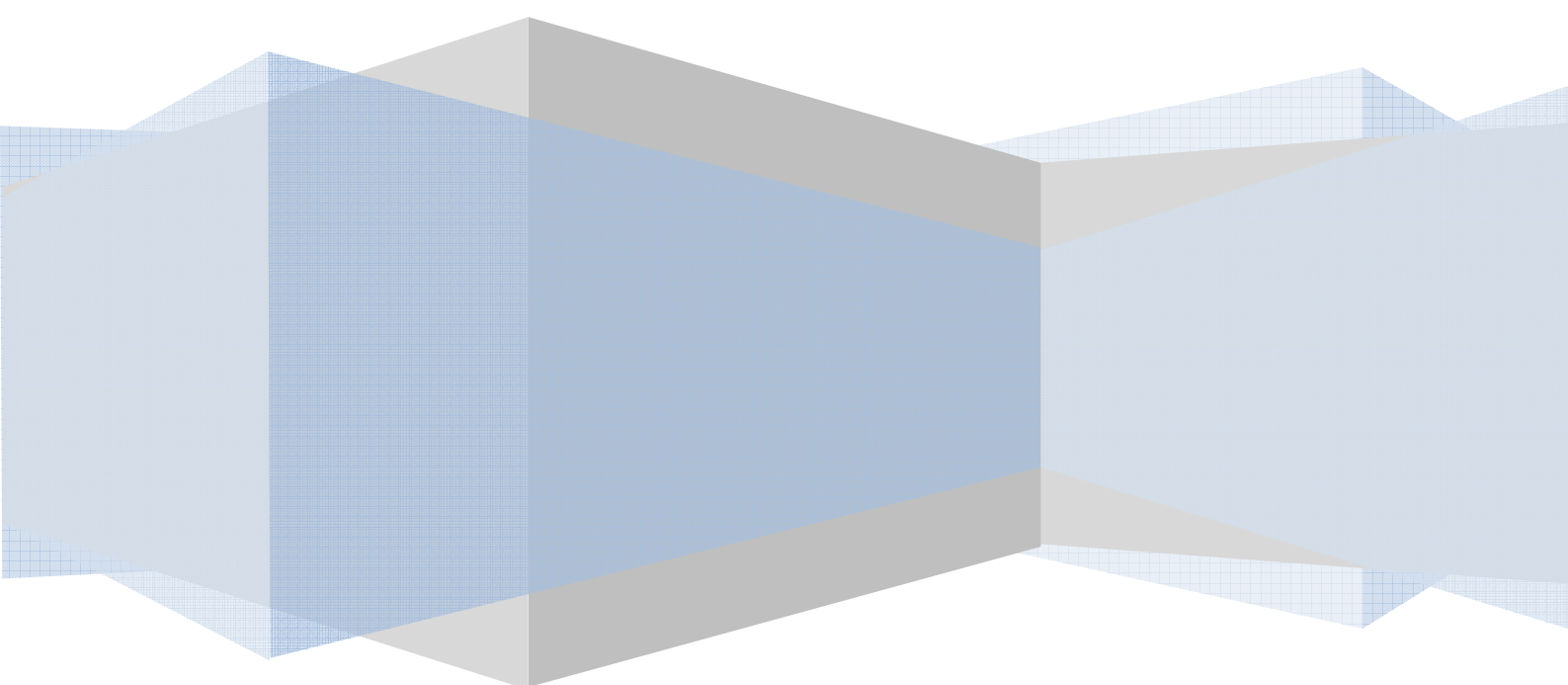


Disabled Facilities Grant: Feedback

January 2013



Contents

Background / Context	3
Responding Cohort	4
Overall Satisfaction	5
Time taken to complete Adaptation.....	6
Delays at Application Stage.....	7
Overall Perceptions of the Adaptation Process	9
Feeling Informed.....	9
Feeling Involved	10
Feeling Supported.....	10
Districts and Boroughs	11
Feedback regarding Adult Social Care	12
Summary of Points of Interest / Recommendations	12
Conclusions and Ways Forward	13

Background / Context

Disabled Facilities Grants help people to remain living independently, by enabling them to adapt their home so that it meets their needs. Typically this grant is used for something like a bathroom modification or a stairlift.

The process of obtaining the grant and then planning and installing the adaptation is complex and involves a number of agencies. In order to gather feedback about this process, a survey was sent to people who have recently had an adaptation to their home that was funded or supported by Adult Social Care and / or by a Disabled Facilities Grant from the districts and boroughs.

This form was initially sent to 146 people in June 2012, however not all districts and boroughs within Surrey were represented within this cohort. It was therefore decided to extend the survey to include districts and boroughs not originally covered. A further 168 surveys were subsequently sent out, meaning that the final dataset covers all areas of Surrey.

