

# November 2007 Citizens' Panel Survey

# Feedback of Results

In November 2007, we sent out our 16th Citizens' Panel survey. The survey was themed around issues of Waste and Sustainability. The topics covered were Climate Change, Composting, Purchasing Choices, Locally Produced Food, Water, Energy Efficiency, Biodiversity, and Information and Advice. We received 1,131 completed surveys by the closing date, representing a response rate of 59%. Thank you to those of you who responded!

This feedback sheet aims to highlight the main findings from the survey and provide you with some information about what officers are currently using the results for. The full results analysis can be downloaded from our website

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/citizenspanel](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/citizenspanel)

## **Climate Change**

The four main measures being taken in the county to help limit the effects of climate change are recycling, energy saving measures in the home, reducing emissions from car use and composting.

Overall you consider using alternatives to the car and recycling to be the most effective means to reduce carbon emissions.

## **Composting**

Currently 60% of you compost waste at home, a significant increase since we last asked about composting in November 2003 when 48% of the panel composted.

When we asked you what we could do to encourage you to compost your waste at home 41% of you said that continuing to sell subsidised compost bins is an encouraging factor, and 37% would be encouraged by provision of more information on how to compost.

## **Purchasing Choices**

We asked about the importance of various factors when buying goods and services from local businesses and overall the most important factor to you was that a business tries to reduce the amount of waste it produces.

## **Locally Produced Food**

94% of you do buy locally produced food at least sometimes, with 25% always trying to buy locally produced food and drink. When we asked you what would encourage you to buy more locally produced food, 79% of you said you would like increased availability of such produce, 71% would be encouraged by clear labelling as local and 60% favour making produce cheaper.

## **Water**

38% of you were affected by the flooding in Worcestershire last summer, and a large majority (87%) of you agree that flooding incidents are likely to occur more frequently in the future. We asked about measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of flooding and by far the most popular option was to prevent building in the flood plain (80% of you chose this as one of four preferred measures).

Concerning demand for water, there has been a shift towards a perception that we do receive enough rain to ensure a plentiful water supply - in 2003 only 21% of the panel agreed, but this has now increased to 40% of you.

When it comes to planning and development issues, 92% of you agree that water demands should be considered in the planning process and 93% agree that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should be incorporated into new developments.

### Energy Efficiency

When we asked you what would encourage you to better insulate your property or to install renewable energy systems at home, financial incentives such as a grant towards the cost or guaranteed reductions in fuel bills were the most popular options.

Overall you consider the most effective way of saving energy at home to be having adequate loft insulation. Other commonly chosen options are having double-glazing, turning off appliances when not needed, having wall insulation, and turning down heating thermostat by 1°C.

District councils and the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre are using the findings from this section in their work to improve the energy efficiency of homes in your area.

### Biodiversity

We asked about four issues to do with your local environment: seeing wild plants, seeing wild animals, preservation of urban green spaces and public open spaces, and retaining the distinctive landscapes of Worcestershire. All of these issues are important to the vast majority of you. 97% of you agree that the condition of your local environment has an impact on your quality of life.

### Information and Advice

Leaflets are generally your most popular medium for receiving information about issues of waste and sustainability. Around a third of you would like to use the County Council website to find out about such issues.

**In response to these findings our Sustainability Officer said:** “The responses to the questionnaire are helping us to understand residents’ attitudes to climate change and sustainability issues, including factors that could encourage sustainable behaviours. The findings will be presented at the Climate Change Conference in June, a meeting set up to review the existing Climate Change Strategy and to encourage organisations to increase their efforts to help limit climate change. Findings will also be feeding in to a variety of awareness raising campaigns on waste and sustainability”

**Our Strategic Planning Team said:** “The results from the questionnaire will be used to inform Worcestershire County Council’s investigations into the mitigation and adaptation to climate change at the County level, as part of our research series on Natural Resource Planning”

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To the best of our knowledge all information was correct at the time of printing: May 2008.