



Social Security  
Scotland

Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

# Annual Client Panels Survey 2023



## Exploring this research

Choose how much detail you want to read:

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- For findings in eight pages → 'Executive Summary' on page 7
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For key findings in a more visual format, a separate [Summary report](#) has also been published.

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## 1. Findings at a glance

This report presents findings from the Annual Client Panels Survey 2023.

The Client Panels are made up of Social Security Scotland clients from across Scotland who have agreed to be part of the Panel. Research with Client Panel members explores what people's experience of Social Security Scotland has been like. The research informs decisions about Social Security Scotland's systems, processes and policies.

The Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 is the first of its kind. The purpose of this research is to gather insights from clients about aspects of their experience which (usually) happen post-decision, such as the experience of receiving recurring payments and communicating with Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances.

The broad aim of the research is to identify aspects of client experience where things are working well or could be improved. Repeating the survey annually also allows for baseline and trend data to be built up to assess change over time.

Key findings 'at a glance' are summarised below.

The survey found that the vast majority of respondents (84%) had a positive overall experience with Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months.

More than nine in ten respondents (94%) reported a positive overall experience of receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months. Findings show that payments had a positive impact for respondents and their families.

Around eight in ten respondents (81%) had a positive experience with the Social Security Scotland staff they had contact with the last time they were in touch. A similar proportion said they felt that staff listened to them (80%) and they were treated with kindness (84%).

A majority of respondents said the process for telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances was clear (73%) and easy (70%). However, the survey also found that the experience of reporting a change of circumstances was anxiety-provoking for half (50%) of respondents.

Some respondents described waiting too long for their application to be processed and a lack of communication about the progress of their applications. This was a recurring theme in open text responses across the survey.

## 2. Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the 2023 Annual Client Panels Survey.

As set out in [Our Charter](#), Social Security Scotland remains committed to listen, learn and improve by encouraging and valuing feedback. Our Client Panels are key to this, ensuring the social security system works for the people of Scotland.

Established in 2020, the Client Panels are made up of Social Security Scotland clients from across Scotland. All clients are offered the chance to join the panel when they complete the Client Survey, which goes to everyone who has received a decision on a benefit application from Social Security Scotland. Research with Client Panel members explores what people's experience of Social Security Scotland has been like. The research informs decisions about Social Security Scotland's systems, processes and policies.

The Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 is the first of its kind and 1,182 responses were received. The purpose of this research is to gather insights from clients about aspects of their experience which (usually) happen post-decision, such as the experience of receiving recurring payments and communicating with Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances.

The broad aim of the research is to identify aspects of client experience where things are working well, or could be improved. Repeating the survey annually also allows for baseline and trend data to be built up to assess change over time.

Key findings are summarised below.

### **Impact of payments**

Respondents said the payments they received from Social Security Scotland had a positive impact. When asked how much the payments helped them to pay for what they need, helped them to control their finances, and had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing, respondents gave an average of eight out of ten for each measure of impact. Similarly, most respondents who received Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods reported that the payments had a positive impact on their

child's health and wellbeing and helped to purchase milk and/or healthy food for their child.

### **Receiving payments**

Nine in ten respondents (90%) had not experienced any problems with receiving payments in the last 12 months. Among the minority who did experience problems, common issues were receiving payments late and long processing times between applications and decisions. Analysis of the responses found that the benefit most prone to problems was Adult Disability Payment. Among the respondents who had contact with Social Security Scotland about a problem with payments, around two thirds (64%) felt they were treated with fairness and respect. Almost half (46%) said they were satisfied with how Social Security Scotland handled the problem with the payment overall. Those who were not satisfied described delays and long processing times.

### **Overall experience of receiving payments**

More than nine in ten (94%) respondents were positive about their experience of receiving payments from Social Security Scotland over the last 12 months.

Respondents were positive about the beneficial impacts of payments for them and their families and some described positive experiences of communicating with Social Security Scotland staff, finding them helpful and understanding. Dissatisfied survey respondents highlighted long processing times and a lack of communication about the progress of their application.

### **Accessing extra support as a result of receiving Adult or Child Disability Payment**

Around one third of respondents (31%) had applied for extra support as a result of receiving either Adult or Child Disability Payment. Almost three quarters (72%) of this group said it was easy to access extra support. Among the minority who found this difficult, some had experienced a lack of join-up between services. Others found a delay in processing their benefit application meant delays in accessing extra support too.

### **Telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances**

Most respondents were positive about the process of reporting a change of circumstances, with a majority of respondents finding it clear (73%) and easy (70%). Despite finding the process of reporting a change to be easy, half of respondents (50%)

said telling Social Security Scotland about the change made them feel anxious. More than four in ten (42%) worried that reporting a change would mean they would lose some or all of their payments.

### **Providing supporting information**

The survey asked about respondents' experiences of providing supporting information relevant to their change of circumstances. More than three quarters (77%) said it was clear what supporting information they needed to provide and almost three quarters (72%) said it was easy to provide. Around one third (31%) of respondents asked Social Security Scotland to collect supporting information on their behalf. This group felt Social Security Scotland could collect the information faster, or knew better what to collect, or could get information they wouldn't be able to get themselves.

### **Outcome of reporting a change of circumstances**

Over half (56%) of respondents felt Social Security Scotland processed their change of circumstances within a reasonable time. Of those whose payments were affected by the change of circumstances, most (72%) said their payments increased. When asked whether Social Security Scotland had clearly explained the way their payments would or would not be affected and why, a majority (66-74%) of respondents agreed. A larger majority (85-95%) said they agreed with the decision made about how their payments would or would not be impacted. Responses were similar among respondents whose payments were affected and those whose payments were not affected.

### **Overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances**

Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents agreed that Social Security Scotland treated them with fairness and respect when dealing with their change of circumstances. More than half (57%) rated their overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about their change of circumstances as good or very good. While some respondents described a positive experience, including helpful and reassuring interactions with Social Security Scotland staff, others highlighted problems with long processing times and a lack of updates. Some described the process of reporting a change of circumstances as anxiety-provoking or stressful.



### **Deciding not to tell Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances**

One tenth of respondents (10%) had considered telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances in the last 12 months but had ultimately decided not to. Reasons for this decision varied. Several of these respondents simply had not got round to informing Social Security Scotland yet. However, some doubted that their change of circumstances would affect their payment so felt there was “no point” while others feared it would result in their payments being reduced or stopped.

### **Receiving contact from Social Security Scotland**

Around half (51%) of survey respondents reported that they had received communication from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months. The vast majority of this group were satisfied with the level, format and usefulness of that communication.

### **Contacting Social Security Scotland**

Over one third (38%) of survey respondents had contacted Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months. The most common reason for making contact was to get an update or information about an application. Most respondents were positive about their experience of contacting Social Security Scotland. Around six in ten (61%) said it was easy to make contact and a similar proportion (60%) felt their issue was dealt with in a timely manner. More than two thirds (67%) got the support or information they needed. For respondents who found it difficult, the most commonly cited barrier to contacting Social Security Scotland was long call wait times.

### **Contact with Social Security Scotland Staff**

When asked about recent contact with Social Security Scotland staff, survey responses were very positive across all satisfaction markers. In particular, a vast majority of respondents felt that staff listened to them (80%) and they were treated with kindness (84%). Respondents described feeling respected and listened to. Some expressed gratitude for staff giving clear explanations of the application and payment processes.

When asked to rate their overall experience with the Social Security Scotland staff they had contact with last time they were in touch, more than eight in ten (81%) rated it good or very good. Respondents expressed gratitude for the service and many responses described the staff as helpful and supportive. However, some respondents who had a negative experience commented that staff were unable to help with their query. Some

respondents highlighted long call wait times and a lack of communication about the progress of their application.

### **Promotional information**

The survey asked what promotional information about Social Security Scotland benefits respondents had seen in the past 12 months. Around two fifths (42%) had not seen promotional information. Of those who had, a large majority of respondents were positive about Social Security Scotland's promotional information. In particular, more than eight in ten (82%) said promotions talked about benefits in a positive way and more than three quarters (78%) said promotional information made it easy to understand what the payments are and how to apply.

### **Overall experience and discussion of findings**

When asked to rate their overall experience with Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months, more than eight in ten respondents (84%) rated it good or very good. Many respondents spoke positively about their interactions with Social Security Scotland staff, describing them as empathetic, supportive and helpful. Respondents were grateful for the support received from Social Security Scotland and some described the positive impact payments have had on their, and their families', lives. This is consistent with findings from the Client Survey 2022-2023 which is sent to everyone who has received a decision about an application. The Client Survey 2022-2023 found that almost nine in ten (88%) of respondents rated their overall experience with Social Security Scotland as good or very good. A vast majority of Client Survey respondents (94%) rated their overall experience of receiving payments as good or very good and a similar proportion (90%) said their overall experience with staff was good or very good.

On the other hand, some respondents described waiting too long for their application to be processed and a lack of communication about the progress of their applications. This was a recurring theme in open text responses across the survey. Respondents' suggestions for improvement included recommending that Social Security Scotland issue regular update messages to assure clients of the progress with their applications, or establish an online platform where clients log in to see details of their benefit, reminders and updates. As a result of listening to clients' feedback from previous user research on this issue, changes have been made to Social Security Scotland's service.

As of March 2024, new text and email updates have been introduced to let people know how their applications for Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment are progressing. Social Security Scotland publishes monthly [statistics](#) on processing times per benefit.

