

Voice!

Police Scotland Priorities

Roads

Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership

Environmental Health & Trading Standards

Fire Scotland

Outdoor Play



Welcome

Welcome to the 34th citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen's citizens' panel, on the results of the 34th questionnaire that you completed in February/March 2015. Topics in that questionnaire included Police Scotland Priorities, Roads, Community Safety Partnership, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, Fire Scotland and Outdoor Play.

Your responses are important in informing and contributing to future plans by all partners of the City Voice. The data is analysed by our research consultants at the Robert Gordon University. As always, all information provided is kept strictly confidential.

The 35th questionnaire, focusing on the topics Police Scotland, Arts and Cultural Activities, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Health and Wellbeing and Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drug Partnership is sent out together with this newsletter. I would like to thank all of you who have continued to complete the questionnaires and have returned them promptly over the last couple of years.

Please get in touch if you wish to make any comments on the citizens' panel.

Annina Cavelti Kee
City Voice Co-ordinator

Future Questionnaires

This newsletter, and the full results of the 34th questionnaire, is available to view on the Community Planning website

www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk. Internet access is provided at libraries throughout Aberdeen and hard copies will be available at Marischal College Customer Service Centre and all city libraries. Alternatively, hard copies can be posted to you by contacting me on the details below.

We plan to issue Newsletter No.36, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in October 2015, along with the 35th Questionnaire.

If you have any further queries or would like to feedback your comments, please contact:

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Aberdeen City Voice is an initiative by Aberdeen's Community Planning Partnership, including Aberdeen City Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it





We would like to welcome Dave Kilgour as our new Chairperson of the City Voice Editorial Board. He is a City Strategist at Aberdeen City Council. We would like to thank Dave Kilgour for his support of the City Voice.

You might have wondered what the City Voice Editorial Board does. It represents all partners which are involved in the City Voice, i.e. Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NHS Grampian, and the universities and college. The Editorial Board oversees the running of the City Voice and reviews all questions before sending them out to the panellists. The citizens' panel is a joint project and all our partners can put questions to our panellists.

The City Voice currently has 912 members. We are still aiming to get this figure up to 1,000. It would be great if you can help us with that! Please, tell your friends and family about us and encourage them to sign up as well - the only requirement is that they are over 16 and live in Aberdeen City. They can also sign up online at www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk, they can email us at cityvoice@aberdeencity.gov.uk or call us on: 01224 522935.

And remember...you can follow us on our blog <https://aberdeencityvoice.wordpress.com/> and we are on the Aberdeen City Council's facebook page and twitter feed!

34th Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 34th questionnaire you completed in February/March 2015. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, we had 911 people on the panel and we received 627 completed questionnaires. This gives us an overall response rate of 68.8%. It is encouraging to see such a good response rate. Thank you to everyone who participated.

It is vital for the success of the City Voice that we keep response rates as high as possible so please continue to complete them. If you wish to change the format that you receive the questionnaire in, i.e. move from hardcopy to electronic questionnaires or from electronic ones to a hardcopy format, please do not hesitate to contact us. If there is another reason you are not replying, please let me know.



