

# NORTHUMBERLAND CITIZENSHIP SURVEY – RESULTS & ANALYSIS 2007

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A big thank-you to everyone who took the time to fill in the survey.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report presents the results from the first Northumberland Citizenship Survey which was carried out over the summer of 2007. The survey was required to provide evidence for both the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy, specifically for areas on volunteering and older peoples (over 50) perceptions. The data collated through the survey will be used to provide baseline evidence for the aims and objectives in the LAA and will assist with setting future targets.

The report presents findings on the following areas:

- Sense of Belonging
- Neighbourhood
- Local Services
- Participation in Local Politics / Decisions
- Volunteering
- Giving
- Arts, Craft and Culture
- Sport & Recreation

## **2.0 DEFINITIONS & METHODOLOGY**

The questionnaire was based on the National Citizenship Survey carried out by the Home Office every two years.

The Northumberland survey was carried out in two phases – a general survey which targeted people aged 16 and over and an older people's survey which targeted people aged 50 and over<sup>1</sup>.

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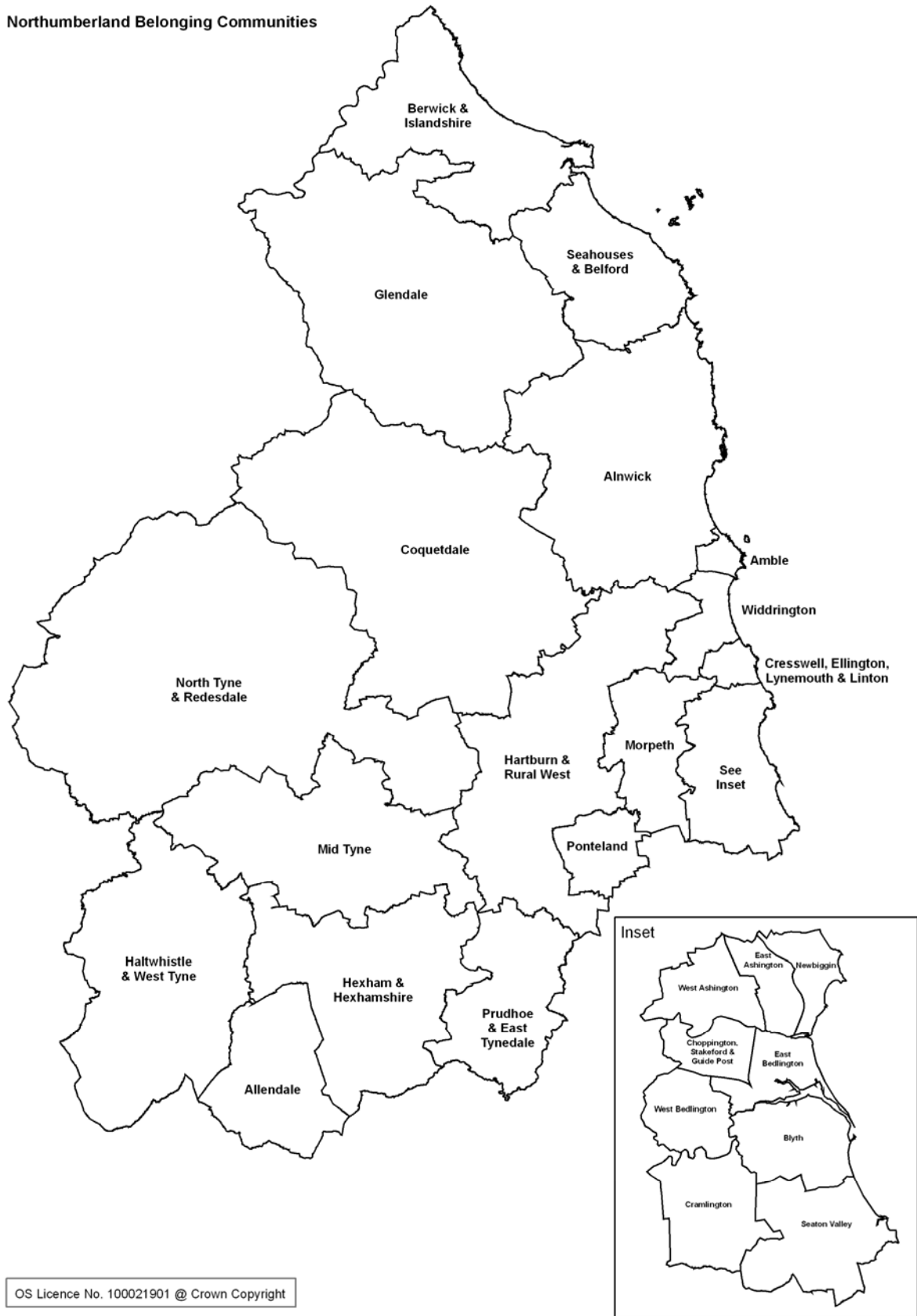
<sup>1</sup> Older People – Older people were defined as those people aged 50 and above at the time of the survey. This classification follows the definition used by National Government.

The General Citizenship study consisted of a postal survey of 52 questions which were posted out to 6,000 households at random. The 50+ survey asked the same 52 questions with an additional two questions focusing on fear of crime to fulfil the data requirements of the LAA. This was sent to 12,000 households in an attempt to get a large enough sample of people in this age bracket. A sufficient response was required for both surveys to allow the results to be analysed at a Belonging Community level.

At the present time there are 26 Belonging Communities within Northumberland although their boundaries have yet to be finalised. The belonging communities are an attempt to breakdown the county into neighbourhood boundaries where detailed information can be presented at a local level. The analysis contained in this report is based on the Belonging Community Boundaries as they were in September 2007 (Figure 1). Further information on these areas is available via the InfoNet website [www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk) .

Using a conservative population estimate, at the 95% confidence interval (how certain we want to be that the results lie within the associated precision) results by Belonging Community have a +/- 10% precision ( we can be 95% confident that the results within the survey represent the population within a sampling error of +/- 10%). A full set of results tables for both surveys are contained within two technical appendices which supplement this report.

**Figure 1: Northumberland Belonging Communities (as defined in Sept. 2007).**





### **3.0 RESULTS: GENERAL SURVEY**

In total there were 2,750 responses to the General Citizenship Survey, which accounts for a response rate of 46%. The lowest number of responses came from Blyth Valley District (308) and the highest from Tynedale (628). There were enough responses from each of the 26 Belonging Communities to allow data to be analysed at this level. The lowest response was from Newbiggin (93) and the highest from Hexham & Hexhamshire (124). The following analysis picks out the key trends for each theme. Full results tables for each of the following categories can be viewed in a separate technical appendix (Technical Appendix General Survey).

#### **3.1 Age and Gender**

More women than men completed the general survey – 59% female and 41% men at a Northumberland level. Two belonging communities did not match the overall trend. In Coquetdale 52% of respondents were male and in Prudhoe & East Tynedale 51% were men. The largest variation was in East Bedlington where 67% of respondents were female and 32% men (1% was unknown).

In general there was a higher response rate from people aged 55 and over. At a Northumberland level 42% of respondents were in the 55-74 age bands. The lowest response rate was from the under 25's with 2%. There are a number of reasons why this would be the case including the number of under 25's who live away from home, parents completing questionnaires as the head of household and also the over 55's having more free time to complete the survey. Within the Belonging Communities Amble had the largest proportion of men between the ages of 35 and 44 answering with 26%. In terms of women 31% of respondents in North Tyne and Redesdale were over the age of 75.

#### **3.2 Ethnicity**

For Northumberland as a whole 98% of responders were White British which corresponds with the Ethnic profile for the county from the 2001 Census. East Ashington had the largest number of respondents from other ethnic groups with

4.1%. Seahouses & Belford had the largest percentage of Other White (2.0%) which may be due to the number of east European workers living in the area.

