

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Leader's Portfolio Meeting

13 May 2010

**AUTHOR/S:** Corporate Manager (Community and Customer Services) / Partnerships Manager

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### FEAR OF CRIME SURVEY 2009/10

#### Purpose

1. To outline the results of the fear of crime survey carried out by the Council between January and March 2010.
2. To agree future actions as a result of the responses received to the fear of crime survey.

This not a key decision, however, has been brought before this decision-maker as the lead Cabinet member for the action in the 2009/10 Council Actions.

#### Recommendations and Reasons

3. That the Leader agrees to:
  - (a) note the content of the report because it reports on a Council action for 2009/10.
  - (b) carry out a further survey aimed at children and young people because they were excluded from the initial survey.
  - (c) continue to work with partners, through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to further publicise accurate crime levels, eCops and crime reduction tips.

#### Executive Summary

4. The report, which is limited through small numbers of responses, shows that the majority of residents participating in the consultation are not overly fearful of becoming a victim of crime. Some fear, higher than it should be compared to the level of crime in the district, does however exist and there are small actions that the District Council can take, with partners, to attempt to further reduce levels of fear.
5. It should be noted that an element of fear can be positive if it does not outweigh the actual risk and is accompanied by a realistic response that assists the individual to take steps to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim.

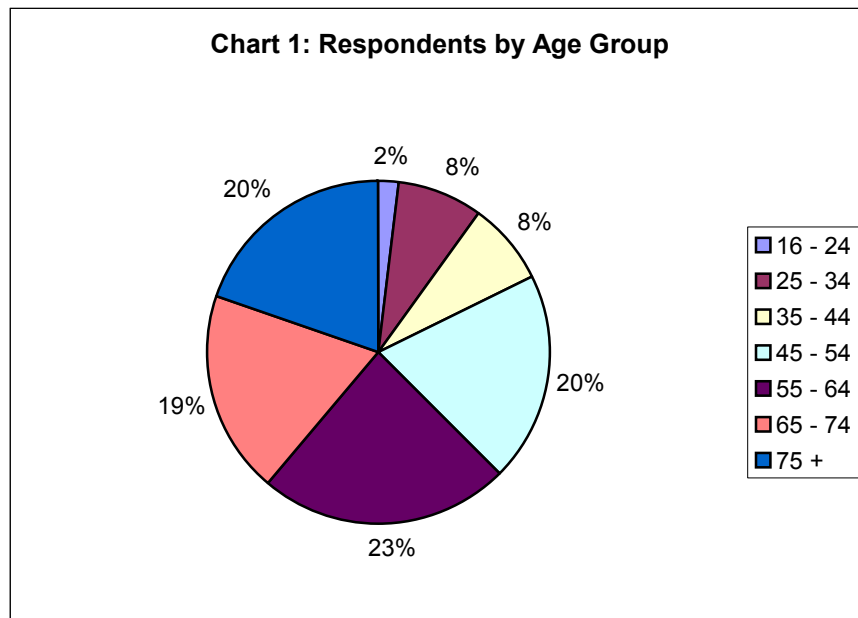
#### Background

6. The 2009/10 Aims, Approaches and Actions included an action to "carry out a Fear of Crime and Public Reassurance Survey". Councillor Ray Manning was agreed as the lead member for this action.

