

# Southampton Safe City Strategic Assessment 2018/19

## 1. Key Messages Summary



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## 1. Key Messages and Priorities

### 1.1 Crime

- In 2018/19, the police recorded crime rate in Southampton was 126 crimes per 1,000 population, significantly higher than the national average, third highest amongst statistical neighbours and an increase of 1% from 2017/18. In comparison, crime in Hampshire and Portsmouth fell by 0.4% and 7.9% respectively, although nationally it increased by 5.7%.
- The relatively flat trend in crime rates in Southampton over the last two years is mirrored by findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales which show that overall levels of crime in England and Wales have remained broadly stable over the same period, with no statistically significant changes.
- A crime severity score is an estimate of the harm caused by crime. Despite the small increase in the number of crimes in Southampton in 2018/19 there was a 1.0% decrease in the total crime severity score for the city. This indicates a slightly less severe mix of crimes in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.
- The crime groups with the worst severity scores in Southampton in 2018/19 were violence with injury, rape and residential burglary. These are the offences which could be said to cause the most 'harm' in Southampton.
- The crime types with notable increases in Southampton from 2017/18 to 2018/19 were violent crime (7.6%), residential burglary (7.5%), domestic violent offences (15%) and serious knife crime (17.2%). The crime types with notable percentage decreases were non-residential burglary (-20.7%), vehicle offences (-10.7%) and anti-social behaviour (-32%).
- Over a third (36%) of offences with an identified suspect or offender were committed by a young person aged between 9 to 24 years old. Offenders of this age group are particularly over-represented in robbery; arson; possession of weapons offences and vehicle offences.
- The more deprived areas of Southampton experience significantly higher rates of crime and anti-social behaviour. Areas of the city which are in the most deprived 20% of areas in England experienced more than four times the rate of crimes in the least deprived 20% areas in 2018/19.
- A simple score was calculated to inform overall crime priority setting. Based on the score the top four crime priorities for the Partnership are:
  - Violent crime, particularly violence without injury

- Residential burglary
- Sexual offences particularly rape
- Domestic crimes including domestic violent crime

## 1.2 Residents' Views

- More than 50% of respondents to the 2019 Community Safety Survey thought that the level of crime had increased in their local area in the last 12 months, a figure which increased to 66% of respondents who live in the most deprived 20% of areas.
- 40% of survey respondents said that they feel safe in their local area after dark. However only 27% feel safe in the city centre after dark.
- Commonly mentioned reasons for feeling unsafe were a lack of police presence; groups hanging around the street; levels of crime; public drinking; and homeless people and beggars.
- Of respondents to the survey who had experienced at least one crime in the last year, 40.6% did not report at least one incident. Of those who did not report an incident, 49% said it was because they did not feel reporting it would make any difference.
- 60% of respondents either agreed or tended to agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- The top 5 community safety issues which people identified in their local area were
  - Rubbish or litter lying around
  - People using or dealing drugs
  - Vandalism, graffiti
  - Begging in the streets
  - Rough sleeping
- The top 5 community safety issues which showed the biggest percentage point increases from the 2017 Community Safety Survey (more respondents thought they were big issues in 2019) were:
  - Knife crime
  - Arson
  - Sexual assaults
  - Youth crime
  - Physical assaults

### 1.3 Risk Factors

- The population of 9 to 24 year olds in Southampton is forecast to grow by 5.4% by 2025. Young people can be at disproportionately high risk of becoming both victims and offenders so other things being equal this population growth is likely to lead to an increase in levels of offending in the city.
- Children who live in poverty are on average more likely to be involved in crime, and income inequality is also positively associated with crime. Although the percentage of children in low income families in Southampton has fallen in recent years it remains high relative to comparator areas and also varies within the city. There is good evidence to show the importance of tackling childhood socioeconomic inequalities through access to public services, housing and education as well as local and social environments.
- The likelihood of a young person offending also increases, on average, with other negative risk factors such as family conflict and living in a household with adults experiencing alcohol and drug use problems. Southampton has high rates of some of these negative risk factors compared to similar areas, including relatively high levels of high risk domestic abuse cases and alcohol-specific hospital admissions.