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Maintenance Report Survey and Results

Michaelmas Term, October 2007

Prepared for:

JCR Committee 2007-8

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Contents

- i. Objectives
- ii. Introduction
- iii. Survey
- iv. Survey Results
- v. More Research
- vi. Conclusions

Objectives

- To examine the current relationship between the student population of Downing College and the Maintenance Department
- To determine whether the change to an external maintenance company in October 2006 had a negative impact in student relations
- To determine whether the change to an external maintenance company in October 2006 had a negative impact on the service provided to all college members in general and students in particular

Introduction

The aim of this document is not to be a comprehensive review of the current maintenance system used by Downing College ("The College"), but instead to be a preliminary report based on a single survey and a limited amount of research.

This report has a very limited scope regarding the current maintenance system used by the College, however if there appears to be evidence of a deeper problem underlying the entire system, this report will recommend a more fuller review of the department.

Before this report is delivered to the relevant College authorities it will be subject to approval of the entire JCR Committee. Any questions, suggestions or complaints regarding this report should be made to the JCR Services Officer.

Survey

At the JCR Open Meeting held on the 14th June 2007 a survey (copy available in Appendix 1) was distributed to all present, and copies placed in the Porter's Lodge. A prize draw was offered to all those who replied and 55 completed forms were returned.

The survey consisted of eight questions split under two headings, as follows;

Requests:

- 1) How often do you submit maintenance requests on average?
- 2) How do you usually submit requests?

3) How quickly are your requests normally completed, on average?

Maintenance:

1a) How satisfied are you with the level of service you receive from the maintenance department?

1b) How could it be improved?

2a) How satisfied are you with the average speed of response to a maintenance request?

2b) Have you noticed any change since the move to an external company in October?

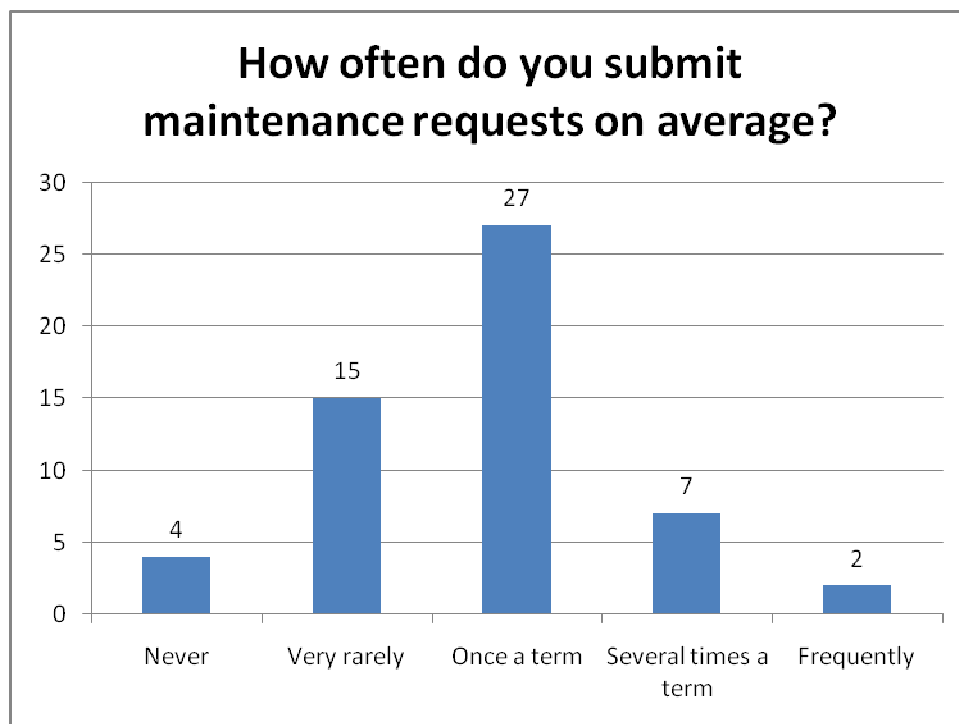
3) Is there anything else you would like to add?

