



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

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04 May 2009

Hi

It's been a crazy month and this meeting has 'snuck' up on me pretty fast. Due to people's commitments this month's meeting has been put back to **Tuesday 12th May**, 6pm at Matson Baptist Church.

Sharon has been very poorly this month and so the minutes from the last meeting won't be available until the meeting in June. I hope Sharon is better soon and will be able to join us on the 12th. As we have no minutes I'm making the most of the opportunity to send out some general information.

We didn't receive a response from our letter to the Community Development Team at Gloucester City Council, but following a complaint they have apologised and will be calling us on Wednesday. I'm unable to confirm whether they will be attending this meeting, but I will add them to the agenda if they can.

We have a really busy agenda for the meeting as always. There are a lot of decisions to be made, so I'd appreciate everyone reading the paperwork enclosed with this invite so that we're all prepared.

This month's mention has to go to John. John has been busy with all sorts of things for community benefit and has provided clear direction on what needs to be done to make things better for residents. John has also provided me with a few much-needed (metaphorical) kicks up the backside. Cheers John.

I hope to see you all at the meeting.

With my best wishes

Julian Hiles
Chair



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

AGENDA

**Meeting to be held on Tuesday 12th May 2009
6.00pm at Matson Baptist Church**

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|----|---|------|
| 1. | Apologies | 6.00 |
| 2. | Police
– PCSOs Hamid Charafi and Chris Jenkinson | 6.02 |
| 3. | Action Plan items and Environmental Strategy | 6.12 |
| 4. | Community Partnership and GL Communities | 6.30 |
| 5. | Gloucester City Homes | 6.45 |
| 6. | Community Improvements | 7.00 |
| 7. | Services for Younger Residents | 7.10 |
| 8. | Any Other Business | 7.20 |

The meeting will close at 7.25pm

Next Meeting: Monday 1st June 2009, 6.00pm
Matson Baptist Church



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

MINUTES

**Meeting held on Tuesday 12th May 2009
6.00pm at Matson Baptist Church**

Present: Julian Hiles (in the Chair), PCSO Hamid Charafi, Sharon Clark, Gill Clark, Mark Gayle, PCSO Chris Jenkinson, Anne Lyne and John Todd.

1. Apologies

Andrea Brewster, Terry Elcock, Councillor Kate Haigh, Councillor Jan Lugg, Councillor Steve McHale, Jackie Payne and Councillor Mary Smith.

2. Police

- 2.1** This week Moat School Rugby Team got knocked out of the quarter finals. Police have started to work with Robinswood School to set up a Rugby Team.
- 2.2** The Police are trying to get the ice cream van that parks outside Robinswood School to move to a safer place.
- 2.3** The Police are pleased to announce that funding has been approved for this year's projects i.e cycling safety and the mini copper scheme amongst others.
- 2.4** Police will be looking into various things in and around Matson & Robinswood, like playing golf on fields and mini motorbikes/scooters.
- 2.5** There is no age limit to ride on footpaths (younger children are not allowed).

3. Action Plan items and Environmental Strategy

- 3.1** A meeting has been planned for the beginning of June to talk to local people about the Gateway Trust. Planning will be submitted on 1st December.
- 3.2** Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 22nd June. Nominations need to be in by 12th June and nomination forms will be available from the One Stop Plus and online.
- 3.3** Constitution changes will be on the agenda before the election to allow for the new committee structure to take effect.
- 3.4** All votes will be by show of hands.
- 3.5** We will soon start monitoring the MITE painting contract. We go to monthly meetings to monitor the Decent Homes work. It was suggested that monitoring should be done by other people and groups than Gloucester City Homes (GCH). We have failed in passing on information about contract monitoring and we will look to do this shortly.
- 3.6** Residents will now be looking at a sample of GCH complaints to ensure they are dealt with accordingly and to improve the responses.
- 3.7** We have submitted a preliminary funding application to GCH and need to finalise the budget at the next meeting.
- 3.8** The next Environmental Strategy meeting is on Thursday 14th May at the One Stop Plus, all welcome.
- 3.9** Vision 21 Eco Fun Day 12 – 4pm Saturday 20th June at the Redwell Centre, Redwell Road. There will be a magician, raffle, music, stalls, information points and much, much more! All welcome.