### 3. Background and research methods

#### 3.1. Background and research aims

This report presents findings from the Annual Client Panels Survey 2023.

Over 8,000<sup>1</sup> members of the Client Panels were invited to take part in the Annual Client Panels Survey. Established in 2020, the Client Panels are made up of Social Security Scotland clients from across Scotland. All clients are offered the chance to join the panel when they complete the Client Survey. The Client Survey goes to everyone who has received a decision on an application for a Social Security Scotland benefit or who has received a payment where an application is not required.<sup>2</sup> Client Panels research is used to explore panel members' experiences with Social Security Scotland and its service. The research provides evidence for continuous improvement to Social Security Scotland's service, processes and policies.

The Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 is the first time that an overall experience survey has been carried out with the Client Panel. The survey gathered insights from Client Panel members about aspects of their experience which typically happen after receiving a decision on an application or a payment. For example, the experience of receiving recurring payments and communicating with Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances. The broad aim of this research is to identify aspects of the client experience where things are working well, or could be improved.

The survey will be repeated on an annual basis to feed into continuous improvement in Social Security Scotland. Repeating the survey annually will eventually allow for baseline and trend data to show change over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Almost all Client Panel members were invited to take part. A small number of panel members were excluded as they were due to receive another Client Survey at the time of the Annual Client Panels Survey.

<sup>2</sup> Carer's Allowance Supplement, Winter Heating Payment and Child Winter Heating Assistance / Payment do not require an application. Clients who are transferring from Department for Work and Pensions benefits to Child Disability Payment or Adult Disability Payment are also not required to submit an application.

### 3.2. Who took part?

The Client Panels were established in 2020 and at the time of writing<sup>3</sup>, there are 13,420 members. Information on the make-up of the Panel can be found in [Annex A](#).

A total of 8,356 invitations<sup>4</sup> were sent to Client Panel members to take part in the Annual Client Panels Survey. The survey was open between 20<sup>th</sup> November and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. A total of 1,182 responses were received, a response rate of approximately 14%.

Demographic information on survey respondents is set out in [Annex B](#). This information is summarised below:

- More than eight in ten survey respondents (83%) were between 35 and 64 years of age. There was a similar number of respondents in the age groups 35-44 (29%), 45-54 (28%) and 55-64 (26%).
- Almost nine in ten respondents (88%) were white and one tenth (10%) were minority ethnic.
- Almost three quarters (72%) identified as a woman, just over a quarter (28%) identified as a man and three respondents answered 'other'. 1% of respondents identified as trans.
- Almost nine in ten survey respondents (89%) stated that they were heterosexual/straight, 5% identified as gay/lesbian, 2% bisexual and two respondents described their sexual orientation in another way.
- More than half (58%) of respondents had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Around two fifths (39%) said they did not have a lasting condition and 3% preferred not to say.
- Four in ten respondents (40%) stated they are a carer.
- Less than 1 in 10 (6%) said they had experience of being in care.
- More than half of respondents (59%) were in the two most deprived SIMD quintiles.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 25 September 2024

<sup>4</sup> Almost all Client Panel members were invited to participate. A small number of Panel members were excluded to avoid over-burdening respondents as they were due to receive a Client Survey at around the same time as the Annual survey going live.

<sup>5</sup> The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ranks data zones in Scotland based on a combination of data about income, employment, health, education, skills and training, geographic access to services,

The survey asked respondents which benefits they had applied for (Table 1) and which benefits they had received (Table 2) over the last 12 months.<sup>6</sup> Respondents had most commonly applied for Adult Disability Payment (37%) and Scottish Child Payment (36%) (Table 1). More than one tenth had applied for Child Disability Payment (15%). Similarly, respondents had most commonly received Scottish Child Payment (45%) and Adult Disability Payment (40%) (Table 2). A fifth (20%) had received Child Disability Payment. Smaller proportions had applied for or received other benefits in the last 12 months.<sup>7</sup>

A quarter (25%) of respondents indicated that they had not applied for any of the benefit types listed in the survey question (Table 1) whereas less than one in ten (7%) said they had not received any of the listed benefits. Note that some benefits – Carer’s Allowance Supplement, Winter Heating Payment and Child Winter Heating Assistance / Payment - do not require an application. Clients who are transferring from Department for Work and Pensions benefits to Child Disability Payment or Adult Disability Payment are also not required to submit an application.

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crime and housing. SIMD quintiles divide Scotland in to five equal size groups. The first quintile contains the most deprived fifth and the fifth quintile contains the least deprived areas.

<sup>6</sup> Carer Support Payment opened for applications in pilot areas on 20th November 2023 – the same date that the Annual Client Panels Survey launched. Experience of Carer Support Payment is therefore not covered in this report but will be included in future Annual Client Panels Survey analysis.

<sup>7</sup> Some benefit types had much fewer applicants/recipients among the survey respondents. Only five respondents responded that they had applied for and received Job Start Payment. Eight had applied for and received Young Carer’s Grant. For Funeral Support Payment, 17 applied and 11 received payments.

**Table 1: Which benefit(s) respondents applied for in the last 12 months\***  
Column percentages (n=1,150)

Response options	
Adult Disability Payment	37%
Scottish Child Payment	36%
None of the above	25%
Child Disability Payment	15%
Best Start Grant / Foods	6%
Funeral Support Payment	1%
Young Carer Grant	1%
Job Start Payment	0%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

**Table 2: Which benefit(s) respondents received in the last 12 months\***  
Column percentages (n=1,172)

Response options	
Scottish Child Payment	45%
Adult Disability Payment	40%
Child Disability Payment	20%
Carer's Allowance Supplement	19%
Winter Heating Payment	11%
Child Winter Heating Assistance / Child Winter Heating Payment	9%
None of the above	7%
Best Start Grant	5%
Best Start Foods	4%
Funeral Support Payment	1%
Young Carer Grant	1%
Job Start Payment	0%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

### 3.3. Analysing and understanding findings

It is important to note that the findings in this report represent the views of survey respondents. We cannot assume that the results represent the views of Social Security Scotland's clients as a whole.

This report contains high level findings from 2023's survey. The Annual Client Panels Survey 2024 report will include a breakdown of results by benefit type, year-on-year comparisons between 2023 and 2024, and any notable variances between demographic groups.



Quotations are used to illustrate the findings discussed in the report. In some cases, minor edits were made to quotations to improve readability. We have avoided acronyms throughout this report to make it easy to read. This includes replacing acronyms with the full words in quotations where possible. Quotes have been selected to best reflect themes which emerged in the findings. The number of quotes illustrating each theme is not necessarily representative of the prominence of that theme in the data.

Results presented in tables use percentages to show proportions of respondents choosing different answer options. Results are rounded to the nearest whole number. This means results included in tables may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Some percentages quoted in the report relate to questions that allowed respondents to choose more than one response. Again, these percentages will not sum to 100%. Where a result was less than 0.5%, this is shown as 0%. Where no respondents selected a particular answer, this is shown as '-' in tables.

In two of the survey questions, an unusually high proportion of respondents selected 'not applicable' and written analysis of these findings is included in the report. 'Not applicable' and 'can't remember/ don't know' responses were included in analysis throughout and are shown in the results tables.

Questions with fewer than 25 responses were not included in analysis. Cohorts smaller than five people are suppressed to ensure respondents are not identifiable.

## 4. Recurring payments

### 4.1. Impact of payments

On a scale of zero to ten (where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'a lot') respondents were asked how much the payments they received in the last 12 months had:

- Helped them to pay for what they needed
- Helped them to control their finances
- Had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing

Responses were similar across all three statements and each statement received an average score of eight out of ten. Scores were grouped into low (zero to three), medium (four to seven) and high (eight to ten) for analysis. Table 3 shows that, for each statement, more than 60% of respondents gave a high score.

**Table 3: Impact of payments received in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=1,072-1,080)

Score	Helped you to pay for what you needed	Helped you to control your finances	Had a positive impact on your health and wellbeing
Low (0-3)	6%	9%	9%
Medium (4-7)	28%	30%	27%
High (8-10)	66%	61%	63%

Responses to each statement were compared against respondents' benefit experience (see Tables D1, D2 and D3 in [Annex D](#)). For each benefit type,<sup>8</sup> more than half of respondents gave a high score across all three statements. A particularly high

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<sup>8</sup> Job Start Payment, Funeral Support Payment and Young Carer's Grant are excluded from this written analysis due to small numbers of respondents in these groups. However, they are included in the results table in the annex for transparency.

proportion (69-74%) of respondents with experience of Child Winter Heating Payment / Child Winter Heating Allowance and Child Disability Payment gave a high score across all three statements. A lower proportion (51-57%) of respondents with experience of Winter Heating Payment gave high scores across all three statements.

Respondents who said that they had received Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant, or Best Start Foods payments were asked further questions about the impact of these payments on their child's lives. On a scale of zero to ten, respondents were asked how much the payments had:

- Helped their child take part in social or educational opportunities
- Had a positive impact on their child's health and wellbeing
- Helped them to purchase milk and/or healthy food for their child
- Helped them financially at key stages of their child's life (for example, when they were born).

The average score for each of these statements, and across all statements, was eight out of 10. Table 4 shows that, for each statement, more than 60% of respondents gave a high score. A particularly large proportion – more than three quarters (77%) of respondents – gave a high score to the statement that payments positively impacted their child's health and wellbeing.

