

# 6 Right Benefit Toolkit

## 6.1 Introduction and summary

In April 2008, Housing Benefit (HB) performance measures were replaced by two indicators – the Right Benefit and the Right Time indicators. The Right Benefit indicator measures the number of changes in HB entitlement in each local authority's (LA's) caseload, both increases and decreases, encouraging LAs to reduce the number of awards that are incorrect. The Right Benefit Toolkit launched in October 2008 aims to support LAs' progress in this area. This section of the survey is aimed at finding out more about LA's awareness and use of the Right Benefit Toolkit.

The key findings based on all LAs answering are summarised in this section. These are followed by the main findings which include charts for all questions plus commentary highlighting the key sub-group differences.

More than nine in ten LAs (91 per cent) were aware of the Toolkit. When LAs were asked about each of the products in the Right Benefit Toolkit, 'Engaging with Customers' would seem to be the most popular (56 per cent either already use it or are planning to use it) while 'Tracking Template' is the least popular (just 35 per cent already use it or are planning to use it and 17 per cent said that they have looked at it but are not planning to use it). Just under half of LAs have either used or are planning to use 'Evaluating Initiatives', 'Best mix of Activities' and 'Example Materials' (47 per cent, 46 per cent and 45 per cent respectively).

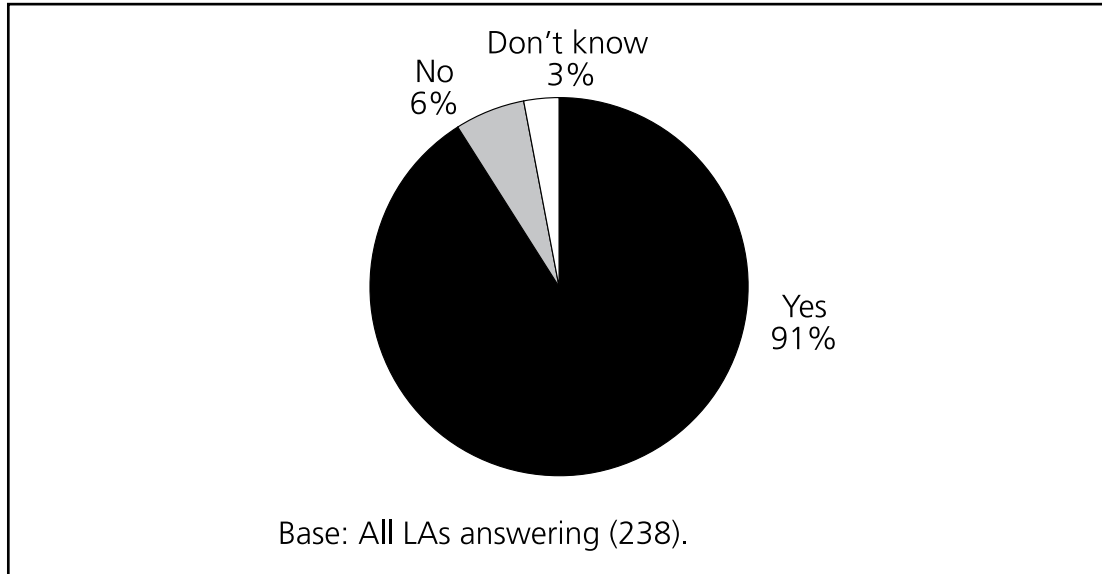
When those LAs that had used each product were asked for their views on it, high majorities said that it had been helpful.

LAs were also asked what other products they would like to see in the Toolkit. More than three-quarters (77 per cent) would like to see details from LAs of initiatives that have worked for them. In addition, just over half would like the Toolkit to include change of circumstance poster and leaflet templates (53 per cent and 52 per cent respectively) and just under half (47 per cent) would like to see change of circumstance letter templates.