3.10 Publicity is ongoing – 50 posters have gone to GCH, which should be going up on notice boards in the blocks and displayed in and around Matson. As soon as more posters are ready they will be given to Sharon to put up in Robinswood. Mark is going to get a large poster done to publicise the TRA – thanks Mark.

4. Community Partnership and GL Communities

4.1 The Community Partnership will be holding its Annual General Meeting next Tuesday 19th May, 6:30 – 9pm.

4.2 Gill, John, Julian, Sarah and Sharon to join the Coordination Group.

4.3 We will pursue a community newsletter through the Partnership.

4.4 Lisa Ritchie provided the following response about GCH Funding for Partnerships: 'I can confirm that Gloucester City Homes has provided support to Neighbourhood Partnerships to enable them to form and launch which took the form of officer support and funding allocation. As you are aware we continue to support our Partnerships through attendance at the monthly meetings where possible and also through support of their events. Gloucester City Homes has not committed to and do not fund Neighbourhood Partnerships on an ongoing basis.'

4.5 Lisa also provided the following response to TRA needs: 'I will use your feedback to form the basis of reviewing our service standards in future as well as the tenants and residents group agreement and the review of tenants and residents group funding. I have already submitted the reviewed service standards for next week's Customer Forum following focus groups and feedback from groups, however happy to incorporate your changes in future amendments.'

5. Gloucester City Homes

5.1 Lisa Ritchie has asked for our training needs to be submitted by 29th May. A list is at the end of these minutes.

5.2 Community Pride Day – Planning meetings at GCH offices on 21st May at 3:30pm, 29th May at 3:30pm and 3rd June at 11:30am.

5.3 A draft of the Residents Group Agreement was discussed and delegated to the working group to finish before the Annual General Meeting.

5.4 The GCH Customer Forum Annual General Meeting will be held on 18th May.

5.5 Adult literacy etc is being looked into for the area. Groups i.e mums are doing short courses in schools.

6. Community Improvements

6.1 Fencing has been held up in Prinknash Road, will be done asap.

6.2 We believe the Partnership has the power to influence change to local by-laws. An example has been Barnwood changing street drinking.

6.3 There will be a Community Pride Day in Winnycroft Lane on 5th June. We need to have a good attendance and Mark will also attend.

6.4 We agreed to use £400 of the Community Improvement Budget to carry out this year's In Bloom. We will also refurbish the hanging baskets in Bazeley Road, which have been neglected and look terrible, with plastic flowers – the baskets are £29.99 each plus VAT each.

7. Services for young people

7.1 A separate meeting needs to be held to discuss this, Sarah Williams to attend. It was suggested we involve Play Gloucester and then talk to our younger residents.

7.2 We need to form a consistent policy on 'no ball games' signs and review signs at existing sites.

7.3 We will ask GCH to provide a copy of the young persons' action plan and work with them on this.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 We have requested copies of the various grounds maintenance contracts and John will be looking at these.

8.2 We were asked if there is a register of landlords. We will look at how you find out who a landlord is.

8.3 If you need to report fly tipping you can ring 01452 396396.

9. Date of next meeting

9.1 Monday 1st June, 6pm at Matson Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Training needs

Meetings and Management

- Committee member roles and responsibilities.
- Secretary role and minute taking.
- Effective participation in meetings.
- Performance monitoring.
- Time management/organisational skills.
- Mind Mapping (a brainstorming technique).
- The Right to Manage.
- Effective use of open spaces / redevelopment.
- Contract monitoring and management.
- Sustainable Communities Act.
- The rights of younger residents.
- Getting the most out of your housing provider.
- Development of residents groups.
- Local compacts.
- Criminal records bureau checks.

Computing

- Computer skills e.g. European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).
- Computer Literacy and Information technology.
- Website creation and design.

Publicity

- Producing effective publicity and newsletters.
- Getting residents involved.



