Living in Lancashire Wave 32 survey

Community safety

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1 Executive summary

This wave of the Living in Lancashire panel looked at people's views on community safety. The survey was sent by email or by post to all 3,974 members of the panel on 18 February and the fieldwork ended on 25 March 2011. In total 2,742 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 69%.

1.1 Key findings

- Just over half of respondents agree that police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour in their local area (54%). This is a considerable increase on the proportion that agreed when the question was asked last year.
- Opinion is split on whether there is more or less crime in respondents' local areas than two years ago (20% think more, 22% think less).
- The proportion of respondents that think there is less crime in their local area has improved since the Place Survey 2008.
- The majority of respondents feel safe outside in their local area during the day (93%). This drops to around three fifths after dark (58%).
- Respondents in Burnley and disabled respondents are more likely to feel unsafe after dark (43% and 32% respectively).
- Most respondents don't think there is much of a problem with various aspects of anti-social behaviour in their local area. The biggest issue is rubbish or litter lying around (34% think it is a very or fairly big problem).
- Respondents in Burnley are more likely to think that vandalism and drugs are a very or fairly big problem in their local area (43% for both).

1.2 Recommendations

The proportion of respondents that think the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour and the proportion that think there is less crime in their area have both increased since the Place Survey in 2008. There are a number of factors that may have contributed to this improvement:

- Crime rates have lowered since last year, particularly instances of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.
- The public has more access to crime statistics now through the Crime Mapper and Safer Lancashire websites[1].

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[1] Crime Mapper: http://www.police.uk/; Safer Lancashire: http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/2011/

- In March 2010, Safer Lancashire launched its anti-social behaviour pledge to tackle anti-social behaviour in Lancashire.
- For six weeks from June 2010, the police and local partners ran a confidence campaign to increase awareness and confidence of what is being done in Lancashire to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour.

Statistics presented to the Safer Lancashire Anti-Social Behaviour working group show that, after the confidence campaign and anti-social behaviour pledge launch, both actual offences and perception of the level of anti-social behaviour decreased so the two campaigns may well have affected the Living in Lancashire result.

Respondents in Burnley are more likely to feel unsafe after dark and to think that vandalism and drugs are a very or fairly big problem in their local area (43% for both). Improving the problems with vandalism and drugs may also improve the proportion of respondents that feel safe after dark.

Despite the fact that respondents feel that police and other local public services are dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour more successfully now, respondents' perceptions of specific aspects of anti-social behaviour have not altered significantly since 2008. Any work that has been done to reduce particular aspects of anti-social behaviour has therefore not been noted by the public. Work should be done to improve this.

2 Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Living in Lancashire regularly since August 2001 (formerly known as Life in Lancashire). A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research they complete and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a county wide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each wave of Living in Lancashire is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning i.e. the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be representative of the population as a whole.

3 Research objectives

The objective of this survey is to look at people's views on community safety. Questions looked specifically at:

- whether people think local services are successfully dealing with crime;
- the level of crime; and
- perceptions of specific aspects of anti-social behaviour.

4 Methodology

This wave of Living in Lancashire research was sent to 3,974 members of the panel on 18 February. A reminder was sent on 11 March, with a final closing date of 25 March 2011.

The survey was conducted through a postal questionnaire, and an online version of the same questionnaire being emailed to members who had previously requested to take part online. The postal questionnaire was sent to 3,155 members and the online questionnaire was sent to 819 members. Where members didn't respond to the online questionnaire they were sent a paper reminder.

In total 2,742 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 69%.

All data are weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 1,983, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

Panel members were also asked questions on community safety in the previous wave of Living in Lancashire (wave 31). The wave 31 questionnaire was sent to 4,026 members of the panel on 19 November. No reminder was sent and the closing date was 10 December 2010. In total 1,972 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 49%. The results of these questions are also reported here to give a fuller picture of the panel's views on community safety.

Many of the questions asked here have previously been asked in the Place Survey 2008. The Place Survey was a postal survey conducted for Lancashire County Council by Ipsos MORI. Surveys were sent to a random sample of addresses across the county. 16,604 people responded to the Place Survey, a response rate of 36%. The Place Survey used a random sample of the Lancashire population rather than a specific panel. While results of the Place Survey 2008 are not exactly comparable with those found here because of the differing methodologies, comparisons are shown where relevant to give indicative results of changes in opinion.

