

Funded by *South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership*



Community Safety in Stranmillis

Old Stranmillis (Road)



**Residents' Association
(O.S.R.A.)
www.oldstranmillis.org.uk**

Report on behalf of the *Old Stranmillis (Road)
Residents' Association (OSRA)*

2016-17

Contents

Introduction	3
The survey's methodology	6
<i>Survey Responses and Analysis</i>	8
Demographics	8
Living in your area	15
Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in your area	28
Policing in your area	37
Future of your area	43
Conclusions	54

Introduction

The following report presents and analyses a survey commissioned by the Old Stranmillis (Road) Residents' Association (OSRA), from a grant provided by the South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership (DPCSP) and conducted by the author. The survey was commissioned in order to obtain the experiences and views of residents in the designated area of Stranmillis. This area incorporates the following streets and boundaries, as detailed by the OSRA:

The area we represent embraces the area from the roundabout at Stranmillis College, Lockview Road and surrounding streets extending to include the developments at Cutters Lane and Laganvale and them extending along the Sharman Road and the boundary of the Lagan Meadows and them extending to and along Bladon Drive but not including Bladon Drive (as it has its own Residents Association) this being the boundary on the South side. All those houses running down the Malone Road from Bladon Drive to the Stranmillis Road are also included in the boundary.¹

The core objective of the research is to obtain the experiences, attitudes, perceptions and knowledge of residents regarding the following issues in their district:

- Crime
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Public safety
- Police performance
- Perception and awareness of policing services
- Community cohesion and engagement
- Priorities for future development

¹ Old Stranmillis Old Residents' Association: www.oldstranmillis.org.uk Accessed 23 September 2017

This report will collect and present the survey responses, and then analyse the data and findings.

The author has direct experience of conducting these surveys for other districts of Belfast – with previous reports for East Belfast DPCSP ‘Community Safety in the New East Belfast Areas: 2015-16 Report’, and ‘Community Safety in the ‘New’ East Belfast Areas, 2016-17 Report’, and for North Belfast DPCSP in 2016-17. The author has also completed relevant reports on the performance of Neighbourhood Watch and PACT schemes in East Belfast, again for East Belfast DPCSP. Comparisons with these relevant other reports and surveys will further enhance conclusions drawn regarding the experiences and priorities of Stranmillis residents.

This report will enhance knowledge of issues such as the under-reporting of crime and ASB in the area and provides a platform for other relevant views expressed by respondents in relation to broader community life.

The report will begin by outlining the methodology of the survey and data collection. It will proceed to analyse how respondents addressed the four sections of the survey; presenting the collated responses to each survey question and an examination and analysis of this data. Section one, ‘Demographics’, establishes the background, age etc. of the respondents. ‘Living in your area’ consists of questions concerned with life in the area, and community cohesion.

'Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in your area' is the core of the report - it concerns the respondents' views and experiences of crime, community safety, ASB, and other related topics. 'Policing in your area' then records respondents' experiences and perspectives of local policing. 'Future of your area' is a section regarding future priorities for community safety, crime prevention and investment in the area.

The report will finish by drawing together conclusions.

The survey's methodology

The survey was conducted through an online survey model, which was circulated via social media and other means online by the OSRA and other residents. The survey was also advertised by the OSRA through leaflets in local shops. The model selected is user-friendly and accessible – multiple choices and tick-box answers. Opportunity was also offered for comments to be left in reply to some, suitable, questions.

The comments left by Stranmillis residents proved to be particularly detailed and rich with context and information.

The survey features 29 questions, largely consisting of questions asked in previous East and North Belfast reports. This approach facilitates comparison with other surveys and builds about existing data.

The survey received 138 responses and was left open for just short of two months. This represents a lower number of responses than was hoped for, but nonetheless in quantity and geographical spread across the area the survey has collected a wide range of perspectives and experiences of crime and related issues in Stranmillis. The number of completed surveys has resulted in a wealth of data and perspectives.

It is also important at this stage to recognise that an online survey is, clearly, weighted towards those who are computer literate and with access to online

material. This has been considered during analysis of the responses, but it should be noted that respondents in this case came from across the age-ranges.

SURVEY RESPONSES AND ANALYSIS

Demographics

Question 1:

Which part of Stranmillis are you resident in? Please enter your street name in box below.

Respondents live across the designated area and provide a representative sample of experiences, knowledge and perspectives.

Below are listed the street names for each respondent, as written by them:

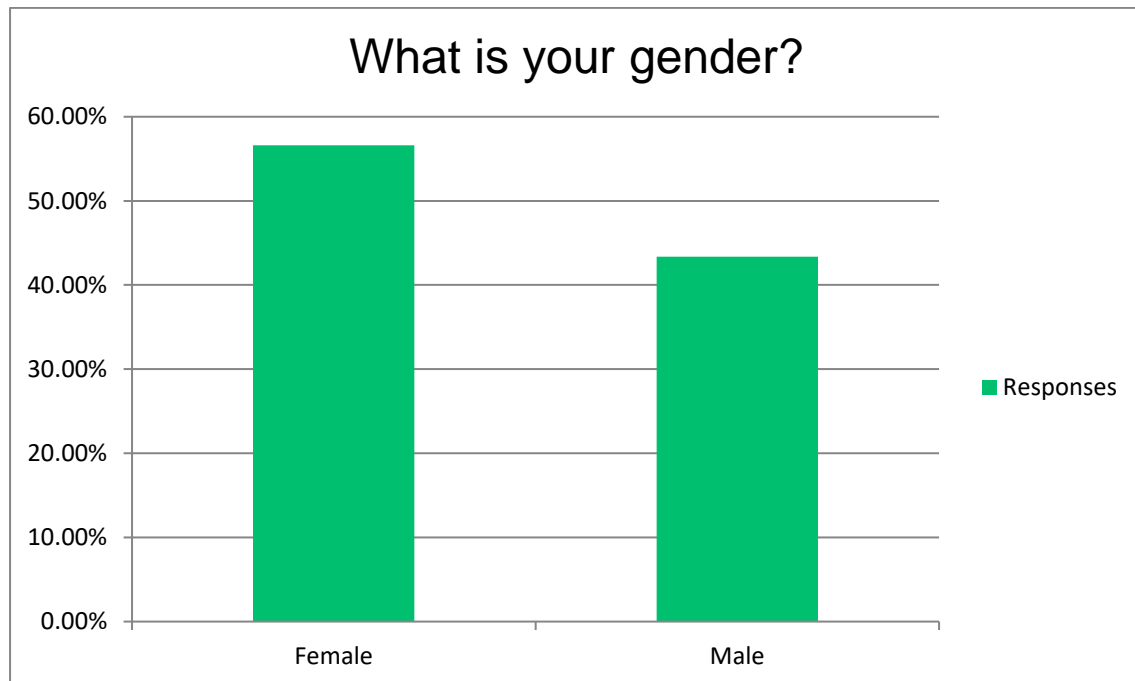
- Lucerne parade
- Sharman Road
- Lucerne Parade
- Sharman Road
- Sharman Road
- Willesden Park
- Sharman
- Hillside Park
- Sharman Road
- Lucerne Parade
- Hillside Crescent
- Harleston Street
- Sharman road
- Colenso Court
- Wansbeck street
- Vauxhall park
- Sharman
- Hillside park
- St Ives
- Prince Edward Gardens
- Lucerne Parade
- Vauxhall Park
- Sandhurst Drive
- Danesfort Park North
- Stranmillis Road
- Knightsbridge Mews
- Sharman Way
- Cricklewood Park
- Sharman Way
- Sharman Park
- Dansefort
- Sharman Way
- Sharman way
- Stranmillis road
- Sharman
- Sharman Gardens
- Sharman Park
- Sharman Park
- Danesfort park north
- VAUXHALL PARK
- Sharman Rd
- Sharman Park
- Willesden Park
- Sharman Road
- Hillside Drive
- Sharman Road
- Sharman Drive
- Cricklewood Crescent
- Vauxhall pk
- Vauxhall park
- Cutters Lane
- Belvedere pk
- Sharman Road
- Belvedere Park
- Lucerne Parade
- Belvedere Park
- Willesden Park
- Hillside Drive
- Belvedere Park
- Lockview Road
- Cricklewood Park
- Laganvale manor
- Cricklewood Park
- Cricklewood Crescent
- Cricklewood Crescent
- Cricklewood Crescent

- Laganvale manor
- Lockview Road
- Cricklewood Park
- Hillside
- Cricklewood Pk
- Laganvale
- Cricklewood Park
- Hillside park
- Bladon Court
- Willesden Park
- Sharman gardens
- Vauxhall Park
- Belvedere Park
- Sharman Road
- Colenso Parade
- Laganvale Court
- Belfast Boat Club, Lockview Road
- Lockview
- Stranmillis gardens
- Sharman Road
- Cricklewood park
- Sharman Road
- Stranmillis court
- Hillside Crescent
- Belvedere park
- Harleston Street
- Richmond Park
- Sharman road
- Lucerne Parade
- Harleston
- Broomhill Lane
- Willesden Park
- Sharman Road
- Richmond Park
- Belvedere Park
- Hillside Drive
- Shaman gardens
- Sharman Way
- Main Stranmillis Road
- Belvedere Park
- Cricklewood pk
- Broomhill Park
- Danesfort park
- Stranmillis Road
- Sharman Road
- Hillside
- Vauxhall Park
- Broomhill Lane
- Lucerne parade
- Sharman
- Old Stranmillis - near Primary School
- Vauxhall Park
- Richmond Park
- Prince Edward drive
- Sharman road
- Bladon Court
- Sharman road
- Knightsbridge Manor
- Sandhurst Gardens
- Stranmillis road
- Richmond Park
- Prince Edward Park
- Wansbeck Street
- Sharman Gardens
- Sharman Gardens
- Old Stranmillis road
- Sharman Way
- Sharman Road
- Stranmillis Road
- Belvedere Park
- Laganvale Manor

Question 2:

What is your gender?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Female	56.62%	77
Male	43.38%	59
Other (please specify)		1
	Answered	136
	Skipped	2

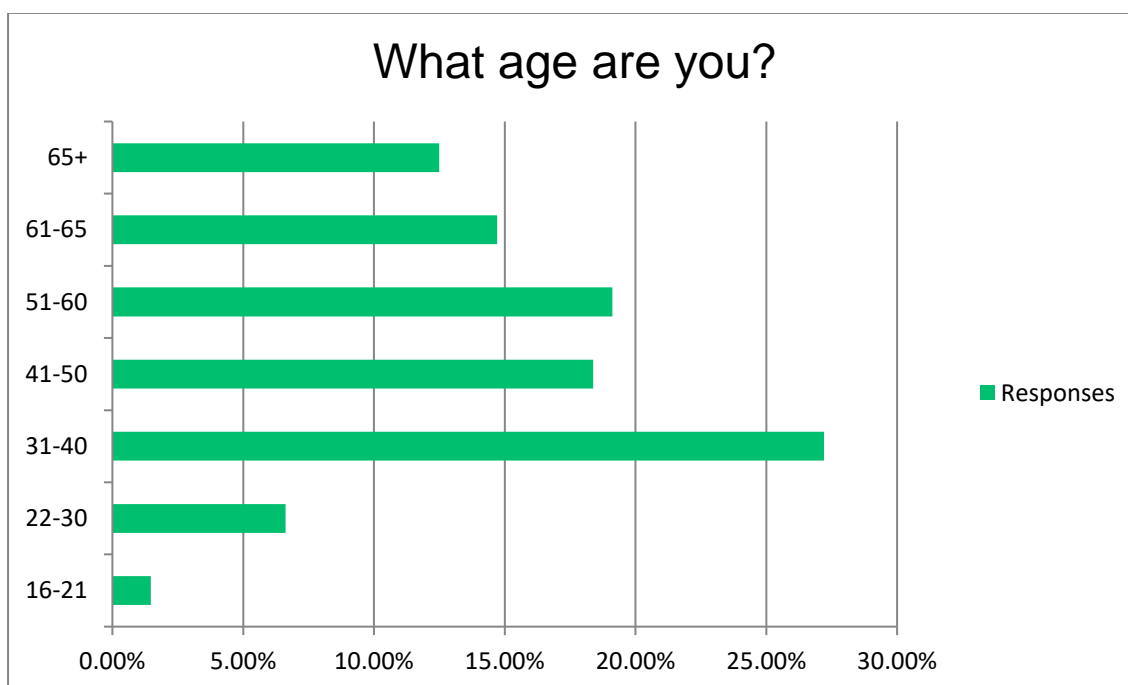


The gender divide is slightly in favour of females but not to a degree that distorts the survey.

Question 3:

What age are you?

Answer Choices	Responses	
16-21	1.47%	2
22-30	6.62%	9
31-40	27.21%	37
41-50	18.38%	25
51-60	19.12%	26
61-65	14.71%	20
65+	12.50%	17
Answered		136
Skipped		2



The age range of the participants is pleasing and adds great value to the survey; enabling the inclusion of a wide-range of perspectives, experiences and priorities.

