

REPORT PROFILE

Swindon Community Safety Partnership approached Voluntary Action Swindon (VAS) to gather feedback on how safe people generally feel out and about in Swindon. Two surveys were carried out one to gather information from adults, and one directed at younger people. This is the youth survey results; the adult results are published separately. Both reports are on the VAS website.

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Following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021. The Government published its new strategy [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls](#). In July 2021, Swindon Community Partnership successfully secured Safer Street Funding, and carried out a survey directed at females. For additional feedback, the Partnership decided to carry out further surveys, one directed at adults in general and another survey aimed at gathering the view of young people. This report outlines the key findings from the Youth Survey and focus groups at New College Swindon.

The survey opened on 1st March 2022 and closed 25th April 2022.

METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

- 82 responses were returned from a published survey.
- Two days were also spent at both New College Swindon's sites at Queens Drive and North Star Avenue to speak to the students directly. We hosted a stall at the college sites and gathered views as part of their Health and Wellbeing open days in April. Incentive bags of information, keyrings, spike prevention stoppers, book markers and sweets were used to draw them to our stand. Group discussions were held when the visited the stand.
- Additional comments are collated and used in this report.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS – full breakdown in Appendix A

Gender

82 people choose to answer this question, 58% (47) of the responses identified as females, 28% (23) male and 14% (11) were either gender non-conforming, self-defining or prefer not to say.

Age

82 people answered this question, with 23 being under 16, 32 in the 16-18 age group and 27 being over 18.

Ethnicity

82 people responded to this question.

69 (84%) of responses were returned from those stating to be White British or other White Background, 6 (7%) of responses were Indian, 2 (2%) of responses were Caribbean, 2 (2%) responses were Pakistani. The balance represented 1 person from each of these groups African, Other Mixed, Any Other Ethnicity.

DATE OF
REPORT
June 2022

Postcode

21 (27%) respondents came from SN2, 14 (18%) from SN3, 13 (17%) from SN1, 10 (13%) from SN5, 7 (9%) from SN25, 4 (5%) each from SN4 and SN6, 2 (3%) each from SN8 and SN9. 1 person had entered SN with no number, one entered 'yes' and one was from Reading (RG19).

KEY FINDINGS

The views included in this section are gathered exclusively from the people who completed the Safer Street Survey, and from comments and viewpoints gathered at the two sites of New College Swindon. They contain no views or opinions from Voluntary Action Swindon. Any quotes are direct, although spellings have been corrected for ease of reading. Some respondents have provided more than one answer for each question, so the comments do not necessarily add up to the number of responses received.

FOCUSED CONVERSATIONS AT NEW COLLEGE SWINDON

Some students visiting the stall opted to complete the survey, otherwise we spent time speaking to groups of students when they visited the stand.

When asked how they felt, there was a lot of negative body language, eyebrow raising, eye rolling, face pulling, tutting and sighing. The consensus was that they did not generally feel safe going out in Swindon, especially the town centre. Most said they either do not go out after dark or would only go out with parents or a group of friends.

A lot of feedback centred around feelings; feeling anxious or nervous and not having the confidence to deal with a negative situation when out and about.

Other conversations were about the fear of knife crime and gangs on estates, including Parks, Penhill and Pinehurst. Some admitted that they haven't actually been to any of these estates, although one said their car was broken in when parked in Penhill.

Those that had been out socialising in the town centre or Old Town said that there was **"always trouble in Tree."** Some said they knew of people being spiked and that they were being charged £5 for a glass topper to stop this happening. A couple of girls that we spoke to, said that **'older men hang around the dance floor perverting at the young girls and security don't care.'** This comment was in relation to the Kings Hotel in Wood Street rather than Tree.

Comments and conversations from discussions, included:

A machete attack outside the college was eye witnessed by students that involved a 16, 17- and 20-year-old, where the person attacked lost fingers. This was reported by two of the groups of students we spoke to, and they seemed to

be unsettled and concerned that this could happen again. Lots of concerns over getting stabbed or being a victim of knife crime.

One had an experience of being followed and was now nervous to go out alone. Even during the day.

Typical comments:

“Not safe anywhere.”

“Stay close to home.”

“Don’t go out after dark.”

“Only go into town if I absolutely have to.”

“Heard bad stuff.” (Penhill)

“Worried about stabbings.”

“Gangs from the estates bother me, worried I will walk into the wrong bit, so only stay close to home.”

“Only go out with my parents.”

“Stay in after dark.”

“Don’t feel safe.”

“Wouldn’t have the confidence to go out in Swindon at night.”

“Couldn’t deal with a situation, so prefer not to go out.”

“My anxiety couldn’t cope.”

“No respect for younger people – older people seem to expect trouble from younger people, so are rude and aggressive towards younger people.”

“Make people happier – I think if they are not happy with their life and their surroundings, they are more likely to commit crime.”

“Cut down on crime, I hear bad stuff about areas, so don’t go out.”

The passage under the railway connecting North Star college site to the town centre was raised as a concern by some students. Now that the colleges have merged, students have lessons across both sites, and may need to walk this way.

“Several times there have been adult males hanging around the entrance of the tunnel. I have been approached: Do you have a cigarette? Where are you going? At the pathway there was a young gentleman sitting smoking and urinating.”

“I’ve seen men weeing down the underpass and they don’t care who sees. It worries me.”

Consistent feedback regarding the use of taxis and the murder of Sian O’Callagan.

“Won’t get in a taxi – scared of being murdered.”

“Something might happen.”

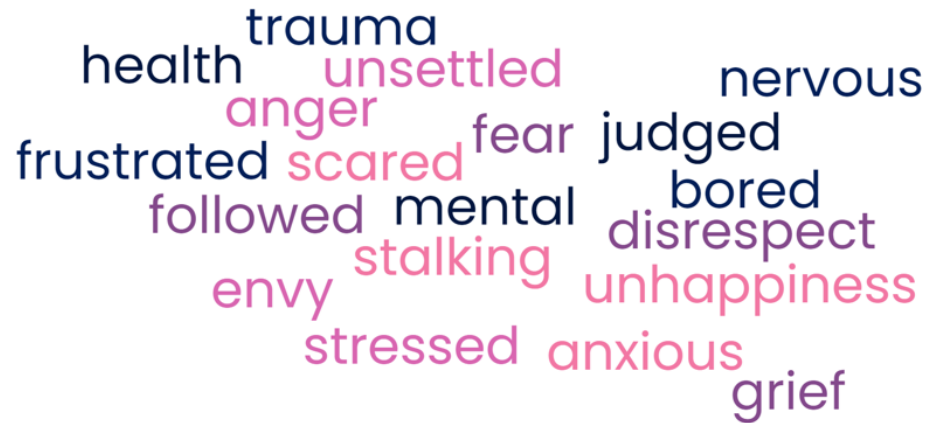
“I’m not allowed to use a taxi.”

“Can only go out if there is someone available to pick me up.”

“Mum picks me up, not allowed in a taxi.”

Even during the day students were wary of getting a taxi.

A lot of the feedback was about feelings, their poor mental health and lack of confidence when out and about. Words used tended to be:



OUT & ABOUT

Daytime Generally

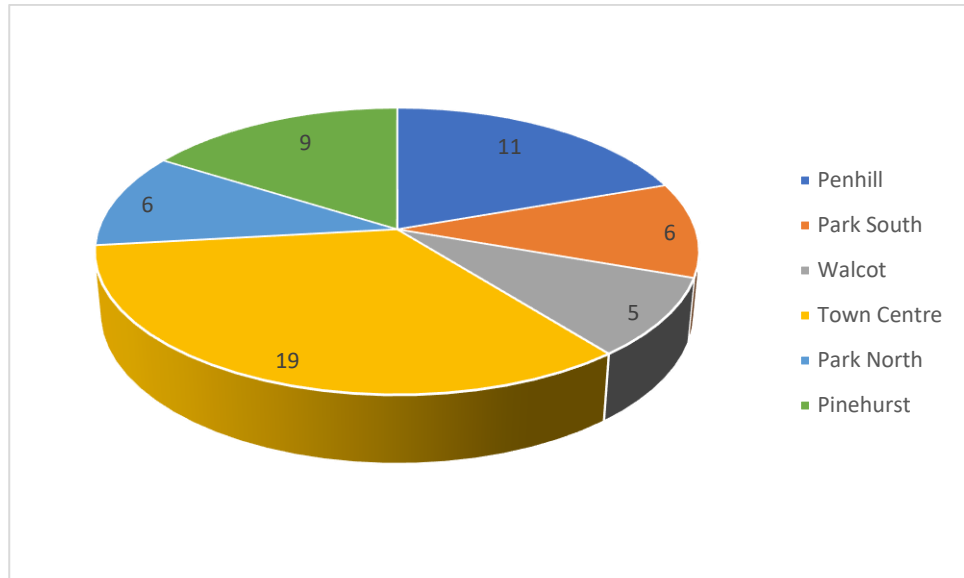
Of the 71 people that answered these questions, 61% stated that they generally felt safe out and about in Swindon during the daytime.

After Dark Generally

This figure drops to 31% after dark.

Specific Areas Reported

58 people answered this question, some people naming more than one area.



Five young people stated that they feel safe anywhere in Swindon.

The town centre is identified as the area that most young people reported as feeling unsafe, one specifically saying '**bottom of town**'. With 5 people stating they would not go to the town centre after dark.

Penhill and Pinehurst are the second and third areas that young people reported not feeling safe, with Park North, Park South and Walcot evenly split after this.

The following areas were mentioned twice:

Old Town
 Sevenfields
 Manchester Road
 Gorsehill

With these areas mentioned once:

Toothill
 Rodbourne
 Orbital
 Badbury Park
 Highworth
 Shaw Ridge
 Lawn

Other areas of concern are:

Alleyways and underpasses (particularly the underpass from North Star into town), dark unpopulated areas, Lawn Woods and Swindon College.

4 people stated that they didn't feel safe in Swindon anywhere.

Explain Why You Feel Unsafe?

