Cumbria County Council Website Users Survey

April/May 2003

Information & Communications Team

Background Information:
During April 2003 the Information & Communications Team ran a web-based survey via a link on the County Council's homepage. The purpose was to gather the views of CCC website users about the quality and usability of the recently redesigned CCC website. A prize was offered as an incentive to complete the survey.

74 completed questionnaires were submitted.

The survey has generated some very useful feedback which the Information & Communications Team is now using to prioritise and direct future website development work.

Survey Findings:

1. What were respondents visiting the website for?

1.1. Survey results suggest that the majority of website users are looking for information about news and events, job opportunities with the County Council and information about the Council itself.

Table 1: What were respondents visiting the site for?

Interest Area	Number of Enquiries	Percentage
Job Opportunities	22	31.4
News & Events	21	30.0
About your Council	16	22.9
General Browsing	13	18.6
Discover Cumbria	11	15.7
Community Information	10	14.3
Libraries & Archives	9	12.9
Other	9	12.9
Roads & Transport	8	11.4
Education	8	11.4
Business	4	5.7
Planning & Environment	3	4.3
Emergency Services	2	2.9
Care Services	2	2.9
Trading Standards	0	0
Total	**138**	**197.1**

Base = 70 (respondents could tick more than one category)

1.2. Those respondents who chose the "other" category were looking for the following:

- A to Z
- Availability of property and house prices

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- Checking forum
- Council Meetings
- Genealogy
- Telephone numbers for council employees
- Information on the south Lakes LSP and the rural Regeneration company
- Information for school projects
- Population and ethnicity data to compare with NYCC
- Relocating to Cumbria
- Contact details for Parish Councils
- Address for County Council

2. Did respondents find what they were looking for?

2.1. The majority of the visitors to the site successfully located all the information they required. However a sizeable minority were not so successful.

2.2. 11 of the 19 respondents who failed to find what they were looking for were looking for information in News & Events, About your Council and Community Information. This suggests these areas could require some further work.

Table 2: Did respondents find relevant information?

	Frequency	Percent
Found all info needed	43	58.1
Found basic info & then had to phone/email an Officer	9	12.2
Had to follow a link to a non-CCC site	3	4.1
Failed to find information at all	19	25.7
Total	**74**	**100.0**

3. How easy or difficult was it for respondents to find the information they were looking for?

3.1. Generally speaking users found it relatively easy to find what they were looking for. On average respondents gave 6.3 marks out of ten. This suggests that while we are doing well there is still plenty of room for improvement.

3.2. Just under 60 per cent of respondents gave a score above 5.

Table 3:How easy was it to find information?

	Frequency	Percent
1 Very Difficult	8	10.8
2	6	8.1
3	4	5.4
4	4	5.4
5 Neither Easy or Difficult	8	10.8
6	3	4.1
7	7	9.5
8	9	12.2

9	9	12.2
10 Very Easy	16	21.6
Total	**74**	**100.0**

Average = 6.3

4. How long did it take to find the information the user was looking for?

4.1. Exactly 50 per cent of respondents were able to find what they were looking for in under 3 minutes, almost 72 per cent were successful within 5 minutes. There is however a significant minority that had to spend a lot longer searching for the appropriate information.

Table 4: How long did it take to find information?

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 minute	15	20.3
1-3 Minutes	22	29.7
3-5 Minutes	16	21.6
5-10 Minutes	6	8.1
Longer than 10 minutes	10	13.5
Wasn't looking for specific information	5	6.8
Total	**74**	**100.0**

5. How long should it take to find the required information?

5.1. In order to benchmark our website's performance we asked respondents to indicate how long they felt was acceptable to have to search for the information needed. Clearly 5 minutes is the absolute upper limit users generally consider acceptable. The survey suggests however that the County Council should be aiming for a 3-minute upper limit.

5.2. Currently 50 per cent of user enquiries are achieved within this timescale.

Table 5: How long should it take to find the required information?

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 minute	10	13.5
1-3 Minutes	26	35.1
3-5 Minutes	26	35.1
5-10 Minutes	10	13.5
Longer than 10 minutes	2	2.7
Total	**74**	**100.0**

6. CCC website usage

6.1. The majority of respondents were first time visitors to the CCC website. Just over a quarter of respondents were weekly visitors. Over 80 per cent visit the site at least once a month.
6.2. 85 per cent and 71 percent respectively said they would revisit the site in future and were likely to recommend it to a friend.
6.3. The majority of users (69 per cent) spend around 10 minutes browsing per website visit.

