

Citizens Panel News

Welcome...

Hello and welcome to another edition of the Citizens' Panel News for 2007.

A very warm welcome to the new members of the panel who have joined since the previous newsletter was sent out.

Thanks to all of you again for your responses to the April survey. A total of 1094 of you filled in and returned the survey. Out of the extended panel of 1486 we had

an overall response rate of 74% which is simply fantastic.

A huge thank you to all of you who took the time to complete this survey and we look forward to hearing from you again on this survey.



In the June survey we will be asking questions about;

- Hospital services
- Community Safety
- Our Community Plan

We are hoping to gather opinions on these topics in order to improve on with the services provided to the Borough through them.

In the previous survey we asked questions on various topics and we are updating you on some of these sections throughout this newsletter.

June 2007
Inside this issue:

Welcome	1
Waste Management—your views	1
Special points of interest	1
Community Payback—Update	2
Leisure and culture	2
Open for business	3
Hate Crime—get involved	3
FAQs	4
Thank you	4

Waste Management—your views



In the last Citizens' Panel survey we asked about this. We did this to help us to meet Government targets and to reduce the impact of waste on the environment.

Over the next few years we will be introducing new recycling services for residents and improving our existing services.

Any opinions we can

obtain from residents across the borough will help us to make decisions and shape the services of the future.

In the last 6 months we have held focus groups with Discussion Panel members to gather opinions on the service we currently offer and how we can move forward with this service.

Your overall opinions on general


household waste collection are good but you think it could still be improved. 87% of you say you are satisfied with the collection of your black wheelie bins.

The answers you gave on recycling also provided some interesting results with 75% of you saying you currently recycle from your home.



shaping your community's future

Special points of interest:

- ♦ 89% of you said that you currently recycle paper
- ♦ 4% of you tried to contact the council over the last Christmas period 
- ♦ 79% of you have either regularly or occasionally used Borough Life magazine to find out information

Payback time—update



Community Payback

In the last edition of the Citizens' Panel News we reflected on your overall opinions about the councils' new community payback scheme. Since this newsletter we have had an update on this new scheme.

The unpaid work unit of Wigan Probation Service recently made a difference in many areas across the Borough—here are just a few examples:

- improvements made to the footpaths and brook in Marsh Green;

• removing graffiti from the congregational church in Ashton in Makerfield;

• removing fly tipping from various locations in Norley Hall;

• cutting down overgrown vegetation and debris from a corner of Firs Park in Leigh; and

- removing graffiti from St Annes Church in Shevington.



The unpaid work unit covering Wigan operates for seven hours per day on seven days and two evenings every week. Since 1st November 2006 the Facelift Unpaid Work Team has

completed 7 projects. 92 offenders were involved and they provided a total of 1691 hours of unpaid work. Based on the minimum wage, the projects supplied £9,046.85 worth of work across the Borough. Without this project this work could not have been completed so you can see how important it is.

The team welcome suggestions and ideas for work from the voluntary and community sector. We have included in this the opinions you gave on this service in the November Citizens' Panel survey last year, so every opinion counts and you can have an input into the differences being made throughout the borough.

Leisure and Culture

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust manage the parks and open spaces across the borough. They are committed to continuously improving the quality of their parks and open spaces services for local people. They asked a set of questions in the previous survey to find out what aspects of these services they need to prioritise for improvement.

The answers you provided will feed into the work done by the



Trust when planning improvements in the future.

Some of the things you said about the parks and open spaces in Wigan Borough were;

- 56% of you are either very or fairly satisfied with how clean the parks and open spaces are in the borough with 21% of you saying you are dissatisfied.
- 70% of you are satisfied with how easy it is to get around the parks and open spaces once you are there.

The Trust also asked a set of questions to find out your opinions on their sports and leisure centres. They are committed to continuously improving the



quality of their sports services for local people. Therefore they want to identify which aspects of these services they need to improve. Some of the opinions you gave were:

- 77% of you are satisfied with how helpful the staff are.
- 82% of you are satisfied with the location of the facilities.
- 21% of you are dissatisfied with the changing facilities compared to the 52% of you who said you were satisfied with them.

The trust will use this information to plan where they need to concentrate making improvements over the coming year.

