



What's the Plan? 2005 Stakeholder Seminar and Library Tour Public Consultation

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“Planning is about: buildings, streets, public, private and green spaces, design, architecture, parking, sustainable communities.....our city for the next generation.”

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act commenced in September, 2004 and introduced a new planning process.

All local planning authorities across England must now produce a **Local Development Framework** to replace the old-style Unitary Development Plan.

The Local Development Framework is a collection of documents and will comprise:

- **Local Development Scheme**– describes all local development documents to be prepared by the local planning authority including a timetable for their preparation

- **Local Development Documents** including:
 - **Statement of Community Involvement**– setting out how consultation will be undertaken and in what format
 - **Development Plan Documents**– Planning policy documents setting out the Council’s approach to development in the City

The main areas of change are:

Sustainability Appraisal

Planners will have to promote sustainable development by carrying out a Sustainability Appraisal to assess the economic, environmental and social impact of each Local Development Document (with the exception of the Statement of Community Involvement).

Front-Loading

The new system will aim to be more 'front-loaded' in terms of plan preparation i.e. consultation will take place 'prior' to the drafting of any potential policies. Greater emphasis will be placed on participation from the community to identify key issues affecting local areas.

Public Service Agreement Target:

This identifies agreed milestones to be reached by March 2007.

Preferred Methods of Communication:

The new Act also introduces a requirement to consult the community about preferred methods of communication during the preparation of these plans e.g. via mailing list, questionnaire, interactive website and/or workshops.

People who want to continue their involvement by commenting on policies as they are drafted will be able to do so via e-mail contact.

Spatial Planning

The concept of 'Spatial Planning' has been introduced into the planning process. Using a 'spatial perspective' means looking at the wider picture, taking into consideration the interaction and effects of a variety of different themes relating to a specific area. This will provide the opportunity to develop policies with a wider focus whilst also containing more specific details relating to the actual implementation of policies. More emphasis will also be placed on sustainable development.

Defined, 'spatial planning' means:

- Location-specific
- Identifies inter-dependencies and relationships between different topics, i.e. housing and employment
- Seeks to identify local diversity and specific needs
- Links local strategies and programmes and identifies what this means in terms of land use planning within an area

- Not restricted to implementation through planning but can be dependent on implementation by another Council department or external organisation such as the health authority
- Considers economic, social and environmental matters

Local Development Documents will set out spatial planning policies for the future development of Manchester.

They will include:

- Development Plan Documents
- Supplementary Planning Documents

Notes:

- The Development Plan Documents have more weight
- Some documents provide information relating to procedural guidelines i.e. Statement of Community Involvement
- Some documents provide more information on a particular issue i.e. Supplementary Planning Document

