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Perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour: Findings from the 2008/09 British Crime Survey

Supplementary Volume 1 to Crime in England and Wales 2008/09

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Introduction

This bulletin is the first in a series of supplementary volumes that accompany the main annual Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09' (Walker *et al.*, 2009). These supplementary volumes report on additional analysis not included in the main annual publication. Figures included in this bulletin are from the British Crime Survey (BCS), a large, nationally representative victimisation survey of approximately 46,000 adults resident in households in England and Wales.¹

Since 2001/02 the BCS has run continuously with interviewing being carried out throughout the year. Respondents are asked about their experiences of crime-related incidents in the 12 months prior to interview. BCS respondents are also asked about their attitudes towards different crime-related issues such as the police, criminal justice system, perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour.

This bulletin presents findings from additional analyses on perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour based on the 2008/09 BCS.

¹ For more information about the BCS see <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>.

GUIDE TO TABLES AND FIGURES

'No answers' (missing values) All BCS analysis excludes don't know/refusals unless otherwise specified.

Percentages may not add to 100 per cent due to rounding.

A percentage may be quoted in the text for a single category that is identifiable in the tables only by summing two or more component percentages. In order to avoid rounding errors, the percentage has been recalculated for the single category and therefore may differ by one percentage point from the sum of the percentages derived from the tables.

Weighting All BCS percentages presented in the tables in this bulletin are based on data weighted to compensate for differential non response. Tables show the unweighted base which represents the number of people interviewed in the specified group.

Table abbreviations

'ints' used as an abbreviation for 'interviews' and refers to BCS interviews conducted in the specified year.

'0' indicates less than 0.5 per cent (this does not apply when percentages are presented to one decimal point) or no response in that particular category.

'n/a' indicates that the BCS question was not applicable or not asked in that particular year.

'..' indicates that data are not reported because the unweighted base is less than 100, unless otherwise stated.

''** indicates that the change is statistically significant at the five per cent level.

'ns' in the logistic regression model table this indicates that the change is not statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Statistical significance

BCS estimates are based on a representative sample of the population of approximately 46,000 respondents aged 16 or over each year. Any sample survey may produce estimates that differ from the figures that would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed. The size of this difference (known as sampling error) depends on the sample size, the size and variability of the estimate and the design of the survey.

Because of this sampling error differences between estimates from successive years of the survey or between population subgroups may occur by chance. In other words, the difference may be simply due to which adults were randomly selected for interview. We are able to measure whether this is likely to be the case using standard statistical tests. Survey results that are statistically significant at the five per cent level, according to these tests, are identified by asterisks in the tables. Only results that are statistically significant at the five per cent level are commented on within this bulletin. Where an apparent change over time is not statistically significant the figures may be described in the text as 'stable' or 'similar'.

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1 Public perceptions of crime

Rachel Murphy and John Flatley

1.1 SUMMARY

This chapter presents findings from new questions added to the 2008/09 British Crime Survey (BCS) on public perceptions of crime. Previous BCS results have been used to describe two types of “perception gap”: one related to differences between what is happening nationally and in the local area; and, the second, the difference between perceptions of crime and actual crime levels.

New questions on “changes in the past few years” to crime “in the country as whole” confirmed previous findings that much higher proportions of the public think crime has been rising nationally than locally.

The perception gap between changes nationally and in the local area is greater for the more serious violent (and therefore rarer) crimes and smaller for acquisitive crimes. This suggests that personal experience is more likely to play a part in the perceptions of the more common crimes while perceptions of rarer crime types are likely to be influenced by media reporting, which tends to focus on the more violent crimes.

Analysis of new questions on specific types of crime and on perceptions of the comparative levels of crime suggests the gap between perceptions of crime and actual crime levels might not be as great as previously thought.

Analysis of small area police recorded crime data showed a clear linear relationship between actual levels of crime and perceptions of the comparative level of crime in the local area. For example, 28 per cent of those living in areas with the highest crime rates perceived they lived in a higher than average crime area compared with just one per cent of those living in the areas with the lowest crime rates.

The proportion of people perceiving increased crime levels locally tended to be higher in the areas with highest police recorded crime levels across all crime types, with the exception of bank and credit card fraud. This difference is more marked for violent (and rarer) crimes (gun crime, knife crime, muggings/street robberies, and people getting beaten up).

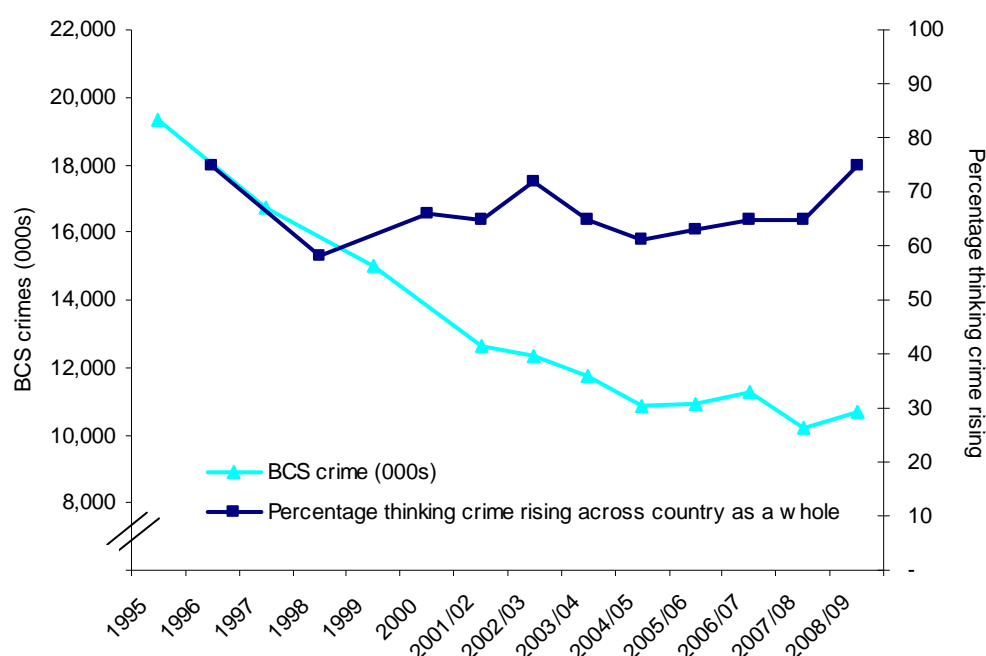
Perceptions of increased national crime levels were higher than perceptions of increased local crime levels across all areas. In other words, there is no relationship between perceptions of increased national crime levels and the level of crime in the area of residence, therefore the perception gap is wider for those people living in the areas with the lowest levels of recorded crime.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The British Crime Survey (BCS) collects a wide range of information about public perceptions of crime and related issues. Headline findings from the 2008/09 survey were reported in the annual volume 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09' (Walker *et al.*, 2009) and included first findings from a new set of questions relating to perceptions of crime. This chapter provides more detailed analysis of these new questions.

Since 1996, the BCS has asked respondents two questions on their perceptions of whether or not crime has changed in the past two years: one asks about crime "in the country as a whole" and another about crime "in this area" (see Box 1.1). Results from this question have generally shown a large majority of adults saying they think crime had risen nationally. This contrasts strongly with results, also from the BCS, showing that experience of crime has fallen considerably over the same period (for example, by 45% between 1995 and the 2008/09 BCS) (Figure 1.1) This apparent "perception gap" has been a subject of considerable discussion (see for example Duffy *et al.*, 2005).

Figure 1.1 Trends in BCS crime and perceptions of changing crime levels, 1995 to 2008/09 BCS



Another element of this "perception gap" is the contrast between views of what is happening across the country as a whole and views held about local crime, with considerably smaller proportions thinking crime has risen locally. These findings have some parallels with attitudes to other public services such as the NHS. For example, surveys have shown that when asked about the state of the NHS, respondents are consistently more positive about the state of local services than they are about the national picture (Laycock, 2005). Similarly, the public tend to be much more confident about how crime is dealt with locally than in the country as a whole and are generally much less pessimistic about the local crime rate than the national picture (Duffy *et al.*, 2005).

General perceptions questions such as these are likely to elicit a "gut feeling", informed less by personal experience and direct observation and more by external sources including the media. Evidence shows the media has a strong influence on both the perception of crime levels rising and the "perception gap" between national and local crime rates. For example, a survey by Ipsos MORI found that around half of people interviewed stated that the reason why they thought there was more crime now than two years ago was because of what they see on television or read in the newspapers (Duffy *et al.*, 2005). It is perhaps not surprising

that the general public think crime is rising when crime features so prominently in the news media. For example, extensive coverage of rarer crimes such as gun and knife-related crime may influence public thinking about “crime” in general, overwhelming messages about the considerable falls in higher-volume crime types.

One view is that the “perception gap” is evidence that the public do not believe or trust the crime statistics. However, an alternative view, based on the evidence above, is that people form their opinions without any reference to official statistics.

1.3 NEW QUESTIONS ON PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME IN 2008/09

To better understand public perceptions of crime, a new set of questions was included in the 2008/09 BCS. This comprised an alternative form of the questions on perceptions of change in national and local crime levels, an additional set of questions on perceptions of changes in particular crime types and a general question comparing crime in the local area with the national average.

Comparison of original and new questions on changes in crime levels

There was concern that responses to the original national and local questions could have been subject to a context effect, which means that prior questions affect responses to subsequent questions. The original national crime question was asked much later in the interview than the local question and may have been influenced by both the length of questioning about crime before the question and in particular the immediately preceding questions about severity of sentencing which is known to be an area where people have strong views.

Thus the new questions were asked in the same section of the questionnaire, the local question immediately after the national one. The new questions differed from the original questions in a number of other ways. First, the time period over which respondents were asked to assess changes was amended from the “last two years” to the “past few years” and there were also minor changes to the response options. In addition, for the local crime question only, the original question was asked only of those who had lived in the area for three years or more whereas the new version was asked of all people (Box 1.1 details the wording of original and new questions). The original questions were retained for a small random part of the sample to compare the responses to the original and the new questions.

As stated in Walker *et al.* (2009), based on the original questions 36 per cent of people think that crime in their local area has increased, while 75 per cent think that crime has increased nationally. First results from analysis of the new questions show that these figures are around ten percentage points higher, with 46 per cent of people thinking that crime levels locally have gone up and 84 per cent thinking that national crime levels have gone up. This could be due in part to the reference period being extended (from “two years” to “the past few years”) and possibly because of their new location within the questionnaire. A similar proportion of people think that crime levels locally have stayed the same (50% answering the original question and 47% answering the new question, data not shown).

Although analysis of the new questions shows a higher proportion of people perceiving that crime has increased than the original questions, the pattern for perceptions of crime levels by demographic, socio-economic and other factors is similar (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2).

