



Coventry Partnership Household Survey 2007

SCS Theme Group Report – Children and Young People

May 2008

FINAL REPORT



Measurement ♦ Evaluation ♦ Learning
Helping you deliver better public services

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Position Statement – Key Point Summary

- ◆ In total, 217 respondents aged 16-24 took part in this study; around 18% of the total sample.
- ◆ A repeated request which came up in the theme group was for surveys such as this to find a way of reporting the views of Coventry's future citizens, its children and young people under 16. The Theme Group highlighted the excellent rating awarded to the Children and Young People's Partnership regarding their involvement and consultation work with young people.
- ◆ So far as this survey is concerned, when analysing the data in detail, and comparing statistics from the young people's sub-group to the general sample as a whole, a range of interesting findings is revealed. First of all, in demographic terms, there are significant differences: young people aged 16-24 are more likely to be ethnically diverse (41% compared to 24% of the general population sample) and more likely to have a faith affiliation other than Christian (49% compared to 32%).
- ◆ In terms of tenure, young people aged 16-24 are more likely to be living in private rented accommodation compared to the general sample as a whole (31% compared to 15%)
- ◆ A fifth of young people are looking to move home within the next 4-5 years, twice the average for the population as a whole. The search for jobs is the main driver to moving, along with locating nearer friends and family. Of those looking to move, more (42%) are looking to move out of Coventry than for the population as a whole (35%).
- ◆ Young people (16-24) chose *facilities for young people* (44%) and *activities for teenagers* (40%) as being their top local priorities for improvement, slightly above the population as a whole. A strong positive public focus on this may help to tackle the negative perceptions reported further down in this summary.
- ◆ Theme group members highlighted the growing number of activities taking place in priority neighbourhoods to engage and involve children and young people. This may indicate a gap in awareness and perception and also of provision for young people in the rest of Coventry amongst adults.
- ◆ Access to green spaces and parks has improved and the awareness of what is available has increased amongst young people.
- ◆ Young people (16-24) are the equal top age group most likely to smoke (38%). 22% of this age-group drink more than the recommended amount of alcohol 2 or more times a week, and less (12%) eat a healthy diet than the general population (20%). Early intervention is required to address these lifestyle issues.
- ◆ Young people are less likely to feel that people locally treat them with respect and consideration; only 19% strongly agreed they felt this, compared to 26% amongst the general population.
- ◆ Young people aged 16-24 (along with older people aged 60-64) appear more concerned than other cohorts about people being drunk or rowdy in public places.
- ◆ More than half of those surveyed thought that Coventry parents took responsibility for the behaviour of their children, although those living in priority neighbourhoods were slightly less likely to think so. Young people aged 16-24 have the same perceptions on this issue as the population at large.

- ◆ Respondents who thought that crime had gone up over the past twelve months were also more likely than average to think that parents failed to take responsibility for their children's behaviour.
- ◆ The perception that 'teenagers hanging around the streets' is a problem, is cited by over half (53%) of all those questioned, and 49% of those aged 16-24. This influences perceptions of crime and feelings of safety in the neighbourhood. Addressing the negative perception of 'teenagers hanging around' must be a key target area for Coventry Partnership if they want to improve overall feelings of safety and neighbourhood satisfaction.
- ◆ Consideration should be given to re-phrasing a supplementary question to ensure the interpretation of the issue is more fully explored. Further work to explore behaviours causing the perceived problem may help to explain the findings, for example, is it young people hanging around shops which is the problem, groups of young people who are shouting and drinking, or maybe is it a reflection of a wider concern about poor inter-generational relations and also maybe the feelings of social exclusion of older people in public spaces?

Summary of evidence on key issues

1. Views of young people in the survey

The youngest age group who completed the Coventry Partnership Household survey was 16-24 year olds. This age group consists of 217 respondents, making up 18% of the total sample of respondents. In this section we look briefly at some examples of where the views of these young people have differed to those of respondents aged 25 and over. Given the size of the young people's sample, differences of less than 7% between the responses from young people and the sample as a whole, are not statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence. Where differences are above 4%, this may still be significant but at a lower, 90% level of confidence.

