

**SureStart4u
Local Evaluation-
User Satisfaction
Consultation**

SureStart4u Local Evaluation- User Satisfaction Consultation

Final report



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Context

SureStart4u is a sixth Wave Sure Start Local Programme covering the areas of Bentilee, Moss Green, Berryhill and Eaton Park in Stoke-on-Trent. It is located in a geographical area which has undergone substantial neighbourhood developments worth 20.5 million, through the SRB2 and SRB Villages Initiative. As a result, SureStart4u follows on a tradition of community involvement and development, and partnership working, the structures for which are likely to be already well-developed. The area is itself a fairly homogenous one; however, the patch is fragmented geographically and makes up a number of distinct communities.

Executive summary and Recommendations

Executive summary

E1 M-E-L Research was commissioned by SureStart4u in October 2004 to undertake a short term evaluation of the SureStart4u local programme. This evaluation incorporated a user satisfaction consultation with parents and carers of young children within the programme area (as required by the Sure Start Unit), as well as a documentary review of Management Information Systems in place at the programme. This report focuses on just one aspect of the SureStart4u local evaluation- the user satisfaction consultation.

E2 The objectives of the consultation were to measure uptake of and satisfaction with local services (including SureStart4u services), and the extent to which these meet the needs of local parents. A questionnaire was designed in consultation with SureStart4u which aimed to answer these key questions, and identify areas for future service improvement. A further aim of the survey was to register parents and carers as SureStart4u members.

E3 In order to involve the community actively in the research, local people were recruited to carry out the interviewing. These local people were trained and briefed to carry out the survey administration alongside M-E-L's own interviewers.

E4 A total of 250 face to face interviews were completed with parents and carers of children under the age of 5 living in the programme area. In order to access the views of a range of parents across the area, sampling quotas were agreed with SureStart4u. Of the 250 interviews, 30% were carried out with 'non-registered' families and 70% with registered families. Reflecting the number of families living in each area of the programme, 190 interviews were completed in Bentilee, 26 in Eaton Park, 15 in Berryhill, with another 19 in Moss Green. Due to the small numbers of surveys involved in the latter three areas, the results are analysed by 'Bentilee' and 'Non-Bentilee' areas.

E5 The results indicate that awareness of SureStart4u is extremely high. At 98%, awareness of SureStart4u amongst respondents is excellent for any Sure Start Local Programme, particularly a sixth wave one. Parents and carers have been made aware of SureStart4u in a number of ways; however, it is clear that local professionals such as Health Visitors and Midwives have had a vital part to play in this dissemination. Good links with these health professionals were also highlighted in the review of documentary evidence. These good links are a vital part of maximising involvement of the local community in any Sure Start local programme.

E6 Involvement of local parents and carers in SureStart4u is also notably high. Roughly two thirds of respondents believed themselves to be a registered parent, with almost half of respondents having used a Sure Start service at the time of interview. This is particularly encouraging in light of the relatively short time in which SureStart4u services have been in operation. Involvement with SureStart4u was found to be far higher in Bentilee than 'Non-Bentilee' areas, both in terms of awareness and use of the programme, as well as rates of registration. Parent and carers in full time work and fathers were less likely than average to be involved in the programme.

E7 Reflecting the high levels of involvement in SureStart4u as service users, parents and carers consulted were very satisfied with SureStart4u's service provision. Almost 100% of respondents were satisfied with their experiences of Sure Start service use. This factor is obviously instrumental in promoting such high levels of involvement, and is an excellent reflection on standards of service provided by SureStart4u, its staff and partner agencies.

Few respondents were able to suggest any additional services which SureStart4u could provide, explaining, *'it covers everything'*.

E8 Awareness, uptake and satisfaction with specific SureStart4u services was, again, found to be extremely high, particularly for such a late programme. Parents and carers consulted were most likely to be aware of the Toy Library/Bookshare as well as the trips and fundays. The Toy Library/Bookshare was also the most commonly used service. These high levels of awareness and uptake represent a real achievement by SureStart4u and reflect well on SureStart4u's communications strategy and publicity materials.

E9 The consultation also highlighted that SureStart4u and its services appear to be accessible to local families. Other than time and work commitments there are no major barriers preventing use of individual SureStart4u services by parents and carers. The only potential area for improvement identified by respondents was the need for improved provision of information about specific services.

E10 One of the most positive findings from this consultation is that SureStart4u has had a genuine impact on the lives of families who have engaged with the programme. Almost 60% (n=103) of those who had used a Sure Start service believed that the programme had made a difference to their lives. This demonstrates that SureStart4u has been able to provide real 'added value'. According the respondents, this takes the form of excellent support, confidence building and access to social networks.

E11 As well as SureStart4u services, respondents were asked about local services in general. The results indicate that satisfaction with all local services for families with young children is very high. Despite this there are clearly some priority areas for action which need to be addressed. Local parents and carers were particularly likely to highlight unreliable public transport and unsafe, poorly maintained parks and play areas as sub standard areas of provision.

E12 Needs relating to improvements in the local area for families with young children were fairly consistent across all areas making up the SureStart4u patch. Priority areas for improvement were found to be parks and play areas, community safety, public transport and the poor quality of the local environment.

E13 Registered parents of SureStart4u were more likely to be satisfied with general service provision in the area than non-registered parents. Whilst we cannot directly attribute this to SureStart4u, it may well be the case that this has been a key contributory factor informing their opinions of local provision for families with young children.

E14 Within the SureStart4u area, a very high proportion of families with children under 5 years live in workless households. At 46% this is almost double the national average. The problem is particularly acute in Bentilee. This is exacerbated by the fact that almost 90% of respondents living in workless households face barriers which prevent them accessing opportunities for paid work, most notably time commitments and childcare problems.

E15 In terms of future service provision, demand for both a café in a Children's Centre and a Wacky Warehouse style indoor play facility is extremely high. Over four fifths of respondents would use the café, with almost 100% willing to pay to use the Playbarn. This is a positive early indication that the planned Children's Centre would be a popular and much needed addition to local service provision, and would be accessed heavily by local families with young children.

Recommendations

The perceptions of local parent and carers consulted via the baseline indicate that the programme is performing very well, meeting the needs of local people and having a positive impact on the lives of local families. As a result there are a limited number of recommendations for future provision which can be made. The majority of areas for improvement raised by respondents are outside the remit of Sure Start Local Programmes.

SureStart4u

R1 Whilst general awareness of SureStart4u was very high there are disparities in awareness between different sections of the community. Awareness of SureStart4u is higher in Bentilee than non-Bentilee; therefore it is vital to ensure that awareness raising initiatives are targeted particularly in the Moss Green, Berryhill and Eaton Park areas.

R2 In the Bentilee area, SureStart4u partner agencies such as Health Visitors and local Schools have played a far greater role in raising awareness than elsewhere in the SureStart4u patch. SureStart4u need to ensure that professionals across all of the programme area are promoting SureStart4u effectively.

R3 Awareness of SureStart4u was also lower amongst male respondents. We would recommend that SureStart4u consider methods of engaging this specific group of parents. Early evidence from the NESS Impact Study has shown that introducing outdoors-based physical exercise activities are a good way to achieve this.

R4 As specified by the sampling frame, at least 70% of respondents interviewed were recorded as being registered with SureStart4u. Despite this, only 64% of respondents could recall being registered. It is important to ensure that parents are followed up regularly to ensure that they remain in contact with the programme.

R5 When taking into account the extremely high awareness of SureStart4u, there is clearly scope for increasing the proportion of the population registered with the programme. It may be the case that it is not always clear how parents and carers can register with Sure Start, and publicity materials need to detail this. Local professionals should be able to signpost parents and carers to SureStart4u and inform them how they could be registered. The benefits of membership also need to be fully promoted so that parents and carers have an incentive to sign up with SureStart4u.

R6 Overall the proportion of respondents who had used any SureStart4u service was high. Despite this, almost 40% of registered respondents had not used a SureStart4u service. SureStart4u could carry out in depth consultation with this group to assess reasons for non-uptake of Sure Start services. In order to boost rates of use it is important to ensure that all groups and services are well promoted, as are their associated benefits. Some families may also need additional support or transportation to enable them to access services.

R7 Rates of uptake of SureStart4u (service use and registration) were considerably lower amongst working parents and carers consulted. Whilst it is difficult to provide services outside of core hours, this would be a vital way of accessing such parents. Provision of one group per week in the evening or at a weekend would allow Sure Start to give additional support to working parents, who may otherwise be unable to access this.

R8 Involvement in SureStart4u is also notably lower in the area defined as 'Non Bentilee'. Whilst this may reflect patterns of need, it is important to ensure that families in this area are signposted to methods of registration and suitable, accessible Sure Start services.

SureStart4u could carry out a mapping of service provision to ensure that services and support are accessible to all families within the patch.

R9 Lack of information about SureStart4u is a barrier which has prevented uptake of its services by parents and carers consulted. SureStart4u needs to review its promotional strategies to ensure that the community is aware of exactly who the programme is there for, and what Sure Start can offer to parents, carers and children.

R10 Despite generally high awareness, knowledge of certain SureStart4u services were lower than average, for example, First Steps Psychology, Mum2Mum and Start up training and advice. Emphasis needs to be placed on promoting these services, particularly taking into account high levels of worklessness and low levels of breastfeeding in the local area.

R11 Certain SureStart4u services with reasonably high levels of awareness have low levels of usage, e.g. Young Parents Group. This could indicate a lack of demand for the service. SureStart4u should review demand for services with low levels of uptake to ensure that these are meeting the needs of local families and are delivered in an appropriate manner.

R12 Some SureStart4u services were found to have lower levels of satisfaction than average. These included Young Parents' Group, Fridays Parents' Group and Triple P. SureStart4u should carry out some more in depth consultation with users of these services to determine reasons for dissatisfaction and identify improvements to provision.

R13 As requested by a number of parents consulted, SureStart4u should look into providing activities outside core hours, particularly in the evenings for working parents.

R14 The SureStart4u area has been host to various neighbourhood based initiatives in the past, including SRB2 and SRB Villages Initiative. With this in mind, the population may be at risk of experiencing 'research fatigue'. As a result, it is vital to provide local families with feedback as to the results of the consultation (along with any actions if possible). This helps to illustrate to families that they can have a genuine impact on local services, and that their views are taken seriously. This exercise would also service to increase awareness of SureStart4u, and could be tied in with a 'sign up now' targeted campaign to register parents.

R15 Despite the high proportion of workless households identified through the Baseline, there is no Job Centre representative on the Partnership Board. SureStart4u should look to involve this agency in Board meetings.

Service provision in the SureStart4u programme area

R16 A key theme which emerged strongly from the consultation was the poor quality of local parks. SureStart4u should pass on the findings to the Local Authority and use its links to petition for improvements to parks, with the provision of separate, fenced off play areas for young children, with age appropriate equipment. It may be necessary to provide wardens in parks to improve feelings of safety for local families and tackle anti social behaviour.

R17 SureStart4u should audit local availability of parks and play areas and look into providing an outdoor play facility for young children in the programme area.

R18 SureStart4u could arrange trips to local parks, allowing families who may be concerned about personal safety to access facilities that they may not otherwise use.

R19 Some respondents identified that indoor play facilities such as a Wacky Warehouse are hard to access. SureStart4u could look to provide an indoor play facility for families, such as that planned in the Children's Centre.

R20 Respondents highlighted the need for more leisure facilities and activities for families generally. SureStart4u could up follow this baseline information with some in-depth consultation work with local families to assess what form these facilities should take.

R21 Whilst the majority of parents thought that they did have enough information about home safety, as well as enough equipment, there is clearly a demand for a home safety checking service. This could be tied in with the work of the 'Fix It' project.

R22 Respondents identified the cost of home safety equipment as a barrier to use. SureStart4u may consider providing subsidised safety equipment if they are not already doing so. If this service is already in place then promotion of this should be increased.

R23 Some respondents in workless household identified lack of childcare as a barrier to work. SureStart4u and partner agencies need to audit availability of childcare, and look to provide more affordable childcare if this is needed. This is particularly important taking into account the extremely high proportion of workless households in the programme area.

R24 The perceived shortfall in childcare may be the result of a lack of information about childcare options. SureStart4u could provide parents with information packs about childcare in the local area.

R25 Respondents called for provision of more after school clubs and facilities. Sure Start should investigate potential for these in partnership with local schools and nurseries.

R26 Uptake of a café based within a local Children's Centre in Bentilee would be very high, with parents wishing to use it as a place to meet people and 'drop in' for a tea/coffee or soft drink. This would be an important addition to the Children's Centre planned by SureStart4u.

R27 Parents and carers in the 'Non Bentilee' areas would be far less likely to access a café or Wacky Warehouse style Playbarn located within a Children's Centre in Bentilee. Whilst this may reflect patterns of need, it is important to ensure that families outside the Bentilee area have access to a similar 'drop in' facility, and that transport is provided to the Children's Centre from these areas.

R28 Over 40% of parents and carers would be interested in accessing future volunteering opportunities within the planned Children's Centre. SureStart4u need to follow this up in the near future. This level of interest in suggests that there may be scope for expanding the Volunteer Programme. Increased promotion of this project would be advisable.

R29 Considering high levels of worklessness in the area, SureStart4u could investigate demand for an employment coordinator. This has been a key area of provision for other local programmes with a similarly high proportion of workless households.