The persisting difference between perceptions of national and local crime shown by the new questions demonstrates that the “perception gap” indicated by responses to the original questions is likely to reflect real differences between perceptions of national and local crime rather than being an artefact of the questionnaire design.

Box 1.1 BCS questions on perceptions of changing crime levels

Original question on perceptions of changes in the NATIONAL crime rates

I would like to ask whether you think that the level of crime in the country as a whole has changed over the past two years. Would you say there is more crime, less crime or about the same amount (since two years ago)?

1. A lot more crime
2. A little more crime
3. About the same
4. A little less crime
5. A lot less crime

Original question on perceptions of changes in the LOCAL crime rates (asked only of those who had lived in the area for three years or more)

How much would you say the crime rate here has changed since two years ago? In this area, would you say there is more crime or less crime?

1. A lot more crime
2. A little more crime
3. About the same
4. A little less crime
5. A lot less crime

New questions on perceptions of changes in NATIONAL and LOCAL crime rates

Looking at this card, what do you think has happened to crime in the country as a whole over the past few years?

1. Gone up a lot
2. Gone up a little
3. Stayed about the same
4. Gone down a little
5. Gone down a lot

And what do you think has happened to crime in your local area over the past few years?

1. Gone up a lot
2. Gone up a little
3. Stayed about the same
4. Gone down a little
5. Gone down a lot

1.4 PERCEPTIONS OF SPECIFIC CRIME TYPES

It is possible that particular crimes affect perceptions when responding to a general question about “crime”. Therefore, an additional set of questions on changes in particular crime types was added to the 2008/09 BCS to explore whether or not the public discriminated between different types of crimes.

This included a set of nine questions about perceptions of changes to specific types of crime at both national and local level. To ease respondent burden and control for any possible order effect, each respondent was presented with questions about just four of the nine crime types in a random order (see Box 1.2).

Box 1.2 New questions on perception of changes in different types of crime; 2008/09 BCS

I'm now going to ask you about different types of crime. For each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think the number of crimes has gone up, gone down or stayed the same over the past few years, both in the country as a whole and in your local area.

(Looking at this card) what do you think has happened to the [CRIME TYPE] in the country as a whole over the past few years?

1. Gone up a lot
2. Gone up a little
3. Stayed about the same
4. Gone down a little
5. Gone down a lot

And what about in your local area?

Same questions and answer responses as above.

Crime types (random order – any four from nine).

1. amount of bank and credit card fraud
2. number of gun crimes
3. number of knife crimes
4. number of homes being broken into
5. number of cars being stolen
6. number of cars being broken into
7. number of muggings or street robberies
8. amount of vandalism
9. number of people getting beaten up

Treatment of don't know responses

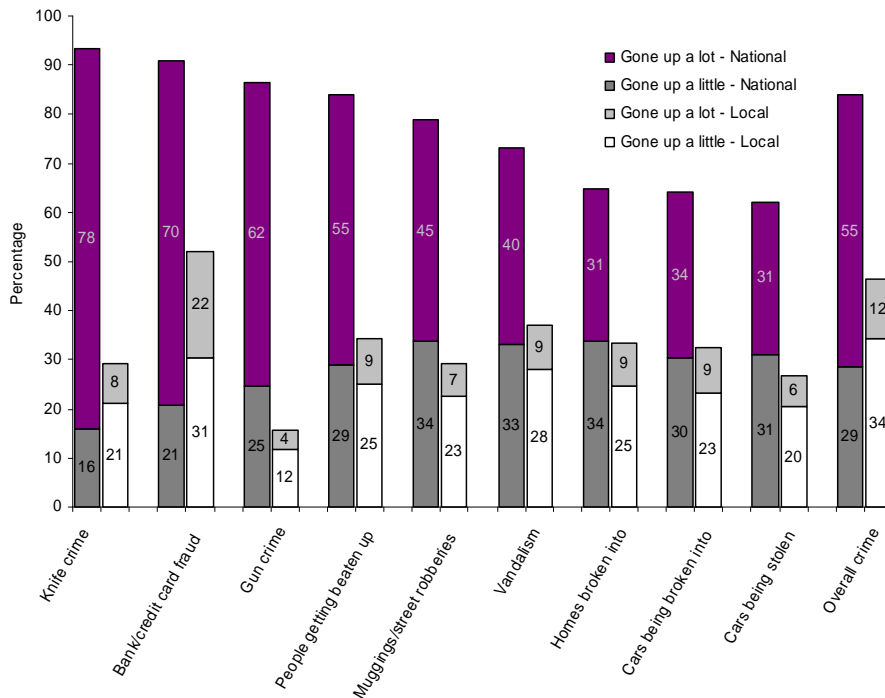
It should be noted that 'don't know' responses are usually excluded from BCS analysis presented in Home Office statistical bulletins when they form five per cent or less of the total responses. However, the proportion of missing responses for the questions on perceptions of local bank/credit card fraud (11%) and perceptions of cars being stolen nationally (6%) exceeded this limit and so would usually be shown as a separate category. However, as the inclusion of these 'don't know' responses does not change the overall picture in terms of the relationship between national and local perceptions, all figures presented here exclude 'don't know' responses. This does, however, indicate that the question on local increases in bank/credit card fraud posed some difficulties for respondents which may partly explain the different profile for this crime.

First results for the new questions on perceptions of changes in specific crime types have already been reported (see Chapter 5 in Walker *et al.*, 2009). This showed, as with the general crime question, a marked difference between national and local perceptions.

The difference between perceptions of changes in the national and local crime levels were particularly marked for knife crime (93% of people perceiving an increase nationally compared with 29% locally) and gun crime (86% nationally compared with 16% locally)¹. This might be partly related to the fact that these types of crime are rare in number but geographically concentrated with, for example, over half of all firearm offences in England and Wales being concentrated in just three police forces: the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester and West Midlands (Povey *et al.*, 2009). They are also the types of crime that attract most media attention and public concern and are therefore likely to influence perceptions about national crime figures.

¹ Some numbers appear different to those in Figure 1.2 due to rounding.

Figure 1.2 Proportion of people who think crime has gone up by individual crime type, 2008/09 BCS



Conversely, there was a smaller gap between perceptions of national and local crime in relation to increases in bank and credit card fraud (91% and 52% respectively). Evidence from the UK Payments Association shows that this type of crime has been increasing in recent years. The UK Cards Association has recorded 2.8 million fraudulent transactions on UK-issued credit cards in the UK in 2008², a rise of four per cent (see Chapter 4, Walker *et al.*, 2009). This suggests that personal experience plays more of a part in answering both the national and local question for this crime type.

When asked about other types of acquisitive crime, there was also less of a gap between national and local perceptions than for violent crimes. For example, homes being broken into (65% of people perceiving an increase nationally compared with 33% locally) and cars being stolen (62% of people perceiving an increase nationally compared with 27% locally) compared with people getting beaten up (84% of people perceiving an increase nationally compared with 34% locally).

It is interesting to note that, with the exception of bank and credit card fraud, people are more likely to perceive that crime overall has gone up locally than when asked about individual crime types (Figure 1.2). This may be because there is an increased sensitivity to perceiving increases when focusing on a particular crime type at local level.

Calculating a net perception gap (i.e. the difference between the proportion thinking crime rising nationally and the proportion thinking crime rising locally) illustrates that it is the more serious violent (and therefore rarer) crimes that have the largest perception gaps (Table 1a). For example, gun crime (net gap of 71 percentage points) and knife crime (net gap of 64 percentage points), and to a lesser extent muggings/street robberies and people getting beaten up (both 50 percentage points). We are able to explore this further with analysis using local crime data, based on police recorded records, below (see sections 1.5 and 1.6).

² The volume of these fraudulent transactions is comparable to the highest volume offence measured by the BCS, vandalism, of which the 2008/09 BCS estimated there to be 2.8 million incidents in England and Wales.

Table 1a: Net perception gap between national and local crime levels, 2008/09 BCS

	2008/09 BCS									
	Overall crime	Crime type perceived to have gone up								
	Gun crimes	Knife crimes	Muggings/ street robberies	People getting beaten up	Bank / credit card fraud	Vandalism	Cars being stolen	Homes being broken into	Cars being broken into	
Local level	46	16	29	29	34	52	37	27	33	33
National level	84	86	93	79	84	91	73	62	65	64
Net perception gap	38	71	64	50	50	39	36	35	32	31

1.5 PERCEPTIONS OF COMPARATIVE LEVEL OF CRIME IN LOCAL AREA

As outlined above, new questions were added to the 2008/09 BCS to ask respondents about whether they thought the area in which they lived was one with a higher than average, lower than average or about average crime rate (see Box 1.3). As reported in Walker *et al.*, (2009), around half of people (51%) thought they lived in a lower than average crime area, 39 per cent believed crime levels in their area were about average and only 11 per cent of people believed crime in their local area was higher than average. Given that crime tends to be geographically concentrated, the low proportions who think they live in a high-crime area is not surprising and is another pointer to suggest that public perceptions of crime, at least as it relates to their local area, might not be so out of alignment with reality.

The headline findings were compared with an independent indicator of crime. Police recorded crime is used because BCS crime data are not available below police force area level. Since the analysis required a very low level geography, information was used from the Crime Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation which is based on police data for 2004/05 (see Box 1.4).

Box 1.3 Question on perception of crime in local area compared with the country as a whole in the 2008/09 BCS

I'd now like to ask you some questions about the level of crime.

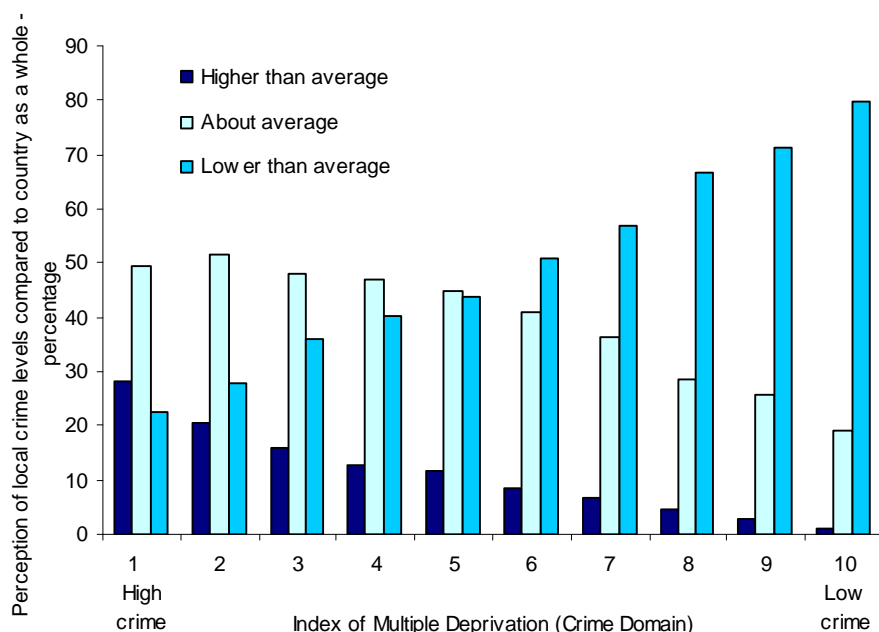
Not all areas of the country experience the same levels of crime. What happens in your local area may, or may not, reflect the national picture. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, it is just what you think.

