

Consultation with Residents About Entrances to Waverley Park



This Research was Designed, Undertaken and Analysed
by:

TOTAL RESEARCH
Neighbourhood Services
Newcastle City Council
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8PN

For further information please contact
Lisa Grabham on:
(0191) 2116246
Email: total.research@newcastle.gov.uk

© June 2007

Contents

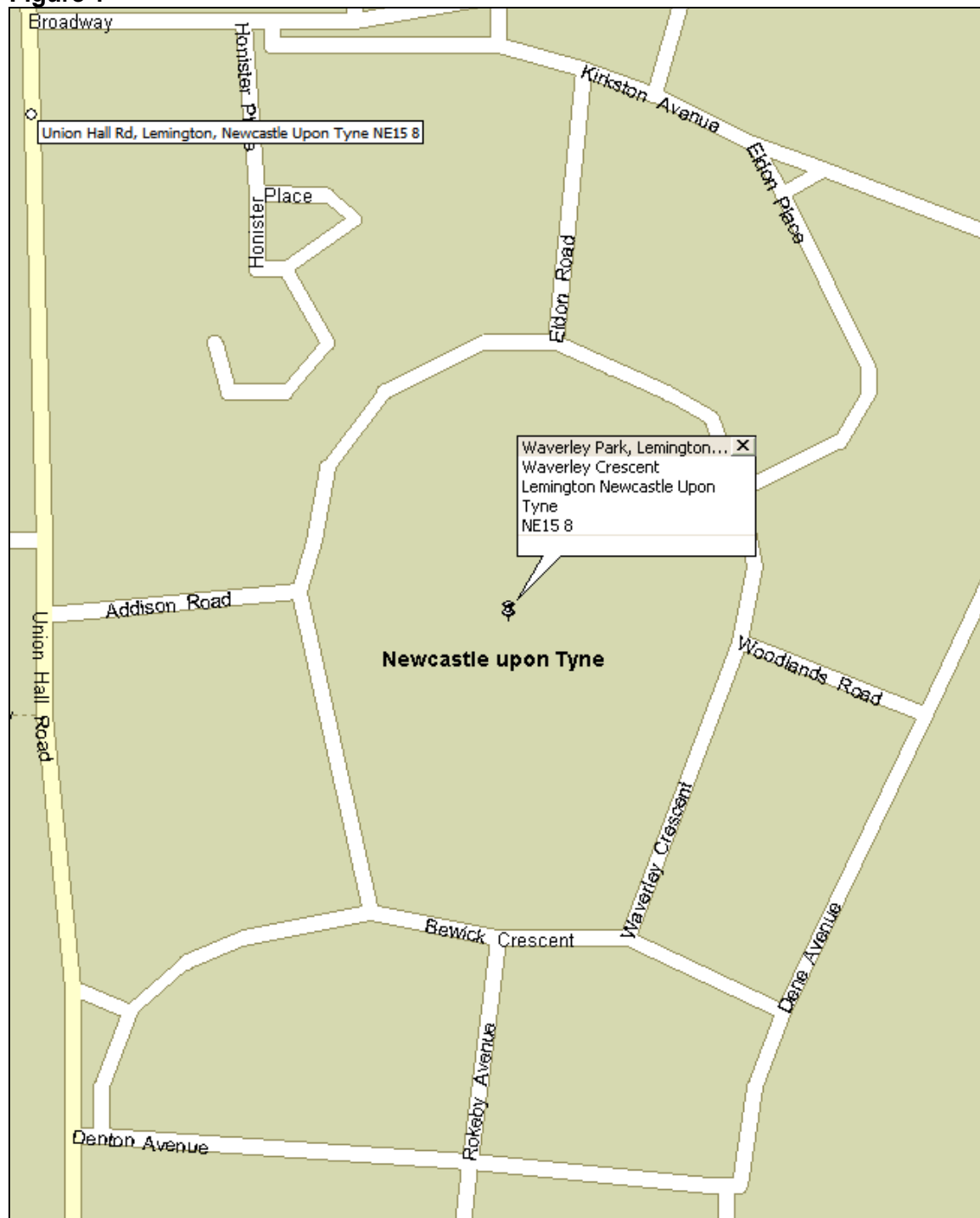
Contents	Pages
Section One Introducing the Research	3-4
Section Two The Findings of the Research	5-11
Section Three Concluding the Research	12
Appendix Questionnaire	



