



Listening to your views!

Dear

Welcome to our latest panel survey.

In this survey we're asking all members of Sevenoaks District Residents' Panel to help us make some important decisions for the future of our community by letting us know their views about:

- Your money, your choice
- Our services
- The Community Plan
- Valuing diversity, promoting equality

All the information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence. When JB Market Research Services presents the results to the District Council, no answers will be attributed to individuals. Also JB Market Research Services will not pass on any personal information to third parties.

Please complete your copy of our questionnaire and **return it to JB Market Research Services by Friday 31st August** in the FREEPOST envelope provided. **No stamp is required.**

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, you can contact the **JB Market Research Services helpline on 01303 249334** (or e-mail: judy@jbmarketresearch.co.uk) or Lucy Baldwin on 01732 227000 (or e-mail: policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

I very much hope you will be able to take part as your views are important to us.

I would also like to thank all those panel members who took the time to complete and return our last panel survey. A summary of these results is on page 2.

Thank you very much for your help in advance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Hales".

Robin Hales
Chief Executive



Residents' Panel Survey 8 – summary of results

Licensing - Gambling

- One third of respondents buy a lottery ticket on a weekly basis
- Upwards of 70% of respondents 'never' go to any of the four listed 'gambling' venues
- 78% of respondents chose either 'restaurant' or 'cinema or theatre' as their first choice of entertainment activity
- 28% of respondents gave 'pubs' as their first choice of venue for playing gaming machines

Community Development – The Community Plan

- 93% of respondents feel safe 'outside' in the District during the day. 59% feel safe 'outside' in the District after dark
- 6% of respondents feel the level of crime in Sevenoaks District is 'higher' than other areas in Kent. 4% feel it is 'higher' than the rest of the country
- 85% of respondents say that the car is the form of transport they use most often
- 85% say getting to a *Council / neighbourhood office* is 'easy'
- 88% are 'satisfied' with the service they get from a *Council / neighbourhood office*
- All the 18 listed priorities were said, by at least 78% of respondents, to be a priority for the next 3-year Community Plan

Equality & Diversity

- 79% of respondents say their religion is Christianity. 20% say they have no religion
- Between 71 and 238 respondents are willing to take part in one form or another of further information-sharing on equality and discrimination issues
- Less than 2% of respondents say they have experienced or witnessed someone receiving less favourable treatment, or being put at a disadvantage, as a result of an equality or discrimination matter

Managing the Panel

- Satisfaction with aspects of the survey questionnaire varies between 70% and 94%
- The most favoured name for the Panel is 'Sevenoaks District Council Residents' Panel'

More information is available by visiting the District Council's website at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Helpful hints for completing this questionnaire

- The questionnaire should be completed by the person to whom it is addressed.
- Please read each question carefully and tick a box to indicate your answer. In most cases you will only have to tick one box but please read the questions carefully, as sometimes you will need to tick more than one box.
- The survey consists of 12 pages and should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. Once you have completed the questionnaire please take a minute to check you have answered all the questions that you should have answered.
- Please return your completed questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope supplied by **Friday 31st August 2007**.
- You do not need to add a stamp. If you cannot find the FREEPOST envelope please send your completed questionnaire to: JB Market Research Services, FREEPOST NAT5473, PO Box 568, Folkestone, CT20 3BR
- If you have any queries about the questionnaire please contact JB Market Research Services on their telephone helpline 01303 249334 or by e-mailing judy@jbmarketresearch.co.uk
- If you require a large print copy please contact the JB Market Research Services helpline on 01303 249334.

Section 1: Your money, your choice

We are currently in the process of preparing our budget plan for 2008-9 and beyond.

We face some extremely difficult decisions. Next year, the grant that the District Council receives from Central Government is likely to decrease, and coupled with smaller returns on our investments due to reducing reserves, we are unlikely to have sufficient financial resources to maintain services at the current levels. Government is also likely to impose a limit on Council Tax rises again next year. The District Council has no option but to examine all the services it offers, and decide where savings can be made.

The following question asks how important the services provided by the District Council are to you. Your answers will be presented to our Members to inform their decision-making.

