



**Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS)  
Housing Survey**

**2018**

## Background

1. In order for Royal Navy and Royal Marines families to contribute to the work of the Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) project team, as it moves towards awarding new contract(s) for the allocation of Service Families Accommodation (SFA) and the Repairs and Maintenance of SFA, a survey was hosted to gather feedback from Serving personnel and their families. The survey ran from 7th November 2018 to 30th November 2018. During that period 670 respondents completed the NFF survey. 59% of respondents are spouses or partners of regular serving RN/RM personnel. Of the 476 respondents who completed the question, 75% either work full-time, part-time or are self-employed.
2. Currently approximately 5,200 serving personnel and their families live in SFA.

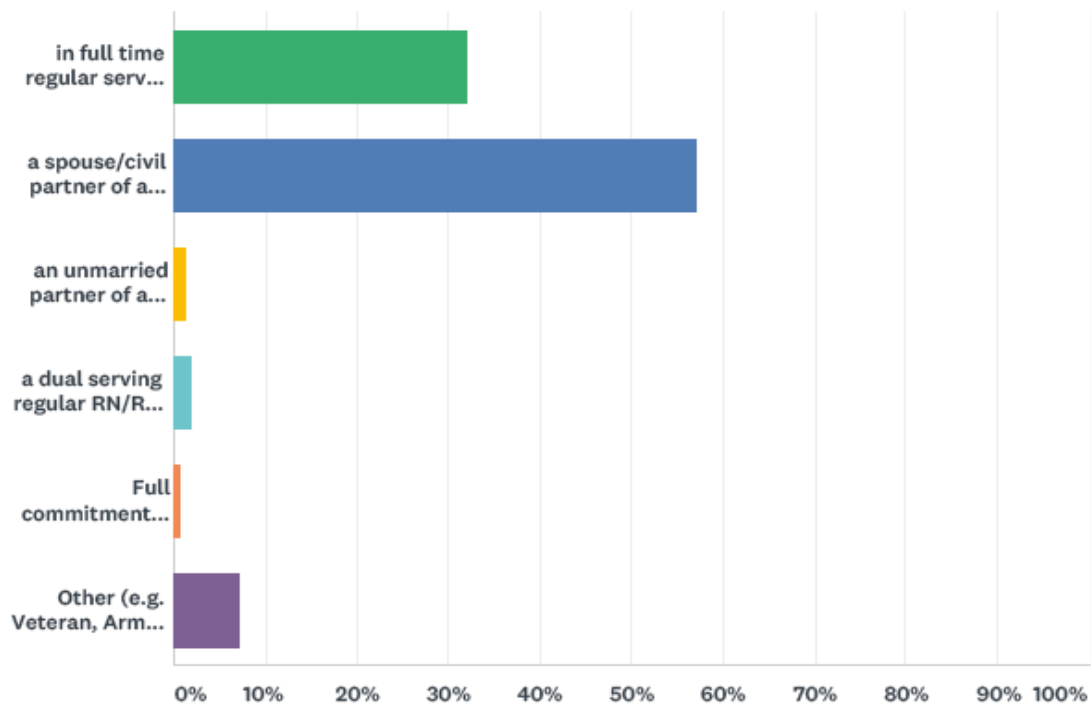
## Summary of Findings

3. When looking at how accommodation could be applied for in the future, 68% of respondents expressed a desire to be able to apply online via the Internet.
4. The ability to have access to floorplans and internal and external photographs of SFA is considered to be of high importance to families.
5. The ability to book an appointment for a repair to SFA via an online or website based system is preferred.
6. Using modern technology, respondents expressed a strong desire for appointments to be offered in shorter 'slot' periods.
7. 74% of respondents replied that a fully stocked van to enable first-time fixes was the most important aspect when a tradesperson visits to fix a problem.
8. When asked about managing a complaint, 59% stated that they would prefer an online system, with the ability to monitor its progress via the Internet.
9. Of the 670 respondents, 230 chose to provide additional free text feedback. The most common themes could be categorised as comments in the following topics:
  - a) Future contracts should invest in lasting repairs and quality replacements. The feedback from respondents states that they wished to move away from a 'patch things up' position.
  - b) A review into the current policy of allocation of SFA according to need rather than rank.
  - c) The ability for a spouse to be more involved with allocation of SFA.
  - d) A review into eligibility for access to SFA. Support for non-married couples is called for.
  - e) A desire for repairs and maintenance to be dealt with at a local level.

## Responses to Multiple Choice Questions

### Q1 Are you:

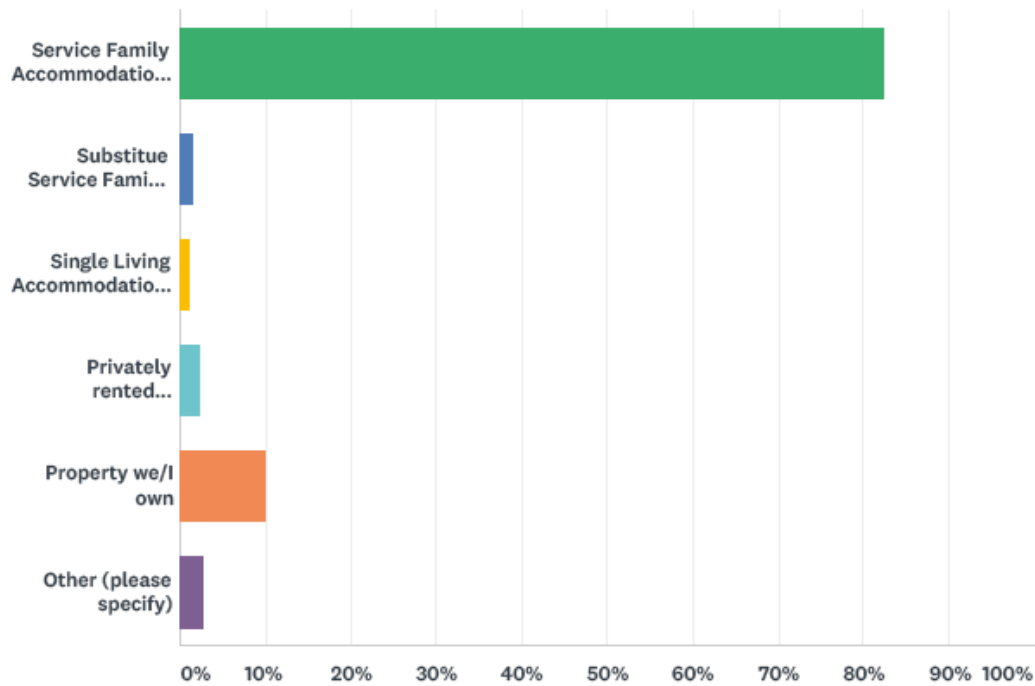
Answered: 670 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
in full time regular service in the RN/RM	32.09%	215
a spouse/civil partner of a regular serving RN/RM person	57.16%	383
an unmarried partner of a regular serving RN/RM person	1.34%	9
a dual serving regular RN/RM married couple	1.79%	12
Full commitment RN/RM Reservist	0.60%	4
Other (e.g. Veteran, Army or RAF personnel or a spouse/partner of an Army or RAF personnel)	7.01%	47
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>670</b>

