

Moray Citizens' Panel

Survey 7: Building Stronger Communities

Report

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the survey was to gauge Panel members' views and experience on a variety of issues relating to Building Stronger Communities theme, including:

- Perceptions of the sense of community in their area;
- Experience of community consultation and decision making;
- Housing;
- Adult learning opportunities;
- Volunteering; and
- Equal opportunities and access.

Craigforth undertook this survey on behalf of Moray Community Planning Partnership during November and December 2007. A total of 742 returns were received by representing an overall survey response rate of 66%. This is a very good level of response particularly considering the timing of the survey fieldwork running into the Christmas period.

A Sense of Community

The majority of Panel members felt that the sense of community in their local area was strong and were confident that they would be able to turn to their friends, relatives and neighbours if they needed help or support. However, there were some area variations suggesting that sense of community may be stronger in rural communities than more populous areas of Moray.

The most common suggestions to improve community relations centred on provision of facilities and activities such as village halls. Friendliness and neighbourliness were also frequently cited, along with respect and trust.

Community Consultation and Involvement

Nearly half of respondents had participated in some form of community consultation and involvement. The majority of those who had been involved had done so with the Moray Council, although other agencies such as Grampian Police, NHS Grampian were also mentioned.

Of those who had participated in some form of consultation, the majority were positive about the way the consultation was conducted. However, respondents were less positive about the outcome of consultation, with some scepticism regarding the extent to which views were taken into account and concerns about feedback provided. In terms of receiving feedback the general preference was for articles in the local press.

The majority would prefer more opportunities to participate in community consultation and well over half indicated that they might be interested in contributing to this. Perhaps unsurprisingly given respondents' involvement in the Panel, the preferred method of participation was via occasional surveys. The most significant perceived barriers to local people taking part in consultation and decision making are a lack of free time or a lack of interest.

Housing in Moray

Panel members felt that the most significant housing related problems in Moray were a lack of affordable properties to buy and a lack of Council or Housing Association properties to rent. However it is notable that most felt these problems were similar to those experienced across the rest of Scotland.

The single most effective way of helping people in Moray to access housing was to provide more affordable homes to buy, closely followed by provision by the Council and/or local Housing Associations of more affordable homes to rent.

Adult Learning

Around a quarter of Panel members had taken an adult learning course in the last two years, most commonly to learn a new skill or for enjoyment. The great majority having taken a class or attended a course reported having had a positive experience.

In terms of potential future involvement in adult learning, the most popular option was for class-based courses, with local schools or colleges the preferred location. The main perceived barriers to adult learning were the cost of courses and a lack of awareness as to the opportunities available.

Volunteering

More than half of Panel members currently volunteer or have volunteered in the past. The most common kind of organisation to volunteer for were voluntary organisations or charities, with youth groups and community groups also common.

An improved sense of community, personal enjoyment and a sense of achievement were seen as the main benefits of volunteering, and more than half would 'definitely' recommend voluntary work to others.

Equal Opportunities and Access

Panel members were asked about the level of convenience of using a number of different services. Overall, Post Office and pharmacies were identified as most convenient, while public transport and hospital outpatient services were the least convenient.

The most significant barriers to people in Moray accessing services and opportunities were seen as transport for people with mobility problems and accessing certain buildings for people with mobility problems. Nearly all respondents thought it important for local services to be accessible to people with mobility or other problems. Older people and those with disabilities were seen as most in need of help in accessing services.

Finally, Panel members were asked how they thought specific groups were treated in Moray. While views were somewhat divided as to the degree that these three groups were welcome and treated fairly, very few felt that groups were actively discriminated against.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background and Study Objectives

1.1. The Moray Citizens' Panel was established by the Moray Community Planning Partnership (MCP) in April and May 2005, and the MCP are also responsible for the ongoing management of the Panel. Current MCP members are:

- The Moray Council;
- Communities Scotland;
- Grampian Fire and Rescue;
- Grampian Police;
- NHS Grampian;
- Highlands and Islands Moray;
- Joint Community Councils;
- Moray Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Moray Chamber of Commerce;
- Moray College;
- Moray Volunteer Service Organisation;
- Royal Air Force; and
- The Volunteer Centre Moray.

1.2. A total of 1329 Moray residents joined the Panel as a result of the recruitment process. There have been a number of further additions and deletions since the initial recruitment; at the time of the survey the total Panel membership stood at 1128, spread across each of the seven main administrative areas:

- Buckie;
- Elgin;
- Fochabers;
- Forres;
- Keith;
- Lossiemouth; and
- Speyside.

Methodology and Response

1.3. Craigforth undertook this survey on behalf of Moray Community Planning Partnership during November and December 2007. The survey was issued to the full sample of Panel members; postal self-completion questionnaires were issued to all 1128 members in mid-November 2007. Reminder letters were sent to all non-respondents in December 2007.

1.4. The aim of the survey was to gauge Panel members' experiences and views of issues related to the local community. The questionnaire was structured around the issues of community consultation, housing, adult learning, volunteering and equal opportunities.

1.5. A copy of the questionnaire used in the survey is provided at Appendix 1.

- 1.6. A total of 742 returns were received by cut off in January 2008, representing an overall survey response rate of 66%. This is a good level of response particularly considering the timing of the survey fieldwork running into the Christmas period. This is likely to have had some adverse effect on the level of response and as such this is somewhat lower than the c70% response rates achieved in previous Panel surveys.
- 1.7. The profile of survey respondents in terms of gender, age, housing tenure and administrative area is provided in Table 1.1 below.
- 1.8. The achieved sample was broadly representative of the Panel as a whole in terms of the five main indicators presented. However, there were some areas of over or under representation of specific sectors of the wider Moray population due to some imbalance in the current Panel membership. The most notable differences were:
 - Respondents under-represented the male population (-4%) and correspondingly over-represented females (+4%);
 - There was a significant under representation of under 40s (-15%). The only age group notably over represented was those aged between 50 and 59 (+12%);
 - Owners are significantly over-represented (+16%), and households in social rented (-11%) and private rented/other accommodation (-5%) correspondingly under-represented; and
 - The achieved sample over-represented the Speyside population (+10%) and to a lesser extent the Keith area (+5%). There was a significant under-representation of the Elgin population (-12%).
- 1.9. The Panel was constructed to achieve a relatively even number of members across the seven geographic areas in order to produce robust survey findings at a sub local authority level. This resulted in an over-representation of residents in the Speyside area and under representation of Elgin residents. Subsequent deletions from the Panel and variations in response to individual surveys have accentuated this over/under representation and it may now be appropriate to refresh the Panel to redress this imbalance.