## 6.2 Main findings

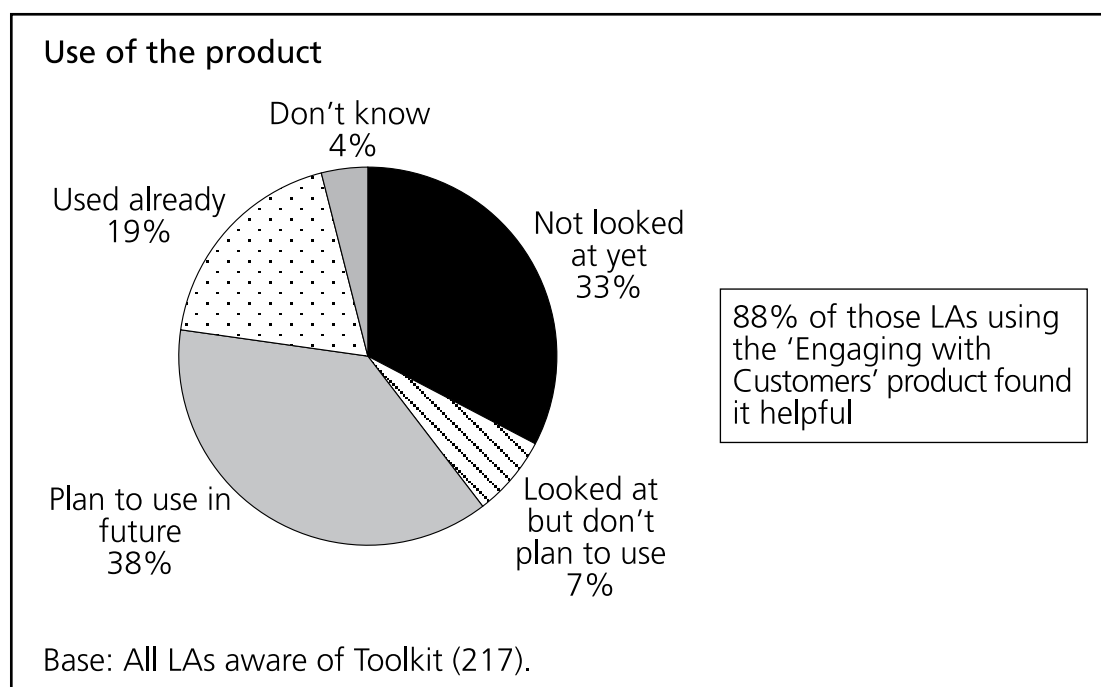
The following details the main findings and includes charts for all questions plus commentary highlighting the key sub-group differences.

**Figure 6.1 Is your LA aware of the Toolkit?**



More than nine in ten LAs (91 per cent) were aware of the Toolkit. Awareness is higher among LAs with a high caseload (97 per cent) than those with a low and medium caseload (87 per cent and 89 per cent respectively).