R30 Criticisms regarding the difficulty in obtaining appointments at local GP services may highlight a need for increased provision of these services. SureStart4u needs to flag this concern with the PCT and local healthcare providers.

R31 Another important priority area for action highlighted by respondents was the local public transport system. Satisfaction with this was extremely low as a result of unreliable buses, low frequency of services and a lack of 'family friendly' buses. Improvements to these services are particularly vital taking into account the fact that over 50% of the population had used public transport in the 6 months before the consultation.

R32 Some respondents identified transport to Sure Start groups and activities as a problem. SureStart4u could look to provide transport to activities where possible if they are not already doing so.

R33 Concerns were raised across the programme area about the appearance and cleanliness of the local environment. This is clearly outside the remit of SureStart4u, but the finding should be shared with local partners including the City Council.

R34 Respondents, particularly in the Bentilee area, suggested that there should be improved provision for older children and teenagers, such as a youth club. These findings should be shared with local leisure providers, including the City Council.

R35 Anti-social behaviour was also identified as a problem by local parents and carers consulted. Again, this is outside the remit of Sure Start, but findings should be flagged with other community safety and crime prevention agencies.

1. Purpose, method and format

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

M-E-L Research, an independent research and service delivery consultancy based in Birmingham, was commissioned by SureStart4u (a sixth wave Sure Start local programme) in October 2004 to undertake a short term evaluation of the SureStart4u local programme. All Sure Start programmes are required by the Sure Start Unit to carry out a large scale satisfaction consultation with its target population on a 3 yearly basis. This SureStart4u local evaluation incorporated such a user satisfaction consultation as well as a documentary review of Management Information Systems in place at the programme.

The objectives of the consultation were to:

- Measure uptake of and satisfaction with local services (including SureStart4u services), and the extent to which these meet the needs of local parents.
- Understand what SureStart4u is doing, and how well this is being done
- Compile an evidence base to inform funding and mainstreaming.
- Identify key questions and hypotheses for future evaluation

This report focuses on just one aspect of the SureStart4u local evaluation- the user satisfaction consultation with parents and carers. The methodology adopted in the consultation is outlined below in Section 1.2, with a discussion of the key findings in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents a summary of key conclusions and recommendations for future service delivery. The evaluation of Management Information Systems is presented in a separate self standing report.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Survey with local parents/guardians

A total of 250 face to face interviews were carried out in November and December 2004 with local parents and carers of children under the age of 5. There were two conditions for eligibility to take part in the survey. Respondents had to:

- Live in the SureStart4u catchment area
- And**
- Be a parent or guardian of at least one child aged 5 or under
- Or**
- Be expecting to become a parent within the following 6 months.

Interviewers were provided with a copy of the SureStart4u boundary map so they could ensure respondents lived within the SureStart4u patch.

Questionnaire design

A questionnaire was designed in consultation with SureStart4u. NESS guidelines were also used to inform the design to ensure that all essential baseline data was collated. It was agreed that the survey should include questions on:

- Awareness of SureStart4u and use of Sure Start services
- Use of general services and facilities for young children and their families
- Satisfaction with these services and facilities
- Barriers to uptake of services
- Potential improvements to services for families with young children
- Use of and attitudes towards home safety equipment

- Plans for the Children's Centre in Bentilee

The questionnaire also included demographic questions such as age, gender and ethnicity. At the end of the survey, a telephone number was requested, so a quality control call-back could be made to at least 10% of respondents. Finally, the questionnaire included provision for parents to sign up as a SureStart4u parent.

Piloting

The questionnaire was piloted in the SureStart4u area on 16 November 2004 at the interviewer briefing session. Some minor amendments were made to the survey in light of the exercise. These piloted surveys are not included in the 250 analysed in Chapter 3.

Recruiting local interviewers

We were keen to work with local people as information gatherers, as well as information providers. To this end, we sought to involve local people as interviewers. Interviewers were recruited in the following ways:

- Publicity materials advertising the interviewing position (and raising awareness of the consultation in general) were sent to a range of local organisations.
- Local people responded to posters directly to the Fieldwork Manager at M.E.L.
- Contact was made with the Volunteer Coordinator at SureStart4u, who made contact with a number of local parents regarding the interviewing opportunities.

Briefing of local interviewers

An interviewer briefing session was held on 16 November 2004, at SureStart4u. A total of 7 potential interviewers attended the session.

During the briefing session, interviewers were introduced to the project and taken through the specifics of the consultation. They were also briefed on the MRS (Market Research Society) Codes of Conduct and provided with some background information to surveys, research and good interviewing technique and interviewer safety.

Letters of authorisation were provided for interviewers to give to respondents, as well as interviewer ID badges. The police were notified of the presence of interviewers in the area. A local drop off point for collection of questionnaires was arranged at the SureStart4u building at Brookhouse Green Primary School.

Three local interviewers began the interviewing, alongside 2 of M-E-L's own interviewers. Local interviewers completed 12 surveys with the remainder completed by M-E-L interviewers.

Sampling

It was agreed that approximately 30% of the 250 interviews should be carried out with 'non-registered' families, with the remaining 70% carried out with families with one or more children registered with SureStart4u. In order to access the views of parents across the area, quotas were agreed, reflecting the numbers of families in each area:

- Bentilee– 190 surveys
- Eaton Park– 25 surveys
- Berryhill– 15 surveys
- Moss Green– 20 surveys

The basis of the sampling is taken from a PCT-held 'CHIPS' list containing the names and contact details of children under 5 in the SureStart4u area. The PCT Caldicott Guardian approved the release of this data to M-E-L upon completion of a data protocol (designed by M-E-L). SureStart4u cross-referenced this CHIPS list with their own list of registered parents to produce a record of all registered and non registered families in the area. This list was used by interviewers to carry out door to door interviews with parents and carers.

Questionnaire response

Table 1 displays the actual number of completed interviews in each area compared to the target.

Table 1: Target and actual interviews

Area	Target Interviews	Actual Interviews
Bentilee	190	190
Eaton Park	25	26
Berryhill	15	15
Moss Green	20	19

1.3 Analysis and reporting

Questionnaire data was entered onto a database using the statistical package SPSS. After the data had been entered, a random 10% check on the entered questionnaires was carried out, to ensure the data had been entered accurately.

Using SPSS baseline frequency counts and percentages were generated. Some cross-tabulations by key demographic determinants were also produced (counts and percentages broken down by key questions such as gender and employment status). Finally, open ended comments were themed using a Grounded Theory framework. This involves a process of theming the data. Baseline frequency counts, percentages and cross-tabulations are presented in the Appendix, along with open ended comments from respondents.

1.4 Format of the report

Chapter 2 analyses the results from the survey with local parents. The report concludes with a summary of key findings and recommendations for future delivery of the programme.

2. Results of User Satisfaction Consultation

2.1 Introduction

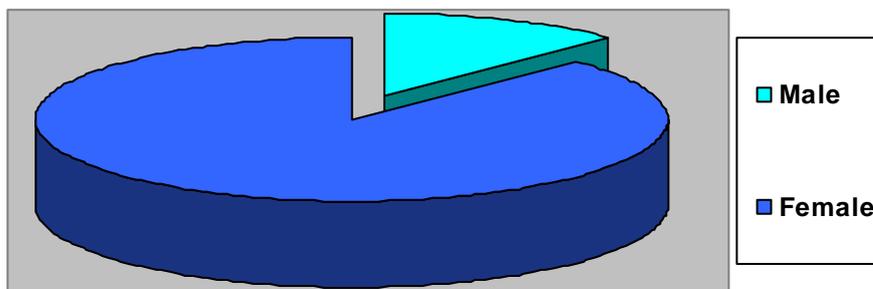
This chapter presents the findings from the 250 completed surveys. The data are analysed overall, and by the Bentilee and ‘non Bentilee’ areas within the patch. Non Bentilee areas include Berryhill, Moss Green and Eaton Park. These have been analysed together due to the small number of surveys completed in each of these areas (based on the quotas identified). Percentages are expressed as valid percentages, that is as a percentage of respondents who answered each particular question.

2.2 Profile of respondents

The profile of respondents is displayed below:

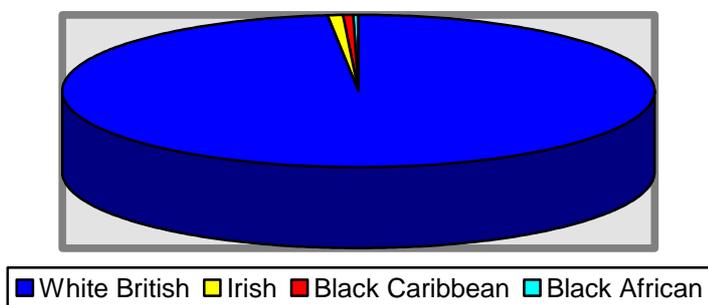
- The vast majority of respondents were female (88%, n=219) (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Gender of respondents (n= 250)



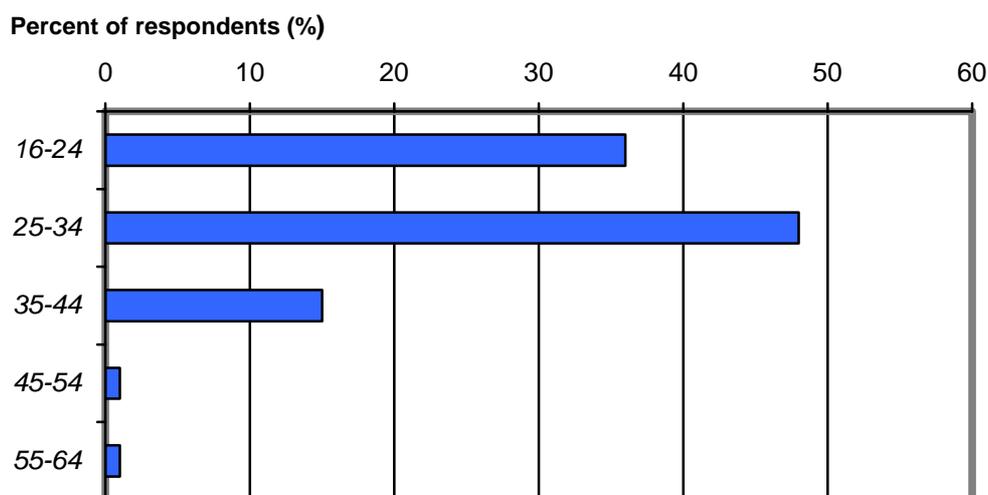
- In terms of ethnicity, Figure 2 shows that 98% (n=246) of respondents were ‘British’. Other ethnicities included ‘Black Caribbean’ (1%, n=1) ‘Irish’ (1%, n=2) and ‘Black African’ (1%, n=1). There was little variation in this by area of the programme.

Figure 2: Ethnic background of respondents (n=250)



- Almost half of respondents were in the 24–34 age group (48%, n=120) with 36% (n=90) aged 16–24. The next highest group was 35–44 years (15%, n=38). This is displayed in Figure 3.

**Figure3: Age of respondents
 (n = 250)**

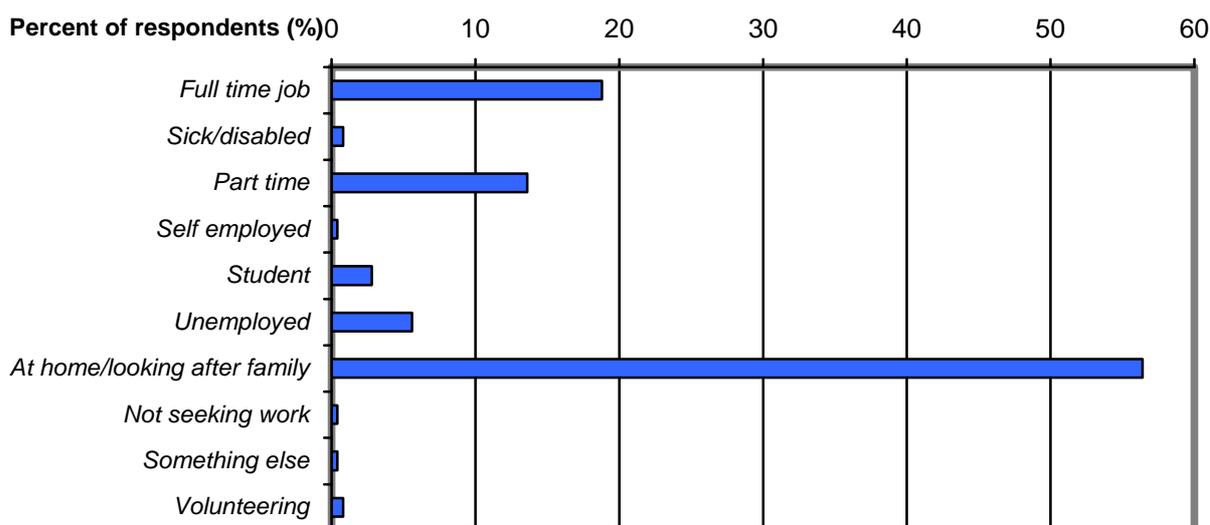


- The majority of parents and carers consulted had two children under the age of 16 (40%, n=96). Another 32% (n=76) of respondents had one child under the age of 16, with 16% (n=38) of respondents having three children. All respondents had at least one child under the age of 5 years.

