

Voice!

Psychoactive Substances
Wellbeing of Older People
Physical Activity
Open Spaces
Quality of Life
Winter Maintenance



Welcome

Welcome to the 32nd citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen's citizens' panel, on the results of the 32nd questionnaire that you completed in June 2014. Topics in that questionnaire included New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), also known as "Legal Highs", wellbeing from age 65+, physical activity, open spaces, quality of life and winter maintenance.

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 33rd survey, focusing on topics such as democratic services, waste service, the hydrogen bus project and environmental services 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 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 32nd 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.33, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in February 2015, along with the 34th 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



FEEDBACK



Panel update!

Some of you might have heard that we held a focus group meeting at the end of July to discuss the format of our newsletter. This meeting with 12 of our panellists was very informative and gave us some helpful inputs. It turned out that people generally seem to be quite happy with the way the results are presented. However, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that a more comprehensive report is available to everyone on our website - www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk. Alternatively you can have a look at the report at the reception of Marischal College or at the Central Library. The report will provide you with more detailed information about the answers you had given. It also analyses the results according to neighbourhoods, gender and age groups.

We are planning to make some small changes in the way we set the questionnaire up. Currently we have questions to two or three topics followed by a section 'additional questions'. In order to keep the questionnaires interesting for you we want to make sure we feature a variety of questions from all our community planning partners. We will therefore start using the themes from Community Planning Aberdeen which are 'safer communities', 'learning and workforce', 'economic growth', 'health and wellbeing', 'older people' and 'children and young people'. We will start with these themes in the next questionnaire.

And finally...

I am off on maternity leave now. Sharon Wilkinson will look after the City Voice in the meantime - you can contact her using the usual city voice email cityvoice@aberdeencity.gov.uk, or by phone 01224 523179. Please continue to complete the questionnaires and stay in touch if you have any questions. Thank you.

32nd Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 32nd questionnaire you completed in June 2014. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, we had 890 people on the panel and we received 672 completed questionnaires. This gives us an overall response rate of 75.5%. We are delighted to see such a high response rate. Thank you to everyone who responded. The majority of the panellists who completed this questionnaire did so online - we had 361 online responses compared to 311 on paper. We also had more women than men who sent this questionnaire back - 356 women compared to 312 men. 249 respondents live in the south of Aberdeen, 221 are from central Aberdeen and 198 from north of Aberdeen.

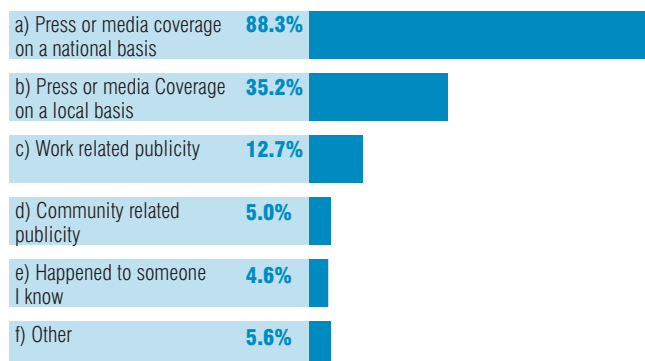
It is vital for the success of the City Voice that we keep response rates as high as possible so please continue to complete them. If you wish to change the format that you receive the questionnaire in, please do not hesitate to contact us. And if there is a reason you are not replying, please let me know.

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) - known as legal highs

Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) is aware of increasing concerns and reported harms to people who have used New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) - also known as "Legal Highs". They wanted to find out more about the awareness of NPS and how they could improve their services.

The first question put to the panellists was if they had heard of NPS. 503 panellists answered with 'yes', 165 with 'no' (out of 668 respondents). The majority of respondents heard about them through press or media coverage on a national basis (88.3%), or through press or media coverage on a local basis (32.5%). See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Where have you heard about NPS ("Legal Highs") during the past 12 month period?



Base = 503 respondents

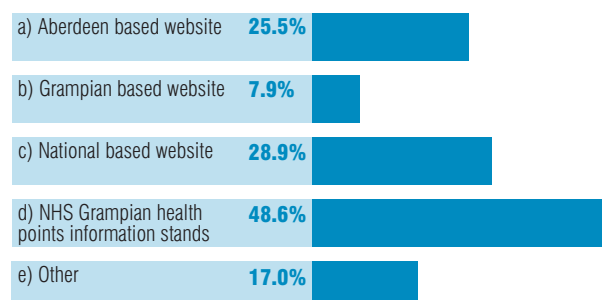
Of those panellists who were aware of NPS use in Aberdeen panellists living in the central areas of the city were more likely to say that they had been aware of NPS use in the Aberdeen area (30.2%), than panellists living in the north (22.5%) or south of Aberdeen (20.8%).