Section One Introducing the Research

Waverley Park is an open space enclosed by Waverley Crescent in the ward of Lemington, Newcastle upon Tyne. (See Figure 1). Despite recent investment of over £160,000, there are ongoing problems with intimidating and anti-social behaviour in the park. This research proposal thus sets out to ask residents to consider the possible closure of two of the three entrances to the park, eliminating use of the space as a thoroughfare and potentially resolving the problems of anti-social behaviour therein.

Figure 1



The Aims of the Research

The aims of this research were thus:

- To contact a statistically valid sample of residents in the streets which surround Waverley Park. These include Waverley Crescent, Addison Road, Woodlands Road, Bewick Crescent, Dene Avenue, Denton Avenue, Union Hall Road, Kirkston Avenue, Eldon Place, Eldon Road, Honister Close and Honister Place.
- To statistically measure levels of preference relating to possible entrance closure at Waverley Park, exploring the rationale behind opinions, together with potentially alternative solutions.

The Objectives of the Research

Objectively, the intention of the research was to:

- Quantify support for/opposition to entrance closure at Waverley Park, detailing the rationale behind opinion, together with alternative/accompanying solutions.

The Research Methodology

Information was collected using a face to face questionnaire, administered by two Researchers throughout the identified catchment area. 100 interviews were completed, yielding a statistically robust and valid sample from which to draw conclusions. A copy of this questionnaire is attached as an appendix. Residents were interviewed in May 2007.

This report is divided into three sections to facilitate easy reading, and findings throughout are presented using a selection of tables and quotes. Important and interesting findings can be found in boxes like this:

- **Important and interesting findings can be found in boxes like this.**

Notes

- All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole figure and may therefore not total 100.
- Percentages have also been calculated excluding missing responses.
- Grateful acknowledgements are extended to all respondents who participated in the research.

Section Two

The Findings of the Research

The Gender of Respondents

58% of respondents were female, with 42% males. This slight imbalance is a standard finding of household surveys of this kind and one which does not usually detract from the findings. (See Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Gender	% of respondents
Female	58
Male	42

- **58% of respondents were female, 42% were male.**

The Age of Respondents

Respondents aged 14 to 84 were interviewed, including those in the youngest age group (16-24) and those in the oldest age group 75 and over). (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2

Age	% of respondents
16-24	10
25-39	15
40-49	16
50-64	29
65-74	21
75 and over	9

- **Respondents of all ages were interviewed, with 10% aged 16-24; 31% aged 25-49; 29% aged 50-64 and 30% aged 65 or over.**

Streets of Residence

Interviews were completed with residents of ten nearby streets in Lemington, as detailed in Table 2.3. (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3

Street
Addison Road
Bewick Crescent
Dene Avenue
Denton Avenue
Eldon Place
Eldon Road
Rokeby Street
Union Hall Road
Waverley Crescent
Waverley Lodge

- Residents from ten streets surrounding Waverley Park were interviewed.

Use of Waverley Park

57% of residents were using Waverley Park, most commonly to cut through to another destination (33%), but also for a variety of other reasons including dog walking, playing football, walking for pleasure and watching and playing bowls (24%). (See Table 2.4).

Table 2.4

Response	% of respondents
No	43
Yes to cut through	33
Yes for another reason	24

- 57% of residents use Waverley Park – most commonly as a cut through (33%) but with a variety of other reasons evident.