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

MAY 2009 UPDATE

1. A reminder that our meeting is taking place on Tuesday 12th May, 6pm at Matson Baptist Church.
2. Included with this mailing is a condensed version of the replies from Gloucester City Council (GCC) and Gloucester City Homes (GCH) about services and consultation for our younger residents. It has so far proved too difficult to fit in an additional meeting, so it's an agenda item this time for decision on how to progress this.
3. There have now been two meetings to discuss funding from GCH. I'm happy to report that the strong commitment to meet our growing needs is still there, and what was for us a hindrance is now turning into something positive. Thanks to GCH for this.
4. We have continued to work on the Residents Group Agreement and I will be bringing a draft for discussion at this meeting. I would like a firm decision on this and delegation to finish this project before the Annual General Meeting.
5. There wasn't enough time to discuss block and street reps at the last meeting. I've asked Terry to provide an up to date list of Matson & Robinswood Reps for the meeting. Here is a reminder of the text from the GCH website and we'll try to fit this in:

If you don't have a resident or tenant association covering your area or if you want to just represent your block or street then why not become one of our Block / Street Representatives. As a Block / Street Rep you will be able to represent the views of the residents in your immediate neighbourhood and act as our eyes and ears - telling us if our services are to be commended or criticised and doing the same for the City Council provided services such as cutting the grass, cleaning the streets or collecting the rubbish.

We will:

Provide you with information on service standards and who to contact
Training to enable you to your representation as effectively as possible; and
Help with the cost of childcare and / or travelling costs if you need to attend any meetings with us.

6. Matson & Robinswood is now getting a regular profile in The Citizen. I'd appreciate everyone's help in gathering and sending me regular news to keep this going.
7. Work has started to improve the grounds in Winnycroft Lane. Work on Quenneys Close will follow this and the contract will run for 8 weeks. We'll be monitoring this work and following it up with our Community Pride Day on Friday 5th June.

We need to have a couple of planning meetings with Terry and as many volunteers on the day as possible please. This is a great chance to meet with residents and good publicity for the group. Let's make the most of it.

8. GCH Customer Forum will be holding its Annual General Meeting on 18th May. I would appreciate a couple of extra members attending with me to demonstrate our commitment. Here's a quick summary of the last meeting:
 - The rent of garage sites and whether these sites can be sustained will be reviewed this year, with redevelopment being considered as an option.
 - A value for money review of communal services charges (such as cleaning) will be held in the next 8 months.
 - It is believed that GCH tenants may be paying twice for street lighting and rubbish collections. A review is being undertaken.
 - We are currently working on the Tenants Charter.
 - GCH will soon be opening from 8.30am to 5.30pm on weekdays.
 - The 2009 / 2010 Delivery Plan was approved – This is the year's action plan and priorities. We had made several targets for this plan including work with young people, training and resident group development and funding.
 - We pointed out that Plain English was still not being achieved and documents need to be clearly understandable.
 - We recommended that there should be an annual timetable of opportunities of when focus groups and policy reviews take place.
 - We recently helped review the Asbestos Management, Gas Servicing and Mobility Scooters in Sheltered Schemes policies.
 - There has been a paid garden service pilot, but there was little interest. Other providers such as Community Payback could not promise a consistent service. GCH will keep looking at other ways of providing gardening services.
 - John Mann (Director of Asset Management and Regeneration) has requested a report on the communal aerials service. The report will include information on signal boosters. This information will help GCH to advise tenants how to get the best out of their systems.
 - Forum will be held on 27th July, 28th September and 30th November.
 - The door entry systems across the blocks of flats have been an ongoing problem. These systems will be discussed at GCH's Investment conference.
9. GCH's Investment Conference is being held on 12th May, from 3.30pm to 6pm at Kingsholm's conference centre. This is the same day as our next meeting, but if anyone would like to join me for part of the day they are very welcome. We will have a publicity stand at this event, focussing on community improvements and events from the last year.
10. A summary of the various councils' Small Area Survey is enclosed for information. We need to use this to feed into our action plan.
11. GCH has asked us to add training to the agenda this time. I've done this, but to help speed things along here is a list of the training we identified a year ago to review, plus a few new ideas:

Meetings and Management

- Committee member roles and responsibilities.
- Secretary role and minute taking.
- Effective participation in meetings.
- Performance monitoring.
- Time management/organisational skills.

