

# Suffolk Constabulary Public Survey 2008

End of year report - April 2009

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## 1 The Survey

- 1.1 The Public Survey asks residents of Suffolk a range of questions about their perceptions of crime and disorder issues in their area.

## 2 Methodology

- 2.1 Three methodologies were used to circulate the surveys and capture responses. A hard copy of the survey was distributed to members of the public by Consultation Unit staff and an online version was produced and advertised externally, including through the police messaging service Police Direct. The survey was also posted to 4,948 residents by Opinion Research Services Ltd., who were employed through their contract with Suffolk Speaks. The raw data from the three collection methodologies was aggregated.

## 3 Respondents

- 3.1 A total of 4218 completed responses were received by the end of April 2009. Of those, 1922 stated they were female and 2052 that they were male.
- 3.2 Figure 1 provides a breakdown of respondents' ages, 3557 respondents provided this information.

**Figure 1: Age, by all respondents**

<b>Age – All Respondents</b>	<b>Number of cases</b>
16-24	164
25-34	296
35-44	579
45-54	675
55-64	851
65-74	643
75 and over	349

- 3.3 Figure 2 provides a breakdown of respondents by ethnicity

**Figure 2: Ethnic Origin, by all respondents**

<b>Ethnic Origin - All Respondents</b>	<b>Number of cases</b>
White (including white 'other')	3845
Asian	11
Black	13
Chinese	7
Mixed	24
Not known	318

## 4 Interpretation of the Data

- 4.1 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to rounding errors, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers.

## 5 Rank Analysis

- 5.1 In this report reference has been made to ‘rank analysis’. This occurs when respondents have been asked to rank or prioritise a selection of different options. For rank analysis each priority is given a score (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> priority is given five points, 2<sup>nd</sup> priority given 4 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> priority given 3 points etc.). A total score for each response option is then calculated. This total score is then used as the basis for ranking each option, i.e. the option with the highest score is ranked top priority and the option with the lowest score is ranked bottom priority.

## 6 Key Findings

- 6.1 The vast majority of respondents (87.2%) stated that they feel *very/fairly safe* in the area where they live.
- 6.2 Just under half of respondents (48.5%) stated that they see a Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer patrolling in the area where they live at least once every 3 months.
- 6.3 Just over a quarter of respondents (29.8%) indicated that ‘teenagers hanging around’ is a problem in their local area.
- 6.4 Anti-social behaviour was ranked as the highest priority for police in the area, followed by ‘house burglary’ ‘responding to emergency ‘999’ incidents’, and ‘speeding’.
- 6.5 43% of respondents agreed that Suffolk Police provide value for money in their area. 18.6% disagreed.
- 6.6 62% of respondents stated that they would pay an increase in Council tax which matches inflation, in order to maintain the same level of policing service.
- 6.7 When asked to rank where they think the police should increase spending if they had more money, ‘anti-social behaviour’ was viewed as the highest priority, followed by ‘responding to emergency incidents,’ ‘house burglary’ and ‘drug related issues’.
- 6.8 Rank analysis reveals that ‘preventing and tackling public disorder’, ‘helping people feel part of their community’, ‘vehicle related issues’ and ‘speeding’ were viewed as the highest priorities for reducing spending should Suffolk Police have to save money.
- 6.9 When asked to rate Suffolk Police’s performance in relation to their priorities, respondents were most likely to state that they are performing *very/fairly well* in dealing with ‘road traffic collisions’ (74%), ‘anti-social behaviour’ (55.5%) and ‘violence in public places’ (54%).
- 6.10 Just over two fifths (44.5%) of respondents agreed that Suffolk Police seek people’s views on anti-social behaviour and crime issues in their area. Just under a quarter (23.7%) disagreed.
- 6.11 More than two fifths (42.9%) of respondents agreed that Suffolk Police are dealing with antisocial behaviour and crime issues in their area. Less than one fifth disagreed (19%).
- 6.12 Over half (58.8%) of respondents stated that they rate the police as *excellent/good*. Only 8.3% rated them as *poor*.