**Table 4: Impact of Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods payments received in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=526-532)

Score	Helped your child take part in social or educational opportunities	Had a positive impact on your child's health and wellbeing	Helped you to purchase milk and/or healthy food for your child	Helped you financially at key stages of your child's life
Low (0-3)	10%	4%	7%	14%
Medium (4-7)	23%	20%	21%	25%
High (8-10)	67%	77%	72%	61%

## 4.2. Receiving payments

The survey asked respondents whether they had experienced any problems with receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months.

A vast majority (90%) of respondents said they had not had any problems. A small proportion (7%) said they had experienced problems with payments ([Table D4](#)). These respondents were asked about the kind of problems they had experienced.<sup>9</sup>

Of the 7% of respondents who had experienced a problem with their payment, around two fifths (39%) said they received payment later than Social Security Scotland said they would (Table 5). A smaller proportion said the problem was receiving payment earlier than expected (8%) or receiving less money (7%) or more money (6%) than Social Security Scotland said they would.

Two fifths of respondents (40%) said they experienced a different kind of problem with their payment. These respondents were asked to provide more information about the problem in an open-text box.

<sup>9</sup> If respondents had experienced a problem with their payment(s) on more than one occasion, they were asked about what happened the most recent time something went wrong.

**Table 5: Types of problems respondents experienced with their payment\***  
Column percentages (n=72)

Response options	
I received payment later than Social Security Scotland told me I would	39%
I received payment earlier than Social Security Scotland told me I would	8%
I received less money than Social Security Scotland told me I would	7%
I received more money than Social Security Scotland told me I would	6%
Other	40%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Among the respondents who described a different kind of problem, comments were commonly about long processing times. Some respondents commented that they were still awaiting a decision from Social Security Scotland at the time of the survey. Several of these comments also highlighted a lack of clear communication from Social Security Scotland, with some respondents feeling uninformed about progress with their applications.

“No contact regards my online application made in July. It’s mid-December and I still have no idea what’s happening.”

Survey respondents were asked which benefit they had experienced problems with. If respondents had experienced problems on more than one occasion, the survey asked about the most recent problem. More than half (51%) of respondents who had experienced a problem said they had a problem with Adult Disability Payment. Around one in ten respondents who had experienced a problem with payments said they had a

problem with Scottish Child Payment (13%) or Child Disability Payment (10%) (Table 6)<sup>10</sup>.

**Table 6: Respondents' experience of problems with payments by benefit type**  
Column percentages (n=72)

Benefit type	
Adult Disability Payment	51%
Scottish Child Payment	13%
Child Disability Payment	10%
I'm not sure	8%
Carer's Allowance Supplement	7%
Best Start Foods	4%
Winter Heating Payment	4%
Best Start Grant	1%
Young Carer Grant	1%

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<sup>10</sup> Note the proportion of survey respondents who received each benefit type in the last 12 months: 45% Scottish Child Payment, 40% Adult Disability Payment, 20% Child Disability Payment

### 4.3. Contacting Social Security Scotland about problems with payments

Survey respondents who experienced problems with payments in the last 12 months were asked whether they had any contact with Social Security Scotland about it.

Around three quarters (75%) of those who had problems with their payments said they had contact with Social Security Scotland about the issue (Table 7). In a vast majority (94%) of these cases it was the client who contacted Social Security Scotland to report the problem, rather than Social Security Scotland contacting the client. Around a fifth (22%) of respondents who had a problem with their payment did not have any contact with Social Security Scotland about it.

**Table 7: Whether respondents had contact with Social Security Scotland about problems with payments in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=65)

Response options	
Yes - I contacted Social Security Scotland to report this	71%
Yes - Social Security Scotland contacted me about this	5%
No - I haven't had any contact with Social Security Scotland about this	22%
Can't remember / Don't know	3%

When asked to comment on why they did not tell Social Security Scotland about the problem, some said that the issue had been quickly resolved or they trusted it would be. Others highlighted long processing times or described barriers to contacting Social Security Scotland. For example, one respondent said their disability made it hard to wait on long phone calls. Another experienced problems using the Text Relay Service when trying to contact Social Security Scotland.

“I didn’t contact Social Security Scotland because they sent me a letter to explain and they paid all the money that was missing.”

“I keep thinking it'll be sorted soon and I hate waiting to get through on the phone. My disability makes it difficult to wait lengthy times on the phone.”

“I am deaf. I tried various methods to try and make contact. I had a phone call at the beginning of the claim but as I can't use the phone I had to ask a visitor to my home to take the call telling me my review form had not been received. [...] I tried to email but got no reply and tried to use relay (a service for deaf people) but they also could not make any contact. It was really frustrating.”

Respondents were asked about how Social Security Scotland handled the problem with their payments. Around two thirds (64%) of respondents felt Social Security Scotland treated them with fairness and respect when handling the problem (Table 8). More than two fifths felt that Social Security Scotland clearly explained the cause of the problem (44%) and half said it was clearly explained what would happen next (50%).



**Table 8: Respondents' experience of how Social Security Scotland handled the problem**

Row percentages (n=48-51)

How much do you agree or disagree that...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Not applicable
Social Security Scotland clearly explained what had caused the problem	44%	14%	41%	2%
Social Security Scotland clearly explained what would happen next	50%	13%	37%	-
Social Security Scotland treated me with fairness and respect when handling the problem	64%	19%	14%	2%

Overall, almost half (46%) of the respondents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with how Social Security Scotland handled the problem with their payment ([Table D5](#)). Just over one third (37%) were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

Respondents were asked to explain why they were or were not satisfied with the handling of their problem. Some satisfied respondents explained that the problem was ultimately resolved – though some highlighted that the resolution took a while.

Respondents also described being satisfied because Social Security Scotland staff had explained the situation, apologised for errors, and been kind and helpful in achieving a solution.

“The lady I spoke with was so helpful, kind and understanding. Said she would sort payment which she did.”

Unsatisfied respondents highlighted long delays and processing times, with some still awaiting a decision on their application at the time of completing the survey. Some

described a lack of communication from Social Security Scotland. Others found contacting Social Security Scotland laborious and said communication was unclear or unhelpful.

“I've had no correspondence since handing my forms in 6 months ago.”

“Your reps could not provide an estimated payment date. I had to phone on a number of occasions to pursue the payment.”

#### 4.4. Overall experience of receiving payments

Respondents were asked to rate their overall experience of receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months (Table 9). The vast majority (94%) rated their experience as very good or good. Less than 2% said their experience of receiving payments was poor or very poor.

**Table 9: Overall experience of receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months**

Column percentages (n=1085)

Response options	
Very good	73%
Good	21%
Neither poor nor good	4%
Poor	1%
Very poor	1%

Respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to tell us about their experience of receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months.

The most prominent themes in the responses were positive comments about the impact of payments received and negative comments about processing times.

Respondents explained how payments from Social Security Scotland had a positive impact for them/their families:

“Enabled me to feel safe in my home. Benefit covers independent living.”

“It’s been a life saver, doesn’t solve all but goes a long way.”

“Without these payments I would have really struggled in the current circumstances of cost of living inflation. These have helped me make sure my kids have the equipment they need and healthier meals.”

Some respondents were also positive about experiences of communication with Social Security Scotland, particularly how they were treated by staff.

“When applying, the staff members on live chat and over the phone could not have been more understanding and helpful about upcoming payments and even my application process.”

“I feel well informed about payments and when they are due. Kept in the loop of any changes.”

However, some respondents described dissatisfaction with long processing times and waiting to hear from Social Security Scotland about the progress of their application.

“Still waiting 18 weeks later to find out if Child Disability Payment will be approved.”

“I was migrated from Personal Independence Payment to Adult Disability Payment and although I am still receiving the money, thank goodness, my change of circumstances application has still not been resolved. I sent it in April and it is now December. They put it down to lack of staff. It is aggravating all my mental health issues.”

## 5. Accessing extra support as a result of receiving Disability Payments

The Annual Client Panels Survey asked respondents whether, in the last 12 months, they had applied for any extra support as a result of receiving either Adult or Child Disability Payment ([Table D6](#)). Almost two thirds (63%) responded 'No', while almost one third (31%) said they had applied for extra support .

Those who responded 'Yes' were asked what extra support they had applied for. The most common answers were:

- Bus pass
- Blue badge
- Motability car
- Council tax reduction
- Carer's Allowance
- Road tax reduction
- Housing benefit
- Railcard/Other travel card

Respondents were asked how easy or difficult it was to use their Social Security Scotland disability payment award to access extra support. Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents described this as very easy or quite easy (Table 10). More than one in ten (13%) found it quite difficult or very difficult and a similar proportion (12%) said it was neither easy nor difficult.

**Table 10: How easy or difficult it was for respondents to use their Social Security Scotland disability payment award to access extra support**  
Column percentages (n=194)

Response options	
Very easy	46%
Quite easy	25%
Neither easy nor difficult	12%
Quite difficult	7%
Very difficult	7%
Can't remember / Don't know	3%

Respondents were asked about their overall experience of applying for extra support as a result of receiving Adult or Child Disability Payment. Positive responses spoke of the beneficial impact of payments from Social Security Scotland and extra support received. Respondents described application processes as straightforward and found Social Security Scotland staff to be helpful and caring.

“It has made a positive impact on being able to afford and access extra support for myself and my child since I have more money and choices. An example is that I have been able to join the local gym to help improve my disability, and my daughter has been able to access music lessons privately.”