The survey asked respondents the proportion of the people in their local area they felt was of the same ethnic group as themselves. Across Northumberland as a whole 58.9% of people felt that the people in their local area were all the same as themselves. People living in the deep rural areas of the county were most likely to feel that there was no ethnic mix and everyone was the same – 77% in Coquetdale, 76% in Mid Tyne and 74% in Allendale. In Blyth Valley, Wansbeck and parts of Castle Morpeth they were less likely to feel that people were of the same ethnic group. In East Ashington for example only 34% felt people were the same as each other and 11% felt that less than half were of the same ethnic group.

Respondents were also asked whether they felt that their local area was a place where people respected ethnic differences. 45.6% agreed with the statement but there was wide variation displayed across the county. In Alnwick District for example only 39.6% tended to agree with this statement whilst in Blyth Valley the percentage increased to 52.7%. Ponteland belonging community had the largest percentage of people agreeing / tending to agree with 73% and Amble the lowest with 41.9%. 29% of people in Newbiggin felt that they disagreed with this statement. The population were unsure how to answer the question with 36% not knowing whether they agreed or disagreed or not answering. In Cramlington 41.8% did not know or did not answer the question.

### **3.3 Marital Status**

Half of all respondents were in their first marriage, the highest proportion in North Tyne & Redesdale (62.1%). The largest proportion of single people was in Blyth (24%) and widowers in West Ashington (22.9%).

### **3.4 Belonging to your Area**

The survey attempted to assess whether the population have a sense of “belonging” to the area.

*How strongly do you feel you belong to your neighbourhood?*

The majority of people (76%) who answered the survey felt very strongly / strongly about the area in which they live. People living in rural areas appeared to have more affiliation with their local neighbourhood than the urban parts of the County (80% felt very strongly / strongly in Alnwick District whereas only 68.4% felt the same in Blyth Valley). North Tyne and Redesdale showed the strongest feelings 84.4% feeling very strongly / strongly. East Ashington had the lowest proportion with 64.9%.

*How strongly do you feel you belong to your town or rural area?*

69% of respondents in Northumberland felt strongly / very strongly about their local town or rural area. As shown in the previous question residents in the rural parts of the County showed a greater connection with their locality, Coquetdale with the highest proportion of 81%.

*How strongly do you feel you belong to Northumberland?*

The majority of Northumberland residents feel very strongly / strongly towards the county (76.7%). Again the rural areas had a greater connection, Coquetdale coming out top with 86.9%. This question raised some interesting opinions indicating that the areas who feel the least affiliation with the County were those places on the edge of the county adjoining the Scottish Borders or Tyneside (Seaton Valley 13.4%, Berwick & Islandshire 11.7% and Ponteland 13% feeling not very strongly / not very strongly at all).

### **3.5 Neighbourhood**

*Would you say this is a neighbourhood you enjoy living in?*

Across the county 64.6% of respondents definitely felt their neighbourhood was an area they enjoyed living in. Again there were marked differences between the urban and rural parts of Northumberland, ranging from 76.9% in Tynedale to 45.8% in Wansbeck. Within Northumberland people in Coquetdale were the most content with their neighbourhood with 85.2% definitely agreeing along with 83% in Allendale and 80.7% in Mid Tyne. Those least in agreement live in East Ashington (27.8%) and East Bedlington (36.3%).

*To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood?*

The largest number of respondents tended to agree with this statement, 50.1% across the whole of Northumberland and ranging from 55.9% in Berwick-upon-Tweed to 41% in Wansbeck. Again there were a range of views exhibited at a more local level ranging from 63.4% in Haltwhistle & West Tyne to 32% in East Ashington. There was also a clear split between the urban and rural areas of the County with the rural areas agreeing more strongly that people in their area would pull together. For example 14.9% of people living in Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth and Linton definitely disagreed whereas 23.8% of people in Alnwick strongly agreed.

*Would you say that this is a neighbourhood where you can trust people?*

Over half of all people responding to the survey felt that in their neighbourhood many people could be trusted (50.5%). In Tynedale District this increased to 62.4% but fell to 34.2% in Wansbeck. Trust was highest in Allendale (75%) and lowest in East Ashington (18.6%). A very small percentage of people felt that no one could be trusted in their neighbourhood, 0.9% across the whole county.

*How likely is it that people in your neighbourhood would participate if they were asked by a local organisation to help solve a community problem?*

The majority of respondents felt that people were very likely or likely to participate (64.8%). Again there appears to be an urban/rural split with people living in Tynedale District (77.9%) perceived to be more likely to participate than people living in Wansbeck District (49.8%). At belonging community level people in Allendale (90.2%) were felt to be the most likely to take part whereas people perceived to be the least willing were in East Ashington (35.1%).

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood are willing to help their neighbours?*

The majority of respondents to this question agreed (59.7%), rising to 62% in Berwick-upon-Tweed and falling to 55.4% in Blyth. Within the county there was a pretty even spread of opinion – in Allendale 94.6% of respondents strongly agreed / agreed with this statement falling to 52.6% in East Ashington.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is a close-knit community?*

Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this opinion (57.6%) with quite a lot of variation within the county (ranging from 71.2% within Tynedale to 42.2% in Blyth Valley). The rural parts of the county displayed most affinity with this statement – North Tyne and Redesdale 83.5%, Allendale 83% and Coquetdale 83%. East Ashington had the largest percentage of people strongly disagreeing / disagreeing with the statement (52.6%).

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood do not share the same values?*

This question divided the county evenly with 37.5% agreeing / strongly agreeing and 39.5% disagreeing / strongly disagreeing. The more urban parts of the county appeared to feel that people in their neighbourhood were less likely to share the same values, 53.5% agreeing in Blyth and 53.8% in Newbiggin. Allendale had the highest percentage disagreeing / strongly disagreeing with 55.4%.

### **3.6 Local Services**

The question on local services attempted to determine how satisfied people were with the following services in their area:

- local schools
- local council housing
- housing association housing
- local street cleaning
- local policing
- local health services
- local services for young people
- local public transport

Answers ranged from very satisfied to very dissatisfied.

In terms of schools 58.5% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied. The most satisfied were people living in the Mid Tyne area (67.5%). People living in Amble and

Newbiggin had the largest percentage of people very dissatisfied / dissatisfied with 8.6%. 26% of people across Northumberland didn't know how satisfied they were with local schools.

For local council housing and housing association housing a large percentage (37.3% and 46% respectively) didn't know. Of those who did answer the majority were fairly satisfied with council housing (25.7%). The answers very much reflected the spread of council housing across the County, for example the number of people answering that they didn't know in Allendale rose to 50.9%. Those most dissatisfied live in Newbiggin where 33.3% were fairly or very dissatisfied. In terms of housing association the largest percentage of people dissatisfied live in Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton (15.8%).

44% of respondent were satisfied with levels of street cleaning in their local area, the most satisfied in Seaton Valley (59.8%) and the least satisfied in East Ashington (32%).

In terms of local policing the majority of people (51.3%) were very or fairly satisfied. In Ponteland 61.3% were very / fairly satisfied with Newbiggin having the largest percentage of people either very or fairly dissatisfied with 45.2%.

In terms of local health services the majority of people (78.5%) were very or fairly satisfied. In Allendale 46.4% were very satisfied with Berwick & Islandshire having the largest percentage of people either very or fairly dissatisfied with 24.3%.

30.4% felt that they didn't know how satisfied they were with local services for young people. In Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton 32.7% were very dissatisfied and 38.6% in West Bedlington. Allendale had the largest percentage of people very/fairly satisfied with 28.6%.