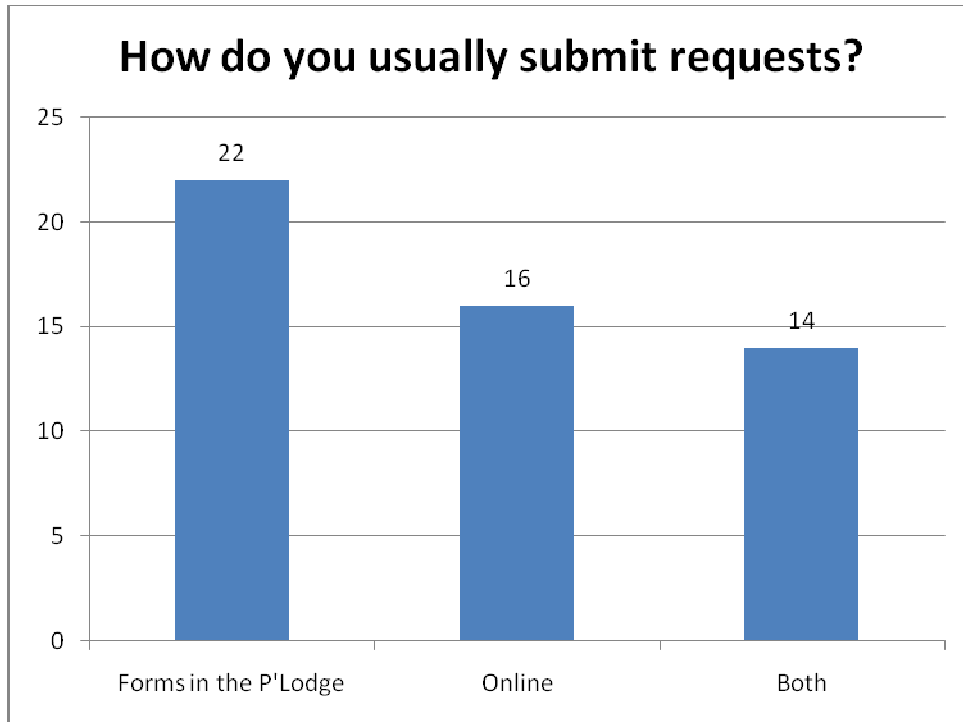
Questions 1, 2, 3, 1a, 2a and 2b took the form of multiple choice answer questions while 1b and 3 gave the students the chance to write a few words.

Survey Results

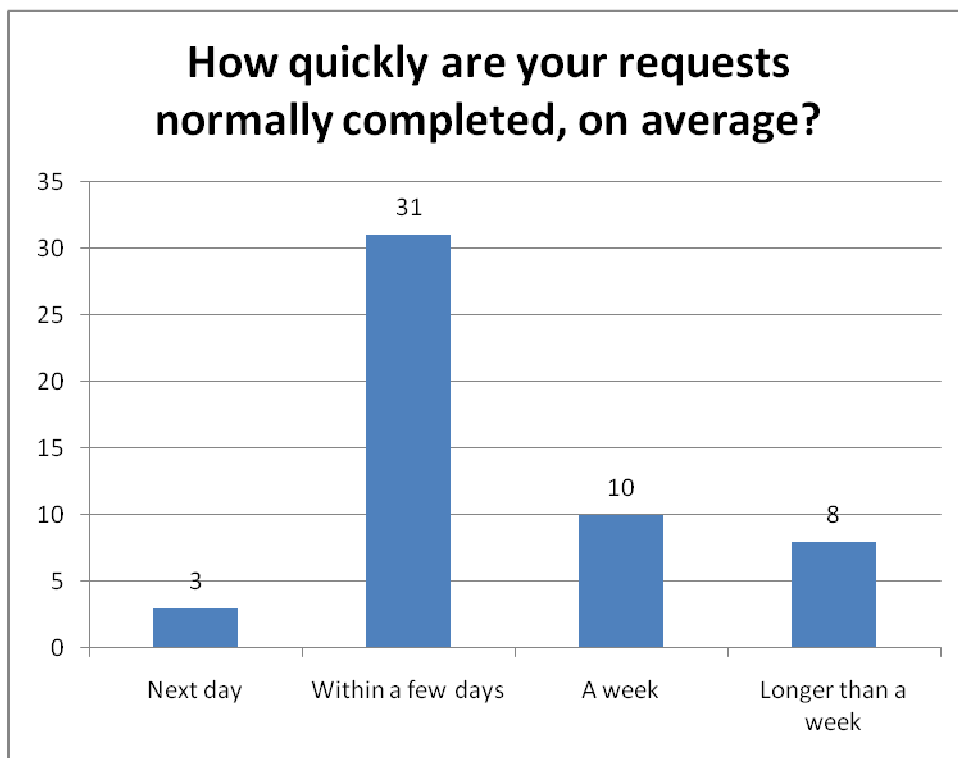
When all the replies had been collected the answers were collated into charts for each question.