Asked about the age of the person who was involved in instances of NPS use 45.9% of the panellists answering this question chose

'adults between the ages of 19-30 years'. 32.8% replied with 'young person/people 17 or 18 years of age' and 25.4% said 'young person/people under the age of 16 years'. An equal 17.2% answered with either 'adults over 30 years of age' or 'don't know'. ADP also wanted to find out if panellists knew where to find information about drug and on alcohol services within the city. It turned out that, more panellists seem to know where to find information about alcohol services than drug services - 48.2% answered with yes when asked about alcohol services whereas 43.6% of the panellists indicated that they knew where to find information on drug services.

Figure 2 shows how panellists answered when asked where they would look for help/information on drug and alcohol services in Aberdeen. The highest percentage of respondents said they would go to a NHS Grampian Healthpoint (48.6%).

Figure 2: Where would you have looked for help/ information (on drug and alcohol services in Aberdeen)?



Base = 494

Other suggestions included answers such as the internet/ search engine/ websites, GP surgery/ health centre or people saying that they don't need to look for help/ information.

This is what we are doing

The Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) was interested to find out more about the impact of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) and how much city residents are aware about the available information, advice and support. It was encouraging that a large majority of City Voice respondents had heard about NPS within the last 12 months. However, less encouraging is that 4.6% of those who had heard of NPS had direct experience with it, i.e. it "happened to someone I know". Although it is difficult to directly compare this figure to other prevalence estimates such as problematic drug and cannabis use it can still be viewed as significant. The numbers of instances relating to NPS awareness are also high: 53.8% of the respondents highlighted they were aware of 3 and more instances surrounding NPS, with the highest proportion of this response relating to the younger age groups. However, it is worth pointing out that the indicated age ranges of those directly involved with NPS is not contained to any particular grouping. NPS and the consequences of its use are very much an issue in Aberdeen City across the population. Around half of the respondents were not aware of where to find information on drug and alcohol services (with a slightly higher percentage able to find information on alcohol services than on drug services). And a large majority of respondents - 79.5% felt that advice and information about alcohol and drugs don't have a high enough profile in the city.

There are some interesting observations to be made in terms of where information is sought: It was heartening to learn that nearly a fifth (from a total of 608) were aware of the Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership website which is a favourable response given that at present this website is tailored at professionals from the partner organisations who make up the ADP rather than at the general public. Asked where panellists would look for help/information, the most selected option was NHS Grampian Healthpoints. Internet sourced information featured well with 28.9% favouring a national website, 25.5% an Aberdeen website, and 7.9% a Grampian website. However it is important to acknowledge that some respondents commented on computer literacy and the importance of being able to ask for advice in person (e.g. GP surgery, City Advice Bureau or in other public service areas). The outcome of this survey has confirmed that NPS is an issue across the population of Aberdeen. The findings may support and confirm the ADP's current strategic thinking. An 'early intervention' approach is due to be piloted in one area of the city later this year. An area-based needs approach may be a useful way to find the right level of intervention. No 'one size fits all' approach in terms of communication, information and awareness around alcohol, drugs and service provision can be applied. The survey responses can help inform the ADP's communication strategy moving forward. It will have to take into account information and education on NPS as well as on other relevant issues in respect to alcohol and drugs, including access to local services.

For further information please contact: nhsg.
aberdeencityadp@nhs.net or 01224 557020

