

# Life events survey

**Research study for**  
Customer Access Team  
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**Prepared by** Nicola Pemberton  
Corporate Research and Intelligence Team  
Policy Unit  
Lancashire County Council



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## 1 Executive summary

The life events survey was commissioned by the customer access team to enable them to help them identify and link together services that will assist customers during life events. The life events survey was a paper-based interviewer-administered questionnaire that members of the public contacting the county council in a face-to-face contact were asked to complete. Fieldwork began on 1 July 2008 and ended on 28 November 2008. In total 950 questionnaires were completed. The main findings and recommendations are shown below.

The most common method of contacting the county council was by telephone (44% last contact, 60% usual contact). Visiting in person was the next most common (14% last contact, 32% usual contact), and the website was the least common (4% last contact, 6% usual contact). Even though survey respondents were interviewed face-to-face, they already use more than one channel, as telephone is their preferred method.

### *Customer service centre*

- Around a third of respondents were aware of, or have used the customer service centre (31% aware, 33% used). This is lower than the 60% who said they usually contact the council by telephone, suggesting that people are using the customer service centre without realising it. Usage is lower among BME respondents and those who don't have English as a first language.
- The most common reasons for phoning the customer service centre were to book a registrar appointment (28%), report a highway fault (16%) or apply for a NoWcard (15%). Customers were very satisfied with the service they received (74%).
- All respondents were asked if they thought they would phone the customer service centre in the future, nearly all thought that they would (95%) and said they would recommend it to someone else (96%).

### *County council website ([www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk))*

- Only half of respondents were aware that the county council has a website (51%), and a quarter thought they have used it (24%) suggesting the need for publicity.
- The most common reason for using the website was to find information (57%).
- Two-thirds felt that they would use the website in the future (67%), though this is lower among the over 60s (39%). The main reason people gave for not using the website in the future was because they don't have access to the internet (47%), or don't like using it (31%).

- Nine in ten of all respondents would recommend the website, the reasons given for not recommending it related to their own lack of experience using the website or computers in general.

The project commissioners were interested in finding out how likely they are to change the way they contact the county council, and the survey looked at the likely effectiveness of a number of mechanisms. Two in five people would use a free telephone if one was available at a venue near their home. Training on how to use the internet would encourage use of the council's website in a quarter of respondents who said they otherwise wouldn't use it (26%). And a free computer at a local venue would encourage use of the council's website in a third of respondents who said they otherwise wouldn't use it (33%). However, among the over 60s both of these are less of an incentive to use the website (17% for training and 20% for free access to a computer).

#### *Service usage for life events*

- A quarter of respondents have **moved house** in the last two years (27%), though this is lower in the over 60s (14%). The most commonly used services were change of address (33%), electoral register (15%) and change of household (13%). Most services were contacted by phone (52%) and after the respondent moved (72%). Almost all contacted the service themselves (92%).
- A quarter of respondents said they have **had a child** in the last two years (26%), though this figure seems unusually high. By far the most used service was birth registration (59%), followed by childcare information service (12%). Services were once again most often contacted by phone (68%). Mostly services were contacted after the child was born (93%) and by the respondent themselves (90%).
- A fifth of respondents have **experienced bereavement** in the last two years (21%). The most used service was registering a death (52%), followed by cremation and cemeteries (9%). Almost four-fifths of the services were contacted by phone (78%), and as you would anticipate everyone contacted the service after their bereavement. Fewer services were contacted by the respondent themselves (75%), mainly because they found it too distressing.
- The services respondents most anticipate to use in the next year were primary school places and nursery school places (11% and 10% respectively).

The demographic profile of face-to-face survey respondents is: female (70%), over 60 (35%, though two-fifths are 21 to 40), have no disability (76%), are white (95%), and have English as their first language (94%).

The survey results should be used in formulating plans for how services are linked together when a customer makes contact for a specific life event. There are also opportunities for encouraging channel change through mechanisms like free phones and computers in local venues and offering training on how to use the internet. As channel change cannot happen without the awareness of the other methods of contact, it is very important to increase awareness of the availability of a central telephone number for the county council and of the website. Some ways of increasing this is through advertising of the telephone number and website at face-to-face outlets (eg libraries, one stop shops).

As the survey was undertaken specifically during face-to-face contact with service users it would be worth comparing the profile of survey respondents with the general profile of face-to-face users. It may also be worth considering carrying out a similar evaluation among users of other contact methods (eg phone, website) to see if their service usage matches those found here, and looking at other life events.

## **2 Introduction**

The life events survey was commissioned by the customer access team to enable them to help them identify and link together services that will assist customers during life events. The life events that were the particular focus of this piece of work were moving house, having a child and bereavement. The survey also obtained face-to-face customer perceptions of current contact methods (eg website, in person, telephone).

## **3 Research objectives**

The main objectives of the survey were to find out:

- perceptions of, and satisfaction with, current contact methods (eg website, in person, telephone);
- tendency for channel change to using the website;
- identifying the proportion of customers who had recently experienced the life events that were the focus of the survey; and
- services used during a life event and methods of contact.

## **4 Methodology**

The life events survey was an paper-based interviewer-administered questionnaire. Members of the public contacting the county council in a face-to-face contact were asked to complete the questionnaire. Fieldwork began on 1 July 2008 and ended on 28 November 2008.

There was no incentive for completing the questionnaire. In total 950 questionnaires were completed.

All data are unweighted, with figures based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

## 5 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of Respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1000	3%	3%	2%

For example, on a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1000 respond with a particular answer, the chance are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire customer base using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a given statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of Sample A	Size of Sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
100	1000	10%	9%	6%
300	300	8%	7%	5%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 300 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 8% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (eg of opinion, service usage etc). Statistically valid differences in the survey results are described in the main body of the report.

The survey respondents were face-to-face contact users and therefore may not be representative of the general public in Lancashire. As they had contacted the county council face-to-face their more general contact mechanisms may be different and their needs could differ. This should be kept in mind when looking at the survey results.

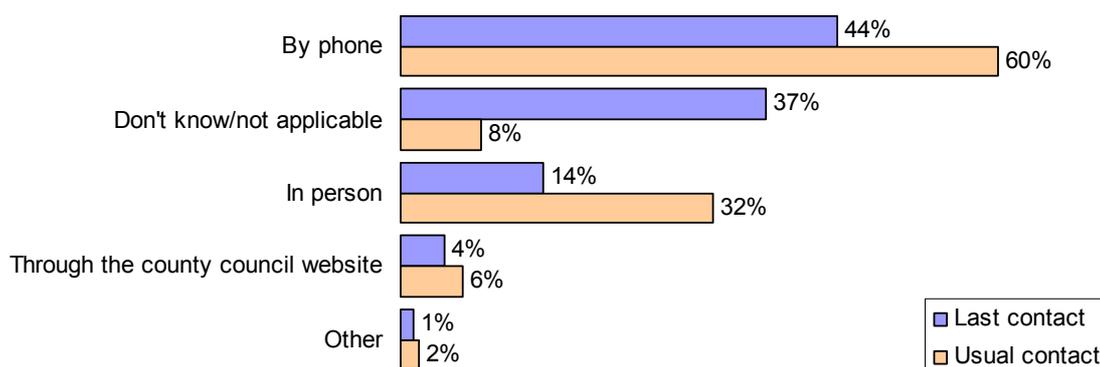
## 6 Main research findings

A marked up questionnaire of the survey results can be found in Appendix 1.

### 6.1 Method of contacting the county council

The first question asked respondents how they last got in contact with the county council, and how they usually get in contact with the county council. The results are shown in chart one below. More than two-fifths last got in contact with the council by phone (44%), and more respondents usually contact the council by phone (60%). The next most commonly used method was to contact in person, more people usually used this method (32%) than used it last time (14%). The website is the least used method of contacting the county council (4% last contact, 6% usual contact).

**Chart 1 -** *How did you last get in contact with the county council? And, how would you usually get in contact with the county council?*



Base: all respondents (891 and 938)

Different people do have preferences for a particular form of contact. Looking first at the last contact made with the county council, men were more likely than women to visit in person (18% versus 13% respectively), and women were more likely than men to use the phone (47% versus 37% respectively).

This is corroborated with the usual form of contact where men are more likely to prefer to visit in person (38%), and women are more likely to use the phone (63%). People with a disability were more likely to make an enquiry/access services by visiting in person (38%, compared to people without a disability 29%), and were less likely to use the phone or website (54% and 3% respectively). Understandably people whose first language is not English were less likely to usually use the phone (46%).

## 6.2 Perceptions of the customer service centre

The county council has a customer service centre that is a central point of contact for the public to make enquiries and access services by telephone.