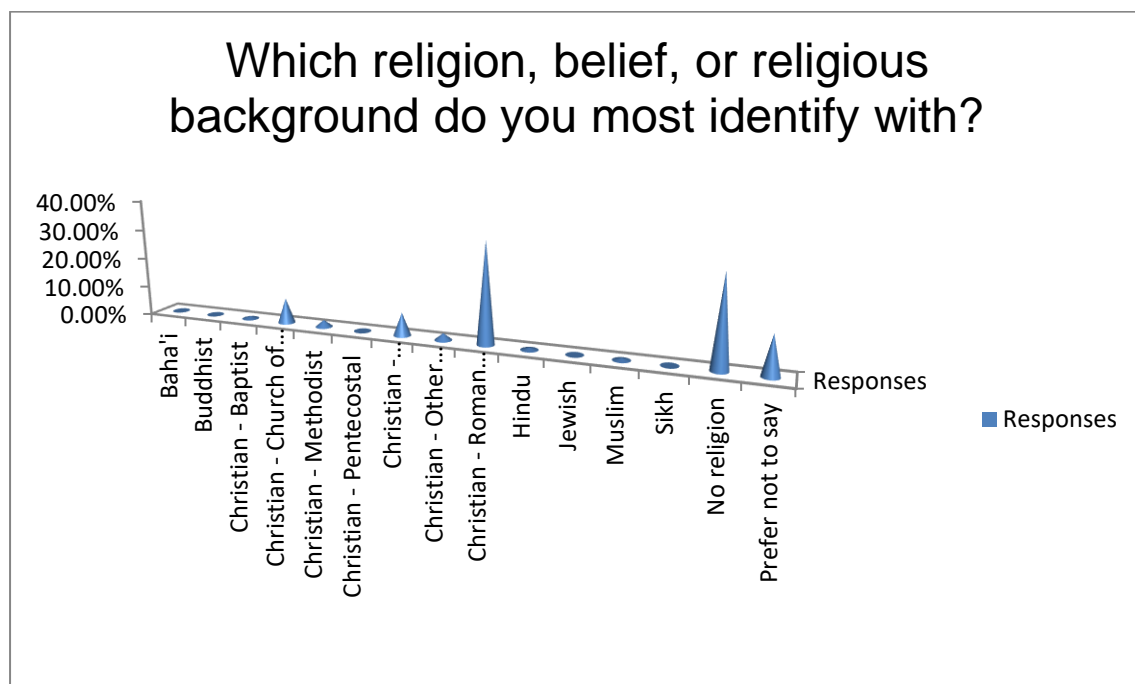
It is pleasing to see those under 30 represented – a demographic sometimes difficult to engage with community safety issues. Furthermore, the high number of 31-40-year-old participants, allied with data from other questions, highlights the importance of young family-life in the area.

The nature of an online survey, and the requirements for computer literacy and online access, does have relevance across age-ranges but in particular for older demographics – therefore the inclusion of a significant number of older participants is significant.

Question 4:

Which religion, belief, or religious background do you most identify with?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Baha'i	0.00%	0
Buddhist	0.00%	0
Christian – Baptist	0.77%	1
Christian - Church of Ireland	8.46%	11
Christian – Methodist	2.31%	3
Christian – Pentecostal	0.00%	0
Christian - Presbyterian	7.69%	10
Christian - Other Protestant	2.31%	3
Christian - Roman Catholic	33.85%	44
Hindu	0.77%	1
Jewish	0.00%	0
Muslim	0.77%	1
Sikh	0.00%	0
No religion	30.00%	39
Prefer not to say	13.08%	17
Other (please specify)		6
	Answered	130
	Skipped	8



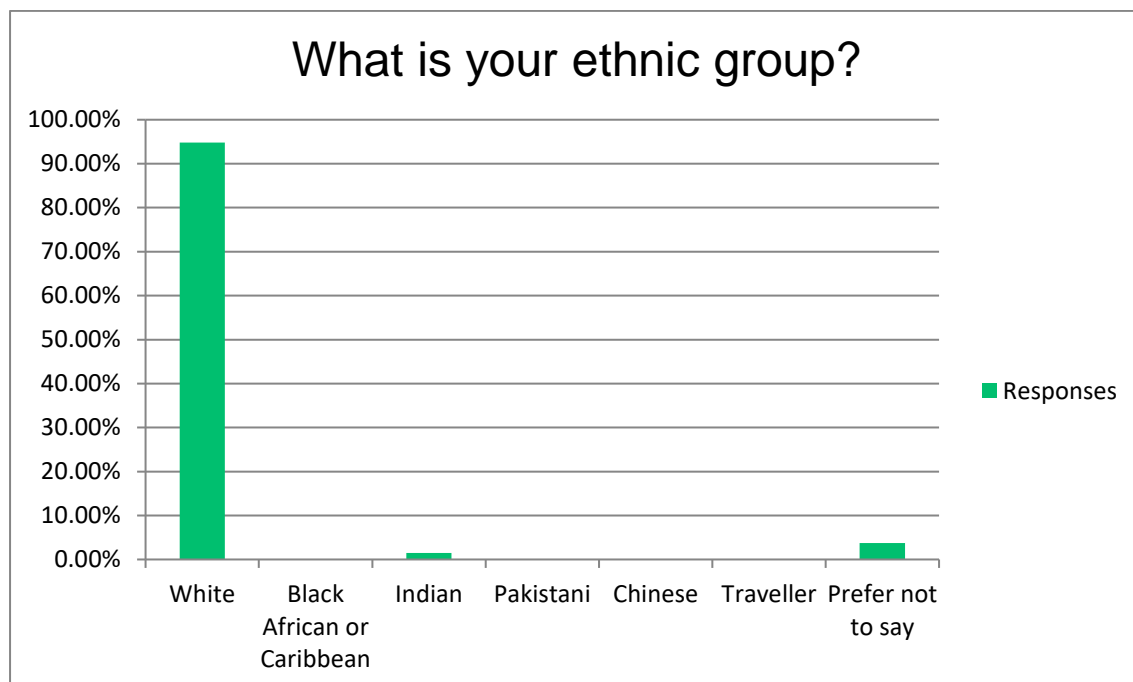
It is disappointing that more religious minorities did not engage with the survey – especially when seeking to measure and understand experiences and perceptions of hate crime or related issues.

However, in broad terms the sample reflects the religious make-up of the area and highlights how in terms of Northern Ireland's old religious divide Stranmillis is a shared space. As ever when asking these types of questions in Northern Ireland there may be some overlap between 'No religion' and Prefer not to say – however the high number of No Religion responses also allies with broader demographic trends.

Question 5:

What is your ethnic group?

Answer Choices	Responses	
White	94.78%	127
Black African or Caribbean	0.00%	0
Indian	1.49%	2
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Traveller	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	3.73%	5
Other (please specify)		1
	Answered	134
	Skipped	4



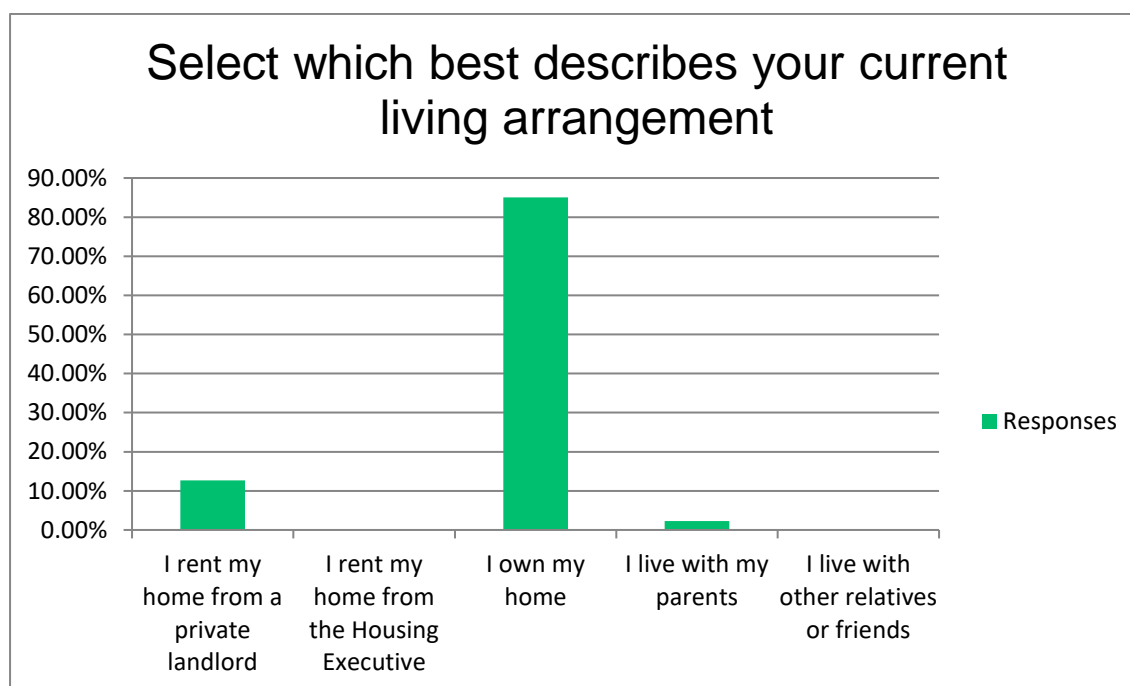
It is disappointing that more ethnic minorities did not engage with the survey, beyond the two participants. Again, this finding should be taken into account when reflecting upon participants' experiences of hate crime and other related issues.

Living in your area

Question 6:

Select which best describes your current living arrangement

Answer Choices	Responses	
I rent my home from a private landlord	12.69%	17
I rent my home from the Housing Executive	0.00%	0
I own my home	85.07%	114
I live with my parents	2.24%	3
I live with other relatives or friends	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)		2
	Answered	134
	Skipped	4



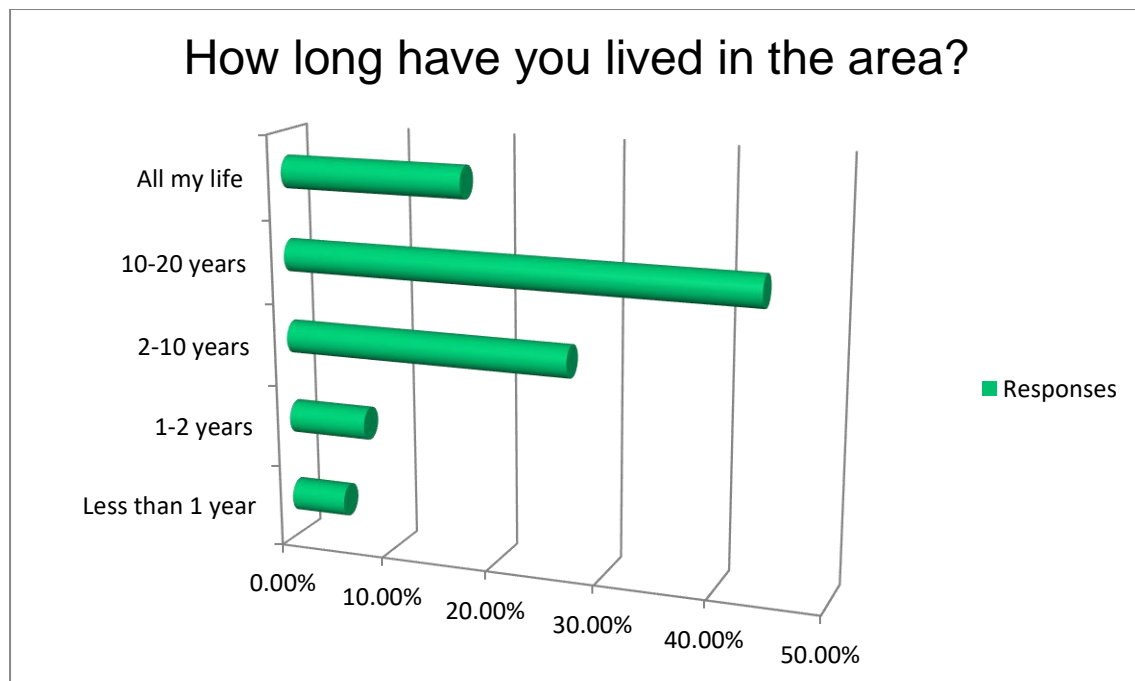
The dominance of home-ownership among the respondents is striking. There are a healthy number of private renters included, but 85% is a significant plurality. This dominance reflects the character of the area, but also perhaps the increased eagerness of this sector to engage with community surveys.

It is important to ally this finding with the concern expressed in the survey for community cohesion and the priority given to long-term trends.

Question 7:

How long have you lived in the area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 year	5.19%	7
1-2 years	7.41%	10
2-10 years	26.67%	36
10-20 years	43.70%	59
All my life	17.04%	23
Answered		135
Skipped		3



That a majority of respondents have lived in the area for ten years or more adds value to the survey when measuring changing perceptions of the area over time.

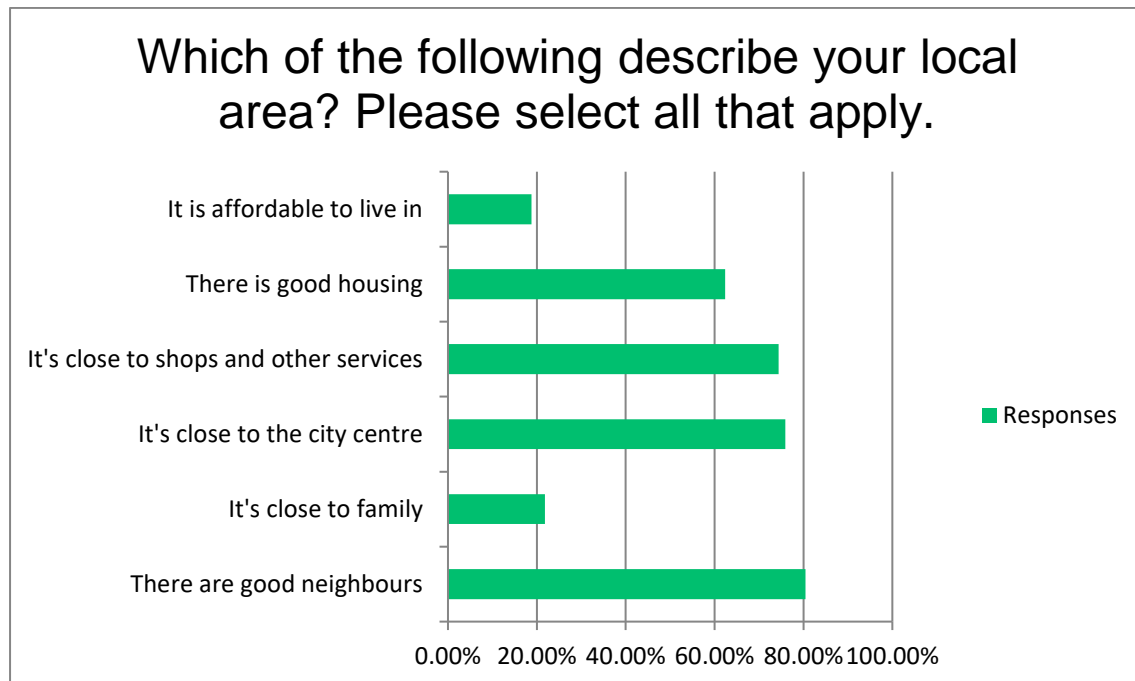
There is also a pleasing representation of newcomers to the area – who can be difficult to engage in community surveys – and who add perspectives from those who have lived in multiple other residential areas.

