

Voice!

Homes Health and Social Care Safety



Welcome

Welcome to the 16th citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen citizens' panel, on the results of the 16th questionnaire. Topics in this questionnaire covered the Community Planning themes of Safety, Health & Social Care and Homes.

This newsletter provides a summary of the results of the questionnaire you completed in March 2009, and how we plan to use this information. Your responses are important in informing and contributing to future plans by all partners of the City Voice.

Questionnaire data is analysed by our research consultants at The Robert Gordon University. As always, all information provided is kept strictly confidential.

The 17th survey, focusing mainly on the Community Planning themes of Locality Planning, Lifelong Learning and Children & Young People is included with this newsletter. Many thanks to all of you who have continued to complete the questionnaires and have returned them promptly over the last couple of years.

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

Philippa Mason
City Voice Co-ordinator

Future Questionnaires

This newsletter, and the full results of the 16th questionnaire, are available to view on the Community Planning website www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk

Internet access is provided at libraries throughout Aberdeen City and hard copies are available at The Point (Broad Street), and all city libraries.

Alternatively, hard copies can be posted out by contacting me on the details below.

I plan to issue Newsletter No.17, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in September 2009, along with the 18th Questionnaire.

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

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

Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it 



Update -

Grampian Fire and Rescue Consultation

As promised in the last newsletter, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) have given us some feedback following the consultation they did with the City Voice panel last year. Peter Murray, Assistant Chief Fire Officer said "Grampian Fire and Rescue Service is extremely pleased to be able to work with members of the Aberdeen City Voice as it provides an invaluable opportunity to get feedback and opinion on our service plans and proposals". He said that "the majority of the panel were in favour of the proposals but there were three areas that attracted lots of additional comments; environmental protection; recruitment of staff from under represented groups; and the refurbishment of fire stations to also be used as community facilities." All responses and comments were analysed and the results discussed by the management team. Comments from the consultation were fed into the draft plan which was then approved by the Grampian Joint Fire and Rescue Board on the 24th April 2009.

As well as comments on the proposals, a number of comments were also received on the style, layout and language used in the draft plan and the consultation questionnaire. Grampian Fire and Rescue Service have taken these comments into account and will make sure that future documents are in clear language, with clear definitions and avoiding abbreviations.

Mr Murray says "Consultation is an important part of developing our service plans and we are very grateful to all respondents who took the time to complete the questionnaire and offer additional comments".

Don't Miss Out

Can I urge all panellists to ensure they return their questionnaires before the final deadline! We have to have a 'cut off' point so I can send the results for analysis, but I often receive questionnaires after this date. I want to make sure that all your views are considered so please make sure your voice is heard by returning the questionnaire in the Freeport envelope before the deadline.

16th Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 16th questionnaire you kindly completed in March 2009. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, there were 900 of you on the panel – we received 744 questionnaires which gives us an overall response rate of approximately 83%. It is important that as many of you as possible respond each time so please keep up the good work. This will help us put all your views and concerns before the Partnership which is involved in providing services for Aberdeen residents and planning for your future.

Please let me know if there are any reasons for you not replying. Are the questionnaires too complicated? Too long? Are we asking about things of little interest to you? What would you like us to ask you about?

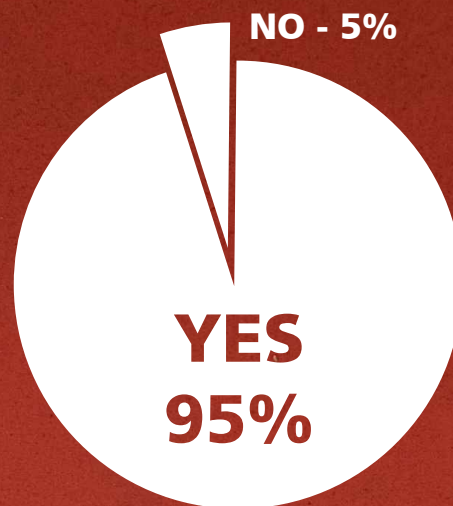
Home Fire Safety

One of the services offered by Grampian Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) is a free home fire safety visit. These visits are carried out by firefighters from your local fire station and are available to all Aberdeen City residents. GFRS wanted to find out how many residents were aware of this service and how they could promote it better in the future.