“I had someone from Social Security Scotland come to my home and helped me apply. They were very polite and friendly and talked me through everything that would happen after I apply. Made it less stressful.”

However, some respondents found the process of applying for extra support to be difficult. Some had experienced a lack of join-up between services, having to repeat the same information to different support services, or explaining to agencies who were unfamiliar with the details of disability benefits and extra support the client might be

eligible for. Others faced barriers when completing applications for extra support, for example having to complete applications online or on an app. Respondents' comments included pleas for better communication between different agencies/departments which offer support and for automation of extra supports where possible. Some respondents described waiting a long time for their benefit to be processed and highlighted that delays in processing their benefit application meant delayed access to other supports. Other comments indicated respondents were unaware of the extra supports they were entitled to.

"The different agencies i.e. Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit and the council tax all want the same information, so you are constantly repeating information. They should be married up so it is easier to access what someone is entitled to."

"When submitting my blue badge application, the staff at the Post Office had never heard of Adult Disability Payment and insisted that they needed a Personal Independence Payment award letter and couldn't accept anything else. [...] It took a very long time to convince them to accept my award letter as part of the application and even then, they felt like they were committing fraud and doing me a huge favour."

"The application was online. You had to go in through another App to give the information and initially it kept getting rejected. It was frustrating and then you had to supply a photo and it had to be done through the App too. Just difficult especially when you've arthritis and my focus doesn't last long. I needed help eventually."

"I did not know that I could apply for any extra support. I would not know where to look for this information."

## 6. Change of circumstances

### 6.1. Experience of reporting a change of circumstances

The survey asked respondents whether they had told Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances during the last 12 months<sup>11</sup>. Around a quarter (24%) of respondents had reported a change of circumstances in that time ([Table D7](#)). Of those, the most common change reported was a change in their or their child's disability, health condition(s) or level of help or care needed (Table 11). More than one quarter of respondents responded 'other' and had the option to describe the change in an open-text box. A majority of the changes described by those who responded 'other' related to changes in health conditions. Some respondents described a change related to applying for other benefits and a few said their child reached an age which altered their benefit eligibility, for example moving from Child to Adult Disability Payment.

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<sup>11</sup> Clients are invited to join the Client Panels after receiving a decision from Social Security Scotland. The Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 asked specifically about change of circumstances reported to Social Security Scotland. Therefore, findings are interpreted as relating to change of circumstances which occurred whilst respondents were clients of Social Security Scotland, rather than change of circumstances reported to Department of Work and Pensions, resulting in case transfer.

**Table 11: Types of change of circumstances respondents told Social Security Scotland about in the last 12 months?\***  
Column percentages (n=239)

Response options	
A change in your or your child's disability, health condition(s) or level of help or care needed	44%
A change of address	14%
A change in personal and/or household circumstances, for example the number of children you look after, or if you started or stopped living with a partner	10%
A change in other personal or contact information (such as name), or payment details (such as a change in bank account)	10%
A change in your or your partner's finances, for example other benefits received (such as Universal Credit)	6%
Other	26%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Respondents had most commonly told Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances by completing an online form (33%) or postal form (28%), or by phoning Social Security Scotland's helpline (22%) (Table 12). Fewer respondents had reported the change in other ways.



**Table 12: How respondents told Social Security Scotland about the change of circumstances**

Column percentages (n=240)

Response options	
By completing an online form	33%
By completing a form and posting it to Social Security Scotland	28%
By phoning Social Security Scotland's helpline	22%
By completing a form and sending it to Social Security Scotland using the document upload service	6%
By having a phone appointment with an adviser	6%
In person - through a home visit	3%
In person - at an arranged venue or Social Security Scotland office	2%
By having a video call appointment with an adviser	1%

Respondents were asked about their experience of telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances. Most respondents (70-74%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were only asked for relevant information, they were able to report the change in the way they wanted, and the process was clear and easy to do (Table 13). Around two thirds (65%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that filling in or providing information about the change did not take too long. Around a fifth (21%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, and a similar proportion (20%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that it was easy to report the change.

**Table 13: Respondents' experience of the process of reporting a change of circumstances**

Row percentages (n=242-244)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know
It was easy to tell Social Security Scotland about the change	70%	9%	20%	1%
The process for telling Social Security Scotland about the change was clear	73%	12%	15%	-
I was able to tell Social Security Scotland about the change in the way I wanted to	74%	11%	15%	1%
Filling in or providing information about the change did not take too long	65%	14%	21%	-
I was only asked for relevant information when telling Social Security Scotland about the change	73%	12%	11%	5%

Respondents were asked how they felt about telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances. Half (50%) of respondents said telling Social Security Scotland about the change made them feel anxious while over a quarter strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement (Table 14). Around four in ten respondents (42%) were worried that telling Social Security Scotland about the change would mean they would lose some or all of their payments while around a third (34%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement. Over a third (38%) strongly agreed or agreed they were unsure whether to report the change because they were anxious

about the process and the impact it could have on their payments. A similar proportion (39%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

**Table 14: How respondents felt about reporting a change of circumstances**  
Column percentages (n=243)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know	Not applicable
Telling Social Security Scotland about the change made me feel anxious	50%	19%	28%	1%	2%
I was worried that reporting the change would mean I would lose some or all of my payment(s)	42%	17%	34%	1%	5%
I was unsure whether to report the change because I was anxious about the process and the impact it could have on my payment(s)	38%	16%	39%	2%	5%

The survey asked respondents if it was clear whether the change of circumstances could impact their payments (Table 15). More than two fifths (44%) strongly agreed or agreed that it was clear while 16% felt it was unclear. Almost a third of respondents (31%) answered 'neither agree nor disagree' to this question.

**Table 15:** How much respondents agree or disagree with the statement: 'It was clear whether the change of circumstances could impact my payment(s)'  
Column percentages (n=244)

Response options	
Strongly agree	19%
Agree	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	31%
Disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	6%
Can't remember / Don't know	5%
Not applicable	5%

## 6.2. Providing supporting information

The survey asked about respondents' experiences of providing supporting information relevant to their change of circumstances. Around three quarters (74%) of respondents had provided supporting information in the last 12 months. Of that group, more than two thirds (67%) submitted the information online and around a quarter (27%) sent it through the post (Table 16).

**Table 16: Whether, and how, respondents provided supporting information relevant to their change of circumstances**  
Column percentages (n=244)

Response options	
No	25%
Yes – I submitted it online	45%
Yes – I sent it through the post	18%
Yes – I provided it in person	5%
Yes – I provided it in another way	5%
Can't remember / Don't know	7%

Over three quarters (77%) of respondents provided the supporting information when they told Social Security Scotland about the change of circumstances as opposed to providing it following a request from Social Security Scotland (Table 17).

**Table 17: When respondents provided supporting information**  
Column percentages (n=166)

Response options	
When I told Social Security Scotland about the change of circumstances	77%
When I told Social Security Scotland about the change and again later after being contacted by Social Security Scotland	11%
Only after being contacted by Social Security Scotland to request it	8%
Can't remember / Don't know	4%

The survey asked respondents to consider a set of statements about providing supporting information (Table 18). Over three quarters (77%) of respondents said it was clear what information they needed to provide, and a larger majority (82%) said it was clear why that information was needed. Around three quarters (72%) said it was easy to provide the supporting information while around two thirds (64%) felt it was easy to get the supporting documents they wanted. Over a third (37%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were asked to provide supporting information that they had provided previously, and a similar proportion (35%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement.

A notable proportion (12%) of respondents responded 'not applicable' to the statement 'I was asked to provide supporting information that I had already provided Social Security Scotland previously'. This could be due to a number of factors, including survey design. It is possible that respondents who had not provided any supporting information to Social Security Scotland previously felt 'not applicable' best described their experience. The design of this question will be reviewed and responses will be

monitored in future Annual Client Panels Surveys to understand any meaningful reasons for the relatively high number of 'not applicable' responses.

**Table 18: Respondents' experience of providing supporting information**

Row percentages (n=164-165)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know	Not applicable
It was clear what information I should provide	77%	8%	13%	1%	-
It was clear why the supporting information or documents were needed	82%	9%	10%	-	-
I was asked to provide supporting information that I had already provided Social Security Scotland previously	37%	14%	35%	3%	12%
It was easy to get the supporting information or documents I wanted	64%	15%	16%	1%	4%
It was easy to provide the supporting information or documents to Social Security Scotland	72%	10%	15%	1%	2%

Of the respondents who had provided supporting information, almost a third (31%) asked Social Security Scotland to collect the supporting information on their behalf. Of this group, a majority (72%) asked Social Security Scotland to collect this information when they first reported the change (Table 19).

Respondents were asked why they asked Social Security Scotland to collect supporting information on their behalf (Table 20). Respondents could select more than one answer to this question. Around three quarters (73%) thought Social Security Scotland could collect the information faster than them and just under half (48%) thought Social Security Scotland would know better what information to collect. Around a third (31%) thought that Social Security Scotland would be able to get information they wouldn't be able to get themselves. One in ten (13%) said they wanted to provide supporting information but couldn't do it themselves.

