Police and Crime Plan Survey

Summary Report

December 2021

Background and methodology

As part of his commitment to actively engage with the diverse communities of Kent and Medway, the re-elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Kent, Matthew Scott, launched his second Police and Crime Plan Survey in September 2021. His first survey was undertaken in 2016, following his first term's election and formed the basis of the Safer in Kent Plan.

The aim of this year's questionnaire was to survey a large and representative sample of residents, to find out their views and experiences of policing and their feelings of safety in their communities. Collecting information from the sample enables the PCC and his staff to draft the new Police and Crime Plan for 2022 to 2025.

The questions asked of residents included:

- Do you believe the current priorities set for Kent Police are the correct ones?
- How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10?
- Have you been a victim of crime in the last year?
- Which issues do you feel are the most important?
- Have you added additional security devices at your home?
- How safe do you feel on the roads in your community?

The survey also requested information about the districts respondents live in, their age, gender, ethnicity, and whether they work for or volunteer with Kent Police. These questions were not mandatory but the information, where given, assists the PCC's office (OPCC) to monitor how representative the sample is, in comparison to the population of Kent and Medway.

The decision was taken to host the survey mainly online via Smart Survey, but hard copies were also available and were handed out at engagement events, like the Kent Police Open Day, freshers' week roadshows, at religious centres and coffee mornings.

Publicising the survey

A link to the survey was posted on the OPCC website and shared widely on social media, making use of the OPCC's Twitter account, Facebook, and Instagram feeds. The survey was also posted on the social media site NextDoor, reaching an audience of 255,631 verified Kent residents. The OPCC also posted the link and a short explanation on community-run Facebook pages, including pages popular with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, which combined had a target audience of more than 200,000.

Local councillors and MPs were also encouraged to share the link amongst their own public contacts. Throughout the survey period, regular reminders were sent out across all social media channels.

A link to the survey was included on all outgoing OPCC e-mail correspondence and staff email signatures. A special edition 'Annual Policing Survey' e-newsletter was circulated to more than 3,000 subscribers. Hard-copy surveys were also posted to residents without internet access, on request.

The survey remained open for ten weeks from 4 September 2021 until 12 November 2021. There were **2,848** completed responses received. The OPCC regards this as a good return - especially as this survey contained no questions directly related to the council tax precept payment which normally trigger wider public and media interest. When the PCC's first Police and Crime Plan survey was undertaken in 2016, the OPCC received **1,690** responses.

It should be noted that no OPCC funds were spent on paid-for digital or print advertising this year. Also the pandemic curtailed many of the PCC's usual external engagements, with understandable caution about encouraging and attending large-scale gatherings when Covid-19 cases remained high.

The OPCC acknowledges that the results are not fully representative of all communities within Kent and Medway, including those from BAME backgrounds, and younger people. Respondents from a BAME background total just under 4% and those aged under 30, 6.7%. This is something the OPCC will continue to seek to improve upon in future years.

Results of the Police and Crime Plan Survey

Part One: Current priorities

Q1: Overall, do you believe the current priorities I have set for Kent Police are the correct ones?

The table below clearly shows the majority of people chose either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' for each of the priorities contained within the current Police and Crime Plan – an average of **82%** .

Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Total
Put victims first	52.32% 1,490	27.07% 771	12.57% 358	5.44% 155	2.60% 74	2,848
Fight crime and antisocial behaviour	63.34% 1,804	21.35% 608	6.46% 184	5.83% 166	3.02% 86	2,848
Tackle abuse, exploitation and violence	57.37% 1,634	26.93% 767	9.27% 264	4.04% 115	2.39% 68	2,848
Combat organised crime and gangs	60.71% 1,729	24.19% 689	9.27% 264	3.83% 109	2.00% 57	2,848
Provide visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing	59.80% 1,703	18.79% 535	7.37% 210	6.36% 181	7.69% 219	2,848
Deliver an efficient and accessible service	55.23% 1,573	26.02% 741	9.62% 274	5.06% 144	4.07% 116	2,848

Further analysis of the data showed that people broadly agreed with the priorities irrespective of whether they had recently been a victim of crime or not; though people who had not been victims agreed more strongly than those who had.

