

**Houghton International**  
Electro mechanical innovation

# Customer satisfaction

## Customer report 2021/22

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** [www.houghton-international.com](http://www.houghton-international.com)

**Houghton International**

Ronnie Mitten Works, Shields Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2YL, UK

**T:** +44 (0)191 234 3000 **E:** [info@houghton-international.com](mailto:info@houghton-international.com)

 @HoughtonInt

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Welcome to Houghton International's 2022 customer satisfaction update.

Our mission is to be the best in the world at what we do, and it is you, our customers, who are the judge of our progress towards that goal. We take your feedback incredibly seriously and use it to drive improvements across our business every month, while also providing essential feedback to all our operational, sales, finance and customer service teams about how they are doing. Every customer comment is shared with the board and leadership teams each month, with actions taken to drive continuous improvement across all aspects of our business. More than anything, we thank everyone who has taken time out of their day to provide us with this uniquely important insight into how our performance supports you, our customers, each day.

I'm always delighted to read about how named individuals have gone above and beyond customers' expectations, so please note that any praise you give is always recognised by the directors and the individual's manager.

In the past year we have seen the world make progress in adapting to living with Covid-19. New challenges have arisen, including the war in Ukraine and rising costs for raw materials, wholesale energy and international freight. The last few years have highlighted more than ever the value of a strong supply chain.

I am delighted that we have been able to return to in-person meetings and events. I extend an open invite to all customers who are yet to visit the Ronnie Mitten Works. Since we moved in to the 120,000 sq ft site in late 2020 we have invested significantly in the facility. Feedback from customers has been overwhelmingly positive. In keeping with our mission, we are striving to operate from one of the best electro mechanical service centres in the world. Again, we need your feedback to help us achieve that goal.

There have been many highlights from the past 12 months. We have seen growing demand across the business, in particular for our site services and on-site dielectric testing, pump services and high voltage coil manufacturing. We are continuing to expand our range of services to better support customer needs, including enhanced machine shop capabilities and improved provision for electrical installation services.

Investment in quality, health, safety and environmental management has continued. We welcomed a new QHSE manager, Graham Knight, and successfully completed a number of audits to reconfirm our commitment to maintaining the highest safety, environmental and quality standards. New processes and procedures have been introduced to further reinforce our QHSE systems and robust health and safety culture.

We also carried out a wider range of work than ever before, including a major repair and rewind of a 26 tonne wind turbine generator; our biggest job in the wind sector to date. As demand has increased, new jobs have been created and we have welcomed our latest cohort of apprentices. In January, Make UK, the representative body for UK manufacturing and engineering, named us their UK SME of the Year. We couldn't be prouder to receive national recognition for the work we do.

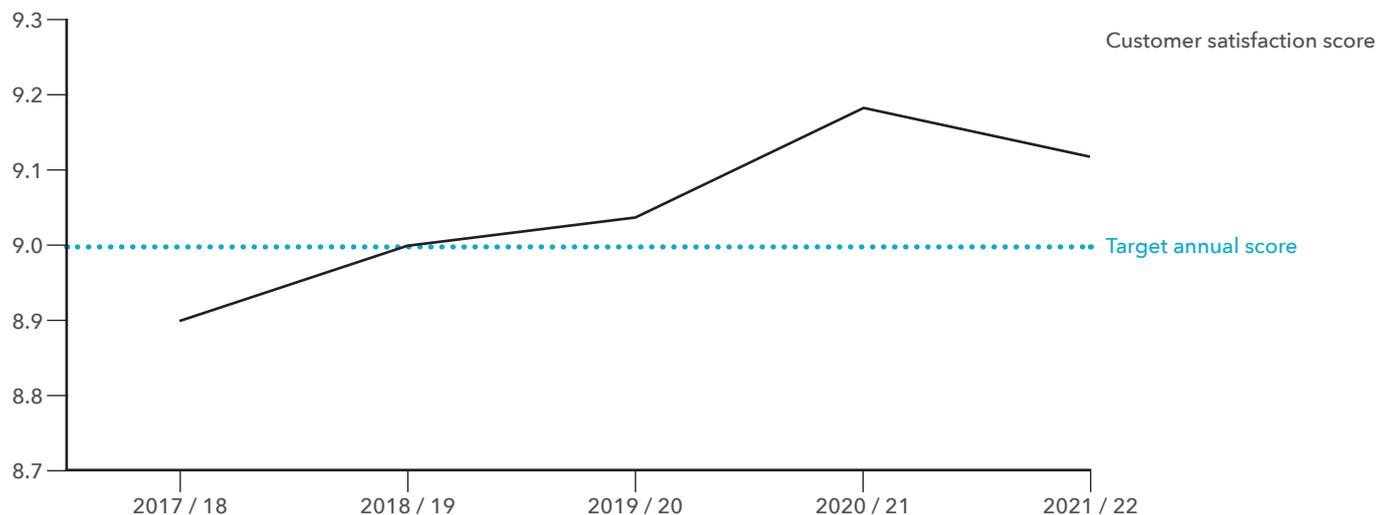
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Mitten', written over a faint circular watermark or background.

