



# Coventry Partnership Household Survey 2007

## SCS Theme Group Report – Community Safety

April 2008

FINAL Report



Measurement ◆ Evaluation ◆ Learning  
Helping you deliver better public services

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## Position Statement – Key Point Summary

- ◆ 90% of respondents feel safe in their own home and safe in their neighbourhood during the day.
- ◆ By contrast, two-thirds of respondents feel safe out in their neighbourhood at night. For Coventry as a whole this figure (66%) represents a decline since the baseline year 2003 (71%) and a reversal of the trend that showed feelings of safety rising from the base to peak at 78% in 2005.
- ◆ The gap between priority neighbourhoods and rest of city has however fallen from 12% to 6%, this is mainly due to the more rapid decline in feelings of safety in the rest of city.
- ◆ People hanging around on the street are most likely to cause people to feel unsafe (57%). Other things causing people to feel unsafe are a lack of police presence (29%), hearing about people becoming victims of crime (28%) and poor street lighting (21%). In future research it would be interesting to explore the reasons why people feel unsafe in more detail.
- ◆ Anti Social Behaviour has an impact on people's feeling of safety. 48% of respondents who feel anti social behaviour is a problem (major/minor) in their neighbourhood feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to three quarters (75%) of respondents who do not think anti social behaviour is a problem. Intimidation/harassment has the biggest impact on feelings of safety, with only 39% of respondents who think this is a problem feeling safe in their neighbourhood at night.
- ◆ Perceived safety at night appears to have a strong bearing on how satisfied people are generally with their neighbourhood as a place to live; of those feeling very unsafe at night, only 53% are satisfied with their neighbourhood; for those who feel very safe however, neighbourhood satisfaction rises to 94%.
- ◆ The perceived problem of drug use and drug dealing in the neighbourhood appears to be reducing steadily in the priority neighbourhoods over the past 5 years, although progress appears to have bottomed out recently especially in the rest of city. Those perceiving drug use to be a problem in priority neighbourhoods have reduced from 29% in 2003 and 32% in 2004, to 19% in 2007. For the rest of city the net decline over five years is less marked at 4%, and in fact the figure has risen slightly over the past 2 years from the low point of 2006.
- ◆ Further work needs to be done to explore young people's views in depth, possibly in conjunction with the Communities that Care survey.
- ◆ Of all the indicators used to measure perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB), 'teenagers hanging around' consistently tops the list of public concerns. The difference between priority neighbourhood and rest of city is also now relatively small, at 5%.
- ◆ The 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest anti social behaviour problem, after teenagers hanging around, is rubbish and litter lying around. 45% of respondents identified rubbish and litter lying around as a problem in their neighbourhood, the highest percentage across all survey years. This masks a general overall improvement in the priority neighbourhoods (falling from over 50% in 2003 and 2004 to 49% this year), more than outweighed however by a worsening in the rest of city, where the problem has increased from 38% in 2003 to 42% in 2007. A very similar pattern is observed for vandalism, graffiti and other damage to vehicles or property.
- ◆ The general deterioration in most of the anti social behaviour indicators is matched by the overall key indicator which asks if people have experienced any type of anti-social

behaviour in their neighbourhood. For the rest of city, there has been a slow and steady rise of 8% over the 5 years of the survey, reaching 80% in 2007. The picture for priority neighbourhoods is more volatile and no clear trend emerges, with the current figure just 3% above the 2003 baseline, at 81%. There is now no significant difference between priority neighbourhoods and rest of city, but as elsewhere in this survey, this is principally because the rest of city has simply 'caught up'.