Open for business

The council is reviewing its services that operate over the Christmas and New Year period with a view to extending the services available during this period in 2007.

We do not currently provide a full range of council services in the days between Boxing Day and New Years Day. Those that are available include adult and children's social care, libraries, leisure facilities and housing services.

We used a section of the April survey to find out more about the services you may have



used in the past and what you might use in the future. Here are some of the opinions you gave.

In relation to services provided over the Christmas and new year period;

- 20% of you stated that you would like to see a normal range of services like those which are currently available throughout the year.
- 40% of you said that the only services which should be available are emergency ones in order to be able to deal with crisis situations.
- 30% of you said you were happy with the services which are currently provided by the council over this period.

When asked whether or not you had tried to contact the council over the last Christmas period;

- 93% of you said you hadn't,
- with only 4% of you saying you had.

You were also asked what your preferred methods of contacting the council would be over the Christmas and new year period. For this 88% of you stated you would prefer to contact the Council by land-line telephone, with 24% saying e-mail and 18% preferring to contact the council in person at a council office.



Hate crime-get involved

Along with the survey this time you will hopefully have seen the letter asking for volunteers for this year's Hate Crime Planning group. But just in case you missed it, here's a bit of information about what's involved.

For the last three years Wigan has held 'Hate Crime Awareness Week' and February 2008 will mark the fourth such occasion. The planning group is a small, but dedicated, group that is responsible for overseeing the organisation and development of the initiative. The group is currently made up of individuals



that represent the diversity of Wigan. Its members are from various organisations that make up the Community Safety Partnership. The group would like to expand its membership so that it reflects further the richly diverse communities that are part of the whole Wigan community.

The group will meet at a Wigan town centre location and the meetings will last for about one and a half hours.

If you are interested in attending these meetings for what will be a truly exciting and original event or want to find out more information please contact Elliot Brown (Hate

Crime Co-ordinator) on 01942 827733, or you can write to Elliot at;

Wigan & Leigh Community Safety Partnership,
17-19 The Wiend
Wigan
WN1 1PF

Or alternatively you can e-mail him at the following address;

Elliott.Brown@Wigan.gov.uk





Your questions answered...??



During the last survey we received a number of queries from concerned panel members who had sent in their completed questionnaires but had then gone on to receive a reminder letter, stating that we were still waiting for them to return their survey.

We explained to those of you who had this concern that there had simply been a cross over between you sending in your completed survey and BMG (the company who send out our surveys) mailing out the reminder letters. The letter you receive with the reminder does explain that this can sometimes happen, but it is obviously still a concern. BMG have assured us that all surveys returned to them are processed straight away so fear not! If you have returned your survey we will receive it

and you can simply ignore and recycle the reminder letter and questionnaire.



Q: When I'm filling in the survey, should I answer the questions for me or someone who lives with me?

A: Unless we ask you for someone else you should only answer for yourself. If we want you to answer for someone else we will make it clear in each question.

For example, "Have you or anyone in your household..."

Q: Where can I see the results of previous surveys?

A: All the Citizens' Panel newsletters are available to view on line on the council's website www.wigan.gov.uk and going to consultation in the A-Z. You will also find lots

more information about the panel and the different topics we've consulted on here.

If you've not got access to the web you can always write to me, Liz Roberts or ring me. My contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

Q: I am a new member to the Citizens' Panel and wanted to know what topics to expect on the surveys throughout the year?

A: Citizens' Panel surveys are sent out 4 times a year and this is the second survey of 2007. The next survey will be done in September. Each survey is put together the month prior to it being sent out so as yet we aren't 100% sure what topics will be included. If you want any further information you can write to me or ring me and I will send this information to you.

Dear all,

Thanks to you all once again for taking the time to read this newsletter and also for completing another successful Citizens' Panel survey.

The sections being covered in the survey this time are once again very interesting and your responses will make a difference to the way Wigan Council moves on with the services we provide.

As always I appreciate hearing your opinions on both the questionnaires and the newsletters in general. If you have any feedback, questions or comments, please get in touch with me using the contact details below.

Many thanks

Liz Roberts

Research Assistant

Wigan Council, Town Hall, Library Street, Wigan, WN1 1YN

Phone : 01942 488388

Email : LizA.roberts@wiganmbc.gov.uk

**Next survey
September 2007**