## Q2 What type of property do you and your family live in?

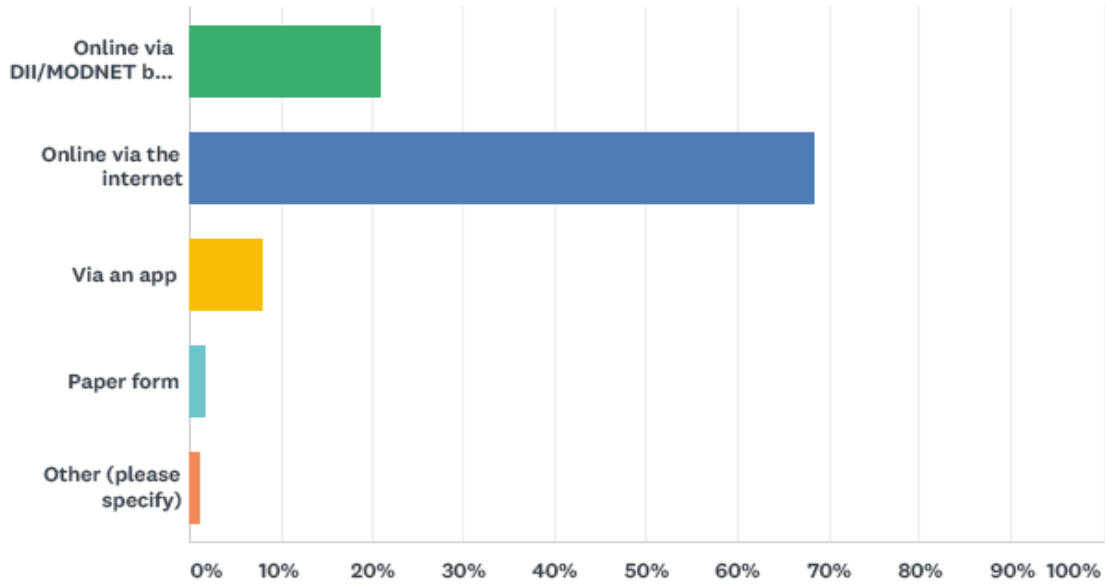
Answered: 611 Skipped: 59



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Service Family Accommodation (SFA)	82.49%	504
Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA)	1.47%	9
Single Living Accommodation (SLA)	0.98%	6
Privately rented accommodation	2.29%	14
Property we/I own	9.98%	61
Other (please specify)	2.78%	17
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>611</b>

### Q3 How would you prefer to apply for SFA?

Answered: 564 Skipped: 106



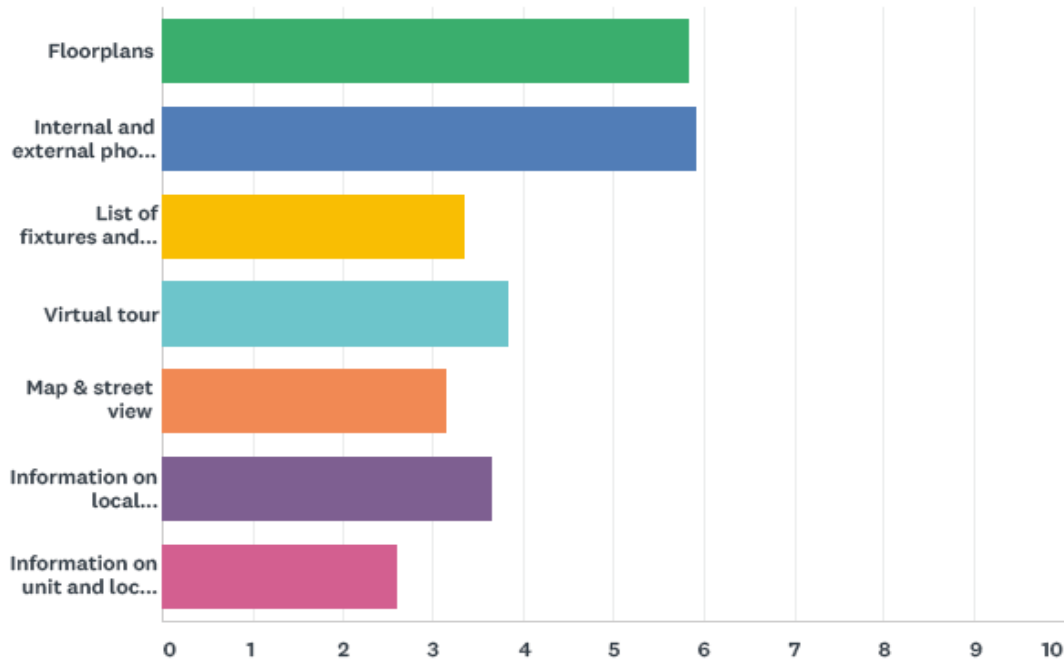
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Online via DII/MODNET by the serving person	20.92%	118
Online via the Internet	68.44%	386
Via an app	7.98%	45
Paper form	1.60%	9
Other (please specify)	1.06%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>564</b>

**For other,**

- In person
- Direct contact with a person able to explain the area

### Q4 When you apply for SFA, what information would you like to be available? Please rank the following options in order of preference, 1 being your most preferred.

