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YOUth matter!

Listening to the voice of young London

Report Author: Barry Charleton
Contributors: Adele Harrison, Paul Dawson

Executive Summary

The Mayors Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) are working in partnership to support an evidence based approach to engagement with young people in London and to understand better their concerns and priorities. To this end, a survey of young people aged 11-18 years across London's schools has been conducted, building upon previous research reported in the Youth Talk report in 2013[1].

In addition to issues concerning safety, victimisation and perceptions of police, the current study particularly seeks to understand young people's views on what may be deemed as intrusive police tactics, such as the use of stop and search, firearms and Taser. Furthermore, it seeks to gain an insight into the thoughts of a group of vulnerable youth not surveyed before - those attending Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

A great deal of data has been obtained by the survey. In total 9,492 youths responded providing a good capture of their voices. This report provides some top level findings, and focuses mainly on groups where it is deemed there is an opportunity and/or need for engagement: the youngest (Year 7, ages 11-12); those attending PRU; and a potentially vulnerable group that report safety concerns within their family.

Key Findings: Overview

The presence of *known* police officers can make young Londoners feel safer

- Overall 41% (n=3,881) of young Londoners ***never or rarely worry*** about their safety.

- The police make a positive impact upon feelings of safety: 76% (n=7,166) of young Londoners feel safer seeing ***known*** police officers patrolling; 69% (n=6,513) feel safer seeing police on public transport and 67% (n=6,332) feel safer having a dedicated Safer Schools Officer.

- Over a quarter (28%, n=2,657) of young Londoners worry about their safety on a daily or regular basis. This is higher for the youngest surveyed (school Year 7, 11-12 year olds).

- Young Londoners feel ***least safe*** in parks 36% (n=3,418) and outside spaces, whilst 33% (n=3,092) said on public transport[i]. Respondents felt most unsafe about groups of people hanging around/gangs (49%, n=4,680)[ii].

[i] On public transport (36%) and in parks and public spaces (32%) were the most frequent responses given by Youth Talk respondents as to where they felt least safe.
[ii] Groups of people hanging around /gangs (51%) was the most frequently given answer as to what worried Youth Talk respondents the last time that they felt unsafe.

- A minority of young Londoners feel ***least safe*** at home (8%, n=774), or else have been made to feel unsafe by a family member (4%, n=347), suggesting they are vulnerable. The levels reported are greater than those documented in the previous Youth Talk (our equivalent survey conducted in 2013). This starkly demonstrates the need to engage and safeguard this vulnerable group.

The majority of young Londoners are not affected by gang or safety issues in school

- The top three issues to affect young Londoners in school daily or a few times a week are violence/fights (27%), bullying (24%) and people stealing (21%). In addition, to violence/fights and people stealing, drugs use/dealing is also a daily or regular experience for 19% of young Londoners in the areas where they live.

- Cyber-bullying/trolling is an emerging issue for young Londoners, with 17% (n=1,644) affected daily or regularly.

- The majority of young Londoners are not affected by gang issues at school (80%, n=7,580), or their home neighbourhood (73%, n=6,925).

- However, an important minority (11%, n=999) feel under pressure to join a gang. This pressure is more marked for the youngest surveyed (school Year 7, 15%, n=351). Given the greater concerns over safety reported by this age group, and the onus on preventing gang crime, this emphasises the need for effective engagement.

- Perceived pressure to join a gang is also more marked for those who have been victims of crime (21%, n=383) and attendees/former attendees of PRU (31%, n=129) in comparison to the overall youth sample, further highlighting the need for effective engagement and preventative education. The opinions of young Londoners suggest that this needs to be undertaken as part of a multi-agency approach, which aligns with MOPAC Policy[2].

The majority of young Londoners have never been victims of crime

- 81% (n=7,649) of young Londoners have never been victims of crime.

- However, the proportion of young Londoners that have been a victim of crime (19%, n=1,843) is higher than that for the general population (11% as measured by the Public Attitude Survey, 7% as measured by the Crime Survey of England and Wales).

- Under half (43%, n=323) of young Londoners who report something stolen to the police, and half (50%, n=173) of those who report an assault/threat to the police, are happy with the police response. This places a renewed focus on the police contact experience with young victims of crime as this is over 30% below that of the adult population, as recorded by the MOPAC User Satisfaction Survey.

Young Londoners are interested in the police and what they do

- Three out of four young Londoners (73%, n=6,961) are interested in receiving information about the police and what they do. 23% (n=2,154) are interested in joining the police cadets, providing an evidence base for the Mayoral ambition to increase cadet membership.

- Under half of young Londoners believe that their local police do an excellent/good job near where they go to school (42%, n=3,944) or where they live (39%, n=3,665). This is over 20% below public confidence as measured via the Public Attitude Survey. Whilst some of this difference can be accounted for by methodological differences, this echoes previous research which indicates that young Londoners are less confident in the police.

- Levels of confidence decrease for young Londoners after school Year 7. Important minorities who have been victims of crime, have attended PRU and who feel unsafe with a family member, show greater levels of disagreement that the police listen to young peoples concerns, deal with issues that matter to them, are friendly and approachable or would treat them with respect, as compared to the overall survey population (see Table 2 in section 4). Effective engagement and contact experiences with these groups is essential.

- 61% (n=5,769) of youth respondents would be willing to meet with/talk to the police about issues which are important to them, predominantly in a school environment, placing a renewed focus upon the role of the Safer Schools Officer.

Young Londoners are supportive of Stop and Search as a tactic

- The use of Stop and Search is relevant to young Londoners: in comparison to other tactics they are more aware of its use, more likely to have seen or experienced it in real life and 55% (n=5,202) claim to know their rights. Encouragingly, young Londoners are largely supportive of Stop and Search as a tactic. In comparison to other tactics asked about, more young Londoners say that Stop and Search makes them feel safe, and more say that the police should use it whenever they feel necessary.

- The majority of young Londoners have never seen or experienced police using firearms, CS spray or Taser in real life. However, an important minority have (firearms 18%, n=1,724; CS spray 17%, n=1,565; Taser 13%, n=1,267). In comparison to a range of tactics asked about, more young Londoners (17%, n=1,581) said that the police should never use firearms, and more felt unsafe (40%, n=3,750) than safe (38%, n=3,605) with regard to their use.

