



Scottish Community  
Safety Network

# Perceptions and Experiences of Community Safety

July 2020



# Why this research was conducted

- By looking at this topic from a person-centric perspective we hope to better conceptualise what community safety as a whole: from what influences it to its consequences, means to different people
- This project aimed to unpick high level data about, and illustrate personal experiences of, community safety, with a view to informing what can be done to create safer communities
- Whilst this research summarises experiences of groups, it is important to remember that experiences of real people within these groups are not homogenous and there will be variation within groups



# How this research was conducted

- To do this, a rapid evidence review was conducted using online journal articles, and data was gathered and analysed from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS), and Public Health Scotland (PHS)
- This research looks at reported feelings of safety, perceptions of neighbourhood issues, experiences of crime and worry about crime because neighbourhood violence and perceptions of neighbourhood safety have been linked to outcomes such as depressive symptoms (Wilson-Genderson and Pruchno 2013), reduced academic achievement (Milam et al 2010) and personal and community wellbeing (Franc et al 2012)
- It also includes Scottish survey questions that measure confidence in the police as this can influence fear of crime (McGovern 2015) and empower citizens to engage in setting priorities for and running local services and encourage compliance with the law (Jackson and Bradford 2010)



## **'Invisible' communities (to the surveys)**

- Because this research uses data from household surveys, people living in group residences, institutions or those without a fixed address are excluded from these sources
- That includes tourists, those living in institutions or communal residences, such as prisons or hospitals, military bases and student accommodation, as well as people who are experiencing homelessness and gypsy travellers without a fixed address (gypsy travellers with a fixed address are included in the White Other ethnic group)

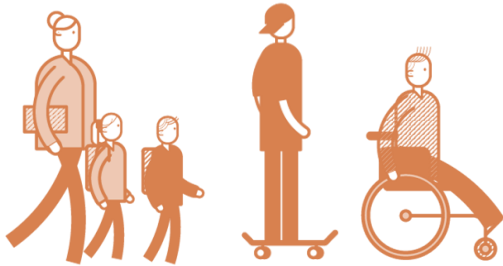


# Importance of community safety

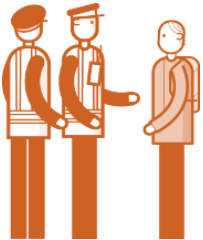
- Hate crime can have **emotional effects** (fear and hurt), **mental health** effects (stress, depression and anxiety), **physical health** (injury), **social impact** (social isolation and reduced attachment to neighbourhood (Benier 2017)), **practical implications** (moving house or job), **attitudes towards the police** (made negative) and effect on others (other victims as well as loved ones) (McPherson 2017; Chalmers and Leverick 2017).
- Neighbourhoods characterized as more walkable are associated with increased **physical activity**, increased social capital, lower overweight, and lower reports of depression and alcohol abuse (Renalds et al 2010).
- Neighbourhood violence and perceptions of neighbourhood safety have also been found to have independent associations with **depressive symptoms** (Wilson-Genderson and Pruchno 2013).
- Increasing neighbourhood violence has been linked to decreases in **math and reading achievement** in the USA (Milam et al 2010).
- Data from ten sweeps of the British Crime Survey suggests that **public confidence in police** is based less on instrumental concerns about crime and more on expressive concerns about neighbourhood stability and breakdown (Jackson et al 2009). Therefore, confidence may be driven not by fear of crime but by lay concerns about disorder, cohesion and informal social control.

# Key findings

Different groups feel safe and worry about crime to different degrees – children and young adults, women, Minority Ethnic people, people with ‘another religion’, those in more deprived areas and lower income households, those in urban areas, disabled people and victims of crime generally feel less safe alone at night and worry about crime more in Scotland



These groups often have worse perceptions of the police



This generally aligns with increased victimisation rates, or increased experiences of discrimination and harassment



These differences between groups with different characteristics are only general, these groups and experiences will not be homogenous



There are major data gaps, especially around young children; trans and gender non-conforming people; lesbian, gay and bisexual people; specific minority ethnic and religious groups in Scotland; and people with specific disabilities – as well as the intersections of these identities





# Age

- There is little research on young children's experiences of community safety, and the Scottish surveys looked at only interview adults (aged 16 and over)
- The threshold between childhood and adulthood varies between pieces of research, and as such some research on older teenagers will overlap with that on young adults
- Lots of surveys group a wide range of ages together, such as the SHS grouping 16-39 year olds and the SCJS grouping 25-44 year olds. Recoding new age bands for analysis was out of scope for this project and so findings may lack detail, however this could be worth exploring in future



# Children

Young children's experiences of community safety can be impacted by the presence of older children making them feel less safe (McCormack et al 2010).

