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# **Gateway to Homechoice Customer Survey**

**Executive Summary of Research  
Report (November 2010)**

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## Executive Summary

- This survey intended to gather customer's views on the existing Homechoice website and policies to enable changes to be considered in the continuing improvement of the service.
- A total of 3,000 surveys were sent out by post and a further 3,000 by email. The survey was also advertised on the Gateway to Homechoice website so that people visiting the site could also respond.
- There were a total of 964 replies to the Gateway to Homechoice Customer Survey. 50.8% of these responses were received through the online version of the survey. This equates to an estimated response rate of 16%.
- 77.6% of respondents to the survey are currently using the Gateway to Homechoice website.
- 56.6% of those using the website had been looking for housing for over a year.
- 58.9% of those able to complete the Homechoice form themselves said they found it 'easy' or 'very easy.' Those who found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' (7.1%) said that this was because the form is long and in-depth and/or they find using a computer hard.
- Just under half of respondents have not viewed property adverts on the Homechoice website (45.2%).
- Of the 54.8% who had viewed the property adverts, 82.3% said they found it 'easy' or 'very easy' to do so. Those who found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' (4.5%) said this was because they had a lack of computer access/knowhow or because there were no relevant properties on the website for them.
- 67.9% of respondents stated they had bid for properties through the website and 32.1% had not. Of the 67.9% who had, 87.3% said they found bidding either 'easy' or 'very easy.' The 5.2% who found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' stated that this was because of a lack of computer knowledge/familiarity or they found no results to bid for. Just under a third (32.7%) of those not making a bid stated that this was because they are in a low band and did not think they would be housed.
- 82.0% stated that they either understand or partly understand how the Homechoice banding scheme works.
- Almost as many respondents felt it was 'unfair' or 'very unfair' (33.4%) as felt it was 'fair' or 'very fair' (39.0%). Of those thinking it unfair/very unfair, the majority said they felt this because they'd been waiting a long time with no result or were always outbid on properties (60 people).
- The most frequently suggested improvement to the website was that more consideration should be given to people's personal issues followed by a call for more transparency on results.
- Overall comments received suggest that the online format is a barrier to many customer's and that waiting for housing using the current process can create stress for customers.
- 41.4% of respondents were aged between 20-39 years.
- 63.4% of respondents were women.
- 12.4% of respondents classified themselves in an ethnic group other than 'white.'
- 46.1% of respondents had a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits their daily activities.