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**Your Police survey 2020/21**  
**We Asked, You Said, We Did**  
**APRIL 2021**

## **We Asked**

In April 2020, Police Scotland refreshed its local policing survey to gather views from Scotland's diverse communities. Your Police 2020/2021 remained open throughout the year (it closed on 5 April 2021) and helped us understand people's opinions of policing in their local area, as well as tell us about any concerns regarding their area which was affecting their safety or wellbeing.

Your feedback helped us make sure that our approaches to policing were fair, in terms of how we are managing the Coronavirus pandemic, and by supporting the communities that we serve.

If you didn't take part in Your Police last year, you can [take part in our new Your Police 2021/22!](#) Don't miss out on your chance to have your say and let us know how we're doing in your community.

## **You Said**

Strong levels of public confidence in the police was reported with the majority of people supporting our approach to keeping people safe during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In total, we received 36,542 responses over 12 months, including over 100,000 free-text responses. There were 1,867 responses received in March 2021 – highlighting the continued dedication of local policing divisions in listening to the communities they serve.

In the main, **people say they have confidence in us**, with the average public confidence level for the period April 2020 – April 2021 being broadly consistent at 57%. Confidence levels among organisations who responded to Your Police (277 organisations) continues to be higher than average at 71%.

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We learned that things which effect public confidence include changes to Covid-19 transmission rates locally and nationally, local lockdowns (Protection Level 4) and the national lockdown which began in January 2021. We also know that events taking place in local areas that attracted a large police presence had an impact on public confidence. Public confidence exists across all of our 13 [local policing divisions](#).

The majority of the **people who responded to Your Police told us that they feel safe in their local areas** – an average of 84% of people said they felt safe. This has remained the case throughout the past year. However, we know that fear about the spread, or potential spread, of Covid-19 sometimes made some people feel less safe.

Overall, 62% of those who took part in Your Police told us that **police are friendly and approachable**. 38% of people said that the police **listen to the concerns of local people** and 34% said the police **deal with local issues**. Throughout the year, a large number of the public said that they 'don't know' when asked about these measures. This highlights an **opportunity for us to enhance and expand our engagement** within Scotland's diverse communities.

46% of people told us their **concern about crime** had remained the same (as before April 2020). Three in ten people said that their concerns about crime had increased during the pandemic (30%), while around one in ten said it had decreased (14%). We know that people with disabilities and those who live in our most deprived areas have more concern about crime. This is very important to us.

Generally, people's concerns have included: social distancing breaches and antisocial behaviour (including at local beauty spots and public parks/greenspace), speeding and dangerous driving, house break-ins, drug taking, dealing and wider vulnerability concerns of relatives and neighbours. Greater engagement being required with children and young people, including those who support them - such as youth workers, teachers, and sports clubs - was also highlighted.

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Summary of public opinion on Police Scotland's approach to policing the COVID-19 pandemic



- I fully support the approach taken by the Police
- The Police should take tougher action to ensure public compliance
- I support the approach taken by the Police but in some cases they are going too far
- The Police have no role in enforcing the lockdown, compliance should be a matter for individuals
- The approach taken by the Police in enforcing the lockdown is too heavy handed
- None of the above

Overall support for tougher measures is similar to public survey data gathered by the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland's User Experience survey. Responses over the period April 2020 – April 2021 told us that when transmission rates of Covid-19 increase, people expect us to take tougher action and when rates decrease, people say they are happy with our approach.

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Benchmarking data from [YouGov](#) consistently showed that Scottish residents were much more likely than English and Welsh residents to want the police to take tougher action to ensure public compliance with restrictions.

On what matters most to the public (from open-ended responses), constant themes included: visibility (local presence), police support in enforcing lockdown restrictions, communicating and engaging with the public, and understanding the needs of diverse communities during the crisis.

## We Did

The survey launched on 9 April 2020 on Police Scotland's [Citizen Space platform](#). It was the largest of its kind in the UK to involve the public in a conversation about the policing approach and COVID-19. Responses have been reviewed on a weekly basis by senior police officers and have helped us act quickly in relation to emerging issues; helping shape our approaches to operational policing across Scotland.

## Ten things we have done with your feedback

**Enhance local police presence at identified key locations** (including scenic areas, parks, urban areas), with a focus on patrolling during the evenings and after dark. People told us a visible police presence was important in making them feel safe.



**Update our local community partners on a regular basis**, through local police scrutiny boards in each local authority area – using the data to design an appropriate policing response for local needs.

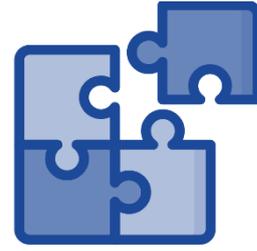


Shape our **communications and advice in local areas** in response to concerns and feedback from the public – helping people to stay safe (including from new scams arising during the pandemic) and be more aware of Scottish Government guidelines for their area.



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Increase engagement with over 20 organisations, representing the interests of people with living with disability, to make sure our information and messaging is accessible for all. This **ensured the police are awareness of the needs and challenges of everyone**, including those living with physical, sensory and learning difficulties, in practicing social distancing and using face masks.



Include the needs and circumstances of people who may be more vulnerable in daily police officer briefings – ensuring the **police engage appropriately and bring empathy and understanding to their interactions**.



**Provide information and advice on issues like hate crime, housebreaking and responsibly use of vehicles** (including off-road bikes and scooters) to reassure all communities.



Offer **discreet and safe ways for the public to report a Covid-related incident and speak to a police officer** using the latest tech. We also developed an online reporting form and used video calls to collaborate with our partner agencies in the public and third sector. We have also used tech to **take part in community meetings** and offer **virtual diary appointments** to make it easier for the public to speak to our officers.



**Increase police patrols and information** in areas where the public have raised concern about reckless driving and speeding.



Provide a **British Sign Language (BSL) version of the Your Police survey**.



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Used the insight we have gathered through Your Police to **help shape our [Annual Police Plan 2021/22](#) and [your local policing plans 2020-23](#).**



## **Thank you**

We are grateful to all who participated in Your Police during 2020/21. Our Research and Insights Team are currently reviewing every response in detail and are developing a full report which will be shared on Citizen Space in the coming months.

The huge response we have had from the public has resulted in us deciding to refresh and launch Your Police 2021/22. Responses to Your Police will continue to feed into decision-making structures within Police Scotland on a regular basis (usually monthly). Police Scotland's 'Public Confidence Governance Board' will build on the actions taken from the survey and continue to shape our approaches to public contact and engagement which is vital for us in order to maintain and increase the already high levels of public confidence achieved during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are enhancing our local and national approaches to community engagement, and involving more people in more decisions about their police service in new ways. Keep an eye on our Citizen Space platform and public information channels for more information in the coming months.

**Further information:** Any clarifications or questions about this update can be made by contacting the Research and Insight Team:

[consultations@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:consultations@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

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