**Table 19: Whether, and when, respondents asked Social Security Scotland to collect supporting information on their behalf**  
Column percentages (n=242)

Response options	
No	51%
Yes - when I first told Social Security Scotland about the change	22%
Yes - both when I first told Social Security Scotland about the change and when Social Security Scotland contacted me	6%
Yes - when Social Security Scotland contacted me to ask for further information	2%
Can't remember / Don't know	18%



**Table 20: Why respondents asked Social Security Scotland to collect supporting information on their behalf\***  
Column percentages (n=64)

Response options	
I thought they could collect the information faster than me	73%
I thought they would know better than me what information to collect	48%
I thought that they would be able to get information I wouldn't be able to get	31%
I wanted to provide supporting information, but couldn't do it myself	13%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

### 6.3. Outcome of reporting a change of circumstances

The survey asked respondents about the outcome of telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances.

More than half (57%) of the respondents said that Social Security Scotland had confirmed that the change of circumstances reported had been processed. Less than half (43%) said it had not been confirmed ([Table D8](#)).

Of those who had received confirmation, over half (56%) strongly agreed or agreed that Social Security Scotland processed the change within a reasonable time while around a quarter (26%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement (Table 21).

**Table 21: How much respondents agree that Social Security Scotland processed the change within a reasonable time frame**  
Column percentages (n=136)

Response options	
Strongly agree	32%
Agree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%
Disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	16%
Can't remember / Don't know	4%

When asked if the change of circumstances had impacted their payments, around two fifths (41%) of respondents said their payments did not change (Table 22). A similar proportion (42%) said there was a change in their payments. Of those respondents, almost three quarters (72%) said their payments increased. Smaller proportions said their payments decreased or stopped, or that they received another benefit or payment.

A notable proportion (21%) of respondents responded 'not applicable' to this question. This could be due to a number of factors, including survey design. Almost a third (31%) of these respondents had described their change in circumstance as a change of address. It is possible that these respondents felt the question about a change of circumstances impacting their payments was not relevant to them because their change was administrative. The design of this question will be reviewed and responses will be monitored in future Annual Client Panels Surveys to understand any meaningful reasons for the relatively high number of 'not applicable' responses.

**Table 22: Impact of change of circumstances on respondents' payment(s)\***  
Column percentages (n=137)

Responses	
No - Social Security Scotland confirmed my payment(s) would not change	41%
Yes - My payment(s) increased	31%
Yes - My payment(s) decreased	5%
Yes - My payment(s) stopped	4%
Yes - I received another payment or benefit	3%
Not applicable	21%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Respondents were asked whether Social Security Scotland had clearly explained the way their payment(s) would/would not be affected and why their payments would/would not change. Responses were similar among respondents whose payments were affected and those whose payments were not affected.

Among respondents whose payments were affected by reporting a change of circumstances, almost three quarters (74%) agreed or strongly agreed that Social Security Scotland clearly explained the way their payments would be impacted and 70% said it was clearly explained why payments would be affected. 5% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with both of these statements (Table 23).

Among respondents whose payments were not impacted after reporting a change of circumstances, around seven in ten (71%) of respondents said it was clearly explained that there would be no change to their payments, one tenth (10%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Two thirds (66%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was clearly explained why their payments would not be affected while more than one tenth (14%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 24).

**Table 23: Respondents' experience of reporting a change of circumstances impacting payments**  
Row percentages (n=56-57)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know
Social Security Scotland clearly explained the way your payment(s) would be impacted	74%	19%	5%	2%
It was clearly explained why your payment(s) would be affected	70%	20%	5%	5%

**Table 24: Respondents' experience of reporting a change of circumstances not impacting payments**  
Row percentages (n=50-51)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know
Social Security Scotland clearly explained that there would be no change to your payment(s)	71%	18%	10%	2%
It was clearly explained why your payment(s) would not be affected	66%	16%	14%	4%

Respondents were asked if they agreed with the decision made about how the change of circumstances would or would not affect their payments. A vast majority of respondents said 'yes' in both cases. More than nine in ten (95%) respondents whose payment were affected agreed or strongly agreed with the decision while almost one fifth (18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than eight in ten (85%) respondents whose payments were not affected agreed or strongly agreed with the decision while 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 25).

**Table 25:** Whether respondents agreed with the decision that their payment(s) would/would not change following the change of circumstances  
Row percentages (n=46-57)

	Agree	Disagree
Respondents whose payments were affected	95%	5%
Respondents whose payments were not affected	85%	15%

#### 6.4. Overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances

Respondents were asked whether Social Security Scotland treated them with fairness and respect when dealing with their change of circumstances. Around three quarters (72%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed while more than one tenth (11%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 26).

**Table 26:** How much respondents agree or disagree that Social Security Scotland treated them with fairness and respect when dealing with the change they reported  
Column percentages (n=237)

Response options	
Strongly agree	43%
Agree	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	7%
Not applicable	3%

The survey asked respondents to rate their overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about their change of circumstances. More than half (57%) of respondents rated their overall experience as good or very good (Table 27). Almost a quarter (24%) rated their experience poor or very poor.

**Table 27: Overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about the change in your circumstances and, where applicable, having this processed**  
Column percentages (n=244)

Response options	
Very good	35%
Good	22%
Neither poor nor good	18%
Poor	14%
Very poor	10%

Respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to tell us about their experience of telling Social Security Scotland about the change of circumstances and, where applicable, having this processed.

Key themes in the responses were long waiting times and a lack of communication from Social Security Scotland during the wait.

“It has been literally months and months, no communication to say they received my forms, no communication to say what is happening next, no communication with estimated time scales. Staff all really friendly, but system needs improving.”

“I felt the length of time it took to get a decision was far too long. It therefore caused me anxiety and distress. There was no information about how long it would take and therefore I was waiting for the postman every day.”

Some respondents described the process of reporting a change of circumstances as flawed or challenging, causing anxiety.

“Constantly unable to speak to case manager. Continually supplied with conflicting information and cannot get an acceptable reason for the delay of over a year. Continue to find this process exceedingly difficult and extremely stressful.”

“Every time either myself or my husband has had to ring to monitor the progress of my change of circumstances the Social Security Scotland employees that have taken our calls whilst being sympathetic for the most part don’t seem to have a clue about where to get information on my file. Calls back have been promised and never fulfilled.”

Some respondents’ comments reflected a positive overall experience and expressed gratitude for the service. Respondents described Social Security Scotland staff as helpful and reassuring.

“I found Social Security Scotland so helpful and found it great the way they dealt with everything”

“Adviser was brilliant, kind, patient and spent time explaining everything.”

## **6.5. Not telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances**

Respondents who said they had not reported a change of circumstances in the last 12 months were asked whether they had considered telling Social Security Scotland about a change during this time but had ultimately decided not to. One in ten (10%) respondents said they had decided not to report a change of circumstances ([Table D9](#)).

Several of these respondents indicated that while they had not yet informed Social Security Scotland, they intended to tell them about the change of circumstances. Some doubted that their change of circumstances would affect their payment so felt there was

“no point” or it would not “make a difference”. Others did not tell Social Security Scotland about the change because they feared it would result in their payments being reduced or stopped. Some respondents felt the process of reporting a change of circumstances was too lengthy or difficult.

“I was afraid my entitlement would be cut as my disability got worse and would they believe me?”

“I felt that the process to update my claim is too cumbersome as the pain I have has increased but the increase is intermittent so perhaps not relevant.”

“Because it makes no difference as I will be told I’m still not eligible.”

Respondents who had not reported a change of circumstances in the last year were asked to consider a set of statements, shown in Table 28. Of these respondents, almost all (96%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of the importance of reporting a change of circumstances to get the payments they were entitled to. A similar proportion (95%) agreed or strongly agreed they were aware they should tell Social Security Scotland about any change of circumstances straight away. Almost nine in ten respondents (89%) said they understood the type of changes they needed to tell Social Security Scotland about. Around eight in ten (83%) said they would know how to report a change of circumstances.



**Table 28:** How much respondents who had not reported a change agreed or disagreed with statements about changes in circumstances  
Row percentages (n=767-768)

	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Don't know
I'm aware it's important to tell Social Security Scotland about changes in my circumstances so I get the payment(s) I'm entitled to	96%	2%	0%	2%
I understand the type of changes I need to tell Social Security Scotland about	89%	6%	1%	3%
I'm aware that I should tell Social Security Scotland about changes in my circumstances straight away	95%	3%	0%	1%
I would know how to tell Social Security Scotland about a change in my circumstances	83%	8%	6%	3%

## 7. Communications with Social Security Scotland

### 7.1. Receiving contact from Social Security Scotland

The survey asked whether respondents had received communication from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months. Around half (51%) of survey respondents said that they had received communication from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months (Table 29). Just over a third (38%) of respondents said they had not received communication. Of those, almost a quarter (23%) had expected to receive some communication.

**Table 29: Whether respondents received any communication from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months and whether they expected to**  
Column percentages (n=1172)

Response options	
Yes	51%
No – but I didn’t expect any communication	29%
No – but I expected to receive some communication	9%
Can’t remember / Don’t know	12%

Respondents who expected to receive communication said they expected to receive confirmation that their application materials had been received and updates on the progress of their application. Others said they had expected to receive a decision in the last 12 months. Some respondents said they would have expected Social Security Scotland to provide advice on clients’ eligibility for other benefits/support and how to access it.

“I would like to have some communication to confirm what is going on.”

“I would have expected some form of acknowledgement regarding my change of circumstances information I submitted, even if it was to say it had not yet been looked at but was pending.”

“Confirming receipt of my written application and telling me if I qualify for extra benefit or not.”

