

Mystery Shopping Data

1.1 Report on Progress with Customer First Stage 1 – 2006

Mystery Shopping

A series of evaluation and mystery shopping exercises were undertaken in August and September 2006, which included visiting Reception points, Telephone conversations and Email responses. A summary of the results is provided below.

Reception Areas

Assessment of 37 reception points (unable to gain access to 3) showed that reception areas, in general, are of a very high standard and have improved greatly since the start of Customer First. Staff are smart and most were wearing a name badge, reception areas are tidy with a good range of advice leaflets and the majority of receptions were displaying the corporate information posters.

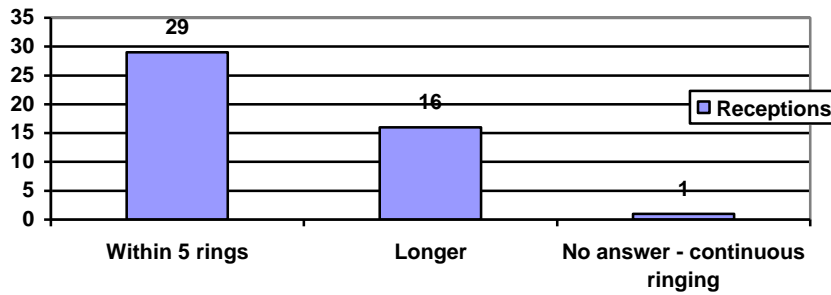
The most common problems identified in reception areas are:

- Signage – either trying to find the reception from the street or once inside the building there is little in the way of directional signs
- Heavy external doors
- Leisure centres have very little corporate information on display
- 6 receptions did not have at least one poster in another language
- 8 had no loop system.
- Customer care displayed by staff in 2 receptions was below an acceptable standard
- Housing reception in the main building at 16 Church Road was very bleak and doesn't have a comfortable feel. It no longer has a desk to complete forms or a children's area. There was a poor range of leaflets on display and many of the wall mounted leaflet holders were missing.

Telephone Calls Results

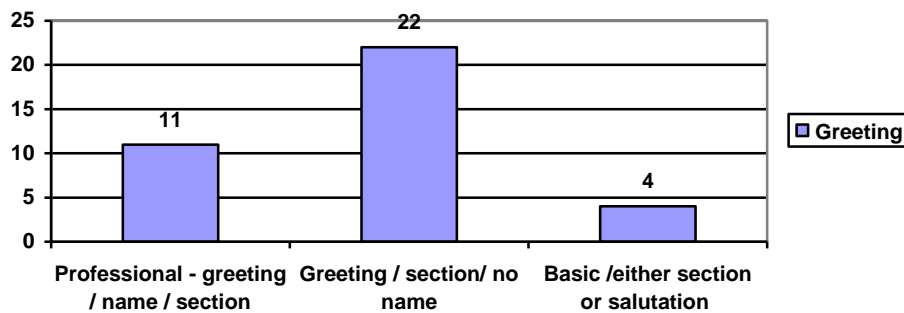
46 receptions throughout the Council were contacted and were asked a simple question "what are your normal opening hours". The results are as follows:-

How long (in rings) did it take to answer?



Of the 46 calls, 9 went to voicemail and only 2 of these gave the name of an officer who would ring back when they were available. One reception that did not answer the phone, nor did it have an answering machine service. 16 areas took longer than 5 rings (corporate standard) to either answer or go to voicemail, although all were answered within 10 rings.

How was the call answered – did they give a greeting including their name and the section they were in?



From the 37 officers who answered the phone all but 1 sounded professional. To quote the mystery shopper, 'he just sounded uninterested'.

All officers answering the telephone were knowledgeable and did not need to direct the call to someone else. Only 1 reception - Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre - gave a closing statement - "is there anything else"; which demonstrated a genuine interest by the call taker in providing an excellent service.

E-Mail responses

19 Services, predominantly within Support Services, were contacted via e-mail and asked to provide information on "which Officer is responsible for your Internet / intranet web updates". The corporate standard for acknowledging e-mails from a customer is 24 hours.

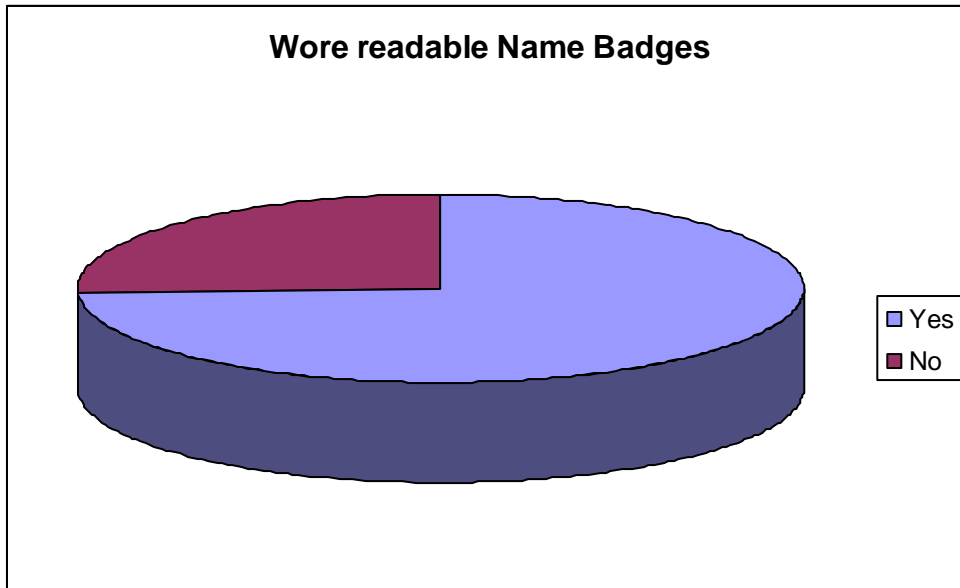
The results were very disappointing. Of the 19 services, only 5 responded within 24 hours with 14 services providing no response at all.

1.2 Results from 2007 Mystery Shopping – Reception Areas

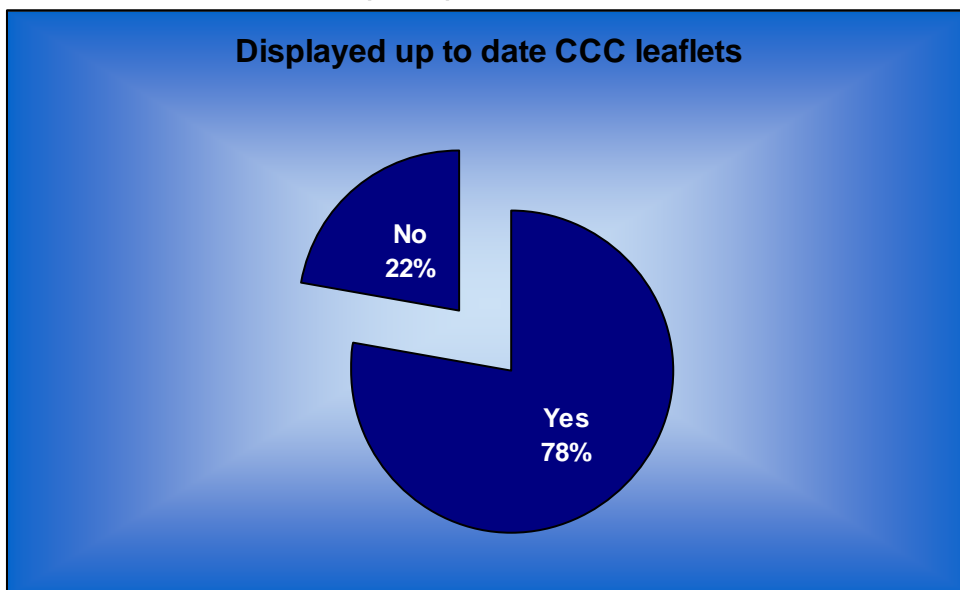
Throughout September 2007 we visited 27 Council reception areas.

