



Disabled Facilities Grant Customer Satisfaction Survey 2014

Private Sector Housing, Families & Wellbeing

Response

Customer satisfaction surveys were sent out in November 2014 to 132 people who had received a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) in 2013 - 2014 and 55 were returned giving a response rate of 42% compared to last year's response rate of 38%.

As in previous years, the majority of respondents were owner occupiers (35). There were 19 Social Housing tenants: 14 Your Housing, 3 Warrington Housing Association, one Muir Housing Group and one Adactus Housing Association tenant. One person stated that they lived with their daughter. None of the respondents were private rented tenants.

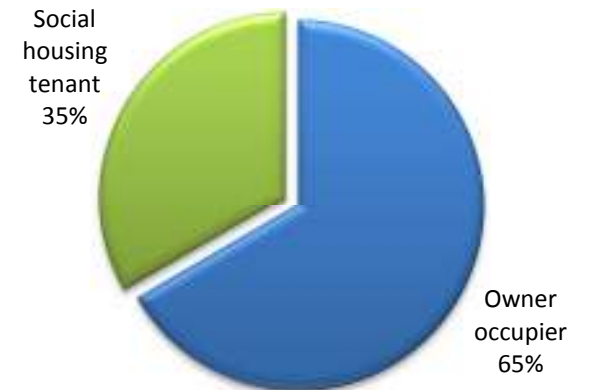
The work carried out was for 36 bathroom alterations, 18 stair lifts, 4 bathroom or bedroom extensions and other works including: two driveways, one through floor lift, one Closo-o-mat toilet, and a garage conversion and for one person a new kitchen.

"I thought the service I received was excellent and the men that came to do the job were very polite and well mannered."

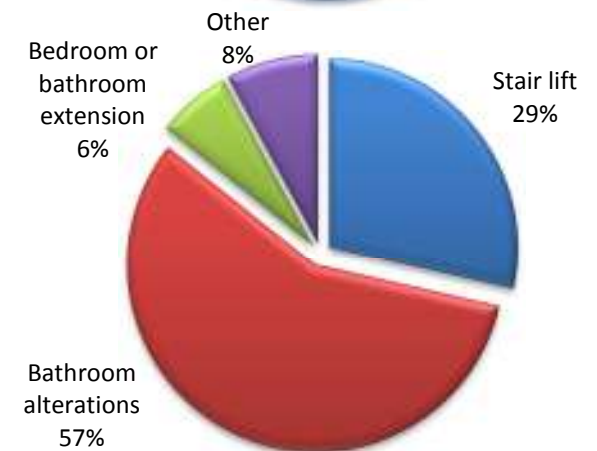
Response rate



Are you an owner-occupier, private tenant or social housing tenant?



What type of work did you have done?



Advice & Guidance

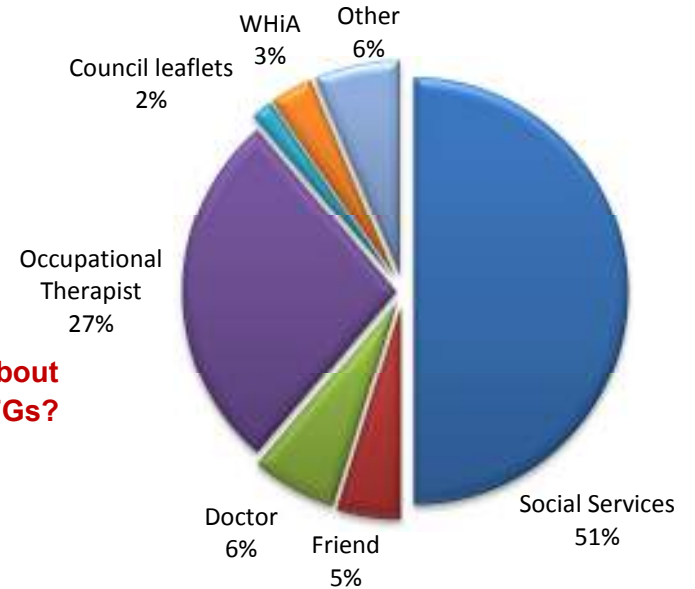
A number of people found out about DFGs via more than one source which is encouraging as it shows that people are being signposted by various organisations such as the M.S. Society and Age Concern.

The majority of people were directed via Social Services or their Occupational Therapist. However, friends, doctors, WHiA and the Council are still significant first contacts.

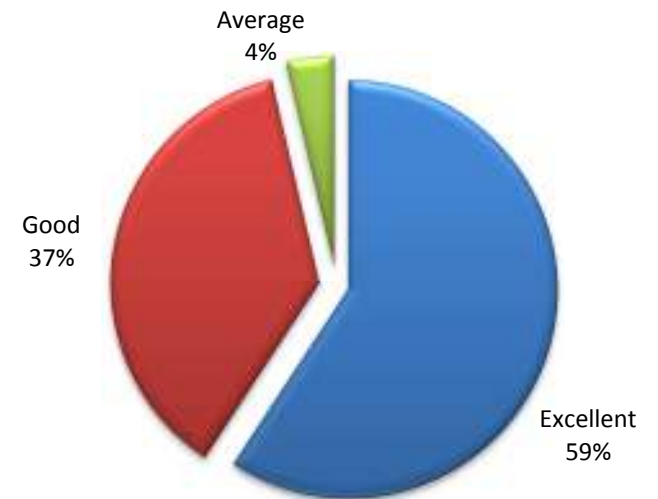
Out of the 50 respondents who answered the question, 42 people had their first contact with Social Services and 8 contacted Private Sector Housing.