Those who had received communication from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months were asked to consider further statements about this experience (Table 30). A large majority of respondents responded positively to all the statements. More than three quarters (78%) agreed or strongly agreed that they received the right level of communication while more than one tenth (13%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than three quarters (78%) said that they had enough choice about how Social Security Scotland communicated with them while less than one in ten (6%) disagreed. More than eight in ten respondents (83%) said the communication they received was useful and nine in ten (90%) said they received communication in a format which was suitable for them. Less than one tenth (6% and 4%) of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with these statements.

**Table 30: Respondents' experience of communication received from Social Security Scotland**  
Row percentages: (n=591-593)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know
I received the right level of communication from Social Security Scotland	78%	9%	13%	1%
The communication I received was useful	83%	10%	6%	1%
I had enough choice about how Social Security Scotland communicated with me	78%	13%	6%	3%
I received communication in a format which was suitable for me	90%	6%	4%	1%

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement 'I received communication in a format which was suitable for me' were asked what format they would have preferred. Some responses described respondents receiving communication in a format which is not accessible for them or is not their preferred method

"I have on every occasion asked that my records advise of my ability of not being able to use the telephone and that contact by email or post would be better for me. This has not been the case."

"If a customer applies online it is because that is their preferred channel. So don't send them a twenty page letter printed on paper in reply."

## 7.2. Contacting Social Security Scotland

Survey respondents were asked whether they had tried to contact Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months (excluding for research purposes). More than half (56%) responded that they had not tried to make contact, while over one third (38%) of respondents said they had ([Table D10](#)).

Of those who had made contact, a large majority (80%) did so using Social Security Scotland's phone helpline. Around one tenth (11%) had made contact via letter and a smaller proportion (6%) had a phone appointment. Over one third (37%) contacted Social Security Scotland via webchat (Table 31). Respondents' experiences of using webchat are analysed in the following section (7.3).

**Table 31: Ways respondents have contacted or tried to contact Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months\***  
Column percentages (n=435)

Response options	
By phoning Social Security Scotland's helpline	80%
By webchat (through mygov.scot or the Social Security Scotland website)	37%
Letter	11%
Phone appointment	6%
In person - home visit	3%
Video call appointment	3%
In person - at an arranged venue or Social Security Scotland office	1%
Another way	4%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Respondents were also asked about the most recent way they made contact with Social Security Scotland. Responses were similar to the methods of contact used over

the last 12 months. Around two thirds (76%) said they most recently used the helpline and around a third (29%) of respondents most recently using webchat ([Table D11](#)).

Of the respondents who tried to contact Social Security Scotland, around half (49%) were looking for an update or further information about an application (Table 32). Over a quarter wanted to ask for advice (29%) or to report a change of circumstances (27%). A similar proportion (24%) were looking for help completing an application.

**Table 32: Reasons for contacting Social Security Scotland\***  
Column percentages (n=435)

Response options	
To get an update or information about an application	49%
To get advice or general information (including about eligibility)	29%
To report a change of circumstances or update your information	27%
To complete an application	24%
To get an update or information about your payment(s) (for example, dates or amounts)	12%
To make a complaint	5%
To ask for or discuss a re-determination or appeal	5%
To provide feedback or a suggestion	2%
Other	8%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Respondents were asked to think about the most recent time they contacted Social Security Scotland. More than three quarters (77%) of respondents said they could contact Social Security Scotland in the way they wanted to while around one tenth disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 33). More than two thirds (67%) got the support they needed, around six in ten (61%) said it was easy to make contact and a similar proportion (60%) felt their issue was dealt with in a timely manner. Around a quarter (23%-24%) of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with these statements.

**Table 33: Respondents' experience of contacting Social Security Scotland**  
Row percentages (n=307-309)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know	Not applicable
I got the support (information or advice) I needed	67%	9%	23%	-	1%
My query or issue was dealt with in a timely manner	60%	13%	24%	1%	1%
I could contact Social Security Scotland in the way I wanted to	77%	11%	12%	-	-
It was easy to contact Social Security Scotland	61%	15%	24%	-	-

Those who found contacting Social Security Scotland difficult were asked to describe the barriers they faced. The majority of these responses highlighted long call wait times. Some described being unable to get through to anyone when they called or were disconnected during the call. In some instances, respondents found that the Social Security Scotland staff they contacted were unable to help. A few respondents said the contact details for Social Security Scotland were hard to find.

“After 3 times without any response, I gave up on trying to use the webchat. Over the phone it was until the 4th attempt where I had to wait for over 30 minutes.”

“On phoning, the length of time you have to wait to speak to someone, it can take hours. And then get passed around numerous people, get cut off and have to start again.”

### 7.3. Experience of using webchat to contact Social Security Scotland

Respondents who had most recently used webchat to contact Social Security Scotland ([Table D11](#)) were asked further questions about their experience. Respondents were asked about the technology used to access webchat. More than two thirds (68%) used a phone and almost one third (31%) used a laptop/PC ([Table D12](#)).

Respondents were asked why they chose webchat the last time they contacted Social Security Scotland. More than a third of responses referred to long call wait times to get through to Social Security Scotland's helpline. These respondents turned to webchat as an alternative to waiting on the phone. A few respondents mentioned that they used webchat whilst also waiting in the phone call queue to see which was answered first. Some respondents found webchat to be a quicker and easier means of contact.

"I chose webchat because previously I had to wait in a telephone queue for over an hour."

"I used the webchat as the phone line message said high volume of calls so I did the webchat whilst I was still on hold."

Respondents' comments also highlighted that webchat was convenient because it allowed them to multitask, for example doing housework or childcare whilst contacting Social Security Scotland. Similarly, some respondents commented that the Webchat was more suited to their environment, for example if they were in a public place and did not want their conversation with Social Security Scotland to be overheard. Some respondents explained that they disliked speaking on the phone as it provoked anxiety or was incompatible with their health condition/disability (e.g. hearing loss, stutter), so webchat was an appropriate alternative.

"I found it easier as I could keep chat while doing work in another window as it was a long wait."



“I feel I have more time to use the Webchat while doing other things. My son who has autism is very loud when I'm trying to make a phone call so I find the webchat a lot easier to communicate without disruption.”

“I get stressed talking on the phone so webchat eases my anxiety.”

When asked to rate their overall experience of using webchat, around two thirds of respondents (64%) had a good experience, while one fifth (20%) said their experience was poor (Table 34).

**Table 34: Overall experience of using webchat**  
Column percentages (n=89)

Response	
Very good	37%
Good	27%
Neither poor nor good	16%
Poor	15%
Very poor	6%

Respondents were asked to explain why they gave this rating. Respondents who had a poor experience described long waiting times. Some said that their query remained unresolved after using webchat and that, in some instances, staff were unable to help or provide information. A few respondents were unable to get through to an advisor or were disconnected while using webchat.

"The wait was long, and then when I stepped away, they connected and cut off the chat because I didn't respond quick enough, so I had to rejoin the queue."

“Staff only have limited information to give. Cannot give timescales or an escalation route.”

Respondents who reported a positive experience described webchat staff as friendly, helpful and knowledgeable. They described the webchat service as straightforward and efficient.

“The ease of use was second to none. The adviser was helpful and knowledgeable and I didn’t forget to ask things that I usually would in a phone call.”

“Waiting time was reasonable. Advisor friendly and helpful.”

#### **7.4. Contact with Social Security Scotland staff**

Respondents were asked to think about the staff they had contact with the last time they were in touch with Social Security Scotland and to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with a list of statements. Table 35 shows that responses were positive across all statements. In particular, a vast majority of respondents felt that staff listened to them (80%), and they were treated with kindness (84%). Almost one fifth (17%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that staff were able to help them.

**Table 35: Respondents' most recent experience of contact with Social Security Scotland staff**  
Row percentages (n=368-372)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know	Not applicable
I was treated with kindness	84%	10%	3%	-	2%
I felt trusted	73%	15%	9%	1%	3%
I trusted staff	71%	17%	10%	0%	3%
Staff listened to me	80%	9%	8%	0%	3%
Staff made me feel comfortable	77%	13%	7%	0%	3%
Staff were able to help me	69%	11%	17%	-	3%
Staff were honest with me	75%	16%	4%	1%	3%
Staff were knowledgeable about Social Security Scotland benefits and services	67%	17%	9%	1%	6%

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'Staff were honest with me' (Table 35). Most (75%) respondents strongly agreed or agreed, 16% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 4% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

Respondents were asked to explain their answer to this question in an open-text box.

Positive responses described Social Security Scotland staff as helpful, polite, understanding and supportive. Respondents said staff made them feel respected and listened to.

“When they contacted me to discuss my daughter’s disability benefit application I was sobbing on the phone and the staff member was so kind and caring and didn’t rush me and checked I was okay before he ended the call.”

“It was actually a very surprisingly pleasant and easy experience, contacting your helpline. The adviser was so lovely and sincere. Was only one call I ever made and I was very impressed with the experience. I was treated with respect and dignity, which was novel. (Chap was lovely). Thank you.”

Respondents were grateful for staff giving clear explanations of application and payment processes.

“Staff explained everything I needed to know and were patient and helpful I trusted what they told me and advised me to do. It may have taken a few attempts but I got there.”

“I asked for help to apply for help as I am not working and unable to work due to health. The adviser took me through a lot of possibilities and suggested various ways to help. Found this information very useful although I could not get help, I still felt listened too.”

Respondents who disagreed that staff had been honest with them described cases where staff were unable to help.