- Mind Mapping (a brainstorming technique).
- The Right to Manage.
- Effective use of open spaces / redevelopment.
- Contract monitoring and management.
- Sustainable Communities Act.
- The rights of younger residents.
- Getting the most out of your housing provider.
- Development of residents groups.
- Local compacts.
- Criminal records bureau checks.

Computing

- Computer skills e.g. European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).
- Computer Literacy and Information technology.
- Website creation and design.

Publicity

- Producing effective publicity and newsletters.
- Getting residents involved.

12. We have requested copies of the various grounds maintenance contracts. The Matson & Robinswood maps from the audit that was carried out a while ago are nearly ready and we can then look at this as a whole long-term activity. We need to make a decision on whether we wish to formally monitor and manage the performance of contracts like this. I will ask for a decision on whether to explore this option at our meeting and will then gather information on the options for this if we decide to take it forward.

Julian Hiles
4th May 2009



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

REPLIES ABOUT SERVICES FOR OUR YOUNGER RESIDENTS

GLOUCESTER CITY HOMES

'Gloucester City Homes is committed to engaging young people in positive ways. A focus for us this year has been engagement of young people, ensuring that young people have a voice, that facilities are improved to meet their needs and instilling of a sense of belonging and ownership to the community.

We held a very successful young persons' focus group in September that had very good attendance and some really positive outcomes. We have developed a young persons' action plan with a focus on developing the group's skills and confidence in order that they are able develop into a youth forum.

We have followed our initial meeting with a visit to Parry Hall Youth Group to work with children to enable them to contribute to the planning for this year's calendar. A young persons' event took place during half term with Longlevens Teenagers Club with a graffiti workshop at the Holy Trinity Church and other events are planned.

This group is new however we committed to this groups ongoing support and development to assist them meet aspirations of them being able to contribute their ideas for service delivery, get involved with other debates both locally and nationally, organise events, visit other youth groups, develop their own website and newsletter.'

Paul Masters

Governance, Research & Business Administration Manager

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

'The two city council service Directorates that are directly providing young people with opportunities to participate in, and influence, policy and decision-making are Services & Neighbourhoods and Strategy & Development. Actions carried out within these Directorates contribute to Articles 2, 3, 6, 15, 29, 31, 33 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Please find detailed below some examples of current activity:

SERVICES & NEIGHBOURHOODS DIRECTORATE:

The City Council's Safeguarding Officer is Martin Shields, Corporate Director, Services & Neighbourhoods.

1. Sports Development. Our officer, Morgana Lovell, has led on activities in Matson & Robinswood. She is also working in deprived areas of the city such as Podsmead and Moreland wards. She reports:

Over 2008 we worked closely with Together in Matson, trying to find positive sporting activities for young people living in the area. We used the Redwell

Centre over the summer offering free basketball and football sessions; this was under the StreetGames scheme. We also worked with Together in Matson, and Matson RFC to utilise a hard court area owned by the rugby club to offer free tennis sessions, coaching in the summer too (again part of StreetGames).

All these sessions were run in partnership with Together in Matson. Over the summer we had approx. 30 young people registered who regularly attended these activities.

In addition to the sports activities listed above, we also offered heavily subsidised training for volunteers, youth workers etc in May 2008 for a new sport called Street Cheer; this is a mixture of traditional cheerleaders and street dance. We provided two spaces for 2 young women in Matson who were keen dancers at Together in Matson (this training was extended to other groups across the city too inc. Matson NP). Both completed their training successfully and were qualified to deliver Streetcheer sessions. Together in Matson funded their first aid courses and CRB certificates, I also funded their insurance. Over the summer they offered biweekly sessions to young people, and have since developed their dance group called Storm. The two girls have successfully been awarded funding to further their training, equipment, competition needs by Young Gloucestershire. StreetGames national charity are also writing up a case study on the two girls based on their successes. Storm have been great support to us in other areas of the city, attending voluntary to fun days, community days, sports events.