For 59% of people the service they received was excellent with 37% rating the service as good. One person didn't the answer question and two owner occupiers rated the service as average. One of these people rated the service at first contact, builder and overall service stages as average and the completed works as poor; the second person rated the service at first contact as average and the completed works, the builder and the overall service as poor. Both had bathroom alterations.

How did you find out about DFGs?



When you first contacted us how good was the service you received?



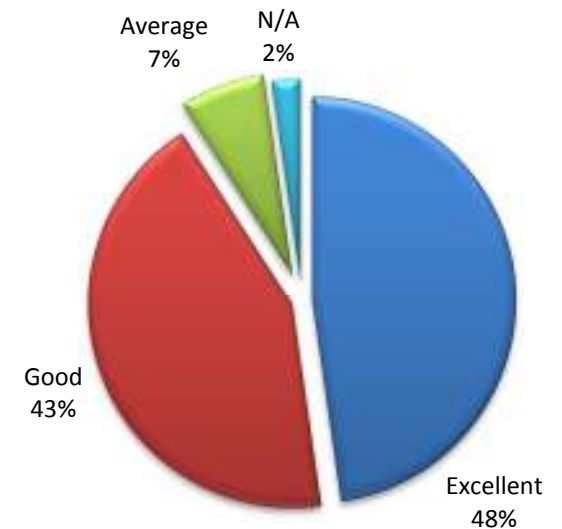
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Of the 43 people who read the Council's leaflet 40 said they were easy to read and 37 said they contained good information about the scheme. The two respondents, who stated that they did not contain good information, were the same owner occupiers that rated the service they first received as average. This was not the first DFG for one of these respondents and they rated the overall experience this time as about the same as previously.

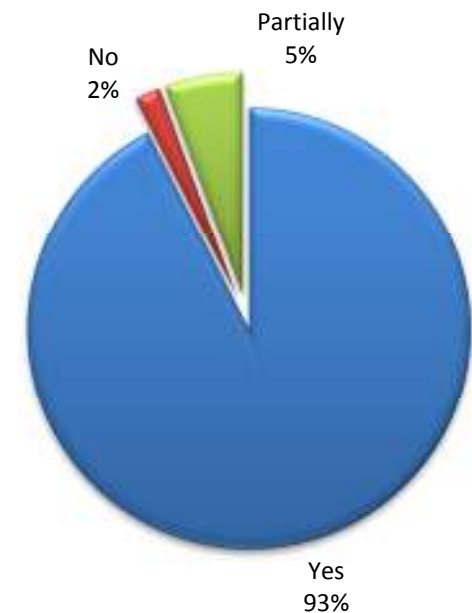
Twenty one people rated the assistance they received in completing the application forms as excellent, 19 as good, 3 as average and one said that the question was not applicable. No one gave a rating of poor.

96% of respondents said the grant application process was explained to them, 92% said their views were taken into account, only one person did not agree with the recommendations made by the OT. This person had a bedroom / bathroom adaptation. Three owner occupiers felt their views were partially taken into account, all had bathroom alterations carried out, and one also had a stair lift fitted.

How would you rate the assistance provided to you in completing the application forms?



Did you agree with the recommendations made by your OT in Social Care?



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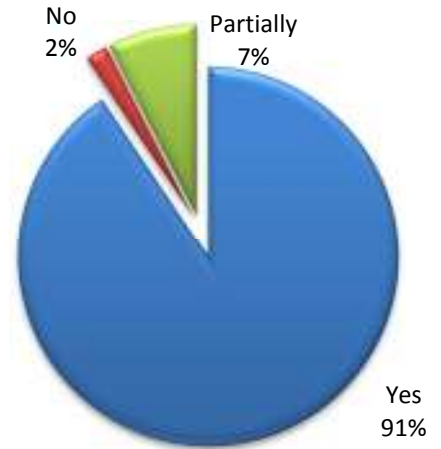
The majority of people were positive about the following:

- the way the grant process was explained
- their views being taken into account during the assessment
- recommendations made by the OT in Social Care
- the advice given to them
- information about the progress of the grant
- what the proposed works would involve
- who to contact in the Grants Team about the application

For the 10 people whose application was delayed each one stated that the information they received to explain the delay was easy to understand.

“The service was excellent, work excellent, left clean, the man who did the work was helpful and considerate.”

Were you satisfied with the advice you were given?



Was your grant approval delayed?



Did you know that DFGs were means tested?



Level of Service

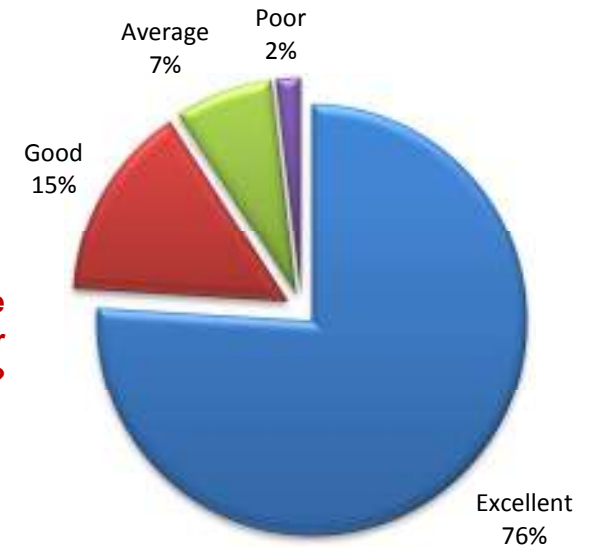
The majority of respondents had received a copy of the plans and everyone who answered the question said that the grant process was completed efficiently. For two people, the building work was not completed on time, both were owner occupiers.