Alma House
Billingham Art Gallery
Billingham Cash Office
Billingham Council Offices
Billingham Education Centre
Bedale Library-Billingham
Connexions
Egglescliffe Library
Fairfield Library
Gloucester House-Car Parking
Gloucester House-Planning
Housing-16 Church Road
Housing Benefits
Kingsway House
Municipal Buildings
Municipal Cash Office
Norton Library
Preston Hall Museum
Registration & Bereavement Services
Roseberry Library-Billingham
Stirling House
Stockton Central Library
Thornaby Cash Office
Thornaby Library Westbury Street
Thornaby Town Centre Library
Trading Standards/Environmental Health
Yarm Library

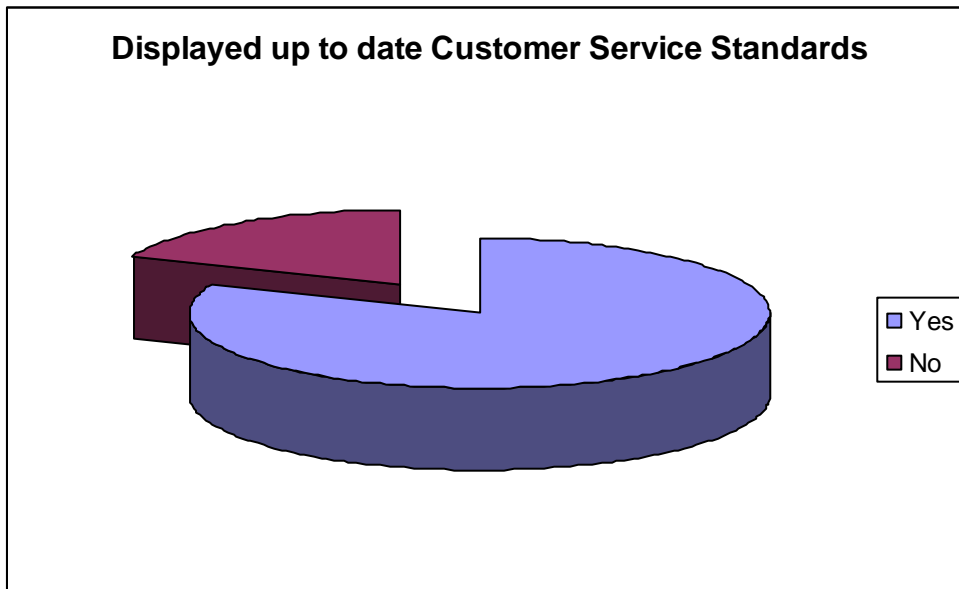
1. 74% of Services wore readable name badges. (20/27)



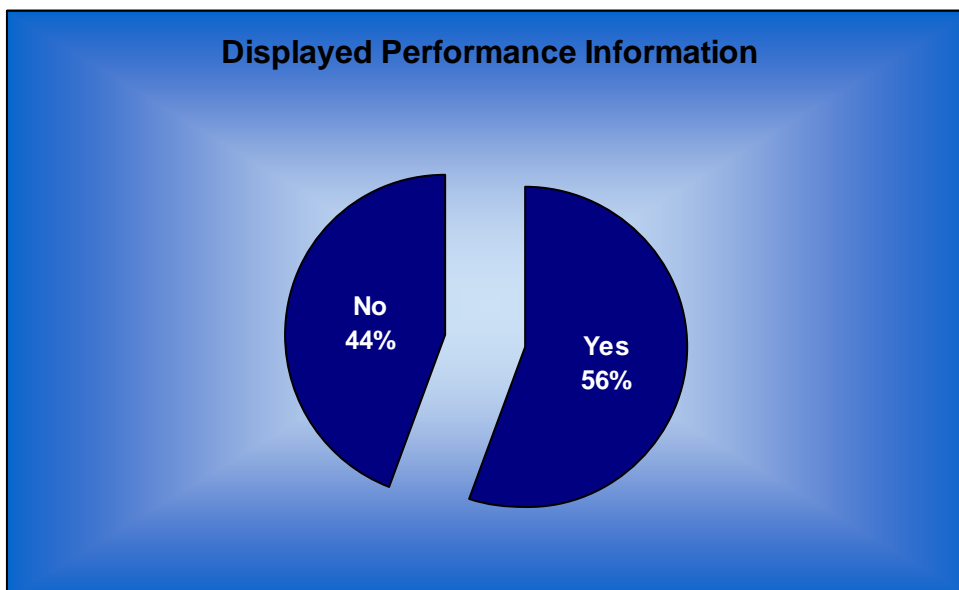
2. 78% of Services displayed the up to date Complaints, Comments and Commendations Leaflet. (21/27)



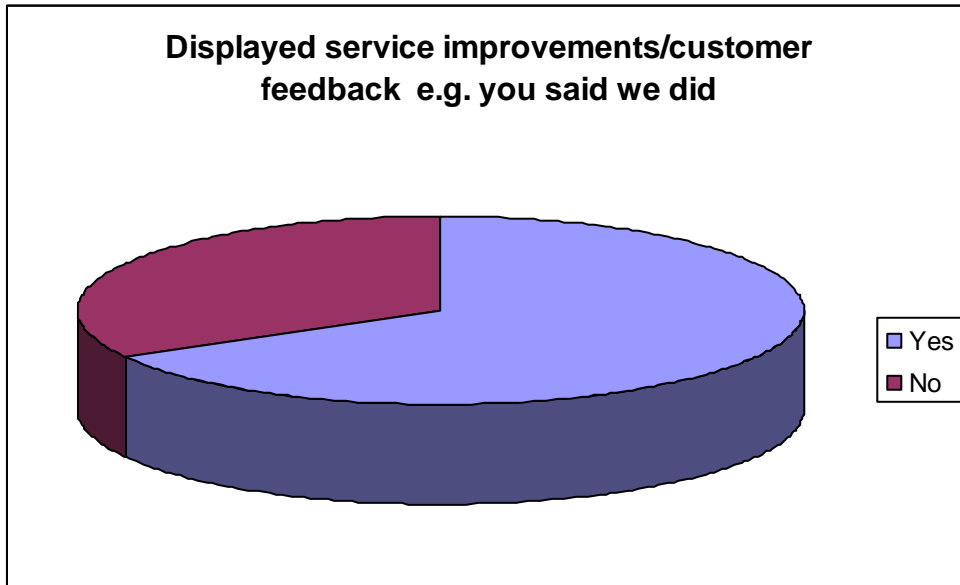
3. 81% of Services displayed the Customer Service Standards. (22/27)



