

Violence Against Women and Girls Survey Results

October 2026



**Derbyshire
Police and Crime
Commissioner**
Safer and Stronger Together

**Protecting Communities
Fighting Crime**



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Contents

Joint Foreword from the Commissioner & Deputy Commissioner	1
Summary and Main Points	4
Notes about the data	7
Q1/2 Numbers of respondents	8
Q3/4 How safe do you feel when you are on your own / alone?	9
Q3 How safe do you feel during the day when you are on your own / alone? ...	10
Q4 How safe do you feel after dark when you are on your own / alone?	13
Q5 Whilst the focus needs to be on changing offender behaviour, these changes will not happen overnight. In the current climate, what makes you feel safer?	18
Q6/7 Have you been a victim of any of the following crime types in the last year: Domestic Abuse, Assault, Sexual Offence, Stalking, Harassment, Upskirting, Drink Spiking, Cyber Flashing?.....	20
As far as you know, was the person who committed the crime(s) under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs?	23
Q8/9 Did you report the crime(s) to any organisation?	24
Q10 Why didn't you report the crime(s)?	25
Q11 After reporting, were you satisfied with the service you received from?	26
Q12/13 Did the Police or the Crown Prosecution Service refer you to any victim support service?	26
Q14/15 Do you feel that Derbyshire Police and the local Councils could do more to reassure and / or protect you when violent and / or sexual crimes against women and girls take place?.....	27

Joint Foreword from the Commissioner & Deputy Commissioner

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is one of the most prevalent and devastating forms of harm experienced across our society, accounting for around 20% of all police-recorded crime in England and Wales.

For far too many women and girls, abuse, harassment and intimidation have become an accepted part of everyday life, affecting their dignity, equality, wellbeing and freedom.

The Government has prioritised halving VAWG within a decade, an ambitious goal that will require sustained investment in prevention, investigation, support and recovery.

More than half (54%) of the residents, businesses and stakeholders who helped shape the Police and Crime Plan ranked serious violence, including VAWG, among their top three priorities for policing. For that reason, tackling VAWG is one of the most important priorities in the Plan.

The reality is that many women and girls continue to modify their behaviour simply to feel safe. They avoid certain places, change their routines, think carefully about what they wear and when they travel. The freedom to live without fear should be a basic right, yet for too many it remains out of reach.



This consultation has been designed to track public perspectives on VAWG locally over time, ensuring our work reflects the experiences, concerns and needs of victims, survivors and communities.

The responses this year broadly mirror previous surveys conducted in 2022 and 2024, showing little overall improvement in how safe women and girls feel across a range of locations. Women and girls continue to rely on strategies such as avoiding certain places, travelling with others and staying in well-lit areas to reduce their sense of vulnerability. Those living with a physical or mental health condition were particularly likely to report feeling unsafe when alone.



Harassment remains by far the most commonly experienced offence, affecting one in seven respondents. Almost one in four women (23%) reported experiencing domestic abuse, assault, a sexual offence, stalking, harassment, upskirting, drink spiking or cyber flashing. Behind every statistic is a person whose confidence, wellbeing or sense of security may have been affected. Of those who reported an incident, one third said the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs at the time.

We are working closely with partners across education, health and the criminal justice system to challenge harmful attitudes, improve safety and provide better support for victims and survivors. The Derbyshire VAWG Strategy seeks not only to secure justice for the thousands of women affected by abuse each year, but also to prevent that harm from occurring in the first place. Every woman and girl should be able to live freely, fulfil their potential and feel safe in their community.

No single agency has all the answers. Communities, parents and educators all have a vital role to play in teaching healthy relationships, consent and mutual respect from an early age. VAWG is a societal issue, and meaningful change will only come through collective action, a willingness to listen, and a commitment to understanding the experiences of those affected.

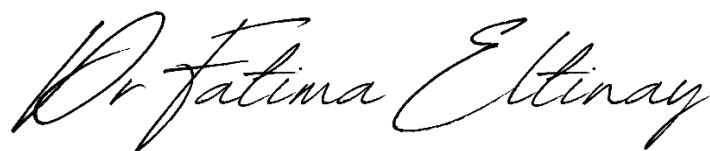
We are grateful to everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences through this survey. Some of the findings make for difficult reading, but they provide an important insight into the challenges that many women and girls continue to face.

Together, as Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, with responsibility for leading our work on VAWG, we are committed to ensuring that the voices of women and girls are heard, their experiences inform our decisions, and that we work with our partners and communities to drive lasting change.



Nicolle Ndiweni-Roberts

Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire



Dr Fatima Eltinay

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire

Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls



Summary and Main Points

- Results in the 2026 survey are generally similar to the two previous surveys in 2024 and 2022. All three surveys each received around 1,400 responses from women and girls across the Derbyshire force area.
- The proportion of women and girls reporting feeling safe in various locations is similar to the 2022 survey, though slightly less positive than the 2024 survey.
- Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were more likely to feel unsafe when on their own / alone at all of the places asked about, both during the day and after dark.
- “Avoiding particular areas”, “Walking with someone” and “Keeping to well-lit areas” were the main factors that make women and girls feel safer – the same as in the previous surveys. However, there were wide variations according to age group. This highlights that interventions and / or campaigns around safety for women and girls need to consider their target age group and be tailored accordingly.
- Almost one in four women and girls (23%) reported that they had been a victim of one of the listed crimes in the last year (Domestic Abuse, Assault, Sexual Offence, Stalking, Harassment, Upskirting, Drink Spiking, Cyber Flashing) – similar to the previous surveys.
- Harassment was by far the most experienced crime, affecting overall one in seven of the women and girls who responded.
- Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were more likely to report having been a victim of one of the listed crimes.
- One third of women and girls who reported being a victim said that the person who had committed the crime was under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs.

- Just under half of women and girls said that they had reported the crime(s) that they had experienced in the past year, which is similar to the rates in the CSEW (year ending March 2026), and the previous surveys. The vast majority of respondents who had reported the crime(s) reported to the police.
- The main reasons given for not reporting the crime(s) were “I didn’t think it would be taken seriously”, “I didn’t think anything could be done about it” and “I don’t have confidence in the police”. Previously, “I didn’t think it was serious enough” featured in the top three reasons, but this has fallen by 21 percentage points indicating that women and girls may now be more aware that certain behaviours are crimes. “I don’t have confidence in the police” as a reason for not reporting a crime has increased by 18 percentage points to 47% since the previous survey in 2024.
- Half of respondents who reported a crime stated that they were referred to a victim support service.
- Just over half of respondents felt more could be done by Derbyshire Police and the local Councils to reassure and / or protect them when violent and / or sexual crimes take place against women and girls, with the most common themes being “Greater police visibility / more patrols” (mentioned in over one third of comments) and “Women and girls reporting crimes to be believed / taken seriously” (mentioned in over one quarter of comments). New themes in the 2026 survey included “Police to investigate properly and ensure offenders are prosecuted” in third place and “Lack of confidence / trust in the police and / or council, two-tier justice system, corrupt police officers” in fourth place.

Notes about the data

- The 2026 survey received 1,558 responses from Derbyshire force area residents, of which 1,471 responses were from women and girls, 66 responses were from men and boys and there were 21 other responses. One hundred and thirty one responses were from persons from an Ethnic Minority background.
- The Crime Survey for England & Wales (CSEW) shows that being of certain non-White ethnic backgrounds, being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other sexual orientation and being disabled are all associated with a higher incidence of being a victim of crime (year ending March 2026). Therefore, more detail has been provided for those questions where responses from different demographics show a wide variation of views / experience.
- For context: 9.3% of the Derbyshire force area population are from an Ethnic Minority background, 2.5% are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other sexual orientation, and 8.4% have their day to day activities limited a lot according to the 2021 Census.
- Respondents were self-selected and may therefore not be representative of the whole of Derbyshire population. However, there was a good spread of respondents across the various demographics (as detailed in the next section).
- Results are weighted according to age group and home local authority in line with the Census 2021 profile of Derbyshire – with the “24 years or under” age group weighted in line with numbers of 11-24 year olds, as younger girls (i.e. primary school age and younger) are unlikely to be outside the home unaccompanied.
- Results for each question are generally based on definite answers only – i.e. “Don’t know”, “Don’t wish to say”, “Prefer not to say” and blank answers have been excluded unless specified.

Q1/2. Numbers of respondents

	All	Women & girls	Proportion of all responses	Census 2021
All Respondents	1,558	1,471	-	-
Ethnic Minority background (51 Asian, 45 Black, 34 Mixed/Multiple, 1 Other) (41 Derby, 90 Derbyshire)	131	123	8.4%	9.3%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Other	158	145	10.1%	2.5%
Physical or mental health conditions reduce ability to carry out day to day activities a lot	160	148	10.3%	8.4%

Distribution of respondents (women and girls) across Derby & Derbyshire

Note that responses were weighted by age group and home local authority area in line with the Census 2021 profile of the Derbyshire force area so that results were not skewed by higher numbers of respondents within certain demographics.