2.2.1 Employment status

Figure 4 shows the employment status of respondents in the SureStart4u area at time of interview. Overall, 56% (n=141) of parents questioned were ‘at home/looking after their family’, making this by far the most popular response. This aside, 19% (n=47) of respondents were in full time employment, with 14% (n=34) in a part time job and 6% (n=14) of the total unemployed and seeking work. Another 3% (n=7) were students.

**Figure 4: Employment status of respondents
 (n = 250)**

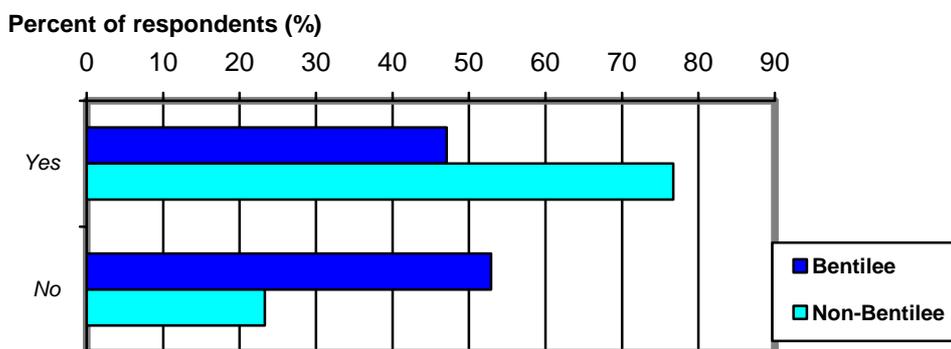


2.2.2 Households with a member in paid work

Of the 250 parents and carers consulted, just over half (54%, n=135) live in a household where there is anyone in paid employment (see Figure 5). This leaves 46% (n=114) of

families living in household in which no-one is in work (this compares to the national average of 22% and an average for Sure Start Local Programmes of 43%, NESS, 2004).

Figure 5: Is there anyone in your household currently in paid work?
(n=249)

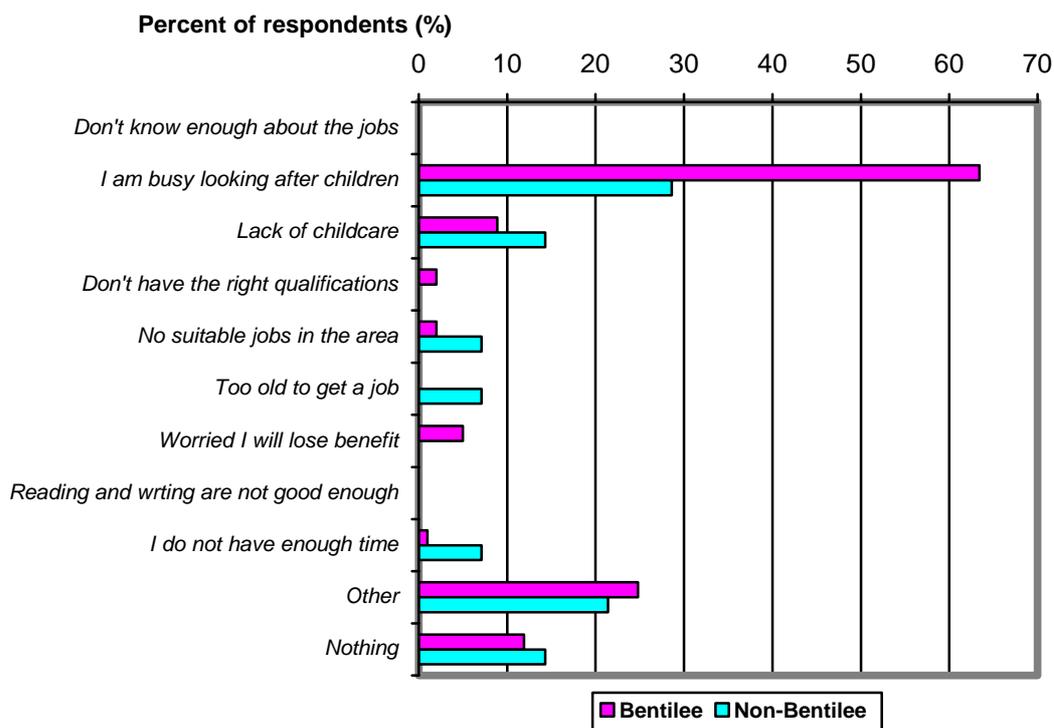


The proportion of households in which no-one is in work was slightly higher amongst families registered with SureStart4u. Forty seven percent of registered parents lived in a household with no-one in paid work (n=75), compared to 43% (n=39) of non-registered families. It also varied considerably depending on area of the patch. In Bentilee, just 47% (n=89) of respondents lived in a household with anyone in paid work, this rose to 77% (n=46) in non-Bentilee areas.

2.2.3 Barriers to accessing paid employment

Of those respondents living in a household where no one in is paid employment, the vast majority did identify barriers which prevent them from accessing work. Just 12% (n=14) of these respondents stated that there were no barriers preventing them accessing paid work.

Figure 6: What prevents you from taking up paid work?
(n=115)
(Only asked to those who live in a household where there is no one in paid work)



By far the most important barrier to paid work for respondents is that they are *'busy looking after children'*. This was mentioned, unprompted, by 59% (n=68) of those in workless households. A further 10% (n=11) of respondents to the question cited *'lack of childcare'* as a barrier to employment, with 4% (n=5) admitting that they are concerned about loss of benefits.

Almost 25% (n=28) of respondents in workless households identified *'other'* barriers preventing them accessing paid work. For these respondents, the most common barrier was an illness or incapacity- this applied to 10 parents consulted. Another four act as carers for a family member or partner. Six respondents explained that they are a *'student'* or *'at college full time'*. Other responses included *'I'm redundant'* (n=2), *'I want to spend time with my son'*, debt and *'I am too busy with Sure Start to get a job'*.

In terms of variation by profile of respondent, females were far more likely to be prevented from accessing work by lack of childcare and time spent looking after children. Males were more likely to identify *'other'* barriers as detailed above.

Within the SureStart4u area, a high proportion of families live in workless households. At 16% (n=114) this is almost double the national average. The problem is particularly acute in the Bentilee area. This is exacerbated by the fact that almost 90% (n=186) of respondents living in workless households face barriers preventing uptake of paid work.

2.3 SureStart4u

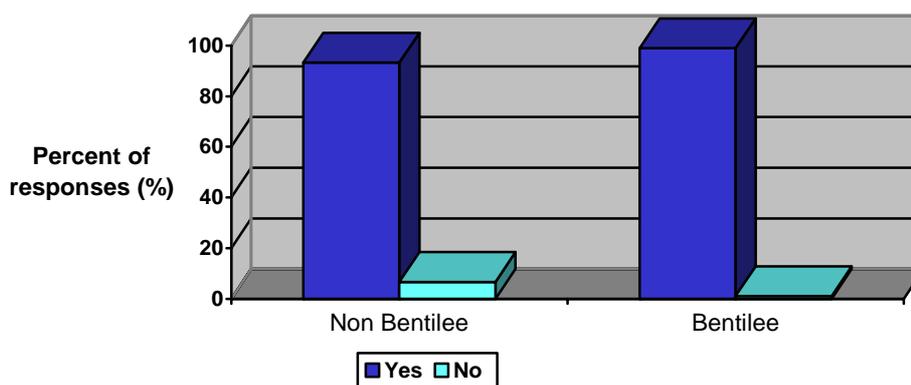
2.3.1 Awareness of SureStart4u

Overall awareness of SureStart4u was shown to be extremely high amongst respondents, particularly for a Round 6 programme (see Figure 7). When asked the question *'Had you heard of SureStart4u before today?'* an impressive 98% (n=244) of respondents answered *'yes'*.

In a Round 6 Sure Start programme in the North West of England, a recent User Satisfaction Consultation revealed that under two thirds (60%) of respondents were aware of the programme (M.E.L Research report) .

Respondents in Bentilee did demonstrate slightly higher levels of awareness of the programme; 99% (n=188) compared to 93% (n=56) in the non Bentilee areas. Awareness of SureStart4u was also found to be higher amongst females than males (99%, n=217 compared to 87%, n=27).

Figure 7: Had you heard of SureStart4u before today?
(n=250)



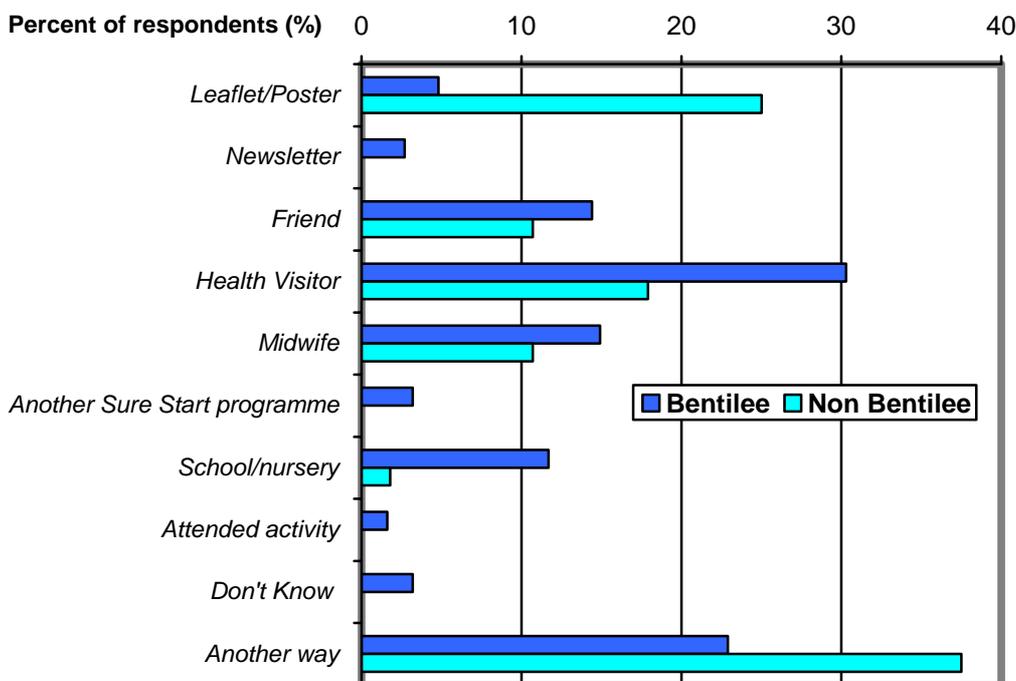
2.3.2 How did you hear about SureStart4u?

Respondents had heard about the SureStart4u programme from a wide variety of different sources. Overall the four most cited sources are as follows:

- Through my Health Visitor (28%, n=67 of respondents had heard about SureStart4u in this way)
- Another way (26%, n=64)
- Through my Midwife (14%, n=34)
- Through a friend (14%, n=33)

The range of sources of information, however, was very wide with schools, nurseries and posters also playing their part in awareness raising. The full list is displayed in Figure 8. Responses did show a degree of variation by area. Respondents in Bentilee were most likely to hear about SureStart4u through Health Visitors (30% (n=57), compared to 18% (n=10) in non Bentilee areas). The most common source of information in non-Bentilee areas were leaflets and posters, (25% (n=14), compared to 5% (n=9) in Bentilee).

Figure 8: How did you hear about SureStart4u?
(n=244)
(Only answered by those who had heard of SureStart4u)



Those respondents who had found out about SureStart4u in ‘another way’ cited a range of sources. Sixteen parents and carers (from Bentilee and Eaton Park only) knew about SureStart4u from local playgroups, including Stay and Play. Another 14 had been contacted by SureStart4u, either by a ‘letter through the post’ or a visit from a Sure Start worker. Nine respondents referred to their local health centre at Eaton Park or Bentilee. Other responses include schools, family and being aware of SureStart4u through work.

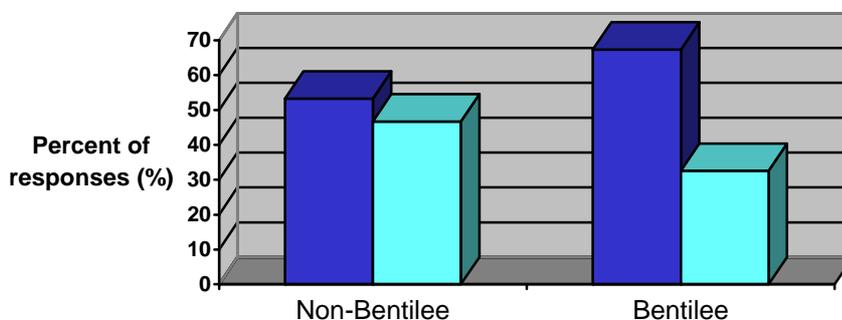
Awareness of SureStart4u is extremely high for any Local Programme, particularly a Round 6 one. Parents and carers have been made aware of SureStart4u in a number of ways; however, it is clear that local professionals such as Health Visitors and Midwives have had a vital part to play in this information dissemination.

2.3.3 Registration with SureStart4u

As an indicator for registration, respondents were asked if they had received a bag of free gifts from SureStart4u. Overall, Figure 9 shows that 64% (n=160) of respondents remembered receiving this bag which included a book, T-shirt or baby vest, a cup and a pen. A higher percentage of females were registered than male respondents (66%, n=144, compared to 52%, n= 16). Rates of registration appeared highest in Bentilee than Berryhill, Moss Green or Eaton Park (67%, n=128, compared to 53%, n=32). Finally, we can see that a low proportion of parents in full time employment are registered with SureStart4u. This accounted for 51% (n=24) of this group, compared to 67% (n=95) of those ‘looking after family’ in the home.

