



# Annual Policing Survey 2018

## January 2019

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## Background and methodology

As part of his commitment to actively engage with the diverse communities of Kent and Medway, the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Kent, Matthew Scott, launched his third Annual Policing Survey in June 2018.

The primary aim of the survey was to reach a large number of residents and offer them the opportunity to respond to five key questions:

- How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (where 1 is 'very unsafe' and 10 is 'very safe')
- The PCC is responsible for the Kent Police budget of £333.3million for 2018/19, or roughly £185 per person in the county. On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think the services you get represent value for that £185? (where 1 is 'very poor value for money' and 10 is 'excellent value for money')
- In your view, what one type of crime or anti-social behaviour does your local area have the biggest issue with?
- Tell us one thing you think Kent Police does really well...
- Tell us one thing you think Kent Police could do better...

The short online survey was primarily hosted on the OPCC website. The link was posted on social media, making use of the [OPCC's Twitter account](#) which remains the most-followed account of any PCC or OPCC in England and Wales. [Facebook](#) was also used, with targeted advertising to reach those residents who use social media but may not routinely use it to engage with the police or the OPCC.

Recognising that not all residents are online or users of social media, a leaflet was also printed and disseminated by the PCC and his team at partnership meetings and at public events, such as the Kent Police Open days and the Kent County Show.

The survey was printed inside a number of local authority magazines which were distributed to several hundred thousand households in Kent and Medway.

A [news article](#) publicising the survey was also uploaded to the OPCC website, and sent to local media contacts. It was referenced in the OPCC's e-newsletter which is sent monthly to more than 500 subscribers, and a link was included within all emailed correspondence sent by the OPCC between July and December 2018.

The survey also included questions about the respondents' address, gender, age, ethnicity, whether they work for Kent Police, and whether they have recently been a victim of crime. This information provided the OPCC with the confidence that the sample was suitably representative of the wider population of Kent and Medway.

Finally, respondents were asked how they had heard about the survey, in order to help the OPCC analyse which methods used to publicise it had been most effective and had offered the best value for money.

The survey remained open until December 2018, receiving 1,400 responses. This level of engagement represented a slight drop compared with the previous two years, possibly because residents who had already had their say in 2016 and 2017 did not believe there was a need to contact the PCC again.

Against a total population of Kent and Medway of around 1.8million, a sample of 1,400 people is still considered statistically significant at a 95% confidence level (a commonly accepted level of probability).

This report summarises the findings from the survey and has assisted the PCC in refreshing his Police and Crime Plan, [Safer in Kent](#).

## Key findings of the Annual Policing Survey

- Most people in Kent feel safe, irrespective of where they live.
- Younger people feel slightly safer than those aged 39 or older.
- People who have been a victim of crime in the last 12 months feel less safe than the rest of the population.
- Kent residents, on average, feel policing offers adequate value for money.
- Those living outside of urban areas, or who have recently been victims of crime, do not feel they are getting as much value for money as the rest of the population.
- Anti-social behaviour is the issue most people feel their local area has the biggest issue with - but they still recognise the importance of tackling serious violence and hidden harm crime.
- Residents generally feel Kent Police does a really good job fighting crime, responding to emergencies and engaging with communities. There are others who are less satisfied with the service.
- The overwhelming majority of people want Kent Police to recruit additional police officers and have more of them visible in local communities.

# Analysis of the responses received

## How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (where 1 is 'very unsafe' and 10 is 'very safe')

1,395 people gave a valid answer to this question. The other five respondents left the question blank.

The survey found that residents across Kent and Medway, on average, feel 6.5/10 safe where they live.

Using information the respondents provided about the first half of their postcode, it was found there was minimal variation in the average scores given between people living in urban, rural or coastal areas. Those living in rural postcodes (who rated their areas as 6.6/10 safe) or coastal communities (6.6/10 safe) reported feeling very slightly safer than those respondents living in urban postcodes (6.4/10 safe).

