
Neighbourhood Services Best Value Review Focus Groups with Erewash Citizens Panel

16 February 2006

Final Report

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1 Methodology & Profile of Attendees

Background and Introduction

This report contains the results of two focus groups held on Thursday 16 February 2006 with 21 Citizen Panel members to inform the best value review of Neighbourhood Services.

The aims of the focus groups were to provide staff with the views of local residents on Neighbourhood Services, in order to inform the best value review, and specifically to:

- To generate ideas about how to improve key services delivered by Neighbourhood Services.
- To test reaction to some specific, new services.
- Investigate the reasons behind Citizen Panel questionnaire data indicating a drop in satisfaction with the black bin service.
- To find out how members of the public wanted the Council to work with local communities, to identify priorities for Neighbourhood Services.

Mail out and response rate

Written letters of invitation were sent out on 16 January 2006 to the 225 respondents to the November 2005, Citizen Panel who said they were interested in either receiving more information, being consulted on, or being involved in helping to develop one or more of the service areas within Neighbourhood Services.

53 responses were received by the deadline on 25 January and 11 were received after this date, giving an excellent overall response rate of 28%.

Respondents were selected on a first come, first served basis and where this allowed, were chosen to provide cross representation of wards, gender and age groups. Staff resources did not allow for the telephone recruitment of panel members- which would have made it possible to select a sample which more closely reflected the population of the Borough as a whole.

27 people were sent a letter of confirmation which included: the details of the event, the topics the groups would be discussing, an information sheet summarising the services provided by the directorate and a location map. The remaining respondents were either notified by telephone, e-mail or letter (depending how they contacted the Council initially) to advise them they would be put on the reserve list and contacted if another event was organised.

All respondents were telephoned 1-2 days before the event to check they could still attend. Six respondents gave their apologies before the event, and one person did not attend giving a 'drop out' rate of 26% although one person did turn up unexpectedly which brought the total number of attendees at the focus group to 21.

Structure of the event

The focus group was held at the Town Hall, Long Eaton between 6.00pm and 8.15pm on Thursday 16 February.

A detailed workshop plan was developed in conjunction with staff in Neighbourhood Services, and is appended to this report. The workshop started with a presentation to

illustrate how the various neighbourhood services impact on every residents' day-to-day life.



Attendees were divided into 2 groups, one group contained residents living in and around the Long Eaton, Sawley and Sandiacre area and contained 9 people, the other was for people living elsewhere in the Borough and contained 12 people.

The focus group discussions were structured around key questions which were displayed on a flip chart. The discussions were followed by a feedback session to all attendees highlighting the key results. All attendees were advised that the results will be available on the Council website and were given the opportunity to claim £10 each to cover their expenses incurred in attending.

Profile of respondents

Table 1 shows where attendees lived.

Table 1: Focus Group attendees by Ward

Ward	Focus Group attendees
	Number
Abbotsford	0
Breaston	3
Cotmanhay	0
West Hallam and Dale Abbey	0
Derby Road East	2
Derby Road West	0
Draycott and Stanton by Dale	0
Ilkeston Central	1
Ilkeston North	0
Hallam Fields	2
Kirk Hallam	2
Long Eaton Central	0
Nottingham Road	2
Ockbrook and Borrowash	2
Old Park Ilkeston	0
Sandiacre North	3
Sandiacre South	1
Sawley	1
Stanley	0
Little Hallam-Ilkeston	0
Wilsthorne	1
Little Eaton and Breadsall	1
Total	21

Table 2 highlights the profile of focus group attendees.

Table 2 Profile of Focus Group Attendees

Respondent Characteristic	Focus Group attendees
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	12
Female	9
<i>Age Group</i>	
25-34 years	1
35-44 years	4
45-54 years	2
55-59 years	3
60-64 years	3
65-74 years	7
75+ years	1
<i>Employment Status</i>	
Employed (Full Time, Part Time, Self Employed)	6
Employed part time	2
Self Employed	1
Wholly retired from work	10
Permanently sick/ disabled	1
<i>Ethnicity</i>	
White British or Irish	21
<i>Housing Tenure</i>	
Owned or mortgaged by you/family	21
<i>Car Ownership</i>	
None	1
One	12
Two or more	8

2 Key Findings

An analysis of the notes taken of the focus group discussions has highlighted a range of key findings, from which a series of recommendations have been developed. These are outlined below according to each question the groups were asked.

How to encourage more people to recycle and what people thought about using wheelie bins to store recyclable materials

Attendees were firstly advised about the Government recycling targets and then asked for ideas about how the Council could encourage residents to recycle more. Both groups suggested their wheelie bins needed to be emptied more frequently throughout the year, but also over the Christmas and Easter holidays when a lot of refuse is generated, *“Empty every week rather than fortnightly.”* A suggestion was made to give workmen the chance to volunteer to work over these periods.

Attendees were secondly asked for their response to the proposal to use wheelie bins to store recyclable materials. Both groups highlighted that storage of an extra wheelie bin could be a problem for some residents *“Storage of 3 bins would be a problem”* and suggested that a choice of storage containers should be offered. A smaller, narrower bin could be provided for recyclables.

There were a number of other ideas for how to encourage residents to recycle more, including:

- Providing residents with more information and instructions on how to recycle, what the recycled products are turned into, and provide some facts and figures on recycling rates.
- Encourage residents to put pressure on manufacturers and supermarkets to reduce the amount of packaging they use by completing customer comments cards at supermarkets.
- Weigh the amount of refuse collected and recycled from each house and offer residents reduced Council Tax rates if they recycle more, or have a prize for households recycling the most waste.
- Educate young people to recycle so it becomes normal behaviour.
- Provide workmen with enough time to talk to residents and promote recycling on their collection rounds.
- Use different types of bin e.g. one which compresses the contents or one bin divided into a number of compartments.

Three attendees were part of the brown bin trial, but felt that it would be better if there had been more publicity to raise awareness that this was a trial scheme.

