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Police and Crime Plan Survey 2024

As part of his commitment to actively engage with the diverse communities of Kent and Medway, the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Matthew Scott, launched his Police and Crime Plan Survey in July 2024. It ran until the beginning of December.

Like previous years, the aim of the exercise was to survey a large and representative sample of residents on their views and experiences of policing, as well as their feelings of safety and whether they had been a victim of crime.

Collecting this information enables the PCC and his staff to draw conclusions that help inform the Police and Crime Plan, which will run for the next four years.

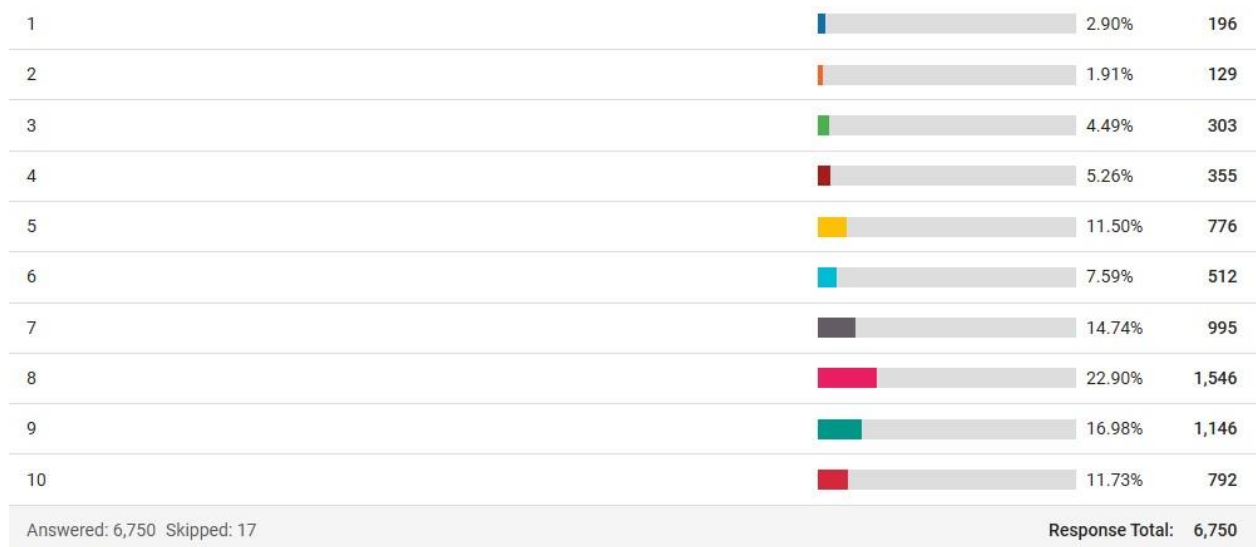
We received 6,767 survey responses overall. This is by far the highest response we've ever had for our Policing Survey, superseding last's year's record total of 4,538.

It was shared widely throughout Kent and Medway, to different communities and in a variety of ways.

Hard copies were completed at the Kent Police Open Day and on our many visits to street stalls, community groups, religious establishments and partner charities all around the county. The survey was widely promoted on our social media channels and posted directly onto various community Facebook Groups, on 'My Community Voice', in Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters and on 'Nextdoor'. It was also circulated by parish councils and local schools.

A special edition Newsletter was sent out to our 5,000-strong mailing list and emails were sent to community liaison officers, places of worship, schools, colleges, universities, rotary clubs, women's institutes, commissioned charities, criminal justice partner organisations, and many more. It was also promoted via a footer on all outgoing OPCC staff emails.

Q1. On a scale of 1 - 10, how safe do you feel where you live? (1 being very unsafe, 10 being very safe).



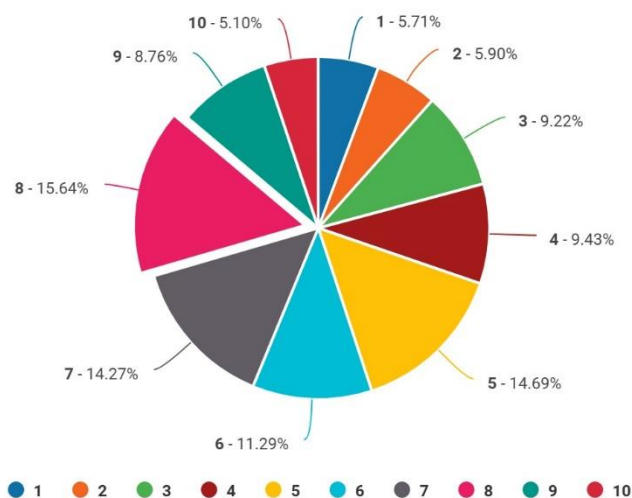
Most people *do* feel safe where they live, with 74% of respondents ticking 6 or above. **The average ranking for feelings of safety where you live was 7/10.** That's higher than last year, when the average was 6.3.

There is a discrepancy however when you compare the views of victims of antisocial behaviour (ASB) or other crime and those who have not been victims.