Using information the respondents provided about their ages, only a slight variation was found between how safe residents felt when the sample was broken down into four age ranges of roughly 350 responses each. People aged under 39 on average felt safer (6.8/10) than those aged 39-52, 53-64, and 65-plus. All three of these older age groups on average felt 6.4/10 safe.

Unsurprisingly, the mean average was noticeably lower among the 324 people who answered this question and who also said they had been a victim of a crime in Kent in the last year. They felt less safe where they live on average (5.0/10) compared with the remaining respondents (7.0/10).



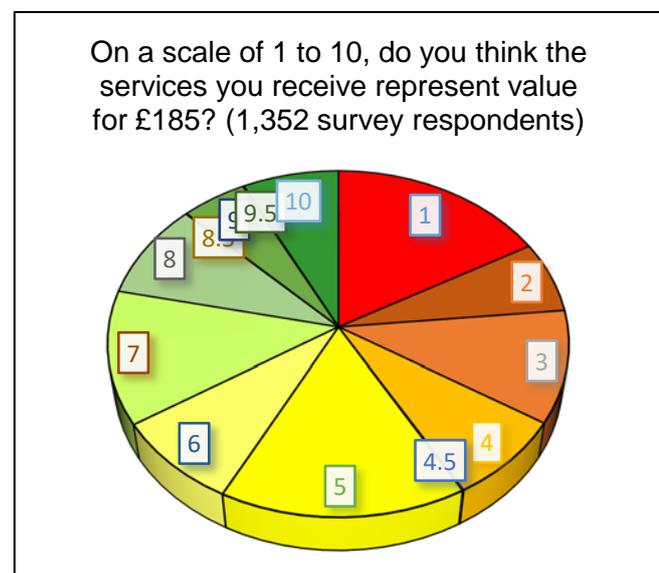
## On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think the services you get represent value for £185? (where 1 is 'very poor value for money' and 10 is 'excellent value for money')

1,352 people gave a valid answer to this question. The other 48 respondents left the question blank.

The survey found that residents across Kent and Medway, on average, rate the Kent Police budget as 5.0/10 for value for money.

Using information the respondents provided about the first half of their postcode, it was found there was some variation in the average scores given between people living in urban, rural or coastal areas. Those living in urban postcodes (who rated policing as 5.3/10 for value for money) and rural communities (5.0/10) reported feeling they were getting more value for money out of policing than those respondents living in coastal postcodes (4.5/10).

This is perhaps because people in urban areas are more likely to see officers on patrol in busy town centres more often than



those living elsewhere. The 2018 [National Rural Crime Survey](#) also found residents in rural areas were more likely to feel isolated, with a poorer perception of policing than urban residents.

Using information the respondents provided about their ages, some variation was found between how safe residents felt when the sample was broken down into four age ranges of roughly 350 responses each. People aged under 39, on average, rated policing in Kent as 5.5/10 in terms of offering value for money while those aged between 39 and 52 (4.9/10); those aged 53 to 64 (4.7/10); and those aged 65 (5.1/10) gave marginally lower scores for this question.

Notably, the average was significantly lower among the 314 people who answered this question and who also said they had been a victim of a crime in Kent in the last year. They, on average, scored the Kent Police budget as only 3.9/10 for value for money whereas the remaining respondents gave an average score of 5.3/10.

### **In your view, what one type of crime or anti-social behaviour does your local area have the biggest issue with?**

Residents were able to give any answer they wished to this question, and 1,343 chose to do so. The other 57 respondents either left this question blank or stated there were no issues in their area.

