# Bolsover District Council Citizens’ Panel

# SUMMARY REPORT

# November 2021

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# Final Report

Kath Drury 24 March 2022

Sarah Kay 24 March 2022

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Cllr Duncan McGregor 24 March 2022

Scrutiny and Elections Officer 24 March 2022

# Methodology

The Bolsover District Council Citizens’ Panel was established to obtain residents’ views on a variety of topics. The panel is currently made up of 330 residents; 61% retired, 18% full-time employed, 6% part-time employed, 5% self-employed, 4% who look after their homes, 4% not being able to work and 2% unemployed.

Residents are typically mailed or emailed a questionnaire twice a year and November’s survey contained six sides of questions including a section of demographics questions.

A total of 330 questionnaires were sent out on Monday 15th November and respondents were given two weeks to complete/return their responses.

A total of 162 responses were received (72 paper, 97 emails), reflecting a response rate of 51%.

Copies of the questionnaire and Viewpoint Newsletter can be found on the Ask Derbyshire site and on the Council’s website.

# Profile

The information in this section compares the profile of respondents to this survey with the District as a whole at the time of the 2011 Population Census. This helps indicate how representative the findings are and should be taken into consideration alongside the results.

# Respondents to Survey:

## Sex

Male: 58

Female: 42

## Age Group

16 – 24 years: 0

25 – 64 years: 39

65 years and over: 62

## Disability

Yes, limited a lot: 15

Yes, limited a little: 26

No disability: 56

# 2011 Census Population Figures

## Sex

Male: 49

Female: 51

## Age Group

16 – 24 years: 12

25 – 64 years: 63

65 years and over: 25

## Disability

Yes, limited a lot: 11

Yes, limited a little: 11

No disability: 78

Responses to this questionnaire are over-representative of males and those over the age of 65 and under-representative of females, the age group of 65 years and over, and of the younger age groups compared to the age profile of those aged 16+ in the District at the time of the 2011 population census.

# Electric Cars

The Council is looking into the current and future need for Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs) on public land across the District. By 'Electric Vehicle' in this instance, we mean 'Electric Car'. We are specifically trying to gauge whether there is current demand for EVCPs on Council-owned car parks and parking areas and whether public charging points would encourage a higher take up of Electric Car. No trend data is available for comparability since this is the first time we are running this exercise.

The clear majority of respondents (96%) are not in ownership of an electric car and more than half of the respondents (60%) stated they are not planning on buying or leasing one in the next three, five or ten years. Those who are open to the idea said they would consider getting an electric car in three years (8%) while almost one sixth (14%) said they would in five years and close to a fifth (19%) said they would in ten years.

Almost a third of respondents (30%) said there was already a suitable location to park or charge the electric car in their area while 43% said there was not and close to a third (27%) said they did not know.

When asked if residents would consider purchasing an Electric Car if charge points were made available in parking areas in their local area, the clear majority (60%) said ‘no’ while almost a quarter (22%) said ‘yes’ and almost a fifth (18%) stated it was not applicable to them.

Interestingly, if the Council were to install charging points on off-street car parks in resident areas, the clear majority said they would use them (64%) while one sixth (15%) said ‘no’ and the remaining 21% said it was not relevant to them as – as illustrated below.

## If charging points were installed in your area would you use them:

Yes 64%

No 15%

N/A 21%

Those in the majority who responded to questions relating to use and ownership of electric cars live in the following wards:

Bolsover 37%

Clowne 20%

Shirebrook 8%

South Normanton 8%

Whitwell 7%

Creswell 4%

Blackwell 4%

Pinxton 4%

Langwith 3%

Barlborough 3%

Pleasley 2

# Planning and Enforcement

Good planning enforcement is a key component in how we look after our District.

Unauthorised developments can have serious and adverse impacts on neighbours and the local environment. Enforcement helps maintain confidence in the planning system and ensures anyone who engages properly with the planning process is treated fairly. Residents were asked a range of questions in order to ascertain their levels of awareness. Once again, no trend data is available for comparability since this is the first time we are running this exercise.

When asked if respondents were aware of the Council’s Planning Enforcement Plan, the clear majority (74%) were not aware and the same amount (74%) did not know how to report a Planning Enforcement issue. When asked if respondents had used the Council's Online Reporting Form to raise a planning enforcement concern, the overwhelming majority (94%) had not. Those who had not used it before (62%) stated that it was not applicable to them while others reported a concern by either phoning the Council (18%), emailing the Council (9%), speaking directly to an Elected Member (5%), visiting Council premises and talking to a member of staff (4%) or writing to the Council (3%).

## Self-Service

The vast majority of respondents (64%) had not used the self-service option on the website while 36% had done.

## Website

Half of the respondents (50%) are aware that you can view plans and decisions on the website before making contact with the Council while 26% were not aware and 23% had not needed to. Almost half of the respondents (45%) were aware they could check planning pages on the website to see if an item already had planning permission while close to a third (29%) were not aware while 27% had not needed to.