	24 yrs & under	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65 yrs & over	No age given	All
Amber Valley	64	28	22	41	41	20	2	218
Bolsover	38	14	17	26	17	12	3	127
Chesterfield	58	27	49	40	31	34	3	242
City of Derby	66	41	38	40	30	33	0	248
Derbyshire Dales	39	16	17	20	33	28	1	154
Erewash	10	11	12	18	17	13	2	83
High Peak	7	12	13	25	22	21	1	101
North East Derbyshire	41	15	14	35	35	17	0	157
South Derbyshire	37	14	23	28	17	21	1	141
Total	360	178	205	273	243	199	13	1,471

Q3/4. How safe do you feel when you are on your own / alone...?

Respondents were asked how safe they feel when on their own in or at various places, both during the day and after dark.

Women and girls from Derby had lower, often the lowest, feelings of safety for most of the places asked about, compared to those from areas outside of Derby.

Older women generally felt safer than younger women and girls, both during the day and after dark, apart from online, where younger women and girls felt safer.

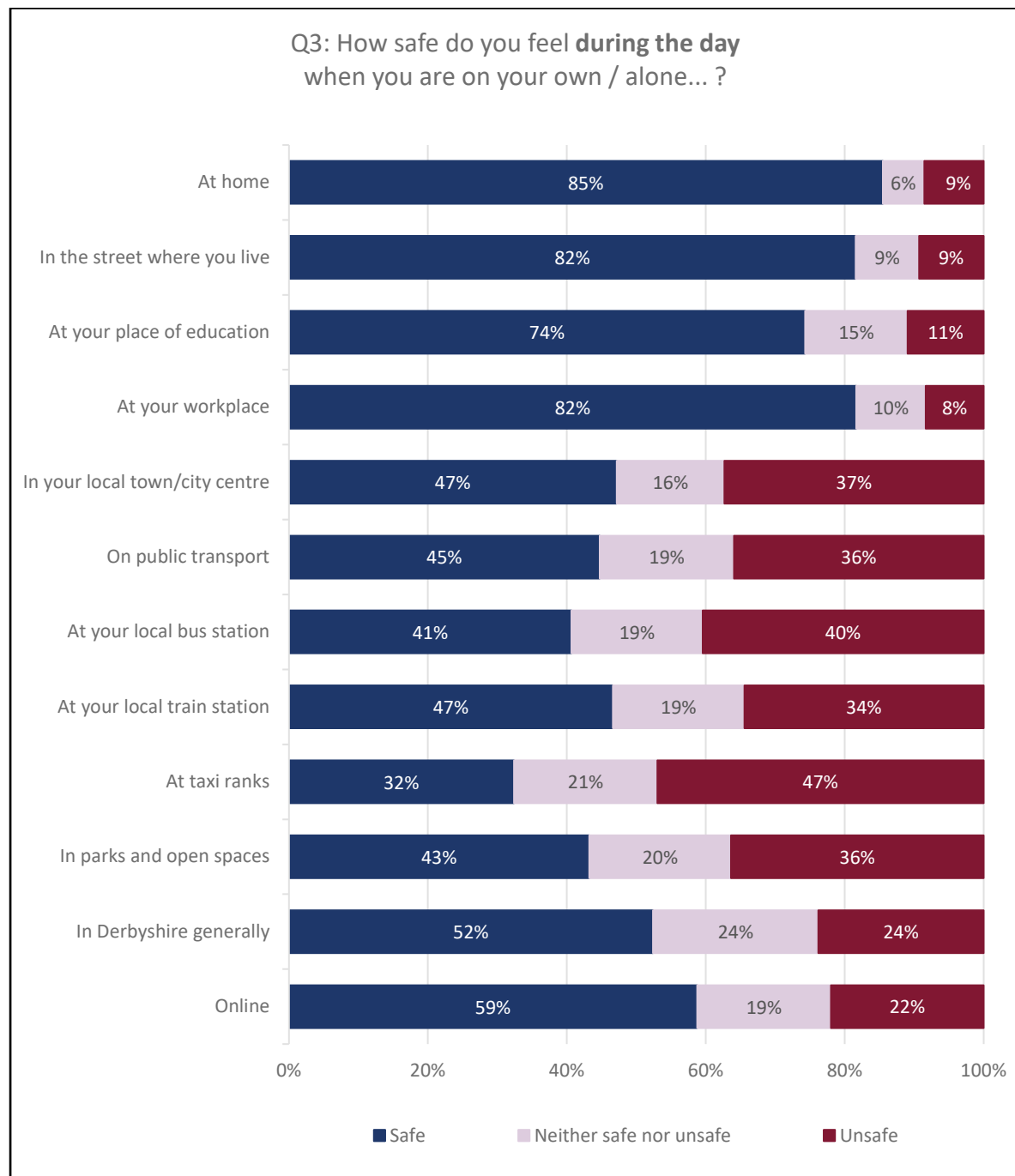
Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were more likely to feel unsafe when on their own / alone at all of the places asked about, both during the day and after dark.

The proportion of women and girls from an Ethnic Minority background feeling safe was fairly similar to those from a White background for at home, in their street, place of education and workplace. They felt safer than those from a White background in their local town/city centre, within the public transport system and at taxi ranks, but less safe online.



Q3. How safe do you feel during the day when you are on your own / alone...?

The main places where women and girls feel unsafe on their own during the day are at taxi ranks and within the public transport system, in their local town/city centre, and in parks and open spaces. “At taxi ranks” was ranked the most unsafe place with almost half of women and girls saying they felt somewhat or very unsafe.



At home / on the street where you live

Around five out of six women and girls (85%) said they felt safe at home, and the majority (82%) also said they felt safe in their street, with just 9% saying they felt unsafe. Women and girls with a reduced ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely to say they felt unsafe both at home (27%) and in their street (29%).

At your place of education / at your workplace

Three-quarters of women and girls said they felt safe at their place of education and / or at their workplace, with 11% and 8% respectively saying they felt unsafe. Women and girls with a reduced ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely to feel unsafe (29%, 21%) for both places.

In your local town/city centre

Just under half of women and girls said they felt safe in their local town/city centre during the day, although this fell to around one third for residents of Erewash and South Derbyshire, and less than a quarter (22%) for residents of Derby.

On public transport / at your local bus station / at your local train station / at taxi ranks

Less than half of women and girls said that they felt safe on their own during the day within the public transport system and over one third said they felt unsafe. At taxi ranks, only one third felt safe, with almost a half feeling unsafe.

Women and girls from Derby and those with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely to feel unsafe. Older women were more likely to feel safe than younger women and girls.

In parks and open spaces

Just under half of women and girls said they felt safe alone in parks and open spaces during the day. However, this tended to be higher in more rural areas such as Derbyshire Dales (64%), and High Peak and North East Derbyshire (both 59%), and lower in Derby (25%), and also South Derbyshire (30%). Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were also less likely to feel safe (31%).

