

# VIEWPOINT NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE CITIZENS PANEL

## Research Summary December 2008

### 1. Background

As a means of obtaining residents' views and responding to residents' concerns, North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) established a Citizens Panel in 2001. The Panel was set up in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, North Eastern Derbyshire Primary Care Trust and Derbyshire Constabulary and consists of a representative sample of 1000 residents.

Questionnaires are mailed to the Panel every quarter covering a variety of subjects. This report presents the findings from the postal survey sent to the Panel in December 2008.

### 2. Objectives and Method

In December 2008, questionnaires were mailed out to all North East Derbyshire Citizens' Panel members. Panel members were asked to complete their questionnaire and return it in the reply-paid envelope by Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December.

In total 543 members of the Panel responded to the survey – that is a response rate of 54%.

In this wave of research, North East Derbyshire and Derbyshire County Council wanted to gather information on participation in swimming, information about the Council and the Council's magazine for residents, "the NEWS".

Within this report all figures are rounded and so may not add up to 100%.

Three appendices are attached to the report, these provide:

- Analysis of open comments (Appendix A)
- Data tables for December 2008 results (Appendix B)
- Data tables giving trend data (Appendix C)

### 3. Survey Findings

#### **Participation in swimming**

Leisure Services are currently developing the first Swim Strategy for North East Derbyshire. This document will focus on four main areas: public swimming, education, the Learn to Swim programme and swimming clubs. The overall aim of the strategy will be to aid continuous improvement of the service, promote health and well being in our district, to promote excellence and to give value for money. The following questions were added to the survey to help development of the strategy.

Only one fifth (20%) of respondents had been swimming in a local swimming pool in the last three months. Of those (123 people) 21% normally swim at Dronfield sports centre, 23% at Sharley Park and 17% at Eckington Swimming Pool. These were the most popular locations of any mentioned.

**Q If you answered yes to the previous question, which pool do you normally swim at?**

If you swim at more than one pool, X the one where you swim most of the time. *(Please X one box only)*

<i>Total number of responses: 123</i>	
	%
Dronfield Sports Centre	21
Sharley Park Leisure Centre, Clay Cross	23
Eckington Swimming Pool	17
Health club	12
Hotel pool	4
Private pool	4
School, college or university	-
Other	19

When asked about safety within different areas of the pool and its environment at the centre they normally swim at, the majority felt safe. Very few felt unsafe.

The most popular times to go swimming were late evening, morning and evening.

**Q At which times of the day or evening would you prefer to swim at your local pool?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>			
	%	%	%
Very early in the morning (5.30-7.00am)	4	2	2
Early in the morning (7.00-8.30)	7	3	4
Morning (8.30-11.30)	17	8	10
Lunchtime (11.30-1.00pm)	7	3	3
Early afternoon (1.00-3.00)	9	3	8
Late afternoon (3.00-4.30)	4	4	3
Early evening (4.30-6.00)	7	3	3
Evening (6.00-9.00)	12	3	3
Late evening (9.00-10.30)	27	4	4

The reasons given for swimming were varied, however, the largest proportions given were

to help with an illness, injury, disability or to lose weight.

The reasons for not swimming were again varied but there were consistent mentions of “difficult to find the time”, “can’t swim”, “not interested”, “Wouldn’t enjoy it” and “Health not good enough”.

The things that respondents felt would encourage them to use the Council’s swimming pools were: more free time, adult only sessions, cheaper admissions prices, if the pool was less busy etc.

**Q What, if anything, would encourage you to use the Council’s swimming pools or swim more often? (Please X all that apply)**

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Nothing, I don't like swimming	15
Nothing, I can't swim	12
If I had better health	10
If the pool was less busy	15
If I had more free time	25
Improved parking facilities	3
Improved security	3
Safer neighbourhood	-
Better facilities eg café, changing rooms	10
Longer opening hours	6
If I had more energy/motivation	12
Support for my specific health needs	4
Cheaper admission prices	18
If I had someone to go with	8
Updated facilities	7
Improved public transport	2
A warmer welcome/friendlier staff	3
Help with childcare or crèche facilities	1
Adult only sessions	18
Better information about what is available	5
Swimming lessons for adults	4
Other	5

There was some interest in the proposed free swimming schemes with 21% claiming they would swim more often if swimming were free for those aged 60 and over.