Demographic profile

The survey has revealed the striking socio-demographic differences between young people and the Coventry population as a whole. For example in terms of ethnicity, 59% are white (compared to 76% for the Coventry adult population). The BME groups are generally more prevalent amongst the younger age groups, but in the case of respondents of Indian origin, the figure is the same (7%) for young people and the general population, while for Pakistani (9% compared to 3%) and Bangladeshi groups (3% compared to 1%), and non-British white (8% compared to 5%) the figures for young people are much higher than amongst the population generally. The implication of the cohort effect (as young people get older) is that the young people's demographic profile is indicative of the likely profile of Coventry's future general population.

Differences in faith affiliation also exist; just 51% are Christian (compared to 68%), 16% Muslim (compared to 7%) and 24% give no faith (compared to 16%).

Nearly a third (31%) of young people are living in private rented accommodation (compared to 15% whole sample) and 43% are living in owner-occupied accommodation (64% whole sample).

Only 2% of young people have a long term health problem (16% for the whole sample) and only 1% self-declare themselves as disabled (8%).

Population mobility

Over a fifth (22%) say they are likely to move home in the next 4-5 years (11% in the whole sample) and amongst this group, 27% want to move because of better job opportunities (15%) while only 19% want a larger property (31%). In total 42% of young people want to move outside of Coventry (35%).

Neighbourhood satisfaction and improvements

When asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with their neighbourhood as a place to live, 16-24 year olds are not significantly more dissatisfied (9%) than other respondents (8%). However their ranking of their five top priorities for improvement in their neighbourhood does differ, along with the percentages giving these concerns (comparison with Coventry average in brackets):

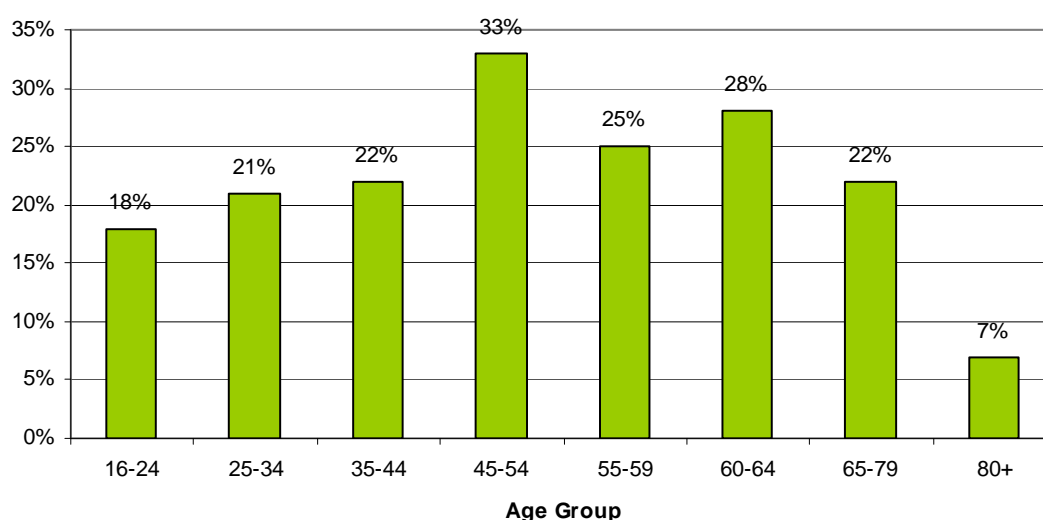
- ◆ Facilities for young people - 44% (37%)
- ◆ Activities for teenagers - 40% (36%)
- ◆ Cleanliness of streets - 36% (39%)
- ◆ Condition of roads and pavements -30% (46%)
- ◆ Level of crime -27% (21%)
- ◆ Sports and leisure facilities - 22% (14%)
- ◆ Job prospects - 17% (6%)

Participation in the local community

Young people's perception that they can influence decisions affecting their neighbourhood, is in line with other respondents (15% compared to 17% of all respondents, difference not significant). However, they appear less likely to be actively involved in improving their neighbourhood (6% compared to 14% for the general population) despite their level of unpaid volunteering being exactly the same as the general population, at 11%.