54 young people answered this question, giving the following reasons for feeling unsafe:

Reason for Feeling Unsafe	No. of People Reporting this Reason
Groups of people hanging about – various descriptions given: “chavs” “perverts” “heckling men” “suspicious people” “roadmen” “scary people” “people arguing” “creeps” “muggers” “teens”	15
Fear of stabbing / knife crime	12
Too many drunks / drug dealers about	8
Too many gangs	5
Victim of Crime (theft/attack/being followed)	4
Fear of crime generally	4
Area is “sketchy” “rough” “dangerous”	4
Fear that ‘something’ will happen	2
Fear of kidnapping	1
Poor Lighting	1

Examples of comments:

- “People arguing and shouting – makes me scared” (Town Centre)
- “I’ve heard bad stuff” (Penhill)
- “I get paranoid that something is going to happen”
- “I hear about a lot of stabbings; people ask me for money and cigarettes etc.”
- “Because I fear of being identified by people that I closed off contact with and they can make a scene when I’m about.”
- “Gang areas, plenty of places to hide and jump out from.”
- “Lots of reports of stabbings & heard scary things about those places.”

What Would Make You Feel Safer?

70 young people answered this question. Security was top of the list with 23 asking for more police on the street, more security or monitoring of the town centre. One person would like to be issued with a stab vest!

“More patrols. Maybe give teenagers areas to hang out so they don't turn to crime.”

“More police around the area. And staying there more not just coming and going.”

“Bobbies on foot on the beat, not in squad cars having a quick filch around.”

10 people would like to see the town improved with less drug dealing and drinkers. So that the town is less intimidating.

“less druggies.”

“get rid of scary people who I find unsettling.”

11 people would like to see more monitoring and CCTV in use.

The introduction of more to do for young people, instead of just having to ‘hang around’ was suggested by 6 people.

“More activities and support to help young people turn their lives around.”

“More areas to properly release stress and anger in a healthy fashion and most likely more places for teenagers to hang.”

“Spaces for us to let off steam in a good way – get old people to respect us!”

An improvement to lighting was requested by 10 people. Especially in alleyways and underpasses.

3 people calling for education and behaviour change in men.

“Change in how men behave. They need to know.”

“More police on foot and mothers raising their boys better. Male crial and banter should be kept in the appropriate places.”

“.....integrated lessons on this.”

One person would like to see the town regenerated and one would like to see more shops.

“An environment where people are happier. I think they are not happy with their surroundings and life so create more problems generally.”

“More lights more flowers and green spaces, brighter colours and less dirty dull areas more murals.”

6 people said they didn’t know what would help them to feel safer.

Have you experienced harassment in any of the following ways?

51 people responded to this question, with over 82% saying that they felt that they were being followed. 65% had been insulted or shouted at in public by a stranger.

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Been insulted or shouted at by a stranger in public	64.71% 33
Experienced catcalls, wolf whistles, unwanted sexual comments or jokes from a stranger in public	56.86% 29
Felt that you were being followed	82.35% 42
Felt threatened by a stranger in a public space	45.10% 23
Experienced someone rubbing up against or touching you in public space or on public transport	13.73% 7
Experienced physical violence	21.57% 11
Felt coerced into certain behaviours	7.84% 4
Been a victim of indecent exposure	9.80% 5
Been a victim of up skirting	5.88% 3
Total Respondents: 51	

Have you ever been a victim of stalking?

Of the 59 replies received, 14 people said they had been a victim of stalking. 8 people reported that this was by someone known to them. Only 1 person felt able to report this. When asked why, one said they wouldn't grass, one felt the perpetrator would know it was them reporting. One was only 15 and didn't know who to report to.

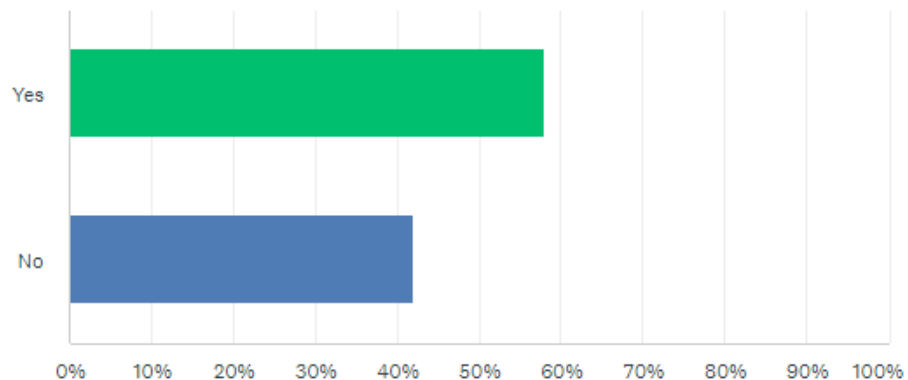
Other comments:

'Police told me a crime hadn't been committed so they couldn't do anything.'
'there's not enough help available.'

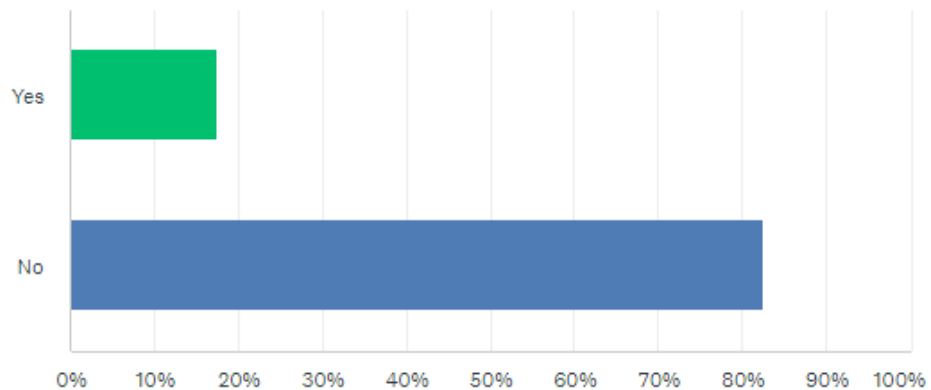
USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN SWINDON

Do you feel safe at the bus station during the day/after dark?

57 people answered this question, with 58% feeling safe during the day.



This drops to 17% after dark.



75% felt safe once they were on the bus during the day, dropping to 45% after dark.

Reasons why young people don't feel safe at the bus station:

“there's a lot of drunk people that wander around that try and get on buses without tickets.”

“Might get stabbed lots of weirdos on buses that sit next to me and sneeze on my head.”

“Sketchy people hanging around.”

“Lack of light and dodgy people hanging around.”

“Some of the multi-storey car parks have drug addicts and tramps who are very aggressive. Also, the train station car park on station road is right next door to 'muggers alley'/western flyer and it is quite a distance to get from the station to the car park increasing the risk of being attacked.”

“Have police monitoring buses, so bus drivers don't have to deal with it.”

Using the train service

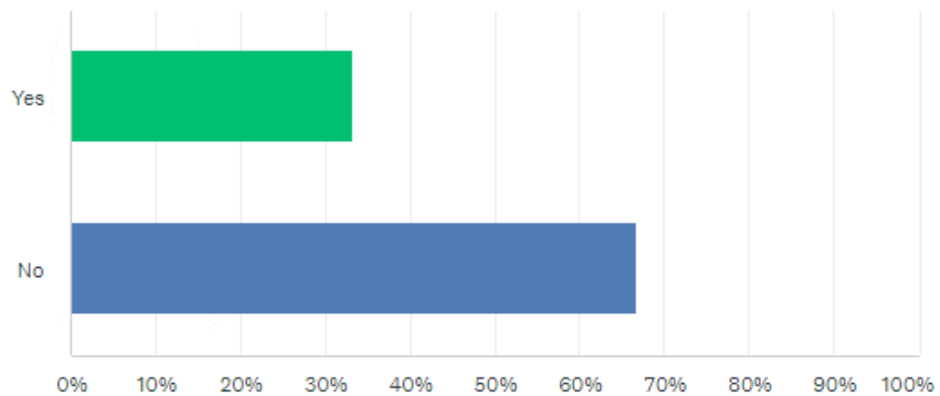
Young people felt slightly safer at the train station compared to the bus station with 69% feeling safe during the day and 35% after dark.

Once on the train 78% felt safe during the day, dropping to 61% after dark.

“You can't trust anyone, but I feel safe on trains as there is cctv.”

Using a taxi service

67% of those using a taxi said they didn't feel safe. This corresponds with those giving feedback at the college. A significant number of students said that they were affected by the murder of Sian O'Callaghan and still don't feel safe. There seems to be a lot of influence here from parents.



“I’ve had a lot of creepy taxi drivers asking inappropriate questions”

“Taxis?? After Christopher Halliwell? Are you serious? How in heavens name did he get away with it for so long? Someone knew or at least suspected and that makes the whole system unacceptable.”

“I wouldn’t travel in a taxi alone; I feel that drivers are not properly vetted.”

“I’m not allowed to use taxis.”

Do you feel safe using Swindon town centre car parks?

