Aberdeen City voice

Aberdeen's Citizens' Panel
Report on the 9th Questionnaire

Land Use and the Environment

A Clean City

Aberdeen's Image

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Aberdeen City Voice – report on the findings of the 9th Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

The final survey sample consisted of 612 responses from members of the citizens' panel. The total panel comprises some 893 citizens of Aberdeen and so the response rate amounts to approximately 69 per cent. The 612 responses are, in the first instance, considered as a whole. Further analysis will be conducted on those results which provoke further investigation and where the various project partners direct further investigation. The further analysis will take the form of targeted analysis on the basis of the personal information of the respondents. This information allows breakdown on the basis of the following variables:

- Gender
- Area
- Age
- Employment
- Home Ownership
- Health Issues
- Ethnicity

Beyond this it is also possible to cross tabulate the various results in order to see if any interesting relationships can be established between the various responses to the different issues covered in the questionnaire.

The analysis presented here is split into the following main topics:

- Land Use and the Environment
- A Clean City
- Aberdeen's Image
- General Questions

LAND USE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

City Centre Improvements

The Council is currently in the process of creating a Masterplan for the city centre. The first stage of this Masterplan involves assessing the redevelopment schemes that have been proposed or implemented in recent years. Included in the works that have been carried out are various streetscape schemes such as the re-paving of Belmont Street and Back Wynd, widening the pavements in Union Street and the provision of sign boards, such as the boards explaining the history of the Castlegate.

Figure 1: In general do you think the city centre has been improved by these schemes?
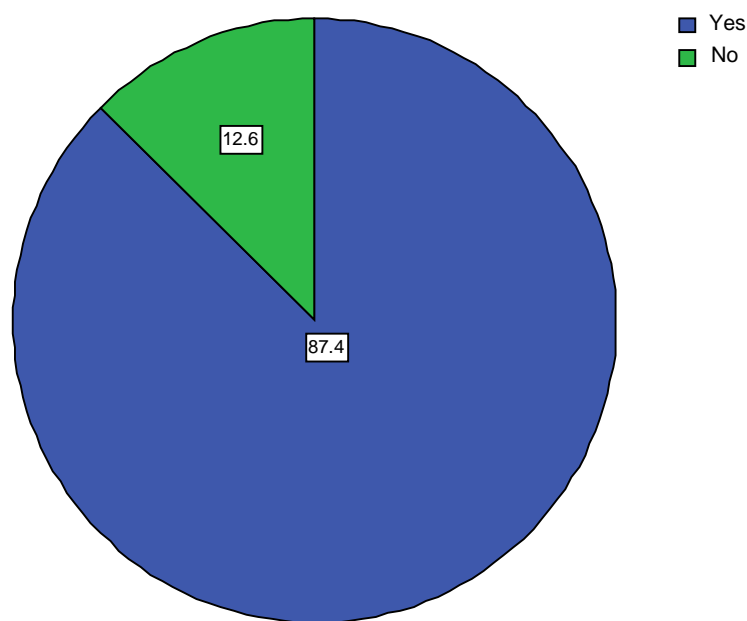
Figure 1 shows that over 87% of panellists believe that the city centre has been improved by the schemes.

Panellists were asked what the single biggest improvement that could still be made to the city centre. The results are summarised below:

- Pedestrianisation (89 comments)
- Attract retailers to vacant premises on Union Street – additional comments that this should not be with amusement arcades or charity shops (41)
- Improve cleanliness (38)
- Improve transport infrastructure (37)
- Pedestrianise only certain sections of Union Street (25)
- Better/more shops (22)
- Knock down St Nicholas House – some added landscape grounds (21)
- Reduce number of beggars (20)

- Regeneration of Union Street (19)
- Clean the granite (14)
- Redevelop Union Terrace Gardens site (14)
- Regeneration of Castlegate (11)
- City centre parking needs increased (10)
- Better public transport links (8)
- Streets and buildings need a 'face lift' (8)
- Revamp bus and train station (8)
- Reduce the number of pubs/clubs (8)
- Do not pedestrianise (7)
- Repair roads/pavements (7)
- Get rid of Triple Kirks' spire (6)
- Create meaningful, safe, cycle paths (5)
- Reduce speed and volume of traffic (4)
- Get rid of bus lanes (4)
- Join Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centre (4)
- Make it safer at night (4)
- Union Square developments (4)
- Pedestrianise except for buses and taxis (3)
- Tidy up unopened shops (3)
- Create a public amenities square in centre of city (3)
- Reintroduce trams (3)
- Pedestrianise Schoolhill instead of Union Street (2)
- More disabled parking and accessible shops (2)
- More stalls/markets (2)
- Do not allow any more building societies/bars on Union Street (2)
- Reduce street furniture (2)
- More green spaces (2)
- Bus shelters take up too much room (2)
- Improve facilities e.g. toilets (2)
- Curb licensing hours
- Extend Union Street popularity
- Community Centre for Seaton/Linksfield
- Make official fly posting areas
- Encourage business to stay in the city centre rather than move out of town
- Minimoto racing circuit
- Knock down old bridge over Dee
- More shops on Holburn
- Reopen St Nicholas Street
- Larger covered areas for entertainment
- Make city centre more vibrant during the day
- Redevelop disused flats
- Finish all developments
- Redevelop Golden Square
- No more fast food outlets
- Regenerate market Street and Regent Quay

- Reopen George Street – Union Street link
- More promotion of what is available
- Police traffic control – e.g. people blocking box junctions
- Better access to The Green and Guild Street area
- One big shopping centre instead of three
- Covered smoking area
- Consistent signs on the side streets
- Remove central islands on streets
- More seats on street
- More arts/entertainment
- Improve Bridge Street
- Create a more continental feel to the city centre
- Shuttle bus between Castlegate and beach
- Tourist information in a better place

Service Response

It is very encouraging to see such a positive response to the re-paving schemes. It is hoped that more re-paving to this standard can be carried out in the city centre and it is clear this will be supported by the survey. It is also encouraging that pedestrianisation emerges as the biggest single perceived improvement that could still be made. When the numbers asking for pedestrianisation generally are added to those specifically seeking partial pedestrianisation of Union St this is by far the most popular improvement sought.

A Masterplan for the city centre is currently being produced. This survey information will constitute part of the public consultation process and inform the content of the Masterplan.

Community Stadium

Aberdeen City Council and other potential partners, including Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen Football Club, Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum, The Aberdeen City Alliance and the Scottish Executive, are looking into the potential for a community stadium to serve the North East of Scotland. The aim is to develop a facility which is much more than simply a football stadium. It will also act as an educational, training, social, recreational, employment and community hub seven days a week for the benefit of the North East of Scotland. The project would involve a wide range of public and private sector bodies as well as representatives from community groups in the city.

Figure 2: Do you support the idea of a community stadium in Aberdeen?

Yes
No

26.7

73.3
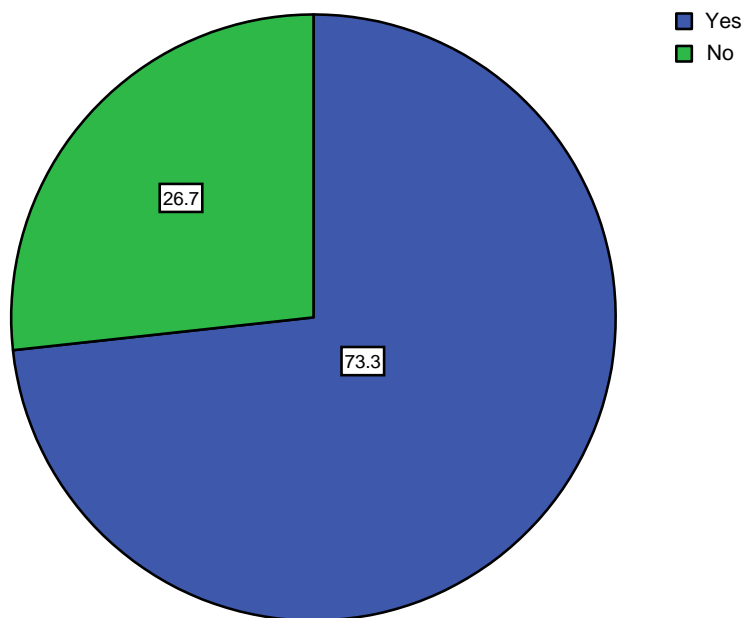
Figure 2 shows that the majority of panellists (73%) support the idea of a community stadium in Aberdeen. Support was slightly higher amongst younger panellists than with older panellists. Gender and area showed no significant variance.

Table 1: If yes which facilities should be included?

	No	Yes
a) All weather pitch	49	364
b) Casino	391	17
c) Community Centre	136	277
d) Gym	77	337
e) Hotel	323	89
f) Ice skating	212	198
g) Indoor bowling	149	261
h) Offices	319	93
i) Sports Hall	57	355
j) Swimming pool	74	338
k) Squash Courts	175	237
l) Sports massage/injury clinic	97	315

Table 1 shows that the facilities most supported by panellist are: all weather pitch (364 panellists), a sports hall (355 panellists), a swimming pool (338 panellists) and a gym (337 panellists).

Some options were less popular with only 17 panellists indicating that they would like a casino, 89 a hotel and 93 would like offices.

Further suggestions included:

- Restaurant (12 comments)
- 50m swimming pool (8)
- Athletics/running track (6)
- Crèche (4)
- Conference facilities (4)
- Concert facilities (4)
- Bike/skate park (3)
- Tennis courts (3)
- Access for disabled people (3)
- Specific facilities for OAPs (2)
- Golf (2)
- Cycling (2)
- Curling (2)
- Parking facilities (2)
- Shops (2)
- Archery range
- Recycling Centre
- Small leisure rooms
- Children's soft play
- Rail and bus stations
- Beauty treatments
- Area for use by sports clubs
- Education

- Advice Centre
- Facilities for gymnastics
- Rock climbing wall
- Facilities for teenagers
- Snooker rooms
- Sports to help children
- Spectating gallery for competitors
- Cinema
- Grass pitch
- Rifle range
- Trained staff
- Money set-aside for repairs etc.
- 5-a-side football
- Children's theatre
- Healthy eating cafe
- Special sports arena for disabled people
- Ballroom
- Corporate facilities

Panellists were asked where they thought the community stadium would be best located. The results are summarised below:

- Beach (95 comments)
- In city centre (27)
- Linksfield area (20)
- Links (19)
- Near public transport (19)
- Pittodrie (19)
- Somewhere easily accessible (14)
- Kingswells (14)
- On WPR (12)
- South of the city (10)
- Westhill (10)
- Bridge of Don (9)
- Area adjoining Chris Anderson stadium (8)
- Outskirts of city (8)
- Altens (6)
- Somewhere with parking (6)
- West of Aberdeen (6)
- Seaton (5)
- Portlethen (4)
- Guild Street (4)
- Hazlehead (3)
- North end of city (3)
- Off Union Square (3)
- Sheddocksley (3)
- Cove (3)
- Dyce (3)

- Banks O'Dee (2)
- AECC (2)
- Within the city (2)
- Near transport centres
- Somewhere with low environmental impact
- Mannofield
- Adjacent to a park-and-ride scheme
- Tillydrone
- Westburn Park
- Suburbs
- Union Terrace gardens area
- In a regeneration area
- Brownfield site
- Garthdee
- Summerhill school area
- College Street/Wellington Road
- A956 Nigg
- Loirston
- Next to railway station
- Off Anderson Drive
- Bucksburn
- Bon Accord Baths
- Satrosphere
- Northfield
- Torry
- Bus dept on King Street
- Woodside
- Rubislaw/Harlaw pitches
- Bridge of Dee

Table 2: Reasons for not supporting the idea of a community stadium

	No		Yes	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
a) Facilities already available elsewhere	62	41.3%	88	58.7%
b) Full range of facilities won't be used	88	58.7%	62	41.3%
c) Money could be better spent	42	28.4%	106	71.6%
d) Would increase traffic	105	70.9%	43	29.1%

Table 2 shows that the main reason panellists gave for not supporting the community stadium was that 'money could be better spent' cited by approximately 72%. 59% of those that did not support the idea of the community stadium cited that 'facilities already available elsewhere'.

Other reasons included:

- AFC should fund their own grounds (13 comments)
- Should be more smaller facilities around the city (4)

- Would be another white elephant and be a burden on council tax payer (2)
- Pittodrie do not get capacity crowds (2)
- Opportunity for companies to make money from public funds (2)
- Money should be used to improve existing facilities (2)
- Spend money on other things
- Make more use of seaside, mountains and rivers
- Not good value for money
- Save energy
- Other facilities would get less funding and fall into disrepair
- Goes against policy of 'neighbourhoods'
- AFC would demand availability
- Not enough facilities centrally
- Beach is too overdeveloped already

Service Response

Unfortunately, due to staff absences over the Christmas and New Year period, no comments on the results of the Community Stadium questions are available. Instead these will be presented to the panellists with the issue of Questionnaire 10 in March. If you would like a copy of the comments once received, please email Sonia Boyd on SoBoyd@aberdeencity.gov.uk or call 522935.

A CLEAN CITY

Aberdeen City Council is committed to maintaining a clean city.

Figure 3: Average (mean) response for cleanliness of city
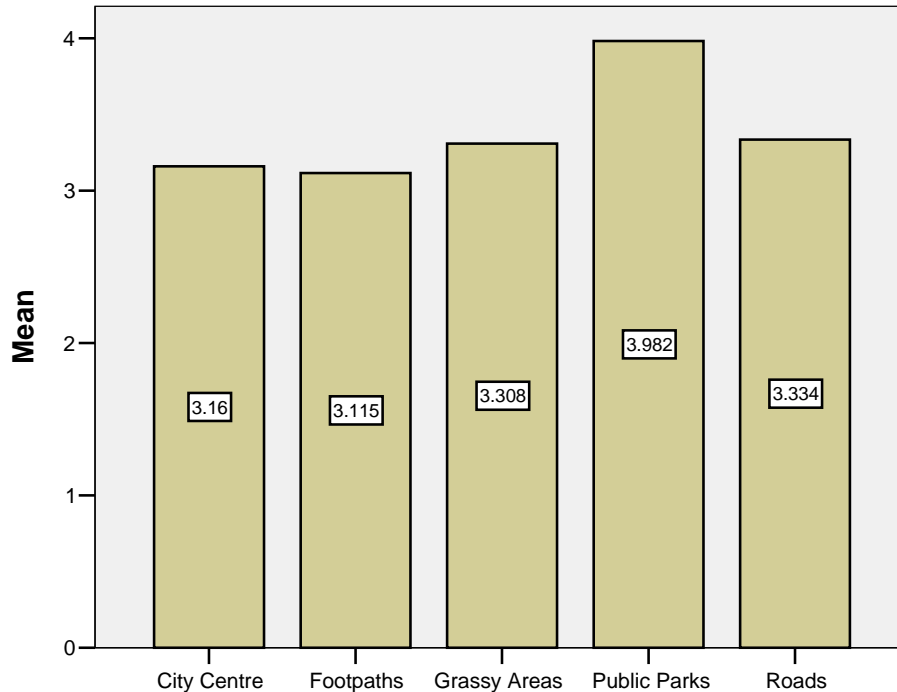
Figure 3 shows the average response to panellists' perception of cleanliness in the city, where 1 is Not Clean and 6 is Very Clean. Panellists were asked to rate cleanliness on a 0-5 scale where 1 is not clean and 6 is very clean. As can be seen when taken as an average of all responses, panellists rated all areas of the city between 3 and 4 on the scale provided. This shows that overall, panellists believe that the city centre is fairly clean.

Table 3: In Aberdeen, how clean do you think the following are?