Requests



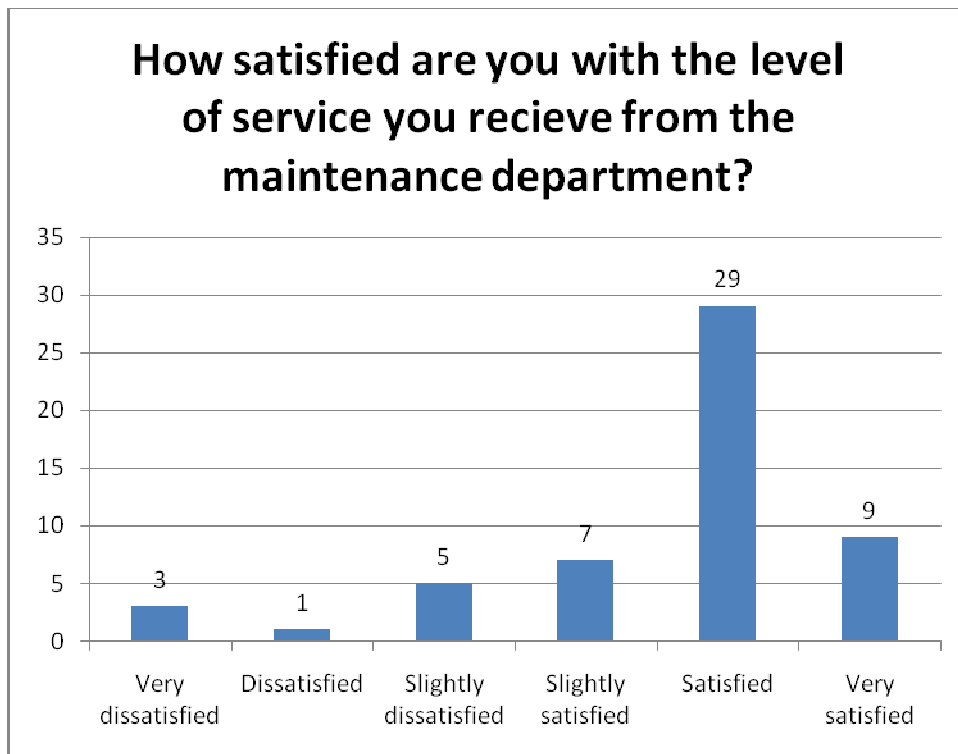


These charts show that most people submit requests only once a term on average, and the majority of requests are submitted using the forms in the P'Lodge, however the online system is obviously still a popular alternative with at least 30 of the sample using it.

