Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Annual Report and Analysis of Building Control Performance Indicators

Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group Report: 2014/15

March 2016
Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group
Department for Communities and Local Government

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Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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Introduction

Developing the Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group's work in support of Building Control Service delivery

Welcome to the latest Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group ("the Group") Report for the survey conducted during 2015.

As you maybe aware, the primary purposes of the Group are to monitor and review the effectiveness of the Performance Standards and Guidance used by Building Control Bodies, to collect performance based evidence related to those Standards such that assessment can be made that current and future performance outcomes will meet the needs of customers and provide information to support self-improvement, and to report annually to all interested parties.

The Group is a sub-committee of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee for England and the Building Regulations Advisory Committee for Wales. Both Committees have seen and approved the publication of this report.

The 2014/15 survey analysis constitutes the main purpose and body of this Report and I want to thank all those Building Control Bodies who submitted their data using the surveymonkey tool, used for the second year running. I am pleased to report that there were 252 respondents to this year's survey, an increase from last year and the highest received since the survey started. It was encouraging to see an increase in returns from Local Authorities in England and Approved Inspectors but the number of returns from Local Authorities in Wales stayed the same. Unfortunately not every respondent from last year's survey made a return this year but it was encouraging to see some Building Control Bodies submitting a return for the first time.

The Report sets out the key areas where performance is satisfactory as well as those that require improvement. The summary of findings on page 12 provides a comprehensive overview and compares this year's data with the previous three years. You will see, as highlighted in the previous two years, there are still concerns about the Age Profile data which continues to show a high level of staff being over 55; creating potential of a serious shortfall in being able to replace older staff heading towards retirement. It was disappointing to see an increase in this age group after a slight improvement last year.

As last year we have included in the Report separated data tables for Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities as well as time series covering four years where possible. We hope you find this information helpful. We will continue to review the information the Report provides to ensure the information provided is still relevant and of benefit to Building Control Bodies and other interested parties.

We are once again extremely grateful to the Building Control Alliance (BCA), its constituent members Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and The Association of Consultant Approved Inspectors (ACAI), CICAIR Limited and others who have contributed to the work and data which forms the basis of this report, and to the Group's Secretariat for carrying out the analysis and producing this report.

For this year's survey there have been minor changes to the 'Complaints Handling Processes' survey questions and a new section on 'Experience of Staff' has been added. The Group will continue to review whether additions and/or clarifications are needed to the current performance indicators to reflect the queries that have arisen during the analysis of the 2014/15 data. However, the Group informed Building Control Bodies in April 2015 that a new indicator will be included in the next survey period 2015/16 which will ask Approved Inspectors to provide a breakdown of work in England and Wales. There will be no other significant changes for the next survey period except for clarifications and revised guidance to assist Building Control Bodies in completing their survey returns and to hopefully improve even further the responses.

I would like to place on record my thanks to all the individual members of the Group, who are unremunerated, for their commitment of considerable time and expertise, and where appropriate to their supporting organisations.

Building Control is an important public service which is increasingly being put under the spotlight, and this year's report illustrates once again how well you deliver this service notwithstanding scope for improvement; I know you will find it interesting and informative, and I commend it to you.

Alan Crane CBE, FCIOB, C.Eng, FICE, FCMI.
Chair, Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group

Data collection process and reporting

Data were submitted to the Group's Secretariat from March until September 2015, using the surveymonkey tool for the second year running. All Building Control Bodies were invited to complete the survey. The analysis of the submissions received has been carried out by the Group's Secretariat and involved four stages of work:

- data preparation – downloading the data from surveymonkey into a single database.
- data validation - this was focused on resolving obvious errors and inconsistencies.
- data analysis - this involved calculating measures of the distribution of each indicator (median, quartiles and deciles - see page 8 for a technical explanation of these measures), as well as other statistical manipulation of the data so that they could be presented graphically in the report.
- reporting - finally, this report was produced to present the results of the analysis and to enable the Group to publish the report so that participants can identify their comparative position on the indicators and help inform policy development in the future.

The Data Annex will be available from LABC Limited and CICAIR Limited for Building Control Bodies to use to be able to compare their performance with other Building Control Bodies.

Confidentiality

The Group was keen to ensure that all organisations could submit data without fear that their data could be identified. To meet this requirement, we have done our best to ensure that no individual organisation can be identified from this report. We have done this by:

- removing all reference to organisation names
- removing or aggregating any data that would enable readers to identify any participant.

Statistics presented

In this report the main statistics presented a mean, a median or a ratio.

The mean is calculated as the sum of all response values divided by the number of responses; this average can be skewed by a small number of ‘outlying’ values which are much higher or lower than the majority of results. The median value is the middle value in the distribution of scores, and therefore in some cases provides a better representation of a ‘typical’ Building Control Body.

Some performance indicators are calculated as a ratio of another measure, so that results are not unduly influenced by a few large Building Control Bodies; for example the complaints performance indicators is calculated as the number of complaints received per building control application. In these cases this percentage is calculated for each respondent, and the ‘mean proportion’ is the mean percentage achieved by Building Control Bodies. This is rather than calculating overall total complaints received by respondents divided by total applications received.

On measures where the majority of responses take the same value, the median is not the best measure. For example the median value of staff turnover is zero, because over half of respondents had not replaced a member of staff in the 12 month period. In this case the mean gives a more accurate reflection, with the mean staff turnover being 5.6%.

The main body of the report shows the distribution of the results from all participants, and makes use of certain measures of the distribution of results. These are:

Measure	Explanation
Lowest decile	10% of results fall below this figure
Lower quartile	25% of results fall below this figure
Median	This is the mid-point - half of results fall below this figure
Upper quartile	75% of results fall below this figure
Highest decile	90% of results fall below this figure

The measures of distribution are calculated on a purely mathematical basis - we have not made assumptions about the 'polarity' of indicators (ie whether a high figure is good or bad).

Please note that ‘average’ has often been used instead of ‘mean’ in the text.

Limitations

In analysing these results, the following should be borne in mind:

- Whilst we have made efforts to ensure the validity of the data, our work in this regard has been limited, and the data are taken from unaudited returns made by individual participants.

- Whilst the number of responses received is reasonable, and up on previous years, the overall response rate is about a half of all Buillding Control Bodies. There is therefore the possibility of 'response bias' - that is to say that the responses received are not representative of the population as a whole.

- Readers should be aware that some Building Control Bodies' figures are derived from relatively few responses, which could affect the results. This is more likely where there are small sample sizes.

Participation in the 2014/15 (2013/14) [1] survey

Returns were received from 252 separate organisations, comprising 86 approved inspectors, 151 local authorities in England and 15 local authorities in Wales. This represents a response rate of around 94% (89%) for approved inspectors, 43% (41%) for local authorities in England and 68% (73%) for local authorities in Wales.

The overall response rate is higher than last year and is the highest received since the survey started. This included returns from 35 organisations for the first time, comprising of 13 approved inspectors, 21 local authorties in England and 1 local authority in Wales. A detailed breakdown of the total responses can be seen in the table below:

	Local Authorities	Approved Inspectors	Total
2007/8	107	39	146
2008/9	68	36	104
2009/10	60	36	96
2010/11	45	40	85
2011/12	146	53	199
2012/13	82	59	141
2013/14	146 (130 England & 16 Wales)	76	222
2014/15	166 (151 England & 15 Wales)	86	252

Of the 252 respondents who returned this year's survey, as in previous years, not every respondent returned data for every part of the survey. However all respondents answered the Process Management Performance Indicator. The table below sets out the response rate for data used in the calculation of the Performance Indicators. There has been an increase in respondents for each of the parts of the survey. Each section of the report also states the number of respondents to that part of the survey.

[1] Percentages in brackets refer to the 2013/14 survey.

Performance Indicator		Number of responses 2014/15 (2013/14) [2]
Process Management		252 (222) Respondents, 182 (158) with system in place and 70 (64) without
Complaints		225 (202) respondents, 134 (117) recived at least one complaint and 91 (85) recived none
Amount of Building Control Work		217 (195)
Building Control Staff	People & Skills	211 (197)
	Experience of Staff	209 (---)
	Specialist Experience	197 (191)
	Age & Gender	208 (196)
	Respect for People:	
	Staff Traiing	188 (172)
	Sickness Absence	193 (169)
	Staff Turnover	209 (191)
	Investors in People	200 (177)

[2] Figures in brackets refer to the 2013/14 survey.

Performance Indicators 2014/15 (2013/14, 2012/2013 & 2011/12)

Performance Indicator Name	Description	Mean Score	Median Score	Year of Survey
Process Management	Rating out of 100 based on coverage and operation of management system. 39 Building Control Bodies in 2014/15 and 48 in 2013/14. scored maximum of 100	82.1 (84.5) (86.1) (84.9)	90 (90) (90) (88)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Complaints	Number of complaints received as a proportion of building control applications	0.26% (0.21%) (0.37%) (0.42%)	0.09% (0.08%) (0.11%) (0.27%)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Staff turnover	Number of direct employees replaced during the year divided by number of direct employees	5.6% (4.3%) (4.0%) (2.9%)	-	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Sickness Absence	Average number of days lost per employee	3.7 (3.1) (2.7) (3.5)	1.5 (1.5) (1.6) (2.3)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Training	Average number of training days given per direct employee	3.2 (3.2) (4.2) (3.8)	2.3 (2.3) (2.6) (2.6)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Investors in People	Number of direct employees covered by Investors in People commitment & recognition	Yes 58	No 142	2014/15
Staff make-up:				
Proportion under 24	Employees aged under 24 as a proportion of workforce	4.0% (3.6%) (2.6%) (3.2%)	0% (0%) (0%) (0%)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Proportion over 55	Employees aged over 55 as a proportion of workforce	26.0% (16.8%) (24.0%) (22.6%)	24% (12%) (20%) (20%)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12
Women	Female employees as a proportion of workforce	26.3% (25.2%) (24.6%) (24.0%)	25% (25%) (25%) (25%)	2014/15 2013/14 2012/13 2011/12

Summary of findings

- 252 Building Control Bodies participated this year, the highest number since the survey started and a 14% increase on the 222 who provided data last year. Of these, 35 (14%) respondents took part in the survey for the first time.
- Performance in the Process Management Performance Indicator for all areas required under the standards was good, with the majority of respondents covering 12 or more of the 14 areas questioned. Three areas were identified as having possible room for improvement; development of an inspection framework, checks on dormant jobs, and certification before completion. [3]
- Responses to the Complaints Handling Process Performance Indicator showed complaints rates were very low, with the average Building Control Body receiving only between two and three complaints in the last 12 months. This suggests that in the vast majority of cases, Building Control Bodies are providing a good service to customers.
- However Building Control Bodies did not perform as well in terms of dealing with complaints that did arise. On average 29% of complaints were resolved in whole or in part in the customer's favour. 12% of complaints were sufficiently severe to be escalated to CICAIR Limited (for approved inspectors) or the Local Government Ombudsman (for local authorities) up from 9% per cent last year.
- The Building Control Work indicator clearly shows that, whilst domestic alterations, extensions and improvements made up on average 74% per cent of applications, this represented only 61% of fees, while for other types of project the percentage of fees was higher than the percentage of projects.
- Responses to the Building Control Staff questions shows another slight decrease in the skill level of Building Control Bodies workforces. On average 55% of staff were fully qualified with corporate membership of relevant professional bodies, down from 57% in 2013/14 and 59% in 2012/13, but the same percentage as in 2011/12. The weakest area of specialist experience was acoustics with 4.5% of staff having this experience a decrease of 0.5% from last year.
- The Age profile of Building Control Bodies suggests that Building Control Bodies will face significant problems replacing experienced staff as their workforce approaches state pension age. Twenty six per cent (26%) of the average Building Control Bodies' work force are aged over 55, compared to 12% who are under 30 and 4% under 24.
- Over the past year slightly more Building Control Bodies lost employees than gained, but the majority of respondents reported no change from last year. This suggests another slight reduction in the size of Building Control Body workforces over the last 12 months.
- Performance on the Respect for People indicators is roughly in line with last year's survey.

[3] Provide a process to allow certification before completion (Occupation Certificate) on the basis that recorded minor issues will be closed out.

Analysis

1. Process Management of Building Control Compliance Operations

The survey asked if there was a process or quality management system in place, and if so whether it was accredited and audited by an external Quality Management System or an International Organisation for Standardization company or by their own system or not accredited or audited. It then asked a series of yes/no questions within the five sections of building control compliance and process management:

- development stages
- resource management
- process management
- customer management
- record keeping

The full detailed questions can be found in figures 1.1.1 to 1.1.5 overleaf.

Numbers of “yes” responses to compliance management questions:

