

# Connections—the voice of Thurrock

Volume 5

October 2005

## Citizen Panel Feedback

### What You Told Us— Helping Improve Council Services 2005/2006

#### Did You Know?...

- 82% of people are happy with the area that they live in.
- 73% of people think that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously.
- 65% of people are also happy with the cleanliness of the borough.
- 71% of people believe they eat healthfully.

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This newsletter focuses on the Quality of Life survey completed in February 2005, the Older People analysis from June 2005 and the General Satisfaction Survey from May 2005. These surveys were completed using three methods, there were interviews conducted over the telephone and by door to door. The Older People analysis has been taken from the Quality of Life Survey. Overall we managed to conduct 1266 interviews in the Quality of Life Survey and 1302 responses from the General Satisfaction Survey. There were responses that showed us what we had to do to make Thurrock a better place, but there were also lots of positive things said about the borough in which we live. For example,

73% of people agree that Thurrock is an area where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously.

We found out from these surveys that only 56% of people were aware of the local community forum. With 12% of the respondents having had some involvement with the Community Forum. Only 9% of you were aware of the Community Strategy (ASPIRE). We also have a “Shaping Thurrock” video, unfortunately only 64 people had heard of it, and there were only 28 people who had seen it.

The document entitled “What You Told Us—



Thurrock is a place that is forever changing and always growing.

Helping To Improve Council Services” was sent out last year with one of these newsletters, it focused on what you want to happen in Thurrock over the next year and what we are aiming to do to make this a reality. We are producing another one for this year that will be sent to you in your next newsletter.

### You’re feeling safer!

This year we found out that the vast majority of people (95%) feel safe when out alone during the day. Although this figure is very good, it drops significantly at night to just over half (56%). This is an increase from 2003 when only 51% of you felt safe.

The biggest fear that people

have when out alone is the harassment by groups of youths.

There are 40% of older people that feel unsafe at night, and 21% of under 25’s also feel unsafe. The thing that they fear the most is the same as all other ages, harassment from groups of youths.

One of the main priorities you identified was the need for more policing and tackling crime.

We have made a commitment in this years budget to provide financial support to enable this to happen.

# What Makes Somewhere a Good Place to Live?



Health care in Thurrock is improving

The General Satisfaction Survey asked this question. We wanted to find out what you considered to be important, that way we could be clear about what we need to do to improve the areas you live in.

You have told us that the most important thing that makes somewhere a good place to live is a low level of crime. 66% of people thought this.

Followed closely by the need for a good health services, 64% of you rated this as second.

Considering the degree of importance given to health it is important to recognise that 37% of you find it difficult to access a local hospital.

Many of you know that there is a new Health Centre opened in Thurrock, called St Clements. This will help people access health services and receive help from professionals locally.

We have introduced questions this year around levels of fitness and healthy living our questions last year did not give us a good enough profile to work from.

We have therefore created a new set of questions in our Quality of Life Survey for this year to expand our knowledge in this area to help us understand what if any service improvements we or Shaping Thurrock Partnership can do to improve things.

*“73% of people agree that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously”*

## Thurrock— a place of diversity

Thurrock is a place where people from all different cultures can live together. 73% of you now think that all people can live together harmoniously. We are a borough that is always changing and growing. In 2001 there were 6549 people that belonged to an ethnic minority in Thurrock, and we expect that this will continue to grow. By looking at the data

we received we found that 1.6% of the over 60 population belong to an ethnic minority. We also saw that 11.4% of school children are of an ethnic minority. This shows an almost 10% change which shows that Thurrock is changing. It is appealing to people from all around the globe and we have something to offer everyone. The people in this

borough are more acceptable to change, and we will try our best to include everyone in our decisions. By trying to include people from different cultures we are fulfilling one of our Community Strategy aims, “Inclusive Thurrock”. We aim to ensure no one feels isolated because of their gender, race, sexuality or any other discrimination they may be used to.

