



Rykneld Homes

Mystery Shopping Exercise

Report

September 2008

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The Derbyshire Tenants Network Mystery Shopping Group

The Aims of the Derbyshire Tenants Network (DTN) are to:

- Raise the standard of resident involvement across the region
- Bring together tenants, residents, leaseholders, officers, councillors and board members working on resident involvement issues in the area.

Our History:

The Derbyshire Tenants Network was formed in 2004 as a networking group for Social Housing Tenants and Residents across Derbyshire.

In the early days of the DTN bi-monthly informal meetings were attended by up to 30 tenants who discussed various topics and subjects relating to social housing. Following these early meetings, themed get-togethers were arranged where good and best practice could be shared and Derbyshire – wide ‘good practice guidance’ was created.

These good practice documents, which have been adopted by a number of landlords across Derbyshire, include the DTN Residents Expenses Policy and the DTN Lettable Standards Report.

In 2005 the DTN took a decision to form a Derbyshire Wide Mystery Shopping Group. Eight Social Housing Landlords are members of the group, being Amber Valley Housing, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Derwent Living, South Derbyshire District Council, Rykneld Homes and Three Valleys Housing.

Tenants from each landlord have engaged in a Mystery Shopping training programme, based upon the Housing Corporation recommended ‘Acis Group Mystery Shopping Toolkit’, Presentation Skills and Report Writing. Following the successful completion of this training, the tenants have been placed into three ‘Mystery Shopping Groups’, each of which will be conducting two Mystery Shopping Projects during the financial year.

Due to the success of the Mystery Shopping Project the decision was made to appoint a Coordinator to enable the group to continue in it’s success and expand. Funding was received from Government Office East Midlands and the post of Mystery Shop Co-ordinator began in October 2007.

The Group conducting the Mystery Shop for Rykneld Homes consists of:

Laraine Nicholls – Rykneld Homes
Adrienne Van Mierlo – Rykneld Homes
Pam Harwood – Rykneld Homes
Betty & Alwyn Bode – Derwent Living
Wendy Knowles – Rykneld Homes

Introduction to the Report

The purpose of this Mystery Shopping Project is to give a customer perspective on the services that Rykneld Homes offer. The Mystery Shop also provides the opportunity to measure performance against company policy and to ensure Rykneld Homes services are customer focused.

The Derbyshire Tenants Network Mystery Shopping Group (DTN) shop focussed on Diversity and Inclusion. The aim being to test how the staff dealt with queries in accordance with their service standards.

The scenarios were created in consultation with staff from Rykneld Homes and all members of the DTN Project Group assigned to complete this shop. Contact was made with the sections of Rykneld Homes by telephone calls, using telephone-recording equipment. A Mystery Shopping Scenario Template was then used to record the relevant information and once collated we used the findings to form the basis of the impressions of the service we received and the resulting report.

Particular consideration was given to:

- The call being answered in the first instance
- Whether the correct information was given out
- The 'Feel Good' factor of the telephone calls
- Whether Staff were helpful

These areas were seen not only as a good indicator of the level of basic customer service given by Rykneld Homes staff, but can also be used to check the consistency of information given by different staff members to a particular scenario.

Rykneld Homes staff were informed of the implementation of the mystery shopping exercise, but they were unaware of exactly when the shops were to be conducted and also who was to be shopped. Staff were also assured that they would not be personally identified in the report and that the shop was not being used to assess individual skills but to look at the overall service of the organisation.

The Mystery Shopping Process

The Mystery Shop was conducted using a total of 5 scenarios. A total of 21 calls were made into the offices of Rykneld Homes.

The topics covered within the scenarios were as follows:

- Minor Adaptations
- Major Adaptations
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Estate Walkabouts – Neighbourhood Champions
- Issues not under Rykneld jurisdiction

The mystery shopping project was carried out by making telephone calls into the Rykneld Homes Office. The calls were recorded and a survey relating to each individual scenario was then completed. The results from all the individual surveys have then been collated to inform the final report. Overall scores have been made relating to the common factors of each call, e.g. time taken to answer, feel good factors etc.

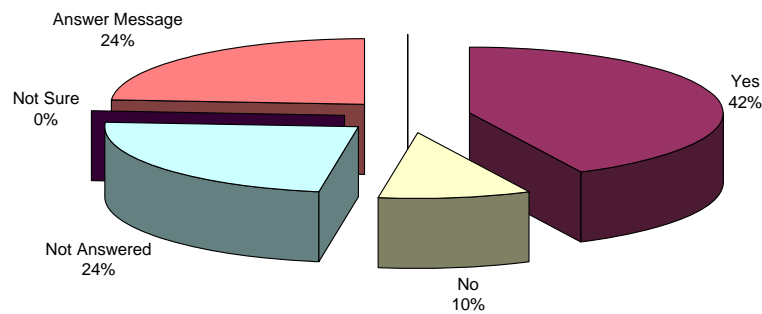
The mystery shop project was conducted during the month of with no pre-determined times for calls to be made, other than they would be carried out during the normal working hours of Rykneld Homes. The Shoppers were asked to vary the day and time of their calls to monitor Customer Service Standards across a full working week.

The Mystery Shopping Project Group were provided with all the information required relating to the scenarios including the relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance, area details, and appropriate details concerning the departments being shopped.

Once all the calls had been made and the surveys completed the results were entered into a spreadsheet and the findings were discussed and recommendations made at a 'post shop' meeting involving the members of the Mystery Shopping Group.

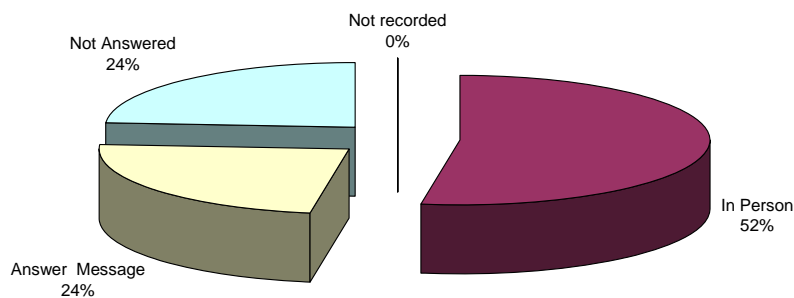
Summary of Report Findings

Overall Did you get through the first time



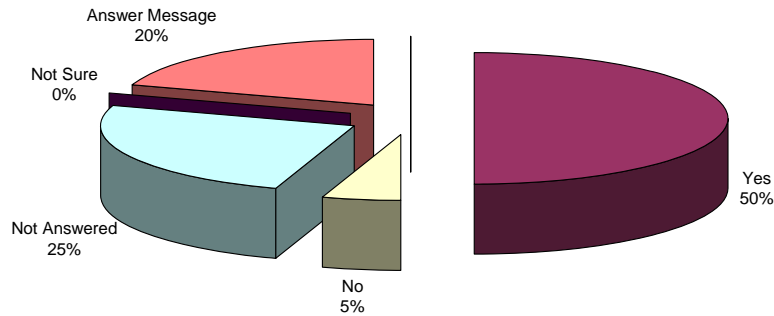
42% of callers got through first time, which is satisfactory only. However, 24% of calls were not answered which is equal to the number that got through to an answer machine and the remaining 10% had to make at least 1 more attempt to get through. The calls which were not answered were all to the Neighbourhood Champions. This will be mentioned in recommendations.

Overall how was the call answered



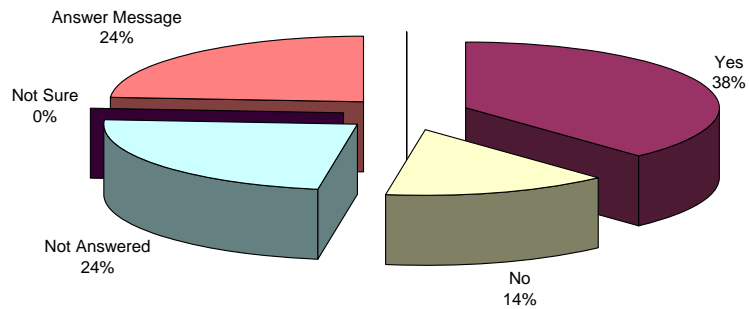
Of all the calls made 52% were answered by a member of staff, 24% got through to an answer machine and the remaining 24% were not answered.

Overall was the call answered within 30 seconds



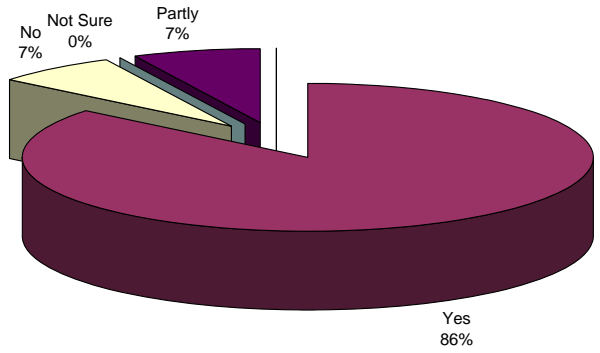
50% of calls were answered within the service standard of 30 seconds, with only 5% outside of this. Of the remaining calls 20% went through to answer machine and 25% were not answered at all.

Overall did staff use the correct phone procedure



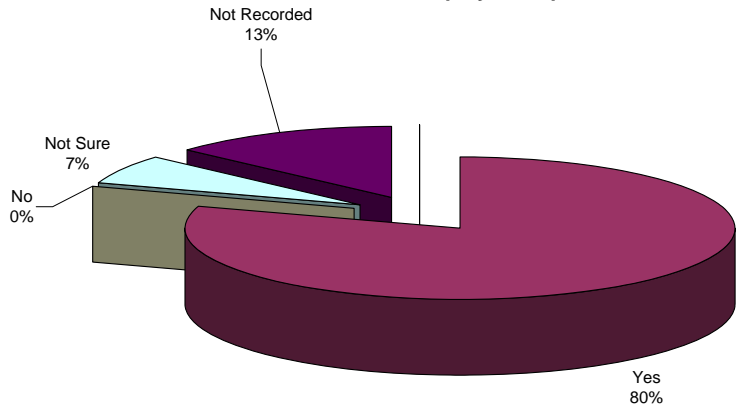
38% of the callers felt that the staff answered the phone using the correct procedure, with only 14% saying the incorrect procedure was used. Whilst this is good this could be improved on further so will be mentioned in recommendations. 24% of callers didn't get an answer and the same amount got through to an answer machine.

Overall were you given the correct information



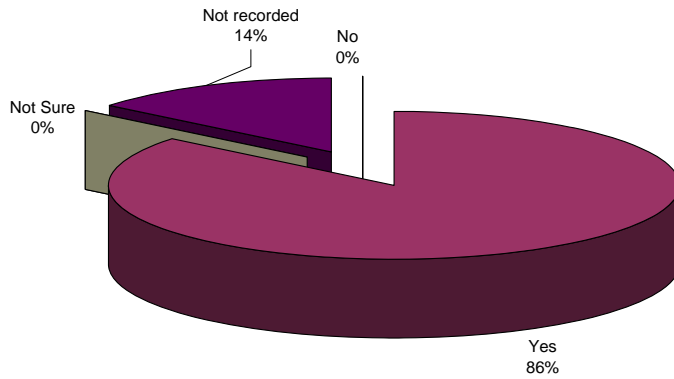
86% of callers felt that they were given the correct information relating to their enquiry, whilst a further 7% felt they received some of the correct information. This leaves only 7% not receiving the correct information. This is a good result.