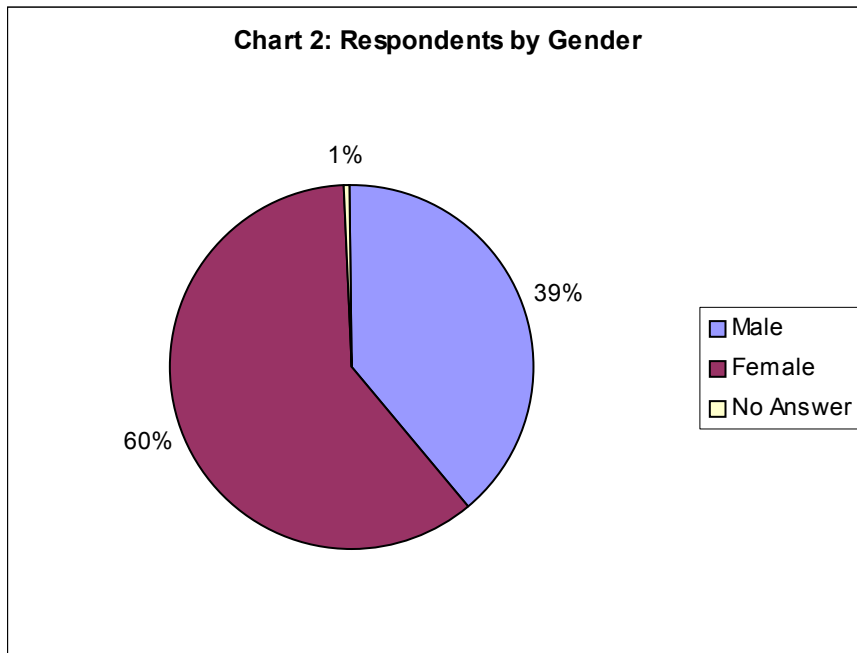
7. After consultation with partners, a fear of crime survey was placed on the South Cambridgeshire District Council website on 7 January 2010 and in the Spring 2010 issue of the South Cambridgeshire Magazine (see Appendix A). The survey ran until 31 March 2010, with hardcopies received by 30 April 2010 also counted in the results.
8. The survey questions are similar to those included in both the Place Survey and the British Crime Survey.
9. The survey was featured on the homepage of the website sporadically throughout the consultation window and also publicised through Neighbourhood Panels meetings that occurred within the window.

### Considerations

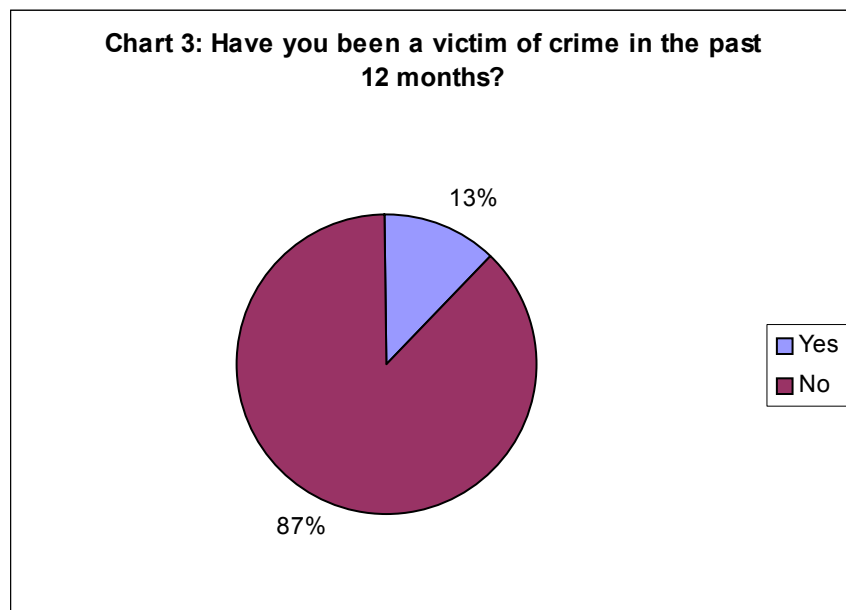
10. There were a total of 152 responses to the survey, which were received either via a web-based survey (64 responses) or a hardcopy survey that was included in the Spring 2010 issue of the South Cambs Magazine (88 responses). The small sample number means that any conclusions drawn cannot be taken as statistically significant and should be used with caution.
11. The results tables can be found at Appendix B.
12. Chart 1 below shows the age of people responding to the survey. As can be seen, 82% of respondents were aged over 45. There were very few respondents between 16 and 24 years (three) and the survey was not open to young people under 16. A further survey, aimed specifically at children and young people could be carried out during 2010 subject to available resources.



