

Results of Citizens Panel Questionnaire 10

The last Citizens Panel in March 2014 asked about three different topics. Here are the key results and the actions we have taken.

Library Services

We asked for your feedback to support the new Library Development plan being drawn up by Falkirk Community Trust who run the Falkirk libraries. What do you like about your public libraries and what could be better? The Trust also wanted to know if there was anything it could do to attract people who don't use libraries or who have recently stopped using libraries.

You said: Of those who filled out this part of the Citizens Panel questionnaire, 30% were regular library users, 30% were occasional library users, 19% used to use libraries but have stopped, and 21% have never really used libraries. This has provided some very interesting data both from people who use the service and from non-users.

Respondents who use libraries particularly like that they can borrow books for free, that the public libraries are welcoming places and that the staff are helpful.

The reasons given by people who have recently stopped using libraries were: they now prefer to use e-books; they don't have time to visit the library any more or they would struggle physically to visit the library. Car parking in Falkirk was also a problem.

The reasons given by people who seldom or never use libraries were: they don't read many books (38%) or they prefer to buy (27%) or download books (26%) instead of borrowing them. Many people also felt that they would struggle to physically visit a library – due to mobility problems or problems with parking – or that they don't have enough time to make a special trip to the library.

Most people knew about the services that the libraries provide. There was also a lot of interest in knowing more about several areas, especially downloadable e-books; downloadable audiobooks and local history and genealogy.

We will: The Trust already has some downloadable e-books, magazines and audiobooks and it is hoping to develop the range of items further.

The Trust has lots of plans to explore local history and genealogy as part of the commemoration of the First World War. It wants to work with customers to research the impact that the First World War had on this area and on local families.

Many of you volunteered to join focus groups and the Trust will get in touch in June/July to invite those who are interested along to meetings. This will help the Trust develop ideas for the services it provides in the libraries.

The Trust will use the data from the Citizens Panel, along with information from other surveys of library customers and non-users, to help decide how to develop library services. The Trust will write a Library Development plan by November this year. This will explore the different themes that it wants to concentrate on in the next few years to encourage more people to use the service and to ensure that the services develop to meet the changing needs of our communities.

Housing Services

We asked if respondents used the Housing Service and, if so, what did they use it for.

You said: About one quarter of you (26%) said you use the housing service. The rest of this section looks at the answers those people gave.

Nearly half (49%) of the housing services users rent a council house and another 13% are applying for one. 21% get benefits advice, 17% use it because of antisocial neighbours. Smaller numbers (around 4-6%) use our landlord registration service, the property factoring service, or the homeless service / accommodation resource centre.

We also asked those respondents who used the service if they preferred to meet an officer in their local Council office, or if they preferred to be visited at home. If they preferred a visit at home we wanted to know what was the most convenient time for a visit, and what kind of information they would like the housing officer to be able to provide.

You said: 47% said they would prefer a visit at home, with only 16% preferring to visit the office (the rest didn't mind where the meeting took place.) Twice as many people said weekdays are the most convenient time for a meeting, compared to those who preferred evenings or Saturdays.

Respondents thought it was important that their housing officer could answer questions on all housing-related issues (64.1%) and to be able to tell them who to contact in the council if they need information on anything else (50.5%). Other respondents wanted an officer to be able to check progress on all applications, repairs, complaints or other queries reported to the Housing Service (44.7%). About one in three thought it important to be able to book an appointment on line.

We will: Based on the information you provided through the Citizens Panel survey, the Housing Service will look at ways to adapt service delivery so that more of the service is provided in your home at a time that is convenient to you, and with the ability to provide more accurate and relevant information to you, our customers. We will also explore information technology solutions to enable officers to visit you at home and provide the information you are looking for and will carry out a pilot study on an appropriate area of the service.