- ◆ One clear area of improvement is satisfaction with police presence. This has risen 17% over the 5 years of the survey, to 53% satisfied overall, with priority neighbourhoods now exceeding rest of city by 3%.
- ◆ The feeling of members from the theme group, in the light of recent votes cast for BNP in council elections, was that there is a need for a more sensitive way of measuring genuine feelings and attitudes in minority ethnic communities and more work is needed to combat racism. This contradicts the findings of this survey, reported elsewhere, that the majority (94%) of survey respondents feel that their neighbourhood is an area where differences between people are respected.
- ◆ Representatives from the theme group felt that future surveys needed to have a more extensive investigation of the role of alcohol in respondents'

♦ **Summary of evidence on key issues**

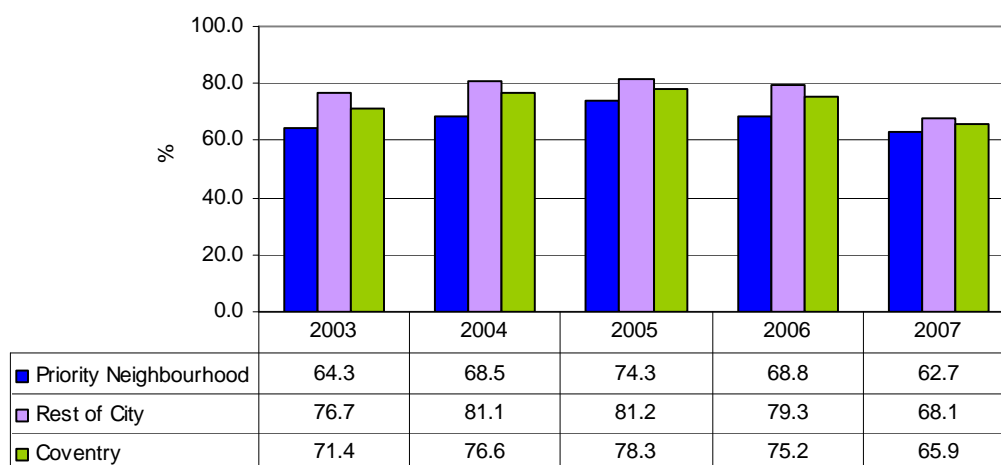
**1. Feeling Safe**

Almost all respondents feel safe in their home, slightly more feel safe in their home during the day than they do at night (98% and 95% respectively). When asked about how safe they feel out in their neighbourhood however, there is a big difference between those who feel safe in their neighbourhood during the day (94%) and those who feel safe at night (66%).

Feelings of safety at home during the day are equal in priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city, at 98%. This is a result of feelings of safety in the rest of the city remaining relatively constant since 2003, and feelings of daytime safety in priority neighbourhoods gradually increasing from 92% in 2003.

The pattern for safety out in the neighbourhood at night shows rather more cause for concern however. The graph below indicates that respondents living in the rest of the city feel safer in their neighbourhood at night than respondents living in priority neighbourhoods (68% and 63% respectively). However, in both areas there has been a net decline in the percentage of respondents feeling safe since 2003 and this is most marked in the rest of city. Feelings of safety initially rose between 2003-2005, then fell in 2006 and 2007. The latest figures show that feelings of safety are now below what they were in 2003. However the gap has narrowed since 2003 when it was 12%, mainly because of the more marked fall in perceived safety in the rest of city.

