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Executive Summary

The remit of the building standards system is to protect the public interest by setting out the standards to be met when building or conversion work takes place, to the extent necessary to meet the building regulations.

This research relates particularly to Key Performance Outcome 5 (KPO5) of the new verification performance framework, titled: ‘Improvement of the customer experience’. The purpose of this KPO is for verifiers to gain a more detailed understanding of their different customer groups and to be able to respond appropriately to their needs.

In 2013 the Building Standards Division commissioned Pye Tait to develop and run the first national customer satisfaction survey, predicated on the need to obtain nationally consistent baseline data and to permit trends analysis in future years. Ultimately it is intended that the running of the survey will be taken on by local authorities.

The project was carried out in two phases and the objectives are set out below.

**Phase 1 (October 2013 – January 2014): Development of the first national customer satisfaction survey:**

1. Undertake research into existing effective customer satisfaction surveys;
2. Investigate the potential use of the Customer Management Tool (CSMT);
3. Carry out research into the existing local authority building standards surveys;
4. Investigate individual local authority needs for a national survey including local requirements;
5. Develop the annual national building standards customer survey;
6. Develop a suitable annual questionnaire;
7. Develop a methodology to identify the customer sample; and
8. Test the proposed survey methodology and questionnaire with local authorities.

**Phase 2 (February 2014 – June 2014): Conducting the survey and providing analysis and reporting**

1. Undertake the first national survey in April 2014;
2. Collate and analyse the results, and provide a report on the survey findings;
3. Undertake any adjustments to the survey tool/questions if required; and

An appraisal of existing approaches for customer surveying was carried out, revealing the following common themes across questionnaires:
About the customer

- Customer contact details and reference numbers (if applicable)
- Customer profile (e.g. if the customer needs to be ‘categorised’ in one or more ways depending on how the results may be analysed)

Responding to customer feedback

- Improving the service in the future (e.g. customer suggestions)
- Specific feedback and any other comments

Satisfaction with the service

- Meeting customer expectations
- Overall satisfaction with the service
- First impressions
- Timeliness of the service
- Delivery of the service
- Knowledge and competence of staff
- Professionalism and staff attitude

- Effectiveness of communications
- Provision of information
- Customer privacy and protection
- Accessibility of the service
- Suitability of facilities
- Problem-handling

Pye Tait completed telephone interviews with Building Standards Managers (BSMs) in 31 of the 32 Scottish local authorities. The objective of these calls was to:

1. Ascertain the extent and nature of local arrangements already in place for measuring customer satisfaction;

2. Understand the comprehensiveness of customer records, in particular whether customer telephone numbers and email addresses are held; and

3. Explore and test the feasibility of possible approaches for deploying a national customer satisfaction survey under the auspices of the new verification performance framework.

Two possible approaches for running the national customer satisfaction survey were discussed with BSMs as part of the interviews, in order to explore their relative feasibility and to help determine the most appropriate approach to be taken forward.

**OPTION 1:** Local authorities supply Pye Tait with their customer contact details and Pye Tait is to assume full responsibility for conducting and promoting the survey

**OPTION 2:** Local authorities take responsibility for promoting the survey to their own customers

Following completion of telephone interviews with local authorities, Pye Tait held

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1 Including other nominated representatives to BSMs, as appropriate.
discussions with the Scottish Government to talk through the findings and agree the most appropriate approach for delivery of the first national customer survey for building standards verification.

Option 1 was agreed and a summary of the approach is presented below.

**Local authorities supply Pye Tait with their customer contact details for the purpose of being invited to participate in the national survey.**

Rationale:

- Ensures consistency in the facilitation and promotion of the survey;
- Enables central collation of:
  - customer numbers – in order to ascertain the size of the ‘survey population’ across all 32 local authorities in Scotland;
  - email address records – in order to determine which local authorities are more and less likely to be represented in the customer survey;
- Permits a central ‘de-duplication’ exercise to be undertaken against customer names/email addresses;
- Avoids the risk of customers of multiple local authorities being contacted more than once to take part in the survey; and
- Minimises work for local authorities, i.e. by undertaking the survey mailing and reminders themselves.

Under this agreed option, local authorities were asked to seek consent from customers to having their contact details shared with Pye Tait under full Market Research Society Code of Conduct requirements, in order for those customers to be invited to participate in the survey.
Following agreement between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government on the main survey approach, Pye Tait developed a detailed draft Action Plan for the development of the survey. It was also agreed that the initial survey would be delivered electronically solely using customer email addresses, rather than a combination of email and post.

The draft Action plan set out the preparations required (including timescales and ownership of each action) and included defined responsibilities for Pye Tait, the Scottish Government and local authority BSMs.

The document was initially reviewed by the Scottish Government before being circulated to local authorities on 26th November 2013. The first action was for local authorities to respond to Pye Tait with any comments by 10th December 2013.

Six local authorities fed back comments and queries in response to the draft Action Plan.

Following consideration of these issues, Pye Tait prepared the final Action Plan, which was agreed by the Scottish Government before being circulated to local authorities on 20th December 2013 in order to commence preparations for the survey.

Looking forward, the Scottish Government should carry out checks to ensure the necessary operational requirements are in place ahead of future national surveys. In particular local authorities should be able to identify from their IT systems the volume of their customers (direct; agent; or other); those with email addresses; and those who have opted-out.

Local authorities should request and record customer email addresses (where these are not already held) at every opportunity and on an on-going basis. In addition, Privacy Notices should be in place on customer documentation to enable customers to opt-out of being invited to participate in future surveys.

Further discussions will be necessary between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government following completion of phase 2, in order to agree the position on this and whether written guidance or training in relation to survey software would be beneficial.
1.1 Background and purpose of the project

The building standards system in Scotland was established as a result of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act gives powers to Ministers to make building regulations, procedure regulations, fees regulations and other supporting legislation as necessary to fulfil the purposes of the Act. The purposes include setting building standards and dealing with dangerous and defective buildings.

The remit of the building standards system is to protect the public interest by setting out the standards to be met when building or conversion work takes place, to the extent necessary to meet the building regulations.

The standards are intended to:

- Secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings;
- Further the conservation of fuel and power; and
- Further the achievement of sustainable development.

The role of the Building Standards verifier is to protect the public interest by:

- Providing an independent check of applications for building warrants to construct buildings provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or to convert buildings;
- Carrying out inspections of construction activities through the process of Reasonable Inquiry; and
- Accepting or rejecting completion certificates.

Verifiers are appointed by Scottish Ministers and the Act provides for a variety of verifiers should they be required. At present, the only appointed verifiers are the 32 Scottish local authorities, each covering their own geographical area. The local authorities were re-appointed on 1 May 2011 for a further six-year period, on the basis that a new performance framework was established to improve the quality, compliance, consistency and predictability of verification activities.

In 2011 Pye Tait Consulting, on behalf of the Scottish Government, developed a set of nine national Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs), which were implemented as part of the Building Standards Verification Performance Framework and launched on 1st May 2012\(^2\). The intention of these was, through more accurate and effective comparisons, to

ensure consistency and quality in terms of outputs and overall service, along with a greater focus on peer review, benchmarking and sharing of best practice. Additionally the KPOs underpin a strong culture of continuous improvement, encouraging local authorities to commit to ‘raising the bar’ across all aspects of delivery and particularly in relation to quality, compliance and consistency of service.

