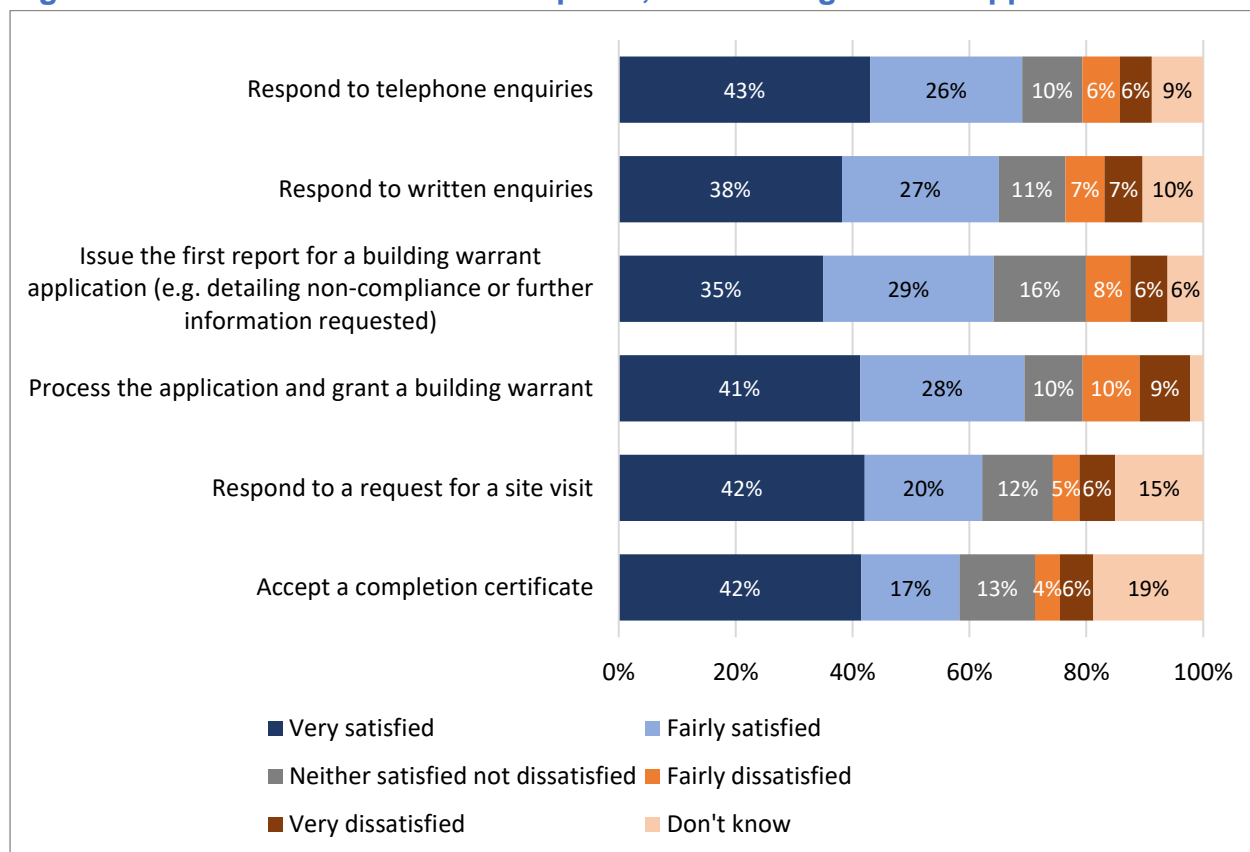


Figure A1.5 Timeliness – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

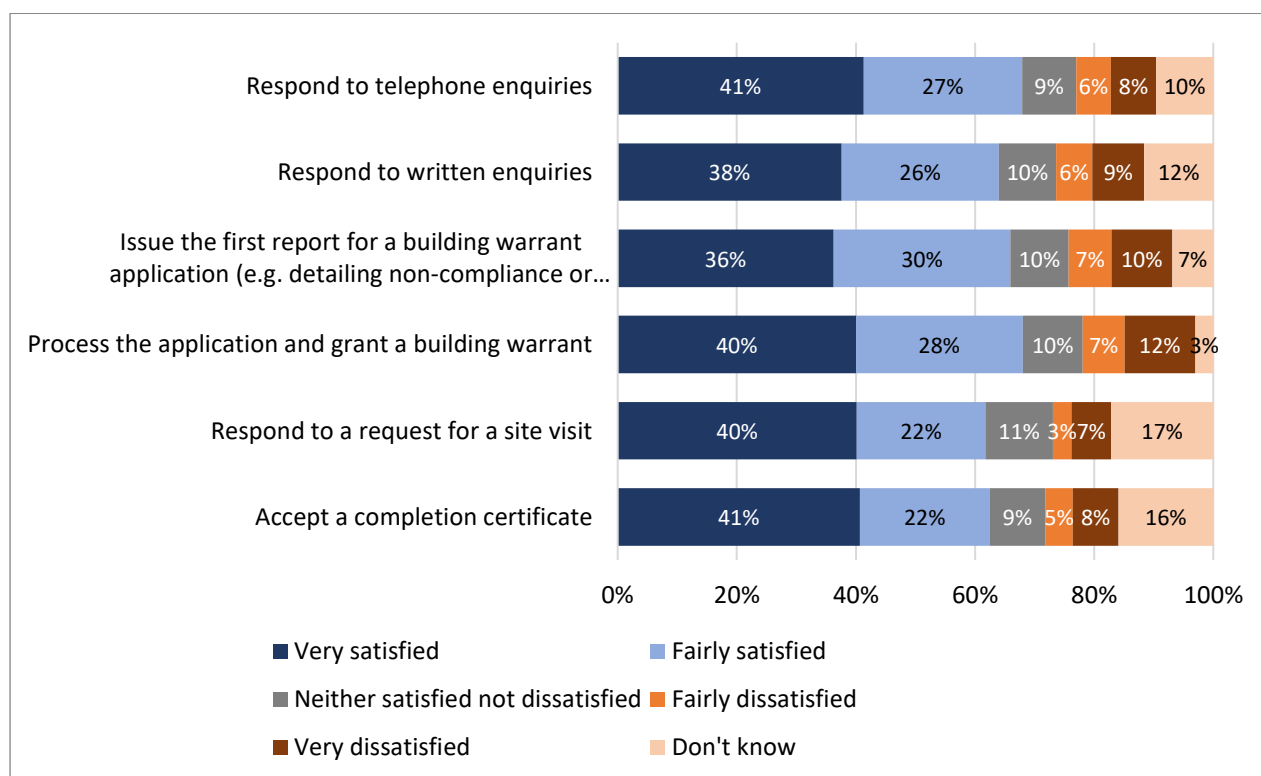


Figure A1.6 Timeliness – LAs with 2,001+ building warrant applications

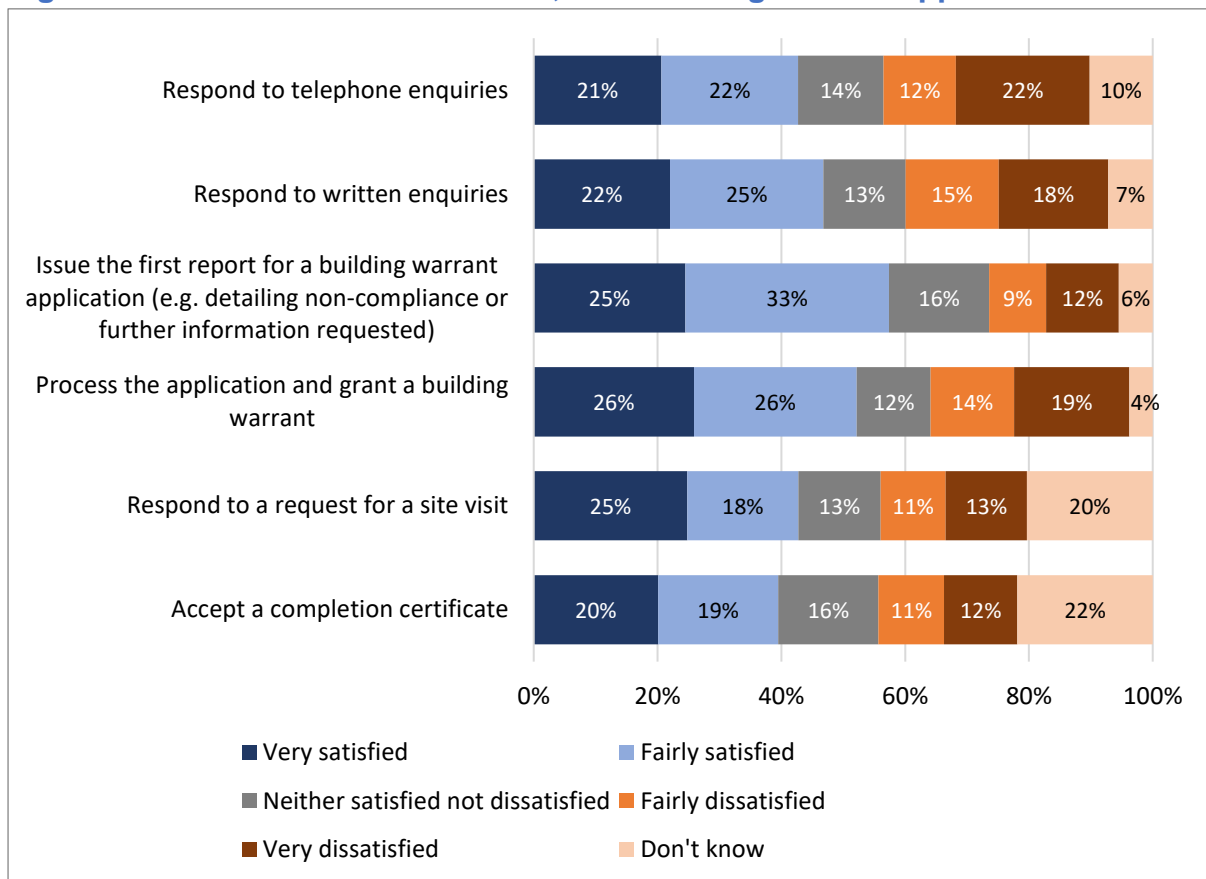
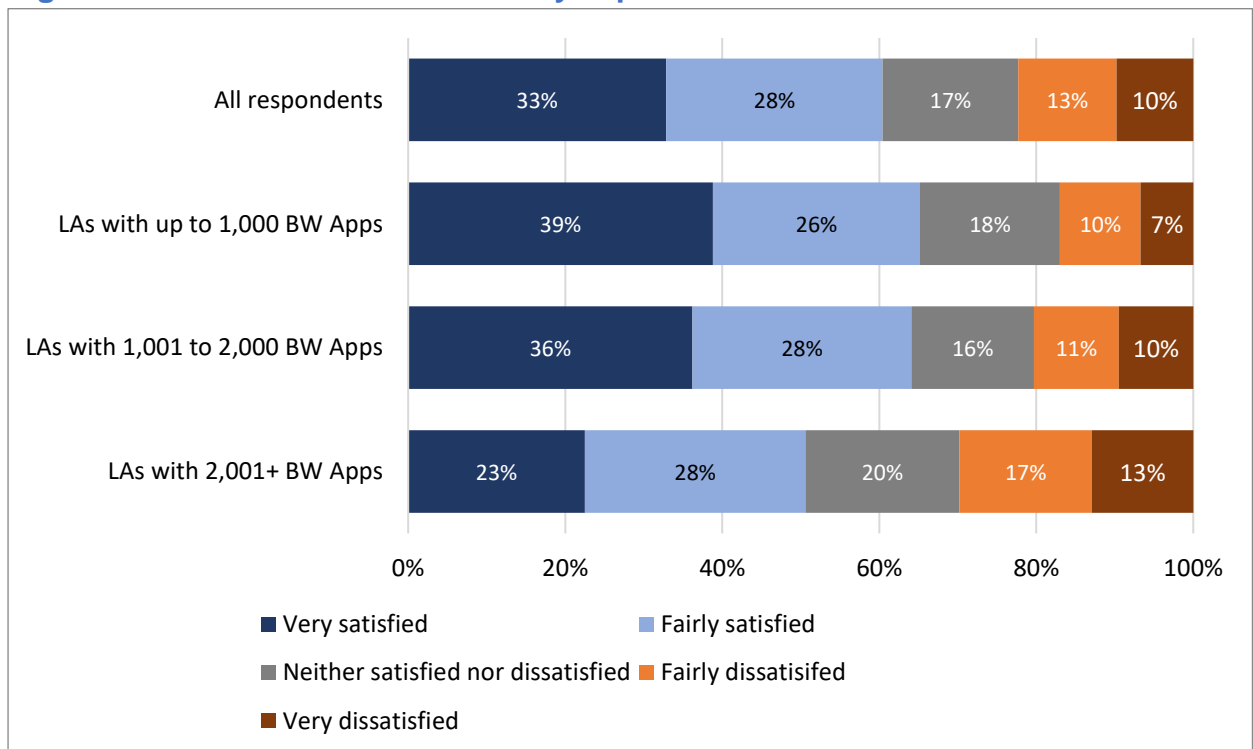