Compared to the country as a whole do you think the level of crime in your local area is....

1. higher than average
2. lower than average
3. or about average?

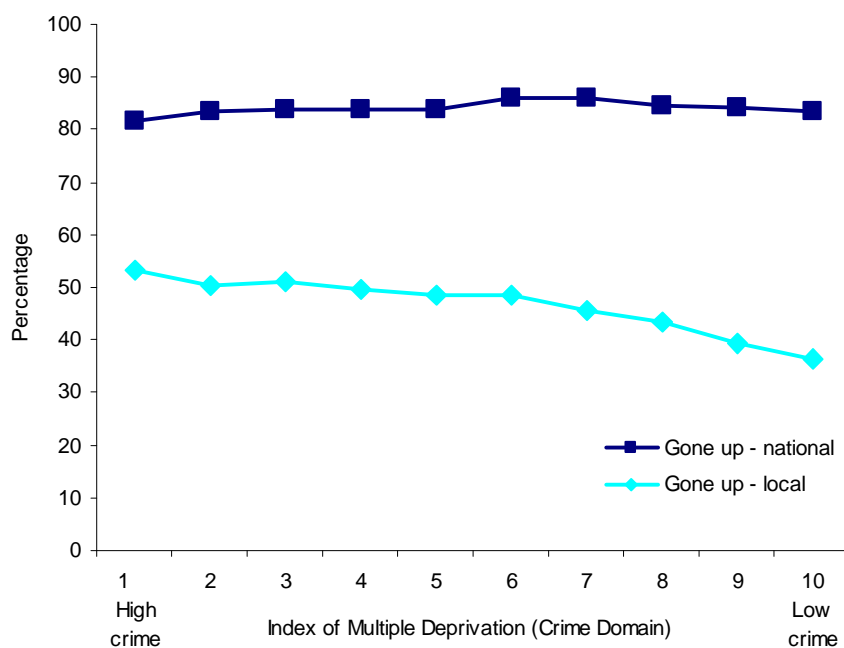
Figure 1.3 shows a clear linear relationship between actual levels of crime, as indicated by the Crime Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and perceptions of the comparative level of crime in an area. The proportion of people thinking they live in a higher than average crime area is higher in areas with higher levels of police recorded crime. The reverse is also true in relation to those who perceive themselves to live in lower than average crime areas. For example, 28 per cent of those living in areas with the highest crime rates perceived they lived in a higher than average crime area compared with just one per cent of those living in areas with the lowest crime rates. In comparison, 80 per cent of people living in the areas with the lowest crime rates perceive that they live in a lower than average crime area compared with 22 per cent of those resident in areas with the highest crime rates (Figure 1.3, Table 1.8).

Figure 1.3 Perception of crime in local area compared to the country as a whole by Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level, (England only), 2008/09 BCS



A similar pattern exists with respect to actual levels of crime and perceptions of change in local crime levels. This is in contrast to perceptions of change in national crime levels, which are similar irrespective of crime levels in the local area (in other words, there is no relationship between perceptions of changes in national crime levels and the level of crime in the area of residence). Therefore, although perceptions of an increase in national crime levels are higher than perceptions of an increase in local crime levels for people living in all areas, the gap is wider for people living in the areas with the lowest levels of crime (Figure 1.4, Table 1.9).

Figure 1.4 Perceptions of national and local crime levels by Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level, (England only), 2008/09 BCS

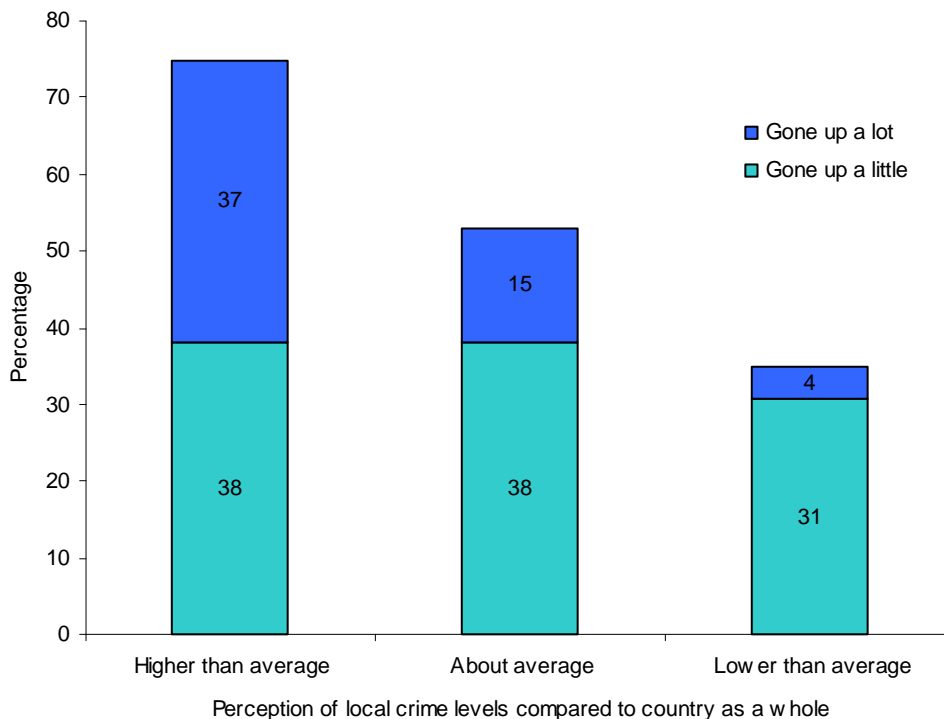


Perceptions of changes in crime by type of area

It is also possible to explore how the perceived level of crime in an area, compared to the country as a whole, affects people's perceptions of the change in crime levels in the local area.

Perceptions of change in local crime levels vary depending on whether people believe that they live in a high, low or average-crime area. As might be expected, people living in areas they believe to have a higher than average crime rate were more likely to report local crime rates to have gone up a little or a lot in the last few years. Three-quarters (75%) of people who believed they live in a high-crime area thought local crime levels had gone up compared with around a third (35%) of those thinking they live in a low-crime area. These differences were even more marked when focusing on those who thought local crime had gone up a lot. For example, 37 per cent of people from perceived high-crime areas believed that local crime levels had gone up a lot, compared with 15 per cent in perceived average-crime areas and four per cent in perceived low-crime areas (Figure 1.5).

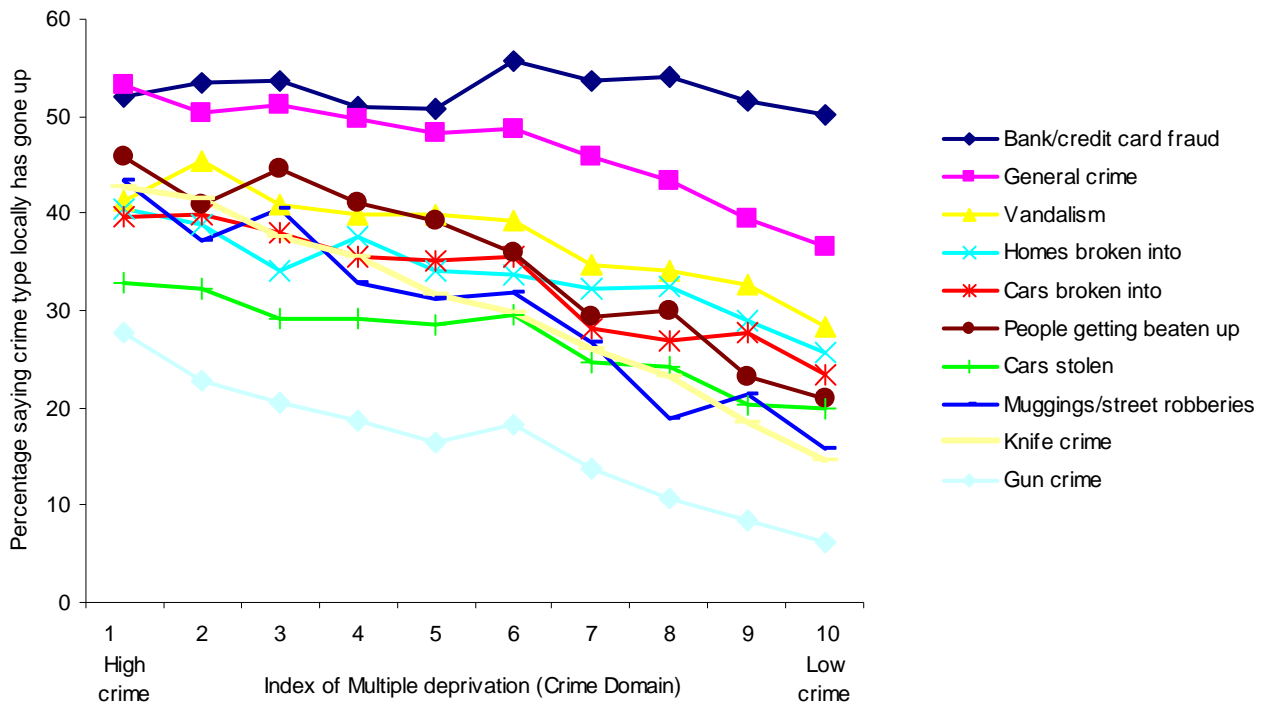
Figure 1.5 Perception of crime in local area compared to the country as a whole by perceptions of change in local crime levels, 2008/09 BCS



1.6 PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE IN SPECIFIC CRIME TYPES BY LEVEL OF CRIME IN LOCAL AREA

Perceptions of change in the levels of individual crime types locally can also be compared with the relevant Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level. The analysis showed that the proportion of people perceiving increased crime levels locally tended to be higher in the most deprived areas across all crime types, with the exception of bank and credit card fraud. However, this difference is more marked for the more serious violent (and therefore rarer) crimes (gun crime, knife crime, muggings/street robberies, and people getting beaten up). Perceptions of the change in bank and credit card fraud are more consistent across all areas (Figure 1.6, Table 1.9).

Figure 1.6 Perceptions of increase in individual crime types in the local area by Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level, (England only), 2008/09 BCS



1.7 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

The previous sections have focused on aggregate analyses. Tables 1.1 to 1.7 provide breakdowns of the new questions by socio-demographic characteristics for reference. Some of the more interesting differences are highlighted below.