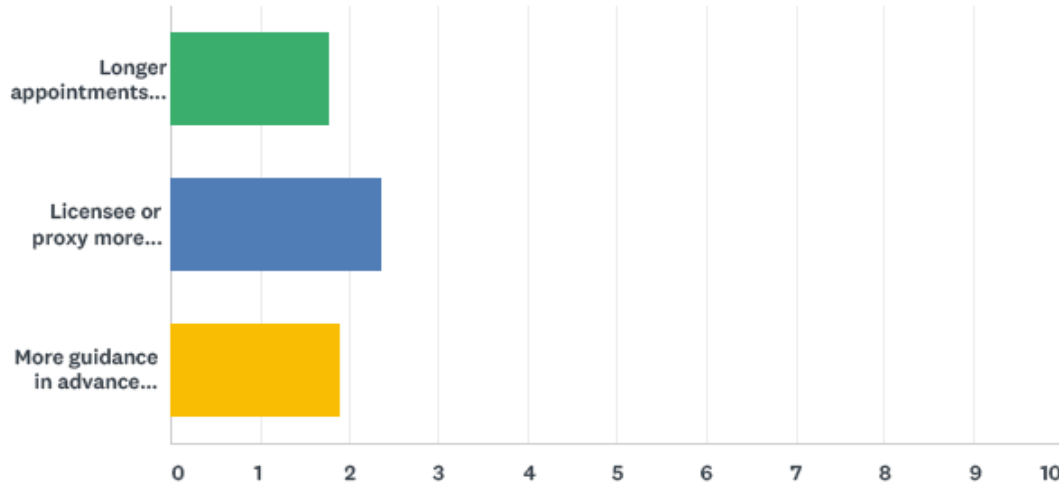
Answered: 557 Skipped: 113



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL/ SCORE
Floorplans	36.31% 195	35.57% 191	14.15% 76	7.45% 40	3.91% 21	1.68% 9	0.93% 5	537 5.84
Internal and external photos of the house	40.89% 220	30.86% 166	16.54% 89	4.83% 26	5.20% 28	1.12% 6	0.56% 3	538 5.92
List of fixtures and fittings	1.30% 7	4.64% 25	20.22% 109	24.12% 130	16.51% 89	16.88% 91	16.33% 88	539 3.34
Virtual tour	11.55% 62	10.24% 55	20.11% 108	16.39% 88	9.87% 53	13.22% 71	18.62% 100	537 3.83
Map & street view	4.04% 22	5.51% 30	10.66% 58	13.42% 73	28.68% 156	20.40% 111	17.28% 94	544 3.13
Information on local schools/childcare provision	6.23% 34	11.17% 61	12.64% 69	20.15% 110	19.78% 108	19.96% 109	10.07% 55	546 3.64
Information on unit and local area facilities	2.88% 16	3.78% 21	6.85% 38	13.33% 74	15.32% 85	24.50% 136	33.33% 185	555 2.59

### Q5 When you move in or out of your SFA, what options would you prefer? Please rank the following options in order of preference, 1 being your most preferred.

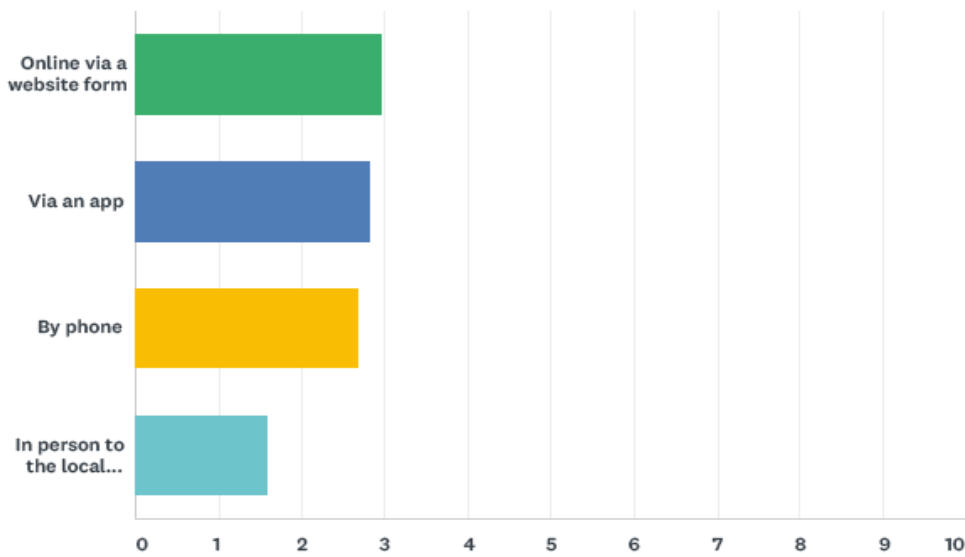
Answered: 528 Skipped: 142



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Longer appointments with the Accommodation Officer to take over the house or hand it back	21.75% 112	33.98% 175	44.27% 228	515	1.77
Licensee or proxy more involved with logging issues in the house (e.g. an electronic system that could be completed as you go around the house logging issues with the Accommodation Officer)	51.63% 269	33.97% 177	14.40% 75	521	2.37
More guidance in advance about the move-in/move-out process and standards	27.81% 146	32.76% 172	39.43% 207	525	1.88

### Q6 When you need to book an appointment for a repair to your SFA, how would you prefer to do it?

Answered: 499 Skipped: 171

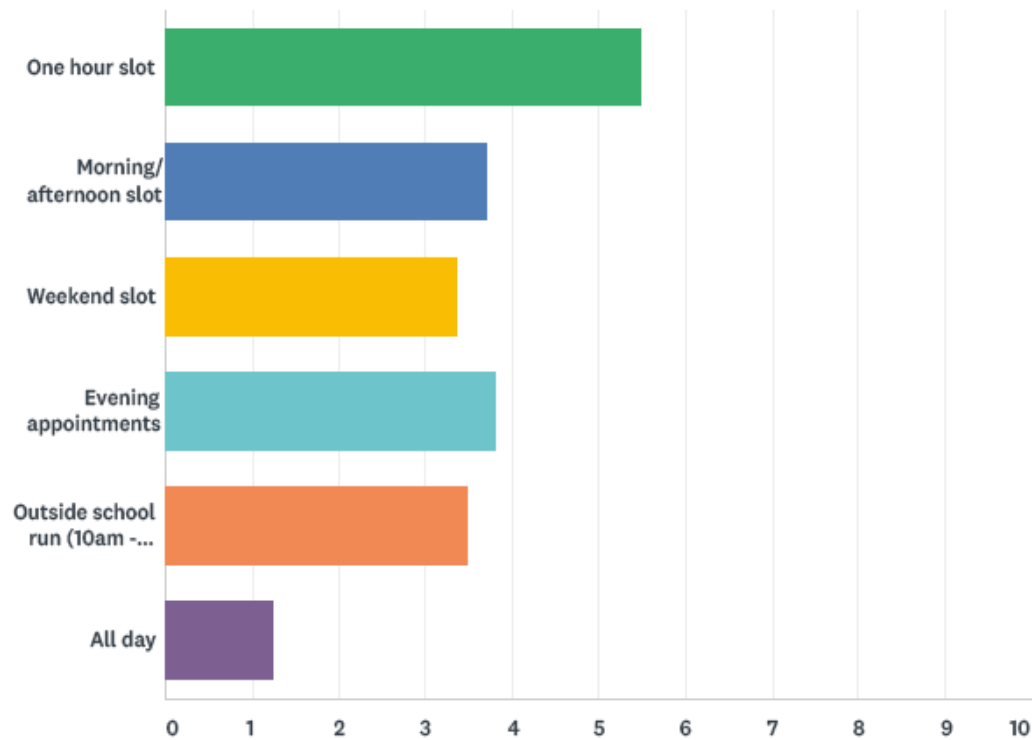


	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
Online via a website form	35.57% 175	33.54% 165	22.76% 112	8.13% 40	492	2.97
Via an app	29.18% 143	34.90% 171	24.90% 122	11.02% 54	490	2.82
By phone	27.35% 134	22.24% 109	40.41% 198	10.00% 49	490	2.67
In person to the local Accommodation Officer	9.35% 46	9.15% 45	11.79% 58	69.72% 343	492	1.58



