Welcome...

The first survey of 2008 covered Equality and Service Provision, Leisure Services and our Website.

The survey was sent to 954 people and 447 were returned giving a response rate of 47%.

This survey’s lucky winner!

Mrs R Bostock completed the last Talkback survey and entered our prize draw. First out of the hat – she wins high street shopping vouchers for £30.

Do you know of anybody else that would like to become a member of Talkback?

Talkback helps us find out what residents views and opinions are on a range of services and issues. The views of panel members are important in helping us improve local areas and the way we deliver our services.

Every effort is made to ensure the panel mirrors the population of the city. Panel members are selected on the basis of where they live, age, ethnicity etc.

The results of all surveys are examined by officers in the Council who, together with your elected Councillors, use the panel’s views to help develop local policies and improve services.

Anybody interested in joining Talkback can do so by calling 01865 252057 or going to www.oxford.gov.uk/talkback
Equality and Service Provision

● In general the Council’s efforts towards accessibility (access to buildings for wheelchair users or other specific needs, those whose first language is not English etc) were recognised.

● Public Toilets were the area with the most problems regarding physical accessibility.

● 12% of panel members had experienced some difficulty communicating with us and most of this was due to the telephone system. The main problems were phone messages not being returned and calls being directed to the wrong departments.

● The majority of respondents felt there were adequate opportunities to give feedback on Council services, 6% felt there were not. The clarity of information from us received cautious approval with some respondents keen to ensure leaflets and communications avoid jargon and use plain English.

What we are doing to tackle your concerns:

● The results have helped us to shape the Corporate Equalities Scheme Action Plan for 2008-11. This Action Plan sets out our priorities for the next 3 years and will be monitored through our Performance management system.

Leisure Services

● Around half of respondents had used Council-run sports facilities in the past year. Ferry Sports Centre and Temple Cowley Pools were the most popular facilities.

● A third of the panel had used Privately-run sports facilities with David Lloyd and Esporta being the most popular.

● Those using privately-run facilities were more likely to use the sports facilities than those using council-run facilities.

● Lack of time and cost were the most popular barriers to use, cost was a significant factor for 17-24 year olds and the disabled.

● Trial membership, flexible hours and better quality facilities were the top three incentives to use facilities more often.

● Users wanted clean and well-maintained facilities, adequate provision for families (including space and privacy in the changing areas) and reasonable prices.
What will happen with the results?

- The results have helped us with the review we have carried out into pricing to improve our level of value for money to customers.
- They have helped in our review of our Customer Standards and we are taking specific action at improving standards for cleanliness of the facilities.
- There was some support for a change in opening times so we are reviewing the opening times of our facilities.
- We are making improvements at Temple Cowley Pools by undertaking a comprehensive refurbishment of the Fitness Room. This will include new equipment in line with our Aspires brand at Ferry Sports Centre and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.

Website

- Just over a third of the panel had visited the website in the past 4 months.
- The majority of panel members were unaware of the improved accessibility features but those who rated them found them to be ‘good’ or ‘excellent.’
- Comments about the website called into question the search facility as several users had problems accessing the information they wanted.
- Some respondents also thought the website would benefit from more events being listed on the web pages.

What will happen with the results?

- We have upgraded the search facility on our website to make it easier to find the information you are looking for e.g. allotments.
- By autumn 2008 we will have a new events section on our website which will include details, photos and maps of events.
- The Text2Speech facility on our website is proving popular especially to those with visual impairments, we will be making further enhancements to this service to ensure it continues to meet the needs of users.
Our Priorities 2008–2011

More housing, better housing for all

Stronger and more inclusive communities

Improve the local environment, economy and quality of life

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

Tackle climate change and promote environmental resource management

Transform the Council by improving value for money and service performance

For details see www.oxford.gov.uk

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