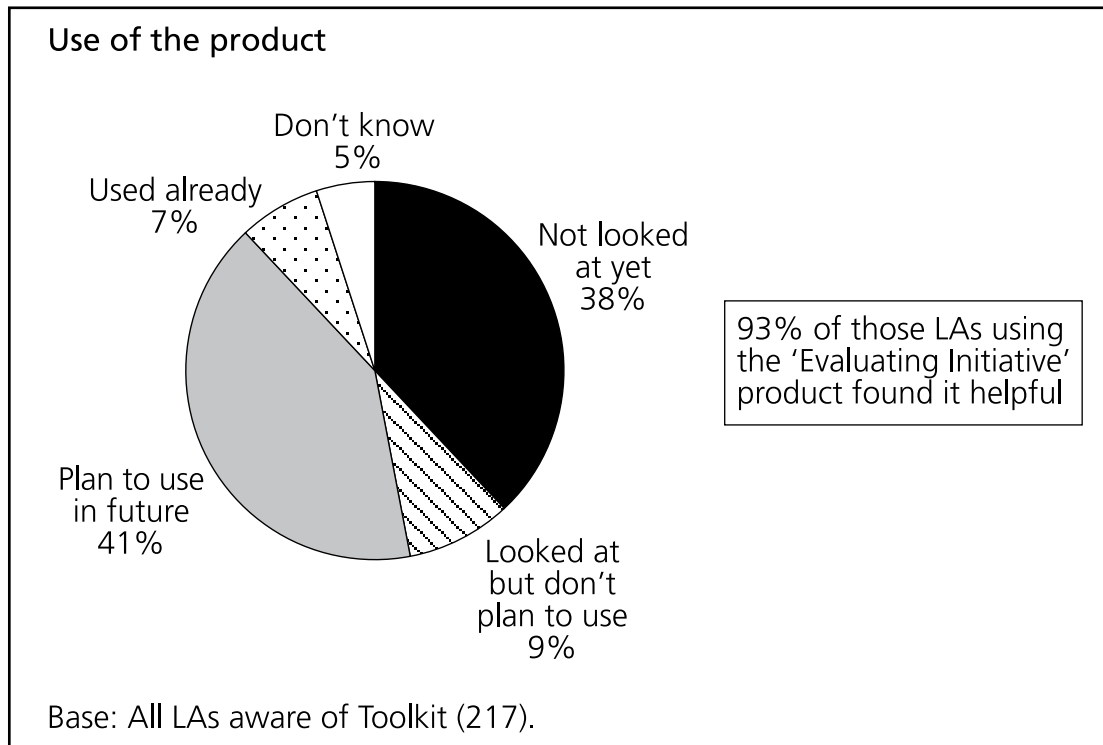
**Figure 6.2** The Right Benefit Toolkit comprises a number of products which are listed in the table below. Please indicate whether you have (a) not looked at the product yet, (b) looked at the product but don't plan to use it, (c) plan to use the product in the future or (d) have used it already – 'Engaging with Customers' product



When LAs were asked about each of the products in the Right Benefit Toolkit, 'Engaging with Customers' would seem to be the most popular (19 per cent already used it and 38 per cent were planning to use it). Low caseload authorities were more likely than medium and high caseload authorities to have been planning to use it in the future (50 per cent, 31 per cent and 35 per cent respectively) and rather less likely to be using it already (9 per cent, 25 per cent and 19 per cent respectively). A relatively large proportion of London boroughs said that they did not know whether or not their LA was using it or were planning to use it in the future (19 per cent).

A large majority of LAs that had used the 'Engaging with Customers' product said that they found it helpful (88 per cent).

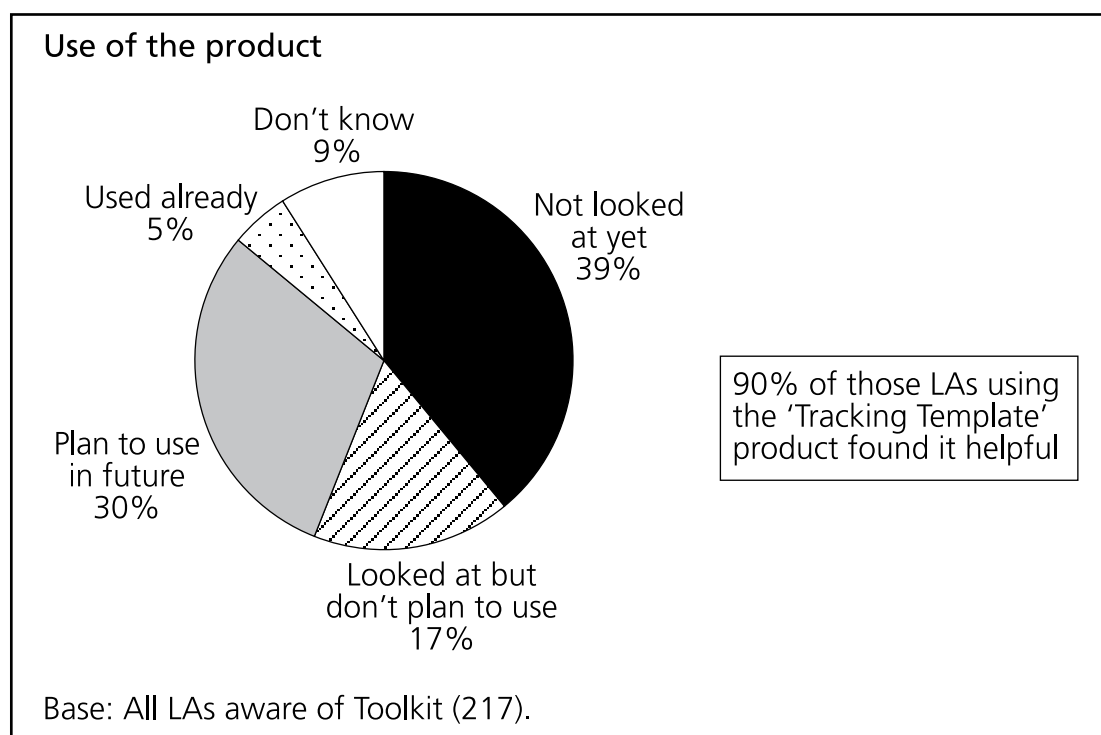
**Figure 6.3** The Right Benefit Toolkit comprises a number of products which are listed in the table below. Please indicate whether you have (a) not looked at the product yet, (b) looked at the product but don't plan to use it, (c) plan to use the product in the future or (d) have used it already – 'Evaluating Initiatives' product