	Victims who either strongly agreed or agreed (Combined %)	Non-victims who either strongly agreed or agreed (Combined %)	% Difference between the two
Put victims first	69.7	81.4	11.7
Fight crime and antisocial behaviour	75.1	86.6	11.5
Tackle abuse, exploitation and violence	74.3	92.2	17.9
Combat organised crime and gangs	76.4	88.9	12.5
Provide visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing	69.7	80.4	10.7
Deliver an efficient and accessible service	72.7	83.0	10.3

Part Two: Your experiences

Q2. How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)

On average **75.48%** of respondents selected a number on the scale of 6 or more, meaning they feel safe.

14.08% selected a number of 4 or lower meaning they feel unsafe. 10.4% selected 5.

The mean average of all 2,848 responses was a score of **7** out of 10, a very slight increase on last year's **6.97** and up from **6.38** in 2019. Further analysis showed that respondents from West Kent felt safest (Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling). Medway, Dartford and Swale had the lowest feelings of safety, although were still above 6 on average.

District	Feelings of safety (out of 10)
Tunbridge Wells	7.54
Tonbridge & Malling	7.38
Ashford	7.25
Canterbury	7.24
Dover	7.18
Folkestone & Hythe	7.10
Sevenoaks	7.07
Gravesham	7.03
Thanet	6.91
Maidstone	6.89
Swale	6.81
Medway	6.76
Dartford	6.25

- Those aged 29 and below responded with a score of **7.04**.
- Those aged between 30 and 59 responded with a score of **6.85**.
- Those aged 60 and above responded with a score of **7.18**.
- Those who defined their ethnicity as "White British" responded with a score of **7.08**.
- Those from a BAME background, including other White backgrounds, responded with a score of **6.93**.

Unsurprisingly those who had been a victim of crime in the past year reported feeling less safe than those who had not. On average they selected a figure 1.55 lower on the scale.

	How safe do you feel where you live? (Out of 10)
Victims	5.73
Non-victims	7.28
Difference between the two	1.55

Part Three: Victims of Crime

Q3. Have you been a victim of a crime in Kent in the last year?

479 (16.82%) of all 2,848 respondents said they had been a victim of crime in the last year, compared to 15.87% last year and 19.7% the year before. The pandemic and release from lockdowns will likely have contributed to changing data.

Answer Choices	Responses		
Yes		16.82%	479
No		83.18%	2,369
Answered: 2,848 Skipped: 0	Response Total:		2,848
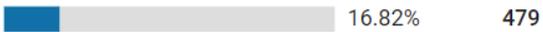
The table below shows the districts where those who responded to the survey and said they had been victims of crime in the last year, live.

District	% of Kent victims
Maidstone	14.14%
Medway	10.42%
Swale	10.42%
Ashford	8.68%
Dover	7.69%
Canterbury	7.20%
Thanet	6.95%
Tonbridge and Malling	6.70%
Dartford	5.46%
Sevenoaks	4.96%
Tunbridge Wells	4.96%
Folkestone and Hythe	4.71%
Gravesham	2.73%
Did not give location	**4.96%**

Medway, Swale and Maidstone saw the highest percentages of victims, which correlates with the previous question of how safe residents felt. Residents in these three districts also felt the least safe.

Dartford was the anomaly here because although this had the 9th lowest % of victims, the residents felt the least safe compared to all other districts.

Q4. If so, how satisfied were you with the service Kent Police gave you?

(1 = very unsatisfied / 10 = very satisfied)

Of the 479 people who had been a victim of crime in Kent within the last year, their average score in terms of satisfaction with Kent Police was **4.26** out of 10. This compares to **4.3** last year.

District	Satisfaction levels out of 10
Maidstone	5.39
Ashford	4.46
Swale	4.43
Tonbridge & Malling	4.33
Thanet	4.25
Canterbury	4.24
Sevenoaks	4.20
Tunbridge Wells	4.10
Dover	3.97
Medway	3.81
Dartford	3.77
Gravesham	3.64
Folkestone & Hythe	3.32

When comparing the levels of satisfaction across districts, the table shows that even though Maidstone had the highest percentage of victims, these people also had the highest levels of satisfaction. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the areas with the fewest victims felt the least satisfied (Folkestone & Hythe, Gravesham, Medway, and Dartford).