Introduction

There is established evidence concerning the importance of researching the views of London's young population and for police to engage positively with them. Not only are 11% of the capitals population[3] aged between 10 and 19, but young people are also more likely to come into contact with the police as both victim and offender[4]. When they do come into contact, it is important for the Police and Criminal Justice System to handle that contact well for a number of reasons. There is evidence that youth reoffending can be reduced with good quality resettlement[5], confidence in the police and support of tactics such as stop and search is lower amongst young people[6]. A recent Mayors Office Strategic Ambitions paper[7] also states that work around gangs and serious youth violence must *"be shaped by and with young people".*

Given that gangs and the police use of stop and search are major media and political issues, this young voice is needed to engage effectively and supportively. Gathering the opinions of London's youth is therefore vital. The Public Attitude Survey (PAS) is only completed by those aged 16 and over, so a survey delivered to youth aged 11-18 is capable of providing valuable insight into what this vital age group (comprising 11% of the capitals population[8]) feel about their safety, their experience of crime, and their perceptions of the police and the tactics they use. The views of marginalised or vulnerable youth are particularly valuable, and in an addition to the previous 'Youth Talk' survey in 2013, this survey was also distributed to Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

In total there were 9,492 respondents to the survey. There was higher proportion of younger respondents - 68% were in school years 7-9 (aged 11-14 years), and only 8% from school years 12-13 (aged 16-18). The male/female split was 54%/46%. See Appendix A for survey methodology. There was not an even distribution of where respondents go to school – please refer to the map in Appendix A.

Findings

The results of the survey are broken down and discussed under the following main themes: ***Safety; Issues that Affect Young Londoners; Victimisation, Satisfaction and Under-reporting; Young Londoners Perceptions of the police; and a case study about vulnerable young Londoners who either attend/have attended PRU, or have been made to feel unsafe by a family member.***

1. Safety

It is a positive finding that a large proportion of young Londoners (41%, n=3,881) never or rarely worry about their safety[iii], although an important minority do. Over a quarter (28%, n=2,657) worry on a daily (11%, n=1,050) or regular basis[iv] (17%, n=1,607).

The Police can make an impact upon safety

Sizeable majorities of young Londoners said that they would feel more safe to see police ***officers that they knew*** patrolling (76%, n=7,166), police on public transport (69%, n=6,513) and having a dedicated safer schools police officer (67%, n=6,332). This last point is particularly encouraging - in the Youth Talk 2013 report, a lower proportion (58%) said such an officer would make them feel safer. There are currently 266 safer schools officers throughout the MPS, an increase from 176 in financial year 2013-2014. As discussed later, in the section on Perceptions of Police, there is evidence for a renewed impetus on the role of safer schools officers.

However, only 40% (n=3,823) said that they would feel safer to see police officers that they *did not* know patrolling. Furthermore, 32% (n=3,053) said this would make them feel *less* safe (only 8% said this of officers they did know patrolling). There is some additional evidence from the survey to suggest that some enforcement activity can make the young Londoners feel unsafe: 50% or more of them feel less safe by the possibility of knife arches/wands at school, or more people being arrested in their neighbourhood. This stresses the importance of a local context to policing and the ability to develop relationships with officers.

Important minorities of young Londoners feel unsafe

Two key findings are: the youngest cohort (Year 7, 11-12 year olds) worry more than those in subsequent school years (see Appendix B for data table). Secondly, those who attend/have attended PRU are more polarised in their opinions, compared to those who have not attended PRU. For example, 35% (n=805) of respondents in school year 7 report worrying about safety on a daily or regular basis. Of those who attend/have attended a PRU, 15% (n=63) worry about their safety on a daily basis, yet a significant 26% (n=107) never worry. Those who have been a victim of crime worry about safety on a daily basis slightly more often (13%, n=247).

[iii] Rarely (a few times a year)
[iv] Regularly (a few times a week)

An important finding from the 2013 Youth Talk survey was that a small number (2%, n=279) of respondents felt least safe at home. A much larger proportion of respondents (8%, n=774) reported the same concern this year. Furthermore, 4% (n=347) of respondents were made to feel least safe by a family member[v], and 3% (n=256) said that they would be made to feel less safe by having family they could talk to. Clearly this is a serious issue, and there is great importance to engage with these youth for their own safety. One of the recommendations from the 2013 Youth Talk was that the role of schools in the wider safeguarding needs to be considered and our findings this year would continue to support this.

People and places influence Young Londoners feelings of safety

In terms of where the youth feel least safe, and what makes them feel least safe bears similarity to the findings reported in Youth Talk: 36% (n=3,418) said in parks and outside spaces , and 33% (n=3,092) said on public transport[vi]. Regarding this second point, there are opportunities to engage with Transport for London and British Transport Police to further develop understanding how safe commuters feel, and ways of addressing the issue. Despite this, it is worth noting that only 9% (n=880) reported feeling unsafe on their journey to and from school. Respondents felt most unsafe about groups of people hanging around/gangs (49%, n=4,680)[vii]. With much media attention and police focus around gang crime, this is an important issue to note - however, equally important is to note some degree of ambiguity. A 'group of people/gangs' does not necessarily mean the same as 'gangs' in the sense as defined by the police. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the issue for the youth, caution should therefore be used in this interpretation.

[v] Q5: The last time you felt unsafe in general, who or what was it that worried you?
[vi] On public transport (36%) and in parks and public spaces (32%) were the most frequent responses given by Youth Talk respondents as to where they felt least safe
[vii] Groups of people hanging around / gangs (51%) was the most frequently given answer as to what worried Youth Talk respondents the last time that they felt unsafe.

2. Issues that affect young Londoners and their priorities

Most young Londoners are not affected by gangs

The majority of young Londoners say that they are never or rarely affected by gang-related activity at school (80%, n=7,580) and in their home neighbourhood (73%, n=6,925). What is particularly encouraging is that the proportion saying that they are ***never affected*** is higher than reported in the 2013 Youth Talk survey.[viii]

An important minority do feel under pressure to join gangs

There are 11% (n=999) of young Londoners who feel under pressure to join a gang. The proportion of those attending/previously attending PRU (31%, n=129) and those who have been victims of crime (21%, n=383) who feel such pressure is higher still, perhaps indicative of a relationship between those with complex social needs, victimisation and gang involvement. Interestingly a larger proportion of Year 7's, 15% (n=351) feel pressure to join gangs than any other year[ix]. This fully supports the prevention approach outlined in the MOPAC gang strategy[9].

According to the respondents to the 2013 Youth Talk survey, the people who should be most responsible for preventing young people joining a gang were the police[x]. In the current survey, the question was asked differently: who did the respondents feel *can* help if they feel under pressure to join a gang, and choose as many from a given list as applicable. Interestingly, while 44% (n=4,192) said the police, this was the fifth most popular choice, falling some way behind four others: the community (76%, n=7,179) and then young people/peers (68%), youth groups/social workers (64%) and teachers/school counsellors (63%). It may be argued that the youth do not trust the police or feel confident that they can help. Or it could be that the youth themselves recognise the gang issue as a complex social one, not just a police one. Either way the results should be used as evidence to support multi-agency gang interventions and prevention strategies which provides further evidence to support MOPAC's serious youth violence strategic approach.

