

# Your Views Matter

# Feedback

Telford and Wrekin Community Panel

January 2016... Wishing you a very Happy New Year

Hello Community Panel member and welcome to your January 2016 edition of **Feedback** – the Council's newsletter for Community Panel members.

**Thank you for your continued help and support.**



## Message from Cllr Angela McClements

**Cabinet Member for  
Communities, Regeneration  
and Transport**

“Those of you who have been receiving this newsletter over the years will notice me as a new face to the front cover. I am Cllr Angela McClements and my Cabinet responsibility is for communities, regeneration and transport.

This is my first message to you via this newsletter and I would like to thank you on behalf of the Council for the views that you give as a member of the Community Panel, they are very much appreciated.

As you all know, financially, times are really tough for the Council. Each year, central Government gives local councils less money to run local services, which inevitably impacts on the services we can provide. As this happens it becomes more and more crucial for us to work together and provide opportunities for local people to tell us about their priorities on Council spending. Listening to local people like you, hearing your views and using them to do the best we can is how we want to move forward.

Sadly, we have no choice but to make some very difficult decisions on how we deliver services in Telford and Wrekin over the coming years and we are grateful to have you on board as we decide how to make them for Telford and Wrekin.

On behalf of the Leader and Cabinet, I wish you all a Happy New Year.”

# Update on the Panel

At the moment there are 1,153 members of the Community Panel.

Last year we asked Community Panel members to update their profiles in line with the new Community Panel membership form.

Most Community Panel members told us that they are interested in giving their views to create a clean, pleasant, safe and friendly place to live and work and one that is easy to travel around.

This year, we would really like to attract more members from Arlestone and Park wards as our figures show that we are low on numbers from these areas. In relation to age range we also want to encourage more members from the 18 – 34 years age bracket. Generally in 2016 we hope, once again to encourage more residents to join the Panel and have their say in Telford and Wrekin.

Could you help us by encouraging any interested people that you know to visit [www.telford.gov.uk/yourviewsmatter](http://www.telford.gov.uk/yourviewsmatter) and complete the online application form?

Alternatively ring the Community Participation team and we will post application forms to you.

## Community Panel Survey January 2015

The response rate for this survey was 46%.

### Walking and cycling and how we used your feedback

The Council wants to make it easier for people to cycle and walk in the borough. Last year Community Panel members were asked questions about their cycling habits and their views on cycling generally.

### How we used your feedback

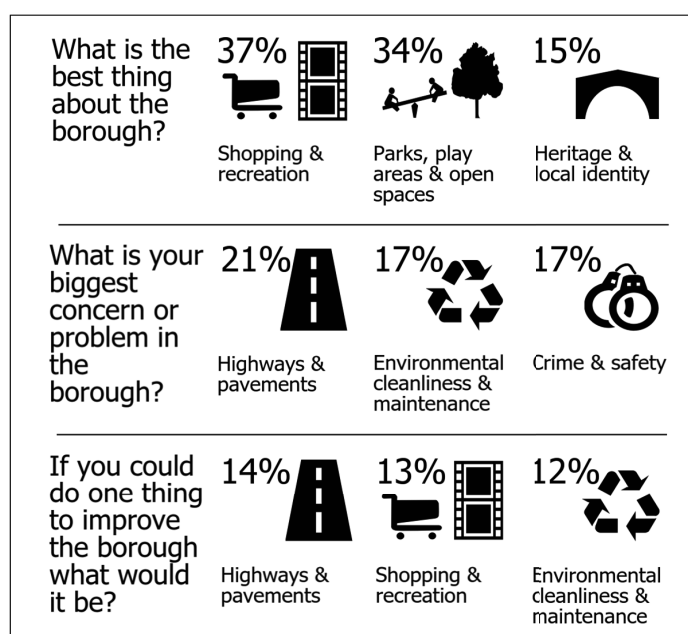
The views of Community Panel members were added to those of other local people and were used by the Council to develop the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

## Together we care about the future

As part of the annual Budget consultation in 2015, local people, including the Community Panel were asked for their views on these three questions;

- What's the best thing about Telford and Wrekin?
- What's the biggest concern/problem in Telford and Wrekin?
- If you could do one thing to improve Telford and Wrekin what would it be?

Across the borough, 1,608 people answered these questions, 486 of them were Community Panel members. Here is a visual summary of the findings.



### How we used your feedback

Local people's answers to these questions have helped the Council's Cabinet of Councillors to make budget decisions and to develop plans for the next 5 years.