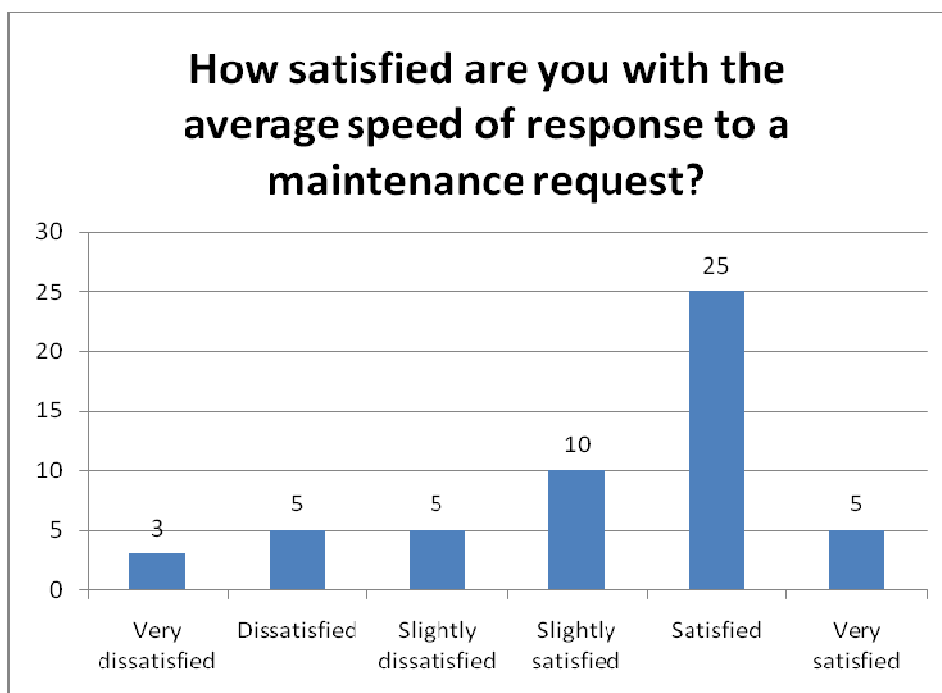


This chart shows that for most people requests are completed within a week, however for at least 34% of the sample the requests took at least a week, and sometimes longer, to be completed.

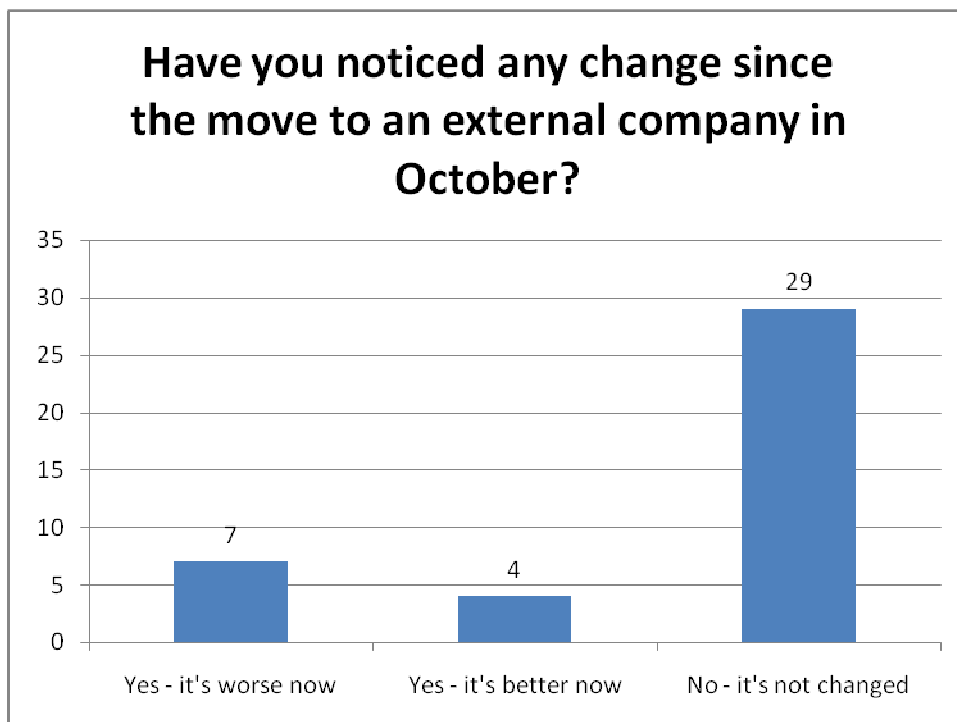
The coming answers are perhaps the most important of the survey for they include how students regard the Maintenance Department as a whole.