Those respondents (1016) who told us they'd been victims of ASB (as opposed to witnesses) rated their feelings of safety as 5.6/10. Those who had NOT been victims of ASB rated their feelings of safety as 7.8/10.

Those who were victims of other crime (775 respondents) put their feelings of safety as 5.7/10, whereas those who had not been victims, rated their feeling of safety 7.4/10.

Q2. On a scale of 1 - 10 how safe do you feel in your nearest town centre? (1 being very unsafe, 10 being very safe).



The above chart shows most people do feel safe in their nearest town centre, with 55% selecting 6/10 or above. The **average feeling of safety ranked 5.8/10**, so less than people's feelings of safety where they live.






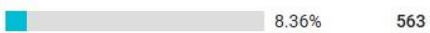
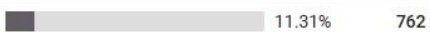



Of course, Kent is a large county, so perhaps it's more interesting to see how safe respondents feel in their nearest town centre, depending which district they live in.

District	Feeling of Safety	No of Respondents
Ashford	5.5 out of 10	617
Canterbury	6.4 out of 10	531
Dartford	5.7 out of 10	960
Dover	5.9 out of 10	333
Folkestone and Hythe	6.2 out of 10	282
Gravesham	4.5 out of 10	237
Maidstone	5.1 out of 10	610
Medway	4.9 out of 10	651
Sevenoaks	7.1 out of 10	449
Swale	5.5 out of 10	614
Thanet	5.8 out of 10	500
Tonbridge and Malling	6.1 out of 10	340
Tunbridge Wells	6.7 out of 10	407

It's also interesting when you compare how safe people feel in different age groups. This suggests 21-39 year olds feel less safe than older people or indeed teenagers.

Age	Feeling of Safety	No of Respondents
17 or younger	6.5 out of 10	1079
18-20	5.8 out of 10	41
21-29	5.4 out of 10	175
30-39	5.4 out of 10	609
40-49	5.7 out of 10	974
50-59	5.5 out of 10	991
60-69	5.5 out of 10	1080
70-79	6.0 out of 10	1035
80-89	6.2 out of 10	283
90 or older	6.3 out of 10	16

Q3. On a scale of 1 - 10, how much do you trust Kent Police? (1 being not at all, 10 being very much).

Answer Choices	Responses
1	 7.48% 504
2	 5.14% 346
3	 6.40% 431
4	 6.10% 411
5	 12.36% 833
6	 8.36% 563
7	 11.31% 762
8	 16.34% 1,101
9	 12.32% 830
10	 14.20% 957
Answered: 6,738 Skipped: 29	
Response Total: 6,738	

Overall people *do* trust Kent Police. **On average respondents rated their level of trust as 6.4/10.** This is a slight improvement on last year, when people ranked their trust level as 6/10.

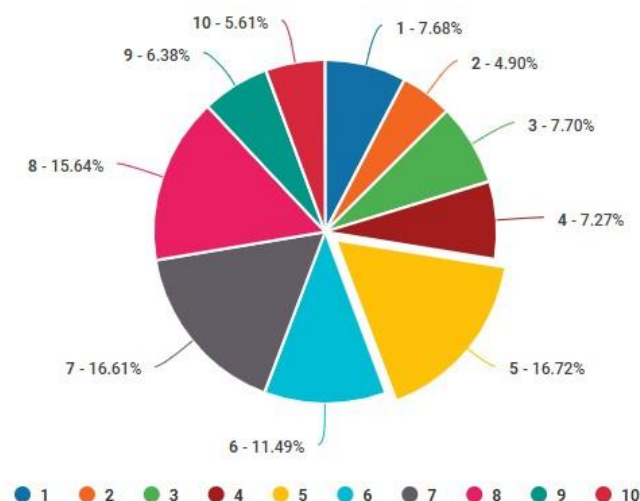
63% scored their trust level as 6 or more, with only 25% rating it as 4 or under. Again, this is an improvement on last year when 57% of respondents scored 6 or above and just under 32% ranked their trust levels as 4 or under.

There is a slight discrepancy when we look at victims of crime. Those who had been victims of ASB scored their trust level as 6.1/10; those who had not been a victim of ASB scored it as 6.5/10.

Those who had been victims of any other crime rated their trust as 5/10, those who had not been victims scored 6.1/10.

This is an improvement on last year, when victims of crime only ranked their trust in police as 4.5/10.

Q4. On a scale of 1 - 10 how well do you think Kent Police are performing, in the current circumstances? (1 being very badly, 10 being very well).



As you can see from the above chart, most people think Kent Police perform OK. The largest number of people were neutral on this answer, scoring the force 5, but the second and third highest ratings were 7 and 8. **On average, the force scored 5.8/10.**

55% scored police performance 6 or above, with 28% rating them 4 or below.

We asked this question slightly differently last year, but then only 40% ranked Kent Police's performance as good or very good, and 34% rated it as poor or very poor. Therefore, the data suggests there has been an overall improvement in perceptions of Kent Police's performance.