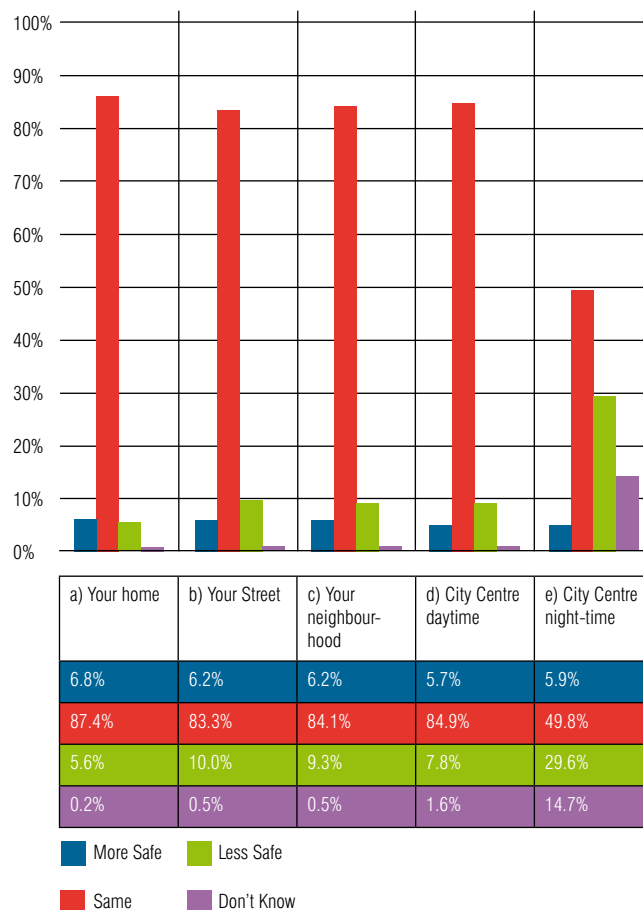
Police Scotland Priorities

The questions asked in the 34th questionnaire were about current policing priorities and how safe the panel members feel they are in their city. The seven priorities are acquisitive crime (theft, housebreaking, etc.); antisocial behaviour (youth annoyance, motorcycle annoyance etc.); national security (national and domestic terrorism); protecting people (public safety, adult and child protection); safer roads; serious and organised crime (drugs, organised crime groups etc.) and violent crime (assault, rape, etc.). The first question asked how relevant panellists feel the policing priorities are. The majority of respondents rated every priority except 'safer roads' as highly relevant. Looking at the different age groups some interesting aspects should be highlighted: When looking at how relevant panellists aged between 16-34 years felt that 'protecting people' is - 100% chose either 'highly relevant', 'relevant' or 'slightly relevant'. At the same time, panellists in this age group perceived 'national security' as less relevant than other age groups. 85.0% of the panellists aged between 16-34 years classified 'national security' as relevant, compared to 93.1% aged between 35-54 years, 91.9% aged between 55-64 years and 97.2% aged over 65 thought it was relevant.

When asked if panellists think there should be any additional police priorities several panellists asked for a more visible and approachable presence on foot in the community as well as keeping the police local.

Panellists were also asked how safe they feel 'at home', 'in their street', 'in their neighbourhood', 'in the city centre during daytime' and 'in the city centre during night time' compared to two years ago. The majority of panellists feel the same level of safety in all areas. However, almost a third of respondents feel less safe in the city centre during night time than they did two years ago.

Figure 1: How safe do you feel compared to this time two years ago?





This is what we are doing

Police Scotland, Aberdeen City Division are pleased to note that the majority of respondents agree with the Policing Priorities for our area. In particular, we note the importance of dealing effectively with violent crime, which so many people identified as 'Highly Relevant'.

Our Local Policing Priorities, identified within our Local Policing Plan, are informed through a process of consultation with local residents and communities. The findings of the survey would therefore indicate that these are aligned to the issues affecting the people of Aberdeen in their day to day lives.

In terms of how safe people feel in comparison to two years ago, it is clear to see that overall the majority of respondents felt as safe or indeed more safe in their homes, street, neighbourhood and the city centre during daytime hours. This indicates that the desire of the Division to ensure local focus and the quality of local service delivery has been retained, despite the significant changes in our organisational structure. The notable exception to this is in terms of how safe people feel in the city centre at night, with almost a third of respondents indicating that they felt less safe. This is not limited to younger or older people, as the percentage of respondents who provided this perspective was similar across all age bands. This is of great interest to us, as statistical evidence would in fact suggest that the city centre is in fact generally safer than previously. In 2014, the city was awarded Purple Flag status, a national accreditation which recognises cities and town centres that excel in managing the evening and night time economy.

Operation Oak is a local Police Scotland initiative, contributing to improved safety outcomes in the city centre. The objectives of Operation Oak are, through partnership working and proactive policing, to:

- reduce violent crime
- reduce antisocial behaviour and alcohol-related disorder
- reduce retail crime
- improve personal safety and wellbeing.

Under Operation Oak, the police seeks to proactively target and manage violent offenders in the city centre, deploy targeted and intelligence-led police patrols, and help businesses to minimise the risks of becoming victim to retail crime. Aberdeen City Division has allocated dedicated resources to delivering Operation Oak, overseen by robust management processes.

Within the two year period since the 2012/13 financial year, Operation Oak has contributed to an overall reduction in city centre crime of 34.0%. The most significant reductions are in respect of thefts, which have decreased by 37.0% and violent crime, which has also fallen by approximately 34.0%.