Eighteen builders / contractors received a rating of excellent for the work they carried out. This is a high rating and reflects not only the high standard of the work but also of the consideration and respect given to the clients by the builders / contractors.

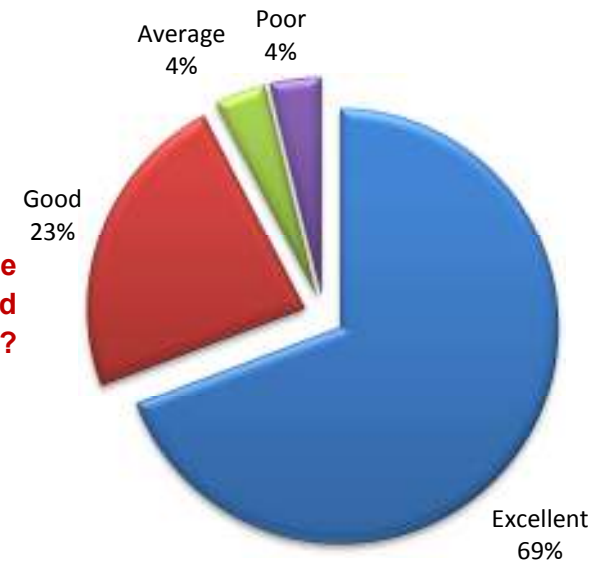
There was only one rating of poor, by the owner occupier who also rated the overall service, and the completed works as poor and first contact and assistance in completing the application forms as average.

“I have always found the service very helpful and supportive to help us handle our daughter’s disabled needs and make our lives easier. We couldn’t have done it without your help.”

How would you rate the builder or contractor who did the work?



How would you rate the quality of the completed work?



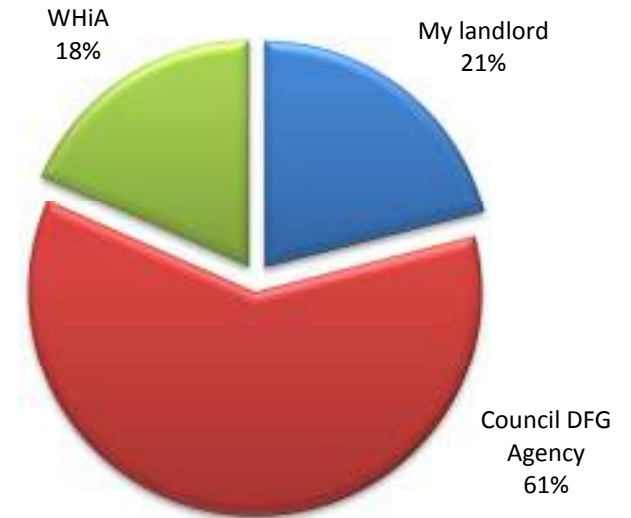
Agents

As in previous years the majority of respondents used the Council's DFG Agency to act on their behalf to design the project, supervise the work, direct the builder / contractor and resolve any issues that may arise. Thirty eight people answered this question and of these, 23 used the Council's DFG Agency, 8 used their landlord and 7 were assisted by WHiA (Warrington Home Information and Improvement Agency).

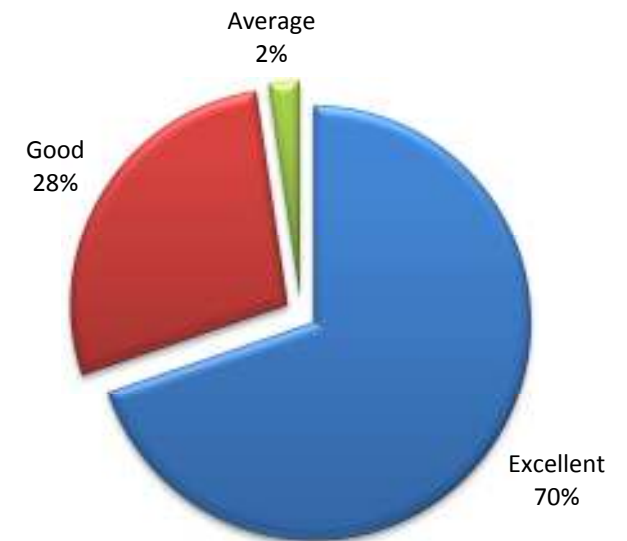
Out of the 42 people who answered the question, 41 were satisfied with the level of supervision of the agency service. Just one person, who was an owner occupier, was not satisfied and rated the contractor as average, the completed works as poor, the quality of the agency as average and the quality of the overall work also as average. Regrettably this respondent did not supply a name or address and so unfortunately we cannot contact them to discuss these issues.

For the 30 out of the 43 people who answered the question the quality of the agency service was excellent, 12 rated it as good and one as average. This was the same respondent as above.