**Figure 1. Proportion of respondents who feel safe in their neighbourhood at night**

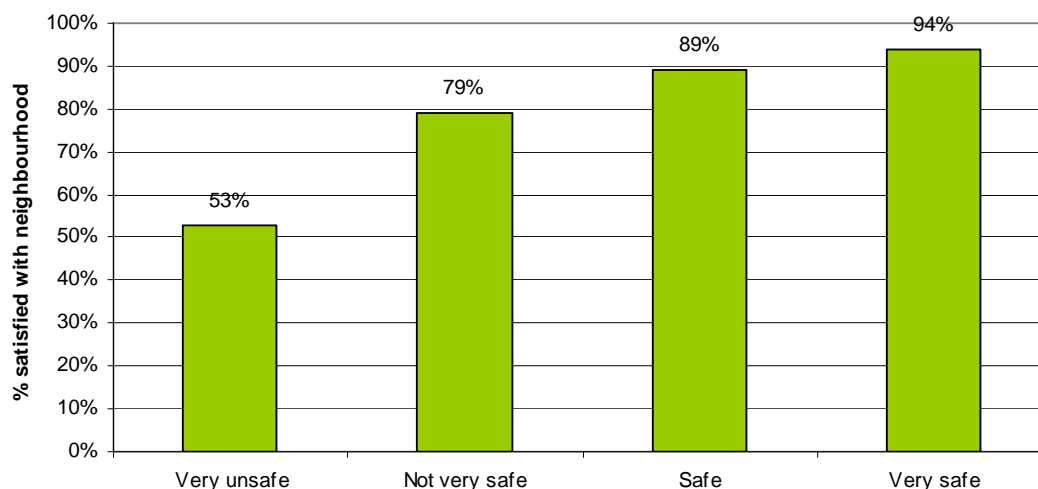


Nationally, 30% of respondents said they felt very unsafe or a bit unsafe when walking alone in their area after dark (British Crime Survey 2004/05). Although the question is worded slightly different, results from the Household Survey indicate that a slightly higher percentage (34%) feel unsafe in their neighbourhood at night. Nationally the percentage of people feeling unsafe in their area after dark remained relatively stable between 2003/04 and 2004/05.

There is a significant difference between the percentage of males who feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to females (75% and 56% respectively). Respondents under the age of 45 are also more likely to feel safe in their neighbourhood at night (69%) in comparison to respondents over the age of 45 (62%).

The graph below shows a positive correlation between feeling safe and satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live. Satisfaction increases from 53% of those respondents who feel very unsafe in their neighbourhood at night to 94% of those who feel very safe.

**Figure 2. The percentage of respondents who are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live by how safe they feel in their neighbourhood at night**



In both areas of the city, people hanging around on the street are most likely to cause people to feel unsafe (57%). Other things causing people to feel unsafe are a lack of police presence (29%), hearing about people becoming victims of crime (28%) and poor street lighting (21%). In future research it would be interesting to explore the reasons why people feel unsafe in more detail.

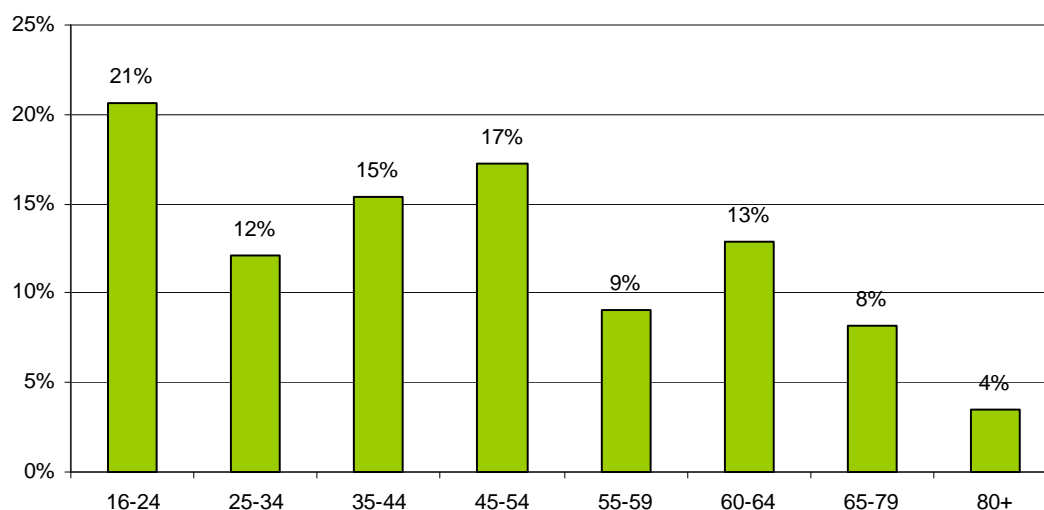
5% of respondents are aware of victimisation taking place in their neighbourhood, a slight but insignificant increase since the previous year (4%). Respondents say that most victimisation is because of race (41%) or religion (28%). Being aware of victimisation appears statistically to have a direct impact on feelings of safety; only 47% of respondents who are aware of victimisation taking place feel safe in their neighbourhood after dark, compared to 67% amongst respondents who aren't aware of any victimisation.