Perceptions of local crime levels vary with demographic, socio-economic and other factors (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2). For example:

- People who had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months (57%) were more likely than non-victims (43%) to perceive that local crime levels have gone up. In contrast, the proportion of victims (85%) and non-victims (84%) perceiving an increase in national crime levels was similar.
- Women (50%) are more likely than men (43%) to perceive that local crime levels have gone up in the past few years.
- People from Black and Minority Ethnic groups (50%) are more likely than White people (46%) to perceive that local crime levels have increased.
- People living in Multicultural areas (53%) were most likely to perceive an increase in local crime levels.
- People who perceive a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area (75%) were more likely to believe that local crime levels had gone up than people who did not perceive a high level of anti-social behaviour locally (40%).
- People who agreed that the police and local council were dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues in the local area were less likely to perceive an increase in local crime levels than people who disagreed that they were dealing with these issues (41% and 62% respectively).

Perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour

Readers of 'popular' newspapers were more likely to perceive an increase in national crime levels than readers of national 'broadsheets' (for example, The Daily Mail, 90%, compared with The Guardian, 62%).

There is also some variation in perceptions of the levels of individual crime types locally by demographic, socio-demographic and other characteristics. For example:

- The difference in perceptions between men and women tends to be more marked for acquisitive crimes than for violent crimes. For example, 36 per cent of women perceive that homes broken into had gone up compared to 30 per cent of men. The difference is smaller for more violent crimes such as gun crime (16% of women and 15% of men perceiving an increase) and knife crime (both 29%).
- The difference in perceptions between White people and people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups is more marked for the most violent crimes. For example 29 per cent of people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups perceive that gun crime locally has gone up compared to 14 per cent of White people. There is less difference for acquisitive crimes such as cars being stolen (both 27%).
- The difference in perceptions between people living in the most deprived and the least deprived areas is also greatest for the most violent offences. For example, 38 per cent of people living in the 20 per cent most deprived areas thought that knife crime had gone up compared to 22 per cent of those living in the 20 per cent least deprived areas. There is less difference for acquisitive crimes such as cars being stolen (30% of those in the most deprived areas and 26% of those in the least deprived areas perceiving an increase). This may in part explain the differences between people from different ethnic backgrounds.

These factors are likely to be interrelated. Further analysis to explore this will be published in subsequent bulletins.

For a full breakdown of the findings on the proportion of adults perceiving that levels of specific crime types had increased in their local area by demographic, socio-economic characteristics and other factors, see Tables 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5.

Perceptions of crime in the local area compared to the country as a whole also vary by demographic, socio-economic and other factors (see Tables 1.6 and 1.7).

Box 1.4 Indices of Deprivation 2007: Crime Domain

The Department for Communities and Local Government produces an Index of Multiple Deprivation. The measure is made up of seven Domain Indices related to crime, income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. They are amalgamated into a single deprivation score for each small area in England (Wales has a separate Index of Deprivation). The Indices of Deprivation 2007 have been produced at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level – a Census area geography which has a minimum population of 1,000 and a mean population of 1,500.

The Crime Domain measures the incidence of recorded crime for four major crime types:

- Burglary (Four recorded crime offence types)
- Theft (Five recorded crime offence types)
- Criminal damage (Ten recorded crime offence types)
- Violence (14 recorded crime offence types)

All are based on geo-coded data from April 2004 to March 2005 supplied by the 39 police forces in England.

For more details on the methodology see:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/733520.pdf>

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/131209.pdf>

Table 1.1 Perceptions of changing crime levels by personal characteristics

Percentages	2008/09 BCS		
	National	Local	Unweighted base ¹
	84	46	34,447
ALL ADULTS			
Age			
16-24	80	43	2,882
25-34	79	43	4,747
35-44	83	48	6,471
45-54	84	51	5,621
55-64	86	50	5,794
65-74	91	46	4,720
75+	92	39	4,212
Men	80	43	15,465
16-24	75	38	1,317
25-34	74	38	2,046
35-44	78	44	2,971
45-54	81	49	2,687
55-64	83	46	2,648
65-74	89	43	2,153
75+	90	37	1,643
Women	88	50	18,982
16-24	86	49	1,565
25-34	83	47	2,701
35-44	87	53	3,500
45-54	87	54	2,934
55-64	89	54	3,146
65-74	93	48	2,567
75+	93	40	2,569
Ethnic group			
White	84	46	31,969
Non-White	81	50	2,473
Mixed	78	46	208
Asian or Asian British	80	51	1,152
Black or Black British	85	50	757
Chinese or other	77	45	356
Marital status			
Married	85	47	16,135
Cohabiting	82	45	3,125
Single	80	46	6,993
Separated	81	47	1,053
Divorced	87	48	3,088
Widowed	91	43	4,040
Respondent's employment status			
In employment	82	47	19,128
Unemployed	80	48	836
Economically inactive	87	45	14,388
Student	75	42	829
Looking after family/home	86	50	1,886
Long-term/temporarily sick/ill	87	56	1,558
Retired	91	43	9,716
Other inactive	79	42	399
	84	46	34,447
	80	45	11,373
	86	47	7,210
	88	48	13,194
	83	44	1,147
	77	43	1,344
	85	48	179
Respondent's occupation			
Managerial and professional occupations	80	45	11,373
Intermediate occupations	86	47	7,210
Routine and manual occupations	88	48	13,194
Never worked and long-term unemployed	83	44	1,147
Full-time students	77	43	1,344
Not classified	85	48	179
Highest qualification			
Degree or diploma	77	43	11,041
Apprenticeship or A/AS level	85	48	5,646
O level/CCSE	88	49	6,824
Other	85	48	1,416
None	89	47	9,439
Long-standing illness or disability			
Long-standing illness or disability	88	48	9,364
Limits activities	89	50	6,458
Does not limit activities	86	46	2,906
No long-standing illness or disability	83	46	25,019
Internet usage			
Used in last 12 months	82	46	22,233
Not used in last 12 months	90	46	12,168
Overall level of perceived ASB			
High	90	75	4,989
Not high	83	40	27,695
Newspaper of choice			
Popular			
The Sun	89	50	7,561
The Daily Mirror	89	49	3,873
The Daily Mail	90	50	6,912
The Daily Express	91	49	2,083
The Daily Star	87	46	792
'Broadsheet'			
The Daily Telegraph	83	43	2,482
The Guardian	62	35	1,716
The Independent	73	42	977
The Times	74	41	2,549
The Financial Times	78	49	297
Some other newspaper	81	43	494
No one newspaper in particular	81	49	348
Would not want to read any newspaper	80	42	4,032
Experience of crime in last 12 months			
Victim	85	57	7,143
Not a victim	84	43	27,304
Police and local council dealing with ASB and crime issues in the local area			
Agree	83	41	16,677
Neither agree nor disagree	82	43	9,628
Disagree	90	62	7,318

1. Unweighted base refers to perceived change in national crime. Bases for local crime will be similar.

2. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of personal characteristics.

Table 1.2 Perceptions of changing crime levels by household and area characteristics

Percentages	2008/09 BCS		
	National	Local	Unweighted base ¹
<i>Percentage saying that there is 'a little more' or 'a lot more' crime over the past few years</i>			
ALL ADULTS	84	46	34,447
Structure of household			
Single adult and child(ren)	85	51	1,770
Adults & child(ren)	83	47	7,671
Adult(s) & no child(ren)	84	46	25,006
Total household income			
Less than £10,000	86	45	5,118
£10,000 less than £20,000	87	46	6,181
£20,000 less than £30,000	87	49	4,654
£30,000 less than £40,000	84	47	3,680
£40,000 less than £50,000	82	46	2,735
£50,000 or more	77	45	4,394
Tenure			
Owner occupiers	85	47	24,120
Social renters	86	49	5,565
Private renters	77	42	4,632
Accommodation type			
Houses	85	47	29,121
<i>Detached</i>	84	44	9,034
<i>Semi-detached</i>	86	47	10,825
<i>Terraced</i>	84	49	9,262
Flats/maisonettes	79	44	4,039
Other accommodation	82	40	153
Output Area Classification			
Blue collar communities	88	49	5,587
City living	75	43	1,480
Countryside	83	35	5,187
Prospering suburbs	85	44	7,891
Constrained by circumstances	85	49	3,209
Typical traits	85	48	6,801
Multicultural	80	53	2,612
Area type			
Urban	84	49	25,538
Rural	85	37	8,909
Level of physical disorder			
High	82	55	1,846
Not high	84	46	31,461
Index of deprivation²			
20% most deprived output areas	85	51	5,795
Other output areas	85	47	19,085
20% least deprived output areas	82	42	6,494

1. Unweighted base refers to perceived change in national crime. Bases for local crime will be similar.

2. Based on Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. Wales is not included here as the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 covers England only (see 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for further details).

3. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of household and area characteristics.

Table 1.3 Proportion of adults perceiving crime levels increased in their local area by personal characteristics