Which agent acted on your behalf?



How would you rate the quality of the agency service?



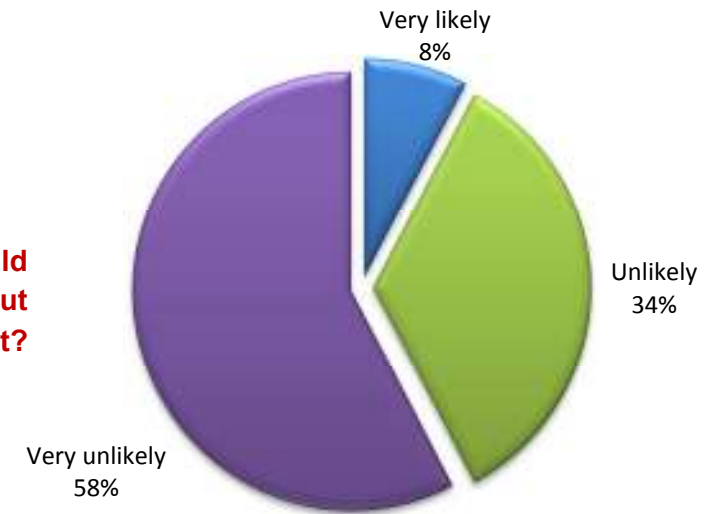
Service Satisfaction

Thirty people would very likely not have had the work carried out if it were not for the grant, 18 said that it was unlikely and 4 said it was very likely.

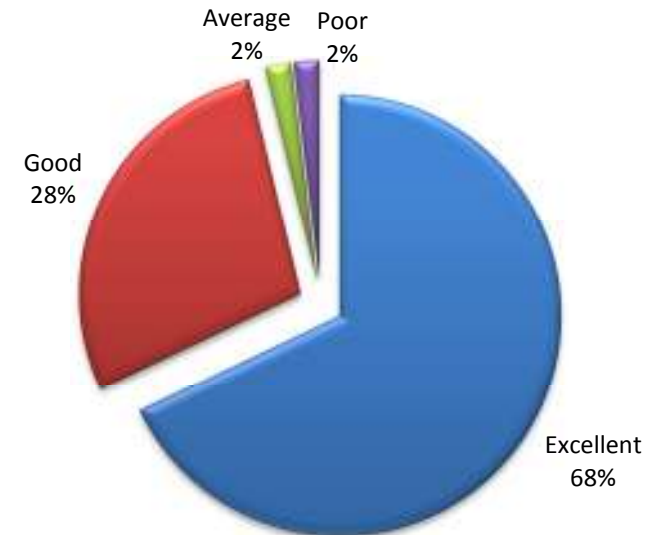
Fifty one people out of the 52 who answered the question said that the completed adaptations had met their needs. The one owner occupier who stated that the work had not met their needs rated the overall service provided as average; they were not satisfied with the level of supervision of the agency and rated the quality of the agency service and the contractor as poor. This was the same person who did not provide contact details.

The quality of the overall service was rated as excellent by 36 people with 15 rating it as good, one as average and one as poor. The person who rated it as poor also rated the contractor and the completed works as poor, this owner occupier had bathroom alterations and rated the builder and completed works as poor.

How likely is it that you would have the work carried out without the grant?



How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided?



The majority of respondents stated that the work had improved their health and wellbeing, they were now less likely to have a fall or accident and they were able to live more independently in their own homes. The many positive comments received show this to be the case.

Interestingly the single respondent who stated that the work had not improved their health and wellbeing had a stair lift fitted plus bathroom alterations and had also rated the contractor and completed works as good and the quality of the overall service as excellent. Perhaps there was some confusion over the question. Four people did not answer the question.

“The service I received was excellent from day one to last day I had no complaints everybody who was involved with the paper work to builders were very accommodating pleasant and met my every need excellent workers.”

Has the work improved your health & wellbeing & enabled you to live more independently in your own home?



Do you feel safer or less likely to have an accident at home, such as a fall, as a result of the work done?

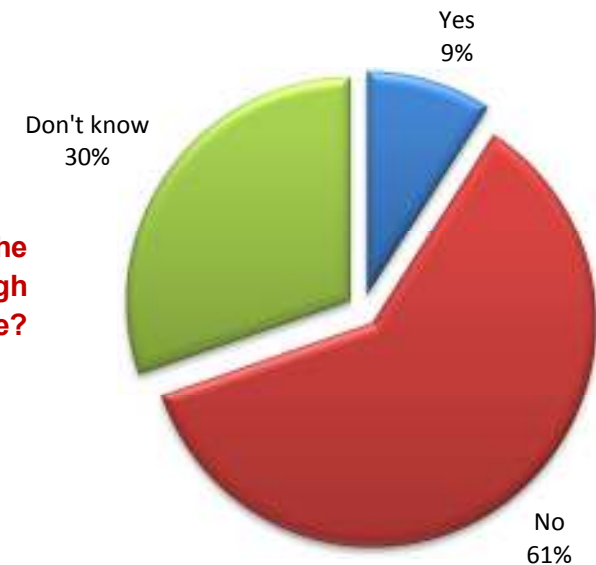


Eleven people said they had previously had a DFG and 5 people said the overall experience this time was better and 6 said it was about the same.