Just under half of LAs had either used (seven per cent) or are planning to use the 'Evaluating Initiatives' (41 per cent) product. Once again, a relatively large proportion of London boroughs said that they did not know whether or not their LA was using it or were planning to use it in the future (25 per cent).

Fourteen out of 15 of those LAs that had used the 'Evaluating Initiatives' product said that they found it helpful.

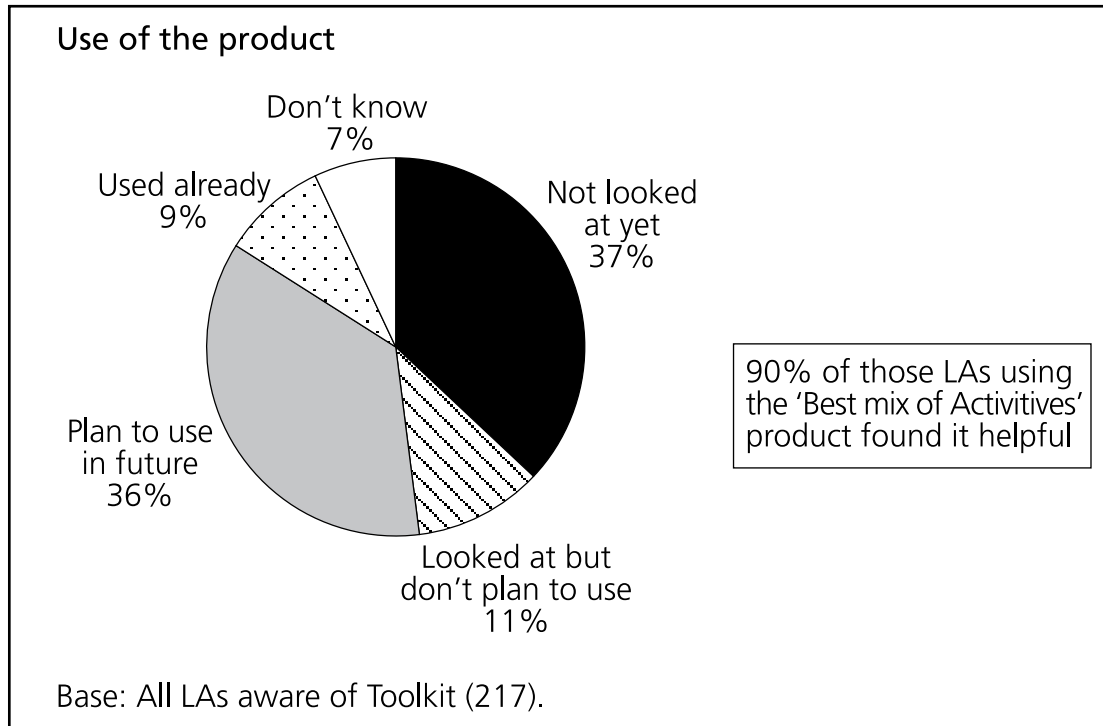
**Figure 6.4** The Right Benefit Toolkit comprises a number of products which are listed in the table below. Please indicate whether you have (a) not looked at the product yet, (b) looked at the product but don't plan to use it, (c) plan to use the product in the future or (d) have used it already – 'Tracking Template' product