Overall was the employee helpful



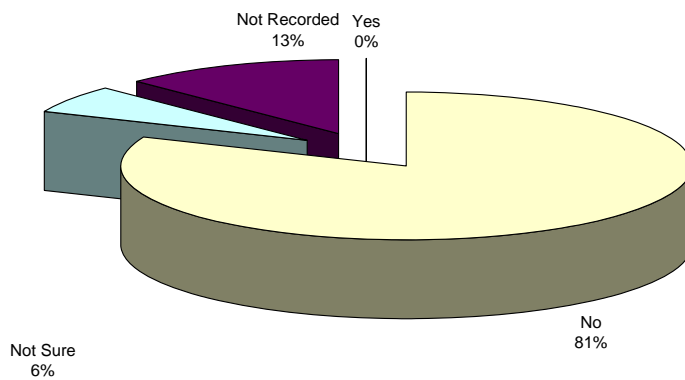
80% of staff were felt to be helpful, which is a good result. None of the callers said the staff weren't helpful and only 7% weren't sure. This once again is a good result

Overall did you feel the staff wanted to help



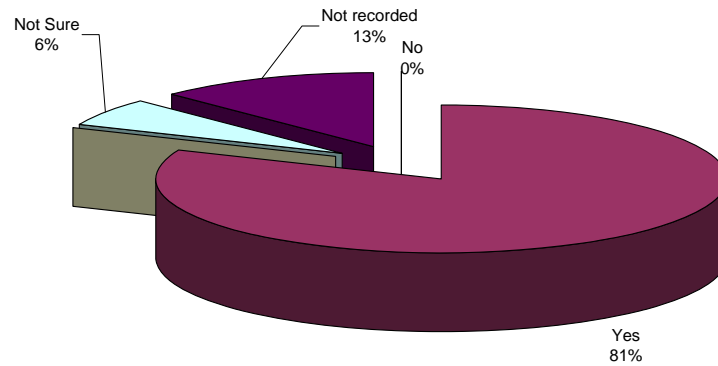
86% of callers felt that the staff willingly offered their help. Which again is a good result. The remaining 14% of the calls did not have this information recorded

Overall did staff use jargon



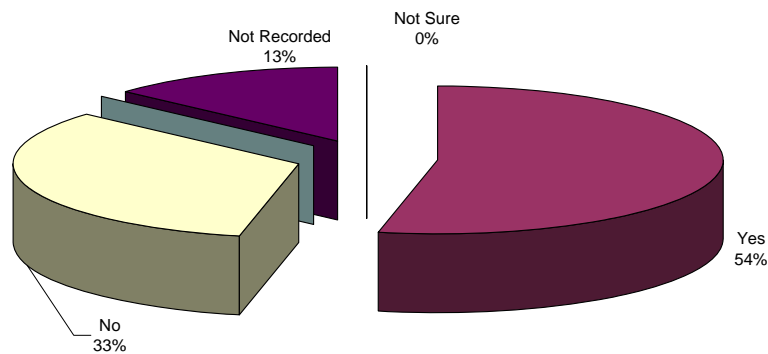
It was felt that of all the calls made 81% didn't use jargon, which again is a good result as only 6% weren't sure, with the remaining 13% of calls weren't recorded.

Overall did staff use good diction

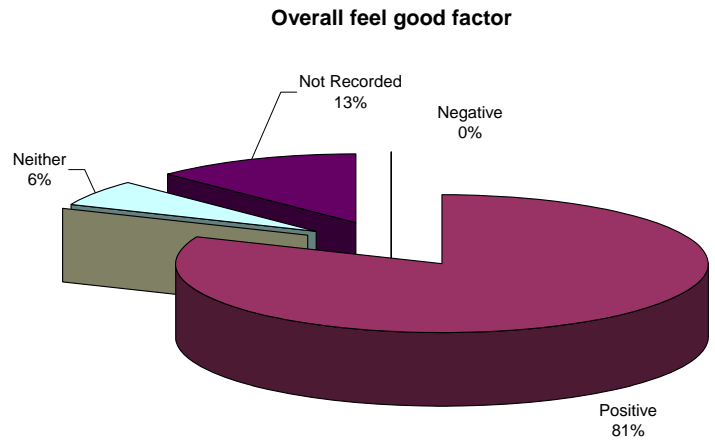


The results for staff using good diction are exactly the same as for the previous category of not using jargon and therefore is a good result,

Overall did staff go the extra mile



It was felt that in all the calls made only 54% of staff went the extra mile to check that callers were happy with the information given. 13% of the calls did not have this information recorded and 33% said that the staff didn't go the extra mile. Whilst this is good, this is felt to be a key element to a positive feel good factor and therefore will be mentioned in recommendations.



81% of callers rated the call with a positive feel good factor, with non rated negative. This is excellent, but none of the calls that were not answered are included in this rating and therefore this could be a higher figure than if these calls were included.

Scenario 1

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is giving out the correct information to customers with regards to minor adaptations

This is the content of the query that you are asked to make.

“Hello, I am ringing on behalf of my friend. They are increasingly struggling with ‘the bath taps’ and they have heard they can have ‘lever taps’ fitted. Is this true and how do they go about it?”

Findings

80% (4 out of 5) of calls made received the correct information, with the other 20% receiving some of the correct information.

80% of the callers felt that the staff were helpful with 80% willingly offering this help. The other 20% felt the opposite.

60% (3 out of 5) of the staff went the extra mile, with the other 40% saying that they didn't.

All of the callers felt the call had a positive feel good factor.

Mystery Shopper thoughts and comments

Very Helpful

Felt a little more info could have been passed on

Very Abrupt

Scenario 2

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is giving out the correct information to customers with regards to major adaptations

This is the content of the query that you are asked to make.

Hello, I am ringing on behalf of my friend. They are struggling with arthritis and need to have a walk in shower fitted. Can you tell me how they can get this sorted please?"

Findings

60% (3 out of 5) of the calls made received the correct information, with the remaining 40% receiving some of the correct information.

80% (4 out of 5) of the callers felt that the staff were helpful with the same number feeling the staff willingly offered this help.

40% felt that the staff went the extra mile, with the remaining 60% saying that they didn't.

80% of the callers felt the call had a positive feel good factor.

Mystery Shopper Thoughts and comments

Very Good

Very Polite

Scenario 3

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is giving out the correct information to customers with regards to Anti Social Behaviour

This is the content of the query that you are asked to make.

“Hello, I am ringing on behalf of my friend. They are having a few issues with their neighbour, what can they do?”

Findings

All of the calls made received the correct information.

All of the callers felt that the staff were helpful and wanted to help.

66% of callers felt that the staff went the extra mile.

100% of the callers felt the call had a positive feel good factor.

Mystery Shopper thoughts and comments

Phoned 3 N Champions and 2 went to voicemail and 1 wasn't answered

Very pleasant couldn't do enough for me

Scenario 4

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is giving out the correct information to customers with regards to Estate Walkabouts

This is the content of the query that you are asked to make.

“Hello, I have heard about the Estate Walkabouts that you do, can you tell me how I can get involved?”

Findings

2 out of 4 of the callers got through to voicemail

Both callers that got through received the correct information.

1 caller felt the staff member was helpful and wanted to help.

1 caller felt that the staff went the extra mile.

1 call received a positive feel good factor.

Mystery Shopper thoughts and comments

Very helpful

Again no response

Couldn't get through

Scenario 5

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is giving out the correct information to customers with regards to issues that do not fall under Rykneld Homes jurisdiction.

This is the content of the query that you are asked to make.

“Hello, I need to report a street light that isn’t working”

or

“The footpath near my house has a bad hole in it can you arrange for it to be fixed please?”

Findings

Of the 1 call that got through they felt that the correct information wasn't received as the call went to answer machine.

Mystery Shopper thoughts and comments

Left message for call back (not received)

Scenario 2a

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is providing information about the Adaptations service on the Website and it is accessible and easily understandable.

Log on to www.rykneldhomes.org.uk

Search the site to find the adaptations information.

Findings

The 2 shoppers that accessed the website felt that it was easy to find.

The information was adequate, easy to find and understandable.

Mystery Shopper thoughts and comments

It gave me a very good insight as to the procedures involved in getting an adaptation. Also being able to fill in a request form on line is a good idea

Scenario 4a

Objective

The objective, or outcome, of this exercise is to see that Rykneld Homes is providing information about Estate Walkabouts on the Website and it is accessible and easily understandable.

Log on to www.rykneldhomes.org.uk

Search the site to find the Estate Walkabout information.

Findings

The 2 shoppers that accessed the website felt that it was easy to find.

The information was adequate, easy to find and understandable

Summary of Recommendations for Improvement

The following are the key recommendations based on the results of the DTN Mystery Shopping Group Exercise:

Feel Good Factor Recommendations:

- ❖ We recommend that the Neighbourhood Champions divert phones to a Duty Officer and set a Service Standard to return messages within 1 working day. Answer machine messages should state the availability of the Champion along with alternative contact details should they be unavailable for more than 1 working day. Work mobile numbers should be distributed and readily available.
- ❖ Reinforce the telephone answering procedure with all staff.
- ❖ Make sure that at the end of each call the caller is asked if they are happy with the information given and ask if any other help is required. Going 'the extra mile' is felt to be very important to callers and therefore key.
- ❖ Encourage full information from Staff for general enquires as callers felt that staff were reluctant to give out full information when people were ringing on behalf of other people for basic information.

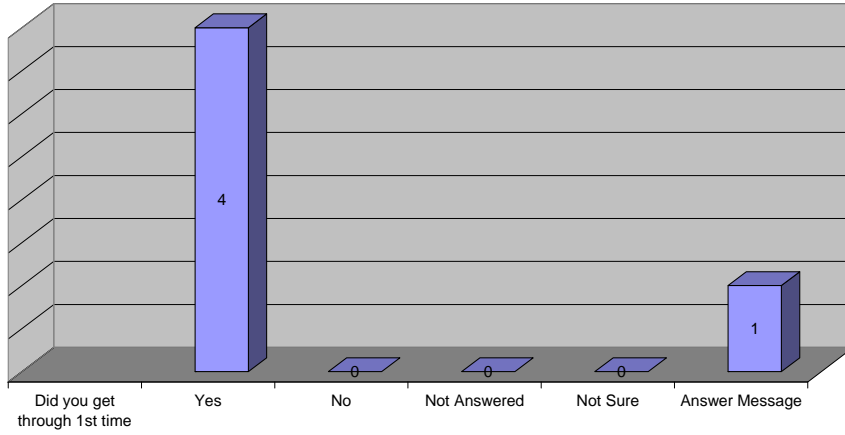
Good Practice Points

There were several Good Practice Examples noted during the Mystery Shopping Exercise as follows:

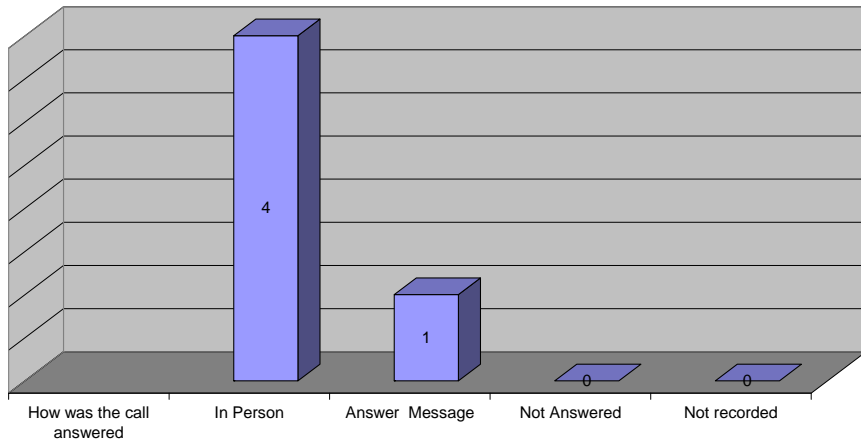
- ❖ All but 1 call were answered within service standards, within 30 seconds.
- ❖ The vast majority of Staff were helpful and willingly offered this help
- ❖ All callers found that staff didn't use jargon and had good diction

Appendix 1

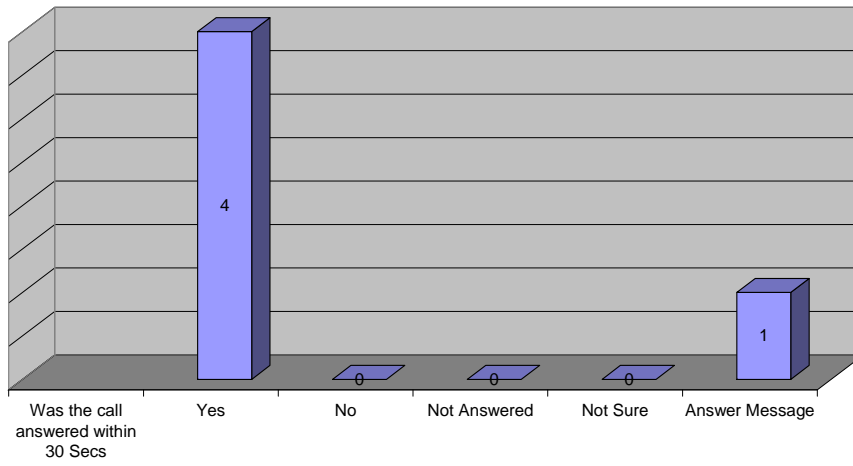
Scenario 1 - Did you get through the first time