How to overcome the problems with green bags

Attendees were advised why green bags were introduced to store recyclable materials, and were informed of some common complaints the Council has received about them- being blown about, not replaced when lost, getting wet and soiled when left outside and people having problems storing them. They were then asked for ideas about how to overcome these problems.

Both groups suggested that time should be built into the daily work program for workmen to use the Velcro on the bags to secure them to protruding objects.

A range of other suggestions were made:

- Provide zips or velcro that runs along the opening of the bag, to ensure that the contents do not spill out.
- Have a fluted bag design so they can be stacked inside each other, and include a weighed bottom in one (the bottle) bag to stop them blowing away.
- Litter split from the bags should be picked up by the workmen.
- Encourage people to re-use supermarket carrier bags to dispose of recyclables.
- Provide a clip on the bin to hang the bag from.



Reasons for dissatisfaction with the black bin service

Attendees were informed there had been a decrease in satisfaction with the service between November 2004 and 2005 and were asked to suggest why this might be.

The most often mentioned reason was that the bins are now emptied fortnightly in winter as well as in summer. The enforcement of the flat lid policy was also unpopular.

Other reasons were that:

- The collection of black bags at the side of brown bins has stopped: *“Why has the collection of black bags at the side of bins stopped?” “Need extra black bags next to the bins but the bin men won’t take them.”*
- There was concern about the smell of the bin and maggots resulting from fortnightly collections and a feeling that: *“nobody cares about ordinary members of the public”.*
- In group one there was a general feeling of anger that there were no waste collections for 3-4 weeks over the Christmas holiday- when more rubbish than

normal is generated. It was also highlighted that the north of the Borough has longer to wait for a collection than the south.

- It was highlighted that residents and local businesses are abusing recycling facilities at West Park.
- There was concern that the refuse collection process leaves a lot of litter on the street, which isn't collected up; *"Operatives tip the contents of one bin into another and... this leads to litter being left on the street, which tends to stay there."*
- Mention was also made of a lack of Civic Amenity site facilities in the Long Eaton area.

How people in local communities could tell the Council where to focus its attention on street scene improvements

Attendees were informed that the Council wants to give local communities more of a say in deciding priorities for improving the street scene, and the relevant street scene services were listed. People were asked for ideas about how to do this.

Both groups suggested using a questionnaire or notification form with Viewpoint and/or Council rates bills. Both groups also suggested some sort of local, neighbourhood based point of contact- this could be a venue where messages are left, a forum or a 'street scene champion' on each street.

Other suggestions were:

- To establish and publicise a dedicated hotline telephone number or e-mail which residents can use to notify the Council. From other comments raised, it is suggested that feedback to people who report litter problems should also be introduced.
- There was concern about litter, particularly away from town centres, and a perception that young people cause the litter problems. Education was felt to be an important part of the solution.

Some potential channels of communication were then listed, and the reaction of attendees to using them was gauged.

Parish Councils: received a mixed reaction, one group felt it was worthwhile, the other didn't know where to start.

Neighbourhood wardens: attendees hadn't seen the wardens and at least 3 people said they didn't associate them with the Council. People in both groups were not aware of their role: *"How do we know who these are?" "What exactly do they do?"*

Call Centre: was felt to be the best way to flag up urgent issues needing an immediate response.

Councillors: one group looked at this and didn't think it was fair to burden Councillors with enquiries of this sort or expect them to provide a rapid response.



How Neighbourhood Wardens can help reduce fear of crime, anti social behaviour and vandalism?

Group members were given some background information from the Citizen Panel questionnaires showing that the Council needs to do more to combat crime and tackle anti social behaviour and vandalism. Group members were asked for ideas for how Neighbourhood Wardens could help with this.

The suggestions from both groups were very similar- the commonly held view was that there needs to be more of them/ they need to be more visible especially in 'problem' areas, at the right time and they need to have more powers. Both groups expressed the view that only the Police can do anything to improve crime as only they have the necessary powers:

"Neighbourhood Wardens don't seem to work at night when most of the anti social behaviour occurs."

"Neighbourhood Wardens can't do anything about crime, only the Police can do that."

There was a strong suggestion that wardens should work with young people to foster Civic Pride and respect and there was a suggestion that young people should be encouraged to provide their views through surveys and focus groups.

3 Recommendations

Where no further data already exists to suggest that the wider population as a whole would support the recommendations then quantitative research should be undertaken to substantiate all of these recommendations, and particularly where the cost implications are high.

Bins and recycling

1. The Council should investigate the possibility of:

- offering residents a choice of containers to hold recyclable materials for collection.
- continuing bin collections over Christmas and Easter.

2. The Council should consider increasing publicity material about recycling- including advice on how to recycle properly, the reasons for recycling, what the recycled products are turned into and provide some facts and figures on recycling rates. This publicity should include campaigns or advice on how to put pressure on manufacturers and suppliers to reduce the amount of packaging waste produced, and could contain competitions encouraging residents to recycle more.

3. If black bin and bag collections must be reduced to meet Government targets then more publicity should be made available as to the reasons why, and this information should also include advice about how to overcome the problems of smell and maggots arising from fortnightly collections, as well as particular issues around wet pet waste for instance.

Green bags

4. The Council should explore the practicality of making the suggested design changes to the green bags. In the meantime waste operatives should be allowed more time to provide a higher quality service focussing on collecting spilt litter and securing the bags after they have been emptied.

Street Scene

5. The Council should consider including a feedback form in Viewpoint for residents to alert the Council to street scene issues and to encourage street champions, as well as providing a dedicated hot line number and e-mail address to enable a rapid response to street scene enquiries. The Council needs to be in a position to respond quickly to the high volume of enquiries that this may result in.

Neighbourhood Wardens

6. The role and existence of Neighbourhood Wardens should be publicised- this could be through wardens attending Community Forum and residents meetings. A local neighbourhood base needs to be established where the wardens can be contacted. A distinct warden uniform could be developed to distinguish Wardens as Erewash Borough Council employees, and one group member suggested that they shouldn't take on traffic warden duties if the Council wants residents to engage with them.

