

### Equality Panel Update

The equality panel, which is made up of a small group of Citizen Panel members is gathering strength and expertise. The group met again in September and learnt about some new legal duties that are emerging through the Equality Bill.

Panel members were asked for ideas about how to improve attendance at our 'Fairness for All' event. These events are held annually to help make sure Council services are accessible to everyone. We will take forward the panels' suggestion that this event should be held in conjunction with other existing and well attended meetings run by the community, such as the Over 50's Forum. We also welcomed the offer made by panel members to get involved in organising and promoting this event.

Panel members used their newly gained skills to scrutinise three equality impact assessments, including one for 'The Hub'. This is a new centre, currently under construction, in South Normanton which will accommodate Bolsover District Council Contact Centre, Police, Health Services and Adult Education, and will provide community facilities like a library, doctors surgery, centre for children and the elderly, private gym and restaurant for local residents.

### WELCOME

This newsletter is a short one as we have not yet started to analyse the results to the September survey. You should receive a summary of these results in May/June 2010 (as Derbyshire County Council will be running the February 2010 survey), in the meantime the full report will be published on [www.askderbyshire.gov.uk](http://www.askderbyshire.gov.uk)

You will notice that in this questionnaire we have asked if you are interested in getting involved in further consultation on some of the topics. This is in response to feedback from the February 2009 survey when 67% of people said they thought questionnaires should 'focus on issues important to local people and where they live'. We are intending that more of this topic specific consultation will be through face to face meetings- another thing that panel members were interested in.

### Forthcoming Budget Consultation

We are also planning to run an electronic survey on Council budgets. This will be the first time we have used our new on-line survey software and it will hopefully be of interest to the 44% of panel members who in February 2009 said they would like surveys to be available electronically. The great thing about this electronic survey is that the results are available as soon as you submit your answers, which means we can get the results to Councillors in double-quick time to help inform their decision making process.

Citizen Panel members for whom we have an email address will be emailed a link, but as we don't have up to date email contact details for all panel members, we would be grateful if you could go to XX to fill in the survey.



# The Place Survey

You may remember that there was no Citizen Panel survey in September 2008 because a huge national survey known as the Place Survey was taking place then. The results of that survey have recently become available, this information will be used by government inspectors to help assess the performance of Bolsover District Council in what is called Comprehensive Area Assessment. The results of the Comprehensive Area Assessments for public sector organisations across the whole country will be available from mid-December from a new website called oneplace which can be found at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/oneplace](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/oneplace)

**Nearly 1,600 residents took part in a nationwide 'Place Survey' asking for your views on a range of issues – from leisure facilities, how well informed you are, the quality and value for money of public services and community safety.**

The results have shown that we are rated on a par or above councils' across the country, but there are areas where we need to improve. The headline results below show some of the comments within the themed areas.

## About the local area

**72%** of residents are satisfied with their local area, up 5% from two years ago

**91%** of residents said they were satisfied with their home as a place to live

**47%** are satisfied with their local parks and open spaces

## Community safety

**85%** of residents feel safe during the day

**59%** of residents say teenagers hanging around on streets is a problem, down from 71% two years ago

**64%** of people think there is a problem with parents not taking responsibility for their children

## Community cohesion

**62%** strongly believe they belong to their neighbourhood, compared to 59% nationally

Nearly **seven in ten people** (68%) agree that Bolsover district is an area where people from different backgrounds get on well together

## Local decision-making

**34%** of residents think they can influence decisions affecting their local area, which is higher

than the national average of 29%

**23%** of residents said they wanted to be more involved in decisions affecting their area, with another 58% saying they would, depending upon the issue

## Information provision

**39%** of residents feel well informed about local public services, which is comparable with the rest of the country

**88%** of residents feel informed about how and where to register to vote and 62% also know how their council tax is spent

## Local public services

**51%** of residents are satisfied with the Council, compared to a national average of 45%

**41%** of residents think we provide value for money compared to a national average of 33%

**32%** of residents are satisfied with sports and leisure facilities.

Cabinet Member for Customer Focused Services Councillor Duncan McGregor said "There are some very interesting results to come out of this survey. Generally we are on a par if not better in what we do compared to the rest of the country and we are now sifting through the information, to see where we need to focus our energies and improve our services for the benefit of our communities. Our residents' views are very important to us and I would like to hear from any residents who have any ideas or suggestions so we can provide better services. I would also like to thank everyone who took part in helping provide us with a snapshot of what our district is like to live in and the services provided."

This newsletter is available in large print or alternative formats on request from 01246 242300.