

# HIGHLAND



# HOME

# CARERS LTD

## Appendix 1

### SERVICE EVALUATION FORM

NAME:

SERVICE TYPE:

Please underline your answers as appropriate, using the space provided for any comments.

1. Highland Home Carers aims to provide a flexible service. Do you think we achieve this?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

2. Are you aware of the 24 hour emergency phone service provided by Highland Home Carers?

YES

NO

3. If you have used this service, did you feel you received a helpful and appropriate response?

YES

NO

NOT APPLICABLE

**4. Do you feel comfortable and confident with Highland Home Carers staff?**

**YES**

**NO**

**5. Do you think that the carers/ support workers are reliable?**

**YES**

**NO**

**6. Highland Home Carers is an employee owned company. Do you think this has any effect on the service provided?**

**YES**

**NO**

**DON'T KNOW**

**7. Do you think Highland Home Carers provides a quality service?**

**YES**

**NO**

**8. Do you have any suggestions as to how Highland Home Carers might improve the overall service?**

**Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Please return in the envelope provided.**

## Appendix 2

### **SERVICE USER INTERVIEW FORM**

#### **1. Values**

*Ask and score each value individually. How well do we live up to them?*

{a} **Providing a flexible, professional service**

Very well quite well ok poorly very badly d/k

{b} **Promoting an inclusive approach within the company**

Very well quite well ok poorly very badly d/k

{c} **Maintaining privacy and confidentiality,, respecting rights and promoting equality**

Very well quite well ok poorly very badly d/k

2. {a} **As a private service user, do you think that invoices are dealt with efficiently?**

{b}..... **On time?**

{c} **Are errors dealt with promptly?**

3. **A point that arose frequently in the response from our questionnaires was a problem with communication between admin staff, carers etc and service users.**

**Have you experienced communication problems with HHC yourself?**

4. **Do you think HHC are...?**

{a} **reliable**

{b} **trustworthy**

**Very fairly not really no**

*Score individually*

5. **Do you feel continuity in staff is important?**

6. **Do you think HHC have a good reputation?**

7. {a} **Do you know anything about EO? (Explain employee ownership).**

{b} **Do you think this is important?**

{c} **Have an effect?**

8. {a} **Do you feel it is important for company's to strive to be environmentally friendly?**

**Yes No Maybe Not sure**

{b} **Would a company's environmental policy influence your choice of provider?**

**Yes No Maybe Not sure**

**9. Would you like to make any other comments or suggestions?**

**Finally, would you give permission for us to quote any of your comments in our social accounts, anonymously, of course?**

**(Discuss individual user responses to initial questionnaire)**

### Appendix 3

#### Highland Home Carers Service User Evaluation Results

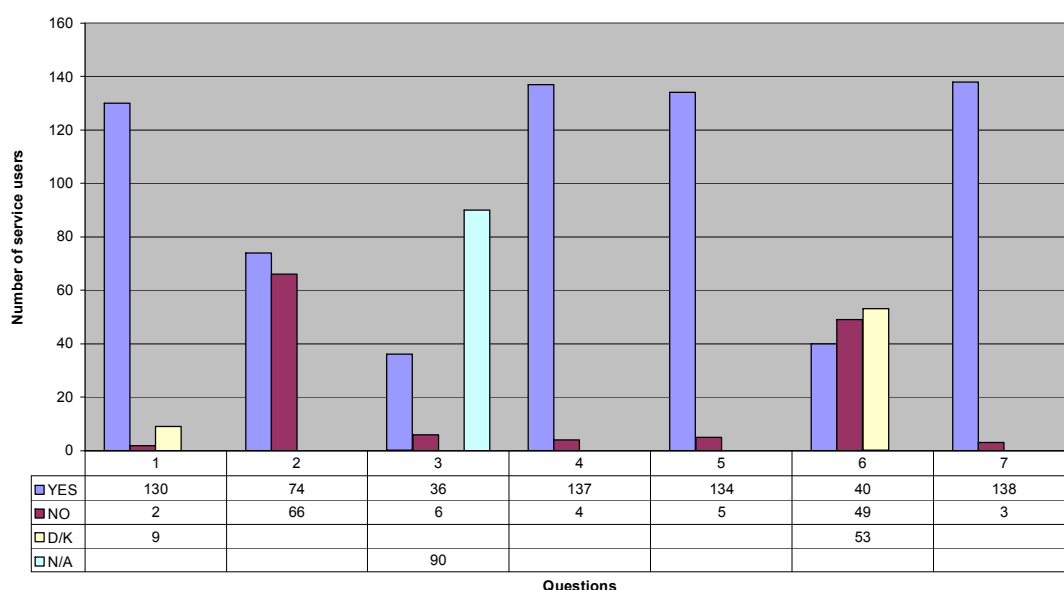
Out of a total of 250 questionnaires sent out to service users, 145 were returned, 143 of which were completed.

Three of these were only partially completed.

Overall we had a 57% response rate which is fairly successful and suggests a fair reflection of the service users' perceptions.

The overall response from users points to the majority feeling they receive a flexible, reliable and quality service from Highland Home Carers, and feel comfortable and confident with staff. On the whole the feedback has been hugely positive and supportive of the company and employees.

SERVICE USER EVALUATION REPORT



1. HHC aims to provide a flexible service .Do you think we achieve this?
2. Are you aware of the 24hour emergency phone service provided by HHC?
3. If you have used this service, did you feel you received a helpful and appropriate response?
4. Do you feel comfortable and confident with HHC staff?
5. Do you think that the carers/support workers are reliable?
6. HHC is an employee owned company. Do you think this has any effect on the service provided?
7. Do you think HHC provides a quality service?

The evaluation indicated that 46% of those questioned were not aware of the 24 hr emergency phone service provided by the company. This issue is in the process of being rectified with those who directly requested more information being informed accordingly and a general newsletter will be sent to all HHC users in due course. All other requests for information have also been addressed.

On the topic of Employee ownership, it emerged that 34% felt this had no effect on the service provided and a further 37% answered that they did not know if employee ownership has any effect. Only 28% claimed to think employee ownership has any effect. We have to

question if those who answered 'no' and 'don't know' did so because they are unaware of employee ownership and its meaning. This was not explored in more detail in the questionnaire in order to keep it as simple and short as possible to ensure maximum response.

Whatever the case, information on employee ownership will be provided to all service users', as it has been previously, to keep all informed.

### Comments

Of the 143 service users' who took part in the evaluation 57 (40%) made comments and suggestions.

The following are a selection of the positive comments received.....

'Keep up the good work'

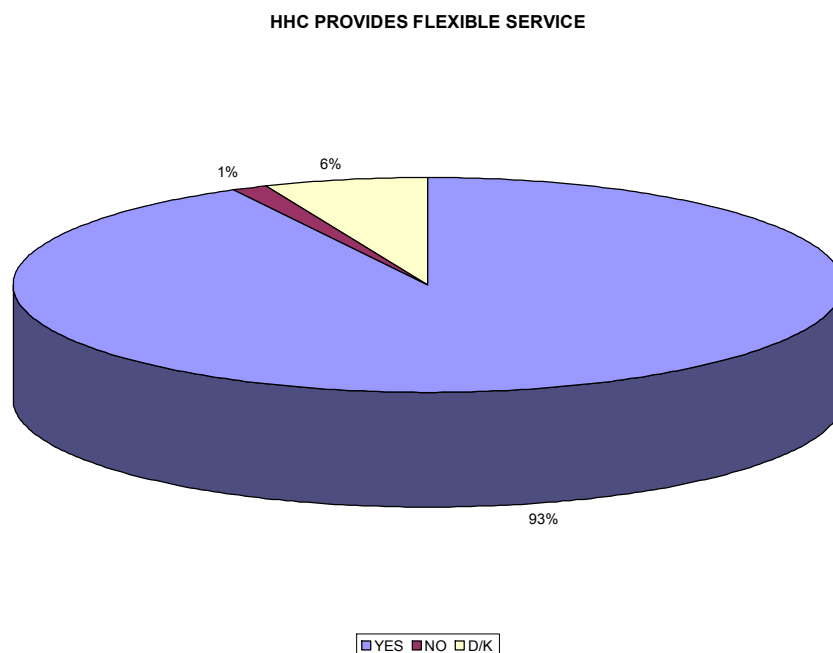
'Punctual, kind and very willing to help with requests'

'Thoroughly satisfied with service'

'Staff on the whole have been conscientious, on time and have a pleasant manner...'

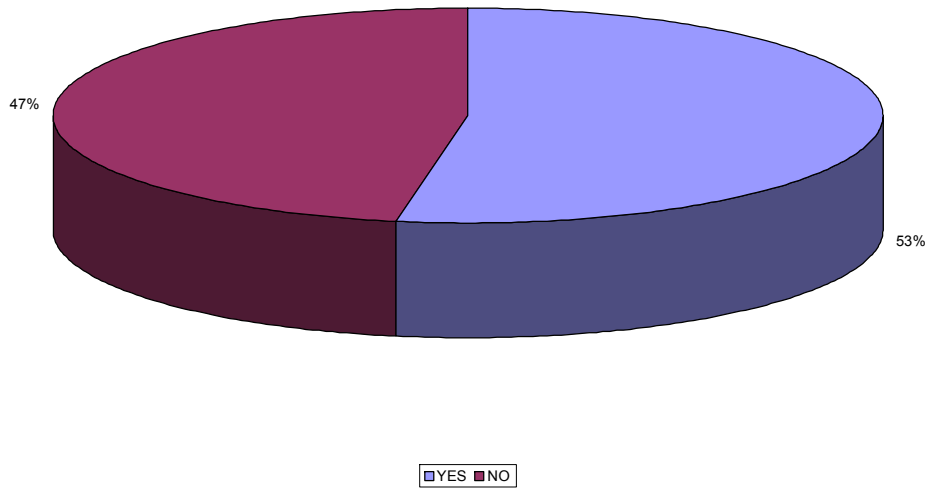
On a less positive note, of those who responded, a significant number referred to occasionally having experienced a lack of communication between office staff, carers/support workers and the users with, for example, messages not being passed on to the necessary person. This is, of course, an area which shall need to be addressed in the near future with action taken to improve the current situation. In addition to this a small number of those whom commented mentioned a lack of continuity in the carers they received, stating that they had several different Carers visiting in a short period of time. As Highland Home Carers appreciates the importance of building up a trusting relationship between Carers/support staff and users' and the value of knowing an individuals needs, this is also an area in which to improve the service.