Additionally, 12% thought family members would swim more often due to the 60+ scheme and 29% for the under 16's scheme.

The current cost of an adult swim was thought to represent good value for money by 39% with only 9% feeling that it was too expensive and prevented them from taking part. Similar levels of response (34% and 6% respectively) were given in relation to the cost of a child swim.

There were reasonable awareness levels for most of the swimming related activities held in NEDDC pools. The lowest levels of awareness were for aqua natal (27%), swim fit (29%) and aquacise (43%).

### Information about the Council

Panel members were asked about their local media use to inform future media use by the Council.

Three-quarters of respondents mentioned the Council Magazine as a local media source they use, giving the highest score of all the options. Local commercial radio, the Council's website and the internet generally all had significant increases in claimed use since 2007.

### Q What local media do you currently use?

	%
The Council's free magazine/the NEWS	76
Local free newspapers	69
Local commercial radio	64
Local free magazines	47
The internet	46
Derbyshire Times	30
Daily local paid-for newspaper	27
Council website	27
Local TV	22
BBC local radio	12
Village or Parish newsletter	8
None of these	1

We then asked how they usually found out about NEDDC and the decisions it makes, and how they would prefer to find out. Again, the Council magazine came out top in both questions, the proportion choosing it in both cases rising since 2007. The second most popular answer was local free newspapers (see Appendix B for full tables).

### The Council's Magazine, "the NEWS"

In 2003 NEDDC moved from a black and white newspaper format (called NED News) to a full colour magazine as its regular communication vehicle for residents of the area. The magazine is called 'the NEWS' and it is circulated to all homes in the NEDDC area 4 times each year.

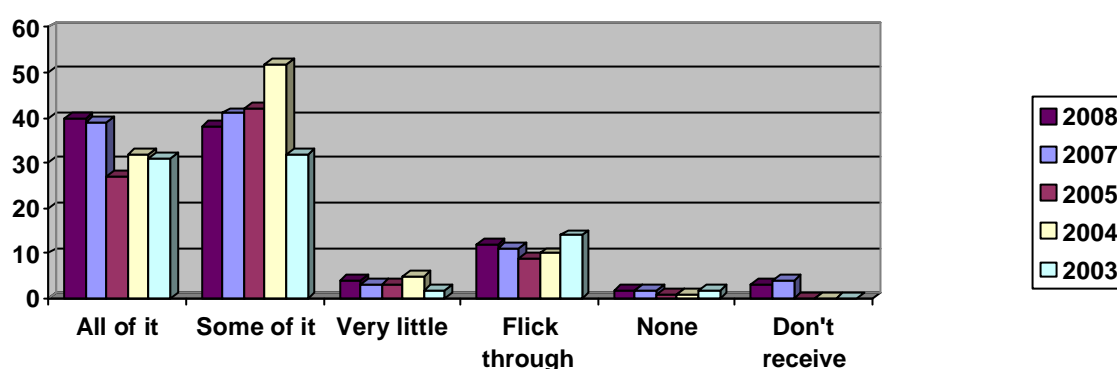
We have asked the Citizens' Panel questions about the format and content of NED News/the NEWS since 2003. This information is used to inform decision making regarding improvements and changes to the publication. Tables showing the results of these surveys over the years can be found in Appendix C.

We asked Panel members whether they receive a copy. Reassuringly, the vast majority

(93%) remain aware of receipt – a figure that has risen significantly since 2003 but remained stable over 2007/08.

Respondents tend to read all of it (40%) or some of it (38%), with very few just flicking through (12%), reading very little (4%) or none of it (2%). Again, the proportion reading all of the publication has risen over the years but remains stable between 2007 and 2008 (see Appendix C).

**Q How much of each issue of “the NEWS” do you generally read?**



We asked respondents to rate ‘the NEWS’ on a range of aspects. The response to each of these aspects was positive with very few considering the publication to be poor on any feature.