## 2. Drugs

Less than a fifth (16%) of respondents think people using drugs is a major or minor problem in their neighbourhood. In the rest of the city the percentage is marginally lower (15%) than in priority neighbourhoods (19%). Slightly fewer believe that people dealing drugs is a problem in their neighbourhood (14%), ranging from 12% in the rest of the city to 16% in priority neighbourhoods.

This could reflect the result of a lot of good work regarding the disruption of the drug market in Coventry via a programme of crackdown and consolidation days, working with communities to reduce availability.

Interestingly, respondents aged 16-24 and 45-54 are more likely to believe that drug usage is a problem in their neighbourhood in comparison to respondents in any other age group (24% and 23% respectively). This may be attributable to the life stage residents are typically at in these age groups, e.g. teenagers and their parents. A similar pattern occurs for those who believe drug dealing is a problem in their neighbourhood, those aged 16-24 are most likely to think drug dealing is a problem (21%).

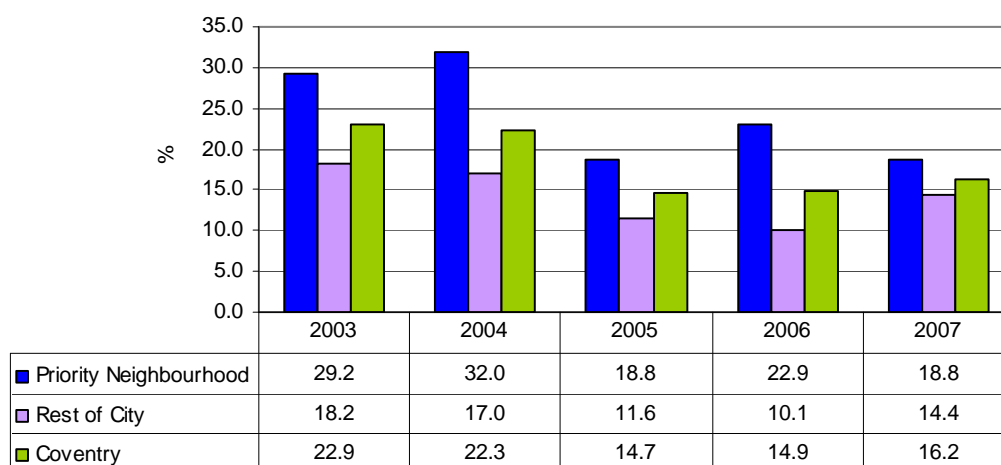
**Figure 3. Proportion of respondents by age who believe drug dealing is a problem in their neighbourhood**

Analysis by ethnic group indicates that Asian respondents are more likely to think that drug usage and drug dealing is a problem in comparison to any other ethnic group; 21% of Asian respondents believe drug usage is a problem in their neighbourhood and 19% think drug dealing is a problem. This result may be due to the young age profile of Asian respondents, 31% of Asian respondents are between the ages of 16-24.

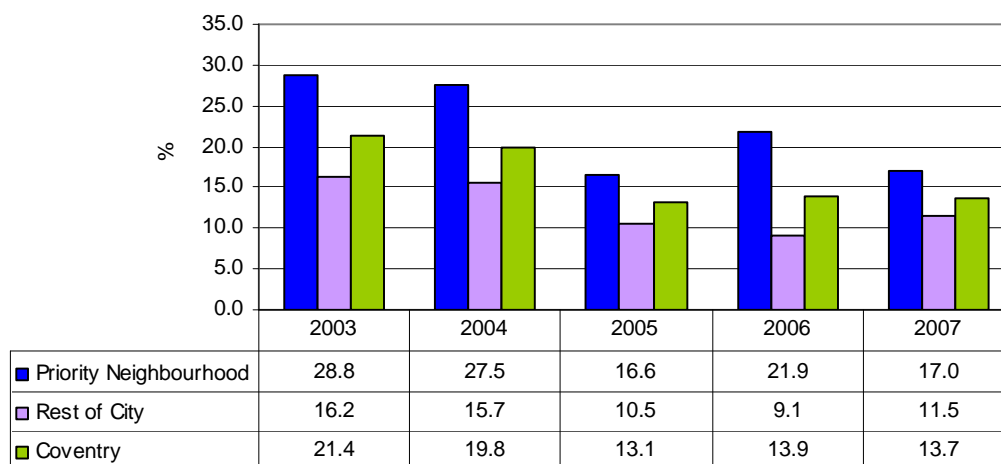
The percentage of people who feel safe in their neighbourhood appears to be influenced by the perception of drug usage. 43% of respondents who think drug usage is a major problem feel safe in their neighbourhood at night, compared to 71% of respondents who do not think drug usage is a problem.