Stop and Search may have been scaled back but these experiences can still foster negative feelings towards the police (Murray 2015 and 2016; Farren et al 2018).

Less than half of teenagers say their local area is 'really good' (Inchley et al 2020).

- ▶ Around 60% of 13-15 year olds 'always' feel safe in their local area in Scotland, and about 30% do so 'most of the time' (Inchley et al 2020).
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- ▶ Fear of crime appears to be one of the biggest issues children face, but this may not be picked up on by community leaders (Pople and Rees 2017). High exposure to violence contributes to this fear and threatens feelings of safety (Goldsmith 2012).
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- ▶ Violence seems to be a key theme in research on older children's experiences of community safety, with high levels of engagement in and experience of violence (Batchelor, Armstrong and MacLellan 2019).
  - ▶ 14% of teenagers reported 2-3 instances of bullying in the past couple of months and around a quarter reported discrimination based on their gender and where they, their parents or grandparents were born (Inchley et al 2020).
  - ▶ Children under age 5 are at slightly higher risk of hospital admission for unintentional injury, the most common cause of which are falls (PHS 2018/19).





# Young adults

Young adults are more likely to think the police are reliable (73% vs 64%) and less likely to think police don't deal with issues that matter locally (15% vs 20%), but less likely to agree that police would treat them with respect (84% vs 88%) than all Scots (SCJS 2017/18).

Young adults aged 16-39 are more likely to perceive issues in their local area, particularly rowdy behaviour, noisy neighbours/loud parties and rubbish/litter (SHS 2018).

- ▶ Young adults aged 16-24 are more likely to feel safe alone in their local area at night (83% compared to 77%), but slightly less likely to feel safe at home (94% compared to 96%) than the general population (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Young adults are 25% more likely than the general population to worry about violent crime and 50% more likely to worry sexual assault, but only two thirds as likely to worry about fraud. This is reflected in the perceived likelihood of crimes happening to them (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Worry about crime did not generally prevent people from doing things they want to (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Young adults aged 16-24 are almost twice as likely to experience discrimination, 50% more likely to be harassed and three times as likely to experience violent crime, while those aged 25-44 are most likely to experience property crime (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ 16-24 year olds are also slightly more likely to experience online crime than older groups (SCJS 2018/19).



# Adults aged 45-59

Adults aged 45-59 generally think less positively of the police than the general population. They are less likely to think the police can be relied upon (59% vs 64% of all Scots) and treat everyone fairly (59% vs 63%), and more likely to think the police are not dealing with issues that matter (23% vs 20%) (SCJS 2017/18).

Those aged 40-59 are about as likely as the general population to feel there are issues (such as rowdy behaviour and litter) in their local area (SHS 2018).

- ▶ 45-59 years old feel as safe as the general population alone at night, both at home and in their local area (77% and 96% respectively) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Adults aged 45-59 are generally most worried about crime happening to them, in particular fraud (65% compared to 54% of the general population) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Of those adults that did report worrying about crime, most were not prevented from doing things they would otherwise want to, across all age groups) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ 45-59 year olds experience a relatively equal share of property crime and relatively little violent crime (SCJS 2017/18).



# Adults aged over 60

Adults aged 60 and over are most likely to agree that police officers would treat them with respect (91% vs 88% of all Scots) and treat everyone fairly (65% vs 63%) (SCJS 2017/18).

Adults over 60 and over generally perceive fewer issues in their local area, being half as likely to report issues with groups and rowdy behaviour in their area than the general population (SHS 2018).

- ▶ Older people feel safest close to home (Ceccato and Bamzar 2016), but are not significantly more likely to report feeling safe alone at home at night than other ages (97% vs 96% of all Scots) (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ Over 60s are least likely to report feeling safe alone in their local area at night (70% vs 77% of all Scots) (SCJS 2017/18).
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- ▶ Those aged 60 and over are generally less worried about crime, with the exception of fraud which worries 60% of those aged 60+ (vs 57% of all Scots) (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ Across age groups, worry about crime equally prevents people from doing things they would otherwise want to (SCJS 2017/18).
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- ▶ Few over 60s experience crime (5% vs 13% of all Scots), but they are more likely to be victims of scam phone calls (5% of those aged 45+ vs 4% of 16-44 year olds) (SCJS 2018/19).
  - ▶ Hospital admissions for unintentional injuries, mainly from falls, disproportionately affect those aged 65 and over (PHS 2018/19).



