

# Hear Me Too

## Results of the Community Needs Survey – A Summary

March 2012

1,000 people were invited to take part in the *Community Needs Survey* during the winter of 2011/12. Partners in the voluntary and community sector helped us reach our target audience – mainly minority and disadvantaged communities. An ‘easy read’ version of the survey and alternative formats or assistance were provided where needed. The survey cost £1,385 to run (includes printing and alternative formats/support).

39% responded (391 people). Following detailed analysis and agreement of priorities with equality stakeholders, the results were published in March 2012.

### Profile of respondents

- Slightly more older people and slightly more women (67% female) were represented in the results. Two people identified as transgender. 6% were 10 to 19 years, 12% 20 to 34 years, 18% 35 to 49 years, 27% 50 to 64 years, 25% 65 to 79 years and 12% were 80 years or older.
- 60% were disabled.
- 20% were of black and minority ethnic origin (majority Asian, Chinese or White Other).
- 10% had English as a second language (including Deaf British Sign Language users).
- 63% did not answer the question about religion/belief: 18% said they were Christian, 10% had no religion/belief and 9% ‘other religion or belief’.
- 73% did not answer the question about sexual orientation but just over 5% said they were lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- 13% were carers.

### Comparing respondents to Devon’s population profile:

Significantly higher	Higher	About the same	Under-represented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older people.</li> <li>• Women.</li> <li>• Minority ethnic people.</li> <li>• People with minority religions/beliefs.</li> <li>• Carers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesbian, gay, bisexual people. (<i>LGB estimated</i>)</li> <li>• Transgender people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Younger people.</li> <li>• Men.</li> </ul>

The survey aimed to target minority and disadvantaged communities (those at most risk of discrimination and inequalities), so this is a good result overall.

## Satisfaction levels

Overall people said they were very satisfied with Devon as a place to live, the majority said they feel safe and are treated with dignity and respect in the community.

People said they were least satisfied with job opportunities, public transport, access to information, cultural facilities and lifelong learning. *Access to jobs and services can be compounded by difficulties accessing public transport.*

Although people said they feel safe and respected in general, about 40% of people said they did not know what to do in the event of a major emergency, about 35% said they do not feel safe outside after dark (over 80s being worst affected) and around a quarter had experienced hate crime.

In terms of influence, about 40% said they feel they cannot influence services or their local area.

### Age

- Age was a significant factor in determining satisfaction levels. A similar u-shaped age pattern could be seen across a range of quality of life indicators, with those of working age being least satisfied. This is an internationally recognised pattern.
- Around 60% of younger people (under 35s) expressed dissatisfaction with their job prospects. In all age groups at least 40% of people said they were dissatisfied with job prospects.

### Carers and disabled people

- Disabled people face numerous barriers to employment, transport and services. They are less likely to have access to a car and are more likely to need to use public services. They experience hate crime and their fear of crime is greater.
- Disabled people are least satisfied about information provided by services, and Deaf people highlighted poor access to British Sign Language interpreters.
- Carers also face barriers accessing services including lifelong learning, cultural facilities, sports and leisure.

### Black and minority ethnic people

- Overall black and minority ethnic people said they were more satisfied about job opportunities, however there was a difference in perceptions between certain ethnic groups with black and mixed heritage people being significantly less satisfied. This may be because of occupational segregation. Organisations may wish to explore this further through staff surveys and workforce profiling.
- 28% of black and minority ethnic people said they had experienced hate crime. This was the second largest group.

- Slightly more black and minority ethnic women (including those from minority religious communities) reported having experienced domestic violence and abuse but were less likely to report it to statutory services compared with white British people.

### Lesbian, gay and bisexual people

- 85% of lesbian, gay and bisexual people said they had experienced hate crime – the highest levels of any group.
- Slightly more lesbian, gay and bisexual people said they had experienced domestic violence and abuse compared with heterosexual people.

### Men and women

- Women experience barriers to using public transport.
- In this survey, more men identified as having experienced domestic violence or sexual assault compared with other surveys carried out. By integrating such questions into a generic survey about quality of life and public services, this may have provided an opportunity for men to disclose.

## Priorities identified

1. Find effective and accessible methods of informing people about services and how to look after themselves, particularly in the event of a major emergency.
2. Continue to safeguard people from hate crime and identity based bullying.
3. Achieve an accessible, regular and well connected public transport network.
4. Ensure services are fully accessible and beneficial for disabled people and carers.
5. Inclusive engagement and participation so that needs are taken into account, particularly in relation to safeguarding against abuse including domestic abuse, job opportunities and lifelong learning.

Devon County Council has activities and plans in place to address all of these concerns, some of which are strategic priorities.

### We will:

1. Set up a working group of disability and minority ethnic community experts to look at improving access to information and review our information about what to do in the event of a major emergency (priority one). We have recently launched a *Communications Toolkit* which provides guidance to staff on producing accessible information and sourcing interpreters and other communication support. We have a strategic plan priority to ensure

information and advice about services is easier to find on our website and in public buildings (ours and partners' premises). We will also review our progress against the British Sign Language Charter to help ensure access to services for Deaf people.

2. Explore public transport solutions (priority three). Access to jobs alongside access for women, disabled people and people living in rural areas will be a key consideration.
3. Continue supporting carers through a new Carer's Break Scheme in which they can apply for a small grant to use for something that improves quality of life such as time off to visit the theatre or go swimming.
4. Launch a new bullying and prejudice related incidents guide and reporting system for schools, this will include disability, homophobic and other identity based bullying/prejudice related incidents as well as racism. In addition, further work addressing hate crime will continue through the hate crime prevention forums and strategy.
5. Under a new engagement strategy and engagement toolkit for staff, we will seek to ensure needs are taken into account in general through more inclusive participation and consultation. We also have a strategic plan priority to increase participation in local democracy and community action amongst under-represented groups.
6. Help improve access to services that can enhance lifelong learning and cultural experiences through the new Passmore Edwards Centre in Newton Abbot, plans for a new Devon Heritage Centre, and improvements to Totnes and Exeter Central Library. 17 Libraries now have WI-FI access. During Adult Learning Week (12 to 19 May) we provided a series of free courses designed to attract a wide spread of interest including art and craft, computing, languages, creative writing and photography. Equality issues are regularly considered in our annual self assessment report for adult and community learning but because of national funding constraints we have limited ability to expand course provision.
7. Establish a countywide network of inclusive Ability Clubs for young disabled people to provide multi-sport opportunities for 11-18 year olds as part of Active Devon, the County Sports Partnership committed to increasing disabled people's participation in sport. Active Devon is currently working in partnership with Living Options to consult with disabled people as part of a bid to Sport England to improve provision for adults. For further information visit [www.activedevon.org/disabilitysport](http://www.activedevon.org/disabilitysport). We are also making countryside walks more accessible by replacing stiles with gates on public rights of way.
8. Continue to keep abreast of equality considerations through regular dialogue with our Equality Reference Group members.
9. Be able to monitor occupational segregation and job satisfaction amongst black and minority ethnic staff through workforce profiles and staff survey results.
10. When issuing any DVA contracts, ensure equality requirements are factored in. The ADVA (Against Domestic Violence and Abuse) partnership has commissioned community organisations to support victims from minority groups.

**For the full report visit [devon.gov.uk/hearmetoo201203.pdf](http://devon.gov.uk/hearmetoo201203.pdf).**

**For further information about Devon County Council's approach to equality, including the Fair for All Programme and Equality Policy visit [devon.gov.uk/equality](http://devon.gov.uk/equality).**