Table 6: How often do you visit the CCC site?

	Frequency	Percent
First visit	24	32.4
Daily	1	1.4
Weekly	20	27.0
Monthly	14	18.9
6 Monthly	10	13.5
Total	**69**	**93.2**

7. Respondents ratings

7.1. Respondents were asked to score the CCC website over 4 areas: visual appearance; quality of content; ease of navigation and overall satisfaction. Average score are given below:

Table 7: Respondent Ratings

	Average score out of 10	Std. Deviation
Score: Appearance	6.80	2.27
Score: Content	6.13	2.29
Score: Ease of navigation	6.51	2.52
Score: Overall Satisfaction	6.48	2.29

7.2. These score indicate a generally good level of satisfaction with the CCC website, however it is obvious there is still significant room for improvement, particularly in terms of content.
7.3. Across the different areas of the website (based on respondent choice at question1 - Discover Cumbria, About your Council etc) there was little variation in these scores in terms of appearance. However, quality of content, ease of navigation and overall satisfaction showed wider variation.

Table 8: Average scores across different website areas

Interest Area	Average "navigation" score	Average "content" score	Average "overall satisfaction" score	N
Care Services	9.50	8.00	9.0	2
Discover Cumbria	8.55	7.73	8.2	11
Planning & Environment	5.00	7.33	8.0	3

Job Opportunities	8.36	7.00	7.5	22
Emergency Services	6.00	6.50	7.5	2
Libraries & Archives	7.67	6.33	7.2	9
Education	6.25	6.86	7.0	8
Community Information	6.00	6.22	6.8	10
News & Events	6.57	6.05	6.7	21
Roads & Transport	5.85	6.43	6.4	8
About your Council	6.13	5.27	5.8	16
Business	6.25	5.00	5.2	4
General Browsing	-	-	-.	13
Other	-	-	-	9
Trading Standards	-	-	-	0

7.4. While these results should be treated with caution due to the small response, Table 8 suggest that the website currently has areas of weakness. In particular the “About your Council” section scores poorly despite being one of the top three reasons for visiting the site. Similarly the “News & Events” section is one of the most popular and the one of the lowest scoring.

8. Suggestions for improving the site

8.1. In several questions respondents were asked to expand on their scores with comments or suggestions for the site, these have been summarised below:

- Publicise new Neighbourhood Forum pages
- Improve quality of the search facilities
- Develop a “Contact Us” page and searchable “Staff Directory”
- Redevelop “News & Events” pages – particularly make news releases more user friendly
- Include information about registering to vote and postal voting.
- Redevelop jobs pages to be more user-friendly – integrate teaching positions into main list
- Make Public Transport Journey Planner more visible within the Roads & Transport pages
- Try and achieve Plain English standard
- Highlight “School Advisers” more clearly
- Develop on-line portal for County Archives
- Provide better information with regard to budget / expenditure details
- Display census data more prominently
- Provide direct links to District Council Local Development Plans
- Include more about Cumbria’s History
- Develop an on-line photo gallery of downloadable images of Cumbria
- Provide links to school websites
- More online forms & E-services. Redevelop current poor E-government pages
- Provide real time traffic reports/ weather details possibly connected to web cams in the towns
- Highlight the A-Z
- Include links to genealogy sites
- Make links to Parish Council site more obvious

9. Respondent Profile

Table 9: Sex

		Frequency	Percent
Male		37	50.0
Female		22	29.7
	Missing	15	20.3
Total		**74**	**100.0**

Table 10: Age

		Frequency	Percent
16-24		6	8.1
25-34		17	23.0
35-44		22	29.7
45-54		7	9.5
55-64		5	6.8
Older than 65		2	2.7
	Missing	15	20.3
Total		**74**	**100.0**

		Frequency	Percent
Working full time		42	56.8
Working part time		4	5.4
Unemployed		1	1.4
Retired		3	4.1
College/University		5	6.8
School pupil		1	1.4
Homemaker		2	2.7
Other		1	1.4
	Missing	15	20.3
Total		**74**	**100.0**