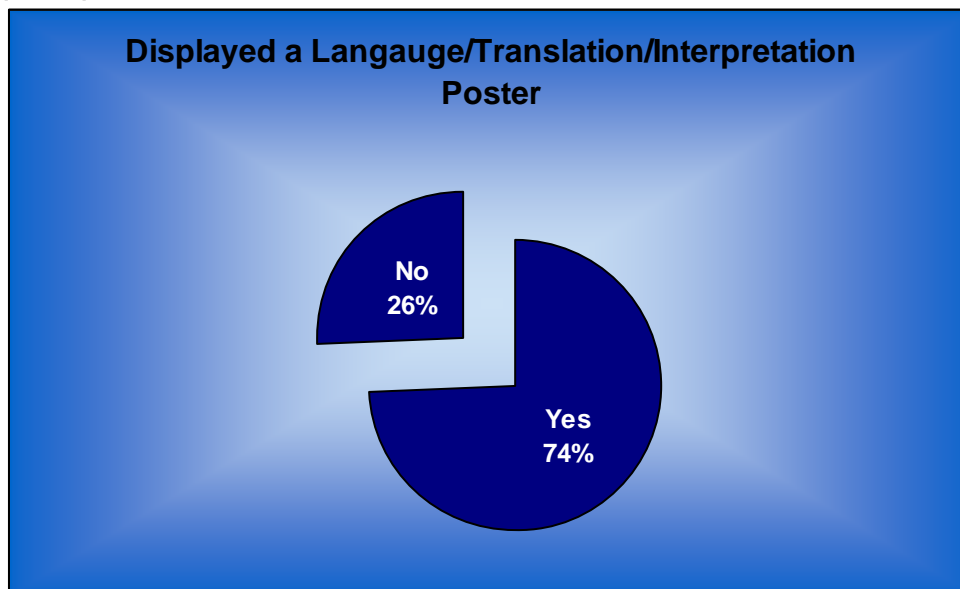
4. 56% of Services displayed some Performance Information. (15/27)



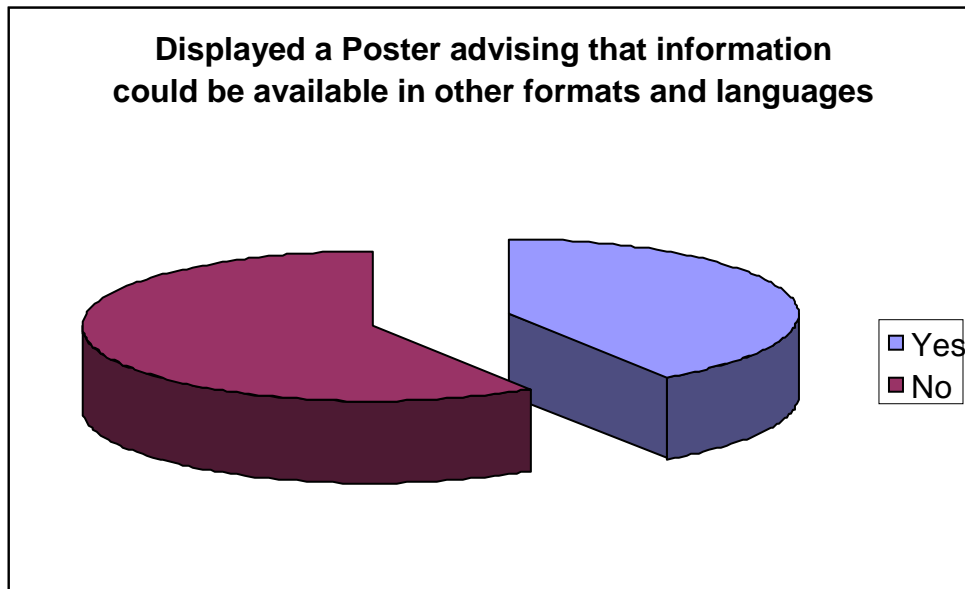
5. 67% of Services displayed service improvements/customer feedback e.g. "You Said, We did" (18/27)



6. 74% of Services displayed a Language/Interpretation/Translation poster. (20/27)



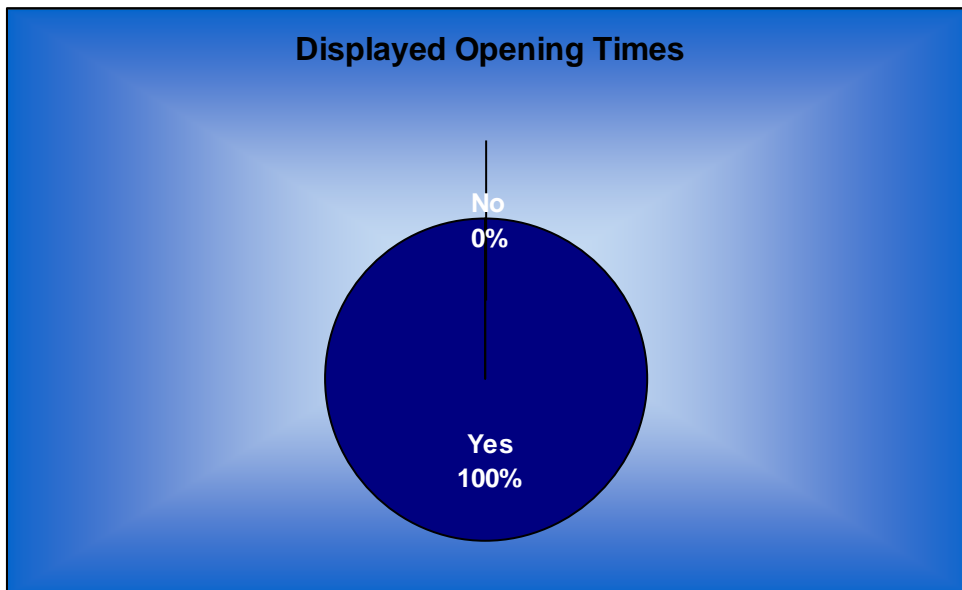
7. 41% of Services displayed a poster advising that information could be made available in other formats and languages. (11/27)



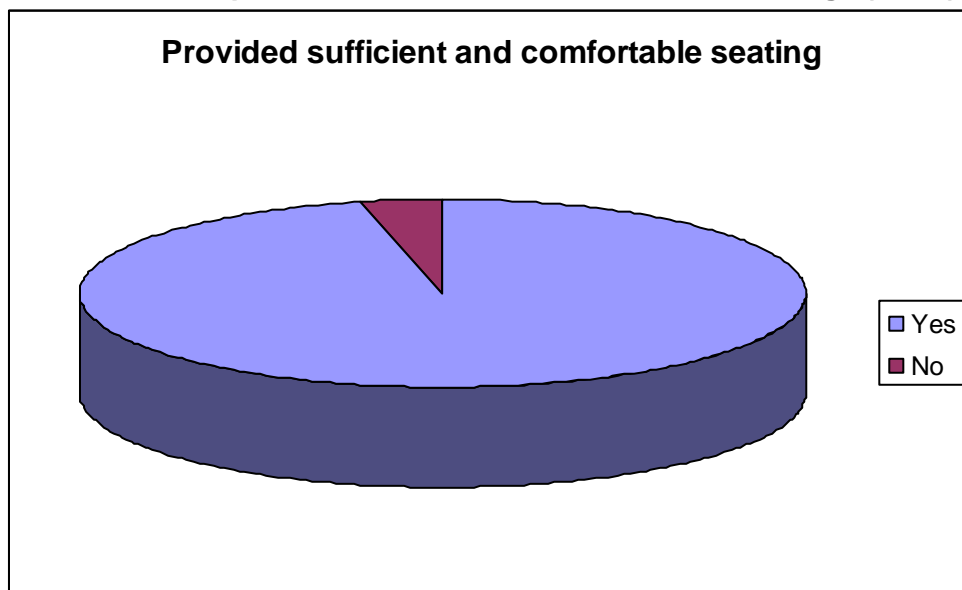
8. 96% of Services were considered easy to find. (26/27)