Percentages											
Crime type perceived to have gone up 'a lot' or 'a little' in the local area:											
	Overall crime	Bank/credit card fraud	Gun crimes	Knife crimes	Homes being broken into	Cars being stolen	Cars being broken into	Muggings/ street robberies	Vandalism	People getting beaten up	Unweighted base
ALL ADULTS	46	52	16	29	33	27	33	29	37	34	33,969
Age											
16-24	43	43	14	33	30	23	32	30	36	43	2,825
25-34	43	57	19	32	30	26	31	32	33	35	4,646
35-44	48	58	18	31	35	28	35	31	39	38	6,386
45-54	51	57	19	33	38	30	36	32	39	37	5,562
55-64	50	56	15	29	37	30	36	28	42	33	5,718
65-74	46	47	11	22	34	28	31	27	39	27	4,668
75+	39	36	10	17	26	21	23	21	30	19	4,164
Men											
16-24	38	42	11	32	23	20	30	26	34	38	1,300
25-34	38	56	19	30	26	22	28	28	29	33	2,003
35-44	44	58	17	30	32	27	30	29	39	35	2,941
45-54	49	56	19	33	38	25	33	31	40	34	2,666
55-64	46	54	14	29	34	26	32	27	43	33	2,611
65-74	43	46	11	25	31	27	31	26	41	25	2,128
75+	37	36	9	18	25	21	24	20	33	19	1,636
Women											
16-24	49	43	16	33	36	25	35	34	38	47	1,525
25-34	47	57	20	34	33	29	34	35	36	38	2,643
35-44	53	58	18	32	39	28	39	33	39	40	3,445
45-54	54	58	18	33	39	34	38	32	38	39	2,896
55-64	54	58	16	28	40	33	39	28	40	34	3,107
65-74	48	49	10	19	36	28	31	27	37	28	2,540
75+	40	36	11	17	26	21	21	22	29	19	2,528
Ethnic group											
White	46	52	14	28	33	27	32	28	37	34	31,531
Non-White	50	51	29	39	39	27	34	41	38	35	2,433
Mixed	46	51	31	39	35	30	30	46	35	41	204
Asian or Asian British	51	53	27	39	42	29	36	41	39	35	1,143
Black or Black British	50	50	38	40	35	28	37	42	36	36	743
Chinese or other	45	43	16	36	39	20	22	37	38	30	343
Marital status											
Married	47	55	15	28	35	28	33	29	38	32	15,955
Cohabiting	45	56	16	32	32	28	33	29	36	38	3,064
Single	46	47	16	32	31	24	32	31	36	41	6,870
Separated	47	53	18	29	34	29	32	35	38	38	1,026
Divorced	48	50	17	31	33	31	37	31	39	35	3,047
Widowed	43	41	12	21	29	25	27	25	34	24	3,996
Respondent's employment status											
In employment	47	57	17	31	34	28	34	30	38	36	18,850
Unemployed	48	42	18	26	39	21	28	33	33	44	818
Economically inactive	45	43	13	26	32	25	31	28	36	30	14,208
Student ⁴	42	37	14	36	27	20	32	31	37	40	824
Looking after family/home	50	44	18	32	39	31	37	34	34	38	1,856
Long-term/temporarily sick/ill	56	46	21	36	41	29	38	38	45	42	1,543
Retired	43	44	10	21	30	24	27	24	35	24	9,600
Other inactive	42	40	13	27	28	18	28	26	32	28	385
Respondent's occupation											
Managerial and professional occupations	45	61	16	30	34	26	31	29	36	34	11,212
Intermediate occupations	47	54	16	29	37	28	35	30	37	33	7,103
Routine and manual occupations	48	46	14	28	33	28	34	29	38	34	13,006
Never worked and long-term unemployed	44	34	16	21	32	24	23	28	32	32	1,139
Full-time students ⁴	43	43	15	34	27	22	32	30	40	42	1,330
Not classified	48	61	20	27	35	37	21	51	41	39	179
Highest qualification											
Degree or diploma	43	60	18	30	32	26	32	29	35	32	10,867
Apprenticeship or A/AS level	48	54	16	31	32	26	34	30	39	37	5,563
O level/GCSE	49	51	14	31	35	29	35	31	40	41	6,727
Other	48	47	16	30	34	29	35	31	43	34	1,390
None	47	42	13	25	35	26	30	27	35	30	9,340

Table continued overleaf

Table 1.3 (continued) Proportion of adults perceiving crime levels increased in their local area by personal characteristics

Percentages											
	Overall crime	Crime type perceived to have gone up 'a lot' or 'a little' in the local area:								People getting beaten up	Unweighted base
		Bank/credit card fraud	Gun crimes	Knife crimes	Homes being broken into	Cars being stolen	Cars being broken into	Muggings/ street robberies	Vandalism		
Long-standing illness or disability											
Long-standing illness or disability	48	50	16	27	35	28	34	31	39	33	9,250
<i>Limits activities</i>	50	49	16	28	36	27	34	32	40	33	6,384
<i>Does not limit activities</i>	46	52	16	26	34	31	35	29	39	31	2,866
No long-standing illness or disability	46	53	15	30	33	26	32	29	36	35	24,655
Internet usage											
Used in last 12 months	46	56	17	31	34	27	33	30	37	36	21,885
Not used in last 12 months	46	43	13	24	33	27	31	27	36	30	12,039
Overall level of perceived ASB											
High	75	66	32	53	56	48	57	55	70	66	4,970
Not high	40	49	12	24	28	22	28	24	30	28	27,345
Newspaper of choice											
'Popular'											
<i>The Sun</i>	50	49	16	32	35	30	36	31	40	39	7,457
<i>The Daily Mirror</i>	49	49	17	28	35	29	33	32	39	37	3,818
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	50	53	14	29	36	28	36	29	40	33	6,805
<i>The Daily Express</i>	49	53	15	29	31	30	36	30	34	33	2,057
<i>The Daily Star</i>	46	43	11	33	31	33	34	28	41	37	776
'Broadsheet'											
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	43	54	12	24	33	26	28	23	32	26	2,445
<i>The Guardian</i>	35	60	20	28	26	20	25	31	32	31	1,688
<i>The Independent</i>	42	60	21	32	35	26	33	36	36	36	965
<i>The Times</i>	41	62	18	32	32	24	32	27	36	32	2,509
<i>The Financial Times</i>	49	69	20	36	38	26	24	45	42	45	294
Some other newspaper	43	46	16	33	37	23	35	23	39	34	489
No one newspaper in particular	49	62	17	22	39	18	33	26	44	26	339
Would not want to read any newspaper	42	45	16	25	29	22	27	27	32	30	4,000
Experience of crime in past 12 months											
Victim	57	59	22	40	42	34	45	39	49	46	7,044
Non-victim	43	50	13	26	31	24	29	26	33	31	26,925
Police and local council dealing with ASB and crime issues in the local area											
Agree	41	49	14	27	30	23	29	25	32	29	16,488
Neither agree nor disagree	43	52	13	26	30	25	29	26	34	31	9,477
Disagree	62	59	22	39	44	36	46	42	53	50	7,263

1. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of personal characteristics.

Table 1.4 Proportion of adults perceiving crime levels increased in their local area by household characteristics

Percentages	2008/09 BCS										
	Crime type perceived to have gone up 'a lot' or 'a little' in the local area:										
Overall crime	Bank/credit card fraud	Gun crimes	Knife crimes	Homes being broken into	Cars being stolen	Cars being broken into	Muggings/ street robberies	Vandalism	People getting beaten up	Unweighted base	
ALL ADULTS	46	52	16	29	33	27	33	29	37	34	33,969
Structure of household											
Single adult & child(ren)	51	50	20	36	38	28	37	36	40	45	1,736
Adults & child(ren)	47	54	17	32	35	27	35	31	39	38	7,585
Adult(s) and no children	46	52	15	28	33	26	32	28	36	32	24,648
Total household income											
Less than £10,000	45	41	17	28	33	27	32	30	39	35	5,057
£10,000 less than £20,000	46	46	14	27	34	28	33	28	39	33	6,111
£20,000 less than £30,000	49	56	18	32	37	29	34	32	37	38	4,582
£30,000 less than £40,000	47	57	15	30	35	29	36	31	37	37	3,627
£40,000 less than £50,000	46	61	16	30	31	27	34	28	40	36	2,718
£50,000 or more	45	63	18	33	34	27	32	30	34	33	4,320
Tenure											
Owner occupiers	47	54	15	28	34	27	32	28	37	33	23,874
Social renters	49	46	20	30	35	27	38	33	39	39	5,492
Private renters	42	51	15	32	29	23	29	29	33	36	4,476
Accommodation type											
Houses	47	52	15	28	34	27	32	29	37	34	28,774
Detached	44	52	10	22	32	26	29	23	34	28	8,929
Semi-detached	47	53	15	29	35	26	33	28	38	36	10,697
Terraced	49	51	18	33	34	28	35	34	40	38	9,148
Flats/maisonettes	44	55	21	36	31	27	34	32	35	35	3,932
Other accommodation	40	46	5	21	21	12	22	22	18	9	150
Length of residence in area											
Less than 12 months	31	48	11	31	24	17	26	22	27	30	1,600
12 months but less than 2 years	34	49	15	28	29	22	24	25	26	32	1,686
2 years but less than 3 years	35	49	18	28	27	23	27	30	29	29	1,856
3 years but less than 5 years	40	50	16	26	31	24	31	25	33	33	2,588
5 years but less than 10 years	45	55	17	29	33	25	32	29	37	33	4,838
10 years but less than 20 years	50	52	15	30	33	29	34	31	39	39	6,424
20 or more years	52	53	16	30	37	29	35	31	41	35	14,976

1. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of household characteristics.

Table 1.5 Proportion of adults perceiving crime levels increased in their local area by area characteristics

Percentages	2008/09 BCS										
	Crime type perceived to have gone up 'a lot' or 'a little' in the local area:										
Overall crime	Bank/credit card fraud	Gun crimes	Knife crimes	Homes being broken into	Cars being stolen	Cars being broken into	Muggings/street robberies	Vandalism	People getting beaten up	Unweighted base	
	46	52	16	29	33	27	33	37	34	33,969	
Output Area Classification											
Blue collar communities	49	47	12	28	34	28	34	41	38	5,511	
City living	43	65	24	40	35	27	39	35	36	1,443	
Countryside	35	45	5	13	26	19	24	26	18	5,139	
Prospering suburbs	44	55	13	24	34	26	29	33	31	7,784	
Constrained by circumstances	49	47	15	28	33	26	36	39	41	3,166	
Typical traits	48	53	12	29	34	27	32	39	36	6,698	
Multicultural	53	53	38	52	42	30	40	42	42	2,578	
Area type											
Urban	49	54	18	34	35	28	35	40	39	25,173	
Rural	37	44	5	12	27	20	25	28	18	8,796	
Level of physical disorder in the area¹											
High	55	50	22	45	41	31	43	47	50	1,825	
Not high	46	52	15	28	33	27	32	36	33	31,025	
Index of deprivation²											
20% most deprived output areas	51	47	24	38	35	30	36	43	44	5,727	
Other output areas	47	53	15	30	33	26	33	38	35	18,813	
20% least deprived output areas	42	57	11	22	34	26	30	32	26	6,383	

1. Based upon the interviewer's assessment of the local area (see 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for further details).

2. Based on Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. Wales is not included here as the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 covers England only (see 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for further details).

3. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of area characteristics.