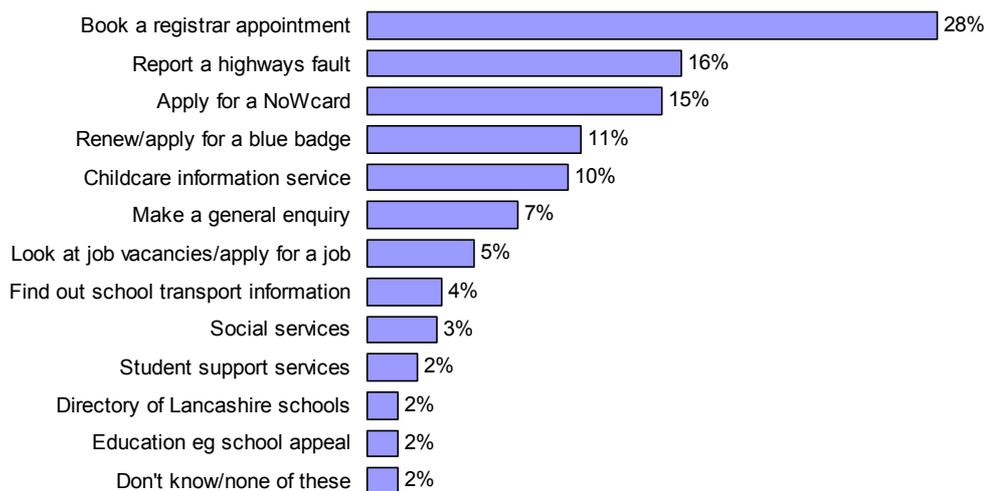
Respondents were asked if they knew about the existence of the customer service centre. Less than one-third said that they were aware of the customer service centre (31%), the majority saying they were not aware of it (69%)<sup>1</sup>. All respondents were then asked if they thought they had telephoned the customer service centre. Responses were similar to the awareness of the service (33% yes, 65% no), though this is lower than the 60% of respondents who usually use the phone to contact the council. There were a couple of differences in the type of people who were less likely to have called the customer service centre. These people were from a BME background (19%) and didn't speak English as a first language (19%).

Do you think you have telephoned the customer service centre?	
Yes	33%
No	65%
Don't know	1%

Base all respondents: (950)

Those respondents who had telephoned the customer service centre were asked the reason why they contacted them. The most common reason was to book a registrar appointment (28%), followed by reporting a highways fault (16%) and applying for a NoWcard (15%).

**Chart 2 -** *Now thinking about the last time you contacted the customer service centre. Please tell us why you contacted them.*



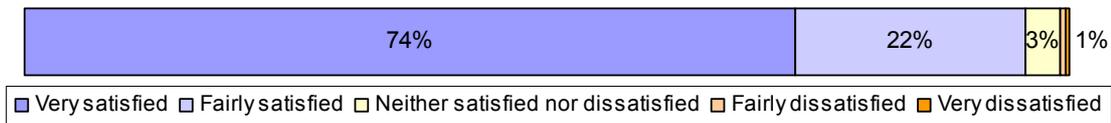
Base: all respondents using the customer service centre (321)

<sup>1</sup> Awareness of the customer service centre may be higher among the more general population as survey respondents made face-to-face contact with the council.

The services different people use also changes by the type of individual. Younger people were more likely to book a registrar appointment (21-30 years old 52%, 31-40 years old 39%). People with a disability were more likely to phone to apply for a Blue Badge (36%), NoWcard (22%), or to enquire about social services (9%). Naturally NoWcard applications were also higher among the over 60s (36%).

Those using the customer service centre were very satisfied (74%), the remainder being mostly fairly satisfied (22%), only 3% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

**Chart 3 - Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received from the customer service centre?**

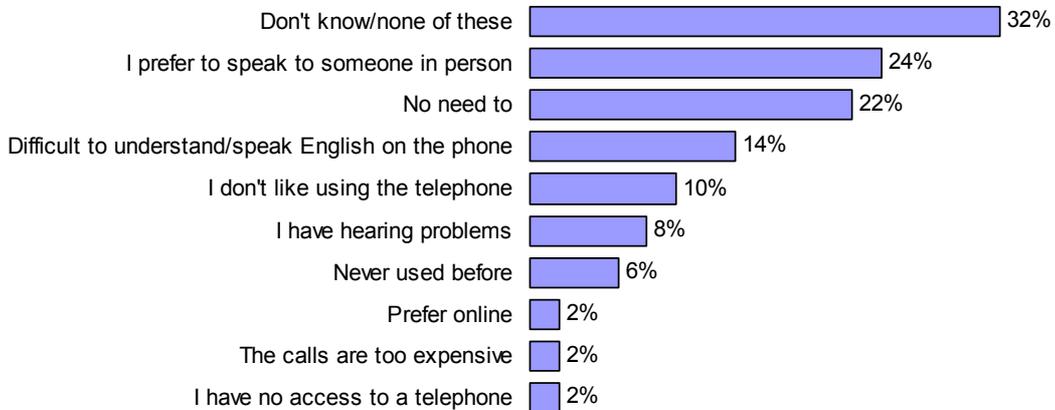


Base: all respondents using the customer service centre (312)

After having the concept of the customer service centre explained to them by the interviewer, all respondents were asked if they would use the customer service centre in the future. Nearly everyone said that they would use the customer service centre in the future (95%), only 50 people (5%) said they wouldn't use it. It is people who don't speak English as a first language who were less likely to say they'd call the customer service centre in the future (86%).

Of the 50 people who said they wouldn't use the service centre, the reasons people gave were that they preferred to speak to someone in person (24%), that they would have no need to use it (22%), and that they have difficulty speaking/understanding English on the telephone (14%).

**Chart 4 - Please tell us why you wouldn't use the customer service centre?**



Base: all respondents not using the customer service centre in future (50)

The reasons why people wouldn't use the customer service centre varied. People with a disability were more likely to say it was because of hearing problems (21%, compared to those without a disability 3%). BME residents and those who don't speak English as a first language were more likely to say it was because they have difficulty speaking/understanding English on the phone (60% and 75% respectively) and that they don't like using the phone (40% and 38% respectively).

Nearly all respondents would recommend the customer service centre to a friend or relative (96%), only 4% saying they wouldn't. The most common reason people gave for not recommending it was that they hadn't used it (26 people), three people experienced a poor service when they used it before.

### 6.3 Perceptions of the county council's website

The survey then went on to look at perceptions of the county council's website ([www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)).

General awareness of the website is fairly low with only just over half being aware that the county council has a website where people can find information and access services (51%)<sup>2</sup>. The people who have significantly lower levels of awareness of the website are over 60 years old (39%).

<b>Are you aware that Lancashire County Council has a website where you can find information and access services?</b>	
Yes	51%
No	49%

Base all respondents: (947)

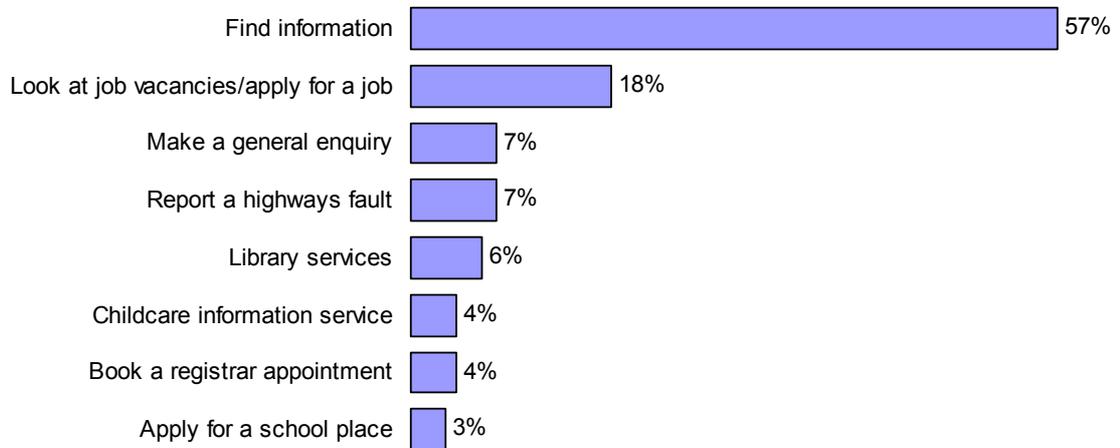
When asked if they thought they had used the website only a quarter thought they had (24%), three-quarters saying they hadn't (76%). Those who were less likely to have used the website were again over 60 years old (11%) and English isn't their first language (12%).

Those respondents who had used the website were asked the reason why they used it last. The most common reason was to find information (57%), followed by looking a job vacancies or applying for a job (18%).

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<sup>2</sup> Awareness of the customer service centre may be higher among the more general population as survey respondents made face-to-face contact with the council.