Other issues at school and near home

Regarding drug use, 19% (n=1,263) of young Londoners say they are affected on a daily or regular basis in the neighbourhood where they live, while a lower 14% (n=663) say that this about school, which shows similarities to previous research conducted in 2013.

Nearly a quarter are affected by bullying on a daily or regular basis at school (24%) and in their neighbourhood (14%), while 17% (n=1,644) are affected daily or regularly at

[viii] 61%, n=5,813 and 54%, n=5,092 (2014) said that gang activity never affected them at school or in their home neighbourhood respectively, compared to 57%, n=6,638 and 47%, n=5408 (2012)
[ix] Please see Appendix B, Table 1 for comparison between school year groups
[x] 36%, n=4,221 said selected the police option in answer to 'who do you think should be responsible for preventing young people from joining gangs (please tick one)' from a list of six options

school by cyber-bullying/trolling. This second issue shows the emergence of cyber crime/trolling; an area requiring a greater evidence base.

3. Victimisation, Satisfaction and Under Reporting

The majority of Young Londoners have never been victims of crime

The majority (81%, n=7,649) of young Londoners have not been a victim of crime. However, compared to the general population, young Londoners are ***more likely*** to come into contact with the police as a victim of crime (19%, n=1,843 compared to 11%, as reported by the PAS, or 7% as reported by the Crime Survey for England and Wales). This is consistent with other evidence.[10] The proportion of victims increases with age (see Appendix B, Table 1, for data table).

An important minority of Young Londoners are even more likely to be victims

There is a relationship between vulnerable young people and victimisation. Once again, those who attend/have attended a PRU stand-out, more than a third, 39% (n=162) have been victims of crime; while the percentage of young people made to feel least safe by a family member was also higher than the overall sample (31%, n=107). This further highlights that vulnerable groups warrant attention as the police are more likely to come into contact with them.

How young Londoners perceive crime may be different to how police do so

In terms of specific crimes, 34% (n=3,237) say they have had something valuable stolen from them, and 24% (n=2,311) have been victims of physical injury or threat. Interestingly, both of these figures are higher than the proportion saying that they have been victims of crime. This may be that they do not always consider the incidents an actual crime, and that they are including trivial incidents in response to the question. An examination of free text responses provided[xi] indicate that this is sometimes the case, revealing instances of friends, classmates or siblings taking low value things, which they may get back, or of fights between them which are not very serious. There is, perhaps some insight here into what the youth actually perceive as being 'crime', which in turn may have some consequence regarding both their own behaviour and how they interact with police. This should be borne in mind the police communicate with young people over crime prevention issues.

Young Londoners are often repeat victims, but do not often report crime to the police

Young Londoners experience repeat victimisation: 43% (n=1,387) of theft victims and 56% (1,276) of assault/threat victims say they have been so more than once. Comparison with Crime Survey for England and Wales figures suggests that this is far higher than the degree of repeat victimisation seen in the adult population.[xii11] Mostly,

[xi] In response to the question 'You say you didn't report this to the police, was this because…' and then having selected the reason 'other'

[xii] For the period April 2013-March 2014, CSEW figures presented by the Office for National Statistics shows that repeat victimisation for theft from person, other theft, other household theft, bicycle theft,

they do tell someone, however only a quarter (23%, n=758) of theft victims and 15% (n=348) of assault/threat victims tell police. The main reasons cited as not reporting a crime to the police were that they did not think it was important or did not think that the police would help. Of those who did report theft to the police, less than half (43% n=323) were very happy or happy with the way police treated them; while 50% (n=173) of assault/threat victims were either very happy or happy. This second figure is lower than the general population as reported in the User Satisfaction Survey (USS), which shows 76% of violent crime victims being completely, very or fairly satisfied with police[12] (the USS provides no comparable figure for theft victims). The most frequently cited things that could have improved the opinions of young Londoners was for the matter to be taken seriously, and for someone to be arrested and charged, which aligns with wider victim research[13].

4. Young Londoners perceptions of police

There is a difference between young Londoners confidence in police and that of London as a whole

There is a 26% confidence gap between young London and London as a whole as measured via the PAS (42% vs 68%). Whilst some of this difference can be accounted for by methodological differences, this echoes previous research which indicates that young people are less confident in the police.

This research reveals that 42% of young people are confident in the policing around their school, and 39% in their home neighbourhood (see Appendix B, data table 2).

There is some overlap between the results of this survey and the PAS in terms of how the boroughs rank for confidence. There are four boroughs that rank below average for confidence in both surveys: Croydon, Lewisham, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

Important minorities of young Londoners are less confident

Subsequent to Year 7 (11-12 year olds), levels of confidence in the police declines. Young people who have been victims of crime, have experienced pressure to join a gang, and seen or experienced Taser being used also have less confidence in the police (see Appendix B, data table 2). Previous research into public confidence shows that despite these individual differences, confidence in the police can be improved by focussing on four key elements: perceptions of police effectiveness, fairness of personal treatment, the level of police engagement with the community, and local people's concerns about local disorder. Taken together these four elements indicate that public confidence can be influenced by 'what police do'[14] .

domestic burglary and robbery ranged from 0.7% (for robbery) to 8.7% (for domestic burglary); while repeat victimisation for violence with injury was 4.8% and without injury 2.1%.

Good quality engagement improves confidence in policing

Previous research has shown that good quality engagement is critical for success, and delivering improvements in public confidence. Assessments of community engagement are made from a combination of measures asking respondents if they agree that the local police listen to their concerns, are dealing with them, are friendly and approachable and would treat them with respect if they came into contact with them for any reason.

Over half of all respondents agreed that the police listen to concerns, deal with issues that matter to them, are friendly and approachable and would treat them with respect. The youngest Londoners surveyed (Year 7) hold the best opinions of each age group, as shown in table 1.