Three of the nine KPOs, categorised under ‘Quality Customer Experience’, aim to ensure that verifiers provide high quality standards and services to customers, underpinned by clear and transparent communications, and an understanding of different customer and stakeholder types and their differing needs. These insights, and actions taken in response to them, are intended to bring about continuous improvement of the customer experience through regular measurement and assessment.

The current research relates particularly to KPO 5: ‘Improvement of the customer experience’. The purpose of this KPO is for verifiers to gain a more detailed understanding of their different customer groups and to be able to respond appropriately to their needs.

In 2013 the Building Standards Division commissioned Pye Tait to develop and run the first national customer satisfaction survey, predicated on the need to obtain nationally consistent baseline data and to permit trends analysis in future years. Ultimately it is intended that the running of the survey will be taken on by local authorities.

1.2 Project objectives

The project was carried out in two phases and the objectives are set out below.

**Phase 1 (October 2013 – January 2014): Development of the first national customer satisfaction survey:**

1. Undertake research into existing effective customer satisfaction surveys;
2. Investigate the potential use of the Customer Management Tool (CSMT);
3. Carry out research into the existing local authority building standards surveys;
4. Investigate individual local authority needs for a national survey including local requirements;
5. Develop the annual national building standards customer survey;
6. Develop a suitable annual questionnaire;
7. Develop a methodology to identify the customer sample; and
8. Test the proposed survey methodology and questionnaire with local authorities.
Phase 2 (February 2014 – June 2014): Conducting the survey and providing analysis and reporting:

1. Undertake the first national survey in April 2014;
2. Collate and analyse the results, and provide a report on the survey findings;
3. Undertake any adjustments to the survey tool/questions if required; and

This report summarises the research findings and processes that have been put in place as part of the phase 1 development stage of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards verification in Scotland.

A note on system-related (IT) considerations for the development of the national survey:

As part of the project specification, the Scottish Government requested the survey ‘system’ as an output for phase 1, including any IT programme which delivers the requirements of the project along with a system user and operator manual.

It is the Scottish Government’s intention that, in future years, management of the customer survey will be passed to Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS). Discussions between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government at the outset of the project questioned the cost-effectiveness of the Building Standards Division (BSD), LABSS or individual local authorities investing in the same professional survey software used by Pye Tait.

Further discussions will be necessary between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government following completion of phase 2, in order to agree the position on this and whether written guidance or training in relation to survey software would be beneficial.

This report therefore focuses on the methodological (rather than system-related) aspects of the national survey development process, which are not software-dependant.

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3 Further discussion about the future intention to transfer the management of the survey to local authorities is covered in section 6.
1.3 Overarching methodology

The diagram below summarises the methodology used to deliver the project.

**Phase One – Develop survey (October 2013 – January 2014)**

- Scoping: Appraisal of existing approaches used by local authorities in Scotland to measure customer satisfaction as part of building standards verification
- Design: Telephone interviews with 32 local authorities to inform the approach to be developed for delivering the national survey
- Consultation: Design of the draft national survey questionnaire
- Reporting: Consultation with 32 local authorities in Scotland on 1) the approach for delivering the survey; and 2) the draft survey questionnaire
- Deliver: Finalisation of the approach and survey questionnaire; production of the phase 1 final report

**Phase Two – Conduct survey (February 2014 – June 2014)**

- Preparation: Agreement reached on customer survey sample and method(s) for undertaking the survey
- Preparation for survey delivery
- Design: Running the national customer satisfaction survey
- Delivery: Collation and analysis of survey data
- Consultation: Development of phase 2 report presenting national survey results
- Reporting: Development of user guide to aid survey management handover
2. Appraisal of Existing Approaches for Customer Satisfaction Surveying

2.1 Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool (CSMT)

The content of the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool (CSMT)\(^4\) provided a starting point for the development of the national survey questionnaire.

The CSMT was developed by the Improvement Service and launched on 9\(^{th}\) June 2010. It provides a national standard for local government and its partners to evaluate service performance and is intended to establish a common framework across Scotland as a uniform tool.

The CSMT question bank is built around five drivers of customer satisfaction:

1. Delivery;
2. Timeliness;
3. Information;
4. Professionalism; and
5. Staff attitude

For the current study, the CSMT question bank was subject to detailed content analysis alongside other examples of published customer surveys – particularly those owned and run by local authorities in Scotland. The purpose of the analysis was to identify good practice, key themes and types of questions that could offer valuable insights for building standards verifiers in Scotland.

2.2 Review of other customer satisfaction survey questionnaires

Pye Tait sourced and reviewed a sample of 26 customer survey questionnaires from a range of different types of organisations, comprising:

- 13 building standards verification services within local authorities (Scotland);
- 6 local authority-wide customer satisfaction surveys (5 Scotland, 1 England);
- 3 private sector companies;
- 3 organisations recognised for customer service excellence\(^5\) (2 private sector, 1 public);
- 1 government department.

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\(^4\) Further information about the CSMT is available via the Improvement Service (online): http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/component/option,com_is_blank/Itemid,1346/

\(^5\) For the purposes of this research ‘companies recognised for customer service excellence’ denotes organisations who are either winners in the 2013 UK Customer Satisfaction Awards run by the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) or who are current holders of the Customer Service Excellence ® standard.
A spreadsheet was formulated grouping together all survey questions into common themes which are presented below under three derived headings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About the customer</th>
<th>Responding to customer feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Customer contact details and reference numbers (if applicable)</td>
<td>• Improving the service in the future (e.g. customer suggestions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customer profile (e.g. if the customer needs to be ‘categorised’ in one or more ways depending on how the results may be analysed)</td>
<td>• Specific feedback and any other comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with the service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting customer expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Overall satisfaction with the service</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Accessibility of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suitability of facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Problem-handling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis reveals that key areas of interest for the national building standards survey potentially extend the five drivers set out in the CSMT. Additional commentary based on a review of all questionnaires is set out below:

### 2.2.1 Overall commentary on the sample of survey questionnaires

The 26 questionnaires generally sought to establish service performance against customer expectations, for example by asking customers the extent to which their expectations had been met in relation to particular aspects of service. Individual questions were generally short, in some cases posed as statements against which respondents were invited to respond. The vast majority of sampled questionnaires made use of Likert-scale\(^6\) or ‘rating’ questions.

In the majority of cases, questionnaires began by establishing the customer profile, for example the category in which the respondent had been a customer. The majority of questionnaires also set out to establish what, why and how often customers used the services in question.

Private sector questionnaires placed more focus on measuring customers’ satisfaction with particular products either purchased or on display (for example their value,\(^6\)

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\(^6\) A Likert scale measures attitudes and behaviours using answer choices that range from one extreme to another (for example, not at all likely to extremely likely).
durability, presentation etc.) In the case of local authority building standards services in Scotland, equivalent questions related to key areas of the service offer, such as the length of time taken to obtain a building warrant; satisfaction with the application forms and application process; quality of advice and guidance offered by staff; and satisfaction with inspection arrangements/visits.