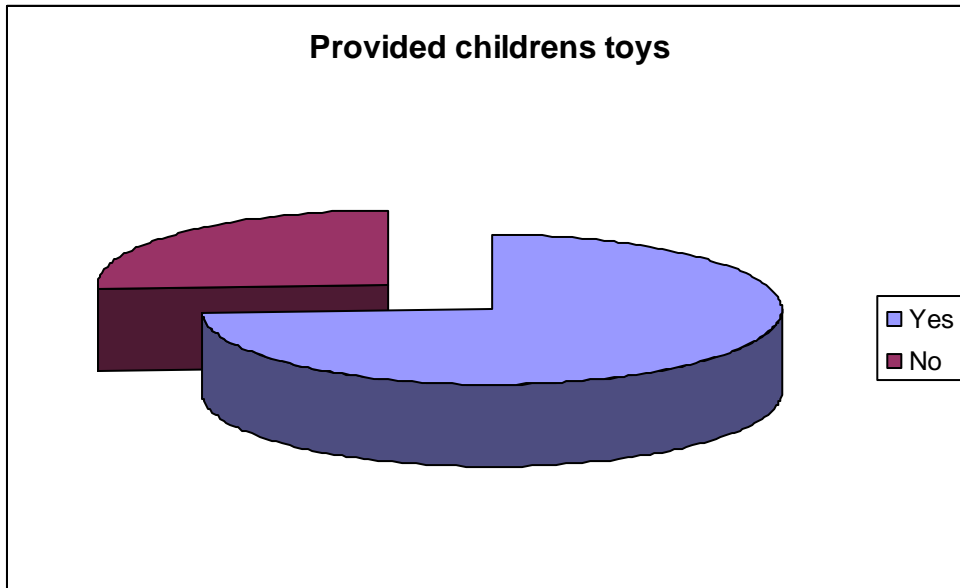
9. 100% of Services displayed opening times.



10. 96% of Services provided sufficient and comfortable seating. (26/27)



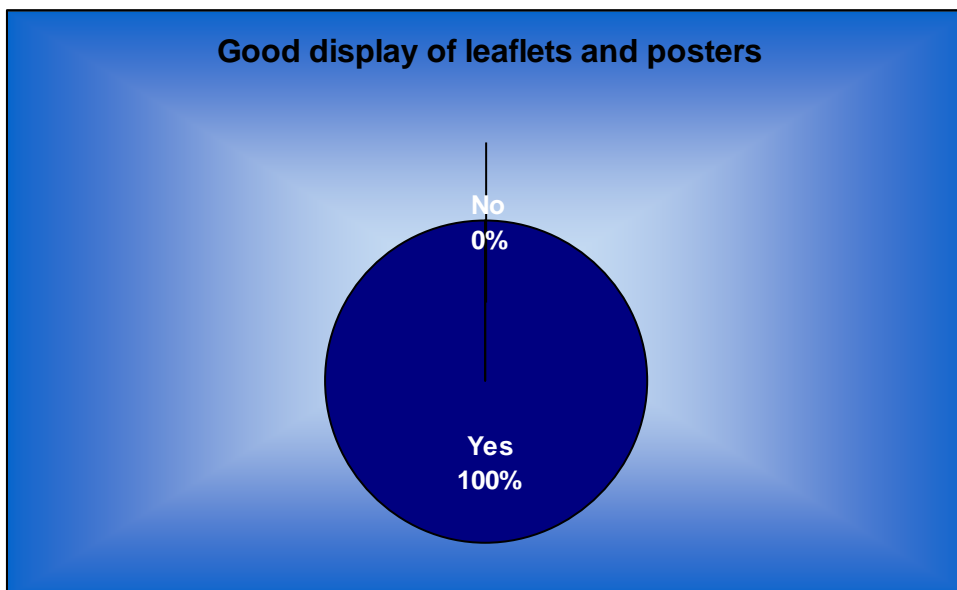
11. 74% of Services provided children's toys. (20/27)



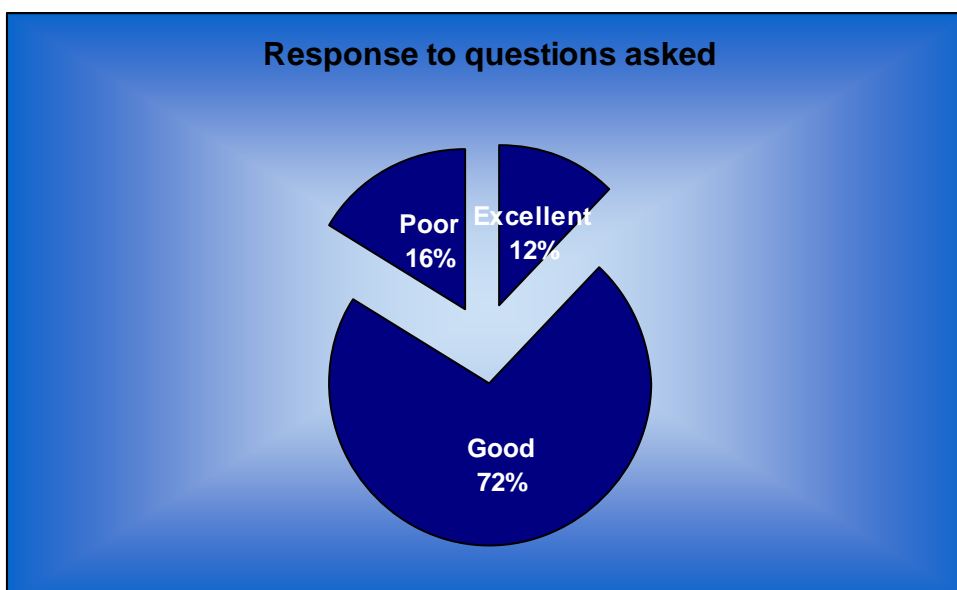
12. 96% of Services were tidy and welcoming. (26/27)



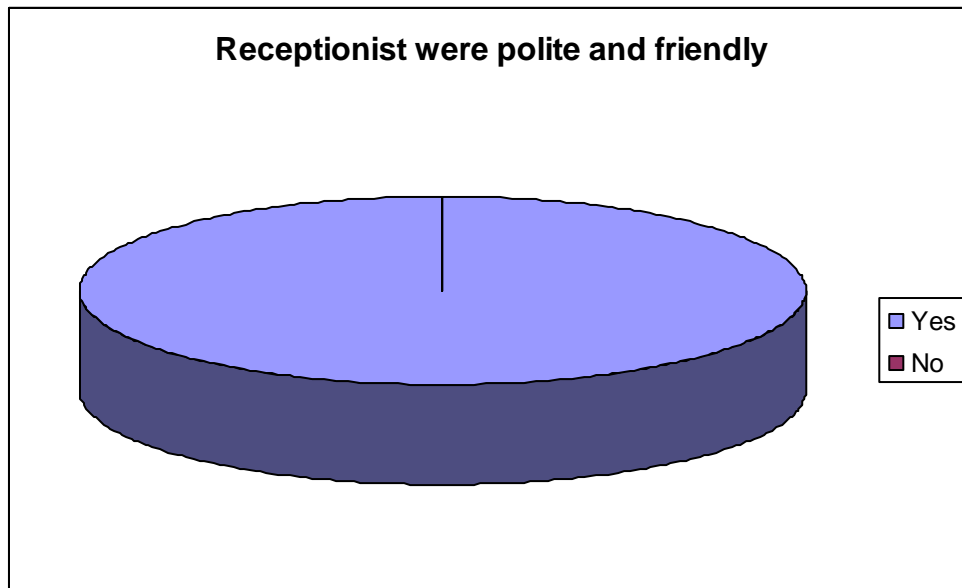
13. 100% of Services had a good display of leaflets and posters.