Q5. This question asked victims of crime what went well.

Of the 479 people who indicated that they had been a victim of crime in the last year, 334 made a comment in the free text field. Below are a few typical examples, although many people wrote "*nothing went well*" in this section.

"I was spoken to at my pace, manner and level of understanding, as well as given respect throughout my situation."

"Kent police came really quickly after calling 999, great support from them. they helped my mum a lot. She got scared the next day, thinking someone is trying to break in again. The 999 police operator was brilliant at helping her and supporting her."

"Response officer keeping contact and updating."

"The initial police involvement and some of their input with victim support."

Q6. This question asked victims of crime what could be improved.

Of the 479 who indicated they had been a victim of crime in the last year, 359 made comment in the free text field. Below are some examples of the most common grievances:

"Speedier response, quick action taken against the offenders, robust consequences to the crime."

"If they could respond quicker"

" I don't bother with 101 as it takes 'forever' to get past the automated preamble and then 'all our operators are busy."

"There was no face to face discussion, it was all phone or computer, not good if you are older or if you haven't got access to the internet. No ability to talk through things you don't understand or explain any challenge you wish to make."

"Contact to victim. Especially when it is an assault to a disabled man. Being given a crime number but no contact for weeks after and no attempt to take finger-prints from vehicle which would have confirmed the perpetrator to take the case further. Now it is too late and likely nothing will happen to someone that goes round punching normal citizens in the middle of the day. How many more people has this person got to injure to be stopped?".

"A response would be helpful. Contact from the police to acknowledge the crime and a bit of interest in solving it or stopping it happen again would have been good. Instead, I received an automated response to my online report. At no point did I feel "Victim First". Some crime prevention advice would have been useful instead of telling me you have provided other people with free shed alarms, but not us. Also, you asked if we wanted victim support. We had our shed broken into - we didn't need victim support, but you gave them our details anyway."

"If your officers would actually investigate the crime."

"The courts said they were going to prosecute then changed their mind and said they wouldn't, which caused significant stress to my family."

"Response. CPS & Courts need to speed up. Delays too long."

"The crime was minor level assault. The assailant clearly had no expectation that he might be caught. Low level criminality occurs frequently because of the low expectation of being apprehended, tried and convicted."

"I was a victim and continue to be of online racial abuse, Kent police , the pcc, need to work with online social media companies and media outlets to tackle online abuse."

"No one from victim support contacted me about my case. I may have been shrewd enough not to give this person money but I had still been a victim of deception by this person. Online dating needs to be regulated as they just take your money but don't vet their customers at all. Dangerous."

Part Four: What matters to you?

Q7. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important? Please select a maximum of six.

The survey asked respondents to select up to six issues from a pre-defined list of 22, to illustrate which they felt to be the most important. The options were not laid out in alphabetical order but were presented in a random fashion; this was to encourage people to look at the options and not just tick the first six.

2,844 people answered this section. *Sexual Violence, Serious Violence including gangs and weapons*, *Child Exploitation,* and *Burglary and Robbery* offences were the most commonly selected issues.

This compares with last year where *Anti-social behaviour, Gangs and county lines, Child sexual exploitation, Knife crime,* and *Burglary* were popular. High-profile cases involving violence against women and girls, including sexual offences, will almost certainly have influenced respondents' choices this year.

Answer Choices	Responses		
Rural crime		24.16%	687
Vehicle crime		17.97%	511
Burglary / Robbery		53.20%	1,513
Stalking and harassment, including online harassment		26.23%	746
Fraud and Cyber crime		26.79%	762
Domestic abuse, including coercion and control		40.68%	1,157
Terrorism and radicalisation		35.62%	1,013
Drugs offences		34.67%	986
Road traffic offences		19.97%	568
Hate crime		14.03%	399
Antisocial behaviour		50.74%	1,443
Child sexual exploitation		53.34%	1,517
Business crime, including shoplifting		5.63%	160
Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences		61.32%	1,744
Human trafficking / modern day slavery		28.09%	799
Sexual offences, including rape		64.49%	1,834
Public disorder, including protests / demonstrations		17.19%	489
Answered: 2,844 Skipped: 4	Response Total:		2,844

Further analysis of the data shows differing top selections among different sub-groups.