This result reflects a satisfactory range.

Question 8:

Which of the following describe your local area? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
There are good neighbours	80.45%	107
It's close to family	21.80%	29
It's close to the city centre	75.94%	101
It's close to shops and other services	74.44%	99
There is good housing	62.41%	83
It is affordable to live in	18.80%	25
Other (please specify)		12
	Answered	133
	Skipped	5



Other

- Good school
- Quiet/mixed area
- Catchment area for good primary and post primary schools
- beside a Local Nature Reserve- Parks and greenspaces
- Easy access to Lagan Meadows; good ethnic mix.
- Close to the towpath
- close a good school
- On a bus route
- Close to towpath and scenic walks. Close to place of work.
- Very close to Lagan Valley Conservation area amenities

- Question 7 is impossible to answer accurately since I have lived in the area for 41 years choices
- Proximity to Lagan Meadows and, a segregated cycle lane

That 80.45% of respondents valuing Good Neighbours represents a strong degree of good relations and social capital in the area. This is striking when compared with the low response rate for Close to Family, 21.8%.

Proximity to the city centre and to shops and other services is clearly a significant attraction for a majority of residents. It is noticeable how three respondents specified the good schools in the area.

The Meadows, parkland and cycle facilities are also specified.

Affordability is understandably not a major attraction for this area. It is perhaps significant that a larger majority did not identify Good Housing – but perhaps affordability impacts on this response, as well as issues later specified in survey responses regarding individual properties.

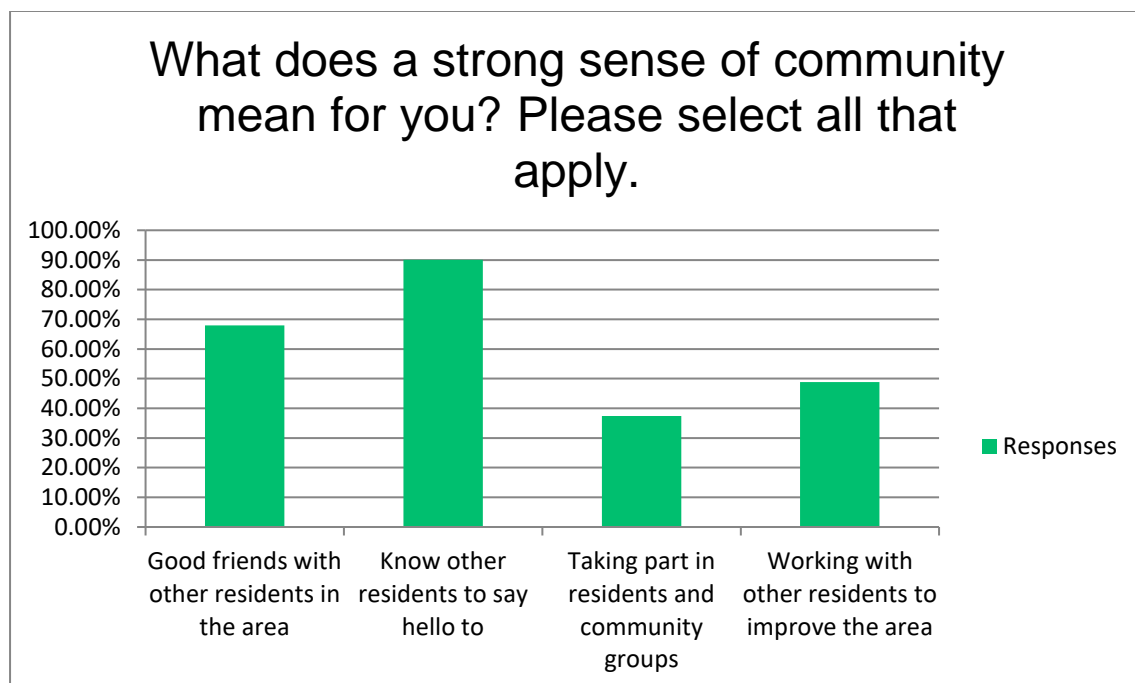
Question 9:

What does a strong sense of community mean for you? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Good friends with other residents in the area	67.94%	89
Know other residents to say hello to	90.08%	118
Taking part in residents and community groups	37.40%	49
Working with other residents to improve the area	48.85%	64
Other (please specify)		6
	Answered	131
	Skipped	7

Other:

- people lookout for each other
- Involvement in local organisations and groups
- Shared interests.
- A sense of security. A cohesiveness with similar values.
- Participating in sport and leisure in a Club
- Residents keeping an eye on neighbouring properties while absent



These responses point to the importance the vast majority of respondents place on being on speaking terms with their neighbours. This links clearly to the high proportion, 67.95%, who relate a strong community with being ‘good friends’ with neighbours. This day-to-day civility and communication is an important resource and

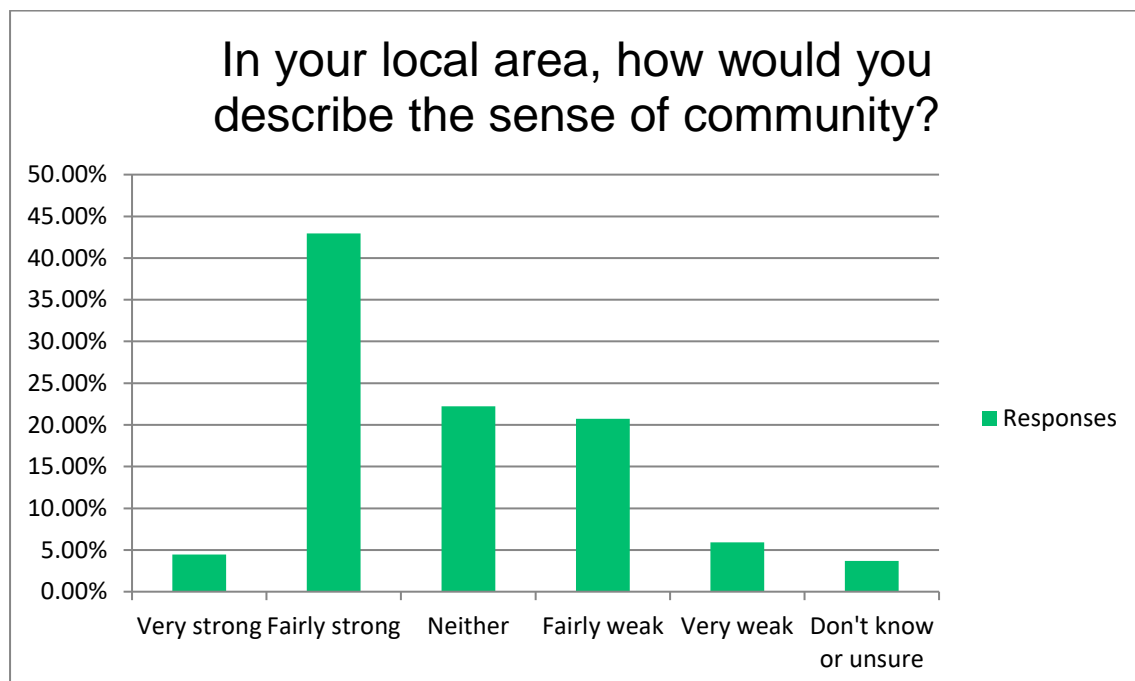
the foundation for all anti-crime strategies. It also is key to improving perceptions of crime and a marker of good social cohesion.

The 37.40% who link participating in resident/community groups with a sense of a good community points to a strong base of support for the OSRA and other groups – as does the 48.85% finding for those who define a strong community as working with others.

Question 10:

In your local area, how would you describe the sense of community?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very strong	4.44%	6
Fairly strong	42.96%	58
Neither	22.22%	30
Fairly weak	20.74%	28
Very weak	5.93%	8
Don't know or unsure	3.70%	5
	Answered	135
	Skipped	3



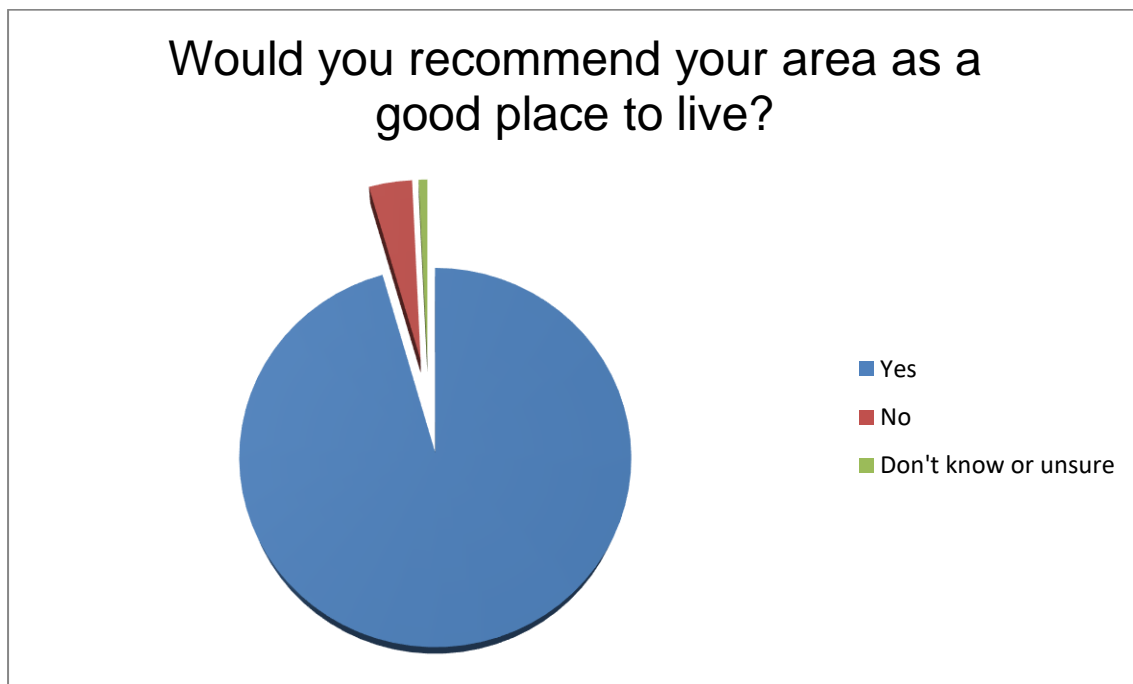
Just under half of participants, 47.4%, feel there is a strong or very strong sense of community in the area. This is strong result.

That just under a quarter feel it is weak or very weak represents a significant minority wishing for more community cohesion, but more striking is the low number of respondents who have a strong opinion on the matter.

Question 11:

Would you recommend your area as a good place to live?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	95.56%	129
No	3.70%	5
Don't know or unsure	0.74%	1
	Answered	135
	Skipped	3



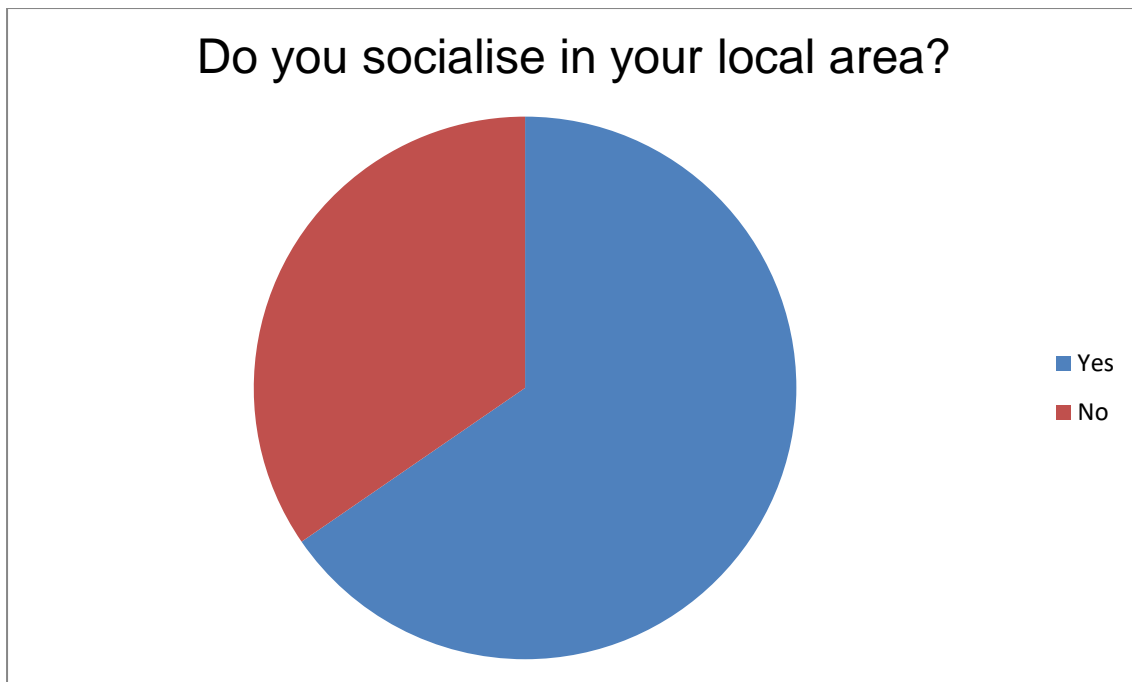
This is a key finding.