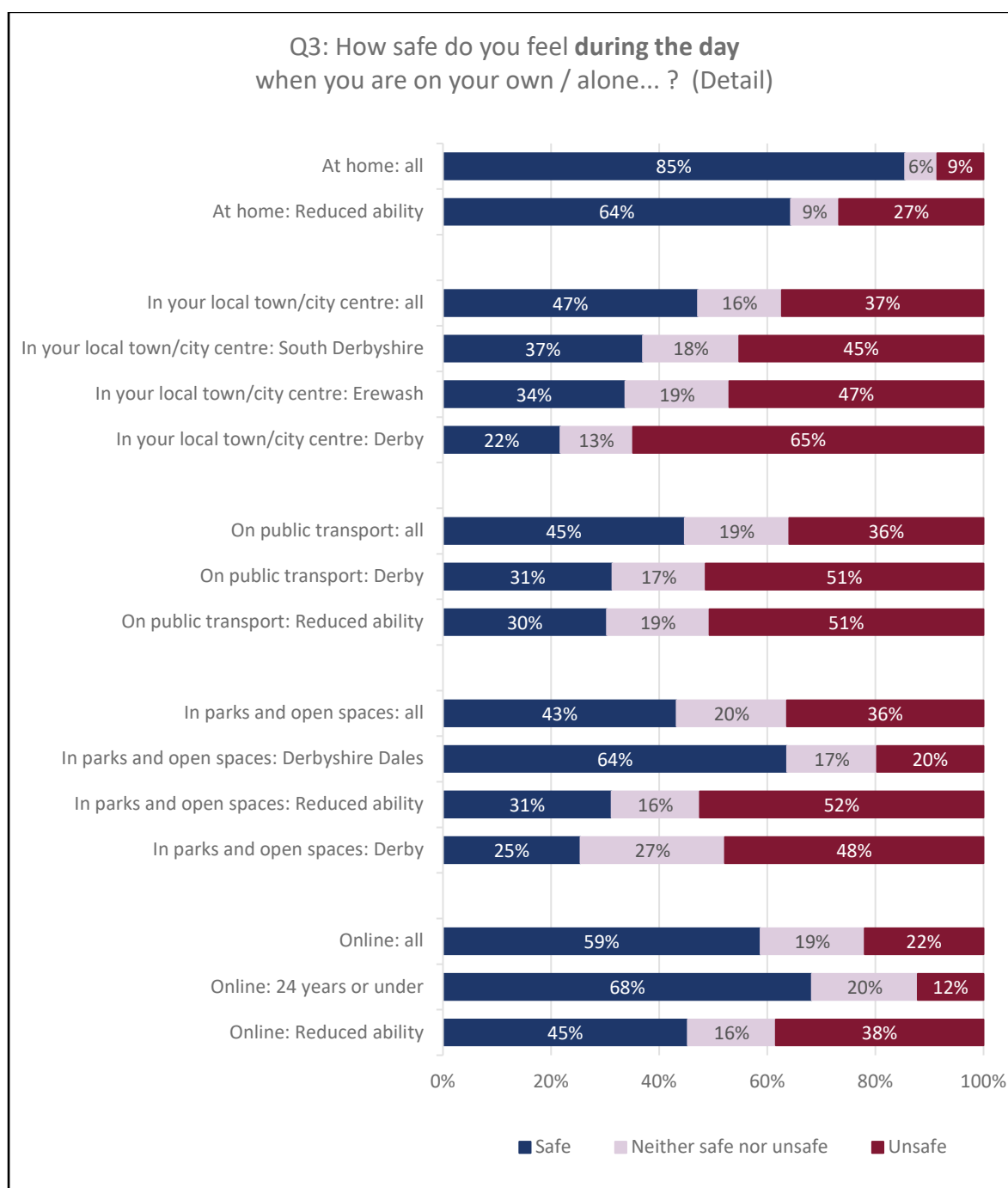
In Derbyshire generally

Just over half of women and girls said that they felt safe on their own in Derbyshire generally during the day, and results were similar to the previous question (in parks and open spaces).

Online

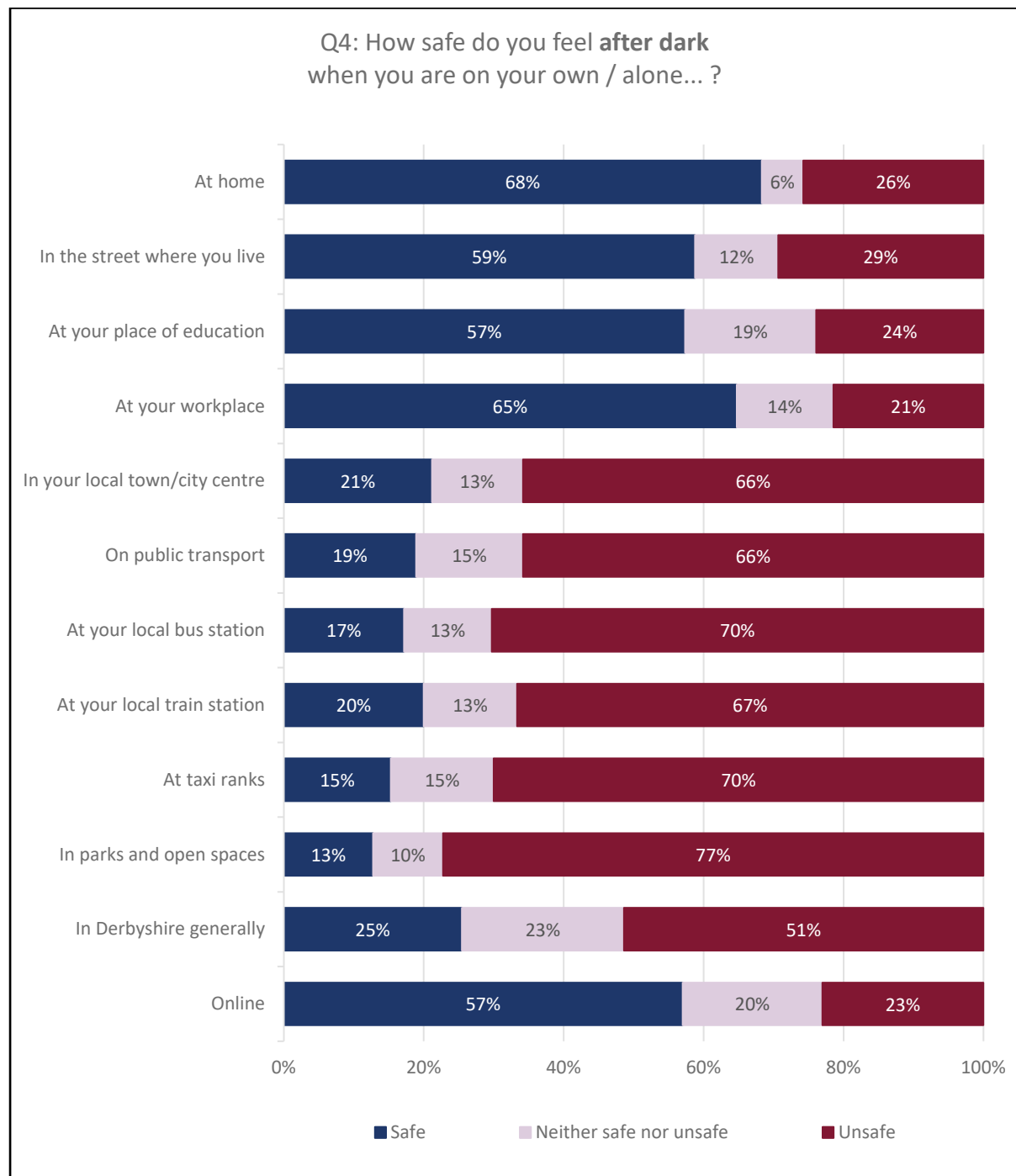
Three out of five women and girls felt safe online during the day, with one out of five feeling unsafe. Those aged 24 years or under were more likely to feel safe and less likely to feel unsafe online. Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were almost twice as likely (38%) as the average to feel unsafe online.

The graph below shows the demographics where there were the largest variations from the average for feeling safe / unsafe during the day.



Q4. How safe do you feel after dark when you are on your own / alone...?

The main places where women and girls feel unsafe after dark are the same as during the day: in parks and open spaces; within the public transport system and at taxi ranks; and in their local town/city centre. "In parks and open spaces" was ranked the most unsafe place with more than three-quarters of women and girls saying they felt somewhat or very unsafe.



At home / on the street where you live

Two-thirds of women and girls (68%) said they felt safe at home, and three out of five (59%) said they felt safe in their street after dark, with 26% and 29% respectively saying they felt unsafe. This is slightly below the CSEW figure (year ending March 2026) where nationally 68% of women said they felt safe walking alone after dark. Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely to say they felt unsafe both at home and in their street.

At your place of education / at your workplace

Around three out of five women and girls said they felt safe at their place of education and / or their workplace after dark, with around one out of five saying they felt unsafe. Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely to say they felt unsafe after dark for both options.

In your local town/city centre

Two-thirds of women and girls overall said they felt unsafe in their local town/city centre after dark, with just one in five saying they felt safe. This fell to only one in twenty women and girls from Derby saying they felt safe on their own in the city centre after dark.

On public transport / at your local bus station / at your local train station / at taxi ranks

Two-thirds of women and girls overall felt unsafe within the public transport system and at taxi ranks on their own after dark.

Women and girls from Derby, Erewash and South Derbyshire were the most likely to feel unsafe. Older women were more likely to feel safe than younger women and girls.

In parks and open spaces

Three-quarters of women and girls felt unsafe in parks or open spaces on their own after dark; however, as during the day, feeling unsafe was higher in urban areas, with nine out of ten women and girls in Derby feeling unsafe.