Figure 1.1.1 Development Stages

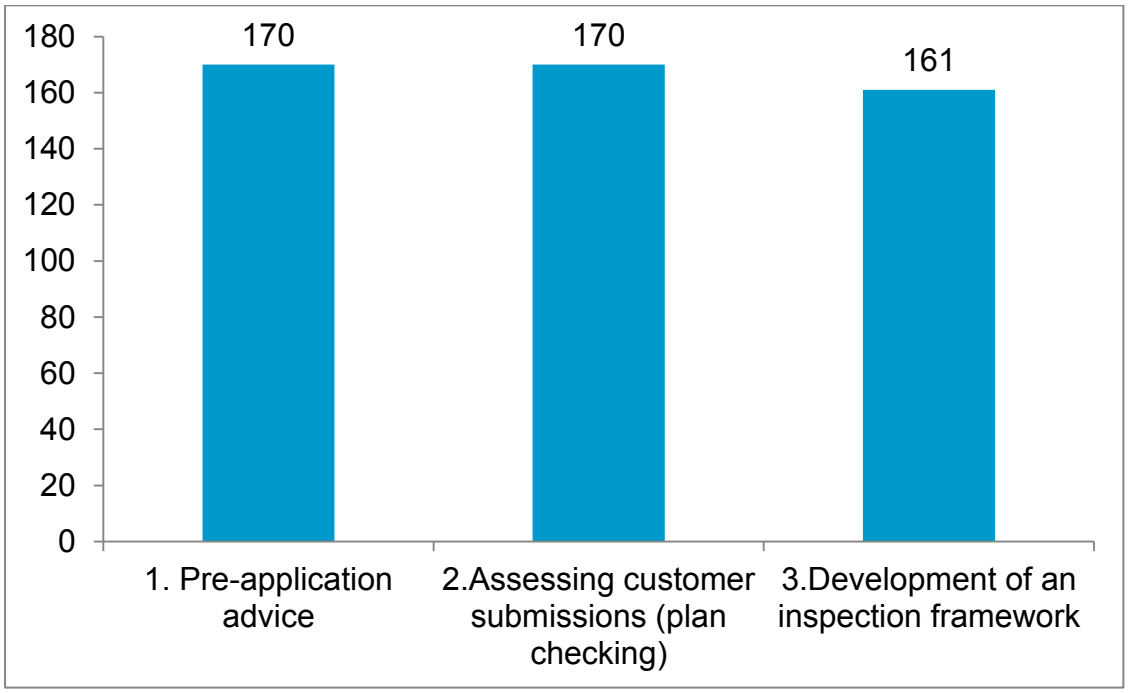


Figure 1.1.2 Resource Management

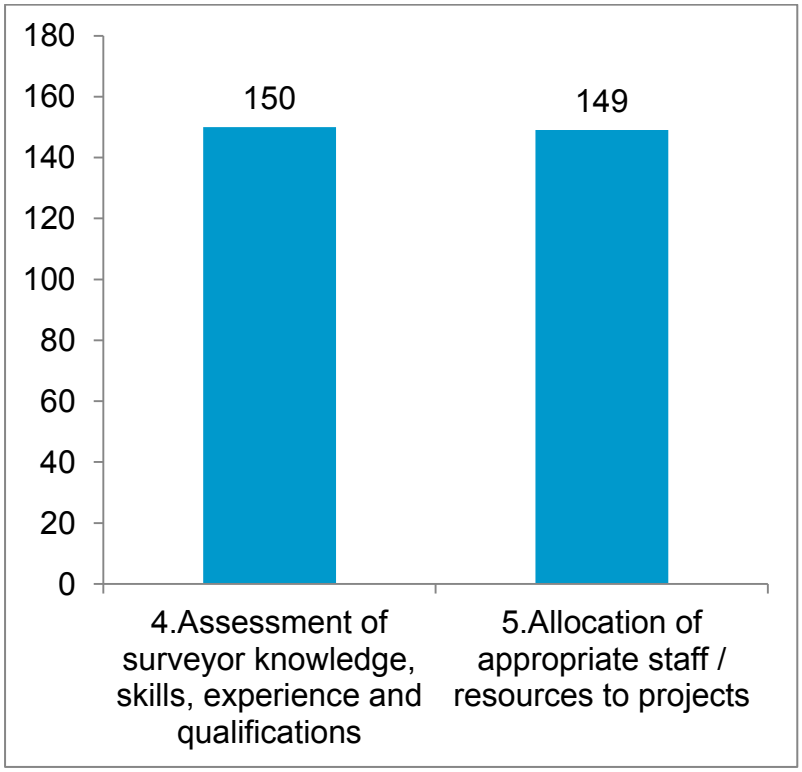


Figure 1.1.3 Process Management

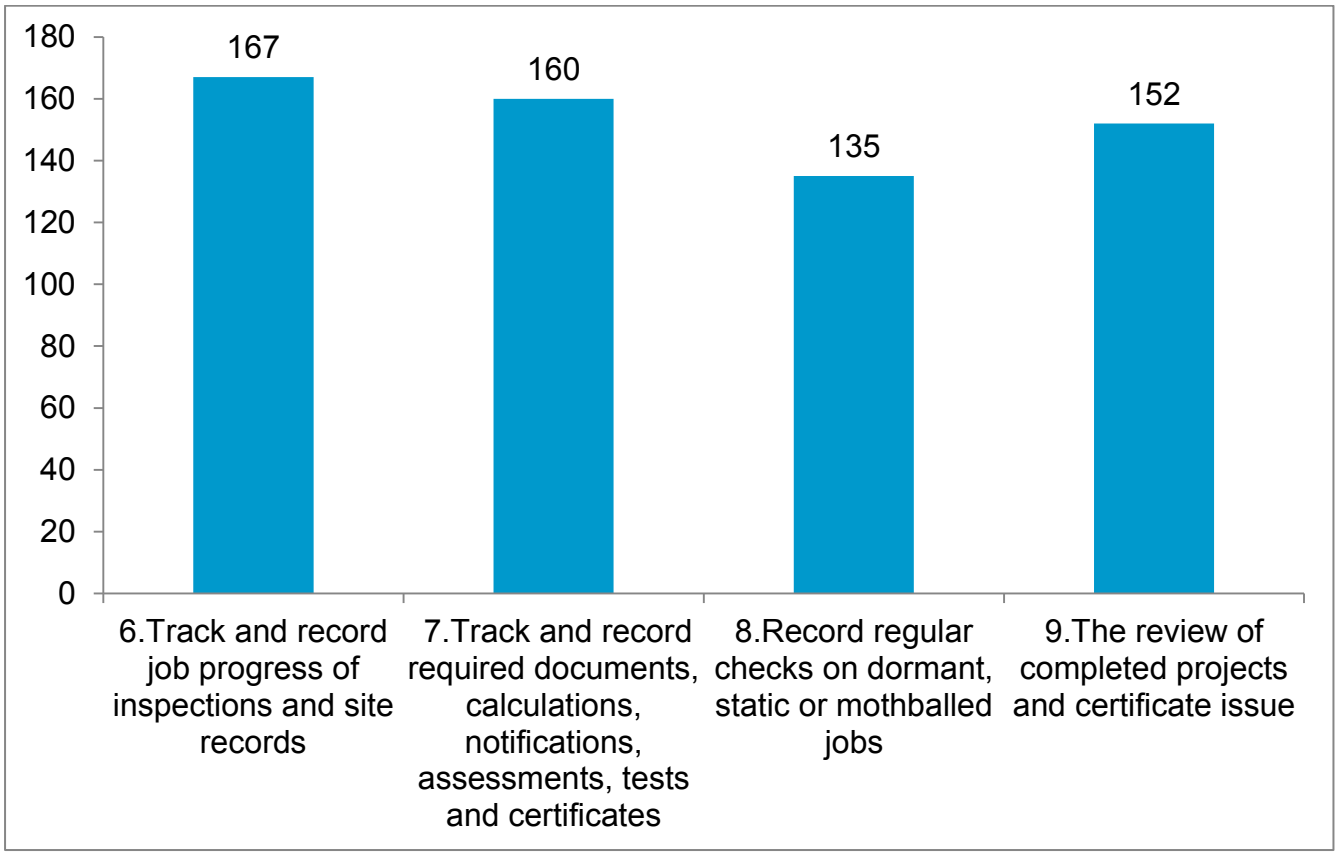


Figure 1.1.4 Customer Management

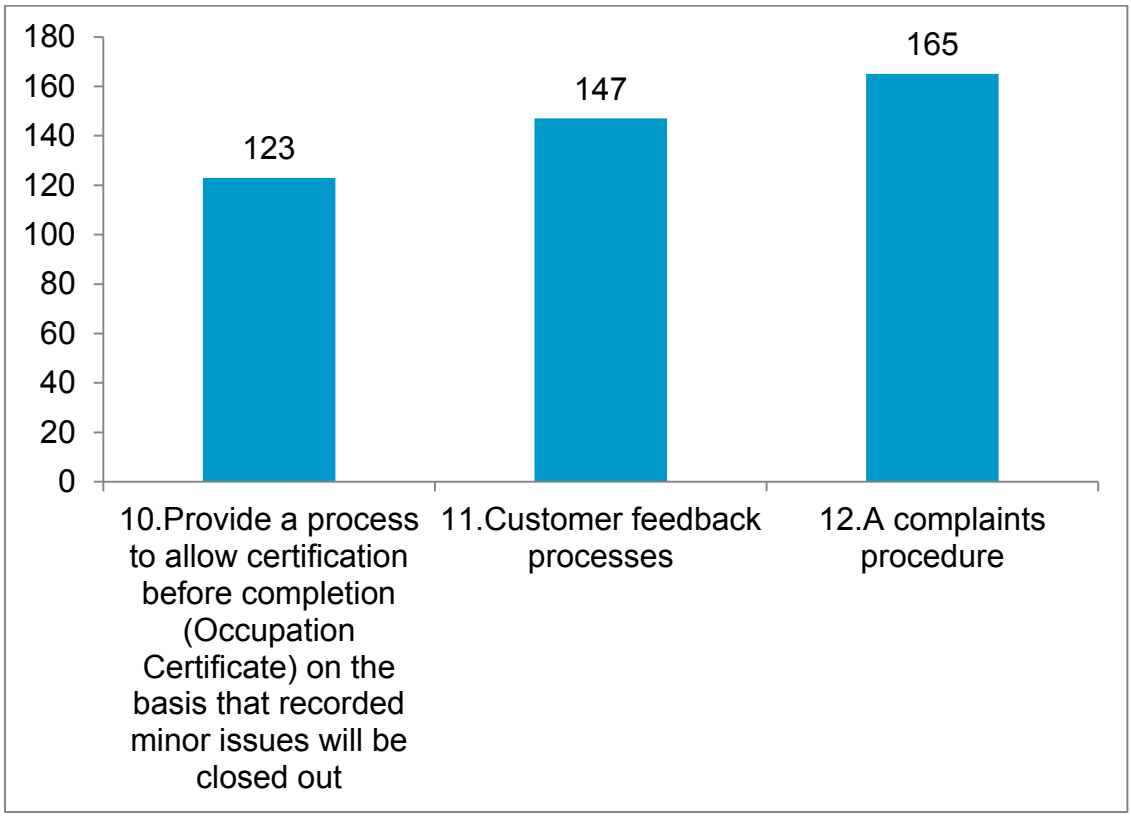
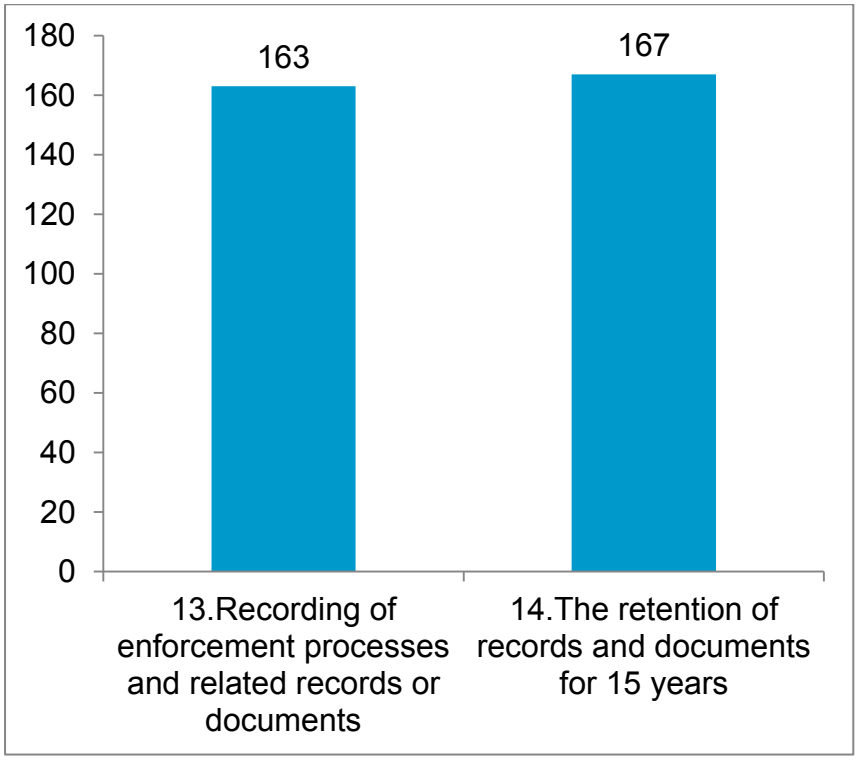


Figure 1.1.5 Recod Keeping



Based on data from 182 respondents

Based on the responses to the 16 questions a score out of 100 was calculated for the Building Control Body, with 6 points awarded for each 'yes' answer and an additional 10 points if the system was externally accredited rather than internally.

Of the 252 returns received, 182 had a process or quality management system in place. Of these, 50% (57%) were externally accredited, 36% (43%) had their own system and 14% were not accredited.

The following table shows high 'yes' response rates for questions which are shown in more detail in figures 1.1.1 to 1.1.5 overleaf:

Over 90% 'yes'	5 questions	1, 2, 6, 12, 13 & 14
Over 80% 'yes'	6 questions	4, 5, 7, 9, & 11

The three questions that had the lowest 'yes' response rate were:

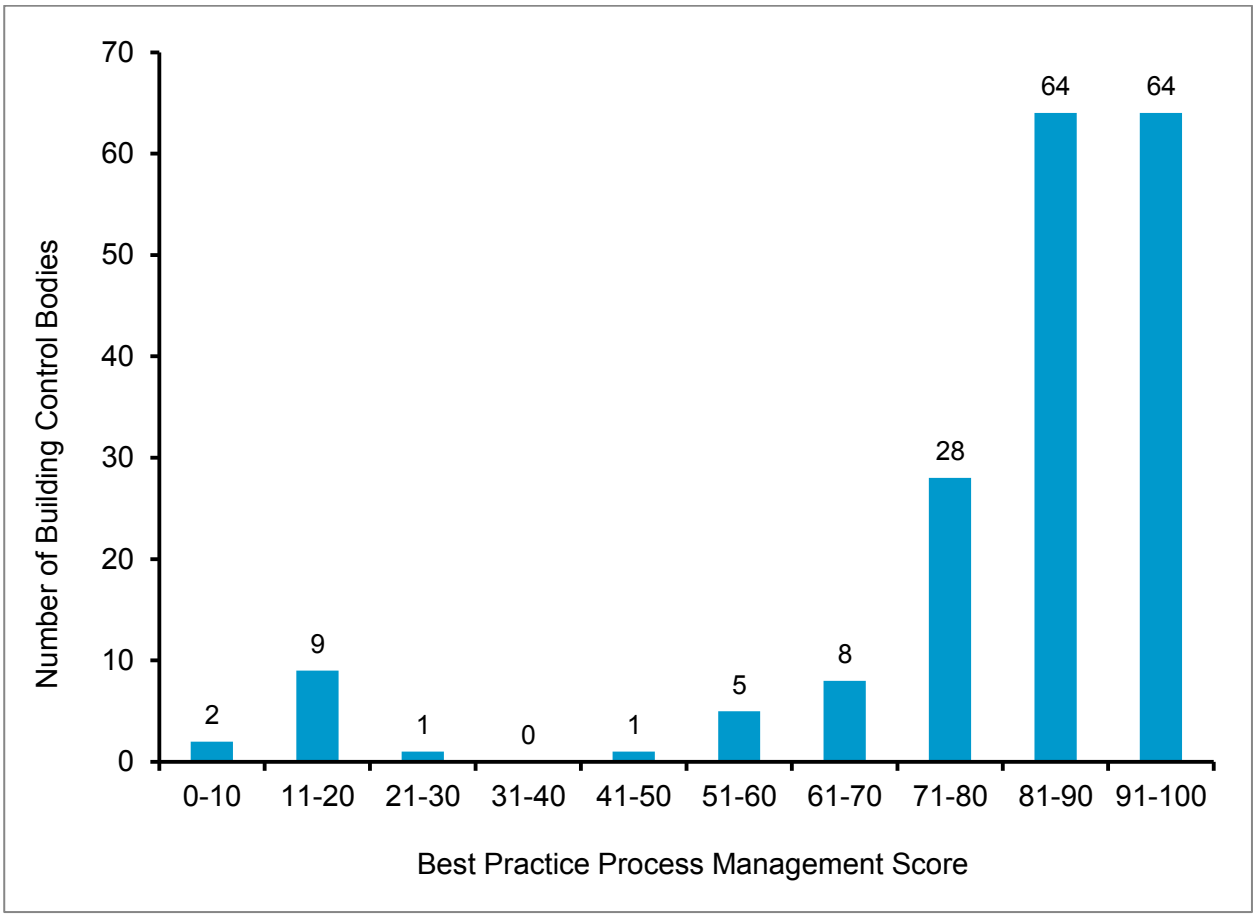
- certification before completion[4] (68%)
- record of checks on dormant jobs (74%).
- development of an inspection framework (75%)

Even the lowest response rate to any of the questions was more than two thirds 'yes' answers.