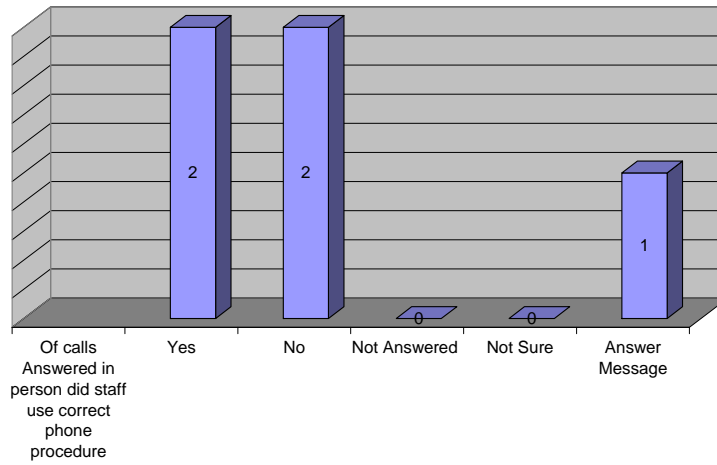
Scenario 1 - How was the call answered



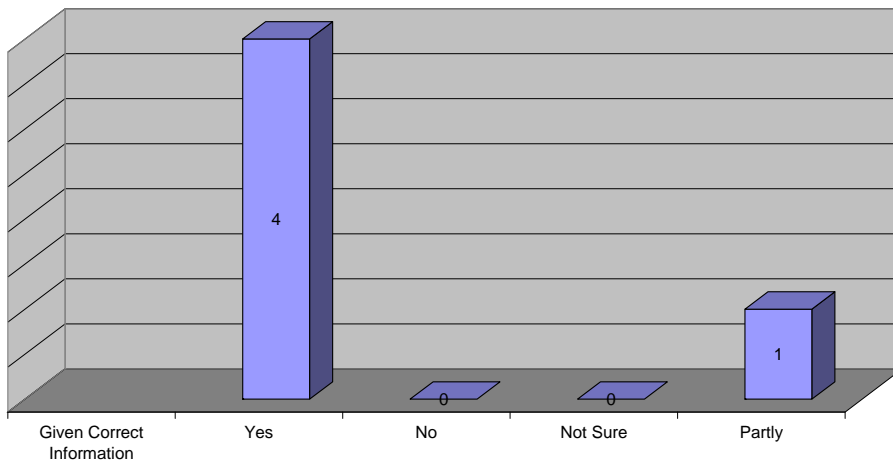
Scenario 1 - Was the call answered within 30 secs



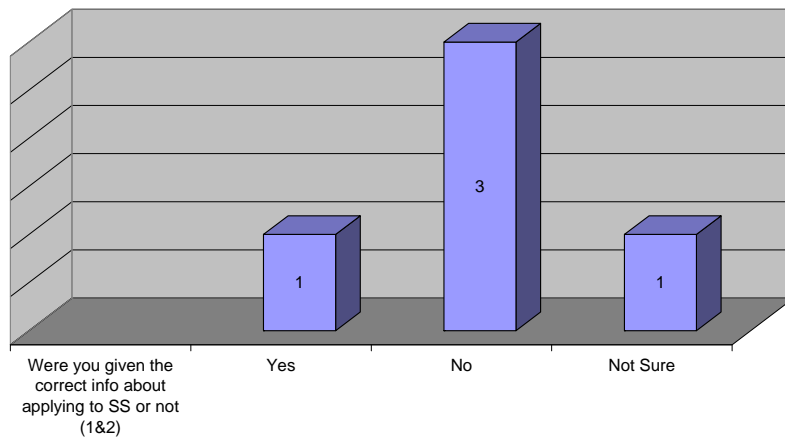
Scenario 1 - Did staff use the correct phone procedure



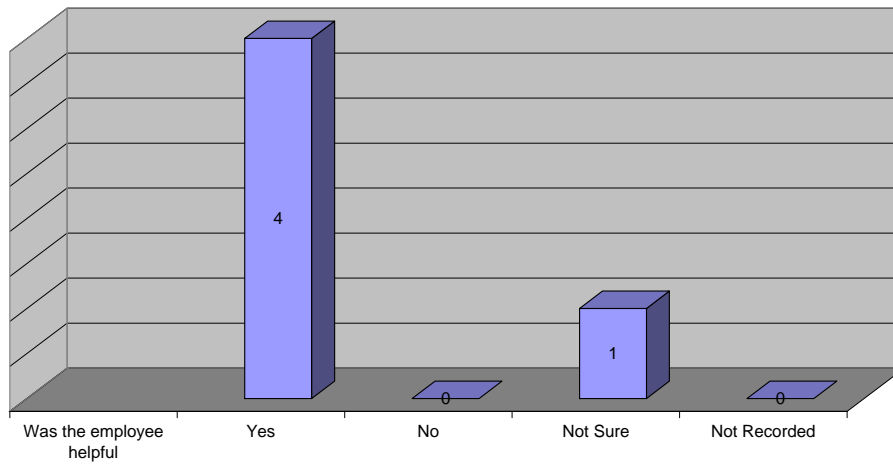
Scenario 1 - Were you given the correct information



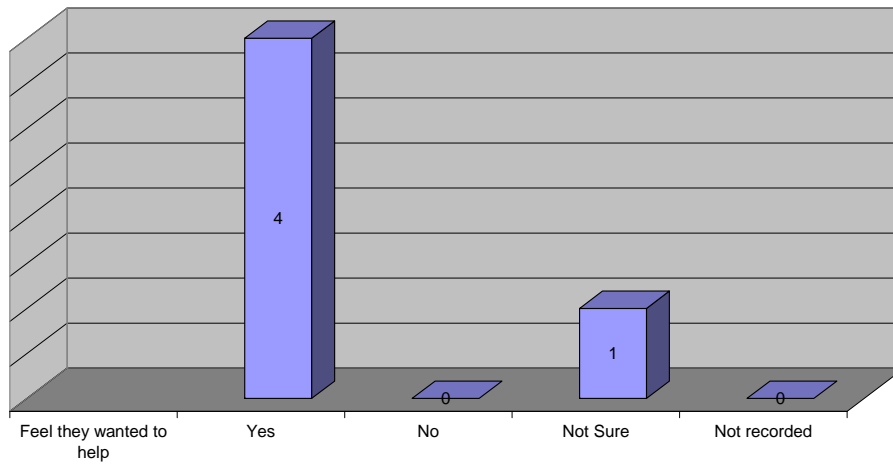
Scenario 1 - Were you given the correct information regarding referral to Social Services



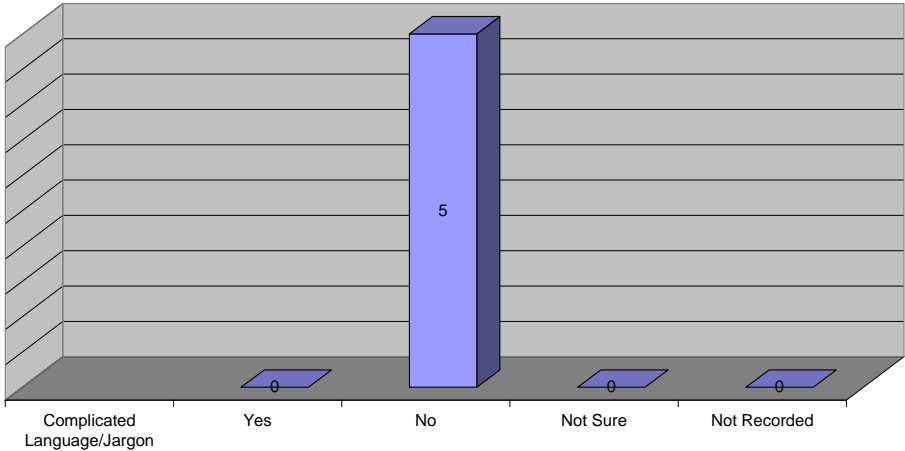
Scenario 1 - Was the employee helpful



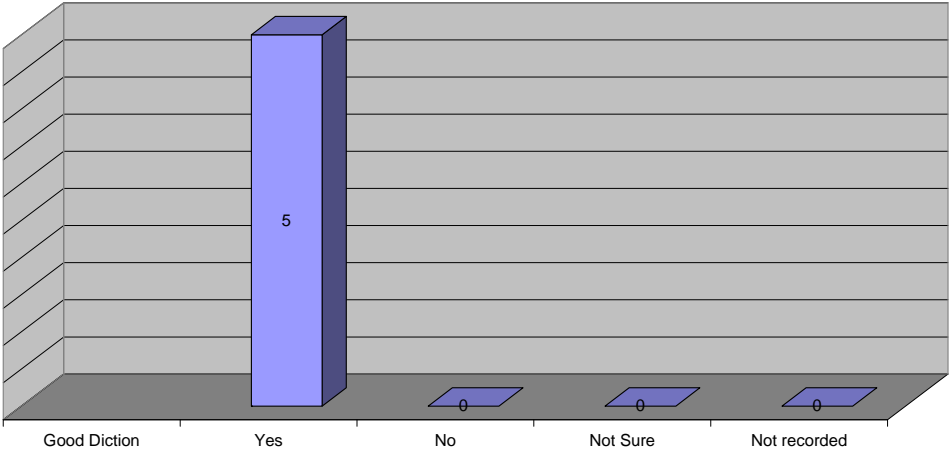
Scenario 1 - Did you feel the staff wanted to help