The overwhelming majority of participants view the district as a good place to live. This is doubly significant given the serious concerns raised elsewhere in the survey, as suggests that for a large majority concerns over issues of crime and ASB are countered by the attractiveness of the area to live.

Question 12:

Do you socialise in your local area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	65.41%	87
No	34.59%	46
	Answered	133
	Skipped	5



This is a strikingly high proportion of local socialisers given the largely residential character of the area.

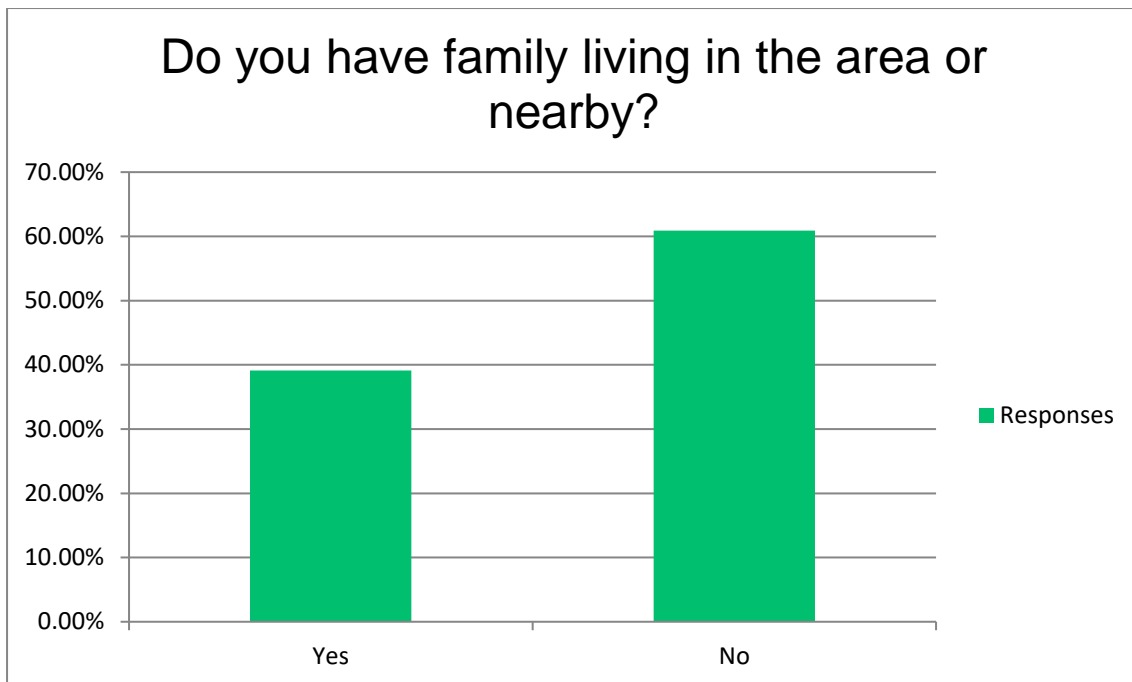
Conceptions of the 'area' are of course fluid and perhaps for many residents extend beyond the boundaries of the OSRA.

It perhaps highlights the closeness people feel to the city centre, or other areas, as well as the attractions of local public houses, cafes, and other meeting places.

Question 13:

Do you have family living in the area or nearby?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	39.10%	52
No	60.90%	81
Answered		133
Skipped		5

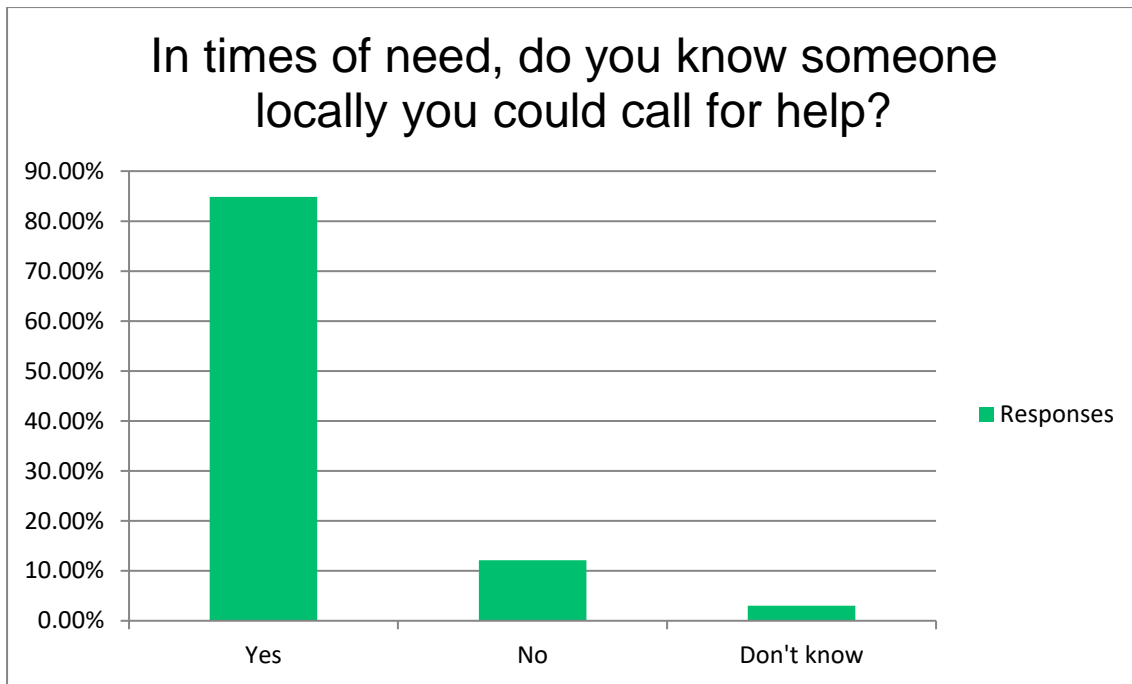


A relatively even split, close to 60/40, is interesting when cross-referenced with the high-level emphasis placed on good relations with neighbours, sense of community, and the length of time respondents have lived in the area.

Question 14:

In times of need, do you know someone locally you could call for help?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	84.85%	112
No	12.12%	16
Don't know	3.03%	4
Answered		132
Skipped		6



84.85% represents a solid degree of social trust and interaction, but the 16 people who answered in the negative is a significant finding.

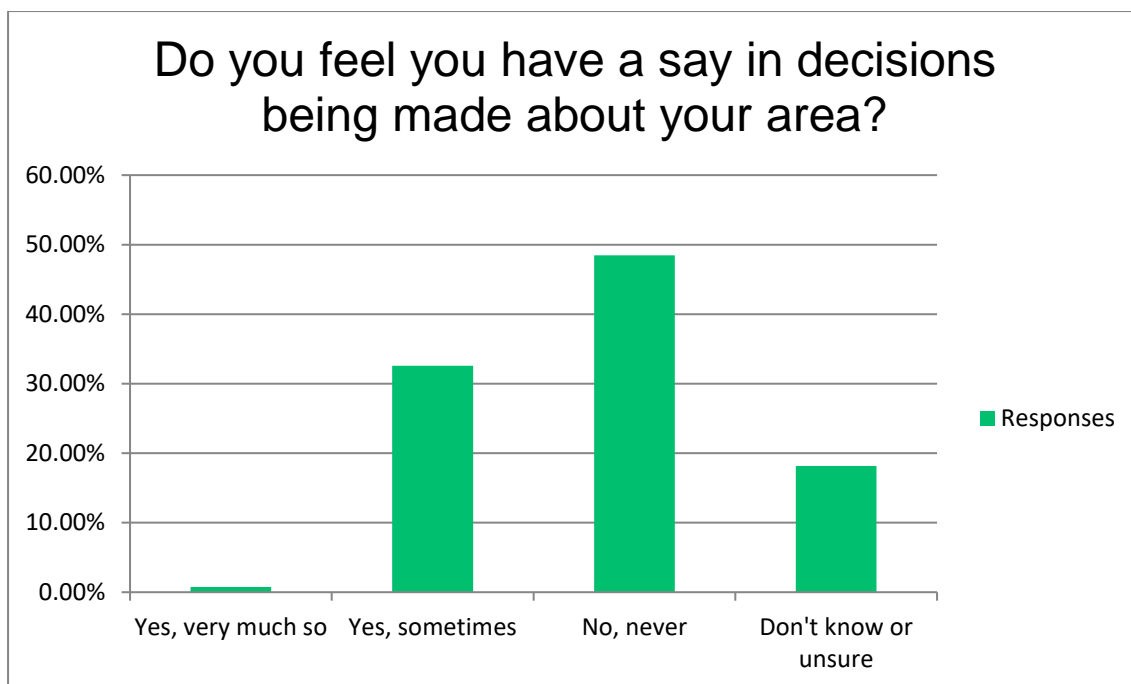
This highlights the social isolation of a minority of respondents who are socially engaged enough to care about community safety – as evidenced by them completing this survey.

Of course, the status of new arrivals to the area may be a major factor, but the local isolation of this minority highlights the importance of social engagement programs and the work of groups such as the OSRA.

Question 15:

Do you feel you have a say in decisions being made about your area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes, very much so	0.76%	1
Yes, sometimes	32.58%	43
No, never	48.48%	64
Don't know or unsure	18.18%	24
	Answered	132
	Skipped	6



That more feel removed from decision-making than empowered is a common finding in such surveys, and in fact the level of those who feel empowered is significantly higher in Stranmillis than that found in the North Belfast Community Safety Report, 2016-17.

However, 48.48% highlights a widespread desire for more of a say. Controversies over the perceived lack of communication from statutory bodies implementing the Lagan bridge development are certainly the most important local contemporary issues affecting this question.

Answering these concerns is clearly key for many residents.

Question 16:

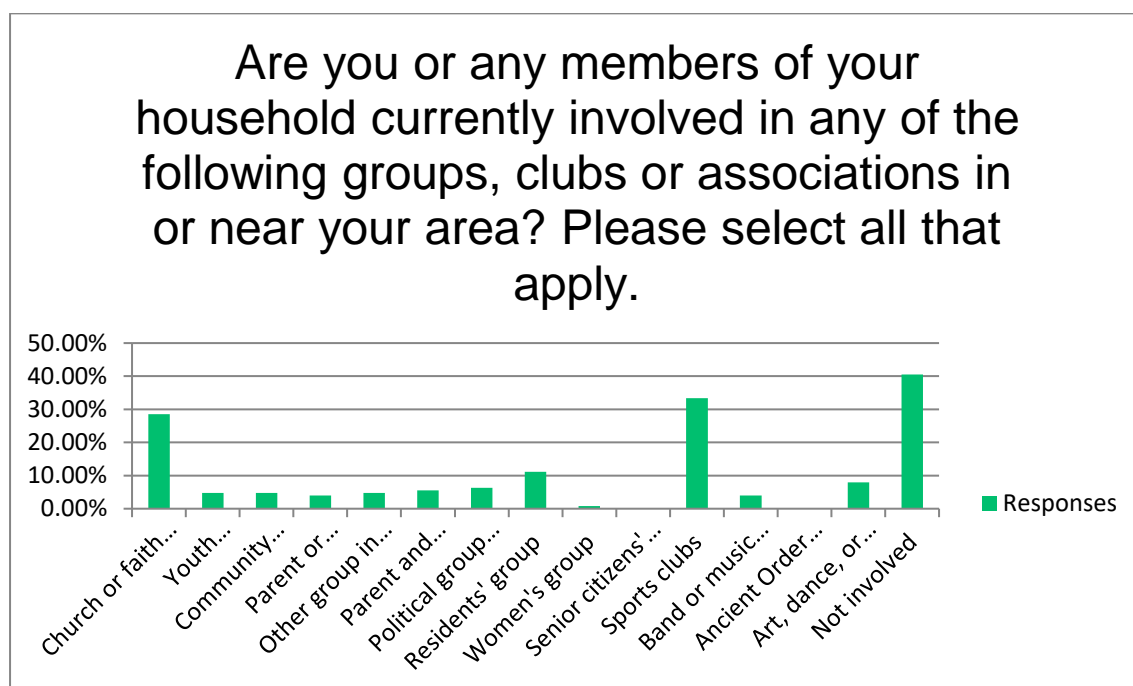
Are you or any members of your household currently involved in any of the following groups, clubs or associations in or near your area? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Church or faith groups	28.57%	36
Youth organisations or groups	4.76%	6
Community group	4.76%	6
Parent or teacher group	3.97%	5
Other group in school	4.76%	6
Parent and toddler group	5.56%	7
Political group or party	6.35%	8

Residents' group	11.11%	14
Women's group	0.79%	1
Senior citizens' group	0.00%	0
Sports clubs	33.33%	42
Band or music club	3.97%	5
Ancient Order of Hibernians, or Loyal Orders	0.00%	0
Art, dance, or drama	7.94%	10
Not involved	40.48%	51
Other (please specify)		7
	Answered	126
	Skipped	12

Other:

- No there is no opportunities for youth
- Bridge club (Belfast boat club)
- Gym
- Pilates classes in Stranmillis Primary School - twice weekly
- Work
- Rowing club



40.48% not involved with any group highlights the success of the survey in reaching beyond those already deeply engaged with community issues.