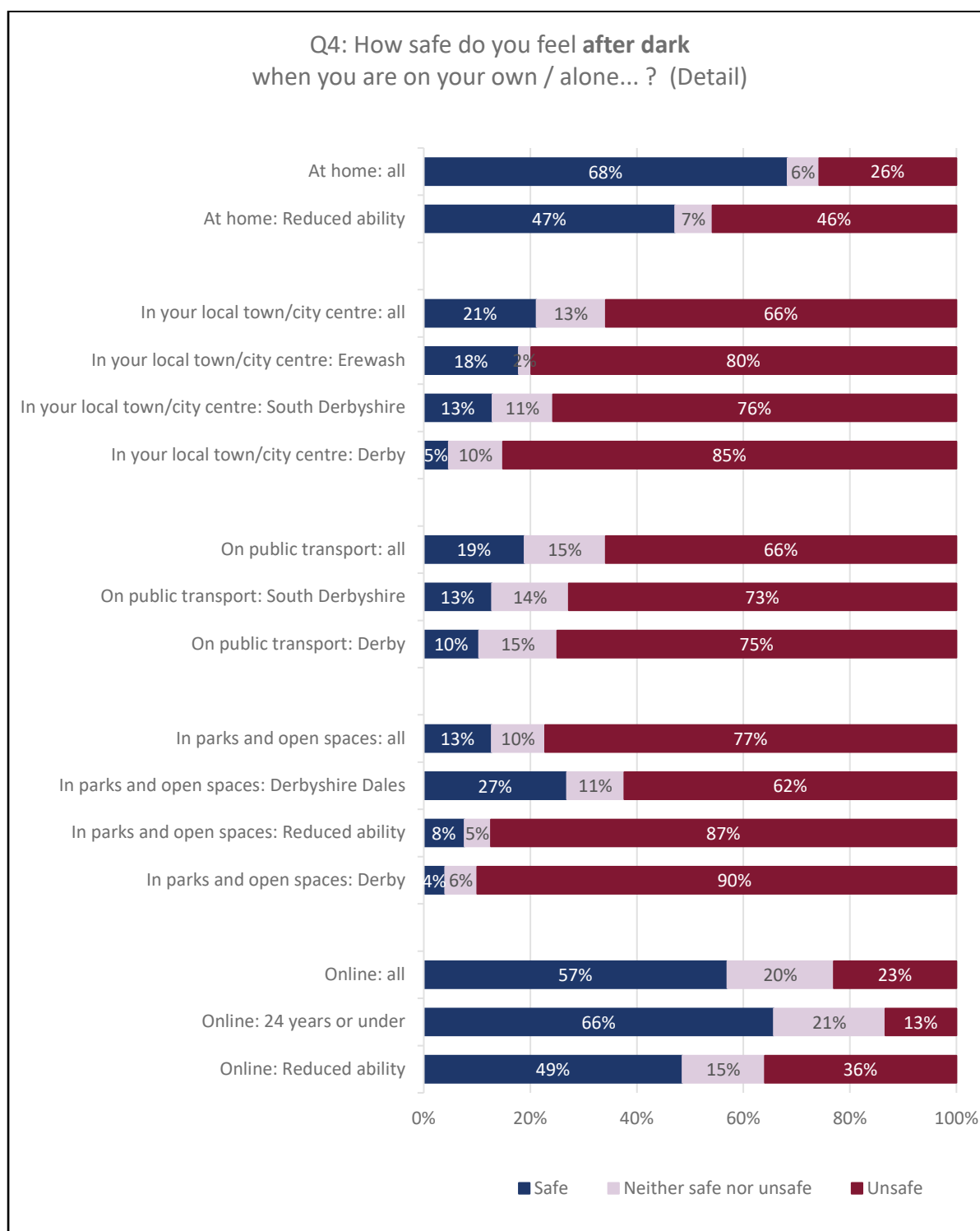
In Derbyshire generally

A quarter of women and girls felt safe in Derbyshire generally on their own after dark, but a half said they felt unsafe. Residents of Derby and women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were most likely to feel unsafe.

Online

Results were very similar to during the day, with women and girls aged 24 years or under more likely to feel safe and those with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities more likely to feel unsafe.

The graph below shows the demographics where there were the largest variations from the average for feeling safe / unsafe after dark.



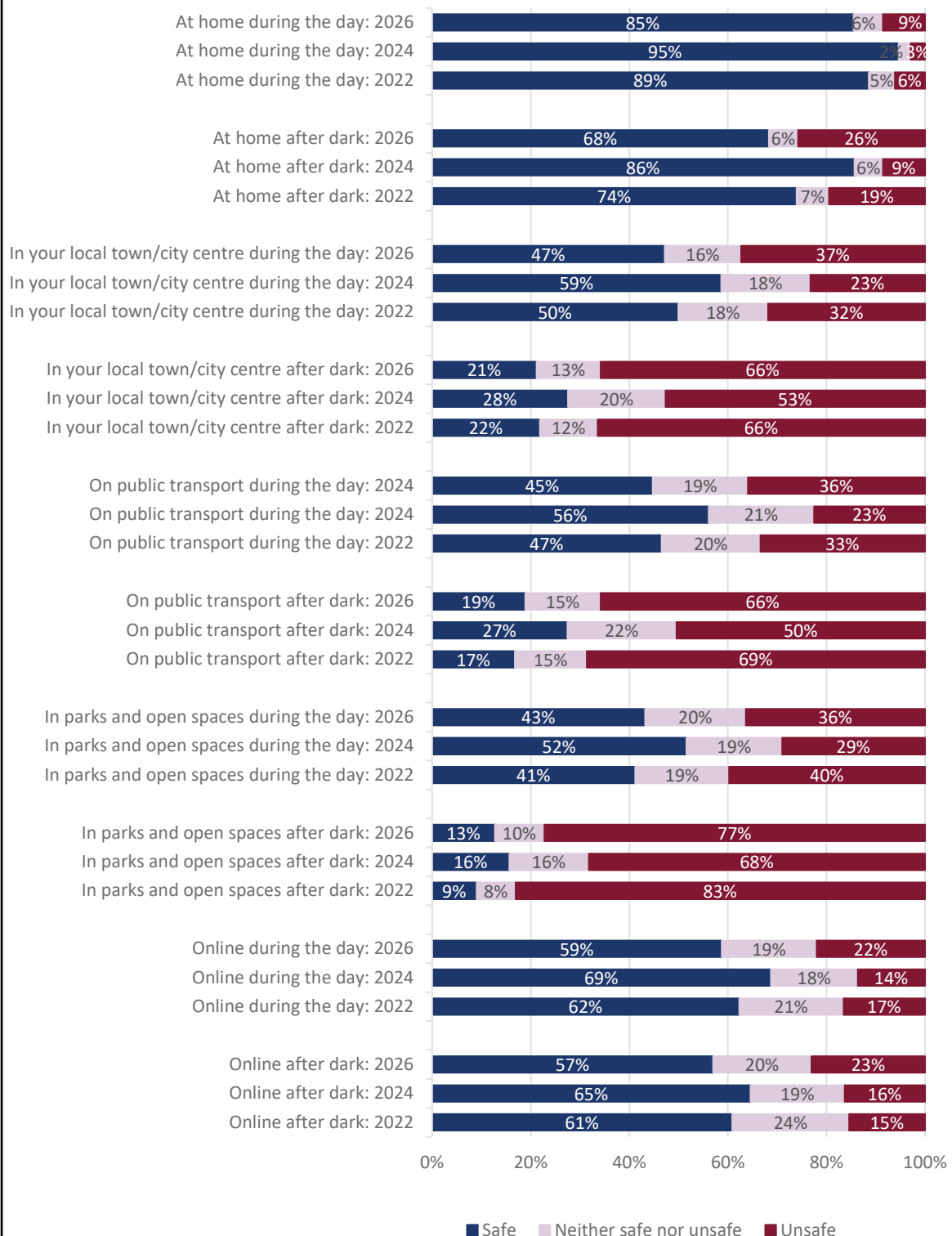
Comparison of 2026, 2024 and 2022 surveys

The proportion of women and girls reporting feeling safe / unsafe in various locations is similar to the 2022 survey, though slightly less positive than the 2024 survey.

Results show that the majority of women and girls feel safe at home, both during the day and after dark. Consistently only around half of women and girls feel safe on their own during the day in their local town/city centre, on public transport and in parks and open spaces - and the proportion of those feeling safe in these places reduces significantly after dark. However, there is little difference in feelings of safety online during the day and after dark.



Q3&4: How safe do you feel during the day/after dark... Comparison of 2026, 2024 and 2022 surveys

