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An abstract graphic featuring a large teal hexagon with a white hexagonal cutout in the center. To the left of this is a smaller, light gray hexagon. Below the teal hexagon is a dark blue shape that overlaps with its bottom edge. The background is white.

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## 1. Executive summary

This report presents the results and analysis from the Public Perceptions Survey as well as the findings from an in-depth consultation with ethnic minority groups in Northamptonshire.

### Key statistics

- 32% of the sample had been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour;
- 13% of participants indicated that they had experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months (21% of online respondents vs. 3% telephone);
- Top 3 ASB issues were: Vehicle nuisance including speeding, illegal parking (57%); Rubbish and litter lying around (36%); and People using or dealing drugs (31%);
- Largest increases in perceptions of ASB problems were: Drug usage – 13%; Vandalism – 11%; and Groups of people hanging around – 6%;
- Significant increases in concern about becoming a victim were identified in the following crime types: Burglary – 11%; Theft from a vehicle – 8%; Theft of a vehicle – 6%; and Violence – 5%;
- 74% of respondents with a mental health condition indicated ASB and crime to be a problem in their area, compared to 40% of respondents without a mental health condition;
- 88% of residents agreed that the police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason (compared to 87% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- 39% agreed police can be relied on to deal with minor crimes, compared to 58% in 16/17;
- 52% agreed that the police in this area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community (compared to 60% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- 40% of residents do not know how to contact the police in a non-emergency;
- 57% online and 37% telephone were willing to make an enquiry via an online chat;
- 25% of residents reported that they felt not very or not at all informed about policing and crime matters and they believe the police are not very good or not at all good at communicating with their community.

### *Innovating how public perceptions of policing and crime are captured*

- This year has seen an expansion in the methodology of the Public Perceptions Survey having a profound impact on results. This has been shaped by an increase in the proportion of the sample who have been a victim of crime or ASB, being significantly more concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour and less confident in the police.
- While the online survey generated a more negative picture, it might reflect a ‘truer’ picture than the original telephone survey exclusive approach through an improvement to the sample. This does present a challenge in measuring change, as the more negative results discussed in this report seem to be as a result in a change of methodology rather than a real change over time.

### *Understanding and responding to the concerns of marginalised populations*

- Experiences, needs and concerns within marginalised demographics were captured this year, in relation to residents’ religion, sexual orientation and disability (mental health, physical and/ or learning disability).

- Early indications are that there are important differences within these groups that should be identified and considered within future strategy, with the results demonstrating an increased likelihood of those with a mental health condition to be victimised, to be concerned about anti-social behaviour and have lower confidence in the police.

### *Responding to crime and anti-social behaviour to improve confidence in the police*

- Burglary remains a key concern for the public in relation to crime and has become the most frequently mentioned crime problem in residents' top three priorities for the police.
- Perceptions of the prevalence of vehicle nuisance and drug using or dealing had the strongest relationship with confidence in the police and local council.
- There is a belief amongst residents that some anti-social behaviour, drug using or dealing and groups of people hanging around is not addressed and is contextually accepted or normalised.

### *Communicating with the public about crime and policing*

- New content was introduced into the Public Perceptions Survey this year about accessibility and how the public want the police to communicate with them.
- A sizable proportion of residents indicated that they felt not very or not at all informed about crime and policing matters and that they believe the police are not very good or not at all good at communicating with their community.
- Whilst there has been an improvement in the proportion of residents that know how to contact the police in a non-emergency, 4 in 10 residents do not.
- There is a willingness for the public to engage with the police online, either to make an enquiry or to report online. However, there are serious concerns about how this might remove the personal contact element between the public and the police by increasing the gap between them, the ability to seek reassurance, the likelihood of receiving a timely response and the security of the information held.

### *Meaningfully engaging with and involving ethnic minority groups*

- The analysis of the in-depth consultation with ethnic minority groups to a large extent reflected key concerns, issues and needs raised in the wider Public Perceptions Survey, with the visibility and the importance of officers being out in communities was seen as key.
- Disappointment was expressed that the police appeared less willing than they have in the past to be involved in and police important events in the cultural and religious calendar.
- In terms of engagement, there was a feeling of fatigue as many individuals were asked to engage regularly but felt frustrated with a one-way exchange, with consultations being described as tick box exercises.
- Hate crime was a key feature within the consultation and factors affecting the level of reporting mentioned were the availability of the police and partner agencies to discuss instances with informally, the value of reporting incidents that will only be recorded and a perceived poor response to hate crimes that had been reported, particularly in terms of action taken and being kept informed of progress.

## 2. Introduction

### *What is public confidence and why is it important?*

The multi-faceted nature of public confidence has been recognised – it can be related to trust, legitimacy, fear of crime, visibility, and feelings of fairness. It can also reflect more general beliefs about justice, or (as referred to in one of the Peelian principles) the extent to which people identify with the police. Crucially, it is different from other measures such as satisfaction – which require direct experience of the police.

For any police force to be effective in safeguarding the public, retaining public confidence is critical. The public are a key source of information, and their trust and cooperation are often key to policing. The importance of public confidence in UK policing has not changed as the policing model still operates on the premise of policing by consent. Research has shown that trust in police effectiveness has a positive association on the public's perceived risk of sanction. In addition, public trust in police to be fair, has a positive association on perceived legitimacy of the police, which is then associated to increased compliance with the law and cooperation with the police.

### *Assessing change*

Nationally, police forces are being challenged to respond to reductions in budgets. An obvious concern is the effect this will have on public confidence, particularly given the known benefits mentioned above. Public confidence in policing is also impacted by governance related issues, specifically the need for developed structures for accountability and transparency of policing representatives and their practices. Whilst it is also acknowledged that wider media coverage (on areas such as financial cuts, reform, and effective responses to terrorism) all contribute to public perceptions of policing, local context is also of significance. For Northamptonshire Police, historically speaking, public confidence has seen relatively minimal changes year-on-year, it could arguably be said that more recently Northamptonshire Police has made the greatest changes to service delivery that are likely to be felt by the public.

In October 2017, Northamptonshire Police introduced the Service Delivery Model (SDM) to better meet the needs of the community and protect people from harm. Key aspects of this model are impacted on by public confidence and the relationship between the police and the community it serves. The new Managed Appointments Unit (MAU) for members of the public reporting incidents that do not need an immediate response, means appointments are now intended to be held at police premises or community locations, requiring a higher level of cooperation from the public than had previously been sought. In addition to more dedicated resources for investigating crime, there was also a re-focus of priorities for neighbourhood policing teams. Neighbourhood policing is one contributory factor to public confidence, particularly in relation to visibility and accessibility. Impacts on public perceptions are of importance given the points highlighted in other commissioned work (Wellbeing and Resilience, 2018) in which PCSOs shared the perception that time on beat was reduced due to other competing demands.

### ***'The police are the public and the public are the police'***

It is also recognised that when considering public confidence, Northamptonshire Police deal with 'multiple publics' – with some groups lacking voice or representation, or those that can be systematically disadvantaged by wider society. This report will pay particular focus to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Peel's vision of 'the police are the public and the public are the police' goes beyond simply demanding the police share characteristics in common with the public, but rather that each party shares civic duties that contribute to the public good. It is recognised that the public are a key source of information, and their trust and cooperation are often key to effective law enforcement, with a recent example being Sikh communities working together with Northamptonshire Police around Asian gold burglary prevention.

### ***Understanding communities***

Recently, concerns have been expressed by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) regarding the reduction in community safety questions contained in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). Nationally, while there appears to be broad agreement that having confidence as a target may not have benefits, it is recognised that, more generally, forces furthering their understanding of the communities they serve is positive, particularly given continued cuts and reforms, and in times where the police are perceived to be the backstop for other services being cut.

### 3. Methodology

The Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice undertakes a survey with residents of Northamptonshire about crime, anti-social behaviour and policing on behalf of Northamptonshire Police and the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner. Members of the public living in Northamptonshire, are asked questions about their perceptions of policing, crime and antisocial behaviour, worry and personal experience of victimisation and willingness to engage with policing. The Public Perceptions Survey has been in place for about ten years and throughout the report the analysis draws attention to changes over time.

#### 3.1 Approach

The survey has historically been carried out over the phone, telephone numbers for households across the county are called at random by a team of telephone researchers in the IPSCJ. However, in October 2017, the IPSCJ launched the online Public Perceptions Survey to complement the telephone surveying that it already undertakes. The primary aim of this was to:

- increase the volume of residents surveyed as telephone surveying is becoming decreasingly fruitful.

As the sample reached through the telephone was predominantly middle to older aged, as well as being largely White, conducting the surveying online was viewed as a way to engage with and create a more heterogeneous sample. As such, a secondary aim of the change was to:

- increase the diversity of the sample.

The results that were obtained online as compared to over the phone presented in this report are different, with residents online being significantly more negative about the police and more concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour problems in their area. Further investigation was carried out to determine why online and telephone respondents differed in their responses and has been reported upon in a separate report produced in December 2017. It is noted that the online sample were much more likely to have been a victim or witness of crime and to perceive there to be crime and anti-social behaviour problems in their area. However, the investigation of the data did not fully explain the differences between the two samples. Therefore, the report was inconclusive but surmised that online respondents may be more negative because they are not a randomised sample but are self-selecting and that the survey had been promoted primarily through police and OPCC communications which may comprise more people that have experienced crime or anti-social behaviour. Therefore, in this report the telephone and online responses are reported separately in addition to the overall responses.

In the twelve months beginning April 2017 to the end of March 2018, 2,765 residents in Northamptonshire participated in the Public Perceptions Survey. 1,141 (41%) of residents completed the survey online and 1,624 (59%) were surveyed over the phone.

## 3.2 Demographics

This Section contains a breakdown of the sample by demographics as compared to the breakdown for the population.

### 3.2.1 Gender

In October 2017, the question on gender was expanded to include non-binary, transgender and other. In this year, 54% (1,483) of participants were female, 42% (1,158) were male, <1% (4) classed themselves as non-binary, <1% (2) classed themselves as transgender and <1% (4) classed themselves as other<sup>1</sup>. Due to small numbers when comparisons are made by gender, only male and female participants are compared. However, as the sample grows, reporting will become possible with other gender types. Figure 3.1 shows that whilst males are still under-represented in the sample, the introduction of the online survey has notably improved their representation compared to last year.

**Figure 3.1 Gender profile**

| Gender | Sample 16/17 | Sample 17/18 | Northants Population |
|--------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Male   | 39%          | 46%          | 49%                  |
| Female | 61%          | 54%          | 51%                  |
| Total  | 100%         | 100%         | 100%                 |

### 3.2.2 Age

Within this year's sample, 4% (104) of the sample were aged 16-24, 8% (195) were 25-34, 13% (341) were 35-44, 22% (561) were 45-54, 21% (529) were 55-64, 21% (559) were 65-74, 11% (287) were 75 or above<sup>2</sup>. Figure 3.2 shows that whilst the younger age groups are under-represented, the introduction of the online survey has been effective in increasing their representation.

**Figure 3.2 Age profile**

| Age                    | Sample 16/17 | Sample 17/18 | Northants Population |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 16-24                  | 3%           | 4%           | 13%                  |
| 25-34                  | 6%           | 8%           | 16%                  |
| 35-44                  | 11%          | 13%          | 19%                  |
| 45-54                  | 18%          | 22%          | 18%                  |
| 55-64                  | 21%          | 21%          | 15%                  |
| 65-74                  | 26%          | 22%          | 10%                  |
| 75 or above            | 15%          | 11%          | 9%                   |
| Total (where provided) | 100%         | 100%         | 100%                 |

<sup>1</sup> 114 participants did not state their gender

<sup>2</sup> 189 participants did not state their age



### 3.2.3 Ethnicity

Figure 3.3 illustrates that 94% (2,455) participants were White, 3% (69) were Asian, 1% (31) were Black, 1% (24) were of a Mixed background and 1% (25) were of an Other background<sup>3</sup>. Due to small numbers in some ethnic groups White participants were compared to those from a minority ethnic background only in each chapter, however, Chapter 8 takes an in-depth look at ethnic differences using two years of data. The introduction of the online survey appears to have had a limited impact on increasing the ethnic diversity in the sample.

**Figure 3.3 Ethnic profile**

| <b>Ethnicity</b>       | <b>Sample 16/2017</b> | <b>Sample 17/18</b> | <b>Northants Population</b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Asian or Asian British | 2%                    | 3%                  | 3.7%                        |
| Black or Black British | 1%                    | 1%                  | 2.4%                        |
| Chinese                | 0%                    | 0%                  | -                           |
| Mixed                  | 1%                    | 1%                  | 2.0%                        |
| White                  | 96%                   | 94%                 | 91.5%                       |
| Other ethnic group     | 0%                    | 1%                  | 0.4%                        |
| Total (where provided) | 100%                  | 100%                | 100%                        |

### 3.2.4 Sexual identities

In October 2017, a question was added to the survey about participant's sexual identities as it is important to determine variations in perceptions and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour across different sexual identities. In the period October – March 2017/18<sup>4</sup>, 86% (1613) of the sample described themselves as 'heterosexual/ straight', 1.7% (32) as bisexual, 1.6% (30) as gay or lesbian and 11% (204) said that they would prefer not to say. Due to small numbers when comparisons are made by sexual identity, it has only been possible to compare those who describe themselves as heterosexual with those that describe themselves any other sexual identity. This is of course far from ideal, however, as the sample grows reporting on each sexual identity should become possible as the sample grows.

### 3.2.5 Religion

In October 2017, a question was added to the survey about participant's religion, 56% (972) were Christian, 39% (681) were of no religion, 2% (3) were an Other religion, 0.6% (11) were Buddhist, 0.9% (15) were Hindu, 1.1% (20) were Muslim, 0.3% (5) were Jewish and 0.2% (3) Sikh<sup>5</sup>. Due to small numbers in cases for some religions, comparisons in the report are made between those that are Christian, those who have no religion and all Other religions.

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<sup>3</sup> 161 participants did not state their ethnicity

<sup>4</sup> 251 participants did not state their sexuality

<sup>5</sup> 132 participants did not state their religion

### 3.2.6 Disability

In October 2017, a more in-depth question on disability was added to the survey. Residents are asked ‘Do you have a long-term physical condition, a mental health condition or a learning disability?’ 15% (288) of the sample had a physical condition, it is difficult to find a specific estimation of the proportion of the population with a physical condition as different estimates include different conditions.

Overall in the sample, 4% (77) had a mental health condition, compared to an estimated 1 in 6 (17%) people in the UK who in the past week experienced a common mental health problem<sup>6</sup>. There were 1% (17) of residents who reported they had a learning disability, compared to approximately 2.5% of the population have a learning disability in England and Wales<sup>7</sup>.

Therefore, those with a mental health condition or learning disability may be under-represented in the sample and, as such, other methods of consultation should be considered to increase understanding of the perceptions and needs of those with mental health conditions or learning disabilities. The Northamptonshire OPCC have recently carried out a large-scale consultation to find out more about the experiences of those with mental health conditions and autism/ADHD with the Criminal Justice System as part of the Time2Listen project.

Unfortunately, due to the small number of respondents that have a learning disability in the sample quantitative analysis has not been able to be carried out on this group on this occasion.

### 3.2.7 Location

Figure 3.4 illustrates how most participants in this years’ survey resided in Northampton, though Northampton residents remain under represented compared to the county’s population. The least number of residents lived in Corby but is proportional to the county population.

**Figure 3.4 District profile**

| District        | Sample 16/2017 | Sample 17/18 | Northants Population |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Corby           | 15%            | 9%           | 9%                   |
| Daventry        | 13%            | 13%          | 11%                  |
| East Northants  | 16%            | 13%          | 13%                  |
| Kettering       | 14%            | 14%          | 14%                  |
| Northampton     | 21%            | 26%          | 31%                  |
| South Northants | 11%            | 13%          | 12%                  |
| Wellingborough  | 11%            | 13%          | 11%                  |
| Total           | 100%           | 100%         | 100%                 |

6. McManus S, Bebbington P, Jenkins R, Brugha T. (eds.) (2016) Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014. Leeds: NHS Digital. Available

<sup>7</sup> People with learning Disabilities in England 2015: Main Report (November 2016), Learning Disabilities Observatory

## 4. Perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour

The theme of this chapter concerns victimisation and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour. The Chapter is organised into the following Sections: Victimisation (4.1); Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime (4.2); Demographic Differences (4.3) and a Summary (4.4).

### Figure 4.1 Key Statistics

#### ***Victimisation:***

- 32% of the sample had been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour in this year, compared to 12% last year;
  - Most common were victims of criminal damage (29%), harassment (20%), Burglary (17%) and Vehicle Crime (16%);
- 13% of participants indicated that they had experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months (21% of online respondents vs. 3% telephone);
  - Most often respondents were a victim of nuisance behaviour (79%), vehicle related nuisance (51%), litter (49%) and rowdy behaviour (44%);
- Differences between non-victims and victims respectively were:
  - (Crime victims) Thought police were doing a good/excellent job: 51% vs. 22%;
  - (ASB victims) Thought police were doing a good/excellent job: 49% vs 22%.

#### ***Perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime:***

- Top 3 ASB issues were:
  - Vehicle nuisance including speeding, illegal parking (57%);
  - Rubbish and litter lying around (36%); and
  - People using or dealing drugs (31%);
- Largest increases identified in perceptions of ASB problems were:
  - Drug usage – 13%;
  - Vandalism – 11%;
  - Groups of people hanging around – 6%; and
  - People drunk or rowdy – 6%.
- Significant increases identified in concerns about becoming a victim were identified in the following crime types:
  - Burglary – 11%;
  - Theft from a vehicle – 8%;
  - Theft of a vehicle – 6%; and
  - Violence – 5%.
- 74% of respondents with mental health conditions indicated that ASB and crime are a problem in their area, compared to 40% of respondents without a mental health condition;
- 35% of people with a mental health condition stated that crime affected their quality of life compared to 16% of respondents without a mental health condition.

## 4.1 Perceptions of victims

This section highlights the higher proportion of victims that participated in this year's annual survey compared to previous years.

### ***4.1.1 Representativeness of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)***

People's perceptions of the police and concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour are significantly related to whether a person has experienced crime or anti-social behaviour themselves. An increase in victims within the sample this year is negatively correlated with results relating to perceptions of policing, crime and anti-social behaviour.

According to the Crime Survey England and Wales (CSEW) (2017), a fifth of the national population (20%) have been a victim of crime in the last 12 months. This suggests that victims are under-represented in the telephone survey sample with only 4 in 100 (4%) saying that they had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months. Whereas, like the CSEW (2017), a fifth (18%) of online participants have been a victim of crime, which might be more in line with the actual population of victims. Although, caution must be exercised as regional and local CSEW data are not available on victimisation. As such, whilst the results of the online survey within this report have negatively impacted on a range of measures, analysis presented in previous years based on the telephone model exclusively may have positively and deceptively increased levels of satisfaction and confidence.

It should be noted that a lower proportion of the sample analysed in this report indicated that they had experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months compared to CSEW participants. Only a fifth of online participants indicated that they had experienced or witnessed ASB and only 3 in 100 of those surveyed over the phone compared to nearly a third (31%) of CSEW participants. As such, caution should be taken when interpreting these results alongside other results presented nationally or regionally.

### ***4.1.2 Type of victimisation***

For residents that had been a victim of crime, the most common types of crimes experienced were, criminal damage with 3 in 10 victims experiencing this type of crime followed by harassment with 2 in 10 victims experiencing it. This was closely followed by Burglary and Vehicle Crime.

For residents that had been a victim of ASB, the most common types were 'nuisance behaviour' with 8 in 10 having experienced it, followed by 5 in 10 having experienced 'vehicle related nuisance' and 'litter' and 4 in 10 having experienced rowdy behaviour.

### ***4.1.3 Victimisation and confidence in the police***

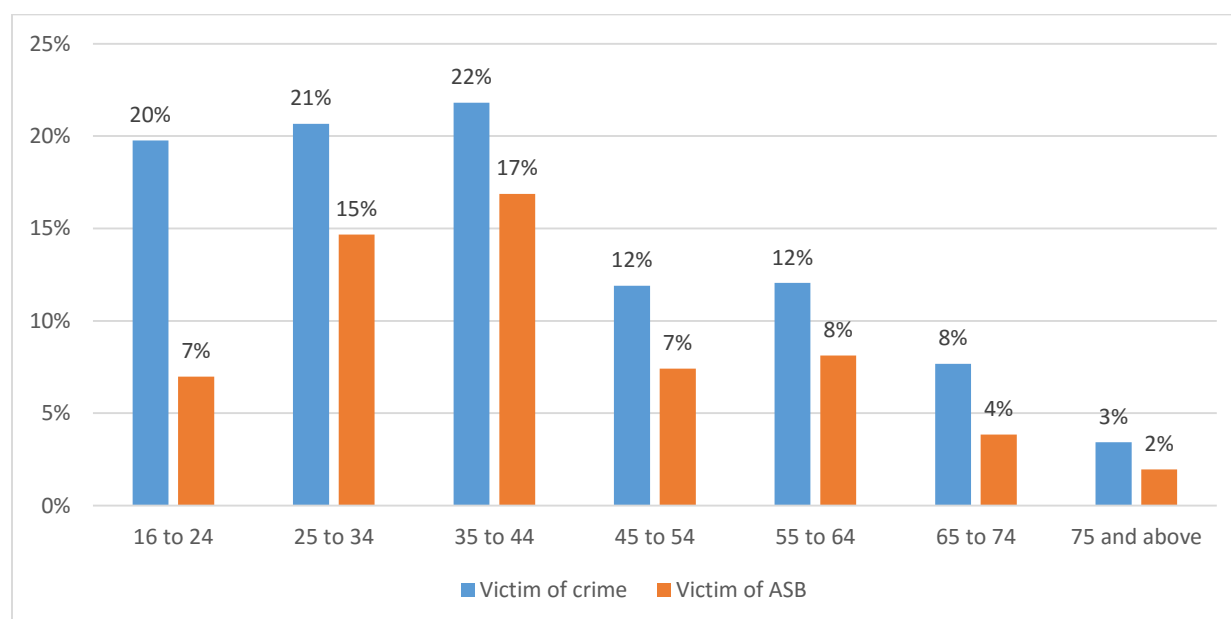
Previous experiences of being a victim of crime and anti-social behaviour had a profound effect on the responses within the Public Perceptions Survey, with those who had been a victim of crime and anti-social

behaviour being significantly less likely to be confident in the police. For both crime and anti-social behaviour, about 5 in 10 of those that had not been a victim thought the police do a good or excellent job compared to about 2 in 10 of those that had been victimised. Those who had been victims of crime or ASB were also significantly less likely to agree that the police are good at communicating with the community, about 3 in 10 (31% victims of crime and 29% victims of ASB) compared to 5 in 10 that had not been victims (51% of those that had not been a victim of crime and 50% of those that had not been a victim of ASB).

#### 4.1.4 Victimisation by demographic

There was no significant difference in the proportion of males and females that had been a victim of crime or ASB within the sample. Those from a minority ethnic background within the sample were significantly more likely to have been a victim of crime (23%) in the last 12 months compared to 12% of White participants, however they were not significantly more likely to have been a victim of ASB. The proportion of those who had been a victim of crime decreased with age, with a fifth of those under the age of 44 having been a victim of crime compared to about a tenth over the age of 44. Being a victim of ASB was most common amongst the 35 to 44 age group, illustrated in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 Crime and ASB victimisation by age group**



Residents that were of another religion other than Christian (i.e. Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh) were significantly more likely than Christians and those with no religion to say that they have been a victim of crime (25% compared to 11% of Christians and 13% with no religion). They were also more likely to say that they had been a victim of anti-social behaviour (14% compared to 7% of Christians and 8% with no religion).

Residents that had a physical disability were significantly more likely to have been a victim of crime in the last year compared to those that did not, 16% (46) compared to 12% respectively (188). Those with a mental health condition were also significantly more likely to have been victims of crime in the last year compared to those that have not, 24% (18) compared to 12% (216) of those that do not. Although those with a physical condition were not more likely to be a victim of anti-social behaviour those with a mental health condition were, 16% compared to 7% of those that do not have a mental health condition.

For sexuality, due to numbers those with a non-heterosexual orientation (i.e. gay or bisexual were combined) were compared to those that classed themselves as 'heterosexual or straight'. There was no significant difference between these groups in victimisation for crime, however, those that were not heterosexual were significantly more likely to say that they had experienced ASB, 15% compared to 8% of heterosexual respondents.

#### **4.1.5 Summary**

Overall, this section demonstrates how the sample analysed this year comprises a higher proportion of people who have been a victim of crime and/or anti-social behaviour (3 in 10) compared to last year (1 in 10), which might help explain why some measures of confidence and perceptions of crime and ASB have negatively changed compared to last year (if online surveys and telephone surveys are looked at in combination). The online sample accessed more victims compared to the telephone survey method. However, when considering the results of the CSEW, it suggests that the online survey is capturing a more proportional representation of victims within the population. Therefore, while the online survey may be representing a more negative picture, it might be reflecting a 'truer' picture than the original telephone survey exclusive approach.

The analysis highlights some demographic differences in victimisation, due to numbers for ethnic groups, only White and ethnic minority participants were compared, however, more in-depth analysis using a longer data period is conducted in Chapter 8. In October 2017, questions were added to the survey about sexuality and disabilities. The analysis presented in this section indicates that are potential differences in levels of victimisation within these demographics. Although, there is some data on a national level of victimisation by disability or sexuality, little information is available locally. Therefore, continued collection and scrutiny of these measures is essential to enhance the police's and other agencies' understanding of victimisation of particular groups within the county.