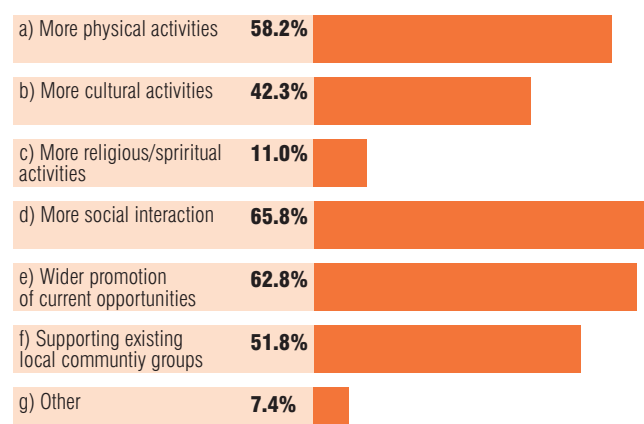
Fraser Hoggan

Development Officer
Aberdeen City Alcohol & Drugs Partnership



The Aberdeen City Council Wellbeing Team wanted to find out about panellists' views on the wellbeing opportunities for over 65s. Asked firstly if they were aware of opportunities currently provided to support 65+ years old to remain active, healthy and engaged, 61.0% of the panellists answered with 'no' and 39.0% said 'yes'. Panellists were also asked what suggestion they feel may contribute to improving and sustaining health and wellbeing opportunities for 65+ years old. The majority thought 'more social interaction' (65.8%) and 'Wider promotion of current opportunities' (62.8%). 58.2% thought 'more physical activities' would help to sustain health and wellbeing opportunities and 51.8% chose 'supporting existing local community groups'. See Figure 3.

Figure 3: Which of the following suggestions do you feel may contribute to improving and sustaining health and wellbeing opportunities for 65+ years old?



Base = 672

Analysis by gender reveals that male panellists chose ‘more physical activity’ more often than female panellists (64.4% and 52.8% respectively). Male panellists also selected ‘more cultural activities’ more frequently than female panellists (46.8% and 38.2% respectively). Female panellists on the other hand more often thought ‘more social interaction’ would improve and sustain health and wellbeing for 65+ year olds (69.1% of female panellists and 62.2% of male panellists).

This is what we are doing

The responses to the questions relating to the wellbeing of older people have proved very informative. They have provided us with a good insight into what people want, where gaps in the service are, and what impact that the wellbeing agenda is having for the older people of Aberdeen. The wellbeing team was formed in 2012, and is therefore in relative infancy. Such feedback provides us with comprehensive evaluation and measurement of performance and will help to inform future service planning and delivery. This data will be considered both within the wellbeing team’s service planning, and during future partnership and integrative working streams. Receiving responses from a wide demographic of citizens on their views of wellbeing has been useful as this data has not previously been available. It emphasises that wellbeing is an important matter to all, and acknowledges that people’s views on wellbeing today will influence the service planning and establishment of sustainable wellbeing opportunities for tomorrow.

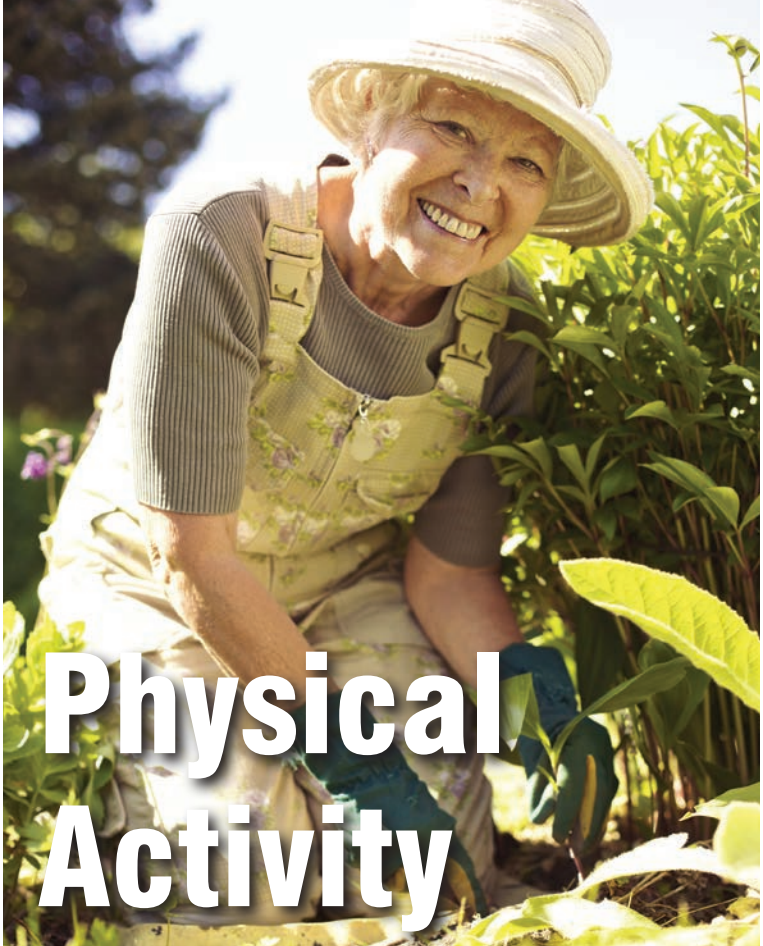
Furthermore, by raising awareness of older people’s wellbeing through completing the City Voice questionnaire, people from across the demographics, may be encouraged to consider how they may support wellbeing opportunities , (at an individual or community level), such as intergenerational activities, or supporting isolated neighbours to access local services. It was also interesting also to note the breakdown of data from neighbourhood responses. This again informs us on a needs based level as to where to focus efforts in terms of health and wellbeing promotion and marketing.