Figure A1.7 Satisfaction with the way kept informed



ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Figure A1.8 Advice and guidance – LAs with up to 1,000 BW applications

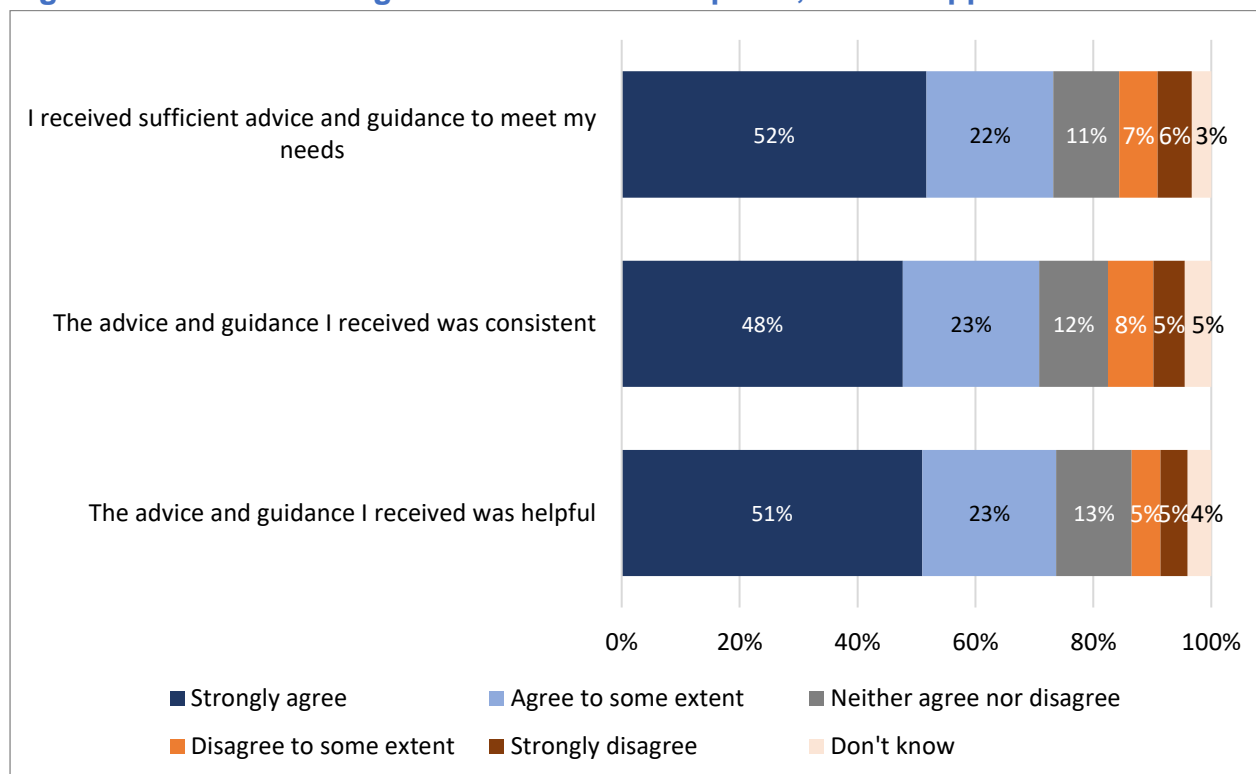


Figure A1.9 Advice and guidance – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

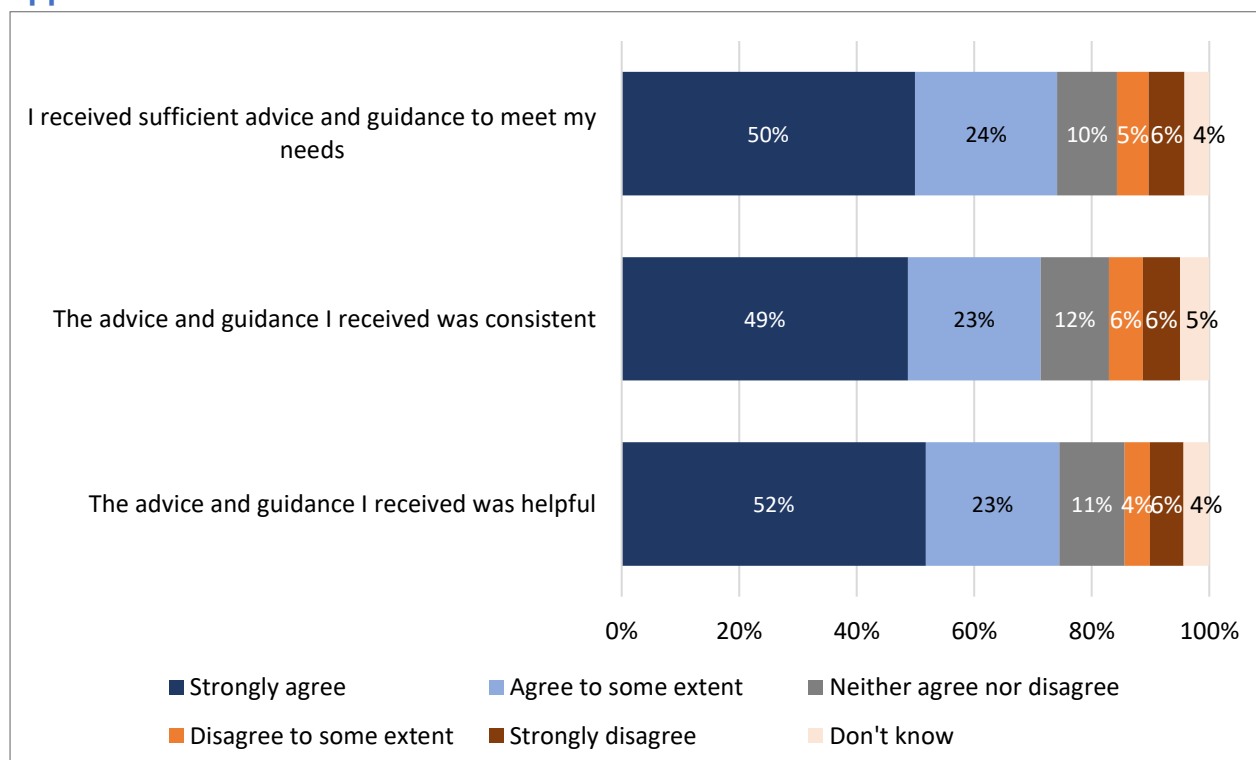
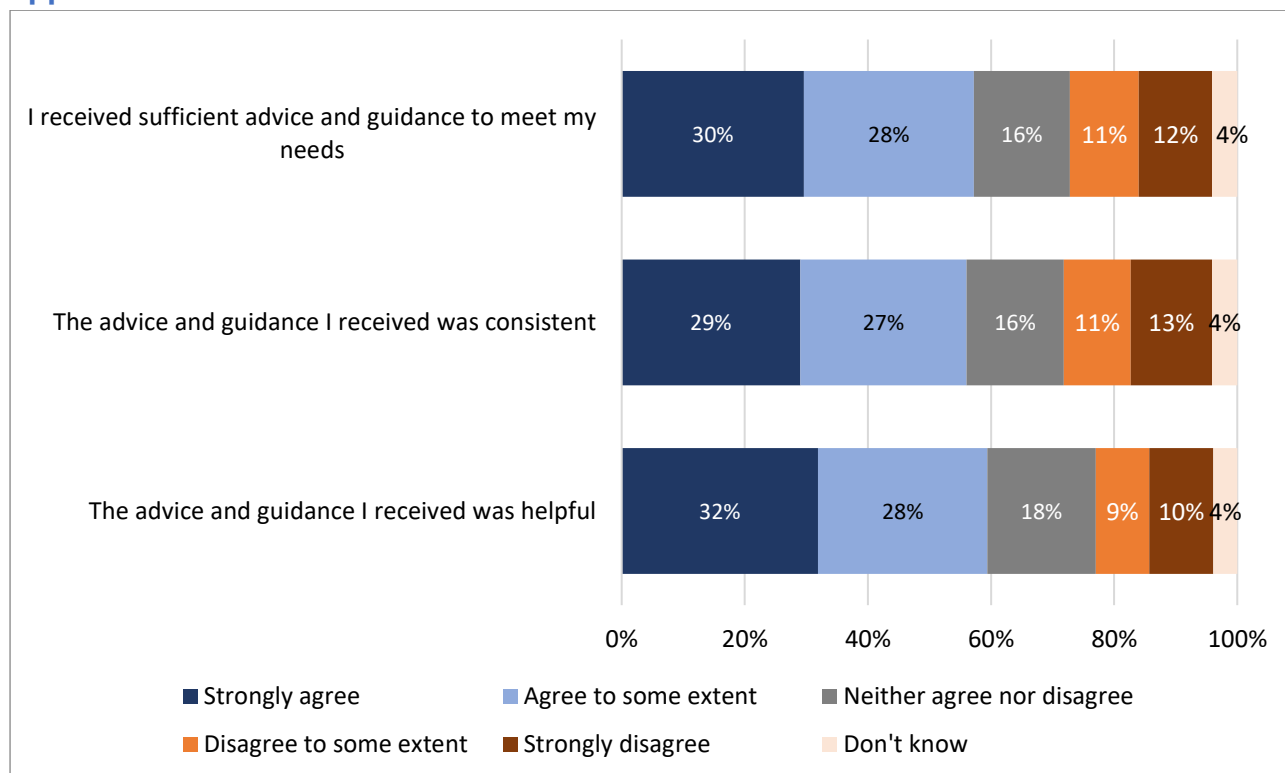


Figure A1.10 Advice and guidance – LAs with 2,001+ building warrant applications



QUALITY OF SERVICE

Figure A1.11 Quality of service – LAs with up to 1,000 BW applications

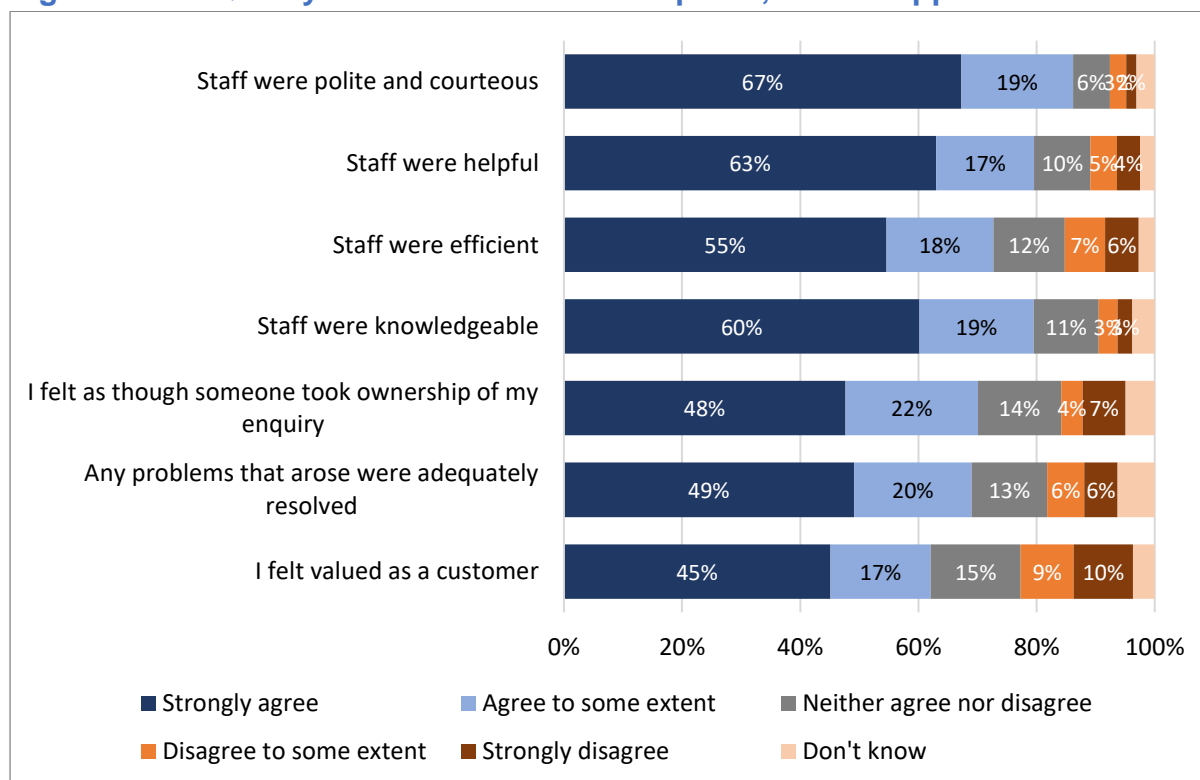


Figure A1.12 Quality of service – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