Results from both stages of the survey have been combined before presenting here, in order to give the fullest picture possible. One additional question was added to the second group of surveys; results for this question have been analysed separately.

Responding Cohort

Of the 314 surveys sent out, 118 people responded. This is an equivalent response rate of 38%.

Basic information about respondents is given below:

	% of Respondents
18-34	3%
35-64	24%
65-74	22%
75-84	34%
85+	17%

	% of Respondents
Female	57%
Male	43%

Just under three-quarters of respondents were aged 65 or over; Slightly more than half of all respondents were female.

The majority of respondents to the survey described their ethnicity as White (8% were non-White).

The Disabled Facilities Grant may be used for a number of different types of home adaptation. Respondents to the survey had received grants for the following types of adaptation:

Type of Adaptation	% of Respondents
Bathroom modification	60%
Stairlift	26%
Ramp	7%
Kitchen adaptation	3%
Extension	3%
Other	2%
Total	100%

Overall Satisfaction

91% of respondents said they were quite, or very satisfied that the adaptation has helped them to remain living independently.

Breakdown of respondents' satisfaction with the overall adaptation process was slightly less positive.

86% of respondents said they were quite, or very satisfied with the overall adaptation process.

Of the remaining 14% of respondents:

- 10 people were 'Neutral'
- 5 people were 'slightly dissatisfied'

No one said they were 'Not at all satisfied' with the process.

Of the 5 people that expressed some dissatisfaction:

- 4 people had a bathroom modification adaptation
- 1 person had a stairlift installed
- 3 people said their adaptation took under 6 months; 1 person took 6-12 months; 1 person took 12-18 months

3 out of 5 of these people gave negative responses in answer to questions around feeling involved and supported. One person did not answer these questions and another gave very positive responses (though this might be an error).

Free text comments from these people indicated possible reasons for their dissatisfaction:

'There was a delay during the application stage'

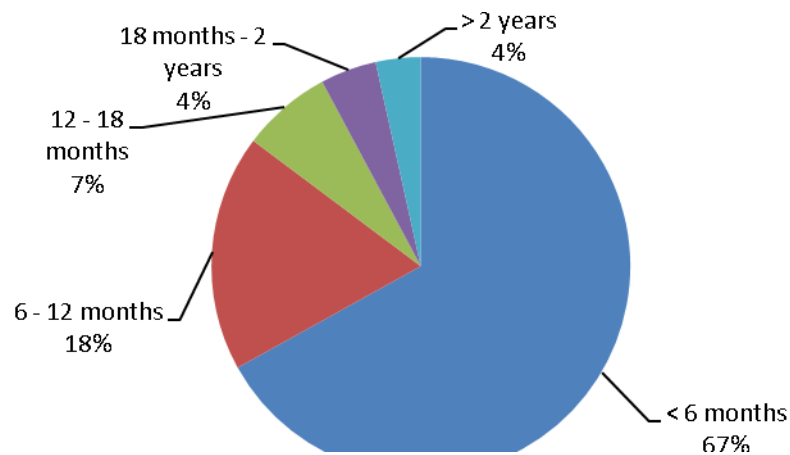
'One contact person could have helped instead of the many departments and the visits'

'When a contract is to do an improvement and the council pays for it, the council should get a satisfactory completion certificate from the occupant before paying the contractors. It is a pity this has not been done'

Time taken to complete Adaptation

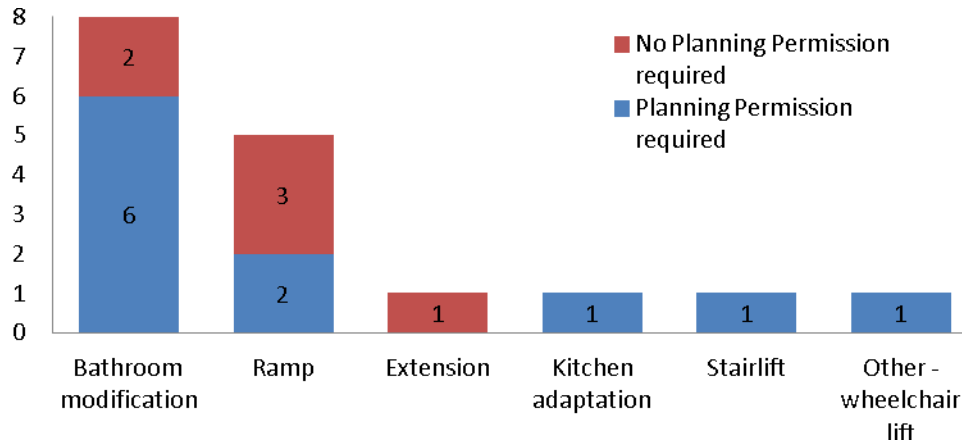
The time taken to complete a major adaptation will vary significantly, since it depends not just on the speed of the process but on external factors such as whether planning permission is required, and what type of adaptation is being made.