The two graphs below show that since 2003 there has been a decline in the percentage of respondents who think that drug usage and drug dealing are a problem in their neighbourhood. In priority neighbourhoods, drug usage seems to have fluctuated over time and is now at its lowest level (19%) whereas in the rest of the city drug usage declined as a problem between 2003 and 2006, and then rose slightly between 2006 and 2007 (10% to 14%). There is a similar pattern in the rest of the city with regards to the percentage of respondents who see drug dealing as a problem in their neighbourhood. People's perceptions may have been influenced by recent media reports which have reported on 'drug problems' in Coventry.

**Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who think drug usage is a problem in their neighbourhood**



**Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who think drug dealing is a problem in their neighbourhood**



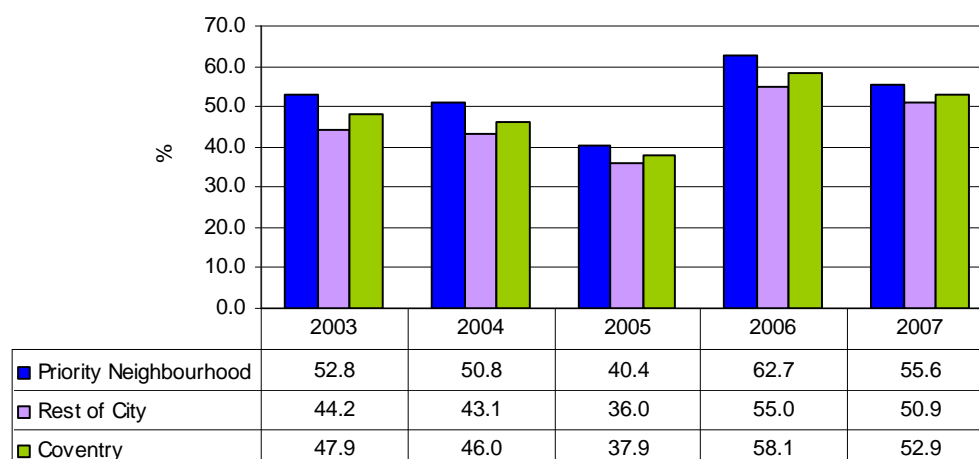
### 3. Anti Social Behaviour

Respondents were asked how much of a problem different types of anti social behaviour (ASB) were in their neighbourhood. The biggest problems were quoted as 'teenagers hanging around' (53%), 'rubbish and litter lying around' (45%) and vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles (all at 43%).

#### Teenagers Hanging Around

The use of this indicator is controversial, but it remains the one that resonates most with the public, and as such is a useful index to highlight an influential public concern. It is also a nationally recognised indicator. The graph below shows the change over time in the percentage of respondents who feel teenagers hanging around is a problem. Please note however that in 2003-2005 the question asked how much of a problem nuisance from young people was, whereas in 2006 the question in the survey changed to ask how much of a problem teenagers hanging around was – this change in question may account for the differences in the graph below.

**Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who think teenagers hanging around is a problem** (Please note question change in 2006 from 'Nuisance from Young People' to 'Teenagers Hanging Around')



Young people aged 16-24 are least likely to think that teenagers hanging around is a problem (49%). The age group most likely to view teenagers hanging around as a problem is the 65-79 year olds (57%). By gender and ethnicity there are no significant differences in the results.