Based on sampling quotas, 70% (n=140) of respondents were registered with SureStart4u. Despite this, the results indicate that 64% (n=160) were aware that they were registered.

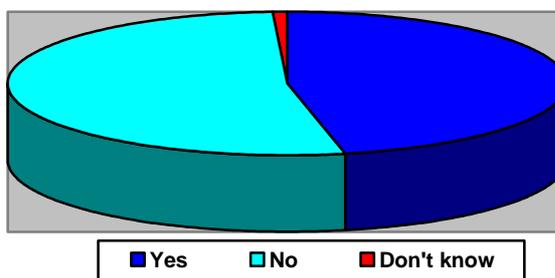
Figure 9: Have you received a bag of free gifts from SureStart4u? (n=250)



2.3.4 Overall uptake of SureStart4u

The results indicate that almost half (47%, n=117) of parents and carers consulted have used a SureStart4u service (see Figure 10). Just 1% (n=2) were unsure whether they had done so, with the remainder being non-service users. Whilst this is a very high proportion of users, it represents just under half of all respondents who were aware of SureStart4u.

Figure 10: Have you ever used any SureStart4u services? (n=250)



Females are more likely to have used a SureStart4u service than males (48%, n=106, compared to 36%, n=11). Area of residence also clearly impacts uptake. Whilst 51% (n=96) of respondents living in Bentilee had used a service, this fell to 35% (n=21) in the area defined as ‘non-Bentilee’. In terms of registered parents, 61% (n=98) of these had used a SureStart4u service compared to 21% (n=19) of non-registered families. However, 38% (n=60) of registered parents consulted had not used a SureStart4u service at the time of interview. Lastly, working parents (in full time employment only) are considerably less likely to be involved with SureStart4u. Twenty one percent (n=10) of these had used a SureStart4u service, compared to 79% (n=11) of unemployed respondents.

involvement of local parents and carers in SureStart4u is extremely high. Over two thirds of respondents believed themselves to be a registered parent, with almost half of respondents having used a Sure Start service. Involvement with SureStart4u is notably higher in Bentilee in terms of awareness, use and registration.

Reasons for non-uptake of SureStart4u

Those respondents who hadn't used SureStart4u services gave a variety of reasons why they had yet to do so. The responses are summarised below:

Lack of information

In Bentilee, 8 parents and carers explained that they had not used SureStart4u services as they were unsure what was on offer and who SureStart4u was available to. *'I don't know much about it', 'I'm not aware of what's on offer', 'I thought it was just for working people'*. Numerous other parents and carers made comments emphasising the need for more information in order to raise awareness of SureStart4u in Bentilee.

Other commitments

Twenty respondents in Bentilee and 14 in non-Bentilee areas mentioned that they have other commitments that currently prevent their use of SureStart4u services. Three parents and carers in Bentilee said that they were in full time work so *'hadn't got the time'*. Other respondents also mentioned that they *'haven't got round to it'* or *'have been too busy'*. These responses were reflected in the non Bentilee areas where work commitments seemed to be an important factor preventing parents and carers from using SureStart4u.

Not registered

In total, 9 parents in Bentilee and 3 parents in the non Bentilee areas explained that they had not used SureStart4u services as they were not registered with SureStart4u, *'I'm not registered.'* Other parents explained that they had only just joined SureStart4u so hadn't yet used the services; *'I only joined last week'*.

Other than time and work commitments there are no major barriers preventing use of SureStart4u services by parents and carers. The only factor identified by respondents was improved information dissemination about Sure Start projects and services.

2.3.5 SureStart4u services

After establishing awareness of Sure Start as a whole, we then focused on awareness and use of specific services and facilities provided by SureStart4u. Sixteen services and activities were listed in a table, and respondents were asked to identify which of these services they were aware of, which they used, and rate satisfaction with these.

Awareness of SureStart4u services and activities

In terms of individual SureStart4u services, considerable variations in awareness were identified. These are displayed in Figure 11. Overall, the SureStart4u services which have the greatest level of awareness are as follows:

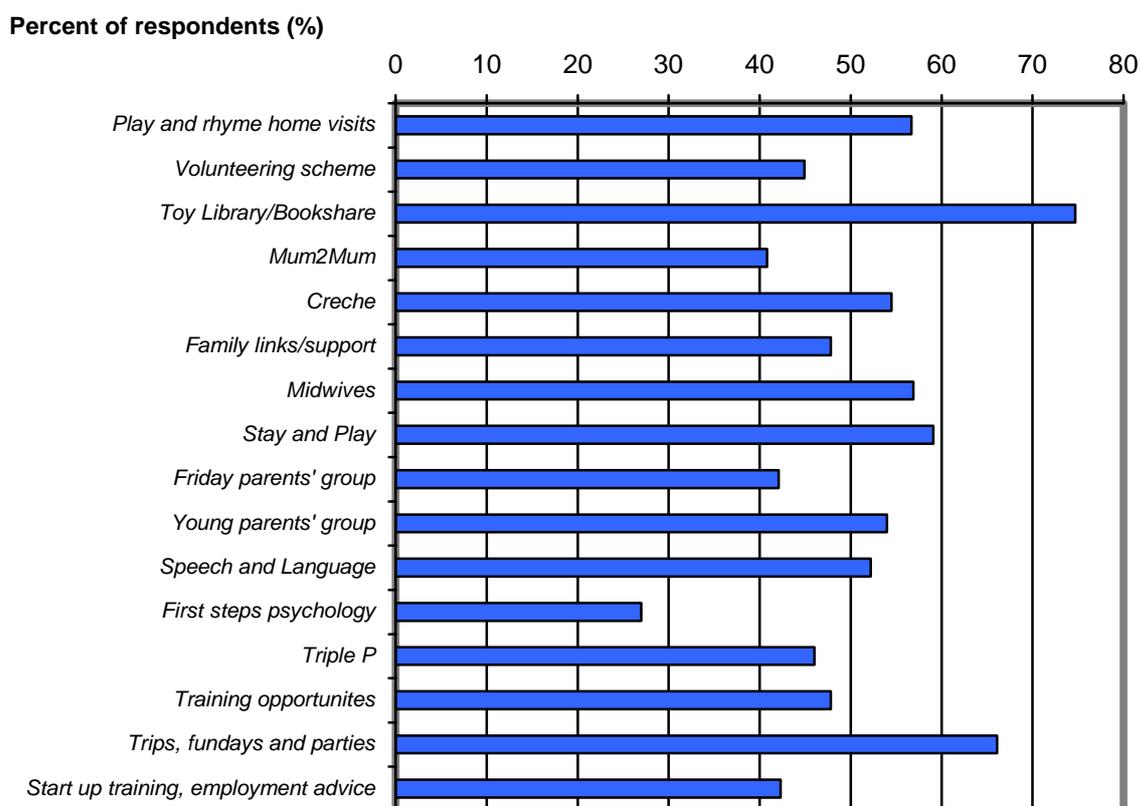
- Toy Library/Bookshare (75% of parents were aware of this service, n = 186)
- Trips, fundays and parties (66%, n=164)
- Stay and Play (59%, n=146)
- Midwives (57%, n=141)
- Play and rhyme home visits (57%, n=140)

The results indicate that awareness of all SureStart4u services is high, with just over 40% of respondents aware of each specific service (with the exception of First Steps). However, those services with the lowest levels of awareness are as follows:

- First steps psychology (27% of parents were aware of this service, n=67)
- Mum2Mum Breastfeeding support (41%, n=100)
- Start up training and employment advice (42%, n=105)
- Friday parent’s group (42%, n=104)
- Volunteering Scheme (45%, n=111)

This represents a real achievement for SureStart4u in terms of awareness raising and programme publicity.

Figure 11: Which of the following SureStart4u services have you heard of?



Uptake of SureStart4u services

Parents and carers who were aware of specific services were asked whether they had used these SureStart4u services. The results are displayed in Figure 12 where a great variation in take-up is observable. This will not be influenced by a lack of awareness as the question was only asked of those who showed awareness of each service.

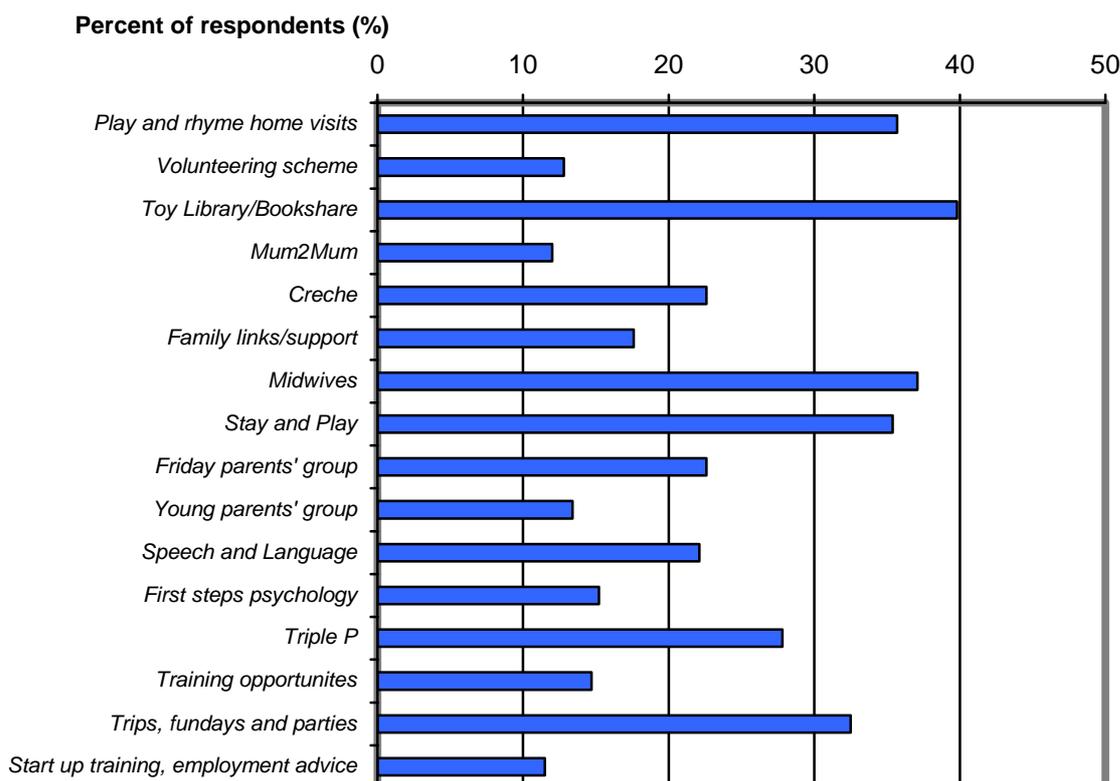
The services that had the highest take up amongst those parents and carers who were aware of the service were as follows:

- Toy Library/Bookshare (40% of parents who were aware of the service had used it in the 12 months before interview, n=74).
- Midwives (37%, n=52)
- Play and rhyme home visits (36%, n=50)
- Stay and Play (35%, n=52)
- Trips, fundays and parties (33%, n=53)

The services that had the lowest take up amongst those parents and carers who were aware of the service were as follows:

- Start up training and employment advice (12% of parents aware of the service had used it in the 12 months before interview, n=12)
- Mum2Mum - Breastfeeding support (12%, n=12)
- Volunteering scheme (13%, n=14)
- Young Parent’s group (13%, n=18)
- Training opportunities (15%, n=7)

**Figure 12: Have you used this SureStart4u service in the last 12 months?
(Only asked to those who had heard of the SureStart4u service)**



Satisfaction with individual services

Finally, respondents who had used specific services were asked to give each service a star rating to represent their satisfaction with it (see Figure 13). Ratings ranged from 1 to 3 stars, with 3 stars being very satisfied and 1 star being not satisfied. The results indicate very high levels of satisfaction with the majority of the services; there were some exceptions to this, however.

