Annual Survey 2005

Contents

1.   Introduction

During March/April 2005, Huntingdonshire District Council undertook a District wide survey based on the overall satisfaction with Huntingdonshire as a place to live and the services that the District Council provides.

The survey was undertaken to assess residents view's on our priorities and services and will be used to judge performance against the achievement of our targets. The findings of the survey will also feed into the Community Strategy and the corporate plan, "Growing Success".

The Survey covered the following issues

- Value for Money
- The Environment
- Community Safety
- Community Leadership
- Accessible services and transport choices
- Reputation and Standards of Service
- Strong and Diverse Economy
- Overall Quality of Life
- Equality of Opportunity

Wherever possible comparisons have been made with recent significant pieces of research. These are:-
- Best Value Performance Indicator Customer Satisfaction Survey 2003/04 (Survey 2003/04)
- Cambridgeshire Quality of Life Survey 2003 (Survey 2003)
- Budget Consultation Survey 2004 (Survey 2004).

2.   Methodology

A four page leaflet, briefly describing the services that Huntingdonshire District Council provide was compiled to help residents make informed decisions about the quality and value for money of services that the District Council provides.

3000 leaflets were distributed to households in the District using a commercially supplied list of contacts, such that the mailed sample reflected the proportional population of the District by ward. Telephone interviews were then conducted with 500+ residents, with quotas placed on age, gender and ward.

Respondent Profile

A sample of 510 residents was achieved. The table overleaf summarises key profile information of those respondents who completed the survey.   The respondent profile demonstrates a good representative sample of the

residents of Huntingdonshire. However, there is a slight under representation of young people. The final data analysis uses a weighted sample (the data has been weighted by younger people, and by gender) so that the data reflects the actual age and gender profile of the district. The results of the survey represent a maximum standard error of +/-4.38% at the 95% level of confidence

An extra sample of young people was used to gain more detailed views from young people aged 11 to 17. The findings of this research are presented in part two of this report.

Respondent Profile			
Gender		**Ethnicity**	
Male	53.3%	White	96.5%
Female	46.7%	Black	0.4%
Age		Mixed	0.2%
16-18	1%	Asian	0.6%
19-24	6.1%	Other	0.2
25-49	49.2%	Refused/not provided	2.2%
50-64	25.9%	**Economic Status**	
65+	17.8%	Full-time employment	41.6%
Number of households without any children	58%	Part-time employment	16.9%
		Self employed	6.5%
Working in Huntingdonshire	44.1%	Unemployed	2.4%
Accommodation		Retired	22.7%
Owned outright	39.2%	Full-time education	2.9%
Buying on mortgage	47.5%	Looking after the home	5.1%
Rent from housing association/trust	6.9%	**Illness/disability**	
		Long-standing illness, disability or infirmity	9.4%
Rented from private landlord	3.7%		