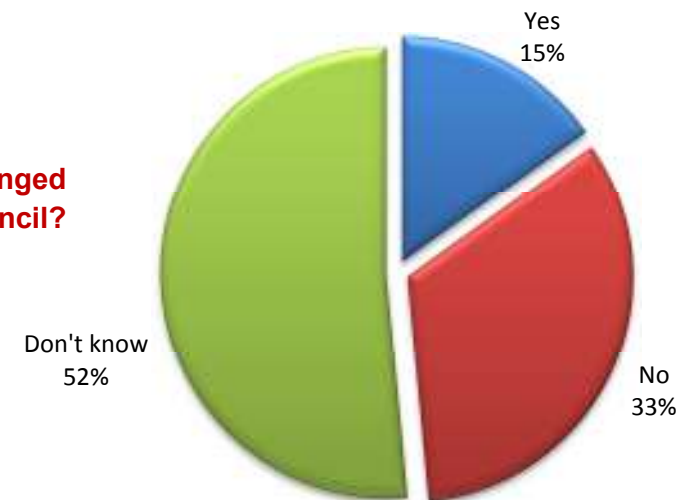
Just one person out of the 53 who answered the question said that the priority scoring system that is in place is not a fair way of allocating funds. This owner occupier had a stair lift fitted and commented; “*Consider fully the needs of the carers also when considering criteria on grant applications*”. This was not the first DFG for this person and they rated the overall experience as about the same as last time. They rated the quality of the work and the contractor as excellent and the quality of the overall service as good.

Owner occupiers were asked if they would have considered having the work carried out without a grant by either paying for it through equity release (20 people said this would not be an option, 3 people said it would and 10 didn't know), or by taking out a loan arranged through the Council on their behalf (5 said they would consider this, 17 said they did not know and 11 would not consider it).

Consider paying for the work yourself through equity release?



Pay by a loan arranged through the Council?



Year	Number sent out	Number of response	% Response rate
2003	101	50	50%
2004	143	74	52%
2005	120	57	48%
2006	114	57	50%
2007	140	77	55%
2008	142	79	56%
2009	172	88	49%
2010	133	61	46%
2011	143	37	26%
2012	130	41	32%
2013	125	48	38%
2014	132	55	42%

Results

Customer comments in response to the question: *'Tell us what you think of the service you received and if we could improve it'.*

1. We had first class service.
Overall service rating: **Excellent**
2. No, the service was the best, very good workmen all of them.
Overall service rating: **Excellent**

3. Everyone was really good. CPEC Ltd on occasions didn't come on the odd day or two and we were left wondering when they were coming, but they did a very good job and the workmen were down to earth and fantastic tradesmen. I would like to thank everyone concerned.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

A letter was forwarded to the respondent explaining that on occasion the builder or contractor may be called to an urgent job without much notice. The Improvement Surveyor for Private Sector Housing said that he will speak to the contractor and ask if they could contact clients if for any reason they are unable to attend on future projects.

4. Great. This was done when my husband was alive he died February 2013 so I don't really remember a lot about it I filled it in best I could. Thank you.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

5. I thought the service I received was excellent and the men that came to do the job were very polite and well mannered.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

6. I do not think the work would have been done had it not been for all the help of Paul Rigby he was very helpful and helped us greatly also the lads from R. Hough were excellent.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

7. I have always found the service very helpful and supportive to help us handle our daughter's disabled needs and make our lives easier. We couldn't have done it without your help.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

8. I think it was good and the time period was worth waiting for.

Overall service rating: **Good**

9. Basically the only pressing issue would be a downstairs toilet but don't believe this is viable!

Overall service rating: **Good**

10. Service was excellent.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

11. Once started builder was very good and made sure we had all services overnight. Re-installing water and W.C. each night. Good lad – good job!

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

12. The service I received was excellent from day one to last day I had no complaints everybody who was involved with the paper work to builders were very accommodating pleasant and met my every need excellent workers.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

13. On behalf of my father I would like to thank all the staff who helped when he was living at home for the care and facility they provided.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

14. Neil (architect) and Hazel (OT) were absolutely brilliant in their dealings with us. They consulted with my daughter (who has learning disabilities) without patronising her, and they made basic changes to the planned layout to accommodate her specific needs. Thank you so much for enabling our daughter to continue to live at home.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

15. I think the service was very good I had peace of mind knowing that the Council had chosen the contractor and if anything went wrong the Council would ensure the contractor would put things in order this very fact takes away doubt and stress.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

Note that the Council has a Registered List of Contractors who are checked by the Council (financial, insurance and quality of work references and checks) but does not choose the contractor on behalf of the client.

16. The service I received was excellent. All the officers I saw were excellent, could not have asked for better.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

17. Very good service you could not improve because the service was excellent.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

18. The service was excellent; work excellent, left clean, the man that did the work was helpful and clean.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

19. We are very satisfied with the service we received in regards to the adaptations to the bathroom.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

20. The service we received from everybody including the builders was excellent. Very impressed with the respect shown as well.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

21. Everything was done to a very good standard.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

22. Our OT Lucinda Warren has taken over the position of our previous, Debbie-Jo. It was Debbie who sorted everything for our driveway was completely approachable and made everything stress free and sorted as quickly as possible to help prevent any problems.

