Evaluating the impact of the 2004 OFT market study into doorstep selling

Prepared for the Office of Fair Trading by GHK

ANNEXES

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A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A.1 This annex presents a detailed overview of the method of approach for the research and fieldwork elements of the evaluation study.

Overview

A.2 The evaluation involved a mix of primary and secondary research comprising five key elements:

- **desk research** – GHK undertook desk based economic research to seek evidence on the size and nature of doorstep sales, the conduct and behaviour of doorstep sellers and consumers, and to analyse complaints data from Consumer Direct, looking at the number of complaints over time and the different types of product and reasons for the complaints.

- **consumer survey** – GHK used market research company, GfK, to complete a survey of 643 consumers that had recently purchased products/service on the doorstep and/or had started a purchase process but then cancelled it. The survey explored their experiences of and attitudes towards doorstep selling, including their awareness of their rights and the changes to those rights since 2004.

- **mystery shopping exercise** – GfK completed 90 mystery shopping assessments, including 45 visits from double glazing companies and 45 visits from mobility aids companies, to examine trader behaviour and compliance with new legislation and regulations.

- **stakeholder interviews** – GHK undertook 15 interviews with a range of government and industry stakeholders to discuss how the doorstep market has changed since 2004 and what impact the OFT market study had on doorstep selling, and

- **doorstep seller interviews** – GHK completed a further 15 interviews with doorstep sellers to explore how the doorstep selling practices have changed since 2004 and what impact the OFT market study has had on doorstep selling practices.
Desk Research

A.3 The desk research identified, reviewed and analysed relevant data and literature relating to the following core evaluation themes:

- data and evidence on the size and nature of doorstep sales in terms of relevant products and services and their respective sales/purchases based on:
  - data and evidence from trade associations including the Direct Selling Association (DSA), British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA), and the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)
  - Office for National Statistics (ONS) consumer survey data and statistics on industry sales
  - Government and regulatory authority data (for example, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem)), and
  - existing research studies relating to specific product or service areas.

- data and evidence on the conduct and behaviour of doorstep sales traders based on:
  - data on the nature of action taken by relevant authorities (e.g. trading standards) against doorstep sellers for non-compliance with new legislation
  - consumer complaints data from the OFT, Consumer Direct, and Ofgem and
  - data on the scale and nature of traders that operate under accreditation schemes/codes of practice (such as OFT approved schemes provided by the DSA and BHTA, and other schemes
such as TrustMark and the Local Authority Assured Trader Schemes Network - LAATSN).

- data and evidence on the conduct and behaviour of consumers in relation to doorstep sales based on:
  - consumer complaints data from the OFT, Consumer Direct, and Ofgem
  - data and evidence from consumer associations (such as Which?, Consumer Focus, Citizens Advice and Consumer Direct)
  - data on consumers using accredited firms only (for solicited work), and
  - data on consumers cancelling contracts during cooling off periods.

**Consumer survey**

A.4 A consumer survey was designed and implemented based on the sample and survey design employed in the 2004 market study. The survey for this study was conducted by telephone with the sample selected using random digit dialling. The target audience for the research was the same as that in the 2004 consumer survey, namely adults aged 18+ in the UK.

A.5 As telephone numbers are associated with a household rather than an individual, sampling was necessarily a two-stage process – drawing a sample of telephone numbers and then selecting an individual eligible adult to interview within each co-operating household. A quota profile check was used to monitor respondent demographics (this is the same method employed in the 2004 OFT consumer surveys). For the initial
‘screener survey’ (described further below), quotas were set on the basis of age, gender, social grade and region.¹

A.6 An individual was eligible for a full interview if they were recent purchasers of products/service on the doorstep and/or people who started a purchase process but then cancelled it. Based on preliminary work from the study team, around 14 per cent of the population was expected to fall into this category and be eligible for the survey. As this is a low population penetration, it was necessary to screen a large number of households to achieve a robust sample.

A.7 The total number of screening interviews undertaken was 8,181, which delivered a sample of 643 completed full interviews with eligible respondents. This was a larger than anticipated screening exercise due to the difficulty of reaching young people via landline numbers and a lower than expected willingness to take part in the research. Figure A.1 presents these figures in the context of the overall survey process and shows that 14.6 per cent of those screened were eligible for interview; it should be noted however that eligibility stood at a steady 14 per cent until the final days of interviewing (2-4 December 2011). This late increase in eligibility may point to a pre-Christmas surge in doorstep selling activity.

¹ Quotas were not set on ethnicity partly because of the adverse knock-on effect on the strike rate, but also because different ethnicities are generally well-represented in GfK’s telephone samples.
A.8 In 2004, the consumer telephone survey took the approach of prioritising higher value purchasers (defined as products or services with a value of £500 or more) in order that a sample of sufficient size could be achieved for separate analysis and this was also the approach adopted for this survey.

A.9 The questionnaire for the survey was designed collaboratively between the study team and the OFT. Although it was based largely on the 2004 survey, some questions were dropped so that additional relevant questions could be included. The final questionnaire is included in Annex B.

A.10 All new questions were subject to expert review within the study team before being piloted. The pilot involved 59 screener interviews and nine full interviews. Upon completion of the pilot, final changes to the survey questionnaire were made prior to the main stage of interviewing.
A.11 The screened sample of individuals was weighted to be representative of the UK population aged 18+ by age within gender, social grade and region.\textsuperscript{2}

**Mystery shopping exercise**

A.12 A mystery shopping exercise was undertaken which consisted of a total sample of 90 home-based assessments split evenly between two market segments – double-glazing and large mobility aids. The assessments focussed on the doorstep seller’s broad compliance with legislation, price transparency/variability and sales processes and techniques.

A.13 Within each segment, three assessments were allocated to each assessor (for a total of 15 assessors). Each assessor was given two specified organisations to contact based on the large organisations within the market, and the third was chosen by their own online/phone book search for local businesses.

A.14 Each assessor gave the exact same specification to each organisation so comparative quotes could be provided. They were instructed to provide the same information for each of the following categories:

- double-glazing (doors and windows only – no other types to be included in quote):
  - reason for quote (e.g. just updating/right time, noise levels, energy saving)
  - size of house
  - number of windows/doors to be double glazed and included in quote

\textsuperscript{2} Target weights were as per the GfK NOP Telebus, which were taken from the following sources: ONS 2009 Mid-Year Population Estimates, BARB Population Estimates 2010/ NRS 2010, Labour Force Survey Summer 2010.
- quantity by lower and ground floors
- wood or uPVC finish
- secondary double-glazing (or not)
- window type and volume of: standard, tilting open or sash

- large mobility aids:
  - impairment of user (if any)
  - age of end user
  - current mobility aids
  - regularity of use, for example, every day, twice a week etc, and
  - type of mobility aid for enquiry: scooter/wheelchair/rollator/frame.

A.15 During the sales visits, assessors stated their needs fairly simply and were led by the salesperson, answering questions realistically based on their own circumstances and requirements.

A.16 Assessors were profiled to match the scenario selected. For the double-glazing assessments, the aim was to have all home owners without double-glazing on the items selected (windows, conservatory, etc.). For the mobility aid assessments, all assessors (or their third party) had real disabilities appropriate to the item for which they were enquiring and did not have one of these items currently.