**Michael Mitten**  
CEO

Our customer satisfaction process is integral to the business, helping guide how we operate to ensure we meet customer needs and deliver the high quality of service we know you expect. Thank you to all who took the time to provide feedback.

This year we carried out more surveys than ever before. In total, 138 surveys were carried out with customers from across the business. All feedback is reviewed by the board of directors and senior management team to help us identify what we're doing well and where we can improve.

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORES



Our aim is to achieve an average annual customer satisfaction score of 9/10 or above. I'm happy to say that once again we have exceeded this target, with an average score of 9.12. This is a great sign that the changes made as a result of previous surveys, as well as the culture of continuous improvement within the business, are continuing to make a tangible difference to the way we operate and the services we provide. However, it also a sign that there are improvements still to be made. We know you hold us to a high standard, and we can only ask that you continue to do so. Key trends, both positive and negative, have been highlighted within this report - along with actions taken as a result of the feedback you have given.

Most of you told us that you are satisfied with Houghton International, with an average score of 9.08. We know our customers have high expectations of us, and this question is a key measure of whether we are meeting those expectations. Exceeding our target score of 9.0 is a good sign we are getting things right. However, we know improvement must be a continuous process.

When asked how we compare to your best supplier, over 70% of respondents answered 9 or 10 for this question, with an average of 8.99 and many telling us we are your best supplier or that you use us exclusively. Furthermore, you told us you are likely to recommend us to others - and, indeed, many of you have referred your colleagues in the industry to us. Recommending us to others is the ultimate signal of trust - thank you, it is appreciated.

## **Quality**

We know that the quality of our products and services is one key reason why our customers come back time and time again and our robust internal systems and processes are integral to this. Last year you gave us a score of 9.12 for quality - an increase from 9.04 in 2020. In the past year we welcomed our new QHSE Manager, Graham Knight, who has continued to drive improvement within the business, with a particular focus on identifying root causes to reinforce a proactive system of corrective action. We once again saw the successful completion of audits for BSI ISO 9001:2015 (quality management), 14001:2015 (environmental management) and 45001:2018 (occupational health and safety), with very positive feedback from auditors, alongside sector specific accreditations such as RISAS in the UK Rail Industry.

## **Delivery**

One of the few scores that decreased year on year was delivery, down from 9.17 in 2020 to 9.02. We appreciate that turnaround time is critical and we aim to be open and honest about how quickly we think we can complete a job. We will never knowingly accept a job with a deadline we don't believe can be achieved.

In recent years we have seen disruption due to supply chain issues, freight costs and availability, and staff sickness and isolation due to Covid. Many of you told us you understood these difficulties and that there is only so much that can be done to mitigate the impact of these global factors. Nonetheless, we recognise there are improvements to be made, particularly when it comes to the communication of delays. We have ensured this feedback has been passed on across the business. Whilst we would never like to see customer satisfaction decreasing in any areas, we are pleased to still achieve the target of 9.0. We will continue to monitor this closely to ensure we are delivering the quality service you expect from us.