Overall service rating: **Good**

23. I was very pleased with the adaptations made to my property. The work carried out was done to an excellent standard.

Overall service rating: **Good**

24. It was well organised.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

25. I don't think you can improve it.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

26. Initial service was good but snagging could be improved.

Overall service rating: **Good**

27. Excellent.

Overall service rating: **Excellent**

28. Waiting time for either start or considering grant through various departments could be quicker. Criteria can fluctuate over several months may need re-appraisal.

Overall service rating: **Good**

Note that the criteria haven't changed during this period; the quickness of the response depends on the resources available and the numbers and complexity of enquiries at the time.

29. Am happy with the bathroom except for the quality and fitting of the door. Despite bringing it to your attention, this has never been rectified and it was fitted approximately 12 months ago.

Overall service rating: **Good**

A letter was sent to the respondent explaining that their comments had been forwarded to WHiA, who oversaw the grant work, asking them to respond to his concerns.

30. The people should be more involved and things should be explained to the old pensioners. I had an awful time with my bathroom but it is done now I would like to thank you for the grant you gave me.

Overall service rating: **Poor**

A letter was sent to the respondent explaining that their feedback had been forwarded to WHiA and that their comments will be taken into account and will assist us in improving our service.

Customer comments in response to the question “*What is a fair way of allocating funding*”.

1. By doing alterations to properties it helps people stay in our own houses so less cost to the Council for care in residential homes.
2. Excellent
3. Those in greatest need
4. Level of need
5. According to immediate need
6. Health needs
7. To make sure everybody gets their fair share
8. Consider fully the needs of carers also when considering criteria on grant application
9. System currently in practice
10. Leave it as it is
11. As it is
12. This is the only thing I have done so I cannot comment really but in my case excellent
13. To help those who can, to still be able to live at home

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1. What type of work did you have done?										
Stair lift	46%	57%	56%	60%	64%	64%	24%	25%	26%	29%
Bathroom alterations	36%	23%	24%	24%	28%	20%	44%	58%	50%	57%
Bedroom or bathroom extension	13%	13%	10%	8%	7%	5%	8%	4%	16%	6%
Other	5%	7%	10%	8%	1%	11%	24%	13%	9%	8%

2. Are you an owner occupier, private tenant or social housing tenant?										
Owner occupier	78%	63%	65%	66%	72%	69%	64%	77%	70%	65%
Private tenant	5%	10%	7%	4%	4%	2%	13%	8%	10%	-
Social housing tenant	17%	27%	28%	30%	24%	29%	23%	15%	20%	35%

3. How did you find out about Disabled Facilities Grants?										
Social Services	51%	44%	44%	57%	54%	59%	45%	47%	49%	51%
OT	27%	33%	33%	23%	33%	22%	31%	21%	15%	27%
Friend	5%	11%	11%	6%	7%	5%	8%	8%	10%	5%
Doctor	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%	11%	10%	6%
Council leaflets	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
WHiA	4%	2%	2%	4%	1%	5%	3%	11%	8%	3%
Phone enquiry	1%									
Other	8%	6%	6%	7%	2%	3%	5%	0%	6%	6%

<i>4A. Which department did you contact first?</i>										
Private Sector Housing	10%	6%	6%	3%	3%	7%	3%	2%	11%	18%
Social Services	90%	94%	94%	97%	97%	93%	97%	98%	89%	82%

<i>4B. When you first contacted us how good was the service you received?</i>										
Excellent	44%	33%	33%	60%	69%	55%	52%	56%	69%	59%
Good	38%	23%	23%	35%	28%	43%	48%	39%	27%	37%
Average	4%	10%	10%	5%	3%	2%	-	5%	4%	4%
Poor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Does not apply	14%	33%	33%							

<i>5A. Did you read the Council's leaflets?</i>										
Yes			83%	71%	87%	73%	95%	83%	81%	79%
No			17%	29%	13%	27%	5%	17%	19%	21%

<i>5B. Were they easy to read?</i>										
Yes	80%	63%	96%	94%	100%	89%	95%	100%	94%	100%
No	7%	7%	4%	6%	-	11%	5%	-	6%	-
Don't know	2%	16%								
Did not read	11%	14%								

<i>5C. Did they contain good information about the grant system?</i>										
Yes	81%	62%	98%	100%	100%	90%	95%	97%	94%	95%
No	4%	7%	7%	-	-	10%	5%	3%	6%	5%
Don't know	10%	21%								
Did not read	5%	10%								

<i>5D. How would you rate the assistance provided to you in completing the application forms?</i>										
Excellent	43%	60%	53%	63%	51%	49%	46%	48%	69%	48%
Good	55%	36%	33%	25%	45%	40%	54%	37%	28%	43%
Average	2%	4%	12%	7%	-	11%	-	9%	3%	7%
Poor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not applicable			2%	5%	4%	-	-	6%		2%

<i>6A. Was the grant application process explained to you?</i>										
Yes	95%	90%	99%	96%	100%	98%	97%	98%	96%	96%
No	2.50%	3%	1%	4%	-	2%	3%	2%	4%	4%
Don't know	2.50%	5%								
Does not apply	-	2%								

<i>6B. During the assessment for the adaptations, were your views taken into account?</i>										
Yes	95%	92%	95%	89%	100%	95%	92%	95%	98%	92%
No	5.0%	-	-	2%	-	-	-	-	-	8%