7. The Council should explore the possibility of a Junior Neighbourhood Warden scheme and other opportunities to work with young people to educate them to improve and look after the street scene.

8. The Council should consider how it can gain the views of young people on street scene issues.

General

9. Given the high level of interest in this event and Neighbourhood Services issues, it is recommended that if possible another event is held in Ilkeston, in order to encourage residents in the North of the Borough to attend. Comments made in the evaluation questionnaire and throughout the focus group discussions suggest people would like the opportunity for a question and answer session, which could be incorporated at the end of such an event.

10. It is also recommended that the Council consider establishing a representative panel of local residents who are interested in helping the Council to develop its Neighbourhood Services.

4 Discussion Results- Group One

This chapter provides the notes made by the scribe of this focus group discussion, they follow the question order outlined in the workshop plan and the questions have been re-produced in full.

Bin Collection and Recycling

Question 1 - How could we encourage people to recycle more of the materials we already collect?

Key points

“Empty bins more regularly”

“Empty every week rather than fortnightly” *(At least 6 people in the group acknowledged their agreement with this)*

“Need to educate people more about recycling, tell people **how** to recycle to encourage them to do it” “Should you take the tops off bottles?”, “Should you wash out bottles?”, “Need more instructions on how to recycle and what to do with containers”

“Telling people what is happening to the recycled materials may make more people sympathetic to it and encourage more recycling”, “Be good to have statistics on recycling”, “May be good to have an educational tape made”

“Encourage people by having prizes for the best recyclers”

“Get the bin men to talk to people more to encourage them to recycle”

“Need to encourage manufacturers to take more responsibility for their packaging. Complete complaint forms at supermarkets to force them to do something about it”, “Get supermarkets to use recyclable and sustainable packaging, you can make a difference”

Other comments made during this question:

“The green bags blow everywhere, there is a lot of rubbish left in the streets especially on a windy day and it puts people off. Also the bags are not secured properly by the bin men”

“There are a lot of things that can't be recycled such as yoghurt pots, orange juice cartons, egg boxes, polystyrene. Everything has a triangle on it and we can only recycle those with a 1,2 or 3 on it, all others can't be recycled”, “People need to be informed about what plastics can be recycled”

“In Belgium people are issued with a number of bags and everything else has to be recycled or an extra charge is made”

“The black bin **is** our limit”

“We already pay through our Council tax”

“Manufacturers have a responsibility for packaging”

“There are a hardcore of people who just won’t recycle”

“Groundfill sites are full”

“There was a big problem at Xmas this year we couldn’t recycle Xmas paper”

“In New Zealand an electronic weighing device is attached to your black bin, lighter bins are rewarded by money off council tax”

“Can’t recycle tyres anywhere”

“Does the Council get any money for reaching its 30% target – could that go towards reducing council tax?”

Question 2- Is anyone here in the recycling test scheme area?

No one was directly involved in the trial but three knew of it:

- One lady’s mother was on the trial
- One person had a friend who was on the trial and said it was “very good”
- One person said that he knew someone but they didn’t use it.

Question 3- What do you think about using wheelie bins to collect recyclables?

Key points

“Storage of 3 bins would be a problem” (*2 other people agreed with this comment*)

“Would like a green bin rather than a green bag”

“Excellent idea but could it be a smaller, narrower bin”

“Bins are difficult for disabled people to handle- too heavy” (*comment by disabled person*)

“Could people have a choice of bins or bags?”

Question 4 - Overcoming problems of green bags

Key points

“Men need to take more care to secure the bags and pick up litter that has blown away”

“How about zipped bags” (*2 or 3 other people thought this was a good idea*) Another person added “it’s still a bag though”

“Or Velcro that goes right across the bag to secure it”

“Why not have them fluted so they fit inside one another and have one slightly weighted e.g. the bottle bag to put all the others in so they don’t blow away”, “This bag could be a different colour from the rest”

“Why not provide a clip that fits on your existing bin to hang the green bags on”

Other comments made during this question:

“Men find it difficult to secure the bags because they’re so stiff to fold and wedge in a gap”

“Putting the bags out the night before encourages foxes to tear and empty the bags, they’re not secure”

Question 5 – Can you think of any reasons to explain the decrease in satisfaction with the black bin service?

Key points

The group reiterated comments made in Q.1.

Not collecting an additional black bag with the bin.

“Empty bins more regularly”

“Collect bins weekly through winter instead of fortnightly”

“Smell after 2 weeks especially in the summer”

“Had maggots after two weeks” (*x3 people*)

“Won’t take the bin if the lid isn’t shut” (*The reasons behind this decision were explained*)

Other comments made during this question:

“Why has the collection of black bags at the side of bins stopped?”, “Need extra black bags next to the bins but the bin men won’t take them” (*3 other people agreed that this was needed*)

“Black bins get very heavy”

“Nobody cares about the ordinary members of the public”

“Have to take stuff to the dump every week because I can’t get rid of my rubbish”

The group was quite cross at this point “Every Xmas I don’t understand why we don’t get a collection for 3 to 4 weeks when people have more than the normal amount of rubbish” (*other people agreed that this was unacceptable*), “It was 4 weeks for us this year, it’s ridiculous”, “Its worse in Ilkeston than Long Eaton, why the discrepancy between North and South?”

“Wet waste from pets needs emptying every week”

“Through last winter the bins were emptied weekly so why not this winter?”

“People who live on King Street in Ilkeston never had any recycling bins”

Rural collections only given 2 bags a week”

“Make sure you tip the bin men at Xmas to ensure they take any extra bags”

Recycling sites overflow- doesn't encourage recycling

Street Scene

Question 6 – How can people in local communities tell the Borough Council where to focus its attention?