## 4.2 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime

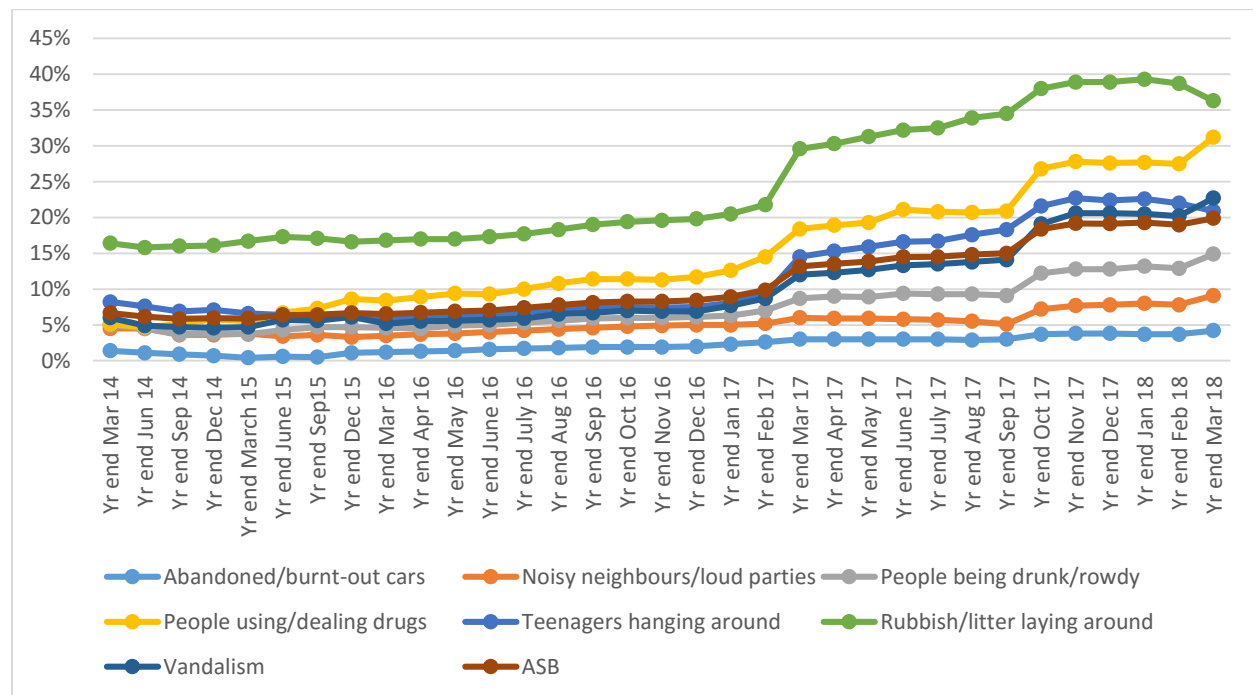
This section explores the results relating to perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime.

### 4.2.1 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is a broad term which includes varied types of incidents with varying impact on individuals and communities, from serious intimidation and harassment to environmental nuisance such as rubbish and litter. It is the interpretation of behaviour that renders it anti-social or impactful by the individual, which is shown to be closely related to their existing view of the level of disorder in an area, or by deeper-seated anxieties about the state of society or their community in general. This is why perceptions of anti-social behaviour and low-level disorder are understood to be closely related to confidence in the police.

Figure 4.2 illustrates perceptions of each of the main types of ASB as a 'very or fairly big problem' in the local area over the last five years. It shows a step change in October 2017 in that the proportion of residents that consider each type of ASB measured a 'very or fairly big problem' increasing. It appears that this step change is likely to be due to the introduction of the online survey in October 2017, however, it is important to note as was discussed in the previous section that the online survey is more representative of victims within the population. Therefore, it is likely that the change may be due to the expansion of the survey methodology providing a more accurate representation of residents' views across the county.

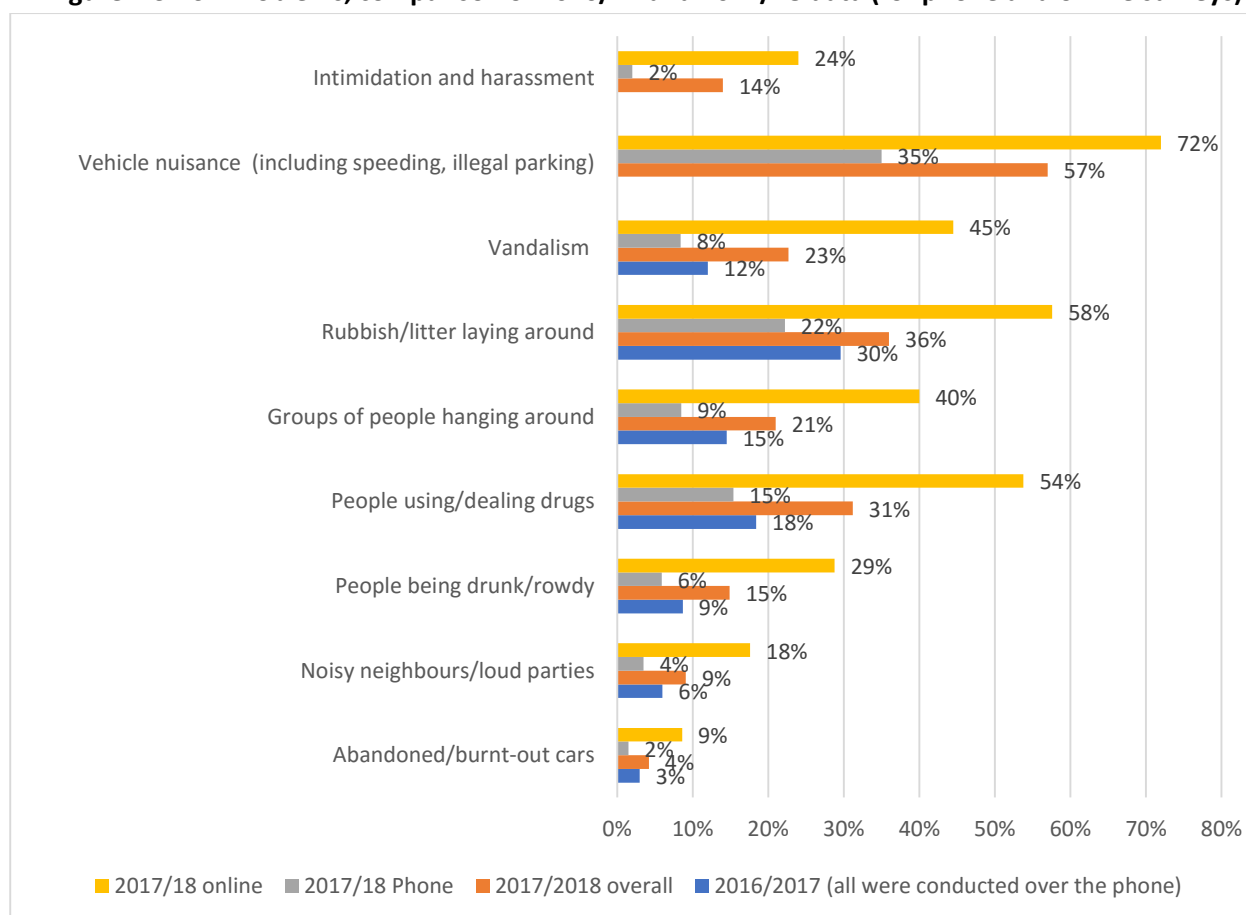
**Figure 4.2 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour over the last five years**



However, due to the potential impact in the difference in methodology this year (i.e. a combination of online and telephone) and last (i.e. telephone only), the telephone surveys from this year were compared to last year to remove this confounding factor of differing methodologies in measuring change over time. The figure below shows the results of this comparison and when phone surveys only are compared, there has been a significant reduction in the proportion of residents who consider each anti-social behaviour issue to be a problem in their area. The difference being particularly notable for rubbish/litter reducing from 30% 2016/2017 to 22% 2017/18 and groups of people hanging around reducing from 15% 2017/17 to 9% 2017/18.

A much higher proportion of residents that responded online considered ASB issues to be a problem in their local area than phone respondents, illustrated in Figure 4.3. For example, 58% of online respondents considered rubbish/ litter to be a problem compared to 22% of residents that answered the survey over the phone this year. Despite the differences between the two surveying methodologies, both groups were most likely to select vehicle nuisance as a problem, which was a new category added this year, followed by rubbish/ litter and drug use and drug dealing. Intimidation and harassment was also added, which was not perceived by a high proportion of residents to be a problem in their area.

**Figure 4.3 ASB Problems, comparison of 2016/17 and 2017/18 data (for phone and online surveys)**





#### ***4.2.2 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour and confidence in the police and local council***

When looking at perceptions of each ASB issue, all had a significant association with the extent to which residents felt that the police and local council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime. The relationship between ASB issues and confidence in the police and local council ranged from being weak to moderate.

The ASB issue that had the strongest association with the perception that the police and local council were dealing with issues was 'vehicle nuisance' (including speeding, illegal parking and off-road motorcycling), with 20% of those that thought this was an issue agreeing that the police and local council are dealing with issues compared to 54% of those that don't think vehicle nuisance is an issue. 'People using or dealing drugs', 'vandalism' and 'groups of people hanging around' also had a moderate association with confidence in the police and the local council while the other ASB issues had what would be classed as a weak association although statistically significant.

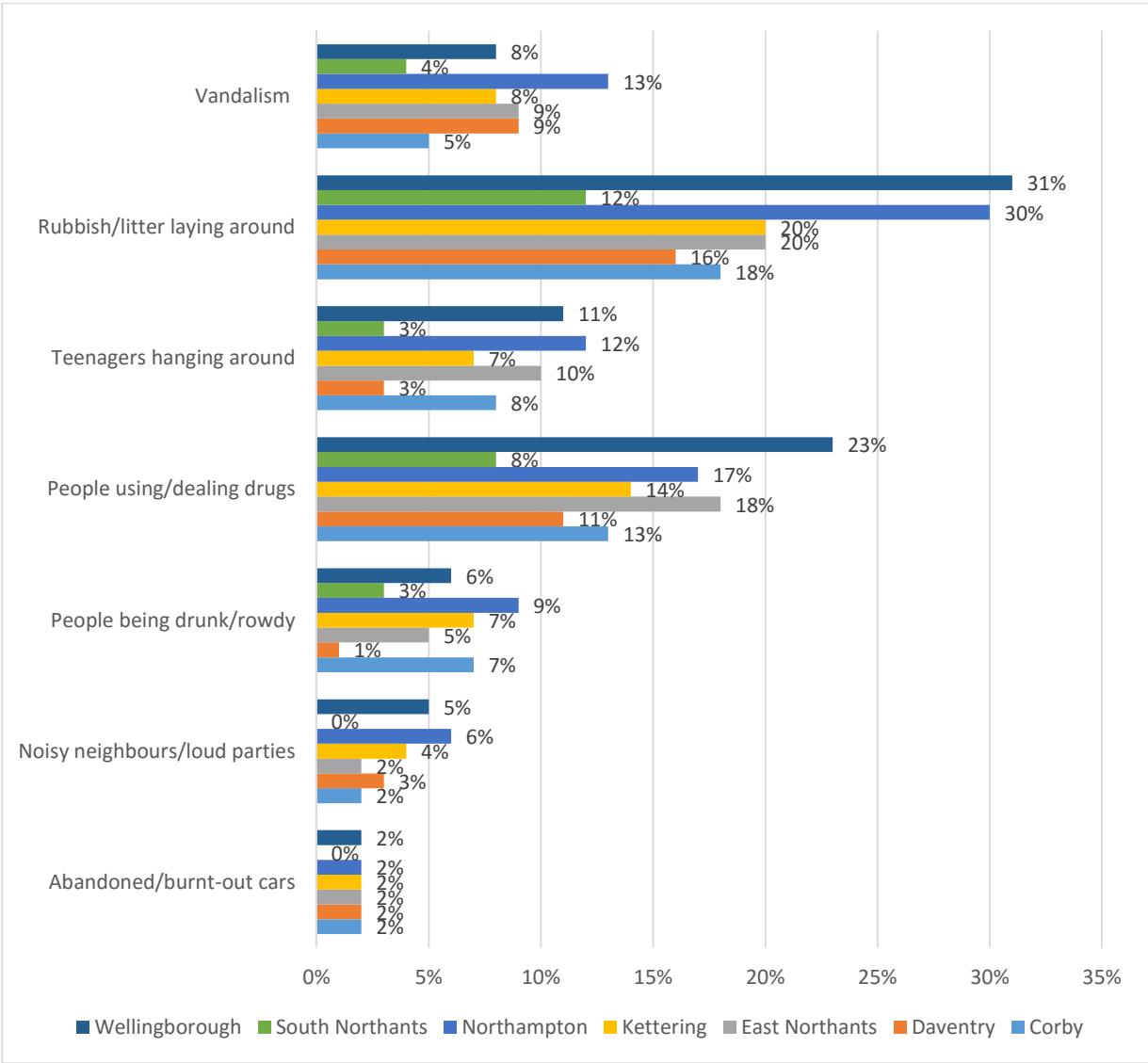
Given that the public identify vehicle nuisance and drug dealing in their top three choices of ASB issues that are a problem and in addition these are the most strongly related to their confidence in the police and local council these could be key areas of focus for partnership initiatives also ensuring that any work on these areas is communicated to the public so that they are aware of what is being done to address them.

#### ***4.2.3 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour by district***

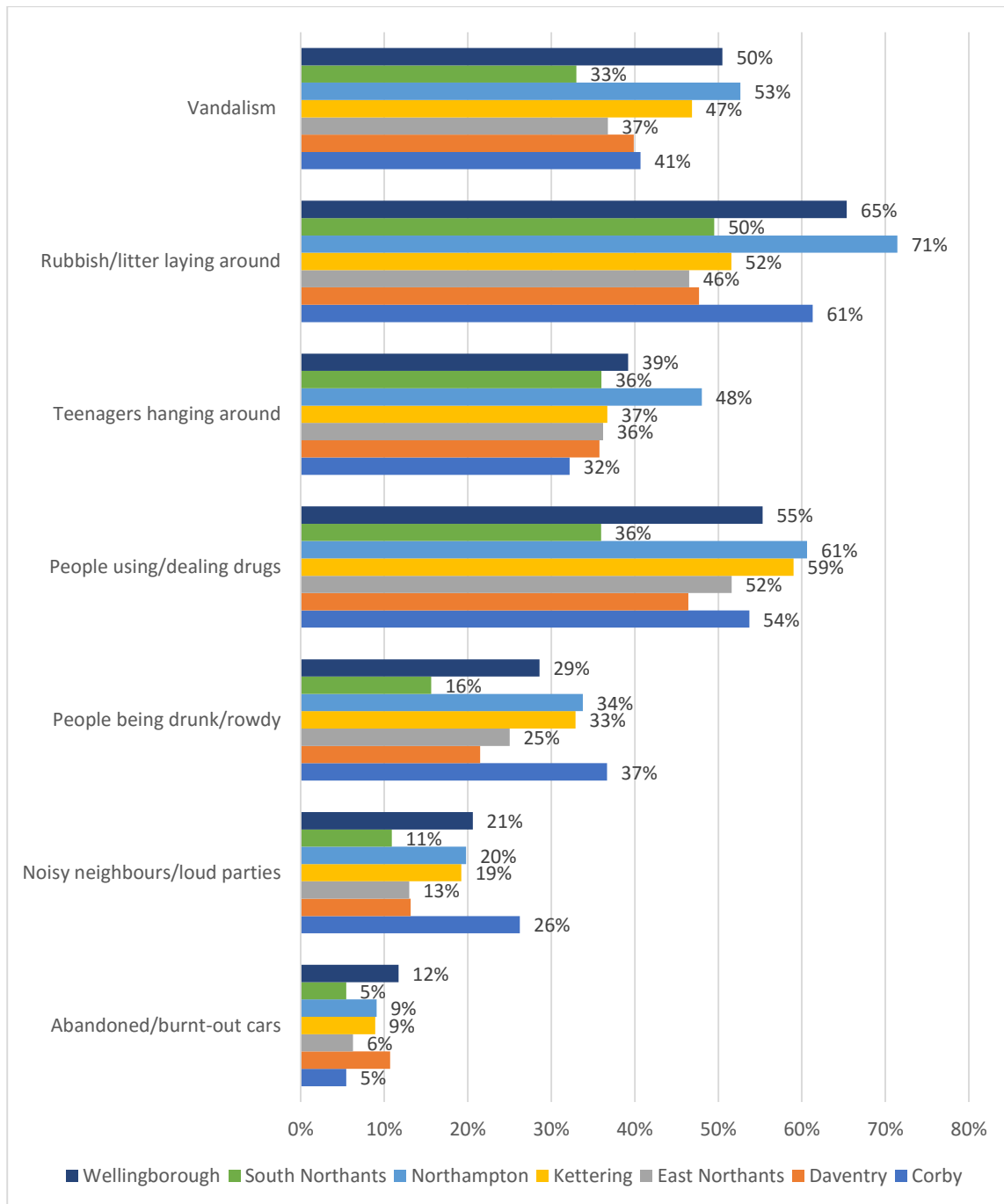
Differences in perceptions of ASB by district are presented in this section. Figure 4.4 shows the differences across the telephone surveys and Figure 4.5 illustrates the differences across the online surveys. Across both survey types, there were significant differences across the districts in perceptions that each ASB issue is a problem in the local area, except for abandoned cars.

In general, participants from Northampton, Wellingborough and Corby cited the most ASB issues as problems in their local area. When considering drug usage and dealing, identified as a key priority within the previous sections, the largest proportions of people who indicated that this was a problem on the telephone were from Wellingborough followed by East Northamptonshire and Northampton whereas online respondents were from Northampton, followed by Kettering and Wellingborough.

Figure 4.4 Perceptions of ASB by district (phone)



**Figure 4.5 Perceptions of ASB by district (online)**

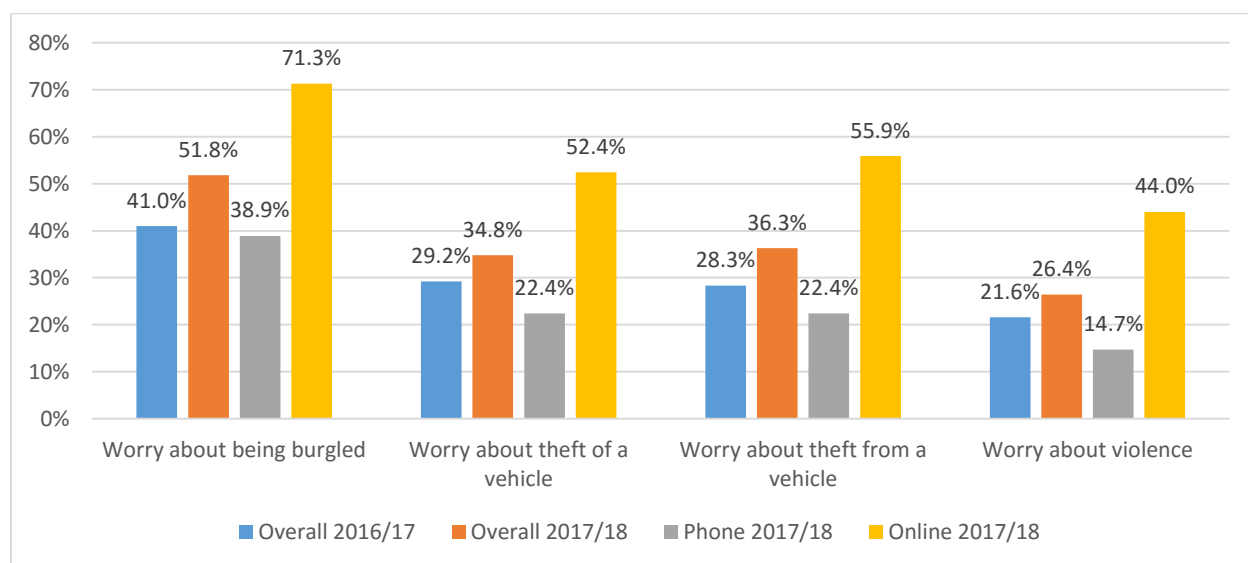


#### **4.2.4 Worry about crime**

In terms of worry about crime, Figure 4.6 shows the proportions of residents that were worried about being a victim of burglary, having something stolen from their car, having their car stolen and being a victim of violence. When looking at the overall data for this year compared to last, a significant increase in concern

was identified. However, when comparing like with like methodology (i.e. the telephone surveying exclusively), there was a significant decrease amongst residents in worry about having something stolen from their car (decreasing by 5.9%), having their car stolen (decreasing by 6.8%) and being physically attacked (decreasing by 6.9%). This difference is likely to be linked with a greater proportion of the online sample comprising victims and witnesses to crime and anti-social behaviour.

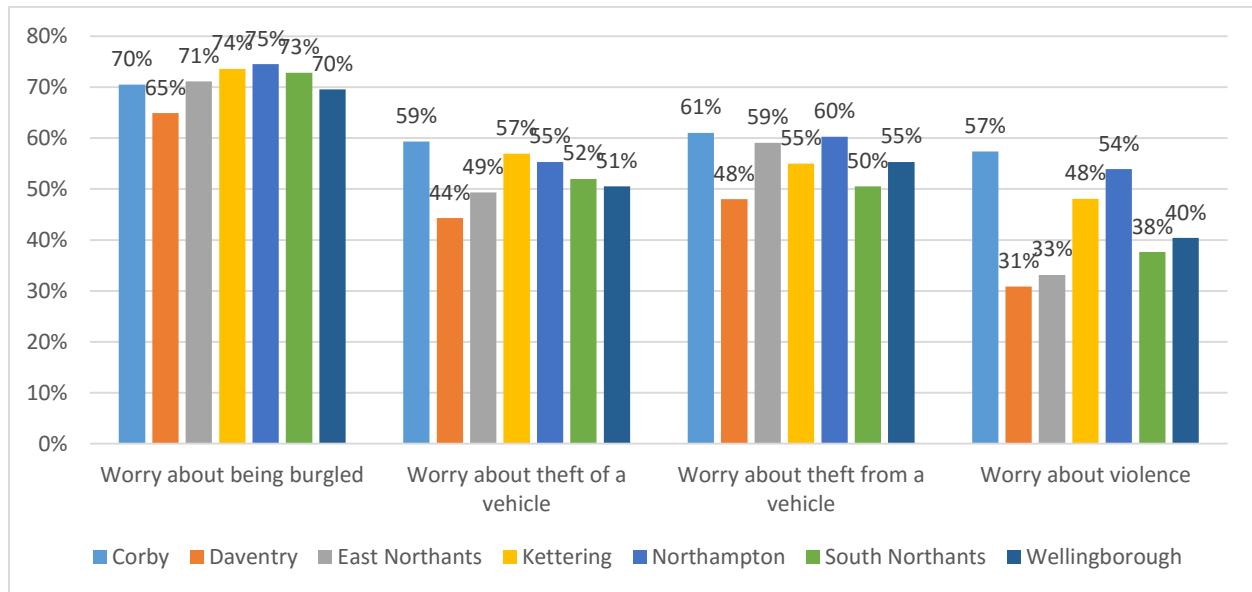
**Figure 4.6 Proportion of residents worried about crime by year end March 18 compared to year end March 17**



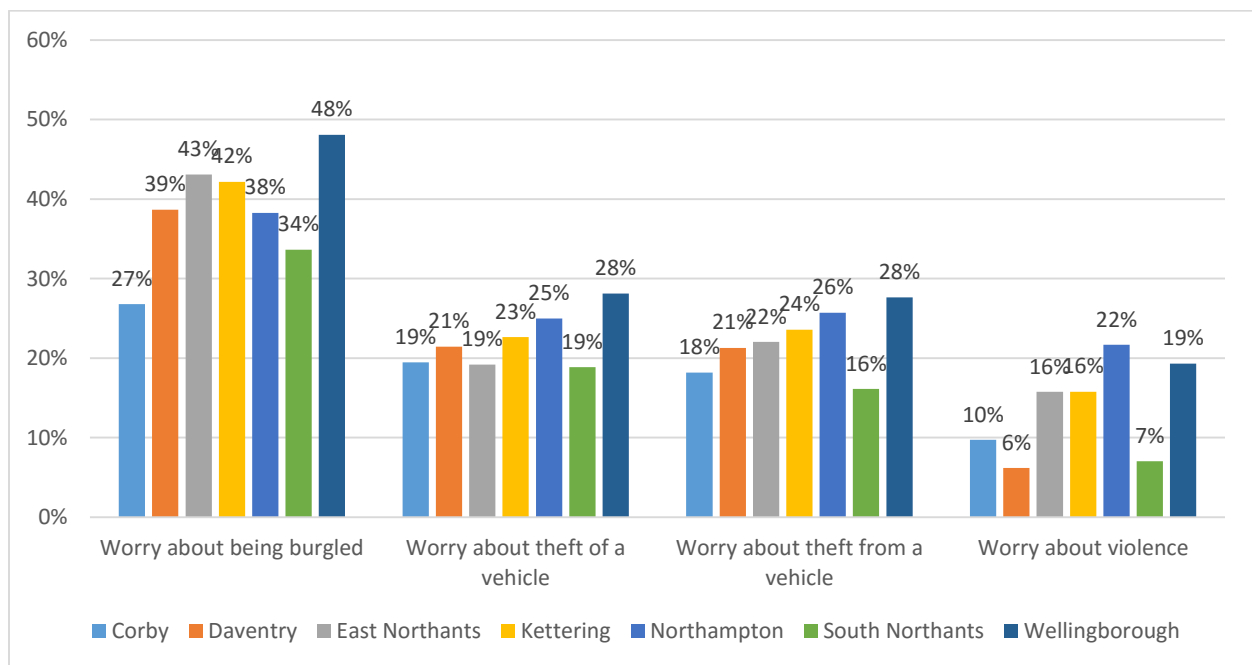
When comparing the districts on the confidence measures, online and phone surveys were looked at separately. This was to eradicate the possible confounding factor of districts having a different proportion of surveys conducted online or over the phone. In terms of the online surveys (Figure 4.7), the only significant difference was the proportion in each district that were worried about being a victim of violence, with Corby (57%) and Northampton (54%) having the highest levels of concern and Daventry (31%) and East Northants (33%) having the lowest levels.