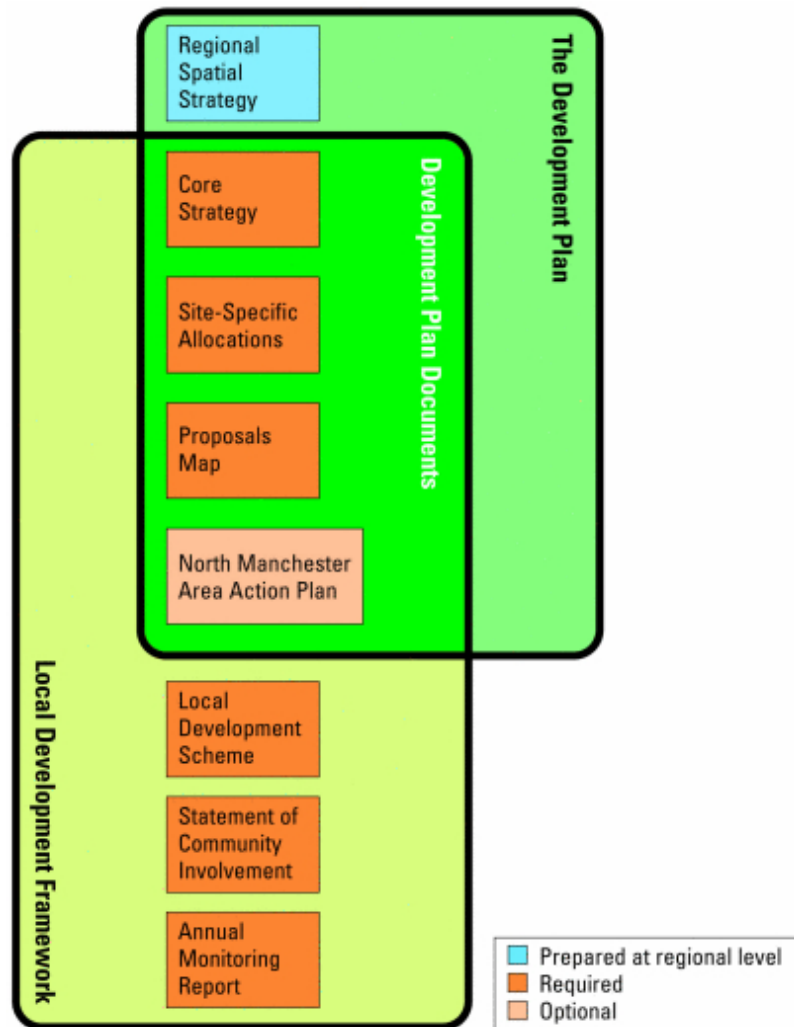
Legal Definition of the Development Plan

Development Plan Documents along with the Regional Spatial Strategy, which is prepared by the Regional Assembly, are legally defined as the Development Plan

Please refer to Fig1, which illustrates the range of documents that can be prepared by the local planning authority which together form the Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework

Figure 1



Manchester's Local Development Scheme describes what the City Council's current planning policy documents are and the timetable for the preparation of Local Development Documents, which will make up the Local Development Framework.

Soundness

Before a Development Plan Document can be adopted it must be tested at an independent examination for “soundness.” There are three elements to soundness:

- **Procedural** – have local development documents been prepared in accordance with the procedures set down in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act?
- **Conformity** – does the plan conform with national/regional policy and the Council’s own Community Strategy?
- **Soundness of policies:**
 - The plan is coherent and consistent within and between local development documents
 - The plan represents the most appropriate approach, having considered the relevant alternatives, and is founded on a robust, credible base
 - The plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances

What’s the Plan? – Stakeholder Seminar

One hundred people from a cross-section of the Stakeholder Community attended the What’s the Plan? Stakeholder Seminar on Tuesday 17th May, 2005 at the Mechanic’s Institute in Manchester. The afternoon session was repeated again in the evening, to enable attendance by people who worked in the voluntary and community sector.

The event launched the review of Manchester’s Development Plan as a Local Development Framework and a series of small workshops were held to discuss and note concerns before the initial policy writing stages and to identify priorities regarding the future planning of Manchester.

Workshops were divided up into five themes:

- Crime & Disorder; Health
- Economy, Transport
- Families, Children and Old People; Culture
- Environment
- Housing; Education

Delegates did not have to represent the views or mandate of the particular organisation they were representing during the workshops.