	City Centre		Footpaths		Grassy Areas		Public Parks		Roads	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No answer	15	2.5%	20	3.3%	26	4.3%	23	3.8%	24	3.9%
1 Not Clean	59	9.7%	47	7.7%	34	5.6%	22	3.6%	35	5.7%
2	94	15.4%	82	13.4%	86	14.1%	48	7.9%	73	12.0%
3	183	30.0%	220	36.1%	163	26.7%	80	13.1%	177	29.0%
4	174	28.5%	180	29.5%	190	31.1%	174	28.5%	190	31.1%
5	75	12.3%	56	9.2%	100	16.4%	199	32.6%	102	16.7%
6 Very Clean	11	1.8%	5	0.8%	11	1.8%	64	10.5%	9	1.5%

Table 3 shows the responses broken down. As can be seen, the area that is rated as being least clean (i.e. result is closest to 0) is the City Centre

followed by footpaths. The area that is rated as most clean (i.e. closest to 6) are the public parks.

Figure 4: How do you rate the general cleanliness of the city?
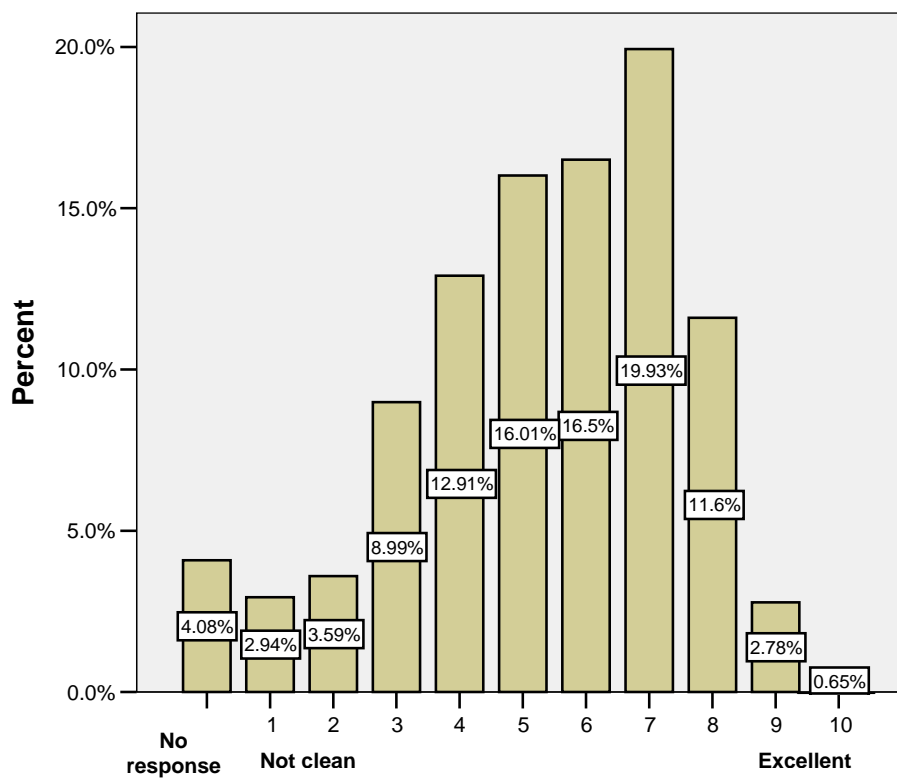
Panellists were asked to rate the general cleanliness of the city on a scale of 1-10 where 1 was very unclean and 10 very clean. As shown in Figure 4, the average response was approximately 5.5. The most popular answer was 7 (cited by 20% of panellists) and approximately 77% of panellists selected a number between 4 and 8. This indicates that panellists believe that the city is generally fairly clean.

Panellists were asked if there were specific areas that they see as being particularly good or poor the city. There were a large number of areas mentioned and so the list below outlines areas that were mentioned more than once.

Areas the panellists considered to be poor:

- City Centre – especially Union Street (120 comments)
- Outside fast food premises (30)
- Dog fouling problems (16)
- George Street (16)
- Chewing gum on streets (15)
- Hazlehead Park (13)
- Beach area (13)
- Areas near schools (9)
- Torry (8)
- Grassy areas (7)

- Tillydrone (6)
- Footpaths (6)
- Too many cigarette ends lying around (6)
- Parks (5)
- Streets with pubs and nightclubs (5)
- Seaton (5)
- Bus stops (5)
- Litter on most streets (5)
- Bridge of Don (5)
- Empty litter bins more (4)
- Housing scheme pavements (4)
- Open spaces and city centre streets lack bins (3)
- Northfield (3)
- Mastrick shops (3)
- Byron Square (3)
- Regeneration areas (3)
- Middlefield (3)
- Cycle track areas (3)
- Housing estates (3)
- Garthdee (3)
- River Don (3)
- Mannofield (2)
- Kincorth (2)
- Mastrick streets (2)
- Around the shopping centres (2)
- Bedford (2)
- Outskirts of city are neglected (2)
- Areas with blocked drains (2)
- Near Asda (2)
- Verges of roads (2)
- Hazlehead (2)
- Manor (2)
- Logie (3)
- Dumping in woodland areas (2)
- Bus station (2)
- Bucksburn (2)
- Graffiti and ruined buildings (2)
- Shrubs bordering roads (2)
- Ring road (2)

Areas that panellists considered being clean are:

- Parks (80 comments)
- City Centre (28)
- Duthie Park (18)
- West End (16)
- Beach area (9)
- Seaton Park (7)

- Belmont (6)
- Union Terrace (5)
- Queens Road (5)
- Westburn Park (4)
- Shopping Centres (4)
- Denburn (4)
- Castlegate (3)
- Victoria Park (3)
- George Street (2)
- Dyce (2)
- Ferryhill (2)
- Mannofield (2)
- Albyn Place (2)
- Johnstone Gardens (2)
- Good floral displays (2)

Service Response

Overall the return has provided positive feedback. With regards to the cleanliness of the city it was encouraging to see that the majority of the panel regard the cleanliness of the city as fairly clean.

The report states that the panellists see the city centre as the area most in need of improvement in terms of cleanliness. This links back into the earlier City Centre improvements question where 38 panellists listed improving cleanliness as an improvement that could still be made to the city centre.

Significant improvements have been made in recent years to the cleanliness of Aberdeen and it is our aim to continue this trend and seek further improvements. The city centre has already been identified as an area requiring improvement, particularly at weekends, and this is being addressed through changes to work patterns and programmes of work, an increase in resources and insuring identified hot spots are targeted on a regular basis.

Public Toilets

Aberdeen City Council is currently carrying out a review of public toilet provision in the City, which will include details on the condition, usage and number of toilets in the City. Panellists were asked for their views.

Figure 5: Do you think there are any areas in Aberdeen where there should be more public toilets?
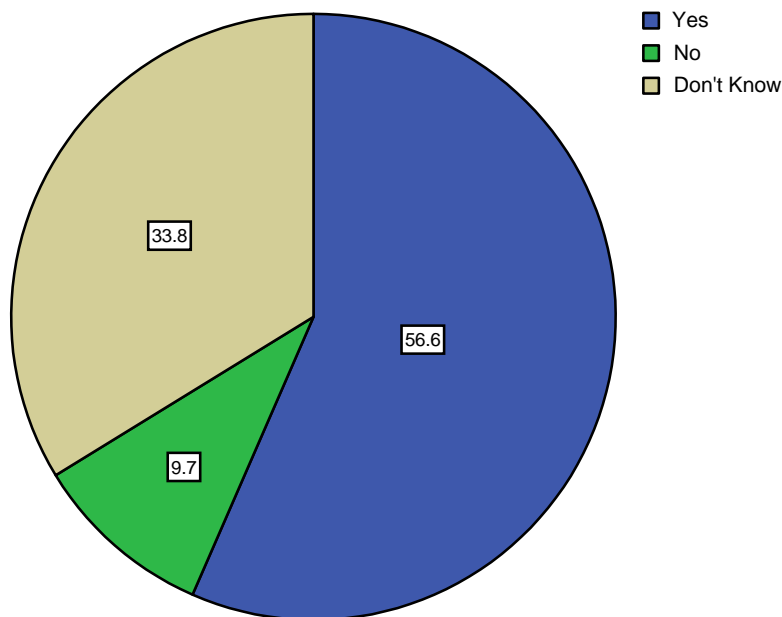
Figure 5 shows that approximately 57% of panellists believe that there should be more toilets in the city. Older panellists were more likely to indicate that they would like more public toilets (63% of over 65s as opposed to 44% of 25-34 year olds).

Locations given included:

- Union Street area (114 comments)
- City Centre (85)
- Beach area (51)
- Parks (35)
- Castlegate (34)
- Holburn Junction area (22)
- Music Hall (16)
- Rosemount (6)
- Hazlehead (6)
- Bridge of Don (5)
- Old Aberdeen (3)
- Ferryhill (2)
- Mannofield (2)
- Kincorth (2)

- Schoolhill (2)
- St Nicholas Centre (2)

Table 4: Perceptions of existing public toilets

	No		Yes	
	Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
a) Clean	160	38.8%	252	61.2%
b) Cold	98	24.4%	303	75.6%
c) Easily Accessible	196	48.9%	205	51.1%
d) Safe and secure	264	68.6%	121	31.4%
e) Smelly	155	39.4%	238	60.6%
f) Vandalised	155	46.3%	180	53.7%

Table 4 shows that the majority of panellists believe that public toilets are clean (61%) and easily accessible (51%). However, 76% believe that they are cold, 61% believe that they are smelly and 54% that they are vandalised. Only 31% believed that they are safe and secure.

Further comments from panellists included:

- Never use toilets (26 comments)
- Not enough toilets (12)
- Need improvements (10)
- Hard to find toilets (7)
- Do not feel safe (6)
- Vary in standard (5)
- Should be an attendant on duty (5)
- Most seem fine (4)
- Toilets in music hall should be open to public
- Poor ventilation in some toilets
- Bus station are terrible
- Close too early
- Overcrowded
- Car park toilets poor
- Some need to be kept drier
- Too many closures
- Spa Street are kept well but fabric needs work
- Toilets are never open

Figure 6: Is it reasonable to charge a small amount for using upgraded toilets?
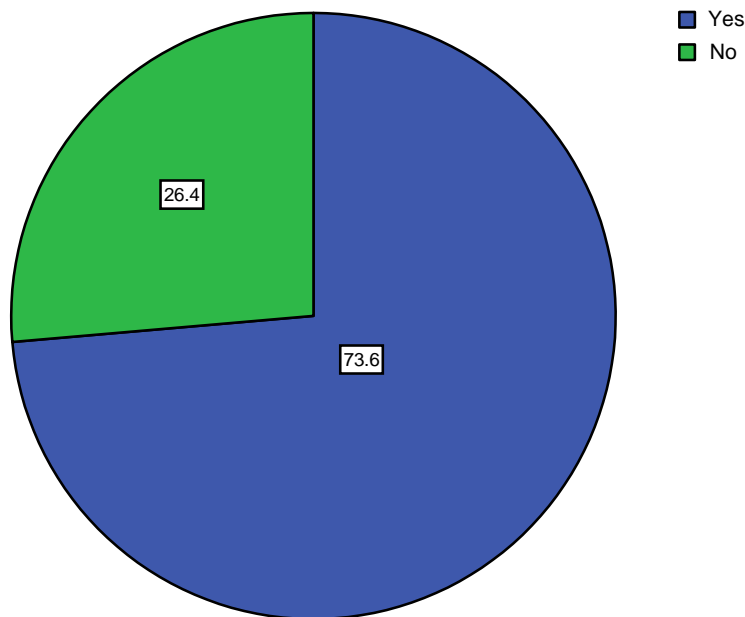
Figure 6 shows that approximately 74% of panellists believe that it is reasonable to charge a small amount for using toilets that had been improved.

Service Response

The information received will definitely inform the location of our toilets and how we manage the facilities in the future. It is evident that there is a need for public toilets in the Union Street/wider City Centre area and this confirms the findings from officers.

It was reassuring that 61% found the toilets clean as the monitoring of toilets has been increased in recent months. However, there were concerns about cold, accessibility, vandalism, security and smell which will be taken into consideration.

It is interesting to note that 74% of panellist believe that it is reasonable to charge a small amount for using improved facilities. Overall the findings will very much focus the requirement for our citizens.

Household Waste

Aberdeen City Council currently provides the following household waste collection services:

- A fortnightly kerbside recycling collection of paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bottles and cans (householders receiving this service are provided with a white bag to collect paper and card and a black box for cans, plastic bottles and glass)
- A fortnightly brown bin collection of garden waste (for green waste collection)
- A weekly black bin collection of general waste

Figure 7: Do you use the kerbside recycling collection service?
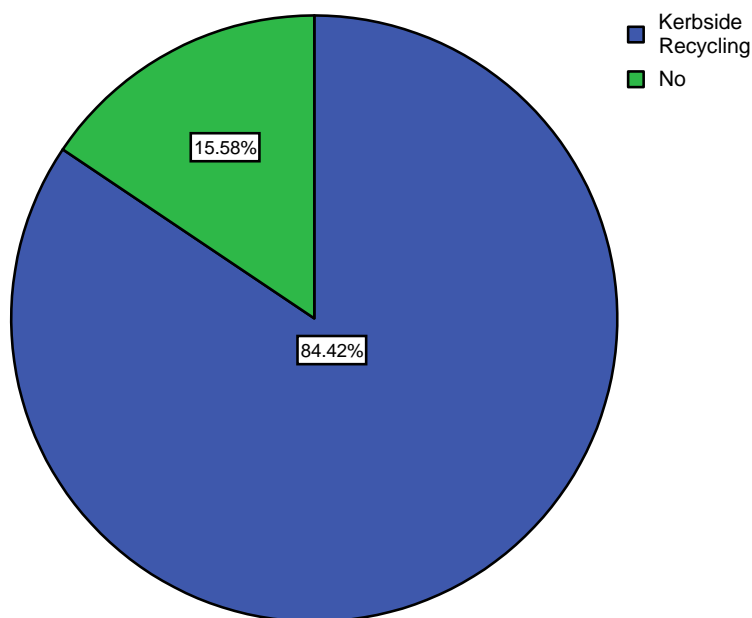
Figure 7 shows that approximately 84% of respondents use the kerbside recycling collection service or the green waste collection. The highest percentage of panellists that use kerbside recycling were in the 55-64 age group where 90% use the collection, as opposed to 75% of 24-35 year olds. Panellists in the North of the city were most likely to use kerbside recycling (92%) as opposed to 71% of panellists in Central areas.

Figure 8: Do you use the green waste collection?
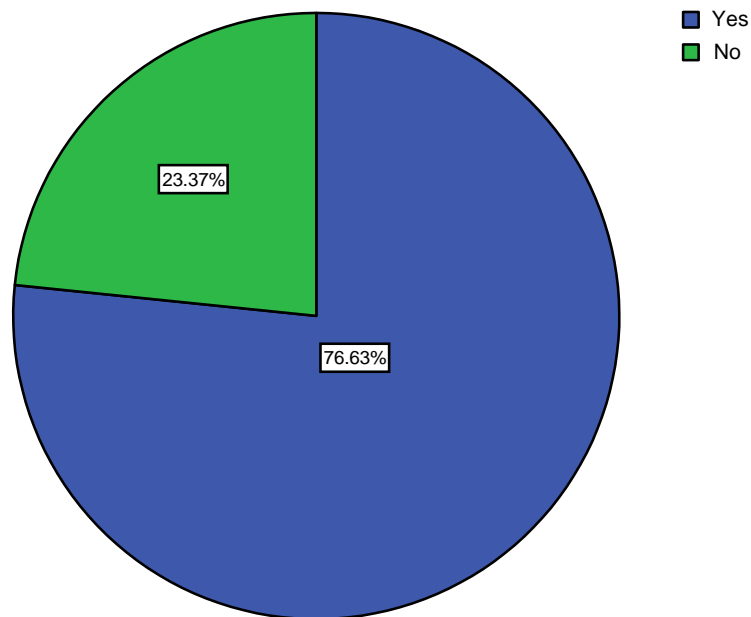
Figure 8 shows that the majority of respondents (77%) use the green waste collection. Once again older panellists were more likely to use this service with 87% of 55-64 year olds using this service as opposed to 62% of 25-34 year olds. Panellists that live in the north of the city were most likely to use the service (83% indicated that they would use it) as opposed to 63% of panellists in the Central area.