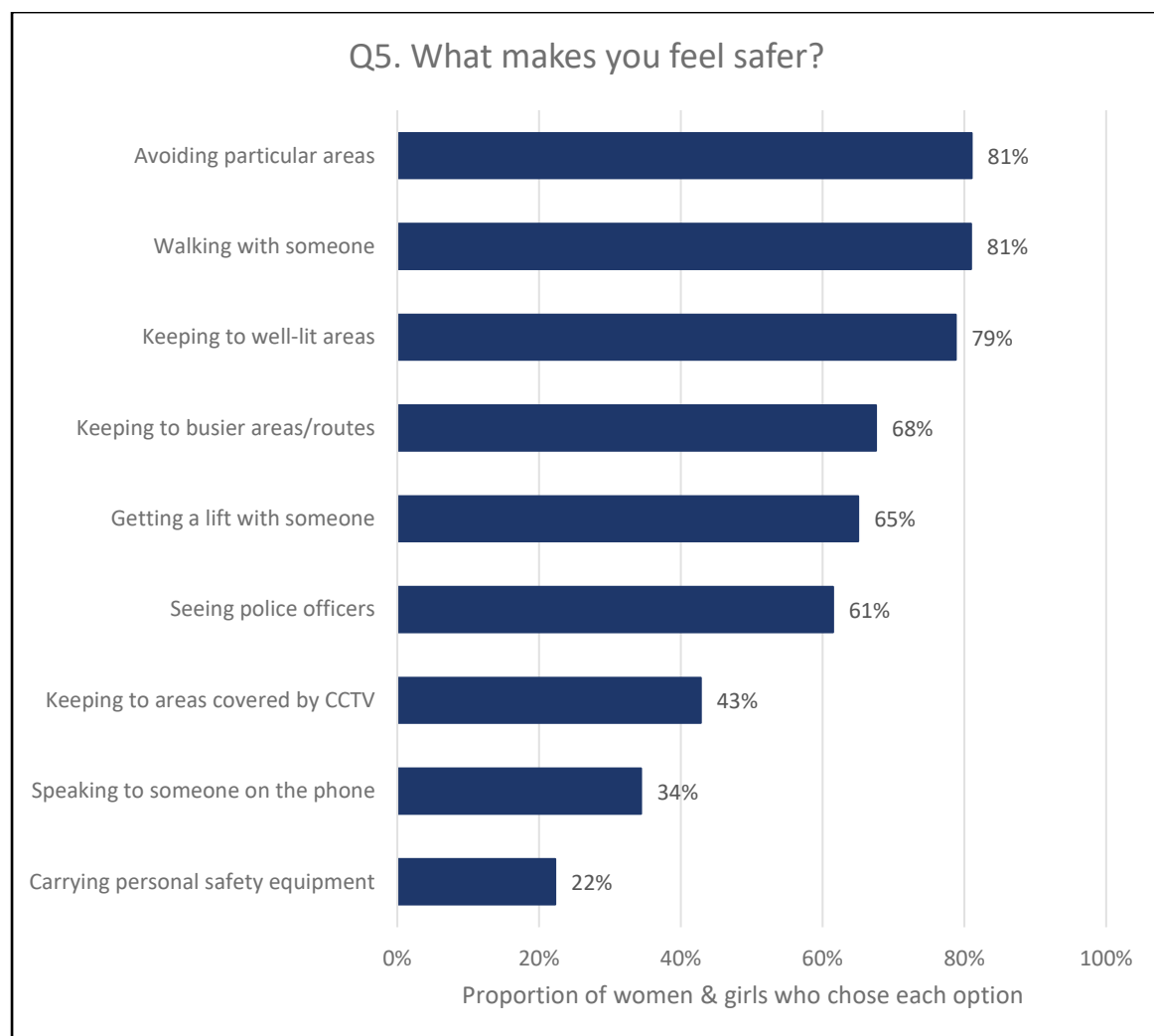


Q5. Whilst the focus needs to be on changing offender behaviour, these changes will not happen overnight. In the current climate, what makes you feel safer?

Respondents could choose as many options as applicable. Results were very similar to the previous two surveys, with the top three issues remaining consistently chosen by the majority of women and girls.

Lighting is an important factor in making women and girls feel safe, with almost four out of five respondents choosing this option. “Keeping to areas covered by CCTV” was chosen by less than half of respondents.

The national police.uk StreetSafe service [StreetSafe | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](https://www.police.uk) allows people to anonymously report safety concerns in public places. The information is regularly passed on to Derbyshire Police and partners to be addressed.

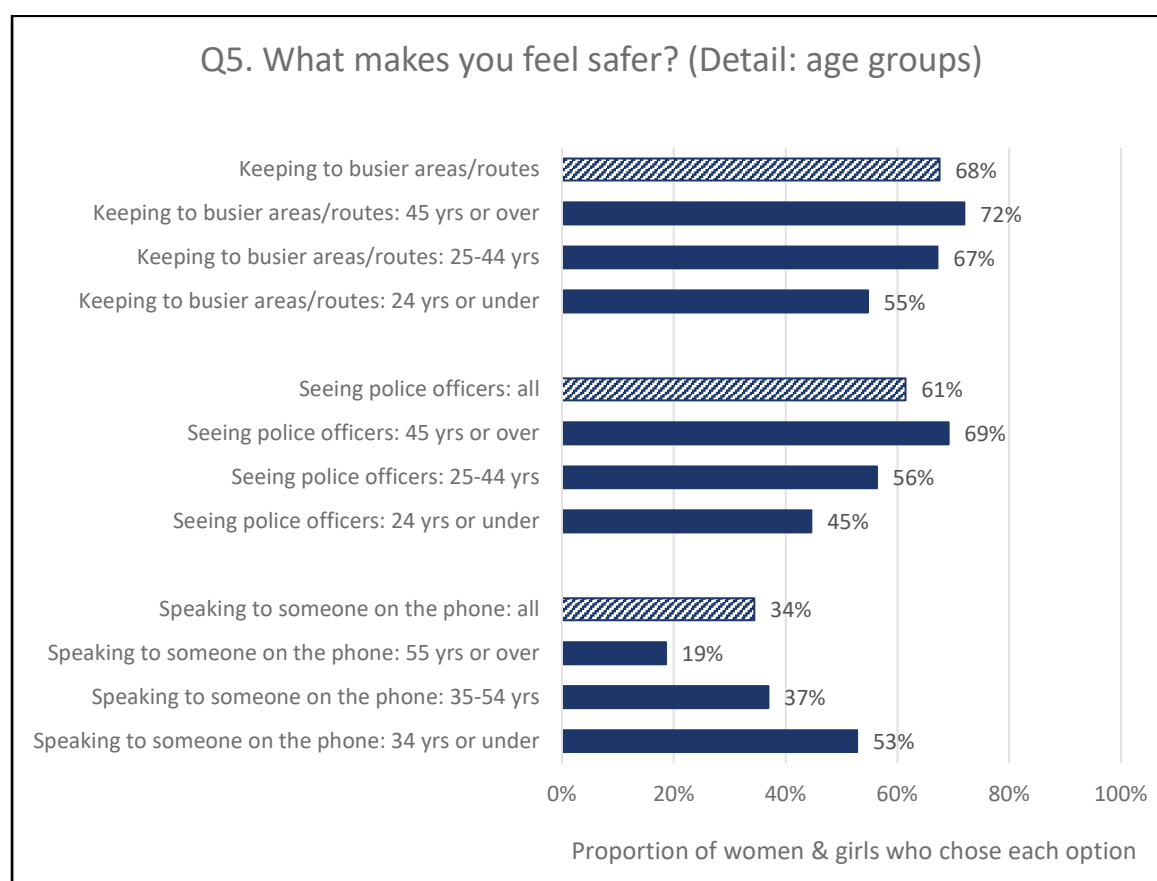


As with the previous surveys, there was a wide variance between different age groups for some of the options.

Younger women and girls were less likely to choose “Keeping to busier areas/routes” than older women. “Seeing police officers” was chosen by seven out of ten women aged 45 years or over as something that made them feel safer; however, this was true for less than half of women and girls aged 24 years or under.

Conversely, “Speaking to someone on the phone” was only chosen by one third of women and girls overall, but by more than half of women and girls aged 34 years or under. Walking with someone was also slightly more favoured amongst younger women and girls.

These results highlight that interventions and / or campaigns around safety for women and girls need to consider their target age group and be tailored accordingly.

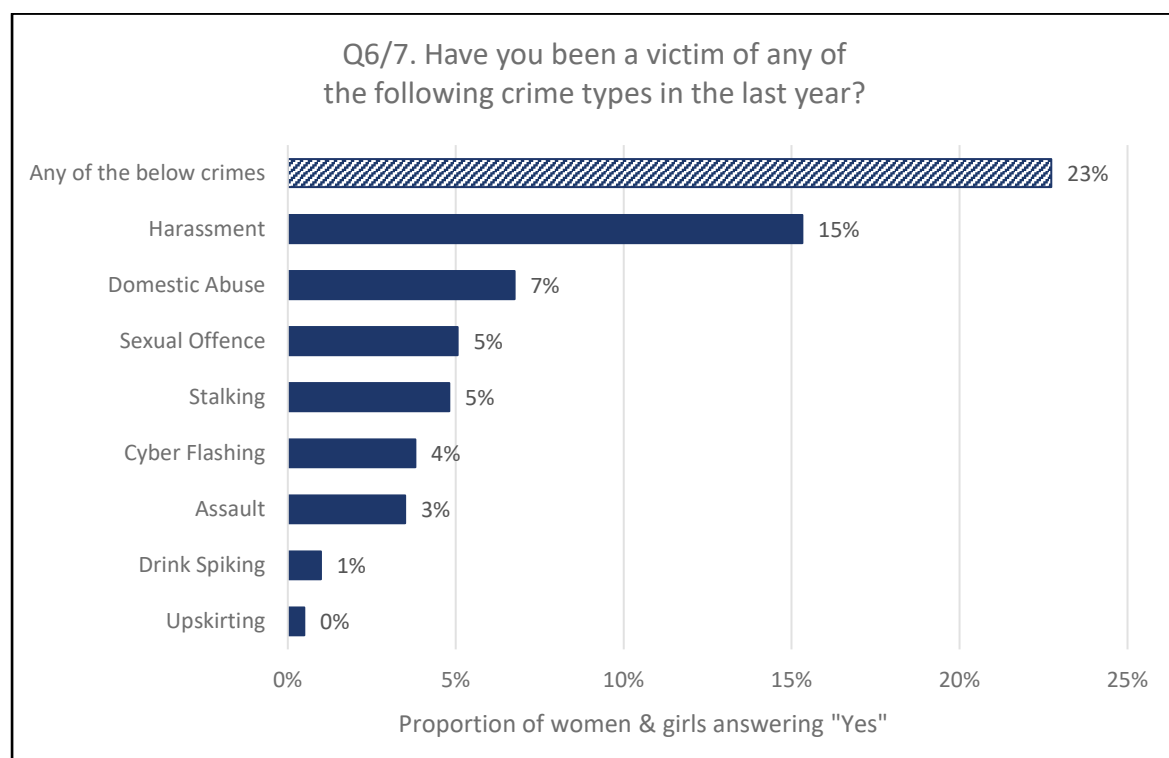


Q6/7. Have you been a victim of any of the following crime types in the last year: Domestic Abuse, Assault, Sexual Offence, Stalking, Harassment, Upskirting, Drink Spiking, Cyber Flashing?

