



Community Confidence Action Research - Letham

Purpose

The following report was compiled by SPA Strategy and Performance and Police Scotland Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division. It provides key findings from the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland's survey in Letham as part of the Community Confidence Action Research Project along with Your Police Survey data for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Executive Summary

This paper discusses the headline findings of a survey conducted in Letham as part of the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland [Community Confidence Action Research Project](#), along with results of the Your Police Survey for the Letham area covering years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

The Community Confidence Survey ran from 20th September to 15th November 2022 with 57 responses. For the Your Police Survey there were 32 responses in 2021/22 and 41 in 2022/23. It should be noted that due to small sample sizes and the non-representative nature of the samples the findings of these surveys cannot be generalised to the entire Letham population.

Key findings:

- Letham community cohesion appears to be strong and people in the area report a sense of safety. Nearly half of the Community Confidence survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Letham had a sense of community, and Your Police Survey insights show that 71% of survey respondents (n=29) stated they felt safe in 2022/23.
- However, when asked to comment on views of Letham, responses were largely negative and related mainly to antisocial behaviour, and drug and alcohol use.
- High levels of confidence in policing were mostly associated with policing in general, and it is notable that the highest proportion of respondents scored 'Low' or 'Medium' in their level of confidence for all indicators. Your Police Survey data also indicates there has been an increase in those who are not confident from 19% (n=6) in 2021/22 to 41% (n=17) in 2022/23.
- Respondents in Letham generally had more neutral feelings in relation to trust and local policing, with a higher proportion scoring 'medium' across all indicators.
- Regarding performance, the highest proportion scored 'a neither good nor poor job' across all indicators. Comparatively, SPA national polling showed a higher proportion of respondent feeling negative about 'tackling anti-

social behaviour' and 'bringing the community together' and a positive response for 'policing in general', 'keeping your area safe' and 'tackling crime'.

- The majority of respondents noticed no changes in local policing in the last six months, nor had their opinion of policing changed.
- The qualitative responses highlight that police presence and visibility appear to be where respondents' confidence issues lie.

Introduction

This paper discusses the headline findings of a survey conducted in Letham as part of the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland [Community Confidence Action Research Project](#), along with results of the Your Police Survey for the Letham area covering years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

It should be noted that due to small sample sizes and the non-representative nature of the samples the findings of these surveys cannot be generalised to the entire Letham population.

Section 1: Community Confidence Action Research – Letham Survey

As part of the Community Confidence Action Research Project, the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland designed a survey to gather views on community and policing in Letham. Hosted on the Scottish Police Authority's Citizen Space, the survey contained 16 questions and ran from 20th September – 15th November 2022. In total 58 responses were received, but one excluded due to the respondent being based in Letham in Angus. This results in a final total of 57 respondents.

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents lived in the Letham area (75%, n=43). Three respondents who submitted paper responses selected more than one reason (live in the area and also works, live in the area and has family/friends, and work in the area and has family/friends). Inputting into Citizen Space only allowed the selection of one so in these instances the main reason selected was living in the area and working in the area.

The highest proportion of respondents were aged 55-64 (23%, n=13) and the lowest aged 16-24 at 9% (n=5). The sample is also predominantly female (67%, n=38). The majority of respondents stated they had no contact with the police in the last 6 months (82%, n=47).

Table 1: Sample demographics (n=57)

Reason for being in/visiting Letham?		
I have family/friends in the area	6	11%
I live in the area	43	75%
I work in the area	2	4%
Not Answered	2	4%
Other	4	7%
Age		

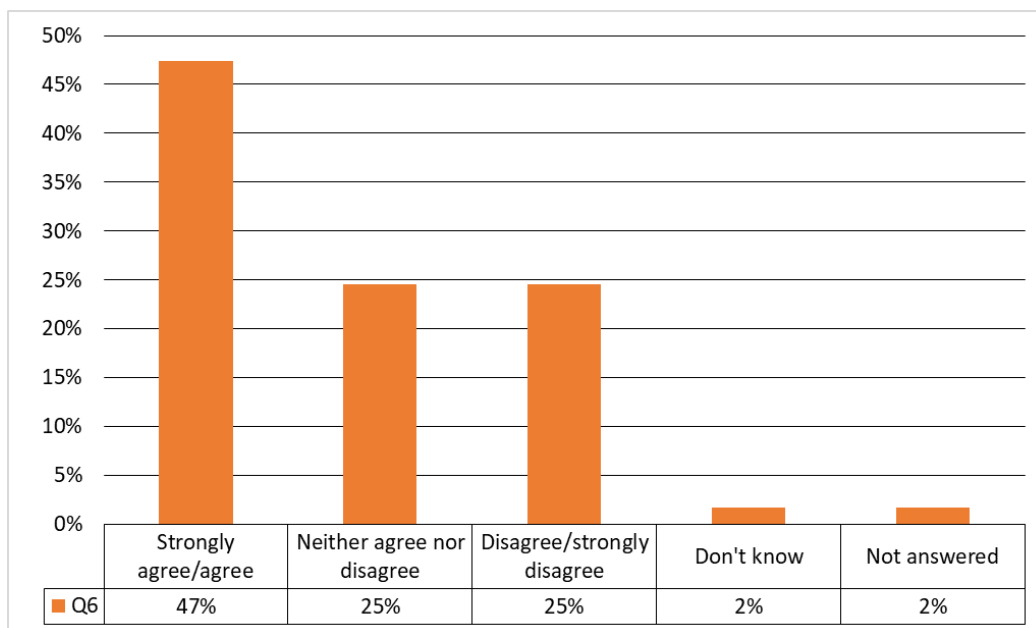
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16-24	5	9%
25-34	10	18%
35-44	7	12%
45-54	11	19%
55-64	13	23%
65+	9	16%
Not Answered	1	2%
Prefer not to say	1	2%
Gender		
Female	38	67%
Male	17	30%
Not Answered	1	2%
Other (please specify)	1	2%
Contact with police – 6 months		
No	47	82%
Yes	8	14%
Not Answered	2	4%