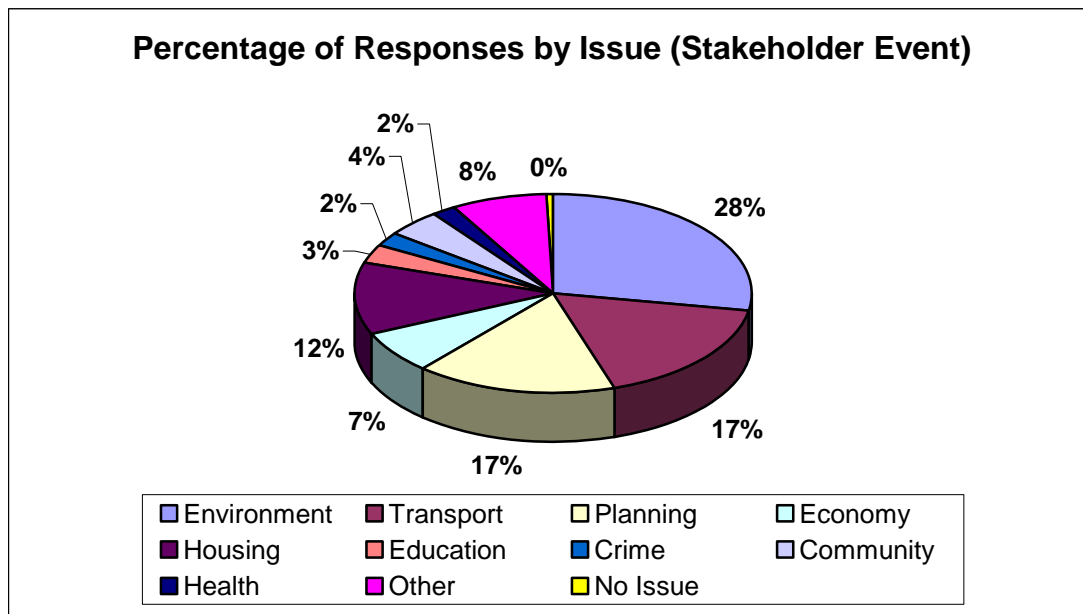
Role of Ambassador

- What's the Plan? Information packs were given to each delegate. The pack included:
 - 10 questionnaires and 10 freepost envelopes, (re: consulting on preferred methods of communication – 6 week only consultation)
 - Local Development Framework Explained brochure
 - A3 Timeline (relating to adoption process of the Local Development Framework)
 - What's the Plan? freepost A5 postcards and A4 response forms (re: key issues)
- Recycled 'What's the Plan? plastic cup pencils and paper pens

Delegates were asked to act as Ambassadors and distribute the What's the Plan? literature and consultation forms amongst their own organization. This was perceived as a key factor in determining the success of the consultation due to the timescale involved regarding the preparation of Development Plan Documents and limited resources available to Manchester City Council.

Responses By Issue – (Stakeholder Event)

55 Response Forms were completed and 205 comments were submitted from the workshops.



The three main issues raised related to the Environment (28%), Transport (17%) and Planning (17%). The following are examples of comments submitted:

Comments - Environmental Issues

- Buildings that will be used in the future should be environmentally flexible
- People need access to green space locally, possibly only small areas without the need to drive to get there
- Prioritise the environment because economic factors often take precedence
- Need strong district centres to drive the regeneration of deprived areas outside of city centre

- The integration of wildlife and leisure interests to ensure both interests are protected and enhanced
- Need to control development in waterside locations
- Market driven development is distorting the urban structure and planned development should not be influenced by it
- Proper provision of green space to improve health of the community and environment

Comments - Transport Issues

- Giving people real travel choice including public transport, cycling and walking. Without the ability to choose suitable travel options people may simply use cars
- The policies should emphasise and assist the growth & convenience of public transport
- Incentives for walking and cycling to help reduce congestion
- Pollution a serious problem for the city
- Reduce the need to travel to have a positive impact on health and air pollution

Comments – Planning Issues

- Improve s106 monies for transport improvements
- Spatial Planning seems like a sensible idea - it was called 'joined up thinking' - lets have more of it
- Framework should set strong strategic direction and overall aims but with flexibility to respond appropriately/differently to needs of different areas
- District Centres - work with other agencies to see where they need to site facilities i.e. GP surgeries, dentist, opticians etc
- The historic environment - a unique, distinctive and historic environment contributes to regeneration, tourism, culture and social / economic needs

The Library Tour, 2005

Public Consultation

The 'What's the Plan?' Library Tour - public consultation took place between 1st June and 6th August, 2005. Staff from Manchester City Council's Planning Strategy team conducted a series of one-day consultations in twenty one libraries across Manchester (*two days at Wythenshawe Forum, five days at Central Library).