The majority of respondent were fairly satisfied with local public transport (36.4%), ranging from 46.9% in Blyth Valley District to 25.2% In Berwick-upon-Tweed. Cramlington had the largest percentage of people fairly satisfied (50%). The most

dissatisfied people live in North Tyne & Redesdale (31.1%) and Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton (45.5%).

### **3.7 Participation in local politics / decisions**

The following questions attempted to assess local people's involvement with local democracy.

The first question asked whether the respondent had contacted a local councillor, MP, official of the local council or other government official at any point over the last 12 months. Across Northumberland as a whole 23.6% had contacted at least one of these in the last 12 months, the highest percentage in Tynedale (30%). 72% of people responding had not contacted any of these people in the last 12 months, rising to 87.6% in East Ashington. People from Hartburn & Rural West were most likely to have contacted their local councillor (20.6%) with people from Berwick & Islandshire most likely to contact their MP (10.7%).

The second question attempted to assess people's participation in public meetings, demonstrations, protests or petitions on issues affecting their local area. 30.7% of respondents had attended or taken part in at least one of these. People in Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton were most likely to have participated (50.5%) with people from West Bedlington least likely to take part (11.9%). Signing a petition was the most participated in with 24.9% of people saying they had signed a petition.

The third question focusing on participation looked at people's involvement in problems affecting their local area whether this was answering a questionnaire, attending a public meeting or taking part in a group discussion. 65.3% hadn't done any of these things in the last 12 months with 31.7% of respondents taking part in at least one. The majority of people (33.9%) had filled in a questionnaire.

The fourth participation question asked whether local people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area and affecting Northumberland. 32.3% tended to disagree and 26.8% tended to agree that they could influence decisions on their local area. East Ashington had the largest percentage of people

tending/definitely disagreeing (64%). Ponteland had the largest proportion tending to agree with 35.2%.

In terms of influencing decisions affecting Northumberland 35.2% of respondents tended to disagree. Ponteland again had the largest percentage of people definitely / tending to agree with 29.6%. Only 13.4% of people in East Ashington agreed with the statement.

### **3.8 Unpaid volunteering**

The survey attempted to understand the types of unpaid volunteering people in Northumberland carry out on a regular basis. The most common forms of unpaid volunteering were helping someone who has difficulty getting out and about (27.9%), giving advice (27.1%) and looking after a property or pet (25.1%). The least common forms of unpaid help were providing personal care for someone who is sick or frail (4.9%), representing someone (8.2%) and decorating / home repairs (9.1%).

People living in Allendale were most likely to help someone who had difficulty getting out and about (42%), give advice (41.1%) and look after a property or pet (34.8%). Those living in East Bedlington were most likely to help people with their shopping or paying bills (24.5%) whereas people in Haltwhistle & West Tyne had the highest percentage of people (23.8%) helping with household jobs such as cooking and cleaning. Amble had the highest percentage of people who gave unpaid help by looking after a baby or children (23.8%).

### **3.9 Volunteering in a group/club/organisation**

The second section of the survey looking at volunteering focused on volunteering for a group or club. The largest percentage of people in Northumberland (22.8%) has been involved with a sports or exercise club in the last 12 months followed by hobby / recreation type clubs (18.7%). Glendale, Alnwick and Coquetdale had the largest percentage of people volunteering with sports groups. Allendale had the largest percentage of people volunteering with religious groups with 26.8%. 42.7% of all respondents do not volunteer at all with a group or club.

The most popular way to help a group or club was to help run and organise sponsored events (17.2%) and to help run an activity (15.2%). 10.9% of respondents help a group or club less than once a week but more than once a month. In Widdrington belonging community the majority of people who volunteer with a group or club do so at least once a week (18%). 13.6% of respondents have spent an average of two hours per week helping their group/club. This rises to 24.5% in Glendale and falls to 7.1% in Blyth.

In the four weeks previous to the survey 18.6% had on average volunteered with the group or club for between 1 and 10 hours. Glendale had by far the highest percentage, 30.9% giving unpaid help to a group or club for this length of time. 7.7% of respondents had not done anything in the four weeks previous to the survey.

20.1% of respondents help a group or organisation based in the voluntary / community sector, 5.6% in the public sector and 5.3% in the private sector. 33.9% of all clubs helped in Allendale were based in the voluntary/community sector.

The majority of people who responded to the survey (14.6%) found out about opportunities to help their group or organisation through someone who was already involved with that organisation. 6.4% had found out about chances to help via already using their products / services. The least likely ways to find out about volunteering opportunities was through a national newspaper (0.3%), millennium volunteers (0.1%) and the careers centre (0.2%).

### **3.10 Why people don't volunteer**

15.6% of respondents felt that they would like to spend more time helping groups and clubs. Cramlington had the largest percentage of people wanting to help more with 23.5% followed by Morpeth (22.8%) and Prudhoe & East Tynedale (22.2%). 56.9% would not like to do any more than they already contribute. Across Northumberland 37.9% of people responding to the survey do not volunteer due to work commitments rising to 41.5% in Blyth Valley. 30.7% do other things with their spare time. Reasons

which were less of a barrier to volunteering were too young (0.2%), new to area (3.4%) and study (4.2%).

Across Northumberland as a whole 37% said there was nothing that would make them more likely to get involved. This was highest in Choppington, Stakeford & Guide Post (48%) and East Bedlington (47.1%). 25.6% said they might be persuaded to help if someone asked them directly. This was important in Mid Tyne (36.8%), Alnwick (33.7%) and Hartburn & Rural West (33.6%). Others felt that more information would help (14.8%). Reasons that would be least likely to persuade people to get involved were providing transport (4.3%) and expenses (5.7%).

### **3.11 Giving**

In the four weeks previous to the survey 47.6% of people in Northumberland had given to charity via a shop counter collection. 32.8% had donated in a local pub with 30.4% of people giving money to a street collection. Respondents to the survey were least likely to give to charity by buying raffle tickets (4.7%) or via direct debit (7.9%). Within Northumberland people living in Alnwick and Mid Tyne gave most to charity in the four week period prior to the survey with East Bedlington participating the least.

Across Northumberland 23.3% of respondents gave £10.00 or more to charity in the four weeks before the survey was carried out. 35.2% of people in Coquetdale gave £10.00 or more over the same time period.

### **3.12 Being Actively Involved**

The questions under this section of the survey attempted to assess how active a role residents take in their community whether this be in an individual role (local councillor, school governor, special constable or magistrate) or as part of a group (making decisions on for example local health services, regeneration, local crime, education etc.).

Only 3.6% of people across Northumberland have taken an individual role in their community by becoming a councillor, magistrate, special constable or school

governor in the last 12 months. 10.5% of respondents have sat on a group making decisions about the local area. This increased to 16.4% in Glendale and 20% in Seahouses and Belford. The most common type of group was ones discussing the local community (2.9%). The least likely groups for residents to be involved in were tenants groups (0.9%) or groups looking at local crime issues (0.8%). 84% of those responding had not done any of these things.

### **3.13 Arts, Craft and Culture**

The questions on Arts, Crafts and Culture aimed to show participation in these activities.

In terms of arts and crafts by far the most popular pastime is reading books, poetry or magazines with 70.5% of people participating in this activity within the last 12 months. This was highest in Coquetdale (78.7%) and Allendale (78.6%) and lowest in East Bedlington (59.8%). Photography was also a popular activity with 28% of respondents taking part in this pastime. Participation was highest in Allendale with 48% doing some form of photography in the last 12 months. The lowest proportion of people had participated in writing music with only 1% of people responding saying they had taken part in this activity. This was closely followed by rehearsing or performing a play with 1.6%.