# Gender

- There is little research on trans and non-binary people's perceptions and experiences of community safety
- Some research groups these experiences with those of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and so some findings are duplicated later under sexual orientation
- It would therefore be useful to conduct more research to understand specific perceptions and experiences of community safety for transgender and gender non-conforming people



# Women

Women are more likely than men to think police are reliable (68% vs 64%) and would treat them with respect (91% vs 88%), but are also more likely to agree that community relations are poor (25% vs 22%) and that police do not deal with issues that matter to the community (24% vs 22%) (SCJS 2017/18).

Data on perception of neighbourhood issues is not available by gender in the SHS.

- ▶ Women are less likely than men to feel safe alone at night both in their local area (66% vs 89%) and at home (93% vs 98%) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Women are more likely to worry about crime happening to them, especially robbing/mugging (2x as likely) and sexual assault (6x as likely), and this is more likely to prevent them from doing things than men (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Women and men experience very similar victimisation rates for all crime types in the SCJS (2017/18).
- ▶ Harassment and discrimination feature prominently in women's lives but this is often normalised and so underreported (Bracadale 2018).
- ▶ Women are 5 times as likely to think their most recent experience of being insulted, pestered or harassed may have been motivated by their gender (SJCS 2017/18).



# Men

Men are less likely to agree that police are reliable (54% vs 68%), respectful (88% vs 91%), and that they listen to local concerns (57% vs 59%). However they are slightly less likely to think that police don't deal with issues that matter to the community (22% vs 24%) and that community relations are poor (22% vs 25%) (SCJS 2017/18).

Data on perception of neighbourhood issues is not available by gender in the SHS.

- ▶ Men feel safer than women alone at night both in the local area (89% vs 66%) and at home (98% vs 93%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Men worry less about all crime types than women, are less likely to think crimes are likely to happen to them in the next year and are less likely to be prevented from doing things they want to at least 'a little' if they are worried (26% vs 39%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Despite higher exposure to violence at a young age (McAra and McVie 2016), most men are no more likely to experience violent crime as adults (SCJS 2017/18). However research suggests that young men in deprived areas continue to be at risk of violence (Batchelor, Armstrong and MacLellan 2019).
- ▶ Women and men experience very similar victimisation rates for all crime types in the SCJS (2017/18).
- ▶ However, men were slightly more likely to have had their device infected by malicious software (9% vs 7%) (SCJS 2017/18).



# Transgender and gender non-conforming people

The sample size of people identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming in the SCJS is too small to explore their perceptions of police, and is too small in the SHS to explore their perceptions of their local areas. This is an evidence gap that should be addressed by future research.

- ▶ The sample of people identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming in the SCJS is too small to explore their feelings of safety in their local area or worry about different crime types.
  - ▶ Given that perception of safety is a significant stressor for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts for transgender and gender non-conforming people (Drescher et al 2019), this data gap need to be filled.
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- ▶ Transgender and gender non-conforming people are disproportionately affected by sexual violence victimisation, partner physical violence and homelessness; these experiences contribute to higher rates of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts (Drescher et al 2019).
  - ▶ Despite the diverse range of identities in the LGBT community, hate crimes can indirectly affect all of its members, especially those who feel empathy towards the victim and those with past experiences of hate crime (Paterson et al 2018).



# Sexual orientation

- There is a distinct lack of Scottish data on experiences of people with specific sexual orientations that needs to be addressed. Survey results from England and Wales have been used instead where possible.
- Some surveys and pieces of research group lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people together, so some of the sources in this section are also relevant to experiences of transgender people.
- A wider focus on the effects of abuse is needed, as a focus on reporting hate crime is at odds with the way abuse is often normalised by LGBT people as a coping mechanism (Browne et al 2011).





# Lesbian, gay and bisexual people

Interestingly, perceptions of the police do not vary in any uniform way by sexual orientation (CSEW 2018/19).

There is no data on how perceptions of neighbourhood issues vary by sexual orientation in the SHS, which presents a data gap to be filled.