Sevenoaks District Council services

Community Safety & Development

- Community safety: working with the Police and other partners to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
- Community Plan: working with Kent County Council, health providers and others to improve the quality of life for those who live or work in the District
- CCTV: 100 cameras covering Sevenoaks, Swanley, New Ash Green, Edenbridge and Westerham 24 hours a day
- Health and environmental projects: e.g. older people's groups, healthy lifestyles activities, walking buses, wildlife gardening, walking groups and other health initiatives
- Edenbridge Local Warden
- Grants for voluntary groups e.g. citizens advice, neighbourhood watch; support and advice to voluntary sector
- Activities for Young People: e.g. Youth Zone summer programme, SNAP Club Nights (anti- drug / alcohol / smoking), 8-12s projects
- Regeneration work across the District

Economic development & Licensing

- Support to businesses and encouragement of inward investment
- Licensing: animal welfare licensing, taxi licensing, public entertainment licensing, personal and premises licensing for the sale of alcohol
- Markets: operation of Swanley market (Wednesday) and Sevenoaks markets (Saturday and Wednesday)
- Promotion of tourism through the Heart of Kent group

Environmental Health

- Commercial food safety, e.g. restaurant inspections, food hygiene, food sampling
- Health & Safety at work enforcement
- General public health issues
- Pest control services
- Animal welfare and other licensing
- Dog Control statutory enforcement responsibilities
- The District Council is required to review local air quality and contaminated land in the District
- Statutory enforcement responsibilities for noise and other nuisance
- Maintenance of 12 public conveniences across the District

Housing

- Legal duty to provide advice or assistance to avoid homelessness, including temporary accommodation, loan to rent privately and mortgage advice / debt counselling
- Legal duty to ensure “Decent Homes Standard” in private and social sector accommodation
- Provision of grants and funding of a Home Improvement Agency service to provide assistance to older people and/or people with disabilities to remain safely in their own homes
- Management of Council owned permanent site for Gypsies and Travellers; and dealing with unauthorised encampments
- Housing Strategy, including policies for affordable housing, required by Central Government and surveys to identify need
- Licensing of mobile homes, caravans and houses of multiple occupation

Leisure & Arts

- Arts development: working with partners to help promote and encourage the arts in the District
- The STAG theatre and cinema, Sevenoaks
- Parks and open spaces: management and maintenance, e.g. Shoreham Woods, Sevenoaks Environmental Park
- Leisure centres: in partnership with Sencio Community Leisure Trust, e.g. White Oak Leisure Centre (Swanley), Edenbridge Leisure Centre, Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, Wildernesse Sports Centre, Lullingstone Park Golf Course

Local Tax collection & Benefits

- Central Government requires the District Council to collect Council Tax from every household (45,000) and Business Rates from every business (4,500) in the District. £64million was collected in 2006-7
- Central Government requires the District Council to pay Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit to those on low income in the District. The Government sets the rules about how much claimants are paid. Over 6,000 people receive more than £20million of benefit in the District every year

Parking & related services

- Off street parking: enforcement of pay and display, management and maintenance of Council owned car parks
- On street parking: management of parking enforcement
- Maintenance of Sevenoaks Bus Station
- Concessionary fares: all pensioners are entitled to a bus pass for free travel within Kent or a reduced price railcard
- Minibus services for older people, people with disabilities and young people
- The District Council is required to undertake street naming and numbering, including the maintenance of street nameplates

Planning

- Legal duty to determine planning and associated applications (e.g. listed building applications)
- Provide advice on planning matters to developers, potential applicants and members of the public

- Prepare all statutory plans regarding the maintenance of the environment and future development in the District, e.g. Local Development Framework (LDF)
- Review Conservation Area (CA) boundaries and prepare CA appraisals and management plans
- Determine building regulation applications and inspect on-going construction work
- Investigate contraventions of planning law and regulations and take appropriate action
- Land Charge Searches providing information for property buyers
- Tree Preservation Orders and advice on planning applications that affect trees

Refuse collection & Recycling

- Collection of household waste (e.g. black sacks, Saturday collections, bulky waste and clinical waste)
- Household waste recycling services (e.g. clear sacks, recyclable white goods collections, garden waste and recycling sites)

Street cleaning

- Cleaning of all adopted streets and footpaths
- Removal of fly tipped waste on Council land and the public highway
- Investigation and removal of abandoned vehicles on Council land and the public highway

Q1. Please tell us how important to you are the Sevenoaks District Council services listed above by ranking them 1 to 10, where 1 is the most important and 10 is the least important. (Please rank the services 1 to 10)

For example: if you think Street cleaning is the most important service provided by the District Council, you would write 1 in the box next to 'Street cleaning'

For example: if you think Planning is the least important service provided by the District Council, you would write 10 in the box next to 'Planning'

	Rank
Community Safety & Development	
Economic development & Licensing	
Environmental Health	
Housing	
Leisure & Arts	
Local Tax collection & Benefits	
Parking & related services	
Planning	
Refuse collection & Recycling	
Street cleaning	

Section 2: Our services

This section of the survey asks how satisfied you are with Sevenoaks District Council services. To help you give an informed answer please use the summary of our services in section 1.