4.1 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1000	3%	3%	2%
2000	2%	2%	1%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1,000 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (i.e. +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of sample A	Size of sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
500	1000	5%	5%	3%
2000	2000	3%	3%	2%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 2,000 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 3% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (eg of opinion, service usage).

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (eg age, gender, disability, ethnicity, geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report.

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.
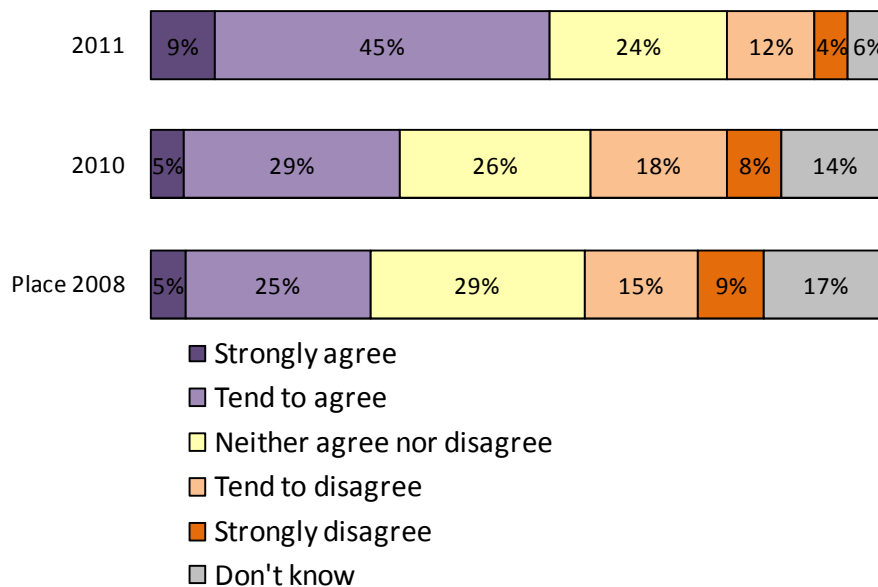
5 Main research findings

It is the responsibility of the police and other local public services to work in partnership to deal with anti-social behaviour and crime. Panel members were asked about crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.

Just over half of respondents agree that police and other local public services are successfully dealing with these issues in their local area (54%). Around one in six respondents disagree (16%).

This question was also asked in wave 29 of Living in Lancashire (June 2010) and in the Place Survey 2008. The proportion of respondents that agree that the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour has increased considerably since last year.

Chart 1 - **How much would you agree or disagree that the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with these issues in your local area?**

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Base: All respondents: 2011 (unweighted 2705, weighted 2062), 2010 (unweighted 1932, weighted 1427), Place 2008 (unweighted 15514, weighted 15168)

Male respondents are more likely to disagree that police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour (21%).

Opinion is split on whether there is more or less crime in respondents' local areas than two years ago (20% think more, 22% think less). Just under half of respondents think the level of crime has stayed about the same (46%).

The proportion of respondents that think there is more crime in their local area has decreased since the Place Survey 2008.