Key Points

“Have more localised forums / residents groups where more local issues specific to your area can be discussed and problems sorted out more quickly”

“Have one person on every street responsible, they could have a reduction in council tax, to report problems”, “may encourage 'jobs worth' people”

Could send out information in Viewpoint or in your council tax to explain where and who people can contact to complain”, “Could have tear out forms to use throughout the year in Viewpoint or the Council Tax mailing to report issues”

“Have a better telephone system that everyone knows”, “just one number rather than loads”, “Have a dedicated hotline”, “use email”

Other comments made during this question:

“Have reported before but no-one gets back to you”

“Concentrate on Long Eaton and Ilkeston to the detriment of rural areas- needs to change”

“40m stretch in Breaston by the church which is always disgraceful” (*Lady quite cross about this*)

“Is anyone in charge of graffiti and litter?, it's never cleaned up”

“People blame the council but its an educational issue”

“Need more bins at school gates”

“Ilkeston is deteriorating”

“Would like to confront people who throw litter but fear for my safety”

have a name and shame policy for people caught littering.

Question 7 – How do people feel about going through the following channels of communication?

- **Parish Council:**

“Told to call EBC, then EBC say to call Parish it’s a viscous circle”

“Parish say that they’re only responsible if it’s on their land”

“No good”, “Don’t know where to start”

- **Questionnaires:**

Need to be simple. Good as can complete them in your own time.

Need analyse of satisfaction ratings by frequency of use.

- **Community Forums:**

Need to be more local- transport to venues is an issue in some areas.

- **Neighbourhood Wardens:**

“Never seen one”

“They should come to resident’s meetings”

“Don’t think of tem as representatives”

“What is their role?” “Needs to be explained”

“Seem unapproachable, don’t know anything about them”

“How do we contact them?” “Need a phone number or a box to leave notes in for them”

“Didn’t associate them with the council” (*3 people agreed with this comment*)

Neighbourhood wardens

Question 8 – How do you think Neighbourhood Wardens could help reduce people’s fear of crime?

“Need higher presence/ visibility.” “Make sure they are not mistaken for traffic wardens.”

“Focus on problem areas such as old people’s homes where they (skateboarders) hang about on ramps”

“Can they have communication with the police for a quick response?”

“Do they have powers”

Richard Ashley explained the role of the neighbourhood wardens and answered people's questions

Question 9 – How do you think Neighbourhood Wardens could help reduce anti-social behaviour?

“Give more power to fine, fixed penalties, hit them where it hurts (*in the pocket*)”

“Kids have nowhere to go”, They’ve got a new multi user place in Breaston”

“Kids not encouraged to do anything else”

“Not all attributable to youth, what about closing time at pubs?”

“Underage drinking in Ilkeston market place causes problems”

Question 10 – How do you think the wardens could help to reduce vandalism?

“Patrol areas where it takes place”

“Can’t do anything if they’ve no powers”

“Have they got transport to get anywhere?”

“CCTV not manned in Ilkeston”

“Community policeman – there’s not enough”, “Only one in Sandiacre”, “Only one in Kirk Hallam”

Key points re: wardens

- More wardens
- More obvious presence
- More powers

5 Discussion Results- Group Two (Sandiacre, Long Eaton & Sawley residents)

This chapter provides the notes made by the scribe of this focus group discussion, they follow the question order outlined in the workshop plan and the questions have been reproduced in full.

Bin collection & recycling

Question 1 - How could we encourage people to recycle more of the materials we already collect?

Question 2- Is anyone here in the recycling test scheme area?

Question 3- What do you think about using wheelie bins to collect recyclables?

Question 1 Key point

More refuse collections needed throughout the summer whilst also rolling out the brown bin trial to a wider range of the population.

Question 2 Key point

Generally those on the trial supported the use of the brown bins. The group generally felt it should be rolled out to the rest of the Borough.

Other comments made during this question

Some sort of system away from the use of bags is needed which has a degree of permanence and is just a more generally solid system of recycling.

The storage of any recyclable goods by a household will pose a problem because of space implications.

Lives in a flat so any bags stored have to be inside – also not provided with a brown bin because of these circumstances.

The Borough Council's brown bin experiment (garden waste throughout the summer) has been worthwhile. At this point, the facilitator asked who of the delegates were on the brown bin trial. Three delegates confirmed that they were on the trial.

Unaware of the brown bin trial actually taking place – better communication to make people aware of these trials is needed.

No one can evaluate the success of the trial if no-one actually knows the trial is taking place.

ALL: A better knowledge of what is recyclable would be useful.

An assumption is made by the Borough Council that no garden waste is created or produced over the winter months – this is not the case!

Having a black bin collection once a fortnight through the summer is simply not enough.

It is ridiculous that no collections for items like paper, card and bottles are made over the Christmas and Easter period especially when it is accepted that this is the period likely to produce the most waste. A lack of collections meant that recyclable waste had to be burnt to create space. Workmen should be given the chance to work over the Christmas period on a volunteer basis.

Was informed that taking waste to the tip was an alternative, but had no car to actually achieve this – this raises wider transportation problems of getting to recycling sites.

Could introduce bins that help to compress waste; however the weight of these may prove to be a problem.

A single bin which is divided into various components should be explored. This has been trialled in Australia and places emphasis on the householder to put this bin at the roadside.

Putting any bin on public land is unavoidable.

Different households have different waste requirements – ‘one approach fits all’ doesn’t work with waste – a flat will have different needs to a detached property for example.

ALL: Encourage local businesses to use minimum packaging to try and cut down the amount of waste.

ALL: Cited the importance of education and the need to encourage young people to recycle so it becomes normal.

Question 4 – If the Borough Council decides to continue using green bags, how could we overcome identified problems?

Key point

Refuge operatives need more time to sort out green bag issues and become accustomed to dealing with them.

Other comments made during this question

Instead of having recycling bags, why can’t we be given disposable bags (and these could be stored within green bags) – However, two group members reiterated that any new loose refuse bags would still blow around in the wind.

Need better co-ordination from the various collections to make the most of the bins that are available at this moment in time.

Garden waste bags get soiled very easily and are difficult to clean.

Green bags did used to get hooked onto the brown bins (one group member reaffirmed his support for this approach).

Refuge operatives only have so much time when they come around on their collection rounds.