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Roads

Aberdeen City Council is continuing to participate in a nationwide project to develop an Asset Management Plan for its roads. The council maintains 500 miles of road, 1,000 miles of footway and 30,000 street lights. The following questions have been asked previously and were now asked again in order to develop a continuing picture of the responses.

Panellists were first asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the present performance of the condition of bus routes, other main roads, side/ local roads, time taken to repair roads, the condition of busy and local footways, time taken to repair footways, intensity of street lighting in the city centre and in residential areas and time taken to repair street lights. A majority of the respondents were fairly satisfied with the condition of bus routes and other main roads (46.4%), fairly dissatisfied with the condition of side/ local roads (39.4%), fairly dissatisfied with the time taken to repair roads (32.2%), neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the condition of busy footways (32.2%), neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the condition of local footways (30.5%), neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the time taken to repair footways (31.1%), fairly satisfied with the intensity of street lighting in the city centre (44.8%), fairly satisfied with the intensity of street lighting in residential areas (41.6%), and fairly satisfied with the time taken to repair street lights (26.8%).

Looking at the difference in the responses across the different areas in the city, panellists living in central areas were proportionately more likely to give an overall 'positive' satisfaction rating ('very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied') to the condition of bus routes and other main roads (57.2%) compared to people living in the north (48.6%) and people living in the south (55.0%). Respondents living

in central Aberdeen are also more satisfied with the condition of side/local roads (25.2%) and with the time taken to repair roads (12.3%) than panellists living in the north (20.1% and 10.3% respectively) and in the south (17.6% and 9.31% respectively) of Aberdeen. Panellists living in northern areas were proportionately more likely to give a 'positive satisfaction rating' to the condition of local footways (35.3%) compared to 25.0% in central and 28.7% in the south of Aberdeen. However, respondents from the north of Aberdeen were less satisfied with the condition of bus routes and other main roads (32.1%) compared to 25.7% respondents living in central Aberdeen and 29.2% in the south of Aberdeen. Meanwhile panellists living in the southern areas of Aberdeen rated the condition of side/local roads (66.5%) and the time taken to repair roads (64.0%) more often as 'not satisfactory' than panellists from the other areas of Aberdeen (51.3% of the people living in central Aberdeen and 60.8% in north of Aberdeen rated the condition of side/local roads negatively and 58.5% in central and 62.0% in north of Aberdeen perceived the time taken to repair roads as dissatisfying).

When asked where panellists would like to see more spending on, the majority (67.6%) thought the council should spend more money on side roads/ local roads and spend about the same money on bus routes and main roads, busy footways, local footways and street lighting.

There are some differences between the ways the panellists of different neighbourhoods would distribute the spending. (Please see figures below, 2a - 2e)

Figure 2: Which areas would you like to see more or less council spending on?