The survey also looked at people's attendance at arts and cultural events over the previous 12 months. The majority of people (44.7%) had visited the cinema over the last 12 months. Attendance at this type of event was highest in Mid Tyne (59.6%) and lowest in Newbiggin (26.9%). Theatre was another well attended event with 35.1% of respondents saying that they had done this in the previous 12 months. This was highest in Ponteland (56.5%) and lowest again in Newbiggin (18.3%). The least attended event was Circus (3.6%) possibly due to the fact it was one of the least accessible type of events. This was followed by Jazz performance (4.6%) although attendance was much higher in Alnwick (12.9%).

The survey asked people how often they had visited a library, archive or museum / gallery in the last 12 months. 42.5% of people had been at least once to a library in

the last 12 months. This ranged from 66.7% in Ponteland to 32% in Seahouses & Belford. The majority of people (17.6%) had been to a library between 1 and 5 times in the last 12 months. A much smaller percentage (8.4%) had attended an archives or records office at least once in the last 12 months. The highest percentage was in North Tyne and Redesdale (13.6%) and the lowest percentage in Ponteland (1.9%). 46.1% of respondents had been to a museum or gallery at least once in the previous 12 months. Attendance ranged from 63.9% in Ponteland to 26.5% in East Bedlington. 36.9% of respondents had been to a museum or gallery between one and five times in the last 12 months.

The survey asked people whether they had visited any heritage sites in the last 12 months. 70.6% had visited a city or town with historic character. This ranged from 85.2% in Ponteland to 46.1% in East Bedlington. A historic park, garden or landscape open to the public also scored quite highly with 58.8% of respondents visiting this type of heritage site at least once in the previous 12 months. People living in Alnwick were most likely to visit this type of attraction (74.3%), possibly due to their close proximity to Alnwick Garden. Those living in East Bedlington (31.4%) were least likely to visit this type of place. Sports Heritage sites were the least likely places to visit with only 7.3% visiting in the last 12 months.

### **3.14 Sports and Physical Activity**

The questions focussing on sport and physical activity attempted to assess respondent's participation in such activities and their use of local sporting facilities and membership of local sporting clubs.

The first two questions looked at whether respondents had done at least one walk or cycle ride lasting at least 30 minutes in the last four weeks. 69.7% had done at least one 30 minute walk in the previous four weeks. Participation ranged from 80.6% in North Tyne & Redesdale to 53.5% in Blyth. In terms of cycling only 11.7% of respondents had done one 30 minute cycle ride in the last four weeks. The people most likely to do a continuous 30 minute cycle ride live in Amble (19%) with the least likely to participate from Choppington, Stakeford and Guide Post (4.9%).

The survey then looked at the type of sport and recreation activities people had been involved in during the previous four weeks. Keep Fit, Dance Exercise and Aerobics was the most popular sporting activity with 15.7% of respondents taking part in this sport at least once in the four weeks leading up to the survey. People living in West Bedlington (22.8%) and Ponteland (22.2%) were the most likely to do this activity with those from East Bedlington (6.9%) & Haltwhistle & West Tyne (6.9%) least likely to do this type of pursuit. Swimming or Diving was the second most popular sporting / recreation activity with 13.1% doing this at least once in the previous 4 weeks. This sport was most popular in West Bedlington where 22.8% of people had participated. People least likely to swim were from East Bedlington (5.9%). Those sports with the least numbers participating were Track & Field Athletics (0.3%), Hockey (0.2%), Netball (0.3%), Skating & Rollerblading (0.2%), Basketball (0.1%), Volleyball (0.1%), Waterskiing (0.1%) and Gymnastics (0.1%).

In line with national government targets the survey then looked at whether respondents had done any physical activity which had either raised their breathing rate or made them out of breath / sweaty. 38% had done some form of physical activity in the last four weeks which had raised their breathing rate. This was highest in Prudhoe & East Tynedale (44.3%) and lowest in East Bedlington (21.6%). 34.3% had done something which had made them out of breath or sweaty. This was highest in Morpeth (42.9%) and lowest in Berwick & Islandshire (20.4%).

The survey then looked at sporting facilities and asked whether people could get to a facility within 20 minutes of their house either by walking or some other form of transport. A sport facility was defined as an indoor or outdoor facility such as a sports club, sport or leisure centre, health and fitness facility or school open to community use. 75.7% responded that they had a facility within 20 minutes travelling distance of their home. Those with the most access were those living in the more urban parts of the county such as Cramlington (94.9%), Newbiggin (94.6%) and Blyth (93.9%). Those areas with more of an access problem appear to be East Bedlington (45.1%) and Glendale (50%).

18.3% of respondents are a member of a sports club. Participation ranges from 32% in Seahouses and Belford to 3.9% in East Bedlington. Across the whole of

Northumberland 14% of respondents had attended a live sporting event in the last four weeks. Attendance at such events was highest in Mid Tyne (20.2%) and lowest in Choppington, Stakeford & Guide Post and East Bedlington (7.8%).

### **3.15 Key Findings from the General Survey**

The General Citizenship Survey highlighted some important differences in opinion within Northumberland and revealed issues where there is general agreement.

#### **Belonging & Neighbourhood**

What is clear from the responses is that the people of Northumberland have a strong sense of belonging and community spirit. 69% feel strongly about their local town or rural area, 64.6% of respondents feel their neighbourhood is an area they enjoy living in and over half of all people responding to the survey feel that they trust other people living in their neighbourhood.

Below county level it is clear that the rural parts of Northumberland have a stronger sense of belonging to their local area, whether this be neighbourhood, town or Northumberland (the rural districts of Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale, all having more than 68% of respondents feeling strongly or very strongly). This urban and rural split was even more pronounced when respondents were asked to consider their neighbourhood as a place in which to live – only 45.8% of people living in Wansbeck felt that it was a place they enjoyed living in whereas 76.9% of people in Tynedale enjoyed living there. This pattern was replicated throughout the neighbourhood questions with the most distinct difference at a sub-county level being whether the respondent agreed that they lived in a close knit community, a 29 percentage point difference between Tynedale (71.2%) and Blyth Valley (42.2%).

#### **Services**

In terms of services there was varied opinion depending on the service being provided, for example only 44% of respondents were satisfied with levels of street cleaning in their local area whereas 78.5% of people were very or fairly satisfied with

health services. The largest difference in opinion was on the service provided by public transport with 60% of people living in Blyth Valley very or fairly satisfied and only 33% agreeing in Berwick-upon-Tweed, a difference of 27 percentage points. The most agreement between districts was on the service provided by local schools, opinion separated by only eight percentage points. All districts were most dissatisfied with the level of services for young people.

### **Participation & Influencing Decisions**

Within Northumberland participation in local problems and decision making is not particularly high:

- 23.6% had contacted a local councillor, MP, official of the local council or other government representative in the last 12 months.
- 30.7% had participated in public meetings, demonstrations, protests or petitions on issues affecting their local area.
- 31.7% had been involved in trying to solve problems affecting their local area.
- 32.3% felt that they couldn't influence decisions affecting their local area.

People living in rural districts of the county were much more likely to get involved in community problem solving and decision making than their urban counterparts. 30% of people in Tynedale District had contacted an MP, local councillor or other local official compared to 15% in Blyth Valley. People living in Berwick-upon-Tweed were most likely to have attended a meeting, demonstration or signed a petition (37.1%) and people in Castle Morpeth (36.9%) were most likely to have taken part in a group discussing local issues. In terms of influencing local and county decisions all districts were consistent in their views, around half of all respondents feeling that they couldn't influence such decisions.

### **Volunteering & Giving**

The most common forms of unpaid volunteering were helping someone who has difficulty getting out and about (27.9%), giving advice (27.1%) and looking after a property or pet (25.1%). 22.8% had volunteered with a sports or exercise club in the last 12 months and 18.6% had volunteered with a group or club for between 1 and 10 hours. 15.6% of respondents felt that they would like to spend more time helping groups and clubs and 37.9% of people do not volunteer due to work commitments.