Looking at the Performance Indicator scores for the Building Control Bodies, 39 (21%) of the 182 achieved a score of 100 which means that their system is externally accredited and audited and covers all of the points questioned regarding process management and building control compliance. This shows a decline on the 30% for 2013/14. This is due to the extra option this year of ‘not accredited or audited’ for the question asking how the organisation’s Process Management System or Quality Managment question is accredited and/or audited. 26 (14%) Building Control Bodies replied yes to this question which would have given them a lower score than in previous years.

[4] Provide a process to allow certification before completion (Occupation Certificate) on the basis that recorded minor issues will be closed out.

Figure 1.2 - Distribution of process management scores:



Based on data from 158 respondents

As in previous years the scores are skewed towards the higher end of the range, with the vast majority achieving a score of over 70.

The median score was 90, and the mean was 84.5 due to a small number of very low scores.

A score of 90 corresponds to an internal system covering all 14 of the areas questioned, and a score of 88 corresponds to an externally accredited system covering 12 out of 14 of the areas questioned.

In general 'yes' responses were high for all the questions with three areas which could be improved; certification before completion (68%) down from 72% last year, checks on dormant jobs (74%) down from 78%% last year and development of an inspection framework (75%) down from 86% last year. This is overall a very good performance for the Process Management Performance Indicator with all areas having over 65% response rate.

92% of Approved Inspectors responded yes to this question compared to 62% of Local Authorities. However, the majority of both Approved Inspectors (78%) and Local Authorities (64%) who did respond yes had a score of between 81 and 100.

2. Complaints Handling Processes

The questions to this part of the survey were revised for 2014/15 and although similar are not all directly comparable to previous years' surveys.

Respondents were asked to state the total number of customer complaints they had dealt with in the last 12 months. They were then asked to state how many of these were:

- closed and resolved in whole or in part in the customer's favour
- referred to the Local Government Ombudsman or CICAIR Limited

They were also asked to state how many of these complaints were either Domestic or Non-domestic work and Technical or Non-technical related, e.g. customer services. To account for the differing sizes of Building Control Bodies, information from part 3 of the survey is used to calculate these measures as a proportion of total building control applications.

Out of 225 respondents to this section of the survey, 134 (60%) responded that they had received at least one complaint in the last 12 months. We cannot be sure whether other respondents had received no complaints or did not have the information available, so only the 225 Building Control Bodies with complaints are included in our analysis. As such the data presented is likely to be an underestimate of the prevalence of complaints; nevertheless, the rate of complaints is very low.

Figure 2.1 below presents the mean proportion of complaints as a percentage of applications. These figures are very low. The complaints between technical and non-technical issues were of a similar proportion. However there were more complaints in relation to domestic projects than non domestic.

As the number of complaints reported was typically very low care must be taken when calculating 'percentage of complaints resolved in whole or in part in the customer's favour'. In many cases the percentage is based on just one complaint; due to this there is a large variation in performance.

The number of complaints reported was similar for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities with means of 0.24% and 0.27% respectively. The majority of complaints for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities were in relation to domestic projects.

Figure 2.1 – Complaints as a proportion of building control applications

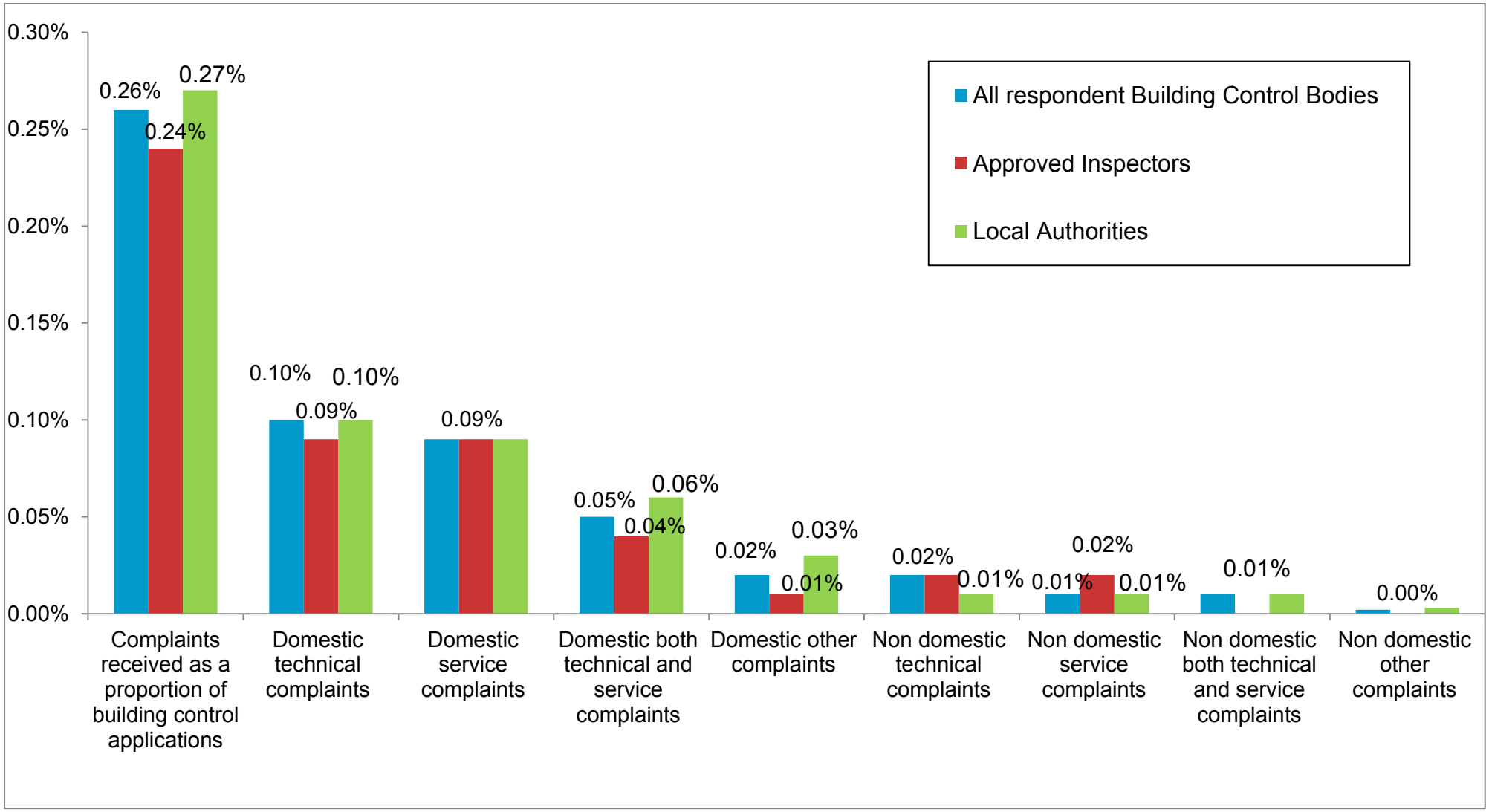


Figure 2.2 below shows that on average 12% of the complaints received from the Building Control Bodies that responded were serious enough to be escalated to an official body. Of the 756 complaints recorded, 57 were escalated to an official body. The percentages for both Approved Inspectors and local authorities were also similar.

Note: the percentages are arithmetical, so do not sum to 100%. They would have to be weighted to do so.

Figure 2.2 - Mean Proportions of Resolutions of Complaints.

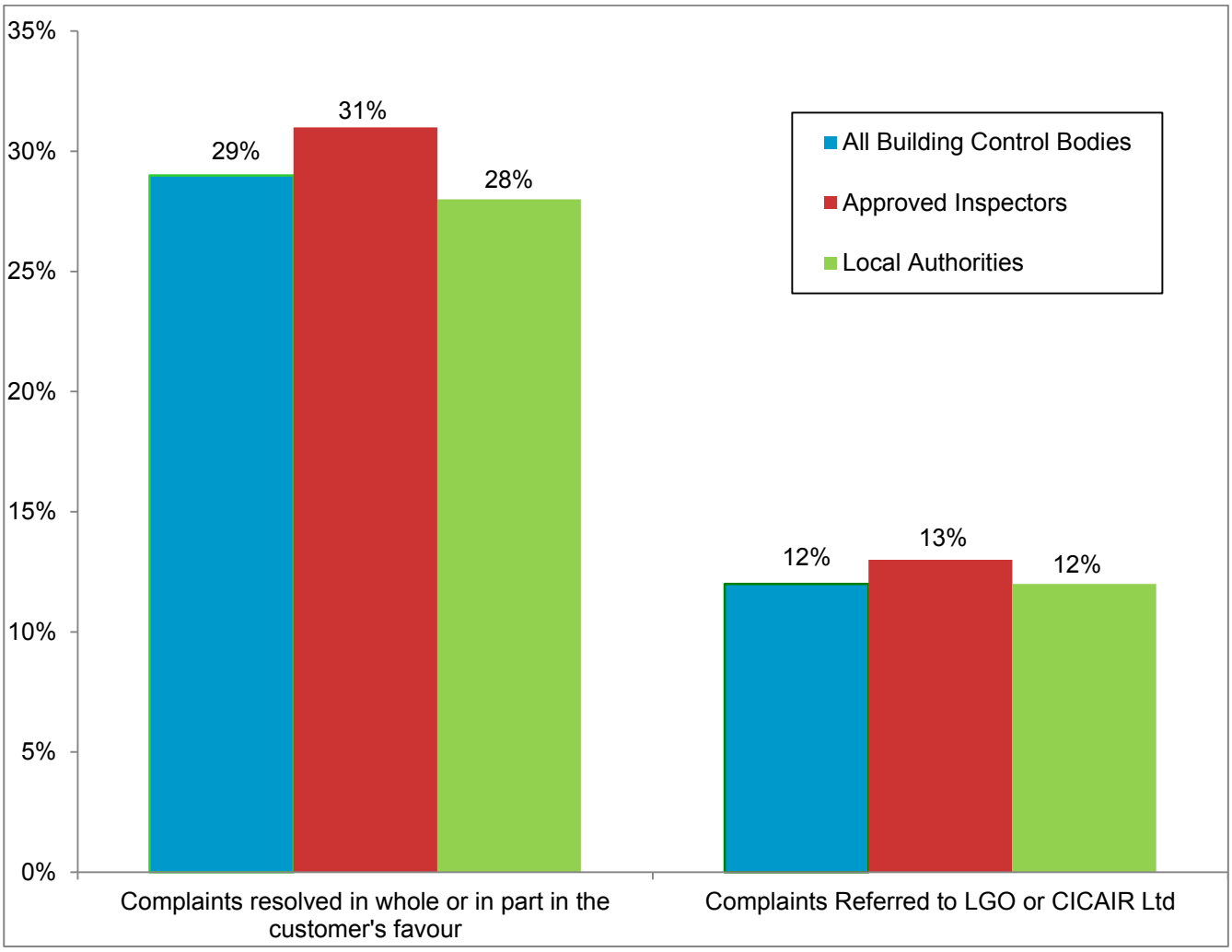


Figure 2.3 – Complaints closed but not resolved in favour of the customer

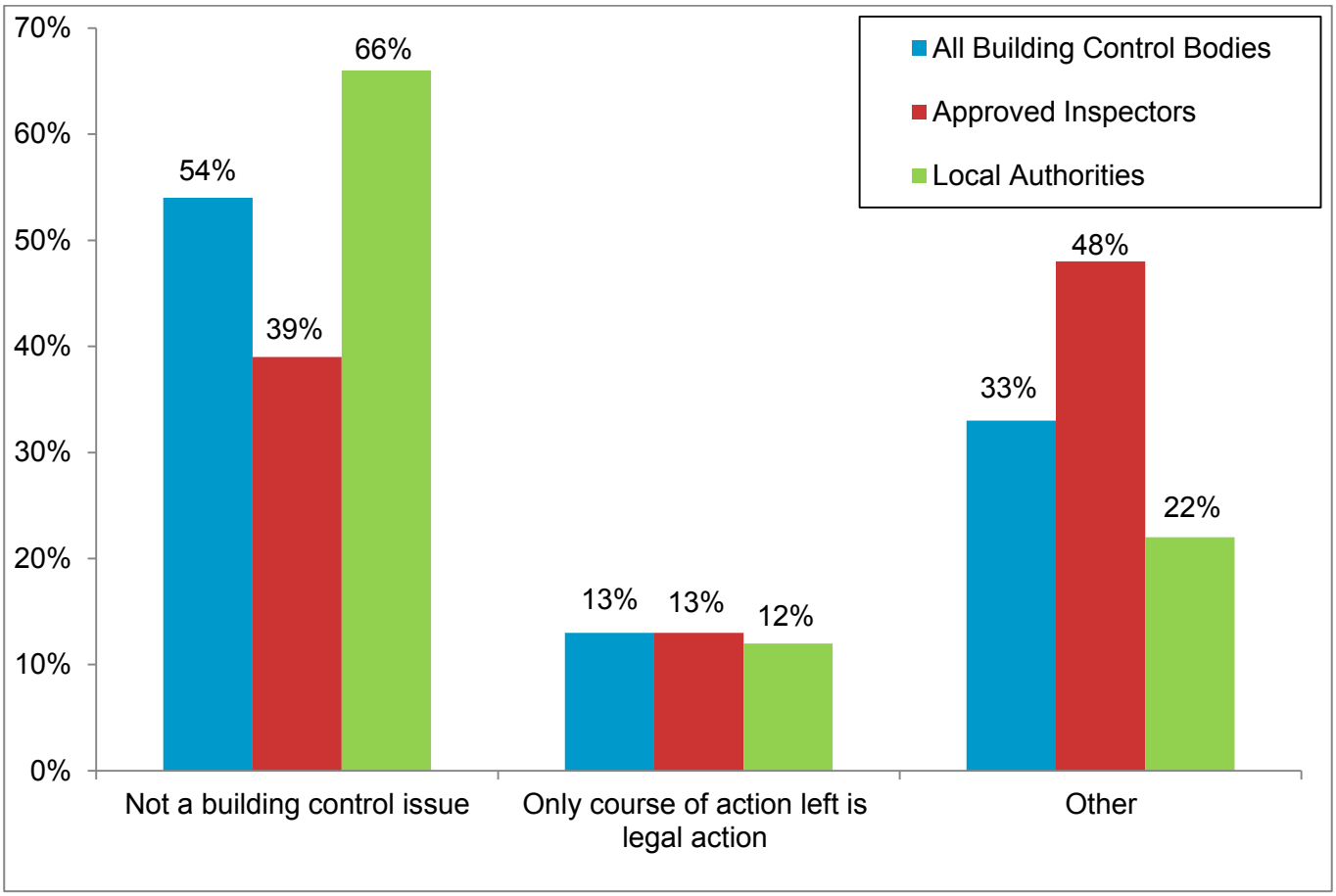


Figure 2.3 shows the percentage of complaints that were closed and not resolved in favour of the customer. For all Building Control Bodies the majority (54%) of complaints closed but not resolved in favour of the customer were not about building control issues. However, for local authorties the percentage was higher (66%) and for Approved Inspectors lower (39%). The number of complaints where the only course of action left was legal action was similar for both Approved Inspectors (13%) and Local Authorties (12%). For Approved Inspectors the majority (48%) of complaints that could not be resolved were for other issues.