Table 1.1: Profile of Survey Respondents, Panel Members and Moray overall

	Survey Respondents (Total 710)		Panel Members (Total 1128)		Moray ¹
	Num	%	Num	%	%
GENDER					
Male	327	46%	516	46%	50%
Female	383	54%	612	54%	50%
BASE	710		1128		-
AGE					
Under 40	132	19%	282	25%	34%
40-49	152	21%	255	23%	19%
50-59	203	29%	299	27%	17%
60+	221	31%	286	25%	29%
BASE	708		1122		-
HOUSING TENURE					
Owner occupied	589	83%	895	80%	67%
Social rented	73	10%	131	12%	21%
Private rented/ Other	44	7%	95	8%	12%
BASE	706		1121		-
GEOGRAPHIC AREA					
Buckie	95	13%	134	12%	16%
Elgin	87	12%	136	12%	24%
Fochabers	101	14%	162	14%	11%
Forres	110	16%	169	15%	18%
Keith	89	13%	156	14%	8%
Lossiemouth	92	13%	156	14%	14%
Speyside	133	19%	212	19%	9%
BASE	707		1125		-

Reporting Conventions

- 1.10. In the analysis we have focused on the questions asked in the survey form. Overall frequency counts and percentages are presented for each question, with the exception of open-ended questions where the main issues and suggestions are highlighted in the text of the report. Additional tables with data on questions not presented in tabulated form within the main report are included at Appendix 2.
- 1.11. We also conducted crosstabulations of all questions by key demographic indicators including gender, age and the residential location of respondents (based on the seven community planning areas in Moray). These variables offer helpful ways of understanding the survey data in greater detail and where significant differences between these groups were evident, these are highlighted in the report text.

¹ Gender and age based on GRO(S) population estimates as at 30 June 2006; housing tenure based on the 2005/06 Scottish Household Survey; geographic area based on the 2004 Moray Community Health Index (therefore not directly comparable to 2001 Census or GROS population estimates).

- 1.12. However, because of the relatively low sample numbers being used in some of the categories, we must be cautious about generalising from some of the crosstabulated data. Overall numbers of respondents are sufficiently high to provide reliable analysis, and crosstabulations are only presented and reported on where numbers are high enough to ensure that results are reasonably robust.
- 1.13. Similarly, where the base number of responses is less than 30, percentage values are not provided. Where appropriate, the missing value is replaced by “-” throughout the report. Where presented, percentage values are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number; consequently for some questions percentages may not sum to 100%.
- 1.14. We produce “net” rating figures for some questions as a useful initial indicator of Panel views. These indicate the balance between positive and negative views amongst survey respondents, and are calculated by subtracting the percentage of “negative” responses (eg “dissatisfied”) from the positive (eg “satisfied”). The result is presented as a positive or negative percentage rating. Where there is a large number of neutral or not applicable responses these may be excluded from the base, and the percentage of positive and negative responses recalculated. We note in the report where this is the case.

2. A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

2.1. The survey began by asking Panel members about their local community. Panel members were asked about the strength of their local community; how much they felt they could rely on friends and relatives for help or support; and finally the three most important things needed for building a strong local community.

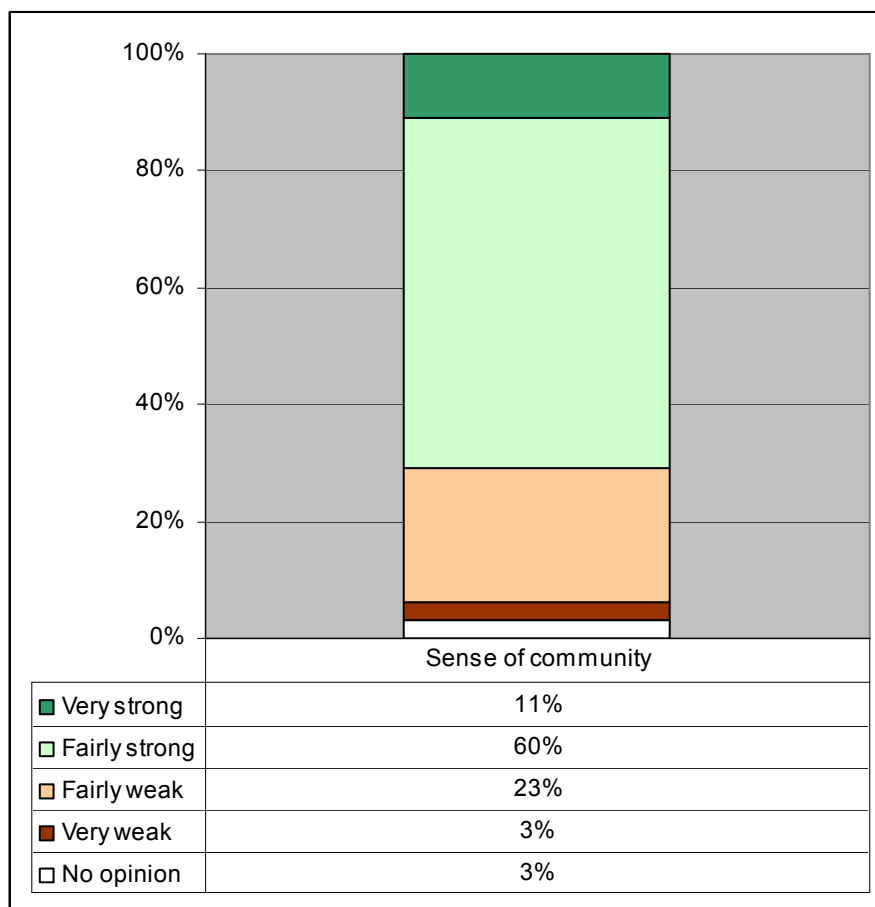
Strength of Community

2.2. First we asked about Panel members’ perception of how strong they felt the local community to be in their area.

2.3. The majority of respondents felt that there was a strong sense of community in their area (71%). Nevertheless, only one in ten respondents felt that their local community was ‘very’ strong (11%) and a quarter of respondents thought that their community was weak (26%).

2.4. Looking across the seven areas there were notable differences in perception about the strength of community. Only around half of respondents in Elgin felt that their community was strong, compared to an average of 71% across the areas. Conversely, an above average 81% of Panel members based in Speyside felt that their community was very strong or fairly strong.

Figure 2.1 Strength of Community



Level of Support Available from the Local Community

- 2.5. Further to respondents views on the sense of community in their local area, the survey asked to what extent they felt that they could rely on their friends and relatives:
- If they were alone and needed help;
 - If their home was empty; and
 - If they needed advice or support.
- 2.6. Panel Members overwhelmingly felt that they would be able to call upon friends or relatives in their neighbourhood in any of the aforementioned circumstances. Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) felt that they could ask friends or relatives in their neighbourhood to watch their home, 85% could ask for help if they were alone and 80% could turn to friends/ relatives for advice or support.