Table 5: If you answered Yes to using the kerbside recycling or green waste collection service, what changes (if any) could be made to this service?

	Kerbside Recycling	Green Waste
a) Weekly collection of materials for recycling	196	80
b) More information on what you can recycle	198	48
c) More information on the benefits of recycling	107	48
d) Penalise residents who don't recycle	172	74
e) None	84	70

Table 5 shows that of the respondents who use the kerbside recycling or green waste collection; 198 would like more information on what you can recycle on the kerbside and 196 would like weekly collection of materials for kerbside recycling.

Other changes mentioned by respondents included:

- More items accepted for recycling and collection (18 comments)
- Weekly collection of recycled boxes (8)
- Fortnightly collections of recycled boxes (6)
- More information on what happens to items once they has been taken away (6)
- Require bigger boxes/bins for recycling (5)

- Different sections for sorting recycling into various components (4)
- Disposal of batteries (4)
- Change box to small bin (3)
- More communal (flat) recycling facilities (4)
- Incentives to be given for recycling (3)
- Better containers (3)
- Same day, co-ordinated collections for all recycled items (3)
- Consistent collection times (2)
- Must maintain the weekly collection of black bins (2)
- Home composting (2)
- Continue collection throughout the year (2)
- Collect at night
- Clearly specified collection times
- More information on why items are left uncollected
- More feedback as to amounts recycled

Table 6: If you answered No, why don't you use the service?

	Kerbside Recycling	Green Waste
a) I'm not offered this service	57	70
b) I don't know how to use it	4	6
c) Unreliable service	7	2
d) Too much trouble	12	13
e) Recycling makes no difference	3	1
f) Not enough room to store materials	20	10
g) I don't care about the environment	2	0
h) I don't have the containers	18	18
i) I don't want to wash items	11	2
j) Containers are too small/big	5	4
k) No incentives to do so	8	5
l) I use the Recycling Centres instead	33	18
m) My box/bag was lost/stolen	4	0

Table 6 shows that of the respondents who do not use either the kerbside recycling collection or green waste collection. The main reasons were 'I am not offered this service', 'I use the recycling centres instead', and 'Not enough room to store materials'.

Other reasons why respondents don't use the service included:

- Have a compost heap (11 comments)
- Live in a flat (6)
- No garden (4)
- Disabled and therefore have trouble walking (3)
- Street is untidy on recycling days (2)
- No material for green waste (2)
- Not enough green waste (2)
- Don't have a car (2)
- Collection day is not suitable
- Too inconvenient

- Recycle much more than I can put in the containers provided
- No room for containers

Table 7: What would encourage you to use the service?

	Kerbside Recycling	Green Waste
a) More reliable service	29	12
b) More information on what you can recycle	41	18
c) More information on the benefits of recycling	27	17
d) Weekly collection of materials for recycling	71	30
e) Risk of financial penalties for not participating	27	16
f) Nothing	12	13
g) Different containers	30	12
h) Financial incentives	20	10
i) Don't Know	8	6

Table 7 shows that panellists would be encouraged to use the kerbside recycling service if there were: weekly collection of materials for recycling (71) and more information on what you can recycle (41). While respondents would be encouraged to use the green waste services if it were a more reliable service (12) and if there were weekly collections of materials for recycling (30).

Other methods to encourage use of the service suggested by panellists included:

- Availability of the service (11 comments)
- Smaller bins (3)
- Community bins (2)
- Recycling bins instead of boxes
- Weekly pick-ups
- Collections at night
- Consistent collection times
- Communal bins
- Convenient/local recycling bins

Table 8: How do you receive, and how would you prefer to receive, information on recycling and waste prevention issues?

	How I receive	Prefer to receive
a) Billboard posters	63	35
b) Bus shelter posters	50	49
c) Door to door visits	6	24
d) Email	12	54
e) Events/roadshows	28	41
f) Friends, neighbours, relatives	48	7
g) Information children receive via school	35	30
h) Internet articles	18	31
i) Leaflets	234	43
j) Newspaper adverts	154	59
k) Newspaper articles	138	53
l) Radio adverts	43	37
m) Telephone helpline	12	22
n) TV advertising	97	53

Table 8 details how respondents receive and how respondents would prefer to receive information on recycling and waste prevention issues. It shows that 234 respondents receive information through leaflets, 154 through newspaper articles and 138 through newspaper articles. Respondents would prefer to receive information through newspaper adverts (59), newspaper articles (53) and TV advertising (53).

Table 9: How well do you think Aberdeen City Council informs you about the following issues?

	Very Poor	2	3	4	5	6	Very Well
a) Waste prevention	31	51	80	162	125	78	55
b) Reuse practices	68	122	110	123	84	41	33
c) The range of materials we collect for recycling	29	58	104	141	124	73	50
d) Home composting	43	72	95	116	107	71	42

Table 9 shows how well respondents think Aberdeen City Council informs them about waste issues. This shows that the highest number of panellists selected option 4 for each of the issues which shows that they think that Aberdeen City Council performs average in informing people about the issues.

Panellists were asked what steps that they would like to see Aberdeen City Council take to reduce the amount of household waste that is sent to landfill. The most popular responses were give more information on HOW to minimise waste, give more information on WHAT you can recycle, offer a weekly collection of materials for recycling and dispose of waste through an 'Energy for Waste' facility.

Other steps suggested by respondents included:

- Encourage retailers/manufacturers to reduce packaging (12 comments)
- Incentives for those who recycle (5)
- Collection and recycling of plastic waste (4)
- Recycling facilities provided to all across the city (3)
- Provide information on what you can recycle (2)
- Larger containers for recycling (2)
- Weekly collection
- Better information on how to dispose of kitchen waste
- Cut down on the use of plastic bags
- Build an incinerator
- Put a tax on plastic bags
- Alternatives to recycling
- More recycling points
- School trips to landfill sites
- Extend what can be recycled
- Provide more user friendly containers
- A refuse centre closer to the centre

Figure 9: Do you think Aberdeen City Council should continue to offer a collection of plastic bottles via the kerbside recycling collection service?
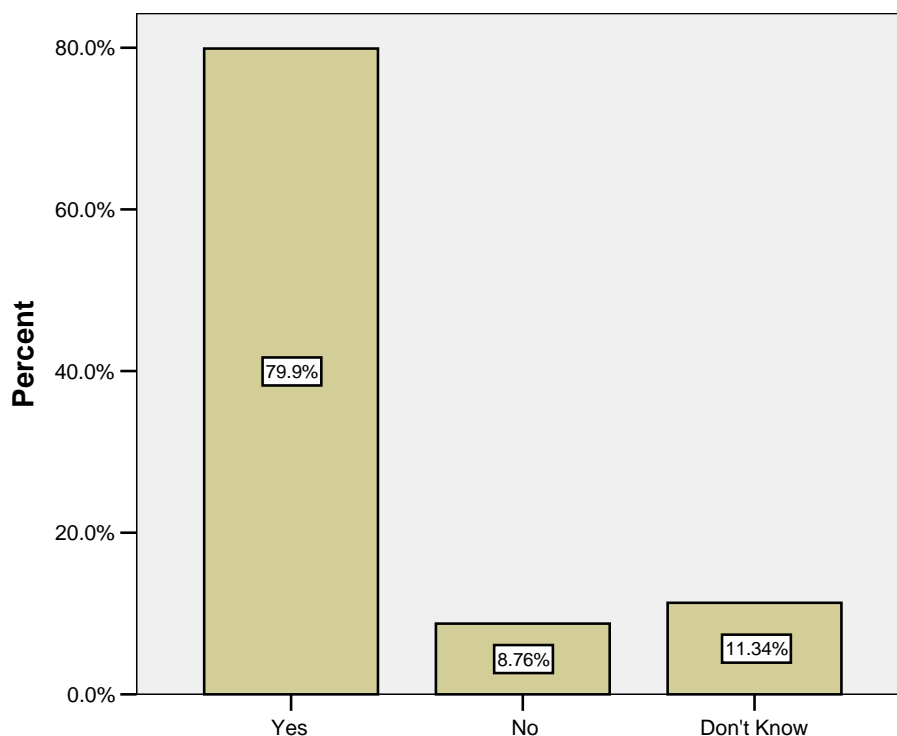
Figure 9 shows that the majority (80%) of the panellists think Aberdeen City Council should continue to offer a collection of plastic bottles via the kerbside recycling collection service.

Figure 10: Do you use a home compost unit or green cone waste digester to recycle your kitchen and garden waste?
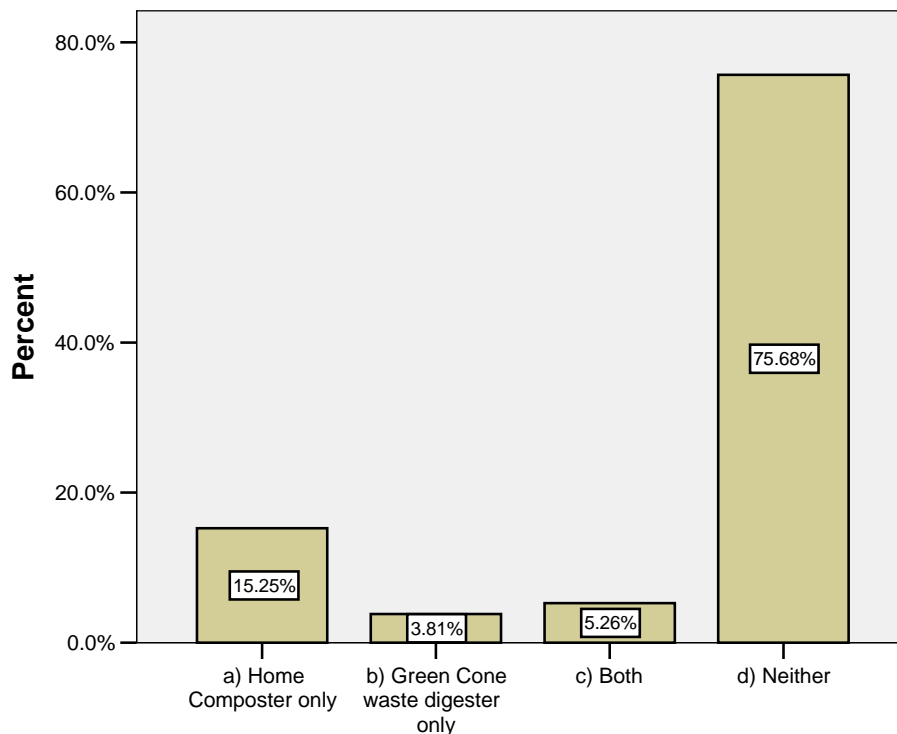
Figure 10 shows that the majority (76%) of panellists use neither a home compost unit or green cone waste digester to recycle their kitchen or garden waste and approximately 5% use both.

Respondents were asked why they do not use either facility. A summary of the responses is listed below:

- Live in a flat /sheltered accommodation (35 comments)
- No garden (33)
- Have no information about either facility (33)
- Produce only a small amount of waste (28)
- Not enough space, small garden (26)
- Was not aware of their availability (24)
- Nowhere to store one (20)
- Have my own compost facility (12)
- Don't know where to obtain one from (10)
- Never been offered one (10)
- No use for compost (9)
- Haven't got round to getting one yet (8)
- The cost of buying one (7)
- Smell/odour (7)
- Don't have the knowledge required to manage composter (6)
- Tried, but there were lots of flies/vermin (6)
- Use brown, garden bin (4)
- Don't how much they cost (4)
- No time (4)
- Green cone too large (4)
- Not able to dig the garden (4)

- Afraid it will attract vermin (4)
- Have no grass (3)
- Too difficult (3)
- Laziness (2)
- Not convinced of usefulness

Table 10: How do you think we should promote the use of home compost units and green cone waste digesters to residents?

	Number
a) Events	195
b) Internet adverts	53
c) Leaflets through the door	373
d) Outdoor posters	167
e) Newspaper adverts	293
f) Television adverts	180

Table 10 shows the most popular methods that respondents think should be used to promote the use of home compost and green cone waste. These were: Leaflets through the door (373) Newspaper adverts (293) and Events (195).

Other promotional methods mentioned by respondents included:

- Provide free units (10 comments)
- Use local press/radio (7)
- Information to schools (5)
- Door to door advice (4)
- Offer discounted units (3)
- Distribute the compost (2)
- Supply small units free (2)
- Local events (2)
- Get garden centres involved (2)
- Letter to households
- Bus stop posters
- Make it compulsory
- Increase knowledge

Panellists were asked if Aberdeen City Council could offer the collection of one additional material for recycling what would it be? The responses are summarised below:

- Clothing/Textiles (92 comments)
- All plastics (65)
- Used batteries (27)
- Carrier bags (16)
- Electrical goods (15)
- Wood/Furniture (13)
- Kitchen waste (8)
- Cardboard (8)
- Scrap Metal (6)

- White goods (6)
- Aluminium/tin cans (5)
- Household goods (5)
- Garden waste (3)
- Glass (3)
- Paint tins (3)
- Chemical substances
- Tyres
- Leaves
- Soil and stones
- Used nappies

Service Response

The Waste Team are delighted to note that the majority of respondents use the kerbside recycling and garden waste collection services, and that the main barrier to participation is purely that the services are not offered in all areas.

We were interested to note that respondents asked for a weekly collection of recyclate. Introducing such a service would allow us to move to an alternate weekly collection of refuse and garden waste to encourage more residents to participate in the services. We are also interested to note that a high proportion of respondents were in favour of penalising residents who don't recycle. This option cannot be employed until national legislation allows us to do so, and a decision of this is expected from Central Government shortly.

The Team are surprised to note that respondents would prefer to receive information on recycling and waste minimisation via press articles and bus shelter adverts rather than the regular updated inserts and collection calendars for their Waste Aware Guide. These comments will be considered by the Waste Marketing Officer for future campaign materials.

With regard to the kerbside collection of plastic bottles for recycling, the Waste Team note that the majority of respondents would prefer Aberdeen City Council to continue to offer this service. The Waste Team are disappointed that the suspension of a service that barely contributes to our recycling targets but constitutes a very high proportion of the costs of running the kerbside recycling collection service, and would encourage waste minimisation measures by householders cannot be considered at this time.

The Waste Team are delighted to note that nearly 25% of respondents use a compost unit, although the main barrier to participation is a lack of suitable garden space. Although Panel members stated that they would prefer not to receive information on waste minimisation and recycling via leaflets, this was the preferred method of receiving information on home composting, and this method, along with newspaper adverts may be used to promote the services in the future.

When asked for details of an additional item that should be collected for recycling, the majority of respondents suggested textiles. Although textile banks are widely available at Recycling Centres and Points across the City, Aberdeen City Council is currently working on proposals to offer a monthly kerbside collection of textiles along with a partner organisation. Details of this new service will be released in the New Year.

Respondents may also like to note that household battery recycling banks are available at all four Recycling Centres – Greenbank Crescent in East Tullos, Pitmedden Road in Dyce, Perwinnes Moss on Scotstown Road and Sclattie Depot on Bankhead Avenue. The Centres are open Monday-Friday 10am to 4.45pm and Saturday and Sunday 9am to 4.45pm and closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Take-back service are also offered by a number of major retailers in the City and residents are advised to enquire in-store when they purchase batteries for further advice. Information of the kerbside recycling of batteries will also be presented to Members via the Environment and Infrastructure Committee next year. Carrier bag recycling facilities are also offered by the major supermarkets.