In summary, the data received indicates that we need to continue to work with the people living in our local communities, applying a flexible approach; assessing need and listening and responding to the voices of the local people, in order to develop sustainable wellbeing opportunities.

The wellbeing team would like to thank all respondents for their comments.

For further information please contact Julie Somers: jsomers@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 01224523122

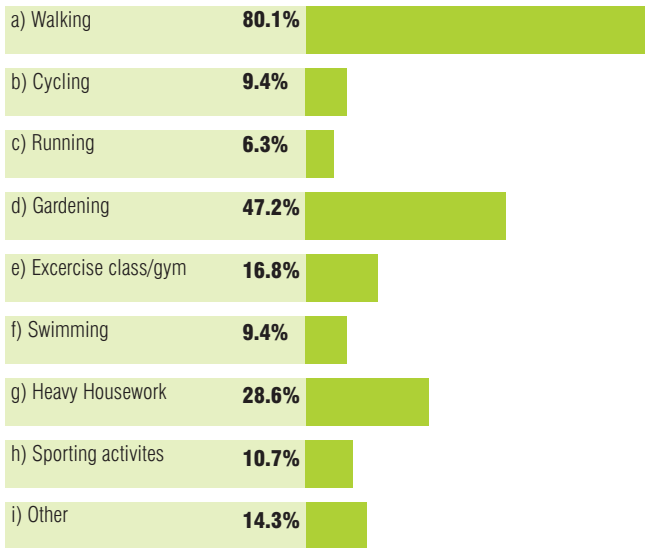
Julie Somers
Wellbeing Co-ordinator
Older People & Rehabilitation Services
Aberdeen City Council



The community planning ‘Health and Wellbeing’ group in Aberdeen is interested in finding out about the type of physical activity people do each week, in what helps them to do physical activity and in the type of barriers that may get in the way of this happening. Here is a selection of questions and answers:

The first thing the Health and Wellbeing group wanted to know was what kind of physical activity panellists mainly do each week. The large majority (80.1%) answered with ‘walking’, followed by ‘gardening’ (47.2%). 28.6% stated that they do ‘heavy housework’ and 16.8% take ‘exercise class/gym’. See Figure 4

Figure 4: What type of physical activity do you mainly do each week?



Base = 672

Additional answers were for example sports/ martial arts, bowls/ bowling, work/ caring/ volunteering, dog walking/ hill walking,

disabled/ ill so limited/no physical activity, exercise at home or parenting/ caring for the home/ DIY.

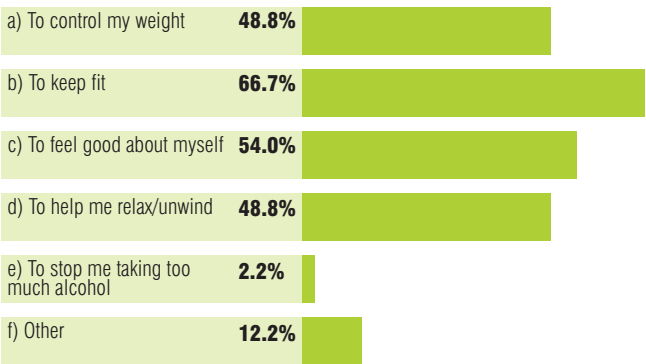
Panellists were then asked on average how much physical activity they do each week. The majority of the panellists answered with 'more than 3 hours a week' (51.7%). 21.7% indicated that they would do '2-3 hours', followed by '1-2 hours' (15.4%), 'less than an hour each week' (5.4%), 'none' (3.7%) and 2.0% chose 'don't know'.