### Results in pie chart format



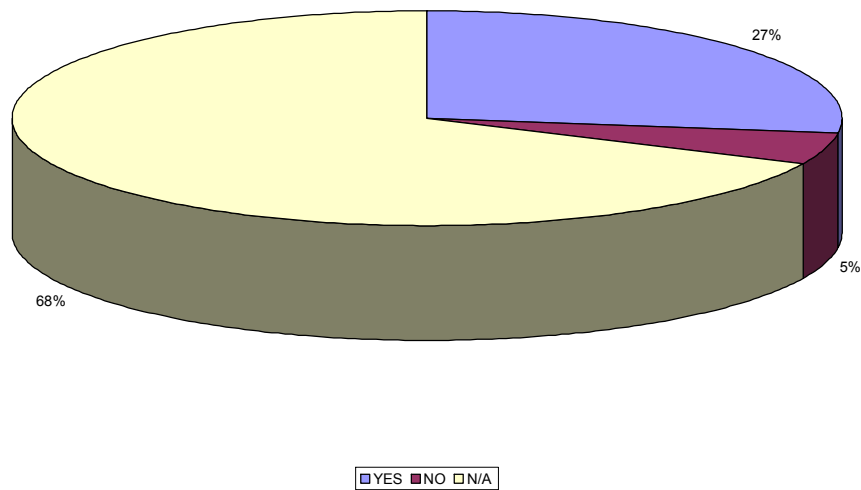
The pie chart illustrates that 93% of those questioned think that Highland Home Carers provide a flexible, professional service. 6% did no know and 1% said no.

**AWARE OF 24 HR PHONE SERVICE**



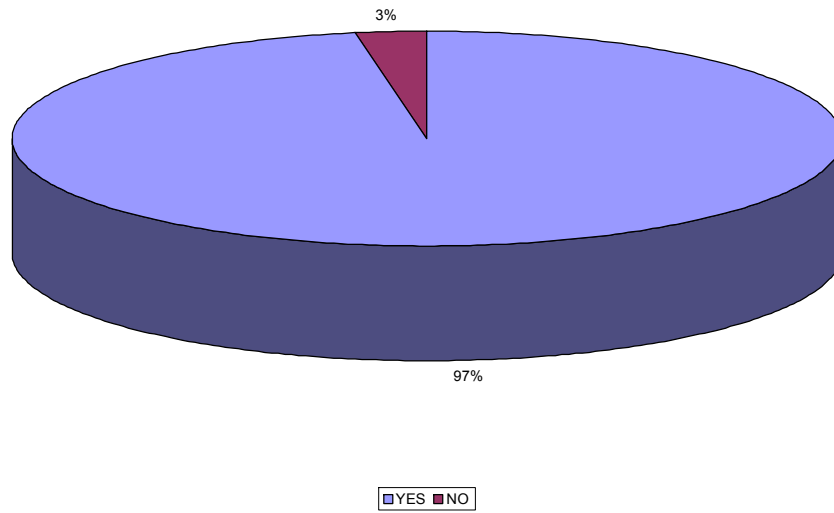
A large number of service users were apparently unaware of HHC 24 hour emergency phone service. As previously stated this matter has been dealt with and information provided.

**24HR PHONE SERVICE: APPROPRIATE RESPONSE**



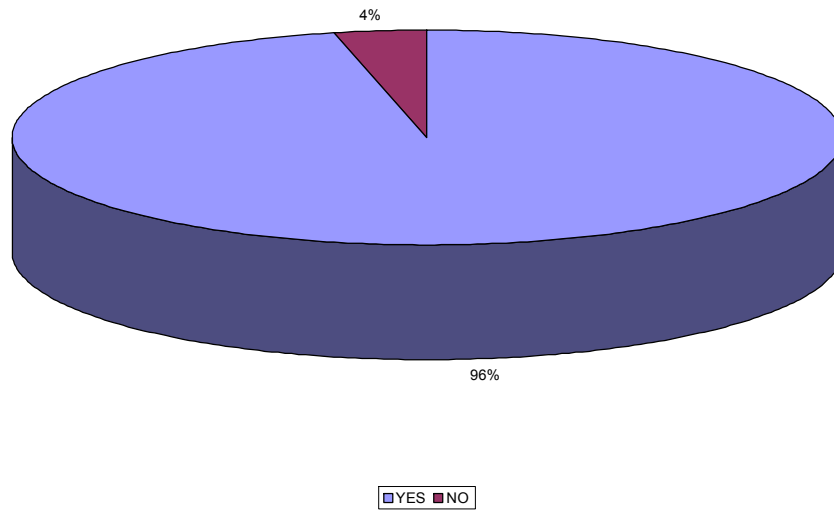
While this question did not apply to the majority of those asked 27 % felt they received an appropriate response. Unfortunately 5 % felt they did not. This has been addressed on an individual basis.

**COMFORTABLE/CONFIDENT WITH HHC STAFF**



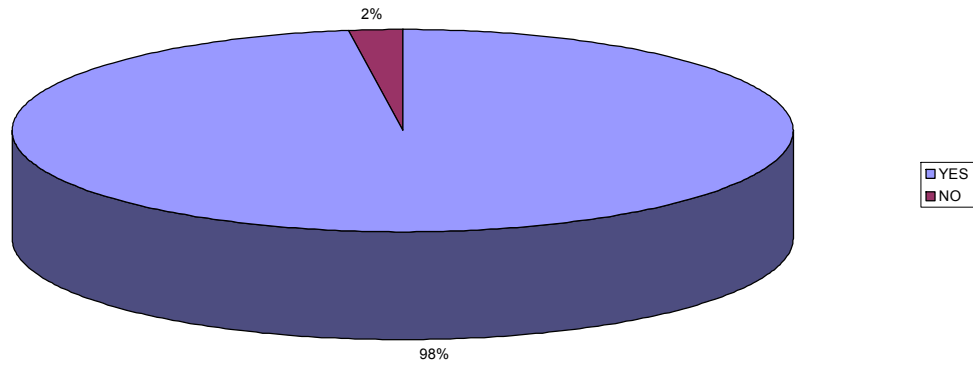
The vast majority of those who responded are comfortable and confident with HHC staff with 3 % stating otherwise.

**HHC STAFF RELIABLE**



96 % found HHC staff to be reliable with the exception of 4% of those who responded.

### HHC PROVIDES A QUALITY SERVICE



98 %, a huge majority feel HHC provide a quality service.

Having examined the questions asked in the evaluation form in accordance with the company values, aims and objectives, it has been recognised that in future years' changes may have to be made to the wording of our values, aims and objectives.

This came to attention with regards to question 5, do you think that carers/support workers are reliable? This is a question that has been asked in previous years' evaluation forms and one that the company feels is valuable and important. Therefore the issue of reliability should be included in our values, aims and objectives.

## Service user interview analysis

The next step in our stakeholder consultation plan was to interview 10 private service users to further explore service user opinion of HHC'S service provision. This also presented the opportunity to question the users' on our values, which we omitted from the evaluation forms to save confusion and maximise response rate.

Therefore the first question we asked the 10 interviewees was regarding our values, the results of which are shown here in table format.

1. How well do we live up to them?

VALUES	Very well	Quite well	Ok	Poorly	D/K
<b>Providing a flexible, professional service</b>	4	4	1	1	
<b>Promoting an inclusive approach Within the company</b>	1	4	2		3
<b>Maintaining privacy and Confidentiality, respecting rights And promoting equality</b>	3	7			

Looking at the table we see that one service user has chosen 'poorly' in response to our ability to perform in relation to value one. While, unfortunately, a negative view of our performance, this was a reaction to a particular issue concerning this user which has been discussed and dealt with.

Other than this the company was rated fairly well in performance of the values. With 3 of the 10 interviewed being unsure of value two as it does really relate more to employees rather than service users.

2. Do you think that invoices are dealt with efficiently? 8/10 said yes and 2 did not know as they did not personally deal with invoices.

3. Have you experienced communication problems with HHC?

Communication problems have already been mentioned in the evaluation and 3 of the 10 interviewed stated that they had experience of this but accepted that a margin of human error should be allowed for. This said, one user interviewed appeared to have experienced more problems than others and felt it was an area that let the company down. This individual stated that she found staff in the office did not always respond appropriately to her phone calls.

4. Do you think that HHC are A) Reliable : Very 8/10 Fairly 2/10  
B) Trustworthy: Very 9/10 Fairly 1/10

5. Do you feel continuity in staff is important?

9/10 interviewed felt that continuity was important in staff as:

'You have to explain everything to new people and it is not easy when immobile or confused..' '...needs familiar and trusted faces'

'Easier when get carers who know...but variety is the spice of life'

6. Do you think HHC have a good reputation?

8/10 said yes, 1/10 no and 1/10 did not know.

One user answered 'no' to this question but only because she had previously heard nothing of HHC in her area and felt the local community hospital where she received treatment lacked information on the company and home care in general. This user felt HHC should be better publicised and more information made available in hospitals etc. She went on to say that she would give HHC a good reference and recommend to friends.

7. A) Do you know anything about employee ownership?

B) Do you think employee ownership is important ?

C) Do you think employee ownership has an effect on the service provided?

There was a mixed reaction to employee ownership with 7/10 interviewed having some knowledge of the topic and it was explained in more detail. 5/10 felt it is important while 2 did not and 3 did not know. Only 4 felt that EO had an effect on the service provided, 4 did not and 2 did not know.

One stated 'great idea, all have a vested interest' while another stated '..don't think people are motivated by it'

8. A) Do you feel it is important for companies to strive to be environmentally friendly?

8/10 said yes, 1/10 maybe and 1/10 not sure.

B) Would a company's environmental policy influence your choice of provider?

3/10 said that yes it would while 4/10 said no, 1/10 maybe 2/10 not sure.

Those interviewed were also asked if their comments could be reported (anonymously) in our accounts, all said yes.

Positive comments :

'Staff extremely helpful and nice'

'Without Highland home Carers what would we do?'

'Carers all dedicated..'

'By jings we are looked after well!'

Negative comments:

'Carers are well trained but communication skills are lacking in the office..'

## Appendix 4

### EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

As you know, Highland Home Carers are carrying out a period of social accounting and audit this year. We would be very grateful if you could complete the following questionnaire.

Your answers to the questions will be treated confidentially and greatly appreciated.

Please circle your answers accordingly.