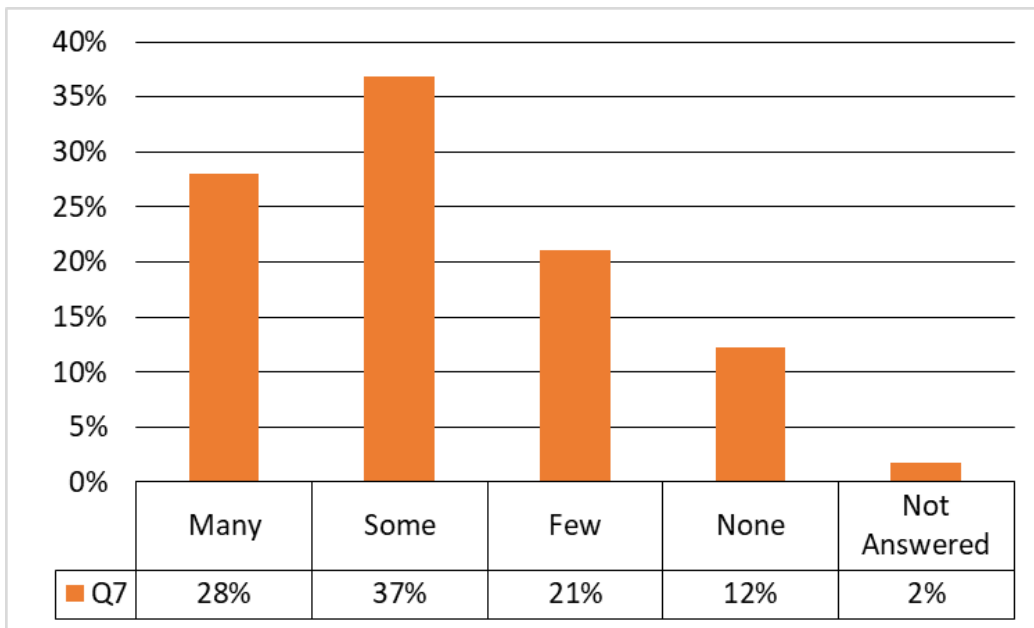
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47% (n=27) of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that Letham had a sense of community, 25% (n=14) neither agreed nor disagreed and 25% (n=14) disagreed/strongly disagreed. Levels of trust in the people in their street varied, with 28% (n=16) selecting they could trust many, 37% (n=21) some, 21% (n=12) few and 12% (n=7) none.

Q6: Do you agree that Letham has a sense of community? (n=57)



Q7: Would you say that you can trust many, some, few or none of the people in your street? (n=57)



Q8: Thinking about your answers to the previous questions, what are your general thoughts and feelings of Letham?

There were 39 comments in total – although three were not relevant to the question. 27 respondents noted negative views on Letham when asked what their general thoughts and feelings were. These comments related largely to antisocial behaviour and drug and alcohol use. Other negative aspects mentioned were vandalism, a lack of activities (in particular for young people), feeling unsafe (either for themselves or children), dog fouling, lack of police presence, and speeding. There were nine comments that noted positive elements of Letham, and five that had positive and negative elements. These comments related more to having a sense of community, people in the area being caring and friendly, and the area improving and receiving investment.

Confidence and Trust in Police

In terms of confidence in police in the local area, over the range of indicators a higher proportion of respondents scored 'Low' for:

- Keeping your area safe (42%, n=24)
- Tackling antisocial behaviour (44%, n=25)
- Preventing crime (40%, n=23)
- Tackling crime (39%, n=22)
- Responding quickly (37%, n=21)

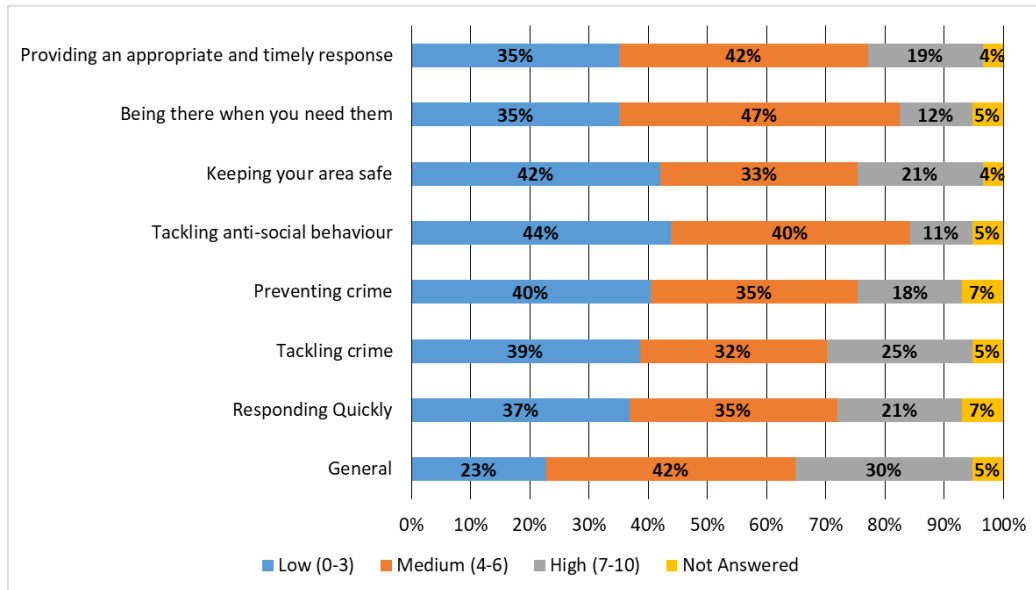
For all of these the next most common score was 'Medium', and in some cases the margin between 'Low' and 'Medium' was relatively small.

A higher proportion of respondents scored 'Medium' for:

- Providing an appropriate and timely response (42%, n=24)
- Being there when you need them (47%, n=27)
- General (42%, n=24)

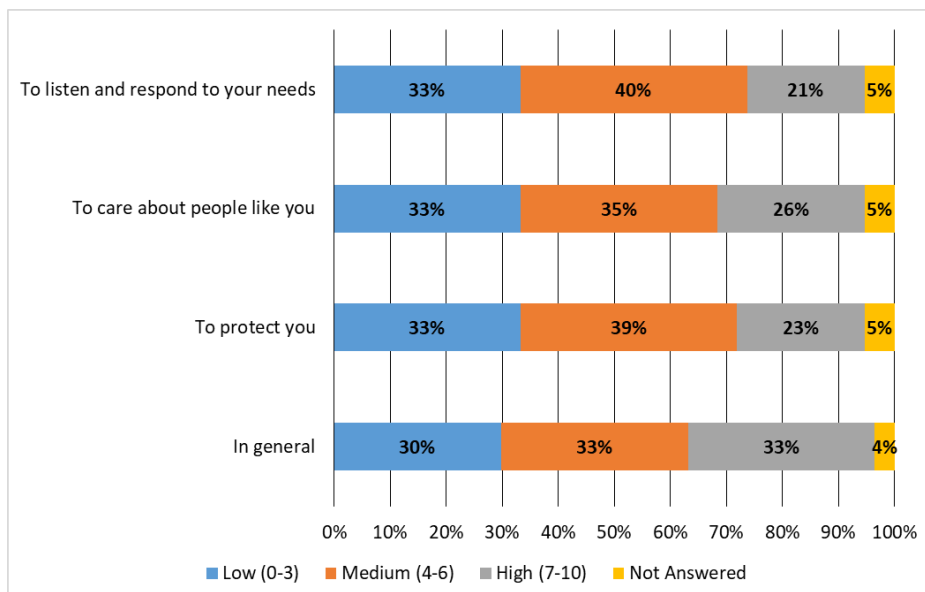
'General' was the only response where a higher proportion scored 'High' than 'Low' (although as noted the highest proportion scored 'Medium').