In the majority of sampled questionnaires, the final stage was used to generate feedback, suggestions and ideas from customers concerning how to improve the service. In a minority of cases, additional ‘equality monitoring’ was gathered.

### 2.2.2 Specific commentary on the building standards verification service questionnaires

The size and length of questionnaires sampled from local authority building standards services in Scotland varied considerably. In one case there was just a single open question asking for comments and suggestions. Four other local authorities used ten questions or less; four used between eleven and twenty questions; and three used between twenty-one and twenty-six questions.

Two local authorities used separate questionnaires for building warrant ‘applicants’ and ‘agents’ respectively. Several others also sought to differentiate between applicants and agents, but used a question to do so as part of a single overall questionnaire.

Questions were generally organised thematically, with five sampled local authorities making use of theme-based headings in the questionnaires.

Of the 13 sampled building standards surveys, nine used Likert-scale questions to make up the majority of the content. Of these, three local authorities used a ‘satisfaction’ scale (ranging from ‘very satisfied’ to ‘very dissatisfied’); two used an ‘agreement’ scale (ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’); and others used a ‘quality’ scale (for example where respondents are asked to rate different aspects of the service from ‘excellent’ to ‘unacceptable’). Only one local authority used more than one perceptual dimension for Likert-scale questions within its questionnaire.

All questionnaires also provided free-text boxes to gather open feedback, usually in the ‘further comments’ or ‘feedback’ sections of the survey.

### 2.3 Development of the national survey questionnaire

Pye Tait developed the draft national customer survey questionnaire following completion of the desk review and a series of telephone interviews with Building Standards Managers (BSMs) across all local authorities in Scotland.\(^7\)

The draft questionnaire was then distributed electronically to local authorities in December 2013 with comments and feedback requested by 10th January 2014.

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\(^7\) The telephone interviews are discussed in more detail in section 3.
Seven local authorities responded with comments on the questionnaire and two responded to state that they did not have any comments.

The new questionnaire forms the basis for the first national survey and is intended to be replicated in future years to enable progress to be measured and trend analysis to be undertaken at national and local levels.

The version that has emerged ‘post-consultation’ consists of 34 questions (although routing rules mean that not all questions will be asked of all customers) and includes a combination of Likert-scale, rating-style, multiple response and open questions.

The national survey questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1.

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8 As with all such time-series research processes there may be a need for additional questions over coming years to meet specific data needs but the central aim is to maintain the analytical integrity of the survey by retaining the vast majority of questions in an unaltered format.
3. Exploration of Possible Approaches for the National Survey

Pye Tait completed telephone interviews with BSMs in 31 of the 32 Scottish local authorities. The objective of these calls was to:

1. Ascertain the extent and nature of local arrangements already in place for measuring customer satisfaction;

2. Understand the comprehensiveness of customer records, in particular whether customer telephone numbers and email addresses are held; and

3. Explore and test the feasibility of possible approaches for deploying a national customer satisfaction survey under the auspices of the new verification performance framework.

Findings from the telephone interviews are set out below.

3.1 Prior awareness of the national survey

All local authorities stated they were aware the national survey was on the horizon and many had expected it as part of the new performance framework. Some had expected it sooner and a small minority mentioned having paused from taking steps to further develop local surveying arrangements until the national survey had rolled out, in order to see how this looked and whether the content would fulfil local needs.

A minority of local authorities expressed some initial concerns about what the content of the national survey might mean for the future of local surveys and whether the content could overlap.

3.2 Existing local arrangements for measuring customer satisfaction

All local authorities in Scotland use at least one method for measuring customer satisfaction as part of the building standards system and these are set out within this section. There are notable variations in terms of the approaches taken and the frequency of data collection and analysis.

Some local authorities have worked together as part of consortium arrangements, adopting the same or similar questions for customer surveys.

The majority of local authorities run a survey on a continuous basis that seeks the views of all ‘current’ or ‘recent’ customers of the building standards system. In many cases, questionnaires are distributed to customers at two key stages of customer interaction: i) when issuing the building warrant; and ii) when issuing acceptance of the completion

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9 Including other nominated representatives to BSMs, as appropriate.
certificate. Evidence from both of these touch-points is used to gauge the customer experience in relation to specific areas of the customer journey.

In a minority of cases, customer surveys are carried out retrospectively, i.e. among past customers, and these are usually on a fixed-term basis, for example annually or biannually.

Other approaches for measuring customer feedback include focus groups (usually quarterly or annually); face to face interactions with customers and, in a minority of cases, telephone interviews.

A variety of platforms are used for delivering structured customer survey questionnaires, including:

- Hard copy questionnaires with accompanying freepost return envelopes;
- Postcards with requests for comments;
- Electronic questionnaires emailed to customers as attachments; and
- Online ‘Survey Monkey’ questionnaires, for which links are either published on hard copy questionnaires and/or embedded into local authority email signature strips.

There appears to be limited proactive and direct promotion of online surveys.

Local authorities tend to use survey findings to inform meetings, action plans and to incorporate into national reporting requirements through the Balanced Scorecard and Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs).

3.3 Customer records

Most local authorities define customers in terms of ‘applicants’ (one-off, e.g. householders); ‘agents’ (some of which will be repeat customers of more than one local authority); and in some cases ‘contractors’. A small number of local authorities define customers more widely as any person or organisation who makes contact with building standards, whether or not as part of a formal application.

Almost all interviewed BSMs were unable to immediately estimate their total number of customers, but most advised they should be able to identify this information with IT support.

It also became apparent that local authorities generally hold more contact information for agents than they do for direct applicants. Where an agent is involved, it is likely that their contact details are supplied on the application form and there could be little known about the property owner other than their name and address.

Understandably some BSMs are more confident and experienced than others in running bespoke customer reports from their main software system (for example, an export of
customer names, email addresses and application information in MS Excel format). Others felt they would benefit from IT support to gather this information.

3.4 Appraisal of options for delivery of the national survey

Two possible approaches for running the national customer satisfaction survey were discussed with BSMs as part of the interviews, in order to explore their relative feasibility and to help determine the most appropriate approach to be taken forward.

The benefits and disadvantages identified in relation to both options are set out below.

**OPTION 1: Local authorities supply Pye Tait with their customer contact details and Pye Tait is to assume full responsibility for conducting and promoting the survey**

**Benefits:**

✓ The survey is promoted consistently to the customers of each local authority;

✓ The burden on local authorities having to send invitations and reminders to customers is taken on by Pye Tait as opposed to falling on local authorities.

**Disadvantages**

- Local authorities need to acquire consent from customers to share their contact details with Pye Tait (a third party);

- Some local authorities expressed concern with respect to the cost and time burden associated with obtaining and recording consent from customers (depending on the historic cut-off point for customer inclusion, and whether customers need to be contacted by email and/or post);

- For a representative sample to be sought according to one or more criteria (for example by customer type, project type or fee income band) local authorities will need to supply Pye Tait with a detailed breakdown of their customers and this may not be easy to do.