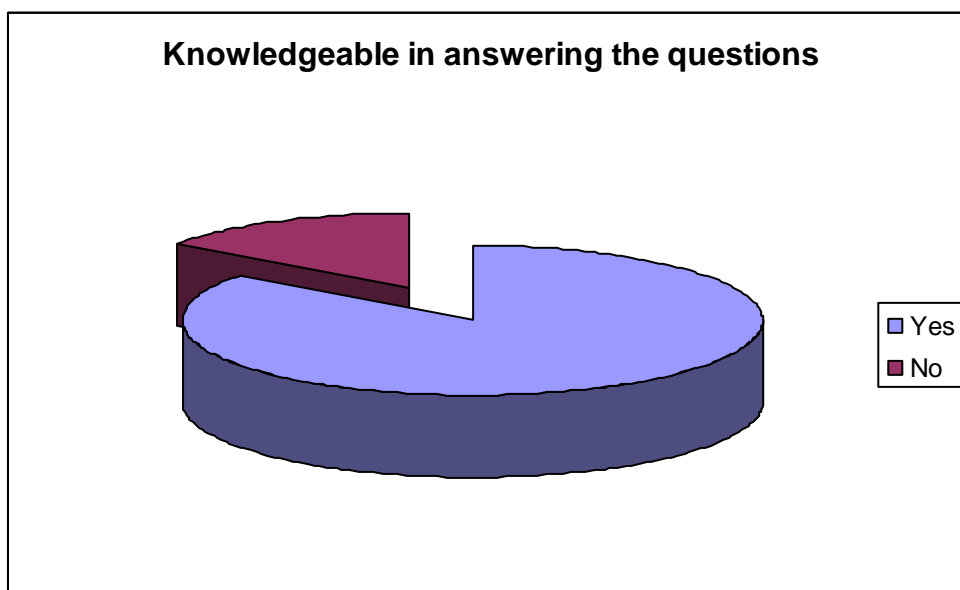
14. In response to the 3 questions each Service were asked, 12% provided excellent responses, 72% provided good responses and 16% did not provide good responses.



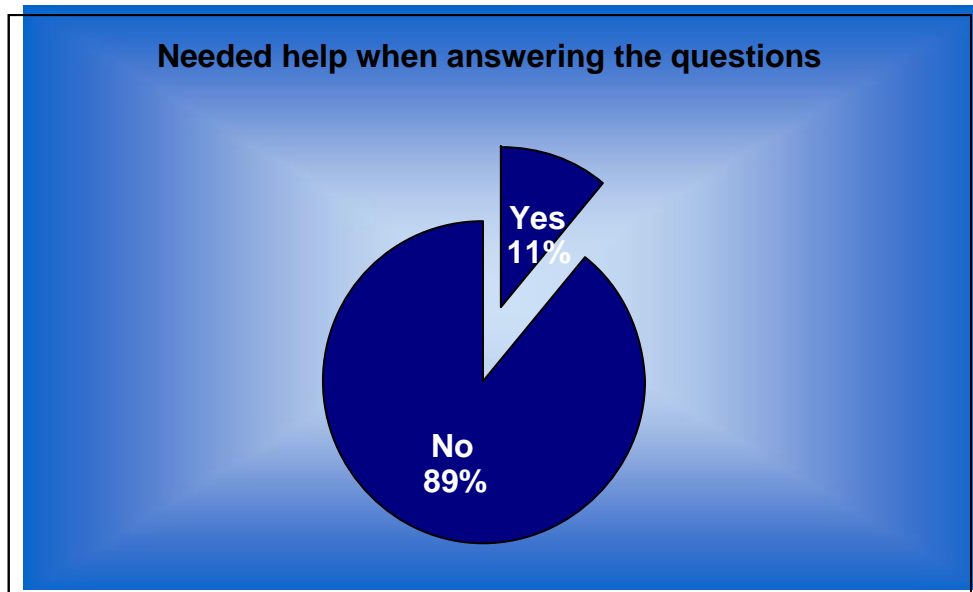
15. 100% of the receptionists were polite and friendly.



16. 85% of receptionists were knowledgeable in answering the questions.
(23/27)



17. 11% of receptionists needed to seek advice from someone else to answer the questions.



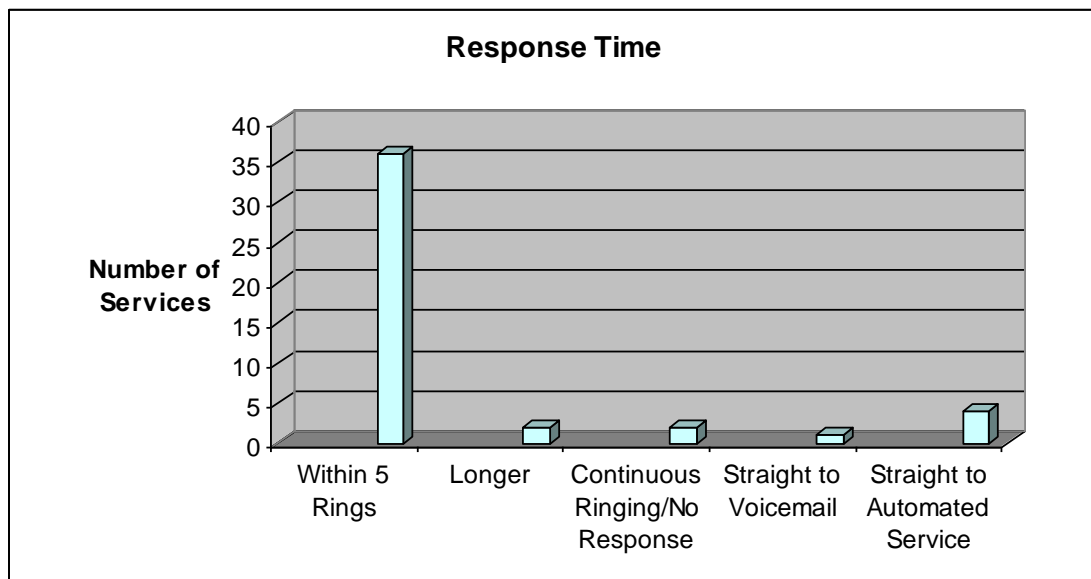
18.

1.3 Results from 2007 Mystery Shopping - Telephone Calls

The following 45 services were telephoned and asked to confirm their office opening times. We were successful in 43 services

Alma House	01642 527457
Animal Welfare	01642 526575
Arc	01642 525199
Bereavement Services	01642 527341
Billingham Art Gallery	01642 527911
Billingham Council Offices	01642 526121
Billingham Forum	01642 521381
Billingham Library-Bedale	01642 527895
Care for your Area	01642 391959
Connexions	01642 677600
Council Tax	01642 527108
Democratic Services	01642 526196
Education Centre	01642 527665
Egglescliffe Library	01642 527958
Fairfield Library	01642 527962
First Contact	01642 527764
Gloucester House-Car Parking	01642 528499
Gloucester House-Planning	01642 526022
High Flyers-Sure Start	01642 528947
Housing Benefit	01642 393829
Ideal House	01642 527532
Ingleby Barwick Library	01642 750767
Kingsway Reception	01642 526843
Licensing	01642 526558
Municipal Buildings	01642 393939
Norton Library	01642 528019
Preston Hall Museum	01642 781184
Ragworth Library	01642 528046
Roseberry Library	01642 528084
Roseworth Library	01642 528098
Splash	01642 527272
Stirling House	01642 527270
Stockton Business Centre	01642 527933
Stockton Central Library	01642 526522
Sure Start	01642 527222
Sure Start Redhill Centre	01642 527780
Thornaby Baths	01642 616727
Thornaby Library	01642 528150
Thornaby Pavilion Library	01642 528117
Tourist Information Centre	01642 528130
Training & Employment Services	01642 528261
Urban Renewal	01642 527797
Yarm Library	01642 528152