Table 1: confidence in the police by school year

Table 1. Confidence in the Police by School Year		Age													
		Year 7 (age 11-12)		Year 8 (age 12-13)		Year 9 (age13-14)		Year 10 (age14-15)		Year 11 (age 15-16)		Year 12 (age 16-17)		Age:Year 13 (age17-18)	
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
To what extent do you agree that the Police..															
Listen to the concerns of young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	1667	72%	1254	59%	1074	52%	602	45%	290	39%	217	41%	147	40%
Deal with issues that matter to young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	1678	72%	1299	62%	1125	55%	642	48%	314	42%	214	41%	155	42%
Are friendly and approachable	Strongly Agree/Agree	1748	75%	1404	67%	1207	59%	737	55%	386	51%	274	52%	196	53%
Would treat you with respect if you came into contact with them for any reason	Strongly Agree/Agree	1800	78%	1476	70%	1336	65%	815	60%	444	59%	315	60%	214	58%

As shown in table 2, a greater proportion of current/previous PRU attendees, victims of crime and those who have felt unsafe at home disagree with each of the listed statements, reinforcing again that those coming into contact with the police are more likely to have a lower opinion. However, previous research by Evidence and Insight indicates that not all contact has to break confidence; positive contact with the police can improve confidence[15].

Table 2: minority groups and confidence in the police

Table 2. Minority Groups and Confidence in the Police		Overall Sample		PRU attendees (current or previous)		Victim of crime		Made to feel unsafe by family member	
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
To what extent do you agree that the Police..									
Listen to the concerns of young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	5251	55%	224	54%	855	46%	189	55%
	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	1656	18%	121	29%	480	26%	82	24%
Deal with issues that matter to young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	5427	57%	219	53%	868	47%	183	53%
	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	1658	18%	119	29%	491	27%	81	23%
Are friendly and approachable	Strongly Agree/Agree	5952	63%	235	56%	1006	55%	199	57%
	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	1395	15%	116	28%	410	22%	79	23%
Would treat you with respect if you came into contact with them for any reason	Strongly Agree/Agree	6400	68%	232	56%	1118	61%	210	61%
	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	1170	12%	119	29%	368	20%	69	20%

Young Londoners prefer information about local issues, and are keen to talk to police about issues that matter to them

Good quality information provision is essential to improving confidence in policing[16]. The results from this year's cohort align with previous studies, young people are mostly interested in what is relevant to them locally, and to have it delivered without them having to seek engagement themselves. However, many more young Londoners are interested in receiving information from the police. Three out of four young people would like to receive Information from the police about what they do (73%, n=6,961). Information is mainly received via the television (53%, n=5,030), and that is how most young people would like to receive it (40%, n=3,807), however 28% would like to receive a newsletter and 23% would like to receive information via a safer schools officer. The type of information that they are most interested in receiving concerns local crime issues (58%, n=5,526), local arrests (44%) and crime prevention advice (35%). Only a quarter of the respondents 27% (n=2,531) say that they do not wish to receive information about the police. It is important that this information is presented in a way which does not heighten their fears about their own safety issues. Information should

be locally relevant but must be presented as good news stories or as examples of police community engagement. It should not be presented as crime figures alone[17].

Regarding their own concerns, 61% (n=5,769) said that they would meet/talk to the police to help them understand issues important to young people. **Particularly encouraging is that this proportion is similar even for those that attend/have attended PRU (60%, n=249), and for those who have felt unsafe in their own home (59%, n=206).** When asked where/how they would most like to do this, the largest proportion (45%, n=4,243) said at school. This appears to be a good place to engage the youth, as there is a low interest in engaging with police at a variety of the community events or groups[xiii]. Here there is renewed impetus on the role Safer Schools Officers, who can play a key role in positive engagement.

As an additional note, despite a lack of interest shown in community events and groups, there ***is*** interest in joining Police Cadets for 23%, (n=2,154 respondents). This provides an evidence base for the Mayoral ambition to increase cadet membership[18].

Young Londoners are aware of police intrusive tactics but some tactics can make them feel unsafe

The young Londoners were asked about a range of police tactics, each of which could, in some way, be regarded as intrusive or forceful[xiv]. The questions sought to see how aware young people were of each tactic, whether they had seen or experienced them in real life, circumstances under which they felt their use may be justified, and whether the police using each tactic made them feel safe or unsafe. Please see charts 5, 6 and 7 in Appendix B for comparative responses.

An important minority of young Londoners have seen or experienced Firearms, Taser or CS Spray in real life

It is not surprising that young people think that the police should only use firearms, Taser and CS Spray in violent situations, or only when someone's life is in danger. What is perhaps surprising is the proportion of respondents who claim to have seen or experienced police using firearms, Taser and CS Spray in real life (18%, n=1,724; 17%, n=1,565; and 13%, n=1,267 respectively).

A larger proportion of young Londoners objected to police use of firearms than any other tactic asked about (17%, n=1,581 saying they should never be used). More of them also reported feeling unsafe knowing the police could use firearms (40%, n=3,750) than safe (38%, n=3,605). This is the only tactic featured on the survey where more respondents felt unsafe than safe.

[xiii] The survey asked if the youth belonged to any of the following: Street elite, Urban Slam, Police Cadets, Scouts , Guides or other Uniformed Group, London/Premier Kicks, Hitz, Street Chance, Met Row, Met Track, Youth Council, Youth Panel, or None of these, and then asked if they were interested in joining any.

[xiv] These tactics included the use of police horses, batons, armoured vehicles, crowd control, CS Spray, Tasers, Firearms and Stop and Search

Stop and Search matters to young Londoners

The use of stop and search in relation to young Londoners is an important issue. Between 2009 and 2013, 25% of all Stops and Searches carried out by the MPS were of under 18 year-olds[19], and between 2011 and 2013. This suggests that the findings above are not surprising; and while they are not necessarily negative, they are important. Once again they provide evidence of how likely young Londoner's are to come into contact with the police, and therefore how well the police need to focus on making that contact as positive as possible. Previous research indicates that the most important aspect for young people during a stop and search is that police have a good reason to use the tactic and treat people politely during the procedure[20]. It is important for the police to consider this and wider safeguarding issues, when carrying out stop and search procedures on young Londoners.

The survey results confirm the importance of the issue to young Londoners. There is a higher awareness of Stop and Search than for any other tactic (77%, n=7,293 were very or fairly aware). Furthermore, 57% (n=5,384) say that they have seen or experienced Stop and Search being used in real life (this is a higher proportion of respondents than for any other tactic, other than police use of horses). In addition to this, 55%, (n=5,202) claim to know their rights if an officer stopped and searched them. Interestingly, the largest proportion of any age group claiming to know these rights were the youngest (60% of Year 7's and 59% of Year 8's). In comparison to the overall sample, a particularly high proportion of current or former PRU attendees (65%) also claimed to know their rights.