- ▶ It was not possible to analyse the SCJS data on feelings of safety by sexual orientation, as there is no variable for sexual orientation in the datasets.
  - ▶ However, in England and Wales bisexual people were slightly less likely to report feeling safe alone at night than heterosexual and gay/lesbian people (76% vs 80%) (CSEW 2018/19).
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- ▶ In England and Wales, those who gave their sexual orientation as 'other' were by far the most likely to worry about burglary and car crime, but worry about fraud and violent crime was fairly equal (CSEW 2018/19).
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- ▶ Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are almost three times as likely to experience discrimination and harassment in Scotland (SHS 2018).
  - ▶ 6% of people believe their most recent experience of being insulted, pestered or intimidated may have been on the basis of their sexual orientation (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ Although it is a diverse community, hate crimes can indirectly affect all LGBT members, especially those who feel empathy towards the victim and those with past experiences of hate crime (Paterson et al 2018).

NB CSEW findings relate only to England and Wales and do not apply to Scotland



# Ethnicity

- There is a lack of Scottish data on specific ethnic groups, often due to small sample sizes. Survey results from England and Wales have been used instead where possible.
- Some surveys and research group different ethnic groups together, leading to a lack of detail. Further research with specific ethnic groups would be useful to better understand their experiences.
- Research shows that for ethnic (and religious) minority young people in Scotland, community safety is often tied up with racism (Botterill et al 2019), so it is important to explore these experiences for different genders and ages.



# Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people

Views on the police vary, with Ethnic Minority and White Other people generally thinking more highly of the police than White Scottish and White British people (SCJS 2017/18).

There is no data on how perceptions of neighbourhood issues vary by ethnicity in the SHS, which presents a data gap to be filled.

- ▶ Minority Ethnic people are less likely to feel safe alone in their local area at night (74% vs 78% of White people) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Minority Ethnic people are 1.5x as likely to worry about vehicle crime, property crime and mugging/robbing, 2x as likely to worry about violent crime and 2.5x as likely to worry about sexual assault compared to White people (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ This worry is more likely to prevent Minority Ethnic people from doing things at least 'a little' (48% vs 34% of White people) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Minority Ethnic people experience very similar victimisation rates to White people for all crime types in the SCJS (2017/18).
- ▶ Ethnic and religious minority groups are around twice as likely to experience discrimination and harassment (SHS 2018).
- ▶ The most common characteristic people worried about being insulted, pestered or intimidated on the basis of was their ethnic origin or race (7% vs 2-5% for other characteristics), and 9% of people say their most recent experience of insulting, pestering or harassment may have been motivated by their ethnic origin or race (SCJS 2017/18).



# Some detail on specific ethnic groups

English and Welsh data suggests those identifying their ethnic background as **Mixed/Multiple** are most likely to feel safe alone in their local area at night (85%) (CSEW 2018/19).

Those identifying as **Other (incl. Arab)** were least likely to report feeling safe in their local area at night (66%) (CSEW 2018/19).

**Asian** people (and White Other people) are least likely to report having had an accident in the past year (7% vs 11% of White Scottish people) (SHeS 2017).

**Asian/Asian British** people are least likely to be worried about car crime (15%) but are fairly evenly concerned about burglary (23%), fraud (26%) and violent crime (24%) (CSEW 2018/19).

Although people identifying their ethnicity as Caribbean are generally more worried about crime than those identifying as African, **Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British** people are most worried about fraud (29%), followed by violent crime (19%) (CSEW 2018/19).



# Religion

- There is a lack of Scottish data on experiences of specific religious groups outside Christianity. Because there were few survey respondents from other religious groups, their answers are grouped together in the data to avoid these respondents being indirectly identifiable. The groups available to analyse are:
  - None
  - Church of Scotland
  - Roman Catholic
  - Other Christian
  - Another Religion
- For ethnic and religious minority young people in Scotland, community safety is often tied up with racism. A recent study found most of the ethnic and religious minority young people had experienced some form of racism, from both strangers and peers (Botterill et al 2019).
- Research suggests that sectarianism has been linked to experiences of bigotry, but not many of discrimination, although this may be partly due to active avoidance of events where people felt this might occur (Goodall et al 2015).



# Those identifying as religious

Perceptions of the police did not vary in any uniform way by religious identity (SCJS 2017/18).

There was no data available on perceptions and experiences of neighbourhood issues by religion in the SHS.