In terms of the phone surveys, there were significant differences across districts in the proportion concerned about being a victim of burglary and of violence. Wellingborough residents were most concerned about being a victim of burglary (48%) and Corby residents (27%) were least concerned. Residents of Northampton (22%) and of Wellingborough (19%) were most concerned about being a victim of violence and Daventry (6%) and South Northants (7%) were least concerned. Interestingly, unlike online respondents, Corby telephone residents did not report a high level of concern about being a victim of violence (10%).

**Figure 4.7 Concern about being a victim of crime by district: Online survey participants**



**Figure 4.8 Concern about being a victim of crime by district: Phone survey participants**



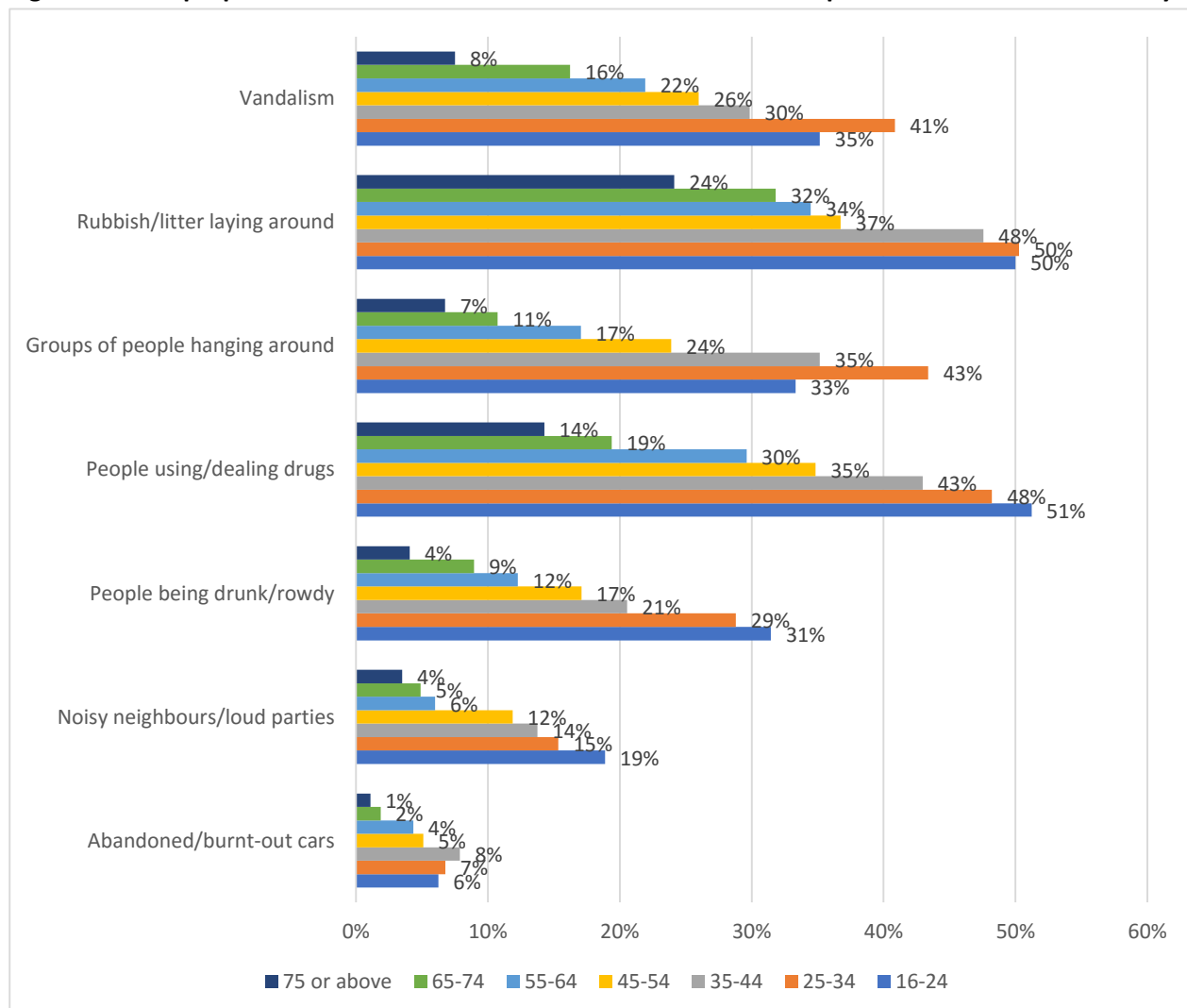
### 4.3 Perceptions of ASB and worry about crime by demographics

There was no significant difference between males and females in the proportion that thought ASB and crime were a problem in their local area. Residents from a minority ethnic background were significantly more likely to consider the following ASB issues to be problems in their local area:

- Noisy neighbours/loud parties, 18% compared to 9% of White participants;
- People being drunk/rowdy, 24% compared to 14% of White participants;
- Groups of people hanging around, 20% compared to 29% of White participants;
- Rubbish/litter laying around, 36% compared to 45% of White participants.

Figure 4.9 below shows the extent to which each age group considered ASB issues to be a problem in their local area. It illustrates that the proportion that consider each to be a problem tends to decrease with age.

**Figure 4.9 The proportion of residents that consider each ASB issue a problem in their local area by age**

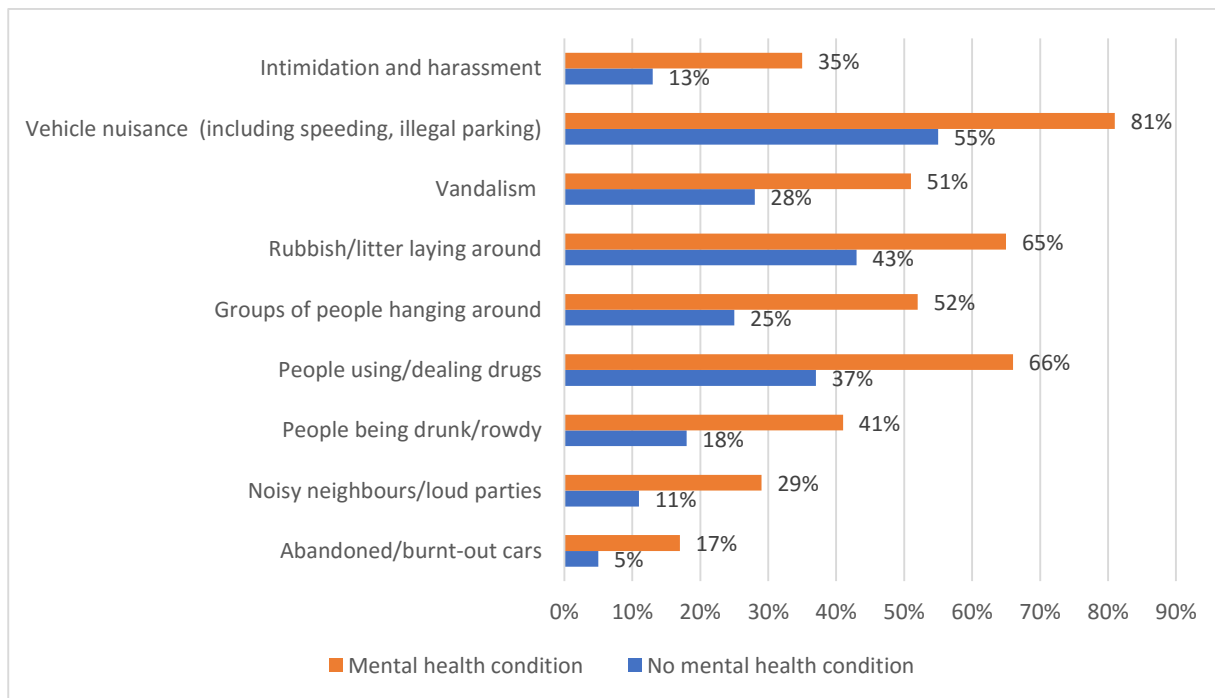


Christian participants were significantly less likely to consider anti-social behaviour to be a problem in their area, 36% compared to 44% of no religion and 47% of those of an Other religion. Those of an Other religion were significantly more likely to consider noisy neighbours/loud parties, people being drunk/rowdy, people using/dealing drugs, groups of people hanging around, rubbish/litter laying around, vandalism and intimidation and harassment to be problems in their area.

Although caution should be exercised due to numbers, those whose sexual orientation was not heterosexual were more likely to consider anti-social behaviour to be a problem in their area, 62% compared to 40% of heterosexual respondents. Those who were not heterosexual were significantly more likely to consider the following issues to be problems in their area: noisy neighbours/loud parties; people being drunk/rowdy; people using/dealing drugs; groups of people hanging around; rubbish/litter laying around; vandalism and intimidation; and harassment.

Those with a mental health condition were significantly more likely than those without to consider ASB and crime to be a problem in their area, 74% compared to 40%. Those with a mental health condition were significantly more likely to say that crime affected the quality of their life, with 35% saying it had a high impact<sup>8</sup> compared to 16% of those without a mental health condition. Residents with a mental health condition were significantly more likely than those without to consider a series of anti-social behaviour problems to be an issue in their area (see Figure 4.10).

**Figure 4.10 The proportion of residents that consider each ASB issue a problem in their local area by whether they have a mental health condition**



<sup>8</sup> Residents are asked to respond on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being no effect to and being a total effect. Those that selected 7 or above were deemed as high impact.

There was no significant difference in the proportion of those with a physical condition and those without that said crime or ASB was a problem in the area or crime had a high impact on their quality of life.

#### 4.4 Summary

Overall, the analysis demonstrated that vehicle nuisance including speeding, illegal parking was the ASB issue that the highest proportion of people thought was an issue in their area, followed by rubbish and litter lying around and people using or dealing drugs. In addition, vehicle nuisance and using or dealing drugs are the most strongly related to their confidence in the police and local council. These could be key areas of focus for partnership initiatives ensuring that any work on these areas is communicated to the public so that they are aware of what is being done to address them. Although, when comparing phone surveys only from this year to last there has been a reduction in concern about all ASB issues except abandoned cars (which is not considered a problem by the vast majority of the population). It is important to note that the online survey is more representative of victims within the population and of key demographics. Therefore, although the results of online participants are more negative than telephone participants it is likely increasing representativeness and possibly providing a more accurate picture.



## 5. Perceptions of, and confidence in, the police

The theme of this chapter concerns confidence in and perceptions of the police. The chapter is organised into the following sections: Perceptions of the Police (5.1); Confidence in the Police (5.2); Demographic Differences (5.3) and a Summary (5.4).

### Figure 5.1 Key Statistics

- 56% of residents agreed that the police can be relied upon to be there when you need them (compared to 61% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- 88% of residents agreed that the police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason (compared to 87% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- 76% agreed that the police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (compared to 69% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- 39% agreed that the police in this area can be relied on to deal with minor crimes, compared to 58% in 16/17;
- 52% agreed that the police in this area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community (compared to 60% in England and Wales according to the CSEW 2017);
- There was a significant increase this year compared to last in the proportion of residents, comparing telephone participants only that agreed that:
  - The police in the area can be relied on to be there when you need them (+4%)
  - The police in the area would treat you with respect if you had contact (+3%) with them for any reason
  - The police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (+3%).

### 5.1 Perceptions of the police

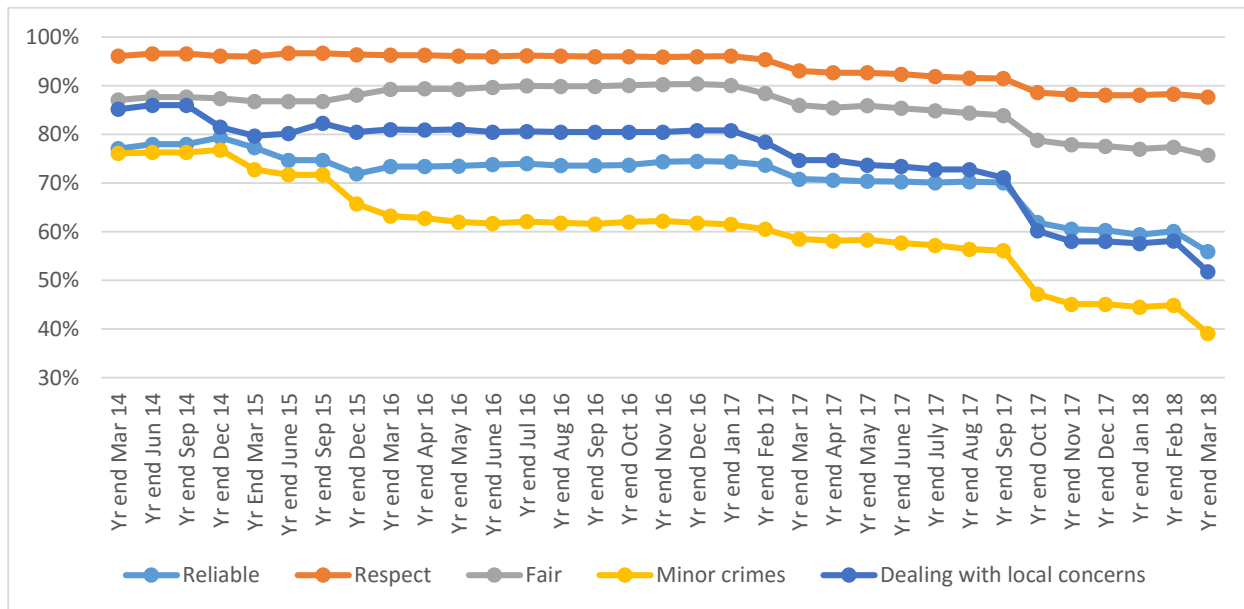
Public perceptions of the police as respectful, reliable and fair in their treatment of individuals in the community are long-standing measures about the relationship between policing and communities. Fairness, decency and attentiveness are attitudes and behaviours which the public expect during any interaction with the police and are often shown through the demeanour adopted by the officer, something which can only be improved at the individual level<sup>9</sup>. This is key to the procedural justice model, which suggests that judgements about personal contact with the police are based more on the processes involved being fair, transparent and understandable, than on outcomes<sup>10</sup>. Alongside these measures which tend to reflect interactions with individual officers, are broader measures of believing the police can be relied on to deal with minor crime and local concerns.

<sup>9</sup> Tyler, T. & Fagan, J. (2008). Legitimacy and cooperation: why do people help the police fight crime in their communities? *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, 6, pp.231-275.

<sup>10</sup> Bradford, B., Jackson, J. & Stanko, E. (2009). Contact and confidence: revisiting the impact of public encounters with the police. *Policing and Society*, 19, (1).

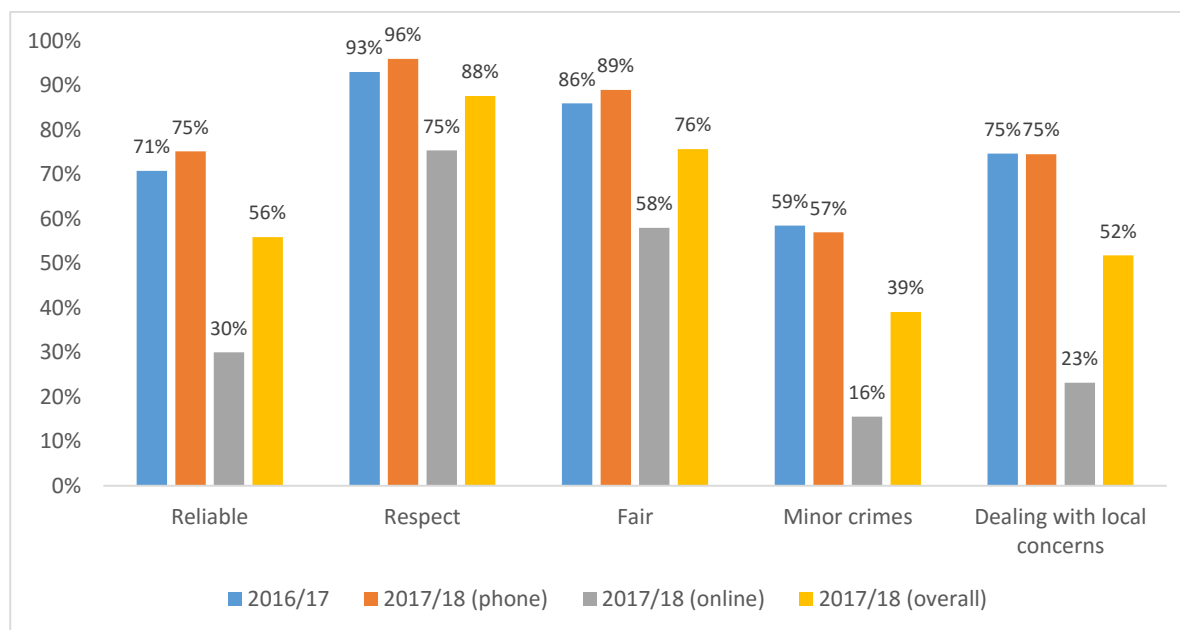
Figure 5.2 shows measures of confidence in the police over the past five years. However, there is a clear step change in October 2017 and in March 2018. As mentioned in the introduction those that completed the survey online were much less likely to be confident in the police and it appears that these step changes are likely to be due to the introduction of the online survey in October 2017 and to the proportion of the surveys that were conducted online in March, which was comparatively high to the previous months.

**Figure 5.2 Perceptions of the police over five years**



Therefore, to enable a more meaningful comparison between this years and last year's data, Figure 5.3 provides the phone and online responses separately. It shows that if comparing the years using the same methodology (i.e. phone) then there has been little change across the two years and in some cases a slight improvement. There was a significant increase in the proportion of respondents that agreed that the police in the area can be relied on to be there when you need them (+4%), the police in the area would treat you with respect if you had contact (+3%) with them for any reason and the police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (+3%).

**Figure 5.3 Perceptions of the police by survey type**



It is interesting to note that the Crime Survey England and Wales (March 2017)<sup>11</sup> reported that:

- 54% of Northamptonshire residents agreed that the police can be relied upon to be there when you need them (compared to 61% of residents in England and Wales);
- 88% agreed that they would treat you with respect (compared to 87% of residents in England and Wales);
- 66% agreed that they would treat you fairly (compared to 68% of residents in England and Wales);
- 54% agreed that they are dealing with local concerns (compared to 61% of residents in England and Wales).

The figures from the CSEW survey seem to be similar to the proportions obtained from the online and telephone surveys combined adding a level of legitimacy to the Mixed method approach.

## 5.2 Confidence in the police

When comparing the districts on the confidence measures, online and phone surveys were looked at separately. This was to eradicate the possible confounding factor of districts having a different proportion of surveys conducted online or over the phone. In terms of the online surveys (Figure 5.4), the only significant difference was the proportion in each district that agreed that the police in the area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community. Residents in Corby were most likely to agree while residents in Northampton and Wellingborough were least likely to agree. In terms of the phone surveys (illustrated in Figure 5.5), the only significant difference was the proportion in each district that agreed that the police in

<sup>11</sup> CSEW perception and ASB data by Police Force Area, year ending March 2017

the area would treat them with respect if they had contact with them for any reason. Residents in East Northants were most likely to agree while residents in Northampton and Kettering were least likely to agree.

**Figure 5.4 Confidence in the police by district (online surveys)**

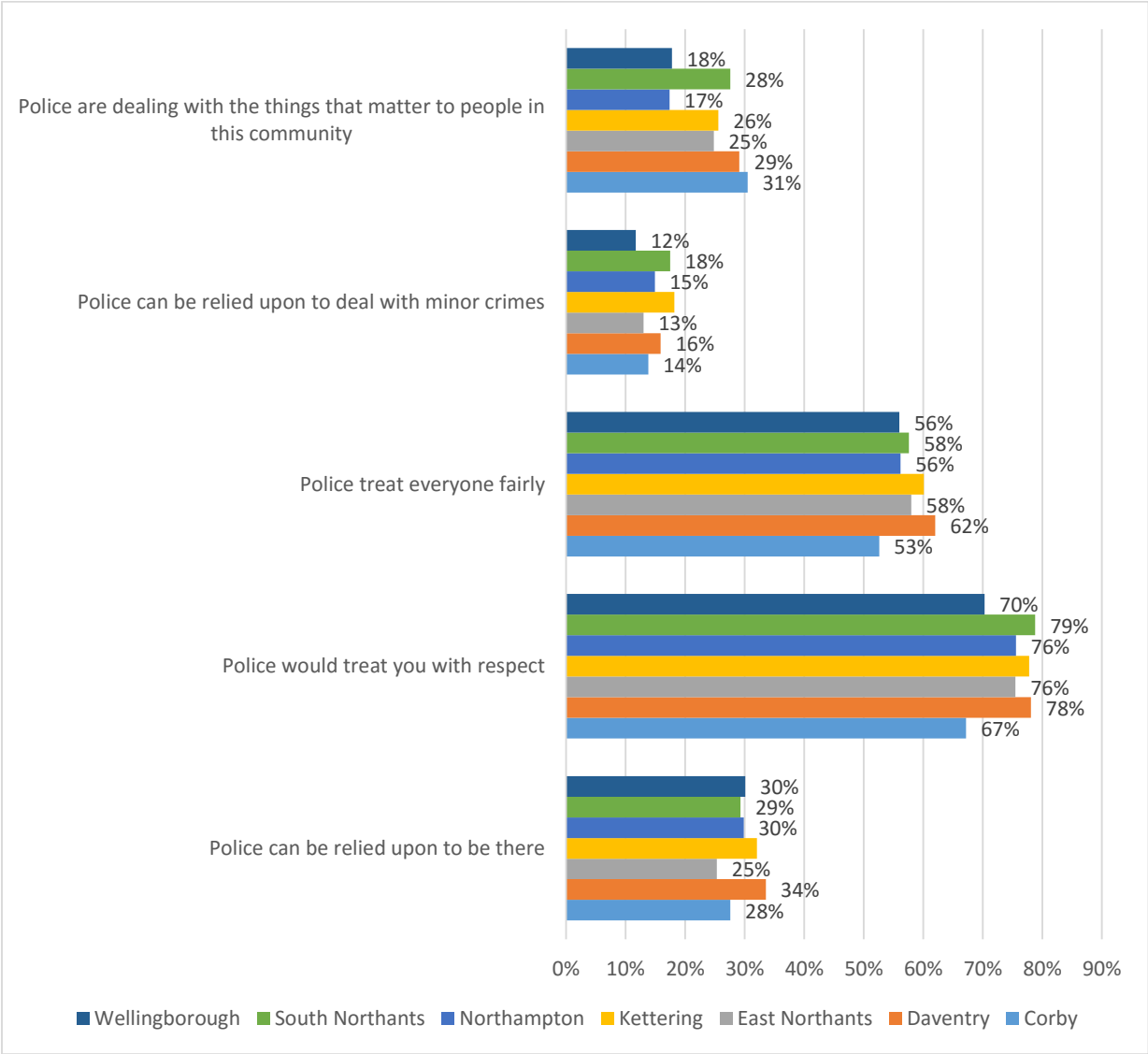
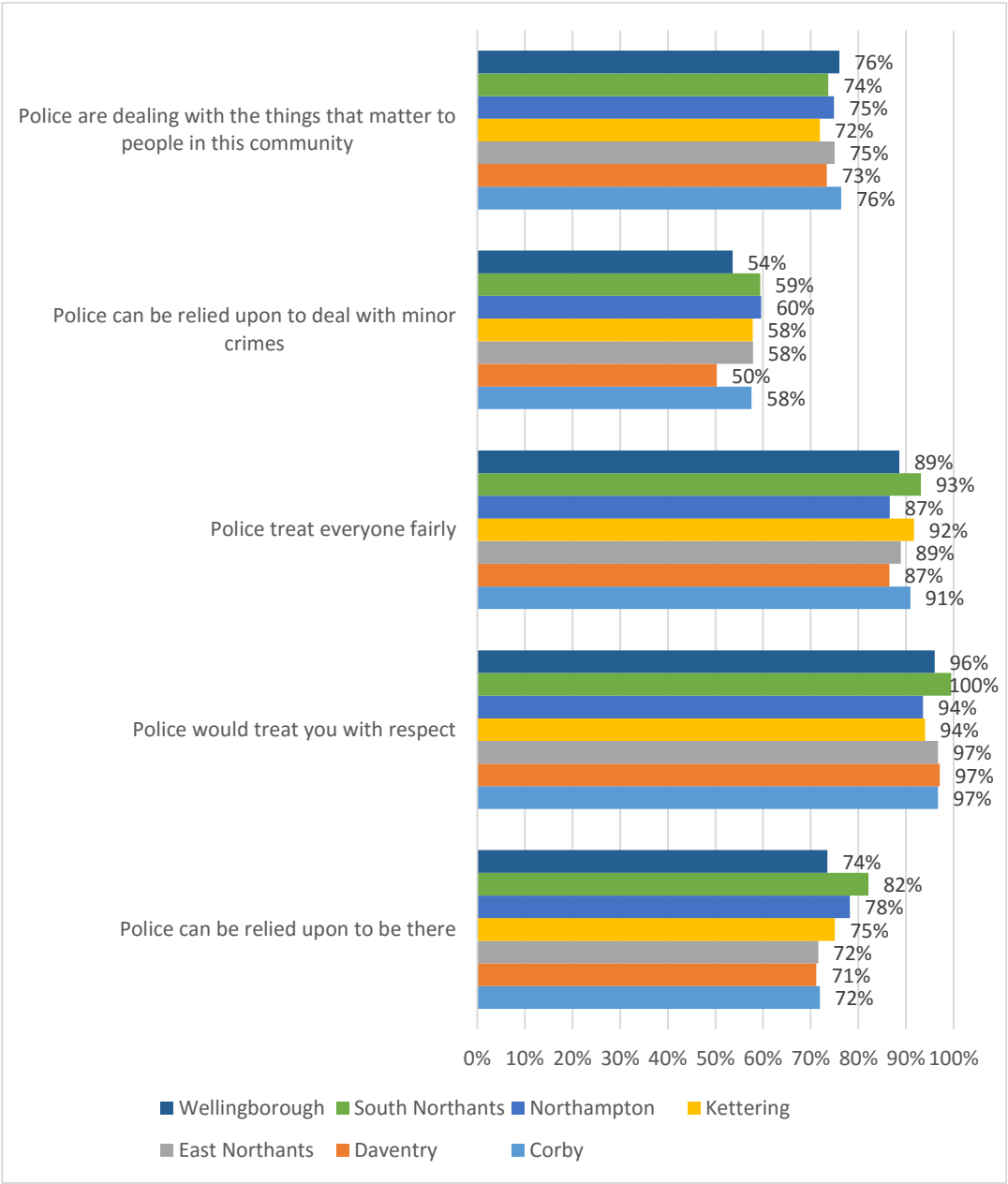