## **Price**

With regards to value for money, you told us that whilst we are not always the cheapest, you recognise the value for money we deliver and that "you get what you pay for." Many of you highlighted that, as well as great service, our quality materials and quick turnaround times were reasons you felt we delivered excellent value. 87.5% of respondents scored 8 or higher for this question, with an average of 8.63.

We understand you would always prefer to pay less, particularly at a time when costs are rising in all areas. We always aim to charge a fair price for our services and deliver excellent value through the quality of service offered. What's more, we have a strong supply chain and will always aim to source materials at the best possible price and pass on savings wherever possible to remain competitive.

Some comments also asked for a clearer price breakdown on quotes. This feedback has been passed on to the relevant account managers. We know different individuals and organisations have different ways of working, so please let your account manager know if there is any way we can adjust our quotes or sales process to better meet your needs.

## **Communication**

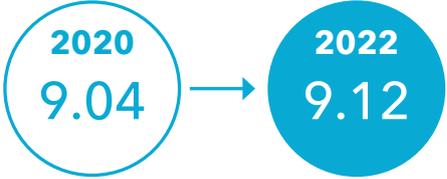
You told us that you feel we are easy to do business with, giving an average score of 9.36. Feedback for this question was very positive, with the score increasing from 9.27 in 2020. Particular praise was given to the operational teams for keeping you informed and providing updates in a timely manner.

However, you also told us that communication was sometimes slower than you would have liked. As with many other businesses, we were impacted by higher levels of sickness and longer absences due to Covid. We have tried to mitigate this as best we can, and, when changes occur, prioritise quick and clear communication. We haven't always got this right and we aim to make improvements in the coming year.

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with Houghton International?



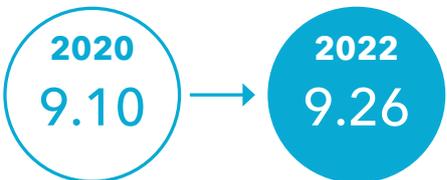
2. In relation to your most recent experiences, how would you rate the quality of our products/services?



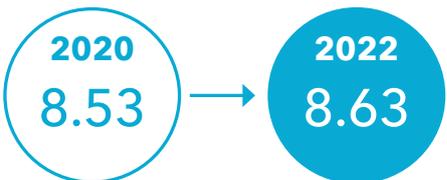
3. In relation to your most recent experiences, how would you rate the delivery of our products/services?



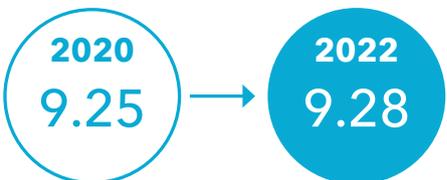
4. How well do our products/services meet your needs?



5. In relation to your most recent experiences, how would you rate our products/services with regards value for money?



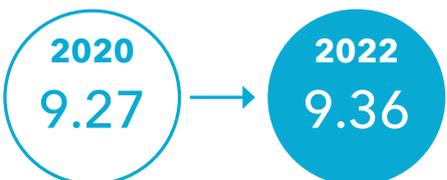
6. How would you rate the service provided by our sales and customer service teams?



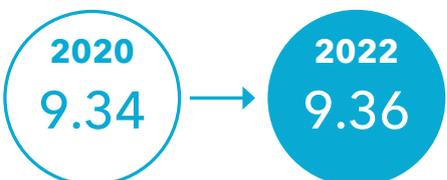
7. Compared with your best supplier, how do you rate Houghton International?