We also work with Together in Matson on supporting their community events as and when they are planned. Currently we are looking at working together and joint funding a project to provide football activities for young people currently out of education.

We are also using Central Technology College for multi sports sessions, which are charged at 50 pence. The school is based in between Matson and Robinswood. Flyers and posters have been posted and emailed out to youth groups, community centres to help promote these positive activities for young people. These sessions started November 2008 and are currently booked until end of March 2009, I have applied for funding to extend activities up until July, but will not know outcome of this until end of January.

I have also just written to youth workers, or those who work with young people to inform them about a brand new volunteering scheme; Cooperative StreetGames Young Volunteer scheme for ages 16 – 25 years. This will provide those who sign up, free StreetGames kit, resources folders, opportunity to work with young people, assist and deliver sports activities, gain certificates for hours of voluntary work completed, gain free training and possibly qualifications such as coaching certificates which can help lead to further work, paid and voluntary. Those successful volunteers can be nominated for national awards.

2. Open Spaces. Our officer, Matt Hill, has conducted many consultations with young people on play areas and skate parks that give young people a real opportunity to participate in designing and improving their neighbourhoods:

During a recent Gloucester City Council Big Lottery Application youth facilities in the Matson Ward were identified as a city wide priority for children and teenage play and sport. This application secured £48k for those facilities. Since then we have worked with the Matson & Robinswood Community Partnership, Together in Matson and the Youth service on a consultation exercise which identified the priorities and potential locations for them. A Multi use games area with youth

shelter adjacent to the Redwell centre was established as that priority. A priority derived straight from local children. The next stage is to work with the County Council on a lease agreement as that area is not City Council land. The design and colour schemes of the muga and shelter will be worked on with those same local children.

As for younger children's play, a replacement for the play area removed from Matson Park is again amongst the top priorities. We are currently working on securing funding for this scheme. The final design will again come from consultation sessions with local children.

Strategically, both the Public Open Space Strategy and the Playground and Youth Facility Strategy are due to be updated in the next year. An integral part of the development and research of these is a city wide consultation exercise with a range of interest groups including children.

3. Community Safety Team. Our Community Safety Project Development Officer, Patricia Dabbs, reports:

We have a hate crime action group and have set up a freephone report it number. We also take part in awareness raising events.

We are constantly trying to raise awareness of the effects of the misuse of drugs and promoting the Young People's Substance Misuse Service and have paid for some lanyards to be distributed to young people with their contact details on.

Last year we led a project around criminal damage in Severn Vale School with a drama presentation.

We are about to embark on a Don't Buy 4 U18 proxy purchase campaign. We are hoping to secure some funding to take a 'Last orders' drama presentation into schools to raise awareness of the consequences of binge drinking and misuse of drugs.

We secured funding for 'Increase the Peace' to promote positive images around not using drugs, guns or knives. Made a CD and now branching out to a football team.

We have paid for Alcohol Awareness sessions from Infobuzz into youth clubs and for excluded children in referral centres.

We are working with Youth Offending to allow under 18s caught shoplifting to take part in restorative justice work – confronting the victim – i.e. the store manager and making reparation. We are also funding the Schools Unit to talk to over 8,000 secondary school pupils re the Shoplifting Shopwatch now in force in Gloucester to prevent them from shoplifting. Shoplifting in 13 – 15 year olds was down by 28% in December and 54% in January as a result.

We are funding a county wide tag rugby event to promote personal safety 'Tackle Safety' for year 6 pupils at Hartpury college. Police will be going into schools for several weeks before the event to train the children to play tag rugby and to have respect for each other and those in authority.

There's also all the Family Intervention Project work which is intense support for families to stop them re-offending – work around activities, attending school, parenting classes etc.

STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE:

Community Strategy & Engagement Service:

1. GYM: We have supervised the work of the Gloucester Youth Movement (GYM) officer over the last few years. Run by young people, for young people, GYM has been involved in a range of activities that provide young people with a say and encourage them to participate in local democracy (e.g. holding elections, meeting with the City Council's Cabinet, consultation on the budget, managing a youth grant, running a Youth Festival etc).