Complemented by a display promoting Sustainability, staff were available to provide further explanation regarding the Local Development Framework and to encourage people who had little knowledge of the planning process to take part in the consultation.

A sixteen page A4 brochure - 'Local Development Framework Explained' was specially written and printed for the What's the Plan? consultations, providing a clear and concise explanation regarding planning issues and the Local Development Framework.

Free promotional What's the Plan? Badges, recycled pencils and pens (advertising Manchester City Council's website) were given away and two types of forms were utilised during the consultation:

A5 postcard:

Participants were requested to identify what they thought were the three most important issues for planning Manchester's future.

As an added incentive to participate, a free raffle was held, offering a year's free gym membership as the prize.

A4 Response Form:

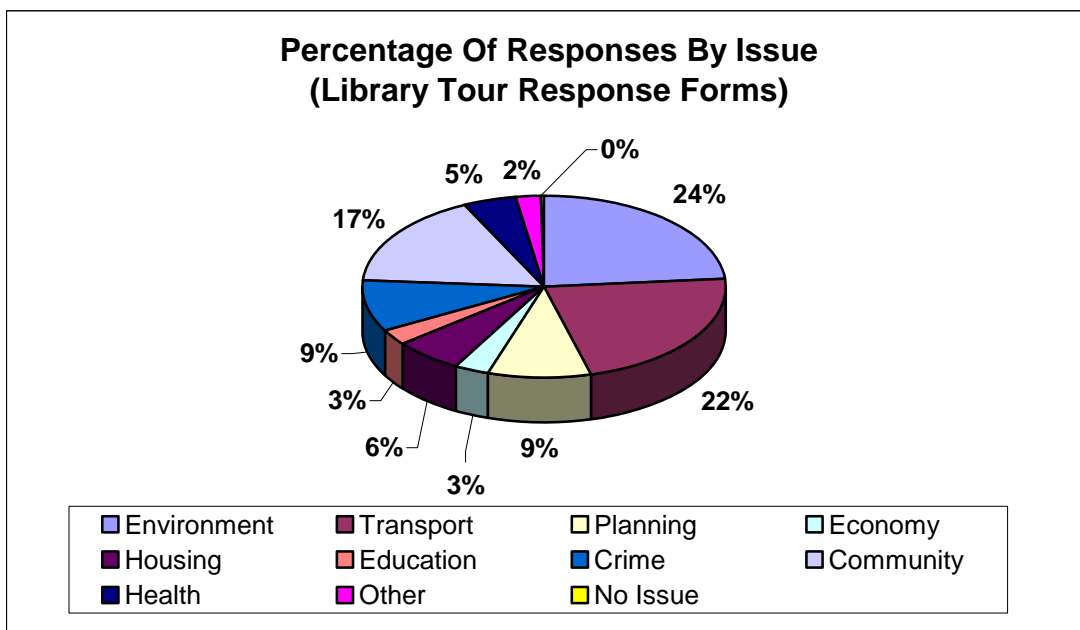
This form enabled room for more detailed comments and the opportunity to sign up for commenting on future draft policies via e-mail

Promotion:

- 13,000 Freepost A5 postcards were distributed across Manchester via Arts About Manchester in two phases: 17th May and mid-June, 2005
- 13,000 promotional flyers and 500 posters were distributed across Manchester via Arts About Manchester
- Four advertisements were placed in local newspapers providing details of dates, location and times of consultations
- All primary and secondary schools in Manchester were sent a poster, promotional flyers, postcards and response forms via the Education in-house mail system
- Posters, promotional flyers, postcards and response forms were distributed via the Valuing Older People Network

Responses By Issue (Response Forms): Library Tour

123 response forms were completed with a total of 497 comments



The three main issues raised related to the Environment (24%), Transport (22%) and Community (17%).