ABERDEEN'S IMAGE

Trees

Trees and woodlands are an integral part of our natural heritage. Their presence can gave a significant impact on our environment quality and contribute to the attractiveness, beauty and character of Aberdeen.

Figure 11: Do you think that trees make up an important part of the landscape of Aberdeen?
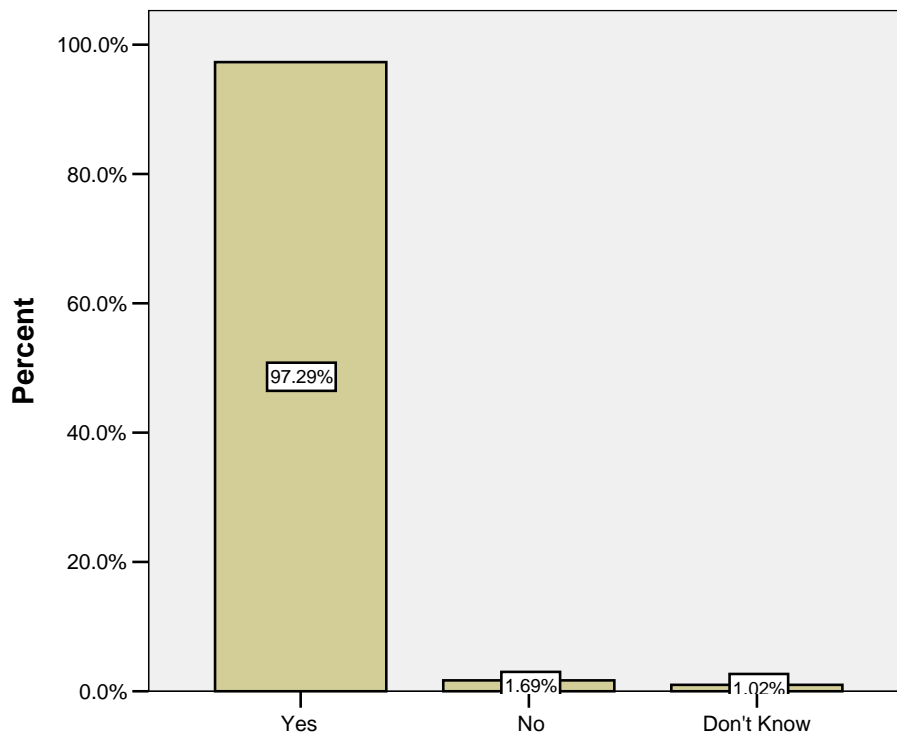
Figure 11 shows that almost all respondents (97%) stated they think that trees make up an important part of the landscape of Aberdeen.

Of the respondents who stated 'no' a summary of there responses as to why are listed below:

- Type of trees planted are inappropriate (5 comments)
- Many trees are overgrown (4)
- Tree roots are breaking up the pavement surface (3)
- There are not enough places to plant trees (3)
- Limited places with trees in the city (2)
- Some trees obscure light (2)
- Trees are often vandalised (2)
- Not as prominent as flowers

Figure 12: Should more trees be planted in Aberdeen?
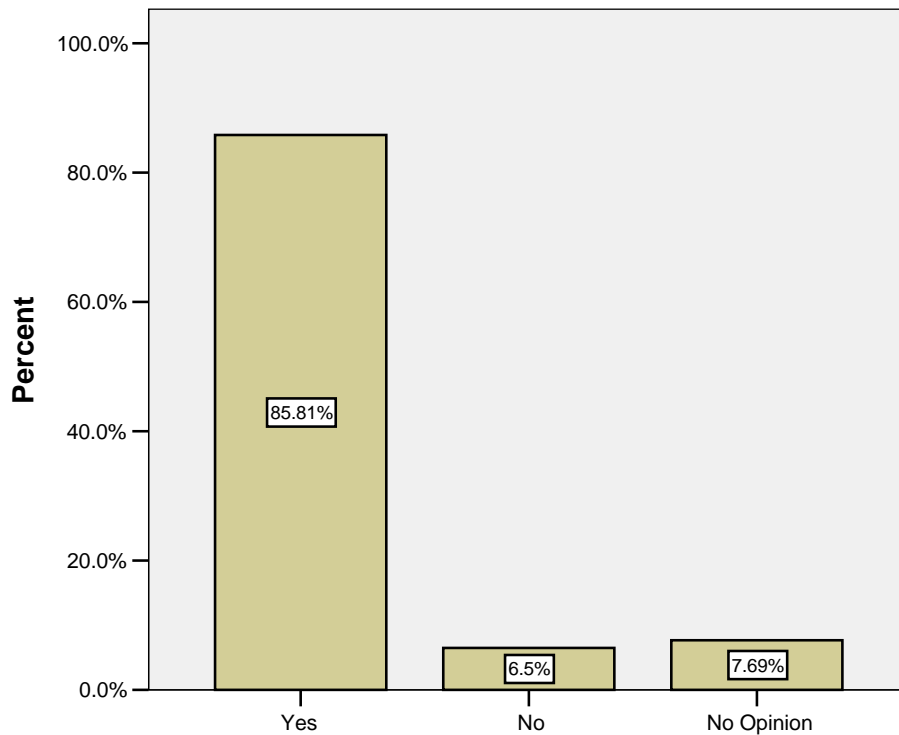
Figure 12 shows that approximately 86% of respondents thought that more trees should be planted in Aberdeen.

Table 11: Most popular places for trees to be planted

	Number
a) Car parks	218
b) Open spaces	430
c) Parks and gardens	383
d) Pavements	185
e) Street verges	238

Table 11 shows that the most popular places respondents would like trees to be planted were: Open spaces (430 respondents), Parks and Gardens (383 respondents) and Street verges (238).

Other places suggested by respondents included:

- Housing developments/estates (5 comments)
- Industrial estates (4)
- Replace trees which have been cut down (3)
- Waste ground (2)
- Everywhere (2)
- School grounds (2)
- Anywhere appropriate
- In the middle of roads
- Council premises
- Areas leading into the city
- City centre

- Wet/flooding areas
- Away from buildings and roads
- River banks

Table 12: When new trees are to be planted should they be from Scotland (native species) or from other countries (non-native species)?

	Number	Percentage
a) Non native species	8	1.4%
b) Native species	220	37.2%
c) Mixture of non-native and native species	278	47.0%
d) Don't mind/Don't know	85	14.4%

Table 12 shows that 278 respondents state new trees should come from a mixture of non-native and native species, 220 believed they should be from native species and 8 state new trees should come from non-native species.

Figure 13: Do you think there should be community involvement in the preservation, maintenance and planting of trees and woodlands within the city?
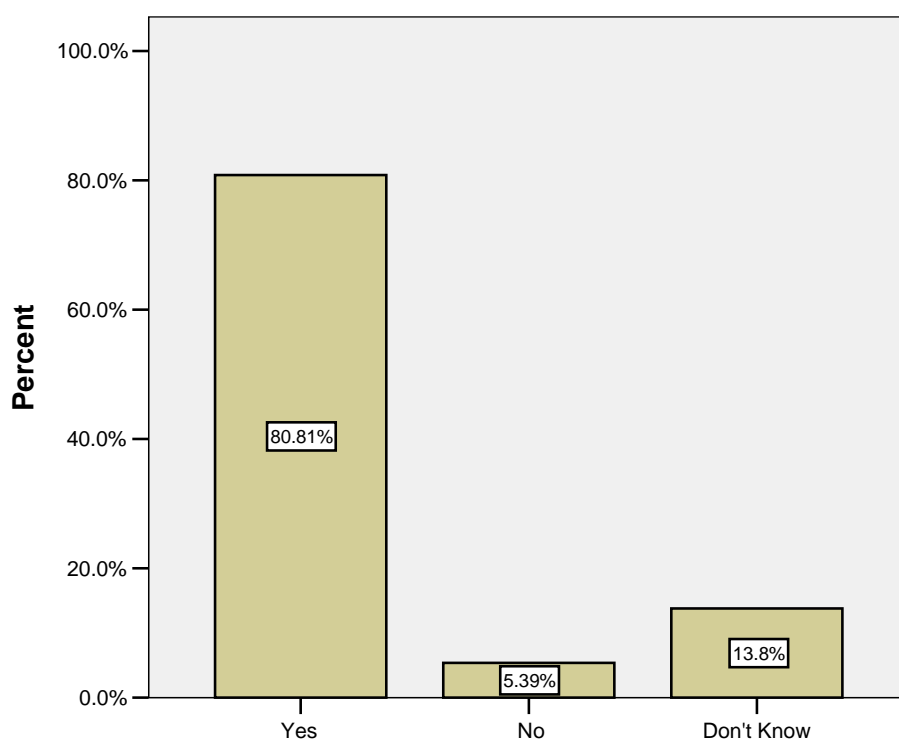

Figure 13 shows that the majority of panellists (81%) think there should be community involvement in the preservation, maintenance and planting of trees and woodlands within the city.

Figure 14: As a general rule, do you think large mature trees or 'Green Monuments' of important heritage value should be given the same protection as Listed Buildings in Aberdeen?
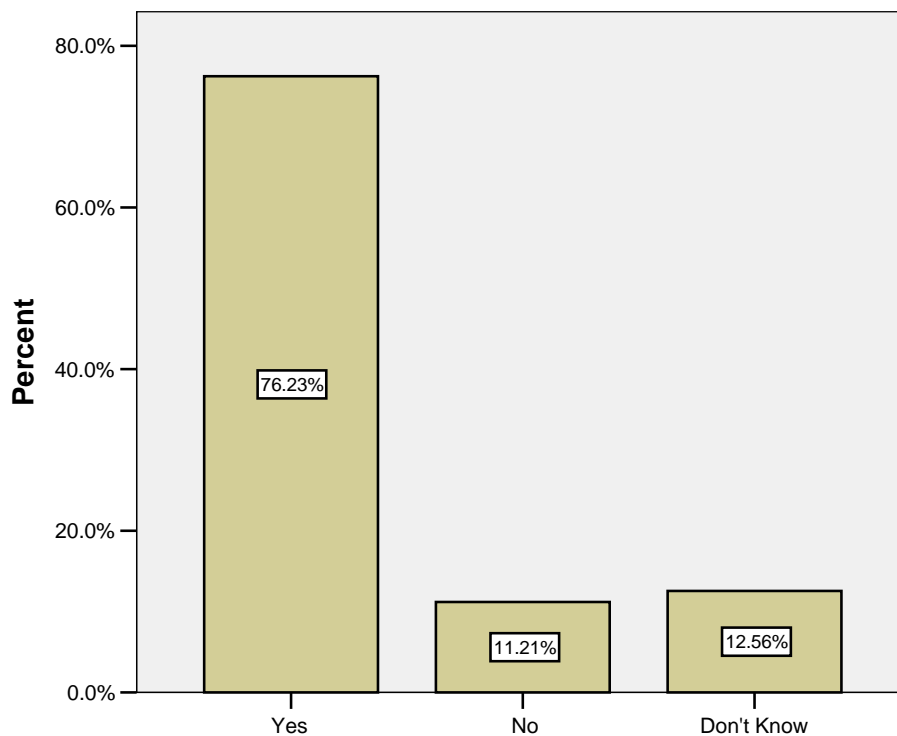
Figure 14 shows that the majority of respondents (76%) thought that 'Green Monuments' of important heritage value should be given the same protection as listed buildings in Aberdeen, while 11% did not.

Panellists were asked what should or could be done to preserve these 'Green Monuments' for future generations. The responses are summarised below:

- Plaque beside tree stating its history and why it is a monument (36 comments)
- Regular maintenance and pruning of trees (34)
- Preservation orders (27)
- Raise awareness/provide information (24)
- Strict planning rules (19)
- Fence them off (18)
- Education (15)
- Protect from vandalism (15)
- Tree surgeon (14)
- Provide information to school children (14)
- High penalties for offences (9)
- Introduce legislation (9)
- Put guards around each green monument (6)
- Nothing (5)
- Yearly health check (5)
- School sponsorship (4)
- Produce a local media campaign informing the public (4)
- Introduce a tree trail in the city (4)

- Convert the surrounding area into mini parks with seating areas (4)
- Increase community involvement (3)
- Produce leaflets detailing the importance of the Green Monuments (3)
- Make the trees a focus using lights (2)
- Adoption schemes (2)
- Council should maintain them (2)
- Creation of more organisations/groups to protect trees (2)

Service Response

As a service we are pleased with the responses to the questions regarding Aberdeen's image in relation to trees. The responses are very interesting and give a good indication as to how the people of Aberdeen feel about trees in their urban environment. There is surprise to the extent of the positive responses to the questions. It was expected that there would be a number of negative responses to many of the questions, the reasons given for the negative responses as received, were expected. What would have been interesting would be to know the number of people that responded positively, who own trees. We often come into contact with people who do not own trees but would like to see more within city. Whereas we also come across people who own trees, but would like to see less trees in there garden and neighbourhood because they are aware of the cost implications of managing their own trees.

These responses will go a long way to supporting the need for an Aberdeen Woodland/Forest/Tree Strategy. They appear to show that the people of Aberdeen care about trees and wish to be involved in the care, protection and maintenance of trees within their locality. Currently in Aberdeen there is a branch of the national organised Tree Warden Scheme that encourages local volunteer involvement in the management and care of their trees and woodlands. This information will help to demonstrate the need for a full time post to be set up within Aberdeen City Council to support the Tree Warden Scheme.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Doorstep Crime

Doorstep crime is a phrase used to describe crimes committed by people who attempt to take advantage of, predominantly older, residents by calling unannounced at their home (cold calling). Typically, the caller will try to persuade the resident to accept their offer of goods or services for which a wholly unacceptable and usually very high charge is made. Sometimes the caller, having "tricked" their way into a resident's home, will simply steal money or property whilst the householder's attention is diverted.

Education of potential victims is a typical and effective means of combating this type of crime, often by means of leaflet drops to residents' homes and stories in the local media. In addition, as an accompaniment to these measures, some local authority areas have allowed 'No Cold Caller Zone' signs to be displayed on street furniture (e.g. lamp) in order to deter potential criminals.

Figure 15: Do you think that displaying 'No Cold Caller Zone' signs on street furniture in Aberdeen would be an effective means of combating doorstep crime?
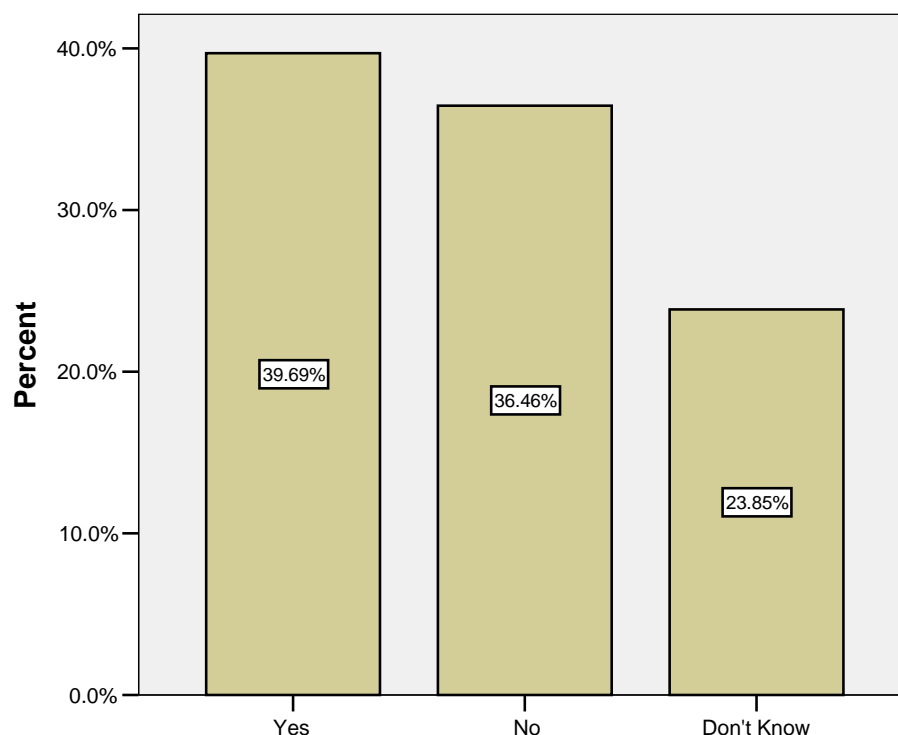

Figure 15 shows that approximately 40% of respondents thought that displaying 'No Cold Caller Zone' signs would be an effective means of combating doorstep crime, while 36% did not. Support was slightly higher amongst older panellists and higher amongst male panellists than female panellists.