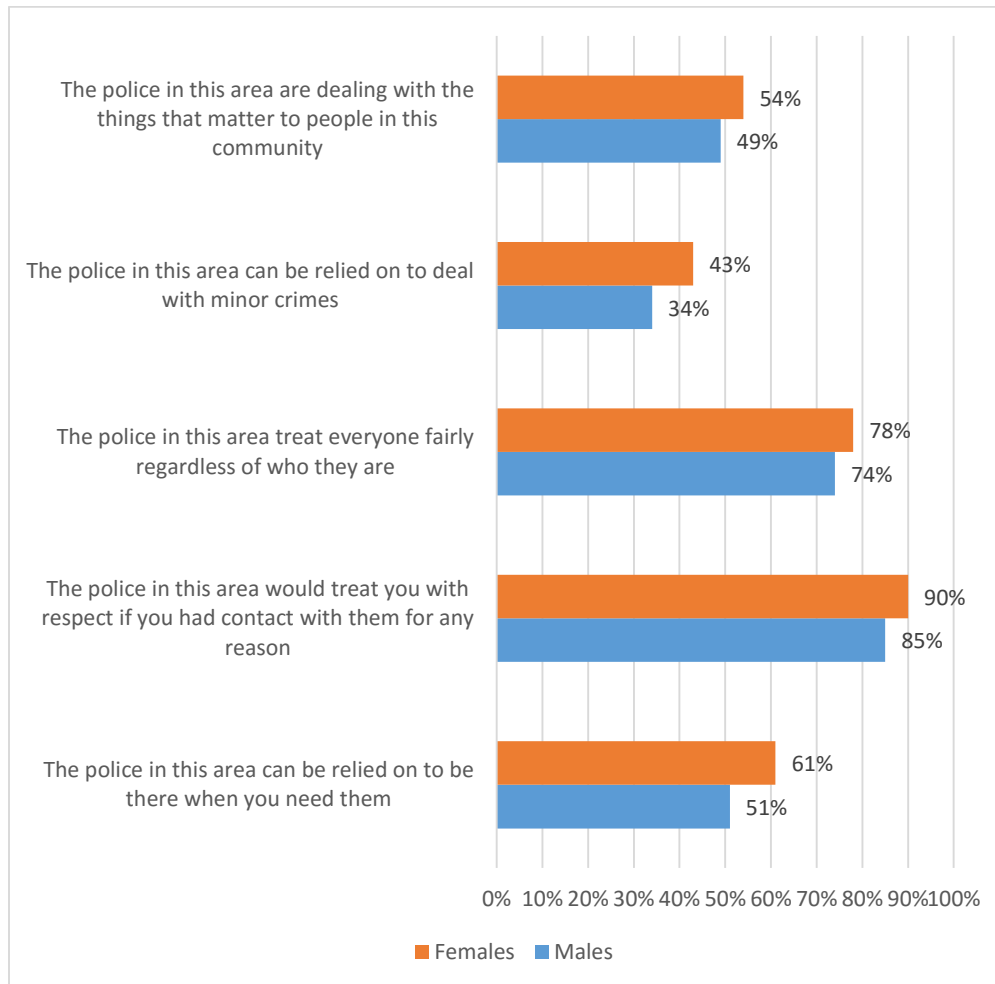
Figure 5.5 Confidence in the Police by District (phone surveys)



### 5.3 Demographics differences

As can be seen in Figure 5.6, female participants were significantly more positive about the police than male participants.

**Figure 5.6 Confidence in the police by gender**

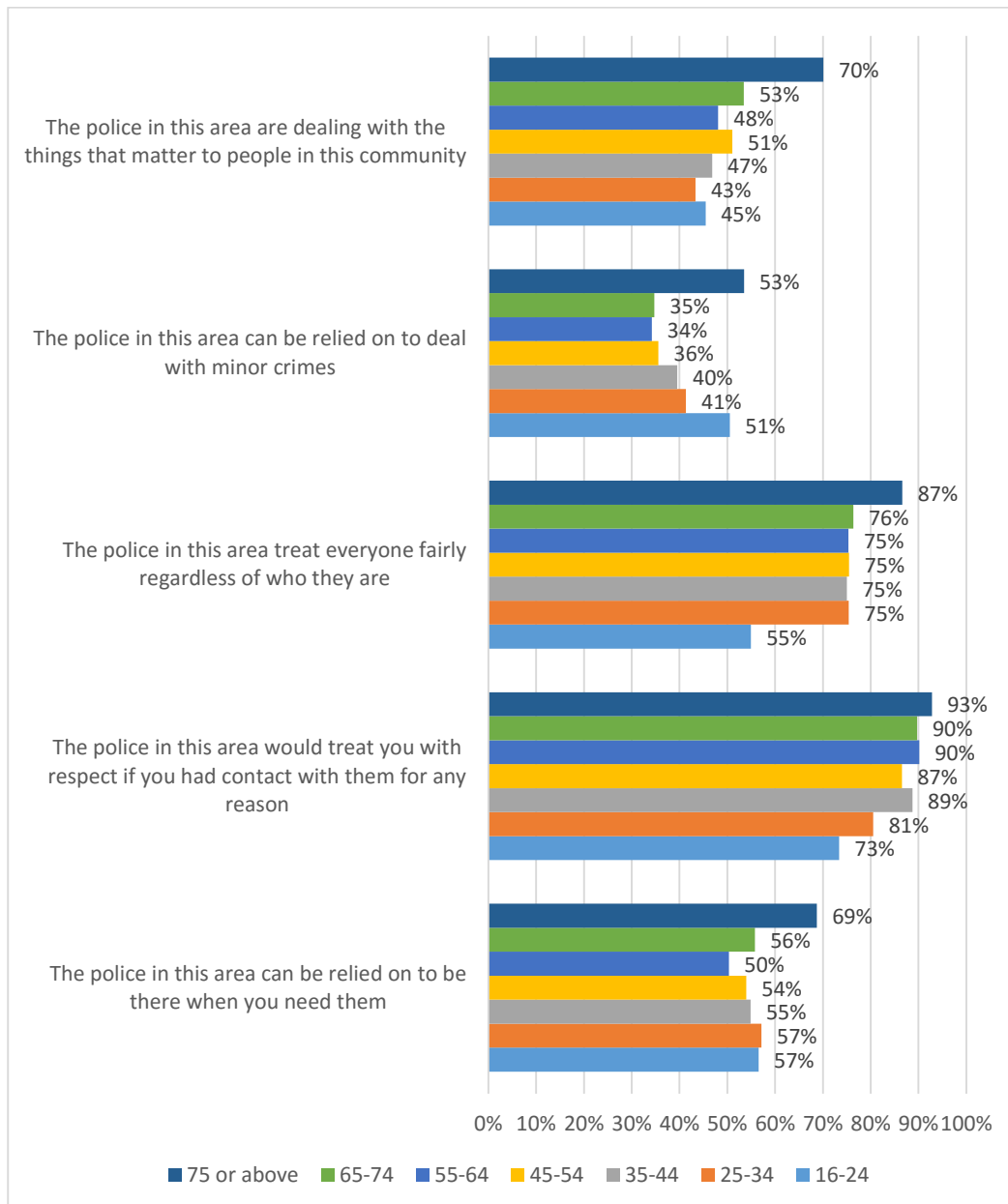


Although ethnic minority participants were significantly more likely to agree that the police can be relied on to deal with minor crimes (58% compared to 38% of White participants), the analysis revealed that they were significantly less likely to agree that the police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason (81% compared to 89% of White participants).

Figure 5.7 illustrates the differences between age groups in the confidence in the police. The older age groups, particularly, those 65 years and over agreed the police are dealing with things that matter to the community. The proportion that agreed that the police can be relied upon to deal with minor crimes decreased with age from 51% of those aged 16-24 years to 35% of those aged 65-74 years, however, the oldest age group (75 years and above) where the exception with 52% agreeing. The proportion of people that

agreed the police treat everyone fairly was consistent with over 7 in 10 agreeing for the middle age groups 25-74 years but was notably low for 16 to 24-year olds with just over 5 in 10 agreeing and notably high for the 75 years and over with nearly 9 in 10 agreeing. Agreement that the police would treat you with respect increased with age with about 7 in 10 of those aged 16-24 years agreeing compared to 9 in 10 of those aged 75 years and over. Agreement that the police can be relied upon to be there when you need them was fairly consistent over the age groups but was highest for the 75 years and over.

### 5.7 Confidence in the police by age group



Those with no religion were significantly less likely to agree that the police are dealing with things that matter to people in the community (36% compared to 44% of Christian participants and 45% of Other religion participants) and are dealing with minor crimes, 26% compared to 31% of Christian participants and 42% of Other participants.

Those that reported that they had a mental health condition were significantly less likely than those that did not to agree that:

- The police are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community (26% compared to 42% of those without);
- The police can be relied upon to be there when you need them (35% compared to 48%);
- The police in this area would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason (69% compared to 85%); and
- The police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (52% compared to 70%).

Those with a physical disability were also significantly less likely to agree with 63% agreeing compared to 70% of those without.

## 5.4 Summary

When looking at all responses confidence in the police has declined, which brings the level of agreement more in line with the results of the Crime Survey England and Wales 2017. This decline was derived from the online sample as the telephone sample in isolation registered an increase in positive perceptions. Overall, participants were most likely to agree that the police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason. However, it is very important to pay attention to the groups that were less likely to agree with this i.e. those from an ethnic minority, 16 to 24-year olds and those with a mental health condition. It is also worth noting that participants with mental health conditions were significantly less likely than those without to be confident in the police on all the measures. Overall, participants were least likely to agree that the police can be relied upon to deal with minor crimes, this is the confidence measure that has shown the most decline over recent years.



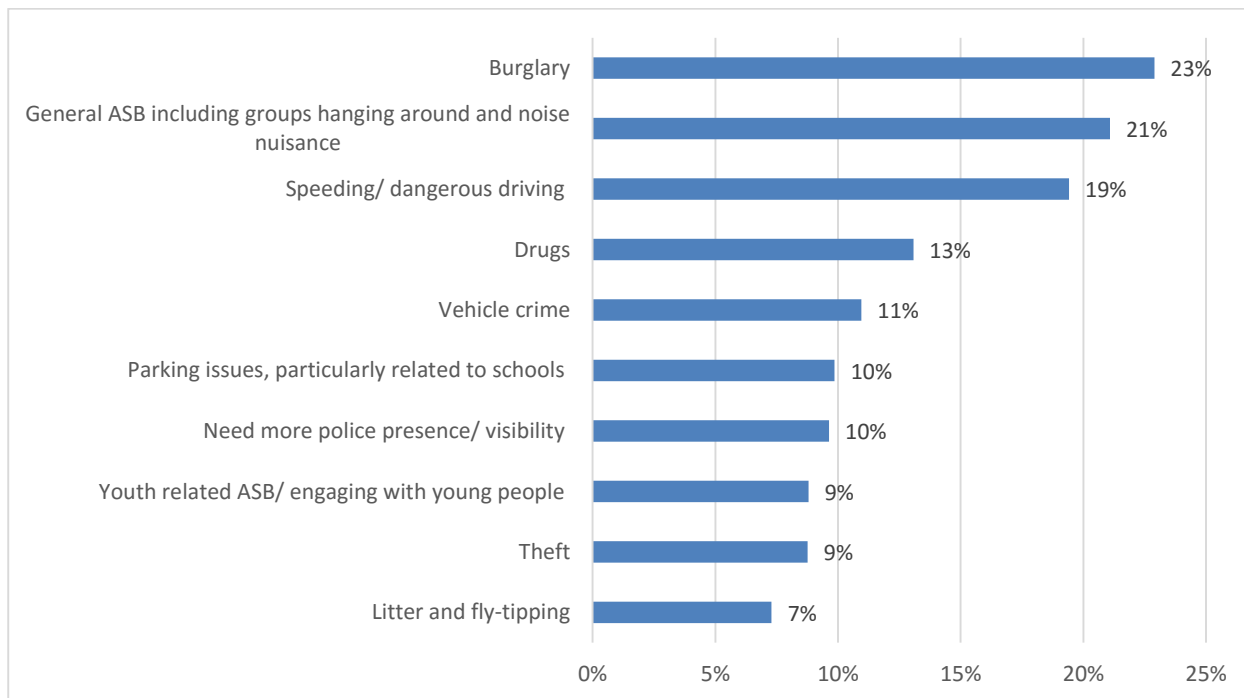
## 6. Public priorities for policing

The theme of this chapter concerns public priorities for policing. The chapter is organised into the following sections: Top Priorities (6.1); Reducing Concern about Crime (6.2); and a Summary (6.3).

### 6.1 Top public priorities

In previous years, speeding/dangerous driving has been the top priority for the largest proportion of participants, however this year it has been over-taken by Burglary (23%) and general anti-social behaviour including groups hanging around and noise nuisance (21%). Speeding and dangerous driving came third with 19% of residents highlighting it in their top priorities. Also, in the top five was drug use and dealing (13%) and vehicle crime (11%).

**Figure 6.1 Top 10 priority issues Identified by the public**



As in previous years, the desire for increased police presence and visibility has not changed markedly with 10% selecting it in their top priorities. This indicates that the public remain concerned about preventative measures with a perception that visibility may reduce crime and ASB. This survey captures public perceptions of police visibility through measuring recollection of average sightings of police officers on foot patrol or in marked vehicles. Figure 6.2 shows that a third of residents (34%) reported that they never saw a police officer on foot patrol and a further third (32%) reported sightings less than once a month.

**Figure 6.2 Recollections of police visibility: On average how often do you see police officers and PCSOs on foot or vehicle patrol in your local area?**

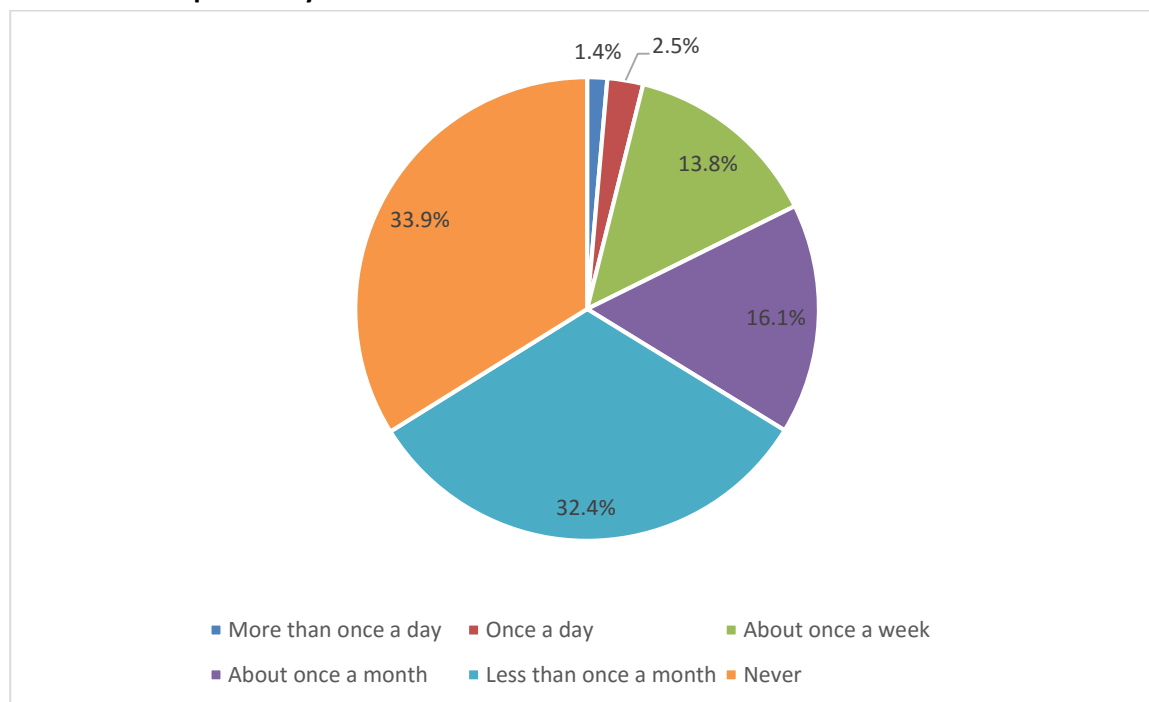


Figure 6.3 shows the top priorities for each district. Please note that not all issues identified were indicated to be priority issues in all districts.

**Figure 6.3 Top Priority Issues by district**

| Issue raised  | Cor. | Dav. | E. Nor. | Ket | Nor | S. Nor. | Wel. |
|---|------|------|---------|-----|-----|---------|------|
| ASB involving motorbikes/ mini motos / dirt bikes                             | 13%  | -    | -       | -   | -   | -       | -    |
| Burglary  | 9%   | 31%  | 38%     | 29% | 23% | 31%     | 31%  |
| Drugs   | 13%  | 12%  | 22%     | 15% | 18% | 10%     | 15%  |
| Environmental changes such as road and pavement maintenance, road signage etc | -    | -    | -       | -   | 4%  | -       | -    |
| General ASB including groups hanging around and noise nuisance                | 13%  | 32%  | 25%     | 22% | 33% | -       | 23%  |
| litter and fly-tipping  | 8%   | 6%   | 6%      | 12% | 16% | 5%      | 9%   |

|  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Need more police presence/<br>Visibility           | 9%  | 8%  | 14% | 13% | 14% | 12% | 13% |
| Parking issues, particularly<br>related to schools | 16% | 10% | 12% | 15% | 13% | 8%  | 12% |
| Speeding/ dangerous driving                        | 15% | 34% | 32% | 24% | 18% | 24% | 24% |
| Theft  | 5%  | 18% | 16% | 9%  | 9%  | 12% | -   |
| Vandalism/ Criminal Damage/<br>Graffiti            | -   | -   | 9%  | 6%  | -   | 7%  | 9%  |
| Vehicle crime                                      | -   | 17% | -   | -   | -   | 11% | 9%  |
| Youth related ASB/ engaging<br>with young people   | 8%  | 12% | 13% | 6%  | 13% | 10% | 12% |

## 6.2 Reducing concern about crime

Residents were asked if there was anything that the police or local authority could do to reduce their concern(s) about crime. Across both telephone and online surveys, the most cited issues were the need to:

- improve the presence of police within the community, often accompanied with a desire to increase the frequency of foot patrols (55%, 541);
- improve the response to crime, repeat offenders and anti-social behaviour, in terms of follow-up, interest and resolution (13%, 128);
- increase the amount of resource available to the police as well as the proportion of current resource channelled into the frontline within communities (10%, 99).

The word cloud below illustrates the keys words captured within participants responses.



For telephone participants, 60% (99) of comments suggested the need to improve the presence of police within the community. Typically, this was through an increase in foot patrol.

*"More police patrols, they used to be around a few times a week, but of late I have not seen even a PCSO patrolling"*

*"More police presence in the Brickhill Road and Kiln Way Wellingborough..."*

The second most frequent suggestion for telephone respondents was to increase the volume of resources available to the police to tackle crime, in terms of both finance and numbers of police officers (17%, 28). The lack of resourcing was linked to reductions in police funding from central government.

*"Needs more money for the police force for things to improve"*

*"Can't think other than stop cuts"*

*"Need more resources from government"*

Other notable issues within the telephone responses included providing a better response to crime and reported incidents (5%, 9); tackling speeding and unsafe driving (4%, 7) and improving the environments in which people live by covering graffiti and repairing damaged property (4%, 7).

*"Respond when people ask for assistance - hear when people have reported but no response. No statements for a couple of days etc. Understand under-funded but need help"*

*"Sort the traffic that uses little streets as go-throughs. And speeding drivers"*

*"Tidy the streets, it has a knock-on effect on everything else. Leaflets to houses about keeping area tidy"*

Like the telephone respondents, the online participants most frequently indicated the need to be more visible and for the police to carry more presence in the community (53%, 442). As part of this, there were some comments that highlighted the importance of being on foot as opposed to vehicle patrols. It should be noted that there were some comments in the data which indicated a preference for police officers to respond to crime and patrol communities as opposed to PCSOs.

*"Visible presence on the street, on foot and answering 101 when we call"*

*"More visible policing especially at night"*

*"More police or pcso's walking the streets a good old fashioned bobby on the beat"*

The second most cited response for online participants was the need to provide a more robust response to crime, repeat offenders and reported incidents (14%, 119).

*"Patrol the area, appear when you call in a crime that is actually taking place (not say they are too busy)"*

*"Stop going for the easy targets to keep the figures good and start actually dealing with career criminals"*

*"Act on information given by the public. Have a joined-up intelligence picture, where your officers know about previous crime. Do not compromise 'sources' by having multiple officers dealing with sensitive information after rapport had already been given"*

The third most cited issue in the online survey was the need for more resources to be available to the police to respond to crime and anti-social behaviour (9%, 71). Furthermore, it was suggested a greater proportion of available funding should be channelled into frontline policing in the community.

*"The PCC use some of the additional £5 million he's taking from us in council tax to put boots on the streets and improve the community safety team's presence in the community"*

*"MORE POLICE OFFICERS. Not just moving officers around to make it look like there's more. Actually increasing the 1200 cops to at least 1300-1400. The area is becoming more densely populated as new build estates pop up everywhere and police numbers aren't growing with it"*

The fourth most frequent response for online respondents was to make improvements to community spaces (7%, 60), which was not seen as exclusively a policing issue. Many participants identified the need for better street lighting to make spaces safer as well as CCTV in places to deter criminal/anti-social behaviours. It should also note that some comments were negative towards the council response and input into addressing local policing issues.

*"Local council could maintain grounds better and cut back vegetation, provide better lighting and clear rubbish. Pro-actively educate residents in respect of responsible behaviour, assist communities to come together by facilitating events outside of normal office hours, promote resident's organisations and enforce legislation"*

*“Increase street lighting...my walk home is in the dark and no street lights there”*

*“I am so upset in the state things are in my street. People have no respect for anything. The amount of rubbish is horrible. I think the council should put CCTV cameras and fine all the people who disrespect our public spaces...No one in my house leaves the house at night. So, more police going on rounds at night would be very appreciated. And the drug dealers, I am tired of seeing them trying to seduce young girls to try drugs, near the cost cutter and there's a house near me where they sell drugs... [Name of Place] is becoming a crime place again where families that work can't be in peace and quiet and be in a public space that is kept clean”*

Finally, across both datasets, participants highlighted the impacts that crime and anti-social behaviour was having on their daily lives and further stresses the need to communicate with the public, assure them that improving their communities is important and that all crime, regardless of its severity, will be robustly addressed.

