



Public: Serious Violent Crime Consultation

Report by Consultation & Engagement Team

September 2023

1. Background and Methodology

Bolton Council is working closely with Greater Manchester Police, Probation, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service, Public Health and other partner organisations, to develop a Serious Violence Strategy for Bolton.

Violent crime is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and lots of activity has already been undertaken to tackle this issue. To support our combined objectives, the Council are preparing to develop a Serious Violence Strategy, supporting the prevention and tackling the drivers of violent crime in Bolton.

To support the development of the strategy's objectives, consideration is needed to understand the issues, perceptions and experiences that impact our communities. Between 12th July and 3rd September, the Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents and stakeholders in Bolton in sharing their reflections on Serious Violent Crime. During that period a comprehensive communication plan was implemented to raise awareness of the proposal across the borough. Social media was heavily utilised throughout the period to share key messages about the consultation and supporting documentation was made available on the Council's webpage. Information was also cascaded to key networks and neighbourhood-based officers, ensuring key messages reached communities.

Participants were surveyed using a questionnaire tool made up of open and closed questions, over a period of 7 weeks, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to reflect and share their thoughts on crime within the borough of Bolton. The questionnaire was made available both digitally and offline, with the questionnaire being accessible on the council's consultation web page, as well as in hard copy format, on request.

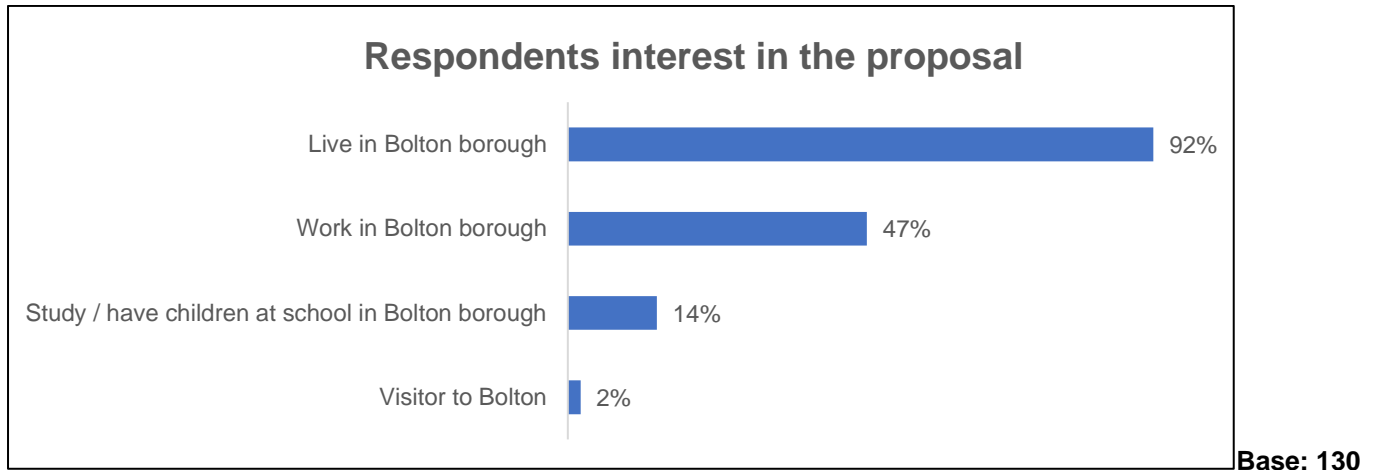
*A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this document, located in Appendix A.

Analysis notes

- Results are presented in the questionnaire format with 'Don't know' type responses removed unless stated.
- Comments have been categorised where feasible. Unless otherwise stated, categories with 5 or more responses are shown. Categories may overlap and a comment from one respondent included in multiple categories. A sample of comments [verbatim] are included in the report. Comments may be abbreviated so that only the relevant extract is included. One comment may be coded into multiple categories, and each category may only cover a certain aspect of the comment, for example a respondent may have made both positive and negative comments about the same aspect.
- Base: unless otherwise stated the base is the number of respondents to a particular question.
- Data has been cleansed where appropriate, e.g., comments moved into existing responses.

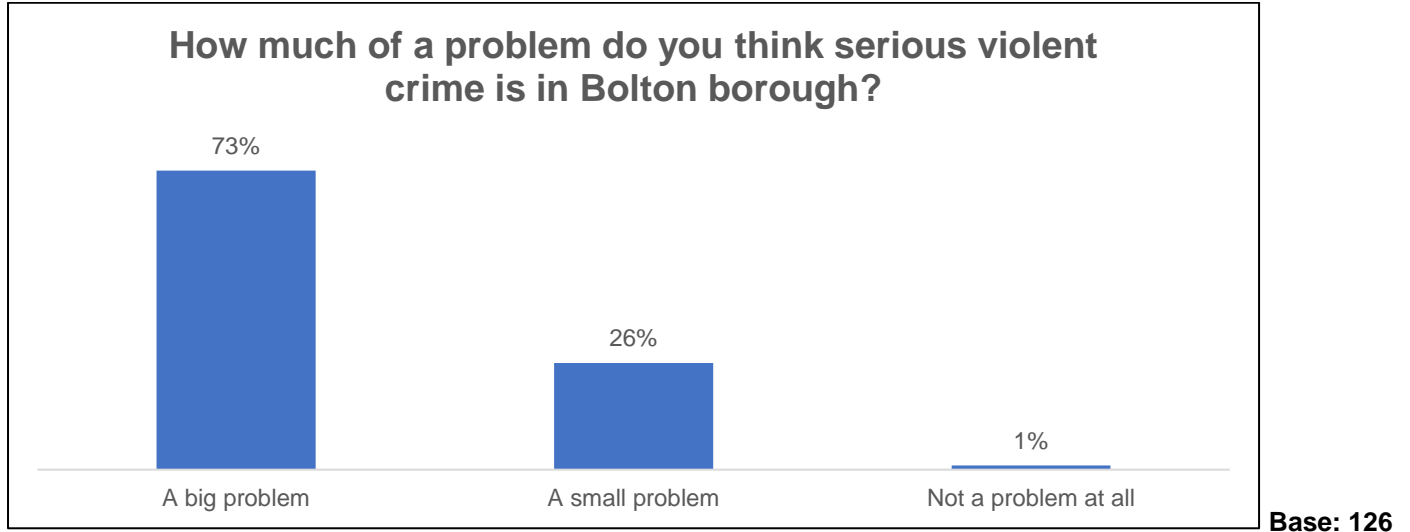
2. Responses

A total of 130 residents and stakeholders took part in the survey, outlining their reflections of serious violent crime. 92% of responses live in the Bolton borough. 47% work in the borough and 14% study or have children that access education in the borough. 2% are visitors to the borough.



3. Opinion on the level of serious violent crime

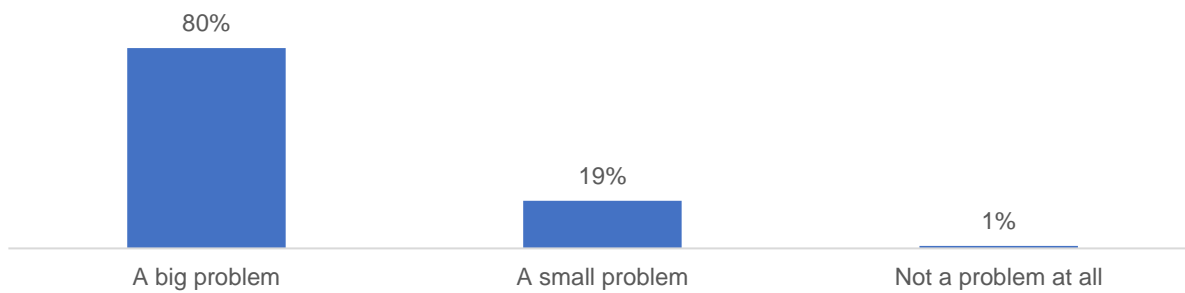
Of the 126 people answering this question, nearly three-quarters (73%) felt the level of crime in Bolton was a big problem. Over one-quarter (27%) stated it was a small problem or not a problem at all.



4a. Level of concern on people carrying weapons

When asked if there was a problem with people carrying knives or other weapons 80% thought this was a big problem, with one-fifth (20%) stating it was a small problem or not a problem at all.

How much of a problem is people carrying knives and other weapons?