Male respondents were more likely to say that they don't do any exercise in a week (4.3% of male panellists compared to 3.3% of female panellists). However, male respondents were also slightly more likely than female respondents to do more than 3 hours of exercise per week (53.8% of male panellists compared to 50.0% of female panellists).

Panellists were then asked what would encourage them to do regular physical activity each week. They could agree or disagree with different statements. 84.7% of the respondents agreed or even strongly agreed with the statement 'I go for walks'. This was followed by 'I get about during the day by walking or cycling' (75.8% strongly agreed or agreed) and by 'I have easy access to recreation opportunities and facilities' (74.0%). At the other end of the spectrum 62.3% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement 'a professional has advised me to do physical activity', followed by 'my work gives me information and opportunities' (57.1%)

When panellists were asked what would motivate them to do regular physical activity they most often chose the option 'to keep fit' (66.7%), followed by 'to feel good about myself' (54.0%). See Figure 5.

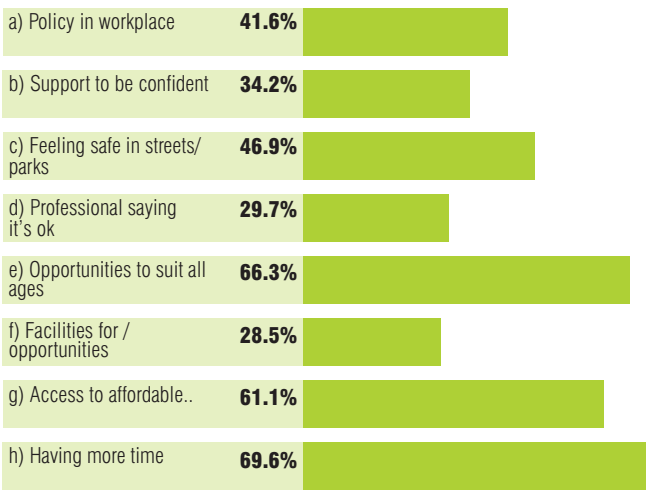
Figure 5: What motivates you to do regular physical activity each week?



When asked what would get in their way of doing regular physical activity each week, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I use public transport or the car for getting about' or 'family/work commitments' (54.3% and 51.1% respectively). Only a relatively small number of respondents agreed with the statement 'I feel it isn't safe' (6.6%) or with 'I don't like it' (11.7%).

Panellists were then asked to answer what would help them to do regular or more physical activity each week. The majority of respondents said 'more time' (69.6%), followed by 'opportunities to suit all ages' (66.3%). See Figure 6.

Figure 6: Do you agree or strongly agree that the following statements would help you to do regular or more physical activity each week?



Base = multiple

Looking at the different age groups it becomes apparent that the younger age groups (16-34 years old and 35-54 years old) were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more time would enable them to do regular or more physical activity each week (92.1% and 82.2% respectively).

This is what we are doing

Some of the results concur with the national health survey responses in terms of types of activity and differences by age groups. It is encouraging to see 80% of respondents selected walking as the national walking strategy was released in June. Reason respondents gave for what gets in the way of doing regular physical activity also concur with the national picture and will be of interest to other thematic groups such as the integrated transport group. We will analyse the results further by age group and also consider them alongside the results to the questions on wellbeing.

If you have any further questions please contact Linda Smith: lindaj.smith@nhs.net or on: 01224 558526.

Linda Smith
Public Health Lead
NHS Grampian



Open Spaces

In March 2011 panellists were asked about their views on open spaces and in September 2011 the council published its Open Space Strategy 2011–2016. In order to assess the progress of the strategy the council is again interested in the panellists' views on open spaces.

Panellists were first asked about their overall satisfaction with the quality of open spaces in the city. On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied) the majority (27.7%) indicated their satisfaction with 7, followed by 18.1% who gave it an 8. Only 3.0% said that they were very dissatisfied and 2.6% were very satisfied. The majority of panellists also seem to be reasonably happy with the safety, crime and antisocial behaviour in open spaces. Again on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied) 24.1% rated their satisfaction with a 7, 17.7% with a 6. Only 0.8% of the respondents selected very satisfied and 3.8% are very dissatisfied.

Asked about their awareness of publicity and promotion of open spaces in the city, 389 panellists (out of 637) said that they didn't know anything about that, 248 answered with yes, they are aware of it.

Figure 7: Are you aware of publicity and promotion of open spaces in the city?