The results told us that approximately 60% of City Voice panellists were aware of this free service. When we asked how you had found out about the service, the majority (25%) had found out through 'word of mouth', from the local newspaper (25%) or from a Home Fire Safety leaflet (20%). This information is really useful as it tells us which communication methods are most effective. 12% of panellists had had a fire safety visit within the last 2 years and 94% of those panellists were satisfied or very satisfied with the visit. More importantly, over three quarters of those residents had made changes to their home fire safety following the visit. Of those who had not arranged a home visit, approximately 60% commented that they feel their home is safe enough already.

Overall, 95% of panellists have smoke detectors in their homes. This was slightly lower in the 25-34 year old age bracket at 89%.

Figure 1 : Do you have a smoke detector in your home?



If you would like to arrange a free home fire safety visit, please contact Grampian Fire and Rescue Service on 01224 696666 or text FIRE to 61611. You can also email them at info@grampianfrs.org.uk



**Fire exit
keep clear**

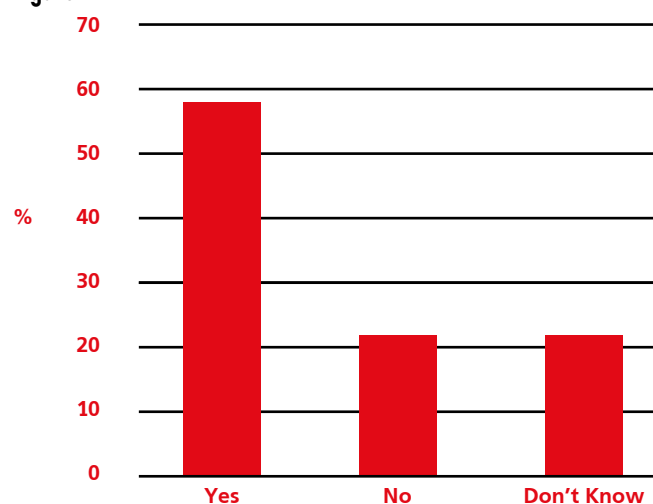
Wilful Fire Raising

Wilful fire raising is the deliberate or malicious starting of fires to cause damage and destruction or endanger life. These fires put lives at risk, destroy property and wildlife, damage our environment and impact heavily on GFRS resources. We wanted to find out your experiences of wilful fire raising in your local area and how you think we could work with the community and other public services to reduce this crime. 17% of panellists told us that there had been a wilful fire in or around their home or local area in the last 2 years. Panellists in the south of the city were more likely to report this (21%) compared with 16.5% in the north areas and 14% in the central areas.

Panellists were asked for their thoughts on how GFRS could reach out to young people to inform them about the dangers of wilful fire raising. The vast majority of you (48%) thought that regular visits by firefighters to schools would be the most effective method. You also told us that you thought 'television advertising', followed by 'leaflets distributed to homes' would be the best way to get information on wilful fires over to the wider community.

Figure 2 shows your responses for 'Do you think that increasing our presence in the community at weekends would help prevent fire raising?'

Figure 2



Your responses tell us that although over half of you think it would, 42% of panellists disagree or don't know. When asked for your suggestions on how we could work to reduce wilful fires in the future, you gave us some brilliant suggestions including;

- Ensure the police and fire service work together to bring high profile prosecutions against those who commit this crime so they act as a deterrent to others.

- Provide more activities for children – many of these fires stem from boredom.
- Clean up fly tipping and remove the temptation before it becomes a problem!

This is what we are doing

The City Voice has provided Grampian Fire and Rescue Service (Aberdeen City Command) with excellent feedback to assist us in the improvement in fire safety and risk reduction.

As a result of the questionnaire responses, we will continue with work that is progressing well and will look to improve other areas. For example;

- Two-fifths of the population remain unaware that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offers free Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs).
- While the majority of people feel their home is safe enough, a large amount of people intend to have a visit but haven't got round to it. Reaching these people is key – we will identify the areas where these people live and have focused events in the areas.
- We will continue to advertise ways to request a HFSV, including the continued or increased use of HFSV freepost returns.
- Over 78% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with the visits conducted by our staff in relation to home fire safety –this positive feedback will be made known to our staff.
- We will consider kick-starting our smoke detector campaign to remind residents of their value.
- Wilful fire raising linked to anti-social behaviour remains an area of high concern.
- We should revisit our approach to engaging with young people.
- We received good suggestions as to our approach to advertising and reducing risk and on how we can improve.
- The presence of the fire service within a community received mixed reactions in terms of possibly being counter-productive but yet meaningful if linked to diversionary activities.

A detailed analysis of the results will be conducted and the outcomes shared with the Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership Forum. We will keep the City Voice panellists up to date with any developments in this area. Grampian Fire and Rescue Service would like to take this opportunity to thank all panellists for their contribution to this section of the questionnaire.

Jacqueline Mackay – Business Support Manager
Grampian Fire and Rescue Service

MRSA screening

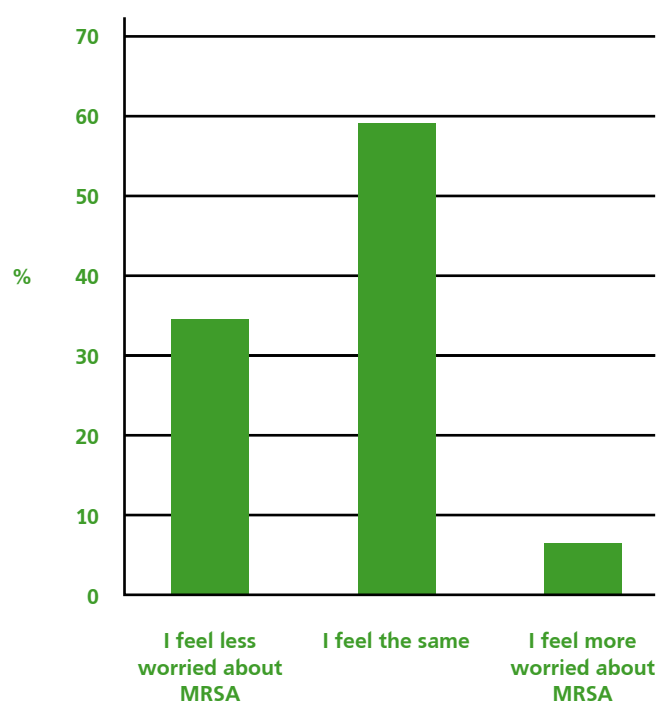
Since August 2008, NHS Grampian has been taking part in a Scottish study to screen patients for MRSA. MRSA is a bacterium that lives on the skin and can cause a number of common infections. The screening programme tests all patients admitted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary or the orthopaedic wards in Woodend Hospital. NHS Grampian wanted to find out if the panel were aware of MRSA, how it spreads and the Screening programme currently in operation.

Your results told us that almost all of you (99%) had heard of MRSA and 90% of panellists were aware that it was mainly spread by hand contact. 93% of panellists were aware that the risk of spreading MRSA could be reduced by handwashing. These results tell us that the panel has a very strong awareness of this important issue.

The City Voice questionnaire asked panellists how worried they were about the risk of MRSA in our hospitals. Overall, 50% of panellists said they were very worried and 40% of panellists said they were a bit worried. Female panellists were more likely to feel worried about MRSA with 55% feeling very worried compared with 44% of men. Panellists in older age groups also indicated a higher level of concern about MRSA.

Finally, NHS Grampian wanted to find out if knowing there is a screening policy in Aberdeen City hospitals changed panellists concern about MRSA. The results can be seen in Figure 3. The results tell us that the majority of panellists (59%) feel the same and 35% feel less worried.

Figure 3



This is what we are doing

NHS Grampian has now been screening patients who stay overnight in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and the orthopaedic wards at Woodend Hospital for MRSA (meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) since 1 August 2008.

An important part of the project was to raise awareness about MRSA and MRSA Screening amongst the general public and to let the wider public know that infections such as MRSA can be prevented by simple precautions such as hand washing. We did this by using various consultation and communication methods across the Grampian region. As well as asking questions in the Aberdeen City Voice, we also asked the Aberdeenshire Citizens Panel and held a one day campaign in The Trinity Mall on Union Street.

The feedback we received from the various consultation methods was more or less similar with most of the differences explained by the various age groups of the respondents.

We are very satisfied with the public awareness of MRSA Screening in Aberdeen City and will continue to review the effectiveness of communication on this subject. We would like to thank all panellists for their help with this and will look to review resident's knowledge and concerns about MRSA again in 2010.

Dr Madhuri Thakur -
Patient Focus Public Involvement Officer (PFPI)
 NHS Grampian



Looked After Children

Some children and young people have difficult life experiences that may require some sort of intervention from the local authority, the Law Courts or Children's Hearings. This can sometimes lead to that child or young person becoming 'looked after'. This means that the Council takes on the responsibility to look after these children in the same way a good parent would. Later this year, the Council are planning to raise awareness of the difficulties sometimes faced by looked after children and called on the City Voice panel to help them understand current knowledge, perceptions and experiences.

Your results told us that overall, 43% of panellists had heard of the term 'looked after children' and 57% had not. Awareness of the term was higher with female panellists. The Council wanted to find out if you were aware of the most common reasons children became 'looked after'. Panellists were asked to tick up to 2 options. 41% of all responses said that it was due to 'lack of parental care' and 23% of responses thought it was due to the child or young person becoming a 'victim of a serious offence'. Panellists were also asked who they thought was responsible for caring for looked after children. The panel's response was spread across all the categories, but the most popular responses were the social work department, the education department, the health service and voluntary organisations.

The panel also provided lots of additional comments on children's services in Aberdeen City. All comments have been sent to the Council, but can be summed up below.

- The lack of funding and support makes it difficult to fully support looked after children
- The public services need to work together to provide a co-ordinated and supportive service
- You need to provide good educational and social services for these young people
- You need to raise awareness of the issues and experiences of looked after children.

This is what we are doing

Like any good parent, the Council wants the children it looks after to enjoy school, be healthy and happy, secure and confident. Children and young people who become looked after often come from chaotic backgrounds and their behaviour can be challenging as a result of the damage they have suffered.

Just like an extended family, there are many parts of the Council and its partner agencies (including the police, the health service and further education providers) that have a role to play in helping to bring up these children.

The feedback from the City Voice questionnaire has provided a useful baseline of information helping us to understand how much the public knows about looked after children's needs and the role of the Council in caring for them.

The City Voice results have been shared with the Elected Member Governance Forum: a forum chaired by the leaders of the Council which deals with matters relating to looked after children and child protection. There were some key messages from the feedback about the role of elected members in caring for looked after children (86% of participants thought that elected members did not have a role to play in caring for looked after children) and the public's awareness of support services available to all in their communities and as a result, Elected Members have asked for this information to be used to inform the Council's Communications Strategy.

We would like to thank the Panel for taking the time to answer these questions and for all the additional comments.

Katrina Stewart – Research and Development Officer

Integrated Children's Services
Aberdeen City Council

goodapple homes

Aberdeen City Council manages approximately 23,000 homes. Since 2002, the housing service has been promoted as 'goodapple homes'. The name and branding was designed to provide a positive and modern image of Council housing in our City. Aberdeen City Council wanted to find out whether the Panel were aware of the goodapple homes brand, and if so, where they had heard about it.

Your results tell us that overall, 35% of panellists had heard of goodapple homes. Female panellists were more likely to be familiar with the brand with 42% indicating they were aware of it, compared with only 27% of men. For the 35% of panellists who had heard of goodapple homes, the Council were interested in how they had heard of the brand. Panellists could tick as many options as applicable. The most popular response was through 'word of mouth'. This was followed by 'in my local housing office' and 'in the local newspaper'.

Finally, the Council wanted to know if the panellists who had heard of goodapple homes were aware that it was the name given to housing owned and managed by Aberdeen City Council. 82% of panellists indicated that they were aware of this and 18% said they weren't.

This is what we are doing

The results show that a large majority (65%) of panellists were unaware of the name goodapple homes before they read about it in City Voice. There is evidence to suggest that those who did know about goodapple, did so as they were a tenant, knew someone who was a tenant or had direct contact with goodapple through their work.

It was quite interesting that from those who had heard of goodapple, there were still some who did not know it was the name of Aberdeen City Council's housing service.

The results you gave us will help us make decisions about the future of the goodapple homes name. We want to advertise our housing service to as many people as possible and for that reason; we will create a communications plan that fully explains the goodapple homes name and the reason behind the name. The plan will be directed at both those with no knowledge of goodapple homes and also to those who have knowledge. The reason for this is because results from City Voice show that there is a percentage of those who had heard about goodapple, but did not know that it was the name of Aberdeen City Council's housing stock.

Alana Donald – Marketing Officer
Aberdeen City Council