Table 2.2 Level of Support Available from the Community

	Net	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/ nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
If I was alone and needed help, I could rely on friends/ relatives in my neighbourhood	+77%	42%	43%	8%	5%	2%	1%
If my home was empty, I could rely on friends/ relatives in my neighbourhood to watch it	+83%	45%	43%	6%	3%	2%	1%
I feel I could turn to friends/ relatives in my neighbourhood for advice or support	+72%	38%	42%	11%	5%	3%	1%

- 2.7. Finally in this section, Panel members were asked to identify which three things were the most important in building a strong community.
- 2.8. Around 80% of Panel members contributed their own ideas as to what would make for a strong community. The majority of answers fell under six broad headings, which are as follows:
- friendliness and neighbourliness
 - facilities, activities and services
 - respect, understanding and trust
 - communication, consultation and involvement
 - common identity and goals and
 - law and order
- 2.9. According to Panel Members, the two most important things for building a strong community were to have close friends and neighbours close by and to have a variety of facilities, activities and services. These included village halls and a number of clubs and societies available to local residents. Overall, the existence of well-equipped services and facilities and the opportunity to attend community groups and activities was the most commonly mentioned way to build strong community relationships.

- 2.10. Panel Members also mentioned three further factors which they felt contributed to building strong communities. Firstly, forming relationships based on respect, trust and understanding could help build a stronger community; secondly, regular communication between the community and local agencies through involvement, consultation and media such as a community newspaper; finally a shared identity was thought to be important.
- 2.11. Law and order was less commonly mentioned, with just under a quarter of respondents mentioning a police presence, security or tough action on hooliganism or drunkenness.

3. GETTING INVOLVED

- 3.1. In this section, we asked Panel members for their views on consultation and participation in decision making in Moray.
- 3.2. Panel members were asked whether they or anyone in their household had been engaged in community decision making (excluding their participation in the Moray Citizens' Panel) and by which agencies. They were also invited to complete questions on how well they rated Moray Council and other local agencies in terms of involving local people in decisions.

Consultation and Involvement in Community Decision Making

- 3.3. Around half of respondents indicated that they or someone in their household had been involved in consultation or community decision making (49%), most in the last two years (35%). The number who had never been involved in any form of consultation was almost equal to this at 44%.

Table 3.1: Involvement in Consultations among Panel Members

	Number	%
Yes, in the last two years	247	35%
Yes, more than two years ago	93	14%
No, never	307	44%
Don't know/ can't say	58	8%
Base	705	

- 3.4. There were some differences in consultation experience across age groups and areas. Elgin respondents were least likely to have been involved in any consultation with those in Speyside, Keith and Fochabers most likely. In terms of age groups, those aged 50 and over were more likely to have participated in consultation than younger respondents.
- 3.5. Next the survey moved on to ask Panel Members which organisations had invited them to take part in consultation and involvement.
- 3.6. The Moray Council was by far the most commonly mentioned organisation in relation to consultation exercises; nearly two thirds of those who had participated in some form of consultation had done so with the Moray Council.
- 3.7. Second to the Council were "other" groups leading community consultation and involvement. These included community councils and associations, national park authorities, suppliers of amenities (such as Scottish Water) and political parties.

Table 3.2 Organisations Involved in Community Consultation

Organisation	Number	%
The Moray Council	202	62%
Grampian Police	38	12%
NHS Grampian	37	11%
HIE Moray	35	11%
Grampian Fire and Rescue	33	10%
Communities Scotland	22	7%
Other	132	41%
Base	325	

- 3.8. Next, Panel members were invited to give their views on how satisfactory their experiences of involvement in community consultation had been, commenting on the following:
- whether enough information about the consultation was provided;
 - the clarity of information provided;
 - how well the consultation was conducted;
 - whether Panel members felt their views were taken into account; and
 - whether feedback was given on results and actions.
- 3.9. Overall across all five criteria, those giving positive views outnumbered those reporting a negative experience. However data suggests that while most felt the practicalities of consultation had been handled well, there were concerns regarding whether views were being taken into account by those making decisions and also around the extent to which feedback was given on consultation results or the actions stemming from them.
- 3.10. The majority of respondents felt that the amount of information given, clarity of information and the conduct of consultation exercises as good. However, approval ratings drop significantly when considering the other two criteria. Fewer than half rated as “good” the feedback they had received and whether they felt their views had been taken into account. Indeed around a quarter of respondents rated feedback and having their views considered as poor.
- 3.11. The survey continued by asking Panel Members if they felt there is enough consultation of local people or opportunities for local people to get involved in decision making in Moray.
- 3.12. More than 7 in 10 respondents would like to see more opportunities for people to get involved in decision making (71%), including 4 in 10 who think there are ‘definitely’ not enough opportunities at present (40%). Only around 1 in 5 think that there are currently sufficient opportunities available (19%).

Table 3.3 Opportunities for Consultation in Moray

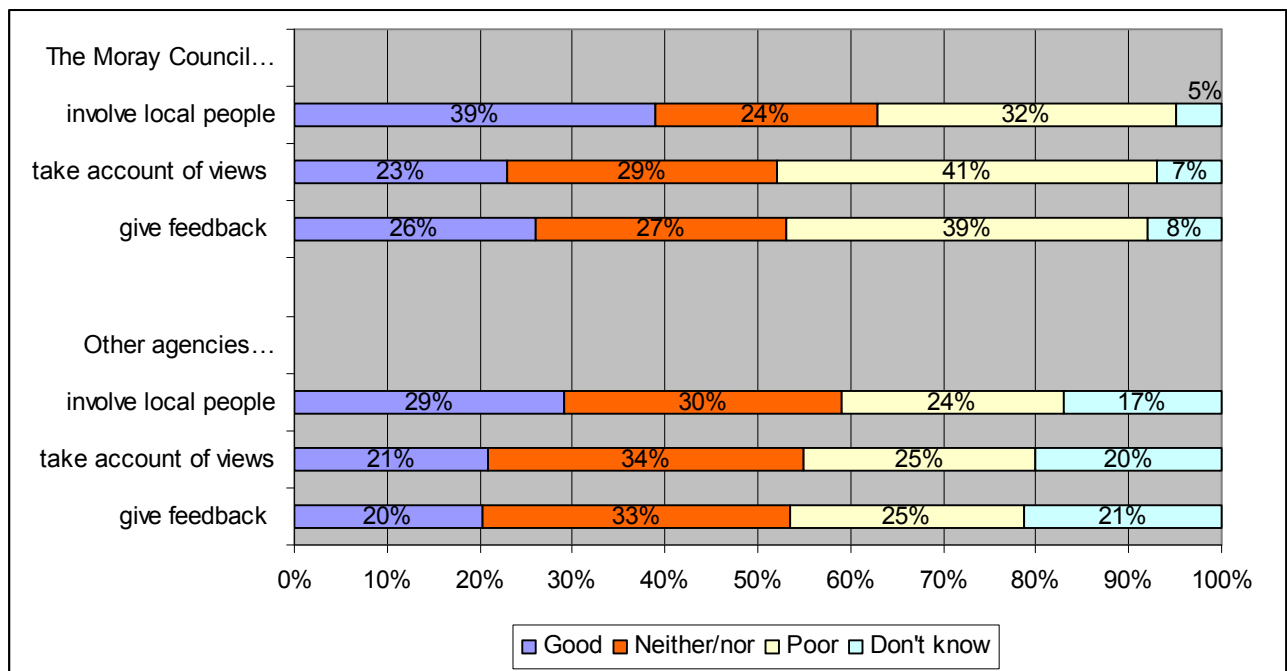
	Number	%
Plenty of opportunities	128	19%
Sufficient, but prefer more	212	31%
Not enough, definitely need more	278	40%
Don't know/ Can't say	72	10%
Base	690	