The answers given represented 28 different issues, as follows:

Antisocial behaviour, including vandalism	258
Substance misuse, including alcohol and drugs	219
Burglary or theft	204
Groups of young people congregating (not necessarily committing any offences)	132
Speeding	109
Other traffic or parking-related issues	106
Flytipping and littering	58
Violent crime; including robbery, gangs, and knife or gun crime	43
Vehicle crime	43
Traveller incursions or offences committed by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities	35
Neighbour issues or noise	23
Issues relating to scrambler bikes, quadbikes and/or mini-motos	19
Crime generally	12
Begging and vagrancy	11
Rural crime	11
Lack of effective or visible policing	11
Stalking or harassment, including online abuse and cyber-bullying	8
Fraud	7
Poaching and wildlife crime	5
Domestic abuse	5
Bogus callers	4
Immigration or over-population	4
Indecent exposure or dogging	3
Public order	3
Dog fouling	3
Hate crime	3
Sexual offences	2
<i>Other</i>	2

In the OPCC's Annual Policing Surveys of 2016 and 2017, residents were presented with a pre-defined list of issues and asked to pick their top concerns. The number one issue selected in both years was child sexual exploitation. Other threats such as rape, terrorism, domestic abuse and knife crime also featured heavily.

In 2018, by contrast, these issues were identified very few times, with antisocial behaviour being the top issue raised.

This has not been interpreted as an anomaly or indicative of a significant change in the public's priorities since 2017. Instead, these three surveys collectively demonstrate that Kent residents recognise the importance of Kent Police tackling serious and organised crime across the county; which was also found to be the case by [a recent report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary into national perceptions of policing](#). However, when freely asked about issues affecting their own communities, they are most likely to list those issues which they themselves have witnessed or which impact upon them more directly - such as vandalism, substance misuse, theft, and traffic-related issues.

To effectively manage this dichotomy, the PCC will continue to ensure that Kent Police has the resources it needs both to deliver effective neighbourhood policing, and also tackle serious violence and abuse which frequently occurs behind closed doors.

When breaking the sample down further based on information the respondents provided about the first half of their postcode, and their age, there was very little difference in the issues raised. Issues themed around antisocial behaviour, substance misuse, and burglary and theft were among the most common answers given.

### **Tell us one thing you think Kent Police does really well.**

Residents were able to give any answer they wished to this question, and 825 identified a piece of positive police work. Unfortunately, the other 575 respondents either left the field blank or gave an invalid response.

The 825 answers given broadly covered 10 different areas of work, as follows. Due to the relatively small sample, the OPCC has not sought to break this data down further based on respondents' places of residence, or age.

Fighting crime generally and keeping people safe	144
Responding to emergency calls	131
Public engagement, including at events and in schools	122
Delivering an efficient, hard-working or friendly service	119
Visible policing	91
Roads policing, including managing traffic collisions	83
Supporting victims of crime and vulnerable people	58
Contact via 101, the force website or social media	40
Working in partnership with the community, including running volunteering schemes like the Cadets	33
Staff support and training	4

### **Tell us one thing you think Kent Police could do better.**

Residents were able to give any answer they wished to this question, and 1,278 gave a valid response. A further 122 either left the answer blank or gave such a broad answer it could not be sub-categorised.

Of the 1,278 valid answers, 672 respondents (53%) referred to a desire for more police officers and/or more visible patrols. This was found to be the most popular answer irrespective of respondents' place of residence or age.

The other answers given broadly fell into one of 15 other categories but, due to the relatively small numbers involved, the OPCC has not sought to break these down further based on respondents' places of residence or age.

Recruit more police officers and/or deploy more visible patrols	672
Act on local intelligence, and attend and investigate less serious crimes	119
Enforce speed limits and traffic laws through more roads policing and/or cameras	82
Engage more with the community, including through publicity	80
Charge, or take other action against, more suspected offenders	76
Focus more on rural crime, and provide more rural patrols	50
Respond to emergencies quicker	46
Improve 101 call-handling	28
Do more crime prevention work, including advice around scams	27
Support vulnerable people	25
Be more efficient – with less paperwork or bureaucracy	16
Provide better updates to victims as investigations progress	11
Listen to complaints	9
Utilise more volunteering	8
Re-open closed police stations	7
<i>Other</i>	22

## About those who responded to the survey

Respondents to the survey came from all 75 postal areas in Kent and Medway. Of respondents who gave the first half of their postcode:

- 46% live in an urban postal area
- 32% live in a rural area
- 22% live in a coastal area.