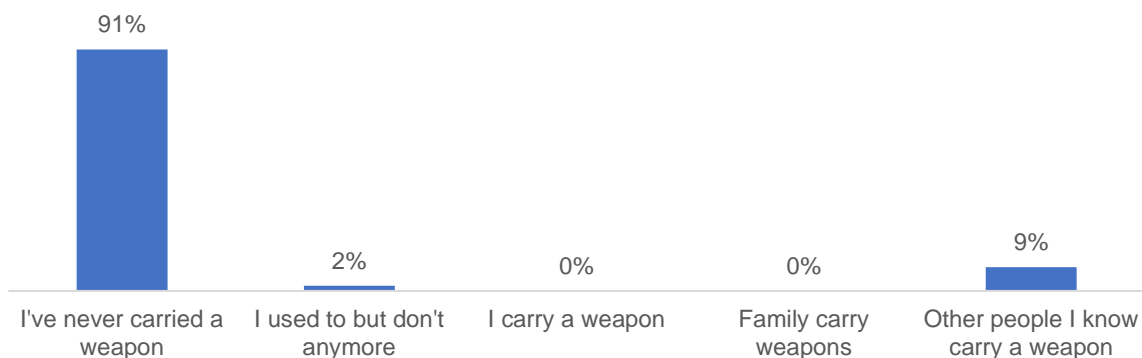


Base: 124

4b. Engagement with people carrying weapons

When asked if they have ever carried a knife or weapon, none of those surveyed carried a weapon, however 2% stated they use to and 9% know other people that do. Of the total responses received, 91% have never carried a knife or weapon themselves.

Do you / does anyone you know carry a knife or another weapon?



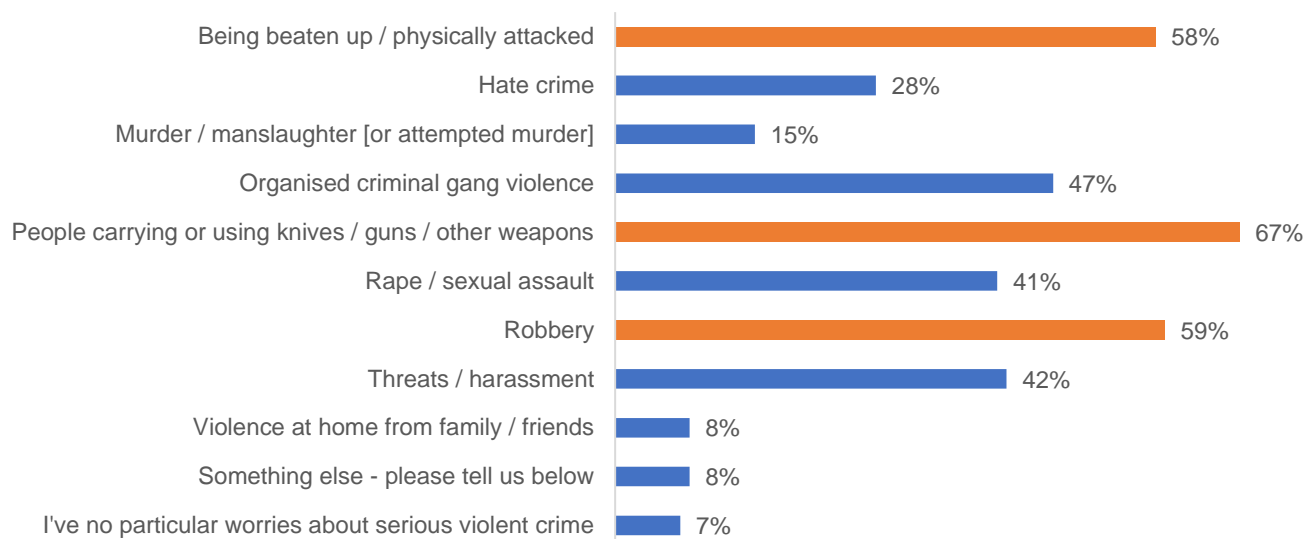
Base: 128

5. Types of crime that young people are concerned about

When asked what crimes are a concern for stakeholders in Bolton, 130 respondents provided their reflections. Asked to choose from a selection of answers, the top three crimes residents and stakeholders were most concerned by are, '*people carrying weapons*' (67%), '*robbery*' (59%), and '*being physically attacked*' (58%). Areas of least concern are, '*violence at home*' (8%), '*murder*' (15%), and '*hate crime*' (28%).

*It should be noted that both this consultation and that with young people showed parallels with concerns about being physically attacked.

Whilst all serious violent crimes are concerning, are there any that you particularly worry about?



Base: 130

9 comments were also received which highlighted further concerns; these are categorised into 3 key themes. Substance misuse is an overwhelming concern for most stakeholders commenting. However, several comments also reflected concern over abduction/trafficking, as well as a concern for others impacted by crime in the borough.

“Drug dealing around where I live, the police know but they say they have not got the resources”

“Drugs and dealing round Bolton in daylight -Ridgemont, Station Park, Queens Park, in wide open spaces. Also Mayor Street/Ellesmere St, daily Black Range Rover or BMW parked up - sitting there all day openly dealing! They're intimidating & threatening.”

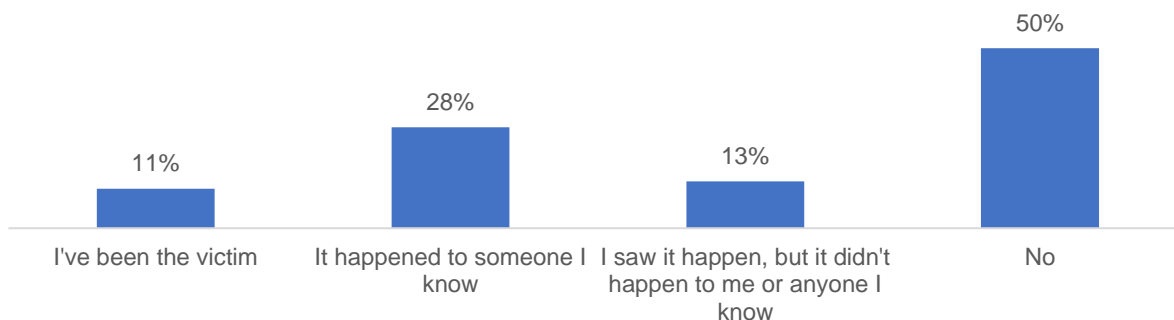
“Sexual exploitation and people trafficking in New Bury”

“My family being affected more than myself. My husband and my children. I worry they will get be targeted when out.”

6a. Victims

Those taking part in the consultation were asked if they or someone they know had been a victim of serious violent crime in Bolton within the last 5 years. 129 responses were received, with respondents able to choose multiple answers. Half (50%) stated they had not had any personal experiences with serious violent crime, however 11% stated that they had been a victim. Just under one-quarter (28%) stated that they knew someone else that had experienced serious violent crime, and 13% stated they had witnessed a violent crime.

In the last five years, have you / anyone you know been the victim of serious violent crime in Bolton borough?



Base: 129

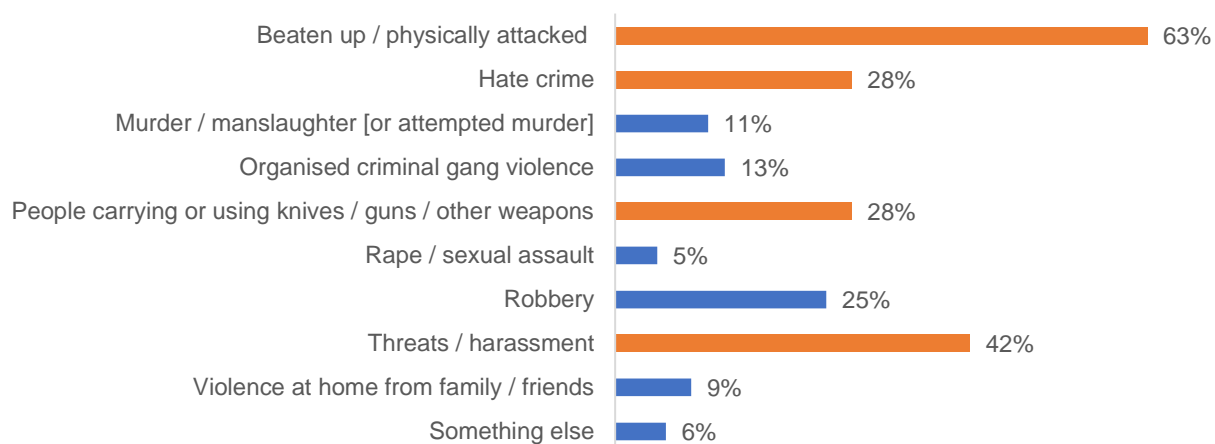
6b. Types of crime involved

Of the 67 respondents experiencing or witnessing crime, 64 individuals went on to comment on the types of serious violent crime they had experience of. The 3 most commented experiences included 'being physically attacked' (63%), experiencing or witnessing 'threats/harassment' (42%), and being a victim of or witnessing a hate crime (28%) and experiencing weapon-based crime (28%).