Chart 2 -   Thinking about crime in your local area, do you think there is more or less crime than two years ago?
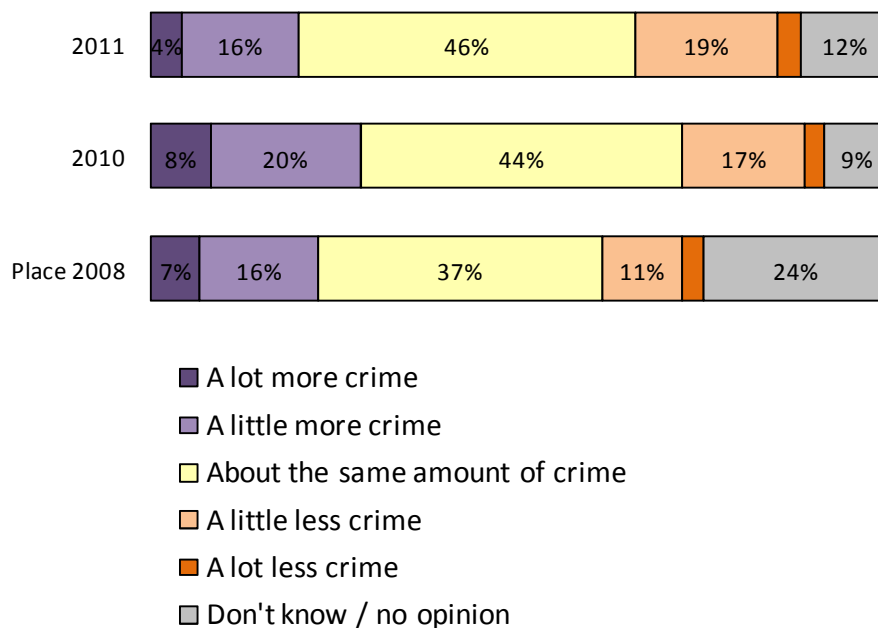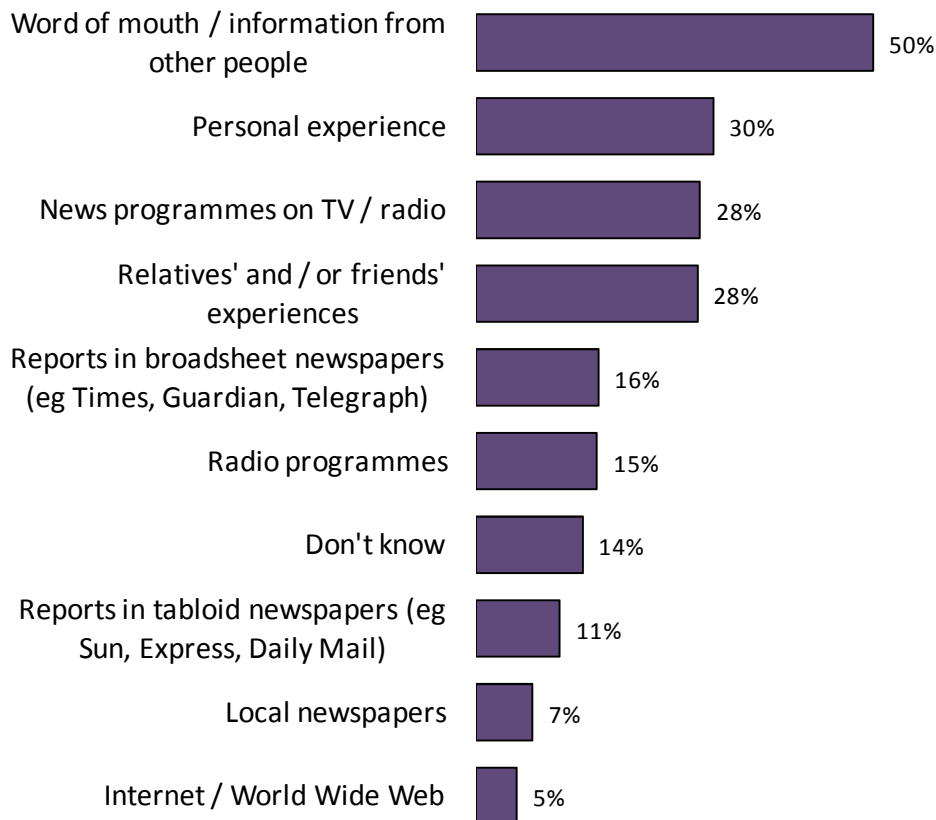

Base: All respondents: 2011 (unweighted 2717, weighted 2067), 2010 (unweighted 2019, weighted 1497), Place 2008 (unweighted 16604, weighted 16024)

Respondents aged 60 or over are more likely to think there is less crime now than two years ago (28% think there is less) while BME respondents are more likely to think there is more crime (34% think there is more).

Half of respondents base their opinion on the level of crime in their local area on word of mouth or information from other people (50%). Three in ten respondents base it on personal experience (30%), news programmes on TV or radio (28%) or the experiences of relatives and friends (28%).

Chart 3 - Why do you think there is more or less crime in your local area?