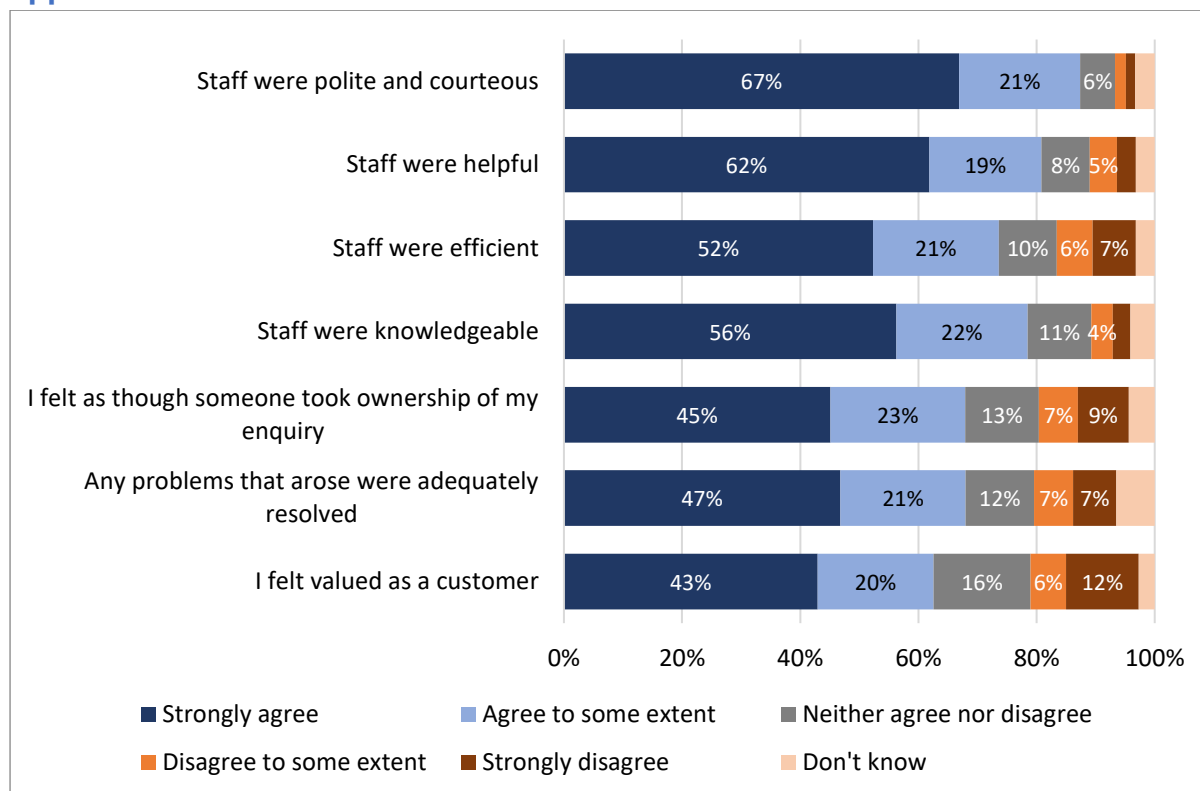


Figure A1.13 Quality of service – LAs with 2,001+ building warrant applications

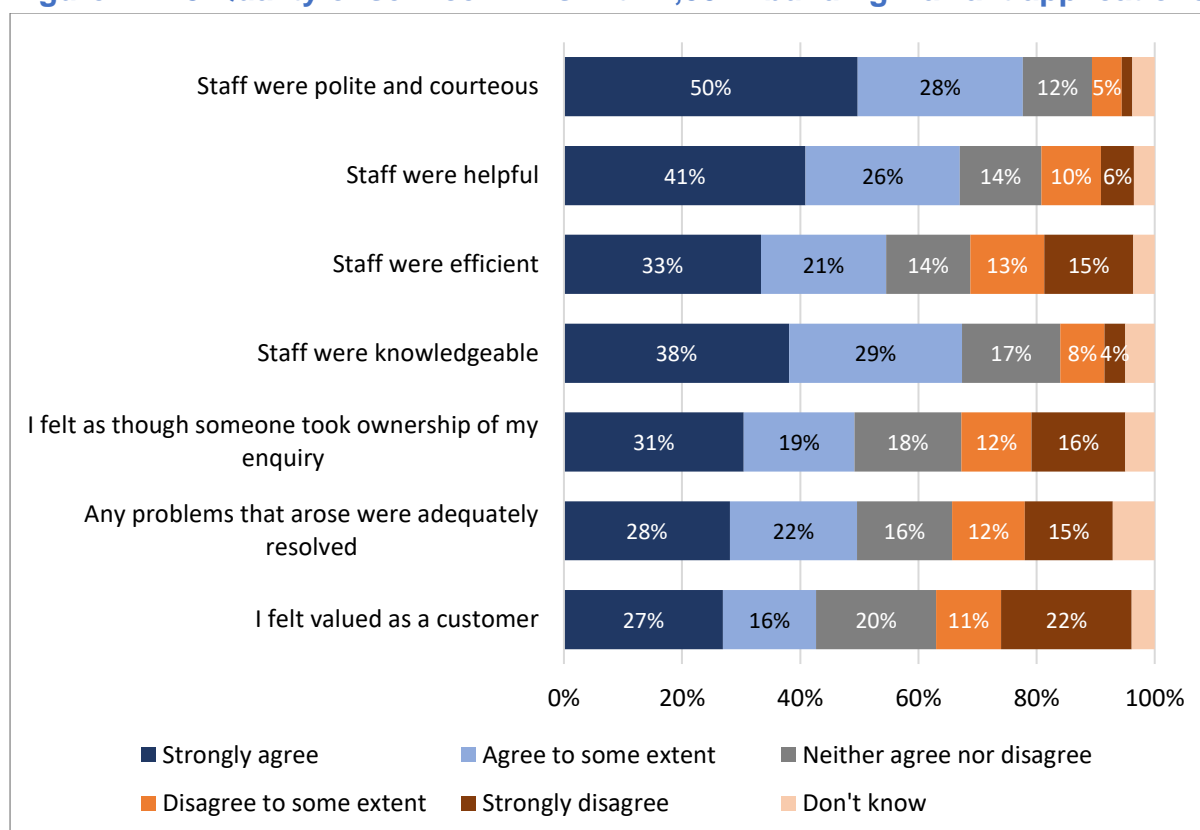


Figure A1.14 Awareness of the need to notify the building standards service

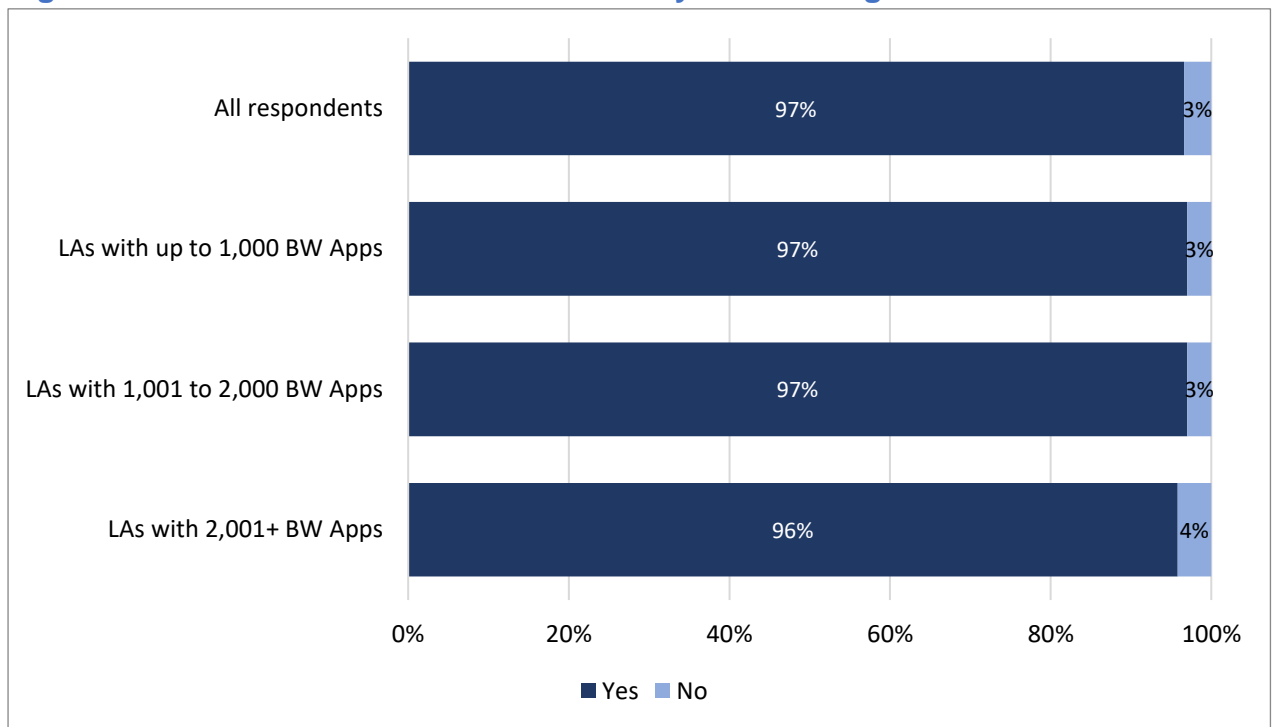


Figure A1.15 Awareness of the new Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP)