Encouragingly, the use of Stop and Search appears to be reasonably well supported amongst the respondents. Only 6% (n=583) feel that Stop and Search should never be used, which is the lowest proportion for all tactics asked about. 58% (n=5,457) said that the use of Stop and Search made them feel safe, which is higher than for any other tactic, and while 17% (n=1,630) said that its use made them feel less safe, this is a lower proportion than for any other tactic (with the exception of police using horses, 17%). Also, 40% (n=3,760) said that they felt Stop and Search should be used whenever the officer thinks that it is necessary, which is a greater proportion saying this than for any other tactic (again, with the exception of police using horses). This echoes previous research which found that 56% thought that stop and search should be allowed[21]. It appears to be the 16-24 cohort who are less supportive of this tactic[22].

5. Case Studies: Vulnerable Young Londoners

The results of the survey have drawn attention to two particular groups of young people, who may be deemed as being vulnerable. The first of these is those who currently attend, or have previously attended Pupil Referral Units (PRU). The second are those identified under the section on Safety - youth who say that the last time they felt unsafe in general; it was a family member that worried them. This section provides additional information on these groups.

PRU attendees are vulnerable youth

Pupil Referral Units (PRU) are Alternative Provision establishments, providing education for young people excluded or unable to attend mainstream school for a variety of reasons. These reasons can include pupils expelled or suspended from school, pregnant school girls or school-age mothers, asylum seekers and refugees who have no school place, pupils with behavioural or anxiety problems, or vulnerable pupils, or those unable to attend school for medical reasons[23]. As of March 2013 there were 393 in England[24] and 48 in London.

Not only are the young people who attend these establishments likely to be vulnerable and live in disruptive circumstances, there is evidence that young people excluded from school are more likely be involved in crime, with sources citing that 60% of young people excluded from school nationally having offended in the previous 12 months[25], or that for 15-17 year olds, 88% of males and 74% of females in Youth Offenders Institutes have been excluded from school at some point[26]. Understanding the views of PRU attendees and developing positive engagement with them is therefore vital[xv].

A combined 4% of respondents to the survey are either currently attending a PRU (2%, n=225) or have previously attended a PRU and are now back in mainstream school (2%, n=193). For this section, the views of this combined group of 418 youth shall be discussed, and referred to as the PRU group.

A total of 62% (n=258) of the PRU cohort are from the younger years, Years 7-9, ages 11-14. There is a more notable proportion of boys than with the overall sample (63%, n=264), while there are a very similar number of White British and Black youth (22%, n=92 and 21%, n=89 respectively).

A larger proportion of the PRU cohort feel worried by a family member the last time they felt unsafe (10%, n=43), and felt less safe by a family member that they could talk

[xv] MOPAC has recently carried out a survey of Youth Offending Team caseload managers in the London Resettlement Consortia, regarding the emotional and mental health needs in regard to traumatic experiences of young Londoners on their caseloads. MOPAC have further commissioned research by the University of Middlesex regarding assessment and identification of support needs amongst victims in from the YOT caseload cohort. Although many young Londoners are not young offenders, this work shows MOPACs drive to understand the complex relationship between needs, offending and victimisation

to (9%, n=38). Although these are very small numbers, it provides some indication of the lack of personal support young people who attend PRU can encounter, and an insight into the kind of safety issues that can affect them.

Encouragingly, nearly three quarters of the group (74%, n=308) felt either very safe or fairly safe in the PRU, 26% did not, with 15% (n=61) saying that they did not feel very safe at all. The survey also asked the PRU cohort questions about how safe, supported and happy they felt about the move back into mainstream school. The majority of PRU attendees felt positive, ranging from 72% (n=299) being happy about the move to 79% (n=328) being confident. 68% (n=283) said that they had been offered support from either a PRU resettlement officer, Social worker or Youth Offending Team Police Officer.

Young Londoners at risk of harm

There is a minority of young Londoners who are at most risk within the environment in which they live. A total of 8% (n=774) of the respondents reported feeling least safe at home; 3% (n=256) said that speaking to a family member would make them feel less safe; 6% (n=1,487) said that they are affected by violence at home on a daily or regular basis; and 11% (n=1,007) select domestic violence/violence within the home as one of the three things they most think the police should focus on to help them feel safe in London. This section shall focus upon the 347 young people (4% of respondents) who say that the last time they felt unsafe in general it was a family member that worried them.

Over three quarters of this cohort (77%, n=269) are aged 15 or younger, with a large proportion of them (46%, n=161) being amongst the youngest surveyed (Years 7 and 8, 11-13 year olds). The male/female split is very similar to that of the overall population responding to the survey (53% male, n=185); while three ethnic groups - Asian, White British and Black, each represent near 20% each.

30% (n=105) of this cohort worry about safety on a daily or regular basis, and a further 27% (n=92) worry a few times a month and the issue that most worries them is a family member. A quarter (18%, n=63) say that violence at home affects them on a daily or regular basis, and 14% (n=48) select domestic violence among their top three priorities for the police to deal with - whereas 60% (n=208), report they never experience this type of violence. This could indicate that violence (while very serious and important to draw attention to) is not the only factor that makes them feel afraid of a family member.

Clearly a provision for support and engagement with this cohort is necessary for their own safety. It is possible that these young people, having reported their concern in response to an anonymous survey, may be more reluctant to do so without other supportive encouragement and engagement. The role that schools and the police play in a multi-agency wider safeguarding approach is critical to reaching and supporting young Londoners.

6. Conclusion

Many Young Londoners surveyed feel safe, and believe that the police - particularly known police - make them feel safer. Issues such as gang crime do not worry the majority, and over 80% have never been victims of crime. Over half believe that the police listen to their concerns, deal with issues that matter to them, are friendly and approachable and would treat them with respect. They also demonstrate a desire for engagement with the police regarding issues important to them, preferably via a school environment.

However, under half of young Londoners believe their local police do an excellent/good job - 20% below that of the Adult Public Attitude Survey sample. Plus, it must be noted that a quarter worry about their safety daily or regularly, and for an important minority there are both concerns about gangs and pressures to become involved in them. These concerns and pressures are more marked for the youngest cohort. Although the youngest (Year 7, 11-12 year olds), in general, also have the best opinions of the police, opinions which deteriorate as they reach late teens, so there is opportunity for early engagement, to be more successful, with this cohort. Equally young people aged 17-18 who have less positive views desire engagement and better engagement strategies are needed to reach this group.

Vulnerable young people, such as victims of crime, those who attend/have attended Pupil Referral Units, and those who have safety concerns over a family member, are more likely to come into contact with the police, and have less favourable opinions of the police - hence positive engagement is also very important with these groups.

Police can make positive impacts upon feelings of safety, through known officers on patrol and safer schools officers. Although there are concerns amongst the young people over intrusive police tactics such as the use of firearms, stop and search - more widely experienced than other tactics - is generally well supported.