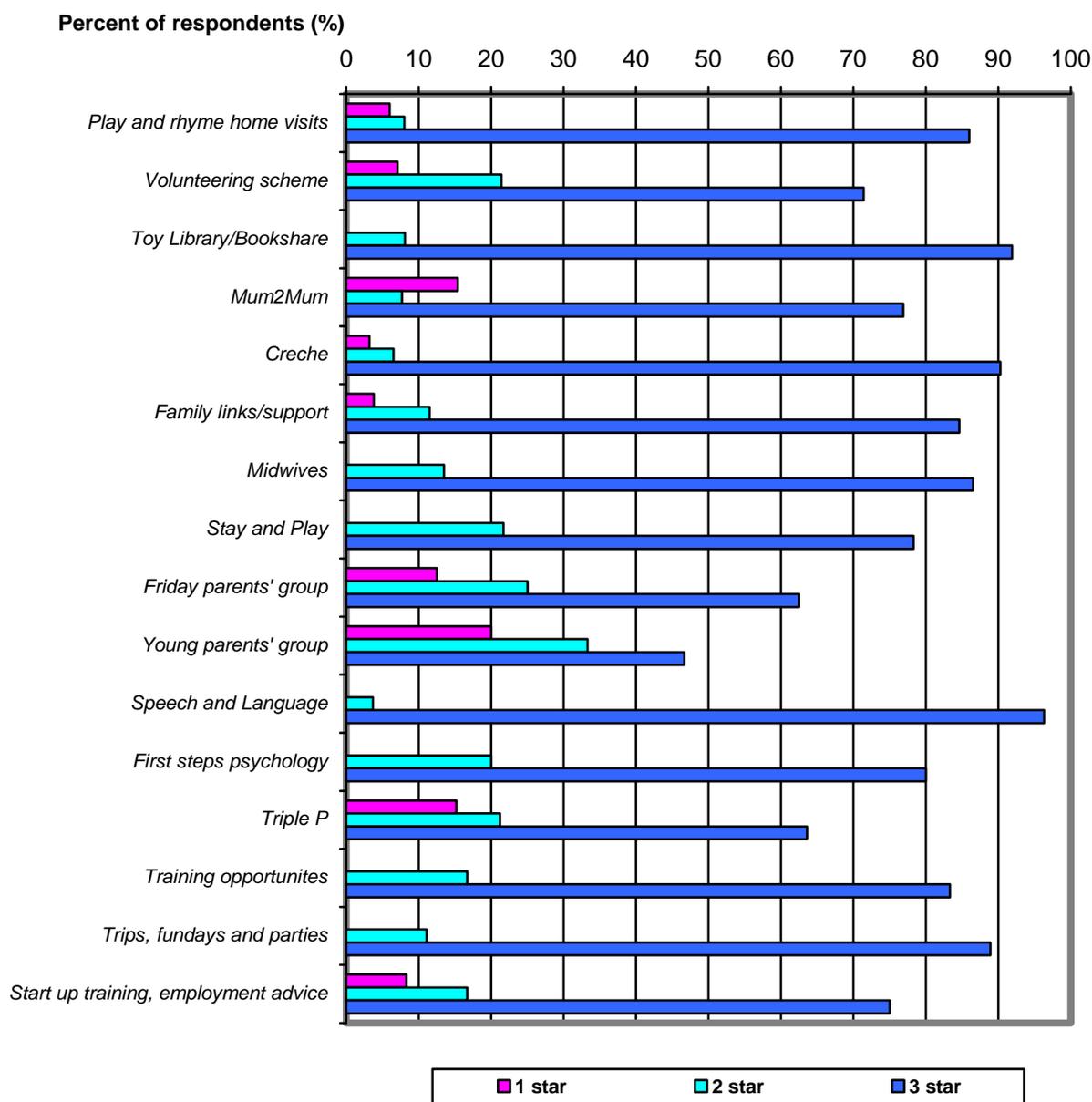
Overall, the five services which were most likely to be given a 3 star rating by the parents consulted were as follows:

- Speech and Language (96% of parents who had used the service awarded it a 3 star rating, n=26)
- Toy Library/Bookshare (92%, n=68)
- Crèche (90%, n=28)
- Trips, fundays and parties (89%, n=48)
- Midwives (87%, n=45)

The least popular services were awarded one star ratings by respondents. Overall, the services with the lowest levels of satisfaction were as follows:

- Young Parents' group (20% (n=3) of parents who had used the service gave this a one star rating)
- Mum2Mum – Breastfeeding support (15%, n=2)
- Triple P – Parenting (15%, n=5)
- Friday parents' group (13%, n=3)
- Start up training and employment advice (8%, n=1)

**Figure 13: What star rating would you give the service?
(Only asked to those who had used each service)**



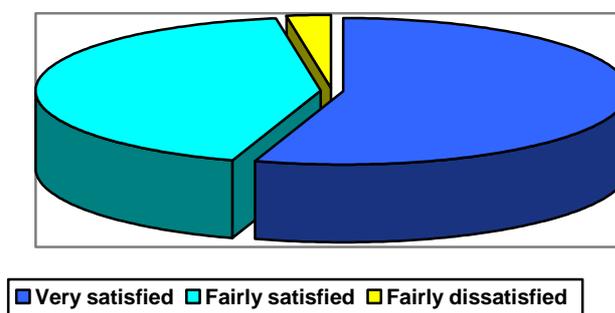
Awareness, uptake and satisfaction with specific SureStart4u services is extremely high, particularly for such a late programme. This represents a real achievement by SureStart4u and its service providers.

2.3.6 Overall satisfaction of SureStart4u services

Respondents who had used any SureStart4u service provided an overall assessment of satisfaction with SureStart4u services. The net satisfaction rating was an excellent +97 (this is generated by subtracting the proportion of respondents who are ‘very’ or ‘fairly dissatisfied’ from those who are ‘fairly’ or ‘very satisfied’). Indeed, 55% (n=84) of respondents were ‘very satisfied’ with SureStart4u services.

- In terms of profile of respondents, females were more likely to be ‘very satisfied’ with the services compared to males (56% (n=80), compared to 36% (n=4)).
- Levels of satisfaction with services showed negligible variation by area.

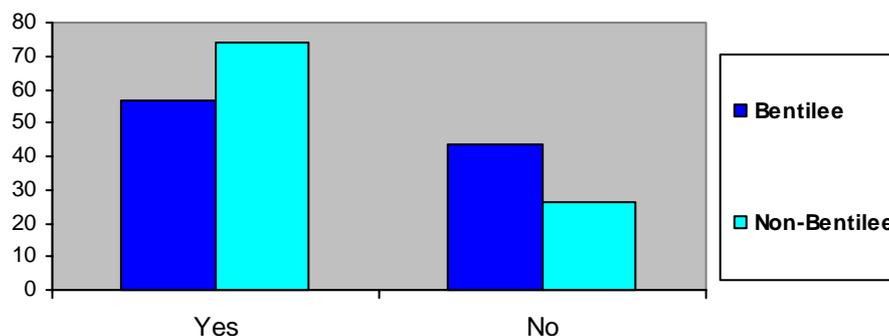
Figure 14: How satisfied are you with the SureStart4u services that you have used? (Only asked to those who had used SureStart4u services) (n=153)



2.3.7 Has SureStart4u made a difference to your life?

Parents and carers who had used a SureStart4u service were asked whether they believed that SureStart4u had made a difference to their life. The results are positive and give encouragement to the programme in these early stages of operation. Almost 60% (n=103) of these respondents agreed that SureStart4u *had* made a difference to their or their family’s life. Parents and carers in the non-Bentilee areas were most likely to agree with this (74% (n=17) compared to 57% (n=86) in Bentilee). Registered services users were also considerably more likely to believe that SureStart4u had made a difference to their lives, whilst females were slightly more likely to state this than males. The results are displayed by area in Figure 15.

Figure15: Do you think SureStart4u has made a difference to your life? (Only asked to those who had used SureStart4u services) (n=175)



Those respondents who agreed that SureStart4u had impacted on their lives were asked to explain why they believed that this to be the case. A variety of issues were discussed.

Support

Overall, 22 parents and carers highlighted that SureStart4u had made a difference to them as it provided help and support when it was needed. *'My son was a bit behind, but SureStart4u helped.'* Other parents emphasised the high standard of support that SureStart4u offer, one parent said that they provide a great deal of *'reassurance'* to parents. Specific support services mentioned by respondents included breastfeeding support (n=1) and speech therapy (n=8); these seem to be proving very popular amongst families. Overall, respondents provided a very positive image of the support that SureStart4u provide.

Socialising

A total of 21 parents and carers emphasised that their social life had improved since using SureStart4u services. Not only were their children making new friends but they were meeting new people as well. One respondent told how SureStart4u had allowed them to *'meet new people', 'it gets you out of the house'*. Other parents and carers talked about the skills they have developed since taking part in SureStart4u activities *'I've got more confidence'* (n=5), *'I've developed my communication skills'* (n=8). Some respondents added that SureStart4u had also improved the social skills of their children as one parent explained *'it gets children mixing with other children'*.

Time off from the children

Ten respondents highlighted the fact that SureStart4u had made a difference to their lives as they now have *'time to themselves'*. A number of respondents in the Bentilee area mentioned that *'it frees up time'* (n=5) and is *'stress free'* (n=2).

SureStart4u staff

Many respondents praised the SureStart4u staff for being so helpful and supportive (n=8). *'They are really nice and there when you need them.'* One respondents specifically stated that the SureStart4u staff are particularly good at listening to you *'there's always someone there for you,' 'they always listen to you'* (n=1). This point was emphasised by another respondent who explained that *'you can always phone them if you need them'* (n=1).

Trips and events

Five respondents in the Bentilee area believed that the trips and events provided by SureStart4u had made a difference to their lives. One respondent emphasised that she wouldn't take her children on a trip on her own as she wouldn't have enough support, but SureStart4u had made this possible as they have *'good trips with plenty of support'*.

Specific services

Specific services that were mentioned by respondents included 'Triple P' (n=1) and 'child psychology' (n=1), 'speech and language' (n=6) and 'family link workers' (n=2). All of these services were perceived to be excellent. One parent/carer in the Moss Green area mentioned that the services *'help me understand the mind of a child'*.

Almost 60% (n=103) of parents and carers who had used a SureStart4u service thought that the programme had made a difference to their lives. This demonstrates that SureStart4u has been able to provide real 'added value'. This added value takes the form of excellent support, confidence building and allowing parents and children to access social networks.

2.3.8 Are there any other services that SureStart4u should provide?

Overall, the majority of respondents could not think of other services that SureStart4u should provide; *'it covers everything'*. However, some parents and carers mentioned specific services that are needed in the area. The most popular responses are as follows:

Evening activities

Four parents and carers in Bentilee and 4 in non Bentilee areas believed that there should be more activities after school and in the evenings. There should be *'night time activities for children'* (n=4) and *'more afternoon groups on other days'* (n=2) for working parents. Other respondents were also very keen for more children to have more after school activities.

Childcare

A number of respondents referred to a lack of after school activities in the area (n=4). Parents and carers also called for more crèche facilities (n=3), particularly those which are affordable (n=1) and in the Moss Green area.

Other services

One respondent in Bentilee highlighted that there should be *'more for the over 5's to do'*. In addition to this other parents and carers consulted would like to see *'more groups for dads'*. Other suggestions made by respondents included:

- *'Swimming and keep-fit sessions'* (n=1)
- *'Indoor play areas'* (n=1)
- *'Health drop-in centre'* (n=1)
- *'Library van'* (n=1)
- *'More trips, visits and outings'* (n=1)
- *'More publicity about Sure Start services'* (n=1)

2.4 General services for children aged under 5 years

As well as examining uptake of SureStart4u services, respondents were also asked about their use of other key areas of provision, including statutory services.

2.4.1 Frequency of use

In terms of uptake of general services for young children, there was great variation in levels of usage. This information is displayed in Figure 16. Overall, the services which were most commonly used by parents and carers interviewed in the last 12 months were as follows:

- GP Services (67%, of respondents had used this service during the 12 months previous to the interview n=166)
- Health Visitors (57%, n=141)
- Local public transport (54%, n=134)
- Indoor play areas (51%, n=127)
- Dentist (49%, n=121)

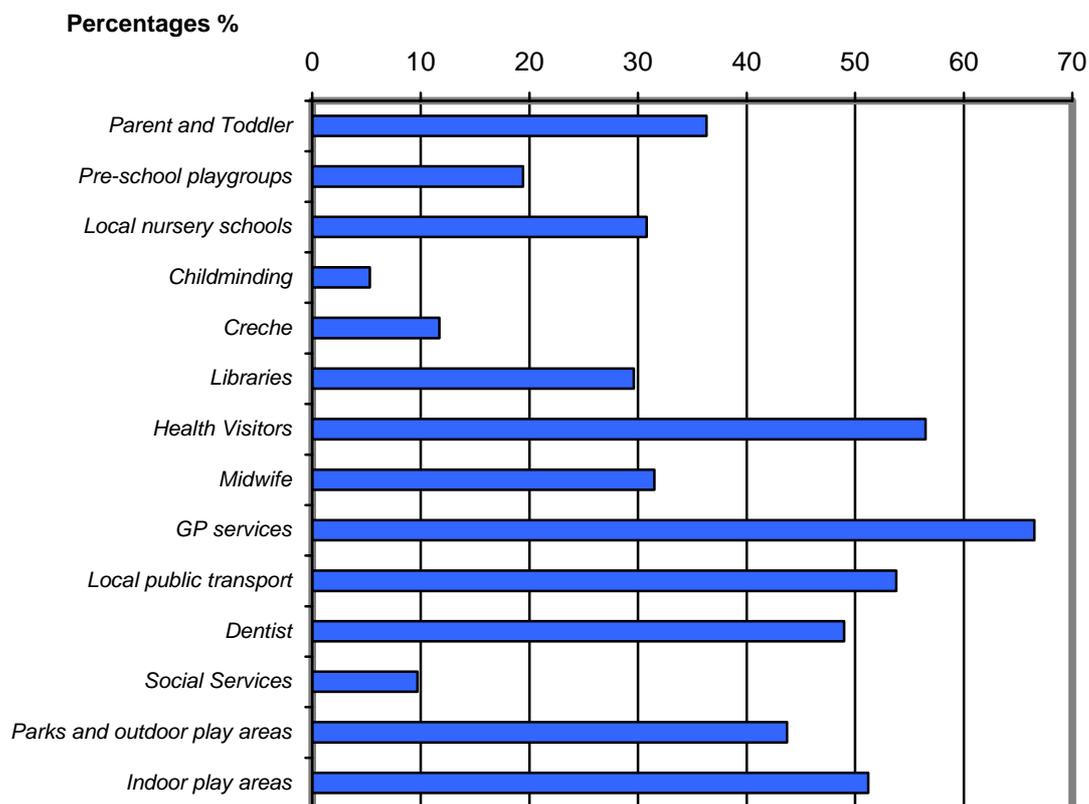
The services with the lowest take-up amongst respondents were as follows:

- Childminding (5%, of respondents had used this service during the 12 months previous to the interview n=13)
- Social Services (10%, n=24)
- Crèche (12%, n=29)
- Pre-school playgroups/play schemes (19%, n=48)

- Libraries (29%, n=73)

Despite being some of the least commonly used services; uptake of Social Services and private childcare does appear relatively high compared to uptake in other Sure Start programme areas. Also a fairly low proportion of respondents had used outdoor parks and play areas in the previous 12 months; just 44% (n=108). When the results were analysed by area, there are negligible variations in terms of the services with low uptake.