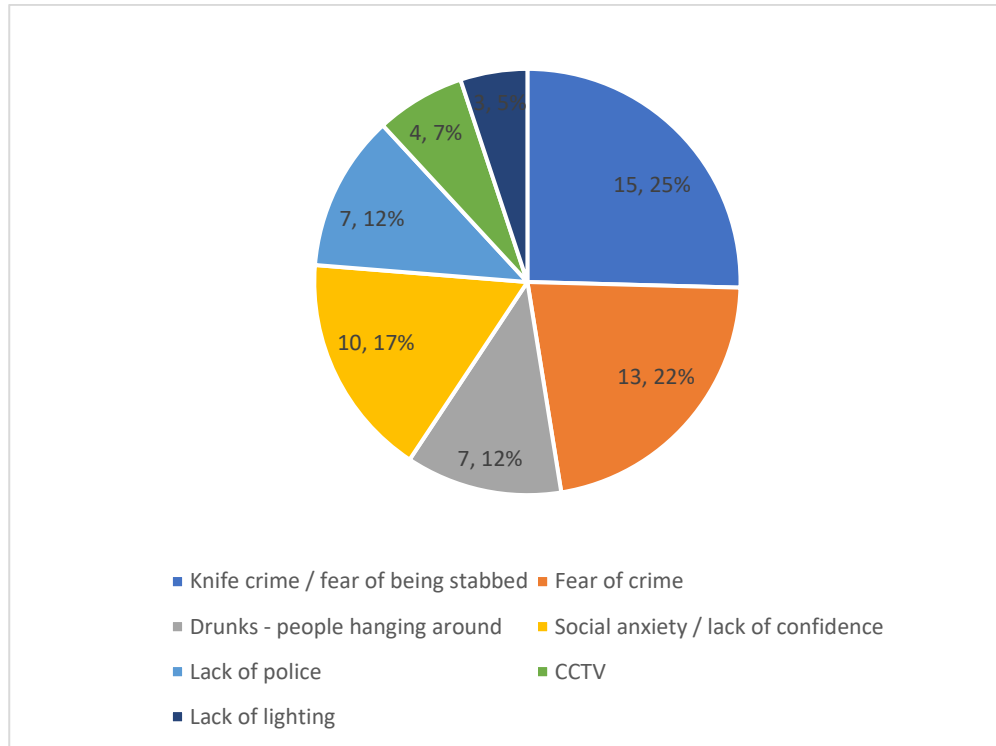
Only 21 young people reported having used town centre car parks with 72% of these feeling safe during the day, dropping to 15% after dark.

“I feel exposed, particularly in car parks at night, there needs to be CCTV and people monitoring drunks.”

“I will never park in a multi-story after dark unless with someone else - too many hidden spots, evidence of drink or drug taking, groups of people. Outside of the town centre, it feels safer.”

Why don’t you feel safe using public transport?

Some of the young people gave multiple answers to this question.



25% (15) people reported that knife crime or the fear of knife crime was the reason they don't feel safe using public transport.

With fear of crime being cited by 13 people (22%).

“I am generally cautious and aware of my surroundings and generally remove myself or change direction if I feel unsafe.”

“Because you don't know what's going to happen if you're on your own, with your parents it's fine.”

“I might get attacked or mugged.”

17% (10) stated that social anxiety or lack of confidence stopped them from using public transport.

“I rarely go on buses because of my social anxiety when travelling on buses, so I stick with driving or trains.”

“I get anxious if I travel alone, so try to avoid it.”

“Travelling anywhere makes me nervous, I prefer to stay at home.”

BEHAVIOURS & ATTITUDES

Have you ever done any of the following during the daytime to feel safe walking Swindon streets?

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

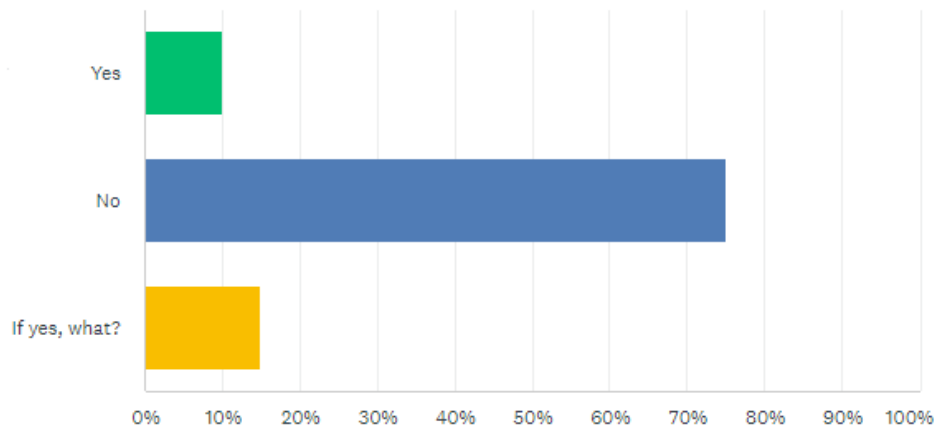
57 young people responded to this question. With the highest proportion saying they would change what they wear. Closely followed by not using headphones. No significant change in behaviour after dark.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Stopped carrying a bag / handbag	26.32%	15
Avoided using headphones	43.86%	25
Carried a personal or rape alarm	24.56%	14
Changed what you wear? For example, covered up more to feel safe.	49.12%	28
Other	Responses	22.81% 13
Total Respondents: 57		

And after dark (answered by 55).

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Stopped carrying a bag / handbag	27.27%	15
Avoided using headphones	50.91%	28
Carried a rape or personal alarm	27.27%	15
Changed what you wear? For example, covered up more to feel safe	41.82%	23
Other	Responses	30.91% 17
Total Respondents: 55		

Have you ever carried a weapon to protect yourself?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	10.00%	6
No	75.00%	45
If yes, what?	Responses	15.00% 9
TOTAL		60

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

75% of the 60 respondents that provided a response to this question said that they did not carry a weapon. Even though the conversations we had at the colleges, suggested that the fear of knife crime or becoming a victim of stabbing was high.

From the 9 responses in the survey of those that did carry a weapon, these weapons were mainly items that they would carry anyway – keys, pens, perfume. One said they carry a meat cleaver and one a taser (I'm hoping this was bravado).

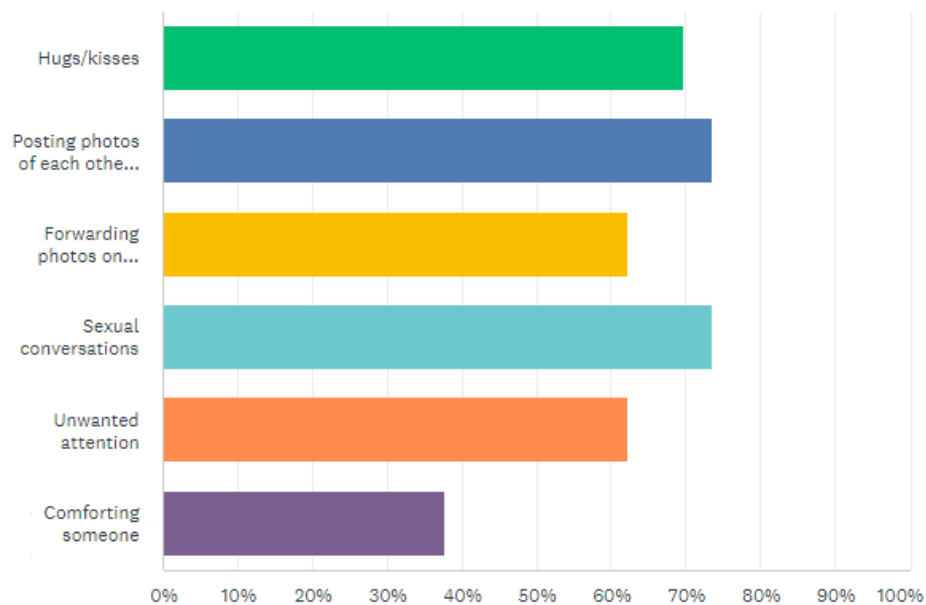
From the discussions at the college, no one said that they carried a weapon, although some did say they would protect themselves with items that they already carried.

Consent

We asked if consent was needed in a friendships and relationships for certain behaviours and received the following responses:

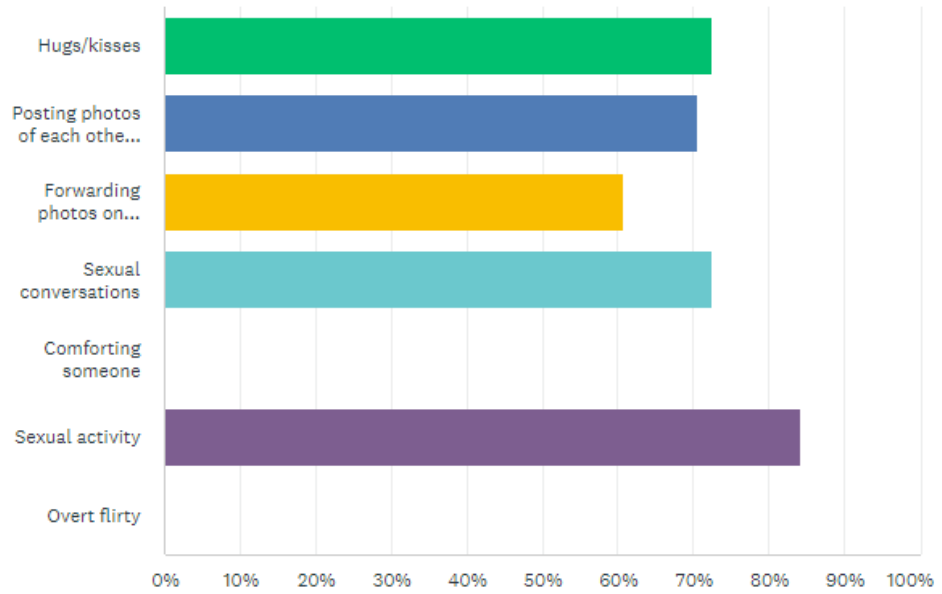
In friendship groups

53 respondents answered this question with the following responses:



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hugs/kisses	69.81%	37
Posting photos of each other on social media	73.58%	39
Forwarding photos on social media	62.26%	33
Sexual conversations	73.58%	39
Unwanted attention	62.26%	33
Comforting someone	37.74%	20
Total Respondents: 53		