Geography
The map below shows the distribution of respondents who took part in the survey.
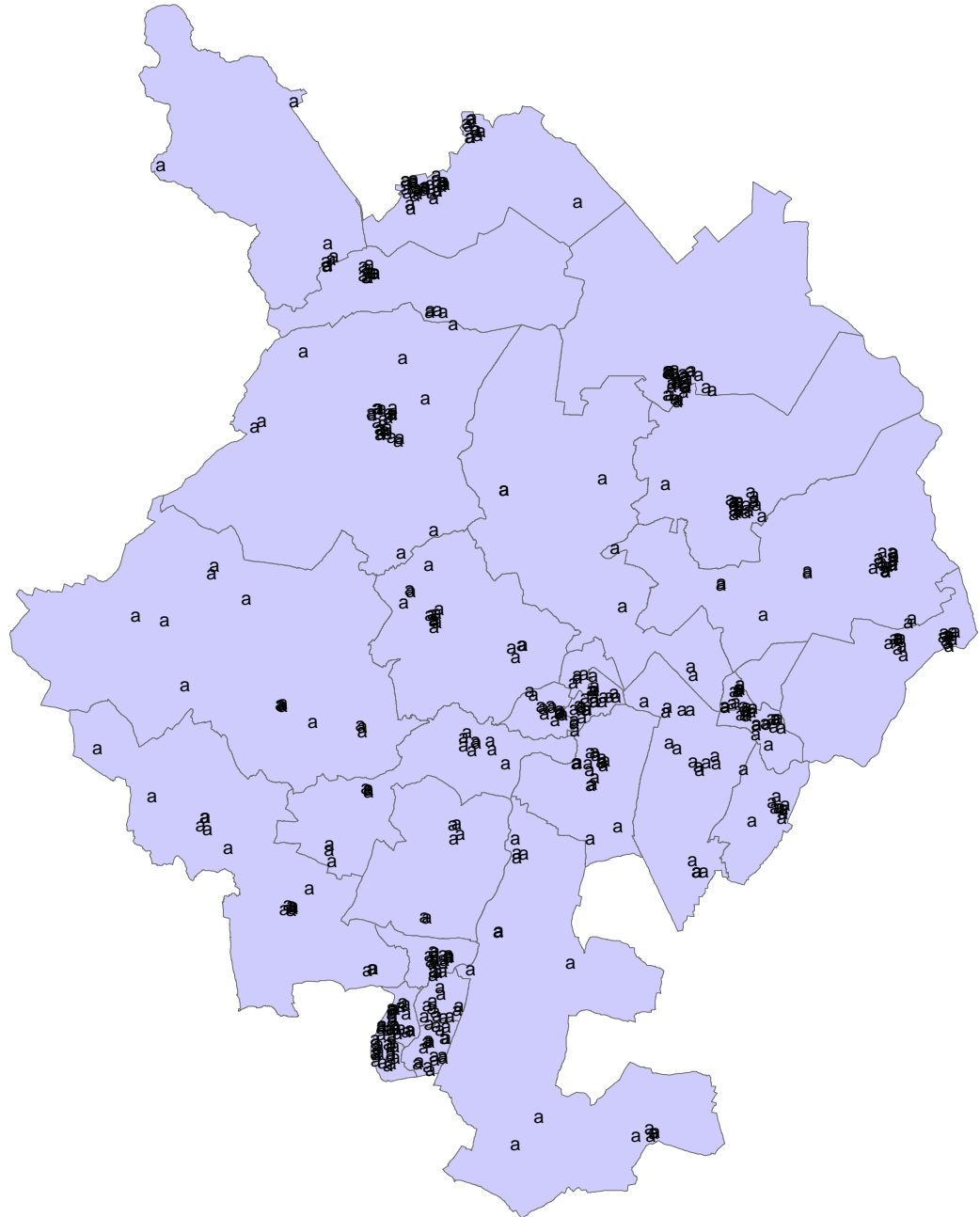
3. Executive Summary

VALUE FOR MONEY
- A low percentage of respondents (36%) were very satisfied/satisfied with the current level of Council Tax for the services provided.

CLEAN, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT
- The majority of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the different aspects of Huntingdonshire's environment.
- There has been a 10% decrease (since the 2003/4 survey) in the amount of respondents expressing satisfaction with parks and open spaces.
- A high percentage of respondents (74%) didn't consider abandoned vehicles or graffiti/fly tipping to be a problem in their area.
- 40% of respondents considered dog fouling to be a significant problem.

SAFE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES
- The majority of respondents felt safe in their home, neighbourhood and in general.
- 11% of respondents had been a victim of crime (46% of which, had been a victim of burglary).

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
- The majority of respondents felt well informed/informed about the different aspects of the Council and the services it provides.
- There was an equal split between respondents who expressed an opinion on whether or not the Council listened to and considered their views. (35% said that they felt that the Council listened to and considered their views, 38% felt that the Council did not listen to and consider their views).
- 44% of respondents rated the Council's reputation as excellent/good.
- 67% of respondents rated the services that they had received, as excellent/good overall.

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES AND TRANSPORT CHOICES
- The majority of respondents rated the different ways in which the Council makes its services available excellent/good.
- The majority of respondents found it easy/fairly easy to access the Council's leisure centres and found physical access to and around leisure centres easy/fairly easy.
- A high percentage (87%) of respondents found it easy/fairly easy to make payments to the Council.
- The most preferred method of making payments to the Council was direct debit.
- Just over half of respondents (52%) said that it would be very/fairly difficult for them to get to work/shopping if they weren't able to use a car.

STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY
- A high percentage of respondents (83%) had not been involved in any training in the last 12 months.

QUALITY OF LIFE
- A high percentage of respondents (87%) were very/fairly satisfied with Huntingdonshire as a place to live.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY
- Just under half of respondents (49%) said that the Council meets some of their needs, 2% said that the Council does not meet any of their needs.