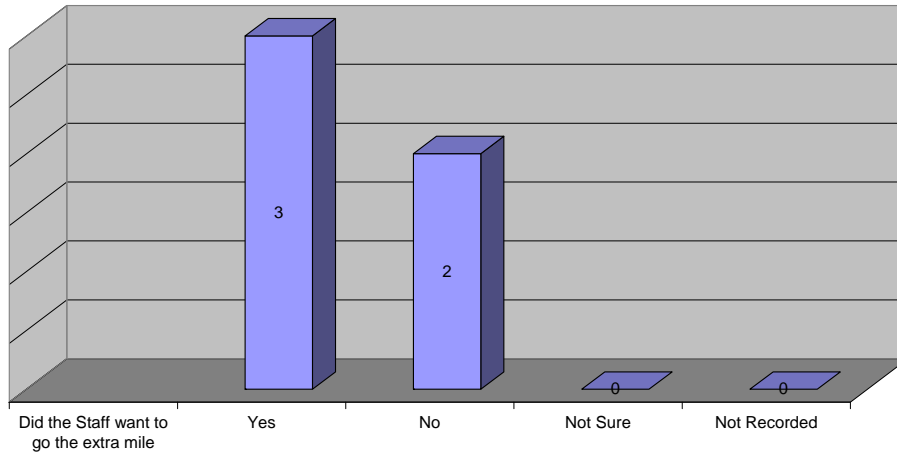
Scenario 1 - Did staff use jargon



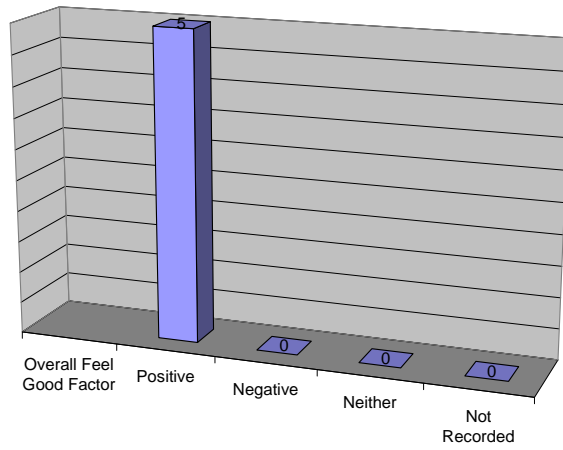
Scenario 1 - Did staff use good diction



Scenario 1 - Did the staff want to go the extra mile

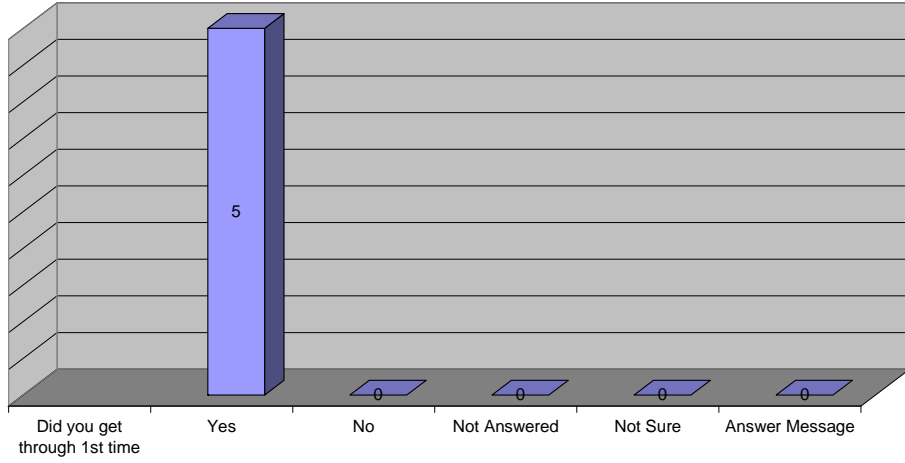


Scenario 1 - Overall feel good factor

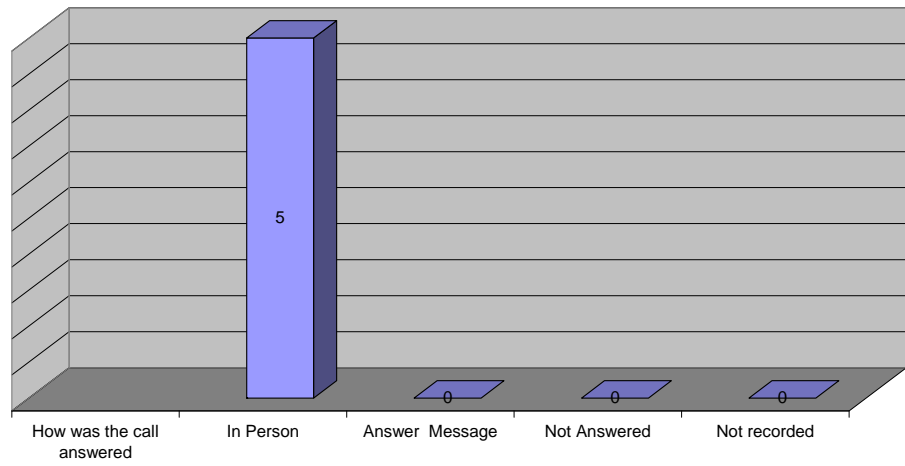


Appendix 2

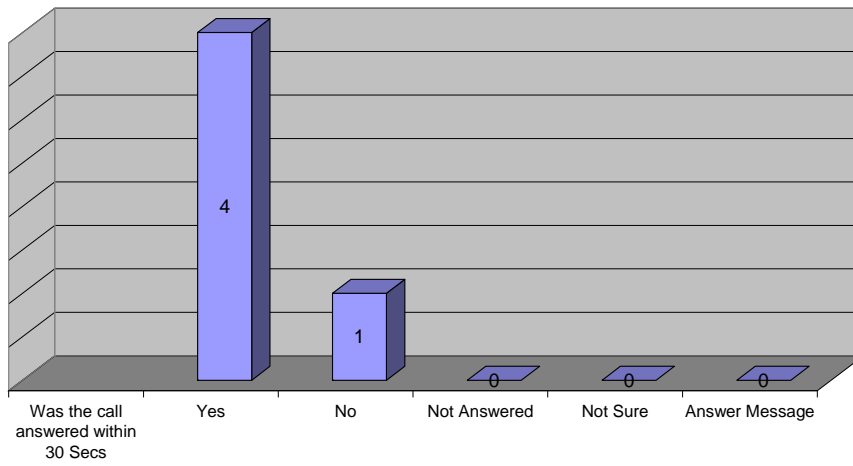
Scenario 2 - Did you get through the first time



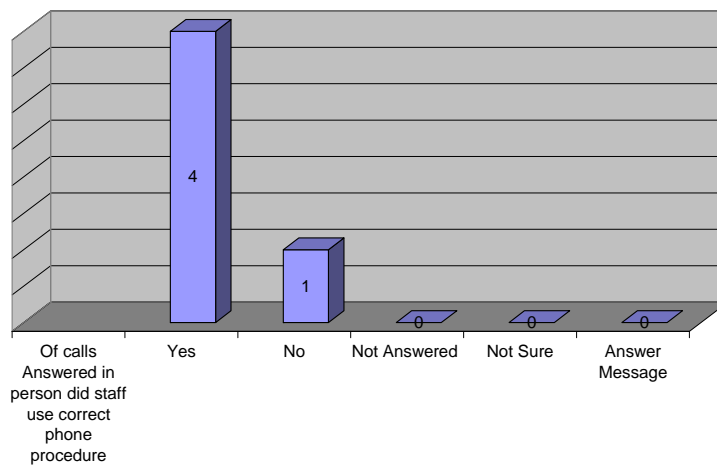
Scenario 2 - How was the call answered



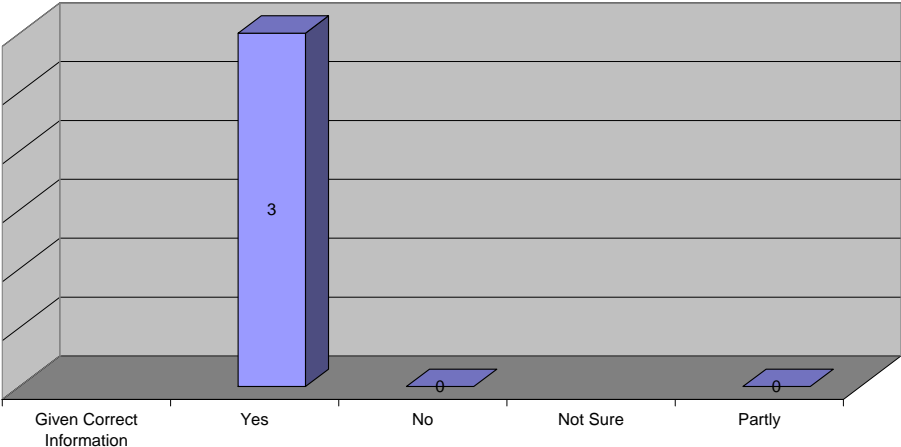
Scenario 2 - Was the call answered within 30 seconds



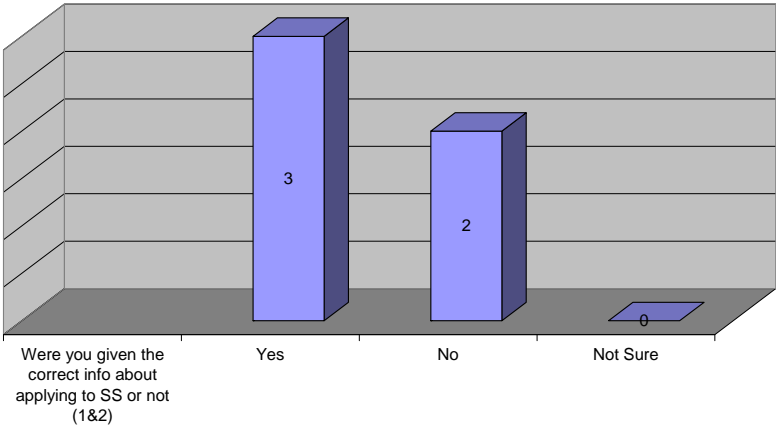
Scenario 2 - Did staff use the correct phone procedure



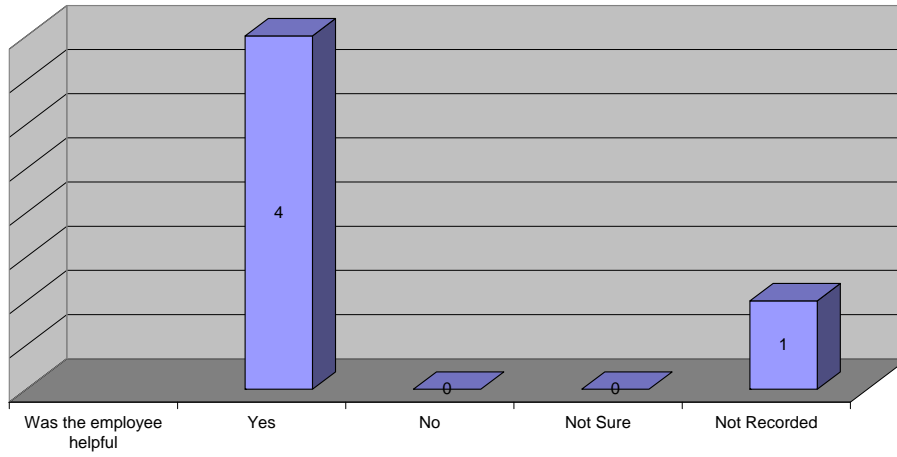
Scenario 2 - Were you given the correct information



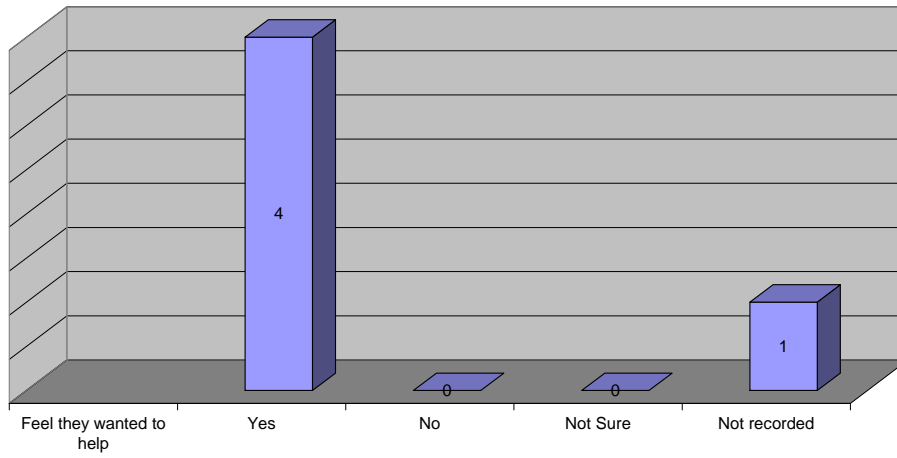
Scenario 2 - Were you given the correct information regarding contacting Social Services



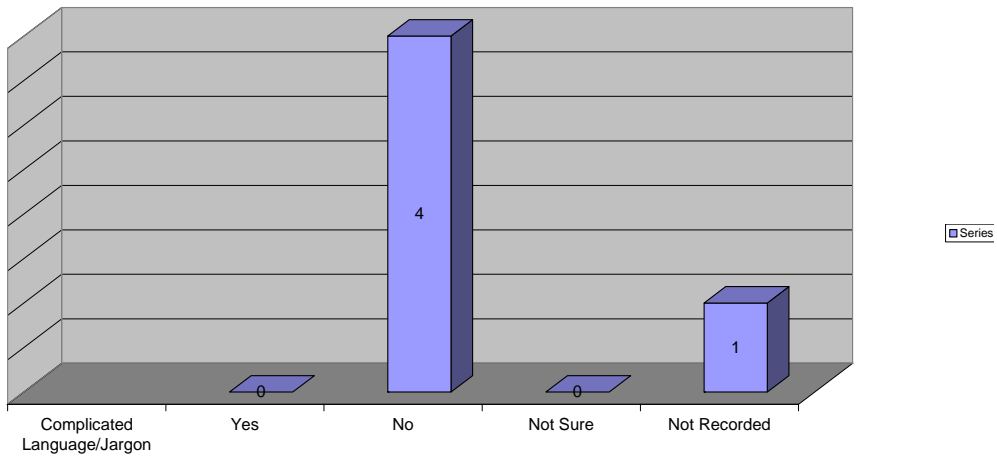
Scenario 2 - Were the employee helpful



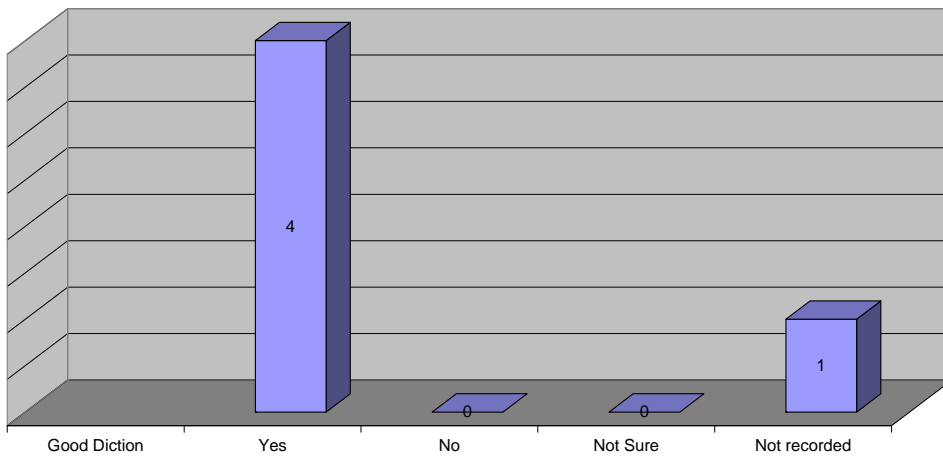
Scenario 2 - Did you feel the staff wanted to help