Of the 6% that stated something else, answers were predominantly drug associated, "groups of young men dealing and taking drugs any time of the day", and abduction, "kidnapped/abducted from outside our home".

*Note, the top responses are consistent with the experiences of young people, as highlighted in the youth consultation report.

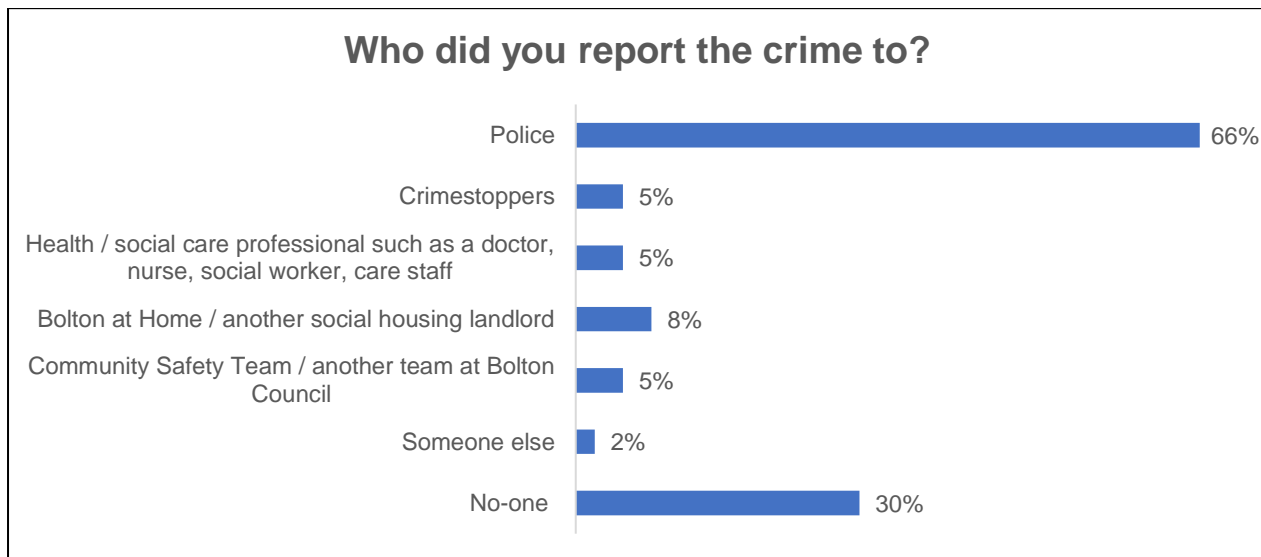
Which serious violent crimes were involved?



Base: 64

6c. Reporting

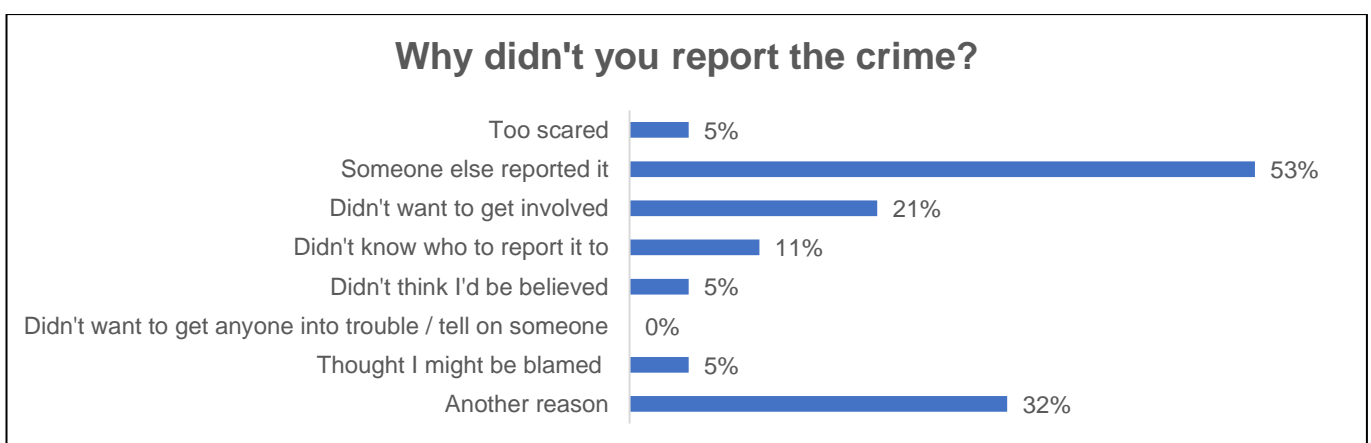
Respondents were asked who they reported the crime to. Of the 64 responses received, two-thirds (66%) stated they reported the incident to the police. 30% did not report the crime at all. 8% reported the incident to their landlord or social housing provider, and 5% reported to a healthcare professional, Council services, as well as Crimestoppers. 2% reported the crime to someone else, “Cafcass/Solicitors/IDVA/Fort Alice/Endeavour”.



Base: 64

6d. Reasons for not reporting a crime

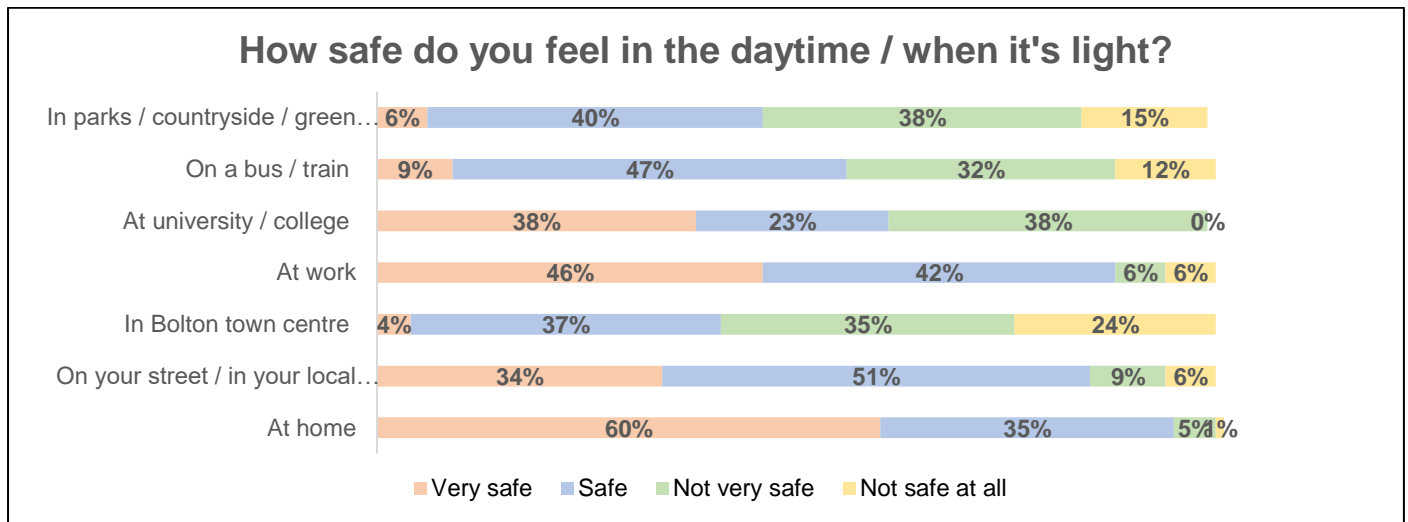
When asked why they didn't report the crime, 10 respondents stated that someone else reported it. 4 respondents stated that they didn't want to get involved and 2 people stated they weren't sure who to report it to. Of the 6 respondents who choose another option, comments tended to reflect a lack in confidence and resources in the criminal justice system, “no point as the court system takes forever to deal with anything if it even makes it that far and then nobody gets any form of punishment anyway” and “my perception is that ultimately the police either aren't interested or are too busy to respond to many reported crimes”.



Base: 19

7a. Daytime safety

Residents and stakeholders were asked about their feelings of safety during the day in various locations in and around the borough. An average of 99 responses were received, with 95% feeling a positive degree of safety at their home address. 88% felt safe at their place of work, and 85% feeling safe on their street or in their local area. Areas where respondents feel less safe are in Bolton Town Centre (59%) and in parks and green spaces (53%).