A.17 Following agreement of the scenarios, sample structure, questionnaire and briefing notes, the fieldwork was conducted based on the questionnaire provided in Annex B.
Stakeholder interviews

A.18 A total of 15 semi-structured interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders (a list of which is presented in Annex D). Interviews lasted up to one hour and were undertaken face-to-face and by telephone to suit the interviewee. The topic guide used as the basis for the interviews is presented in Annex B.

Interviews with doorstep traders

A.19 An accreditation letter provided by the OFT was used by way of introduction to the businesses contacted for interviews. This letter set out for the businesses the purpose of the research and, hence, the context for the interviews.

A.20 Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 businesses involved in doorstep selling. The interviews lasted up to 30 minutes and were undertaken by telephone as this was the most convenient interview format for traders.

A.21 Although the sample is small and not representative of doorstep sales, the evaluation looked to diversify the sample as far as possible according to the following business characteristics:

- product value:
  - high value products (more than £500) – it was originally intended that half of the sampled businesses would be involved in selling high value products (such as double glazing, conservatories, mobility aids and major landscaping works), whereas 11 of the 15 businesses fell into this category in the actual sample
  - medium value products (between £35 and £500) – it was intended that one-quarter of the sampled businesses would be involved in selling medium value products (such as small garden products, home repair/maintenance services, soft-furnishings and home security products such as alarms), whereas four of the 15 businesses fell into this category in the actual sample
o low value products (under £35) – it was intended that one-quarter of the sampled businesses would be involved in selling low value products (such as cosmetics, home wares, cleaning products and food products), whereas no interviews were completed with such businesses as a result of difficulties in seeking agreement from such businesses to participate.

• sales location:

o businesses were interviewed across a small spread of locations in England – including the south of England (eight interviews), the Midlands and the east of England (four interviews) and the north of England (two interviews) – and Wales (one interview), and

• business size:

o businesses were also recruited on the basis of their size with four interviews with single owned/run businesses, eight interviews with small and medium businesses and three interviews with larger, national businesses.

A.22 Complaints data from Consumer Direct were examined to further stratify the sample based on the conduct/behaviour of the business. These data provided information on the number/nature of consumer complaints directed towards businesses for doorstep selling and/or according to their compliance or non-compliance with new doorstep selling regulations in the 2006-2010 period, which made it possible to interview businesses that had displayed a mix of conduct/behaviours. In this regard, interviews were completed with nine businesses that did not appear in the Consumer Direct complaints data regarding doorstep sales and six businesses that did appear in the data.

A.23 The topic guide used for interviews conducted with doorstep sellers is presented in Annex B.

3 This decision was taken in agreement with the OFT.
B RESEARCH TOOLS

B.1 This annex sets out the questionnaires and other tools used for primary research.

Consumer survey questionnaire

‘Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is [INSERT INTERVIEWER NAME] and I am calling from GfK NOP, an independent research company, on behalf of the Office of Fair Trading. The Office of Fair Trading is a Government body responsible for protecting consumer rights and they have commissioned my company to undertake an important survey about doorstep selling. Would you be willing to help?

IF NECESSARY:

• The initial questions will take 3 minutes to complete.

• The study is being undertaken strictly for research purposes and all your answers will remain totally confidential.

• The results of the survey will be published and will be used to guide Government policy in this area.

• Your telephone number was generated at random by a computer to ensure the inclusion of all households, including those who are ex-directory.

• If you have queries about the study, the project manager at GfK NOP is Viv Young; her contact number is 020 7890 9840.

• If you would like to discuss the research with someone at the Office of Fair Trading, please call Laura Phaff on 020 7211 8701.

• If you would like to check that the survey is being conducted in good faith I can give you a Freephone number for The Market Research Society, who will confirm the validity of this survey (0500 39 69 99).’
SCREENER

A1  Code gender *(only ask if unclear)*

- Male
- Female

A2  To ensure that we speak to a representative sample of people, please can you tell me your age at your last birthday?

INTERVIEWER: Enter age directly. If necessary, prompt to age bands

SINGLE CODE

[enter age]
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 or over
- Refused

A3  And again to ensure our survey is representative, may I ask what is the job or profession of the Chief Income Earner in your household?

IF NECESSARY: that is the person with the highest income, whether from employment, pensions, state benefits, investments or any other source

IF RETIRED, PROMPT FOR PREVIOUS JOB/PROFESSION

* JOB TITLE
* JOB DESCRIPTION
* INDUSTRY
* QUALIFICATIONS
* SIZE OF COMPANY

INTERVIEWER: Record social grade.

- A
- B
- C1
- C2
- D
READ OUT

The survey is about the sale of goods or services at your doorstep or in your home. The person selling the goods or services might have made an appointment with you or they may have called at your address unexpectedly.

Your commitment to the purchase must have been made DURING the person’s visit to your home, but NOT after or before that first visit. Tupperware parties and the like are NOT included.

ASK ALL

A4 I am going to read out a number of goods and services and I would like you to tell me if you have bought any of them from someone who came to your home in the LAST 6 MONTHS and where you agreed to the sale AT THE TIME of their visit. This can include purchases that you later cancelled, or did not actually receive anything in return for. So firstly …

READ OUT EACH IN TURN AND CODE YES TO ALL THAT APPLY

IF NECESSARY:

• This includes casual sellers who call at your door, for example someone selling food or offering their labour
• The person may have come to your house by appointment, for example you have invited them to come and give you a quote or a demonstration

IF NECESSARY PROMPT WITH: Have you bought or signed up for this product or service in the last 6 months and agreed to the sale at the time of the person’s visit to your home, either with or without an appointment, even if you later cancelled or never received the goods/services?

[CATI TO RANDOMISE]

Hardware goods or cleaning products
Home improvements such as double-glazing, fitted kitchens or bathrooms, alarm systems, conservatories, extensions or heating/energy systems etc
Cosmetics, jewellery, toiletries or clothing
Household goods such as domestic appliances, furniture, pictures or carpets etc
Holiday or timeshare agreements
Specialist products, such as orthopaedic beds, electric wheelchairs, stair lifts or hearing aids etc.
Food items
Utility services, such as changing your gas, electricity or telephone provider
Legal services
Home services including home repairs, such as gardening, plumbing, building, etc.
Education or training courses
Cleaning services such as window cleaning
Subscriptions or donations via direct debit, for example to charities or magazines
Any other goods or services (specify)

ASK IF NONE AT A4

A5 Can I just check, in the LAST 12 MONTHS have you bought or signed up for any goods or services costing over £500 from a person who came to your home and agreed the sale during their visit? This can include goods or services that you purchased, but later cancelled, or did not actually receive anything in return for.

Yes
No – GO TO A5a

A5a May I just check, has anyone else in your household bought goods or services from a person who came to your home in the LAST 6 MONTHS and where they agreed to the sale at the time of their visit?

Yes – TRANSFER NOW AND RETURN TO A1 (recode as appropriate)
Yes – ARRANGE APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK
No – GO TO A5b
don’t know/ refused – GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

IF NO AT A5a
A5b And in the last 12 MONTHS has anyone in your household bought goods or services costing over £500 from a person who came to your home and where they agreed to the sale at the time of their visit?

Yes – TRANSFER NOW AND RETURN TO A1 (recode as appropriate)
Yes – ARRANGE APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK
No / don’t know/ refused – GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

IF ANY AT A4 OR YES AT A5

A6 And were you the main person involved in this purchase or purchases?

DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Yes – GO TO A8
Joint decision – GO TO GO TO A8
No – GO TO A7

A7 Would it be possible to speak to the person who was involved in the purchase process, either now or at another time?

Successfully transferred – RETURN TO A1 (recode as appropriate)
Not available at this time – MAKE APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK
Person lives elsewhere – GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT
Refused – GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

A8 Based on your experiences we would very much like to ask you some further questions. May I continue or would you like me to call back at another time?

IF NECESSARY: This would take approximately 15 minutes to complete, depending on your experiences

Yes, willing to take part now – GO TO MAIN INTERVIEW
Prefer to be called back – MAKE APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK
Refused – GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

MAIN INTERVIEW

B Establishing value of purchase

ASK IF ANY AT A4
I’d like to know the price of the goods or services you bought or signed up for in your home in the last 6 months, regardless of whether you subsequently cancelled or never received anything in return.

FOR EACH ITEM AT A4 EXCEPT UTILITIES (WHICH SHOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE ASSIGNED A MID RANGE OF £35 TO £500 BY CATI):

B1 Did you buy [textfill fromA4] in a single transaction costing under £35, £35-£500 or over £500, where the sale was agreed in your home at the time of the salesperson’s visit?

IF ‘LEGAL SERVICES’ CODED ATA4, interviewer read out after question: Please think about the total annual amount you would pay for this service.

INTERVIEWER IF DK/NOT SURE RESPONSE, PLEASE PROMPT WITH: I’m just looking for your best estimate.

MULTICODE ALLOWED IF MULTIPLE TRANSACTIONS WERE MADE – CODE VALUE AS APPLICABLE FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL TRANSACTION

Under £35
£35-£500
Over £500

ASK IF YES AT A5

B2 Earlier you told me that you had bought or signed up for goods or services costing over £500 in the last 12 months. What was this?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT TO PRECODES. ALLOW MULTICODE.

- Hardware goods or cleaning products
- Home improvements such as double-glazing, fitted kitchens or bathrooms, alarm systems, conservatories, extensions or heating/energy systems etc
- Cosmetics, jewellery, toiletries or clothing
- Household goods such as domestic appliances, furniture, pictures or carpets etc
- Holiday or timeshare agreements
- Specialist products, such as orthopaedic beds, electric wheelchairs, stair lifts or hearing aids etc.
- Food items
Utility services, such as changing your gas, electricity or telephone provider
Legal services
Home services including home repairs, such as gardening, plumbing, building, etc.
Education or training courses
Cleaning services such as window cleaning
Subscriptions or donations via direct debit, for example to charities or magazines
Other goods or services (specify)

* CATI TO ALLOCATE TO QUOTA BASED ON HIGHEST VALUE CATEGORY AT B1/B2

IF QUOTA FULL SELECT NEXT HIGHEST VALUE CATEGORY.

<£35 in last 6 months  1  CHECK QUOTA (xx) *
£35-£500 in last 6 months  2  CHECK QUOTA (xx) *
>£500 in last 6/12 months  3  CHECK QUOTA (xx) *

STORE RESPONSE CODED AT B1/B2 FOR THE QUOTA VALUE CATEGORY SELECTED, FOR USE IN TEXT SUBSTITUTION AT SECTION D

IF MORE THAN ONE PRODUCT TYPE CODED AT B1/B2 FOR THE QUOTA VALUE CATEGORY SELECTED, ASK B3

B3  You mentioned more than one type of goods or services with a value of [textfill value from prospective quota: £35/ £35 - £500/ over £500].
Which of these was the type of goods or services that you purchased most recently? Was it:

READ OUT

SCRIPTWRITER SHOW THE MULTIPLE CODES THAT WERE MENTIONED IN THE PROSPECTIVE QUOTA VALUE CATEGORY AT B1/B2 SO THAT INTERVIEWER CAN CODE WHICH WAS MOST RECENT

STORE RESPONSE CODED AT B3 FOR USE IN TEXT SUBSTITUTION AT SECTION D
C General experiences and attitudes

ASK ALL

First of all I’d like to ask a few questions about your general experiences.

C1 Approximately how often do door-to-door salespeople call at your doorstep unannounced? Would you say they call...? READ OUT. CODE FIRST THAT APPLIES

Every couple of weeks or more frequently
  Once a month
  Once every 2 to 3 months
  Once every 4 to 6 months
  Once every 7 to 12 months
  Less frequently
  (Don’t know)

ASK ALL

C2 On average, how often would you purchase goods or services from someone who came to your home, either with or without an appointment and where the sale is agreed at that time in your home?

READ OUT, CODE FIRST THAT APPLIES

Once a month or more
  Every 2-3 months
  Every 4-6 months
  Every 7-12 months
  Every 1 to 2 years
  Every 3 to 5 years
  Less frequently
  (Don’t know/ Couldn’t say)

ASK ALL

C3 I’m now going to read out some views and opinions about door-to-door and in-home selling and I’d like you to tell me to what extent you personally agree or disagree with each. So firstly ...

READ OUT STATEMENT THEN READ OUT:

Do you ...?
READ OUT SCALE

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
(Don’t know/couldn’t say)

CATI TO ROTATE STATEMENTS

• This type of selling should be much more tightly regulated by the Government
• Such salespeople prey on the most vulnerable members of society
• You can often get a good deal buying products or services in this way
• The vast majority of in-home salespeople are highly professional
• Salespeople should not be allowed to make unsolicited calls at someone’s house. IF NECESSARY; by unsolicited, I mean where the visit or call is uninvited

D Specific experience of doorstep/in-home purchase

READ OUT: I would now like you to think about the [PRODUCT STORED DURING QUOTA ALLOCATION – textfill from B1/B2/B3] you most recently bought or signed up for with a value of [textfill:VALUE SELECTED FROM QUOTA: £35/ £35 - £500/ over £500] EXCEPT – IF UTILITIES £35-£500 IS THE SELECTED PRODUCT STORED DURING QUOTA, THEN PLEASE USE FOLLOWING QUESTION TEXT INSTEAD (IT DOESN’T MENTION THE VALUE):

I would now like you to think about the [PRODUCT STORED DURING QUOTA ALLOCATION – textfill] you most recently bought or signed up for.

I am going to go through the sales process in more detail for this purchase.

ASK ALL

D1 Which of the following best describes how the sale came about?
READ OUT
A call at your door without any prior agreement or notice
A visit to your home with prior agreement or notice
Don’t know / can’t remember

ASK ALL

D2 Did the sales person remain at the doorstep or actually come into your home?
Stayed at the door
Came into the home
(Don’t remember)

IF CODE 2 AT D2

D3 Did you invite them in yourself without being asked or did they ask if they could come in?
Invited them in without being asked
They asked if they could come in
(Don’t remember)

ASK ALL

D4 Did the caller provide any form of identification?

PROBE TO PRECODES
Yes, when I asked to see it
Yes without me asking to see it
No
Don’t know/ can’t remember

ASK ALL

D5 Did the sales person provide you with a written quote for the goods or services?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE TO PRECODES
Yes, after I asked for one
Yes, without me asking for one
No, because I said it wasn’t necessary
ASK ALL

D6 Did you make any price or quality comparisons with similar goods or services before deciding to buy?