At a sub county level in terms of the type of unpaid volunteering there was little deviation within Districts to the general trend, the commonest types of unpaid volunteering helping someone get out and about, looking after pets and giving advice. There was some difference however in the type of club /organisation helped. For example people living in Alnwick District (28%) were more likely to volunteer with a sports exercise club than people living in Wansbeck (15%). Respondents living in rural parts of the county were more likely to have links with religious organisations than their urban counterparts. Work commitments and childcare problems were again barriers to volunteering, particularly in Blyth Valley.

### **Being Active in the Community**

A very small percentage of people (3.6%) have taken an individual role (councillor, magistrate, special constable or school governor) in their community in the last 12 months. Only 10.5% of respondents have sat on a group making decisions about the local area.

This lack of involvement is mirrored at a sub-county level with between 89.5% and 94.2% of district populations not taking on an individual role in the last 12 months. People living in the rural districts of the County were more likely to participate in a group making decisions on the local area (17.1% in Tynedale compared to 8.8% in Blyth Valley).

### **Leisure, Culture & Sport**

Across Northumberland the most popular pastime is reading books, poetry or magazines. 44.7% had visited the cinema in the last 12 months and 42.5% of people had been at least once to a library. 70.6% had visited a city or town with historic character.

At a sub-county level a similar pattern was displayed with reading again the most common leisure pursuit. However there were some differences. Participation in sewing and knitting for example was much higher in Castle Morpeth (27%) than in other parts of the county such as Blyth Valley (18%). There was also some difference in visiting cultural events between districts with visiting the cinema for example higher in Alnwick District (54%) than Berwick-upon-Tweed (39%). Towns / cities with historic

character were the most visited place across all districts. Visiting archaeological sites showed variation between districts being a much more popular pursuit in Tynedale (48%) than Wansbeck (21%).

In terms of sport and exercise 69.7% had done at least one 30 minute walk in the previous four weeks. Keep Fit, Dance Exercise and Aerobics were the most popular sporting activities with 15.7% of respondents taking part at least once in the four weeks leading up to the survey. 38% had done some form of physical activity in the last four weeks which had raised their breathing rate. Access to sporting facilities was good with 75.7% of respondents having access within 20 minutes travelling distance of their home.

People living in the urban districts of the county were around 10% less likely to have done a continuous 30 minute walk in the four weeks previous to the survey than their rural neighbours. There was no marked difference between districts in the type of sport participated in with aerobics again the most popular sporting activity. There were some access differences to sporting facilities, Blyth Valley having the most people with access (86%) and Berwick-upon-Tweed the least access (69%).



## **4.0 RESULTS: 50+ SURVEY**

In total there were 2,394 responses to the Older People's (50+) Citizenship Survey, which accounts for a response rate of 20%. The lowest number of responses came from Blyth Valley District (258) and the highest from Tynedale (551). There were enough responses from each of the 26 Belonging Communities to allow data to be analysed at this level. The lowest response was from East Ashington (63) and the highest from Ponteland (131). The following analysis picks out the key trends for each theme. Full results tables for each of the following categories can be viewed in the technical appendix supplementary to this report (Technical Appendix: Older Peoples Survey).

### **4.1 Age and Gender**

More women than men completed the older people's survey – 53% female and 46% men (1% unknown) at a Northumberland level. Seven Belonging Communities did not match the overall trend (Berwick & Islandshire, Choppington, Stakeford & Guide Post, East Bedlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham & Hexhamshire, Ponteland & West Bedlington). The largest variation was in Choppington, Stakeford & Guide Post where 57.5% of respondents were male and 41.3% female (1% was unknown).

In general there was a higher response rate from people aged between 55 and 64. At a Northumberland level 36% of respondents were in the 55-64 age band. This rose to 46% in Prudhoe & East Tynedale. The lowest response rate was from the 50-54's with 15%.

### **4.2 Ethnicity**

For Northumberland as a whole 98% of responders were White British which corresponds with the Ethnic profile from the 2001 Census.

The survey asked respondents the proportion of the people in their local area they felt was of the same ethnic group as themselves. Across Northumberland as a whole 61% of people felt that the people in their local area were all the same as themselves. People living in the deep rural areas of the County were most likely to

feel that there was no ethnic mix and everyone was the same – 82% in Coquetdale, 78% in Mid Tyne and 76% in Allendale. In Blyth Valley, Wansbeck and parts of Castle Morpeth they were less likely to feel that people were of the same ethnic group. In Ponteland for example only 22% felt people were the same as each other and 9.2% feeling that less than half were of the same ethnic group.

Respondents were also asked whether they felt that their local area was a place where people respected ethnic differences. 41.8% tended to agree with the statement but there was wide variation across areas. In Blyth Valley District for example only 36.4% tended to agree with this statement whereas in Castle Morpeth the percentage rose to 48.2%. Ponteland belonging community had the largest percentage of people tending to agree with 59.5% and Seahouses & Belford the lowest with 27.4%. 21.3% of people in Newbiggin felt that they tended to disagree with this statement. People however were unsure of how to answer the question with 37% not knowing whether they agreed or disagreed or not answering.

### **4.3 Marital Status**

Just over half of all respondents were in their first marriage, the highest proportion in Ponteland (71.8%). The largest proportion of single people was in East Bedlington (11.8%) and widowers in Blyth (29.7%).

### **4.4 Belonging to your Area**

*How strongly do you feel you belong to your neighbourhood?*

The majority of people (79.5%) who answered the survey felt very strongly / strongly about the area in which they live. People living in rural areas appeared to have more affiliation with their local neighbourhood than the urban parts of the county (83.5% felt very strongly / strongly in Alwick District whereas 71.3% felt the same in Blyth Valley). Mid Tyne showed the strongest feelings, 90.5% feeling very strongly / strongly. East Ashington had the lowest proportion with 55.6%.

*How strongly do you feel you belong to your town or rural area?*

73.8% of older respondents in Northumberland felt strongly / very strongly about their local town or rural area. As shown in the previous question residents in the rural parts of the county showed a greater connection with their locality, Alnwick and Haltwhistle with the highest proportion at 85.5%.

*How strongly do you feel you belong to Northumberland?*

The majority of Northumberland residents feel very strongly / strongly towards the county (82.7%). Again the rural areas had a greater connection, Mid Tyne coming out on top with 91.7%. This question, like the general survey, raised some interesting views, the areas feeling the least affiliation with the county again those places linked to the Scottish Borders or Tyneside (Seaton Valley 11% and Berwick & Islandshire 17.8% feeling not very strongly / not very strongly at all).

## **4.5 Neighbourhood**

*Would you say this is a neighbourhood you enjoy living in?*

Across the county 69.4% of older respondents felt their neighbourhood was an area they enjoyed living in. Again there were marked differences between the urban and rural parts of Northumberland, ranging from 80.4% in Tynedale to 49.9% in Wansbeck. Within Northumberland older people from Hartburn and Rural West were the most content with their neighbourhood with 90.6% definitely agreeing along with 89.9% in Allendale and 88% in Coquetdale. Those least in agreement live in East Ashington (30.2%) and East Bedlington (39.7%).

*To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood?*

The largest number of respondents tended to agree with this statement, with 50.4% across the whole of Northumberland, ranging from 54.5% in Berwick-upon-Tweed to 43.1% in Wansbeck. Again there was a variety of views exhibited within the county ranging from 68.3% in North Tyne & Redesdale to 30.2% in East Ashington. There was also a clear split between the urban and rural areas of the County with the more rural areas tending to agree more strongly with the statement.