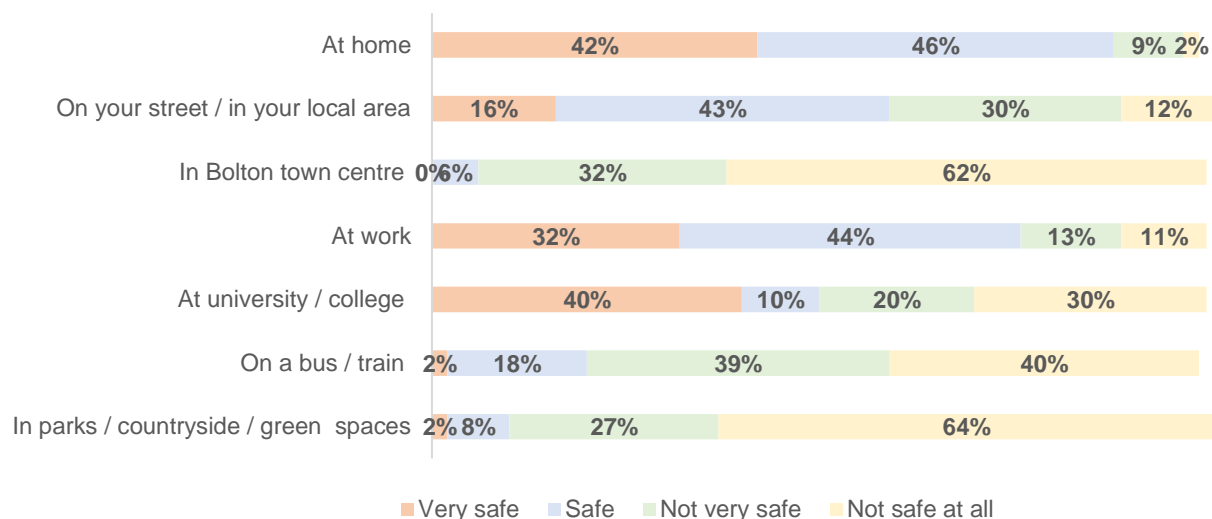


Base average: 99

7b. Night-time Safety

Respondents were asked about their feelings of safety at night in various locations in and around the borough. An average of 96 responses were received, with 88% of residents feeling safe at their home address. 76% felt safe in their work setting and 59% felt safe on their street/local area. Areas where residents and stakeholders feel less safe are in Bolton Town Centre (94%), parks/green spaces (91%) and on public transport (79%). This is consistent with the feelings of environmental safety outlined by young people.

How safe do you feel after dark?



Base average: 96

7c. Why stakeholders don't feel safe

Respondents were asked to outline why they don't feel safe in the Bolton borough and 110 responses were received. These comments were categorised into 9 key themes:

Theme	Total comments received
Substance misuse / Homelessness	35
Types of people	33
Resources, including police	29
Locations	22
Vulnerability of protected groups	17
Too much crime & Antisocial Behaviour	15
Physical attacks, including carrying weapons	13
Enforcement and reporting	12
Media	10

Substance misuse / Homelessness

35 comments were received which referenced drug and alcohol infuled servious violent crime, as well as the level of homelessness within the borough. Comments were primarilly focused on town centre locations.

- *“Alcohol plays a major factor in the night time making peoples behaviour very unpredictable. I don't like family members going to Bolton town centre in particular. I think this is an issues for alot of towns and not unique to Bolton.”*
- *“There are loads of drug users, beggars and homeless people hanging about. Some are quite scary with their behaviour. They approach you in cars and look intimidating at traffic lights.”*
- *“Beggars and drunk people in the street - sometimes very intimidating, more so after dark when there are less public around.”*
- *“Alcohol and drugs also play a significant role, and a spike is now anticipated as the school holidays have started.”*
- *“Illicit beggars and drunks on dark nights always risk the perception of threats although most are harmless.”*
- *“Homeless and drug problem is very common in Bolton every traffic light and store asda aldi has a bagger on the front door.”*

Types of people you might experience

33 comments were received that highlight the types of people and groups that respondents feel are perpetrators of serious violent crime, including comments about young people.

- *“Too many shady characters lurking about.”*
- *“There are lots of people loitering about, and they are always asking for money and dont like it when you refuse.”*
- *“Groups of youths hanging round. Some younger kids who have no respect and don't care about others”.*
- *“Gangs of youths in balaclavas and on electric bikes are prevalent in the area.”*
- *“High levels of males hanging around in groups”.*
- *“Violent people emerge from their homes after dark”*
- *“Alot of anti social behaviour, young people hanging around, throwing glass bottles in the road.”*
- *“people hanging around or mithering for money, groups of men sitting outside coffee shops looking at people as they pass. drug dealer/drug addicts hanging around or in and out of shops stealing.”*
- *“Youths with anti-social behaviour issues congregate in public parks at night”.*

Resources, including police

29 comments were received that highlighted the lack of resources in hotspot areas, particularly in relation to lack of lighting in dark areas and the significant shortage of police presence.

- *“Not enough lighting at night. Not enough police presence in town.”*
- *“There are not enough police in the area patrolling the streets and parks”.*
- *“Limited people around and no police presence”.*
- *“Zero police on patrol.”*
- *“There are no police or PCSO available to be around and the general public are fearful to challenge”.*
- *“The government and councils have cut beyond the bone and society is suffering. Safety in our communities is no longer taken seriously.”*
- *“Limited lighting in certain places”.*
- *“Green spaces are often badly lit, high levelr of prostitute on the area i live, the women seem to have little support”.*

Locations

22 comments were received that focused on crime within particular areas of the town, the focus primarily being safety in Bolton Town Centre.

- *"I live near Longsight Park where there have been a number of attacks in the daytime, including violent attacks. There are regular occurrences of men zipping through at speed on motorbikes, using it as a cut through to Tonge Moor / Crompton Way. I hate my children having to use the route to get to school and I no longer feel safe using the park or woodlands."*
- *"Regarding the Town Centre, there are too many isolated dark areas across the town, with boarded up shops, homelessness & addicts."*
- *"There are gangs of men that hang around street corners, not just in the town centre but in Deane."*
- *"Bolton Town Centre does not feel safe due to the number of people that loiter and beg. You feel that if you ignore them they may come after you."*
- *"I feel that my house and neighbourhood are relatively secure".*
- *"Where people have been threatened or attacked with knives it's generally at night in park type of areas."*
- *"There use to be threatening characters loitering near car parks asking for change but with cashless payments the problem has abated."*
- *"Try not to put myself in situations that would put me at risk- ie would never walk through town centre alone at night. Very conscious of my surroundings if I have to go out alone in the dark in my local area."*
- *"The only time I ever feel unsafe when out on my own during the day is around Bolton town hall square, many people with drink / drugs habits wander around often walking towards you as you are walking , this is when I feel threatened and feel vulnerable."*
- *"Feel intimidated which can be during the day and at night. Walking to car parking and walking around Bolton town centre and there is groups of people and then some people that are begging."*

Vulnerability of protected groups

17 comments were received that highlighted the vulnerability of those with protected characteristics. There was particular concern around gender-based violence to women and girls, as well as concern by older residents that found their age to put them at risk of being a victim of crime.

- *"I feel vulnerable as a lone female."*
- *"I am in my 70s and feel vulnerable at night."*
- *"I hear/read that violence against females is on the increase, as is robbery & gangs."*
- *"I'm an elderly woman & I certainly wouldn't go into town or walk through parks on my own at night."*
- *"Walking alone particularly at night I believe can make you particularly vulnerable both as a lone female but also for my husband targeted in an unprovoked way or my children targeted for their possessions or from other groups of young people."*
- *"I am disabled and have to walk with a stick, it is a symbol of someone who is vulnerable and thus an easy target".*

Too much crime & Antisocial Behaviour

15 respondents made reference to there being too much crime in the area, including anti-social behaviour, which perpetuates the feeling of being unsafe.

- *“Bolton has become lawless. People have no regard for others and more and more innocent people minding their business are being targeted for no reason whatsoever.”*
- *“General increase in crime and drug misuse.”*
- *“Although crime during the day is increasing, antisocial behaviour is increasing, and most reports are from after dark.”*
- *“Due to increased numbers of incidents such as sexual assault and robbery.”*
- *“Too much anti-social and rowdy behaviour in Bolton”.*
- *“People have become oblivious to screams and yelling on the streets and in town no one pays attention.”*
- *“Too much knife crime in neighbouring area.”*

Physical attacks, including carrying weapons

Some comments (13) reflected a concerned about being physically attacked, robbed, as well as perpetrators carrying weapons.

- *“My clients have also been threaten with knives outside there homes by youths.”*
- *“The threat of being attacked or robbed.”*
- *“Twenty years ago we had an attempted robbery but they fled when we heard them.”*
- *“The prevalence of knives”.*
- *“A colleague was mugged 10 years ago. Another colleague got chased late at night by youths.”*
- *“People have been mugged in my area.”*
- *“Due to knife crime and vulnerability”.*

Enforcement and reporting

12 comments were received around the theme of enforcement and reporting, particularly the lack of faith that prosecutions will take place.