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 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, has 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

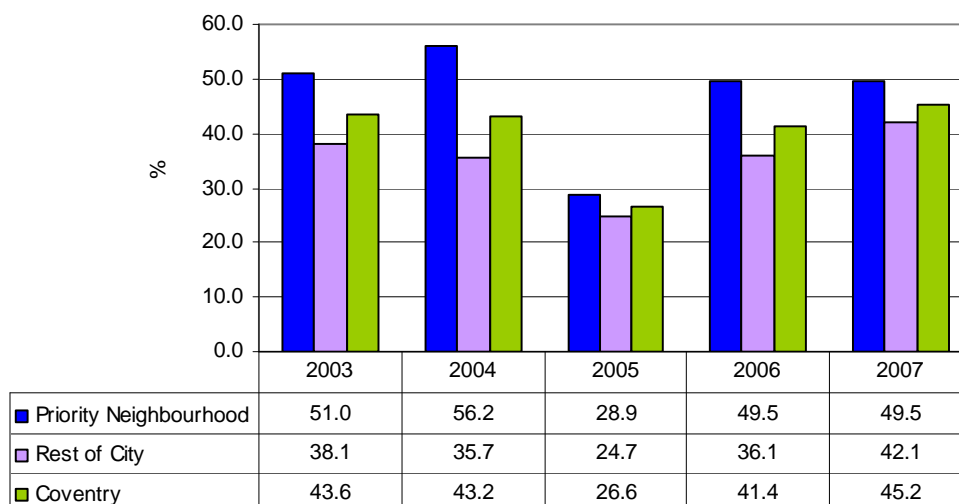
increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months. In comparison less than a tenth (8%) of all respondents agree strongly that crime has increased in their neighbourhood.

### Rubbish or Litter Lying Around

In priority neighbourhoods, the percentage of respondents who think that rubbish or litter lying around is a problem in their neighbourhood increased between 2003 and 2004, the percentage dropped dramatically in 2005 and then levelled out between 2006 and 2007 at 50%. In the rest of the city, the percentage of respondents who thought rubbish or litter lying around was a problem dropped between 2003 and 2005, however for the last two years the percentage has increased up to 42%, the highest it has been across all years.

A possible reason for the significant drop in 2005 is that the question in the survey asked people to consider how much of a problem litter, rubbish and fly tipping was, whereas in other years the question just focused on litter and rubbish.

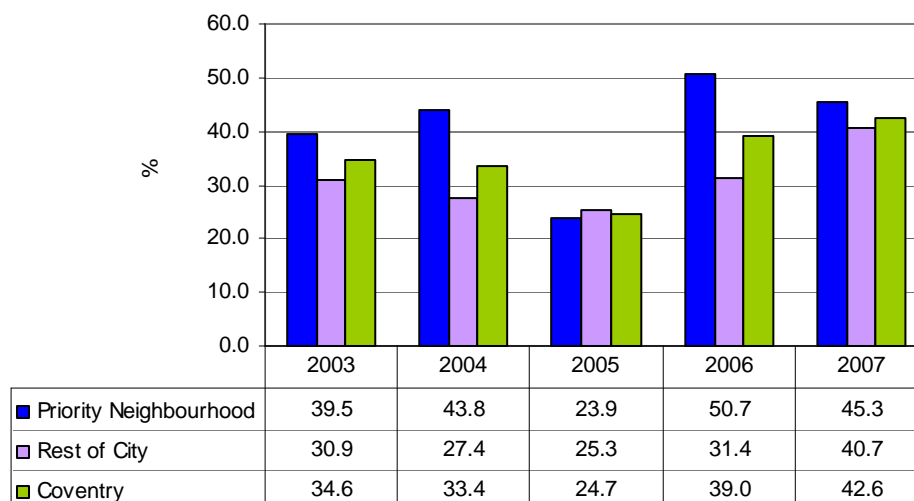
**Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who think rubbish/litter lying around is a problem**



### Vandalism/Graffiti

Excluding 2005 data, there appears to have been a steady increase in the percentage of respondents who say vandalism and graffiti is a problem in their neighbourhood. In priority neighbourhoods the problem peaked in 2006 when over half of all respondents (51%) said vandalism or graffiti was a problem, in 2007 the percentage reporting it as a problem fell to 45%. In the rest of the city, 41% of respondents said vandalism/graffiti was a problem compared to 31% in 2003. Over time, there has been a narrowing in the gap between priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.