3. Breakdown of Building Control Work

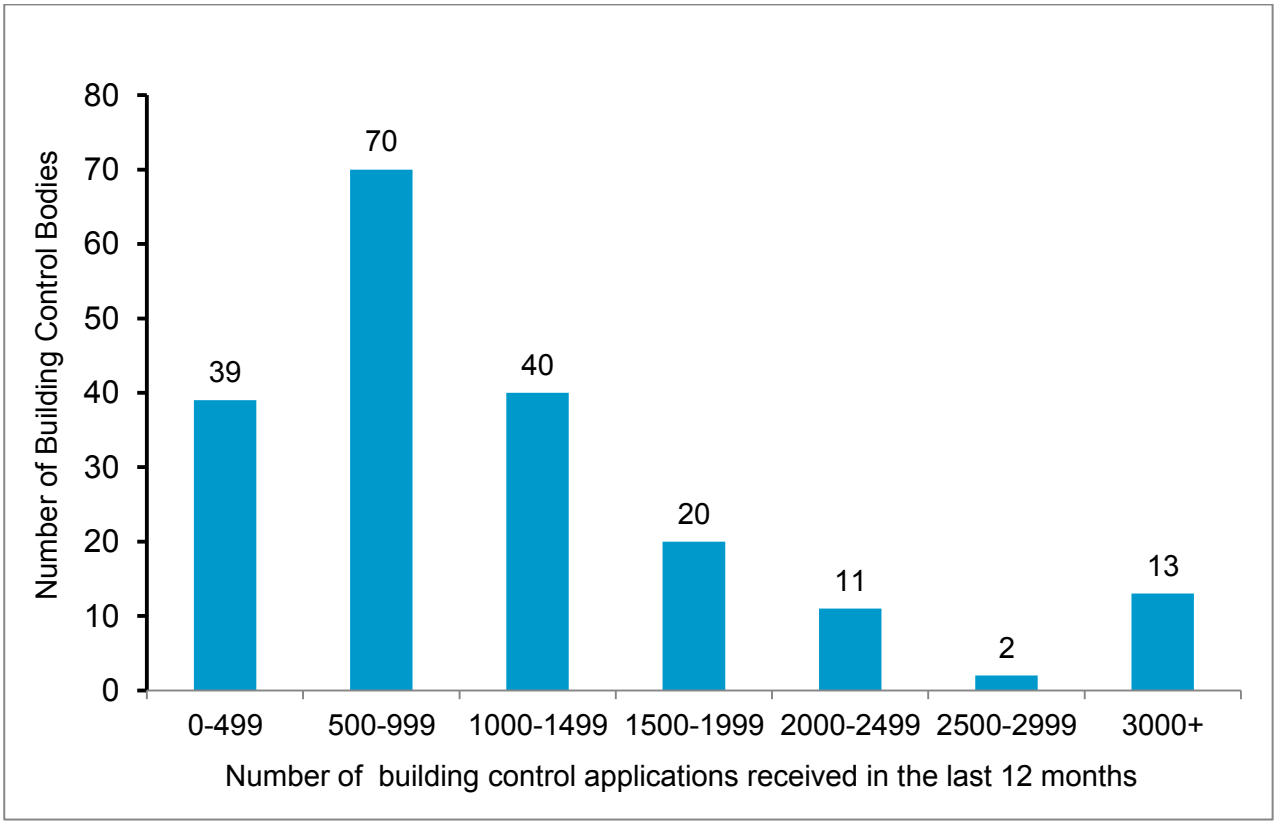
The survey asked for the number of building control applications received in the last 12 months, how many of these had started construction and of those, how many were still incomplete. The total amount building control fees charged in the last 12 months was also asked for.

Finally, the breakdown of building control projects in terms of percentage of total projects was asked for, as well as the percentage of the total fees that were charged for that type of project. There were 6 types of projects defined:

- new build homes including new homes created by conversion or change of use
- all other domestic work e.g. domestic alterations, extensions & improvements
- new build commercial/retail/industrial/hospitality
- all other commercial/retail/industrial/hospitality e.g. alterations or extensions
- new build education/health/justice/community/public building
- all other education/health/justice/community/public building alterations & extensions

Of the 252 returns received, 195 provided a figure for the number of building control applications received in the last 12 months. The distribution of these results is displayed in figure 3.1 below. In total 284,210 applications were received by respondents to the survey.

Figure 3.1 – Distribution of Total Number of Projects by Building Control Body



Based on data from 195 respondents

The median number of applications was 866 (859), and the mean was higher, at 1,310 (1,240) due to a small number of Building Control Bodies having a very large number of applications received. This can be seen from the distribution in figure 3.1: 13 (14) Building Control Bodies received 3,000 or more applications. The vast majority of Building Control Bodies received less than 2,000 applications in the last 12 months the same as last year's survey.

The majority of Approved Inspectors, 24 (34%), who responded received between 0 and 499 applications while the majority of Local Authorities, 55 (44%) received between 500 and 999 applications. There were significantly more Approved Inspectors, 11 (15%) than Local Authorities, 3 (2%) that received 3,000 or more applications the same as last year.

The median number of projects which had started construction was 653 (612) which is 75% (72%) of the total number of applications received. On average, 53% (50%) of these projects which started construction in the last 12 months were still uncompleted. These figures have all slightly increased from last year.

Overall the mean building control fee charged per application was £581 (£621). However as figure 3.2 below shows, average fees varied depending on the size of Building Control Body. These calculations include data from the 195 returns that had responded with answers to both the questions required.

As the chart shows, by far the highest average fees were earned by Building Control Bodies that received less than 500 applications in the year 2014/15, the same as the two previous years. Average fees charged then fluctuate, with the lowest fees for Building Control Bodies that received between 2500 and 2999 applications at £333 a change from last year which was 1500 and 1999 applications at £420.

The average fees for all categories were higher for Approved Inspectors than Local Authorities as shown above. However, a few Building Control Bodies were unable to provide application and/or fee information due to commercial reasons and difficulties in extracting the information from their computer systems.

Figure 3.2 – Average fee per Building Control Application

Figure 3.3 – Breakdown of Projects

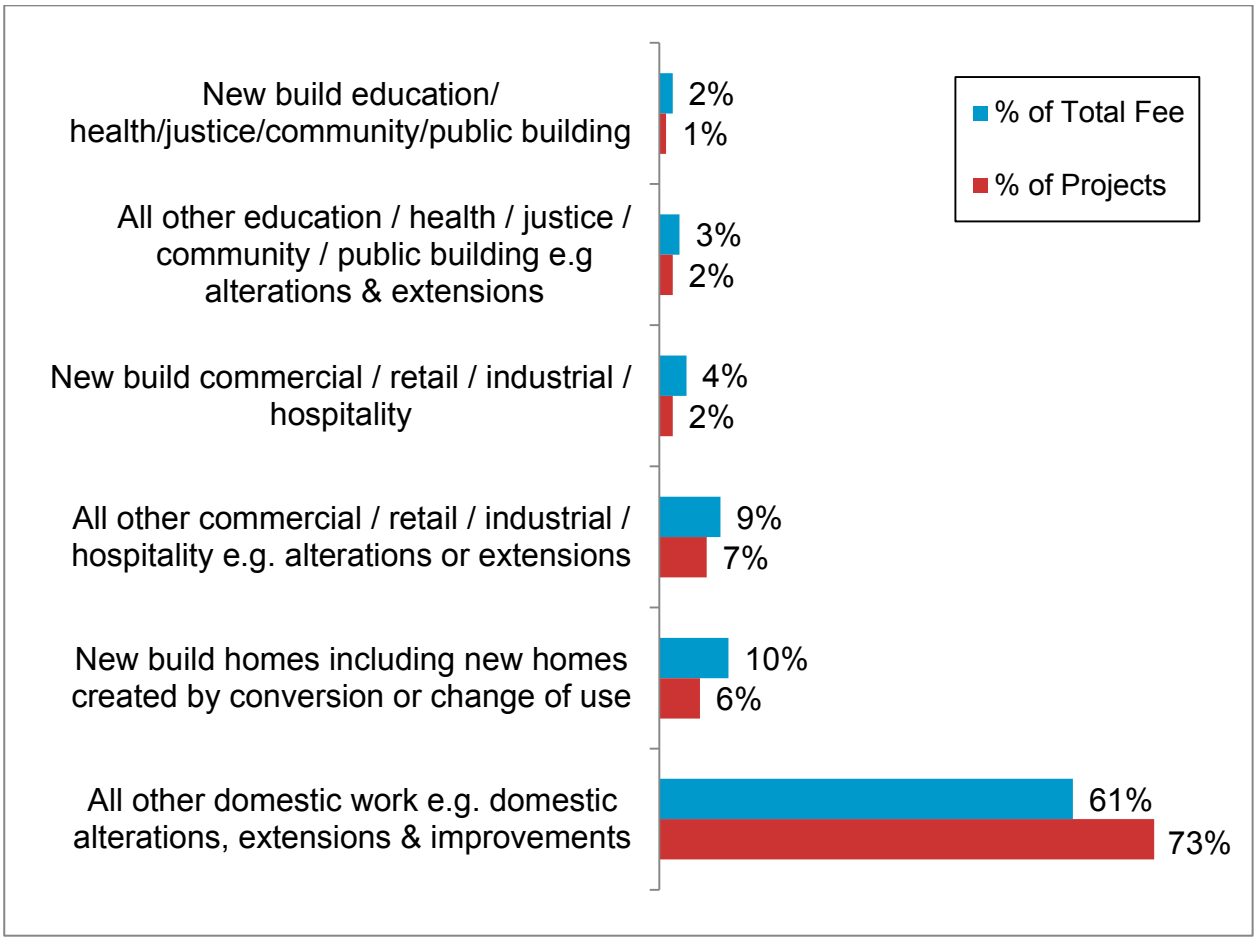


Figure 3.3 shows the median percentages of projects for 152 responses to this part of the survey and that the majority of projects were domestic alterations, extensions and improvements etc. but that in general these projects earned lower building control fees, refelecting complexity of work and level of interation needed, and that there were relatively smaller numbers of new build homes, commercial and public building alterations, and commercial and public new builds but these earned higher building control fees. The low number of new build homes was probably due to the the fact that one application can cover several houses.

This is much the same as in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 reports but note the category headings have been amended slightly his year for clarity. However, although the majority of projects for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities were domestic alterations Approved Inspectors as last year had a smaller percentage of 62% (52%) than Local Authorities at 80% (78%). Approved Inspectors also had just over double the percentage (12%) of commercial extensions than Local Authorities (5%) The other categories were evenly split between Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities.

4. Building Control Staff

This part of the report is split into 5 sections:

People and Skills (4.1),

Experience of Staff (4.2)

Specialist Experience (4.3),

Age and Gender profile (4.4), and

Respect for People (4.5).

4.1 People and Skills

The survey asked respondents to give their total number of staff in 11 categories, which covered:

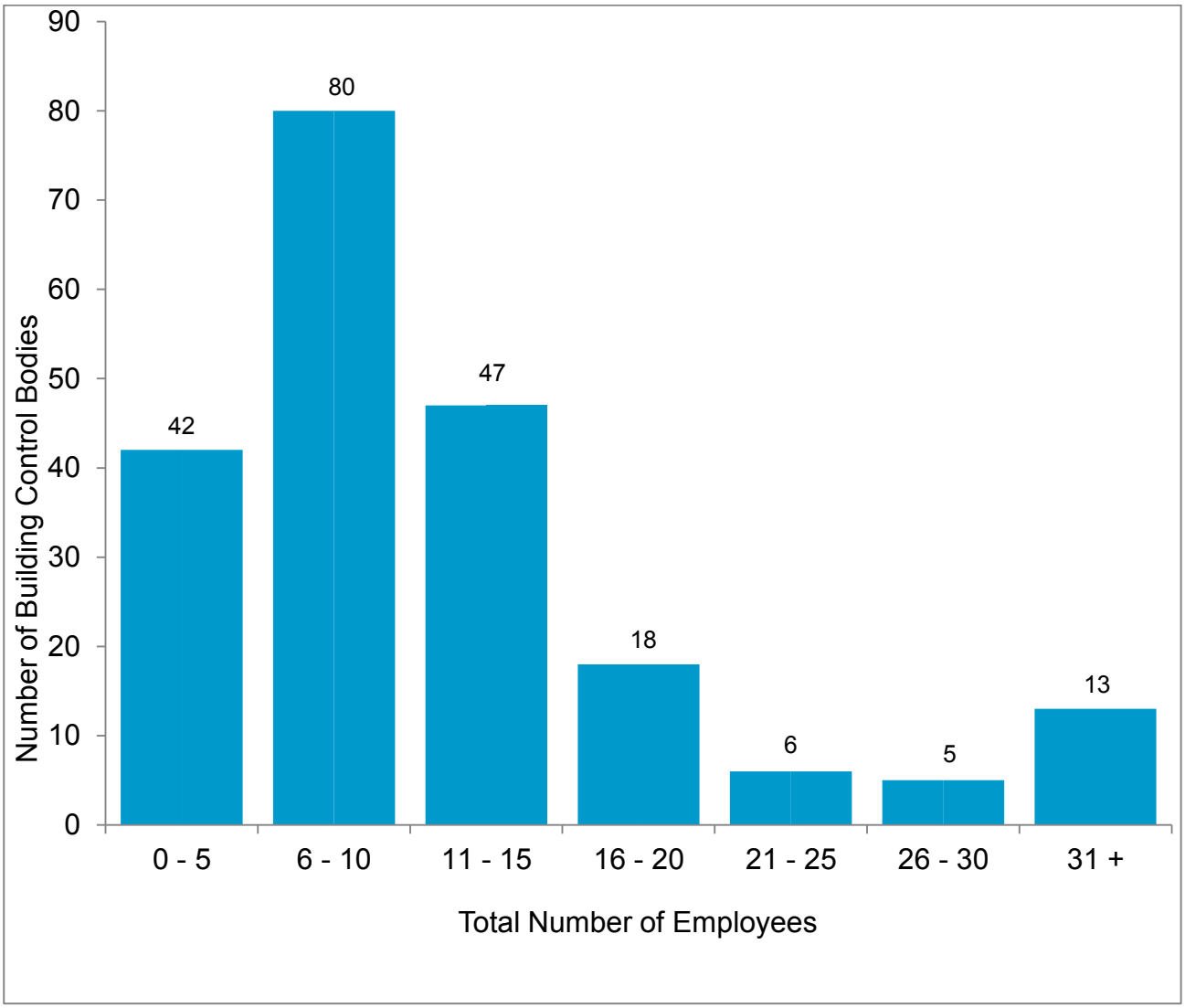
- direct and contract employees
- full time and part-time employees
- employees' qualifications.

The specific questions are set out in figure 4.1.2.