**Chart 5 - *Now, thinking about the last time you used the county council's website. Please tell us why you used it.***



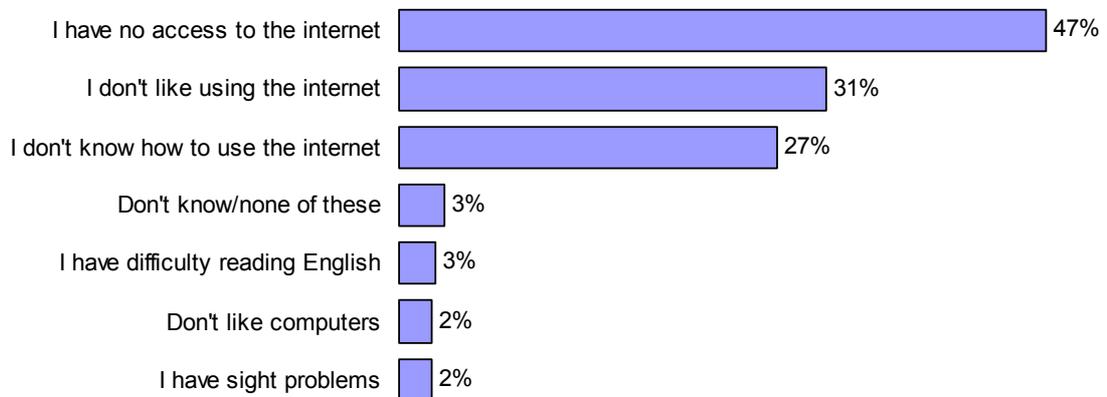
Base: all respondents using the county council website (227)

Looking in more detail at the type of service accessed showed that men were more likely than women to have reported a highways fault on the website (19% versus 3% respectively).

However, two-thirds of respondents thought that they would use the council's website in the future (67%), only one-third saying that they wouldn't (33%). Predicted future usage of the website is significantly lower among the over 60s (39%).

Of those who wouldn't use the website in the future, the most commonly mentioned reasons were because they didn't have access to the internet (47%), didn't like using the internet (31%) and because they don't know how to use the internet (27%).

**Chart 6 - *Please tell us why you wouldn't use the website?***



Base: all respondents not using the county council website in the future (227)

The respondents more likely to say they have difficulty reading English don't have English as their first language (50%) or are BME (36%).

Nine in ten people would recommend the county council's website to a friend or relative (90%). Only one in ten would not recommend it (10%). The people who were less likely to recommend it were over 60 (79%).

<b>Would you recommend the county council's website to a friend/relative?</b>	
Yes	90%
No	10%

Base: all respondents (888)

Most people said they wouldn't recommend it because of their own lack of knowledge and experience of using the website (65%) or computers (24%).

## 6.4 Channel change

The survey looked at what things could be put in place to encourage people to change their method of contacting the council to the more cost effective mechanisms eg telephone and internet. These questions were asked to the people who said they wouldn't use the customer service centre or the council's website in the future.

The first element looked at how likely people are to use a free telephone to contact the customer service centre from a venue near their home (eg a library). The majority said they wouldn't use it (60%), two-fifths said they would (40%).

<b>If there was a telephone at a venue near where you live (eg a library) that you could use to telephone the customer service centre for free. Would you use it?</b>	
Yes	40%
No	60%

Base: all respondents not using the customer service centre in the future (70)

A few questions looked at mechanisms that could be put in place to encourage people wouldn't use the council's website in the future. The first question asked people if they had training on how to use the internet, would they then use the county council's website. This would encourage a quarter of respondents to use the website (26%), although three-quarters still wouldn't use it (74%). If there was a computer at a venue near where respondents live (eg a library) to access the internet for free a third of respondents would use it (33%). However, two-thirds would not use a free computer (67%).

<b>If you had some training on how to use the internet, would you then use the county council's website?</b>	
Yes	26%
No	74%

Base: all respondents not using the website in the future (259)

<b>If there was a computer at a venue near where you live (eg a library) that you could use to access the internet for free, would you use it?</b>	
Yes	33%
No	67%

Base: all respondents not using the website in the future (306)

The training on how to use the internet and free internet access at local venues was less likely to encourage the over 60s to use the website (17% and 20% respectively) compared to younger respondents.

## 6.5 Service usage for life events

The remainder of the questionnaire looked at service usage among respondents for specific life events experienced in the last two years. The percentage figures for the life events questions are shown by number of services used rather than number of respondents (unless otherwise stated).

### 6.5.1 Life event: moving house

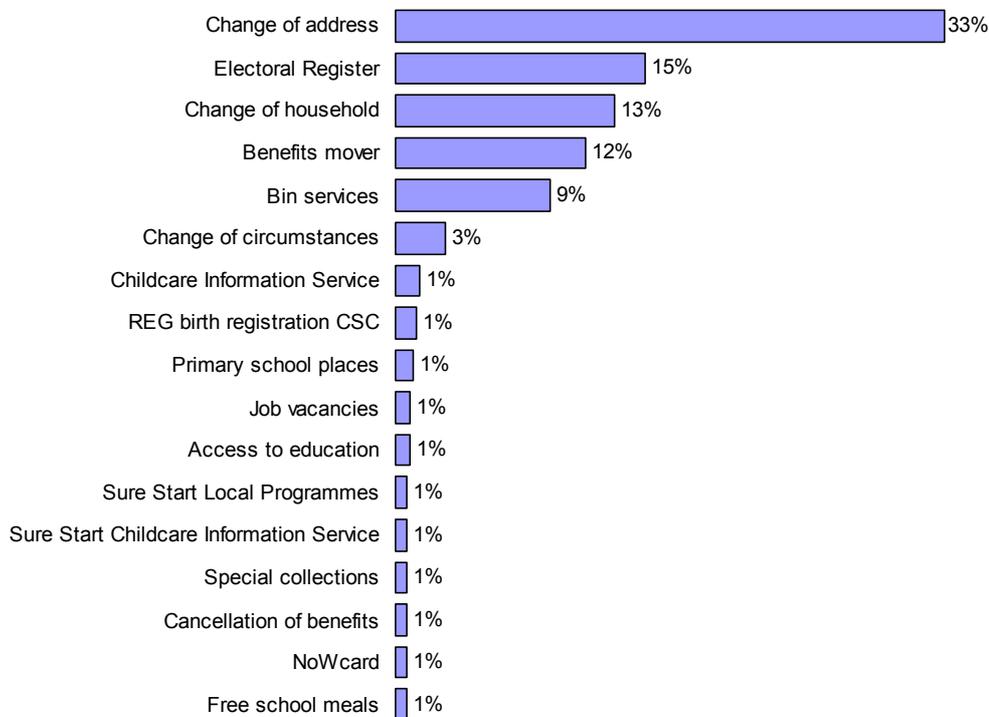
The first life event examined was moving house. Just over a quarter of respondents had moved house in the last two years (27%). The over 60s were significantly less likely to have moved in the last two years (14%).

Have you moved house in the last two years?	
Yes	27%
No	73%

Base: all respondents (946)

The services that respondents used when they moved house are shown in chart seven below. The most used service was change of address (33%). This was followed by electoral register (15%), change of household (13%), benefits mover (12%), and bin services (9%).

**Chart 7 - *Thinking about when you moved house. What services, if any, did you or your family use?***

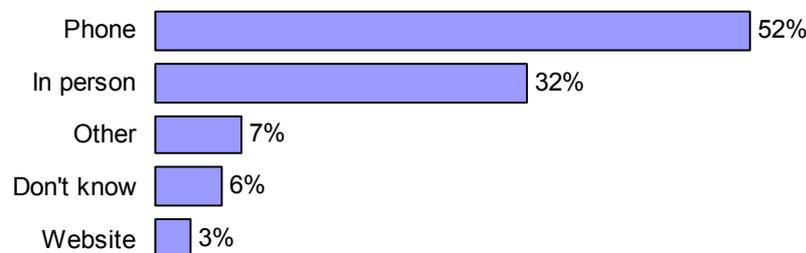


Base: all services used (469)

Around half of the services used were contacted by phone (52%), the next most commonly used method was to visit in person (32%). The website was the least used form of contact (3%). The phone was less used among people with a disability (40%), BME respondents (30%), and people whose first language isn't English (31%). More people visit when English isn't their first language (54%).

The majority of the services used were contacted after they moved (72%), rather than before (28%). And almost all contacted the service themselves (92%) rather than getting someone to do it on their behalf (8%). The people who were less likely to contact the service themselves were BME (65%), didn't have English as their first language (64%), or had a disability (85%).