Respondents to the survey were aged as young as nine, and as old as 101. Of those respondents who chose to give their age:

- 11% were aged 25 or under
- 25% were aged 26-45
- 40% were aged 46-65
- 24% were aged over 65

Respondents to the survey were roughly split male and female. Of those respondents who chose to give their gender:

- 55% self-identified as female
- 45% self-defined as male
- 0.2% (three people) self-identified as non-binary

Based on their ethnicity, respondents to the survey were roughly representative of the wider population of Kent and Medway. Of those respondents who listed a recognised ethnicity, 95% self-identified as being from a white background and 5% self-identified as being from a BAME background, specifically:

- White – British (or White – English) 942
- White – Irish 9
- Any other white background 86

- White and black Caribbean 3
  - White and black African 2
  - White and Asian 7
  - Any other mixed background 8
  - Asian – Indian 6
  - Asian – Pakistani 0
  - Asian – Bangladeshi 2
  - Any other Asian background 7
  - Black – Caribbean 1
  - Black – African 2
  - Any other black background 0
  - Chinese 1
  - Other 11
- 
- Prefer not to say / blank / ambiguous 313<sup>1</sup>

Of those respondents who indicated whether or not they currently work for, or volunteer with, Kent Police, 92.2% said they did not.

Of those respondents who indicated whether or not they had been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year, 77% said they had not.

Of those respondents who indicated how they had found out about the Annual Policing Survey 2018:

- 35% heard about the survey via Facebook
- 25% heard about the survey via a local newspaper, radio, TV or online
- 15% received it via email, including via the OPCC e-newsletter
- 13% had met with the PCC, or his staff, at an event
- 4% heard about the survey via word-of-mouth (eg friends/family/colleagues)
- 3% heard about the survey via Twitter
- 3% found a printed leaflet
- 2% other.

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<sup>1</sup> Ambiguous terms given included responses such as 'Anglo-Saxon', 'English' and 'Christian'.

# Copy of the Annual Policing Survey 2018

## I'm Matthew Scott, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent

My role includes holding the Chief Constable to account, setting the council tax precept for policing, commissioning services for victims of crime and funding community safety projects.

I also set the policing priorities for the county by consulting with residents like yourself, so I'd be grateful if you could complete this short survey about policing where you live.

Let me know your views by filling out this survey and returning it to me.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First half of your postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender (male/female/Non-Binary/Trans/Intersex/prefer not to say) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently work for, or volunteer with, the police?  Yes  No

Have you been a victim of a crime in Kent in the last year?  Yes  No

How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? \_\_\_\_\_  
(where 1 is 'very unsafe' and 10 is 'very safe')

The PCC is responsible for the Kent Police budget of £333.3million for 2018/19, or roughly £185 per person in the county.

On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think the services you get represent value for that £185? \_\_\_\_\_  
(where 1 is 'very poor value for money' and 10 is 'excellent value for money')

In your view, what one type of crime or anti-social behaviour does your local area have the biggest issue with?

\_\_\_\_\_

Tell us one thing you think Kent Police does really well: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us one thing you think Kent Police could do better: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would you like to opt-in to receive our monthly e-newsletter, please give your email address here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Tell us where you heard about this survey: *Maidstone Council's Borough Insight magazine*

Please cut out and return this form to:

Annual Policing Survey 2018, OPCC, Kent Police HQ,  
Sutton Road, Maidstone ME15 9BZ

Or, if you prefer, you can complete this survey online at  
[www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/consultations)

For information about how we use your personal information  
please visit [www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/privacy)