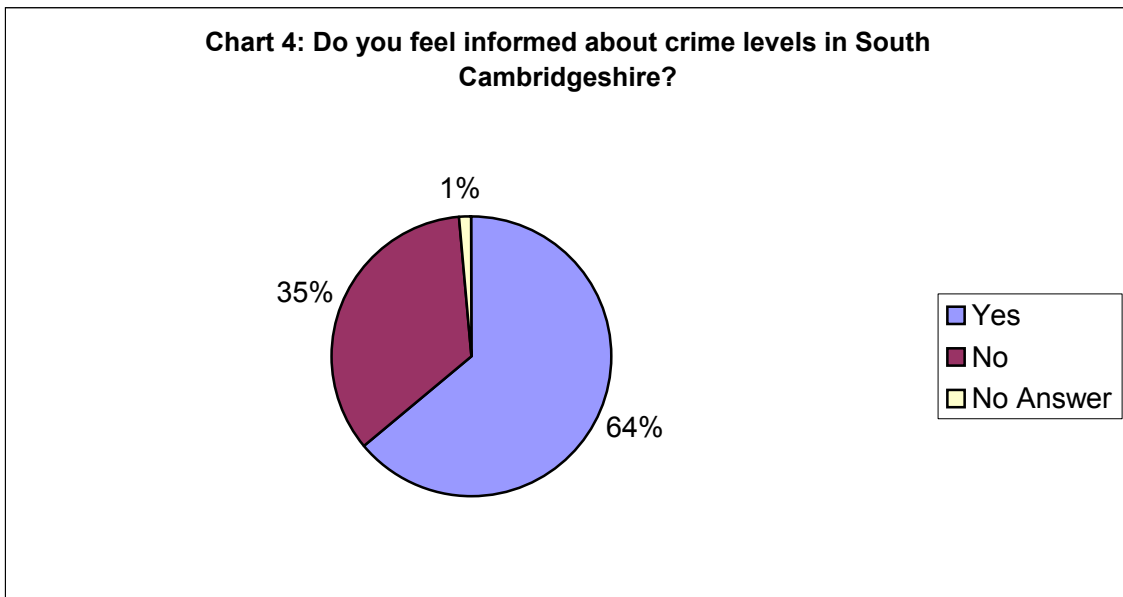
13. Chart 2 shows the gender breakdown of respondents. Three-fifths of respondents were female (92).



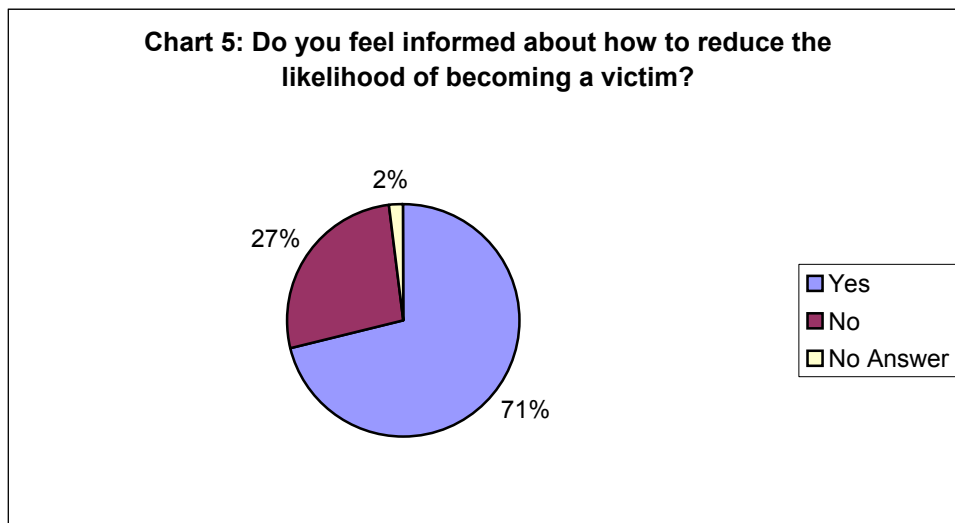
14. Chart 3 shows that only 20 respondents (13%) stated they had been a victim of crime in the past 12 months whereas the vast majority, 133 respondents (87%), had not.