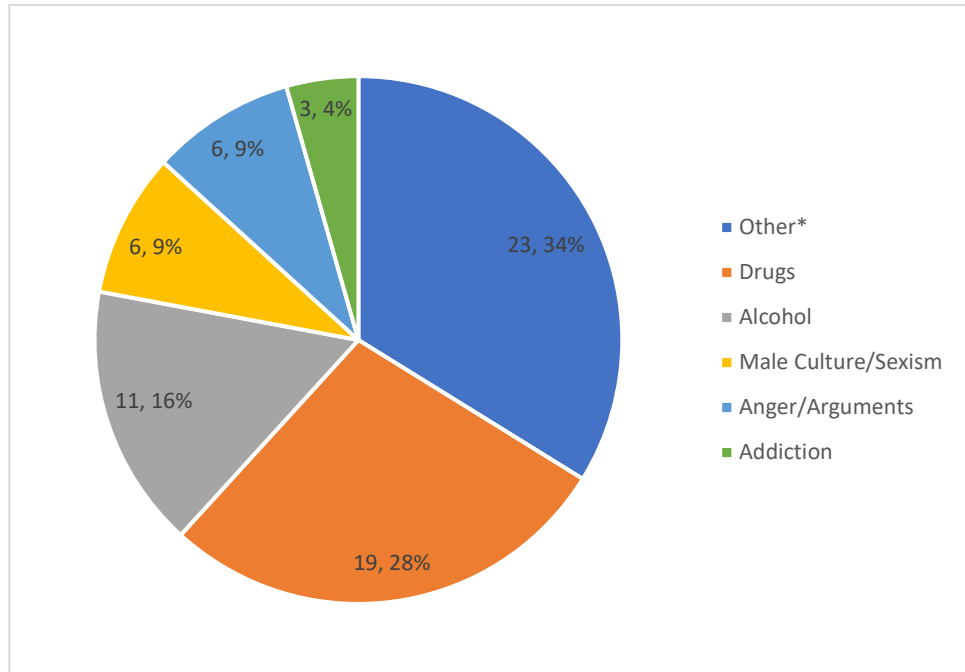
Consent in a close personal relationship



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hugs/kisses	72.55%	37
Posting photos of each other on social media	70.59%	36
Forwarding photos on social media	60.78%	31
Sexual conversations	72.55%	37
Comforting someone	0.00%	0
Sexual activity	84.31%	43
Overt flirty	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 51		

What do you believe to be the main issues contributing towards aggressive behaviour?

40 respondents answered this question.



When asked the main issues contributing towards aggressive behaviour 28% (19) suggested drugs are the main cause of aggression, with misuse of alcohol reported by 11 people (16%), a further 3 (4%) cited addiction. Toxic male behaviour, culture and sexism was stated by 6 people (9%). Another 6 (9%) said anger, arguments, and differences of opinion.

34% (23 people) listed the following issues contributing towards aggression.

Environmental

- Poverty
- No respect for young people (2)
- Bullies (2)
- County Lines (2)
- Lack of education
- Knife crime
- Gangs (2)
- No police
- Legal system

Feelings/Mental Health

- Boredom (2)
- Frustration with life
- Trauma (2)
- Poor mental health
- Envy
- Grief
- Unhappiness

Three people didn't know what contributed to aggression.

Examples of direct quotes:

“Addiction, children being brought up by parents who have addiction or who are neglected.”

“Boredom, frustration with life situation, drink, drugs, money issue.”

“Built up anger, trauma in their life, anger issues, not being spoke to properly, drugs, people not knowing how to cope with their emotions.”

“Not being happy with how they live, bad friends, parental neglect, consciously not being satisfied, knowing you’ve been raised badly.”

“People don't feel safe in the current times with knife crime being at such a high rate.”

Do you have any suggestions of how this aggressive behaviour could be challenged?

33 people answered this question, with 9 people requesting more police, or improved policing, harsher punishment for offenders. Some people suggested more than one thing.

“Police focus on gang related stuff.”

“Stricter enforcement.”

6 people would like to see more education.

“Allowing access to grief specialist services that will educate and teach tools that will allow the grief to be acknowledged and released. Once perception of life has changed, so their language and behaviours will improve, drugs and alcohol will be needed less, and life will be better.”

“At home with the family, at school, in the workplace and on social media. Maybe tv progs about how people should behave (and I don't mean women taking all the precautions).”

“Better education.”

“Teach respect from a young age- schools.”

3 people would like to see better drug rehab services.

“Instead of arresting violent people on the streets offer them support with their mental health and drug rehabilitation.”

2 would like to see better provision for mental health.

“Look at aggression as a mental health problem.”

2 requested better facilities for young people.

“Find healthy ways for people to deal with stress and anger which is safe and legal. Also, find more places for teenagers to have fun, so they don't get bored and commit crime like vandalism.”

“Give teens and kids safe spaces so they can be themselves. For adults try and help them by rehab.”

Other suggestions included:

“Education at school and more leisure facilities like swimming.”

“Thresholds for social service involvement should be lowered, bigger presence of support groups for addicts.”

“Pubs should close at a reasonable time.”

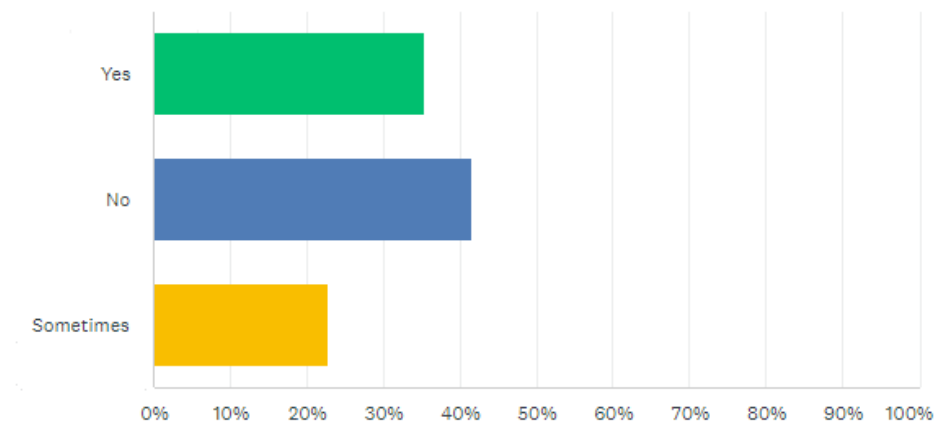
“We need listening to and helping.”

“More lighting and cctv although this would only deflect crime and not solve it.”

“More people training to deal with aggressive behaviour, more police officers present especially at night and a better presence around pubs etc, help services for anger that are free.”

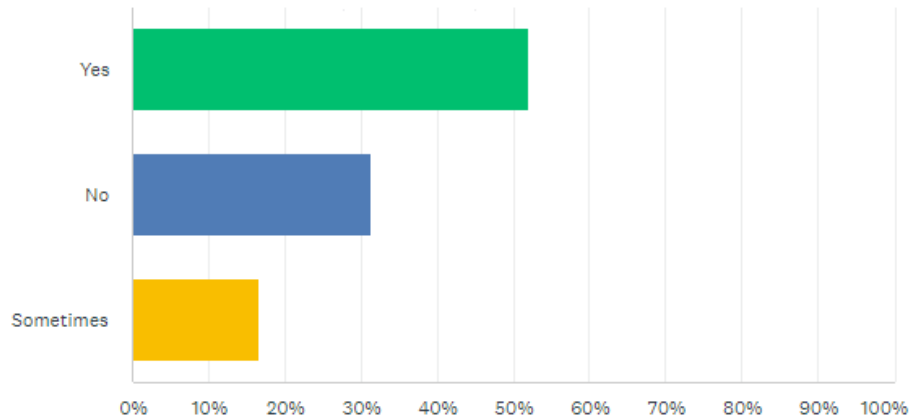
Do you ever feel restricted in what you wear? Covering up to feel safer.

During the daytime



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	35.42% 17
No	41.67% 20
Sometimes	22.92% 11
TOTAL	48

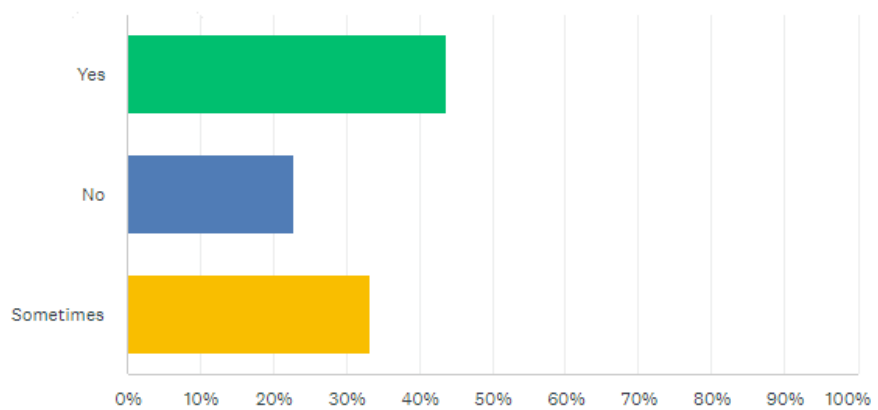
After dark?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	52.08%	25
No	31.25%	15
Sometimes	16.67%	8
TOTAL		48

48 people answered this question and 36% said they would cover up during the day to avoid unwanted attention, with this figure rising to 52% after dark. 79% said that what you wear is a factor in how people view you.

Do you feel you have to alter your behaviour around others?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	43.75%	21
No	22.92%	11
Sometimes	33.33%	16
TOTAL		48

When asked why responses were:

44% (21 people) saying they change their behaviour around others, and a further 33% (16 people) saying they sometimes change their behaviour.

A lot of responses reflected that they didn't want to be judged so tried to blend so as not to attract unwanted attentions.

Other comments included:

“Autism and ADHD means I am vulnerable, and I mask that to try and fit in better.”