Appendix A: Methodology

All data has been obtained from responses to an online survey rolled out to youth across London. The questionnaire was developed by MOPAC's Evidence and Insight team in collaboration with both MOPAC policy staff and Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) engagement officers. The questionnaire built upon a previous version used for the Youth Talk report conducted in 2013.

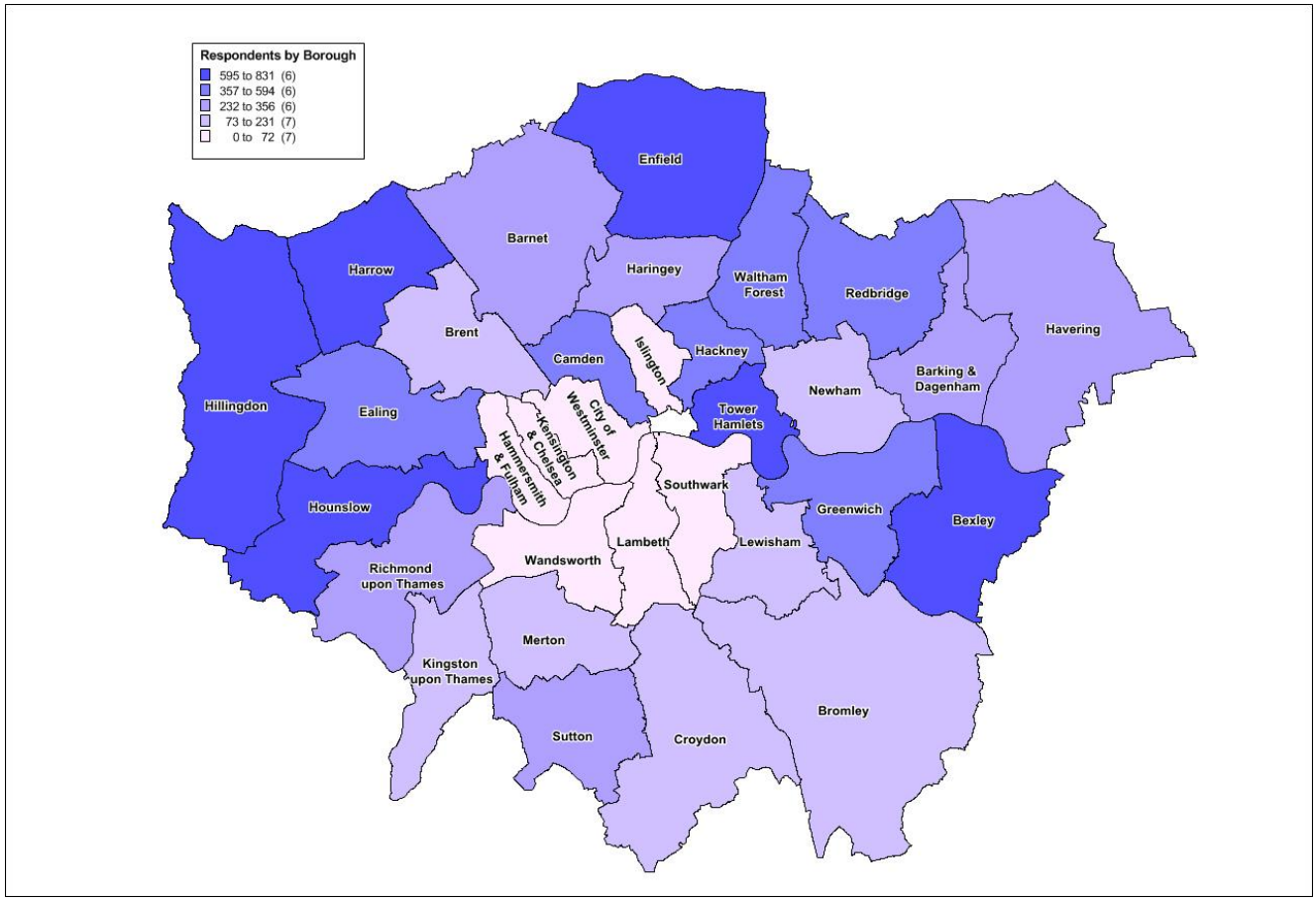
The survey was promoted in London schools by MPS Safer Schools Officers and letters were sent to all schools in boroughs where response rates were low. MOPAC also used social media to promote the survey. The survey was carried out online, either during class time or as homework. School years 7-13 were surveyed (11-18 year olds). It consisted of a total of 52 questions, some of which were rooted in others, and therefore only completed where relevant.

There were 9,492 respondents to the questionnaire from youth at school across the 33 London boroughs (including the City of London). This number is 1% of the population of London aged 10-19[27]. While this is larger than the representation garnered by the Public Attitude Survey, it must be noted that the survey is not as robust as the PAS. There is not an equal representation of youth attending school on all boroughs, and from three boroughs there are less than 10 respondents in each case: Westminster (three), Islington (four) and Kensington and Chelsea (five). This must be kept in mind when assessing how robust the findings are. The distribution of respondents by borough is shown in Appendix A: Map below.

There is also higher representation of younger youth. Youth in school years seven, eight and nine accounted for over 20% of respondents each; school years 11 to 13 were represented by under 10% of respondents each (8%, 5% and 4%).

52 youth (0.5%) responded to the question "What type of school do you attend?" by choosing Pupil Referral unit; however, in response to the question 'Have you ever attended a Pupil Referral Unit?', 224 (2%) of them said "yes - currently", and a further 193 said "yes - have attended... but now back in mainstream school". Throughout this paper, wherever opinions or feelings of PRU respondents are reported on, it is this group of 418 youth that are be referred to.

Map 1: Where online respondents go to school



Note:
There were also 91 respondents who went to school in the City of London (second from bottom range), and 76 respondents who did not know what borough they went to school on.

An additional 226 paper responses were received, some of these were not usable as minimal questions had been completed, and some had been returned after the closing date and were therefore not included within the analysis presented in this report. However, analysis of the 139 responses which were useable aligns with the main findings presented here. The majority of respondents who returned the paper questionnaires were from schools in Islington (64%) and Waltham Forest (17%).