Under this option, the Scottish Government/Pye Tait need to provide clear instructions to local authorities that include:

- The process and timescales for acquiring consent from customers to having their contact details shared with Pye Tait;

- Copies of exemplar correspondence to send to customers to notify them about the survey and seek consent; and

- Specific types of customer and application information to be supplied to Pye Tait.
OPTION 2: Local authorities take responsibility for promoting the survey to their own customers

Benefits:

- Local authorities do not need to seek consent from customers to sharing their contact details with Pye Tait;
- The survey potentially has a wider reach as local authorities will be able to promote the survey to all customers in a variety of ways, such as via email, within email signatures, and enclosed within documents posted out to customers.

Disadvantages:

- The survey may not be promoted in a consistent way by all local authorities;
- Some local authorities expressed concern with respect to the cost and time burden associated with sending out mailings and reminders to customers about the survey.

Under this option, the Scottish Government/Pye Tait would need to provide clear instructions to local authorities, including:

- Text for local authorities to send to customers and a copy of the questionnaire/web link;
- Any special sampling requirements; and
- Guidance on timescales for initial/reminder mailings.

3.5 Defining an historic cut-off point for customer inclusion

Early discussions between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government defined April 2012 as being the cut-off point for customers to be included in the first national survey. This date was selected on the basis that it would maximise the number of customers potentially in scope of the survey (and hence the number of responses) without extending too far back in time to the point at which customers would not be able to recall their experiences.

Local authorities expressed concern that contacting customers as far back to April 2012 could be too costly to organise and would present too great an administrative burden, particularly if all customers (as opposed to a sample) needed to be invited to take part.

3.6 Dealing with agents that work with multiple local authorities

The interviews highlighted that where agents are customers of more than one local authority, they risk being mailed about the survey multiple times. This is especially likely
if local authorities assume individual responsibility for promoting the survey to their own customers.

This risk is easier to reduce under option 1 (above) whereby customer records obtained by Pye Tait may be de-duplicated to avoid multiple mailings to the same agent. Questionnaire guidance notes would then need to make clear that agents should respond with respect to one local authority per submission, but may complete the questionnaire more than once, as appropriate.
4. Agreed Approach for the National Survey

Following completion of interviews with local authorities in October 2013 – the following issues remained outstanding and were taken forward for discussion between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government.

1. Whether option 1 or option 2 should be selected for delivery of the survey;
2. The historic cut-off point for inclusion of customers;
3. Whether all customers or only a sample should be invited to participate in the survey;
4. Whether the survey should include applicants or agents or both;
5. Whether the survey should be administered by email or post, or a combination of both; and
6. Whether or not the survey should be delimited to include only customers with email addresses.

Following completion of telephone interviews with local authorities, Pye Tait held discussions with the Scottish Government to talk through the outstanding issues and agree the most appropriate approach for delivery of the first national customer survey for building standards verification.

A summary of the agreed approach is presented below.

1. **OPTION 1: Local authorities supply Pye Tait with their customer contact details and Pye Tait assumes full responsibility for conducting and promoting the survey**

Rationale:

- Ensures consistency in the facilitation and promotion of the survey;
- Enables central collation of:
  - customer numbers – in order to ascertain the size of the ‘survey population’ across all 32 local authorities in Scotland;
  - email address records – in order to determine which local authorities are more and less likely to be represented in the customer survey;
- Permits a central ‘de-duplication’ exercise to be undertaken against customer names/email addresses;
- Avoids the risk of customers of multiple local authorities being contacted more
than once to take part in the survey; and

- Minimise work for local authorities.

Under this agreed option, local authorities are to seek consent from customers to having their contact details shared with Pye Tait under full Market Research Society Code of Conduct requirements, in order for those customers to be invited to participate in the survey.

2. The historic cut-off point for customers in scope of the first survey is 1st April 2013.

Rationale:

- Historic customers dating back over one year (by the time the survey is operational in April 2014) are less likely to be able to recall their experiences;

- The cost and administrative time required for local authorities to obtain consent for customers dating back further than one year is considered to be prohibitive; and

- The selected cut-off point will provide a database of sufficient size to permit reasonable statistical accuracy at the analytical stage.

3. All customers over the agreed time-period are to be invited to participate in the survey, as opposed to a sample of customers.

Rationale:

- Telephone interviews with BSMs raised concerns that the volume of customer email address records might vary between local authorities, with the risk that this might already limit the potential reach of the survey;

- The potential variance in customer numbers between local authorities (particularly those with email addresses) would make the development of a sample strategy particularly difficult; and

- The survey should seek to be as fully inclusive as possible.

4. For the purpose of the survey, customers are defined as:

a. Applicants for building warrants (including any agents);
b. Submitters of completion certificates (including any agents); and
c. Other individuals and businesses that have interacted with the building standards service.

Customers are therefore primarily property owners, developers and their agents.
5. Local authorities only supply Pye Tait with customer names and email addresses and do not supply application information relating to each customer, for example project types and fee income bands.

Rationale:

- Given the intention to survey ‘all’ customers rather than a stratified sample – application information would not be needed ahead of survey launch for sampling purposes;

- It would not be feasible to pre-seed application information into the survey questionnaire responses as some customers may have submitted multiple applications of different types for more than one local authority;

- Multiple-response questions can be used to establish the capacity in which a respondent has been a customer of a local authority in question (including application-related information).

6. The survey is hosted online and promoted to customers via email.

Rationale:

- The cost and administrative time associated with printing, mailing and subsequently entering response data from hard copy paper questionnaires for customers of all 32 local authorities, would render a postal survey cost-prohibitive;

- Response times are typically longer for postal surveys and this could impact negatively on the project requirements for timely results and feedback;

- The potential resource burden for local authorities in terms of printing and issuing paper questionnaires would also appear to be prohibitive based on the feedback received from the telephone interviews; and

- An online survey is considered to be more environmentally sustainable with lower carbon costs and less waste.
Following agreement between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government on the main survey approach, Pye Tait developed a detailed draft Action Plan for the development of the survey.

The draft Action Plan set out the preparations required (including timescales and ownership of each action) and included defined responsibilities for Pye Tait, the Scottish Government and local authority BSMs.

The document was initially reviewed by the Scottish Government before being circulated to local authorities on 26th November 2013. The first action was for local authorities to respond to Pye Tait with any comments by 10th December 2013.

Seven local authorities fed back with comments and queries in response to the draft Action Plan and these issues are summarised and discussed in this section.

Following consideration of these issues, Pye Tait prepared the final Action Plan, which was agreed by the Scottish Government before being circulated to local authorities on 20th December 2013 in order to commence preparations for the survey.

**The final Action Plan is presented in Appendix 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 1: Considerable local authority staff time is required in the preparation for the survey, where Councils are already operating with reducing resources.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Local authorities will only be required to run a list of customers since April 2013 and forward the list to Pye Tait Consulting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Local authorities will not be required to send hard copy letters to historic customers asking for email addresses retrospectively where these are not already held;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For new customers and where application documentation has already been printed, local authorities may supply inserts to customers containing information about the survey;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The historic cut-off point for customer inclusion in the survey is 1st April 2013 and not 1st April 2012 which will considerably reduce work in preparing the contact list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Issue 2:** If the survey is to be carried out in April 2014 this does not give customers that have lodged applications or Completion Certificates during March & April time to potentially opt out.