Figure 16: Have you used this service in the past 12 months?



2.4.2 Satisfaction with local services

Respondents who indicated that they had used a service in the past 12 months were asked to assess this service, stating the extent to which they were satisfied with the service and how the service could be improved.

How satisfied were you with the service?

The services that respondents were most satisfied with were as follows:

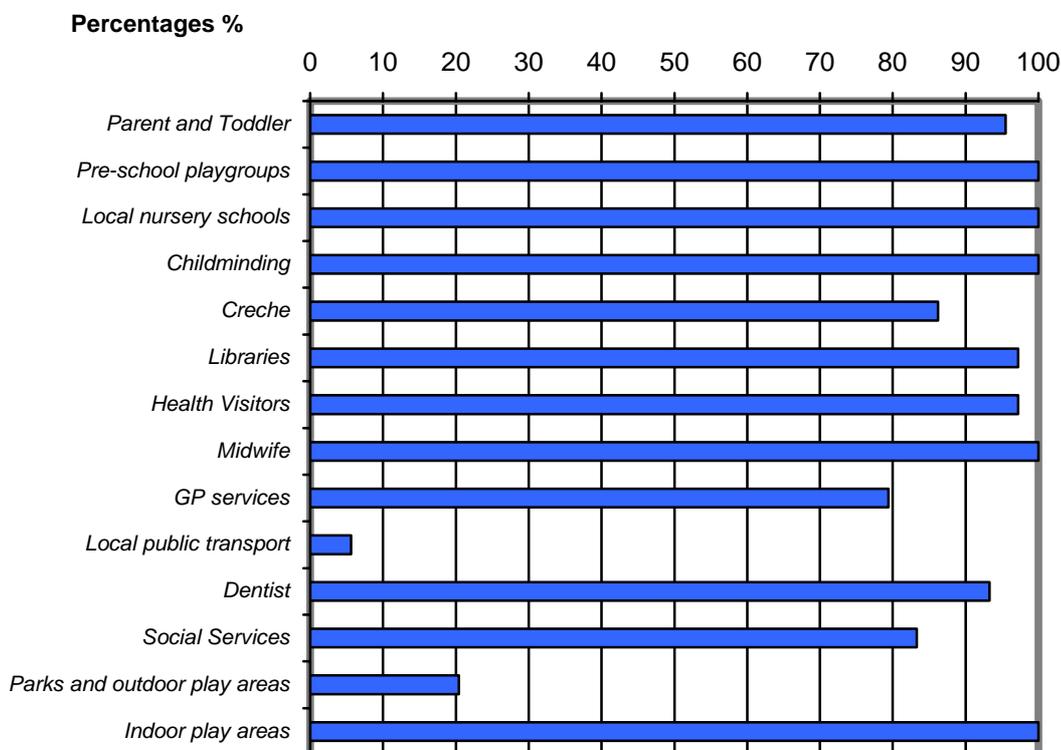
- Pre school play groups/play schemes (50% (n=24) of parents were very satisfied with local services, with 50% (n=24) satisfied with local services.)
- Local nursery schools (53% (n=40) very satisfied, 47% (n=36) satisfied)
- Childminding (54% (n=7) very satisfied, 46% (n=6) satisfied)
- Midwife (56% (n=44) very satisfied, 44% (n=34) satisfied)
- Indoor play areas (50% (n=64) very satisfied, 50% (n=63) satisfied)

The local services that respondents were least satisfied with were as follows:

- Local public transport (37% (n=49) of respondents were dissatisfied and 11% (n=14) were very dissatisfied with the local public transport.)

- Parks and outdoor play areas (30% (n=32) dissatisfied, 10% (n=11) very dissatisfied)
- GP services (7% (n=12) dissatisfied, 3% (n=5) very dissatisfied)
- Social Services (8% dissatisfied, n=2)

Figure17: Net satisfaction rating with specific services



The full results are displayed in Figure 17. Respondents who were dissatisfied with certain services gave a variety of suggestions as to how these services could be improved. These are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: How can services be improved?

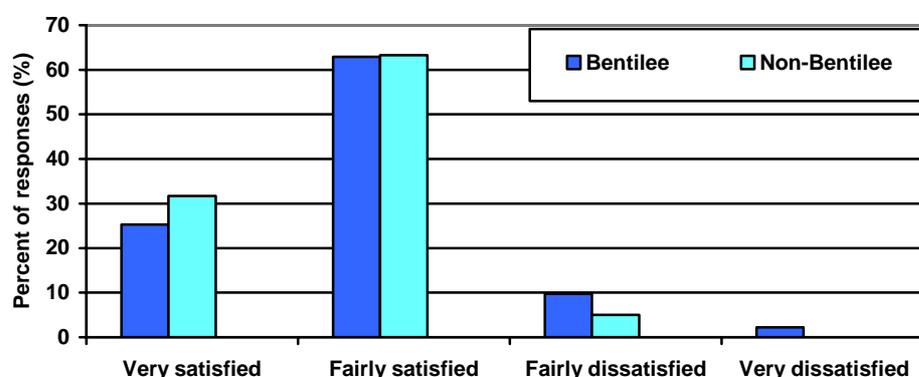
Service	How can it be improved?
Parent and Toddler Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inviting more people; <i>'not enough people go'</i> (n=1) ● <i>'Not a very good service'</i> (n=1)
Crèche	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workers should contact parents if child gets injured (n=1)
Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library is closed at the moment; <i>'shame its now shut'</i> (n=1)
Health Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents need more regular visits; <i>'you don't hear off her much'</i> (n=1) ● <i>'they think they know it all'</i> (n=1)
GP services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid making people feel awkward (n=1) ● Need more appointments and out of hours times (n=4) ● Appointments <i>'take too long'</i> (n=1) ● Distance of surgery is too far (n=1) ● Doctors should prioritise urgent appointments (n=1) ● GPs should be friendlier and shouldn't make patients feel <i>'rushed'</i> (n=2) ● <i>'I can't understand my doctor'</i> (n=1)
Local public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transport needs to be on time (n=11); <i>'they don't run on time'</i>, <i>'they are very late'</i>. <i>'they never ever come on time'</i> ● <i>'Poor timetable'</i> (n=3) ● Buses need to run more frequently as <i>'there's no space on them'</i> (n=2) ● Buses need to be more accessible for people with pushchairs <i>'I can't get my buggy on the buses.'</i> (n=3)

Dentist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parking spaces needed at surgery (n=1) • <i>'Takes too long to get an appointment'</i> (n=1)
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service needs improving <i>'they haven't worked for me'</i>. (n=1)
Parks and outdoor play areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks need to be cleaned; <i>'it's full of rubbish and glass'</i> (n=14) • Parks need to be made safe, <i>'it is full of druggies', 'the teenagers have wrecked it'</i> (n=6) • Park is very <i>'rundown'</i> (n=8) • Anti-social behaviour needs to be tackled in the parks (n=2) • More play equipment needed; <i>'there are no slides or other things'</i> (n=1)

2.4.4 Overall satisfaction with services in the SureStart4u area

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with all local services for children under the age of 5 in the SureStart4u areas (see Figure 18).

Figure18: Satisfaction with general services for families with children under 5 in the area (n=246)

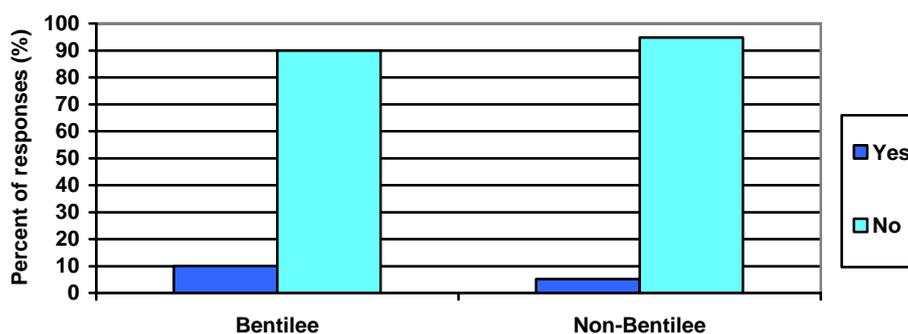


- The results were positive, with a net rating of +80. Twenty seven percent of respondents were 'very satisfied' with local services (n=66). However, a total of 10% (n=25) of respondents stated that they were either 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with local services for families with young children.
- In terms of variation by area, respondents living in Bentilee were most likely to be dissatisfied with services (this applied to 12% (n=22) of Bentilee residents, compared to 5% (n=3) in the non-Bentilee area).
- Families registered with SureStart4u were also more likely to be 'very satisfied' with local provision (30%, n=47, compared to 22%, n=19 for non registered).

Whilst satisfaction with local services for families with young children is generally high, here are clearly some priority areas for action which need to be addressed by local service providers. The poor quality of public transport and parks and play areas were key areas identified by parents and carers during the consultation.

Finally, respondents were asked if there was anything that currently prevents them from using local services. Approximately 90% (n=225) of respondents stated that they experienced no barriers to service use; however 10% (n=22) of parents cited specific services that they could not use. The results are displayed in Figure 19.

**Figure 19: Are there any services that you would like to use but can't at the moment?
 (n=247)**



Bentilee

Respondents in Bentilee mentioned a range of services that they would like to use but were unable to. Parents and carers consulted were most likely to refer to childcare facilities, such as a crèche or nursery. Respondents were unable to use these facilities as *'my son is too young at the moment'* (n=3).

Playgroups, Parents and Toddler groups, Play and Stay and SureStart4u trips were also mentioned by parents. Respondents were unable to use these facilities as *'I haven't got the time'* (n=2) or *'I work all the time'* (n=2)

Another parent in the Bentilee area said that they would like to use an indoor play area, *'if it was opened locally'*. One respondent highlighted how they were unable to use swimming facilities as there is *'no local pool'*.

Non Bentilee

One respondent in Berryhill mentioned that they would like to use the Wacky Warehouse but are unable to as *'transport is a problem'*.

Two other parents in the non-Bentilee areas mentioned that the quality of local parks are poor thus preventing them from using these resources.

2.5 Perceptions of the SureStart4u area

2.5.1 Improvements in the local area

Respondents were asked what improvements could be made to the SureStart4u area which would make life better for families with children under the age of 5 years. The results are presented below by each of the four distinct SureStart4u areas.

Bentilee

Local environment

The majority of responses referred to the improvements that need to be made to the cleanliness and safety of the local environment. Twenty respondents agreed that there is a real need to *'clean up the parks and play areas'*. Respondents also believed the appearance of the local area needs to be improved.

Facilities

Improvements to local facilities was a popular area of need identified by local parents and carers. The majority of these suggestions related to improving play facilities for young children. Respondents particularly referred to poor levels of safety in local parks and play areas (n=16), and the need to tackle this. Although this is outside the remit of Sure Start, many parents and carers consulted also mentioned that there should be more facilities for older children and teenagers (n=5). One suggested the provision of a youth club locally.

Transport

A variety of improvements to transport facilities in general were discussed. One respondent stated, *'transport is a problem because I don't drive.'* Problems with bus services were highlighted by the parents living in Bentilee who agreed that *'bus services need sorting out'* (n=5). Parents and carers also suggested that a school bus service could be provided, along with improved transport to venues where SureStart4u services are provided. One respondent mentioned that the traffic on Wellfield road is especially dangerous and suggested traffic calming measures in the area.

Safety/security

Three respondents discussed the importance of tackling problems of drug use in the area. Parents and carers would like to see more police *'on the beat'* (n=2) locally to reduce the drug problems. Finally one respondent would like to see anti social behaviour reduced especially on Devonshire Square.

Berryhill

The majority of respondents living in the Berryhill area stated that *'more play areas are needed locally;* (n=2) *'a local park would be good'* (n=1). There is also a need for more *'activities'* generally available in the area (n=1). One respondent added that a *'local shop is needed'* in Berryhill.

Moss Green and Eaton Park

Many of the suggestions made by the parents and carers consulted living in Bentilee were reflected in the responses of parents and carers from Moss Green and Eaton Park. These suggested that there should be more parks, play areas and play groups. Many parents also highlighted the need for better safety and security on the street.

Needs relating to improvements in the local area were fairly consistent across all areas making up the SureStart4u patch. Priority areas for improvement were found to be parks and play areas, community safety, transport and the poor quality environment.

2.6 Home safety equipment

2.6.1 Perceptions of home safety equipment

In order to assess perceptions of home safety equipment, respondents were given five statements to consider. Table 7 summarises the results of this question, presenting the proportions of respondents who either strongly agreed or agreed with each statement.