Respondents could select as many crime types as applicable. This year, Cyber Flashing (unwanted sexual pictures) was also included in the list of crimes.

Almost one in four women and girls (23%) reported that they had been a victim of one of the listed crimes in the last year (Domestic Abuse, Assault, Sexual Offence, Stalking, Harassment, Upskirting, Drink Spiking, Cyber Flashing) – similar to the previous surveys. Of those who had been a victim of crime, around half had been a victim of only one type of crime, with around one quarter subject to two crimes and the remaining quarter reporting that they had been the victim of three or more of the listed crimes.

Harassment was by far the most experienced crime, affecting overall one in seven of the women and girls who responded. Within the crime types, there was quite a wide variation between different demographics reporting being a victim. Therefore, any interventions should recognise and be appropriate for those demographics who are more likely to experience particular crimes.

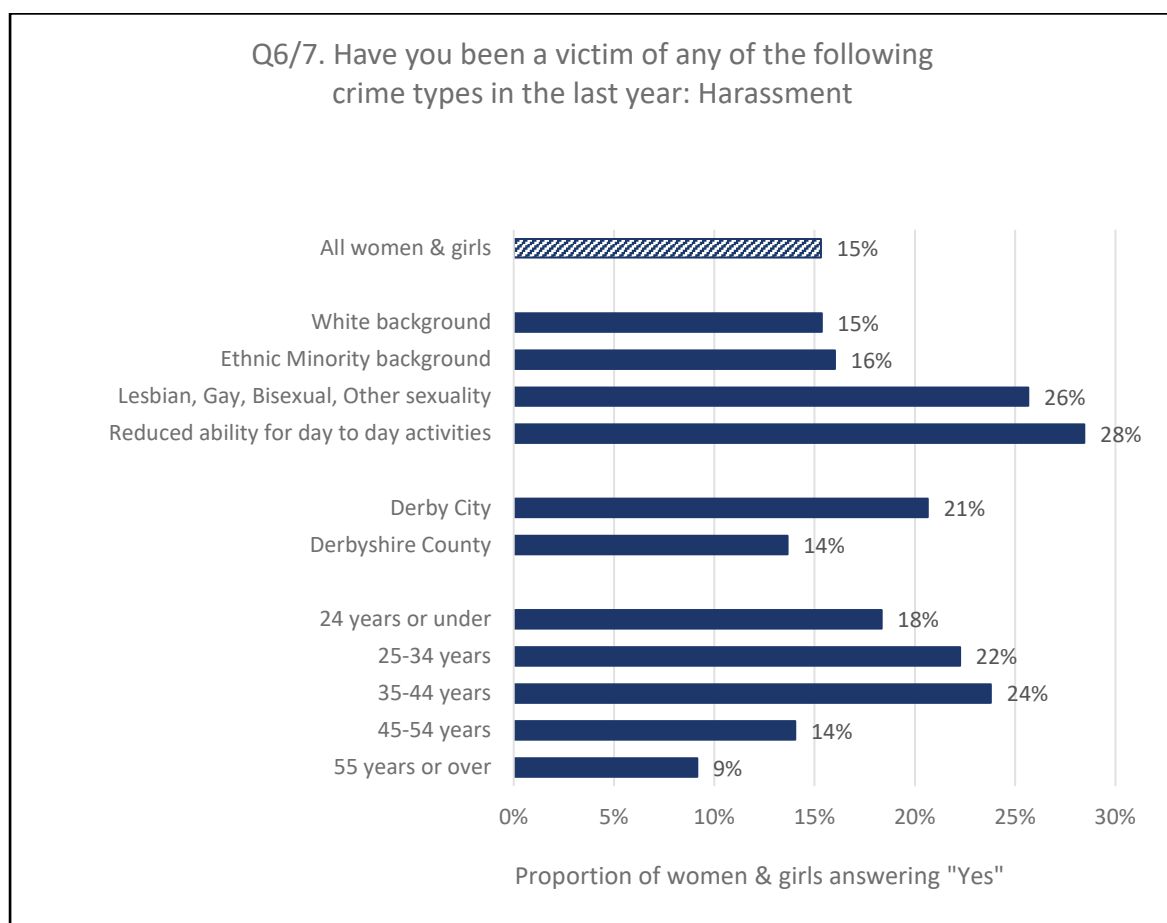


The Crime Survey for England & Wales (CSEW) shows that being of certain non-White ethnic backgrounds, being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other sexual orientation and being disabled are all associated with a higher incidence of being a victim of crime (Annual Supplementary Tables year ending March 2026).

Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities, and to a lesser extent, those who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other sexuality, were more likely to report having been a victim of one of the listed crimes, particularly Assault, Sexual Offences, Harassment and Drink Spiking.

Women and girls with a physical or mental health condition which reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities were much more likely than the average to report being a victim of Domestic Abuse and/or Stalking.

The following charts show a breakdown of various demographics for the three most experienced crime types (Harassment, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences).

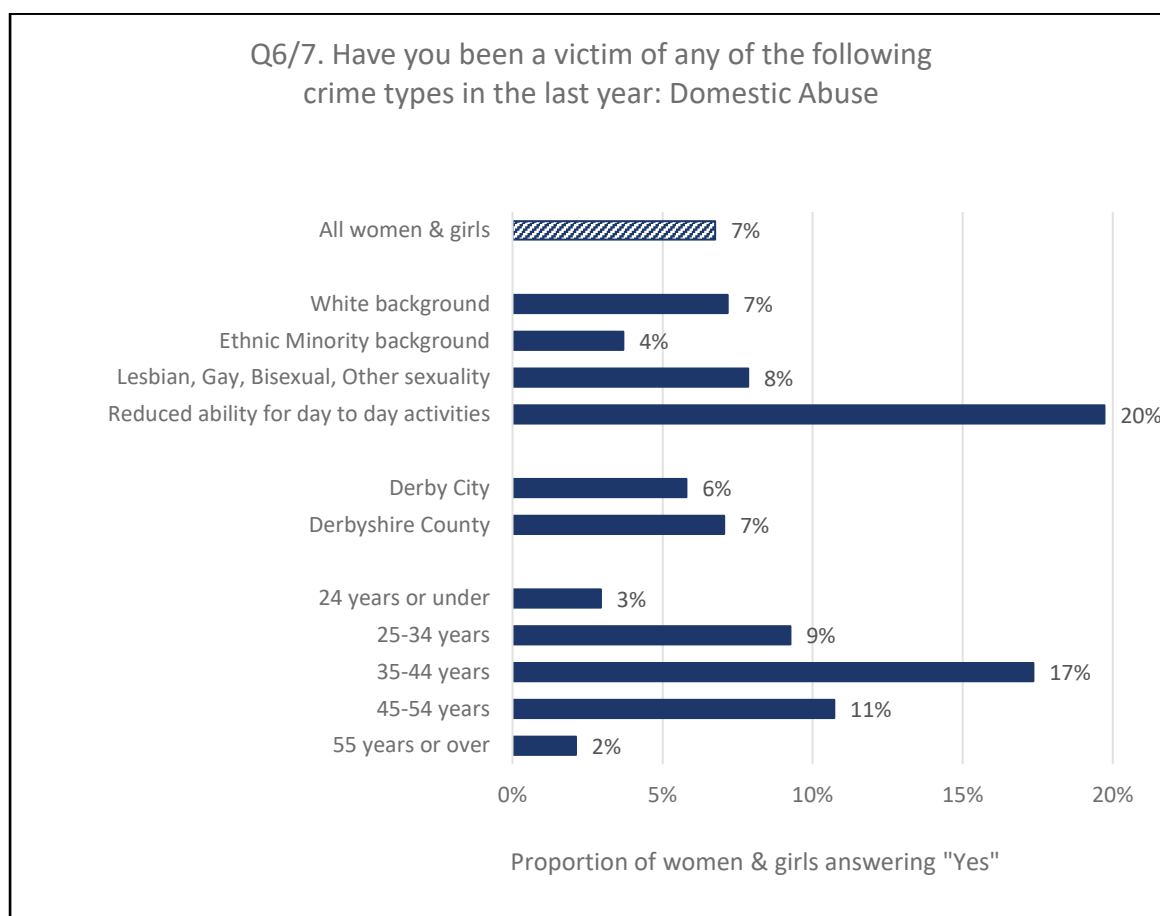


Women aged 35-44 years were the most likely to report being a victim of crime - this is particularly the case for Domestic Abuse. It is also noteworthy that only 3% of those aged 24 years or under reported being a victim of Domestic Abuse - which is the same as the 2024 survey.