Q9: How much confidence do you have in the police your local area in... (n=57)



Regarding trust, the highest proportion of respondents across all categories scored 'Medium'. For all except 'In general', the second most common score was 'Low' (for 'in general' the trend mirrors that with confidence with the second most common being 'High').

Q10: How much trust do you have in the police your local area (n=57)

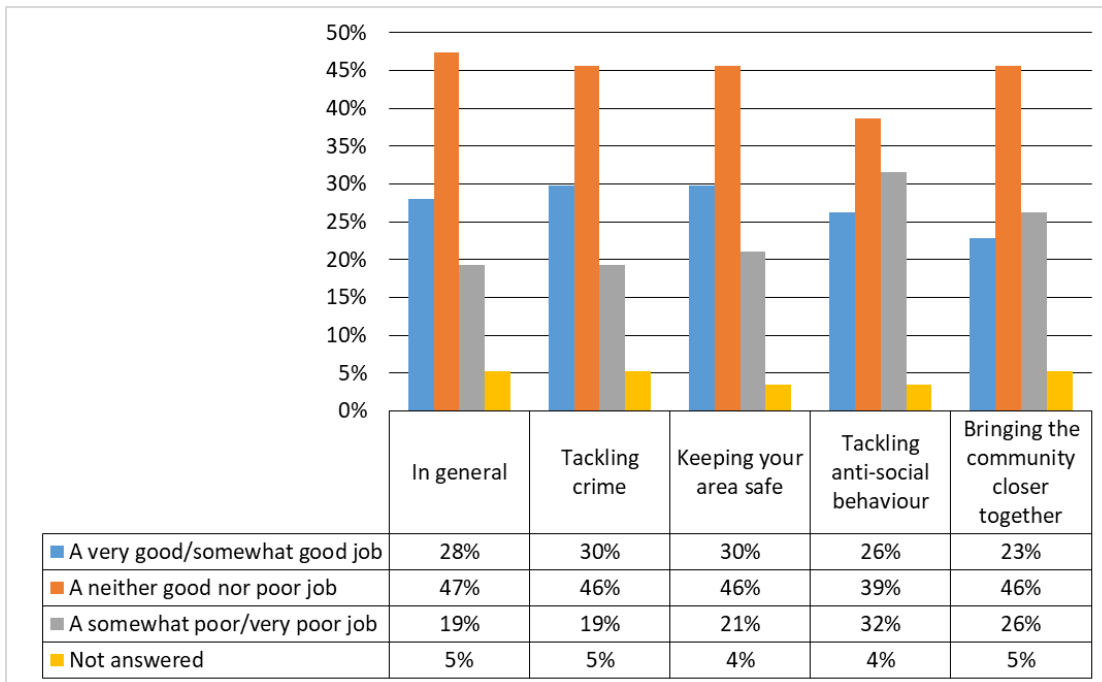


Regarding the performance of police in their local area, the highest proportion of respondents selected 'A neither good nor poor job' across all scenarios. Contrastingly, SPA [national polling](#) showed a higher proportion of respondents selecting a negative response for 'tackling anti-social behaviour' and 'bringing the community together' and a positive response for 'policing in general', 'keeping your area safe' and 'tackling crime'.

For 'In general', 'Tackling crime' and 'Keeping your area safe', the second most common response for the Letham respondents was 'a very good/somewhat good job'.

For 'tackling anti-social behaviour' and 'bringing the community closer together' the second most common response was 'a somewhat poor/very poor job'.

Q11: How good or poor a job do you think the police in your local area are doing at the moment in the following regards? (n=57)



Changes/Views on Local Police

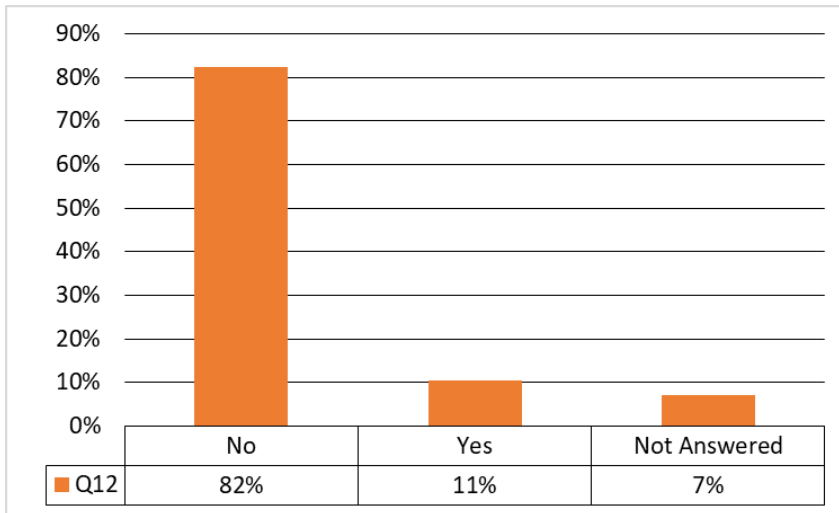
The majority of respondents noticed no changes in how local police engaged in the local area in the last six months (82%, n=47). Six respondents who selected 'Yes' noted police seemed 'down to earth and normal' and one explicitly referenced the PPCW outreach officer engaging with local people. Other comments included there being more police vans at night, that police were "never around" or there appeared to be less police on the streets, and that police were not tackling the drug problem in Letham.