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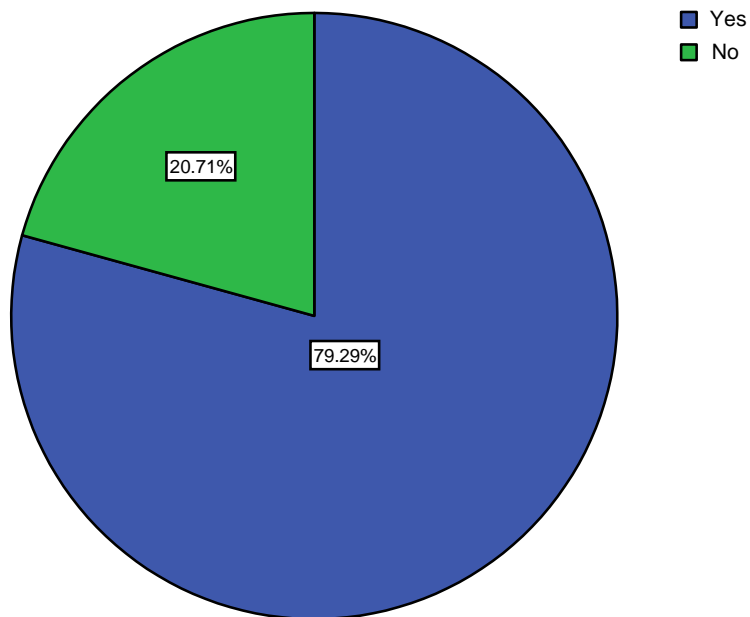**Figure 16: Would you be happy to have such signs displayed in your area?**

Figure 16 shows that the majority, (79%) of panellists would be happy to have such signs displayed in their area, while 21% would not. When results were broken down by neighbourhood the numbers were too small to be significant but can be provided if requested.

Service Response

As the majority of panellists have indicated that they would be happy to have 'No Cold Caller Zone' signs displayed in their area and because a generally positive response to the question, 'Do you think that displaying 'No Cold Caller Zone' signs on street furniture in Aberdeen would be an effective means of combating doorstep crime?' has been received, it is intended to progress this matter further with a view to trialling such zones within Aberdeen. The officer in charge is now making enquiries elsewhere in order to learn from the experience of others in the implementation of such zones.

Parking Patrols

The Council is looking to increase parking patrols throughout the city dealing with street parking. This will mean that patrols are in progress for 20 out of 24 hours, seven days a week.

Figure 17: Do you think that this length of enforcement is required?
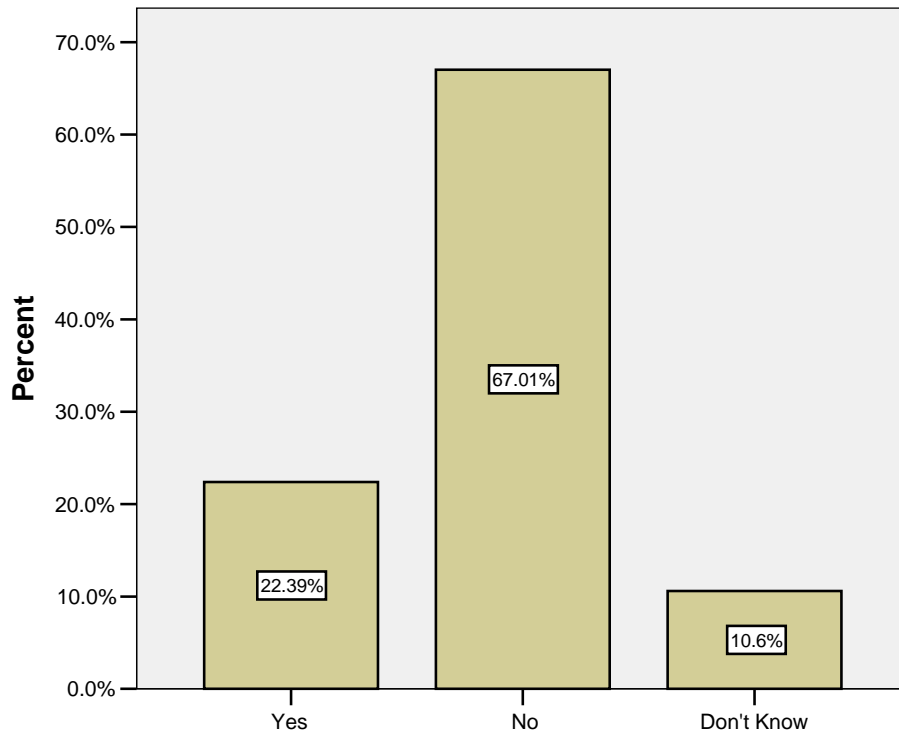

Figure 17 shows that 67% of panellists do not think that this length of enforcement is required.

Figure 18: Do you think that additional patrolling will ease congestion throughout the city?
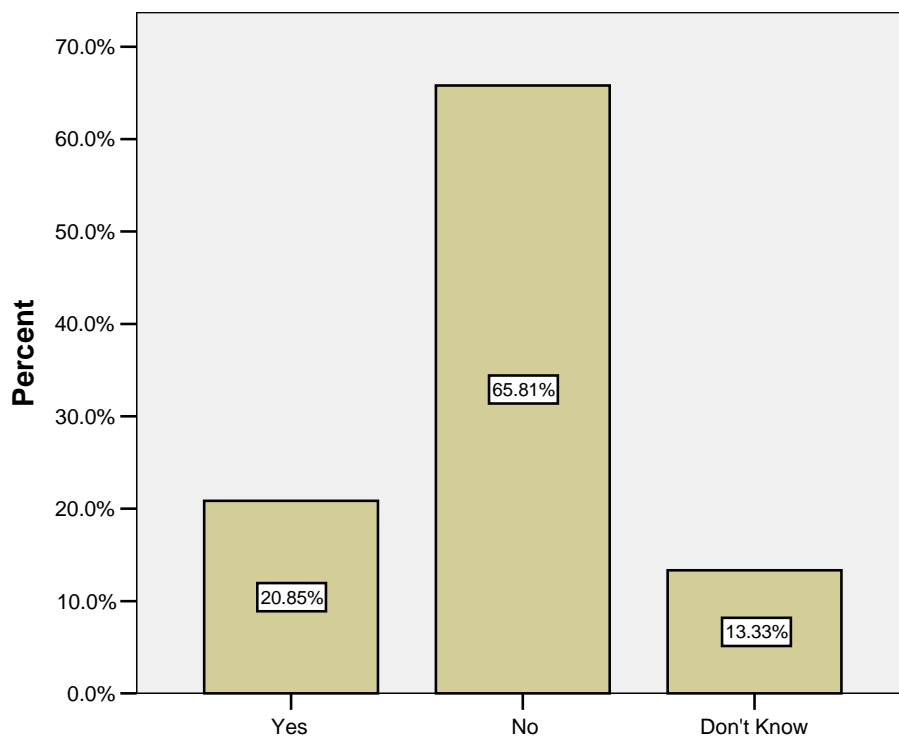
Figure 18 shows that approximately 66% of panellists think that additional patrolling will not ease congestion throughout the city, while 21% think that it will ease congestion.

Service Response

A recent report from the Environmental and Infrastructure Committee approved a pilot scheme to extend parking provision for a trial period of three months. Feedback from the Evening Express indicated that most responses were in favour of increasing patrols in the city.

It is therefore surprising to note that 67% of panellists do not think that the level of enforcement is required; whilst 66% do not believe it will ease congestion throughout the city. That being said it will provide a basis for the views of stakeholders when reporting to Committee at a future date.

Neighbourhood Community Action Plans

The first Neighbourhood Community Action Plans for the City's 37 Neighbourhoods were produced in May 2006. These plans highlight local issues and priorities within a specific Neighbourhood, as identified by those living in the Neighbourhood. They also explain what Community Planning Partners are doing to address these issues and priorities. Neighbourhood Community Action Plans can be found in Community Centres, Dentists, Health Centres, Doctors Surgeries, Post Offices, in Central and Local Libraries and the home library service and on the Community Planning website (www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk)

Figure 19: Have you heard of Neighbourhood Community Action Plans?
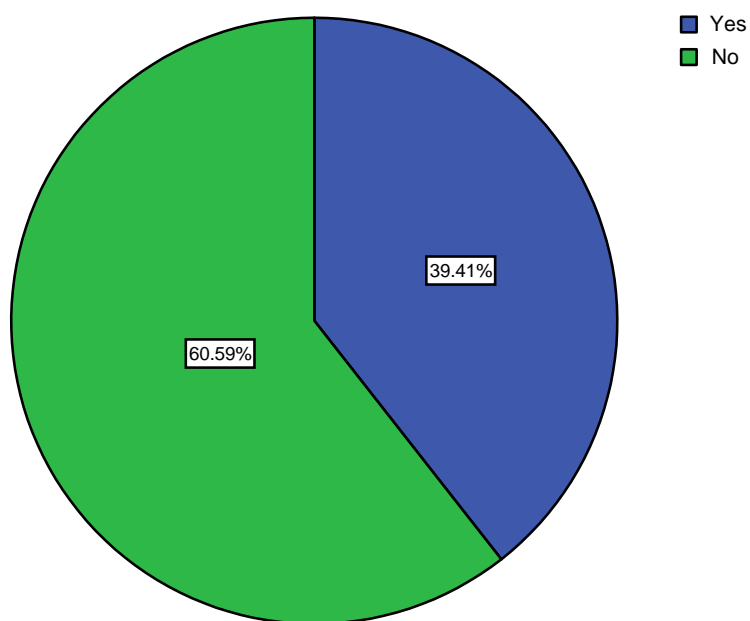
Figure 19 shows that the majority of respondents, approximately 61% had not heard of Neighbourhood Community Action Plans.

Figure 20: Have you looked at the plan that relates to your neighbourhood?
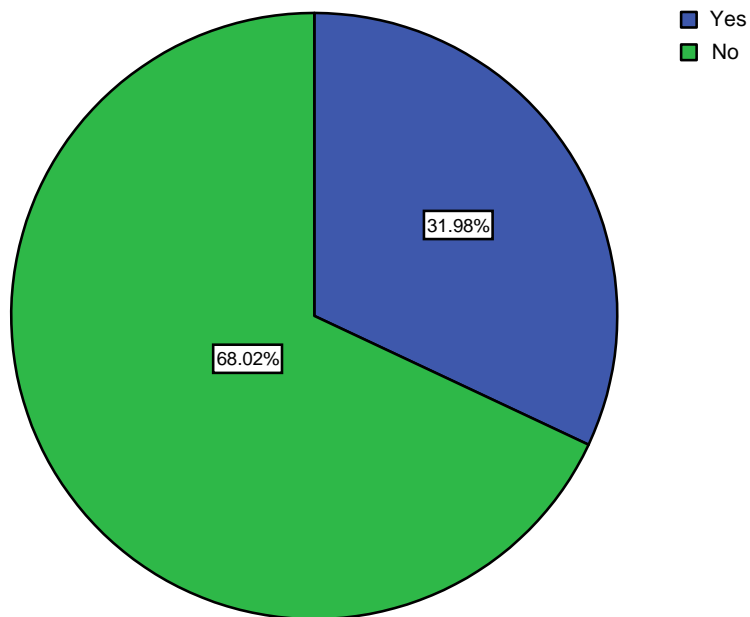
Figure 20 shows that of panellists that have heard of the Neighbourhood Community Action Plans the majority, (68%) had not looked at the plan which relates to their neighbourhood.

Figure 21: If Yes, on a scale of 1-10, how useful did you find the plan?
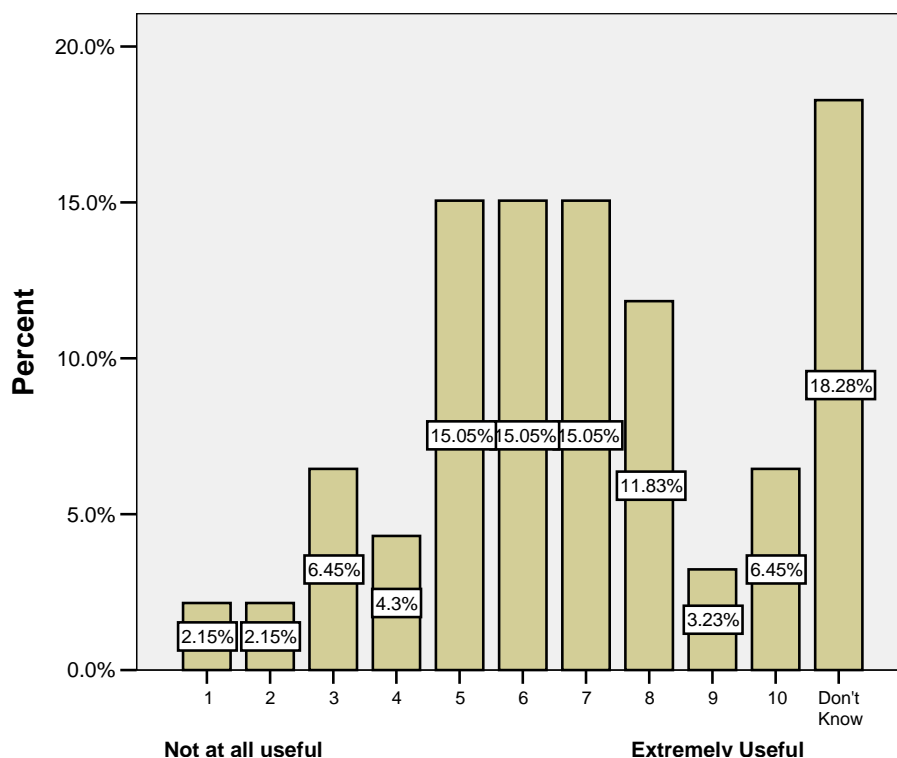
Figure 21 shows of the respondents who had looked at a plan on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being not useful and 10 being very useful the average result

of all respondents was 7.03. Please note that this only represents the views of 106 panellists as knowledge and use of the plan was low amongst panellists.