# Communications

It is important to the Council that it is reaching residents using the correct channels and with content of interest. Residents were asked a series of questions to gauge their satisfaction with the Council’s communications function.

## ‘In Touch’ Magazine

When asked if residents received a copy of the Council’s quarterly ‘In Touch’ magazine, over 8 in 10 (88%) confirmed they did and positively, over half (54%) read all of it while just over a fifth (22%) only read some of it and over one-tenth read the bits which interest them (12%) reflecting a 5% and 13% increase from 2019 and 2017 respectively.

When asked how they would rate the magazine, 72% residents responded favourably saying they thought it was good; fairly good (51%) or very good (21%) which compares with 76% in 2019 saying it was fairly good (47%) or very good (29%) and 67% in 2017 saying they thought it was fairly good (46%) or very good (21%) ▲

## Website

When asked if residents had ever visited the Council’s website, almost two-thirds (63%) confirmed they had while the remaining 37% had not. When asked about the main reason/s for visiting the Council’s website, the majority stated it was to report a problem (36%), to obtain information on planning issues (36%), to find information on events (30%) or find out about leisure activities (28%).

The majority of respondents found what they were looking for (93%) and the 7% who did not find what they were looking for said it was for the following reasons:

* Search did not show relevant information (five people)
* Unclear where to go find the information (four people)
* Too slow – timed out/gave up (one person)
* Other – “The link did not work” (one person)

Those who have never visited the Council’s website said it was because they have never needed to (36%), they contact the Council in other ways (31%), don’t have access to the Internet (24%) or do not want to use the Internet (7%). When asked about how easy respondents found it to navigate the website, more than half (61%) found it fairly or very easy.

The majority of respondents visited the Council’s website for the following reasons:

Find information on planning issues 36%

Report a problem 36%

View upcoming events 30%

Browse the news 31%

To view leisure activities 28%

Other 23%

Find Council opening times 10%

Business information 9%

Pay a bill 7%

Apply for Council Housing 2%

## Themes from those who selected ‘other’ reasons for visiting the Council’s website include:

* Bulky waste collection
* Recycling depots
* Report issues with bin emptying
* Info on recycling
* Bin collection dates
* Closing of roads
* Covid-19
* Looking for handyman service

## Social Media

Bearing in mind the demographic of the Citizens’ Panel when considering the results in this section; 61% of panel members are retired and 56% are over the age of 65.

When asked if respondents used social media in general, more than half (55%) said they do while the remaining (45%) do not which compares with 51% who did in 2019 and 49% who did not.

Those who use social media on a regular basis use Facebook the most (43%) followed by YouTube (24%), Instagram (13%) and Twitter (9%). Those who do follow the Council on social media, follow the Council on YouTube (42%), Instagram (33%) and Twitter (33%).

The majority use social media for keeping in touch with family and friends (40%), for getting general information (37%) and for getting news (11%). Those who have never visited any social media sites before attribute it to the fact they do not want to use social media (28%) and they prefer contacting the Council in other ways (16%).

## Local Media

When asked which local media residents use, the Council’s magazine, ‘In Touch’ was the most popular (75%) followed by the Council’s website (31%). Residents said they usually find out about the Council via ‘In Touch’ (72%) and the Council’s website (27%). The majority would prefer to find out about the Council via ‘In Touch’ (69%) or via the Council’s website (33%).

## Bolsover TV

When asked if residents have seen an episode of Bolsover TV, 31% confirmed they had which is more than double the amount (14%) in 2019 ▲

When asked what respondents thought about the channel, feedback was generally positive with comments as follows:

Excellent!

Offers insight into events and general work the Council is involved in.

Really enjoy this, it’s not too long, it’s interesting content-nice to see other areas in District.

Very good informative and found things out about my local area.

Very varied, interesting and informative.

Like the chair exercises! More like these please.

Limited in content.

Fairly interesting.

More reports on local Sports Clubs would be useful.

Not always relevant to my locality.

Amateurish production but interesting and relatable content.

The presenter doesn’t know how to pronounce the name ‘*Bolsover’* properly.

When asked about what sort of content residents would like to see on Bolsover TV in future, residents said:

Local information and developments planned.

Local events happening/happened, planning and major developments.

More of the history of our area and more of the stuff like nature and local footpaths.

Work of local charities.

Upbeat stories which make people proud of the town.

Sports or other activities.

Availability of local exercise groups.

Updates on new initiatives, services and facilities in the Bolsover District.

More Clowne-related stories please.

Community Welfare items.

Plenty of volunteers doing good work-how about featuring some.

Local events before they happen to encourage people to go.

## Internet Access

The vast majority of respondents said they accessed the internet on their Home PC (64%) which is down 7% from 71% in 2019 and down from 80% in 2017. More than half of the respondents (52%) said they access the internet on their mobile phone which is 3% higher than 49% in 2019. Nearly a quarter of respondents (44%) access the internet on their tablet which is up 5% from 39% in 2019 ▲

There were 18 respondents who said they have no Internet access and indeed have no plans to get access; this compares with 25 people saying the same in 2019.