Results indicate that young people are least likely of all age groups (with the exception of 80+ year olds) to have undertaken some form of informal volunteering in the last 12 months. However, evidence gathered elsewhere indicates that young people actually make a significant contribution to the local community; however they may not equate their contribution to be volunteering.

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who have done some informal volunteering in the last 12 months.



Sport, leisure and recreation

Participation in physical activity weekly is marginally higher amongst young people (86% compared to 82% for the general population) but they are significantly more likely to take part monthly in sport (72% compared to 51%).

As the most likely group to participate in active sports, it is not surprising that young people rank improving sports and leisure facilities in their neighbourhood higher than any other age group; 22% of 16-24 year olds thought sport and leisure facilities needed improving in their neighbourhood (ranked 6th overall). They are also marginally less likely to believe local parks and open spaces are well maintained and looked after (9% very satisfied, compared to 13%).

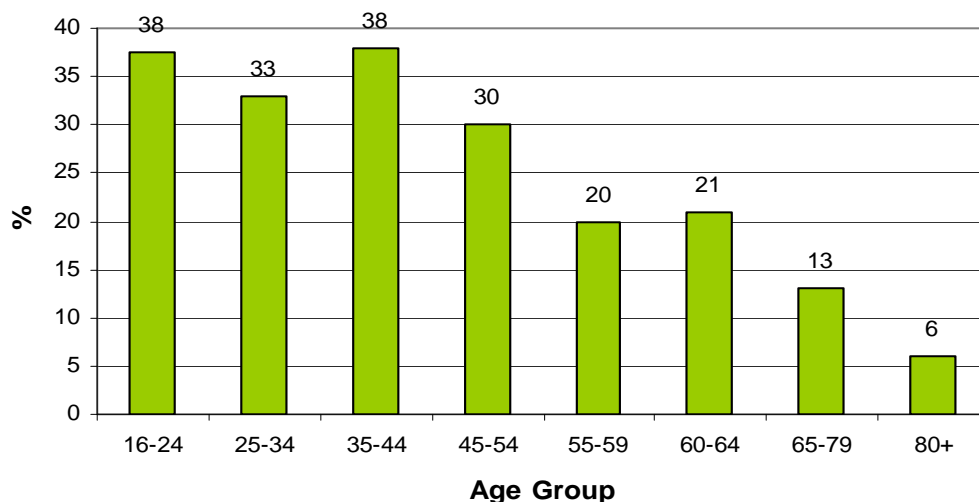
Smoking and Alcohol Consumption

The graph below clearly shows the age profile of Coventry smokers, with young people (38%) along with the 35-44 age band being the most likely to smoke. In addition to smoking, over a fifth (22%) of 16-24 year olds drink more than the recommended amount of alcohol 2 or more times a week, however 16-24 year olds are not the biggest drinkers across all age groups. This reinforces the need for early intervention programmes to address smoking and use of alcohol.

It will be important to track the changes in smoking rates to identify whether the smoking ban in public places introduced in July 2007 has an impact on take up rates, as the latest national

research evidence shows smoking prevalence falling over 5% in the period since the ban came into effect. The Theme Group also felt it would be useful to add a question asking when people began smoking.