- *“The justice system does nothing to deter violent crime.”*
- *“No presence of law enforcement, need prevention rather than reactive policing”.*
- *“Reporting to Bolton Council meetings NOTHING GETS DONE been going on for 4 years now. Enough is enough.”*
- *“The lack of adequate punishment, a weak system”.*
- *“I feel that society as a whole has got to the stage where criminals feel that they can do exactly what they want. Especially if not caught and if they are caught they are not dealt with properly. Sentances need to be a lot more severe. There is no discipline in schools.”*

Media

10 comments were received highlighting the role the media has in drawing people’s attention to crime and raising the profile of crime in a particular area.

- *“Hear /read of violent incidents in local and wider news.”*
- *“The media portrayal doesn't help in terms of perceptions. as doesn't a lack of funding for key services such as police.”*
- *“Hear news reports about people being robbed / attacked”.*
- *“Bolton news highlights the amount of violent crime within the town and particular issues within the town centre.”*
- *“The media relay all these scary tales of threat, violence, criminal activity etc. it's good to know these things are happening in Bolton. Being aware makes us make safer choices.”*
- *“Every day there's another story on Bolton News, or I drive past a police cordon, I see something on social media or an email from a community group of neighbourhood watch about some kind of violent crime in Bolton. Feels like no where is safe here really.”*

Other comments

Other comments that were received specifically focused on feelings of vulnerability, *“I feel isolated and vulnerable”*; concerns around the ethnic diversity within the borough, *“There a far too many asylum seekers in Bolton”* and *“too many people from different countries appear menacing”*. Comments were also received that referenced crime on the transport network, *“Bus drivers don't care, they just want you on and off the bus and to go home after shift”* and *“I also wouldn't walk the streets or use public transport alone at night.”*

8. What Bolton Council could do to help cut down on serious violent crime and keep people safe

Respondents were asked to reflect on measures that would help them feel safer in Bolton. 117 comments were received, which are categorised into 9 key themes

Theme	Total comments received
Enforcement, reporting and greater police precense	96
Better community engagement and partnerships	28
Greater investment in resources	19
Education & early intervention	17
Tackling drug, alcohol and homelessness	13
Environment / Pride in place	8

Enforcement, reporting and greater police precense

Overwhelming, a considerable number of respondents (96) referenced the need to have better enforcement and reporting structures in place. The majority of comments focused specifically on greater engagement from Greater Manchester Police, as well as frustration in the lack of on street police presence.

- *“Having a greater officer presence in areas that are seeing increases in crime, outside of the district centres.”*
- *“Make some effort to catch the perpetrators. We reported a serious crime and it was closed within days despite the perpetrator being identified and known to you.”*
- *“More PCSOs on foot in the Bolton area - you used to see loads now there are hardly any”.*
- *“The police are stretched to capacity and the council stand by and let the police tackle crime in Bolton. Stricter legislation needs to be in place particularly in public space and the town centre of a night to help combat crime.”*
- *“The police should have a more visible presence on the streets of Bolton and feet on the ground not driving round in cars.”*
- *“Harsher sentences need to be given to those committing violent crime. A slap on the wrist and don't do it again is not working. The police do what they can but are frustrated by CPS/the courts.”*
- *“Better police presence, police answering the phone rather than ringing for 20 minutes plus.”*
- *“Prison for knife crime, clamp down on gangs of youths”.*
- *“Random stops of people to check if carrying weapons/knives More visible policing and in the roads too”.*
- *“We need more Police PCSO and community safety teams in the areas of high risk. Bolton has become oblivious to crime and seems to turn a blind eye to it. we need a zero tolerance approach showing Bolton isn't a soft touch.”*
- *“Build more prisons and lobby government for longer sentences for these crimes to ensure there is sufficient deterrent and also that they spend more time behind bars and less time on the streets attacking other people.”*
- *“Quicker response and attendance after ringing 101”.*
- *“More presence in the town centre. Greater punishment for those who do offend.”*
- *“I think the CPs and courts need to give out firmer sentences, also youth crime there should be dealt with harder not just slap on wrist or sent to Raise school”.*

Better community engagement and partnerships

28 respondents referenced the need for greater investment into community activities and improving partnerships across key agencies and the voluntary sector.

- *“Work to encourage more people to have a stake in doing something positive for their communities”.*
- *“Schools and the council also need to do their bit, it is not just the police”.*
- *“Provide a program area for youth to burn the energy off.”*
- *“Improved youth provision including intensive outreach.”*
- *“Ensure outreach/education programs extend to young adults and parents. Focus is put on children and teenagers (not inappropriately) but young adults and parents would also benefit from the same services”.*
- *“More places where individuals & groups can go for social activities - hopefully would take those looking to cause trouble off the streets & into a better life style.”*
- *“Youth centres closing have hampered young kids who may easily go off the rails”.*
- *“Work with a charity to offer self defense classes free of charge like the ones that run in blackrod.”*
- *“Interventions must have a multi-agency approach as there are often a number of reasons as to why people offend.”*
- *“Develop better communication between police and neighbourhoods; encourage discussion and feedback from neighbourhoods.”*

Greater investment in resources

19 comments called for greater investment into resources, specifically CCTV and lighting infrastructures. Some comments referred to knife amnesty collections, as well as implementing late night drinking legislation.

- *“Improving lighting and cameras.”*
- *“Further investment in the town centres is needed, inc CCTV.”*
- *“Stricter legislation needs to be in place particularly in public space and the town centre of a night to help combat crime.”*
- *“Clearer posting of this is a safe monitored CCTV area...”*
- *“Better security on buses and trains so you don't feel intimidated”*
- *“More amnesty days for weapons that are better publicised in target areas.”*
- *“Have security staff in the interchange who will address the antisocial behaviour.”*
- *“Run days when people in the community can hand in weapons without punishment”.*

Education & early intervention

17 respondents thought that further information should be provided, educating the borough on what serious violent crime is, how to identify it and how to keep yourself safe. Early intervention methods were seen as a preventative measure in reducing serious violent crime in Bolton.

- *“Education - trying to educate people at a younger age as to acceptable behaviour and dangers around violence/alcohol/drug use.”*
- *“Bolton Council and their partners could work on educating people to look out for their own personal safety, how to recognise potential issues”.*
- *“I think any campaign should include education/support for parents of at risk demographics”*
- *“Better education in schools regards the consequences for their actions”.*

Tackling drug, alcohol and homelessness

Some responses (13) focused specifically on tackling challenges associated with alcohol and substance misuse. In addition, some comments called for greater intervention to be invested into tackling homelessness and begging.

- *“End 24hr drinking in the town centre, absolutely zero benefits to this at all.”*
- *“More robust action with homeless / beggars.”*
- *“They need to tackle the homeless people who are constantly begging for money or food on the streets in Bolton. Also look at the drug culture within Bolton as its now like handing out sweets on street corners.”*
- *“Bolton Council should deal with the amount of beggars and threats of violence from intimidating gangs in the town centre.”*
- *“Don't like people begging for money. Not happy that some of these beggars appear to have homes. I feel very uncomfortable when approached.”*
- *“Stop pub goers drinking in the streets especially Bradshawgate”.*
- *“Don't allow the addicts to congregate in the square, it definitely deters myself and friends from visiting the area.”*

Environment / Pride in place

8 comments were received calling for improvements within specific geographical areas, increasing a sense of pride in place, this included Bolton Town Centre. However, it should be noted that other comments reflecting the Town Centre have been captured in key themes above, including the call for greater police presence, as well as addressing drug, alcohol and homelessness related concerns.

- *“Better environmental layouts generally.”*
- *“Further investment in the town centres is needed”.*
- *“Invest in the town centre and make it a more pleasant place to be - shops, cafes, restaurants etc, NOT BARS AND CLUBS.”*
- *“We need to build our town centre back to being thriving and vibrant and we need to run criminals out of town.”*

Other comments tended to focus on equalities, including supporting the socio-economic duty.

- *“We need better housing standards on social housing and again strict expectations on tenancies, police need to be freed up to fight crime and work within communities.”*
- *“GMP police should focus on ensuring all victims of crime are recognised as Victims not ignoring significant parts of our society , not all victims are female in terms of domestic abuse for instance”.*
- *“Stop stigmatising people who live in deprived areas, we're not all criminals yet we get viewed with suspicion and crimes against us are not dealt with properly.”*

9. Further comments

Residents and stakeholders were asked if they wanted to make any further comments that the Council and its partners could take on board for consideration. 43 comments were received which were themed into the following categories.

Theme	Total comments received
Police and enforcement measures	18
Too much crime and change is needed	11
Engagement, intervention and partnerships	10
Locations	6
Gang crime	5

Police and enforcement measures

Comments under this theme tended to focus on the role of the police and on tougher enforcement measures that could be implemented as part of the review process.