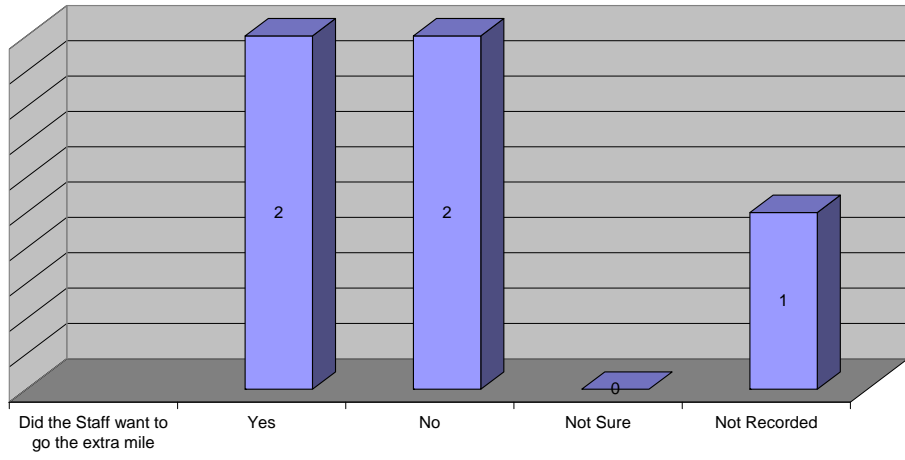
Scenario 2 - did staff use jargon



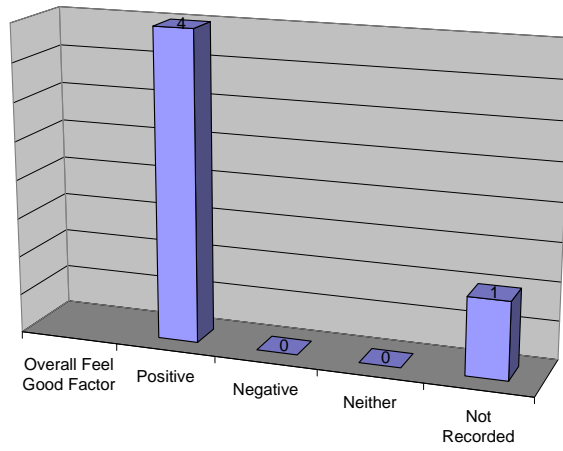
Scenario 2 - Did staff use good diction



Scenario 2 - Did staff want to go the extra mile

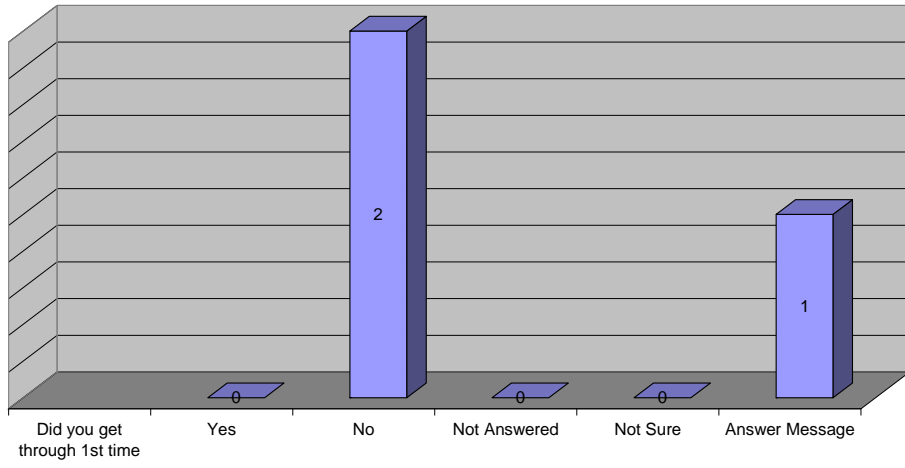


Scenario 2 - Overall feel good factor

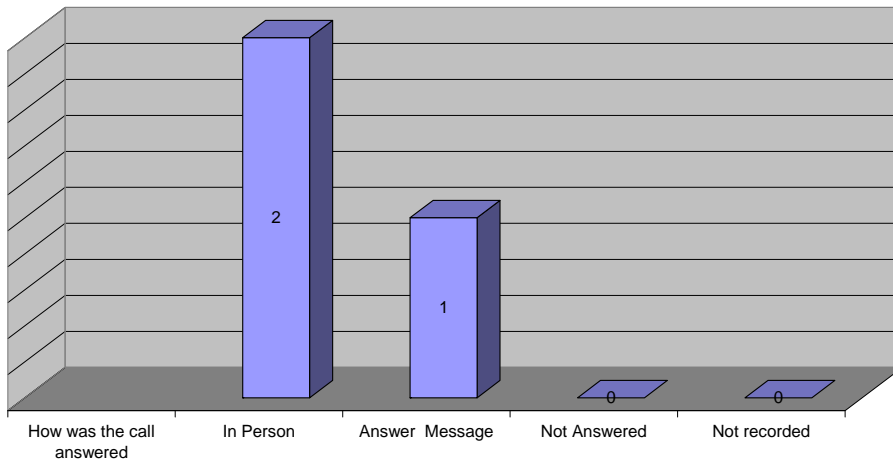


Appendix 3

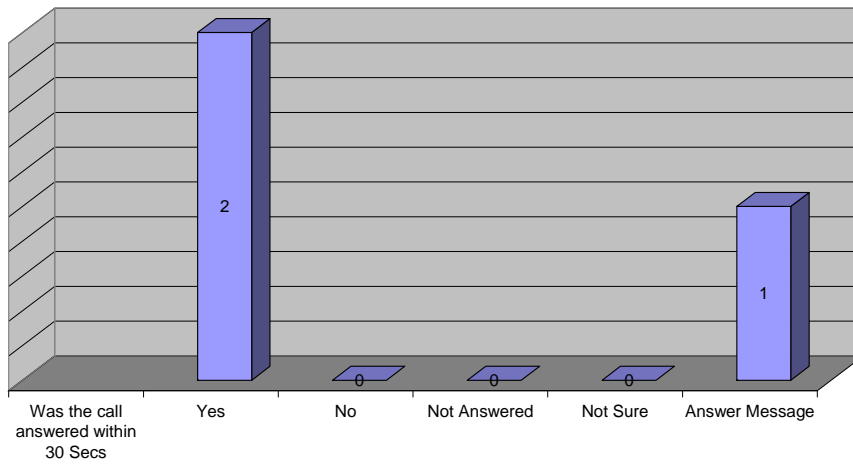
Scenario 3 - Did you get through the first time



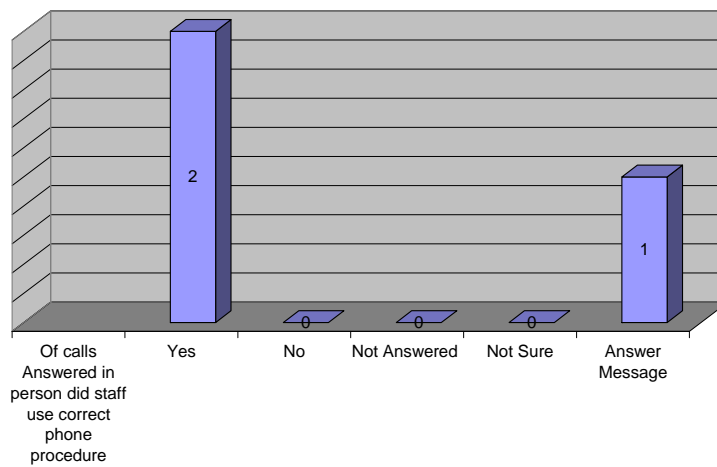
Scenario 3 - How was the call answered



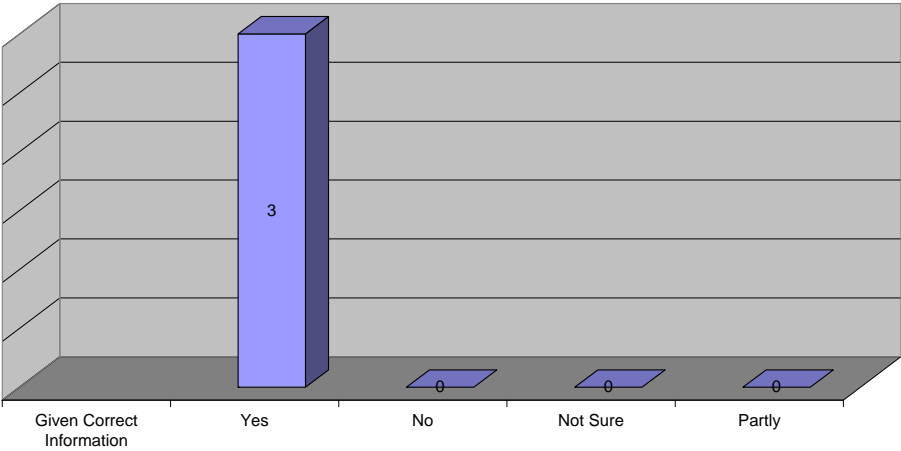
Scenario 3 - Was the call answered within 30 seconds



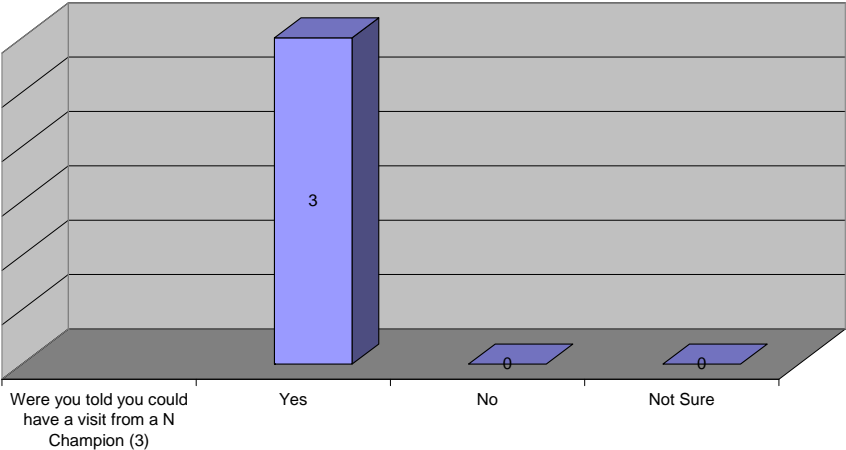
Scenario 3 - Did staff use the correct phone procedure



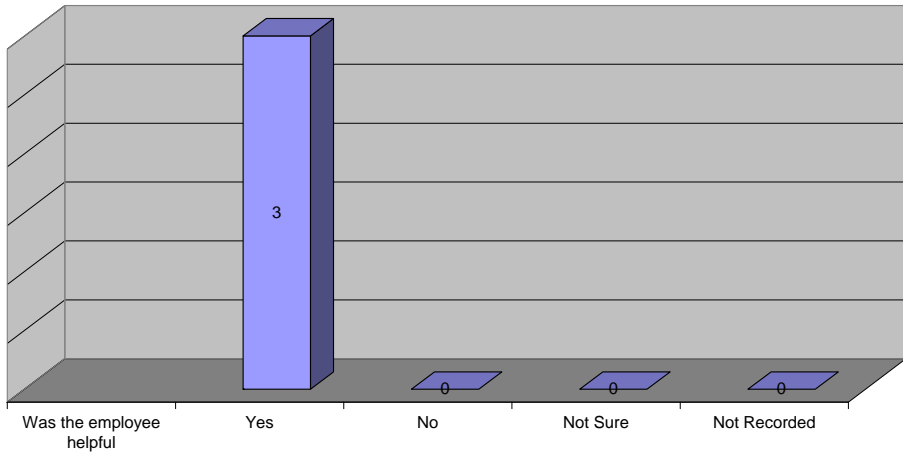
Scenario 3 - Were you given the correct information



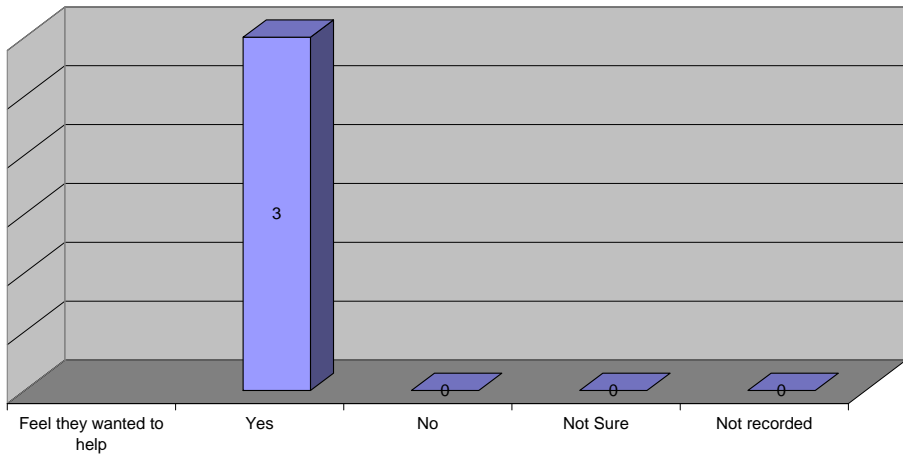
Scenario 3 - Were you told a Neighbourhood Champion could visit



