



2008-2009
Improving Accessibility
2009-2010
Positive Engagement of Older People
Raising Prosperity Through Partnerships
Cohesive and Resilient Communities



Spring 2011
Your views matter



Living in Lancashire

Thank you for continuing to give us your views and help us make a difference. In this issue we'll tell you about what we found out from you in our last survey and some of the actions we are already taking.

In the last survey you told us about your experience of customer service from the council.

The most common reasons you contact the council are to report an issue or problem, to ask for information and to ask for help or advice.

Half of you say your query or problem was sorted out in your first call or visit to the council.

The majority of you agreed that the staff you dealt with were polite and friendly. Three quarters of you thought that it was easy to contact the county council and that you were treated with fairness and respect. You were less likely to agree that it was easy to speak to the person you needed.

Two thirds of you were satisfied with the service you received from Lancashire County Council.

You also gave us your opinions on community safety. Just over half of you agree that police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour in your local area. This is a considerable increase

on the proportion that agreed when the question was asked last year. Opinion is split on whether there is more or less crime than two years ago in your local areas.

Winter gritting service

Around half of you were satisfied with the winter gritting services on main roads across Lancashire this winter but about a third were dissatisfied. Three quarters of you didn't feel informed about winter gritting services provided by the council which is an area we'll improve on this year.

Heysham-M6 road link

Less than a third of you knew that the Heysham-M6 road link is now going ahead. Encouragingly though, two thirds of you think the plans are a good idea.

The council's budget proposal

Three quarters of you weren't aware of the council's three-year budget proposal. Worryingly, only two fifths of those who were aware of the proposal felt informed about it.

Lancashire County Council online

Here at Lancashire County Council we're taking advantage of social media to let you know what's happening around the county and to give you more ways to get in touch with us. For those of you who are interested you can:

- 'Like' our Facebook page and use it to speak out about something, influence the decisions that are made in your local community or simply ask a question you want answered: www.facebook.com/lancashirecc
- Follow us on twitter @lancashirecc for all the latest news updates, events and more: www.twitter.com/lancashirecc
- View and comment on our photographs on Flickr at www.flickr.com/lancashirecc. We'd also like you to share your own Lancashire pictures with us - the best of which will feature on our website.
- Watch and comment on our videos on YouTube: www.youtube.com/lancashirecc

Cost saving with Living in Lancashire

At Living in Lancashire we always try to be as cost-effective as possible. Recently some of you have asked about the things we do to save money, so we thought we'd share these with you here.

First, we buy our supplies in bulk. We order enough envelopes and paper to complete several surveys, saving us money compared to ordering just enough for each survey individually.

We periodically check our printing costs against other suppliers to make sure they are competitive and work closely with our printers to get value for money. We save a lot of money by designing and analysing our surveys in-house so we don't have to pay expensive research companies to do this for us.

In the last few years we have invested in a high-speed scanner which recognises your responses automatically, saving us time and money compared to entering your responses manually. This also improves accuracy in recording your responses.

We use Citipost to deliver our surveys to you as they are significantly cheaper for us than using other mail distributors. We use Royal Mail for your replies, but we use second class postage to save costs.

We recently started putting our surveys online which saves us printing, posting and processing costs. Around 1,000 of you have now signed up to receive your surveys by email. However, we know that not all of you have access to a computer, so we will continue to make a paper version available. It is important for the county council to get the views of all groups in Lancashire not just those who are online.

Finally, by using a panel of people who are willing to respond to our surveys we save a significant amount of money. Without a panel we would have to send a greater number of questionnaires out to random addresses to get the same level of response and we wouldn't be able to use the online option. Using the panel also allows us to get a cross-section of opinion from people across the county - we couldn't be sure of getting this with random surveys.

We try hard to make our budget go as far as possible and will continue to look for ways to save money and be more efficient whilst providing your views to the county council and its partners to influence decision making.

Social capital

A while ago we asked you about relationships in your neighbourhood, your social networks, volunteering and unpaid help that you give to others. All these things are part of what we call 'social capital'. Social capital has many definitions but it is generally concerned with the level of social relations within a particular community which can be used to create productive benefits by and for that community. In other words, communities working together to create and deliver services for themselves. This is central to the government's Big Society concept.

The Living in Lancashire survey gave us the opportunity to look at how much, if at all, social capital already exists within Lancashire. Overall, it would appear that social capital is relatively strong in Lancashire although there are significant differences between different areas. The results of the survey will help us understand our role in the Big Society. We'll let you know later in the year how we'll be supporting communities to work together in Lancashire.

Economic development

Before Christmas we asked you about economic development in Lancashire. The responses you gave us have contributed to a number of important projects.

- The information about skills has been used to assess the economic conditions in the area which will help us to prioritise where we need to improve the local economy.
- The trend of more highly skilled people travelling further to work is consistent with other studies done in recent years and nationally. This information is important to help us understand our approach to employment and residential development.
- The trends seen in the results for different parts of the county, for example around skill levels, support the county council's current economic strategy.

We'll let you know more as we start to make changes as a result of these projects.

We're always pleased to hear from our members. You can contact us in any of the following ways.
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