Two who selected 'No' and two who did not answer also commented. Of these, two reported they had not noticed, one that they had no comment and the other

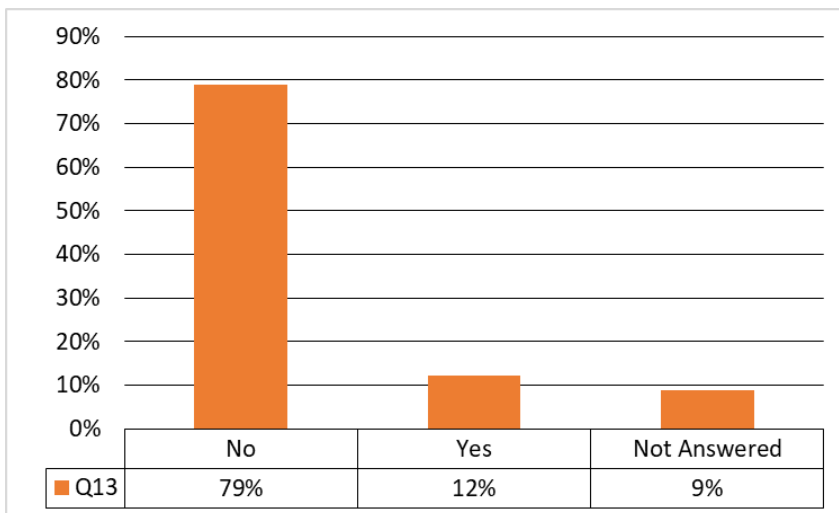
that police were not visible and, when seen, were usually driving and “turning a blind eye”.

79% (n=45) stated their view of policing locally had not changed in the past six months. 17 respondents provided further detail with the most consistent comment relating to a lack of police presence/visibility.

Q12: Have you noticed any changes in how local police engage in the local area in the last six months? (n=57)



Q13: Has your view of policing locally changed in the past six months? (n=57)



Q14: A key part of this project is focused on understanding why people may be less confident in policing in the area. Please let us know below the things you think may impact confidence

There were 35 comments in response to Q14. The majority (n=19) related to a lack of police visibility and presence in the area, with some mentioning a desire for community policing and street presence. There is a sentiment within a small number of the responses that the police operate in a reactive manner and are

visible in the community when incidents occur. A small number of respondents also mentioned police response being slow or being refused help – although one respondent did note a quick response. Another respondent noted some officers being quite aggressive and intimidating, yet they mentioned some were also pleasant. Many responses highlighted issues in the area (e.g. alcohol and drug use, antisocial behaviour etc.) and four respondents specifically noted issues not being addressed by police (although one attributed this to the current legal system).

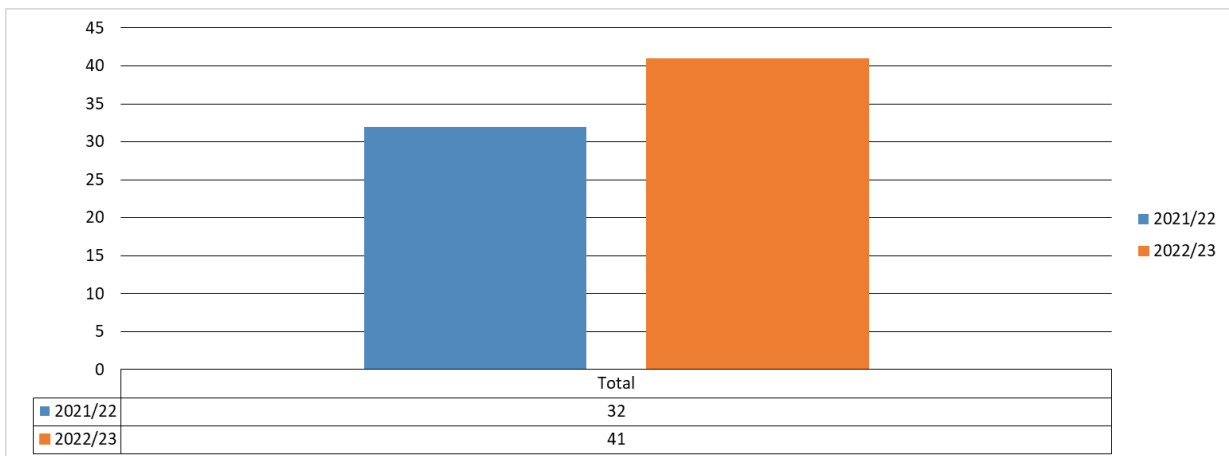
Q15: If you have any comments on the topics raised within this survey, please detail them in the text box below

There were 10 responses to Q15. There were no notable themes, but resources was mentioned by two respondents with one noting issues around police funding impacting the level of police presence and that with cuts in the budget from Scottish Government that it was unlikely there would be improvement. Another noted the impact of resourcing but felt that safety and wellbeing of people in the area would surely be a top priority. This respondent also noted increased paperwork and office working, but commented that there must be a way to balance this and allow officers to return to the streets and “not be frightened to act” in case that lead to an increase in paperwork. One highlighted that it was difficult to keep the balance between friendliness and authority, along with presence and safety in today’s society. One respondent was also sure that “most people would like to see the ‘Bobby on the beat’ and that children could “do with some direction on how to behave”.

Section 2: Your Police Survey – Letham, Perth

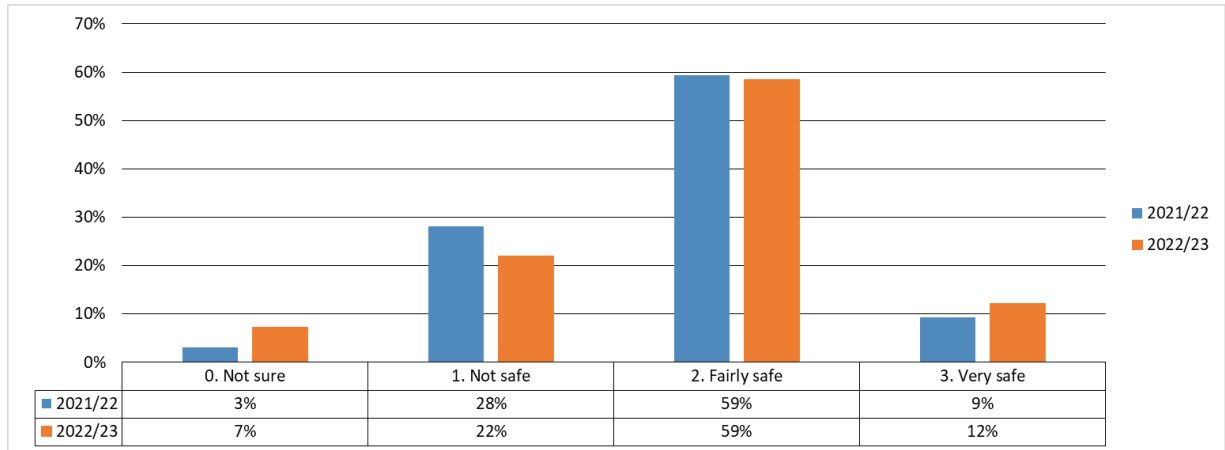
The following report has been compiled to analyse the results from the Your Police survey from people who are resident within the Letham area of Perth. Data has been gathered for the time period 1st April 2021 until 13th October 2022. Data is shown for both financial years separately to determine any changes in opinion within the current financial year.

