

Living in Blaenau Gwent

2009

Summary

Summer
2009



What is this leaflet?

This is a summary of the results collected from the Living in Blaenau Gwent Survey 2009, which was undertaken for local public service providers by CELLO **mruk** research limited between March and June 2009.

Why was the survey done?

In order for public services providers to offer you the high level of services that you expect, they need to understand how you feel about your area and the services that you use, why you feel this way, and how you think the area and the services available can be improved.

That way, service providers are able to put your experiences and suggestions at the centre of their decision-making, and improve the delivery and quality of the services that you use, which helps to make Blaenau Gwent a better place to live and work.

Who was asked, and how?

Trained CELLO **mruk** research representatives travelled all over Blaenau Gwent interviewing approximately 1,000 randomly selected residents. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each, and were undertaken within resident's homes.

Further information

If you would like more information on the survey, please contact the Policy & Research Team at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council who can arrange to send you the full report.

Telephone: 01495 355786

Email: pps@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Blaenau Gwent as a place to live

- More than half of you (53%) told us that you thought Blaenau Gwent was a 'very good' or 'good' place to live.

How would you rate Blaenau Gwent as a place to live?

Poor 8%	Average 40%	Good 44%	V.good 9%
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- Over the previous 5 years, 11% of you thought the area had improved, 45% of you thought it had stayed the same and 42% of you thought the area had got worse.

You and your community

- Just under two-thirds of you (61%) said that you knew many of the people in your local area.
- Nearly a third of you (30%) said you were 'optimistic' about the future of Blaenau Gwent,
- Over two-thirds of you (71%) believed you had at least some control over your future.
- Two thirds of you (67%) like to know what is happening in your community but are happy to let public service providers get on with it.
- 7% of you said that you had participated in voluntary activities, with 5% of you helping to run group activities.



Health, care and well-being

- Over two-thirds of you (70%) described your health as 'good' or 'very good'.

How would you rate your health?

Bad 9%	Fair 21%	Good 43%	Very Good 27%
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- Three out of every five of you (59%) had done something within the previous 12 months to try to improve your health, such as eating more fruit and vegetables or taking more exercise.
- 9% of you said that you were looking after family or friends who are suffering with a long-term illness.
- Those of you that had used health services offered in Blaenau Gwent, such as GP surgeries, pharmacies, dentists and opticians were satisfied with each service receiving at least a 94% satisfaction rate.
- Those of you that had used services and facilities that help promote well-being such sports centres and libraries were mostly satisfied with all of them; each service and facility had at least an 84% satisfaction rate.
- Satisfaction rates with social care services were also high with at least two-thirds of those that had benefited from services being satisfied.

Lifelong Learning

- Seven in 10 (71%) respondents had not benefited from or used any educational services in the last 12 months. Perhaps as expected, the most popular services used were primary school (16%) and secondary schools (13%).
- Satisfaction rates from those that used education services such as pre-school, primary schools, secondary schools and adult education were all in excess 90%.
- One in ten of you (11%) had taken part in some form of adult learning.



Jobs

- Almost half of you (47%) said that job prospects needed improving in Blaenau Gwent.
- Only 3% of you agreed that there are plenty of job opportunities in the area and over a third of you (37%) said that you are worried about losing your job or not being able to get a job.
- Most of you were aware of organisations such as the Job Centre that could help you to find a job.

Housing

- Over half of you (53%) thought there was a lack of high quality, modern housing in Blaenau Gwent, and two thirds of you (64%) agreed that more affordable housing should be built in the area.

Policing and Community Safety

- 16% of you said that you had contacted Gwent Police during the previous 6 months and 5% of you had contacted another public service regarding anti-social behaviour.

Are you satisfied that Gwent Police are dealing with anti social behaviour and crime issues in the area?

