

FEEDBACK

Newsletter

Issue 6- April 2007



Citizens' Panel

What is the Citizens' Panel?

Thurrock Council set up a Citizens' Panel in 2000, to keep the council informed about the views of local residents. Over the last few years there has been an increased need to consult with residents about all aspects of public services.

How to Join?

The Citizens' panel is usually refreshed annually. If you would like to join please contact: Market Research UK on 0800 1613157.

Did you know?

- 146,700 people live in Thurrock
- Thurrock is made up of 20 wards and over 90 super output areas
- The black and minority ethnic population is estimated at 5.4%
- The average male can expect to live for 76.9 years & females for 81.1 years in Thurrock
- The average weekly wage in Thurrock is £470

Welcome

Welcome to the **Thurrock consultation feedback newsletter!**

Thurrock Council recognises the importance of providing feedback on surveys that local residents have taken part in, consequently, this newsletter provides feedback on the results of the Best Value Performance Indicator Survey that was carried out nationally in 2006.

We received, in total, 1,159 responses from residents to our survey, which equated to a 43% response rate. If you would like to see a copy of the complete report and all the results, please visit the consultation web page by following the link below.

www.thurrock.gov.uk/i-know/consultation/

Citizens' Panel continued...

To ensure that the panel is representative of Thurrock, people are selected according to age, ethnicity, gender and where they live in the borough. The most recent panel was recruited in September 2006 and there are approximately

Thurrock is committed to providing services that people need and to do this we need to consult and involve local people in the various stages of planning and design of services.

If you would like to get involved please visit the consultation web page

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Consultation Feedback

We asked you... you told us you views

We asked:

how satisfied are you with the way the council runs things?

Nearly half of residents 49% said they were satisfied with the way the council runs things, up 5 percent from 2003/4. In January alone the Council logged more than 40 unique compliments, which highlighted the exceptional work carried out by members of staff across all Council departments. Our customer care service has won recognition after scooping a prestigious award for customer services.

One residents told us:

"I find the local council very helpful... they explain in layman's terms – many thanks"

Another resident said:

"The staff in Corringham council office are very polite and helpful. They always take care explaining things so we can understand them"

Another resident said:

"The guy that came to go through my claim was very helpful and also phoned me back when he found out I had conflicting letters which had worried me"

We asked:

how satisfied are you with the way Thurrock Council has kept land clear of litter and refuse?

62 percent of people said they were satisfied with the way we keep streets clean and tidy, up 12% from 2003/4. You told us you wanted cleaner streets.

What we did...

We created a rapid response team to target major areas and routes to clear rubbish quickly.

We also increased the number of environmental enforcement officers to target and prosecute polluters. We increased the number of street cleaning officers and launched a "Be Smart" campaign to raise awareness. We invested in a new graffiti removal vehicle and set up a special graffiti team to target vandals that damage public and private buildings across Thurrock.

What residents say matters to us and we use different ways to find out.

We asked:

how well the council keeps residents informed about council services?

Just over a third of residents (36%) said they were kept well informed about our services, which we recognise is below the national average.

What we did...

In order to keep our residents better informed, we decided to produce an annual A-Z of council services to let you know about all the services we deliver. The A-Z is a comprehensive list of telephone numbers for all services and contact details for all 49 Thurrock councillors.

In addition, the communications team introduced 'Thurrock Magazine' which will be distributed quarterly to every household in the borough.

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Profile Themes

The Thurrock Profile is based on **quality of life themes**.

All data and information is grouped under one of the following themes:

- People & Place
- Community Safety
- Education & Training
- Economy
- Labour Market
- Environment
- Housing & Households
- Health & Well-being
- Deprivation

In each theme you can access key data and analysis through **Quick Facts** and comprehensive raw data through the **Data Downloads** sections.

Did you know?

- There are 62,000 households in Thurrock
- The average house price in Thurrock is £169,000
- Deaths from cancer, circulatory disease and smoking are above average
- 30% of the population are aged over 50
- Unemployment is slightly above average at 2.5%

Consultation Feedback

We asked you.... You told us (continued from page 2)

We asked:

what do you think of local public transport?

45% of residents said they were satisfied with the local bus service, which although low, nevertheless remains a significant improvement by 10 percent compared to three years ago. Arriva introduced a valuable new link between Chadwell and Basildon, and First Essex has brought in better buses on Service 200 through Stifford Clays and Orsett.

We have acted to ensure that vital trips have been protected, whilst also taken action to make substantial improvements by adding in extra subsidised journeys.

Residents told us they were not happy with the state of bus stops. In response the council have acted to improve many bus stops by providing higher kerbs and producing better publicity. These improvements have resulted in a significant rise in bus useage.

We asked: How do you rate the waste collection service in Thurrock?

Most residents 82% were satisfied with the waste collection service overall. We can also arrange to collect and dispose of your bulky household items such as old furniture, beds, fridges, televisions and old computers.

Latest Updates

- Recorded crime data 1998 to 2005-2006
- Crime detection rates for 2004-05 and 2005-2006
- Mortality data – all causes, cancers and circulatory diseases 1991 to 2003-2005
- Ward level population estimates 2003
- Life expectancy data 1991-2005
- Weekly and hourly earnings data 2005
- VAT data 1991 to 2005
- Births and fertility rates 1996 to 2005
- Unemployment trends 1998 to 2007

We asked:

How do you rate recycling services in Thurrock?

Most people 63% were satisfied with Thurrock's recycling service. Even more people 79% were satisfied with the local recycling centre (local tip) at Buckingham Hill. This includes the location of the site, how clean the site is, the opening hours of the site and the recycling facilities provided at the site.

What we did...

We extended the green waste collection service to a further 13,000 properties across Thurrock. We piloted the kitchen waste recycling service which has proved a huge success and very popular with residents. We increased collections from bi-weekly to weekly.

The local tip at Buckingham Hill is now open 7 days per week, and is also open longer hours in the summer. We provided new improved signage so that so residents are now aware of the new opening times.

We asked: how do you rate our libraries?

Thurrock has ten libraries, a mobile library and a housebound library service. 94% of library users were satisfied with the library service overall. People were satisfied because they were able to find the correct book to borrow and they were able to find the information they were looking for, far more easily than usual.

Libraries continued...

There is more to Thurrock libraries than borrowing books. When you join your local library you will have access to over 3 million items including: books, journals, CD's, DVD's, videos, play station games and CD ROM's.

All our libraries provide access to computers and Internet access to help you with your homework or research projects.

We asked: what do you think of our website?

Almost one in ten (9%) of residents said they use the council website as their main source for finding out about the council.

The council's web team continues to improve the web site by making more services accessible electronically. You can now pay your council tax and other bills on line. You can report many services on line including: blocked drains, abandoned vehicles, dumped rubbish, damaged pavements, abandoned shopping trolleys.

You can register on line to receive notification about new consultations. When you sign up we will send you an email with a link whenever a new consultation appears on the web site. We also re-vamped the Thameside Theatre web site to allow you to find out about shows and performances, to allow on line booking, latest news and releases, competitions and much more.

Have your say

- We are committed to involving residents in developing and improving council services
- Would you like to take part in surveys?
- How can you have your say

Your views are important. We want to know what you think of our services. If you have any feedback please email:

performance@thurrock.gov.uk

Visit the Consultation Page

Why not visit the Consultation web pages to find out what consultations are currently taking place

www.thurrock.gov.uk/i-know/consultation