<i>6C. Did you agree with the recommendations made by your OT in Social Care?</i>										
Yes	89%	92%	95%	89%	97%	97%	97%	90%	96%	93%
No	-	-	-	2%	-	-	-	-	2%	2%
Don't know	-	5%	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Partially	11%	5%	5%	9%	3%	3%	3%	10%	2%	5%

<i>6D. Were you satisfied with the advice you were given?</i>										
Yes	89%	92%	95%	89%	100%	95%	92%	95%	98%	91%
No	-	-	-	2%	-	-	-	-	-	2%
Partially	11%	5%	5%	9%	-	5%	8%	5%	2%	7%

<i>6E. Did you know that DFGs are means tested?</i>										
Yes	74%	59%	78%	77%	87%	72%	63	71%	73%	80%
No	21%	31%	22%	23%	13%	28%	37	29%	27%	20%

<i>6F. Were you adequately informed of the progress of your application?</i>										
Yes	74%	59%	78%	77%	87%	72%	94%	92%	100%	94%
No	21%	31%	22%	23%	13%	28%	6%	8%	-	6%

<i>6G. Did you know who to contact in the Council's Grants team about your application?</i>										
Yes	86%	67%	80%	82%	88%	75%	76%	87%	89%	86%
No	14%	23%	20%	18%	12%	25%	24%	13%	11%	14%

<i>6H. Did you understand what the proposed works would involve?</i>										
Yes	100%	97%	93%	97%	99%	98%	94%	98%	100%	100%
No	-	-	7%	3%	1%	2%	6%	2%	-	-

<i>6I. Sometimes we are unable to process grant applications as quickly as we would wish due to funding issues, was your grant approval delayed as a result of this?</i>										
Yes						39%	40%	52%	21%	22%
No						28%	23%	23%	60%	46%
Don't Know						33%	37%	25%	19%	32%

<i>6J. Was the information that we provided to explain the delays easy to understand?</i>										
Yes							64%	67%	79%	82%
No							13%	-	-	3%
Don't know							23%	33%	21%	15%

<i>7A. Did you have a copy of the plans?</i>										
Yes	56%	60%	71%	64%	76%	69%	70%	62%	68%	50%
No	19%	25%	19%	23%	15%	21%	21%	20%	17%	28%
N/A	20%	10%	10%	13%	9%	10%	9%	18%	15%	22%

<i>7B. Was the grant process completed efficiently?</i>										
Yes	91%	87%	92%	99%	100%	94%	91%	97%	100%	100%
No	-	2%	8%	1%	-	6%	9%	3%	-	-
Don't know	9%	12%								

<i>7C. Was the building or installation work completed on time?</i>										
Yes		79%	76%	84%	89%	84%	83%	92%	96%	92%
No		13%	24%	16%	11%	16%	17%	8%	4%	8%
Don't know		8%								

<i>7D. How would you rate the builder or contractor who did the work?</i>										
Excellent	53%	62%	59%	57%	61%	59%	47%	67%	72%	76%
Good	37%	22%	22%	34%	31%	26%	28%	31%	19%	15%
Average	8%	12%	16%	8%	7%	10%	17%	2%	9%	7%
Poor	2%	5%	3%	1%	1%	5%	8%	-	-	2%

<i>7E. How would you rate the quality of the completed works?</i>										
Excellent	58%	62%	62%	62%	65%	53%	50%	59%	69%	69%
Good	34%	22%	24%	28%	30%	32%	33%	33%	27%	23%
Average	6%	12%	13%	7%	5%	11%	11%	8%	4%	4%
Poor	2%	5%	1%	3%	-	4%	6%	-	-	4%

<i>8A. Did you obtain the plans and arrange the contractors yourself or with an agent?</i>										
With an agent			98%	95%	98%	98%	94%	97%	95%	90%
Did it myself			2%	5%	2%	2%	6%	3%	5%	10%

8B. Which agent acted on your behalf?										
My landlord			27%	20%	16%	13%	6%	-	8%	21%
Council DFG Agency	43%	47%	54%	54%	73%	64%	69%	72%	68%	61%
WHiA	11%	2%	12%	13%	9%	23%	25%	28%	24%	18%
Other	11%	17%	7%	11%	11%	2%	-	-	-	-
None	35%	34%								

8C. Were you satisfied by the level of supervision provided by the agency when the works were in progress?										
Yes	72%	71%	91%	93%	98%	84%	85%	97%	95%	98%
No	2%	3%	9%	7%	2%	16%	15%	3%	5%	2%
Don't know	14%									
N/A	11%									

8D. How would you rate the quality of the agency service?										
Excellent		46%	54%	53%	64%	36%	44%	65%	67%	70%
Good		41%	31%	38%	3-	45%	41%	32%	22%	28%
Average		10%	12%	9%	3%	14%	4%	3%	11%	2%
Poor		3%	3%	-	3%	5%	11%	-	-	-

9A. How likely is that you would have had the work done without a grant?

Very likely			-	3%	5%	3%	12%	5%	-	8%
Likely			-	6%	9%	7%	12%	2%	7%	-
Unlikely			56%	29%	42%	36%	35%	48%	41%	34%
Very unlikely			44%	62%	44%	54%	41%	45%	52%	58%

9B. Did the completed adaptations meet your needs?