3.13. The survey went on to ask Panel Members to rate the Moray Council and other local agencies on the following criteria:

- Whether they did enough to involve local people;
- Whether they took account of views given; and
- Whether they gave feedback on the results of involvement.

3.14. Notwithstanding the relatively high number of neutral “neither/nor” and “don’t know” responses – particularly in relation to ‘other’ agencies - results suggest respondents are somewhat sceptical about consultation undertaken in Moray. This is especially evident with regards to taking account of local people’s views and providing feedback.

3.15. The extent to which the Council and others involve local people was the only criteria where ‘good’ ratings outnumbered ‘poor’, with around 4 in 10 rating the Council as good on this (39%) and 3 in 10 rating other agencies as good (29%). In relation to taking account of views and giving feedback only around a quarter rated the Council as good (around 25%), fewer than rated these aspects as poor (around 40%). Relatively few felt able to comment on other agencies in relation to these criteria.

Figure 3.4 Rating of Organisations on Consultation and Involvement

Awareness of Opportunities for Involvement in Local Decision Making

- 3.16. The survey continued by asking Panel Members how aware they were of different groups involved with community consultation and decision making. These were:
- Area forums (previously known as local neighbourhood forums);
 - Other local resident or tenant groups;
 - Community Councils;
 - Village Hall Committees; and
 - Other.
- 3.17. Awareness was strongest in relation to Community Councils and Village Hall Committees, with 86% and 79% respectively having heard of them. Respondents were least familiar with Area Forums and other local resident or tenant groups; nearly a third had never heard of these at all.
- 3.18. It should be noted that even where Panel Members registered a high awareness of the existence of a community group, most indicated that they 'did not know much' about that group. For example, while more than 80% had heard of community councils only a third knew 'a lot' about them. This may suggest that while Panel members are aware that community groups exist, they do not engage in the decision making processes therein.

Table 3.5 Awareness of Community Groups Involved in Decision Making

	Fully aware, know a lot about	Heard of, but don't know much about	Not heard of at all	Don't know
Village Hall Committees	35%	44%	15%	6%
Community Councils	34%	52%	11%	3%
Area Forums	15%	48%	32%	5%
Other local resident or tenant groups	14%	47%	32%	7%
Other	23%	8%	13%	56%

Feedback on the Results of Consultation / Participation

- 3.19. The survey progressed to ask Panel Members how they would prefer to be informed of the results of consultation and of any actions taken subsequently.
- 3.20. As has already been seen above, the provision of feedback has been identified by Panel members as one of the potential weak points of community consultation exercises. Therefore, Panel members' views on feedback may be particularly important for improving the approach.
- 3.21. Panel members felt that the best way for agencies in Moray to provide feedback on the results of consultations and subsequent actions was via articles in the local press; 85% selected this option. Although this was by far the most commonly mentioned option, there was also support for feedback via leaflets, either delivered to their door (59%) or displayed in local public places (57%).

Table 3.6 Feedback on Consultations

	Number	%
Articles in the local press	599	85%
Leaflets / bulletins delivered to your door (e.g. with other Council correspondence)	414	59%
Leaflets in local public places (e.g. libraries, Council Officers, GP surgeries)	400	57%
Information / reports made available on the internet	336	48%
Reports made available in local public places	319	46%
Regular reports to local public meetings	253	36%
Other	29	4%
Base	701	

Future Involvement in Consultations

- 3.22. Next, Panel Members were asked about how interested they would be in getting more involved in local issues and decision making than at the present moment.
- 3.23. As many as 3 in 5 felt that they may be interested in getting more involved in decision making in the future (60%), perhaps surprising given that around half indicated they or a household member had previously been involved in consultation (in addition to their participation in the Citizens' Panel). Around a third of respondents felt that they would probably or definitely not be interested in getting more involved.
- 3.24. There may also be some variation in preference according to area, with a higher proportion of Elgin respondents indicating a willingness to participate in future consultation than across other areas.

Table 3.7 Interest in future involvement

	Number	%
Definitely interested	60	9%
Possibly interested	353	51%
Probably not interested	181	26%
Definitely not interested	70	10%
Don't know/ Can't say	33	5%
Base	697	

- 3.25. Following on from the previous question, Panel Members were asked how they would prefer to get involved in consultation and decision making in their local areas.
- 3.26. The most popular form of participation was to take part in occasional surveys, selected by three quarters or respondents; this is perhaps unsurprising given the experience of the respondents on the Moray Citizens' Panel. In addition nearly two thirds would be interested in attending occasional meetings or events (63%).

- 3.27. These were by some margin the most popular ways to participate in community decision making. For example, only around 1 in 5 would consider joining a Community Council or a local resident or tenant group, which may suggest a preference for occasional rather than longer term commitments.

Table 3.8 Preferred Method of Participating in Consultation

	Number	%
Taking part in occasional surveys	448	75%
Attending occasional meetings or events	379	63%
Joining a Community Council	114	19%
Joining a local resident or tenant group	101	17%
Other (please write in)	38	6%
Base	597	

- 3.28. Finally in this section of the survey, Panel Members were asked about what might prevent people in Moray from participating in local issues or decision making.
- 3.29. A lack of free time or other commitments was the most commonly identified barrier to participation being mentioned by nearly two thirds of respondents. In addition around 3 in 5 felt that a lack of awareness of the opportunities available would prevent people from taking part. However it is also worth noting that as many as 60% felt that local people would not get involved due to a lack of interest. This may suggest that even if awareness levels of community involvement were raised, Panel members are sceptical about the likely impact this would have.
- 3.30. In the 30-39 age groups, lack of free time was the most commonly mentioned factor which would prevent participation in community decision making. A lower proportion of the 60 and over age group thought that a lack of time was a factor, which may be accounted for by a higher number of retired people in this group.

