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# Speak Up, Speak Out

## 2023 Report



Safer Kingston Partnership  
Healthy and Safe Communities



# Survey Summary

## Introduction

The Kingston Community Safety Team administered its annual youth survey with the objective of gaining deeper insights into safety perceptions among the younger members of the borough.

Prior to the survey's release, a focus group of young individuals reviewed and approved the survey questions, ensuring their relevance and resonance with the target audience.

## Target Audience

The survey engaged young people aged 11-25 who reside, study, work, or engage in social activities within the Kingston community.

## Survey Results

The 2023 Speak Up, Speak Out Youth Survey was live between 18th September and 19th November and completed 160 young people.



# Youth-led Changes

Kingston Council is committed to actively listening to the voices of young people and effecting positive changes within the borough. We strongly believe in harnessing the power of their ideas, experiences, and suggestions to foster a safer and more vibrant community for all.

## The Survey Sections;

- **Nightlife in Kingston** - This year's survey was enhanced by the inclusion of specific 'nightlife' questions. These questions were designed to gather valuable insights, preferences, and concerns from young individuals regarding the borough's dynamics between 6pm and 6am. The findings from this survey will play a pivotal role in shaping the development of the Evening and Night Time Economy Strategy (expected publication, Spring 2024).
- **Crime in the borough** - Within the survey, a dedicated section was included to inquire about crime and safety perceptions among this age group. This recurring, annual component is deliberately structured to facilitate the ongoing monitoring of changes and improvements over time.
- **What can be done?** -We offered young individuals an opportunity to propose constructive ideas on how the council can enhance areas of concern. This approach provides the council with evidence-based suggestions and creates opportunities for collaborative improvements, fostering a co-produced process alongside our young community members.

## The survey aimed to:

- Understand how safe young people feel when out and about in Kingston
- Understand how to improve young people's feelings of safety at night
- Identify barriers they face in seeking help
- Discover the changes needed to improve safety for 11-25 year olds in the borough
- Empower young people with opportunities to lead projects that make a difference in Kingston
- Co-produce new projects with their valuable insights



# Demographics

The survey saw a predominant participation from individuals identifying as female, comprising 72% of the respondents. Meanwhile, 17% identified as male, and 11% of participants chose not to disclose this information.

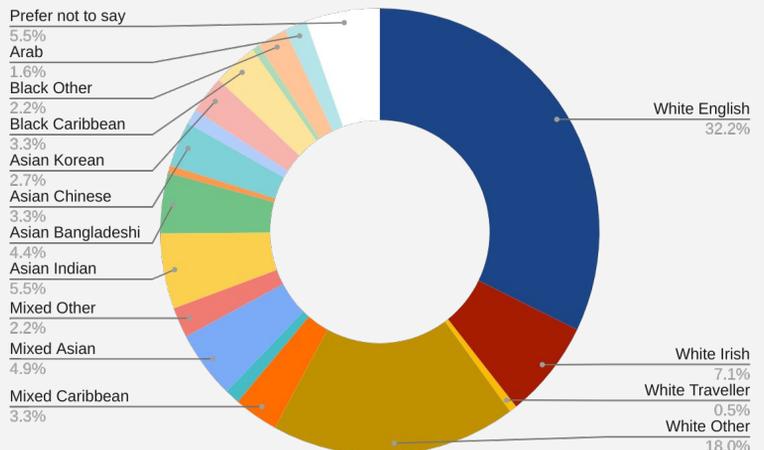
The vast majority of survey participants fell within the 11-17 age range (93%); 49% were between the ages of 11-13, and 44% were 14-17. Regrettably, we did not receive any responses from individuals in the 22-25 age group.

73% identified as Straight / Heterosexual, 6% Gay or Lesbian, 6% Bisexual

4% of participants disclosed they had been in Care.

A noteworthy 18% of participants reported having physical or mental health conditions or illnesses expected to last 12 months or more. Within this group, 13% primarily indicated facing mental health challenges, conditions, or disorders, including depression, schizophrenia, or anxiety.

Among those who disclosed their ethnicity, the majority of participants, 57.8% identified with a white ethnicity. Additionally, 17.5% identified as Asian, 10.4% as having a mixed heritage, and 5.5% as black.