*“Move me. I'm terrified of where I live and I have a 2-year-old who I do not want to grow up around here as there is always something going on that's either illegal or extremely intimidating”*

*“Having been at the mercy of burglars and having locks on windows doors etc I can't see anyone reducing my fears of home crime”*

### 6.3 Summary

Overall, in terms of priorities for policing, burglary and general anti-social behaviour including groups hanging around and noise nuisance have increased within priority, followed by speeding and dangerous driving. The analysis of public priorities for policing indicates that the public remain concerned about preventative measures with a perception that visibility may reduce crime and ASB. The qualitative analysis suggests the need for a more discernible identity in the community, with officers developing a relationship with residents to alleviate their concerns and respond to low-level crime. Whilst recognising the police officers are very busy, it is important to recognise that the public may not necessarily understand this and that officers have an important role in communicating with the public that they are tackling local concerns such as burglary, street drinking and inappropriate driving. It is, however, understood that the police need more resources than at their current level to address the volume of crime and issues in the community. Nevertheless, the analysis suggests the need to improve the response to crime, especially low-level crime which is being interpreted by some as being tolerated rather than robustly addressed. Reductions in resources and perceptions of police staff reductions are linked with identified themes in the data relating to participants feeling like their community is now a breeding ground for crime, and that burglary, theft, anti-social behaviour and reckless driving are tolerated.

## 7. Accessibility and communication

The theme of this chapter concerns accessibility and communication, key themes within this years' survey. The chapter is organised into the following sections: Contacting the Police in a Non-Emergency (7.1); Reporting Crime Online (7.2); Willingness to make Enquiries Online (7.3); Willingness to Report Suspicious Activity (7.4); Being Kept Informed of Police and Crime Matters (7.5); and a Summary (7.6).

### Figure 7.1: Key Statistics

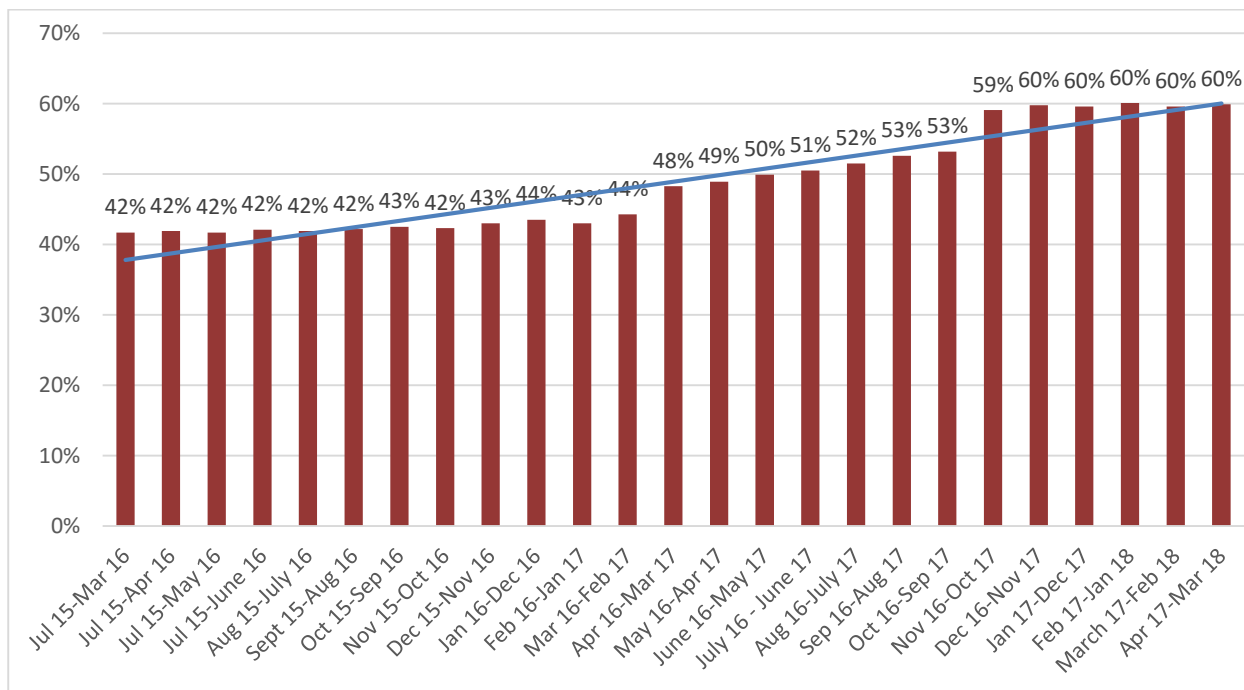
- 40% of residents do not know how to contact the police in a non-emergency;
- 61% of residents reported that they would be very comfortable to report suspicious activity and a further 29% indicated they would be fairly comfortable;
- Residents were asked about their willingness to report crimes, incidents or issues via an online form. As might be expected telephone participants were more likely than online participants to select 'none of the above', 45% compared to 21%. However:
  - 50% or more said that they would be willing to report vehicle related nuisance or inappropriate vehicle use', 'criminal damage/ vandalism' or 'theft from a shed or garage' online;
  - Over 40% said that they would be willing to report 'theft from a vehicle', 'street drinking', 'drugs/ substance misuse', 'rowdy or nuisance behaviour', and 'theft of property' online;
- 57% of online participants and 37% of telephone participants indicated that they would be willing to make an enquiry via an online chat;
- 25% of residents reported that they felt not very or not at all informed about policing and crime matters and they believe the police are not very good or not at all good at communicating with their community;
- There is much scope for increasing residents' awareness of different methods of accessing information about the police as less than 50% of telephone respondents were aware of each mechanism the police use to communicate and online respondents had low awareness of mechanisms that were not based online;
- The most popular online mechanisms were the force website, with 33% of residents using it (and a further 37% saying they would use it in the future) and Facebook, with 30% of residents using Facebook (and a further 19% saying they would use it in the future);
- By far the most common suggestions for how the police could better communicate local police and crime matters, was to improve police visibility and presence within the community (40%). This was followed by publish localised newsletters, leaflets and pamphlets about local concerns and issues (15%), hold local town meetings (10%) and better advertise the online communication options (9%).

## 7.1 Contacting the police in a non-emergency

Participants were asked whether they know how to contact the police in a non-emergency. Figure 7.2 illustrates that 60% reported that they did, which was significantly higher than the previous year (48%). This appears to reflect the expansion of methodology to the online survey whose respondents were significantly more likely than phone respondents to say that they know how to contact the police in a non-emergency, 80% compared to 47% of those surveyed by telephone. Figure 7.2 shows that in the period ending October 17 the proportion increases to 59% from 53%. It is still worth noting that there was a steady increase in the months preceding the introduction of the online survey from 44% in the period ending February 2017 to 53% at the end of September 2017.

However, at the year ending March 2018, there are still 4 in 10 residents that say that they do not know how to contact the police in a non-emergency, which may discourage them from making contact or leading them to call 999. Thus, further advertising of non-emergency reporting mechanisms is likely to be beneficial.

**Figure 7.2: The proportion of residents that said that they knew how to contact the police in a non-emergency**



When looking at knowledge of how to call the police in a non-emergency there was no significant difference across districts in online or phone survey participants.



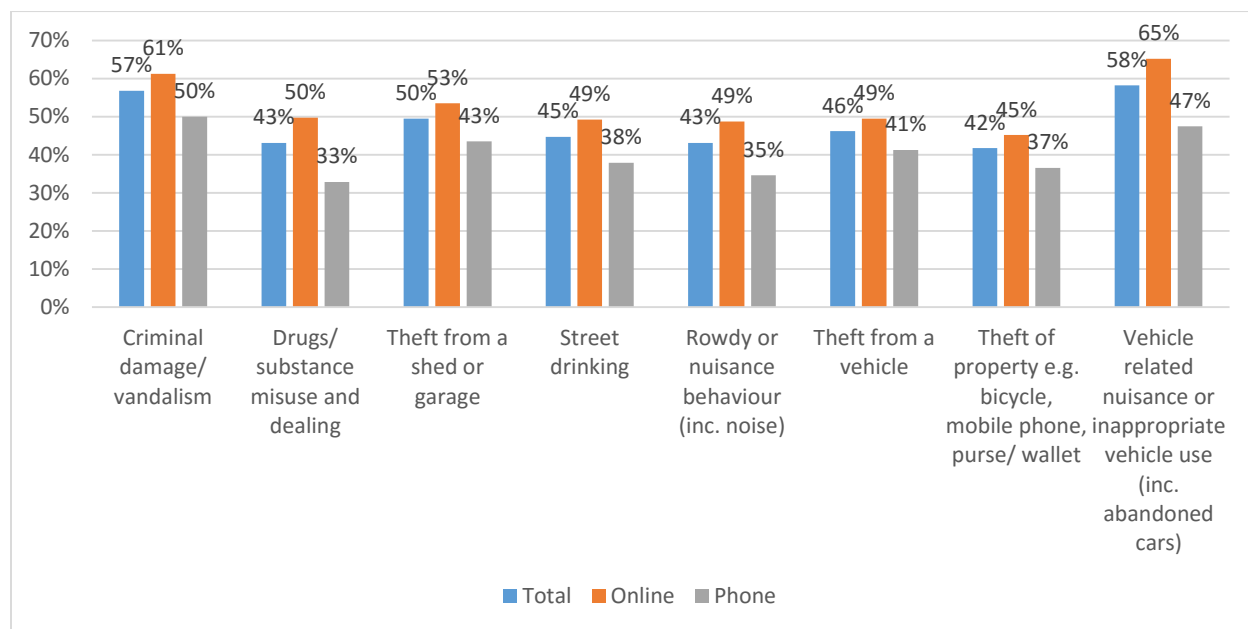
## 7.2 Reporting crime online

In October 2017, questions were introduced to the survey to understand participants' willingness to interact with the police online. Firstly, residents were asked *'Which of the following crimes, incidents or issues would you be prepared to report online?'* and crime and incident types are then listed.

Residents could also respond 'none of the above' and 31% of residents responded in this way, telephone respondents being more likely to respond in this way compared to online respondents, 45% and 21% respectively.

However, Figure 7.3 shows that the proportion of residents that would be willing to report online for each type of crime listed. It illustrates that, as might be expected, online respondents were more likely to indicate that they would report each type of crime online. However, a sizable proportion of phone respondents also reported that they would report crimes or incidents online. Overall, residents were most likely to say that they would be willing to report 'vehicle related nuisance or inappropriate vehicle use' (58%) and 'criminal damage/ vandalism' (57%) online.

**Figure 7.3 Proportion of residents that said that they would report each crime type listed for telephone, online respondents and overall.**



Residents were asked to note any questions, recommendations or concerns that you may have about online reporting. Across both telephone and online surveys, the most cited questions, recommendations or concerns were:

- a preference for telephone contact when reporting crime, with online reporting interpreted as too impersonal and not providing assurance and support to the reporter (30%, 247);

- The following word cloud illustrates the key words stated within their concerns about online reporting.



*"I would rather speak to somebody over the phone than go online"*

The second most frequent response for telephone respondents was a concern about the availability of internet connections or access to a computer to report online (26%, 87).

*"I don't have a computer so would ring 101 to report crime"*

*"Tedious erratic internet connection - prefer to talk to a human"*

The third most common response for telephone respondents was a concern that reporting online would not be responded to as quickly as speaking to a call handler or officer and would be treated as less urgent compared to a telephone call (6%, 19).

*"If it's happening there and then I'd ring for a quicker response"*

*"I would rather phone for more serious or more immediate issues. It depends on when the emails are picked up I suppose"*

For online participants, the most cited issue was a concern that reporting online would result in a lower priority respective to telephone reporting and result in a delayed response to the incident (33%, 162). Online reporting was not seen as being of equal value and importance to respondents.

*"I would feel that a response would not be so immediate as talking with a person, and it would be more difficult to explain the situation in appropriate detail. Therefore, for crimes where I had had something stolen for example, I wouldn't be happy with sending some information off and then waiting for a reaction for however long it would take"*

*"I would not feel confident that reporting via an online route would be actioned with any sort of priority..."*

The second most common issue raised for online participants regarded the feedback that would be provided for online reports and how such information would be stored, reviewed and acted upon (30%, 147). Many participants stressed the need to have a 'status' for the report, indicating who and when it was reviewed, as well as a mechanism to provide feedback and a crime reference number. For some, it was felt that online reports would not be acted upon and would be a 'tick-box' exercise rather than a formalised channel through which to interact with the police with their concerns or issues.

*"You would need to have a mechanism where the incident was followed up, either by email or phone to ensure the person reporting it felt that their incident was being dealt with"*

*"When reporting online, I would be concerned if it were a 'fill in the boxes and press send' kind of form as there is no way of saving a copy of what you have sent and/or requesting a 'read receipt' There would need to be a system that gives you a reference number or the ability to send a copy to your own email address if requested for follow up (Crimestoppers is an average web reporting system, but it is very generic and local concerns would be better reported locally (EG a named person - not necessarily a police officer - dealing with your reporting))"*

*"Not much confidence that online reported crimes are investigated. Simply data. And an incident number given. Lacks reassurance"*

The third most frequent response for online participants related to a preference to speak to an operator or officer via the telephone when reporting crime (19%, 93). It should be noted that many of the responses were concerned that online reporting might further increase a perceived gap between the police and the public, with online reporting not providing reassurance to victims or witnesses to crime.

*"I would want to speak to a person directly and be made to feel it is received and being dealt with assurance is everything in some cases"*

*"I would prefer a personal contact. That would also enable me to feel sure that I had given all the necessary information in the way that it is needed and would feel more reassuring that the issue had been heard by a member of staff"*

It is worth noting that a sizeable proportion of the online respondents were concerned about the security of information being shared online (9%, 42). Many of these concerns referred to a fear of reprisal if online reporting was accessed or hacked by parties external to the police.

*"How would I know it would be a "secure" site?"*

*"The fear of it being hacked and my details being found out and repercussions from it"*

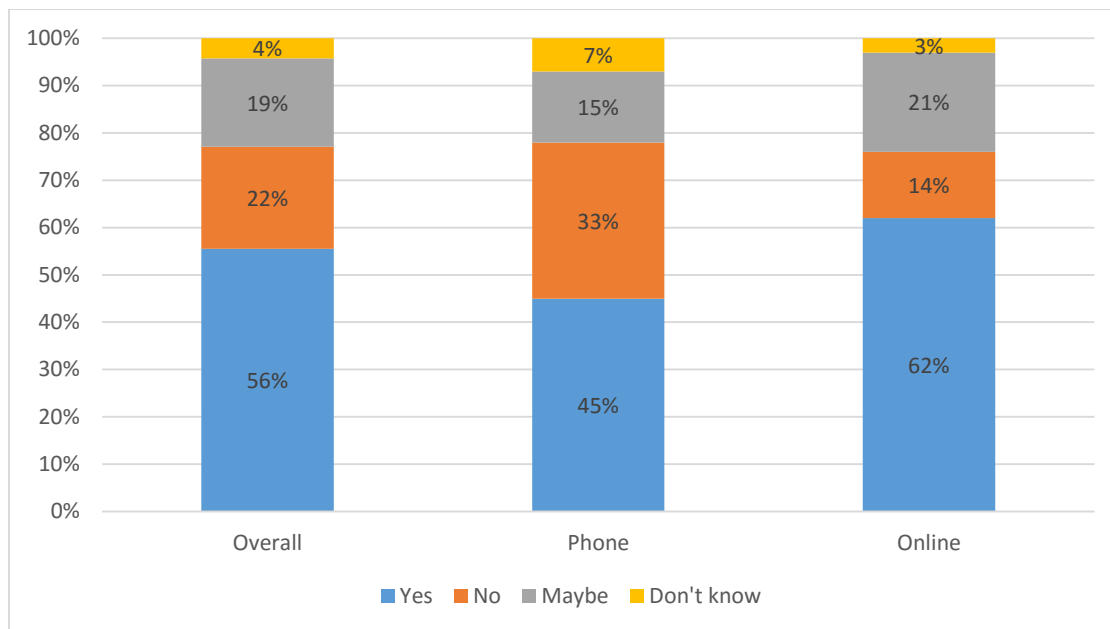
*"Will it be anonymous, and will the culprits be able to track people who reported it?"*

Overall, the analysis suggests that there is a sizable proportion of residents that would consider reporting certain types of incidents online. However, there was also reticence as many would prefer to speak to someone for reassurance and feedback, the public would need reassurance of the equity between telephone and online reporting in terms of response, as well as being informed about how such information would be shared, stored and used to address crime. Security of such information is critical within such assurances, as the public would be sceptical about sharing sensitive or criminal allegations, as maintaining anonymity through such a process might not be achieved.

### 7.3 Willingness to make enquiries online

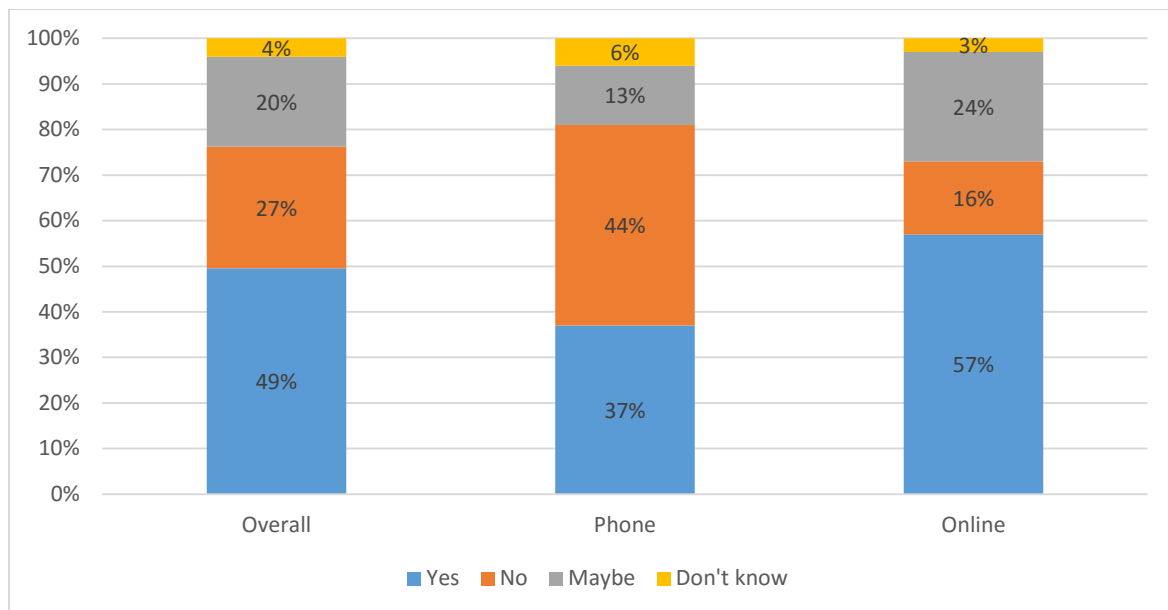
Residents were also asked 'would you be happy to make an enquiry through an online form?' Figure 7.4 shows the proportion of residents that would be willing to make an enquiry online, illustrating that nearly half (45%) of those surveyed by phone and 6 in 10 (62%) online participants would be willing to make an enquiry online. A third (33%) of telephone participants reported that they definitely would not while online participants were less likely to say 'no' (14%) and more likely to say maybe if they didn't say 'yes'.

**Figure 7.4 Proportion of residents that said that they would be happy to make an enquiry via an online form (for telephone, online respondents and overall)**



Residents were also asked ‘*would you be happy to make an enquiry through an ‘online live chat through Northamptonshire police website?’* Although fewer residents indicated that they were happy to make an enquiry in this way compared to an online form, still 57% of online respondents and 37% of telephone respondents reported that they would be willing to, illustrated in Figure 7.5.

**Figure 7.5 Proportion of residents that said that they would be happy to make an enquiry through an online live chat through Northamptonshire police website**



Residents were asked to note any questions, recommendations or concerns that they may have about making enquiries through an online form or live chat. Across both telephone and online surveys, the most cited questions, recommendations or concerns were:

- a preference for communication via telephone, which was seen as more secure compared to online platforms (38%, 139);
- a lack of access to or ownership of a computer to make enquiries through an online form or live chat (22%, 80);
- concerns about the privacy and protection within online platforms (9%, 34);
- a concern that issue enquired or reported would not be responded to in a timely fashion (9%, 34).

The word cloud below illustrates the key words used in response to their questions, recommendations or concerns.



*“Unsure about how quickly a response will be received. Unsure about how to use online live chats”*

*“Again with online form the concern would be when it was dealt with”*

The second most frequent response for online participants was to indicate a preference for telephone reporting and contact with the police (20%, 26).

*“As long as information is used and acted upon rather than a tokenistic approach that people feel they are communicating concerns when actually they are just being recorded rather than acted upon”*

*“It's sometimes easier to have direct dialogue either face to face or by telephone”*

The third most frequent comment related to concerns about the privacy and security for hosting live chats, especially when communicating sensitive information (18%, 24).

*“That it is a local representative which who you are speaking and not a subcontracted agency who know nothing of your area or complaint”*

*“Live chat is not appropriate for sensitive communication due to hacking risks - you as police should know this!”*

*“Online live chat - visible to everyone? Means you can't refer to specific cases”*

It should be noted that there were several comments across both telephone and online respondents which suggested that live chats would be a useful addition to the telephone service, though it was strongly asserted that the live chat should be staffed by a member of the police who provided personalised responses rather than scripted and inexpressive messages.

*“The online chat format would be a good option that I would use”*

*“This would certainly feel more personable, and the knowledge that someone is there responding in real time is more comforting”*

*“Operator should not simply follow a script”*

*“I'd have concerns that the person I'm chatting with is just there to answer calls and would refer everything to someone else who doesn't have time to deal with the enquiry properly”*

*“Is online reporting seen by a human or a bot or algorithm of some sort?”*

Although, a slightly higher proportion of residents would consider making an enquiry via an online form than a live chat, in both cases about half of participants indicated that they would consider it. However, concerns were raised about the police becoming more depersonalised in how it engages with the public and the fear that it would be a replacement rather than an enhancement of the communication mediums currently available. If live chat was launched, it would be critical to convey the security measures in place

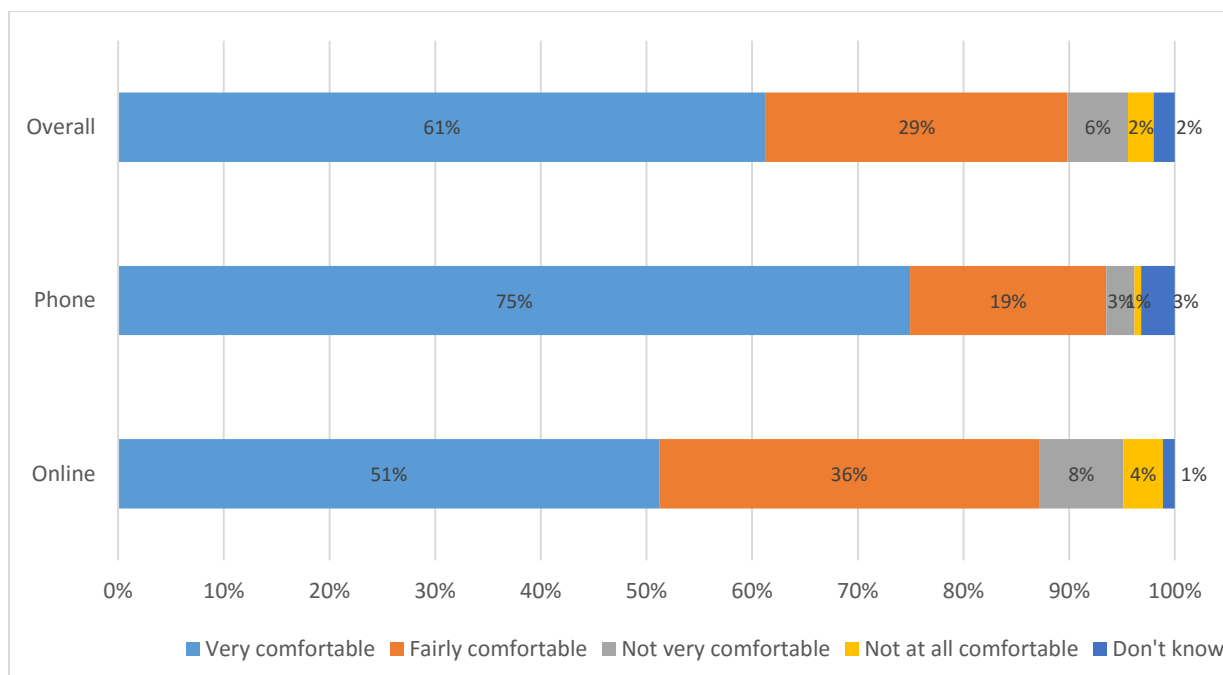


to ensure confidentiality, who and how the service would be staffed and enough provision to allow a timely response.

## 7.4 Willingness to report suspicious activity

A very high proportion of residents reported that they would be very comfortable to report suspicious activity (61%) with a further 29% saying they would be fairly comfortable. Only 8% of residents said that they would be not very or not at all comfortable to report suspicious activity. Phone participants were significantly more likely to be comfortable with reporting suspicious activity.

**Figure 7.5 Extent to which residents feel comfortable reporting suspicious activity**



Residents were asked what might stop them reporting suspicious activity to the police or local authorities. As can be seen in the word cloud below the most common answer was 'nothing'.



However, across both telephone and online surveys, the most cited issues were:

- fears of being threatened, that they would be identified and that there would be repercussions (36%, 316). As part of this, the assurance that the police would protect an individual's identity was questioned;
- that nothing would stop people reporting suspicious behaviour (32% 278);
- that reporting suspicious behaviour would not result in any meaningful action or response, and therefore would be a waste of time (16%, 137).

For telephone respondents, the most common response was that nothing would stop them reporting suspicious activity to the police (57%, 185).