Need to make the most of hooks and time should be built in to the collection rounds to enable green bags to be secured. Use of Velcro strips could help sort these problems out.

Are refuge operatives actually asked for their ideas on how best to tackle certain issues?
(*Cllr Corbett confirmed that they are*)

Any protruding object should be used to hang green bags upon – door handles, gates, railings etc.

Green bags are generally inconvenient – it goes against what is being talked about – to use and to store.

Would rather use recyclable bags from superstores and major shops than green bags (One group member raised the point asking how many superstores actually used recyclable bags)

Question 5 – Can you think of any reasons to explain the decrease in satisfaction with the black bin service?

Key point

Frequency of collection is key to service satisfaction levels.

Other comments made during this question

Bins not being collected due to parking problems (cars preventing access to certain streets). Re-investigate yellow lines to bar cars and allow wagons access.

Summer period is the worst and this leads to fly-tipping in the general area.

Operatives tip the contents of one bin into another and this can lead to untidy bins which need to be washed through no fault of the bin owner. This also leads to litter being left on the street, which tends to stay there.

This is the first year that black bins have been emptied fortnightly, as opposed to weekly.

If you're away for whatever reason, it could be as much as a month before your bin can be emptied, far too infrequent.

Because of a reduced frequency in collections, people are content to use West Park's recycling facilities as a dumping ground.

Local companies are using West Park's and Wilne Lane's recycling facilities irresponsibly.

Recycling facilities need to be emptied more frequently.

All litter should be collected when the Borough Council offers extra bag collections – why take two bags and leave a third on the street? There should be no limit on the number of bags that can be recycled.

We're all being asked to recycle more, but there just aren't the facilities to do this.

Why haven't the Borough Council issued refuse operatives with environmental protective equipment to deal with extra litter?

Made mention of a lack of tip facilities in the south of the Borough (in particular Long Eaton) and this leads to people using the facilities in Broxtowe (this is a key concern) – A tip is a key Civic Amenity but others discussed the drawbacks to having a tip in the vicinity of a residential area.

ALL: Bin lid rule causing bad feeling amongst residents (i.e. if bin lid protruding, bins are not emptied).

Street Scene

Question 6 – How can people in local communities tell the Borough Council where to focus its attention?

Send everyone in the Borough a questionnaire in their rate bills – other methods include using Viewpoint and Free Newspapers.

Queried what area the 'street scene' encompassed (Richard Windsor clarified that it meant all local communities).

Could use a drop-in centre to gather ideas (not a Council venue as this can be intimidating to visit for some people). This could involve Council Officers going out into communities and making themselves approachable to the general public.

Two people thought that use of the internet should be promoted.

Question 7 – How do people feel about going through the following channels of communication?

Key point

Whilst delegates all felt comfortable flagging up issues through all of the above channels of communication, it was agreed that the most pressing issues should be flagged up through the Call Centre and then diverted to the relevant person(s) at the Borough Council.

- **The Parish Council:**

DB: This was available as a worthwhile option.

- **Questionnaires:**

Would like the use of questionnaires to address neighbourhood-related and refuse-orientated issues.

Would like a separate box for ideas, including a feedback sheet at the end of it.

- **Attending Community Forums:**

- **Approaching Neighbourhood Wardens:**

How do we know who these are (issues with their uniform and dress)?

ALL: These Wardens aren't visible enough and don't get into the heart of local communities.

What exactly do they do?

Some people might feel put off or intimidated to approach them (Richard Ashley described the work and role of the Neighbourhood Wardens).

Sandiacre seemingly the poor relations – not seen any Wardens in Sandiacre.

- **Contacting the Council Call Centre:**

ALL: This is the best way to flag up urgent issues that need attention almost immediately.

- **Contacting your Local Councillor:**

You don't tend to get an immediate answer.

Not really fair to burden the local Councillor over every issue, especially when it needs a speedy response.

- **Borough Council making decision on the data it receives:**

- **General Points**

Raised the point that suggestion boxes in a variety of locations were a good method of bringing in ideas.

An E-message board would be good to put queries to and receive answers from Borough Council representatives.

Complaints should go directly to the Borough Council. More information should be used to rectify problems and ideas should go to a central website where they can be picked up upon by a Borough Council representative.

ALL: Nothing wrong with a good old-fashioned letter to recommend a change/idea.

Neighbourhood wardens

Question 8 – How do you think Neighbourhood Wardens could help reduce people's fear of crime?

Question 9 – How do you think Neighbourhood Wardens could help reduce anti-social behaviour?

Question 10 – How do you think the wardens could help to reduce vandalism?

Key point

Better visibility for Wardens and more strategic allocation of Wardens to problematic areas in the Borough.

Other comments made during this question

More needed on the street and should be completely dedicated to dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Dedicate them specifically to an area or communities.

Need to get them into schools and help with the education of children to create some pride amongst the young.

Need the police out on the streets as a more visible presence, and only the police can do anything about this problem.

Neighbourhood Wardens don't seem to work at night when most of the anti-social behaviour occurs (Richard Windsor explained that Wardens were soon to start working through the evening on a shift-based pattern 7.00pm – 7.00am).

Wardens can't do anything about crime, only the police can do that.

If Wardens are to make a presence, more of them are needed and they need to be more visible.

Getting kids involved with Wardens helps to foster civic pride – it is up to Neighbourhood Services Department to spread the word about what Wardens do.

Need to teach children the meaning of respect so that they wouldn't cause as many problems on the streets – also need to teach parents respect too. Workshops should be part of a school's education provision.

Involve youngsters in discussions such as this. Mix them into groups but ensure that they have a full part in discussions and aren't there simply to make up the numbers.

Are children listened to?

Questionnaires need to be sent out to children of various ages and schools to seek their views on certain anti-social issues.

Not sure of the uniform worn by Wardens – don't know who they are.

Need to deploy Wardens in areas and at times that anti-social behaviour tends to happen.

Where do their powers end – general confusion over what they do, and do they liaise with the Police?