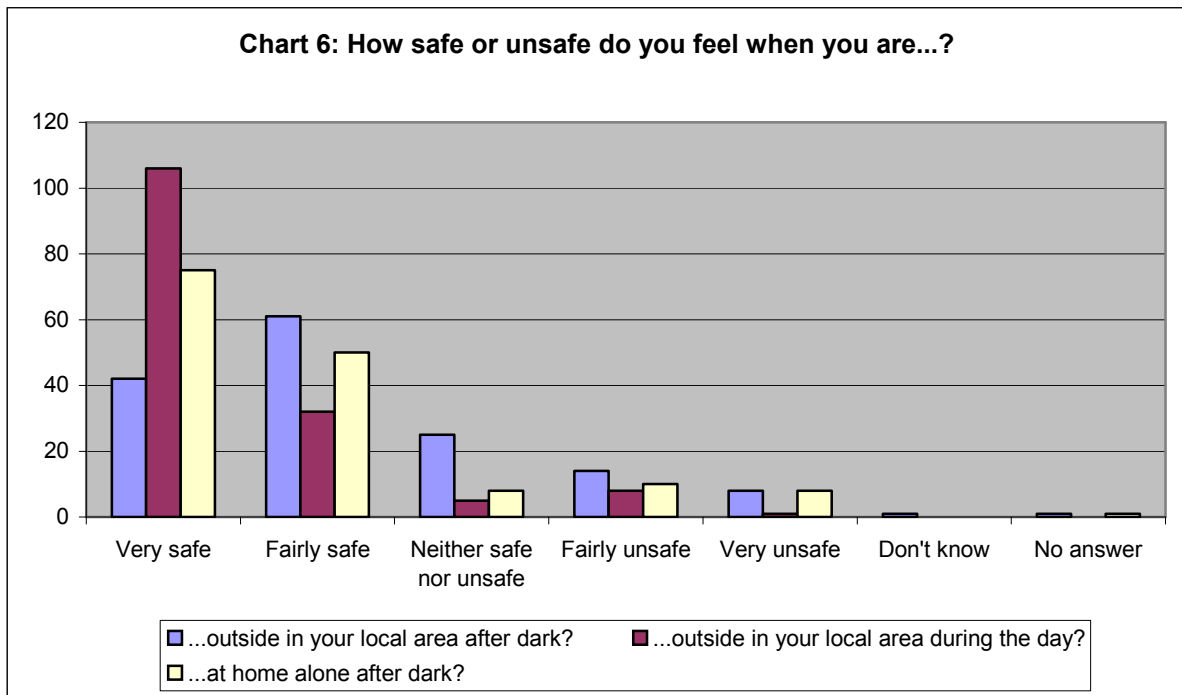
15. Chart 4 shows that nearly two-thirds of respondents feel informed about crime levels in South Cambridgeshire. Many of those who do not feel informed would like to receive information via the South Cambridgeshire Magazine, their parish magazine, online or via email. It would be possible to make the links to the Cambridgeshire Constabulary website clearer on our own website, to continue to place articles in the South Cambs Magazine and to also feature another article about eCops in the Magazine.



16. Chart 5 shows that nearly three-quarters of respondents feel informed about how to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim. Where respondents do not know how to reduce their likelihood, the majority would like information in writing either by email, in the Magazine or leaflets through the door. The suggestions at paragraph 14 are also relevant in response to this question.



