

Viewpoint Results

Summary for the September 2014 survey

In September/October 2014, members of the Viewpoint panel were asked about their participation and opinions on community cultural services and volunteering. The survey was sent to 1,662 panel members and received a response rate of 80%. The citizens panel aims to be as representative of the population of South Gloucestershire as possible and where this is not achieved any over- or under-representations are balanced by weighting the data. The main findings of the survey are summarised below.

Arts and Heritage

- 22% of people had visited a museum, gallery or heritage sites site within South Gloucestershire and 51% in the surrounding area.
- Community based arts events were the most popular of arts activities with 7% having attended these events and a further 16% of respondents having heard of them. The most popular heritage site was Avon Valley Railway with 61% of participants having visited the attraction and a further 28% having heard of it.
- 19% of respondents had participated in or were aware of the Discover Festival.

Public libraries

- Almost two thirds of all survey participants had visited a public library in the previous 12 months (63%).
- 80% of survey participants who used public libraries reported they were either very satisfied or satisfied with public libraries
- About a third of respondents had participated in a library event or activity in South Gloucestershire in the previous 12 months and 8% had participated in a library event or activity in the local region. Events range from author talks and Community Learning sessions to events for children.
- When asked about convenient library opening hours, respondents said they would be most likely to visit public libraries on Saturday afternoon (41%), evenings during the week (39%) and before midday on Saturdays (33%).
- If public libraries were to offer new services, the most popular options would be a place for reporting issues with council services (41%), access to voluntary and community groups (35%) and general advice on council services (32%).

Sports

- A third of survey participants had visited or participated in a sports event or activity in South Gloucestershire in the previous 12 months.
- The sports with the highest regular participation were swimming (25%), cycling (22%), going to the gym (21%) and running (15%).
- About a third of survey participants reported that they participate in sports for an average of more than 90 minutes in a typical week (34%).
- The main reasons reported for participating in sports were improving fitness (69%), improving health (68%) and enjoyment (51%). The main reason for not participating in sports of those who reported they did not play sport was that they did not enjoy it (38%).
- Respondents already participating in sports said they would be most encouraged to do more sports by cheaper opportunities (44%). Current non-participants were most likely to be encouraged to do sports through beginner and improver courses to re-introduce people to sport (20%).
- The improvement to local sports facilities that respondents most wanted to see was lower fees (46%), particularly for Active Leisure Centres.

Volunteering

- Twenty-seven percent of all survey participants stated they were volunteers.
- The most popular area was support for young people with 24% of volunteers dedicating time to this service area.
- About half of all respondents who said they volunteered for a council or non-council service reported to volunteer for an average of 1 to 4 hours per week (51%).
- Involvement of volunteers in council service areas was particularly welcomed in heritage (71%), other non-listed voluntary and charity work (71%), arts (68%), sports (65%), parks and open spaces (65%) and environment (64%).
- The largest objection to volunteers in council service areas was received for childcare (41%) and care for adults (31%).
- A large number of comments received called for increased publicity and promotion of cultural and sports offers and volunteering opportunities in South Gloucestershire to increase awareness and thereby attendance rates.

What next - How will we use the results?

Responses are currently supporting the work on bringing libraries and One Stop Shops together into community hubs and we are using this information as we develop a community hub in Kingswood and in other areas over the forthcoming year.

We will particularly focus on increasing participation in sport by women and encouraging those who currently only do a small amount of exercise to get more active. We will do this by delivering beginner courses and taster sessions, Street Games and Door Step clubs. Following the comments on need for publicity, we will start by targeting publicity in priority neighbourhoods and at sports events. We acknowledge that there is a trend towards individual rather than team sports and will aim to support these activities. Information about the level of volunteering will be used to measure the value of volunteering in South Gloucestershire, to encourage more people to volunteer and to make it easier for them to support local community activities.

The full report is available on www.southglos.gov.uk/viewpoint .