## 7 Safety and Policing in Suffolk

- 7.1 The vast majority of respondents (87.5%, (3636/4156)) stated that they feel *very/fairly safe* in the area they live. The percentage of people feeling safe is slightly lower than at the end of 2007/08 (91.3% (4228/4633)) and the target (93%) set by the Police Authority for 2008/09.
- 7.2 Those living in Mid Suffolk were the more likely to feel *very/fairly safe* (93%, (368/396)).
- 7.3 Respondents living in Ipswich were less likely to feel *fairly/very safe* (78.2%, (369/472)).

**Figure 3: How safe / unsafe do you feel in the area where you live? By all respondents**

Feelings of safety	Number of cases
Very safe	1417/4156 (34.1%)
Fairly safe	2219/4156 (53.4%)
A bit unsafe	443/4156 (10.6%)
Very unsafe	77/4156 (1.8%)

## 8 Officer visibility

- 8.1 Just under half of respondents (1972/4064 (48.5%)) stated that they see a Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) patrolling in the area where they live at least once every 3 months. A smaller proportion (1565/4064 (38.5%)), never see one. Figure 4 provides a breakdown.
- 8.2 Those living in Forest Heath were most likely to have seen an Officer or PCSO patrolling within the last 3 months (118/169 (69.8%)). Those living in Mid Suffolk were least likely to have seen an Officer or PCSO within the last 3 months (152/385 (39.5%)).

**Figure 4: How often do you see a Police Officer or PCSO patrolling in the area where you live? By all respondents**

Feelings of safety	Number of cases
Weekly	776/4064 (19.1%)
Monthly	728/4064 (17.9%)
Every 3 months	468/4064 (11.5%)
Every 6 months	276/4064 (6.8%)
Yearly	251/4064 (6.2%)
Never	1565/4064 (38.5%)

## 9 Anti Social Behaviour

- 9.1 Figure 5 provides respondents' perceptions of the key elements of anti-social behaviour (ASB). 'Teenagers hanging around on the streets' and 'rubbish or litter lying around' were perceived to be the biggest problems.
- 9.2 Just over a third of respondents (1315/4038 (32.5%)) cited 'teenagers hanging around on the streets' as a problem. Residents of Ipswich were significantly more likely to state that they are a problem (186/461 (40.3%)). Those living in Mid Suffolk were least likely to state this (76/382 (19.9%)).
- 9.3 Just over a quarter of respondents (1217/4018 (30.2%)) indicated that 'rubbish or litter lying around' is a problem in their local area. Those living in Forest Heath were most likely to state this (82/273 (30%)). Those living in Mid Suffolk were least likely to state this (78/384 (20.3%)).

**Figure 5: Please tell us to what extent, if at all, the following are a problem in your local area (within 15 minutes walk from where you live). By all respondents**

	Very big problem	Fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	Total
Abandoned or burnt out cars?	22	92	769	3033	3916
Noisy neighbours or loud parties?	106	265	1370	2180	3921
People being drunk/rowdy in public places?	234	539	1404	1799	3976
People using or dealing drugs?	141	364	983	2401	3889
Rubbish or litter lying around?	378	839	1919	882	4018
Teenagers hanging around on the streets?	406	809	1619	1204	4038
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles?	297	700	1803	1246	4046

- 9.4 In order to deduce whether a respondent perceives a high level of ASB in their local area, their responses to each of the seven elements listed in figure 5 are given a numerical value (3 for 'very big problem,' 2 for 'fairly big problem and so on) and then aggregated to provide a single figure. Those who score 11 and above are deemed to perceive a high level of ASB. This methodology is a replication of that employed by the British Crime Survey (BCS).
- 9.5 Across the county, 11.2% (473/4218) of respondents perceived a high level of ASB in their area. Figure 6 provides a district breakdown of perceptions of ASB. As shown residents in Forest Heath have the highest perceived level (23.9% (54/226)), whilst those living in Mid Suffolk were least likely to perceive high levels of ASB (4.3% (21/494)).