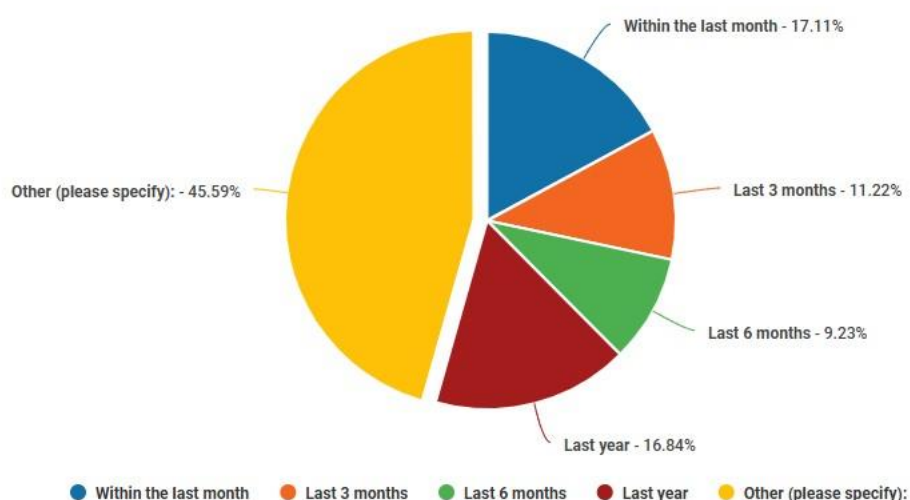
However, there is still a worrying discrepancy between victims of crime and non-victims. Those who had been victims of ASB scored police performance as 4.3/10, victims of other crimes rated it 4.4/10. Non-victims scored it 6.6/10.

Last year the result for victims was similar, with 58% thinking the police performed badly or very badly.

We also compared "police performance" by age groups. The age groups with lower satisfaction levels were the 50-59 and 60-69 groups. Older and younger people were more positive.

Age	How well are Kent Police performing	No of Respondents
17 or younger	6.8 out of 10	1024
18-20	5.7 out of 10	37
21-29	5.8 out of 10	171
30-39	5.5 out of 10	578
40-49	5.6 out of 10	916
50-59	5.3 out of 10	962
60-69	5.4 out of 10	1065
70-79	5.8 out of 10	1027
80-89	6.2 out of 10	263
90 or older	6.4 out of 10	16

Q5. When did you last see a police officer on the Beat in your area? (i.e. walking the streets)