Just over a third of LAs were already using (five per cent), or planning to use, the 'Tracking Template' product (30 per cent). There were no significant differences between sub-groups.

Nine out of ten LAs that had used the 'Tracking Template' product said that they found it helpful.

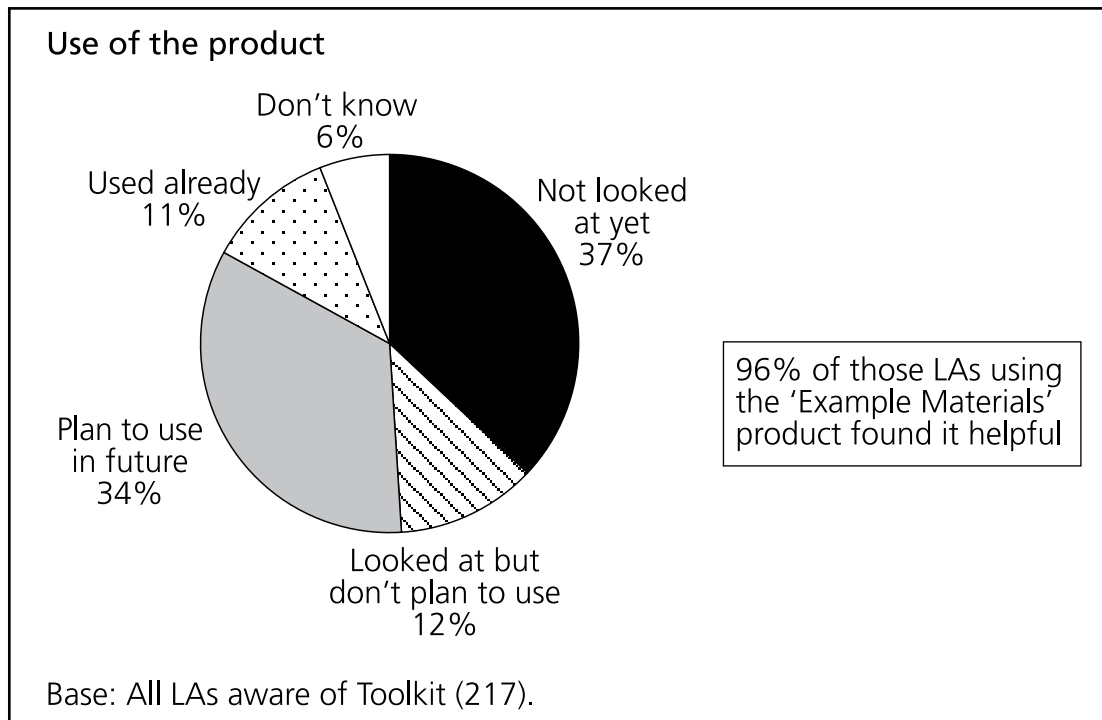
**Figure 6.5 The Right Benefit Toolkit comprises a number of products which are listed in the table below. Please indicate whether you have (a) not looked at the product yet, (b) looked at the product but don't plan to use it, (c) plan to use the product in the future or (d) have used it already – 'Best mix of Activities' product**



Although just nine per cent of LAs already used the 'Best mix of activities' product, 36 per cent were planning to use it in the future. Low caseload authorities were the least likely to have been already using it (two per cent versus 13 per cent of medium caseload authorities and 11 per cent of high caseload authorities). Once again, a relatively large proportion of London boroughs said that they did not know whether or not their LA was using it or were planning to use it in the future (19 per cent).