Information on the activities of GYM can be found on their website www.bananas-gov.co.uk. This post is currently under review, with a view to developing the role into one that could provide community development support to set up neighbourhood youth forums, perhaps run an annual youth conference and increase youth participation across the city council.

2. Neighbourhood/Community Partnerships: Each of the 8 Neighbourhood Partnerships regard young people as important stakeholders, but do find engaging them quite difficult. In consultations, residents across the city regard improvements to facilities and activities for young people a priority and are committed to delivering this for their neighbourhoods.

They tend to work with youth groups and workers, supposing and promoting their activities and helping to fund raise (e.g. Longlevens young people were supported in putting in a successful youth funding bid and were awarded £38,000 for a mini bus; Together in Matson was awarded Partnership funding to help run family coach trips; Podsmead Youth Cafe bid was supported by residents in the Three Bridges Partnership by telephone voting, promotions etc which led to a successful bid and a new youth cafe). There are many other examples, which you may find on the Neighbourhood Partnership page of the city council website www.gloucester.gov.uk (see list on right hand side of home page).

3. Community & Voluntary Grants: Our Grants Team award grants to a number of community & voluntary groups that support children and young people (again see our website for more information).
4. Gloucester Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership): The LSP has a Children & Young People's Priority Action Group; full details of the Delivery Plan for this Group can be found on the Gloucester Partnership website www.gloucesterpartnership.org.uk and in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The LSP Officer is based in the Community Strategy & Engagement Service.

This is not a comprehensive list, but I hope gives you an indication of the importance the city council places on promoting the rights of young people and providing opportunities for them to be involved in what we do.

Sylvia Webster
Community Strategy & Engagement Manager



Matson & Robinswood Tenants and Residents Association

INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION SURVEY (IMDS) INTERIM REPORT

11th March 2009

Cheltenham Borough Council • Gloucester City Council • Gloucestershire County Council

This report has been reduced down from the original.

Introduction

This interim report sets out the overarching findings from the focus groups carried out in December 2008 and January 2009, broken down by questions from the survey.

The final report will contain the full analysis from the survey, full findings from the focus groups and will be placed within the context of the Place Survey.

In October 2008, a consultation began that sought the views of residents in the most deprived areas of Gloucestershire. The consultation became known as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation Survey (IMDS), and was designed to explore a number of topics relating to the respondent's satisfaction, perceptions, awareness and involvement, within their local area. The questions were mainly drawn from the Audit Commission's national Place Survey and cover the key services issues that affect people's lives at neighbourhood level.

The IMDS gathered initial information through a postal questionnaire, before employing focus groups in order to explore some of the main findings in greater depth.

The broad areas, which all of the focus groups covered, were:

- What do you like about your area?
- What would you most like to improve about your area?
- How involved do you feel in the decisions that affect your area, and how far do you feel you can influence these decisions?
- At night, how safe do you feel in your area?

Please be aware that the response rates for the surveys were low. Details of response rates and confidence intervals will be provided in the full report.

Responses for Matson & Robinswood

Q1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

Overall the general consensus from the group was that they were fairly satisfied with their area. They did pick up on specific areas that could be improved, but felt that

there was a high level of community spirit and on the whole the people who lived in the area seemed happy and were friendly.

Q4. On the whole, do you think that over the past year your local area has got better or worse?

Don't know	2.5%
Have lived here less than 1 year	2.5%
Has not changed much	47.5%
Worse	28.8%
Better	18.8%

Contrary to the survey results, the group seemed positive about their area, and said that they had seen improvements over the past year. They felt that Gloucester City Homes had helped to make the area cleaner, and they also felt that less young people were hanging around the streets.

Q5. Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

Agree	23.8%
Disagree	48.8%
Don't know	27.5%

The survey results indicated that almost half of respondents did not feel they could influence decisions, and less than one-quarter felt they could.

The results from the survey were mirrored in the focus group. Despite the participants already being actively involved in their area, they felt that their influence was, for certain things, limited. They felt that resident power needed to be developed, perhaps through increased involvement with budgetary decisions. One participant stated that they felt the County Council and its partners were not listening to the community's needs, they felt that lots of issues with the area have been identified but nothing has been done about them.