- ▶ Religious people generally feel less safe alone in their local area at night (73.1%) compared to non-religious people (82.5%), but there is little difference at home.
- ▶ Roman Catholics are least likely to do so (69.5%), followed by Church of Scotland and Another Religion (72.6% and 72.7%).

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- ▶ Religious people were slightly more worried about all crime types happening to them when compared to non-religious people, with the exception of robbing/mugging – particularly those with ‘another religion’ (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ This worry is more likely to prevent religious people from doing things at least ‘a little’, again particularly for people with ‘another religion’ (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ People with ‘another religion’ were more likely to experience crime than Christian denominations and non-religious people. The difference was greatest for property crime (almost 2x as likely as any other group) (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ People with ‘another religion’ are around 3x as likely to experience discrimination and harassment than non-religious people (SHS 2018).
  - ▶ 2.5% of people thought their most recent experience of being insulted, pestered or harassed may have been motivated by their religion. 3.6% of people were very or fairly worried about this happening (SCJS 2017/18).



# Disability

- Research points to a significant minority of disabled people, in particular people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions, experiencing bullying, harassment and violence. These experiences take place in a variety of settings and have a variety of perpetrators: from schools and homes to on the street, from professional carers, friends and family to strangers (Hall 2019).
- Fears about personal safety can make disabled people fearful to the extent of avoiding certain places and situations (McClimens et al. 2014 in Hall 2019).
- While these findings are reflected in Scottish data on the next slide, there is no data on the experiences of those with specific disabilities. Due to small sample sizes, further qualitative research may be needed to fill this gap.



# Disabled people

Disabled people have less positive perceptions of the police than non-disabled people across all the questions asked (SCJS 2017/18).

There was no data on differences in perceptions and experiences of neighbourhood issues by disability in the SHS.

- ▶ Disabled people feel less safe alone at night, both in their local area (65% vs 80%) and at home (91% vs 97%), compared to non-disabled people (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Disabled people worry more about crime happening to them, particularly robbing/mugging, violent crime and sexual assault (around 50% more likely to worry) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ This worry prevents them from doing things at least 'a little' to a greater extent than for non-disabled people (48% vs 30%) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ People with a long-term physical/mental health condition are around 50% more likely to experience harassment and discrimination than those without one (SHS 2018).
- ▶ Disabled people are slightly more likely to experience crime generally, compared to non-disabled people (15% vs 12%) (SCJS 2017/18).





# Area deprivation and income

- The crime drop in Scotland has occurred unequally, with no improvement for those most at risk of being a victim, including those socio-economically disadvantaged (McVie et al 2020).
- Socio-economic disadvantage interacts with other characteristics and experiences such as gender, age and other forms of vulnerability to create varying impacts in terms of feelings of safety and exposure to violence (Batchelor, Armstrong and MacLellan 2019; McAra and McVie 2016).
- Area deprivation in this research is measured by the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation.
- Income, unless stated otherwise, is measured in bands:
  - Less than £5,200;    • £15,600 - £20,799    • £36,400 - £51,999
  - £5,200 - £10,399    • £20,800 - £25,999    • £52,000 - £77,999
  - £10,400 - £15,599    • £26,000 - £36,399    • £78,000 or more



# People in more deprived areas (SIMD)

Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland thought less positively about the police than the rest of Scotland across all questions asked. They are less likely to think police would treat them with respect (85% vs 90%) and treat everyone fairly (64% vs 71%), more likely to agree that community relations are poor (30% vs 22%) and that police do not deal with issues that matter to the community (32% vs 22%), and slightly less likely to think that police listen to local concerns (56% vs 58%) (SCJS 2017/18).

Neighbourhood issues (e.g. vandalism, groups, drugs misuse, rowdy behaviour, noisy neighbours, neighbour disputes, rubbish /litter, animal nuisance, abandoned/burnt out vehicles) were reported by up to 8 times as many people, and experienced by up to 6 times as many people, living in the 20% most deprived areas compared to those in the 20% least deprived areas (SHS 2018).