When broken down in "What TYPE of area do you live in: urban, rural or coastal?", the top 3 priorities were:

Rural inhabitants:

1) Rural Crime

2) Vehicle crime

3) Road traffic offences

Urban inhabitants:

=1) Hate Crime

=1) Business Crime

3) Stalking and harassment

Coastal inhabitants:

1) Hate crime

2) Stalking and harassment

3) Antisocial behaviour

When broken down into age groups, older people were more concerned about burglary and robbery and anti-social behaviour, whereas younger people consider stalking and harassment, including online harassment, more important:

Top 3 priorities for Under 20s

1) Sexual offences including rape
2) Child sexual exploitation
3) Stalking and harassment, including online.

Top 3 priorities for 20-40s

1) Sexual offences, including rape
2) Serious violence including gangs.
3) Child sexual exploitation

Top 3 priorities for 40s-60s

1) Sexual offences, including rape
2) Serious violence, including gangs
3) Child sexual exploitation

Top 3 priorities for 60s-80s

1) Sexual offences, including rape
2) Serious violence, including gangs
3) Antisocial behaviour

Top 3 priorities for 80+ group

1) Serious violence, including gangs
2) Burglary and robbery
3) Child sexual exploitation

Respondents who self-defined as either **mixed race** or **BAME** selected:

1) Sexual Offences including rape
2) Child sexual exploitation
3) Antisocial behaviour.

Respondents who self-defined as **white** recorded similar priorities:

1) Sexual offences, including rape
2) Child sexual exploitation
3) Burglary and robbery

Victims of crime broadly chose the same crimes as non-victims, however they saw anti-social behaviour as more important than burglary or child sexual exploitation.

Top 5 crimes respondents feel are the most important	Victims (%)		Non-victims (%)	% Difference between the two groups
1	Sexual offences, including rape (54.3%)	1	Sexual offences, including rape (66.4%)	12.1
1	Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences (54.3%)	2	Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences (62.6%)	8.3
3	Antisocial behaviour (52.2%)	3	Child sexual exploitation (54.0%)	1.8
4	Child sexual exploitation (49.7%)	4	Burglary/Robbery (53.9%)	4.2
5	Burglary/Robbery (49.3%)	5	Antisocial behaviour (50.4%)	1.1

Q8 Are there any other issues which Kent Police deal with in partnership with other agencies that you feel are important?

1,004 respondents completed this free text field, although a number of the responses referred to issues already captured within the list in Q7. A selection of additional comments are below:

- Fly-tipping
- Homelessness
- Pet theft/animal cruelty
- Illegal immigration
- Mental health
- Policing public footpaths
- Electric scooters and mopeds on paths
- Speeding through villages
- Gender self-identification in custody
- Verbal abuse
- Unauthorised encampments/issues with traveller communities

Part Five: Road Safety

Q9 To what extent do you feel safe on the roads where you live?