Part 1

4. VALUE FOR MONEY

Satisfaction with Council Tax Level

4.1 Having read through the leaflet that details the services provided by the District Council, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the level of Council Tax set by the Council for the services that are provided. Ratings were given on a five point scale where 5 = very dissatisfied and 1 = very satisfied.

Key Findings

- 36% of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the current level of Council Tax for the services that are provided

- 26% of respondents were neither satisfied or dissatisfied with the current level of Council Tax for the services that are provided

- 28% of respondents were very dissatisfied/dissatisfied with the current level of Council Tax for the services that are provided
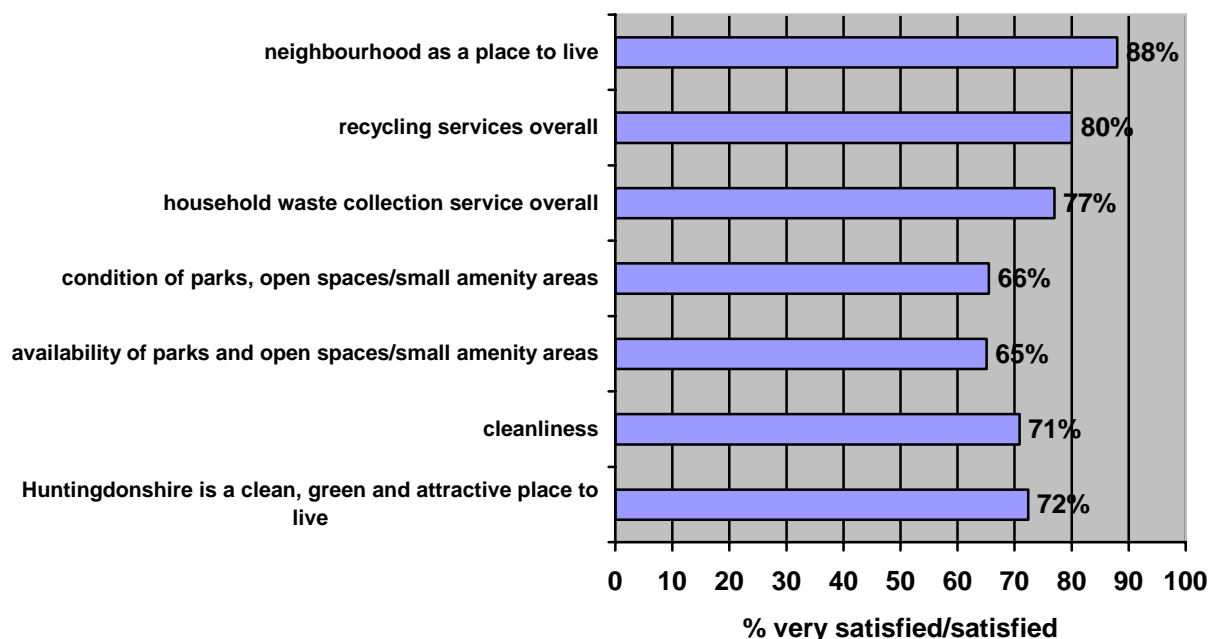

Comparisons
4.2 In contrast, the budget consultation carried out in summer 2004 found a high level of satisfaction with services, 67% of residents surveyed were pleased with the current level of service that the Council provides and 64% of residents opted for increases in Council Tax, to achieve their personal preferences for services.

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5. CLEAN, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Environment

5.1 Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with different aspects of Huntingdonshire's environment. Ratings were given on a five point scale where 5 = very dissatisfied and 1 = very satisfied. The graph opposite shows the level of respondents who indicated that they were very satisfied/satisfied with each of the aspects of Huntingdonshire's environment.

% very satisfied/satisfied

Key Findings
5.2 The majority of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied/satisfied with the different aspects of Huntingdonshire's environment.

Comparisons
5.3 88% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This shows a slight increase (3%) for the survey (2003) when 85% of respondents said that they were satisfied with the local area as a place to live

5.4 80% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with recycling services overall. Compared with the 2003/04 survey, this shows an 8% increase.

5.5 The percentage of respondents expressing satisfaction with parks and open spaces has decreased by 10% compared with the 2003/04 survey when 76% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of Council managed parks and open spaces.

5.6 Overall satisfaction with household waste collection has decreased by 7% since the 2003/04 survey where 86% of respondents expressed satisfaction with household waste collection

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Buildings and Natural Environment

5.8 Respondents were asked to rate the quality of Huntingdonshire's buildings and natural environment. Ratings were given on a five point scale where 5 = very poor and 1 = very high quality.