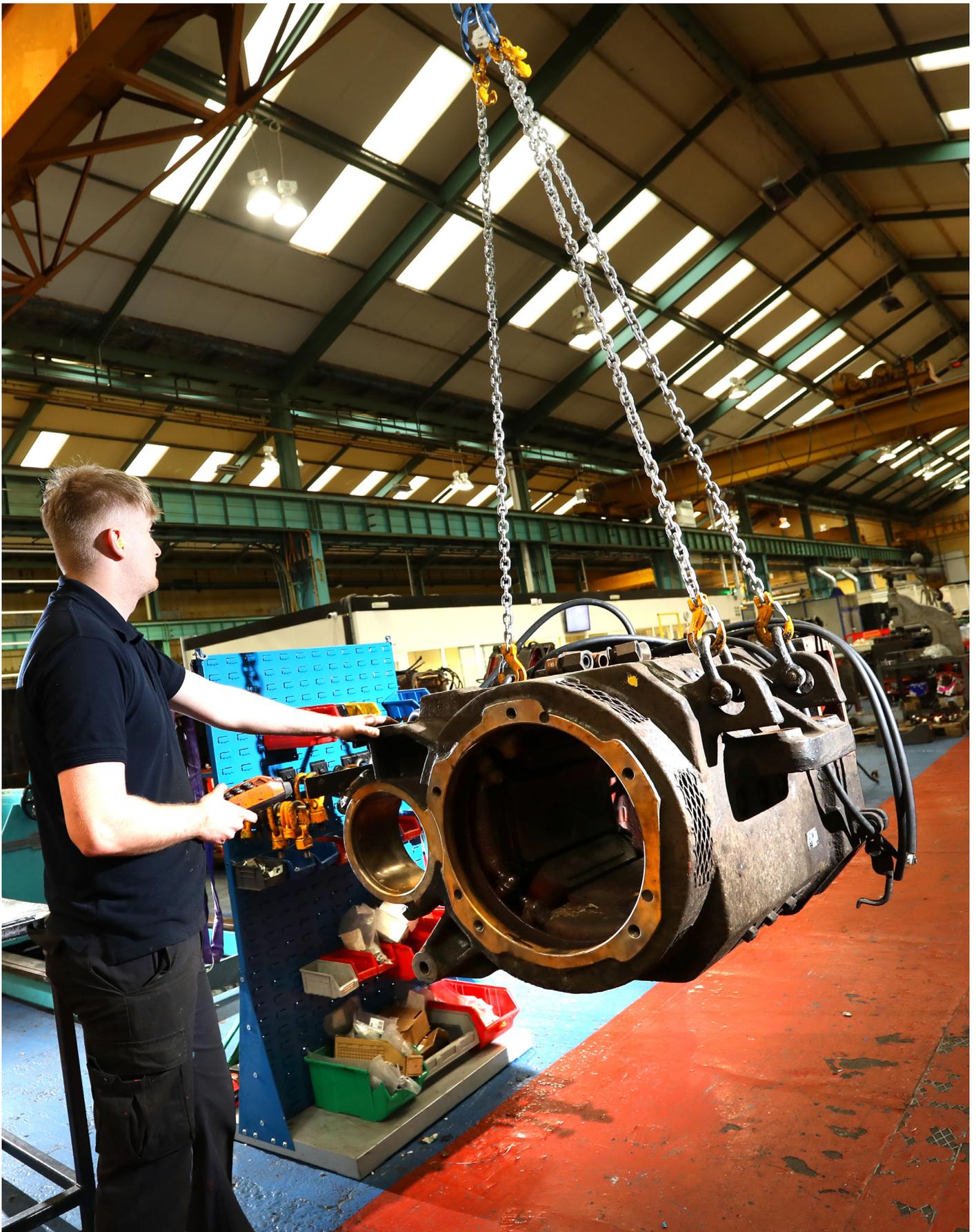


8. How easy is Houghton International to do business with?



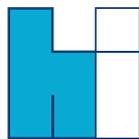
9. How likely is it that you would recommend Houghton International to a friend, colleague or industry associate?





Thank you for taking the time to read this report. Customer feedback is integral to how we operate and is one of the key ways we drive improvement across the business.

If you have any questions about this report or would like to pass on further feedback to our team, please get in touch any time, either by speaking to your sales contact or get in touch with me directly on **+44 (0)191 234 3000** or **[michael.mitten@houghton-international.com](mailto:michael.mitten@houghton-international.com)**.



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