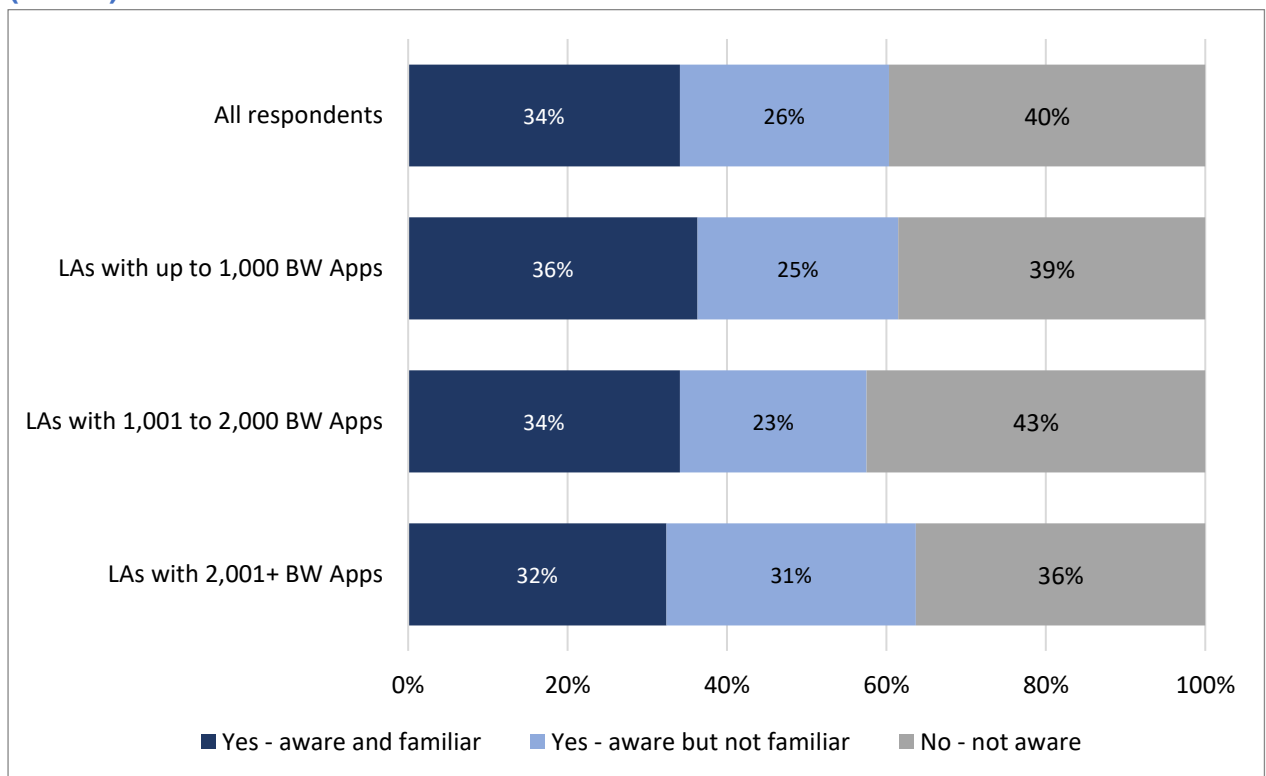


Figure A1.16 Whether an inspection visit was undertaken

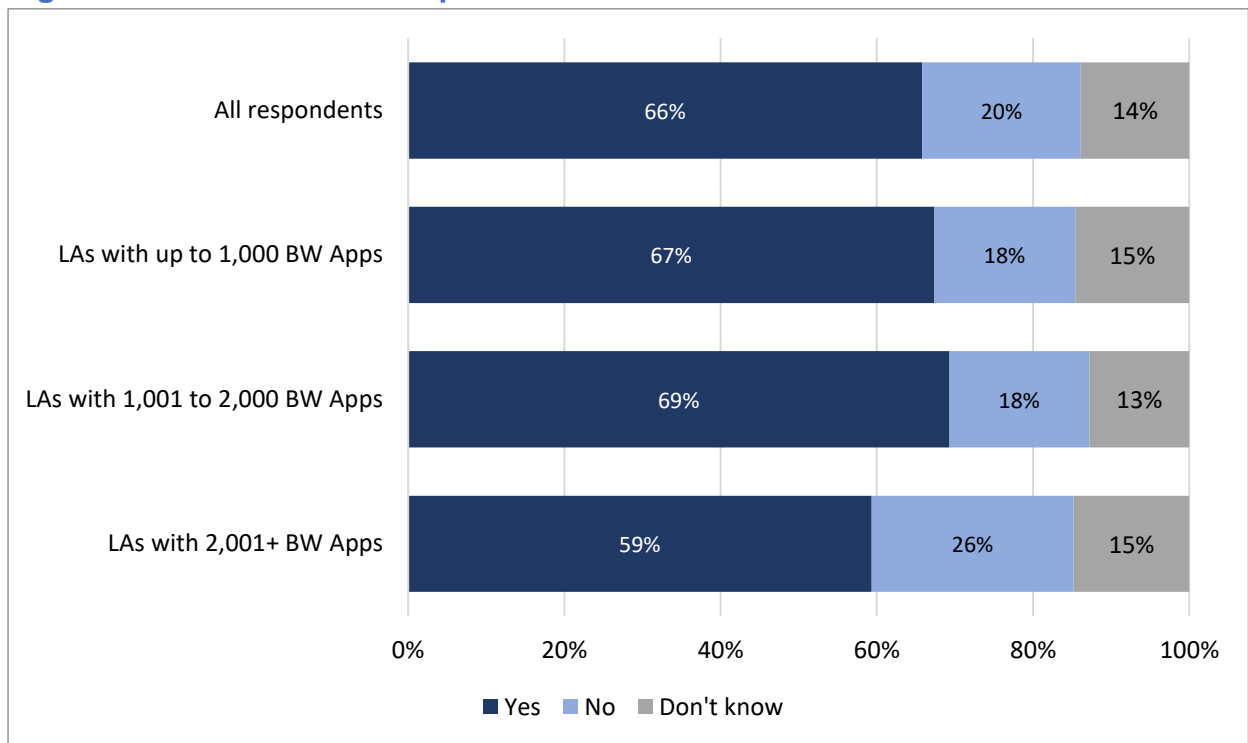


Figure A1.17 Satisfaction with aspects of the inspection visit – LAs with up to 1,000 BW applications

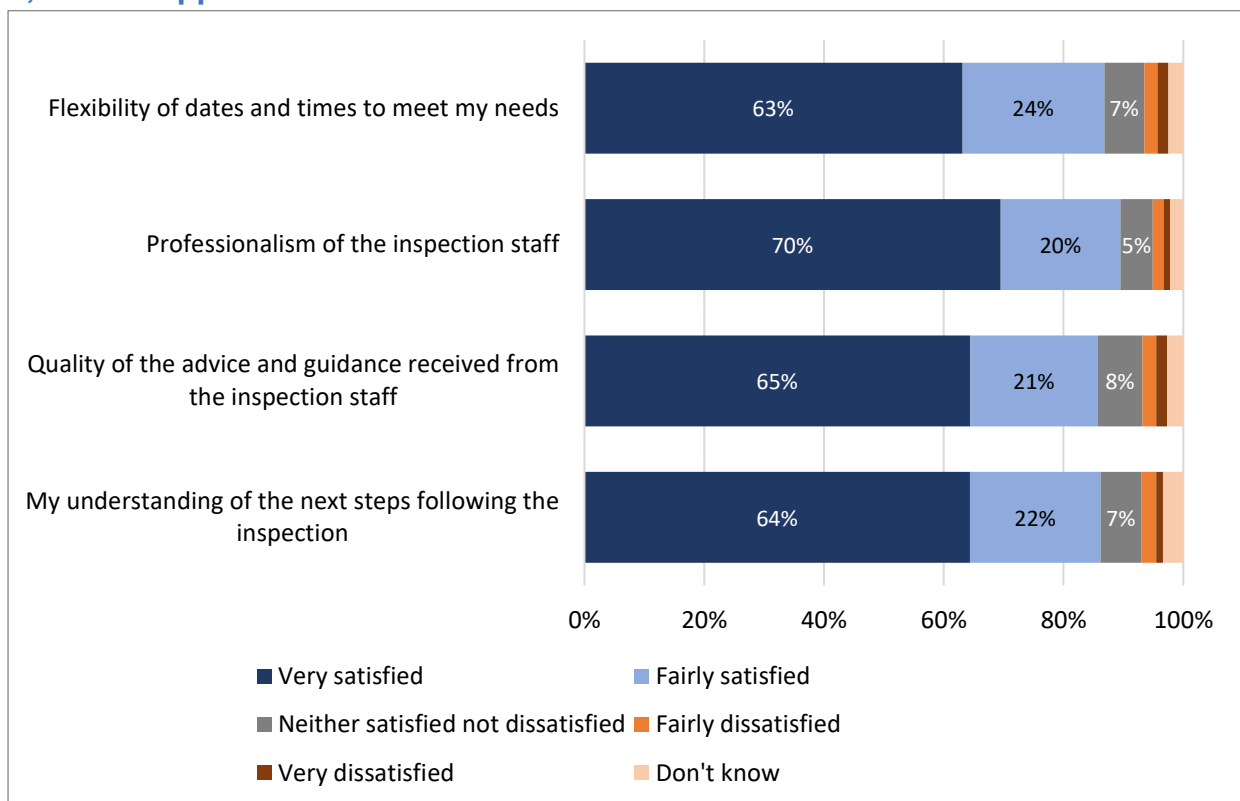


Figure A1.18 Satisfaction with aspects of the inspection visit – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

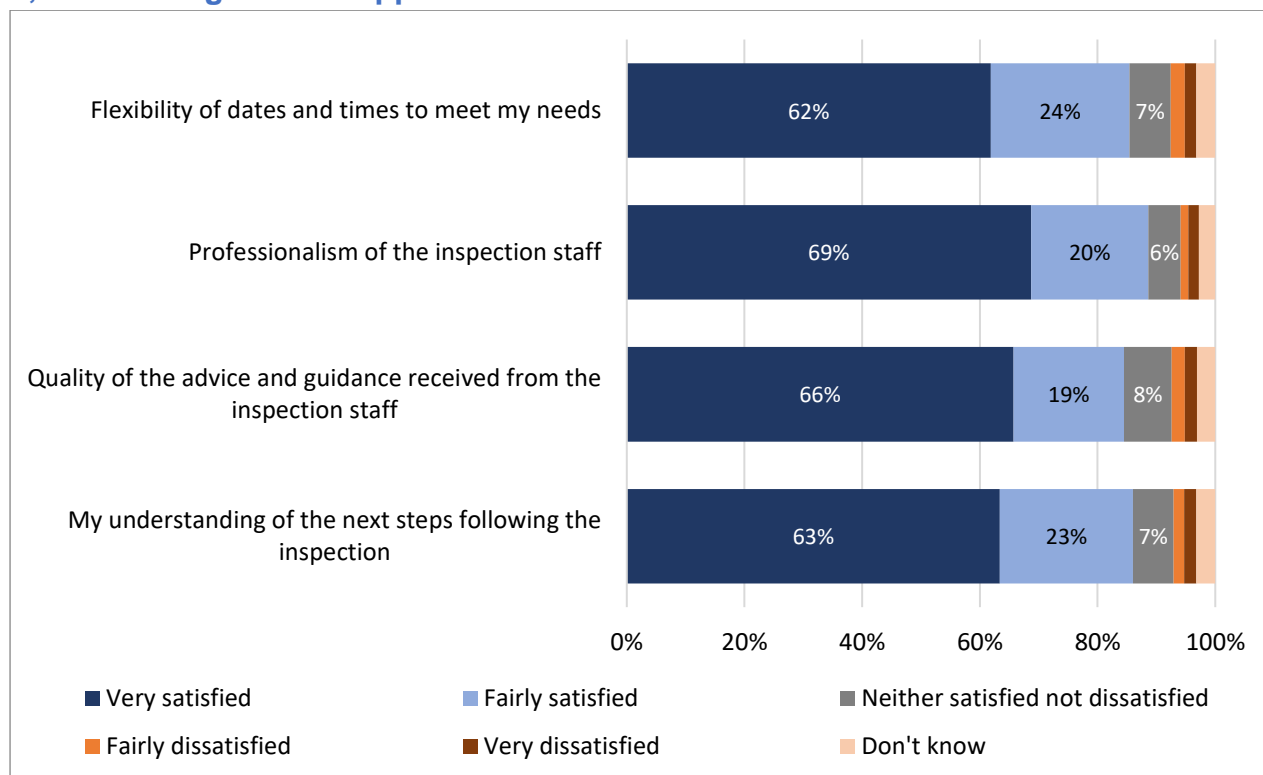
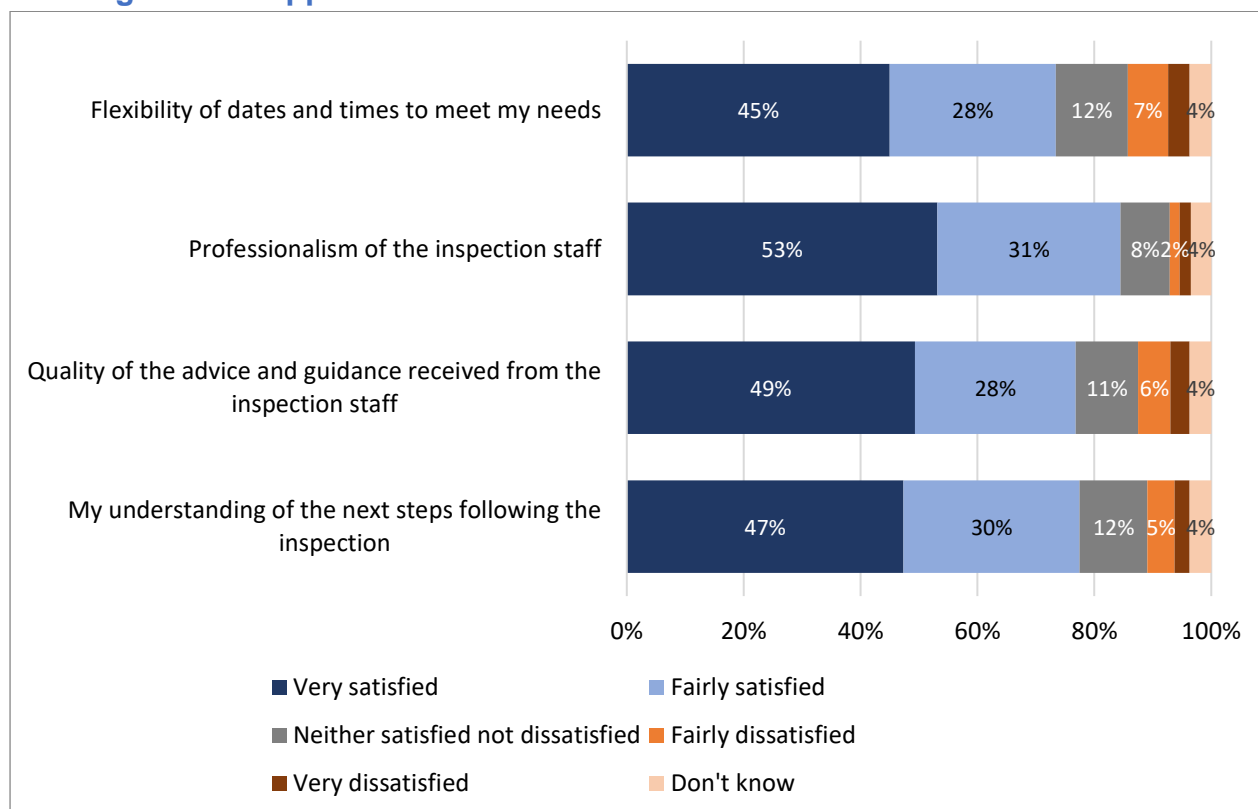