**Response:**

Only customers between 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2013 and 28\textsuperscript{th} February 2014 are in scope of the first survey. Where any customers opt out after this point, local authorities should continue to record this information locally so this can be taken into account for the next annual survey (likely to take place in 2015).

On this basis, the exemplar opt out statements to be appended to existing building standards documentation refer to the Scottish Government’s wish to contact them “in future” but without specific reference to the 2013 survey.

**Issue 3:** Consideration should be given to incorporating the national questions into existing customer surveys undertaken by verifiers. This would make collation and reporting less bureaucratic, more efficient and would perhaps lessen customer fatigue regarding surveys.

**Response:**

Pye Tait’s interviews with local authorities revealed a variety of different local arrangements in place concerning how regularly surveys are undertaken, the types of customers contacted and the methods used for distributing surveys.

For a national survey, the timescale, approach to delivery and question-set should ideally be consistent across all 32 local authorities and the data would benefit from being collated and analysed from a central point in order to deliver consistent, independent reporting at both a national and individual local authority. As such, continuing with a national standalone survey is the preferred approach.

**Issue 4:** The proposed approach may discourage customers from engaging with existing successful surveys.

**Response:**

The relationship of the national survey to local surveys remains uncertain and this should be clarified in the future. However the need for an overall, consistent survey for the entire nation is considered paramount.
**Issue 5:** An opt-in approach would be more appropriate than an opt-out approach when seeking customers’ consent to having their contact details shared with a third party.

**Response:**

An opt-in system could yield too few responses for the national survey to be viable.

An opt-out arrangement is perfectly permissible, especially for officially-sanctioned, satisfaction research. The nature of the research is ‘public sector primary research’ as opposed to ‘direct marketing’. The survey does not involve sales in any way and will not be gathering personal or confidential data. As researchers, Pye Tait staff fully adhere to the requirements of the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

Following the initial opt-out stage, respondents will be invited to participate in the research by Pye Tait and have a further opportunity to unsubscribe from further communications at any time. Customers will be fully informed and clearly told that their contact details will not be used for any other purpose and, in full compliance with the MRS Code all identifying data will be deleted from Pye Tait’s systems following completion of the project.

---

**Issue 6:** The opt-out process could prove labour-intensive if there is not an easy way to collate e-mail addresses and send the communication as a group e-mail. This may mean some sort of conversion from Excel to Outlook and IT support to see if this is possible – otherwise it is manual entry (cut & paste) which is time consuming.

**Response:**

A group email would be preferable and it should be possible to perform a simple export, e.g. highlighting and copying all email addresses in Excel, then pasting them into the BCC field in an MS Outlook email.

---

**Issue 7:** With respect to recording opt-outs, has Pye Tait or the BSD spoken to software providers (e.g. Idox) to facilitate this?

**Response:**

This may need to be a recommendation for the future/year 2 of the national survey. In the meantime it appears this will be accommodated through Pye Tait’s normal research software and cleaned lists produced at project completion.
**Issue 8:** It would be helpful to know where on the forms the new opt-out statements are to go, for example prior to the declaration or as part of guidance notes.

**Response:**

This should be clearly visible within the body of application forms.

---

**Issue 9:** Where a local authority holds a low number of email addresses, an alternative approach would be that hard copy letters are sent by Pye Tait to postal addresses held on the public register, to request email addresses. This would reduce the additional workload being placed on local authorities.

**Response:**

For the first national survey, agreement has been reached with the Scottish Government that customers will be contacted based on existing contact records.

Going forward (and for future national surveys) there is a case for local authorities to request and record customer email addresses as a matter of course. Such a policy would assist both the local authority and any future national surveys.

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**Issue 10:** The opt-out email template (appended to the Action Plan) does not include a ‘reply-to’ email address. Furthermore this should include a Pye Tait ‘reply-to’ address, thereby reducing the burden placed on the local authority to process the information.

**Response:**

It has been assumed the customer replies to the email they have been sent by the local authority, however, this may need to be a different email address. Local authorities may therefore wish to adapt this template accordingly to refer to a different reply-to address.

The recording of opt-outs needs to be undertaken at a local level as this will need to be on-going to prepare for repeat surveys in future years. Moreover, Pye Tait may not be involved in the delivery of the national survey from 2015 onwards and this will make it vital that opt-outs are fully recorded and acted upon.
**Issue 11:** While adding this to the Building Warrant Application Form is not an issue as it is a model form and easily adaptable, there is an issue with altering statutory forms relating to Form 5: ‘Completion Certificate – Submission’ and Form 6: ‘Completion Certificate where No Building Warrant Has Been Obtained – Submission’. Both of these are statutory forms and as a result the wording cannot be altered from the statutory instrument.

**Response:**

With respect to Forms 5 and 6, the Privacy Notice (incorporating the opt-out statement) should be included as an accompanying flyer. The intention is that this should be returned to the local authority if the customer wishes to opt out.

**Issue 12:** Many customers are architectural practices that submit multiple applications each year, often submitted by different employees of the practice. It is highly likely this will result in multiple applications with contradictory "opt outs" from the same practice.

**Response:**

The most recent indicated preference should always be used and local opt-out records updated accordingly.

The final Action (Appendix 2) provides further detail about the survey development process and takes into account the various issues set out above.
6. Phase 1 Summary and Forward Planning

It is important to note that, while this report has been written following the completion of phase 1 (the development stage of the national survey), some aspects of the Action Plan\textsuperscript{10} are underway at the time of writing. A full assessment of the success of the project (including lessons learned and any agreed actions to be carried forward into future years) will only be possible upon completion of the project in June 2014.

1. The introduction of the new national performance framework for building standards verification in Scotland is designed to promote and embed consistency across local authorities in Scotland. However, the findings from phase 1 have revealed that a variety of different methodologies and systems are in place among verifiers for measuring customer satisfaction, justifying the case for a national approach and template in order that results may be compared on a like-for-like basis as part of KPO 5 – \textit{Improvement of the customer experience}.

2. A new, national customer satisfaction survey questionnaire has been developed, with the intention that this will respond to the requirements of KPO5, and provide meaningful customer insights for local authorities to plan their own changes or improvements. The questionnaire seeks customers’ consent to their responses and associated contact details being passed back to the local authority in question – providing the opportunity for the local authority to contact these customers to discuss any specific aspects of their feedback in more detail.

3. As this project represents the first national customer satisfaction survey for building standards verification in Scotland, it has required extensive initial development work. It is the intention that this will lay the foundations for replicating the survey in future years and ease subsequent lead-in time. Having said that, certain aspects of the approach and methodology may need to change in future following analysis of lessons learned from the initial survey.

4. The development stage for the national survey has explored the extent to which local authorities are able to support the survey with preparation and promotion activities, taking into account their IT capabilities, cost and time available. Local authorities are generally supportive but the predominant concern has been the possibility of having to issue postal requests to obtain customer email addresses and having to issue hard copy letters to promote the survey.