Respondents were asked to state a reason if they thought the plan was not useful. A summary of responses are listed below:

- Failure to take notice of residents opinions (4 comments)
- Plans need to be put into action (3)
- Consultation was not widespread
- Plans were too vague
- There were no dates of completion
- Cause for more vandalism
- Print too small

Figure 22: Did the plan make it clear who was responsible for carrying out any proposed actions?
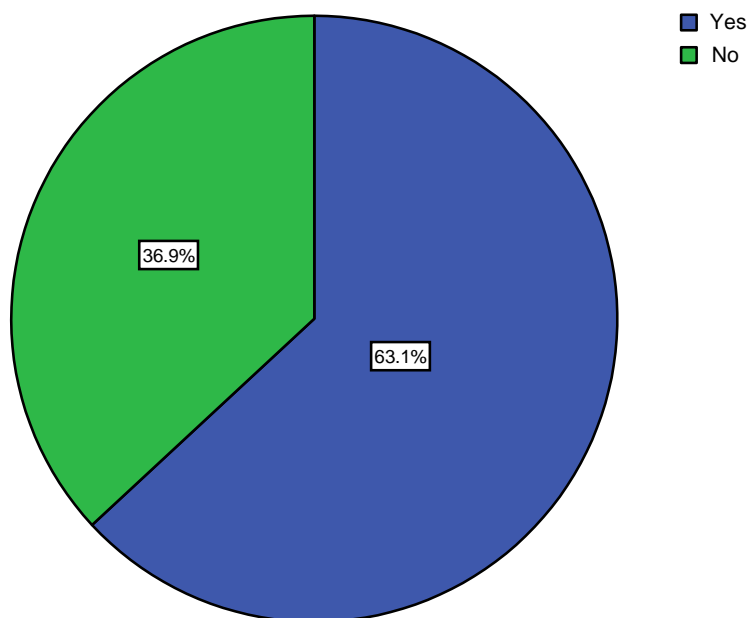
Figure 22 shows that the majority of respondents (63.1%) stated that the plan made it clear who was responsible for carrying out any proposed actions.

Figure 23: Do you think you have a role in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plan that has been published for your area?

Figure 23 shows that approximately 46% of panellists believed that they have a small role in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plan published for their area. A further 13% think they have a significant role.

Figure 24: Are you aware of how to get local issues included in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plan Process?
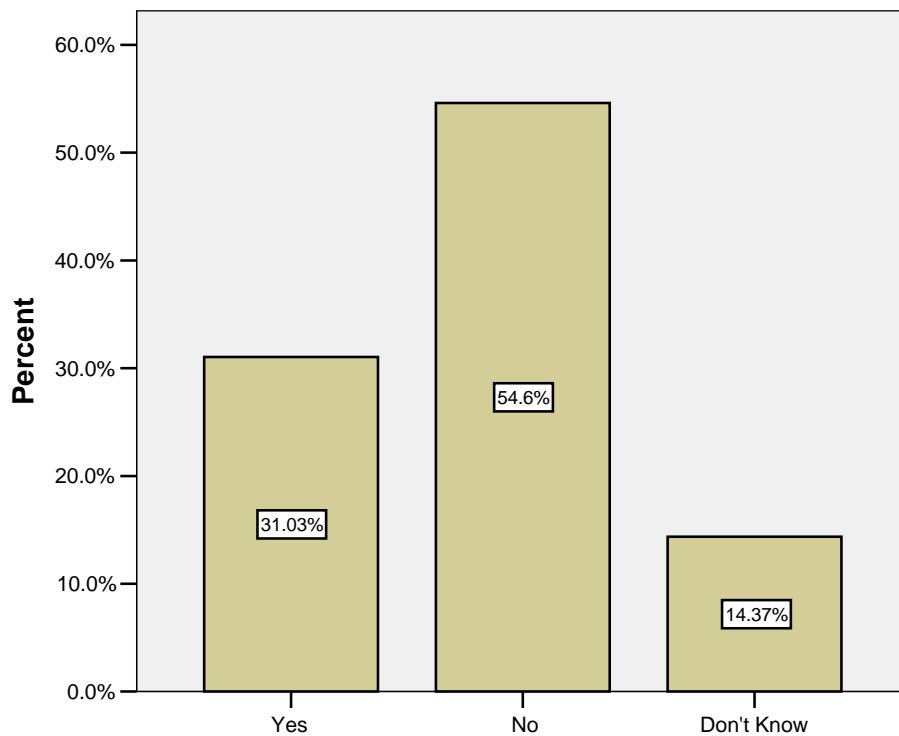
Figure 24 shows that the majority of respondents (54.6%) are not aware of how to get local issues included in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plan Process.

Figure 25: After reading the plan, are you now more likely to get involved in the neighbourhood planning process?
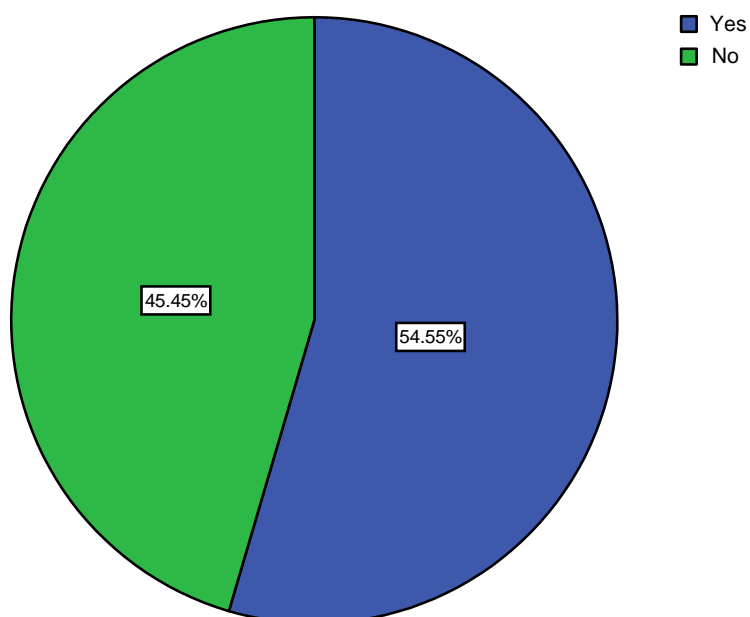
Figure 25 shows that the majority of respondents (approximately 55%) are now more likely to get involved in the neighbourhood planning process having read the plan.

Service Response

Figure 19 shows that the majority of respondents, approximately 61% had not heard of Neighbourhood Community Action Plans (NCAPs). There is a need to better promote NCAPs and the neighbourhood planning process particularly to those that are unaware and currently not community activists.

Figure 20 shows that of panellists that have heard of the Neighbourhood Community Action Plans the majority, (68%) had not looked at the plan which relates to their neighbourhood. Only 30% of those that are aware of the NCAPs have looked at their local one. As only 40% have heard of NCAPs then only 12% of the citizens have actually looked at their local plan. We would hope that more publicity would mean more community involvement and therefore more people looking at the plan. We need to find out why people aren't looking at their local plan. Perhaps this is a question for a future panel?

Figure 21 shows of the respondents who had looked at a plan on a scale of 1-10 the average result of all respondents was 7.03. Please note that this only represents the views of 106 panellists as knowledge and use of the plan was low amongst panellists. It is encouraging that two thirds of those that looked at the plans found them useful.

To address the respondents comments as to why the plans weren't useful;

Better publicity as mentioned above and community involvement should address:

- Failure to take notice of residents opinions (4 comments)
- Plans need to be put into action (3)
- Consultation was not widespread
- Plans were too vague

Neighbourhood Community Planning Officers (NCPOs) will ensure that all agreed actions will have a specific timescale in the NCAP and that through the service teams that the responsible person should ensure these timescales are adhered to. This should address:

- There were no dates of completion

We are unsure of the context and meaning of the comment:

- Cause for more vandalism

Copies of the plan are available in different formats, including large print, which should address:
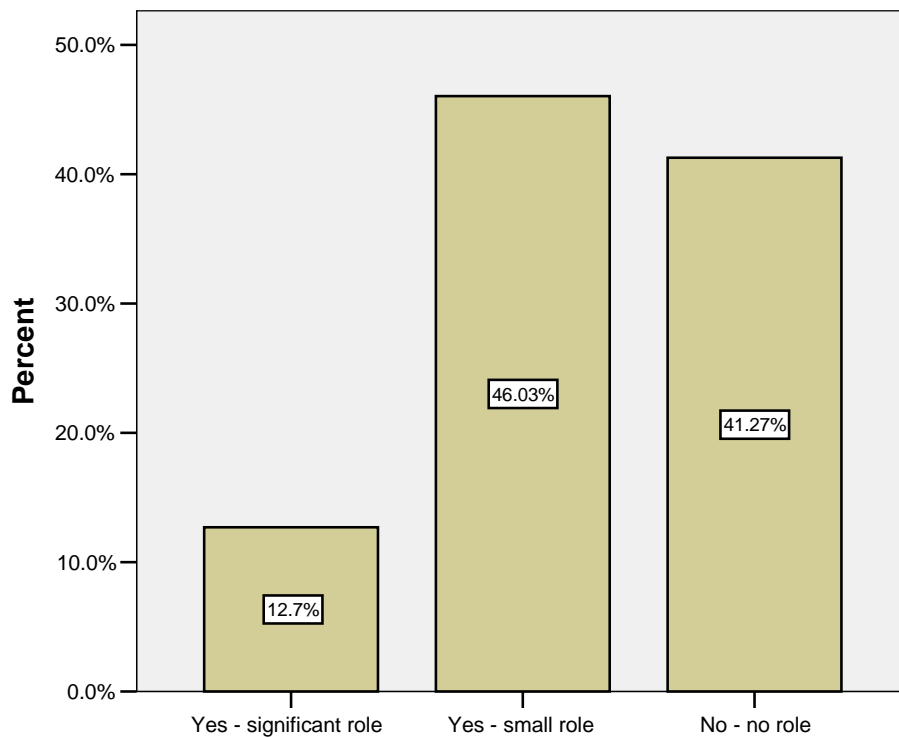
- Print too small

Figure 23 shows that approximately 46% of panellists believed that they have a small role in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plan published for their area. A further 13% believe they have a significant role. This is encouraging as the results show that just under 60% have a small or significant role in the Neighbourhood Planning and NCPOs will work to publicise the process and hopefully increase this involvement.

Figure 24 shows that the majority of respondents (54.6%) are not aware of how to get local issues included in the neighbourhood Community Action Plan Process. This again relates to publicising the whole process.

Figure 25 shows that the majority of respondents (approximately 55%) are now more likely to get involved in the neighbourhood planning process having read the plan. This is encouraging and we would like you to circulate our contact details to the panel.

Summary of Actions required:

- Publicising Neighbourhood Community Actions Plans and the Neighbourhood Planning Process, including how people can become involved.
- Neighbourhood Community Planning Officers (NCPOs) will undertake to look at ways of promoting neighbourhood planning including having clear web links on the home pages of all Community Planning partners.
- NCPOs to continue to develop the Local Community Networks and Neighbourhood Service Teams to ensure that local issues are identified and that these issues are actioned.
- Sonia Boyd to forward contact details of the NCPOs to the panellist, when feeding back, so that any of those interested in being involved can make contact with their local NCPOs.

iKiosks

In May 2006, iKiosks were installed at six sites in Aberdeen. Outdoor iKiosks are situated outside the Art Gallery, near Marks & Spencer, at the Music Hall and in the Castelgate. Two indoor single-screen kiosks are located at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and the Robert Gordon University's new sports complex. In late December, a further iKiosk will be available at Torry library.

iKiosks offer residents and tourists free and easy access to information about the city. Information found on the iKiosks comes from various sources, including Aberdeen City Council, who are leading the project, Grampian Police, NHS Grampian, The Robert Gordon University and Visit Scotland. All iKiosks are accessible to people with disabilities and help reduce the "digital divide" by giving everyone who uses public services instant access to information on a wide range of subjects. As the iKiosk Network develops, important notices from the Council, NHS Grampian and Grampian Police could be displayed in different languages.

Future iKiosk developments could include a link with the Council's Accord Smartcard, for example, 'topping up' the electronic purse held on the Accord card along with a credit card. Payment could also be made with the card for certain council services.

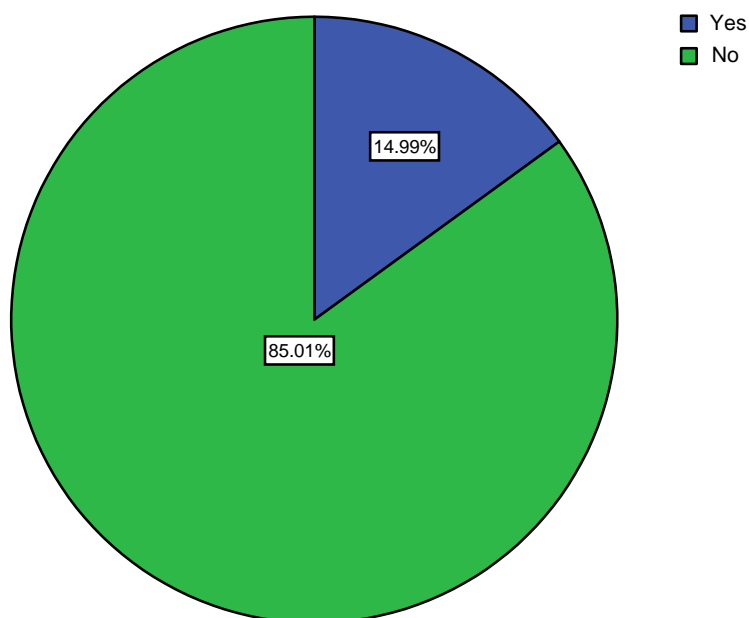**Figure 26: Have you ever used an iKiosk?**

Figure 26 shows that the majority of panellists, (approximately 85%) have never used an iKiosk. There were no significant differences between male and female panellists or by age.

Figure 27: If yes, on a scale of 1 to 7, how easy was it to use the iKiosk?
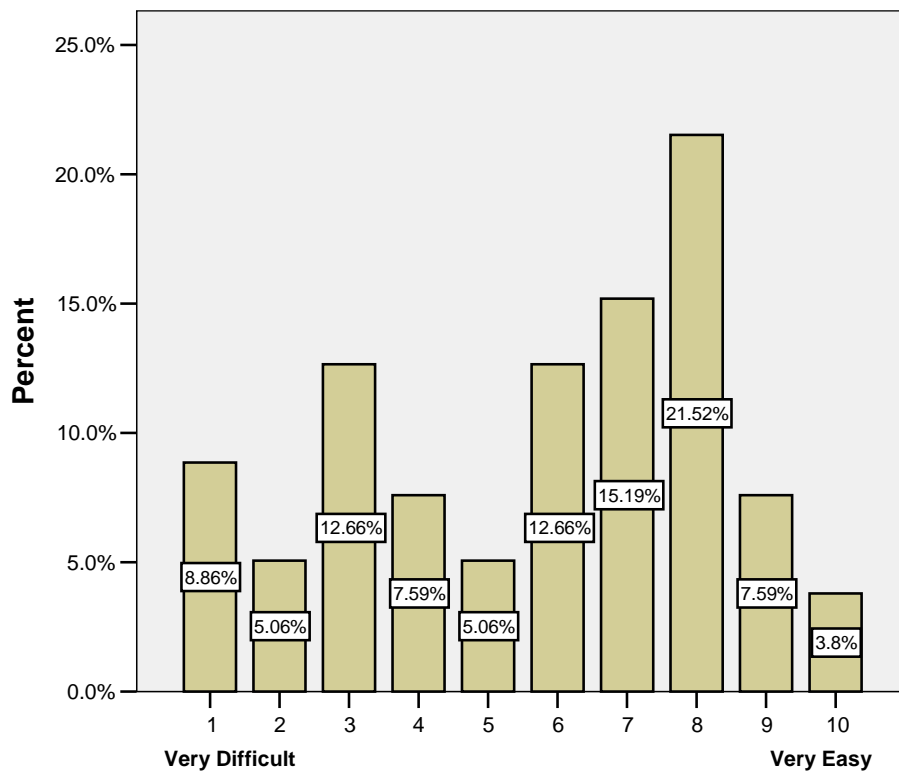

Figure 27 shows that of the respondents who had used the iKiosk, the mean of response of the ease of use of the iKiosk was 5.80 (on a scale of 1-10 where 1 represents 'very difficult' and 10 'very easy'). The most popular value selected was 8 (approximately 22% of panellists).