Response Times



80% of Services contacted answered the call within 5 rings. (36/45)

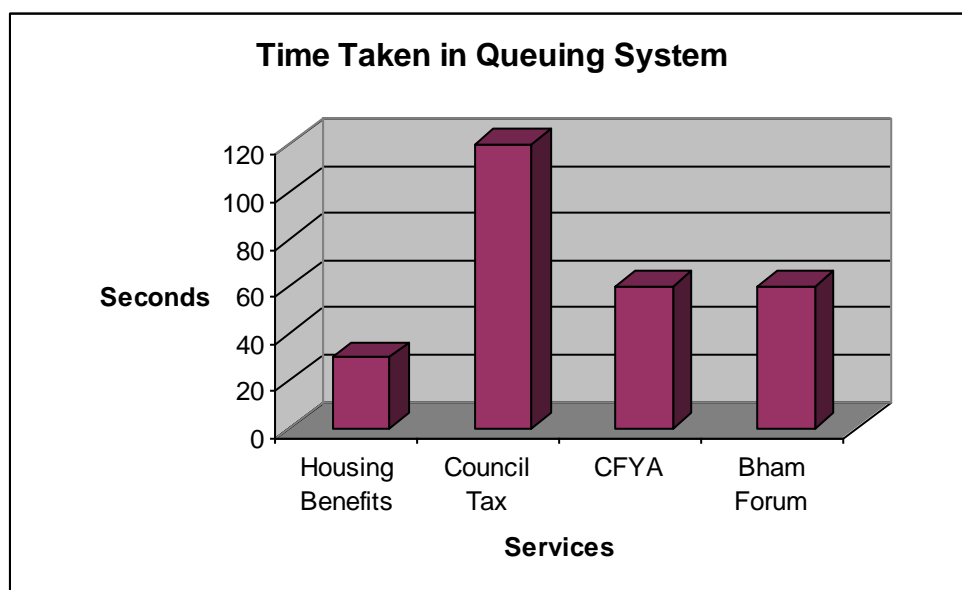
4% of Services contacted answered the call longer than 5 rings. (2/45)

4% of Services continuously rang/no response (2/45)

2% of Services rang straight to Voicemail (1/45)

10% of Services went straight to an automated service (4/45)

Automated Response- length of time taken to answer



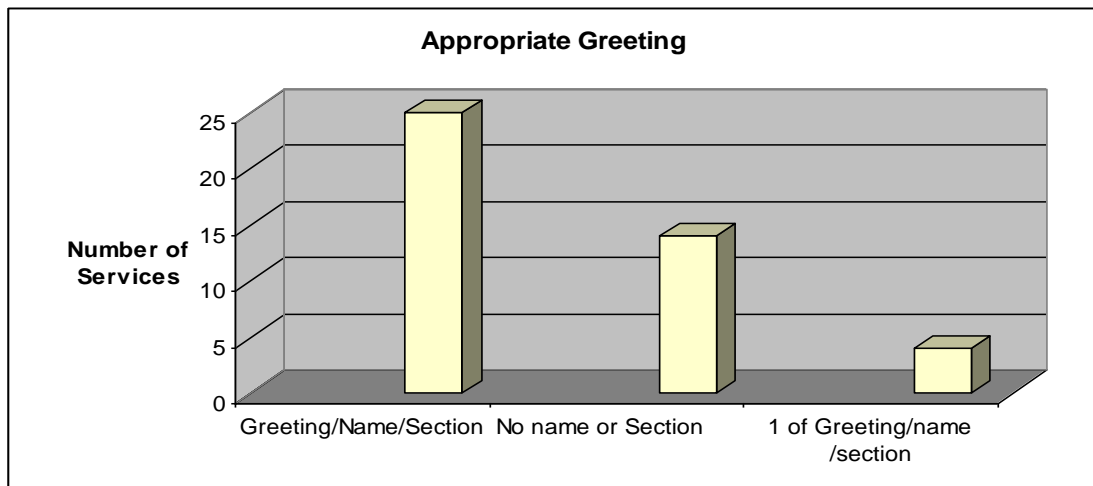
Housing Benefits-30 Seconds

Council Tax-2 minutes

CFYA-1 minute

Billingham Forum-1 Minute

Greeting - should include morning/afternoon, name of service and person taking the call

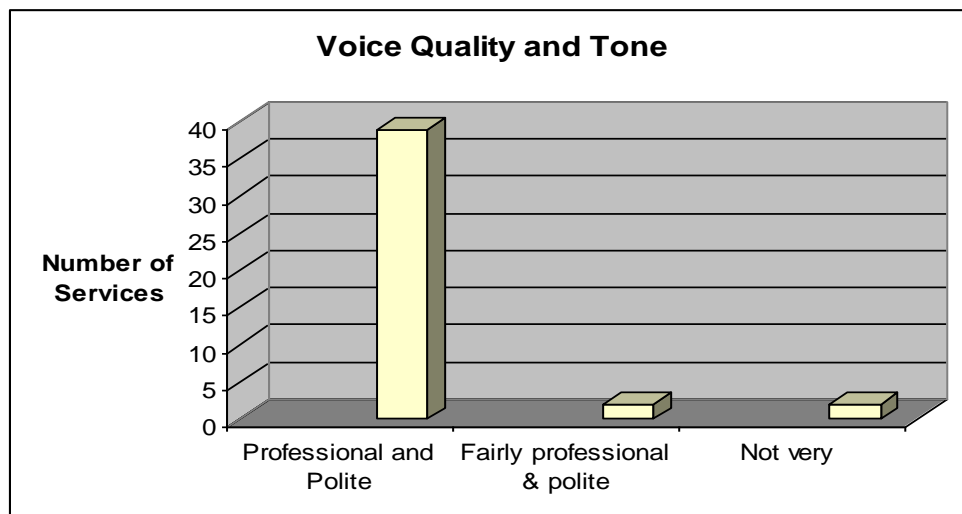


58% of Services provided a greeting with name and section. (25/43)

33% of Services did not provide either a name or service (12 no name and 2 no service) (14/43)

9% of services only provided 1 of the required standards. (4/43)

Voice Quality and Tone

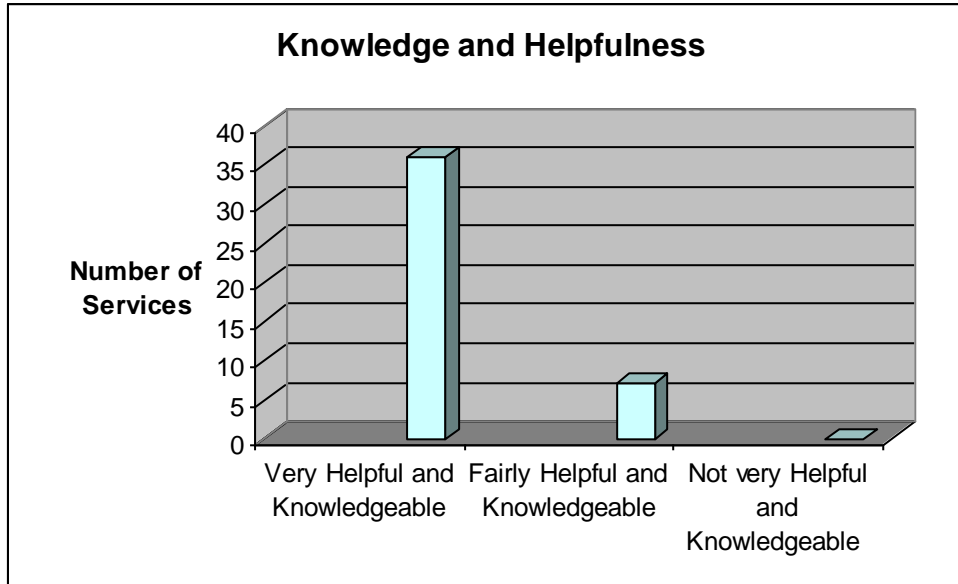


90% of services were professional and polite (39/43)