**Chart 8 - How was the service contacted?**



Base: all services used (467)

<b>Was the service contacted before or after you moved?</b>	
Before	28%
After	72%

Base: all services used (461)

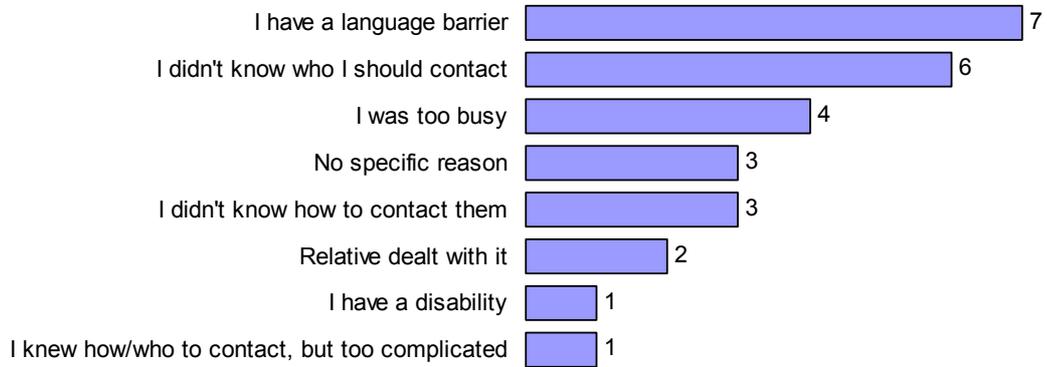
<b>And, did you contact the service yourself?</b>	
Yes	92%
No	8%

Base: all services used (473)

The breakdown of how, and when, each service was contacted is shown overleaf.

Of the respondents who didn't access the service themselves, the most common reasons for it were because of language barriers (7 respondents) and not knowing who to contact (6 respondents).

**Chart 9 -** *Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.*



Base: all respondents accessing services through someone else (23)

What services, if any, did you or your family use?	How was the service contacted?					Was the service contacted before or after you moved?		Did you contact the service yourself?	
	Phone	Website	In person	Other	Don't know	Before	After	Yes	No
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Moving address	91	0	48	4	10	25	127	141	13
Electoral Register	27	4	13	27	0	1	68	66	5
Change of household	23	1	32	0	6	16	46	53	9
Benefits mover	27	0	25	1	1	42	11	52	2
Bin services	27	2	10	1	3	6	37	43	1
Change of circumstances	4	0	7	1	2	6	8	12	2
Childcare Info Service	7	0	0	0	0	5	2	7	0
REG birth registration CSC	4	0	2	0	0	1	5	6	0
Primary school places (including online admissions)	2	3	0	0	0	5	0	5	0
Job vacancies	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	1
Access to education	3	0	1	0	0	1	3	3	1
Sure Start Local Programmes	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	0
Sure Start Childcare Information Service	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	3	0
Special collections	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Cancellation of benefits	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	3	0
NoWcard	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	1
Free school meals	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	1
Library	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Directory of Lancashire Schools	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
CSO REF - district council services	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
Child Development Centres (SEN)	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Secondary school places (inc.OSA)	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
School transport CSC	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
General social care	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Register a marriage	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Student service loans	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Council Tax and finance	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
ACS cancelling/suspending social care services	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
REG certificates service CSC	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Disabled parking bays	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Exemptions	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Education Maintenance Allowance	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Nursery school places	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	242	14	151	35	22	126	334	429	37

## 6.5.2 Life event: having a child

The second life event examined was having a child. Just over a quarter of respondents had had a child in the last two years (26%), though this figure seems unusually high in comparison to birth rates in the county<sup>3</sup>. This could be a result of the type of venues where the face-to-face contact occurred (eg libraries) where people with young children are more likely to go. Respondents who are younger were naturally more likely to have had a child in the last two years (21 to 30 years old 56%, 31 to 40 years old 45%).

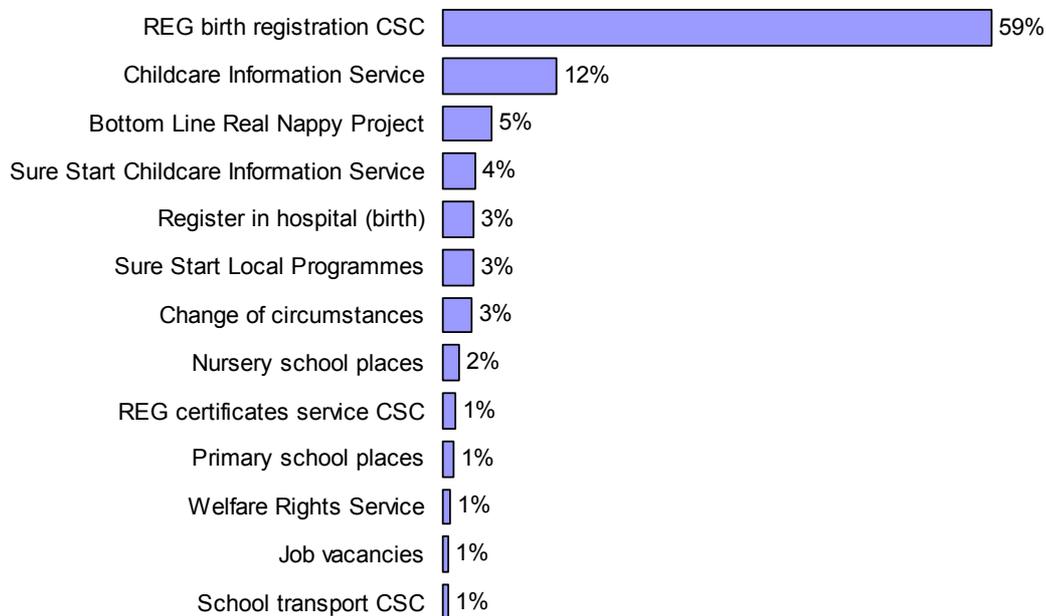
Have you had a child in the last two years?	
Yes	26%
No	74%

Base: all respondents (939)

The services that respondents used when they had a child are shown in the chart below.

Naturally the most used service was birth registration (59%). Childcare information service was the next most used service (12%). Respondents with a disability were more likely to enquired about school transport (6%).

**Chart 10 - *Thinking about when you had your child. What services, if any, did you or your family use?***



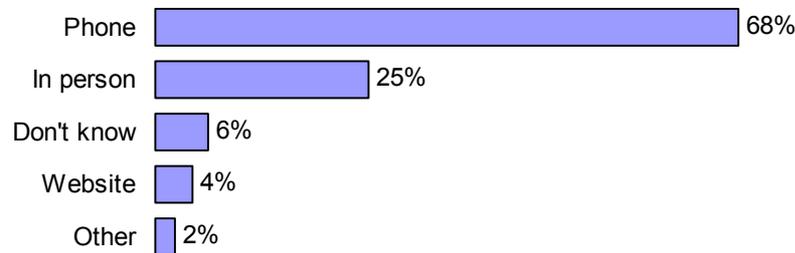
Base: all services used (362)

<sup>3</sup> As a comparison for birth rates, the proportion of the county population (1.16 million) having a child in 2006 was 1.1%

Two-thirds of services used were contacted by phone (68%), the next most commonly used method was to visit in person (25%). The website was the least used form of contact (4%). Once again BME respondents and those whose first language isn't English were less likely to use the phone (48% and 44% respectively).

Almost all of the services used were contacted after they had their child (93%), rather than before (9%). And nine in ten service contacted were contacted by the respondent themselves (90%) rather than getting someone to do it on their behalf (10%). Respondents who were less likely to contact the service themselves were BME (68%), English wasn't their first language (62%), and had a disability (76%).

**Chart 11 - How was the service contacted?**



Base: all services used (357)

<b>Was the service contacted before or after you had your child?</b>	
Before	7%
After	93%

Base: all services used (363)

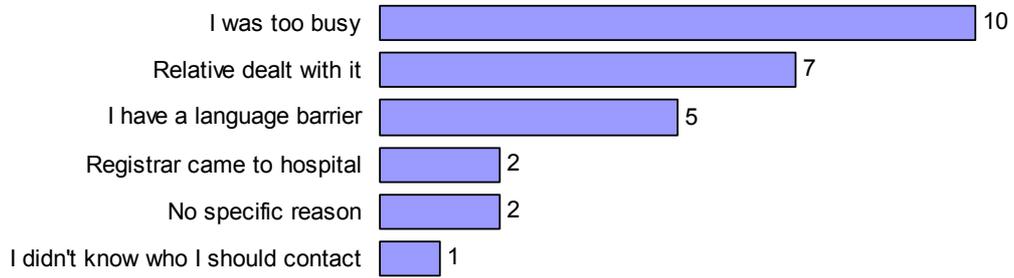
<b>And, did you contact the service yourself?</b>	
Yes	90%
No	10%

Base: all services used (367)

The breakdown of how, and when, each service was contacted is shown overleaf.

Of the respondents who had someone else access the service for them the most common reasons for it were because they were too busy (10 respondents) and because a relative dealt with it (7 respondents).