For part-time workers respondents were asked to provide full-time equivalent values, for example an employee working two days a week would be denoted as 0.4.

211 respondents provided information for this section. The median total number of employees was similar to last year at 9.2 (9.0), with a mean of 13 (12.4). Figure 4.1.1 shows the distribution of Building Control Bodies by total staff numbers. The mean is higher than the median as it is influenced by a few Building Control Bodies with very large workforces.

Figure 4.1.1 – Distribution of Total Number of Staff

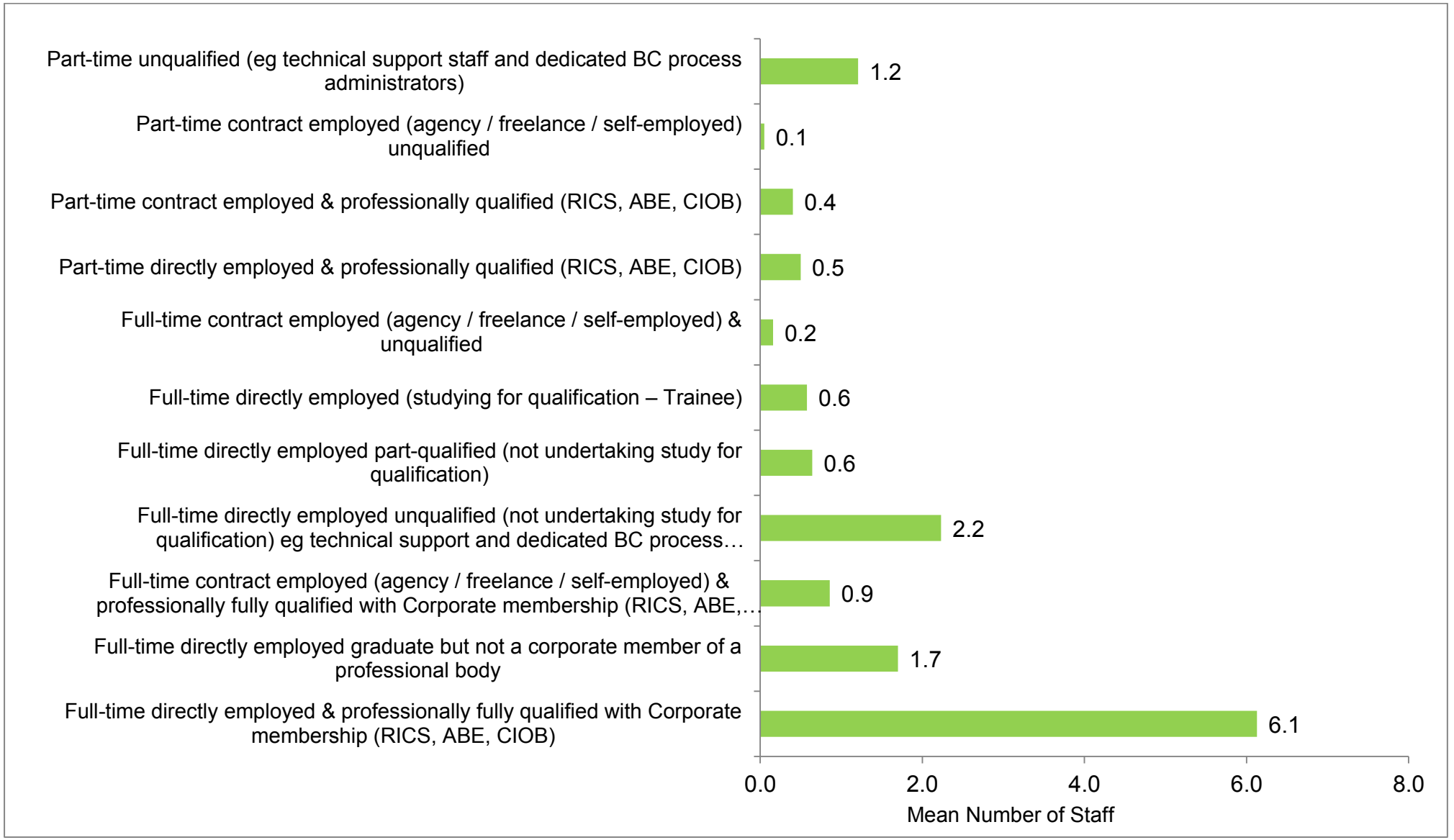


The majority, 58% (60%), of Building Control Bodies responding to the survey had 10 employees or fewer, and 80% (83%) of respondents had 15 employees or fewer. The majority of Approved Inspectors, 30% (37%) had 5 or fewer employees while the majority of Local Authorities 47% (49%) had between 6 and 10 employees. However as last year Approved Inspectors had a higher percentage, 12.5% (14%) of having 31 employees or more than Local Authorties 2% (2%).

Figure 4.1.2 overleaf shows Building Control Bodies' mean number of staff by qualification and employment type.

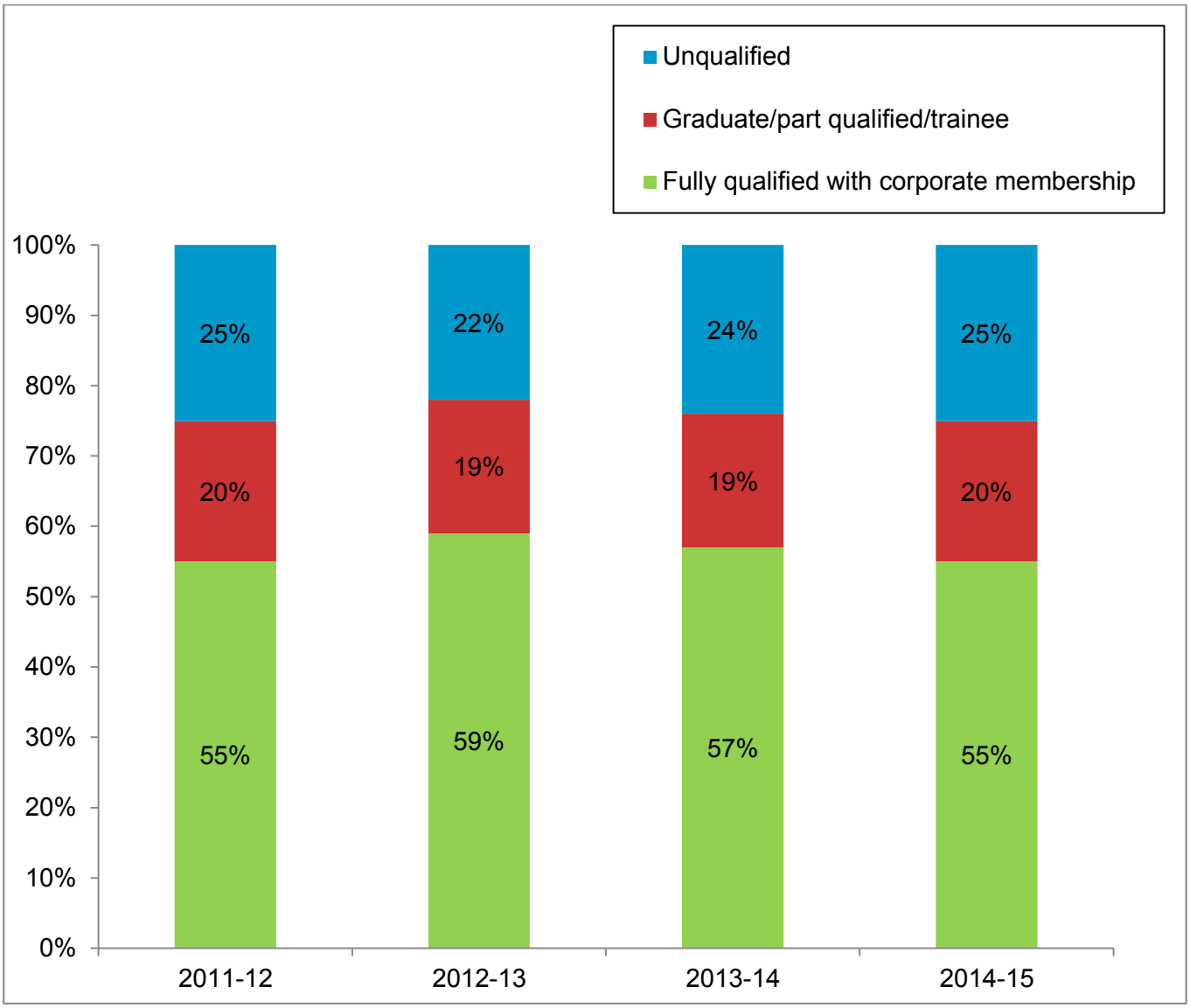
Of the 13 mean total number of employees, 6.1 (47%) were full time directly employed fully professionally qualified with corporate membership, with a further 1.7 (13%) full time directly employed graduates without corporate membership. The two other relatively large proportions are full and part time direct employees with no qualifications, which are presumed to be mainly administrative staff. Building Control Bodies tend to employ a smaller proportion of trainees than of part-qualified staff not undertaking further study.

Figure 4.1.2 – Staff Classification



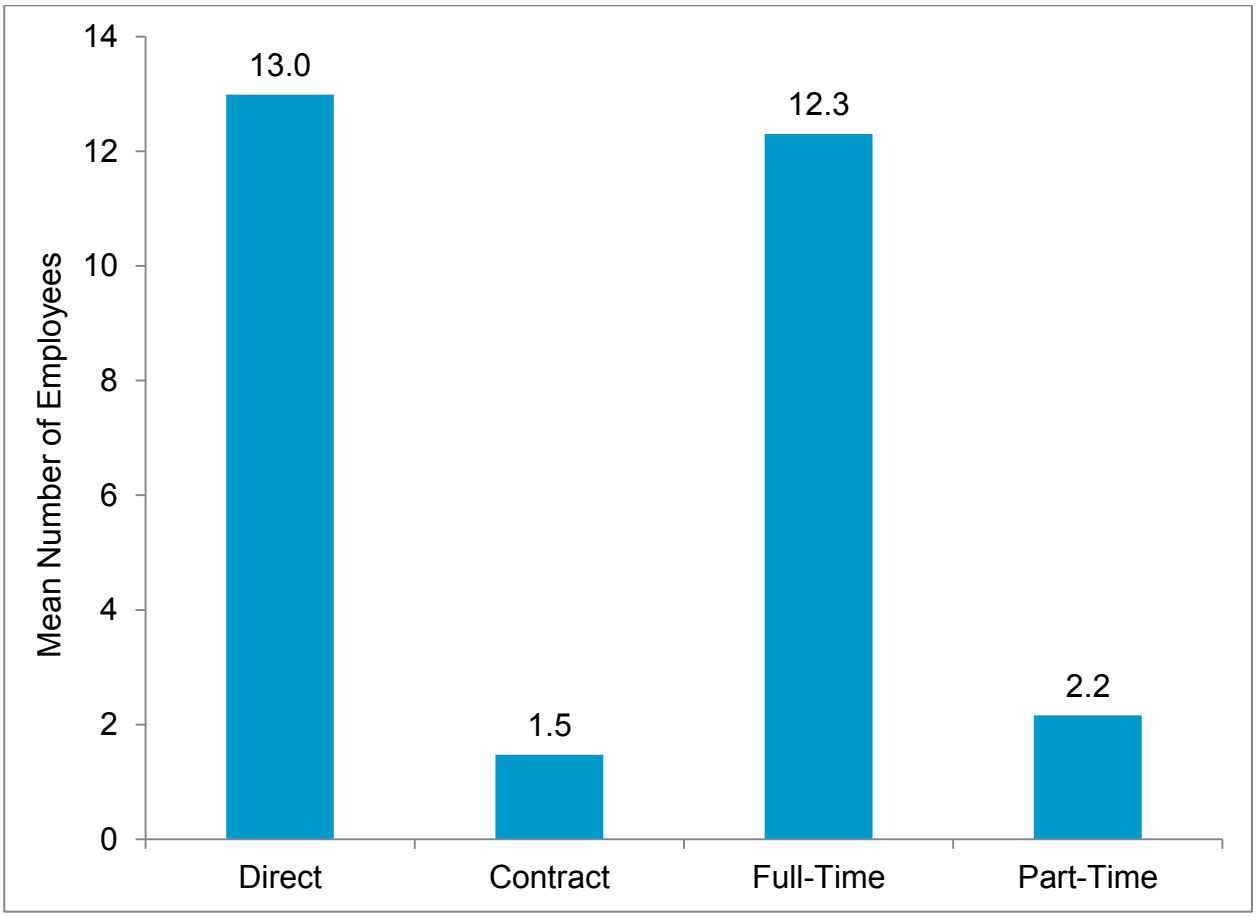
Including those working on a contract basis or part time, professionally qualified staff with corporate membership made up 55% (57%) of the average Building Control Bodies workforce. As figure 4.1.3 below shows, this is a slight decrease in this performance indicator, compared to 57% in last year's survey while there has been a slight increase in unqualified staff to 25% from 24% last year and for graduate/part qualified/trainee to 20% from 19%. The percentage of unqualified staff was the same for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities (25%). However, as last year Approved Inspectors had a higher proportion 58% (62%) of staff fully qualified with corporate membership than Local Authorities 55% (51%). This means that Approved Inspectors have a lower proportion 17% (15%) of graduates, part qualified/trainee staff than Local Authorities 20% (23%).

Figure 4.1.3 – Mean proportion of staff by qualification



As in previous years there are higher mean numbers of direct and full time employees than part-time and contract employees, which can be seen in fig 4.1.4 below.

Figure 4.1.4 – Staff by employment type



The use of contract staff seems to have increased slightly again this year. In 2014/15 the mean number of contract staff employed was 1.5 while last year it was 1.3 and in 2012/13 1.2 double the number reported in 2011/12.The overall mean number of staff has increased slightly from 12.4 to 13 simliar to the 2012/13 number of 13.2. This may imply that Building Control Bodies continue to meet demand with flexible contractors rather than permanent staff. Three quarters of contract employees were fully qualified with corporate membership, equally split between part-time and full-time.

Part time workers are more likely than full time workers to be unqualified (e.g. technical support staff and dedicated Building Control process administrators); over half of part time staff were in this category. Around 41% of part time workers were professionally qualified, with slighty more (23%) employed directly than on a contract basis (18%).

The mean number of employees in each category was slightly higher for Approved Inspectors but the split between the four categories was similar for Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities. Both had higher mean numbers of direct and full time employees than part-time and contract employees.

4.2 Experience of Staff

The survey asked Building Control Bodies how many of their staff employed had extensive experience in domestic and non-domestic work as well as how many support staff they have. This is a new set of questions introduced for 2014/15.