Category	Percentage
Word of mouth / information from other people	50%
Personal experience	30%
News programmes on TV / radio	28%
Relatives' and / or friends' experiences	28%
Reports in broadsheet newspapers (eg Times, Guardian, Telegraph)	16%
Radio programmes	15%
Don't know	14%
Reports in tabloid newspapers (eg Sun, Express, Daily Mail)	11%
Local newspapers	7%
Internet / World Wide Web	5%

Base: All respondents (unweighted 2596, weighted 1976)

Respondents aged 25-44 are more likely to base their opinion on word of mouth (56%) while respondents aged 60 or over are more likely to base it on news programmes (36%) and tabloid newspapers (14%). BME respondents are more likely to base their opinions on newspaper reports (broadsheet 24%, tabloid 16%). Respondents in full-time employment are more likely to use personal experience (37%).

The following questions were asked in the previous wave of Living in Lancashire (wave 31).

The majority of respondents feel safe outside in their local area during the day (93%) with over half feeling very safe (55%). The proportion of respondents feeling safe drops to around three fifths after dark (58%).

Chart 4 - How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area...?

	Very safe	Fairly safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Fairly unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't know
During the day	55%	39%	5%			
After dark	14%	44%	15%	18%	7%	

■ Very safe
■ Fairly safe
☐ Neither safe nor unsafe
☐ Fairly unsafe
■ Very unsafe
☐ Don't know
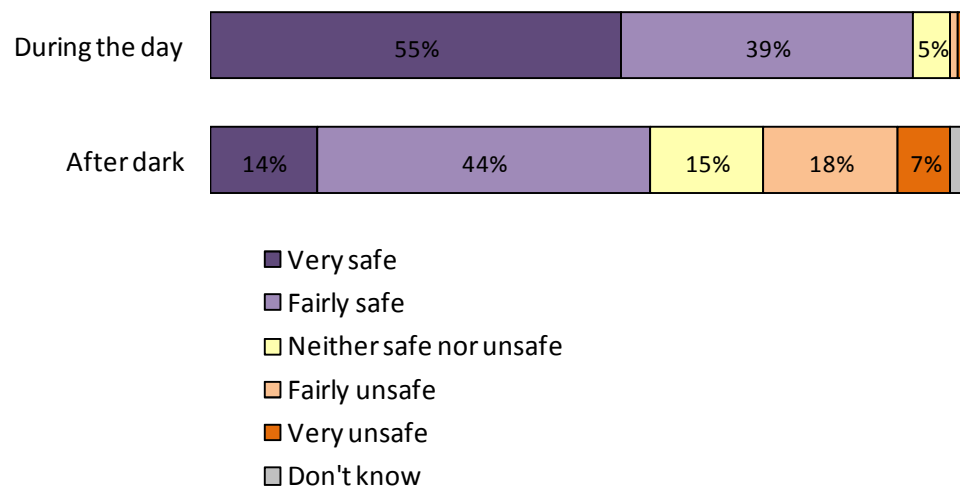
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1919, weighted 1369)

Respondents in the highest socio-economic group (AB), respondents in rural areas and respondents in Ribble Valley are more likely to feel safe after dark (68%, 69% and 75% respectively). Respondents in Burnley and disabled respondents are more likely to feel unsafe after dark (43% and 32% respectively). Respondents in Burnley are less likely to feel very safe during the day (32%).

The following charts show the breakdown by district of how safe respondents feel during the day and after dark.