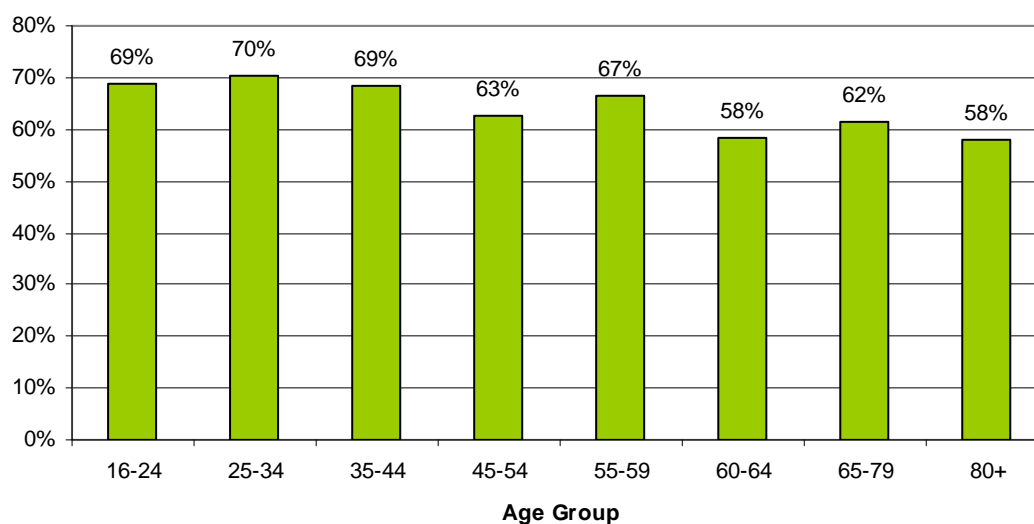
Figure 4. Percentage of people who smoke in each age group



Community Safety

Young people feel safer than the general population in their neighbourhood, both during the day (37% compared to 29%) and at night (21% compared to 14%). The factors causing them to feel unsafe are similar to those of the general population except that 'people hanging around on the street' is higher (64% compared to 57%).

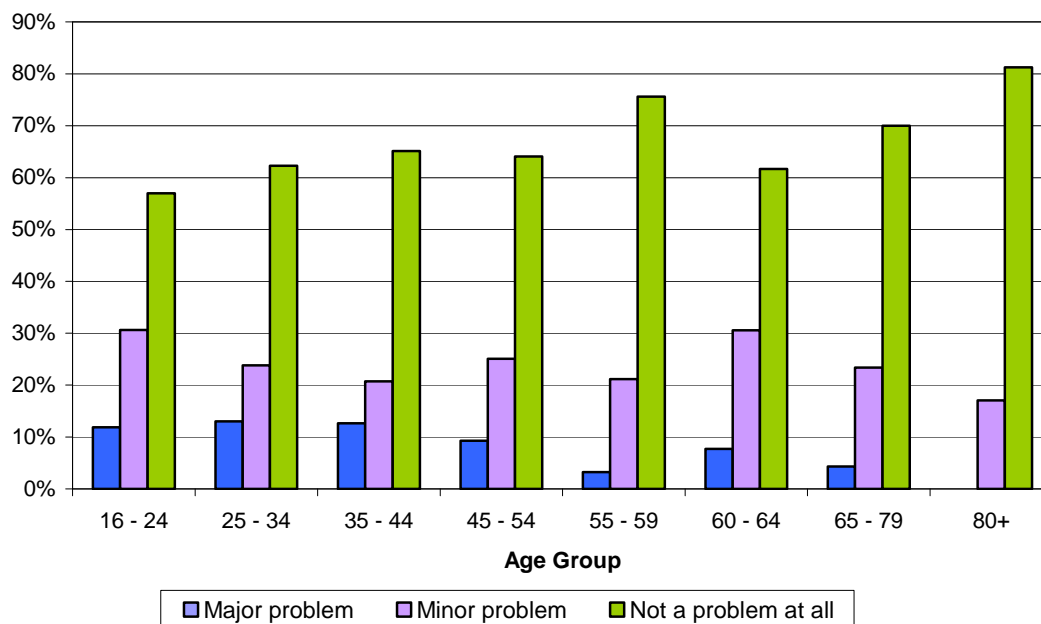
Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who feel safe in their neighbourhood at night.



Slightly (about 4%) more are aware of drug use and drug dealing in the area than the general population, but this is not likely to be statistically significant. Concern generally at the 'problem of teenagers hanging around' (19%) is exactly the same amongst the young people's group as for the general population.