“They couldn’t/wouldn’t advise me on how long I will be waiting or even what the outcome might be or how it will affect me.”

“The staff were very pleasant but were unable to help with my query and weren’t able to give me correct information or resolve the problem.”

Poor communication from Social Security Scotland was a theme in these responses. Some respondents had been given inconsistent information.

“I got no outcome of my complaint, no contact from management, no letters, no apologies, nothing.”

“They gave bad information over the phone that didn't relate to information on the forms. In fact, it was like one hand didn't know what the other was doing.”

Respondents were asked to rate their overall experience with the Social Security Scotland staff they had contact with last time they were in touch. More than eight in ten (81%) rated it as good or very good. Around one tenth of respondents (11%) rated their experience with staff as poor or very poor (Table 36).

**Table 36: Respondents' overall experience of their most recent contact with Social Security Scotland staff**  
Column percentages (n=369)

Response options	
Very good	56%
Good	25%
Neither poor nor good	10%
Poor	6%
Very poor	4%

Respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about their most recent interaction with Social Security Scotland staff.

Most responses expressed gratitude for the service and many responses described the staff as helpful and supportive.

“Anyone I've spoken to has been exceptionally helpful, respectful and considerate.”

“I was supported emotionally and mentally by the staff when explaining my situation.”

“To the member of staff who took my call. She was very patient and I could hear the care in her voice. As much as I hate being on the phone, I felt as comfortable as I possibly could with her.”

Some respondents who reported a negative experience found that staff were unable to help and suggested that Social Security Scotland staff required more training.

“The staff need better training about the actual rules around claiming benefits and how the system actually works so that they can give people the correct information rather sending people on a wild goose chase following incorrect information.”

“Get the resource. Get them properly trained for the role they are to do. Get more disabled people who understand the processes from the other side involved and employed.”

A few respondents mentioned a lack of communication about the progress of their application.

“It would have been good to have been given an idea of the wait time for processing the application form.”

## **7.5. Promotional information**

The survey asked what promotional information about Social Security Scotland benefits respondents had seen in the past 12 months. Around two fifths (42%) of respondents said they had not seen any promotional information. Respondents had most commonly seen promotional information on the Social Security Scotland or mygov.scot websites (26%) or through adverts on TV, radio, online or in newspapers (25%) (Table 37).

**Table 37: Where respondents saw promotional material about Social Security Scotland benefits\***

Column percentages (n=1143)

Response options	
I haven't seen any promotional information or materials	42%
Social Security Scotland website or mygov.scot	26%
Advert (on TV, on radio, online, or in newspaper)	25%
Another social media channel (e.g. Facebook Group, Reddit) or online community	15%
Public place (such as GP surgery, health centre, library or community centre)	12%
News article or programme (on TV, on radio, online, or in newspaper)	9%
Official Social Security Scotland social media page	8%
Social Security Scotland newsletter	6%
Child's nursery or school	5%
Support or advice organisation's website, newsletter, office or information stand	4%
Jobcentre Plus	3%
Outdoor advertising (such as on buses, bus stops, or phone booths)	2%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

Among those who saw or heard an advert for Social Security Scotland, more than two fifths (44%) said TV, around a third (32%) saw it online, around one fifth (19%) heard it on the radio and 5% in a newspaper ([Table D13](#)).



Of those respondents who had seen promotional information on an official Social Security Scotland social media page, around three quarters (74%) saw it on Facebook ([Table D14](#)).

The most common public space for seeing promotional information was GP surgeries (42%). Around a quarter (26%) of respondents who had seen promotional information in a public space said they saw it in a health centre/hospital. 15% saw information in a library and 13% in a community centre ([Table D15](#)).

Respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the promotional information they had seen. Respondents were positive across all the statements (Table 38). In particular, around eight in ten respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the promotional information talked about benefits in a positive way (82%) and made it easy to understand what the payments are and how to apply (78%).

**Table 38: Respondents' views of adverts and promotional information they have seen about Social Security Scotland's benefits**  
Row percentages (n=641-662)

How much do you agree or disagree...	Strongly agree or agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree or disagree	Can't remember / Don't know	Not applicable
Were aimed at you	69%	24%	3%	2%	2%
Made it easy to understand what the payments are and how to apply	78%	16%	3%	2%	2%
Caught your attention	75%	19%	2%	2%	2%
Talked about benefits in a positive way	82%	13%	2%	2%	1%
Were interesting to you	74%	20%	2%	2%	2%
Made you think it was worthwhile finding out more about the payment(s)	75%	17%	3%	2%	4%
Encouraged you to find out more about the payment(s) and how to apply	74%	17%	3%	2%	5%

Respondents were invited to make suggestions on how Social Security Scotland should promote information about its benefits.

Respondents suggested that Social Security Scotland should promote its benefits in medical settings: GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists. It was highlighted that people with disabilities and elderly people would especially benefit from information in these settings. Schools were also suggested, including school newsletters, leaflets in schools and nurseries, and raising awareness through parent councils. Other local settings

suggested included buses/bus stops, gyms, pools, libraries, places of worship, foodbanks, supermarkets/shops, workplaces and community groups.

“Perhaps to be included in newsletters from schools as I'm sure most parents read them.”

“Information should be posted in GPs, Dentists, Hospitals, Schools, bigger supermarkets to target people who need the help!.”

“Hospital waiting rooms, particularly those clinics that deal with potentially disabling effects in the medium to long term. A flow chart for eligibility potential may also be helpful.”

In terms of communication methods for promotional material, email, social media and text received similar numbers of suggestions, while post, radio and TV adverts were mentioned less often. Some respondents highlighted the need for communications to be accessible, for example in audio format.

Some respondents suggested that promotions should be targeted at existing clients, advertising the additional supports they might be eligible for.

“Make it easier to find out what benefits current recipients may also be entitled to.”

“Can there be audio formats as I struggle to read due to poor concentration.”

“Through social media or promotional emails would help a lot. Also, different formats so people feel included.”

## 8. Overall experience with Social Security Scotland

The survey asked respondents to rate their overall experience with Social Security Scotland over the last 12 months. More than eight in ten (84%) rated their overall experience as very good or good while 5% rated it as very poor or poor (Table 39).

**Table 39: Overall experience with Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=1,177)

Response options	
Very good	58%
Good	26%
Neither poor nor good	8%
Poor	3%
Very poor	2%
Not applicable	2%

The survey asked respondents if they would like to make any suggestions for improvement or provide further comments about their experience with Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months.

Consistent with comments made elsewhere in the survey, respondents described long waits for their application to be processed and a lack of communication about the progress of their applications. Respondents also highlighted long call wait times.

“Takes too long to get through on phone line. And taking too long to process claims.”

“I don't understand how it can take so long to let people know where they stand, this lack of decision and information only adds to the stress and worry, and it leaves clients wondering where they will be, going forward, leaving them without the ability to make any plans or commitments.”

A few respondents suggested that a solution to these issues might be regular update messages to assure clients of the progress with their applications, or an online platform where clients log in to see details of their benefit, reminders and updates. To address call wait times, some responses recommended that more Social Security Scotland staff should be employed to take calls.

“It would be useful to have a platform to login to, similar to Universal Credit, where I can see relevant information to me and my daughter's accounts, which could also make it easier to contact someone if necessary.”

“Get more staff in so that applications are resolved in good time. It just worsens people's mental health to have it hanging over their heads and being clueless as to what will happen to them. Also there should be updates on the status of your case. Instead of us getting upset and trying to call by ourselves.”

Respondents spoke positively about their interactions with Social Security Scotland staff, describing them as empathetic, supportive and helpful.

“I have been treated with dignity, respect, compassion and understanding and for this I feel very grateful to your staff and the decisions that were made for me were done on a personal basis instead of a one size fits all category. Thank you.”

“I think they're doing a brilliant job and I'm astounded at how compassionate and respectful this service is.”

Respondents were grateful for the support received from Social Security Scotland and some described the positive impact payments have had on their lives.

“No suggestions at present. The Scottish child payment has really helped myself and my daughter over the last 12 months, it has at times made the decision between heating the house or having food that much easier and has had a severe impact in helping my mental health over the last 12 months. It's the help we really needed at such an uncertain time.”

“We appreciate your help and support. It's really helpful in the recent living costs crisis. Getting an extra amount of money without paying more for taxes which helps mentally and financially so many thanks.”

## 9. Discussion

**Table 40:** Summary of respondents' overall rating of different aspects of client experience

Overall experience of...	Very good or good
receiving payments from Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months	94%
telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances	57%
recent communication with Social Security Scotland staff	81%
Social Security Scotland over the last 12 months	84%

The Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 asked respondents to rate their overall experience of various aspects of the client journey. Table 40 summarises some of those overall ratings. A vast majority of respondents rated their overall experience of receiving payments (94%) and communication with staff (81%) as good or very good. This is consistent with findings from the [Client Survey 2022-2023](#) which is sent to everyone who has received a decision about an application. The Client Survey 2022-2023 found that almost nine in ten (88%) of respondents rated their overall experience with Social Security Scotland as good or very good. A vast majority of Client Survey respondents (94%) rated their overall experience of receiving payments as good or very good and a similar proportion (90%) said their overall experience with staff was good or very good.

