

AHIPP Survey

**Customers' views of Home Information
Packs and the home buying and selling**

24 August 2009

1. Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

The Association of Home Information Pack Providers (AHIPP) commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct an online survey amongst its member's customers. This report begins with an executive summary which includes the headline findings and some key methodological details. Chapter 2 considers the survey findings in greater detail, while Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used and provides details on how to interpret the results. The topline results are included in the Appendix.

The survey includes questions on the following issues:

- customers' satisfaction with the management of their HIP (2.1);
- their views of the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)¹ (2.2);
- whether or not the HIP affected their decision to sell their home (2.3);
- their views of the buying and selling process (2.4);
- their views on the importance of improving the energy efficiency of homes (2.5); and
- how useful they feel different elements of the HIP are for home buyers (2.6).

1.2 Methodology

Member organisations sent an email to customers who had had their Home Information Pack (HIP) completed between 10 June and 5 August 2009. Customers were sent a link to the Ipsos MORI website, where they were asked to input their email address. Ipsos MORI sent respondents an email that included a unique link to the online questionnaire. A total of 2,032 customers took part in the survey. Further methodological details are included in Chapter 3.

1.3 Headline findings

Around seven in ten (69%) customers are satisfied with the way that the HIP has been managed so far. A little under one in eight (13%) are dissatisfied.

Just less than three quarters of customers (73%) say it took less than 20 minutes to complete the Property Information Questionnaire. Three quarters (75%) found it easy to complete.

Over four in five (82%) customers agree that the process of buying and selling properties takes too long, while only 4% disagree.

A majority of customers (57%) agree that home buyers should be provided with more upfront information about the condition of the property that they are buying.

¹ The Property Information Questionnaire was announced in December 2008 and introduced on the 6th April 2009. It has been based on the Home use form. It has been designed to be completed by the home seller and is included as part of the HIP.

Half of customers (50%) say that home buyers having more information about a property before making an offer would improve the buying and selling process, while three in ten (30%) would say it would not.

In general more agree than disagree that adding more information to a HIP in order to speed up the house buying process is a good thing (43% versus 35%). One in five are neutral, (21%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing with this statement.

Around half of customers (49%) agree that improving the energy efficiency of homes should be a government priority while a quarter (26%) disagree. Two in five (40%) disagree that a more energy efficient home would make properties more attractive to buyers.

Customers were asked about how useful they found buyers would find various aspects of the Home Information Pack. Three in five (60%) say that the information provided by the seller in the PIQ is useful, while a little over two in five say that information on the energy efficiency of the property (44%) and how to save money by reducing energy costs (42%) are useful.

1.4 Publication of this research

As AHIPP has engaged Ipsos MORI to undertake an objective programme of research, it is important to protect its interests by ensuring that it is accurately reflected in any press release or publication of the findings. As part of our standard terms and conditions, the publication of the findings of this report are therefore, subject to the advance approval of Ipsos MORI. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

1.5 Acknowledgements

Ipsos MORI would like to thank Ashley King, and Paul Tenant for all their help and assistance in developing this project. We would also pass our grateful thanks to all the AHIPP member organisations and respondents taking part in the survey.