Overall, two-thirds of respondents said that their adaptation took less than 6 months to complete. A full breakdown of responses is shown here:



Estimates from Districts and Boroughs themselves around how long an adaptation should take indicate that even a complex adaptation (such as a bathroom modification) should take a maximum of 10 months.

It is therefore those responses indicating timeframes greater than 12 months that are of most concern. 15% of all respondents reported that their adaptation took longer than a year to complete - this is equivalent to 17 individuals. Types of adaptations for these individuals may be broken down as follows:



Bathroom modifications and ramps appear to most frequently take longer than a year to complete. It is evident that these sometimes require planning permission, and bathroom modifications in particular may be complex; all of these factors may lengthen the time taken to complete.

It should be noted that the majority of respondents expressing some degree of dissatisfaction related to bathroom modifications (however these are also the most frequent type of adaptation within the survey cohort).

Delays at Application Stage

A further question was added to the second batch of surveys (sent to 168 individuals, of whom 77 responded), around whether any delay was experienced, and if so, at what stage of the process.

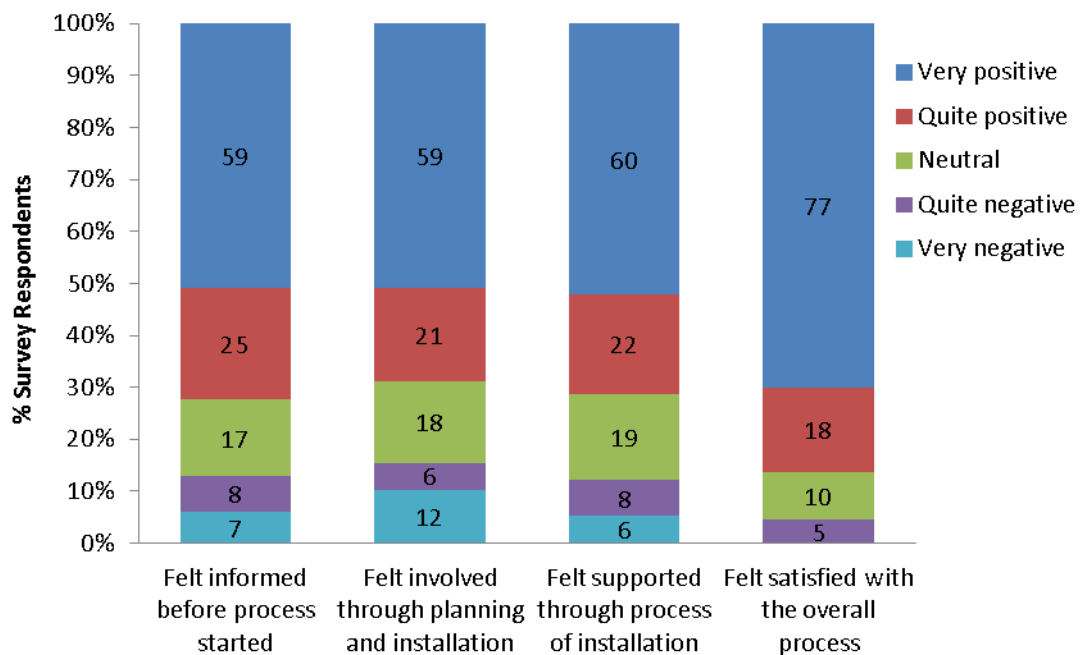
37% of respondents (26 out of 71) indicated that they had experienced a delay in the process. Of these people, the majority (84%, or 22 out of 26) said that this delay was in the application stage of the process. The remaining 4 people attributed the delay to the installation.

This data suggests that there is an issue around the application process; however as this is a complex process involving communication between several parties it is difficult to draw conclusions as to what the issues might be.

Some further insight is available from free text comments provided by people around this question. Whilst the number of comments is not statistically significant, there are some themes including issues such as: budget constraints, waiting lists where other people had higher needs and time needed to working out the type of adaptation needed. One person said their application was mislaid and required intervention from local Councillor in order to proceed.

Overall Perceptions of the Adaptation Process

The graph below shows responses to survey questions indicating how the process was perceived by people receiving an adaptation. Survey recipients were asked how informed they felt before the process started, how involved they felt through planning and installation, and how supported they felt through the installation process.



Roughly half of all survey respondents reported feeling ‘very’ informed, involved, or supported.

Interesting to note that people responded more positively to the question about overall satisfaction than specific questions about aspects such as feeling informed / involved / supported.

Feeling Informed

Survey respondents found out about their entitlement to an adaptation from a variety of sources:

Found out from...	% of survey respondents
Occupational Therapist	41%
District / Borough Council	22%

Social Care Practitioner	20%
Hospital Professional	8%
Other	6%
Contact Centre	3%

Half of all respondents said they felt 'very' informed before the process started. 13% of respondents said they felt slightly un-informed, or not at all informed.