Base = 637 respondents

The vast majority of respondents have not been involved in developing open space / green space management plans in the last two years. 96.6% answered this question with 'no', 3.4% with 'yes'. Additionally, only a small number of panellists are involved in park user groups (such as 'friends of' groups). 96.1% answered this question with 'no', 3.9% with 'yes'.

Most panellists seem to think that private businesses should contribute towards improving the quality of open spaces in the city. 70.1% answered with 'yes', 29.9% with 'no'. Panellists in the age group 16–34 were most likely to say that they did not agree that private business should contribute (37.7% of panellists aged between 16 and 34 answered this question with no).

This is what we are doing

The results of the questionnaire are very interesting and useful. They will help us to set up the future direction and prioritising our action plan for the open space strategy and future management.

The results provide us with the overall picture of the quality of open space across the city. It gives us the information we were looking for particularly the results where people have shown less satisfaction about the quality of open spaces than last time. The results representing age group and gender are very interesting and provide us with the information to focus on the age group that are less interested in managing open spaces. The results on publicity and promotion are interesting to look at across the city neighbourhoods. It is very interesting to see the response to the question about involving businesses in improving the quality of open spaces. It provides us with a clear direction to focus on the type of contribution we should be looking for.

We will use these results in preparing the 2nd annual monitoring report due to be published at the end of 2014. We will also compare these results with the results of the open space audit conducted in 2010. Additionally, these responses will help us in conducting the future review of open/green space audit. We will be able to use these results to work better with our partner organisations, community group, developers, businesses and council departments. The results will further be used to work with elected members to help in the decision making process for the future planning and management of open spaces across the city. The results are filling the gaps in open space planning and management. Finally, we will use these results to compare with other cities and local authorities in the country.

For further information please contact: Aftab Majeed, amajeed@aberdeencity.gov.uk or on 01224 523464.

Aftab Majeed
Environmental Planner
Aberdeen City Council

Quality of Life

The economic manifesto of Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) includes a vision of the area as being one of the most interesting and enjoyable locations in the UK in which to visit, live, work and grow up. In 2012 the City Voice panellists were asked for a first time to give their views on a series of topics which could contribute to a good quality of life and to suggest any other relevant factors. ACSEF wanted to assess whether things are better, worse or whether they have stayed the same over the last two years. Panellists were therefore asked to rate a number of different topics on a scale of 1 to 5. Because the question was long and detailed only the most popular rating is mentioned here. For more details please consult the report which is available on our website.

Transport and Communication

Panellists don't seem to be satisfied with the levels of traffic congestion - the majority rated this aspect with a 1 or a 2 (36.3% and 35.0% respectively), local public transport, maintenance of roads, national and international transport and broadband was rated by the majority with a 3.

Shopping and Entertainment

The majority of City Voice panellists rated the range of shops and cultural facilities with a 3 (38.1% and 47.8% respectively) whereas 50.9% rated the choice of bars/ restaurants with a 4 or a 5.

Housing and the Environment

'Attractive city centre' received a low rating by most panellists (65.0% chose either 1 or 2). 'Availability of affordable housing' was also rated badly by the majority of panellists - 37.9% rated it with a 1, 28.6% with a 2. 'Air quality' and 'air pollution' was mostly rated with a 3 (44.8%), so was 'clean streets' (42.0%), 'choice of housing' (45.9%). A better verdict received 'access to the countryside' as well as 'access to parks etc.'. Both were rated by a majority with a 4 or a 5 (60.2% and 53.6% respectively).

Economy and Jobs

'Cost of living' received a low ranking from the majority of respondents - 21.7% gave it a 1, 39.9% a 2. 'Levels of earnings/ income' was mostly rated with a 3 (37.7% of the panellists), so was 'impact of volunteering on your local community' - 60.4% of the panellists ranked it with a 3. Both, 'employment opportunities' and 'local economy' seem to be perceived better by the panellists - 53.1% and 48.5% respectively rated it with a 4 or a 5.

Lifelong Learning

Issues about lifelong learning seem to be perceived by the majority panellists as average. 52.3% of the respondents rated 'quality of schools/ education' with a 3. Also rated with a 3 were 'further/ higher education' (by 44.9% of the respondents) and 'activities for young people' (by 52.9% of the respondents).

Community Safety

'Level of crime' and 'anti-social behaviour' were both most frequently rated with a 3 (53.1% and 50.6% respectively).