*“Nothing would”*

*“Absolutely Nothing”*

The second most frequent response for telephone respondents was a fear of being threatened, that they would be identified and that there would be repercussions (30%, 96). The need for anonymity in this process was of particular importance to respondents and more reassurance may be required by outlining how they can report, how the information will be used and how their identity will remain confidential].

*"You never know if they'll throw a brick through your window"*

*"...hope not. Maybe danger to self or family"*

*"...nothing unless the offender had seen me and I felt threatened, so to see it at a distance I would be happy to report it"*

Other issues noted by several telephone respondents were a lack of response, uncertainties around what to report, the severity of the incident or language barriers.

For online respondents, the most common response was a fear of reprisal for contacting the police (40%, 220). Concerningly, many participants indicated that their identity had not remained anonymous, which had resulted in fears of becoming a victim of retribution.

*"If police come to my house and are spotted by the people I am reporting"*

*"The Police in this area are very indiscreet. I would fear they would leave me at risk of reprisals from antisocial residents"*

*"People in my area, if they know you report anything, they will retaliate. I feel threatened"*

The second most frequent response for online respondents was that reporting suspicious behaviour would not result in any meaningful action or response, and therefore would be a waste of time (22%, 141). Some of the responses in the survey referred to serious incidents with little response being observed or communicated to the reporter of the information.

*"Tried once no one respond. Someone was on the roof of the bungalow opposite. No one came to investigate a number of years ago. Now do not bother"*

*"they don't take any notice. we reported a cannabis factory and got no action until it was being emptied"*

*"not sure but it is unlikely that the police would act on it, my neighbour's windows were shot at and shattered two days ago but the police weren't interested"*

*"If it's a minor crime- not worth bothering as it wouldn't be high enough priority for the police to bother with. I did once report hearing a violent crime in progress - was shocked that only one officer was sent. I felt I'd put myself in a dangerous situation while the poor lone officer was trying to find me and the victim. While I was waiting for the officer to find me, I was subject to verbal abuse by 2 men, one of which was the offender, whilst I was on the phone to the call operator. Would think twice before doing this again as I felt one officer was not enough for a situation where the level of violence and number of offenders was unknown!!! Next time I may walk away"*

The third most frequent response was that nothing would stop people reporting suspicious behaviour (17%, 93). The fourth most frequent response was that the reported information would not be taken seriously, that reported information would be dismissed or categorised as a waste of police time (11%, 60).

*"Being taken seriously... not wanting to waste police time"*

*"Passed information before to do with drug dealing that's still an issue and get the impression from the police they can't be arsed to take it seriously"*

*“Thinking it’s not as important as I first thought, and that it might waste police time and take them away from more important stuff”*

*“It is sometimes difficult to judge what is “suspicious” activity and I would hate to waste police time. If I was convinced the activity was “serious” crime (as opposed to anti-social behaviour) I would definitely report it”*

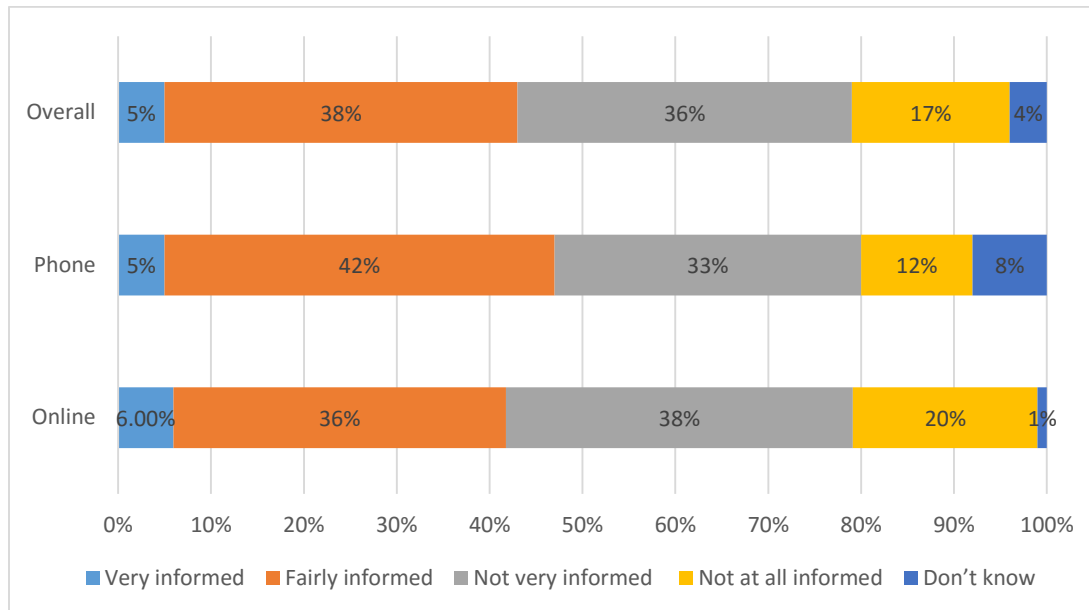
*“I called 101 in the past as I saw someone in my street acting suspiciously around a neighbours back garden and gate. Having recently spoken to a PCSO about reporting suspicious activity via 101 I called. The operator was incredulous that I had called and had no interest in my report as the person was not doing anything wrong at that point. I felt embarrassed and like a time waster even though I thought I was doing the right thing”*

Overall, there was an observable difference between how telephone and online respondents answered this question, with the telephone participants being more likely to declare nothing would stop them reporting. However, for online respondents, the answers were more cautious and concerned that the information would not be kept confidential and that their identity would become known to the subject. The sizeable amount of responses that indicate that the information would not be taken seriously and indeed would lead to a negative dismissal of their report is concerning, as it directly undermines efforts to build a stronger and valued relationship between the police and public. More attention to how such information is acknowledged and valued by the police upon reporting is needed, with mechanisms and assurances provided that the police will keep their identity anonymous and that they will take steps to protect it.

## 7.5 Being kept informed of police and crime matters

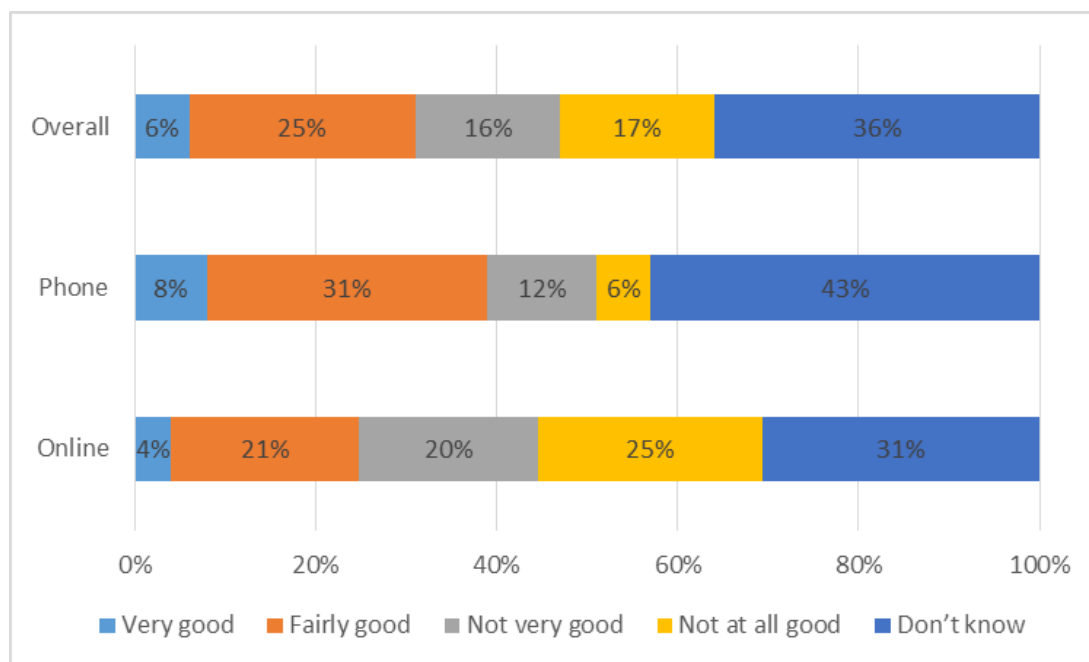
Figure 7.6 shows how informed residents feel about policing and crime matters in their local area. Overall, 42% of residents said that they felt informed about policing and crime matters, which compares favourably to 32% of residents in England and Wales (Ipsos MORI in December 2017: Public Perceptions of Policing in England and Wales, 2017). However, over half (58%) of residents reported that they feel ‘not very’ or ‘not at all informed’.

**Figure 7.6 Extent to which residents feel informed about policing and crime matters**



Residents were also asked how good they thought the police are at communicating with the community. Overall, 45% of residents indicated 'not very good' or 'not at all good', illustrated in Figure 7.7. Interestingly, about a third (31%) stated that they did not know. See the figure below.

**Figure 7.7 Extent to which residents feel the police are good at communicating with the community**

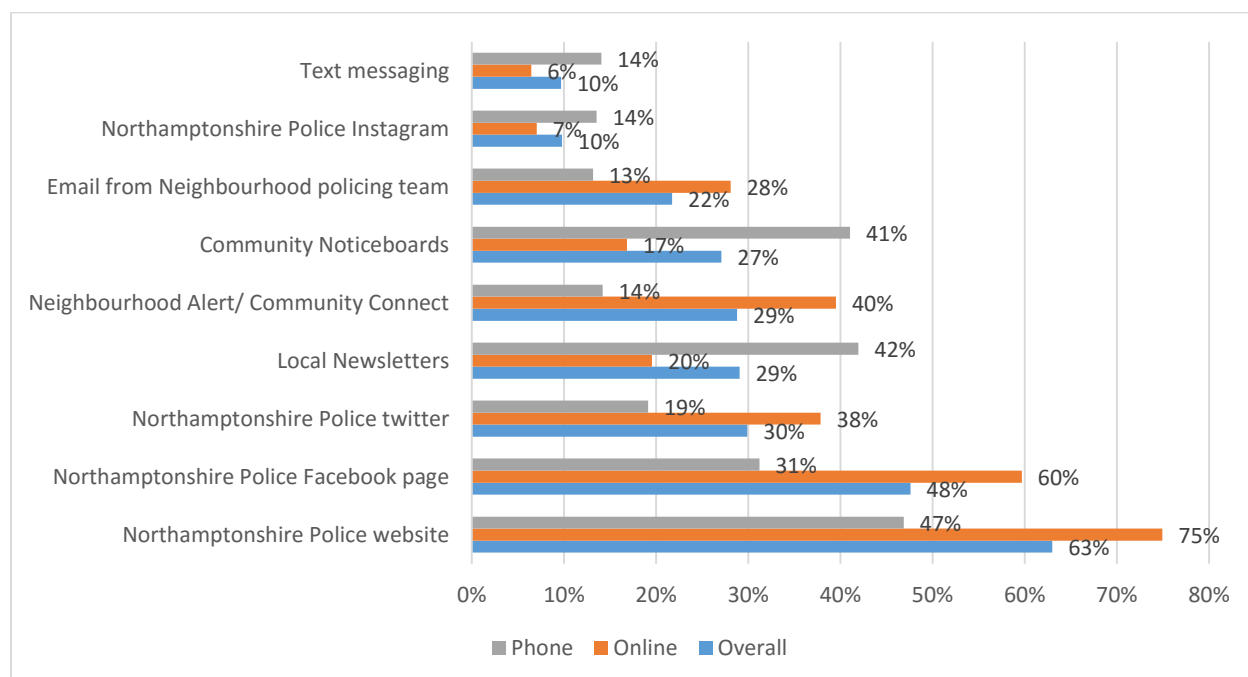


This raises the question as to whether those that reported they are not very or not at all informed are not because the police are not effectively communicating with them or it is not a priority for them.

Therefore, the question about whether they felt informed and whether they feel the police communicated well were looked at in combination. A fifth of all residents (21%) reported that they felt not very or not at all informed, but they didn't know whether the police communicated well suggesting that it might not be a priority for them. However, 25% of residents indicated that they felt not very or not at all informed and they believe the police are not very good or not at all good at communicating with their community.

Residents were asked whether they were aware of different forms of communication that the police use. Figure 7.8 shows their level of awareness of each. For both the online and telephone participants they were most likely to be aware of the police website, 75% of online respondents and 47% of phone respondents. The second and third forms of communication online participants were aware of was the police Facebook page (60%) and Neighbourhood alert/ community connect (40%). However, this is unsurprising as these would have been how they had accessed the survey. The forms of communication that phone participants were most commonly aware of, after the police website, were local newsletters and community noticeboards with about 4 in 10 being aware of these. Online respondents were much less likely to be aware of these methods. These findings suggest that there is much scope for increasing resident's awareness of different methods of accessing information about the police as for the telephone respondents less than 50% were aware of each mechanism and online respondents had low awareness of mechanisms that were not based online.

**Figure 7.8 Awareness of police communication methods.**

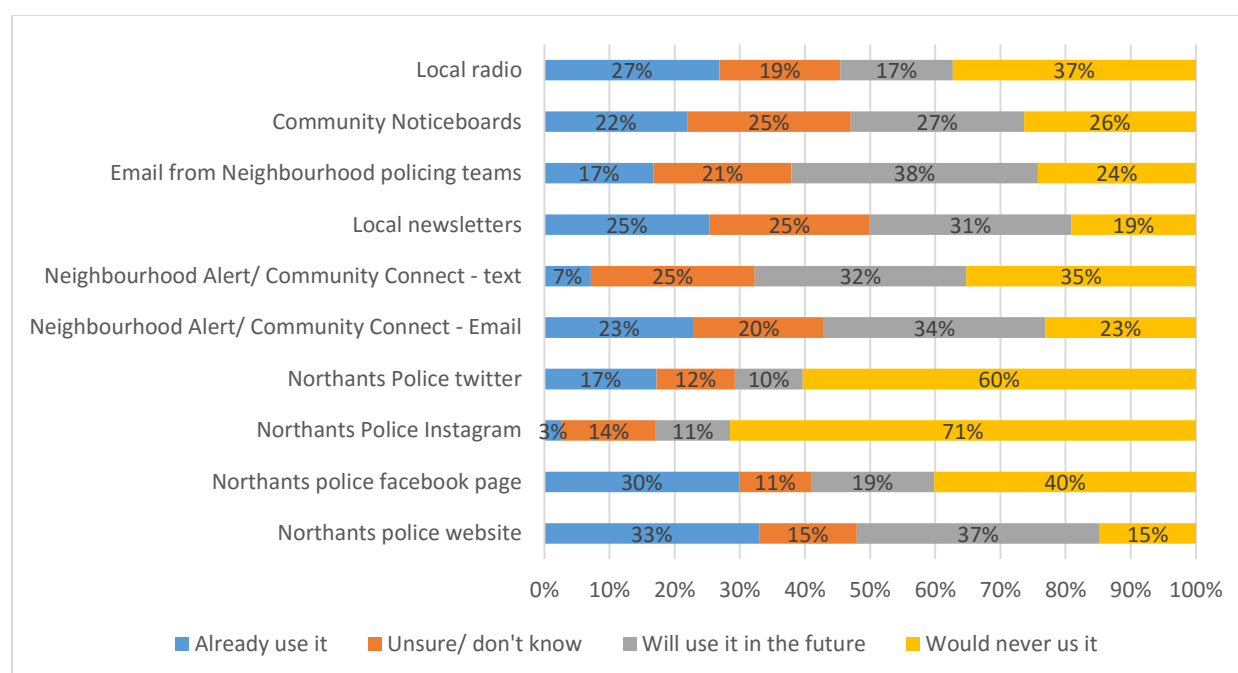


Residents were then asked about whether they do or would use each of the mechanisms, illustrated in Figure 7.8. A third of residents (33%) use the police website, which was the most popular mechanism listed and a further 37% said that they would use it in the future. Facebook was also used by nearly a

third (30%) of respondents but fewer stated that they would use it in the future (19%). Given that these are the most popular mechanisms it is important that the Force continues to develop these platforms to ensure they are current, user-friendly and accessible to all. As they are used by many respondents to the survey, it may be worth adding a question about how they think they can be improved or what they think works well. Other methods might include having some user-groups that can test the sites based on a framework of key questions.

Twitter and Instagram were less popular, particularly Instagram with only 3% saying they used it and 71% saying they would never use it. Local radio and newsletters were also popular, used by a quarter of residents. Mechanisms that seemed to potentially be under-utilised, but residents have an appetite for emails from neighbourhood policing teams, Neighbourhood Community Connect (texts and emails), local newsletters and community noticeboards, illustrated in Figure 7.9.

**Figure 7.9 Present use of and willingness to use different communication mechanisms in the future.**



Residents were asked '*what could the police do to better communicate with you about local police and crime matters?*' Across both telephone and online surveys, the most cited suggestions were:

- to improve police visibility and presence within the community, most frequently associated with a need to increase foot patrol within local areas (40%, 302);
- to publish localised newsletters, leaflets and pamphlets about local concerns and issues (15%, 117);
- to hold local town meetings, which would allow a dialogue between the police and the local community (10%, 78);
- to better advertise the online communication options more widely, with many not knowing about the range of communication options currently in operation (9%, 66).

The word cloud below represents the key words used in response to the improving communication.



For telephone participants, the most frequent response was to improve the police visibility and presence in the community, by engaging with members of the public on foot or door-to-door (37%, 116). Several of these responses indicated that they have experienced a withdrawal of officers or PCSOs within the community.

*"Doesn't feel like a community as such - not reaching me. Presence on the streets. Local volunteering with the community - gets people in touch with each other, police learn about local people. Don't change the local police officer so often"*

*"Be out walking the town more and engaging more, especially when there are market days"*

*"Feel forgotten as a village - more presence on the street"*

The second most frequent comment was to publish local newsletter or post information through the door in the form of a leaflet (20%, 63). It was suggested that this type of communication should be very specific to particular neighbourhoods, rather than district/county level.

*"Newsletters to individual postcode"*

*"Inform people more about what is going on by leaflet drop with clear police notice on it"*

The third most frequent response was to better advertise the online communication options more widely, with many not knowing about the range of communication options currently in operation (14%,



45). It should be noted that several participants valued engagement from the survey team, as their participation made them aware of a number of options they were not aware of.

*"Noticeboards and knowing where to look. If we don't look then it is our fault and not the police, the public have to take some responsibility for themselves. Advertise the online contact options more, this phone call for the survey was really helpful and informative"*

*"Use the online options now that I know about them and advertise these options more"*

*"More surveys like this, I like the idea of the emails for contact, maybe a leaflet drop to show these other ways of communication from the police"*

For online respondents, the most common response was to improve police visibility within the community, especially foot patrol (42%, 186). Many of the comments indicated the need for police officers to engage with the public and listen to their concerns. Some comments negatively perceived police presence in vehicles, as this created a barrier between them and the officer.

*"Be more visible! I want my daughter to grow up in a world where she meets police officers daily, so she knows that they are there for her!"*

*"If ever we get police on foot patrol they should attempt to become part of the community by talking to people and securing their confidence"*

*"On street visibility, talking to people on the street. Having a police station I can actually walk into and talk to a police officer. It's no good telling me my nearest walk in desk is in Daventry when I live in Towcester"*

*"Be more visible. And listen to the public when asked questions. Rather than be defensive"*

The second most frequent response for online participants was to have more frequent and local town meetings, which would allow a dialogue between the police and the local community (14%, 60). It was suggested that this might not necessarily be held by operational officers and rather senior officers, police staff etc. to appraise the community of local developments or concerns.

*"Officers should be available, from time to time, at local shops and shopping centres, libraries and public buildings, to communicate with the public, and to answer any questions members of the public should ask them"*

*"have a presence in the town, have their meetings with the public at a time more suited to working people rather than during a working day"*

The third most frequent response from participants online was to provide localised newsletters, leaflets or pamphlets, posted to individual homes, to inform the public of local policing matters (12%, 54).

*"A leaflet through the door would be a good start. I wouldn't want to subscribe to a newsfeed or website that would constantly remind me of dangers/crime"*

*"newsletter or insertion in village newsletter"*

It should be noted that some participants were critical of the communication strategies and mediums currently used. In particular, the frequency of postings and whether different outlets were updated were among the chief concerns.

*“Too many initiatives start but then are not updated frequently and not removed”*

*“Daventry Police started “Shopwatch” in 2014, last picture update, December 2016, last written contact December 2014. Fair to say I rest my case!”*

## 7.6 Summary

Overall, the analysis suggests that the communication between the police and the public is challenging, with officers being perceived as less available and willing in public spaces to engage with residents about their concerns. Moreover, there is a need to make information disseminated to the public more localised and relevant to different locales within Northamptonshire, with residents not necessarily connecting with countywide issues. Finally, many of the communication modalities currently used were poorly understood or residents unaware of their availability. Once aware, there were some positive comments about their content. Crucially, there is a need for consistency in the messages posted online, in terms of quality, relevancy to local areas and accessibility.

Northamptonshire Police’s PEEL legitimacy report 2017 conducted by HIMCFRS praised the Force for having a good strategy for engaging with the community:

*“Comprehensive local plans support this strategy and provide neighbourhood teams with practical and relevant guidance. Officers and staff use a range of methods to engage with the public, such as beat surgeries and attending parish council meetings. They also adapt their methods to suit the needs of a particular community. For example, police and community support officers (PCSOs) have secured the free use of a vacant shop in Swansgate shopping centre for one or two hours a day. The local neighbourhood team uses this as a base to meet members of the community and hear their concerns.”*

However, it was indicated that local policing teams’ approach to the use of social media was not consistent. It was recommended that better use of the MiPad system, which allows officers and staff to view information and analysis that are relevant to their local area, would enable the force to give its communities good quality feedback.

## 8. Public perceptions from ethnic minority groups

This chapter explores public perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour from the perspectives of people from ethnic minority groups. Traditionally there has been limited uptake to the Public Perceptions Survey by people from ethnic minority groups and, as such, valuable insights into the priorities and perspectives are not being captured. Therefore, the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice was commissioned to conduct research into exploring their views on policing and crime within Northamptonshire.

This chapter is organised into 3 Sections: 1.1. Background; 1.2. Results from Northamptonshire's Public Perceptions Survey - Ethnic Differences; and 1.3. In-depth Perspectives from Ethnic Minority Residents.

### 8.1 Background

In October 2017, The Cabinet Office published the Race Disparity Audit which is a summary of findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website. The Race Disparity Audit was commissioned with a view to shine a light on how people of different ethnicities are treated across public services by publishing data held by the Government. Nationally, in terms of confidence in the police and fear of victimisation, it highlighted the following:

- Adults in the Asian, Other and Black ethnic groups were most likely to feel they would fall victims to a crime in the next year;
- Almost 4 out of 5 adults felt confident in their local police but confidence levels were lower among Black adults and those from a Mixed background (by around 6 percentage points when compared with White adults);
- Confidence was lowest among the youngest adults with only around 3 out of 5 Black people aged 16 to 24 who had confidence in the police;
- In 2015/16, White people were among the least likely to become a victim of crime or to fear becoming a victim of crime. The risk of becoming a victim of crime was highest for Mixed, Black and Asian adult populations; in 2016/16 around 1 in 5 adults in the Mixed group were the victim of a crime in the previous 12 months compared with around 1 in 7 White adults.

In the 2011 Census, 14.3% of the population of Northamptonshire stated they were of a non-White British ethnicity. According to Northamptonshire Analysis, Northampton and Wellingborough have the most non-White ethnic residents, with South Northamptonshire and East Northamptonshire having the least non-White ethnic residents.

In a recent review of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Delivery Group (2017), it was found that hate crime is perceived to be greatly under reported. Whilst the focus of the review was on all hate crime, race was the dominant form of hate crime in the county. The review argued that hate crime was not viewed as being a priority within organisational strategies across the county, with other agendas within the county being given more prominence and priority by organisational and political leaders. It was reported that "the ending of the Hate Crime Unit resulted in the loss of the high-level review from the point of view of the victim on each case and was left with non-specific advice around hate crime with the recognition that all supervisors

should be able to respond to these types of crime/incident. Victims of hate crime have unique vulnerabilities” (Callender, 2017:5), and the relationship between the police and different communities was indicated to have weakened, with the relationship not being viewed as strong enough to enable people to feel confident that if they report hate incidents it will be responded to.