Self Directed Support

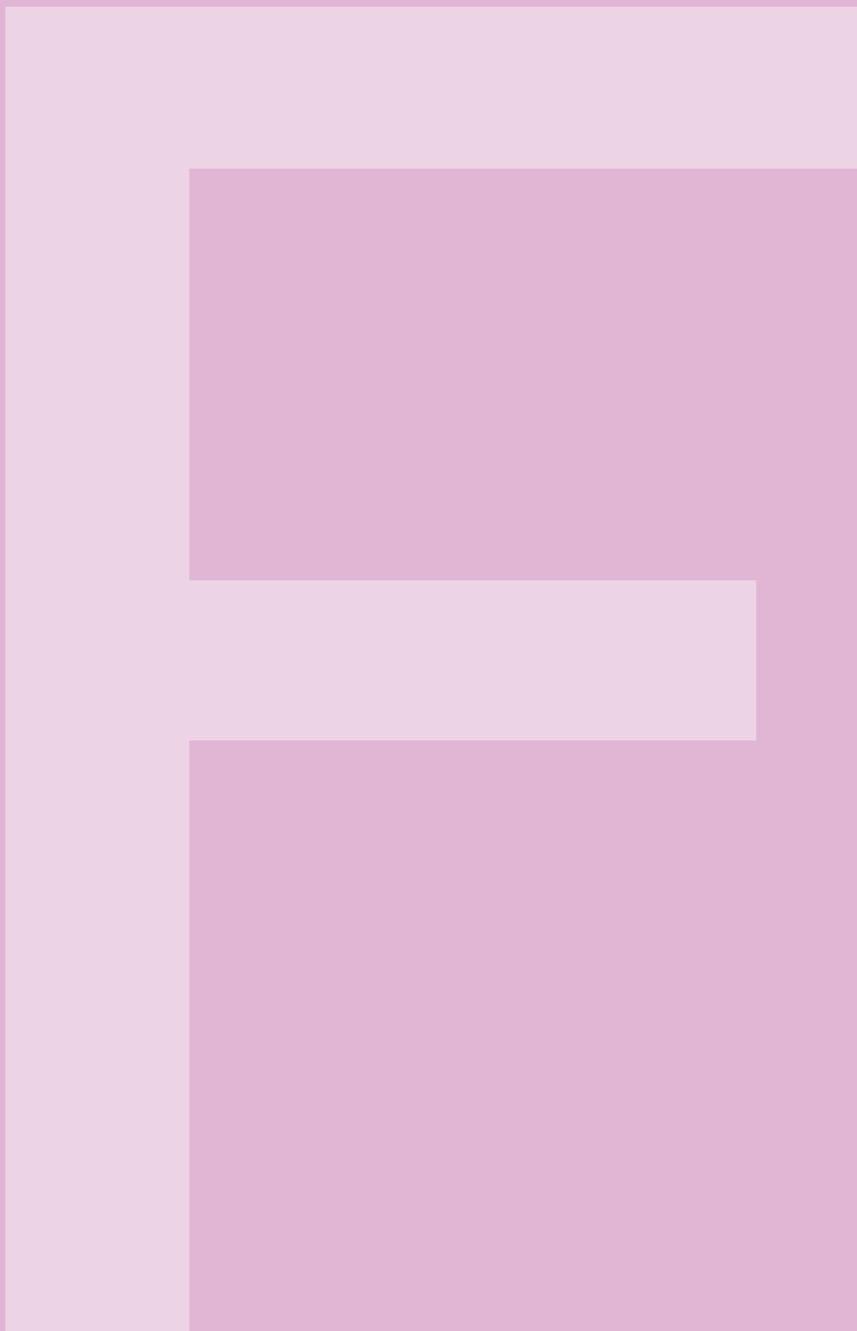
We asked if you had heard about the new arrangements for providing support with daily activities to frail older people or those who are ill or disabled. We also asked where you would be most likely to look for information about this support.

You said: Very few respondents (10%) had heard about Self Directed Support (SDS). 73 respondents said they or someone in their household already receive support with daily activities but they were no more likely to have heard of SDS.

When asked where you would find out about information on getting help with daily activities over half would phone the council to ask or pick up a leaflet in a library or One Stop Shop.

There were some interesting differences in the answers from people who already receive support and those who do not. People already receiving support were much more likely to ask a support worker or member of their family if they wanted more information about help with daily activities. But people not receiving support were much more likely to look for such information on the Council website. Other responses suggested leaflets about SDS could be available in GPs surgeries.

We will: Based on the information collated from the Citizens Panel survey, the SDS team will be distributing SDS leaflets to all libraries, One Stop Shops, and council offices. In addition we are talking to health colleagues about distributing SDS leaflets to doctors' surgeries and Health Centres. We will make sure that frontline workers discuss Self Directed Support options with all new service users when their needs are being assessed, and that existing service users are given the options through a review process. National campaigns are also underway with Self Directed Support commonly referred to as personalisation.



Other Formats

If you have any queries about the Citizens Panel questionnaire, or if you want to receive questionnaires and feedback reports in other formats (e.g. Braille, large print, a different language etc.), please contact us at citizenspanel@falkirk.gov.uk, or call 01324-506011.



Falkirk Council