Table 7 suggests that home safety is an important issue for the majority of respondents. Whilst most parents and carers do believe that they have sufficient information about home safety, as well as the relevant equipment, 90% (n=225) of respondents would use a home checking service. Responses also indicate that parents and carers consulted perceive

equipment to be expensive to purchase. Respondents in the Bentilee area were most likely to feel that they do not have enough information about home safety, or enough safety equipment.

Table 7: How much do you agree with the following statements? (n=250)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree
'As the parent of a young child, safety in the home does concern me'	61%(n=153)	36% (n=90)
'I feel that I do have enough information about how to protect my family from accidents in the home'	50% (n=124)	44% (n=109)
'Safety equipment is expensive to buy'	37% (n=92)	46% (n=115)
'I have enough home safety equipment in my home'	31% (n=78)	50% (n=124)
'If a home safety checking service was available I would like to use it'	34% (n=84)	56% (n=141)

2.6.2 Use of home safety equipment

Respondents were then asked to identify what safety equipment they currently have in their home. As displayed in Figure 20, the most commonly owned items of home safety equipment were as follows:

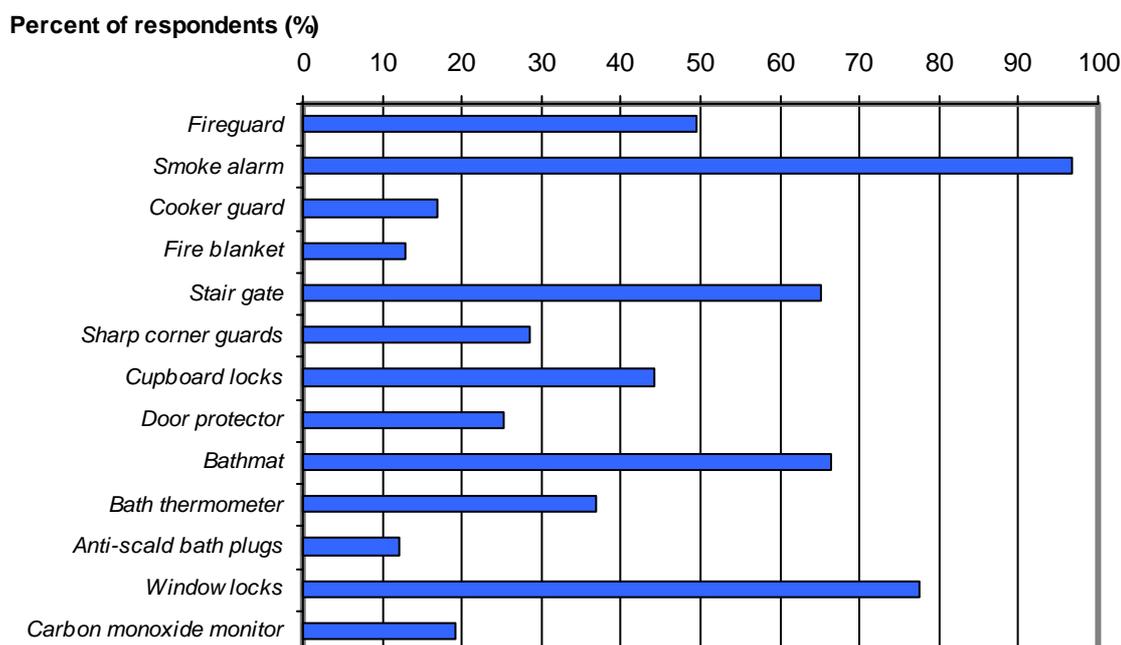
- Smoke alarm (97% (n=241)of parents had a smoke alarm in their house)
- Window locks (78%, n=194)
- Bathmat (66%, n=166)

The items of home safety equipment that were least commonly owned amongst respondents were as follows:

- Anti-scald bath plugs (12% (n=30) had an anti-scald bath plug in their house)
- Fire blanket (13%, n=32)
- Cooker guard (17%, n=42)

Ownership of safety equipment showed little variation by area or profile of respondent.

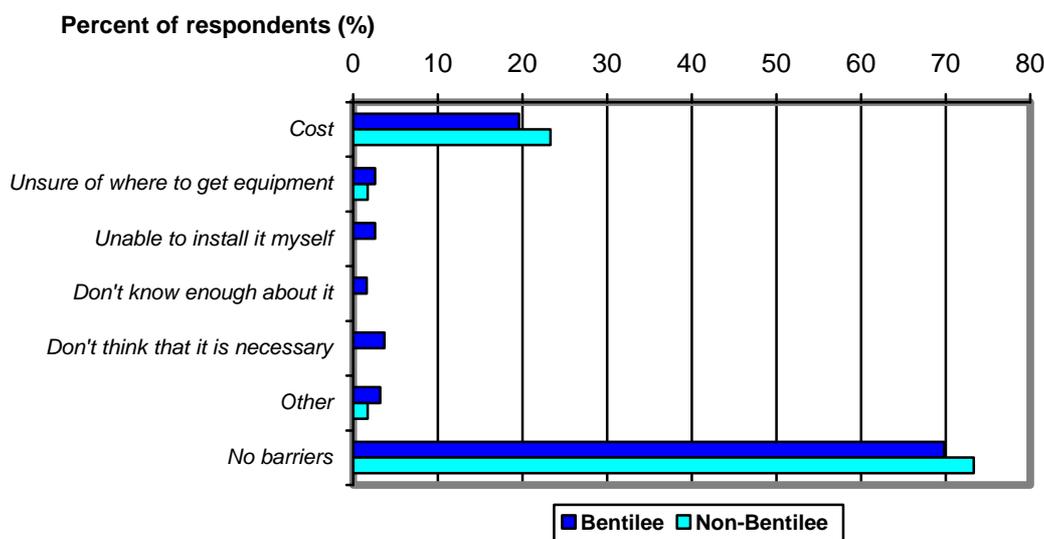
Figure 20: Ownership of Home Safety Equipment by respondents (n=250)



What prevents you from using home safety equipment?

The results displayed in Figure 21 indicate that the majority of respondents are able to use home safety equipment, and that there are no barriers to this (this applied to 71% (n=176) of respondents). The remaining 29% of respondents, however, were able to identify barriers preventing their use of this equipment. The major factor that seems to prevent use of home safety equipment is 'cost'. Approximately 20% (n=51) of respondents reported that the cost of safety equipment is too high, thus preventing them from buying it. Few other responses were given; however, 2% (n=6) of the sample indicated that they were unsure where to get equipment, with another 2% (n=5) unsure as to how to install it. Finally, 3% (n=7) of the sample stated that they don't believe that home safety equipment is necessary.

**Figure 21: What prevents you from using home safety equipment?
 (n=249)**



There was little variation in responses by area; however, there were clear differences when results were examined by gender. Whilst 31% (n=62) of women identified barriers to their use of home safety equipment, this applied to 16% (n=5) of males. Female respondents were more likely to identify cost as a barrier, as well as lack of confidence in installing equipment.

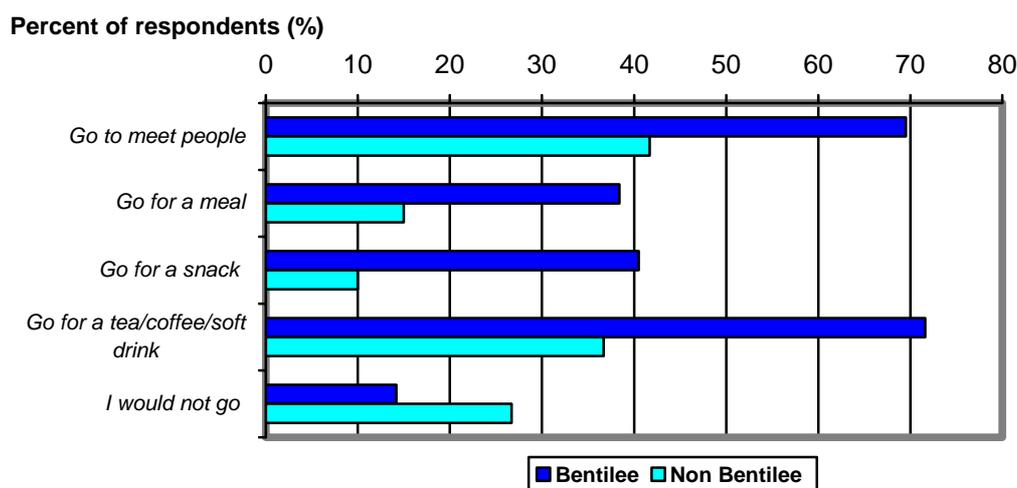
Home safety was found to be an important issue for parents and carers consulted; however, it was not thought to be an area which respondents needed help or guidance with. Despite this, demand for a home safety checking service was high.

2.7 Projected uptake of services

2.7.1 Café in local Children's Centre

In order to inform future service provision, respondents were asked to discuss their potential use of a café if one were to be provided in a local Children's Centre.

**Figure 22: If there were a café in a local children’s Centre in Bentilee, would you...?
(n=250)**



The results in Figure 22 suggest that such a resource would be popular with local families. Over four fifths of respondents would use a café, with just 17% (n=43) stating ‘*I would not go*’. The social function of such a café would be important to parents, with roughly two thirds (63%, n=157) stating that they would ‘*go to meet people*’. The café would be equally popular as a place to go ‘*for a tea/coffee or soft drink*’ (63%, n=158) of respondents would do this). Less popular was the use of a café as a place to eat, with roughly a third of respondents saying that they would use the café for a meal, and another third using it ‘*for a snack*’.

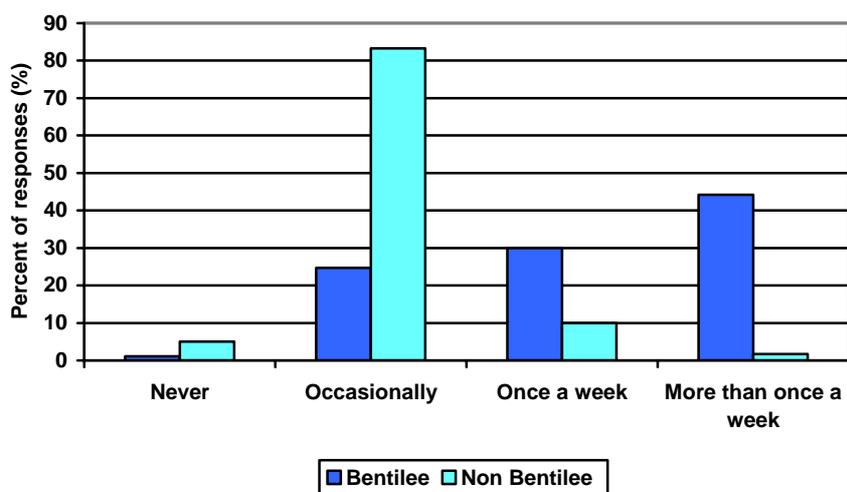
Female respondents were more likely to show interest in a café than males (84% of females would use a café, compared to 74% (n=23). Females were also considerably more likely to put emphasis on the social aspect of a café; 66% (n=145) of females would go to meet people, compared to 39% of males (n=12). Working parents would also be less likely to use a café. Thirty two percent (n=15) of parents/carers in full time employment would not use the café. Finally, potential levels of use of a café were notably higher amongst parents and carers living in Bentilee than outside the area (over 27%, n=16 of respondents from the non-Bentilee area stated that they would never use the café, compared to 14% (n=27) of those living in Bentilee).

2.7.2 Wacky Warehouse style Playbarn

Respondents were also questioned about future uptake of planned ‘Wacky Warehouse’ style Playbarn (see Figure 23). Again, results indicate a strong demand for such a facility. Twenty five percent (n=148) of respondents would pay to use the resource at least once a week, with 34% (n=85) wishing to use it more than once a week. Just 2% (n=5) of the sample would never use the Playbarn, with the remaining 39% (n=97) identifying themselves as occasional users.

Potential uptake of this service appeared slightly higher amongst females than males, although there was generally little variation with profile of respondent.

**Figure 23: If there were a Wacky Warehouse-style Playbarn in Bentilee, how often would you pay to take your children there?
(n=250)**



2.7.3 Volunteering opportunities

Forty one percent of respondents (n=102) would be interested in accessing future volunteering opportunities in a local Children’s Centre. Of these respondents, just under three quarters (74%, n=126) have at least one child under the age of 3 years (Figure 25).

Demand for both a café in a Children’s Centre and a Wacky Warehouse style indoor play facility would be extremely high. Eighty four percent of respondents would use the café, with 98% (n=245) willing to pay to use the Playbarn.

2.8 Any other comments?

Finally, all respondents were asked if they had any other comments to make about any of the issues raised in the questionnaire.

Bentilee

Additional comments made by respondents were generally very positive. In total, 10 parents and carers in Bentilee believed SureStart4u to be an excellent service, praising its great reputation and the services on offer, *‘I’m very happy with Sure Start’* (n=4). One respondent also stated that *‘Sure Start was fantastic’*. One unregistered respondent was very interested in SureStart4u after completing the questionnaire, commenting *‘I wish I heard about it before.’* There were also a number of suggestions for improvement in the area made by respondents questioned in the Bentilee area. Respondents called for more play areas and facilities for young children. A further suggestion made by one respondent was to improve the local transport as the buses are very unreliable. One male respondent in Bentilee also suggested having a *‘Wacky Warehouse or McDonalds in the area’*.