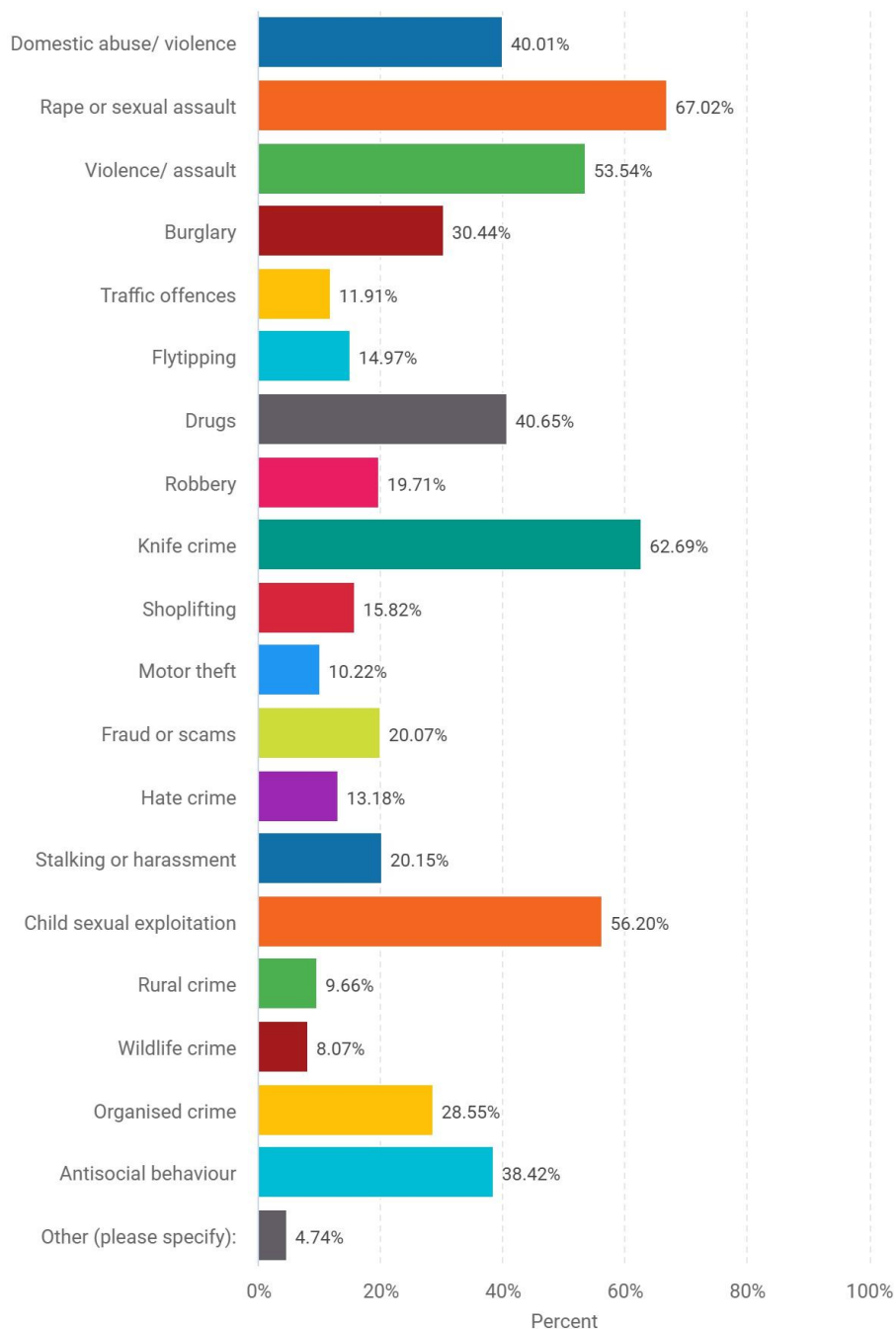


We have not asked this question before and did so in this survey to help us track the new Neighbourhood Policing Model.

As you can see, **54% of respondents had seen an officer in the last twelve months**, but nearly 46% answered “other”. Most of these, but not all, said they had never seen a police officer patrolling on foot in their area, or they had not seen one for years. Others said they had seen police patrol cars, but not officers walking the streets, while others just wanted to be specific and tell us they’d seen an officer in the last few days or weeks.

There are of course, many variables with this question: people may be out or simply not see officers on the beat, but the perception of a lack of visible policing is something the Neighbourhood Policing Model is seeking to change.

Q6. Which of the following crime types do you feel are the most important? Tick up to 6.



We ask this question annually, to inform our Police and Crime Plan. This year’s most commonly ticked crime types were broadly the same as those favoured in previous years.

This year the most important crime types were:

Crime Type	Percentage
Rape and Sexual Assault	67%
Knife Crime	63%
Child Sexual Exploitation	56%
Violent Assault	41%
Drugs	41%
Domestic Abuse	40%

Last year the six most important crimes for respondents were: Violent Crime (including weapons), Sex offences (including rape); Child Sexual Exploitation; Antisocial Behaviour, Burglary and Domestic Abuse .

For the first time this year Antisocial Behaviour did *not* feature in the top five crime types. It was selected by just over 38% of respondents and came eighth on our list. It's possible that this reflects the demographic of the respondents, as we have a far higher proportion of young people filling in the survey this year.

Q7. Do you agree with the PCC's current priorities for the Chief Constable?

In this section, Matthew Scott wants to know if people agree with his policing priorities for the new Police and Crime Plan. We asked people to tell us if they think the current priorities are still important and as you can see overwhelmingly, people agreed.

Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Total
Prevent crime and antisocial behaviour	62.71% 3,557	24.19% 1,372	9.47% 537	1.92% 109	1.71% 97	5,672
Tackle violence against women and girls	60.82% 3,446	23.84% 1,351	11.61% 658	1.94% 110	1.78% 101	5,666
Protect people from exploitation and abuse	53.97% 3,041	30.13% 1,698	12.95% 730	1.77% 100	1.17% 66	5,635
Combat organised crime and county lines	62.60% 3,533	24.26% 1,369	9.80% 553	1.88% 106	1.47% 83	5,644
Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities	64.55% 3,644	22.75% 1,284	8.27% 467	2.41% 136	2.02% 114	5,645
Support victims	53.81% 3,021	29.71% 1,668	12.59% 707	2.21% 124	1.67% 94	5,614
Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero	43.34% 2,436	32.02% 1,800	19.11% 1,074	3.38% 190	2.15% 121	5,621
Protect young people and provide opportunities	48.66% 2,738	30.18% 1,698	16.69% 939	2.90% 163	1.58% 89	5,627

Answered: 5,690 Skipped: 1,077

Q8. Have you experienced antisocial behaviour in the last year?