Another possible reason for limited resident involvement that was raised was around not getting consistent feedback. They felt that if residents could see that their views had been used then it would make them more inclined to participate again – they said that residents felt 'fobbed off' by local authorities because there are no established feedback routes.

Another suggestion was that when holding focus groups, it would be useful if more information could be circulated about them prior to the event, then residents could make an informed decision whether to attend or not.

Q12. And thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?

There are three clear priorities: Level of crime, clean streets and road and pavement repairs. However, only one of these came up as an area that the group felt required improvement.

The main area that the entire group felt needed to be improved was the pavements. They said that when Telewest installed their cables they dug up the pavements but did not resurface them properly. It was felt that this did not make the area look very

nice, but more importantly it made walking hazardous, especially for people with mobility difficulties. They also expressed concerns about the hedges by the side of the paths, and said these were very infrequently cut back, and when they were the debris was not properly cleaned up.

The group referenced Matson Avenue as having particularly bad roads, and said this road was 'breaking up', however this was not isolated, and the group felt the majority of Matson's roads were in need of resurfacing. They felt that the reason this hadn't already been done was because their area is generally ignored and doesn't get a fair share of money to spend on improving their area.

Other issues about the roads were that the roundabouts were very bland. They felt there was scope for these to become more visually pleasing, and consequently make the area look nicer. Some participants stated that they would be happy to plant flowers, trees etc on the roundabouts, and would help with the upkeep. They also stated that road signage is often out of date and incorrect, and had concerns around crossing the roads. The group said that there are a lot of cars that park by the side of the road, that cause visibility issues and make crossing the road dangerous, which is exasperated by the lack of pedestrian crossings.

Some members of the group suggested that there should be more activities for teenagers, and felt that there was a general lack of leisure facilities for the area. The need for local shops to be refurbished was also raised, as was a need for improved adult education opportunities including budget planning, life skills and basic cookery for example.

Q14. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day / after dark?

During the day

Safe	74.4%
Unsafe	12.2%
Neither safe nor unsafe	13.4%
Don't know	0%

After Dark

Safe	36.6%
Unsafe	35.4%
Neither safe nor unsafe	24.4%
Don't know	3.7%

The group did not appear shocked by the dramatic difference between how safe people feel during the day and after dark, despite saying that they generally felt safe at night. Some members of the group said that they did feel intimidated by the groups of young people who hang around by bus shelters, although when questioned they said that it was rare to see young people actually causing problems. It transpired that the majority of problems seemed to be caused by older people returning home after being out clubbing, and the amount of general rowdiness as people leave the local pubs can be intimidating.

The group acknowledged that a lot of the reasons for not feeling safe at night was fear of the unknown – because it is dark they can't judge whether situations are dangerous as easily. It was suggested that better street lighting could help with this. However, a couple of participants felt that a lot of the perceptions of crime were

caused by the media – they felt that the media pick examples of antisocial behaviour and make it seem like it is happening everywhere.

Q20. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with key local public services provided by Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucester City Council?

When asked what they liked about the area in which they lived, participants stated that there were good public transport services, and they particularly liked having access to green open spaces. They liked that they were close enough to local services such as shopping facilities, but also very close to green spaces, although concerns were expressed over the maintenance of these areas. An aspect of being close to open spaces that divided the group was the sheep. Some participants felt these added to the sense of being close to nature, but others felt they made a lot of mess that wasn't ever cleaned up.

The group were happy that they have some local shops, but expressed concerns that some shops were closing, and felt that with the uncertain economic climate they may lose more.

Q23. Overall, how well informed do you feel about local public services?

Very well informed	7.4%
Fairly well informed	23.5%
Not very well informed	34.6%
Not well informed at all	28.4%
Don't know	6.2%

The group's opinion again very closely reflected the results from the survey. They felt that there were existing means of finding out about public services, but unless you were already involved in the resident / community groups then you wouldn't find this information out. They also were concerned about the consistency of information, and felt this should be improved.