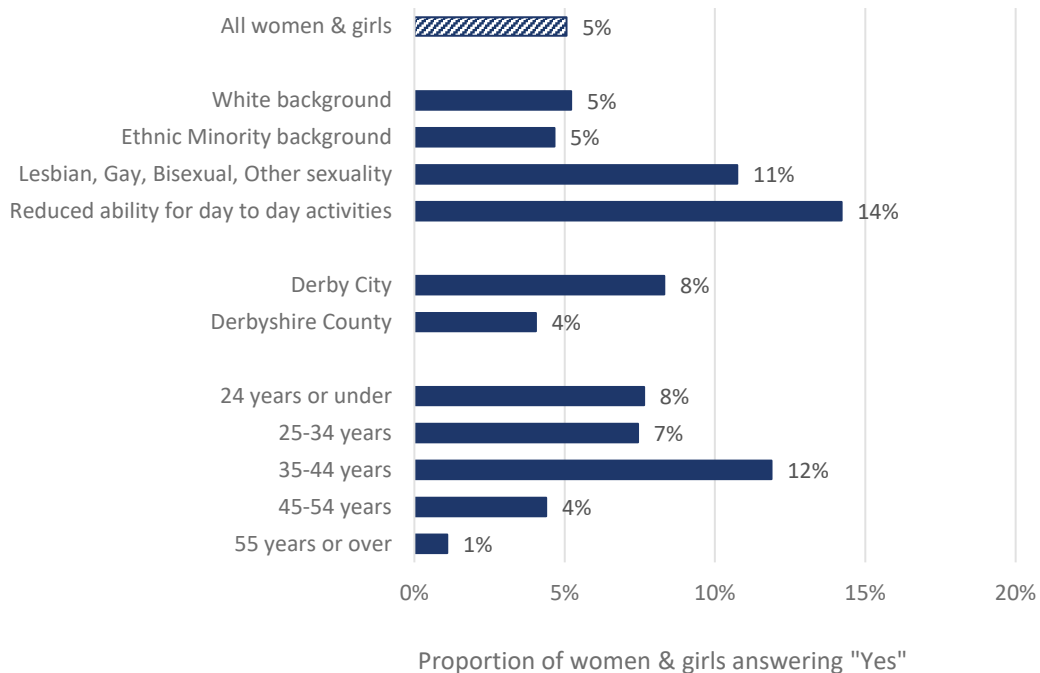
However, these results differ from the CSEW estimates of Domestic Abuse for all persons (year ending March 2025, latest available) where 18.2% of 16-19 year olds and 12.9% of 20-24 year olds had experienced some form of Domestic Abuse in the past 12 months compared to the average of 7.8% of people (9.1% of females) aged 16 and over – and that also the prevalence of Domestic Abuse decreases with age.

This discrepancy may be due to respondents for this survey being self-selected and therefore not fully representative, a difference in methodology between this survey and the CSEW, and also that younger respondents in particular may not recognise certain behaviours as Domestic Abuse crimes.

Women and girls from Derby were much more likely to report having been a victim of Harassment or a Sexual Offence than those from the Derbyshire County area.



Q6/7. Have you been a victim of any of the following crime types in the last year: Sexual Offences



As far as you know, was the person who committed the crime(s) under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs?

This was a new question in the 2026 survey. One third of women and girls who reported being a victim said that the person who had committed the crime was under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs. Domestic Abuse showed the highest rate.

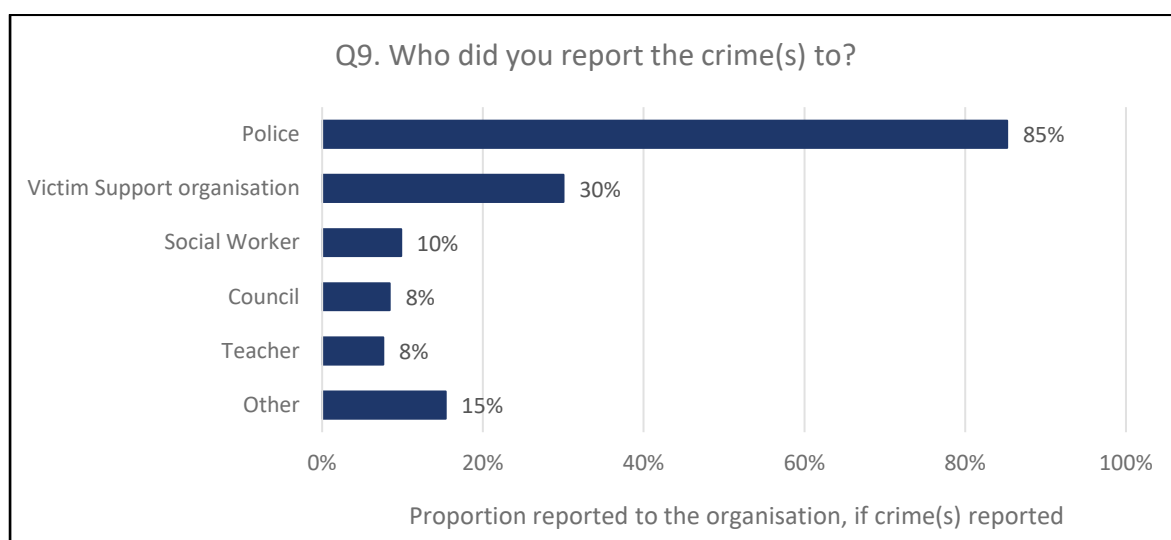
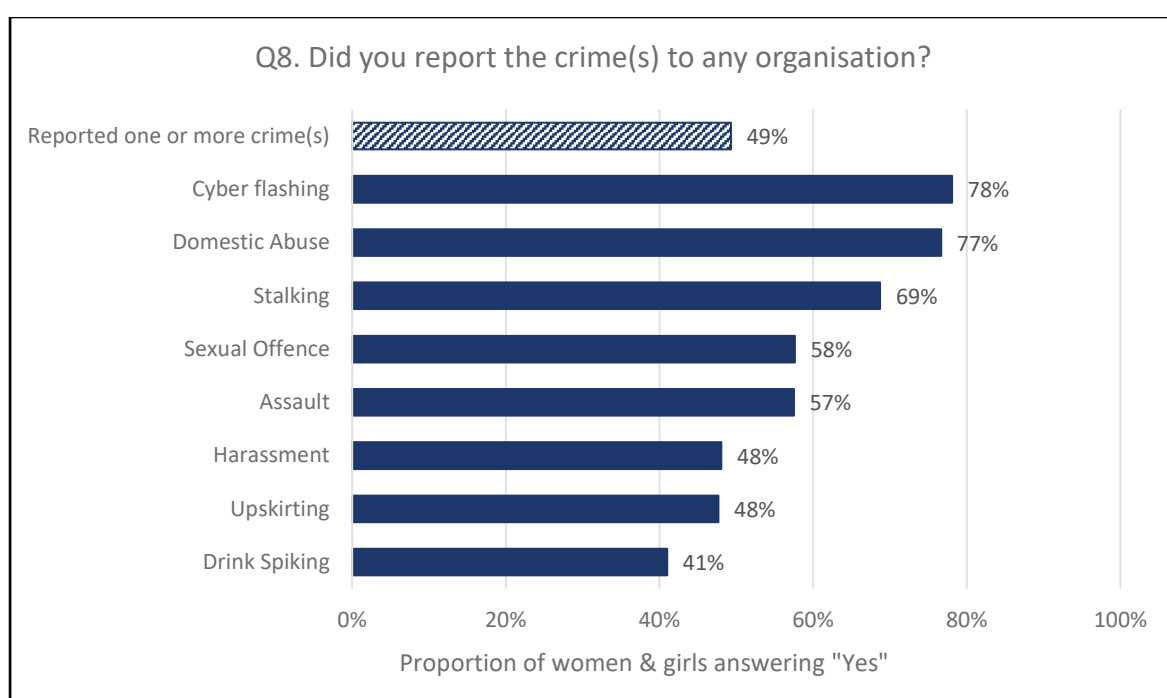
Under the influence of...	Alcohol only	Drugs only	Both Alcohol and Drugs	At least one of Alcohol or Drugs
Domestic Abuse	16%	5%	22%	44%
Assault	9%	4%	23%	36%
Sexual Offence	12%	1%	18%	31%
Stalking	8%	5%	16%	29%
Harassment	6%	4%	18%	29%
Upskirting	13%	0%	0%	13%
Drink Spiking	14%	0%	23%	37%
Cyber flashing	5%	3%	5%	13%
Any of the crimes	9%	2%	22%	34%

(Percentages may not add due to rounding)

Q8/9. Did you report the crime(s) to any organisation?

Respondents could choose more than one organisation where they had reported the crime(s). Just under half of women and girls said that they had reported, which is similar to the rates in the CSEW (year ending March 2026), and the previous surveys.

Although the more serious crimes were more likely to have been reported, still nearly one quarter of victims of Domestic Abuse and more than one third of the victims of a Sexual Offence had not reported their crime(s). The vast majority of respondents who had reported the crime(s) reported to the police. "Other" organisations reported to included websites, employers and CrimeStoppers.