Following discussions between Pye Tait and the Scottish Government, both of these possible options have been ruled out of the final Action Plan.

5. At the outset of the project it was unclear how easy or difficult it might be for local authorities to identify their total number of unique customers (including those with email addresses) from the total number of customer applications over a given period

\textsuperscript{10} The Final Action Plan for the development of the survey is presented in Appendix 2.
of time\textsuperscript{11}. This process has proven difficult for some local authorities, particularly identifying the volume of customers submitting completion certificates as opposed to those applying for a building warrant.

At the time of writing, all local authorities have either supplied or promised this information to Pye Tait. Not all have been able to provide breakdowns of total customers and total email addresses by the categories of ‘applicant’ and ‘agent’.

Gaps in customer data, or low volumes of email addresses, could have the following implications:

a. It may not be possible to determine the complete population of unique building standards customers in Scotland over a given period of time and, hence, the proportion of total customers that ultimately respond to the survey;

b. It may not be possible to produce reports at local authority level where customers of specific local authorities (or insufficient customers) have not been captured by the survey.

6. As a result of the groundwork undertaken as part of phase 1, the Scottish Government should carry out checks to ensure the following operational requirements are in place ahead of future national surveys.

a. Local authorities should be able to identify from their IT systems:
   
   o the volume of total unique building standards customers over a given period of time;
   o the volume of customers with email addresses;
   o a breakdown of email addresses by opt-out selection;
   o a breakdown of the above figures in terms of i) ‘direct applicant’; ii) ‘agent’; and iii) ‘other’.

b. Local authorities should request and record customer email addresses (where these are not already held) at every opportunity and on an on-going basis. This is intended to support future survey activity but could potentially help to widen customer choice in terms of preferences for certain types of correspondence.

c. Privacy Notices should be in place on customer documentation to enable customers to opt-out of being invited to participate in future surveys. This is relevant where a third party organisation is commissioned to carry out the survey and where the Scottish Government requires local authorities to supply details of their customers to this third party organisation.

If it is the intention in the future that local authorities contact their own customers to invite their participation in the survey, then local authorities may choose to contact all their customers accordingly.

d. As part of the opt-out process, local authorities should be able to identify and

\textsuperscript{11} Whilst direct applicants (for example building owners) might be one-off customers, agents are likely to submit multiple applications for different warrantable building projects.
record, on an on-going basis, details of customers who choose to opt-out of being invited to take part in the survey.

For the first national survey, local authorities are required to log customer opt-outs manually. Ahead of subsequent surveys, consideration should be given to developing and implementing a more automated process. This may require external IT support or input from software developers, for example Idox.

7. It is the Scottish Government's intention that, in future years, the national survey will be handed to LABSS or individual local authorities to administer. This presents a risk to the independence of the survey and decisions will need to be made with respect to:

a. A suitable IT system to be used for hosting an online survey, distributing electronic survey mailings and carrying out analysis of all responses in a consistent way;

b. Who will take responsibility for coordinating the survey, analysing results (particularly time-series analysis), and producing reports at national and local levels from all data obtained;

c. Whether local authorities will be in a position to promote the survey to their own customers or, alternatively, who will take responsibility for coordinating and de-duplicating customer records supplied by all local authorities.

8. The position of the national survey in relation to local surveys remains uncertain and is a concern for some local authorities. This should be clarified in the future by the Scottish Government although it may be appropriate to wait until after the first national survey has completed and reported in order to determine its relative success. Key issues to address here include:

a. What the national survey means for the future of local arrangements – in particular whether the results from the national survey are more or less useful at a local level for responding to KPO5, than existing local surveys;

b. The risk of survey fatigue among customers being asked the same questions as part of national and local surveys;

c. The potential for an “omnibus” approach in the future by which local authorities submit any very specific questions they may have and these are added to a standard national survey. This would also significantly ease the survey burden on respondents; and

d. Whether any emerging ‘national priorities’ resulting from the national survey could detract from local priorities and lead to a dip in areas of existing high performance.
Customer Satisfaction Survey for Building Standards

Please tell us what you think

Introduction

The Scottish Government would like to obtain your views and feedback about the local authority Building Standards service in Scotland. This is a national survey that is being administered separately to customer feedback questionnaires issued by individual local authorities.

As a Building Standards customer since April 2013, we would like to hear about the quality of service you have received, for example when applying for a building warrant and/or submitting a completion certificate. We are interested in your views on the customer service you have experienced as opposed to the actual decision made in response to an application.

When answering the questions you will be asked to identify which local authority you are providing feedback on. If you have been a customer of more than one local authority and would like to provide additional feedback, please complete a separate survey.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

If you are unable to answer any questions, or if they are not applicable to you, please leave them blank.

Reassurance

Pye Tait Consulting is carrying out this survey independently on behalf of the Scottish Government and all 32 local authorities in Scotland.

The findings from the survey will be treated confidentially and reported anonymously by Pye Tait Consulting under the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

If you have any queries, please contact Adrian Smith at Pye Tait Consulting, via a.smith@pyetait.com or by telephoning 01423 509433.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this online survey.

Please click the ‘Next’ button, below, to continue.
PART 1: About your application

Q1. Which ONE of the following local authorities are you responding about in this survey? (Please tick the appropriate box and complete a separate survey for any other local authorities of which you have been a customer since April 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aberdeen</th>
<th>Highland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeenshire</td>
<td>Inverclyde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angus</td>
<td>Midlothian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyll and Bute</td>
<td>Moray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Edinburgh</td>
<td>North Ayrshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clackmannashire</td>
<td>North Lanarkshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar</td>
<td>Orkney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumfries and Galloway</td>
<td>Perth and Kinross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>Renfrewshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ayrshire</td>
<td>Scottish Borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Dunbartonshire</td>
<td>Shetland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Lothian</td>
<td>South Ayrshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Renfrewshire</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falkirk</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>West Dunbartonshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>West Lothian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. In what capacity have you been a customer of the building standards service? [Tick all that apply]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct applicant for building warrant, for example building owner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct submitter of completion certificate, for example building owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent working on behalf of an applicant or submitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If ‘Other’ – please specify: ________________________________________

Q3. For which of the following reasons did you make contact with your local authority building standards service? [Tick all that apply]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application for a building warrant (including any pre-application discussion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During construction, including submission of a completion certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reason/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If ‘Other’ – please specify: ________________________________________

Q4. [Asked if Q3 = building warrant] How many building warrant applications have you submitted to this local authority since April 2013? If you are unsure, please provide a best estimate.


Q5. [Asked if Q3 = completion certificate] How many completion certificates have you submitted to this local authority for acceptance since April 2013? If you are unsure, please provide a best estimate.