- ▶ Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland were significantly less likely to feel safe in their local area at night when alone (64% vs 79% rest of Scotland), and slightly less likely to feel safe in this way at home alone (92% vs 96%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Those in the 15% most deprived areas are between 1.5x and 2x as likely to worry about robbing/mugging, violent crime and sexual assault than those in the rest of Scotland (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Worry about crime is also more likely to prevent people in the 15% most deprived areas from doing things they want to at least 'a little' than the rest of Scotland (42% vs 32%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Those living in the 15% most deprived areas were around twice as likely to experience violent crime, and 50% more likely to experience property crime and general crime, than the rest of Scotland (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Those in the 20% most deprived areas were also more likely to report being discriminated against (10% vs 7%) and harassed (7% vs 4%) than those in the 20% least deprived areas (SHS 2018).
- ▶ Those in the 20% most deprived areas are also more likely to report having had an accident (12% vs 9%) (SHeS 2017) or be admitted to hospital for an unintentional injury (PHS 2018/19) than those in the 20% least deprived areas.



# Household income

Attitudes to the police were mixed for income. While there was no clear difference by income for whether police are reliable and treat everyone fairly and listen to local concerns, those in higher income households were more likely to think that police would treat them with respect, and less likely to agree that community relations are poor and that police do not deal with issues that matter to the community (SCJS 2017/18).

There was no SHS data on how perceptions and experience of neighbourhood issues varies by household income.

- ▶ Those in the 20% lowest income households are also more likely to report having had an accident than those in the highest income 20% of households (13% vs 10%)(SHeS 2017).
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- ▶ Those in higher income households were more likely than those in lower income household to worry about vehicle crime and fraud, while those in lower income households were more likely to worry about property crime, robbing/mugging, violent crime and sexual assault (SCJS 2017/18).
  - ▶ Those in lower income households were more likely to be prevented from doing things at least 'a little' by this worry than those in higher income households (SCJS 2017/18).



# Urban/rurality

- Urban/rurality is usually classified into the following categories:
  - Large urban areas
  - Other urban areas
  - Accessible small towns
  - Remote small towns
  - Accessible rural
  - Remote rural
- Differences in perceptions of safety and crime may be influenced by the different sense of neighbourliness experienced in urban and rural settings.
  - E.g. 96% of those in rural areas agree that if their home was empty, they could count on a neighbour or other people in their area to keep an eye on it, compared to 85% of those in urban areas (SCJS 2017/18).
  - E.g. 90% of those in rural areas agree that they have neighbours or other people in their local area they could turn to for advice or support, compared to 80% of those in urban areas (SCJS 2017/18).



# Urban areas

People in urban areas are less likely to think police treat everyone fairly (69% vs 75%) and that they listen to local concerns (57% vs 64%). They are more likely to agree that community relations are poor (24% vs 22%). However, urban and rural views on whether police are reliable, would treat respondents with respect and deal with issues that matter to the community are very similar (SCJS 2017/18).

Those living in large urban areas are also up to 4 times as likely to perceive and up to 7 times as likely to experience problems in their neighbourhoods (such as vandalism and rowdy behaviour) than those in remote rural areas (SHS 2018).

- ▶ Those in urban areas generally felt less safe alone at night than those in rural areas, both in their local area (75% vs 88%) and at home (95% vs 98%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ People in urban areas are also more likely to be worried about all types of crime happening to them, and are more likely to think these are likely to happen to them in the next 12 months, except for fraud where the reverse is true (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Worry about crime prevents 36% of those in urban areas from doing things they want to at least 'a little', compared to 25% of those in rural areas (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Violent crime and property crime affects over 50% more people in urban areas (SCJS 2017/18), however online crime affects slightly fewer people in urban areas (20% vs 23%) (SCJS 2018/19).



# Rural areas

People in rural areas are more likely to think police treat everyone fairly (75% vs 69%) and that they listen to local concerns (64% vs 57%). They are slightly less likely to agree that community relations are poor (22% vs 24%). However, urban and rural views on whether police are reliable, would treat respondents with respect and deal with issues that matter to the community are very similar (SCJS 2017/18).

Those living in small remote areas are also up to 4 times less likely to perceive and up to 7 times less likely to experience problems in their neighbourhoods (such as vandalism and rowdy behaviour) than those in large urban areas (SHS 2018).

- ▶ Those in rural areas generally felt more safe alone at night than those in rural areas, both in their local area (88% vs 75%) and at home (98% vs 95%) (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ People in rural areas are also less likely to be worried about all types of crime happening to them, and are less likely to think these are likely to happen to them in the next 12 months, except for fraud where the reverse is true (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Worry about crime prevents 25% of those in rural areas from doing things they want to at least 'a little', compared to 32% of those in urban areas (SCJS 2017/18).
- ▶ Violent crime and property crime affects over 50% fewer people in rural areas (SCJS 2017/18), however online crime affect slightly more people in rural areas (23% vs 20%) (SCJS 2018/19)



# Victims of crime

Victims of crime tend to think less positively of the police, across all measures asked about in the SCJS. They are less likely to think that the police are reliable (60% vs 68%), would treat them with respect (86% vs 90%), treat everyone fairly (62% vs 71%) and listen to local concerns (53% vs 59%) than non-victims. They are also more likely to agree that community relations are poor (29% vs 22%) and don't deal with issues that matter to the community (30% vs 22%) (SCJS 2017/18).