Chart 5 -   Breakdown by district of how safe respondents feel outside in their local area during the day
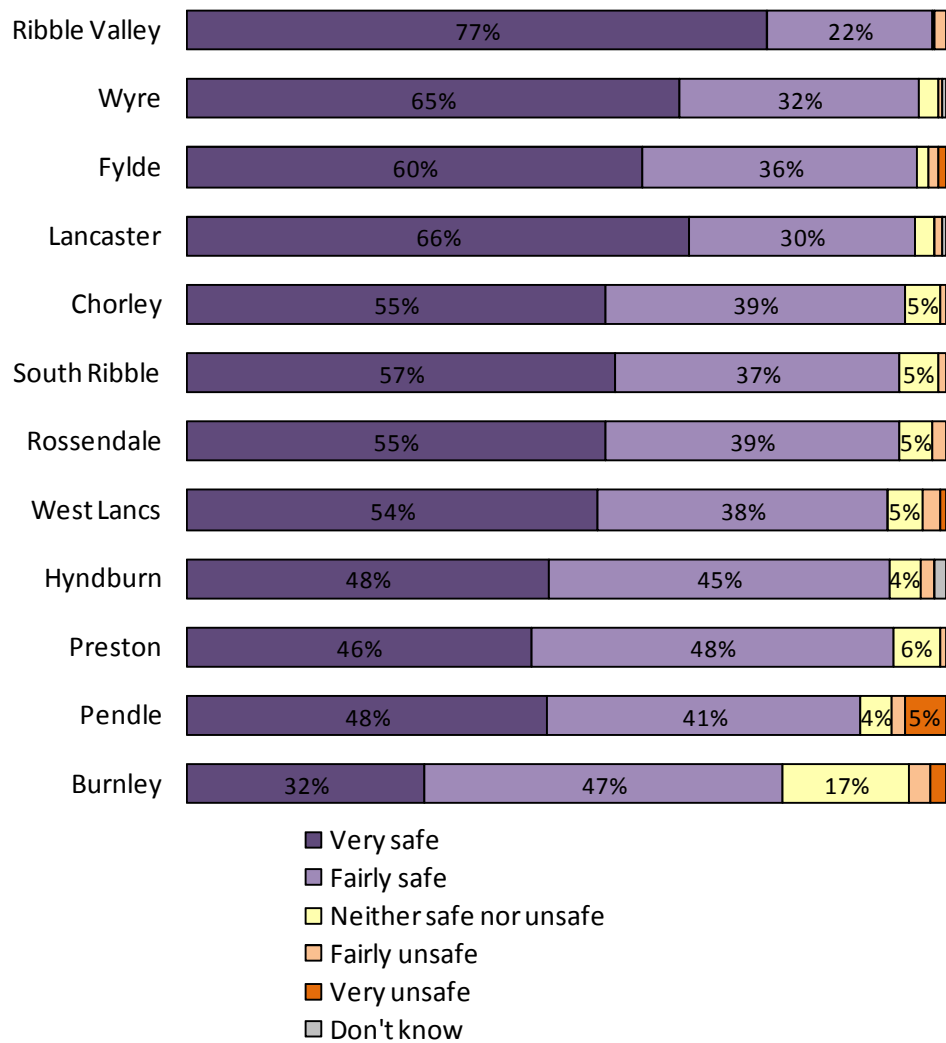