Q6. For which of the following categories of work have you submitted an application? [Tick all that apply]

- Domestic new build – multiple plotted developments (houses/flats)
- Domestic new build – other (e.g. one-off house build)
- Domestic existing build - extension
- Domestic existing build - alteration
- Non-domestic – residential (e.g. hostels, guest houses, hotels, hospitals)
- Non-domestic – assembly (e.g. churches, schools, health centres, libraries, stadia)
- Non-domestic – commercial (e.g. shops, restaurants and office buildings)
- Non-domestic – Industrial (e.g. factory buildings, manufacturing units, refineries)
- Non-domestic – storage/agricultural (e.g. grain stores, car parks, bonded warehouse)

If ‘Other’ – please specify: ________________________________

PART 2: Meeting your expectations

Q7. Overall, to what extent did the service you received from the local authority building standards service meet your expectations? Please rate on a scale from 1 ‘not at all’ to 10 ‘completely’.

Q8. Please provide your reasons for this rating: ________________________________
# PART 3: Timeliness

**Q9.** How satisfied were you with the time taken by the local authority building standards service to undertake each of the following? [Leave any statements blank if not applicable]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respond to telephone enquiries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to written enquiries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue the first report for a building warrant application (e.g. detailing non-compliance or further information requested)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process the application and grant a building warrant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to a request for a site visit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept a completion certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q10.** How well did the local authority keep you informed about the progress of your application/submission (if applicable)?

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither well nor poorly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART 4: Advice, guidance and quality of service from building standards service staff

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the advice and guidance you received from local authority building standards service staff?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree to some extent</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree to some extent</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I received sufficient advice and guidance to meet my needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The advice and guidance I received was consistent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The advice and guidance I received was helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the quality of service received from building standards service staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree to some extent</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree to some extent</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff were polite and courteous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff were helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff were efficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff were knowledgeable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt as though someone took ownership of my enquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any problems that arose were adequately resolved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q13. [Only asked if ‘Strongly Agree’ to any of Q12 A – F] You have stated STRONGLY AGREE to at least one of the above statements with respect to the advice, guidance and quality of service you have received. Please can you explain what was particularly good?


Q14. [Only asked if 'Strongly Disagree' to any of Q12 A – F] You have stated STRONGLY DISAGREE to at least one of the above statements with respect to the advice, guidance and quality of service you have received. Please can you explain your reasons?


Q15. Are you aware of the need to notify the building standards service before warrantable work commences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Route to Q17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Route to Part 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q16. Did you have an inspection visit by building standards service staff?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Route to Q17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Route to Part 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q17. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of the inspection visit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flexibility of dates and times to meet my needs</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism of the inspection staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughness of the inspection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the advice and guidance received from the inspection staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART 5: Communications

Q18. In which of the following ways did you interact with the local authority building standards service? [Tick all that apply]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the building standards service offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If ‘Other’ – please specify: ____________________________________

Q19. On a scale from 1 ‘very poor’ to 10 ‘very good’ - how would you rate each of the following aspects of the local authority’s written information and documentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpfulness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout and presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of plain English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q20. Have you visited the building standards section of the local authority’s website?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Route to Q21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Route to Q23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q21. Did you find all the information you were looking for on the website?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q22. In what ways, if any, do you think the building standards section of the local authority’s website could be improved?

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q23. In terms of how you would like to communicate with the local authority building standards service in the future – please rate the following forms of communication from 1 ‘most preferred option’ to 5 ‘least preferred option’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of Communication</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Email
Telephone
Letter
On-site visit
At the building standards service offices

Q24. In what ways, if any, do you think the local authority building standards service could improve its communications?

Q25. How easy was it to make contact with your local authority building standards service? Please rate on a scale from 1 'very easy' to 10 'very difficult'

Q26. Please provide your reasons for this rating:

Q27. Did you have reason to visit the offices of the local authority building standards service?

Yes  Route to Q28
No  Route to Q29

Q28. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of the building standards service offices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q29. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the building standards service? Please rate on a scale from 1 'not at all satisfied' to 10 'completely satisfied'

Q30. Your views are important and the local authority would like the opportunity to contact you to discuss your feedback further. In order to do so, we require your consent to share your individual responses with them, along with your contact details. Are you happy for us to do so?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Route to Q31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No – I wish to remain anonymous</td>
<td>Route to Q34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q31. [Only asked if Yes to Q30] Please provide your contact name:

Q32. [Only asked if Yes to Q30] Please provide your email address:

Q33. [Only asked if Yes to Q30] Please provide your contact telephone number:

Q34. Finally, do you have any final comments about how you believe the local authority building standards service could be improved in the future?

<Submit button> and thank you page.
Appendix 2: Final Action Plan – Survey Development

Proposed actions and timescales relevant to the survey approach and delivery are set out below. Accompanying notes are included to provide further detail and explanations, where appropriate. Pye Tait Consulting has been appointed to undertake the first national customer satisfaction survey on behalf of the Scottish Government (Building Standards Division). It is intended that the final report presents the findings at national and individual local authority level, to inform KPO5 of the national performance framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Required Action</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
<th>By when:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agree and sign-off communication to be sent to BSMs, setting out:</td>
<td>BSD &amp; Pye Tait</td>
<td>20/11/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Proposed survey approach;</td>
<td>BSD to issue</td>
<td>22/11/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Email and templates to circulate to BSMs.</td>
<td>BSD to issue</td>
<td>22/11/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Communication sent out to BSMs for review and comment, including the draft action plan for review</td>
<td>BSD to issue</td>
<td>22/11/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>BSMs to review the action plan and advise Adrian Smith at Pye Tait if there are any concerns – via <a href="mailto:a.smith@pyetait.com">a.smith@pyetait.com</a></td>
<td>BSMs</td>
<td>10/12/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Required Action:</td>
<td>By whom:</td>
<td>By when:</td>
<td>Status:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Local authorities to identify and supply Pye Tait with:</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/12/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|      | A. Numbers of unique customers  
   *For the purpose of this research, customers are defined as the applicants for building warrants (including any agents); and submitters of completion certificates (including any agents). In general this would be owners or developers and their agents.*  
B. Numbers of email addresses (broken down as above). | BSMs     |          |         |
| 5.   | Pye Tait to review numbers of customers/email addresses from all 32 BSMs and flag up to BSD where there are any concerns, for example if the volume of email addresses appears too low. | Pye Tait | 20/12/13 |         |
| 6.   | Finalisation of Action Plan | BSD & Pye Tait | 20/12/13 |         |
| 7.   | Exploration of supporting approaches for conducting the survey. (NB: Local authorities will not be requested to send hard copy letters to historic customers to customers for whom they do not hold email addresses). | BSD & Pye Tait | 10/01/14 |         |
| 8.   | Local authorities to provide any comments on the national survey questionnaire by email to Adrian Smith at Pye Tait Consulting – [a.smith@pyetait.com](mailto:a.smith@pyetait.com)  
The national survey questionnaire was circulated to BSMs accordingly on 13/12/2013. | BSMs | 10/01/14 |         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Required Action:</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
<th>By when:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9A.  | **BSMs to have completed action points 9A to 9E, below:**  
The model building warrant application form is to be updated with an appropriate Privacy Notice so that new customers have the opportunity to opt out of the survey.  
An exemplar Privacy Notice for this purpose is attached – Appendix 3.1. Following feedback this differs slightly to the version contained within the previous draft action plan.  
The Privacy Notice should be clearly visible within the body of application forms.  
We are aware that certain local authorities are unable to actions changes to the model form due to IT-related issues. Until it is possible to change these forms please refer to point 9B (below).  
We are aware that it is not currently possible to alter Form 5 ‘Completion Certificate – Submission’ and Form 6 ‘Completion Certificate where No Building Warrant Has Been Obtained – Submission’. Please refer to point 9B (below). | BSMs | 24/01/14 | |
| 9B.  | **The Privacy Notice should be printed and included as an accompanying flyer with 1) blank building warrant application forms that have already been printed; 2) and for all issuances of Form 5 and Form 6 that cannot be altered; and 3) any other instances where local authorities are unable to action changes to model application forms.**  
An exemplar Privacy Notice for this purpose is attached – Appendix 3.2. Following feedback this differs slightly to the version contained within the previous draft action plan. | BSMs | 24/01/14 | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Required Action:</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
<th>By when:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9C.  | **Preparation of an Excel spreadsheet containing details of current and historic customers dating back to April 2013.**  
Information should be presented in a single worksheet in columns headed as follows:  
- Title  
- First Name  
- Surname  
- Business name (optional but should be given if a personal name is not held)  
- Email address  
Title, first name and surname may be combined within a single column if easier. It is important that email addresses are provided in a separate column.  
Where a customer has submitted multiple applications, they should only be listed once per local authority. (Pye Tait will ultimately de-duplicate any email addresses duplicated across Councils).  
Where both an applicant and agent are listed as part of an application, both should be included as both are considered to be customers of the building standards service. | BSMs | 24/01/14 |         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Required Action:</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
<th>By when:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9D.</td>
<td>An electronic opt-out communication is to be sent to all historic customers with email addresses dating back to April 2013.</td>
<td>BSMs</td>
<td>24/01/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An exemplar opt-out email for this purpose is enclosed – Appendix 3.3.