ALLOW MULTICODING. PROBE TO PRECODES

Yes – price comparison/ other quotes
Yes – quality comparison
Yes – both price and quality comparison
No

(Don’t know/ can’t remember)

ASK ALL NOT MAKING ANY PRICE/QUALITY COMPARISONS

D7 Was there any particular reason why you didn’t make any price or quality comparisons? PROBE TO PRECODE. MULTI CODE ALLOWED.

Too much hassle
No time
Didn’t cross my mind to make comparisons
Nowhere else sells these products
Mobility problems/ can’t get to other suppliers
No access to the internet to make comparisons
Other reason (specify)
(Don’t know/ can’t remember)

ASK ALL MAKING PRICE COMPARISONS/ GETTING OTHER QUOTES

D8 When you made price comparisons, did this involve other suppliers visiting your home to provide you with quotes?

PROBE TO PRECODES

Yes – written quotes
Yes – verbal quotes
Yes – mix of written and verbal quotes
No
D9 Do you recall what you paid for the goods or services that we have been discussing?

WRITE IN AMOUNT – THIS CAN BE AN ESTIMATE

[Numerical write in]

DK

D10 And can you tell me the lowest price you found for this product or service when you sought other quotes from suppliers visiting your home?

DO NOT READ OUT

Same as answer at D7 [textful answer from D9] (i.e. they chose lowest priced product)

Received a lower quote than the price they actually paid at D9 (WRITE IN AT NEXT SCREEN)

D10b WRITE IN AMOUNT – THIS CAN BE AN ESTIMATE

[Numerical write in]

DK

D11 And can you tell me the highest price you found for this product or service when you sought other quotes from suppliers visiting your home?

DO NOT READ OUT

Same as answer at D7 [textfill answer from D9] (i.e. they chose highest priced product)

Received a higher quote than the price they actually paid at D9 (WRITE IN AT NEXT SCREEN)
D11b  WRITE IN AMOUNT – THIS CAN BE AN ESTIMATE

[Numerical write in]

DK

IF CODE 2 AT D10

D12  So the price you paid for the goods or services we have been discussing was higher than the lowest price you found from another supplier that visited your home. Why didn’t you choose the lowest priced goods/services?

**DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE.**

Quality of goods/services
Reputation of supplier
Experience of quote/sales process
Sales person
Terms and conditions
Other (specify)

D13  May I just check, could you have easily purchased these goods and services in another way, for example, on the high street or over the internet, or was a home visit the only way of purchasing this particular good or service?

**DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.**

Could easily have purchased in another way
Could not easily purchase in another way
Don’t know/ couldn’t say

D14  [MOVED TO AFTER D22]

D15  [MOVED TO AFTER D22]

D20  [NEW POSITION] As part of this purchase, did you receive or sign any form of contract or document?

**PROBE TO PRECODES**

Yes – on the day of the visit
Do you recall being informed by the salesperson about any rights you had to cancel the agreement or return the products within a seven day cooling off period?

**PROBE TO PRECODES. ALLOW MULTICODE**

- Yes – told verbally
- Yes – informed in written documents
- No
- Don’t remember

**IF YES AT D12**

And how easy was it to understand this information?

- Very easy
- Fairly easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Fairly difficult
- Very difficult
- (Can’t remember)

Regardless of what you were told by the salesperson, were you aware of your right to cancel?

- Yes
- No
- (Don’t remember)

**IF YES AT D14**

Would you have still made the purchase had you not had these rights to cancel?

- Definitely would
- Probably would
D20  [MOVED TO BEFORE D16]

ASK IF CODE 1 or 2 AT D15 AND GOODS VALUE > £35

D21  Earlier you told me that you had signed a form of contract or document, can I just check, did this include information about your rights to cancel the agreement or return the products within a seven day cooling off period?

Yes
No
Don’t remember

D22  And, did you at any stage try to cancel this purchase or return any products?

PROBE TO PRECODES

Yes – tried but was unsuccessful
Yes – still pending an outcome/ waiting to hear
Yes – successfully cancelled purchase/ returned products
No

IF CODES 1-3 AT D22

D22a  How long after making your purchase did you try to cancel?

Within 7 days
After 7 days
Dk/ can’t remember

IF CODES 1–3 at D22

D23  You told me that you [if code 1, 2] tried to cancel [if code 3] cancelled your purchase, why was that?

Unhappy with goods or services received
Unhappy with the sales process/ felt pressured to purchase
Unhappy with the contract or terms and conditions of the sale
  Changed my mind
    Found a better value product/service elsewhere
    Found a better quality product/service elsewhere
  Other (specify)

**IF CODE 1 AT D22**

D24 Why were you unsuccessful in cancelling the purchase or contract or returning the product(s)?

  The cooling off/cancellation period had run out
  Salesperson did not give me the necessary information
  Company would not accept the cancellation/return
  Other (specify)

**IF CODE 3 AT D22**

D25 How easy or difficult was it to cancel the purchase or contract or return the product(s)?

  Very easy
  Quite easy
  Neither easy nor difficult
  Quite difficult
  Very difficult
  (Don’t know)

**IF CODES 4 OR 5 AT D19**

D26 Why was it difficult to cancel the purchase/contract or return the product(s)?

  [Open response]

ASK IF DID NOT CANCEL/TRY TO CANCEL AT D22 AND MULTIPLE PURCHASES IN LAST 6/12 MONTHS (code 4 or DK/REF at D22 AND made multiple purchases at A4 or B2)
D27 And thinking about all the other purchases you made on the doorstep or in your home in the last (6/12) months, did you at any stage try to cancel any of these or return any products?

PROBE TO PRECODES

Yes – tried but was unsuccessful
Yes – still pending an outcome/ waiting to hear
Yes – successfully cancelled purchase/ returned products
No

IF CODE 3 AT D21

D28 Were the goods or services you cancelled the result of purchases made during sales visits that you had sought or invited, or were they purchases that were made during unexpected or uninvited sales calls?

PROMPT TO PRECODES. ALLOW MULTICODE

Invited visit
Uninvited visit
(Don’t know/ can’t remember)

IF CODE 1 AT D22

D29 Approximately what was the total value of the goods or services that you cancelled?

IF NECESSARY; you can just give me your best estimate

[write in value]

ASK ALL

D14 [NEW POSITION] Now I would like you to think about the sales process and any sales techniques that were used by the sales person. Did the sales person employ any of the following sales techniques? RANDOMISE STATEMENTS 1-5

Yes
No
(Don’t know/can’t remember)
• A higher initial price, subsequently followed by the offer of a discount
• A free gift or service at the start of the sales process
• Any form of discount that was available on condition that you agree to the sale that day
• A telephone call to a colleague or superior in order to secure some special deal or discount
• The sales person avoided discussing price
• Did they use any other sales technique, as far as you are concerned? (IF YES - SPECIFY)

D15 [NEW POSITION] I now want you to think about the behaviour of the sales person. I am going to read out a number of statements and I would like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each. So firstly ... RANDOMISE STATEMENTS. ALLOW NOT APPLICABLE

READ OUT STATEMENT THEN READ OUT:

Do you ...? [READ OUT SCALE]

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
(Don’t know/couldn’t say)
(Not applicable)

• The sales visit was unnecessarily prolonged
• The sales person used pressure selling
• The sales person was very clear about explaining the exact price of the goods or service
• The behaviour of the sales person made me feel threatened or intimidated
• The sales person mentioned and explained my consumer rights
• The sales person made claims that subsequently proved untrue
• The sales person was polite and helpful
I had difficulty getting the sales person to leave

[ONLY IF D20 IS YES, CODES 1 TO 3] The sales person mentioned something verbally that did not appear in the final contract

D30 I’d now like you to think about your rights as a consumer.