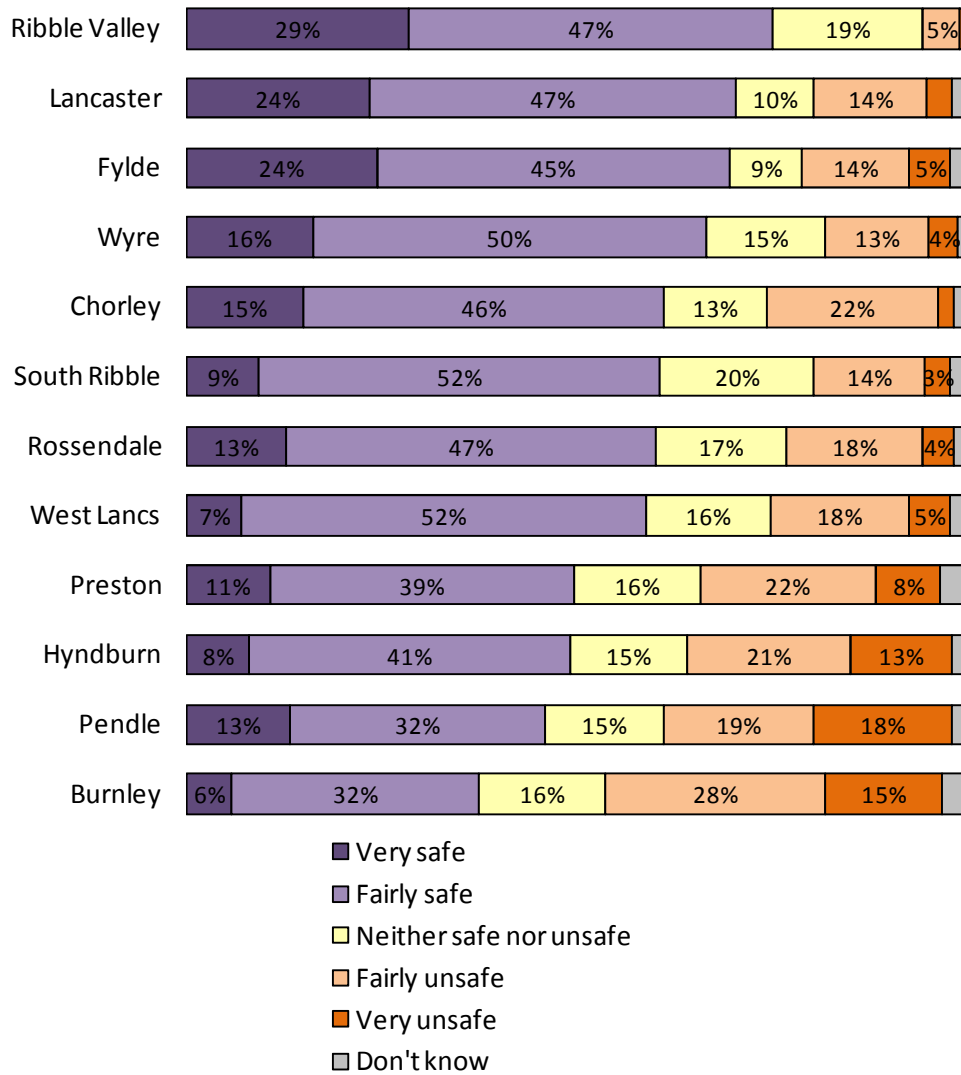
Chart 6 - **Breakdown by district of how safe respondents feel outside in their local area after dark**