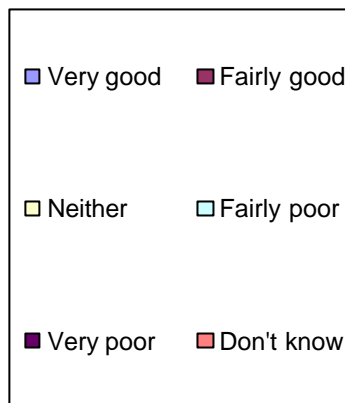
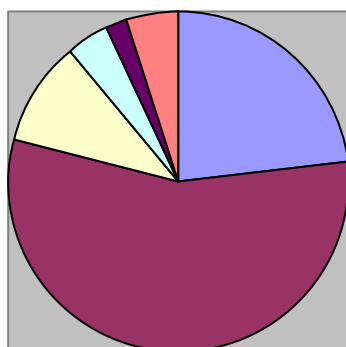
**How would you rate ‘the NEWS’ on the following aspects?**

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Easy to read	40	48	6	1	1	5
Attractiveness	22	51	16	5	1	5
Relevant	23	50	14	6	2	6
Informative	28	51	11	4	1	5
Colourful	25	42	24	3	1	6
Interesting	20	49	17	7	3	5
Keeps me up to date	22	51	14	5	2	6
Well laid out	24	47	18	3	1	7

These figures are very consistent over time. The latest figures show the highest proportion of “very good” responses over the years for every aspect apart from attractiveness (see Appendix C).

Overall, 'the NEWS' was considered to be good by almost 8 in 10 respondents (79%).

**Q Overall, how would you rate 'the NEWS'?**



To gauge the balance of future content of the magazine, we asked whether respondents would like to see more articles or fewer for various topics.

In line with previous years, the subjects that most people would like to see more of in the future were very consistent with those mentioned in previous years. They were:

- Features on the local area
- New Council services on offer
- Community news
- Walks in the local area

Again in 2008, they would like to see less on:

- Reader quizzes and competitions
- Activities involving councillors

**Information about your Council and its services**

**Q14a Other**

Do not consider Sheffield Star to be local  
Don't know what NEDDC are doing  
Planning decisions from NEDDC - local district councillor  
Tenants and residents meeting  
Local free magazines and newspapers are not always delivered to our home  
Clay Cross community partnership meeting  
We don't get a local free newspaper  
Housebound - news has to be brought to me  
Viewpoint newsletter  
Councillor surgery

**Q14b Other**

Make the decisions more obvious. Have a page titled 'decisions'  
I am happy with the current arrangements  
Email notification link to the council website  
Set up email for people  
Clay Cross community newspaper. Not had one for 2 months  
Look North should include NE Derbyshire in its programme  
Could be clearer where to find on internet  
Clay Cross community partnership meeting  
Don't receive reflections magazine  
Need independent analysis review  
Email

**Participation in Swimming****Q Have you been swimming in a local swimming pool in the last three months?***(Please X one box only)*

	%
Yes	20
No	80

**Q If you answered yes to the previous question, which pool do you normally swim at?**If you swim at more than one pool, x the one where you swim most of the time. *(Please X one box only)*

<i>Total number of responses: 123</i>	
	%
Dronfield Sports Centre	21
Sharley Park Leisure Centre, Clay Cross	23
Eckington Swimming Pool	17
Health club	12
Hotel pool	4
Private pool	4
School, college or university	-
Other	19

**Q Generally, when you visit this pool, do you feel safe??***(Please X one option on each row only)*

	Yes	No	N/A
<i>Total number of responses: 257</i>			
	%	%	%
In the car park	64	4	32
In the changing rooms	66	2	32
In the pool	66	1	33
In other parts of the building	62	2	36

**Q At which times of the day or evening would you prefer to swim at your local pool?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>			
	%	%	%
Very early in the morning (5.30-7.00am)	4	2	2
Early in the morning (7.00-8.30)	7	3	4
Morning (8.30-11.30)	17	8	10
Lunchtime (11.30-1.00pm)	7	3	3
Early afternoon (1.00-3.00)	9	3	8
Late afternoon (3.00-4.30)	4	4	3
Early evening (4.30-6.00)	7	3	3
Evening (6.00-9.00)	12	3	3
Late evening (9.00-10.30)	27	4	4