Do you think you have additional rights when buying from ordinary shops and retail premises, or additional rights when buying at the doorstep or in your home? Or do you think your rights are the same in each case?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT TO PRECODES

Additional rights when buying at ordinary retail premises
Additional rights when buying at the doorstep or in-home
Consumer rights are the same in each case
(Don’t know)

D31 [If code 2 at D30: As you correctly mentioned] When buying something at your doorstep or in your home after a visit from a salesperson there are regulations in place that give you rights in addition to those you have when buying at ordinary shops and retail premises. Do you know what these additional consumer protection rights are?

Yes - do know what these additional rights are
No - don’t know what these additional rights are

IF YES at D25

D32 What are the additional rights?

DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE TO PRECODES.

You can cancel goods/services valued at £35 or more
7 day cooling off/cancellation period
You can cancel goods/services only if you’ve paid by credit card
Cancellation rights apply to solicited and unsolicited visits
You can cancel goods/services only if you have a written contract
Other (specify)
E Post purchase experience

ASK ALL

E1 Now thinking about AFTER you had made the purchase, I want you to think about anything unexpected that happened. By that I mean anything about the goods or service that you only became aware of following your agreement to purchase

READ OUT EACH AND SAY: was there anything unexpected about this?

Yes
No
(Don’t know)
(Not applicable)

- The terms and conditions
- The price of the good(s)/service
- The quality of the good(s)/service
- The running costs
- Was there anything else unexpected? (SPECIFY)

ASK FOR EACH ITEM MENTIONED AT E1 (AREAS 1-3)

E2 You mentioned there was something unexpected about [textfill from E1], what exactly happened? PROBE FULLY

[Open response]

ASK FOR EACH ITEM MENTIONED AT E1 (AREAS 1-4)

E3 If you had been told or warned about [textfill from E1] before you made the decision to buy, do you think you might have made a different decision to buy? Would you say you would …?

READ OUT

Almost certainly not have bought
Probably not have bought
Probably still have bought
Almost certainly still have bought
(Don’t know/ couldn’t say)
ASK ALL

E4 Now thinking about the goods or services you purchased, how satisfied were you with them overall?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- (Don’t know)

ASK ALL

E5 And thinking about the sales process, how satisfied were you with the sales process overall?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- (Don’t know)

E6 **ASK ALL CODED 4 OR 5 AT E5,** You have indicated that you were dissatisfied with some aspect of the sales process. Did you report the problem or make a complaint?

**IF YES PROBE WITH:** Who did you complain to?

- Yes to sales person
- Yes to company involved
- Yes to trade association
- Yes to police
- Yes to local Trading Standards
- Yes to other agency i.e. OFT / Consumer Direct
- Yes to another body (specify)
- No
- (Don’t know/ can’t remember)
ASK ALL NOT REPORTING PROBLEM/ MAKING A COMPLAINT AT E6

E7  What were the reasons for not reporting the problem or making a complaint? PROBE TO PRECODES. MULTI CODE ALLOWED

  Didn’t feel it was worth complaining about
  Not sure how to go about doing so
  Afraid of salesperson’s reaction
  Too much hassle
  No time/ not got around to it
  Cooling off period ran out
  Only realised the problem after the cooling off period had expired
  Other (specify)

ASK ALL REPORTING PROBLEM/ MAKING A COMPLAINT AT E6

E8  What was the outcome of your complaint? PROBE AS PER PRE-CODES WHERE NECESSARY

  Problem/complaint was resolved to my satisfaction
  Problem/complaint was addressed, although not to my full satisfaction
  Problem/complaint was not resolved
  Problem/complaint still being investigated
  Other (specify)
  Don’t know/can’t remember

ASK ALL CODED 4 OR 5 AT E5

E9  Has your experience made you reluctant to buy through a salesperson, representative or contractor who comes to your home in the future?

  Yes
  No
  Don’t know/ couldn’t say

IF YES AT E9

E10  Why is this? PROBE FULLY

  [Open response]
Demographics

Finally, I’d like to ask a few questions about you to help us understand your answers.

F1 Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?

   Yes
   No
   (Don’t know)
   (Refused)

IF CODE 1 AT F1

F2 Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

INTERVIEWER PROBE TO PRECODES

   Yes, a lot
   Yes, a little
   Not at all

IF CODE 1 OR 2 AT F2

F3 Does your condition or illness make it more difficult for you to shop normally in the high street?

   Yes
   No
   (Don’t know)
   (Refused)

ASK ALL

F4 Are there any [if yes at F3: other] circumstances that make it difficult for you to shop in the high street - including access to transport, your location or any other factors?

(MULTI-CODING POSSIBLE)
Yes – lack of transport
Yes – remoteness or otherwise poor location
Yes – other reason
No – do not consider having any such problems

F5 And are you....

- Working (Full or part-time)
- Retired/ unemployed
- Student
- Not working - housewife/ househusband

F6 How would you describe your ethnic background?

**DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

- White: British
- White: Irish
- White: Any other White background
- Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed: White and Black African
- Mixed: White and Asian
- Mixed: Any other Mixed background
- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background
- Black or Black British: Caribbean
- Black or Black British: African
- Black or Black British: Any other Black background
- Chinese
- Other
- (Refused)

F7 Thinking about your total household income before tax, which of the following best describes your gross annual household income?

**READ OUT**

- £9,500 or less
The Office of Fair Trading and GfK NOP may wish to undertake further research using the findings of this study in the coming months. Would you be happy for GfK NOP or the Office of Fair Trading to contact you to ask if you are willing to take part in a more detailed interview building on some of your responses to this survey?

Yes (ensure name and contact number are recorded)

No
Mystery shopping exercise script and checklist

Section 1 – Assessor Details

Q1.1 What is your gender?

Male
Female

Q1.2 What is your age bracket?

Under 30
30-40
41-50
51-60
61-65
66-70
71 +

Q1.3 What region do you live in?

Scotland
East Midlands
East of England
Greater London
North East England
North West England
South East England
South West England
West Midlands
Yorkshire and the Humber

Q1.4 Which phrase most closely describes your perception of home selling?

I would never normally book a home selling appointment
I have purchased one or two products in my home before (small i.e. make up, medium i.e. gas/electricity or large i.e. double glazing)
I have purchased several products in my home before (small i.e. make up, medium i.e. gas/electricity or large i.e. double glazing)
Q1.5 Which phrase most closely describes the level of trust you have in this type of selling?

- I do not trust this type of selling
- I neither trust nor distrust this type of selling
- I do trust this type of selling

S1R Which scenario have you completed? [must match coversheet]

- Double glazing (Go to 2.1)
- Mobility Aids (Go to 3.1)

Section 2 – DOUBLE GLAZING ONLY: Assessment Details

Q2.1 What was your reason given for enquiring about a quote?

- New double glazing – never had before
- Updating existing double glazing
- Double Glazing - reduce noise levels
- Double Glazing - energy saving

Q2.2 How many bedroom windows (either floor) did you include in your quote request?

1
2
3
4
5
5+ (specify)

Q2.3 How many ground floor windows (not including bedrooms) did you include in your quote request?