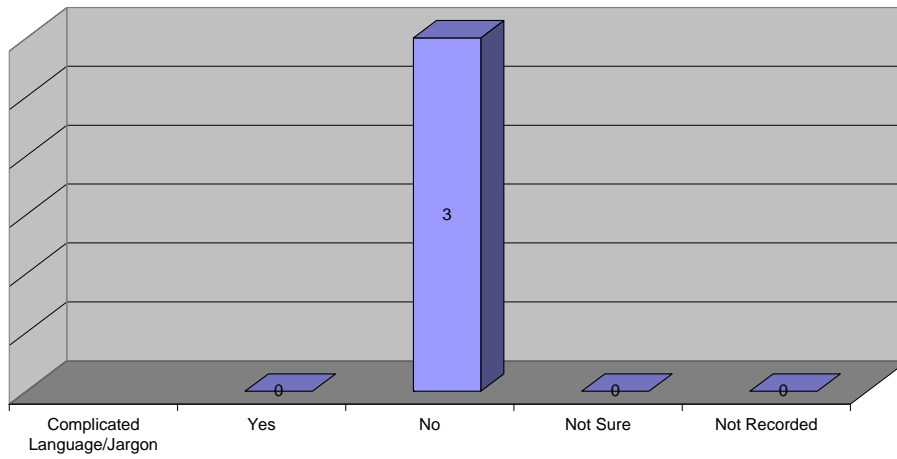
Scenario 3 - Was the employee helpful



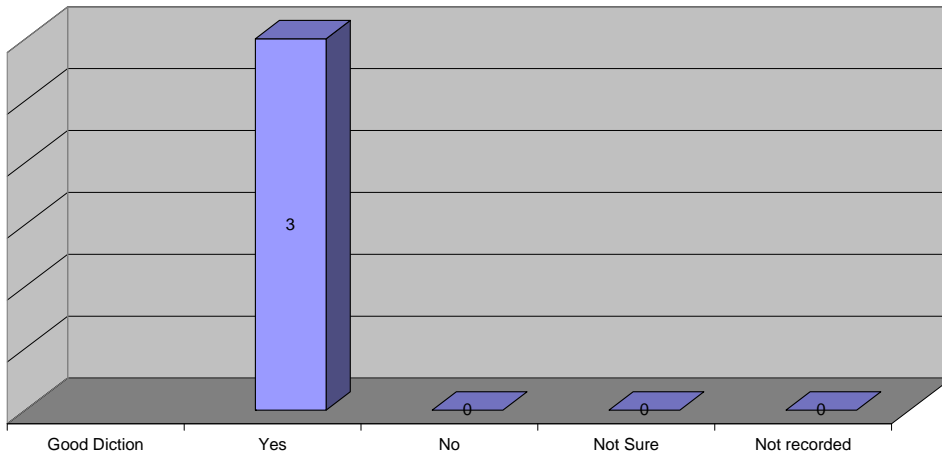
Scenario 3 - Did you feel the staff wanted to help



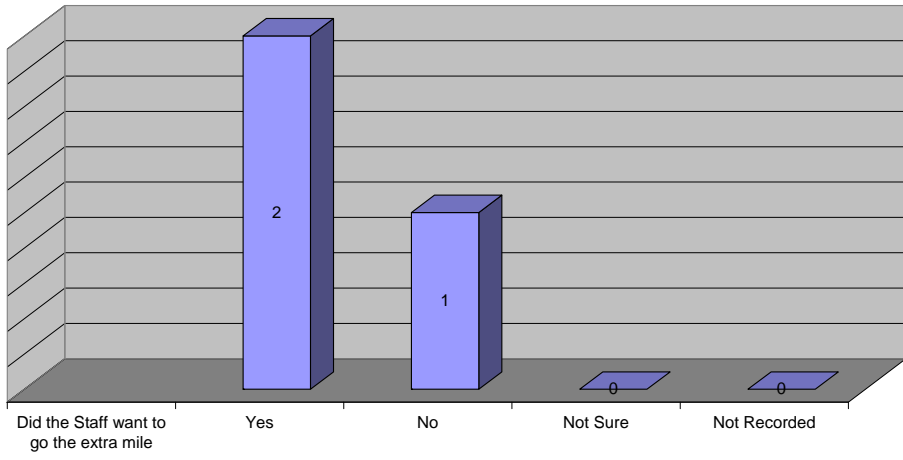
Scenario 3 - Did staff use jargon



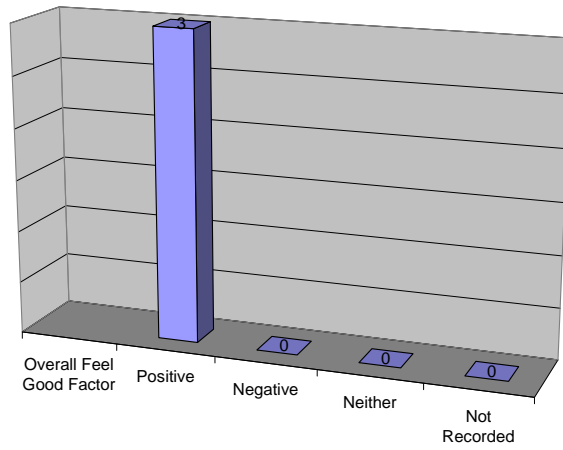
Scenario 3 - Did staff use good diction



Scenario 3 - Did staff go the extra mile

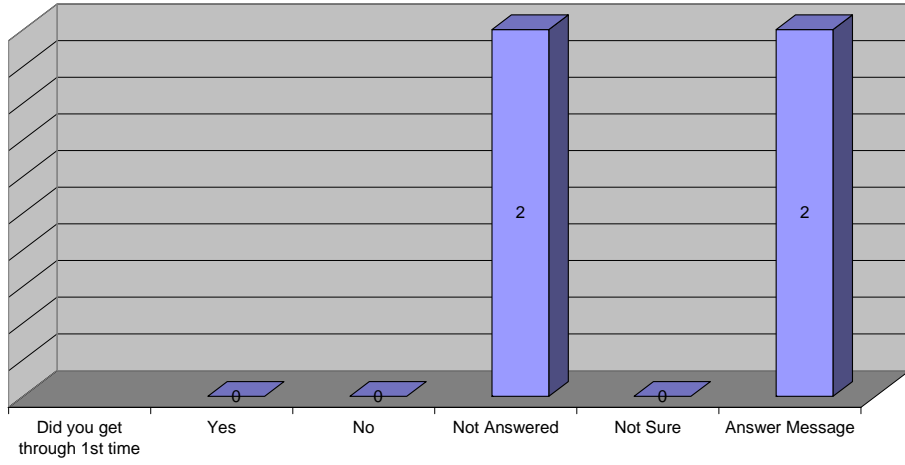


Scenario 3 - Overall feel good factor

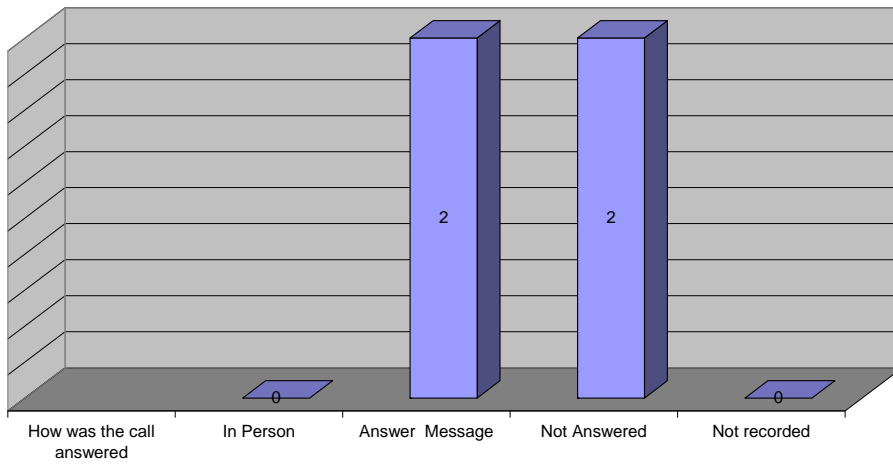


Appendix 4

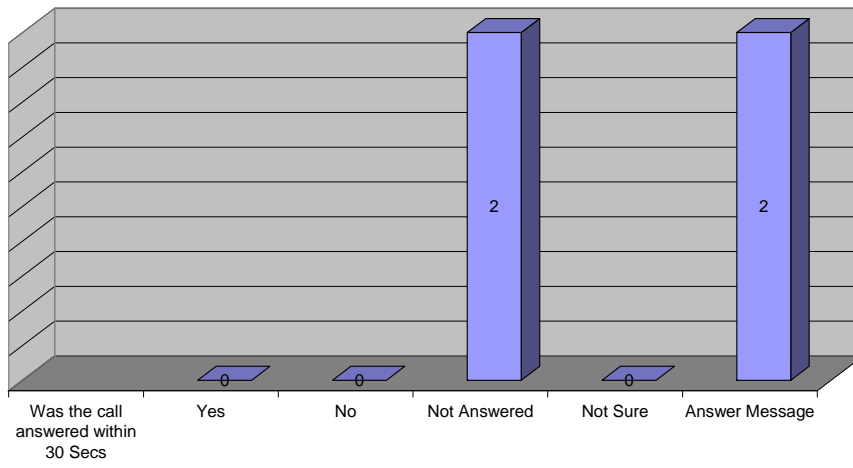
Scenario 4 - Did you get through the first time



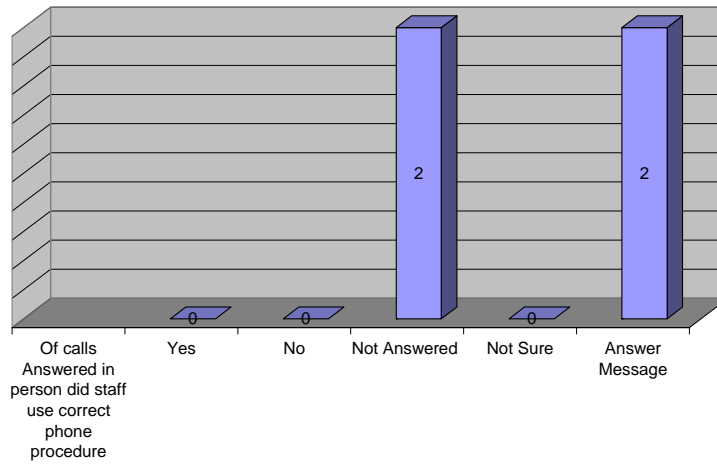
Scenario 4 - How was the call answered



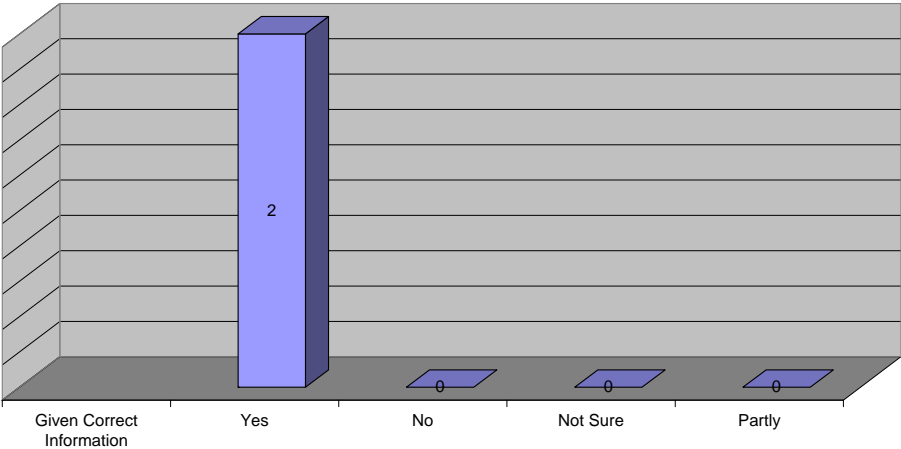
Scenario 4 - Was the call answered within 30 seconds