As this chart shows 83% of the sample are at least slightly satisfied by the service they are receiving from the Maintenance Department. However question 1b allowed for more individual answers and 14 people made comments about the speed of responses to problems being too slow or erratic. It is interesting to note that half of the 14 had termed themselves as at least slightly satisfied with the level of service. Another popular comment, made by 6 people, is that there is a lack of communication between the maintenance department and students.



This chart shows that the majority of people have no reason to complain regarding the *average* speed of response to a maintenance request, however the number of dissatisfied students is higher, at 25%. This, coupled with the 14 extra comments would tend to suggest that there may be room for improvements in the speed at which responses occur.



This chart shows that the vast majority of people have noticed no difference between the old system and Cofathec with only 28% of the sample noticing a difference. Of those who did notice more believed that the service has become worse, but as the sample at this point consists of 11 people it is neigh-on impossible to draw any reliable conclusions from this.

More Research

Following a Freedom of Information Act request, data was released by Downing College showing the difference between the time for completion of maintenance requests in 2006 when Reactionary¹ Maintenance was carried out in-house and the similar times from October 2006 to August 2007 when the Reactionary Maintenance was carried out by Cofathec, the external company.

It is important to note that the following results are based upon 2901 data points for the in-house values and 1243 data points for the Cofathec values, although as the numbers are in the thousands the data will be reasonably reliable.

¹ 'Reactionary Maintenance' is the term used to describe the repairing of things when they break, or after a problem has occurred. This is opposed to 'Precautionary Maintenance' (or 'Proactive Maintenance') which refers to the routine and continual testing and repairing of things throughout the year, in order to prevent them from breaking or such problems to occur. Proactive Maintenance has been carried out by Cofathec for much longer than the Reactionary Maintenance, which was transferred in October 2006

<i>Time in days</i>	In-House	Cofathec
Maximum	245	153
Minimum	0	0
Average	3	8

This shows that while the maximum in-house delay is much longer than the maximum Cofathec delay the average is much less. Cofathec on average take over a week to complete most maintenance tasks, while the old in-house system was seemingly able to cope with responding within three days on average.

Conclusions

This report does not contain enough hard and fast data to draw many valid conclusions, although I believe there is enough evidence regarding current average response times to point to there being potential for improvement in this area by Cofathec.

I do not personally believe that there is huge cause for concern regarding the maintenance department, and I would not recommend a fuller report. I believe that, given time, Cofathec should be able to improve upon their current response rate times.

With this in mind I am going to recommend that a similar report to this be carried out by either the 2007-2008 or the 2008-2009 JCR Executive Committee as a way of seeing if any improvements have been made in either one or two years from now. If no improvements are seen to be made at that point then perhaps a proper review could be undertaken by either the JCR Exec or the College itself.

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- Maintenance Survey

The JCR Committee are currently examining the system used to respond to maintenance requests. Now we want YOUR input.

There will be a PRIZE DRAW for all completed entries. Your name will not be associated with your answers.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Requests:

- How often do you submit maintenance requests on average?
Never Very Rarely Once a term Several times a term Frequently
- How do you usually submit requests?
Forms in the P'Lodge Online Both
- How quickly are your requests normally completed, on average?
Next day Within a few days A week Longer than a week
... if so, how long?

Maintenance:

- How satisfied are you with the level of service you receive from the maintenance department?
Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Slightly dissatisfied Slightly satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
- How could it be improved? _____

- How satisfied are you with the average speed of response to a maintenance request?
Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Slightly dissatisfied Slightly satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
- Have you noticed any change since the move to an external company in October?
Yes - it's worse now Yes - it's better now No - it's not changed
- Is there anything else you would like to add? _____

Thank You! Please place completed forms in the box in the Porter's Lodge.