5% of services were fairly professional and polite (2/43)

5% of services were not very professional and polite (2/43)

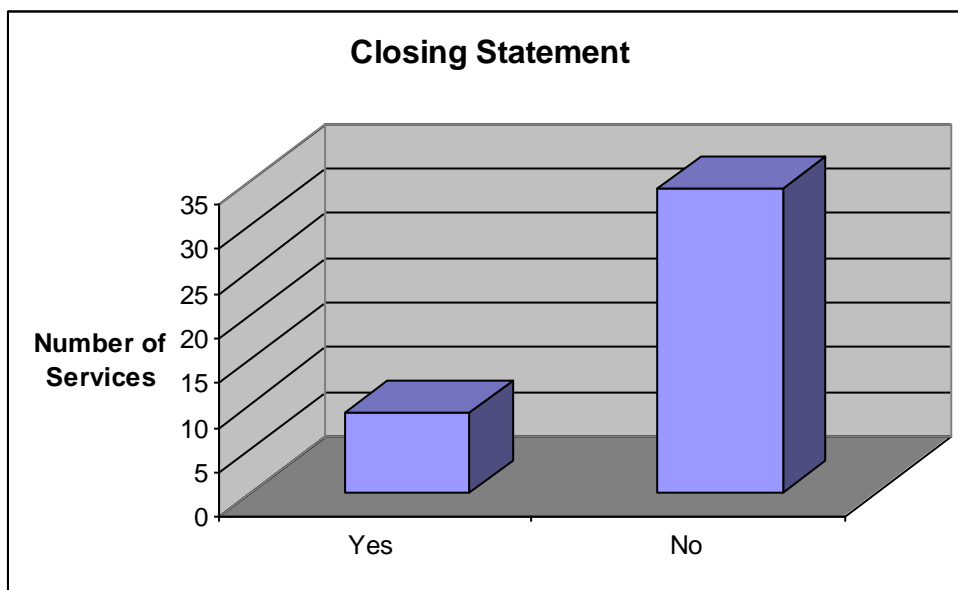
Knowledge and Helpfulness



83% of services gave a very helpful and knowledgeable response. (36/43)

17% of services gave a fairly helpful and knowledgeable response. (7/43)

Closing Statement e.g. is there anything else I can help you with?



21% of services provided a closing statement. (9/43)

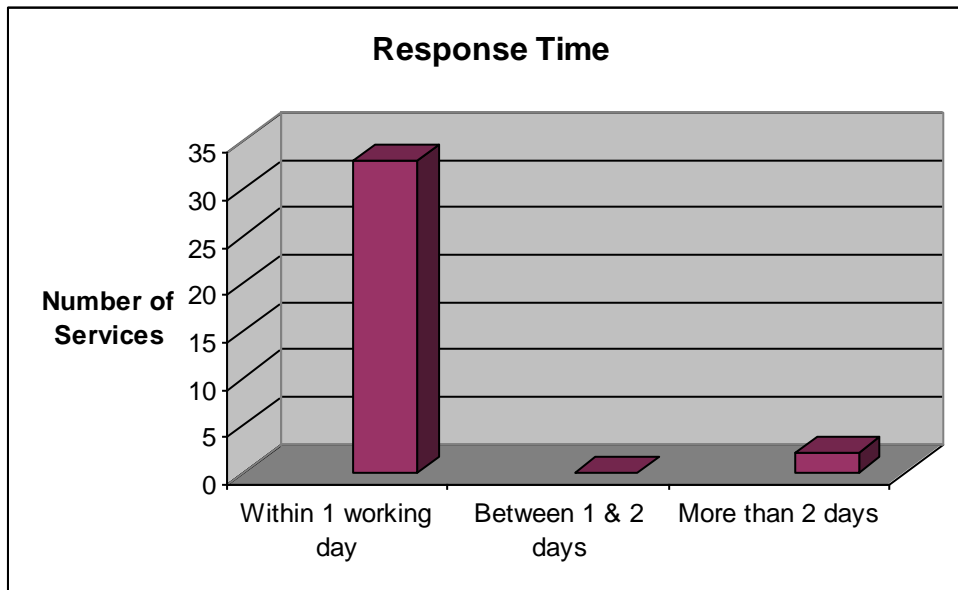
79% of services did not provide a closing statement. (34/43)

1.4 Results from 2007 Mystery Shopping – Email Contact

The following 36 Services were emailed In September and asked to provide the name of the Local Councillor for Stillington.

Adult Education	adulthood@stockton.gov.uk
Animal Health	animal.health@stockton.gov.uk
Billingham Forum	billinghamforum@teesactive.co.uk
Billingham Library	Billingham.library@stockton.gov.uk
Care for your area	careforyourarea@stockton.gov.uk
Council Tax	council.tax@stockton.gov.uk
Democratic Services	electoral@stockton.gov.uk
Egglescliffe Library	Egglescliffe.library@stockton.gov.uk
Fairfield Library	Fairfield.library@stockton.gov.uk
First Contact	firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk
Gloucester House-Car Parking	carparking@stockton.gov.uk
Housing Benefits	benefits.section@stockton.gov.uk
Ingleby Barwick Library	ingelbybarwick.library@stockton.gov.uk
Kingsway Reception	Kingsway.reception@stockton.gov.uk
Licensing	licensing.administration@stockton.gov.uk
Municipal Buildings	reception.municipalbuildings@stockton.gov.uk
Norton Library	Norton.library@stockton.gov.uk
Planning	planning@stockton.gov.uk
Preston Hall Museum	prestonhall@stockton.gov.uk
Registration & Bereavement Serv	birthsdeaths@stockton.gov.uk
Roseberry Library	Roseberry.library@stockton.gov.uk
Roseworth Library	Roseworth.library@stockton.gov.uk
Splash	splash@teesactive.co.uk
Stockton Business Centre	business.centre@stockton.gov.uk
Stockton Reference Library	stocktonreferencelibrary@stockton.gov.uk
Stockton Sports Centre	stocktonsportscentre@teesactive.co.uk
Stockton Tourist Centre	touristinformation@stockton.gov.uk
Sure Start	surestart@stockton.gov.uk
Thornaby Pavilion/Pool	Thornaby.pavilion@teesactive.co.uk
Trading Standards	tradingstandards@stockton.gov.uk
Training and Employment Services	tes@stockton.gov.uk
Urban Renewal	urban.renewal@stockton.gov.uk
Yarm Library	yarm.library@stockton.gov.uk
Youth Offending Service	youthoffendingservice@stockton.gov.uk