Neighbourhood Wardens need to be able to communicate with youngsters – there is the potential for youngsters to 'shadow' Wardens to appreciate the complexities of the role/task.

6 Evaluation Questionnaires

Twenty of the twenty one attendees completed the evaluation questionnaire.

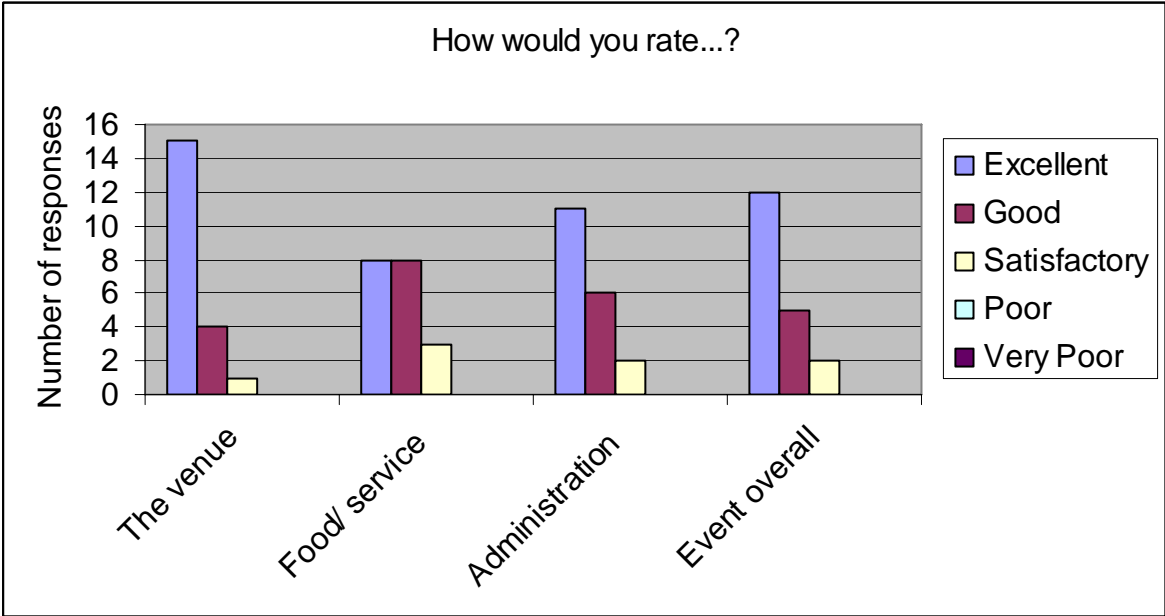
Some of the comments respondents made about the event overall which illustrate that it was well received:

“A good opportunity to voice opinions and ideas, need to do on a larger scale”

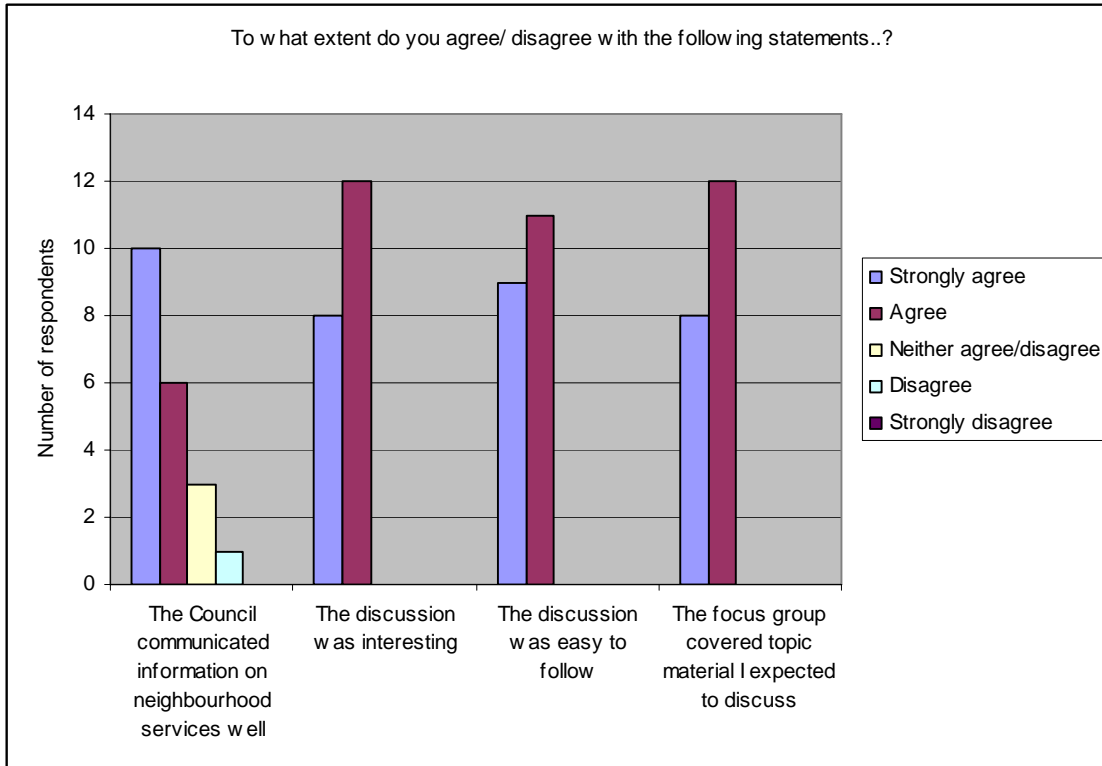
“Very interesting, constructive and enjoyable”

“Useful in comparing views of different areas. Informative and worthwhile.”

More than two thirds of attendees rated the event overall as ‘excellent’ and attendees rated the event, including the venue, food and administration, as satisfactory or above.



All but two of the 21 attendees felt they had enough opportunity to express their point of view and all but one attendee felt the pace and length of the event to be about right. All attendees agreed that the discussion was interesting, easy to follow and covered the topic material they expected.