- *“What is the point of a Police Station in a corner of Middlebrook, miles away from any conurbation. If the Police are going to have remote Stations, then there must be a physical presence in those conurbations. Especially at night. If that means walking the beat every night, then so be it”.*
- *“Ignoring the small stuff, such as off road bikes, electric scooters, low level ASB, graffiti and public order, creates the perception of a lawless society, which allows violence to breed and become the norm. Clamp down on small stuff, with a near zero tolerance approach.”*
- *“We need a system of victim first, not offender first.”*
- *“We need more police on foot every day and every night not just sitting in a car”.*
- *“I hear all the time, derogatory comments about the police presence around Bolton. I’m aware that the police are terribly short staffed and cannot respond or check out what’s going on everywhere. Maybe police dogs could be used more .”*
- *“Bolton needs to go back to basics and police beats”.*

Too much crime / change is needed

11 comments focused on the concern that Bolton experiences too much crime and intervention is needed.

- *“Although I have not been a victim of serious violent crime I am aware of increased incidents in my local area. Also the increased numbers of sirens from emergency services can be a bit unnerving”.*
- *“It’s not exclusive to Bolton, but we can be better”.*
- *“Too many kids on electric bikes and scooters committing crimes and getting away before police arrive.”*
- *“It’s rife and the Police are doing nothing about it and the criminals know that which is why they have free reign to do as they please with no repercussions likely.”*

Engagement, interventions and partnerships

10 comments were received that made reference to building better engagement processes, intervention practices and partnerships across the borough.

- *“Talk to teachers, youth leaders, taxi drivers, restaurateurs....make sure they know you and where to get hold of you!”*
- *“Need to publicise more about what is being done and challenge perceptions that are created by the media - the real facts.”*
- *“Young people to be involved in designing the solutions.”*
- *“Open mental health centres like libraries.”*
- *“Reinstate estate offices to communicate face to face with people.”*

Locations

A number of comments referenced specific locations across the borough with crime related problems.

- *“I would not myself and wife, or allow kids onto areas like Leverhulme park after dark”.*
- *“People no longer feel safe in the town centre. Day or night. I know budgets are restricted, but if the town is to thrive, then policing must become a priority.”*
- *“Parks and green spaces during the day are usually okay, as long as there are others around, but at night are taken over by gangs. It’s terrifying.”*
- *“I live in the outer area of Bolton and feel perfectly safe in my local area at daytime. I would be very worried in Bolton town centre as I am unable to see and would not want to go to the theatre on my own at night.”*
- *“It is too high and people are upping sticks and moving to more safer towns / areas”.*

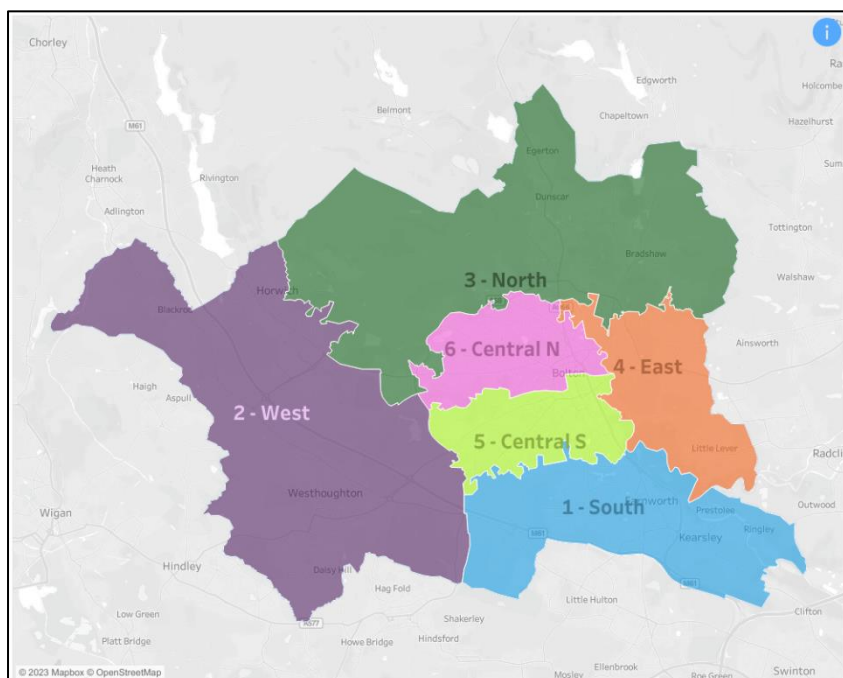
Gang crime

5 comments referred to gang related crime.

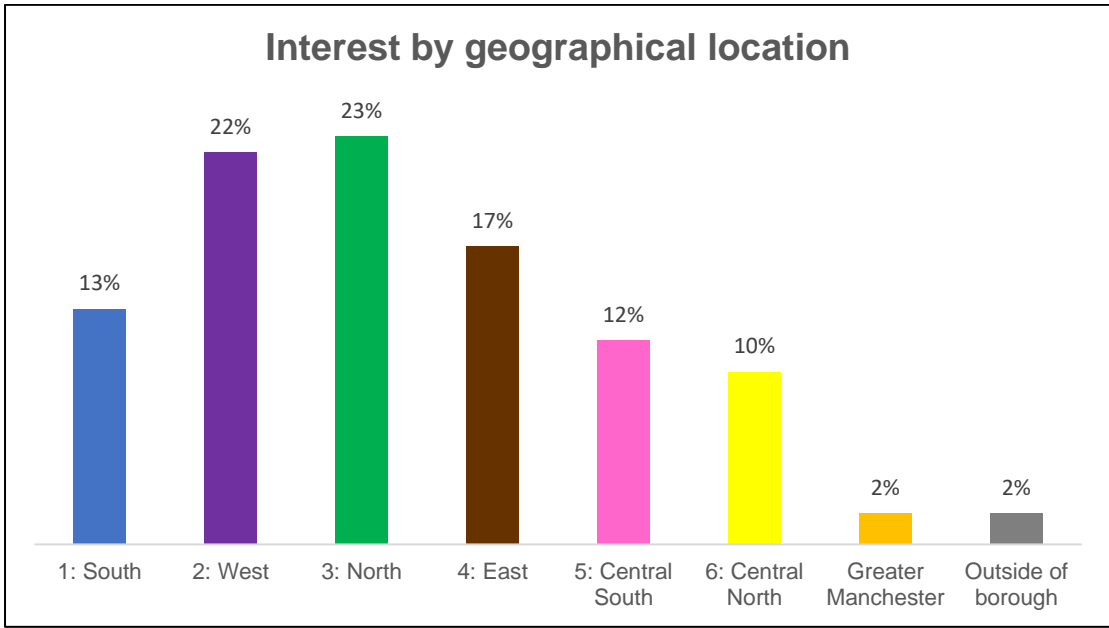
- *“Gang violence amongst youths has always been an issue in Horwich for generations. More ground level work needed”.*
- *“Too many vigilante groups taking matters in their own hands and fighting on the streets with weapons.”*
- *“Bolton is generally seen as a warm and welcoming place so I hope any gang culture is effectively managed and isolated”.*

10a. Demographics: Geographical

The table below outlines the demographics of respondents by geographical neighbourhood. A total of 113 respondents provided their full postcode. The highest number of responses were received from residents in the North of the borough (23%) and West of the borough (22%). Lowest engagement is from residents in Central North (10%). 4% of responses came from visitors outside of the borough.



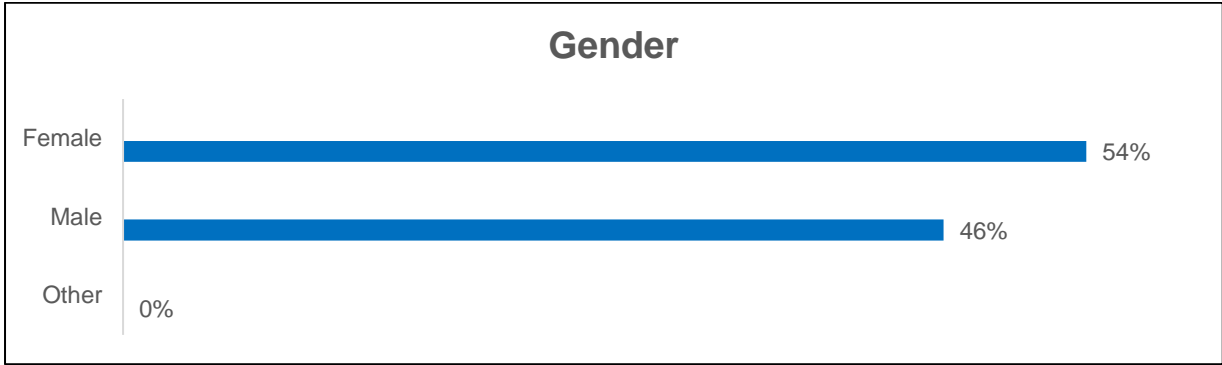
*Neighbourhoods are a local geography for integrated health and social care; all have a population of around 50,000 residents.