## Q7 When you are offered a repair or maintenance appointment, what would you prefer?

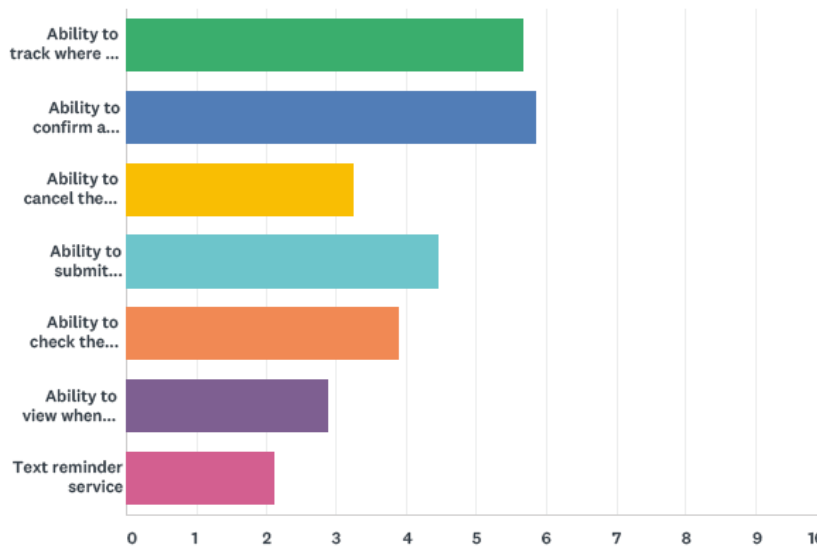
Answered: 498 Skipped: 172



	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
One hour slot	68.71% 336	17.38% 85	8.79% 43	3.68% 18	1.02% 5	0.41% 2	489	5.48
Morning/ afternoon slot	3.95% 19	25.99% 125	27.03% 130	23.49% 113	18.92% 91	0.62% 3	481	3.71
Weekend slot	6.04% 29	14.37% 69	25.83% 124	26.46% 127	18.54% 89	8.75% 42	480	3.37
Evening appointments	7.68% 37	25.10% 121	25.73% 124	24.07% 116	15.98% 77	1.45% 7	482	3.80
Outside school run (10am - 2pm)	15.26% 74	17.53% 85	11.75% 57	17.94% 87	32.58% 158	4.95% 24	485	3.50
All day	0.42% 2	0.42% 2	0.63% 3	3.35% 16	11.53% 55	83.65% 399	477	1.24

### Q8 If it was possible to have an online portal for you to check what is happening with your repair, which of these possible functions would you prefer?

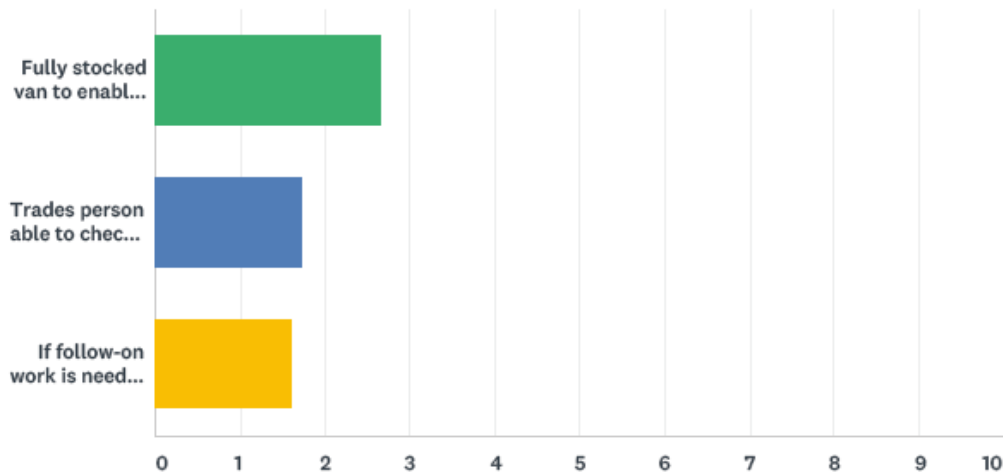
Answered: 498 Skipped: 172



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Ability to track where the trade person is (e.g. see how many stops until your house)	41.06% 202	26.63% 131	13.21% 65	7.72% 38	3.66% 18	4.47% 22	3.25% 16	492	5.67
Ability to confirm a narrower arrival time on the day	35.16% 173	37.40% 184	14.63% 72	7.52% 37	2.44% 12	1.83% 9	1.02% 5	492	5.86
Ability to cancel the appointment	0.62% 3	3.90% 19	19.10% 93	20.74% 101	22.18% 108	19.10% 93	14.37% 70	487	3.25
Ability to submit photos/videos in order to help diagnose the problem correctly	12.35% 60	16.87% 82	21.60% 105	20.16% 98	16.05% 78	8.85% 43	4.12% 20	486	4.46
Ability to check the status of the repair (e.g. open, closed, awaiting financial approval)	6.75% 33	9.00% 44	17.59% 86	24.34% 119	23.93% 117	13.29% 65	5.11% 25	489	3.90
Ability to view when regular statutory and mandatory inspections are due with the ability to select a convenient appointment	2.66% 13	5.32% 26	8.79% 43	11.86% 58	19.63% 96	36.61% 179	15.13% 74	489	2.89
Text reminder service	2.85% 14	1.83% 9	5.91% 29	7.54% 37	11.61% 57	15.48% 76	54.79% 269	491	2.11