Frequency of Use of Waverley Park

35% of residents were using Waverley Park frequently, with a further 22% using it occasionally. (See Table 2.5).

Table 2.5

Response	% of respondents
Frequently	35
Occasionally	22
Never	43

- **Just over one third of residents use Waverley Park frequently.**

Incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour in Waverley Park

Over half (53%) of all residents consulted said that they were affected by anti-social behaviour in the park. (See Table 2.6).

Table 2.6

Response	% of respondents
Frequently	31
Occasionally	22
Never	47

- **Over half (53%) of all residents are affected by anti-social behaviour in Waverley Park.**

The most common forms of anti-social behaviour detailed included noise (12%), bad language (7%), litter (6%), binge drinking (6%) and missiles being thrown (6%). However, a plethora of additional types of anti-social behaviour included broken glass, dog fouling, graffiti, speeding motorbikes, spitting, violence, fires and garden invasion.



Residents referred to the impact on the environment within the park:

“there are smashed bottles and spit on the ground”

“there are bottles left lying around just outside the park”

“there’s too much dog fouling”

“there has been litter left by the kids, damage to the bowling green and pot holes left by their bikes”

“there’s graffiti on the seats, we cannot sit there and enjoy the park”

noise:

“the park can get quite noisy, especially at weekends”

“fireworks have been set off”

and abuse from young people:

“I find teenagers drinking alcohol in the park intimidating”

“the kids can make smarmy and abusive remarks towards some people”

“fruit has been thrown at me and my 99 year old father”.

Some residents commented on attempted vandalism and damage to their property:

“missiles were thrown at my windows and one of the kids dropped their trousers in front of me”

“my windows have been broken”

“kids have broke my windows twice with golf balls”

“some of the kids have been banging on my doors and jumping over fences”

“kids have occasionally been sitting on my fence”

“there has been litter in the garden from the kids coming and going to the park”.

- Environmental and verbal abuse in Waverley Park were commonly detailed by residents.

Opinions on Possible Closure of Selected Waverley Park Entrances

The vast majority of respondents (79%) were most likely to feel that closing two of the entrances to Waverley Park have no impact on anti-social behaviour in the vicinity. In contrast, just one resident in every five (20%) felt that this was an action which would potentially reduce anti-social behaviour. (See Table 2.7).

Table 2.7

Response	% of respondents
Make no difference	79
Reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour in the park	20
Increase the amount of anti-social behaviour in the park	1

Lying behind these statistics were feelings that nothing short of complete closure of the park would stop the anti-social behaviour observed and experienced by residents (20%), the fact that young people would still be able to access the park (19%) and the inconvenience to residents (6%):

“closing two of the entrances off will be an inconvenience to other people”

“the remaining entrance will be a problem for those people living nearby”

“there will be opposition to the idea by people who live near the main entrance”

“this will affect other people who are regularly using Waverley Park”

“closing one entrance would cause problems for older people”

“it doesn’t matter; the kids will still get in”

other respondents were doubtful if the measures would work:

“nothing will stop the kids climbing over”

“the kids will still find a way to get in”

“the kids would just use the open entrance”

“there’s nothing you can do”

“no, Waverley Park has always been a bad place”

“kids do not use the entrances as a cut through”

“I don’t think that closing two of the entrances would make any difference at all”

“kids must have somewhere to go”.

In contrast, a minority of residents felt that closure of two of the entrances **would** reduce the level of anti-social behaviour in Waverley Park:

“I think that this option would be better for residents”

“closing two of the entrances might reduce the number of kids in the park”

“having just one entrance might restrict their movement”

“closing one entrance off would reduce the number of motorbikes being used there”

“if two of the entrances were closed off then the kids would not have easy access”

“it would be easier to contain the kids”

“the police will catch the offenders”.

- The majority of residents felt that the possible closure of two entrances to Waverley Park would make no difference to levels of anti-social behaviour.