46.9% of respondents said they felt either 'very safe' or 'safe' on the roads, with only 21.2% reporting feeling 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'. Almost a third had no strong feelings about the issue.
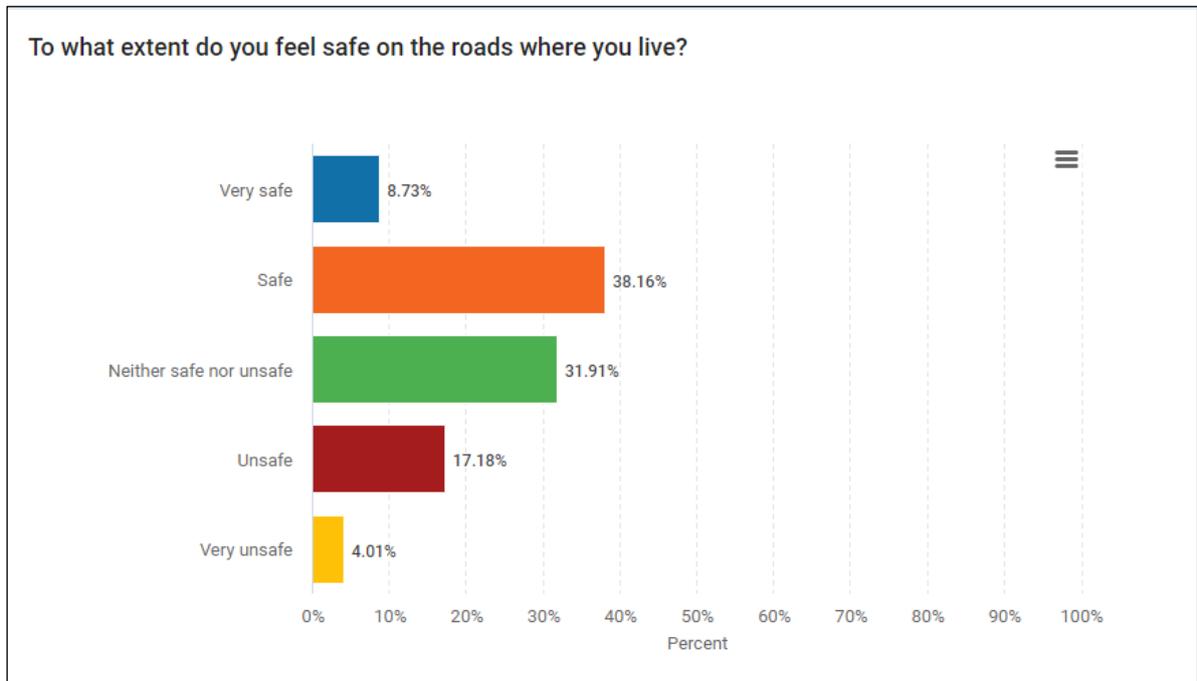
Q10 To what extent do you witness road traffic offences on the roads where you live? (e.g. using a mobile phone, speeding or not wearing a seatbelt etc?)

The majority claimed to witness a road traffic offence daily (51.51%). Only 8.37% report 'rarely' or 'never' seeing offences on the roads.
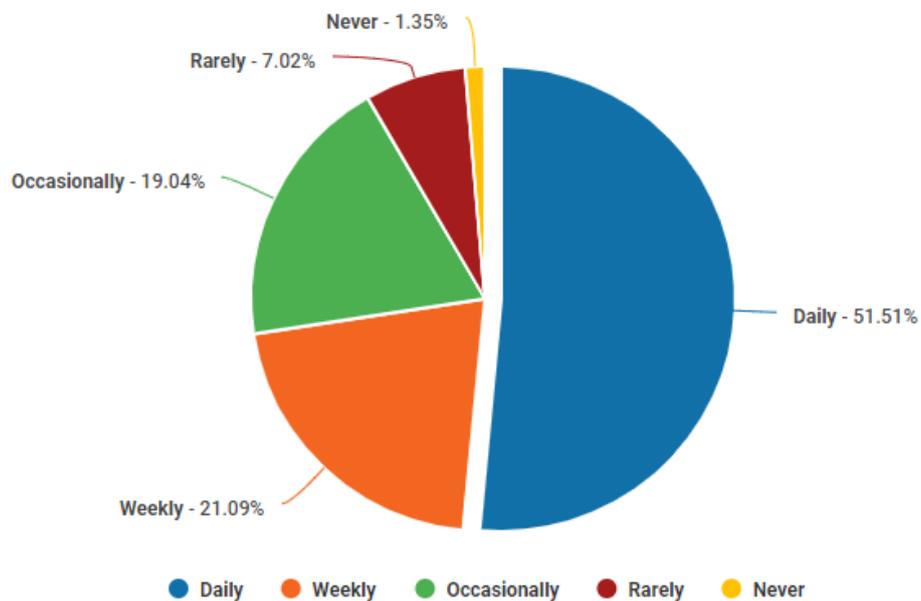
Q11 To what extent do you agree that offences which occur on the roads where you live require more enforcement?