## 8.2 Results from Northamptonshire’s public perceptions survey - ethnic differences

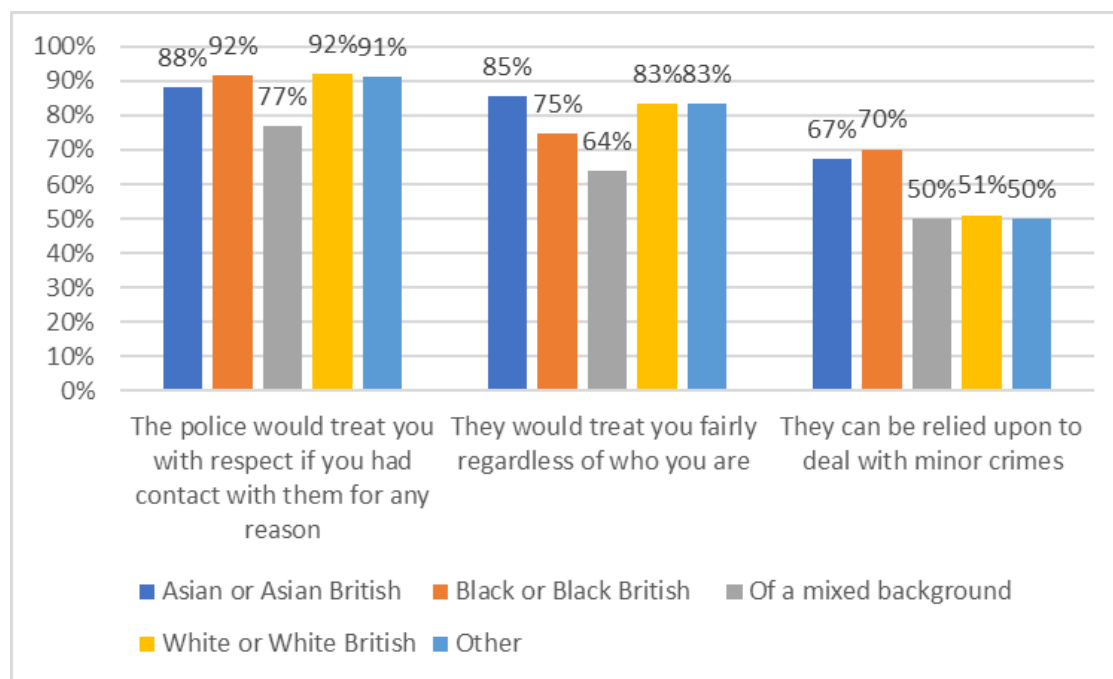
This section illustrates the results ethnic differences from the Public Perceptions Survey analysis. Due to the low numbers of ethnic minorities within the Public Perceptions Survey, it is often difficult to make distinctions between the views and perceptions of different ethnic groups. This annual report typically analyses the data for the year and due to participation, based on ethnicity, White respondents are compared to all ethnic minority groups. This is unsatisfactory as it masks the differences between diverse groups. Therefore, in this chapter, two years of data have been combined to look at ethnic differences (2016/17 and 2017/18). This enables a detailed examination of differences between ethnic groups but still only at a high level.

The analysis compared the following groups: Asian or Asian British; Black or Black British; of a Mixed background; White or White British; and Other. It was found that there was no significant difference in the proportion from each ethnic group that agreed that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area.

Within the survey, residents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements about the police in their area. The analysis shows that there were no differences across ethnic groups in the proportion of participants that agreed that the police could be *‘relied upon to be there when you need them’* or in the proportion that agreed that *‘the police are dealing with things that matter to people in the community’*. There were significant differences identified, however, in the proportion that agreed that *‘the police would treat them with respect if you had contact with them for any reason’*, *‘they would treat them fairly regardless of who you are’* and *‘they can be relied upon to deal with minor crimes’* (illustrated in Figure 8.1):

- Those from a Mixed ethnic background were the group least likely to agree that the *‘police would treat you with respect If you had contact with them for any reason’*;
- Those from a Mixed ethnic background were also least likely to agree that the police would *‘treat you fairly regardless of who you are’* followed by Black respondents.
- Asian and Black respondents were most likely to agree that the police *‘can be relied upon to deal with minor crimes’*.

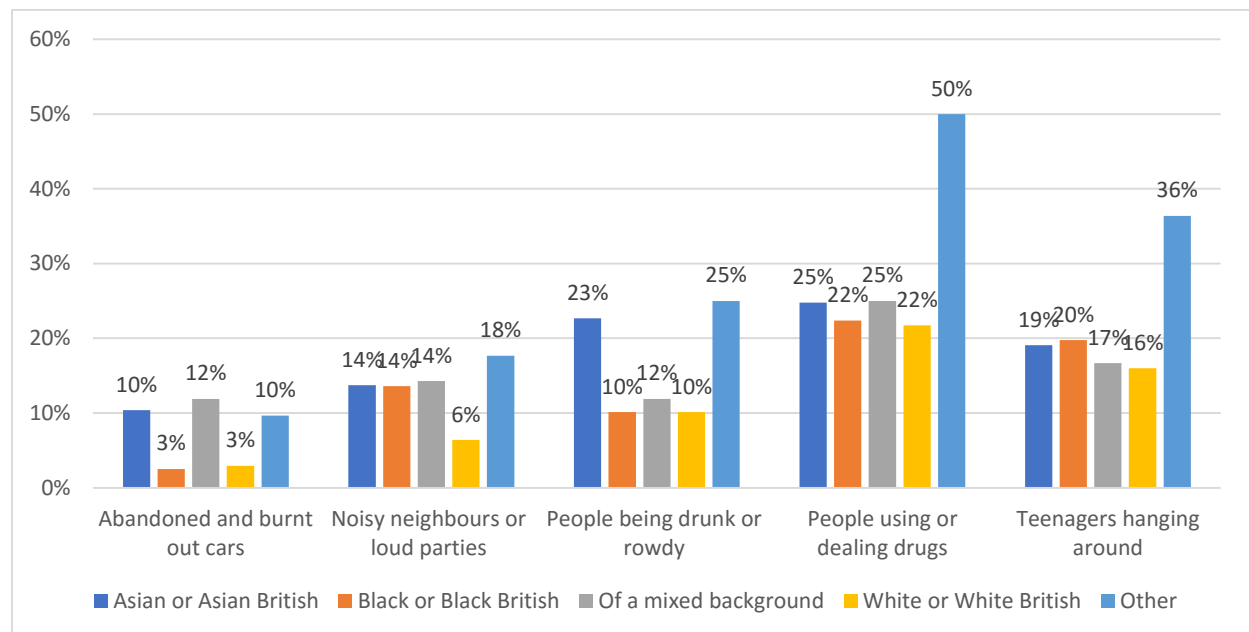
**Figure 8.1 Agreement with statements about the police by ethnicity**



There was also no significant difference in the proportion from each ethnic group that indicated that they knew how to contact the police in a non-emergency. However, in October 2017, the question was added ‘*On average how often do you see police officers and PCSOs on foot or vehicle patrol in your local area?*’ Residents from an ethnic minority were significantly more likely to say ‘never’ (34%) compared to 19% of White participants.

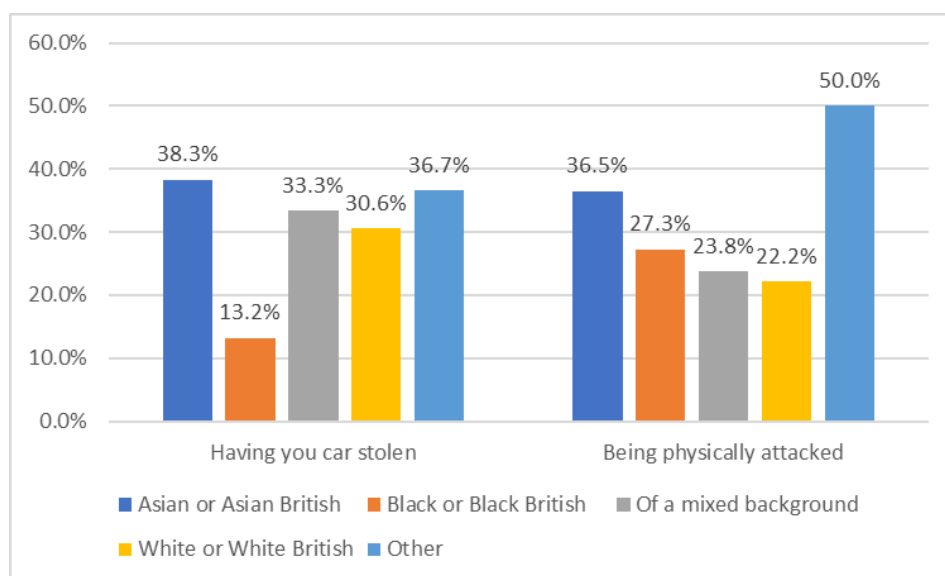
Residents were also asked the extent to which they think specific anti-social behaviour problems are issues in their local area. Ethnic groups did not significantly differ on the proportion that suggested that rubbish or vandalism is a problem in their area. However, they did significantly differ for other ASB problems which are represented in Figure 8.2. It is worth noting that some of the difference may be explained by where different participants live, however, due to numbers this was difficult to determine.

**Figure 8.2 Concern about anti-social behaviour issues in the local area by ethnicity.**



There was no significant difference in the proportion that were concerned about being a victim of burglary or theft from a car but there were significant differences in the proportion that indicated that they were concerned about their car being stolen or being a victim of a physical attack (See Figure 1.3). It is worth noting that variations of worry about vehicle crime may not only be indicative of a worry about crime but also about car ownership. According, to the Department of Transport (2017), between 2011 and 2015, Black people were most likely to have no access to a car or van (at 42%), followed by people from the Other ethnic group (at 37%), people with Mixed ethnicity (at 35%), Asian people (at 24%), and White people (at 18%).

**Figure 8.3 Concern about having a vehicle stolen and being physically attacked by ethnicity**



In October 2017, the question *'Are you worried about being a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour because of who you are?'* was added to the survey to identify experiences and perceptions of hate or intolerance. In total, 11% (142) of residents stated that they were worried about being a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour because of who they are. Although, numbers in ethnic groups were too small to make any statistical comparison, those from an ethnic minority were significantly more likely to indicate that they were worried than White participants, 47% (18) compared to 9% (109) respectively. Asian/Asian British (58%, 15) were the most likely group to suggest that they were worried. Numbers were too small in the other groups to meaningfully interpret. Residents were asked to specify why they were concerned about being a victim and the most common response was based on race, with 19% of participants specifically stating race<sup>12</sup>. Around 4 in 10 Asian residents (42%) indicated that they worried about being a victim due to their race, compared to 25% of Black residents, 22% of Other residents, 18% of Mixed residents and 0.4% of White residents.

Overall, the participation from ethnic minority residents in the Public Perceptions Survey (either on the telephone or online) limits the strength of evidence from which to draw conclusions. Nonetheless, there are some critical observations from this data which are important to consider. Residents from Mixed ethnic backgrounds are significantly less likely to agree that the police would treat them fairly or with respect; people from an ethnic minority are less likely to indicate that they have seen a police officer on foot or in a vehicle; ethnic minority participants are significantly more likely to indicate that they are concerned about being a victim because of who they are; and the most common characteristic linked to worry about victimisation because of who you are was race. This suggests that whilst there were few differences in the proportions of people who indicated the police can be relied upon if they are needed, the relationship between the police and residents was indicated to be different based on ethnicity.

### 8.3 In-depth perspectives from ethnic minority residents

Due to the under-representation of ethnic minority residents in the Public Perceptions Survey and the difficulty in distinguishing whether there are distinct issues or concerns the OPCC commissioned the IPSCJ to carry out a more in-depth consultation, the findings of which are presented in this section. The consultation involved focus groups and interviews with community groups and representatives. The consultation has included members of the Black, Bangladeshi, East European, Sikh and Muslim community as well as representatives from organisations including the police, Northampton Inter Faith Forum (NIF) and Northamptonshire Rights Equality Council (NREC).

All data were subjected to thematic analysis to identify key issues that were important across the dataset. This chapter is organised into 3 overarching themes: 1.3.1. Relationship and Connectedness; 1.3.2. Behaviour and Activities; and 1.3.3. Issues and Measures.

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<sup>12</sup> 17% disability, 16% gender, 14% age, 9% sexuality and 4% religion

### 8.3.1 Relationships and connectedness

The first overarching theme concerned issues that linked with notions of relationships and how different communities felt connected to the police. This section comprises 4 subthemes:

- 8.3.1.1. Consistency of Communication and Engagement – *‘It’s been disbanded’*;
- 8.3.1.2. Points of Contact and Familiar Faces – *‘They work to reach the community’*
- 8.3.1.3. Physical Space and Relationships with Communities – *‘It relies on a building’*
- 8.3.1.4. Responsiveness to Community Needs – *‘The Police have been very good recently’*

#### 8.3.1.1 Consistency of communication and engagement – ‘It’s been disbanded’

Communication and engagement with the police were identified in the analysis to be intermittent. Here, participants described experiences of being involved in a variety of working groups to improve aspects of policing then the activity appeared to cease with the reason why, and the plan going forward, not communicated. This undermined belief within the community that their input and what they have been working on to improve was valued and worth their time. An example given was the activity of the Stop Search Working Group where the individual had just started attending the group and had been to two meetings:

*“...We had two meetings and then it’s been disbanded and it’s now looking, you know, the police are now looking at how they can incorporate all kinds of police powers and how that’s going to be scrutinised, which I think is brilliant, I think that’s necessary... so I’ve attended two meetings, really been wanting to provide an input in that and yet it seems that over a year now, nothing has happened, nothing has moved forward, there’s not a huge amount of communication in terms of a timeline of when things, so I know things are in the pipeline but it just feels like things are rumbling so it doesn’t give the impression, even if it is a priority, it doesn’t give an impression that this is actually important and significant and a priority...”*

A similar experience was also articulated in relation to Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), where a participant had been giving their time to the IAG when activity seemed to cease:

*Respondent 1: “...The IAG, you met a couple of times, there was encouragement and then you joined it? What happened to it?*

*Facilitator: So, you were involved in the IAG? (Directed at Respondent 2)*

*Respondent 2: I was yeah.*

*Facilitator: And then what happened?*

*Respondent 2: And then just poor communication then it just dispersed and then apparently, it’s back now...”*

A key point within the analysis was the need for communities to have an ongoing, consistent and two-way relationship with the police. Participants felt that community interaction was essential for the police in order to increase the confidence of the public to report crime and also to assist the police to prevent and solve crime. Participants interviewed felt that the best way to do this was to visit communities, attend events and go to places where communities gather such as places of worship.



*“They (the police) have to rely on the public, the public are the biggest people to help them, so the police need to do more work with communities and with the people, everyone really, just to build their confidence to get them to report stuff and that will make their job so much easier”*

Overall, the analysis suggested that the communication and engagement activities with members of different communities was too intermittent and featured a series of communication breakdowns. Participants also indicated a desire to engage with the police to meaningfully develop practice which is very positive. Such engagement should, however, outline the commitment and expectations of all involved (both the individual and police) within such activities to reference the respective progress, value and impact of engagement.

#### **8.3.1.2 Points of contacts and familiar faces– ‘They work to reach the community’**

This theme relates to the importance of the roles that points of contact, familiar faces and understanding networks played in the respective relationships between the police and different communities. The analysis evidenced positive stories about community officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the Community Engagement Officers that have built relationships with the community and were perceived as understanding the dynamics within them. The Community Engagement Officers (CEOs) were identified as being well known amongst individuals and groups:

*“...they’ve got good connections with the mosques because the community engagement officers, [Name of CEO] and [Name of CEO], they’re very good. I mean [Name of previous CEO] and [Name of Previous CEO] were before them, you know, and I think if that, those people in that position, they work hard to reach the community, it’s not just the Muslim community, there’s a lot of different communities that they’ve tried to, and I think that those roles are so important”*

Individuals also discussed positive relationships with Community Engagement Officers and PCSOs in their area:

*“The local PCSOs patrol around the area, I think there is a good relationship with the community, never mind a particular community but with the community as a whole there is a good relationship, there is a positive relationship...I can only comment on the ones in Spencer/Dallington, they are very good... they are very engaging, they give you information, they look out for you, they are very approachable”*

However, some groups and individuals stated that they did not know their community officers. There was a desire for stability within officer postings and reduce the frequency of officers moving on quickly to new posts with relationships having to be built again, indicating the importance of having reliable points of contact between the community and the force.

*“So, again talking from experience, over a number of years what we find is that we build a good relationship with the officers, whether it be the local officers or the senior officers and then they get promoted and move to a different area and then we have to rebuild the relationships again with the new team”*

The analysis also highlighted the need for a better understanding of all the communication networks in the county and how information can be fed up and down. Some participants, especially those

representing organisations, also felt that consultation with their organisation was patchy and focused on a small number of topics such as hate crime when they should be consulted about a wider set of issues:

*“In reality, there are only so many things people can actually go to so people want to be very clear on why they are being engaged with and what’s the purpose...I think that’s what’s missing in this county is actually having a grip on who all your networks are, how everyone communicates, what are all the different ways of getting that information out so we can go upwards to the police and authorities and back down again and it does happen in small pockets but I wouldn’t say there is no county wide approach to that.”*

The evidence suggests that knowledge about how the new policing model works and the impact on the community is not widely understood. For instance, changes to the way that policing operates and the impacts to issues such as visibility and communication flows need to be explained to the public so that they understand changes identified within communities.

*“Maybe I’ll explain to my friends, like the police currently has changed the police model they do, so they don’t sit at the police station anymore they do patrol the areas, that’s why we see police cars everywhere now”*

*“I suppose with the new model that has come in... From where (we) sit, we have long standing relationships with the Community Engagement Officers and Hate Crime Coordinator. We know who those people are... it would probably find it more of a challenge for people round the table to know who their local policing teams were now and whether they could go to them and whether that relationship was still the same or whether its [different]. You can’t go those people anymore and you’ve just got to ring 101 and get whoever comes to you”*

Overall, the analysis shows how participants wanted to have consistent points of contact with the force to build a stronger relationship and wanted to better understand the new force model and how it will impact policing within communities. There were some examples of effective and positive relationships with some officers, though relationships with local policing teams were indicated to be more variable.

#### **8.3.1.3 Physical space and relationships with communities – ‘It relies on a building’**

The analysis highlighted the importance of the roles that physical spaces played within the relationships between the police and the respective community. Some communities were identified as having a focal space, which served to bring the community together on a regular basis. For instance, the Gurdwara was highlighted as a place that is a factor in enabling the fostering of a good relationship with the Sikh community. Other communities were understood to be more transient and elusive restricting the ability of community leaders to disseminate information to its members. For instance, participants in a focus group discussed the lack of an obvious physical space for some groups, which was seen as a potential issue in relations with the police but also in the perception between communities:

*“It’s interesting that, I don’t think, and I don’t know but there is no other demographic speaking like that about the police being in the community and doing that work...”*

*“I think it relies on a building if you have the resources... that relationship indirectly can create its own problems in the community because it can be seen that one community is over, you know, has a better relationship by sheer resources”*

Overall, the analysis shows that some communities benefit in their relationship with the police by having a physical space which brings large proportions of that community together. However, for communities that are more transient or difficult to reach, bespoke strategies and engagement plans should be designed and implemented in order to strengthen the respective relationships. Participants highlighted the possible benefits of having a physical space that acts as a hub for the community. However, care must be taken not to homogenise a community on ethnic lines recognising the diversity and difference within and between ethnic groups.

#### **8.3.1.4 Responsiveness to community needs – ‘The Police have been very good recently’**

This theme related to the ability of the police to be responsive to community needs. Here, participants were relatively positive, reflective of the quantitative results in section 1.2, with the police being recognised as arranging meetings in response to national and international events, inviting people to attend to share concerns. This practice was highlighted as a positive example of communication which demonstrates a direct interaction to respond to community needs. Indeed, rather than exclusively interact with community leaders, such events were indicated to enable a greater degree of interaction with different community members which was celebrated.

*“there was obviously a spate where there was quite a few terrorist attacks and I think there was different people around the table each time which was good, so it wasn’t just the same gatekeepers, you were getting different individuals with different feedback. I think these were good and to hold things like that on an ad hoc basis to respond to issues worked quite well actually.”*

The policing of specific cultural events was discussed within different groups, with the police being seen as less willing to attend and provide presence. This shift was largely linked to reductions in police funding, though it was noted that a unique opportunity for training officers in the management of large events, meeting community members and understanding different cultures and events was being missed. Whilst Silverstone was identified as fulfilling the training environment for officers, it was felt that street carnivals and cultural events have different needs and expectations of officers. A few participants discussed how they could not understand why the police, if paid, could not police the event.

*“[The] Carnival event should be used as a training event, when we first did it in 2005 our security was the police and we paid. The community felt good, it’s a bit like the Notting Hill pictures you see, dancing and chatting with officers...that lasted a couple of years and then it was not part of their agenda”*

Overall, the analysis shows how the police are positively responding to cultural needs. However, a specific issue relates to how participants felt that policing significant events in the cultural and religious calendar is an important part of fostering that two-way relationship. When communities are giving up their time and resource to help the police, they expected that the police will, in return, support them with resource at appropriate times.

### 8.3.2 Behaviour and activities

The second overarching theme were issues relating to the behaviour and activities of policing and the impacts to their relationship with different communities. This section comprise 3 subthemes:

8.3.2.1. Consultation Scepticism and Fatigue – ‘*What do they want now?*’;

8.3.2.2. Increasing Cultural Diversity and Leadership – ‘*It really flows from the top down*’

8.3.2.3. Legitimacy and Accountability – ‘*Well within the legislation*’

#### 8.3.2.1 Consultation scepticism and fatigue - ‘*What do they want now?*’

The first theme within behaviour and activities related to scepticism and reticence amongst some communities and groups to engage in consultations. Recent consultations were described as tick box exercises, which are there to serve the agency running the consultation rather than the community, impacting on the value participants felt from their contributions. The dynamic within consultations suggested unequal power relations to define issues and assign action, with those being consulted with left feeling undervalued:

*“... people will invest in those relationships if they think it’s worthwhile doing it. It’s just a case of, oh let’s get a load of people together and let’s run, you know, say like stop and search policy past them, get everyone in the room, and then we can tick a load of boxes and say look, hey, we got all these people together and we consulted with them. You know, when the communities want some help you know, or some resource or whatever then it’s a case of, oh not sure we can do that, so it has to be two ways”.*

Quite often those individuals and organisations approached have given up their time and have been involved in many previous consultations for various agencies and this requires precious time and resource that they may not have to spare. This has resulted in feelings of fatigue and frustration within communities who are not experiencing enough benefit for continued engagement. Whilst different groups consulted understood the value and benefit to participating in consultation activities with the police, especially in terms of maintaining lines of communication, it is critical to be aware of the impact on their organisations or lives:

*“So, I think there has to be that kind of balance and that recognition that there isn’t unlimited resource and just because organisations are either community groups or voluntary sector organisations, that they can’t just keep doing things for free. And if the police want to improve their practice, which is really brilliant and we would encourage that, there has to be recognition of the resource implications on the organisations that they’re calling upon all the time”*

*“The community are tired. You go into the Black community and they are like ‘what do they want now? What do they want now?’”*

Overall, the evidence here suggests the need to greater awareness of the limited resources and/or time community groups, individuals and organisations might have when trying to engage or consult with them. Furthermore, agencies also need to ensure that for any planned engagement, it has a clear purpose that is communicated to all involved and that the result of the engagement is communicated back. Finally, the analysis indicates the importance of appropriately recognising and appreciating the investments specific individuals make to support their community and policing agendas.

### 8.3.2.2 Increasing cultural diversity and leadership - 'It really flows from the top down'

The importance of leadership and increasing cultural diversity within the police was identified in the analysis. Participants discussed a need to understand different cultures and increase the diversity within policing, though there were differing views on how this could best be achieved. For instance, some indicated the need to recruit more police officers from their community, to reflect their values and understand the internal dynamics within it. Others suggested adopting a long-term approach by building relationship within schools with high numbers of children from ethnic minority backgrounds, encouraging students to consider policing as a career. It was noted, however, that rather than increase the diversity of officers alone, the force should invest in all officers to be more culturally aware.

*"We need more of our cultures in the police, so that you know people from our cultures can interact with, you know, have more trust and so on"*

*"It starts at the point of education, of if you are culturally educated or culturally aware, and want to grow in that area then I think that would be a great start to being able to embrace other cultures, but I don't know how much training goes on behind the scenes in relation to that"*

The importance of leadership within the organisation being committed and demonstrating the desire to engage with communities was identified as critical. There were some comments from participants who were extremely satisfied with the approach of the Chief Officers, stating that relations between the police and their community were probably the best they have ever been. A key activity instrumental in this view was that the Chief Constable, soon after coming into post, visited communities demonstrating to them that he was committed to understanding their needs.

*"So, it really flows from the top down, so because the Chief Constable is keen to work with communities, the next tier of Chief Inspectors and the Assistant Chief Constable as well, they're all very much engaged in community work. So, it created that culture there where it is about, you know, if the community needs something, what can we do to help them? And that's working the other way around as well, where the police need something, you know, we're, you know, we go to the meetings, we take our time out to help them as well."*

It must be noted, however, that not all participants had positive views of the senior leadership within policing. For example, one individual described a disagreement with a senior officer when discussing a race relations incident that he had been involved in at public group. The officer was a high ranking White officer, he referred the incident to a lower ranking officer who was Black. Rather than being a task delegated on a hierarchical basis, it was deemed to be negatively delegated on an ethnic basis.

*"...If he's up there (referring to the rank of the senior officer) and he's not willing to have this conversation (with me) it makes me go 'is he uncomfortable?', 'Doesn't he know what he is doing?'. Then if a police officer approaches him and says he has had this problem with this Black guy what does he say if he hasn't had a chance to speak to someone who's on the other side...if him at the top wasn't going to then where do you go from there?"*

Overall, the behaviours and practices of the leadership were evidently scrutinised by different members of communities, both positively and negatively. In balance, the accounts captured in the consultation were largely positive, though the negative accounts do provide valuable information to learn from. The diversity within the force was a topic discussed by different groups and the analysis suggests a need to

both increase such diversity, although concern was raised that this has previously been attempted by reducing recruitment standards, as well as the cultural sensitivity of officers within their exchanges in the community.