Chart 1: Total Survey returns



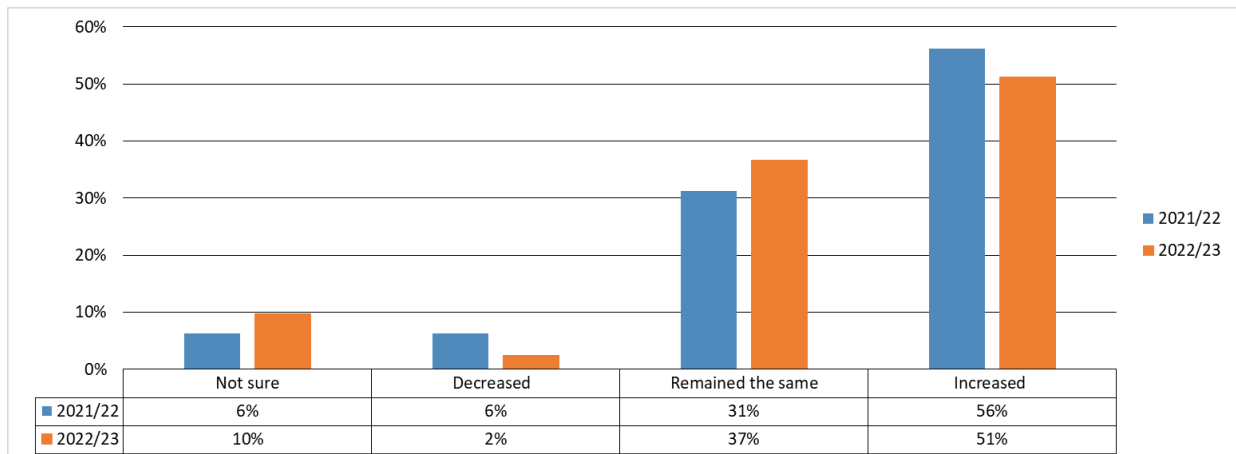
The chart shows an increase in responses this year compared to last year. There has, therefore, been a greater level of engagement from residents of Letham in the past six months.

Chart 2: How safe do you feel in your area? (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



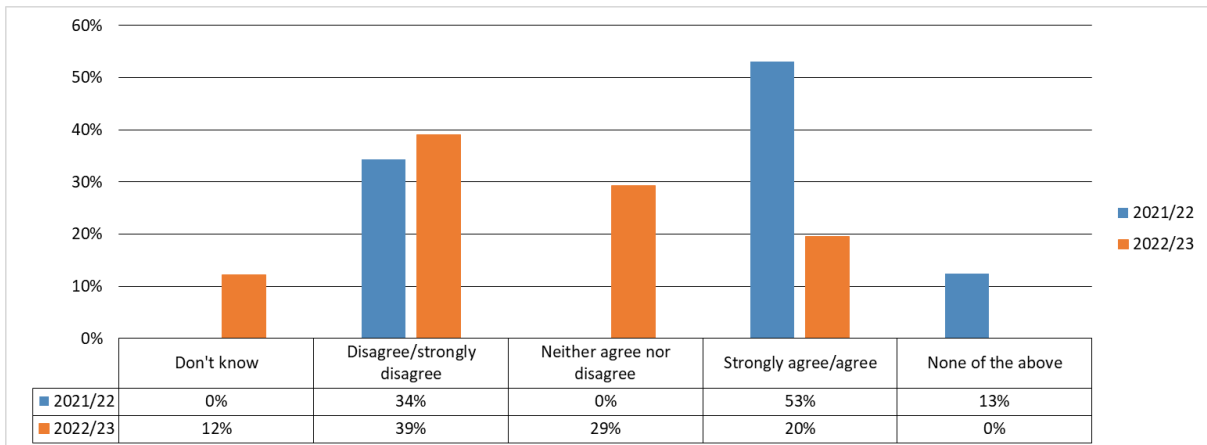
There has been an increase in the number of people who feel safe in their community this year. The level of persons stating they do not feel safe remains static at 9 responses but the percentage of all respondents who do not feel safe has fallen from 28% to 22% due to the increased sample size. In total, this year 71% (n=29) of people state they feel safe within their community.

Chart 3: Concerns about crime (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



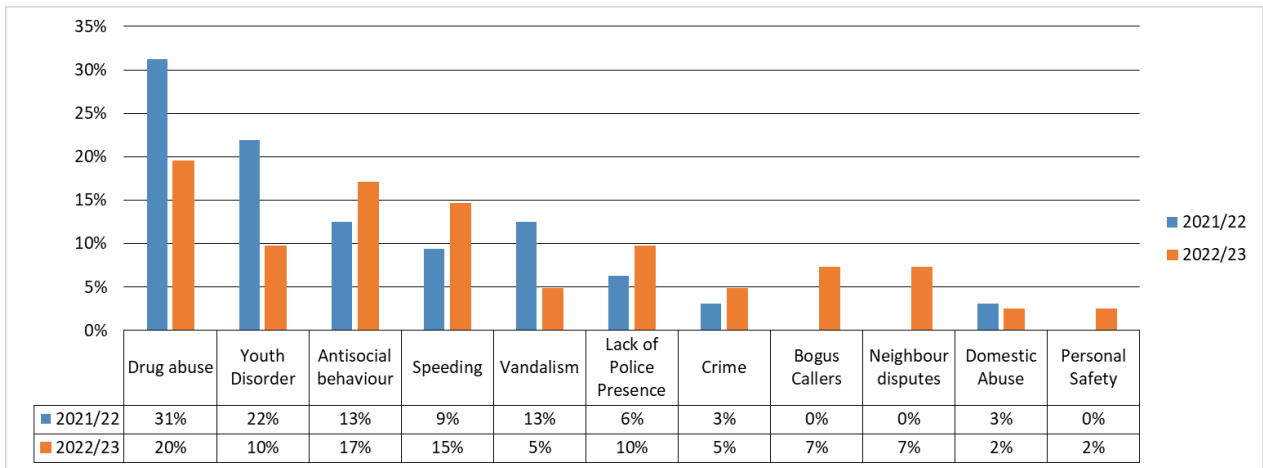
The community still continues to have concerns about crime with very few people stating their concerns had decreased. Indeed, more than half of people stated their concerns had increased. The level of concern has not altered significantly in the current year.