*Would you say that this is a neighbourhood where you can trust people?*

Over half of all people responding to the survey felt that in their neighbourhood many people could be trusted (56.6%). In Tynedale District this increased to 64.6% but fell to 42.2% in Wansbeck. Trust was highest in Hartburn & Rural West (76.4%) and lowest in East Bedlington (29.4%). A very small percentage of people felt that no one could be trusted in their neighbourhood, 0.5% across the whole county.

*How likely is it that people in your neighbourhood would participate if they were asked by a local organisation to help solve a community problem?*

The majority of respondents felt that people were very likely or likely to participate (69.6%). Again there appears to be an urban/rural split with people living in Tynedale District (77.3%) perceived to be more likely to participate than people living in Wansbeck District (58.4%). At belonging community level people in Hartburn & Rural West (89.6%) were felt to be the most likely to take part whereas people perceived to be the least willing were in Blyth (40.5%).

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood are willing to help their neighbours?*

The majority of respondents to this question agreed (57.2%), rising to 63.6% in Blyth Valley and falling to 54% in Wansbeck. Within the county there was quite a wide difference in opinion – ranging from 94.4% strongly agreeing / agreeing in Coquetdale to 57.1% in East Ashington.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is a close-knit community?*

Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this opinion totalling 60.3% for Northumberland as a whole with quite a lot of variation within the county (ranging from 69.9% within Tynedale to 47.7% in Wansbeck). The rural parts of the county displayed most affinity with this statement – North Tyne and Redesdale 77.9%, Allendale 78.8% and Coquetdale 82.4%. East Bedlington had the largest percentage of people strongly disagreeing / disagreeing with the statement with 51.5%.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood do not share the same values?*

This question divided the county evenly with 38.8% agreeing / strongly agreeing and 43% disagreeing / strongly disagreeing. Some of the more urban parts of the county

appeared to feel that people in their neighbourhood were less likely to share the same values, 61.8% agreeing in East Bedlington and 55% in Newbiggin. West Bedlington had the highest percentage disagreeing / strongly disagreeing with 57%.

## **4.6 Local Services**

The question on local services attempted to determine how satisfied people were with the following services in their area:

- local schools
- local council housing
- housing association housing
- local street cleaning
- local policing
- local health services
- local services for young people
- local public transport

Answers ranged from very satisfied to very dissatisfied.

In terms of schools 54.1% of older respondents were very or fairly satisfied. The most satisfied were people living in the Glendale area (64.4%). People living in Newbiggin and East Bedlington had the largest percentage of people very dissatisfied / dissatisfied with 8.8%. 28.7% of older people across Northumberland didn't know how satisfied they were with local schools.

For local council housing and housing association housing a large percentage (38.8% and 47.1% respectively) didn't know. Of those who did answer the majority were fairly satisfied with council housing (24.1%). Those most dissatisfied live in Newbiggin where 27.5% were fairly or very dissatisfied with council housing. In terms of housing association the largest percentage of people dissatisfied live in Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton (11.3%).

42.9% of older respondent were fairly satisfied with levels of street cleaning in their local area, the most satisfied in Seahouses & Belford (54.7%) and the least satisfied in Hartburn & Rural West (30.2%).

In terms of local policing the majority of people (51.5%) were very or fairly satisfied. In Hexham & Hexhamshire 68.7% were very / fairly satisfied with Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton having the largest percentage of people either very or fairly dissatisfied with 51.5%.

78.9% of older people across Northumberland were very or fairly satisfied with their local health services. This increased to 86% in West Bedlington. Berwick & Islandshire had the largest percentage of people very or fairly dissatisfied at 27.8%.

33.4% felt that they didn't know how satisfied they were with local services for young people. In Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton 45.4% were very dissatisfied. Cramlington had the largest percentage of people very/fairly satisfied with 27.8%.

The majority of respondent were fairly satisfied with local public transport (35.1%), ranging from 47.5% in Wansbeck District to 23.1% in Berwick-upon-Tweed. East Ashington had the largest percentage of people fairly satisfied (55.6%). The most dissatisfied people live in East Ashington (64.9%).

#### **4.7 Participation in local politics / decisions**

The following questions attempted to assess local people's involvement with local democracy.

The first question asked whether the respondent had contacted a local councillor, MP, official of the local council or other government official at any point over the last 12 months. Across Northumberland as a whole 32.5% of older people had contacted at least one of these in the last 12 months, the highest percentage in Berwick-upon-Tweed (39.2%). 65.1% of people responding had not contacted any of these people in the last 12 months, rising to 77.4% in Cramlington. People from Hartburn & Rural West were most likely to have contacted their local councillor (20.8%) with people from Berwick & Islandshire most likely to contact their MP (15.6%).

The second question attempted to assess people's participation in public meetings, demonstrations, protests or petitions on issues affecting their local area. 37.3% of respondents had attended or taken part in at least one of these. People in Newbiggin were most likely to have participated (55%) with people from East Ashington least likely to take part (20.6%). Signing a petition was the most participated in with 29% of people saying they had signed a petition.

The third question focusing on participation looked at people's involvement in problems effecting their local area whether this is answering a questionnaire, attending a public meeting or taking part in a group discussion. 54.9% hadn't done any of these things in the last 12 months with 42.9% of respondents taking part in at least one. The majority of people (31.5%) had filled in a questionnaire.

The fourth question on participation asked whether local people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area and affecting Northumberland. 30.2% tended to disagree and 27.3% tended to agree that they could influence decision on their local area. Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton had the largest percentage of people tending/definitely disagreeing (62.9%). Alnwick had the largest percentage definitely / tending to agree with 44.4%.

In terms of influencing decisions affecting Northumberland 31.7% of respondents tended to disagree. Cramlington had the largest percentage of people definitely / tending to agree with 31.2%. Only 13.5% of people in Blyth agreed with the statement.

#### **4.8 Unpaid volunteering**

The survey attempted to understand the types of unpaid volunteering older people in Northumberland carry out on a regular basis. The most common forms of unpaid volunteering for older people were helping someone who has difficulty getting out and about (36.8%), giving advice (34.1%) and looking after a property or pet (31.1%). The least common forms of unpaid help were providing personal care for someone

who is sick or frail (5.8%), representing someone (11.4%) and decorating / home repairs (9.1%).

People living in North Tyne & Redesdale were most likely to help someone who had difficulty getting out and about (49%) and giving advice (45.2%). Ponteland had the highest percentage of older people looking after a property or pet (45.8%). Those living in Newbiggin were most likely to help people with their shopping or paying bills (31.3%) and help by looking after a baby or children (26.3%), whereas people in West Bedlington had the highest percentage of people (30.2%) helping with household jobs such as cooking and cleaning.

#### **4.9 Volunteering in a group/club/organisation**

The second section of the survey looking at volunteering within the County focused on volunteering for a group or club. The largest percentage of older people in Northumberland (24.9%) has been involved with a hobby / recreation type club followed by a religious group (19.3%) in the last 12 months. Seahouses & Belford and Hexham & Hexhamshire had the largest percentage of people volunteering with a hobby/recreation group. Alnwick had the largest percentage of people volunteering with religious groups with 29.9%. 37.6% of all respondents do not volunteer at all with a group or club.

The most popular way to help a group or club was to help run and organise events (19.3%) and raising money / taking part in sponsored events (17.9%). 13.7% of respondents help a group or club at least once a week. 17% of respondents have spent on average at least two hours per week helping their group/club. This rises to 25% in Mid Tyne and falls to 7.9% in East Ashington.

In the four weeks previous to the survey 11.5% had on average volunteered with the group or club for between 1 and 10 hours. Seahouses & Belford had by far the highest percentage, 23.2% giving unpaid help to a group or club for this length of time. 5.4% of respondents had not done anything in the four weeks previous to the survey.