1 Are you...?

**part-time          full-time**

2 Are you employed as...?

**CARER      SUPPORT WORKER      CARER/SUPPORT WORKER  
OFFICE STAFF**

3 How long have you worked for Highland Home Carers?

**LESS THAN 1 YEAR    1-3 YEARS          3-5 YEARS    OVER 5 YEARS**

4 Were you in employment immediately before joining Highland Home Carers?

**YES          NO**

5 Do you think employee ownership has an effect on how you do your job?

**YES          NO**

6 Does employee ownership give you a greater sense of belonging within the company?

**YES      NO**

**COMMENTS:**

7 If you devote any of your time to charity or volunteer work in any form, would you mind telling us about it

This is our **Mission Statement:**

***“Highland Home Carers aims to provide a flexible, quality home care and support service, enabling individuals to remain in their own home with assistance in maintaining their current lifestyle and promoting independence where possible”***

8. Do you think this is a suitable description of what we do?

**YES          NO**

**COMMENTS:**

9. The following are **Values** adopted by the company, how well do you think we live up to them?

*Providing a flexible, professional service*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*Promoting an inclusive approach within the company*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*Maintaining privacy and confidentiality, respecting rights and promoting equality*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

- 10 Here are our **Objectives**. How well do you think we achieve these?

*To enable service users to stay in their own homes with our support*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*To be a fair and good employer and promote inclusion in the workplace*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*To be a financially viable company*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*To contribute to the local community and economy*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*To be an environmentally conscious company*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

*To promote and support community initiatives and charitable organisations not necessarily directly involved with the company*

**VERY WELL      QUITE WELL      OK      POORLY      DON'T KNOW**

11 We would like to know what currently makes you **happy / motivated** or **unhappy / unmotivated** at work. Please tick the box for any or all of the items in the column that accurately represents your feelings. Then please number 1 to 5 (1 being **most** important) for the items that most influence you.

	Happy/ Motivated	Unhappy/ Unmotivated	Priorities
<b>Pay</b>			
<b>Job security</b>			
<b>Terms and conditions of employment</b>			
<b>Safety from discrimination, bullying and harassment</b>			
<b>Appropriate facilities and supervision</b>			
<b>Training and developing new skills</b>			
<b>Ability to grow and be challenged through work</b>			
<b>Opportunities to develop and advance in your role or in other roles within the organisation</b>			
<b>Control and flexibility over your own work</b>			
<b>Recognition and appreciation of your work</b>			
<b>Communication</b>			

**COMMENTS:**

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO WRITE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, USING

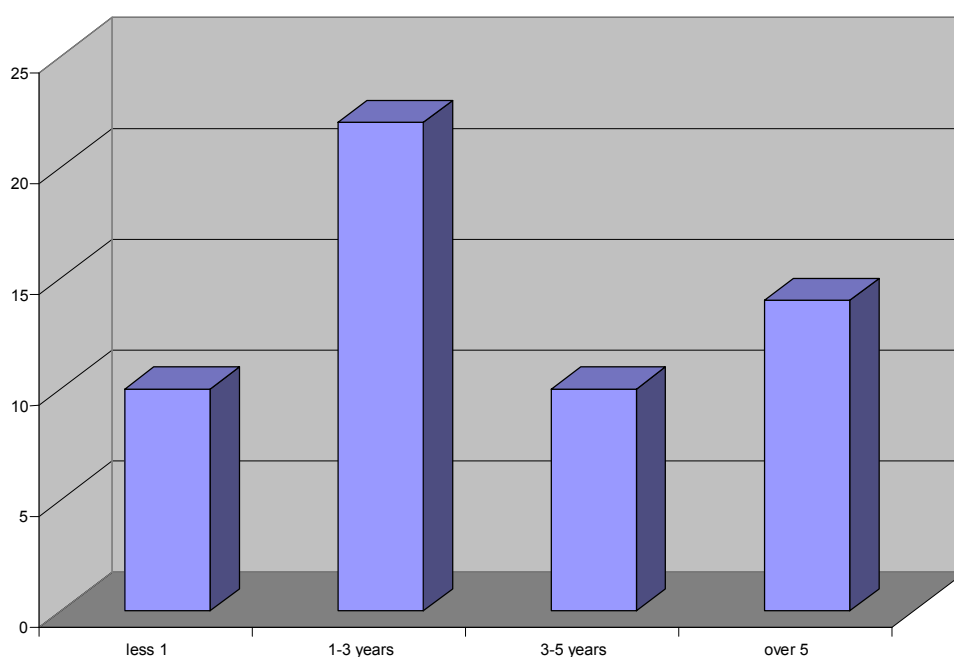
## Appendix 5

### Employee questionnaire results

We received just 56 completed questionnaires from of 124 that were sent out. At slightly less than 50% this was a fairly disappointing response from staff.

Of the 56 who responded 23 work part time, 32 full time and one person failed to answer the question. 25 of the responses were from carers, 7 from support workers, 18 from those who class themselves as both care and support staff and 6 from office staff.

The following graph shows the amount of time those who answered have been in employment with the company.



39/56 employees were in employment immediately before joining HHC.

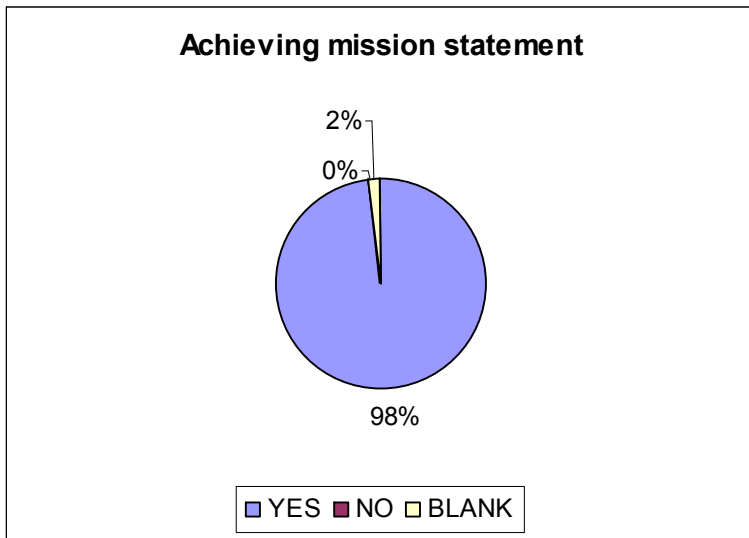
Only 12/56 felt that employee ownership has an effect on how they do there job. A more promising 31/56 felt E.O gives them a greater sense of belonging within the company. A disappointing 24/56 did not, and 1 did not answer.

We asked if anyone devotes any of their time to charity or volunteer work and if they would mind telling us about it.

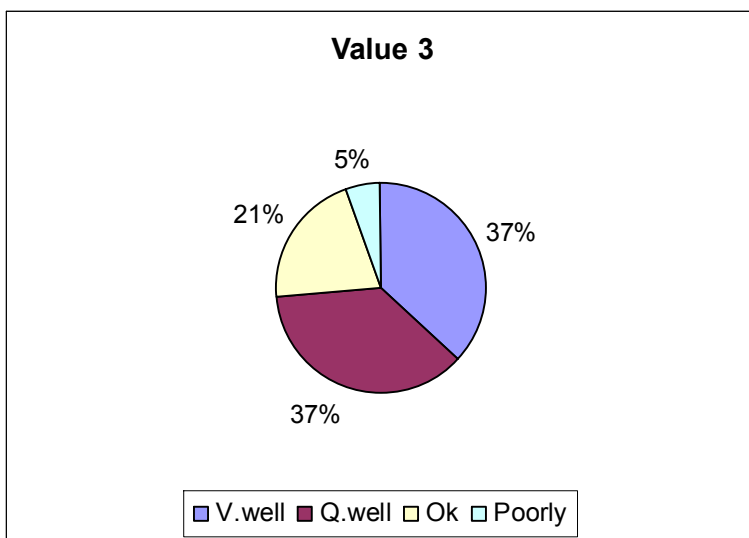
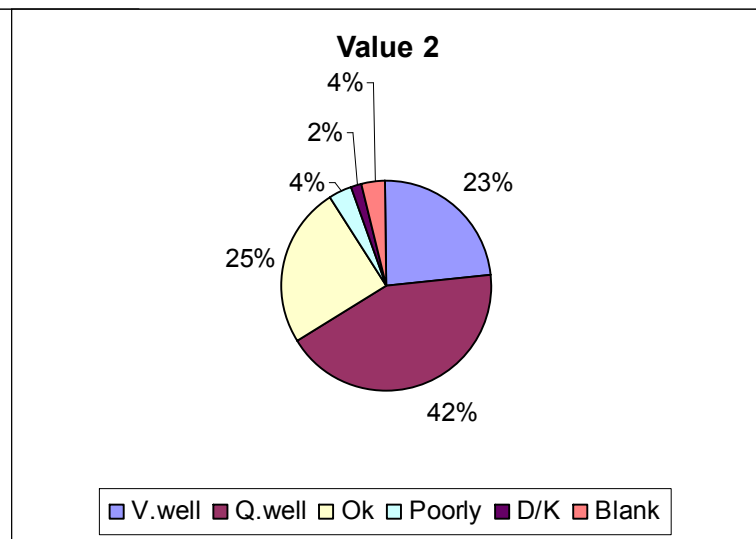
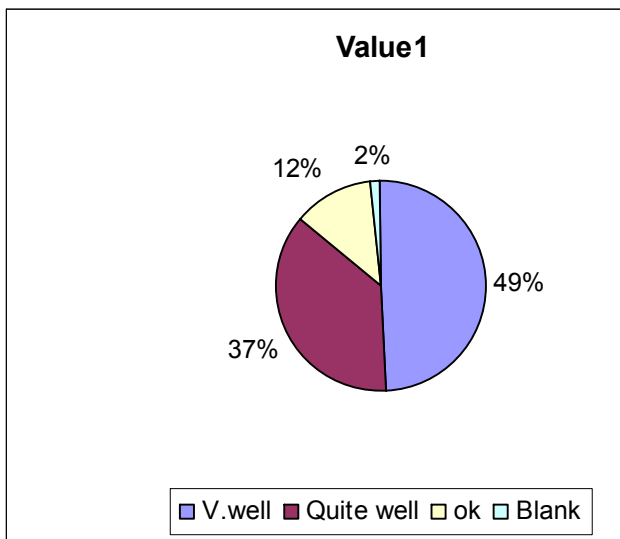
6/51 employees stated that they had.

One told of volunteering for the past 15 years with youth organisations and shop mobility and would like to do more. Another gave time to blytheswood care and another devotes Friday nights to presenting hospital radio. One employee is the chair of VISH and another the chair of L'arche Inverness and a trustee of L'arche uk, devoting around a half day per week to doing so. Other employees told of giving support to Oxfam and generally helping others in their spare time.