Q2. Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Sevenoaks District Council runs things? (Please ✓ one box only)

- Very satisfied..... 1
- Fairly satisfied..... 2
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied... 3
- Fairly dissatisfied..... 4
- Very dissatisfied..... 5
- Don't know..... 6

Q3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following services provided by Sevenoaks District Council. Please answer, regardless of whether you have used these services or not. (Please ✓ one box for each row)

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Community Safety & Development	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Economic development & Licensing	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Environmental Health	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Leisure & Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Local Tax collection & Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Parking & related services	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Refuse collection & Recycling	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Street cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Section 3: The Community Plan

The Sevenoaks District Community Plan sets out a 10-year vision for the Sevenoaks District: “We want Sevenoaks District to be recognised by all as a place with safe and caring communities, a green and healthy environment and a dynamic and sustainable economy.” Some of the indicators we use to measure success relate to how safe people feel, whether people get on with each other and how well served they are by local services.

The following questions will help us to target our delivery plan appropriately.

The results will be used by the Sevenoaks District Community Planning Partnership (a partnership formed between Sevenoaks District Council, Kent Police, Kent County Council, health and housing providers, voluntary, business and community organisations) to deliver services.

Q4. On a day to day basis how safe from crime and disorder do you feel in the District of Sevenoaks ... (Please ✓ one box for each row)

	Very safe	Fairly safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Fairly unsafe	Very unsafe
outside during the day?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
outside after dark?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅

Q5. Compared with other areas in Kent, do you think the level of crime in the District of Sevenoaks is ... (Please ✓ one box only)

- Higher..... ₁
- The same..... ₂
- Lower..... ₃
- Don't know..... ₄

Q6. And compared with the rest of the country, do you think that the level of crime in the District of Sevenoaks is ... (Please ✓ one box only)

- Higher..... ₁
- The same..... ₂
- Lower..... ₃
- Don't know..... ₄

Q7. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: My local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and cultures get on well together. (Please ✓ one box)

- Agree strongly..... ₁
- Agree slightly..... ₂
- Neither agree nor disagree..... ₃
- Disagree slightly..... ₄
- Disagree strongly..... ₅
- Don't know..... ₆

Section 4: Valuing diversity, promoting equality

We want to ensure we design and shape our services around the District's community. The following questions ask you about how we can improve the services the District Council provides to meet particular needs. Your answers will help us to develop priorities for action to address the needs of people based on their gender, age, faith/belief and sexual orientation.

Q8. To what extent do you think any of the following may affect your experience of Sevenoaks District Council services? (Please ✓ one box for each row)

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Your gender	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Your caring responsibilities for children or other family members	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Your marital or civil partnership status	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Your age	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Your religion, faith or religious / philosophical belief (or lack of)	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Your sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

Q9. Please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree that the following are priorities for action to design and shape District Council services around our District's population. (Please ✓ one box for each row)

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Gender Improving our understanding of the needs of men and women when using our services	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Increasing awareness and use of our services where men or women are under-represented	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Age Providing events for young people	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

Strongly agree Slightly agree Neither agree nor disagree Slightly disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Improving awareness about the services provided by the District Council for younger and older people

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Understanding and providing for the housing needs of younger and older people

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Providing access to Benefit services for older people in a way that meets their needs

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Improving awareness of older people's entitlement to concessionary bus / rail fares

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Faith / Belief
More publicity in recognising religious days for all cultures

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Improving our understanding of the needs of people with diverse faiths and customs when using our services

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Sexual orientation
Improving our understanding of the needs of the sexually diverse community when using our services

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅ ₆

Q10. Do you have any suggestions of how we can improve our services to meet the needs of people according to their gender, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation? (Please write in the box below)

Section 5: Managing the Panel

We are committed to strengthening how we consult with local people. Part of this work centres on how we consult using the Residents' Panel.

Q11. We are interested in receiving feedback on the questionnaires we send out. To what extent do you agree with the following ...? (Please ✓ one box for each row)

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The questionnaire is clearly laid out	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
The questionnaire was easy to complete	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
The topic areas in the questionnaire are interesting to me	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
The topic areas in the questionnaire are relevant to me	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the survey questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

Q12. What topics should be included in future panel questionnaires? Please tell us what you would like to be asked about. (Please write in the box below)

I would like to be asked about

Section 6: Other comments & suggestions

Q13. Is there anything else you would like to add? - If so please write in the box below.

Important note:

- Due to data protection issues, no answers will be attributed to individuals. We are therefore unable to respond directly to the comments, requests or enquiries you include on this questionnaire.
- If you would like to contact Sevenoaks District Council

Call: 01732 227000

E-mail: information@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Visit our website at: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Write to: Sevenoaks District Council
 Council Offices
 Argyle Road
 Sevenoaks
 Kent
 TN13 1HG

Thank you very much for taking part

**Please return your completed questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope supplied by
Friday 31st August**

You do not need to add a stamp

If you cannot find the FREEPOST envelope please send your completed questionnaire to:

*JB Market Research Services
FREEPOST NAT5473
PO Box 568
Folkestone
CT20 3BR*

August 2007