The following are examples of comments submitted:

Comments – Environment Issues

- Keep green spaces clean and unbuilt-on. Protect bird species, trees, wild flowers
- Parks seem to need prioritisation and spending: high usage of some shows what's possible
- People love to sit outside in the sunshine, so take positive steps to convert some existing, undeveloped sites into local parks & gardens, even if very small
- More recycling facilities in the city centre
- Pollution - linked to transport, energy use, general public health
- Manchester could be much greener and better - it would help everyone
- All new developments should require developers to plant trees either on or near the site
- Child-friendly space - because kids are part of cities too!
- All new builds to meet a stringent minimum environmental quality to minimise Manchester's ecological footprint
- Manchester city centre needs more gardens and parks.
- City's waterway heritage must be protected and developed.
- Community garden space - these provide beautiful inner-city getaways and foster community building as well as eating sustainably

Comments – Transport Issues

- Buses don't tend to connect local facilities
- Having seen what has been achieved by the Altrincham, Eccles & Bury lines it seems obvious that the schemes proposed should be carried out to reduce pollution and noise levels
- Public transport needs to be integrated, accessible and convenient. Helps improve the environment and is good for social inclusion
- School Access - many school children are dropped off by parents causing local residents problems around many schools

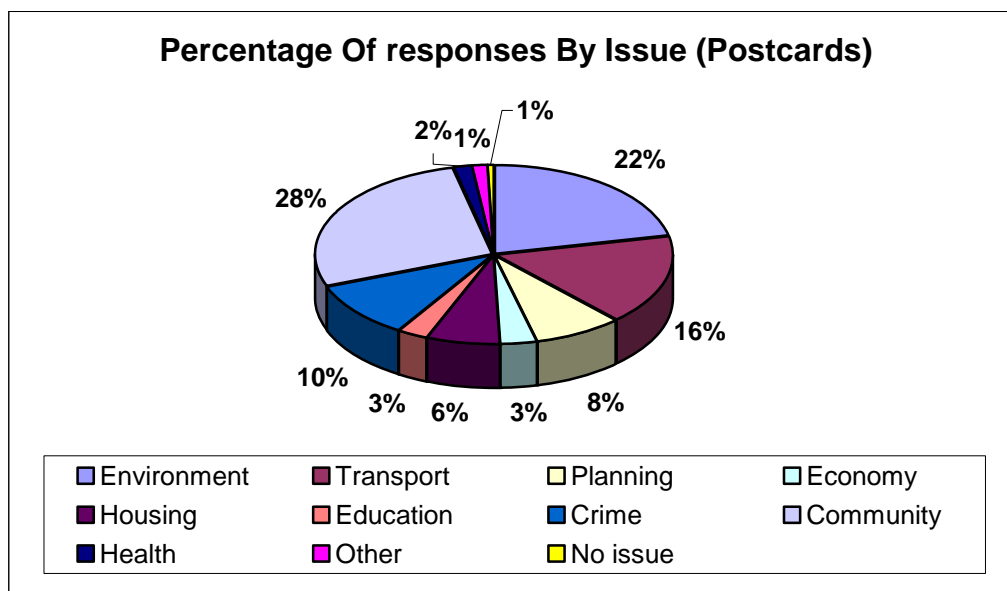
- Better bus services needed
- Tickets for public transport could be bought from shops or supermarkets
- Do NOT let the government hold Manchester to ransom over congestion charge in return for the Metrolink cash!
- Cycle paths - whole network needs an overhaul, improving and more cycle parking facilities backed up by publicity
- Insufficient emphasis on traditional rail services. Despite improvements, still much to be done. Many services seriously overcrowded
- Insufficient park & ride facilities in city, though due to shape of Manchester these may need to be located outside city boundary so a purely local view should not be taken

Comments – Community Issues

- Shops & facilities local to homes - people move out if no shops
- Young people and kids need something to do in their neighbourhood not just a bit of grass - but facilities!
- Allotments - people growing own food and helping keep more of Manchester green
- More public toilets
- There are big gaps in youth facility provision in Manchester
- To achieve a sense of place and community, each local suburb needs a physical heart / centre which is vibrant, refurbished and a happy place to be
- Too many areas are run down and poorly facilitated with services and shops, which contributes to a depressed perception
- Spaces for young people
- Need local swimming baths

Responses By Issue (Postcards): Library Tour

387 postcards were received with a total of 1125 comments.