People aged 16-24 and 60-64 appear to be more concerned about people being drunk or rowdy in public places compared to other age groups except the 60-64 age group: 42% (16-24) and 39% (60-64) respectively thought that people being drunk or rowdy in public places is a minor or major problem.

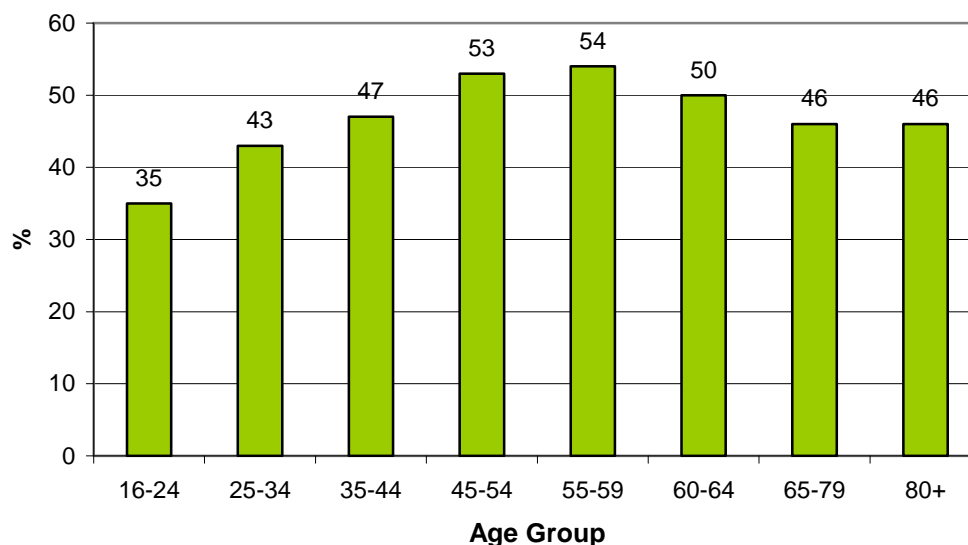
Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who think people being drunk or rowdy in public places is a major or minor problem.



Environmental contribution

Of all of the age groups, young people aged 16-24 are the least likely to have reduced their water, energy and waste consumption, encourage wildlife or grow their own fruit and vegetables over the last 12 months than any other age group.

Figure 7. Percentage of respondents over the past 12 months who have taken part in “environmentally aware” activities.



Summary

In summary, the research has shown that while in many cases the responses from the young people’s group are very similar to those from the population at large, there are some notable differences, highlighted here, that suggest that young people have a different social composition and have distinctive needs and perceptions.

2. Perceptions of parenting and young people

While the Section above has centred on young people's own views and perceptions, this area of public policy is also influenced by how older people view young people and the issues that arise in connection with young people.

In the following section we have summarised two topics which feature amongst the wider concerns of the adult population as a whole – perceptions of parenting, and concerns about 'young people hanging around'. We note that while this latter term may not always be helpful in generating positive attitudes to young people, it is nevertheless regularly placed high on the list of public concerns and is widely used nationally as a standard quality of life indicator.

Parenting

Respondents were asked if they thought parents in their local area take responsibility for the behaviour of their children or not. More than half of all respondents (58%) agreed that parents did take responsibility for their children, respondents in priority neighbourhoods were less likely to agree (56%) compared to respondents in the rest of the city (60%). Young people aged 16-24 are not significantly different to the general population in their perceptions of this issue.

Since 2006, when the question was first asked in the survey, the percentage of respondents who thought parents take responsibility for their children has increased in priority neighbourhoods (56% to 58%); however it is decreased significantly in the rest of the city (74% to 60%).

Whether or not respondents agree that parents take responsibility for their children has a significant impact on whether they view teenagers hanging around on the street as a problem or not. 75% of respondents who disagreed that parents take responsibility for their children, thought that teenagers hanging around on the street was a major or minor problem, compared to 53% of all respondents. Respondents, who disagree that parents take responsibility for their children, are also more likely to think that anti social behaviour generally is a problem (60% compared to 32% of all respondents).