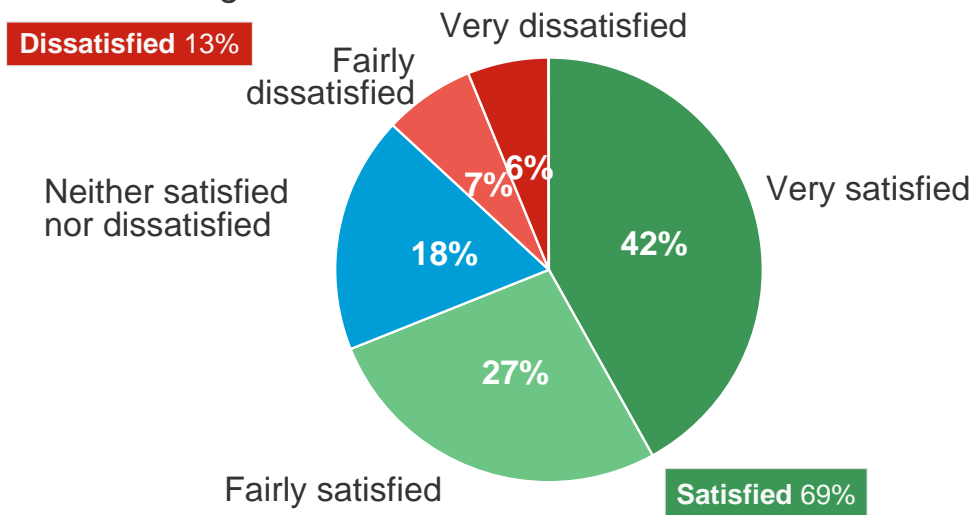
2. Survey findings

2.1 Satisfaction with the management of the HIP

Around seven in ten (69%) customers are satisfied with the way that the HIP has been managed so far. Of these two in five (42%) are very satisfied. Just under one in five (18%) describe themselves as neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and around one in eight (13%) are dissatisfied.

The production of the HIP

Q1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way that the production of your Home Information Pack (HIP) has been managed so far?



Ipsos MORI Base: All customers (2,032)



Women are more likely than men to be satisfied with the management of the HIP (71% versus 66%). Younger customers are also more likely to be satisfied than older customers: three quarters (75%) of customers aged between 18 and 34 are satisfied compared to 69% of customers as a whole. Satisfaction is also high in the North West (75% are satisfied), and the East Midlands (74% are satisfied).

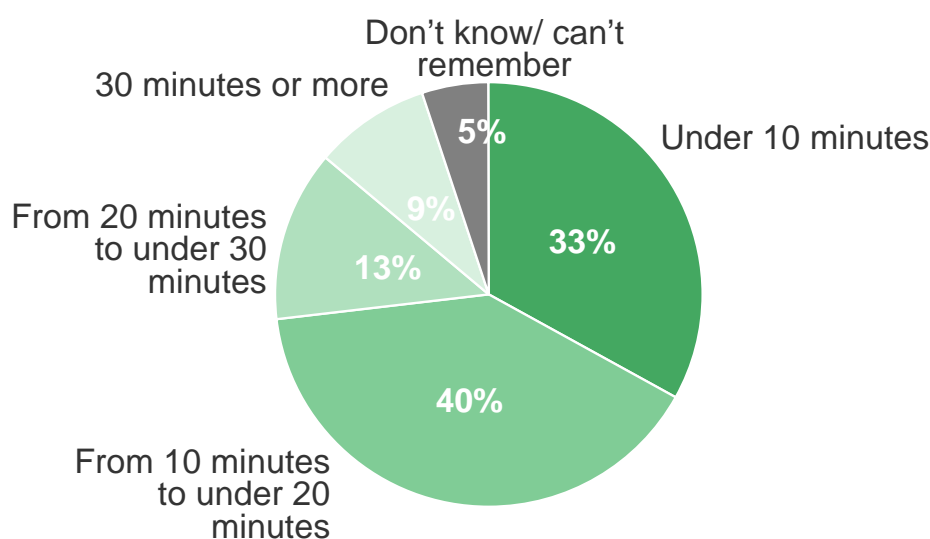
2.2 The Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)

The Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ) was introduced by the government at the end of 2008. It contains important data about the property and is designed to be easy for sellers to complete without professional help².

Around three quarters of customers (73%) say it took less than 20 minutes to complete the PIQ with a third (33%) saying it took less than 10 minutes. Less than one in ten (9%) describe the questionnaire as taking 30 minutes or more to complete.

Completing the PIQ

Q2. *How long did it take you to complete the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)?*



Ipsos MORI Base: All customers (2,032)



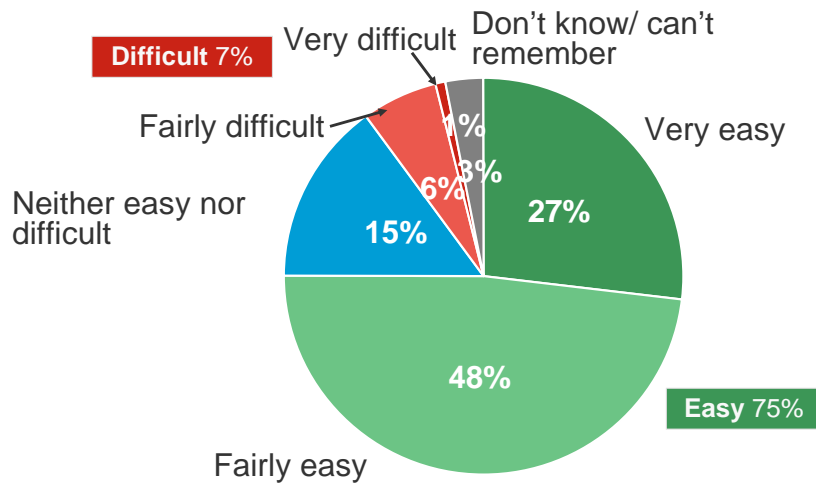
Customers' with a freehold property are significantly more likely than those with a leasehold property to report that the PIQ took less than 10 minutes to complete (37% versus 17%). This is likely to be because of the additional details that leaseholders need to include within their PIQ (part 2 of the form) which are likely to take some additional time to complete.