Long wait times between application and decision, and a lack of communication during this time were recurring themes in the open text answers from a minority of Annual Client Panels Survey respondents. This issue has been identified in previous Social Security Scotland research. Respondents to the Client Survey 2022-2023 (over 34,000 people) were asked to suggest how Social Security Scotland could improve its service. Many commented that better and more frequent communication would be helpful. Around one in five wanted more updates on how their application was progressing. As a result of listening to clients' feedback, changes have been made. As of March 2024, [new text and email updates](#) have been introduced to let people know how their

applications for Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment are progressing. Social Security Scotland publishes monthly [statistics](#) on processing times per benefit.

More than half of respondents rated their overall experience of telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances positively. However, compared to other questions about overall experience, a smaller majority of respondents rated their experience of reporting a change of circumstances as good or very good (57%). This survey found that although a large majority (70%) of respondents found the process of reporting a change of circumstances to be easy, half (50%) of respondents found it anxiety-provoking. The process for telling Social Security Scotland about a change of circumstances has been refined in response to client feedback gathered through user research.

As set out in [Our Charter](#), Social Security Scotland remains committed to listen, learn and improve by encouraging and valuing feedback. Our Client Panels are key to this, ensuring the social security system works for the people of Scotland.

This was the first Annual Client Panels Survey. Social Security Scotland researchers will reflect on the effectiveness of this survey's design (including survey questions and approach to fieldwork) to inform the Annual Client Panels Survey for 2024. Repeating the survey annually also allows for baseline and trend data to be built up to assess change over time.

The results of this and future Annual Client Panels Surveys will be used alongside other evidence to feed into the Charter Measurement Framework which reports on Social Security Scotland's performance. The findings will also support Social Security Scotland's continuous improvement.

This survey was designed in consultation with teams across Social Security Scotland, including client services, communications, research, and policy colleagues. The findings have been shared with these teams and will inform their decision-making.



## Annex A: Client Panels demographics

As of 25 September 2024, we have 13,420 members on our Client Panels. Below is a summary of some information about the Client Panels. (Please note that percentages will not add up to precisely 100% where we do not have complete information available).

- 72% are women, 27% are men
- 1% self-identify as transgender
- 14% are aged 34 or under, 77% are aged 35-64, and 9% are over 65
- 87% are white, 10% are minority ethnic
- 86% live in urban areas, 14% live in rural areas
- 34% are carers
- 7% are care experienced
- 87% are heterosexual, 7% are gay/lesbian or bisexual
- 61% of members have a physical or mental health condition
- 5% of members have UK refugee status

## Annex B: Annual Client Panels Survey 2023 Respondents – Demographics

The Annual Client Panels Survey did not ask respondents to provide details of their age, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. Demographic data for survey respondents was taken from existing Client Panels records and was not available for all respondents. We held demographic/equalities data for a total of 1,100 respondents.

**Table B1: Age**

Column percentages (n=1,009)

Age	
16-24	1%
25-34	7%
35-44	29%
45-54	28%
55-64	26%
65+	10%

**Table B2: Ethnicity**

Column percentages (n=1,078)

Ethnicity	
White	88%
Minority Ethnic	10%
Prefer Not To Say	2%

**Table B3: Gender**

Column percentages (n=1,078)

Gender	
Woman	72%
Man	28%
Prefer not to say	1%
Other	<1%

**Table B4: Whether respondents self-identifies as trans**

Column percentages (n=1,070)

Trans status	
Yes	1%
No	97%
Prefer not to say	2%

**Table B5: Sexual orientation**

Column percentages (n=1,076)

Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual/Straight	89%
Gay/Lesbian	5%
Bisexual	1%
Prefer not to say	5%
In another way	<1%

**Table B6: Lasting physical or mental health condition**

Column percentages (n=1,073)

Sexual Orientation	
Yes	58%
No	39%
Prefer not to say	3%

**Table B7: Whether respondents have ever been granted refugee status to live in the UK**

Column percentages (n=1,077)

Refugee status	
Yes	5%
No	93%
Prefer not to say	2%

**Table B8: Whether respondents have ever been in care**

Column percentages (n=1,083)

Care experience	
Yes	6%
No	92%
Prefer not to say	2%

**Table B9: Whether respondents are carers**

Column percentages (n=936)

Carer status	
Yes	40%
No	56%
Prefer not to say	4%

**Table B10: SIMD Quintile**

Column percentages (n=1,069)

SIMD Quintile	
1	30%
2	29%
3	19%
4	14%
5	9%

## Annex D: Supplementary tables

**Table D1:** Respondents' scores for how much their payments helped them to pay for what they needed, per benefit group

Row percentages (n=5-517)

Benefit type	High	Medium	Low
Carer's Allowance Supplement	67%	25%	8%
Best Start Grant	71%	22%	7%
Best Start Foods	69%	29%	2%
Funeral Support Payment*	91%	9%	0%
Young Carer Grant*	50%	50%	0%
Job Start Payment*	60%	20%	20%
Scottish Child Payment	71%	25%	4%
Child Winter Heating Assistance / Child Winter Heating Payment	74%	22%	4%
Child Disability Payment	73%	22%	5%
Adult Disability Payment	63%	30%	8%
Winter Heating Payment	57%	37%	6%

\*Note, a small number of respondents (less than 20) belonged to this benefit group

**Table D2: Respondents' scores for how much their payments helped them to control their finances, per benefit group**

Row percentages (n=5-516)

Benefit type	High	Medium	Low
Carer's Allowance Supplement	60%	30%	9%
Best Start Grant	60%	31%	9%
Best Start Foods	69%	22%	8%
Funeral Support Payment*	82%	18%	0%
Young Carer Grant*	63%	25%	13%
Job Start Payment*	80%	0%	20%
Scottish Child Payment	64%	29%	7%
Child Winter Heating Assistance / Child Winter Heating Payment	70%	23%	7%
Child Disability Payment	69%	25%	6%
Adult Disability Payment	61%	29%	10%
Winter Heating Payment	53%	33%	14%

\*Note, a small number of respondents (less than 20) belonged to this benefit group

**Table D3: Respondents' scores for how much their payments had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing, per benefit group**  
Row percentages (n=5-515)

Benefit type	High	Medium	Low
Carer's Allowance Supplement	61%	28%	11%
Best Start Grant	66%	31%	3%
Best Start Foods	73%	25%	2%
Funeral Support Payment*	73%	27%	0%
Young Carer Grant*	50%	38%	13%
Job Start Payment*	40%	40%	20%
Scottish Child Payment	67%	28%	5%
Child Winter Heating Assistance / Child Winter Heating Payment	74%	20%	7%
Child Disability Payment	71%	22%	7%
Adult Disability Payment	62%	27%	11%
Winter Heating Payment	51%	33%	16%

\*Note, a small number of respondents (less than 20) belonged to this benefit group



**Table D4: Whether respondents experienced problems with their payment(s) in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=1090)

Response options	
No	90%
Yes	7%
Can't remember / Don't know	3%

**Table D5: Respondents' satisfaction with how Social Security Scotland handled the problem with their payment**  
Column percentages (n=73)

Response options	
Very satisfied	18%
Satisfied	28%
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	11%
Unsatisfied	13%
Very unsatisfied	24%
Can't remember / Don't know	3%
Not applicable	4%

**Table D6: Whether respondents applied for extra support as a result of receiving either Adult or Child Disability Payment**  
Column percentages (n=630)

Response options	
No	63%
Yes	31%
Can't remember	5%

**Table D7: Whether respondents had told Social Security Scotland about any change(s) in circumstances in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=1020)

Response options	
No	71%
Yes	24%
Can't remember	5%

**Table D8: Whether respondents Social Security Scotland had confirmed that the change reported had been processed**  
Column percentages (n=243)

Response options	
Yes	57%
No	43%

**Table D9: Whether respondents considered telling Social Security Scotland about any changes in circumstances**  
Column percentages (n=767)

Response options	
No	83%
Yes	10%
Can't remember	7%

**Table D10: Whether respondents tried to contact Social Security Scotland in the last 12 months**  
Column percentages (n=1168)

Response options	
No	56%
Yes	38%
Can't remember	7%

**Table D11: Most recent method used to contact Social Security Scotland**  
Column percentages (n=306)\*

Response	
By phoning Social Security Scotland's helpline	76%
By webchat	29%
Letter	3%
Other	3%
Phone appointment	2%
In person – at an arranged venue or Social Security Scotland	0%
In person – home visit	0%
Video call appointment	0%

\*Respondents could choose more than one answer

**Table D12: How respondents accessed webchat**  
Column percentages (n=88)\*

Response	
Phone	68%
Laptop / PC	31%
Tablet	8%

\*Respondents could chose more than one answer

**Table D13: Where respondents saw or heard an advert for Social Security Scotland benefits**

Column percentages (n=270)\*

Response	% Total
On TV	63%
On radio	27%
Online	46%
In a newspaper	7%

\*Respondents could chose more than one answer

**Table D14: Social media pages where respondents saw promotional information**

Column percentages (n=86)\*

Response options	
Facebook	84%
X (formerly Twitter)	19%
Instagram	5%
LinkedIn	2%
Other	3%

\*Respondents could chose more than one answer

**Table D15: Public places where respondents saw promotional information**  
Column percentages (n=127)\*

Response options	
GP surgery	72%
Health centre / Hospital	45%
Library	26%
Community centre	22%
Other	6%

\*Respondents could chose more than one answer

## How to access background or source data

### The data collected for this report:

- ☐ are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- ☐ are available via an alternative route
- ☒ may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact [ResearchRequests@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:ResearchRequests@socialsecurity.gov.scot) for further information.
- ☐ cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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