Figure A1.19 Satisfaction with aspects of the inspection visit – LAs with 2,000+ building warrant applications



COMMUNICATIONS

Figure A1.20 Channels of interaction

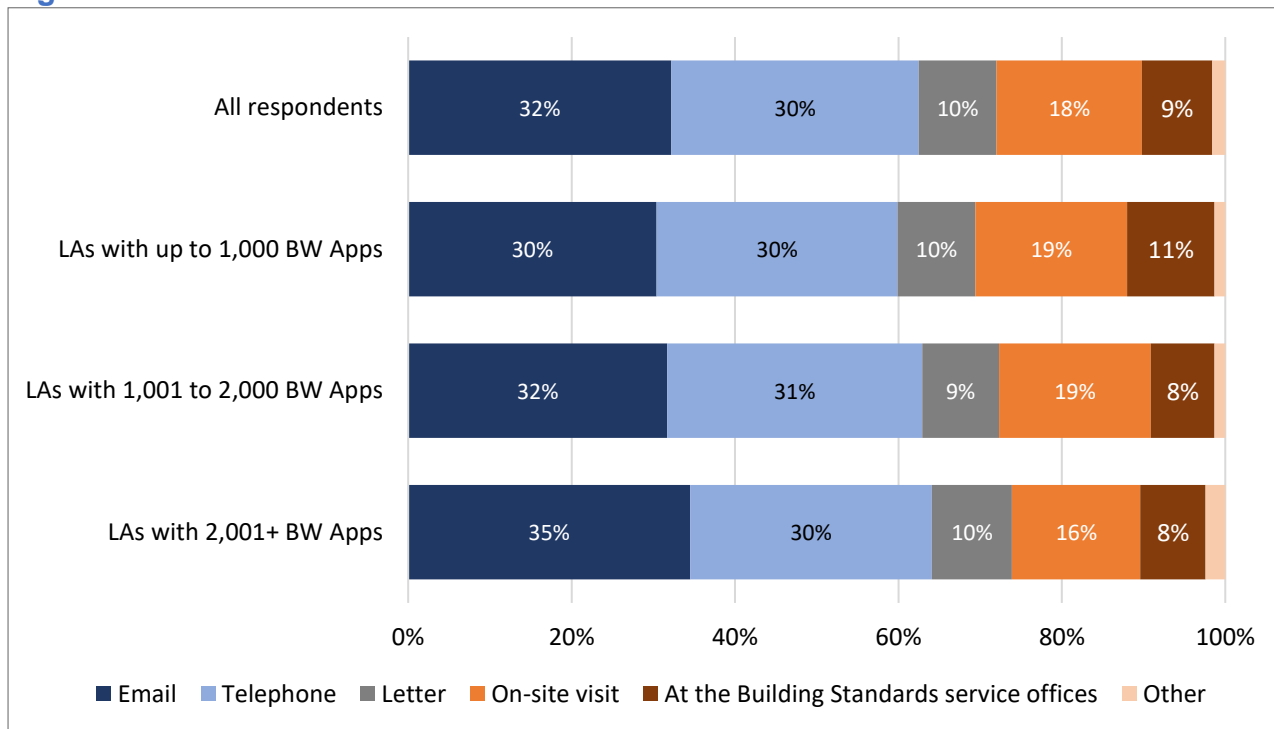


Figure A1.21 Quality of written information and documentation

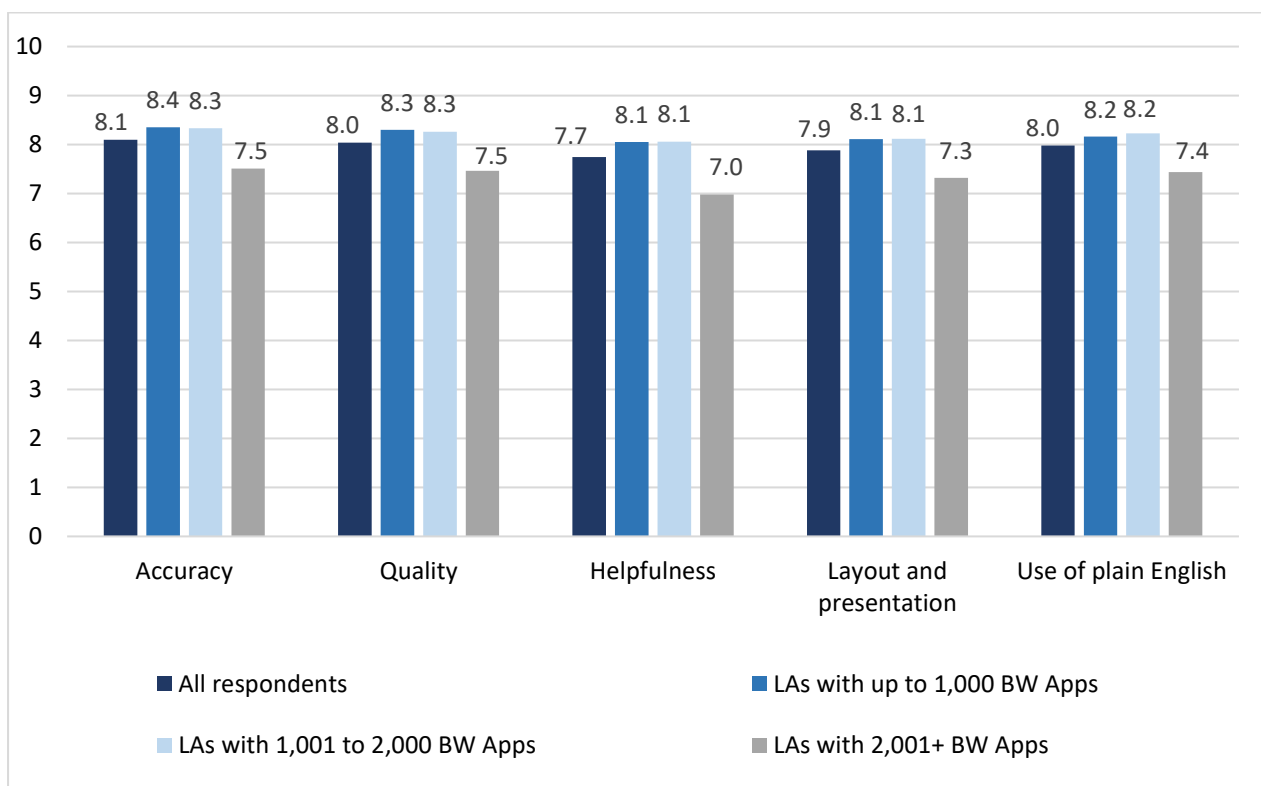


Figure A1.22 Whether visited the building standards section of the local authority website

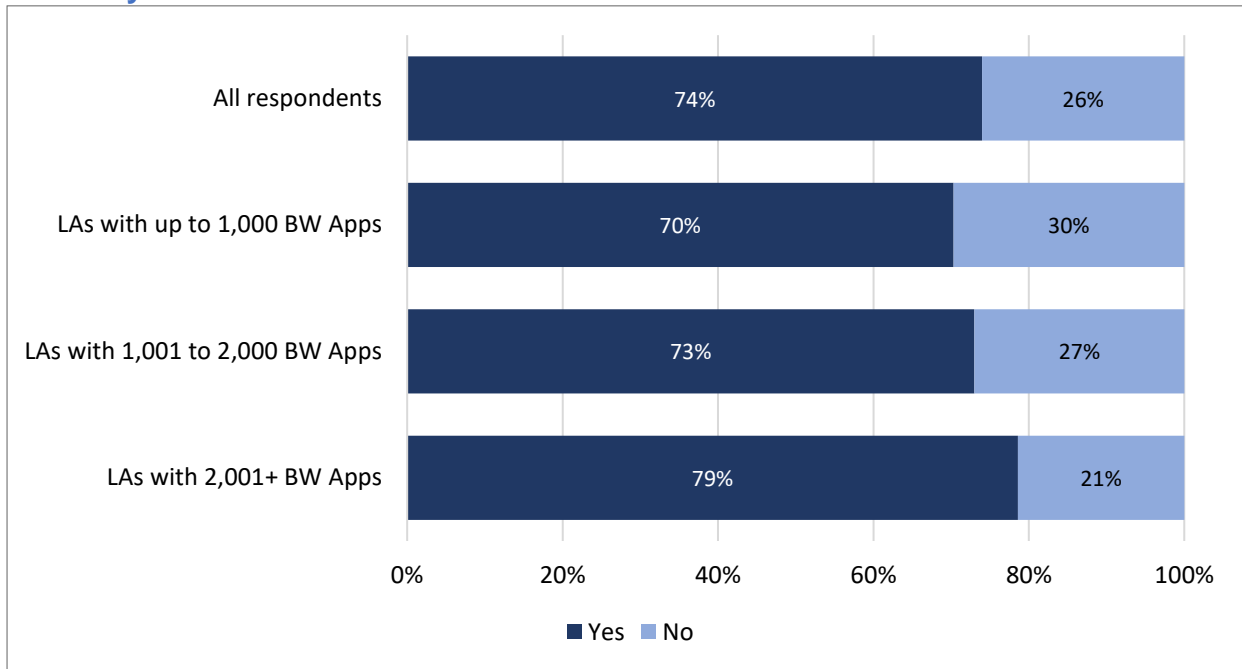


Figure A1.23 Satisfaction with forms of electronic communication – LAs with up to 1,000 building warrant applications

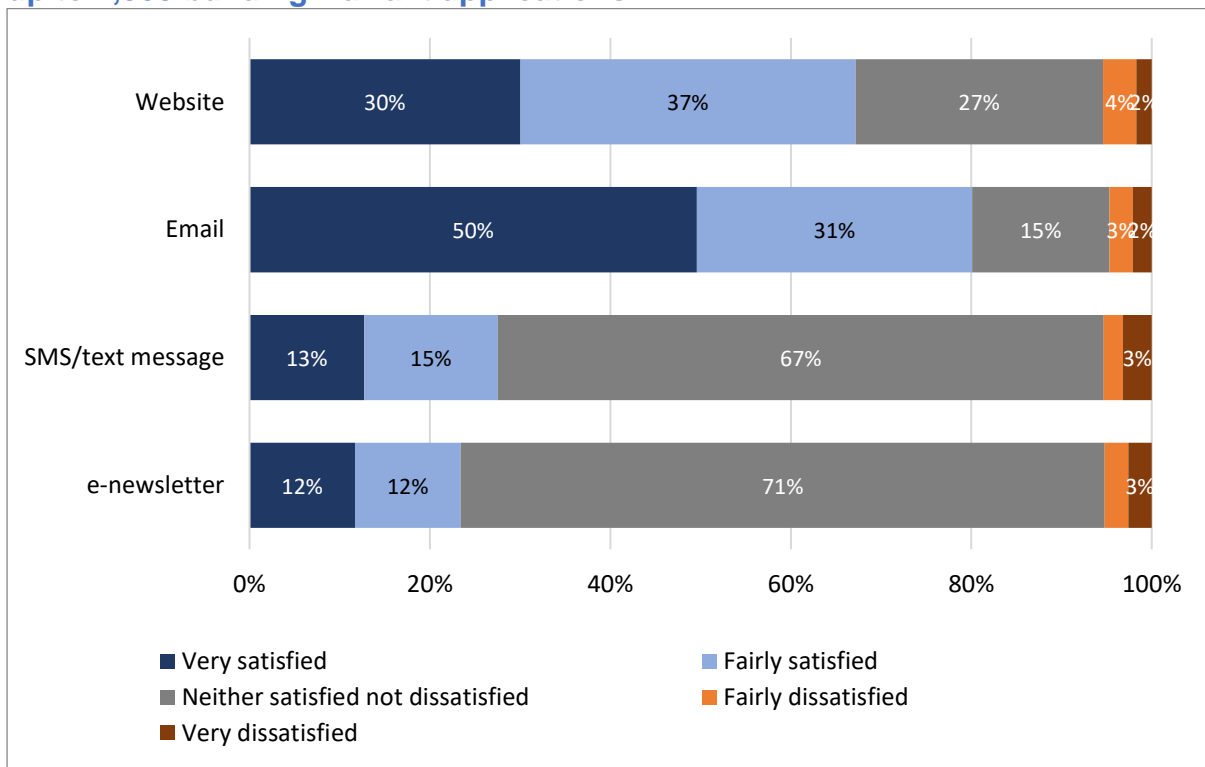


Figure A1.24 Satisfaction with forms of electronic communication – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