Table 13:Which of the following facilities do you think should be available on iKiosks?

	No		Yes	
	Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
a) Free Internet calls for emergency notification	2	3.3%	59	96.7%
b) Free Internet calls for information requests	5	12.5%	35	87.5%
c) On-line request forms	6	12.0%	44	88.0%
d) Credit or debit card payment options	6	26.1%	17	73.9%
e) Council's Accord Smartcard	3	8.6%	32	91.4%

Table 13 shows the facilities that panellists think should be available on the iKiosks. The facility that received the highest level of agreement, 96.7% was 'Free internet calls for emergency notification'.

Other suggestions for services available on the iKiosks included:

- Tourist information (2 comments)
- Report vandalism
- Information about local amenities

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Figure 28: Would you like to see information on the iKiosks available in more languages?
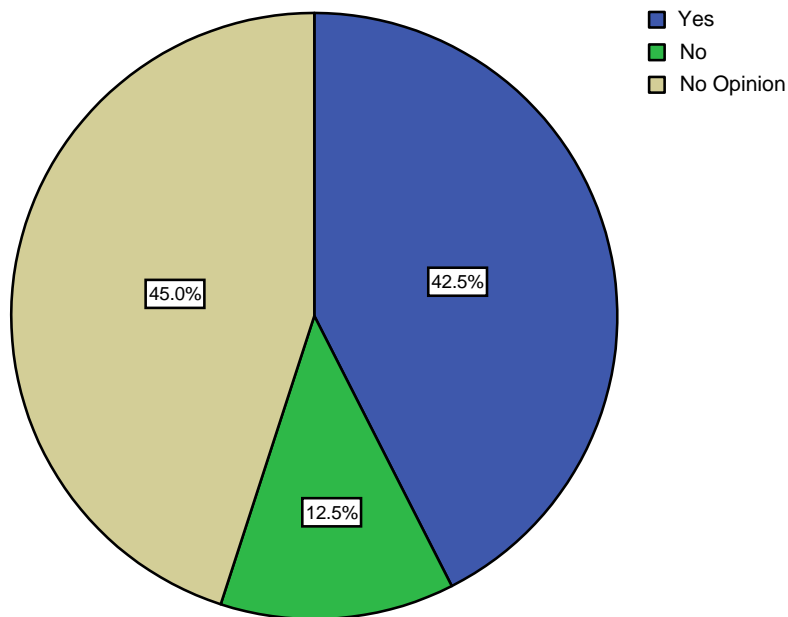
Figure 28 shows that of the respondents who have used an iKiosk, 42.5% would like to see information on the iKiosks in more languages. The highest percentage of respondents, 45% have no opinion.

A selection of the languages suggested by panellists are listed below:

- French (13 comments)
- Polish (12)
- German (11)
- Spanish (8)
- All European languages (5)
- All languages spoken by foreign people living in Aberdeen (4)
- Eastern European (3)
- Italian (3)
- Chinese (3)
- Arabic (2)
- Norwegian (2)
- As many as possible (2)
- Japanese
- Hindi
- Gujerati
- Romanian
- Russian
- Gaelic

Figure 29: Do you think that iKiosks should display adverts if they help to pay for additional iKiosks at no extra cost to the council?
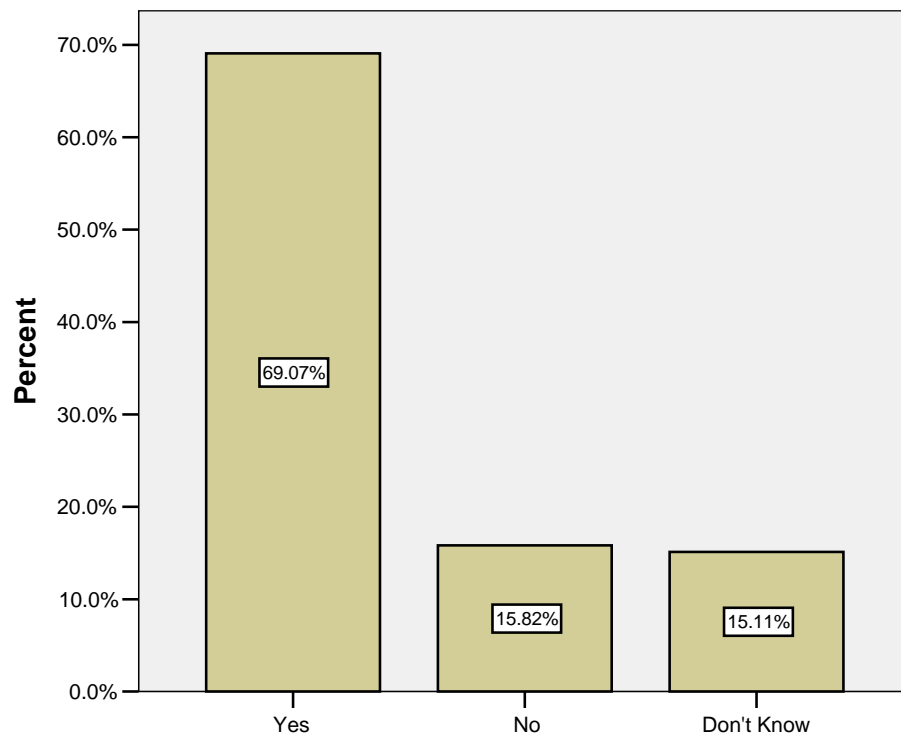
Figure 29 shows that the majority, approximately 69% of respondents, think that iKiosks should display adverts if they help to pay for additional iKiosks at no extra cost to the council.

Figure 30: Most iKiosks are currently outside. Would you like to see more iKiosks inside council offices or other public buildings?
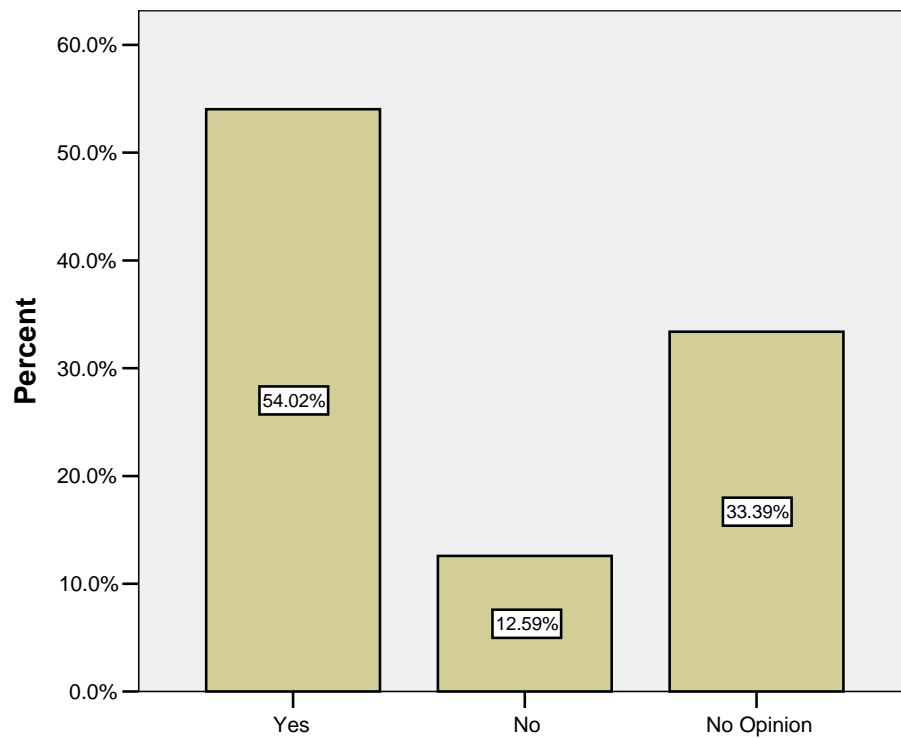

Figure 30 shows that the highest number of respondents, 54%, would like to see more iKiosks inside public buildings. Approximately 33% of respondents selected 'no opinion'.

Figure 31: Do you think there needs to be better signs on the top of iKiosks which can be seen from a distance, explaining their use more clearly?
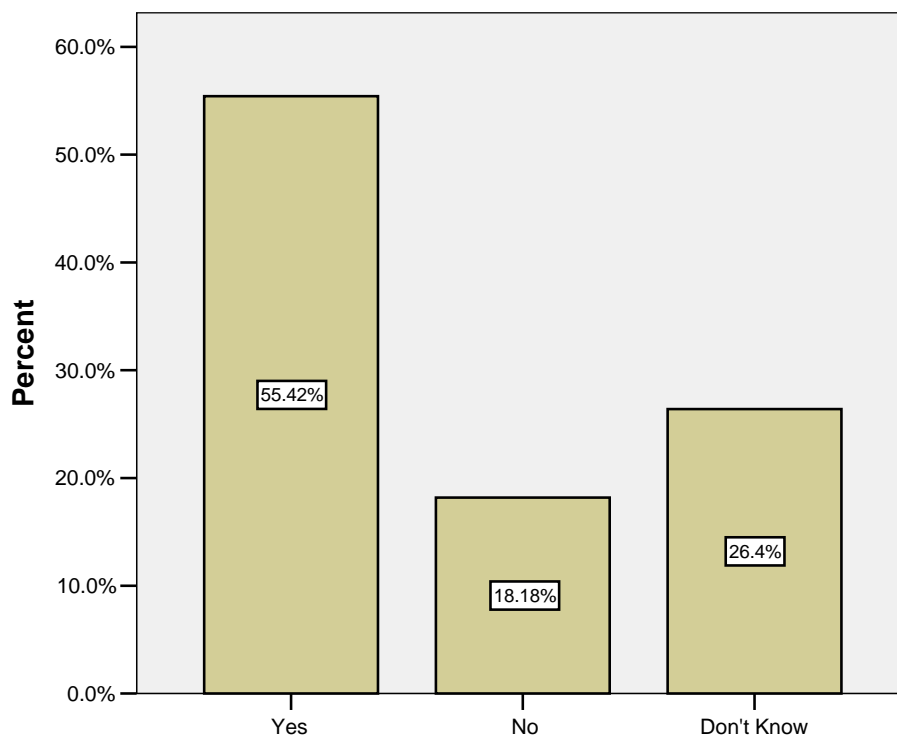

Figure 31 shows that the majority of respondents think there needs to be better signs on top of iKiosks which can be seen from a distance, explaining their use more clearly.

Service Response

The latest City Voice Questionnaire was certainly a thought provoking read. My first observation and surprise to some extent is that over 1/2 of those who said they did not use the Council's Website did so because they did not have access to a computer or Internet connection.

The iKiosk Network along with the Peoples Network within our Library system does and can help in bridging this "digital divide" between the 'haves' and 'have nots', as it provides (depending on location) 24/7 "free" Internet access, email, Video Mail and now Webcalls. I am not surprised that the "free" Webcalls received overwhelming endorsement and have been a success. My hope is to build on that and gain support for use among Council at least for emergence numbers and services e.g., homelessness. Other strategic partners have been more proactive and NHS24 are now considering it, along with the local radio station, airport and Samaritans etc.

However, only 15% of the respondents said that they has used an iKiosk. Therefore, I would like to see more "traditional" awareness raising events and presentations made to young, old, disabled and non-indigenous migrant groups and forums throughout the City and communities.

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Informally, I have begun this but would need support and a more structured programme for the New Year.

I am continually striving to ensure that those who interact with the iKiosks find them intuitive to use and carry away a good experience. I am hearten to see that around 2/3rds did but I am looking at ways to ensure that is not just maintained but improved and that the 1/3 who did not are converted.

The Questionnaire highlighted the need for more language conversation (Polish, Chinese, French, German etc.) of key, emergency messages and services. This confirms what I have already begun to put in place. Council Finance sub-committee recently approved funds to allow this. The Polish & Chinese communities will be the first to benefit.

Better (non-electronic) visual signage was also highlighted and this has been addressed and additional signage will appear on the iKiosk at Torry Library which was launched on Thursday 21st December. Thereafter the rest of the Network.

Finally, the most encouraging feedback is that there is a desire to see the iKiosk Network grow and that a majority would support an income generating model that included the use of sensitive advertising to help offset costs. This has been included in the iKiosk sustainability report requested by Council and my hope is that some concrete progress can be made with this in the New Year.

Aberdeen City Council Website

Aberdeen City Council's website (www.aberdeencity.gov.uk) was re-launched in May 2006. The new site is designed to be more accessible to citizens. It provides information on all council services, and in many cases is a way of accessing these services electronically.

We get many comments from people who visit the website but we also want to get more detailed feedback. This will allow us to establish what you want to see on the site and allows us to make improvements.

Figure 32: In the last 12 months have you visited Aberdeen City Council (ACC) website?
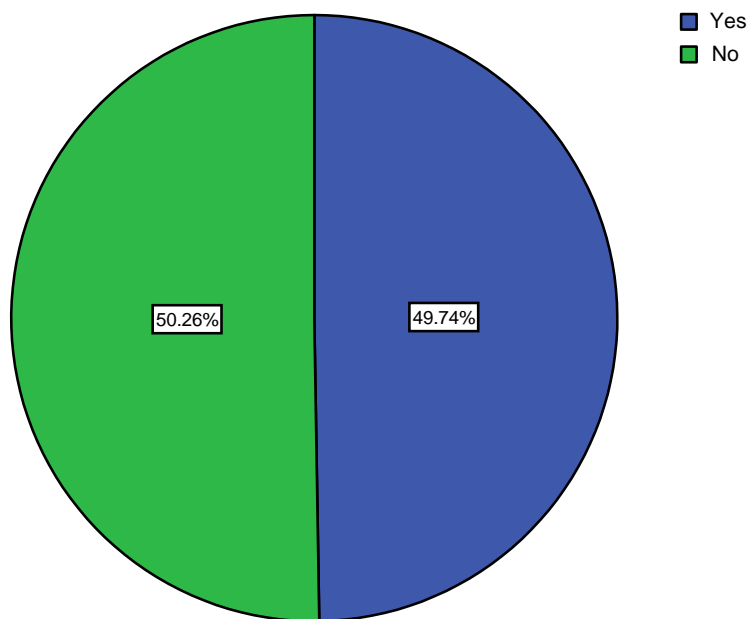

Figure 32 showed that approximately half of respondents have visited the Aberdeen City Council (ACC) website in the last twelve months whilst half have not visited the ACC website. When broken down by age of respondent, the results show that 73% of 25-34 year olds have used the website as opposed to only 18% of over 65 year olds.