**Chart 12 - *Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.***



Base: all respondents accessing services through someone else (27)

What services, if any, did you or your family use?	How was the service contacted					Was the service contacted before or after you had your child?		And, did you contact the service yourself?	
	Phone	Website	In person	Other	Don't know	Before	After	Yes	No
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
REG birth registration CSC	147	3	51	2	14	2	212	189	25
Childcare Information Service	40	3	3	0	0	2	42	43	0
Bottom Line Real Nappy Project	11	3	1	4	0	11	8	18	1
Sure Start Childcare Information Service	10	1	5	0	0	1	12	13	0
Register in hospital (birth)	1	0	7	2	1	0	12	9	3
Sure Start Local Programmes	5	1	5	0	0	1	11	11	0
Change of circumstances	3	0	8	0	1	2	9	9	2
Nursery school places	3	1	2	0	0	2	4	6	0
REG certificates service CSC	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0
Primary school places (including online admissions)	3	0	1	0	0	1	3	4	0
Welfare Rights Service	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	0
Job vacancies	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
School transport CSC	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Pensions	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Student service loans	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Directory of Lancashire Schools	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Benefits mover	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Electoral Register	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Cremation and cemeteries	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Death copy certificates	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Social Services, out of hours support	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Blue badges	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Homelessness	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Overpayments	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Moving address	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Exemptions	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Access to education	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Free school meals	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	241	15	88	8	16	24	338	329	31

### 6.5.3 Life event: bereavement

The last life event examined was bereavement. A fifth of respondents had experienced a bereavement in the last two years (21%). Respondents aged between 21 and 30 were less likely to have experienced a bereavement in the last two years (7%).

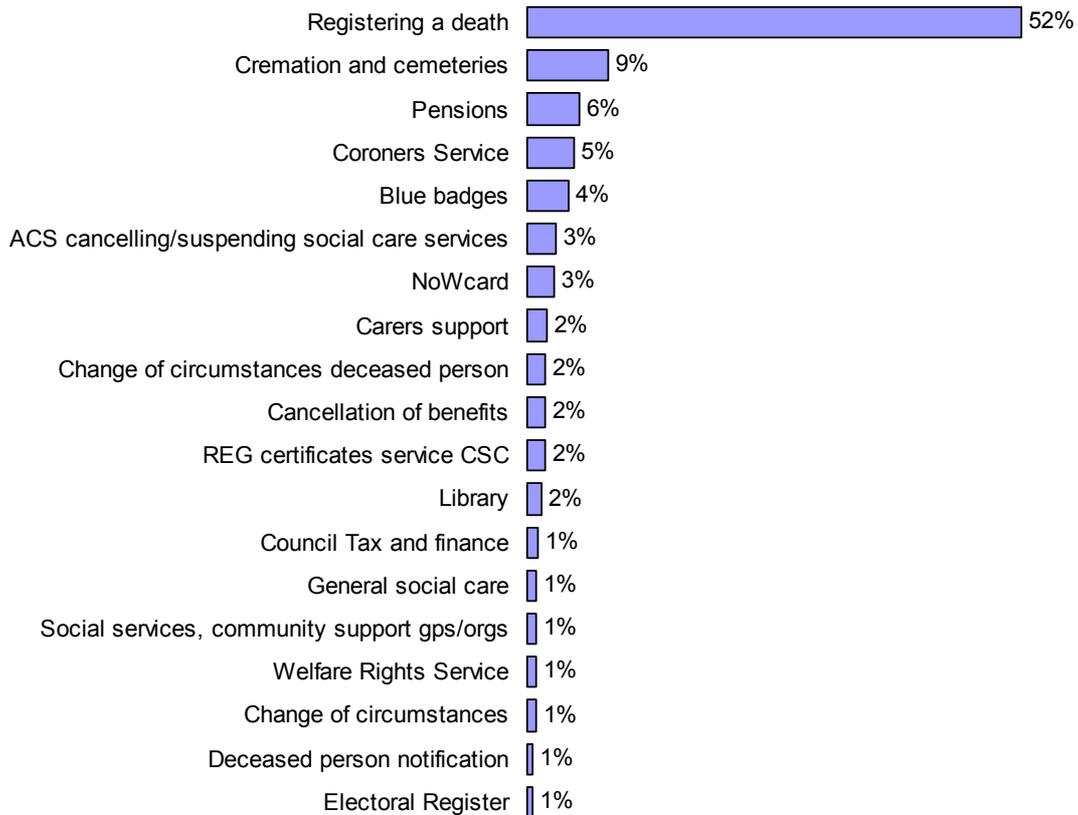
Have you experienced a bereavement in the last two years?	
Yes	21%
No	79%

Base: all respondents (946)

The services that respondents used, or requested information about, when they were bereaved are shown in the chart below.

The most used service was registering a death (52%). This was followed by cremation and cemeteries (9%), pensions (6%), and coroners service (5%).

**Chart 13 - *Thinking about when you experienced a bereavement. What services, if any, did you or your family use?***

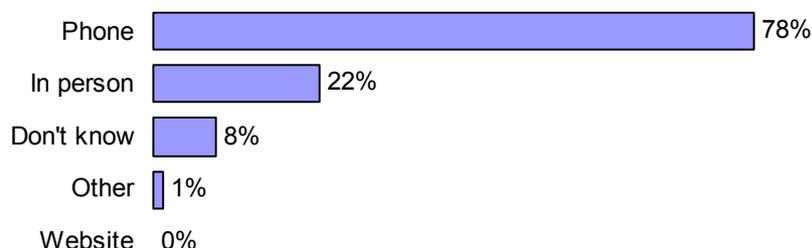


Base: all services used (323)

Almost four-fifths of the services used were contacted by phone (78%), the next most commonly used method was to visit in person (22%). No one used the website to contact a service. Women were more likely to contact services in person than men (25% versus 15% respectively).

As you would anticipate, all of the services were contacted after the bereavement (100%). Fewer services were contacted by the respondent themselves than for the other life events (75%), a quarter of services were used by someone on the respondents' behalf (25%). Men were more likely to contact the services themselves (83%), and those with a disability or BME respondents were less likely to contact the service themselves (65% and 29% respectively).

**Chart 14 - How was the service contacted?**



Base: all services used (324)

Was the service contacted before or after?	
Before	0%
After	100%

Base: all services used (321)

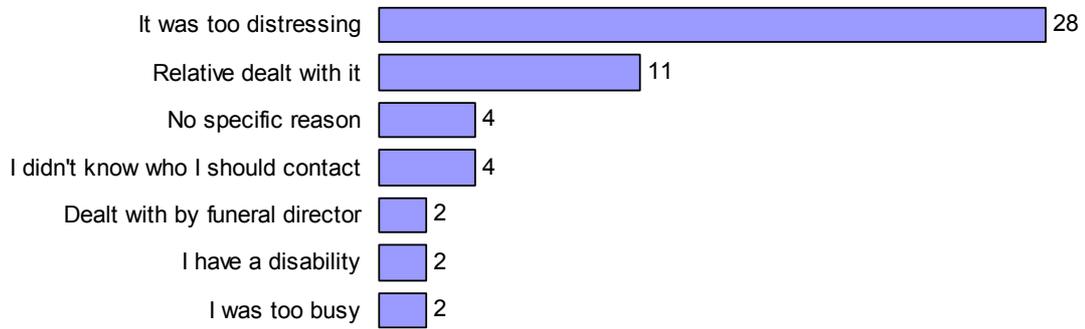
And, did you contact the service yourself?	
Yes	75%
No	25%

Base: all services used (336)

The breakdown of how, and when, each service was contacted is shown overleaf.

Of the respondents who had someone else access the service for them the most mentioned reason for it was because it was too distressing (28 respondents).