Base: 113

10b. Gender

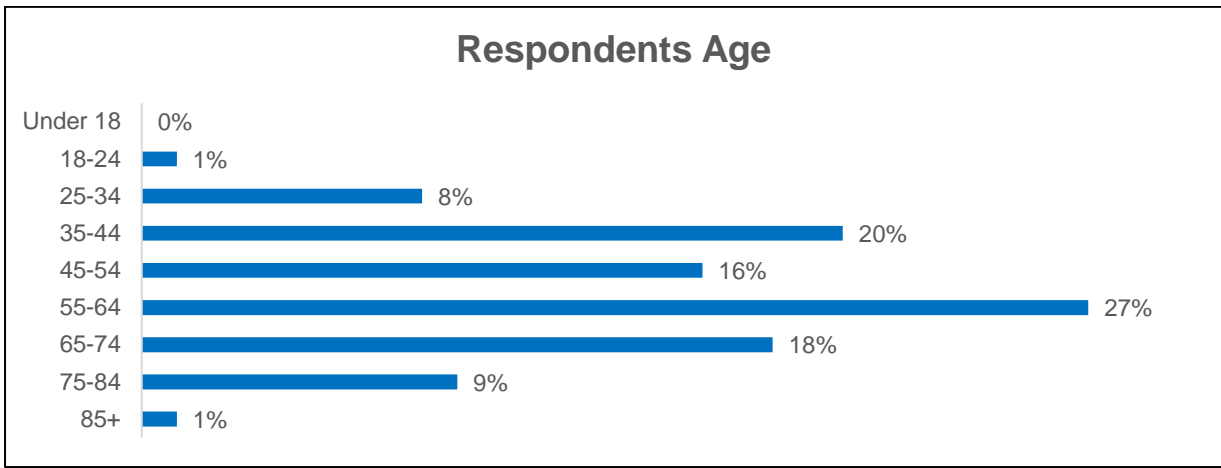
127 responses were received providing the respondent’s gender. 54% of respondents identify as being female, 46% as male and 0% of respondents identified as ‘other’.



Base: 127

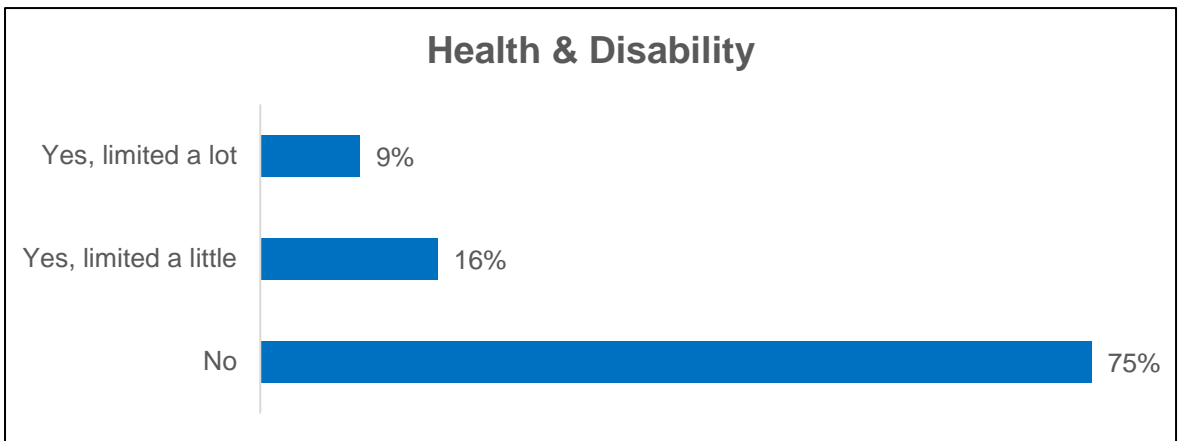
10c Age

128 responses were received indicating the respondent’s age. 71% of respondents are between the ages of 25 – 64 years. 28% of respondents are over the age of 65 years.



10d. Health and disability

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they have a health or physical condition. Of the 126 responses received, one-quarter (25%) have a health condition or disability.



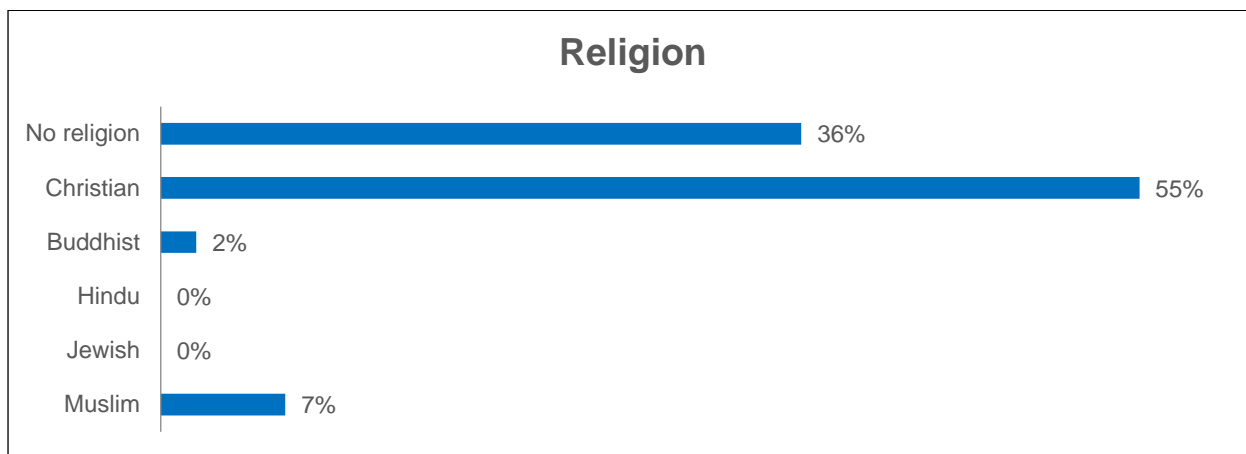
10e. Ethnicity

124 respondents provided their ethnicity when undertaking the consultation. 11% of respondents identify as being from a none-white community, with 5% indicating as being from the Asian/Asian British community.



10f. Religion

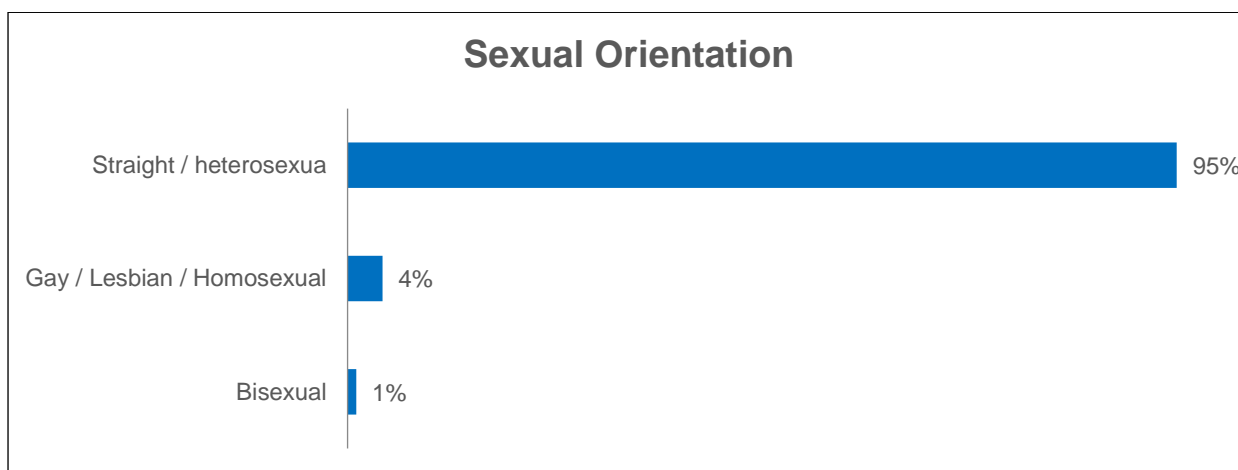
Respondents were asked to share their religious status. Of the 122 responses received, 55% identify as being Christian, 7% Muslim, 2% Buddhist and 36%, have no religion.



Base 122

10g. Sexual orientation

119 respondents provided their sexual orientation, of which 5% are from the LGBTQ+ community.




Base 119

11. Summary

Bolton Council ran a 7-week consultation seeking to engage the views of residents and stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences of serious violent crime. 130 stakeholders took part in the consultation, with the majority of responses coming from Bolton North (23%) and Bolton West (22%).