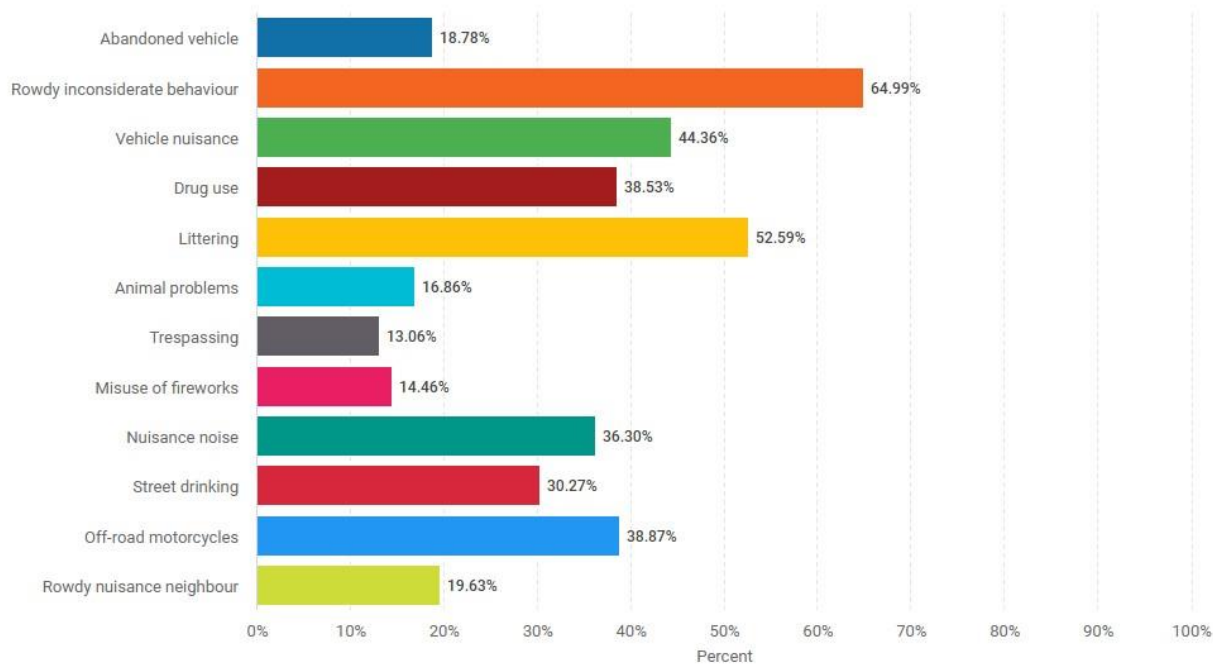
This section of the survey was dedicated to antisocial behaviour, because it's one of the most complained about offences. We want to understand what sort of things people are experiencing, whether as victims or witnesses.

These are questions we haven't asked before but will do so in the future so we can monitor performance.

Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes, as a victim		1,016
Yes, as a witness		2,608
No		2,958
Answered: 6,582 Skipped: 185		Response Total: 6,582

The above table suggests that **55% of people in Kent are either witnessing or experiencing ASB**. The following questions provide more detail.

Q9. If so, which type did you experience? (You can tick as many as you like).

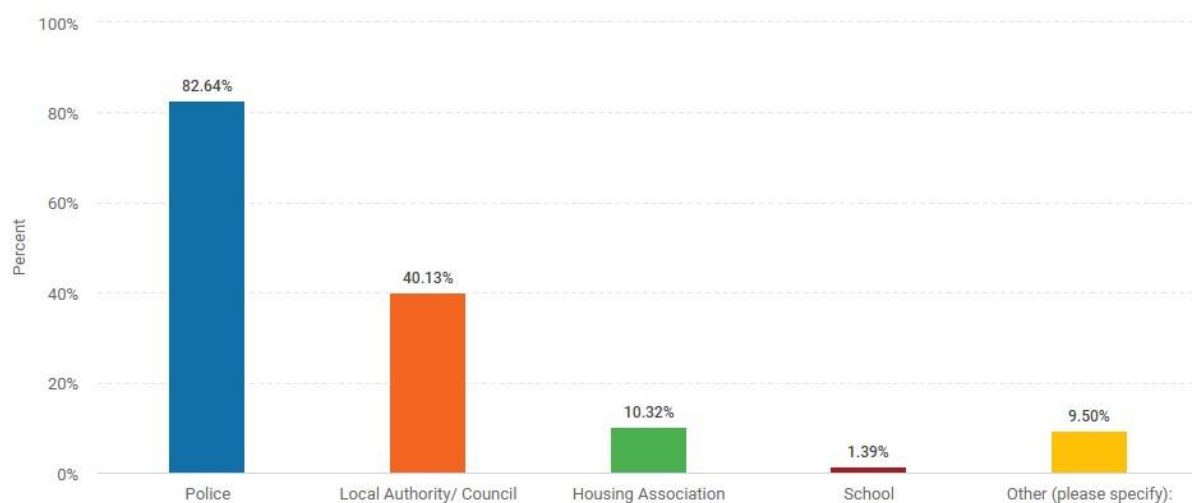


As you can see rowdy inconsiderate behaviour tops the poll, followed by littering, vehicle nuisance, off-road motorcycles and drug use.

Q10. Did you report this?

Asked whether victims or witnesses reported this, **34.84%** (or 1224 people) said YES; **65.16%** (or 2289 respondents) said NO. Clearly most people do *not* report ASB to any authority.

11. To whom did you report it?



Of those who do report, most still call the police, although a substantial number did report to the local authority.

Q12. Are you happy with how it was dealt with?

When we asked this, the answers were disappointing.

22.86% (or 278 respondents) said YES they were happy.

59.7% (or 726 respondents) said NO they were not happy.

17.43% (or 212 respondents) said the case was not yet concluded.