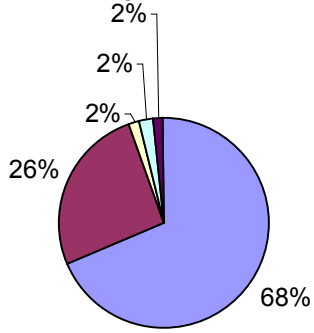
Mission statement:



Values:

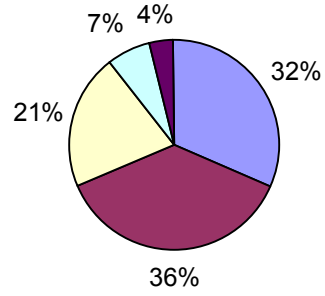


**Objective 1**



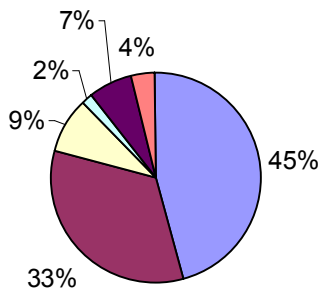
■ V.well ■ Q.well ■ Ok ■ Poorly ■ D/K

**Objective 2**



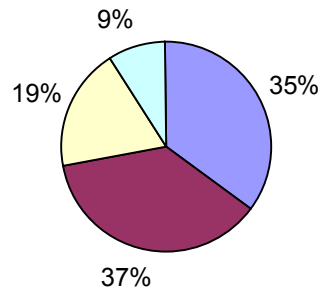
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**Objective 3**



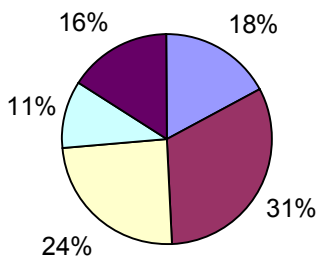
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**Objective 4**



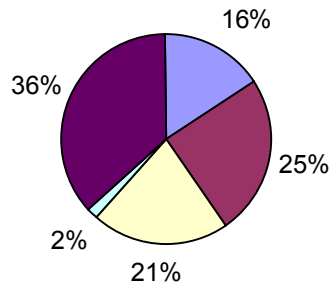
■ V.well ■ Q.well ■ Ok ■ D/K

**Objective 5**



■ V.well ■ Q.well ■ Ok ■ Poorly ■ D/K

**Objective 6**



■ V.well ■ Q.well ■ Ok ■ Poorly ■ D/K

We finished off the questionnaire with the following:

We would like to know what currently makes you **Happy / motivated** at work or **Unhappy / unmotivated** at work. Please tick the box for any or all of the items in the column that accurately represents your feelings. Then please number 1-5 (1 being the **most important** ) for the items that most influence you.

There appears to have been considerable confusion relating to the completion of this table as employees filled the table in various different ways. For instance, some numbered their priorities 1-5 in the correct column as intended but others numbered all the way from 1-10 and others rated 1-5 in the happy/unhappy column instead. As such the numbers, particularly in the priorities column do not add up. With hindsight we realise that the wording and presentation of the exercise could have been clearer.

	Happy/ Motivated	Unhappy/ Unmotivated	Priorities
<b>Pay</b>	31	21	
<b>Job security</b>	43	13	
<b>Terms and conditions of employment</b>	47	6	
<b>Safety from discrimination, bullying and harassment</b>	41	10	
<b>Appropriate facilities and supervision</b>	34	15	
<b>Training and developing new skills</b>	31	20	
<b>Ability to grow and be challenged through work</b>	35	15	
<b>Opportunities to develop and advance in your role or in other roles within the organisation</b>	27	21	
<b>Control and flexibility over your own work</b>	45	10	
<b>Recognition and appreciation of your work</b>	33	32	
<b>Communication</b>	23	32	

## Appendix 6

### Employee Focus Group Results

15/05/08

Four focus groups were held with staff with a total of 29 employees taking part. Three of these groups consisted of care and support staff and the other with administration and co-ordination staff in the office.

We opened each focus group by introducing ourselves and giving a brief explanation of the social audit and what we wanted to achieve. Following this we asked everyone present to introduce themselves, stating their role within the company and how long they had been employed. This got everyone talking and had the purpose of making those present feel more comfortable and relaxed.

Everyone had an agenda for the meeting in front of them along with a copy of the company mission statement, values and for the first group, objectives 1,2 4 and 5.

Unfortunately when we came to discuss the objectives in the first of the focus groups all present appeared to lose interest, feeling that these were somewhat repetitive and there seemed to be a general lack of understanding as to the relevance of scoring the objectives. As such the decision was taken to exclude this part of the agenda from this group and subsequent groups and move on to our discussion topics and scoring on treatment at work and training.

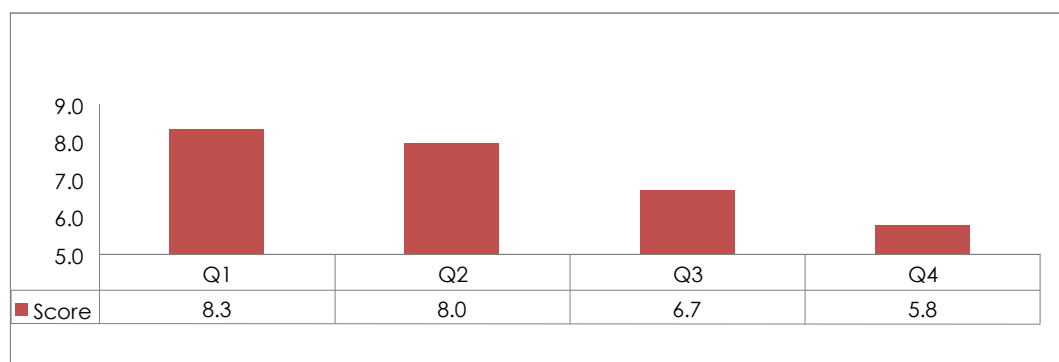
A few moments were allowed for employees to think about the topics on the agenda before we began the process of getting their feedback using the flip chart and scale of 1-10. The scale was explained and ensured all understood.

Topics on the agenda along with the mission, values and objectives were communication issues, treatment at work and training.

The Mission and values had to be explained fairly clearly and simply in some of the groups for some of those present to grasp what was being said and what we expected of them. All were also invited to write down any comments or thoughts on the paper provided. No-one took us up on this offer.

On some of the topics discussed and scored a degree of the range in answers and differences in comments etc may be due to the fact that the office/co-ordination staff and care/support staff (who attended separate groups) do tend to have conflicting opinions due to the opposing nature of their jobs.

The graph below shows the average scores per question for all present.



Question 1. Are we achieving the mission statement?

Question 2. Are the values appropriate?

Question 3. Are you well treated at work?

Question 4. What do you think of the training you have had?

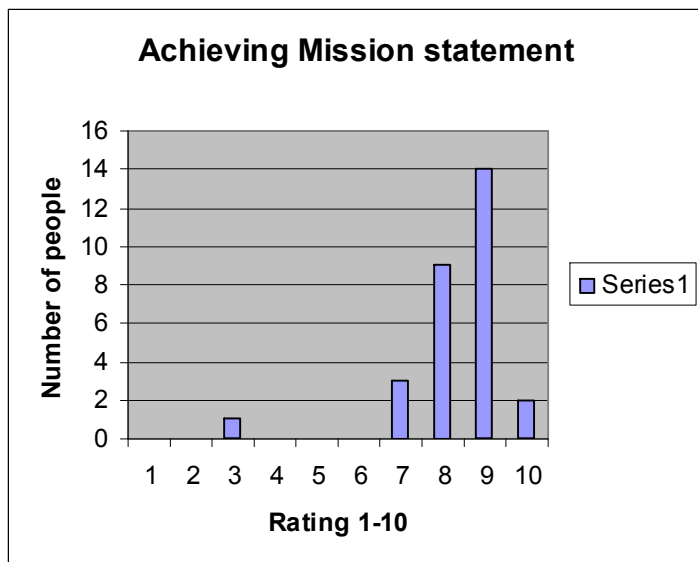
The following is a break down of the information gathered for each question/topic.

**Mission:**

'Highland Home Carers aims to provide a flexible, quality home care and support service, enabling individuals to remain in their own home with assistance in maintaining their current lifestyle and promoting independence where possible'

Are we achieving this?

The following chart displays the scores given by the employees.



Everyone agreed that the statement encompassed what the company is trying to do and felt it appropriate.

On the whole this was scored highly. Reasons given for low scores included lack of time off(due to no staff cover) and adequate support for staff reducing ability to do the job to best of ability, therefore having a knock on effect on the service provided. One employee also felt that occasionally there may be a failing in 'promoting independence' due to interference from family members in some situations. He felt it should be made very clear to relatives that carers are there to do what the individual wants and needs rather than what the family thinks they need.

It was stated by one individual, and agreed by others, that the company does everything in its power to achieve that stated in the mission but restrictions and red tape imposed by the council and outside bodies infringes upon the ability to do so.

This resulted in some placing their score lower down the scale although the rest scored basing their answer mainly on the company efforts.

It was suggested that perhaps the company mission should also include something directed at employees as currently it relates solely to the service users. Employees are, however, included in the company values and objectives. Another employee felt that the staff do not need to be included in the mission as this should be about the service users, and the employees are included in the values and objectives. These points will be open to future debate.

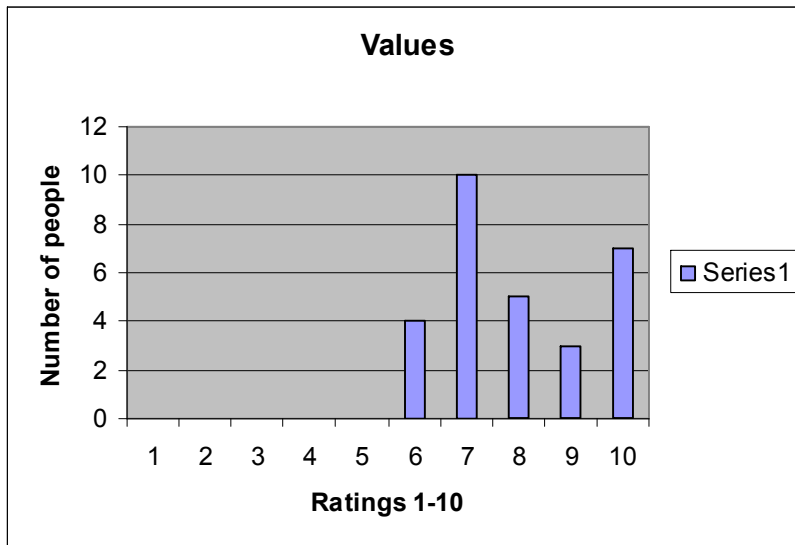
**Values:**

Promoting a flexible, professional service

Promoting an inclusive approach within the company

Maintaining privacy and confidentiality, respecting rights and promoting equality

Are these appropriate?