16.8% of respondents help a group or organisation based in the voluntary / community sector, 3.9% in the public sector and 3.8% in the private sector. 27.3% of all clubs helped in Allendale were based in the voluntary/community sector.

The majority of people who responded to the survey (11.4%) found out about opportunities to help their group or organisation through local events. 6.9% had found out about chances to help via places of worship. The least likely ways to find out about volunteering opportunities was through the employers volunteering scheme (0.1%), millennium volunteers (0.1%) and the careers centre (0.1%).

#### **4.10 Why people don't volunteer**

12.8% of respondents felt that they would like to spend more time helping groups and clubs. East Bedlington had the largest percentage of people wanting to help more with 22.1%. 58% would not like to do any more than they already contribute. Across Northumberland 34.2% of older people responding to the survey do not volunteer due to feeling they are too old. 25.6% haven't heard of any opportunities to give help whilst a further 25.6% have to look after someone who is elderly or ill. Reasons which were less of a barrier to older people volunteering were studying (1.9%), doing other things with their spare time (4.3%) and not knowing which groups need help (6.3%).

Across Northumberland as a whole 33.2% said there was nothing that would make them more likely to get involved. This was highest in Cresswell, Ellington, Lynemouth and Linton (43.3%). 28.7% said they might be persuaded to help if someone asked them directly. This was important in North Tyne & Redesdale (39.4%), Coquetdale (38.9%) and Seahouses & Belford (36.8%). Others felt that more information would help (15.1%). Reasons that would be least likely to persuade older people to get involved were qualifications (3.3%) and helping with career (1.8%).

#### **4.11 Giving**

In the four weeks previous to the survey 40.9% of older people in Northumberland had given to charity via a raffle. 34.6% bought goods in a charity shop with 31.2% of people giving money to charity via a direct debit or standing order. The people

responding to the survey were least likely to give to charity by buying giving to beggars (4.4%) or via a pub collection (5.5%).

Across Northumberland 30.9% of respondents gave £10.00 or more to charity in the four weeks before the survey was carried out. 48.1% of people in Hartburn & Rural West gave £10.00 or more over the same time period.

#### **4.12 Being Actively Involved**

The questions under this section of the survey attempted to assess how active a role residents take in their community whether this be in an individual role (local councillor, school governor, special constable or magistrate) or as part of a group (making decisions on for example local health services, regeneration, local crime, education etc.).

Only 4.9% of older people across Northumberland have taken an individual role in their community by becoming a councillor, magistrate, special constable or school governor in the last 12 months. 15.7% of respondents have sat on a group making decisions about the local area. This increased to 31.3% in Newbiggin and 25.3% in Seahouses & Belford. The most common type of group was ones discussing the local community (8%). The least likely groups for residents to be involved in are groups looking at local education issues (0.7%) or groups looking at local crime issues (0.9%). 70.3% of those responding had not done any of these things.

#### **4.13 Arts, Craft and Culture**

The questions on Arts, Crafts and Culture aimed to show older peoples participation in these activities.

In terms of arts and crafts by far the most popular pastime is reading books, poetry or magazines with 36% of older people participating in this activity within the last 12 months. This was highest in Glendale (51.5%) and Coquetdale (49.1%) and lowest in East Ashington (14.3%). Photography was also a popular activity with 17.8% of respondents taking part in this activity. Participation was highest in Coquetdale with

28.7% doing some form of photography in the last 12 months. The lowest percentage of people participated in writing music in the last 12 months with only 0.8% of people responding that they had taken part in this activity.

The survey also looked at people's attendance at arts and cultural events over the previous 12 months. The majority of people (40.9%) had visited the theatre over the last 12 months. Attendance at this type of event was highest in Hexham & Hexhamshire (54.5%) and lowest in East Bedlington (25%). Cinema was another well attended event with 40.1% of respondents saying that they had done this in the last 12 months. This was again highest in Hexham & Hexhamshire (55.6%) and lowest again in East Bedlington (23.5%). The least attended event was Circus (2.7%) possibly due to the fact it was one of the least accessible type of event. This was followed by Jazz performance (6.9%).

The survey asked people how often they had visited a library, archive or museum / gallery in the last 12 months. 45.8% of older people had been at least once to a library in the last 12 months. This ranged from 60.2% in Cramlington to 31.3% in Choppington, Stakeford & Guide Post. The majority of people (18.8%) had been to a library between 1 and 5 times in the last 12 months. A much smaller percentage (10.6%) had attended an archives or records office at least once in the last 12 months. The highest percentage was in Newbiggin (18.8%) and the lowest percentage in East Ashington (1.6%). 43.8% of respondents had been to a museum or gallery at least once in the previous 12 months. Attendance ranged from 61.3% in Hartburn & Rural West to 24.3% in Blyth. 35.3% of respondents had been to a museum or gallery between one and five times in the last 12 months.

The survey asked people whether they had visited any heritage sites in the last 12 months. 69.5% had visited a city or town with historic character. This ranged from 82.9% in Prudhoe & East Tynedale to 50.8% in East Ashington. A historic park, garden or landscape open to the public also scored quite highly with 58.8% of respondents visiting this type of heritage site at least once in the previous 12 months. People living in Ponteland were most likely to visit this type of attraction (74%) with older people from East Ashington (34.9%) least likely to visit this type of place.

Sports Heritage sites were the least likely places to visit with only 5.3% visiting in the last 12 months.

#### **4.14 Sports and Physical Activity**

The questions focussing on sport and physical activity attempted to assess respondent's participation in such activities and their use of local sporting facilities and membership of local sporting clubs.

The first two questions looked at whether respondents had done at least one walk or cycle ride lasting at least 30 minutes in the last four weeks. 65.6% had done at least one 30 minute walk in the previous four weeks. Participation ranged from 78.8% in Allendale to 44.6% in Blyth. In terms of cycling only 7.7% of respondents had done one 30 minute cycle ride in the last four weeks. The older people most likely to do a continuous 30 minute cycle ride live in Amble (15.6%) with the least likely to participate from Berwick & Islandshire (3.3%).

The survey then looked at the type of sport and recreation activities people had been involved in during the previous four weeks. Keep Fit, Dance Exercise and Aerobics was the most popular sporting activity with 11.7% of respondents taking part in this sport at least once in the four weeks leading up to the survey. People living in Alnwick (18.8%) and Newbiggin (17.5%) were the most likely to do this activity with those from Berwick & Islandshire (5.6%) & East Bedlington (5.9%) least likely to do this type of sport. Swimming or Diving was the second most popular sporting / recreation activity with 10.1% doing this at least once in the previous 4 weeks. This sport was most popular in Seahouses & Belford where 17.9% of people had participated. People least likely to swim were from East Ashington (3.2%). Those sports with the least numbers participating included Skating & Rollerblading (0.1%), Basketball (0.1%), Volleyball (0%), Waterskiing (0%) and Skateboarding (0.1%).

In line with national government targets the survey then looked at whether respondents had done any physical activity which had either raised their breathing rate or made them out of breath / sweaty. 34.2% had done some form of physical activity in the last four weeks which had raised their breathing rate. This was highest

in Morpeth (47.7%) and lowest in Blyth (18.9%). 25.4% had done something which had made them out of breath or sweaty. This was again highest in Morpeth (39.6%) and lowest in Amble (12.2%).

The survey then looked at sporting facilities and asked whether people could get to a facility within 20 minutes of their house either by walking or some other form of transport. A sport facility was defined as an indoor or outdoor facility such as a sports club, sport or leisure centre, health and fitness facility or school open to community use. 45.7% responded that they had a facility within 20 minutes travelling distance of their home. Those with the most access were areas such as Newbiggin (65%), Alnwick (60.7%) and Morpeth (58.6%). Those areas where access was perceived as more of a problem were East Bedlington (29.4%) and Glendale (27.7%).