Table 1.6 Perception of crime in the local area, compared with the country as a whole, by personal characteristics

Percentages ¹	Perception of crime in the local area compared with the country as a whole					2008/09 BCS	
	Higher than average	About average	Lower than average	Unweighted base	Unweighted base	Higher than average	Lower than average
ALL ADULTS	11	39	51	34,184			
Age					Respondent's occupation		
16-24	14	41	45	2,882	Managerial and professional occupations	10	32
25-34	15	38	48	4,712	Intermediate occupations	9	35
35-44	12	37	51	6,435	Routine and manual occupations	12	48
45-54	10	39	52	5,589	Never worked and long-term unemployed	14	40
55-64	8	38	53	5,743	Full-time students	16	38
65-74	7	40	52	4,672	Not classified	10	56
75+	7	40	53	4,151			
Men	11	36	53	15,362	Highest qualification		
16-24	15	38	47	1,318	Degree or diploma	10	32
25-34	16	34	49	2,036	Apprenticeship or A/AS level	11	38
35-44	12	34	55	2,958	O level/GCSE	11	41
45-54	9	36	55	2,679	Other	15	41
55-64	8	36	56	2,621	None	11	46
65-74	7	39	54	2,135	Long-standing illness or disability		
75+	7	35	58	1,615	Long-standing illness or disability	11	43
					Limits activities	12	44
					Does not limit activities	9	40
					No long-standing illness or disability	11	37
Women	11	41	48	18,822	Internet usage		
16-24	13	43	44	1,564	Used in last 12 months	11	36
25-34	14	41	46	2,676	Not used in last 12 months	11	45
35-44	12	40	48	3,477	Overall level of perceived ASB		
45-54	10	41	49	2,910	High	29	49
55-64	9	40	51	3,122	Not high	7	36
65-74	7	42	51	2,537	Newspaper of choice		
75+	7	43	50	2,536	Popular ²		
					The Sun	13	44
Ethnic group					The Daily Mirror	11	47
White	10	39	51	31,746	The Daily Mail	7	37
Non-White	19	39	42	2,433	The Daily Express	6	40
Mixed	21	32	47	206	The Daily Star	13	45
Asian or Asian British	19	39	43	1,142	Broadsheet ³		
Black or Black British	18	43	39	736	The Daily Telegraph	5	29
Chinese or other	20	35	45	349	The Guardian	17	31
					The Independent	13	34
Marital status					The Times	9	31
Married	8	37	55	16,057	The Financial Times	24	26
Cohabiting	13	39	47	3,110	Some other newspaper	16	40
Single	15	40	44	6,927	No one newspaper in particular	15	33
Separated	17	42	41	1,039	Would not want to read any newspaper	12	39
Divorced	12	43	45	3,060	Experience of crime in last 12 months		
Widowed	8	44	48	3,979	Victim	17	42
					Not a victim	9	38
Respondent's employment status					Police and local council dealing with ASB and crime issues in the local area		
In employment	11	37	52	19,012	Agree	9	38
Unemployed	18	43	39	828	Neither agree nor disagree	9	37
Economically inactive	11	41	48	14,249	Disagree	17	43
Student	18	40	43	854			
Looking after family/home	14	42	44	1,875			
Long-term/temporarily sick/ill	17	50	33	1,548			
Retired	7	39	54	9,600			
Other inactive	14	40	46	382			

1. Read as the percentage of all adults perceiving that crime is higher than average, about average and lower than average for each characteristic of interest. For example, 11 per cent of men perceived crime in their local area as higher than average, 36 per cent as about average and 53 per cent as lower than average.

2. See Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2 for definitions of personal characteristics.

Table 1.7 Perception of crime in the local area, compared with the country as a whole, by household and area characteristics

Percentages ¹	2008/09 BCS			
	Perception of crime in the local area compared with the country as a whole			
	Higher than average	About average	Lower than average	Unweighted base
ALL ADULTS	11	39	51	34,184
Structure of household				
Single adult and child(ren)	20	47	34	1,745
Adults & child(ren)	11	37	52	7,649
Adult(s) & no child(ren)	11	39	50	24,790
Total household income				
Less than £10,000	14	47	39	5,055
£10,000 less than £20,000	11	43	46	6,125
£20,000 less than £30,000	12	42	46	4,631
£30,000 less than £40,000	9	37	53	3,666
£40,000 less than £50,000	9	35	56	2,730
£50,000 or more	9	29	62	4,373
Tenure				
Owner occupiers	8	37	55	23,939
Social renters	18	49	32	5,509
Private renters	14	37	48	4,607
Accommodation type				
Houses	10	38	53	28,925
<i>Detached</i>	4	27	69	8,983
<i>Semi-detached</i>	10	40	50	10,736
<i>Terraced</i>	14	44	41	9,206
Flats/maisonettes	18	44	38	3,982
Other accommodation	7	38	56	153
Output Area Classification				
Blue collar communities	13	50	37	5,546
City living	17	37	45	1,463
Countryside	2	19	79	5,175
Prospering suburbs	5	32	63	7,834
Constrained by circumstances	15	51	34	3,183
Typical traits	7	41	51	6,744
Multicultural	29	45	26	2,565
Area type				
Urban	13	44	43	25,296
Rural	3	20	77	8,888
Level of physical disorder				
High	25	51	24	1,820
Not high	10	38	53	31,235
Index of deprivation²				
20% most deprived output areas	22	52	26	5,747
Other output areas	10	39	51	18,916
20% least deprived output areas	4	26	70	6,463

1. Read as the percentage of all adults perceiving that crime is higher than average, about average and lower than average for each characteristic of interest. For example, eight per cent of owner occupiers perceived crime in their local area as higher than average, 37 per cent as about average and 55 per cent as lower than average.

2. Based on Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. Wales is not included here as the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 covers England only (see 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for further details).

3. See 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09 Volume 2' for definitions of household and area characteristics.

Table 1.8 Perception of crime in the local area, compared with the country as a whole, by Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level, (England only)

Percentages

2008/09 BCS

	Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) ¹									
	High crime 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Low crime 10
	<i>Percentage perceiving that they live in a 'higher than average', 'about average' or 'lower than average' crime area</i>									
Higher than average	28	20	16	13	12	8	7	5	3	1
About average	49	52	48	47	45	41	37	29	26	19
Lower than average	22	28	36	40	44	51	57	67	71	80
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,781</i>	<i>2,623</i>	<i>2,607</i>	<i>2,912</i>	<i>3,110</i>	<i>3,219</i>	<i>3,184</i>	<i>3,358</i>	<i>3,463</i>	<i>3,869</i>

1. The ten per cent of areas with the highest deprivation (Crime Domain) scores are identified as the highest crime areas and the ten per cent of areas with the lowest deprivation (Crime Domain) scores are identified as the lowest crime areas. See box 1.4 for more information.

Table 1.9 Proportion of adults perceiving increased crime levels by Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain) level, (England only)

<i>Percentages</i>	2008/09 BCS									
	Index of Multiple Deprivation (Crime Domain)¹									
	High crime 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Low crime 10
<i>Percentage saying that there is 'a little more' or 'a lot more' crime over the past few years</i>										
Overall Crime										
<i>National</i>	82	83	84	84	84	86	86	84	84	83
<i>Local</i>	53	50	51	50	48	49	46	43	39	37
Crime in the local area										
Bank/credit card fraud	52	53	54	51	51	56	54	54	51	50
Gun crimes	28	23	21	19	16	18	14	11	8	6
Knife crimes	43	41	38	36	32	30	26	23	18	15
Homes being broken into	40	39	34	38	34	34	32	33	29	26
Cars being stolen	33	32	29	29	28	30	25	24	20	20
Cars being broken into	40	40	38	36	35	36	28	27	28	23
Muggings/ street robberies	43	37	40	33	31	32	27	19	21	16
Vandalism	41	45	41	40	40	39	35	34	33	28
People getting beaten up	46	41	45	41	39	36	29	30	23	21
Unweighted base	2,768	2,602	2,613	2,910	3,071	3,198	3,164	3,331	3,430	3,836

1. The ten per cent of areas with the highest deprivation (Crime Domain) scores are identified as the highest crime areas and the ten per cent of areas with the lowest deprivation (Crime Domain) scores are identified as the lowest crime areas. See box 1.4 for more information.

2. Perceptions of anti-social behaviour

Jenny Parfremment-Hopkins and Philip Hall

2.1 SUMMARY

This chapter presents further analysis of the 2008/09 British Crime Survey (BCS), focusing on perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

The BCS includes questions about how much of a problem a range of different types (or strands) of ASB are in the local area. Seven of these questions are used to create an overall index to provide a measure of those with a high level of perceived ASB. 'Crime in England and Wales, 2008/09' shows that the proportion of people with a high level of perceived ASB has remained stable (at 17%) compared with the 2007/08 BCS.

The current analysis shows that, when considering their local area, two-thirds of people either did not perceive a problem with any of the seven types of ASB or perceived a problem with only one of them (43% and 18% respectively). When three types of ASB were perceived together, the most common combinations were:

- teenagers hanging around, litter and vandalism or graffiti (mentioned by 2% of people who perceived at least one strand of ASB as a problem); and
- teenagers hanging around, people using or dealing drugs and people being drunk or rowdy (2%).

These strands also featured in the most commonly reported combinations of four or five types of ASB. Very few people perceived a problem with more than five strands of ASB (4%).

Thirty per cent of people perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem and 81 per cent of these people also perceived the teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social (representing 22% of people overall). Within this group, problem behaviours perceived included drinking alcohol, taking drugs and carrying knives (mentioned by 77%, 37% and 12% of those perceiving teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social).

Two-thirds (65%) of people who perceived a problem with people using or dealing drugs in the local area perceived a problem with both behaviours, 12 per cent with drug use only and eight per cent with drug dealing only. Sixty-one per cent of people who perceived a problem with drug use had formed their impressions through personal experience compared with 54 per cent of those who perceived a problem with drug dealing. This is considerably lower than the equivalent figure for people who perceived a problem with people being drunk or rowdy (86%).

Eighty per cent of people who perceived a problem with people being drunk or rowdy in the local area perceived a problem with both behaviours, nine per cent with people being drunk only and ten per cent with people being rowdy only. The majority (70%) of people who perceived a problem with people being drunk thought that the people who were drunk were behaving in an anti-social manner. The most common problem behaviour associated with people being drunk or rowdy was noise (mentioned by 76% of people who perceived a problem).

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The term anti-social behaviour (ASB) as used in the British Crime Survey (BCS) covers a range of behaviours and outcomes from criminal behaviour (such as damage to property) to general nuisance, all of which may impinge on the quality of people's lives. ASB cannot be measured in the same way as experience of crime; it is often not possible to specify who is the 'victim' or what is an 'incident'. As a result, the BCS has included questions on perceptions of ASB for a number of years, including questions about how much of a problem a range of different types of ASB are in the local area. Seven of these questions are used to create an overall index to provide a measure of those with a high level of perceived ASB¹ (see box 2.1).

Box 2.1 Questions on perceptions of anti-social behaviour

The BCS asks respondents how much of a problem a range of different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) are in their local area. The questions provide a snapshot of the respondent's perceptions of problems in their area at the time of interview. The BCS asks:

For the following things I read out, can you tell me how much of a problem they are in your area. By your area I mean within 15 minutes walk from here.

.....*Teenagers hanging around on the streets?*

.....*Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles?*

.....*People using or dealing drugs?*

.....*People being drunk or rowdy in public places?*

.....*Rubbish or litter lying around?*

.....*Noisy neighbours or loud parties?*

.....*Abandoned or burnt-out cars?*

Respondents are asked to select their answers from the following response list:

- *Very big problem*
- *Fairly big problem*
- *Not a very big problem*
- *Not a problem at all.*

The BCS uses the responses to these seven individual ASB questions to construct a scale to measure 'high' levels of overall perceived ASB. The scale scores the responses to the questions as follows: 'very big problem' = 3, 'fairly big problem' = 2, 'not a very big problem' = 1 and 'not a problem at all' = 0. The maximum score for the seven questions is 21. Those respondents with a score of 11 or more on this scale were classified as having high levels of perceived ASB.