District	Very safe	Fairly safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Fairly unsafe	Very unsafe
Ribble Valley	29%	47%	19%	5%	
Lancaster	24%	47%	10%	14%	
Fylde	24%	45%	9%	14%	5%
Wyre	16%	50%	15%	13%	4%
Chorley	15%	46%	13%	22%	
South Ribble	9%	52%	20%	14%	3%
Rossendale	13%	47%	17%	18%	4%
West Lancs	7%	52%	16%	18%	5%
Preston	11%	39%	16%	22%	8%
Hyndburn	8%	41%	15%	21%	13%
Pendle	13%	32%	15%	19%	18%
Burnley	6%	32%	16%	28%	15%

Legend:
- ■ Very safe
- ■ Fairly safe
- □ Neither safe nor unsafe
- ■ Fairly unsafe
- ■ Very unsafe
- ☐ Don't know

Encouragingly, when asked about different aspects of anti-social behaviour, most respondents don't think they are a problem in their local area. The biggest problem is rubbish or litter lying around (34% think it is a very or fairly big problem).

Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008 suggesting that, while anti-social behaviour is not felt to have increased, any initiatives to try and reduce anti-social behaviour do not appear to be changing respondents' perceptions.

Chart 7 -   Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are...?
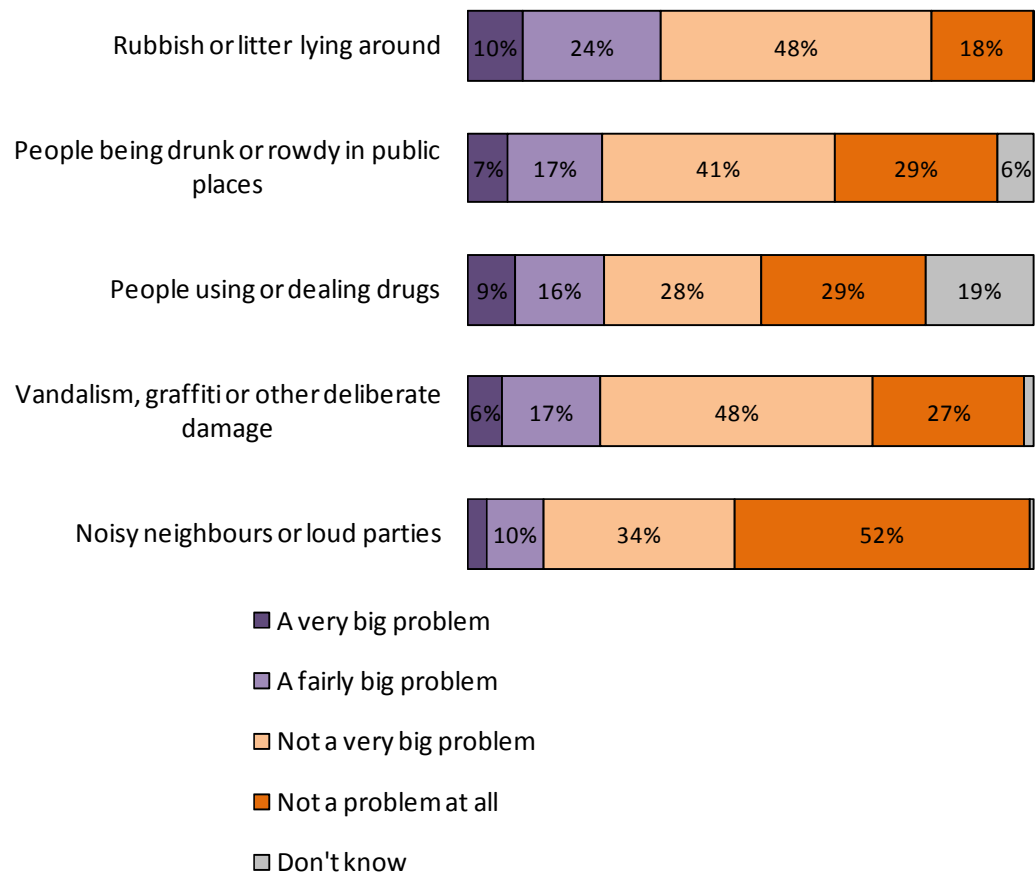
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1935, weighted 1393)

BME respondents are more likely to think that all of these issues are a very or fairly big problem in their local area: rubbish 60%; being drunk/rowdy 59%; drugs 61%; vandalism 52%; noisy neighbours 41%. Respondents in Burnley are more likely to think that vandalism and drugs are a very or fairly big problem in their local area (43% for both). People using or dealing drugs is also seen as a problem by respondents in socio-economic class DE (39%).

Respondents in Ribble Valley are more likely to say that rubbish or litter lying around and vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage are not problems at all (36% and 47% respectively). Respondents in rural areas are more likely to think that rubbish, drugs and people being drunk or rowdy are not problems in their local area (79%, 66% and 81% not a very big problem or not a problem at all respectively).

6 Conclusions and recommendations

The proportion of respondents that think the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour and the proportion that think there is less crime in their area have both increased since the Place Survey in 2008. There are a number of factors that may have contributed to this improvement:

- Crime rates have lowered since last year, particularly instances of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.
- The public has more access to crime statistics now through the Crime Mapper and Safer Lancashire websites[2].
- In March 2010, Safer Lancashire launched its anti-social behaviour pledge to tackle anti-social behaviour in Lancashire.
- For six weeks from June 2010, the police and local partners ran a confidence campaign to increase awareness and confidence of what is being done in Lancashire to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour.

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Respondents in Burnley are more likely to feel unsafe after dark and to think that vandalism and drugs are a very or fairly big problem in their local area (43% for both). Improving the problems with vandalism and drugs may also improve the proportion of respondents that feel safe after dark.

Despite the fact that respondents feel that police and other local public services are dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour more successfully now, respondents' perceptions of specific aspects of anti-social behaviour have not altered significantly since 2008. Any work that has been done to reduce particular aspects of anti-social behaviour has therefore not been noted by the public. Work should be done to improve this.

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[2] Crime Mapper: http://www.police.uk/; Safer Lancashire: http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/2011/

7 Appendix

7.1 Socio-Economic-Group Definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

Group A
- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows

Group B
- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications
- Principle officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows

Group C1
- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows

Group C2
- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group D
- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group E
- All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without a regular income