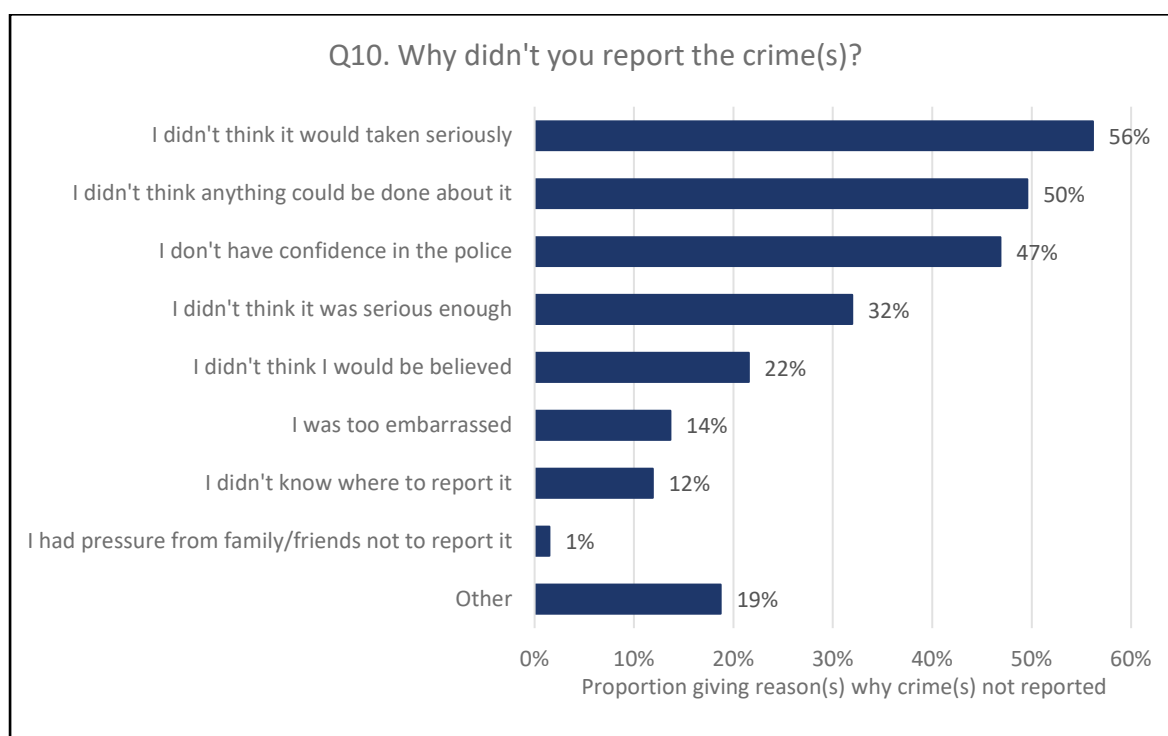


Q10. Why didn't you report the crime(s)?

Just under half of those who had been a victim of crime said they did not report the crime(s) to any organisation. Respondents could choose as many reasons for not reporting as applicable. There were not enough responses to enable further analysis regarding the different crime types or by demographics.

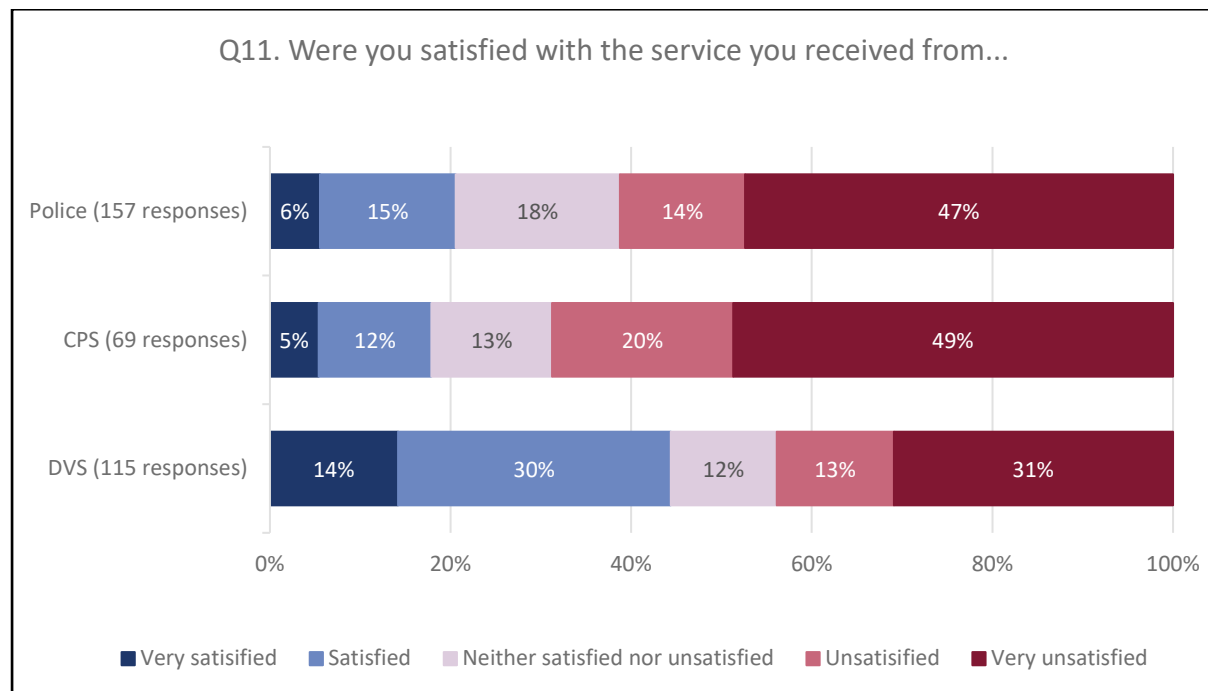
The main reasons given for not reporting the crime(s) were “I didn't think it would be taken seriously”, “I didn't think anything could be done about it” and “I don't have confidence in the police”. In the previous two surveys, “I didn't think it was serious enough” featured in the top three reasons, but this has fallen by 21 percentage points since 2024 indicating that women and girls may now be more aware that certain behaviours are crimes.

“I don't have confidence in the police” as a reason for not reporting a crime has increased by 18 percentage points to 47% since the previous survey in 2024. Amongst the comments in the “Other” category, there were several mentions of a lack of confidence in the police and justice system (two-tier justice), belief that the perpetrator(s) would not be held to account, and fear of reprisals.



Q11. After reporting, were you satisfied with the service you received from...?

Only a limited number of respondents answered this question, and as respondents were self-selected, results should be taken with some caution. Therefore, responses have not been broken down further by crimes experienced or demographics.



Q12/13. Did the Police or the Crown Prosecution Service refer you to any victim support service?

Half (50%) of respondents stated that they were referred to a victim support service, similar to the previous surveys. Those who gave details of the service(s) said they were referred to Derbyshire Victim Services (DVS) and / or various services for victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences.

Q14/15. Do you feel that Derbyshire Police and the local Councils could do more to reassure and / or protect you when violent and / or sexual crimes against women and girls take place?

Just over half of respondents felt that more could be done by Derbyshire Police and the local Councils (836 of all 1,558 respondents, 793 of 1,471 women and girls), with a total of 694 respondents providing comments.

Overall, “Greater police visibility / more patrols” topped the list by a large margin (as it has for all three surveys), being mentioned in over one third of comments. “Women and girls reporting crimes to be believed / taken seriously” remained in second place, as in 2024, being mentioned in over one quarter of comments.

There were several new themes in the 2026 survey, including “Police to investigate properly and ensure offenders are prosecuted” in third place, “Lack of confidence / trust in the police and / or council, two-tier justice system, corrupt police officers” in fourth place, “I change my behaviour, avoid certain locations etc” in eighth place, “Concern about / experience of VAWG offences committed by immigrants” in eleventh place and “Train officers about VAWG issues” in fifteenth place.

Themes mentioned in more than 35 comments (i.e. in more than 5% of total comments)

Greater police visibility / more patrols	239 mentions
Women and girls reporting crimes to be believed / taken seriously	185 mentions
Police to investigate properly and ensure offenders are prosecuted	156 mentions
Lack of confidence / trust in the police and / or council, two-tier justice system, corrupt police officers	112 mentions
Improve communication and / or supply information	105 mentions
More / better support for victims	84 mentions
Don't blame victims	72 mentions
I change my behaviour, avoid certain locations etc	69 mentions
Education of men and boys	68 mentions
More / better lighting	62 mentions
Concern about / experience of VAWG offences committed by immigrants	59 mentions
Stricter sentencing / punishments	55 mentions
Quicker response to incidents	54 mentions
More CCTV	46 mentions
Train officers about VAWG issues	37 mentions

Have you been a victim of crime?

If you would like to talk to someone about what has happened to you, or you would like emotional or practical support we are here to help. All services are free and confidential.

- ADULT VICTIM SERVICES
- YOUNG VICTIM SERVICES
- DOMESTIC ABUSE
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- HATE CRIME
- STALKING VICTIM SERVICES
- ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Help and support is available with
**Derbyshire
Victim Services**

 DerbyshireVictimServices.co.uk

 Support@DVSupport.org

 0800 612 6505

 Text 'DVS' to 82228



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