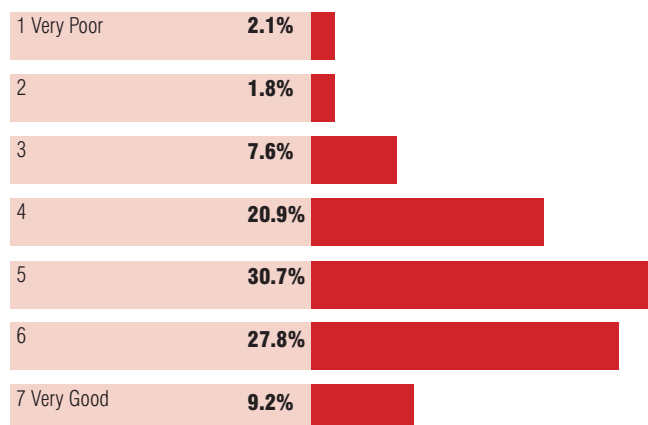
Health and Wellbeing

And finally topics about health and wellbeing: 'Access to social services' (by 65.9%), to 'sports facilities' (by 41.9%), to 'community facilities' (45.5%) and 'the local health services' (by 42.9%) were rated by the majority of panellists with a 3.

Asked about the changes over the last two years the majority of panellists rated most of the topics with 'no change'. Topics which panellists perceived as either 'a bit worse' or 'much worse' are 'levels of traffic congestion', 'attractive city centre', 'choice of housing', 'availability of affordable housing', 'cost of living', 'impact of volunteering on your local community', 'quality of schools/ education', 'activities for young people' and 'access to social services'.

Finally panellists were asked to rate their quality of life now, with 1 being 'very poor' and 7 being 'very good'. The majority of respondents rated their quality of life with a 5 (30.7%). See Figure 8

Figure 8: How would you rate your own quality of life?



Base = 622 respondents

Compared to two years ago the perception of the quality of life seems to have dropped. Back then, a majority of panellists (32.1%) rated their quality of life with a 5. Additionally, more people consider their overall quality of life in 2014 as 'very poor' (2.1%) compared to 1.1% in 2012 and less people rated it as 'very good' (9.2% in 2014 compared to 10.5% in 2012).



This is what we are doing

City Voice panellists were asked to consider a range of factors that can contribute to a good quality of life. We then asked you to provide a satisfaction level (between 1 and 5), and to say whether you felt these factors were better or worse than when we last asked you the questions two years ago.

The results show that most of the options were rated as 'no change' by the majority of respondents. The factors that were rated by the majority of panellists as being 'a bit worse' or 'much worse' included: levels of traffic congestion (76.5%), cost of living (83.3%), and access to social services (57.2%). We then asked you what other factors influence your quality of life. You said that care/socialisation for the elderly, parking, faith in the council, the divide between rich and poor all had an influence. These factors that you have provided will be looked at to see if they should be included in future questionnaires. Finally we asked you to rate your overall quality of life on a scale of 1-7 where 1 = very poor and 7 = very good. The majority of panellists rated their quality of life as a '5' (30.7%), with 27.8% rating a 6, and a further 9.2% giving a rating of 7. When these questions were asked 2 years ago (City Voice 25) 32.1% of panellists rated their quality of life as a 5, 30.2% rated a 6, and 10.5% rated a 7. In 2012 the percentage of panellists rating a 5 or above was 72.8%; in 2014 it was 67.7%. This clearly shows that the overall quality of life in Aberdeen has seen a decrease for our panellists.

These results will be presented to the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) management team in October. The overall decrease in the rating of Quality of Life in the City is concerning, with a lack of affordable housing and traffic congestion two key factors impacting on that. ACSEF is working with both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils together with the Scottish Government and housing developers to look at accelerating the delivery of affordable housing. Construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) will begin in autumn 2014. This major project, together with planned improvements in public transport, road and rail, will help reduce levels of congestion in the city.

ACSEF's economic manifesto includes a vision of our area as being one of the most interesting and enjoyable locations in the UK in which to visit, live, work and grow up. Knowing what is important to Aberdeen residents will help them to focus their resources on the topics that matter.

For further information please contact Sharon Wilkinson: swilkinson@aberdeencity.gov.uk or on 01224523179

Sharon Wilkinson

Senior Research Officer
Aberdeen City Council



Winter Maintenance

The council wants to reduce the effects of adverse weather conditions on the movement of people and vehicles to permit safe travel on the more important roads in the city. In order to achieve this, they have asked panellists a number of questions relating to their satisfaction about a number of different areas in regards to winter maintenance.