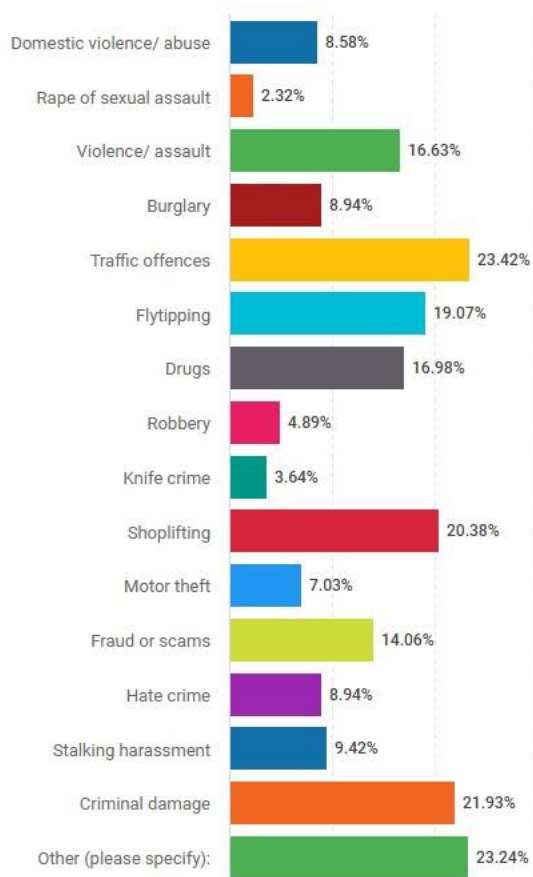
Q13. Have you experienced any other type of crime in the last year?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes, as a victim	12.15% 775
Yes, as a witness	14.77% 942
No	73.08% 4,660
Answered: 6,377 Skipped: 390 Response Total: 6,377	

We've never asked whether people have *witnessed* crime before, but it's heartening to see that a large majority have not been a victim of, or witness to, crime. Last year 77% said they had not been a victim and 23% said they had, so 12% of people indicating they'd been a victim this year is a marked decrease, although please note this question does *not* include antisocial behaviour which was the focus of question 8.

Q14. What type of crime was it?

What type of crime was it?



Last year antisocial behaviour was the highest crime experienced, with criminal damage, stalking or harassment and burglary or robbery following on. Considering Question 8, in which a large number said they'd been a victim of ASB, this is still the most common type of crime. Traffic offences and criminal damage follow.

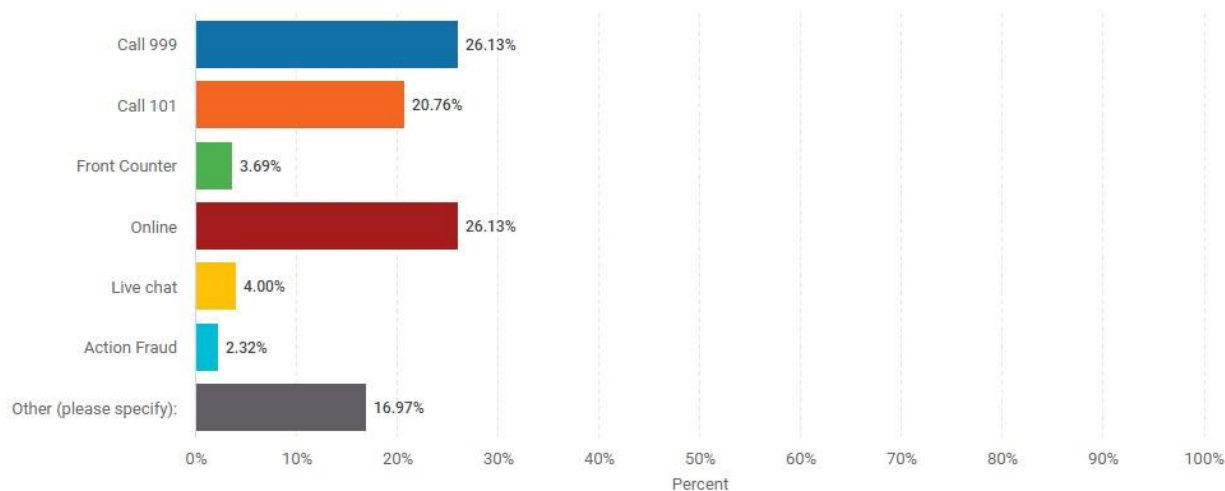
This year, for the first time, we included shoplifting on the list and it scored highly, as did flytipping, but it's worth remembering the question was answered by *witnesses* to crime as well as victims this year.

Q15. Did you report this crime?

56.9% said they reported the crime; 43% said they hadn't, but remember this question could also be answered by witnesses as well as victims themselves. We do encourage everyone to report the crimes they experience or witness.

Q16. If so, how did you report this?

How did you report it?