Chart 4: Police Listen to the Concerns of Local People (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



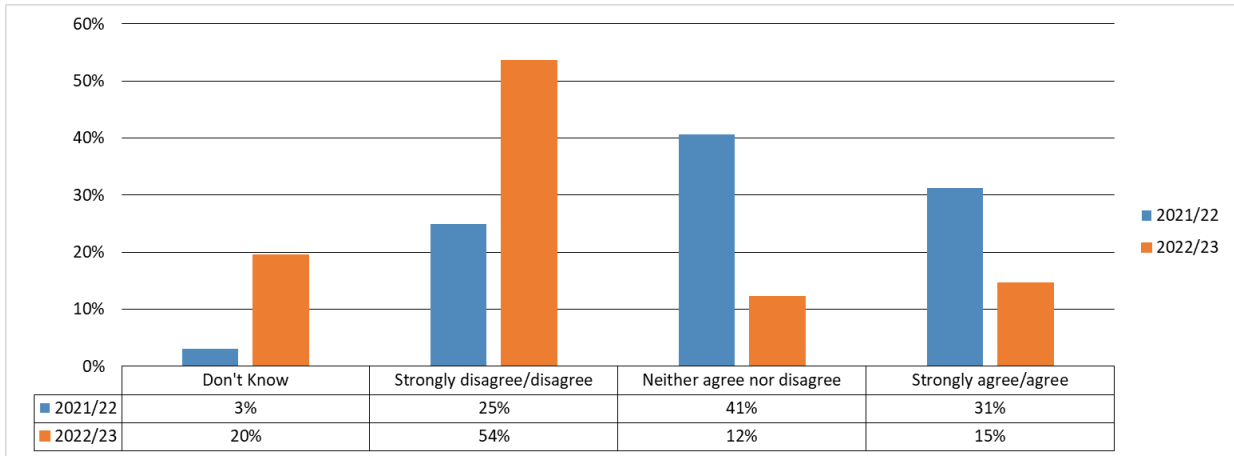
The results of this question appear to alter considerably between the two years of analysis. This may be partly due to options available for persons to respond with. Overall, the percentage of persons who disagree with the statement has only increased slightly to 39% (n=16) from 34% (n=11) of replies last year. A large number of people this year have replied that they either agree or disagree whereas there were no replies for this response last year. This appears to have impacted on the number of people who have agreed with the statement that Police listen to public concerns.

Chart 5: Local Community Concerns (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



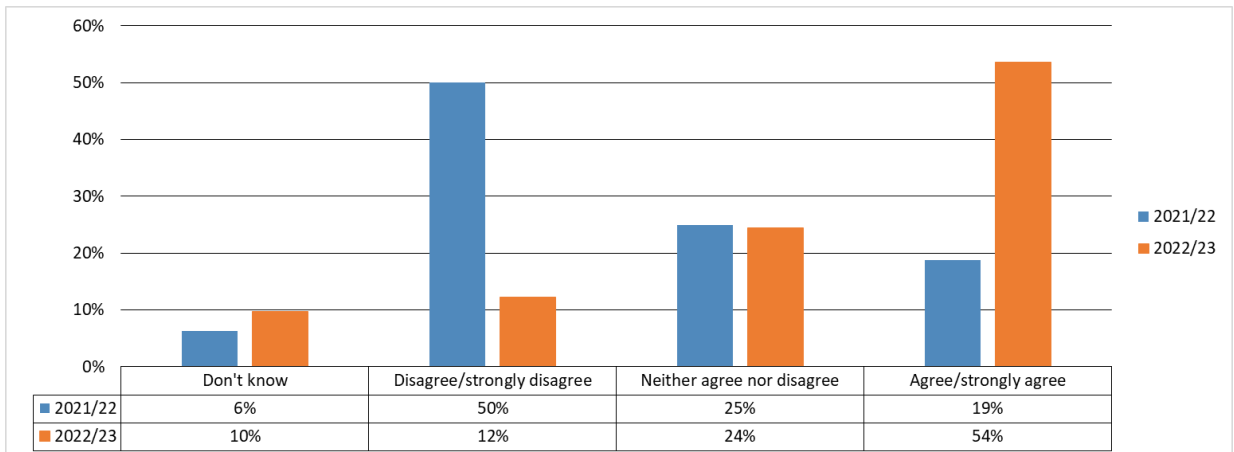
The main issues that impact upon the local residents of Letham are drug dealing/abuse and antisocial behaviour including youth disorder. This year has seen an increase in concerns regarding speeding and bogus caller incidents.

Chart 6: Police are dealing with issues that affect my local area (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



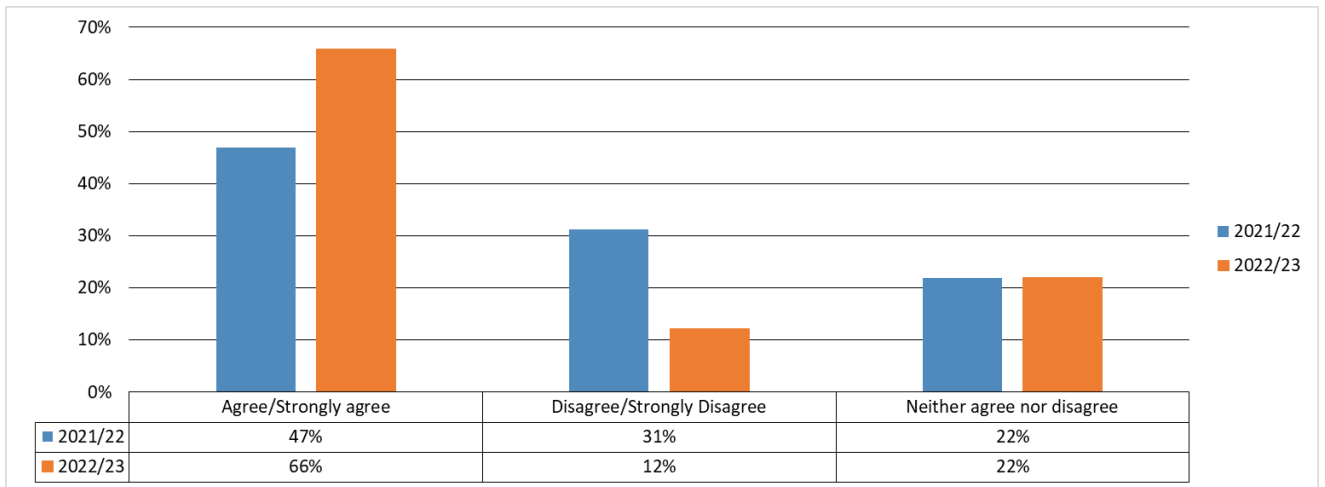
There has been a marked change in the results to this question this year with more than half of people now stating police are not dealing with issues that affect the area compared to only a quarter of responses last year.