The following chart illustrates how easy or difficult customers find completing the PIQ. Three quarters (75%) of respondents describe it as easy, with over a quarter (27%) describing it as very easy. Only 7% describe it as difficult, a figure that rises to one in ten (10%) of those with a leasehold property.

² Taken from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/propertyinformationquestionnaire>

The difficulty of the PIQ

Q3. How easy or difficult was it to complete the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)?



Ipsos MORI Base: All customers (2,032)

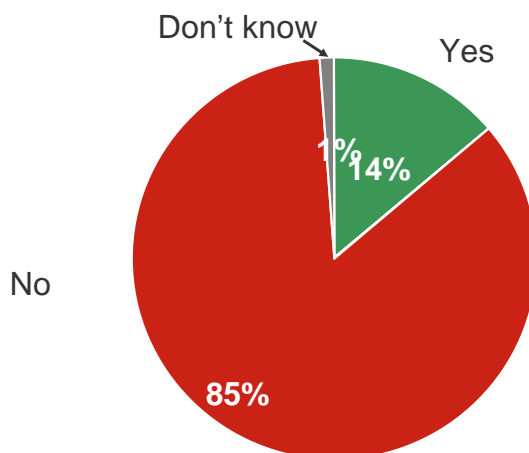


2.3 Customers' views of the HIP

One in seven customers (14%) say that the need to obtain a HIP influenced their decision whether or not to sell their home, compared to six in seven (85%) who say it did not influence their decision. It is important to note that *all* those taking part in the research have commissioned a HIP.

The influence of the HIP

Q4. Did the need to obtain a HIP influence your decision whether or not to sell your home?



Ipsos MORI Base: All customers (2,032)



2.4 Customers' views of the buying and selling process

Customers were asked whether they agree or disagree with a number of statements about the buying and selling process.

Most customers (82%) agree that the process of buying and selling properties takes too long with over two in five saying that they strongly agree (44%). Younger customers are more likely to agree with this statement than older customers (86% of those aged between 18 and 44 agree compared to 77% of those aged 65 or over).

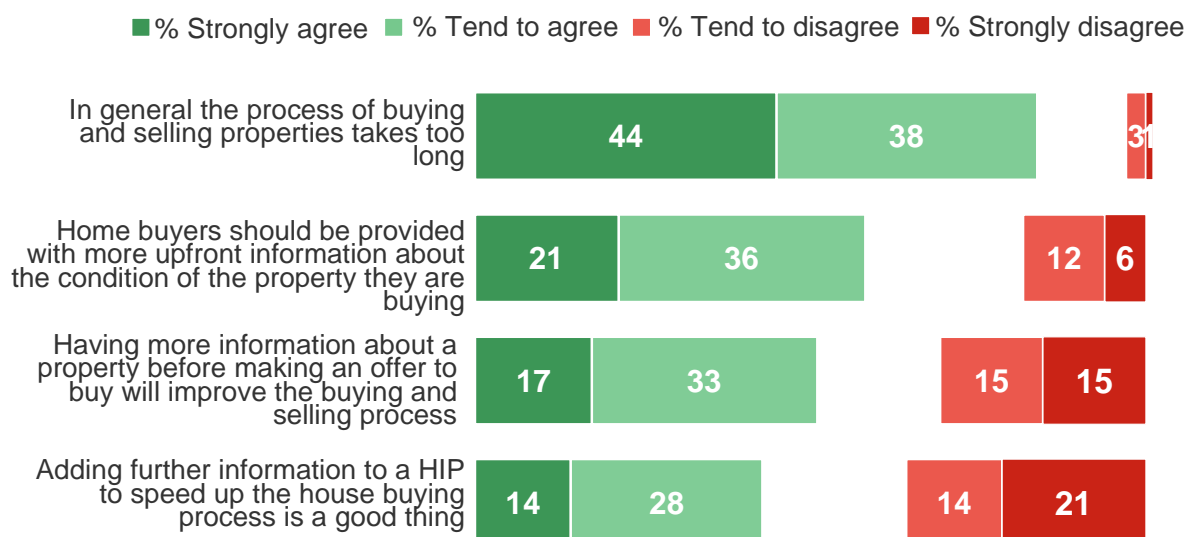
A majority of customers (57%) agree that home buyers should be provided with more upfront information about the condition of the property that they are buying. Support for a change in the home buying and selling process is significantly higher among younger customers (63% of those aged between 18 and 44 agree compared to 54% of those aged 65 or over).