There was no data on differences in perceptions and experiences of neighbourhood issues by victim status in the SHS.

- ▶ People who have been a victim of crime in the past year feel less safe alone at night, both in their local area (68% vs 78%) and at home (91% vs 96%) (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Recent victims worry over 50% more about all crime types except fraud, and are more likely to be prevented from doing things at least 'a little' by this worry (44% vs 32%), when compared to non-victims (SCJS 2017/18).

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- ▶ Much of the violent crime in Scotland is concentrated on 'repeat victims': often young men from deprived areas (Scottish Government 2019)
- ▶ Interestingly there are no differences in the prevalence of online crime for victims and non-victims of offline crime (SCJS 2018/19).



# People experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping

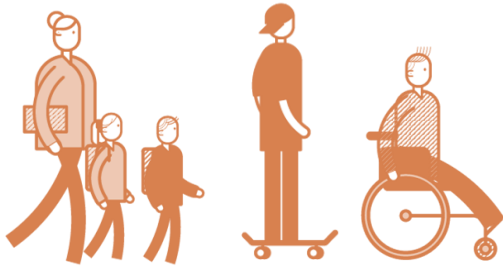
There is a data gap as people with no fixed address are not included in the Scottish surveys used in this research however from international research (Canada) satisfaction with police interaction was mostly (62%) negative (vs. 7% neutral and 31% positive). Most common descriptors were rude (65%), helpful (59%), mean (56%), unhelpful (48%), kind (47%) and sympathetic (33%) (Krameddine and Silverstone 2016).

- ▶ Feeling unsafe may have particularly adverse health consequences for chronically homeless individuals as this can trigger previous trauma related to victimisation (Hsu et al 2016).
  - ▶ There is a lack of distinction between public and private space, or 'safe' and 'unsafe' places: homelessness is widely considered to be a marginal and risky space, but can also be considerably safer than remaining at home (Pain and Francis 2010).
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- ▶ Young people living on the streets in Canada are much more likely than young people with homes to be victims of a broad range of crimes, particularly violent and sexual crime (Gaetz 2004).

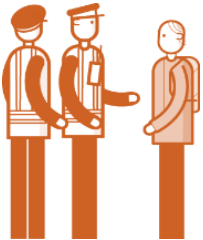


# Key findings

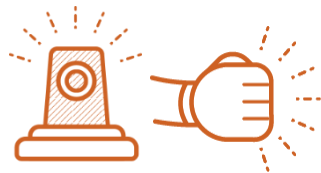
Different groups feel safe and worry about crime to different degrees – children and young adults, women, Minority Ethnic people, people with ‘another religion’, those in more deprived areas and lower income households, those in urban areas, disabled people and victims of crime generally feel less safe alone at night and worry about crime more in Scotland



These groups often have worse perceptions of the police



This generally aligns with increased victimisation rates, or increased experiences of discrimination and harassment



These differences between groups with different characteristics are only general, these groups and experiences will not be homogenous



There are major data gaps, especially around young children; trans and gender non-conforming people; lesbian, gay and bisexual people; specific minority ethnic and religious groups in Scotland; and people with specific disabilities – as well as the intersections of these identities



# Conclusions

Data gaps may need to be filled using qualitative research as some groups concerned are quite small. Qualitative research would also help to explore the variation within groups and the intersections between them.



Future research also needs to explore how these experiences have changed after COVID-19, e.g. older people, those with underlying health conditions and BAME people are at a greater risk from the virus, and while non-sexual crimes of violence fell by 14%, fraud may have increased.



We also need to explore the root causes of feelings of safety and unsafety and worry about crime, to be able to target these effectively (e.g. do we need to alter neighbourhood structure (Scarborough et al 2010)).



Groups may need tailored community safety strategies – some may benefit from neighbourhood schemes, or more interaction with police; some may need more protection at home than out in public; some will need more protection from specific crime types etc.



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