**Q Why do you like to go swimming?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Just enjoy it	5
To keep fit (not just to lose weight)	4
To meet with friends	-
To take children	-
To lose weight	10
To improve my performance	8
To train or take part in a competition	8
To help with my illness, injury, disability	22
As a holiday activity	7
To improve my health	12
Other	2
Don't swim	17



**Q If you have not been swimming in a local pool in the last three months, please tell us the main reasons why? (Please X all that apply)**

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Can't swim	15
Wouldn't enjoy it	10
Health isn't good enough	12
Not really interested	14
It's difficult to find the time	17
I am too old	6
No transport	2
Car parking is not convenient	1
I have concerns about safety or security	2
Location isn't convenient	2
No one to go with	7
Style of pool ie plain rectangle	2
It costs too much	5
Opening times aren't convenient	2
I exercise enough already	10
I'm too unfit	4
Facilities are out of date	3
Pool gets too busy	7
I'm too lazy	5
Other	12

**Q What, if anything, would encourage you to use the Council's swimming pools or swim more often? (Please X all that apply)**

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Nothing, I don't like swimming	15
Nothing, I can't swim	12
If I had better health	10
If the pool was less busy	15
If I had more free time	25
Improved parking facilities	3
Improved security	3
Safer neighbourhood	-
Better facilities eg café, changing rooms	10
Longer opening hours	6
If I had more energy/motivation	12
Support for my specific health needs	4
Cheaper admission prices	18
If I had someone to go with	8
Updated facilities	7
Improved public transport	2
A warmer welcome/friendlier staff	3
Help with childcare or crèche facilities	1
Adult only sessions	18
Better information about what is available	5

Swimming lessons for adults	4
Other	5

**Q If swimming at Council run pools was free for those age 60 or over, would you or members of your family swim more often?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Yes, I would	21
Yes, family members would	12
No	37
Don't know	20

**Q If swimming at Council run pools was free for those aged 16 or under, would you or members of your family swim more often?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Yes, I would	8
Yes, family members would	29
No	42
Don't know	22

**Q Are you aware of the following activities held at the local pools in North East Derbyshire?**

*(Please X one option on each row only)*

<i>Total number of responses: 419</i>		
	Yes	No
	%	%
Aquacise	43	58
Aqua natal	27	73
Aqua fun for children	51	49
Parent and baby swimming	62	38
Lane swimming	56	44
Swim fit	29	72
Learn to swim programme for children	69	31
Learn to swim programme for adults	48	53

**Q The Council reviews the fees for leisure facilities every year. Currently the cost for an adult to swim is £2-70. In your view is the cost of adult swimming in North East Derbyshire facilities.....?**

*(Please X one only)*

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Too expensive so that it prevents me attending	9
Expensive but worth it for the benefits it gives	10
Good value for money	39

In line with other providers	18
None of these	4
Don't know	20

**Q Currently the cost to swim for a child or young person under the age of 16 to swim is £1-65. In your view is the cost of junior swimming in North East Derbyshire facilities..... (Please X one only)**

<i>Total number of responses: 544</i>	
	%
Too expensive so that it prevents me attending	6
Expensive but worth it for the benefits it gives	7
Good value for money	34
In line with other providers	15
None of these	3
Don't know	24

### **Information About Your Council and it's Services**

**Q What local media do you currently use?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

	%
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	76
Local free magazines	47
Local commercial radio	64
The internet	46
BBC local radio	12
Daily local paid-for newspaper	27
Local TV	22
Derbyshire Times	30
Local free newspapers	69
Village or Parish newsletter	8
Council website	27
None of these	1

**Q How do you usually find out about North East Derbyshire District Council and the decisions it makes?** *(Please X all that apply)*

	%
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	81
Local free magazines	36
Local commercial radio	15
The internet	11
BBC local radio	19
Daily local paid-for newspaper	7
Local TV	46
Derbyshire Times	45
Local free newspapers	60
Village or Parish newsletter	26
Council website	9
Local Councillor	7
Word of mouth	32
Libraries	20
Posters	13
Leaflets	18
Tourist Information Centres	6
None of these	1
Don't know	1
Other	1