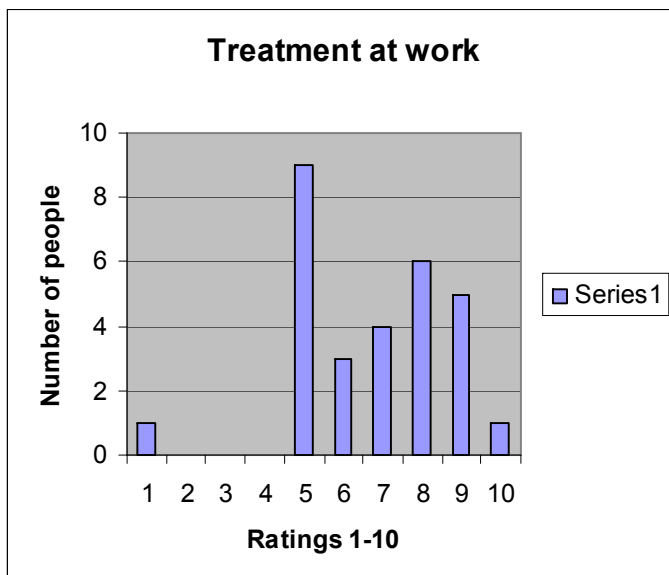


We see here that all rated the values from 5-10. Most appeared to feel that they are certainly values the company should be striving towards. Where the scores have been disappointingly low, as the values seem to be a fair reflection of what the company should be striving to achieve, it seems there has been a little confusion over the question asked. Some have apparently based their answer on if we are achieving them rather than if they are appropriate although the distinction between the two was stressed.

All present rated the values highly, agreeing that these were values the company should be aiming to achieve. It was stated that nobody could disagree that these were good values and that we do provide a professional, flexible service.

Discussion ensued and it was stated that new starts not knowing what to do had a bearing on the professionalism of the service provided. The comments and suggestions made at this stage will be included later in the report although it was felt that not enough shadowing has an impact on the service provided thus on achieving the values. It was also stated that 'HHC were slightly better in this area than other agencies'.

**Treatment at work:** Are you well treated at work?



Treatment at work warranted a lot of discussion and as we see from the chart there was a great deal of variation in scoring. The highest number of employees placed there score at 5 which itself is fairly poor. The lowest scoring of 1 was from an employee working in isolation on the west coast who feels very cut off from others and believes she receives little communication and interaction from the office and other staff. This was her reason for such a low score, of course measures must be taken to improve her and others feeling of well being in the job.

Comments on treatment at work:

### **Lack of support**

Lack of recognition and appreciation

Lack of staff to cover bed runs/nights/time off

Working long stretches as no staff to cover, feeling an element of emotional blackmail involved

Feeling of being dropped in at the deep end and left to get on with it

### **Fairness**

Different rates of pay

Fairness in treatment of all workers

Favouritism

Grief over time off (for parents needs etc)

Bed runs not shared out equally

If no argument given tendency to be 'lumped with work'

New staff being given work from established staff

### **Communication**

Sense of being made to feel guilty if saying 'no' to extra work

Not always spoken to nicely and treated as equals

Work appearing on rotas without being asked

Worry over phoning in sick because of perceived bad reception

### **Structural**

Gaps in rota

Mistakes in rota

Low pay

No control over hours

Problems over availability/flexibility

No set hours/wage

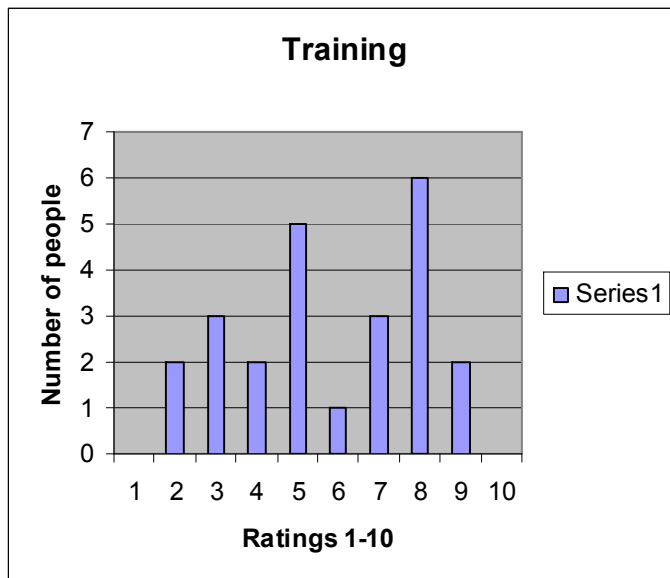
As we can see there was a long list of issues that employees felt unhappy with that should be addressed and where reasonable and possible measures taken to improve conditions.

The difference in rates of pay was discussed. This relates to the difference in pay between home care, enhanced care and housing support. The rates for these types of work are set by the council and as support work requires more qualification than care work and more of a degree of responsibility/report writing etc this work is paid more, accordingly. This was discussed at length and care workers felt that the company should be pushing more for better rates of pay for carers. All were in agreement on this and the company are in the midst of negotiations with the council on pay. Mileage paid to employees was also an issue but this again is decreed by the council.

A member of the office staff also scored fairly low on this issue due to occasional verbal abuse from members of care/support staff although felt well treated by management. There was a feeling of being expected to 'put up with' this poor treatment as part of the job. On the whole all present from the office felt well treated at work.

## Training:

What do you think of the training you have had?



Training was another area where scores varied greatly.

One member of the office staff opted out of scoring on this issue as she felt that the training courses available which the company had sent her on were of poor quality. Therefore she would have scored this very lowly and felt that would be unfair as it was not a reflection of the company but rather the training available.

Those from the office who did take part also felt this was a difficult area as the actual time available to them to take part in training is very limited due to busy work schedules.

There were four members of staff who scored zero for training (not shown on the chart) because they have had none. Although seemingly inexcusable, part of the reason for this is that the staff involved in the group work in isolation on the west coast, a considerable distance from the office in Inverness. Although these staff have been asked to attend training in Inverness they have declined to do so because of the distance they would have to travel. This matter will be raised with management and suggestions made to resolve this situation.

All other staff wanted more training and many felt there had not been enough recent training. There was also a general feeling that there should be more 'shadowing' (working with an experienced employee for a given period) for new inexperienced employees. This said, most enjoyed the training they had been given.

Training wanted:

- First aid/ yearly
- Seizures/epilepsy
- Peg feeds
- Catheter care
- Moving and handling
- Moving and handling on site
- Dementia /Alzheimer's
- Diabetes
- MS
- Choking
- Communication issues
- Writing reports
- Rights and responsibilities
- De-escalation

Mental health issues  
Refresher courses  
Pressure care  
Training to suit individual client needs

It was discussed that First aid training is not actually compulsory for the job.

It was also noted that HHC received a very good report from the care commission on the training provided by the company.

**Communication:**

This as always was a major concern for employees and merited plenty of discussion, problems listed as follows:

Lack of communication between office staff and carers/support staff  
Messages not passed on regarding deaths  
Not enough information given on clients  
Clients going in and out of hospital and staff not being informed  
Lack of information on clients and care plans  
Office should liaise more with the council on issues of team work, communication and occurrence of competitiveness between the two agencies.  
When staff phone to say they are running late the message is not passed on to client.

Employees felt that these communication issues were ongoing and frequent.

Although this was acknowledged as a problem area office staff felt that all the good communication and amount of work they do, messages passed on etc goes unnoticed with focus always given to mistakes. On the whole it was felt that communication is relatively good. It was also mentioned that the lack of a permanent receptionist and various temps in recent weeks had contributed to communication issues.

It was also noted that communication problems 'work both ways' and that staff on the whole fail to read newsletters etc containing important information.

Communication within the company is obviously an area of contention and warrants a good deal of discussion. Measures to improve the current situation should be discussed and acted upon.

**General comments:**

A need for regular reassessment of client needs  
Bad atmosphere in the office  
Not being spoken to/greeted on entering office  
Co-ordination staff not worrying what staff are going where, no matter the logistics or inconvenience as long as work is covered, also not taking enough responsibility for what occurs out on the job  
Office staff can be harassed and not have time to deal with staff  
Staff being out of pocket re. Upkeep of car and petrol  
Company is growing but not all keeping up with it- not enough staff? (office)  
No apologies or responsibility taken for errors  
Discrepancies between employee rotas and that in office  
Expected to be in two places at once  
Lack of holiday cover  
Confusion over rates of pay  
Live-in work is mentally and physically exhausting  
Parity of pay within co-ordination team

**Main problems:**

Communication  
Rotas  
Travel  
Supervision  
Pay

**Suggestions:**

More office staff  
Co-ordination staff being given certain area of the town to deal with  
Paid stand-by carers to cover work when necessary  
Staff in the office to be positioned further apart to minimise feeling of intimidation when entering the office and give more privacy to discussions.  
Holding staff social occasions e.g family summer party at HHC founder's house?!  
Better mileage allowance  
Payment of bus fares for those without cars  
A contact in the office or employee director to approach with any issues  
Time to meet/talk  
More client choice over staff  
Consistency with clients  
Privacy to talk in office  
Adverts placed for staff suited to work evenings and weekends  
Need for more male staff  
Don't rely on texts re. Changes in work – if no response contact worker  
State to clients approx. time of arrival rather than specific as not always possible to be on time  
Buddy system  
New starts beginning with easier clients  
More team work and interaction  
New starts given longer to be shown the ropes  
Extra pay for those helping to train new staff (through shadowing etc)  
Rotas in advance i.e monthly for live-in staff  
Ask before adding work to rota  
Phone calls to see how things are  
Company raise profile of carers  
Continual reassessment of client needs  
Office liaison with other agencies  
Monthly meetings  
Say 10 minutes travel time allocated within clients time and client informed of this to minimise hassle and confusion

Pep talks etc  
Introductions for new staff in the office  
Meet or greet person in the office  
Office staff would like a better rate of pay for being on call as this can constitute a lot of extra work and lack of sleep.

**Positives:**

Like other staff  
Like the job  
Like working independently  
Loyal workforce  
Good at covering if staff have personal emergency  
Flexibility  
General agreement that the flexibility of the job is good.