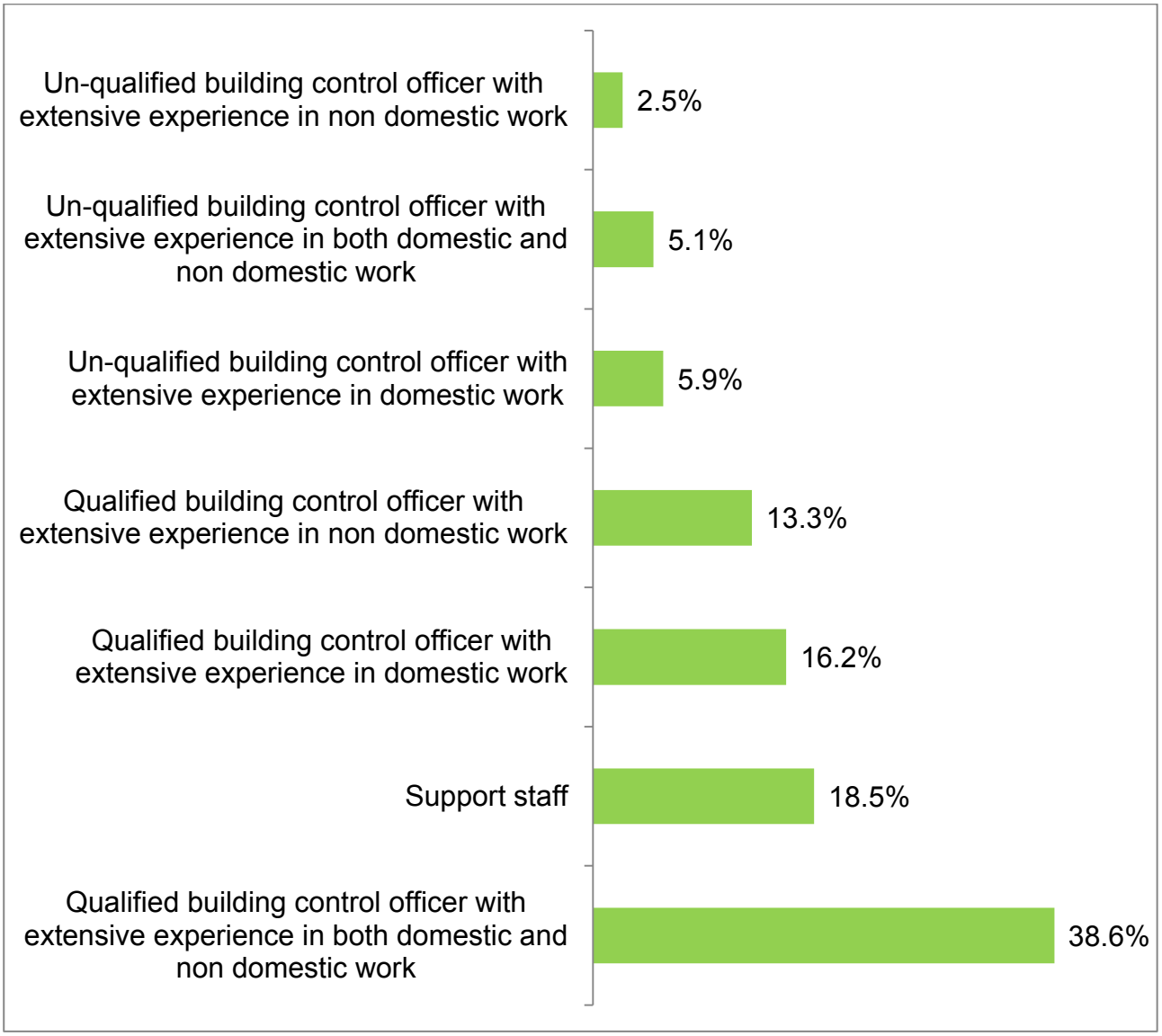


Figure 4.2.1 uses data returned from 209 Building Control Bodies. It shows the mean percentage of staff having each type of experience.

The data shows that most staff are qualified building control officers with extensive experience in both domestic and non domestic work. This was the same for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authoriies This represents the wide range of building work that building control bodies are required to supervise. The next highest was support staff at 18.5%. The lowest number of staff were unqualified building control officers with extensive experience in non-domestic work at 2.5%.

4.3 Specialist Experience

The survey asked for the Building Control Bodies to input how many of their staff had extensive experience in each of 9 specialist areas of building control, as well as an 'other' category if staff have extensive experience in an area not mentioned.

Figure 4.3.1 – Staff Specialist Experience

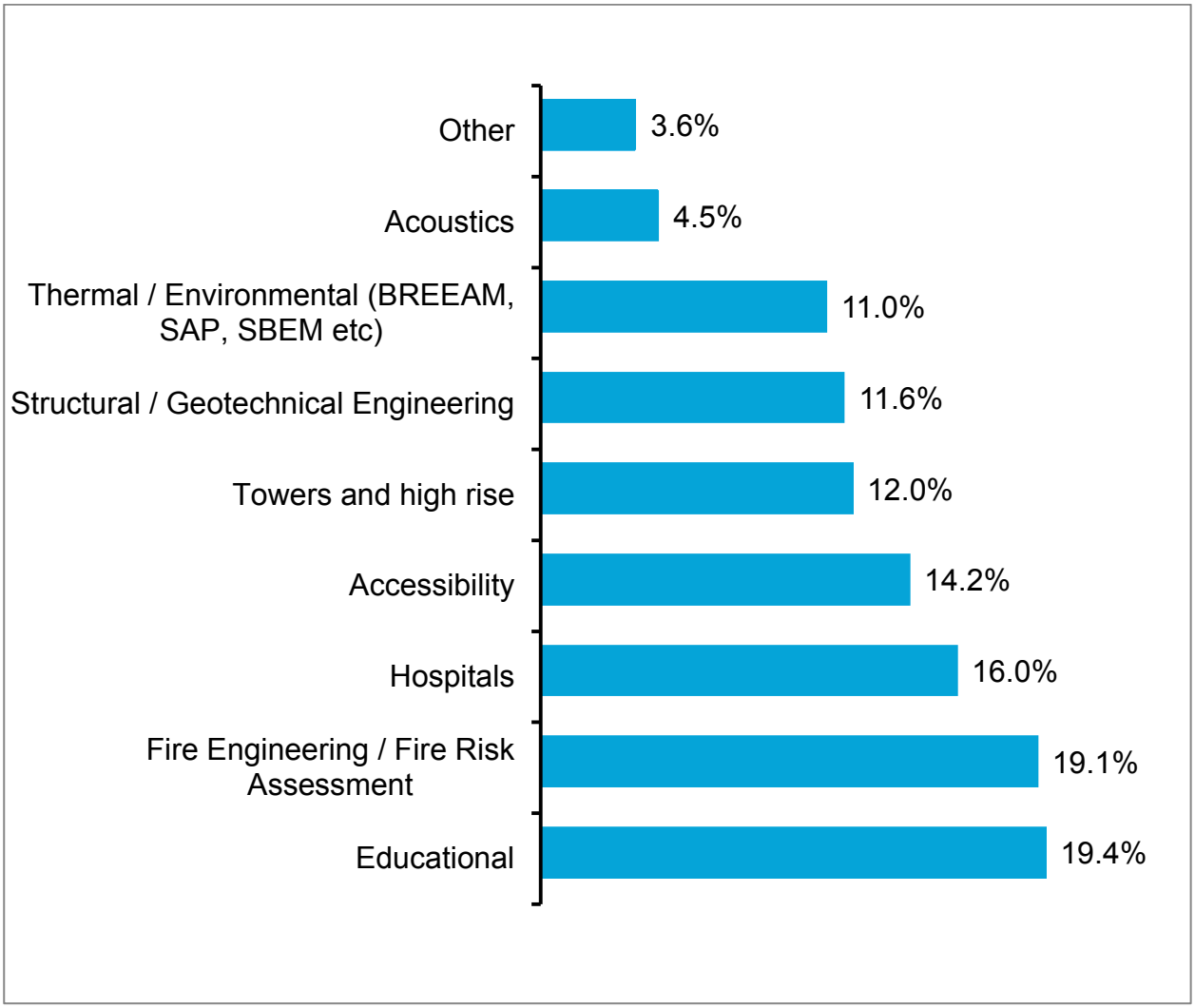


Figure 4.3.1 uses data returned from 197 Building Control Bodies. It shows the mean percentage of staff having each type of specialist experience.

The data shows that staff have the highest level of experience in educational buildings expertise, followed by the second highest in fire engineering and risk assessment. This was a reversal of last year's position and was the same for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities. The weakest area appears to be acoustics, as only 4.5% of staff had extensive experience in this and is a decrease of 0.5% from last year's survey. This was also the weakest area for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities. Most categories have seen an increase since last year's survey of between 0.8% and 1.8%.

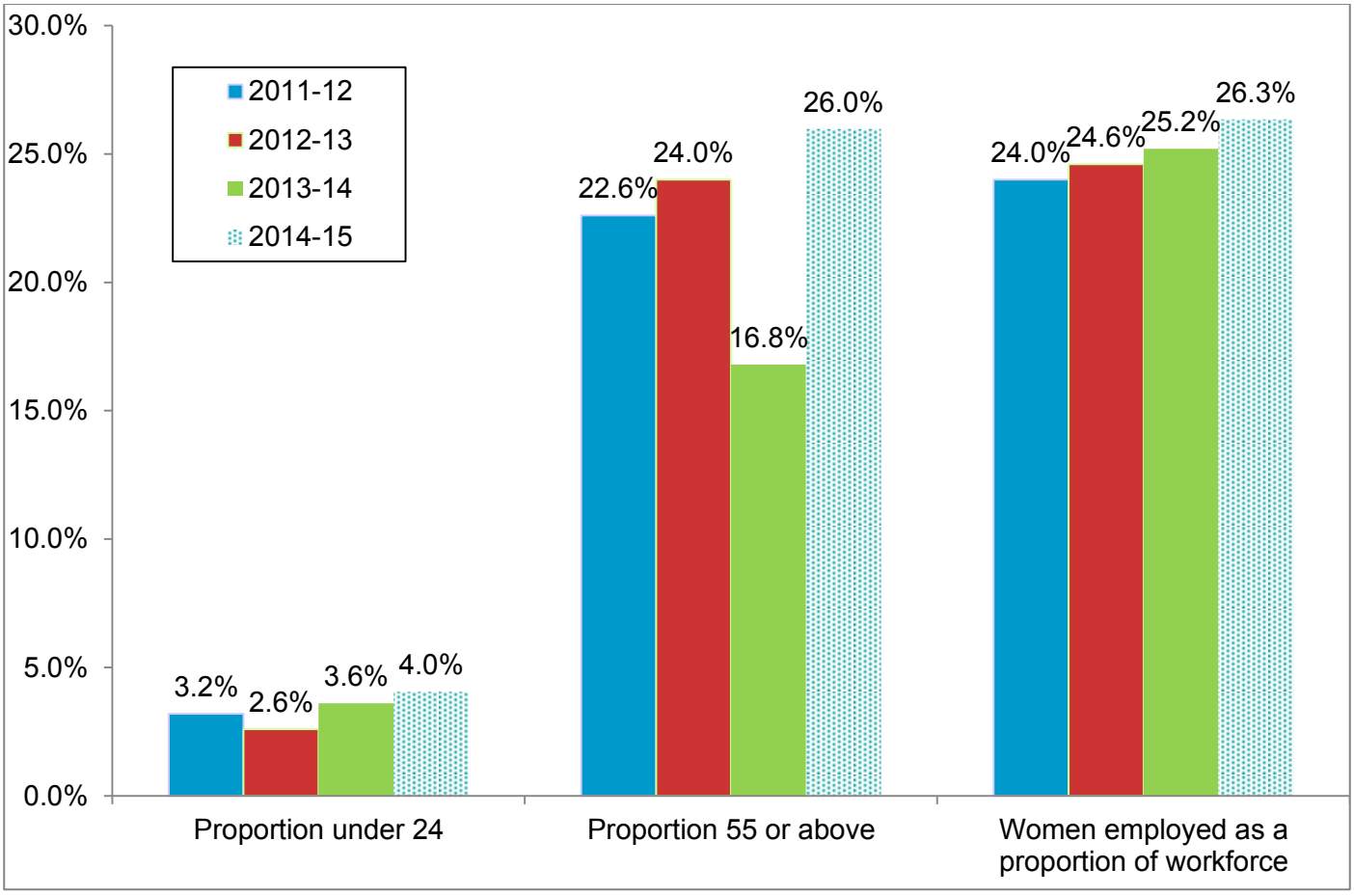
4.4 Age and Gender profile

The survey asked respondents to give the number of male and female staff within the following age ranges:

- Under 24
- 24-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-54
- 55-60
- 61+

Respondents were asked to include direct, full time, part time and contract staff. Figure 4.4.1 overleaf summarises the performance indicators from section 4.4 of the survey. 208 respondents provided data for this section of the survey.

Figure 4.4.1 – Mean Performance Indicator Scores for Age and Gender Distribution in the Workforce

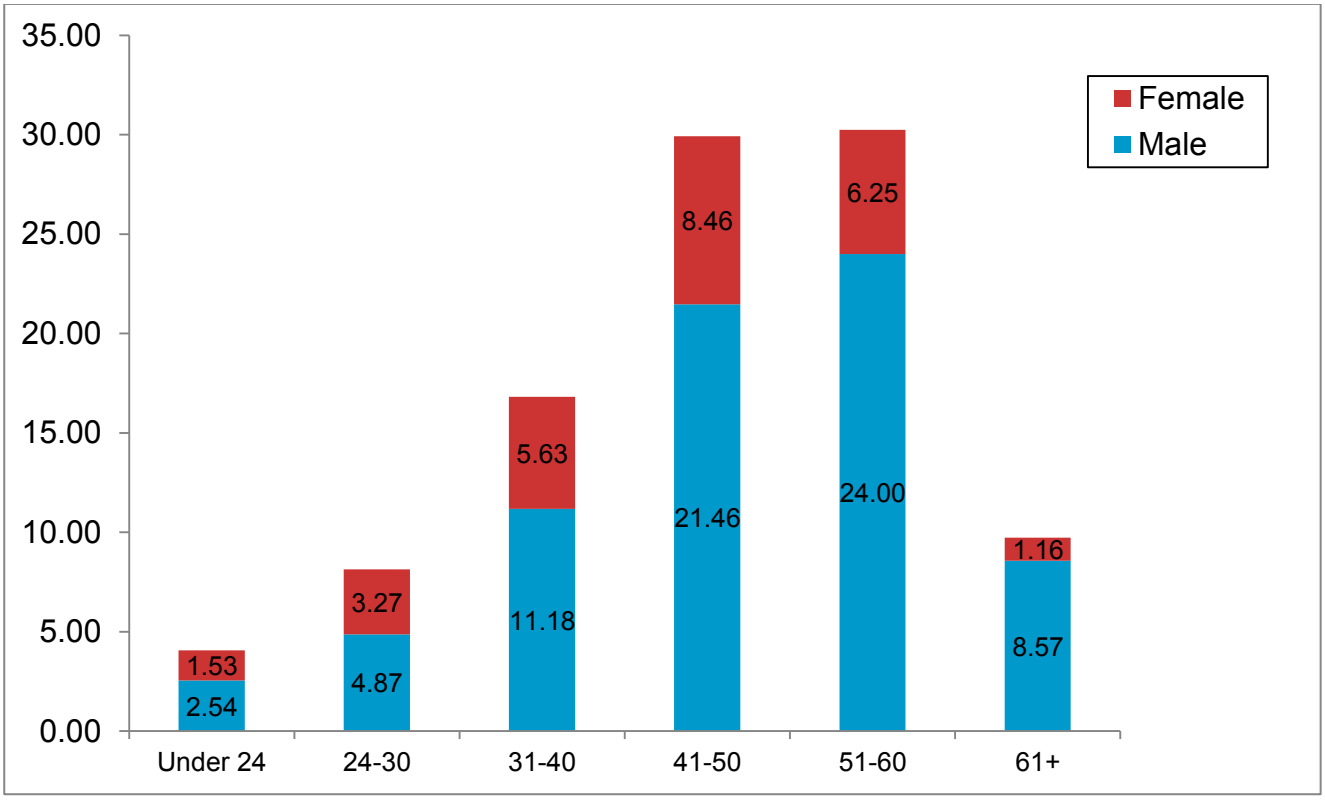


Overall performance on these indicators is mixed. The mean proportion of staff under 24 has increased from 3.6 to 4%. As last year it is slightly higher for Approved Inspectors at 4.4% (5.3%) and slightly lower for Local Authorities at 3.8% (2.6%. The mean proportion of the workforce who are 55 or above has increased after a decrease last year to 26% (16.8%). As last year it is slightly lower for Approved Inspectors at 22.5% (14.3%) and higher for Local Authorities at 28.1% (16.8%). This shift is not encouraging as there still appears to be a shortfall to be able to replace older staff heading for retirement.