**Figure 8. The percentage of respondents who think vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles is a problem**



### Abandoned / Burnt Out Cars / Joyriding

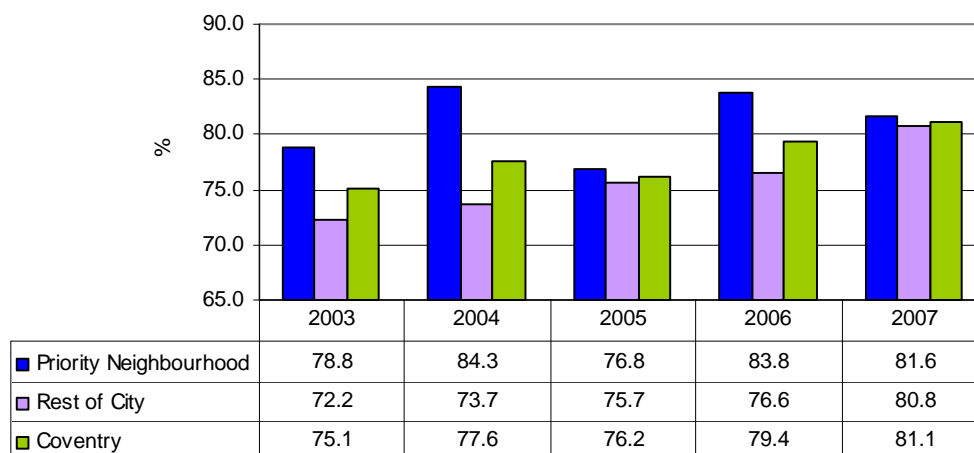
There has also been a significant improvement in the number of respondents reporting that abandoned or burnt out cars and joyriding are a problem. In 2003, 23% of respondents reported that abandoned or burnt out cars were a problem in their neighbourhood, by 2007 this percentage had more than halved (9%). In terms of joyriding, 33% of respondents in 2003 thought it was a problem, by 2007 this percentage was 17%.

### Anti Social Behaviour Generally

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Anti Social Behaviour is defined as 'behaviour likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress to members of the public not of the same household as the perpetrator'.

In nearly all cases, ASB is more of a problem in priority neighbourhoods than the rest of the city. The biggest gap of 9%, is between respondents in priority neighbourhoods who say noisy neighbours or loud parties are a problem compared to respondents in the rest of the city (21% and 12% respectively). The only element of ASB that is more of a problem in the rest of the city is car parking, 43% compared to 35% in priority neighbourhoods, possibly due to higher car ownership amongst respondents in the rest of the city. An equal percentage of respondents in both areas of the city say nuisance pets, people sleeping rough and hoax calls are a problem in their neighbourhood (9%, 2% and 7% respectively).

The key indicator for ASB, measures the percentage of respondents who have experienced any type of ASB (major or minor) in their neighbourhood. The graph below shows that since 2003, the gap has narrowed between those experiencing anti social behaviour in priority neighbourhoods in comparison to the rest of the city. In priority neighbourhoods, experience of ASB has fluctuated over time, peaking in 2004 and 2006. In the rest of the city, experience of ASB has steadily increased since 2003 and is now at its highest level (81%).

**Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who have experienced anti social behaviour in their neighbourhood**

ASB has an impact on people's feeling of safety. 48% of respondents who feel anti social behaviour is a problem (major/minor) in their neighbourhood feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to three quarters (75%) of respondents who do not think anti social behaviour is a problem. Intimidation/harassment has the biggest impact on feelings of safety, with only 39% of respondents who think this is a problem feeling safe in their neighbourhood at night.