999 and online reporting are the most common ways people contact the police. A fifth called 101 and a large cohort said “other”. We asked them to specify and their answers included “told the school”; “reported to the Environment Agency”; “reported through Crimestoppers”; “reported to a PCSO or officer”. The word cloud below was created to reflect the free text block.



Q17. Were you happy with how it was dealt with?

30.5% (or 289 people) said YES.

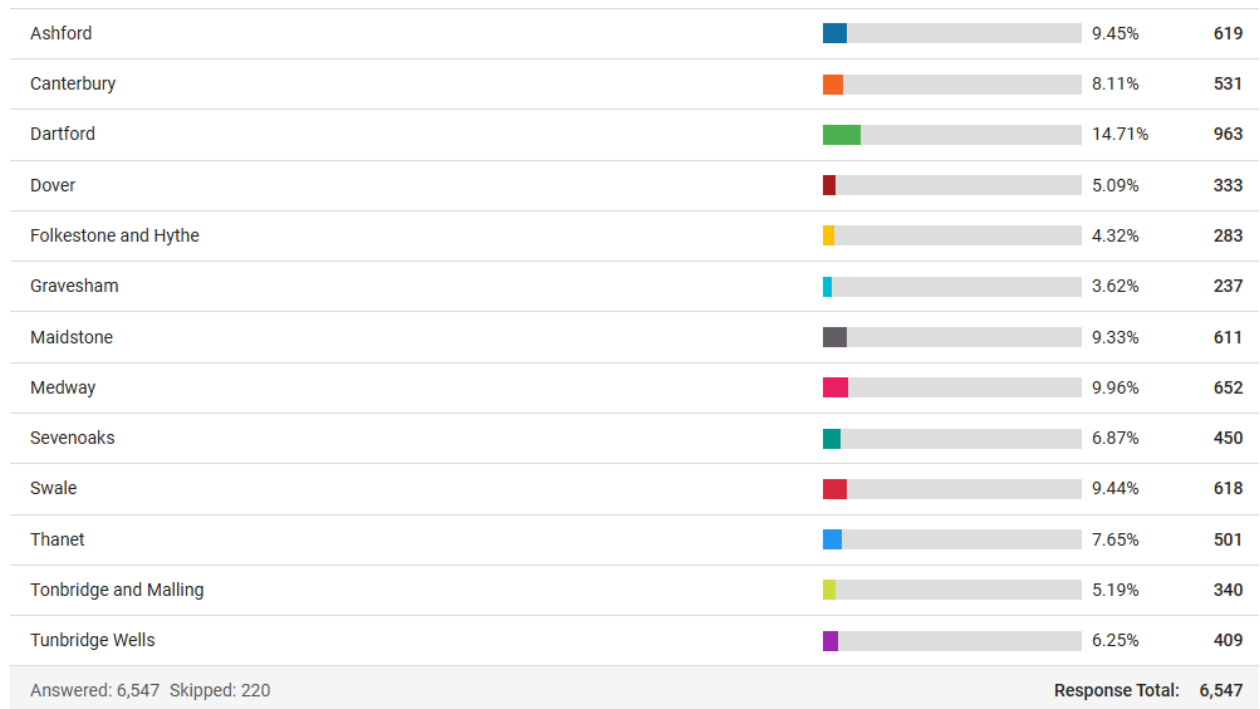
53.5% (or 508 people) said NO.

16% (or 152 people) said the case was not yet concluded.

It is concerning that only 30.5% of victims or witnesses are happy with the way the matter was handled and nearly 54% were not. We are aware there are significant delays in the criminal justice system and will ask this question in the future to measure progress.

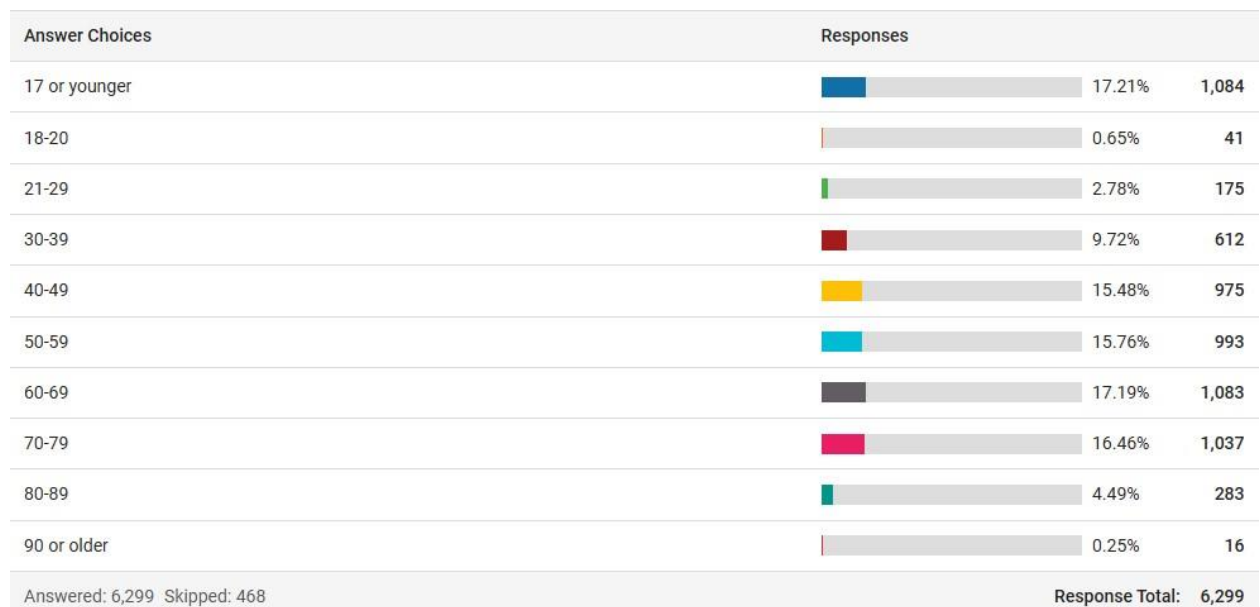
OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PERSON.