Customers are less likely to agree that "having more information about a property before making an offer to buy will improve the buying and selling process". Half of customers agree (50%) with this statement compared to three in ten (30%) who disagree. Those most likely to agree with this statement include those aged under 34 (57% support) and women (53% support).

Less than half of customers (42%) agree with the statement "adding further information to a HIP to speed up the house buying process is a good thing". A third of customers (34%) disagree with this statement while a fifth (21%) neither agree nor disagree. Men are significantly more likely than women to disagree with this statement (40% versus 28%).

Statements on the buying and selling process

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements ...



Ipsos MORI Base: All constomers (2,032)



2.5 Improving the energy efficiency of homes

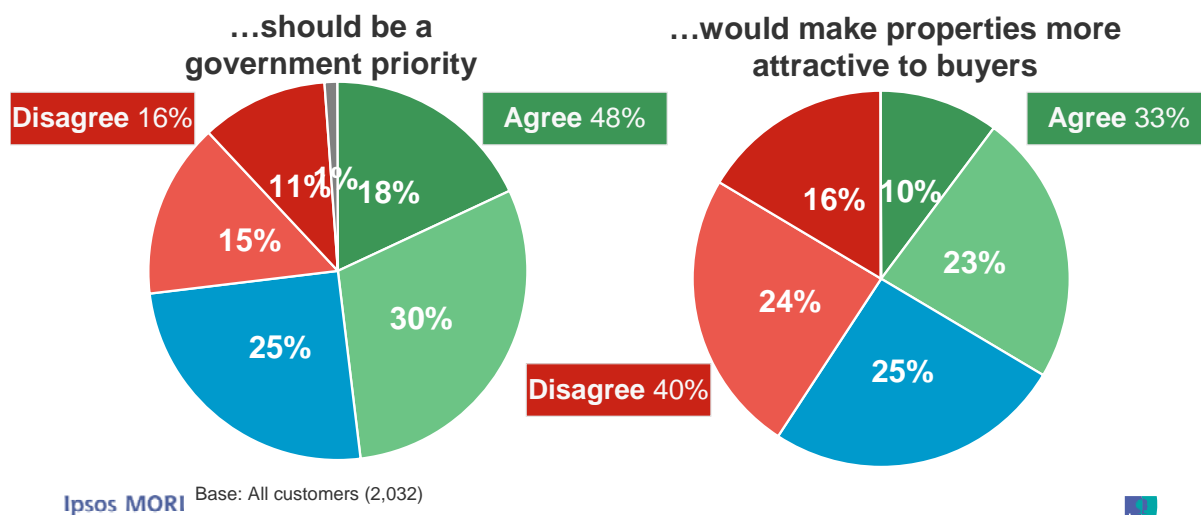
Half of customers (49%) agree that improving the energy efficiency of homes should be a government priority, with a quarter disagreeing (26%), and another quarter (25%) saying that they neither agree nor disagree.

Overall customers are more likely to *disagree* than agree with the statement that improving the energy efficiency of homes would make properties more attractive to buyers (41% disagree compared to only 33% who agree). The East Midlands is the only region where customers are more likely to agree with the statement than disagree (44% agree versus 31% disagree).

Improving the energy efficiency of homes

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Improving the energy efficiency of homes ...