**Figure 6: Percentage of respondents with perceived high levels of ASB. By all respondents**

	% respondents with high perceived levels of ASB
Babergh	11.6% (34/293)
Forest Heath	23.9% (54/226)
Ipswich	20.4% (97/476)
Mid Suffolk	4.3% (21/494)
St. Edmundsbury	8.2% (34/415)
Suffolk Coastal	8.0% (47/587)
Waveney	14.4% (47/327)

9.6 The perceived levels of ASB are a significant improvement when compared to last years findings where 13.8% (640/4674) of respondents perceived high levels of ASB in their local area. A change to last year is that residents of Forest Heath were most likely to perceive high levels (23.9% (54/226)).

## 10 Priorities

10.1 Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 19 options what their top five priorities for the police were in their area. Their responses have been analysed with the aid of rank analysis (see paragraph 5.1). Figure 7 provides the full list of options in priority order.

10.2 'Anti social behaviour' was ranked as the highest priority for police in the area, followed by 'house burglary', 'responding to emergency incidents' and 'speeding'.

10.3 'Counter terrorism' and 'preventing and tackling public disorder' were viewed as the lowest priorities.

**Figure 7: What do you think should be the main priorities for the police in your area? (Please rank your top five priorities, 1 being your highest priority). By all respondents**

Rank Order		Score
1	Antisocial behaviour	5645
2	House burglary	4341
3	Responding to emergency 999 incidents	3973
4	Speeding	3378
5	Alcohol related issues	2708
6	Helping people feel part of their community	2539
7	Major crime e.g. murder rape	2374
8	Youth nuisance	2248
9	Graffiti Vandalism	2024
10	Vehicle related nuisance	1764
11	Drug related issues	1949
12	Incidents involving firearms or knives	1480
13	Violent crime	1160
14	Offences against children	1072
15	Tackling organised crime e.g. drug dealing and people trafficking	944
16	Civil emergencies e.g. flooding animal disease transport incidents	847
17	Domestic abuse	686
18	Preventing and tackling public disorder e.g. raves	413
19	Counter terrorism	313

## 11 Budget

11.1 Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed that Suffolk Police provide value for money in their area; 42.7% (1748/4091) agreed, 18.6% (762/4091) disagreed. Figure 8 provides a breakdown.

**Figure 8: Do you agree or disagree that the police provide value for money in your area? (To help you answer this question, the average band B council tax-payer in Suffolk pays £116.41 per year or £2.24 per week towards policing and a band D council tax-payer pays £149.67 per year or £2.88 per week. By all respondents**

Value for money	Number of cases
Strongly agree	432
Agree	971
Neither agree nor disagree	1570
Disagree	407
Strongly disagree	196

11.2 Respondents were asked what future level of council tax they would support. Just under two thirds (63.5%, (2437/3836)), stated that they would pay an increase in council tax which matches inflation, in order to maintain the same level of policing service. Just under a third (30.5% (1172/3836)) indicated they would be prepared to support a greater than inflation rise in order to receive a better police service and 5.9% (227/3836) of respondents stated they would support a less than inflation rise and accept a reduction in policing services.

11.3 Respondents were asked where they think the police should increase spending if they had more money. Rank analysis (described in paragraph 5.1) was used and revealed that 'anti social behaviour' was viewed as the highest priority. This was followed by 'responding to emergency '999' incidents,' 'house burglary' and 'drug related issues'.

11.4 'Preventing and tackling public disorder', 'civil emergencies' and 'domestic abuse' were viewed as the least important priorities. Figure 9 provides the list of options in rank order.

**Figure 9: If the police had more money, where do you think they should increase spending? (Please choose five options from the list below ranking them 1 to 5, with 1 being your highest priority for increased spending). By all respondents**

<b>Rank Order</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>
<b>1</b>	Anti social behaviour	5211
<b>2</b>	Responding to emergency 999 incidents	3334
<b>3</b>	House burglary	3003
<b>4</b>	Drug related issues	2605
<b>5</b>	Alcohol related issues	2585
<b>6</b>	Incidents involving firearms or knives	2208
<b>7</b>	Major crime e.g. murder rape	2145
<b>8</b>	Youth nuisance	2133
<b>9</b>	Violent crime	2081
<b>10</b>	Tackling organised crime e.g. drug dealing and people trafficking	1999
<b>11</b>	Speeding	1870
<b>12</b>	Offences against children	1715
<b>13</b>	Helping people feel part of their community	1615
<b>14</b>	Graffiti Vandalism	1391
<b>15</b>	Vehicle related nuisance	1151
<b>16</b>	Domestic abuse	735
<b>17</b>	Counter terrorism	638
<b>18</b>	Civil emergencies e.g. flooding, animal disease, transport incidents	602
<b>19</b>	Preventing and tackling public disorder e.g. raves	489