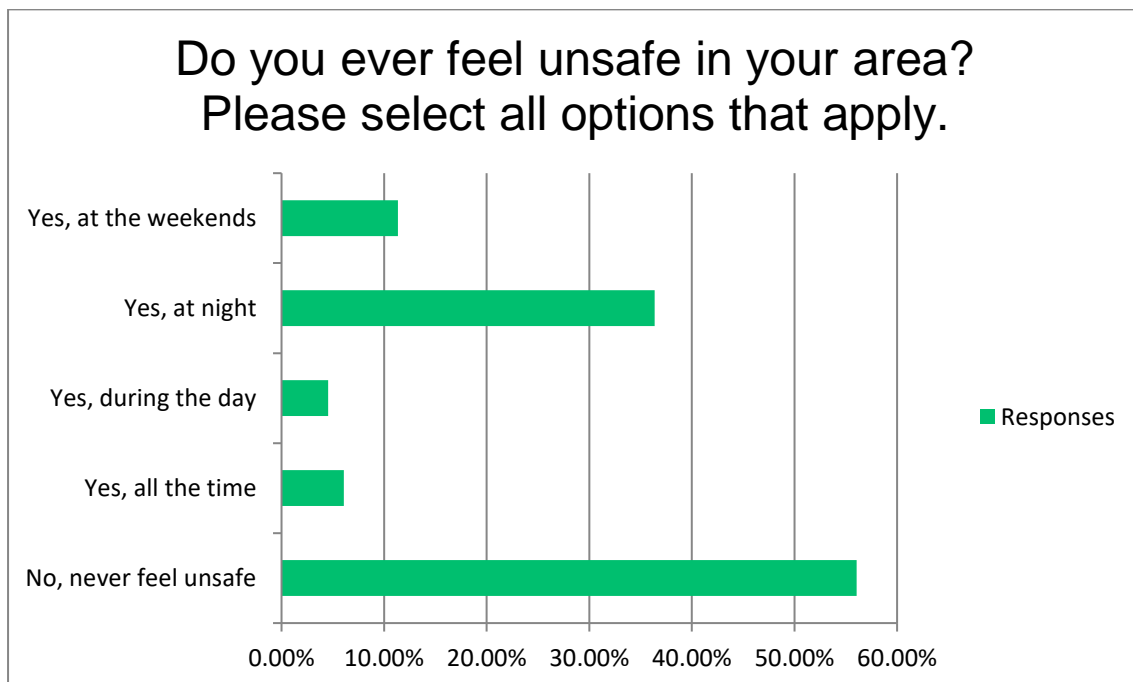
Sports club, in particular, in this case the Boat Club and allied Tennis club, are clearly important locally, as are church groups.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in your area

Question 17:

Do you ever feel unsafe in your area? Please select all options that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
No, never feel unsafe	56.06%	74
Yes, all the time	6.06%	8
Yes, during the day	4.55%	6
Yes, at night	36.36%	48
Yes, at the weekends	11.36%	15
Yes, at specific times of the year. Please specify.		30
	Answered	132
	Skipped	6



Comments:

- When there is a spate of burglaries
- Only in specific areas
- April until October
- Some time when towpath is quite
- During term time, especially St Patrick's day

- This summer there has been a lot of youths drinking about the Lagan Meadows and being generally anti-social.
- Yes. In really good weather in spring and summer the area suffers from some significant antisocial behaviour - local youths mostly- who drink openly in the parks and open spaces. They sometimes break down fences set fire to plastic bins and litter the area with bottles cans and plastic bags and generally behave very badly. Very seldom are they challenged by the PSNI or Belfast City Council who own and manage the properties where most of this anti-social behaviour occurs.
- I think that is true of all parts of Belfast...I would not walk or run at night on my own
- Apart from 12th July
- Rarely, except after there was a gun found at the entrance to the Lagan meadows a few months ago!
- Occasionally when there are "strangers" lurking on the tow path!
- Drug dealing, and associated impacts have made people feel unsafe at times when walking in the
- Meadows Alcohol abuse by large groups of young people also a factor
- 12th/13th July -Summer evenings on towpath
- I do not feel at risk from injury to my (my family's) personage but am wary of property violation when the local drug pushers & users congregate in the meadows or when there are burglaries, car theft.
- Over the 12th July period
- Never feel unsafe so to speak but aware of the need to take care with home security
- Speeding drivers causing serious risk to families with young children and older residents.
- St. Patrick's Day "celebrations" over spilling from the Holy land
- Burglaries are a concern.
- Not unsafe but high crime rate with burglaries & drugs.
- underage drinking + antisocial behaviour

- Noisy at night time with drunk men coming home late at night, fearful of being confronted and property damaged. I am more concerned for my wife.
- 11th, 12th July
- It feels like crime is increasing in our area - houses being robbery, drugs in the meadows - and I see very little police. People are not reporting attempted break-ins as they don't believe police will care. What does that tell you?
- sometimes at night. not always
- All year
- Occasionally if there's a peak in burglaries or car theft
- Occasionally when parties are held
- sometimes especially during the summer when the burglaries are high and when we see the drug dealers at the end of Sharman road and entrance to the lagan meadows.
- When there have been break-ins in the area or car thefts.
- I feel quite unsafe at weekends due to the drunken youths using the Lagan towpath to party and take drugs and at lagan lands east. More needs to be done to address this.

Findings for this key issue point a majority of respondents never feeling unsafe in the area. Proportionately this is a slightly higher 'Never' finding than the corresponding data the author collected for North Belfast and East Belfast reports.

However, fears over safety at night are widespread – over one-third – and should be treated as a key finding from this report. They clearly relate with the data recorded in this report to fears of ASB, drugs, and wishes for improved lighting.

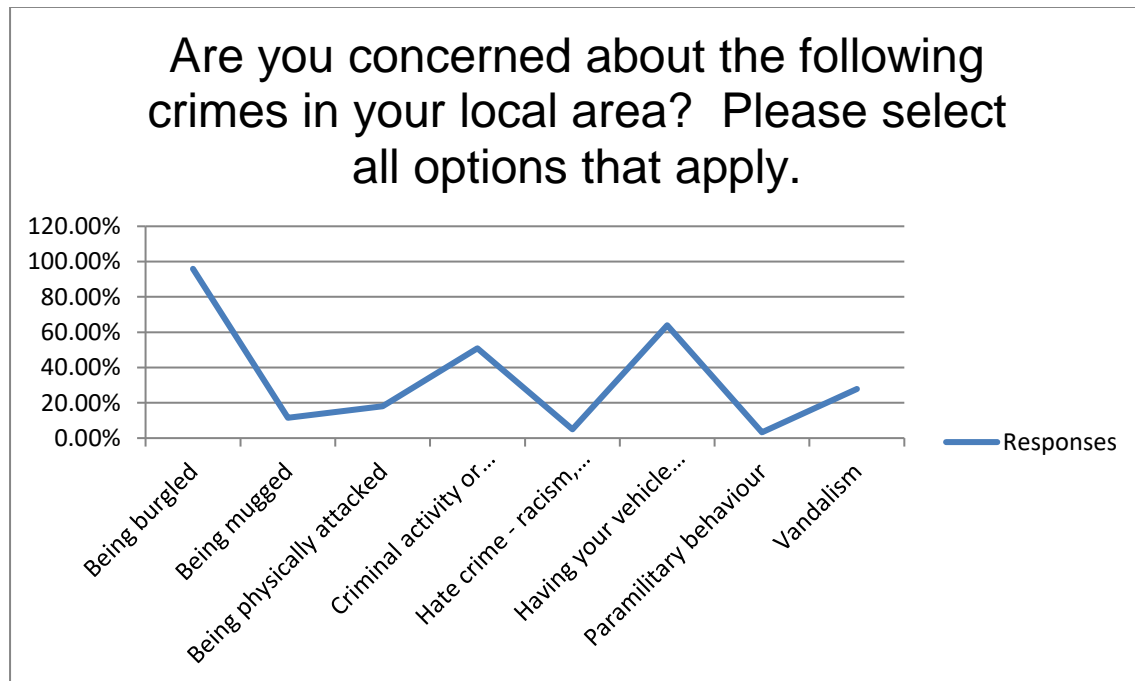
The detailed comments recorded speak for themselves, but clearly concerns regarding the marching season and St Patrick's Day celebrations are an issue for some – as they are elsewhere in the city. Again, improving perceptions, as much as experience, is an issue that needs to be addressed in relation to these events.

The comments highlight fear of burglary and ASB.

Question 18:

Are you concerned about the following crimes in your local area? Please select all options that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Being burgled	95.90%	117
Being mugged	11.48%	14
Being physically attacked	18.03%	22
Criminal activity or anti-social behaviour	50.82%	62
Hate crime - racism, sectarianism or homophobia	4.92%	6
Having your vehicle stolen or damaged	63.93%	78
Paramilitary behaviour	3.28%	4
Vandalism	27.87%	34
Other (please specify)		10
	Answered	122
	Skipped	16



Comments:

- Graffiti everywhere and nothing done about it.
- Break ins
- Drug dealing
- drug dealing
- Speeding.

- Drug dealing
- Noise of youths making way at night to and from Lagan Meadows. We have young children in the house
- drugs dealers and junkies b
- Drug related problems - including dealing
- Previously burgled in 1992

95.90% expressing concern regarding being burgled is a further key finding from this report. This is a strikingly high proportion and significantly higher than the equivalent finding in the author's reports for other parts of the city. Addressing the continuing fear of burglary will continue to be a key challenge for the police, residents' association, Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, and statutory bodies.

In part the higher priority given to burglary may reflect lower levels of concern regarding other crimes, but clearly the high-profile burglaries in recent years has left a legacy of anxiety.

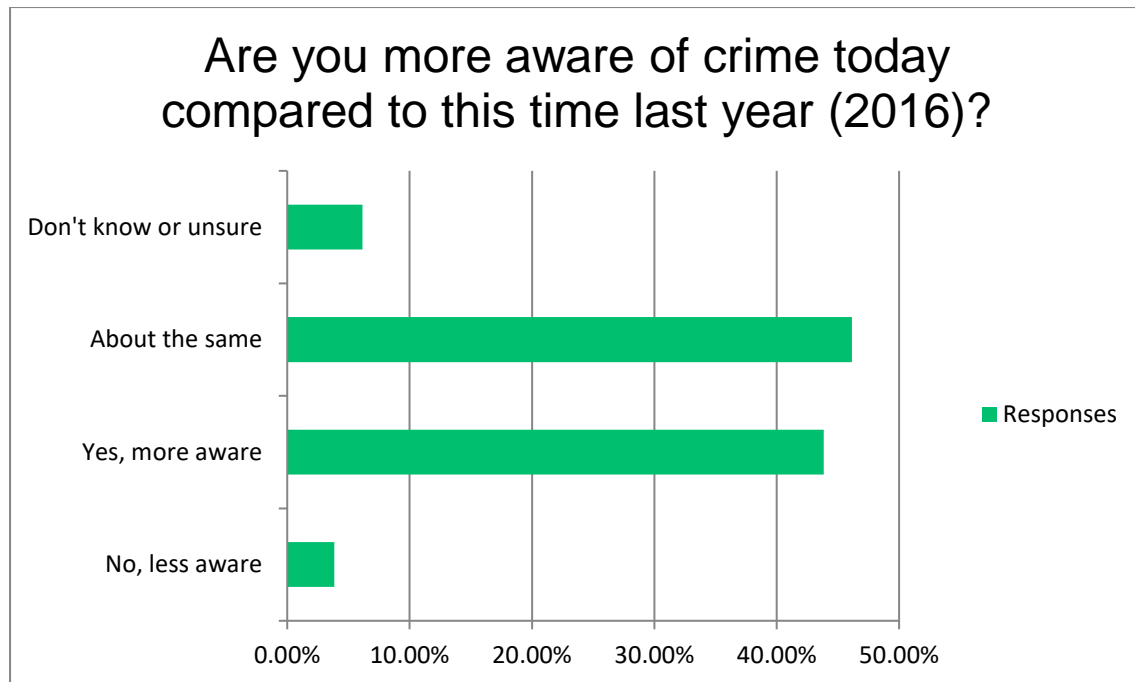
Vehicle crime is the next most prominent fear for people in the area – 63.9 expressing concern.

The comments highlight concern of drugs crime and this clearly relates to the more general fear of criminal activity and ASB.