<p>Dissatisfied 23%</p>	<p>Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied 34%</p>	<p>Satisfied 30%</p>
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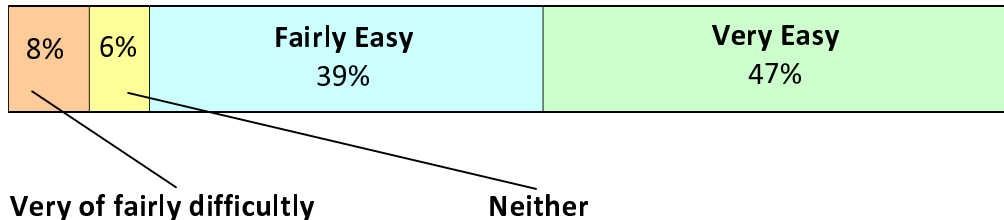
- You felt that litter and anti-social use of vehicles were the biggest problems in your areas. However, straying animals and noisy neighbours/load parties were rarely mentioned as problems.
- Nearly all of you said that you felt safe walking alone during the day, and just under two thirds of you (61%) at night.



Local transport and road facilities

- The vast majority of you (86%) thought it was easy to get around in the local area.

Overall, how easy or difficult do you find it getting about the local area?



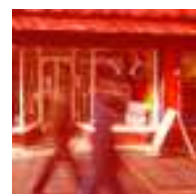
- 82% of you agreed that Ebbw Valley Railway had made Blaenau Gwent a better place to live and work.
- From a list of road and transport related facilities 82% of you were satisfied with the street lighting in your area, 60% of you were satisfied with traffic management, 59% with road safety and 51% with the traffic calming measures that were in place.

Shopping in the area

- Three quarters of you (75%) said that you visited your main town centre at least once a week, and just under two thirds of you (60%) visited out-of-town retail opportunities at least once a week.
- 28% of you rated your town centre as a 'good' or 'very good' place to shop. Although most of you preferred the shopping experience at the out-of-town retail opportunities, with four out of five of you (81%) describing them as 'good' or 'very good'.

Natural Environment

- Two thirds of you (67%) described the natural environment in Blaenau Gwent as 'good' or 'very good', and most of you (81%) agreed that it was accessible.



Communication

- Over a third of you (36%) felt that public service providers kept you 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed and more than half (57%) of you said that you didn't need any more information about public services.
- Two thirds of you (67%) said that you like to know what's happening in the area, but you are happy to let the service providers get on with it.
- Most of you (90%) had not been involved in any previous community meetings or consultations with service providers.

Awareness of Regeneration Projects

- Over half of you were aware of the regeneration proposals for the former steelworks site in Ebbw Vale, 'The Works' (56%) and the Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan Hospital (52%). In fact, half of you (50%) could name a specific regeneration project undertaken in the previous 2 years.
- 23% of you were aware of the Welsh Assembly's programme to regenerate the Heads of the Valley area, and again 23% of you were aware of the proposals to develop The Learning Campus at 'The Works' site.
- 20% of you were aware that the 2010 National Eisteddfod was being held at 'The Works' site.



Your suggested improvements for local services

You were asked what could be done to improve things in your local area. The top answers that you provided for each category are given below: -

Housing

- Renovate existing or disused buildings (43%)
- Build more affordable housing (26%)
- Provide more affordable houses to rent (20%)

Transport & Traffic

- Improve road maintenance (40%)
- Improve public transport (21%)
- Improve traffic calming measures (13%)

Policing and Community Safety

- More visible community safety presence (65%)
- More things for young people to do (19%)
- Tackle drugs (10%)

Health, Care & Well Being

- People taking more responsibility for their own health (21%)
- Support for parents (21%)
- Improved access to health services (10%)

Environment

- Cleaner streets (25%)
- Provide more recycling facilities and kerbside recycling (21%)
- Stricter enforcement of penalties for dog fouling (20%)



What was clear from the survey?

On a whole, most of you were reasonably satisfied with the area and the level of public service that you had received.

Even so, it was clear that there were a number of things that needed changing or improving in order to make the area a better place to live, in particular poor job opportunities, low quality housing, road maintenance and community safety issues.

On a positive note, most of you were very satisfied with the level of health, well being and education that you were receiving, and most of you appreciated the natural environment in Blaenau Gwent, which the majority of you described as good or very good as well as easily accessible.

Thank you to all who took part in the survey, your feedback has been very valuable and will help improve the quality of life for all current and future generations of Blaenau Gwent.