**Q How would you prefer to find out about the Council and the decisions it makes?** *(Please X all that apply)*

	%
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	57
Local free magazines	28
Local commercial radio	12
The internet	11
BBC local radio	15
Daily local paid-for newspaper	6
Local TV	33
Derbyshire Times	32
Local free newspapers	47
Village or Parish newsletter	26
Council website	9
Local Councillor	11
Word of mouth	8
Libraries	16
Posters	14
Leaflets	23
Tourist Information Centres	7

None of these	-
Don't know	2
Other	1

**The Council’s Magazine For Residents, “the NEWS”**

**Q Do you receive a copy of “the NEWS”?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	%
Yes	93
No	4
Don’t know	3

**Q How much of each issue of “the NEWS” do you generally read?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	%
All of it	40
Some of it	38
Very little	4
Just flick through	12
None of it	2
Do not receive a copy	3

**Q How would you rate “the NEWS” on the following aspects?**

*(Please X one box per row)*

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don’t know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Easy to read	40	48	6	1	1	5
Attractiveness	22	51	16	5	1	5
Relevant	23	50	14	6	2	6
Informative	28	51	11	4	1	5
Colourful	25	42	24	3	1	6
Interesting	20	49	17	7	3	5
Keeps me up to date	22	51	14	5	2	6
Well laid out	24	47	18	3	1	7

**Q Overall, how would you rate “the NEWS”?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	%
Very good	23
Fairly good	56
Neither	10
Fairly poor	4
Very poor	2
Don’t know	5

**Q In terms of the content of “the NEWS”, would you like to see more or less of the following?**

*(Please X one box per row)*

	More %	Less %	About right %	Don't know %
Community news	52	4	38	7
In-depth features on Council services	36	8	49	7
New Council services on offer	56	3	34	7
Walks in the local area	49	7	33	12
Arts and culture in the area	33	10	47	10
Activities involving young people	28	9	46	17
Activities involving Councillors	17	25	44	13
Short articles	31	6	51	13
Features on the local area	64	2	28	7
Opening times of offices	18	5	66	11
Reader quizzes and competitions	20	24	45	11
Information on other public sector services eg Police, Health Service etc	46	4	42	8
Events that the Council organises	30	6	54	10
Providing links to community groups	22	6	58	15
Providing contact details for Council services	29	2	61	8

## Appendix C

### Citizens' Panel – December 2008 – Trend Data

#### Information About Your Council and it's Services

Q What local media do you currently use? *(Please X all that apply)*

	Sept 2007	Dec 2008
	%	%
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	75	76
Local free magazines	47	47
Local commercial radio	24	64
The internet	24	46
BBC local radio	30	12
Daily local paid-for newspaper	15	27
Local TV	75	22
Derbyshire Times	47	30
Local free newspapers	65	69
Village or Parish newsletter	29	8
Council website	5	27
None of these	2	1

**Q How do you usually find out about North East Derbyshire District Council and the decisions it makes?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

	<b>Sept 2007</b>	<b>December 2008</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	76	81
Local free magazines	40	45
Local commercial radio	56	60
The internet	30	36
BBC local radio	8	7
Daily local paid-for newspaper	25	26
Local TV	14	15
Derbyshire Times	18	19
Local free newspapers	41	46
Village or Parish newsletter	7	9
Council website	7	11
Local Councillor	6	7
Word of mouth	27	32
Libraries	16	20
Posters	10	13
Leaflets	15	18
Tourist Information Centres	8	6
None of these	1	1
Don't know	1	1
Other	1	1

**Q How would you prefer to find out about the Council and the decisions it makes?**

*(Please X all that apply)*

	<b>September 2007</b>	<b>December 2008</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
The Council's magazine/the NEWS	44	57
Local free magazines	22	32
Local commercial radio	37	47
The internet	20	28
BBC local radio	5	6
Daily local paid-for newspaper	23	26
Local TV	9	12
Derbyshire Times	12	15
Local free newspapers	24	33
Village or Parish newsletter	8	9
Council website	7	11
Local Councillor	12	11
Word of mouth	5	8
Libraries	11	16
Posters	11	14
Leaflets	20	23
Tourist Information Centres	5	7
None of these	1	-
Don't know	3	2
Other	1	1