### The Council's Budget 2016/17

The Community Panel survey for January 2016 includes budget questions for 2016/17. Local people's responses will again feed into budget decisions. For more information please visit [www.telford.gov.uk/budget](http://www.telford.gov.uk/budget)

On 19 January the Council will be holding two public events to give details on the budget. The meetings will be held at Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, 1-3pm and 6-8pm. Please come if you can.

## Community Panel recruitment

In spring 2015, Community Panel members who we are able to contact via email were invited to help us by giving their views for future Community Panel recruitment campaigns.

We were looking for panel members who were prepared to have their photograph taken with their own quote letting people know why they think that the Community Panel is important.

We know that local people are interested in what other local people say, thank you to the small number of panel members who came forward. We now have a number of quotes that we can use to encourage other local people to join the panel and have their say.

Here are some of the quotes that we gathered;

*"I want to help make Telford and Wrekin a more personalised and community focused area. I want our local council to be a people's council and to prioritise our needs".*

*"I hope that the views of the Community Panel help to give a better understanding about what residents think about priorities and services so that the best use can be made of limited resources".*



## Community Panel Survey Summer 2015

The response rate for this survey was 55%.

### **Are you healthy, safe and independent?**

During the summer 2015, an important consultation took place across Telford and Wrekin. The Community Panel were invited to take part.

A new law called the Care Act 2014 tells local Councils that they must think about how people can be more in control of their own lives, by feeling happy, healthy, safe and fulfilled.

Now that there is less money for Councils to spend, there is a need for people to be cared for and supported by family, friends and their local communities. If more people were supported in this way health and social services could offer the right support at the right time to those that need it most.

The survey questions asked what people found helpful and difficult in relation to being healthy and feeling good, being safe and secure and being in control of their own lives.

### **How we used your feedback**

The responses to the survey questions will help the Council to understand what will prevent people from needing care and support services and what will prevent people from becoming dependant on high cost specialist services.

Local people's views will help to shape future plans for health, wellbeing and prevention in Telford and Wrekin.

### **Online services**

In 2015, the Council launched a review of its website and online services. Community Panel members were invited to take part in the review and a Community Panel survey asked direct questions about people's online usage.

The Council would like more people to access its services through the website, social media and apps. If more people were to do this, both local people and the Council would save time and money.

## How we used your feedback

Local people's views will help the Council to develop its website and online services. These services are for local people and it is important that they function well and meet people's needs.

## Healthwatch

In 2012 the Government created a new national body called Healthwatch England, and the local Healthwatch in each area across England.

Healthwatch is the consumer champion for health and social care. It is there to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people and speak out on their behalf.

The Council is responsible for checking that our local Healthwatch is doing what it has agreed to do. In 2015 Community Panel members were asked how much they knew about Healthwatch and if they had ever used its services.

## How we used your feedback

The Council has regular meetings with Healthwatch to discuss and hear feedback about local services. The information gathered from the Community Panel was shared with Healthwatch and used in the evaluation of their work locally.

## Commercial services website focus group

Telford & Wrekin Council has a range of services that local people can buy, for example renting community centres, or hiring sports equipment. The Council is developing a website which will advertise these things and make it easy for local people to buy them direct.

Last year, Community Panel members who have told us that they are interested in discussions about Council budgets and value for money were invited to attend a focus group about the new website.

Community Panel members who came along told us that they found the session comfortable, interesting and informal.

## How we used your feedback

The information that was gathered from the focus groups helped the Council to develop a website that organisations and local people will trust, and one that looks professional yet friendly. The new website will be trialled by schools first and will then be made available to residents later in the year.

## Remember...

As a Community Panel member you can take part in a range of activities and give your views in a number of different ways.

Responding to surveys is great and gives valuable information to the Council but after reading this newsletter you might like to further your involvement by joining in with focus groups or volunteering to gather views.

If you decide you would like to be more involved please let us know; we would love to work with you more closely.

To find out more about Community Engagement in Telford and Wrekin visit  
**[www.telford.gov.uk/yourviewsmatter](http://www.telford.gov.uk/yourviewsmatter)**

or to get in touch with  
**The Community Participation team;**

**Andy Challenor, Debbie Rudd  
and Sarah Stembridge**

**Ring: 01952 382131**

**Email: [yourviewsmatter@telford.gov.uk](mailto:yourviewsmatter@telford.gov.uk)**