17.5% of respondents are a member of a sports club. Participation ranges from 28.8% in Morpeth to 6.3% in East Ashington. Across the whole of Northumberland 13.8% of respondents had attended a live sporting event in the last four weeks. Attendance at such events was highest in Ponteland (23.7%) and lowest in Allendale (6.1%).

#### **4.15 Fear of Crime**

In the older peoples survey an additional two questions were included to try and gauge fear of crime amongst the older population in Northumberland. This question did not get a response rate large enough to be able to present information at a belonging community level with any significance so a comparison at district level only is included in the technical appendix.

The first question attempted to assess how worried older people were about:

- Having their home broken into.
- Being mugged or robbed.
- Being physically attacked by strangers.
- Being insulted or pestered by someone while in the street / public place.

- Being subject to a physical attack because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion.

Overall across the whole of the County older people were most worried about having their home broken into, 53.7% of respondents answering that they were very worried / worried about becoming a victim of this type of crime. This increased to 84.8% in Blyth Valley, who also had the largest percentage of older people worried or very worried about all five types of offence listed above. Respondents were least concerned about becoming a victim of a racial, ethnic or religious crime with only 10% of respondents saying they were worried / very worried about this.

The second question attempted to assess in general how worried older people are about becoming a victim of any type of crime. 41.9% responded that they were very worried / worried about becoming a victim of any type of crime. Fear again was greatest in Blyth Valley (63.6%) and lowest in Tynedale (19.4%).

#### **4.16 Key Findings from the Older People's (50+) Survey**

The 50+ Citizenship Survey highlighted some important differences in opinion within Northumberland and revealed issues where there is general agreement between older people in different parts of the county.

##### **Belonging & Neighbourhood**

The older people of Northumberland have a strong sense of belonging and community spirit with 69% feeling their neighbourhood is an area they enjoy living in.

Looking below a county level, similar to the general survey, the rural parts of Northumberland have a stronger sense of belonging to their local neighbourhood and town. All six districts however displayed strong affinity with Northumberland. The older people surveyed also showed greater affinity with the county than those people who answered the general survey

Like the general survey this urban and rural split was even more pronounced when respondents were asked to consider their neighbourhood as a place in which to live – only 50% of people living in Wansbeck felt that it was a place they enjoyed living in

compared to 80% in Tynedale, a difference of 30 percentage points. Like the general survey this pattern was replicated throughout the neighbourhood questions.

### **Services**

In terms of services there was varied opinion depending on the service being provided, for example only 43% of respondents were satisfied with levels of street cleaning in their local area whereas 79% of people were very or fairly satisfied with health services. The largest difference in opinion at a district level was on the service provided by public transport with 62% of people living in Blyth Valley very or fairly satisfied and only 29% agreeing in Berwick-upon-Tweed, a difference of 33 percentage points. Older people were most happy about the level of health services, satisfaction above 75% in all districts. The most agreement between districts was on the service provided by local schools, opinion separated by only 8 percentage points. Like the general survey all districts were most dissatisfied with the level of services for young people.

### **Participation & Influencing Decisions**

Within Northumberland participation by older people in local problems and decision making is not particularly high, but on the whole higher than the results for the general survey:

- 32.5% of older people had contacted a local councillor, MP, official of the local council or other government official over the last 12 months.
- 37.3% of respondents had attended or taken part in public meetings, demonstrations, protests or petitions on issues affecting their local area.
- 30.2% felt that they couldn't influence decisions affecting their local area.

Like the general survey, older people living in rural districts of the county were much more likely to get involved in community problem solving and decision making than their urban counterparts. 39% of people in Berwick-upon-Tweed district had contacted an MP, local councillor or other local official compared to 26% in Blyth Valley. People living in Tynedale were most likely to have attended a meeting, demonstration or signed a petition (43%) and people in Castle Morpeth (51%) were most likely to have taken part in a group discussing local issues / completing a

questionnaire. In terms of influencing local and county decisions all districts were fairly consistent in their views, between 42% and 55% disagreeing that they could influence decisions about their local area and between 45% and 57% disagreeing they could influence decisions effecting Northumberland.

### **Volunteering & Giving**

Consistent with the results of the general survey the most common forms of unpaid volunteering for older people were helping someone who has difficulty getting out and about (37%), giving advice (34%) and looking after a property or pet (31%). Levels of unpaid volunteering by older people in general were higher than the people responding to the general survey. 25% had volunteered with a hobby / recreation type club in the last 12 months followed by religious groups (19%). 13% of respondents felt that they would like to spend more time helping groups and clubs and 34% of older people do not volunteer due to feeling too old. 33.2% said there was nothing that would make them more likely to get involved.

At a sub county level there was little deviation between districts in the type of unpaid volunteering, the commonest types helping someone get out and about, looking after pets and giving advice. There was some difference however in the type of club /organisation helped. For example people living in Berwick-upon-Tweed district (31%) were more likely to volunteer with a hobby / recreation club than people living in Blyth Valley (17%). Respondents living in rural parts of the county were again more likely to have links with religious organisations than their urban counterparts. Being too old, having to look after someone who is sick or elderly and not knowing about volunteering opportunities were perceived to be the largest barriers to older people volunteering.

### **Being Active in the Community**

A small percentage of older people (5%) have taken an individual role (councillor, magistrate, special constable or school governor) in their community in the last 12 months. Only 16% of respondents have sat on a group making decisions about the local area.

This lack of involvement is mirrored at a sub-county level with between 79% and 90% of district older people not taking on an individual community role in the last 12 months.

### **Leisure, Culture & Sport**

Across Northumberland the most popular pastime for older people are reading books, poetry or magazines. 41% had visited the theatre in the last 12 months and 46% of older people had been at least once to a library. 70% had visited a city or town with historic character.

At a sub-county level a similar pattern was displayed with reading again the most common leisure pursuit. However there were some differences. Participation in photography for example was much higher in Castle Morpeth (22%) than in other parts of the county such as Blyth Valley (13%). There was some difference between districts in the type of cultural events participated in, for example the percentage of people attending classical music events was much higher in Castle Morpeth district (22%) than Wansbeck district (8%). Towns / cities with historic character were the most visited type of place across all districts.

In terms of sport and exercise 66% had done at least one 30 minute walk in the previous four weeks. Keep Fit, Dance Exercise and Aerobics were the most popular sporting activities with 12% of respondents taking part at least once in the four weeks leading up to the survey. 34% had done some form of physical activity in the last four weeks which had raised their breathing rate. Access to sporting facilities was perceived to be a lot less than respondents in the general survey with only 46% feeling they have access to a facility within 20 minutes travelling distance of their home.

People living in the urban districts of the county were less likely to have done a continuous 30 minute walk in the four weeks previous to the survey than their rural neighbours. Only 56.2% of older people in Blyth Valley had been on a 30 minute walk compared to 72.3% in Castle Morpeth. There was no marked difference between districts in the type of sport participated in with keep fit /aerobics again the most popular sporting activity.

## **Fear of Crime**

The questions on fear of crime found that older people were most worried about having their home broken into, 53.7% of respondents answering that they were very worried / worried about becoming a victim of this type of crime. This increased to 84.8% in Blyth Valley, who also had the largest percentage of older people worried or very worried about all five types of offence (being mugged/robbed, physically attacked, insulted in the street and subject to a racial attack). Older people were least concerned about becoming a victim of a racial, ethnic or religious crime with only 10% of respondents saying they were worried / very worried about this. 41.9% of older people were very worried / worried about becoming a victim of any type of crime. Fear again was highest in Blyth Valley (63.6%) and lowest in Tynedale (19.4%).

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