Chart 7: Police are friendly and approachable (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



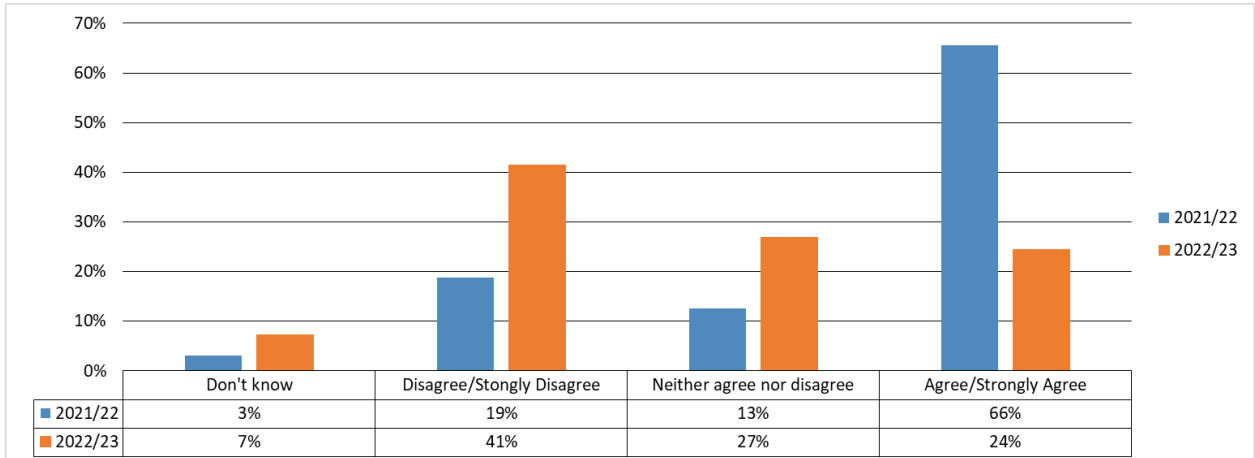
The public have seen a change in the way regarding how friendly and approachable the police are in Letham. Last year, half of replies (n=16) disagreed with this statement whereas now only 12% disagree (n=5). Previously only 19% (n=6) agreed with the statement whereby now 54% (n=22) of people agree that the police are friendly and approachable.

Chart 8: I have Respect for Police in my Local Area (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



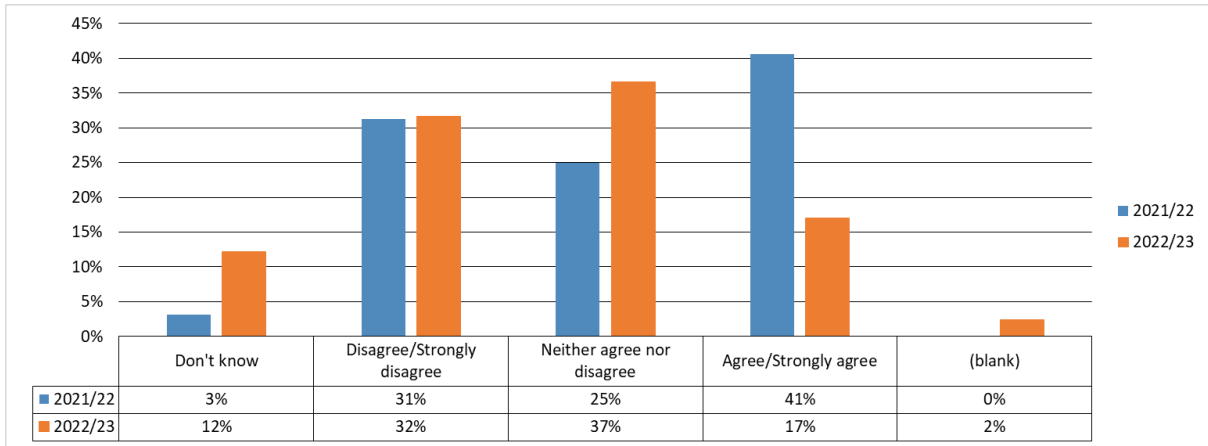
There has also been an increase in the level of respect towards police this year. Almost two thirds of replies this year agree with the statement compared to under half of replies last year. Those who stated they do not respect the police have fallen with only 12% (n=5) of replies this year disagreeing with the statement.

Chart 9: I have Confidence in the Police in my Local Area (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



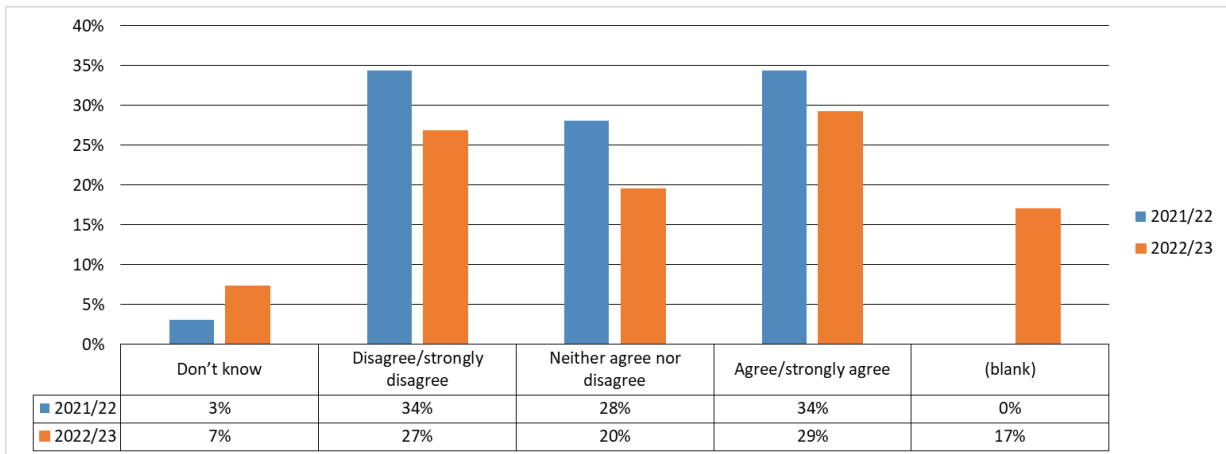
The level of people who disagree with this statement has increased from 19% (n=6) last year to 41% (n=17) this year with the difference correlating to the earlier question regarding whether people believed police were dealing with issues within the area.