Alternative Solutions to Anti-Social Behaviour in Waverley Park

The most commonly suggested alternative suggestions included a park keeper (14%), police patrols (13%), CCTV (12%), the installation of lights (11%) and a diversionary play park/place for teenagers (11%).

“park patrols might help”

“I think that police patrols would be a good idea”

“there could be a park keeper based there”

“a park warden might improve things”

“lights and CCTV could be installed”

“monitor the park on a regular basis”

“lock the park at night with large gates”

the provision of activities for young people:

“there could be more community centres for kids to go to”

“provide somewhere for kids to go”

“change Waverley Park into a play park again”

“there needs to be activities for the kids in the park”

“have some fetes for kids and other activities that would attract families”

“kids are bored. Put in a skateboard park and use the Lemington Centre for youth activities”

measures to reduce anti-social behaviour:

“get rid of the teen shelter where the kids congregate and drink alcohol”

“close the park down and move teen shelter to a more central position”

“stop the shop keepers selling alcohol to the kids”

“lock the kids up in detention centres”

and an improvement of cleaning measures:

“clear debris from the park”

“dog scoops could be provided”.

Section Three

Concluding the Research

- 3.1 Utilising the views of 100 adult residents in the immediate vicinity of Waverley Park, it is evident that almost 60% of residents are using Waverley Park – either to cut through to another destination, or for more specific reasons commonly including dog walking and walking for pleasure. Furthermore, over one third (35%) of residents use Waverley Park frequently.
- 3.2 However, a significant proportion of all residents (over 50%) have been affected by anti-social behaviour whilst using the park. This is something which affects both male and female residents of either gender and which commonly manifests itself as noise or verbal abuse, but also as environmental issues, including litter, dog fouling, graffiti and broken glass.
- 3.3 Clearly these residents are undoubtedly seeking a solution to this problem. However, the possible closure of two of the three Waverley Park entrances is NOT seen as a viable solution by the majority (80%) of residents.
- 3.4 This is a view frequently underpinned by a clear belief that either nothing will stop the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour in Waverley Park, or, the lesser view that residents – many of whom use the park as a cut through themselves, as already highlighted - would be inconvenienced as a consequence.
- 3.5 Thus, the restriction of access to the area is largely shunned. In contrast, far more popular are measures which tackle anti-social behaviour with increased security. The introduction of regular security patrols by a park keeper and/or the police, combined with CCTV is requested accordingly.



Appendix
Newcastle  **WAVERLEY PARK RESEARCH – MAY 2007**
City Council

Good morning/afternoon. I'm a Research Interviewer from Newcastle City Council. Despite recent investment of over £160,000 In Waverley Park, there are ongoing problems with intimidating and anti-social behaviour in the park. We are asking residents to consider the possible closure of two of the three entrances to the park, preventing the space being used as a 'cut through' and hopefully ending the problems of anti-social behaviour.

1. Firstly, can I ask if you ever use Waverley Park either to cut through or for another reason?

No 1 Yes to cut through 2 Yes other reason (specify below) 3

2. If yes, how often do you use it?

Frequently 1 Occasionally 2 Never 3

3. How often if at all are you affected by anti-social behaviour in Waverley Park?

Frequently 1 Occasionally 2 Never 3

4. Could you tell me what kind of anti-social behaviour, and how, if at all, you are affected by it?

5. How would you feel about two of the entrances to Waverley Park being closed off, leaving just one entrance? This would stop the park being used as a cut through. Do you think this would:

Reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour in the park 1
 Make no difference 2
 Increase the amount of anti-social behaviour in the park 3

6. Why do you say that?

7. Do you have any alternative solutions to the ongoing problem of anti-social behaviour in Waverley Park?

8. Gender:

9. Age:

10. Address

THANK YOU FOR BEING INTERVIEWED.

We will keep you informed about the results of the survey over the coming weeks.