Good company  
Service provided is good

It is a fair company  
Shares and wage rises  
Fair bonuses  
Overall good company  
Secure job  
Progressing company  
Happy at work  
Generally a fair company to work for  
Points are taken on board  
Good when off sick  
On the whole it is a fantastic job, HHC does a fantastic job  
Lack of interference can be a good thing  
Opinions valued  
Feel listened to  
Good employer  
Love the job

'I had no clue when I started the job, the job we do in the community is second to none. Carers deserve more recognition in terms of money and respect. Rewarding but hard work....Its a wonderful job I wish everyone else could see it and what it has taught me ...'  
Others were in general agreement on this statement.

'We are all still here after years so it can't be that bad' quoted in relation to the various grievances.

It was also acknowledged that most people are happy in the job but when people get together all the moans come out!

All staff present agreed the group was constructive and would like more of the same.



**Values:**

Promoting a flexible, professional service  
Promoting an inclusive approach within the company  
Maintaining privacy and confidentiality, respecting rights and promoting equality

Are these appropriate?

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 +  
X  
X  
X  
X  
X

All present agreed that these are values we should be striving to achieve. There was discussion about changing the wording of the second value as the meaning may not be easily understood. This shall all be reviewed at the end of the audit.

Next we moved on to rating each individual objective with the question How well are we achieving these?

Objective 1 To enable service users to stay in their own homes with our support..

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 +  
X X  
X X  
X

It was stated that at times HHC does not quite achieve this and can be prevented by finances and sometimes family.

Objective 2 To be a fair and good employer and promote inclusion in the workplace..

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 +  
X  
X  
X  
X

It was stated that this was an area in which to do better and more should be done to promote inclusion. Also that HHC is a relatively fair and good employer.

Objective 3 To be a financially viable company..

				X	
				X	
_ 0	5			10 +	
				X	
				X	
				X	

All agreed that the company is financially viable as financially it does really well. It was stated that the board is as vigilant as can be although there is always potential for bigger profit. This statement was followed by the comment that the company would never be purely profit driven, it has never been the prime motive and never ill be.

Objective 4 To contribute to the local community and economy..

_ 0	5			10 +	

It was stated that HHC does actively favour local purchasing having switched suppliers of stationary etc and computer software etc. It was also stated that employees are all local, living and spending locally. This said, it was also stated that the company could do better and are limited in what is locally available.

Objective 5 To promote and support community initiatives and charitable organisations not necessarily involved with the company

				X	
		X	X	X	X
_ 0	5				10 +

Could do a lot better- particularly with matching staff to location. Could do a lot more as a company.

Objective 6 To promote and support community initiatives and charitable organisations not necessarily directly involved with the company..

				X	
				X	
				X	
_ 0	5				10 +
				X	
				X	

## Treatment of employees

How well are employees treated?

0 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 +  
X X X  
X

Comments included:

Not treated badly just (Staff) have issues

Issues are maybe not dealt with as well as would like

Could be worse

Regarding issues- it depends on the person dealing with the issue and depends on the employees approach( as to the outcome).

## Training

Training provided by HHC?

0 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 +  
X  
X X  
X X

Comments included:

Above average

Need more training but that provided is good

There is scope to provide more

There is an open budget ( for training) not curtailed

When approached for training staff are listened to and efforts made to provide

Staff encouraged re.training

Company has paid for staff to take particular courses such as Svqs and Open

University courses

## Communication

There has to be an understanding from all different points of view and understanding of different posts, remits and priorities and constraints.

There can be over-active communication

Messages are sometimes not passed on

When someone answers the phone (Staff member) they do not always identify who is speaking, this should be done.

Have to do better in this area

Shared responsibility  
Message book should be checked

On the flip side of the communication debate it was stated that people do have to make an effort to find out information, read information that is sent to them and attend meetings.

The importance of communication was discussed and how it improves business and service provided in general. It was stated that communication is the company's greatest weakness.

The possibility of a member of staff with responsibility for communication was suggested as operational staff are busy with other issues.

### **Baxi Partnership LTD**

The company link with Baxi was discussed as the last topic on the agenda..

Comments included the following:

Worry over links and communication with Baxi

As BPL changes and evolves the service HHC receives from them seems to be suffering although HHC still paying them

Board members questioned the added value and contribution from Baxi- What are we getting?

HHC have an annual audit forced upon them through the Baxi link

Lots of hidden costs created through the association

Could be better communication and running of Baxi

HHC principles/values do not fit with Baxi practice, as they are financially driven

HHC is not

The drive for employee ownership did not come from Baxi but from within the company.

On a more positive note:

Help with financial reporting and improvements also with budgeting

They were the trigger for employee ownership and without them probably could not have become employee owned company.

## **Appendix 8**

### BAXI PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION RESULTS

21/05/08

This was a fairly informal interview with Carol Leslie from Baxi Partnership limited.

Carole was first asked about the HHC mission statement.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

**“Highland Home Carers aims to provide a flexible, quality home care and support service, enabling individuals to remain in their own home with assistance in maintaining their current lifestyle and promoting independence where possible”**

Is this appropriate to the company?

Carole felt that yes, the statement is appropriate to the company but she felt that perhaps there should be some reference made to employees in the statement. She also wondered if we were making our point strongly enough in the statement. Carole mentioned once hearing company Chairperson Nick Boyle give a speech about the company and his passion for what HHC are committed to achieving made an impression on her. Nick spoke of the tremendous privilege to be able to give people choice and Carole felt that this should shine through more in the company mission statement.

Are we achieving it?

Carole answered that yes, she thinks we do. She stated that we could do better if more resources were available e.g. from the council but that HHC does this to the best of its ability.

#### **VALUES:**

- Providing a flexible, professional service
- Promoting an inclusive approach within the company
- Maintaining privacy and confidentiality, respecting rights and promoting equality

What do you think of the company values?

Although Carole felt that the values should perhaps contain reference to ‘caring’ she did agree with the company values.

This was all that was discussed with Carole although she was given the opportunity to read the Audit framework and comment on it, this was not relevant to the audit process and as such is not included here.

Carole was not consulted further as the objectives and activities do not directly concern Baxi Partnership ltd and so would not be relevant.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Meeting with Social Work Service Representatives**

**19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2008**

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

Ivan McCulloch – CLDT, Dingwall  
Andrew Newton – LDST, Inverness  
Marilla Tyler – Older Adults Team, Inverness  
Jeremy Lax – Community Care Team, Inverness

#### **AGENDA**

- Welcome to participants & thanks
  - Intro to Social Accounting (Paper CD2)
  - Intro to Framework Document (Paper framework)
  - Stress openness & honesty, even if difficult
1. Do you have any thoughts or comments on our Mission Statement & Values?
  2. Activity 1.1 - Do you think we achieve this?
    - Were you aware that we provide all these services?
  3. Activity 1.2 - Is this important? Did you know that we offer this back-up?
    - Have you or any of your service users accessed this service? What was your/their experience?
    - How important is this in terms of using HHC?
  4. Activity 1.3 - Do you think our staff are sufficiently well trained?
    - Are there areas where we could improve?
    - Do you have any suggestions for additional training?
    - How important is it that our staff are checked through Disclosure Scotland? PVGA 2007
  5. Activity 1.4 - Are we adaptable in your experience? Where could we have been more flexible? Do you have any good examples?

RATING QUESTION:           Adaptability
  6. Activity 1.5 - Do you think we do this? Can you give any examples?

RATING QUESTION:
  7. Do you have any thoughts or questions on any of our other Objectives?
  8. Why might you purchase our services rather than another agency?
  9. Is it important to you that we are an employee-owned company?

Thank you and Ending

#### **RESULTS**

This meeting was held in the Highland Home Carers office on 19/06/08. Of the nine representatives invited four attended.

An introduction to the social accounting process was given and all present were asked to give frank and candid opinions on Highland Home Carers' service provision. Each person was given a copy of the framework.

1. To begin with all were asked if they had any thoughts or opinions on the Mission statement and values. All agreed that these were fine and had nothing further to add.

2. The next step was to go through Objective 1, looking at each activity and seek opinions on performance.

Activity 1.1 providing a 24 hour care....

Do you think we achieve this and were you aware that we provided these services?  
Two of the four present were not aware of the live-in service provided. An explanation of this was given and agreed that they did not know because this was not particularly relevant to the services they require and use. All agreed that HHC do provide the services well.

3. Activity 1.2 Providing an out of hours emergency phone number...

Is this important? Did you know we offer this back-up? Have you or any of your service users accessed this service? What was your/their experience?

Yes all were aware of the stand by service. 2/4 had experience of use either themselves or service users, found to be very helpful. This was stated as one of the reasons for using HHC, because of the personal contact and calibre of support.

It was stated by the one representative that although this is a quality service it would be helpful to her team to receive feedback from this service in the morning as HHC staff have been the last contact with the service user. This was a very valid point and assurance was given that this would be taken into account in the future.

4. Activity 1.3 Employing trained and trustworthy staff...

Do you think our staff are sufficiently well trained?  
Are there areas where we could improve?  
Do you have any suggestions for additional training?  
How important is it that our staff are checked through Disclosure Scotland?

While all agreed that HHC staff are generally well trained (and sometimes more so than other agencies) points were raised about areas where additional training could be beneficial. The main issues were Dementia where ongoing training is always crucial as so many service users are presenting with this illness and Autism training as many support workers are needed for clients who are on the autistic spectrum. It was stated that it can be hard to find support staff to deal with these service users. Epilepsy training was also discussed and the difficulty with accessing this.

There was general dialogue concerning our moving and handling training, how robust is this? One person stated she had come across some staff who did not appear entirely comfortable with this. It was explained that we have an in-house trainer and this is part of induction and ongoing training. It was also stated that this can be an awkward area as every service user is different, the settings are different and new situations take getting used to. Not everyone fits with the rules, this was agreed by all.

First aid was discussed and although this is not actually compulsory all felt it was in fact important for staff to have. HHC staff do undertake a First aid course every three years. In conclusion it was stated that training is fairly good but could be better and one individual stated it is excellent.

5. Activity 1.4 Being as adaptable in our approach as is reasonably possible

Are we adaptable in your experience?  
Where could we have been more flexible?  
Do you have any good examples?

One individual stated that in the main we are extremely flexible 'someone always gets back to me, other agencies don't'

The issue of continuity was raised at this point and it was stated that recently there have been cases lately with clients with Dementia where too many carers have been attending. We all agreed that this is not appropriate for any clients it is especially important for those with dementia to have familiar faces.

While we agree whole heartedly with this explanations were given for why this may sometimes happen e.g. covering bed runs in the evening, the same staff cannot work every night and we need to use those who are available to cover shifts. Measures will be taken to try and rectify this problem.