Figure 2a): Main roads and bus routes

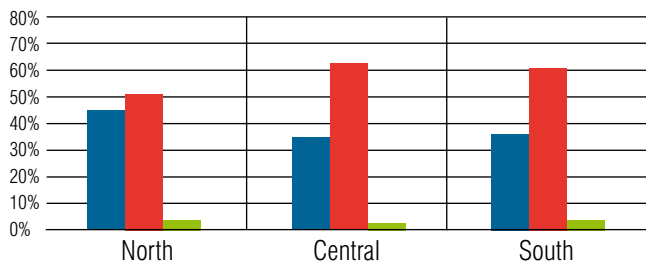


Figure 2b) Side roads/ local roads

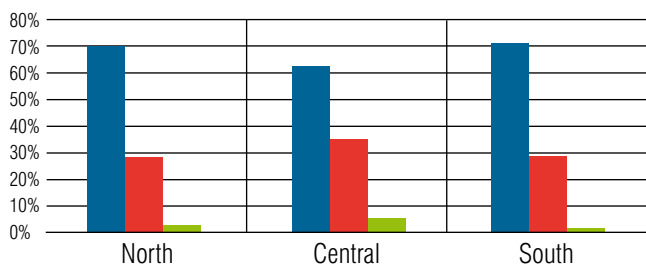


Figure 2c) Busy footways

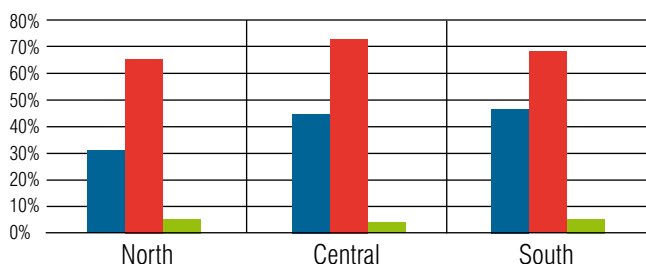


Figure 2d) Local footways

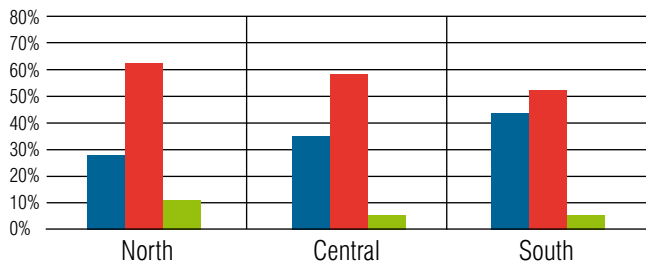
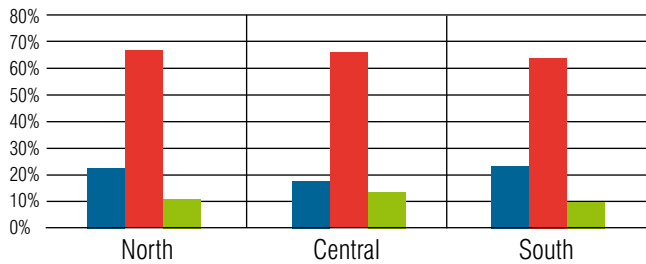


Figure 2e) Street Lighting



■ Spend more
 ■ Spend the same
 ■ Spend less

This is what we are doing

The results continue to be of considerable interest to us in developing our Roads Asset Management Plan for the long term stewardship of what is probably the council's most valuable asset.

The level of satisfaction with the condition of main routes has improved. This is a positive result as a budget has been allocated allowing the service to remove some of the worst areas of defects in main routes. It shows that the work being carried out is achieving its intention.

There has also been some improvement in the level of satisfaction with the condition of side roads. This is less easy to explain, although we have been reviewing the materials and plant used to patch defects. This has meant fewer failures of patches and return visits which should help with the perception of overall road condition.

Overall the level of satisfaction with side roads remains low which reflects the current spending profile in these areas.

Fewer respondents are expressing themselves dissatisfied with the time taken to repair roads. This may be explained by the adoption of more flexible working patterns which are enabling work to be carried out on a 24/7 programme.

Footway maintenance has also benefited from the adoption of these more flexible working patterns. The targeting of defective areas, such as the trip hazard caused by uneven surfaces around street trees, has meant that these footways are now safer to use. It is pleasing to note the small reduction in the level of dissatisfaction, although the overall level of satisfaction reflects the level of work still to be carried out.

There has been little significant change in the response to the maintenance of street lighting, although the level of satisfaction with residential lighting has declined somewhat. Unfortunately efforts to improve levels of lighting across the city using new technologies such as led's to cut power costs, and carbon usage, have been paralleled by increasing numbers of unsafe poles which require to be cut down. The work to replace these columns becomes part of a work programme which does require a little time to complete.

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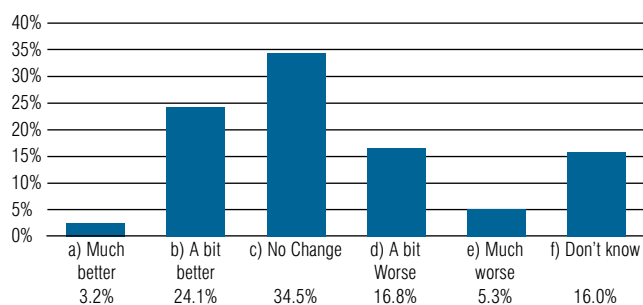
Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership

Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership works to prevent and reduce the incidence of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviours, tackle the underlying causes of such behaviour and work harder to ensure that Aberdeen is a place where people are, and feel, safe. The questions will provide evidence of the views and experiences of local people in Aberdeen City in relation to community safety. The first question put to panellists was about how safe they feel walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. Most panellists answered that they feel safe in their neighbourhood after dark (51.0% feel fairly safe and 28.0% feel very safe). Looking at the disaggregation by gender it is not surprising that male respondents generally feel safer walking alone at night than female respondents - 36.8% male respondents and 20.4% female respondents feel very safe. A difference can also be seen looking at the different areas. Panellists living in the north and south of Aberdeen were proportionately slightly more likely to feel very safe (32.3% in north and 30.3% in south Aberdeen) than people living in central Aberdeen (21.1%).