Most people (92% of respondents) whose application required planning permission said that they received appropriate advice on this.

Feeling Involved

Again, roughly half of all respondents said they felt 'very' involved through the process of planning and installing the adaptation. 16% said they felt slightly uninvolved, or not at all involved.

Feeling Supported

Again, roughly half of all respondents said they felt 'very' supported through the installation process.

Respondents were also asked who they were supported by and could select their response from a list. 35% of all respondents indicated they had support from two or more of the sources listed (which included the option 'Other').

The following 5 responses were most frequently given in answer to this question:

Supported by...	% of survey respondents
District & Borough Grants Department	53%
Social Care Occupational Therapist / Practitioner	37%
Family / Carer	14%
Housing Improvement Agency	13%
Housing Association	12%

11 people said they felt 'slightly unsupported' or 'Not at all supported'.

Of the 6 people who said they felt 'not at all supported', 2 people said no one gave them any support, and 4 people said they received support from one source. This was either the District & Borough Grants Department, Social Care OT / Practitioner or Family / Carer.

Districts and Boroughs

The second round of surveys has ensured reasonable coverage across all Districts and Boroughs in Surrey. Numbers of respondents were as follows:

District / Borough	No. of Survey Respondents	% of respondents 'very' or 'quite' satisfied overall
Guildford	14	93%
Surrey Heath	16	88%
Waverley	6	83%
Elmbridge	12	100%
Epsom & Ewell	16	88%
Mole Valley	7	71%
Woking	12	92%
Spelthorne	8	63%
Runnymede	10	100%
Tandridge	10	90%
Reigate & Banstead	6	67%
Total:	117*	87%

* 1 respondent with missing District / Borough

Both Elmbridge and Runnymede showed high levels of satisfaction, with all survey respondents in these areas saying they were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with the adaptation process.

Feedback regarding Adult Social Care

Survey respondents were specifically asked to reflect on areas in which Adult Social Care did well, and a way in which Adult Social Care could improve.

What one thing did ASC do well?

Staff

- 'The workers carrying out the installation were very thoughtful'
- 'My OT [Occupational Therapist] was absolutely marvellous and she treated me with great respect'
- 'Runnymede Borough Council have a great team of carers'
- 'Very supportive throughout the whole process'
- 'Very nice people doing their job in a sensitive and understanding way'

Communication

- '...kept us fully informed at every step of the way'
- 'Follow up was first class, 2 or 3 telephone calls in the immediate 2 weeks after'
- 'Did receive support in my native language which helped me fully understand the process'
- 'They kept me and my husband informed and supported me'

Quality of Work

- 'All the work was done to a really high standard'
- 'All done very well'
- 'The builders were very tidy and friendly'

Can you think of a way in which ASC could improve?

Communication

- 'More consultation about my needs'
- 'More discussion with me during the planning process'
- 'Keeping in touch by telephone'
- 'Telling you where you are on the [waiting] list'
- 'Making it easier to find out about in the first place'

Quality of Work

- 'Making sure the job is finished to a high standard'
- 'Shower gets stuck most of the time'
- 'Would have liked a tidy, clean contractor'
- 'Council should get a satisfactory completion certificate from the occupant before paying the Contractors'

Waiting time

- 'For various reasons it took a long long while to get the stair lift. Not being able to go to bed for nearly two years did affect my health and standard of life'
- '[They could improve..] the time it takes. My Mum waited 18 months.'

Conclusions and Ways Forward

Overall, respondents were positive about their experience of the DFG process and the outcomes it helped them to achieve. 86% of respondents said they were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with the overall process.

There appear to be some issues with the application process which are, in some instances, affecting the length of time it takes for the adaptation to be completed. An officer-led group with representatives from SCC and Districts and Boroughs has been established in the last year to look at this very complex process and find ways of streamlining it. A workshop was held in January with the District and Boroughs and work streams agreed to address these issues.

Other suggestions for consideration going forwards:

- Look at ways of reviewing or gathering feedback on DFG cases taking longer than a year. This could be used to learn from cases where there have been delays in order to develop continuous improvement of this process.
- Establish protocol for keeping customer informed where there are delays.
- Look at ways to raise awareness of DFG funding (one suggestion was leaflets in GP's surgeries).
- Consider ways to signpost people to sources of support throughout the process

Further information and details on this survey are available from:

Liz Uliasz – Senior Manager, South West Surrey

Phone: 01483 518072 Email: liz.uliasz@surreycc.gov.uk

Sarah Wright – Information Analyst, ASC Business Intelligence Team

Phone: 01483 517498 Email: s.wright@surreycc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank