

Voice!

Greener-City Parks

Greener-Waste Services

Smarter-Police Scotland

Smarter-Traffic Management



Welcome

Welcome to the 30th citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen's citizens' panel, on the results of the 30th questionnaire that you completed in October 2013. Topics in that questionnaire included city parks, waste services, police Scotland: setting our priorities, traffic management and citizen involvement and participation.

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 31st survey, focusing mainly on questions in and around 'Fairer' and 'Wealthier' 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.

Annina Cavelti Kee

City Voice Co-ordinator

Future Questionnaires

This newsletter, and the full results of the 30th questionnaire, are 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 the Marischal College Customer Service Centre and all city libraries. Alternatively, hard copies can be posted to you by contacting me on the details below.

I plan to issue Newsletter No. 31, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in June 2014, along with the 32nd 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, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it





New Chairperson

We would like to welcome Joyce Duncan as our new Chairperson of the City Voice Editorial Board. Joyce is the Chief Executive of Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) and we would like to thank her for becoming involved in the City Voice.

Online panellists

We are still receiving a high response rate from our online panellists, which is appreciated. A few comments have been received about our online questionnaire which we are wanting to act on. Firstly, you asked for a progress bar to let you know how long the questionnaire was - we will now be adding this. You also asked for a confirmation that your questionnaire had been submitted. There will now be a final page on the questionnaire which will provide this confirmation.

Panellist update!

At the end of November we wrote to panellists that had not completed the last 4 questionnaires asking them if they were still interested in being involved in City Voice. As a result we have removed 180 panellists from the panel - we would like to thank them for their interest in the City Voice. Our task this year is to replace these panellists and we aim to have over 1,000 again by the end of the year. We have updated our website, and provided a link to our recruitment form. If you know anyone who would like to get involved in the panel, you can direct them to www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk, or they can contact us and we will send them a hardcopy recruitment form. You can join the panel if you are aged over 16 and live in Aberdeen.

And finally...

As Philippa mentioned in the last newsletter, she is now off on maternity leave. She had a healthy baby boy in October!

30th Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 30th questionnaire you completed in October 2013. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, there were 1009 of you on the panel - we received 712 questionnaires which gives us an overall response rate of 70.6%. We were happy to see that the response rate has gone up since the last issue. Thank you everyone who responded. Not surprisingly, the difference in the response rates between our paper-based and email panellists continued and for the first time a majority of respondents (53.4%) completed their survey online, whilst a very large minority (46.6%) returned a paper copy. This means that the respondents who completed the questionnaire online increased by 3.8% compared to the 29th questionnaire.

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 and if you wish to change the format that you receive the questionnaire in, please do not hesitate to contact us. And if there is a reason you are not replying, please let me know.

Greener - City Parks



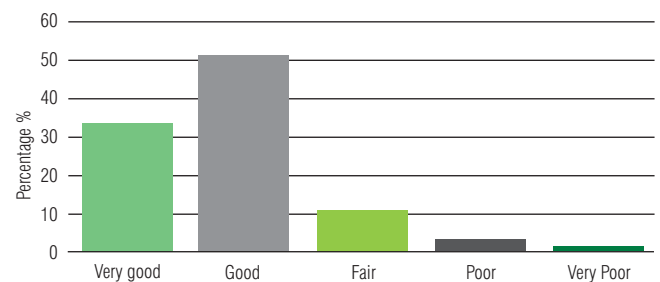
Visits to Aberdeen's parks vary considerably over the seasons. The Council wants to ensure that it makes the most out of these spaces throughout the entire year. The Council therefore wants to find out about panellists' experiences when they visit Aberdeen's large formal parks. The information the Council gains will help to enhance people's experiences when they visit these parks. The most frequently visited parks in the last 12 months are Duthie Park (68.0 %) and Hazlehead Park (54.9%). Seaton Park (28.4%), Westburn Park (27.9%) and Victoria Park (19.1%) were visited by fewer panellists and 15.7% had not visited any of these parks.

Most panellists went to their most visited park 1-5 times a year (42%), followed by the 23% of panellists who visited it 1-3 times a month.

A majority of panellists go to the park in order to get some fresh air (44.5%), for a walk (36.8%), to relax and to think (24.0%), to enjoy the beauty of the surroundings (22.3%) or for a family outing (21.3%). Fewer people tend to go to the park in order to visit the play area (17.5%), to attend events (15.5%), to meet friends (13.0%) or to walk the dog (12.8%).

A large proportion of the panellists seem to be happy with their experiences. 293 members of the panel (out of 581 respondents) rated their last visit to their most visited park with 'good' and 200 with 'very good'. 63 respondents considered their last visit as 'fair' and only a relatively small number of panellists (21) said they had a poor or even very poor (4) experience. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1: Thinking of your last visit to the park you have most visited in the last 12 months, overall how would you rate that visit?

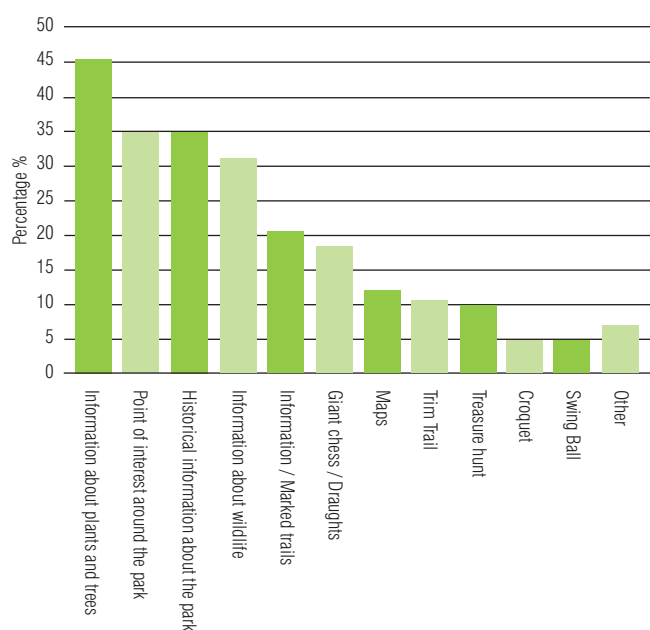


The negative rating was mainly due to poor maintenance (48.8%), dog mess (12.0%), the lack of availability of food and drink (12.0%), the toilet facilities in the park (and the lack of it) (12.0%) or due to bad vehicle access (12.0%).

When asked how they would rate the facilities at their last visited park 'tracks / footpaths' received the highest overall approval (64.2% considered them as either 'good' or 'very good'). Furthermore, 'play areas' and 'tracks/footpaths' were the only facilities which were rated positively by a majority. Respondents were then asked what additional facilities they would like to see at the park they visited most often. Provided with a list of possible answers the most chosen option was 'toilets' (38.8%), followed by 'picnic tables' (36.0%), 'café/snack bar' (32.0%), 'benches' (23.0%), 'car parking' (17.7%), a 'plant shop' (15.5%) and a 'BBQ area' (10.8%).

The City Council also wanted to find out what panellists would choose in order to increase their enjoyment of the park. The majority chose 'information about plants and trees you can see', 'points of interest you can see around the park', 'historical information about the park' or 'information about wildlife you can see'. (See Figure 2)

Figure 2: Which of the following would increase your enjoyment of the park you visited most often?



The City Council asked the panellists how they travel to their 'favourite' park. 116 panellists (out of 209 respondents) said they travel by car, followed by 72 people who stated that they walk, 21 take the bus and 11 ride their bicycle. When asked if they would use a bus service which would be provided by a local bus operator the most popular answer was 'probably wouldn't use it' with 30.9%. However, only a little less people (29.1%) were of the opinion that they 'probably would use it'. In this question the female respondents (14.4%) more often stated that they would definitely use it than the male panellists (7.5%).

The City Council wants to find out which of the major parks the panellists had not visited in the last five years. The park which has been visited the least by the members of the panel is Victoria Park, 67.1% of the panellists have not visited this park. 55.9% of the panellists answered that they have not visited Seaton Park, followed by Westburn Park (54.5%), Hazlehead Park (28.4%) and by Duthie Park (20.4%). When asked why they have not visited these parks, the most popular response for all but Seaton Park was 'just not got round to it'. Seaton Park is too far away for the majority of respondents who answered that they had not visited this park. Furthermore, quite a large number of respondents stated that they do not want to visit Seaton Park, Westburn Park and Victoria Park.

This is what we are doing

It was of no real surprise to see Duthie Park and Hazlehead Park as the most visited of our parks. These two parks are Aberdeen's largest and most used green spaces. It is fantastic to see the parks rated so highly by the respondents with 85% rating the parks good or very good. The service has worked extremely hard to improve our parks and the report shows that all the hard work has been worthwhile and is appreciated.

The park facilities seen as in most need of attention, café, toilets and parking, are all areas that we see as a priority to improve and will be working towards these improvements in 2014. We are confident that if a similar survey is run in 2015 these areas will receive much better ratings.

The responses received with regards to the question 'which of the following would increase your enjoyment of the park you visited most often' gave some pleasing feedback in that the options that proved the most popular are the options that the service is looking to add to and improve on in 2014. Significant budget, staff time and resources are to be allocated to these options throughout 2014.

Overall the report was very positive and gave encouraging feedback. The panellists responses will be presented to the Service Management Team and will provide good statistical evidence that will be used to determine not only the direction and focus of service delivery but also influence budgetary and policy decisions. Environmental Services would like to thank the panellists and the City Voice team for their time and effort in providing this valuable data.

Steven Shaw

Environmental Manager
Aberdeen City Council



Greener Waste Service

Over the last 6 years the panellists of City Voice have been asked questions about the waste services. The information given by the respondents is used to assess the use and effectiveness of this service and helps to plan future initiatives that will encourage people to reduce, reuse and recycle.

When asked what services they were offered at their address it becomes apparent that a very clear majority of respondents are offered the 'kerbside recycling', i.e. black box and white bag, (89%), 'garden waste', i.e. brown bin, (83.5%) and 'kerbside food waste mixed with garden waste', i.e. green caddy / brown bin, (71.4%). However, only a small number of panellists are offered 'communal on street non-food recycling' (11.9%) and 'communal on street food waste recycling' (5.3%), which would reflect the number of our panellists that live in flatted accommodation.

We then asked which services of the ones offered are actually being used. The answers show that 89.0% of the panellists offered 'kerbside recycling' are using it. A similar picture can be seen for 'garden waste' (89.3%). A bit lower was the percentage of respondents using the service for 'kerbside food waste mixed with garden waste' collection (75.5%), of panellists using 'communal on street food waste recycling' (74.1%) and of members of the panel who use 'communal on street non-food recycling' (68.9%).

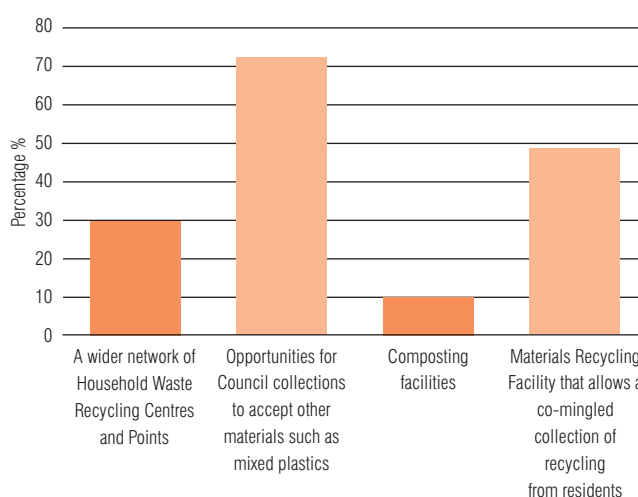
Some differences in the use of the services can be seen when looking at the different age groups.

Type of waste	16-34 years	35-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years
Kerbside food waste	65.8%	73.8%	80.5%	76.4%
Communal on street non-food waste recycling	50.0%	85.0%	63.2%	69.2%

The City Council is interested in finding out why panellists were not using services despite being offered them. In relation to food waste most people answered that they compost at home (27.5%). Others have concerns over the stored waste producing odour (25.3%) or they think it takes too much trouble / too much time (24.2%). In relation to garden waste, most respondents who are not using the service provided say they compost at home (31.0%), do not have enough room to store containers (17.2%) or use recycling centres / points instead (17.2%).

In order to comply with the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Plan which wants to increase the amount of recycling / composting by 2015 to 70%, Aberdeen City Council needs to increase its use of recycling facilities, and to develop further schemes. The Council therefore wanted to know which options would be the most effective at encouraging residents to recycle more. (See Figure 3)

Figure 3: Which of the following options do you think would be most effective at encouraging residents to recycle more?



When asked if they would use Council facilities provided at the Household Waste Recycling Centre to donate items for charities 549 panellists (out of 688 respondents) said yes. Only 67 said they would not use this service and 72 said they did not know if they would use it or not. The majority of respondents who said that they would use it said they would donate textiles/clothing (92.3%) or small electrical goods (81.8%). The percentage continued to be high for respondents who would donate 'toys, games and books' (66.3%) and 'furniture' (58.1%) through this service.

Smarter -

This is what we are doing

The Waste Service would like to thank all questionnaire respondents. The feedback will influence both short term awareness work and longer-term service changes.

The data shows strong support for recycling across our households. 72.8% would like to see the service extended to recycle more materials from home. We have paid very close attention to this and can confirm our intention to collect more materials –including rigid plastics –from late 2014. Our new Household Waste and Recycling Centre at the Grove Nursery, Hazlehead, will open in early 2014 –allowing residents to recycle more materials. We are developing plans for future centres offering significantly greater convenience to residents in areas currently some distance from such facilities.

The findings show that 89.3% of respondents use their garden waste collection service, whilst 75.5% actively recycle their food waste mixed with garden waste. There is a discrepancy here of 13.8% between two services that allow residents to recycle food waste. These findings suggest that residents using the garden waste recycling service may be unaware, unable or unwilling to recycle food waste with their garden waste. We will further investigate these findings to develop targeted awareness campaigns to encourage residents to recycle more food waste within their brown garden waste bins.

For the first time this year, we used the latest City Voice to ask residents for their opinions towards a reuse facility at our Household Waste and Recycling Centres. This would be a new service for Aberdeen –allowing good quality materials to be donated by residents for reuse by local charities. We are delighted to find that 79.8% would support a reuse project. We will now proceed to develop a business case for this project and hope to offer a pilot at Hazlehead's Grove Nursery in spring 2014.

James Martin

Waste Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council

After merging eight of Scotland's regional police forces to become one organisation, Police Scotland wanted to ask panellists to help shape Police priorities as well as to act as a baseline for subsequent annual consultations. So they wanted to find out how panellists would rate the neighbourhood they live in. The majority of panellists rated their neighbourhood as very good (51.2%), followed by 'fairly good' (42.3%). Only comparatively few stated that their neighbourhood was 'fairly poor' (5.2%) and even fewer selected 'very poor' (1.2%). When asked about the level of crime in their area, most of the respondents answered with either 'there is no crime in my area' (47.3%) or 'there is little or no crime in my area' (44.0%). However, in North and South 50.5% and 51.6% respectively answered with 'there is little or no crime in my area', whereas in Central most people answered with 'there is some crime in my area' (59.6%).

There are also some variations to these questions when looking at the different age groups. 48.5% of the panellists aged between 16-34 and 48.4% of respondents 65+ answered that 'there is little or no crime in my area'. Respondents aged between 35-54 and 55-64 stated that 'there is some crime in my area' (49.5% and 48.0% respectively). Panellists selecting the option 'there is a lot of crime in my area' were proportionally the highest among the 16-34 years old (6.1%), compared to 5% of those aged 55-64, 3.2% of those aged 35-54 and only 0.7% of those aged 65+.

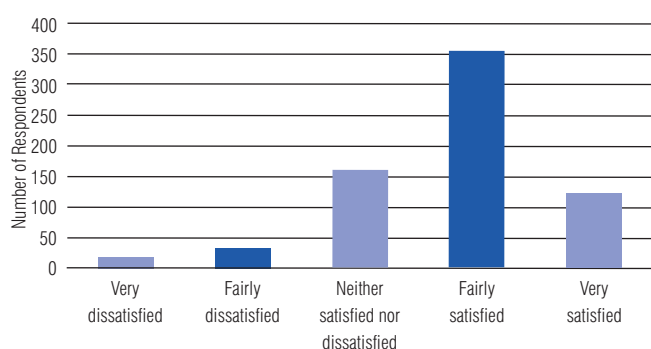
Police Scotland wanted to find out if the members of the panel were concerned about the level of crime in their neighbourhood. The majority of respondents does not seem to be too concerned about the level of crime in their neighbourhood (71.4%). When questioned if they feel safe walking home alone after dark a large proportion of respondents said that they do. 47.9% feel fairly safe, followed by 24.8% who feel very safe. Only 3.5% of panellists answered that they feel very unsafe.

The majority of panellists also said that they have not been affected by antisocial behaviour in their local area in the last 12 months (64.5%). However, the proportion of male respondents who was affected is slightly higher than the equivalent proportion among women (37.7% and 33.1% respectively). 42.6% of the panellists said that they are fairly satisfied that crime and antisocial behaviour issues in their area are tackled efficiently by the local Police, 35.6% with neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 12.4% of the panellists were very satisfied whereas 7.3% were fairly dissatisfied with the measures taken and only 2% said that they were very dissatisfied.

The panellists were also asked about the work being done by local agencies such as Police, Fire Service, City Council, etc. and their efforts in tackling antisocial behaviour in the local areas. Most members of the panel (36.5%) selected 'fairly satisfied' as an answer, followed by 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (24.3%). 11.9% were 'very satisfied'; whilst 7.8% were 'fairly dissatisfied' and 3.6% were 'very dissatisfied'. The ones who answered with 'dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' were asked to give a reason for their negative response. The most common answer was 'no visible presence' (35.0%), followed by 'Police don't respond to incidents when reported' (13.3%) and 'too slow to respond and/or attend incidents when reported' (11.7%).

The City Council wanted to know how the panellists overall feel about the work being done by the Police in Aberdeen. 355 panellists (out of 689 respondents) answered with 'fairly satisfied', 160 panellists said that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'. 119 members of the panel stated that they were 'very satisfied' and only 35 were 'fairly dissatisfied' and 20 respondents said they were 'very dissatisfied'. (See Figure 4).

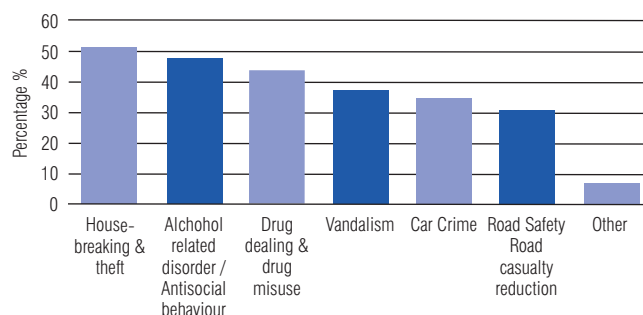
Figure 4: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the Police in Aberdeen?



Since 1st April 2010, a new Community Focused Policing model was initiated in Aberdeen comprising 13 Community Policing Teams. These teams have responsibility for all policing matters in local areas and are empowered and resourced to work with partners and deal with local challenges as well as to respond to incidents. About half of the panellists were aware of them before reading about it in the City Voice (48.4%), the other half however had not heard of it before (51.6%). The panellists who were aware of these teams were then asked if they knew how to contact them. Roughly half of them said yes (49.8%) whereas half of them (50.2%) did not know how to reach out to these teams.

The panellists of City Voice were then asked what issues they would like their local Community Policing Team to adopt as priorities during the coming year. The most pressing issues seem to be 'housebreaking and theft' and 'alcohol related disorder / antisocial behaviour', followed by 'drug dealing and drug misuse'. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5: Of the following issues, which would you like your local Community Policing Team to adopt as priorities during the coming year?



This is what we are doing

The responses from City Voice panellists will be invaluable to Police Scotland in general and Aberdeen City Division in particular as we move forward in setting our priorities for the next fiscal year. They are particularly important as they provide us with our first 'Police Scotland' baseline in the city and thus a highly important platform upon which to base our future performance. Already, for example, our performance has resulted in an almost universal reduction across our priority crime areas.

The panellists' responses were indicating a good level of satisfaction with their neighbourhoods, as well as the overall perception of crime levels. In relation to the Police, we were encouraged by the amount of satisfaction in the service we provide, but a little surprised about the number of respondents who indicated that they were unaware of a dedicated Community Police Team for their area. These, together with the low perception of our presence in the neighbourhoods are issues we must look to address for the future.

Work is now already well underway within our organisation on our next Local Police Plan which will be supported by a range of Multi-Member Ward Plans. With these we hope to continue to improve our performance across all crime categories in the year to come. Our strap line, 'Keeping People Safe' is very apt as this lies at the heart of our efforts and by working in close partnership with the community, listening to them and acting on their concerns, we stand to maximise the impact of our activities across the city.

Andrew Verreydt

Local Authority Liaison Officer
Police Scotland

Smarter - Traffic Management

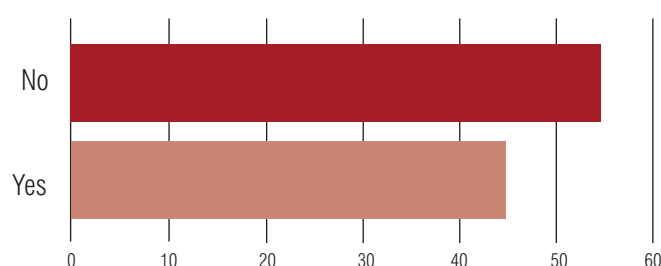
Since March 2013 the City Council took over responsibility for bus lane enforcement from Police Scotland. The primary aim is to improve traffic flow and journey times, encourage the use of public transport and improve air quality. In order to do so panellists were asked if they would like Aberdeen City Council to increase the number of bus lane enforcement cameras on existing bus lanes. The majority selected 'neither agree nor disagree' (28.5%), followed by 'disagree' (19.2%) and 'agree' (18.8%). When asked if Aberdeen City Council should consider introducing new bus lanes (with cameras) on main arterial routes into the city the largest proportion of panellists 'strongly disagreed' (23.8%) or 'disagreed' (23.2%).

The Council introduced a new form of pedestrian crossing - the so called Puffin crossing. This type has the red man / green man indicator incorporated into the push button units installed adjacent to where pedestrians wait to cross. This should allow for the indicator to be better seen by the pedestrians - in particular by the ones with visual impairments. The Puffin crossing also has a detector that registers the presence of pedestrians and allows additional time for those with mobility impairments to cross the road, up to a predetermined maximum. And finally, they should also reduce the delays on the road network by cancelling unwanted pedestrian demands so traffic is not stopped unnecessarily.

Overall the panellists seem to have a positive response to the new Puffin crossings. When asked if they find the new Puffin crossing facilities easy to use 53.4% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed'. 56.3% stated that they find it easy to see the red / green men at these crossings and 67.5% clearly understand when they should start to cross the road on a Puffin crossing. 61.8% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the comment that they have enough time to cross the road before the traffic starts at a Puffin crossing and 57.4% feel safe using a Puffin crossing to cross the road.

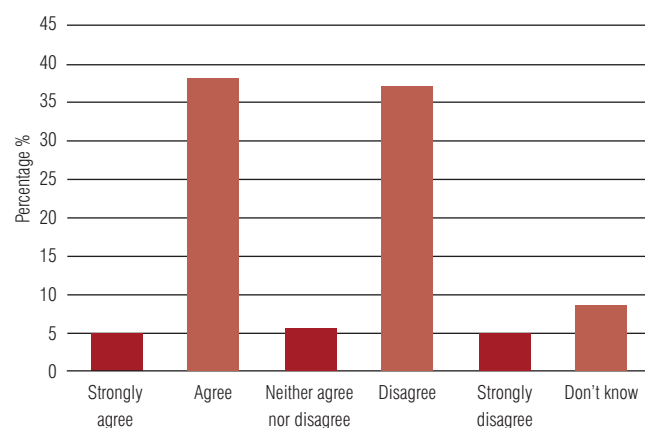
The City Council also wanted to know if panellists were aware of the difference between a Puffin crossing and a Pelican crossing when approaching them as a driver or passenger. The majority, 365 panellists (out of 662 respondents) stated that they are not aware of the difference, 297 said they were. (See Figure 6)

Figure 6: As a driver / passenger, are you aware of the difference between a Puffin and a Pelican crossing when you approach them?



The respondents who were aware of the difference between a Puffin crossing and a Pelican crossing were then asked if they think that they make fewer unnecessary stops as a driver at Puffin crossings. 82 respondents agreed, 81 disagreed and 13 neither agreed nor disagreed with this comment, whilst 10 strongly disagreed and another 10 strongly agreed with it. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'As a driver, I make fewer unnecessary stops at Puffin crossings than at Pelican crossings.'?



This is what we are doing

The question about the increase in the number of bus lane cameras employed on existing bus lanes was very much in balance with only a very small percentage higher than the percentage against. The response would suggest that panellists do not have a strong opinion either way and are generally in acceptance of the need to enforce the bus lanes. In contrast the members of the City Voice panel appear to feel strongly against the implementation of further sections of bus lanes and indicate a bias towards the use of the private car. The responses, whilst not entirely unexpected, show a lack of support and commitment from the majority of panellists for the use of sustainable travel options and environmental concerns. The responses would indicate that support for measures to support sustainable transport and environmental issues require to be taken forward as a package that is clearly understood by the public showing that alternatives to the private car are both viable and justifiable.

The fact that almost 50% of panellists are aware of the differences between a Puffin and Pelican crossing is encouraging given that the use of the Puffin technology has only been widely introduced in recent years in line with the limited resources available. The series of questions relating to the use Puffin crossings gave a very positive indication that the crossing type is well received and understood and that the benefits of the Puffin crossing are appreciated. Of course, there is continuing and additional work to be carried out in respect to promotion of pedestrian crossing facilities. This will be continued through the Road Safety partnership.

Andrew Smith

Traffic Engineering Manager
Aberdeen City Council

Additional Questions - Citizen Involvement and Participation

The concept of co-production is about redefining how public services are designed and delivered. The concept wants to place the individual and the community at the heart of public services so it is no longer a 'top down' approach with only little involvement from the public or the community.

One aspect of this new approach focuses on the local environment. In order to improve the local environment in Aberdeen's neighbourhoods the City Council wanted to know how good panellists believe their local environment to be. A large proportion of respondents answered that it's 'quite good' or even 'very good' (56.2% and 25% respectively). Only 5.9% considered the neighbourhood they live in as 'quite bad' or 'very bad'.

Most panellists identified dog fouling (50.6%), traffic (44.9%) and littering (43.0%) as the biggest problems.

The panellists were asked a number of questions in relation to them taking part in activities which helped to improve their neighbourhoods. These questions focused on the time period of the last five years. Panellists were asked if they had told other people not to drop rubbish, not to let their dogs foul the streets, if they signed a petition, wrote a letter or joined a protest about the local environment in their area, if they had given feedback to local authorities on the state of the local environment in their area, or if they had given feedback to local authorities on how local services could improve the local environment in their area. And finally, the panellists were asked if they had taken part in a clean-up of their street or local park. The majority answered these questions with no. The highest proportion of negative answers were in relation to attending a meeting on improving the

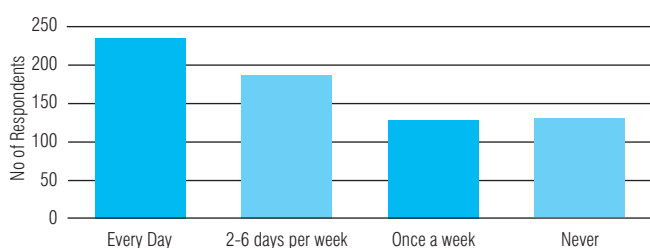
local environment in their local area (80.9%) and to sign a petition, write a letter or join a protest about the local environment in their area (72.2%). The most positive answers received the question if panellists gave feedback to local authorities on the state of their local environment with 31.3% of respondents saying they did so more than once. 29.4% stated that they were part of a clean-up of their street or local park more than once.

Aberdeen City Council is committed to helping people to reduce their energy and water consumption. Therefore the City Council wanted to know from the panellists if they take any measures to conserve water. 533 members (out of 693 respondents) said they would take measures, 160 respondents don't. There is a slight difference between age groups. The proportion of respondents who take measures is smaller among those aged 16-34 (65.2%) than those 35-54 (77.7%), 55-64 (77.7%) and 65+ (78.6%).

Panellists were also asked if they take measures to save energy. Here 96.5% of the respondents answered with yes and only 3.5% said no.

The City Council also wanted to find out how often panellists make a conscious effort to walk, cycle or use public transport instead of using a private car for their journey. 231 members of the panel (out of 684 respondents) stated they take a conscious decision every day, 191 members 2-6 days per week, 130 members do so once a week and 132 panellists said they never make a conscious decision about that. (See Figure 8)

Figure 8: During an average week, on how many days do you make a conscious effort to walk, cycle or use public transport instead of using a private car for a journey?



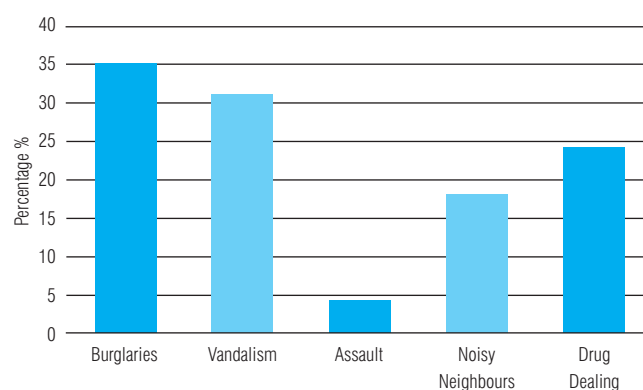
Panellists were asked how satisfied they are with the job public agencies do managing the local environment in their area. 42.8% answered that they were 'quite satisfied', 32.2% were 'neither satisfied' nor 'dissatisfied' and 10.7% were 'quite dissatisfied'. When asked about the information they get from the Council or other public agencies about local environment issues, 41.4% answered that they were 'neither satisfied nor

dissatisfied', 24.8% were 'quite satisfied' and 19.8% stated that they are 'quite dissatisfied'. And when asked about the extent to which the Council and other public agencies asked their opinion on the local environment 35.9% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied', 22.2% 'quite satisfied' and 20.7% 'quite dissatisfied' and 12.0% answered that they are 'very dissatisfied'.

Many panellists believe they can make a positive difference to the quality of their local environment. However, the majority of respondents (78.8%) have never been involved in a group which works to improve the quality of the local environment and a large proportion of respondents also said that they would not be interested in becoming involved (63.0%), whilst 37.0% said they would be interested.

Aberdeen residents have been working together with organisations such as the Council and the Police to help tackle crime and antisocial behaviour across the city for example, by monitoring how well the Council and Police have been tackling the problems that really matter. That is why the City Voice wanted to ask panellists a few questions about crime and antisocial behaviour in the local area in which they live. Asked about what community safety issues panellists believed to be a problem in their local neighbourhood, the majority stated that burglaries and vandalism are the biggest issues (35.1% and 31.6% respectively). Drug dealing (24.3%) and noisy neighbours (18.3%) was ranked in the middle whereas only 4.6% identified assault as a problem. (See Figure 9)

Figure 9: Which of the following issues do you believe to be a problem in your local area?



When asked about how important it is to them to improve the safety of their neighbourhood the majority of panellists answered with 'very important' (52.1%), followed by 'quite important' (36.6%), 'neither important nor unimportant' (7.0%), 'very unimportant' (2.2%) and 'quite unimportant' (2.1%). The City Council wanted to find out from panellists if they had taken part in any activities in the last 5 years which related to

community safety in their local area. Respondents stated that they do ask a neighbour to keep an eye on their home when they are away (65.8%) or they themselves keep an eye on their neighbour's home when they are away (69.6%). However, the replies to the other questions suggest that panellists seem to take a less active part. 18.9% of panellists stated that only once they reported an incident of crime and antisocial behaviour that involved them or someone in their household to the Police and 15.9% answered they have done so more than once. 12.8% of the respondents answered that they reported a community safety problem which did not affect them personally and 18.6% stated they did so once.

Asked about the satisfaction with the information they receive from the Police or other public agencies about crime and antisocial behaviour the majority of respondents said they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (46.3%). 23.3% answered that they were 'quite satisfied' and 11.7% stated that they are 'quite dissatisfied'. When asked about the extent to which the Police and other public agencies ask about their opinion on crime and antisocial behaviour the largest proportion of respondents again stated that they are 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (48.6%). 15.0% of the respondents are 'quite satisfied' and 15.8% 'quite dissatisfied'.

The Council is interested in knowing if panellists have been involved in a group or association which works to improve safety in their neighbourhood. The majority of respondents (83.9%) said that they have never been involved in any such group or association; only 5.2% stated that they are currently involved in one and 11.0% used to be but are no longer. However, to a large proportion panellists believe that they can make a positive difference to the safety of their neighbourhood (61.8%). But when asked if they want to join such a group 70.6% of the respondents stated that they would not, whilst only 29.4% would be interested in getting involved.

This is what we are doing

First of all, I am delighted with the number of responses to the City Voice questionnaire on citizen involvement and participation. The results from the questionnaire are very interesting and have given lots of valuable information, some of which are expected and some more surprising.

The overall perception of the respondents on their local environment is very satisfactory. Nevertheless, dog fouling is a major problem that seems to be perceived (worse than

traffic) across Aberdeen. This situation is the worst in the City Centre. When the respondents were asked whether they did anything to raise this matter, the overall engagement of the actions was rather limited. The respondents specified that Aberdeen City Council should be more engaging with the Aberdeen citizens when it comes to exchanging information or involving citizens about issues on local environment. The majority of the respondents declared that they were not involved in a group or association that worked to improve the quality of the local environment in their area. However, they also said they would be willing to get involved in a group of such nature when they are given a chance. This raises some issues for the Council regarding the way their information is disseminated across the city and technologies they have used to engage with the Aberdeen citizens.

The overall perception of the respondents on community safety gives a general picture about the issues that have been problematized in Aberdeen. Amongst those, burglaries and vandalism came out as significant problems in the city. However, similar to the previous theme, when it comes to getting involved in overcoming such matters in the area, there has not been much consultation in terms of how to seek advice from police or reporting to the police an incident or anti-social behaviour. The respondents stated that they have not been clear about the information they receive regarding crime and anti-social behaviour in their areas.

The overall picture shows that Aberdeen citizens are geared towards engaging in the delivery of public services individually rather than collectively. This finding overlaps with the study emerged from the 2008 international survey of co-production by Governance International and that has been reinforced by the Local Authorities Research Council Initiative. The previous research explains that citizens are more likely to engage in co-production of public services with public agencies when the actions involved are relatively easy and when they can be carried out individually rather than in groups.

The survey result will be used in taking forward the work in enhancing and developing the co-production strategies for public services.

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