Table 3.9: Potential Barriers to Participation

	Number	%
Lack of free time / other commitments	448	64%
Lack of interest	418	60%
Not aware of opportunities available	409	59%
Difficult to get to (lack of transport)	193	28%
Opportunities are not relevant or interesting	185	27%
Not enough opportunities available	139	20%
Other	65	9%
Base	698	

4. HOUSING IN MORAY

- 4.1. This section looks at Panel Members' views on issues relating to housing in Moray.
- 4.2. Panel members were asked to identify the extent to which a number of different housing issues represent a problem in Moray; whether the situation was worse in Moray than in Scotland as a whole; and finally what practical steps could be taken to help people in Moray access housing.

Housing Problems in Moray

- 4.3. First the survey asked Panel Members to what extent they believed that the supply, affordability and condition of properties to buy and rent were a problem in Moray
- 4.4. It is notable that most respondents felt that all of the aforementioned issues were problems to some extent in their area.
- 4.5. In terms of properties available to buy affordability was seen as the most significant issue with nearly 7 in 10 indicating that they felt properties being unaffordable was a 'major' problem (68%). Supply of properties was seen as less of an issue with around a quarter of respondents reporting that a lack of homes for sale was a major problem (24%). Very few identified the condition of social rented properties as a major problem in Moray (4%).
- 4.6. A perceived lack of Council or Housing Association properties for rent was identified as the most significant issue in relation to properties to rent in Moray; around two thirds felt this was a major problem (66%). Respondents were less likely to see a shortage of private rented properties as a problem for Moray, although there remained around a quarter who felt this was a major problem.
- 4.7. However a substantial proportion felt that the affordability of private rents was a problem in Moray – more than 2 in 5 identified this as a major problem (42%).

Table 4.1 Perceptions of Problems with Housing in Moray

	Major problem	Minor problem	No problem at all	Don't Know
Properties available to buy				
Not enough	24%	35%	28%	13%
Not affordable	68%	23%	3%	6%
In poor condition	4%	33%	30%	34%
Properties available to rent				
Not enough Council / Housing Association	66%	14%	2%	18%
Not enough private rented	24%	38%	12%	27%
Private rents are not affordable	42%	25%	7%	27%
Private rents are in poor condition	10%	28%	11%	51%

Housing Problems in Moray Compared with Elsewhere in Scotland

- 4.8. In addition to asking respondents to indicate whether they felt the above were problems in Moray, the survey also asked the extent to which they felt that these were more or less of a problem in Moray than elsewhere in Scotland.
- 4.9. It is notable that a significant proportion of respondents felt unable to comment on how Moray's experience of these issues compared with the rest of Scotland. In particular there was limited awareness of how property condition in Moray compared with other local authority areas.
- 4.10. Moreover, for many of the issues most of those giving a view felt that housing problems in Moray were similar to those across the rest of Scotland. The only problems which a substantial proportion of respondents felt were worse in Moray were:
- the affordability of properties to buy; and
 - the availability of Council and Housing Association properties for rent.

Table 4.2 Housing Problems in Moray Compared with the Rest of Scotland

	More of a problem	About the same	Less of a problem	Don't know
Properties available to buy				
Not enough	20%	47%	12%	22%
Not affordable	31%	39%	14%	16%
In poor condition	7%	38%	13%	40%
Properties available to rent				
Not enough Council / Housing Association	30%	36%	6%	28%
Not enough private rented	18%	39%	7%	36%
Private rents are not affordable	21%	36%	9%	33%
Private rents are in poor condition	10%	34%	9%	48%

Access to Housing

- 4.11. Finally on housing, Panel Members were asked how the Council and partner organisations might best help people to access housing in Moray. Respondents were asked to identify **all** approaches they thought would make a difference, and then to identify what they felt would be the **single most effective** approach.
- 4.12. Overall the most commonly mentioned options for assisting people to access housing in Moray were for the Council to provide more homes to rent (82%); and for more affordable homes to be made available to purchase (82%). These were also by far the most commonly identified as the single most effective way in which local residents could be assisted to access housing; more than 4 in 5 identified one or other of these options as the single most effective (44% Council properties to rent, 38% affordable homes to buy).
- 4.13. In addition around 7 in 10 felt that more Housing Association properties being made available to help would be an effective way of improving access to

housing in Moray (71%), but relatively few felt this would be the single most effective approach (8%).

- 4.14. There were differences according to age group regarding the single most effective way to help people in Moray access housing. Most of those aged under 40 felt that more affordable new homes to buy would be the single most effective measure to help people access housing in Moray. In contrast, most of those aged 60+ felt that more Council homes to rent would be the most effective approach.

Table 4.3 Ways to Help Access to Housing in Moray

	All		Single most effective		Rank
More homes available to rent from the Council	524	82%	220	44%	1
More 'affordable' new homes available to buy	521	82%	187	38%	2
More homes available to rent from Housing Associations	449	71%	39	8%	3
More plots available for 'self build'	299	47%	27	5%	4
More homes available for private rent	182	29%	6	1%	5
Other (please write in)	62	10%	19	4%	6
Base	636		498		-

5. ADULT LEARNING

- 5.1. The survey moved on to ask Panel members about their participation in adult learning courses, including leisure-based evening classes, The Big Plus Campaign, vocational training, degree courses, Open University Courses and other courses.
- 5.2. Panel members were asked about their experiences of adult learning and the motivations behind their wishing to take a class. They were also asked to give their views on:
- what kind of course they would consider taking part in;
 - where a suitable location for a class might be;
 - whether there were enough opportunities for adult learning in Moray;
 - whether they were aware of funding and support available; and
 - what might prevent someone taking part in adult learning.

Uptake of Adult Learning

- 5.3. Overall around 2 in 5 respondents had participated in an adult education course (41%), including around 1 in 5 who had done so in the last two years (22%). Most respondents had never participated in any adult learning (60%) although half indicated that they might be interested in doing so (30%).