It was also mentioned that this relates to our Mission statement of 'Promoting independence' as when lots of different people are working with a client, it is difficult to monitor progress and to tap into strengths. Again with regards to personal care and dignity, too many faces cannot be very pleasant for the service user.

With regards to being adaptable, one person stated that it can be hard trying to organise a programme of care for someone and knowing if it is going to work as often HHC have to ask them to wait a fortnight until the service user can be worked into a new rota. This can be frustrating. It was explained that HHC do not want to say 'yes' we will provide the service and then be unable to do so. It was also stated that HHC could possibly provide the service when required but for the first week or so there would be a host of different carers attending until a regular team could be established. This would then return us to the problem of continuity.

It was also stated that with regards to palliative care the response needs to be quick, HHC is trying to be more flexible in this area.

#### 6. Activity 1.5 Doing our utmost to provide the service required...

Do you think we do this?  
Can you give any examples?

It was stated that sometimes due to a lack of HHC staff to cover evening shifts that sometimes work has to be put elsewhere.

A brief discussion on employee ownership followed. It was stated that this probably helps to keep staff; it means people have an investment in keeping high standards. It probably helps to try and move the company in a positive direction, committed staff, and all helps for quality.

To conclude it was asked if anyone had any more general comments about the company which resulted in the following comments:

(HHC used for) Reliability, quality, adaptability, flexibility and personalised service.  
There is always someone there when you phone  
Sometimes have to use other agencies when HHC are too busy.

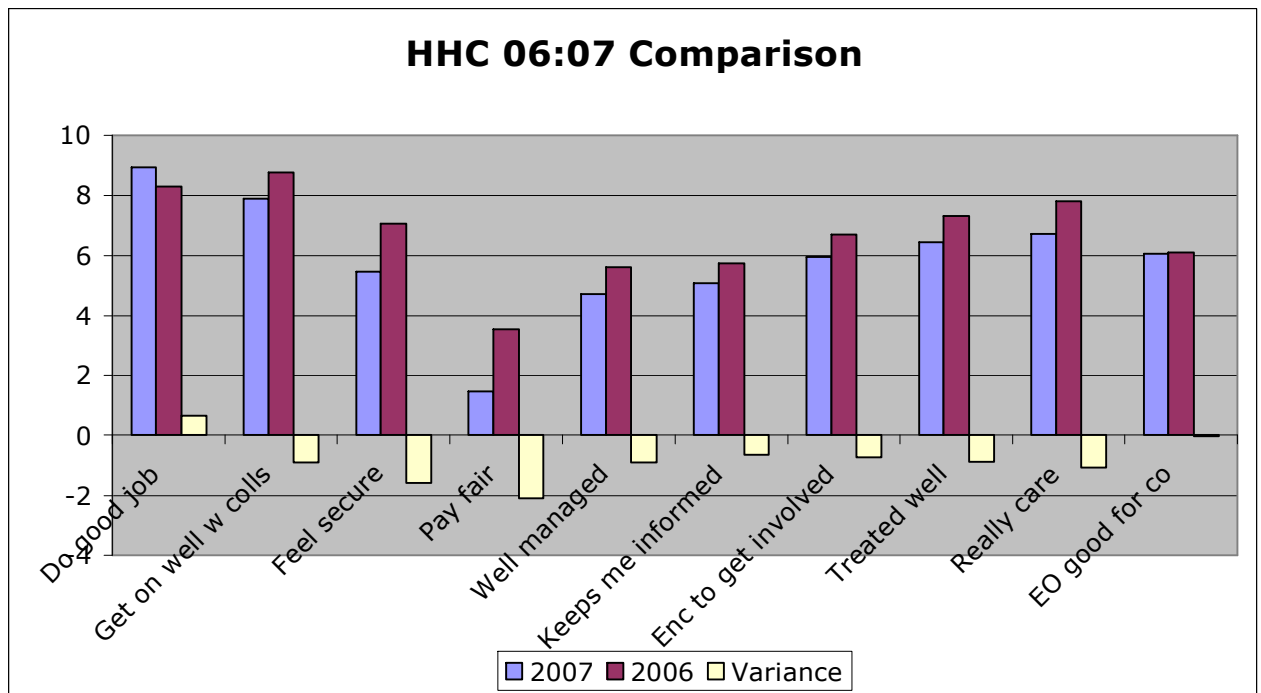
**Appendix 10**

**Highland Home Carers Interim Survey Report**

There were 59 responses to the survey, which suggests that results should give a fair reflection of the attitudes and demographics of the employees of Highland Home Carers.

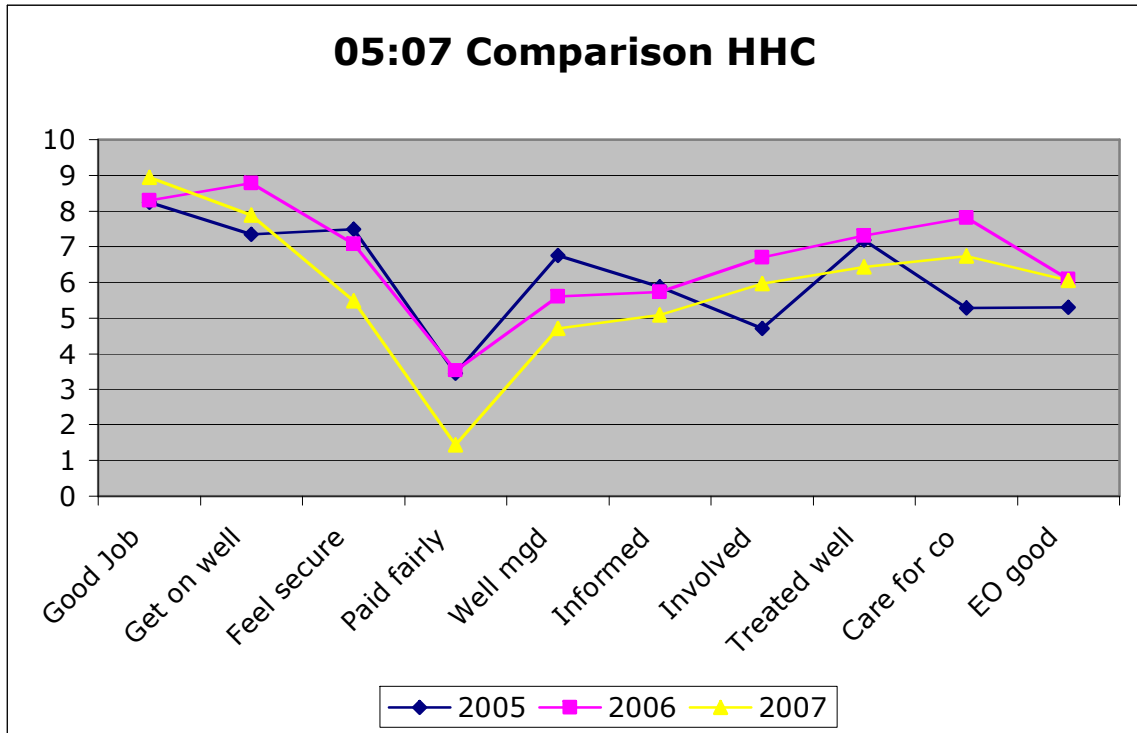
**Overall Attitude Results**

HHC returned very positive results last year, and 2007 shows a very slight decline across the board.



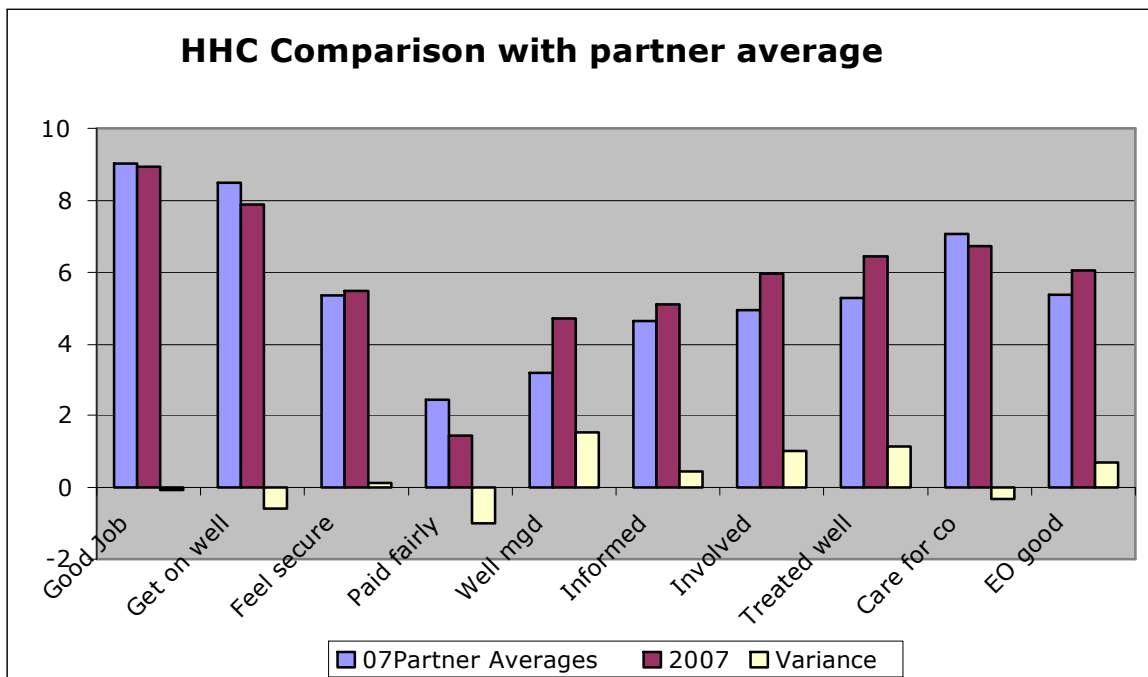
Perceptions of fairness of pay, and feelings of security show the most significant decreases. The number of employees who feel that employee ownership is good for the company has remained the same, and there is a slight increase in the numbers who feel they do a good job. There is a very slight decrease across all other categories.

Over the three years HHC employees have been completing the survey, 2007 shows poorer results. It is worth bearing in mind that the 2005 survey only attracted a handful of responses and therefore would not interpret too much out of this. 2007 and 2007 graphs follow a very similar pattern, with 2007 falling just below 2006 across the categories. Decreases are slight, however, these results are worth noting and investigating further.