## Q9 When the trades person arrives to fix your problem, which of these would be the most helpful?

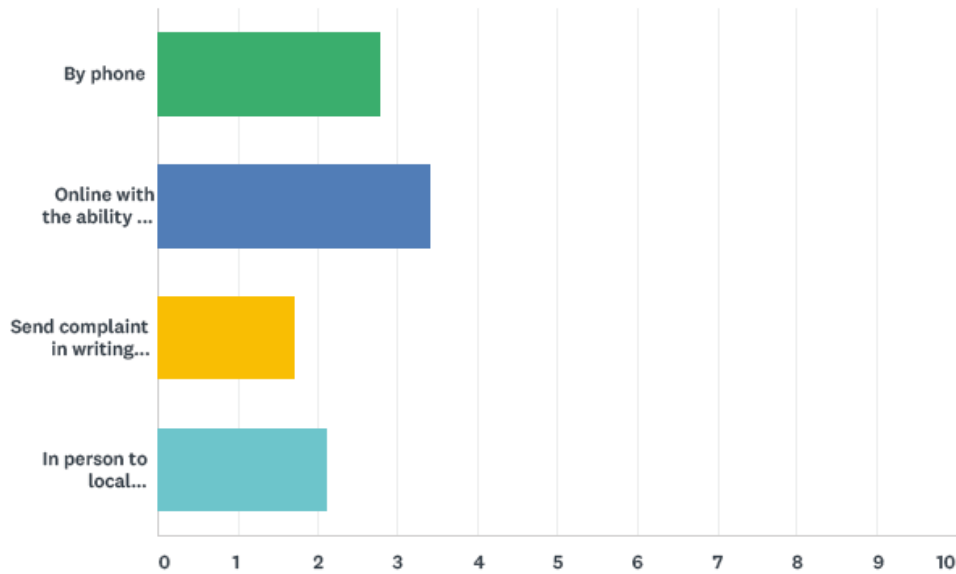
Answered: 488 Skipped: 182



	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Fully stocked van to enable first-time fix (e.g. doesn't have to come back another day as doesn't have the part)	73.65% 355	18.46% 89	7.88% 38	482	2.66
Trades person able to check the rest of the house to see if other repairs are needed (to repair at same time or book future appointment as required)	17.67% 85	38.67% 186	43.66% 210	481	1.74
If follow-on work is needed, ability to book next appointment before they leave	9.69% 47	42.89% 208	47.42% 230	485	1.62

## Q10 If you need to make a complaint, how would you rather this was managed?

Answered: 489 Skipped: 181



	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
By phone	24.06% 115	40.79% 195	25.10% 120	10.04% 48	478	2.79
Online with the ability to monitor its progress through an online system	58.26% 282	27.27% 132	12.81% 62	1.65% 8	484	3.42
Send complaint in writing (letter or email)	3.14% 15	12.79% 61	35.64% 170	48.43% 231	477	1.71
In person to local Accommodation Officer	15.80% 76	18.92% 91	25.99% 125	39.29% 189	481	2.11

## **Q11 If you have any comments about the way complaints should be managed in the future please make them here:**

142 Respondents provided comments. The most common themes could be categorised as comments in the following topics:

- 42% of respondents stated that they wanted effective communications during the process of resolution. They felt it important that the contractor should pro-actively manage any complaint with the family.
- 19% of respondents stated that a complaint should not be closed unless all parties agreed that it should/could be closed.
- 18% of respondents requested better transparency of the complaints process. They stated that clear timescales for resolution should be available and families should have a clear explanation of what they should expect.
- 11% of respondents stated that frontline staff should be more empowered to respond to a complaint in order to bring an issue to a swift resolution.
- 10% of respondents stated that there should be an independent party to audit and oversee the process in order to hold the contractor to account.

### **Comments included:**

‘Communication is key, please don’t treat us like we are idiots’

‘I had a house that was electrically unsafe after a renovation. When I tried to complain to raise the health and safety issue, it was treated as a service level complaint rather than having some kind of investigation into who did the work’

‘When the complaints are against a third party supplier there is no process to force them to fix/repair what they have broken, the call centre just say “it’s not our problem. I will call the company to sort it out”. I am now in the second year of waiting.’

‘Online so there’s an e-mail trail showing what’s actually gone on’

‘It would be useful for the tenant to have some recourse as currently they just shut my complaint and I have to raise another one complaining that they shut my complaint. It’s a ridiculous situation. There needs to be actual monitoring of this and some incentive for the company to actually deal with the complaint.’

‘Complaints to be taken seriously from the operator, missed appointments are time consuming and it’s normally the non-serving personnel who has to waste lots of days for no shows. This isn’t always taken seriously and sometimes is fobbed off as it can’t be helped. Appointments aren’t always given to the contractors as you speak to them. Vans should have basic equipment to fix first time and more details to be given to the contractor, as they arrive sometimes with just a job number.’

‘All stages of a complaint should be treated as they are with any other organisation whereby formal confirmation of receipt of the complaint is made via either an acknowledgement letter or ideally an e-mail. There should be a complaint handling process available in writing so that personnel can clearly

see the expected timescales. This would remove the feeling that you need to constantly chase updates and will free time for telephone staff etc. This will also provide accountability for contractors and potentially lead to savings if jobs are completed quicker in, for example, instances where jobs have been delayed and damage has become worse. By having a system online personnel can check progress, request updates electronically once time markers are reached if updates have not been provided.'

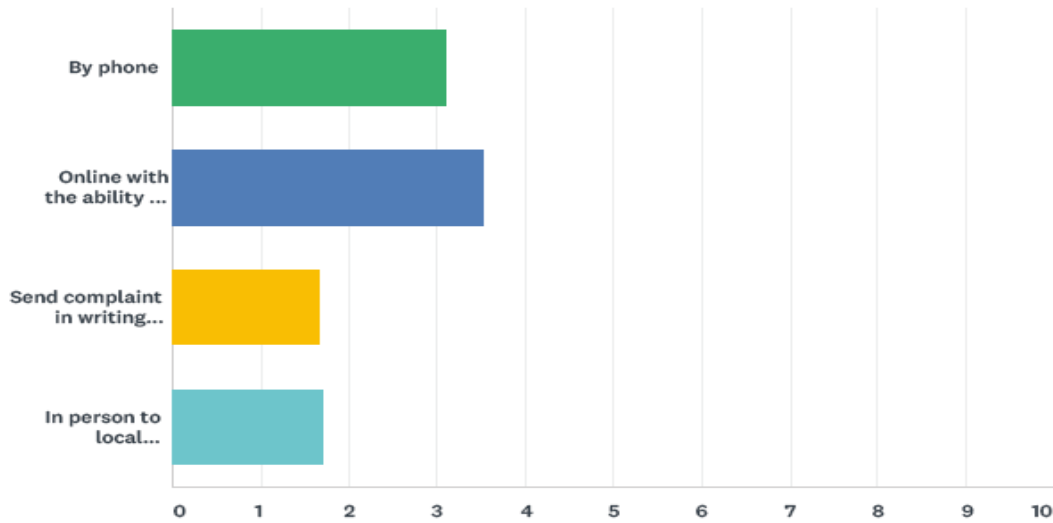
'It would be good to have a record beyond the phone call.'

'A more transparent service is needed.'

'Please don't close a complaint before it's resolved.'