Table 5.1 Uptake of Adult Learning in Moray

	Number	%
Yes, in the last two years	142	22%
Yes, more than two years ago	124	19%
No, but definitely interested in doing so	55	9%
No, but possibly interested in doing so	133	21%
No, definitely not interested in doing so	192	30%
Base	638	

- 5.4. Next, those who had taken an adult learning course were asked whether they agreed with a series of statements about their experience.
- 5.5. As can be seen from Table 5.2 below, the great majority of respondents reported having had a positive experience:
- 93% found their course relevant;
 - 93% gained new skills and learned new things;
 - 92% enjoyed the course;
 - 85% felt that it was easy to find out about the course;
 - 85% would consider attending another activity;
 - 77% thought the facilities were good;
 - 73% felt that they had received good value for money; and
 - 71% felt that it was held at a reasonably convenient time.
- 5.6. The largest source of dissatisfaction seems to have been the time at which classes were held, but even here only around 1 in 6 of those who had taken a class felt that it was held at an inconvenient time (17%).

Table 5.2 Attitudes towards Adult Education Courses

	Net	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It was easy to find out about the course	+77%	37%	48%	7%	7%	1%	0%
The facilities were not good	-67%	4%	6%	13%	48%	29%	0%
It was held at an inconvenient time	-54%	6%	11%	11%	47%	24%	1%
The course was relevant to me	+93%	38%	55%	6%	0%	0%	0%
I gained new skills / learned new things	+91%	49%	44%	5%	1%	1%	0%
I enjoyed the course, group or activity	+88%	48%	44%	4%	3%	1%	1%
It was not good value for money	-63%	4%	6%	15%	44%	29%	2%
I would consider attending another activity	+80%	38%	47%	6%	3%	2%	5%

- 5.7. The next question asked those who had taken part in an adult education course about their motivations for doing so.
- 5.8. The most commonly mentioned motivational factor was to learn new skills or subject areas with more than two thirds of respondents indicating this (69%). In addition, more than half of respondents had attended a course for enjoyment (54%).
- 5.9. Also notable are the next four motivations listed in the table, with between 1 in 5 and 2 in 5 respondents reporting the following motivations:
- meeting new people (40%);
 - gaining a qualification (28%);
 - improving job prospects (27%); and
 - studying something related to current employment (22%).
- 5.10. Perhaps surprisingly the proportion who had undertaken an adult learning course as a means to an end for example to improve literacy or access further education, was much lower than were motivated by enjoyment.

Table 5.3 Motivations for Taking Part in Adult Education

	Number	%
Learn new skills or subject area	325	69%
Enjoyment of the course or group	253	54%
Meet new people	187	40%
Gain a qualification	134	29%
Improve job prospects	128	27%
Related to current employment	107	23%
To access further or higher education	43	9%
Return to education	29	6%
Improve literacy or numeracy	21	4%
Other	34	7%
Base	468	

Future Learning

- 5.11. Panel members were questioned on the kind of adult learning course which might interest them in the future. They were asked to choose all the applicable options from the following list:
- Online based course or activity;
 - Distance learning;
 - Class based; and
 - Mixed.
- 5.12. The most popular form of adult learning was class based with nearly 3 in 5 preferring this (58%). Mixed and distance learning approaches were each preferred by a similar proportion of respondents (45% and 41% respectively) while online learning was somewhat less commonly preferred (38%).
- 5.13. There were variations in the preferred type of adult learning across age groups. Online based courses or activities were more popular with under 40s than older age groups, while class based learning was most popular with the 60+ age group.

Table 5.4 Preferred Form of Adult Learning

	Number	%
Class based	244	58%
Mixed	187	45%
Distance Learning	174	41%
Online based course or activity	160	38%
Base	420	

Locations for Adult Learning

- 5.14. The survey continued by asking Panel Members to identify locations which they felt would be good places to run adult learning activities. Respondents were asked to choose all options which they felt would be good options, and also to indicate which they felt would be the best place.
- 5.15. The most commonly selected option for a venue for adult learning courses was local schools or colleges, selected by more than 4 in 5 respondents (83%). This was also by far the most commonly selected as the **best place**; more than half of respondents felt that schools and colleges would be the best place for adult learning (56%).
- 5.16. Other popular options were local libraries (62% selecting amongst 'all' options) and community centres (58%) although these were less likely to be seen as the 'best' place. It is notable that a somewhat higher proportion of women than men expressed a preference towards community based venues such as libraries, community centres and day centres.
- 5.17. Adult learning in the workplace or in local sports centres were the least commonly mentioned venues.

Table 5.5 Locations for Adult Learning Courses

	All		Single Best		Rank
	Number	%	Number	%	
Local schools or colleges	532	83%	308	56%	1
Local libraries	393	62%	108	20%	2
Community centres/ Church halls	368	58%	78	14%	3
Learndirect centres	239	37%	24	4%	4
Day or drop in centres	225	35%	10	2%	5
In the workplace	145	23%	15	3%	6
Sports centres	142	22%	-	-	7
Other (please write in)	27	4%	8	1%	8

Opportunities for Adult Learning

- 5.18. Next the survey asked Panel members whether or not they felt that there were enough opportunities for adult learning in Moray, how aware they were of opportunities and funding, and what they thought might be barriers to people taking part in adult learning opportunities.
- 5.19. Most respondents felt that there were 'sufficient' opportunities for adult learning in Moray (64%). However, most of these indicated that they would prefer more (38%) – indeed together with those that felt that more opportunities were 'definitely' needed, more than half of respondents indicated that they would like to see more opportunities for adult learning in Moray (54%).

Table 5.6 Perceptions of Opportunities for Adult Learning in Moray

	%
Plenty of opportunities	25%
Sufficient, but prefer more	38%
Not enough, definitely need more	16%
Don't know/ Can't say	21%

- 5.20. Next the survey asked Panel Members about the extent to which they were aware of adult learning opportunities, funding support and other types of support.
- 5.21. The great majority of respondents had heard of adult learning opportunities in Moray (90%), although most of these indicated that they only knew 'a little' about local opportunities – only 3 in 10 indicated that they 'new a lot' about available adult learning opportunities (30%).
- 5.22. Awareness of funding and support available for adults wishing to participate in courses was considerably lower than awareness of the courses themselves. While more than half had heard of funding and support available (54%), only around 1 in 10 knew 'a lot' about these and around 3 in 10 had never heard of funding or support available for adult learning.