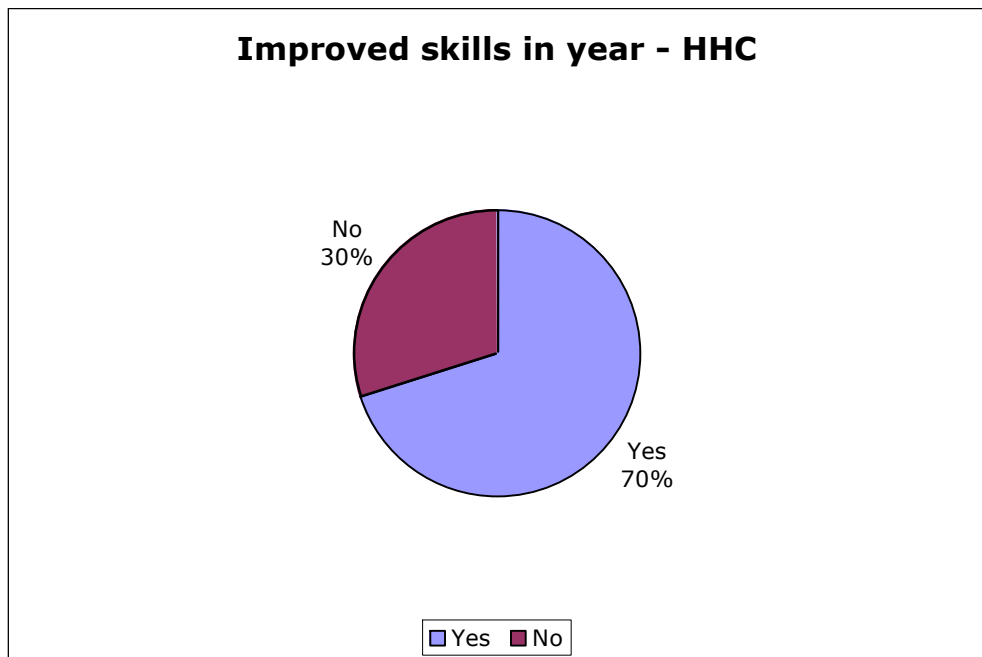


HHC compares well to the other partner companies when the results are averaged out.

The lower score on getting along with colleagues may be because many HHC employees work in isolation. Perception of fair pay is slightly lower than the partner average, and caring for the company is also very slightly lower. In all other categories HHC score higher than the partner average score.



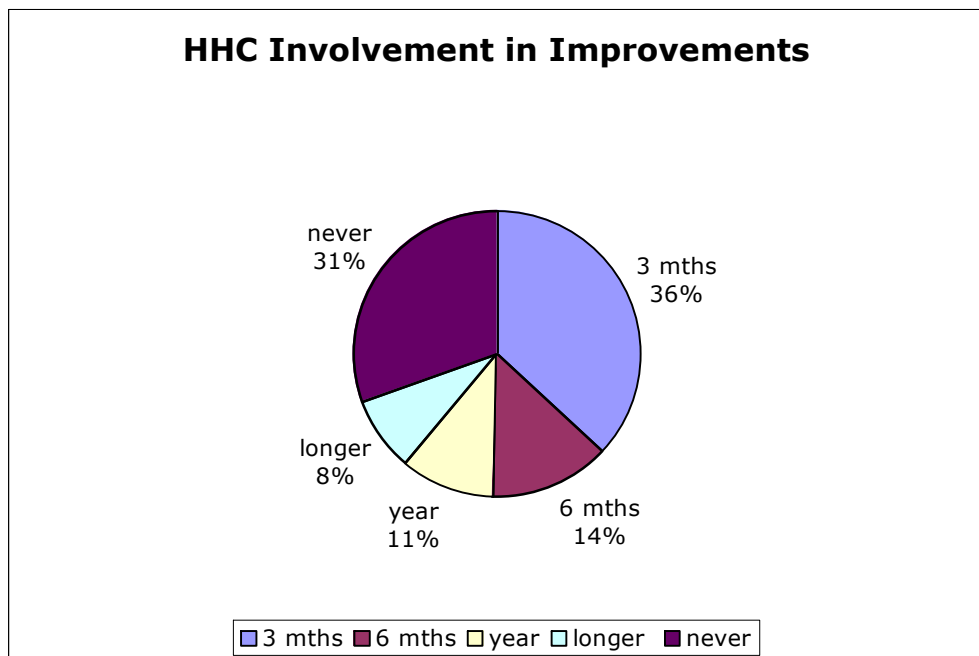
70% of HHC employees report having experienced some form of skill



development over the past year, which demonstrates a very healthy investment in training.

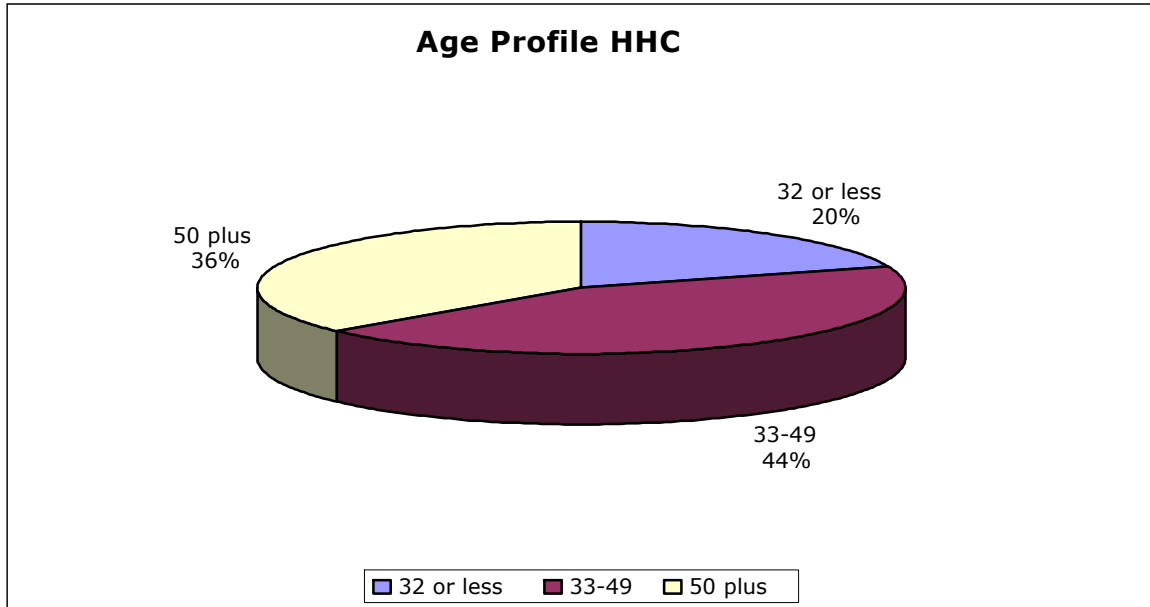
Involvement in improving the company is seen as an indicator of employee engagement and HHC have 50% of employees reporting that they have been involved in this in the past six months. A worrying figure is that 31% don't think they have been involved at all.

85% of employees report having voted in elections in the past year, with 11% saying they have never voted.

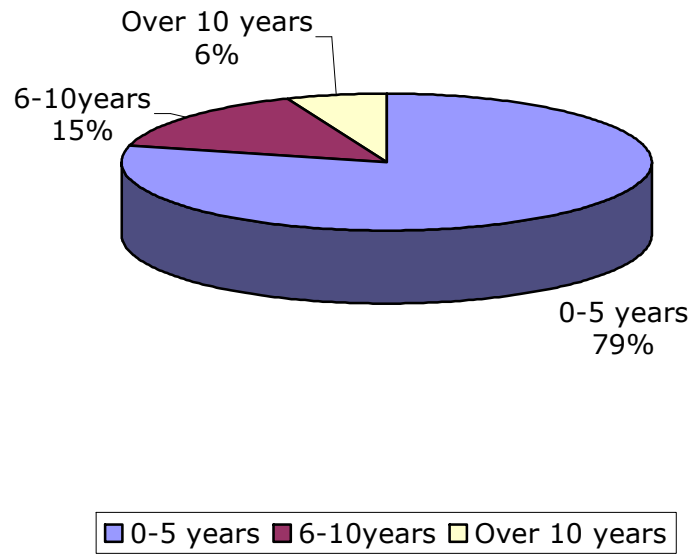


## Demographics

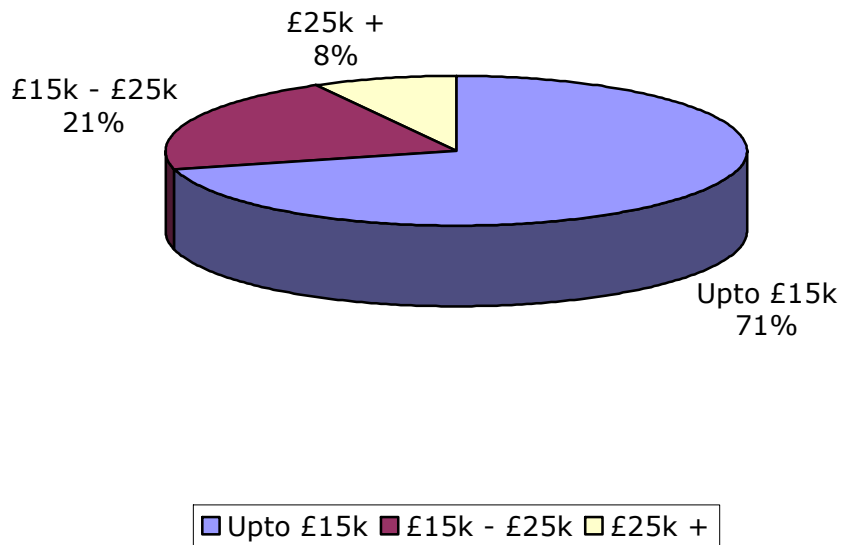
Bear in mind these are the results of less than 50% of the company so may not be true reflection.



## Length of Service



## Salary Distribution HHC



### Comments

*Who surveys Baxi?*

*Lack of communication between people in the office, messages don't always get passed on  
Don't get enough information (sometimes none) about clients (new) on rota when you ask in office  
Little or no training/introduction when first start job. Just sent out to clients on own.*

*Have been treated unfairly involving bad communication also false information resulting in suspension due to this. Colleague being very difficult to work with. Thinking or assuming that if they have worked with this client they know how and the way things should be done on every shift. That suits "them" which I personally disagree and this can cause contradictions and friction.  
Now I am very confused when phoning company to explain grievances with colleagues as I personally feel they have "favourites" which makes you feel very inadequate. Also being told with other colleagues that the more you call the company you are disliked/victimised.*

*As I have only been employed by HHC for about 3 months I do not feel that at present I can give a true reflection on how well the come company treats its employees.*

*Would like more interaction with people in the company outside Inverness*