Figure 33: If no what is the main reason?
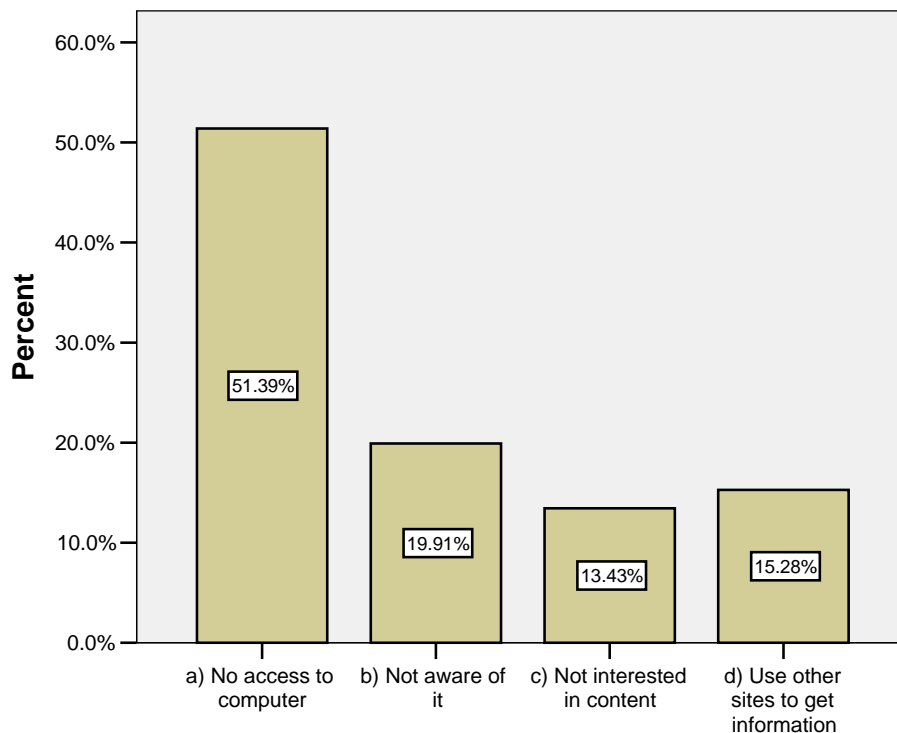
Figure 33 shows that of respondents who had not visited the ACC website in the last twelve months the majority, approximately 51%, have stated that no access to a computer was the main reason.

Respondents were asked to specify other reasons why they have not visited Aberdeen City Council's website in the last 12 months. A selection of comments are summarised below:

- No need to access it (9 comments)
- I would prefer to speak to someone if I had a problem (7)
- Have not required any info (6)
- Too busy (5)
- Access council info in other ways (2)
- Have a computer but not the internet (2)
- Never considered it
- Nervous about going online
- Usually too laborious to use
- Addictive

Figure 34: If Yes, how often do you visit the website?

Figure 34 shows that over half of respondents visit the ACC website less than once a month. Approximately 4% of respondents visit the website on a daily basis.

Figure 35: What is your main reason for visiting the site?

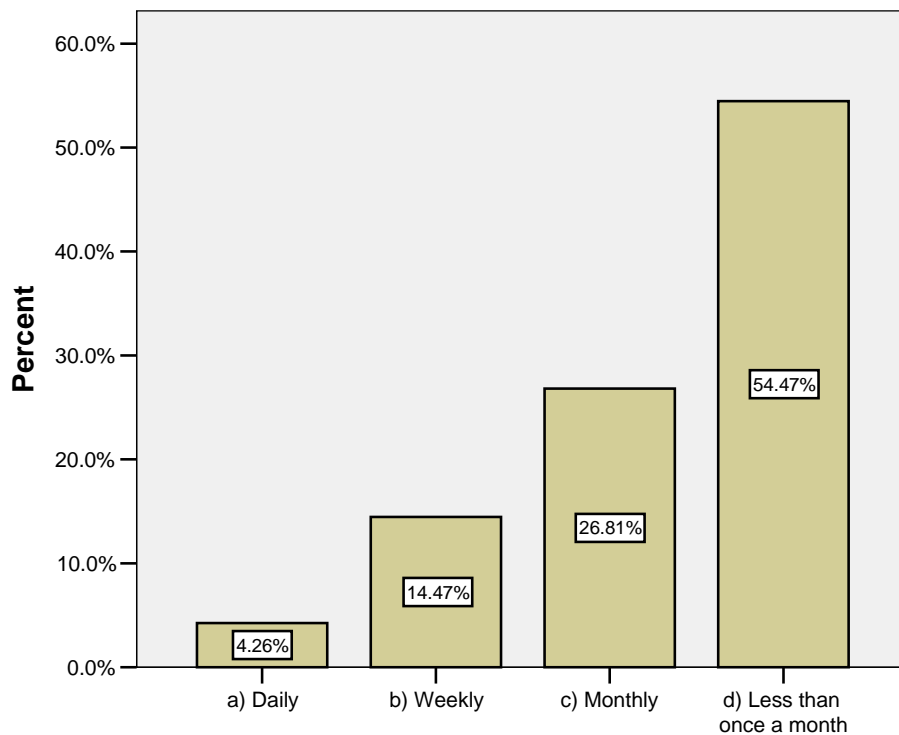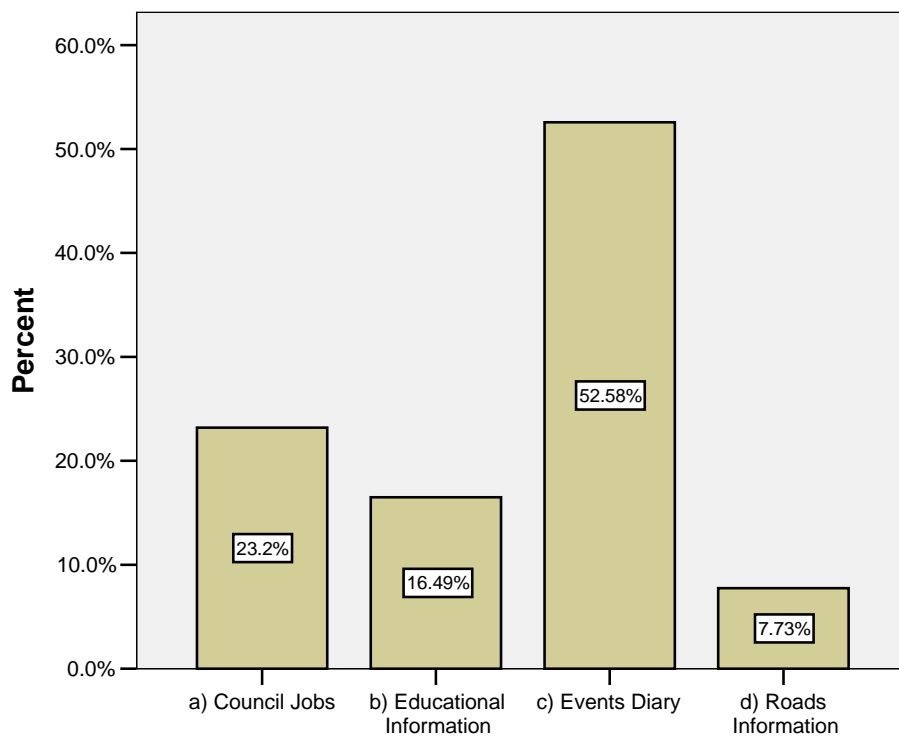Figure 35 shows that the majority of respondents (52.58%) visit the website to access the events diary, with approximately 8% accessing the website for road information.

Other reasons for visiting the site included:

- Planning Information (14 comments)
- General information (11)
- Contact details (8)
- Look at webcams (7)
- Minutes of council meetings (6)
- Reporting Faults (6)
- Weather (6)
- Sports facilities (5)
- Part of my job (4)
- Environmental/recycling information (4)
- Arts/recreation information (3)
- Various Information (2)
- Curiosity (2)
- News (2)
- Community Councils
- Holiday dates
- Housing
- Statistics
- Hire information
- Benefits
- Keeping up with questionnaire

Table 14: In your opinion, is the council website:

	No		Yes	
	Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
a) Easy to navigate	59	23.5%	192	76.5%
b) Easy to read	15	6.0%	234	94.0%
c) Easy to understand	23	9.5%	218	90.5%
d) Helpful	27	11.3%	213	88.8%
e) Offers services I want	30	14.6%	175	85.4%
f) Quick to load	13	6.4%	191	93.6%

Table 14 shows that the majority of respondents who have visited the ACC website in the last 12 months answered Yes to each of the above aspects of the council website.

Further opinions regarding the website included:

- Difficult to use the search engine (5 comments)
- Can't find the information I'm looking for (4)
- Less easy to navigate after website update (3)
- Current website vast improvement (3)
- Text too small
- Old site better – useful features lost

- Requires familiarity
- Information is often out of date
- Lots of information available
- Doesn't provide information required

Respondents who answered No to any of the aspects above were asked why. A summary of the reasons are listed below:

- Difficult to find information required (6 comments)
- Used to be more user friendly (6)
- Search facility poor (6)
- Difficult to get information unless you know what you are looking for
- The site is slow (4)
- Too much info to navigate through (3)
- Text too small to read clearly (3)
- The site is confusing (3)
- Too busy on homepage (2)
- Have to scroll down too much (2)
- No response or follow up to emails sent (2)
- Deal links common (2)
- Takes too long to find what I need (2)
- Too many errors
- Wrong colours being used
- Too many options
- Site map confusing

Panellists were asked to list additional topics they would like to see on the website. A summary of the responses is listed below:

- Information on what's on in the city (14 comments)
- Up-to-date travel information e.g. road works and traffic (5)
- Information on buses e.g. bus lanes, timetables, routes (5)
- History of Aberdeen (4)
- Tourist information (4)
- Clear contact details for councillors/council officials (3)
- Council budget and expenditure (3)
- Information on religious services (3)
- Contact details of all council employees (3)
- Online parking permit renewals (2)
- Neighbourhood watch information (2)
- Names and addresses of companies recommended by the council (2)
- Disability Information (2)
- Volunteering opportunities
- Pollution readings
- More health information
- More local news
- League tables for all councils
- E-planning
- Info on social work out of hours service
- Library catalogue

- Culture in Aberdeen
- Council departments and structure

Panellists were then asked why they would like to see the above additional topics on the website. The results are summarised below:

- For more information (5 comments)
- Information is useful for visitors (4)
- To increase the councils accountability to the communities they serve (4)
- To avoid unnecessary telephone calls (2)
- To make travel easier/more convenient (2)
- Raise awareness (2)
- Council has a duty to promote the city
- Local events are not advertised well enough
- Current information is not accurate
- Information isn't available in one place

Table 15: How do you normally find information on the Council website?

	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
a) A-Z	49	26.5%	124	67.0%	12	6.5%
b) Left Hand topic list	68	35.1%	113	58.2%	13	6.7%
c) Search function	68	31.6%	127	59.1%	20	9.6%

Table 15 shows that the majority of respondents sometimes use the A-Z, the Left Hand topic list and the Search function.

Other methods mentioned by respondents included:

- Save pages to favourites (2 comments)
- On page links
- Central library
- Look through the website
- Bookmarks I have set up

Figure 36: On the web, are you most likely to use the Council website to look for information on other aspects of the City of Aberdeen?
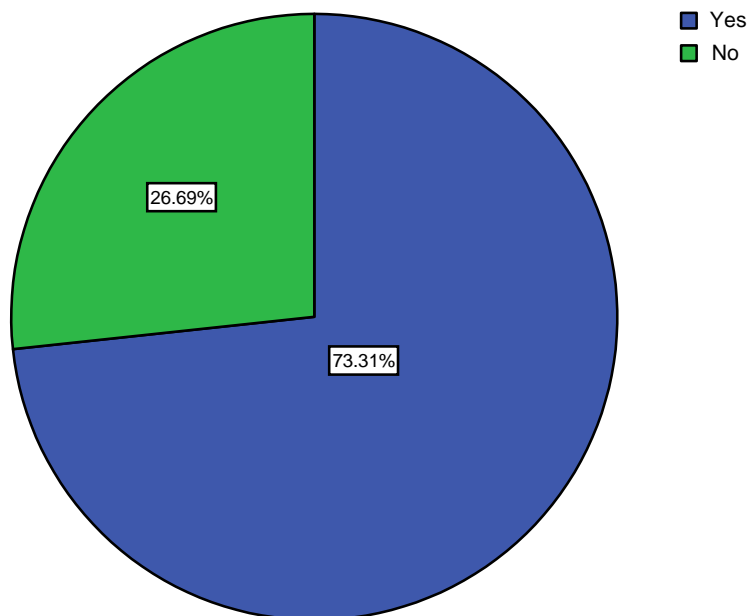

Figure 36 shows that the majority of respondents stated that they were most likely to use the ACC website when looking for information on other aspects of the City of Aberdeen.

Panellists were asked if you do not use the ACC website, which website(s) would you use? A summary of the responses can be found below:

- Google (20 comments)
- Various search engines (7)
- This is North Scotland (6)
- Cinema websites (4)
- Tourism website (4)
- HM Theatre (3)
- Aberdeen University (2)
- Visit Scotland (2)
- Lemon Tree
- AECC
- Scottish Executive
- Environmental websites
- Google Earth

Service Response

We appreciate the panel's response and have found it interesting to compare it with the statistics which we measure on the website itself.

It's very positive that half the people polled have visited the Council site in the last 12 months. However, of those only 46% visit the site more than once per month.

The statistics measured on the website show different visitor patterns. For example, of the 134,747 visits during November 2006, 12% of visitors had visited the site more than once per day, on average, over the last 7 months compared to 4% of the panelists.

In order to get more people to visit the site more regularly we need to ensure that we offer what citizens want. We will analyse the feedback that you gave us and will use that to improve the site features.

In addition to the suggestions we received, we may look at introducing more 'sticky' content on the home page, such as E-cards and online polls/questionnaires.

Referring to Table 14, the percentage of panellists answering 'no' for sections A, E and D is higher than we would like to see.

- We need to know what they were looking for so that better links can be created from the Home Page, or via intermediary pages, e.g. using "Our City" link.
- Clearly labelled menu names (with tool tips) plus information in a few clicks could help these users
- The search feature will be improved.

While these percentages are higher than we would wish for, the respondents who answered "yes" to all of the options (Easy to navigate, Easy to read, Easy to understand, Helpful, Offers services I want and Quick to load) averaged 88% across all questions.

"Panellists were asked to list additional topics they would like to see on the website".

While these figures do give an insight into what the public would like to see, it must be noted that some of the answers to not correlate with Figure 35. 53% of respondents view the website for Events/What's On and 8% for Roads/Traffic information. However panellists later stated what additional topics they would like to see. The top two answers for this was 'Information on what's on in the city' and 'Up-to-date travel information e.g. road works and traffic'.

This suggests that some panellists are not aware of, or cannot locate, content which is actually on the site. We will look at promoting the site more heavily and at sign-posting content more effectively.

It should also be noted that the following topics, which were also identified as topics which panellists would like to see on the site, are already covered.

- Information on buses e.g. bus lanes, timetables, routes
- Tourist information
- Clear contact details for councillors/council officials
- Council budget and expenditure

- Online parking permit renewals
- Disability Information
- More local news
- Info on social work out of hours service
- Culture in Aberdeen
- Council departments and structure

The feedback regarding other requested information will be fed into our redevelopment plans for the site which will see changes to the home page and the A-Z.

The need for improvement in the Events/What's On section is recognised. This is currently a high priority area in the development plan. A new Events Calendar, currently being finalised before launching in the New Year, will provide citizens with a more comprehensive list of all events in Aberdeen City run by both the council and external bodies. Because this will be constantly updated and far more comprehensive, we hope that users will be compelled to check the website for this information more regularly. A key further development to this will be the ability for citizens, and community groups, to submit events.

There was no main method of finding information. Reponses were split fairly equally between all three: the A-Z, the left-hand menu and the search feature. This is a very good sign that the left hand navigation is used and that services are categorized appropriately. When we introduce the new Scottish Service List and Scottish Navigation List, which are both new standards, we will continue to improve the left hand navigation, the A-Z and the content of the home page to help users target exactly what they are looking for.

In general, the findings presented in this report are very encouraging, and we welcome further positive and constructive feedback that will assist in the future development of the website. We make a firm commitment that all findings in this survey will be addressed appropriately and fed into the website development plan for 2007.

We are about to embark on a major survey of site users to try to get feedback from a larger set of citizens which will be amalgamated with the feedback from panelists in order to further improve the site.

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Community Planning in Aberdeen

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