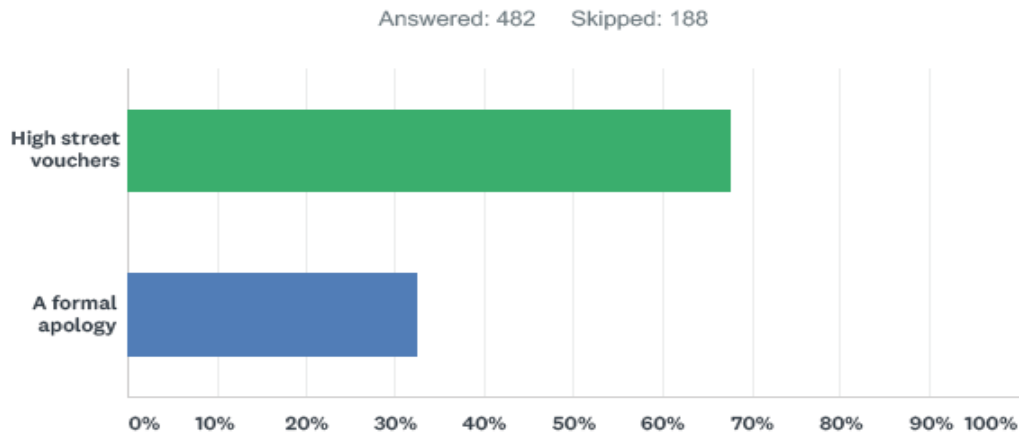
## Q12 If you have a missed appointment, how would you like to report this?

Answered: 472 Skipped: 198



	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
By phone	30.32% 141	51.83% 241	14.19% 66	3.66% 17	465	3.09
Online with the ability to monitor its progress through an online system	63.33% 297	27.93% 131	8.10% 38	0.64% 3	469	3.54
Send complaint in writing (letter or email)	0.43% 2	10.63% 49	44.90% 207	44.03% 203	461	1.67
In person to local Accommodation Officer	6.71% 31	9.31% 43	32.90% 152	51.08% 236	462	1.72

### Q13 If you had a missed appointment, how would you like this to be acknowledged?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
High street vouchers	67.63%	326
A formal apology	32.37%	156
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>482</b>



## Q14 If you have any comments about how missed appointments should be handled or compensated please make them here:

159 Respondents provided comments. The most common themes could be categorised as comments in the following topics:

- 35% of respondents stated that an apology and explanation of why an appointment was missed coupled with a voucher or compensation is important.
- 29% of respondents want to be told that an operative cannot attend the appointment as soon as it becomes apparent.
- 22% of respondents seek better management of subcontractors/on the ground staff to improve missed appointments and customer service.
- 14% of respondents state that the occupant should be offered the opportunity to choose the next appointment time rather than being issued with an appointment.

### Comments included:

‘Good management of information that lets me know if an appointment is likely to be missed which is much more important to me than vouchers. Prioritisation of my appointment next time would be good as well’

‘Sending the wrong tradesperson should count as a missed appointment. I’ve had multiple instances in which I have clearly described the nature of the issue and the type of tradesperson required and then they send someone else (who invariably can’t conduct the work). This is indirectly costing the MOD. We’re a two Service person couple, every wasted appointment is a half or full day of work the Royal Navy has lost from one of us sitting at home.’

‘I have experienced several missed appointments during my time in an SFA. I have had to book a holiday and take time off work to attend these appointments and have ended up out of pocket. Financial compensation should be offered when this happens. Given the vast array of modern technology there should be no reason why appointments cannot be rescheduled in advance to prevent working families being affected.’

‘As I work full time if I take a day off for repairs whilst my husband is deployed it is wasting my leave to spend with my husband; this should be compensated’

‘You should be informed that the appointment cannot be made. Lots of people take time off work to wait in and it is very annoying when no one shows up’

‘We have had appointments missed on a number of occasions. Sometimes we get a call after it has been missed to say they aren’t turning up (too little too late). I think on the day the tradesperson should confirm by phone they are turning up. I also think occupants should be penalised for not being present at an appointment. Remedial (2nd appointments) should be confirmed by phone and not by post’

‘Communication should be made either by call handlers and/or tradespeople if they are running late/ dealing with sickness etc. as may be able to reschedule an appointment earlier on in the day to prevent

people wasting their time waiting for someone to turn up, who is never going to because of staff shortages or emergency call outs etc.'

'I like the High Street vouchers but seriously would actually prefer a call to advise of cancellation as either myself or husband have to take time off work!'

'I've had people turn up and knew nothing about it!'

'Of course if someone is running late or has to cancel this should be done via a telephone call and correct correspondence should be issued. Appointment letters not always issued or are given the wrong day/time'

**Q15 If you have any other comments about the future of housing allocation and the repair/maintenance contract, please use the space below. The Naval Families Federation is looking for comments on how you would prefer things to work in the future, rather than commenting on the current contract.**

230 Respondents provided comments. The most common themes could be categorised as comments in the following topics:

- Investment to be made in the housing stock
- A large amount of respondents commenting about the need to make lasting repairs and replace faulty or broken items with quality products and avoid a 'patch job'.
- Respondents requested that in the future it would be positive for spouses to be given more access to and the ability to contribute to the allocation of SFA
- Respondents expressed views that the regulations governing access to SFA could be modernised to include support for non-married families to access subsidised accommodation.
- Respondents expressed views that the regulations governing access to SFA could be reviewed to consider the allocation of SFA in accordance with need rather than rank.
- Respondents commented on a potential improvement of customer service by using a more localised arrangement for allocations and repairs and maintenance.

**Comments included:**

'All people want is a fair allocation of housing and for the house allocated to be in a safe location, good repair and not pay over the odds for poor accommodation'

'Bring back a housing officer for each location that can be a POC as opposed to a call centre in Liverpool. Issues would be sorted quicker'

'Introduction of a routine rolling maintenance programme including gutter clearance, and a more regular replacement programme for kitchen and bathrooms. Revert to more regular carpet replacement rather than 'as necessary'. Ensure sufficient insulation throughout the house. Repairs should be permanent/long term rather than quick, easy and cheap which invariably require readdressing'

'It should be easier for the spouse of the Service personnel to apply for housing, especially when the Service person is deployed and not able to make the application themselves'

'More funding is required to bring the standard of housing up to date'

'The process should be streamlined with everyone working off one system and individuals being able to see how an application is progressing'