Table 5.7 Awareness of Learning Opportunities and Related Funding and Support

	Fully aware, know a lot about	Heard of, know a little about	Not heard of at all	Don't know/ Can't say
Adult learning opportunities available	30%	60%	2%	8%
Funding available for those interested	13%	44%	29%	15%
Support available (e.g. course funding, hardship fund, help with childcare)	8%	42%	30%	20%

Factors Preventing Participation in Adult Learning Opportunities

- 5.23. Finally in this section, the survey asked Panel Members if they thought that anything might be preventing adults from taking part in adult learning opportunities in Moray:
- 5.24. The cost of courses was most commonly mentioned potential barrier to adult learning in Moray, selected by 66% of Panel members. In addition, at least half mentioned lack of awareness as to what kind of courses were available (55%), lack of interest in adult education (50%) and lack of free time (49%).
- 5.25. In particular the sizeable proportion who felt that lack of interest was a barrier to people taking up adult learning opportunities should be noted. This suggests that there is likely to be a limit to the extent to which work to tackle other barriers (eg cost and lack of awareness) might increase take up of opportunities.

Table 5.8 Factors which prevent people from taking part in adult learning opportunities

	Number	%
Cost of courses	459	66%
Not sure what is available	385	55%
Lack of interest	347	50%
Lack of free time, other commitments	343	49%
Difficulties getting to courses	329	47%
Lack of childcare, cost of childcare	307	44%
Courses not at convenient times	295	42%
Not enough courses available locally	236	34%
Other	30	4%
Base	695	

- 5.26. Age, gender and geographical area appear to have an impact on views on potential barriers to take up of adult learning opportunities:
- Females were more likely than males to mention lack of available courses, cost, and lack of childcare as barriers to learning.
 - A higher percentage of under 40s mentioned inconvenient timing of courses, a lack of free time and a lack of childcare.
 - More of those living in Speyside than felt that difficulty in getting to the courses prevented people from taking up adult learning.

6. VOLUNTEERING

- 6.1. The penultimate theme addressed by the survey is that of volunteering. The focus here was Panel members' experiences of volunteering, including how often individuals volunteer, the kind of organisations that they volunteer for, and what skills they feel that volunteering gives them.

Uptake of Volunteering Opportunities among Panel Members

- 6.2. In total more than half of respondents currently or have previously volunteered in Moray (55%). This included just over a third who currently volunteer (35%).
- 6.3. Nevertheless there remained 45% of respondents who have never volunteered, most of whom were not interested in doing so (27%). Around 1 in 6 respondents indicated that they had not previously volunteered but might be interested in doing so in the future (17%).

Table 6.1 Volunteering among Panel Members in Moray

	Number	%
Yes, currently volunteer	243	35%
Yes, have volunteered in last 2 years	51	7%
Yes, have volunteered more than 2 years ago	94	13%
No, but may be interested in volunteering	122	17%
No, and not interested in volunteering	190	27%

- 6.4. The survey continued by asking those with volunteering experience about how and for whom they had chosen to give their time.
- 6.5. Just under half chose to volunteer for a voluntary organisation or a charity (47%), likely to include a range of different organisations. In addition, around a quarter had volunteered for a youth or children's group (24%), around a fifth for another type of community group (22%) and a similar proportion for a church or religious group (19%).
- 6.6. Age appears to affect the type of organisation Panel Members had chosen to volunteer for. For example those aged 50+ were more likely to give their time to voluntary organisations or charities, while those aged under 40 were more likely to undertake voluntary work for youth and children's groups.

Table 6.2: Organisations where Panel Members Volunteer

	Number	%
Voluntary Organisation or charity	180	47%
Youth or Children's Group	94	24%
Community Group	84	22%
Church or religious group	74	19%
School Board, PTA or parents' group	67	17%
Sports club	64	16%
Social club	23	6%
Trade Union	11	3%
Other	93	24%
Base	387	

- 6.7. Respondents tended to give their time on a fairly frequent basis, with nearly half indicating that they currently or had previously volunteered at least once a week (47%). Around a further quarter volunteered several times a month (27%) and around 1 in 10 around once a month (12%). This suggests that the great majority of those who currently or had previously volunteered did so at least once a month (86%).
- 6.8. Those aged 60+ tended to volunteer more often than others with more than half volunteering on a weekly basis compared to around 2 in 5 younger respondents.

Table 6.3 Frequency of Volunteering by Panel Members

	Number	%
At least once a week	178	47%
Several times a month, but not every week	101	27%
About once a month	45	12%
Not every month but at least once a year	28	7%
Less often	17	5%
I have only volunteered once	9	2%
Base	377	

- 6.9. The survey continued by asking those with experience of volunteering what kind of benefits the voluntary work brought them.
- 6.10. An improved sense of community, enjoyment and a sense of achievement were the most commonly mentioned benefits, each cited by more than 7 in 10 of those with volunteering experience (73%, 73% and 71% respectively). This may point towards a potentially significant role played by volunteers in shaping the local community. The above were far more commonly mentioned than other listed benefits, although it is notable that for those aged under 40 benefits in terms of new skills and increased employment prospects were mentioned.
- 6.11. Perhaps reflecting the extent to which respondents felt that volunteers had given them benefits, the vast majority felt that they would recommend

volunteering to others (95%). This included as many as 3 in 5 who felt that they would 'definitely' recommend it.

Table 6.4 Benefits of Volunteering

	Number	%
Improved Sense of Community	278	73%
Enjoyment	276	73%
A sense of achievement	269	71%
Better social life	135	36%
Better self-confidence	125	33%
Better or new skills	114	30%
Better mental or emotional health	111	29%
Better physical health	60	16%
Improved employment prospects	32	8%
Other	25	7%
Base	380	

Table 6.5 Would Panel members recommend voluntary work to others?

	Number	%
Definitely Recommend	228	59%
Probably Recommend	137	35%
Probably not recommend	9	2%
Definitely not recommend	4	1%
Don't Know / Can't Say	8	2%
BASE	386	

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS

- 7.1. The final section of the survey related to equal opportunities and access.
- 7.2. This included questions about how convenient or inconvenient Panel members found accessing a variety of services in Moray, what barriers they thought prevented people from accessing services, how important it was for local services to try and overcome these barriers and about the needs of specific groups in Moray.

Convenience of Services

- 7.3. Firstly Panel Members were asked how convenient or otherwise they found it to use services in Moray. They were asked to rate a number of different services.
- 7.4. Overall it is notable that for each service listed more than half of respondents indicated that access was very or fairly convenient. However, within this broadly positive picture there were some significant variations.
- 7.5. Post offices and pharmacies were identified as most convenient with around 9 in 10 indicating that they found access convenient (91% and 90% respectively). Moreover, there were the only facilities which more than half of respondents felt were 'very' convenient.
- 7.6. Access to shopping for a small amount of groceries or food, GP surgeries and banks/ building societies was also seen as generally good with a large majority indicating that they found these services convenient to access (86%, 83% and 82% respectively). Access to petrol stations in Moray was also generally seen as good with around 3 in 4 rating this as convenient (77%).
- 7.7. The two services seen in Moray seen as least convenient were hospital outpatients departments and public transport, although as noted above more than half rated these as convenient (63 and 54% respectively). Nevertheless, these two services were more likely than others to be seen as inconvenient; 25% felt that hospital outpatients department were inconvenient and 30% that it was inconvenient to use public transport in Moray.