1
2
3
4
Q2.4 How many doors did you include in your quote request?

1
2
3
4
5
5+ (specify)

Q2.5 Which finish did you request quote for?

uPVC
Wood
Aluminium
Other (specify)

Q2.6 Did you ask for secondary double glazing?

Yes
No

Q2.7 In total, how many standard windows did you request a quote for?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11+ (specify)

Q2.8 Organisation contacted for this quote [must match coversheet]

Anglian
Q2.8a When asked, how long did the member of staff tell you that the appointment would take?

[Please mark down in minutes]

Q2.9 Did the salesperson walk around your house looking at the existing windows?

Yes
No

Q2.10 Did the salesperson note down any window/door measurements?

Yes
No

S2R  ROUTING QUESTION: Click Next to Route to Section 4

Next (Go to 4.1)

Section 3 – MOBILITY AIDS ONLY: Assessment Details

Q3.1 What was your reason given for enquiring about a quote?

Disability/illness
Not as able to get about/age
Other (specify)

Q3.2 Which product did you enquire about?

Mobility Scooter
Wheelchair
Stair lift
Adjustable Bed(s)

Q3.3 What relationship did you say the end user was to you?
Q3.4 What current mobility aids did you say you/3rd party had?

None
Mobility Scooter
Wheelchair
Rollator
Walking Frame
Stair lift
Adjustable Bed(s)

Q3.5 Which mobility aid organisation did you contact?

Stannah
Mobility Plus
Acorn Stairlifts
Scoomatic
Other (specify)

Q3.5a Was this a national or local company?

National
Local

Q3.6 Please state the age for the person who the mobility aid was being enquired for:

[Please mark down age]

Section 4 – Appointment Booking

Q4.1 How did you find the phone number to contact the organisation?

Online
Telephone Book

Q4.2 Date of successful call to book appointment:
Q4.3 Time of successful call to book appointment:

[Please mark down time: -- : -- ]

Q4.4 How many attempts to get through to person or to leave a message for call back?

1
2
3
4+

Q4.5 Did you have to leave a message and await a call back?

Yes
No (Go to 4.7)

Q4.6 How long after leaving a message did you receive a call back?

Same day as message left
Working day after message left
2 working days after message left
More than 2 working days after message left
No call back – called again on 3rd working day

Q4.7 How long did it take to arrange a time for the company to visit your home?

Less than 5 mins
5.01 to 10 mins
10.01 to 15 mins
15.01 to 20 mins
More than 20 mins (specify)

Q4.8 Did they offer a telephone quote as well or instead of the home quote?

Telephone quote given as well (specify)
Home visit agreed only

Q4.9 Was the member of staff friendly on the call?
Q4.10 Did you feel pressured to commit to anything during this call?

Yes (specify why)
No

Q4.11 Did they mention anything about a financial commitment to gain a quote during the call?

Yes (specify)
No

Q4.12 Did you receive any further confirmation of the appointment in a further communication?

Yes – by email
Yes – sales person phoned before they arrived
No

Q4.13 Did you receive any information pack or posted marketing material after booking your appointment (but before the home visit)?

Yes – information pack and/or other marketing material without pricing information included
Yes – information pack and/or other marketing material with pricing information included
No information pack and/or posted marketing material received

Section 5 – Homes Sales Visit

Q5.1 What date was the sales visit to your home

[Please mark down date: dd/mm/yyyy]

Q5.2 What time was the visit booked for?

[Please mark down time: -- : -- ]

Q5.3 Was the sales person more than 5 minutes late for your appointment?
Q5.4 If yes, did they ring ahead to say they would be late?

Yes

No (Go to 5.6)

Q5.5 Were you offered an apology for them being late?

Yes

No

Q5.6 How many sales people were present at your appointment?

1

2

3 + □ (specify)

Q5.7 Did they introduce themselves?

Yes

No

Q5.8 What job title did they have?

Not told

Sales representative or similar

Sales manager or similar

Other (specify)

Q5.9 Did they provide a form of photo identification?

Yes – unprompted

Yes – only when asked

No

Q5.10 Did the salesperson ask to come into your home

Yes

No
Q5.11 Did they ask you about why you were considering purchasing the product?
Yes
No

Q5.12 Were you asked to show them any existing products you had?
Yes
No

Q5.13 Did they have any example products with them?
Yes (Please describe)
No

Q5.14 Did they have any case studies, references or customer testimonials with them?
Yes
No

Q5.15 Did they have a structured presentation/pitch which they talked through? i.e. presentation-type printouts?
Yes
No

Q5.16 Did they list, or state, any benefits of purchasing their products?
Yes
No (Go to 5.19)

Q5.17 How many benefits were you given?
1
2
3
4
5 or more (specify)

Q5.18 Please list what the benefits were that you were given:
[Please specify]
Q5.19 During their initial pitch, did they try and up-sell/cross-sell you any other products from their range?
Yes (specify)
No

Q5.20 During their initial pitch, did they try and up-sell/cross-sell you more expensive product types from their range?
Yes (specify)
No

Q5.21 Did they give you a catalogue/booklet to keep?
Yes
No

Q5.22 Were you left with any other paperwork?
Yes (specify)
No

Q5.23 Did any of the paperwork you were left with mention your cancellation rights?
Yes (specify)
No
n/a - No paperwork

Q5.24 Did any of the paperwork you were left with mention a cooling off period?
Yes (specify)
No
n/a - No paperwork

Section 6 – Price Quote and Deal Offered

Q6.1 Were you given a verbal quote for your product enquiry during this appointment?
Yes
Q6.2 Were you given a written quote during this appointment?

Yes – prompted
Yes – unprompted
No

Q6.3 What was the initial quote given?

£…..
No quote (Go to 6.9)

Q6.4 Was the price given with VAT?

Yes
No

Q6.5 Was there any further price breakdown given? If yes, please explain.

Yes (specify)
No

Q6.6 Was it the listed price in their brochure/catalogue

Not sure
Yes
No – less than advertised price
No – more than advertised price

Q6.7 Was the initial price mentioned reduced further during the appointment?

Yes
No (Go to 6.9)

Q6.8 If Yes, by how much?

Less than £100
£100-£200
£201-£300
More than £300
Q6.9  Were any sales tactics/incentives used or mentioned to persuade you to buy there and then?

Q6.9a  None used?  
Yes  (Go to 6.10)  
No

Q6.9b  Multi-purchase discounts?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9c  Free item with purchase?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9d  Free upgrade?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9e  One day only price?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9f  Contact Head Office for further discount?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9g  Salesperson’s targets they needed to hit?  
Yes  
No

Q6.9h  Other?  
Yes (specify)  
No
Q6.10 When they gave you the price did they remind you of the benefits of purchasing with their company?  

Yes  
No

Q6.11 Were the product guarantees mentioned during their pitch?  

Yes  
No

Q6.12 Did the salesperson explain the process of installation/delivery of product?  

Yes  
No

Q6.13 Did they explain how long the installation/delivery would take?  

Yes  
No

Q6.14 Did they try and book and installation/delivery there and then?  

Yes  
No

Q6.15 Did they verbally explain the cancellation rights you have? If Yes, what were you told?  

Yes (specify)  
No

Q6.16 Did they verbally mention or explain a cooling off period? If Yes, what were you told?  