Yes	95%	98%	100%	99%	99%	98%	97%	97%	100%	98%
No	5%	1.5%	-	1%	1%	2%	3%	3%	-	2%
Don't know	-	1.5%								

9C. How would you rate the quality of the overall service provided?

Excellent	56%	63%	63%	62%	70%	47%	61%	62%	72%	68%
Good	42%	30%	30%	33%	27%	46%	25%	38%	19%	28%
Average	2%	3%	3%	5%	3%	5%	11%	-	9%	2%
Poor	-	3%	3%	-	-	2%	3%	-	-	2%

10A. Has the work improved your health and wellbeing?

Yes			96%	97%	94%	95%	86%	100%	94%	98%
No			4%	3%	6%	5%	14%	-	6%	2%

10B. Do you feel safer or less likely to have an accident at home, such as a fall, as a result of the work done?										
Yes			96%	97%	96%	97%	94%	95%	98%	94%
No			4%	3%	4%	3%	6%	5%	2%	6%

10C. Has the work enabled you to keep living independently in your home, when you could otherwise not have done so?										
Yes			97%	97%	99%	97%	85%	97%	96%	98%
No			3%	3%	1%	3%	15%	3%	4%	2%

11A. Have you had more than one DFG (whether at this property or another?)										
Yes							9%	10%	14%	21%
No							91%	90%	86%	79%

11B. If yes, how would you rate your overall experience this time?										
Better							-	25%	80%	45%
Worse							-	-	-	-
About the same							100%	75%	20%	55%

12. The Council introduced a priority scoring system in November 2009 to enable limited resources to be targeted towards those people in greatest need; do you think that this is a fair way of allocating funds?										
Yes							90%	91%	100%	98%
No							10%	9%	-	2%

13. What do you think is a fair way of allocating funding?
 Respondents were asked for their views on the fairest way to allocate funding, the responses can be found on pages 16

14. For owner occupiers only.
 To enable the work to be carried out more quickly would you:

A. Consider paying for it yourself through equity release? (to be paid back when the house is sold)

Yes						11%	19%	12%	25%	9%
No						59%	38%	55%	25%	61%
Don't know						30%	43%	33%	50%	30%

B. Pay by a loan arranged by the Council?

Yes						11%	19%	12%	25%	15%
No						59%	38%	55%	25%	33%
Don't know						30%	43%	33%	50%	52%

Recent Improvements that we have made to the service:

1. The Council has set up a pilot project supported by Adult Social Care and Private Sector Housing to fast track the installation of ceiling track hoists and ramps for appropriate clients, using some capital funding set aside from the capital programme for DFGs. The programme will be carried forward into the next financial year (2015/16) and will be evaluated when the project has spent the allocation of £50k. If successful, a bid will be made to the Better Care Fund for continuing financial support.
2. The Council is in the process of improving its website and the Housing Services website, which includes information on adaptations went live in June 2014 (<http://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200633/housing>)
3. There have been significant improvements in the way that data is stored using the Civica (Flare) property database, although some paper documentation continues to be retained.

Planned improvements to the service from March 2015 include:

1. Files to be annotated on the front cover of the file / within the file notes in a more prominent position to indicate a client contribution to the cost of the work, to reduce potential payment errors by the Council.
2. At the pre-start site meeting, clients will be informed of the name of the officer (and their contact details) who is to be the main point of contact once the work starts. Grant recipients will also be requested to provide a main contact point for the contractor / Council officer.
3. Mini survey to be undertaken by Private Sector Housing to obtain further information on wash down toilets which have been installed in the last 4 years, since the Council's DFG Agency was formed. This will inform future grant specifications.

Background information:

Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory and, if an adaptation for a service user is recommended and the client satisfies the grant requirements, then the Council is obliged to process a grant application.

Clients are subject to means testing and the maximum grant available is £30,000. When a grant has been approved, the client has 12 months in which to complete the works and the grant funding already approved will remain available for them.

In February 2011 the Council changed the way it provided support for owner-occupiers and private tenants pursuing an enquiry for Disabled Facilities Grant assistance. A small team – the DFG Agency Team - was created within Private Sector Housing, comprising a Senior Occupational Therapist, an Architectural Support Officer and an Adaptations Liaison Officer. These officers support the client in a number of ways - drawing plans, obtaining tenders for the work, assisting the client to obtain any necessary tests (e.g. asbestos test) and monitoring the works in progress. The team was brought together from 2 other units within the Council and this has enabled processes to be streamlined and allows for more effective and timely support for clients during the grant process than under the previous arrangements.

Social housing landlords are encouraged to use the services of WHiA (Warrington Home Information and Improvement Agency) to assist their tenants with adaptations, although several also have dedicated teams within their own organisations that can assist with this too. Social housing landlords are requested to pay 50% towards the cost of any adaptation, apart from GGHT which fully funds all adaptations to its properties.

Facts and figures for 2013 / 14

Government grant for Warrington BC: £674,717

Additional capital funding from WBC: £325,000 (plus £40,975 repaid to the Council on sale of 7 properties receiving grant assistance)

Total funding available: £1,040,692

Category	Owner-occupiers	Social Housing tenants	Private tenants	Total
Grants approved	£965,453 (103 no)	£141,042 (54 no)	£18,283 (4 no)	£1,124,778 (161 no)
Grants paid	£883,863 (91 no completed)	£120,466 (47 no completed)	£13,073 (3 no completed)	£1,017,402 (141 no completed)