Appendix B. Tables

Table 1: safety and experience of crime

Table 1. Safety and experience of crime		Overall Sample		Age														PRU attendees (current or previous)		Victim of crime		Made to feel unsafe by family member	
				Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10		Year 11		Year 12		Age:Year 13							
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
How often do you worry about safety?	Never/Rarely	3884	41%	761	33%	810	38%	912	44%	615	46%	366	47%	245	49%	181	49%	198	47%	718	39%	150	43%
	Regularly/Daily	2657	28%	805	35%	639	30%	528	26%	311	23%	167	22%	126	24%	81	22%	120	29%	566	31%	105	30%
Have you ever felt under pressure to join a gang?	Yes	999	11%	351	15%	214	10%	166	8%	121	9%	79	11%	32	6%	36	10%	129	31%	383	21%	73	21%
	No	8493	91%	1968	85%	1896	90%	1896	92%	1232	91%	673	90%	492	94%	336	90%	289	69%	1460	79%	274	79%
Have you ever been a victim of crime?	Yes	1843	19%	290	13%	324	15%	417	20%	332	25%	197	26%	156	30%	127	34%	162	39%			107	31%
	No	7649	80%	2029	86%	1786	84%	1645	80%	1021	76%	555	74%	245	66%	7649	81%	256	61%			240	69%
Have you ever had something valuable stolen?	Yes	3237	34%	716	31%	700	33%	755	37%	483	36%	244	32%	190	36%	149	40%	217	52%	1172	64%		
	No	6255	66%	1603	69%	1410	67%	1307	63%	870	64%	508	68%	334	64%	223	60%	201	48%	671	36%		

Table 2: confidence in the police

Table 2. Confidence in the Police		Overall Sample		Age														PRU attendees (current or previous)		Victim of crime		Made to feel unsafe by family member		Seen Taser used in real life	
				Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10		Year 11		Year 12		Age:Year 13									
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
To what extent do you agree that the Police..																									
Listen to the concerns of young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	5251	55%	1667	72%	1254	59%	1074	52%	602	45%	290	39%	217	41%	147	40%	224	54%	855	46%	189	55%	899	57%
Deal with issues that matter to young people	Strongly Agree/Agree	5427	57%	1678	72%	1299	62%	1125	55%	642	48%	314	42%	214	41%	155	42%	219	53%	868	47%	183	53%	912	58%
Are friendly and approachable	Strongly Agree/Agree	5952	63%	1748	75%	1404	67%	1207	59%	737	55%	386	51%	274	52%	196	53%	235	56%	1006	55%	199	57%	981	63%
Would treat you with respect if you came into contact with them for any reason	Strongly Agree/Agree	6400	68%	1800	78%	1476	70%	1336	65%	815	60%	444	59%	315	60%	214	58%	232	56%	1118	61%	210	61%	1019	65%
How good a job do you think that the police are doing in the area around your school?	Excellent/Good	3944	42%	1326	57%	899	43%	758	37%	413	31%	238	32%	171	33%	139	37%	153	37%	559	30%	133	38%	587	38%
How good a job do you think that the police are doing in your home neighbourhood?	Excellent/Good	3665	39%	1171	51%	846	40%	717	35%	408	30%	249	33%	158	30%	116	31%	142	34%	509	28%	103	30%	555	35%

Table 3: police tactics

Table 3. Police tactics		Overall Sample		Age														PRU attendees (current or previous)		Victim of crime	
				Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10		Year 11		Year 12		Age:Year 13					
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
Does knowing that the police can use the following tactics make you feel…																					
CS Srpay	Safe	3887	41%	997	43%	880	42%	847	41%	500	37%	276	37%	228	44%	159	43%	163	39%	775	42%
	Less Safe	2865	30%	798	34%	683	32%	599	29%	399	30%	181	24%	120	23%	85	23%	142	34%	544	30%
Taser	Safe	4298	45%	1117	48%	972	46%	935	45%	560	41%	312	42%	240	46%	162	44%	178	43%	852	46%
	Less Safe	2979	31%	808	35%	706	34%	620	30%	406	30%	200	27%	142	27%	97	26%	133	32%	556	30%
Firearms	Safe	3605	38%	954	41%	813	39%	743	36%	491	36%	260	34%	200	38%	144	39%	160	38%	711	39%
	Less Safe	3750	40%	923	40%	876	42%	826	40%	506	37%	293	39%	196	37%	130	35%	151	36%	758	41%
Stop and Search	Safe	5457	58%	1462	63%	1304	62%	1146	56%	709	52%	366	49%	276	53%	194	52%	200	48%	997	54%
	Less Safe	1630	17%	404	17%	343	16%	365	18%	244	18%	126	17%	86	16%	62	17%	110	26%	353	19%
If you were stopped and searched by a police officer, whould you know your rights?	Yes	5202	55%	1388	60%	1241	59%	1112	54%	681	50%	359	48%	238	45%	183	49%	271	65%	900	54%
	No	4290	45%	931	40%	869	41%	950	46%	672	50%	393	52%	286	55%	189	51%	147	35%	853	46%

Table 4: police engagement

Table 4. Police engagement		Overall Sample		PRU attendees (current or previous)		Made to feel unsafe by family member	
		Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage	Base (number)	Percentage
If you were given the chance, would you talk to/meet with the police to help them understand what issues are important to young people?	Yes	5769	61%	249	60%	206	59%
	No	3723	39%	169	40%	141	41%
Where would be the best place to do so?	School	4243	45%	266	64%	148	43%