**Chart 15 - *Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.***



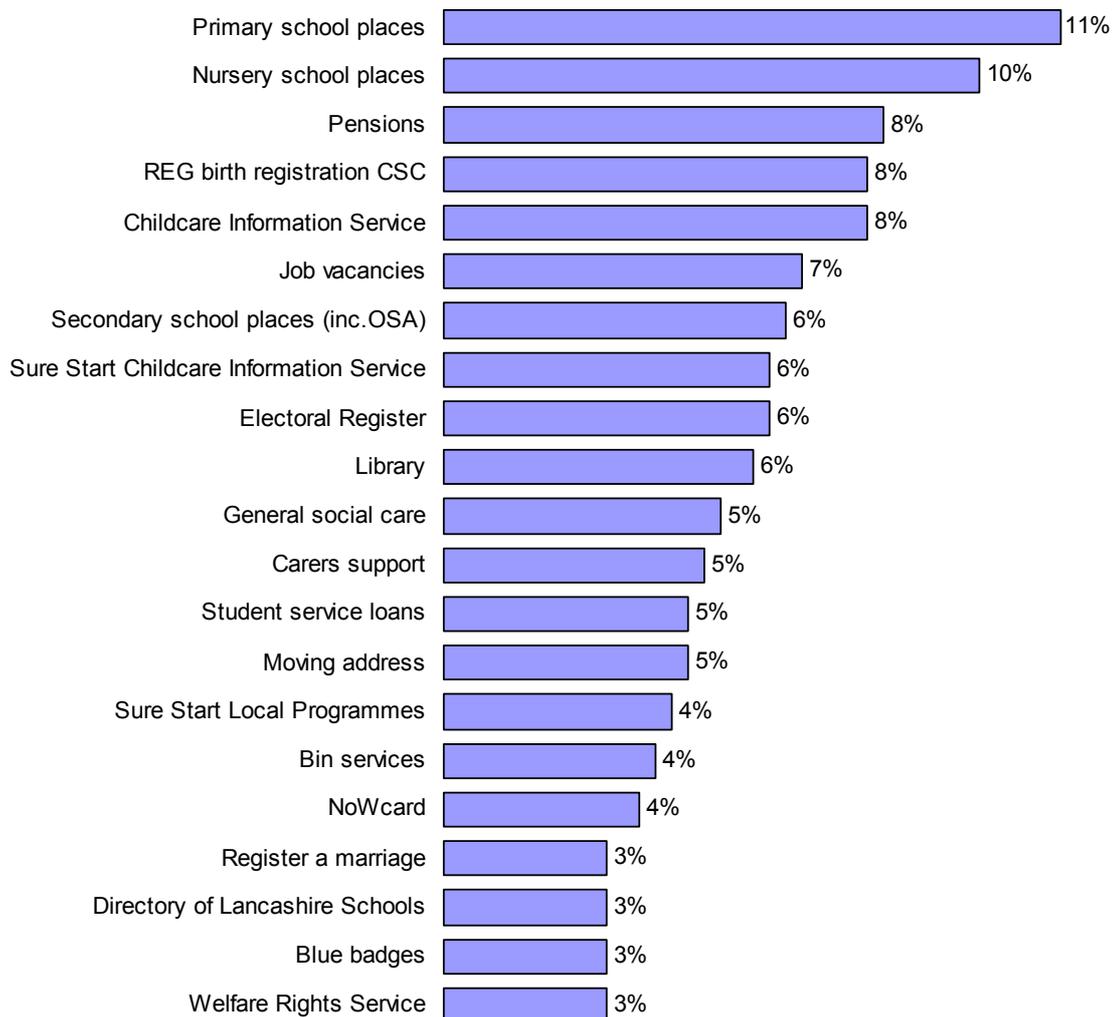
Base: all respondents accessing services through someone else (54)

What services, if any, did you or your family use?	How was the service contacted?					Was the service contacted before of after?		And, did you contact the service yourself?	
	Phone	Website	In person	Other	Don't know	Before	After	Yes	No
	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Registering a death	129	0	43	1	12	0	168	114	55
Cremation and cemeteries	27	0	2	0	0	0	27	20	7
Pensions	11	0	4	1	2	0	18	16	2
Coroners Service	14	0	1	0	1	0	16	12	4
Blue badges	12	0	1	0	0	0	14	13	1
ACS	9	0	1	0	0	0	10	10	0
cancelling/suspending social care services									
NoWcard	7	1	2	0	0	0	9	7	2
Carers support	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	7	0
Change of circumstances deceased person	2	0	3	0	0	0	6	5	1
Cancellation of benefits	5	0	1	0	0	1	5	6	0
REG certificates service CSC	5	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	0
Library	4	0	1	0	0	0	5	5	0
Council Tax and finance	4	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	0
General social care	3	0	2	0	0	0	3	3	0
Social services, community support groups/organisations	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	2
Welfare Rights Service	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	3	0
Change of circumstances	2	0	2	0	1	0	3	3	0
Deceased person notification	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Electoral Register	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	0
Change of household	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Special collections	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Change of household	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Bin services	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Abandoned vehicles	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Birth Certificates, re registrations and corrections	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
REG birth registration CSC	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Moving address	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	253	1	70	4	17	1	320	246	75

#### 6.5.4 Future service use

Finally respondents were asked what services they were likely to use in the next year. Respondents are anticipating using primary school places (11%) and nursery school places (10%) most in the coming year. The use of these services relates to the high number of respondents that said they'd had a child in the last two years.

**Chart 16 - *In the next year which, if any, of the following council services do you think you will use?***



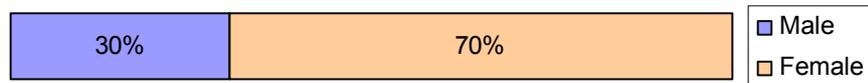
Base: all respondents (333)

## 6.6 Demographic profile of face-to-face users

The demographic profile of the face-to-face users who completed a survey is shown in the charts below.

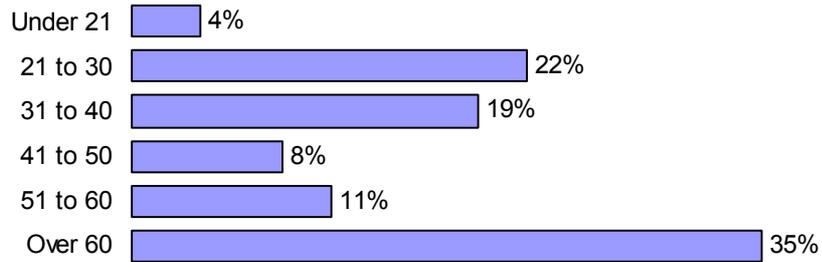
The majority of respondents are female (70%). A third of respondents are over 60 (35%), though two-fifths are 21 to 30 (22%) and 31 to 40 (19%). A quarter of respondents have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity (24%). The majority of respondents are white (95%), and have English as their first language (94%).

**Chart 17 - Are you...**



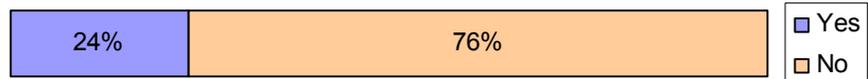
Base: all respondents (947)

**Chart 18 - Which of the following age groups do you fall into?**



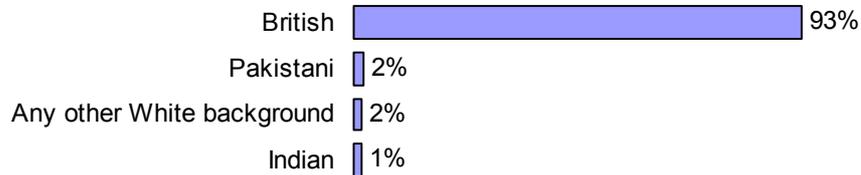
Base: all respondents (950)

**Chart 19 - Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?**



Base: all respondents (942)

**Chart 20 - To which of these groups do you consider you belong?**



Base: all respondents (949)

**Chart 21 - Is English your first language?**



Base: all respondents (948)

## 7 Conclusions and recommendations

Questionnaires were completed through front-line staff in face-to-face contact with members of the public. In total 950 questionnaires were completed. The main findings are shown below.

The most common method of contacting the county council was by telephone (44% last contact, 60% usual contact). Visiting in person was the next most common (14% last contact, 32% usual contact), and the website was the least common (4% last contact, 6% usual contact). Even though survey respondents were interviewed face-to-face, they already use more than one channel, as telephone is their preferred method.

### *Customer service centre*

- Around a third of respondents were aware of, or have used the customer service centre (31% aware, 33% used). This is lower than the 60% who said they usually contact the council by telephone, suggesting that people are using the customer service centre without realising it. Usage is lower among BME respondents and those who don't have English as a first language.
- The most common reasons for phoning the customer service centre were to book a registrar appointment (28%), report a highway fault (16%) or apply for a NoWcard (15%). Customers were very satisfied with the service they received (74%).
- All respondents were asked if they thought they would phone the customer service centre in the future, nearly all thought that they would (95%) and said they would recommend it to someone else (96%).

### *County council website ([www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk))*

- Only half of respondents were aware that the county council has a website (51%), and a quarter thought they have used it (24%) suggesting the need for publicity.
- The most common reason for using the website was to find information (57%).
- Two-thirds felt that they would use the website in the future (67%), though this is lower among the over 60s (39%). The main reason people gave for not using the website in the future was because they don't have access to the internet (47%), or don't like using it (31%).
- Nine in ten of all respondents would recommend the website, the reasons given for not recommending it related to their own lack of experience using the website or computers in general.

The project commissioners were interested in finding out how likely they are to change the way they contact the county council, and the survey looked at the likely effectiveness of a number of mechanisms. Two in five people would use a free telephone if one was available at a venue near their home. Training on how to use the internet would encourage use of the council's website in a quarter of respondents who said they otherwise wouldn't use it (26%). And a free computer at a local venue would encourage use of the council's website in a third of respondents who said they otherwise wouldn't use it (33%). However, among the over 60s both of these are less of an incentive to use the website (17% for training and 20% for free access to a computer).