Response Time

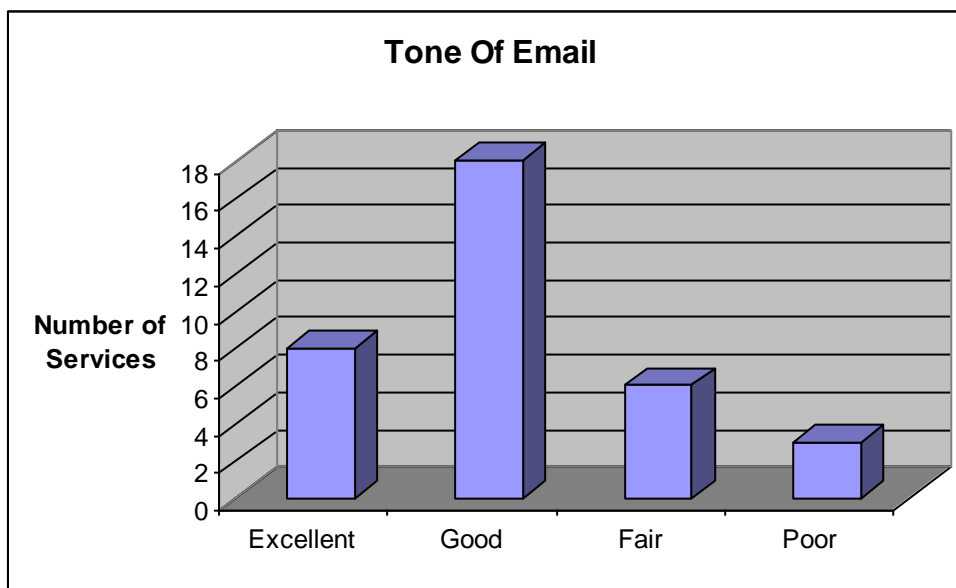


94% of Services sent a reply within 1 working day (33/35)

6% of Services sent a reply more than 2 days later (2/35)

Only 1 Service failed to respond

Tone of the Email



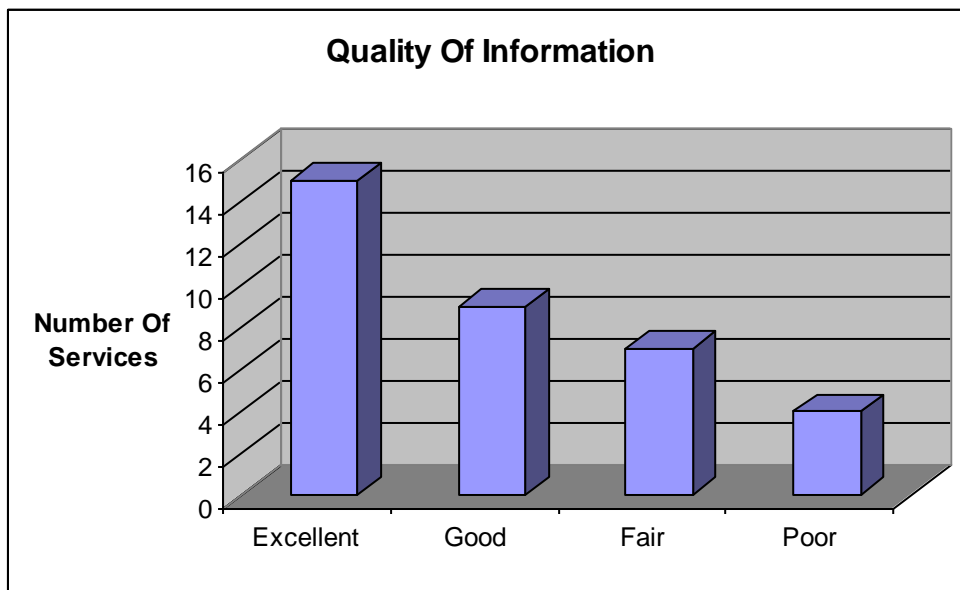
23% of services were excellent (8/35)

51% were good (18/35)

17% were fair (6/35)

9% were poor (3/35)

Quality of Information



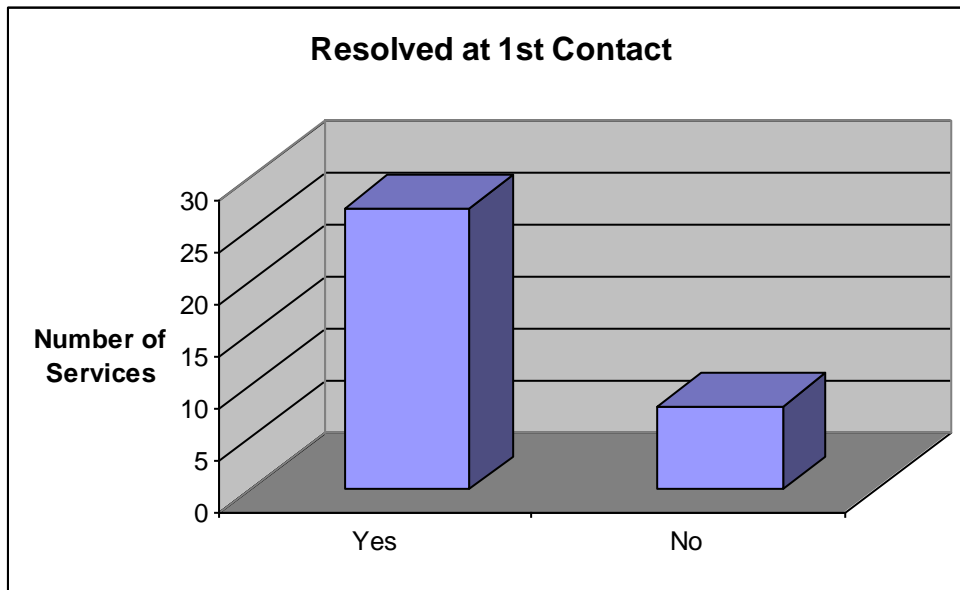
43% of Services were excellent (15/35)

26% of Services were good (9/35)

20% of Services were fair (7/35)

11% of Services were poor (4/35)

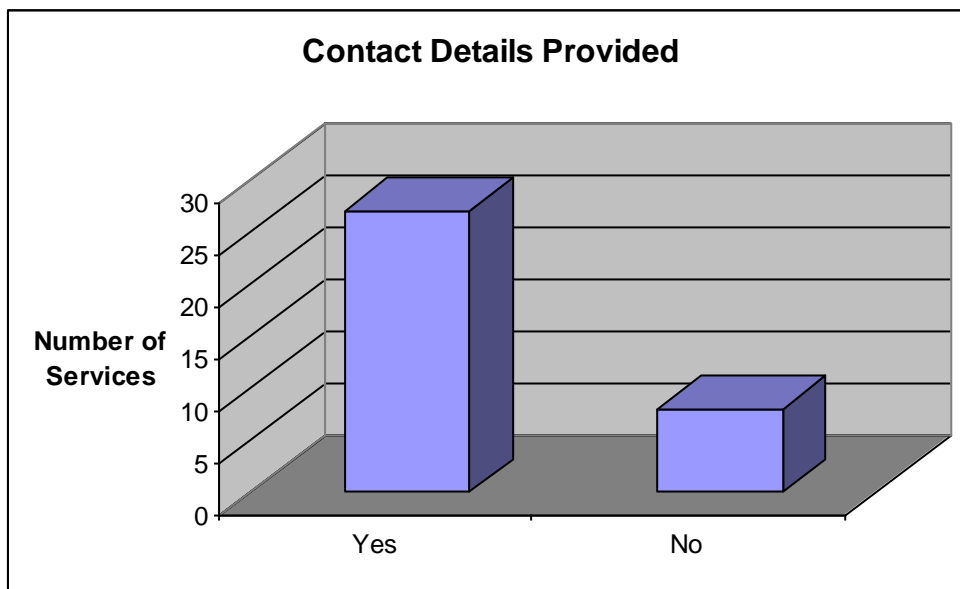
Resolved at 1st Contact



77% of replies were fully resolved at 1st contact (27/35)

23% of replies were not fully resolved at 1st contact e.g directed to another person or SBC website for the information (8/35)

Contact Details Provided



77% of replies contained the name and service of the responder (27/35)

23% of replies did not contain the name of the responder (8/35)