Asked about their satisfaction with the Roads Winter Service Plan the majority of respondents said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (31.8%) followed by 29.2% who were fairly satisfied. Most panellists consider the Report of Expected Weather Condition as fairly satisfying (39.5%), followed by 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' by 29.6% of the panellists.

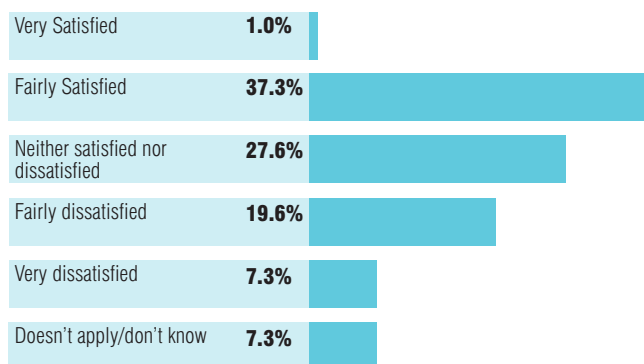
49.3% and 49.2% of the panellists said that they were fairly satisfied with the gritting and the snow-ploughing of bus routes and other main roads. However, asked about the level of satisfaction with the gritting of side and local roads a majority of the panellists seems to be fairly dissatisfied (33.0%), followed by very dissatisfied 26.8%. Asked about the snow-ploughing of side and local roads a similar picture can be seen - 32.9% are fairly dissatisfied and 25.9% are very dissatisfied.

The gritting of busy footways also seems to be a concern for the majority of panellists. 26.4% stated that they were 'very dissatisfied', followed by 25.1% who is 'fairly dissatisfied'. Asked about the snow-ploughing of busy footways 26.0% of the respondents said that they are 'fairly dissatisfied', followed by 24.4% who is 'fairly satisfied'. And finally panellists were asked about their satisfaction with the gritting and the snow-ploughing of

local footways. 32.2% were 'very dissatisfied' with the gritting of local footways, followed by 30.4% who is 'fairly dissatisfied'. And 30.5% are 'fairly dissatisfied' with the snow-ploughing of these footways, followed by 28.7% which is 'very dissatisfied'.

Panellists were also asked if they think that the council is making adequate provisions for winter maintenance - 37% of respondents were 'fairly satisfied' - see Figure 9.

Figure 9: Do you think the council is making adequate provisions for winter maintenance?



Base = 617

Female respondents were more likely to be either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the provisions than male respondents (1.3% of female respondents were very satisfied, compared to 0.7% of male respondents). At the same time, a slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents were very dissatisfied with the provisions for winter maintenance (8.5% compared to 6.1%).

Finally, City Voice panellists were asked if they had ever made use of a community salt bag. The overwhelming majority of respondents answered with 'no' (93.9%). Only 6.1% said that they have used this service. However, a different picture can be seen when asking panellists if they had made use of a grit bin in the past. 49.9% said yes, 50.1% said no.

This is what we are doing

It is disappointing that the satisfaction level has dropped with all questions concerning winter maintenance. It is particularly perplexing that approximately 21% of respondents were fairly or very dissatisfied with gritting of bus routes and approximately 18 % were fairly or very dissatisfied with the snow ploughing of bus routes and main roads. This causes us some concern as we have just experienced the mildest winter for many years with very few traffic issues related to winter and virtually no snow.

For side roads and footways, satisfaction levels have been low in the past. There is an expectation of service provision which is much greater than the service that can possibly be supplied given the current resources. Steps have been taken to publicise the service which is actually possible, and to publicise the availability of self-help salt bags.

Further media work and a further public presentation are intended this year to publicise the 1 tonne salt bag scheme and the change in grit bin policy to hopefully increase public awareness.

Street Lighting

Although dissatisfaction levels remain low for all questions concerning street lighting, these levels have increased slightly. There has been some difficulty in employing appropriately skilled workers to carry out repairs due to the nature of the labour market in Aberdeen. This is being addressed by training our existing workforce to carry out simple repairs which should improve the response time for carrying out repairs. There is a scheme being carried out presently to upgrade the street lighting on Union Street and Union Terrace which should hopefully improve the perception of the lighting levels in the city centre.

If you have any further questions please contact John Shearer: JShearer@aberdeencity.gov.uk or on 01224 241556
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