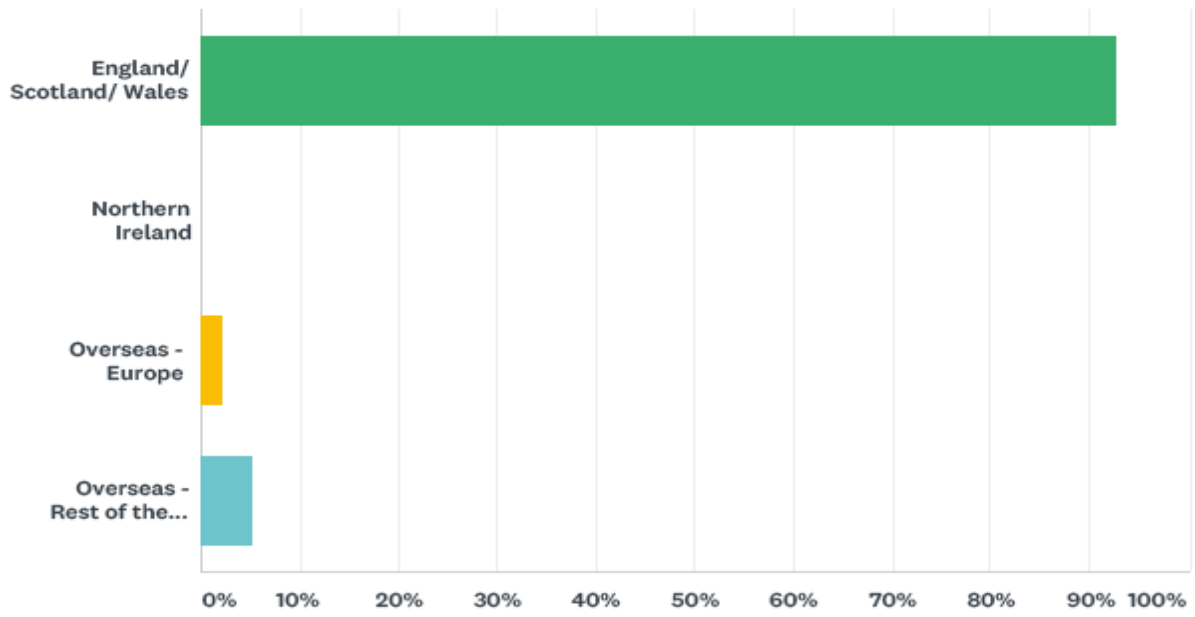
'It would be great if we could apply for houses through the Internet, not MOD Intranet. Our serving person travels which means things can't get done in his absence! Super frustrating since I'm the one who has to organise schools, doctors, dentists, etc.... If he can proxy me for a move in, then why not the paperwork? I'm better at it anyway!'

'As a solo parent in my last quarter and the female it would be nice for the contractors not to always assume I'm the partner of someone serving or that I am able to be home after the school run. My husband was at our family home 120 miles away, my daughter wasn't at school and I work full time in the military'

'The points raised in this survey contain genuine issues we have with the maintenance contract so anything that could be improved from this survey would be of benefit. As someone who works full-time and has a husband who is in and out of the country an easier way to manage appointments would be very helpful'

## Q16 Are you living in:

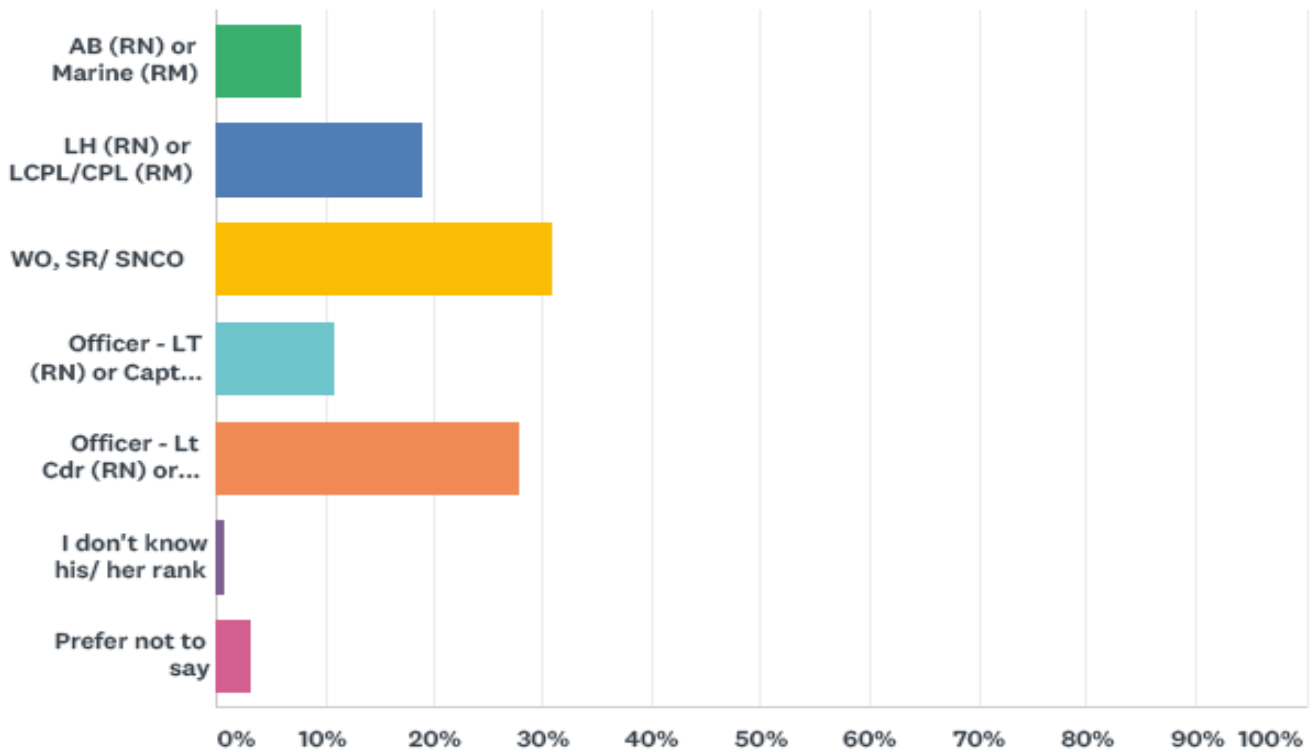
Answered: 476 Skipped: 194



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
England/ Scotland/ Wales	92.65%	441
Northern Ireland	0.00%	0
Overseas - Europe	2.10%	10
Overseas - Rest of the world	5.25%	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>476</b>