### *Service usage for life events*

- A quarter of respondents have **moved house** in the last two years (27%), though this is lower in the over 60s (14%). The most commonly used services were change of address (33%), electoral register (15%) and change of household (13%). Most services were contacted by phone (52%) and after the respondent moved (72%). Almost all contacted the service themselves (92%).
- A quarter of respondents said they have **had a child** in the last two years (26%), though this figure seems unusually high. By far the most used service was birth registration (59%), followed by childcare information service (12%). Services were once again most often contacted by phone (68%). Mostly services were contacted after the child was born (93%) and by the respondent themselves (90%).
- A fifth of respondents have **experienced bereavement** in the last two years (21%). The most used service was registering a death (52%), followed by cremation and cemeteries (9%). Almost four-fifths of the services were contacted by phone (78%), and as you would anticipate everyone contacted the service after their bereavement. Fewer services were contacted by the respondent themselves (75%), mainly because they found it too distressing.
- The services respondents most anticipate to use in the next year were primary school places and nursery school places (11% and 10% respectively).

The demographic profile of face-to-face survey respondents is: female (70%), over 60 (35%, though two-fifths are 21 to 40), have no disability (76%), are white (95%), and have English as their first language (94%).

The survey results should be used in formulating plans for how services are linked together when a customer makes contact for a specific life event. There are also opportunities for encouraging channel change through mechanisms like free phones and computers in local venues and offering training on how to use the internet. As channel change cannot happen without the awareness of the other methods of contact, it is very important to

increase awareness of the availability of a central telephone number for the county council and of the website. Some ways of increasing this is through advertising of the telephone number and website at face-to-face outlets (eg libraries, one stop shops).

As the survey was undertaken specifically during face-to-face contact with service users it would be worth comparing the profile of survey respondents with the general profile of face-to-face users. It may also be worth considering carrying out a similar evaluation among users of other contact methods (eg phone, website) to see if their service usage matches those found here, and looking at other life events.

## 8 Appendices

### 8.1 Appendix 1: marked up questionnaire

All values are given in percentages

Base: all respondents (950) unless otherwise stated

		Column N %	Count
How did you last get in contact with the county council?	By phone	44%	393
	In person	14%	128
	Through the county council website	4%	40
	Other	1%	12
	Don't know/not applicable	37%	329
	Total	100%	891

		Column N %	Count
And, how would you usually get in contact with the county council?	By phone	60%	566
	In person	32%	296
	Don't know/not applicable	8%	76
	Through the county council website	6%	59
	Other	2%	18
	Total	100%	938

		Column N %	Count
Before today, were you aware of the customer service centre?	Yes	31%	296
	No	69%	653
	Total	100%	949

		Column N %	Count
Do you think you have telephoned the customer service centre?	Yes	33%	317
	No	65%	620
	Don't know	1%	13
	Total	100%	950

		Column N %	Count
Now thinking about the last time you contacted the customer service centre. Please tell us why you contacted them.	Book a registrar appointment	28%	91
	Report a highways fault	16%	50
	Apply for a NoWcard	15%	47
	Renew/apply for a blue badge	11%	34
	Childcare info service	10%	32
	Make a general enquiry	7%	24
	Look at job vacancies/apply for a job	5%	17
	Find out school transport information	4%	12
	Social services	3%	11
	Student support services	2%	8
	Directory of Lancashire schools	2%	5
	Education eg school appeal	2%	5
	Don't know/none of these	2%	5
	Make a payment	1%	4
	Free school meals	1%	2
	Benefits enquiry	1%	2
	Pension	1%	2
	Social care services	1%	2
	Real nappy project	1%	2
	Human resources	1%	2
	School transport	1%	2
	Report anti-social behaviour on buses	1%	2
	Apply for a school place	1%	2
	Cycle paths	0%	1
	Make a complaint	0%	1
	Environmental health	0%	1
	Cemeteries, crematoriums	0%	1
	Bus stop enquiry	0%	1
	Waste management	0%	1
	Book a wedding	0%	1
	Council Tax	0%	1
	Neighbour noise complaint	0%	1
	Car parking	0%	1
Sure Start	0%	1	
Planning	0%	1	
Library services	0%	1	
Faulty NoWcard	0%	1	
Total	100%	321	

		Column N %	Count
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received from the customer service centre?	Very satisfied	74%	230
	Fairly satisfied	22%	69
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3%	10
	Fairly dissatisfied	1%	2
	Very dissatisfied	0%	1
	Total	100%	312

		Column N %	Count
Will you use the customer service centre in the future?	Yes	95%	893
	No	5%	50
	Total	100%	943

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why you wouldn't use the customer service centre?	Don't know/none of these	32%	16
	I prefer to speak to someone in person	24%	12
	No need to	22%	11
	I have difficulty understanding/speaking English on the telephone	14%	7
	I don't like using the telephone	10%	5
	I have hearing problems	8%	4
	Never used before	6%	3
	Prefer online	2%	1
	The calls are too expensive	2%	1
	I have no access to a telephone	2%	1
	Total	100%	50

		Column N %	Count
If there was a telephone at a venue near where you live (eg a library) that you could use to telephone the customer service centre for free. Would you use it?	Yes	40%	28
	No	60%	42
	Total	100%	70

		Column N %	Count
Would you recommend the customer service centre to a friend/relative?	Yes	96%	856
	No	4%	37
	Total	100%	893

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why you wouldn't recommend it?	Not used it	74%	26
	Don't like using telephones	6%	2
	Not advertised enough	6%	2
	Poor service when I used it	9%	3
	Too far away	3%	1
	Prefer face-to-face	3%	1
	Total	100%	35

		Column N %	Count
Are you aware that Lancashire County Council has a website where you can find information and access services?	Yes	51%	482
	No	49%	465
	Total	100%	947

		Column N %	Count
Do you think you have used the county council's website?	Yes	24%	229
	No	76%	718
	Total	100%	947

		Column N %	Count
Now, thinking about the last time you used the county council's website. Please tell us why you used it.	Find information	57%	129
	Look at job vacancies/apply for a job	18%	40
	Make a general enquiry	7%	17
	Report a highways fault	7%	17
	Library services	6%	14
	Childcare information service	4%	9
	Book a registrar appointment	4%	9
	Apply for a school place	3%	7
	Real nappy project	1%	3
	Faulty NoWcard	1%	3
	Apply for a NoWcard	1%	3
	Record office	1%	2
	University work	1%	2
	Waste management	1%	2
	Benefits enquiry	1%	2
	Look up contact numbers eg police	1%	2
	Pension	1%	2
	Planning	1%	2
	Directory of Lancashire schools	1%	2
	Don't know/none of these	1%	2
	Renew/apply for a blue badge	1%	2
	Voting	0%	1
	Volunteering	0%	1
	Special Educational Needs	0%	1
	Browsed for a general look	0%	1
	Work related	0%	1
	Elevate	0%	1
	Car parking	0%	1
	Sure Start	0%	1
	Social services	0%	1
	Human resources	0%	1
	Education eg school appeal	0%	1
Make a payment	0%	1	
Find out school transport information	0%	1	
Total	100%	227	

		Column N %	Count
Will you use the county council's website in the future?	Yes	67%	631
	No	33%	312
	Total	100%	943

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why you wouldn't use the website?	I have no access to the internet	47%	142
	I don't like using the internet	31%	94
	I don't know how to use the internet	27%	83
	Don't know/none of these	3%	10
	I have difficulty reading English	3%	8
	Don't like computers	2%	7
	I have sight problems	2%	7
	Too old	1%	4
	Health problems	1%	3
	I find the county council's website difficult to use	1%	3
	Not interested	1%	2
	Family member will do it for me	1%	2
	If had access	0%	1
	Changing address	0%	1
	Personal details	0%	1
	Never used before	0%	1
Prefer telephone	0%	1	
Total	100%	305	

		Column N %	Count
If you had some training on how to use the internet, would you then use the county council's website?	Yes	26%	67
	No	74%	192
	Total	100%	259

		Column N %	Count
If there was a computer at a venue near where you live (eg a library) that you could use to access the internet for free, would you use it?	Yes	33%	100
	No	67%	206
	Total	100%	306

		Column N %	Count
Would you recommend the county council's website to a friend/relative?	Yes	90%	797
	No	10%	91
	Total	100%	888

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why you wouldn't recommend the county council's website?	Need to use it first	65%	56
	Don't like/not interested in computers	24%	21
	Information on website not useful	1%	1
	Not advertised enough	1%	1
	Too old	2%	2
	No time to use it	1%	1
	Don't like the layout	1%	1
	No friends who use the internet	2%	2
	Centralisation is bad	1%	1
	Total	100%	86

		Column N %	Count
Have you moved house in the last two years?	Yes	27%	251
	No	73%	695
	Total	100%	946