Key Findings

- 57% of respondents rated Huntingdonshire's buildings as very high/acceptable quality (30% expressed no opinion)

- 73% of respondents rated Huntingdonshire's natural environment as very high/acceptable quality

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Comparisons

5.9   Since the quality of life survey 2003, there has been a decrease of 9% for both the level of satisfaction with Huntingdonshire's natural environment and built environment

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Abandoned vehicles, Dog Fouling and Graffiti

5.11 Respondents were asked to say if they felt that abandoned vehicles, dog fouling and graffiti/fly tipping were a significant problem in Huntingdonshire. The table below shows the findings.

Key Findings

	Yes	No
Do you consider abandoned vehicles to be a significant problem	23.8%	73.9%
Do you consider dog fouling to be a significant problem	40.3%	58.6%
Is Graffiti/fly tipping a problem in your area	26.2%	73.6%

- Dog fouling was seen by respondents as the most significant problem.

5.11   Respondents were asked to rate public arts projects/events on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = very good and 5 = very poor.

Key Findings

- 42% of respondents felt that public arts projects/events were very good/good (31% expressed no opinion).

6. SAFE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

6.1 Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they felt safe in their homes, neighbourhood and in general. Ratings were on a five point scale where 1 = very safe and 5 = very unsafe.
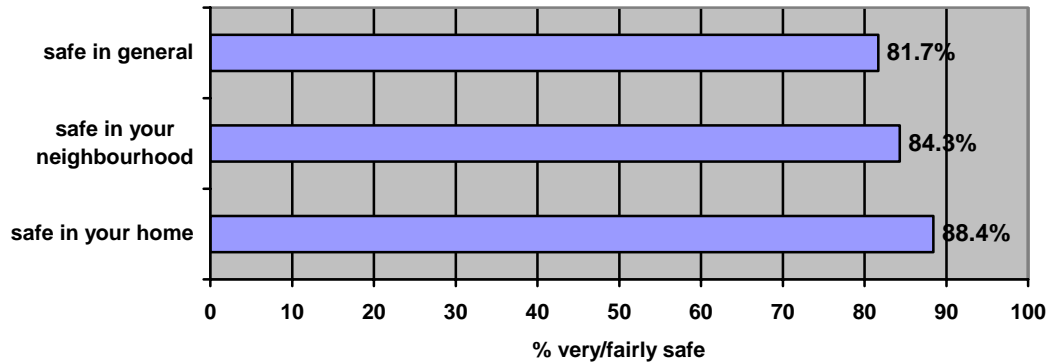
- The majority of respondents felt safe in their home, neighbourhood and in general

- 11% of respondents had been a victim of crime in the last twelve months and of those respondents who had been a victim of crime, 46% had been a victim of burglary.

7. EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

7.1 Respondents were asked if they felt that the Council has clear direction and priorities.

Key Findings

- 53% of respondents said yes, the Council has clear direction and priorities

- 22% of respondents said no the Council doesn't have clear direction and priorities and 25% said that they didn't know

8. GOOD REPUTATION AND STANDARDS OF SERVICE

8.1 Respondents were asked to rate how well or not they were informed about different aspects of the Council and the services it provides. The table below shows how well informed respondents felt they were.

Key Findings

	Well informed	Informed	Not Informed	Don't Know
Council Services Provided	22%	54%	16%	7%
Who to contact about services/facilities	16%	52%	22%	11%
The standards of service	16%	57%	20%	7%
How to complain or appeal about a decision	12%	42%	29%	18%
How well the Council is performing	16%	49%	26%	9%
Local events and activities	22%	55%	19%	5%
Improvements planned for services	15%	47%	27%	11%
How the Council spends money	16%	47%	29%	8%
How the Council makes its decisions	10%	40%	37%	14%

- The majority of respondents felt well informed/informed about the different aspects of the Council and the services it provides

- Respondents felt the least informed about how the Council makes its decisions, followed by How the Council spends its money and how to complain or appeal about a decision.

8.2   Respondents were asked if they felt that they were able to make their views known to the Council and if they felt that the Council listened to and considered their views.

Key Findings

- 66% of respondents felt that they were able to make their views known to the Council (25% said that they did not feel that they were able to make their views known to the Council)

- 35% of respondents said that they felt that the Council listened to and considered their views

- 38% of respondents didn't feel that the Council listened to and considered their views

8.3   Respondents were asked to rate the Council's reputation and the services they have received overall on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = excellent and 5 = poor.

