What you told us in 2012 and what we did...
Dear Talkback panel member

Thank you very much indeed for your support in 2012. In 2012 you answered our questions on four subjects and this report summarises the results and what we have done since the surveys. The Talkback panel is a well-known and respected source of opinion on issues affecting Oxford and the information you provide continues to influence Oxford City Council’s work in many areas, for example:

- In our Summer 2012 survey you told us that you would visit Oxford city centre more often if there was a better variety of shops. We are developing the Clarendon centre, hoping to agree to an extension of the Westgate centre, as well as carrying out a review of the Covered Market.

- Based upon your responses to our Dancin’ Oxford Festival questions, we will have more events that appeal to older people and more family-friendly activities.

- In Autumn 2012 you told us that domestic burglary is the crime that most concerns you. We will continue to offer increased security measures to those who have been burgled, or who are vulnerable and at risk of burglary.

- Your comments on empty dwellings have been considered in detail as part of our work on the new Empty Property Strategy.

With grateful thanks for your help in 2012 and we look forward to hearing your views in 2013.

Consultation Team
We asked for your views on Oxford city centre and the facilities that the city council and its partners provide. This included some questions that had been asked in a 2011 talkback survey, plus some questions about use of the city centre in the evening.

You told us...

Your overall satisfaction with the city centre is 80%, which is the same as the Spring 2011 survey. This is what you said about your visits to the city centre:

- Your top reasons for visiting Oxford city centre are: to shop during the day (92%); to visit during the evening (83%); and during the day for leisure (80%).
- Food shops, non-food shops and the library are the most used facilities.
- Your main form of transportation into the city centre is bus or coach for both daytime (62%) and evening (46%).
- You would visit the city centre more often if there was an improvement to the range of shops, events and markets.

We did...

- Following the council’s granting of planning permission, works have commenced on extending the Clarendon Centre. Once complete later this year, there will be new shops, including an anchor H&M store.
- The Council is engaged in negotiations with the owners of the Westgate Shopping Centre with a view to agreeing a major extension to the centre that will increase the quantity and quality of the city centre retail offer.
- The Council is also conducting a strategic review of the Covered Market to ensure its continuing viability and the presence of independent retailers in the city centre.
- Car travel will continue to be restricted in the city centre because of the nature of its historic townscape and the narrow bridge accesses to the core area. The very high levels of public transport use help to address the challenge, but in addition, the Council is exploring a new method of traffic management.
The chart below shows factors considered to make Oxford city a “good place to live” ranked on importance vs satisfaction with the top right quadrant showing factors seen as both most important and where respondents were most satisfied.
We wanted to find out from you how effectively we promote Dancin’ Oxford, and asked for your views on the festival that was held in February and March 2012.

Summer Survey 2012: Dancin’ Oxford Dance Festival

You told us...

- That over a quarter of you had heard of the Dancin’ Oxford dance festival.
- It is important that events appeal to older people and children, and that they are free.
- You prefer to buy individual tickets rather than a ticket package.
- There is interest in a broad range of style of dance. The most popular types of dance mentioned were ballet/classical (13%), contemporary dance/modern ballet (12%), Latin dance (9%) and Ballroom (9%).
- 24% of you are likely to attend a Dancin’ Oxford future event. 50% of you are unlikely or unsure about whether you would attend a future event.

We did...

- Plan to increase coverage of the Dancin’ Oxford event through printed media, especially in the Oxford Times and Oxford Mail.
- For Dancin’ Oxford 2013 we will increase the number of events aimed at attracting older people, and include more family friendly events.
- Decide not to introduce ticket packages for the 2013 event.
- The Dancin’ Oxford 2013 will have a broader range of free events to encourage both newcomers and repeat visitors to the dance festival.

Dancin’ Oxford can encourage activity in all age groups particularly the young and elderly.
You told us...

- Nearly a third of responders stated that you are aware of someone who has difficulty finding somewhere to live in your area of the city.
- The most commonly cited reasons given for people having difficulty finding somewhere to live were a lack of affordable housing (40%), expensive rented accommodation (23%) and a shortage of council housing (9%).
- One in five panel members who responded are aware of an empty dwelling in their area, rising to a quarter of respondents in North East and Central areas.
- The unsightly nature of empty dwellings (76%), vandalism (40%) and devaluation of adjoining properties (38%) were perceived to be the biggest issues associated with empty dwellings. A wide range of other associated problems were also identified.
- Overall 94% of respondents felt it important that the Council should ensure that empty homes are brought back into use, and 84% believe that the Council should take formal action to ensure they are brought back into use.

We did...

- Your comments on Empty Properties have been considered in detail and have helped to shape the new Empty Property Strategy.
- Your overwhelming support for bringing Empty Properties back into use and for formal action to be taken where necessary, will influence decisions that we make when determining our course of action.

Autumn Survey 2012: Empty Dwellings

The impact on your neighbourhood of an empty dwelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devalued adjoining property</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural damage to adjoining property</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest infestation</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squatted in</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target for vandalism</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsightly</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We did…

- Continue to run our successful target hardening scheme, offering increased security measures to those who have been burgled, or who are vulnerable and at risk of burglary.

- Continue to use the Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGS) across Oxford to tackle communities’ local crime and anti-social behaviour concerns.

- Maintain our Nightsafe scheme to tackle alcohol-related crime and disorder. Nightsafe was extended to cover the whole of Oxford city in 2011 and includes:
  - Extra police officers on patrol at weekends.
  - Partner officers liaising closely with licensees.
  - Volunteer street pastors who operate on Friday nights.

- Produce an annual Community Safety Talkback report for Oxford and a series of reports based on the six geographic sectors of Oxford. The reports are shared with partners and are also used by the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership Steering Group, to help set community safety priorities for the coming years.

- Tasked Oxford City Council’s Community Response team to monitor and patrol anti-social behaviour hotspots. The team undertake environmental visual audits, issue fines for litter and dog-fouling and have recently been accredited under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme by Thames Valley Police, so that they can use a range of additional powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the city.

- Our Crime and Nuisance Action Team (CANAcT) work very closely with the local Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Community Response Team and support services to resolve anti-social behaviour. This close working has resulted in behaviour that may affect a person’s tenancy being challenged at an earlier stage before more serious enforcement action needs to be taken. However if the issue needs further action, Anti-social behaviour orders, injunctions and evictions can be used by the team.

You told us…

- Domestic burglary is your biggest concern. 47% are worried about this issue and 12% are very worried.

- Speeding vehicles and dangerous driving is an anti-social behaviour problem for 51% of respondents. Your other top concerns are: cars being parked inconveniently, dangerously or illegally (47%); and rubbish or litter lying around (37%).

- Fewer than one in five (18%) think that alcohol related antisocial behaviour in Oxford city centre is a problem during the day, but well over half (55%) think this was a problem at night. The comparable figures for 2011 were 20% and 58%.

- Overall, 46% of panel members agree that the police and council are dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour issues that matter in their area.

Get involved…

If you’d like to join one of our Focus Groups, please see the following page to find out how.
Get involved...

We would like to increase the number of people that are satisfied with the way we are dealing with antisocial behaviour. In order to do this we need to speak to those that are dissatisfied and explore the reasons why. We are planning to do this by running some focus groups with Talkback members and discussing reasons for dissatisfaction and ideas for improvement. The outcomes from these focus groups may lead to changes to some of our services and the way we deliver these services.

If you would be interested in taking part in one of our focus groups, we would be pleased to hear from you.

To get involved please contact Jill McEachern at jmceachern@oxford.gov.uk with your contact details.

Talkback reports are available to view at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation
Or we can send you copies on request. Please call: 01865 252057