The four main issues raised related to the Community (28%), the Environment (22%), Transport (16%) and Crime (10%). The following are examples of comments submitted:

Comments – Community Issues

- Improved community health and leisure facilities
- Listening to local communities / voluntary groups
- Lack of public toilets
- Some fabulous monuments in public parks
- Youth clubs for older children
- More fresh food shops e.g. fishmongers
- Give us back our toilets plus more open to open seven days a week.
Don't waste money on modern sculptures
- Give the youth somewhere to go and something to do, but ask them first, don't presume to know their needs
- More public seating in the city
- Facilities for OAP's, especially for meals and socialising

- Centre that promotes taking care of the environment and allows young people to get involved and learn about e.g. recycling.

Comments – Environment Issues

- Need more play areas for children
- Green space; use it, celebrate it, promote it
- Not enough parks and need more improved facilities
- Safer park areas for the elderly
- Need more fencing on and around canals
- Clean up of derelict areas, especially housing estates
- Less building on green spaces
- Develop vacant industrial land for housing (brownfield sites) and protect 'greenfield' land
- Leave school fields and open spaces alone
- Green places at the end of every street

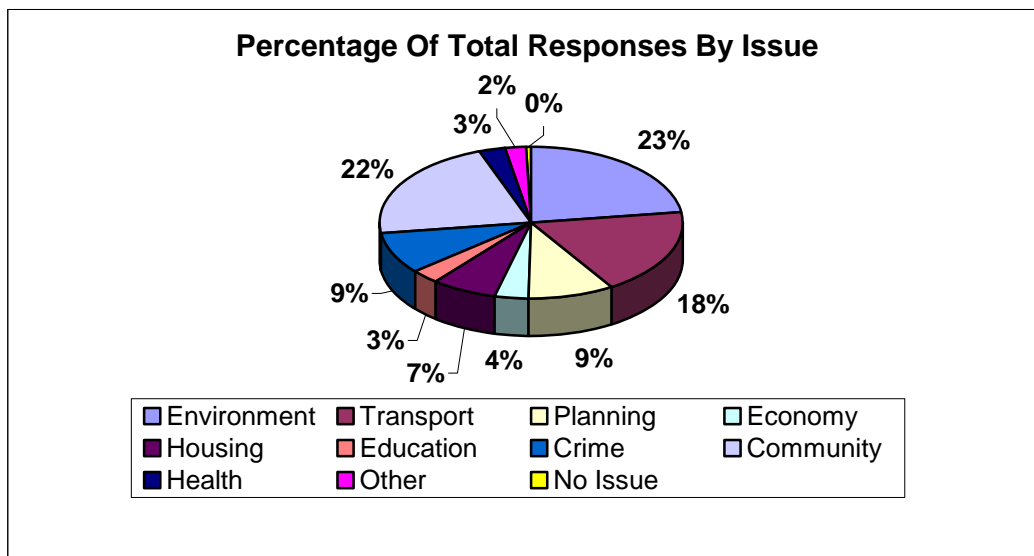
Comments – Transport Issues

- More comprehensive, better maintained and car free cycle lanes
- Cycle facilities on trams and more tram routes
- No more parking spaces in city centre - brave public transport schemes instead
- Integrated approach to public transport and essential access for cars within the city
- Improved public transport such as Metrolink, quality bus initiatives
- An affordable public transport system
- Alternative energy buses