When asked why they answered the way they did, many panellists stated that they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood in the dark because they have not heard of any incidents and/or have not had any problems themselves. Another popular answer was that they feel very safe because they live in a nice/quiet area. Reasons for feeling unsafe were poor street lighting and drug or alcohol activities.

Panellists were then asked what their opinion is about changes in crime and antisocial behaviour in Aberdeen in the last 2 years. The majority of the panellists answered with 'no change' (34.5%), whereas 24.1% answered with 'a bit better' and 16.8% with 'a bit worse'.

Figure 3: What is your opinion on crime and antisocial behaviour in Aberdeen in the last 2 years?



This is what we are doing

The first question 'How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark?', asks the respondents to qualify their answer and these replies contain useful information which can potentially be used to influence service delivery and recommendations in relation to Community Safety.

Results based on the neighbourhood area of panellists show some differences and it would be interesting to match these differences to panellists' replies as to why they answered the first question 'How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark?' This could be used to influence service delivery within the various neighbourhoods.

The answers to questions provided in the most recent City Voice questionnaire for Community Safety will be used to provide evidence of the views and experiences of local people in Aberdeen City in relation to community safety. The questions asked relate specifically to the key overarching performance indicators set out within the CSP (Community Safety Partnership) Strategic Assessment and will allow the CSP to measure performance in relation to Crime and Anti-social Behaviour. The responses will update previous results from the Scottish Household Survey and from City Voice Questionnaire 25. The questionnaire results will be presented at a future Quarterly Performance Review meeting of the Community Safety Partnership.

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Environmental Health & Trading Standards

The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service of Aberdeen City Council carries out a wide range of enforcement, advisory and promotional activities aimed at protecting the public and assisting businesses and individuals to comply with the law. The following questions were put to the panellists in order to establish the current level of awareness of these services and the value that the panel places upon them.

The first question was, if panellists ever had any contact with Environmental Health Services. 78.4% of the panellists said no, 17.2% said yes and 4.4% don't know.

The reason most often given for having had contact with Environmental Health Services was 'dead, nuisance wildlife, vermin; advice/complaint about noise/light/smell pollution and neighbour dispute'.

Asked if they had any contact with the Trading Standards Service, an overwhelming majority said no (88.0%), whereas 10.6% answered with yes. Reasons for contacting the Trading Standards Service were faulty/fake goods/poor workmanship; general problem with a company/service or nuisance phone calls and scams/ doorstep scams and scam emails.

Panellists were then asked to list three services of which they are aware of being provided by the Environmental Health Service. Only a bit more than half the respondents chose to answer this question (327 out of 627). Almost half the people who chose to answer this question (185 respondents) answered with 'food - hygiene, inspection, licences, monitoring'. 131 panellists said 'waste and recycling - collections, advice, provision of container and bags' and 99 respondents listed 'animals - nuisance, dead, pests, vermin'. When asked to list three services the Trading Standards Service is providing only 306 panellists (out of 627) answered. The most frequent answer was 'sellers and businesses - general inspecting, enforcing trading laws, ensuring fair trading and pricing' (102 respondents), followed by 'counterfeit goods and trading - advice, inspecting seizing' (95) and 'substandard, miss-sold, faulty goods or services - advice, inspecting' by 94.

Panellists were also asked if they would like to receive more information about these two services - 53.8% said yes, 46.2% answered with no.

This is what we are doing

The responses indicated that a majority of respondents had not had contact with the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services. This is not particularly surprising, as most citizens are passive recipients of services and regulatory regimes that ensure the safety of food and goods and a fair trading environment, and that risks to the environment and public health, safety and well-being are properly controlled.

Most respondents had a fairly clear knowledge of the types of service provided by Trading Standards, but this was not the case with Environmental Health, with services such as the public mortuary and animal health and welfare not mentioned, and other services such as waste collection and street cleaning being included. There is clearly work to be done in raising awareness of some of our services.