- 11.5 Respondents were also asked where they thought the police should reduce spending in the event of them having to save money.
- 11.6 Rank analysis (described in paragraph 5.1) reveals that ‘preventing and tackling public disorder’ ‘helping people feel part of their community’ and ‘vehicle related nuisance’ were viewed as the highest priorities for reduced expenditure.
- 11.7 Respondents were least likely to want the police to reduce spending on ‘violent crime,’ ‘responding to emergency ‘999’ incidents’ and ‘offences against children’. Figure 10 provides the list of options in rank order.

**Figure 10: If the police had to save money, where do you think they should reduce spending? (Please choose five options from the list below ranking them 1 to 5, with 1 being your highest priority for reduced spending). By all respondents**

<b>Rank Order</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>
<b>1</b>	Preventing and tackling public disorder e.g. raves	2049
<b>2</b>	Helping people feel part of their community	1923
<b>3</b>	Vehicle related nuisance	1778
<b>4</b>	Speeding	1705
<b>5</b>	Civil emergencies e.g. flooding animal disease transport incidents	1639
<b>6</b>	Graffiti Vandalism	1480
<b>7</b>	Counter terrorism	1346
<b>8</b>	Youth nuisance	1205
<b>9</b>	Domestic abuse	1101
<b>10</b>	Alcohol related issues	951
<b>11</b>	Anti social behaviour	506
<b>12</b>	Drug related issues	503
<b>13</b>	Tackling organised crime e.g. drug dealing and people trafficking	405
<b>14</b>	Incidents involving firearms or knives	329
<b>15</b>	House burglary	283
<b>16</b>	Major crime e.g. murder rape	241
<b>17</b>	Offences against children	176
<b>18</b>	Violent crime	145
<b>19</b>	Responding to emergency 999 incidents	91

## **12 Perceptions of Performance**

- 12.1 When asked to rate Suffolk Police's performance in relation to their (local) priorities, respondents were most likely to state that they are performing *very/fairly well* in dealing with 'road traffic collisions' (91.6%), 'anti-social behaviour' (69.3%) and 'violence in public places' (79.5%).
- 12.2 They were least likely to think Suffolk Police are performing *very/fairly well* in dealing with 'vehicle crime' (60%), 'house burglary' (66.1%) and 'robbery' (71%). Figure 11 provides a breakdown.

**Figure 11: Some of Suffolk Police’s main priorities are listed below. How do you think they perform in dealing with these? By all respondents**

	<b>Very well</b>	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>Fairly poorly</b>	<b>Very poorly</b>	<b>Don’t know</b>	
Anti-social behaviour	338	1834	729	234	775	3910
Domestic abuse	334	1131	217	64	2089	3835
House burglary	323	1424	655	239	1209	3850
Road traffic collisions	1415	1508	180	87	693	3883
Robbery	355	1374	542	165	1401	3837
Vehicle crime	298	1285	753	302	1213	3851
Violence in a public place	554	1524	392	142	1234	3846
Other emergencies	600	1425	150	63	1524	3762

- 12.3 Over two fifths of respondents (1769/3969 (44.6%)) agreed that Suffolk Police seek people’s views on anti-social behaviour and crime issues in their area. Just under a quarter (940/3969 (23.7%)) disagreed.
- 12.4 Slightly more than two fifths of respondents (1681/3919 (42.9%)) agreed that Suffolk Police are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues in their area. Just under a fifth (747/3919 (19%)) disagreed.
- 12.5 Over half of respondents (58.8% (2377/4042)) stated that they rate Suffolk Police as *excellent/good*. Only 8.3% (337/4042) rated them as *poor*. These figures compare favourable with those from the 2007/08 survey where 52.6% (2313/4395) stated they rated Suffolk Police as *excellent /good* and 10.3% (454/4395) rated them as *poor*.