The majority of respondents said they would like to see more enforcement, with 76.5% either agreeing strongly, or agreeing, with the statement

Answer Choices	Responses		
Strongly agree		45.34%	1,278
Agree		31.18%	879
Neither agree nor disagree		16.96%	478
Disagree		5.36%	151
Strongly disagree		1.17%	33
Answered: 2,819 Skipped: 29	Response Total:		2,819

When analysing the data between districts on how safe they felt on their roads, how far they agreed with tougher penalties and how often they witnessed traffic offences, there were some differences.

The tables below show a combination of percentages of those respondents who said they felt 'very safe' or 'safe' on the roads; those who said they witnessed offences 'daily' or 'weekly'; and those who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that there should be tougher penalties.

District	How safe? (Combined % very safe and safe)
Folkestone & Hythe	56.17
Sevenoaks	50.91
Tonbridge & Malling	49.50
Thanet	49.24
Dartford	48.00
Medway	47.94
Ashford	47.43
Tunbridge Wells	46.95
Canterbury	45.94
Dover	44.89
Maidstone	43.79
Swale	40.61
Gravesham	40.22

District	How often? (Combined % daily and weekly)
Ashford	78.20
Swale	77.07
Dover	76.77
Maidstone	74.54
Dartford	74.18
Canterbury	74.16
Gravesham	73.91
Sevenoaks	72.28
Tonbridge & Malling	71.79
Thanet	70.50
Tunbridge Wells	70.12
Medway	67.24
Folkestone & Hythe	64.38

| District	Tougher penalties (Combined % strongly agree and agree)
Dover	81.32
Gravesham	81.32
Thanet	80.00
Canterbury	79.43
Swale	78.95
Dartford	78.66
Tonbridge & Malling	78.22
Ashford	76.92
Maidstone	76.40
Tunbridge Wells	75.61
Medway	72.70
Folkestone & Hythe	71.92
Sevenoaks	70.91

It appears those areas which felt the safest on the roads were less likely to agree or strongly agree with tougher punishments for road traffic offences (Folkestone & Hythe, and Sevenoaks). People in Dover, Gravesham, Swale, and Canterbury said they were more in favour of increasing punishments.

Similarly, those who witnessed offences more regularly felt more strongly about toughening punishments.

Part Six: Crime Prevention

Q12 Have you taken any of the following steps to make your home safer?

Most people have installed some sort of security measures, with window locks being the most popular. Many people have installed several items.
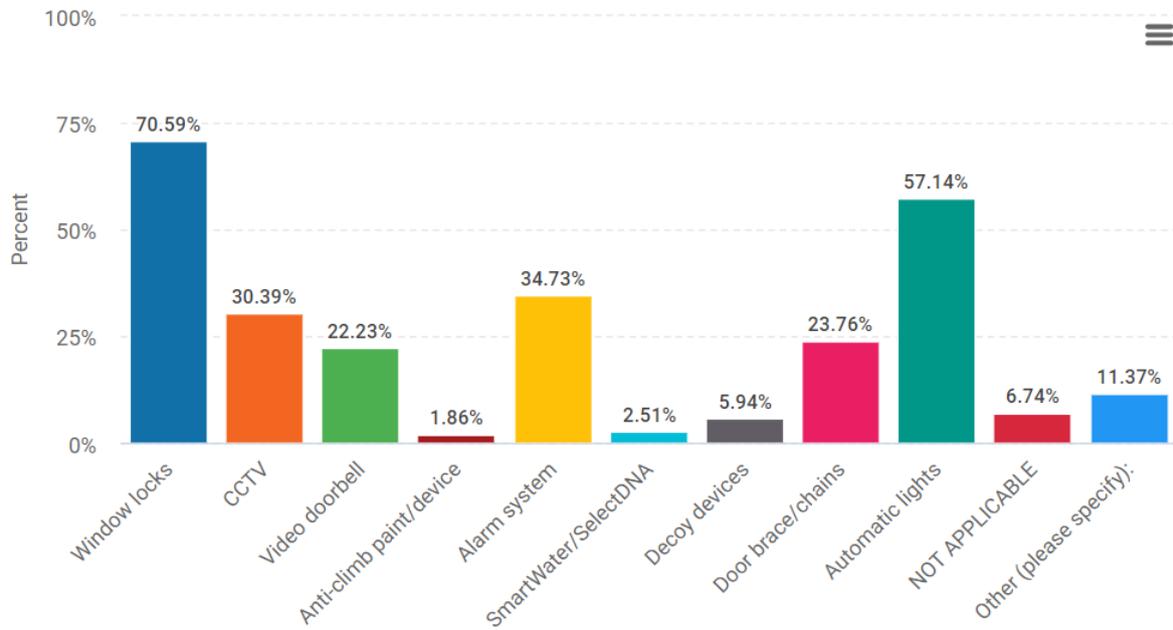
## Q12 Does this make you feel safer?