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the responses received felt that the level of serious violent crime across the borough was a big problem. When asked if the borough had a problem with people carrying a weapon, 80% reported it as being a big problem. 91% of those responding had never carried a weapon.

The crimes that stakeholders are particularly concerned by are 'people carrying weapons' (67%), 'robbery' (59%), and 'being physically attacked' (58%)



Half of respondents had no personal experience with serious violent crime and 11% had been a victim. Where people had experiences of violent crime, it was particularly in relation to a physical attack, harassment, hate crime and weapon related crime.

Where incidents had occurred, 66% reported the crime to the police. 30% of respondents did not report the crime at all. The main reasons for this were not wanting to get involved (21%), or that someone else had reported it (53%).

Environments where stakeholders feel safe include their home, their place of work and their local area. Residents and stakeholders felt less safe in Bolton Town Centre, in parks and green spaces, and on public transport.

The top reasons for not feeling safe in the borough were highlighted as being the level of substance and alcohol misuse and the level of homelessness; the types of people that are associated with serious violent crime; and the lack of resources, including policing.

When asked to consider solutions to preventing or reducing serious violent crime, the top suggestions include increasing the level of police presence, enforcement and reporting measures; having greater community engagement and partnerships; and increasing investment into resourcing locations to prevent crime.

End.

Serious violent crime consultation 2023

Please complete this questionnaire online if possible, by going to the 'Active consultations' page of Bolton Council's website www.bolton.gov.uk.

Serious violent crime can have a devastating and costly effect on our society. It causes widespread damage, not only to the victims and their families, but also to the local community who may live in fear.

By giving your views and experiences in this survey, you can help us to develop a new Serious Violence Strategy - a plan of action to deal with serious violent crime and reduce the impact on our communities. The Strategy will build on the work already being done by the Community Safety partnership to tackle serious violence - it's an important issue and more can always be done.

Serious violent crime is when someone physically hurts or threatens to hurt someone else. If the offender clearly meant to cause physical harm, the police record this as a serious violent crime, even if no-one was actually injured.

There are many kinds of serious violent crime including murder, manslaughter, rape, sexual assault, gangs, domestic violence, robbery, hate crimes and assault. Some - but not all - involve a weapon such as a gun or knife, and some are related to drugs or alcohol.

Most people will never experience serious violent crime, but it can be worrying.

We want to hear from you, whether you've experienced serious violent crime or not - but we can't take reports of crime in this survey. All serious violent crime should be reported to Greater Manchester Police, either on their website www.gmp.police.uk/ or by ringing 101 [always ring 999 in an emergency]. You can also report crimes anonymously to CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111 or through their website crimestoppers-uk.org/

Please complete this questionnaire online if possible, by going to the 'Active consultations' page of Bolton Council's website www.bolton.gov.uk.

Your response - keeping your data safe

Most questions are optional so that you can miss out any you prefer not to answer.

The results of this consultation may be made public, however if you're responding as an individual you won't be identified in any report as your responses will be anonymised and grouped with those from other people. If you're responding in an official capacity your response may be published but no personal details will be included.

Any personal data you provide will be held securely, in line with our retention schedule and privacy policy, which can be found online www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notices or ring 01204 334875 for a paper copy.

We use Snap Surveys professional software to collect and process your data. Their privacy policy can be found online www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/ Snap Surveys Ltd. follow the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Serious violent crimes and weapons

Q1. How much of a problem do you think serious violent crime is in Bolton borough?

- A big problem
- A small problem
- Not a problem at all
- No opinion

Q2. How much of a problem is people carrying knives and other weapons?

- A big problem
- A small problem
- Not a problem at all
- No opinion

Q3. Do you / does anyone you know carry a knife or another weapon? Please be honest - we won't know who you are

- I've never carried a weapon
- I used to but don't anymore
- I carry a weapon
- Family carry weapons
- Other people I know carry a weapon

Worries and concerns

Q4. Whilst all serious violent crimes are concerning, are there any that you particularly worry about?

- Being beaten up / physically attacked
- Hate crime [being targeted because of your appearance, disability, faith / belief, gender, gender identity, race or sexual orientation]
- Murder / manslaughter [or attempted murder]
- Organised criminal gang violence
- People carrying or using knives / guns / other weapons
- Rape / sexual assault
- Robbery
- Threats / harassment
- Violence at home from family / friends
- Something else - please tell us below
- I've no particular worries about serious violent crime

If "something else" please say which serious violent crimes you worry about

Your experience

Q5. In the last five years, have you / anyone you know been the victim of serious violent crime in Bolton borough?

- I've been the victim
- It happened to someone I know
- I saw it happen, but it didn't happen to me or anyone I know
- No - please go to Q9

Q6. Which serious violent crimes were involved?

- Beaten up / physically attacked
- Hate crime [being targeted because of your appearance, disability, faith / belief, gender, gender identity, race or sexual orientation]
- Murder / manslaughter [or attempted murder]
- Organised criminal gang violence
- People carrying or using knives / guns / other weapons
- Rape / sexual assault
- Robbery
- Threats / harassment
- Violence at home from family / friends
- Something else - please tell us below

If "something else" please say which serious violent crimes were involved

Q7. Who did you report the crime to?

- Police
- Crimestoppers
- Health / social care professional such as a doctor, nurse, social worker, care staff
- Bolton at Home / another social housing landlord
- Community Safety Team / another team at Bolton Council
- Someone else - please tell us below
- No-one - please go to Q8

If "someone else" who did you report it to?

Q8. If you didn't report the crime - Why didn't you report the crime?

- Too scared
- Someone else reported it
- Didn't want to get involved
- Didn't know who to report it to
- Didn't think I'd be believed
- Didn't want to get anyone into trouble / tell on someone
- Thought I might be blamed
- Another reason - please explain below

If "another reason" please explain

Feeling safe in Bolton borough

Q9. How safe do you feel in the daytime / when it's light?

Please think about how any worries about crime and anti-social behaviour affect how safe you feel in these places within Bolton borough

	Very safe	Safe	Not very safe	Not safe at all	Not applicable / No opinion
At home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On your street / in your local area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Bolton town centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At university / college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On a bus / train	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In parks / countryside / green spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q How safe do you feel after dark?

10. Again, please think about how any worries about crime and anti-social behaviour affect how safe you feel in these places within Bolton borough.

	Very safe	Safe	Not very safe	Not safe at all	Not applicable / No opinion
At home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your street / local area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Bolton town centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At university / college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On a bus / train	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In parks / countryside / green spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you've answered 'Not very safe' or 'Not safe at all' in Q9 or Q10 - Please tell us why you don't feel safe

Reducing serious violent crime

Q11 How could Bolton Council, Greater Manchester Police, our partners and the community work together to tackle serious violent crime and help to keep people safe in our borough? Is there anything else we should be doing to help reduce serious violent crime?

No suggestions

Other comments

Q Please use this space if you'd like to make any further comments about serious violent crime
12. in Bolton borough

No comments

Your interest

Q Which of the following describes you / your family's interest in this consultation?

13.

- Live in Bolton borough
- Work in Bolton borough
- Study / have children at school in Bolton borough
- Visitor to Bolton
- Official response from Parish / Bolton borough Councillor / Elected Member - please answer Q13b & c then there are no further questions for you. Please miss out the 'About you' section.
- Official response from a business / organisation / community group. You must have their permission to submit an official response on their behalf - please answer Q13b & c then there are no further questions for you. Please miss out the 'About you' section.
- None of the above - please explain at Q13a

Q13a If you have answered 'None of the above' - Please say what your interest is

Q13b - for official respondents only - Please say which ward, business organisation or community group you represent

Q13c - for official respondents only - Please say what your role is - in what official capacity do you represent the business, organisation or community group?

About you

Your answers in this section help us to make sure we are getting views from different types of people. They won't be used to contact or identify you.

**Q14 Please give your full
postcode**

Q 15. Are you...?

Female

Male

Identify in another way

Q 16. Which age group are you in?

Under 18

35 - 44

65 - 74

18 - 24

45 - 54

75 - 84

25 - 34

55 - 64

85 or over

Q 17. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term physical or mental health condition / illness?

Yes, limited a lot

Yes, limited a little

No

Q 18. What is your ethnic group?

White British

Asian or Asian British

White other

Black, Black British, Caribbean or African

Mixed or Multiple ethnic group

Other ethnic group

Q What is your religion?

19.

- No religion
- Christian [including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations]
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Other religion

Q Which of the following most closely describes your sexual orientation?

20.

- Straight / heterosexual
- Gay / Lesbian / Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Other sexual orientation

Thanks! Please post to FREEPOST RTTT-YTEL-YSXS, Consultation & Engagement Team, Bolton Council 2nd Floor, Town Hall, Victoria Square, BOLTON, BL1 1RU