Over half of respondents say they would like more information on Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services. We are considering the production of information about the services we provide, using infographics, in a leaflet and on the website, together with some success stories. We also intend to work with the media to produce "spotlight" articles on aspects of the service that would be of interest to the public, such as the mortuary.

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Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

In April 2013 the single Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was formed in Scotland and as a part of their fire reduction strategy, 'Scotland's Fight Against Fire', the emphasis has been to identify vulnerable people and reduce their risk from fire as much as possible. The results will be used by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to assess whether the current forms of advertising and fire safety communications with the public have been successful and if there have to be improvements made.

The first question was put forward to find out if panellists have seen or heard any Scottish Fire and Rescue Service fire prevention advert. 56.6% of the panellists have said yes, whereas 43.4% said no.

Most panellists saw an advert on TV (66.5%), followed by 'newspaper' (35.6%) and 'radio' (27.7%).

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service then wanted to know if panellists have taken any action because of seeing or hearing this advert. 78.5% said it did not result in any action while 21.5% said it did. When looking at the gender disaggregation it shows that more women (25.0%) than men (17.7%) took action. Most panellists who had taken action checked/replaced their smoke alarm/battery asked for a house inspection or avoided leaving electrical items in use while sleeping or out.

Panellists were also asked if they knew what a Home Fire Safety Visit was. 89.3% answered with 'yes', 10.7% with 'don't know'. Only a minority of people who knew what a Home Fire Safety Visit was, ever had one (20.2% said yes and 79.8% said no). 87.3% of the people who had a Home Fire Safety Visit thought that it had made their home safer whereas 12.7% said it did not.

Respondents were asked if there is a fire related issue they have concerns about within their community. The majority (117 out of 169 panellists who answered this question) answered with no. Some of the concerns panellists mentioned were 'bins/rubbish', 'wilful fire raising', 'youth' and 'access to houses due to parking/traffic congestion'.

Overall, panellists seem to be satisfied with the local service provided by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Figure 4: Overall, how do you rate the local service provided by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service?



This is what we are doing

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is extremely grateful to those panellists who provided a response to the questions that were submitted.

The first question regarding fire safety advertising has been very useful in indicating the effect of paid television advertising in comparison to radio or newspaper promotion. It would indicate that our national paid television adverts are effective. The fact that a good number of responders have received information through the newspapers, highlights to us the benefits of offering timely media statements and editorials, thus allowing the newspapers to keep the public informed as well as providing an ideal opportunity to promote an appropriate safety message.

The personal changes that individuals have carried out as a result of receiving fire safety information and advice will also add value to our evaluation of our key messages. Maintenance of smoke alarms, electrical safety and requesting a Home Fire Safety Visit, appear to be the main changes or actions that have been carried out as a result. This will be fed back to our campaign organisers in order to influence future campaigns. One of the most reassuring results was the confirmation of understanding of what a Home Fire Safety Visit is. Almost 90% knew what a visit was and the majority of those that had requested a visit previously, felt that it had resulted in their home being safer. This is good evidence to justify the publicising of the Home Fire Safety Visit process.

The purpose of the question regarding community magazines was to measure the strength of readership in order to justify

our efforts in providing regular articles for their inclusion. The positive return of nearly half the responders indicates that the magazines could be influential within the local communities in which they are delivered.

One of the questions was aimed at gauging the general perception of what a 'vulnerable' person is thought to be. When asked if they knew of a person that would be 'vulnerable' to having a house fire only 10% claimed to know someone. These people highlighted age, mental health and mobility as causal factors. The Service is continually focusing on high risk individuals and this response indicates that perhaps the factors contributing to making a person 'vulnerable', needs to be more widely emphasised.

The responses to the last two questions were very positive, firstly there aren't perceived to be too many fire related concerns within local communities other than wilful fires, refuse and bins, which were highlighted. These issues are dealt with very swiftly through our involvement in the Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership HUB.

Lastly, over 80% of responders rated the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service locally as being good or very good, with only 0.8% recording a 'below satisfactory' return. Although only recently becoming a single Service, these figures are extremely encouraging.

