

# Annual SWF Customer Satisfaction Survey Results and Analysis 2024-25

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## 1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the feedback gathered from customers of SPSO's Scottish Welfare Fund service over the past year. It covers response rates, satisfaction from customers who received a review and plans for improvement generated from feedback.

The main findings over the past year are listed below:

- 1.1** The results demonstrate a high level of customer satisfaction with a majority of positive responses being received across all questions.
- 1.2** The highest scoring questions were linked to the service being easy to access, explanation of the process, timeliness, and accessible language being used.
- 1.3** The lowest scoring questions were linked to listening to understand circumstances, considering information fairly before reaching a decision and clear explanation of the decision.
- 1.4** The majority of qualitative comments evidenced strong satisfaction with the service. Common themes included a timely and effective service, empathy and understanding being shown, and a person-centred approach.
- 1.5** A small minority of comments highlighted dissatisfaction with the service including not being listened to or believed, or circumstances not being taken into account.

## 2. Distribution and Returns

In Q2, a new survey approach was introduced after no responses were received in Q1. The survey design process drew on customer preferences, external insights, and research to improve engagement. Key changes included a shorter survey, distributing

the survey separately from the decision, and personalised invitations. Surveys were sent by email (unless otherwise requested) one day after decisions were issued. Response rates, measured monthly, rose significantly under the new method.

## 2.1 Annual Total

Total no. of surveys issued	309
Total no. of surveys completed	42
Response rate %	14%

A 14% return rate represents a positive outcome, especially given the nature of Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) reviews. These review process is generally much shorter than other SPSO services, resulting in briefer engagement with staff.

Many SWF applicants are also facing serious or urgent challenges, such as homelessness, fleeing domestic abuse, or struggling to afford essential items like food or energy. We accept that in these circumstances, completing a survey may not be a priority. We are therefore grateful to those who took the time to share their feedback. The information gathered provided valuable insight into the quality of the service we provided. We will continue to monitor response rates throughout the coming year.

## 3. Quantitative and Qualitative Survey Results

- Quarter 1 : n/a
- Quarter 2 : [link to survey results](#); [Customer Survey SWF 2024-25 Q2](#)
- Quarter 3 : [link to survey results](#); [Customer Survey SWF 2024-25 Q3](#)
- Quarter 4 : [link to survey results](#); [Customer Survey SWF 2024-25 Q4](#)

## 4. Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Feedback

Feedback has been analysed by the Head of Investigations for Independent National Whistleblowing Officer & Scottish Welfare Fund Reviews and the SWF Team Manager . It has also been shared with SPSO's Leadership Team, the Service Improvement Forum and all SWF colleagues.

### 4.1 Analysis of feedback

Notable points of improvement	Relevant service standard(s)	Management response/action/recommendation. Date of any action taken
1. Minority of customers referenced not being listened to or that their circumstances were not taken into account.	We will communicate effectively with you; We will work in an open and fair way	Discussed by management and team in meetings on 14 Nov 2024 and 20 Feb 2025. Noted that decision bias could influence responses to these questions, but that in all cases, we should ensure we listen to individual circumstances and reflect in decisions.

2. One customer suggested referring to food banks in Q3 responses.	We will communicate effectively with you.	Agreed in team meeting on 20 February 2025 that we cannot refer to individual food banks, as we cover all of Scotland. Instead, we will ensure we signpost to local services like the SWF team or social work to progress.
3. The survey scale used in Q2 was not effective for analysis.	n/a	We amended the survey scale at the end of Q3, leading to clearer results and more effective analysis.
Notable points of satisfaction	Relevant service standard(s)	Management response/action/recommendation. Date of any action taken
1. The majority of responses received across all three quarters for all questions showed strong satisfaction with the service. Likewise, qualitative feedback was also mostly of a positive nature. This shows strong customer service performance across the year.	Multiple	Shared feedback with the team using quarterly reports via email and at team meetings each quarter. Most most recently on 11 June 2025.

## **5. Conclusion**

The results show consistently strong satisfaction with the service. We were especially encouraged to note that many customers described being treated with kindness and empathy, and that they found the service both effective and efficient. This is particularly important given the urgent and often traumatic circumstances many applicants face.

A small number of responses highlighted concerns about not feeling heard or their circumstances not being taken into account. In the year ahead, we expect to remove questions relating to the decision itself, in line with changes to our customer service standards that shift the focus to the quality of service rather than the outcome. This is because there is a separate process for handling dissatisfaction with the review outcome, (the reconsideration process). This may reduce these responses to these questions. Nevertheless, we will continue to monitor these areas and explore further improvements where needed.