# Q17 What rank are you/ is the serving family member?

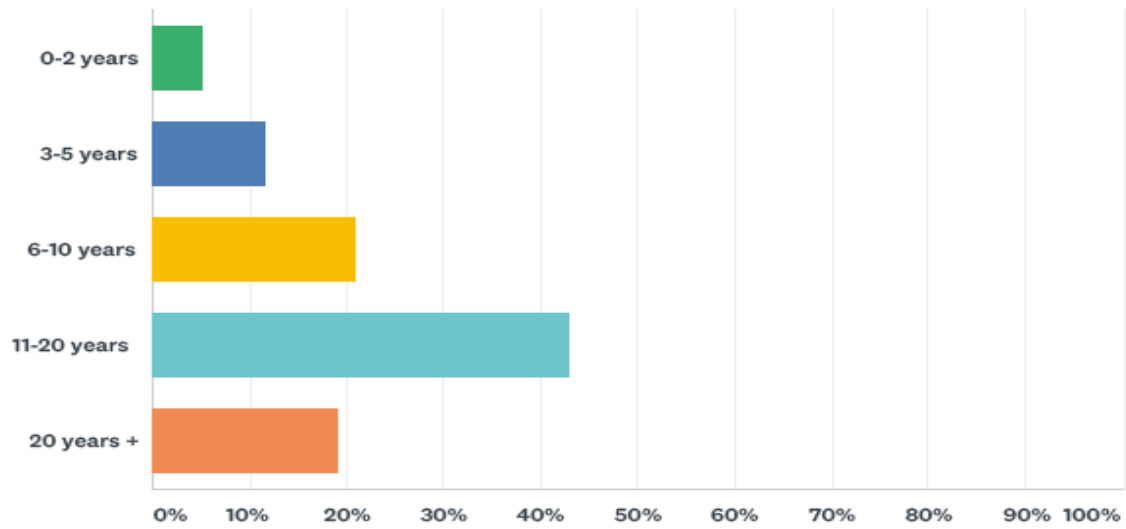
Answered: 477 Skipped: 193



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
AB (RN) or Marine (RM)	7.76%	37
LH (RN) or LCPL/CPL (RM)	18.87%	90
WO, SR/ SNCO	30.82%	147
Officer - LT (RN) or Capt (RM) & below	10.90%	52
Officer - Lt Cdr (RN) or Major (RM) or above	27.88%	133
I don't know his/ her rank	0.63%	3
Prefer not to say	3.14%	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>477</b>

## Q18 How long have you been in RN/RM or an RN/RM family?

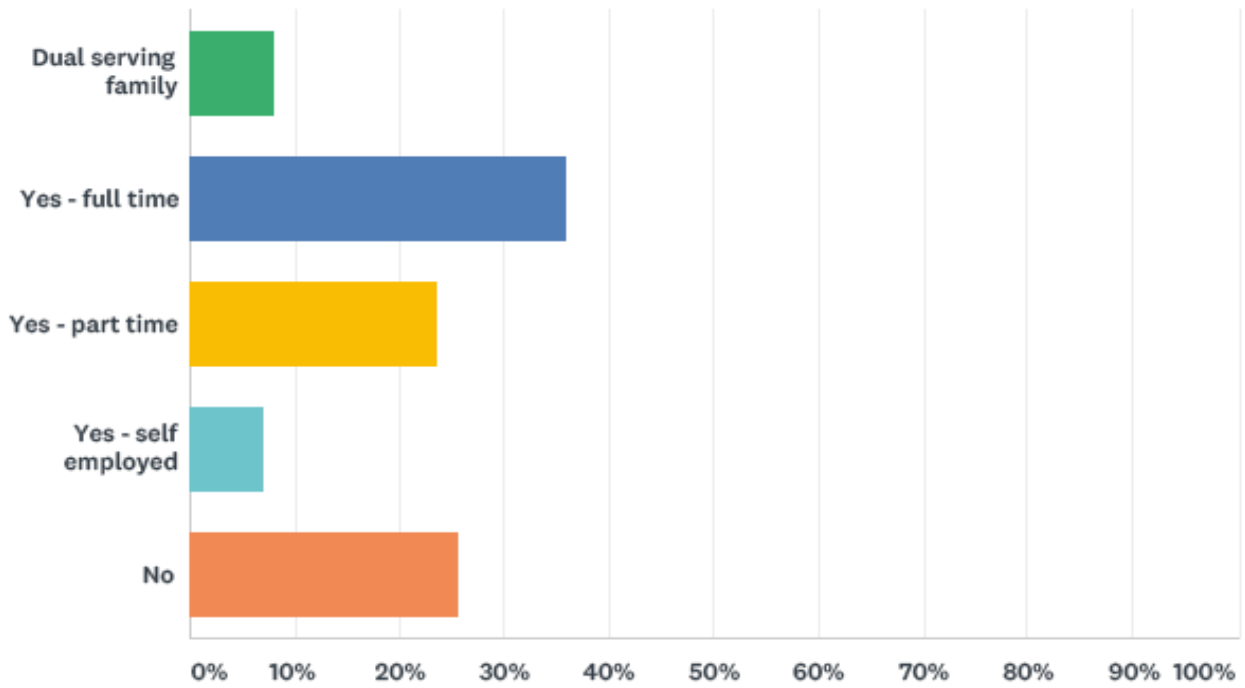
Answered: 477 Skipped: 193



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-2 years	5.24%	25
3-5 years	11.74%	56
6-10 years	20.96%	100
11-20 years	42.98%	205
20 years +	19.08%	91
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>477</b>

## Q19 Does the non-serving family member work?

Answered: 476 Skipped: 194

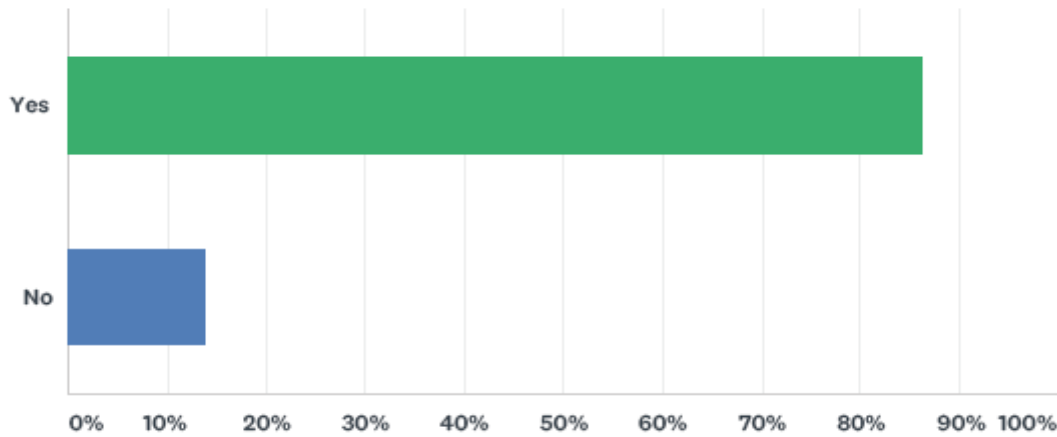


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Dual serving family	7.98%	38
Yes - full time	35.92%	171
Yes - part time	23.74%	113
Yes - self employed	6.93%	33
No	25.42%	121
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>476</b>



## Q20 Do you have children/ are there children in the family?

Answered: 476 Skipped: 194



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	86.13%	410
No	13.87%	66
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>476</b>