Question 19:

Are you more aware of crime today compared to this time last year (2016)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
No, less aware	3.85%	5
Yes, more aware	43.85%	57
About the same	46.15%	60
Don't know or unsure	6.15%	8
	Answered	130
	Skipped	8



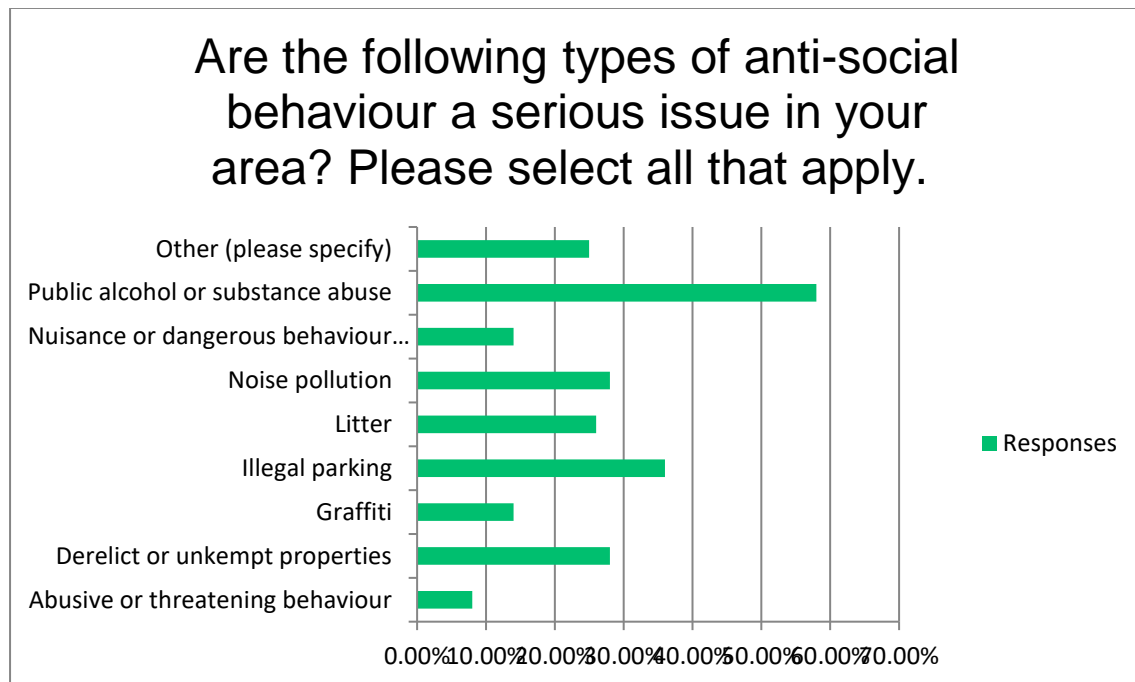
In analysing this result, one must acknowledge that the survey itself functions as a way of raising awareness of crime.

However, the result does suggest a large minority of residents perceive crime to be worsening. Clearly recent problems with burglary and concerns over drugs crime are key to these perceptions.

Question 20:

Are the following types of anti-social behaviour a serious issue in your area? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Abusive or threatening behaviour	8.00%	8
Derelict or unkempt properties	28.00%	28
Graffiti	14.00%	14
Illegal parking	36.00%	36
Litter	26.00%	26
Noise pollution	28.00%	28
Nuisance or dangerous behaviour by pets or animals	14.00%	14
Public alcohol or substance abuse	58.00%	58
Other (please specify)	25.00%	25
	Answered	100
	Skipped	38



Others:

- Drug dealing
- It's the same as other areas if not less
- Student noise at night
- Drug dealing was rampant in this immediate area for a few years from 2014 into 2017 but the PSNI have cracked down hard on this very effectively during the past 2 years. At present there does not appear to be any significant drug

use or dealing in this immediate area i.e. Lagan Meadows Park and Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

- public alcohol sometimes at weekends but not often and only off the Stranmillis Road late at night
- Drug dealing
- I am conscious of an increasing drug problem in the towpath area.
- Have heard that there are issues with drug dealing
- The Lagan meadows after a party
- Speeding.
- Re antisocial behaviour, refers to towpath area after dark only
- Drug dealing
- dog excrement on the pavements is very common in the area
- Dog poo
- Drug taking
- Dog fouling
- Camping lighting fires in Lagan Valley Regional Park graffiti and litter
- Hedges over growing paths on Lucerne
- Very late-night partying right next door
- Drug dealing in adjacent park.
- Weekend partying by young people which will only become much worse if the plans for the Stranmillis Weir footbridge go ahead. Revellers can be heard clearly from the Annadale side of the river at weekends - even in winter months. We don't need them to have easy access to this area!!!!
- Noise from aircraft
- Drug dealing and raves/parties in the meadows around public holidays
- Burglary and drug dealing
- Druggies in Lagan Meadows and Stranmillis village

That a small majority believe alcohol or substance abuse is a serious issue is reinforced by the range of detailed comments specifying these issues.

Illegal parking is clearly a significant issue for a large minority of residents.

The issue of Noise pollution is linked with problems of alcohol and drug abuse in public

It is noticeable that litter is a lower priority for residents than recorded in reports for North and East Belfast.

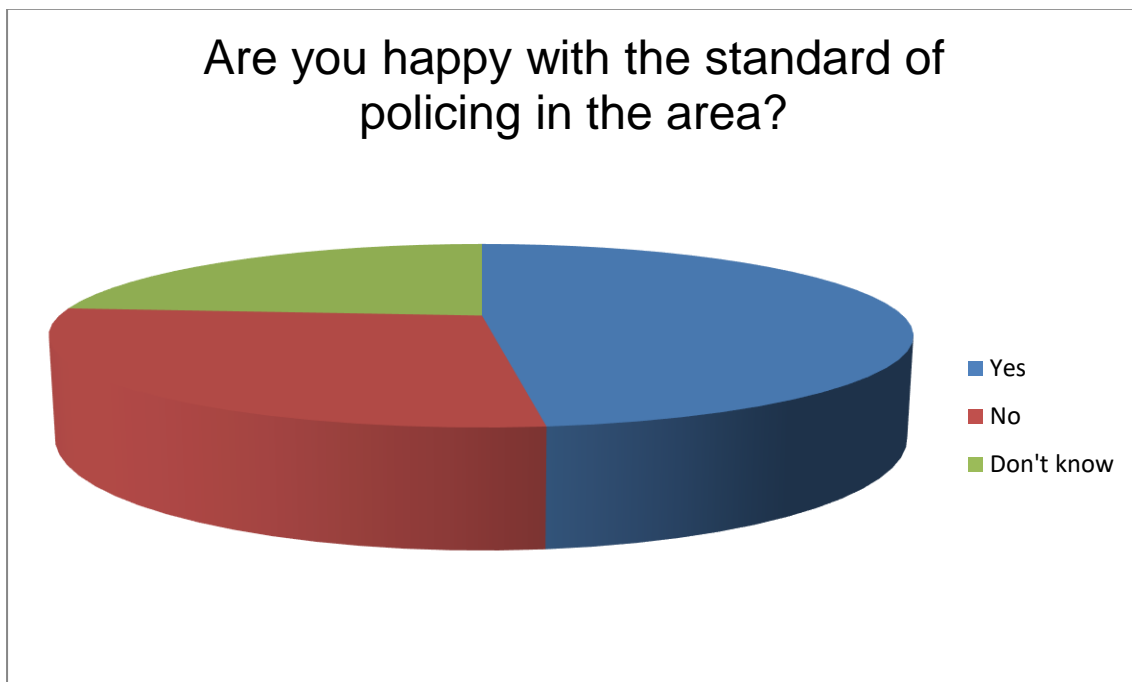
Dog fouling is a serious issue for a number of residents – as is sadly the case in previous reports in East and North.

Policing in your area

Question 21:

Are you happy with the standard of policing in the area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	48.09%	63
No	28.24%	37
Don't know	23.66%	31
Answered		131
Skipped		7



Just under half, 48.09%, of respondents stating they are happy with the standard of local policing is a significantly higher proportion than the corresponding results for North and East Belfast both in the low 20s of percentages)

This is noteworthy given the serious issues the survey raises regarding crime and ASB, and the desire for additional police presence raised in later datasets.

It suggests many in the community appreciate recent work by the police to tackle issues relating especially to burglary and drugs.

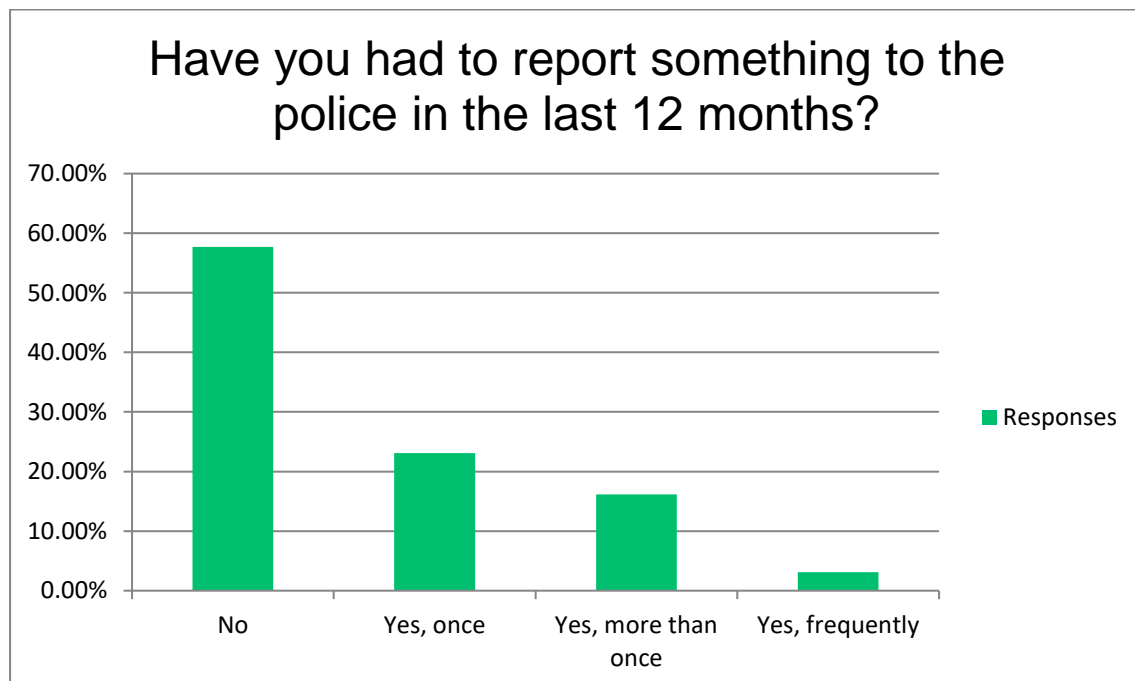
However, over a quarter of participants being unhappy with the standard of policing is a significant minority.

The large proportion of Don't Knows, 23.66%, most likely relates to those who have had little or no contact with the police.

Question 22:

Have you had to report something to the police in the last 12 months?

Answer Choices	Responses	
No	57.69%	75
Yes, once	23.08%	30
Yes, more than once	16.15%	21
Yes, frequently	3.08%	4
	Answered	130
	Skipped	8

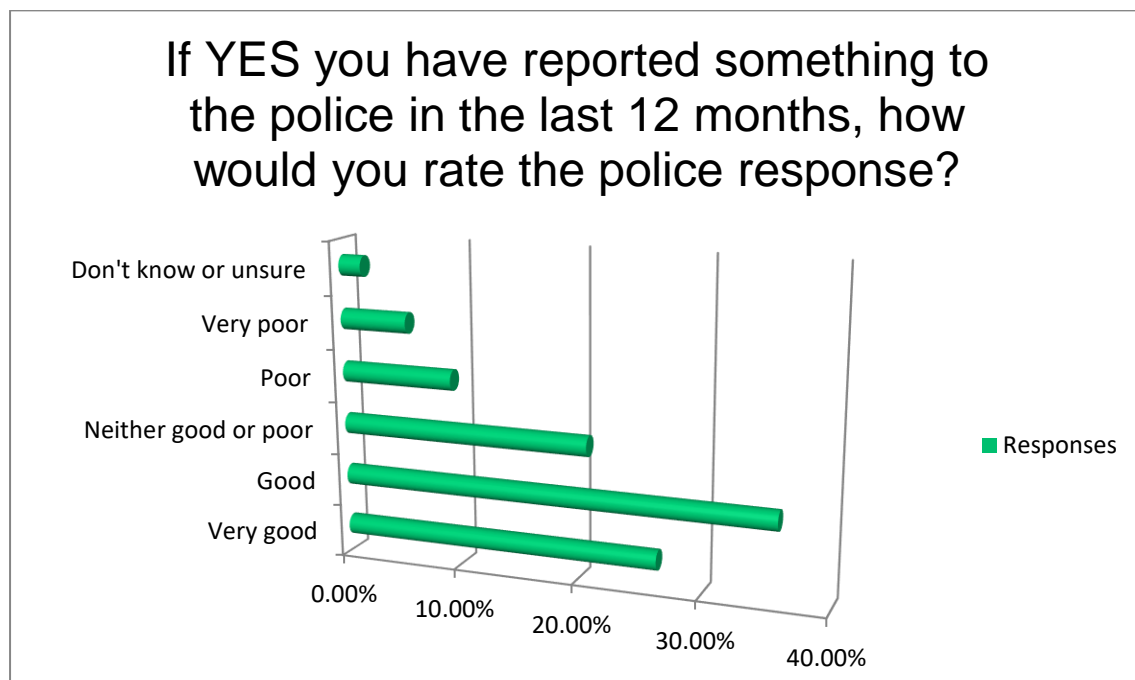


The result of 4 attests to a low rate of those who frequently have to contact the police. However, 55 respondents who have had contact with the police in the last 12 months does provide a good level of experiences and perceptions for the survey to access police performance and the area's relationship with the police.