Key Findings

- 44% of respondents rated the Council's reputation as excellent/good

- 22% of respondents rated the Council's reputation as fair/poor

- 67% of respondents rated the services that they had received, as excellent/good overall

- 15% of respondents rated the services that they had received as fair/poor overall

9. ACCESSIBLE SERVICES AND TRANSPORT CHOICES

Availability of Services

9.1 Respondents were asked to rate the different ways in which the Council makes its services available. The ratings used a 5 point scale where 1 = excellent and 5 = poor. The table below shows the ratings for each of the different ways the Council delivers its services.

Key Findings

%	Excellent	Good	Neither	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Telephone	8	41	11	7	4	30
Face –to-face	4	23	9	6	6	52
Internet	3	17	5	5	1	68
Postal	7	43	12	9	2	27
Access at our offices	5	31	11	5	3	45
Overall	6	50	13	10	2	19

- Overall the majority of respondents rated the different ways in which the Council makes its services available as excellent/good
- A high percentage of respondents expressed a 'don't know' opinion for the internet, face to face and access at our offices categories. suggesting that the majority of respondents were more likely to use the telephone of post as methods of accessing the Council's services.

Leisure Centres

9.2 Respondents were asked to rate how easy they found it to get to the Council's leisure centres and how easy they found physical access around the Council's leisure centres. The ratings used a 5 point scale, where 1 = very easy and 5 = very difficult.

Key Findings
- 65% of respondents found it very easy/fairly easy to get to the Council's leisure centres

- 78% of respondents found physical access to and around the Council's leisure centres very easy/fairly easy.

Making payments to the Council

9.3 Respondents were asked to rate how easy they found it to make payments to the Council. A 5 point scale was used where 1 = very easy and 5 = very difficult.

Key Findings

- 87% of respondents found it very easy/fairly easy to make payments to the Council

- The most preferred method of making payments to the Council was Direct Debit, 71% of respondents indicated that this was there preferred method

Transport

9.4   Respondents were asked, if they weren't able to go by car to work (or shopping), how easy it would be for them to get there another way.

Key Findings

- 52% of respondents said that it would be very/fairly difficult for them to get to work/shopping if they weren't able to use a car

Licensed taxi/private hire

9.5   Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the availability of licensed taxi/private hire vehicles

Key Findings

- 65% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with the availability of licensed taxi/private hire vehicles

10. STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY

Training Opportunities

10.1 Respondents were asked if they had been involved in any training in the last twelve months that had resulted in achieving a qualification or certificate of accreditation. Respondents were then asked how satisfied they were with the opportunities for learning and training that are available to them.

Key Findings

- 16 % of respondents had been involved in any training in the last twelve months that had resulted in achieving a qualification or certificate of accreditation. (59% of these respondents had undertaken this as part of their work)

- 83% of respondents had not been involved in any training in the last twelve months that had resulted in achieving a qualification or certificate of accreditation.

- 55% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with the opportunities for learning and training available to them. (34% expressed a 'don't know' opinion)

- The most preferred way of learning was at college and in the work place

11. QUALITY OF LIFE

Huntingdonshire as a place to live

11.1 Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with Huntingdonshire as a good place to live. Using a 5 point scale where 1 = very satisfied and 5 = very dissatisfied.

Key Findings

- 87% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with Huntingdonshire as good place to live

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Comparisons

11.2 Since the quality of life survey 2003, there has been a small increase (2%) in the number of respondents stating that they are satisfied with Huntingdonshire as a good place to live

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12. EQUALITIES

12.1 Respondents were asked to indicate how well the Council meets their needs and if they felt that the Council promotes equality and inclusion.

Key Findings

- 44% of respondents said that the Council meets all of their needs
- 49% of respondents said that the Council meets some of their needs
- 2% of respondents said that the Council doesn't meet any of their needs
- The main reasons that respondents indicated for the Council not meeting their needs were:-
    - Better refuse collection
    - Improve the public transport service
    - Maintenance of roads/pavements/footpaths
    - More better youth facilities
    - Better policing of the area
    - Better recycling
    - Better leisure/sports facilities
- 72% of respondents said that the Council promotes equality and inclusion in their community/neighbourhood

Part 2
Young Persons

Background and Methodology

To gain a picture of the views of young people in Huntingdonshire a Young Persons consultation event was arranged. This involved getting together a group of young people to explore their views on the services that the District Council provides and the overall quality of life in Huntingdonshire. A series of qualitative group exercises facilitated by youth workers, were used to cover some of the relevant issues in the resident's survey. The findings of the consultation exercises are summarised below.