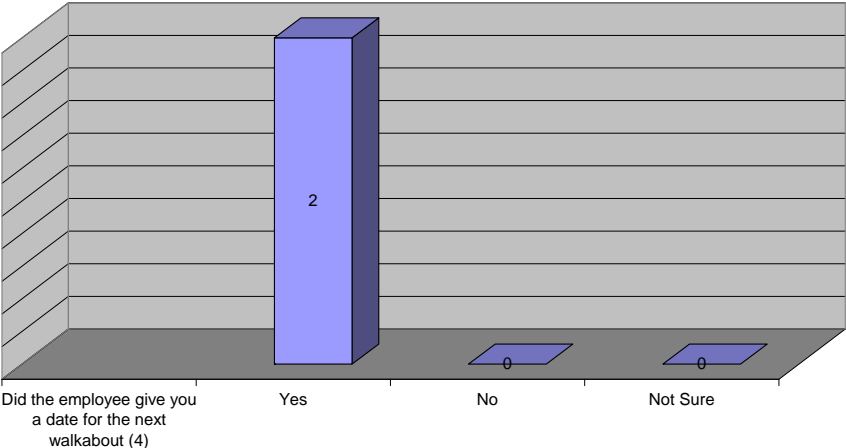
Scenario 4 - Did staff use the correct phone procedure



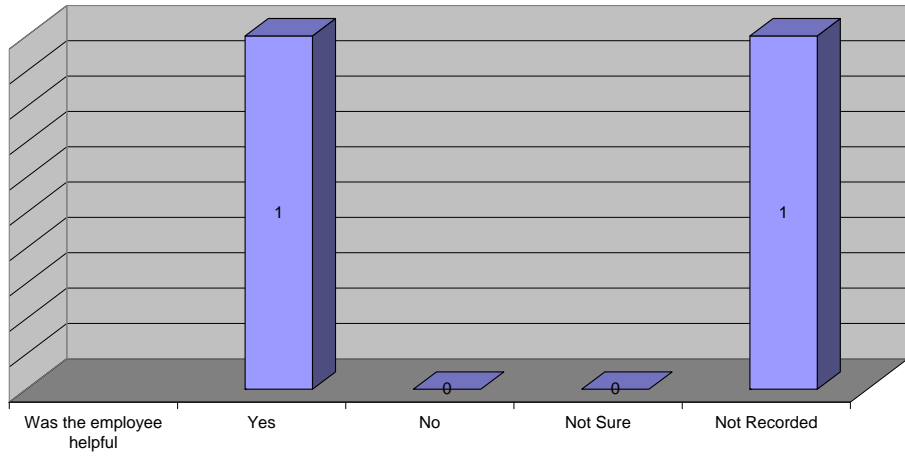
Scenario 4 - Were you given the correct information



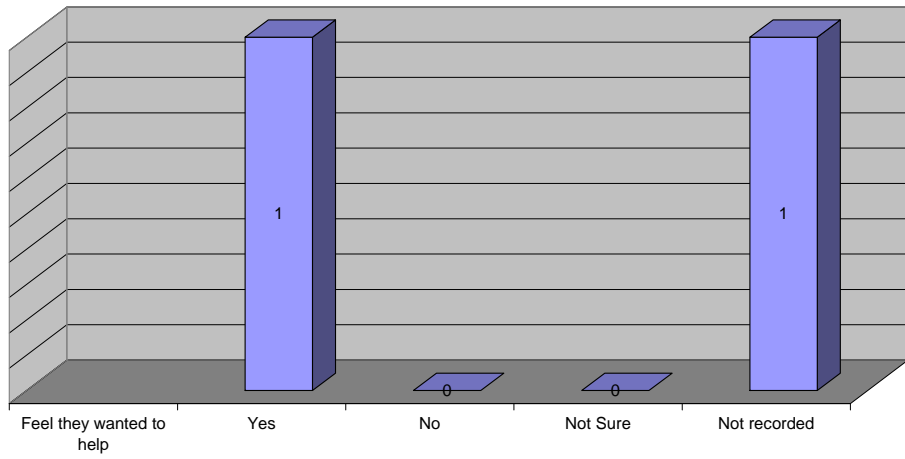
Scenario 4 - Were you given the date of the next walkabout



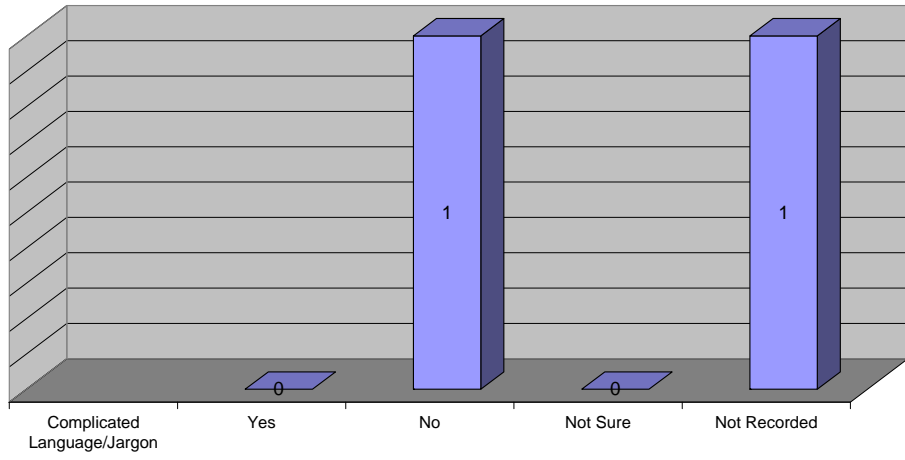
Scenario 4 - Was the employee helpful



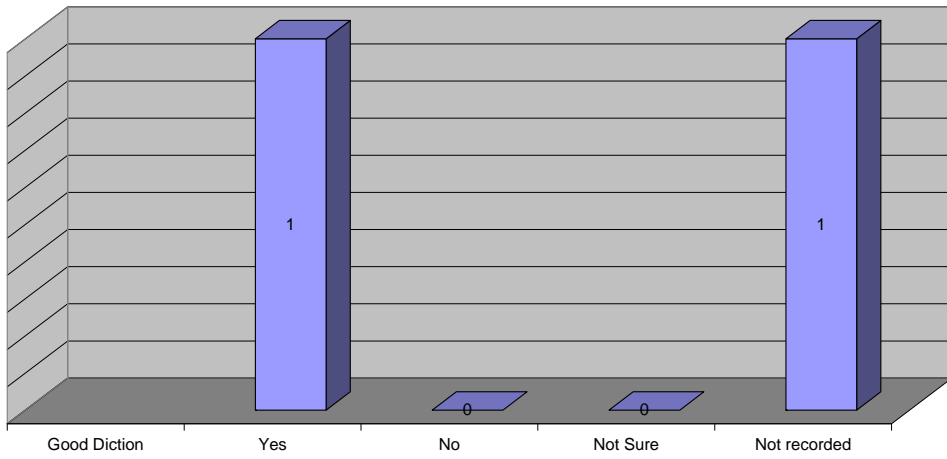
Scenario 4 - Did you feel the staff wanted to help



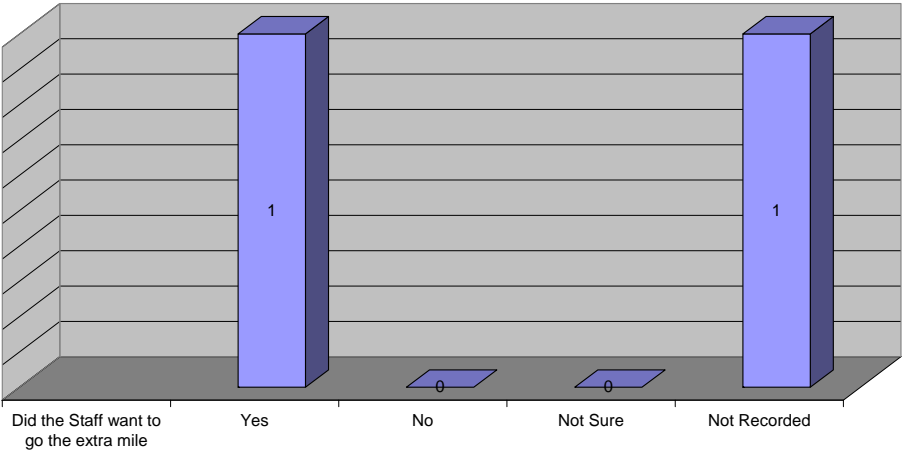
Scenario 4 - Did staff use jargon



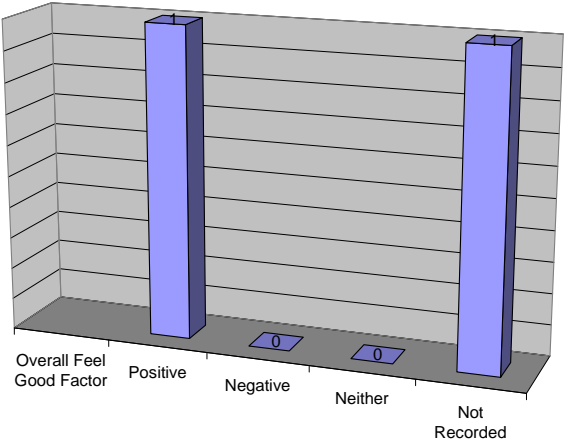
Scenario 4 - Did staff use good diction



Scenario 4 - Did the staff go the extra mile

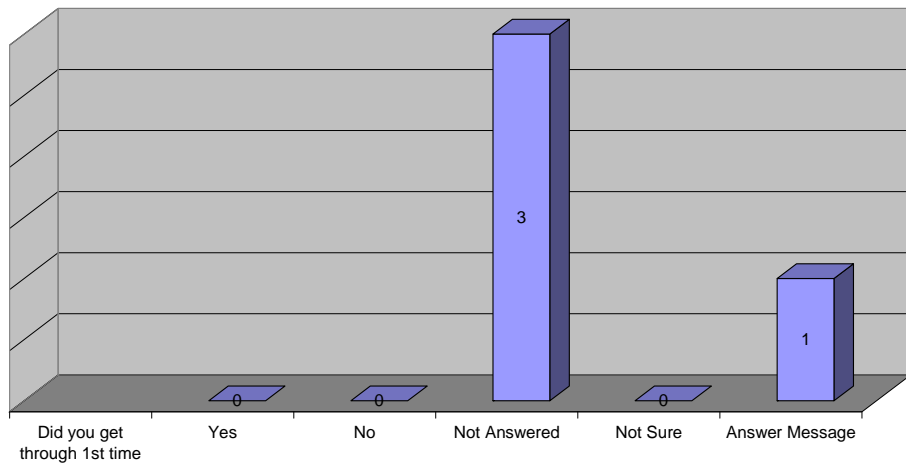


Scenario 4 - Overall feel good factor

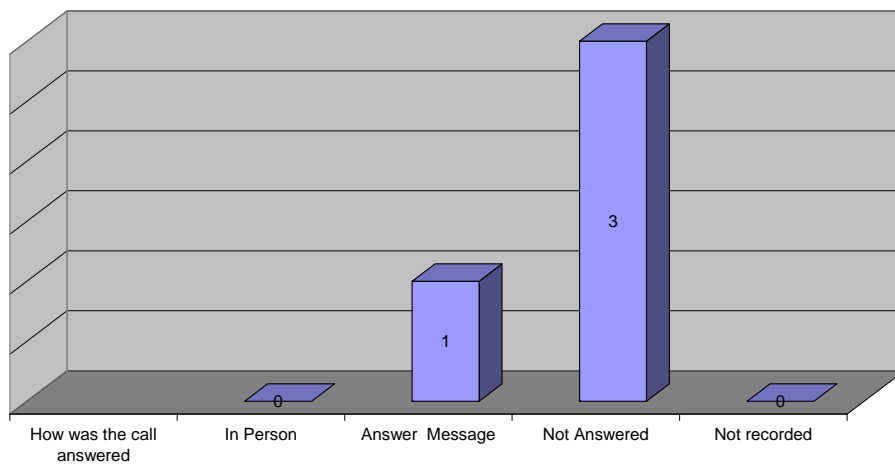


Appendix 5

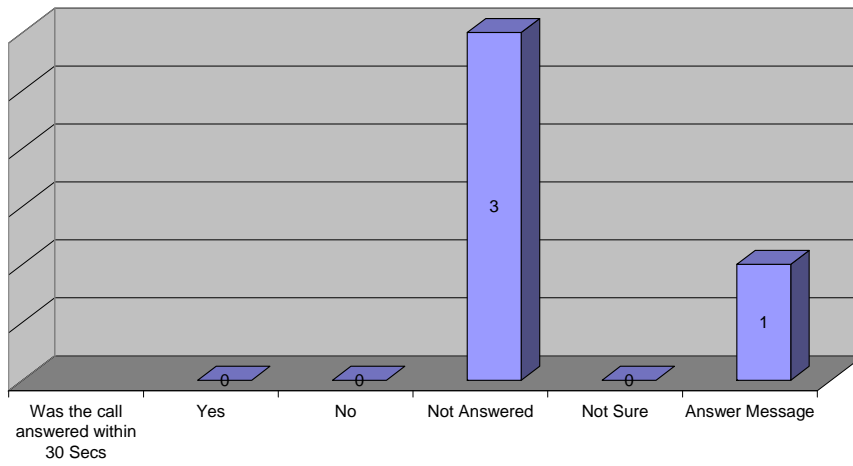
Scenario 5 - Did you get through the first time