Chart 10: The Police are doing a Good Job in my Local Area (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



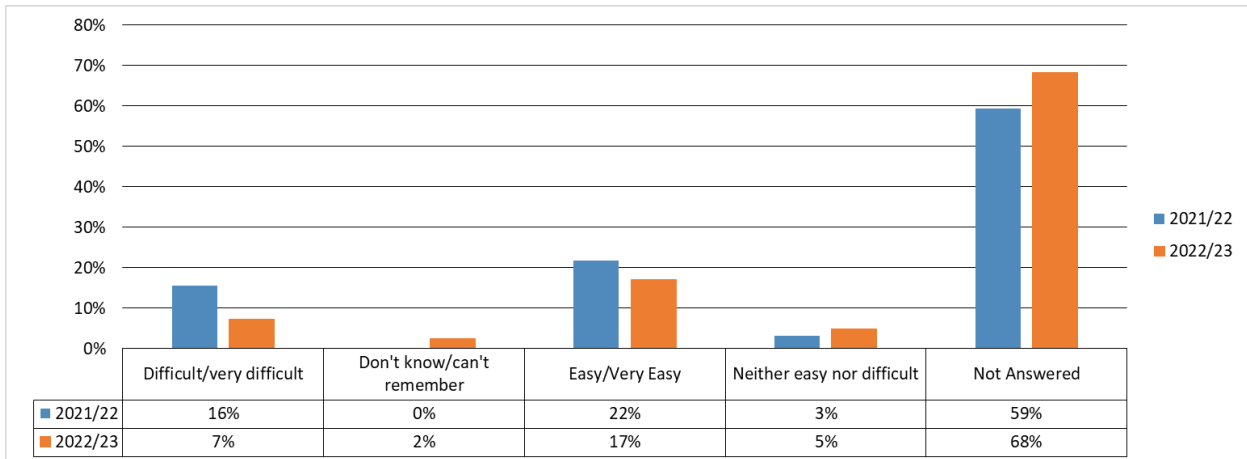
The results show less people agreeing with this statement this year. The percentage of those who disagree with this has remained at the same level with 31% (n=10) in 2021/22 and 32% (n=13) in 2022/23 of replies disagreeing with this statement in each of the past two years.

Chart 11: Police Scotland is an Organisation I can Trust (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



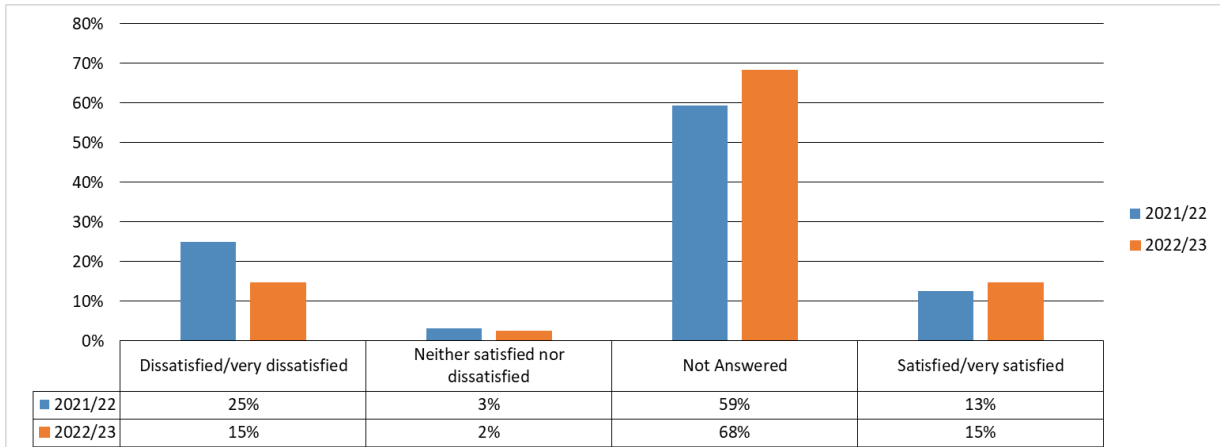
The results for this question remain very similar for both years. After removing the blanks for the current year, the split between all answers remains roughly the same with a third of people agreeing and a third disagreeing.

Chart 12: How easy was it to contact Police Scotland (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



This question is not applicable to a high number of people who replied to the survey, with only 13 providing an answer in both years. The results do show that more than half of those who answered the question found it easy to contact Police Scotland. Only 23% (n=3) of those who answered the question this year stated it was difficult to contact the police compared to 38% (n=5) last year.

Chart 13: Based on your overall experience of communicating with Police Scotland, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you (2021/22 n=32, 2022/23 n=41)



Again, a large number of people did not answer this question so the findings cannot be considered meaningful. In 2021/22 and 2022/23 only 13 respondents provided an answer. This year the same number of respondents are satisfied as those who are not satisfied (n=6).

Conclusions and Key Findings

While high levels of respondents agree Letham has a strong sense of community, it is notable that one quarter of respondents to the Letham survey disagreed. It is also notable that the majority of respondents who commented in this section noted negative views on the area, primarily relating to antisocial

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behaviour, drug use and alcohol use. Your Police Survey respondents also highlighted these concerns along with youth disorder.

It is important to note that the highest proportion of respondents scored 'Low' confidence for the majority of indicators. Further, the second most common response was only 'High' for policing in general. The Your Police Survey shows an increase in those who are not confident police in their area from 19% (n=6) last year to 41% (n=17) in 2022/23. This suggests that there are issues around confidence in policing in the Letham area.

Regarding trust in police, the highest proportion scored 'medium' trust, with the second most common being 'low' – aside from 'In general' which scored high. This suggests that while there are issues of trust in the Letham area, there is a greater level of trust than there is of confidence.

When scoring how good a job local policing were doing in the area, the highest proportion of respondents selected 'a neither good nor poor job' across all scenarios. This is more positive than SPA national polling for 'tackling antisocial behaviour' and 'bringing the community together' where the highest proportion scored 'Low'. However, the picture in Letham is more negative in relation to 'policing in general', 'keeping your area safe' and 'tackling crime' which scored positively in the SPA national polling. Fewer respondents to the Your Police Survey also agree police are doing a good job in their local area - 41% (n=13) in 2021/22 to 17% (n=7) in 2022/23).

The majority of respondents noted no changes in local police engagement and stated that their view of policing locally had not changed in the past six months.

Across the survey comments relating to policing largely related to a lack of police presence/visibility. There were also some comments relating to police not dealing with issues which was a strong view in the Your Police Survey data.