		Column N %	Count
Thinking about when you moved house. What services, if any, did you or your family use?	Moving address	33%	156
	Electoral Register	15%	71
	Benefits mover	12%	54
	Bin services	9%	44
	Change of household	9%	40
	Change of household	5%	22
	Change of circumstances	3%	14
	Childcare Info Service	1%	7
	REG birth registration CSC	1%	6
	Primary school places (inc online admissions)	1%	5
	Job vacancies	1%	4
	Access to education	1%	4
	Sure Start Local Programmes	1%	3
	Sure Start Childcare Information Service	1%	3
	Special collections	1%	3
	Cancellation of benefits	1%	3
	NoWcard	1%	3
	Free school meals	1%	3
	Library	0%	2
	Directory of Lancashire Schools	0%	2
	CSO REF - district council services	0%	2
	Child Development Centres (SEN)	0%	2
	Secondary school places (inc.OSA)	0%	2
	School transport CSC	0%	2
	General social care	0%	1
	Register a marriage	0%	1
	Student service loans	0%	1
	Council Tax and finance	0%	1
	ACS	0%	1
	cancelling/suspending social care services		
	REG certificates service CSC	0%	1
	Disabled parking bays	0%	1
	Exemptions	0%	1
Education Maintenance Allowance	0%	1	
Nursery school places	0%	1	
Total	100%	469	

		Column N %	Count
How was the service contacted?	Phone	52%	242
	In person	32%	151
	Other	7%	35
	Don't know	6%	27
	Website	3%	14
	Total	100%	467

		Column N %	Count
Was the service contacted before or after you moved?	Before	28%	127
	After	72%	334
	Total	100%	461

		Column N %	Count
And, did you contact the service yourself?	Yes	92%	433
	No	8%	40
	Total	100%	473

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.	I have a language barrier	30%	7
	I didn't know who I should contact	26%	6
	I was too busy	17%	4
	No specific reason	13%	3
	I didn't know how to contact them	13%	3
	Relative dealt with it	9%	2
	I have a disability	4%	1
	I knew how and who to contact, but it was too complicated	4%	1
	Total	100%	23

		Column N %	Count
Have you had a child in the last two years?	Yes	26%	247
	No	74%	692
	Total	100%	939

		Column N %	Count
Thinking about when you had your child. What services, if any, did you or your family use?	REG birth registration CSC	59%	214
	Childcare Information Service	12%	44
	Bottom Line Real Nappy Project	5%	19
	Sure Start Childcare Information Service	4%	13
	Register in hospital (birth)	3%	12
	Sure Start Local Programmes	3%	12
	Change of circumstances	3%	11
	Nursery school places	2%	6
	REG certificates service CSC	1%	5
	Primary school places (inc online admissions)	1%	4
	Welfare Rights Service	1%	3
	Job vacancies	1%	2
	School transport CSC	1%	2
	Pensions	0%	1
	Student service loans	0%	1
	Directory of Lancashire Schools	0%	1
	Benefits mover	0%	1
	Electoral Register	0%	1
	Cremation and cemeteries	0%	1
	Death copy certificates	0%	1
	Social Services, out of hours support	0%	1
	Blue badges	0%	1
	Homelessness	0%	1
Overpayments	0%	1	
Moving address	0%	1	
Exemptions	0%	1	
Access to education	0%	1	
Free school meals	0%	1	
Total	100%	362	

		Column N %	Count
How was the service contacted	Phone	68%	241
	In person	25%	88
	Don't know	6%	22
	Website	4%	15
	Other	2%	8
	Total	100%	357

		Column N %	Count
Was the service contacted before or after you had your child?	Before	7%	24
	After	93%	339
	Total	100%	363

		Column N %	Count
And, did you contact the service yourself?	Yes	90%	331
	No	10%	36
	Total	100%	367

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.	I was too busy	37%	10
	Relative dealt with it	26%	7
	I have a language barrier	19%	5
	Registrar came to hospital	7%	2
	No specific reason	7%	2
	I didn't know who I should contact	4%	1
	Total	100%	27

		Column N %	Count
Have you experienced a bereavement in the last two years?	Yes	21%	197
	No	79%	749
	Total	100%	946

		Column N %	Count
Thinking about when you experienced a bereavement. What services, if any, did you or your family use?	Death copy certificates	52%	169
	Cremation and cemeteries	9%	28
	Pensions	6%	18
	Coroners Service	5%	16
	Blue badges	4%	14
	ACS	3%	10
	cancelling/suspending social care services		
	NoWcard	3%	9
	Carers support	2%	7
	Change of circumstances deceased person	2%	6
	Cancellation of benefits	2%	6
	REG certificates service CSC	2%	6
	Library	2%	5
	Council Tax and finance	1%	4
	General social care	1%	3
	Social services, community support groups/organisations	1%	3
	Welfare Rights Service	1%	3
	Change of circumstances	1%	3
	Deceased person notification	1%	2
	Electoral Register	1%	2
	Change of household	0%	1
	Special collections	0%	1
	Change of household	0%	1
	Bin services	0%	1
	Abandoned vehicles	0%	1
	Birth Certificates, re registrations and corrections	0%	1
	REG birth registration CSC	0%	1
Moving address	0%	1	
Total	100%	323	

		Column N %	Count
How was the service contacted?	Phone	78%	253
	In person	22%	70
	Don't know	8%	26
	Other	1%	4
	Website	0%	1
	Total	100%	324

		Column N %	Count
Was the service contacted before or after?	Before	0%	1
	After	100%	320
	Total	100%	321

		Column N %	Count
And, did you contact the service yourself?	Yes	75%	252
	No	25%	84
	Total	100%	336

		Column N %	Count
Please tell us why a family member used the service rather than you.	It was too distressing	52%	28
	Relative dealt with it	20%	11
	No specific reason	7%	4
	I didn't know who I should contact	7%	4
	Dealt with by funeral director	4%	2
	I have a disability	4%	2
	I was too busy	4%	2
	Happened abroad	2%	1
	Hospital dealt with it	2%	1
	Not close enough to register	2%	1
	I knew how and who to contact, but it was too complicated	2%	1
	I didn't know how to contact them	2%	1
	Total	100%	54

		Column N %	Count
In the next year which, if any, of the following council services do you think you will use?	Primary school places (including online admissions)	11%	38
	Nursery school places	10%	33
	Pensions	8%	27
	REG birth registration CSC	8%	26
	Childcare Information Service	8%	26
	Job vacancies	7%	22
	Secondary school places (inc.OSA)	6%	21
	Sure Start Childcare Information Service	6%	20
	Electoral Register	6%	20
	Library	6%	19
	General social care	5%	17
	Carers support	5%	16
	Student service loans	5%	15
	Moving address	5%	15
	Sure Start Local Programmes	4%	14
	Bin services	4%	13
	NoWcard	4%	12
	Register a marriage	3%	10
	Directory of Lancashire Schools	3%	10
	Blue badges	3%	10
	Welfare Rights Service	3%	10
	Benefits mover	2%	6
	Access to education	2%	6
	Flood zone	2%	5
	Bottom Line Real Nappy Project	2%	5
	Change of household	1%	4
	Dropped kerb	1%	4
	Change of circumstances	1%	4
	Free school meals	1%	4
	School transport CSC	1%	4
	Child Development Centres (SEN)	1%	3
	Exemptions	1%	3
	Education Maintenance Allowance	1%	3
Council Tax and finance	1%	2	

	ACS cancelling/suspending social care services	1%	2
	REG certificates service CSC	1%	2
	Youth work through information and advice work in What Now Information Centres	1%	2
	Disabled parking bays	1%	2
	Business Rates	1%	2
	Register in hospital (birth)	0%	1
	CSO REF - district council services	0%	1
	Special collections	0%	1
	Home visits	0%	1
	Cancellation of benefits	0%	1
	Abandoned vehicles	0%	1
	Cremation and cemeteries	0%	1
	Death copy certificates	0%	1
	Social services, community support groups/organisations	0%	1
	Fostering	0%	1
	Homelessness	0%	1
	Education grants	0%	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>333</b>

		Column N %	Count
Are you...	Male	30%	288
	Female	70%	659
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>947</b>

		Column N %	Count
Which of the following age groups do you fall into?	Under 21	4%	36
	21 to 30	22%	210
	31 to 40	19%	184
	41 to 50	8%	80
	51 to 60	11%	106
	Over 60	35%	334
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>950</b>

		Column N %	Count
Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? Long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time.	Yes	24%	222
	No	76%	720
	Total	100%	942

		Column N %	Count
To which of these groups do you consider you belong?	British	93%	878
	Irish	0%	3
	Any other White background	2%	15
	White and Black Caribbean	0%	1
	White and Black African	0%	1
	White and Asian	0%	1
	Any other mixed background	0%	1
	Chinese	0%	3
	Caribbean	0%	0
	African	0%	3
	Any other Black background	0%	0
	Indian	1%	14
	Pakistani	2%	20
	Bangladeshi	0%	3
	Any other Asian background	0%	2
	Other ethnic group	0%	4
Total	100%	949	

		Column N %	Count
Is English your first language?	Yes	94%	891
	No	6%	57
	Total	100%	948