Nearly 76% reported these measures did make them feel safer.

Those who answered no were asked what would make them feel safer in **Q13**. The most common response was more police on their local streets. Other popular remarks included improved street lighting and more CCTV.

# Questions from the survey that are not included in the main report

Q16 Which district do you live in?

As the chart shows, responses were received from every district, indicating that the survey was widely received.
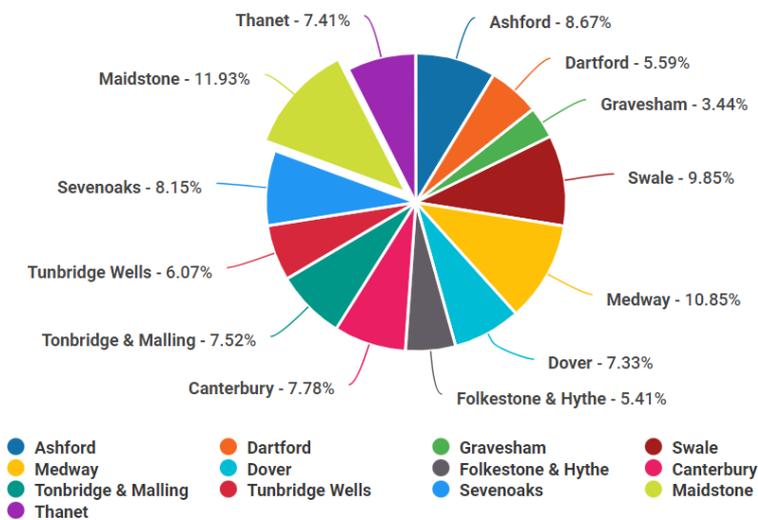

Q17 asked respondents to describe the area they lived in.

The greatest number of respondents (43.65%) indicated that they live in a rural area. These proportions in this pie chart are almost identical to last year.
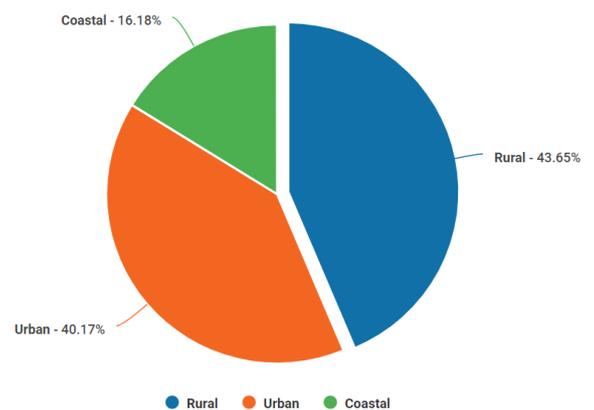
Q18 asked which age cohort the respondent fell into.

The age of this year's respondents is a similar make-up to the previous year although we did more than double responses from the 17 or younger cohort. 60-69 saw the largest number of respondents.

Age	%	Count
17 or younger	2.01%	54
18-20	0.48%	13
21-29	4.13%	111
30-39	10.24%	275
40-49	13.22%	355
50-59	20.22%	543
60-69	26.55%	713
70-79	19.81%	532
80-89	3.13%	84
90 or older	0.22%	6
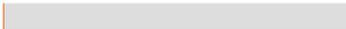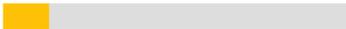
Q19 asked which gender respondents were.

Just under 45% were male, 54.5% female. The remaining 1% was either 'prefer not to say', 'transgender' or 'gender neutral'.

Q20 asked about the respondents self-defined ethnicity.

Almost 89% were White British

Over 3% were White but not British

Roughly 4% were from a BAME background

Over 4% did not disclose