### **8.3.2.3 Legitimacy and accountability – ‘well within the legislation’**

The final theme within the behaviour and activities of the police related to issues of legitimacy and accountability. The participants highlighted the importance of the public seeing that the police are exercising their power legitimately and appropriately and that they had a clear understanding of their own policies. The issue of stop search was raised by participants in two of the focus groups, with both commenting that it was a useful power, for example, in relation to the growing concern that some young people carry knives. There was a suggestion that the power is not utilised enough, related to a perceived fear by officers to be labelled as ‘racist’. It was strongly indicated that accusations of this nature should not be an issue and officers should be more confident in exercising this power within the bounds set out by legislation.

*“They are terrified of being accused of being racist”*

*“They haven’t been trained with the managerial tools to handle that problem because if you are armed and educated and know your rights you could say I am well within the legislation to stop you and this is the reason why”*

The handling of cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was also raised by a member of one community as something that shook community confidence in the police to handle situations sensitively and appropriately. The practices of the police, in this instance, were indicated to not be appropriate and invade the privacy of the family and child. Another issue raised related to the complaints procedures and feedback, when having made complaints to the police and the IPCC, the individual received no feedback or result.

*“I know some families that have had things happen, that weren’t 100% acceptable. There was a family that, I don’t know why... I can’t remember exactly the details, but I know that the child was took out of the family home, took and examined, whether she’d had FGM or not, but she hadn’t, photos were took of the child down there, and because they are police property now... Something like that will just go around like wildfire and I think, there’s been other families been targeted, just people have turned up at their houses and you know, said we need to check your child or something like this and it’s, I think they really need to find a different way how to deal with this, you know.”*

Overall, the analysis demonstrates the importance of police legitimacy and operating within the bounds of clear and transparent legislation. For some, the police were perceived as too passive in exercising powers in relation to public safety through a fear of being labelled as ‘racist’. It is crucial that the activities of the police are publicly justifiable and that officers should be held accountable in instances where the bounds of legislation are crossed. Crucially, participants felt that officers needed appropriate training to ensure that they are able to use powers appropriately and justify their use.

### 8.3.3 Issues and measures

The third and final theme related to specific issues and measures important to the development of policing in the local context. This section comprises 3 subthemes:

8.3.3.1: Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour - *'There seems to be a general hostility'*

8.3.3.2: Reporting Hate – *'What's the point?'*

8.3.3.3: Response and Victim Satisfaction – *'There's some really good work... but unless there's a follow-up'*

#### 8.3.3.1 Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour – *'There seems to be a general hostility'*

Issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour were discussed with all groups, with the key issues being highlighted as youth anti-social behaviour, drugs, hate crime and Asian gold burglaries. In terms of anti-social behaviour among young people, participants discussed how there is not a lot for young people to do now, so they congregate in town where all the buses go to and they have access to cheap food and clothing. Members of different groups understood why this could be intimidating for the public. The lack of resources that were available for youth provision was a contributing factor to this growing issue. A participant who organised and hosted youth groups stated that there was now an issue with young people carrying knives but there was no funding for them to be able to run prevention workshops or initiatives. A young person commented that some young people turn to drug dealing as they felt that there were no opportunities available to them when leaving school. Visibility and patrolling were considered important deterrents by participants, as well as being ways to connect with the population.

*"We had summer schemes that engaged the police, they were heavily involved in the summer schools, because they used to do the swimming didn't they and the trips, so you would have an indirect relationship"*

*"Once I reached sixth form, a lot of people started to drop out of school and they feel like there is nowhere else to go so they just hit the streets selling drugs"*

*"It seems to be limited police presence, there is nothing to say that there is an authority that needs to be respected".*

Drug use or dealing were noted by several groups as an issue, which reflects the findings of the Public Perceptions Survey. There was a view that it is almost normalised with it being obvious on the street, where there was a degree of tolerance rather than a robust policing of the issue. The widespread availability of illegal substances is a concern that was highlighted in the analysis with a need for the police to reassure the public that such crimes will not be tolerated.

*"I had a situation when I was walking to the shop in the daytime, it was like 12 o'clock and somebody at the bus stop, he asked me, 'do you smoke weed'? I said 'no'. He said, 'because I can sell you', and he showed me weed, he wasn't scared about it... it just seems so accepted and they're quite comfortable just to do that"*

The impact of hate crime was talked about by several different communities engaged in the consultation and how it was particularly prominent when terrorist attacks occurred and in the wake of Brexit and other world events, with some people fearing or even expecting it daily. The frequency and proportion of hate within community spaces was indicated to be growing and some participants described how they changed their behaviour to protect themselves from being abused. For instance, one female participant talked about when she goes to town, she always makes sure she smiles and tells her children to always smile as she felt this reduced the risk of being targeted. Other behaviour changes included becoming more reclusive.

*"Perhaps previously the main kind of areas of hate crime that we focused on or that we had reported to us were in relation to race and religion around issues to do with terrorism, Muslim women in particular, those kind of areas and racially motivated offences. I think the racially motivated offences have changed slightly in that we have seen more Eastern European complainants, so it's not necessarily based on skin colour or assumptions around religious kind of connections, but it tends to me linked more to the kind of the Brexit and the kind of the Eastern European migration, although I think that has been an issue for a while. But strangely things like LGBT hate crime and disability hate crimes since Brexit seems to have increased as well... Yeah, it seems to just be the kind of, I think the view is that there seems to be a general hostility that has been created around that and I think that has manifested itself in other forms of hate crime as well as the kind of the racially aggravated..."*

*"...this was really horrific, some man picked up a can of alcohol that had something in it... he threw it at her and said something, abuse, you know, abused her with his words and so on and threw the can at her, and so she had alcohol all over her. She reported it obviously and so on and so on, I can't remember exactly what happened when she reported it to the police but for that reason, she rarely goes out of the house."*

The final issue mentioned in the consultation related to a spate of Asian gold burglaries and a sense of intimate targeting of people in the community. It was indicated that the speed of the response could be improved as well as the advice and information provided to the community to prevent these types of crimes. This has resulted in a degree of fear within some households.

*"Asian houses being targeted for jewellery [is a priority] and I just don't think the police...I just think they should work a bit quicker and faster to find these types of robberies, because it's happened before, and should realise, you know, that their main target should be finding the people that actually did the crime. I think, like, they should give Asian people more security and give them advice on how to prevent these from happening"*

*"The Asian kind of family houses they get targeted for burglary because of the gold.... Yeah. Again, it's, they're very, very scared, you know"*

Overall, the analysis suggested that there was a growing sense of tension and hostility in the wake of national and international events which has led to an increase in the frequency of hate-related incidents. Furthermore, there appeared to be a degree of expectation of the occurrence of anti-social behaviour, drugs, hate and burglary, which are important to confront to reassure the public that such crimes will and are not tolerated by the police.



### 8.3.3.2 Reporting Hate– ‘What’s the point?’

Linked with the previous theme of crime and anti-social behaviour were factors linked with reporting of incidents to the police. Participants discussed how there had been good work and progress around promoting what hate crime is and how to report. The recent Safer Northamptonshire campaign on hate crime was positively received, especially the language of ‘abused because of who you are’, which they felt was more understandable. Nevertheless, it was felt that more of this work was needed so that people understand what a hate crime or incident is, what they need to do when it happens and how to report and then what will happen next.

The first key factor shaping reporting was having familiar contacts and approachable faces that they could informally chat to about instances. Essential within this factor was creating informal opportunities for the community to approach an officer to have a brief exchange to clarify whether issues experienced should be reported formally.

*“There is a place for having that information, but the reality is you can put out all the posters, and all the messages but actually it is only when you talk to people, and that’s a time thing isn’t it, and have those conversations is when people actually talk about what’s happened to them”*

*“Before the community were very sort of reticent to talk to the police officers and especially when it comes to reporting things like hate crime, are you really going to ring the police up and report it? Whereas when you have got a police officer there just having a cup of tea, they can go over and say, ‘well actually this happened is it worth me reporting?’ and they’ll say well did you take this, this and this you know I would definitely report that”*

The second factor influencing the reporting of hate-related incidents was a reporting apathy due to lack of action to hate crime incidents. Some participants questioned whether reports were reviewed and stressed the need to transparently share a summary or profile of hate-related incidents with the public. Such transparency about hate would allow the public to understand how information is used and analysed, identifying key trends across the county. Participants described the process of encouraging others to report hate incidents that did not reach the crime threshold as difficult, with the knowledge that it would not be investigated. One participant who had experienced verbal abuse commented:

*“I was coming down the escalator in Primark with two of my children and somebody was coming up the other escalator, because you cross don’t you, and he picked up a towel from the bottom of the stairs and put it on his head like a hijab and said Allah, Allah, Allah going up past me. Now I didn’t consider that as a hate crime or incident, I didn’t consider it because he’s just being a, you know, just being an idiot really...And when I spoke to [Community Engagement Officer] about that and they said you should report that. It wasn’t until later that I reported it and the lady came around to my house, I told her everything, police lady, and I said what can, can anything be done? Was there CCTV in there? And she said well, I don’t, no, nothing can be done. I said, well what if I’d reported it on the day, could anything be done, and she said no, not really. And that alone just says, what’s the point?”*

The third factor shaping the reporting levels in the county was a lack of confidence among residents whose first language was not English. The issue of language barriers was raised by a focus group and community leader. The Polish focus group talked about the benefit to them of online methods. The

Polish focus group also felt that it was important to have the option of a translator and suggested that leaflets in the most common languages in Northamptonshire would be useful. They also commented in terms of accessibility of the police that they did not feel that the numbers to call were advertised or prominent enough around the community compared to the case in Poland.

*“Many people who live here long time don’t speak English still, so for them maybe a good idea will be when they can opportunity to send message when they can translate their information informal somewhere and send it to police, not speak with them, because listening is very difficult and can be difficult for them”*

The final issue raised in relation to reporting was an acceptance or tolerance of abuse. Some individuals talked about members of their community tolerating abuse because they felt that there was no other option or because it was a weekly or daily occurrence.

*“I know one sister the other day, I met her in Aldi, she said ‘that man just said something to me in here’. You know, but she wouldn’t say anything about it, and I said to her ‘do you want to report that’? She said ‘what’s the point, it’s just going to happen the next day’. So, it’s a repeated you know, and I do try and encourage people to do, to report and to log and whatever they want to do but you know, they don’t see it as being something that’s necessary I suppose, they just accept it. An acceptance that it’s part of life, which is sad, very sad.”*

Overall, a series of factors impacting on the reporting of hate within the county were identified. Critically, the public need to understand *why* reporting hate is important and *how* such information is used to re-assure them that hate in all forms is not acceptable, that people who experience hate will be supported and that those who are perpetrators of hate will be prosecuted. At present, the evidence shows how the members of ethnic minority communities see little value in reporting hate if it does not translate into action.

#### **8.3.10 Response and victim satisfaction – ‘There’s some really good work... but unless there’s a follow-up’**

The final issue relating to specific measures in the county concerned experiences of response to incidents and victim satisfaction. It is noted that examples were evident in the analysis of communities receiving excellent service from the police when having been a victim of crime. For instance, several individuals from one community group had been victims of a hate crime, the community engagement officer who attended their meetings and they knew well, as well as the community group itself, guided and supported the victims through the whole process. This approach gave them the confidence to proceed which led to a conviction increasing their confidence in and knowledge of the system.

Beyond these examples, there was a wider feeling that the response to crime is variable and some have had less positive experiences. A key issue that was highlighted, linking with results in the Public Perceptions Survey, is a lack of communication as well as speed of response. Participants described not having their expectation met, raising concerns about the reliability of the police to adequately keep them informed and meet with them promptly following a crime.

*“My cousins house got robbed, we called them [police]. The Officer was meant to come that night, he came four nights later, you got to think about the family that just got robbed they would expect these people to come quickly that night but to come four days after. I understand*

*there is bigger crimes going on out there but at least a phone call to tell us you are not going to come"*

*"...Even an email [from the police] to say we are dealing with it or we are looking at it we are really sorry, you know, contact us if you are anxious, in your case (referring to another member of the group), we know it just went on forever..."*

The analysis highlighted how community members were very positive about instances where the police have "knocked on doors" and informed them of incidents and gave them Crime Prevention Advice. Such an approach was seen as a positive exchange with the police, reassuring them that measures were being taken to prevent crime within local areas.

*"...something happened in the night. I can't remember actually what that was, but next day police patrol knocked on my door, and they gave me letters and said 'can you put somewhere on the doors or wherever to make sure everybody reads that letter, there was something what happened at night, if anybody saw that, call the police'. And they wrote a few ways we can make our house safer...you know, how to help us to make our house safe when we're leaving home alone...So that's why I am feeling so confident with them"*

The negative perceptions around the response to crime has resulted in some community members feeling the need to police their own communities to protect members of their community (or the wider community) from harm, particularly vulnerable members. Some individuals talked about themselves or other community members carrying out their own investigation work or intervening in incidents. In relation to Asian Gold burglaries, some members of the community described carrying out their own patrols. Whilst such an approach carries levels of personal risk, it also may lead to them committing offences themselves.

*"It is coming to the point where we are taking matters into our own hands, my cousins lap top got stolen, it came to the point where I made a fake Facebook account and found out who was selling it, told the officer (but) he didn't do anything about it."*

*"They were certain things that were missed yeah the person that actually reported the crime was doing a lot of the police work themselves because they wanted to get to the bottom of this and they weren't even the victim...Now the only reason their doing their own detection work is because they have no confidence in the police doing it"*

*"Well you think I will deal with it myself next time..."*

An important point raised in relation to crimes was the reporting of and response to what might appear as minor incidents, but when combined indicate a larger crime against an individual. While recognising that it would be unlikely that the officers dealing with separate instances would be the same each time, they highlighted the importance of not looking at instances in isolation but trying to focus on the bigger picture and impact to the victim. Participants highlighted the need to leave victims with some sort of package of advice and support. For example, what to do if it were to happen again, leaving incident diaries, leaving direct contact details so that the victim does not feel isolated but has support and guidance. Critically, it is important to acknowledge the pattern of incidents to an individual, rather than be oblivious or indifferent to them.

*"It has escalated and escalated, they haven't reported, for whatever reason the smaller stuff, or all the smaller stuff has been reported but didn't get dealt with because it's always been dealt with as an incident so we can't do anything or we are just going to monitor it, and then it gets out of hand, then what was the victim gets treated as the offender, then you have broken all confidence"*

*"...I always thought it was better to be left with something...but I think if the person is left with something, this what is going to happen next, if it happens again do x, y and z. You have got to keep it relatively simple for people it can't be over complicated...if there is something like harassment diary where they are able to capture what's going on and officers can leave instant numbers you have got a little bit of a package there."*

Finally, the role that Voice can play in supporting victims was raised and the need to ensure victims and community members are aware of Voice and what it offers. According to victim satisfaction survey data for the period October to December 2017, only 28% of victims surveyed said that they had been given the details of Voice. Violence victims were the most likely to have been offered support from Voice (40%), followed by burglary victims (38%), hate crime and vehicle crime victims (33%) and lastly ASB victims (7%). It was noted that the public knew what 'Victim Support' was but there is a need to increase awareness of Voice.

Overall, while there were some examples of good practice in relation to the response of victims, the majority of data highlighted how the public consulted were concerned about the speed and nature of response to crime. The perceived lack of response to crime by the police had led to a series of small-scale community measures to protect themselves, which is a response to be closely monitored to ensure compliance with what is considered to be reasonable. Finally, concerns were raised in relation to how the police process and understand what, in isolation appears to be a minor issue, but when combined creates a larger picture of victimisation.

## 8.4 Summary

In summary, the relationship between the police and different communities was indicated to have recently been weakened, with communities experiencing a distancing from the familiar connections they previously had. There was some good practice noted, however, more needs to be done to connect different communities with new teams within local policing, especially through activities that foster trust and familiarity. The analysis indicates the importance of not over relying on specific individuals within communities and rather attempt to engage with a wider body of citizens through diverse communication strategies. Within this, it is crucial not to homogenise communities along ethnic lines, but rather recognise and celebrate the diversity within and as well between different communities.

In terms of behaviours and activities of policing and their impacts to the relational dynamics with different communities, the consultative strategies have negatively impacted on communities, especially those who are the regular 'go-to' individuals. In particular, the results of the engagement are rarely communicated back, with participants feeling the activity is tokenistic rather than a genuine attempt to engage and involve members of the community from ethnic minority backgrounds. Leadership was identified as being critical and the behaviours of the Chiefs were positively reported in the main. More activities that actively bring leaders within policing into contact with the community should be considered. Finally, the analysis highlighted the importance of the public seeing that the police are exercising their power legitimately and appropriately and that they had a clear understanding of their own policies.

In relation to specific issues and measures important to the development of policing in the local context, the analysis illustrated a feeling that there was a growing sense of tension and hostility in the wake of national and international events. The evidence shows how the members of ethnic minority communities see no value in reporting hate and lack confidence that reporting incidents will translate into action. More communication outlining why reporting is critical and how information will be processed would be beneficial at challenging the lack of value attached to reporting hate. Finally, those consulted were concerned about the speed and nature of response to crime as well as the capacity or willingness of the police to consider the bigger picture of victimisation beyond the immediate and isolated low-level incident.

## 9. Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter outlines key conclusions from the Public Perceptions Survey in 2017/18 and recommendations (R).

### 9.1 Innovating how public perceptions of policing and crime are captured

This year has seen an expansion in the methodology of the Public Perceptions Survey as the original method of telephone surveying alone was becoming increasingly difficult, with contact rates declining over recent years. Furthermore, the sample via the telephone was not representative of the county, with younger age groups, ethnic minority residents and males all under-represented. The online survey has allowed, and has demonstrated, an increase in the representativeness of the sample, particularly in terms of reaching the younger age groups. It has also increased accessibility of the survey to residents if they wish to express their views, rather than a system where they are randomly selected.

The results presented in this report have documented how the introduction of the online survey has had a profound impact on results, with those completing it being significantly more concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour and less confident in the police. A key factor which has influenced the responses to key measures has been an increase in the proportion of the sample who have been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour. However, comparison with national victimisation data suggests that the online sample is now more representative of victims in the county than before. Therefore, while the online survey may be representing a more negative picture, it might be reflecting a 'truer' picture than the original telephone survey exclusive approach. This does present a challenge in measuring change, as the more negative results discussed in this report seem to be as a result in a change of methodology rather than a real change over time.

**R1:** To establish a new baseline concerning levels of public support and confidence in policing, by continuing online and accessible mediums to engage with a more representative sample of the public and by embracing a more diverse approach in terms of methodology to gathering perceptions.

**R2:** To embed the Public Perceptions Survey in a wider variety of dissemination locations (virtual and physical) with partner agencies, transcending police and crime-related sites, to further increase the diversity within the sample.

## 9.2 Understanding and responding to the concerns of marginalised populations

For the first time this year, the survey asked for and considered residents' religion, sexual orientation and disability (mental health, physical and/ or learning disability) if they had one. This is important information to better understand the experiences, needs and concerns within these marginalised demographics on a local level. Although numbers within these categories are small at present, early indications are that there are important differences within these groups that should be identified and considered within future strategy. Particularly notable at this stage was the increased likelihood of those with a mental health condition to be victimised, to be concerned about anti-social behaviour and have lower confidence in the police.

**R3:** To implement bespoke strategies to further capture the views and experiences of those marginalised groups that are under-represented in the sample by targeting the survey or by using other appropriate methods with those who might find participation in a survey difficult (For example, increasing accessibility for those with learning disabilities).

**R4:** To align all engagement activities that seek public views on policing and crime with the demographic factors used within this survey to create larger datasets which will allow more meaningful analysis of differences between minority groups through the synthesis of data.

**R5:** To strategically prioritise work with people with mental health conditions, organisations that support them and the third sector to better understand their needs and alleviate their concerns, building on the existing work being delivered by the police and OPCC in this area.

## 9.3 Responding to crime and anti-social behaviour to improve the confidence in the police

Burglary remains a key concern for the public in relation to crime and has become the most frequently mentioned crime problem in residents' top three priorities for the police. In terms of anti-social behaviour issues, vehicle nuisance (including speeding, illegal parking and off-road bikes) was considered the biggest problem followed by rubbish/ litter lying around and people using or dealing drugs. It is also worth highlighting perception of the prevalence of vehicle nuisance and drug using or dealing had the strongest relationship with confidence in the police and local council. There is a belief among residents that some anti-social behaviour such as drug using or dealing and groups of people hanging around is not addressed and is contextually accepted or normalised. The results presented in the report suggest that the public do not understand approaches to these issues by the police, or perceived lack of approach, and are frustrated by a lack of police 'presence' and a lack of response to CCTV. It was noted, however, that the public believed that Crime Prevention Advice was an important component to enable them to keep themselves and their communities safe.

Confidence in the police has declined (including all responses both online and telephone), which brings the levels of agreement in line with the results of the Crime Survey England and Wales 2017. This decline was derived from the online sample as the telephone sample in isolation registered an increase in positive perceptions. Participants were most likely to agree that the police would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason. It is important, however, to recognise groups that were less likely to agree with this, such as those from an ethnic minority, 16 to 24-year olds and those with a mental health condition. It is also worth noting that participants with mental health conditions were significantly less likely than those without to be confident in the police on all measures, highlighting their importance as a future strategic priority. Overall, participants were least likely to agree that the police can be relied upon to deal with minor crimes, this is the confidence measure that has shown the most decline over recent years.

**R6:** To strengthen and embed a partnership approach to crime prevention strategies, in line with recommendations made in Northamptonshire PEEL report.

**R7:** To evaluate and improve the response to low-level crime, ensuring incidents are not looked at in isolation but patterns are identified in relation to individuals affected and geographic contexts.

**R8:** To assess how the police and local council communicate their approaches and strategies to address public concerns and establish expectations within local contexts, considering a more consistent use of social media and MiPad by local policing teams as outlined in the PEEL Report.

## 9.4 Communicating with the public about crime and policing

New content was introduced into the Public Perceptions Survey this year about accessibility and how the public want the police to communicate with them. A sizable proportion of residents indicated that they felt not very or not at all informed about crime and policing matters and that they believe the police are not very good or not at all good at communicating with their community. Interestingly, awareness of the wide range of methods in which the police communicate information was quite low whilst stated interest in using certain methods in the future is quite high such as Neighbourhood Alert. Residents were most aware of the force website and Facebook page, with these being popular methods of obtaining information.

**R9:** To identify and prioritise mediums the police want to keep up-to-date within localised information about crime and widely disseminate these to the public.

**R10:** To work with resident groups to test new communication approaches and evaluate content to improve the accessibility and value of information.

Whilst there has been an improvement in the proportion of residents that know how to contact the police in a non-emergency, 4 in 10 residents do not. This is important as it is likely a contributing factor to the misuse of 999 and is an important part of residents feeling that they are connected to the police, at a time



when resources make it difficult for the Force to be accessible on a local level. There is a willingness for the public to engage with the police online, either to make an enquiry or to report online. However, there are serious concerns about how this might remove the personal contact element between the public and the police by increasing the gap between them, the ability to seek reassurance, the likelihood of receiving a timely response and the security of the information held. Although encouragingly a high proportion of residents were willing to report suspicious activity, their key concern was confidentiality and anonymity due to fear of reprisal. Strong reassurances are needed on these aspects of information exchange.

**R11:** To continue to widely promote 101 and other methods to contact the police in a non-emergency.

**R12:** To review the support mechanisms to online reporting alongside the ability of the police to meet public expectations to provide a timely response, reassurance and confidentiality, with any expansion of online reporting being closely monitored and reviewed.

## 9.5 Meaningfully engaging with and involving ethnic minority groups

The analysis of the in-depth consultation with ethnic minority groups to a large extent reflected key concerns, issues and needs raised in the wider Public Perceptions Survey, with the visibility and the importance of officers being out in communities being seen as key. While groups that have obvious physical spaces or meeting times were more positive about their relationship with the police, those that did not felt less connected as they had less chance of interaction. Those consulted acknowledged a reduction of resources, but disappointment was expressed that the police appeared less willing than they have in the past to be involved in and police important events in the cultural and religious calendar. Demonstration of support in these events was seen as pivotal in ensuring a positive reciprocal relationship with the community as well as increasing the police's understanding of different cultures. In terms of engagement, there was a feeling of fatigue as many individuals were asked to engage regularly but felt frustrated with a one-way exchange, with consultations being described as tick box exercises. It was also felt that communication and activity have at times been intermittent between different departments of the police and different agencies, lacking overall strategic cohesion.

**R13:** To consider wider benefits (such as reciprocal cooperation, training opportunities and improving cultural understanding) and relationships with communities when allocating resourcing for community events.

**R14:** To develop a controlled strategy of engagement with communities being mindful of time and resource implications for groups, organisations and individuals across both the police and other agencies, making explicit the purpose, scope, impact and feedback mechanism of all activities.

The issue of and response to hate crime was a key feature within the consultation. Key factors affecting the level of reporting mentioned were the availability of the police and partner agencies to discuss instances with informally, the value of reporting incidents that will only be recorded and a perceived poor

response to hate crimes that had been reported, particularly in terms of action taken and being kept informed of progress. There was concern that the impact of these factors reduces the levels of reporting leading to hate crime as they were indicated to be perceived as not being considered as a priority for the police and being resourced appropriately.

**R15:** To create opportunities, where possible, for the police and partner agencies to be in the community so that people can informally talk about experiences that they may have had.

**R16:** To evaluate the feedback provided to individuals reporting hate incidents, outlining how the information will be used, the value of the report, the support available to the individual and how the perpetrator will be addressed.

**R17:** To assess how data from hate incidents that are recorded only is used, how evidence is synthesised to identify patterns of hate and how such information is communicated to the public.