Table 5: awareness and experience of police tactics

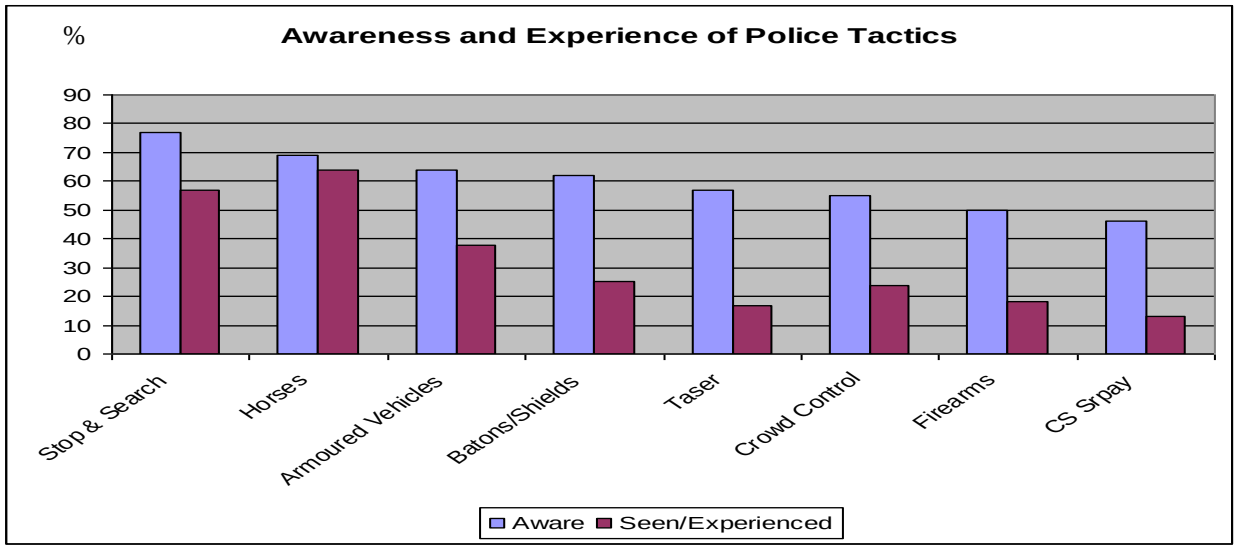


Table 6: use of police tactics and feelings of safety

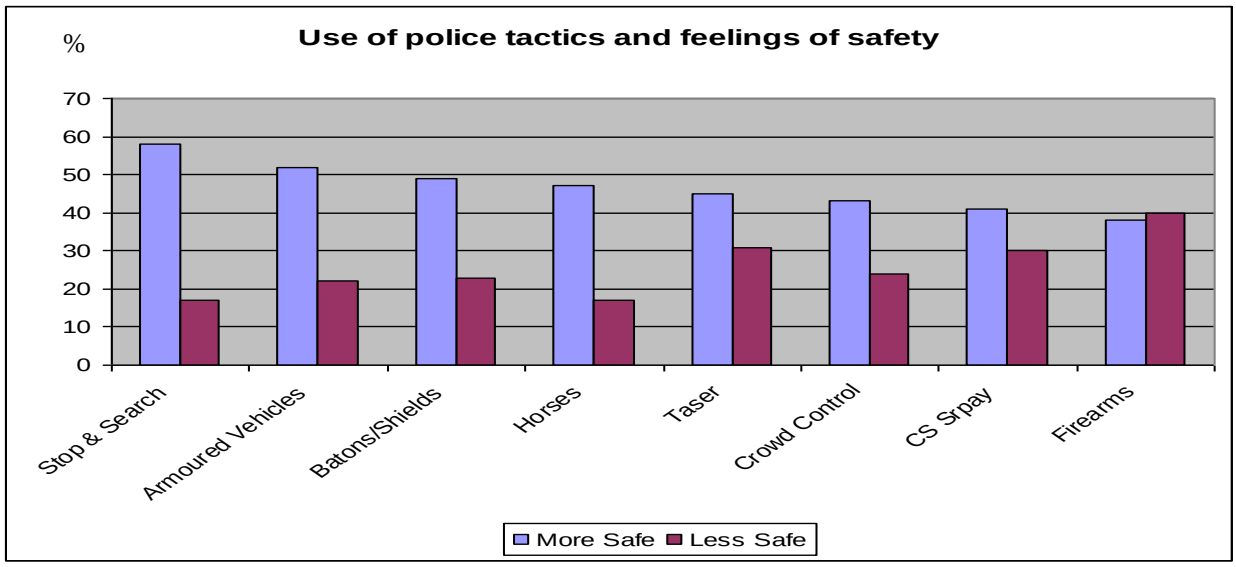
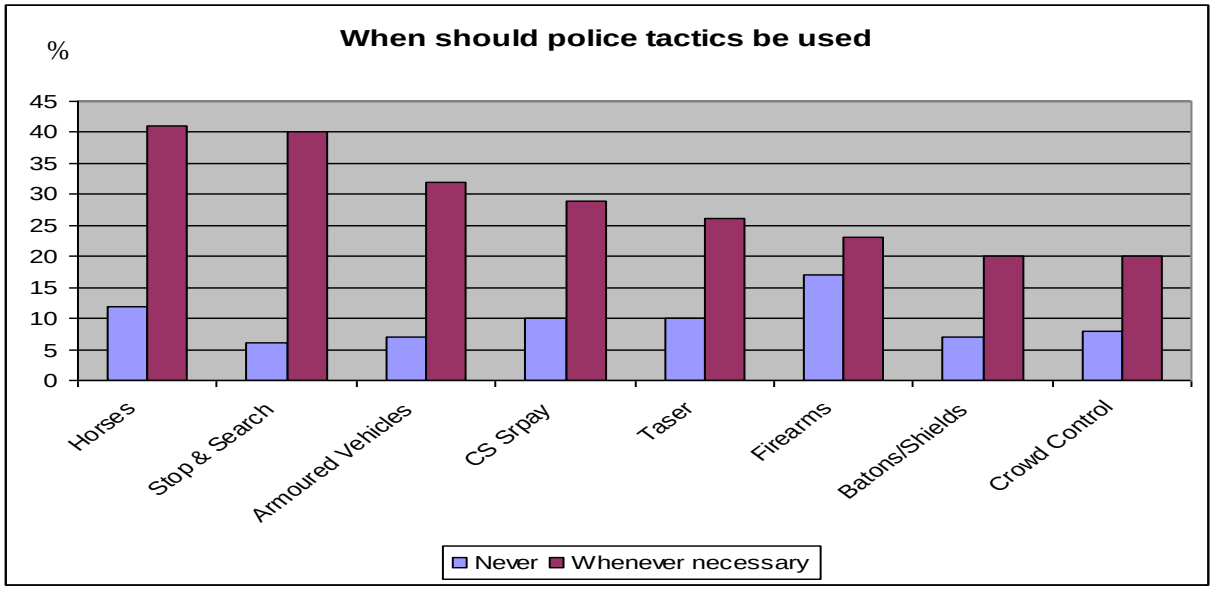


Table 7: when should police tactics be used



The survey asked in what situations each tactic should be used, giving a range of answers: never, violent situations only, crowd control situations only, only when someone's life is in danger, when police believe people might be involved in crime and whenever officer thinks necessary. The chart shows responses for 'never' and 'whenever officer thinks necessary only' for contrast

[1] Youth Talk: the Voice of Young London, MPS Corporate Development, August 2013
[2] Strategic Ambitions for London: Gangs and Serious Youth Violence, London Crime Reduction Board, June 2014
[3] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/KS102EW/view/2013265927?cols=measures
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[6] MOPAC Public Attitude Survey, r12 month MPS data
[7] Strategic Ambitions for London: Gangs and Serious Youth Violence , London Crime Reduction Board, June 2014
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[14] Stanko and Bradford, 2009 Beyond Measuring 'How Good a Job' Police Are Doing: The MPS Model of Confidence in Policing
[15] Ibid
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[26] Transforming Youth Custody: Putting education at the heart of detention, Ministry of Justice, February 2013

[27] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/KS102EW/view/2013265927?cols=measures