Non- Bentilee

There were also a number of very positive comments made regarding local provision in the remaining areas. Many parents and carers praised the SureStart4u services and activities, *‘Sure Start is very good’* (n=8), *‘everyone is friendly’* (n=1). The only suggestions made from these areas were for increased provision of information about SureStart4u and for the programme to publicise its services more widely. These respondents emphasised that there needs to be more SureStart4u publicity specifically in the areas outside Bentilee.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

This final Chapter of the report presents some overall key findings of the baseline survey, as well as a more detailed set of recommendations for future service provision.

3.1 Key findings

3.1.1 SureStart4u

- Awareness of SureStart4u is extremely high. At 98%, awareness of SureStart4u amongst parents and carers is excellent for any Sure Start Local Programme, particularly a sixth wave one. Parents and carers have been made aware of SureStart4u in a number of ways; however, it is clear that local professionals such as Health Visitors and Midwives have had a vital part to play in this information dissemination. Good links with such health professionals were also demonstrated by the review of documentary evidence (presented in a self-standing report). This indicated that SureStart4u services are receiving increasing numbers of referrals from local agencies particularly, Health Visitors and Midwives.
- Involvement of local parents and carers in SureStart4u is also notably high. Over two thirds of respondents believed themselves to be a registered parent, with almost half of respondents having used a Sure Start service at the time of interview. Involvement with SureStart4u is notably higher in Bentilee in terms of awareness, use and registration.
- Reflecting this high level of involvement in SureStart4u as service users, parents and carers consulted were found to be very satisfied with SureStart4u's service provision. Almost 100% of respondents were satisfied with their experiences of Sure Start service use. This factor is obviously instrumental in promoting such high levels of service use, and is an excellent reflection on standards of service provided by SureStart4u, its staff and its partner agencies.
- Awareness, uptake and satisfaction with specific SureStart4u services is, again, extremely high, particularly for such a late programme. This represents a real achievement by SureStart4u and reflects well on SureStart4u's publicity and communications strategy.
- Another important finding is that SureStart4u and its services appear to be accessible to its target group. Other than time and work commitments there are no major barriers preventing use of individual SureStart4u services by parents and carers. The only potential area for improvement identified by respondents was the need for improved provision of information about specific services. However, as highlighted elsewhere in the consultation, these information channels are generally very well developed.
- One of the most positive findings from this consultation is that SureStart4u has had a genuine impact on the lives of families who have engaged with the programme. Almost 60% (n=103) of parents and carers who had used a SureStart4u service believed that the programme had made a difference to their lives. This demonstrates that SureStart4u has been able to provide real 'added value'. SureStart4u service users described how this added value takes the form of excellent support, confidence building and allowing both parents and children to access important social networks. Registered parents of SureStart4u were also more likely than non-registered parents to be satisfied with general service provision in the area. Whilst we cannot directly attribute this to

SureStart4u, it may well be the case that this has been a key contributory factor informing their opinions of local provision for families with young children.

- In terms of future service provision, demand for both a café in a Children's Centre and a Wacky Warehouse style indoor play facility is extremely high. Over four fifths of respondents would use the café, with almost 100% willing to pay to use the Playbarn. This is a positive early indication that the planned Children's Centre would be a popular and much needed addition to local service provision, and would be accessed heavily by local families with young children.
- Home safety was found to be an important issue for parents and carers consulted; however, it was not thought to be a priority area in which respondents needed help or guidance with. In spite of this, demand for a home safety checking service would be high according to the survey results.

3.1.2 General services

- Satisfaction with general local services for families with young children is very high. Despite this there are clearly some priority areas for action which need to be addressed by providers. Local parents and carers were particularly likely to highlight unreliable public transport and unsafe, poorly maintained parks and play areas as sub standard areas of provision.
- Needs relating to improvements in the local area for families with young children were fairly consistent across all areas making up the SureStart4u patch. Priority areas for improvement were found to be parks and play areas, community safety, public transport and the poor quality of the local environment.

3.1.3 SureStart4u Programme area

- Within the SureStart4u area, a very high proportion of families with children under 5 years live in workless households. At 46% this is almost double the national average. The problem is particularly acute in the Bentilee area. This is exacerbated by the fact that almost 90% of respondents living in workless households face barriers which prevent them accessing opportunities for paid work, most notably time commitments and childcare problems.

3.2 Recommendations

The perceptions of local parent and carers consulted via the baseline indicate that the programme is performing very well, meeting the needs of local people and having a positive impact on the lives of local families. As a result there are a limited number of recommendations for future provision which can be made. The majority of areas for improvement raised by respondents are outside the remit of Sure Start Local Programmes.

3.2.1 SureStart4u

Awareness raising

R1 Whilst general awareness of SureStart4u was very high there are disparities in awareness between different sections of the community. Awareness of SureStart4u is higher in Bentilee than non-Bentilee areas; therefore it is important to ensure that awareness raising initiatives are targeted particularly in the Moss Green, Berryhill and Eaton Park areas.

R2 In the Bentilee area, SureStart4u partner agencies such as Health Visitors and local Schools have played a far greater role in raising awareness than elsewhere in the SureStart4u patch. SureStart4u need to ensure that professionals across all of the programme area are promoting SureStart4u effectively.

R3 Awareness of SureStart4u was also lower amongst male respondents. We would recommend that SureStart4u consider methods of engaging this specific group of parents. Early evidence from the NESS Impact Study has shown that introducing outdoors-based physical exercise activities are a good way to achieve this.

Registration

R4 As specified by the sampling frame, at least 70% of respondents interviewed were recorded as being registered with SureStart4u. Despite this, only 64% of respondents could recall being registered. It is important to ensure that parents are followed up regularly to ensure that they remain in contact with the programme.

R5 When taking into account the extremely high awareness of SureStart4u, there is clearly scope for increasing the proportion of the population registered with the programme. It may be the case that it is not always clear how parents and carers can register with Sure Start, and publicity materials need to detail this. Local professionals should be able to signpost parents and carers to SureStart4u and inform them how they could be registered. The benefits of membership also need to be fully promoted so that parents and carers have an incentive to sign up with SureStart4u.

Uptake of Sure Start services

R6 Overall the proportion of respondents who had used any SureStart4u service was high. Despite this, almost 40% of registered parents and carers consulted had not used a SureStart4u service. SureStart4u could carry out more in depth consultation with this group of parents to assess reasons for non-uptake of Sure Start services. In order to boost rates of use it is important to ensure that all groups and services are well promoted, as are their associated benefits. Some families may also need additional support or transportation to enable them to access services.

R7 Rates of uptake of SureStart4u (service use and registration) were considerably lower amongst working parents and carers consulted. Whilst it is difficult to provide services outside of core hours, this would be a vital way of accessing such parents. Provision of one group per week in the evening or at a weekend would allow Sure Start to give additional support to working parents, who may otherwise be unable to access this.

R8 Involvement in SureStart4u is also notably lower in the area defined as 'Non Bentilee'. Whilst this may reflect patterns of need, it is important to ensure that families in this area are signposted to methods of registration and suitable, accessible Sure Start services. SureStart4u could carry out a mapping of service provision to ensure that services and support are accessible to all families within the patch.

R9 Lack of information about SureStart4u is a barrier which has prevented uptake of its services by parents and carers consulted. SureStart4u needs to review its promotional strategies to ensure that the community is aware of exactly who the programme is there for, and what Sure Start can offer to parents, carers and children.

Specific SureStart4u services

R10 Despite generally high awareness, knowledge of certain SureStart4u services were found to be lower than average. First Steps Psychology, Mum2Mum and Start up training and advice are all examples of services which have lower levels of awareness. Emphasis

needs to be placed on promoting these services, particularly taking into account the high levels of worklessness and low levels of breastfeeding in the local area.

R11 Certain SureStart4u services with reasonably high levels of awareness have low levels of usage amongst parents and carers consulted, e.g. Young Parents Group. This could indicate a lack of demand for the service. SureStart4u should review demand for services which have experienced low levels of uptake to ensure that these are still meeting the needs of local families and are being delivered in the appropriate manner.

R12 As highlighted in Section 3.1, satisfaction with individual Sure Start services amongst users was extremely high. Some services, however, were found to have lower levels of satisfaction than average. These included Young Parents' Group, Fridays Parents' Group and Triple P. SureStart4u should carry out some more in depth consultation with users of these services to determine reasons for dissatisfaction and identify improvements to provision.

R13 As requested by a number of parents consulted, SureStart4u should look into providing activities outside core hours, particularly in the evenings for working parents.

Feedback

R14 The SureStart4u area has been host to various neighbourhood based initiatives in the past, including SRB2 and SRB Villages Initiative. With this in mind, the population may be at risk of experiencing 'research fatigue'. As a result, it is vital to provide local families with feedback as to the results of the consultation (along with any actions if possible). This helps to illustrate to families that they can have a genuine impact on local services, and that their views are taken seriously. This exercise would also serve to increase awareness of SureStart4u, and could be tied in with a 'sign up now' targeted campaign to register parents.

Partnership Board

R15 Despite the high proportion of workless households identified through the Baseline, there is no Job Centre representative on the Partnership Board. SureStart4u should look to involve this agency in Board meetings.

3.2.2 Service provision in the SureStart4u programme area

Play and learning facilities

R16 A key theme which emerged strongly from the consultation was the poor quality of local parks, both in terms of safety and facilities, as well as cleanliness and maintenance. SureStart4u should pass on the findings to the Local Authority and use its links here to petition for improvements to parks, with the provision of separate, fenced off play areas for young children, with age appropriate equipment and facilities. It may also be necessary to provide local wardens in parks to improve feelings of safety for local families and tackle the anti social behaviour identified by respondents.

R17 SureStart4u should audit local availability of parks and play areas and look into providing an outdoor play facility for young children in the programme area.

R18 SureStart4u could arrange trips to local parks, allowing families who may be concerned about personal safety to access facilities that they may not otherwise use.

R19 Some respondents identified that indoor play facilities such as a Wacky Warehouse are hard to access. SureStart4u could look to provide an indoor play facility for families, such as that planned in the Children's Centre.

R20 Respondents highlighted the need for more leisure facilities and activities for families generally. SureStart4u could up follow this baseline information with some in-depth consultation work with local families to assess what form these facilities should take.

Services providing support

R21 Whilst the majority of parents thought that they did have enough information about home safety, as well as enough equipment, there is clearly a demand for a home safety checking service. This could be tied in with the work of the 'Fix It' project.

R22 Respondents identified the cost of home safety equipment as a barrier to use. SureStart4u may consider providing subsidised home safety equipment if they are not already doing so. If this service is already in place then promotion of this should be increased.

Childcare facilities

R23 Some parents and carers in workless household identified lack of childcare as a barrier preventing them from accessing paid employment. SureStart4u and partner agencies need to audit availability of childcare places, and look to provide more affordable, childcare if this is needed. This is a particularly important action taking into account the extremely high proportion of workless households in the programme area.

R24 The perceived shortfall in childcare may be the result of a lack of information about childcare options. SureStart4u could provide parents with information packs about childcare options in the local area.

R25 Respondents called for provision of more after school clubs and facilities. Sure Start should investigate potential for these in partnership with local schools and nurseries.

Provision for local parents and carers

R26 Uptake of a café based within a local Children's Centre in Bentilee would be very high, with parents and carers wishing to use it as a place to meet people and 'drop in' for a tea/coffee or soft drink. This would therefore be an important addition to the Children's Centre planned by SureStart4u.

R27 Parents and carers in the 'Non Bentilee' areas would be far less likely to access a café or Wacky Warehouse style Playbarn located within a Children's Centre in Bentilee. Whilst this may reflect patterns of need, it is important to ensure that families outside the Bentilee area have access to a similar 'drop in' facility, and that transport is provided to the Children's Centre from these areas.

R28 Over 40% of parents and carers consulted would be interested in accessing future volunteering opportunities within the planned Children's Centre. SureStart4u need to follow this up in the near future. This level of interest in volunteering suggests that there may be scope for expanding the Volunteer Programme if necessary. Increased promotion of this project would also be advisable.

R29 Considering the high levels of worklessness in the local area, SureStart4u could investigate demand for an employment coordinator at the Sure Start local programme. This has been a key area of provision for other local programmes with a similarly high proportion of workless households.

Health Services

R30 Criticisms regarding the difficulty in obtaining appointments at local GP services may highlight a need for increased provision of these services. SureStart4u needs to flag this concern with the PCT and local healthcare providers.

Other local services and support

R31 Another important priority area for action highlighted by respondents was the local public transport system. Satisfaction with this was extremely low as a result of unreliable buses, low frequency of services and a lack of ‘family friendly’ buses. Improvements to these services are particularly vital taking into account the fact that over 50% of the population had used public transport in the 6 months before the consultation.

R32 Some respondents identified transport to Sure Start groups and activities as a problem. SureStart4u could look to provide transport to activities where possible if they are not already doing so.

R33 Concerns were raised across the programme area about the appearance and cleanliness of the local environment. This is clearly outside the remit of SureStart4u, but the finding should be shared with local partners including the City Council.

R34 Respondents, particularly in the Bentilee area, suggested that there should be improved provision for older children and teenagers, such as a youth club. These findings should be shared with local leisure providers, including the City Council.

R35 Anti-social behaviour was also identified as a problem by local parents and carers consulted. Again, this is outside the remit of Sure Start, but findings should be flagged with other community safety and crime prevention agencies.