



Your Views on Community Safety

WELCOME to the fourth edition of the Angus Citizens' Panel News giving you feedback and information from the last survey.

Over 70% of you responded to the last survey, the highest ever rate of return for the panel. Your answers have provided some extremely valuable information on a huge number of issues.

The most encouraging thing is that your responses confirm other information about the low level of crime in Angus. It is good to know, that, on the whole, you quite rightly do not expect to suffer as a victim of crime and, you feel safe, particularly during daylight hours.

Having said that we recognise that you are concerned about violence and intimidation in the street, and particularly by the role alcohol plays in the behaviour of men and boys. Rest assured that Tayside Police and Angus Council share your concerns and are working hard to reduce anti-social behaviour and tackle the misuse of alcohol.

We also note with some concern that many of you are reluctant to report incidents. We want you to be confident that your calls make a difference and urge you to work with us to tackle the issues we all face.

Neither have we ignored your views on fire-safety, fireworks, road-safety and anti-social behaviour, issues that are covered in more detail elsewhere in the newsletter. We are committed to tackling these issues together.

Finally we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the time you spent completing the survey. We hope that you feel that taking part has been worthwhile and hope you will once again complete our next survey on Lifelong Learning, Angus Council services and dealing with Angus Council.

Thank you once again for your commitment to the Citizens' Panel.

Community Wardens, community solutions

Your views on Community Wardens were very encouraging, with strong support for the development of a scheme based on crime prevention. This would see wardens promoting home security, patrolling streets and reporting incidents.

A huge number of you also thought that the introduction of a scheme to improve the environment would be a positive step. It was also

great to see that many of you would be happy to be involved in developing proposals and plans to introduce Community Wardens in local areas.

We are also delighted to announce that an application for funding to provide Community Wardens has been made to the Scottish Executive and we want as many of you as possible to help shape their introduction.

What you want, what you really, really want!

Your priorities in terms of tackling community safety came across clearly from the survey and, thankfully, they are no great surprise to us. You will be pleased to know that your priorities are similar to those of the young people of Angus!

Put simply, you want us to concentrate on drugs, the anti-social behaviour of young people, vandalism, drink driving, and rape and sexual assault in that order. You also want us to make our three top priorities dealing with emergencies, detecting and arresting offenders and criminals, and patrolling our county.

At the moment we are working with our partners to develop things like a community wardens scheme, and a noise nuisance service that will allow the police and other partners to concentrate on the priorities you have identified. This work will also tackle the issues you raised around public transport, particularly after dark.

We are committed to working in a partnership between the police, council and others with each specialising in particular areas and all working to the shared priorities that you have helped us identify.

This is the beginning of the process. We have listened to your priorities but also when you say you want us to keep consulting you. We will continue to listen and try to deliver services that match your concerns.

Doorstepped?

Again we were unsurprised that doorstep callers are a concern to you, particularly those from energy companies. This is a national issue that is being addressed at a national level, although we are, of course, committed to doing whatever we can in Angus to improve matters. If you are concerned about doorstep callers please contact Angus Council Trading Standards Service on 01241 435600 or tradstand@angus.gov.uk.

Starry, scary, night?

Despite feeling safe during the day you feel much less secure at night. Lighting is clearly an issue for you and we will continue to prioritise repairs. Obviously it is difficult to solve these problems overnight but be assured that we have listened to your views and are trying hard to do something about them. Meantime street lighting faults should be reported through the ACCESS Line to help us help you.

Drink and disorder

One of the strongest messages we got from both panel surveys is that you want something to be done about drinking, vandalism and intimidation on the street. This is something that Tayside Police and Angus Council take very seriously. We already work very hard to tackle underage drinking and will use any information you give us in our fight against it.

The same applies to intimidation and disorderly behaviour. Whenever either the council or the police are made aware of an incident we will deal with it quickly and fairly.

Helping us to Help YOU

The survey revealed that a large number of you simply do not report those incidents that you become aware of for a number of reasons. Unfortunately, if we don't know about crime or anti-social behaviour we cannot do anything about it. It is important for you to tell us about anything that concerns you, and there are plenty of ways to get in touch. These include ACCESS Line on 08452 777 778 or accessline@angus.gov.uk, Tayside Police on 01382 223200, by e-mail mail@tayside.pnn.police.uk, or by contacting any council office or police station.

Homeward bound...

Many of you, and many of the young panel too, were of the view that young people that distress, intimidate or harass members of the public in their own communities should be taken home by the police. This finding has certainly been taken on board, whilst it is also encouraging to note that young and old alike agree that young people should respect their local communities.

Snap, crackle, pop

Fireworks are fun, but they can also be used to cause harm, distress and upset. This is something that most of you clearly agree with - and want something done about. So you'll be pleased to know that the Fireworks Act was passed late last year.

The Act will let the Scottish Executive introduce rules to put a noise limit on fireworks available to the public, ban fireworks from certain places and at certain times, licence those who sell fireworks, regulate public fireworks displays and let councils deal with those who sell fireworks irresponsibly. When the opportunity arises, we will make sure the Scottish Executive is aware of your views

FIRE!

We are delighted to reveal that the results on fire safety were very, very encouraging! The vast majority of you have smoke-alarms and fire action plans and know what to do and when to do it. On the downside, there are still a significant minority that don't, so if you are one of them and need help or advice, please phone us at Tayside Fire Brigade on 01382 322222 or www.taysidefire.gov.uk. If you are also one of those looking for help to fit an alarm, please contact Angus Care and Repair on 01307 463232 who will be delighted to help.

Don't call me!

The survey revealed that far too many of you are receiving offensive, obscene and nuisance calls. This is serious and you should report it to Tayside Police on 01382 223200, by e-mail mail@tayside.pnn.police.uk, or at any police station.

Domestic abuse no excuse

As with crime, we were pleased to note that your experience of domestic abuse matched the information we have. Rest assured that we take this issue very seriously and are monitoring any and all abuse including access to children, cash and damage to property.

Be safe be seen

It came as something of a shock to learn that many of the bike-riders responding to the survey did not use helmets or lights and were ready to admit to riding on pavements. Tayside Police and Angus Council take these issues so seriously that a road safety campaign was launched in December.

The campaign, saw a number of people charged and warned, either for riding on pavements or for riding without lights.

Roads, cameras, action!

Your views on a range of roads and transport issues, over a number of surveys, have certainly helped us in planning services. We were delighted by the overwhelming support for the Tayside Safety Camera Partnership and were pleased to learn of your support for speed humps and bumps.

We have also noted your concerns about pavement maintenance and particularly ice during the winter months. Unfortunately much of the disruption on roads and pavements has been caused by utilities companies. The Council has recently responded to a Government consultation document on the problem. We have also listened to your concerns about safety whilst using public transport and will be taking these on board as we tackle broader issues of anti-social behaviour after dark in public places.

Dogs and Litter, Litter and Dogs

It is no surprise but one of your biggest concerns continues to be the mess caused by irresponsible dog-owners. You will be pleased to know that we have introduced dedicated teams to deal with dog-fouling. Please also be assured that litter and vandalism remain at the top of our agenda