## What do Young People Want?



We want young people to play an important role in our community.

We carry out a lot of different consultations that involve young people—one example covered in this year’s ‘What you told us’ looks at the result of three small groups of children who worked together over a number of weeks last year. We wanted to know what young people

actually want, not just assume that we know.

We found out that young people want a say in how things are planned for them. They often feel isolated in their own communities and some young people believe there is not enough organised activities locally.

We are now going to ensure we consult with young people when making our decisions. We want to create wider opportunities in the community to prevent isolation. We will also ensure there is a variety of activities for people and make sure everyone is able to get in-

# What Do Older People Think?

In 2003 84% of the over people over 60's were satisfied with their neighbourhood. By 2004 this had decreased by 13%.

We found out that 58% of people thought that the area where they live had deteriorate over the last two years.

Older people have said that there needs to be an improvement on buses and trains as well as cleaner streets. In fact 10% of people feel this will make Thurrock a better place to live. 15% of older people believe that more policing will improve the borough and raise peoples satisfaction with the local area.

This year 65% of people said they found it easy to access a hospital. This has risen from 24% in 2003.

43 % of older people believe that they have no influence on the decisions that the Council makes. We hope that the "What You Told Us" document shows that we value everyone's

point of view and the consultations we do, do change the way in which we provide out services.

We want to benefit everyone living in the area. 26 % of older people are now dissatisfied with the boroughs cleanliness, in fact 11% of people said it is dirt that gets them down most about Thurrock.

We have made clear streets a priority for this year and invested in this area—we are hoping that when we carry out our next survey to see what impact this has had on your views.

Councillors are concerned about the low levels of satisfaction in relation to public transport and have this year instigated a scrutiny review into this which includes a public consultation. We will aim to provide you with an update on the outcome of these investigations in one of these newsletters.

*"65% of older people find it easy to get to a hospital, compared to only 24% last year"*

## Our Aspirations for Thurrock

Our priorities and aspirations for improvements to Thurrock have been developed from your responses over recent years to the consultations under discussion here—in our performance plan we have made commitments to ....

- Preserve and improve green areas.
- Improve hospital provision/ healthcare
- Have better schools and education
- Create more provisions for young people and families
- Improve the cleanliness of the borough
- Improve local public transport

- Improve housing
- Have more policing

We accept that as we improve different aspects of life in Thurrock your aspirations will change and that we need to be able to recognise when we have delivered the improvements that we will need to move onto the next thing. Our way of finding out when we have got there and what we need to move onto is through our annual consultations with you—the next Quality of Life survey will be carried out in the next couple of weeks it will be interesting for us to see if we need to now change any of these priorities.



We want only good things for our community

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any query, we'll do our very best  
to help!*

## *For Your Information.....*

*We have this year established a 'finance panel' who have been working with us over the summer—learning about how local government finance operates. We will give you a report on their activities in the next edition of this newsletter.*

*The Quality of Life survey will be carried out in October 2005.*

## Levels of Satisfaction

Everyone was asked if they were satisfied with a particular service or place in Thurrock. Here are the findings—

- 43% of people are satisfied with land control of litter and refuse.
- 47% of people are satisfied with the local bus service, this has risen from 35% in 2003.
- 74% of people are happy with the libraries in the area.
- 59% of people are satisfied with the Fire Service.
- The Environmental Service has a 51% level of satisfaction.



59% of you are satisfied with the Fire Service.

- 50% of residents are pleased with the Education Authority.
- 48% of residents are satisfied with Cultural & Recreational Services in their local area.
- Only 41% of people were satisfied with the complaints procedure, we have made changes to this and we hope you appreciate the improvements.
- Overall just over half of the residents of Thurrock believe that they are informed enough of the Council and its services.
- 53% of the local population that are pleased with the

overall authority and the way that we run things.

**All of these areas of satisfaction have shown an improvement on the last general satisfaction survey in 2003.**



53% of people are pleased with the way the Council runs things.