**The Council's Magazine For Residents, "the NEWS"**

**Q Do you receive a copy of "the NEWS"?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	2008	2007	2005	2004	2003*
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	93	91	82	78	79
No	4	6	12	13	15
Don't know	3	3	4	9	6

*\* Publication was NED News at this time*

**Q How much of each issue of "the NEWS" do you generally read?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	2008	2007	2005	2004	2003
	%	%	%	%	%
All of it	40	39	27	32	31
Some of it	38	41	42	52	32
Very little	4	3	3	5	2
Just flick through	12	11	9	10	14
None of it	2	2	1	1	2
Do not receive a copy*	3	4	n/a	n/a	n/a

*\*This option was added in 2007*

**Q How would you rate “the NEWS” on the following aspects?**

*(Please X one box per row)*

	Very Good				Fairly Good				Neither				Fairly Poor				Very Poor				Don't know			
	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Easy to read	40	33	26	34	48	56	43	53	6	6	10	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	5	5	-	-
Attractiveness	22	22	14	23	51	52	39	45	16	17	20	28	5	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	5	5	-	-
Relevant	23	18	13	16	50	55	42	56	14	15	20	25	6	4	2	3	2	2	1	1	6	6	-	-
Informative	28	23	18	23	51	57	45	55	11	10	15	20	4	4	2	2	1	1	-	1	5	5	-	-
Colourful	25	23	14	23	42	47	35	39	24	22	25	32	3	2	4	5	1	1	1	1	6	6	-	-
Interesting	20	16	11	18	49	51	40	49	17	19	22	27	7	6	4	5	3	3	1	1	5	5	-	-
Keeps me up to date	22	20	16	19	51	51	39	47	14	16	20	28	5	5	3	5	2	2	1	1	6	6	-	-
Well laid out	24	23	13	20	47	47	38	45	18	20	24	31	3	3	4	3	1	1	-	1	7	6	-	-

*\*This option was added in 2007*

**Q Overall, how would you rate “the NEWS”?**

*(Please X one box only)*

	2008	2007	2005	2004	2003
	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	23	20	19	23	11
Fairly good	56	56	56	55	50
Neither	10	13	20	20	15
Fairly poor	4	3	4	2	4
Very poor	2	2	1	1	1
Don't know*	5	6	-	-	-

*\*This option was added in 2007*

**Q In terms of the content of “the NEWS”, would you like to see more or less of the following?**

*(Please X one box per row)*

	More				Less				About right				Don't know*			
	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04	08	07	05	04
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Community news	52	58	53	54	4	2	2	3	38	32	45	40	7	8	-	3
In-depth features on Council services	36	41	33	38	8	7	6	6	49	42	61	50	7	10	-	5
New Council services on offer	56	63	72	69	3	2	1	1	34	27	27	26	7	9	-	3
Walks in the local area	49	55	64	59	7	6	5	4	33	26	32	32	12	13	-	5
Arts and culture in the area	33	41	43	43	10	6	7	6	47	39	50	40	10	14	-	11
Activities involving young people**	28	27	-	-	9	9	-	-	46	46	-	-	17	18	-	-
Activities involving Councillors	17	19	16	19	25	20	28	22	44	44	56	51	13	17	-	7
Short articles	31	36	39	38	6	5	5	4	51	45	56	51	13	14	-	7
Features on the local area	64	68	70	70	2	2	2	2	28	22	28	26	7	8	-	2
Opening times of offices	18	18	27	20	5	5	3	5	66	62	71	66	11	14	-	9
Reader quizzes and competitions	20	21	25	25	24	23	22	18	45	42	53	47	11	15	-	10
Information on other public sector services eg Police, Health Service etc	46	53	62	61	4	2	2	3	42	35	36	32	8	10	-	4
Events that the Council organises**	30	33	-	-	6	4	-	-	54	52	-	-	10	11	-	-
Providing links to community groups**	22	25	-	-	6	5	-	-	58	55	-	-	15	15	-	-
Providing contact details for Council services**	29	33	-	-	2	3	-	-	61	52	-	-	8	12	-	-

*\*This option was not included in 2005*

*\*\* This option was added in 2007*