In addition, parents' not taking responsibility for their children, appears to have an impact on people's perceptions about whether or not crime has increased; 46% of respondents who disagree that parents take responsibility for their children, agree strongly that the level of crime has increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months. In comparison less than a tenth (8%) of all respondents agree strongly that crime has increased in their neighbourhood.

Teenagers Hanging Around

The percentage of the general population citing 'teenagers hanging around the streets' as a major or minor problem is 53% of all respondents surveyed; again it is raised more often in priority neighbourhoods (56%) than it is in the rest of the city (51%). Although there is no statistically significant correlation by age, young people aged 16-24 are the least likely of all age groups to believe that 'teenagers hanging around' is a problem (49%).

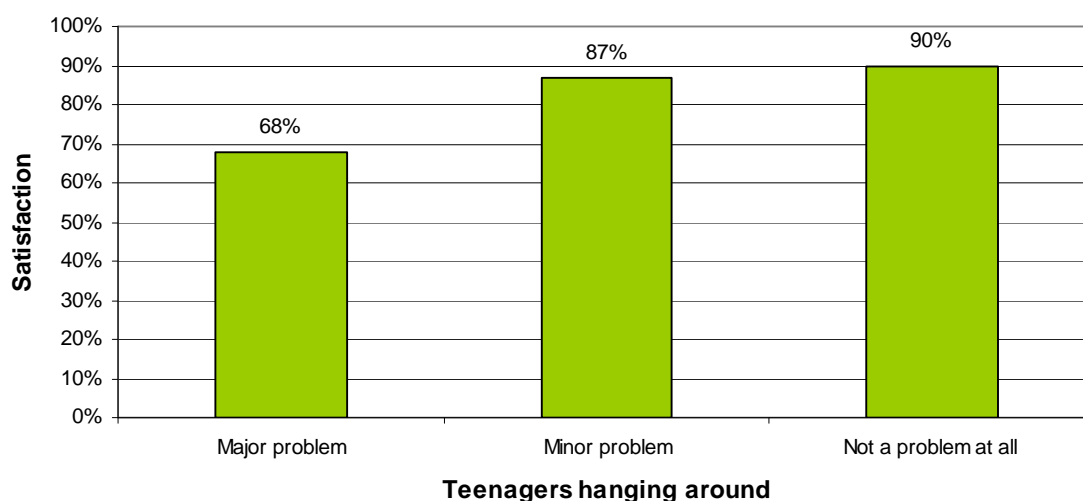
'Teenagers hanging around' appears to have an impact on respondents' feelings of safety in the neighbourhood. The percentage of respondents who feel unsafe in their neighbourhood during the day increases from 6% to 9% for respondents who view teenagers hanging around as a problem and from 34% to 46% for feelings of safety in the neighbourhood after dark.

In addition, 'teenagers hanging around' is linked with people's perception of crime. Over half of those who thought teenagers hanging around was a major problem in their neighbourhood, thought that the level of crime had increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months, compared to 18% of respondents who did not think that teenagers hanging around was a problem in their neighbourhood.

What is also interesting, is the link between 'teenagers hanging around' and overall satisfaction with the neighbourhood in which people live; 68% of respondents who believe teenagers hanging around is a major problem are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, compared to 90% of those who do not think teenagers hanging around is a problem (note that this is not in itself a measure of the presence of 'teenagers hanging around' but specifically that this constitutes, from the respondents' perspective, a problem). Negative perceptions associated with 'teenagers hanging around' need to be addressed as a key target area for Coventry Partnership if they want to improve overall satisfaction.

Also, noting the concerns raised about the wording of this question, consideration should be given to re-phrasing a supplementary question to ensure the interpretation of the issue is more fully explored. Further work to explore behaviours causing the perceived problem may help to explain the findings more clearly. 3

Figure 2. Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as place to live by the magnitude of the problem of teenagers hanging around



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