Yes (specify)  
No

Q6.17 Did they provide any further information about the installation/delivery process?  

Yes (specify)  
No
Q6.18 Was there a final quote given during the visit? If Yes, what was the quote?

Yes (specify)

No

Section 7 – Follow Up Contact

Q7.1 Did you feel under pressure to agree to purchase anything during the appointment?

Yes

No

Q7.2 On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is Not at All and 5 is Very, how pressured did you feel to commit to a purchase today?

1

2

3

4

5

Q7.3 Were you asked about follow up contact?

Yes

No

Q7.4 Did they agree a specific time/date to contact you further?

Yes

No

Q7.5 What method was it agreed this would be by?

Phone

Email

Visit

Other (specify)

Q7.6 How long was the sales person at your home for in minutes?
Q7.7 In total how long was the sales person at your home for?

- Up to 30 minutes
- 30.01 to 45 minutes
- 45.01 to 60 mins
- 60.01 to 90 mins
- 91 to 120 mins
- More than 120 mins

Section 8 – Provision of Information

Q8.1 Did you feel you were given clear information regarding the product?

- Yes
- No
- (specify)

Q8.2 Did you feel you were given clear information regarding the price?

- Yes
- No
- (specify)

Q8.3 Did you feel you were given clear information regarding the installation/delivery?

- Yes
- No
- (specify)

Q8.4 Did you feel you were given clear information regarding your cancellation rights?

- Yes
- No
- (specify)

Q8.5 Did you feel uncomfortable at any stage during your appointment?

- Yes (specify)
- No

Q8.6 Was the salesperson friendly at all times?
Section 9 – General Perceptions

Q8.7 Was the salesperson polite at all times?

Yes
No (specify)

Q9.1 Please give an overall comment about the salesperson

[Please specify]

Q9.2 Please give an overall comment about the sales tactics they used

[Please specify]

Q9.3 Would this experience encourage you to purchase products using this purchase method? i.e. home selling

[Please specify]

Q9.4 Has the degree to which you trust this type of selling been influenced by your experience on this assessment?

This assessment has helped me to trust this type of selling more / had a positive impact on my level of trust

The assessment did not change how much I trust this type of selling / had no impact on my level of trust

The assessment has made me trust this type of selling less / had a negative impact on my level of trust

Q9.5 Taking account of your experience on this call which phrase most closely describes your perception of home selling?

Experience enhanced or had a positive impact on my perception of home selling

Experience did not change / had no impact on my perception of home selling

Experience lowered or had a negative impact on my perception of home selling

(specify)

Q9.6 If you had been a genuine customer, would you have taken up the quote provided today? Please explain why/why not.
Q9.7 Please categorise your reason:

Q9.7a Price

Yes
No

Q9.7b Local company

Yes
No

Q9.7c Trustworthy

Yes
No

Q9.7d Safety/Quality standards

Yes
No

Q9.7e Friendliness

Yes
No

Q9.7f Other □

Yes (specify)
No

Q9.8 Is there anything else GfK should know about this assessment?

Yes (specify)
No
Topic guide for stakeholder interviews

This section presents a topic guide outlining the areas of questioning to be used when interviewing key stakeholders for the evaluation study.

Introduction

‘Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening

My name is [INSERT INTERVIEWER NAME] from GHK, an independent research organisation.

The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has commissioned GHK Consulting to evaluate the impacts of its 2004 market study into doorstep selling. Your organisation was involved in the consultation exercise in 2004 and this interview will aim to get a sense of how the doorstep market has changed since 2004 and what impact the OFT market study had on doorstep selling.

The answers are confidential. They will not be attributed to you or your organisation.’

2004 Market Study Background

Market study recommendations

The OFT made a number of recommendations to improve the operation of the doorstep sales channel, including:4

- the Doorstep Selling Regulations be amended to require information on cancellation rights and how they may be exercised to be more prominently and clearly displayed in contracts, with a clear indication of the circumstances in which cancellation rights might be lost

- DTI (now BIS) legislate to make cancellation rights applicable in all sales which take place off business premises, whether or not the sales visit which gave rise to it was solicited by the consumer

• to avoid the undermining of cooling off periods, DTI (now BIS) should consult on the ‘right to recover payment’ in regulation 7(2)(iv) of the Doorstep Selling Regulations and a possible ban on work and/or payment within seven days for contracts concluded following at least an unsolicited visit, subject to limited exceptions, and

• firms selling on the doorstep should provide greater transparency on prices for their products and a greater willingness to provide written quotes. The OFT expected to see this requirement included in any Consumer Code seeking approval from the OFT.

In addition, the OFT stated that it intended to run a national consumer education campaign to provide consumers with information on their rights when buying at their doorstep and the benefits of shopping around. The campaign also aimed to inform consumers of the psychological techniques used by doorstep sellers and give advice on how to combat them.

**Implementation of recommendations**

In response, the Government incorporated the extension of cooling-off periods to solicited visits in the Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007. On 1 October 2008 the ‘Cancellation of Contracts Made in a Consumer’s Home or Place of Work etc Regulations 2008’ came into force. The regulations extended cooling off periods to solicited visits and now require cancellation notices to be provided within contracts.

The encouragement of greater transparency on prices and willingness to provide written quotes is being taken forward through industry self-regulation, by encouraging traders to operate under approved Codes of Practice or (for the building and construction trades) through participation in TrustMark.

On 1 October 2008, the OFT launched an awareness campaign to inform consumers about their new rights under the doorstep selling regulations. Furthermore, on 16 November 2009, the OFT launched another campaign (‘Your Doorstep, Your Decision’). This campaign aimed to raise awareness of how to handle doorstep sales tactics and the risks of rogue traders. The campaign was aimed primarily at women over 70.
along with their families, friends and carers. The OFT Communications Team published an evaluation of this awareness campaign in January 2011.

In September 2010, the OFT also joined forces with Age UK to warn older consumers about the danger of rogue traders. The joint awareness raising activity aimed to highlight the financial risks of being scammed and the emotional toll it can take.

**Awareness of the 2004 OFT study**

Q1 Are you aware of the market study conducted by the OFT in 2004 to examine doorstep sales in the UK?

Q2 Are you aware of the recommendations proposed by the OFT as part of this study? To what extent do you think they have subsequently been implemented?

**Doorstep sales**

Q3 Do you believe that the nature (e.g. product type) and scale (e.g. sales completed) of the doorstep selling ‘market’ has changed since the OFT’s 2004 market study? If so, how?

Q4 What, in your opinion, are the major product groups of focus for doorstep sellers?

Q5 [For specific industry stakeholders]: Approximately what proportion of all sales of [double glazing / mobility aids / etc.] do you think are completed on the consumer’s doorstep and what makes you say that?

Q6 Do you have any evidence that suggests how important doorstep selling is for businesses as a channel to increase competitiveness and growth? Has this changed in recent years?

---

Changes in trader behaviour

Q7 To what extent do you think doorstep sellers are aware of the changes introduced since 2004?

Q8 To what extent would you say doorstep sellers are complying with these changes?

Q9 Do you think there has been an increase in the proportion of doorstep sellers providing clearer information to consumers on pricing (e.g. written quotes) and their rights (e.g. cancellation information)? If so, to what extent?

Q10 Do you think there has been a reduction in the degree of price variation in doorstep sales for [double glazing/mobility aids / etc.] since the 2004 study? If so, by how much?