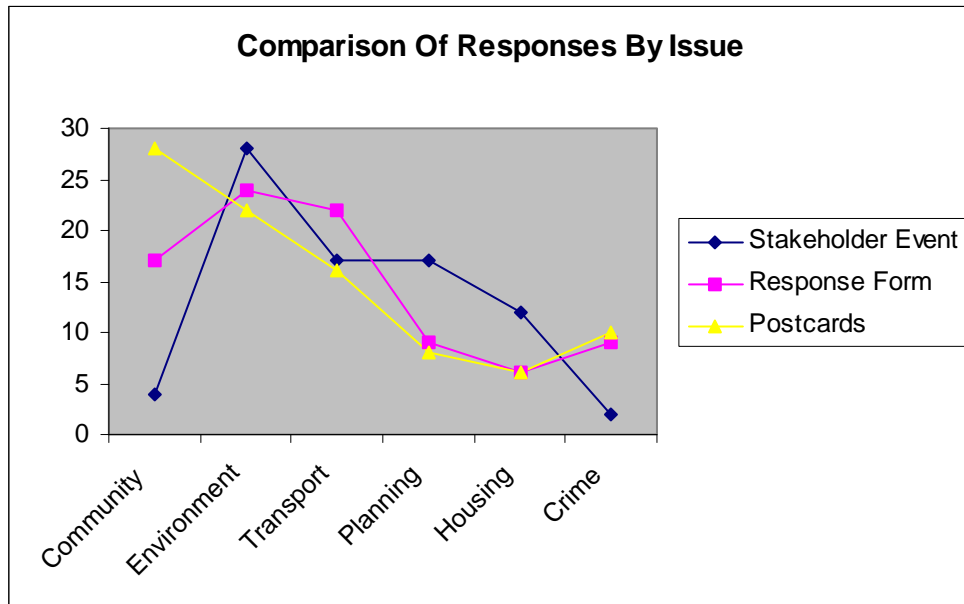
Comments – Crime Issues

- Security in parks – CCTV
- Designing out crime
- Better street lighting
- Better policing of recreational areas
- Projects to 'win over' young folk and combat crime
- CCTV for public safety
- Visible police presence, clamp down on anti-social behaviour
- More police on the beat
- Anti-social behaviour - do what you can in planning

Total Responses from Library Tour



There is some commonality between the different consultation media:



Stakeholder Event

28% Environment
 17% Transport
 17% Planning
 12% Housing
 2% Crime

Response Forms

24% Environment
 22% Transport
 17% Community
 9% Crime
 9% Planning

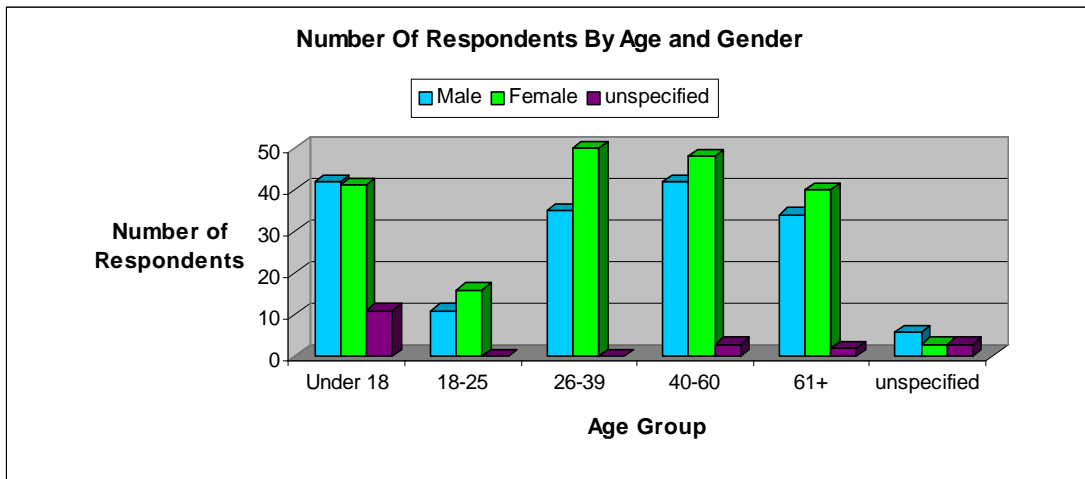
Postcards

28% Community
 22% Environment
 16% Transport
 10% Crime
 8% Planning

The top three 'Issues' from the Library Tour public consultation exercise related to the Environment, Transport and the Community, which is reflected and corroborated in the feedback received from the What's the Plan? Stakeholder Seminar, apart from one exception: issues related to Planning. With a 17% share reflected in the Seminar results and only 9% and 8% respectively from the public consultation, this higher rating may be attributable to delegates attending the Stakeholder Seminar being more informed and proactive regarding planning issues.

