

About the Big Conversation

The Big Conversation was an initiative that was used to gather information from our residents to help us develop the first Community Plan for Ards and North Down. This plan, known as the Big Plan for Ards and North Down, contains a long-term vision for this area and is based on the issues our residents and other community planning partners told us are important. The Big Conversation was successfully used to gather feedback from over 1500 stakeholders. We want to build on this by using the concept to establish a platform that residents know is an effective way of voicing their opinion.

The Big Conversation Panel is a platform for Ards and North Down residents to give their views on a range of issues and public services. The Big Conversation is managed by Ards and North Down Borough Council on behalf of Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership.

The Big Conversation Panel is based on three online¹ surveys spread over 12 months.

The Big Conversation Panel - Survey ONE is open from mid-September - 30 November 2020².

It will be supported by a further two online surveys. Survey TWO will open from 1 February 2021, survey THREE will open from 1 June 2021.

By participating in these surveys, you are helping Ards and North Down Borough Council and its Community Planning Partners, deliver better services that have a greater chance of positively impacting on personal wellbeing. Answer to questions within these surveys will help us to understand the impact of Covid-19 and the initiatives that are needed to help communities and individuals recover.

Our questions are designed around two main themes

- **Assessing the wellbeing of our residents**
- **Prioritising our activities for the best delivery of services**

Some of the questions we ask you will be the same across all three Big Conversation Panel surveys. This is to help us understand how people's feelings and experiences change over the 12 months of the Big Conversation Panel and will provide an indicator of the population of Ards and North Down's wellbeing.

Covid-19 has had a devastating impact on our residents. Survey ONE focuses on finding out how people have been affected so that public bodies can put in place actions and programmes that will provide the help that is needed.

¹ Residents who do not have internet access can register (via telephone) to be a 'hardcopy' panel member and will receive surveys and correspondence via mail.

² Please note these are preliminary dates and may change

About the Big Conversation Panel – Why you should get involved

What is the Big Conversation Panel?

- The Big Conversation is a panel of Ards and North Down residents who have agreed to give their views on a range of issues
- We contact our panellists and ask them to complete up to three questionnaire surveys
- The questionnaires cover a wide range of topics and issues that affect our community and will initially be influenced by the impact of Covid-19

Who runs the panel?

- The Big Conversation is part of the ongoing engagement activities of Ards and North Down's Strategic Community Planning Partnership. The partnership includes Ards and North Down Borough Council; Police Service of NI, NI Fire and Rescue Service, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Public Health Agency, Health and Social Care Board, Education Authority, Central Government, Sport NI, Libraries NI, Invest NI, Tourism NI, National Trust, Translink, 3rd Sector CP Forum, and South East Regional College
- Ards and North Down Borough Council is responsible for managing the Big Conversation Panel.

Why Should I join the Big Conversation Panel?

The completed questionnaires give us vital information:

- They tell us what you think about Ards and North Down's public services and how we can make them better
- They help us measure performance and improve future service delivery
- They help us make decisions based on the information you tell us
- We send you a newsletter with a summary of the results and what we are doing based on the responses we receive

How do you choose who is on the panel?

- Anyone who lives in Ards and North Down and is aged 16 years and over can join the Big Conversation Panel. Other opportunities to have your say will be available for younger residents
- We are keen to encourage as many people as possible – of all ages and social groups and from all areas of the borough – to try to ensure that all Ards and North Down's citizens are represented

What do Big Conversation members do?

- As part of a pilot you will be asked to complete three questionnaires over a 12-month period
- This can be done by postal questionnaire (we will send you a pre-paid envelope) or by completing an online version (we will send you an email with a link to the questionnaire)

Why do you need personal details about me?

- You will note that we ask for some personal information about you. Firstly, we ask for your name, e-mail address and postcode. This is to allow us to keep a record of who is on the panel, and to be able to remove you as a panellist if you request it.
- Secondly, we ask for information about you, including your age, gender, ethnic group and employment. We include this information in the data analysis. We do this to enable us to look at possible differences between different social groups or different parts of the borough. For example, certain issues may only affect certain age groups or geographical areas.
- Please note, we remove personal identifying information (e.g. name and address) before analysing the questionnaire – which means we don't know how you answered each question. *Your personal contact details are kept separately on a secure database that is password protected and not shared with anyone.* We hold this information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and use it for administration purposes only.

I am an online panellist – how do you store my questionnaire responses?

- We use Citizen Space software on Ards and North Down Borough Council's Consultation Hub to collect the questionnaire data from the online panellists. Citizen Space is owned by Delib and used by more than 100 organisations around the world, from small councils to national governments. Information on Citizen Space can be found at: <https://www.citizenspace.com/info>.
- All questionnaire responses are downloaded and stored in a password protected file. Delib do not have access to any personal information you supplied to us when you joined the Big Conversation Panel, for example, your name, address, gender, etc.

What happens to completed questionnaires (hard copy and online)?

- The data collected in paper questionnaires is manually entered into a database. We then keep the questionnaires until the final report is published, after which time they are destroyed.
- All information from the online questionnaires is directly downloaded into a secure database. This information contains no personal details and is anonymised.
- Both hard copy and online databases are then combined for the analysis. This information is kept for 2 years and then deleted.

How can I find out the results of a questionnaire?

- A report is produced for each questionnaire. Additionally, the Big Plan (Community Plan) engage newsletter highlights key issues identified within the survey. This newsletter is posted to our paper panellists and a link is emailed to our online panellists.
- You can also see the latest report and newsletter in our libraries.
- Online copies of the report along with copies of all previous reports, newsletters and questionnaires can also be found on the Council's website.

What if I want to leave the Big Conversation Panel?

- You can leave the panel at any time and we will stop sending you e-mails with surveys to complete.
- The Panel has been established as a pilot of 12 months, if it works, we will consider making it a permanent feature of how we talk to our residents. You will be given the option on whether you wish to remain involved and continue to help us improve our services or whether you would prefer to leave.

Join the Big Conversation Panel and make your voice heard!

All you need to do to join the Big Conversation Panel is complete the first survey.