Question 23:

If YES you have reported something to the police in the last 12 months, how would you rate the police response?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very good	26.42%	14
Good	35.85%	19
Neither good or poor	20.75%	11
Poor	9.43%	5
Very poor	5.66%	3
Don't know or unsure	1.89%	1
	Answered	53
	Skipped	85



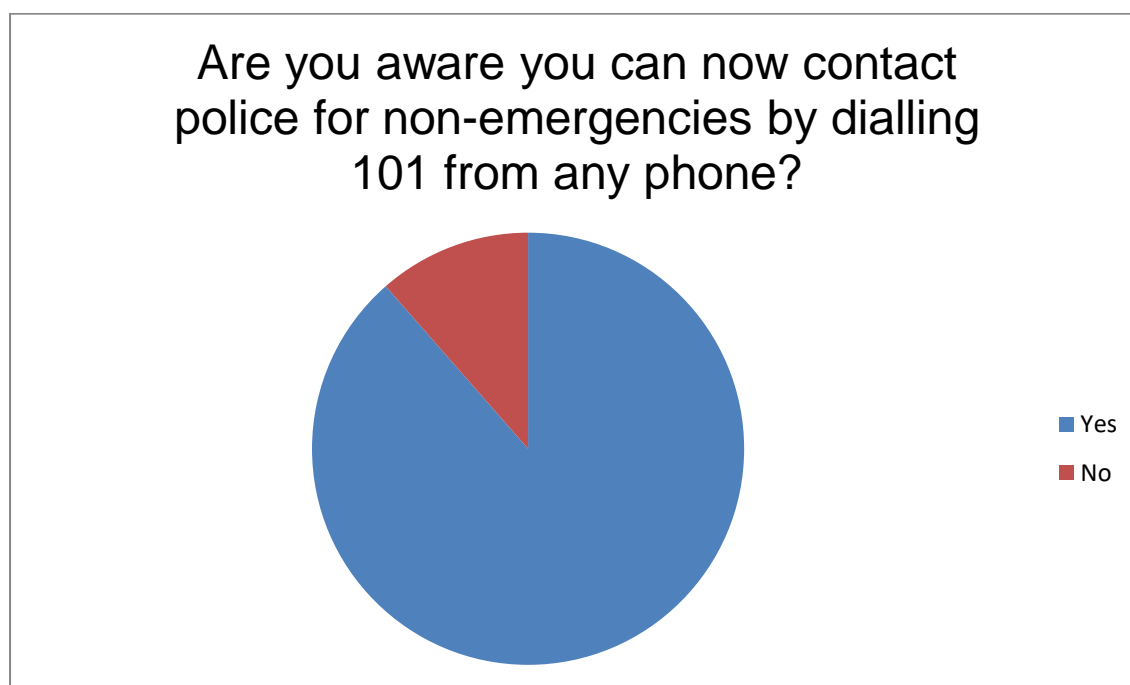
Only 8 respondents who have had contact with the police within the last year rated the police's performance as either poor or very poor. This is a notably positive reflection in the police's local performance – although obviously the experiences of those 8 are not to be discounted, and the 3 who recorded 'Very poor' may reflect serious issues for the police to consider.

A comfortable majority, 62.27%, recorded a positive assessment of how the police handled their interaction.

Question 24:

Are you aware you can now contact police for non-emergencies by dialling 101 from any phone?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	88.55%	116
No	11.45%	15
	Answered	131
	Skipped	7



The survey in itself will act to increase awareness of 101.

The OSRA and other such forums do much to increase awareness of 101 and other key points of community safety.

Question 25:

Are you aware of any partnerships, community groups, or other organisations set up to tackle issues of antisocial behaviour or crime in your area? If yes, please name in box below.

Comments:

- Neighbourhood watch
- No
- OSRA
- Old Stranmillis Road Residents Association
- No
- neighbourhood watch
- Neighbourhood watch
- No, I don't like the name old Stranmillis Road RA...it implies only those who have lived here for 30-40+ years are relevant.... we are all residents....
- No
- Neighbourhood Watch
- No
- No
- Old Stranmillis Residents Association/Neighbourhood Watch
- Neighbourhood Watch, Old Stranmillis Residents
- old Stranmillis
- OSRA
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Neighbourhood watch
- Old Stranmillis Road residents assoc
- No
- neighbourhood watch
- Old Stranmillis Residents Association
- OSRA
- No
- Neighbourhood watch

- No
- No
- South Belfast policing partnership etc
- Community policing
- No
- The Rainbow Project
- Stranmillis residents' association
- Residents' Association
- Stranmillis Residents Group
- Neighbourhood watch scheme old Stranmillis
- Andrew Charles group
- The residents' committee - OSRA disseminates information from PSNI.
- OSRA
- Neighbourhood watch
- None.
- Neighbourhood Watch
- No
- OSRA + neighbourhood watch
- No
- OSRA
- O.S.R.A.
- Belfast council
- OSRRA
- No - none.

These comments highlight awareness of the work done by OSRA, which will be increased by the survey.

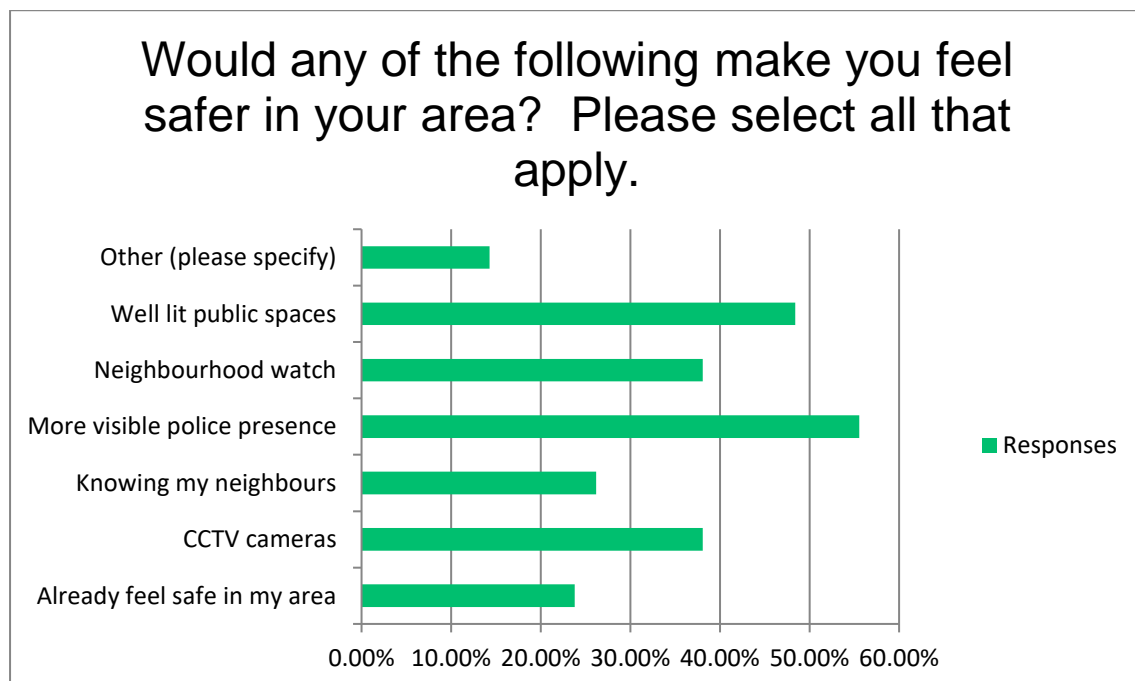
Neighbourhood watch schemes are clearly also widely recognised.

Future of your area

Question 26:

Would any of the following make you feel safer in your area? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Already feel safe in my area	23.81%	30
CCTV cameras	38.10%	48
Knowing my neighbours	26.19%	33
More visible police presence	55.56%	70
Neighbourhood watch	38.10%	48
Well lit public spaces	48.41%	61
Other (please specify)	14.29%	18
	Answered	126
	Skipped	12



More visible police presence is clearly the widely shared aspiration, with a majority of respondents hoping to witness it.

'Well-lit spaces' attracts the support of almost half of respondents, which allies with concerns expressed over safety at night by a large minority of participants.

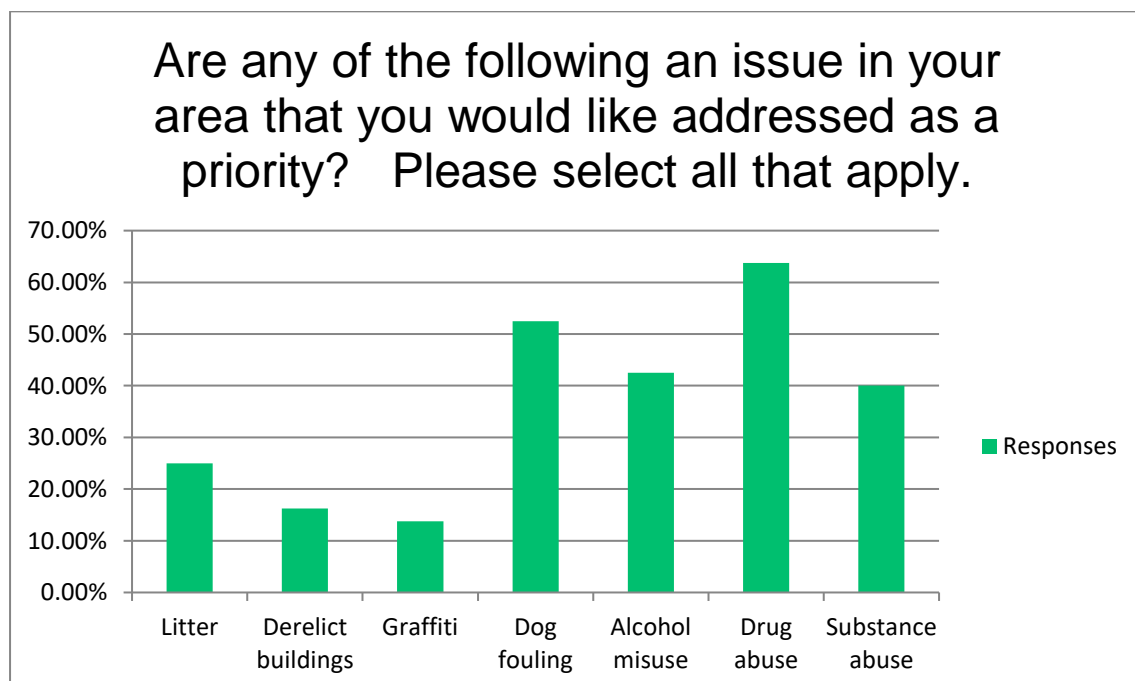
48 respondents highlighting the value they place in CCTV is a further notable result.

There is also a large degree of appreciation for the importance of Neighbourhood watch – which perhaps suggests the schemes have the potential to expand locally.

Question 27:

Are any of the following an issue in your area that you would like addressed as a priority? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Litter	25.00%	20
Derelict buildings	16.25%	13
Graffiti	13.75%	11
Dog fouling	52.50%	42
Alcohol misuse	42.50%	34
Drug abuse	63.75%	51
Substance abuse	40.00%	32
Other (please specify)		27
	Answered	80
	Skipped	58



Comments:

- Lighting on pedestrian paths

- Illegal car parking and cars parked across resident's driveways
- Turning cars in resident's driveways.
- Get more bins and dog bags
- General antisocial behaviour caused by the above
- Parking on pavements, especially on corners and at junctions
- Minor issues but carparking blocking access is inconvenient. Bins left for days on the pavement just make the place look uncared for
- Drug dealing - when it occurs. Young people drinking and littering the parks and Green spaces.
- None really, just a greater presence by police at weekends
- Drug/alcohol abuse in towpath area
- Speeding.
- Parking on double yellow lines and close to and across gateways
- Houses being bought by landlords or being let to several "friends. The associated problems may include parking - several cars at vying for space, and neglected gardens. Cars parked so far onto the footpath that pedestrians have to walk on the road especially in Lucerne Parade.
- dangerous driving at the Stranmillis roundabout
- Crime
- Not a priority. Drinking in summer months on towpath.
- Burglaries
- Drug paraphernalia on tow path
- Hedges force people to walk on Rd. Lucerne
- Hedges which stop me walking on the footpath. Cars parking on footpath
- See above - drug dealing. Better prevention of burglaries.
- Parking on footpath
- Drug dealing
- Inconsiderate parking

- Cars blocking footpaths
- litter and dog fouling on the paths in the lagan meadows
- There are a lot of private landlords in this area - and they do not keep the outsides of their properties in good condition - I feel there needs to be more done.

This dataset confirms the impact of issues relating to illegal parking – especially on the Lockview Road – and drug and alcohol abuse and related ASB in the area. The comments provide further details of how these issues are affecting the lives of a significant proportion of participants.

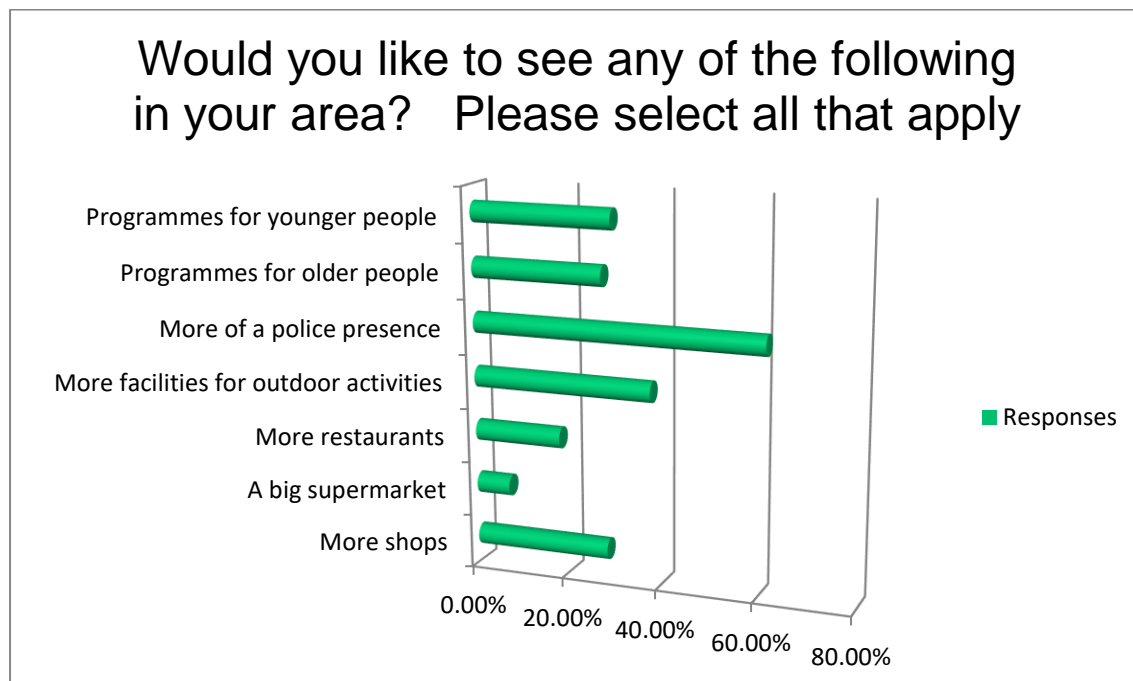
The issue of bins as well as cars, blocking pavements is also a concern.