The group of young people was made up of a mixture of ages ranging from 11 to 17. In order to undertake the consultation exercises two sub groups were created. One group ('younger' group) was made up of participants aged 11 to 13 and the other group ('older' group) was made up of participants aged 14 to 17.

CLEAN, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

- The 'older' group didn't think that Huntingdonshire is a clean place to live whilst the younger group had mixed feelings on how clean they thought Huntingdonshire is. It was felt by the younger group that litter was more evident in public places such as schools and town centres.

- The 'younger' group felt that there weren't enough parks and open spaces and those that do exist are perceived as not clean and used by older young people who often *"smoke and swear".*

- There were differing attitudes amongst both groups of young people on abandoned vehicles. The older group didn't feel that abandoned vehicles are a problem whereas the younger group felt that abandoned vehicles were a problem.

- Dog fouling was experienced by both groups as a problem, especially in play areas. *"when I play football or go football training there is always at least 1 person with dog muck on their shoes"*

- Graffiti was perceived as a bigger problem amongst the 'younger' group. However it was appreciated as an 'art form' in appropriate places.

- There were mixed feelings on the dumping of rubbish on road sides by both groups.

- Recycling was popular amongst both groups of young people. It was felt that there is a good provision of facilities but these could be

expanded by providing recycling opportunities in schools and in towns and parks, *"No drink bottle/cans recycling when in town/out with mates"*

- When asked about Arts provision in Huntingdonshire, both groups felt that there was not enough. Some of the popular suggestions for provision were rock music gigs and graffiti *"Graffiti camps to stop graffiti in wrong places – A wall where paint can be washed off"*, *"Always wanted to be in a band but never had an opportunity"*

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES AND TRANSPORT CHOICES

- There was general agreement by both groups of young people that leisure centres are easy to get to, and around. St Neots leisure centre was mentioned as particularly difficult to get around if you were disabled.
- Few young people use public transport they tended to rely on parents to get to school, shops and activities.
- The older group of young people were more likely to use taxis and were generally positive about the provision.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Overall, both groups of young people agreed that Huntingdonshire is a good place to live.

SAFE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

- The majority of young people felt safe within their own homes.

- When asked if they felt safe in their neighbourhood, the younger group said that they felt safer during the day. Both groups highlighted street lighting as something that made people feel safe. Amongst the 'younger' group, there was concern over drugs and the perception that adults and older young people are drug users. The 'older' group felt that having people around made them feel safe, whether this is friends, police, CPSOs or street wardens, but they felt that the police are difficult to access and CPSOs are not respected.

STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY

- The majority of young people had been involved in learning opportunities outside school. Generally, it was felt that access to learning opportunities in villages were limited.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE IN GENERAL

- Appendix A, attached sets out the comments that both groups gave relating to where they live.

Place	Good Points	Bad Points
Huntingdon	Houses ➤ When you see housing they are not all the same colour because bits of them are in colour and bits of them aren't ➤ Houses are cool, don't like flats – messy and horrible ➤ The buildings are okay and there are a lot of them (flats) Shops ➤ Not that much space between shops ➤ Shops in Huntingdon okay ➤ There are plenty of shops ➤ There are lots of good food shops ➤ Good shops, prices good. I love Wilkos ➤ The Huntingdon shops are really good and there is a good variety General ➤ Buildings – not very high storey buildings ➤ Some nice old buildings from the Cromwell period ➤ There are good new buildings like the Rec centre Green Environment ➤ Nice Trees Cost Of Living ➤ Not too expensive Open Spaces ➤ There are loads of places to play football ➤ There are a lot of good parks ➤ Lots of fields ➤ Really clean, use it for playing and walking but	Houses ➤ There are some rough houses and are not big enough. Shops ➤ Bad shops ➤ Not enough designer shops ➤ There are too amny boring shops e.g. charity, estate agents ➤ Have to go too far for the best shops ➤ All shops are in one place ➤ Most shops I go in could be improved ➤ I don't think there is enough shops General ➤ Trampy buildings ➤ The environment is not clean and there's not that many bins ➤ Parts of the environment stink ➤ Too much litter ➤ Not a very clean place ➤ There is a lot of litter in the parks ➤ The town is full of litter and pollution ➤ There is a lot of fly tipping ➤ Lot of green area but needs to be cleaned (YG) ➤ Rubbish dumped in Sapley Square (OG) Things To Do ➤ Not much to do ➤ Could be more parks etc in Stukely Meadows (TG) Other ➤ There is not much good service ➤ Skanky!