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Outdoor Play

Outdoor play and activities for children (0-16 years) are thought to be important for physical and emotional growth and may help to establish good habits and lifestyle. There are a number of issues that affect children's access to outdoor play and activity. The following questions were asked to find out about panellists views on the play spaces that are currently available and how they can be improved. Additionally, Aberdeen City Council is reviewing the provision of 'No Ball Games' signs.

When asked if their children (or children they supervise) use children's play areas, the majority of respondents answered that this question was 'not applicable' to them (56.0%). 29.4% said that their children used play areas, whereas 14.7% said that theirs didn't. Being asked how often children were using the play areas, most respondents said 'weekly' (56.2%), followed by 'daily' (13.0%) and 'monthly' (13.0%).

Panellists were then asked to rate the features of a play area by thinking of their most recent visit. As a general statement it can be said that panellists rate each feature as 'good'. However, for a more detailed picture of these results please consult the full report (www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk).

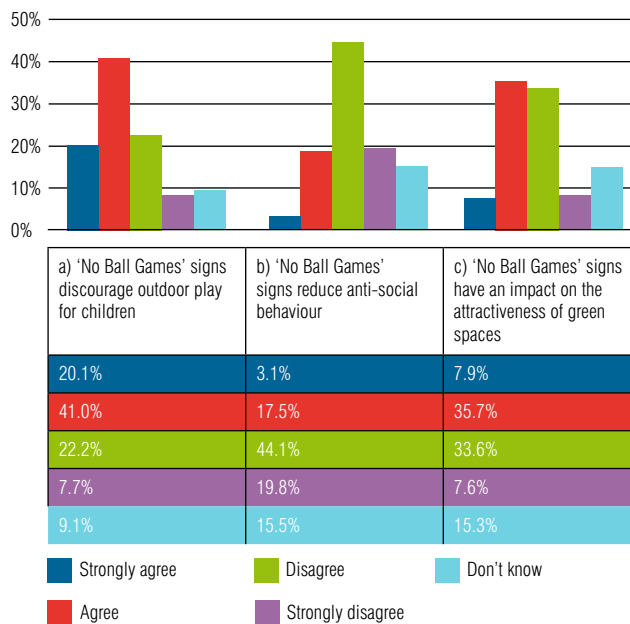
Panellists were also asked if their children or the children they supervise use the play areas unsupervised. 84.4% said no while only 15.2% said yes. Reasons most commonly given for playing unsupervised was the age. The age was also the most common reason for not letting children play unsupervised.

Asked if their children or children they supervise play outdoor unsupervised, 68.7% said no, whereas 31.3% said 'yes'. A reason why they answered with 'yes' was that the children play 'in the garden/street immediately outside home, because the area is quiet/safe and because of their age'. Again, their age is also the most common reason for not letting children play outdoors unsupervised.

Panel members were also asked to consider how the presence of a 'No Ball Games' sign affected the play of children in their care. The majority of respondents answered with 'don't know' (31.9%), followed by 'won't play because of the sign' (21.0%) and 'no effect, they play anything anywhere' (7.9%).

Finally, panellists were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with the following statements:

Figure 5: Indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:



This is what we are doing

Environmental Services is currently undertaking a program of play area refurbishment, which appears to be reaping benefits. The service is delighted that respondents were positive about the availability, cleanliness and maintenance of the equipment as well as the cleanliness of the play areas. The break down of responses per park identified dissatisfaction with Altens Community Centre. The equipment at this site is due to be replaced; new equipment is ordered and the refurbishment will take place once it arrives.

The answers to the 'No Ball Games' signs questions provided some interesting feedback. 43.7% of respondents indicated that the play of the children in their family or the children they supervise is affected by the presence of 'No Ball Games' signs. They either don't play or tailor the type of play. Almost 50% of respondents indicated that the children in their family or the children they supervise would be more likely to play at a site if the 'No Ball Games' signs were removed. In addition 61% agreed or strongly agreed that the presence of 'No Ball Games' signs discouraged outdoor play.

This indicates that there are areas of the city where play is restricted by signs and provides the service with feedback that the removal of 'No Ball Games' could increase outdoor play opportunities. These results provide data that will be used in a report on the removal of 'No Ball Games' signs which will be presented to councillors later this year. The feedback from the City Voice provides good statistical evidence for Environmental Services that will influence budgetary and policy decisions. The service would like to thank the panellists and the City Voice Team for their time and effort in providing this valuable data.

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