Q18. Which district do you live in?



Q19. Your age

In the past we have been criticised for having an overwhelming number of people aged 60 or above filling in our survey. This year we have employed new methods to secure the participation of younger people.



Q20. Sex

51% of respondents were women; 46% were male; 0.4% ticked 'other' and 3% preferred not to say.

Q21. Ethnicity

Answer Choices	Responses		
Asian or British Asian including: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or any other Asian background		3.90%	238
Black or Black British including: Caribbean, African or any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background		3.44%	210
Mixed or multiple ethnic background		2.00%	122
White: including English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or any other white background		83.79%	5,108
Other including: Arab or any other ethnic group		0.54%	33
Prefer not to disclose my ethnicity		6.32%	385
Answered: 6,096 Skipped: 671		Response Total:	6,096

Conclusion

On average residents of Kent and Medway do trust the police, rating that trust as 6.4/10.

This is an improvement on last year's 6/10 score, and perhaps more heartening is that trust has improved among victims of crime too. Last year victims only ranked their trust as 4.5/10, now it's 5/10. Those who'd been victims of antisocial behaviour rated their trust as 6.1/10.

The Kent Police performance rating is slightly lower, with the average score 5.8/10. However, 55% of the population rated Kent police as 6 or above out of ten, which is a big difference on last year when only 40% of respondents scored performance positively. However, victims of crime and antisocial behaviour still do *not* rate the performance of Kent Police as favourably, with victims of ASB rating it 4.3/10 and victims of other crime scoring it 4.4/10. It seems victims *trust* the police, but do not always think they do a good job.

Feelings of safety appear to have improved, however. People feel 7/10 safe where they live, again an improvement on last year's 6.3/10. Victims of antisocial behaviour however score lower at just 5.6/10.

People feel marginally less safe in their nearest town centre, depending on the area they live. On average it is ranked at 5.8/10, but some people (residents of Sevenoaks, for example) feel safer, others (residents in Gravesham for example) feel less safe. People aged between 21-39 feel less safe in their town centre than older or younger people, possibly because this cohort uses night-time economy more often.

This year we introduced a new section, designed to measure the Neighbourhood Policing Model. We asked if people had seen police officers walking the beat. 54% said they'd seen an officer in the last twelve months, but a substantial cohort said they hadn't and this perception is something we will continue to monitor.

We also introduced a section about antisocial behaviour, as it repeatedly tops our polls of the crime type people experience most. 55% of the population say they've either been victims of or

witnesses to ASB. Mostly they describe rowdy behaviour, littering, vehicle or noise nuisance. Most (65%) do not report these cases, although those who do tend to either call the police or the local authority. They tend to be dissatisfied with the outcome.

Victims of other crimes (12% of our cohort) *do* tend to report to the police, but similarly only 30.5% are happy with the outcome, with a disappointing 53.5% saying they were unhappy. More positively nearly three quarters of all respondents had not been a victim or witness to other crimes.

The most common crime types experienced (or witnessed) mirrors previous years with antisocial behaviour being the most frequent (hence its own section this year), followed by traffic offences and criminal damage. Shoplifting and flytipping were listed this year and scored highly, probably because we asked *witnesses* of crime to tell us what they'd seen, as well as those who were the direct "victim".

Every year we ask people to tick six crime types, which they believe should be priorities for Kent Police. This is always a difficult question to answer, because all the choices could merit a tick, but it's helpful to understand what matters most to residents of Kent and Medway. The top six crime types are broadly the same as previous years: rape and sexual assault, child sexual exploitation violent assault and knife crime usually feature, but antisocial behaviour came further down the "most ticked" this year. It is possible that with a large cohort of younger respondents, crimes which mattered to their age group have featured more prominently.

It's worth noting that a record 6767 filled in the anonymous survey this year. We've also expanded the reach across different age groups, ethnicities and geographical parts of the county. We wish to thank everyone for taking the time to complete it and share it with others. The feedback is valuable and will assist the Police and Crime Commissioner draft the priorities for his new Police and Crime Plan and hold the Chief Constable to account at his quarterly Performance and Delivery Boards.