



Sutton Online Residents Panel Information & Advice Survey

Summary Report

March 2014

Online Panel Survey – Information and Advice

The questionnaire was used to look at how residents, who perhaps do not have specific information & advice requirements, may access information and advice services in the future. This was important as to understand where someone would go initially, would help inform how services are delivered going forward and also identify how we could help people access the information and advice that they need.

In total 112 residents took part in the Information and Advice survey, of which 94% (105) were from the online residents' panel. Due to the small sample size it should be noted that the results of this panel survey cannot be taken as being representative of the wider population; however it can be used to provide an indication of what the thoughts and opinions might be.

Panel members were presented with a number of scenarios whereby they would need to go and get information or advice, for example '*You are caring for an elderly relative and you want to know what services and support is available to you*'. For each of the scenarios, the respondent was presented with a number of places or organisations where they would go first. This was not a comprehensive list of options, for example Age UK was not always provided as an option, however an 'other' category was always available. In addition people can have a very wide range of advice issues – benefits, debt, housing, consumer, immigration, employment that could not all be covered by the scenarios presented.

Key Findings

When presented with a list of places or organisations, with the exception of debt advice and victim of crime, the council was the most popular choice to go to initially. For most scenarios this would result in the council directing people to other organisations that would be able to provide the support required.

The results also suggest that there is a clear preference to be able to access information and advice either face to face or in person, as this was the most popular method for all scenarios. There may be a number of reasons for this, for example there were a number of comments about how it was not easy to find information online, or it is likely that the more personal nature of face to face makes it more popular. Also the percentage desiring face to face contact increases when advice is required, as opposed to information.

Across all of the scenarios there was a clear desire for the following:

- Information and advice to be provided within 24 hours
- The information and advice needs to be tailored to what is available locally
- Organisations should be able to refer to other information or advice available

There was also a split between those people that would prefer the provider to have in depth knowledge on a particular topic and those that would expect the provider to have a broad understanding across a number of different topics.

Finally those community networks and informal groups, that tend to be widely used by those individuals who have specialist information and advice requirements, do not appear to be present for this wider population, with very few stating that this would be their preference.

Next Steps

The results of the panel survey have been used to inform a needs assessment for Information and Advice Services across Sutton. This needs assessment will be published as part of a draft Information and Advice Framework in July for wider consultation with key stakeholders and partners.

Once agreed the Framework will shape all information and advice services provided by the council going forward and will enable the council to ensure that the information and advice requirements of Sutton residents continue to be met in the future.

Full Results

You are caring for an elderly relative and you want to know what services and support is available to you

- Sutton Council (37%), search engines (23%) and Age UK (13%) were the most popular places respondents would go for information and advice regarding caring for an elderly relative
- 32% of respondents would like to receive the information face-to-face or in-person and 24% would like it through a website or webpage.
- Further analysis revealed that of those who initially go to Sutton Council, 31% would like to receive the information or advice through emails, 25% through a website or webpage and 20% face-to-face.
- 50% of those who would initially go Age UK would like to receive the information or advice face-to-face.
- Almost half would expect to receive the information or advice within 24 hours.
- Over three quarters of respondents believe it is very important that the provider has a local knowledge of what is available in Sutton.
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You were made redundant six months ago and have got into mortgage arrears. The lender is threatening court action. You want help with preventing repossession of your home

- 70% of respondents would initially go to Citizens Advice Bureaux for information or advice and two thirds would like to receive the information or advice face-to-face or in-person.
- 70% of those who would initially go to Citizens Advice Bureaux would expect to receive the information or advice face-to-face.
- A third would expect to receive the information or advice immediately and a further 35% would expect it in the next 24 hours.
- The majority of respondents (98%) believe it is important for the provider to be able to refer them to other information or advice available.
- Only 72% believe it would be beneficial for the provider to be able to provide information or advice across a wide range of topics.

You have a young child and want to find out about what childcare, activities and support services are available

- 39% of respondents would initially go to Sutton Council
- Through a website or webpage was the most popular way respondents would like to receive information or advice (36%) followed by face-to-face or in-person (25%).
- Of the 39% who would initially go to Sutton Council, 42% would like to receive the information or advice through a website or webpage.
- A third would expect a response within 24 hours.
- Almost all of the respondents (96%) think it is important for the provider to have local knowledge of what is available in Sutton.
- Only 68% of respondents think it is important for the provider to be able to provide information or advice across a wide range of topics.

You have recently been a victim of crime and want to know what services and support is available to you

- The majority of respondents would initially go to the Police and over a half would expect to receive the information or advice face-to-face.
- Half of all respondents would expect to receive the information or advice immediately.
- Most respondents (99%) think it is important for the provider to be able to refer them to other information or advice available.

You want to know if you are eligible for social housing and how you go about applying

- Three quarters of respondents would go to Sutton Council initially for information or advice regarding social housing.
- 40% would like to receive the information face-to-face or in person and 20% would like it through the telephone.
- 40% of those who would initially go to Sutton Council would like to receive the information or advice face-to-face or in person.
- A third of respondents would expect a response within 24 hours and one quarter expect a response immediately.
- Most respondents (99%) think it is important the provider has a local knowledge of what is available in Sutton and that they have in depth knowledge of the topic.