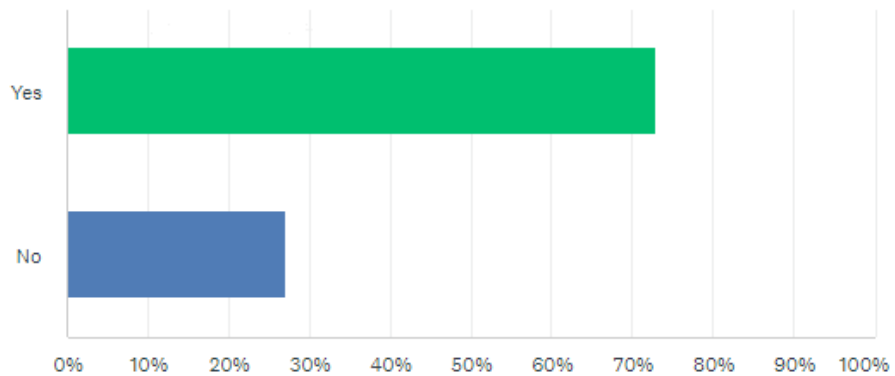
“Housing association occupants target private homeowners who tend to be more civilised and are easier targets. To prevent this, you must dress in tracksuits to blend in with the 'chavs'.”

“People complain how I act sometimes, or I get embarrassed.”

“Some men may perceive friendliest for promiscuity.”

“To fit in better become less of a target.”

Do you call friends out if they do something you feel is inappropriate whilst out in Swindon?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	72.92%	35
No	27.08%	13
TOTAL		48

Of the 48 people that responded to this question, reassuringly nearly 73% would call friends out for inappropriate behaviour.

The following behaviours would be challenged:

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cat calling / whistling	76.74%	33
Inappropriate names	76.74%	33
Up skirting	90.70%	39
Spiking	90.70%	39
Sharing inappropriate photos / pictures	93.02%	40
Making inappropriate jokes that other people may find offensive	81.40%	35
Having conversations that are inappropriate	72.09%	31
Total Respondents: 43		

When asked if there is anything else that would be challenged. 2 people said they wouldn't feel safe to challenge, or they would be 'too scared'. Racism and racist remarks would be challenged by 4 people. 3 people said they would challenge anything they deemed to be inappropriate.

Other comments received:

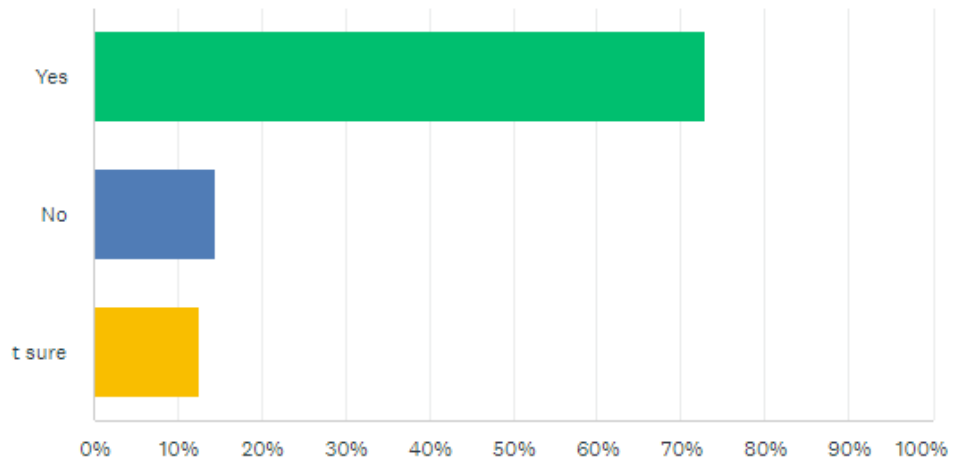
“Not talking bad about someone behind their back.”

“Toxicity between different social classes in school settings and different communities.”

“Anything my father would have grounded me for :)”

“Faking mental health issues and being mean to people because of how they dress.”

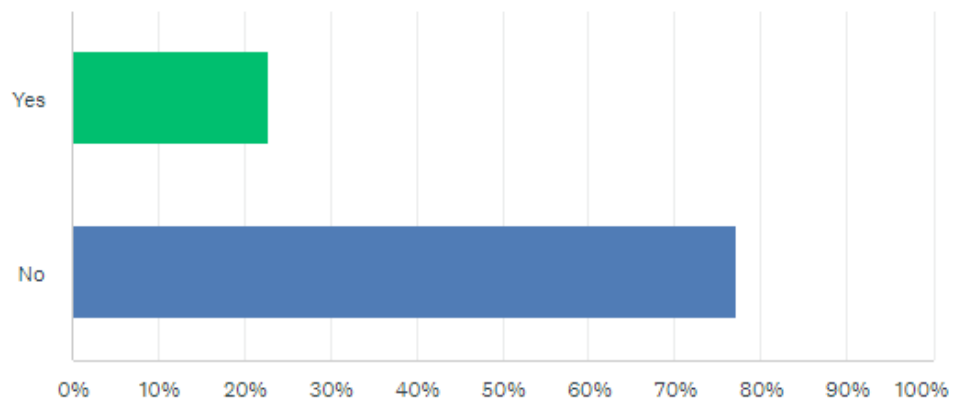
Have you set boundaries for yourself that you don't let others cross?



Of the 48 people that answered this question, over 70% had set their own boundaries that they wouldn't let others cross.

NIGHTTIME ECONOMY

Do you feel safe going on a night out in Swindon?

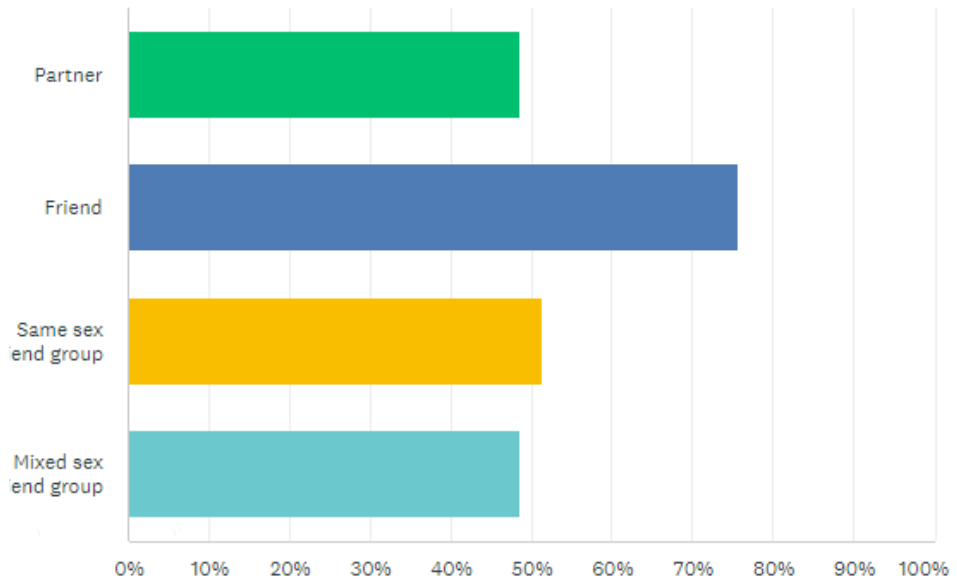


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	22.73%	10
No	77.27%	34
TOTAL		44

Out of the 44 young people that answered this question, only 10 said they would feel safe on a night out in Swindon.

Who do you go out with?

37 young people answered this question.

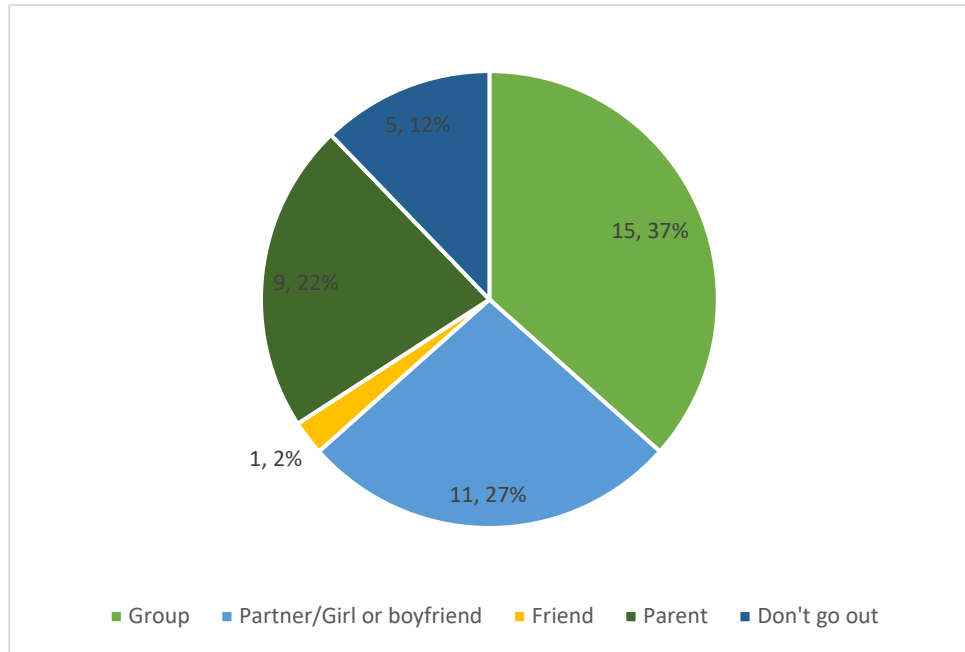


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Partner	48.65%	18
Friend	75.68%	28
Same sex friend group	51.35%	19
Mixed sex friend group	48.65%	18
Total Respondents: 37		

When asked who they felt safest with, 15 (37%) opt to go out in a group to feel safer.

“A big group of mates, people less likely to do stuff to a group.”

“Mixed sex group because having both sexes I feel helps as men who may want to try it on maybe won't if another man there.”



Respondents said that they felt safest when out with a partner (15, 37%) followed by their parents (11, 27%). Given the age of the people completing this survey this isn't surprising.

