

Herefordshire Voice

July 2008

THE HEREFORDSHIRE
partnership 

Thank you

The last Herefordshire Voice survey was completed by 741 panellists, which is 63% of the whole panel. Thank you very much for taking the time to complete it.

The next few paragraphs give a summary of the results from the last survey. The full report is available online at www.herefordshirepartnership.com/hv or if you don't have access to the internet, paper copies are now also available in Herefordshire libraries. They will be held in the library "stock", so you will need to ask a librarian to help you find a copy, which can then be delivered to your local library if necessary.

The local media

The most commonly used media sources were BBC Midlands Today (87% watch it often or sometimes), Herefordshire Matters (83%), The Hereford Times (76%), the Journal (70%) and ITV Central News (70%). Confidence in the accuracy of media sources with regard to information about the Council was generally very high, with BBC Hereford & Worcester being the most trusted with 96% confident that it is generally accurate. When asked which newspaper they would look in to find job adverts, 79% said they would look in the Hereford Times, and 37% would look in the Journal.

Recognition of Council services

There is not space in this newsletter to include the full list of services with an indication of whether or not the Council provides them. This information can be found in the full survey report. Amongst the services provided directly by the Council, most people correctly identified the Council as the provider. Amongst services provided for the Council with or by a partner or contractor, most were correctly identified as having some form of Council involvement, with some variation. Amongst the services not provided by the Council, many were incorrectly attributed to the Council.

Info in Herefordshire

Around half of respondents had heard of Info in Herefordshire before receiving the survey. Satisfaction with various aspects of visiting an Info Centre was generally very high, with very low levels of dissatisfaction. The only exceptions to this were seen in Hereford - where 11% were dissatisfied with the convenience of its location, and Kington - where 17% were dissatisfied with the convenience of its opening hours. Across all Info Centres, 92% were satisfied with the service overall.

Opening hours

At Info Centres, the extension to opening hours considered most useful would be Saturday mornings - 85% would find it useful (very useful or quite useful). 63% would find it useful if they were open the same hours each day, while 58% would find it useful if they stayed open later on weekday evenings. The most popular possible extension to the Info by Phone service was availability on Saturday mornings, where 87% said they would find it useful. 76% would find it useful if the service was available slightly later on weekday evenings.

Making a request for service

Around half of respondents had requested a Council service. 77% made this request by telephone, and 25% did so in person. 68% were satisfied with the way their request was handled overall, while 24% were dissatisfied. The most positive aspect of making a request for service was knowing how to make the request, with 80% satisfied and 9% dissatisfied. 76% were satisfied that they were listened to and understood, with 18% dissatisfied. The least positive aspect was the number of times respondents had to make contact to get the issue resolved, with 65% satisfied and 26% dissatisfied.

Making a complaint

A quarter of respondents had made a complaint to the Council. 68% made their complaint by telephone, 20% did so in person, and 20% by letter. 42% were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled overall, while 48% were dissatisfied. 75% were satisfied with knowing how to go about making a complaint and 13% were dissatisfied. 31% were satisfied with how quickly the issue was resolved while 56% were dissatisfied. 33% were satisfied with the number of times they had to make contact to get the issue resolved, while 53% were dissatisfied.

Your views put into action

Back in September and October last year, we asked you some questions about influencing local decisions, engaging with the Council, Herefordshire Matters, and respect and consideration.

As a result of the “influencing local decisions” section, Herefordshire Partnership is commissioning a follow-up survey. It will look in more detail at the impact that Parish Plans and PACTs have on citizens' sense of being able to influence local decisions. The survey will focus on 8 to 10 parishes across the county, and the results will be used to inform future

consultative procedures. With regard to “engaging with the Council”, there is a councillors' development programme underway to assist them with their leadership role. The responses concerning Herefordshire Matters confirmed that it had high readership levels and was considered to be clearly written and designed and that articles were useful and understandable. This information helped the Council to determine which qualities were to be maintained if Herefordshire Matters was to continue to be a source of useful information, now provided jointly by the Council and the Primary Care Trust.

This survey

This survey looks at planning and development in Herefordshire. The Council's Forward Planning Team are putting together a document which will determine how the county will look in terms of housing and economic growth until 2026, and this survey is part of a wider consultation on the development of this “core strategy”. You may have already heard about this consultation from another source. There are two slightly different versions of the questionnaire, one for Herefordshire Voice panellists, and one which has been sent to people who have a professional or personal interest in planning. If you have already completed the other version, there is no need to repeat your answers here.

The Herefordshire Voice version of the questionnaire is slightly shorter, but even so it is 16 pages long, which is considerably longer than previous panel surveys. We're aware that answering this questionnaire might be a daunting prospect, but we felt that it's a topic that affects almost everyone, and we wanted to give you the opportunity to have your say on something that could have such a big impact on Herefordshire. However, there may be questions or whole sections which you do not feel are relevant to you, so feel free to skip any that you don't have an opinion on.

**I hope you find this survey interesting, and thank you for your help completing it.
If you have any questions, please contact Michael Brown on 01432 260 495.**