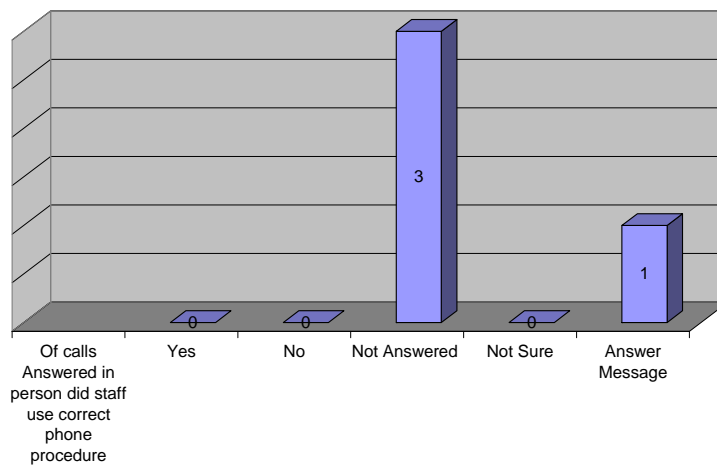
Scenario 5 - How was the call answered



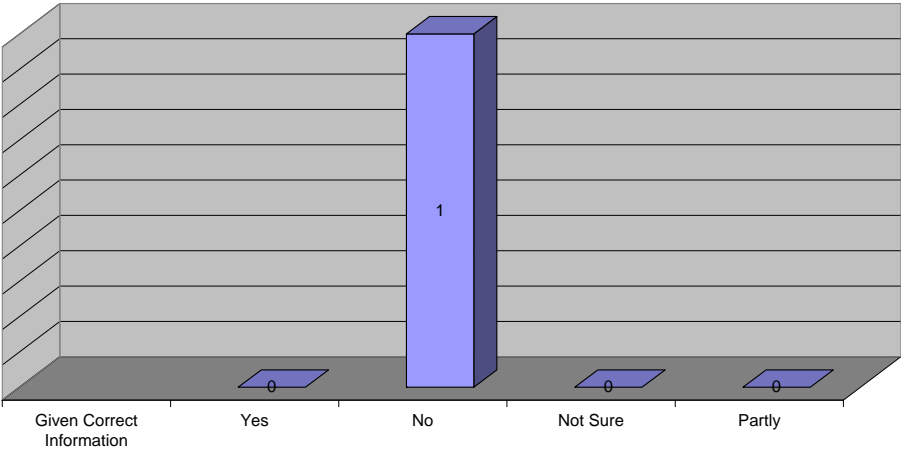
Scenario 5 - Was the call answered within 30 seconds



Scenario 5 - Did staff use the correct phone procedure

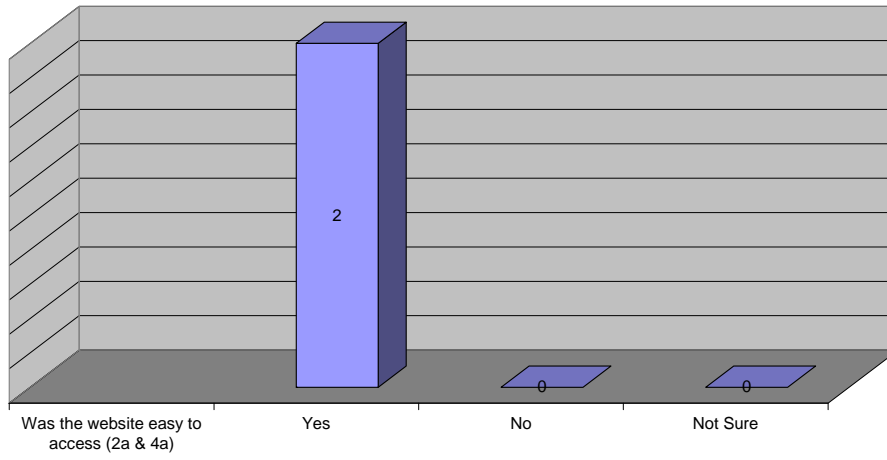


Scenario 5 - Were you given the correct information

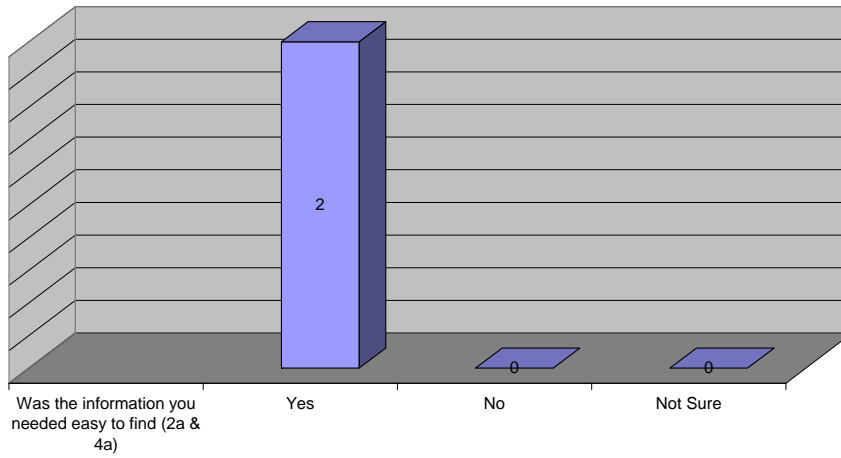


Appendix 6

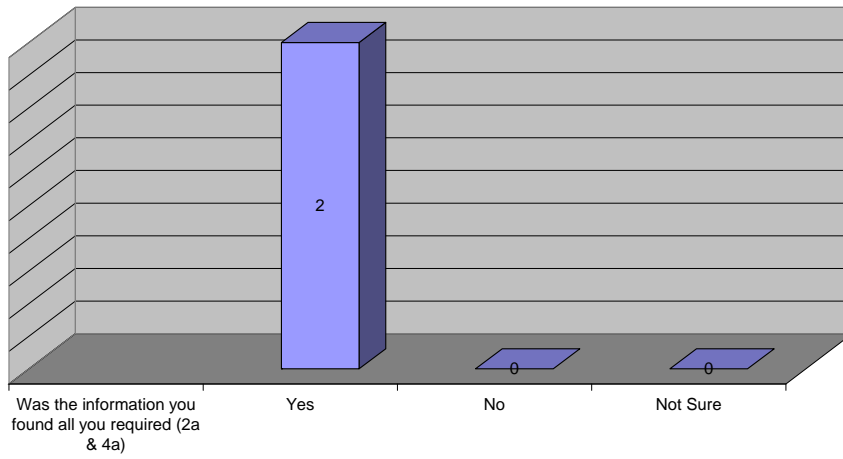
Scenario 2a - Was the website easy to access



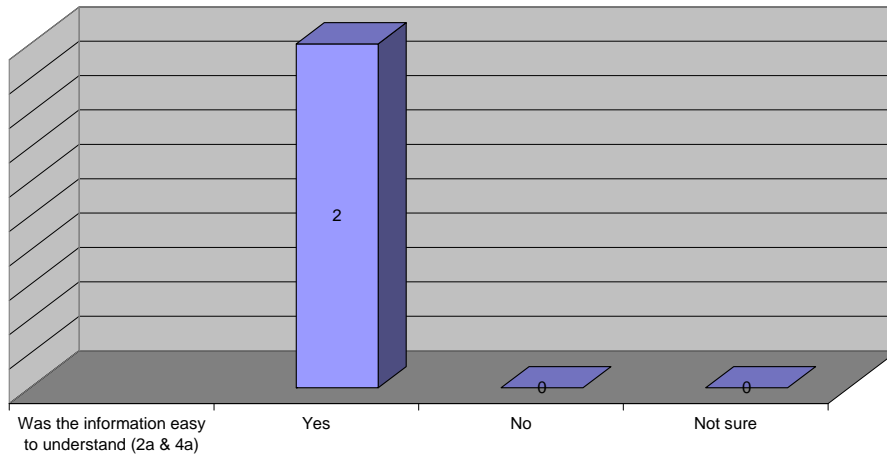
Scenario 2a - Was the information easy to access



Scenario 2a - Was the information adequate

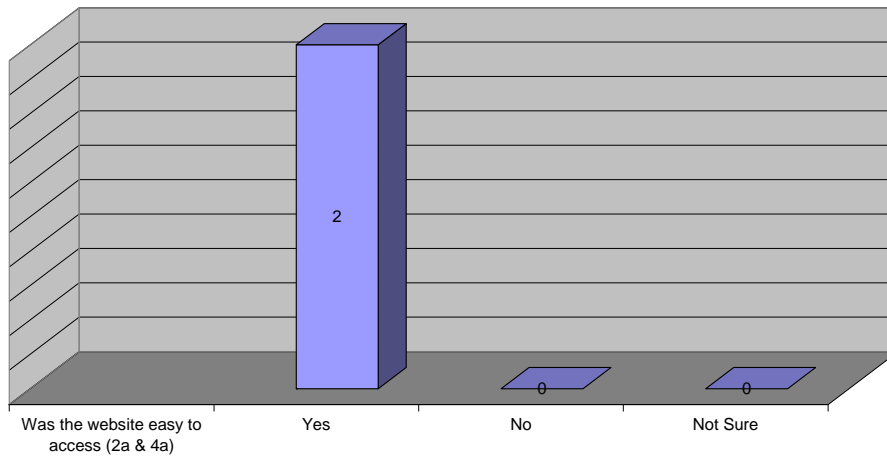


Scenario 2a - Was the information easy to understand

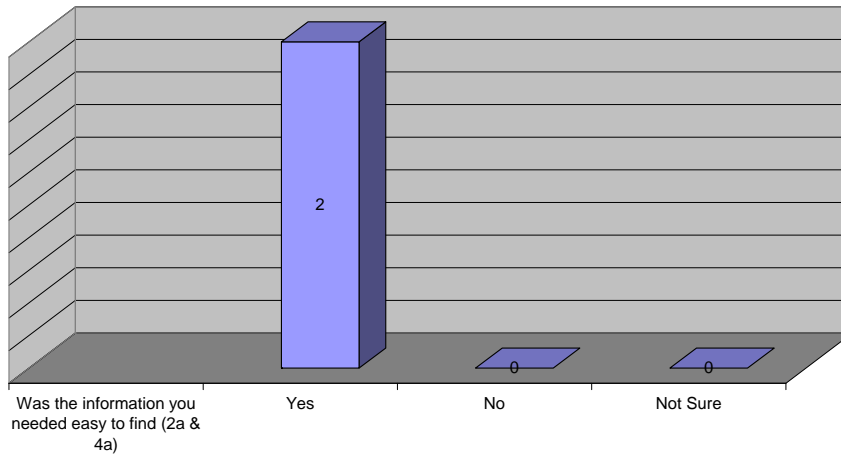


Appendix 7

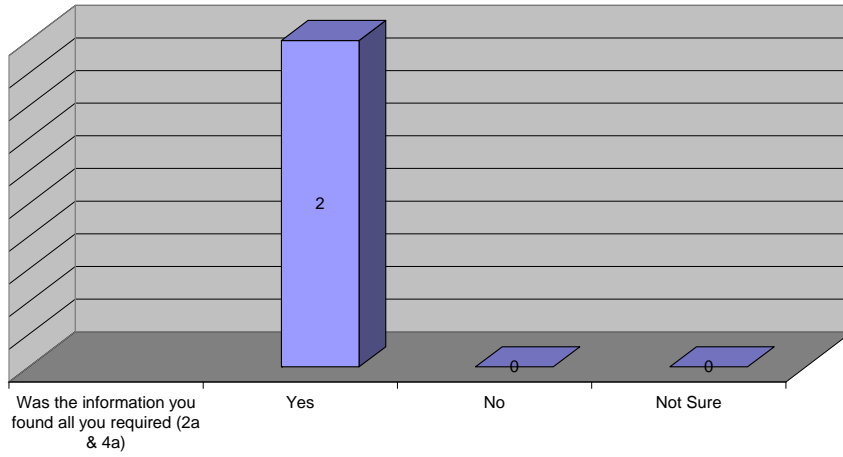
Scenario 4a - Was the website easy to access



Scenario 4a - Was the information you needed easy to find



Scenario 4a - Was the information you found adequate



Scenario 4a - Was the information easy to understand