The suggestions made for improving future focus group discussions were:

- Widen the age group x4
- Noise from the other group distracting/ hold discussions in separate rooms x4
- Smaller groups and provide more general facts x2
- More experts to answer enquiries of a specific nature x2
- More local forums
- Get younger people involved so they can have a say on local matters
- Stop people holding their own conversations- be firmer
- 6.30 start
- Slightly more detailed agenda sent to participants earlier
- Not enough time

Other thoughts, ideas or comments that attendees didn't get a chance to raise in the group discussions were:

- Produce a DVD about recycling
- Drug dealing in Ilkeston is getting out of control. Go into schools, start from a young age and teach them what is right and wrong.

Would like to discuss:

- Licence sale of fireworks better
- Vandalism, fear or crime needed more of an airing
- Parks and other public facilities

APPENDICIES

A: Recruitment documents



EXECUTIVE TEAM

Community Consultation

*Town Hall
Long Eaton
Derbyshire
NG10 1HU*

Switchboard: 0115 9072244
Fax: 0115 9072343
Minicom: 0115 931 6056
Web: www.erewash.gov.uk

Please ask for: Corinna Beatson
Direct Telephone: 0115 931 6072
E-Mail: corinna.beatson@erewash.gov.uk

Your Ref:
Our Ref:

Date: 16 January 2006

Dear Citizen Panel Member

Erewash Citizens Panel- discussion of the Neighbourhood Services provided by Erewash Borough Council

On **Thursday 16 February**, Erewash Borough Council will be holding a workshop to involve panel members in a discussion about improving the quality of the Neighbourhood Services which the Council delivers. The results of the workshop will inform the Council's review of this service to help ensure it provides the 'best value' possible to local rate payers. The event will be held at Long Eaton Town Hall, starting at 6pm and will run until approximately 8.15pm.

In the November 2005 questionnaire, you mentioned that you were interested in one or more of the Neighbourhood Services that the Councils delivers, and we hope that you will be able to take up this invitation. The Council will be offering £10 to each panel member to cover your costs for attending, we will also provide refreshments during the evening.

Places are limited- to reserve your place I would be grateful if you could e-mail, telephone or complete and return the slip at the bottom of the page to: Corinna Beatson, Erewash Borough Council, FREEPOST NG4475, Town Hall, Long Eaton, Derbyshire, NG10 1BR, no later than **Wednesday 25 January**. You will not need to include a stamp on the envelope. An agenda and location plan will then be sent out nearer the date.

Please contact Corinna on 0115 931 6072 if you have any queries about this event, and many thanks for your continued support on the Citizens Panel.

Yours faithfully

C.Y. Beatson

Phillip Wright

Corinna Beatson
Consultation Officer

Phillip Wright
Assistant Director, Waste & Transport

7213

Name would like to attend the workshop on 16 February.

Do you have any special dietary requirements? Please
specify:.....

Can we provide any equipment or assistance to help you take part in the workshop? Please
specify:.....
.....



EXECUTIVE TEAM
Community Consultation

*Town Hall
Long Eaton
Derbyshire
NG10 1HU*

Switchboard: 0115 9072244
Fax: 0115 9072343
Minicom: 0115 931 6056
Web: www.erewash.gov.uk

Please ask for: Corinna Beatson
Direct Telephone: 0115 931 6072
E-Mail: corinna.beatson@erewash.gov.uk
Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: 6 February 2006

Dear

**Re: Erewash Citizens Panel- discussion of the
Neighbourhood Services provided by Erewash Borough Council**

Many thanks for accepting our invitation to attend the workshop being held in **Long Eaton Town Hall at 6pm on Thursday 16 February**. There has been a lot of interest in this event, but I can confirm you have a space. The evening will run as follows:

- Arrival and light buffet starting at 6pm.
- Welcome and presentation on Neighbourhood Services.
- Focus Group discussions to generate ideas in response to some of the following questions: how could the Council encourage people to recycle more, views on using wheeled bins to recycle, how current problems with using the green bags can be overcome, how local communities can get more involved in setting local priorities for improving the street scene and how the neighbourhood wardens could help reduce people's fear of crime.
- Evaluation questionnaire and feedback session.
- Event finishes at **8.15pm**.

A location map for Long Eaton Town Hall is enclosed. The car park outside the Council Offices is free after 6pm and the staff car park should be available for use from 5.45pm.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely

Corinna Beatson
Consultation Officer
Encs- location map and summary of Neighbourhood Services

B: Workshop Plan

AIMS OF THE WORKSHOP

Aims of the workshop	How the aim will be achieved
To investigate questionnaire data indicating a drop in satisfaction with the black bin service	Q5
To find out how the Council could work with local communities to identify priorities for Neighbourhood Services	Q7, Q6
To generate ideas about how to improve key services delivered by Neighbourhood services	Q1, Q4, Q8, Q9, Q10, welcome activity
To test reaction to some specific new services	Q2, Q3, welcome activity

DETAILS FOR THE WORKSHOP

Date	Thursday 16 February
Times	Room available to set up from: 14:00 Participants arrive: 18:00 Buffet available: 17:00 Event finished by: 20:15
Venue	Long Eaton Town Hall- Committee Room.
Target Participants	Two groups of 8-12 people from the Citizens Panel who have expressed an interest in attending focus groups and an interest in being involved in one or more of the service areas which the Neighbourhood Services directorate deliver.
Equipment	2 flip chart stands, paper & pens, clipboards, bluetac, post it notes
Staffing	Welcome desk x2, Facilitators: Corinna Beatson & Val Glew Scribes: Adam Reddish & Jan Oldham Reserve: Rachel Stone