Eighteen out of 20 LAs that had used the 'Best mix of activities' product said that they found it helpful.

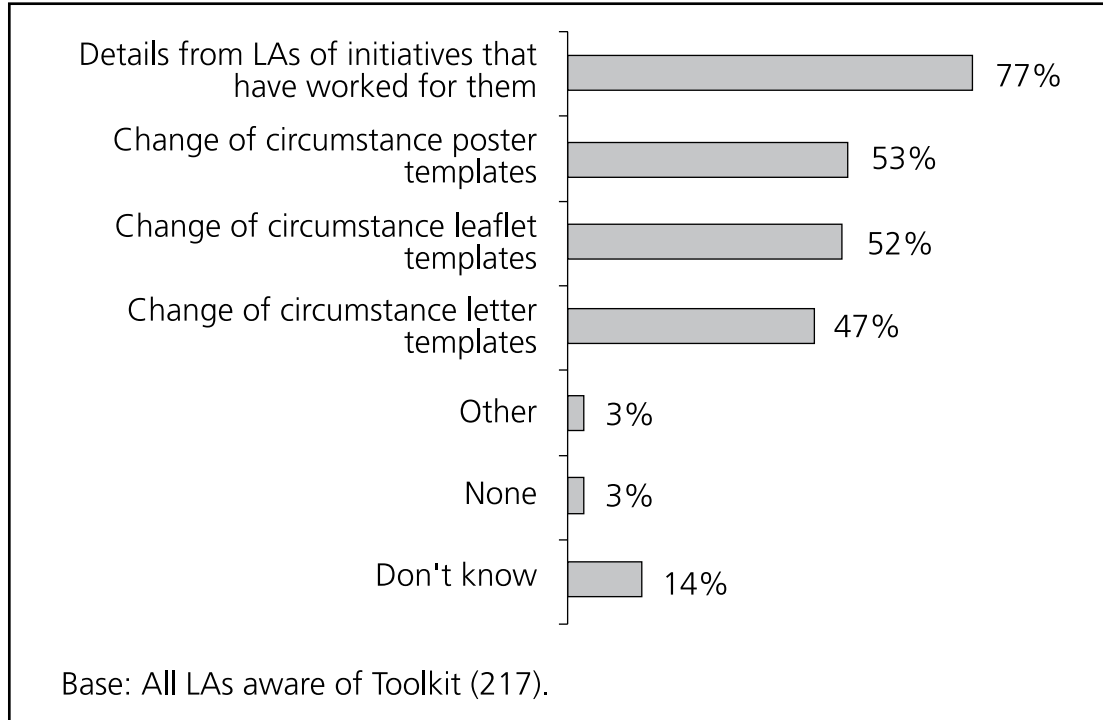
**Figure 6.6** The Right Benefit Toolkit comprises a number of products which are listed in the table below. Please indicate whether you have (a) not looked at the product yet, (b) looked at the product but don't plan to use it, (c) plan to use the product in the future or (d) have used it already – 'Example Materials' product



Eleven per cent of LAs were already using the 'Example materials' product and a third (34 per cent) were planning to use it in the future. Once again, a relatively large proportion of London boroughs said that they did not know whether or not their LA was using it or were planning to use it in the future (19 per cent).

Twenty-three out of 24 LAs that had used the 'Example Materials' product said that they found it helpful.

**Figure 6.7 What other products would you like to see in the Right Benefit Toolkit?**



LAs that were aware of the Right Benefit Toolkit were asked what other products they would like to see in the Toolkit. More than three-quarters (77 per cent) would like to see details from LAs of initiatives that have worked for them, with this rising to 100 per cent of Scottish authorities. In addition, just over half would like the Toolkit to include change of circumstance poster and leaflet templates (53 per cent and 52 per cent respectively) and just under half (47 per cent) would like to see change of circumstance letter templates (47 per cent). Fourteen per cent of LAs said that they did not know what other products they would like to see and this rose among London boroughs and Welsh authorities to 38 per cent and 56 per cent respectively.