The mean proportion of women in the workforce was 1.1 percentage points higher than in last year's survey; this is another small change in line with the trend over the past four years.

The mean proportion of women is over a quarter (26.3%) The Group's survey methodology asked respondents for information on staff based on full time equivalent numbers[5]. Across the UK as whole, women have a greater likelihood of working part time. Estimates of the female proportion of the UK workforce in terms of full time equivalent figures are closer to 40%. This is still some way above respondents' average figure of 26.3%. The mean proportion of women for the Approved Inspectors who responded was 24.6% compared to a slightly higher percentage of 27.4% for Local Authorities.

Figure 4.4.2 – Mean proportion of total staff by Age and Gender



[5] For example: A part time employee who worked 3 days a week would be counted as 0.6.

Figure 4.4.2 shows a more detailed breakdown of staffing profiles[6].and illustrates as last year that employees' ages are heavily weighted around the 41-60 age ranges: the mean proportion of workers between these ages being 60%, the same as in last year's survey. There is a sharp drop in workforce proportion for the 61+ age group, the same as in last year's survey. This is the same for both Approved Inspectors and Local Authorities.

This chart also illustrates the proportion of women in each age group; this diminishes steadily as age increases. Women on average make up 39% of employees under the age of 30. For employees between the ages of 30 and 50, this proportion falls to around a 30%. Women account for just over a sixth of the 51-60 band and less still of those over 60.

Figure 4.4.3 – Distribution of over 50s in the Workforce

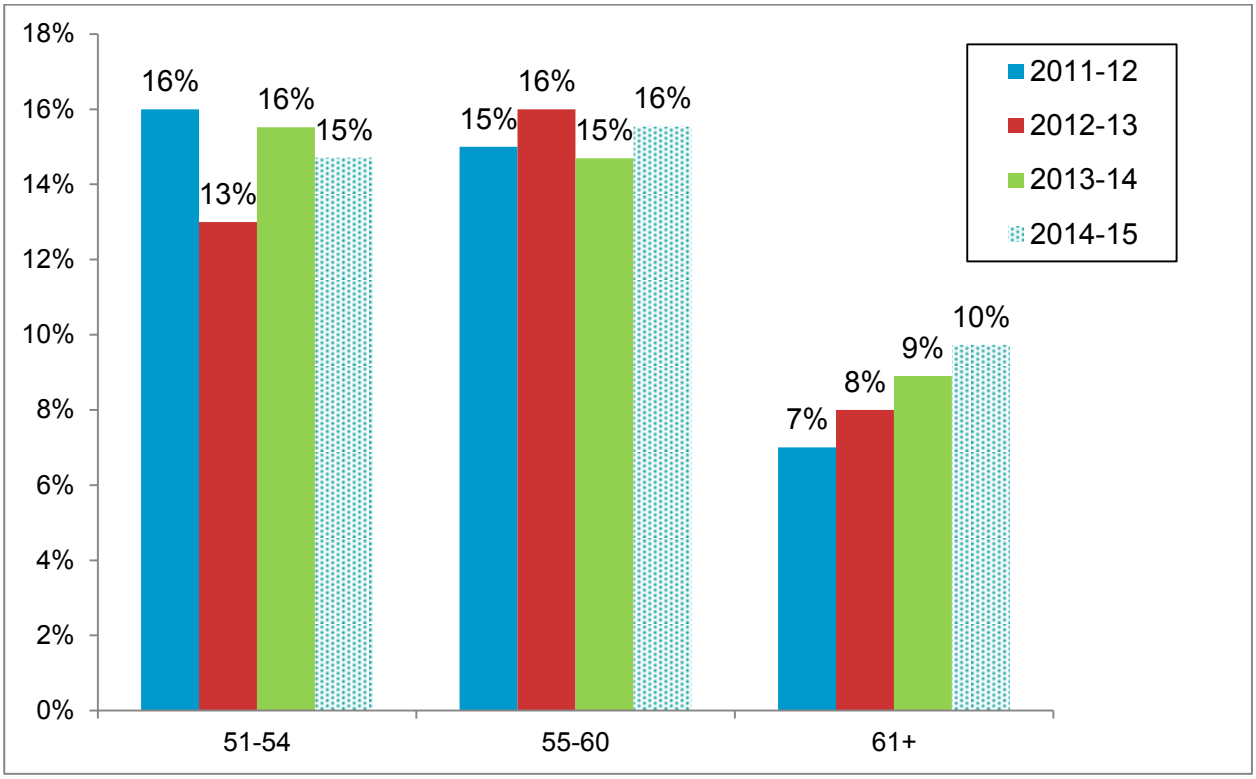


Figure 4.4.3 gives a more detailed distribution of the aggregated groups. The proportion of employees in the bands aged 55 to 60 and over 61 have both increased slightly by 1%. While the proportion of those aged 51 to 54 has fallen by 1% in the mean proportion of employees. Figure 4.4.3 above shows that if the current trend continues, Building Control Bodies will have to replace their workforce at an accelerating rate over the next decade, and of course accommodate the issue of relative dilution of experience in the workforce.

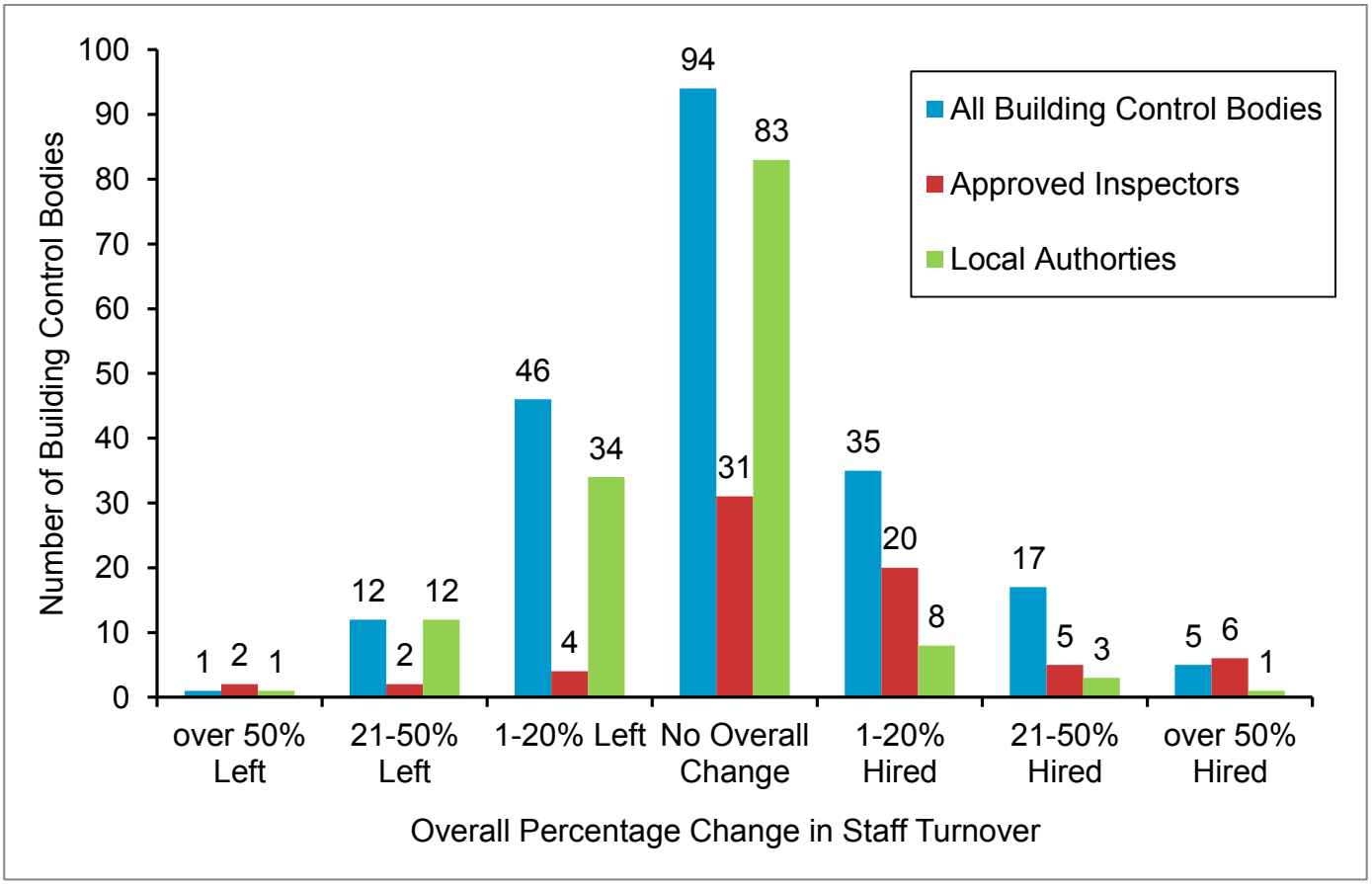
[6] Age bands 51-54 and 55-60 have been combined to aid visual comparison.

4.5 Respect for People

The survey asked for the Building Control Bodies to give for the past twelve months the number of direct employees that left, the number that were hired, and the number of employees that left and were replaced in their specific role.

The survey then asked for the total number of days that were lost due to sickness absence across all directly-employed staff, and the total number of training days provided for direct employees. Finally if the Building Control Body was covered by Investors in People recognition was requested.

Figure 4.5.1 – Staff Turnover

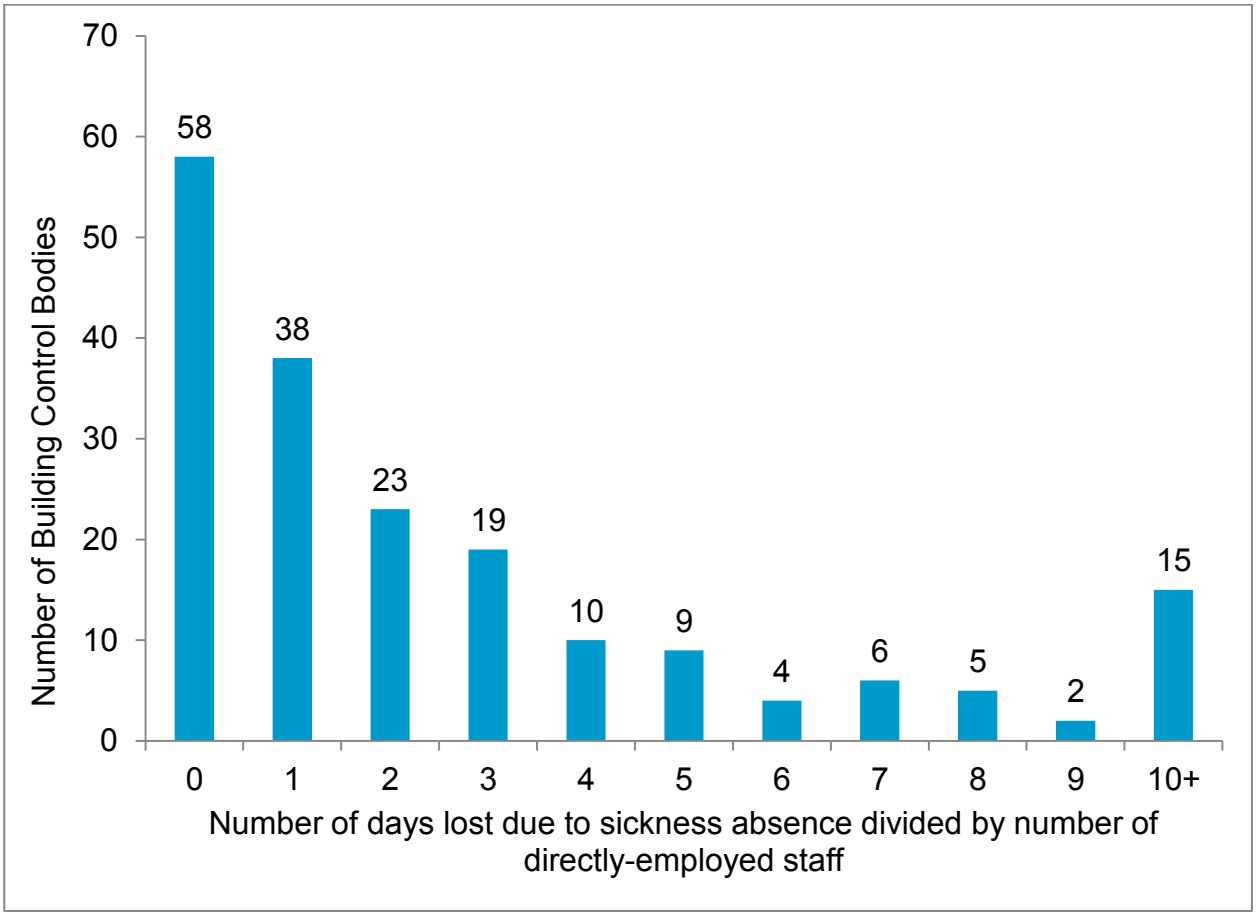


A shown in figure 4.5.1, slightly more Building Control Bodies showed an overall loss in the number of employees than those that showed an increase. However, as last year, the majority of Building Control Bodies recorded no overall change in the size of their workforce. So in general numbers of employees have fallen very slightly. This was the same for Approved Inspectors with 31 (44%) of respondents having no overall change and 83 (58%) of Local Authorities. However more Local Authorities 47 (33%) had direct employees that had left compared with 8 (11%) of Approved Inspectors. Local Authorities also hired less direct employees 12 (8%) compared with 31 (44%) of Approved Inspectors.

The mean level of staff turnover, defined as the number of direct staff who left and were replaced divided by the total number of direct staff was 5.6%. This is low, but has increased compared to the 4.3% in last year's survey and the 4.0% in 2012/13. This small upturn in staff turnover could be a result of increased staff movement between Building Control Bodies, or an accelerating need to replace retired workers. 87 of 205 Building Control Bodies that responded had not hired any direct staff during the last 12 months.