17. Chart 6 shows how safe respondents feel when they are outside in their local area after dark or during the day and at home alone after dark. The majority of respondents feel very or fairly safe in each of the three scenarios listed. As would be expected more people feel very or fairly safe outside in their area during the day (91%) that both at home after dark (82%) or in their local area after dark (68%). These figures increase to 94%, 87% and 84% respectively if the numbers answering "neither safe nor unsafe" are added.



18. Table 1 shows that when the results for 'How safe or unsafe do you feel when you are...?' are compared to the answers for 'Have you been a victim of crime in the past 12 months?' we can see that there does not seem to be a correlation between how unsafe respondents feel and if they have been a victim in the past 12 months.

**Table 1: Number of respondents who have been a victim in the past 12 months that feel very or fairly unsafe when they are...**

	Very unsafe	Fairly unsafe	Total (out of 20)
...outside in your local area after dark?	1	4	5
...outside in your local area during the day?	0	2	2
...at home alone after dark?	2	2	4

In fact 14 of the 20 respondents who stated they had been a victim of crime in the past 12 months did not answer that they feel very or fairly unsafe for any of the three questions.

19. Table 2 shows that when the results for 'How safe or unsafe do you feel when you are...?' are compared to the answers for 'Do you feel informed about crime levels in South Cambridgeshire?' there is not a correlation. More respondents (18 out of the 53) stated that they felt very or fairly safe in response to all three questions.

**Table 2: Number of respondents who do *not* feel informed about crime levels in the district that feel very or fairly unsafe when they are outside in their local area after dark or during the day and/or at home alone after dark.**

	<b>Total</b>
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to one of the questions	1
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to two of the questions	10
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to all three questions	4
<b>Total (out of 53)</b>	<b>15</b>

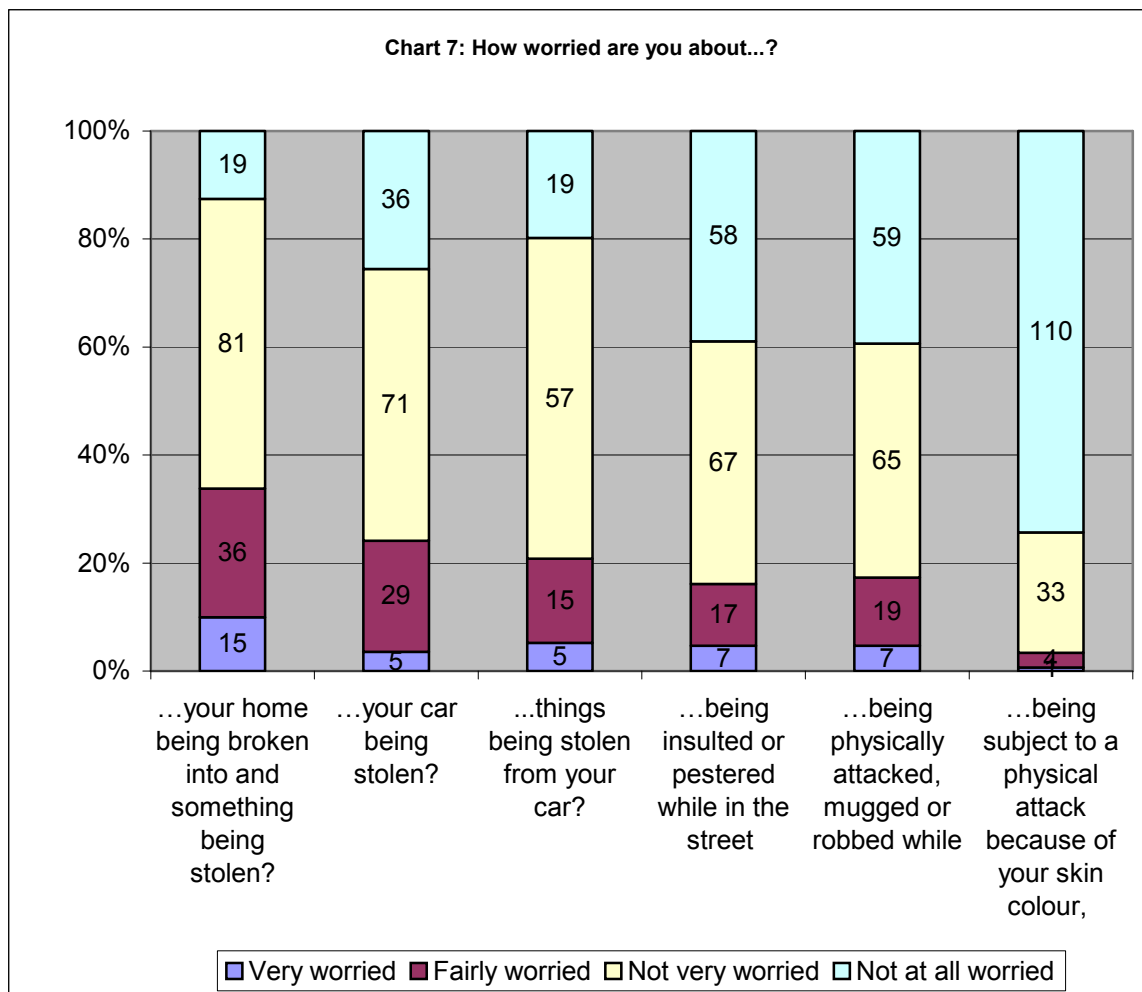
20. Table 3 shows that when the results for 'How safe or unsafe do you feel when you are...?' are compared to the answers for 'Do you feel informed about how to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim?' there is not a correlation. More respondents (22 out of the 41) stated that they felt very or fairly safe in response to all three questions.