The 2008/09 BCS shows that the proportion of people with a high level of perceived ASB has remained stable (at 17%) compared with the 2007/08 BCS and down from a high of 21 per

¹ This overall measure forms one of the indicators for a Government Public Service Agreement (PSA) on 'Making Communities Safer' (PSA 23). Additionally, two of the individual strands (perceiving problems with people being drunk and rowdy and perceiving problems with people using or dealing drugs) are performance indicators for PSA 25 'Reduce the harm caused by alcohol or drugs'. (Further information about Public Service Agreements can be found in 'Crime in England and Wales 2008/09' (Walker *et al.* 2009)).

cent in 2002/03. Long-term trend analysis has been described in 'Crime in England and Wales, 2008/09' (Walker *et al.*, 2009).

This chapter provides more detailed analysis on perceptions of different types of ASB, including information from new questions introduced in the 2008/09 BCS. It also explores the relationships between the different ASB strands and presents the most commonly perceived combinations of types of ASB. Further work on the seasonality of BCS perception measures will be published in 2010.

The chapter builds on previous analysis on perceptions of anti-social behaviour (including Flatley *et al.*, 2008; Upson, 2006; and Wood, 2004) and focuses specifically on the following three measures:

- problems with teenagers hanging around in the local area;
- problems with people using or dealing drugs in the local area; and,
- problems with people being drunk or rowdy in the local area.

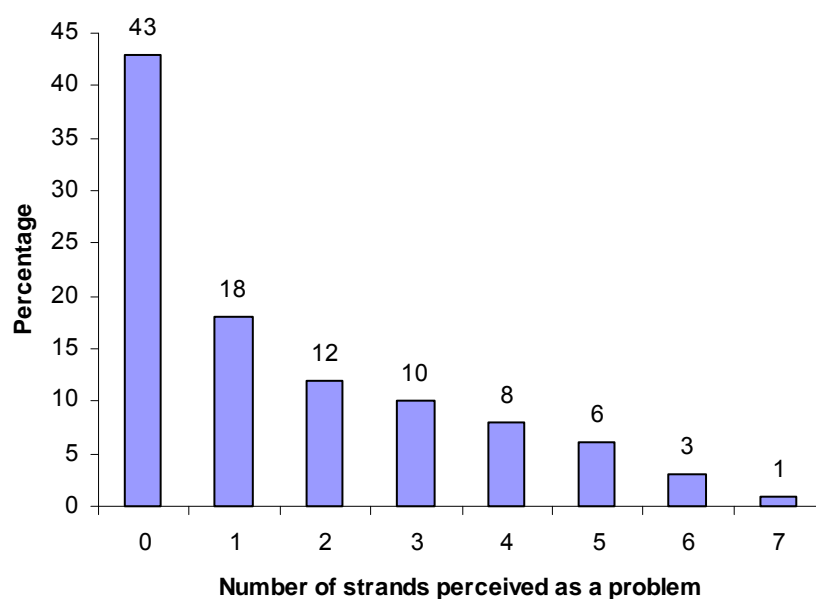
The new questions in the 2008/09 BCS relating to perceptions of teenagers hanging around were introduced to address the argument that teenagers hanging around in itself is not anti-social, rather that it is the behaviour of the teenagers that may be considered so. Increased focus on problem behaviours relating to drug use and drug dealing and drunk and rowdy behaviour in the local area required more detailed questions to establish which aspects of each of these behaviours were perceived to be the most problematic.

2.3 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL ASB STRANDS

This section explores the relationships between the individual strands of the overall measure of perceived ASB and identifies the combinations of strands most commonly perceived to be a problem.

Overall, two-thirds of people did not perceive a problem with any form of ASB or perceived a problem with only one of the individual strands (43% and 18% respectively; Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Number of ASB strands perceived as a problem, 2008/09 BCS



Among people who perceived a combination of two types of ASB there was a wide range of combinations. When three types of ASB were perceived together, the most common combinations were:

- teenagers hanging around, litter and vandalism or graffiti (mentioned by 2% of people who perceived at least one strand of ASB as a problem); and
- teenagers hanging around, people using or dealing drugs and people being drunk or rowdy (2%).

These strands also featured in the most commonly reported combinations of four ASB types, which were:

- teenagers hanging around, vandalism or graffiti, people using or dealing drugs and people being drunk or rowdy (mentioned by 3%); and
- teenagers hanging around, litter, vandalism and people being drunk or rowdy (2%).

Similarly, when five strands were reported, the most common combination consisted of: teenagers hanging around, litter, vandalism or graffiti, people using or dealing drugs and people being drunk or rowdy (5% of people perceived this combination of ASB strands to be a problem; Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2).

Overall, very few people perceived more than five strands to be a problem (4%). In particular, problems with noisy neighbours or with abandoned cars were less commonly reported alongside other forms of ASB.

Figure 2.2 Most commonly perceived combinations of strands of ASB, for people perceiving three or more strands of ASB as a problem, 2008/09 BCS

Noisy neighbours	Teenagers hanging around	Rubbish or litter	Vandalism or graffiti	People using or dealing drugs	People being drunk or rowdy	Abandoned cars	%*
	•	•	•	•	•		5
•	•	•	•	•	•		3
	•		•	•	•		3
	•	•	•				2
	•			•	•		2
	•	•	•		•		2
	•	•	•	•			2
	•	•	•	•	•	•	2
	•	•		•	•		2
		•	•	•	•		2

*Percentage represents the proportion of people perceiving this combination of strands (based on people who perceived at least one strand of ASB as a problem).

Problems with teenagers hanging around were commonly mentioned alongside other strands of ASB, although it is difficult to assess the underlying relationships between this strand and others from this type of analysis. However, the next section explores this issue using new questions from the 2008/09 BCS.

2.4 NATURE OF ASB

People who perceived problems with teenagers hanging around, drug use or dealing or drunk or rowdy behaviour in the local area were asked a series of more detailed follow-up questions about the specific behaviours they experienced. This included questions about where the

incidents took place, how regularly the behaviours were experienced and details about the exact nature of the problem.

Young people and ASB

Of the seven strands that make up the overall ASB measure, teenagers hanging around has remained one of the most widely perceived problems for a number of years. The 2008/09 figures showed that 30 per cent of people perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem in their local area. This was stable compared with 2007/08.

However, this measure has come under some criticism² since teenagers hanging around (in itself) is not an anti-social behaviour. In order to address this argument, in 2008/09 people who thought teenagers hanging around were a problem were asked if they believed the young people were behaving in an anti-social manner; the majority, 81 per cent of those perceiving a problem, believed that they were (suggesting that most people were interpreting the initial question in the way it was intended). Thus, while 30 per cent of people overall perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem, 22 per cent perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem *and* identified specific acts of ASB associated with teenagers³.

A range of different behaviours associated with this problem were reported. Some of the most commonly reported problems included: swearing or using bad language; being loud, noisy or rowdy; just being a general nuisance; or littering (mentioned by 80%, 78%, 72% and 63% respectively of those perceiving the teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social; Table 2.2). However, some of the behaviours reported may be considered more serious, including:

- drinking alcohol (77% of those perceiving teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social);
- being abusive or harassing people (50%);
- fighting with each other (38%);
- taking drugs (37%);
- intimidating or threatening people (36%);
- physically assaulting people (11%); and
- carrying knives (12%).

In comparison, people who perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem, but their behaviour *not* to be anti-social, tended to report fewer and less serious problems (Table 2.3). However, these findings should be treated with some caution as questions relating to the types of problems perceived were not directly comparable between people who perceived teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social and those who did not⁴. Problems reported by people who did not perceive teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social included:

- threatening or intimidating behaviour (30% of those not perceiving teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social);
- boredom/having nothing to do (30%);
- hanging around (23%);
- being noisy, loud or rowdy (13%); and
- littering (3%).

² For example: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/markeaston/2008/11/>

³ Estimate based on the quarter sample asked this question.

⁴ People who perceived teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social were asked to select any behaviours they perceived from a list presented to them (they were also able to specify any additional behaviours they perceived that were not on the list). People who did not perceive teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social were asked to specify what problems they perceived with teenagers hanging around, without reference to a list of options.

It is interesting to note that perceptions of whether behaviour is anti-social differ from person to person. For example, teenagers being loud, noisy or rowdy was identified as a problem with teenagers hanging around both by those perceiving their behaviour to be anti-social and those who did not.

The characteristics of people who perceived teenagers hanging around to be a problem and their behaviour to be anti-social were similar to those who had a high level of perceived ASB. Details of the characteristics associated with having a high level of perceived ASB are summarised in 'Crime in England and Wales, 2008/09' and described in more detail in 'Supplementary Volume 1 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08'.

People using or dealing drugs

The 2008/09 BCS showed that 28 per cent of people perceived people using or dealing drugs to be a problem in their local area. This represents an increase (from 26%) compared with the 2007/08 figures, but an overall decrease compared with the 2001/02 figures (31% perceived a problem in 2001/02).

The initial question measuring perceptions of how much of a problem drug use and dealing is in the local area does not differentiate between problems with drug use and with drug dealing as separate behaviours. In 2008/09 those who perceived people using or dealing drugs to be a problem in their local area were asked to specify whether there was a problem with people using drugs, with people dealing drugs, or whether both behaviours were a problem. Two-thirds (65%) said both drug use and drug dealing were a problem, whilst 12 per cent and eight per cent respectively said that drug use or drug dealing alone was a problem. A further 16 per cent were not sure whether drug use or dealing separately, or both, were a problem.

People perceiving problems with drug use and/or drug dealing in their local area were asked how they formed their impression of the problem(s). Previous analysis⁵ has shown that of all of the individual strands of ASB, impressions of problem drug use and drug dealing were least commonly formed through the respondent's personal experience and this is supported by findings on drunk and rowdy behaviour reported in the next section. Impressions of both drug use and drug dealing were formed on a similar basis, most commonly through personal experience (61% for drug use and 54% for drug dealing; Table 2.4). However, people who perceived drug use to be a problem were slightly more likely to say that the problem occurred close to where they lived than people who perceived drug dealing to be a problem (54% compared with 49%; Table 2.5).