The 13 respondents who consider derelict properties a priority are echoed in comments regarding private landlords, hedges and the appearance of the area.

Question 28:

Would you like to see any of the following in your area? Please select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
More shops	28.57%	28
A big supermarket	7.14%	7
More restaurants	18.37%	18
More facilities for outdoor activities	37.76%	37
More of a police presence	61.22%	60
Programmes for older people	27.55%	27
Programmes for younger people	29.59%	29
Other (please specify)		15
	Answered	98
	Skipped	40



Comments:

- Parking spaces provided for existing shops so that customers do not have to park outside my house and across my driveway 7 days a week.
- More kids' stuff small park
- playpark

- NA
- Fewer coffee shops.....
- I am happy with provision of above.
- A recreational playpark for children somewhere on the unused green along Sharman Road
- More segregated cycle routes and traffic calming measures other than speed bumps.
- a nice, quiet, traditional pub
- Belfast Boat Club is willing to do its part to promote programmes for young and old
- Better parking
- A chip shop down at the roundabout!
- Allotments or community garden space
- There is something I would not like to see - which you don't have an option for - I would not like to see the proposed bridge over the lagan linking Stranmillis to lagan lands east / Annandale going ahead - it will combine the drugs and drink problem of both areas and be a menace for local residents.

Responses again highlight the desire for an increased police presence from a majority of respondents.

The low rate of response for many of the options, in addition to some of the comments, point to a general satisfaction with services and businesses in the area.

Comments raise specific concerns about the impact of the Lagan Gateway development – a significant number of residents are concerned existing issues around ASB and crime may be worsened by the development. This is certainly an issue of confidence in the development that statutory bodies may wish to address.

Question 29:

Are there any final comments you would like to make regarding Community Safety in Stranmillis? Please enter comment in box.

Comments:

- The car parking is a joke especially since the Coffee shop opened on Lockview Road. People do not care where they park and have no consideration for the local residents. Now even on a Sunday you are tortured with people parking near or across your driveway.
- No
- The car parking provided for customers visiting the existing shops on Lockview road is non-existent. People are parking outside my house sometimes across my driveway 7 days a week. The speed of the cars going up and down Lucerne Parade is ridiculous. I contacted my Local Councillor 7 years ago about the car parking and the size of the speed ramps in Lucerne Parade. He contacted the Police and DRD and guess what they said there was nothing wrong with the car parking in Lucerne Parade and that the speed ramps were a standard size. Nothing will be done until someone is injured in an accident! Not only do they park across your driveway, they then use your driveway or someone else's driveway to turn their cars. The parking has been worse since the COFFEE SHOP opened around the corner. Even their staff park outside your house 7 days a week from 7.00am to 9.00pm. Why is there no parking provided for the staff and customers who visit the shops on Lockview Road? There is a large paved area outside these shops which the Coffee Shop uses as an extension to their premises. Surely this is illegal?
- We are a community with some problems and appreciate the work done by PSNI, however I do realise that in comparison to other areas, we're extremely lucky and appreciate that with a lack of resources, I can't have everything I want.
- I have experienced two break ins at my property (although nothing was stolen) and I can see signs of a third attempt. I have lived in this area since 2004 and this problem is increasing. It does not feel as safe at night, particularly near the Lagan Meadows/Tow Path area. I'm also concerned about the plans to build a foot bridge to link the area to Annadale Embankment as I believe this will exacerbate the current problems. I do not see much of a sign of a police response to the problems.
- The service alleys are a source of both anti-social and criminal behaviour
- In my opinion the PSNI with limited recourses do a great job with regard to cracking down on drug dealing and abuse. They also do a reasonable job in trying to deal with antisocial behaviour by young people when requested to do

so. The latter is a reactive response rather than a proactive one. Belfast City Council in my opinion could do a lot more to proactively deal with antisocial behaviour and littering of Parks and green spaces in the area but I think their record in doing so is VERY poor. They appear to me to be a 9.00 to 5.00 organisation who do not appreciate that people need to be on the ground when these types of behaviour are prevalent. A proactive approach is required within a predictable timeframe. GOOD WEATHER = more antisocial behaviour in Lagan meadows and surrounds.

- As the parent of a teenager who has been stopped/searched/brought home by the police on a number of occasions, I know that he and his friends feel victimised by the police at times. That said, on my engagements with police officers in relation to this, they have been pleasant, professional and understanding at all times.
- No
- Have regularly witnessed heroin dealing on Lagan tow path, boat club, Lagan meadows, Sharman road.
- I feel very lucky to live in such a safe and beautiful area with great neighbours and facilities.
- Plans to develop Lagan Gateway will further exacerbate ASB
- Survey is rather weak with answers not providing full range of options i.e. question relating to how long you have lived in area. Also concerned with how survey result will be used i.e. If this is to access more resources for the Stranmillis area, there are other areas with greater need. Our NI finances are such that prioritising spending is an absolute necessity & I believe that individuals must take responsibility for their property, actions etc & not rely on monies that our government (I know, what government!) does not have nor use monies that should be invested in health, education etc.
- I feel rattled because someone tried to break into my house over the 12th when I was not around. I have not been aware of this happening since it happened when I moved in 5 years ago
- Concerned at the growth of drugs in general in Northern Ireland. I believe the associated criminal element may pose problems for even the safest of areas in the future.
- My biggest personal concern is the excessive speed of some cyclists on the tow path.
- I feel that overall this is a very good area to live in. I have heard mention of drug paraphernalia being found along parts of the Lagan. It would be good to try and tackle this problem given the amount of families and dog walkers who use the path. Possibly additional bins or police presence would help. Appreciate this is a difficult issue to address though.

- The main issues are the increase in anti-social behaviour and illegal drugs along the tow path and Lagan Meadows. I no longer feel safe walking in the area with my kids unless my husband or another adult is with me. Dog fouling is also an issue and Belfast city council needs more patrols in the area
- We have found our neighbourhood very safe since we came in 2012. We are a family of 4 with 2 teenage boys
- Very aware of large groups of young people drinking on other side of the river near the weir
- I support the proposed bridge across the Lagan
- There is a serious risk to the life of younger and older people by people speeding in this built up area. If not addressed, people could be seriously affected.
- Traffic police randomly on the Stranmillis Road would help to stop speeding. I have never encountered a police checkpoint on this road in the 13 years I have lived here.
- Overall a great place to live but the number of thefts and burglaries needs addressing. 'White van men' etc are rife during the day and are clearly casing area/taking advantage of older residents. Perhaps more education about refusing people offering work on doorstep and reporting out of place or suspicious vehicles and people on 101 would help clear them out of area as right now must be regarded as a soft touch by criminals.
- Police do come out promptly when called but there is little or no follow up afterwards.
- I have almost been hit using the crossing on Lockview Road some 4 times - something needs to be done before there's a fatal accident
- The proposed new foot bridge is a concern - increased anti-social behaviour! Drugs and substance abuse at the tow path is already majorly concerning for someone with two small children who like to walk and ride bikes along the path and play in the meadows.
- I am concerned about the bridge development and the impact it may have on the already crowded towpath. Also, the fact that there's been next to no consultation with the residents of the area makes it seem like the council are trying to push through a development for the sake of it. I have no problem with the building of a lock and making the river more useable for boats but there are already 2 bridges over the river near here and they're both unfit for purpose if you ask me. Do them up first before building more.
- More police presence would be beneficial given the number of cars stolen in the area.

- I appreciate receiving the regular crime updates and advice forwarded by Constance Mc Coy via the Old Stranmillis Residents Association.
- Aircraft noise and dog fouling remain biggest issues, drug abuse returned for a while also cyclists not using a bell make towpath walks with grandkids a nervous activity
- Thank you for this survey and your commitment to the area. Philip Weir, Boat Club Captain, 07989502719
- Yes, please do something to sort out the rate of burglaries. Our house has been burgled twice and I am terrified and paranoid all the time now.
- Great area but needs more cohesion. Perhaps having children etc leads to this
- Generally good safe place to live
- Mothers with prams and elderly people forced to walk on Rd because of overgrown Hedges protruding on Lucerne.
- Community safety partnerships are totally useless and waste of money. Residents of Sharman don't know who or what they are or what they do. Disband them and pay a couple community police dedicated to this area instead
- More of a police presence and better luck at catching burglars as it has happened twice to me both during the day
- It's a good area to live in but still don't believe I could walk home alone in the evenings.
- I feel that there may be weirdos / flashers in the towpath, and I wouldn't feel safe walking alone at quiet periods like early morning or Sunday evening
- Proposed Stranmillis Weir bridge could only make life much worse for local residents re antisocial behaviour. We need to have a public consultation asap!
- Need to communicate more with local people about how you are trying to combat drugs and break-ins. It feels like we are soft targets. Pay highest rates, but get little protection.
- Stranmillis is a good area but over the past year the levels of drug and alcohol abuse in the Lagan meadows has increased significantly. Police doing what they can but can't be everywhere. Would support CCTV installed in the meadows, along the tow path and along streets leading them.
- Drug dealing and parties around public holidays like St Patrick's day have become major problems in the last 3yrs. Littering and vandalising paths and

the meadows is also a major issue. Houses are routinely targeted by burglars so we feel the pressure to be constantly watchful.

- A playpark for children is very much needed. Parking restrictions on old Stranmillis Road unnecessary and would like to see listed. Some properties not kept well and bringing down the area. Concerned by number of burglaries.
- There is a serious issue surrounding parking along the Lockview Road and Laganvale Manor at certain times at weekends and evenings it is sometimes impossible to enter the development with cars ignoring yellow lines - which need to be extended into Laganvale or make it a Residents only parking zone. Also - the proposed bridge linking Stranmillis to Annandale / Lagan Lands East needs to be seriously reviewed - the Old Stranmillis Residents' Committee was not consulted and I feel that linking these two points with a bridge would be sheer madness given the antisocial activities which happen on both sides - it would certainly make me feel very very unsafe at weekend and fear going out in the area knowing that drunken youths potentially out of their heads on drugs could be at the bottom of my street. This needs to be examined and agreement reached with the local residents who have to live here.

These comments provide a rich source of first-hand experience and perspectives on many of the issues already discussed – in particular concerns regarding drugs crime, illegal parking and a general shortage of parking, and the possible impact of the Lagan Gateway development.

It is also notable the comments from those who have taken the time to record their appreciation of the strengths of the area.

Furthermore, there is clearly awareness of the pressure on police resources and limitations on what they can achieve.

The issue of the speed of cyclists on the tow path is also raised, along with concerns regarding parking in specific locations.

Conclusions

The individual datasets presented above present a wealth of information and their own conclusions, however, this report will conclude by re-enforcing and underlining the main findings from the survey.

There are a number of positive conclusions about the community that can be clearly seen and others to be inferred from the data.

- 1) The overwhelming majority of respondents consider the area a good place to live (Q11), with good neighbours and services. Much was said in the data and in individual comments regarding the positive traits of the area, including: good schools, access to green spaces, close to the city centre, a reasonable level of community cohesion.
- 2) A majority of respondents, 56%, stated they never felt unsafe, which is significant given the self-selecting nature of the survey and its themes (Q17).
- 3) Only a small minority of those in contact with the police have a poor opinion of the service they received, and an overall majority have a positive view of the police's performance locally (Q21-23).

These positive assessments point towards many of the obvious strengths of the area and additional assets specified by participants, however, the survey did raise numerous serious local concerns, experiences of crime and ASB, and challenges for local police and other agencies to address.

- 4) Fear of being burgled was shared by a large majority of respondents (Q18). This was the single biggest issue regarding crime raised.
- 5) Vehicle crime and illegal parking are priority issues for many residents.

- 6) Concern over drug crime – in particular drug dealing and public substance abuse – is a reoccurring theme throughout the survey. This relates to drug crime in specific areas, especially the meadows, but also a generalised fear. The comments detail many individual experiences of drug crime impacting the area, and in particular how it relates to ASB.
- 7) Alcohol abuse and public drinking is a significant issue for many residents – often allied to drug abuse, noise, and other ASB.
- 8) A significant minority of respondents feel unsafe in the area at night (Q17). This relates to the aforementioned concern over ASB and substance abuse, but also to a popular demand for better lighting (Q26).
- 9) There is a widespread wish for more visible policing in the area (Q26 & Q28).
- 10) A small but significant number of respondents stated they knew no-one in the area to contact at times of need (Q14). This highlights the problem of social isolation for some residents.
- 11) For a significant minority of participants the Twelfth of July and St Patrick's Day create issues of ASB and perceptions of feeling unsafe.
- 12) Comments recorded highlight that for a number of residents there is concern the Lagan Gateway development may exacerbate existing problems relating to ASB and other issues in the area. Police and all relevant statutory agencies could address many of these concerns and perceptions, and in doing so improve community engagement. Perceived exclusion from the Lagan Gateway process in part explains the sentiment of a significant proportion of residents who feel they have little say in decisions impacting the area (Q15).