Figure 4.5.2 below shows the distribution of sickness absence per employee. It includes data from the one hundred and sixty nine (169) Building Control Bodies that responded to this Performance Indicator.

Figure 4.5.2 – Distribution of Sickness Absence



The distribution is weighted towards lower sickness absences which is an encouraging result. The median is 1.5 days per direct employee, and the mean is higher at 3.7.This performance indicator has stayed nearly the same as in last year's survey, with sickness absence rates median staying the same at 1.5. and the mean up at 3.7. However, Approved Inspectors had a lower median of 1 day per direct employee compared to 4.5 days for Local Authorities. The mean for Approved Inspectors was also lower at 0.8 compared to 2.5 for Local Authorities. This was due to Approved Inspectors not having more than 7 days while there were still a number (17%) of Local Authorities that had 7 or more days.

Figure 4.5.3 – Distribution of Training Days Given to Direct Staff

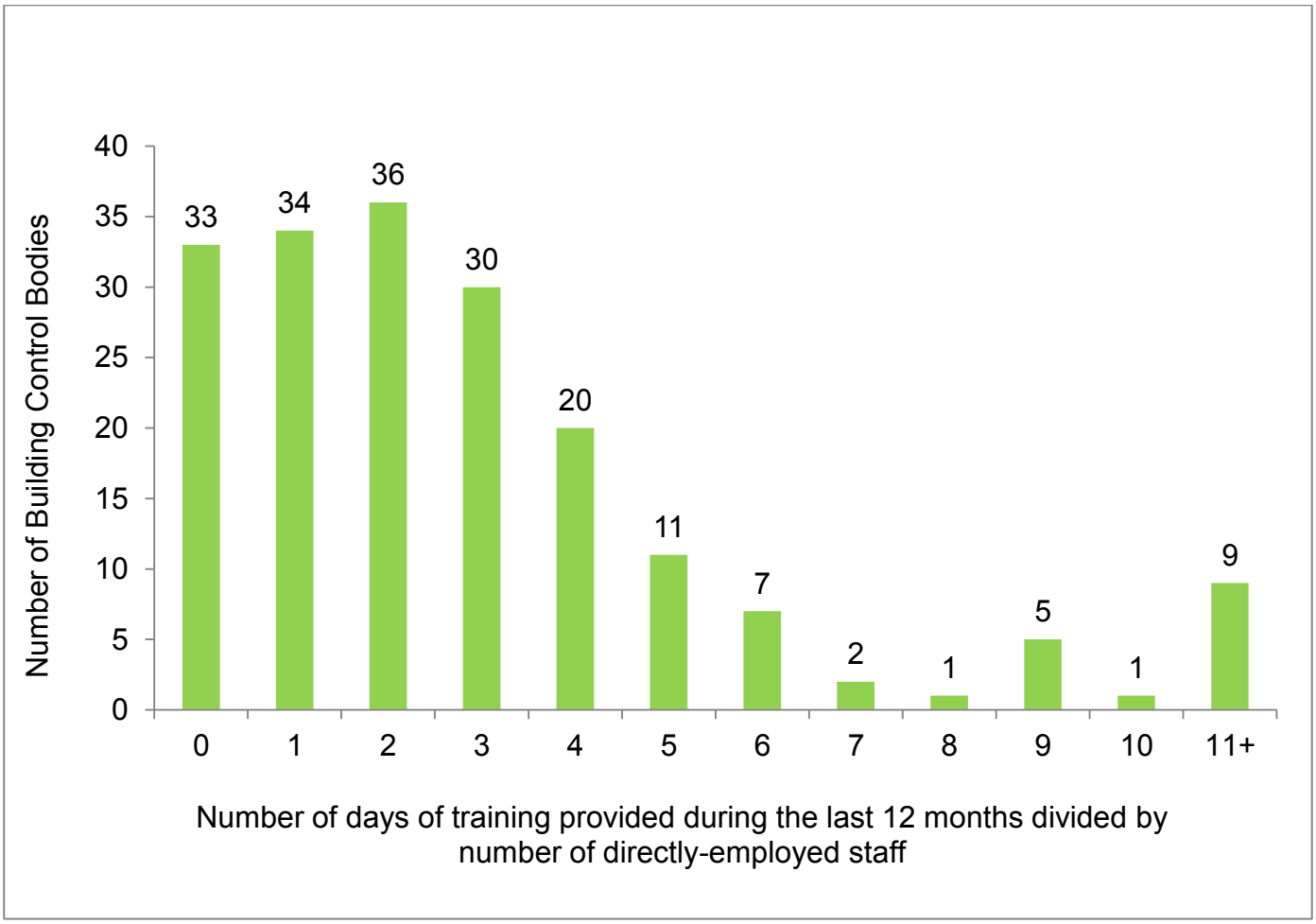


Figure 4.5.3 above shows the distribution of the mean number of training days provided for each employee. One hundred and seventy two (172) Building Control Bodies returned data for this Performance Indicator.

This distribution shows that 79.1% of Building Control Bodies gave their employees up to 4 training days each, similar to last year which was 79.6%. The median number of training days given was 2.3, and the mean was higher at 3.2 due to a few reports of 11 or more training days being given the same as last year.

Approved Inspectors had a slightly lower mean of 3 and median of 2.1 compared to Local Authorities who had a mean of 3.4 and median of 2.4.

Investors in People

Of the two hundred (200) Building Control Bodies that responded, 47 were covered by the Investors in People recognition programme, and 142 were not covered by the programme.

Explanations of the Performance Indicators

Process Delivery

1. Process Management of Building Control Compliance Operations

Measure*:* Ranking score of the Building Control Body's coverage and organisation of their process management system.

The aim of this performance indicator is to assess the coverage and depth of the Building Control Body's process management system. A ranking score for the process/quality management system in place is calculated based upon the extent of the building control process covered by the system and whether the system covers:

- appropriate resource allocation
- customer feedback
- record keeping
- third party accreditation & audit

Customer Satisfaction

2. Complaints Handling Processes

Measure*:* Number of complaints received as a proportion of building control applications

This headline indicator is calculated using total number of complaints during the last 12 months as a proportion of the number of building control applications received during the same period.

Building Control Bodies can also derive subsidiary indicators from the survey data to assess split complaints between technical and non technical including customer services (process and operational matters and the proportion that were closed and resolve in whole or in part in the customer's favour.

It should be noted that as projects will run across the year end, any complaints received will not necessarily relate to building control notices issued during the year. In addition the number of active projects during the year is likely to be greater than the number of applications, while it is possible that multiple complaints could be lodged against one project. Accordingly, whilst the Performance Indicator is a valuable management tool for assessing a body's relative performance, it does not provide a definitive calculation of the proportion of projects against which complaints are lodged.

3. Breakdown of Building Control work

Measure*:* Number of building control applications received and how many of these applications have started construction as well as the total value of the building control fees for these applications.

Subsidiary indicators are also included to assess the split of applications and fees by market segment and as a percentage of the total.

4. Building Control Staff

4.1 People and Skills

Measure*:* Proportion of staff in a building control office role that are fully qualified with corporate membership (The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Association of Building Engineers (ABE), Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)).

This is a headline indicator of the building control body's ability to deliver a quality service by ensuring that the advice provided to applicants has a sound basis and that regulation is consistent and well-grounded through the use of appropriately skilled staff.

4.2 Experience of Staff

Measure*:* Proportion of staff in a building control office role that have extensive experience in domestic and non domestic work and support staff.

4.3 Specialist Experience

Measure*:* Proportion of staff in a building control office role that have additional qualification or extensive experience in specific area (e.g. Structural/Geotechnical Engineering, Educational).

4.4 Age and Gender Profile

Measures*:* The collected data on staff profile question provides a suite of indicators on staff make-up by gender and age.

4.5 Respect for People

Staff turnover and sickness absence are valuable indicators of staff morale. They are Respect for People Performance Indicators included in the UK Construction Industry Key Performance Indicators as:

- they provide insight into staff morale
- the Performance Indicators have implications for the delivery of an effective service to customers. High rates of staff turnover or sickness absence could potentially adversely affect the quality of service or even technical advice provided
- the data is readily available to managers.

The measures cover training and Investors in People which are indicators of the organisations commitment to and investment in developing its staff resources that can have implications for the long term performance and success of the organisation. The measures on staff make-up provide indicators of social inclusiveness that also have potential implications for the longer term success of the organisation.

Staff turnover

Measure*:* Number of direct employees that left the company during the year as a proportion of all direct employees.

Sickness absence

Measure*:* Number of working days lost due to sickness absence per direct employee.

Training

Measure*:* Average number of training days provided by the Building Control Body across all direct employees.

Investors in People

Measure*:* Proportion of Building Control Bodies covered by Investors in People recognition.

Staff Composition

Measures*:* The collected data on staff profile question provides a suite of indicators on staff make-up by age and gender including:

- women as a proportion of the workforce
- people under 24 as a proportion of the workforce
- people over 55 as a proportion of the workforce.

List of respondents for 2014/15 survey

Approved Inspectors

A.B.C. Certification
Acivico Building Consultancy Limited
Act Surveyors LLP
Active Building Control
Adrian Thomas Building Control Limited
Aedis Regulatory Services Limited
Align Building Control Limited
Approved Design Consultancy Limited
Approved Inspector Services Limited
Approved Inspectors Limited
Ask Building Control Limited
Assent Building Control Limited
Asset Building Inspectors Limited
Asure Survey Limited trading as Assure Building Control
Ball and Berry Limited
BBS Building Control Limited
Bespoke Building Control Limited
BlueKeep Building Control Limited
BRCS (Building Control) Limited
Buckley-Lewis Partnership Limited
Building Consents Limited
Building Control Approved Limited
Building Control Partnership Limited
Building Control Services AI Limited
Building Control Surveyors Limited
Building Control (UK) Limited
Butler & Young Limited / Butler & Young Residential Limited
Campagna Limited
Capital and Counties Building Control Services Limited
Capital Approved Inspectors Limited
Carillion Specialist Services Limited
Celtech Consultancy Limited
Clarke Banks Limited
Coast 2 Coast Building Control Limited
Complete Building Control Limited
Cook Brown Building Control Limited
Cornwall Building Control Limited
CPR (Construction Plans & Regulations) Limited
Darren Ettles (Integral BCS)

Deborah L'Aimible
Dunwoody Building Legislation Limited
Evolve Building Control Consultants Limited
Greendoor Building Control & Specialist Services Limited
Guy Shattock Associates Limited
Harwood Building Control Approved Inspectors Limited
HCD Building Control Limited
Head Projects Building Control Limited
J M Partnership (Surveyors) Limited
James Anthony Bourje Approved Inspector Limited
jhai Limited
LBC (South) Limited
Lewis Berkeley Building Control Limited
Lexicon Approved Inspectors Limited
LHR Building Control Services Limited.
London Building Control Limited
MC Plan & Site Services Limited
Meridian Consult Limited
MFA Building Control Limited
MLM Building Control Limited
Morgan Wolff Limited
NHBC Building Control Services Limited
Oculus Building Consultancy Limited
OnSite Building Control Limited
Owl Building Control Solutions Limited
Premier Guarantee Surveyors Limited
Prime Construction Consultants Limited
pt Building Standards Limited
PVM Building Control Services Limited
PWC Building Control Services Limited
Quadrant Approved Inspectors
Regional Building Control Limited
RH Building Consultancy Limited
Ryan Property Consultants Limited
Salus Approved Inspectors
Shore Engineering Limited
Spire Building Control Services Limited
STMC (Building Control) Limited
Studious Limited
Thames Building Control Limited
The Building Inspectors Limited
ToP Building Control Limited
Total Building Control Limited
Turton Building Control Limited
Wilkinson Construction Consultants Limited
Yorkshire Building Control Limited
Yorkshire Dales Building Consultancy Limited

Local Authorities in England

Acivico Building Consultancy Limited - Birmingham City Council
Allerdale Borough Council
Amber Valley Borough Council
Arun District Council
Ashfield District Council
Ashford Borough Council
Babergh District Council
Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Bassetlaw District Council
Bath & North East Somerset Council
Bedford Borough Council
Blackpool Council
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Borough of Broxbourne
Borough of Poole
Boston Borough Council
Bournemouth Borough Council
Bracknell Forest Council
Braintree District Council
Brighton and Hove City Council
Broxtowe Borough Council
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Calderdale Council
Cannock Chase and Stafford Building Control Service
Carlisle City Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Charnwood Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Building Control Service
Cheshire East Council
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Chichester District Council
Chiltern and South Buckinghamshire Building Control
Christchurch and East Dorset Councils
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
City of Lincoln Council
City of London Corporation
City of York Council
Copeland Borough Council
Cornwall District Council

Darlington Borough Council
Dartford Borough Council
Devon Building Control
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Dover District Council
East Herts District Council
East Lindsey District Council trading as Lincs Building Consultancy
East Midlands Building Consultancy
East Staffordshire Borough Council
East Sussex Building Control Partnership
Eden District Council
Elmbridge Building Control Services Limited
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Fareham and Gosport Borough Councils Building Control Partnership
Forest of Dean District Council
Fylde Borough Council
Gateshead Council
Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Halton Borough Council
Harborough District Council
Harrogate Borough Council
Herefordshire Council
Hertsmere Borough Council
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Hull City Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
Ipswich Borough Council
Kettering Borough Council
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Liverpool City Council
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Bexley
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Bromley
London Borough of Camden
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Enfield
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Havering
London Borough of Hillingdon
London Borough of Hounslow
London Borough of Lewisham
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
London Borough of Southwark
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Maidstone Borough Council
Manchester City Council
Melton Borough Council
Mendip District Council
Mid Suffolk District Council
Milton Keynes Council
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Newcastle City Council
New Forest District Council
North Dorset District Council
North Hertfordshire District Council
North Kesteven District Council
North Lincolnshire Council
North Norfolk District Council
Northhamptonshire Borough Council
Northern Warwickshire Building Control Partnership
Oldham Council
Pendle Borough Council
Pennine Lancashire Building Control
Peterborough City Council
Portsmouth City Council
Preston City Council
Purbeck District Council
Reading Borough Council
Rossendale Borough Council
Rother & Hastings Building Control Partnership
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Royal Borough of Greenwich
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Runnymede Borough Council
Rutland County Council
Sedgemoor District Council
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council
Sheffield City Council
Slough Borough Council
South and Vale Building Control
South Gloucestershire Council
St Albans District Council
St Helens Council
STG (South Thames Gateway) Building Control Partnership
Stroud District Council
Sussex Building Control (Horsham & Crawley)
Tandridge District Council
Taunton Deane Borough Council

Telford and Wrekin Council
Thurrock Council
Torbay Council
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
West Dorset District Council
West Oxfordshire District Council
Westminster City Council
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Winchester City Council
Wirral Council
Wokingham Borough Council
Wolverhampton City Council
Wycombe District Council
Wyre Council

Local Authorities in Wales

Bridgend County Borough Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council
City and County of Swansea
Conwy County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Gwynedd Council
Monmouthshire County Council
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Newport City Council
Pembrokeshire County Council
Powys County Council
Torfaen County Borough Council
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Wrexham County Borough Council