

# FEEDBACK

## Poole Opinion Panel



### Panel News

In this edition we welcome a number of new members who have recently joined the panel and say goodbye to those of you who have been on the panel for some time. We really appreciate the time you give to share your opinions, so thank you!

The Poole Opinion Panel is made up of around **1,500** residents and is designed to be reflective of Poole by lifestyle group, age, gender and area. We replace members approximately every three years to ensure that the views of the panel remain fresh, and to give others an opportunity to have their say.

### Summer 2006 Survey

**1,061 people** took part in the last survey in Summer 2006, making a response rate of **59%**.

Julie Jones from Oakdale was the winner of the £50 voucher. We'll announce the winners of the June 2007 Survey draw in the next edition of Feedback.

**We asked about:**

- Community Safety
- Contacting the Council
- Car Parks
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Adult learning
- Highways maintenance

As many of these topics are in the current survey, we do not want to influence your answers and so we will report back in the Autumn edition of Feedback, however some results are available over the page.



## 2006 Best Value Residents Satisfaction Survey

Last Autumn the Council conducted the '2006 Best Value Residents Satisfaction Survey', which meant that we skipped a panel survey. Every Council carries out a similar survey every three years, with questions prescribed by the Government so that performance can be compared. The survey asked questions about what it is like to live in Poole and what most needs improving in the area as well as questions about the Council's main services.

Here is a summary of the key results...

Almost two thirds (**63%**) of respondents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the Council overall, which is an increase of **19%** in the satisfaction rating since the survey was last carried out in 2003. This result rates Poole Council the best out of all 46 unitary authorities in England.

More than eight out of ten (**83%**) respondents were satisfied with Poole as a place to live. The level of crime, health services, clean streets and affordable housing, are the factors respondents said were most important in making Poole a nice place to live. Congestion, activities for teenagers, affordable housing and public transport are those factors that need most improvement.

**Jim Bright, Strategic Director, said:**

*"The Council is committed to improving services to residents in the town and the survey shows that we are doing a good job but we will continue to improve services, concentrating on those areas that need extra attention and ensuring that Poole delivers excellent services."*

Many of the Council's services have seen an increase in satisfaction since the last survey in 2003 and many perform above the average for Unitary Authorities:

Service	Satisfaction%		Change
	2006	2003	
Poole is kept clear of litter and refuse	76	62	↑
Waste collection	93	89	↑
Waste recycling	84	71	↑
Waste disposal	78	75	↑
Transport information	55	49	↑
Bus services	55	55	↔
Sports and leisure	66	57	↑
Libraries	81	73	↑
Museums / Galleries	46	52	↓
Theatres / Concert Halls	69	66	↑
Parks / open spaces	86	86	↔

For more information about the Best Value Survey, logon to [boroughofpoole.com/opinions](http://boroughofpoole.com/opinions)

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# Customers First

We asked about experiences and expectations of contacting the Council to develop the 'Customers First' Strategy – which focuses on improving customer service and access to Council services.

The majority of Panel members (69%) contact the Council less than once a month and around one third (31%) never contact us. Most want to alert us to things that need our attention, such as a streetlight fault, or need information. Environmental & Consumer Protection, Transportation, Planning and Leisure are among the most commonly contacted services.



**Chris Owens, Head of Customer Services and Communications, said:** "We were pleased to see some improvements in your ratings of customer service in the last survey and have continued to work on improving the speed, quality and consistency of our service. More and more enquiries are now being dealt with at the first point of contact by our Customer Services Centre, which first opened a year ago, and we're always looking for opportunities to further improve ease of access to Council services and information. We've asked some more questions in this survey so that we can keep our focus on what really matters most to you when you contact us."

## Adult Learning

One in ten (9%) of you had signed up to take part in an adult learning course in the 6 months prior to the survey, a decrease of 13% in Autumn 2005.

23% said that you intend to sign up to take part in an adult learning course in the next 6 months. This shows that intentions are good, but in reality barriers such as lack of time get in the way.

Women show more interest in adult learning courses than men – just over one out of 10 women (11%) had signed up to take part in a course and around one in twenty men (6%).



**Lesley Spain, Adult Learning Manager, said:**

"Adult learning participation rates were down 9% nationally last year as a result of increases in course fees and the realignment of funding towards 'employability skills'. However, Poole Adult Learning has sustained a diverse range of courses at reasonable cost, including many of the leisure and recreational activities we know local people want. We are constantly reviewing business efficiency and accessibility to our programme to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of the community."

## Highways Maintenance

Around half (49%) of you said that you were satisfied with the maintenance of Poole's roads and just over a quarter (28%) dissatisfied. This shows no real change in perceptions since 2005, when we last asked these questions.

Your perceptions were similar regarding pavements. One half (50%) are satisfied with the maintenance of the pavements in Poole and just over one quarter (28%) are not satisfied. This has shown a slight decrease in satisfaction since 2005, when satisfaction was 57%. However this was because more respondents tended to have no opinion rather than being dissatisfied.

## Your Opinions

There are a number of other current consultations you may also be interested in....

### Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Transportation Services want to hear views on Rights of Way in Poole. Take part on-line, or contact the Rights of Way Officer on 01202 262060.

### Supporting People – 5 Year Strategy 2007-2012

The strategy outlines the needs for the Borough in terms of housing related support, gaps in current provision and priorities for commissioning new services to enable people to live independently in the community.

### A Time Of Our Lives –

### Poole's Older People Strategy 2007-2012

The Strategy aims to look at how we can work in partnership to improve quality of life and services in all areas which older people have identified as important. All residents are welcome to comment on the draft strategy document and give their opinions.

For further info about these and other consultations, logon to [boroughofpoole.com/opinions](http://boroughofpoole.com/opinions), email [opinions@poole.gov.uk](mailto:opinions@poole.gov.uk) or call 01202 633354.