WORKSHOP PLAN

TIME	ACTIVITY	PERSON	MINS
6.00-6.20	Participants arrive, receive name badges and are welcomed. Food and drinks are available. Leaflets on display.		20
6.20-6.40	Welcome Housekeeping (fire regs, toilets) and Presentation - to provide background & context to today.	Cllr Corbett Derek	5 15
6.40-7.50	<p>Introduce the focus group session</p> <p>Establish and display the ground rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobiles off • Keep contributions brief and to the point • Everyone has the right to express their view • One person speaks at a time • Comments made today will stay within this room. <p>Introduce yourself & the scribe, explain that you will both be taking notes. Explain that you do not work in Neighbourhood Services therefore a have degree of independency. Explain there will be people who do work in that directorate attending to listen to what you say, they will not be taking part in the discussion. Let people know they are free to help themselves to more drinks throughout.</p> <p>Ask everyone to quickly introduce themselves, tell us where about you live, how long you've lived there and if you've been to a focus group before.</p> <p>TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION DETAILED BELOW</p> <p>Bin collection & recycling (30 min) It is a legal requirement for the Borough Council to recycle more household waste. We are currently meeting our target to recycle 30% of all household waste, but we need to do more. By 2020 we will have to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 25% of what it was in 1995. If we don't meet our target the Government will impose a financial penalty on us. Q1: How could we encourage people to recycle more of the materials we already collect? <<record ideas>> Q2: In some areas of Erewash the Council is testing out using the wheelie bins to collect and put out recyclable paper, card, cans and plastic (NOT glass).</p>	Group facilitator	10

	<p>Is anyone here in the test scheme area? <<scribe to ensure they record how many and who>> Q3: Ask all- What do you think about using wheelie bins to collect recyclables? Would this cause you any problems- probe as to what the problems are and probe for solutions. Probe as to why they might like to use the bins.</p> <p>Green bags were introduced to store recyclable materials because plastic boxes were considered a potential health and safety risk for the public and refuse collectors and because the amount of external funding available to the Council at the time wasn't enough to cover the cost of buying wheeled bins (£1 million).</p> <p>Q4: The Council has received complaints about bags blowing about, not being replaced when lost, getting wet and soiled when left outside and people have problems storing them. If the Council continues using green bags, how could we overcome these problems? How can we make the green bags easier to use? Probe- Are people willing to provide some of the solutions themselves, or do they expect the Council to do this?</p> <p>The November 2005 Citizen Panel survey showed that satisfaction with the black bin service is decreasing slightly compared to November 2004, whereas satisfaction with other domestic waste services (brown bin, green bags and recycling sites) is increasing.</p> <p>Q5: Can you think of any reasons to explain the decrease in satisfaction with the black bin service?</p> <p>Street Scene (15 min) The Council wants to give local communities more of a say in deciding local priorities for improving the street scene (list relevant services eg street cleaning, grass cutting, bus shelters, litter bins <<Phil>>).</p> <p>Q6: How could people in local communities tell the Borough Council where to focus its attention? Q7: How do people feel about going through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Parish Council, • questionnaires, • attending Community Forums, • approaching Neighbourhood wardens, • contacting the call centre, • contacting your local Councillors, • or the Borough Council making the decision based on information it gathers. 		
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	<p>Probe- what issues might there be with each approach?</p> <p>Neighbourhood Wardens (15 min) In a 2005 Citizen Panel survey asked people how well the Council was doing in a range of activities it gets involved in. Two areas stood out above the rest in terms of what the Council does <u>not</u> do well- these were combating crime (37%) and tackling anti social behaviour (39%). Q8: How do you think neighbourhood wardens could help reduce people's fear of crime? Q9: How do you think neighbourhood wardens could help reduce anti-social behaviour? The same Citizen Panel survey asked people about problems in their neighbourhoods, 'vandalism' came out top as the most frequently mentioned problem by 33% of respondents. Q10: How do you think the wardens could help to reduce and vandalism?</p>		
7.50-7.55	<p>Evaluation Questionnaire Facilitators to distribute the questionnaire and allow participants 5 minutes to complete it.</p>	Group facilitator	
7.55-8.00	<p>Feedback Session All to go back to meeting room for feedback from the discussion sessions- each group facilitator to lead.</p>	Group facilitators	
8.00-8.10	<p>Thanks and closing remarks including a reminder for attendees to leave their feedback questionnaires.</p>	Cllr Corbett	
8.15	<p>End</p>		

C: Presentation

Neighbourhood Services



Who do we serve?

110,300 population
Long Eaton 30%
Ilkeston 30%
Rural Wards 30%

48,077 Households
42.2 Sq Miles



What exactly does Neighbourhood Services do?

???



A walk in the park

Leave home
Drive through town
Park at West Park
Walk in the Park



Waste & Transport

2004/05 49,644 tonnes of refuse / recycling collected from 48,000 house holds
107 tonnes each working day.
9,600 bins are lifted per day.

We are currently on track to exceed the statutory recycling target of 30% for 2005/06.

23 Public Conveniences



Neighbourhood Management

2004/05 386 abandoned vehicles were inspected

27 car parks

Team of 12 Neighbourhood Wardens out on patrol – foot and van

Stray dogs and dog fouling issues



Green Spaces & Street Scene

260 hectares (650 acres) of park and open spaces across the district totalling 101.

Produce over 120,000 bedding plants per annum

Street cleansing generates approx 65 tonnes of waste per day. 2,700 litter bins are emptied each week.



D: Evaluation Questionnaire



Erewash Borough Council

Citizens Panel: Evaluation Questionnaire



Please complete all questions as fully as possible by ticking the appropriate boxes or writing in your answer

OVERALL RATING

1. How would you rate the following?: (Please tick one box for each statement)

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
a) The Venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Food/Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Today's Event Overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What was your opinion of the overall event?

PACE

3. How did you find the pace of the event? (Please tick one box for each statement)

Too slow About right Too fast

4. How did you find the length of the event? (Please tick one box for each statement)

Too long About right Too fast

DELIVERY AND CONTENT

5. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements: (Please tick one box for each statement)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) The Council communicated information on neighbourhood services well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) The discussion was interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) The discussion was easy to follow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The focus group covered topic material I expected to discuss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



6) Did you feel you had enough opportunity to express your point of view?: *(Please tick one box for each statement)*

Yes

No

7) What suggestions do you have for improving future focus group discussions?

8) Do you have any other thoughts, ideas or comments that you didn't get a chance to raise in the group discussions?