# Kingston Nightlife

**60%** of young people informed us that they go out in Kingston between the hours of 6pm and 6am

During these hours young people go to;

- Restaurants (39%)
- Leisure activities such as bowling (36%)
- Cinemas or theatre (38%)
- Hang out by the Riverside or parks (25%)

Young People enjoyed being out at this time because;

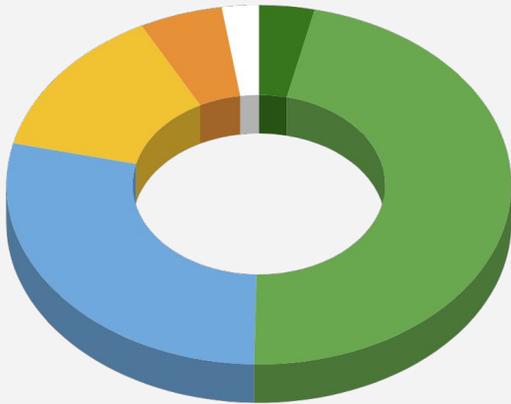
- Of the choice of things to do (30%)
- They like the atmosphere (28%)
- Their friends encourage them to go out to hang out (27%)
- Choice of places to visit (26%)

Participants who didn't enjoy being out during these hours stated;

- It doesn't feel safe (60%)
- Lack of things to do (23%)
- It doesn't feel welcoming or inclusive (22%)
- They dislike the atmosphere (21%)



# Kingston Crime



- Very Safe
- Fairly Safe
- Neutral
- Fairly Unsafe
- Fairly Unsafe
- Not answered

Feelings of safety in Kingston persist at a high level, with only 14% of young people reporting feeling unsafe. Interestingly, even though the majority of young individuals have not personally experienced or witnessed a crime, some still expressed feelings of unsafety. This may be attributed to specific hotspot areas in Kingston, where the Council is proactively engaged in improvement initiatives through multi-agency efforts and Context Conferences.

**53%** of young people reported feeling safe in Kingston.

This marks a 13% decrease compared to the 2022 survey results, signaling a heightened sense of unsafety in the borough. Correspondingly, MET Police data reveals a 3.5% increase in reported crime in the borough.

**17%** of young people shared that they had witnessed a crime in the borough over the last 12 months. This represents an 8% decrease compared to the 2022 survey results.

**10%** of young people reported experiencing a crime in the borough over the last 12 months. This figure remains consistent with the 2022 survey results.

The reporting of crime among young people remains low, with only 2% reporting a crime they witnessed and none reporting a crime they experienced. This represents a significant decrease compared to the 2022 results, where 20% of young people reported witnessing a crime and 33% reported experiencing one.

# Kingston Crime



## Top 5 Locations Young People Reported Feeling Unsafe

- Eden Street (51%)
- Kingston Town Centre (37%)
- Outside of Pryzm ((36%)
- Cambridge Road Estate (27%)
- Fairfield Park (26%)

## Crimes Predominantly Witnessed

- Antisocial behaviour (14%)
- Theft (11%)
- Drug Dealing (11%)
- Youth Violence, Gangs, Exploitation (10%)
- Knife Crime (8%)

## Crime And Disorder Issues Young People Want The Council To Prioritise

- Unsafe Locations (51%)
- Knife Crime (43%)
- Youth Violence, Gangs and Exploitation (42%)
- Drug Dealing (34%)
- Antisocial Behaviour (28%)



# Suggestions

## Suggested ways the Council should tackle these issues;

- Physical Improvements to unsafe areas (49%)
- More CCTV cameras (39%)
- Increased Police presence (37%)
- Law enforcement for criminals (29%)
- Support for Young People e.g. Youth Programmes (28%)
- Antisocial Behaviour Enforcement (23%)

Improve the response of police and authority teams when hearing of antisocial behaviours. This will make young people feel safer in Kingston but also around the police.

More supervision at bus stops especially around schools' finishing times

Reduce crime during night so women feel safe to walk around after it gets dark

Make sure all employees are aware of what might be happening and that they know how to help

Get schools to provide education on what is classified as a crime

More security in the Eden Street McDonalds

I think it would be helpful if it was shown to young people what can happen if they fight in the street, and the consequences of them

(eg: many people do not know that carrying a knife is a crime) and what to do if someone has a knife.



# Next Steps

## Increased Engagement & Visibility

The Council aims to double awareness figures in the next two years. Presently, 9% of young people are aware of the Youth Service and Detached Bus, 16% Project X, 1% Crying Sons, 6% Street Pastors, and 16% are aware of the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team.

## Increased Youth Programmes

The Youth Safety Community Forum will persist in its yearly allocation of £10,000 for supporting small, community-led projects focused on supporting young people and reducing crime levels.

## Increased CCTV Visibility

The Council will work closely with the MET Police to enhance surveillance infrastructure by installing additional CCTV cameras in hotspot areas. The priority focus for 2024 will be Kingston Town Centre and its surrounding areas

## Kingston University Collaboration

Engagement with Criminology students studying the Crime Prevention and Community Safety module. Offering opportunities for them to gain insights and shadow pertinent roles within the Council.