Local authorities will need to identify a suitable approach for efficiently transferring customer email addresses into the email system. One example may be to copy in bulk from MS Excel and pasting into the BCC field of a group email.

After careful consideration it has been decided that an opt-out rather than an opt-in approach will be needed. There are concerns that an opt-in approach would yield too few responses for the national survey to be viable. An opt-out arrangement is perfectly permissible, especially for officially-sanctioned, satisfaction research. The nature of the research would be categorised as ‘public sector primary research’ as opposed to ‘direct marketing’. The survey does not involve sales in any way and will not be gathering personal data. As researchers, Pye Tait fully adheres to the requirements of the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

Following the initial opt-out stage, respondents will be invited to participate in the research by Pye Tait and will have a further opportunity to unsubscribe from further communications at any time. Customers will be fully informed and also told clearly that their contact details will not be used for any other purpose and will be deleted from our systems immediately following the validation of survey responses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Required Action:</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
<th>By when:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9E</td>
<td><strong>Creation of an electronic log to record details of customers who respond to opt out of the national survey from this point forward.</strong></td>
<td>BSMs</td>
<td>24/01/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We understand there is currently no automated means by which customers choosing to opt out of the national survey can be logged and that this information may need to be recorded manually in the first year. As Pye Tait Consulting has only been contracted to undertake the first national survey, this information should continue to be recorded locally so that it can be accessed in preparation for the survey being repeated in future years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>Cut-off point for customers opting out from being invited to complete the first national survey.</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
<td>14/02/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customers who have opted out by 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2014 will be excluded from the invitation for the first national survey.</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customer opt-outs after this point should continue to be logged so that this information can be accessed in preparation for the survey being repeated in future years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11A.</td>
<td><strong>Local authorities to remove from the MS Excel file (cf. point 7C), all customers who have opted out from the national survey by 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2014.</strong></td>
<td>BSMs</td>
<td>28/02/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Required Action:</td>
<td>By whom:</td>
<td>By when:</td>
<td>Status:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 11B. | Local authorities to send the MS Excel file (excluding opt-outs) to Adrian Smith at Pye Tait Consulting — [a.smith@pyetait.com](mailto:a.smith@pyetait.com)  
Pye Tait is able to accept password protected Excel workbooks (either via email or by post using CD/DVD media) and passwords should be sent separately. Pye Tait will treat all data securely and this will only be used for the purpose of the research. A copy of Pye Tait’s data security statement can be made available upon request. | BSMs | 28/02/14 | |
| 12.  | Pye Tait Consulting to prepare customer contact records supplied by local authorities.  
This will involve de-duplicating any repeat customer records so that customers are not invited to participate more than once. | Pye Tait | 31/03/14 | |
| 13.  | Hosting and promotion of the online national customer satisfaction survey.  
Pye Tait will assume responsibility for sending out email invitations and reminders containing the survey link and responding to any queries.  
BSMs are encouraged to promote the survey link during April 2014 as part of email correspondence and via flyers/inserts to accompany printed correspondence. | Pye Tait/BSMs | April 2014 | |
Appendix 3: Exemplar Privacy Notices

Appendix 3.1: To be added to the existing model building warrant application form (cf. action point 9A)

Your views are important to us. In conjunction with local authorities, the Scottish Government (Building Standards Division) would like the opportunity to contact you in the future to invite your feedback as part of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards.

The Scottish Government may appoint a carefully selected third party to administer the survey independently on its behalf and notify you when the questionnaire is available. If you would prefer that we DO NOT share your contact details with any carefully selected third parties for the specific purpose of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards, please TICK THIS BOX.

☐

If un-ticked, we will assume you are happy to be invited to participate in the survey.

Appendix 3.2: To be printed as a flyer/insert to accompany blank application forms that have already been printed (cf. action point 9B)

Your views are important to us. In conjunction with local authorities, the Scottish Government (Building Standards Division) would like the opportunity to contact you in the future to invite your feedback as part of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards.

The Scottish Government may appoint a carefully selected third party to administer the survey independently on its behalf and notify you when the questionnaire is available. If you would prefer that we DO NOT share your contact details with any carefully selected third parties for the specific purpose of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards, please TICK THIS BOX and RETURN THIS FLYER WITH YOUR APPLICATION.

☐

If this flyer is not ticked and enclosed, we will assume you are happy to be invited to participate in the survey.
Appendix 3.3: Opt-out email to be sent to historic customers (cf. action point 9D)

Subject line: Your views are important – please notify us if you wish to OPT OUT

Dear Customer

We are writing to you as a customer of the Scottish building standards system since 1st April 2013.

Your views are important to us. In conjunction with local authorities, the Scottish Government (Building Standards Division) would like the opportunity to contact you in the future to invite your feedback as part of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards.

The Scottish Government may appoint a carefully selected third party to administer the survey independently on its behalf and notify you when the questionnaire is available. If you would prefer that we DO NOT share your contact details with any carefully selected third parties for the specific purpose of the national customer satisfaction survey for building standards, please reply with the word “unsubscribe” in the body of your email no later than 14th February 2014. If you do not reply within this time we will assume you are happy to be invited to participate in the survey.

Thank you very much for your time.