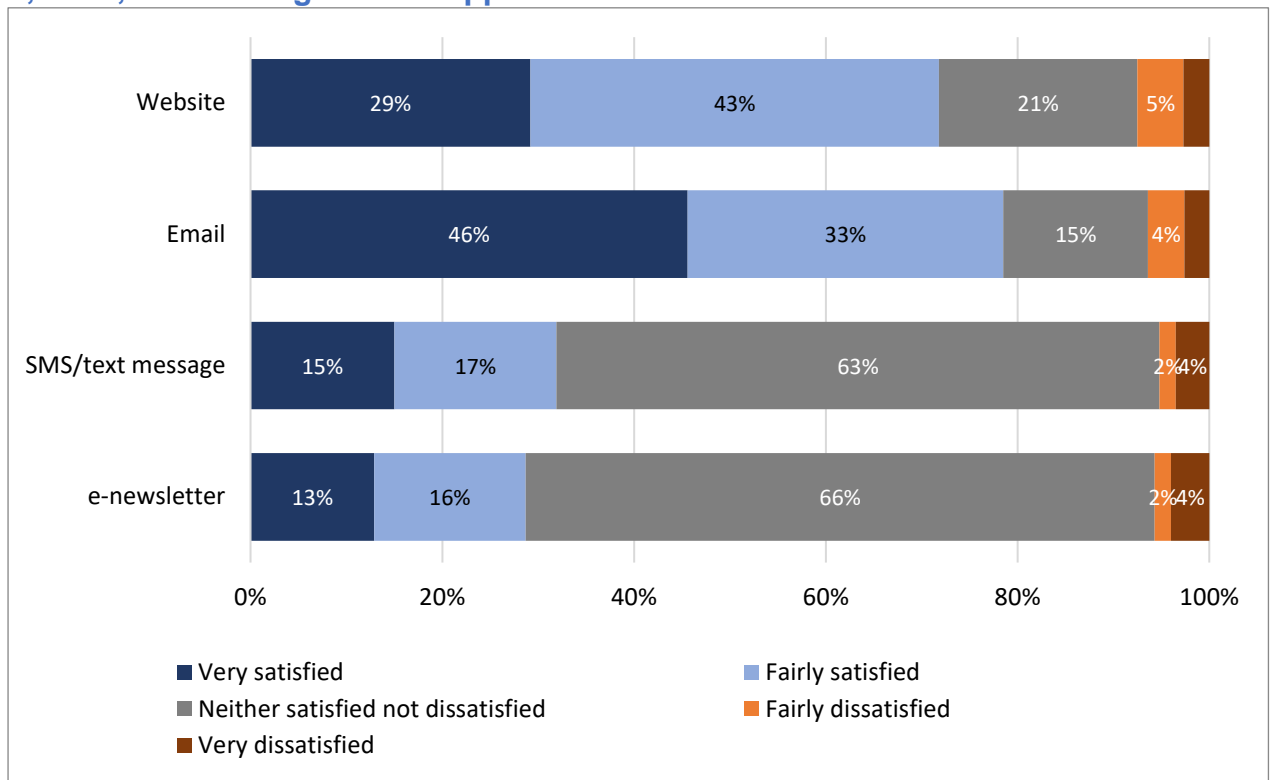
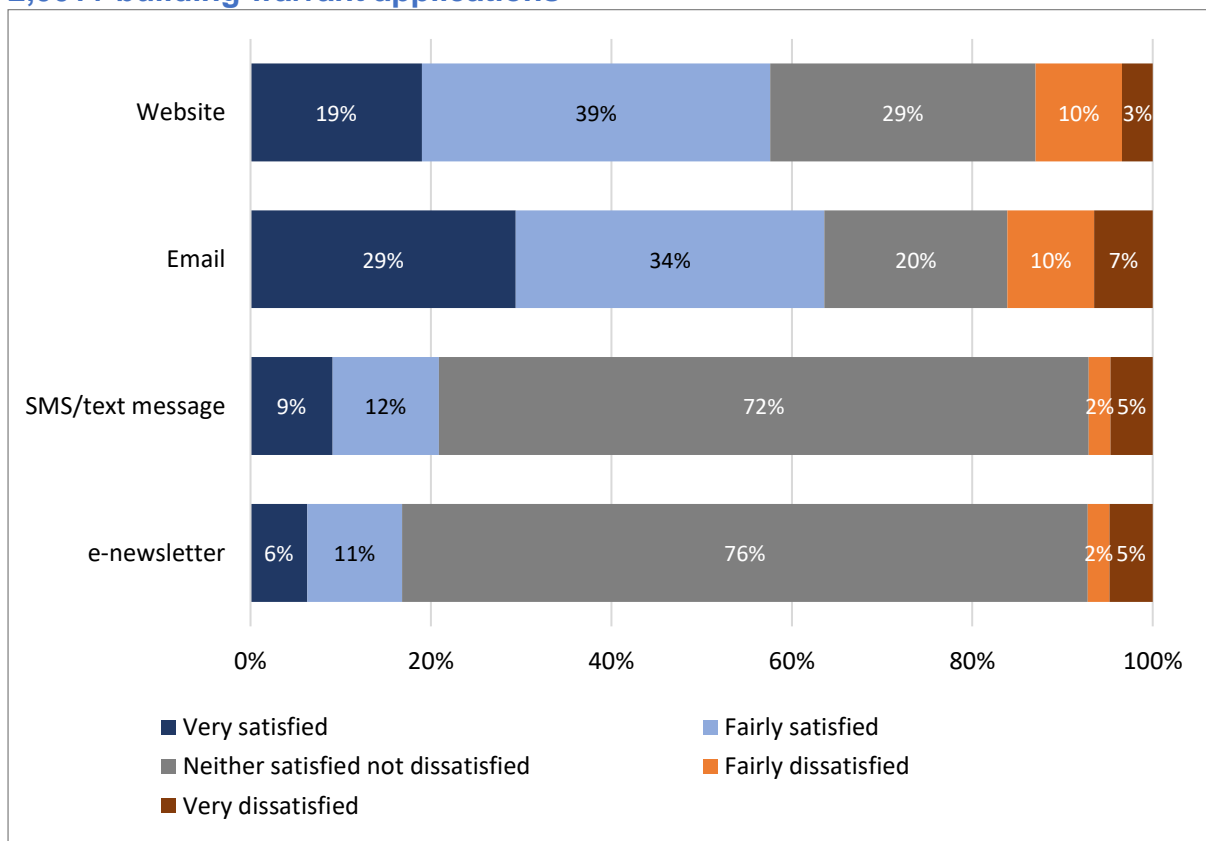


Figure A1.25 Satisfaction with forms of electronic communication – LAs with 2,001+ building warrant applications