#### Information about Anti Social Behaviour

34% of respondents feel informed about what is being done to tackle ASB in their local area, respondents in priority neighbourhoods feel less well informed than respondents in the rest of the city (30% and 37%).

Males also feel less well informed than females about what is being done to tackle anti social behaviour (31% and 38% respectively). By age, the most well informed respondents are those over the age of 65. However, the least well informed respondents (27%) are those aged between 55-59.

Since 2006, when the question was first asked in the Household Survey, the percentage of respondents who feel informed about ASB has decreased from 38% to 34%. In priority neighbourhoods the percentage has decreased more (36% to 30%) than in the rest of the city (39% to 37%).

Respondents who feel informed about what is being done to tackle ASB are less likely to think that crime has increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months. 25% of respondents who feel informed about ASB agree that crime has increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months in comparison to 36% of respondents who do not feel well informed about what is being done to tackle ASB in their local area.

## 4. Criminal Justice System

Respondents were asked to comment on their satisfaction on the following aspects of the criminal justice system; police presence, police family presence, police response to incidents, victim/witness care, protection from offenders, length of time between incident and court hearing, being kept informed about the progress of a case and sentencing of offenders in court.

In all cases, satisfaction is higher than it has been in any other survey year. Satisfaction with being kept informed about the progress of a case has increased the most, from 28% in 2004 to 59% in 2007.

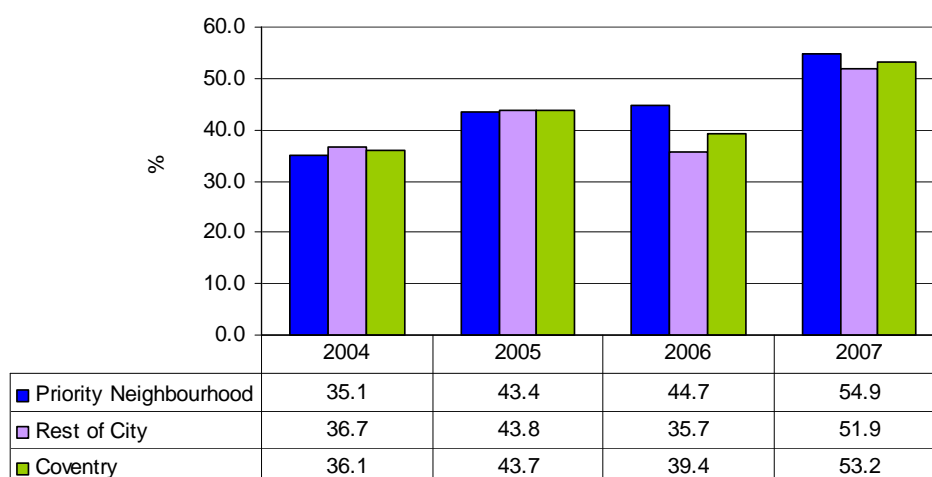
It is also interesting that satisfaction is higher in priority neighbourhoods than it is in the rest of the city. The biggest gap is in satisfaction with sentencing of offenders, in priority neighbourhoods 52% of respondents are satisfied compared to 43% in the rest of the city.

### Police Presence

The graph below shows an increase in satisfaction with police presence in both priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city. In priority neighbourhoods satisfaction has increased year on year. In the rest of the city, satisfaction has increased overall, despite a drop in satisfaction in 2006. In 2004, satisfaction with police presence was higher in the rest of the city whereas in 2007, results show a higher satisfaction amongst respondents living in priority neighbourhoods.

This finding is thought to be linked to the increased visibility of the police presence in Coventry. There has been an increasingly effective deployment of police resources through the 'AIMS' process: including crackdown and consolidation days, street briefings and local neighbourhood action plans.

**Figure 10. Percentage of respondents satisfied with Police Presence**





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