Place	Good Points	Bad Points
	problems getting there (YG) Other ➢ Quite big, lots of bird poo – it some times smells – but overall helpful and busy! ➢ I think its alright but there is room for improvement ➢ Around H.Brooke is really nice ➢ The HCP is cool – fun. HYC – great! ➢ There is a lot of problems on the Oxmoor but it's not that bad a Place to live – lots of people to play and places to go (YP)	➢ The mess is okay. I love big open fields! ➢ Don't like the Oxmoor, a lot of bad people there (YG) ➢ Abandoned vehicles quite frequent on Oxmoor (YG) ➢ I see a lot of graffiti in Sapley area – very messy, offensice language and stupid pictures (YG)
Kimbolton	➢ Generally good. Easy-to-find layout ➢ Good. Lots of green spaces etc	➢ Slightly lacking but it is quite small
Ramsey	Houses ➢ Most houses are well kept and not messy ➢ Its fine, there are no big flats or estates Shops ➢ Good but shops don't stay for long. Good fish and chip shop in Great Whyte! Other ➢ OK ➢ Not sure, seems okay Things To Do ➢ Ramsey should have a youth club or safe place to go	Environment ➢ There is a lot of litter about ➢ There needs to be more flowers and trees to make it look more pretty ➢ Dumping of rubbish near Ramsey and Warboys (YG) Shops ➢ Get rid of all the takeaway shops, there's too many ➢ More shops maybe
Warboys	Buildings ➢ OK, most are good looking Environment	Shops ➢ Needs more shops ➢ Non existent – odd few shops but are well spread out

Place	Good Points	Bad Points
	➢ Good, lots of open spaces	Houses ➢ Less housing estates Things To Do ➢ Needs a proper football ground Other ➢ A tip ➢ Rubbish gets dumped in remote places where no one lives (YG)
Somersham		Shops ➢ There are no big shops ➢ Some are rubbish ➢ There is not many shops accept food shops General ➢ Older CYP swearing and smoking. Gangs of older YP makes younger YP feel intimidated (YG) ➢ Okay nut not much to do – seems to be a lot of druggies because there isn't much to do.
Brampton	➢ Shopping is good! ➢ Some houses are okay ➢ Environment is okay	➢ Brampton wood is not to do with Brampton ➢ 12 lane highway one side. 6 lane highway on other and A14

Place	Good Points	Bad Points
Sawtry	➢ New houses are pretty cool ➢ Some nice houses	➢ No shops
Yaxley	➢ Brilliant shopping centre for its size	
St Neots	Shops ➢ Reasonable variety of shops. High street has lots of shops ➢ As good as they can be in such a small town General ➢ Most of the buildings are cool ➢ Old style as its such an old town – has history, its nice ➢ Nice old churches and houses, should be built more like that instead of plain buildings Environment ➢ Environment – safe, friendly. A nice place to live ➢ Clean air, not much pollution. Lots of green areas ➢ Clean and tidy ➢ Has a lot of parks = clean and tidy (YG) Other ➢ Quite nice ➢ Looks good except for graffiti	Houses ➢ Too many scummy housing estates Shops ➢ Bad shops, not that many clothes to buy; because when you're walking around, people have the same things on that you are wearing ➢ Shops mainly targeted at an older audience ➢ No good shops at all! (need shopping centre) ➢ Cant buy clothes from opticians, banks and charity shops! ➢ Full of estate agents and charity shops, not a good match. General ➢ Buildings – new ones built on flood plains, not exactly practical ➢ Okay. Looks fairly mix and match. Newer buildings don't really fit in with older ones Environment ➢ Has a lot of litter ➢ Has a lot of graffiti ➢ There are too many fields where I live ➢ Okay. More could be done to protect wildlife etc ➢ Graffiti everywhere, on ground, walls, lamp posts etc (OG) Other ➢ There are millions of birds

Place	Good Points	Bad Points
		➢ Messy and trampish ➢ Minging! ➢ Skanky!