ACCESSIBILITY

Figure A1.26 Building standards service staff are accessible to meet in person

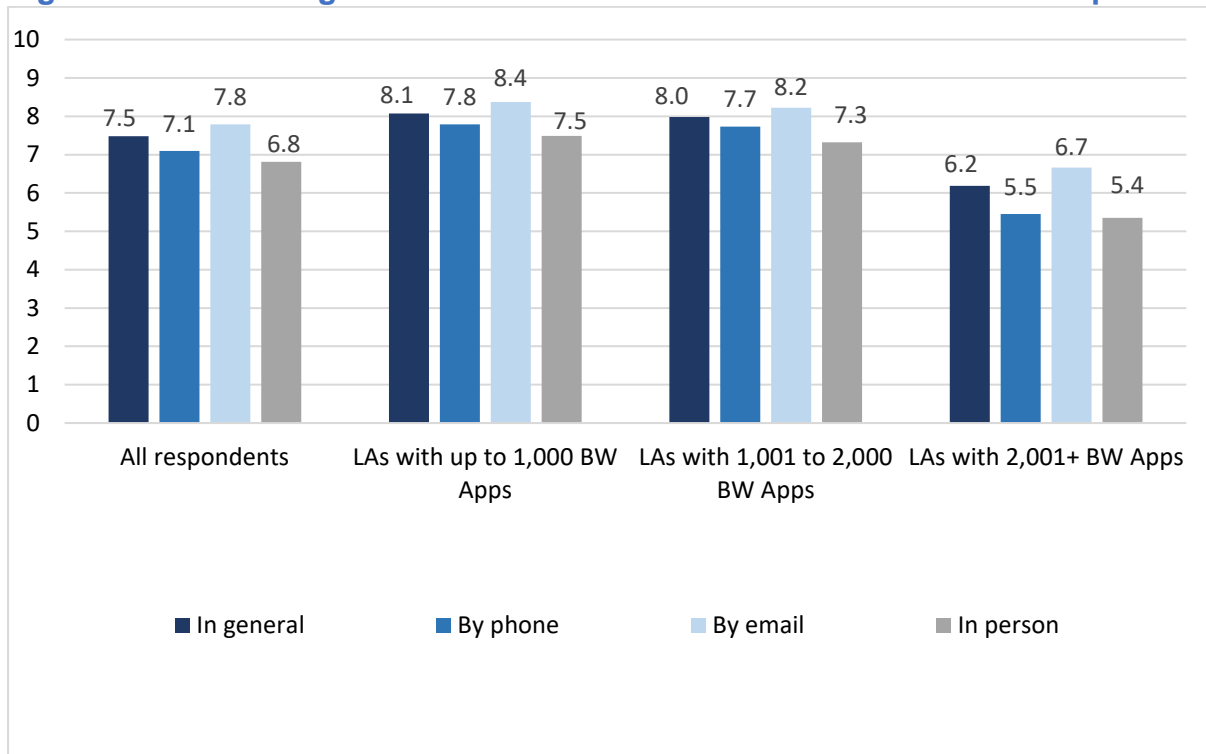


Figure A1.27 Building standards service staff are accessible to meet in person

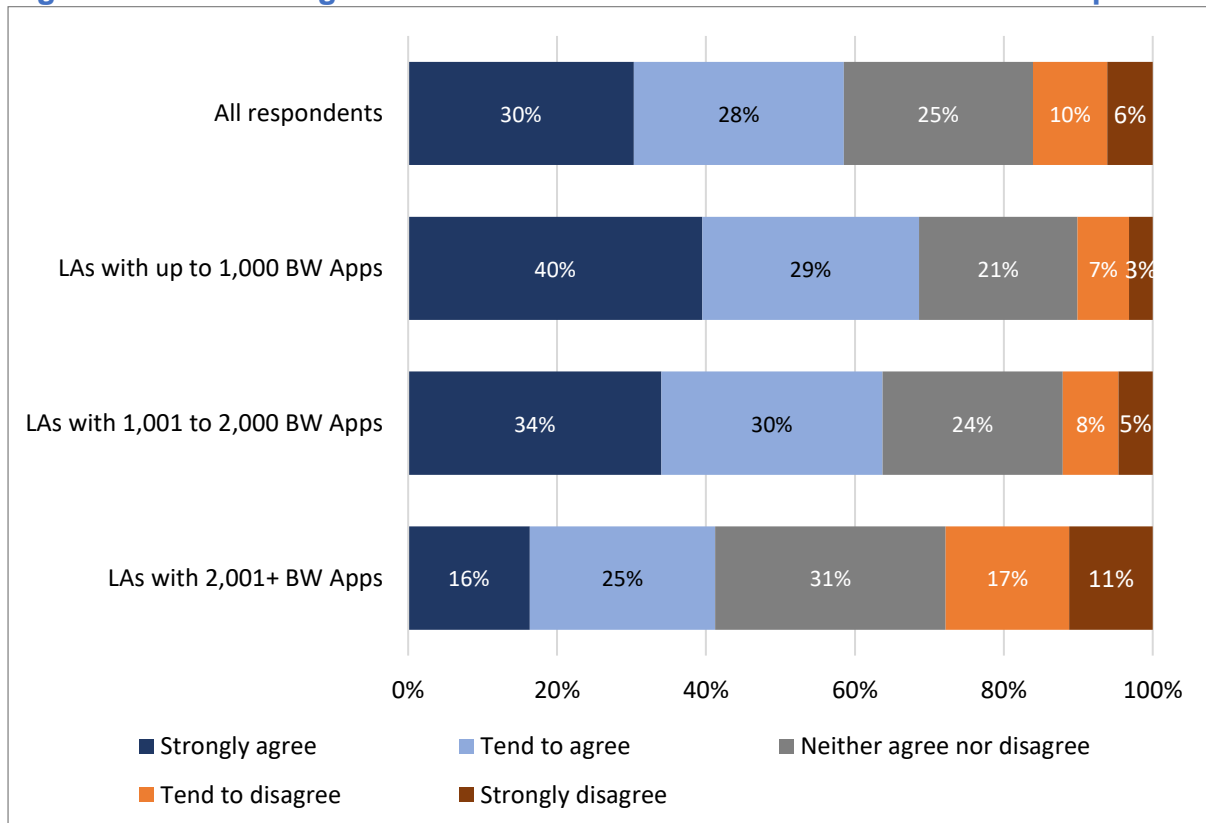


Figure A1.28 Building standards service staff are approachable

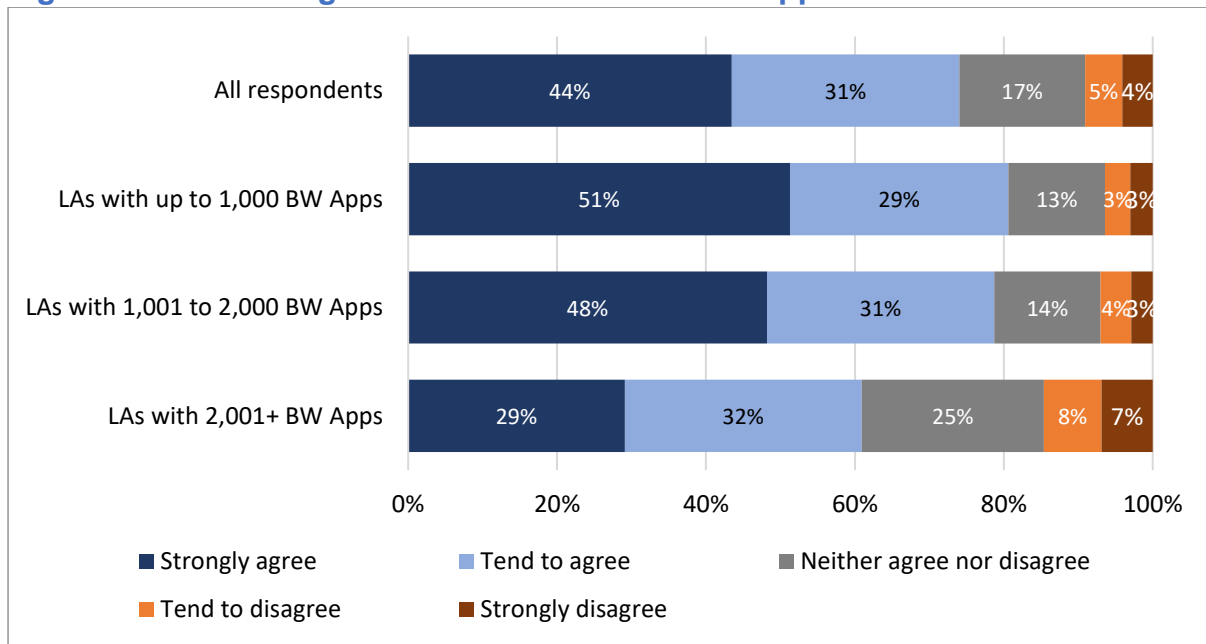


Figure A1.29 Whether visited the offices of the building standards service

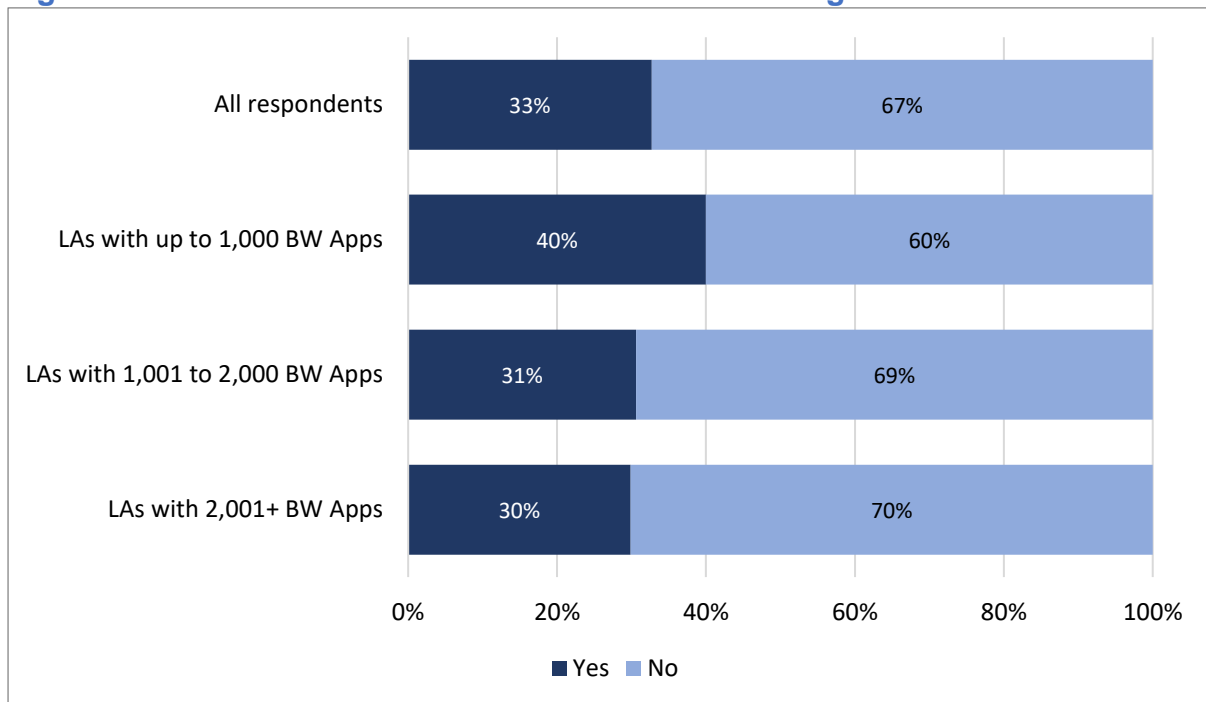


Figure A1.30 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the building standards service offices – LAs with up to 1,000 building warrant applications

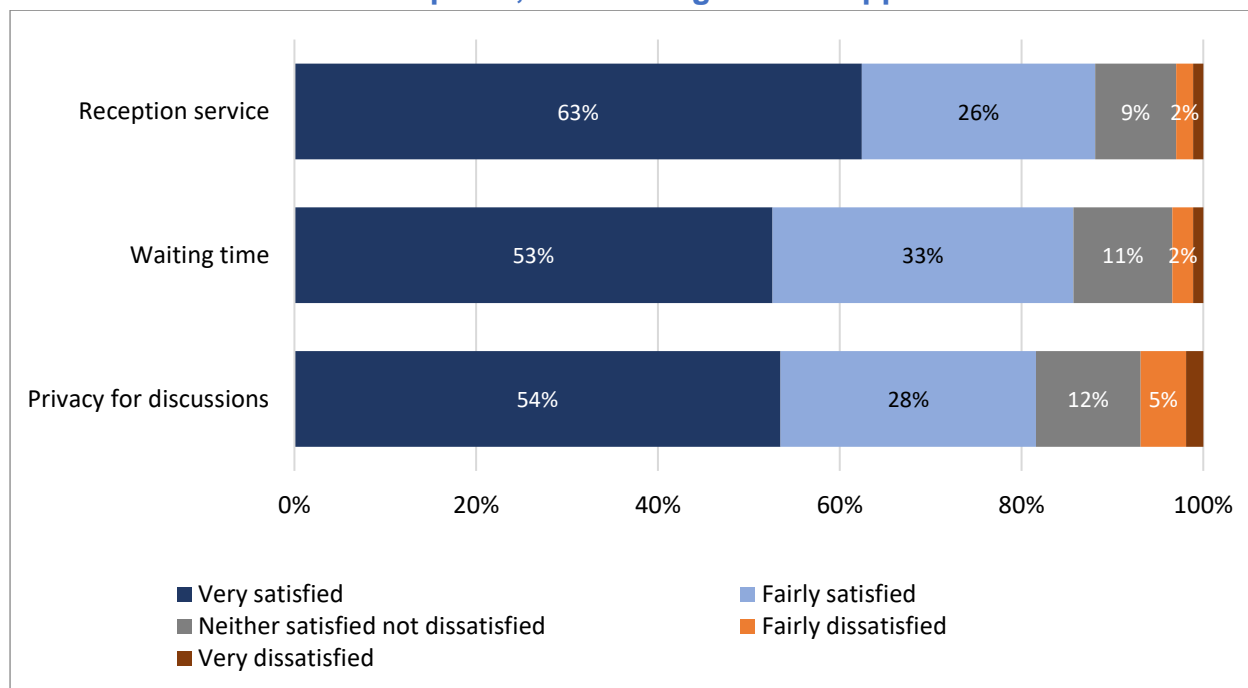


Figure A1.31 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the building standards service offices – LAs with 1,001-2,000 building warrant applications

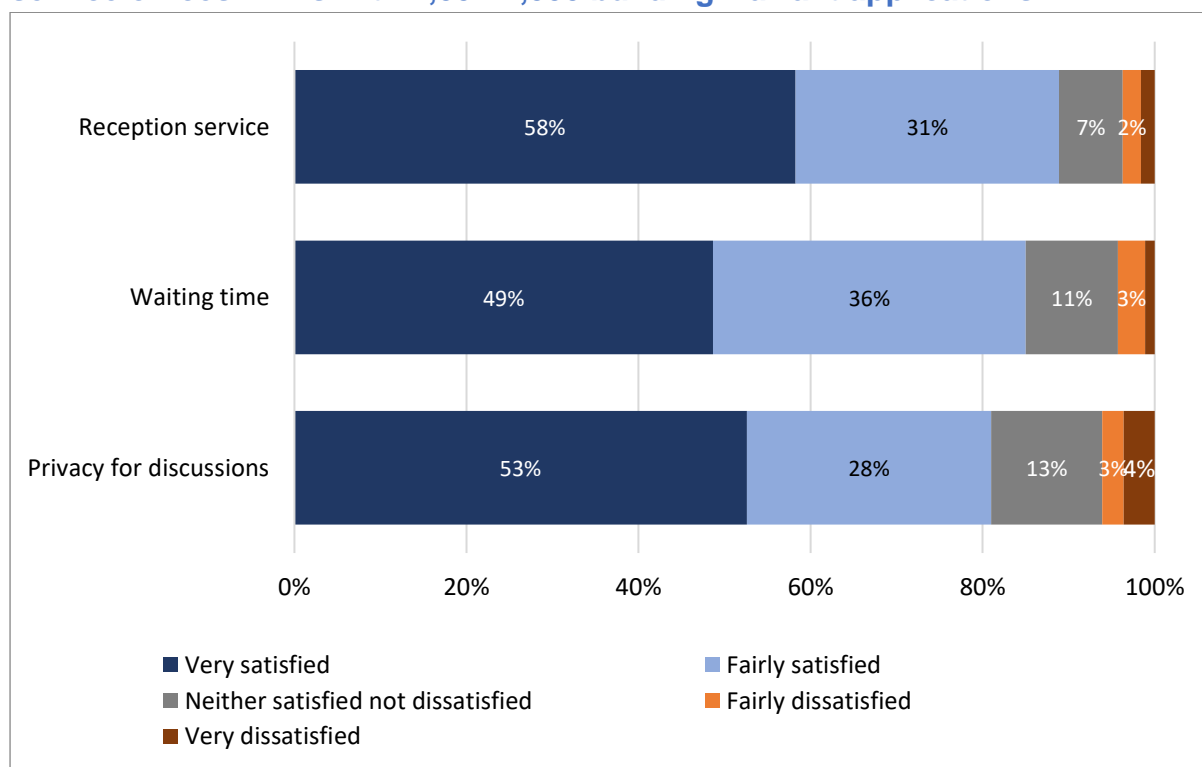
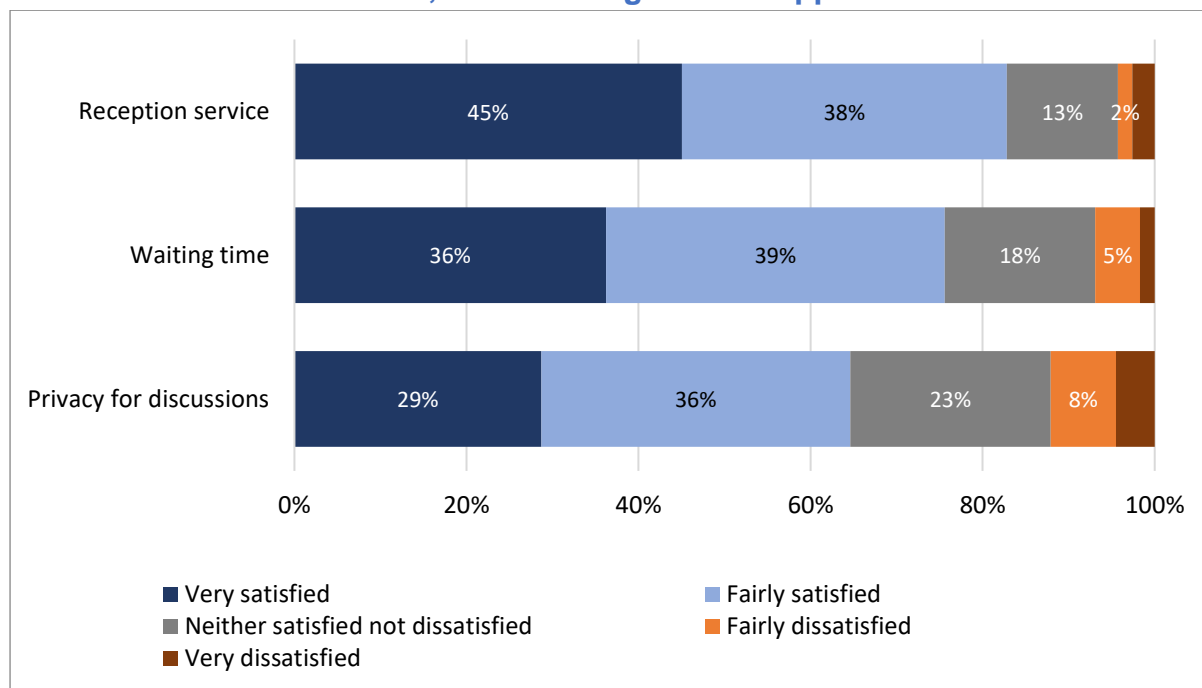