■ % Strongly agree ■ % Tend to agree ■ % Neither agree nor disagree ■ % Tend to disagree
■ % Strongly disagree ■ % Don't know/ No opinion



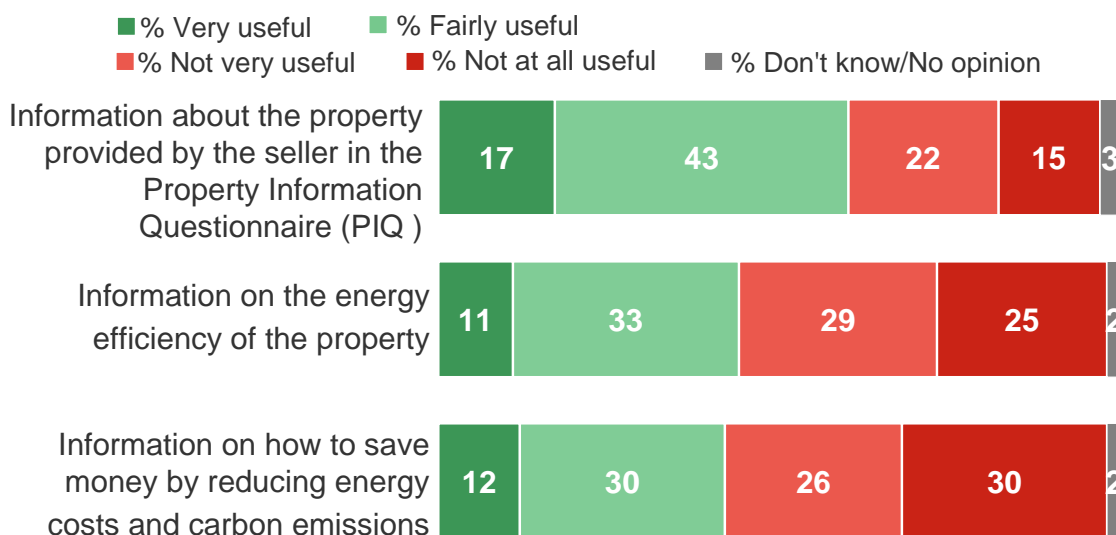
2.6 How useful are different elements of the HIP

The following chart illustrates how useful customers feel different elements of the HIPs are for people buying a property. It is important to note that the customers commissioning a HIP are likely to be *selling* their properties, but not necessarily buying a new property.

Three in five customers (60%) think that the PIQ is useful to those buying a property, compared to less than two in five (37%) who do not. A little over two in five (44%) customers feel that information on the energy efficiency of the property is useful, while a similar proportion (42%) feel that information on how to save money by reducing energy costs is useful.

How useful is the HIP?

Q6. How useful do you think the following types of information are for people buying a property?



Base: All respondents (2,000)
Ipsos MORI



3. Methodological Note

3.1 A note on the methodology

This survey was conducted online amongst customers of AHIPP member organisations between 10 June and 5 August 2009. The advantage of the methodology used is that a large number of customers could take part in the survey, in a short period of time, and at a relatively low cost.

The disadvantage of such a methodology is that only customers with email access are able to take part. In 2008, 65% of households in Great Britain had internet access at home³ but rates are considerably higher among younger and middle to higher income households. These factors make an internet survey appropriate for the population who are likely to be selling homes.

The data for the survey has **not** been weighed as there is no known national survey of the characteristics of people who have commissioned a HIP in the fieldwork period. It is not possible to predict the response rate for this survey as there is no data available for the number of customers who were invited to take part.

³ National Statistics *Internet Access 2008: Households and Individuals*
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=5672>

3.2 The profile of survey respondents

The proportions of respondents who have commissioned a HIP in the fieldwork period are as follows.

	Number of people	Percentage of respondents %
	2,032	100
Gender		
Male	1,028	51
Female	1,000	49
Age		
18-34	363	18
35-44	496	24
45-54	477	24
55-64	464	23
65+	226	11
Government Office Region		
East of England	278	14
East Midlands	133	7
London	310	15
North East	131	6
North West	163	8
South East	317	16
South West	305	15
Wales	30	1
West Midlands	134	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	216	11
Source: Ipsos MORI		

3.3 Statistical reliability

The customers taking part in the survey are only a sample of the total 'population'. We cannot, therefore, be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if all customers had been interviewed (the 'true' values). However, we can predict the variation between the sample results and the 'true' values from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given.

The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 19 in 20 that the 'true' value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the '95% confidence interval' based on a pure random sample.