Q11 Do you think there has been a change in the sales techniques of doorstep sellers in recent years? If so, how?

Q12 [For specific industry stakeholders]: Do you have any data on the number of traders operating under approved industry codes of practice?

Q13 [For specific industry stakeholders]: Do you have any data on the number of traders who are registered with industry accreditation schemes (such as TrustMark, Fensa, the Direct Selling Association and the Glass and Glazing Federation)?

Q14 Do you have any evidence to suggest that businesses have experienced an increase in administrative burden since the implementation of the OFT recommendations?

Changes in consumer awareness and attitudes

Q15 Do you think that consumers are aware of the changes to their rights when making purchases at home?

Q16 Specifically, would you say that consumers are aware of their extended rights when making purchases from doorstep sellers (in particular, about
the fact that ‘cooling off’ periods now apply to solicited doorstep sellers as well as unsolicited calls)?

Q17 To what extent do you think that consumers, in general, are satisfied that they can easily access information on their rights in the context of purchases made at home?

Q18 Would you say that the proportion of consumers exercising newly available rights (e.g. applying cooling off periods to solicited doorstep calls) has changed significantly for key product groups since 2004? To what extent?

Q19 To what extent do you think that consumers consider the alternatives available (‘shop around’) when making a purchase in the home? This includes comparing between doorstep sellers and comparing to products purchased in retail shops/online.

Q20 Would you say consumers are now better aware of sales techniques intended to promote ‘forced’ sales (relative to 2004)?

Q21 Do you believe that consumers are, in general, more confident and/or satisfied when making purchases from doorstep sellers?

Q22 Do you think the awareness raising campaigns led to changes in consumer behaviour? Have these changes/impacts been sustained?

**Impacts of the OFT’s market study**

Q23 Overall, what do you consider to be the main impacts of the OFT’s market study?

Q24 Do you consider that there are areas in which consumer detriment continues to exist in relation to doorstep selling?

Q25 What further improvements (if any) do you think could be made to the way in which doorstep selling operates?
Topic guide for doorstep seller interviews

This section presents the final topic guide and associated questions for the in-depth interviews. It is assumed that these interviews will be held with the business manager, who may also be the business owner.

Introduction

‘Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening
My name is [INSERT INTERVIEWER NAME] from GHK, an independent research organisation.

The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has commissioned GHK Consulting to document changes in doorstep selling in the UK since 2004 (the time at which the OFT undertook its market study into doorstep selling). This interview will aim to get a sense of how the doorstep selling practices have changed since 2004 and specifically what impact the OFT market study had on your doorstep selling practices.

The answers are confidential. They will not be attributed to you or your business.

[WHERE RELEVANT, CONFIRM THAT PARTICIPANTS ARE CONTENT FOR YOU TO RECORD THE INTERVIEW PURELY FOR ACCURACY. IF NECESSARY, STRESS AGAIN THAT ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS.]

Employment, training and leads

Q1 What is the annual turnover of your company and what proportion of this turnover comes from Doorstep Sales?

Q2 Which salesperson category would you say best describes you? (INTERVIEWER: Choose from: single owner/operator; small business owner; or larger organisation)

Q3 Have you had professional sales training? Do you provide ‘on the job’ training to staff (where applicable)?
Q4 In what ways do you source leads for the products you seek to sell?  
(INTERVIEWER: Choose from: catalogues, personal and professional networks, local papers, Yellow Pages, cold calling, other channels)

Product groups

Q5 What types of products do you most commonly sell to consumers making purchases at home/on the doorstep?

Q6 Which product groups, in your experience, tend to be most commonly purchased by consumers making purchases at home/on the doorstep?

Sales techniques

Q7 Which factors would you say are most important in making a doorstep sale?

Q8 What type of sales technique(s), in your opinion, are most effective in making a doorstep sale?

Q9 What type of sales technique(s), in your opinion, are least effective in making a doorstep sale?

Q10 In approximately what proportion of doorstep sales visits would you (or one of your employees) enter a consumer’s home either after being invited by the consumer without asking or being invited by the consumer only after asking?

Q11 How long, on average, would you say you pursue an opportunity to make a sale?

Q12 What proportion of the doorstep sales you make would you say are solicited and unsolicited?

Q13 What is your opinion regarding ‘high-pressure’ tactics often attributed to doorstep sellers? Would you say any of these are justified? If so, under what circumstances?
Pricing

Q14 What determines the price that you quote to consumers during a doorstep sale?

Q15 Do you ever offer a discounted price during a doorstep sale and on what basis would you provide this?

Q16 Would you say that, overall, your prices have increased, fallen or stayed about the same since 2004?

Q17 How often do you provide consumers with a written quote during a doorstep sale? Do you provide this as a matter of course or only when requested? And has the frequency with which you provide written quotes changed since 2004?

Contracts and cancellations

Q18 How often do you provide consumers with a contract during a doorstep sale? Do you provide this as a matter of course or only when requested? And has the frequency with which you provide written quotes changed since 2004?

Q19 Do your contracts include information on cooling off periods and cancellation rights for consumers? If so, for how long have you been including such information in your contracts?

Awareness of 2004 OFT study

Q20 Are you aware of the market study conducted by the OFT in 2004 on doorstep selling?

Q21 Are you aware of the recommendations made by the OFT in its 2004 study [list if necessary]?

Q22 To what extent do you think the recommendations of the OFT impacted upon your business area?

Q23 Are there changes in the relevant legislation and regulatory enforcement that you would associate with the OFT’s findings?
Q24 Has there been any cost implication to your business as a result of the 2004 recommendations (i.e. an increase in cancellations by customer)?

Perspectives on consumer rights

Q25 Would you say that consumers have become better aware of their rights vis-a-vis purchases made at home in recent years (after 2004)?

Q26 Roughly what proportion of consumers would you estimate ask you about their consumer rights including cancellation rights and cooling off periods?

Q27 What additional regulations do you think could be introduced, if any, to protect consumer rights in this area and are you aware of the provisions under the EU Consumer Rights Directive (e.g. extending cancellation rights for products worth at least €50 to 14 days)?

Industry self-regulation

Q28 Are you a member of a trade association, industry ombudsman scheme or any other industry-led accreditation scheme? If so, can you confirm which ones?

Q29 Do you sign-up to and adhere to any industry codes of conduct which relate specifically to the doorstep sales aspects of your business, including the provision of written quotes? (e.g. through an accreditation scheme) If so, can you confirm which ones and what aspects of your doorstep sales procedure the codes of conduct relate to (e.g. sales techniques, contracts, quotes, etc.)?

Q30 Do you have any other comments in relations to the doorstep selling regulations?
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D LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

D.1 Stakeholder discussions were undertaken in order to review the problems and recommended solutions arising from the OFT’s 2004 market study and to explore developments since the study was published (including the implementation of the OFT’s recommendations).

D.2 The following stakeholders were consulted either verbally (through interviews and teleconferences) or in writing via email:

- Age UK
- Consumer Focus
- Which?
- Citizens Advice
- Glass and Glazing Federation
- British Healthcare Trades Association
- TrustMark
- Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS)
- Direct Marketing Association
- Direct Selling Association
- Local Government Regulation (formerly LACORS)
- Trading Standards Institute
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for Business and Industry (Scotland)
- Angus Council Trading Standards, and
- Trading Standards Service Northern Ireland.