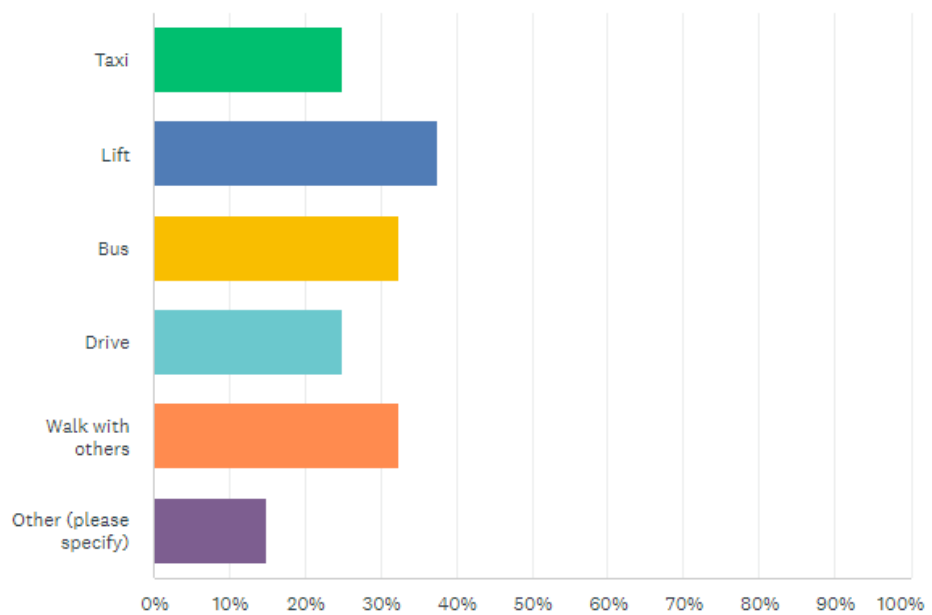
“My parents, I trust that they want me to be safe.”

Other comments:

“My partner, but don't always feel safe with him.”

“My safety is not measured by who I am with.”

How do you usually get home from a night out?

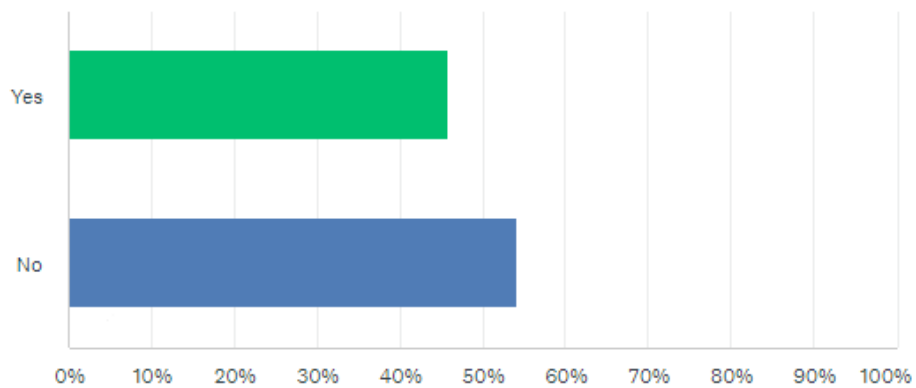


SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Taxi	25.00%	10
Lift	37.50%	15
Bus	32.50%	13
Drive	25.00%	10
Walk with others	32.50%	13
Other (please specify)	Responses	15.00%
Total Respondents: 40		

37% of these that answered, opted to get a lift. Reflecting the feedback from the students at the college. With young people choosing not to go out if there wasn't the option of a lift back home.

Do you feel venue security in Swindon is adequate?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.95%	17
No	54.05%	20
TOTAL		37

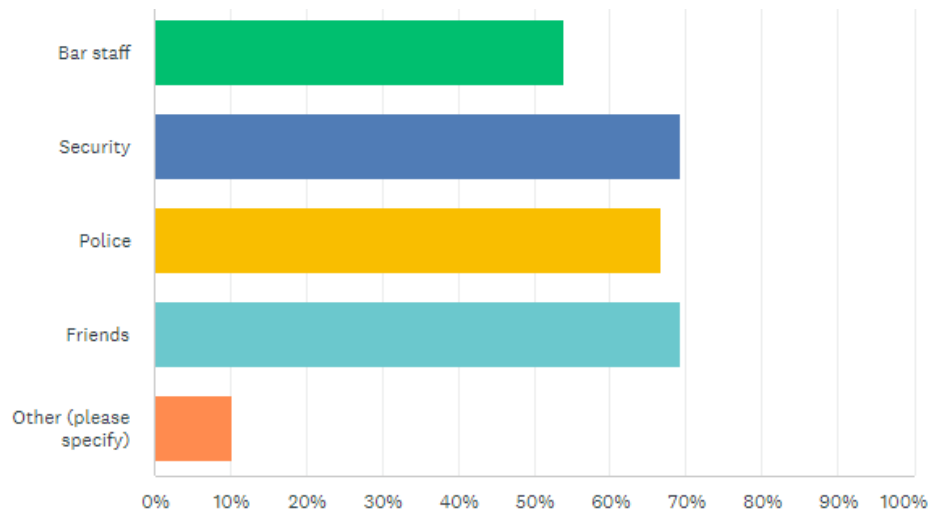
Tree is mentioned a few times, both in the survey and in conversation at the college, as somewhere that young people don't feel safe. Kings is another. Some saying they only go to quiet pubs.

“I always feel vulnerable in Kings, rather than unsafe.”

“Old men leech around the dance floor, just leering.”

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

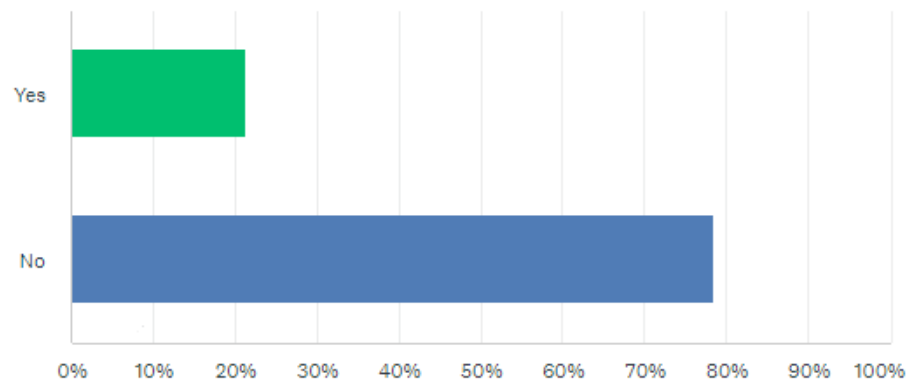
Who would you go to for help on a night out in Swindon?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bar staff	53.85%	21
Security	69.23%	27
Police	66.67%	26
Friends	69.23%	27
Other (please specify)	Responses	10.26%
Total Respondents: 39		

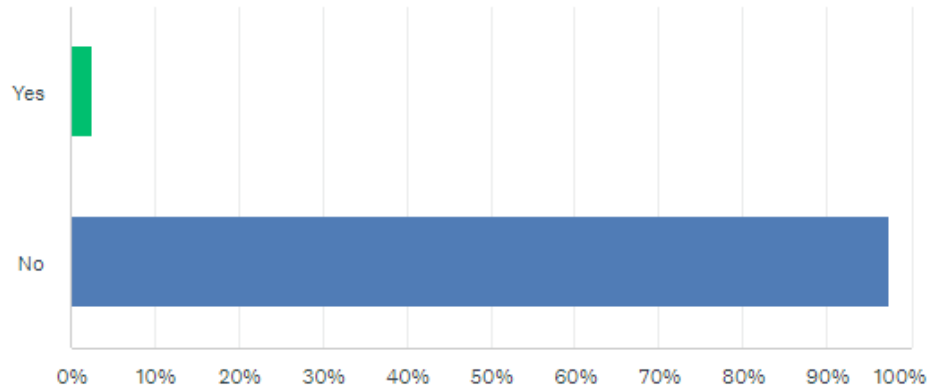
The four people that provided responses said that they would go to their parents or other family members for help.

Are you aware of Swindon Street Pastors?



Just over 2% had heard of Swindon Street Pastors, no one had used them for support during a night out.

Have you ever been spiked in a Swindon venue?

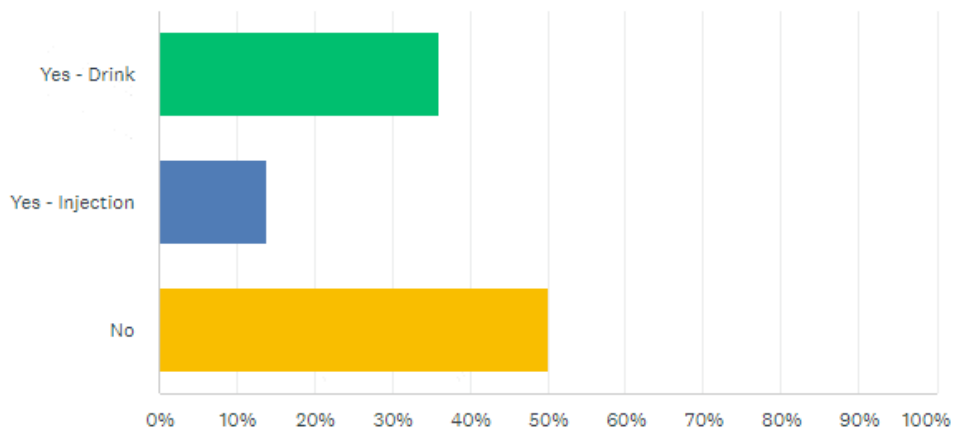


Of the 40 people that answered this question, 3 said they had been spiked, 2 by drink and 1 injection. The one by drink said they were spiked in the Goddard Arms in Old Town. The other 2 declined to say.