Table 7.1 Convenience of Services in Moray

	Very convenient	Fairly convenient	Neither/ nor	Fairly inconvenient	Very inconvenient	Don't know
Post offices	59%	32%	1%	5%	2%	-
Chemist/pharmacist	58%	32%	3%	5%	2%	0%
Small amount grocery / food shopping	50%	36%	5%	7%	2%	0%
GP surgery	47%	36%	4%	9%	3%	0%
Banks / building societies	44%	38%	4%	8%	5%	0%
Petrol station	38%	39%	5%	10%	7%	1%
Hospital outpatients department	19%	44%	8%	18%	7%	4%
Public transport	25%	29%	11%	13%	17%	6%

- 7.8. Those aged 60+ generally found the listed services more convenient than younger respondents, for example particularly in relation to accessing post offices. In terms of area those in Speyside tended to find access less convenient than those in other areas, particularly in relation to public transport – this is likely to reflect the more rural nature of this area.

Accessibility of Services

- 7.9. The great majority of respondents indicated that they felt it was important to some degree to ensure that services in Moray are acceptable (95%), including nearly two thirds who felt this was 'very important' (63%). Very few felt that accessibility of services was unimportant.
- 7.10. However, respondents identified a number of potential barriers to residents accessing services in Moray.
- 7.11. Across all of the barriers listed at Table 7.2, the majority of respondents indicated that these were a problem to some degree in Moray. Transport for people with mobility problems was seen as the most significant problem, being seen as a 'major' problem by more than 2 in 5 (42%) perhaps unsurprising given the older age profile of the Panel and the relatively high incidence of disabilities. This was also the only barrier where the number of respondents who considered it a major problem outnumbered those who considered it a minor problem.
- 7.12. Access to buildings for people with mobility problems and facilities for people with hearing / sight impairments were also seen as significant barriers to access, each mentioned as 'major' problems by between 1 in 5 and 2 in 5 respondents (24% and 22% respectively).
- 7.13. Panel Members were also asked to give their suggestions as to any other barriers which might prevent people in Moray from accessing services. These included a lack of adequate and low-cost public transport; a lack of knowledge as to how to access services; unhelpful staff and bureaucracy; and a lack of out-of-hours service provision.

Table 7.2 Perceptions of Barriers to Accessing Services

	Major problem	Minor problem	No problem at all	Don't know
Transport for people with mobility problems	42%	37%	4%	17%
Access to buildings for people with mobility problems	24%	51%	9%	16%
Facilities for people with hearing / sight impairment	22%	42%	4%	33%
Attitudes towards people from different cultures	18%	44%	14%	24%
Language barriers	21%	39%	12%	28%

Treatment of Specific Groups

- 7.14. Finally the survey asked Panel members how they felt people disabled people, people from outside the UK and people from ethnic minorities were treated in Moray.
- 7.15. Views of respondents differed somewhat in relation to each of the above groups, but it is notable that while there was some difference of opinion as to whether these groups are welcomed and treated fairly, few think that these groups actually suffer discrimination in Moray.
- 7.16. Looking at each of the groups in turn, around 7 in 10 felt that disabled people are welcomed (70%) and treated fairly in Moray (69%) - only around 1 in 20 disagreed with this. Around 1 in 10 thought that disabled people were discriminated against in Moray (9%).
- 7.17. Views were somewhat less positive in relation to people from ethnic minorities and to some extent people from outwith the UK. Fewer than half agreed that people from ethnic minorities are welcomed and treated fairly in Moray, with respondents somewhat more confident that this group is treated fairly in Moray (48% agree) than that they are welcomed (43%). Moreover it is notable that around 1 in 5 felt that people from ethnic minorities are not welcomed in Moray (19%). Similarly, around 1 in 8 agreed that people from ethnic minorities are discriminated against in Moray (13%).
- 7.18. Around half of respondents agreed that people from outwith the UK are welcomed and treated fairly in Moray. Again there was more confidence that people are treated fairly (52% agree) than that they are welcomed (48% agree). Indeed around 1 in 6 felt that people from outwith the UK are not welcomed in Moray, and around 1 in 8 that they are discriminated against (13%).

Table 7.3 Attitudes to Specific Groups in Moray

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
People with disabilities...						
...are welcomed by local people	14%	56%	18%	4%	0%	8%
...are treated fairly in Moray	11%	58%	16%	5%	0%	9%
...are discriminated against in Moray	1%	8%	23%	46%	9%	13%
People from ethnic minorities						
...are welcomed in Moray	5%	38%	26%	16%	3%	11%
...are treated fairly in Moray	6%	42%	26%	8%	2%	15%
...are discriminated against in Moray	2%	11%	29%	33%	8%	18%
People from outwith the UK						
...are welcomed by local people	6%	42%	25%	13%	4%	11%
...are treated fairly in Moray	6%	46%	25%	7%	2%	14%
...are discriminated against in Moray	2%	11%	27%	32%	8%	20%

Support in Accessing Services

- 7.19. Finally the survey asked Panel Members which specific groups they think might need additional support to access services in Moray. Respondents were asked to identify all groups which they felt required extra support, and the single group which would require the **most support**.
- 7.20. The group most commonly identified by respondents as needing additional support to access services was older people; around 9 in 10 felt that this group required additional support. This was far more commonly identified as the single group requiring the most support; half of all respondents identified older people as most in need of support.
- 7.21. People with disabilities were also commonly mentioned, indeed this was the only group mentioned by more than half of respondents (79%). People with disabilities were also the only group identified as most in need of support by a substantial number of respondents, although at 25% this is only half as many as felt older people were most in need of support.
- 7.22. Although far less likely to be identified as requiring help to access services, it is notable that around 2 in 5 respondents felt that the following groups were in need of some additional support: people from outside the UK, unemployed people, people from ethnic minority groups and young people. However these were much less likely to be selected as being most in need of support.

Table 7.4 Groups Needing Support in Accessing Services

	All		Group most in need of support		Rank
	Number	%	Number	%	
Older People	624	89%	229	50%	1
People with disabilities	549	79%	116	25%	2
People from outside the UK	304	44%	20	4%	3
Unemployed people	289	41%	25	5%	4
People from ethnic minority groups	285	41%	6	1%	5
Young people	283	41%	36	8%	6
School age children	204	29%	12	3%	7
Other	35	5%	14	3%	8
Base	698		458		-

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY FORM