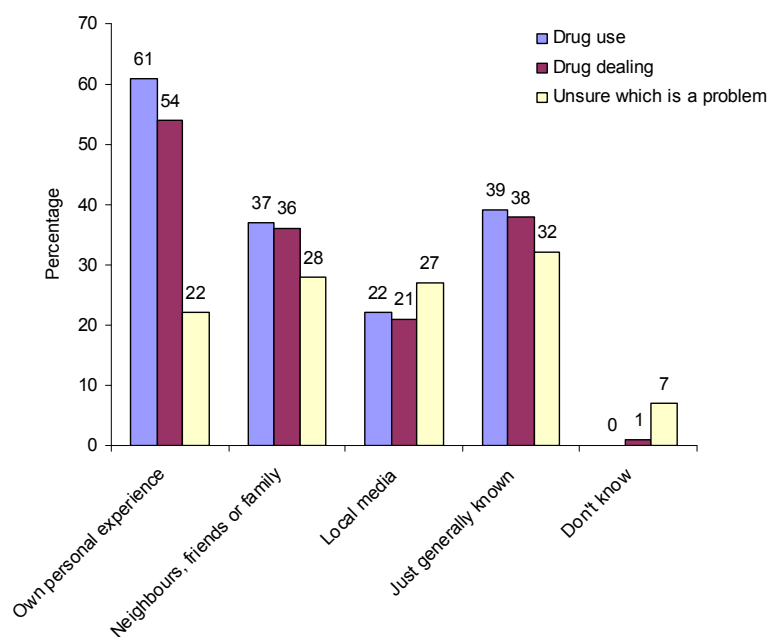
Other common ways of forming an impression of drug use and/or dealing as a problem included:

- it being just generally known in the area (39% for drug use and 38% for dealing);
- experiences of others (e.g. neighbours, friends; 37% for drug use and 36% for dealing); and
- through the local media (22% for drug use and 21% for dealing).

As might be expected, those who were not sure whether there was a problem with drug use, drug dealing or with both in their local area were less likely to have personally experienced either behaviour (only 22% of this group formed their impressions through personal experience), were less likely to say the problem occurred close to where they lived (13%) and were more likely to say that they didn't know.

⁵ See 'Perceptions and experience of anti-social behaviour: findings from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey' (Wood, 2004)

Figure 2.3 Influences on impressions of drug use and drug dealing, 2008/09 BCS



The frequency with which people experienced problems with drug use was higher than for drug dealing; 61 per cent of those perceiving drug use to be a problem experienced problems with drug use at least once a month compared with 50 per cent who experienced problems with drug dealing at least once a month. However, the proportions experiencing a very high frequency of problems (every day or almost every day) were broadly comparable for drug use and for drug dealing (14% and 12% respectively). In contrast, people who were not sure whether there was a problem with drug use, drug dealing, or with both, were more likely to say they experienced problems less than once a month (28%) or that they didn't know (40%; Table 2.6).

Drunk or rowdy behaviour

According to the 2008/09 BCS, 26 per cent of people thought that people being drunk or rowdy in public places was a very/fairly big problem in their area. This was stable compared with 2007/08.

The initial question measuring perceptions of how much of a problem people being drunk and rowdy is in the local area does not differentiate between problems with people being drunk and with people being rowdy as separate behaviours. In 2008/09 those who perceived people being drunk or rowdy to be a problem in their local area were asked to specify whether there was a problem with people being drunk, with people being rowdy, or whether both behaviours were a problem. The majority of people (80%) thought that there was a problem with both types of behaviour, with the remainder split between those thinking that people being drunk was a problem (9%) and those thinking that people being rowdy was a problem (10%).

Of those who felt that there was only a problem with people being drunk, the majority (70%) thought that the people who were drunk were behaving in an anti-social manner.

Those who perceived a problem with people being drunk or rowdy were most likely to form the impression that there was a problem from their own experience (86%). Indeed, 62 per cent of respondents said that people were drunk and rowdy in public close to where they lived, such as directly outside their house or flat or in nearby streets, and two-thirds of people (66%) said that they saw or heard people being drunk or rowdy in the local area once a week or more often (Table 2.9). A smaller proportion (9%) experienced problems with people being drunk and rowdy close to where they lived every day or almost every day.

Thirty per cent of people said their impressions of drunk and rowdy behaviour were influenced by what they had been told by neighbours, friends and family and 20 per cent said that they were influenced by local newspapers, radio or television. Twenty-five per cent of people reported that the presence of drunk and rowdy behaviour was something that was just generally known (Table 2.8).

Those who perceived drunk and rowdy behaviour in public places to be a problem in their local area also reported a range of different behaviours (Table 2.7).

- In line with previous findings, the most common behaviour, mentioned by three-quarters of those perceiving a problem (76%), was that noise from people in the streets when they had been drinking caused a problem.
- The next most common problem was cans and bottles being left on the streets or thrown into gardens (69%). In addition, 55 per cent of people reported fast food-wrapping being left on the streets or thrown into gardens as a problem, 37 per cent reported people urinating in public places to be a problem and 34 per cent reported vomit on the pavements to be a problem. In total, 80 per cent of people who perceived a problem with drunk or rowdy behaviour reported one or more of these environmental factors to be a problem.
- Young people drinking in public places was mentioned by 57 per cent of those perceiving a problem, while homeless people and alcoholics drinking in public places was mentioned by 16 per cent.
- Fifty-six per cent of those perceiving a problem said that people being abusive when they had been drinking was a problem, and 49 per cent said that people being intimidating when they had been drinking was a problem. In total, 66 per cent of those perceiving a problem reported people being abusive or intimidating when they had been drinking to be a problem.
- Alcohol-related violence was reported by 43 per cent of people who perceived a problem, with 37 per cent reporting fighting within or between groups to be a problem and 23 per cent reporting violence/people being assaulted by drunks.

Table 2.1 Top two most commonly reported combinations of ASB strands, by number of strands in combination

Percentages ¹

2008/09 BCS

Number of strands	Individual strands included in combination	%
1	Litter only	10
1	Teenagers only	6
2	Drugs and drunk/rowdy	3
2	Litter and vandalism	3
3	Teenagers, litter and vandalism	2
3	Teenagers, drugs and drunk/rowdy	2
4	Teenagers, vandalism, drugs and drunk/rowdy	3
4	Teenagers, litter, vandalism and drunk/rowdy	2
5	Teenagers, litter, vandalism, drugs and drunk/rowdy	5
5	Noisy neighbours, teenagers, vandalism, drugs and drunk/rowdy	1
6	Noisy neighbours, teenagers, litter, vandalism, drugs and drunk/rowdy	3
6	Teenagers, litter, vandalism, drugs, drunk/rowdy and abandoned cars	2
7	All	1
<i>Unweighted base</i>		23,918

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with any of the seven individual strands of ASB.

2. The combinations presented here are a sub-section of all possible combinations. Thus percentages will not equal 100.

Table 2.2 Nature of behaviours experienced by those who perceive teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social

Percentages¹	2008/09 BCS
	Percentage who experienced this behaviour
Type of behaviour experienced:	
Swearing/using bad language	80
Being loud, rowdy or noisy	78
Drinking alcohol	77
Just being a general nuisance	72
Littering (e.g. spitting gum on the street)	63
Blocking the pavement	52
Being abusive/harassing or insulting people	50
Fighting with each other	38
Taking drugs	37
Intimidating or threatening people	36
Blocking the entrance to shops	34
Damaging property or cars	33
Writing graffiti	27
Carrying knives	12
Physically assaulting people	11
Mugging or robbing people	10
Other behaviours	2
Not doing anything in particular	0

Unweighted base 2,312

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with teenagers hanging around but thought their behaviour was anti-social.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one response possible.

Table 2.3 Nature of problems experienced by those who do not perceive teenagers' behaviour to be anti-social

Percentages¹	2008/09 BCS
	Percentage who experienced this behaviour
Type of problem experienced:	
Boredom/nothing to do	30
Intimidating/threatening	30
Hanging around/causing an obstruction	23
Being loud/noisy/rowdy	13
Littering	3
Smoking/drinking/being drunk	7
Something else	13
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>541</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with teenagers hanging around but thought their behaviour was not anti-social.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one response possible.

Table 2.4 How impressions of problem with drugs are formed, by drug use, drug dealing and those unsure which is a problem
Percentages¹ **2008/09 BCS**

Source of information	Problem:		
	Drug use	Drug dealing	Unsure which is a problem
Personal experience	61	54	22
Neighbours/friends/family	37	36	28
Local media	22	21	27
Just generally known	39	38	32
Other way	1	1	2
Don't know	0	1	7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,081</i>	<i>1,959</i>	<i>430</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people using or dealing drugs.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one response pos

Table 2.5 Proximity of drug use and dealing in the local area
 Percentages¹ 2008/09 BCS

Proximity	Problem:		
	Drug use	Drug dealing	Unsure which is a problem
Close to where respondent lives	54	49	13
Not close to where respondent lives	42	44	66
Don't know	4	8	20
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,081	1,959	430

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people using or dealing drugs.

Table 2.6 Frequency of drug use and dealing in the local area
Percentages¹

2008/09 BCS

	Problem:		
	Drug use	Drug dealing	Unsure which is a problem
Frequency			
Every day/almost every day	14	12	2
About 2-3 times a week	15	11	6
About once a week	12	10	8
About 2-3 times a month	9	9	5
About once a month	11	8	7
About 2-3 times a year	9	10	7
Less often	18	26	26
Don't know	12	16	40
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,080</i>	<i>1,955</i>	<i>430</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people using or dealing drugs.

Table 2.7 Nature of behaviours experienced by those who perceive people being drunk or rowdy to be a problem in their local area

Percentages¹	2008/09 BCS
	Percentage who experienced this behaviour
Type of behaviour experienced:	
Noise from people in the streets when they have been drinking	76
Cans and bottles left on the streets or thrown into gardens	69
Young people drinking in local streets/parks and other public places	57
People being abusive when they have been drinking	56
Fast-food wrapping left on the streets or thrown into gardens	55
People being intimidating when they have been drinking	49
Fighting within or between groups	37
People urinating in public places	37
Being kept awake by drunken and rowdy behaviour	36
Vomit on the pavements	34
Violence/people being assaulted by drunks	23
Drink-related theft or vandalism	22
Homeless people and alcoholics drinking in local streets/parks and public places	16
Drunk people begging	9
Other behaviour	1
Nothing in particular	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,535</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people being drunk or rowdy in public places.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one response possible.

Table 2.8 How impressions of problems with people being drunk or rowdy are formed

Percentages¹	2008/09 BCS
	Percentage who formed their impression this way
Personal experience	86
Neighbours, friends or family	30
Everyone knows about it/just generally known about the area	25
Local newspapers, radio or TV	20
Other	0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,542</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people being drunk or rowdy in public places.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one response possible.

Table 2.9 Frequency of people being drunk or rowdy in the local area

Percentages¹	2008/09 BCS
	Percentage who experienced this frequency
Every day/almost every day	9
About 2 or 3 times a week	27
About once a week	30
About 2-3 times a month	14
About once a month	11
About 2-3 times a year	5
Less often than 2-3 times a year	5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,502</i>

1. Based on adults who perceived fairly or very big problem in their local area with people being drunk or rowdy in public places.

Appendix 1 Bibliography

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Copies of recent Home Office publications based on the British Crime Survey, including reports that report jointly on the BCS and police recorded crime, can be downloaded from:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>