They all stated that they had not reported this. When asked why, one responded **“because I would have to discuss what was done to me after the spiking.”**

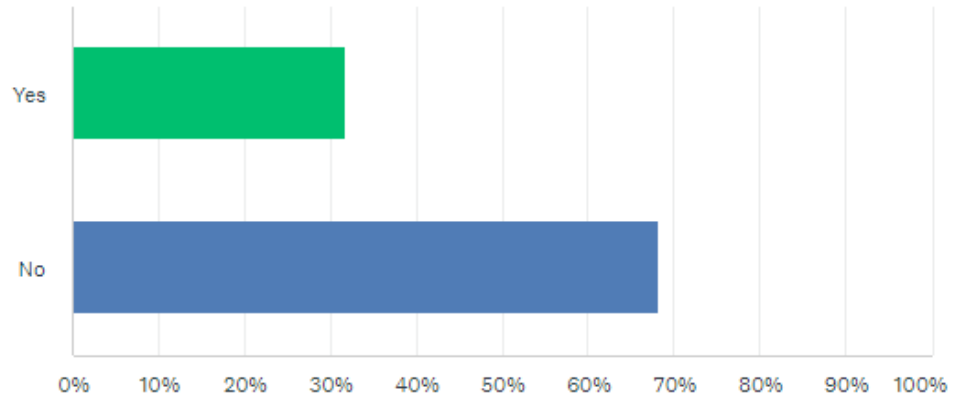
Do you know anyone that has been spiked?

39 people answered this question.



From the groups providing feedback at the college sites, there was consistent feedback on fear of being spiked if they went out. With Tree being the venue that the students named as being a place known for spiking incidents. It was also reported that Tree charged £5 for a glass topper to prevent this.

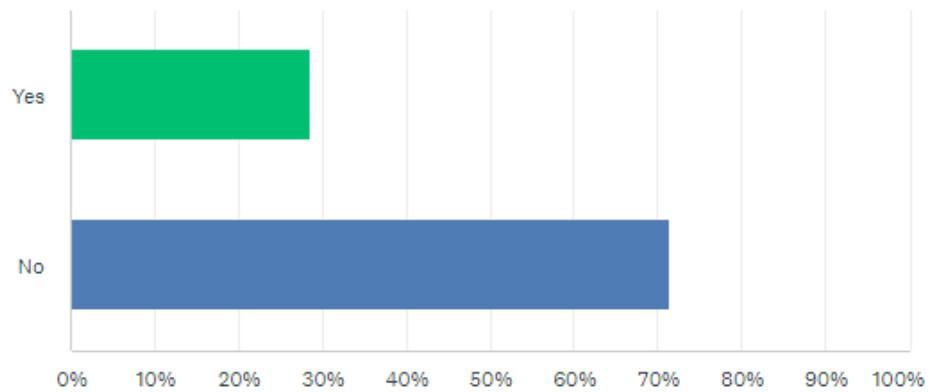
Would you know what to do if someone got spiked?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.71%	13
No	68.29%	28
TOTAL		41

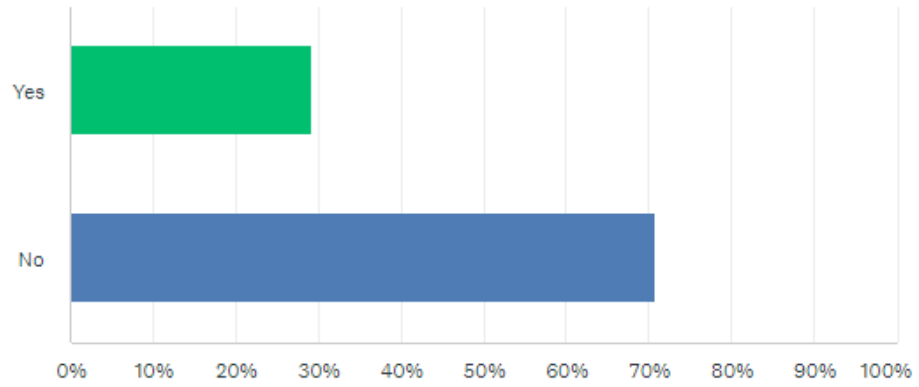
Over 68% stated that they wouldn't know what to do if one of their friends was spiked.

Have you seen the Ask Angela Campaign in Swindon?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	28.57%	12
No	71.43%	30
TOTAL		42

Are you aware of StreetSafe?

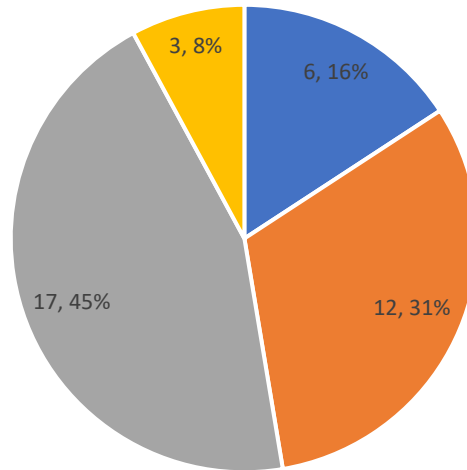


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	29.27%	12
No	70.73%	29
TOTAL		41

What are your views on general recommendations that females should adopt these behaviours?

- Don't walk alone at night – stick to well-lit streets.
- Don't listen to headphones after dark.
- Don't look at your phone while walking at night.
- Don't dress 'provocatively'.
- Don't drink alcohol.
- Learn self-defence.

37 respondents answered this question.



■ Good advice ■ Agree but... ■ Don't agree ■ Other

45% (17 young people) said that they didn't agree with this advice.

"It's bullsh*t, teach perpetrators that they are wrong. It's better not to go out at all than it is to spend the whole time wondering if you're doing the right thing."

"Don't think it's appropriate to feel compelled to adopt this behaviourism as a woman because men should also feel at risk out at night."

"Doesn't fix the problem."

"I feel it's wrong as us women should not have to feel scared in the streets, we don't need to be living under fear."

"I feel women should be able to drink what they want and wear what they want, if there was free self-defence I would go."

"Laying all the responsibility on women is absolutely the wrong way to deal with this. Victim blaming is unacceptable."

6 young people (16%) agreed with the advice.

"Good, they seem like good bits of advice."

"I agree with all of them sadly. I wish it wasn't this way, but you have to stay safe."

12 young people (31%) agreed but added additional thoughts.

"I agree that I've had to do some of these. For example, sticking to streetlights and main roads so I have more people around me."

Examples of other comments made:

“Be aware of your surroundings.”

“Carry a personal alarm.”

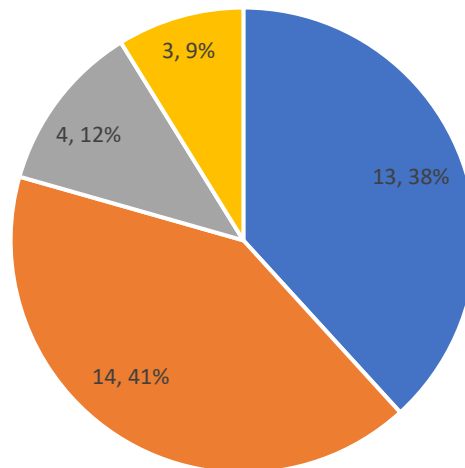
“Don’t how out after 9 pm.”

“I believe both females and males should adopt these recommendations, but the best advice is to avoid walking around anywhere in Swindon, in particular, the new developments like Tadpole, Badbury Park and Wichelstowe as these newer areas have loads of housing association properties.”

“Why should the onus be on us to stop attacks? It’s like saying don’t have a nice house or nice things because it encourages stealing!”

What are your views on general recommendations that males should adopt these behaviours to make females feel safer?

- Keep distance.
- Don’t walk or run up behind women (cross the road to pass).
- Don’t stare.
- Keep comments to yourself (even compliments).
- Challenge friends if they are being inappropriate.
- Be an active bystander – ask if it looks like someone needs support.
- Place yourself between a female and an aggressor.
- Provide support if you are asked to.



■ Good advice ■ Agree but... ■ Don't agree ■ Other

In contrast to the suggested female behaviours, 41% (14 people) agreed with these suggested behaviours, with another 38% (13 people) agreeing but with added comment. 4 people (12%) didn’t agree.

“A good start.”

“Good. It is all stuff males can do to make females feel safe.”

“Good ideas, need to start implementing these from a young age.”

“I agree with them, and it would help me feel safer.”

“I think these are sensible, but very sad they have to be specified shouldn't this kind of respect be taught from a young age??”

“I believe these are pointless as many males do not feel safe and are more likely to physically attacked than women.”

“I don't think men think they are intimidating to women.”

“All they need to do is not try and kill us then we may feel safe, these rules basically just say they should treat women with respect which is weird they need to be written down because that should be an automatic response.”

GENERAL FEEDBACK

What ideas would you like to see piloted to help everyone feel safer on the streets of Swindon?

26 respondents answered this question. Most of them were suggesting more police, better lighting, better CCTV coverage – particularly in the town centre. They would like to see less use of drink and drugs on the streets and more provision for the homeless.

Some of the more innovative ideas were:

- Education programme aimed at young men.
- Improved checks on taxi drivers, with more security around the use of taxis, especially after dark.
- Use of 'safe spaces', particularly when out on a night in Swindon.
- Use of art to create murals that give positive messaging.

“Introduction of tight security check for taxi drivers (the same as those used to get people who want to work in education).”

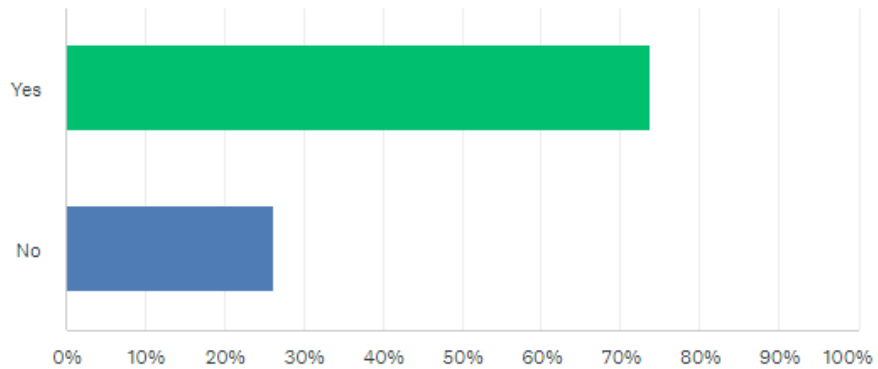
“More checks for taxi drivers.”