Figure A1.32 Satisfaction with specific aspects of the building standards service offices – LAs with 2,001+ building warrant applications



Appendix 2: National Survey Questionnaire

2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey for Building Standards Please tell us what you think

Introduction

The Scottish Government (Building Standards Division) would like to obtain your views and feedback about the local authority Building Standards service in Scotland. This is a national survey that is being administered separately to customer feedback questionnaires issued by individual local authorities.

As a Building Standards customer since April 2018, we would like to hear about the quality of service you have received, for example when applying for a building warrant and/or submitting a completion certificate. We are interested in your views on the customer service you have experienced as opposed to the actual decision made in response to an application.

How to complete the survey

You will be asked to identify which local authority your feedback relates to. If you have been a customer of more than one local authority and would like to provide additional feedback, please complete a separate survey.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete (this may take a little longer depending on how much feedback you wish to give). Please note, the final question asks you for any additional comments or feedback not covered by the previous questions.

As you progress through the survey, you will only be presented with those questions that are relevant to you. If you are unable to answer any questions, or if you feel they are not applicable, please leave them blank.

Reassurance

Pye Tait Consulting is carrying out this survey independently on behalf of the Scottish Government and all 32 local authorities in Scotland. The findings from the survey will be treated confidentially and reported anonymously by Pye Tait Consulting under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

If you have any queries, please contact Tom Wilson at Pye Tait Consulting, via t.wilson@pyetait.com or by telephoning 01423 509433

Thank you for taking the time to complete this online survey. To continue, please select a local authority to provide your views and feedback. Please note that after you press 'submit' at the end of this survey, you will return to this page and your response for this local authority will be marked as 'completed' (below).

PART 1: About you and your application: [Local authority selected]

Q1. In order to minimise selection error, customers were no longer presented with this drop-down list of 32 local authorities to manually select which to provide feedback about. Instead, this information was either pre-filled (for customers of one local authority) or a dynamically controlled reduced list was presented for customers of more than one local authority (typically agents).

Which ONE of the following local authorities are you responding about in this survey? (Please tick the appropriate box and complete a separate survey for any other local authorities of which you have been a customer since April 2018).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Aberdeen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highland
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aberdeenshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inverclyde
<input type="checkbox"/>	Angus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Midlothian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Argyll and Bute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moray
<input type="checkbox"/>	City of Edinburgh	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Ayrshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clackmannanshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Lanarkshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orkney
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dumfries and Galloway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perth and Kinross
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dundee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Renfrewshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	East Ayrshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scottish Borders
<input type="checkbox"/>	East Dunbartonshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shetland
<input type="checkbox"/>	East Lothian	<input type="checkbox"/>	South Ayrshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	East Renfrewshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	South Lanarkshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	Falkirk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stirling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fife	<input type="checkbox"/>	West Dunbartonshire
<input type="checkbox"/>	Glasgow	<input type="checkbox"/>	West Lothian

Q2. In what capacity have you been a customer of the Building Standards service? [Tick one only]

<input type="checkbox"/>	Applicant for a building warrant and/or submitter of a completion certificate (e.g. building owner/tenant)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agent working on behalf of another applicant/submitter
<input type="checkbox"/>	BOTH of the above, i.e. direct applicant/submitter AND agent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If 'Other' – please specify: _____

Q3. [Only asked if Option 1 selected to Q2] Did you use an agent to act on your behalf as part of the application process?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

Q4. For which of the following reasons did you make contact with your local authority Building Standards service? [Tick all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/>	To discuss your proposal before applying for a building warrant
<input type="checkbox"/>	To make an application for a building warrant
<input type="checkbox"/>	During construction, including submission of a completion certificate

	Other reason/s
--	----------------

If 'Other' – please specify: _____

Q5.For which of the following categories of work have you submitted an application? [Tick all that apply]

	Domestic new build – multiple plotted developments (houses/flats)
	Domestic new build – other (e.g. one-off house build)
	Domestic existing build - extension
	Domestic existing build - alteration
	Non-domestic – residential (e.g. hostels, guest houses, hotels, hospitals)
	Non-domestic – assembly (e.g. churches, schools, health centres, libraries, stadia)
	Non-domestic – commercial (e.g. shops, restaurants and office buildings)
	Non-domestic – Industrial (e.g. factory buildings, manufacturing units, refineries)
	Non-domestic – storage/agricultural (e.g. grain stores, car parks, bonded warehouse)

If 'Other' – please specify: _____

PART 2: Meeting your expectations: [Local authority selected]

Q6.Overall, to what extent did the service you received from the local authority Building Standards service meet your expectations? Please rate on a scale from 1 'not at all' to 10 'completely'?

Q7.Please provide your reasons for this rating:

PART 3: Progressing your application: [Local authority selected]

Q8.How satisfied were you with the time taken by the local authority Building Standards service to undertake each of the following? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Respond to telephone enquiries					
Respond to written enquiries					
Issue the first report for a building warrant					

application (e.g. detailing non-compliance or further information requested)					
Process the application and grant a building warrant					
Respond to a request for a site visit					
Accept a completion certificate					

Q9. How satisfied are you with the way you were informed about the progress of your application? [Leave blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Very satisfied
	Fairly satisfied
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
	Fairly dissatisfied
	Very dissatisfied

Q10. [Only asked if 'fairly dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' to Q9] What are your reasons?

PART 4: Quality of service: [Local authority selected]

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the advice and guidance you received from local authority Building Standards service staff? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Strongly agree	Agree to some extent	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree to some extent	Strongly disagree
I received sufficient advice and guidance to meet my needs					
The advice and guidance I received was consistent					
The advice and guidance I received was helpful					

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the quality of service received from Building Standards service staff? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Strongly agree	Agree to some extent	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree to some extent	Strongly disagree
Staff were polite and courteous					
Staff were helpful					

Staff were efficient					
Staff were knowledgeable					
I felt as though someone took ownership of my enquiry					
Any problems that arose were adequately resolved					
I felt valued as a customer					

Q13. [Only asked if 'Strongly Agree' to any components of Q11 or Q12] You have stated **STRONGLY AGREE** to at least one of the above statements with respect to the advice, guidance and quality of service you have received. Please can you explain what was particularly good?

--

Q14. [Only asked if 'Strongly Disagree' to any components of Q11 or Q12] You have stated **STRONGLY DISAGREE** to at least one of the above statements with respect to the advice, guidance and quality of service you have received. Please can you explain your reasons?

--

Q15. Are you aware of the need to notify the Building Standards service before warrantable work commences?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Q16. Are you aware of the new Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP) which is issued by the local authority at the same time as the building warrant is granted?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – aware but not familiar
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – aware and familiar
<input type="checkbox"/>	No – not aware

Q17. Did you have an inspection visit by Building Standards service staff?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Route to Q18
<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Route to Part 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	Route to Part 5

Q18. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of the inspection visit?
[Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Flexibility of dates and times to meet my needs					

Professionalism of the inspection staff					
Quality of the advice and guidance received from the inspection staff					
Your understanding of the next steps following the inspection					

PART 5: Communications: [Local authority selected]

Q19. In which of the following ways did you interact with the local authority Building Standards service? [Tick all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/>	Email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Telephone
<input type="checkbox"/>	Letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	On-site visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	At the Building Standards service offices
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If 'Other' – please specify: _____

Q20. On a scale from 1 'very poor' to 10 'very good' - how would you rate each of the following aspects of the local authority's written information and documentation:

	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Accuracy	
Quality	
Helpfulness	
Layout and presentation	
Use of plain English	

Q21. Have you visited the Building Standards section of the local authority's website?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Q22. How satisfied are you with each of the following forms of electronic communication made available by the local authority Building Standards service? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Website					
Email					
SMS/text message					
e-newsletter					

Q23. [Only asked if 'fairly dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' to any of Q22 A to D] You stated FAIRLY DISSATISFIED or VERY DISSATISFIED to at least one of the options in the last question about electronic communication. What are your reasons?

--

Q24. Generally, in what ways (if any) do you think the local authority Building Standards service could improve its communications?

--

PART 6: Accessibility: [Local authority selected]

Q25. How easy was it to make contact with the local authority Building Standards service via each of the following methods? Please rate on a scale from 1 'very difficult' to 10 'very easy'

	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
In general	
By phone	
By email	
In person	

Q26. Please provide reasons for your ratings:

--

Q27. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to the local authority Building Standards service? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
Building Standards service staff are accessible if I want to meet with them in person					
Building Standards service staff are approachable					

Q28. Did you visit the offices of the local authority Building Standards service?

Yes	Route to Q29
No	Route to Q30

Q29. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of the Building Standards service offices? [Leave any statements blank if don't know or not applicable]

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Reception service					
Waiting time					
Privacy for discussions					

PART 7: Overall satisfaction and final comments: [Local authority selected]

Q30. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the Building Standards service?
Please rate on a scale from 1 'not at all satisfied' to 10 'completely satisfied'

Finally, do you have any final comments about how you believe the local authority Building Standards service could be improved in the future?

Appendix 3: Survey Invitation Email

Email subject: Building Standards in Scotland – Customer Feedback Questionnaire

Dear {Name}

We are writing to you as a customer of the local authority Building Standards service in Scotland.

This means that since 1st April 2018 you may have submitted a building warrant application, completion certificate, used the services of your own agent, or made other enquiries through your local authority Building Standards service. You may also have been an agent acting on behalf of an applicant.

The Scottish Government would like to obtain your views and feedback on the customer service you received. This will help identify which aspects are working well and any areas where improvements need to be made in the future.

We would be most grateful if you would spare 5 or 10 minutes to complete the online survey.

If you have been a customer of more than one local authority Building Standards, you will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided by each.

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO START THE SURVEY

Your feedback is important to us, even if you are not able to answer all questions or have had limited contact with the local authority Building Standards service.

Further information, including our contact details, can be found via the survey link (above).

Many thanks for your time and contribution.

Kind regards,

Pye Tait Consulting (on behalf of the Scottish Government, Building Standards Division)

You may choose not to receive further e-mails about this research from Pye Tait Limited simply by clicking [UNSUBSCRIBE](#). Pye Tait Limited registered address: Royal House, 110 Station Parade, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 1EP.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2020

OGL

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.scot

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-83960-509-3 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, January 2020

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS684154 (01/20)

W W W . g o v . s c o t