Demographic

Demographic information was collected via the A5 freepost postcards: 387 postcards were completed: 51% of respondents were female, 44% of respondents were male, with 5% not answering the question.



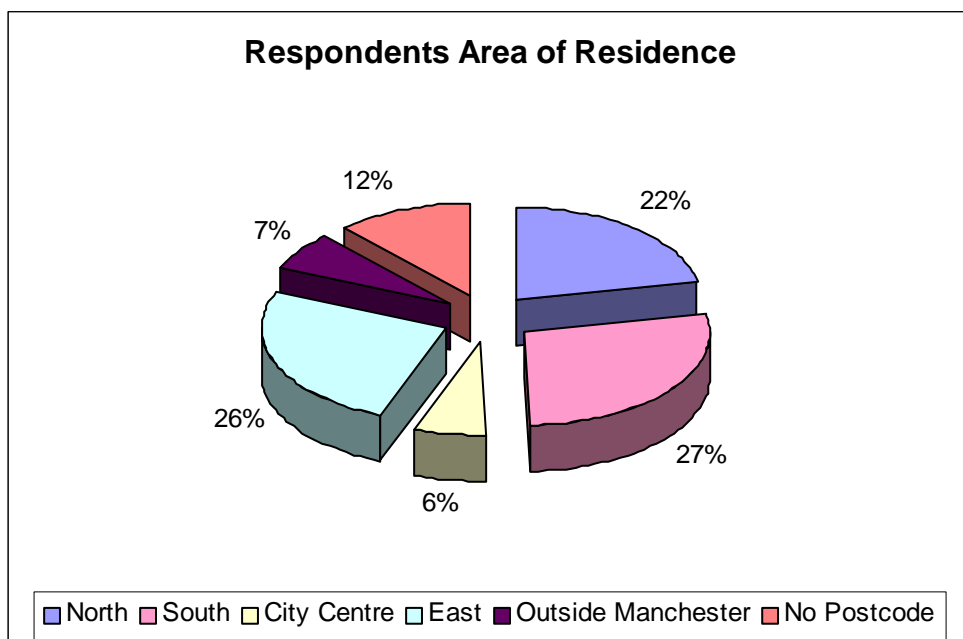
There is a marked difference between gender responses in the 26 – 39 year old groups, with an 18% difference between male and female respondents.

Overall, there is an even spread of respondents from each age group with one notable exception: the 18–25 year old group. Reasons for low participation could be:

- Further Education Students had returned home (left the area) for the summer holiday
- Students may use University / College libraries as opposed to local library
- People may have been at work
- The What's the Plan? consultation did not motivate young people to take part

The consultation was very successful in reaching the under 18 year old groups – a generally hard to engage section of the community.

Demographic information was also collected regarding respondents area of residence. The aim of the Library Tour consultation was to be as inclusive as possible by taking the consultation out to the public. The graph below illustrates a healthy balance of respondents from the city centre, south, north and east of Manchester. People who worked in Manchester but actually lived outside of the Manchester boundary were included in the consultation.



The demographic information received has been incredibly useful for analytical purposes, but was only requested on the A5 freepost cards. The A4 response forms were designed to request more detailed feedback relating to key issues and registration details regarding the e-mail sounding boards only. In retrospect, it would have been beneficial to have included the opportunity to collate demographic information via all forms of symmetrical communication.

Next Steps

There will be an opportunity to meet members of the Planning Strategy Team at the forthcoming Manchester Event at the Manchester International Conference Centre from 11.00am until 4.00pm on Saturday 18th March, 2006.

Contacts

For more information regarding the Local Development Framework, please contact:

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