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	+	+	+
100 interviews	6	9	10
200 interviews	4	6	7
300 interviews	3	5	6
500 interviews	3	4	4
1,000 interviews	2	3	3
2,000 interviews	1	2	2
2,032 interviews	1	2	2

Source: Ipsos MORI

For example, on a question where 50% of customers respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary, by more than two percentage points. Thus, the confidence interval (or margin of error) is by how much the survey result could increase or decrease and still be considered to reflect the 'true' result that would have been recorded if everyone in the population had been surveyed.

When the results are compared between separate sub-groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real," or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been surveyed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is "statistically significant" - it is again necessary to know the total population, the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer, and the degree of confidence chosen. The values below give an indication of the sampling tolerances that can be made whilst assuming a "95% confidence interval".

Differences required for significance

Sample sizes at or near these percentage levels

	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	+	+	+
100 and 100	8	13	14
100 and 200	7	11	12
250 and 250	5	8	9
250 and 500	5	7	8
500 and 500	4	6	6
1,000 and 1,000	3	4	4
Source: Ipsos MORI			

Appendix: Topline Results

- Results are based on 2,032 customers who have had a Home Information Pack completed by AHIPP member organisations between **10 June and 5 August 2009**
- Data are unweighted
- Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of don't knows/not stated
- Results are based on all customers (2,032) unless otherwise stated. Where a smaller number is indicated it is due to some customers not responding to the question.
- An asterisk (*) represents a value of less than one half of one percent, but not zero

Q1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way that the production of your Home Information Pack (HIP) has been managed so far?

	%
Very satisfied	42
Fairly satisfied	27
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18
Fairly dissatisfied	7
Very dissatisfied	6
Don't know	*

Q2 How long did it take you to complete the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)?

	%
Under 10 mins	33
From 10 mins to under 20 mins	40
From 20 mins to under 30 mins	13
30 mins or more	9
Don't know/can't remember	5

Q3 How easy or difficult was it to complete the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)?

	%
Very easy	27
Fairly easy	48
Neither easy nor difficult	15
Fairly difficult	6
Very difficult	1
Don't know/can't remember	3

Q4 Did the need to obtain a HIP influence your decision whether or not to sell your home?

	Yes	%
	No	14
	Don't know/can't remember	85
		1

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the process of buying and selling properties?

		Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither/ nor %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No opinion/ Don't know %
A.	In general the process of buying and selling properties takes too long	44	38	13	3	1	1
B.	Home buyers should be provided with more upfront information about the condition of the property that they are buying	21	36	23	12	6	1
C.	Improving the energy efficiency of homes should be a government priority	18	30	25	15	11	1
D.	Improving the energy efficiency of homes would make properties more attractive to buyers	10	23	25	24	16	*
E.	Adding further information to a HIP to speed up the house buying process is a good thing	14	28	21	14	21	2
F.	Having more information about a property before making an offer to buy will improve the buying and selling process	17	33	18	15	15	2

Q6 Below are some examples of the information that is contained within a HIP. How useful do you think the following types of information are for people buying a property?

		Very useful %	Fairly useful %	Not very useful %	Not at all useful %	No opinion/ Don't know %
A.	Information about the property provided by the seller in the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ)	17	43	22	15	3
B.	Information on the energy efficiency of the property	11	33	29	25	2
C.	Information on how to save money by reducing energy costs and carbon emissions	12	30	26	30	2

Demographic Results

Q7 Are you male or female?

Base (2,026 customers)

	%
Male	51
Female	49

Q8 How old are you?

Base (2,028 customers)

	%
18-34	18
35-44	24
45-54	23
55-64	23
65-74	9
75+	2

Q9 How many adults aged 16 or over live in your household? Please include yourself.

	%
1	22
2	63
3	10
4 or more	5

Q10 How many children under the age of 16 live in your household?

	%
0	71
1	14
2	12
3 or more	3

Q11 What is the first half of the postcode of the property you received the HIP for?

(Used to find out which Government Office Region each HIP was made in)

	%
East of England	14
East Midlands	7
London	15
North East	6
North West	8
South East	16
South West	15
Wales	1
West Midlands	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	11
Not stated/ Unable to match	1

Q12 May I just check, for the property that you ordered the HIP, is the property freehold, leasehold or leasehold with a share of the freehold?

	%
Freehold	81
Leasehold	15
Leasehold with a share of the freehold	4
Don't know	1

Q13 And how many bedrooms does the property have?

Base (2,029 customers)

	% *
Studio	
1 bedroom	5
2 bedrooms	29
3 bedrooms	39
4 bedrooms	20
5 bedrooms or more	6
Don't know	*