“Taxis to be made safer.”

“Safe places to go to if you feel threatened in any way. These could be venues, public houses, coffee shops etc.”

“Teaching people from an early age what is acceptable and what isn't. It would also be useful if there were severe penalties that could be imposed by police and the courts.”

Do you think a charter for Swindon venues to sign pledging to keep females safe would help?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.68%	28
No	26.32%	10
TOTAL		38

Any additional comments you would like to add?

“To stop the mixing of housing association properties with private homes and ideally relocating and selling off all housing association homes on the newer developments.”

“I said no because majority of people would ignore it and some would debate about it.” (In relation to a Charter).”

“This is about education, there shouldn’t need to be a charter to ensure women are safe, men can be equally vulnerable as well those from minorities.”

COMMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of these comments and recommendations (published separately) are also included in the Adult Survey results and remain relevant to this report.

Demographics

- Hold targeted focus groups with underrepresented groups to gather a more balanced view. With the survey being predominately returned from females, does this suggest that males tend to feel safer? Surveys were also mainly completed by White British. Does more work need to be done to gather views from different community groups for a more balanced return on views?

Town Centre

- The town centre regeneration programme will go some way to dealing with some of the issues raised here, but the public doesn't always seem to be aware that this is happening. [Town centre regeneration | Swindon Borough Council](#)
 - a. Increase positive messaging – a lot of people don't have access to the internet, so needs to be available in different formats.
 - b. Use empty shops to show what regeneration is planned.
 - c. Utilise a shop in the town centre to get information publicised on re-generation programmes already happening.
 - d. Have a stall at the new market to provide information and answer questions.
- Increase police / security within the town centre, specifically when people are leaving work and drug dealers are more active to address and deal with this issue.

Penhill, Pinehurst and Parks

Reflecting the feedback from the Adult Survey, Penhill, Pinehurst and Parks are they areas having negative reputations. Although again, some of this feedback is based on reputation rather than experience or actual knowledge of the area. Work seems to be needed around positive messaging to promote these areas in in a more balanced way.

Those interviewed expressed concerns about 'no go areas' due to gangs, particularly Penhill and Pinehurst and the two Parks areas. Some fear young people crossing into the wrong area may be 'beat up'.

Does this reflect the need to increase youth worth within these areas?

Knife Crime

Knife crime is reflected in the feedback from this survey as being a big concern to young people. Even though the knife crime statistics for knife related crime is relatively low in Swindon.

There was an 8% decrease in knife-enabled crime year ending June 2021.

In Swindon there was 131 incidents of a knife being used in a crime, and 94 incidents of people being in possession of a knife.

These figures were taken from National Police Chief's Council (NPCC). June 20 – 21.

From April 2022, a change in legislation to the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 has made it harder for young people to buy dangerous weapons, both at point of sale and delivery. Link for full article [here](#).

Maybe some work could be carried out in the college to alleviate some of the fears around knife crime?

Stalking

Of the 14 people that had experienced stalking, only one person had reported this to the police, with the following response.

**‘Police told me a crime hadn’t been committed so they couldn’t do anything.’
‘there’s not enough help available.’**

Others commented that they didn’t feel they would be believed, or they didn’t know where to report. Worrying as one of the victims was 15.

Police to build relationship with young people within the college and town generally, giving more information on knife crime, stalking and gangs to give young people the confidence to report incidents, and how to report incidents/crime.

Taxis

- Young people do not have much confidence in using taxis with 67% saying they didn’t feel safe.
- Most of this is influenced by the Sian O’Callaghan murder.
- Parental influence on children, with them not being allowed to use taxis.
- Work with Taxi services to increase confidence. The new law for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Safeguarding Legislation will help with this.
- Work with taxi firms to do more to ensure passengers feel safe.
- Training for taxi drivers in how to speak to passengers without causing offence.
- Some sort of accreditation for taxi drivers to reassure passengers of safety.

Night-time Economy

- Work with pubs mentioned in this report to improve their reputations and increase feeling of safety, particularly:
 - a. Tree night club – issues with spiking and charging £5 for glass tops to protect the drink is out of order (if true).
 - b. Kings Hotel in Wood Street. Issues with men surrounding the dancefloor and security not listening.
- Identify safe places to go for help when on a night out so that young people have somewhere to seek help and get advice.

Feedback from the Survey and Conversations at New College Swindon

When speaking to the students at the college and information gathered from the survey a lot of the feedback is about negative feelings and emotions, with some

students seeming to lack confidence in their ability to deal with situations they 'think' might happen.

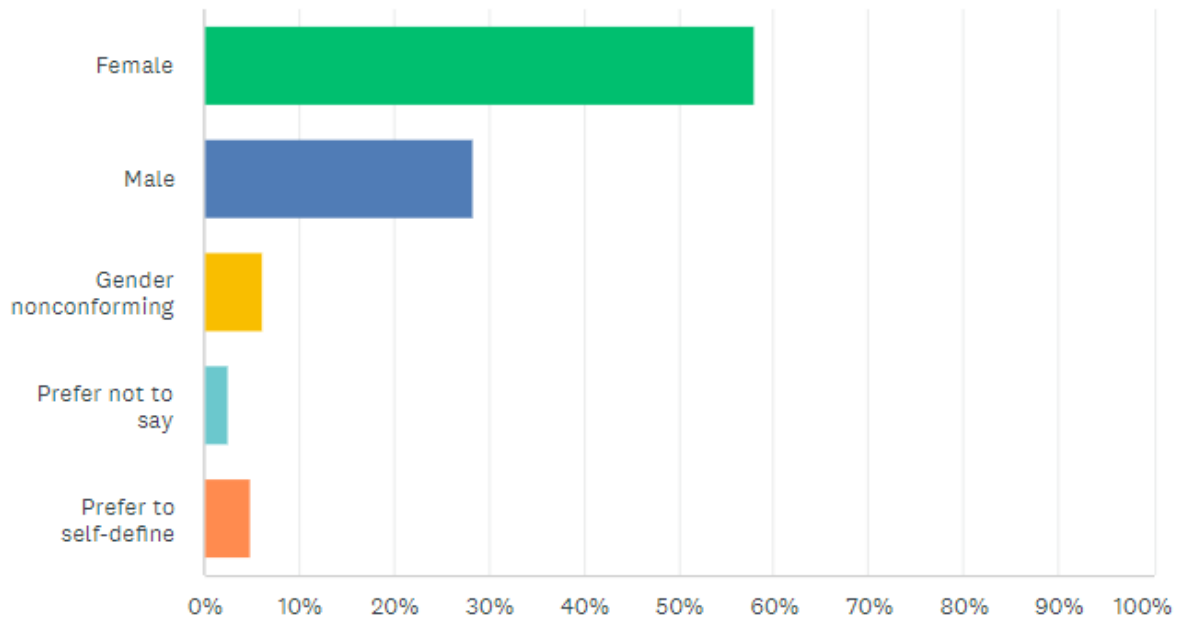
- Provide students with training in building confidence and resilience – students came across as being totally risk-adverse to the point of not wanting to go out at all.
- Raise awareness of facts around knife crime.
- Provide students with information on what to do when a friend is spiked.
- Promote positive behaviours and respect for each other.
- Raise profiles and promote positive schemes like Ask Angela, Street Pastors, and Safer Streets.

**VOLUNTARY ACTION SWINDON WOULD LIKE TO THANK
YOU FOR YOUR TIME IN RESPONDING TO THIS SURVEY**

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

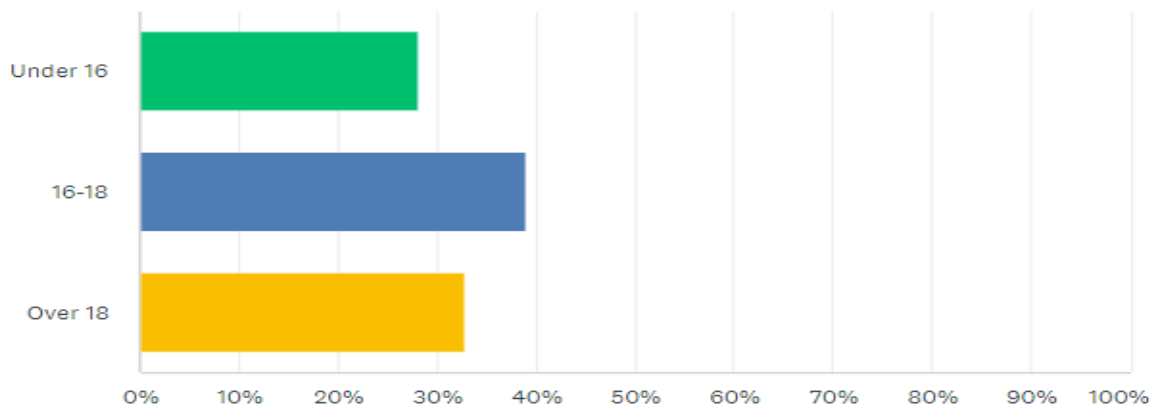
APPENDIX A - SAFER STREETS YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

Gender



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	58.02%	47
Male	28.40%	23
Gender nonconforming	6.17%	5
Prefer not to say	2.47%	2
Prefer to self-define	4.94%	4

Age



SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 16	28.05%	23
16-18	39.02%	32
Over 18	32.93%	27
TOTAL		82

Ethnicity

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White British	79.27%	65
White Irish	2.44%	2
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0.00%	0
Any other White Background	1.22%	1
Gypsy/Roma	0.00%	0
White and Black Caribbean	1.22%	1
White and Black African	1.22%	1
White and Asian	0.00%	0
Any other mixed background	1.22%	1
Indian	7.32%	6
Pakistani	2.44%	2
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Any other Asian background	0.00%	0
Caribbean	1.22%	1
African	0.00%	0
Any other black background	1.22%	1
Chinese	0.00%	0
Any other ethnic group	1.22%	1
TOTAL		82

SAFER STREETS SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

Postcode