**Table 3: Number of respondents who do *not* feel informed about how to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim that feel very or fairly unsafe when they are outside in their local area after dark or during the day and/or at home alone after dark.**

	<b>Total</b>
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to one of the questions	1
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to two of the questions	5
Responded 'very or fairly unsafe' to all three questions	4
<b>Total (out of 41)</b>	<b>10</b>

21. Looking at Chart 7 below, it should be noted that the 'not answered' figures have been removed due to the fact that a number of people were unable to answer the question about things being stolen from their car because of an error with the web-based survey, which omitted the question early on during the consultation window. 41 of the 56 respondents who did not answer the question about things being stolen from their car can be attributed to this error and therefore the figures for this question should be viewed with caution. A number of people also did not answer the two questions about cars because they do not own one.

From the responses gained, more people are worried about their home being broken into and something being stolen (34%) than for any of the other crime types included, however, as mentioned above, the figures for people being worried about things being stolen from their car may be showing lower than is actually the case.



**Options**

- 22. To note the report and
  - (a) recommend no further action, or
  - (b) take small action, with partners on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to further publicise accurate crime levels, eCops and crime reduction tips, and/or
  - (c) carry out a further survey aimed at children and young people because they were excluded from the initial survey.

**Implications**

23. Financial	Minimal financial implications for any options suggested.
Legal	None identified.
Staffing	Staff resources required if the survey is to be rolled out to young people.
Risk Management	None identified.
Equal Opportunities	Young people have not been surveyed to date. Also, some people with disabilities may not have had the opportunity to complete the survey to date due to the two formats used.
Climate Change	None identified.

**Consultations**

24. The results will be shared with the South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.
25. The results will be published on the District Council website as well as summarised in the Autumn 2010 issue of the South Cambridgeshire Magazine.

**Effect on Strategic Aims**

26. The Fear of Crime Survey has been carried out in response to an action in 2009/10, which was related to the aim "We are committed to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for you and your family". The responses suggest that the majority of people in South Cambridgeshire are not overly fearful of crime, however, there is some work that can be done to further reduce levels of fear.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

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